

**CODE OF PRACTICE  
WELFARE OF HORSES IN THE A.C.T.  
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## **1. Introduction**

This Code of Practice is intended to provide an outline of the principles of husbandry, management and handling throughout the lifetime of the horse.

The Code emphasises the importance of good horsemanship and husbandry practices, pointing out that persons in charge of horses have a legal liability under ACT legislation to care for horses under their control.

The Animal Welfare Act 1992 and Regulations 1993 enact as law that a person shall not, without reasonable excuse, commit an act of cruelty, or deliberately cause unnecessary pain to an animal, or fail to provide it with appropriate and adequate food, water, shelter and exercise. Horse owners are expected to be familiar with this Act and its Regulations.

Horses can be kept under a variety of conditions, from extensive grazing to intensive housing in individual boxes or stables. In all of these situations the basic needs of horses are :

- readily accessible food and water to maintain health and vigour;
- freedom of movement to stand, stretch and lie down;
- regular exercise;
- social contact with other horses and/or people;
- shelter and accommodation that provides adequate protection;
- protection from disease, and regular inspections to assess the need for attention to feet, teeth and parasite control; and
- rapid identification and treatment of injury and disease.

The Code aims to establish and/or document guiding principles which are already well accepted by those experienced with horses and those in the racing and other equine pursuits. The intent and principles of the Code shall apply to any new or currently unlisted horse practice.

The Code does not replace the need for experience and commonsense in horse husbandry, and the use of veterinarian advice when necessary. The overriding theme and principles of this Code are that the well being of the horse must at all times be considered above the demands of owners, breeders, trainers, riders, drivers, sponsors, officials or spectators.

## **2. Responsible Ownership**

Owners are responsible at all times for the welfare of their horse/s unless that responsibility has been given to another person or persons under an agreement, evidenced in writing and signed by the owner and the person or persons taking that responsibility.

Horse owners, particularly new horse owners, should be aware of the requirements of horse welfare as stated in this Code, and if necessary undertake a course of horse management or welfare, as provided by the Canberra Institute of Technology, breed societies or pony clubs. Some suggested reading is included in the attached Bibliography (Section 9).

Prospective purchasers, owners, handlers and breeders of horses should be aware that proper feeding, maintenance and training of horses represent long-term responsibilities and considerable expense. Many welfare problems are created when owners or handlers neglect animals on economic grounds. Responsible ownership also entails disposing of an unwanted horse in a humane way or selling it to a suitable new owner.

### **3. General Husbandry**

#### **3.1 Behavioural Needs**

The application of sound principles of husbandry requires an understanding of animal behaviour.

The design of facilities, the stocking density, and the composition of groups of horses must ensure that each horse has a sufficient area to prevent undue stress and/or injury. Subordinate horses must have an opportunity to escape from bullying by dominant animals in the group. Colts, stallions, weanlings, pregnant and sick animals usually require segregation from other groups of horses, to reduce the risk of injury and disease.

#### **3.2 Supervision**

Frequency and level of supervision should relate to the likelihood of risk to the welfare of each horse.

Horses kept under intensive management in stables and yards should be inspected, fed and watered at least twice a day.

Horses grazing under more extensive conditions require variable supervision, according to the density of stocking and availability of suitable feed; nature and disposition; age and pregnancy status; and the nature of fencing and reliability of water supply. Mares in the last month of pregnancy should be closely observed for signs of foaling.

Steps must be taken to ensure that horses are attended to promptly in the event of fire, flood, injury or sickness.

#### **3.3 Food and Water**

##### **3.3.1 Water**

Horses require free access to an adequate supply of good quality water.

A bucket supply of water should be used only where horses are constantly supervised and should be replenished at least twice a day.

Requirements for water vary widely depending on age, body weight, air temperature and humidity, level of work, state of health and type of diet of the horse (**see Appendix 1**).

### **3.3.2 Food**

Horses need food that will maintain their health, vitality and welfare.

Food for horses should meet the appropriate requirements of growth, pregnancy, lactation and work (**see Appendix 2**).

If there is insufficient pasture for nutritional needs for horses kept under extensive conditions, they should be given extra feed on a regular basis. Regular supervision should be provided to observe behaviour patterns and response to feed. Feed troughs for horses should be spaced to minimise bullying and allow subordinate animals access to feed. Less thrifty horses require segregation and special feeding if they lose body condition and vitality.

When a horse fails to thrive, the quality, quantity and availability of feed, and the health of the horse (including the state of its teeth and the extent of parasitism) should be evaluated. If in any doubt veterinarian advice must be sought. Horse owners and agisters must at all times take account of seasonal variation in the quality and quantity of the available feed. Care should also be taken to protect horses from food harmful to health; eg, poisonous plants, uncontrolled access to grain or pellets.

Horses should not be overfed. Overfeeding can induce laminitis or founder expressed as lameness. Animals at risk should be exercised and their intake of food reduced to minimal maintenance requirements. Affected horses should be examined by a veterinarian and moved to more suitable pasture, or confined to yards and fed suitable dry feed, not grain or other concentrated high energy feed. However, all components of diet essential for growth, health, work and vitality should be readily available to horses.

Excessive amounts of high energy grain feeds may affect the reactions of horses to restraint and training. Inadequate or excessive feeding may result in ill-health and affect horses' attitude and movement.

In the stable situation generally feeders and water troughs should be raised and placed in a corner. They should be smooth and free of protrusions, resist tipping and be easy to clean. Food should be stored in containers with close fitting or hinged lids to prevent entry of vermin; they should be placed in an area protected from water and rain to prevent spoiling. If paddocked horses are hand fed, suitable unbreakable feeders should be used and appropriate measures taken to prevent bullying or stealing of food.

## **3.4 Premises**

### **3.4.1 General Requirements**

Premises should be designed to minimise the risk of injury to horses.

The risk of injury increases where horses are overcrowded and the competition for food, water and space leads to fighting.

### **3.4.2 Fencing**

Fencing should be of suitable height and be sufficiently sturdy to prevent escape. Suitability of fencing varies according to the size, sex and disposition of the horses, stocking density and paddock size. Fences should be properly maintained and, when horses are in close confinement, should be readily visible.

Barbed wire, prefabricated wire fencing, and high tensile wire are prone to cause severe injury to horses and are therefore not recommended for use in small areas. Electric fencing, properly fitted and maintained, provides a safe and effective barrier to horses, when used with conventional post-and-wire and post-and-rail fences, or if erected alone in a highly visible form.

Gateways should be designed to give easy and safe passage of horses; they should not be too narrow. Gates should be fastened with a secure chain or catch, to prevent escape of horses and possible injury.

### **3.4.3 Accommodation**

Healthy horses can tolerate extremes of heat and cold if they are acclimatised and have adequate feed, water and shelter. However, steps should be taken to minimise the effects of climatic extremes and other factors producing either heat or cold stress. Young foals, very old or sick horses are most susceptible. Horse owners should ensure that adequate shade or protection is provided, depending on prevailing weather conditions. Landscape features, such as shelter belts of trees, hedges and gullies, as well as man made features, such as stables and sheds, provide shelter.

Horses clipped during winter should be rugged, except when working or when weather conditions are very mild. Rugging should be seasonally appropriate and protective for the horse. During warm conditions winter rugs should be replaced by summer weight rugs to avoid heat stress.

Yards or stables including loose-boxes and shelter-sheds provided for horses should not restrict their freedom to stand, lie down, stretch and groom themselves. Stables should be constructed and maintained to provide adequate security and minimise risk of injury and disease. Paddocks and yards should be free of objects likely to cause injury.

The floors of yards and stables should have surfaces that permit adequate drainage and allow horses to stand and walk normally. Stabled or yarded horses should be given adequate exercise every day. Continuously stabled and yarded horses should have a period of weeks in each year in a grassed paddock.

Stables should give adequate natural ventilation to prevent the accumulation of ammonia, stale air and moisture. Air vents on the roof and/or on opposite sides of the box are preferred. Horse owners should ensure that adequate shade or protection depending on prevailing weather conditions is provided to horses confined in yards.

Stables or yards for individual horses should be fit for the purpose. For horses of 14.2 hands in height or more, the floor area should be at least 13.5 square metres, with each side being a minimum of 3 metres in length. For ponies the area should be at least 9 square metres with each side being a minimum of 2.5 metres in length. The height should be in all cases a minimum of 60 cm above the height of the poll of the horse or pony with its head in a normal position. The roof should provide adequate shelter from the elements, including adequate insulation for both hot and cold weather. Guttering and downpipes should be provided to convey stormwater away from stables. Horses kept in stables should be accommodated singly unless accustomed to shared accommodation, eg mare and foal.

The walls should be capable of withstanding damage. They may be lined with plywood sheets or rubber conveyor belting, etc. to prevent injury to horses and also to protect the walls from pawing and kicking. The doorways should be at least 1.2m wide and 2.4 m high with no protrusions. Hinged doors should open outwards.

Fire-fighting equipment must be available and there should be ready access to horses to enable them to be released quickly in case of fire.

Provision should be made for storage of food, bedding, stable equipment and saddlery. Horses must not be able to gain access to food stores.

Clean bedding, such as straw, sawdust, wood shavings, shredded paper or rice hulls, should be provided for warmth, insulation and protection from abrasion.

Dirty bedding and stale or contaminated feed and water should be removed each day. Disposal of washings, urine and dung should be made in compliance with the requirements of the ACT Government.

Where horses are accommodated for short term periods in stalls, the stalls should provide adequate ventilation and shelter. The floors should have surfaces that permit adequate drainage.

Tethering of horses should be a short-term practice only. Long-term tethering of horses is not acceptable.

#### **3.4.4 Services, Agistment and Stabling**

A wide variety of services, agistment and stabling facilities are available for horses and, usually, the degree of care and attention given to horses is in direct proportion to the fee charged.

Services provided may include regular supervision, rugging, grooming, stabling and individual feeding.

Where a horse is kept on premises other than those of the horse owner, an agreement should be made between the two parties embodying the points listed in **Appendix 3**.

## 4 Special Husbandry Requirements

### 4.1 General Management

Persons responsible for the supervision of horses should be able to recognise signs of ill-health and may need to call a veterinarian to diagnose and treat any illness, injury or parasite infestation.

Healthy horses:

- are active, move freely, eat and drink well;
- have clear eyes and nostrils, clean skins and coats; and
- are neither very thin nor overfat.

Sick horses may show the following signs:

- lassitude and loss of condition - these signs are frequently associated with an inadequate diet, internal parasites or teeth problems;
- digestive upsets - seen as diarrhoea, with soiling of tail and hind legs, or constipation or colic (abdominal pain) with restlessness, pawing, kicking at the stomach or rolling, often accompanied by straining, teeth-grinding and patchy or generalised sweating;
- lameness due to injury, laminitis or founder, foot abscess or improper hoof maintenance; and
- discharges from eyes, nostrils, or swollen glands under the throat - these are indications of respiratory disease and may be accompanied by a cough, fever, loss of appetite.

Injuries and infectious diseases occur more frequently where horses are overcrowded and facilities are not maintained adequately.

Persons responsible for the welfare of horses should seek *urgent* veterinarian attention for horses showing symptoms, for example:

- acute abdominal pain, colic or abdominal distension;
- respiratory distress;
- serious injuries, including deep wounds, severe haemorrhage, suspected bone fractures, or eye injuries;
- straining for more than 30 minutes by a mare that has not foaled; and
- inability to rise or stand.

Veterinarian attention should also be sought as soon as possible for horses showing symptoms, for example:

- loss of appetite;
- marked lameness or injuries not responding to treatment within 24 hours;
- persistent signs of respiratory disease (colds);
- diarrhoea;
- weight loss;
- dry, harsh coat;. and
- any other unresolved signs of ill health.

Horses should not be allowed to suffer for want of attention. They should be killed humanely (see Section 6) when seriously injured or sick if proper care and attention cannot be provided, or removed to suitable facilities to permit adequate treatment, supervision and continuing after-care.

## **4.2 Education, Training and Performance**

Persons engaged in educating, training and using horses should be experienced, or under direct supervision of an experienced person. Competent horsepersons recognise the different behaviour patterns of horses and successful trainers adapt their training methods to suit the particular horse. Competent persons are confident and instil this confidence in the horses they handle or train. They recognise that most horses respond best to firm but gentle techniques, and to rewards when the horse has responded correctly.

Foals less than four or five months of age may be handled to accustom them to being caught and led, and to being confined within a yard, stall or horse float, when accompanied by their mothers.

After weaning (usually between five and seven months of age), foals may be accustomed to having their legs and feet handled, and to being tied up and confined. Horses should not be broken to ride until they are aged at least 18 months.

Training and conditioning of young horses for competitive purposes requires considerable skill, time and experience. The selection, care and training of horses used for work and competition are complex arts and skills. Persons involved in the education and training of horses should be familiar with average requirements for age, suitability and fitness levels of horses used for the purpose for which the animal is being trained.

Abnormal physiological and behavioural responses to training and confinement should be recognised and measures taken to correct them. These responses may include aggression, biting, pawing, kicking, weaving, pacing, crib-biting, wind-sucking, irregular appetite and unusual sweating patterns.

Disciplinary measures may be necessary to establish control and discourage bad habits, such as biting, refusal to load onto a transport vehicle or into a starting stall. Discipline has to be administered immediately following the act of misconduct, and should be minimal. Alternatively such techniques as blindfolding may be used to allay fear during loading. Appropriate education beforehand is the key to good behaviour. Training methods involving cruelty or repeated pain 'insults' must not be used. Horses must not be beaten or abused.

All saddlery, harness and other equipment such as bandages, boots, plates, tongue ties and bits used with horses should be non-injurious, of sound condition, well-fitting, correctly adjusted, and regularly cleaned, so that the risk of injury and disease to horses is reduced. Supportive or protective elastic bandages may be used on joints and tendons during training, competition and racing. Bandages must be securely fixed when used during work and racing.

It is recognised that a whip is necessary in certain circumstances to control or guide a horse. Whips used in flat or harness racing must be of a type approved by the stewards under the rules of racing (see Section 5 below). No horse should be whipped if it is clear that it will not achieve a place. Only blunt spurs, as approved by the stewards may be used. Stewards may punish a rider if in their opinion he/she has used a whip or spurs to excess or in an improper manner. Such judgement should take into account an opinion from the race-course veterinarian concerning the latter's findings in post race inspection of horses considered to be so affected. Artificial stimulatory devices shall not be used.

The ACT Animal Welfare Act 1992 (Section 14) prohibits the use of spurs with fixed or sharpened rowels. In equestrian disciplines other than flat and harness racing, the use of the whip should follow the guidelines of the particular discipline.

Horses require regular exercise for a period of weeks before they are adequately conditioned for more strenuous exercise. It is possible, even with well-trained animals, to inadvertently over-ride horses. Experience and skill are required to train horses to perform to their utmost ability in races and competitive horse sports without inducing distress or severe illness. Horses should be of the appropriate type, be adequately educated, fed and housed and trained to the degree of fitness for the task to be performed or the race to be undertaken. It should be recognised that the weight carried or pulled by horses should be commensurate with the type of activity carried out, and the state of maturity, size and condition of the horse.

Inexperienced persons training or riding have an obligation to use the horse in accordance with its fitness and, if in doubt, should seek advice from an experienced horseperson. Veterinarian attention should be sought if there is any doubt about the fitness of a horse for training, competition or racing.

### **4.3 Footcare**

Horses' hooves should be trimmed regularly as required to permit normal mobility. Horses ridden or driven on roads and tracks or hard surfaces should be shod. Shoeing should be practised only by experienced persons or farriers. Shoeing should not provoke any abnormality of gait or conformation.

Hooves of horses in work should be inspected each day for signs of injury, loose shoes or impacted stones or infections. Shod horses should be inspected at least every six weeks for replacement or adjustment of shoes. Shoes should be removed or inspected regularly when horses are not in training or regular use.

### **4.4 Treatment Procedures**

#### **4.4.1 General**

Effective management and treatment of horses involves using various forms of restraint. These will vary with the temperament, disposition and previous learning experience of the particular horse, the nature of the management procedure and the skill of the handler.

Restraint methods used on horses should always be the minimum necessary to carry out routine management procedures. Prolonged or overzealous use of restraints, such as nose-twitches, may cause severe reaction from many horses. Twitches should only be applied to the upper lip. Ear twitches should

not be applied. Adequate facilities to provide a safe environment, and suitable equipment, should be available when horses are subjected to any procedure or treatment.

Management and treatment procedures should only be performed by competent persons. Treatment practices that cause pain should not be carried out on horses if painless or alternative methods of treatment can be adopted. Treatment practices causing pain should be performed only under the influence of suitable analgesic prescribed by a veterinarian and/or anaesthetic administered by a veterinarian.

#### **4.4.2 Identification**

Skin branding, lip tattooing and microchipping are the accepted methods of identifying horses. Hot iron branding may be required by some breed societies. Freeze branding is the usual method of permanent identification. Horses should not be branded using corrosive chemicals. Horses should be branded before weaning and as early as management practices will allow. Branding should be performed only by experienced persons.

#### **4.4.3 Surgical and Medical Procedures**

Surgical procedures should be performed and anaesthesia given only by a veterinarian. Horses of any age should not be castrated without the use of appropriate anaesthetic agents.

Practices such as firing, knicking (cutting the skin or ligaments of the tail to ensure the tail is held high) and limb neurectomy for the purpose of performance enhancement are not acceptable.

Medication such as vaccines, drenches, food additives, liniments, lotions should be used strictly in accordance with the manufacturer's instruction. Overdosing may be harmful; under-dosing may be ineffective.

Treatments should be administered in a hygienic manner. Medical wastes, syringes and needles, etc should be disposed of in accordance with clinical waste disposal requirements of the ACT Government.

#### **4.5 Protection from Disease**

Routine vaccination of horses against tetanus is recommended. Owners should seek veterinarian advice about vaccination against other disease. Prompt appropriate preventive treatment should be given to horses for diseases that may be common in a district or occurring in a mob. Routine treatment for internal parasites and early treatment of external parasites should be practised. The effectiveness of treatment must be evaluated by veterinarian examination if the response to routine treatment is poor.

Good hygiene and cleanliness in and around stables, including disposal of effluent and litter, will reduce the risk of parasitism and disease. Control of flies and vermin can be aided by use of proper storage bins and prompt removal of spillage, daily cleaning of stables and surrounds and proper disposal of waste. Suitable pest control measures such as fly baits and surface residual sprays should be used, if necessary. Safety precautions are essential to protect both users and horses when using such chemicals. Horses diagnosed with a contagious disease must be immediately isolated from other horses.

Paddocks used for grazing horses should be managed in such a way that contamination by parasites or other disease producing agents is minimised. Good management practices include spelling paddocks for intervals, grazing with other species such as sheep and cattle, collection of droppings where size of yard makes it feasible and avoidance of overstocking.

## **5 Racing and Competitive Discipline Codes**

In addition to the welfare provisions of this Code, each discipline has rules controlling its sport and participants are advised to be aware of these rules and comply with them.

Barrel, Bending and Flag Racing: Australian Bushmen's Campdraft and Rodeo Association Rule book or rules of breed societies involved in this activity - eg Australian Stock Horse Society Handbook for judges, competitors and members.

Bushracing: Not active at present in the ACT

Campdrafting: Australian Bushmen's Campdraft and Rodeo Association Rule book; and rules of breed societies involved in this activity - eg Australian Stock Horse Society Handbook for judges, competitors and members.

Carriage Driving: Australian Driving Society Inc. Rules for driving events.

Cutting: National Cutting Horse Association of Australia

Dressage: Equestrian Federation of Australia Inc.

Endurance Riding: NSW Endurance Rider's Association Inc. Members handbook.

Eventing: (One, Two and Three Day Trials) Equestrian Federation of Australia Inc. Rules for official horse trials.

Harness Racing (trotting): Canberra Harness Racing Club, Harness Racing Authority of NSW - Rules of Harness Racing.

Polo: Not active at present in the ACT though rules are made by Australian Polo Council.

Polocrosse: Polocrosse Association of Australia.

Pony Club events: The Committee of the Day, but within the hierarchy of organisations from local Zone 16 Committee, Pony Club of New South Wales and Australian Pony Club Council.

Quarter Horse Racing: Not active in the ACT at present but rules are made through Australian Quarter Horse Association.

Showing and Hacking: Equestrian Federation of Australia Inc.; and breed classes, or shows devoted to a breed, also involve rules of the breed society eg Australian Appaloosa Association Ltd. Rule Book.

Show jumping: Equestrian Federation of Australia Inc. Rules for show jumping events.

Tentpegging: Australian Tentpegging Association.

Thoroughbred Racing: Australian Jockey Club, Sydney The Rules of Racing.

Vaulting: Australian competitive vaulting rules as of January 1993, approved through Equestrian Federation of Australia Inc.

Western Performance: Rules are made through the Australian Quarter Horse Association.

Any other horse activity should be organised under the rules of its Australian governing body.

## **6 Humane Death**

When it is necessary, the method of humane killing should be effective and cause sudden and painless death for any horse.

Acceptable methods are:

- rapid intravenous injection of concentrated barbiturate solutions; and
- shooting, using a firearm or humane killer captive bolt to the brain.

Euthanasia by injection should be performed only by veterinarians. Shooting should only be carried out by persons trained or experienced in this, and in accordance with the diagram below. Euthanasia on the race track should be performed behind appropriate protective screens to shield the horse from public view. Disposal of the carcass should meet with ACT Government regulations.

## **7 Transport**

Appropriate training and conditioning reduce the risk of injury during transport. Unhandled horses should not be transported alone in single or dual horse trailers. Horses unaccustomed to being transported will usually travel better in the company of other horses. Young or unbroken horses frequently travel best when loose-penned in small groups in trucks.

Other horses should be fitted with suitable head-stalls and the leads should be secured to the vehicle using a quick-release knot, so as not to endanger the animals. Care should be taken to prevent attempted escapes over tail-gates or under breast-rails of trailer floats.

Electric prods must not be used.

It is recommended that horses should be transported in separate compartments of a truck or trailer: ie

- horses significantly different in size or type for example weanlings and adults, light or heavy horses, etc;
- stallions - separately with high dividers;
- mares in advanced pregnancy - double width compartments; and
- mares and foals - double width compartments.

Unweaned foals should be transported with their mothers.

After 24 hours of road travel, a rest period of 12 hours should be provided, before starting the next stage of the journey.

Special precautions should be taken to provide water, shelter and ventilation during extremely hot weather. Horses in transit should be fed and watered at intervals of no longer than 8 hours. Provision should be made for foals to suckle their dams during transit.

Horses should have adequate leg supports, eg bandages, boots, knee and hock caps, etc, fitted to minimise tendon, ligament joint and bone damage. Bell boots may be used to protect the coronet and hooves. Hoods, blankets and sheets are desirable to protect parts of the body that are likely to suffer abrasion or bruising during transport. Extra tall horses should be fitted with poll protectors to ensure injury does not occur to the head.

Lame and sick horses should not be transported except to or from a place for veterinarian treatment. Mares more than 10 months pregnant should not be transported for more than 8 hours. Mares with foals at foot should not be transported within 7 days of foaling unless it is to or from a place for veterinarian treatment, or is for a journey of two hours or less. Mares foaled fewer than 14 days should not be transported for more than 8 hours.

All transport vehicle doors and ramps should be fitted with secure latches, and be close-fitting to reduce the risk of injury and/or escape. Loading facilities should be constructed so that they are unlikely to cause injury to animals. The design and construction of vehicles should be suitable for horses. Floors of transport vehicles should be of solid construction and provide a nonslip footing for horses. Horses should not be transported in double decker transport vehicles.

Inspection of horses should be carried out by either the driver or attendant not later than 30 minutes after commencement of the journey, and thereafter at intervals of at least every 2 hours. Horses should be unloaded as soon as possible after arrival at the destination.

Transport vehicles should be thoroughly cleaned and inspected regularly for faults. Faulty vehicles must be repaired before further use.

## 8. Bibliography

The following list of references is provided as a guide to further reading for those involved in the care of horses. Though included in the list, the readings are not endorsed by this Code of Practice.

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## 9 Acknowledgements

This document draws heavily on the Victorian Department of Agriculture Agnote Order No. 2167/83 *Guidelines for the Welfare of Horses*. Further assistance in preparation of this Code is gratefully acknowledged from various industry related societies and specifically:

- ACT Equestrian Association Incorporated
- ACT Equine Veterinary Practitioners
- ACT Racing Club Inc
- ACT Thoroughbred Owners and Trainers Association
- Australian Equine Veterinary Association
- Australian Jockey Club
- Australian Veterinary Association
- Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and Energy
- RSPCA (NSW) Inc and (ACT) Inc
- Victorian Racing Club Inc



## **10 Appendices**

### **Appendix 1 - Water Requirements**

The basic maintenance requirements of water for ponies and horses are about 52ml/kg bodyweight/day.

Ponies 200-300 kg bodyweight require 10-15 litres daily  
Horses 300-450 kg bodyweight require 15-25 litres daily  
Horses 450-500 kg bodyweight require 25-30 litres daily.

These requirements are significantly increased with growth, work and lactation. Two or three times as much water as shown above is needed by horses in work or lactation. Water requirement is closely related to dry matter intake of food. Horses need 2-4 litres of water per kilogram of dry matter intake. This requirement increases as air temperatures rise (15-20% increase for 13°C to 25°C temperature change).

Water troughs and containers should be inspected regularly for function, replenishment, cleanliness and freedom from contamination. Water should always be clean.

## Appendix 2 - Feed Requirements

Good quality pasture, containing suitable grasses and legumes, can provide the food requirements for most horses, except those doing hard work.

Horses should be fed according to body condition and work. It is undesirable for any horse to be overweight. The efficiency of food utilisation will vary between particular horses. Thoroughbred horses require substantially more feed per kilogram of body weight than other breeds. Most horses kept in smaller areas require supplementary feed for some part of the year, depending on stocking density and their requirements for growth, pregnancy, lactation and work.

Approximate minimum feed requirements of ponies and adult horses are shown in the table. Horses in hard work have special feeding requirements, and information is available in books such as Hawcroft's *The Complete Book of Horse Care* (1989).

Body weight of horse (kg)	Idle horse (maintenance only)	Moderate work (jumping, stock work, some eventing). Horse needs both hay and grain	
	hay* (kg)	hay* (kg)	grain (oats)(kg)
300	5.0	4.0	1.0
400	7.0	5.0	3.5
500	8.0-9.0	5.5-7.5	4.0-6.0

\* Good quality pasture hay rich in clover, or lucerne hay

Inexperienced people should consult a veterinarian or an experienced horseperson about selection of suitable foodstuffs for horses used for training and racing.

Protein, mineral and vitamin supplements should be provided when required.

Adequate, good quality food is necessary for the growth of young horses. At six months of age horses require as much energy-rich foods and more protein than idle, adult horses.

Lactating mares require about 70% more energy foods than idle, adult horses.

### **Appendix 3 - Agistment/Stabling Agreement**

It is recommended that the following components form the basis of any agistment agreement:

- 1 Horse description and identification: name, sex, age, breed, height (hh approx), colour/s, marks, brands like (n/side, off/side) and any other distinguishing features.
- 2 Horse owner's name or horse lessee's name, address(es), contact phone number(s).
- 3 Property owner's name, address(es) and contact phone number(s).
- 4 Location and name of holding paddock or stable.
- 5 Statutory age limit of parties entering into agreement (must be 18 years or over).
- 6 Interpretation of terms used.
- 7 Extent of services provided by property owner for agistment or stabling.
- 8 Holding period (if no fixed period write "indefinite").
- 9 Payment rate.
- 10 Payment date(s).
- 11 Notice periods for variation.
- 12 Rights of property owner if fees are owing, rights to detain or power of sale, etc.
- 13 Warranty by horse owner/licensee of horse's suitability for agistment/stabling, including its health, statement of responsibility of horse owner to maintain the horse in good health with particular attention to parasite control, hooves and teeth.
- 14 Indication of circumstances in which property owner may call for veterinarian attention, name and phone number of veterinarian surgeon used by horse owner.
- 15 Circumstances in which agreement may cease.
- 16 Rules for use of facilities provided, including health, hygiene and cleaning.
- 17 Limits of liability and indemnity, including third parties.