

MINUTES OF MEETING

Industry Advisory Committee

Tuesday 12th October 2021 @ 7:00pm

Location: Bistro SAHRC

Attendees:

Scott Barclay (Chair) Anne Mowday (AM); Darren Billinger (DB); Richard Miller (RM) [SAHRC], Mario Borg (MB); Toby Ryan (TR); Tyson Linke (TL) [SACHRCA], Aaron Bain (AB) [SA BOTRA], David Thuen (DT) [HRSA].

Meeting opened at 7:05pm

1 Welcome

Chair welcomed all to the committee meeting and thanked all for attending. Chair outlined the structure of the meeting to follow.

1.1 Apologies – None

1.2 Conflicts – None

Confirmation Of Minutes – Confirmed by TR, seconded by MB.

ACTIONS:

1. Minutes to be distributed to industry bodies

1.3 Action Item Progress

I. Lasix/Altrenogest Series

MB reported that the Welfare and Integrity Committee met and discussed the IAC proposal of introducing a series of races for horses which were all treated under the supervision of a Veterinary Surgeon, with either Lasix or Altrenogest.

With respect to Lasix, MB noted that HRSA had previously approached HRA with this concept and were advised that HRA would not support such a series and if it was to proceed HRA would withdraw its support of the SA Harness Racing industry. Furthermore, the SA Government advised that it would withdraw any funding to HRSA should the use of Lasix be allowed in SA to any degree.

With respect to the use of Altrenogest, MB noted that the Welfare And Integrity Committee were in full support of the proposal as it could assist in multiple ways: enhancing the safety of participants, allowing mares in the current racing pool to continue to race and the possible recruitment of mares from other states to increase our racing population.

TR advised that we are entering the season when mares would benefit the most from this proposal and a swift progression of this item is required. He suggested HRSA elevate the current allowable level of Altrenogest in SA.

ACTIONS:

1. Chair to raise this item with HRSA Chair and Chair Of Stewards to progress

- II. Race Series Proposals – On-Going
- III. Inconsistent Performances – On-Going
- IV. Driver Interviews

Chair reported the HRSA Board are in support of introducing pre and post driver interviews to promote our industry and our participants.

ACTIONS:

1. HRSA Board to progress with implementing this proposal

- V. Follow up Bianca as an option for supporting marketing initiative in the future, AB to provide details to SB – Completed

ACTIONS:

1. Chair to discuss the possibility of utilising this additional marketing support at the next HRSA Board meeting

- VI. Distribution of SABOTRA Industry Survey Results – Completed

- VII. Develop a feedback form to be uploaded on the website

A draft of the feedback form for the HRSA website was tabled. Discussion ensued and amendments to this form were suggested and agreed to.

ACTIONS:

1. Chair to advise HRSA IT department of amendments required to feedback form and progress with going 'live'

- VIII. Proposed 80/20 Stakes concept and Industry repercussions

MB advised that a meeting between accounting company Hall Chadwick and key stakeholders of the industry had taken place. At this meeting the current financial position of HRSA was disclosed. The review of Hall Chadwick was that in their opinion if HRSA does not reduce its expenditure the company runs the risk of becoming insolvent.

MB further advised that the recommendation from Hall Chadwick is to reduce the prizemoney budget by 20% to create a margin of safety for HRSA. It was noted that this review was completed prior to HRSA brokering a deal with the corporates to increase the percentage of turnover returned by the corporates to HRSA.

Discussion ensued on this item, with the following considerations and recommendations emanating from the discussion:

- Do not increase driver fees if prizemoney for owners is reducing - rewarding a minority of participants who do not supply the product at the expense of the majority who do supply the product would not be seen as a positive
- If there is to be a prizemoney reduction it should come from the top end eg. Saturday Night prizemoney levels and feature races and not from the lower end – emphasis on reducing the feature budget
- Any prizemoney reductions to be made bearing in mind the National Ratings Matrix – set prizemoney levels to maximise dollars earned for the points accrued for winning a race wherever possible
- Given the fact that the Hall Chadwick review has not taken into account the projected increase in return from the corporates, could the prizemoney budget be reduced by 10% instead of 20%?
- Focusing on the actual new prize money is key and the optics of it in conjunction with impact to points.
- Strong consensus that a 20% reduction would lead to a far greater exodus of participants from the industry than a 10% reduction
- This would in turn lead to smaller field sizes, less race meetings, less revenue and likely further required stake reductions

ACTIONS:

1. DT to communicate to the CEO and Chair of HRSA the above considerations and recommendations of the IAC

2. New Business

2.1 – Review feedback from the SABOTRA Industry Survey

The Chair advised that the HRSA board had reviewed the results of the recent SABOTRA industry survey. He relayed to the group a summary from the HRSA Chair, highlighting the key points where the HRSA Board have identified opportunities for improvement. These areas included:

- Communication
- Transparency
- Welfare

2.2 – Workshop future race series

AB suggested conducting the Country Cups in 2022 as a race series, culminating in the SA Cup. The SA Cup would be restricted to those horses which competed in the Country Cups (Potentially SA Trained only)

Due to time constraints, the group was unable to conclude this discussion.

ACTIONS:

1. Workshop future race series item to be carried over to the next IAC meeting

3. Other Items For Discussion

3.1 – General Business

I. Southern Cross

TL questioned if HRSA were considering any amendments to the conditions of eligibility for the Southern Cross for foals from 2022. DT advised that the conditions for 2022 have not been finalised.

Discussion took place, with the following suggestions put forward:

- Increase the minimum time required that non-SA Bred Southern Cross eligible horses must be under the care of an SA trainer before being eligible to compete
- Amend eligibility to SA Bred or SA trained (currently SA Bred or 100% SA Owned)
- Reduce prizemoney of Finals and utilise savings to increase the win bonus
- Reduce the Southern Cross bonus but provide the opportunity for horses to win multiple bonuses

ACTIONS:

1. DT to communicate the above suggestions to HRSA Racing Committee for consideration when determining the Southern Cross conditions for 2022

II. Rehoming Funding

TL questioned if the money HRSA is currently allocating for rehoming is government funded or funded from general HRSA income.

The Chair advised that it is government funded and the proviso on this money being distributed to HRSA is that it must be used for the purposes of rehoming standardbreds.

III. CEO

The Chair reported that the HRSA Board have elected to appoint an Interim CEO in the role that is to be vacated following the resignation of the current CEO, for a period of 6 months. This will be announced in the coming week.

The HRSA Board are yet to determine the structure of the management of HRSA beyond this 6 month period.

IV. Board Appointments

AM advised that the 4 new HRSA Board Directors have been selected. They are awaiting approval from the relevant authorities, which is anticipated to occur by the end of November.

3.2 – Set date for next meeting

The date for the next meeting was decided to be Tuesday November 9 2021.

The Chair requested the attendance of David Thuen and further advised that the HRSA Chair will be in attendance

4. **Meeting Close** – 9:00pm