



February 13, 2019

Dear USEF Leadership,

During the recent United Professional Horsemen's Association ("UPHA") Annual Conference, representatives from several Show Horse Organizations met and ultimately formed the "Joint Leadership Council". This Council consists of representatives appointed by the Boards of Directors from the American Hackney Horse Society, American Morgan Horse Association, American Road Horse and Pony Association, American Saddlebred Horse Association and the UPHA.

The members of the Joint Leadership Council are seeking to strengthen, improve and enhance the relationships between USEF and its Breed Affiliates. It is the desire of this Council to make the relationships as good as they can be for the benefit of growing our respective Breeds and in turn, benefit the USEF.

This Council has evaluated, reviewed and determined that there is a wide range of issues that are areas of concern to our respective memberships, as well as an underlying image problem of USEF that exists amongst our collective memberships. Thus, we would like to offer some possible remedies that we believe would provide mutually beneficial results to all parties. We hope that USEF leadership will find the following proposals to be both reasonable and in the best interest of equestrian sport, and we feel that the acceptance of these would be gladly welcomed by our memberships.

Outlined below are areas of concern where we would appreciate and welcome your consideration:

1. **The National Breeds and Disciplines Council** - We support a bylaw change to increase the representation of trotting breeds on the Council.
2. **Licensed Officials Committee** - We feel that our breeds are not adequately represented on the Licensed Officials Committee. We propose that at least one additional seat be reserved to represent our collective memberships in the future. Additionally, we propose that USEF provide funding to bridge the gap as our affiliates assume the responsibility for educating judges. Judges' education is a tremendous responsibility, and was previously seen as a benefit of USEF membership by the affiliates. Since USEF made the decision to cease providing judges' education, we ask that it assist with funding as we make the transition.

3. **Drugs and Medications Rules** – The Horsemen in our respective Breeds have long argued (at least since the days of John Lengel running the D & M program) for therapeutic use of tranquilizer in transporting horses and clipping young horses. To deny that tranquilizing a horse during transport or clipping that may injure itself, other horses and/or human handlers is in fact therapeutic defies common sense. We do understand the difficulty in discerning relatively small amounts of tranquilizer given close to the time of an event from relatively larger amounts given a longer time from the event, and also understand that in some disciplines and breeds the use of tranquilizer is seen to provide a competitive advantage. Thus, we are reviewing and planning to work closely with Dr. Steve Schumacher (Veterinary Committee) on a solution we believe is clearly in the best interest of equine welfare and embraces the commitment to maintain a level playing field for all exhibitors.

4. **USEF's SafeSport Policy** – While we understand the ramifications of the federal law that created the US Center for SafeSport, and certainly have no tolerance for sexual misconduct in our sport, the fact is that most of our members see requiring adult amateur hobbyists who compete at a non-Olympic level to take the SafeSport training as an unnecessary barrier to participation. A large number of our members have noted that other NGBs offer and provide SafeSport training, and encourage their amateur hobbyist members to take it, but do not mandate that they do so as a pre-condition for membership. We request that USEF take our memberships' concerns seriously and communicate any possible changes or modifications of the rule to us. Additionally, we believe the ability to take the training as a written test, as well as in Spanish, would be welcomed by more members than USEF and SafeSport can realize. It is our further hope that USEF, as our NGB, will continue to advocate for more transparency and a more robust hearing process from the SafeSport Center. We encourage USEF to reach out to other NGB's of SafeSport to determine if any share similar concern(s) in regard to the SafeSport Investigation and Hearing Process. If other NGBs share similar concern then it is suggested that USEF and other such NGBs jointly address such with the SafeSport Center and seek possible revision and improvement to the process.

5. **USEF Recognized Horse Shows vs. Non Recognized Horse Shows** - It is not a secret that an increasingly high percentage of our shows feel the costs and requirements of affiliating with USEF outweigh the benefits. While we believe the Competition Lite program is a significant positive step, we see the lack of governmental oversight and rules enforcement for shows as a serious problem for our breeds. To address this concern, Joint Leadership Council members will conduct public forums at spring shows in every region of the country, and we invite USEF officials to participate in as many as possible.

Additionally, any assistance in the form of materials, information and/or suggestions from USEF would be greatly appreciated to assist this Council in regard to such Forums. While we plan to note the benefits of USEF membership and affiliation to our owners, exhibitors, trainers, competition managers and secretaries, we plan to spend the majority of our time answering our members' questions, listening to their concerns, and asking for their ideas as to how all of our organizations can better serve our members and promote our sport.

We appreciate the importance of the relationships between USEF and its Breed Affiliates. Your consideration of our proposals is greatly appreciated and we sincerely believe that they will provide long lasting benefits to all. We look forward to working with USEF to better promote our sport as well as the safety and welfare of our beloved horses.

Sincerely Yours,

Joint Leadership Council

American Hackney Horse Society
American Morgan Horse Association
American Road Horse and Pony Association
American Saddlebred Horse Association
United Professional Horsemen's Association