



12 December 2025

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

### AMENDMENT TO HARNESS RACING NEW ZEALAND REGULATIONS CONDUCT OF MEETINGS, PROGRAMMING, HANDICAPPING AND RATINGS REGULATION

On 9 December 2025, the HRNZ Board considered and approved an amendment to clause 18.3 of the Conduct of Meetings, Programming, Handicapping and Ratings Regulation.

This amendment reinstates discretionary powers previously available to Handicappers under the former rating system. The change enables Handicappers to re-rate unplaced horses under defined conditions to maintain competitiveness within the ratings framework.

The reintroduction of this clause reflects the need for horses to remain competitive and active within the domestic racing population. Horses that become uncompetitive are at greater risk of being retired prematurely or sold offshore, reducing the depth of the New Zealand racing pool.

The amendment restores a practical and proven mechanism that allows Handicappers to proactively manage horse ratings and ensure fairer, more balanced fields. The change has been discussed with and endorsed by the NZ Trainers & Drivers' Association and HRNZ Handicappers, Andrew Morris and Kevin Smith. Any decision to re-rate a horse will be made after review and agreement between both Handicappers.

The amended clause 18.3 in the Conduct of Meetings, Programming, Handicapping and Ratings Regulation will now read as follows:

*18.3*

- (a) *Any horse returning to racing from a break of six months may be eligible for re-rating at the discretion of the Handicapper upon application by connections.*
- (b) *Handicappers may, at their discretion, re-rate unplaced horses (fifth to last, including Group and Listed races) by up to a maximum of three (3) points, where:*
- *the horse is rated from R50 to R70 and has had three (3) unplaced starts since its last win or re-rating; or*
  - *the horse is rated from R71 to R120 and has had two (2) unplaced starts since its last win or re-rating.*

These changes will take effect from 15 December 2025.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Steele", written in a cursive style.

**Brad Steele**  
Chief Executive