

## Council Meeting Update:

Here is a summary of some of the key subjects discussed at last week's Council meeting.

**Showcase & National Shows:** At this time, Council has agreed there is no immediate need to cancel any of the shows, however our Treasurer has advised caution pending the outcome of funding requests. A final decision as to whether we can afford to hold Nationals and ALL 5 Showcase shows will be made at the next Council meeting, once we have reviewed the results of our sponsorship and funding applications. Every effort is being made to reduce costs and secure funding for the shows – keep an eye out for additional fundraising activity over the next few months.

The show situation was discussed with those clubs attending the Club Discussion portion of the Council meeting and we propose working more closely with clubs to plan and support the annual Showcase event in their regions. No decision to cancel any Showcase show will be made without consultation with the affiliated clubs in the region.

Shows are being scrutinised because, after last year's losses at the shows, members asked that Council be more diligent around funding them. This year, more care is being taken to work within a contained cost framework, without reducing the quality of the show; and to place more focus on raising funds and securing sponsorship to minimise costs. Please engage in the questionnaires that will be coming out from the Showing and Show Rules Focus Group. You can help shape the future of NZMHA shows and provide guidance on those aspects of showing that are important to you.

**A & P Shows:** Council discussed how we might increase the availability of shows for members who wanted to go out and have fun with their minis. One suggestion was to enhance our A&P Hi-Points Awards and split the competition between North and South Islands to make it fairer on both regions and encourage greater attendance at these shows. Council agreed this is a good idea. Sponsors are being secured to provide prizes for the Hi-Points Awards and offers of trophies have been received. This is currently being reviewed with the Ribbons & Trophies Coordinators and we will provide more information shortly.

Our RAS Liaison, Shelley Guy, has been working hard to lift the profile of miniature horses within RAS and they have commented on how well both NZMHA and National are working together as a team. NZMHA has agreed to sponsor the Supreme ribbon for the Canterbury A&P show and we are in discussions with another South Island A&P show that is interested in bringing miniature shows back into the program.

In the North Island, some affiliated clubs have taken on providing "fun shows" for a couple of A&Ps and we are working with National to try to secure as many of the miniature shows as we can. Regional Delegates have been asked to identify those A&P events with miniature horse shows so that we can include these in our show calendars and make every effort to avoid NZMHA show dates where A&P shows are in close proximity. We would like to thank Shelley for her commitment to the position of RAS Liaison and all the work she has done to protect NZMHA's position as one of the two miniature horse associations affiliated to the RAS.

**Member Behaviour:** For some time, members have been asking Council to "do something" about the continuous negative behaviour of a small number of individuals, which has sometimes resulted in members leaving or a negative impact on the reputation of NZMHA. Council responded with a Social Media Policy, designed to encourage members to treat each other with respect and discourage unpleasant posts in public Social Media. Unfortunately, we failed. The behaviour continues, and has even worsened in some cases. Council have had to look at how we can take action to stop behaviour that may impact negatively on the Association, and which may damage the reputation NZMHA has with members, sponsors and other funding bodies. We want to restore camaraderie and fun at NZMHA events.

Council are here to serve the members – all of whom deserve a supportive and friendly environment. In an effort to maintain a positive environment and encourage adherence to the NZMHA Constitution and Rules and the Social Media Policy, Council has introduced Corrective Action Plans (CAP) – a confidential warning to member whose behaviour has

been deemed to be inappropriate. After the behaviour has been reported, an investigation is conducted and the behaviour discussed with the member. The CAP notifies the member of the outcome of the investigation and requires the member to avoid a repeat breach of the rules or demonstration of any similar negative behaviour for a determined period. Failure to comply with the CAP will result in the outlined behaviour being combined with whatever new behaviour has been reported for investigation and further action will be taken.

**Drug Testing:** Last year Council were advised of an oversight in notifying members of the list of prohibited substances in the event of any drug testing taking place at NZMHA shows.

After discussion with other equine associations, Council has elected to adopt the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI) Equine Prohibited Substances database, for the purpose of identifying a list of prohibited substances, as required under NZMHA Show Rules Section G08 - DRUGS AND ARTIFICIAL IRRITANTS.

Please find attached a link to the database. We recommend you familiarise yourself with this site as it provides good information on banned and controlled medicines and detection times.

<http://inside.fei.org/fei/cleansport/ad-h/prohibited-list>

Drug Testing may occur at NZMHA National and Showcase shows, or any show run under NZMHA Show Rules, with the express advance written permission of NZMHA Council. Such permission may only be sought by the Show Committee. The obtaining of such permission does not make Drug Testing at the show mandatory. If drug testing is to take place the rules outlined in NZMHA Show Rules, section G8, must be adhered to.

This notification does not mean that drug testing will be applied at all, or indeed any shows. After the matter was brought to Council's attention last year, we wanted to make sure members were advised of the list of prohibited substances in line with the requirements under the NZMHA Official Show Rules and make sure the requirement is maintained.

**Focus Groups:** These are progressing with a number of members generously agreeing to take part in the various focus groups to help NZMHA move forward. Discussion Forums have been established and Focus Group Members will be asked to participate in discussion and review of ideas put forward by other members either on Facebook or directly with Council Members. If you have any ideas for change – please raise them on our NZMHA Futures Facebook Discussion page. If you want change, you need to be a part of it. Council are relying on members to assist with helping make NZMHA the organization you want it to be.