

# PROPOSALS FOR 2025 RULES CHANGES DRIVING & PARA-DRIVING RULES

**NOTE**: Please use one table below for each proposed Rule Change. For any questions please check first the "<u>User's Guide</u>" or contact the FEI at <u>francisco.lima@fei.org</u>

# Proposal from (Name of National Federation or MOU Stakeholder)

ICDA – International Carriage Drivers Association

### **Article No.-Article Name**

900.4. International Rules

# **Comment and Rationale**

ICDA is still recommending the changes for Dressage to a percentage score given that it simplifies the scoring system and ensuring a better balance between Dressage, Marathon and Cones. The Driving Committee has to recognise that major NFs support this proposal as well.

# **Proposed Wording**

900.4. Scoring Principles

The objective is to ensure that there is balance in the scoring principle in each of the three phases (Dressage, Marathon and Cones) except that the Marathon should receive the highest weighting (i.e. 30 : 40 : 30).



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

### **Article No.-Article Name**

922.1-6. Entries World Singles Championship for Horses

### **Comment and Rationale**

In the proposal of the FEI as set forward NFs who are not able to send a team, entries will be classified as Individual Entries. It is important to be clear in the Rules that these NFs are entitled to send the same number of Athletes in a certain class as NFs with a team – the new proposal is not in line with Art. 927.2.

2. For Pony and Youth Championships, at the discretion of the OC, all NFs who have submitted a Nominated Entry may be invited to enter Additional Individual Entries.

### **Proposed Wording**

Referral to Art. 927.2.



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

### **Article No.-Article Name**

935.2. Examinations and Inspections of Horses

### **Comment and Rationale**

ICDA respects the position of the Veterinary Commission and the Driving Technical Committee, ICDA would, however, like to resubmit its recommendation to replace the First Horse Inspection with an In Harness Horse Inspection immediately prior to the Dressage test for competitions up to and including CAI3\* but excluding CAIOs and Championships.

ICDA believes that such a change can be backed up by arguments covering equine welfare, athlete and groom safety as well as economic considerations for show organisers and athletes.

Firstly there are a large number of checks throughout the period of the competition beginning with the vet check on arrival, which in 2025 has been supplemented by a heart rate check which takes place either on arrival or in the stables later the same day. There are bit checks following the Dressage, In Harness Inspections both prior to and following on from the Marathon as well as In Harness Inspections prior to and following on from the Cones. This means that at every stage of the competition equine welfare can be carefully assessed. First Horse Inspections typically takes place on Wednesday morning. Some athletes are therefore competing more than 48 hours after the First Horse Inspection. This is a result of the trend to invite more than 100 competitors to include multiples meaning that there are often more than 200 horses/ponies in the First Horse Inspection. ICDA believes that, for welfare reasons, this gap needs to be reduced.

ICDA believes that In harness Inspections provide a very good basis on which to assess fitness and health of equines given that with a weight bearing load it is likely that fitness to compete can be properly assessed

There have been several incidents during the 2025 season where athletes and grooms have been injured (in one case at Drebkau seriously) as a result of large numbers of horses and ponies being assessed simultaneously. Loose horses and ponies are a frequent occurrence It is therefore very difficult for officials and athletes alike to manage such occasions.

Lastly the economic considerations for the various stakeholders is an important consideration. If the First Horse Inspection is replaced by an In harness Inspection prior to the Dressage, athletes and their often large support teams will save one to two days of travel/costs which will then also help reduce organiser costs.



- 2. First Horse Inspection
- 2.1. This must take place at all Events CAIOs and Championships before the start of the first Competition. At CAIs the First Horse Inspection will take place in harness, minimum 30 minutes before the start of the Athlete in the first Competition.

### For CAIOs and Championships:

- 2.2. It is conducted by the President of Ground Jury and the Veterinary Delegate acting together as an Inspection Panel with the President of the Ground Jury in charge.
- 2.3. See Veterinary Regulations and Guidelines for OCs and Officials for details.
- 2.4. For safety reasons, Horses must be presented in bridles and shown on a loose rein or lead. Each Horse must display its identity number (See Article 944.2).
- 2.5. Horses are not permitted to wear bandages or blankets/rugs.
- 2.6. No Horse may be presented with its identity concealed in any manner by application of paint or dye for example.
- 2.7. One FEI Steward carrying a Whip must be present. The FEI Steward is the only person who may assist if a Horse refuses to trot. Handlers may not carry a whip while presenting the Horse. The use of a short whip for restraint of stallions and difficult Horses may be permitted by the Inspection Panel upon request (See Veterinary Regulations, Article 1043).
- 2.8. The Inspection consists of an initial observation of the Horse standing still. It must then be walked in front of the Inspecting Committee, and then trotted 30 metres away from the Committee before returning towards the Committee at the trot.
- 2.9. A Veterinarian may be allowed to handle a limb or other parts of the body, but may not perform any other clinical tests (i. e., flex a limb, or walk or trot a Horse in a circle). see Veterinary Regulations, Article 1038.
- 2.10. In exceptional or doubtful cases, the Inspection Panel may direct that a Horse be placed in an officially supervised holding area (no whips allowed) for a further inspection to take place at a convenient time during the Inspection or in addition to be re-inspected on the following day without any request or presumption by the Athletes.
- 2.11. A re-inspection on the following day is only possible if no decision (accepted or not accepted) is made on the day of the Horse Inspection. The Horse must be presented by the same person as before In the Event of equality of votes within the Inspection Panel, the President of the Ground Jury will have a second and casting vote, and the decision will be announced immediately.
- 2.12. Any Horse, which is due for re-inspection on the following day and is accepted, can be sampled for Prohibited Substances.
- 2.13. Only a member of the Ground Jury has the authority to Disqualify any Horse which is considered to be unfit for the Event (marked lameness, serious injury or poor general condition). A Veterinarian has no authority to disqualify a Horse except where there is a welfare issue.
- 2.14. The Athlete or their representative who presents the Horse must be smartly dressed.

#### For CAIs

2.14. The First Horse Inspection must be carried out in harness before the turnout starts the Dressage test. It must be performed under the supervision of the Veterinary Delegate and/or the President of the Veterinary Commission and the



Steward, reporting to the president of the Ground Jury. The Inspection is obligatory at all CAI Events. The Horse(s) must be presented by the Athletes themselves; Competing without presenting will result in an Elimination.

2.15. Horses will be inspected harnessed to their carriages. Leg bandages over-reach boots and brushing boots are permitted, but must be removed if required.

2.16. Only the Ground Jury member has the authority to Disqualify the Horse if it is considered to be unfit to continue the Event. It is permitted to substitute a Horse who has failed the In-Harness Inspection before Dressage, upon re-presentation, the Athlete may start the Dressage Competition.



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

# **Article No.-Article Name**

937.1.4. Weights and Dimensions

# **Comment and Rationale**

Annex 11 should be revised – measurement should be with wooden blocks – see proposal Annex 11..

# **Proposed Wording**

1.4. The track width of all carriages is measured at ground level on the widest part of the metal rim of the rear wheels. For measuring of the carriages, please refer to Annex 11.



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

### **Article No.-Article Name**

940.1.11. Harness, Carriage and Horses

# **Comment and Rationale**

This Article is / can be a reason for a lot of discussion. What is 'correctly and fully harnessed'. It has to be horse friendly. Delete this paragraph until there is a consensus of what the meaning is of 'correctly'.

The reference in the FEI feedback is not in the Tack app: *Please refer to the tack app where "correctly harnessed" is already described:* 

https://tack.fei.org/article/eb3fa87d-e38f-4774-8113-d496434bac34

### **Proposed Wording**

1.11. The Horses must be correctly and fully harnessed to the carriage, including the reins.



ICDA – International Carriage Drivers Association

### **Article No.-Article Name**

940.7. Harness, Carriage and Horses

# **Comment and Rationale**

Not using the collar terrets often reduces or removes the leverage and therefore improves horse performance and welfare. ICDA agrees on the request from the USA NF to allow reins not being required to pass through breast/full collar terrets, as in several circumstances it give negative leverage.

For that ICDA likes to have the FEI Tack App updated as well, so reins can be passed under the shoulder straps. <a href="https://tack.fei.org/equipment/6d681f5e-4fdd-48f2-85e3-b58527cca565">https://tack.fei.org/equipment/6d681f5e-4fdd-48f2-85e3-b58527cca565</a> -> as the Tack app is updated regularly, this can be easily amended.

### **Proposed Wording**

7.1. All rings, terrets and/ or other devices which have an extreme leverage effect on the reins or bits are forbidden at any time within the Showgrounds. Reins are not required to pass through the breast/full collar terrets, but may pass under the shoulder straps unless they add extreme leverage.



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

### **Article No.-Article Name**

940.11.2. Harness, Carriage and Horses

# **Comment and Rationale**

As in jumping, ear hoods may be attached to the noseband. There is no reason not the allow this. The FEI feedback on ear hoods being over tightened -> in that case alter the Tack App. It should be the same for all disciplines.

### **Proposed Wording**

11.2. Ear hoods and plugs are permitted. Ear hoods may not be attached to the noseband and but must allow free movement of the ears of the Horse. Failure to comply will result in 5 penalty points.



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

### **Article No.-Article Name**

945.1.1. Starting Order

945.2.1.1.

# **Comment and Rationale**

ICDA does not agree with the FEI Feedback as this Article has been subject to modification before. As it not representing solely a rare case, ICDA likes to have the DTC to have a more specific opinion.

Outside assistance – physical outside assistance – needs be clarified in the FEI Driving Rules. The majority of the respondents of the ICDA Survey have the opinion that leaving a whip on the ground to be picked / bucket of water / showing times on a paper during marathon is not considered physical outside assistance. Physical assistance is external help provided to an Athlete / Groom in a physical manner – handing over items ('hand to hand'). See below for the definition of physical outside assistance.

Physical Outside Assistance generally refers to any external help provided to a person in a physical manner, often in situations where independent effort is expected. The specific definition can very based on context, but here are some common interpretations:

 In Sports & Competitions — Any aid given by an external party (such as a coach, teammate, or apectator) that provides a physical advantage, like pushing a cyclist, handing a runner water outside designated aid stations, or fixing equipment during a race. Many competitive events prohibit physical outside assistance to ensure fair play.

The alternative would be to delete the whole Article and allow this – it is part of the evolution of the sport – outside assistance with electronics is allowed – maybe this can be the next step.

#### **Proposed Wording**

- 1.1. Any physical intervention by a third party, not riding on the carriage, whether solicited or not, with the object of facilitating the task of the Athlete to provide external help in a physical matter / handing over items to the Athlete, Groom or his Horses, or helping their Horses, is considered to be outside assistance.
- 2.1.1. Any physical intervention by a third party, not riding on the carriage, whether solicitated or not, with the object of facilitating the task of the Athlete to provide external help in a physical matter / handing over items to the Athlete, Groom or his Horses, or helping their Horses, is considered to be outside assistance. Any Athlete who has received outside assistance may be eliminated by the Ground Jury.

Alternative - delete Art.



- 1.1. Any physical intervention by a third party, not riding on the carriage, whether solicited or not, with the object of facilitating the task of the Athlete to provide external help in a physical matter / handing over items to the Athlete or his Horses, or helping their Horses, is considered to be outside assistance.
- 2.1.1. Any physical intervention by a third party, not riding on the carriage, whether solicitated or not, with the object of facilitating the task of the Athlete to provide external help in a physical matter / handing over items to the Athlete or his Horses, or helping their Horses, is considered to be outside assistance. Any Athlete who has received outside assistance may be eliminated by the Ground Jury.



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

### **Article No.-Article Name**

948.2.1. Starting Order

# **Comment and Rationale**

The majority of the respondents of the ICDA Survey has the opinion that a free draw like CAIs is the most fair way to determine the starting order for dressage: same as 948.1 - free draw allocation in public with president of the jury. There is a very strong support amongst ICDA members to this given the perceived disadvantage of competing on the first day / group of dressage.

Following the FEI Feedback on this matter including the proposed wording to change this article, ICDA is still in favour of a free draw for all, but accepts this proposal.

Proposed Wording		



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

### **Article No.-Article Name**

958.1.3-6 Classification

### **Comment and Rationale**

As set out in the explanation for 900.4 the balance in scoring the suggestion is to have the scoring for dressage set to percentage: to percentages. Furthermore this will be easier to understand for spectators and for calculation office as no issues with coefficients etc.

ICDA does not agree with the FEI Feedback and once again strongly advises the system with percentages as in eventing. The Driving Committee has to recognise that major NFs support this proposal as well.

The correction of an error as sent in by the GBR NF – re coefficient – is not actual anymore.

- 1.3. In order to adjust the influence of Driven Dressage on the whole Event, where the total possible marks for the Test are greater than 160, the average score will be multiplied by the coefficient printed expressed in percentages on the score sheet to obtain the adjusted average score to be used in the results.
- 1.4. Penalties are only awarded by the President of the Ground Jury at C. Any penalties will be deducted from the adjusted obtained average percentage score and the final total will be deducted from 160–100 (per cent)-to obtain the penalties for the Test.



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

### **Article No.-Article Name**

Chapter XI Driven Dressage Art. 958 Classification – Total Marks

#### **Comment and Rationale**

ICDA notes that the Driving Committee feels the feedback from the Driving Forum on the scoring of Dressage was highly divided.

ICDA recognises that there is a strong body of opinion that does not wish to reduce the influence of dressage and would like to maintain an equal balance between the scoring of each of the three competitions.

The issue is that this season's results again show that dressage is much more influential than either marathon or cones and that the sport is not delivering on this goal of a balanced scoring. ICDA has analysed 20 competitions across P1/P2/H1/H2 and H4 classes. The difference in penalties between the winner and the 75th percentile in dressage in these competitions is 9 penalties compared to 6 for marathon and 4.2 penalties for cones. The winner of the dressage was the overall winner in 9 of the 20 competitions and 2nd overall in a further 4 competitions.

ICDA is happy to share the detailed analysis but believes that presenting the dressage scores on a percentage basis would help deliver a fairer and more equal distribution between the three competitions and would be much easier for sponsors and spectators to understand.

Therefore ICDA strongly recommends to change the scoring in dressage to a percentage basis.

Proposed wording		



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

### **Article No.-Article Name**

959 General & 960 The Course

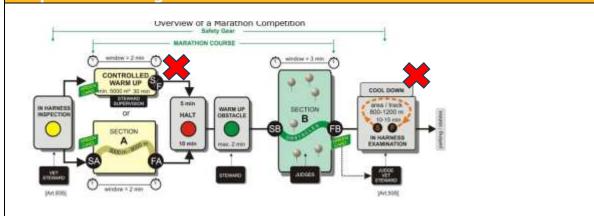
# **Comment and Rationale**

The proposal of ICDA for Marathon - choice of either:

- Free warm up - start only possible after vet check - or Section A.

Warm up marathon – should not be a controlled warm up for any event. Section A should be optional. Where there is no section A, there should be a (sand) arena available for warm up.

ICDA believes Section A should be retained as an option as part of the Marathon. There are a number of events where Section A is an integral part of the show set up and where there are limited options for alternative warm up areas. Section A offers a very effective way to warm up horses and ponies and should be retained. Championship venues will need to make clear at the beginning of each championship year whether they intend to offer a Section A or a warm up area.





ICDA – International Carriage Drivers Association

### **Article No.-Article Name**

960.1.3. The Course

### **Comment and Rationale**

Marathon - choice of either:

- Free warm up - start only possible after vet check - or Section A.

ICDA believes Section A should be retained as an option as part of the Marathon. There are a number of events where Section A is an integral part of the show set up and where there are limited options for alternative warm up areas. Section A offers a very effective way to warm up horses and ponies and should be retained. Championship venues will need to make clear at the beginning of each championship year whether they intend to offer a Section A or a warm up area.

# **Proposed Wording**

1.3. The Marathon Course must may consist of two Sections (A and B or Controlled Warm-Up and B) and a Cool Down in all classes and levels.



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

# **Article No.-Article Name**

960.1.6. The Course

# **Comment and Rationale**

Marathon - choice of either:

- Free warm up start only possible after vet check or Section A.
- No controlled warm-up. (Just like dressage/cones warm-up)

No cool down section: stay for approximately 10 minutes and leave after check by vet/judge

### **Proposed Wording**

1.6. Free warm up before the start of B. An available area (unstewarded) will be available for warmup. As an alternative option to the Section A there can be used a Controlled Warm-Up with a maximum Time Allowed of 30 minutes in a designated warm up arena with minimum 5000 square metres, properly stewarded, with a judge in attendance.



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

# **Article No.-Article Name**

960.2. The Course

# **Comment and Rationale**

Marathon - choice of either:

- Free warm up start only possible after vet check or Section A.
- No controlled warm-up. (Just like dressage/cones warm-up)

No cool down section: stay for approximately 10 minutes and leave after check by vet/judge

# **Proposed Wording**

The pace in Section A, B and Controlled Warm-Up and Cool Down Area is free.



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

# **Article No.-Article Name**

960.2. The Course

# **Comment and Rationale**

The number of obstacles for Championships is set: 8 obstacles. The proposal is to set this: 7 - 8 for Single Horses and Pony classes.

Section A option (max. 12 km/h horses, 11 km/h ponies) – to allow a part of walking as well – horse welfare!

V 20 10 20 2	Section A		Controlled warm-up	Section B				
LEVEL	Distance km	Speed H	Speed P	Time	Distance km	Speed <b>H</b>	Speed P	# OBST
Championships	7-9	12-14	11-13	25 to 30 minutes	7-9	14	13	8
3* / 4*	5-9	12-14	11-13	25 to 30 minutes	5-9	14	13	6-8
2*	5-9	11-13	10-12	25 to 30 minutes	5-9	12-14	11-13	5-7
J + U25	4-6	11-13	10-12	25 to 30 minutes	4-8	12-14	11-13	5-6
CHILDREN	4-6		10-12	25 to 30 minutes	4-8		11-13	4-5
PARA	4-7	11-13	10-12	25 to 30 minutes	4-8	12-14	11-13	5-6



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

#### **Article No.-Article Name**

975.10.7. Judging Cones Competition

### **Comment and Rationale**

ICDA agrees on the FEI Feedback – i.g. that level of the first Athletes is not always consistent with that of the highest-ranked Athletes. Therefore the wording 'does not incur additional penalties' is essential!

Measurement cones course - the outcome of the ICDA Survey is:

- Develop a mobile device to help improve accuracy of measuring the driving lines (4 wheeled maybe)
- PoJ has the responsibility for measurement of the cones course (Art. 972.1.1.) in conjunction with the TD and CD.
- Bring back the possibility changing time after 3 Athletes to ensure a correct balance of the Cones as a element of the total results.

Should the timing be adjusted by the Ground Jury, this will be announced by the Commentator and communicated at entrance Arena (notice board) and electronically (whatsapp).

# **Proposed Wording**

10.7. After 3 Athletes there is the possibility for the President of the Ground Jury in conjunction with the Technical Delegate and Course Designer to alter the Allowed Time in such a way that the Athletes who already finish the Cones Course do not incur more penalties for exceeding the Time Allowed.



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

### **Article No.-Article Name**

Annex 11 Measurement of the Carriage

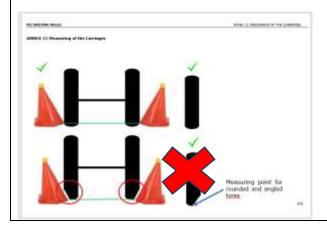
# **Comment and Rationale**

ICDA believes that measurement of carriages should be with wooden blocks and is supportive of up to 4cm in height. Use of current cones is likely to continue to cause difficulties as they cannot accurately measure a vertical height.

### **Proposed Wording**

### Annex 11.

The measurement of carriages should be with wooden blocks and is supportive of up to 4cm in height as to accurately measure a vertical height.







ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

### **Article No.-Article Name**

FEI Tack App

# **Comment and Rationale**

ICDA supports the remark of the GER NF that the FEI Tack App is not always in line with the current wording of the Driving Rules and not postulate own interpretations, what is actually unfortunately the case. The Tack App should be updated only once a year to avoid surprises!!

# ICDA's proposal is:

- Flag the changes / section in the Tack App with changes
- No changes 3 months prior to a Championship

Proposed Wording		



ICDA – International Carriage Drivers Association

#### **Article No.-Article Name**

Annex 7 - Cones and Markers Specifications

# **Comment and Rationale**

ICDA supports the proposed introduction of small blocks under the cones to address the stability of cones in sand arenas in particular.

We believe however that the implementation needs to be re thought. Although the new cones / blocks have been tested, they have yet to be used in competition. It is essential therefore that they are tested as quickly and widely as possible before a final decision is made.

It therefore makes much more sense to test the new cones in CAI2\* and CAI3\* competitions. World Cup Qualifiers only involve Horse Teams and the Championships occur very late in the season. Given that the rationale for the change has been significantly influenced by experience of H1 and Pony Championships it makes much more sense to start with these classes. On the basis of the current proposal the first time H1 athletes will experience the new cones will be in the 2026 World Championships.

We furthermore believe it does not make sense to introduce the change in width to certain classes (Annex 8 Article 14-Cones) until the impact of the new cones can be fully assessed. The risk is otherwise that the combination of the two rule changes has unintended consequences for the significance of the cones phase in the overall result.

ICDA believes that this change should only be introduced in 2027 and not in 2026 as currently proposed.

Last but not least: the blocks as specified on page 177 of the proposals do not fit under all cones!

We support the reduction is speed for the pony singles (Art.

### **Proposed Wording**

First more testing!



Proposal from (Name of National Federation or MOU Stakeholder)
ICDA – International Carriage Drivers Association
Article NoArticle Name
Annex 8 – Art. 14 Cones
Comment and Rationale
We support the reduction is speed for the pony singles (in conduction with Annex 7) – safety.
Proposed Wording



ICDA - International Carriage Drivers Association

### **Article No.-Article Name**

Annex 14 Medical Services

### **Comment and Rationale**

ICDA supports the introduction of a specific Medical Services protocol for Driving. It is important that these provisions are not diluted and over time enhanced. Whilst they are the minimum to be provided by OCs they are in several respects inadequate. Whilst the requirement for at least one medically appropriate vehicle reflects the minimum requirements of other disciplines the requirements for driving are different given that any accident may involve both athlete and groom and many medically appropriate vehicles have room only for one injured person. There has been a concrete example at a CAI3\* event in the last twelve months where the presence of only one such vehicle was inadequate to deal with the simultaneous injury of an athlete and groom.

Proposed Wording	



ICDA – International Carriage Drivers Association

#### **Article No.-Article Name**

Article 933 Welfare of the Horse (Abuse of Horses and Doping)

2. Wounds and Lacerations

#### **Comment and Rationale**

ICDA support a more pro active approach towards welfare of the horse. While ICDA supports a greater consistency across disciplines, it is important to take into consideration that horses in driving are attached to a carriage.

The wording of Art. 933.2.1 for dressage & cones should be the same, but more important, the wording of 2.3. regarding minor cases can be in contradiction of a, b & c (minor cases can be fresh blood).

- 2.3. In minor cases of blood in the mouth, such as where a Horse appears to have bitten its tongue or lip, or minor bleeding on limbs, after investigation the Athlete may be authorized to continue.
- a. Dressage phase: If the Ground Jury suspects bleeding on the Horse during the test, the Ground Jury will stop the Horse(s) to check. If the Horse shows fresh blood, it will be eliminated. The elimination is final. If the Judge through examination clarifies that the Horse(s) has no fresh blood, the Horse may resume and finish its test.
- a. Dressage & Cones phase: Horses with blood on the body and/or bleeding in the mouth will be eliminated. In minor cases of blood, such as where a Horse appears to have bitten its tongue or lip or minor bleeding on limbs, Officials the President of the Ground Jury will ring the bell and may authorize the rinsing or wiping of the mouth and allow the Athlete to continue; any further evidence of blood in the mouth will can result in Elimination.
- b. Marathon phase: all athlete induced blood on the horse, Horses with blood on the body and/or bleeding in the mouth must be reviewed case by case by the Ground Jury. If the Horse(s) shows fresh blood, Officials may authorize the rinsing or wiping of the mouth and if there is no further evidence of bleeding, the athlete is allowed to continue. Cases of significant blood will result in Elimination.



Proposal from (Name of National Federation or MOU Stakeholder)
ICDA – International Carriage Drivers Association
Article NoArticle Name
Comment and Rationale
Proposed Wording