

FEI

Attn.: Mr. De Vos, Mr. Williams, Mr. Cooke
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Dear Mr. de Vos, Mr. Willams and Mr. Cooke,

In addition to earlier reactions and reports about the concerning situation in which the Endurance sport is finding itself right now, we would like to draw your attention to the following issues;

The FEI veterinarians whom have acted in functions like veterinarians for veterinary inspections, president of a veterinary commission and foreign veterinary delegate have noticed that there is an increasing number of serious injuries and even death of horses during several Endurance events.

During a congress in New Market in 2009, the FEI Endurance veterinarians have already vented their concerns to the FEI and other involved organizations. Since that time, a group of veterinarians, whom are very committed to the welfare of the horses, have decided to make a (verbal or written) report of the extreme cases of all events during the winter competition. Gradually, they have seen more and more horses break their leg during an event. Also, horses are dying on a regularly base as a result of many causes, which regrettably are not clear for the FEI veterinarians.

Other affairs, like treating during events, which are (to the professional opinion of the FEI veterinarians) beyond all FEI rules and regulations, are considered normal.

Also the rules for the maximum weight of 75kg for athlete and tack, are completely ignored. The necessary supervision on this is totally missing.

During several events, veterinarians and judges have noticed that in the grooming area numerous teams have intravenously injected fluids to competing horses. This investigation was not without any risk, as some team members felt the need to physically defend themselves against the presence of the veterinarians in the neighborhood of the concerned horses.

After reading the above we can conclude that there is no honest competition between the competing combinations and teams. In our opinion the (so important) welfare of the horse is seriously damaged. Next to this, the fact that FEI veterinarians are threatened should be taken very seriously.

With this letter, the Royal Dutch Equestrian Federation is sharing the concerns that were expressed by the Federation of Switzerland and the European Equestrian Federation. We support the proposal of the European Equestrian Federation, but we would like to strongly advise for independent investigation (also concerning the persons who will join this investigating commission).

In our opinion the already planned round table conference can be a good start, but not adequate enough, a intensive investigating committee will be necessary.

The FEI needs to realize that welfare- and image troubles in one of the equestrian disciplines can have very negative consequences for the Equestrian sport in total.

We trust to have informed you sufficiently for the moment. Should you need proof of incidents happening, we have facts and figures available of several events in the Middle East.

With kind regards,



Drs. Maarten van der Heijden
High Performance Director and International Affairs