

**Securing Harness Racing's Future:
Utilisation of Horses, Creating Opportunities & Dates**

Report 1
Reference Group

For Industry Consultation

Comments to utilisation@hrnz.co.nz by 5pm Friday 8 March

19 February 2024

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1 Context

Background

The release of the draft 2024/25 racing calendar has crystallised the urgent need for the harness sport to prepare for the expansion of racing and improve the utilisation of horses.

Once the guaranteed income from Entain's TAB's franchise to the racing codes finishes in four years we have to survive on what the TAB earns with a large part of our funding being what harness earns. If we are to grow and maintain our share of the TAB's distributions, we need profitable turnover.

The HRNZ Utilisation Reference Group's remit is accessing and encouraging the racing of the pool of underutilised horses to support the sustainability of the sport. This first report is primarily about the 'enablers' for growth.

The Reference Group identified the potential under-utilised horses as:

- Qualified but not raced, or those only tried once or twice (*Note: over 500 horses in last three years have qualified but got to the races.*)
- All horses that meet a behaviour trial qualification standard but don't meet the time standard.
- Horses that may be retired after the summer circuits for lack of racing opportunities.
- 2YOs & 3YOs that reach a mark after one or two wins and leave the NZ system.
- Lower rated horses that are exported whose owners would prefer to race here if they saw opportunities. [*See Annex A for some 2022 exports and what they have achieved in Australia. Why not here?*]
- Fillies and mares. [*Note only 46% of them get to the races compared to 56% C&Gs.*]

Immediate Work Areas

- A. New Handicapping and Programming Policy
- B. Lower Grade Conditioned Racing
- C. Two-year olds
- D. National Racing Bureau
- E. Qualifying Standard
- F. Claimers

Consultation

The HRNZ has endorsed this report for release to the sport for consultation.

2 Reference Group

The Reference Group is:

Name	Title	Region
Clark Barron	Public Trainer	Southern
Karen Blanchard	Racing Manager ATC	Auckland
David Branch	Chief Executive, WBOPH	Waikato
Jason Broad	General Manager, Southern Harness	Southern
Richard Bromley	Country Clubs Administrator	Canterbury
John Denton	Racing Manager NZMTC	Canterbury
Arna Donnelly*	Public Trainer	Waikato
Doug Gale	National Forum	Manawatu
Peter Larkin	President, Ashburton Trotting Club	n.a.
Bill McDonald	HRNZ Board	n.a.
John Mooney (Lead)	Industry Leader	n.a.
Andrew Morris	HRNZ Handicapper	n.a.
Scott Phelan*	Public Trainer	Auckland
Regan Todd	Public Trainer	Canterbury
Matthew White	Public Trainer	Auckland / Waikato

The Group is supported by Ollie Partridge, Data Analyst and Cameron Kirkwood, Industry Liaison, HRNZ.

Arna and Scott were unable to participate in the first meeting.

3 Objectives

HRNZ's Mission is to "*champion the sport, celebrate the participants and to have the horse at the heart of everything we do.*" Its Vision is "*Harness Racing is a thriving and entertaining national sport on track for a better tomorrow.*"

Our objectives are:

- I. *Using the horses we bred and own to put on races that:*
 - *Are enjoyable and sustain a viable pool of breeders, owners and licence holders;*
 - *Are attractive and profitable betting races with competitive and consistent racing*

- II. **Programming and conditioning races that present punters with an attractive wagering product.**
- III. **Maintaining high standards of animal welfare and integrity.**

Taking a medium-term perspective of the next three racing years 2024/25 to 2027/28 the project will offer the Board and the sport recommendations on:

- A. Increasing the utilisation of the horses we bred.
- B. How to support a sustainable new harness racing calendar, in particular:
 - a. the proposed significant set of new meetings (phased over a number of years as appropriate);
 - b. the re-structuring of Thursday and Friday night racing; and
 - c. piloting or trialling new meetings and races in the period April to July 2024
- C. Enhancing race programming and conditioning to present punters with competitive and consistent wagering options.

The project will also report key assumptions, risks (with mitigation strategies) and a small set of practical performance measures.

What does Success Look Like?

The success of the project will be measured through demonstrating:

- a. **Better use of the horses we bred and own to put on races that are enjoyable and sustain a viable set of breeders, owners, licence holders and clubs with attractive and profitable races.**
- b. **Significantly increased profitable turnover.**

4 Handicapping System

This proposed policy will seek to use the handicapping system and conditioned race programming, hand in glove.

The success of this system rise or fall on setting and enforcing programming policies.

The Reference Group reached the consensus that the current Rating Handicap System is not an appropriate framework for the best use of our horses or efficient programming as it has evolved from 2017. Reasons include:

1. There is no logical reason to link rating points to stakes.
2. The entry point into the rating system at MR50 is too high for maiden winners in most cases. *{Note: the median rating of all current horses racing is 47.}*
3. A horse should be able to find its competitive rating and return to that level.

4. The number of unplaced starts and hence costs required to return to a competitive rating too great and not conducive to encouraging retention.
5. There are too many horses bunched at the lower ratings that are often programmed in races without appropriate conditioning.
6. Horses going up in the ratings are meeting experienced horses coming down the rating when conditioning could be used to separate them.
7. The incentive to race most 2Y0s is lacking in the present handicapping system. This is the largest group of untapped potential in our horse population and needs to be better utilized.
8. We do not used conditioning effectively to race like with like

The Sports High-Level Objective

The Handicapping and programming Policy is the sport's main mechanism for owners, breeders' and licence-holders investment and sweat equity to achieve the higher-level objectives is Section 2 above.

Objective of the Handicapping & Programming Policy

The objective of the Handicapping and Programming Policy is to enable the achievement of the above objectives by:

- providing a handicapping framework that puts horses in a competitive position as often as possible; and
- the use of evidence-based conditioned programming to seek to race together horses with like ability and experience.

The purpose of the current Guidelines is *"The Ratings Handicapping System is designed to treat all horses fairly & to provide a fluid racing environment so horses can compete against those of similar ability."*

Structure of the Handicap System

- A. One entry point for all horses.
- B. A qualified horse takes a maiden status, no rating, and take its place in a field based on conditions, e.g. age, sex or just a qualified non-winner.
- C. Ratings to range from R35 to R100.
- D. Horses enter system at R40 after their maiden win.
- E. ALL winning horses will receive a five-point penalty [Note: Ratings will no longer be linked to stakes. Trainers and owners can choose if they race for \$5,000 or \$12,000 when the points for a win are the same. Using stakes in the last five starts, wins in the prior six months, lifetime

wins when conditioning races will keep them out of where they should not be!]

- F. Horses placed second to fifth will have no rating change.
- G. Horses placed sixth to last will lose one rating point. *(Note: Rating points awarded in a race will broadly match points lost based on 10 horse average fields. Reference Group is not blind to the danger of the integrity issue around the 5th and 6th place boundary. A small stake increase for 5th may ameliorate horses being pulled up.)*
- H. Penalty free races are penalty free, i.e. no points to the winner and no points deducted.
- I. Concession for junior drives will be available.
- J. No rating concessions for fillies and mares. *(Note: They will be catered for by programming adequate races (set a national target percentage for F&M races, say 16%) and using provisions of conditioned racing and preferential draws.)*
- K. Other than as below for 2YOs all horses can be catered for by using conditioned racing, age group races and preferential draws.

Two-year olds

- L. All non-winning 2YOs will be rated as maidens (i.e. qualified) on 1 January of the 3YO year.
- M. Except as below in Paragraph N all wins in a 2YO race will be re-rated as penalty free as at 1 January of the 3YO year and will start the year as a maiden.
- N. (a) **An option for discussion: wins against older horses.** 2YO winners of one race against older horses will be re-rated at R40 on 1 January of their 3YO year, two or more races at R45. *[Note, we need to encourage owners of 2YOs to race them in appropriately conditioned races rather than putting them aside until their 3YO year or selling them.]*
- (b) **Option for discussion: feature race wins.** 2YO winners of a Group 1 or Group 2 race or a Listed race with a published stake of \$50,000 will retain those points as at 1 January. *[Note: This affects 17 races: Pacing: seven G1's, four G2's, two Listed & Trotting: Two G1's, one G2, one listed. The alternate is that this small group of 2Yos receive a concession, and if so at what level? A further option is to retain no points, all 2YOs rated R40 and leave it entirely to future race conditioning.]*

Conditioned Races and Policy

The rating system provides the framework while conditioning seeks to race 'like with like'.

Program and race policies will set the priorities to achieve HRNZ's higher level objectives.

Programming will take a national perspective as implemented locally. For example, series races for fillies and mares will be programmed for the season with feature races placed to encourage the retention of our trotting and pacing mares here. A current example of this is the Country Cups.

Significantly increase the use of conditioning in races using ratings and conditions such as the earnings in last four or five starts, a win in last four or five starts, wins in last six months or a year;

Within a program races should be tiered or graduated up based on the conditions.

Programs should be consistent from week to week to create opportunities for the same pool of horses to race each other.

Avoid programming extraneous ad hoc conditions that do harm to a particular set of horses, e.g. adding one-win horses to a R35 – R45 ace without any conditions such as non-winner last five starts does not seem sensible.

Where nominations are sufficient for two or three races of 13 or more horses, consideration will be given to splitting them into an extra race in fields on 10+ horses. *[Note: For wagering 10-11 starters is optimal with the margin gain dropping off at 12+ horses.]*

These are only examples of the policies the bureau would develop, monitor and adapt.

Implementation

After this period of consultation and consideration of submissions a new handicapping system could be introduced with effect from 1 August 2024, subject to IT change and extensive awareness activities with licence-holders.

Complementary Measures

Changes to the Handicapping and Programming Policy on their own are not sufficient. These measures in this paper are interlinked parts of the whole:

- A National Racing Bureau to manage consistency in programming, implementing races series and similar strategies to encourage particular sets of horses (e.g. the Silk Road for F&Ms), evidence driven race conditioning that promotes wagering turnover, margin and participation and club and regional cooperation.
- Removal of the time standard for qualification.
- Lower stakes with regular and consistent opportunities for particular sets of horses to race each other.

5 Lower Grade Races & Meetings

There is strong support for the introduction of:

- a. Conditioned lower grade races with stakes around \$5,000 that can be added to current meetings; and
- b. Additional race meetings with these races.

Additional racing can generate additional turnover and profit for the sport. We know we have the horses from the sources listed in Section 1.

When implementing both initiatives we need to be guided by four principles:

- The objectives in Section 3 above.
- Careful implementation to ensure sustainability.
- Do no harm. For example, racing in the 'Crusaders' catchment in the Upper South Island is strong and provides significant margin/profit for the whole country and the North Island in particular. New race dates in Canterbury, without new horses will harm existing profitable Sunday grass track meetings. Similarly, without new horses into the local pool any Addington Tuesday meeting will harm the profitable Sunday meetings in May to August.
- Be wary of unintended consequences. Research, consultation and using pilots and trials can minimise this risk.

Additional Races

The Reference Group recommends that HRNZ and clubs program conditioned lower stakes races starting as soon as possible.

Southern Harness and Waikato have indicated that they are prepared to 'pilot' additional races on their programs starting soon.

The conditioning possibilities are many and these are just examples:

- \$5,000 stake, R35 to R38: Won less than \$2,001 & a non-winner in last five starts and less than two wins in last six months; or
- \$5,000 stake R39 to R42: Won less than \$5,000 and a non-winner in last five starts and less than four wins in the last 12 months; or
- One win lifetime; or
- Whatever fits the current local population.

We will need to make short-term changes to the current Ratings Matrix with these races carrying 5 points until a new handicapping policy is adopted.

The Handicapping Regulations need amending to remove the \$7,000 minimum stake.

Additional Meetings

The clubs are currently working on the revised dates calendar for 2024/25, including possible new dates for the coming year.

New meetings can be scheduled, if:

- the horses are available;

- it is cost effective and staff are available for track operations and all ancillary services (RIB, TAB, ambulance etc);
- we look at scheduling trials at these meetings in between the tote races;
- the handicapping system discourages the rorting of the system that occurred when Tuesday racing was last in play; and
- club funding arrangements are secured.

It is highly unlikely these meetings will be in Auckland.

6 Two Years Olds

The Reference Group acknowledges Entain NZ's support for the 160 2YO races programmed this year and the \$750,000 for the owner and breeder \$12,000 bonus.

HRNZ has mandated that 2YOs can only race in 2YO races, subject to review.

This has caused some disquiet for a number of reasons:

- a. There is a very small pool of horses available which does not permit a practical handicapping system for 2YOs only.
- b. Only a very small group of 2YOs are capable of performing to a much higher standard. These horses can completely dominate the scheduled races providing a massive disincentive to owners, who have average horses to keep them in training.
- c. As all the races are mobile, a programmer has only a very limited means of handicapping these elite horses in the lower-class fields.
- d. Previously, 2YOs could, and did, start in open handicap races - an option now denied to them. On the other hand, if they are allowed to remain competing in the lower class races they will dominate and owners of lesser performing horses will be forced off the tracks by lack of returns relative to the cost of training.
- e. But, some clubs, especially in the North Island, need 2YOs to fill fields later in the season.
- f. What happens to a good one.? He or she can progress to the eight group & feature races and return to these 2YO races. They can win only one Entain bonus. Entering and winning these races they then denies other 2Yos access to the \$12,000 win bonus.
- g. Could the Entain bonus be attached to some \$5,000 races?
- h. What happens to those that are beaten by a good one? Evidence clearly shows in the exports that owners sell MR50 2YOs. Understandably they take the money and we hope they reinvest.

The Reference Group will continue to work on this with urgency. Time is not our friend as the season marches on.

Options include:

- i. Given that the elite group is too small on its own for a substantial part of the season they could be released from the 2YO restriction and allowed access to the wider racing market with conditions; and/or
- ii. Attaching the Entain bonus to \$5,000 races; or
- iii. Holding the 2YOs to these races when scheduled but allowing them in conditioned races, say against maiden 3YOs, including using preferential barrier draws.

7 National Racing Bureau

There is a strong consensus within the Reference Group, and explicitly ATC, WBOP, NZMTC and Southern Harness, that HRNZ needs a national racing bureau.

Its functions, described in detail in Annex B, will include:

- a. Responsibility for programming of races for the season, in consultation with clubs;
- b. Publishing programs and dates for feature races and race series (e.g. Winter Rewards and new series) so that owners and trainers can better plan the race program for their horses.
- c. Extending the use of conditioned programming to achieve consistency of fields.
- d. Publishing detailed race programs at least four months in advance.
- e. Providing services relating to nominations, withdrawals, composition of fields, driver nominations, scratchings and any other administrative functions relating to the conduct of races.
- f. Monitoring the effectiveness of the Handicapping and Programming Policy against its objectives and recommending and making changes.

As an example of how the bureau will function:

- a. All nominations for racing through to the following Monday will be made online only by noon Monday.
- b. Trainers will rank their race preference online. Nominations will remain "blind" until fields are declared Monday afternoon for all meetings up to and including Friday.
- c. The nominations for meetings in the weekend and the following Monday meeting will be declared Monday with withdrawals required by noon Tuesday.

Programs will note if fields are to be selected from the bottom, or top down or if open (i.e. the Bureau selects the field).

Owner/trainer preferences will be respected via the online system.

The bureaus in Victoria and WA operate with two people. Victoria ran 444 meetings and 4,200 races last year, almost double New Zealand.

The Bureau will work closely with clubs. There would be very limited human interface with trainers during field selection.

Implementation

Target date 1 August 2024 recognising the significant IT work required and awareness training with clubs, licence holders & owners.

8 Behaviour-based Qualifying Standard

No qualifying time – performance base only

There is no longer a justification for having a time standard for qualifying. None. The time standard was removed from the definition of a standardbred about five years ago.

There are a significant number of horses that maintain their gait in a qualifying trial and for a myriad of reasons, some unrelated to them, they do not go under the qualifying time. So What? They end up coming back to the trials in a fortnight, additional cost to the owner!

We forget the advice of the great Italian thoroughbred breeder and trainer Federico Tesio that *“The thoroughbred exists because its selection has depended, not on experts, technicians or zoologists, but on a piece of wood: the winning post of the Epsom Derby.”*

Horses don't race time!

If a horse can maintain its gait from a mobile or stand, in a field, it should receive a qualifying certificate.

We need owners who are willing to race their horses in like company racing to the winning post.

The Victorian Rule for qualifying is as below. We recommend similar for here to be implemented as soon as practicable after this period of consultation.

Harness Victoria Rule 11

“11.1 – To be eligible for a mobile start race a horse must qualify in a mobile start Qualifying Trial and/or to be eligible for a standing start race a horse must qualify in a standing start Qualifying Trial.

11.2 – To qualify to race, a horse must, to the satisfaction of the Stewards:

11.2.1 – In a mobile start – score up without interference to other horses and be in its correct barrier position and be within one metre of the mobile barrier gate from the candy pole to the starting point, then complete the trial in a competitive manner without losing gait or rhythm.

11.2.2 – In a standing start – not delay the start through intractability and leave the barrier at the correct gait then complete the trial in a competitive manner without losing gait or rhythm.

11.2.3 – For such qualifications to be valid, a minimum of four horses must contest a mobile start trial and a minimum of three horses shall contest a standing start trial, unless otherwise determined and approved by Stewards.

11.3 – To change the gait of a horse, the owner or trainer must lodge a written request with HRV. The horse must re-qualify and a further change of gait cannot be approved until the expiration of three months from the date of the previous request.

11.4 – A horse must be qualified to race prior to acceptance time for a given meeting.

11.5 – A horse that qualifies without having had a valid Stable Return lodged may have that qualification rescinded.”

Qualifying trials could / should be run in association with Tuesday lower grade meetings, as at Menangle, for reasons of efficiency and value for money, i.e. a stakes race, 15 minutes later a qualifying trial, a stakes race and push repeat.

9 Claimers

The Group believe any horse in any race should be able to be notified by an owner as available to be claimed at a nominated price once entered in a race.

Recognising the issues from earlier times further work is required to implement claiming efficiently and maintaining integrity.

10 Annex A - Quick Analysis of Some 2022 Exports (23 January 2024)

10 **lowest** MR horses (never had a win) and 10 **lowest** rated R horses.

New Zealand Careers compared to Australian career (which includes NZ)

Horse	Sex	Age	New Zealand				Export Date	Owned in	Australia			
			Rating	Starts pace	Wins pace	\$			Career	Starts	Wins	Places
Major Grace	M	3	MR40	25	0	\$12,122	16/12/2022	Overseas	\$100,838	41	9	7
Splash Of Crimson	M	3	MR40	19	0	\$9,539	07/07/2022	Mid Canterbury	\$65,462	45	8	12
Boo	G	4	MR41	12	0	\$3,598	08/06/2022	Southland	\$51,303	58	6	16
Frankie J Holden	G	3	MR41	10	0	\$3,065	09/12/2022	Overseas	\$26,069	33	4	4
My Little Big Man	G	4	MR41	12	0	\$7,461	21/12/2022	South Auckland	\$43,214	25	6	4
Lil Ripper	M	4	MR42	16	0	\$6,738	27/07/2022	South Auckland	\$50,569	44	5	13
Lookout	M	4	MR42	13	0	\$5,018	16/03/2022	Southland	\$22,994	33	3	7
Apache Warrior	G	3	MR43	9	0	\$2,286	07/07/2022	Mid Canterbury	\$9,375	18	1	1
Blue On Black	M	4	MR43	8	0	\$2,299	07/07/2022	Canterbury	\$8,355	11	1	1
Cut Glass	G	3	MR43	9	0	\$3,850	20/05/2022	Canterbury	\$48,554	42	5	8
				133	0	\$55,976			\$426,733	350	48	
Frosty Reception	M	6	R35	60	3	\$11,255	15/06/2022	Canterbury	\$42,730	69	6	8
Six Times A Lady	M	4	R35	25	1	\$12,556	27/06/2022	Canterbury	\$30,429	67	3	5
Miss Hathaway	M	4	R36	24	1	\$21,552	30/03/2022	South Auckland	\$21,523	24	1	5
Maxwell Robyn	G	4	R37	17	1	\$10,580	15/11/2022	Otago	\$13,826	22	1	3
Paytons Rock	G	3	R37	17	1	\$11,475	06/09/2022	Nelson	\$57,655	48	6	17
Bonnie Prince Louis	G	4	R38	22	1	\$10,784	07/03/2022	Southland	\$123,091	59	12	12
Melody's Mischieff	M	6	R38	36	2	\$25,545	05/05/2022	Manawatu	\$34,417	59	2	15
Mary Austin	M	3	R39	17	1	\$16,069	13/07/2022	Canterbury	\$29,044	41	2	10
So Art I	M	4	R39	19	1	\$11,212	09/06/2022	Southland	\$48,770	42	7	4
Tiger Lou	M	5	R39	27	1	\$13,675	19/04/2022	South Canterbury	\$37,081	47	4	8
				264	13	\$144,703			\$438,566	478	44	

And for curiosity, the middle of the pack:

Horse	Sex	Age	New Zealand				Export Date	Owned in	Australia			
			Rating	Starts pace	Wins pace	\$			Career	Starts	Wins	Places
Tiffs Little Sister	M	2	MR49	4	0	\$6,488	17/06/2022	Overseas	\$26,268	13	4	3
Bold Medley	G	2	MR50	1	0	\$1,860	07/10/2022	Canterbury	\$44,935	19	5	6
Bolramski	G	2	MR50	2	0	\$2,115	09/09/2022	Mid Canterbury	\$26,625	4	1	1
Brickie's Dream	G	3	MR50	2	0	\$1,805	18/11/2022	North Canterbury	\$49,038	18	7	6
Cyclone Milly	M	2	MR50	1	0	\$1,140	20/12/2022	Auckland	\$21,395	17	2	7
Maddi's Tiger	H	2	MR50	1	0	\$750	20/07/2022	South Canterbury	\$25,351	16	3	4
Rosberg	G	3	MR50	1	0	\$1,938	07/07/2022	Canterbury	\$42,212	30	5	8
Saint Louie	G	2	MR50	1	0	\$2,325	13/12/2022	Canterbury	\$35,147	9	5	2
Sweet Mila Jean	M	3	MR50	2	0	\$2,810	14/09/2022	North Canterbury	\$7,530	4	1	2
The Black Flash	H	2	MR50	2	0	\$11,925	12/07/2022	Southland	\$128,278	18	8	4
				17	0	\$33,156			\$406,779	148	41	
Hugo Maguire	H	2	R53	5	2	\$16,288	30/08/2022	Overseas	\$41,018	17	6	3
Idealingold	G	4	R53	13	2	\$13,931	07/07/2022	Canterbury	\$42,493	28	6	7
Immer Besser	M	5	R53	32	4	\$36,451	12/04/2022	Canterbury	\$51,085	43	6	12
Port Au Prince	G	4	R53	36	3	\$32,079	11/08/2022	Southland	\$209,263	73	13	17
Alcippe's Delight	M	4	R54	10	2	\$17,672	20/04/2022	South Canterbury	\$80,244	39	7	11
Franco Macho	G	4	R54	8	3	\$18,860	23/03/2022	Canterbury	\$34,399	32	5	5
Mac's Tomado	G	3	R54	54	5	\$14,046	19/04/2022	Tauranga/Whakatane	\$79,320	86	9	13
Mr Ibiza	H	3	R54	19	3	\$55,015	11/04/2022	Auckland	\$91,179	38	6	13
Riveered	G	4	R54	31	4	\$52,404	29/11/2022	Canterbury	\$80,436	50	7	6
Sweet Annie	M	5	R54	27	3	\$24,174	22/02/2022	Wanganui	\$65,370	59	7	13
				235	31	\$280,920			\$774,807	465	72	

Annex B: Harness Racing Bureau

Race Programming

- a. In conjunction with Racing Manager, develop race programming strategy.
- b. Lead the development of the annual schedule of dates with the TAB NZ and clubs.
- c. Oversee delivery of race programmes for all clubs in a timely manner
- d. Allocate funding levels to each meeting and race in accordance with HRNZ Board policies and taking into account any race club contributions
- e. Responsible for loading harness race programmes into racing system four months in advance and ensuring the details of the race programmes information for all meetings and races are complete and accurate and in alignment with the Business Plan
- f. Programme and load official trial conditions into InfoHorse.
- g. Liaise with club management in relation to changes to race programmes
- h. Load amendments to race programmes into Infohorse as required
- i. Liaise with club secretaries as necessary when changes to published race meeting programmes occur and to apply their requests with race names when such changes arise
- j. Assist the Racing Manager with the preparation of annual race group and feature fixtures and race series for particular sets of horses.

Handicapping and Racing

- k. Select starters for race and official trial fields for harness racing meetings conducted in accordance with the Rules of Harness Racing and Handicapping and Programming Policy considering at all times the objectives of that Policy
- l. Lead the selection of horses for feature races such, providing objective selection of the best performed horses for each feature race.
- m. Respond directly to queries from customers regarding race programmes, racing policies and related rules
- n. Correctly classify horses which have been imported for racing in accordance with the new business model rules.

Policy Development

- o. Conduct regular reviews of policy for harness racing handicapping and programming to ensure it remains fit for purpose.
- p. Keep abreast of developments throughout Australia with a view to improving NZ race programming.

Racing Administration & Operations

- q. Provide assistance and input to enable the harness code racing operations throughout the country to operate efficiently and effectively for the benefit of all stakeholders.
- r. Understand the operations of InfoHorse racing system, as related to racing administration functionality and assist with co-ordination and usage by stakeholders including awareness and communications with licence-holders and other stakeholders.