

Equine Ethics and Wellbeing Commission

The following 24 draft Recommendations will be discussed in more detail at the 2023 Sports Forum. These recommendations are in addition to those previously shared with the FEI Board, and are intended for submission for consideration by the FEI Board at a later stage.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Be a Leader

The FEI will play a critical role in advancing equine welfare globally by setting an example that others aspire towards.

Recommendation 1

Develop and share a future-focused '[Good Life for Horses](#)' vision and a strategy for safeguarding equine wellbeing, and ensuring the future involvement of horses in sport.

Recommendation 2

Publicly commit to defining, promoting and ensuring a **Good Life** for horses as the fundamental tenet of the FEI Equine Wellbeing Strategy.

Recommendation 3

Develop and use an 'equine centric' design approach for FEI event planning and management to ensure that equine behavioural, social, physical (including thermal) and mental needs are a key consideration in choice of location/venues/provision of facilities and management of a FEI affiliated event.

Recommendation 4

Promote only ethical and evidence-based equestrianism. Ensure ongoing development of an understanding of the importance of utilising ethical, evidence-based practices in horse training, management and performance.

Recommendation 5

Ensure that the horse's interests are always placed before the interests of the human or sport, and celebrate equestrians who clearly place their horse's interests before their own.

2. Be Trusted

The FEI will embed equine welfare within its structure and ways of working to demonstrate its commitment to prioritising equine welfare in both policy and practice.

Recommendation 6

Create a permanent internal FEI Equine Ethics and Wellbeing 'body/office' to advocate specifically for the welfare interests of horses in sport, providing a 'voice for the horse' and supporting the FEI in ensuring welfare is paramount.

Recommendation 7

Develop and implement a robust FEI internal decision-making process to ensure that equine welfare and ethics are genuinely prioritised in the development of FEI policy and in practice.

Recommendation 8

Adopt a transparent and evidence-based approach for assessing the impact on horse welfare of new and existing items of tack and equipment in training and competition. Prioritise individual equine welfare in relation to the regulation of new and existing tack and equipment, being prepared to de-regulate tack because of risks to equine welfare.

Recommendation 9

Establish and implement a process for ensuring high standards of welfare and investigating risky practices for horses when 'outside of competition' through establishing something similar to human athlete checks under the WADA code.

Recommendation 10

Ensure the existing Equestrian Community Integrity Unit (ECIU) is trusted and supportive, and there is an effective 'whistle-blowing' process for dealing with all FEI related concerns/complaints concerning equine welfare in and out of competition. Empower FEI equestrians to be 'Active Bystanders' and to challenge bad practice when they see it.

Recommendation 11

Ensure the existence of an effective 'zero-tolerance' policy which prevents, prohibits and punishes any practice that compromises equine welfare and safety during and outside of competition.

3. Be Transparent

The FEI will validate its commitment to equine welfare by being proactive in how it communicates, engaging in dialogue and providing credible information.

Recommendation 12

Proactively and positively engage with the public (including equestrian stakeholders) in matters related to equine welfare.

Recommendation 13

Develop an agreed FEI 'welfare centric' terminology for use when describing the way in which humans and horses interact in sport.

Recommendation 14

Develop and share a set of FEI Equine 'Ethics and Wellbeing Position Statements' to ensure consistent understanding and messaging in relation to the FEI's commitment to equine welfare across the FEI family.

Recommendation 15

Proactively track and monitor 'Social Licence to Operate' and progress in relation to equine welfare, through use of a dedicated assessment tool (a 'Social Licence Dashboard'). Measure progress against agreed equine welfare objectives and identify areas of public concern to help guide future FEI initiatives.

Recommendation 16

Require mandatory collection and publication of comprehensive lifecycle information (birth to death health/travel/event attendance/ownership/performance records) and injury statistics for horses involved in sport, alongside a trusted identification registration and traceability system.

4. Be Pro-Active

The FEI must be prepared to challenge the status quo and demonstrate a dynamic path of action towards achieving the highest standards of equine welfare, taking their stakeholders with them.

Recommendation 17

Ensure that all FEI stakeholders commit to the '[FEI Equestrian Charter](#)'.

Recommendation 18

Update the FEI Code of Conduct for the Welfare of the Horse to reflect the FEI's commitment to ensuring all horses have 'A Good Life', underpin the FEI Equestrian Charter, and to define what 'A Good Life' means in relation to the management and working life of horses.

Recommendation 19

Develop and disseminate a 'road map' (an implementation plan with timelines) for addressing the [six priority areas of focus](#) described by the EEWB. Require and empower all FEI stakeholders make use of the [six enablers](#) to address the [priority areas of focus within their own context](#).

Recommendation 20

Establish and promote an equine ethics and wellbeing education programme for all equestrians. Require FEI stakeholders to complete at least two core modules related to equine wellbeing and Social Licence to Operate preferably within their first year of association with the FEI.

Recommendation 21

Empower officials to ensure welfare is paramount, through improved mandatory training and ongoing professional development, greater support for ensuring effective enforcement and more accountability for achieving high standards of individual horse welfare at all times at an event.

Recommendation 22

Recommend evidence based acceptable transport frequency and journey length for ensuring the welfare of competition horses and sustainability of the sport.

5. Be Open to Independent Evaluation

The FEI will achieve higher standards of welfare and earn trust more sustainably by inviting external scrutiny.

Recommendation 23

Implement additional checks by trained professionals and officials to ensure horses are always 'Fit to Compete' by investing in more extensive and stricter health and welfare monitoring pre and post competition to prevent horses entering the competition arena if experiencing pain and/or stress.

Recommendation 24

Establish a permanent FEI Equine Ethics and Wellbeing Independent Advisory Committee to act as a 'critical friend' and provide an external perspective and independent advice related to the welfare of horses in sport.

