

7<sup>th</sup> February 2020

**TO: TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SELECT COMMITTEE**

**SUBMISSION FROM NEW ZEALAND TRAINERS' ASSOCIATION  
INCORPORATED  
ON THE  
RACING INDUSTRY BILL**

The Trainers' Association is appreciative of the opportunity to submit on the Racing Industry Bill and reiterates its appreciation to the Minister for Racing.

Minister Peters understands the urgency required for revitalisation of the industry to ensure a sustainable livelihood for stakeholders. This was evident with the commissioning of the Messara Review. The subsequent Messara Report recommendations were fully supported by the Trainers' Association.

As a recognised industry organisation, the Trainers' Association's membership is approximately 900 licensed horse trainers. Members are spread throughout the country, mainly in the rural areas and have branch operations based in the following regions: Northern (Waikato north), Central Districts, Taranaki, Canterbury, Southland and a sub-branch in Otago.

Trainers derive their livelihood from the industry and employ around some 3000 staff – many of whom would find it difficult to find employment in other industries. Trainers invest in land and specialised facilities for training horses. The decline in racing highlighted in the Messara report has had a material impact on trainers, many of whom now rely on selling horses to make training viable financially for them. They, like many other industry stakeholders, require urgent relief through substantial increases in stakes of the magnitude promised in the Messara report in order to be able to remain in this valuable and significant industry.

A revitalisation with substantial stake increases will stimulate ownership and stem the exodus from NZ of not only horses but also the many highly skilled horsemen and women. Whilst the first Bill did facilitate an expansion of revenue streams, these are yet to flow through to the industry in the form of increased stakes.

It is the view of the Trainers' Association Executive that the Racing Industry Bill drafted diverts from several of the key recommendations in the Messara Report. Therefore, essential amendments are required to ensure that revitalisation of the industry does occur, and that the legislation is future-proofed.

Accordingly, the Trainers' Association fully endorses the submission prepared on the Racing Industry Bill by our code-governing body, New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing. The required amendments outlined in the NZTR submission the Trainers' Association view as particularly crucial are:

- Clause 81 in regards Use and control of the industry's Intellectual Property. The codes and the TAB must all be able to use racing Intellectual Property to maximise revenue for the benefit of the industry. However, assigning ownership and control of racing IP to the TAB without any regulations does not achieve this.
- Clause 46: The governance of the TAB to be led by the industry rather than Government, to drive partnering with an overseas wagering operator. John Messara clearly outlined a proven system for Board appointments. He implemented this system in New South Wales and it has ensured the necessary industry knowledge and skill sets are in place at governance level.
- Broadening the functions and powers of the racing codes, particularly in the areas of setting race dates and race programs to work in conjunction with the TAB

The Trainers' Association Executive also question why the Bill contains so many instances where the Minister of Racing is required to be consulted and involved in decisions. This is another deviation from the Messara Report which recommended a framework that would "*enable industry leadership and management to pursue more effective decision-making*". The other area of significant concern is that whilst the current Minister for Racing is supportive of the industry, it is unlikely that future Ministers will have the same degree of enthusiasm, insight and rapport with the industry. As is the historical case, going back over 30 years.

The Trainers' Association is 100% behind a united industry-wide approach and will fully support the Racing Industry Bill if the required amendments in the New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing submission are adopted. However, many of our members have advised they are prepared to take whatever action is necessary to prevent the Bill proceeding in its current form.

Please be advised the NZ Trainers' Association wish to appear orally before the Select Committee and are likely to be represented by National President, Tony Pike; Canterbury branch President, Andrew Carston; Executive Officer, Wendy Cooper; and trainers Samantha Logan, Kieran Murdoch and Cody Cole.

Yours truly,



**EXECUTIVE OFFICER**