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RACING INDUSTRY FEEDBACK SOUGHT FOR FUTURE VENUE PLAN

Racing industry leaders are seeking feedback from industry participants to help inform a future venue plan which will help generate maximum benefit for racing's stakeholders, participants and investors by delivering increased financial returns, strategic investment in fit-for-purpose infrastructure and a long-term sustainable future for the industry.

The CEOs of the New Zealand Racing Board (NZRB), New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing (NZTR), Harness Racing New Zealand (HRNZ) and Greyhound Racing New Zealand (GRNZ) are leading the development of a plan to help shape the future for New Zealand racing.

"New Zealand has a rich and successful racing history that is to be cherished - champion animals, quality bloodstock, top class trainers, drivers and jockeys, and an industry full of people passionately devoted to racing.

"Our racing industry is a part of local communities, providing jobs, facilities, and social events, the benefits of which extend beyond simply racing," says NZRB CEO, John Allen.

"However, the pace of change and the challenges affecting racing have been rapid over recent decades and show no signs of slowing down.

"Many racing venues have significant infrastructure challenges, including unreliable racing surfaces and deteriorating oncourse facilities for both racegoers and our customers and communities," says Mr Allen.

"We recognise that clubs/venues are the decision makers regarding their race tracks; however, the scale of investment required is not an issue that can be solved by the NZRB, one code, club or region," adds NZTR CEO, Bernard Saundry.

"The recent commitment from Racing Minister Winston Peters and the New Zealand Government for an all-weather track is fantastic news, and while the work we do on the Future Venue Plan will support this initiative, it will be a separate process undertaken in partnership with the Minister and will not be dependant on the outcome of this feedback process," says Mr Saundry.

"We need to invest in the right racing, trialling and training infrastructure that will drive greater efficiency and sustained growth over the next 5, 10, 15 plus years, while creating the safest possible environment for our animals and modern facilities for racing participants, customers and communities," says HRNZ CEO, Edward Rennell.

"The first step is to seek the views of clubs and Recognised Industry Organisations (RIOs) on our wider industry infrastructure issues, and encourage ideas on what we, as an industry, must do to address them for the future of racing for decades to come," says Mr Rennell.

Feedback is being sought through an online survey which includes a series of questions as well as providing an opportunity for participants to submit additional thoughts and ideas.

“We encourage clubs and RIOs to collaborate with key participants to provide a full range of views. We would also like to see thinking and discussions at a regional level,” adds incoming GRNZ CEO, Mauro Barsi, who takes up his new role on 5 March but has already been involved with this process through his role on the NZRB Board.

“Nothing has been predetermined, and industry input is critical to the plan’s development and success. We are providing an open forum where all issues can be raised, and where fresh ideas can be shared and considered - no idea is a bad idea,” says Mr Barsi.

The survey has been shared with industry participants this week and is open for contributions until 5pm on Friday, 13 April 2018. These will be used to inform the development of the draft future venue plan, which will be shared with industry for consultation in mid 2018.

General queries regarding the survey can be sent to fvp@nzrb.co.nz.

Ends.

For more information:

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