



RIDE ORGANISER'S HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

The enclosed guidelines are designed to assist those people/committees running SAERA/SAERA Affiliated Endurance Rides. They are based on the knowledge, experience and opinions of competitors over a number of years.

All affiliated rides must be conducted in accordance with the AERA Riding Rules. Copies of the AERA Members Handbook are available from the SAERA Membership Secretary.

Endurance Ride means a ride of 80 km or longer.

Training Ride means a ride of 40 – 60 km. **Training rides** over 60 km, but less than 80 km, must be sanctioned by the State Management Committee.

THE ORGANISERS

Rides can be run by an established group, a recognised Club or a group of enthusiasts who form a committee specifically to run a ride, any of which must be an incorporated body. Whichever the case, it is essential that there are sufficient people involved to carry out all the tasks required. Efficient organisation relies on an adequate number of reliable helpers. Local groups such as Country Fire Service (CFS), Catering groups or other horse clubs can be approached to assist in various aspects.

The following are some of the personnel required to run a ride:

1. Ride Veterinarians
2. Chief Steward
3. Course Coordinator
4. Ride Secretary
5. Time Keepers
6. Communications
7. TPR's
8. Vet Area Pencillers
9. Weigh-In Steward
10. Runners (between vet area and Secretary)

A brief description of the duties of the Ride Organiser and ride personnel is as follows:

1. Ride Veterinarians

All information pertaining to the veterinarian's responsibilities and authority and veterinary procedures are contained in the AERA Members Handbook.

The main responsibility of the Vet is to look after the horses throughout the ride. The Vet has the final say as to whether the horses may participate in, continue the ride or are vetted out. It is suggested that Ride Organisers book their rides at least three months in advance. The SAERA Vet Coordinator will then book a Vet from the SAERA Vet List, then advise the Ride Organiser, who may contact the vet prior to the event to finalise details, such as start times, vetting method etc. During the ride the Vet(s) should be supplied with meals and refreshments.

2. Chief Steward

The duties and responsibilities of the Chief Steward are outlined in the Administration section of the AERA Members Handbook.

Duties and responsibilities of the Ride Committee are outlined in the AERA Members Handbook, page 6.

3. Course Coordinator / Course Designer

The Course Coordinator is someone who has complete knowledge of the course that includes but is not limited to:

- Distances of each leg
- Check points
- Water, and
- Hazards on course.

They should organize vehicles to check the course for any arrows, which may have been stolen or fallen down, prior to the ride starting. A suggested time to check the course is about 2 hours before the start time. They should also organize an emergency horse float, which must be on standby to be able to pick up lame or injured horses.

It is suggested that the course be ridden, or driven, in the dark (for those parts that will be traversed by horses and riders in the dark) if possible to ensure arrows can be seen and are placed in the correct positions. Course marking should be undertaken by experienced people to ensure safety of horses and riders is paramount.

4. Ride Secretary

The Ride Secretary is the person, appointed by the ride committee, to be in charge of communications with SAERA and complete the necessary paperwork. They are responsible for all ride stationery, including:

- Training Ride Vet Cards
- Ride affiliation fees and insurance
- Membership forms and Master Sheets
- Chief Steward and Vet Report Sheets
- Best Conditioned Horse Sheets
- Ride entry forms
- Time sheets
- Weigh-In sheets

They will be in charge of taking entries for the ride and ensure that the riders satisfy entry requirements according to the AERA rules, recording all of the relevant details onto the master sheets. The Secretary must refuse entry by any rider in the 80km or longer event who is not in possession of a current membership card and log book. The Ride Secretary will complete the master sheets with information from the log books and vet cards throughout the ride.

When the ride is complete the evaluation sheet(s) for best-conditioned horses will be filled out with the details from the master sheets and handed to the Vet/Chief Steward prior to best-conditioned work outs.

The Ride Secretary may also arrange trophies for the ride (in consultation with SAERA as required) including:

- 1st to 3rd for each division
- Best Conditioned Horse awards
- Completion Prizes, and/or
- Draw prizes.

After the ride the Secretary must ensure the ride fees and day membership fees are paid to SAERA and submit a financial reconciliation sheet (for the Treasurer) and master sheets that are sent to the Pointscore Secretary.

5. Timekeepers

The Timekeeper's responsibility is to be in charge of filling out the time sheets and logbooks at the start and finish line. There is normally a tent or float set up at a position where the timekeepers have an uninterrupted view of the horses and riders coming and going.

The equipment needed for the tent or float includes:

- Tables and chairs
- Writing equipment
- Scales
- Time clocks

Clocks are used in conjunction with filling out time slips and the logbook, to write down arrival time, vet time and out time. It can be helpful to set one clock at the correct time, one clock a half an hour later (to indicate vet time) and a third clock one hour later (to indicate out time) when standard vetting time is used.

The timekeeper liaises with the Ride Secretary, who will help with the organisation of the logbooks and training ride vet cards that will be needed at the tent or float prior to the first horse completing the first leg of the endurance ride.

Timekeepers are needed at the start/finish line approx half an hour before the first horse and rider's anticipated time of arrival. The timekeepers fill in the hour, minute and second the horse arrives on the time slip. This time slip is handed to the riders by a helper and the times are filled out in the logbooks. Time keeping procedures will vary for gate-into-hold. Ride Secretaries should familiarize themselves with vet gate-into-hold procedures prior to the commencement of the event.

It is advisable to have two timekeepers to ensure correct times are recorded when incoming riders arrive in large numbers.

6. Communications

Effective communications for the ride are vital. Australian Citizen Radio Monitors (ACRM) are most commonly used at SAERA rides to monitor check points and provide feedback to the ride base. However, organisations such as SES or CFS may be approached to set up communications at the base and checkpoints for the ride.

Radio operators and checkpoint operators should be familiarized with check point positions to which they are allocated and with the area.

7. TPR (Temperature/Pulse/Respiration) Stewards

SAERA has a list of qualified TPR stewards. These people should be contacted prior to the ride to see if they are available, confirm times they can help, etc. During the course of the ride the TPR stewards should be supplied with refreshments and meals.

8. Pencillers

Vet Area Pencillers write up the metabolic parameters as encountered by the TPR Stewards and Vet(s). These people should be requested for pre-ride vetting (usually 2 – 5pm on the Saturday) and during the ride on Sunday.

These should be a corresponding penciller for each Steward and the vet should have his/her own penciller.

The penciller working with the vet should have the vet cards and logbooks in order of vetting. The penciller will fill in the logbook according to the Vet's instructions, making each record in black ballpoint pen.

9. Weigh-In Stewards

The Weigh-In Steward is required on the Saturday for entries and on the Sunday at the finish line. On the Saturday the role of the steward is to weigh all competitors so their weights can be recorded on the entry forms. These weights determine which division the rider is eligible to enter and will be recorded on master sheets and in log books.

On Sunday the riders' weights will be checked against the recorded ride entry weight during the course of the ride, to ensure that they stay within their correct weight division. Weighing in is usually done at the finish line. Junior riders do not need to weigh in during the ride, but must be weighed at the finish of the ride for Best Conditioned calculations.

10. Runners

Runners may be required to carry vet cards and log books from the finish line to the vet area. Once horses are checked by the vet the vet cards and logbooks are taken to the Secretary's office, for completion of the master sheets. Then they go again to the timekeeper(s) at the finish line.

VENUE

Criteria for a suitable venue includes:

- Large enough to accommodate 30-40 horse trucks/floats, and other vehicles, camping space and vetting area
- Ample water supply and sufficient toilet facilities
- A level area for the vetting, preferably fenced off
- A dry area, shed or similar for the secretary's office in the event of bad weather.

If these are not available, other arrangements need to be made, e.g. hire toilet(s), water tanks, tents etc.

COURSE

A clover leaf course is preferable for all concerned and then the vetting, strapping and camping can be managed in one central area. The course should avoid bitumen roads, particularly busy roads where possible. Most riders appreciate a balance of level going and hills.

The maximum length of any one leg is 50 km and there must be a vet check at the end of each leg. An average of the distances between **standard** vet check points must not be greater than 40km. For vet gate hold rides, there should be three legs with the last being the easiest. The course should be measured as accurately as possible. When a course leg is greater than 20kms, a check point must be positioned out on course.

There must be adequate water on all legs. If clean water is not naturally available on course it must be provided by the organizers at every 10kms and not further than every 15 kms. Hay is to be made available on course at water points especially when there is little or no natural food source on course (e.g. green "pick"). Lucerne hay is preferred.

COURSE MARKING

Please refer to SAERA Course Marking Policy (attached).

AFFILIATION REQUIREMENTS

Rides should be booked (on the nomination form) at least 3 months before the planned date and is subject to approval of the SAERA State Management Committee. The SAERA Vet/Chief Steward Coordinator will book a vet for your ride as soon as practicable.

ADVERTISING AND RIDE PROMOTION

Information should be provided to the SAERA Newsletter editor at least two months prior to the ride so that details can be included in the Newsletter.

PRIZES AND TROPHIES

“To Complete is To Win” is the endurance riders motto. The welfare of horses and the future of the sport depends on the majority of riders completing the ride, not winning.

Aim to recognise those riders who successfully complete the course within the allocated time and to the satisfaction of the vet. All completions should get the same award, if offered, regardless of placings, e.g. ribbon or small trophy. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes should be inscribed with the placing and year.

“Points Only” rides (No Frills) are permitted, but must be advertised as such, entry fees should reflect the fact that no prizes are offered.

A separate prize/trophy is to be awarded to Best Conditioned Horses. For the purpose of this award, Heavyweight and Middleweight divisions can be combined and Lightweight and Junior divisions can be combined. The trophies should be the prestige awards for the ride.

ENCOURAGEMENT AWARDS

Sashes or a common award, such as a mug are provided by SAERA for every endurance ride and training ride. These awards should be presented to riders who have successfully completed their ride and shown a high degree of sportsmanship or horsemanship. The recipients should be chosen by the Ride Committee and/or the Vet.

BEST CONDITIONED AWARDS

Best Conditioned Awards are usually calculated from the first five competitors in Middleweight/Heavyweight, Lightweight/Junior and Harness. Any alteration to this should be mentioned at the pre-ride briefing/course talk.

For rides of less than 160km it may be left to the discretion of the vet whether horses are paraded ridden or led for the Best Conditioned Award. Horses cannot be assessed for Best Conditioned until at least one hour after completion by all eligible horses. The Best Conditioned workout is best done with all eligible riders together for spectators.

Riders should be given adequate time to prepare and warm up their horse when notified of the Best Conditioned work out. For example, it is not acceptable to expect them to saddle up, warm up and be in the vetting ring in 15 minutes.

If a horse presented for consideration is lame, that horse is not eligible for the award, regardless of its score. Riders may withdraw from the Best Conditioned Award, but this should be discouraged without good reason.

At the Best Conditioned workout/parade the Vet will examine all horses presented and his score will be written in the appropriate section of the Best Conditioned Evaluation Sheet. It is at the Vet's discretion what workout is required, however, it must be the same for all horses.

VETTING

The vetting area should be roped off or isolated and well lit. It must be away from the start/finish line and other traffic. It should be quiet and preferably flat and clear for approximately 50 metres. Rough ground, potholes, stones etc should be avoided.

NO DOGS OR SMALL CHILDREN are allowed in the vetting area. The vetting area should be restricted to one horse and the minimum number of persons. The Vet may allow a stable mate horse to accompany the horse into the vetting ring if it is considered that this will assist the horse to show a true heart rate.

Pre-ride vetting occurs the afternoon preceding the ride, after entries have been taken. Accredited TPR Stewards will minimise hold ups.

Horses must remain at the ride base from the pre-ride check until after the Vet and Secretary sign off the horses log book at the completion of the ride. The Head Vet must check any horse in doubt. A partial refund of entry fee may be provided for horses that vet out at the pre-ride inspection. The amount of the refund is at the discretion of the Ride Committee.

WITHDRAWALS

All withdrawn horses must be presented to the Vet unless they are withdrawn after being vetted through and before commencing the next leg. Horses cannot be withdrawn prior to the 30-minute vet check. Horses withdrawn on course must be presented to the Vet as soon as practicable after returning to ride base. If on examination by the Vet, the horse is lame or not fit to continue, that horse is recorded as being vetted out. The reasons for all withdrawals and the condition of the horse must be recorded on the master sheets.

Failure to present the horse to the Vet is NOT a withdrawal. Failure to present the horse to the Vet will be recorded as a "Vet Out" and counts as a penalty against horse and rider under the Early Warning System and Suspensions Rule, Rule H18, AERA Members Handbook.

PRE RIDE BRIEFING

This is held the evening prior to the ride, once pre-ride vetting has been completed. All Novice Riders must attend the pre-ride briefing. Any rider nominated as a Pace Rider must be present at the pre-ride briefing.

The pre-ride briefing should include:

1. Identification of the Chief Steward
2. Identification of the Pace Rider (if applicable)
3. Start Times
4. Maximum and minimum times
5. Distance of legs
6. Colours of arrows on each leg
7. Location of water on course
8. Notable hazards, particularly for sections to be ridden in the dark
9. Gate etiquette and consideration of other riders
10. Awareness of any rider or horse experiencing difficulty (especially on longer rides)
11. Explanation of
 - procedures for vetting, weighing etc.
 - rider's responsibility to be on time
 - priority to be given to riders doing longer rides (vetting)
12. Reminder that dogs must be kept restrained and away from vetting ring
13. Ride contact telephone number (where service permits)

WEIGHT DIVISIONS AND WEIGH-IN

All Endurance Rides consist of the following divisions:

Heavyweight – 91kg and over all up riding weight

Middleweight – 73kg and up to 90.9kg all up riding weight

Lightweight – less than 73kg all up riding weight

Junior – 15 years or under in the year of the ride. Juniors under 10 years must be accompanied by an adult approved by the Ride Committee.

Harness – This can be offered if the course is suitable. Harness guidelines are in the Members Handbook.

All competitors must weigh-in at entry. The scales must be accurate. The scales must be set on a firm level surface and manned by a steward to record all weights. On the day of the ride the scales should be located near the finish line so riders can weigh with a minimum delay.

At the completion each leg, Heavyweight and Middleweight riders are required to demonstrate that they have maintained the minimum weight. All riders must weigh-in at the completion of the ride and these weights are used to calculate the weight scores for Best Conditioned Horse Awards.

STARTING TIMES AND TIME LIMITS

Ride start times are up to the Ride Organisers and will vary according to weather conditions, maximum ride times and other factors such as hazards on course. Training rides should not start in the dark. Many of these riders may be first time endurance riders.

Early starts are necessary for Endurance Rides to allow time to travel home after the ride. Presentations should be held at about 3pm. Riders who have traveled long distances appreciate an early ride start and reasonable time to travel home.

RECOMMENDED START TIMES

160km – Midnight

120km – 2am – 4am

80km – 5am – 6am

40m – 7am – 9am

Lead vehicles are recommended for night-time starts, especially where any potential hazards are early in the course or if there are points where riders could miss a turn-off. Safety lights/light sticks are available and are excellent for night sections, which are otherwise difficult to mark.

MAXIMUM RIDING TIMES

160km – 21 hours

120km – 14 hours

80km – 9 hours

40km – 5 hours

These times are based on an average course and can be extended with regard to the terrain and weather conditions. The setting of this time is at the Ride Committee's discretion but it must not be less than a time based on 10 km/h. Only riders who finish the course within these times can be considered to have completed.

SPECIFIED MINIMUM RIDING TIMES

These apply to all Novice Riders/Novice Horses and Training Riders. Again, the setting of these times is at the discretion of the Ride Committee but must be less than a time based on 14 km/h. In Endurance Rides Pace Riders may be used instead of a Specified Minimum Time for Novice Riders/Novice Horses.

Minimum times are as follows:

80km – 6 hours

40km – 3 hours

Minimum riding times should be set per leg. Both minimum and maximum times are based on riding time, i.e. time spent on course. Riders are considered to have started the ride/leg at the time they are due to start, not at the time that they leave base.

INSURANCE

All SAERA members are covered by Public Liability. Ride Committees do not have to arrange their own insurance. SAERA also has a Voluntary Workers Policy, which covers voluntary workers and helpers.

Day Membership Fees apply to non-SAERA members entering Training Rides. The Day Membership Form must be included with the Ride Stationery. Day Membership should only be used for a maximum of two training rides per year, after which the rider should become a SAERA Member and has a choice of becoming a full member or a training rider member.

All riders entering the Endurance Ride must be full financial members of SAERA and provide their membership card at entry.

RIDE SAFETY PROCEDURES

The Chief Steward must complete a Risk Management return and will be required to identify what local services and other authorities have been notified of the ride. The ride organizer should be aware of the requirements appropriate to the degree of hazard that the ride presents (e.g. distance from nearest hospital) and make appropriate arrangements in advance of the ride. For example, if it is necessary for the riders to cross a bitumen road, it may be necessary to contact the local Police and advise them.

Endurance riding is an invigorating and sometimes dangerous sport. Experienced and older riders must consider novice and younger riders and their horses. These considerations are most critical in the dark and every encouragement should be given to more experienced riders to 'buddy' someone who is new to the sport.

Check points on course are important and ensure that each rider has reached that point. If a horse or rider experience difficulties, assistance can be called from each checkpoint. Checkpoints are also useful in preventing cheating by short cuts.

Ride organizers should make every effort to have **at least 1 radio checkpoint** (2 or 3 is preferable) on each leg. If the terrain is difficult more checkpoints may be required.

All checkpoints should be in communication with the base, either directly or by relay, and should be aware of their position on course. If a rider arrives at a checkpoint either experiencing difficulties themselves or with a message from another rider in difficulty, base camp should be notified immediately so that assistance can be arranged. In this situation it is important that the radio operator at base is aware of their responsibilities, has access to maps of the area and knows the exact position of all checkpoints so that assistance can be swiftly and efficiently coordinated.

A mobile steward, in communication with the ride base may travel the course to deal with any problems arising on course.

A vehicle (4WD) and float must be available to collect any horse in distress.

St John Ambulance should be notified of the ride date and venue and it is useful to also inform the police of the ride. Ride base should have a radio or telephone contact with emergency authorities.

LOG BOOKS

All riders competing in Endurance Rides must have a log book for their horse. Riders without log books are only permitted to enter Training Rides.

Novice Horse log books are blue. The identification page must be filled in. Novice Horses or Novice Riders must be noted on the master sheets.

Endurance Horse log books are yellow. All Endurance Horses must have the identification page in the log book correctly completed and signed by a Vet or Log Book Secretary. If this identification has not been done the horse must compete under Novice Horse rules. If the horse has not successfully completed a ride of 80 km or over in the previous 13 months it must also comply with the Novice Horse rules for one ride.

At the time of entry, the log book is to have the ride details entered and is then returned to the rider. The rider takes this to the Vet for the pre-ride vetting. All log books are kept by the ride secretary once the horse has been vetted. This allows the details to be entered onto the master sheets prior to the ride.

As each rider completes each leg, the times are entered into the log book and the log book is handed to the rider. The rider then presents the horse and log book to the Vet. Once the vetting details are entered, the log books are then returned to the ride secretary for vetting details to be entered onto the master sheets.

Log books can only be returned once they have been signed off by the ride Secretary and the Head Vet. Log books are usually returned to competitors at the presentation of awards after the ride. Prior to presentations, the ride secretary should check all log books have been correctly filled in and signed.

The only personnel able to alter data entered in the log book are the Vet, Chief Steward, and Ride Secretary, who may correct data entered at the time, by drawing a line through and initialing. White-out is not to be used at any time.

Where vet cards are used (in Training Rides for horses without log books), the same procedure is followed. Where a horse with a log book is entered in a Training Ride, that log book must be used.

RIDE STATIONERY

It is important that organizers are familiar with the ride stationery and that it is correctly completed. The Ride Stationery should be forwarded two to three weeks prior to the ride. The organizers should familiarize themselves with the various forms at this stage and contact SAERA for clarification if necessary.

Entry forms – all entrants must complete the 'Entry and Indemnity Form'. Check the rider's membership number and the horse's log book number have been noted on the form. These forms should be kept by the organisers.

Master Sheets – These are the complete record of the ride. They must be correctly filled in, i.e.:

1. Novice Horses and Riders are noted
1. Membership numbers have been recorded for all riders
2. Start Times are recorded
3. Pre-ride weights and vetting details are recorded
4. Log book numbers are recorded for all horses
5. Reasons for vet/out withdrawal are recorded (including heart rates)
6. Maximum and minimum times are noted
7. Pace Rider noted (if used)
8. SAERA Encouragement Award Winners are noted

It is suggested that the master sheets are not written up until all entries have been taken, and that riders are listed by weight division. This will simplify the calculation of placings after the ride. These forms must be returned to the SAERA Point Score Secretary.

Time sheet – this assists with recording times. Rider numbers can be rapidly noted and then transcribed into log books. It does not need to be kept once the ride is completed.

Best Conditioned Evaluation – this format must be used for the calculation of Best Conditioned Horse. One form is used per section, i.e. one form for Heavyweight/Middleweight and one form for Lightweight/Junior and one form for Harness. All calculations should be completed by the Ride Secretary or Chief Steward except for sections 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4. These sections are to be completed by the Vet. Many of the details can be completed prior to all eligible horses completing the ride in order to save time. The weight score cannot be completed until all eligible horses have been vetted through. These forms should be returned to the SAERA Point Score Secretary.

Chief Stewards Ride Report – This form must be completed by the Chief Steward after the ride and should include details of any out of the ordinary incidents. If an invasive treatment or vet order form is used it must be noted. This form must be returned to the SAERA Point Score Secretary.

Ride Reconciliation – this is used to reconcile money collected at the ride. It must be completed and sent with the money to the SAERA Treasurer.

Unsuccessful competitors – This form lists all vet outs and withdrawals for the ride and must be completed and forwarded to the SAERA Point Score Secretary.

Point Score Sheets – These should be completed from the master sheets. One sheet is used per division, per ride (they are not used for Training Rides). Riders are listed in order of finishing. Interstate riders (i.e. non-SAERA members) should be included on these forms.

Invasive Treatment/Accident Form – This form is only required to be completed if a horse is treated by the Vet, i.e. after an injury, or if the Vet administers any invasive treatment, i.e. drips, drenches, injections etc.

Vet Order Form – These forms are available for the Vet to complete if it is felt that any horse should be prevented from competing or made to compete as a Novice, for up to 3 months. If they are used, one copy is given to the rider, one is sent to the SAERA Secretary and the third is retained by the Ride Secretary.

Risk Management Checklist – This form demonstrates that in the planning and preparation of the ride, all of the relevant agencies have been notified, and that risks have been assessed and adequate controls put in place.

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

Scales

Pens, paper, clipboards, paper clips

Table and chairs

Cash float for entries

Copy of ride rules/Member Handbook

Time keeping clocks

Rider numbers/bibs

Hats and ropes/stakes to mark out vetting and/or strapping area

Staple gun and staples (or similar) to mark the course

Fluids - IV

Vests for Chief Steward, Vet and other officials

Ride Stationery, vet cards, entry forms etc

Checklist for Rides

Name & Date of Proposed Ride

Venue (& Approval if required eg Forestry)

Ride Organiser

Ride Secretary Trailer to Venue

Vet

Assistant Vet (If required)

Course Marker & Signs to Ride Base

Ride Secretary

Chief Steward

Time Keeper/Asst Ride Sec

Weigh In Steward

Water (Ride Base & Course)

TPR (Sat PM)

TPR (Sat PM)

TPR (Sun AM)

TPR (Sun AM)

TPR (Sun PM)

TPR (Sun PM)

Volunteer catering

Communications

Toilet

Toilet Paper

Trophies/Prizes/Gifts for helpers

Catering

Rescue Float

First Aid Delegate (at base)

Certificate of Currency

Notification of event to: Police

Ambulance

Emergency Service s

SAERA's Role regarding Ride Officials etc:

SAERA is responsible for securing a Vet and Chief Steward for each proposed ride.
SAERA will also assist in securing a Ride Secretary, and TPR's if requested to do so by the Ride Organiser.

Distance & Pricing:

80km = \$90, 40km = \$25 members and \$50 non-members

Ride Times:

Pre vetting is usually between 2 and 5pm on Saturdays.

Recommended Start Times are as follows: 80km - 5am or 6am, 40km - 8am, 20km -10am