

To: International Carriage Drivers Association

Lausanne, 31 July 2023

### **Reply to the ICDA letter of the 4 July 2023**

Dear ICDA Representatives,

We thank you for your letter of the 4 July regarding your concerns related to the Dressage Modification policy. It was thoroughly reviewed and discussed at the 21 July FEI Driving Committee meeting. We would like to clarify the concerns you have raised in the letter:

**ICDA:** *In earlier discussions with representatives of the Driving Technical Committee it was clearly understood that athletes were to be chosen automatically from the top-5 of the FEI World rankings in descending order, creating confidence in the process of developing new dressage tests. This applies to all classes and all Athletes.*

During both internal discussions and with various stakeholders, there was a consensus that to limit to the top 5 Athletes in each class was very limited and that it should be open to more Athletes. With the top 20 being included, we anticipated more applications from which to select and have a better perception of who is available and interested to be part of the Working Group. However, this intent does not mean we believe the top 5 athletes should be missing from this group.

**ICDA:** *The current rules provide for 100x40 meter arenas for driving championships (in combination with a choice for OCs by 80x40 or 100x40 meter arena for other competitions). The proposed policy commits the working groups solely to design for a 80x40 meter arena. Although at the meeting only one athlete was open to discussing regarding to an 80x40 meter arena, the majority of those present at the meeting clearly believe that the 100x40 meters is the most appropriate for four-in-hands of horses.*

The current Rules have both sizes, 100x40 for Championships and 80x40 optional for other Driving events and the Driving Committee has no intention to modify these Rules before the next Rules revision.

The reason to refer to the new design for the 80x40 arena is because for the moment the 100x40 arena has a Dressage test in place and specifically made in accordance with the size of the arena. The 80x40 arena is not, it's an adapted test from the Championships arena test, so we need a new design as highlighted by the Driving community present at the Driving Forum, *"...a test should be constructed specifically to fit the arena"*, which unfortunately is not the case.

**Driving Forum** Conclusion from Session 4 - Dressage:

*"There was general agreement that the tests and the size of the arena must go together i.e. a test should be constructed specifically to fit the arena."*

**ICDA:** *Secondly the proposed time table only works if there is a rule change before the introduction of the test after the World Championships in 2024. As this implies a major rule change, it is our understanding that this cannot be introduced before 2026 and therefore would not meet the 2-year qualification period conditions required for new tests before a world championship.*

The Committee is fully aware of the timings to start the work and the timings for implementation. We want to start immediately working with the different working groups in order to speed up the process. The first 2 working groups are the horse and pony teams and the Youth tests. This will be quickly followed by the Horse Pairs test.

In order to be implemented ASAP we still need to have some discussion internally with some FEI departments to be sure this can be applied well before the timeline we had set for implementation.

**Driving Forum** discussion during Session 4 - Dressage:

*"...the development and consultation process for new tests, lengths of the arena in particular for H4, a change to the H2 (horse pairs) test in 2024, canter movements, one-handed elements and a reminder that the majority of H2/P2 (pony pairs) Drivers are amateurs."*

**ICDA:** Our proposal is:

*"1. To put on hold the application process for applications from athletes."*

The Committee sees no need to put on hold the process. We have now received the applications and it fits well within the level of experts we need for such a difficult task. Invitation letters will follow shortly and meetings will start next month.

*"2. A revised selection procedure needs to be agreed in line with earlier discussions with FEI representatives to ensure that athletes – either the top level athletes*

*(starting with the top 5 and not the suggested top 20) in dressage and/or world ranking – are part of the working group.”*

Now that we have the applications, we can confirm it aligns with the ICDA proposal.

3. Terms of reference have to be agreed up front, specifically the 3\* test has to comply with the current rules for 100x40 arenas for driving championships. The 2\* and 3\* tests need to work for both 100x40 and 80x40 arenas, therefore meeting the requirements for both four-in-hand classes (horses and ponies).

As already referred already above in this letter as a conclusion from the Driving Forum, *“There was general agreement that the tests and the size of the arena must go together i.e. a test should be constructed specifically to fit the arena.”* we think we are all in agreement.

*“4. ICDA proposes to recommend athletes to become members of the different working groups.”*

We thank you for this, if the ICDA could promote and motivated the members to apply to the working groups it would be fantastic.

**ICDA:** *“We are open to a zoom meeting with the FEI and René Poensgen, Glenn Geerts, Koos de Ronde and Boyd Exell (four-in-hand drivers ICDA representatives) in the coming days to discuss the next steps.”*

At this time, a meeting to discuss a process that is currently underway and will begin its first cycle in the next two weeks would not serve any of the stakeholders effectively. We feel that a post mortem meeting after the new process has been through its first full cycle would be more fruitful and produce more meaningful reactions and changes. We encourage the selected ICDA members that will be working through this initial process to actively participate and take notes, not only the issues and improvements, but also the positive aspects as well; so that we have a full 360 degree view. We look forward to the ICDA's participation at that time.

Kind regards,



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FEI Driving & Para Driving Director



Karoly Fugli  
FEI Driving Technical Committee  
Chair