

Media Release

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Society site breaks new ground Fuelled by 25% spike in offshore interest

The current export push by Australia's largest equine breed organisation – The Australian Stock Horse Society - steps up a gear this week with the unveiling of a new marketing tool.

At a ceremony this Friday (5 August 2005), the new “bells and whistles” export website will be unveiled at the Hunter Valley Equine Research Centre in Scone. www.ashs.com.au/export incorporates what are believed to be a number of unique features (see page two).

Since March 2004 international traffic to the Australian Stock Horse Society's main website has soared by 25%, prompting it to develop an associated resource dedicated to its potential export purchasers.

The Hon. Michael Costa, MLC ¹ will activate the site, which converted into business during its pilot phase. Last month the trial online catalogue achieved a sale to the USA. The horse will be used for Polocrosse and leaves Australia at the end of this month.

From today, global prospects looking to purchase a registered Australian Stock Horse can simply click on www.ashs.com.au/export to participate in a virtual 24/7 Society Approved sale. It takes the Society's Hunter Valley showcase to the world in a number of languages.

Society head Mr Steve Guihot said, “With valuable funding provided by Coal & Allied Community Trust Fund we have created a master website in a series of four languages.”

In developing the content for the website the Society has spent the past twelve months capturing the most frequently asked questions; the answers to which are now incorporated into the dedicated new export site. Mr Guihot said that potential buyers most want to know how they can purchase Australian horses; how much do they cost; and whether it is complicated to import Australian horses.

Continued....

¹ The Hon. Michael Costa, MLC is current Member of the Legislative Council and Minister for Roads, Economic Reform, Ports and the Hunter.

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Australian Stock Horse
SOCIETY

Features of the site include:

- A comprehensive online catalogue of listings, with vendors able to upload photographs plus video footage of the horse for sale.
- A powerful search engine enables buyers to search for the exact specifications e.g. colour, height, gender, disciplines, price range. Alternatively they can submit an enquiry for the Society to source a particular horse which may not be listed.
- Links to complementary services such as accredited Veterinarians for pre-purchase examinations, International Freight Forwarders and Equine Insurers.
- An international currency converter is incorporated into the clear easy to use layout.
- The site is now open in English, with translations in Chinese, Spanish and French. The Chinese translation will be invaluable ahead of the Society's second mission to China in September.

Commenting on their involvement in the project, Coal & Allied Community Trust Fund Chair, Dr Nick Senapati said, "We are delighted to support a community initiative of this nature it has the potential to enhance the economic development of the many equine breeders in our region is significant. We are also proud to help promote a product of such heritage value as Australia's own horse breed."

Since the Society's export campaign began late last year it has undertaken a successful trade mission to China, prompted by interest ahead of the Beijing Olympics. The next push being into Canada in September in direct response to significant interest from North America which currently imports in excess of 30,000 horses annually². The Society reports that both markets are searching for new breeds to service the boom in recreational and sports riding.

The Australian Stock Horse, which featured in the opening ceremony of the 2000 Sydney Olympics, has a rich history. The Australian Stock Horse (ASH) developed from bloodstock transported to the colony on the first fleet in 1788. Subsequent selective breeding created one horse which displays versatility and superb temperament and is suited to work, rest and play.

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EDITOR'S NOTES:

1. Established in 1971, the Australian Stock Horse Society is based in Scone, New South Wales.
2. With more than 9500 Members and over registered 150,000 horses, the Society is Australia's largest organisation of recreation/work horses.
3. Its mission is to maintain the heritage and to promote the bloodlines and high-performance of the Australian Stock Horse among equestrian activities and the public.
4. **For more see www.ashs.com.au/export**

² Source: "Equine Industry Export market Opportunities study 2003 Equine Canada