



1 April 2020

Dear Racing Participants and Owners

On behalf of NZTR, we want to provide you an update on the work we are doing in these unprecedented times.

The New Zealand racing industry, like many businesses, faces critical challenges as a consequence of COVID-19.

The NZTR Board has met regularly over the past two weeks discussing the lockdown, the economic and social impacts, what cuts we can make, and how do we return to racing. There has been significant work undertaken by an industry working group around what format a return to racing might take.

Following an NZTR Board meeting last night and based on the assumption of a four-week lockdown, we are targeting a return to racing on 1 July at a reduced network of venues. We will need to be flexible as each region comes out of lockdown and with the possibility that alert levels might fluctuate.

An indicative four-month calendar has been developed and the key components are as follows:

- If training is able to resume in May, we anticipate trialling in late June with race dates from 1 July
- Building from a single meeting per week in each region in July
- A focus on racing near the horse population in early months and building to wider venue use by late Spring
- Incentives being explored to get horses to the races rather than multiple trials
- The removal of nomination and acceptance fees during the initial period
- A programme that needs to be flexible, with races over shorter distances initially
- No reduction to the minimum stake but a flatter stake model across the board initially to ensure wider distribution of funds to owners
- A return to jumps racing is likely for Northern region but unlikely for South due to likely travel restrictions
- The scheduling of Group and Listed races and reviewing the pattern has been discussed and the recognition that travel restrictions will require a new way of thinking
- Data is important and a team from NZTR's National Racing Bureau will be making contact with trainers over the coming weeks. Information on the number of horses potentially able to enter work will play a part in forming the programming of races when we resume.

The full impact on stake allocations will be known once we have the full picture from RITA and the Government.

In addition to the measures and activity referred to above NZTR:

- Has reduced payroll and contractor costs by 20% since the shutdown of racing including the salaries of Board members by 100% and the CEO by 25%
- Commenced the development of enhancing the protocols and actions required when a return to racing and training is possible under the Government Alert level system.
- Worked with RITA and the Government in providing data and information on how NZTR wants racing to resume with an appropriate funding model.
- Conducted phone and video conferences with stakeholders and club representatives to provide information and responding to queries in these uncertain times

NZTR's priority is to recommence racing as soon as possible to maintain employment within our sport and to distribute much needed funds for our participants. We are also very aware that you are all working hard to maintain equine welfare at the highest level.

We recognise that people may be under considerable stress as they consider the future of their business and urge you to make use of the government financial assistance packages. The link to the information required can be found [here](#). It is also important to look after your own wellbeing, if you feel you are not coping you can call or text 1737 free anytime, 24/7 to speak to a trained counsellor.

Please follow the protocols put in place by the Government under Alert level 4 over the coming weeks. Stay at home, obey social distancing and wash your hands! This is vitally important to allow us to get through the lockdown period and allow the country and our industry to get through this.

On behalf of NZTR, we sincerely hope that you all remain safe and healthy throughout these strange and uncertain times.

Yours in Racing,



Dr Alan Jackson  
Chairman



Bernard Saundry  
Chief Executive