



HSI & IDHBA Meeting
Monday 1st December 2025
Horse Sport Ireland Offices, Naas
2pm

Present: Denis Duggan, CEO (HSI)
Sonja Egan, Head of Breeding, Innovation & Development (HSI)
Lucinda McClure, Senior Executive Assistant (HSI) (*Minutes*)
Brian Murphy (IDHBA)
Sharon Mannion (IDHBA)
Michael Murphy (IDHBA)
Sally Begg (IDHBA)
Joanne Maguire (IDHBA)

DD opened the meeting at 14:00hrs and welcomed all participants. Introduction were made and DD acknowledged the passing of Matthew O'Meara and expressed condolences on behalf of HSI.

DD noted that the Board of HSI recently approved a new Transparency Policy and advised that notes and actions of stakeholder meetings will now be published on the HSI website.

SE moved to speak to the first agenda item.

Breeding & Production Advisory Forum Participation

SE requested feedback and noted that HSI continually review the advisory forums to ensure they are fit for purpose and serving the industry to best effect. HSI acknowledged that some of the forum representatives have not regularly attended meetings, and this will be addressed across all forums early in 2026. BM noted that the IDHBA feel that the engagement via both the advisory forum and the stakeholder strategy day held at Goffs, has been very positive.

National Breeding Services (NBS) 2026

SE spoke to NBS 2026 and highlighted the key changes from 2025. The schemes were discussed.

SE requested that IDHBA raise greater awareness within their network of the schemes available to breeders and highlight the vast array of financial and educational resources available.

SE noted that all schemes currently remain subject to funding from DAFM and final details will be published in due course.

BM advised HSI that IDHBA are intending to run a demo day on 22nd February 2026 including information on how to present an animal for inspection and the schooling process and sought support from HSI for same. SE noted that HSI was separately seeking ETS funding for such an activity that wouldn't be reserved for Irish Draughts alone. **BM to write to SE outlining full proposal and support sought in terms of a stand or HSI attendance, where possible.**

Irish Draught Amnesty

SE noted that HSI recently wrote requesting feedback on the amnesty and requested IDHBA's perspectives on the topic. BM noted IDHBA are in favour of the amnesty but noted a lot of people still don't get their mares inspected and many are unaware of the amnesty. It was noted there is still a need to educate people and publicise it more. BM suggested it might be worthwhile to send direct notifications to people who own a mare that is eligible. SB also noted that when you apply for inspections it isn't clear that you can apply for the amnesty.

The amnesty was discussed. BM advised that IDHBA members and Board feel that the amnesty rule should remain beyond 2026 and has been positive. BM noted that all IDHBA branches were approached for feedback, and they have expressed desire to retain the amnesty for a further 3 years.

It was noted that breeders still need educating to fully understand the importance of registering their animals in the studbook and the implications of not doing so, including limiting their opportunities to competition and funding i.e. NBS, Acres etc.

SE noted that HSI can internally review mares which may have progeny that are not classified and contact those breeders where details are available to support detection of as many animals' eligible animals as possible.

Irish Draught Stallion Book

SE advised that an online version of the stallion book is now available. It was noted that a print version could be provided but this would have to be on a pre-order basis and with payment made in advance. The matter was discussed. MM noted it is important to include Class 2. HSI advised that individual pages will not be created for Class 2 owing to the volume and resourcing required and advised that all ID animals can be viewed and filtered by classification on CapallÓir.

The matter of bringing stallions to grade up based on progeny was discussed and the **IDHBA agreed to take the point away for further thought and revert to HSI.**

IDHBA noted intention to produce their own stallion book, SE noted that some information can and has been provided but advised that photography cannot be shared owing to commercial licensing.

AOB

SM noted several questions which have been put forward from various branches, and these were discussed. **SM to send the full suite of questions to SE for written responses to be provided which can be distributed to the branches.**

Inspections were discussed at length. It was noted that hosting stallion and or mare inspections on weekends is hugely challenging from a cost perspective, HSI do not have the funding to cover the weekend hire costs, where venues would ordinarily make most of their income on lessons/competitions. HSI are also involved in the region of 100 events per year, many of which are on the weekends, and it is not possible to resource all weekend requests.

Breed standard and bone density was discussed and BM noted that the current breed standard is accurate and true. However, the perspective was that it can be subjective and what is true for a traditional draught may not be so for a performance draught. It was noted that the breed standard is recommended not mandatory. It was noted that minimum handling standards and body score measurements will be enforced at inspections.

BM noted instances of information/images from inspections being published online and it was noted that this should be handled by breeders directly advising individuals that they do not have permission to post images/information about their animal without their consent. It was noted

that HSI cannot control or enforce this as animals are not subject to GDPR regulations. However, spectators can be reminded that any photography/videography take should be for personal use only and not for publication.

Stepping Stones was discussed. BM noted some changes to be included in 2026 proposals for funding. SE noted safeguarding and insurance requirements in term of Breeding Grant applications.

BM thanked HSI for the ongoing support which is hugely appreciated by IDHBA.

At 15:24hrs the meeting closed.

Ends.