



UPPER SOUTH ISLAND REGIONAL FORUM
PO Box 31-209
Christchurch

Executive Summary

Upper South Island Regional Forum

Date: Tuesday, 23 September 2025 | **Time:** 7:00 PM | **Location:** Christchurch

Purpose of Meeting

The Forum was held to discuss key issues affecting regional clubs, raise concerns to HRNZ leadership, receive updates on financial and operational priorities, and contribute to national strategic planning processes.

Key Matters Discussed/Reported

- **Board Update – HRNZ Chair Grant Jarrold**
 - Summary of last 2 months board activities (refer to circulated Chairmans report 25/9/25)
 - Infrastructure grants process and conclusion (refer to circulated report 25/9/25)
 - Conference & AGM October 2025 agenda & speakers
 - Waikato BOP Club update
 - Venue rationalisation and government pressure to deliver best venue utilisation

- **Operations Update – HRNZ CEO Brad Steele**
 - World Drivers Championship – additional stakes funding provided to incentivise/reward those horses finishing 5th or worse to recognise their commitment to the series
 - Stakes moving to weekly payment
 - Cup week slot races now full
 - Warriors' joint promotion & summer vacation activation programme
 - HRNZ IT appointee under contract for 18 months, key upgrades & improvements
 - First handicapping report covering new system due 30 September
 - TAB Online Casino Licence – HRNZ submitted in support
 - Code funding, position unchanged

- **Racing & Wagering Update – HRNZ Matt Peden**
 - GBR will no longer be published due to commercial sensitivity (Entain)
 - Consolidated reporting to clubs due very soon
 - Jackpots & Exotics not delivering for Entain
 - August extra 15 races with turnover up 12% versus same time last year
 - Horse exports down
 - Programming times unlikely to change at this point
 - Bureau function lifting
 - SSS System pending, new saddle cloths on order

- Camera towers – any queries to Matt Peden
- **Matters raised** following the presentation:
 - Tote operators, costs rising coupled with a shortage of skilled operators, a need to a succession plan & training
 - Costs relating to Clerk of Course, Starters and Race Day Track staff still pending

General feedback

- Field size good, particularly in the South Island with grass track meetings gathering momentum
- TAB account retention how is this tracking (Matt P)

Concerns and Challenges

- Communication remains a hot topic, to be discussed at conference – video messaging may be the go-to option as we need to reach deeper into the industry
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Decisions and Outcomes

- Tote staff collective agreement discussion – Kaikoura and NZ Met – action 2026
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References

- [HRNZ Official Website](#)
- [Race Day Performance Updates](#)