

## **IFHA Principles of Good Practice for the Aftercare of Racehorses**

### **Preamble**

1. The International Agreement on Breeding, Racing and Wagering states that; 'horseracing authorities by implementing, publishing, monitoring and enforcing appropriate policies, rules and by other activities, in so far as this is in their direct or indirect control, should assure that the participants in horseracing themselves meet their responsibilities to provide suitable care for the racehorse before, during and also after racing'.
2. The care provided for racehorses after retirement is an important concern for both the racing industry and the wider society within which the racing industry operates. To maintain and strengthen the social acceptance of horseracing, all racing stakeholders must ensure that appropriate care and husbandry is provided for ex-racehorses.

### **Appropriate Aftercare**

3. All reasonable measures should be taken to provide a suitable future career or comfortable retirement option for ex-racehorses. The primary responsibility for the transition of a horse from racing to a future career or retirement lies with the owner of the horse.
4. Racing authorities should assist owners in transitioning horses out of racing and into a second career or other retirement option by providing advice to owners and by directing them to reputable re-training facilities, equestrian sports organisations or racehorse aftercare facilities.
5. Racing authorities should consider means by which the demand for ex-racehorses for future careers can be increased, for example, by supporting equestrian sports in general and, in particular, by promoting the use of ex-racehorses in such sports.
6. The responsibility for the care of any horse must lie with its current owner. However, the racing authorities should, in cooperation with horse welfare organisations, and, as far as is possible within the local environment, implement systems to monitor the welfare of ex-racehorses and to provide advice to individuals unable to provide proper care for a horse.
7. Racing authorities should maintain a database of the reasons for racehorse retirements and a record of at least the first transition career or other management option provided for each horse after retirement from racing.
8. The re-registration of retired racehorses with the intention of returning to racing must be regulated by the racing authority, and a veterinary certificate of *suitability to race* must be provided to the authority before consideration is given to re-registration.
9. Racing authorities should consider supporting systems of veterinary and behavioural assessment of the suitability of retired racehorses for future careers and the subsequent re-training of suitable horses for those careers.
10. Euthanasia of an ex-racehorse may be appropriate in some circumstances, for example when a chronic painful and incurable condition is present, when the horse is aged or when resources are genuinely not available to provide proper care. Veterinary advice should be obtained before deciding upon euthanasia and, if the veterinary advice assesses euthanasia to be an appropriate means of managing an individual horse, must be performed respectfully, humanely and with minimum stress both before and during the procedure.