



**IRISH PONY CLUB
SAFETY, HEALTH AND
WELFARE POLICY**



Irish Pony Club Safety, Health and Welfare Policy

It is the policy of the Irish Pony Club to safeguard the safety, health & welfare of its employees, sub contractors, paid/unpaid officials, instructors, volunteers, members, their parents or guardians, visitors and anyone else, including members of the general public who may be affected by the activities of the Irish Pony Club (IPC).

The requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 and associated legislation are accepted as being the minimum requirements and where reasonably practicable higher standards will be attained.

The main objectives are:

- Prevention of personal injury.
- Prevention of damage to property from accident or fire.
- Protection of the environment.

The Executive Committee of the Irish Pony Club are ultimately responsible for all safety, health & welfare issues concerning the Irish Pony Club.

1.1. The Chairman and Administrator are responsible for:

- Implementing the health, safety and welfare policy within the Irish Pony Club.
- Ensuring the policy is kept under review and revised as necessary.
- Ensuring all members of the Irish Pony Club Executive Committee and all existing District and Assistant District Commissioners are in receipt of the latest revision of the IPC Safety, Health & Welfare Policy and Safety Statement.
- Make available appropriate training and guidance to employees of the Irish Pony Club, Members of the IPC Executive Committee, District Commissioners and Assistant District Commissioners, all other IPC Officials and Volunteers to enable them to undertake their health & safety duties with confidence.
- Ensuring all Safety, Health & Welfare matters are correctly addressed at all Area and Championship Competitions. This includes the appointment of a **Safety Officer** in each Branch and at any competition run by a Branch, Area or Headquarters.
- At all Pony Club activities, parents and officials are responsible for their own and their children's safety and the safety of everyone present.

1.2. Area Representatives:

Area Representatives are delegated the following tasks:

- Ensuring that District or Assistant District Commissioners are in receipt of the current Safety, Health & Welfare Policy, and that any questions they may have concerning the application of the policy is answered, by the Administrator.
- Ensuring all Safety, Health & Welfare matters are correctly addressed at their Area Competitions and at other Area activities.

1.3. District Commissioners:

- The District Commissioner is the most senior Irish Pony Club Official within the branch structure and therefore is responsible for the function of Safety and Health within their branch. Each Branch must appoint a Safety Officer who is responsible providing advice on all Safety, Health & Welfare matters to enable the District Commissioner, or event organizer, to comply with the relevant rules and regulations.
- In situations where the District Commissioner or Assistant District Commissioner cannot be present an appointed Irish Pony Club Official or competent adult must agree to deal with any Safety and Health matters that are left outstanding or that may arise.

1.4. Branch Safety Officer (BSO):

Each Branch appoints a Safety Officer whose role it is to advise the District Commissioner and the Branch Committee to enable them to make decisions that reflect the requirements for health, safety and welfare of the members, volunteers and others who may be affected by the activities organised by the Branch. The Branch Safety Officer should ensure that risk assessments are carried out prior to all Pony Club activities. They should also ensure that either they attend or there is an appointed Safety Steward is present at major competitions. The Branch Safety Officer should be a member of the Branch Committee.

1.5 Competition Safety Officer:

The Competition Safety Officer (CSO) is responsible for completing the Risk Assessment for the venue and the competition in general. They should consult with the Competition Chief Steward regarding the Management Procedure for Death and Serious Injury. The CSO should make every effort to attend the scene of a fall/incident where the ambulance is called to attend an injured party. The CSO should ensure an Accident Report Form (see appendix) is completed where appropriate. CSO is responsible and reports to the Chief Steward.

1.5. Employees, contractors, paid and unpaid officials, instructors & volunteers:

- Must take all reasonable care for the safety, health & welfare of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions or omissions.
- Must co-operate fully with the Irish Pony Club and its Officials on all safety, health & welfare issues.
- Must not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of safety, health & welfare.
- Must use correctly and as intended all work items, procedures and personal protective equipment provided by the Irish Pony Club (or other employers), in accordance with the training and instructions given and report any loss or defect immediately.
- Must inform the most senior IPC Official present of any situation they consider represents danger or could result in harm to themselves or others.
- Must inform the most senior IPC Official present of any failings or shortcomings as regards safety, health & welfare.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE IRISH PONY CLUB

The Irish Pony Club's purpose is:-

- to encourage young people to ride and to learn to enjoy all kinds of sport connected with ponies and riding.
- to give instruction in riding and horsemanship and to educate Members to look after and to take proper care of their animals.
- to promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, citizenship and loyalty to create strength of character and self-discipline.

The riding of ponies and horses inevitably involves some risk. Members are entitled to learn to ride and to participate in equestrian sports in as safe and secure an environment as is

reasonably practicable. Taking risks is a crucial element in a child's development. It is imperative that Members are allowed to take risks in a controlled environment to ensure their development and to enable each individual to achieve their ideals.

These guidelines are intended to show how organisers can do what is reasonably practicable to ensure the safety, health and welfare of Members and volunteers at Pony Club activities without unnecessarily restricting their enjoyment and learning. It is intended to be used in conjunction with other Irish Pony Club and Pony Club publications. The Pony Club Manual of Horsemanship covers all aspects of horsemanship, when it is followed risks to both horse and rider will be minimised. The Irish Pony Club rule books for the individual disciplines set out rules for the conduct of competitions in each discipline.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to give a basic framework for the organisation of Irish Pony Club activities that can be easily followed. This framework gives a straightforward structured approach to the activity while ensuring that the organiser meets the requirements of health and safety legislation. It is important to remember that health and safety is just one issue when organising an activity. To this end there should be an integrated approach that covers all aspects of the activity, that is the place, people, horses, money and safety.

There is a common feeling that health and safety law is all embracing and restrictive. This is not the case. The law requires the organiser to do what is **reasonably practicable** to ensure the health, safety and welfare of anyone who might be affected by the activity they are organising. When deciding what is reasonably practical one is permitted to balance the cost and inconvenience of potential control measures against the benefits that would result.

TRAINING & GUIDANCE

Training by approved Irish Pony Club Health & Safety trainers is made available to District Commissioners, Branch Secretaries, Safety Officers and other Branch officials and volunteers on the Duty of Care to Irish Pony Club members with regard to health, safety and welfare issues. Requests for training should be made to the Administrator.

FRAMEWORK

The organisation of any activity, large or small, has six stages:-

Purpose	-	Decide what we wish to do.
Place	-	What facilities do we have available?
Plan	-	How we are going to achieve our purpose
Personnel	-	Who is going to do what
Prepare	-	Be prepared for something to go wrong
Paperwork	-	Keep records.

Purpose

It is necessary to decide what the aim of the activity is and who are the target participants.

Place

Having clearly decided what is to be organised the facilities required can be decided upon.

The facilities that are available at the time they are required may not be ideal. The organiser may then decide to change the purpose of the activity or to build the necessary facilities. If the numbers are limited at the chosen location the purpose of the day may be changed by restricting the target group of participants. The facilities may have to be improved, for example by building some new cross country fences.

Plan

Once the purpose and the location has been decided the activity can be planned. For the activity to run smoothly there needs to be a clear plan indicating who is to do what, when they are to do it and who has asked them.

i. Organisation Checklist

A structured organisation checklist is the simple way of achieving this. Obviously more complex activities will require a longer checklist. Some examples are included where specific activities are considered. The headings for the checklist will probably be as follows:-

Task	Personnel	Date asked	Confirmed	Cost	Completed	Paid	Notes

The list of tasks may include a task or group of tasks that are delegated to an individual. For example, the preparation of a show jumping arena and building the course.

Once the initial plan for the activity has been prepared the risks can be assessed. A budget examines the financial risks and a risk assessment examines safety risks.

ii. Budget

The budget estimates the potential cost of the activity and the income that might be received. Some Irish Pony Club activities can be provided free to members or subsidised to some extent, for example rallies. At all activities, financial control is necessary to ensure the best use of resources.

iii. Risk Assessment

The risk assessment examines the **significant hazards** and lists the **control measures** that are to be used to ensure that the risks are at an acceptable level. A risk assessment must be carried out for all work activities. The risk assessment should identify the significant risks, identify who is exposed to those risks and detail the control measures taken to reduce the risks to a reasonable level. To carry out a risk assessment there are five steps to follow:

1. What could go wrong? That is identify the hazards.
2. Who is at risk? Identify the people at risk.
3. What can be done to prevent it going wrong? Reasonably practicable control measures that will reduce the risks to an acceptable level.
4. Record the assessment. Make a written record.
5. Review your assessment. During the run up to the activity and as the starting point if the same activity is to be run at a later date.

It is a matter of judgement to decide what the significant risks are but it is important not to overlook something that is masked by excessive detail of trivial risks.

The Organiser will now have three documents, an organisation checklist, a budget and a risk assessment. These will be working documents that will develop as the day approaches.

Personnel

When selecting people to perform tasks during the preparative stages and on the day it is necessary to be aware of their strengths and weaknesses. This includes volunteers and those who are paid either as a contractor or an employee. They must receive the necessary information to be able to perform their tasks safely. Their physical capabilities must also be taken into account. Someone who works at a desk from Monday to Friday is unlikely to be able to do eight hours manual labour on a Saturday to prepare a cross country course or the junior ride are unlikely to be able to act as the show jumping arena party all day. Similarly, a strong character will be required as a crossing point steward.

It is essential to consider the welfare of the team on the day. Before the day everyone needs to know when to arrive, when they can expect to be able to leave and what catering facilities, if any, will be available. If volunteers feel valued and that they have been looked after well they will come again.

Prepare

The careful planning of the activity will ensure that the day is well organised but riding inevitably involves some risk. For example, riders do fall off sometimes, handlers can get kicked etc. There must be an "emergency plan", that indicates who does what when someone gets hurt. The Irish Pony Club publishes **Minimum requirements for First Aid** at all activities (Appendix A). When completing the risk assessment, the organiser should consider these and decide whether or not more cover is necessary.

The emergency plan should include communications with the on site first aider or first aid team, the vet (who may be on call rather than on site) and for a cross country event the course builder. It must also be clear who is responsible for calling the emergency services and how this is to be done, this person must know the **Ordnance Survey map reference** of the site entrance. The first aid team must know who can give them permission to leave the site at the end of the day.

An Air Ambulance may be used to evacuate a casualty. The organiser should plan what would be done in the event of an Air Ambulance being used. What part of the activity would have to be stopped. Where would the helicopter land? This in fact will be decided by the pilot whatever is indicated from the ground. Small groups dressed in dark clothing in the middle of a large field can be very difficult to see from the air. Thus, on a cross country rally or an organised hack in the countryside have some bright reflective clothing to lay on the ground to guide them in to your position.

The possibility of a serious incident should also be considered. The management procedure for a fatality or serious injury can be found in (Appendix C, P. 21).

Paperwork

After the activity, the organiser must retain the following: -

- The Organisation checklist

- The Risk Assessment

- A financial account

- A schedule and programme for a competitive event

- A first aid treatment record (from ambulance crew and /or doctor on duty)

- These documents need to be retained for 15 years.

RISK ASSESSMENT

A risk assessment must be carried out and recorded for all activities. This is an assessment of the significant risks that identifies the people who are exposed to those risks and the control measures that have been or are to be taken to reduce the risks to a reasonable level. It is a matter of judgement to decide what the significant risks are but it is important not to overlook something that is masked by excessive detail of trivial risks. The risk assessment should be carried out by someone who is directly involved in the organisation of the activity. When carried out by someone else on behalf of the organiser the organiser should make themselves aware of the contents of the risk assessment.

To carry out a risk assessment there are five steps to follow:

1. What could go wrong? That is identify the hazards.
2. Who is at risk? Identify the people at risk, for example members, helpers, spectators, instructors.
3. What can be done to prevent it going wrong? Reasonably practicable control measures that will reduce the risks to an acceptable level.
4. Record the assessment.
5. Review your assessment. Having carried out a risk assessment for rallies at a particular location it would only be necessary to review the assessment if there was a significant change to the rally format. Similarly, if a competition is held at the same site as last year it is only necessary to review the risk assessment to identify significant changes.

Standard check lists are available for Irish Pony Club activities on (www.irishponyclub.ie)
The procedure for using these is as follows:

Hazard:	Tick listed hazard and move to 'hazard details' column or write N/A if not applicable and proceed with next hazard.
Hazard Details:	Tick appropriate hazards, listing further ones under 'other' and proceed to 'risk group' column.
Risk Group:	Tick appropriate group(s) and proceed to 'action planned' column.
Action Planned:	The control measures listed are those commonly used for the hazard in question. It is anticipated they will be effective in most cases. You may consider additional measures necessary to control the risk adequately, see the note after 'risk level' below. Tick and implement those you feel will be the most effective and proceed to the 'risk level' column.
Risk Level:	Your opinion of the risk taking into account the actions you plan to implement. If in your opinion the risk is still high you need to consider other control measures in order to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.
Detail Action You Propose:	Detail precisely what additional actions you intend to do.
Note:	Use a blank sheet to record additional hazards not identified on the check list and as a debriefing form at the event and document changes you would like to implement for subsequent events.

Review An assessment may cover a series of events at one location, eg rallies, mounted games practices. Assessments should be reviewed annually or when there is a significant change. All assessments should be signed and dated as should each review.

In some circumstance, it may not be necessary to complete your own risk assessment because a perfectly adequate assessment covering all aspects of the activity has already been carried out. In these circumstances a brief questionnaire may be used to ensure that adequate procedures and arrangements are in place to ensure the safety at Irish Pony Club activities.

Equestrian centres will have completed risk assessments and have their own emergency procedures for accidents and other incidents (e.g. fire). The use of the Questionnaire for the assessment of hired facilities will enable the organiser of the activity to assess the safety procedures at the centre. If those procedures are adequate and cover all aspects of the planned Irish Pony Club activity there is no need to complete an additional risk assessment.

Contractors who do specialist work associated with events, for example catering, trade stands, or construction work for example cross country course building or the erection of temporary stables have to carry out their own risk assessment covering their own activities. The questionnaire for the assessment of contractors is intended to check that the contractor has the necessary procedures and arrangements in place. An Irish Pony Club assessment will normally be required to cover those aspects of the work that are controlled by or involve Irish Pony Club officials and/or volunteers.

FIRST AID

Personnel

For all competitions involving cross country jumping the course must be inspected by a competent person, who is not the course builder.

For Branch and Area run competitions, this could be a member of the Eventing Committee or a Senior Instructor or a person with relevant skill and competence experienced in doing so for another equestrian organisation.

A **Chief Steward** must oversee the running of all cross-country competitions and ensure they are run according to IPC competition rules.

At National level – the Chairman of the relevant Committee must appoint a Chief Steward and ensure the cross-country course is fit for purpose.

A Medical Doctor / Paramedic / EMT and an Ambulance (e.g. Order of Malta, Red Cross and Civil Defence etc.) are required for all Irish Pony Club inter Branch competitions involving cross country riding and show jumping for example Hunter Trials, Eventing and Tetrathlon and Minimus.

At Area Qualifying Competitions (S. J., C.T.): a Medical Doctor and an Ambulance should be required..

At Mounted Games and Polo Competitions: Trained First Aid Personnel should be present. (see page 18 Appendix A, for definition of Trainer First Aider).

At Branch activities, there must be at least one person present who has some knowledge of First Aid and immediate access to a telephone. The level of knowledge required will depend on the activity involved.

Where a branch is running a cross country competition i.e. at camp, a **Trained First Aider must**

be present.

The above are minimum standards. Branch Officials should be guided by the distance from a hospital and the number taking part when deciding what First Aid service they will put in place at any given activity.

First Aid Kit

There must be a first aid kit at all Irish Pony Club activities (identifiable by being marked with a white cross on a green background) equipped to at least the following standard:

- 20 individually wrapped, sterile adhesive dressings of various sizes.
- 6 medium (12cm x 12 cm) individually wrapped, sterile non-medicated dressings.
- 2 large (18 cm x 18 cm) individually wrapped, sterile non-medicated dressings.
- 4 individually wrapped triangular bandages (preferably sterile).
- 2 sterile eye pads.
- 6 safety pins.
- Several pairs of disposable gloves.
- Individually wrapped, moist cleansing wipes for abrasions etc.
- 1 litre of sterile water, or commercial equivalent solution, for use where running water is not immediately available for eye irrigation.

Veterinary First Aid Kit.

Vets are only on site at major events. At activities where there is not a Vet present it is usual to contact the Veterinary practice that looks after the member's pony when treatment is necessary. However, a simple first aid kit can be useful for the treatment of minor injuries such as cuts. The local Veterinary practice will prepare a suitable kit.

Accident Reporting

A laminated sign should be displayed at every Irish Pony Club event informing those attending that they must report any of the following incidents or accidents to the secretary or organiser of that event on the day:

- Property or vehicle damage
- Personal injuries
- Personal illness

Any such reports must be entered in either The Branch Accident Book or recorded on the IPC Accident Report Form (p. 19, Appendix B) (see below for clarification) and brought to the attention of the District Commissioner, Area Representative or Chairman of Discipline (whichever is relevant).

There are three main reporting and recording procedures:

1. Accidents resulting in property damage or injury to people, **that were not caused by or did not involve horses or ponies,** and illness associated with Irish Pony Club activities (i.e. food poisoning) must be recorded in the Branch Accident Book.
2. Accidents resulting in property damage or injury to people, **that were caused by or involved horses or ponies,** must be recorded as follows:
 - Property Damage - on the Irish Pony Club Accident Report Form and a copy sent to IPC Headquarters
 - Minor injury requiring first aid attention – Branch Accident Book
 - Significant Injury where the casualty is taken to hospital or instructed to see their own Doctor - IPC Accident Report Form and a copy sent to IPC Headquarters.
3. In addition to the above, serious injuries that involve an **employee being taken to hospital, or being unable to work for more than three days,** have to be reported to the Health & Safety Authority. In each instance the Administrator must be informed by the event organiser. The Administrator will make the report to the HSA.

The Administrator checks all accident reports received at the office and arranges for a investigation to be carried out when necessary. This will be in addition to any investigation carried out by the Health & Safety Authority.

CONCUSSION

In the event of concussion, which may occur without loss of consciousness, **riders are not allowed to ride again** and an examination by a doctor is compulsory, immediately at the event, or following transfer to hospital. Please use the "Concussion Advice Form" (p. 27, Appendix E) to ensure that parents are definitely aware of the need to adhere to medical advice.

Concussion

1. Concussion is a condition that is not always immediately obvious. It can have very serious after effects.
2. The Irish Pony Club states in all its Rule Books that following the fall of a rider, if concussion is suspected, the advice of the Medical Officer must be sought and followed. They must not ride again that day.
3. This advice must be relayed personally to the Parent or Guardian of the competitor and care must be taken to ensure that the Parent or Guardian fully understands:
 - a) The seriousness of the possible injury
 - b) That the rider should be taken that day to a Doctor or the A&E department of the local hospital
 - c) The rider must not ride again that day and must adhere to medical advice re length of time for which they are 'laid-off'.
 - d) Riding hat should be replaced.
4. The medical advice must include warnings about the danger signs which can occur later, namely:
 - i. Deterioration of consciousness
 - ii. Restlessness and/or irritability
 - iii. Vomiting
 - iv. Persistent or worsening headache. The parent or guardian must be advised that if any of these symptoms occur, medical assistance must be sought immediately.
5. The Concussion Advice Form must be completed and signed and dated by the Parent or Guardian.

Work Groups

Working groups do a wide variety of jobs connected with the running of a Irish Pony Club branch. Preparing for camp, building cross country jumps, preparing for a show are just a few examples. In terms of safety these are no different to any other Irish Pony Club activity. There may however be some additional safety issues to be considered when doing the risk assessment.

Each member of the work group must receive the necessary information to be able to perform their tasks safely. This includes volunteers as well as paid employees. Their physical capabilities must also be taken into account. Someone who works at a desk from Monday to Friday may not be able to do eight hours manual labour on a Saturday.

Some items of equipment require specific training to be able to use them safely, a chainsaw or post driver for example, while others need some familiarisation to know where the controls for the particular model are located, a tractor for example.

It is true that "many hands make light work" but too large a work group can create problems. Decide the number of helpers required at the planning stage. Volunteers are just as easily put off if they feel that their time was not needed as they are if they are taken for granted and over worked.

Working alone

This is quite reasonable, individuals can work at their own convenience and achieve a great

deal. However, working alone with machinery increases the risks. When working alone decide the tasks that can be performed without undue risk, ensure that communications are available and arrange to report in to someone at intervals.

Equipment

A wide range of equipment may be used from simple hand tools to heavy earth moving machinery. The requirements are the same for all machinery, it must be: -

- **Fit for purpose.**
Equipment must be used for its intended purpose, within the design capability and according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- **Correctly maintained.**
The manufacturer's recommendations for maintenance should be followed. This will include sharpening chain saws, annual tests for electrical equipment and lifting equipment, and general servicing. A visual check for obvious defects should be made before any item of equipment is used.
- **The user (operator, driver) must be competent.**
Formal training is required for many types of machinery. Experienced operators will be much more efficient than novices. Carefully select tasks for the novices, this will enable them to learn and of course reduce the risk of accidents.

Noise levels produced by petrol driven hand tools are high and operators must wear ear protection. Ear plugs can be used but are not as effective as ear muffs and since they are worn within the ear can cause infection. In general, if the noise for a machine makes conversation difficult the ear protection should be used.

Electrical equipment used out on a cross-country course will normally be battery powered. If electrical tools are to be used only use 110volt equipment outdoors and remember that the trailing leads create a tripping hazard and trips, slips and falls are the most common causes of accidents.

Manual Handling

The manual handling of heavy loads is a common cause of back pain which can have lasting consequences for the individual. There are now few people who are hardened to genuine physical work, the physical capabilities of the individual members of the team need to be assessed when planning the work. A few sensible precautions when doing manual work can significantly reduce the risk of injury.

- **Always assess the load**
Is it heavy, bulky or unwieldy? Is it difficult to grasp? Is the load unstable or are the contents likely to shift during handling? Are the edges sharp or rough?
- **Always assess the task:**
Where is it going? Can the size or load be reduced? Avoid lifting directly from the floor? Do not place objects above shoulder height? Is protective clothing (ie gloves) required? Is assistance required or would it be a help?
- **Always assess the environment:**
Is there sufficient space to manoeuvre? Is the ground surface uneven, slippery or unstable? Are there steps or gradients to negotiate?
- **When lifting:**
Place the feet apart with the leading leg forward. Ensure your feet and hands are well positioned to equate the load. Ensure you have a firm grip keep the back straight. Do not jerk or twist and keep the load as close to the body as practicable.

Substances

Care needs to be taken when using a hazardous substance. These can be recognised by the hazard symbol on the label indicating that the substance is harmful, an irritant, corrosive, or toxic. The most likely substances to fall in one of these categories are wood preservatives and weed killers. These can be used safely by following the manufacturer's instructions which can be found either on the label or on an instruction sheet supplied with the substance. One sensible precaution is to have a 25 litre water container close to hand and to ensure that the first aid kit contains a bottle or two of eye-wash.

Trips, Slips and Falls

Good housekeeping is essential in the prevention of these types of accident and emphasis should be placed on the following points;

- Equipment must be positioned and used in such a way that neither the equipment nor any attached trailing leads create a risk of injury to the user or to any other person.
- Materials and work equipment must not be left in hazardous situations.
- Floor areas must be kept clean, dry and tidy.
- Pedestrian and where applicable, horse routes must be kept clear at all times
- Liquid spills that could constitute a slip hazard must be removed or sanded.
- Particular attention should be paid to electrical cables from generators and to marquee pegs and guy ropes.

Young Persons/Trainee Instructors

As part of their education and training as a member of The Irish Pony Club members under the age of 18 years may assist with a range of tasks ranging from assisting instructors to course building. Where this is done, it must be included in the risk assessment. The assessment must take account of any risks to health and safety, which may arise as a consequence of the young person's lack of experience, or absence of awareness of existing or potential risks, or of the fact the young person has not fully matured. **Please note it is the policy of the Irish Pony Club that these young people must only work under the supervision of a registered Instructor or course builder.**

Warning Signs

Where it is found necessary on the grounds of safety to display warning signs these must be of the correct size and style appertaining to the danger being highlighted, and where appropriate will be as specified by the Health & Safety Authority. If in doubt obtain clarification from Irish Pony Club Headquarters.

Warning signs must be obeyed at all times by everyone present.

Fire & Emergency Procedures - Camp and Major Events

Planning / Design Precautions:

- Plan the layout of any camp or event with particular emphasis on unobstructed escape routes, access by emergency services and the storing of ignitable and combustible substances.
- Provide separate areas for stabling, sleeping, food preparation, vehicle parking and the storage of combustible materials such as hay., straw, shavings and refuse products.
- Electrical and gas installations should be in safe working condition. If in doubt, isolate and do not use.
- Temporary stabling, canvas accommodation and caravans should be sited well away from combustible or ignitable substances. Gas bottles should be removed from caravans used as sleeping accommodation by Irish Pony Club members and / or officials.
- Cooking appliances must be in good condition and only used for their intended purpose.

- They must stand on a firm level surface and never left unattended when in use.
- Exercise care when storing and changing gas cylinders and with the storage and fuelling of generators. Always keep stocks to a minimum and avoid spillage.
- Park vehicles away from combustible and ignitable substances. Arrange for all non-essential vehicles to be removed.
- Establish and enforce a safe smoking policy. Classify high-risk areas as nonsmoking. In practice, it is more successful to designate safe smoking areas rather than enforce a total ban, which often results in secretive smoking in the most dangerous of places.
- Camp fires and bonfires must be controlled and supervised by officials of the branch at all times.
- The entire camp site should be secured by a suitable fence or hedge to prevent the added hazard of escaping horses and ponies onto surrounding roadways in the event of mass stable evacuation.

Fire Detection and Alarm Raising

- Display laminated copies of Fire Instructions in canteens, dormitories etc. (in Colleges, etc. these should be available from the Administrative staff).
- Where fire detection systems are installed these should be tested on arrival and every one made aware of the warning sound. Where no system exists provision must be made for raising the alarm in event of fire and other emergency. The system must be effective and practical and only used in emergency or practice, as general use will result in failure to respond to a real emergency. A continuous sounding car horn or shouting "FIRE" is adequate in most situations - simple and effective is more important than elaborate and misunderstood.
- At camp or any overnight stay, a list of everyone present must be kept and a roll call made by an official in the event of an emergency to ensure everyone has been evacuated.
- A safe assembly point must be established and identified.
- Fire drills and emergency evacuation procedures must be practiced.
- A 24 hour means of dialing 999 is essential.

Fire Fighting Equipment:

Fighting fires requires specialist training and equipment. Only small fires involving no personal risk to any individual should be tackled.

- Extinguishers - use only dry powder or Carbon dioxide extinguishers where electricity and fat fires are involved. Ensure the adults who will be present know how to operate them.
- Water - the ideal media for fighting combustible fires, but never use on electrical or fat fires. **Always assess the environment.**

Vehicles

Only vehicle drivers holding the appropriate licence or provisional licence holders under supervision are permitted to manoeuvre vehicles at Irish Pony Club activities. This includes tractors and quads (sometimes used for score collecting).

Any person driving a Quad /All terrain vehicle on behalf of the Irish Pony Club **must wear a suitable helmet** while doing so.

No person may move any vehicle (other than their own) unless they have the authorisation of the owner or driver.

Horses and Ponies

Most of the people attending Irish Pony Club activities will be familiar with horses and ponies but we must always be conscious of people who may be particularly vulnerable to the dangers these animals, such as the very young, the old and those with disabilities. Many of these may be simply

unaware of the potential risks involved by what would be obvious to those experienced with horses or ponies.

General Guidelines

- Only bone fide members, correctly attired may ride at Irish Pony Club activities i.e. no siblings or friends or parents may ride.
- Only riding hat or skull cap to current Irish Pony Club Tack Sheets are allowed. Chin straps must be worn fastened at all times when mounted. Hat/Skull cap and proper riding boots must be worn when riding, lunging, and letting out horses, handling young horses and loading. It is recommended to wear gloves when doing all the above tasks and when training or leading horses.
- Wear approved body protector (as per IPC Tack Sheets) when jumping, hacking, riding cross country or riding young horses.
- Never wear jewellery when riding or working with horses.
- Keep your jacket closed when riding.
- Dismount to put on or take off clothing (including number cloths/bibs).
- Warn horses of your approach - speak first.
- Do not run, shout or make sudden movements near horses.
- Handle horses quietly
- Do not walk behind a horse; walk by the horses' shoulder when leading it.
- When tying up; tie your lead rope to twine only.
- Never leave tied-up horses unattended.
- Put away forks, other tools, buckets and wheelbarrows when not in use.
- Do not use buckets with handles in stables.
- Keep field and feed-room gates closed.
- No smoking in yards, stables, feed stores or tack rooms.
- Check stitching on tack for safety regularly.
- Check vehicles, horseboxes and equipment for safety regularly.
- Turn the horse's head towards doors and gates before you close them.
- When riding on the road always follow the rules of the road and be courteous.
- Avoid riding alone on the road. If you have to always tell someone when you will be back and what route you are taking.
- When leading a horse on the road, stay on the left-hand side and walk between it and traffic.
- Do not let strange horses out in a field together.
- Care should be taken when letting horses out in a field; close gate, turn horses towards the gate and let them all go at the same time.
- Avoid leaving a horse in a field on its own when you bring in others.
- Extreme care must be taken when loading and unloading horses/ponies, an adult must be present and members are recommended to wear riding hat and gloves.

Safety Guidelines re Shooting Phase of Tetrathlon

Tetrathlon Shooting Phase

- It is prohibited, without lawful authority or reasonable excuse, to discharge or carry a loaded or unloaded air rifle or pistol in a public place. A public place is any premises or building to which the public have or are permitted access, whether or not on payment.

- It is not permitted to trespass with an air rifle or pistol on land, water or in a building.
- It is an offence to discharge an air rifle or pistol within 50 ft. of the centre of a roadway if by so doing a nuisance is caused.
- When a member carries an air rifle or pistol, in a public place, it should be in a securely fastened gun case.
- It is not permitted to have an air rifle or pistol in a public place except at an authorised range or in connection with a shooting club or shooting gallery.
- Parents who buy an air rifle or pistol for use by a person 21 yrs. and under must keep control of it at all times, even within their own home.
- A person 21 years and under can have an air rifle/pistol and ammunition temporarily in their possession only in special situations and then only when under the supervision of branch officials i.e. in connection with their membership of a club or when at an authorised shooting range, at branch practice or competition.

Safety Rules re Shooting Training and Competition

- Air and CO2 pistols must be made safe by opening the cocking handle and/or loading part.
- Guns should be unboxed and used only on an approved shooting range under the control of a Firing Point Steward or a Shooting Trainer.
- A pistol must never at any time be pointed (loaded or unloaded) at anyone.
- Always assume a pistol is loaded until it is proved otherwise.
- Never leave a firearm unattended unless it is locked away.
- Always point a firearm down the range or in a safe direction.
- After the last shot, the competitor must ascertain before leaving the firing point that there are no pellets in the chamber of the pistol/rifle.

General Public

All care must be taken to safeguard the general public from harm or injury at Irish Pony Club activities.

Any accident/incident involving the general public must be notified immediately to the District Commissioner and to the Appropriate Area Representative and IPC Office.

Visits and Excursions

Branches often organize trips for their members to places or events of interest. These may be of general interest as well as of equestrian interest. The requirements for these are similar to any other Pony Club activity. Some additional consideration are required.

Transport

The mode of transport will depend upon the size of the party and the nature of the visit. For small groups, private cars may be used. Each car used should be in road worthy condition, insured for the driver or drivers who will drive it and only carry the number of passengers specified by the manufacturer. All drivers must have a valid license for the type of vehicle. A self-drive vehicle may be hired. The drivers must have an appropriate license and be declared to the hirer. The number of passengers must not exceed that specified by the manufacturer.

A coach may be hired with driver. The maximum number of passengers must be agreed with the hirer who must also be told of the ages of the members traveling.

Supervision

The number of adults supervising the members will depend upon the type of visit and the ages of the children. This should be decided as part of the risk assessment. As a rule of

thumb the number of children one adult can supervise is equal to the age of the children. Thus, one adult can supervise seven 7-year-old children or twelve 12 year old children. The minimum number of helpers in addition to the organiser may be determined in this way. The supervisor's roles may be defined as Child Care Positions requiring a Garda Vetting check. Helpers on an afternoon visit to the Hunt kennels will not be require a Garda Vetting check while the supervisor of an overnight stay will need to complete a Garda Vetting Application at least 12 weeks before departure.

Away Trips

The Journey needs to be planned to allow adequate time including comfort and meal breaks. With groups of private cars avoid travelling in convoy but agree to stop at set points where you can meet up and check that the whole party are keeping to the itinerary. At each stop check carefully that everyone is present before setting off, when travelling in more than one vehicle everyone must stay with the vehicle that they start the journey in. It is illegal to travel in the accommodation part of a horse lorry without properly fitted seat belts.

At the event

Ensure that everyone is aware of the time and place to meet for departure. If necessary in writing. If the children are to be allowed to be independent have a meeting point where they can gather and meet their supervisors and insist that they stay in groups. Mobile phone are a useful means of communication but remember that they are fallible, batteries run out or the signal fails.

Over night stays

These are similar in many ways to camp. Information on medical issues is required. Any medication to be taken by a child should be given to the organizer with clear instructions as to when it is taken and the organizer will ensure it is taken correctly. Adults must not sleep in the same room as the children. The adults should be near enough to the children's room to ensure their welfare and security.

Role of Parents

The Irish Pony Club is a volunteer organisation and depends on parents and guardians to help. Fairness should take precedence over competitiveness. Teaching by example will foster caring and respect for all.

Parents / Guardians should therefore:

- Be a positive role model for their children and other Members by respecting coaches, officials, volunteers and leaders; their authority and decisions; the rules and regulations under which The Irish Pony Club operates.
- Agree to discuss disputes / appeals at a suitable, agreed time with the correct officials, within the appropriate level of The Irish Pony Club organisation, without resorting to hostility or violence.
- Always remember that Irish Pony Club activities are intended to be educational, safe and fun to benefit the Members rather than parents.
- Respect the horses and ponies and show humane care for them at all times.
- Respect the property and equipment used in any activities, considering safety uppermost in all situations
- Be knowledgeable about the rules of the discipline or competition their child is taking part in and encourage their child to know, be familiar with, and follow these rules.
- Promote the physical and emotional well-being of their child, other Members and horses ahead of any personal desire to win or succeed in any activity.
- Teach their child that taking part, learning and showing sportsmanship in all competitions, testing situations, clinics, etc are more important than winning.
- Praise all Members equally for trying hard and competing fairly.
- Inform officials as soon as possible if they or their child is unable to fulfil commitments or attendance at events.

- Help their child and others to understand the satisfaction of co-operation, group work and team spirit in achieving personal goals and growth, and good results.
- Volunteer their services and skills, whether equine-related or not, whenever possible.
- When using social networking sites always conduct yourself in an appropriate way as you would face to face. Be aware of what you say and how you say it – the use of sarcasm and innuendo are not appropriate.

Parents / Guardians should not:

- Force their child or other Members to take part in activities with which they are not comfortable.
- Disrespect the decisions of coaches / officials concerning the skills and abilities of their child or other Members.
- Undermine the authority of coaches / officials by interfering with, or coaching any Members from the sidelines.
- Dispute the decisions of coaches / officials and volunteers during an event or in front of their child, other Members or parents.
- Engage in or condone unsportsmanlike behaviours such as booing, taunting, using profane language, refusing to congratulate winners, etc.
- Criticize officials, instructors, volunteers or members on social networking sites or by use of text messaging.

ROLE OF INSTRUCTORS, TRAINERS AND COACHES

Instructors must act as a role model and promote the positive aspects of sport and of horse riding and maintain the highest standards of personal conduct. The role of an Irish Pony Club instructor is to teach the members to ride and to take proper care of their ponies and horses while ensuring that the highest ideals of sportsmanship are maintained. Instructors courses, seminars and conferences are arranged to enable instructors develop as professionals to maintain the standards of instruction provided to the members.

The should: -

- promote the ideals and aims of The Irish Pony Club, follow its rules and never condone rule violations, rough play, bullying or the use of prohibited substances.
- Be generous with praise, never ridicule or shout at members for making mistakes. All members are entitled to respect. Care must be taken not to expose a child intentionally or unintentionally to embarrassment or disparagement by use of sarcastic or flippant remarks.
- Remember that young people ride for fun and enjoyment and that skill, riding for fun and care of the pony have priority over highly structured competition. Never make winning the only objective. Encourage the development of respect for opponents, officials, selectors and other Instructors. Avoid criticism of fellow Instructors.
- Be careful to avoid the "star system". Each child deserves equal time and attention.
- It is important to realise that certain situations or friendly actions could be misinterpreted by the participant or by outsiders. Avoid working alone and ensure there is adequate supervision for all activities. Instructors are responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries between a working relationship and friendship with members.
- Set realistic goals for the participants and do not push members. Create a safe and enjoyable environment.

- Avoid giving advice of a personal or medical nature - if you are not qualified to do so. Any information of a personal or medical nature must be kept strictly confidential unless the welfare of the child requires the passing on of this information.
- When using social networking sites always conduct yourself in an appropriate way as you would face to face. Be aware of what you say and how you say it – the use of sarcasm and innuendo are not appropriate.
When emailing or texting young people always copy the messages to another responsible adult and use the 'BCC' facility to avoid sharing email addresses.
- It is advisable to keep a record attendance at training
- All accidents must be reported in accordance with Irish Pony Club requirements.
- If behavioral problems arise and a member has to be disciplined, keep a brief record of the problem/action/outcomes and inform the DC.

Role of Members

The Irish Pony Club aims to promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, citizenship and loyalty to create strength of character and self-discipline. Members should show respect for their ponies and horses, instructors, Branch officials, competition organizers and stewards and their fellow members.

When competing they should abide by the rules of the competition and accept the decisions of the event stewards and organizers. They may query a decision they do not understand politely and listen to the explanation. They should support the other members of their team and also other members of their Branch.

The should not: -

- Possess or consume alcohol, illegal drugs or performance enhancing drugs.
- Smoke
- Engage in sexual activity
- Use foul language
- Tolerate or be involved in discrimination of any kind
- Leave an event or activity unless accompanied by their parent or guardian or by a Branch official.
- Criticize officials, instructors, volunteers or members on social networking sites or by use of text messaging.

Irish Pony Club Accident Report Form *(Appendix B)*



NAME of BRANCH _____

Date of Accident _____ Time _____

Name & Address of Person Involved _____ Age _____

Parent's Name & Address _____

Venue and Landowner _____

Name & Address of Instructor _____ Qualifications _____

Name Horse/Pony _____ Sex _____ Age _____ Height _____

Name & Address of Owner of Horse/Pony _____

Had the person involved ridden this horse/pony before; _____ if so how often _____ How many years of riding experience _____

INSTRUCTORS/ORGANISORS REPORT (Tick or delete as appropriate)

Was the horse/pony Ridden On lead rein Loose Tethered/Tied

Activity Flatwork Show Jumping Cross-country Other _____

Was hat displaced during accident? Yes No Was harness secured? Yes No

Was hat: PAS015 EN1384 ASTM F1163 Other specify _____

Was body protector worn? Yes No If Yes, What Type? _____

Did rider/horse fall? Neither Horse Rider Both

Was rider injured? Yes No

Was horse injured? Yes No Killed/Destroyed

Was professional attention required? GP/Doctor Hospital Order of Malta/1st Aid None

If no professional attention what action was taken _____

Did rider complete rally/lesson/event/ Yes No

Description of location Field Indoor school Outdoor arena Countryside Stable Lorry

Comments: _____

Signature Instructor/Organiser _____ Signature District Commissioner _____

Date _____ Date _____

Describe the accident in your own words _____

Names and addresses telephone numbers of witness to the accident: (independent Bystanders, Parents, Judge, Fence Steward etc.)

Report of witnesses. (It is important to have reports from as many people as possible, additional sheets may be attached to this form).

Signature of witnesses: _____

Signature of District Commissioner: _____

Instructor/Organiser: _____

Outcome of Doctor's assessment of injured party and/or result of x/ray or assessment at hospital *i.e. what injury did member sustain?*

Signed:

Summary of Minimum Standards of Medical Cover at Irish Pony Club Competitions

		Appointed person	Trained First aider	Qualified First aider	Fully equipped first aid kit	EMT or Paramedic	Paramedic or Doctor	Ambulance
Rallies/camps		Yes	Yes		Yes			
	With Cross Country	Yes		Yes	Yes			
Fun/sponsored rides		Yes			Yes			
	With Jumping	Yes		Yes	Yes			
Mounted games	Training/ Rallies	Yes	Yes		Yes			
	Area Competition	Yes	Yes		Yes			
	National Championship	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dressage	Training and Competition	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			
	National Comp and Championships	Yes		Yes	Yes			
Show Jumping	Training (under instruction)	Yes	Yes		Yes			
	Competitions up to and including 1m or 20-60 competitors	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		
	Competitions over 1m or 50-100 competitors	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
	National Championship	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cross country	Training (under instruction)	Yes	Yes		Yes			
	Branch Competition	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Inter Branch Competition	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Area Qualifier	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	National Championship	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tetrathlon	Run	Yes	Yes		Yes			
	Swim	Yes	Yes		Yes			
	Shoot	Yes	Yes		Yes			

Definitions:

Appointed Person: Someone appointed by the DC/Committee to coordinate Medical requirements in compliance with minimum standards, including communication in the event of a serious accident. This may be the Trained or Qualified first aider, provided they are part of the Branch team organizing the activity.

Trained First Aider: A person who has received a certificate for attending a recognized course run by one of the voluntary ambulance service providers. This qualification must be revalidated after no more than 3 years.

Qualified First Aider: A person who holds a First Aid at Work or an Equine Specific First aid qualification or a qualified Nurse. First Aid at Work certificate must be revalidated after no more than 3 years.

Fully Equipped First Aid Kit: All Branches should have a fully equipped first aid kit designed for a workplace and not one designed for home or personal use. (has.ie for recommendations)

Emergency/Cardiac First Responder: Person trained in basic life support and in the use of a defibrillator

EMT: (Emergency Medical Technician) a registered practitioner who has completed PHECC's training at EMT level – minimum standard to provide care and transport of an injured patient.

Paramedic: a registered practitioner who has completed PHECC's training at EMT level – qualified to provide care and transport of a patient with serious or life threatening injuries.

Advanced Paramedic: as Paramedic and with responsibility for education and clinical lead.

Irish Pony Club
Concussion Rule for All Disciplines



In the case of a head injury, or other injury likely to cause concussion the following applies:

Concussion – mandatory 21 day suspension from all Irish Pony Club activities which involve riding.

Suspected concussion – the competitor must be re examined by the medical staff or a paramedic after 30 minutes. If concussion is confirmed or still suspected, mandatory 21 day suspension applies.

If the competitor is not examined for any reason, mandatory 21 day suspension will apply.

A Concussion Advice Form should be supplied to the parent or guardian of the competitor, by the official in charge of the event.

If a competitor is taken to hospital from an event or advised to attend hospital for assessment or treatment, minimum 21 days mandatory suspension will apply in respect of concussion or other head injury.

The day of the injury counts as the first day of the suspension period.

A competitor who is suspended due to concussion may not compete or ride any horse, in any capacity at any Irish Pony Club competition or activity until he/she provides written confirmation from a Registered Medical Practitioner that he/she is fit to resume riding.

Concussion Action Plan

What should I do when a head injury is suspected?

1. Remove the rider from the lesson/ rally/ competition.

Look for signs and symptoms of concussion if the rider has experienced a blow to the head. When in doubt, sit them out!

2. Ensure that the rider is evaluated by an appropriate health care professional.

Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. As an instructor/parent/DC, the following information can help health care professionals in assessing the rider after the injury:

- Cause of the injury and force of the blow to the head
- Any loss of consciousness and if so, for how long
- Any memory loss immediately following the injury
- Any seizures immediately following the injury
- Any vomiting
- Number of previous concussions(if any)

3. Inform the rider's Parents or Guardian

Let them know about the possible concussion and give them the Concussion Form. This can help parents to monitor the rider for signs or symptoms that appear or get worse once the rider is at home.

4. Keep the rider out of the saddle

A rider should be removed from the activity on the day of the injury and until they are symptom free and an appropriate health care professional gives them the all clear.

After you remove a rider with a suspected concussion from activity, the decision about return to riding is a medical decision.

Signs and Symptoms of Concussion

Signs observed by Instructor/onlooker

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about course/exercise
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of score
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness – even briefly
- Shows mood, behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to fall
- Can't recall events after fall

Symptoms reported by the rider

- Headache or 'pressure' in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurred vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just 'not feeling right'

What are Concussion Danger Signs?

Call an ambulance or take the rider to A&E immediately if after a fall the rider exhibits one or more of the following danger signs:

- *One pupil larger than the other*
- *Is drowsy or cannot be wakened*
- *A headache that gets worse*
- *Weakness, numbness or decreased coordination*
- *Vomiting*
- *Slurred speech*
- *Does not recognize people or places*
- *Becomes increasingly, confused, restless or agitated*
- *Exhibits unusual behaviour*
- *Loses consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously)*

Why be concerned about Concussion?

Most riders with a concussion will recover fully and quickly. But for some riders, signs and symptoms of concussion can last days, weeks or longer.

If a rider has a concussion his or her brain needs time to heal. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first - usually within a short time period - can slow recovery or increase the chances of long term problems.

In rare cases repeat concussions can result in brain swelling causing permanent brain damage or death.

References

Lovell MR et al. Grade 1 or "ding" concussions in high school athletes. American Journal of Sports Medicine
Institute of Medicine Workshop on Neuropsychological Consequences of Head Impact in Youth Soccer
CDC Sports related recurrent brain injuries US
Acquired Brain Injury Ireland Guidelines

MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE FOR DEATH AND SERIOUS INJURY (*Appendix C*)

INTRODUCTION

1. The Procedures laid out below are intended to minimise the trauma which death or serious injury is likely to bring to all who are connected or involved. They are provided in the form of a check list which should be applied with common sense and consideration of local circumstances.

RESPONSIBILITY

2. Ultimate responsibility for implementing the Procedure is vested in the Official/Senior Steward (OS). He/ she is advised to:
 - a) Firstly: Ensure that appropriate emergency services are at the scene of the incident and take action to augment if necessary (i.e. Air Ambulance).
 - b) Secondly: Establish a "Control Cell" – ideally, under cover and providing: quiet, privacy, accessibility (as necessary), tables & chairs and Communication (3 telephones/mobiles are suggested:- Walkie Talkie radios in use during the competition.
 - c) Thirdly: Staff the Control Cell with
 - a. Self
 - b. Med/Vet Rep
 - c. Gardaí Rep
 - d. P R Rep / Spokesman
 - e. Doorman

See attached table (appendix c)

DEATH OR SERIOUS INJURY TO RIDER

PROCEDURE FOR OFFICIALS

1. The Official Steward is in charge and should **hand over** the responsibility for the continued running of the Activity (i.e. Horse Trial, Rally, Competition, etc) to the Organiser. The Official Steward's responsibilities are:-
2. Official Steward should inform immediately:-
 - a. The Organiser
 - b. The Gardaí

When informing the Gardaí, the Steward should establish whether they are issuing a press statement and if so, when, and to whom and what it will say.

3. **FIRST SECURE YOUR AREA** – brief your officials and fence judges not to discuss the accident with anyone. Ask your Doctor to brief the First Aid officials likewise.
4. **PLEASE NOTE** – It should be borne in mind that both transmitting and receiving radios can easily be overheard – therefore, to avoid sensitive messages being

compromised, volume controls should be sensibly set and crowded conditions avoided.

5. Official Steward – should ensure that **key witnesses** remain at the site of the Activity and are available to make statements to the police. If there is an official photographer on site, they should be tasked to take a picture of the fence or other scene of accident as early as possible.
6. Official Steward should ensure that the **next of kin** are informed as soon as possible. If the next of kin are at the event, the steward must do this. Ideally a doctor or another trained in bereavement should be present, e.g., priest, nurse, etc.
7. If not, arrangements must be made through the Gardaí, but under no circumstance should the next of kin be informed on the telephone.
8. Remember that different people will react to this news in different ways. Some may become irrational or hysterical and none should be allowed to drive home unescorted. It should also be borne in mind that others involved with the case may react and suffer from shock.
9. It may prove advisable to replace the fence judges at the fence where the accident happened, if those who saw the accident are badly upset and perhaps suffering from shock or required as witnesses. At least, a support person should be despatched to accompany.
10. Official Steward should liaise closely with the **doctor** and ensure that the doctor remains available to make statements to the police.
11. Official Steward should appoint a spokesman to speak to the Press on his behalf. If a policeman or ex-policeman is available, they are particularly good at this.
12. With modern communications it is most likely that press reporters will come to the site, if they are not already there.
13. If there are other people at the event site with telephones (estate office, secretary, etc) they must be briefed NOT to make statements, however much they may be pressed to do so. They should refer all callers to one telephone number which the appointed spokesman should answer.
14. What the spokesman tells the Press is dependant on whether the next of kin have been informed. If they have been informed, then the information set out in paragraph 16 below should be given.
15. If the next of kin have NOT been informed, the rider's name and other details MUST NOT be released. Reporters may find this information out from other sources but the Official Steward's representative must not release it until the next of kin have been informed. It will generally be accepted by the press/media that:-

“A rider was critically / fatally injured but no further information will be released until the next of kin have been informed.”

NOTE: The local news agency is likely to have a 'stringer' at the bigger events, who will be searching for newsworthy items, which they send to every newspaper

– both national and local plus radio. The head straight for the First Aid officials for gory news!

If the Police send out their usual fast statement - the local news agency will receive it and send it out. This will save you doing so. However, you may then get the reaction to it with calls from the local newspapers trying to extract more news. This can send press scurrying to your event or ringing the site owner and can happen very quickly after the statement is sent out by the police. It may be in your interests to persuade the Police to delay their statement by an hour or so - if this then gets you to 5.00 p.m. when the event is almost over. (Remember the Police statement may go out regardless of whether the rider's name is being released. If this is the case, the pressure from the press is that much greater when trying to find out who it is).

It is vital that your 'spokesman' is very solid and sensible in handling these calls and is not drawn into any discussion or innuendo, which can result in inaccurate or sensational reporting. Equally, it is important to speak positively without giving the impression that there is anything to hide, i.e., this was a tragic accident which fortunately is a rare occurrence in the sport of horses, and our sympathy goes out to his / her family, etc.

16. The following information should be compiled as quickly as possible. If the suggested format below is used, a perfectly acceptable Press Statement will be produced. Any press representatives should be told to assemble at the Secretary's tent at a specified time, when a press statement will be made:-

"It is with the deepest regret that we announce that Boy / Girl(Fore name).....(Surname) died as a result of a fatal accident (or suffered a serious injury) whilst competing atPony Club Eventing in.....(County) atam/p.m. on(date).(Fore name). Age.....from..... (town, county) had been a Member of theBranch of The Irish Pony Club for years.'s (Fore name) horse(horse's name), a.....year old gelding/mare/stallion.....
.....(brief description of incident, e.g. horse stumbled and fell over the rails at fence 15.(Fore Name) was thrown off the horse which in falling itself, struck the rider's head causing fatal injuries). The horse / pony was not injured. The Doctor and Medical Team were at the scene within minutes and (name) was taken to Hospital where she was pronounced dead on arrival. No further details are available at present." It would be better not to give the causes of death – if you do so you are prejudging both the investigations and the autopsy, we have had incidents where the doctor has advised that death was caused by x and the autopsy has proved that it was caused by y.

Put at the bottom of the statement a name and telephone number for contact / queries, etc.

NOTE: Avoid giving the rider's whole address in order to save the family from press harassment. Just give the nearest town in their address.

17. The Press may well ask about the dimensions of the fence at which the accident happened and this information should NOT be divulged. A suggested reply is:-

"All the fences on the course are within the dimensions specified in the rules and no details will be discussed before the Coroner's Inquest.horses had successfully jumped the fence before the accident".

This is fine provided that the dimensions are not given in the programme. If they are they should be given out and also if this information is requested on site the journalists will simply make their way to the fence themselves and measure it up and they take guestimates rather than actual measurements – in this instance it would be better to give simple dimensions such as the height and the width.

18. The Official Steward should contact:

- a) The Organiser
- b) The Irish Pony Club Health and Safety Officer, Mr. Peter Ponsonby (087 2449380).
- c) The Administrator of the IPC: Mary Fitzpatrick (086 8355724)
- d) The Area Representative
- e) The Chairman of the Irish Pony Club Mrs. Barbara Micks (086 6096611).
The prepared statement is ideal if you are challenged by the Press at the event or subsequently, and it should enable you to guard against INADVERTENTLY laying yourself open to accusations of negligence. Any press enquiries after the event should come through The Pony Club Office.

19. The Official Steward should communicate all relevant facts to the Administrator of the Irish Pony Club as soon as he/she is able (telephone number above). Please don't leave messages – speak in person.

20. (i) It is important that the Official Steward ensures that the police realise that he is an experienced and well-informed official. If you have competed at International level for 5 years, organised events for 2 years, or officiated for 3 years, then make the point.

21. (ii) Any of the following may be called to the Coroner's Inquest - Official Steward, Organiser, Course Builder, Fence Judge, Cross-country Steward, or Area Representative.

22. The Official Steward, as a voluntary official, will probably be asked to give evidence on the facts, and may be asked if the fence was safe.

23. **All should therefore be quite clear on all the facts before leaving the site of the activity that day, so that they can subsequently make an accurate statement and correctly answer questions. It is vital that written statements**

are taken from all witnesses and signed by them before they leave the event. The correct accident reporting procedure must be carried out as detailed in Section 8 Accident Reporting. It might be appropriate to consider cancelling but there are no hard and fast rules – it must be the decision of the organiser taking advice from relevant people as soon as possible.

DEATH OR SERIOUS INJURY TO HORSE *(Appendix D)*

1. The sport has always prided itself not only on its safety record, but also on its image as a 'good clean, healthy and responsible sport'. Thus, any ill-informed publicity is of very deep concern. Whilst the equestrian press continually provide their excellent support and defence of the sport, there may be other members of the press taking a new (and possibly detrimental) interest in the sport.
2. At most Irish Pony Club Activities it should still be possible to deal with a horse which is killed or which has to be destroyed, without undue fuss and in accordance with

IPC Eventing Rule Book [page 31, Rule 4.6](#) - Destruction of severely injured horses.

3.
 - a) In the event of a horse being lost, the Official Steward (if appointed)/Organiser is in charge and should be prepared to delegate as he thinks fit. The continued running of the Activity may be handed over to other officials, if, say, there is a considerable media presence at the event or if it appears that there may be a hostile press presence. Whoever is dealing with the horse fatality has the following responsibilities:-
 - b) He should inform immediately:-
 - c) The Organiser
 - d) The Irish Pony Club Health and Safety Officer, Mr Peter Ponsonby (087 2449380)
 - e) The Area Representative
4. It should be borne in mind that both transmitting and receiving radios can easily be overheard - therefore to avoid sensitive messages being compromised, volume controls should be sensibly set and crowded conditions avoided.
5. He should ensure that **key witnesses** make immediate brief written statements. In conjunction with the vet, he should conduct an immediate and thorough enquiry, establishing the cause of the accident and death.
6. He should ensure that the **owner** is informed as soon as possible at the event. If the owner is not at the event, other arrangements must be made - probably through the rider and or its DC.
7. It is important to agree a medical sentence for inclusion in the statement with the Doctor / Vet. IT IS VITAL that this is kept short and factual and they will know what to say and how to say it.
8. He should speak to the press himself or appoint a spokesman to speak on his behalf.
9. If the vet is available, they are particularly good at this.
10. With modern communications it is possible that press reporters will come to the site even if they are not already there.
11. If there are other people at the event site with telephones (secretary, etc.) they must be briefed NOT to make statements, however much they may be pressed to do so. They should refer all callers to one telephone number which the appointed spokesman should answer.
12. The following information should be compiled as quickly as possible. If the suggested format below is used, a perfectly acceptable press statement will have

been compiled. If you stick closely to the format below, it should enable you to guard against INADVERTENTLY laying yourself open to accusations of negligence. Any press representatives should be told to assemble at the secretary's tent at a specified time, as early as is reasonably possible, when a press statement will be made:-

"It is with great sadness that we announce that(horse number)(horse name) ridden by (rider's name) and owned by(owner's name) died/was put down as a result of a (fatal) accident at fence number (name of fence) whilst competing at P.C. Activity in (county) atam/p.m. on (date).(horse's name) a year old gelding / mare / stallion

Give a description of the incident e.g. horse stumbled and fell over the rails at fence 15(rider's name) was thrown off the horse which fell and was subsequently found to have broken its near foreleg and was humanely put down by the vet. The rider was unhurt. No further details are available at present."

- 13. The Press may well ask about the dimensions of the fence at which the accident happened. A suggested reply is:

"All fences on the course are within the dimensions specified in the rules and this fence was inches under the maximum height permitted. horses had however successfully jumped the fence before the accident."

NOTES:

- 14. It is important that the Official Steward/Organisers ensure that the press realise that he is an experienced and well-informed official. If you have competed at International level for 5 years, organised events for 2 years, or officiated for 3 years, then make the point.
- 15. To avoid subsequent conflicting memories, it is recommended that those directly concerned with the accident take copies of the press and witnesses' statements before they go home.

Irish Pony Club Medical Plan

It is the responsibility of the Organizer to have the appropriate medical cover for the type of event, taking into account the number of participants and spectators.

The Organizer should carry out a written Risk Assessment.

Medical Cover should be arranged according to Minimum First Aid Cover at Irish Pony Club Competitions.

The organizer should prepare a Medical Officer's Pack in advance of the competition, to include:

Injury report forms

Concussion Forms

Relevant emergency phone numbers (ambulance, hospital, chief steward, organizer, safety officer)

Competition programme with planned times

Map of the XC course where applicable

At the Competition:

Ensure adequate communications (radio/mobile phone) between medical personnel and between Organizer and medical personnel

The procedure for contacting the emergency services must be agreed with the Medical Provider

Appropriate emergency telephone numbers should be listed and a copy supplied to the Secretary's Office

The appropriate Accident Forms must be completed and returned to HQ in the event of an accident.

A copy of the Evidence of Insurance should be displayed.

Basic Standards of Medical Care:

Concussion – in the event of concussion, which may occur without loss of consciousness, riders are not allowed to ride again and an examination by a doctor is advisable, immediately at the competition or following transfer to hospital. These riders or their parents/guardians (if under 18), should be issued with a concussion advice form by the Medical Officer.

Any competitor who has a fall should see the medical personnel on the day and be passed fit to ride if he/she wishes to ride again at the same competition.

Action list for doctors/ambulance personnel on arrival/during event:

Report arrival immediately to Organizer

Inspect and collect Medical Officer's pack

Drive around the site, including XC, if applicable, checking locations, access to arenas and fences.

Decide strategic placement of personnel/vehicles

Agree incident procedures with Doctor, Chief Steward and radio control

Try to be aware of the Chief Steward's whereabouts.

Contact local hospital, if necessary

Check riders who report after falling.

The Doctor's vehicle and at least one ambulance should be able to reach all parts of the site, therefore, these vehicles should be 4WD

If the ambulance is required to leave the site to transport a casualty, the Medical Officer and Chief Steward must be informed and the competition may be suspended.

This document should have an annual review.

Date of next review May 2016

CONCUSSION ADVICE FORM (*Appendix E*)

Ibeing the Parent/Guardian of

.....

Of the Branch of the Irish Pony Club have been informed that they have been involved in an incident which may have involved a head injury. They may have suffered a concussive injury.

I confirm that I have been advised that they should be seen by a Doctor or attend an Accident and Emergency unit at a hospital today.

I have been advised that the following symptoms could indicate a worsening of their condition:

- i. Deterioration of consciousness
- ii. Restlessness and/or irritability
- iii. Vomiting
- iv. Persistent or worsening headache

And that if any of these symptoms occur medical assistance must be sought immediately. I will ensure my son/daughter complies with the medical advice re 'standing-down' from riding.

Signed.....Print Name.....

Date.....

**SAMPLE LETTER TO BE SENT TO:
Ambulance Service Provider (*Appendix F*)**

Dear.....

Re: First Aid provision at on.....

TheBranch of the Irish Pony Club is organising a (*type of activity*) at (*place*) on (*date*) . One (or two) ambulance(s) will be required from (*warm-up start time*) until (*expected finish time*) the anticipated time the event will finish. Please could you provide the following (or “Please could you quote for providing the following”).

Ambulance

A designated vehicle, appropriately marked and identifiable which conforms to current regulations of the transport of the injured or seriously ill patient. It must contain necessary resuscitation, immobilization and transport equipment. This should include the equipment detailed on the list attached.

Personnel

Either

Two ambulance personnel, one of whom must be a trained and qualified Paramedic. The second member of the ambulance team should be trained at least to the level of qualified First Aider. Training records must be kept for each person and be available for scrutiny by a representative of the Irish Pony Club on the day if requested.

Followed by either

A Doctor will be present to act as the designated Medical Officer for the event. The Doctor will discuss the detailed medical arrangements with the ambulance personnel on arrival.

Or

Two ambulance personnel, one of whom must be trained and qualified Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or better. The second member of the ambulance team should be trained at least to the level of a qualified First Aider. Training records must be kept for each person and be available for scrutiny by a representative of the Irish Pony Club on the day if requested.

Or

The senior member of your team will be asked to act as the designated Medical Officer for the event. The organiser will discuss the detailed arrangements with them on arrival.

The competitors at this event will include children; therefore, all medical personnel should have completed a current Garda Vetting check.

Insurance

The ambulance and personnel must be covered by public liability insurance, the Organiser may request to see a copy of the insurance certificate on the day of the competition.

Yours sincerely, etc.