

Hi Sonia,

Fantastic that your club is planning for future FEI rides. This was one of our objectives in supporting earlier events around Australia.

It is now much easier to conduct FEI rides even in conjunction with National AERA events. The main reason is that AERA has altered VGIH rules to be the same as FEI rules so the two can operate together with ease.

What FEI rides offer other than a way for people to value add their horse is "**a pathway for riders young and not so young to venture into International competition.**" This is not different to what they are currently doing at AERA rides, for some it is just the next step up the pathway not a change in direction just a continuation of all the enjoyable things they have with AERA competitions.

Internationally we have friendly's such as the Trans Tasman and regular South African exchanges through to the real competitions at International level being the World Youth and Junior Endurance Championships, World Endurance Championships and the World Equestrian Games, these are the Olympics of our sport, as the highest possible level of competition for Endurance in the World.

**VGIH.** Vet Gate into Hold. This vetting system provides an opportunity for support crew ( mum's, dad's, brothers, sisters or horsey friends ) to actively provide professional assistance at the crewing area ahead of the competitor calling time into the vet gate. Professionals/Organised crew take just a few minutes each leg whilst others can take considerably longer and all this clearly shows up the Elite ATHLETE both horse and rider on that day of competition.

**OFFICIAL'S** Selection of Vet's, Officials Ground Jury, Chief Steward, Technical Delegate etc. Local's should always be preferred and when bringing in outside official's ensure they can bring positive and passionate energy to the event, that they can respect and work alongside the AERA Chief Steward and his or her team. You must remember that all your competitors have found their way through the sport under AERA rules and whilst the FEI rules are similar they are also different, and so friendly officials that can clarify rules and terms e.g. TD is very important.

No priority should be afforded FEI or AERA unless a Championship event is held.

**The EVENT.** Keep it simple, stay within the rules, respect horse welfare, have fun and be informative.

We like many, value add horses at FEI rides, but to us FEI is about training to be more professional for WEC and WEG competitions. Financial viability is one aspect of being professional.

We wish you well with your planning, please keep us informed.

Regards

Alexandra, Penny and Peter Toft.

TOFT ENDURANCE.