

## **IAEJ Guidelines and Checklist for Media Operations at Equestrian Events**

### **Press Service**

The Press Service should be operating according to the size/significance of the event and not later than six months prior to the event.

### **Press Officer**

The Press Officer has a key role to play in the organisation of an event. He / she has a good knowledge and understanding of horsesport and media operations in general. He / she is in charge of the press office and has clear recognition within the Organising Committee by being part of the core team.

The main role of the Press Officer and his/her staff is to ensure the smooth running of the press office and related services and provide information, before, during and after the event in a proactive way. An active media information policy, where news is spontaneously and systematically offered, is the best service that can be offered to the media.

Supporting staff: depending on the number of accredited journalists, sufficient additional staff should be available (e.g. to ensure that the necessary copies of results and starting lists are made, the working space is tidy and clean, to accompany journalists to the media stands if needed, etc.)

### **Accreditation**

All members of the media should be clearly identified; therefore a proper accreditation system needs to be put in place.

The accreditation process shall start six months prior to the event and all media shall be accredited before the event starts. This will allow the Press Officer to determine the size of the Press Centre and prepare adequate facilities. The Press Officer needs to pay full attention on the acceptance of accreditation requests and only grant accreditation to professional members of the media.

At any event, regardless the level of importance, press accreditation shall give access to the following areas: press centre; press stand; training areas; catering areas (including non-public catering services, when applicable); mixed zone or Competitors stand

In accordance with FEI Regulations, press accreditations do not give access to the stabling area. Generally press accreditation does not give access to the field of play, with the exception of accredited photographers wearing special identification (bibs, armllets), or when special activities for the media are organised, such as course walks.

### **Press Conferences**

A press conference shall be organised when there is a need for it and important news needs to be communicated to the media. If the news does not require direct interaction between the organisation and the media, there is no need of a press conference. The subject and main points on the agenda of the press conference, as well as the main speakers shall be communicated to the media in advance.

#### *Running order*

The Press Officer shall conduct the press conference according to the following basic running order:

- Presentation of the table
- Announcement of results of the competition (top of the leader board), and updated standings if the competition is part of a series
- Short comment on the competition (number of starters, number of spectators, any relevant information).
- Press Officer asks the first open question to the interviewed person ("how do you feel," what is your opinion on," etc.)
- Q&A (Q&A shall be controlled by the Press Officer, who shall invite one media representative at a time.)
- Thank the guests on stage and to the audience, misc. announcement (programme of the next day, etc.)

### **Facilities**

#### *Press Centre*

A standard press centre is composed of the following areas:

- **Public areas:** welcome desk; safe/storage area; press working area; photo working area; an information area (pigeon holes/trays with starting lists, results etc.); press conference area;
- **Private areas:** press officer's office; photo manager's office; webmaster's office; editorial staff working space;

#### *Work stations*

The working space shall be minimum 1 metre per person, one electrical plug per position. Photographers need a working space, preferably in a dedicated area.

#### *Telecommunication system*

In case a payphone system is installed detailed invoices shall be made available. Phone calls can either be free of charge or charged to the user, but rates shall not be overtaxed and communicated in advance to the accredited media. Free of charge wireless capability is preferred.

#### *Press Conference Room*



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According to the importance of the event and the press attendance, the press conference shall be held either as a formal conference with a moderator, or as an informal briefing between the interviews and the press.

A press conference room is most of the time arranged in theatre style, with a podium for the speakers. The number of seats shall be relative to the number of accredited press (approx. 1 seat every 5 accredited press).

Podium: essential: tables, chairs, water / preferable: tablecloth, name plates, backdrop, decoration.

Audio: speakers, microphones, audio outputs for TV and radio

TV: platform at least 30 cm high, 1 metre wide, positioned opposite the stage at the end of the room

### *Press Stand*

The press needs adequate space to watch and follow the competitions and take notes for their reports.

The press tribune shall be clearly identified and only accessible to accredited media and authorised personnel. A member of the press staff should be assigned to service this area.

Essential: reserved tribune; good view on the field of play; separate area from the public, not far from the mixed zone; entrance control, security. Preferable: tabled seats; electrical outlets; telephone/modem connection; monitors.

### *Press Parking*

Parking should include a reserved area for the accredited press located at a reasonable distance from the showground and press centre.

## **PRESS INFORMATION**

A constant flow of information regarding the event should be provided to the press before and during the event. According to the press mailing list, press releases and/or newsletters should be circulated via e-mail and the official website of the event. A press kit containing useful information such as programme of the show, entries, nationalities represented, prize money by class, history of the show, interview / presentation of key officials such as show president, show director, course designer, famous riders, side events such as charity actions, list of sponsors should be sent two months before the event. During the event, information should be provided through the distribution of: press releases, newsletters, flash quotes, press conferences. All information produced on site shall be made available to the non-attending media via fax, e-mail and the website.

Information should include:

Before the event: press kit; accreditation system; travel and accommodation details, car pass; timetable and general information about the event; list of participating nations/competitors; key contacts

During the event: biographies of the competitors; past winners of the event; venue: fact and figures; detailed schedule of the event, including press conferences and other activities for the press (guided course walks, stable visits, tours, forums, parties, etc.); sport description (for non-specialised media); starting lists; course plans; results; press releases.

Please note updated biographies of international competitors are available on the FEI website [www.horsesport.org](http://www.horsesport.org).

## **PHOTOGRAPHERS**

Photographers are key members of the media. Due to the nature of their activity, there are specific requirements which should be met to allow them to work effectively.

### General requirements

- Accredited photographers have priority in the allocation of lockers for storage of their equipment, as well as for parking spaces.
- A separate working area for photographers should be set up in the Press Centre
- It is important that a Photo Manager is appointed to liaise with photographers and ensure that all requirements are met.
- There shall be a dress code for photographers if the event is televised

### Identification

All accredited photographers must be provided with a special identification (armlet, bib). This identification is clearly different from other badges and must be communicated to security personnel and technical officials. Bibs are to be numbered and recipients registered. A cash deposit might be asked to ensure return of the bib at the end of the event.

### Photo positions

Positioning of the photographers during all phases of the event should be planned in advance by the Press Officer and the Photo Manager, and agreed with the technical officials. Position of TV cameras need to be taken into account while planning photographers' positions. TV has priority. Photo positions must be planned at a very early stage so that tickets are not sold to seats just behind the area. Photo positions might be either a defined area next to the competition arena, or a smaller clearly marked and roped-off zone with controlled access in the field of play. In the event of a lack of space either around the arena or inside, photographers should be allowed to shoot from the press stand.

**Jumping:** photo positions shall be organised inside the ring. Photographers should not leave the ring during the competition; they can however change position in between competitors. If there are too many accredited photographers, a rotation system will have to be arranged. The pockets should be placed so that riders can be photographed from the left and from the right. In addition, the photographers should have access to the arena at least at two of the four sides.

#### Lighting

It should be noted that photographers need more light in an indoor arena than what is required by TV (1000 lux). Photographers need 1200 lux in order to deliver optimal quality pictures.

### **CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

There are four basic types of crisis that can occur during an equestrian competition. They are:

1. Competition related problem. i.e. major horse/rider/spectator accident
2. Veterinary / judicial related problem. i.e. abuse
3. Discipline related problem i.e. competition rules or conditions
4. General organisational problem. i.e. transport, access, electrical breakdown etc.

The Press Officer should always be involved in the crisis management team. The persons within the Organising Committee who are authorised to comment on the incident/accident shall be clearly identified and a detailed plan of action should be agreed in advance.

A press statement shall be transmitted to the press as soon as the exact circumstances and plan of action have been decided. In the meanwhile, the Press Officer shall be in charge of the initial response or holding statement to the press:

*"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."*

Replies, either written or verbal, should be brief, calm, objective, clear and factual.

The complete document of the FEI Crisis Management Plan is available from the FEI.