



HARNESS RACING NEW ZEALAND

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Julia McLean
Canterbury Equestrian Advocacy Group Chair
New Zealand Equestrian Advocacy Network

By email: horseridersvru@gmail.com

Dear Julia

SUPPORT FOR HORSE DRIVERS AND RIDERS TO BE FORMALLY RECOGNISED AS A VULNERABLE ROAD USERS

I am writing this letter on behalf of Harness Racing New Zealand (HRNZ), in support of the New Zealand Equestrian Advocacy Network (NZEAN) asking Government for an amendment to the Land Transport (Road User) Rule 2004 to formally recognise the vulnerability of horses being ridden and driven on roads, as Vulnerable Road Users. We believe that this initiative is vital for the safety and wellbeing of the equestrian community throughout New Zealand.

Horse driving and riding has long been a part of the history of Aotearoa and our culture. Recognising the equestrian community as Vulnerable Road Users would ensure that they get respected and treated the same as other vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians and cyclists. This would also allow road planners to consider our equestrian community when developing new roading projects, including safe alternative pathways off the road for horse drivers and riders.

HRNZ have many licensed Trainers, with some still using roads to work their horses or to get to their nearest training track. We also have a huge life after racing network of riders and drivers that regularly use roads for their recreational activity. It is extremely important to us that these people and horses are recognised and kept as safe as possible.

There are many benefits for our equestrian community if they were recognised as Vulnerable Road Users. This includes improved safety measures and legal protections for our horses and owners and motor vehicle driver education. Educating drivers of how to safely share the road with horses and what their obligations are when passing a horse, this would not only make the road safer for horse owners, but also for the passengers in cars.

Now is the perfect time for Government and local authorities to consider and implement the recommendation from the New Zealand Equestrian Advocacy Network. HRNZ believes that the safety and wellbeing of the entire equestrian community is paramount and formal recognition of them as Vulnerable Road Users would go a long way to ensuring this happens.

HRNZ is fully supportive of the New Zealand Equestrian Advocacy Network and other stakeholders in progressing this amendment.

Yours sincerely

Brad Steele
Chief Executive Officer