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CHARTER

Harness National Forum

18 September 2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Forum is called the Harness National Forum (NF).
- 1.2 The NF is established under Clauses 12.1 to 12.10 of the Constitution of Harness Racing New Zealand (HRNZ) Constitution (“Constitution”).
- 1.3 For the avoidance of doubt the NF:¹
 - a. does not have separate corporate status;
 - b. is consultative forum, not a decision-making body of HRNZ, or another layer of governance; and
 - c. is independent of HRNZ in its composition and functioning.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The Harness National Forum is a cross-harness code body that through cross sport conversations and networking, and with the best collective interests of the New Zealand harness sport at heart, can:
 - (a) Contribute perspectives on national matters that will inform the Board’s:
 - (i) strategic thinking on plans and long-term strategies;
 - (ii) governance-level dialogue and decision-making about matters important to the future of the sport of harness racing;
 - (b) Contribute meaningful input to the selection of directors by providing feedback on the required competencies and skills; and
 - (c) Nominate three members of the Directors’ Nomination Panel who do not have to be members of the National Forum.

3. Composition & Chairperson

- 3.1. The NF is comprised of:
 - 3.1.1 Three members nominated by the North Island Regional Forum.

¹ Constitution Clause 12.7

- 3.1.2 Three members nominated by the Upper South Island Regional Forum.
- 3.1.3 Two members nominated by the Southern Regional Forum.
- 3.1.4 One member, and an alternate, nominated by the small racing clubs (as defined in the Racing Industry Act 2020) and if more than one is nominated as a member or alternate by and election conducted by the Chief Executive.
- 3.1.5 One member nominated by the N.Z. Standardbred Breeders' Association Incorporated.
- 3.1.6 One member nominated by the NZ Trotting Owners Association Incorporated.
- 3.1.7 One member nominated by the New Zealand Harness Racing Trainers and Drivers Association Incorporated.
- 3.1.8 A member co-opted by the NF, limited to two at any one time, for a specific purpose or project and for a fixed term not greater than two years.
- 3.2 The appointing bodies named in clause 3.1 (other than small racing clubs under clause 3.1.4) shall have sole discretion in determining the method for selecting or removing their nominee to the National Forum, including the appointment of an alternate.²
- 3.3 The members of the NF:³
 - 3.3.1 Shall elect a member as Chairperson at their first meeting after the HRNZ annual general meeting to hold office until the end of the next annual general meeting.
 - 3.3.2 May remove the Chairperson by majority vote two weeks after notice in writing and signed by four members has been received by the secretary.
- 3.4 A member of the HRNZ Board cannot be a member of the NF.

4. Term

- 4.1 A member of the NF is appointed for the period and subject to the terms and conditions specified by the appointing organisation.
- 4.2 A member of the NF may hold office for up to nine years cumulatively.

² Constitution Clause 12.2

³ Constitution Clause 12.4

5. Secretary, Costs, Meetings and Process

- 5.1 The NF shall seek to reach decisions by consensus. If a consensus cannot be reached each member present shall have one vote with a majority required. The Chairperson shall have a casting vote.
- 5.2 The NF shall appoint a secretary who will be responsible to the Chairperson of the NF for the efficient administration and communications of the NF among its members, with HRNZ and with third parties.
- 5.3 Before 1 May in each year the NF will prepare a draft budget to be agreed with HRNZ.
- 5.4 HRNZ will establish an annual budget for the NF's operating costs, including the Chairperson's allowance.⁴
- 5.5 The NF will reimburse its members for their reasonable costs of their participation in the NF to the extent provided for by the annual budget.⁵
- 5.6 The NF will meet:
 - a. a minimum of four times per calendar year;
 - b. at such other times as the Chairperson requests; or
 - c. at the request of the Chief Executive of the HRNZ in consultation with the Chairperson; or
 - d. at the request in writing of the majority of the representatives appointed under clause 3.1.
- 5.7 A quorum for a meeting shall be a majority of the Clause 3.1 representatives.
- 5.8 The NF may meet in person or via electronic media or a mix of both.
- 5.9 At least 48 hours' notice shall be given of a meeting of the NF a requirement that may be waived if a majority of clause 3.1 representatives agree in advance.
- 5.10 The NF must cause minutes of all meetings to be made and retained and circulated to members, the regional forums, and the HRNZ Board.
- 5.11 The Chairperson may invite any member of HRNZ board, management or staff or industry participant or a subject matter expert/s to attend meetings as observers to contribute and support the effective conduct of the NF.

⁴ Constitution Clause 12.8(a)

⁵ Constitution Clause 12.8 and 12.6(c)

6 Communication & Consultation

- 6.1 The Chairperson is the spokesperson for the NF and will seek to ensure that communications among the NF, the Regional Forums and the HRNZ Board are efficient and effective at the national level.⁶
- 6.2 The Chairperson will be responsible for organising meetings with the HRNZ Board as and when required. The NF may be represented by the Chairperson and such other grouping of members as is determined by the NF.
- 6.3 The Chairperson shall be responsible for ensuring that the regional forums are given the opportunity to contribute their inputs to:
 - 6.3.1 issues of national significance to the sport of harness racing;
 - 6.3.2 consultation requests from HRNZ on the initiation, development and implementation of strategies for the promotion, strategic development, and welfare of the sport of harness racing;⁷ and
 - 6.3.3 opportunities for the NF to make submissions on policies, laws, rules etc or advocate for the sport of harness racing.

7 Reporting

- 7.1 The NF Chairperson shall report on the work of the NF:
 - 7.1.1 to the HRNZ annual general meeting;
 - 7.1.2 quarterly to the Regional Forums and the HRNZ Board; and
 - 7.1.3 as required to the HRNZ Board, or management, and the Regional Forums on matters that require immediate attention.
- 7.2 When the NF is reporting to the HRNZ Board on a matter they have been consulted on it shall record whether small racing clubs agree or disagree with the NF submission. If small racing clubs disagree (in a material or significant way) with the National Forum view then the reasons why should be noted.

8 Amendments to the Charter

- 8.1 This Charter will be reviewed every two years. This Charter may be amended by the NF at any time in consultation with the Regional Forums and the HRNZ Board.
- 8.2 Amendments to this Charter require a two-thirds majority of those present at a NF meeting.

⁶ The Regional Forums are responsible for communication with clubs, kindred bodies and key stakeholders in their region. Nothing in this Charter precludes HRNZ engaging directly with its member clubs and kindred bodies.

⁷ Constitution Clause 12.9 (Consultation)