**12 December 2017**

**The International Horse Sports Confederation Welcomes Significant Progress on Key Projects**

**The International Horse Sports Confederation (IHSC) held a series of meetings at the Hong Kong Jockey Club on Saturday, 9 December 2017.  The IHSC has endorsed developments in several key projects which highlight the significant progress being made on the important work of the IHSC, including as a result of its collaborative activities with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).**

**Re-election of Mr Louis Romanet as IHSC President**

**At the annual meeting of the General Assembly, the current President of the IHSC, Mr Louis Romanet (who is also Chairman of the IFHA), was elected for a further term of two years.**

**Successful staging of regional workshops during 2017**

**The IHSC received a comprehensive update on the successful staging of three OIE-IHSC regional workshops held in Johannesburg, Guatemala and Montevideo during 2017.  A key driver for the workshops is to facilitate advancements in the temporary international movement of competition horses.**

**The workshops brought together a broad range of private and government sport horse industry stakeholders, including representatives of national equestrian federations, national racing authorities, national veterinary authorities and customs organisations in the South African, Central American and South American regions.  Priority issues and collectively-defined actions have been agreed for each region which are being actively progressed, and which the OIE-IHSC Technical Committee will continue to monitor and support.  The IHSC has supported plans for further regional workshops during 2018.**

**Significant progress on important research projects**

**The IHSC’s Technical Meeting also received detailed reports on some critical, and advanced, research projects which are being jointly conducted by the OIE and IHSC.  Since 2015, significant progress has been made on six scientific studies on African horse sickness, equine influenza and glanders.**

**Arising from that work, the IHSC has now given its in-principle agreement to support the development of a new African horse sickness DIVA (Differentiating Infected from Vaccinated Animals) vaccine.  It is anticipated that development of a polyvalent vaccine and immunity studies may be completed for a new vaccine within approximately 18 months.  The IHSC believes that the development and production of an African horse sickness vaccine would be a major achievement, and would deliver a far-reaching positive impact on horse sports around the world.**

**The IHSC also noted pleasing progress in relation to:**

**          the development of equine influenza vaccination protocols, which are anticipated to be included in the OIE Terrestrial Manual by 2019; and**

**          research work into the development of a serological diagnostic assay for glanders, with critical milestones expected to be reached by mid-2018.**

**-ENDS-**

**Editors’ Notes

The IHSC was established in 2013 and brought together the international bodies for major horse sports, being:**

**       the Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI); and**

**       the International Federation of Horse Racing Authorities (IFHA).**

**The key missions of the IHSC include:**

**       being the official body for the relations of the horse industry with the OIE;**

**       the exchange of information and technical knowledge between the FEI and IFHA;**

**       the encouragement of cooperation between the FEI and IFHA on matters of mutual interest which affect horse sports;**

**       the representation of the collective interests of the FEI and IFHA.**

**Louis Romanet, Chairman of the IFHA, was appointed as the President of the IHSC in 2015.  Ingmar De Vos, President of the FEI, is the Vice-President of the IHSC.

Other attendees at the meetings included, from the FEI: John McEwen, FEI Bureau member and Chair of the FEI Veterinary Committee; and Dr Göran Akerström , Veterinary Director of the FEI; and from the IFHA: Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges, Vice-Chairman of the IFHA; Andrew Harding, Executive Director of the IFHA; Dr Roland Devolz, Technical Advisor; and Andrew Chesser, Secretary General of the IFHA.

About the FEI**

 **The International Equestrian Federation (FEI), founded in 1921, is the international body governing equestrian sport recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).  The FEI is the sole controlling authority for all international events in Dressage & Para-Dressage, Jumping, Eventing, Driving & Para-Driving, Endurance, Vaulting, and Reining.**

 **The FEI establishes the regulations and approves equestrian programmes at Championships, Continental and Regional Games as well as the Olympic & Paralympic Games.**

**The FEI is based on the principle of equality and mutual respect between all 134 affiliated National Federations, without prejudice to race, religion or internal politics.**

**The FEI promotes equestrianism in all its forms and encourages the development of the FEI equestrian disciplines throughout the world. The core values of the FEI are: fair play, equality, complicity with the animal and respect for the horse and the environment.**

**About the IFHA**

**The IFHA is the world peak body for the international sport of Thoroughbred racing. Its members are the national racing authorities across the globe which stage Thoroughbred races.**

**Major areas of the IFHA’s activities include:**

**•      Making and amending the International Agreement on Breeding, Racing and Wagering (the IABRW)**

**•      Policy development relating to welfare and safety of horses and riders**

**•      International Race Planning and Grading (“black type”)**

**•      World Rankings**

**•      Equine Prohibited Substances and Practices**

**•      Harmonization of Race Day Rules**

**•      Fostering commercial development of the racing industry globally**

**The IFHA is a foundation member with the FEI of the IHSC and is affiliated to the OIE.**

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