



NEW ZEALAND THOROUGHBRED RACING

RACING OPERATIONS REPORT
NO. 120 | TUESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2024
VIA TEAMS MEETING

New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing Inc
18 Dick Street, Cambridge 3434
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FY25 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

KPI	FY25	FY24 Budget		Commentary	Status v. budget
Funded prizemoney	\$28.46m	\$28.25m	\$28.73m	For FY25 to 24 November. Slightly below budget and slightly above last year. Net impact of races abandoned, rescheduled & with less than 10 runners.	
Average funded prizemoney	\$36,435	\$35,799	\$37,409	For FY25 to 24 November. Slightly above budget and up on last year.	
Race meetings	94	92	93	For FY25 to 24 November. 1 more than budget, 2 more than last year although includes meetings partially run.	
Races run	781	789	768	For FY25 to 24 November. 13 more races than budget, 8 less than last year.	
Total starts	8,104	8,461	8,471	For FY25 to 24 November. Behind budget and last year. Disrupted start to the season.	
Average field size	10.38	10.72	11.03	For FY25 to 24 November. Below budget and last year.	
Races with less than 8 starters	118	120	126	For FY25 to 24 November. Fewer than last year and budget.	
Individual starters	2,796	2,823	2,795	For FY25 to 24 November. Individual starters closer to last season and now matching budget.	
Domestic turnover (FOB and Tote)	\$149.8m	\$132.6m	\$151.9m	For FY25 to 24 November. Slightly behind budget (\$471m FY target v \$449m LY), well ahead of last year. May now include betcha turnover.	
Domestic market share (turnover)	57.32%	58.93%	57.94%	For FY25 to 24 November. Well below last season, slightly lower than budget. Budget is average 3 year rolling market share.	
Active customers	72,234	61,236	61,236	Individual NZ Thoroughbred Customers for the month of October. Well up on last season, does include betcha.	

FY25 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

KPI	FY25	FY24 Budget		Commentary	Status v. budget
Domestic Gross Betting Revenue (GBR)	\$23.92m	\$25.13m	\$28.52m	For FY25 to 24 November. Entain NZ Gross Betting Revenue on NZ thoroughbred racing. Well down on last year and budget due to poor fixed odds margin, may now include betcha turnover.	
Domestic market share (GBR)	55.19%	58.81%	60.39%	For FY25 to 24 November. Well down on last season and budget (3 year rolling average in Code Funding Agreement). Disruption to meetings and poor fixed odds margin on NZTR currently.	
TAB NZ distribution to NZTR (excl. Race Fields, Tabcorp & gaming)	\$27.23m	\$26.71m	\$27.39m	For FY25 to 5 November (profit & duty payments received for Aug to Oct). Slightly behind budget & ahead of last year due to duty and recalculation of profit.	
Export income (Race fields, now incl. Tabcorp)	\$4.28m	\$4.47m	\$4.44m	For FY25 to 20 November (Tabcorp & Corporate Bookmakers for Aug to Oct). Behind budget and last year.	
Club & industry funding	\$6.46m	\$6.00m	\$6.73m	For FY25 to 31 October. Lower than budget, higher than last year due to increase in funding.	
NZTR operational expense	\$3.29m	\$1.94m	\$3.63m	For FY25 to 31 October. Lower than budget due to timing, above last year due to increase in funding.	
Fillies & Mares as % of individual starters	49.93%	50.58%	50.00%	For FY25 to 24 November. Behind last season at the same time, slightly behind full season budget.	
Races at Strategic & Significant venues	68.63%	68.06%	70.68%	For FY25 to 24 November. Ahead of last season, slightly behind budget.	
Starts from strategic training tracks (17)	81.81%	81.07%	80.00%	For FY25 to 24 November. Ahead of last year, ahead of full season budget.	
Key				Favourable to budget or equal to or less than 1% unfavourable to budget	
				More than 1% unfavourable to budget but equal to or less than 5% unfavourable to budget	
				More than 5% unfavourable to budget	

A photograph of several horses and jockeys in a starting gate, ready for a race. The horses are in various colors, and the jockeys are wearing colorful silks. The background shows a green field and a fence.

KEY MATTERS AS AT 3 DECEMBER 2024

LICENSING & REGISTRATIONS

NZTR is currently reviewing our systems to enhance horse traceability and ensure compliance with rules and regulations. This review will involve system updates and a focus on potential rule improvements.

A recent audit recommendation emphasises the need for regular checks on race entries and the stud book to maintain accurate records. Our registration teams and the National Racing Bureau are currently facing unnecessary pressure due to incomplete stable returns, unrecorded imports, and unreported retirements.

To address these issues, the Racing Integrity Board has committed to enforcing compliance, ensuring that stable returns are complete and accurate records are maintained regarding the whereabouts of horses.

We are exploring several measures to improve compliance, and we urge all participants—including trainers, owners, and breeders—to ensure their records are up to date. Strengthening our rules and maintaining accurate records are essential for supporting the integrity and efficiency of our industry.

A photograph of a horse race starting gate. Several horses and jockeys are lined up in their stalls, ready to start a race. The jockeys are wearing colorful silks. The horses are dark-colored. The background shows a green field and a fence.

KEY MATTERS AS AT 3 DECEMBER 2024

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Elite Jockey Programme

- The roll out of the Elite Jockey Program will begin in Feb 2025. The Elite Jockey Program or (EJP) forms an integral part of NZTR's commitment to fostering emerging talent. The EJP is designed to attract and develop the next generation of jockeys by equipping them with the skills to perform as high-performance athletes. Through the EJP apprentices receive comprehensive support from elite sports coaches, oversight of progress and support to develop their race day skills. By maintaining a selective number of licensed apprentices, we ensure that each participant has ample opportunity for race day experience, successful apprenticeship completion, and retention in the senior riding ranks, supporting the long-term sustainability of New Zealand's racing industry.
- The EJP offers two intakes per racing calendar year (February and August), with limited places available per intake. Candidates will undergo a comprehensive screening process, and successful applicants will be licensed as apprentice jockeys with NZTR for a period of three years.
- Details of the program and eligibility criteria will be available on the NZTR website in the coming weeks. Any questions about the program please contact Amy Johnson on 027-5615787 or email amy.johnson@nztr.co.nz

Jumpouts

- Use of Jumpouts to count towards required trial rides for probationers- Jumpout conditions have been updated [here](#).

A photograph of several horses and jockeys lined up at the starting line of a race track, ready to start a race. The horses are in various colors, and the jockeys are wearing colorful silks. The background shows the track and some structures.

KEY MATTERS AS AT 3 DECEMBER 2024

TRACKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Awapuni

- The sand slits are now over 50% complete with focus shifting to grass growth. The project remains on track for a return to racing in March.
- To support the successful delivery of the project there will be increased monitoring including weekly track walks. The Project Control Group (PCG) have also increased the frequency of their meetings to ensure they can get in front of any issues if anything arises.
- The Club are also now in possession of a new tractor/mower which allows them to mow whenever they require it, which is beneficial for thickening up and promoting grass growth.

Te Aroha

- Further work has been completed on the 1600m chute at Te Aroha. The Regional Track Advisor, Graeme Styles and Racecourse Manager, Ryan Gartner are happy with the 1600m chute to be used at Te Aroha's meeting on the 8th of December. There are three 1600m races programmed on this day.
- In general, the track has come a long way since the wetter months. Rigorous plans remain in place to assist the functionality of the profile and drainage through to next winter.

Avondale

- Power at Avondale has been reinstated. They are not scheduled to return to racing until March. NZTR will work with Entain as to what level of service will be returned to the venue now that power had been restored.

Synthetic Tracks

- As per the maintenance plan, the Cambridge synthetic was re-waxed in late November. The Awapuni synthetic was re-levelled on Thursday 21st November. Martin Collins will also use this visit as a chance to ensure that the surface is being managed appropriately.

Track Markers

- Track markers have arrived from Australia and been delivered to Matamata Racing Club for a trial run.
- The markers have been used for jump outs to date, with generally positive feedback. One challenge is they can be difficult to move once put in place.
- NZTR is now considering a staged implementation for the markers, for example using them for open class horses trialling raceday.

A photograph of several horses and jockeys in a starting gate, ready for a race. The jockeys are wearing colorful silks, and the horses are dark-colored. The background shows a grassy field and some structures.

KEY MATTERS AS AT 3 DECEMBER 2024

RACING OPERATIONS

Dates for 2025/26 Season

- There is a Dates Committee meeting scheduled for 11 December 2024. NZTR is working with Entain to confirm the dates for this season.

Race Day Programming Guide

- Entain has provided a guide to raceday programming which can be found [here](#). The guide identifies key factors to consider when programming a race day, and provides context from a wagering perspective.

KEY MATTERS AS AT 3 DECEMBER 2024

RACING OPERATIONS

Central Region Date and Venue Changes – 24/25 Season

- Below are the Hawke's Bay date and venue changes that have been reallocated for the remainder of the 24/25 season. These have been approved by both Entain NZ in terms of servicing and TAB NZ through the dates process. The meetings on 2 and 17 November were previously confirmed.
- Included in these relocations are two RACE meetings. These have also been moved due to an anticipated delay in the return to racing at Awapuni. This is due to a particularly wet spring and the consequential deferral of sand-slitting the track.
- The Little Avondale Stud Lowland Stakes will now race on Sunday 2 March. This and two black-type races on Saturday 12 April (Hawke's Bay Cup meeting) have received Pattern Committee approval in terms of their venue change.
- There will minor distance tweaks, in some instances, to programmes already advertised.

Race Date	Meeting	Confirmed Club/Venue
Saturday 2 November	Feilding @ Hastings	Feilding @ Trentham
Sunday 17 November	Hawke's Bay	Woodville @ Woodville
Wednesday 11 December	Hawke's Bay	Wairarapa @ Tauherenikau
Sunday 29 December	Taranaki @ New Plymouth	Wanganui @ Whanganui
Tuesday 31 December	Hawke's Bay	Taranaki @ New Plymouth
Saturday 25 January	Wellington @ Awapuni	Wanganui @ Whanganui
Wednesday 29 January	Hawke's Bay	Waverley @ Waverley
Sunday 16 February	Wairoa @ Hastings	Wairarapa @ Tauherenikau
Friday 28 February	Hawke's Bay	Egmont @ Hawera
Saturday 15 March	Hawke's Bay	Wanganui @ Whanganui
Wednesday 19 March	Manawatu @ Awapuni	Waverley @ Waverley
Saturday 12 April	Hawke's Bay	Otaki-Maori @ Otaki
Sunday 13 April	Otaki-Maori	Wairarapa @ Tauherenikau
Wednesday 30 April	Hawke's Bay	Woodville @ Woodville
Saturday 12 July	Hawke's Bay	Egmont @ Hawera



KEY MATTERS AS AT 3 DECEMBER 2024

WELFARE

AnnaRehab Open Day

- The Welfare team attended along with Ontrack's Andy Cowan, and the AnnaRehab team has been attending local Ag Days and School events to showcase their team of retired thoroughbreds.

Know Your Thoroughbred Clinic

- Nationwide thoroughbred subsidized education clinic's "Know Your Thoroughbred" aimed to improve horsemanship and knowledge for those who choose an OTTB thoroughbred. Creating awareness, promoting thoroughbred versatility, and understanding of thoroughbreds.
- The next clinic will be held 16 & 17 November with Donna & Elise Edwards Smith at their Waerenga property, designed to coach riders and their thoroughbreds in a supportive environment.

Raceday & Trial Fatalities

- EMRP met on 22nd October to review race and trial cases to date this season. To date, we have 2 race day and 5 trial fatalities.
- To enable the EMRP to operate consistently it is imperative we collect as much information as possible and therefore the club's assistance is much appreciated in enabling post-mortems to be conducted.

NZ Open Farms Day Sunday 9th March 2025

- Open Farms is an initiative that enables the public to visit farms for a showcase of their activities. We would like to see more thoroughbred farms participate. More information can be found [here](#).

Horse Ambulance

- A video explaining the workings of the Horse Ambulance can be found [here](#). This is a great summary and is worth sharing more widely.

Welfare Team Staff Changes

- We are sorry to farewell Donna Cameron our Horse Traceability Liaison, Donna's tenacity to ensure we as an industry strive for improved traceability and completion of retirement and Death forms, we hope the legacy Donna has left is continued.
- We welcome Kristin Boyce to our welfare team, she brings a strong equestrian and thoroughbred background and will provide further support and focus in the retired thoroughbred space.

KEY MATTERS AS AT 3 DECEMBER 2024

WELFARE

Misting Fans

- The eight large misting fans are currently being distributed to four destinations nationwide in preparedness for the summer months. There will be two available where required. The fans are easily maneuverable on wheels but are substantial and will require a trailer to transport.
- There needs to be a hose connection and power source in close proximity, and they are then placed 25m apart to create the airflow between. Clubs will need to consider where they place them in an area that best suits, some trainers already have these in their training barns and have reported the horses enjoy them so long they are introduced appropriately.
- The Horse Ambulance will try to assist in transporting them to race days where possible but in all instances, any horse incident will be the priority.
- If high temperatures are forecasted, please ensure you plan ahead and implement the hot weather policy.

Research Focus Group

- We are currently in the process of establishing a focus group for research projects that are more tailored to our requirements to educate our participants and ability to front foot information and evidence-based scientific facts when defending our industry – this will encompass representatives from the NZERF, Massey, NZTBA, NZTR, and an equine veterinarian.
- Chris Rogers – Appointed New Zealand Equine Trust Chair in Equine Health, Welfare and Performance (effective January 1 2025)





KEY MATTERS AS AT 3 DECEMBER 2024

WELFARE

Know Your Thoroughbred

- A key focus this month has been developing our Nationwide thoroughbred subsidized education clinic's "Know Your Thoroughbred" initiative, which aims to improve horsemanship and knowledge for those who choose an OTTB thoroughbred.
- 35 horse and rider combinations attended our first clinic under the "Know Your Thoroughbred" initiative with Donna & Elise Edwards Smith at their Waerenga property, and we are currently sorting dates for clinics throughout the North and South Island.

Retrainers Network

- We are exploring minimum standards requirements for the Acknowledged Retrainers Network. We will provide a recommendation to the NZTR Board on a framework once we have completed due process. We have also met and discussed the concept with the Retrainers network asking for feedback over the next few months. Any standards we implement must be measurable.
- Despite our repetitive industry communications on expectations, we continue to see horses arriving that require remedial work before entering the program. We have expressed to the Owners and Trainers Association that expectations need to be met.
- The vet checks have resulted in successfully culling horses that should not be admitted to the program and have been returned to the racing connections. We follow up with the horses' connections to ensure they are supported in navigating the best outcome for the horses.
- The changes we have made to the Retrainers network with regards to the split payment and reporting is providing invaluable data to understand the length of time it is taking to rehome horses and also dispel any feedback around horses being passed on quickly to ill-equipped purchasers.

OTTB Sponsorship

- We continue to look for sponsorship opportunities that will incentivize thoroughbred ownership in equestrian.
- A new initiative we are piloting is the Thoroughbred Challenge in partnership with the Matamata Equestrian Group on the 28th March 2025, this is aimed at horses that are in their first year of transition from racing(18 months). We have put together strict terms and conditions to ensure we showcase good examples of horsemanship. \$5k prizemoney pool will be on offer including a \$1000 bonus to any horse that has been sourced from a Retrainer.
- This competition will be run alongside the Randlab Matamata Equestrian Group Horse Trial where we sponsor our Best Performed Thoroughbred and we hope we can grow this to a key event that engages with the surrounding thoroughbred community. A promotion will start in December to publicize the event.

A photograph of several horses and jockeys in a starting gate, ready for a race. The horses are in various colors, and the jockeys are wearing colorful silks. The background shows a green field and a fence.

KEY MATTERS AS AT 3 DECEMBER 2024

WELFARE

Welfare Support Cases

- One horse was sent to NZTR for support from MPI. The horse's owner was disqualified under the Animal Welfare Act from owning horses. MPI seized several horses and NZTR took ownership of the one thoroughbred.
- An ex-Para rider has had declining health and although tried every avenue was unable to rehome the two thoroughbreds he had on hand. NZTR have stepped in to access a suitable option.
- The Welfare team was satisfied that a licensed trainer had received a lifetime disqualification for a severe neglect case, the case was an example of good collaboration between the RIB and NZTR.

Equine Crematorium

- The establishment of a North Island Equine Crematorium is progressing. The Building Consent for the facility has been submitted and earthworks are being scoped, with the intent to undertake these while the Consent is processing. The Trustees are also considering a discussion paper on the establishment of a South Island operation.

NZ Open Farms Day Sunday 9th March 2025

- We would like to see more farms and stables participate
- <https://www.openfarms.co.nz/host-an-event/event-hosting-guide/>

Raceday and Trial Fatalities

- Dr Amira Mikhail Head of Veterinary Services for the RIB has advised her role has been disestablished. We are awaiting communication from the RIB as to who will be the liaison between the Raceday vets and ensure the information is collected and provided to us.
- EMRP is due to meet on 10 December to review race and trial cases to date this season.
- To date, we have 4 race day and 5 trial fatalities.
- To enable the EMRP to operate consistently it is imperative we collect as much information as possible and therefore the club's assistance is much appreciated in enabling post-mortems to be conducted.



KEY REMINDERS AS AT 3 DECEMBER 2024

SECTIONAL DATA (TRACK MARKERS - RED)

NZTR has invested heavily in providing sectional times and data for interested parties. In order to produce accurate information, we ask that all clubs have red markers clearly displayed at the 200, 400, 600 and 800 metre marks and also 400m after the start of each start point (i.e. for a 1600m race there needs to be one at the 1200m, for a 2200m race there needs to be one at the 1800m)

- If you require more markers please contact Tim Lambert (tim.lambert@nztr.co.nz)

EQUINE FATALITIES IN TRAINING

To enable NZTR's proper equine welfare reporting, clubs are required to notify NZTR when a horse dies or is euthanised as a result of a training incident. Please advise traceability@nztr.co.nz with the horse name or breeding, and the trainer name.

RACEDAY BOX CONTAMINATION

Due to the risk that horses may swab positive for human drugs, NZTR reminds Clubs that they should:

- Regularly replace sawdust and straw in boxes which are used on race day; and
- Advise both through signage and race day security that participants must not urinate in horse boxes.

HOT WEATHER POLICY

- Warmer temps are forecasted in the next week, and with the likely probability of high temperatures around the country this Summer, please ensure that you are taking all precautions to protect the welfare of both horses and humans. NZTR's Hot Weather Policy can be found [here](#).



KEY REMINDERS AS AT 3 DECEMBER 2024

JOCKEY WORKSHOPS

NZTR will kick off Jockey Workshops Monday 2 December in Cambridge at Onxy restaurant from 12:00-1:30pm to update Jockeys and present the following:

- Key content from the recent Roadshow
- Updates on any jockey benefits or administrative changes
- Elite Jockey Programme update.
- Sports Psychologist Dr.Rod Corban
- Collective professionalism with Darren Shand

Additional dates will follow in the Central and Southern regions:

- Monday 9 December 12-1:30pm- Christchurch- Riccarton Park-The Tea House
- Monday 16 December 12-1:30pm- Palmerston North-Race Awapuni- Marton Fielding Lounge



KEY REMINDERS AS AT 3 DECEMBER 2024

OPTIONS FOR REPORTING BULLYING AND HARASSMENT ISSUES

NZTR emphasises that there are avenues available for any participants who feel they have been badly treated to report their concerns and have them addressed.

Industry participants can be assured that the NZTR Board and management have zero tolerance for sexual harassment and bullying in the industry. Fair and respectful treatment of all participants is a fundamental expectation for involvement in our sport.

The industry, in partnership with the Salvation Army, employs two full-time welfare support staff, who are available to discuss any personal issues, and complaints can be made to any NZTR staff member.

The complaints will be taken seriously, with the priority being the rights and wishes of the complainants.

Participants can also directly contact the Racing Integrity Board, through the racing integrity line, with the option of leaving their contact details or an anonymous message.

If you have any concerns about the way that you or anybody else in the industry have been treated, the following can be contacted:

- Andrew McKerrow (welfare support): 029 771 2398 andrew_mckerrow@nzf.salvationarmy.org
- RIB racing integrity line: 0800 748 123 [Online Message Form](#)
- Neil Grimstone (RIB Manager Integrity Assurance): 021 272 6009

NZTR seeks ways to collaborate with clubs and sector groups to ensure that awareness of this issue is increased, and that any persons affected by bullying or harassment feels aware and empowered to bring this to attention of their preferred contact.