

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Racing for Regional Development Project

18 January 2016

A wonderful story of economic development is building in Charlton. The central character here is the Charlton Harness Racing Club (a grass roots community sporting group) alongside both the Buloke Shire Council and Regional Development Victoria.

Charlton Harness Racing Club representatives are thrilled with the outcomes currently achieved by the *Racing for Regional Development* Project. Whilst the project certainly had its obstacles to negotiate along the way, most notably the floods of 2011, the project reached completion back in 2012. At that stage the club was trying to fill the three stables contained in the training complex that had been built.

Currently two of the three stables are occupied, complementing around half a dozen other trainers using the track as a training base from their own stables. One of the trainers using the stables as their home base, Bruce Elliott, originated from Horsham and has been training horses at the complex for the last twelve months.

The second of the trainers, John Holman, took a redundancy package and moved to Charlton to train horses. He chose Charlton because of the complete package for a horse trainer. He was able to find good quality and affordable housing in a town that has purpose built training facilities that are especially suited to harness racing trainers. This combined package is the probably the best available in Country Victoria, particularly when the town is one of the few true country centres that offer regular harness racing meetings as well as close proximity to other venues.



Visiting trainers from interstate have also utilised the currently vacant stable when travelling teams of horses into the state for carnivals or to target races in Victoria.

The Charlton Harness Racing Club foresees that in the future there may be opportunities to increase the number of stables and trainers at the venue. Proposed intensive chicken farming in the area for example could provide additional part time employment opportunities for trainers looking to supplement their racing income.

The recent track upgrade coupled with the new stables and interest in training and living in Charlton goes a long way to continuing the town's proud tradition in the sport. A truly great story of sporting and economic development is building.

**End release**

**For further information contact Travis Fitzgibbon on 1300 520 520**