

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SENIOR VETERINARY SURGEON (SVS) AT POINT-TO-POINTS

Personal

1. The SVS
 - a) Should have racecourse or extensive P2P experience
 - b) Holds current ARVS CMS accreditation
 - c) Must be appointed at least three months in advance of the fixture date
 - d) Is fully conversant with the relevant P2P Instructions and has read the Responsibilities of a SVS (P2P) document
 - e) Must be provided with contact details for:
 1. Clerk of the Course
 2. Horse Ambulance Provider
 3. Horse Recovery Driver
 4. Senior Medical Officer

Pre-Fixture

2. **Vets.** The SVS must ensure that the veterinary team for the fixture is suitably qualified and equipped as per the Instructions. A team of three veterinary surgeons is strongly recommended but, at the discretion of the SVS, this may be reduced to two if the predicted number of runners is less than 40. This may not be possible on some courses due to the layout and access. A race must not commence if only one veterinary surgeon is available to attend casualties.
3. **Horse Ambulance and Recovery Wagon.** In advance of the fixture, the SVS should contact the Horse Ambulance provider and Recovery vehicle driver to ensure that the vehicles are fit for purpose and meet the requirements of the Instructions. It should also be ascertained that the designated drivers have relevant horse handling experience.
4. **Clerk of Course.** The SVS must contact the CoC to discuss the following:
 - a) Time of Briefing
 - b) Screen availability and deployment
 - c) Rapid response team of assistants (screens and water)
 - d) Hot Weather Protocol (if considered relevant by SVS)
 - e) Driver and vehicle provision if necessary
 - f) Stop Race Protocol
5. **SMO.** The SVS must contact the SMO to discuss the briefing of medical staff and all fence attendants with respect to the Recumbent Horse, Danger Zones and the Trapped Jockey scenario. This is best conducted at the CoC fence briefing, usually about one hour prior to racing.

Before Racing on the Day

6. **Timing.** The SVS should arrive at least one hour in advance of the first race and attend the CoC briefing
7. **Checks before first race.** The SVS should check that all the necessary veterinary services are in place and compliant with the Instructions. Screens must be available at the last two fences, in the winners' enclosure, the Paddock, unsaddling area and ideally where horses enter and leave the course.
8. **Communications.** The SVS should ensure that all team members have a radio and are on a dedicated channel to allow effective communication. All team members should be made aware of the relevant channels required to contact the CoC and the Senior Steward if necessary.

NB: a radio check of all team members should be conducted well in advance of the first race. The SVS should ensure that the CoC and the Senior Steward are both contactable.

9. **Senior Steward.** The SVS should make contact with the Senior Steward and confirm that all the Veterinary services are in place and compliant with the Instructions. If a Hot Weather Protocol is in place, the Senior Steward should be made aware and a request made to brief all jockeys that they should dismount post-race at the request of a veterinary surgeon, to ensure that horses can be cooled as deemed necessary.

10. **Briefing.** The SVS must brief the veterinary team on the course layout, access points, bypass directions and the Stop Race Protocol. The team should be deployed in such a way as to ensure prompt attendance to all casualties. Plans for redeployment should be discussed should a team member be required to attend a casualty.

During Racing

11. The Senior Steward should be contacted by the SVS in the event that anyone behaves inappropriately towards a member of the veterinary team or refuses to act as directed by a veterinary surgeon on matters of horse welfare.
12. The SVS (or any veterinary surgeon with relevant experience) should be available to the stewards as required to offer an opinion on matters of riding extremely tired or injured horses, evidence of excessive use of the whip or any other matters related to horse welfare.
13. At the end of the meeting, it is recommended that the SVS conducts a short debrief with all members of the team to ensure that all significant injuries have been recorded, that all major incidents on the racetrack are reviewed and critiqued and to discuss whether any changes need to be made to the provision of veterinary services in the future. Productive feedback to the CoC is always appreciated and encourages useful changes to be made at future meetings to ensure ongoing improvements in the provision of efficient veterinary services.

On occasion of Injury

14. Treatment forms (V019 – available on the PPA website) must be provided to the connections of all horses receiving medical care.
15. The SVS should ensure that all members of the veterinary team are adequately supported as soon as possible in the event of a serious casualty. If a second opinion is required, this should invariably fall to the SVS and it is recommended that connections are fully briefed by the SVS regarding diagnosis, prognosis and ongoing treatment. (Where possible, all cases of humane

destruction should receive a second opinion from another RVS, but not at the risk of compromising horse welfare.)

16. The SVS must always be involved in the decision-making process regarding 'fitness to travel' and referral to centres for further assessment and treatment.

NB: if connections are resistant to veterinary assistance and display a disregard for a horse's welfare, it is strongly recommended that the SVS reminds them of their responsibilities. In extreme cases, the SVS may decide to report the matter to the Senior Steward.

17. In the event of a fatality, the SVS must ensure that the P2P secretary is aware of the horse's name and the trainer/owner's details. It is strongly recommended that the costs of humane euthanasia are covered by the P2P. Costs related to elective euthanasia are best explained to connections by the SVS.

Post-Fixture

18. The SVS must ensure that prompt contact is made with the home veterinary surgeon regarding horses that have sustained serious and/or long term injuries, in order to establish continuity of care.

19. The SVS should make a follow-up phone call in the case of horses which sustain serious and/or long-term injuries and return home or are sent to a referral centre. In the event that a horse is subsequently euthanased having been reassessed, it would be appreciated if this information could be included in the Fixture Veterinary Report Form.

20. **Fixture Veterinary Report Form.** The BHA requests that the online Fixture Veterinary Report is completed and returned within a few days of the meeting. The report is in digital form and only takes a few minutes to complete. It can be found here:

<https://www.cognitofrms.com/BritishHorseracingAuthority/pointtopointinjuryreportform>