



Minutes of the 5th BREEDING & PRODUCTION ADVISORY FORUM
of HORSE SPORT IRELAND
held online via MS TEAMS
Thursday 31st July 2025 AT 2.30PM -3.25PM

Present: Amanda Fahy, IDHBA (AF)
Brigid Devine, ICA (BD)
Cait Hennessy, CPBS (CH)
Stephen Long, CPBS (SL)
Mike Burns, CPBS (MB)
Johnny Brady, CPBS (JB)
Christopher Bogle, NIHB (CB)
Allison Mercer, NIHB (AM)
Liz Murphy, MRBG (LM)

In attendance: Sonja Egan- Head of Breeding, Innovation & Development (SE)
Jenny Gaffney – Breeding Grant Manager (JG) (Minutes)

Apologies: Henk Minderman, Breeders Elite (HM)- Christopher Bogle attended on behalf

Not Present: Barbara Hatton, RSOS (BH)
Sean McGuirk, IDHS (SM)
Kevin Noone (TIHA)
Pat Cunningham (PC)
Hannah Richardson, IHRA (HR)
Tomás Rosengrave (TR)
Daragh O'Tuairsig, CPBS (DO)
Niamh Lewis, IEVA (NL)

Abbreviations: Horse Sport Ireland (HSI); Chief Executive Officer (CEO); Microsoft (MS); Traditional Irish Horse Association (TIHA); Irish Draught Horse Breeders Association (IDHBA); Irish Draught Horse Society (IDHS); Irish Cob Association (ICA); Irish Trotter Studbook & Irish Pacer Studbook (IHRA); Kerry Bog Pony Society (KBPS); Mayo Roscommon Breeders Group (MRBG); Irish Equine Veterinary Association (IEVA); Registered Stallion Owners Society (RSOS); Connemara Pony Breeders Society (CPBS); Northern Ireland Horse Board (NIHB); Irish Shows Association (ISA); Department of Food, Agriculture and the Marine (DAFM); General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR); Equine Premises Number (EPN);

Quorum: Not Reached

Governance/TOR: Meeting opened at 14:33. Updated Terms of Reference noted (quorum, attendance). Chair vacancy remains; nominations requested. Attendance to be monitored in line with TOR.

- CPBS Funding: Breeding Grant Initiative item to be discussed offline.

2025 NBS Schemes & Initiatives:

- Status and drawdown timelines reviewed; improvement suggestions invited.
- Mare Breeding Package: ~3× oversubscribed; drawdown underperformed due to incomplete compliance. Further breeder education recommended. Penalties for non-use discussed; approach to be cautious. Reopening deemed too late for relevant schemes this season.
- Starting & Schooling: DAFM geotagging given a 2025 lead-in year; acknowledged user challenges. Potential proposal for 2026 first-come, first-served payouts based on timely, complete paperwork. Care would need to be exercised that no one may complete the scheme if operated that way.
- Premium Retention: Update noted.
- Environmental Scheme: Advertising broad; targeting to be refined. Earlier openings considered, contingent on early DAFM approval.
- Stallion Health Screening: Low uptake flagged; members to promote to stallion owners for 2026.
- Colt Retention: Misaligned applications (performance animals); rarity criteria unmet despite relaxed T&Cs. Not planned to return in 2026; addressed via Starting Scheme access for 3YO animals.

Events/Competitions:

Foal Championship and Loose Jumping to run in parallel in 2025 (resource efficiency).

Additional Updates 2025: WBC Lanaken & Le Lion proceeding in September; Valkenswaard cancelled. Young Breeders extended later into the year. HWSD testing and Studbooks review ongoing. Query on SNP testing progeny of HWSD N/N parents noted; future genotyping/trait mapping is being explored.

NBS 2026—Items for Review/Development:

- More targeted promotion of schemes.
- Provide the 2024 outcomes report (DAFM to remain to publish; Forum to review for 2026 scheme planning).
- Assess feasibility of an A.I. course for breeders (legislation/insurance), there currently is one offered by Teagasc.
- Explore speakers/knowledge/content on Embryo Transfer and genetics.
- Colt Retention Scheme not returning for 2026

Process/Next Steps: Forum to review 2024 and 2025 scheme detail to support scheme planning. Proposed ideas returned to HSI before 20th October. Minutes to be published with key decisions/actions.

Meeting ends 15:25