

Event Organisers Guide

8.1 - Serious Incident Management

Serious Injury of Horse and/or Athlete

Despite extensive efforts to continually review and address safety in our sport there will always be the potential for accidents to occur. Through Organisers and FEI Officials effective protocols have been established for managing such incidents when they occur.

The first priority is to ensure good standards of emergency **veterinary** and **medical** services have been put in place for the event. Next it is important to have screens and personnel to use in the event of a major accident to ensure maximum privacy while the Athlete and/or Horse is/are being attended to by the emergency services.

The serious incident protocols expect that all tasks that need to be carried out in the event of a serious incident be identified and allocated:

- Support Athlete connections (eg accompany to hospital)
- Support any volunteers / officials closely involved
- Investigate & collect information / statements to record incident (FEI Officials will help coordinate)
- Examine horse & tack – record (Vet Services Manager & FEI Chief Steward)
- Manage communications

In managing communications with press and the media in the event of a serious incident the aim should be to issue an initial holding statement, for example "The organisers are investigating the facts surrounding the incident. As soon as these are available, a full statement will be issued and a press conference held."

This may be followed up by intermediary statements such as:

"We can confirm that sadly a rider has suffered serious injuries. Further information will be released as soon as it becomes available.", or:

"We can confirm that sadly a horse has suffered serious injuries but no further information will be released until the owner has been informed."

A detailed statement should be issued at the earliest opportunity, but only once facts are known and relevant persons notified. The **FEI Communications team** are available to assist with the construction of this statement and to provide further support and advice.

Other Incidents

Organising Committees should carry out a risk assessment to determine the potential for and likelihood of other major incidents occurring which would disrupt the event. Such eventualities may include protests, field of play incursions, terrorism, significant climate events (typhoon, hurricane, flooding etc) and fire. Incident management and contingency plans should be drawn up accordingly,

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involving as appropriate local, regional and national agencies.

Further Resources

The FEI's generic Crisis (Serious) Incident Management Plan is available [here](#). Additionally there is a specific Eventing Serious Incident Management protocol which can be downloaded [here](#).

Any questions?

If you have any questions regarding organising FEI competitions or would like further advice not available through this guide please contact your [National Federation](#) or the relevant FEI department [here](#).

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