

Executive Summary

HRNZ National Forum Meeting

Date: 27 February 2025 | **Format:** Zoom Meeting

Meeting Overview:

- Chaired by John Hartnell, attended by National Forum members, HRNZ Chair Grant Jarrold, and Vice Chair Hannah Doley.
 - Focused on strategic planning, financial reporting improvements, operational communication, and sector engagement.
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Key Discussion Points:

- HRNZ Board is refreshing the strategic plan by May 2025, prioritising financial sustainability, operational improvements, and leadership in animal welfare outcomes.
- Stakeholder engagement will be undertaken through surveys and face-to-face meetings.
- Legislative changes regarding Geo fencing are expected to provide benefits for the harness code.
- Discussion covered the potential future impact on harness racing following the exit of greyhound racing in New Zealand.
- National Forum raised concerns about the timeliness and detail of financial data (especially turnover figures) available to clubs.
- HRNZ Chair agreed to discuss with management improvements to the financial reporting timeline.
- Emphasis placed on stronger coordination between HRNZ Board, Executive, and the National and Regional Forums.
- The Forum called for a structured and consistent approach to stakeholder engagement and new initiative rollouts.
- Concerns raised about the lack of supporting business cases and communication behind the draft race calendar changes.
- Specific examples cited included:
 - Scheduling five meetings in six days in Canterbury during Cup Week.
 - Moving a meeting from Wyndham to Winton without consultation.
- Financial support for expanded racing initiatives (e.g., Taupo grass track meeting) was discussed, highlighting the need for appropriate funding.
- National Bureau communication issues were flagged, particularly around employment responsibilities between clubs and the Bureau.

Agreed Actions:

- HRNZ to improve financial reporting timelines and provide greater detail on race meeting performance.
 - Follow-up required with HRNZ management regarding National Bureau issues and race calendar changes.
 - National Forum meetings to align with HRNZ Board meetings to improve strategic input and responsiveness.
 - Planning to schedule an in-person National Forum meeting with the HRNZ Board for introductions and strategic feedback.
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Summary:

The Forum emphasised the urgent need for improved financial transparency, better stakeholder consultation, stronger communication practices, and tighter alignment across the HRNZ governance and operational structures to ensure effective strategic delivery.

Reference: [HRNZ Website](#)