JERSEY CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE WELFARE OF

HORSES

THE CODE

The Code of recommendations for the welfare of horses is intended to encourage those responsible for looking after these animals to adopt the highest standards of husbandry. It takes account of five basic needs, known as the "Five Freedoms".

The Five Freedoms are:

1. **FREEDOM FROM HUNGER AND THIRST**

- by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour;

2. **FREEDOM FROM DISCOMFORT**

- by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area;

3. **FREEDOM FROM PAIN, INJURY OR DISEASE**

- by prevention or by rapid diagnosis and treatment;

4. **FREEDOM TO EXPRESS NORMAL BEHAVIOUR**

- by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animals' own kind;

5. **FREEDOM FROM FEAR AND DISTRESS**

- by ensuring conditions and treatment to avoid mental suffering.

SECTION 1 - HORSE CARE AND WELFARE

A: GENERAL MANAGEMENT

1. The basic requirement for the welfare of horses is a husbandry system appropriate to the health and, so far as practicable, the behavioural needs of the animals and a high standard of care.

Number of horses

2. Horses, being herd animals, prefer to live in social groups and appear to enjoy human contact. If kept singly, they require frequent contact with, and supervision by, the owner or person in charge. They should always be treated as individuals, even when kept in large groups. When forming new groups, care should be taken to avoid fighting and stress, particularly if adult animals are mixed.

3. Although large groups can be managed successfully, in general the larger the size the greater the degree of skill and conscientiousness needed to safeguard welfare. The size should not be increased nor should a large group be set up unless the person in charge will be able to safeguard the welfare of the individual animals.

General supervision

4. Every person responsible for the supervision of horses must be able to recognise signs of ill health, have knowledge of basic equine first aid, and have a veterinarian to diagnose and treat any serious illness or injury. Plans should be made to ensure horses can be attended to promptly in the event of accident, fire or other emergency.

Horsemanship

5. Horsemanship is a key factor in ensuring that welfare needs are met. No matter how acceptable a system may be in principle, without competent horsemanship, the welfare of the horse(s) cannot be adequately protected. Training plays a vital role in the development of the horseman's awareness of welfare requirements.

Handling horses

6. Horses require calm, sympathetic and competent handling. Horses respond best to firm but gently approach and to rewards for correct responses. Handlers should think ahead to ensure that horses are not panicked by unexpected occurrences. Abnormal physiological and behavioural responses to handling, training and confinement (such as the development of vices) should be recognised and measures taken to correct them. Discipline, if appropriate, must be administered immediately following an act of misconduct, and must be no more severe than is necessary and reasonable to achieve the trainer's objectives. ? Similarly, any restraint used to assist normal management or treatment of the horse should be the most mild and effective available, and should be applied for the minimum required period.

Training, riding and driving horses

7. Every person training, riding or driving horses must be competent in the activity being carried out or supervised by an experienced horseman/woman. The horse should be used in accordance with its age, level of fitness and health. It is important to recognise the different behaviour patterns of horses, and adapt training methods to suit the individual. Even well trained animals can be over-ridden. Riders and drivers must ensure their horses do not suffer avoidable injury, distress or illness.

8. Training methods which involve cruelly ill- treating horses are unacceptable. Whips and spurs should be used on horses to reinforce correctly applied aids (voice, hands, seat and legs) when the horse has failed to respond. Horses must never be struck around the head or genitals with any whip, lead or other object. Spurs should not be used as punishment, and must not be used in a manner which causes skin damage

Saddlery and equipment

9. Harness, saddlery and training aids used for handling, riding, driving and schooling horses must be free of features that are likely to cause unnecessary pain suffering or distress to the horse.

10. Saddlery, harness and equipment should be maintained in clean, supple condition, free from cracks and other features likely to cause chafing and sores. Bits should contain no rough or sharp surfaces which may cause damage to the mouth.

B: GRASS-KEPT HORSES

Supervision of horses on grass

11. The frequency and level of supervision of horses should take into account factors such as stocking rates, availability of feed, type of horses kept (i.e. breed, age and disposition), security of grazing area and reliability of water supply. It is therefore recommended that horses at grass must be inspected at least once a day.

12. Many fields will contain muddy areas particularly around gateways and, feed and water troughs.. It is not acceptable for an animal to be kept in an area which is totally covered with mud and/or water to the extent that the animal cannot rest on dry ground. Enforced standing in extensive wet and/or muddy areas can lead to skin and hoof problems and is therefore a potential welfare problem.

The stocking density

13. The stocking density depends on the suitability of the grazing area (ground conditions, time of year) and the skills of the keeper with regard to both horse care and pasture management. Stocking densities can increase as grass growth permits. During winter and dry summers, supplementary feed may be required to maintain good body condition. Poaching of the ground in wet weather or the use of paddocks for exercising (riding) damages the pasture and reduces the grazing capacity

14. Overcrowding leads to competition for food, water and space and may lead to fighting and subsequent injury. Sufficient space must be available to permit incompatible animals to be segregated and to enable animals to escape bullying.

Supplementary feeding

15. Grazing may ensure an adequate intake of roughage and minerals. If grazing is poor or limited, supplementary feeding may be required. Horses should be moved at appropriate intervals to clean pastures to control parasite infestation. This should be combined with a regular parasite control programme advised by a veterinary surgeon.

Pasture management

16. Horses are selective grazers and unless effective pasture management is employed, pasture can rapidly become “horse sick”. Rough areas soiled with dung and areas of weeds reduce the grazing available as the contaminated area increases. In this state, the pasture is of little value and there is a high risk of parasitic worm problems. Over grazing also depletes some nutrients, which in turn leads to poor pasture quality and growth rate reducing the ability of the pasture to recover.

Poisonous plants and dangerous objects

17. Horses at pasture may be at risk from poisonous plants especially at the times of year when grass is in short supply. Paddocks should be kept free of plants, such as Ragwort, which are poisonous to horses.

18. There should be no sharp projections or fittings likely to cause injury in or around fields.

C: SHELTERS

19. Some form of shelter should be provided for all horses.

20. Animals which are used to being stabled throughout the winter should not suddenly be turned out into severe weather conditions.

Provision of shelters

21. Horses should be provided with access to effective shelter and/or be suitably rugged to protect them against cold, wet, windy weather and to provide shade and protection from flies.

22. Where natural shelter belts and trees do not provide protection artificial shelter should be provided.

Construction of Shelters

23. Shelters must be soundly constructed with no surfaces or projections likely to cause injury to horses. The shelter should be constructed to shield the horse against prevailing winds. The roof should allow adequate ventilation and sufficient height to provide clearance for the horse with its head raised.

24. Each horse must have adequate room to lie down, stand up and turn around. There should be a clean and dry area for the horse to lie down, the surface of which protects the horse from abrasions and capped elbows and hocks.

25. Field shelters are normally open fronted to enable free access and to prevent horses becoming trapped or cornered by dominant horses.

Use of rugs and accessories

26. Rugs are a form of shelter and should be used on “thin-skinned”, clipped and old horses to keep them warm and dry during cold wet weather. If worn during wet weather, rugs must be maintained in a waterproof condition. A spare rug should be available so that rugs can be changed and dried out. Rugs should be the correct size for the horse and correctly fitted to prevent rubbing, hair loss and abrasions.

27. Rugs should be checked daily for rubbing and to enable observation of changes in body condition. This is particularly important with older horses that often lose condition over the winter months. All rugs must be removed at leased weekly for airing and the removal of loose hair and caked-on dirt from both the cloth and straps.

28. Hoods should only be worn if entirely necessary and must be the correct fit. Some hoods must be attached to the rug or surcingle, to prevent them from slipping forward over the horses head. It is advised that hoods should only be worn by horses that are turned out for short periods where some degree of supervision can be maintained.

Fencing and gateways

29. The suitability of fencing varies according to the breed, sex and disposition of the horses, as well as stocking density and paddock size. Fencing should be strong and high enough to prevent horses from escaping. It should be designed, constructed and maintained to avoid injury, with no sharp projections pointing inwards.

30. Fences should be readily visible to horses and properly maintained. The ideal fence for horses is the post-and-rail type, with rails treated or painted with non-toxic preparations. A popular alternative, which also provides a good visual barrier, is a single top rail attached to a conventional post-and-wire fence. Barbed wire, netting and narrow gauge high-tensile steel wire, can cause severe injury to horses and should be avoided as should internal fence-stays, which can be a cause of injury.

31. Electric fencing is popular but horses require supervision until they have become accustomed to the fence. Temporary internal subdivisions may be created quickly

with electrified tape and fibreglass standards. A single electrified wire or tape attached to outriggers on conventional post and rail and wire fences provides an effective barrier to prevent contact between animals in adjacent paddocks and the chewing of rails

32. Electric fences should be designed, installed and maintained to ensure contact does not cause more than momentary discomfort to the horse. Electric mesh type fences are not suitable for horses. All power units for electric fences must be effectively earthed to prevent shorts and electricity being conducted in unwanted places, e.g. gates and water troughs.

33. Gateways should be designed to allow for the easy and safe passage of horses. Gates must be securely fastened to prevent escape and injury to the animals.

Water requirements

34. A horse requires, on average, 20 - 40 litres (5 - 10 gallons) of water a day depending on the work it is doing, its diet and environmental factors. This requirement increases in hot weather, following strenuous exercise and when feed stuffs with a low water content are being fed or when grazing is dry.

35. It is essential that all horses have constant access to **clean** fresh water or that adequate water is made available to them on a regular basis throughout the day.

Provision of water at grass

36. Clean, fresh drinking water should always be available to horses in grazing paddocks. Water troughs maybe self-filling (connected to a mains water supply or bowser) and should be easy to drain and clean. Alternatively, an adequate supply of water must be provided on a regular basis to avoid thirst. Natural water sources such as streams are not generally considered to be satisfactory and an alternative water supply should be provided. Water troughs and containers must be kept clean.

37 When ice forms it must be broken at least twice a day without fail during freezing conditions. The water supply should also be checked and provision made to fill troughs by alternative means (hose, barrel or buckets) if necessary.

Situation of troughs

38. Ideally troughs should be situated in or along a fence line in a well-drained area of the field, away from gateways (to minimise the problems of poaching) and not under trees where leaves could soil the water.

39. It must not be possible for a horse to become trapped or cornered in the area of the trough.

40. The trough should be securely fixed at a convenient height to allow horses of different size to drink comfortably. It should not be possible for the horse to paw the water or dislodge the trough and knock it over. It is essential that there are no sharp edges, protruding corners or exposed taps. Taps and fittings where present, should be safely boxed in.

Tethering

41. Tethering is not recommended as there is a high risk of injury to horses

D: HOUSING SYSTEMS FOR HORSES

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

42. In general, the greater the intensity of the management system and degree of confinement, the greater the need for adequate provision of facilities and care to ensure that the horse's welfare needs are met. These needs include adequate provision of feed and water, comfort and exercise.

Supervision of stabled horses

43. The frequency and level of supervision required for stabled horses should take into account factors such as the housing system, degree of confinement, type of horse kept (i.e. breed, age and disposition), and the provision of necessities (bedding, water, feed).

Ventilation and respiratory hazards

44. Airborne contaminants, such as dust (from bedding, feed and scurf) and ammonia fumes from soiled bedding, can pose a significant respiratory hazard for housed horses.

45. Stabling must be well ventilated to prevent a build-up of dust and fumes that could be detrimental to respiratory health. As far as possible, dust-free bedding should be used and feedstuffs should also be dust-extracted. Horses are more sensitive than humans to the effects of ammonia fumes and, therefore, stale bedding should be removed at least once a day and preferably twice a day where horses are being stabled for long periods. Where deep-litter systems are used and for example when loose-housing groups of horses, adequate drainage and a supply of dry top-up bedding is essential.

46. Ventilation must provide good air circulation without directing draughts on to the horses. With adequate ventilation and freedom from draughts, the air temperature of the building should not vary significantly from ambient, i.e. that outside in the open air. In cold weather, to maintain body warmth and condition, the horse should be provided with extra feed and/or clothing; windows or top doors should not be closed as this reduces ventilation.

Bedding material

47. Adequate suitable bedding is necessary to provide warmth and protection from draughts, to prevent injury and jarring of the legs, to enable the horse to lie down in comfort, to reduce the risk of the horse becoming cast and to encourage the horse to stale.

48. Bedding material must be non-toxic and provide effective drainage (and/or be absorbent), to maintain a dry bed and assist in keeping the air fresh.

Water supply

49. Sufficient clean water to prevent thirst must be provided. A horse's average daily water requirement (20 - 40 litres) depends on the individual, on work done and on environmental factors (such as air temperature and humidity). Stabled horses on diets of hay and concentrate rations, generally have a greater water requirement than those grazing on fresh herbage.

50. Fresh water can be supplied in buckets or automatic drinking bowls.

51. Water containers must be kept clean and positioned where they do not become clogged with food or bedding material. Buckets may be clipped to the wall or placed in an old car tyre, to prevent them from being knocked over. Buckets should be emptied, cleaned and refilled at least twice each day and topped up as necessary. Automatic drinkers should be well maintained, by daily cleaning and testing, and positioned at a safe height to prevent the horse injuring itself.

Provision of feed

52. Hay racks and nets should be positioned and designed to avoid the risk of injury, particularly to the horse's eyes. Nets must be placed where feet cannot be caught in the mesh. Feed containers should be kept clean and uneaten rations removed, to discourage rodents and prevent the horse from eating soiled and stale feed.

53. Regular feeding times are essential to prevent stress, impatience and boredom, which could lead to abnormal behaviour and the development of stable vices. When horses are fed in groups, there should be sufficient trough space or feeding points to avoid undue competition for food.

HOUSING

54. Advice on welfare aspects should be sought when constructing or altering buildings to provide stabling for horses. The main considerations in planning the construction and layout of stables are the safety and welfare of the horses, by provision of adequate drainage and ventilation and ease of access.

General construction

55. The building must be constructed soundly, with no exposed surfaces or projections likely to cause injury.

56. Floors must be non-slip, designed to provide good drainage away from the horse. Dirt floors must be maintained by regularly filling any holes which develop.

57. Roofs must be high enough to provide good air circulation and with a minimum clear space of 2 - 3 feet (60 - 90 cm) above the poll of the horse in its normal standing position. There should be adequate lighting, to permit the inspection and safe handling of the animals.

58. Windows or ventilators should be fitted to provide adequate ventilation, without directing draughts on to the horses or creating draughts at floor level. Fixtures and fitting to which horses have access should be free of sharp edges or projections and should be positioned to avoid injury. Grills should be fitted over windows to avoid the risk of breakages or injury. Surfaces should be treated with non-toxic paints or wood preservatives.

Segregation and individual spatial requirements

59. In a loose box, the horse must have sufficient room to lie down, stand up and turn around without the risk of injury. The recommended minimum box sizes are 12 ft x 12 ft for horses and 10 ft x 10 ft for ponies. Boxes for foaling, and for mares with foal at foot, should be a minimum of 15 ft x 15 ft. Loose boxes smaller than these recommendations may increase the risk of injury to both the horse and handler, particularly when young and untrained animals are stabled.

60. Stalls must provide sufficient space for a horse to be led in and turned around and to stand up and lie down (on its brisket) without risk of injury. The recommended minimum stall width is 5 ft and the minimum length is 8 ft. The aisle or alleyway

behind the stalls should be sufficiently wide, approximately 6 - 8 ft, to enable horses to be lead safely past stalled horses.

61. The space allowances for communally or loose-housing horses, should be appropriate for the age, size, number and type of horses. The stocking density should allow each horse sufficient individual space, similar to guidelines for loose-box housing, i.e. approximately 100 - 120 sq ft per animal.

62. Special care must be taken to separate incompatible individuals, such as entire males (colts and stallions), rigs and mares heavily in foal or with foal at foot.

HOUSING SYSTEMS

Loose boxes (standard stable)

63. Loose boxes are commonly used for the overnight or long-term accommodation of horses. Each horse accommodated in a loose box must have sufficient room to lie down, readily rise and turn around in comfort.

64. An adequate layer of bedding should be provided and in any case, when a horse is kept for more than consecutive 6 hours in a loose box with a concrete or similarly hard floor. On dirt floors, bedding must be provided if the horse is to be housed for more than 8 hours.

Stalls

65. Stalls must be constructed soundly, with no exposed surfaces or projections likely to cause injury to horses. They must provide adequate room for horses to be led in and turned around. Horses must be confined within stalls in a manner which prevents them causing injury to themselves and to adjacent animals.

66. Each horse should be secured by a weighted rope, running through a chest-high ring at the back of the stall, attached to a well-fitting head-collar. The rope should be of sufficient length to enable the horse to amble backwards and forwards within the stall and to lie down comfortably without restriction. When the rope is correctly attached, the horse should be able to stand diagonally within the stall but not be able to turn around to face the front of the stall. A suitable block should be fitted to the end of the rope to take up any slack and prevent the horse from becoming entangled.

Communal or loose housing

67. Groups of horses can be stabled together in communal barns. Loose housing is often the most practical system for managing young-stock or brood mares that have already formed social groups. Loose housing is economical and labour saving but care must be taken to ensure that all individuals fair equally well.

68. Segregation of incompatible animals is particularly important where communal or loose housing systems are used and, under such systems, horses should not be mixed if any one individual is aggressive to others; nor should hind-shod horses be mixed with unshod.

69. The introduction of a new horse or horses to an existing group can result in bullying. This may be alleviated by increasing the space allowance or by penning the new animal adjacent to the existing group for a short period.

General safety

70. Fire is always a threat in stable areas. Storing damp straw, hay and used bedding in or near stables is a common cause of fires and should be avoided. Highly

inflammable liquids must not be stored in or close to stables where horses are accommodated. Smoking in stable areas should not be permitted. All equipment and services, including drinkers, ventilating fans, heating and lighting units, fire extinguishers and alarm systems, should be kept clean, inspected regularly and kept in good working order. A residual circuit breaker should be installed.

E: HEALTH

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

71. The keeper should know the normal behaviour of horses and signs which indicate good health. These include good appetite, alertness, good coat condition, absence of lameness, firm droppings and no visible wounds, abscesses or injuries. Horses should be inspected regularly and particular attention should be paid to their feet. Preventative control of internal parasites, such as roundworms and tapeworms is essential and a programme should be discussed with your veterinary surgeon.

72. When horses become ill, the cause should be identified and appropriate action taken. Veterinary advice should be obtained if initial first aid or treatment is not effective or the horse appears to be seriously ill or in pain.

Preventive treatments

73. The health of the horse should be safeguarded by the use of preventive measures such as routine parasite control and vaccination programmes based on veterinary advice.

74. Attention to grooming will help identify parasitic and skin problems at an early stage. Horses in work should be regularly groomed and washed after strenuous work to help maintain their skin and coat in a healthy condition. Unless they are rugged, horses at grass should not be groomed excessively as this will remove grease from the coat which is the horses natural waterproofing and essential to help keep the horse warm and dry.

75. Whenever an infectious disease is suspected a veterinary surgeon should be called immediately. To prevent disease spread, affected horses must be isolated until a veterinary surgeon considers the infectious period has passed. Contaminated equipment and facilities should be disinfected with an effective product before re-use with other horses.

76. All horses have worms and, if left untreated or if there is a significant worm burden, the horse will not only lose condition but serious internal damage may be caused resulting in colic and other disorders.

77. Worms can be controlled by a combination of good pasture management and regular worming with effective treatments. The frequency of treatment should follow veterinary advice.

Flies and external parasites

78. Flies - Flies can cause a great deal of irritation to horses particularly during the summer. Fly fringes, masks, repellents and insecticide creams should be used to alleviate the fly problem.

79. Lice - Lice cause itching and discomfort to horses. Infestations are more evident in the winter months when the coat is long. The irritation causes the horse to rub and bite itself creating bald or sore patches and the coat becomes dull and scurvy. Lice should be treated using an authorised product when signs are first found.

Skin conditions

80. Skin conditions such as mud fever, ringworm and sweet itch must be treated effectively. Your veterinary surgeon will advise.

Care of teeth

81. Horses with worn or abnormal teeth are unable to chew their food properly, resulting in poor digestion. Common signs of this are; half chewed food dropping out of the mouth; poor condition and lack of energy; whole grains, such as oats, in the droppings; avoidance behaviour, associated with the bit; and failing to respond to pressure on the reins.

82. In the mature horse, sharp and uneven edges may develop on the outer edges of the upper teeth and on the inner edges of the lower molars. These should be evenly filed by a veterinary surgeon, or qualified equine dental technician.

83. Horse's teeth should be examined at least annually. The period should be reduced to 6 months when concentrates or grains are fed regularly as a large portion of the ration.

Hoof care

84. When unshod, hooves should be trimmed as required to maintain a healthy hoof. Horses ridden or driven on roads or hard, rough surfaces must be correctly shod by a farrier on a regular basis. Hooves should be examined daily for signs of injury and other abnormalities, loose shoes and impacted foreign material.

85. Where abnormal heat or painful pressure points are found in the hoof, the cause should be investigated by either a competent farrier or veterinary surgeon. Loose shoes and those with risen clenches should be promptly removed to prevent possible foot injury. Shoes should be removed and adjusted or replaced approximately every 6 weeks unless a farrier or veterinary surgeon has instructed otherwise.

F: FEEDING HORSES

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

Horses' natural feeding habits

86. An understanding of feeding habits and digestive function is essential to ensure health and satisfaction in grazing and stabled horses.

87. Horses are continuous or 'trickle' feeders, with a comparatively small stomach capacity for short-term food storage and minimal digestive action. Horses normally consume their daily feed intake over 16 - 20 hours when foraging naturally, therefore, when stabled or where supplementary feeding is necessary, they require small but frequent feeds.

88. In its natural state, the horse eats a variety of forages (mainly grasses) to meet its nutritional needs. The horse has, therefore, adapted to relatively low energy and protein diet to meet its maintenance requirements.

Nutritional requirements

89. The horse requires sufficient feed to provide nutrients and energy for maintenance of proper body function and condition. Additional feed is required to meet a horse's activity requirements for work, growth, pregnancy and lactation. Both maintenance and activity requirements must be provided to maintain body weight and condition.

90. Maintenance feed is the amount required to maintain the horse at a constant, healthy body condition when at rest i.e. the work required of the horse is no greater in terms of physical activity than that expected of a healthy horse grazing freely in a paddock.

91. If fed to appetite, the average horse will consume 2% of its bodyweight, as dry matter, to meet daily maintenance requirements. Regular condition scoring or weighing will help establish any individual variation required around the 2% bodyweight guideline.

92. Individual horses have varying digestive capabilities and these affect maintenance requirements. The horse's temperament and metabolic rate must also be taken into account, because nervous highly strung horses and those with a high metabolic rate utilise far more energy than quiet horses of the same bodyweight. Periods of cold weather may significantly increase a horse's maintenance needs.

93. When a horse is working, its feed demands increase and a pasture-only diet may not be sufficient to meet the increased needs. Forage takes a long time to digest and the horse may be unable physically to eat enough to sustain its energy needs, consequently, supplementary feeding in the form of grains or concentrates is required.

94. Elderly, sick or injured horses may have special feed requirements and veterinary advice should be sought to devise a suitable ration.

Practical feeding

95. Changes in diet should be made gradually with no sudden increases in the concentrate or energy content of the ration. To avoid causing metabolic disorders, horses should not be fed a full-grain ration on the evening before, or on, rest days.

96. Horses should be fed plenty roughage and only sufficient concentrates to supply energy relevant to the level of fitness and the type of work done. The ration should be balanced for the individual horse's requirements, and the roughage content should not fall below 25% of the total ration.

97. Horses should be fed little and often. The ration should be divided into at least two separate meals and fed at regular times. It should be well mixed and freshly prepared before each feed. Succulents, such as carrots, are a beneficial and appetising addition to the daily ration.

98. To aid digestion and to avoid digestive upset, horses should not be worked on a full stomach nor should they be watered immediately after feeding. Only good-quality feeds should be fed. Feeding utensils should be kept clean. Food should be stored to prevent deterioration and contamination. Inferior, dusty, mouldy or stale left-over feed must not be fed.

99. The diet should be palatable, and nutritious. Good feeding practices should be complemented with good husbandry, such as hygiene, regular worming, care of teeth and adequate exercise to ensure the health and welfare of the animal.

Importance of water

100. Water is an essential daily requirement to ensure proper body functioning and every horse must have access to a sufficient supply of fresh, clean water.

101. If overheated and blowing immediately after exercise, horses must not be given access to cold drinking water; they should first be allowed to cool down, to avoid the risk of colic. Electrolyte supplements can be added to their usual water supply to enable the horse to replace fluid and body salt balance.

TYPES OF FEEDS

Herbage

102. Due to the seasonal growing cycle of grasses and clovers, the nutritional value of pasture changes throughout the year. These changes should be recognised and accounted for in determining the overall food requirement.

Conserved forage

103. There are three types of conserved forages; hays, silage and haylage.

104. The quality of conserved forage depends on the time of cutting, the weather conditions, the method of conservation and the processing involved. All conserved forage fed to horses must be good quality, to supply nutritional requirements and avoid health problems. It should be clean (free from soil, debris and poisonous plants), smell fresh and be free from dust and mould.

Concentrate feeds

105. Cereals (barley, oats) or compound feeds (commercially blended nuts, cubes or mixes) provide a concentrated form of energy and nutrients to meet extra energy needs. Grains can be processed (heat-treated, crushed or rolled) to improve digestibility, however, processing may reduce the feed's nutritional value.

106. To avoid digestive problems, adequate levels of roughage should be fed. Consideration should be given to bulking-out, by adding bran or chaff in addition to providing fibre in the form of conserved forage.

107. When feeding concentrates, they should always be measured by weight rather than volume as there are marked differences in densities, not only between types of grain but also within different consignments of the same grain.

QUALITY AND DIGESTIBILITY OF FEEDS

Quality

108. When selecting suitable feeds for horses, whether to provide the total ration or a supplement to grazing, it is important that only good quality feeds are fed in sufficient quantities to ensure that the horses thrive.

109. Feed should be correctly processed, stored and handled to prevent spoiling prior to feeding and ensure the nutritional value is maintained. If feed deteriorates during storage or is of sub-standard quality it should not be fed.

Digestibility

110. The digestibility or nutritive value obtained from feed stuffs is influenced by the fibre content and processing of feeds, the rate of intake and amount of feed consumed, the efficiency of the horses' digestive system (chewing, breakdown and absorption) and the horse level of physical activity.

Feeding-related problems

111. Several ailments may be directly related to or influenced by incorrect feeding or diet. Many problems and common disorders related to feeding result from boredom due to confinement and irregular feeding times.

112. Horses may develop bad habits at feeding times, leading to wastage of feed, digestive upsets and potential injury to handlers from impatient or aggressive behaviour.

113. Attempts should be made to recognise and discourage vices, as far as possible, by alleviating boredom and stress associated with confinement and controlled feeding.

114. Horses are susceptible to digestive disorders (colic, diarrhoea, constipation) and metabolic conditions (laminitis, azoturia) as a result of incorrect nutrients or feeding practices. Veterinary attention must be sought if the horse show signs of abdominal pain or signs of muscle spasms (tying-up) and lameness or heat in the limbs.

115. Some horses, particularly ponies, are able to utilise energy in feeds very efficiently and can suffer from severe energy overloading. This is one of the causes of a common and crippling disease, laminitis. Other causes and predisposing factors include stress, a sudden increase in work, excessive concussion, and drinking large amounts of cold water when hot. Susceptible horses and ponies should have restricted access to spring and autumn pasture and grains. Low energy forages such as hay should be fed.

116. Horses should not be permitted to become over-fat. Control of over-weight horses using starvation diets is unacceptable. These horses must be supplied with a balanced reduction diet of food and water.

117. Neglect, lack of nutrients, insufficient quantity or quality of feed, serious illness or disorders affecting the horses ability to utilise food i.e. bad teeth or severe worm burdens, can result in serious loss in body condition. Horse can rapidly deteriorate in condition, becoming weak and thin. Horses must always be observed and changes made to the ration if the animal begins to lose weight or condition. Veterinary advice must be sought in all cases of unexplained or rapid weight loss.

G: HUMANE DESTRUCTION

118. It may be necessary, in the event of incurable illness, old age or permanent unsoundness or, more suddenly, as a result of an accident, to arrange the humane destruction of a horse.

119. It is the responsibility of the owner to be fully informed on the methods and welfare considerations of humane destruction, in order to prevent the horse suffering unnecessary pain and distress.

Welfare Considerations

120. The horse's welfare must always come first. Therefore, in the interests of the horse all owners should give the issue their full consideration, well before the time comes to make a decision.

Serious injury, terminal illness or chronic conditions

121. Where, in the opinion of a veterinary surgeon, a horse does not respond to treatment for any serious injury or condition involving significant pain, or where a horse is in such a condition that it would be cruel to keep it alive, the animal must be destroyed humanely, without unreasonable delay.

Permanent unsoundness, end of usefulness or old age

122. In a non-emergency situation, where a horse is permanently unsound or has a recurring or progressively degenerative condition, a rational decision must be made with due regard for the horse's future and welfare.

123. When a horse reaches the end of its active working life, or is elderly, consideration must be given to whether the horse can be provided with a good quality of life in retirement or whether it would be kinder to have the horse painlessly destroyed. The long-term interests and welfare of the horse must outweigh every other consideration.

Methods of Humane Destruction

124. Horses may be destroyed only by a veterinary surgeon (using lethal injection or by shooting) or by the States Slaughterman (by shooting only).

SECTION II - WELFARE CONSIDERATIONS WHEN TAKING HORSES AWAY FROM THEIR FAMILIAR ENVIRONMENT

H: TRANSPORTING HORSES

125. Horses are frequently transported within, on to and off the Island. The following recommendations ensure the protection of the welfare of horses during transport by road including transit in a vehicle which is driven or towed on and off a roll-on roll-off sea-faring vessel. Commercial Transporters must be authorised by the States Veterinary Officer to comply with current EU Regulation.

CONSIDERATION PRIOR TO TRANSPORT

Attendants

126. The person in charge must ensure transport is undertaken in accordance with the law. During transport the attendant may be the driver of the vehicle. When, because of time or distance, a single driver cannot maintain proper care of the horses, the presence of a second attendant is necessary.

Vehicle maintenance

127. A poorly driven or badly maintained horse box or trailer, with inadequate accommodation can lead to extreme stress and injury for horses in transit. Horse boxes, trailers and towing vehicles must be maintained in a road worthy condition to ensure the comfort and safety of the occupants.

128. The driver must be competent at handling and manoeuvring the vehicle before attempting a journey with an animal on board. The driver should ensure a smooth and considerate journey and avoid rapid acceleration and deceleration.

Unfit animals

129. Unfit animals should not be transported. Seriously ill, injured (particularly those with serious leg injuries), and weak animals should not be transported other than in specially designed horse ambulances or for short distances on the advice of a veterinary surgeon when emergency surgery is required. Mares due to foal should not be transported.

Loading and Unloading

130. Not only can poor standards of care during loading, unloading and carriage be against the Law, but will almost certainly adversely affect the horse. Straw matting, or other suitable non-slip material, should be used on ramps or other surfaces where necessary, to prevent the risk of injury.

Care during Transport

131. Everyone who handles or transports horses has a duty of care and is potentially liable to prosecution where injury or unnecessary suffering has been caused or is likely to occur. The journey should be planned ahead and if for instance, hot weather is forecast, travel overnight should be arranged.

132. Horses in transit should be offered clean water at regular intervals to avoid thirst. The attendant in charge should bear this in mind particularly if an animal is being transported to and from the Island by sea. Animals can become hot and distressed when travelling by sea, particularly in high ambient temperatures. The attendant in charge should inspect and offer water to the horses during the crossing, on a least one occasion. Travel on hot days should be avoided.

133. Suitable food and water should be made available to the horse on arrival at their destination. Suitable palatable, wholesome food should be offered during the journey. Suitable hay nets or racks must be provided, and animals should not be fed off the floor.

I: HORSE WELFARE AT EVENT AND COMPETITIONS

Competitions

134. In all equestrian sports, the welfare of the horse must be considered paramount. The highest standards of nutrition, health, sanitation and safety must be maintained at all times.

135. All handling and veterinary treatment must ensure the health and welfare of the horse. During transportation, adequate provision must be made for ventilation, feeding, watering and maintaining a healthy environment.

136. The well-being of the horse must take precedence over the demands of all interested parties and commercial concerns. All riding and training methods should take account of the horse as a living creature and must not include any technique considered to be abusive. Furthermore, in the interest of the horse, the fitness and competence of the rider (or driver) should be regarded as essential.

137. National and international rules regarding the health and welfare of horses must be strictly adhered to, not only in competition but also during training.

Organisers of Equine Activities

138. Organisers of any equine activity where horses are brought together, must provide facilities and services to ensure that the horses welfare can adequately be catered for.

139. The organiser should provide an adequate supply of fresh clean drinking water for all horses involved in the activity and, if unable to do so, owners of competing horses should be given prior warning. All horse accommodation provided by the organisers must be secure and meet the minimum required standards.

140. The organisers of any equine activity should consider the well-being of the horse above any personal needs and the demands of others. The organiser must ensure that every test of speed, skill or endurance is within the reasonable capacity of a fit, healthy horse that is correctly trained for the purpose.

141. The organiser has a responsibility to provide on-call emergency access to a veterinary surgeon who is experienced in equine treatment.

SECTION III - ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR COMMERCIAL HORSE ENTERPRISES

J: LIVERY YARDS

142. A Livery yard is one providing facilities, supervision and/or care of horses that are not the property of the operation, in return for remuneration or reward.

143. The livery may include the provision of grazing, stabling and training or breeding, on a commercial basis.

Livery Services

144. The following is a guide to the main types of livery services available, although conditions may vary between establishments.

Full Livery

145. This includes the provision of stabling, or stabling and turn-out, and the complete care of a horse in return for remuneration or reward. This type of livery may include, by arrangement, the training and exercise of the horse, and preparation for riding or competitions as required by the owner.

Part Livery

146. This covers the provision of supervision, stabling and/or grazing in return for remuneration or reward. The care of the horse and responsibility for watering, feeding and maintenance of the bedding, is by arrangement. Unless otherwise stated, exercise and grooming are usually carried out by the horse's owner/agent, although the livery yard operator will usually bring-in or turn-out the horse as required.

Working Livery (or half livery)

147. Here, the care of the horse is carried out by the livery yard in return for its agreed use by the livery operator. There may also be agreed remuneration or reward. In addition to the responsibilities for the care of the animal, the conditions under which the horse can be worked (such as the number of hours per day or week), restrictions on the type of work or type of rider (size and experience) and any exceptions should be clearly defined.

Do-it-yourself Livery

148. This covers the provision, by the yard operator, of stabling and/or grazing in return for remuneration or reward, where the feeding and care of the animal is to be carried out by its owner. Responsibility for turn-out, checking, emergency callout of veterinary attention or farrier, and security of tack is devolved by mutual arrangement.

Grass Livery

149. Grass livery is the provision of grazing and shelter with or without supervision in return for remuneration or reward. Provision may also be made for supplementary feed as necessary. Responsibility for checking the horse, maintenance of fencing, pasture management and the rotation of horses between paddocks, should be clearly defined.

Responsibilities and Agreements

150. Financial arrangements, types of care, facilities offered and conditions will vary between establishments and should, therefore, be clearly defined. A written agreement, defining the conditions of livery, should always be made between the operator and the owner or agent of the horse. Preferably, such agreements should be made before the horse concerned is placed at the establishment.

151. The agreement should state the name of the person responsible for supervision of the horse, for the provision of feed and water, and the action to be taken in the event of illness or injury to the horse.

152. The operator of the livery yard should state the provisions made for the safety and security of the animals, the supply of feed and bedding, and routine measures for vaccinations and control of parasites.

153. In all forms of livery, the ultimate responsibility for the welfare of the horse while the animal must be clearly stated in writing.

154. Any disputes that may arise between a livery yard operator and the horse owner/agent must not be permitted to interfere with the minimum standards of accommodation, supervision, nutrition and general welfare of the animal.

K: RIDING ESTABLISHMENTS

155. The term ‘riding establishment’ refers to the operation of a business where horses are kept for the purpose of hire for riding and/or for use in providing instruction in riding, in return for payment or reward.

156. The definition includes any business, non-profit making or voluntary operation which provides a horse or horses for riding, trekking or tuition, whether or not the reward is financial or otherwise. This also includes establishments in which the horses used for tuition are owned or leased by the operator/proprietor.

Qualification of Proprietors/Managers

157. The owner or manager of a riding establishment must be suitably qualified and experienced in the management and care of horses to be able to supervise the establishment.

The Use of Horses

158. Horses (including any horse, pony, ass, mule or jennet) must be in good health, physically fit and suitable for the purpose for which they are used. Animals three years old and under and mares within three months of foaling are not suitable. Every horse should have at least one rest day per week.

General Husbandry

159. The supply of feed, water and bedding material must be adequate and of suitable quality, with sufficient provision for the animals within the establishment plus reasonable reserve.

160. Horse must be adequately exercised, groomed, rested and visited at suitable intervals.

Grazing

161. Horses at grass must have fresh, clean water at all times, as well as adequate pasture and shelter. Supplementary feed should be provided when horses are in work or during the winter, according to the type of horse and the pasture quality.

Housing

162. Riding establishments must have suitable accommodation for its horses and ponies.

Health

163. Reasonable precautions must be taken against the spread of infectious diseases and veterinary first-aid equipment maintained on the premises. Isolation facilities should be available. In case of emergency, it is advisable that the name, address and telephone number of the vet, farrier and doctor are prominently displayed.

Saddlery

164. All riding equipment should be maintained in good condition so as not to cause suffering to the horse or accident to the rider. Saddles and girths should be fitted to be comfortable for the individual horse and stirrup irons should be of a suitable size for the rider.

Safety and Security

165. Fire Precautions: must be taken for the protection of horses in case of fire or other emergency. Smoking on the premises should be prohibited by notice. Fire extinguishers should be serviced regularly and water must be readily available. There should be easy, clear access to all stalls and loose boxes. The name, address and telephone number of the licence holder or other responsible person, with directions for action in event of fire procedure, how to operate equipment, where it is stored and where to lead the horses to safety. Advice may be sought from the Fire Prevention Officer.

166. Insurance: the licence holder must hold a current Public Liability Insurance policy which provides indemnity against personal liability for damages in the event of death of or injury to an employee, rider or visitor and damage to property.

L: STUD YARDS

167. A Stud Yard is one providing facilities for the breeding of horses. This may include the care and management of brood mares, facilities for foaling, management of mares with foals at foot and young stock. The general codes for the welfare of horses apply. Breeding animals and young stock have additional requirements.

Management

168. Stud management requires special knowledge, horsemanship and facilities different from those of other commercial horse enterprises.

The stallion

169. The temperament of an entire male horse may be variable and unpredictable especially in the breeding season (spring and early summer). The stallion should be stabled away from immediate direct contact with other horses, though within sight of them preferably overlooking the "covering yard". Stallions are often best controlled by one regular handler who will understand their temperament and behaviour. Exercise and grazing arrangements may often have to be solitary but certain stallions may be able to combine a full competitive life and stud duties very well. As stallions may bite vigorously, adequate warning notices should be posted near their stable.

Brood mares

170. Brood mares at stud awaiting covering are often well managed in small groups in suitable grass paddocks and cared for as any other horse at grass. They should be unshod or only have "grass tips" on the front feet to prevent kick injuries.

Mares with foals at foot

171. Once foaled down, mares with foals of similar age may be grouped together in suitable paddocks during the day in favourable weather. Mare and foal boxes need to be larger than a box for a single horse with a wider door access to allow the foal and mare to walk in together. Similarly gateways and fencing of paddocks must take account of the foals size and immaturity.

Young stock

172. Weaned foals may be kept in peer groups. If this is not possible then great care must be taken to avoid fighting or bullying within a group. Individual stabling at night in poor weather is required though loose housing in adequate yards may be applicable. Yearlings should be managed in same sex groups along the same principles as older horses.

Covering

173. The thoroughbred breeding season is controlled by the rules of The Stud Book though mares can conceive outside the defined dates. With an average pregnancy of 330 days, breeding is planned so that foals are born in spring and early summer to coincide with good weather and supply of grass.

Venereal and other diseases

174. Stud managers must be aware of the separate Codes of Practice on Equine Diseases These are available from the Horseracing Betting Levy Board www.hblb.org.uk and include Contagious Equine Metritis, Equine Herpes Virus, Equine Viral Arteritis and other bacterial diseases. Veterinary advice on these

matters may be sought. It is also recommended that all horses visiting the stud should be adequately vaccinated against Equine Influenza and Tetanus.

Preparation of the mare

175. During her breeding season, a mare will be in oestrous for up to 5 days every 21 days. Veterinary advice may be sought about the optimum time for covering and for the avoidance of twin conceptuses. However, a mare should be properly "teased" before being brought before the stallion. This is achieved by using a "trying board" to prevent injury to the handlers, stallion or mare.

Foaling

176. There is a saying that the "Foal decided the day but the mare decided the time". The supervision of foaling is often difficult as the progression from the first stage labour to the delivery of the foal may be very rapid and not observed even in a well maintained yard, most often occurring in the still early hours of the morning.

Foaling boxes

177. Foaling boxes must be of adequate size for the type of mare with good lighting available, good access and ideally more than one place for observation. CCTVs may be installed. The walls and floors should be of suitable materials to allow thorough cleaning between each mare foaling. Adequate bedding with banking to the walls should be maintained, to prevent injury to the mare,.

Veterinary considerations

178. Observing foalings is important to be able to detect any dystocias requiring immediate intervention and correction. Expulsion of placenta within a short time of the foal being born is essential to prevent endometritis and shock laminitis in the mare. Healthy foals will stand within 45 minutes of birth and suckle soon after. This is vital to be able to receive the essential colostrum.

Mare and Foals at Foot and Yearlings

179. The colostral immunity/protection wanes by four months of age and active immunisation programmes against Equine Influenza, Herpes Virus and Tetanus may be commenced.

180. Foals and yearlings are most susceptible to parasitic worm infections that can be picked up from permanent horse paddocks. Good grass management to control dung burdens is essential and veterinary advice concerning worming protocols should be sought.

LEGISLATION

181. The following legislation is of relevance:

- Animal Welfare (Jersey) Law 2004
- Animal Health (Jersey) Law 2016
- Veterinary Surgeons (Jersey) Law 1999
- Community Provisions (Welfare of Animals during Transport) (Jersey) Regulations 2013