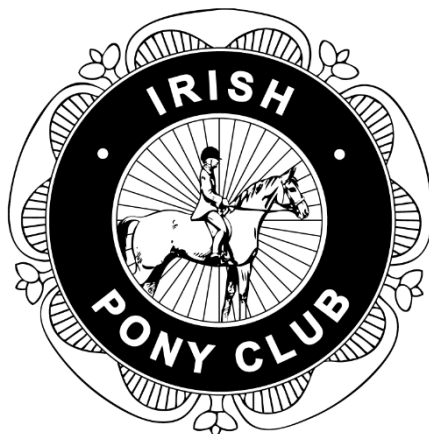


IRISH PONY CLUB - ADMINISTRATION RULES



CHANGES AGREED AT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING 20/04/2011

Amended Jan, March, April '18 & Feb, March '19, July '20, Oct '24

Table of Contents

1. OBJECTIVES
2. CONFLICT OF LOYALTY & CONFLICT OF INTEREST
3. MEMBERSHIP
 - 3.1 Members
 - 3.2 Associate members
 - 3.3 Permission or Access or Entry
4. SUBSCRIPTIONS
5. ORGANISATION
6. STRUCTURE OF THE IRISH PONY CLUB
 - 6.1 Board of Directors of the Irish Pony Club
 - 6.2 Equestrian Executive Committee
 - 6.3 The Chairman
 - 6.4 The Vice Chairman
 - 6.5 The Area Representative
 - 6.6 Discipline Subcommittees
 - 6.6.1 Discipline Subcommittee Chairman
 - 6.7 Committees responsible for Training
 - 6.8 Extra Committees
7. INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL
8. THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AREA REPRESENTATIVES
9. BRANCH OFFICIALS
 - 9.1 District Commissioners
 - 9.1.1 Assistant District Commissioners and Joint District Commissioners
 - 9.2 New Branches
 - 9.3 Annual meeting of parents
 - 9.4 Nominations to a Branch committee
 - 9.5 Conflict of interest
 - 9.6 Election for District Commissioner
 - 9.6.1 Joint District Commissioner and Senior District Commissioner
 - 9.7 Death of a District Commissioner
 - 9.8 Replacement District Commissioner
 - 9.9 Conflict within a Branch

- 9.10 Branch Committee meetings
- 9.11 Branch Children's officer
- 9.12 Branch Health and Safety officer
- 9.13 Branch Presidents
- 10. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A DISTRICT COMMISSIONER
- 10.1. The DC is responsible for ensuring the duties of the Treasurer
- 11. BRANCH FINANCE
- 12. CLOSING OF BRANCHES
- 13. VISITING MEMBERS
- 14. TRANSFER RULE
- 15. RALLIES.
- 16. CAMPS
- 16.1 Residential camps
- 16.2 Payment of instructors and others
- 17. PHOTOGRAPHY AT IPC ACTIVITIES
- 18. TRAINING / STANDARDS OF EFFICIENCY
- 19. COMPETITIONS ORGANISED BY BRANCHES
- 20. TEAMS TRAVELLING OUTSIDE OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND
- 21. CLASSES OPEN ONLY TO PONY CLUB MEMBERS
- 22. EXCHANGES BETWEEN BRANCHES
- 23. DISPLAYS
- 24. UNSUITABLE PONIES AND SADDLERY
- 25. THE EURO PONY CLUB
- 26. BADGES AND TIES.
- 27. BRANCH STATIONERY
- 28. OFFICIAL IRISH PONY CLUB LOGO
- 29. IRISH PONY CLUB WEBSITE
- 30. BRANCH WEBSITES
- 31. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND MEMBERS
- 32. SOCIAL MEDIA
- 33. IRISH PONY CLUB WEBMAIL SYSTEM
- 34. IRISH PONY CLUB TIE AND FLAG
- 35. IRISH PONY CLUB ANNUAL CONFERENCE

36. HATS/HELMETS/BODY PROTECTORS
37. JEWELLERY
38. LEGAL LIABILITY
39. THE IRISH PONY CLUB LIABILITY INSURANCE POLICY
40. ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT
42. SPONSORSHIP
43. IRISH PONY CLUB SHOP
44. WORLD ANTI-DOPING AGENCY
45. COMPLAINTS, DISCIPLINARY AND APPEALS PROCEDURES
46. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS, GDPR

1. OBJECTIVES

The Objectives of the Irish Pony Club are:

To encourage young people to ride and to learn to enjoy all kinds of sport connected with horses and riding.

To provide instruction in riding and horsemanship and to instil in members the proper care of their animals.

To promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, citizenship and loyalty, thereby cultivating strength of character and self-discipline.

In furtherance of these Main Objectives, the Irish Pony Club is committed to safeguarding the safety, health & welfare of its employees, sub-contractors, paid/unpaid officials, instructors, volunteers, members, their parents or guardians, visitors and members of the general public in the conduct of the activities of the Irish Pony Club. All those involved in the activity of the Club shall conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the Irish Pony Club and embraces the guidelines contained in the Sport Ireland Safeguarding Guidance for Children and Young People in Sport (2019). The Irish Pony Club Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport and Safeguarding Policies and Procedures forms part of the Rules of the Club. All members, parents/guardians and Branch officials/instructors are expected to agree to abide by the IPC Code of Conduct. These documents may be found on the IPC website along with the IPC Child Safeguarding Statement.

The welfare of our young people in the Irish Pony Club is our first priority and we are committed to providing an environment that will allow participants to perform to the best of their ability, free from abuse, neglect, bullying and intimidation. Bullying, whether physical, verbal or psychological, including via electronic media, will not be tolerated within the Irish Pony Club. In furtherance of these Main Objectives, all members, parents/guardians and Branch officials/instructors are expected to abide by the IPC Code of Conduct, and Branch DCs, Children's Officers and other Officials must attend a Safeguarding course. For further detail see the IPC Anti bullying policy on the IPC website.

2. CONFLICT OF LOYALTY & CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of Loyalty

A person empowered to take decisions on behalf of The Irish Pony Club must ensure that those decisions are made in the best interests of The Irish Pony Club. A Conflict of Loyalty could arise if decision making is influenced by considerations other than those in the best interest of the Irish Pony Club.

Conflict of Interest

At all levels in the Irish Pony Club, from the Board to Branch Sub committees, any potential conflict of interest must be strictly observed. Whenever an individual has a personal interest in the matter to be discussed at a meeting of a committee of which he/she is a member, he/she must:

- a) Declare his/her interest before discussion begins.
- b) Be absent from the meeting for that item, unless expressly invited to remain to provide information.
- c) Not be counted in the quorum for that part of the meeting.
- d) Be absent during the vote and have no vote on the matter.

Normally, no Equestrian Professional will be eligible for appointment as an Area Representative, a District Commissioner, or as a member of any committee or sub-committee established under these Rules, except for the Training Committee.

The Equestrian Executive Committee however, at its discretion, may decide to approve the appointment of an Equestrian Professional and may attach to the approval such conditions as the Equestrian Executive Committee in its absolute discretion considers appropriate. In such a case, the person must submit a written declaration that he/she has read and understood the Conflict-of-Interest Policy of the Irish Pony Club (to be found on the IPC website), as defined in this Rule, and that he/she will adhere to it. Equestrian Professionals who are members of any committee (including the Training Committee) or the Equestrian Executive Committee must also submit such a declaration. The Rule shall not be applied retrospectively.

3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Members - those who have not attained the age of 18 years on the 1st of January, who pay the annual subscription, and whose parents or lawful guardian shall complete and sign the official Application Form/Renewal Form for membership as prescribed by the Club and submit this form to their Branch Secretary or designated Branch Officer. A Club Member may not be a member of more than one Branch. The canvassing or 'poaching' in any form by or on behalf of a prospective Member is not permitted.

3.2 Associate Members are members who, upon attaining the age of 18 prior to 1st of January, continue as Branch members and pay the prescribed annual subscription. New members joining the Club for the first time, who have attained the age of 18 prior to the 1st of January, must pay the annual subscription and sign the Official Application form and submit the same to their Branch Secretary or designated Branch Officer.

3.3 Permission or Access or Entry

The Club reserves the right to refuse membership or access or entry or involvement in any Pony Club activity, to any member or non-member (adult or child) and to decline to renew membership of an existing/previous member without stating any reason.

The Club reserves the right to refuse membership to a Branch when the existing number of Members of that Branch exceed the maximum previously agreed by the relevant Branch Committee.

Membership automatically terminates at the end of the year in which a member becomes 23 years of age, with the exception of those renewing membership to take senior tests. Members aged between 23 yrs. and 25 yrs. are not eligible to compete in competition.

The decision by the Club as regards membership applications is final and binding.

4. SUBSCRIPTIONS

- Annual subscription as determined from time to time by the Equestrian Executive Committee is payable on or before 1st January for the following year. The first annual subscription is payable upon application for membership, provided that any person who has, for the first time, become an Irish Pony Club member after the 30th November in any year shall not be required to pay a further subscription on the next 1st January.
- Annual subscriptions are payable to the Branch of which the Club Member is a member.
- Annual subscription once paid is non-refundable.
- Failure to pay the annual subscription shall lead to withdrawal of membership benefit and to preclusion from participation in any Branch activity.
- Each Branch shall send to The Irish Pony Club Office such proportion of all annual subscriptions as from time to time shall be determined by the Equestrian Executive Committee.
- Members are not allowed to take part in any Irish Pony Club activity until the annual subscription is paid and either a new Official Application Form or Renewal Form is signed and submitted to the Branch Secretary or other designated officer.
- Members of the Irish Pony Club and their families and guardians agree to abide by the Rules of the Club including the Code of Conduct. Breaches of the Rules will be subject to Club disciplinary proceedings under these Rules.

5. ORGANISATION

Areas:

For the purpose of administration, Ireland is divided into nine Areas as defined, limited and determined from time to time by the Club. Areas shall consist of a number of Branches grouped together for administration purposes as defined by the Club.

6. STRUCTURE OF THE IRISH PONY CLUB

Board of Directors			
<i>Ultimately responsible for the Governance and Finances of the IPC CLG</i>			
Audit Committee <i>Monitors IPC Governance and financial integrity</i>	Nominations Committee <i>Invites suggestions for membership of the Sitting BOD</i>	Finance Committee <i>Responsible for IPC Accounts and appointment of staff</i>	Equestrian Executive Committee & Sub Committees <i>Responsible for all equestrian matters</i>
Branches <i>Provide training in all equestrian activities in a safe and fun atmosphere</i>			Office Staff <i>Support all IPC activities</i>

6.1 BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE IRISH PONY CLUB CLG (BOD)

The Board of Directors is composed of:

Five Sitting Directors

Four Virtue of Office Directors as follows:

Chairman of the Equestrian Executive Committee	(elected by the EEC)
Treasurer of the IPC	(appointed by the BOD)
Chairman of Training	(elected by the Training committee)
Chairman of Finance	(elected by the Finance committee)

Four Elected Directors:

One Area Representative	(elected by all Area Representatives)
One Chairman of Disciplines	(elected by all Discipline Chairs)
Two DC Directors	(elected by the DC Members of the IPC CLG)

Election of DC Directors to take place before the IPC CLG AGM. DC Directorships should be advertised on the IPC website. All candidates must be nominated in writing by a member of the EEC. If there are more nominations than there are places available, then a postal vote should take place. Those entitled to vote will be the DC Members of the IPC CLG (see the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the IPC CLG for details of Members of the IPC CLG). In the event of equality of votes, the Chairman of the EEC shall have the casting vote.

Directors shall hold office for three years and will be eligible for re-appointment for one further 3y term. Re-appointment will be possible after a break of at least 12 months (except in the case of the DC Directors).

The business and affairs of the Club shall be conducted in the best interests of the Club and in compliance with these Rules, the legislation governing the protection of children and with due regard to the charitable status of the Company.

The Board of Directors are empowered to make, amend and/or rescind these Administrative Rules as the need arises for the general regulation of the Club. Administrative Rules can be amended or set aside by a majority vote at the regular meeting of the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors are empowered to create Sub Committees as and when required. A Sub Committee may be given Terms of Reference by the Board of Directors. All Sub Committees shall keep minutes of their meetings which shall be made available to the Board of Directors if required.

All Branches, Areas, Equestrian Executive Committee, Sub Committees and Club Officers are subject to the control and direction of the Board of Directors concerning any matter relating to the business and affairs of the Club.

The exercise of control or direction by the Board of Directors in relation to the business and affairs of the Club shall be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

A decision of or direction issued by the Board of Directors concerning any matter relating to the business and affairs of the Club is final and binding.

6.2 EQUESTRIAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Equestrian Executive Committee shall attend to the business and affairs of the Club. The Board of Directors reserves to itself all original powers necessary for the proper regulation of the business and affairs of the Club and retains to itself all necessary powers of oversight and control of the activities and decisions of the Equestrian Executive Committee.

The Equestrian Executive Committee shall be empowered to create Sub Committees as and when required. These Sub Committees may be given terms of reference by the Equestrian Executive Committee. All Sub Committees shall keep minutes of their meetings which shall be made available to the Equestrian Executive Committee and/or Board of Directors if required.

The Equestrian Executive Committee shall consist of one representative from each of the Areas of the Irish Pony Club, known as Area Representatives, together with the National Officers and Chairmen of the designated sub-committees as listed in the current Irish Pony Club Yearbook.

In the event that a person is an EEC member in more than one capacity, they shall have only one vote.

A person may not serve as Chairman of more than one Sub Committee of the EEC at the same time.

All members of the Equestrian Executive Committee are under a continuing duty to ensure that the Registration of Interests is accurate and up to date. Failure to declare a financial interest as defined may result in removal from office

The receipt by members of the Equestrian Executive Committee of occasional fees, for teaching or examining at Pony Club Branches shall not disqualify them from being members of the Equestrian Executive Committee

The Equestrian Executive Committee shall have the power of appointment of officers for specific duties. The appointment should specify (a) the duration of such appointment, (b) its terms of reference (c) the voting rights that apply (d) the process for removal. Special arrangements outside of the foregoing will apply to the appointment of Administration Officers or Health and Safety Officers and for Child Welfare Officers.

The Equestrian Executive Committee of the Irish Pony Club reserves the right to terminate the appointment of any official, after following due process, where it is in the best interest of the Irish Pony Club to do so.

6.3 THE CHAIRMAN

Shall be elected by the Equestrian Executive Committee during the month of October from among its members and shall hold office for a period of three years from the 1st of January following his/her appointment. A retiring Chairperson is eligible for re-election for one further term. Re-election will be possible after a break of at least 12 months.

The retiring Chairman shall give 21 days' notice of their intent to step down. Nomination papers will be sent from the Irish Pony Club Office to those members of the Equestrian Executive Committee eligible to vote. If there is more than one nomination for the position of Chairman an election will take place, with each elected member of the Equestrian Executive Committee having one vote. This election will be conducted and counted at the next meeting of the Equestrian Executive Committee. No proxy votes allowed.

The Chairman may co-opt two persons, who will not have voting rights. Co-optees term of office ceases when the Chairman's term ceases.

6.4 THE VICE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman may appoint a Vice Chairman from within the Equestrian Executive Committee. The Vice Chairman's term of office ceases when the Chairman's term ceases.

6.5 THE AREA REPRESENTATIVE

is elected by the District Commissioners within their Area and holds office for a period of 3 years from the autumn election and is eligible for re-election. An Area Representative may only serve two, three-year terms. Re-appointment will be possible after a break of at least 12 months.

At the end of the 3 years the Irish Pony Club office shall notify the serving Area Rep that her/his 3-year term of office has been completed and enquire if they wish to go forward for re-election. The Irish Pony Club Office shall notify the District Commissioners in the Area and request nominations. If there is more than one nomination a postal ballot will take place with each Branch in the Area having one vote. A member of Equestrian Executive Committee will be appointed to attend the Area Meeting to oversee the election.

An Area Representative may not serve as a Branch District Commissioner. All newly elected Area Representatives shall provide two references, attend a Safeguarding course and undergo Garda Vetting.

6.6 DISCIPLINE SUB-COMMITTEES

There are five discipline Sub Committees whose function it is to promote and manage the competitive activities of the IPC. They are grouped together under the headings of Dressage and Combined Training; Eventing and Hunter Trials; Minimus and Tetrathlon; Mounted Games; and Show-Jumping.

Each of the nine areas of the IPC has one representative on each discipline Sub Committee who will serve for a three-year term and will be eligible to be reappointed for one further term. Re-appointment will be possible after a break of at least 12 months.

To form these committees each Branch selects, by election, if necessary, for each discipline, only one willing person with the knowledge, interest and time to represent the area in that discipline. The IPC Administrator shall in the month of May inform all D.C.s in writing of the need to nominate persons for positions on these committees thereby giving adequate time to encourage new participants. At the Autumn Area meeting the person to represent each discipline will be selected, from the Branch nominations, by election using voting papers. To vote, the D.C. or a nominated representative must be present, and each Branch may have one vote only. In the event of a tie the Area Representative will have the casting vote.

Should the Area be unable to find a nominee to represent it, the Equestrian Executive Committee may appoint an appropriate person to fill the role. This person will have voting rights and may remain on the committee for no more than three years. Should a suitable person from within the Area become available to represent the discipline, the Equestrian Executive Committee will reconsider the matter.

These discipline Sub Committee representatives are the link between the Branches and the Equestrian Executive committee. They bring the views of the members and their parents to the attention of the Sub Committees whose chairman in turn reports to the EEC. They are required to:

- attend their area meetings
- attend the discipline Sub Committee meetings
- assist at their area qualifiers
- act as chief steward at other Area qualifiers
- help at the championship of their discipline.

Should a committee member be unable to fulfil these duties an election will be held to appoint another representative to complete the remaining term of office.

All elected sub-committee representatives must be approved by the Equestrian Executive committee, must complete a Safeguarding course, undergo Garda Vetting and provide two references.

Only under exceptional circumstances should a person serve on more than two discipline Sub Committees. Neither an Area Representative nor a D.C. should be on these committees.

6.6.1 Discipline Sub Committee Chairman

The new Sub Committee, at its first meeting, conducts an election (using voting papers) to choose the new Chairman of that committee and discipline. The Sub Committee Chairman with the approval of the Equestrian Executive Committee may co-opt three additional advisory members to serve during his/her term of office. Any such election or co-option shall be subject to the approval of the Equestrian Executive Committee, who also reserves the right to terminate the appointment of any committee member. Co-opted members on any committee do not have voting rights and their term of office ceases with their chairman.

Following the election of an Area Rep to the position of Chairman of a discipline, a new Area Rep should be sought to represent that, Area. In order to do so, the election process will be repeated, and the nominee will have voting rights. The Chairman has a casting vote only.

On completion of a three-year term the Chairman may go forward for election by the discipline Sub Committee for one more three-year term after which he/she should retire. Only under exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the Equestrian Executive Committee may a third three-year term be considered. On retirement, he/she may be nominated again by his/her Branch for the role of Area Rep.

If a Chairman or Sub Committee member retires during the three-year term, the existing Sub Committee members will repeat the election process and the newly elected member shall hold office until the term of appointment of the replaced member is completed.

All these Sub Committees are responsible to the Equestrian Executive-Committee, and shall submit a report of activities, the meeting minutes, a list of recommendations for approval, and a budget to cover any proposed expenses, on request and at each Equestrian Executive meeting.

No Sub Committee decision is binding until ratified and minuted by the Equestrian Executive Committee.

Where a Sub Committee is granted permission by the Equestrian Executive Committee to hold a bank account, the Treasurer and Chairman of the Sub Committee are responsible for the financial management of the account as per IPC Financial Policy & Procedures (available on the IPC website). No Sub Committee may enter into financial commitment that risks a loss that is larger than 50% of its free reserves at the time of the commitment, or €2,500 whichever is the greater, without the approval of the Equestrian Executive Committee. Free reserves are the assets of the Branch (excluding fixed assets) less its liabilities and also less any amounts that have been set aside for a specific purpose.

6.7 COMMITTEES RESPONSIBLE FOR TRAINING

The Equestrian Executive Committee is responsible for the appointment of the additional Sub Committees dealing with Training, and the encouragement of Youth involvement. The Chairman of each of these Sub Committees is eligible to vote at Equestrian Executive Committee meetings. These Sub Committees are responsible to the Equestrian Executive-Committee, and shall submit a report of activities, the meeting minutes, a list of recommendations for approval, and a budget to cover any proposed expenses, on request and at each Equestrian Executive meeting.

6.8 EXTRA COMMITTEES

The Equestrian Executive Committee may appoint additional Sub Committees as needs arise. The Sub Committee will be directly responsible to the Equestrian Executive Committee, and if considered to be permanent, shall undergo the same election process as the discipline committees, and shall submit a report including a budget to cover any expenses they may incur. These Sub Committees may, at their discretion co-opt not more than two persons onto their committee only after seeking Equestrian Executive Committee approval.

7. INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Individuals and Teams representing the Irish Pony Club abroad:

Only a written invitation received by the Irish Pony Club shall be considered by the Equestrian Executive Committee. Branches representing the Irish Pony Club abroad should conform to an agreed dress code. All Discipline Sub Committees shall submit a budget and an itinerary of proposed travel plans. Team Trainers and Chaperones travelling with members must undergo Garda Vetting, attend a Safeguarding course and complete a Travelling Away with underage Members Form; Travel Guidelines and form are available on the IPC website.

Inter Branch invitations from The Pony Club, Northern Ireland must be approved by the Branch DC and notified to the IPC office.

8. THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AREA REPRESENTATIVES

- a) To ensure that the Ethos and the Rules of the Irish Pony Club are understood and observed by the Branches in the area.
- b) To ensure that the Branches are aware of, and adhere to all statutory obligations, amongst which include Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Garda Vetting and General Data Protection Regulations. Details of these may be found on the IPC website.
- c) To attend the Equestrian Executive meetings of the IPC to represent the views and wishes of their Area and to discuss any difficulties.
- d) To arrange and chair a minimum of two Area meetings per year.
- e) To appoint an Assistant Area Representative (AAR) to share the work and take responsibility should the Area Rep be unavailable.
- f) To appoint an Area Treasurer to keep the Area account and to make payments for

instructors, judges and travel expenses for IPC officials.

- g) As positions fall vacant invite each District Commissioner to nominate only one individual for election to each Discipline Sub Committee to represent the Area.
- h) To co-ordinate Area Training and arrange all aspects of the B test in the Area.
- i) To visit the Branch rallies, camps and training and observe these activities.
- j) To run your Area Qualifiers in co-operation with Branches in an appropriate venue and appoint suitable judges and all necessary competition personnel.
- k) To assist the IPC Office with any Championship held in the Area by sourcing volunteers and helping with local knowledge.
- l) To attend all Championships, National Training Days and the IPC Conference.
- m) To advise the Equestrian Executive Committee on the suitability of proposed District Commissioners proposed new Branches and applicants for overseas visits and other activities.
- n) To handle complaints and manage transfer requests with the support of the Equestrian Executive Committee and the IPC Administrator.

9. BRANCH OFFICIALS

9.1 DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

The first District Commissioner of any new Branch may be appointed by the Equestrian Executive Committee on the recommendation of the Area Representative.

In existing Branches, District Commissioners and, when required, Joint District Commissioners, are elected by the Branch Committee.

District Commissioners shall hold office for a period of three years and will be eligible for reappointment for one further term. Re-appointment will be possible after a break of at least 12 months.

All new District Commissioners must complete an application form, provide two references (one from an equine background, the second from a responsible member of the community e.g. a professional), undergo Garda Vetting and attend a Safeguarding course. All new DCs must attend Branch Officials Training within six months of being elected.

A District Commissioner shall not be deemed to have been appointed until the Equestrian Executive Committee has given its approval and a letter of confirmation of approval has been sent by the Chairman of the Irish Pony Club.

The out-going District Commissioner is responsible for the Branch until such approval is given. However, if circumstances arise where the serving DC does not wish to be involved with the Branch any longer the Branch Committee will elect a new DC to act in place of the retiring DC until approval for the new DC has been given.

The first District Commissioner of a new Branch shall within one calendar month of his/her appointment, form a local Committee which shall consist of not less than seven persons and not more than fifteen (in Branches of more than 150 members, the Committee may be increased proportionately (e.g. a Branch with 180 members may have up to 18 Committee members), of which the District Commissioner shall be one. The current Committee must agree on the maximum number of Committee members in advance of the Annual Parent's Meeting.

The District Commissioner may appoint an Assistant District Commissioner, Secretary, Treasurer, Health and Safety Officer from within the Committee, and must appoint a Children's Officer from within the Committee. The Treasurer may not be the District Commissioner, nor may he or she be anybody residing at the same address as the District Commissioner. Joint District Commissioners must be elected by the Branch Committee.

See Rule 10 for the responsibilities of a District Commissioner.

9.1.1 Assistant District Commissioners and Joint District Commissioners

Equestrian Executive Committee approval is required for the appointment of Joint or Assistant District Commissioners.

9.2 NEW BRANCHES

New Branches will be subject to a probationary period of one year, during which time their activities will be monitored. Full Branch status will be considered by the Equestrian Executive Committee at the end of that year.

Newly formed Branches must not 'poach' members from existing Branches.

Approval to form a new Branch will not be given to a group of parents that are/were in dispute with officials from an existing Branch.

9.3 ANNUAL MEETING OF PARENTS

Each Branch Committee shall call an Annual Meeting of Parents and Associate Members between 31st October and 15th November each year, with a view to enlisting their help and support for future activities and of obtaining their views on matters connected with the Irish Pony Club.

Branch Annual Accounts (comprising Income & Expenditure and a list of Debtors and Creditors) prepared to 31st October should be presented to parents at the Annual Parent's Meeting and a copy sent to the IPC office before 30th November each year (see IPC Financial Records Policy & Procedures available on the IPC website).

- Notification of Annual Parents meeting. Written notification of the Annual Parents Meeting shall be sent by post or electronically to the last registered address of members, as recorded by the Secretary of the Branch, 21 days in advance, inviting their parents/guardians to attend.
- This meeting shall have the right to propose and elect persons for election on to the Branch Committee. The election must be carried out by secret ballot with the DISTRICT COMMISSIONER having the casting vote in the case of equality of votes.
- Former members and their parents/guardians are eligible for election to the Branch Committee but do not have a right to nominate and are not eligible to vote for the Committee.
- The Area Representative should be invited to the Annual Parent's Meeting.
- The Annual Parent's Meeting must include a report from the District Commissioner on the activities of the past year, the presentation of the Branch Annual Accounts by the Treasurer, and questions and opinions from the floor. Other reports may be given as appropriate, and awards may be presented. This meeting has no authority to impose decisions on the Branch Committee.
- Eligible to vote at the Annual Parent's Meeting are:
 - o One parent/guardian representing each family in which there are current members.
 - o Any (paid up) Associate member present.
 - o No proxy vote allowed.
 - o No vote by former members or their parents/guardians.

9.4 NOMINATIONS TO BRANCH COMMITTEE

Must be formally proposed and seconded from the floor at the Annual Parent's Meeting.

Nominees should be present and if elected agree to uphold and abide by rules of the Irish Pony Club and the Sport Ireland Safeguarding Guidance for Children and Young People in Sport (2019). It is recommended that all adults with "substantial access" to children i.e. Children's Officer, Secretary, Treasurer, Camp Supervisors, Team Chaperones, Safety Officer etc. shall undergo Garda Vetting and a Safeguarding course.

A person may only serve on the Committee of one Branch of the Irish Pony Club.

Committee members shall be elected to serve for a period of three years with a limit of two, three-year terms. Re-appointment will be possible after a break of at least 12 months.

A Branch Committee may, should they so desire, include past District Commissioners as Ex-Officio members of the Branch Committee e.g. Branch President, in acknowledgement and appreciation of their valued contribution to the Branch (they do not have voting rights).

A Branch Committee may at any time, and from time to time, increase or reduce the number of its members which includes the District Commissioner provided the number shall not at any time be reduced below seven. For the purpose of increasing the number of its members or of filling any casual vacancy or vacancies a Branch Committee may at any time co-opt a member or members to its committee. These co-opted members may remain on the committee until the Autumn Parents meeting in the current year, where they are eligible for election/re-appointment. Co-opted committee members do not have voting rights.

9.5 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In order to avoid conflicts of interest, it is not permitted that a DC or any of his direct family be an Equestrian Professional ie a commercial provider of horses, ponies, training, instruction or venues. The Equestrian Executive Committee may in very exceptional circumstances give special permission to such person for a limited period only. The IPC Conflict of Loyalty, Conflict of Interest and Equestrian Professional Policies may be found on the IPC website.

9.6 ELECTION FOR DISTRICT COMMISSIONER

Each Branch Committee shall, at its autumn Committee meeting following the Annual Parents Meeting conduct an Election for District Commissioner if his/her term of office has expired. If the term of office of the District Commissioner is due to expire, the Branch Committee shall elect the person whom it desires to appoint to that office for the ensuing three years. The proposed District Commissioner shall not be entitled to vote in such an election, and shall, for the duration of the election, cease to act as Chairman of the Branch Committee and retire from the meeting. The other members of the Branch Committee present at the meeting shall appoint, from among their number, a person to act as Chairman for the duration of the election, and, in the case of equality of votes a second or subsequent ballot should take place until a majority is reached.

9.6.1 Joint District Commissioner and Senior District Commissioner

In exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of the Equestrian Executive Committee, (a maximum of) two Joint District Commissioners of a Branch may be elected. When a Branch Committee decides to elect Joint District Commissioners, distinct demarcation of duties and responsibilities must be defined and advised to the Area Representative and IPC office. However, in this event, one of the District Commissioners must agree to accept the ultimate responsibility for carrying out the duties and responsibilities of a District Commissioner, as detailed in Rule 10.

Where Joint District Commissioners are elected in a Branch, when one resigns or leaves, both of the joint posts are then open. The Branch Committee start again to elect either a District Commissioner or Joint District Commissioners to administer the Branch.

9.7 DEATH OF A DISTRICT COMMISSIONER

If a District Commissioner should die or cease for any reason to hold office the Equestrian Executive Committee shall take responsibility for the affairs of the Branch until such time as an election takes place.

9.8 REPLACEMENT DISTRICT COMMISSIONER

If a District Commissioner should cease to act or hold office, or if a District Commissioner elected by the Branch Committee is not approved by the Equestrian Executive Committee, or is suspended from office, the Secretary of the Branch Committee shall call and hold a Branch Committee meeting. They shall elect a District Commissioner to take the place of the one ceasing to hold office, or whose election is not so approved. The newly elected District Commissioner shall hold office until the term of appointment of the District Commissioner who has ceased to hold office would have expired. Any such election shall be subject to the approval of the Equestrian Executive Committee on receipt at the Irish Pony Club office of a completed application form, proof of application for Garda Vetting, and two independent references supporting the appointment as set out in Rule 9.1.

9.9 CONFLICT WITHIN A BRANCH

If during the District Commissioner's term of office, the majority of the Branch Committee consider that the Branch is not being run in accordance with the objectives of the Irish Pony Club, or in the event of serious conflict arising within a Branch, the Branch committee must appoint from amongst their number a person to report to the Area Representative, who in turn must report to the Chairman of the Equestrian Executive Committee.

The Area Representative with the help of two others from outside the Branch will investigate the matter immediately, and report to the Chairman. The Equestrian Executive Committee may also initiate such an investigation and they may deem it appropriate that a person other than the Branch's Area Representative should carry out any investigation.

9.10 BRANCH COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- a) The Branch Committee of each Branch must meet at least three times within each Pony Club year between 1st November and 31st October. Subject thereto the Branch Committee of each Branch may meet together for the dispatch of its business, adjourn, or otherwise regulate its meetings as it thinks fit.
- b) In the case of Joint DCs, one should be appointed to Chair the meeting.
- c) If the District Commissioner is unable to be present at any meeting of the Branch Committee or shall not arrive within fifteen minutes of the time fixed for the meeting, the members of the Branch Committee then present shall appoint one of their number to be Chairman of that meeting.
- d) Notice: Minimum notice of seven calendar days must be sent in writing, by post or electronically to all Committee members at their last known address.
- e) Quorum: Committees of under twelve members must have 50% + 1 (excluding the Chairman/DC) of Committee members present at a meeting to make the proceedings valid. Committees over twelve members should agree a quorum but it is recommended that six or seven members would be fair.
- f) Agenda: The Agenda must be prepared by the Chairman and Secretary, and then agreed by the Committee at the commencement of the meeting.

- g) Proposals: arising at any meeting shall be decided by a majority of votes. In the case of equality of votes, the District Commissioner or Chairman appointed in his/her place shall have a casting vote only. A casting vote thus exercised by the Chairman should vote to preserve the “status quo” as there is clearly not a majority in favour of change.
- h) Minutes: of all Branch meetings must be recorded and at the following meeting proposed, seconded and signed by the District Commissioner, as a true and accurate account of the meeting. They must then be retained safely by the Secretary and passed on to the succeeding Secretary.
- i) Accounts: At each Branch Committee meeting the Treasurer shall be required to present a Financial Report including bringing a copy of the most recent Bank Statement. (See IPC Financial Records Policy & Procedures on the IPC website).
- j) AOB: Any matter(s) brought up under AOB are for discussion only and no binding decisions may be made on items not on the agenda. AOB can include suggestions for the agenda of the next meeting.
- k) Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM): In exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of the Area Representative in collaboration with the Chairman of the Equestrian Executive Committee, an EGM of a Branch Committee may be called by the Area Representative.

9.11 BRANCH CHILDREN’S OFFICER

The role of the Children’s Officer’s is to establish a child centred ethos within the Branch and promote the implementation of the Sport Ireland Safeguarding Guidance for Children and Young People in Sport (2019) (available on the IPC website). S/he is the link between the children and the adults in the club. S/he also takes responsibility for monitoring and reporting to the Branch Committee on how club policy impacts on young people and sports leaders.

9.12 BRANCH HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICER

The role of the Health & Safety Officer is to advise the District Commissioner and the Branch Committee in order to provide as far as possible for the health, safety and welfare of the members, volunteers and others who may be affected by activities organised by the Branch.

The Branch Health & Safety Officer should ensure that Risk Assessments are carried out prior to all Pony Club activities; Risk assessment forms are available on the IPC website.

The Branch Health and Safety Officer or their nominee should attend all activities and competitions organised by the Branch.

9.13 BRANCH PRESIDENTS

Any Branch Committee may appoint a President of its Branch. This is an honorary position and as such does not carry voting rights.

10. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A DISTRICT COMMISSIONER

It is the responsibility of a District Commissioner to ensure that:

- a) Rallies and lectures covering all aspects of the Irish Pony Club activities are organised. The interests, welfare and education of all members must be catered for.
- b) References from two people are sent to The Irish Pony Club office immediately after his/her election as District Commissioner, along with an Application Form and proof of application for Garda Vetting. She/he must sign the IPC Code of Conduct and agree to abide by the Sport Ireland Safeguarding Guidance for Children and Young People in Sport (2019) (available on the IPC website) and enforce the rules of the Irish Pony Club.
- c) The Branch Committee shall meet at least three times in each year and be responsible for organising the Annual Parents Meeting.
- d) A complete record is kept of all members of the Branch, with the date of birth of each member and Tests achieved. General data protection regulations (GDPR) must be adhered to; the Irish Pony Club guidance on GDPR for members and volunteers, and data processor agreement may be found on the IPC website.
- e) Annual subscriptions are duly collected receipted, and members are registered with the Irish Pony Club office. All such remittances and returns that are requested by the Equestrian Executive Committee are rendered to The Irish Pony Club office when due.
- f) An Income and Expenditure account and a list of assets and liabilities of the Branch is kept (to 31st October) and details sent annually to The Irish Pony Club office by 30th November each year. See Irish Pony Club Financial Records Policy and Procedures available on the IPC website.
- g) That all communications from The Irish Pony Club office are placed before the Branch Committee and relevant details are sent to members.
- h) The District Commissioner is responsible for the appointment of a Branch Official to be present at every function carried out by a Branch and at every event in which a team or individual representing the Branch takes part, and that the rules of the Irish Pony Club are applied, especially with regard to entry and eligibility for competitions (see special rules for competitions).
- i) The Irish Pony Club office and the Area Representative receive notification of all Branch activities (by use of the Branch Activity Notice for Insurance Purposes form available on the IPC website, and/or Branch Newsletter, and/or email) before they take place.
- j) The District Commissioner (or his/her) representative must attend Area meetings and invite the Branch Secretary and Treasurer to Area meetings.
- k) A District Commissioner may appoint officers for specific duties from the elected committee.
- l) The District Commissioner should appoint a Chief Instructor to advise him/her (information for DCs, instructors and Assessors re the IPC Instructor's Register, and Irish Pony Club Recruitment and Selection Procedures are available on the IPC website).
- m) It is the responsibility of the District Commissioner to ensure that no child participates in any

Pony Club Branch activity unless membership has been paid; this is for insurance purposes. Any member found taking part in Area and Championship competitions without payment of membership will be eliminated from the competition.

- n) Risk Assessment must be carried out at each venue to be used for Pony Club activities. Risk assessment forms may be found on the IPC website.
- o) All Branch Officials including Instructors, Team Trainers, Chaperones, overnight camp supervisors and anyone who has “substantial access” to members of the Branch must provide two references, undergo Garda Vetting and attend a Safeguarding course. References shall be kept on record in the Branch.
- p) The District Commissioner is ultimately responsible for the financial records of the Branch as per IPC Financial Policy & Procedures (available on the IPC website). The protocol for the reporting and maintaining of Branch and other accounts must be adhered to in all financial transactions.

10.1. THE DC IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THE DUTIES OF THE TREASURER ARE CARRIED OUT AS FOLLOWS:

- a) The Treasurer must present an Income and Expenditure Account, a statement of Debtors and Creditors and a Register of fixed assets for the previous Pony Club Year, for approval by the Branch Committee.
- b) The accounting records of the Branch (including, but not limited to ledgers, bank statements, invoices, cash books, cheque books and counterfoils, lodgement records and computerised records) are the property of the Branch. Should the accounts be kept on a computer then the rights to use any proprietary software (including serial numbers and activations codes) must be owned by the Branch. Accounting records kept in a computer must be securely backed up at regular intervals, at least monthly. If the computer system is password protected the password must be known by another member of the Branch Committee as well as the Treasurer.
- c) Should it appear that a Treasurer or any other person carrying out the functions of a Treasurer is not providing the required level of financial stewardship; the Equestrian Executive Committee, upon advisement of the Area Representative, may after due process suspend them from office, and order that all of the Branch’s financial records and documents should be surrendered to a named person. In the period between Equestrian Executive Committee meetings, the Chairman of Finance may initiate the suspension.

The Chairman of the Equestrian Executive Committee shall order an investigation into the complaint against the suspended person. Depending on the outcome of this investigation, he/she may either be reinstated or removed from office. In the latter case, he shall have the right to appeal; the decision of the Appeal Committee shall be final.
- d) A register must be kept of the fixed assets (land, buildings, vehicles, caravans, trailers, jumps, trophies and other equipment) belonging to the Branch, whether or not the Branch capitalises fixed assets in its accounts. Items costing or valued (whichever is the greater) less than €100 need not be entered on the register. Property comprising a set should be priced as a set, not as individual items. This register must be physically checked at least once every year.

11. BRANCH FINANCE

Branches should adhere to the IPC Financial Procedures Policy available on the IPC website. Branches shall be largely autonomous in their control of Branch funds. However, it should be understood that the funds of The Irish Pony Club, whether they are held by the Branches or by the Irish Pony Club Office, are all regarded as being part of the organisation's funds. This means that if any part of the Irish Pony Club cannot pay its debts, its creditors can seek payment from elsewhere within the organisation. For this reason, no Branch may enter into financial commitment that risks a loss that is larger than 50% of its free reserves at the time of the commitment, or €2,500 whichever is the greater, without the approval of the Equestrian Executive Committee. Free reserves are the assets of the Branch (excluding fixed assets) less its liabilities and also less any amounts that have been set aside for a specific purpose. This criterion also applies to the Irish Pony Club Shop, and all Sub Committees that hold a separate bank account.

District Commissioners are not allowed to contribute in cash towards the expenses of their Branches. However, Branch fundraising may be undertaken. Branch Officials are entitled to be reimbursed for Branch running expenses i.e. post, phone, photocopying etc incurred in running their Branch.

It is recommended all payments should be made by cheque or online.

Branches may offer discounted membership to second or subsequent members of the same family. It is suggested that a family with three or more children be charged membership that is 2.5 times the single membership fee.

12. CLOSING OF BRANCHES

If a Branch shall, for any reason whatsoever, cease to exist, it shall be the duty of the District Commissioner/Branch Officials, or Committee members holding office at the date of such cessation if there shall not be any such District Commissioner, forthwith upon such cessation, to send to the Irish Pony Club office:

- a remittance of all funds (active and dormant accounts) of the Branch under the management of the Branch Committee.
- all records of Branch members.
- all minute books and statements of accounts pertaining to the Branch.
- all other documents held by the Branch.
- an inventory of all equipment (such as jumps) held and owned by the Branch.

The Branch should dispose of or transfer all such equipment as the Equestrian Executive Committee shall direct.

In the event of a division in a Branch (i.e. two Branches being formed where 1 existed) the Equestrian Executive Committee shall decide on the division of Branch funds and equipment.

In the event of a Branch merging with an existing named Branch, all funds, records and equipment shall be transferred to the named Branch.

13. VISITING MEMBERS

All members will be welcomed as occasional visitors to the working Rallies or Camp of any Branch with the approval of both District Commissioners and the Area Representative. No test may be taken outside the Branch without the written permission of both District Commissioners and the Area Representative.

Visitors from outside Area 17 (NI) and the UK require additional insurance.

14. TRANSFER RULE: version dated 2020 available on IPC website at

<https://www.irishponyclub.ie/index.php/officials-m/downloads/memb-m>

15. RALLIES

a) Rallies will be held regularly and organised by the Branch Committee and no person shall hold a Rally or give instruction at a Rally unless authorised by a Branch Committee or District Commissioner. A working rally is one at which instruction is given and which is open to all members of the Branch within the age range for which it is intended. It may be either a mounted or unmounted Rally. An unmounted Rally is usually for horse and pony care instruction.

Team practices or coaching sessions do not qualify as working Rallies.

b) For Area Competitions and above, members should have been to a minimum of three working rallies since the previous 1st July, to be eligible to represent their Branch. Camp counts as one working rally. For inter-Branch friendly competitions Branches may adopt their own policy. Senior members should attend training before Area competitions and Championships.

c) To ensure Insurance cover, The Irish Pony Club office and/or Area Representative must be in possession of a Diary of Branch activities before they take place (by use of the Branch Activity Notice for Insurance Purposes form available on the IPC website, and/or Branch Newsletter, and/or email).

d) To ensure Insurance cover, appropriate medical cover must be provided at all Irish Pony Club activities, both within-Branch and inter-Branch including rallies/camp, hacks, fun/sponsored rides, mounted games, dressage, show jumping, cross country and tetrathlon. A Summary of Minimum Standards of Medical Cover at Irish Pony Club Competitions may be found on the IPC website.

e) It is of great importance that at every function carried out by a Branch, and every event in which a team or individual representing the Branch takes part, a tack Inspection is carried out (see special rules for tack).

f) A Branch Official shall be present to accept responsibility for the proper conduct of affairs or to deal with unwanted incidents. Such person may be either the District Commissioner or some other member of the Branch Committee appointed to act on their behalf.

g) At every working rally instruction shall be given, followed by a fun activity.

h) Parents are welcome at Pony Club activities but are asked not to interfere with the instruction being given or on the progress of the rally unless specifically requested to do so.

i) Teamwork shall be encouraged in preference to individual competitions.

j) Unmounted rallies shall be encouraged, when visits to kennels, riding establishments, lectures etc. will impart information, knowledge and experience.

k) There shall be no awards at working rallies, but an occasional rally may be arranged such as a gymkhana, hunter trial, dressage, mounted games or show jumping competition at which prizes may be given.

l) Money prizes may not be given.

16. CAMPS

Camps are organised for the members of a Branch, together with their ponies, held over a period of several days, usually during the summer holidays. Camps may be either residential or non-residential for both members and ponies. The object of Camp is to provide an instructional holiday for members and their ponies. Instruction shall be given each day, but the holiday element must not be neglected and there should be a balanced mix of enjoyable activities and competitions. Not all of these activities and competitions need to be equestrian in nature. Camp is intended to be fun.

In view of the additional responsibilities for the Health, Safety and Welfare of the members that arise from the very nature of Camp, Branch Committees must plan Camp organisation very carefully, especially for residential Camps. Rigorous Risk Assessment must be carried out at all venues to be used (Risk Assessment forms are available on the IPC website), and both the District Commissioner and the person in charge of the Camp (the Camp Organiser) must be fully conversant and compliant with the Sport Ireland Safeguarding Guidance for Children and Young People in Sport (2019) and Irish Pony Club's guidelines on child welfare (available on the IPC website).

16.1 RESIDENTIAL CAMPS

District Commissioners are directly responsible for the supervision of members at Residential Camps. Parents of both genders must be present if both sexes are present.

A responsible adult shall be available to the members at all times of the day and night. There shall also be a qualified First Aider equipped with a mobile phone and an appropriately stocked First Aid Box. Arrangements for catering must ensure that all food hygiene regulations are fully met.

16.2 PAYMENT OF INSTRUCTORS AND OTHERS

Instructors, and others such as Camp helpers, may be paid a fee on production of an invoice. It is strongly recommended that fees should be negotiated in advance, and that they should not be paid in cash. Instructors are self-employed and thus are responsible for their own tax.

17. PHOTOGRAPHY AT IPC ACTIVITIES: policy dated 2022 available on IPC website at <https://www.irishponyclub.ie/index.php/officials-m/downloads/admin-pol-m>

18. TRAINING / STANDARDS OF EFFICIENCY

All Assessors for every test MUST be on the current Irish Pony Club Instructors Register.

- a) The Training Committee has overall responsibility for all training activities within the Irish Pony Club. The Committee is also responsible for the Standards of Efficiency Tests.
- b) In order to encourage Irish Pony Club members to improve their equestrian proficiency and knowledge and to encourage pride in their work practices, a series of standards has been introduced, for each of which an Efficiency Certificate is awarded.
- c) There are eleven standards: - A, H, Foundation Coach, Lungeing, B, C+, Riding and Road Safety, C, D+, D and E Test of which A is the highest and E the lowest. Club members shall take these in reverse sequence. An Efficiency

Certificate is awarded for each standard; these certificates are signed by both the Assessor and the District Commissioner of the Branch to which the candidate belongs.

- d) Tests for D, D+, standards shall be carried out by an Assessor listed in the current Instructors Register.
- e) Assessors for C Test and upwards must be from outside the Branch and must not have instructed the candidates within the past 6 months.
- f) For C Test it is necessary to have one Assessor from the C+ or higher Assessors List and one from the C Coach List or higher.
- g) C+ standard Tests may not be taken until the candidate has passed the Riding and Road Safety Test.
- h) For C+ standard Test it is necessary to have two Assessors, one from the C+ Assessors List or higher and one from the B Assessors List or higher.
- i) The Test for B standard shall be carried out by two Assessors, one of whom must be from the Irish Pony Club list of B Assessors or higher and one from the A and H Assessors List and must be organised by the Area Representative.
- j) Results of all Tests must be sent to the IPC office.
- k) The Tests for Lungeing, Foundation Coach, H and A standards shall be carried out by Assessors approved by the Training Committee and will be organised by the Training Chairperson and Committee. Candidates for H Test must have passed the Lungeing Test and candidates for A Test must have passed H Test and Lungeing Test. Members who have passed the B Stable management may take the Lungeing Test and then the H Test.
- l) Members taking a Test from E to C+ outside their own Branch need the consent of their own DC and that of the host Branch; the Area Representative should also be notified.
- m) A minimum of one month must elapse before any failed Test is re-taken, with the exception of A Test where three months must elapse before the Test is retaken.
- n) It is the responsibility of the District Commissioner to arrange Efficiency Tests except B Test which is arranged by the Area Representative and the Lungeing Tests, Foundation Coach, H, and A Tests which are organised by the Training Committee.
- o) Parents may not, under any circumstance, organise Efficiency Tests for their children.
- p) From C+ Standard and up it is outlined on the Test Syllabus that the candidates will exchange horses at the discretion of the Assessors.
- q) Members who have passed the Foundation Coach Test are permitted to coach up to C Test but are not permitted to assess any Efficiency Tests.

19. COMPETITIONS ORGANISED BY BRANCHES

At all Inter-Branch competitions, current membership cards must be presented.

Appropriate medical cover must be provided as specified in the Summary of Minimum Standards of Medical Cover at Irish Pony Club Competitions to be found on the IPC website

20. TEAMS TRAVELLING OUTSIDE OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

A member wishing to put themselves forward for selection on a team travelling outside of the Republic of Ireland in any discipline, must have taken part, or been available for selection by their Branch, in that discipline, during the previous 12 months. Travelling members, parents/guardians of members aged under 18y and officials must comply with IPC Travel Guidelines and complete a Travel Permission form available on the IPC website.

21. CLASSES OPEN ONLY TO PONY CLUB MEMBERS

At a County or Local Show, classes confined to Branch members may be arranged only with the consent of the District Commissioner of the Branch in whose district the class is held. He/she must approve the conditions of the classes and the persons appointed to judge them. The Irish Pony Club office must be notified for verification of Insurance. Prize money is forbidden.

22. EXCHANGES BETWEEN BRANCHES

The exchange of visits and interchange of ideas between Branches can be beneficial to all concerned. The sharing of common interests and the spirit of friendship engendered among members, from different backgrounds has everything to recommend it. Members must have prior permission from both DCs before engaging in any activity with an outside Branch.

23. DISPLAYS

Branches shall not undertake to give displays or to stage competitions at Shows or other public gatherings without first obtaining permission from their Area Representative. The Irish Pony Club office must also be consulted.

24. UNSUITABLE PONIES AND SADDLERY

Members may come to working rallies/camps/training with ponies which are quite unsuitable for them, or with ill-fitting or unserviceable saddlery. This calls for sympathetic understanding and handling. Strict adherence to the routine inspection, of rider, saddlery and pony at the outset of every working rally is the best safeguard against sub-standard turn-out. In cases in which action is called for, the child shall be dismounted and the matter referred to the Irish Pony Club official in charge of the rally. If an approach to the parents concerned is deemed necessary or desirable such shall be initiated by the District Commissioner or official.

The following are regarded as unacceptable at Irish Pony Club functions:

- a) Ponies that are under 4 years of age or are infirm through old age; ponies that are visibly ill, thin or lame; ponies that are a danger to their riders, or to other members or their ponies or bystanders.
- b) Mares heavily in foal, mares in milk or with foal at foot.
- c) Stallions may only be ridden at Irish Pony Club activities by members if they have permission from a District Commissioner to do so. The District Commissioner must inform in advance the organiser/Assessor of the competition/test that a stallion will be ridden, and must also guarantee that the stallion will only be ridden by the nominated rider and remain under named adult supervision when not being ridden. The Irish Pony Club policy on stallions at IPC activities can be found on the IPC website.
- d) Unsafe/Unsuitable pony/horse. If in the professional opinion of the Instructor/Trainer/District Commissioner, a pony/horse is deemed unsafe/unsuitable they have the right to ban the pony/horse from a rally, camp or training session.

25. THE EURO PONY CLUB

The Irish Pony Club is affiliated to Euro Pony Club, which was formed in 1990 and currently has membership embracing 16 European countries. Its object is to promote cultural exchanges among Pony Club members from the participating countries. Contact the Irish Pony Club office for details of the Irish Pony Club representative.

26. BADGES AND TIES.

Badges and ties of membership are supplied to Irish Pony Club members on payment of such charge as shall, from time to time, be notified by the Equestrian Executive Committee. Membership badges and ties shall be worn at all Branch rallies and Irish Pony Club activities, unless the wearing of a tie is inappropriate to that activity. Associate ties are available to members 18 yrs. and over.

27. BRANCH STATIONERY

If printed stationery and fixture lists are used, care should be taken that the title is correctly worded, viz. TheBranch of the Irish Pony Club NOT ThePony Club.

28. OFFICIAL IRISH PONY CLUB LOGO

shall be used (available from the IPC office) on all Branch stationery and Branch Websites.

29. IRISH PONY CLUB WEBSITE

The purpose of the website is to provide a source of information about the Irish Pony Club. The official IPC website domain name is <https://www.irishponyclub.ie/index.php>

Information such as Branch details, structure, inter-Branch notices, rulebooks, policy documents, competition details and results can be found on it. The Irish Pony Club Website will be managed by a Webmaster appointed by the Equestrian Executive Committee.

30. BRANCH WEBSITES (see below for full policy)

Branch websites belong to the Branch – not to any individual member, parent or volunteer even if they are building or hosting the site for the Branch. Only the Branch has permission to use the Pony Club name and logo. It is imperative that the District Commissioner should have all of the information regarding the site, including:

- where it is hosted
- selecting a domain name (e.g. .com or .ie)
- how to get into the site (passwords, etc.)
- contact information for the host
- how to change or shut down the site if needed

As leadership changes, all of the information regarding the Branch's website should be passed on to the new District Commissioner. If a parent, volunteer, or member plans to build and/or host the Branch's site, it must be made clear that the authority and responsibility for the website remains with the District Commissioner.

Guidelines for IPC Branch Websites

These guidelines have been prepared to assist Branches who wish to set up a website, or who already have a website.

Whether your website is managed by someone within your Branch or a commercial website company, these guidelines should be of assistance.

OWNERSHIP

Remember that your Branch's website belongs to the Branch – not to any individual member, parent or volunteer even if they are creating or hosting the site for your Branch. Only the Branch has permission to use the Irish Pony Club name and logo. It is imperative that the DC should have all of the information regarding the site, including:

- Where it is hosted
- Selecting a domain name (e.g. .com or .ie)
- How to get into the site (passwords, etc.)
- Contact information for the host
- How to change or shut down the site if needed

Although the DC may not have the technical knowledge to use this information, they should, nevertheless have the above details and keep them safely. These can then be passed on if technical support of the site changes within the Branch.

If there is a change of DC, all of the information regarding the Branch's website should be passed on to the new DC. If a parent, volunteer, or member plans to build and/or host your Branch's site, be sure it is clear from the beginning that the authority and responsibility for the website remains with the DC.

PRIVACY POLICY

The website should include a privacy policy; a suggested wording is below:

This privacy policy tells you about the information we collect from you when you use our websites. In collecting this information, we are acting as a data controller and, by law, we are required to provide you with information about us, about why and how we use your data, and about the rights you have over your data. Any external links to other websites are clearly identifiable as such and *Insert name of website owner* are not responsible for the content or the privacy statements of these websites. If you have any issues or queries relating to such websites, please contact the providers directly. We are *Insert name* Our address is *Insert address*. You can contact us by post at the above address, by email at *insert email address*. or by telephone on *insert number*. The Irish Pony Club CLG Company Registration Number is 112131

CONTENT

General Data Protection Regulations should be followed as outlined in The Irish Pony Club Data Protection Guide to compliant management of personal data with reference to the GDPR for members and volunteers, which may be found on the IPC website together with the IPC Data processor Agreement for data processors.

The DC should be involved in the initial development of the site to be sure these guidelines are being followed before the first page is ever posted on line. The DC should decide what content is to be on the website, in other words, what information they want contained in the website.

Even if another volunteer is responsible for building/maintaining the site, the DC should review the site from time to time to ensure accuracy and content is appropriate. While it is unlikely that you will ever have problems, it is better to be safe than sorry. To that end, the following is recommended:

- NEVER list contact information for a child (i.e. email address, phone, postal address)
- NEVER list a child's full name
- DO use first names, pony's names, etc.

PARENT/VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

It is better to address this issue with your Club before you build your website. Some parents/volunteers may not want their information posted on the Branch site. Check with your Branch committee that it is ok to put their contact details on the Contact Us page

ADVERTISING/SPONSORSHIP

If your Branch seeks advertisers/sponsors as a way of supporting the cost of your site (or just as a way to raise funds for the Branch), be aware of IPC's Corporate Sponsors. Your advertisers should not be direct competitors of the IPC's Corporate Sponsors. Advertising should not dominate the website but should be discreet so that it doesn't interfere with the information the visitor has come to find.

NEWSLETTERS/CALENDARS

Many Branches are beginning to post their Branch's newsletter online. If you decide to do this, just remember to follow the above guidelines. Before posting your newsletter online, remove contact information for youth members or other personal details that would make it possible for an online predator to make direct contact with members.

IPC LOGO/LINK

All Branches should use the IPC logo for official Branch purposes, including on a Branch website. Remember that you are a Branch of the IPC, not a separate club. This should be clear on the banner at the top of your page. A link to the Irish Pony Club (www.irishponyclub.ie) should be included somewhere on your site. You are also welcome to include links to any other part of the IPC site, although linking to the front page is preferred since that is where new information, announcements, and updates are first posted.

LINK ON NATIONAL WEBSITE - <https://www.irishponyclub.ie/index.php>

As soon as your Branch has its site up and running, be sure to submit your website address to the IPC office so that a link can be added to the IPC Branch Websites page.

INCLUDING IPC FORMS/DOCUMENTS

As a rule, do NOT publish official IPC publications (e.g. Rule Books, Tack Sheets, Dressage Tests) on your site. Instead, add a link to the IPC relevant page or document. (<http://www.irishponyclub.ie>). The national forms/documents are subject to change at any time so the only way to ensure your members and volunteers are using the most current form is to use the forms on the national site.

UPDATING YOUR WEBSITE

If you have a Branch website, it should be updated regularly. Use it to improve communication within your Branch and give as much details as possible about events. Also, members love to see reports and results of what has been happening. Also include photos but remember not to use full names in the captions. If you have a website and it's never updated, it's better not to have one at all as visitors get very frustrated and disappointed when they check it and see its months out of date. This can lead to misinformation and incorrect contact details being available.

Try and lay out your website in a logical manner. You should not need too many pages but refer to the IPC website when possible. It should be easy to find information on your website and avoid cluttered and badly laid out pages as

your website visitor will quickly click away if they don't like it and find it confusing. You may find the following pages about Basic Rules of Web Page Design and Layout helpful.

BASIC RULES OF WEB PAGE DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Many Pony Club websites are not done by professional web designers. You may find the following useful to consider when you are arranging to set up or redesign your website.

Your web site should be easy to read

The most important rule in web design is that your web site should be easy to read. What does this mean? You should choose your text and background colours very carefully. You don't want to use backgrounds that obscure your text or use colours that are hard to read. Dark-coloured text on a light-coloured background is easier to read than light-coloured text on a dark-coloured background.

You also don't want to set your text size too small (hard to read) or too large (it will appear to shout at your visitors). All capitalized letters give the appearance of shouting at your visitors.

Keep the alignment of your main text to the left, not centered. Center-aligned text is best used in headlines. You want your visitors to be comfortable with what they are reading, and most text (in the West) is left aligned.

Your web site should be easy to navigate

All of your hyperlinks should be clear to your visitors. Graphic images, such as buttons or tabs, should be clearly labeled and easy to read. You should select the colours, backgrounds, textures, and special effects on your web graphics very carefully. It is more important that your navigational buttons and tabs be easy to read and understand than to have "flashy" effects.

Link colours in your text should be familiar to your visitor (blue text usually indicates an unvisited link and purple or maroon text usually indicates a visited link), if possible. If you elect not to use the default colours, your text links should be emphasized in some other way (boldfaced, a larger font size, set between small vertical lines, or a combination of these). Text links should be unique -- they should not look the same as any other text in your web pages. You do not want people clicking on your headings because they think the headings are links.

Your visitors should be able to find what they are looking for in your site within three clicks. If not, they are very likely to click off your site as quickly as they clicked on.

Your web site should be easy to find

How are your visitors finding you online? The myth, "If I build a web site, they will come," is still a commonly held belief among companies and organizations new to the Internet. People will not come to your web site unless you promote your site both online and offline. A good way for a Branch Website to be found is to have a link to it from the IPC National Website.

Once you have created a web site, you should include it on all printed material such as letterhead, newsletters, flyers etc.

Not only should your web site be easy to find, but your contact information should be easy to find. People like to know that there is a person at the other end of a web site who can help them in the event that:

1. they need answers to questions which are not readily available on your web site
2. some element on your site is not working and end users need to be able to tell you about it, and

Your web page layout and design should be consistent throughout the site.

Just as in any document formatted on a word processor or as in any brochure, newsletter, or newspaper formatted in a desktop publishing program, all graphic images and elements, typefaces, headings, and footers should remain

consistent throughout your web site. Consistency and coherence in any document, whether it be a report or a set of web pages, project a professional image.

For example, if you use a drop shadow as a special effect in your bullet points, you should use drop shadows in all of your bullets. Link-colours should be consistent throughout your web pages. Typefaces and background colours, too, should remain the same throughout your site.

Colour-coded web pages, in particular, need this consistency. Typefaces, alignment in the main text and the headings, background effects, and the special effects on graphics should remain the same. Only the colours should change.

Your web site should be quick to download

Studies have indicated that visitors will quickly lose interest in your web site if the majority of a page does not download within 15 seconds. Even web sites that are marketed to high-end users need to consider download times.

A good application of this rule is adding animation to your site. Sure, animation looks "cool" and does initially catch your eye, but animation graphics tend to be large files. Test the download time of your pages first. If the download time of your page is relatively short and the addition of animation does not unreasonably increase the download time of your page, then and ONLY then should animation be a consideration.

Finally, before you consider the personal preferences of your web page design, you should consider all of the above rules FIRST and adapt your personal preferences accordingly. The attitude "I don't like how it looks" should always be secondary to your web site's function. Ultimately your website should be attractive and easy to use for the visitor/user.

31. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND MEMBERS

Anyone sending communication or correspondence on behalf of the Irish Pony Club or Branch, or using the organisation members' contact details to do so, should be made aware that the communication must be in compliance with the GDPR, as explained in The Irish Pony Club Data Protection Guide to compliant management of personal data with reference to the GDPR for members and volunteers (to be found on the IPC website).

Electronic communications include calls to landline, fax or mobile phone, as well as SMS, e-mail or social media messaging, e.g., Facebook.

Some important points are:

- Messages such as reminders about events and registration, notification of a change of time for training, or a change of venue for a competition, etc do not require prior consent from the recipient. Communications which promote or advertise products or tickets to an event do require prior, clear, freely-given consent.
- Where messages are being sent via social media, WhatsApp or other group text facilities, it is important to ensure that the purpose and content of the message is confined to the purpose for which the group was set up – for example, if the WhatsApp group was set up to inform parents about upcoming events, times of training or deadlines for registration, then the content of any message sent via this Group must be limited to those purposes.
- E-mails sent by organisation officials to several recipients at once should always use the bcc ("blind copy") field to prevent the unnecessary disclosure of recipients' e-mail addresses to others
- Messages relating to the activities of children and under-age members (those under the age of 18) should be sent directly to their parents or guardians, not to the minors themselves.

32. SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media should be used in a responsible manner as described in the Irish Pony Club Policy on the use of social media and IPC Child Protection and Welfare Policies and Procedures to be found on the IPC website.

Important points are:

Branch Facebook pages

- Should be set up as a 'Page' not a 'Group'.
- Should be named correctly, as per the Pony Club Branch.
- Should not include inappropriate advertising (eg tobacco and alcohol).

Twitter

- Sports Leaders and Officials are advised to use protected Tweets.
- They should choose a username which represents the Branch properly, but which is not too long.

E Safety Guidance for Officials, Staff & all Sports Leaders

- It is essential that you keep both yourself and young people safe online and, as an adult, you have a key role to play in actively promoting these safety measures.
- You should keep a professional distance online, just as you would in the 'offline' world.
- Bear in mind that once you place something on a website or social networking site it is in the public domain.
- Adults involved in any capacity with the Irish Pony Club must not accept members as their friends on their personal Facebook or Twitter pages.

Guidance for Officials / Sports Leaders / Staff

- Remember you are in a position of trust as a volunteer.
- Remember some sites have an age restriction (i.e. Facebook has a minimum age of 13 years.)
- Only set up pages for events, activities or groups for which you are responsible.
- Do not use your personal social networking account to communicate with young people.
- Conduct yourself in an appropriate way as you would face to face.
- Don't engage in on-to-one conversation with young people via chat facilities.
- Do not provide personal details, such as email addresses, school name etc. for young people on your website or social networking channel.
- Always ensure you have parental permission to use any appropriate photos of young people (ensure all members sign either a new member's application form or a membership renewal form annually which includes permission for use of photos), and do not name members in captions.
- When emailing or texting young people always copy the message to another responsible adult preferably the member's parent. Use the BCC facility to avoid sharing email addresses.
- Appoint a responsible adult (preferably someone familiar with Facebook etc.) to manage the page. They must monitor interaction between users (members and the public) – comments on photos and activities posted.
- If you are concerned about the way a young person is attempting to contact you, tell the Branch Children's Officer and/or the Branch Designated Liaison Person (DC)

- Know how to block someone online and report them to Facebook if you feel uncomfortable.

E Safety Guidance for Young People

The following points are intended to keep you safe online:

- Do not give out personal details such as your address, mobile number or location on any website or on the phone.
- Do not communicate with people on social networking sites if you do not know them.
- Do not meet up with anyone who you have only met and spoken to online.
- Make sure your social networking profile is set to private or for friends only.
- Only accept 'friends' request from someone you actually know.
- Remember that any photos, video clips and comments uploaded to the internet may be there forever even if you delete them. They may also be viewed by people that you may not think will see them.
- When uploading photos of yourself and friends make sure your friends are happy for you to do so.
- Never upload photos or send comments that may be hurtful to others.
- Make sure you know how to block someone on a social networking site, and if necessary report them.
- If you are worried and would like help, tell your parents or a responsible adult such as your school teacher and go to www.childnet.com – Young People & Social Networking Sites Guide and www.ceop.police.uk – Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre.

33. THE IRISH PONY CLUB WEBMAIL SYSTEM

All Branches and areas will have their own email address ending in *.irishponyclub.ie*. This should be used whenever possible. Passwords should be changed frequently and kept secure. If responsibility for the webmail system passes to another volunteer, the password should be changed to maintain a high level of security.

34. IRISH PONY CLUB TIE AND FLAG

In the Pony Club tie these colours are to be worn in the proportions, pale blue 9; gold 1; Purple 9.

Only those entitled to wear an official Irish Pony Club badge as a Club member, or an official, are entitled to wear the Club tie. There is also a dark blue tie with an embroidered Pony Club badge which may be worn by Associate members and officials.

When the Pony Club colours are flown as a flag, the stripes shall be horizontal, blue being the uppermost, and purple at the bottom. The proportions of the colours in the flag shall be: pale blue 9; gold 5; purple 9.

35. IRISH PONY CLUB ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Equestrian Executive Committee invites District Commissioners, Instructors, representatives of the Branch Committees and parents to an Annual Conference, this meeting shall be held at least once a year at a time and place appointed by the Equestrian Executive Committee. At this meeting subjects put forward by the Branches will be discussed, and any recommendations made shall be considered subsequently by the Equestrian Executive Committee.

Motions to Conference must be sent to the office in writing at least seven days prior to the Conference.

36. HATS/HELMETS/BODY PROTECTORS

The wearing of hats or helmets is compulsory and must comply with the regulations in the relevant current Irish Pony Club Tack Sheet. Hats must be worn with the chinstrap correctly fastened at all times when mounted. Body protectors must be worn when jumping. Failure to comply with this provision shall amount to a breach of discipline.

37. JEWELLERY

This rule applies to all Pony Club mounted activities. No jewellery is allowed for safety reasons, other than a wristwatch, a wedding ring, a stock pin worn horizontally or a tie clip. It is recommended that stock pins are removed for cross country. Members who are contemplating piercing their ears or any other part of their body should be aware that they will not be allowed to participate in any Pony Club mounted equestrian activities until such time as the "sleepers" can be safely removed.

38. LEGAL LIABILITY

Neither any Branch or the Equestrian Executive Committee of the Irish Pony Club or any person acting on its behalf shall accept or be held responsible for any accident, damage, injury or loss at rallies or any other meetings to Irish Pony Club members or their animals.

39. THE IRISH PONY CLUB LIABILITY INSURANCE POLICY

This insurance policy covers the legal liability of the Irish Pony Club and landowners only where negligence by officers of the Pony Club is proven. The insurance Policy is affected by the Equestrian Executive Committee on behalf of the Irish Pony Club to cover the legal liability of Branch officers for accidents caused to third parties. The 'third party' includes Club members. It must be emphasised that this policy relates solely to liability at Common Law, which implies proven negligence against the Irish Pony Club.

40. ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT

It is most important that liability shall, in no circumstances, be admitted on behalf of the Irish Pony Club, either verbally or in writing if any accident should occur, even though it may appear that the accident was, in fact, caused by negligence on the part of the Branch or official. Any admission of liability may very seriously prejudice subsequent defence, or even invalidate the Policy.

In the event of an accident, immediate notice, using the IPC Accident Report Form (available on the IPC website) giving full details of the circumstances, must be sent to The Irish Pony Club office. If any communication is received from a third party, this must, at once, be passed on unanswered. If an answer is essential, this shall merely acknowledge receipt of the communication.

The main point to remember is that before any Irish Pony Club function there should be an up to date minuted list of Branch officials/Committee members present, also including the names of people in charge of special events such as Camp, Gymkhanas, Hunter Trials, Horse Trials Mounted Games etc.

For insurance purposes, risk assessment must be carried out before all IPC activities, using the Risk Assessment forms available on the IPC website.

See also the Minimum Standards for Medical Cover for the Irish Pony Club Competitions, the current IPC Medical Plan and the IPC Crisis Management Procedure for Competitions available on the IPC website.

41. CONCUSSION

In all Pony Club activities, riders who suffer concussion, with or without loss of consciousness, will not be allowed to ride again that day. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure the member's fitness to ride following concussion. Should symptoms persist, SEEK MEDICAL ADVICE.

The Irish Pony Club Rules on Concussion may be found on the IPC website.

42. SPONSORSHIP

Applications to potential sponsors of all National Championships and all international teams must be approved by the Equestrian Executive Committee before confirmation to avoid possible conflict of interest.

43. IRISH PONY CLUB SHOP

The Equestrian Executive Committee shall appoint a Manager to run the Irish Pony Club Shop on behalf of the Irish Pony Club. Any bank accounts operated by the Manager are the property of the Irish Pony Club CLG. The shop may not enter into financial commitment that risks a loss that is larger than 50% of its free reserves at the time of the commitment, or €2,500 whichever is the greater, without the approval of the Equestrian Executive Committee. Free reserves are the assets of the shop (excluding fixed assets) less its liabilities and also less any amounts that have been set aside for a specific purpose.

44. WORLD ANTI-DOPING AGENCY

a) Members:

The Irish Pony Club subscribes to the Doping Control Policy of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), for details see www.wada-ama.org/en

b) Horses/ponies:

The Irish Pony Club complies with FEI Anti Doping Policy. It should be noted that the person held responsible may not be the rider.

45. COMPLAINTS, DISCIPLINARY AND APPEALS PROCEDURES: policy dated 2018 can be found on the IPC website at <https://www.irishponyclub.ie/index.php/officials-m/downloads/admin-pol-m>

46. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS, GDPR

Significant changes to Data Protection legislation came into effect on 25th May 2018 which impacts on how the Irish Pony Club, at all levels, engages with its affiliated Branches and members. It is important that every Branch, official and member, is aware of how these changes in the law affect the ways in which members' personal information can be collected and used for Irish Pony Club purposes.

What is Data Protection?

Data Protection legislation is intended to protect the right to privacy of individuals (all of us) and seeks to ensure that Personal Information is used appropriately by third parties that may have it (Data Controllers). In essence, Data Protection relates to any information that can be used to identify a living person such as their name, address, date of birth, contact number, email address, membership number, photographs, etc.

There are other categories of information which currently are defined as Sensitive Personal Data which require more stringent measures of protection and these categories include religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, trade union membership, medical information etc.

What is GDPR?

The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) is an EU legislation that came into effect on 25th May 2018.

It very clearly sets out the ways in which the privacy rights of every EU citizen must be protected and the ways in which a person's 'Personal Data' can and can't be used. It places the onus on the person or entity that collects a person's information (Data Controller) to comply with the legislation and to demonstrate compliance. The Irish Pony Club Data Protection Guide to compliant management of personal data with reference to the GDPR for members and volunteers, and the IPC Data processor Agreement for data processors may be found on the IPC website.