

**From:** Office - ICDA

**Sent:** Thursday, 24 April, 2025 19:22

**To:** Manuel Bandeira de Mello

**Topic:** New Veterinary Rules on heart rate checks - feedback

Dear Manu,

ICDA has received a lot of feedback on the way in which the new Veterinary Rules on heart rate checks are being implemented on arrival at competitions. The feedback reflects the experiences of grooms and athletes at both Exloo and Kronenberg in the last few weeks. As you know both competitions attracted a significant number of entries, including large H2/H4 classes, which means that several hundred horses and ponies arrive within a narrow window the day before the First Horse Inspection.

Athletes and grooms are firstly challenging the value of a heart rate check just as the horses are unloaded from the horse trucks after, in many cases, long trips. This is a moment of high stress for grooms and equines and the results may not be a fair reflection of the wellbeing of the horse. In informal conversations at the Driving Forum vets questioned what value such checks would serve when taken just off the trucks.

The work load of vets has increased significantly as a result of the introduction of the heart rate checks and there are insufficient resources available to handle this additional requirement. Attached is a photograph of scenes in the stable area at Kronenberg which have been described as "chaotic" by a number of those present. This cannot be good for the welfare of both equines and grooms.

ICDA proposes that, if the FEI continues to attach importance to the heart check, then alternative arrangements are found to check heart rates once horses have settled into their stables, which is a much fairer test of equine wellbeing. The scenes pictured in the attachment should not be repeated.

Kind regards.

Marie de Ronde-Oudemans  
Secretary General ICDA



[www.icda-driving.com](http://www.icda-driving.com)  
[office@icda-driving.com](mailto:office@icda-driving.com)

