

British Racing's Commitment to the Welfare of Racehorses

Everyone in the sport - racecourses, trainers, owners, breeders, stable staff, jockeys, owners, administrators, officials and veterinary professionals - is committed to and has a role in ensuring and enhancing horse welfare. The British Horseracing Authority is the governing body of the sport and, through the Rules of Racing and its licensing and inspection of participants, education, training and monitoring, ensures horse welfare, including compliance with UK Animal Welfare legislation. Some risk to horses is inherent in the sport, as it is to differing degrees in the life of a horse in any environment, but we recognise our responsibility to care for our horses and reduce unnecessary risks. Horseracing has close and constructive relationships with animal welfare organisations, such as the RSPCA, SSPCA, World Horse Welfare and Retraining of Racehorses, and works with these and other groups to understand and reduce risk.

Horseracing's welfare initiatives focus on the following:

- **Care** – those involved in horseracing have every incentive for horses to race to the best of their ability, so wish to see them well cared for from before they enter racing, throughout their careers in the sport and beyond. Breeders and the sales industry have every interest in the welfare of horses. In training and on racecourses the horses are in the care of experienced horsemen and women whether licensed trainers, stable staff or jockeys. Expert veterinary care is always available. Horses are reviewed before racing by one of the Authority's Veterinary Surgeons and medication controls ensure they do not race under the effect of any drugs. When a horse retires from racing there are many avenues open to them, and the Industry supports and monitors the work of trainers and owners, and organisations such as Retraining of Racehorses to assist with finding new homes and careers for horses.
- **Surface** – all courses are licensed annually by the Authority and work with the Authority's trained and experienced Inspectors of Courses and independent agronomists to provide the best and safest racing surfaces, to minimise the risk of injury, and to encourage owners and trainers to run their horses. Courses are limited in the use of their turf, and racing on hard ground is not permitted in jump racing. Trainers also have every incentive to provide safe training grounds and all recognise their duty of care to their horses. The Authority provides specific annual reports and statistics on ground conditions and casualties at every course, and inspects trainers' facilities and provides advice to enable trainers to meet licensing criteria.
- **Obstacles** – All racecourse obstacles are designed in line with the specifications of General Instructions, agreed in liaison with the Authority's Inspectors of Courses, and both hurdles and fences are regularly renewed and reviewed. The BHA collates statistics of fallers and casualties from each race meeting, including Point to Points, and reports to racecourses to assist them in identifying and improving any individual obstacles which may pose a problem. Racecourses invest substantially to improve horse safety.

To underpin these, and other, industry horse welfare initiatives and the Authority's regulation, horseracing provides assistance and support for numerous research projects designed to improve racehorse welfare. This includes commercially funded projects, and the Horserace Betting Levy Board's veterinary programme which invests several million pounds every year in research projects to enhance horse health and welfare. The Authority ensures personal confidentiality and commercial competitiveness is respected to encourage reporting from participants and shares appropriate data with participants, other racing authorities and research groups. More information is available on the BHA Website: www.britishhorseracing.com/inside_horseracing/about/whatwedo/Veterinary/default.asp