

## **Terms of Reference for the Equine Welfare Steering Group**

### **September 2024**

#### **1. Purpose**

The Equine Welfare Steering Group is tasked by the BEF Board to develop robust and effective oversight to ensure the primacy of equine welfare across the Federation, that:

1. Is founded on a robust regulatory framework;
2. Applies a welfare-centric approach to regulation and planning for events and activities;
3. Establishes awareness and education in relation to best practice for those involved with horses;
4. Adopts a robust response to any form of mistreatment with effective sanctions for prohibited behaviour; and
5. Embeds a culture of using ethical, evidence-based practices in training, management, and performance.

It will provide oversight, guidance and direction on the implementation of new policy and regulation as well as an ongoing remit to review and improve the way in which the Federation safeguards equines.

#### **2. Authority and Accountability**

The authority of the Steering Group is established by the Board of the BEF. It is a non-executive committee and has no executive powers, other than those specifically delegated in the Terms of Reference. It reports to the Board of the BEF.

#### **3. Duties**

The duties of the Steering Group are as follows:

- To work with the Equine Welfare and Ethics Advisory Group (EWEAG) to understand the key threats and challenges, both real and perceived to equine welfare; developing and overseeing the implementation of improvements to meet those threats and challenges.
- To review the recommendations of the EWEAG with regard to tack and training methods, ensuring a coordinated approach to implementing any regulatory changes and minimum standards required to give effect to its recommendations, both nationally through the Member Bodies, and Internationally through the FEI and EEF.
- To develop recommendations for the BEF Board in relation to the implementation of a cross Federation regulatory regime that ensures a harmonised approach to the management of equine welfare cases. To include:
  - Overarching regulations in relation to unacceptable conduct that causes harm to horses
  - Clarity over roles and responsibilities at both a national and international level

- Processes that allow for the prevention, detection and prosecution of equine abuse cases
  - Identifying and overseeing the implementation of an appropriate reporting and case management process
  - A proportionate sanctioning regime with reciprocity across all MBs, to include clarity over the management of historical cases.
- To ensure that Member Body compliance with the equine regulatory regime forms part of the assurance compliance process for minimum governance standards.
  - To recommend such measures as may be required to restore and maintain public confidence and trust in equestrianism.
  - To make recommendations on appropriate strategic equine welfare campaigns that put the importance of the horse at the centre of cross federation promotional activity, seeking to influence both affiliated and unaffiliated participants using a balance of strong storytelling, strong evidence and data and which makes the ethical case for culture change.
  - To make recommendations on training, education, coaching and CPD programmes across the Federation to raise awareness of issues and ensure best practice is adopted with equine welfare at the centre of what we do.
  - To agree and recommend to the BEF Board the appropriate timelines for implementation of projects and initiatives as appropriate.

#### 4. Membership

- BEF Chair of the Board to act as Chair of the Steering Group
- BEF CEO
- BEF Board x 2 (who may represent their respective MB)
- BEF Head of Integrity
- Representative(s) of Olympic Discipline MB
- Representative of non-Olympic FEI Discipline
- Representative of BHS
- Representatives from non-Olympic Member Bodies (TPC, RDA, ABRS+, WHW)
- Retired athlete with international experience

Others who may be invited to participate:

- WCP
- UK Sport Representative
- Representative from the BHA
- Representative from another sport which has faced similar challenges

Membership will be reviewed on an annual basis.

**5. Frequency of and Attendance at Meetings**

The committee will meet six times in the first year and then two times a year thereafter, or when necessary, when convened by the Steering Group Chair. Meeting times and dates will be specified in advance.

Sub-groups of the Steering Group may be set up to work on specific projects or issues, with a clear brief from and regularly reporting back to the Steering Group. Any sub-group will cease to operate once it has completed its brief.

**6. Quorum**

The quorum for a meeting of the committee shall be [5] representatives which must include the Chair and/or BEF CEO, and at least one representative from each category of Member Body.

**7. Reporting Arrangements**

Minutes are to be circulated to Steering Group members and the Board of the BEF.

**8. Conflicts of Interest**

Members of the committee shall declare any potential conflict of interest in relation to the work of the committee and a written record of these shall be kept. The Chair shall be responsible for managing any actual or perceived conflict of interest. Should an actual conflict arise the Chair shall determine the appropriate procedure which may include excluding the relevant member from the whole or part of a committee meeting.

**9. Confidentiality**

All members of the committee have a duty of confidentiality and shall not disclose details of the discussions/decisions of the committee to third parties without the express agreement of the Chair.

**10. Process for Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Steering Group**

The Steering Group shall undertake an annual review and self-evaluation of its performance, including a review of the committee's compliance with these terms of reference.

**11. Review of Terms of Reference**

The Steering Group shall keep these Terms of Reference under regular review to ensure the Group meets the overarching intent of ensuring the primacy of equine welfare across the federation, and recommend any proposed changes to the Board of the BEF.