

HORSE SPORT IRELAND

STRATEGIC PLAN 2009 - 2012





HORSE SPORT IRELAND

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HORSE SPORT IRELAND



CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

Horse Sport Ireland became the governing body for equestrian sport in Ireland on 1st January 2008. It was created following the acceptance by both the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism and the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food of proposals contained in The Dowling Report (July 2006).

Much progress has been made in the last 12 months. Highlights include:

1. The establishment of an effective Board that is nominated by affiliate bodies.
2. The establishment of a professional executive team and national office.
3. The transfer of authority and functions of The Equestrian Federation of Ireland (E.F.I.) to Horse Sport Ireland.
4. Recognition of Horse Sport Ireland as the governing body by the Federation Equestre Internationale (F.E.I.) and the Olympic Council of Ireland.
5. The establishment of successful high performance structures.
6. The allocation of responsibility for maintaining the Irish Horse Register to Horse Sport Ireland by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

The Board of Horse Sport Ireland commissioned Genesis, a consulting firm, to assist the team with drafting a set of strategic priorities for the sector for the period 2009 - 2012.

Following significant consultation with the sector and key stakeholders, and drawing on the insights and recommendations from the Irish Horse Board's report '*The Future of the Irish Sport Horse Industry*' (Karen Hennessy and Katherine Quinn, UCD), a framework for development has now been agreed.

This framework sets out a clear and challenging pathway towards achieving the agreed vision for the sector. It provides focus and direction and prioritises the areas of strategic importance for the period of the plan.

Joe Walsh
Chairman



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S FOREWORD

This strategic plan sets out a pathway for the development of the Irish Sport Horse Sector over the next four years.

The sector makes a huge contribution to the economic, cultural and social development of rural areas, in particular, throughout Ireland.

Traditionally, the sector has been fragmented with many different bodies operating, largely, in isolation. The formation and establishment of Horse Sport Ireland (HSI) has brought the breeding, sporting and leisure sides of the sector together for the first time.

On the breeding side, the Irish Horse Board Co-operative Society motto '*A Tradition of Champions*' is very appropriate and Ireland's success continues with the Irish Sport Horse Studbook topping the World Studbook Eventing rankings again in 2008. However, huge challenges lie ahead. We have fallen down the rankings as a breeding nation for top-class international show jumpers. How we address this, while simultaneously protecting and building on our reputation as the world renowned source of outstanding riding horses, is an enormous challenge. This will require real leadership from those who are elected to represent the views of breeders. This plan sets out clear objectives but deciding and implementing the detailed operational aspects will be challenging. Difficult decisions will need to be made. The status quo will not serve us in the future.

As this strategy is being published, all organisations that have responsibility for overseeing the running of sports which are Olympic disciplines have their eyes focused on London 2012. We are no different. London 2012 provides a rare opportunity for our horses and riders to compete in favourable climatic conditions. We will be publishing a separate High Performance Plan for equestrian sport in the months ahead with London 2012 as the main goal. While we crave medals, we do so with an unflinching demand that the rules of our sport and the welfare of our horses must not be compromised in the pursuit of success.

The findings of the Expert Group set up by the Board of Horse Sport Ireland, under the chairmanship of Dr. Gordon Holmes, to advise on the eradication of prohibited substances and practices from the Irish equestrian sector, were published recently. Horse Sport Ireland intends to implement its recommendations rigorously. We will be relentless in the pursuit of a clean sport.

One other key theme in the plan is education and training. Horse Sport Ireland has already got off to a very strong start in this area with the Skillnets Programmes and Shared Affiliate Programmes. The plan sets further ambitious targets in the education and training area.

The current economic and fiscal climate poses huge challenges for Horse Sport Ireland, the sector itself and those who participate in it. It is a difficult environment for a new organisation to be starting in. However, we have strong relationships with our key funders: the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Irish Sports Council. By delivering this plan we will maximise our case for funding.

The Horse Sport sector continues to rely on the contribution of many thousands of volunteers, who organise and assist with the running of events or who take on leadership roles in their affiliate bodies. A key challenge for Horse Sport Ireland is to apply our professional staff resources to complement the voluntary effort rather than replace it.

Finally, while there tends to be a focus on sporting success and the breeding industry, we must not lose sight of the fact that for many people involved in the sector, it is largely a leisure and social pursuit. Equestrian sport is enjoyed, in equal measure, by people of all ages and of both genders. The vast majority of those involved are focused on participating in the equestrian activity they love. For the next four years we must ensure that the focus is on the horses and riders in the arenas, on the cross-country courses and on breeding successful horses – not on the personalities in the committee rooms.

The sector has enormous potential. Producing this plan has been challenging but implementing it will be the real test.

Damian McDonald
CEO
January 2009



HORSE SPORT IRELAND

AFFILIATE ORGANISATIONS

ASSOCIATION OF IRISH RIDING CLUBS (AIRC)
ASSOCIATION OF IRISH RIDING ESTABLISHMENTS (AIRE)
CARRIAGE DRIVING SECTION OF HSI
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE
DRESSAGE IRELAND
EVENTING IRELAND
IRISH LONG DISTANCE RIDING ASSOCIATION (ILDRA)
IRISH HORSE BOARD CO-OP
IRISH PONY CLUB
IRISH PONY SOCIETY
IRISH UNIVERSITIES RIDING CLUB ASSOCIATION (IURCA)
MEDICAL EQUESTRIAN ASSOCIATION (MEA)
PARA EQUESTRIAN IRELAND
RDS (ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY)
RIDING FOR THE DISABLED ASSOCIATION - IRELAND (RDAI)
SHOW JUMPING IRELAND

CONTEXT FOR STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Horse Sport Ireland, a government established agency, promotes the sport horse sector in Ireland. It brings together the sporting, breeding and leisure sides of the industry.

The agency is a joint initiative of the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism and the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and is based on the Dowling Report (July 2006), which recommended new governance structures for horse sport in Ireland. The organisation is established as an All-Island Body.

Late in 2007, the Equestrian Federation of Ireland (E.F.I.) agreed to transfer its powers and functions to Horse Sport Ireland.

On 1st January 2008, Horse Sport Ireland became the governing body for equestrian sport in Ireland as recognised by the Federation Equestre Internationale (F.E.I.) in Lausanne. The agency maintains the Irish Horse Register, which contains the Irish Sport Horse Studbook and the Irish Draught Horse Studbook. Horse Sport Ireland runs the International Show Jumping, Eventing and Dressage High Performance programmes, funded by the sporting disciplines and the Irish Sports Council.

The Dowling Report also recommended that Horse Sport Ireland should provide affiliate services. A dedicated Affiliate Services Unit (A.S.U.) is now in place for this purpose.

With the Dowling Report now implemented, the purpose of this strategic plan is to:

1. Identify the key issues inhibiting the development of the sector
2. Provide recommendations and strategies to address these issues
3. Specify the role of Horse Sport Ireland in implementing the strategy

A critical factor in the successful delivery of this strategy is Horse Sport Ireland's working relationship with its affiliated organisations. A number of key principles will govern the working relationship between the two:

- Greater co-operation within the sport horse sector to improve effectiveness and efficiency.
- Respect for the voluntary nature of the affiliated organisations that is matched by the affiliates' understanding that Horse Sport Ireland's purpose is to complement the work being done by volunteers while bringing firm governance and overall direction to the sector.
- Recognition of the need for greater professionalism across the sector. Actions undertaken must be done in a professional way regardless of whether they are carried out by executives or volunteers.
- Recognition of the need for more strategic, independent, decision-making, immune from the influence of vested interests, as well as greater continuity in leadership positions within organisations.
- Recognition that equestrian organisations exist for the purpose of promoting their disciplines, their programmes and their activities.
- The sector recognises that it would be stronger, more efficient and better placed to achieve its potential if all affiliates fully integrate into HSI. However, it is clearly understood that the decision to integrate will be a matter for each individual affiliate to determine for itself at the appropriate time.
- The Board of Horse Sport Ireland will only re-visit the issue of full integration in early 2011. In the interim, any organisation can pursue full integration if they so wish.

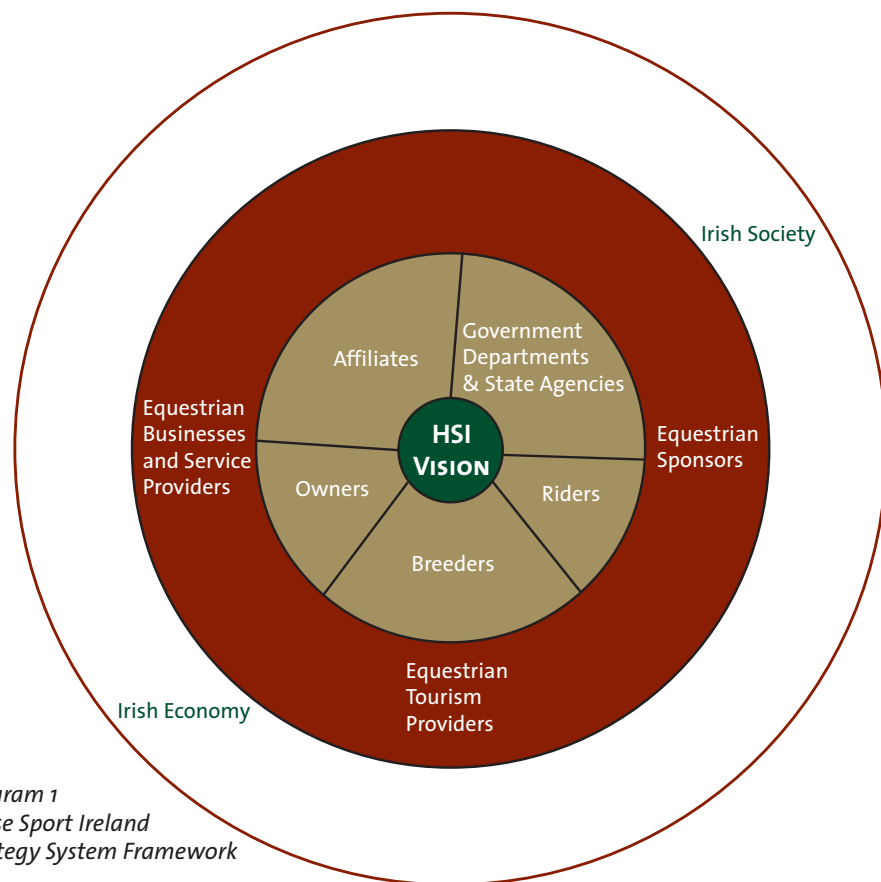


Diagram 1
Horse Sport Ireland
Strategy System Framework

Drafting this Strategic Plan required an extensive process of consultation over several months, facilitated by a consultant appointed to assist with the preparation of the plan. A series of public consultation meetings elicited a healthy response from the public and interested organisations.

Progress of this initial Strategic Plan will be reviewed at the start of 2011.

A summary of the ambitions of various stakeholder groups follows.

Diagram 1 above shows the positioning of those various stakeholders in relation to the desired vision for the sector.

STAKEHOLDER AMBITIONS

HSI AFFILIATES

Progressive associations that work to nurture and achieve the objectives of their members.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND STATE AGENCIES

An equestrian sector that has a reputation as a world leader and that contributes to the social and economic success of Ireland.

BREEDERS

Producing quality Irish Sport Horses that are commercial, competitive and successful.

RIDERS *

Ability to pursue, appreciate and enjoy their chosen equestrian sport and experience based on their desire, ambition, commitment and talent.

OWNERS

Committed owners who strive to achieve and enjoy their personal goals and objectives through their involvement with equestrianism.

EQUESTRIAN BUSINESSES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

A thriving network of successful businesses and service providers that meets the needs of customers and stakeholders alike.

EQUESTRIAN SPONSORS

A vibrant network of public and private sponsors whose goals and objectives are achieved through its involvement in the sector.

EQUESTRIAN TOURISM

A significant driver of regional tourism development that generates a supplementary source of income for equestrian businesses.

*For the purposes of this document, where the heading Riders is used, it also embraces Carriage Drivers.



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VISION FOR THE HORSE SPORT SECTOR

All stakeholders want to see:

- A strong governing body that acts as a driving force and provides clear leadership and direction.
- Strategies and structures that support the goals of breeders, owners, riders, affiliate organisations and relevant Government Departments and State Agencies.
- A sector that operates with integrity and is recognised as being vibrant and successful and that enhances the reputation of Ireland.
- A sector driven by the needs of the market and customers.
- A sector that is well funded through public and private sources.

MISSION FOR HORSE SPORT IRELAND

Based on the vision for the sector, Horse Sport Ireland's mission (working with affiliate organisations, Government Agencies and Departments) is to put in place policies, practices and plans that will lead to the sustainable development of a vibrant horse sport sector in Ireland.

In order to achieve this, Horse Sport Ireland will provide a framework for the development, promotion and effective management of the sector. This framework proposes four core principles to inform strategy development.

Principle 1:

ADOPT A MARKET-LED APPROACH TO BREEDING POLICY

Devise a breeding policy that is rooted in the needs of customers, supports genetic progress and is based upon scientific research and the principle of breeding for purpose.

Principle 2:

INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN THE SECTOR

A fundamental objective of HSI will be to increase the number of people participating in the sector.

Principle 3:

DELIVER IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE

This will necessitate establishing strategies in relation to physical and administrative infrastructure, training and education, leading to high performance outcomes.

Principle 4:

PROVIDE STRONG LEADERSHIP

This focuses on strategies for governance, integrity services and developing secure funding sources with clear allocation priorities.

SUMMARY MISSION STATEMENT

To lead the Irish Sport Horse sector in achieving and maintaining world-class standards in the areas of breeding, sport and in the provision of leisure riding opportunities.

VALUES

Underpinning all activities of Horse Sport Ireland is a commitment towards a set of core values. These values inform how HSI conducts its work, how it interacts with stakeholders and the strategies it adopts to achieve its mission. They are:

Integrity

HSI inspires trust by acting fairly, objectively, honestly and ethically with all the stakeholders with whom it interacts.

Excellence

HSI strives for excellence in all that it does. HSI measures performance based on agreed objectives and takes action based on facts.

Innovation

HSI is constantly looking for ways to innovate and improve the way it operates to serve the needs of all stakeholders.

Accountability

HSI honours its commitments and accounts for its actions to stakeholders and the general public.

Co-operation

HSI is committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders on a sustained basis.

Horse Welfare

HSI is committed to ensuring that the welfare of the horse is never compromised in the pursuit of sporting excellence or commercial gain.



CORE PRINCIPLES

AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS	Market-Led Approach	Increased Participation	Improved Infrastructure	Strong Leadership
	Breeding Policy	Riders	Physical Infrastructure	Governance
	Breeder Information	Owners	Education Programme	Integrity Services
	ISH Promotion	Spectators	High Performance	Funding

Diagram 2
Horse Sport Ireland Strategy
Principles and Strategic Focus

DELIVERING THE VISION AND MISSION

Based on the four core principles, Horse Sport Ireland will achieve the vision for the sector and deliver on its mission through the adoption of strategies and programmes under 12 areas of strategic focus with accompanying actions.

PRINCIPLE 1 – MARKET-LED APPROACH

Adopt a market-led approach to all aspects of horse production. This will inform strategies in relation to:

1. Breeding Policy
2. Breeder Information
3. Promotion of the Irish Sport Horse

PRINCIPLE 2 – INCREASE PARTICIPATION

Increase the numbers participating in equestrian activities. A particular focus will be on:

4. Riders
5. Owners
6. Spectators

PRINCIPLE 3 – IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE

Deliver improved infrastructure to achieve the overall vision. Particular focus will be on:

7. Physical and Administrative Infrastructure
8. Education and Training Structures
9. High Performance Structures

PRINCIPLE 4 – STRONG LEADERSHIP

Provide strong leadership on behalf of the sector domestically and internationally with emphasis on:

10. Governance
11. Integrity Services
12. Funding

A schematic that illustrates the integration of principles and the areas of strategic focus is detailed in Diagram 2.



1. MARKET-LED APPROACH

Devise a breeding policy that is rooted in the needs of customers, supports genetic progress, is based upon scientific research and the principle of breeding for purpose.

1.1 BREEDING STRATEGY

- 1.1.1 A CHANGE IN THE IRISH SPORT HORSE STALLION SELECTION PROCESS AWAY FROM THE CURRENT APPROVAL SYSTEM TOWARDS A SYSTEM WHICH PROVIDES THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE LEVEL OF PUBLISHED INFORMATION, TO INCLUDE:
- The results of the veterinary examination carried out on the animal
 - The results of the conformation assessment at inspection
 - As much information as possible in relation to the performance of the horse, its dam, its sire, its siblings and other relatives
 - An overhaul of the current inspection process
 - Appropriate transition arrangements
- 1.1.2 A REVIEW OF THE ELITE THOROUGHBRED SCHEME WITH A VIEW TO HAVING MORE THOROUGHBRED STALLIONS AVAILABLE TO ISH BREEDERS.
- 1.1.3 THE INTRODUCTION OF A PROGRAMME TO ASSIST BREEDERS TO MAKE OPTIMUM USE OF THEIR MARES, TO INCLUDE :
- Classification of mares to reflect the breeding goal
 - An information service for mare owners
 - Provision of comprehensive information on stallions
 - A progeny assessment service
 - Promotion of Artificial Breeding Technologies
 - Introduction of a 'matron scheme' (to allow a young mare who has produced a foal to compete in competitions a year below her age)
- 1.1.4 THE INTRODUCTION OF STUD BOOK ENTRY INSPECTIONS FOR HORSES NOT AUTOMATICALLY ENTITLED TO BE INCLUDED IN THE STUD BOOK.
- 1.1.5 REVIEW THE COLT RETENTION SCHEME.

- New System agreed during 2009. Implemented 2010 onwards

- During 2009

- New System agreed during 2009. Implemented in 2010

- During 2010

- During 2009

- 1.1.6 THE DEVELOPMENT OF COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROGRAMMES WITH RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS.
- 1.1.7 INTRODUCE PROGRAMMES TO INCREASE THE LEVEL OF REGISTRATION AND PEDIGREE INFORMATION AVAILABLE FOR PONIES.
- 1.1.8 DEVELOP A SUSTAINABLE BREEDING POLICY FOR THE IRISH DRAUGHT HORSE IN ASSOCIATION WITH IRISH DRAUGHT BREEDERS.
- 1.1.9 INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBILITY OF PRESERVING TOP NATIVE BLOODLINES (ISH) BY CRYOPRESERVATION OF GENETIC MATERIAL.
- 1.1.10 CONTINUE TO INTRODUCE INITIATIVES TO RECOGNISE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF BREEDERS.

- Initial Programmes in place 2010

- 2010 onwards

- 2009/2010 onwards

- During 2009

- 2009 onwards

1.2 BREEDER INFORMATION

- 1.2.1 DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE ONLINE BREEDER INFORMATION DATABASE TO INCLUDE :
- All available information regarding individual mares and their progeny
 - All available information regarding individual stallions and their progeny
 - Performance results for progeny
 - A breakdown of individual stallion scores at inspection
 - A facility where other subscribers can have access to certain types of information
 - A search function to allow breeders to review the results of horses from particular bloodline crosses
 - Details in relation to each individual horse's bloodlines specifically showing the percentage of native Irish bloodlines
- 1.2.2 A REVIEW OF THE ESTIMATED BREEDING VALUE (E.B.V.) SYSTEM WITH THE AIM OF IMPROVING INDUSTRY CONFIDENCE IN THE E.B.V. CONCEPT.

- 2009 - 2012

- 2010



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- 1.2.3 THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE STALLION, MARE AND FOAL BOOK RESOURCES, TO INCLUDE: - 2010
- More user-friendly formats on the website
 - The inclusion of Estimated Breeding Values following the E.B.V. review.

- 1.2.4 ENHANCED INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION AND TRACKING SYSTEMS TO PROVIDE BREEDERS WITH INFORMATION ON RESULTS FROM THEIR MARES' PROGENY. - 2011

1.3 SPORT HORSE PROMOTION

- 1.3.1 HORSE SPORT IRELAND WILL ADOPT A TARGETED APPROACH TO THE PROMOTION OF IRISH BRED SPORT HORSES WITH A FOCUS ON HIGH VALUE MARKETS. - 2009

- 1.3.2 HORSE SPORT IRELAND WILL DEVELOP AN APPROVED LIST OF SELLERS AND SUPPLIERS OF IRISH SPORT HORSES. IN ORDER TO GAIN APPROVAL THE SELLER OR SUPPLIER WILL SIGN UP TO AND OBSERVE A CODE OF CONDUCT. - 2010

- 1.3.3 INTRODUCE A SAMPLE CONTRACT BETWEEN SELLERS AND BUYERS. - 2010

- 1.3.4 UNDERTAKE A REVIEW OF THE IRISH SPORT HORSE STUDBOOK SHOW JUMPING CLASSES WITH A VIEW TO ENHANCING THEIR EFFECTIVENESS AS AN INCENTIVE TO BREED OR PURCHASE AND SUBSEQUENTLY RETAIN IRISH SPORT HORSES AND AS A SHOWCASE FOR THE IRISH SPORT HORSE. - 2010

- 1.3.5 UNDERTAKE A REVIEW OF THE INWARD BUYER PROGRAMME. - 2009

- 1.3.6 CONTINUE WITH SUPPORT FOR CLASSES RESTRICTED TO IRISH HORSE REGISTER/STUDBOOK HORSES. - Ongoing

- 1.3.7 DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY TO PROMOTE THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND ABILITIES OF IRISH PONIES TO BETTER EXPLOIT IRELAND'S REPUTATION AS A PRODUCER OF TOP QUALITY PERFORMANCE PONIES. - 2010

- 1.3.8 WORK WITH THE SALES COMPANIES TO IMPROVE THE LEVEL OF PEDIGREE AND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN THEIR CATALOGUES. - 2009

- 1.3.9 INTRODUCE A DATA EXCHANGE PROCESS WITH THE SALES COMPANIES TO GATHER MORE SALES RELATED INFORMATION AND TO ASSIST IN THE TRACKING OF HORSES POST-SALE. - 2009

2. INCREASED PARTICIPATION

A fundamental objective of HSI is to increase the number of people participating in the equestrian sector. While specific programmes to tackle this are set out below, the main driver for getting more people fully involved is the success of our National and International teams and our ability to promote their achievements. Accordingly, investing in High Performance programmes will be important, as will a focused strategy to maximise exposure for the achievement of our horses, riders and owners.

2.1 RIDERS

- 2.1.1 INTRODUCE A NATIONAL PROGRAMME IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO PROVIDE MORE STUDENTS WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO TRY HORSE RIDING, TO INCLUDE: - Devise in 2009 roll out in 2010

- Arrangements with approved riding establishments to provide subsidised tuition
- Further development of inter-schools competitions with an emphasis on training and talent spotting
- Introduction of an inter-schools dressage competition

- 2.1.2 DEVELOP PROGRAMMES WITH THE IRISH UNIVERSITIES RIDING CLUBS ASSOCIATION TO PROMOTE EQUESTRIAN SPORT AT THIRD LEVEL. - Devise in 2009 roll out in 2010

- 2.1.3 DEVELOP A PLAN IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE GATEWAY AFFILIATES – THE IRISH PONY CLUB, IRISH PONY SOCIETY, ASSOCIATION OF IRISH RIDING ESTABLISHMENTS AND ASSOCIATION OF IRISH RIDING CLUBS, TO ATTRACT NEW PARTICIPANTS, TO INCLUDE:

- Support for competitions that are targeted at new participants - 2009
- Support for initiatives that are targeted at getting more people involved - Devise 2009 and implement 2010
- A centrally managed online system to put interested parties in touch with the relevant riding establishments, clubs or branches - Devise in 2010 implement 2011
- Publication of an information booklet on how to get involved in horse riding - 2009



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| 2.1.4 | WORK WITH THE RELEVANT AGENCIES TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF BRIDLE WAYS ON PUBLIC LANDS. | - 2012 | |
| 2.1.5 | WORK WITH APPROPRIATE AFFILIATES AND SECTIONS TO DEVELOP FEI DISCIPLINES OF CARRIAGE DRIVING AND ENDURANCE. | - 2009-2012 | |
| 2.1.6 | INTRODUCE A MECHANISM TO ALLOW THE ORGANISATIONS INCLUDING POLO, POLOCROSSE AND LE TREC TO AFFILIATE TO HSI AND WORK WITH THEM TO DEVELOP THEIR ACTIVITIES. | - 2009 | |
| 2.1.7 | ESTABLISH STRUCTURES AND DEVELOP PLANS TO PROMOTE REINING AND VAULTING IN IRELAND. | - 2009 | |
| 2.1.8 | LIAISE WITH YOUTH PROJECTS IN DISADVANTAGED AREAS TO EXPLORE PATHWAYS FOR GREATER INVOLVEMENT IN THE SECTOR. | - 2009-2012 | |
| 2.1.9 | DEVELOP INITIATIVES TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN PARA-EQUESTRIANISM. | - 2009-2012 | |
| 2.1.10 | WORK WITH RIDING FOR THE DISABLED ASSOCIATION – IRELAND TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS WHO ASSIST THEM IN THEIR WORK. | - 2009-2012 | |
| 2.1.11 | ESTABLISH A PONY COMMITTEE WITHIN HSI WITH REPRESENTATION FROM ALL RELEVANT AFFILIATES. | - 2009 | |
| 2.1.12 | INTRODUCE A REGULAR E-NEWSLETTER TARGETED AT RIDERS AND PROSPECTIVE RIDERS. | - 2009 | |
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 | | | |
| 2.2 OWNERS | | | |
| 2.2.1 | THE APPOINTMENT OF A STAFF MEMBER IN HSI TO ACT AS A POINT OF CONTACT FOR OWNERS OR PROSPECTIVE OWNERS AND TO PROMOTE INITIATIVES TO ATTRACT MORE OWNERS TO THE SECTOR. | - 2009 | |
| 2.2.2 | SET OUT A NUMBER OF SUGGESTED BEST PRACTICE TEMPLATES FOR THE OWNER/RIDER RELATIONSHIP, TO INCLUDE:
– Models to bring financial clarity to the owner/rider relationship
– A structured agreed training and competition plan for the horse | - 2009 | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A sample contract for owners and riders – A standard set of rules and sample contracts for partnerships and syndicates – A suggested legal format for leases |
| 2.2.3 | PROGRAMME TO DEVELOP INCREASED RECOGNITION FOR OWNERS IN ALL PUBLICATIONS, PRESS RELEASES AND MEDIA INTERVIEWS. | - 2009-2012 | |
| 2.2.4 | INTRODUCE WORKSHOPS FOR RIDERS ON THE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS NEEDED TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN OWNERS, TO INCLUDE MODULES ON COMMUNICATION AND DEALING WITH THE MEDIA. | - 2010 | |
| 2.2.5 | WORK WITH AFFILIATES ON INITIATIVES TO ACKNOWLEDGE OWNERS AT EQUESTRIAN EVENTS, TO INCLUDE:
– Including their names on start lists
– Including their names on scoreboards
– Access to hospitality
– Admission passes
– Prize-giving ceremonies | - 2009-2012 | |
| 2.2.6 | INTRODUCE INCENTIVE SCHEMES TO ASSIST SHOWS AND EVENTS IN SOURCING SPONSORS TO INCREASE PRIZE MONEY. | - 2009-2012 | |
| 2.2.7 | INTRODUCE AN AWARDS SYSTEM TO RECOGNISE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF OWNERS. | - 2009 | |
| 2.2.8 | BROCHURE FOR OWNERS
– Devise a brochure to encourage people to get involved in sport horse ownership | - 2009 | |
| 2.2.9 | INTRODUCE A REGULAR E-NEWSLETTER TARGETED AT OWNERS AND PROSPECTIVE OWNERS. | - 2009 | |
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| 2.3 SPECTATORS | | | |
| 2.3.1 | WORK WITH AFFILIATES TO IMPROVE THE SPECTATOR-FRIENDLINESS OF EVENTS, TO INCLUDE: | - 2009-2012 | |



- Availability of start lists, programmes and guides
 - Properly planned timetables to ensure events run to time
 - Appropriate viewing areas
 - Improved catering facilities
 - Improved toilet facilities
 - Presentation of arenas and grounds
 - Addition of alternative attractions
 - Properly trained commentators
- 2.3.2 DEVELOP AN ANNUAL PLAN TO PROMOTE KEY EVENTS, TO INCLUDE: - 2009-2012
- Production of a calendar before the start of the year
 - Links to host venues with maps
 - Targeting of regional and local media
 - Events guide on HSI website
 - Targeted advertising of events
- 2.3.3 WORK WITH FÁILTE IRELAND TO PROMOTE SUITABLE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS IN IRELAND TO PROSPECTIVE FOREIGN VISITORS. - 2009-2012
- 2.3.4 WORK TO RETAIN AND ENHANCE THE TV COVERAGE OF EQUESTRIAN EVENTS. - 2009-2012
- 2.3.5 PREPARE INFORMATION BOOKLETS AND ONLINE RESOURCES TO EXPLAIN EQUESTRIAN TERMS TO THOSE WHO HAVE LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF EQUESTRIAN SPORTS. - 2009
- 2.3.6 INTRODUCE A COMBINED NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR ALL DISCIPLINES. - 2011
- 2.3.7 EXAMINE THE MERIT OF HOSTING SPECIFIC INTERNATIONAL EVENTS IN IRELAND WITH THE AIM OF PROMOTING THE PROFILE OF EQUESTRIAN SPORT. - 2009-2012
- 2.3.8 INTRODUCE AN E-MAIL ALERT SYSTEM FOR POTENTIAL SPECTATORS AND FOLLOWERS OF IRISH TEAMS. - 2010
- 2.3.9 INTRODUCE A REGULAR E-NEWSLETTER FOR SPECTATORS. - 2009

3. IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE

3.1 PHYSICAL AND OPERATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- 3.1.1 FURTHER ENHANCE THE WEBSITE AS THE PRINCIPLE SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR ALL WHO WANT TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE SECTOR. THIS WILL INCLUDE: - 2009
- Greater involvement from affiliates in providing information for the website
 - The availability of audio/visual material on the site
 - The consideration of a live streaming facility
 - The ability to sign up to receive a regular e-newsletter from HSI
- 3.1.2 DEVELOP E-COMMERCE FACILITIES TO INCLUDE: - 2010
- Online registration in the Irish Horse Register
 - Online sports registrations
- 3.1.3 EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF INTRODUCING A COMMON HORSE REGISTRATION SYSTEM FOR ALL DISCIPLINES. - 2010
- 3.1.4 THE PROVISION OF A DEDICATED AFFILIATE SERVICES UNIT, TO INCLUDE: - 2009-2012
- Financial services
 - Office facilities
 - Meeting facilities
 - Administration support
 - Marketing and communications support
 - An affiliate services co-ordinator
- 3.1.5 ACHIEVE ADMINISTRATION EFFICIENCIES THROUGH THE INTRODUCTION OF INFORMATION AND OTHER TECHNOLOGIES TO IMPROVE PROCESSING FUNCTIONS. - 2009-2012
- 3.1.6 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATION IN THE DOCUMENT ON EQUESTRIAN FACILITIES RECENTLY AGREED BY THE BOARD, INCLUDING WORKING TO FURTHER DEVELOP PUNCESTOWN AS A VENUE FOR EQUESTRIAN EVENTS AND LIAISING WITH THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS ON OTHER POTENTIAL VENUES, PARTICULARLY FOR EVENTING COURSES. - 2009-2012



3.2 EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

3.2.1 PROVIDE RECOGNISED EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS, INCLUDING:

- Acquiring FETAC quality assurance provider status to enable the delivery of a broad spectrum of equine related courses which have awards recognised under the National Framework of Qualifications - 2009
- Carry out training needs analysis for the sector for additional educational courses and develop new courses that meet learner needs - 2009
- Develop a matrix of existing equine qualifications to enable candidates to continue to the appropriate educational courses through a Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) system - 2009

3.2.2 COACHING

- Further enhance the HSI Coaching Programme by developing levels 3 & 4
- Develop a Continuous Professional Developmental (C.P.D.) programme where coaches are required to accumulate a certain number of credits annually by attending refresher courses in specific areas:
 - First Aid Courses
 - New developments in coaching methodology
 - New developments in mental preparation and physical fitness
 - Legislative requirements
- Work with Coaching Ireland to have Irish coaching qualifications recognised on the International Coaching Qualifications Framework - 2009-2012
- Provide insurance cover for accredited coaches from Level 1 upwards - 2009
- Integrate the coaching model with a planned "Pathway to Performance" model for talented riders and horses in the sport horse sector - 2009-2012
- Ensure that all coaches deployed for training/bursaries funded by HSI are qualified HSI coaches at appropriate levels - 2010
- Maintain a database of accredited HSI coaches on the HSI website
- Develop a Competition Horse Management programme using the same structure as the coaching programme which will integrate transport and welfare regulations - 2009

3.2.3 BREEDER EDUCATION

Develop a comprehensive training programme to educate breeders on how to make informed breeding decisions to produce horses for the market place and increase the profitability of their breeding enterprises - 2009-2012

3.2.4 YOUNG BREEDERS

Develop a sustainable young breeder training programme in conjunction with Teagasc, with the objective of annually producing a competitive team for the International Young Breeder Competition - 2009

3.2.5 SHARED AFFILIATES

Develop shared affiliate educational programmes which are applicable to, and beneficial for, a wide range of equestrian disciplines. These will include: - 2009-2012

- Promotion of safety in sport
- Development of a child protection policy which will be rolled out to all affiliates
- Training for Event Officials i.e. judges, stewards and event organisers
- Training for novice horses in Show Jumping, Eventing and Dressage
- Training for Equitation Jumping
- Information Technology and business development programmes

3.2.6 INTEGRATE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES WITH THE HIGH PERFORMANCE PROGRAMME

Develop a Pathway to Performance model for talented riders and horses in the sport horse sector. - 2009-2012

- The Pathway to be designed to guarantee full participation, fair play and frequent prospects of success
- Encourage riders to deliver on their full potential
- Develop a Pathway to Performance model for talented Irish horses
- Training and sponsorship provided for young horse classes will comply with the horse Pathway model
- Training programmes should be subject to ongoing assessment



3.2.7 DRESSAGE

The introduction of targeted programmes and competitions to encourage more new / start up riders to focus on dressage / flat work in their formative riding years. - 2009-2010

3.2.8. EQUESTRIAN SKILLNET

HSI will continue to promote and support the activities of the Equestrian Skillnet to assist in its development and to acquire continuous funding for the provision of education and training programmes, which are aimed at developing work place skills for Ireland's sport horse industry. - 2009

3.3 HIGH PERFORMANCE

3.3.1 HORSE SPORT IRELAND RUNS HIGH PERFORMANCE PROGRAMMES WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE IRISH SPORTS COUNCIL AND THE RELEVANT AFFILIATES. THE ORGANISATION IS CURRENTLY PREPARING A SEPARATE HIGH PERFORMANCE PLAN WHICH WILL BE PUBLISHED SEPARATE TO THIS STRATEGIC PLAN. THIS PLAN WILL INCLUDE: - Plan produced 2009 implemented in 2009

- Increased professional support to riders
- Greater integration with the coaching system
- Greater linkages with the Irish Sports Council and the Institute of Sport
- The establishment of clearly defined squads in all disciplines and at all levels
- The enhancement of codes of conduct and the introduction of clear requirements that the riders will sign up to in order to be part of a squad
- The enhancement of current structures

4. STRONG LEADERSHIP

4.1 EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

4.1.1 THE BOARD OF HORSE SPORT IRELAND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE OF THE SECTOR. IN THIS REGARD IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS CONTINUE TO APPLY TO DECISION MAKING: - 2009-2012

- Decisions not influenced by vested interests
- Emphasis on the right decision for the organisation and the sector
- Total confidentiality in relation to Board matters
- Emphasis on strategic issues
- Clear demarcation between management responsibilities and Board responsibilities

4.1.2 STRUCTURES: SOME OPTIONS WILL BE SET OUT REGARDING MEASURES TO ADDRESS ISSUES THAT AROSE DURING THE CONSULTATION PHASE OF THE PLAN. THESE INCLUDE: - 2009-2012

- Greater involvement for organisations which do not have direct representation on the Board
- Greater stability in Board membership
- Greater clarity on Board members' responsibilities as directors of the Board of HSI while recognising they are nominated by affiliates
- Utilising more non-industry expertise
- Clarifying the role of advisory committees

4.1.3 HORSE SPORT IRELAND WILL BE AT THE FOREFRONT IN PROMOTING HORSE WELFARE, TO INCLUDE: - 2009-2012

- Implementing compulsory microchipping legislation
- Supporting measures to encourage all owners to obtain a passport for their horse
- Introducing initiatives to encourage the surrendering of passports
- Examining feasibility measures to improve ownership tracking
- Working with the Horse Liaison Group of the Farm Animal and Welfare Advisory Council (F.A.W.A.C.) to explore further welfare support measures

4.1.4 INTRODUCE INITIATIVES TO ACKNOWLEDGE, SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE VOLUNTEERS WHO GIVE THEIR TIME TO THE SECTOR, PARTICULARLY JUDGES, STEWARDS AND OTHER OFFICIALS WHO MAKE THE RUNNING OF EQUESTRIAN EVENTS POSSIBLE. THESE WILL INCLUDE: - 2009-2012

- Enhanced training programmes
- A formal acknowledgement system
- A programme to recruit more officials
- Greater support for Irish officials to obtain International qualifications



- 4.1.5 HORSE SPORT IRELAND WILL ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES IN RELATION TO CHILD PROTECTION. - 2009
- 4.1.6 WORK WITH RELEVANT AGENCIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND TO EXPLORE WAYS OF GIVING PRACTICAL EXPRESSION TO THE FACT THAT HSI IS AN ALL-ISLAND GOVERNING BODY. - 2009
- 4.1.7 ENSURE THAT HORSE SPORT IRELAND IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE ETHICS AND STANDARDS IN PUBLIC OFFICE REQUIREMENTS AND ANY SIMILAR REQUIREMENTS. - 2009-2012
- 4.1.8 DEVELOP KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs) TO PROVIDE METRICS TO ALLOW THE BOARD TO MEASURE PERFORMANCE AND ESTABLISH INDUSTRY BENCHMARKS. - 2009
- 4.1.9 PRODUCE AN ANNUAL REPORT WHICH WILL INCLUDE AN INDUSTRY FACTS REPORT. - 2009
- 4.1.10 INTRODUCE A CUSTOMER CHARTER TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION ON ALL HORSE SPORT IRELAND SCHEMES IN A CUSTOMER FRIENDLY FORMAT INCLUDING A COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE AND A PROCESS FOR DEALING WITH SCHEME-RELATED APPEALS. - 2009

4.2 INTEGRITY SERVICES

- 4.2.1 HORSE SPORT IRELAND WILL ESTABLISH AN INTEGRITY SERVICES SECTION TO ENSURE THAT THE FINDINGS OF THE EXPERT GROUP TO ERADICATE PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES AND PRACTICES FROM THE IRISH EQUESTRIAN SECTOR ARE IMPLEMENTED. - 2009
- 4.2.2 CONTINUE TO WORK WITH THE IRISH SPORTS COUNCIL AND THE WORLD ANTI-DOPING AGENCY TO ENSURE THAT PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES ARE NOT USED BY COMPETITORS.
- 4.2.3 REVIEW HORSE SPORT IRELAND'S SPORTS RULE BOOK TO ENSURE: - 2009
- A clear and easily understood set of rules
 - A fair disciplinary process

4.3 FUNDING

- 4.3.1 HORSE SPORT IRELAND WILL FOCUS ON CREATING THE CONDITIONS TO ATTRACT FURTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDING INTO THE SECTOR. - 2009-2012
- 4.3.2 HORSE SPORT IRELAND WILL ENSURE TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THE ALLOCATION OF FUNDING UNDER APPROVED INITIATIVES AND SCHEMES. - 2009-2012
- 4.3.3 THE EMPHASIS WHEN MAKING DECISIONS ON FUNDING ALLOCATIONS WILL BE ON ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES SET DOWN IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN AND ON ENSURING GREATER CO-OPERATION WITHIN THE SECTOR. - 2009-2012
- 4.3.4 MAXIMISE EXISTING SOURCES OF INCOME - 2009-2012
- Existing income comes from five sources - The Irish Sports Council, Dept. of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (DAFF), National Development Plan (2007 – 2013), Breeding Registrations and services income and Sport Registrations and services income. The last two sources of income are the only two that Horse Sport Ireland can influence directly. The organisation understands that it exists to serve those involved in the industry and thus has a responsibility to keep these charges as low as possible. However, depending on Government support, these and other areas may need to be reviewed as additional sources of income.
- 4.3.5 HISTORICALLY THE SPORT HORSE SECTOR HAS BEEN RUN ON AN ALL-ISLAND BASIS. HOWEVER, THERE IS A NEED TO SECURE FUNDING FROM THE RELEVANT AGENCIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND FOR THE SPORT HORSE SECTOR. HORSE SPORT IRELAND WILL WORK WITH RELEVANT AGENCIES TO PUT NORTHERN IRELAND FUNDING MECHANISMS IN PLACE. - 2009
- 4.3.6 DEVISE AND IMPLEMENT A STRATEGY TO TARGET COMMERCIAL SPONSORSHIP FOR IRISH TEAMS AND COMPETITIONS HELD IN IRELAND. - 2009
- 4.3.7 ENSURE THAT THE SECTOR MAKES THE BEST POSSIBLE CASE FOR FUNDING FROM SOURCES SUCH AS THE DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, SPORT AND TOURISM'S SPORT CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND SEEK OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SOURCES OF CAPITAL FUNDING. - 2009-2012



HORSE SPORT IRELAND

Appendix A: The Dowling Report

1. Horse Sport Ireland (HSI) will be a company limited by guarantee. It shall have a Board of Directors, representatives of the industry, and two advisory boards. Its executive will be responsible to the main Board. HSI shall be an all-island body.

AIMS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF HSI

2. The responsibilities of HSI are to:
 - Develop and implement strategies for the development and promotion of an internationally competitive Irish sport horse industry (breeding, sport and leisure sides) - including quality improvement, education and training, market development, welfare and high performance - and based as far as possible on Irish bred horses.
 - Ensure coherence between breeding policies and the needs of the sport and leisure sides of the industry.
 - Act as Governing Body for the sport in Ireland and represent the industry and sport internationally.
 - Maintain the Irish Horse Register.
 - Co-ordinate the activities of the different organisations within the industry and provide services for and on behalf of those organisations.
 - Obtain adequate and secure financial resources for the industry.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

3. HSI will be controlled by a Board of Directors comprising:
 - (a) Eight, with one directorship rotating between ILDRA, the CDA and PEI
 - (b) Four representing other sport/leisure organisations
 - (c) Five representing the breeding side of the industry
 - (d) One independent Chairman

The individual organisations in the sport and leisure sector will nominate their 12 directors at (a) and (b). The Irish Horse Board will nominate the 5 at (c). The Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism, in consultation with the Minister for Agriculture and Food, will nominate the Chairman.

The Board will be charged with ensuring that the responsibilities of HSI are effectively discharged and that proper corporate governance is in place. It shall appoint the Chief Executive, ensure that an effective administration is established and oversee its proper operation.

SUB BOARDS

4. The Connellan Report suggested a large Council, fully representative of the industry, which would advise on policy and strategy. We are suggesting that this function should be performed by a sub Board responsible for advice on policy and strategy in the sport and leisure areas. In any company the Board of Directors has to be, and be seen to be, the overall controlling entity in

terms of policy, strategy and implementation. It is suggested that the numbers on this sub Board be kept at a manageable level which would mean at least halving the numbers suggested in Connellan. It does not seem necessary to have large multiple representation from individual organisations on this type of advisory body. We are suggesting, therefore, that each organisation has one member on the advisory sub Board, with one member from Northern Ireland and an independent Chairman (15 members).

5. The Irish Horse Board should continue as a co-operative with members elected / nominated as at present. It would perform the function of an advisory sub Board within HSI on issues relating to the stud book and breeding policy and would agree the programmes to implement that policy within the budgetary parameters stipulated by the HSI Board. Implementation would, however, be the job of the executive, responsible through the CEO, to the Board of HSI. Responsibility for ensuring coherence between breeding policy and the sports / leisure needs of the industry would rest with the Board of HSI. The Breeding Sub Board would co-opt a member each from the Connemara Pony Society, the Irish Pony Society and the Northern Ireland Horse Board. This Sub Board would be responsible for nominating the breeder representatives to the Board of HSI.

EXECUTIVE

6. The Board would appoint the CEO, who would be responsible for the appointment of the other staff and the establishment of an effective administrative structure.
7. It is envisaged that there would be three broad divisions within HSI:
 - Finance and services (including education, training)
 - Sport (including international)
 - Breeding (including the stud book)

Each division would be headed up by a Director responsible to the CEO. The Finance Director would act also as the Company Secretary.

A suggested organogram for the proposed new body is attached. This is very much a draft outline as the drawing up of a detailed structure for the body is, of course, a matter for its Board and Chief Executive.

8. Many of the services needed within HSI (Education, IT, HR, Payroll, Membership) are needed also in the individual organisations. Once HSI is established it would offer to provide these services to the individual organisations on an agency basis, thereby maximising synergies and effecting cost savings.



HORSE SPORT IRELAND

FINANCIAL

9. Current funding for HSI will come from the resources of its constituent organisations, the Irish Sports Council and the Department of Agriculture and Food (breeding policy and related issues). At present the public element of the expenditure on the activities which would be the responsibility of HSI is about €2.25m out of a total of €5.8m. The level and breakdown of future expenditure will, of course, be determined by the nature of the approved strategic plan for the organisation. There is, however, a need to be clear about the initial expenditure requirement of the new body. It is suggested that this needs to be set at €7.5m for 2007. Of this amount, about €1.5m would be for operational and administrative costs which is in line with the current position. Thus, the additional expenditure, which would require an increase from €2.25m to €4m in the allocation from public sources, will be for all the various programmes operated by, or with funding from, HSI. The funding requirements for future years will need to be settled within the framework of the multiannual strategic plan, the drawing up of which will be the first major task of the new Body.

The additional funding from public sources should be for improved or new programmes and services. Thus, organisations will be required to maintain their normal financial contribution to the activities which in the future will be the responsibility of HSI but which are currently undertaken by the Horse Board, the EFI or individual organisations.

10. The new body will, of course, have capital expenditure requirements. The extent of these will also depend on the strategic plan but is likely to include:

- a headquarters building
- a centre of excellence, and
- a common IT system

The cost of a capital programme can be reduced if decisions are taken to lease rather than build a new headquarters and to use existing facilities, such as Punchestown, for the centre of excellence. The plans and costs involved need to be negotiated with the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism.

NORTHERN IRELAND

11. All are agreed that HSI should be an all-island body. Most of the organisations affiliated to the EFI cover the whole island. The Horse Board does not but it has effective working links with the Northern Ireland Horse Board. In this new context those links will be strengthened and formalised with a view ultimately to having a single Horse Board (with perhaps two sections).

There is a clear need to ensure that there is proper representation from Northern Ireland within the new structure. As outlined above, there would be at least one Northern Ireland

representative on each of the two Sub Boards. In addition, it is suggested that one of the representatives of the FEI disciplines and, after formal links are created between the two Horse Boards, one of the nominees of the Breeding Sub Board, be from Northern Ireland.

NEXT STEPS

12. The revised proposals will now go to the Horse Board and, through the EFI structure, to the individual sport and leisure organisations for approval. Assuming this is forthcoming, the organisations should then make their nominations to the Board and the Minister should appoint the Chairman. The Board should then operate on an interim basis in order to appoint the Chief Executive and set up the organisational structure, with a view to having HSI formally established by the end of this year.

July 2006



HORSE SPORT IRELAND

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

ORGANISATION SUBMISSIONS:

Airborne Stables, LLC
Association of Irish Riding Clubs
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food
Eventing Ireland
Irish Pony Club
Northern Ireland Dressage
Northern Ireland Horse Board
RDS
South Leinster Region of Eventing Ireland
Teagasc
The Half Bred Horse Breeders Society Ltd

INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSIONS:

Barry O'Connor
Charlie Ripman
Christel Mehagnoul
Conor Sheridan
Donna Craig
Harold McGahern
Lorna Elliott
Martin Hurley
Mr & Mrs H.A. Warnock
Patrick Kehoe
Susanne Quinn
T.J. Hurley
Thomas P. Meagher
Trevor Badger

GROUP SUBMISSIONS:

Bill Murphy
Chantal Deon
D.J. O'Sullivan
Derek Long
Eddie Murphy
Ivor & Olive Broderick
James Tarrant
John Noonan
Kevin Croke
Killian Dunne
Larry McDermott
Liam Ryan
Marilyn Power
Martin O'Dea
Martin Shaughnessy
Ned O'Flynn
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