

Equestrian sport and the concept of a social license

Presentation to the 2017 FEI General Assembly Roly Owers MRCVS
Chief Executive, World Horse Welfare



Overview



- 1. Introduce World Horse Welfare
- 2. Social license why and what
- 3. Four actions to consider taking
- 4. An exciting announcement...

World Horse Welfare



- Leading equine charity for 90 years
- Covers full spectrum of equine world
- Works across 4 continents
- 120 employees €10m turnover
- Education, campaigns and hands-on care
- Policy engagement
- Sport horse welfare advisor to regulators – e.g. FEI















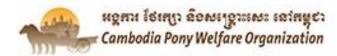
World Organisation for Animal Health











Changing views

- World Horse Welfare
 Celebrating 90 years of helping horses

 The Cruelty Of Equestrian Sports
- Public views evolving on use of horses in sport or work
- Partnership or exploitation?
- 'Use but not abuse' vs 'Use is abuse'
- Lack of understanding of ethos of horse sport
- Horses belong in fields!

If I love animals, how can I love horse racing? It requires denial ...





Protests over horse 'cruelty' as equestrian fans threaten to boycott 2012 Olympics

This is NOT the view of World Horse Welfare!

Why a social license?



Helps put focus on:

- Make right ethical choices for horses (not new...)
- Changing attitudes of society

"It is no longer just us, the horse people, who decide what is right and wrong. The pressure from society on the treatment of horses is increasing."

Hanfried Haring, EEF President

What is a social license?



- Unwritten, non-legally binding contract
- Society 'gives' right to operate
- About building trust that we behave ethically
- We ALL have responsibility to cultivate social licence

LEVEL OF SOCIAL LICENSE	SYMPTOMS/INDICATORS
WITHHELD / WITHDRAWN	Shutdowns, blockades, boycotts, violence / sabotage, legal challenges
ACCEPTANCE / TOLERANCE	Lingering/recurring issues & threats, presence of outside NGOs, watchful monitoring
APPROVAL / SUPPORT	Company seen as good neighbour, pride in collaborative achievements
PSYCHOLOGICAL IDENTIFICATION	Political support, co-management of projects, united front against critics



A social license in horse sport?





Firm foundations in horse sport World Horse Welfare

Welfare Code of Conduct:

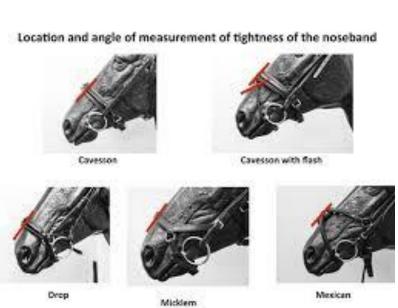
"All those involved in international equestrian sport must adhere to the FEI Code of Conduct ... and acknowledge and accept that at all times the welfare of the horse must be paramount ... and never be subordinated to competitive or commercial influences."

- Enforcement of rules and standards on field of play and off of it
- Responsibility from birth to death and in training yards

Rules can and should evolve







Action 1: do not ignore!



 If we ignore public opinion, future of equestrian sport AT RISK

 Lessons from Australian greyhound racing and National Hunt racing

Jumps racing faces axe in Australia

Jumps racing may be scrapped in Australia following three equine deaths at the famous Warrnambool three-day carnival in Victoria's Western District last week.



Action 2: be proactive



- Respond to public opinion
- Actively engage with public concerns
- Demonstrate and communicate welfare provisions
- Seek independent view on whether rules protect welfare (German Federation, British Dressage)
- Be honest, transparent and move swiftly to stamp out
 ANYTHING that harms the welfare of the horse

Zero tolerance required



 Acts of abuse have lasting impact on reputation

 The horse is the chief stakeholder in the social license to operate

Australian jockey Caboche suspended for punching horse



Action 3: highlight relevance of the sector World Horse Welfare Celebrating 90 years of helping horses

Articulate relevance of horse sport and wider horse sector

Europe: Jobs, Growth and Investment

- 7 million equidae
- €100 billion+ per annum to economy
- 2.6 million hectares of land
- Key rural employer
 - Second largest rural employer in some Member States
 - ➤ At least 180,000 jobs in France



Action 4: highlight horse-human partnership Horse Welfare

 Continue to highlight uniqueness of horse-human partnership in sport

 Demonstrate our respect for horses







17 September

World Horse Day



Seeking to engage everyone



- Hope you will support the campaign
- Seeking to engage all Federations down to local riding clubs
- Website with toolkit to be available
- Aim to include racing, polo, universities, other NGOs and others involved with horses







Thank you

@rolyowers

www.worldhorsewelfare.org

