

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

Project Stamina sets a clear path for the future of New Zealand racing infrastructure

New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing (NZTR), Harness Racing New Zealand (HRNZ) and TAB NZ have today, Tuesday 28 July, released Project Stamina, a long-term roadmap to create a modern, sustainable racing and training venue network that will support the future of New Zealand racing.

Project Stamina brings together an independently developed, evidence based, National Masterplan, prepared by consultancy RCP, with One Equine View – the shared position adopted by NZTR and HRNZ on how the recommendations should be implemented across both codes.

The project represents the first truly cross-code infrastructure strategy for New Zealand racing, providing a coordinated approach to future investment and infrastructure planning.

The Project Stamina National Masterplan was funded by TAB NZ on behalf of the two racing codes and follows an extensive independent review of New Zealand's racing and training venue network.

Over many years, New Zealand's racing footprint has evolved while participant numbers, horse populations and industry economics have changed. As a result, the industry now has more venues than can be sustainably supported, with capital and operating expenditure spread too thinly across the country.

Project Stamina is designed to better align racing and training infrastructure with where horses, participants and racing activity are concentrated today, while recognising the importance of racing quality and performance. This will allow investment to be focused on fewer, higher-quality facilities that will support the long-term future of the industry.

More than 50 workshops and meetings were held with clubs, participant groups and industry organisations throughout New Zealand as part of the independent review, with feedback helping shape the final recommendations.

The Masterplan also drew on more than a decade of previous industry reviews and strategic work, including the recommendations of the Messara Report, ensuring Project Stamina builds on existing knowledge while providing a clear, coordinated pathway for future investment and implementation.

NZTR Chair Russell Warwick said the release of Project Stamina marked a significant milestone for the industry.

"This is about ensuring New Zealand racing has the infrastructure it needs to thrive for decades to come. Project Stamina provides a clear, evidence-based roadmap that puts the long-term

interests of the industry first, while keeping the welfare of the horse at the centre of the network."

"Doing nothing is not an option. Our infrastructure must reflect today's racing landscape and be capable of supporting future growth. This plan gives us the opportunity to invest where it will deliver the greatest long-term benefit for participants, horses and the wider industry."

HRNZ Chair Grant Jarrold said the collaboration between the two codes was a defining feature of the project.

"NZTR and HRNZ have worked collaboratively together through this significant body of work with Project Stamina, with each code contributing their specific perspectives to the development of One Equine View. While each code has its own operational needs, we recognise that many venues and investment decisions are interconnected."

"This is not simply another review. It provides a unified direction that links strategy, investment and implementation, giving the industry greater certainty about the future."

The recommendations focus on creating a venue network that delivers reliable racing and training surfaces, stronger wagering performance, sustainable revenue and high-quality facilities for horses and participants.

As part of the next phase, NZTR and HRNZ will develop a clear and consistent minimum standards framework for community venues. This will help ensure that retained venues provide safe, fit-for-purpose facilities for horses, participants and racing while remaining financially sustainable.

NZTR and HRNZ also acknowledge that some of the recommendations in Project Stamina will have significant implications for clubs and communities.

NZTR and HRNZ said the code views had not been taken lightly and were informed by extensive industry engagement, independent analysis and a clear focus on the long-term sustainability of the sport.

The release of Project Stamina marks the beginning of the next phase of engagement, detailed assessment and implementation planning rather than the end of the conversation. The recommendations do not, by themselves, constitute final decisions to cease racing at a venue, close a facility or dispose of a property.

Meetings will now be held with clubs directly affected by proposed venue changes, providing an opportunity to discuss the recommendations, consider local circumstances and contribute feedback before moving to an implementation phase.

Implementation will occur over a number of years and will be supported by detailed business cases, investment planning and continued engagement with clubs, participants and stakeholders.

The two codes are encouraging all industry participants to read the full Project Stamina report before drawing conclusions. Supporting resources, including a video and frequently asked

questions, have also been made available to help everyone understand the recommendations and the process ahead.

Project Stamina provides a clear, long-term roadmap to ensure New Zealand racing has the infrastructure, investment focus and industry alignment needed to build a stronger, more financially sustainable future.

ENDS

Notes to Editor:

The One Equine View recommends retaining 39 venues and holding a further five pending business cases. Nineteen venues would leave the network entirely:

Seven current racing venues would no longer hold race meetings:

- Rotorua and Trentham (thoroughbred)
- Manawatū and Wyndham (harness)
- Gore, Hāwera and Ōamaru (dual-code)

Twelve are non-racing venues.

Three of the retained venues - Ōtaki, Tauherenikau and Wingatui - would stop hosting harness racing but continue to host thoroughbred meetings.