

EQUINE CATASTROPHE - EXPLANATORY NOTES

Please read these explanatory notes prior to an equine euthanasia.

1. An equine catastrophe occurs when either;
 - a) An equine dies without veterinary intervention at an Endurance event or
 - b) An equine is euthanased at an Endurance event or
 - c) An equine dies without veterinary intervention or is euthanased subsequent to an Endurance event at which the injury or metabolic condition initially manifested itself.
2. Where an equine death occurs pursuant to clause 1 above the Chief Steward shall ensure the following occur.
 - a) The treating veterinarian(s) and the Responsible member of the horse are given copies of this *Form 15 Explanatory Notes* prior to the act of euthanasia.
 - b) That *Form 22 Consent to Equine Euthanasia* (if appropriate) is completed by the Responsible member prior to euthanasia and retained by the Chief Steward.
 - c) That *Form 23 Equine Catastrophe – Veterinarian Report* is completed by the treating veterinarian and retained by the Chief Steward.
 - d) That *Form 24 Equine Catastrophe - Chief Steward Report* is completed.
 - e) That *Form 2 – Invasive Treatment Non Metabolic – Rider* or *Form 3 Invasive Treatment Metabolic – Rider* is completed as appropriate and retained by the Chief Steward.
 - f) The Chief Steward shall forward to the Division Secretary within 28 days of the event, Forms 22, 23, 24 and either Form 2 or Form 3 as applicable plus the horse's logbook.
 - g) That the Chief Steward verbally notify the relevant Division President or Secretary within 48 hours of the equine death.
3. In summary, the rules of the AERA Inc. regarding an equine death are as follows.
 - a) If euthanasia or a horse death is likely, the Chief Steward must be informed and consulted by the treating veterinarian(s).
 - b) If euthanasia is to be performed, the treating veterinarian should – wherever possible – have a second veterinarian consult on the case - ideally the head veterinarian. In the event that this is not possible, another AERA Inc. accredited veterinarian or an associate veterinarian may be consulted, depending on the make-up and number of the veterinary team.
 - c) Prior to the equine being euthanased the following must be undertaken:
 - i. A suitable place designated for euthanasia, possible post mortem and disposal must be determined.
 - ii. Form 22 must be completed by Person Responsible for the horse;
 - iii. Form 23 must be completed recording the clinical signs and parameters that led to the decision to euthanise;
 - d) An equine death will usually be classified as either:
 - i. Accidental-type death.
[Due to trauma or some pre-existing problem that has reappeared under exercise conditions].
 - ii. Metabolic-type death.
[These are the cases about which we know little and gross pathology may be quite normal. In these cases thorough collection of samples for histopathology is most important].
 - e) In the event of any equine death, in principle, a necropsy should be conducted. Prior to any necropsy being performed, the veterinarian shall consider whether the death is an accidental type death or a metabolic type death as discussed in 3(d) above. Should the circumstances dictate that a necropsy should be considered then the treating veterinarian shall undertake a risk assessment to establish whether the procedure can be conducted without presenting an unacceptable risk to human or animal health and well-being. In particular, the risk of zoonotic disease must be assessed.
 - f) If the risk assessment indicates that an unacceptable risk is present, the necropsy must not be conducted. In this case, the veterinarian shall complete Form 23 as comprehensively as possible, detailing the clinical condition of the horse and any diagnosis made.
 - g) Where the risk assessment indicates that a necropsy is able to be conducted, the following procedures shall be followed;
 - i. pre-euthanasia blood samples should be collected if possible and submitted to a recognised laboratory for histopathology, hematology and metabolic profile;
 - ii. all observations at the necropsy must be accurately recorded;
 - iii. samples should be taken from target organs as appropriate to the circumstances;
 - iv. Form 23 must be completed.
 - h) The veterinarians shall pass all costs for the drugs, treatment and euthanasia to the Responsible member of the horse. All costs relating to the necropsy are to be passed to the AERA Inc.