

# Media Release

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## CONTACTS

Jen Bowcock +61 (2) 6545 1122

[stock.horse@hunterlink.net.au](mailto:stock.horse@hunterlink.net.au)



## Society Loses Chief: Scouts Seek Successor

**Australia's largest equine breed society is losing its chief executive, prompting a search for a leader to direct the organisation's continued national and international growth, from their base in regional NSW.**

Steve Guihot announced his decision to leave the Australian Stock Horse Society at the organisation's last annual general meeting in Geelong, Victoria.

Society Chairman Mr Malcolm Field confirmed that Mr Guihot's statement ended speculation amongst the Society's almost 10,000 members who have seen him steer the organisation through significant change during more than two terms in the top spot.

Mr Field paid tribute to Guihot who first joined the Society in 1999 after a move from the Scone Shire Council. Mr Guihot renewed his initial three year contract for a second term, and subsequently agreed to an additional twelve month extension.

Guihot believes it's time for a fresh pair of hands on the reins.

Mr Field said, "Steve Guihot's achievements during his term were considerable, which is reflected in a 50% growth in membership since his arrival. I think he will best be remembered for his professionalisation of the Society across almost every front. Steve has worked very well with directors, members and staff and will be sorely missed. "

**Given the global growth in recreational horse riding, whoever fills the top job will need to be able to direct the Society's push into new international markets,** Mr Field said. Change management will be another area of expertise for Guihot's replacement, as the organisation moves from being purely a domestic to an international brand.

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## **Society Loses Chief: Scouts Seek Successor/2....**

13 January 2006

Mr Guihot has agreed to remain with the Society until a suitable successor is found. A national and international recruitment search has just begun.

Steve Guihot said for him it is simply time for a change and that he is looking forward to pursuing a personal business venture, which will enable him to spend more quality time with his family. Meanwhile Society history will record Mr Guihot's achievements at the helm to include:

- *Promotional/Profile building*
  - ASH participation in the 2000 Sydney Olympics Opening Ceremony
  - Formation of Strategic Alliances with RM Williams and other key stakeholders
  - Introduction of the online stud book and website redevelopment
  - Secured the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia as Patron to replace the late RM Williams.
- *Export*
  - Recognised the Society was ready to capitalise on global demand and masterminded the processes to assist Members to capture new market opportunities/widen their markets which would otherwise have been far too challenging for individual producers to undertake.
  - Secured funding for newly created export manager's position and export development activities, creating the assistance and channel for a whole of industry approach.
- *Organisational*
  - Taking the Society from being a breed register /society to a professional organisation which keeps pace with modern business environment.
  - Restructuring of company and branch network to deal with introduction of GST in 2000.
  - Oversaw the move to new modern headquarters in 2000.
  - The introduction of Coaching and Judging Accreditation.
  - Recognised the need to assist and support our volunteer network.
  - Currently overseeing the development and installation of a new Membership database and back office computer support system.

*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.*

**ENDS**

**CONTACTS:** Steve Guihot/Jen Bowcock +61 (2) 6545 1122 [stock.horse@hunterlink.net.au](mailto:stock.horse@hunterlink.net.au)

### **EDITOR'S NOTES:**

1. Established in 1971, the Australian Stock Horse Society is based in Scone, New South Wales. The most recent AGM was held on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2005 in Geelong, Victoria.
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](http://www.ashs.com.au)