

ACT Dressage Association (ACTDA)

Risk Management Plan

General

The ACTDA conducts dressage competitions and events in the Canberra region, primarily at Equestrian Park, Cotter Road, Curtin, ACT.

This document is the document that should primarily be used to guide committee members, general members, participants and attendees at events, on the actions required to be undertaken to assist in mitigating safety risks.

Everyone is encouraged to take safety seriously at competitions and events run by the ACTDA. Anybody who observes anything that may be a threat to safety of a person or horse at an event is encouraged to report it to the safety officer or a committee member as soon as possible.

This risk management plan should be regularly reviewed to ensure capture of emergent risks and to ensure accuracy of risk mitigation treatments.

Aim

The aim of this plan is to:

1. Outline the strategies put in place by the ACTDA to mitigate safety risks at events and competitions
2. Provide guidance to committee members and volunteers on their roles and responsibilities for risk management at events and competitions.
3. Provide information and guidelines to competitors and attendees at events as to their responsibilities in relation to safety at events/competitions that they may be attending.

Risk Management during horse activities

Although this risk management plan is intended assist the ACTDA in providing a safe environment for all in attendance at events/competitions, it must be *stressed* that horse riding is a dangerous activity and can result in serious injury or loss. The ACTDA and the ACTDA committee do not accept any responsibility for any loss or injury during an event/competition and as a result all those in attendance do so at their own risk.

Safety Officer

A safety officer will be appointed for each event/competition. The name of the safety officer will be included on the draw or competitor information sheet for the event/competition. The name of the safety officer and contact details will also be posted on the outside of the container and/or on the scoreboard.

The safety officer will have full authority to make **all** decisions concerning the safety of all those in attendance on the day including horses and other animals present. This authority includes the following:

- Removal of items, people or animals which may cause a threat to those present during an event/competition.
- Cessation of an event/competition in the case of a serious threat to safety arising during the running of the event/competition that cannot be mitigated in any other manner.

All persons present at an event/competition organised by the ACTDA must comply with the decision of the safety officer or ACTDA committee member to whom a safety concern has been raised.

The safety officer will inspect the venue prior to the commencement of the event to ensure that the environment is safe for all concerned. Any high risk areas will continue to be supervised throughout the competition.

All safety incidents must be reported to the safety officer.

An incident report must be completed for every safety incident which is dealt with by either the safety officer or a committee member. Blank incident report forms will be available on the day of every event/competition or from the web site. Completed incident reports should be raised at the next committee meeting for discussion and further action if required.

Safety of volunteers

ACTDA will ensure that all volunteers are experienced with horses and competition environments. ACTDA will make all volunteers aware of the responsibilities they are undertaking and the danger involved. An ACTDA committee member will brief the volunteer of their requirements on the day.

At the time of the briefing the committee member will ensure that all volunteers are compliant with the following:

- All volunteers are to sign a waiver.
- All volunteers under 18 years old provide a waiver signed by parent or guardian.

Public safety

There is no restriction on members of the public attending ACTDA events/competitions. When members of the public are in attendance it should be assumed that they have little or no knowledge on how to behave in the presence of horses. Riders and competitors should be aware of this at all times.

Members of the public should not be allowed admission to areas where they may be in close proximity to horses whenever possible. These restricted access areas should include the following at a minimum:

- Competition arenas and direct surrounds
- Warm up arenas
- Float parking areas
- Stabling and yard areas
- Lunging areas.

Dogs

Dogs must be on a lead at all times. Dogs that are a nuisance, e.g. barking or lunging at people, or animals must be removed from the premises if so directed.

Dogs are **NOT** allowed in stabling areas, warm up arenas or in the general competition arenas.

Float Parking Area

Vehicle drivers must ensure that horse floats are parked a sufficient distance from other floats to enable a horse to be tied to each float and to move around without creating a hazard to other horses, people or vehicles.

All drivers must also ensure that exits are not blocked by either their vehicle or their float.

If a tethered horse is known to have a propensity to kick or engage in any activity that might be a danger to a passer-by, that horse must be attended by a suitable experienced person at all times whilst it is tethered.

All horses must be tied up in a safe manner.

The owner or rider of a horse that is considered to be behaving in a dangerous manner may be requested to remove the horse from the premises. The horse will be scratched from any remaining events entered on the day and will not be permitted to be ridden during the competition.

Horse Gear

It is **not** the responsibility of the gear steward to check the safety of a horse's gear. Gear safety is the responsibility of the rider.

The function of the gear steward is to check that the horse's gear complies with EA rules for dressage, e.g. whip length, correct bit, saddlery and dress. The EA is the governing body for Dressage in Australia.

It is up to the rider to ensure their gear is safe and properly fitted.

Arena Rules

Riders must know and obey "arena rules" in the warm up arena. These rules are posted on the ACTDA web site.

Smoking

Smoking is both a health and safety hazard. A discarded cigarette can easily cause dry grass, hay and the like to ignite. All persons who smoke are requested to do so well away from non-smokers and any flammable materials. Smoking is not permitted in the stables or any enclosed area.

Infectious disease control

The ACTDA acknowledges that there is a risk of infectious diseases being spread between horses, humans and other animals at an event/competition, particularly when horses are stabled overnight at the venue. At major competitions a horse health officer will be appointed to monitor and address any horse health issues that may arise during the event. The name of the horse health officer will be posted on the ACTDA web site and on the scoreboard/ rider information area.

The horse health officer will ensure that the following steps are conducted in order to minimise the risk of infectious disease spreading during an event:

- Ensure that there is a veterinarian on call if required.
- Publicise a number for competitors to call in case of a horse health emergency.
- Minimise public access to stable areas
- Spread stabling allocation out as much as possible in order to ensure limited nose to nose contact.
- Provide separate vehicle parking for spectators and competitors
- Create a single entry and exit point to the grounds
- Provide adequate horse washing facilities.
- Provide adequate hand washing facilities
- Provide taps for filling water buckets.
- There will be NO communal water troughs provided for use by competitors
- Allocate a yard in the yard area, or a stable in the stable block, away from the other horses that a horse can be placed in the case of it falling ill.
- Assist in enforcing a 'stock standstill policy if required'.
- Assist in developing a contingency plan for competitors if a 'standstill' policy is in place.

Signs of possible infectious disease

The following signs have been associated with the possible onset of infectious diseases in horses. Any horse displaying these signs should be reported immediately to the horse health officer:

- Increased body temperature
- Increased heart rate
- Discomfort/ weight shifting between legs
- Depression
- Rapid deterioration with respiratory or nervous signs
- Respiratory distress
- Increased respiratory rate
- Nasal discharge, can be initially clear
- Wobbly gate
- Apparent loss of vision in one or both eyes
- Aimless walking in a dazed state
- Head tilting and circling
- Muscle twitching
- Urinary incontinence
- Inability to get up.

The onset of an infectious disease is not limited to these signs and any concerns in relation to a horses health should be immediately reported to the horse health officer.

If there are any reported health incidents at an event, the horse health officer will report on these and the subsequent actions taken at the next general meeting of the committee.

First Aid

ACT DA keeps a first aid box in the administration office with a range of first aid materials. The ACTDA also keeps a basic veterinary first aid kit on site in the container.