



HRNZ HEALTH AND ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Harness Racing New Zealand Inc (HRNZ) Health and Animal Welfare Policy is to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all registered harness racing horses is maintained, during the time they are registered (with the industry) and while they perform the following activities:

- ***Racing***
- ***Training***
- ***Other activities associated with Racing and Training***
- ***Breeding***

The maintenance of the health and animal welfare of these registered horses ensures the best interests of all industry participants are served, along with the protection of the industry's reputation.

The following policy relates to the Animal Welfare Act 1999 (AWA 1999), as amended in May 2015, which is administered by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). The AWA 1999 was amended by MPI to make improvements to the regulations under the AWA 1999 to attach specific offences and penalties to breaches of minimum animal welfare standards.

POLICY STATEMENT

HRNZ is committed to the health and welfare of horses involved in the wide range of harness racing related activities in New Zealand. HRNZ considers that the health and animal welfare standards in the industry should exceed those standards legally required in New Zealand, to ensure the ongoing sustainability and integrity of the New Zealand Harness Racing industry.

Prior to the retirement of horses from the harness industry, HRNZ encourages owners to consider all available retirement options, and if applicable to speak with their trainer about potential options, which will provide the retiring horse with continued good welfare for the rest of its natural life.

On retirement from the industry, the owner is responsible for notifying HRNZ of what has happened to the horse on leaving the industry. HRNZ requires a greater understanding of what happens to horses when they leave the industry, and is in the process of updating its procedures and New Zealand Rules of Harness Racing to improve the retirement process.

HRNZ will review established legal and scientific information on at least a six monthly basis, relevant to health and animal welfare to make or amend standards, regulations and rules as necessary. In addition, HRNZ will work with MPI and the Royal New Zealand Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), as applicable, to act on any reported breaches to the AWA 1999. HRNZ will also work with the Racing Integrity Unit (RIU) on animal health and welfare matters. The RIU is responsible for prosecuting breaches under the Rules of Racing.

THE AWA 1999

The purpose of the AWA 1999 is to ensure that owners of animals and persons in charge of animals attend properly to the welfare of those animals. While HRNZ considers all of the AWA 1999 to be important, there are three particularly relevant sections that HRNZ endorses as relevant to the Industry as follows:

Section 10 **Obligation in relation to physical, health and behavioural needs of animals**

The owner of an animal, and every person in charge of an animal, must ensure that the physical, health, and behavioural needs of the animal are met in a manner that is in accordance with both:

- Good practice
- Scientific knowledge

Section 11 **Obligation to alleviate pain or distress of ill or injured animals**

The owner of an animal that is ill or injured, and every person in charge of such an animal, must ensure that the animal receives treatment that alleviates any unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress being suffered by the animal.

Section 22 **Transport of animals**

Specifies certain minimum conditions that must be observed in relation to the transportation of animals, regarding the security and comfort of the accommodation and the supply of sufficient food and water.

The duty of care to uphold these standards lies with the owners, and those in charge, of the horse.

As part of HRNZ's duty, it will, as necessary, make standards, procedures or rules regarding health and animal welfare in a range of areas such as, but not limited to:

- Track safety
- Stable conditions
- Number of starters and line limits
- Injury during a race
- Use of the whip
- Safety and performance affecting equipment
- Minimum racing age and applicable distances
- Use of prohibited substances
- Nasal bleeds and other health related issues
- Euthanasia
- Veterinary inspections
- Vaccinations
- Bio security
- Disease management
- Racing of pregnant mares
- Retirement from racing

HRNZ also embraces and will communicate the Five Domains model for animal welfare which adheres to the current scientific knowledge of animal welfare, researched by David J. Mellor, Professor of Animal Welfare Science and foundation Director of the Massey University Animal Welfare Science and Bioethics Centre, New Zealand. It centres on the following five categories with practical provisions:

1. **Nutrition:** Provide ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour
2. **Environment:** Provide an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area
3. **Health:** To seek veterinary advice regarding prevention of infectious disease, rapid diagnosis of any injury and disease and professional treatment
4. **Behaviour:** Provide sufficient space, proper facilities, and the company of the animal's own kind
5. **Mental experiences:** Ensure conditions and treatment that avoid mental suffering

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Where possible, HRNZ will incorporate health and animal welfare matters into all training material presented to industry participants. Matters covered will include general horse welfare, ill health, emergency situations and injury prevention.

APPLICATION

The application of rules and regulations regarding animal welfare shall apply to all parties listed in the New Zealand Rules of Harness Racing October 2018. Any amendments or additions to this policy will be administered in accordance with these rules.

HRNZ will investigate allegations of health and animal welfare breaches to registered horses and will inform the applicable officers responsible under the AWA 1999. HRNZ may also instigate disciplinary action against persons found to be breaching conditions within the AWA 1999.

References

AWA 1999 (as amended in May 2015) – MPI
New Zealand Rules of Harness Racing October 2018 – HRNZ