



NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2019

DUNSTAN TRAINER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Congratulations to the Dunstan Trainer of the Year award winners - the brilliant partnership of Murray Baker and Andrew Forsman, taking out the title for the third consecutive year. Murray was also recognised for his Contribution to Racing and his long and successful career. He was a very worthy recipient of this very prestigious title. His contribution to the Trainers' Association should also be noted as he has been a representative at the very top level.

STAFF & IMMIGRATION PROBLEMS

The phone at the Trainers' Association is running hot with trainers struggling to secure staff, and even more so if they are requiring visas from overseas. In particular, trackwork riders are in such short supply, trainers are sometimes rushing the process with less than ideal results.

Here is what the Trainers' Association can do to help:

- Place advertisements on your behalf on the racing social media platforms
- Include you on a list on the Trainers' Association website as someone looking for staff
- Provide a letter of support for visa applications – there is a request for this information on the website
- Provide templates on the website for employment compliance including Employment Agreements, Offers of Employment, Job Descriptions, Wage recording spreadsheet...
- The Trainers' Association is not able to provide visa advice – it is against the law.

What you as trainers need to do:

- Seek professional advice from a licensed immigration advisor if there appear to be any issues with a visa – please see the Trainers' Association website for contacts.
- If you do not have all the paperwork completed for an immigrant, and they start working without it, you can be blacklisted by Immigration NZ and receive a substantial fine.
- Check with references and previous employers as to suitability of the potential staff member – unfortunately the truth is not always told and it is understood that there have been cases when someone who has said they were riding 12 horses a day, when in fact they hadn't ever ridden trackwork before.
- Beware of those acting as agents from other countries – if you don't speak with the actual potential employee, it could turn out they don't even speak English. There have also been recent people "replicating" letters written without consent of the original letter-writer.
- Speak with the potential staff member to ensure they can speak English and follow instruction.

- Use templates available on the Trainers' Association website for Employment Agreements, Offers of Employment and Job Descriptions – take extra care for immigrants that you do not refer to groundwork and place the emphasis on riding – as this is the skill shortage.

LEGISLATIVE CHANGES AFFECTING TRAINERS

IMMIGRATION

Legislation has been passed on further changes for immigration. By 2021, all employers of immigrants will have to be accredited. The Trainers Association has been consulting with Leading Recruitment and Immigration who are putting together recommendations for trainers and are also going to assist with sourcing immigrants with the required skills. We will keep you updated with progress.

REFORM OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

There have also been major reforms in Vocational Education and these are being urgently considered by the industry. From April 2020, the Primary ITO will no longer exist and will be replaced by a Workforce Development Council for the Primary and Forestry Industries. A lot of detail is still to be confirmed, but both Wendy Cooper from NZ Trainers' Association and Chris Watson from NZTR are deeply involved in the process at a high level to ensure the best outcome for the industry.

HEALTHY WATERWAYS

The Government wants to improve the current management of freshwater.

It is proposing new requirements that would:

- strengthen Te Mana o Te Wai as the framework for freshwater management
- better provide for ecosystem health (water, fish and plant life)
- better protect wetlands and estuaries
- better manage stormwater and wastewater, and protect sources of drinking water
- control high-risk farming activities and limit agricultural intensification
- improve farm management practices.

The Trainers' Association will monitor the proposals and ensure members' views are sought and communicated.

WINNER DUNSTAN TRAINERS' MAIDEN NZ AWARD

In September the racemeeting chosen was held at Tauranga on the 11th. The first on the card was the Ultimate Mazda 1600m Maiden. It was won by the favourite, Unacceptable, trained by John Bell from Cambridge. As John is a member of the Trainers' Association, he too will receive a bag of Dunstan Speedfeed and a bag of Equifibre Lucerne-Pro.

THE OPTIMIST

With the demise of The Informant, there is no forum for industry opinions. Trainers are invited to read the blog entitled The Optimist. There are a number of viewpoints that are well worth reading and in particular the articles published 5th and 13th of September. To find the blog, please go to the website: <http://www.theoptimist.co.nz/>

The Executive of the Trainers' Association support the view that time is critical and the Minister needs to *“rev up the DIA and RITA and get the Messara Report actioned..”*

The Trainers' Association will ensure the voices of its members are heard and will continue to lobby for urgent action.