

Lead Body for British Performance Sport Horses and Ponies (PSHP) Update Meeting

**16 November 2007
BHS Boardroom, Stoneleigh Deer Park**

Introduction

Further to the last open meeting on 7 June 2007, the PSHP Steering Group have been developing the ideas suggested and presented them back to interested parties today to seek their views.

Presentations

Graham Suggett, BEF Director of Equine Development, introduced the session, providing an overview of the steps taken to arrive at this point, and welcomed those in attendance. Graham thanked the Steering Group for their tireless efforts in developing this project.

Jan Rogers, BEF Head of Equine Development, delivered the update presentation which can be found at www.bef.co.uk in the *British Breeding/Lead Body Process* section.

Celia Clarke, Steering Group member, delivered a presentation on The British Breeder magazine to complement and support the PSHP membership organisation and showed the group some mock-ups of the design. It was felt that a lower resolution PDF version should be produced for uploading onto websites. This was agreed.

It was felt that both the PSHP promotional flyer and the magazine editorial should be written in plain English. This was agreed.

Logo designs

The audience preferred the logos top left and bottom left on page 20 of the update presentation. No one present thought that either logo was unacceptable. The Steering Group will discuss which they feel is the most appropriate and they will commission this logo for use. Please see these logos in the slide presentation which can be found at www.bef.co.uk in the *British Breeding/Lead Body Process* section.

Feedback session

Lynne Crowden, Steering Group interim chairman, chaired the feedback and discussion session where the following points were raised:

David Clark – Trakehners UK

Applauded rapid progress in the development of this Body. David asked for a list of benefits to justify the £5 foal levy proposed. It was explained to the audience that if individual breeders were to join PSHP in their own right, the £5 foal levy for studbooks would be waived thus there is an incentive for studbooks to encourage breeders to become individual members.

Lynda Lodge – BSPA

Congratulated the Group on its progress. Asked how comparability would be facilitated between gradings when daughter studbooks were not in a position to make any alteration to systems.

John Shenfield, Steering Group member

Briefly outlined the proposal to classify gradings, performance tests and evaluations into nominal groups, the workability of which will be discussed at the proposed regional roadshows. The idea is not to mandate that any studbook's systems are altered but to compare systems and share learning whilst making the results more comprehensible for the sport horse and pony breeder and buyer in order that more people will grade their stock because the process is more readily understood and less intimidating. John reiterated that the use of UELNs is crucial in all situations

Celia Clarke

Stated that PSHP will empower grass roots breeders to engage with British studbooks to provide the services that they are looking for

David Clark – Trakehners UK

David hoped that British bred, trained and ridden horses could be classified meaningfully using such terms as “elite” and “premium”, irrespective of studbook of origin, to assist with international promotion. The planned PSHP ‘kitemark’ is proposed to encompass certain values and qualities along these lines, responded Lynne Crowden.

Mark Shaw, Steering Group member

Stated that this may help redeem the current pattern of British breeders registering horses abroad because it is seen to increase their value because the horses are better marketed. Lynne Crowden added that PSHP will help shape the culture of British breeding to become more strident in its self promotion and more subtle in its marketing

Michelle Thompson – breeder, via Celia Clarke

It was raised that the ‘kitemark’ could work in conjunction with existing BQM stud standards whereby a consistent ID number is used to identify that stud and the youngstock it produces

Edith Rutherford - breeder

Raised a cautionary note regarding legal standing of the ‘kitemark’ if it constitutes an implied warranty. The precise nature of the ‘kitemark’ needs to be explored in detail and clearly defined

Lady Vestey - WPCS

Keen to seek the support of WPCS for PSHP because many top performance sport horses and ponies have Welsh origins. Lady Vestey also expressed concerns regarding height certificates for FEI ponies. It was suggested that PSHP members discuss this at the regional roadshows and bring their collective views to the attention of the appropriate organisation which may be the Showing Council, as suggested by Pat Campbell

Kate Robbins – BSJA

Kate made the link between continental and British cars, the former being more desirable. The same preference exists for horses. Lynne Crowden stated that prestige car marques were typically British and we needed to develop this parallel

Marion Eydmann – SHBGB

Marion affirmed that SHBGB would do their best to meet the needs of their breeders by promoting them but the organisation needs feedback from breeders as to what their requirements are. It seems that PSHP is just the mechanism to achieve this two way communication

Michelle Thompson via Celia Clarke

There is a missing link between the best young horses and the best producers and riders which needs to be bridged and this mechanism could be developed by PSHP as a body which will seek to involve all people in the young horse development chain to formalise some processes

David Clark – Trakehners UK

David reiterated one of the Functions of PSHP – the accurate and complete recording of pedigree in competition programmes

Lynda Lodge – BSPA and Lady Vestey – WPCS

Began a debate as to the definition of British bred stating that it should include only horses of British parentage. This will continue to be debated but, essentially, if the most successful bloodlines in sports horse and pony breeding come from abroad our industry could be remiss in excluding these from the national herd and British breeding is defined as where the breeding decision was made and where the foal was born and where the revenue from the eventual sale of that horse will land. Mark Shaw added that successful ponies are often of British origin whereas horses could benefit from the performance capacity of overseas bloodlines. It is important that a distinction is retained between British bred and British breeds.

Catherine Burdock – SHBGB

Felt that PSHP could be of considerable assistance in explaining and simplifying EU Directives which is readily achievable through the BEF. Graham Suggett said that he did this regularly for BEF and saw no reason why the notes he produced could not be circulated more widely.

Lynda Lodge – BSPA

Made a point about considerable investment already having been made by studbooks in NED and wishing this to be recognised. Likewise SHBGB. The point is noted for the record. Linda also asked for a clear definition of a performance/sport horse. This is typically classified as a horse which participates in an international or Olympic performance or discipline. It will be the subject of further debate and a formalised definition will be decided upon. Linda also raised the matter of overseas studbooks coming into other countries to grade horses leaving few benefits for the country in which the horse was bred. John Shenfield outlined a similar discussion which was heard at the WBFSH General Assembly and added that such situations should be handled cooperatively rather than confrontationally

Lady Vestey – WPCS

Suggested that focus on the proposed 'kitemark' should revolve around conformation and temperament. The point is noted. Lady Vestey also endorsed the concept of regional roadshows and stated that education would and should be one of the core functions of PSHP

John Shenfield

John stated that the British breeding sector was populated largely by amateur people who were often informed breeders who could start horses but could not produce them. In other words, there is a big break in the chain from three years old and the BEF's mandate to produce the Long Term Equine Development process should consider this as priority. This will be the case, in conjunction with the recommendations of PSHP. The riders present at the meeting implored breeders to think of what their requirements may be when undertaking breeding decisions

Mary Wilson, Steering Group member
Suggested a concept of PSHP patrons

Lynne Crowden

Suggested absorbing learning from other countries, adopting their best practices which have a cultural fit with Britain, disregarding the remainder, adding our own ideas and developing our own body of work in the Lead Body process.

Lynne Crowden brought the lively and informative discussion to a close by thanking all who had participated and asked if those present were prepared to give a mandate for the Lead Body to progress as updated in the slide show today.

Pat Campbell proposed and Edith Rutherford seconded such a proposition which was supported by a unanimous show of hands with no abstentions.

The BEF were thanked for funding the Lead Body process to date and facilitating the consultation.