

MINUTES
OF THE 143rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE
NATIONAL HORSERACING AUTHORITY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA,
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 15 JANUARY 2025, COMMENCING AT 11H00
AT THE HEAD OFFICE, TURFFONTEIN RACECOURSE, JOHANNESBURG.

ATTENDANCE:

National Board Directors: Mr N Nalliah (Chairman)
Mr D Rosevear (Deputy Chairman)
Mr V J Moodley (Chief Executive)
Mr G Ahmed
Mr J Kinsley
Mr S Mathen
Miss P Mickleburgh
Mrs S Rowett

Members: Mr W H Ackerman
Mr A C Costa
Mr J da Mata
Mr O A Ferraris
Mr G B K Jarvis
Miss R L Klaasen
Mr S A Nkosi
Mr Joshua Peter
Mr Marc Peter
Mr P A Peter
Mr S S Poee
Dr D C Pretorius
Adv N Riley
Mr A J Rivalland
Ms F Sithebe
Mr G Soma
Mr X Spies
Ms N A Turner
Mr D Yutar

In Attendance: Dr S S de Kock (NHA)
Mr A D Hyde (NHA)
Mr Lennon Maharaj (NHA)
Mr H Mayosi (Attorney – Norton Rose Fulbright)
Mr R L Smith (Auditor – Nolands)

Apologies: Mr R L Bruss
Mr J M Goodman
Mr G A C Lucas
Dr A H Parker
Mr R Sewgoolam

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone present to the One Hundred and Forty-Third Annual General Meeting of Members of The National Horseracing Authority of Southern Africa (the NHA). The Chairman also welcomed Mr Ryan Smith from Nolands Auditors and Mr Hlonela Mayosi from Norton Rose Fulbright Attorneys as well as the members of the NHA Executive Management. Out of Province Directors, Dr Ashley Parker and Mr Rikesh Sewgoolam unfortunately cannot be present and have tendered their apologies.

2. Quorum

The Chairman advised the meeting that the NHA had received 53 proxies, which were available for any member to view, and confirmed that in total, with the Directors and Members in attendance plus the proxies, there was a quorum present.

In accordance with the Constitution, the Chairman advised that he would preside over the Annual General Meeting and declared the meeting duly constituted in terms of the Constitution.

3. Notice of Meeting

The Preliminary Notice of the Annual General Meeting was published in the Racing Calendar and on the NHA website on 29 November 2024.

The General Notice was published on 20 December 2024 and again on 3 January 2025.

Members were invited to submit additional agenda items. No submissions were received by the closing date, which was at least 40 days prior to the AGM.

The Notice of the Meeting was taken as read.

4. Minutes of the 142nd Annual General Meeting held on 17 January 2024 – Agenda Item 1

The Chairman confirmed that the Minutes of the 142nd Annual General Meeting, held on 17 January 2024, had been available on the NHA website since 6 May 2024.

The Chairman requested approval of the Minutes.

Adv N Riley raised concerns about the accuracy of the minutes and the Chairman's previous commitments to provide certain information that he had requested.

The Chairman responded that, subsequent to the last AGM, legal advice was sought regarding the sharing of the Board & Remuneration Committee Minutes with Members who are not members of the NHA National Board as they were not for public or member distribution.

Discussions included a review of the minutes from the previous AGM with Adv N Riley requesting permission to distribute copies of all correspondence between him and the Chairman on his request as he had brought copies for the meeting. The Chairman granted Adv Riley's request and after distributing copies to all present, Adv Riley had read all of the correspondence to the meeting.

Adv Riley noted, whilst reading the correspondence, that the Chairman stated that Adv Riley had requested copies of the resolution of the National Board of the NHA authorizing the litigation in the matter of Langa Goodman Douse. He stated that this issue is expected to be relevant when legal costs and expenses are later debated or questioned in the report.

Adv Riley stated that he requested the minutes of the NHA Remuneration Committee (last 5 years) and National Board meetings (last 3 years) and stated that the Chairman acknowledged the volume of documents and said that he will try and get them to him within three weeks.

Adv Riley pointed out that no qualifications were made in the meeting about this commitment and questioned the Chairman for not honouring that commitment, further asking why threats in the latest correspondence to him of noting that Adv Riley was a member of the Legal Practices Council were necessary, as he had written to the NHA in his personal capacity as a member of the NHA and not as a legal practitioner.

The Chairman clarified that the minutes belong to the NHA and not to him as the chairman personally. Whilst he chairs the Board, he is not the sole member of the Board. He stated that although he may have initially given an undertaking, which is debatable, he had discussed the matter with the rest of the members of the National Board and thereafter sought legal advice, which advice was that the requested information is not public and cannot be shared with any member outside of the members of the National Board, including Adv Riley.

The Chairman repeated and stressed to Adv Riley that he is not entitled to the National Board and Remuneration Committee minutes. Adv Riley stated that he is entitled to the information and does not agree with the statement by the Chairman. The Chairman further suggested that if Adv Riley still believes he is entitled to the documents, he is free to pursue action or steps, including legal action if he so wishes, but the Chairman remained resolute in not willing to provide Adv Riley with copies of the minutes that he had requested.

Adv Riley stated he would pursue legal remedies under the Access to Information Act, within a three-year period. He questioned the necessity of the NHA incurring unnecessary legal fees in this matter, arguing that the requested documents are neither privileged nor inaccessible under the Act, as the NHA is funded by members and Operators.

Adv Riley then highlighted that international reporting standards require disclosure of directors' remuneration in financial reports, including Mr Moodley and Mr Hyde who are Directors.

He expressed frustration at being directed to litigate, emphasizing that the Chairman had initially advised him to submit his request in writing without any mention of seeking legal advice or consulting the Board.

Adv Riley stated that the Chairman had agreed to his request at the meeting, arguing that the current refusal contradicts his earlier commitment.

The Chairman noted Adv Riley's personal legal opinion on access to the minutes, but stated he would not comment further, given Adv Riley's mention of taking legal action on this matter and the answer remains unchanged that the requested copies of the minutes will not be made available to Adv Riley.

Mr Kinsley sought clarity and enquired from Adv Riley that in one of the letters from Adv Riley to the Chairman, Adv Riley mentioned that he was aware of the proceedings of the AGM having been present during the entire meeting and thus there is nothing confidential in those minutes. Mr Kinsley stated that he recalls Adv Riley recusing himself for part of the meeting and thus he was not present for the entire duration of the meeting.

Adv Riley stated that he had indeed recused himself for about five minutes of the meeting during a particular discussion.

Mr Kinsley respected Adv Riley's decision to recuse himself and acknowledged the valid reason. He, however, enquired as to how Adv Riley would have dealt with the position of listening to the entire recording of the AGM, given that he chose to recuse himself because of any potential conflict of interest on a certain matter that was discussed at that AGM. In response, Adv Riley said that he was absent for about five minutes during the meeting, and he had been told by the Chairman that he would be provided with the minutes requested.

Ms Sithebe raised concerns about the governance implications of challenging specific sentences in the official minutes. She questioned how the process would move forward, especially in light of potential process issues related to approving the minutes as a true and accurate reflection.

The Chairman noted that no corrections had been made to the minutes and proceeded with reviewing them.

He then enquired if the minutes could be confirmed.

Adv Riley raised an objection to the minutes. The Chairman noted Adv Riley's objection.

The Minutes of the AGM meeting held on 17 January 2024 were noted with one objection. No corrections were made, and the minutes were approved.

5. Report of the Chairman of the National Board of Directors for the year ending 31 July 2024 – Agenda Item 2

The Chairman confirmed that the 2024 Annual Report was published on the NHA website on 20 December 2024, including the Financial Statements for the year ending 31 July 2024.

The Chairman took the report as read and opened the floor for comments or objections.

No comments or objections were raised for pages 1-45 of the Annual Report.

6. Audited Financial Statements of The National Horseracing Authority of Southern Africa, for the financial year ended 31 July 2024 – Agenda Item 3

The Chairman moved on to the review of the Annual Financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2024, starting from page 46.

Adv Riley enquired about Miss Kayiya's current position with the NHA. The Chief Executive confirmed that Miss Kayiya had resigned. Adv Riley asked if she is currently being used as a consultant, to which the Chief Executive responded that she is not, but she may be so engaged if required, given her institutional knowledge and depending on the NHA's need.

Adv Riley noted that the reports were done in December 2024, while the Chief Executive clarified that the reports were completed in November 2024.

The Chairman moved on to the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee section, starting from page 49, and opened the floor for questions on the Financial Statements.

Adv Riley enquired if the Financial Statements reflect all of the expenses of the NHA. The Chairman stated that the Financial Statements reflect all expenses for the period under review, up to 31 July 2024 (the end of the 12-month reporting period).

Adv Riley enquired about the expenses of consultants who are not attorneys, asking where these expenses are reflected in the Financial Statements.

Mr Rosevear noted that pages 84 and 85 provide a detailed breakdown per line item of expenses. He pointed out that note 18 addresses legal costs and provisions carried forward. Investigation costs and legal costs are reflected separately on pages 84 and 85.

Adv Riley enquired if the R1.8 million listed includes only investigation costs or if it is inclusive of other legal items. He noted that the investigation costs increased from R11 000 in 2023 to R1.8 million in 2024, with an additional R8.3 million spent on legal issues.

Mr Rosevear highlighted the historical revenue challenges faced by the NHA, particularly in relation to inflation and levy increases that have not kept pace with general inflation. He noted that there was a significant increase in legal costs, which includes estimations and adjustments for provisions based on available information at the financial year-end.

In previous years, such as 2021 and 2022, adjustments and reversals were made for legal costs, including a reversal of R2 million in 2021 or 2022. In 2023, major legal matters arose, including the Douse case and others, contributing to increased legal expenditures. Similarly, in the current year, new issues and consequently legal costs had been incurred and will be incurred.

Adv Riley enquired if the investigation costs listed are only those of external investigators, and do not include in-house NHA investigations.

Mr Rosevear confirmed that the investigation costs are indeed for external investigators.

Mr da Mata questioned whether the feedback or outcome of these investigations will be shared with members.

Mr Rosevear explained that investigations are initiated by the Executive, supported by the National Board, to uphold the integrity of the NHA. As a regulator, the NHA is responsible for enforcing its Rules and Constitution, as well as defending actions brought against them. The outcomes of the investigations are used by the NHA in any actions it may take against persons who breach or contravene the Rules or NHA's constitution and are not made public for obvious reasons.

Adv Riley requested permission to excuse himself from the conversation.

The Chairman clarified that if there is an alleged breach of rules, the Executives will engage persons to carry out the necessary investigations where such capacity is not available within the NHA.

The Chief Executive mentioned that some sensitive investigation costs are included in the figure of R1,8 million, but due to extremely sensitive nature of these matters, these cannot be discussed further with the members, but they have been discussed with the Operators.

Mr da Mata enquired about the investigation into the maiming and killing of horses in Port Elizabeth back in 2020, expressing his concern that he has to date not received feedback on the matter.

Mr Hyde explained that the matter was thoroughly investigated based on the evidence provided to the investigating team. The stable staff were interviewed, and video footage was reviewed. No charges were brought against any person or member due to lack of any evidence that could be linked to any individual member or licenced official of the NHA. Mr Hyde emphasized that the issue was taken very seriously, and he undertook to follow up with the investigating team to review the file and revert to Mr da Mata.

Adv Riley rejoined the meeting.

Mrs Rowett mentioned that part of the steps taken, as a result of the investigation, included improving security in the area of the stables.

Mr Rivalland emphasized that he did not want to go through all the financials, as the Operators alluded to last year, that they are going to fund the NHA irrespective of the costs. He highlighted an interest in understanding the significant jump in Trade and Other Payables from R16 million to R22 million and queried the reason for this increase.

The Chief Executive advised that a new LCMS machine was purchased for the laboratory in April 2024, but the amount was only payable in September 2024 and became operational in that month. The amount that was paid in September 2024 was however due and outstanding at the end of the financial year being 31 July 2024 and thus recorded as Trade and other payables.

Concerns were raised by Members about the effectiveness and justification of TCO2 testing, with no prosecutions reported despite significant amounts being spent on this testing.

Discussions highlighted the need for clarity on compliance with IFHA regulations and the implications of varying testing levels across jurisdictions.

Adv Riley enquired about TCO2 testing and asked when it was implemented by the NHA. The Chief Executive replied that it was implemented on about 6 April 2020.

Adv Riley noted that the financials are up to the end of July, indicating an expenditure of just over R310 000 per month for TCO2 testing.

The Chief Executive explained that official on-course TCO2 testing took place from the 6th of April but stated that the actual testing had been implemented six months earlier but that was a pilot phase with no scratchings being made regardless of the TCO2 results during that pilot phase. Therefore, the total cost includes testing done before April which was the on-course implementation date.

Adv Riley noted that in 2023, the NHA spent R656 000 on the Traditional Equine Industry (TEI), reducing to R168 000 in 2024. He emphasized that the focus should be on equine athletes and questioned the anomaly regarding the purpose of the association.

He pointed out that the TCO2 testing cost R1.2 million, with R400 000 monthly, and it raises concerns about the number of months testing was conducted and if during that entire period had there have been any prosecutions for positive tests.

The Chief Executive advised that TCO2 testing was conducted for six months, and prosecution for positives has not been done but horses withdrawn if they were above the thresholds for scratchings.

The Chief Executive stated that TCO2 testing is currently a high-level work in progress project. However, to answer Adv Riley's question, the R1.2 million will translate to R4.8 million in this financial year, which has been approved by the Operators. The Operators understand the mandate, as it is a requirement for them to sell the pictures internationally, following the IFHA guidelines. Therefore, the R1.2 million is forecast to increase to R4.8 million, as part of the rules outlined by IFHA, to enforce fair competition. The NHA is a full signatory to IFHA.

The Chairman clarified that compliance focuses on implementing TCO2 testing, regardless of a specific threshold, with each country determining its own level.

Adv Riley enquired if this was stated in the rules to which the Chairman explained that the rules do not explicitly mandate that this needs to be done but it is part of the international guidelines if a country wishes to be part of the World Pool.

Adv Riley enquired about the amount of R88 560 allocated for Trainers and Riders.

Mr Rosevear explained that the Benevolent Fund is in respect of ongoing obligations to fund medical contributions for two retired members of which one unfortunately passed away during the financial year.

Adv Riley noted that historically, fines were paid into the Benevolent Fund.

Mr Rosevear explained that the practice was to contribute the NHA fines into the Benevolent Fund, but this was amended after consultation many years ago for the NHA to retain the fines given that it incurs the legal costs on matters that result in the fines being imposed. The disclosure has been amended some years ago to show the fines separately in the financial statements in the interest of transparency, but it is netted off against the legal fees.

Adv Riley expressed ethical concerns, questioning how the NHA can justify spending significant amounts (e.g., R5 million, potentially R15 million) in TCO2 testing when only a small portion is donated to support individuals who have served the industry for many years.

He also raised concerns about the purpose of TCO2 testing, highlighting that to date there have been no prosecutions for breaches or contraventions.

The Chief Executive explained that the imposition of fines for excess TCO2 levels is part of a high-level work in progress project, with ongoing discussions involving SANTA, through Mr Rivalland, the Trainers and Operators. He stated that the process to date has involved constant communication with SANTA.

Ms Sithebe expressed an understanding of the NHA's mandate and fully supports it from 4Racing as an Operator. However, she raised concerns about the significant increase in legal costs from 2023 to 2024, emphasizing that such a jump is not sustainable.

She urged that efforts be made to understand the root causes of the litigation and reduce consequential legal actions. This can be viewed as being detrimental to the industry both financially and in terms of morale. She emphasized the need for a more sustainable approach beyond continuous litigation.

The Chairman explained that when there is a breach of rules or an alleged breach, individuals have the option to admit guilt or proceed to an Inquiry. In cases where an Inquiry is chosen, the NHA incurs unavoidable legal costs, especially if the individual opts for legal representation. The NHA must engage legal professionals to handle such matters, which is essential for maintaining the regulatory functions and responsibilities of the NHA.

The Chairman acknowledged that while some costs are unavoidable, steps have been taken to minimize unnecessary expenses, referencing past cases such as the Douse matter, where significant costs were incurred. He emphasized that, according to the NHA constitution, the Board must resolve to agree to litigate or defend any matter.

Mr da Mata questioned the necessity of going to litigation if the use of the crop is counted until 12 strikes and expressed the view that if the NHA manages its processes effectively, individuals who exceed the 12-strike limit shouldn't require litigation.

Adv Riley recused himself from the meeting at this point.

Mr Rivalland stated that he would bring up this matter under general discussions as it does require a suitable platform. He emphasized that this forum is the only place where licensed stakeholders can come together to discuss issues. Mr Rivalland expressed that, although he is not in favour of excessive whip use, jockeys are concerned about the level of punishment for exceeding the 12-strike limit. He referred to a call he received from a jockey requesting the matter be raised at the AGM, highlighting the need for clear guidelines and a collaborative approach to establish a chart for managing crop penalties. This approach would help ensure that the rules are understood and adhered to by all stakeholders.

The Chief Executive mentioned that during the Rules Committee meeting, guidelines were agreed upon and placed on the website for public comment. The Chairman of the Jockeys Association was invited to the Rules Committee meeting but did not attend, and there were no comments received on the guidelines and no objections after three weeks of them being published on the website. Mr Rivalland stated that jockeys are unsure about the punitive measures for exceeding the 12-strike limit. They expressed confusion regarding the inconsistent penalties, with R20 000 being imposed for two strikes over, and different amounts applied in feature races.

Mr Hyde responded, emphasizing that he had personally addressed jockeys regarding the guidelines. He clarified that penalties would rise in line with Graded Races, with stakes affecting the quantum of fines. Recent press releases highlighted large fines, reflecting the industry's awareness of strict enforcement.

Mr Hyde noted that jurisdictions worldwide are reducing strike limits, with 12 strikes being significantly higher than in other regions, such as the UK. He highlighted the importance of maintaining a level playing field, safeguarding horse welfare, and ensuring integrity in the sport. The riders have been informed that fines are proportionate to race stakes, with 10% of the stake allocated to the rider and 5% allocated to the fines. Mr Hyde emphasized that as an industry, they must be the voice of the horse, ensuring fairness and perception are maintained.

Mr Hyde highlighted that while fines will increase for higher stake races, the 12-strike limit remains a significant concern, as it is much higher limit than those compared to other jurisdictions.

Mr da Mata raised the question of why there should be a difference between major and Grade 1 races, arguing that cruelty to the horse should not be differentiated based on the race's significance.

Mr Hyde mentioned the need to address penalties in the Rules Committee, considering a possible disqualification element similar to what has been introduced overseas for riders exceeding the limit.

Mrs Rowett highlighted that the Rules Committee is the appropriate forum for discussing rule changes, emphasizing that at the last meeting, no jockeys attended despite being invited. She urged stakeholders to take advantage of this opportunity to attend the Rules Committee forums.

The Chairman reinforced that all rule proposals are published, and stakeholders are encouraged to provide comments, even if they disagree. He stressed that feedback should be submitted during the committee process, rather than after the rules are adopted, to ensure fairness and proper consideration.

Mr Soma noted the inconsistency in the argument that hitting a horse 13 times is cruel when hitting it 12 times is not. He stated that if cruelty is a concern, then the whip should be removed entirely. However, he clarified that he is not advocating for this but wanted to raise the point for consideration. This comment was noted.

A call for a more structured approach to rule enforcement and penalties was emphasized, with suggestions of involving licensed stakeholders in the decision-making process.

Advocate Riley was called back to the meeting.

The Chairman informed Adv Riley that the meeting was still discussing the financial statements.

Adv Riley raised concerns about the Traditional Equine Industry (TEI) spend, questioning whether enough was being allocated to horse welfare and enquiring as to where the money came from.

Mrs Rowett explained that the TEI is a sponsored expenditure, funded by the KZN Government. She further elaborated that the NHA, in collaboration with the Coastal Unit, works with horse care units to ensure the welfare of horses, with traditional equine industry initiatives being supported by the NHA through microchipping and health checks. This spending is covered by government funding and does not come from the NHA.

Mr Rosevear mentioned that there is an item of income and expenditure related to the TEI expenditure. The subsidy received from KZN government was reduced in 2024 in line with expenditure.

The Chief Executive explained that the NHA contributes time and resources to initiatives such as microchipping, health checks, and hosting race meetings for traditional racing. The goal is to formalize traditional racing and integrate it into mainstream racing, with empowerment points as a benefit.

Adv Riley enquired about the funds held by the NHA, specifically referencing page 75, and asked where the money originates.

Mrs Rowett clarified that the funds come from the World Pools betting stakes, a deal established in 2020. This includes World Pool Days, such as Met Day, where specific races are assigned for World Pool betting.

The Chief Executive explained that the NHA manages funds through SAHEP, where operators sell pictures internationally and receive commissions. A percentage of these turnovers is allocated to the NHA, which then controls and disburses the funds based on SAHEP invoices.

Adv Riley enquired about SAHEP, its independence, and the members and directors. He questioned the governance structure and asked for more details on SAHEP's composition.

Mrs Rowett clarified that SAHEP is a non-profit entity without members, with her as a Director. Other Directors include Messrs Adrian Todd and John Grewar and the Late Mr David Avery as Chair.

Adv Riley requested confirmation that SAHEP solely consists of its own directors and is an independent organization.

Mrs Rowett confirmed this, acknowledging that she had not been provided with the Articles of Association and thanked Adv Riley for raising this matter as she will follow up on the Articles of Association.

Adv Riley enquired if funding only comes from the Hong Kong Jockey Club.

Mrs Rowett explained that the NHA is the custodian of the funds, being the affiliate body to Asian Racing and Hong Kong Jockey Club. Hong Kong Jockey Club stepped in to fund the export work after South Africa no longer had funding for export protocols. The goal is to make exports self-funding, now that direct exports from South Africa are permitted.

The Chairman asked if there were any further questions on the financials and if not, for them to be approved.

Proposed: Mr Rivalland

Seconded: Mrs Turner

The Financial statements were unanimously adopted.

7. Appointment or re-appointment of the Auditors – Agenda Item 4

Audit Fee:

The Chairman reaffirmed that the Audit, Risk, and Finance Committee will set the Audit Fee, which will then be taken to the National Board for approval.

The fee for the financial year ended 31 July 2024, is disclosed in the financial statement as R355 000.

Re-appointment of Auditors:

The Chairman confirmed that the National Board was pleased with the existing Auditors' work and suggested that Nolands South Africa be re-appointed as the Auditors for the next year.

No objections were raised to the re-appointment of Nolands South Africa as the Authority's Auditors.

Proposed: Adv Riley

Seconded: All in favour

8. To transact any business which may be transacted at an Annual General Meeting – Agenda Item 5

Before moving on to General, the Chairman gave the floor to anyone wanting to raise any matters.

Mr Rivalland raised concerns about communication effectiveness and stated that a preliminary notice of meeting must be communicated more effectively to ensure all members are informed and can participate in discussions. He said this should be via an email to all members rather than just publishing the preliminary notice on the NHA website.

He enquired about the status of finalizing the outstanding items relating to rules since the last rules committee meeting. Ms Rowett stated that this will be dealt with at the next rules committee meeting.

HANDICAPPING MATTERS

Mr Rivalland highlighted the need for a *bosberaad* with trainers and interested parties about handicapping and changes that may need to be made. He stated that he is aware that the Chief Executive is not happy about the way the Operators are introducing certain condition races, which removes the handicappers' ability to properly rate horses.

Mr Rivalland mentioned the importance of understanding the merit rating system and proposed having a meeting at least once a year with interested parties to review and improve the system, if necessary, as well as inform members and owners.

Mrs Rowett echoed Mr Rivalland's points and raised additional concerns about the increasing prevalence of handicapped terms being used in pattern races and the increase in restrictions, which she believes holds a horse to a false level.

She noted that more handicapped races at Grade 3 levels lead to horses winning who are well in at the Handicap, affecting the Stud book. She emphasized that pattern races should showcase the best horses, but Operators prefer handicaps to increase runners and betting turnover, posing a threat to the integrity of the Stud Book.

PATTERN RACES

The Chief Executive stated that the pattern is in the domain of the NHA and emphasized the importance of protecting it. South Africa's current status in the blue book is an advantage for selling horses internationally. He highlighted the issue of horses being held to a false level due to handicapped terms in pattern races, which suppresses the system and threatens the integrity of the pattern races. The Chief Executive mentioned efforts by the NHA to protect the pattern races and the challenges faced in maintaining the system.

Mr Rivalland suggested that operators could set minimum merit rating requirements for horses to compete in Grade 2 races to protect the integrity of the pattern races. He expressed concern about the public's misunderstanding of the issue and the potential risks to the racing industry.

Mr da Mata shared a different perspective, suggesting that the fear of maintaining pattern races might be driving up numbers artificially and affecting the export performance of South African horses.

The Chief Executive clarified that local ratings differ from international ratings.

Adv Riley argued that it should be the responsibility of owners and trainers to decide where and when to run their horses.

FEMALE JOCKEYS

The members raised questions about the fairness of weight allowances for female riders, with discussions on whether these allowances provide equal opportunities or create disparities.

Adv Riley questioned the system of weight allowances for female jockeys, citing the example of Jockey Rachel Venniker, who receives a 1.5kg allowance despite being a competent jockey.

The Chief Executive explained that the allowance is an opportunity allowance aimed at providing equal opportunities for female jockeys, based on historical data and positive discrimination practices.

Historical data analysis showed that female jockeys had equal opportunities when the allowance was 4kg but faced reduced opportunities as the allowance decreased. The Chief Executive emphasized the importance of maintaining these allowances to support and encourage female jockeys' participation in the sport.

Mr Rivalland asked to be excused as he had a flight and left the meeting

The Chief Executive reported strike rates of various jockeys and the impact of weight allowances, with differing opinions on whether the allowances create an unfair advantage.

- Richard Fourie: 26%
- Craig Zackey: 19%
- Gavin Lerena: 25%
- Rachel Venniker: 15% (with an added 1.5kg advantage)

Adv Riley raised questions regarding other jockeys in Rachel Venniker's category.

The Chief Executive stated that Rachel Venniker would need a 27% strike rate to show a clear advantage.

Adv Riley highlighted that comparing Rachel Venniker to male jockeys is not fair, emphasizing that she performs better than 90% of her male counterparts.

The Chief Executive explained the weight-for-age scale and its historical application, citing *EMPRESS CLUB*'s 2.5kg allowance against *FLAMING ROCK* when *EMPRESS CLUB* was superior as this allowance is based on the average filly/mare.

Adv Riley mentioned that France is the only country implementing a similar practice, advocating for equal competition terms for female jockeys.

Mr Soma suggested increasing the pool of female jockeys for a more comprehensive evaluation. He emphasized that Miss Venniker's consistent performance should be taken into account but cautioned against drawing conclusions solely on her data.

9. General

Concerns were raised about the effectiveness of current penalties as a deterrent for Jockeys, suggesting a need for a review of the enforcement methods.

10. Closing Remarks

The Chairman thanked the members for their support, those who attended by proxy and those physically present, the Board of Directors as well as the Executives for their contribution during another challenging year.

Mr Costa thanked the Directors and the Executives for the time and effort that they have diligently spent in discharging a very onerous and at times, a very trying task.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 13:00.

N NALLIAH
Chairman