



## **Animal Welfare Standing Committee**

Meetings:	Monday May 18 <sup>th</sup> 2009	13.30-16.30
	Tuesday May 19 <sup>th</sup> 2009	13.30-16.30
	Wednesday May 20 <sup>th</sup> 2009	13.40-16.30

Room: "Frogn"

Standing committee secretary: Julie Kjærmann-Jensen

Chairman: Ross Cooper (Australia)

Members: Klaus Storm (Denmark), Paul Essartial (France), Isabelle Decostanzi (France), Steve Phillips (New Zealand), Peter Forsberg (Sweden), Michael Tanner (USA), Britt Helene V Lindheim (Norway), Katja Hautala (Finland), Torhild Huseby (Norway)

### Minutes:

**1. Committee chairman.**

Ross Cooper was elected committee chairman.

**2. Finalization of agenda items (# 6, 7)**

Put UET agreements as raised in ITA meeting earlier today on agenda if time.

**3. Receipt and confirmation of 2007 Standing Committee minutes from Christchurch  
Review of Chief Executive meeting in Canada 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2008**

Everything discussed in Christchurch 2007 is on the agenda and can be discussed this year as well. Members were encouraged to read minutes from Christchurch during this meeting if they haven't already done so.

**4. Equine health issues**

a) Equine influenza. Update from Australia, Europe, North-America.

Australian update:

Australia has been declared Equine influenza free earlier this year after an outbreak that in some areas prevented racing for up till 6 months. Western Australia and New Zealand was mostly unaffected by the Equine influenza, but felt the effects through decrease in racing across the state borders.

There is now a system in place for dealing with the issue if it should reappear, but they are hopeful that it is eradicated. As a result of the outbreak the quarantine restrictions have been upgraded.



Vaccination against Equine influenza: Compulsory vaccination has not been adopted after veterinary recommendations. The authorities have a supply of vaccinations in case of further outbreaks.

Europe:

In most of the European countries the Equine influenza is endemic and vaccinations are compulsory. The horses cannot compete if their vaccinations aren't up to date. Outbreaks occur regularly, but are small and usually not a threat to the racing industry.

b) Use of anabolic steroids and growth hormones.

All European countries as well as Australia have a total ban on anabolic steroids for race horses.

France will start a new program on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 that will allow them to store samples of blood, urine or hair. Every time a horse is sold the seller and the buyer must agree to testing of the horse, so that if a positive sample is ever collected they can trace samples backwards and see when the horse last provided a clean sample, retrospective testing. If a positive sample is ever provided, the horse will be banned from racing and breeding for life.

France will also start testing supplements and other products on the market so that trainers and owners can be sure that what they are giving the animals is free of anabolic steroids.

The other European countries identify that there is a problem with banning horses with positive sample on anabolic steroids from breeding as most of their stallions are from the USA where such medication is allowed. The option to make a note in the stallion books of horses that have been given anabolic steroids is a possibility, as it might deter European breeders from using those stallions.

**Recommendation:**

- 1) By January 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 all countries should implement a 12 month withdrawal time for the use of anabolic steroids.
- 2) By January 1<sup>st</sup> 2012 all countries should implement a lifetime ban from racing for horses <sup>1)</sup> that have tested positive for anabolic steroids. All stallions need to provide a negative anabolic steroid sample before they can be used for breeding purposes.

1) Recalling the individual responsibilities of owners and trainers



c) Equipment used on horses

UET has noticed a growing problem in Europe regarding different regulations on allowed equipment in the different countries as more and more horses travel to other countries for racing. A harmonization of equipments that are allowed and forbidden in all the European countries is a future goal.

The list produced should be a positive list, i.e. a list of allowed equipment.

In regards to world wide harmonization the different requirements of pacers vs. trotters must be taken into consideration.

d) Use of veterinary resources

In Christchurch 2007 it was recommended that all jurisdictions should establish commercial relationships with their Veterinary Associations and Government legislators.

Most of the countries have one or more “in house” veterinarian positions in their associations and the track veterinarians are employed locally.

Denmark has no veterinarian employed in the organization.

In Sweden all trainers are visited by a veterinarian on regular basis to keep control of animal welfare issues.

Finland created an “in house” veterinarian position 3 years ago.

e) Transportation of horses

In the European Union there has been implemented a new legislation for the transportation of all types of animals. Regulations have been placed on the quality of the transportation vehicle, the length of transportation allowed before the animals must be given a break as well as the education of the person(s) responsible for the transportation.

The transportation legislation applies to all animal transportation with a commercial aspect, both mass transportation by professionals and singular transportation by amateurs/owners.

Several countries have already implemented the legislation in various degrees.

As the legislation came as a response to severe conditions in slaughter animal transportations, some of the regulation specifications are causing problems or issues in regards to transportation of racing horses.



New Zealand and the USA report that at the moment they have no issues with transportation.

Australia will check back to committee next time in regards to the transportation standing, it is possible that the different states have individual regulations if they have any.

f) Bleeders

All the European countries represented as well as New Zealand and Australia have a ban against using diuretic treatments such as "LASIX" for treating Bleeders.

Most countries have some type of control with horses that are discovered as bleeders, and can/will prohibit them from racing until the horse gets a clean health certificate.

New Zealand and Australia gives a 3 month ban from racing on initial discovery, and a lifetime ban if the problem reoccurs.

Denmark has begun to make a note in the stallion books if a stallion has been declared to race whilst on diuretic treatments, such as "LASIX".

In the USA racing whilst on diuretics such as "LASIX" is permitted only when the horse in question has a signed veterinarian certificate that the horse is a bleeder. But it has become easier, perhaps too easy over the years to qualify a horse for diuretic treatment. Up to 75-80% of horses in the USA are racing whilst on diuretic treatment.

**Recommendation:**

1) All use of diuretics such as "LASIX" should be prohibited as it is a well known masking agent for other prohibited agents. There has been no scientific evidence to support the claim that LASIX is beneficial to bleeders.

2) All countries should include a note in their stallion books if a stallion has been declared to race whilst on diuretic treatments such as "LASIX".

(The US and Canada made general reservations to this recommendation.)

g) Racing without shoes

1 week ago the French Trotting Association decided after a request from betters that a declaration about whether the horse shall race with or without shoes must be made at start declaration , 2 days prior to racing. After this no change can be made unless the



Stewards at the track determine that the track conditions are too poorly to safely allow horses to race without shoes.

Control of the horses' hoofs will take place both before and after the race.

A horse found to race in disagreement with declaration will be disqualified and the trainer will be heavily fined.

There has also been considered to ban racing without shoes all together, but the trainers are against it as they want to be able to choose.

Norway does not have a declaration or information to betters system.

In Sweden the trainers declare whether the horses are racing with or without shoes on arrival at the track. Information is given at the track and displayed to TV viewers.

No penalty is given if the trainer changes his/her mind later.

Horses that are declared to race without shoes are sometimes inspected afterwards, and upon detection of damage to the hoofs the trainer can be fined.

USA does have a declaration of information system in place.

In both New Zealand and Australia it is very unusual for horse to race without shoes, as the tracks are too hard.

**Recommendation:** Declaration and information to betters on which horses are racing with or without shoes is best left to the National Organizations to decide.

h) Whips in racing, can it be removed altogether?

In Norway the use of a whip in racing is banned completely. This has created a new issue with extensive use of "loose reins". Recently there has been an implementation of harder regulations regarding loose reins, but such violations are harder to indentify than the use of a whip would be.

The other European countries allow the use of whips, but apply various regulations on how many times the driver can use the whip, where, when and how the whip can be used, and an overall consideration.

Penalties for violations of the whip regulations vary from fines to suspension depending on the severity and the rate of occurrence of the violation.

In New Zealand and Australia one hand usage of the whip is allowed, but there are regulations as to how far back the driver can bring the whip.



Both countries report that the issue of whip usage is to be addressed at future meetings, and further restrictions are likely to be made.

In the US animal welfare associations have started reacting to the use of whips in races. At a recent national conference it was decided that penalties for violations should be tougher, but mainly the regulations were not changed. Some jurisdictions have decided to enforce stricter regulations and guidelines. The new regulations from Kentucky are recommended as a model for other states to follow.

In Russia apprentice drivers are not allowed to use whips.

**Recommendations:**

**Minimum Standard For Whip Use**

- On reign must be held in each hand at all times.
- Reigns are not to be crossed during a race.
- The whip must only be used with a flicking action/motion during a race.
- Whip to remain within the confines of the sulky at all times.
- Excessive use of the whip to be subjected to penalties on an increasing scale as determined by controlling jurisdictions.
- The strict control of a whip use is twofold in that it is a significant animal welfare issue and to promote a positive perception of the trotting industry to the general public.

**5. Integrity issues**

- a) Update of anti-doping work. Methods, number of tests, racing/training, results  
The Scandinavian countries have started testing for anabolic steroids with hair samples. All use of such substances is prohibited, and if detected a horse will be banned from racing for ever.

Most countries will suspend a horse from racing once a test is positive, and the suspension cannot be lifted until a negative test has been confirmed.

Finland only analyzes the B sample if the trainer requests it. A negative sample is not required to lift racing suspension from a horse; it is automatically lifted once the case is closed. Average is 4 weeks, 6 weeks at most.

New Zealand and Australia enforce a zero tolerance policy on doping, and New Zealand has opened up for both prerace testing as well as retrospective testing.



In France a minimum of 2 trainers are visited and tested every month. And the 40 best horses every month are tested and followed to ensure that they are clean.

Detention barns:

No countries other than US make use of detention barns on a regular basis. But before major races most countries have a guard following the horse around from the moment it enters the track to it leaves. This is not only to prevent doping and milkshaking etc. but to ensure the safety of the horse.

EPO:

EPO is easy to discover and thus not a major problem in Europe. There are more rumors/myths of EPO usage than identified cases.

USA is working on developing a new testing method that is cheaper and easier, it will probably come at the end of this year.

b) Milkshake-testing

Norway has just started testing for milkshake doping.

Australia can report a decrease in the milkshake problem in the last couple of years.

In the state of Pennsylvania in the US, all horses are tested before a race. Indiana is likely to follow shortly.

c) Stewarding

Generally a problem with recruiting new stewards has been noted. The position is not attractive enough to secure people with the right qualifications.

France and New Zealand were the only countries not to report a problem with steward recruiting.

New Zealand reported that the situation improved when they implemented a Judicial Control Agency that functions as the judge in cases brought to them by the stewards. The stewards no longer have the power to make a final decision/ruling.

The USA has had a problem with inconsistency in rulings from track to track, but are at the moment upgrading the training and education program for stewards.



**Recommendation:**

- Greater emphasis should be placed on Industry integrity and stewards control with due consideration to financial constraints and resources.
- Without integrity we have no industry.

d) Investigate techniques and development

Most countries have a person or a department assigned to the task of investigating positive doping cases and cases of animal cruelty in the sport.

In Finland there is also an independent Animal Anti Doping Committee that overlooks the investigations and gives a recommendation on final action/verdict to be made.

Norway has no specific person or department assigned to the task of investigation, but an anti-doping committee that will make the initial investigations on behalf of the jurisdiction.

In severe animal welfare issue cases most countries have a procedure in place for turning the case over to the nations or the states authorities for trial.

e) Integrity and reputation; media, public, politicians etc.

In the USA the public have a distrust for the betting system. There are 3 companies offering betting games, and they do not always communicate well enough and there have been problems with protocol not being followed.

Public view on use of anabolic steroids

In human sports if an athlete is discovered to be using anabolic steroids he or she is automatically viewed as having disgraced the sport and him/herself.

In Europe the same goes for animals testing positive for the use of anabolic steroids, a positive sample would be devastating for the sports reputation.

In USA there has recently been a scandal involving anabolic steroids in human sports, and the reaction to such doping is felt also by the harness industry. The sport finds that it is being ignored by potential audiences as they learn of the use of anabolic steroids in race horses.

The media is always much more interested in the news that are bad publicity for the sport.



France has decided to take a more open approach towards the media, and be more transparent about what goes on in the industry and the sport.

6. Consideration of issues arising from presentations to business sessions of World Conference, which is not covered by # 1-5
7. Other matters/general business

**Attachment**

- 1) Anti-doping figures from UET Statistics 2008
- 2) Suggestions to agenda for the Animal Welfare Standing Committee on next WTC in 2011



## Animal Welfare Standing Committee Attachment #1

### UET Statistics 2008; Anti-doping figures

Country	Number of races	Samples	Positive cases
Austria	958	80	2
Belgium	991	226	2
Czech Rep.			
Denmark			
Estonia	-	4	-
Finland	6 377	1 285	2
France	11 000	16 092	55
Germany			
Hungary			
Italy	13 601	21 623	103
Malta	546	56	15
Netherlands	1 335	240	1
Norway	821	4 652	1
Russia	4 623	236	5
Slovenia	160	22	-
Spain			
Sweden	9 051	3 442	1
Switzerland	2 314	76	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51 777</b>	<b>48 034</b>	<b>187</b>



## **Animal Welfare Standing Committee Attachment #2**

### **Suggestions to agenda for the Animal Welfare Standing Committee on next WTC in 2011**

Follow up on the recommendation made in Oslo 2009 on

- 1) The use of Anabolic Steroids
- 2) The use of diuretics
- 3) The minimum standard for whip usage
- 4) The issue of Integrity and Stewards