



## **MOUNT CRAWFORD DRESSAGE CLUB**

### **RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY**

For Competitions, Training Days and other Activities held by the  
**Mount Crawford Dressage Club**

The Mount Crawford Dressage Club Committee is committed to ensuring a safe sporting and working environment for every person involved in MCDC competitions and activities. To enable this commitment to be met, this Risk Management policy has been adopted and will be continually reviewed as required.

This policy is intended to provide for a reasonably safe environment for all competitors, spectators, volunteers and any other persons attending events, and their horses. It must be recognised however, that the handling and riding of horses is a dangerous activity and can result in serious injury and loss. Neither the MCDC or the members of the MCDC Committee accepts any responsibility for any loss or damage suffered by any person. Anyone who handles or rides a horse or attends events held by the MCDC do so entirely at their own risk.

Please note that MCDC members are insured for Public & Product Liability only and are not covered for Personal Accident or Injury. MCDC strongly recommends that all members have their own personal insurance and ambulance cover.

#### **General:**

- The MCDC Committee will appoint a committee member to be responsible for safety and risk management at all MCDC events (hereafter known as the Safety Officer/Risk Management Officer).
- The MCDC Risk Management policy shall be utilised when preparing for an event, and all aspects of this policy will be addressed, and any hazards identified.
- At MCDC competitions and other activities, the Safety Officer, the delegated official for the day or any Committee member in attendance on the day each have the authority of the committee to make any decision necessary in relation to any matter concerning safety.
- All events will follow the rules of Equestrian Australia. This includes 'unofficial' and 'closed' classes where the intent of the rules must still apply.
- All event personnel should know and understand general safety procedures and be conversant with the MCDC Risk Management Policy.
- Volunteers and other event personnel should have the required experience and knowledge to perform their duties or will be appropriately trained and supervised before commencing duties.
- All accidents or incidents will be recorded on a MCDC Incident Report form and be noted for future safety considerations.
- A list of emergency services contact details will be available on the day and will be noted in the program where applicable.
- First Aid kits and basic veterinary equipment will be available on site and easily accessible. Emergency personnel, such as ambulance officer/doctor/veterinarian etc, should attend the event where required by the rules or by the Safety Officer.
- Dogs must be on a lead at all times. Dogs that are creating a nuisance (eg barking or lunging at people or animals) must be removed from the venue if so directed.
- Where food is provided at an MCDC event or activity, the requirements of the 'Safe Food Australia' guide will be adhered to. All persons providing food at the event or activity must be made aware of their obligations under this guide and abide by them. All persons consume food at the event/activity at their own risk.
- The MCDC may cancel any event in the case of extreme weather conditions – this includes excessive heat or excessively wet weather/ground conditions. Please refer to the Hot Weather Policy and Wet Weather Policies, specifically addressing extreme weather conditions.

## **Hot Weather Policy:**

- The MCDC Hot Weather Policy states that events will be cancelled when a temperature of 36C or above is forecast for the Mount Barker area or the CFS advises of catastrophic fire conditions or at the discretion of the MCDC Committee.
- When riding in hot weather, it is the rider's responsibility to ensure that they drink enough fluids, in addition to appropriately attending to their horses needs in order to avoid heat stress.

## **Wet Weather Policy:**

- Mount Crawford Dressage Club will assess the state of the grounds following heavy or consistent rain prior to an event. A decision on the state of the grounds will be made on the Thursday prior to the competition, and no information will be available prior to this time. Once a decision has been made it will be posted on the Mount Crawford Dressage Club website.
- Where there is the possibility of an event being cancelled due to poor weather, it is the responsibility of the competitors to ensure that they check the Mount Crawford Dressage Club website on the Friday evening for information.

## **Fire Policy:**

- Please be aware that the Club grounds are located in a high fire risk area near the Mount Crawford forest, and there is no mains or firefighting water available.
- Refer to the separate MCDC Fire Policy available on the MCDC website.

## **First Aid Policy:**

- Please refer to the separate First Aid Policy and Incident Report Form available on the MCDC website.

## **Responsibility of participants:**

- All members expected to familiarize themselves with and abide by Club and EA rules, policies and Codes of Practice. Members are also expected to keep informed and up to date by reading newsletters, rally information and policy changes.
- All riders on the grounds must be members of the Mount Crawford Dressage Club or the EA and must report to the office before riding. EA riders must be able to show their EA membership card if requested.
- All participants entering a MCDC event must sign the appropriate waiver/release forms where applicable.
- Approved helmets are to be worn at all times whilst mounted, or in accordance with EA regulations with respect to competition attire.
- It will be the responsibility of the rider of each horse to ensure that all riding equipment is well maintained and correctly fitted. Where applicable, a gear check will be conducted prior to riding.
- For competition days, all riders need to supply their own bridle or saddleblanket numbers, visible from both sides of the horse. It is your responsibility to make sure your horse is wearing the correct number, especially if you have more than one horse on the grounds.
- Pick up any baling twine, fill any holes your horse may have dug and please scatter the manure.
- Act in accordance with the information provided and with common sense at all times, considering the safety and welfare of people, horses and property, yours and others.
- All competition days are conducted under EA rules. Please know and abide by them. Anyone blatantly breaking any rule may be eliminated and asked to leave the grounds.
- It is the responsibility of the rider/competitor to ensure that the level of fitness and training of their horse is suitable for the competition entered or the activity to be undertaken.
- Juniors under the age of 18 years must always be supervised by a parent or nominated adult.

## **Venue:**

- The Safety Officer and, if possible, one other member of the MCDC organising committee, will inspect the grounds prior to the start of the competition or event. If necessary, they will discuss with the venue manager any potential hazards that require attention before the event commences.
- Inspections of higher-risk areas (e.g. spectator areas, warm up areas, catering and meal areas) should be repeated during the event as appropriate.
- Where applicable, a warning sign advising that horse sports are a dangerous activity should be displayed.
- Arenas will be defined clearly and use appropriate safe surrounds.
- No horses are permitted in the spectator area in front of the office/canteen/toilets.

## **Parking and Traffic:**

- For all traffic, a 10km/h speed limit is applicable throughout the venue.
- All areas of parking will be of sufficient size to allow safe movement of vehicles at all times and vehicles must be parked so as not to block the exit for others.
- All drivers will ensure that horse floats are parked a sufficient distance (at least 9 meters) from other floats to prevent one horse from being able to kick another horse or damage vehicles.
- Entry to and exit from the venue will be sufficiently sign-posted and allow for the safe movement of trucks and floats.
- Floats/Trucks and spectator's vehicles should be kept separate where possible, and designated parking areas be clearly marked.

## **Handling of Horses:**

- Stallions must be kept under strict control at all times and not be left unattended. Any person handling a stallion must be over the age of 18 years and must be suitably experienced in stallion handling.
- All horses must be tied in a safe and secure manner. If horses which are tied up are known to have a tendency to kick or engage in any activity that might be a danger to a passer-by, that horse must be attended to by a suitably experienced person at all times whilst it is tied up.
- Portable yards should be of solid construction. The use of electrical tape, strings, ropes or chains will not be permitted.
- Any horse that is behaving in a manner considered to be dangerous to any other people or horses on the grounds may be requested to leave the event. Any horse which is required to leave will be taken to have scratched from the competition or event for which it is entered on that day and the horse will not be permitted to take part.
- Abuse of any horse will not be tolerated, and the offending person/s may be requested to leave the event. Abuse includes excessive use of a whip or spurs.
- Horses should be provided with access to water during breaks. Please bring a tub or bucket and you will need to bring your own supply of drinking and washing water.

## **Horse Warm Up Areas:**

- The horse warm up areas must be adequate for the number of horses requiring use of the area and the maximum number of horses permitted in the area needs to be controlled to avoid potential accidents.
- When passing another rider ahead of you who is unaware of your presence, call "passing" to make them aware. If you are passing another rider coming from the opposite direction, pass left shoulder to left shoulder.
- If you are having difficulty, you may be asked to work away from the other horses, please consider other riders and horse's safety at all times.
- No dogs will be allowed in the warm-up or competition areas at any time.

## **Personal Safety:**

- If a horse becomes loose whilst on club grounds, ensure you advise the owner and a MCDC Committee member who will then decide on the best course of action. Please ensure the horse is calm and at a standstill before approaching.
- When offering or asking for assistance with your horse, remember that even the most experienced horse handler can get hurt when something goes wrong.

## **Members of the Public/Spectators:**

- There are no restrictions on members of the general public attending any MCDC event. However, it should be assumed that members of the general public are not familiar with the behaviour of horses and do not know how to handle them or how to behave in their presence. Accordingly, persons riding or handling a horse must be especially alert for the presence of members of the general public (children in particular).
- Members of the public/spectators attend the event at their own risk. Safe viewing areas for spectators are provided near the office/canteen area.
- Members of the public/spectators will not, as a general rule, be permitted to enter competition and horse movement areas. If they do so, they enter at their own risk.

## **SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR MCDC TRAINING DAYS:**

**The current MCDC Insurance Policy covers the following activities:**

- Flatwork/Dressage/Formation Riding
- Working Equitation/Handy Horse
- Ground work
- Gridwork and Showjumping – Up to 60cm
- Gymnastic/Poles on the ground
- Novelties/Games

**A quote for additional insurance must be obtained for any activity not listed above, which may include:**

- Cross Country
- Trail or Navigation Rides
- Cattle work
- Showjumping – Over 60cm
- Formation Jumping
- Club Camp
- Polocrosse

### **General:**

- The Training Day Coordinator and/or Safety Officer are responsible for checking the safety of the venue and having the first aid kit and emergency phone numbers on-hand while an event is taking place.
- All participants must be MCDC members, day membership will not be available.
- All instructors will be suitably qualified and insured and provide a Certificate of Currency.
- An Incident Report Form will be available in the office area. The Training Day Coordinator or Safety Officer will be responsible for ensuring the form is completed by the relevant parties when any incident deemed noteworthy by the Safety Officer takes place. The first aid kit and emergency contact details will also be available in the office. An ambulance, vet or other emergency services agency will be contacted if the Coordinator or Safety Officer considers it necessary.
- Any actions deemed unsafe by the instructor or training day coordinator will result in a warning in the first instance and in the second instance, the rider will be asked to leave the venue.
- Once a class has commenced, it is under the direction of the instructor and if it is necessary to leave a class, the instructor must be informed.
- A horse behaving in a manner that upsets other horses may be asked to work in another area.
- If, in the instructor's opinion, a horse is dangerous, the rider may be instructed to leave the area.
- Approved safety helmets and appropriate footwear must be worn at all times whilst mounted.
- It will be the responsibility of the rider of each horse to ensure that all riding equipment is well maintained and correctly fitted.
- All tack and equipment must comply with the EA rules for each discipline. The EA rules for tack and equipment will also apply when non-EA disciplines are being offered (ie Trail Riding).
- The instructor or training day coordinator may deem tack unfit for use. Bridles must have a bit, and reins must be attached to the bit.
- Horses and ponies must be three years of age or over for flatwork classes and four years of age or over for jumping classes. Please contact the training day coordinator if your horse is younger.
- Horses should be tied up with a halter and lead rope during breaks. Horses may not be tied up with reins at any time.
- No riding is to be done in alternative arenas/paddocks without the prior consent from the training day coordinator and the venue.
- MCDC has a non-smoking policy.
- Horses must be presented at training days in good health and in sound condition. If a horse is suspected of being unsound or unwell, the instructor or training day coordinator may direct that it not participate.

- If a horse has been unwell with a contagious condition or communicable disease, the training day coordinator may direct that it not participate at the next rally or until vet clearance has been obtained post illness.
- Horses must be provided with access to water during breaks. If the venue does not have a water supply (ie Mount Crawford Dressage Club Grounds), you will need to bring your own supply.
- All lessons are to be ridden unless specified. Horses are not to be led in lessons, this is deemed to be a danger to all participants, horses and instructors.
- Where applicable, you must state which level you feel best describes you and/or your horse's capabilities on the entry form. This will help the training day coordinator to put you in the lesson that you will benefit the most from.

## **Venues:**

- Any venue where MCDC competitions and activities take place must meet all safety requirements of the event, and it is strongly recommended that the MCDC be the sole hirer of the venue.
- All members must be made aware of and follow the appropriate Risk Management procedures of the venue being hired and sign an appropriate waiver form for the venue if required.
- The training day coordinator and/or the designated safety officer will inspect all areas of the venue that are likely to be used, prior to the start of the event. They will discuss with the venue manager or property owner potential hazards that require attention before the event commences.
- Inspections of high-risk areas (e.g. spectator areas, warm up areas, catering and meal areas) will be inspected by the Training Day Coordinator and/or the Safety Officer during the event as appropriate.
- Arenas will be clearly defined.
- The Organising Committee will follow the appropriate crisis/emergency management procedures of the venue being hired.

## **Parking and Traffic:**

- A 10km/h speed limit is applicable throughout the venue.
- All areas of parking will be of sufficient size to allow safe movement of vehicles and vehicles must be parked so as not to block the exit for others.
- Drivers will ensure that horse floats are parked a sufficient distance (at least 9 meters) from other floats to prevent one horse from being able to kick another horse or damaging vehicles.
- Entry to and exit from the venue will be sign-posted and allow for the safe movement of trucks and floats.
- Floats/Trucks and spectator's vehicles should be parked in separate areas and where possible, designated parking areas will be marked.

## **Arena Etiquette:**

- When passing another rider, riders should call "passing" to make their intention clear. If passing a rider coming from the opposite direction, passing should be left shoulder to left shoulder.
- At least two horse lengths should be left between horses. The performance of a ten-metre circle with return to the track can create distance.
- If it is necessary to stop riding, riders should move to the centre.
- Slower horses should use the inside track.
- Close attention should be paid to the instructor and the other riders to avoid collisions.
- Novice riders or green horses that may be experiencing difficulty, should be allowed them more space.
- Sufficient room should be left in line ups to avoid kicking and biting.
- Riders should advise the instructor if they wish to leave the class midway through the lesson, move to the centre and leave when safe.
- Spectators should keep voices down so that the lesson is not disturbed.

## **Show Jumping/Cross Country:**

- When show-jumping training above 60cms or any Cross Country training takes place, a separate insurance premium must be organised.
- The Safety Officer and/or training day coordinator must inspect and approve the grounds before activities commence.
- Potential hazards must be identified and rectified (eg. Unnecessary cups in wings, incorrectly positioned ground rails, loose cups under wings, ground condition etc)
- The instructor must have the appropriate accreditation and experience.
- The number of on-foot assistants in the arena or on the course should be kept to a minimum.

## **Trail Riding/Navigation Rides:**

- When trail riding/navigation rides take place, a separate insurance premium must be organised.
- All sanctioned MCDC Trail Rides shall be conducted under the control of the delegated Ride Coordinator who is a competent rider, as well as a member of the MCDC committee or their delegate.
- The Ride Coordinator must ensure a pre-ride briefing is conducted to advise participants of potential hazards and other details relevant to the safe conduct of the ride. They must ensure that all participants understand the commands that will be used throughout the ride.
- High visibility vests or other identifying clothing must be worn by the Ride Coordinator and any other ride official, and these people should be identified to all participants at the pre-ride briefing.
- There must be a minimum of two ride officials at any ride, plus at least one ride official per ten riders. One ride official will ride at the front of the group and another at the rear of the group. One of the ride officials must also be a First Aid Officer and carry a mobile phone.
- An Incident Report Form will be available from the Ride Coordinator. The Ride Coordinator or Safety Officer will be responsible for ensuring the form is completed by the relevant parties when any incident deemed noteworthy by the Safety Officer takes place. The first aid kit will be available in the float parking area, and emergency contact details will also be carried by a ride official. An ambulance, vet or other emergency services agency will be contacted if the Ride Coordinator or a ride official considers it necessary.
- The route shall be inspected prior to the commencement of the ride for any potential hazards, otherwise the Ride Official riding at the front of the group must advise of any potential hazards.
- All riders must comply with State Road rules when riding on or near roadways.
- Permits, if required, will be obtained by the Ride Coordinator prior to the ride.
- Ride distances and approximate times will be advised on the entry form.
- Alcohol is not permitted to be consumed prior to or during the ride.
- Dogs are not permitted.
- Manure must be collected and removed from parking venues, unless otherwise advised.
- Riders must wear appropriate clothing for trail riding and for the prevailing weather conditions, including approved helmets and footwear.
- It is the responsibility of each rider to advise the Ride Coordinator of any pre-existing medical conditions prior to the ride.
- It is the responsibility of each rider to assess their level and their horse's level of skill when negotiating hazardous terrain, and if necessary, dismount and lead their horses where appropriate.
- Horses which have shown a tendency to kick must be identified by a red ribbon in their tail.
- It is the responsibility of each rider to ensure that their horse's level of fitness is suitable for the length of ride.
- At all times, horses remain the responsibility of their riders and as such, riders should always be aware of riders/horses in their vicinity to avoid potential dangers.
- It is the responsibility of all riders to maintain appropriate control of their horse and to keep them out of kicking distance of other horses at all times.
- Riders must not pass or overtake another rider at a speed or in a manner which is likely to excite their horse.
- All gates should be left as they are found. Riders will always consider other user groups and respect private property.

## **Camping:**

- When a club camp takes place, a separate insurance premium may need to be organised.
- Where camping is available, all rules applicable to camping at that venue will apply. This applies to policies such as parking, horse accommodation, camp fires, the consumption of alcohol and manure collection.
- Where this information is not provided by the venue, the entry form will contain the relevant policies as applicable.
- An Incident Report Form will be available from the Camp Coordinator. The Camp Coordinator or Safety Officer will be responsible for ensuring the form is completed by the relevant parties when any incident deemed noteworthy by the Safety Officer takes place. The first aid kit and emergency contact details will be available in the camping area. An ambulance, vet or other emergency services agency will be contacted if the Camp Coordinator or another official considers it necessary.
- Horses must be securely accommodated in either portable steel yards or taped yards powered by an operational electric fence unit.
- Where gas/electricity is available, these must be stored appropriately, and all cables/pipes properly covered and/or fenced. Power leads must not cross roads or tracks.

## **Horse Accommodation:**

- Where horse accommodation (stables, yards etc) is provided, all rules applicable at that venue will apply. This applies to policies such as manure collection and cleaning of the facilities.
- Horse accommodation must be designed and constructed so as to minimise the risk of injury to horses and must have sufficient room to allow the horse to turn around and lie down.
- Potential hazards must be identified and addressed.
- During a MCDC event, stables or yards must only have one horse in the stable or yard at any time.
- Stables and yards must be cleaned appropriately prior to departure.

These conditions apply unless the MCDC Committee has given the competition/activity concerned a written exemption.

**Reviewed September 2021**