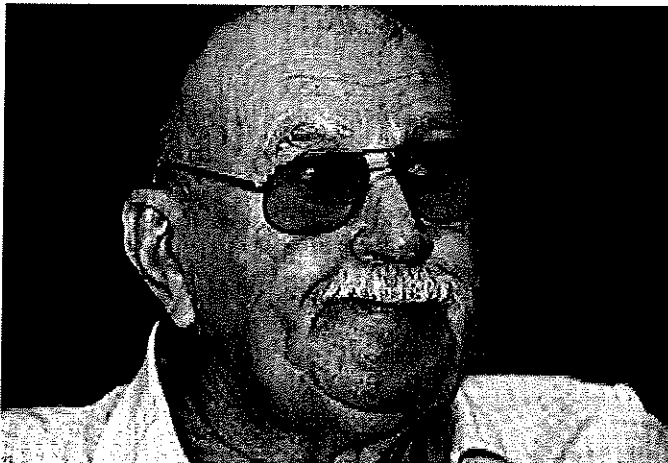


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News

Bill Ludwig faces probe over vote-rorting allegations

- by: Patrick Lion
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UNDER fire ... Labor Party powerbroker Bill Ludwig is facing allegations of vote-rorting.
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LABOR Party kingpin Bill Ludwig is facing an investigation over explosive vote-rorting allegations involving the state's peak horse racing body.

Mr Ludwig and fellow Queensland Racing Limited director and chairman Bob Bentley allegedly exercised proxy votes without the permission of two racing industry groups at a QRL meeting this month.

The vote approved a change to the QRL constitution and potentially allows directors to remain in their roles until 2018.

Retired Supreme Court Judge Bill Carter wrote to Treasurer Andrew Fraser, who is responsible for racing, demanding a Crime and Misconduct Commission probe.

Mr Carter raised doubts over the validity of the votes and what he believed to be "serious and disturbing" conflicts of interest.

"The subject matter of the relevant resolution ... was directly relevant to the future tenure and to the financial benefit of Messrs Ludwig, Bentley and the three other directors," Mr Carter wrote in the letter obtained by The Courier-Mail.

Both men have rejected the claims but the industry groups, Queensland Country Racing Committee and the Australian Trainers Association, will also write to the Treasurer.

QCRC solicitor Tim Ferrier last night demanded that Mr Fraser not approve the new constitution.

Mr Ferrier claimed committee members were not canvassed and a proxy was not appointed by them.

The ATA also met yesterday and signed a letter relating to alleged misuse of its vote.

ATA leading trainer Barry Baldwin said the group wanted explanations from the minister on the circumstances surrounding the vote.

Mr Fraser last night said he had not contacted the CMC and had only just read the August 19 letter.

"I am concerned about the nature of the allegations and have asked my department to investigate and advise me further," he said.

Mr Ludwig, who is the QCRC chair and Australian Workers Union federal president, declined to go into detail about what he told fellow QCRC members.

"Everything that was done was in absolute conformity with the constitutional process," he said.

Mr Bentley said he was handed the ATA vote from the president of the group, Ron Maund. "I did nothing else but hand the proxy in," he said.

The result was 14-1 in favour of the change, with 12 votes needed for approval and proxies requiring two signatures.

But Mr Carter's letter also included an allegation that a QRL official excluded Townsville Turf Club chairman Alan Parry after he travelled from north Queensland to Brisbane.

Opposition racing spokesman Mike Horan said he was surprised Mr Fraser had not contacted the CMC as he was legally obliged to do so.