

**ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS
AND
BRITISH VETERINARY ASSOCIATION**

THE RIDING ESTABLISHMENTS ACTS 1964 AND 1970

**GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THEIR RIDING
ESTABLISHMENT INSPECTORS**

January 2012

1.1 THE INSPECTION OF RIDING ESTABLISHMENTS MUST ONLY BE CARRIED OUT BY A CURRENT MEMBER OF THE RCVS/BVA INSPECTORATE OF APPROVED VETERINARY SURGEONS. (RE Act 1964 S. 2(3))

1.2 A list of members is available on the RCVS website www.rcvs.org.uk

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INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 When the Riding Establishments Act, 1964, came into operation on 1 April 1965, the British Veterinary Association invited representatives of the British Horse Society, the County Land Agent's Association, the Ponies of Britain Club and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to form a committee to consider the advice on problems arising from the implementation of the Act. As a result of information and experience accumulated by this Committee, a Memorandum was prepared for the assistance of the veterinary inspectors and local authorities administering the Act. This Memorandum was widely circulated among interested parties and in March 1968 revisions were published.
- 2.2 In 1970 a Bill to amend the principal Act was presented to Parliament and came on to the Statute Book as the Riding Establishments Act, 1970, which came into operation on 1 January 1971. The Committee has further amended the Memorandum on the principal Act to take into account the effects of the amending Act.
- 2.3 The result of these Acts is that riding establishments (as defined below) are required by law to be licensed by local authorities. The licence may only be issued or denied by the local authority following an inspection and report by a veterinary surgeon who is a member of the RCVS/BVA Inspectorate.
- 2.4 The RCVS and BVA have formed a joint sub-committee which is charged with responsibility for maintaining the list of Riding Establishment Inspectors, setting standards for their admission and retention on the list, and for ensuring, as far as possible, a competent and uniform level of inspection.

- 2.5 These guidelines have been modified in line with the Animal Welfare Act 2006, the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 and the Equine Codes of Practice for England, Scotland and Wales.

THE RIDING ESTABLISHMENTS ACT, 1964

- 3.1 The Riding Establishments Act, 1964, repealed the Riding Establishments Act, 1939, and forbids the keeping of a riding establishment except under the authority of a licence issued by the local authority. The term 'riding establishment' means the carrying on of a business "***of keeping horses to let them out on hire for riding, or for use in providing instruction in riding for payment, or both.***"(RE Act 1964 S.6 (1))
- 3.2 "***Horse***" is defined as including "***any mare, gelding, pony, foal, colt, filly or stallion and also any ass, mule or jennet***" (RE Act 1964 s.6 (4)).
- 3.3 In addition to horses and ponies in traditional riding schools, trail riding, orienteering and trekking have become popular, and establishments offering these activities require a license. The running of beach ponies and donkeys, instruction in playing polo (other than on the pupil's own horse) and the hiring of horses for hacking and hunting also require a license.
- 3.4 **INSPECTION OF PREMISES IS REQUIRED FOR:-**
- 1 Previously licensed riding establishments;
 - 2 Riding establishments which have a three month provisional licence;
 - 3 New applications for licensing;
 - 4 Any premises where there is reason to believe a person is running a riding establishment as defined above.
- 3.5 The fourth category may be visited initially by a veterinary inspector appointed by the local authority, or by a local authority officer, to determine whether licensing is necessary. Any local authority officer undertaking such an investigation should have a sound knowledge of horses and their management or should be accompanied by a veterinary surgeon who is on the list of inspectors.

- 3.6 **Only current members of the veterinary inspectorate are authorised to advise the local authority as to the licensing of a riding establishment.**
- 3.7 When an inspection is made for licensing, ideally the Veterinary Inspector should be accompanied by a local authority official.

RIGHT OF ENTRY OF PREMISES

- 3.8 The 1964 Act empowers the local authority to instruct its veterinary inspector/officer to enter premises where it is believed a person may be keeping a riding establishment or one which is licensed "**at all reasonable times**" (*RE Act 1964 S.2(2)*) and inspect the premises, and any horses thereon.
- 3.9 It is an offence under the Act for any person to deny access to such premises to a duly authorised officer.

LICENCES

- 4.1 A licence is granted annually by the Local Authority following an application. The applicant must be 18 years of age or over, or a body corporate. The licence fee is decided by the local authority in accordance with Section 35, Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act, 1974. The licence is issued by the local authority after it has considered the report from its veterinary inspector
- 4.2 Following an inspection, if it is recommended that a licence is issued but that certain improvements must be carried out by the licence holder, a follow up visit must be made to ensure that the recommendations have been carried out. This may be done by a non-veterinary local authority officer only if an **annual licence** was recommended by the Inspector and minor improvements are required. The follow up to a provisional licence (see below), prior to further licensing, must be made by a member of the Inspectorate.

PROVISIONAL LICENCES

- 4.3 ***"In any case in which application is made under the principal Act to a local authority for a licence to keep a riding establishment and the local authority are not satisfied that having regard to all the circumstances they would be justified in granting such licence they may grant a provisional licence that will come into force at the beginning of the day on which it is granted and shall remain in force for three months"***
(*RE Act 1970 S.1 (1)*).

- 4.4 The 1970 Act allows a local authority to give a provisional licence where considerable improvements to the premises are required before a full licence can be awarded.
- 4.5 The provisional licence can specify conditions and the licensing authority will normally only grant a full licence when these conditions have been satisfied. The granting of a provisional licence is, in the first instance, for a period of three months.
- 4.6 A second provisional licence may be given for a further three months but no more than 2 may be granted in any 12 months. Care must be taken to ensure that riding establishments that are only open during the summer months, such as trekking yards, do not try to exist permanently on provisional licences.
- 4.7 When such conditions are imposed, it is important that **subsequent inspections are carried out by the same inspector**, so that there is continuity in the reports to be considered by the authority. Veterinary inspectors should consult with the local authority officer to agree a detailed procedure.
- 4.8 It is desirable that licensing authorities accept professional advice on matters involving seeking an expert or second opinion in cases of doubt or difficulty.

PLANNING PERMISSION

- 4.9 Before consideration is given to the granting of a licence to a new applicant, the local authority should ascertain that the applicant has obtained Planning Permission under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 (a) to use the premises as a riding establishment and either (b) to erect new stables or other buildings on the site, or (c) has obtained Permission for Change of Use of all, or part, of the premises if either all, or part, of a farm or other premises are to be used as a riding centre.

INSURANCE

- 5.1 The 1970 Act specifies that the licence holder shall hold a current Public Liability Insurance policy to provide an indemnity against liability at law to pay damages for accidental bodily injury or damage to property to those hiring a horse for riding or receiving instruction in riding resulting from his own activities or those of members of his staff or of his clients in connection with his business. **(RE 1970 Act S.2 (4A))**

CONDITIONS: QUALIFICATIONS OF THE APPLICANT

- 5.2 An Inspector is required to consider the suitability of the applicant as to his/her experience in the management and care of horses and his/her ability to supervise the establishment, ***“either by experience in the management of horses, or by being the holder of an approved certificate or by employing in the management of the riding establishment a person so qualified, to be the holder of such a licence” (1970 Act S.2 (ii)(4)(a))***
- 5.3 Both the British Horse Society (BHS) and the Association of British Riding Schools (ABRS) grant recognised qualifications to suitable candidates, with the BHSAI (or equivalent) generally accepted as being the necessary minimum level.
- 5.4 Other equine qualifications such as college diplomas and NVQs may be taken into consideration as proving the suitability of an applicant or manager.
- 5.5 If a new applicant has no recognised qualifications and is relying on practical experience the local authority should obtain references to support the application and the Inspector should assess them.
- 5.6 If the management of a riding establishment is to be entrusted to another person by the applicant (such as a manager), the suitability and experience of the manager must also be considered and reported upon.
- 5.7 The principal Act provides that a licence will not be granted to a person disqualified under the Act or five other specific Acts for the protection of animals. Provision is made for appeal to a magistrate’s court on the refusal of a licence or any condition subject to which a licence is proposed to be granted.
- 5.8 **A copy of these guidelines should be sent by the local authority to all new applicants.**

THE INSPECTORATE

- 6.1 A veterinary surgeon wishing to become an Approved Inspector of Riding Establishments must first apply to the Secretary of the Riding Establishment’s sub-Committee. All new applicants to the inspectorate are required to attend a one-day instructional and induction course before they can be admitted to the Inspectorate, and applications are

scrutinised by the Riding Establishment's sub-Committee for approval before admission to the Inspectorate.

Qualifications

- 6.2 The Committee requires certain criteria to be met.
- 6.3 The inspector will have at least five years experience post registration by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, of which at least the last two years should fulfil the requirements below.
- 6.4 At least 30% of the potential inspector's practice workload, (being a minimum of 10 hours per week), will be with horses. In exceptional cases, this requirement may be relaxed; particularly, for example, in remote geographical areas.
- 6.5 The veterinary surgeon will have attended an induction course before inclusion and will also attend an approved refresher course every 5 years thereafter.
- 6.6 All courses are run by the Riding Establishment's sub-Committee.
- 6.7 Failure to attend a refresher course normally leads to the removal of the inspector from the panel, unless a dispensation is agreed in advance. **It is therefore important for all local authorities to examine the list of inspectors regularly to avoid possible adverse legal consequences should a non-inspectorate veterinary surgeon be used for inspections.** This list is only available on the RCVS website at www.rcvs.org.uk . **(RE Act 1964 S.2 (3))**

INSPECTORS REPORT FORM

- 7.1 Licensing authorities and their inspectors are advised to use the Veterinary Inspectors Report Form, which is available free of charge and can be found in the related documents section on the riding establishment page of the RCVS website. Riding Establishments - RCVS Animal Owners. This form may be completed on-line for subsequent transmission or storage, although a check should be made with the Local Authority as to whether on-line submission is acceptable. A copy of the application form should be sent to the inspector concerned so that he is familiar with the type of premises and the number of animals to be inspected.
- 7.2 Upon completion of the inspection, the report form should be returned by the inspector to a **named individual** at the Local Authority. Where any recommendations or adverse comments are made on the report form by the inspector, a letter to the local authority should accompany

the report form outlining the inspectors concerns, giving full details and the Inspector's recommended course of action.

INTERNAL AUDITING OF REPORTS

- 7.3 Each year several local authorities are requested to forward copies of their inspectors' reports for scrutiny by the Riding Establishment sub-Committee. Both the inspector and the local authority are informed by letter of the Committee's findings.
- 7.4 Action will be taken by the Committee should the reports fall below the required standard.

ADVICE TO INSPECTORS

QUALIFICATIONS

- 8.1 The criteria for eligibility for inclusion in the Inspectorate have been outlined above. In particular, re-applicants and part-time workers should ensure that they fulfil the criteria of a minimum of 10 hours equine practice weekly.
- 8.2 The committee will consider the continuing appointment of inspectors over the age of 65 for a further period following the submission of a self-declaration of fitness to continue in practice.
- 8.3 Inspectors must have personal indemnity insurance.

THE INSPECTION

GENERAL

- 9.1 The local authority should be encouraged to have one of its officers present at the inspection. In this way small problems can quickly be sorted out and larger ones will be more readily understood by the authority.
- 9.2 The inspector is required to inspect the horses and the premises to assess the operation of the riding establishment as a whole. He/she will advise the local authority on the type of equine activities carried out by the establishment and the standard to which they are performed. This can vary from teaching people to ride in confined areas, to the hiring of horses for riding with or without supervision, and also includes beach donkeys, trekking centres, and orienteering.
- 9.3 The definition of "horse" has already been given and includes pony, ass, mule or jenny.

- 9.4 The inspector should visit the riding establishment at a reasonable time when all the horses are likely to be at the stables, having previously made an appointment convenient for all parties. The time of year when an inspection is carried out should relate to the use of the animals. Pony trekking centres should be inspected during the trekking season when the animals are in full use. The inspection of any establishment that is carried out at the beginning or end of the season is of little value in determining the standard of care and management of such animals.
- 9.5 The day book/diary/appointments book must be inspected to assess the workloads of the horses.
- 9.6 The horses must be, and as far as can be judged, continue to be maintained in good health. This is not always easy to ascertain at the first inspection but a general assessment of the establishment, the state of the buildings, the saddlery and the record keeping etc will be good indicators of the standards of the establishment.
- 9.7 The inspector will certify that every horse and pony presented to him comes within the terms of the Acts. He must list them including age, short description and their general condition, including feet (noting if shod). The shoeing book may be inspected, or the owner/manager carefully questioned as to the frequency of shoeing.
- 9.8 The inspector should note for each horse inspected what restrictions (if any) are required to be placed on the use of that animal. This would be expected to apply particularly to:- smaller animals, older or young/inexperienced animals, unshod animals, and any with a medical condition which might limit their ability to perform the tasks required. Any restrictions should be noted, with a copy sent to both the Establishment and the Local Authority.
- 9.9 Mares heavily in foal, and for three months after foaling, and all animals three years and under are not allowed to be used. The latter is defined as a horse whose lower permanent lateral incisor teeth have not yet erupted. (see list of offences below) A register of all animals three years and under is required to be kept.
(RE Act 1970 S.2 (1) (ii) (4A) (e))
- 9.10 Horses at part livery and working livery of which the establishment has limited use, and any animal used for providing instruction in riding for payment, whether owned by the establishment or not, are within the provisions of the Acts. This includes escort horses. Horses kept in the stables at full livery should be noted.
- 9.11 **Section 1(3) of the principle Act authorises the inspection of any horse or anything found on the premises if the inspector deems it to be necessary, even if it does not fall within the terms of the Acts.**

ANIMAL WELFARE ACT 2006

- 10.1 Inspectors should be aware of the “Duty of Care” imposed on all animal owners and keepers by section 9 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 (England and Wales) and section 24 of the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 (Scotland). These acts require an animal, owner or keeper to meet each animal’s needs by all steps which are reasonably practical to the extent required by good practice.
- 10.2 The needs are defined as:-
- a) its need for a suitable environment,
 - b) its need for a suitable diet,
 - c) its need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns,
 - d) any need to be housed with, or apart from, other animals. And
 - e) its need to be protected from pain (except in Scotland), suffering, injury or distress.
- 10.3 Guidance on how these needs might be met are laid out in the Equine Codes of Practice issued by the Welsh Assembly Government and the Scottish Government in 2009, and by DEFRA for England in 2010. Further advice may also be gained from the Equine Industry Welfare Guidelines Compendium published by the National Equine Welfare Council. www.newc.co.uk

NOTICES

- 11.1 The name, address and telephone numbers (preferably including a mobile telephone number) of the licence holder or other responsible person must be displayed prominently and clearly on the outside of the premises. The post code should also be displayed on the notice to help the emergency services locate the property in the event of a fire.
- 11.2 This notice is particularly important at premises at which no one lives permanently or which are left unattended for long periods of the day
- 11.3 The notice should have on it clear instructions as to what to do in the event of a fire. This notice should be in a prominent place and large enough to be easily read from a distance. The small plastic notices which have been available from some equine societies may satisfy the letter of the law but not its intention and should be discouraged as inadequate.
- 11.4 Prominent “**No Smoking**” notices must be present in all areas of the premises.

INSPECTION OF THE HORSES

12.1 RE act 1970 S2 (1) (ii)(4)(b)(i): "That paramount consideration will be given to the condition of the horses and that they will be maintained in good health and in all respects physically fit, and that in the case of a horse kept for the purpose of its being let out on hire for riding or for a horse kept for the purpose of its being used in providing instruction in riding the horse will be suitable for the purpose for which it is kept."

Note the "need to be protected from pain injury suffering or distress"

- 12.2 Every horse should be brought out of its stable into good light, the description noted for future identification, and the animal walked and trotted on a hard level surface. Its age must be checked and a careful inspection must be made for sores and galls from its tack, as well as any other injuries. Any injuries found must be noted and their significance assessed.
- 12.3 Each animal should be seen tacked up at some stage during the examination.
- 12.4 The clinical inspection of each horse should include auscultation of the chest whilst at rest, plus an ophthalmoscopic assessment of both eyes.
- 12.5 Attention must be paid to the state of the feet, which should be properly trimmed, and to the shoes if shod. This should be noted, as well as any badly worn, cast or loose shoes. **(RE Act 1970 S.2(1)(ii)(4)(b)(ii))**
- 12.6 When abnormalities are found they must be assessed in respect of the animal's welfare and the safety its rider. The abnormality must be noted and a decision must be made immediately as to whether the animal should continue to be used. The owner or his agent should also be informed immediately.
- 12.7 In such cases the inspector should not attempt to make a diagnosis or suggest treatment, but should inform the owner or manager that the horse must be seen by their own veterinary surgeon.
- 12.8 If a horse is found to be in need of veterinary attention it must be removed from work by a verbal order that must be confirmed in writing as soon as possible at or after the inspection. Any such animal may only be returned to work when the owner has obtained, at his own expense, a veterinary certificate stating that the horse is fit for work.

- 12.9 Where horses are declared by the owner as not in work because of lameness, illness or injury, the inspector must also be satisfied that the appropriate treatment is being carried out.
(RE Act 1970 S.2(1)(ii)(4A)(a))

ACCOMMODATION

Note the “need for a suitable environment”

- 13.1 **The principal Act requires a riding establishment to have accommodation suitable for its horses and ponies in respect of construction and size, number of occupants, light, ventilation and drainage. Specific recommendations are made in the Equine Codes and should be complied with.**
- 13.2 Construction should be substantial, adequate to contain the animal and should provide warmth and shelter in clean hygienic conditions. Access to boxes and stalls should be safe and convenient. Stalls shall be large enough to allow the animal to lie down and get up without risk of injury. Boxes shall be large enough to allow the animal to turn around and there should be sufficient headroom, with a minimum allowing a horse to hold its head in a normal upright position without its ears touching the roof. Both shall be free of fittings and projections or other structural features that might cause injury to equine occupants. Doors must open outwards, be of robust construction, and of such a height as to allow the animal to look out.
- 13.3 The amending Act requires that buildings converted for use as stabling must comply with all the requirements of the principal Act. Cowsheds, pig sties and other agricultural buildings are not usually suitable without significant modification.
- 13.4 Consideration should be given to the number of horses kept at an establishment, including animals at livery, in relation to the buildings and land that are available. It would generally be accepted that it should be possible to bring all horses under cover should the need arise.
- 13.5 **If appropriate a licence may impose a condition that no more than a specified number of horses of all categories should be kept on the premises.**
- 13.6 Lighting must be adequate to render the use of artificial light unnecessary during daylight hours. Horses must be protected from injury from windows, electric switches, loose wires and other equipment in stalls and boxes. If an inspector is in any doubt about the safety of electrical equipment he must report this to the Local Authority and request in writing that the installation is checked by a qualified electrician.

- 13.7 In the absence of mains electricity adequate alternative lighting should be readily available.
- 13.8 Ventilation should provide regular air changes without significant draughts
- 13.9 Drainage must be adequate to carry away liquid voided by the horses and keep the floors or bedding dry. Drains shall discharge outside the buildings. There must be provision for the storage and disposal of manure and spoiled bedding, and this must be located sufficiently far from buildings to avoid the risk of fire and the spread of disease.
- 13.10 Many of the problems at riding establishments are related to the buildings. This is easy to deal with when a potential riding establishment is being inspected for the first time. Either a licence is refused until improvements are made or, if changes of a more minor nature are required, a provisional licence is recommended while the required improvements are completed. Where there has been a gradual deterioration in a premises, the same system may be used to bring it up to an acceptable standard. Improvements must be made during the period of one or two provisional licences for a full license to be restored.
- 13.11 The introduction of the Animal Welfare Acts in 2006 has given increased urgency to the provision of a suitable environment for all animals, and improvements may be suggested on this basis.

GRAZING

- 14.1 The amending Act requires that horses maintained at grass must have water and shelter at all times, as well as adequate pasture. They should also receive supplementary feed if necessary, either when in work or during the cold winter months. The supplementary feed requirement will depend on the type and age of the animal, its workload and the pasture provided. Warmblood types, such as TBs and Arabs, may need stabling as well as additional feed during winter. Turnout rugs will provide some extra protection from the elements; such fittings should be checked daily and the rug removed at least twice a week to ensure that the animal is clean and dry underneath. Cold blooded types, such as native ponies and cobs, are more hardy and can usually overwinter at grass provided there is shelter available and supplementary feeding given where necessary.
- 14.2 Fences must be maintained in a safe condition, free from hazards and loose or broken rails. Barbed wire is not generally regarded as suitable for horses, although it may be acceptable as a boundary fence on large acreages providing it is maintained properly. Fields should be free of

rubbish, parked machinery and other equipment likely to cause injury to horses. There must be control of injurious weeds including ragwort.

14.3 Horses at grass must be visited twice daily by a person competent to recognise injury or illness, and with the authority to take the necessary action if required.

14.4 It is generally recommended that a minimum of one acre per horse is required with two acres per horse being necessary if outdoor exercise areas are provided, and hay or haylage is to be produced. Where establishments do not have access to the recommended acreage, inspectors should ascertain how the horses' exercise requirements are to be met, and how waste disposal is to be managed.

14.5 More specific guidance regarding grazing is provided in the Equine Codes of Practice.

INDOOR AND OUTDOOR SCHOOLS

15.1 The surface of the school should be well drained, free of standing water and maintained regularly to keep it level and smooth. It should have the degree of 'give' consistent with the nature of the surface material of which it is composed.

15.2 Indoor schools should ideally have no central roof stanchions. All stanchions around the walls must be either outside of the innermost protecting wall or well padded up to a height above the head of a rider on the tallest horse used in the establishment. Central stanchions, if absolutely necessary, should be similarly padded. There should be no other projections, either around the walls or elsewhere in the school, that could cause injury to horse or rider.

15.3 Outdoor schools should be properly fenced and maintained so as not to cause injury to horse or rider. Lighting stanchions must be properly padded (as above) if they are sufficiently close to the riding surface to present a danger of contact.

15.4 Indoor schools should have functional doors and outdoor schools must be able to be closed off by gates or rails when in use.

15.5 Any jumping or similar equipment should be maintained in a good state of repair and should be stored out of the school when not in use.

SADDLERY

16.1 The principal Act requires that riding equipment shall be maintained in a good condition so as not to cause suffering to the horse or accident

to the rider. Inspection of saddlery shall be carried out in a good light. It will normally be fitted on the animals for which it is intended, to ensure that a correct fit can be established, with particular attention being given to the condition of the leather (or synthetic material), buckles, stitching and padding and to the degree of wear on bits. Leather should not be dry and should not crack when fully bent. Any article of saddlery deemed to be in poor condition must be taken out of use immediately and noted in the report.

- 16.2 The following are some of the items that are unacceptable in a riding establishment. Saddles with broken trees, nickel stirrups, stirrups with worn or smooth treads, worn and dirty girths, numnahs or saddle cloths that are dirty or are used to try to improve the fit of a badly fitting saddle. Some bits, such as a running gag, may be considered unsuitable for use on horses that are used for teaching purposes.

RIDING HATS

- 16.3 The availability of riding hats should be ascertained and their overall appearance assessed. However any further examination of hats and other riding apparel is a Health and Safety issue, and is the joint responsibility of the proprietor of the Riding Establishment and the Local Authority. In general riding hats should have the current British Standard mark.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

- 17.1 ***1970 Act S.2(1)(ii)(b)(viii): "That adequate accommodation will be provided for forage, bedding, stable equipment and saddlery."***
- 17.2 The supply of food, drink and bedding material must be adequate and suitable; the hay and food shall not be mouldy or rat infested. Hard feed should be stored in vermin-proof containers. By inspection of these, the Inspector must satisfy himself that all are sufficient for the animals in the establishment, with a reasonable reserve. It must be borne in mind that some riding establishments prefer to have frequent deliveries of foodstuffs, rather than store large quantities.
- 17.3 The amending Act requires that the horses be adequately exercised, groomed, rested and visited at suitable intervals. By inquiry and examination of the stable records and appointment book, (which it is desirable should be kept in permanent form), the inspector must be satisfied on these points.

DISEASE CONTROL AND FIRST AID EQUIPMENT

- 18.1 ***1970 Act S.2(1)(ii)(b)(vi): "That all reasonable precautions will be taken to prevent and control the spread among horses of***

infectious or contagious diseases and that veterinary first aid equipment and medicines shall be provided and maintained in the premises.”

- 18.2 The Acts require that reasonable precautions are taken against the spread of infectious disease, and veterinary first aid equipment must be maintained on the premises in a clean state in a place set aside for that purpose. So far as possible, the inspector must be satisfied that there is provision for the isolation of any animal with an infectious disease.
- 18.3 First aid equipment may include antiseptic solution and powder, dressings, bandages, scissors and a thermometer. It is strongly advised that the name, address and telephone number of the attending veterinary surgeon and doctor be prominently displayed at each establishment in case of emergency.
- 18.4 Adequate alternative lighting should be readily available for veterinary examinations or simple first aid treatments.
- 18.5 The vaccination of animals against equine disease in a riding establishment should be recommended by the veterinary inspector, but it cannot, under the present Acts, be made mandatory.
- 18.6 Parasite control measures should be discussed and records checked.
- 18.7 The inspector should make enquiries to satisfy him/herself that every horse on the establishment is in possession of a valid passport.

FIRE PRECAUTIONS

- 19.1 ***1970 Act S.2(1)(ii)(b)(vii): “That appropriate steps will be taken for the protection and extrication of horses in case of fire and, in particular, that the name, address and telephone number of the licence holder or some other responsible person will be kept displayed in a prominent position on the outside of the premises and that instructions as to action to be taken in the event of fire, with particular regard to the extrication of horses, will be kept displayed in a prominent position on the outside of the premises.”***
- 19.2 Owners, managers and staff must be made aware that their primary duty in the event of a fire is to call the fire brigade, extract the horses and attend to the safety of people. Fire fighting is dangerous and should be left to the professionals. For small isolated fires a water tap and hose may be adequate. Fire extinguishers should be serviced annually and the last service date must be visible on an attached label.
- 19.3 There must be clear access to all stalls and loose boxes to allow for emergency evacuation. A suitable holding area away from the buildings where animals may be temporarily contained should be identified and staff instructed accordingly.

- 19.4 The amending Act requires that the name, address and telephone number of the licence holder or other responsible person, with directions for action in case of fire, particularly with regard to the extrication of horses, must be displayed prominently on the outside of the premises.
- 19.5 All stables must comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 or the Fire Safety (Scotland) Order 2009. A fire risk assessment must be carried out and a pre-incident planning form logged with the local fire service. An inspector should check that the Establishment has complied with this requirement, but need not concern him/herself with the details.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ASSESSMENT

- 20.1 The veterinary inspector should ask to see the stables' Health and Safety assessment. If one is not available the proprietor should be reminded of the need for one in order to comply with the terms of the Health and Safety at Work Act, although the enforcement of this lies with the local authority.

SUPERVISION

- 21.1 ***1970 Act S.2 (4A): " No horse will be let out on hire for riding or used for providing instruction in riding without supervision by a responsible person of the age of 16 years or over unless (in the case of a horse let out for hire for riding) the holder of the licence is satisfied that the hirer of the horse is competent to ride without supervision.
The carrying on of a business of a riding establishment shall at no time be left in the charge of any person under 16 years of age."***
- 21.2 The inspector shall satisfy himself/herself as far as possible that the management of the business is not left under the supervision of a person under 16 years of age.
- 21.3.A The 1970 Act requires that horses let out on hire must be supervised by a person 16 years of age or over, unless the licence holder is satisfied that the hirer is competent to ride without supervision.

NOTE

Inspectors should be aware that owners are allowed to appeal against the decision of a local authority to refuse a licence. Such cases are heard before magistrates who are often reluctant to take action to remove a person's means of livelihood, but may well agree to the imposition of improved conditions.

OFFENCES

22.1 It is an offence under the Acts:

- To keep a riding establishment without a licence;
- To wilfully obstruct or delay any person in the exercise of his/her powers of entry or inspection;
- To permit a person for the time being disqualified under this Act from keeping a riding establishment or to have control or management of an establishment;
- To conceal a horse or horses with intent to avoid inspection under the Act;
- To use in a riding establishment a horse in contravention of the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 or the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006
- To use in a riding establishment any horse three years old or under, or any mare heavy in foal or within three months after foaling;
- To fail to provide curative care for a sick or injured horse used in a riding establishment;
- To supply riding equipment which is visibly defective or likely to cause suffering to the horse or an accident to the rider.

EXCEPTIONS

22.2 The following do not fall within the definition of keeping a riding establishment within the meaning of the Acts:

- A business premises where the horses employed for the purposes of the business are kept by, or under, the management of the Secretary of State for Defence; or
- The carrying on of such a business if solely for police purposes; or
- The carrying on of such a business by the Zoological Society of London or by the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland; or
- The keeping of horses by universities for the instruction of students on courses qualifying for membership of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

VARIATIONS OF PREMISES AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

22.3 Apart from the standard riding school premises, other centres of horse activity which come within the scope of the Acts present the Inspector with special considerations. These include:

Trail Riding - guided and unguided
Riding Schools with attached trekking
Riding Schools with Livery
Centres requiring an Adventure Activity Licence

Centres teaching Polo using hired horses
Centres and Individuals hiring Hunters and Hacks

These establishments should normally be inspected during their operating season and should comply with the normal requirements of the riding Establishments Acts in so far as these are reasonably applicable. Where it is impossible to inspect all premises, a representative sample must be inspected.

- 22.4 It is important to give the Local Authority a concise idea of how the centre operates, and to consider whether the operators are competent to run what may be extensive riding, where control of the health and safety of the rider and horse may be from a distance.
- 22.5 In these cases it is useful to see a risk assessment of the centre that will give the Inspector some idea of how things are run.

Trekking Centres

- 22.6 As a general rule, horses and ponies in purely trekking centres are so used to the pattern and familiarity of rides that the inexperienced rider can rely on the horse to carry them safely.

Hacking

- 22.7 This is the next stage upwards in horsemanship from conventional lessons or trekking, where the rider is expected to be able to control the horse competently and independently.
- 22.8 The Inspector must be satisfied that the operator is able to gauge the skill level of the rider for the appropriate horse.

Trail Riding

- 22.9 The horses travel over greater distances than the previous two types of operation, often staying away overnight, and may cover 80-100 miles in a week.
- 22.10 This requires a more skilled rider, and better supervision by the operator, especially with regard to accidents and emergencies.
- 22.11 Any horse that becomes lame or sick is normally replaced under the supervision of the operator during the trail ride, and provision for this must be made.
- 22.12 The horses can find this type of work physically demanding and distances over 12-15 miles per day can be a problem, particularly for young horses. Most centres offering this type of riding will give the horse a week off for every week on.
- 22.13 The most adventurous of this type is unguided, with the rider left to their own devices with maps and a rendezvous. It is essential that the Inspector is satisfied that adequate control and management is in place to cover any eventuality.

22.14 For example, all riders are checked in at night by phone, and the overnight stays allow for the checking of the horses.

Riding School with attached trekking.

22.15 The Inspector shall be clear about which horses are used for each type of function

Riding Schools with attached Livery.

22.16 There shall be a clear distinction of premises between the hired out horse and those at livery.

22.17 In the case of “DIY” livery, a separate feed, tack and other facilities is to be preferred.

22.18 In case of doubt the inspector is authorised to inspect all animals on a premises for which a licence is requested, not merely those used in the riding school.

Centres requiring Adventure Activity Licence Association licences.

22.19 This applies to centres offering activities to under 18 year olds. The licence is given after inspection by the AALA, and generally applies to trekking centres where the horses are taken well away from main roads, and at certain heights of mountain. It does not strictly apply to all centres, but many get this licence if dealing with school children.

Polo/Hireling Centres

22.20 Establishments teaching **polo** on hired ponies must ensure compliance with the provisions of the Acts and ensure the ponies are suitable for this specific purpose.

22.21 Similar considerations apply to centres **hiring hunters and hacks.**