



Guidance for EU Member State National federations during transition phase of Regulation (EC) 504/2008

Lausanne, May 2011

Reference: Issuing FEI Passports and Recognition Cards post European Regulation (EC) 504/2008

Dear European Union National Federation,

Horses competing in international equestrian sport under the auspices of the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI) have travelled either under a full FEI Passport ("FEI Passport") or an identification document which has been recognised by the FEI as compliant with FEI requirements and to which an FEI Recognition Card has been applied (to an "FEI recognised Passport", see FEI Veterinary Regulations).

This approach has allowed government officials to identify equines moving across borders in order to compete. These documents have also provided a means of maintaining the integrity in equestrian sport by ensuring that a horse competing at an event is indeed the one that is entered, that its presence has been officially recorded, that required vaccinations or disease testing records can be clearly linked to a horse presented to FEI officials, and that if doping and medication controls are undertaken, that the horse being tested is the correct one.

This system has provided a level of confidence in the FEI registered horse across the world, and it has also allowed it to benefit from a particular status of "registered horse" within EU legislation, enabling the movement of such horses and their traceability.

In order to have a similar ability to identify all horses within the European Union, the European Commission introduced Regulation (EC) No 504/2008. The intention of this regulation was to partly establish an identification document and recording system that ensured that horses which were not appropriate to enter the human food chain, did not do so. A special section (Section IX) establishes whether the horse is intended for eventual human consumption or not. The intention was also over time to link identification documents with national issuing bodies, entering relevant identification information such as identification numbers and microchips etc into centralised databases. Regulation (EC) 504/2008 therefore lays down criteria for national passport issuing bodies to issue national identification documents (passports) which meet the intent of the EU. Such national passports are termed "EU compliant." National Federations within the EU have been made aware of the implications of this regulation for some time now, and their governments may have been working with them to explain these implications.

The introduction of any such regulation was expected to be accompanied by a required period of transition. However during this transition period it has been



Guidance for EU Member State National federations during transition phase of Regulation (EC) 504/2008

apparent that implementation on a national level by member states has been undertaken according to a variety of timescales, and with a variety of approaches. This lack of a standardised approach has meant that it has been very difficult to issue simple guidance to National Federations that could apply across all member states. For example, FEI passports not being national, whilst meeting much of the criteria of Regulation (EC) 504/2008, cannot be termed "EU compliant national passports". However if a member state did not have a suitable "EU compliant national passport" agreed, there was little option available but to issue an FEI Passport to an FEI registered horse so that it could compete. The intention had always been that once "national EU compliant passports" became a requirement, they would be eligible for an FEI recognition card as all such Regulation (EC) 504/2008 compliant passports would be of a standard to be recognised by the FEI as a suitable identification document.

The attached Q&As explain the approach to be taken by NFs during this transition period. They have been agreed with EU Commission Officials and are distributed to National Federations at a time when clarification will be effective. Further updates may be required to be issued over time during the transition period.

Your attention is drawn to the following key points.

- The practice of issuing of a new FEI Passport to horses that have never had an FEI passport before and which are permanently residing in a EU Member State **must cease immediately**.
- Horses, which already have an FEI passport, may continue to use it until it expires and may continue to revalidate it without any issue as long as it has been continually revalidated without interruption. If it is not revalidated every 4 years (so it expires) **without gaps**, then it cannot be used or renewed, and a nationally compliant EU passport must be applied for, which in turn must have an FEI Recognition Card in order to allow the horse to take part in FEI competitions. EU legislation requires that any horse in the EU has a clear statement regarding whether the horse will enter the human food chain by the means of the insertion the language of Section IX.
- **National Federations have a vital role to play to ensure that confidence in all FEI identification documents is maintained by government and EU authorities.** This is particularly important as the use of an FEI recognition card secures "Registered Horses Status" that allows the movement of our horses according to a different set of criteria from other "non-registered horse" types. **Therefore National Federations must satisfy themselves that**



Guidance for EU Member State National federations during transition phase of Regulation (EC) 504/2008

- That any EU compliant passport presented meets the criteria of Regulation (EC) 504/2008, even if posted by their Government on the EU website that contains all such compliant issuing bodies. **If the NF is not satisfied** that the standards have been met, then they must not issue a recognition card for that particular national passport until such time as they are satisfied that the standards have been met
- **To the best of their ability National Federations must be confident that any horse, which has applied for an FEI recognition card, meets the requirements for receiving one. For example, it is extremely important that the issuing NF is satisfied that the horse is going to participate in future FEI events.**
- **NFs must also ensure that any horse permanently resident in the EU, must have a completed Section IX (see above)**

It is vital to maintain the confidence of government authorities that an FEI Recognition Card is only issued for the purpose for which it was intended. This means that the FEI Recognition Card must remain a means of facilitating transportation of high quality international level horses across borders for the purpose of taking part in international competitions, and not for any other purpose, such as circumventing non registered horse legislation.

If you have any further queries about the above Guidance and attached Q&A during this period of transition, please contact myself at Graeme.cooke@fei.org or Mariama.Bangura@fei.org, or Laurianne.Cordey@fei.org .

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Graeme Cooke', is positioned above the typed name.

Graeme Cooke
FEI Veterinary Department