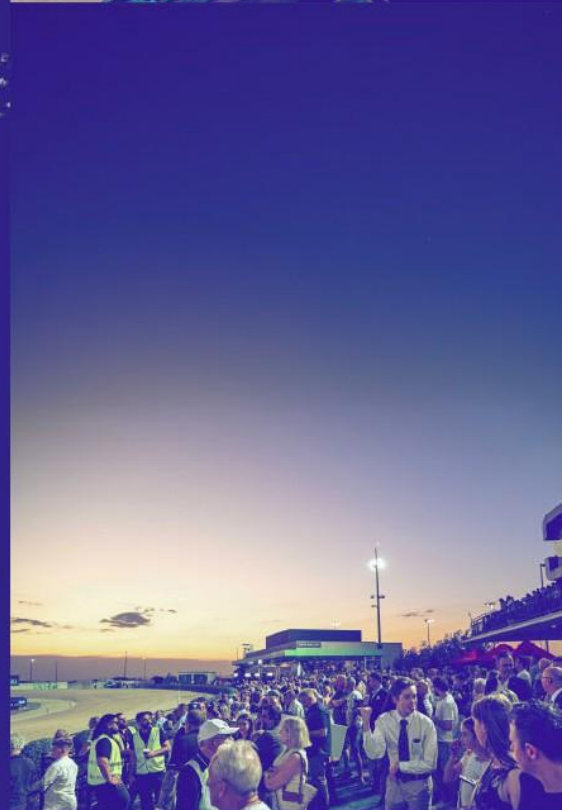




HARNESS RACING VICTORIA

2026-28 STRATEGIC PLAN





VISION

To be a connected and sustainable harness racing industry that inspires communities, supports participants, and engages fans and future generations



PURPOSE

To govern harness racing with integrity, build strong financial and strategic foundations, and strengthen and grow communities



VALUES

Purposeful:

Act with clarity and consistency

Respect:

Earned and given

Innovate:

Driven for positive change

Deliver:

Promises made, promises kept

Empathy:

Walk in their shoes

KEY CHALLENGES & RISKS

SUSTAINABILITY

1. Declining breeding and ownership dilutes the horse population, impacting starters and wagering revenue
2. Wagering growth lags costs, limiting returns to participants and owners, who have their own cost pressures
3. Aging demographics and prohibitive entry barriers, including cost and access, narrow the participant pool
4. More generous interstate and inter-code returns draw participants
5. Societal changes towards animal-based sports and wagering deter growth and threaten future

COMMERCIAL

1. Structural change in wagering markets, including competition and government reform, impact funding base
2. Lack of brand innovation diminishes relevance, impacting partner, customer, and participant pools
3. Failure to diversify revenue builds over-reliance on flagging wagering revenue
4. Fiscal tightening limits operational and capital funding, requiring new revenue streams

COMMUNITY

1. Aging infrastructure and financial constraints threaten clubs' sustainability
2. Club closures or mergers carry reputational risks and lose communities and participant population
3. A diluted, aging volunteer workforce needs to operate under greater regulation, threatening club governance and function
4. Stakeholders' competing priorities and change resistance slow or discourage evolution

WELFARE & INTEGRITY

1. Perception that integrity and life-after-racing welfare standards fail to meet evolving industry and community expectations risks harness racing's social licence to operate
2. Failure to strengthen education, prevention, and support systems for concussion, serious injury, and mental health heightens the potential of long-term harm that impacts industry wellbeing and legal exposure
3. Lack of creation and retention of a capable talent pool risks a failure to meet the demands of an evolving racing environment and governance requirements

ORGANISATION

1. Financial restrictions and legacy image make attracting talent challenging and stretch resources
2. Stressed resources contribute to a failure to embed an innovation culture and execute large-scale change
3. Disconnection between strategic ambition and operational capability slows progress and stresses workforce
4. Inability to maintain ongoing investment in data and surveillance tools inhibits productivity





2026-28 STRATEGIC PLAN

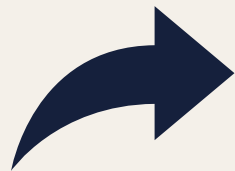
Critical enablers: Priorities that pave the way for strategy execution

Foundational catalysts

Four inter-dependent issues have profound implications on each pillar over the 2026-28 period, and every year beyond.

These are separated for primary focus in FY26.

- A** HRV capital restructure, including Melton realisation, to create future revenue streams (e.g. future fund)
- B** Metro venue resolution
- C** Venue network and club operating model
- D** Governance framework that enhances capability



FOUNDATIONS
DEFINE
EXECUTION

Strategic Plan 2026-2028

Five pillars to execute the industry strategy over the next three years.

These are to be advanced through to 2028..

- 1** Industry Sustainability
- 2** Commercial Strength
- 3** Community and Stakeholders
- 4** Integrity and Welfare
- 5** Organisation





2026-28 STRATEGIC PLAN



SUSTAINABILITY

Build pathways for the next generation of owners, breeders, participants, and customers

Next generation - ownership

- Re-engage and attract new and diversified owners, including through enhanced on-course experiences at key regional clubs
- Revised prizemoney strategy and indexation, with position/policy regarding other jurisdictions' levels
- Practical syndication for the next generation of owners

Next generation - breeding

- Address the supply chain to reduce barriers to breeding and to stimulate the horse population
- Partner with the Victorian Government to deliver breeding and sustainable incentive programs

Intergenerational appeal

- Research and consultation to define, identify, engage and earn younger generations of fans, punters and general community members
- Introduce programs to attract, develop and retain younger generations of participants

Next-generation infrastructure master planning

- Cross-industry consultation for infrastructure, including training centres
- Training facility masterplan, including upgrades to existing and establishment of new to suit the next generation

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- Profile (age, gender) of leading breeders, trainers, and participants
- Ownership profile (% of new owners and syndicators)
- Foal numbers
- Prize money that's in line with industry commercial results
- Number of trainers and horses in new and shared facilities
- Participants' distance travelled from training bases



COMMERCIAL

Innovate product to maximise revenue and grow reach and engagement

Elevate the racing product to maximise wagering

- Develop and refine HRV's racing offering to maximise wagering outcomes, provide key carnival moments, and strengthen community engagement
- Drive racing product innovation to address perceived lack of excitement

Strengthen commercial partnerships to drive revenue

- Enhance and renegotiate HRV commercial agreements and partnerships as required to optimise revenue returns
- Design and implement a structured, tiered sponsorship framework (e.g. Platinum, Gold, Silver) to attract new commercial partners across various industries (agriculture, FMCG, automotive, etc.)

Collaborate with WSPs to promote product

- Engage with selected wagering service providers (WSPs) to foster a partnership approach that promotes the racing product and content
- Research punters' behaviours to win a greater market share

Maximise fan reach and engagement

- Increase audience reach, website traffic, and brand visibility through targeted marketing, media partnerships, broader broadcast coverage, and efficient ad spending.
- Partner with local content creators, racing enthusiasts, and lifestyle influencers to co-create content that brings harness racing to new audiences

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- Average race turnover
- Average field size
- Racefields fees
- Sponsorship revenue
- Growth in unique punters
- Maintain total bet count
- Growth in unique website visitors
- Growth in social media followers (IG/X/FB/YT)



COMMUNITY

Foster community within the industry through collaboration and communication

Venue network and club operating model

- Design and progress towards a venue network model that maximises resource allocation and utilisation across venues, including racing and training tracks/facilities
- Revise the racing program across a hierarchy of venues and clubs to balance revenue prioritisation with participant welfare and community engagement
- Refine club operations to implement best practices and maximise returns to the industry

Industry consultation and communication

- Constructive and meaningful two-way industry collaboration with stakeholders, including through HRAC and roadshows
- Comprehensive communication that promotes the industry, its economic contribution, integrity, people and animals

Community engagement and impact

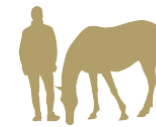
- Collaborate with industry, including volunteers, breeders and owners, to build awareness of capability and trends, and drive involvement
- Promote and execute best practices to empower the industry to broaden its footprint, including through local engagement and activities

Racing industries alignment and impact

- Harness innovation and product promotion with HRA and other governing states
- Co-ordination and community-building with Victorian Racing Industry partners

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- Construction of venue and club model
- Percentage of compliant clubs
- Volunteer and club committee map creation
- Delivery of AI-enhanced online FAQs
- Industry EDM audience growth
- Develop and execute stakeholder framework
- Increase cross-code community events
- Implemented cross-code synergies and campaigns



INTEGRITY & WELFARE

Building trust through strengthened integrity and welfare standards

Implement leading integrity and compliance

- Establish a robust compliance framework with strict integrity checks, drug testing, and anti-doping measures for horses and participants
- Develop transparent reporting and accountability structures to reinforce ethical standards

Develop a comprehensive welfare program

- Introduce welfare policies covering horse care, health monitoring, and retirement options, ensuring the ethical treatment of standardbred horses throughout their lives
- Partner with veterinarians and welfare organisations to deliver consistent, best-practice welfare standards industry-wide

Fostering a safe and inclusive environment

- Provide proactive education and support programs to build industry knowledge, capability, and commitment to integrity and welfare
- Host workshops and seminars to keep industry participants informed about new regulations and best practices

Drive gender and youth equity in racing

- Initiate programs focused on promoting gender and youth equity, including scholarships, training programs, and mentorship opportunities
- Partner with local schools, training facilities, and advocacy groups to support diversity and inclusivity in racing careers.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- Four targeted compliance ops in high-risk areas
- 75% of prohibited substance cases to VRT within 120 days
- 100% compliance with post-race injury reporting by June 2026
- Benchmark all stables against the welfare framework by June 2028.
- Annual PD session on welfare, integrity, and mental health
- 100% completion of mandatory education and training for all licensed participants
- Two+ annual mentoring programs for young participants



ORGANISATION

Build an innovative, accountable and collaborative culture that enhances outcomes

Innovation and future readiness

- Improve operational efficiency and commercial competitiveness through creative thinking.
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement through structured innovation programs and empowered agile teams.

Workplace efficiency

- Review governance structures to ensure accountability and responsiveness
- Review existing workflows and eliminate duplication and inefficiencies
- Enhance collaboration and communication with the industry

Digital investment to enhance capability

- Enhance operational capacity through business simplification and high digitalisation
- Ensure HRV has the capability and functionality to be data-led in its decision-making

Workforce and capability development

- Encourage succession planning and youth engagement strategies.
- Promote inclusion, diversity, and equity.
- Embed values to improve the employee experience and enhance the talent management framework

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- Four working group initiatives tested with 50% adoption rate
- Whitepaper on new ways of working
- 75% of all HRV roles and job refreshed
- One system enhancement per annum that eradicates risk
- One new system or delivery enhancement through operational digitisation
- 1/3 of new hires from outside the industry
- 20% improvement on employee engagement results

