



EQUINE STUDBOOKS ASSOCIATION

Representing Horse and Pony Studbooks of the UK

Chair: Celia Clarke (WBSUK), Vice-Chair: Natalie Meredith (AHS), Secretary and Treasurer : Jane Murray (Native Breeds)

MINUTES

826 EQUINE STUDBOOKS ASSOCIATION MEETING NO 14

10.30 AM TO 12.30 PM MONDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2024

VIA ZOOM

Present

826ESA Committee: Celia Clarke (CC) (Chair); Catherine Burdock (SHB(GB)); Sacha Shaw (NPS); Simon Cooper (Weatherbys); Natalie Meredith (AHS); Jane Murray (NF, and Notes)

Observers: John Shenfield, Jane Nixon MRCVS, Gina Dent (CPR);

Defra Equine ID: Helen Johnston; Frances Adeke; Andrea Klassen

Defra Zootech: Maddy Perkin

Defra BTOM Germinal Products Team: Heather Escala

Breed Societies: Judith Harris, Steve McMinn (Eriskay); Geth Tillin, Sue Gillingham (Connemara); Ruth O'Reilly (AQHA); Emma Hore, Caroline Hamilton (CHAPS); Sue Young, Stacey Buckley (STAGBI); Katherine Wilkinson (Fell); April Lawn (Dales); Sam Hyman (Weatherbys); Christine Lovatt (Dartmoor); Laura Paice (SHB(GB)); Josie Shereston, Rowena McDermott (Percheron); Sheralie Matravers, Susannah Muir (Exmoor); Mary McBryde (BAPSH); Jill Robinson (MHCGB); Eva-Maria Broomer (AES); Kate Eaton, Katy Holder-Vale (British Hanoverian); Gwenan Thomas (STAGBI); Ruth Staines, Barbara Smathers (Caspian); Rosie Perry-Evans (British Spotted); Gemma Stanford, Serena, and Holly Churcher (BHS); Hollie Sanderson (NPS); Kim Sands (APHCUK); IHSGB Ltd

Apologies for absence

Observers: Lady Anne Vestey

Defra Zootech: Rachel Davis

Breed Societies: Sandra Lawrence (BSPA); Paula Moore (British Appaloosa); Paul Janaway (Trakehner); Andrea Betteridge (TGCA); Dawn Winship (New Forest); Angela Whiteway (Shire); Heather Chaplin (IDHS); Andrea Betteridge (TGCA)

Minutes of the last meeting/AGM held on 18 April 2024

These had been circulated prior to the meeting and were taken as read, and approved on the proposal of Natalie Meredith, second Catherine Burdock.

Matters arising from the last meeting not covered elsewhere in the agenda

Caspian Society: Ruth Staines reported that work continues but it is slow progress as the contact person in the Netherlands has been ill.

Chair's report

Celia Clarke's report had been circulated prior to the meeting. CC reported that the Committee had been less busy than normal as all liaison activities with Defra in relation to equine ID came to a halt when the general election was called and while the new government established its priorities. However recently there has been some significant work with the Defra Zootech team. In non-governmental activities, 826ESA has actively supported the second British Horse Foundation webinar on Better Beginnings for a Better Life: the 2 to 4 year old Horse. 826ESA has now been

recognised by the British Horse Council as the representative for the non-Thoroughbred breeding sector and will be making its first report at the December meeting.

Treasurer's report

Jane Murray is taking over as Treasurer and the transfer of signature authority is nearly completed. There has been no movement on the account since the last meeting.

Update on the Equine ID consultation, Presentation by Helen Johnston

Following the new government's Budget statement, Defra had notified PIOs that it was not possible to progress with the project to develop digital identification and passports in the format previously planned. There will be no immediate changes to equine identification or the working of the Central Equine Database. The Defra team needs more data from PIOs on what the issues are with Amber Records. Where records are 'stuck' (eg awaiting payment for the completion of a transfer), Defra cannot override as it is a matter between the PIO and the customer. If there are other reasons then Defra will need more details. CC requested recirculation of the form to record issues.

CC asked who owns the data uploaded by PIOs. HJ responded that the data in the CED belongs to Defra, and the data in PIO databases belongs to the PIO. CC then asked who owns the intellectual property for the development of CED and if work is done for another project who owns those intellectual property rights. HJ said it was a complex picture and will need further checking with the digital delivery team. Noting that she has to deal with the Spanish authorities, Mary McBryde queried who owns UELN and microchip data. In response, Simon Cooper suggested that a Studbook's database IP belongs to the studbook organisation, but when the data sits on the Defra database it belongs to Defra.

John Shenfield asked about the procedure following export of an equine when the new owners do not change ownership. HJ said it depended on the destination, but for exports to the EU, the new owner should notify a PIO in their country, and that PIO should notify the GB PIO. HJ added that vendor declarations should be encouraged. JS further asked about archiving of CED equine records. HJ said that records are kept for 35 years, but following notification of death, then 2 years. After 35 years, personal information is being redacted, but basic equine data will be kept.

Zootechnical Compliance for Studbooks: Understanding Entry Requirements and Registration Practices under EU Regulation 2016 / 1012, Presentation by Maddy Perkin

- **Introduction:** Some UK studbooks may unintentionally be non-compliant with zootechnical legislation. UK law mirrors EU Regulation 2016/1012. Zootech governs trade in pedigree livestock.
- **Purpose, and Role of Defra:** Clarify entry requirements for studbooks and pedigree passports, and for Defra to ensure compliance with the law.
- **Why compliance matters:** Trade Impacts: non-compliance risks the UK's third-country listing with the EU; genetic integrity: safeguards genetic diversity and the reputation of UK breeds; Zootech recognition supports PIO status
- **Structure of a Breeding Book.** Must have a **Main Section** for Pure-bred animals, with parents in the main section, or supplementary section of the studbook of the same breed and entitled to a registered pedigree passport. May have an optional **Supplementary Section**, for animals meeting the breed standard, but of any parentage, and can only be issued with an ID-only passport. Grading Up is over one generation.
- **Non-Zootech Register.** Animals that do not meet breed standards or pedigree requirements, or do not want to be graded up. ID-only passport only.
- **Entry Requirements for the Main Section:** Under Article 18, animals qualify if: parents are in the main section of the same breed's studbook; one or both parents are in the supplementary section; or imported with a valid zootechnical certificate.
- **Next Steps:** Defra is working with societies via correspondence and meetings. Defra will be doing a review of all studbooks. **Aim:** minimise disruption while ensuring compliance.

Discussion points

- A zootech certificate is needed for imported semen. The covering certificate is not the same as the zootech certificate.
- Do not blur the lines between a registered passport and an ID-only passport when recording pedigree during the grading-up process.
- The main section can be divided into classes and grading-up can take place upwards through those classes.
- Scotland. It is up to the DA what reviews are done.
- Verification of pedigree, what does it mean and by whom? The breed society rules will determine the process of verification and if DNA testing is required.
- High health status should make movement requirements easier for competition horses, but it does not seem to be happening at the present.
- Equines are different to other species in that equines only need one generation to grade up to the main section; however part-breds may need a different studbook and become a new breed if they cannot be upgraded to the main section of the current studbook.

Update on border issues at Stansted Airport, by Simon Cooper

A part of the site has been offloaded to become a solar farm, but there will be delays while planning permission is secured. In the meantime, high health status is on hold, while negotiations continue between BHA and the Minister. Moving closer to the EU Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Agreements might help but it also risks dragging UK into EU welfare issues.

Import and export of semen: there are still problems at the borders, but Heather Escala reported that the 24-hour requirement is being looked at again and the previous pilot is being analysed ahead of the 2025 breeding season.

Update by Jane Nixon MRCVS

- **Biosecurity:** there have been some flu outbreaks recently around the country. The Tell Tail app is recommended for receiving alerts of disease outbreaks. The International Equine Disease Collation Centre is a good source of world-wide information and provides a quarterly update.
- **Climate Change and Disease:** At the recent BHF conference, Richard Newton delivered an important paper on the effects of movements of mosquitoes due to climate change. The currently active Blue Tongue virus (cattle, sheep) has put about half the country in a restricted movement zone and it should be noted that it is the same mosquito that carries West Nile Virus which is steadily moving northwards through Europe. An avian flu sub-type has jumped to other species and would be a serious threat if it jumped to equines.
- **Social Value of Equestrianism:** This term is now being favoured over social licence to operate. Sheffield Hallam University is researching, for the BEF, how the social value of equestrianism contributes to physical, mental and economic well-being. The British Horse Foundation's project on Better Beginnings illustrates how the breeding of good quality youngstock leads to longevity and healthier horses.

Discussion Points

- Eva-Maria Broomer thanked JN for her overview and reported that WBFSH has commissioned research on welfare and equine breeding, which will be published.
- A science and fact-based approach is needed, with evidence-based decisions,
- So often, to the general public, an accident or problem with one horse is perceived as a problem with all horses.
- All issues need embracing and then made understandable to the general public without being patronising. How do we translate research findings into easily understandable articles?
- Welfare issues are common to all studbooks and a strong, unified voice is needed while solving the same problems.

Meeting closed 12.05 pm