

Welfare – global overview of ethics and responsibilities in horse sport – from birth to death

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Chief Executive, World Horse Welfare





My background

- Qualified veterinary surgeon
 - Cambridge University (1992)
 - MSc Nutrition: London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (1997)
- Chief Executive of World Horse Welfare since 2008
- Previous roles included Blue Cross and Royal Army Veterinary Corps
- Treasurer of the British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA) – Chairman of the UK Equine Disease Coalition – Board member of the British Horse Council – and of the European Horse Network





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Overview

1. World Horse Welfare
2. A changing world
3. A social license to operate
4. Responsible ownership
5. Proactive engagement for future



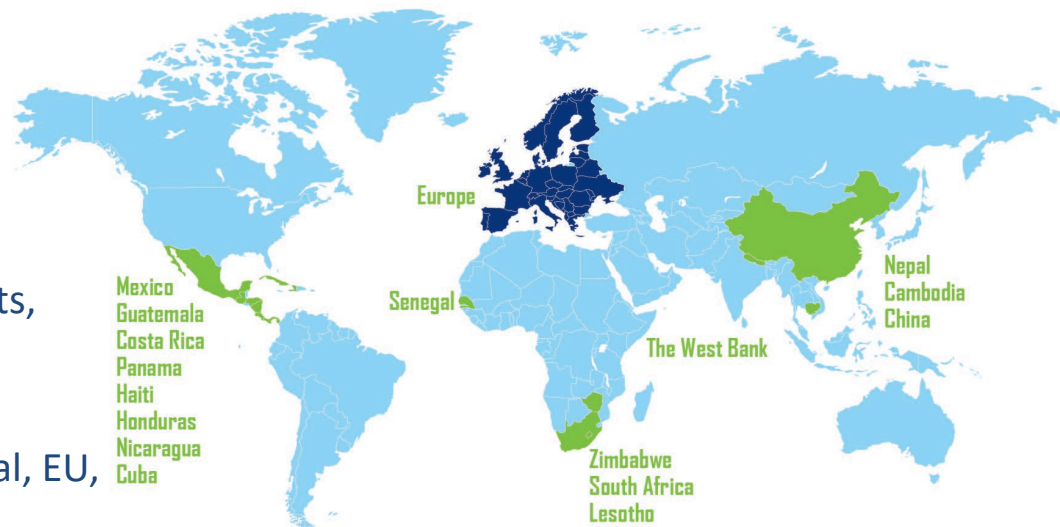
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www.worldhorsewelfare.org
Registered charity no. 206658 and SC038384



1. An overview of World Horse Welfare

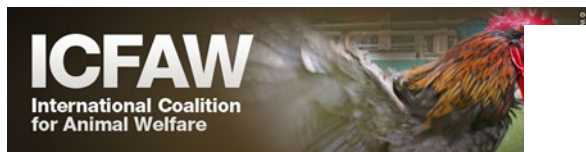
- Leading equine charity since 1927
- Actively promotes horse-human partnership
- Works across 4 continents
- 120+ employees – €12m turnover
- Partnership working with governments, universities, regulators, other NGOs
- Strong veterinary credentials
- Active in policy engagement – national, EU, OIE, UN
- Supports responsible horse sport



Partnership working



World Organisation for Animal Health



INTERNATIONAL COALITION FOR WORKING EQUIDS



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2. A changing world – in our understanding

- *Animal welfare: ‘... physical and mental health and happiness...’*
(Cambridge Dictionary)
- From the Five Freedoms:
 - Freedom from hunger & thirst
 - Freedom from discomfort
 - Freedom from pain, injury & disease
 - Freedom from fear & distress
 - Freedom to express natural behaviour





...to the Five Provisions – a life worth living

1. **Good nutrition:** Provide ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour
2. **Good environment:** Provide shade/shelter or suitable housing, good air quality and comfortable resting areas
3. **Good health:** Prevent or rapidly diagnose and treat disease and injury, and foster good muscle tone, posture and cardiorespiratory function
4. **Positive mental experiences:** Provide safe, congenial and species-appropriate opportunities to have pleasurable experiences
5. **Appropriate behaviour:** Provide sufficient space, proper facilities, congenial company and appropriately varied conditions





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Advances in research and understanding

- Veterinary medicine and treatments
- Veterinary research – equine health and welfare
- Training methods
- Equine behaviour
- Equine learning theory



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A changing world – of public scrutiny

- Animal welfare increasingly valued
 - Growing expectation for horses to be well treated and cared for
 - Growing concerns around equine injuries
 - Age of social media...
 - Animal rights campaigns
- ➔ Changing views of what is acceptable





Shift in public values

- 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!

The Cruelty Of Equestrian Sports



By Alexander Nevzorov

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

... parasitizing on physical ...
 ... in this sport but forced to it by pain and beating. So why the hell we call it a sport?
 Among all sportsmen there are no more than two percent of real sadists, and others just do not realize what they're doing."
 As you look through this small collection of typical phenomena and dishonesty come from ...



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





Breeders in spotlight too

- Oversupply
- Selling to who?
- What happens to horses if not suitable for sport?
- What happens after career?





3. Horse sport needs a social license

Social License (SLO)

What is 'Social License (SLO)'

The Social License to Operate (SLO), or simply social license, refers to the ongoing acceptance of a company or industry's standard business practices and operating procedures by its employees, stakeholders and the general public. The concept of social license is closely related to the concept of sustainability and the **triple bottom line**. Social license to operate is created and maintained slowly over time as the actions of a company build trust with the community it operates in and other stakeholders. A company must be seen operating responsibly, taking care of its employees and the environment, and being a **good corporate citizen**. When problems do occur, the company must act quickly to resolve the issues or the social license to operate is put in danger.





What is a social licence?

- 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 LICENCE	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

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Horse sport can lose its social license



Why horse-racing in Australia needs a social licence to operate

November 2, 2017 7:04pm GMT



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4. Responsible ownership is the cornerstone

- Responsible breeding
- Responsible care
- Responsible training
- Responsible post-career rehoming
- Responsible end of life
- ***Responsible from birth to death***





Code of Conduct



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- *“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 it
- Reducing risk as far as possible



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Responsibility from birth





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British & Irish racing seek lifelong traceability

30 day foal notification to provide greater transparency and support British racing's commitment to whole-life care for thoroughbreds



HORSE RACING
IRELAND

home / racing / racing: irish interest / new 30-day foal notification to be introduced in january 2019

Racing Racing: Irish Interest

New 30-day foal notification to be introduced in January 2019

By Paul Naughton



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Responsibility to death

International racing established forum in 2017 to:

- Raise awareness globally of the importance of welfare for thoroughbred racehorses
- Improve education on lifetime care, including end of life issues
- Develop a network which allows best practice to be easily shared
- Promote the versatility, adaptability and potential of thoroughbreds





Quality -vs- Quantity of life

- Quality of life must be driver of end of life decisions
- Once a race or sport horse, always one in public's eye
- Euthanasia or slaughter must be options for horses who cannot be retrained or rehomed
- Providing quality not quantity of life is the responsible approach



More can be done

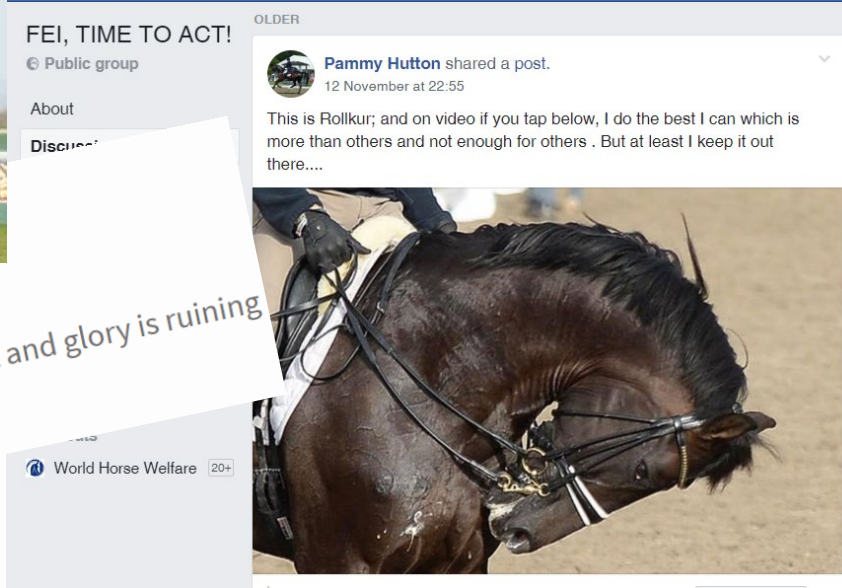
- Good developments in racing – but much more to do
- All of us in horse sport must strive to assume greater responsibility
- To safeguard social license, need to know where we are





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What is state of our social license?



Bred to Death

Our special report on how the racing industry's drive for profit and glory is ruining the Thoroughbred horse.



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Create a new independent welfare body to protect racehorses from abuse and death

The British Horseracing Authority is responsible for around 200 horses die each year due to racing. The government to set up an independent welfare body as its only interest, which will take up horses dying.

Politicians have racing in their cross-hairs and the sport must wake up

MPs debate how to 'stop horses dying' after huge response to petition including 1,300 signatures from Gloucestershire

More than 105,000 people are calling for an independent regulatory body to be set up



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5. So what do we need to do to better live our ethics and build on our social license?



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#1 – Do the right thing

- We must live by our ethics, putting the horse first
- Consider the future of all foals produced
- Recognise the bigger picture of responsible ownership
- Be willing to change to improve practices – through experience and research





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Respond to new evidence



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#2 – Respond to public opinion

- If we ignore public opinion, future of equestrianism AT RISK
- Actively engage with public concerns
- Demonstrate and communicate welfare provisions
- Be honest and transparent
- This is NOT mob rule...





#3 – Zero tolerance required

- Acts of abuse have lasting impact on reputation
- The horse is the **Chief Stakeholder** in the social license to operate
- When needed essential to act quickly – and be seen to be doing so

Australian jockey Caboche suspended for punching horse

🕒 9 November 2017 | Australia



Davy Russell punching his horse was a serious blow to racing's image





#4 – Explain the ethos of horse sport

- Continue to highlight uniqueness of horse-human partnership in sport
- Demonstrate our respect for horses in everything we do



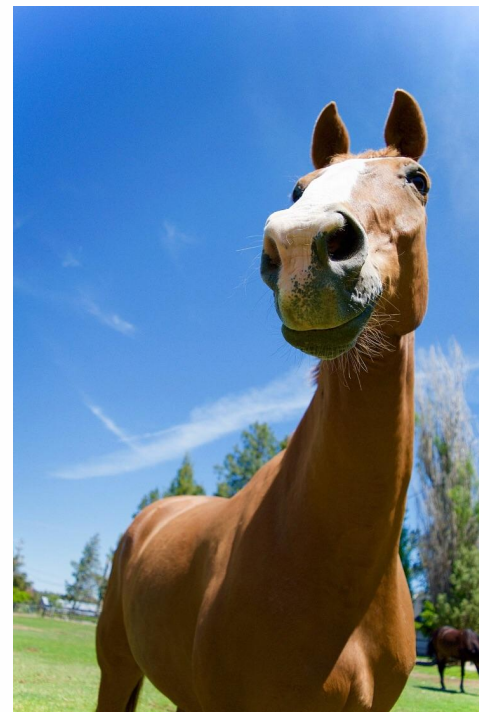
#TwoHearts





Summary

- Public views of horse sport is changing – scrutiny increasing
- Build on our social license – or risk losing it
- Take responsibility – as individuals and as a sector
- Explain, promote and celebrate the unique horse-human partnership





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Thank You

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