

Briefing Note of the 44th Board Meeting of Horse Sport Ireland held on 6th Sept 2012

Present: Joe Walsh (Chairman) Neil Henry, Lt. Col. Gerry O’Gorman (ret), Gerard McCloskey, Helen Kelly, James Beecher, Harold McGahern, Liam Murphy, Taylor Vard, Rita Dunne, Tony Hurley, Peter Molloy, Samuel Smyth.

Apologies: Lt Col. Brian MacSweeney, Georgia Stubington, Jessica Harrington, Charles Powell, Robert McCormick.

In Attendance: Damian McDonald (Chief Executive)
Mark Bolger (Director of Finance & Operations)
Alison Corbally (Director of Breeding & Programmes)
Louise Donnelly (Administrative Assistant)

The Chairman opened the meeting by recognising the many achievements of Irish riders and Irish Sport Horses (ISH) in recent months including the Individual and Team placings at European Championships for Pony Eventing, Young Rider Eventing and Junior Showjumping Teams, the Senior Show Jumping Nations Cups success at Hickstead, the Aga Khan win in Dublin and the success at the London Olympics for the Eventing, Showjumping, Para Equestrian riders and Pentathletes. In particular he highlighted Cian O’Connor’s Olympic Bronze Medal, The Para Equestrian Team Medal and Helen Kearney’s two individual Paralympic medals.

Minutes of the 43rd Board Meeting and Matters Arising:

The draft minutes of the 43rd Board meeting were approved on the proposal of Neil Henry and seconded by Lt. Col Gerry O’Gorman. There were no matters arising.

Board Correspondence:

The CEO said that Board correspondence had been received from the Northern Ireland Horse Board (NIHB) in relation to the need to conclude a formal arrangement between Horse Sport Ireland (HSI) and the NIHB.

Finance Report:

The Director of Finance presented the HSI year to date management accounts.

Breeding Sub Board Report:

The Director of Breeding & Programmes presented the Breeding Sub Board report which was included in the meeting pack. Ms Corbally also explained the changes to the ISH rules which were detailed in the appendix to the Breeding Sub Board Report.

A concern was raised that the FEI license fee for competing internationally absorbed a proportion of the travel subsidy for Lanaken and that there should be some waiver on this fee.

The CEO said the FEI license fee could be reviewed by the Finance Committee but any fee change would have to apply across all disciplines as by definition all license holders were representing Ireland in International Competition. He pointed out that the fee was already lower than it had been in 2007 and noted that a portion of the FEI licenses fee was re-allocated back to the FEI.

Sport Sub Board Report:

The CEO said the next meeting of the Sport Sub Board would take place on Monday 10th September. He presented the agenda items due for discussion at this meeting. A copy of the agenda was included in the meeting pack. He asked the Board to note that the equestrian development proposal at Abbotstown was progressing well. The CEO stressed that HSI were mindful that the development of such a facility should not have a major impact on the business of existing equestrian centres and establishments. A concern was raised that the development should not be seen as an alternative to the Army Equitation School. The Director of Finance pointed out that the Army Equitation School had been fully consulted and had provided a letter of support to the National Sport Campus Development Authority (NSCDA) development.

There were concerns raised about the Department of Agriculture legislation regarding the registration of premises. The CEO said significant adjustments to the documentation had taken place as a result of input from Affiliates at the meeting with the Department earlier in the year. A further meeting would be sought with the Department of Agriculture with a number of Affiliate delegates to discuss further. He invited Neil Henry to also attend on behalf of the Breeding Sub Board to give his input.

Anti-Doping Programme Update:

The Director of Finance provided an update on the progress of the HSI National Anti-Doping Programme. This report was included in the meeting pack.

The CEO stressed that the note in the report regarding adverse analytical findings was confidential information for the attention of Board members only and should not be passed on to Affiliates. A full report would be publically available after all cases had concluded.

The CEO said there was still one vacancy to be filled on the Disciplinary Hearing Committee Panel. The Chairman proposed that Mr Jerome Kennedy be appointed to fill the vacancy. This was agreed unanimously by the Board.

London 2012 Olympic Games Report:

The CEO gave a power point presentation report on the London 2012 Olympic Games which included an overview of the selection process, pre-Olympic logistics, accommodation, accreditation etc. He pointed out that the cost of accredited officials was borne by the

Olympic Council of Ireland (OCI) and that they facilitated the rotation of accreditations from Eventing to Showjumping support personnel.

The CEO outlined the process that had been followed in the Denis Lynch selection matter and the subsequent appeal by Denis Lynch to the Court of Arbitration for Sports (CAS) Ad Hoc Division. The CEO flagged that the legal costs incurred from the CAS hearing and the matter in general would be significant.

The CEO said HSI would be hosting a formal reception later in the year for the Olympic medallists and underage teams to mark their success at the European Championships.

A Board member enquired about the next steps with the independent review carried out by Jane Williams into the Showjumping High Performance Programme and whether her report would fit into the overall review with the Irish Sports Council (ISC). The CEO said the report would feed into the ISC debrief process and that it would be made available at the next Board meeting.

The CEO said that following the ISC debrief HSI would decide what the appropriate High Performance structures would be for the next four years. He said once the structures were agreed HSI would move to engage personnel to carry out the various roles within the system. He clarified that the contracts with the Senior Showjumping Team Manager and the Senior Eventing HP Manager end on December 31st 2012. The decision on who would fill those roles would be made by the respective selection panels as established by the Board in 2009. These panels consist of the Chair and the CEO of HSI, the Chair of the relevant Affiliate, the Chair of the relevant High Performance Committee and a nominee from the Irish Sports Council.

Tattersall's International Event Funding:

The CEO brought to the Board for discussion the matter of funding of Tattersalls International following a press release from Tattersalls indicating that the event would not be able to take place in 2013 unless additional funding was secured from HSI.

After discussion, the Board agreed that HSI should provide a letter to Tattersalls strongly supporting the continuation of the Event, which was considered a very important event for Ireland, and indicating that HSI would intend to match the funding allocation given to Tattersalls in 2012 subject to there being no significant reduction to HSI's grant allocation.

Some concern was expressed about the press release that Tattersalls had issued. In general, the Board felt that doing business through the media was not helpful.

Promotions – China:

The CEO reported that HSI would be represented at the upcoming HORFA International Horse Fair in Shanghai, China 7th – 9th September. A sample of the ISH brochure which would be included in the literature on the stand was included in the meeting pack.

A.O.B:

Tony Hurley asked if it would be a possibility for reserve venues to be in place for the ISH Studbook Showjumping Series in 2013 following the cancellation of some venues in 2012 due to weather conditions. The Director of Breeding & Programmes said reserve venues would be considered for 2013.

A request for Board meeting packs to be circulated in advance of Board meetings was made. The Chairman said this would be facilitated where practical.

The next Board meeting was provisionally scheduled for **Thursday 1st November at 11.00am**

ENDS