

News Bulletin – August 2011



Welcome back! This is the second news update from the British Horse Industry Confederation (BHIC). As I mentioned in the last month's edition we are now releasing a monthly summary of the work that the Confederation has been doing.

The news summary below will hopefully give you a good idea of some of the activities we've been undertaking, and you are very welcome to use this copy in your own magazines and newsletters and on your websites. There is more information on the

BHIC's website here: www.bhic.co.uk. Please contact us if you have any queries or questions.

Best wishes,
Jan Rogers, Chair

BHIC News:

National Equine Database (NED)

24,000 people use the NED on a regular basis. It enables Defra to access passport information and enables the public to look up horses prior to purchase and validate information on horse passports. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) funding for NED has been confirmed up until September 2012. This funding will manage the passport information from 80 Passport Issuing Organisations (PIOs). Ahead of issuing a tender document for the passport data management services currently provided by NED Defra will begin a public consultation. NED's, extended funding means that it will be still be in business, albeit with some operational changes, and able to respond to this tender. Meanwhile, NED itself will be scaling back its operations in order to operate within its revised budget.

Disease Prevention

The BHIC's former Chair, Professor Tim Morris, took part in a Horse and Hound roundtable discussion which focused on equine issues. The round table panel included;

- Paul Jepson: Consultant, Vet and former Chief Executive of The Horse Trust
- Richard Newton Head of Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance, Animal Health Trust
- Josh Slate Professor of Equine Clinical Studies, Royal Veterinary College
- Karen Coumbe: H&H's Veterinary Consultant
- Lucy Higginson: Editor, H&H
- Alick Simmons: Deputy Chief Vet, Defra.
- Roly Owers: Chief Executive, World Horse Welfare

The round table lead to a very interesting discussion on the National Equine Database, the tripartite agreement and horse passports.

BHIC Meets with the Chief Executive of the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency, Catherine Brown

Representatives from the BHIC this month met with Catherine Brown the Chief Executive of the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency. The meeting was an opportunity to discuss issues such as equine community disease surveillance, communication with vets and horse owners regarding disease outbreaks and opportunities for the BHIC and Defra to work together.

Horse Passports

The BHIC continues to engage with Government on proposals to change the current system of Passport Issuing Organisations (PIOs). Defra has stated that at present it will not be going forward with plans to create a single PIO, but Agriculture and Food Minister Jim Paice has made it clear that future reform of the passport issuing system is on the agenda. The BHIC has put together a briefing document outlining the equine sector's stance on this issue, stating that:

The BHIC welcomes a review into how the current system can be made more effective and efficient, but are not prescriptive whether the right vehicle by which to deliver an improved system is a single or just a few (but fully efficient) Passport Issuing Organisations. Whatever is developed it should ensure Breed development and responsible breeding programmes.

Defra continues to hold meetings with Stakeholders on the issue, including one recently attended by BHIC Chair Jan Rogers. A Defra Project Board for the next stage of the process is being assembled, with Tim Morris included as an external member.

All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for the Horse

The most recent meeting of the APPG for the Horse took place on the 11th July. Professor Tim Morris – Director of Equine Science and Welfare at the British Horseracing Authority (BHA) and former Chair of the BHIC – briefed the group regarding the review on use of the whip in Racing currently being carried out by the BHA. The review brings together views from across the sector – from jockeys, trainers, welfare groups and horse breeders. The findings of the review will be published later this year. The next APPG meeting is planned for Monday 5th December 2011. Further details at <http://www.britishhorseracing.com/grand-national-and-whip-reviews/> and http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/horse_racing/13751127.stm

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