

24 September 2015

NZTR IMPLEMENTS COMPREHENSIVE REVIEWS FOLLOWING HAWKES BAY ABANDONMENT

NZTR has commenced three separate policy reviews in a comprehensive evaluation of the abandonment of the Hawkes Bay (HBRI) race meeting on 19 September 2015, namely:

1. An independent technical report by Turftech, experts in sports turf maintenance, to assess the track at Hastings. A report will be provided to NZTR on Monday, 28 September 2015.
2. An independent report of all of the circumstances which led to the abandonment of Saturday's meeting and of the standard NZTR/RIU Procedures for meeting abandonments and track performance issues.

The objectives of this review are to ensure thoroughbred racing has practical and fully compliant procedures and processes for considering whether a race or trial meeting should be abandoned, and officers and managers of racing clubs, the RIU and NZTR meet the requirements of the Racing Act, the Rules of Racing and the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

The review will be undertaken by Mark Freeman and Rachael Brown (Partners at Bell Gully) and will consider, in relation to the abandonment, the processes followed on race day as well as track maintenance and irrigation in the period leading up to the meeting. Interviews will be conducted with representatives of the RIU, HBRI, NZTR, the Trainers' Association and the Jockeys' Association among other parties. The report on the abandonment of the race meeting on 19 September will be provided by 2 October 2015 while the report on any recommend changes or amendments to the existing NZTR/RIU race day procedures will be provided by mid-November 2015.

3. A review the NZTR Venue Guidelines for track preparation. This review will be completed by mid-December 2015 and will be subject to a broad consultation process.

"The race day abandonment of the HBRI Windsor Park Plate race meeting was a devastating blow to all involved and affected the preparations of a number of New Zealand's best horses. Hopefully lessons can be learnt that will prevent a similar occurrence happening in the future", NZTR Chief Executive, Greg Purcell, said.

It should be noted that following the abandonment, NZTR and the HBRI management undertook a wide-ranging evaluation of all approaches to mitigate the impact of the abandonment and ensure the best possible outcome for all participants, in the difficult circumstances.

Approaches that were considered included, but were not limited to, the postponement of the balance of races from the meeting at Hawkes Bay or an alternative racecourse, pushing back the Windsor Park Plate and Livamol Classic by a fortnight and, staging the Windsor Park Plate as an additional race on Livamol Classic day on the same programme.

After evaluation, which included a broad consultation with trainers and jockeys, NZTR and HBRI announced that the:

- Livamol Classic race meeting would proceed as scheduled on Saturday, 3 October 2015 with the \$70,000 Group 3 Gold Trail Stakes added as an eleventh race to the programme; and
- \$200,000 Group 1 Windsor Park Plate over 1600 metres will be run at Trentham on Saturday 24 October 2015 and replace the Group 3 Thompson Handicap over the same distance which was due to be held on that day. New nominations will be called for the races and will close at noon on 20 October 2015.

NZTR has made the standard compensation policy of \$200 in respect of every horse due to start in a race subsequently abandoned at the Hawke's Bay meeting and has refunded all nomination and acceptance fees.