

Event Organisers Guide

4.7.2 - Facilities, Services & Conditions for Grooms

HAPPY GROOMS = HAPPY HORSES

Introduction

Grooms play a vital role in the equestrian competition community, often working the longest hours taking care and looking after the welfare of the Horses in their charge both at home and at the shows they attend. For this reason Organisers are asked to do everything possible to provide the best possible and most appropriate facilities, services and conditions for Grooms during their events.

The following guidance highlights key considerations for Organisers in creating an attractive working environment that looks after the welfare of the Grooms and recognises and respects the key part they play in protecting the welfare of the Horse and preparing both Horse and Athlete for competition.

Conditions for the Horses

The Grooms first consideration will be for their Horse/s. All stabling requirements are outlined in [FEI Veterinary Regulations](#) (Art. 1008). A well appointed and serviced stables area is of greatest importance and essential for the welfare of the horse. Some important considerations are:

- A safe environment for both Horses and humans
- Clean and disinfected stables well constructed of high quality materials
- Adequate space for equipment and aisles wide enough to allow safe movement of the Horses and people
- Comfortable temperature in the stables and for outdoor events everything should be done to avoid poor climatic conditions
- A suitable area for (un)loading Horses and assistance provided to Grooms (un)loading equipment.
- Adequate lighting and safe electrical points

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- Good quality Horse bedding and hay
- Horse wash down facilities and sufficient water taps throughout stables area
- Stable are should be well secured and access controlled as defined in [FEI Veterinary Regulations](#) (Arts. 1008.13-16, 1009)

Further information in [section 3.1](#) (Venue & Facilities) and [section 4.7](#) (General Event Management & Operations).

Grooms Accommodation

In many cases Grooms will stay in their Horse lorries/transporters. In this instance ideally parking for these should be as close as possible to the stables with electric hook-ups made available.

If accommodation is provided this should preferably be on a single occupancy basis unless Grooms are given the opportunity to share with friends/colleagues/fellow team Grooms. If this accommodation is not on or very near to the venue then the Organiser should provide shuttle transport operating throughout the stables opening period each day.

Toilet & Shower Facilities

Sufficient, clean and well-maintained toilets must be provided, as should showers when Grooms are staying on-site. These facilities should be close to the stables area and/or lorry parking as appropriate.

Catering

Food for Grooms must be readily available, healthy (eg. including salads) and varied, with any meal service being at appropriate times according to the show/competition timetable ie. not only during key competitions. Food, including 'grab and go' meal options and snacks, should be available close to the stables areas. If possible Organisers should consider providing food free of charge for Grooms. However if this is not possible at least provision of water and tea/coffee is strongly encouraged.

If the tap water is drinkable, provision can be made for cups or refillable bottles and efforts made to ensure the Grooms are aware the water is safe to drink.

Where appropriate Organisers might consider making available a lounge area where Grooms can relax, rest and eat. This could include a microwave to enable Grooms to heat their own or provided re-heatable food.

These key considerations are highlighted by the following comments received from Grooms as part of a survey carried out by the [International Grooms Association](#) into Grooms catering provision at shows:

"Often the food is incredibly expensive at international shows and the food that is available at non-meal times when grooms have a spare five minutes is insufficient."

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"Their catering tent was on the way to the rings, always had hot coffee and tea as well as donuts and fruit, all for free. This is a spring show that's always cold so having these hot drinks right there was so helpful."

"They (the Organiser) work with a point system. So if you have no time for breakfast you could do early lunch and a late lunch instead. The food tent is open the whole day from 0600 to 2000."

"At xxxxx the food is very close to stables with long opening hours to find a slot to grab a bite between training times, competitions."

"Sometimes grooms just don't stop from 6am to 10pm and we can be sick for never stopping (headache, vomiting, shaking) so a little something close by the stable is really helpful."

"Having water and coffee makes a big difference. Food outlets charge so much for drinks at shows."

Show & Competition Information

Grooms should be well informed and updated about the show programme/timetable, startlists, any important telephone numbers/contacts and other general/stables information relating to their work. Messaging groups and event apps can be useful tools in this respect.

Groom Recognition

Any other initiatives to support and recognise Grooms will be much appreciated. This can include, for example, naming Grooms on competition start and results lists and involvement in prize-givings.

Further Advice

The [International Grooms Association](#) supports members throughout their career as a Groom, providing support, advice and education to all working in the industry and to speak up on the issues that matter and that can be positively impacted through the FEI and international show Organisers.

Further supplementing the advice and guidance on this page, the IGA have produced a booklet - '[The Dream Show](#)'. It includes many ideas and initiatives that Organisers can consider in seeking to provide even better facilities and conditions for Grooms. The guide can be accessed [here](#).

The IGA are happy to be available to Organisers seeking further advice and guidance on providing the best possible facilities, services and conditions for Grooms at their shows. Please contact contact@internationalgrooms.org.

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