



10 September 2026

CIRCULAR 2606

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Proposed 2026 Rule and Constitution Amendments

The proposed amendments to the New Zealand Rules of Harness Racing and to the Constitution of Harness Racing New Zealand Incorporated, to be considered at the 2026 Annual General Meeting of Harness Racing New Zealand Incorporated on 10 October 2026 at Christchurch are outlined below.

The proposed amendments to the Rules will come into force as set out in the remits.

1. **Rule 105(1) - Definition of Authorised Person**
Proposed by the HRNZ Board
This remit comes into force on 1 November 2026

Remit: Amend the definition of Authorised Person in rule 105 to state:

AUTHORISED PERSON means a person in the Authorised Person Regulations.

Reason:

The current definition is outdated. This remit will require a new regulation to be drafted which will clearly state who may take samples from participants. The regulation can then be amended as required from time to time as circumstances require.

2. **Rule 105(1) - Definition of an official of HRNZ**
Proposed by the HRNZ Board
This remit comes into force on 1 November 2026

Remit: Amend the definition of Officials of HRNZ in rule 105(1) to state:

OFFICIALS OF HRNZ includes:

- (a) *the handicapper, chief executive of the Racing Integrity Board, the Racing Integrity Board's Manager: Integrity Assurance, and legal advisors employed by the Racing Integrity Board;*
- (b) *a starter and judge on any day they are exercising their functions at a race meeting;*
and
- (c) *any other person employed or engaged by the Racing Integrity Board on the day they may exercise a compliance or adjudicative function.*

Remit: That rule 116 Paid Officials be amended to state:

OFFICIALS OF HRNZ

- 116 (1) *No official of HRNZ shall bet or be interested in any wager or bet on any harness race in New Zealand.*
- (2) *No official of HRNZ referred to in paragraph (a) of the definition of officials of HRNZ shall be engaged or be interested either directly or indirectly in any business in connection with the ownership, sale, lease, or management of any horse registered to which these rules apply for racing purposes or breeding purposes.*
- (3) *An official of HRNZ referred to in paragraph (b) or (c) of the definition of officials of HRNZ shall not exercise any power or function under these rules if a horse in which they have a direct or indirect interest in is racing on the day they are acting as a starter, judge, or may exercise a compliance or adjudicative function.*

Reason:

Persons employed or contracted by the Racing Integrity Board engaged in compliance or adjudicative functions should be included as officials. Where an official is only exercising a compliance or adjudicative function on a particular day, they are a paid official on that day. The remit would permit the likes of a swabbing assistant or veterinarian to bet on a race provided they are not officiating on that day.

3. Rule 105(1) - Definition of Sample

Proposed by the HRNZ Board

This remit comes into force on 1 November 2026

Remit: Amend the definition of Sample in rule 105(1) to state:

SAMPLE means a sample or specimen of blood, urine, breath, hair, saliva, perspiration, tissue, or any other bodily fluid taken from a horse or participant.

Reason:

This remit removes the word “hide”, as samples of hide are not taken from horses.

4. Rule 213(1A) - Blood Bicarbonate testing

Proposed by the HRNZ Board

This remit comes into force on 1 November 2026

Remit: Amend rule 213(1A) to state:

- (1A) *Notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 213(1)(c) a Stipendiary Steward shall scratch or declare ineligible to start in any race any horse which has on analysis of a pre-race blood sample taken from it a blood total carbon dioxide (TCO₂) level greater than such level as may be set from time to time by the Board.*

Reason:

Rule 213(1A) provided for blood bicarbonate testing. This type of testing no longer occurs and has been deleted.

5. **Rule 214(1) – Control of Horses for Examination**
Proposed by the HRNZ Board
This remit comes into force on 1 November 2026

Remit: Amend Rule 214(1) to state:

- (1) *After withdrawals close for a race meeting a Stipendiary Steward has the power, before and during the race meeting in relation to any horse that has been entered for a race at the meeting to order:*
 - (a) *that any person take and maintain control of a horse at any place, for such period, and under such conditions as the Stipendiary Steward may direct; and*
 - (b) *that any such horse be examined, have a sample or samples taken from it, or both.*

Reason:

To remove the words “(including a sample of its urine and/or blood)” and to update the wording.

6. **Rule 214(3) and 1004M(5) - Analysis of Samples**
Proposed by the HRNZ Board on behalf of the RIB
This remit comes into force on 1 November 2026

Remit: Amend Rule 214(3) to state:

- (3) *Any sample taken under this rule shall be sent to a laboratory for analysis including any further or subsequent analysis as agreed or directed by either the Chief Executive, or the Chief Executive of the Racing Integrity Board. Any subsequent analysis may include quantitative analysis but no other analysis, including specific gravity analysis, if that analysis was not included in the initial analysis.*

Remit: Amend Rule 1004M(5) to state:

- (5) *Any sample taken under this rule shall be sent to a laboratory for analysis including any further or subsequent analysis as agreed or directed by either the Chief Executive, or the Chief Executive of the Racing Integrity Board. Any subsequent analysis may include quantitative analysis but no other analysis, including specific gravity analysis, if that analysis was not included in the initial analysis.*

Reason:

The proposed amendment enables further testing be decided by the Chief Executive of HRNZ or the Chief Executive of the Racing Integrity Board. In addition, quantitative analysis can be undertaken if not included in the initial analysis. This would generally arise for non-threshold substances where the level of the prohibited substance is sought.

7. **Rules 301A - Licensing Regulations**
Proposed by the HRNZ Board
This remit comes into force on 1 November 2026

Remit: Insert a new rule 301A that states:

- 301A *The Board may from time to time make regulations relating to:*
- (a) *The form of, consideration of, granting, or refusing to grant an application for a licence.*
 - (b) *The imposing, amending, or deleting any conditions or restrictions on a licence.*
 - (c) *The cancellation, withdrawal, or suspension of a licence.*
 - (d) *The obligations of a holder of a licence.*

Reason:

This remit will expressly provide for the Board to make regulations relating to licencing and provide scope for there to be more substance around licencing decisions.

8. **Rules 105(1), 302, 326 - Licensing Committee**
Proposed by the HRNZ Board
This remit comes into force on 1 November 2026

Remit: Insert in rule 105(1) a new definition of Licensing Committee that states:

LICENSING COMMITTEE *means a committee of three or more persons appointed by the chief executive from the persons nominated by the Board to the licensing panel.*

Remit Amend rule 302 by inserting before (a) the following:

- (aa) *is not considered fit, proper, and of suitable character;*

Remit Insert a new rule 326

DELEGATION

- (1) *The Board may in writing, either generally or specifically, delegate any of its functions and powers under this Part III of the rules to the licensing committee except the power to set fees.*
- (2) *When a delegation is made to the licensing committee it may perform or exercise the delegated functions or powers in the same manner and with the same effect as if they had been conferred directly, and not by delegation.*
- (3) *Sub-rule (2) is subject to any general or special directions given or conditions imposed by the Board.*
- (4) *A licencing committee purporting to act under a delegation is presumed, in the absence of proof to the contrary, to be acting in accordance with the terms of the delegation.*
- (5) *A delegation:*
 - (a) *may not include a power to further delegate any function or power;*
 - (b) *is revocable at will in writing;*
 - (c) *continues in force according to its terms until it is revoked, despite any change in the membership of the Board or of any committee; and*

- (d) *does not prevent the performance or exercise of any function or power by the Board.*

Remit In Part XIII of the rules replace the words “*exemptions committee*” with “*licensing committee*” wherever they appear.

Reason

To permit licencing decisions to be decided by a licensing committee.

Persons can be nominated to the licensing panel by the Board and the chief executive would appoint a committee of at least three persons.

The proposed amendments will expressly provide the Board can delegate its powers and functions to the licensing committee.

9. Rule 858(1)(o) – Signalling the Starter
Proposed by the HRNZ Board on behalf of the RIB
This remit comes into force on 1 November 2026

Remit: Rule 858(1) be amended by adding a new paragraph (o) as follows:

- (1) *A driver must not:*
(o) *Signal to the Starter unless there was interference prior to or at the start or the horse has broken equipment or an emergency has occurred.*

Reason

The Rule protects the integrity of the starting process by ensuring recalls occur only for legitimate reasons.

10. Rule 1004E – Disqualification from Race
Proposed by the HRNZ Board
This remit comes into force on 1 November 2026

Remit: Amend rules 1004E(3), (4) and (5) to state:

- (3) *An Adjudicative Committee must disqualify the horse, amend the placings and the stakes shall be paid in accordance with that decision if the owner and trainer does not request under the swabbing instructions the reserve sample (if available or not already sent for analysis) be analysed at an approved laboratory by 4.00 pm on the third working day after being advised that a prohibited substance was detected in a urine or blood sample.*
- (4) *Where the owner or trainer does request the reserve sample (if available) be analysed at an approved laboratory by 4.00 pm on the third working day after being advised of the analysis and the analysis of the reserve sample indicates that a prohibited substance may have been administered to, or ingested by, the horse, an Adjudicative Committee must disqualify the horse, amend the placings and the stakes shall be paid in accordance with that decision.*
- (5) *The owner or trainer of the horse subject to a positive result may notify in writing the chief executive of the Racing Integrity Board that they intend to challenge the analysis and the basis for that challenge. The notification must be within 10 working days of being advised of the results of the analysis, or the result of the reserve sample (if applicable). The Adjudicative Committee shall then determine whether the horse*

is to be disqualified after hearing from the parties. Disqualification and changes of placings under this rule, will take effect from the immediate Monday following the judicial decision or such other time as the Adjudicative Committee determines.

Reason

The proposed amendments to (3) and (4) will permit under proposed Swabbing Instructions a laboratory to send the B sample to another laboratory where the circumstances require its prompt analysis, such as involving detection of a prohibited substance that may quickly deteriorate in the sample. The amendment to (5) is to refer to the chief executive of the Racing Integrity Board not the general manager.

11. Rules 1719 and 1720 - Vaccinations and Contagious diseases

Proposed by the HRNZ Board on behalf of the RIB

This remit comes into force on 1 November 2026

Remit: Insert new rule 1719 and 1720 that state:

Horses that have had a vaccination

- 1719 (1) *In this rule a vaccine means any vaccination administered to a horse in any dose and includes equine influenza, Hendra virus, strangles or tetanus vaccines.*
- (2) *A trainer must not permit a horse that has been administered a vaccine to participate in any race, trial, or work-out during the 5 clear days following midnight on the day the vaccine was administered unless permitted to do so by a Stipendiary Steward.*
- (3) *A trainer must ensure a record of any administration of any vaccine is included in the trainer's record of treatment for the horse under clause 8.2.4 of the Horse Care Regulation.*
- (4) *A Stipendiary Steward may scratch from a race, or declare ineligible to start in a race, a horse that has or may have had administered to it any vaccine in the 5 clear days period in sub-rule (2).*

Contagious or infectious equine disease

- 1720 (1) *The Board may make regulations relating to the requirements of participants in relation to contagious or infectious equine disease.*
- (2) *A breach of the regulations that risks the spread of a contagious or infectious equine disease is declared to be a serious racing offence.*

Reason

Rule 1719 requires a horse not to race until 5 clear days after being administered a vaccine as the administration of a vaccine may affect the performance of a horse.

Rule 1720 relates to a proposal by the RIB in relation to contagious or infectious equine diseases. HRNZ's preference is that the detail be included as a regulation to enable prompt amendment if and when required. It is proposed that both equine codes have aligned procedures in place to deal with contagious and infectious equine diseases.

12. Third Schedule of Rules and Second Schedule of Constitution - Voting
Proposed by the HRNZ Board
This remit comes into force on 1 November 2026

Remit: Amend the definition of betting licence in the Second Schedule of the Constitution to state:

betting licence means a being licence issued to a club under s 68 of the Racing Industry Act 2020 as at 1 August in the relevant racing year and includes a betting licence issued for a dual code meeting.

Remit: Amend the Third Schedule of the rules to be identical to the Second Schedule of the Constitution

Reason

The voting provision be amended by calculating the number of votes each club has being determined by the number of betting licences issued to the club as at as at 1 August in the relevant racing year. The reason for this is the initial allocation of betting licence may change before 1 August or after 1 August.

The voting in the Third Schedule of the rules needs to be updated to mirror the voting in the Constitution.