



12 December 2025

OFFICIAL NOTICE

AMENDMENT TO HARNESS RACING NEW ZEALAND REGULATIONS SAFETY NUMBER FOR APPROVED TRACKS REGULATION – TAUPO, HAWERA & OAMARU RACECOURSES

On 9 December 2025, the HRNZ Board considered and approved amendments to the Safety Number for Approved Tracks Regulation, effective from 15 December 2025, in relation to Taupo, Hawera and Oamaru Racecourses. The background and details follow.

1. Addition of Taupo Racecourse as an Approved Track

- Following a full track inspection and review, John Denton, assisted by representatives from HRNZ, Waikato Bay of Plenty Harness Racing and Taupo Racing Club proposed to enact the following race distances and field sizes for harness racing on Taupo Racecourse. This report has been endorsed by the RIB.
 - Track Start Points: 1750 metres for all mobile starts, 2600 metres for all standing starts.
 - 1750 metre mobile start Safety Limits: Front line 6, Second row 4, 10 starters overall.
 - 2600 metre standing start Safety Limits: Front line 6, Second row 4, 10 starters overall.
- Harness Racing will return to Taupo, with a view to creating more grass track opportunities for Northern and Central Districts horses.

2. Hawera Racecourse Safety Limit for 2000 Standing Start

- In a meeting on 25 November between representatives from HRNZ, RIB, Hawera Harness Racing Club, the NZ Trainers & Drivers Association, as well as endorsement from John Denton (HRNZ Track Manager) it was unanimously recommended that Hawera's 2100 metre standing starts should be reduced in distance to 2000 metres, effectively meaning that Hawera's 2100 metre standing start distance will be moved forward 100 metres to a 2000 metre starting point.
- This change addresses concerns raised from the horsemen and RIB following the 2025 meeting regarding cluttering at the 2100 metre start point. The 2000 metre start point allows horses to start within the passing lane, therefore providing additional space, and moving the start point away from the bend.
- The current 2100 metre starting limit of 14, with nine on the front line and five on the second line will be applied to the 2000m starting point.

3. Oamaru Front Line Limit for Mobile Starts

- At the request of Southern Harness, the mobile limits at Oamaru Racecourse (for both all-weather and grass) will be altered to eight on the front line, with the maximum remaining at 14 horses. The standard front line in mobile races at Oamaru (grass and all-weather) is currently nine.

- This change will bring Oamaru Racecourse in line with other Southern Harness venues. Oamaru has been an anomaly because when the venue has been used by Southern Harness clubs, special race conditions have been required to deal with the fact the Southern Harness mobile barrier can only cater for eight horses.

These changes will take effect from 15 December 2025.

The full Safety Number for Approved Tracks Regulation is available within the HRNZ Regulations on the website.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brad Steele', with a stylized, cursive script.

Brad Steele
Chief Executive