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GUIDELINES ON THE ESTABLISHMENT, MANAGEMENT, AND SELF-DECLARATION TO WOAH OF AN EQUINE DISEASE-FREE ZONE



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AND SELF-DECLARATION TO WOA
OF AN EQUINE DISEASE-FREE ZONE**

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For more information on the establishment of Equine Disease Free Zones, please contact WOAH (disease.status@woah.org) and the IHSC (goran.akerstrom@fei.org)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An equine disease free zone (EDFZ) is a part of a country, defined by and under the control of the Veterinary Authority, containing an animal population or subpopulation with a specific animal health status with respect to multiple specified equine diseases.

Establishing an EDFZ aims at enabling the safe entry and exit of horses, protection of equids in the EDFZ from diseases that may occur in other parts of the territory, and protection of the national population of equids outside of the EDFZ from diseases that potentially could be imported into the zone. An EDFZ can be established to allow international horse sports competitions to take place in countries which have not yet controlled or eradicated specified equine diseases in their entire territory.

An EDFZ is usually defined in relation to specified equine diseases that are listed by the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH). The demonstration of freedom of the EDFZ from each of the specified diseases should be in accordance with the relevant provisions the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*. Non-listed diseases that may be of relevance for an equine event may also be considered.

The extent and boundaries of an EDFZ are flexible and may be determined by geographical and other features. An EDFZ should be comprised of a Core Zone containing the equestrian event venue separated usually by a physical barrier from surrounding areas. Around this Core Zone, there should be a Surveillance Zone in which the health status of all epidemiologically relevant animals, and especially equids, should be documented and monitored. The Surveillance zone should be clearly defined and separated from the rest of the equine population by a physical, geological or legal barrier. Good governance of the Veterinary Services and a clearly articulated partnership with the industry are essential for the effective establishment and maintenance of an EDFZ. The EDFZ should be supported by a comprehensive biosecurity plan, and movements into and out of the surveillance zone and the Core Zone of the EDFZ should be strictly controlled under the responsibility of the Veterinary Authority.

WOAH Member Countries may make a self-declaration of an EDFZ to WOAH under the responsibility of their Delegate.

ACRONYM LIST

| | |
|---------------|--|
| AHS: | African horse sickness |
| CZ: | Core zone |
| EDFZ : | Equine disease free zone |
| PVS: | Performance of Veterinary Services |
| PZ: | Protection zone |
| SOPs: | Standard Operating Procedures |
| SZ : | Surveillance zone |
| WAHIS: | World Animal Health Information System |
| WOAH: | World Organisation for Animal Health |

INTRODUCTION

Establishing an EDFZ aims at enabling the safe entry and exit of horses, protection of equids in the EDFZ from diseases that may occur in other parts of the territory, and protection of the national population of equids outside of the EDFZ from diseases that potentially could be imported into the zone. An EDFZ can be established to allow international horse sports competitions to take place in countries which have not yet controlled or eradicated specified equine diseases in their entire territory.

EDFZ developments are consistent with government and industry approaches to expand equine sports given the growth of these sports internationally, as well as the demand in emerging regions or countries to participate in such sports.

For instance, as of April 2019, temporary EDFZ have been successfully established to host the following international competitions:

- 16th Asian Games, People's Republic of China, 2010;
- 17th Asian Games, Republic of Korea, 2014
- Olympic and Paralympic Games, Brazil, 2016
- 5th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games, Turkmenistan, 2017
- 18th Asian Games, Indonesia, 2018

The establishment of an EDFZ can be a complex process which requires strong government, industry and resource support, accompanied by high level business planning. Investments in an EDFZ can have benefits for countries and industries. Provided that the principles described in the present guidelines are followed, supported by legislation, strong governance, professional expertise and effective operations, an EDFZ can be flexible and customized to suit local needs.

The present Guidelines aim at providing a structured approach to support Members Countries of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) in:

- establishing an EDFZ (section 1),
- applying for the publication of a self-declaration of an EDFZ by WOAH (section 2),
- implementing control of movements through specific Veterinary Certificates (section 3).

In addition, should a WOAH Member country require further assistance in establishing an EDFZ, WOAH can recommend independent experts and consultants upon request.



SECTION 1.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EDFZ

1. DEFINITION

An EDFZ is a part of a country, defined by and under the control of the Veterinary Authority, containing an animal population or subpopulation with a specific animal health status with respect to multiple specified equine diseases.

2. PURPOSE OF AN EDFZ

Establishing an EDFZ can be considered in situation in which a Member cannot establish the health status of the equine population in the entire territory but can establish the health status for a smaller zone with a limited animal population. To date, all EDFZ self-declared to WOAHP have been temporary and established in the context of an equestrian sports competition located in a Member that did not have existing trading relations with all of the Members which wanted to take part in the competition.

An EDFZ can provide Governments, equine industries and the owners of horses engaging in high-level international equestrian events with confidence that biosecure systems are in place to protect competing horses from disease and thus enable their safe return to their countries of origin or other onward destination. An EDFZ also allows for the national horse population to be protected from the risk of diseases possibly imported into the zone.

Another potential application for an EDFZ is when a Member wants to start trading relations with another Member and creates an EDFZ as an interim measure while establishing the health status of the entire territory.

3. VETERINARY SERVICES

An EDFZ should be under the control of the Veterinary Authority, therefore it is essential that trading partners can have confidence in the performance of those Veterinary Services. Formally, this means the Veterinary Services should comply with the requirements of Chapters 1.1 and 3.2 of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code)*. These chapters set requirements for the notification of listed diseases and the quality of the Veterinary Services.

The structure of the Veterinary Services should have sufficient capacity to provide the staff and related resources necessary to establish and maintain the EDFZ. The division of responsibilities, accountabilities and interaction between the field and the central level should be clearly documented.

Regarding disease reporting, the Member hosting the EDFZ should have a history of prompt reporting of any listed disease and records of regular submission of 6 monthly and annual reports.

The quality of the Veterinary Services depends on a set of factors, which include fundamental principles of an ethical, organisational, legislative, regulatory and technical nature. The Veterinary Services should be able to demonstrate compliance with these fundamental principles. To that end, Members wishing to establish an EDFZ are encouraged to engage in the WOAHP global programme for strengthening the Performance of Veterinary Services (WOAHP PVS Pathway). This would help to give trading partners confidence in the competence and good governance of the Veterinary Services, which is essential for international acceptance of any veterinary health certification or self-declaration of an EDFZ.

Veterinary Services are also encouraged to engage in a clearly articulated Public-Private Partnership with the equestrian industry wishing to utilise the EDFZ for equestrian events in order to delegate certain supervisory functions and delineate responsibilities.

The key principles and pre-requisites for the establishment of an EDFZ are outlined in Table I.

Table I. Key principles and pre-requisites for the establishment of an EDFZ (based on Murray, 2016)¹

| Quality of the Veterinary Services | Staff and resources | Assessment of the equine health situation | Risk mitigation and risk management |
|---|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sound governance processes and effective underpinning national legislation ○ Confidence in the Veterinary Services concerned and credible health certification | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strong government, industry and resource support ○ Well-trained staff, highly effective and professional technical services, and strong partnership arrangements between the public and private health sectors ○ High-level business planning, logistical coordination and effective communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Definition of diseases of concern, using the listed diseases as a reference (Table II) ○ Baseline knowledge of the health status of equines and other animals in the local population ○ Understanding of local wildlife population ecology, vectors and risk ○ Ongoing risk evaluation through a monitoring and evaluation process, with a view to enhancing risk management procedures. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prescribing the boundaries of the EDFZ and operational arrangements for the control of movements ○ Development of a high-quality, overarching biosecurity plan, supported by detailed documented standard operational procedures ○ Development of a contingency plan for confirmed or suspected outbreaks of infectious disease |

4. STRUCTURE OF AN EDFZ

The EDFZ concept arose from the WOAH standards on Zoning and Compartmentalisation as described in Chapters 4.4. and 4.5. of the *Terrestrial Code*.

A) GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The animal subpopulation within the EDFZ should be clearly defined under the responsibility of the Veterinary Authority in accordance with the recommendations in the relevant chapters of the *Terrestrial Code*, including those on animal identification and traceability.

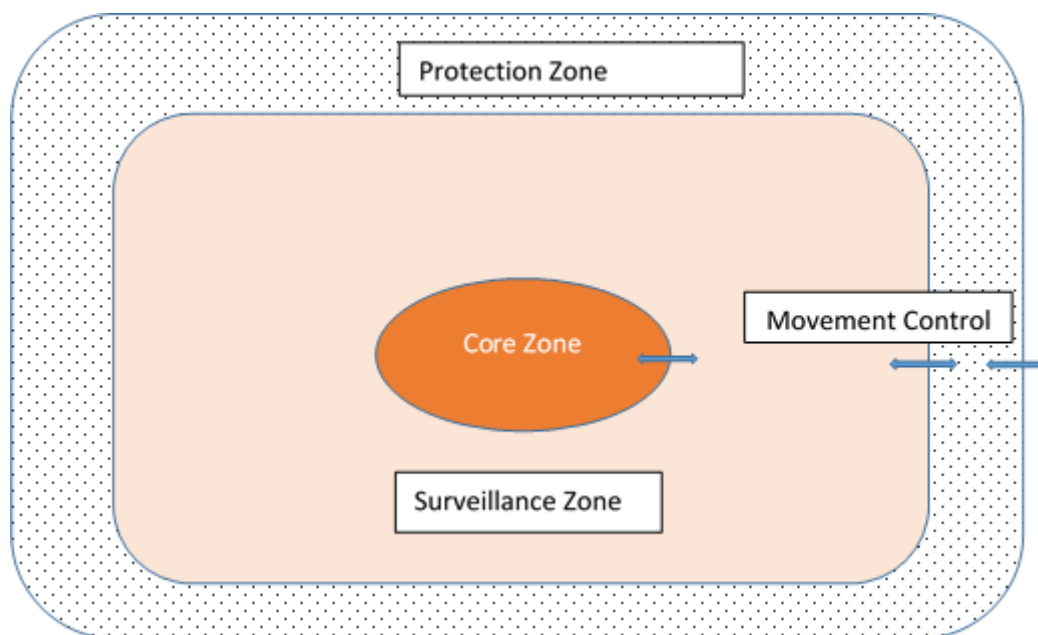
Once the Veterinary Authority have clearly defined the subpopulation of equids in the EDFZ, a clear epidemiological separation from other animals and all factors presenting a risk to the health status of that subpopulation should be established. The recommended way of establishing this separation of the subpopulation is through the use of defined zones within the EDFZ: a **Core Zone (CZ)**, a **Surveillance Zone (SZ)** and (optionally) a **Protection Zone (PZ)** as illustrated in Figure 1.

¹ G. Murray (2016) Equine Disease Free Zones. Bulletin, (1) 55-59

The size of the EDFZ should be based on a risk assessment for the diseases for which the EDFZ is self-declared free and consequently the extent of the CZ, SZ, and PZ should be determined by the Veterinary Authority based on physical, legal or geographic boundaries and communicated through official channels.

As a general principle, it is strongly recommended that an EDFZ should not contain any wild or feral equids (with the exception of captive equids in a zoo) as it is in general not possible to determine and monitor their health status with confidence. If wild or feral equids are present in the EDFZ, the Veterinary Authority should have current knowledge about their population, habitat and ecology, and absence of evidence of infection in wild or feral equids should be demonstrated supported by an effective surveillance system.

Figure 1. Structure of an EDFZ



B) CORE ZONE (CZ)

The CZ typically contains the event venue. This CZ is physically or geographically (usually physically) separated from the surrounding Surveillance Zone. Movement controls into and out of the CZ should be managed through a clearly defined partnership arrangement between the Veterinary Authority and the industry utilizing official veterinary certificates (see section 3. Veterinary Certificates). Typically, movement control is managed by industry with oversight and audit by the Veterinary Authority. There should be management and biosecurity controls in place, all equids should be registered and their movements traceable. Holdings where equids reside should be registered. The health status of equids in the CZ should be documented, in accordance with the relevant requirements of the *Terrestrial Code*, for each disease from which the EDFZ is declared free.

C) SURVEILLANCE ZONE (SZ)

The Surveillance Zone is physically or geographically separated from the CZ and either from a PZ or from the rest of the territory. There should be official movement controls into and out of the SZ that are under the control of the Veterinary Authority (see Section 3. Veterinary Certificates). Surveillance within the surveillance zone should be conducted in accordance with the requirements set in the *Terrestrial Code* for each disease from which the EDFZ is declared free. Equids in the CZ should have a defined, surveyed, and documented health status.

D) PROTECTION ZONE (PZ) (OPTIONAL)

A PZ may be established to separate the susceptible population in the SZ and preserve the health status of equids in the EDFZ from adjacent countries or zones of different animal health status. The PZ can be considered as a buffer and does not need to be included in the formal EDFZ.

Biosecurity and sanitary measures should be implemented in the PZ based on the animal management systems, the epidemiology of the diseases under consideration, and the epidemiological situation prevailing in the neighbouring countries or zones.

These measures should include intensified movement control and surveillance and specific animal identification and animal traceability for all animals susceptible to the particular diseases for which the PZ is established in accordance with the relevant chapters of the *Terrestrial Code*, to ensure that animals in the PZ are clearly distinguishable from other populations, and may also include:

- vaccination of all or at risk susceptible animals;
- testing or vaccination of animals moved;
- specific procedures for sample handling, dispatching and testing;
- enhanced biosecurity including disinfection and disinsection procedures for vehicles/vessels and vehicles used for transportation of animal products, feed or fodder, and possible compulsory routes for their movements within, to or from the zone;
- specific surveillance of susceptible wildlife and relevant vectors;
- awareness campaigns aimed at the public or targeted at breeders, traders, hunters or veterinarians.

Movements into and out of the PZ should be under the control of the Veterinary Authority using veterinary certificates (see Section 3. Veterinary Certificates).

5. CONTROL OF MOVEMENTS

Relevant animal movements into or out of the EDFZ should be documented and controlled based on the issuance of official movement permits and strict access control, certification and quarantine (as further described in section 3. Veterinary Certificates).

A prerequisite for effective control of movements is the existence of a valid traceability system for equids. All equids within the EDFZ should be individually identified and registered in such a way that their history and movements can be documented and audited.

The entry points into the EDFZ should be limited in number and organized to facilitate the conducting of effective official controls.

As part of the movement protocols, it may be necessary to set up Pre-Entry Isolation Facility (or quarantine center) (outside of the CZ) as a pre-condition for entry into the CZ.

6. DISEASES FROM WHICH AN EDFZ IS DECLARED FREE

Usually, an EDFZ is defined in relation to listed diseases that affect equids (Chapter 1.3. of the *Terrestrial Code*) (Table II). In addition, an EDFZ may also be defined in relation to other equine diseases, not listed by WOA, that may be considered important in the context of international horse movement and equine health.

The selection of diseases for which the EDFZ is self-declared free should result from a documented risk based approach. Indeed, while it is possible to include all of the listed diseases that affect equids by demonstrating freedom from each disease in accordance with the relevant requirements of the *Terrestrial Code*, using a risk-based approach is an efficient strategy to reduce the list of diseases to be considered. For example, if there was no breeding in the EDFZ then the breeding diseases could be identified as not of relevance to the EDFZ. Similarly, for a vector borne disease if the absence of competent vector in EDFZ was demonstrated then this disease may also be disregarded.

Diseases that are not included in the self-declaration of freedom may still need to be addressed in the biosecurity plan.

Table II. WOAH-listed diseases that affect equids

| Equine diseases and infections | Multiple species diseases, infections and infestations of relevance to equids |
|--|---|
| African horse sickness virus | Anthrax |
| Contagious equine metritis | Equine encephalomyelitis (Eastern) |
| Dourine | Rabies |
| Equine encephalomyelitis (Western) | Japanese encephalitis |
| Equine infectious anaemia | New world screwworm |
| Equine influenza | Old world screwworm |
| Equine piroplasmiasis | Surra |
| Glanders | West Nile fever |
| Infection with equid herpesvirus-1 | |
| Infection with equine arteritis virus | |
| Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis | |

7. SURVEILLANCE AND EARLY WARNING

For each of the diseases for which the EDFZ is self-declared free, there should be enhanced and ongoing systems in place to ensure that the zone is and remains free from disease through both surveillance and an effective early warning system.

The surveillance should be carried out with reference to Chapter 1.4 of the *Terrestrial Code*, and any specific surveillance requirements listed in the relevant disease-specific chapters of the *Terrestrial Code*.

The diseases for which the EDFZ is self-declared free should have been compulsorily notifiable by legislation for the relevant period of time defined for each disease in the *Terrestrial Code* prior to the establishment of the EDFZ.

The surveillance and early warning system should be supported by an educational plan to increase awareness of both private veterinarians, relevant stakeholders, and the public, of signs and symptoms of the diseases for which the zone is declared free.

8. BIOSECURITY PLAN

The procedures and measures to be implemented to maintain the specific animal health status of the EDFZ depend on the epidemiology of the diseases considered, including the presence and role of vectors and susceptible wildlife and environmental factors, on the animal production systems as well as on the application of biosecurity and sanitary measures, including control of movements.

An EDFZ should be supported by a comprehensive biosecurity plan and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to support the implementation of the biosecurity measures. The Biosecurity Plan and the SOPs should be developed and implemented through active cooperation between industry and Veterinary Services, under the responsibility of the Veterinary Authority.

The Biosecurity Plan should cover the following topics:

- (International) horse arrival and departure, including biosecurity at airports of arrival and transport via biosecure highway passages where required
- Inspection on arrival
- Training / exercising protocols for horses at the event
- Biosecurity of the venue
- The Pre-Entry Isolation Facility (if established)
- Regulation of the entry of animals, humans and equipment
- Cleaning and disinfection
- Biosecure disposal of waste
- Procedures to maintain effective risk-based biosecure separation of horses e.g. others from

- a different geographic origin (if appropriate)
- Vectors and vermin control programs
- Clinical inspection and health monitoring of the horses
- Isolation stables and possibly an equine hospital
- Staff training

9. CONTINGENCY PLANS

Detailed contingency plans should document arrangements to ensure the early detection of any disease incident, rapid response, effective containment and traceability. Conduct of simulation exercises is encouraged to test the effectiveness of plans and to update them in light of new information.

Contingency plans should cover disease prevention and control in the following situations:

- In the Pre-Entry Isolation Facility
- At the event venue and in the CZ
- In the SZ and PZ

Contingency plans should also address any future changes in risk factors based on the diseases of the self-declaration that are detected in the surveillance programme conducted inside and outside of the EDFZ.

10. TEMPORARY OR LONG TERM EDFZ

An EDFZ is a complex arrangement to establish and maintain. It was developed primarily as a temporary approach for the hosting of horse sports competitions.

If an EDFZ is established for a longer period of time, the Veterinary Authority should ensure the continuous implementation of surveillance and early warning in all zones (CZ, SZ, PZ) and of all risk mitigation measures including those of the biosecurity plan, contingency plans, movements controls, and the continuous certification and testing as appropriate of all equids moved between zones.

11. CONSIDERATIONS ON THE INCLUSION OF A BREEDING ESTABLISHMENT WITHIN AN EDFZ

It is strongly recommended not to include breeding establishments in an EDFZ.

12. TIMELINE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EDFZ

In view of the complexities involved in establishing an EDFZ, it is suggested to prepare an EDFZ project plan as a tool to support the development and timing for the establishment of the EDFZ in relation to the scheduled event. A project plan that establishes the time line and budget with appropriate milestones in place for the development of the EDFZ is essential to ensure the successful implementation of the EDFZ.



SECTION 2. PUBLICATION OF A SELF-DECLARATION OF AN EDFZ BY WOA

WOAH Member Countries may make a self-declaration of their EDFZ to WOA under the responsibility of their Delegate in accordance with Chapter 1.6. of the *Terrestrial Code*.

1. APPLICATION FOR THE PUBLICATION OF A SELF-DECLARATION OF AN EDFZ BY WOA

A) PROCEDURE

WOAH has procedures for the official status recognition for six diseases. African Horse Sickness (AHS) is the only listed disease that affects equids for which WOA officially recognises freedom. This means that freedom from AHS cannot be based on a self-declaration².

For all other listed diseases that affect equids (Table II), as well as non-listed diseases, freedom might be based on a self-declaration which can be published by WOA at the request of a Member Country³.

Documentation supporting self-declarations needs to ensure both the use of up-to-date WOA terminology and full adherence to WOA principles and practices.

Responsibility for the information contained in a self-declaration lies entirely with the WOA Delegate of the Member concerned.

It is recommended that a self-declaration of an EDFZ submitted to WOA for publication be prepared in one of the official languages of WOA (English, French or Spanish) and be composed of:

- an executive summary following the template provided hereafter (5 pages maximum);
- an EDFZ dossier following the template provided hereafter, including appendixes as appropriate and annexed to the executive summary (45 pages maximum).

B) DOCUMENTED DEMONSTRATION OF FREEDOM

For each disease from which the EDFZ is self-declared free, documented evidence of compliance with the provisions of Article 1.4.6. of the *Terrestrial Code* as well as with the requirements for freedom defined in the relevant chapters of the *Terrestrial Code* should be provided in the self-declaration for the relevant period of time defined for each disease in the *Terrestrial Code*.

² More information on the procedure to apply for the official recognition of freedom by WOA is available at: <https://www.woah.org/en/document/sop-for-official-recognition-of-animal-health-status-and-endorsement-of-official-control-programmes/>

³ Detailed information on the procedure to apply for the publication of a self-declaration of freedom by WOA is available at: https://www.woah.org/en/document/sops-self-declarations_a/

2. TEMPLATE OF A SELF-DECLARATION OF AN EDFZ

A) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The executive summary should address all sections listed below:

- **Introduction**

The introduction should outline the reason for the establishment of the EDFZ. For a temporary EDFZ, the dates for which the EDFZ will be active should be clearly defined. The diseases from which the EDFZ is self-declared free should be listed.

- **Veterinary Services**

A summary of the structure and capacity of the Veterinary Services to administer the EDFZ and to provide the necessary health assurances should be provided including a description of the government, industry and resource support, governance processes, and underpinning legislation.

- **Structure of the EDFZ**

In this section, there should be a description of the EDFZ supported by a map showing the boundaries of the zone(s) as well as the location of the check control posts. The population of equids and other animal species in the EDFZ should be described.

- **Equine health status in the EDFZ**

For each disease from which the EDFZ is self-declared free, compliance with the relevant provisions of the *Terrestrial Code* should be demonstrated for the relevant period of time.

- **Maintenance of the EDFZ**

The main measures of the EDFZ biosecurity plan should be outlined. In particular, the measures implemented to prevent the introduction of the diseases from which the EDFZ is declared free should be described, taking into consideration the route of transmission of the different diseases. The monitoring of the implementation of these measures should also be described.

How movements into and out of the EDFZ are controlled and certified should be described.

- **Regionalization of the EDFZ (optional)**

There is no facility to recognise an EDFZ in the regulations of the European Union. If it is envisioned that horses from the European Union will participate in the horse sports competition hosted in the EDFZ, the European Commission may require a separate dossier and inspection process. This section of the executive summary may include an update on the steps taken for recognition of the EDFZ by the European Union or any other trade bloc that may have separate agreements.

- **Conclusion**

The conclusion should include a statement of the WOAHP Delegate about taking responsibility for the self-declaration of the EDFZ as well as, for each listed disease relevant to the self-declaration, a reference to the chapter(s) of the *Terrestrial Code* based on which freedom is declared.

B) EDFZ DOSSIER

- **Introduction**

The introduction should give an explanation of the reason for setting up the EDFZ. For a horse sports competition, include the name and date of the event, what equine disciplines will be included, anticipated number of international participants and their countries of origin. Provide an overview of the stakeholders and their roles in the event and describe any agreements or Memorandums of Understanding that have been made.

This section should also contain:

- A formal request that WOAHP publishes the self-declaration;
- The exact denomination of the diseases for which freedom is self-declared;
- Reference to the relevant chapters and articles of the *Terrestrial Code*;
- The starting date of the declaration of freedom and expiration date in case of a temporary EDFZ;
- Evidence that the diseases are notifiable to the Veterinary Authority at national level should be provided and reference to the regulatory system in place relevant to the specific diseases should be made.

- **Description of the EDFZ**

This section should comprehensively describe the physical layout of the EDFZ, constituent zones (CZ, SZ, PZ) and extent of the areas covered. The boundaries of the EDFZ should be described and justified. State any natural, geographic or legal boundaries of the EDFZ, the entry points and control posts, and include maps where appropriate.

Core zone

The description of the CZ should include a description of the physical or geographical barriers separating the CZ from the surrounding areas and control points, available facilities and size of the CZ.

For an equestrian event venue, describe the stabling layout and include a plan of the venue. Any biosecurity control features should be highlighted, for example, any vehicle wheel wash bays, vermin meshing on fences, and hand wash stations. Highlight the isolation area and its separation from the residential stabling. Control of movements to and from a veterinary hospital for treatment of equine injuries that are not available for treatment in the CZ need also to be addressed. There should be an associated biosecurity plan for these movements and isolation in the veterinary hospital and include the provision for return of the horse to the country of origin if the treatment requires hospitalization beyond the duration of the equine event.

Biosecurity arrangements for training and exercising of competition horses in the CZ should be addressed.

Surveillance Zone

The description of the SZ should include the physical, geographical or legal barriers separating the SZ from the surrounding areas and indicate the control points, number and type of animals contained in the SZ, type of holdings and locations. Describe how entry is controlled outside the control posts.

Biosecurity at airports of arrival and departure including biosecure highway passages are important, particularly to ensure the safe return of horses and procedures should be included in the dossier.

Protection Zone (if applicable)

The description of the PZ should include the physical, geographical or legal features separating the zone from surrounding areas, control points, size of the zone and animals contained as for the SZ.

List of diseases for which the EDFZ is self-declared free

The EDFZ maybe self-declared free from one or more of the listed diseases that affect equids (except African horse sickness). There should be a detailed explanation of the rationale for the list of diseases chosen including any non-listed diseases. It is important that reference is made in the self-declaration to any listed diseases that affect equids which have been identified as not of relevance to the EDFZ.

The demonstration of freedom should follow the provisions of Article 1.4.6. and the relevant disease-specific chapters of the *Terrestrial Code* for each disease for which freedom is self-declared.

Non-listed diseases that may be of relevance for an equine event may include for instance strangles, Nipah virus, Hendra virus, epizootic lymphangitis, and vesicular Stomatitis.

- **Veterinary services**

Provide an overview of the Veterinary Services, their different functions and capacities, the reporting history to WOA and details of the diagnostic laboratory for equine diseases.

National Veterinary Services

Describe the National Veterinary Services, their structure and function, including an organogram. What legal instruments are in place and what powers are given to the National Veterinary Services? Describe any limitations and areas where other Governmental departments may have authority, and any delegations of regulatory authority with special reference to horses. Describe the legislation for the Notifiable Diseases and assigned powers in the event of a transboundary disease incursion. How are the National Veterinary Services funded and what fees are charged for services? What role does the National Veterinary Services have in the registration of equids and related holdings? What are the requirements for inter- and intra-regional equid movement and how is this monitored/enforced? Provide details of the database for registration of the equids and who monitors the non-horse equids.

Regional Veterinary Services

Describe the role regional veterinary services will play in the EDFZ and how this is co-ordinated with the National Veterinary Services. Describe any legislation relating to the Regional Veterinary Services and the powers that are assigned to inspectors if separate to the National Veterinary Services. Provide details of funding for Regional Veterinary Services. Include any accreditation arrangements for Regional Veterinary Services, private veterinarians, animal health technicians, and describe what powers they have.

National Equestrian Association (or other private organisation) with oversight of the EDFZ

For an equine event, what roles does the National Equestrian Association play in the EDFZ, what is their relationship with the National Veterinary Services. Give details of any Memorandum of Understanding or legislative instruments empowering the National Equestrian Association and the working relationship / partnership with the National Veterinary Services.

Legal basis for the Veterinary Services and any other involved stakeholder to deliver the services of relevance to the EDFZ

What legal rights do the Veterinary Services have to deliver veterinary services, control an outbreak, register horses and premises, maintain a database, and who has the power to sign movement certificates. List all relevant legal provisions in place and point out their relevance to the EDFZ (e.g., which powers they give to the Veterinary Services to implement the EDFZ). Copies of relevant legislation might be included in the Annexes.

Diagnostic Laboratory

Describe the officially designated laboratory facilities and their compliance with the WOA standards for quality assurance in accordance with the *Terrestrial Manual*. List the tests that are available for diagnosis of equine diseases. Provide details of inter-laboratory quality assurance programmes. Provide details of funding for the diagnostic laboratory, qualifications of laboratory staff and provision for continuing professional development. Describe the procedure for shipping samples off to international reference laboratories where needed, or other laboratories for tests that are not available at the national diagnostic laboratory. Describe the training that is given to veterinarians for preparation and handling of samples that are submitted to the laboratory. What documentation is provided with samples and how are the sample records kept?

- **Animal Health management**

Census

Provide a description of the livestock population in the country. How many horses, donkeys, mules, zebras and other equids are there in the country and in each zone of the EDFZ? Describe the latest census and the distribution of the equids, including any wild or feral equids. What other animal species are there and how many in the country and in each zone of the EDFZ? If epidemiologically relevant to the diseases from which the EDFZ is self-declared free, has a recent census been conducted of swine and ruminants?

Identification and traceability

Are all equids individually identified, registered and a database maintained in the EDFZ? Describe the procedure for the registration of horses and the registration of all equine holdings. Describe how the Veterinary Services assure that every horse residing in the EDFZ is identified and that every horse imported in the EDFZ is identified. Who issues the equine passports and what controls are in place for branding or microchipping of horses? Are holdings that have swine and ruminants registered?

Baseline disease situation

Give details of equine diseases reported via WAHIS to WOA, and the current disease status of equids. Provide details of any surveys undertaken and the relevance to the demonstration of freedom for the diseases from which the EDFZ is self-declared free in accordance with the relevant requirements of the *Terrestrial Code* for these diseases.

Describe the control measures that are in place to prevent introduction of diseases into the EDFZ including diseases for which freedom cannot be demonstrated and how their implementation is controlled. Where appropriate, surveys should include wild or feral populations in the zones that are potential hosts for the disease being surveyed.

The self-declaration should be clear as to whether freedom is claimed for the first time or to regain freedom. For each disease from which the EDFZ is self-declared free, a summary of the disease history, including a description of the susceptible animal population in the country, and the date of last occurrence of the disease should be given. When relevant, a description of the measures having led to the control and eradication of the disease should be provided.

The control measures described should comply with the historical and current control measures reported by the Member to WAHIS. It should be specified, when relevant, if a vaccine was ever used to eradicate the diseases from which freedom is self-declared and when the last vaccination was carried out.

If vaccination is still applied, it should be clearly specified under what circumstances, how these align with provisions of the *Terrestrial Code*, and how risks are accounted for within surveillance programmes. The type of vaccine and frequency of vaccination should be specified.

Surveillance and early warning in the EDFZ

For the specified diseases from which the EDFZ is self-declared free, with reference to Article 1.4.6. and the relevant disease-specific chapters of the *Terrestrial Code*, describe what surveillance has been carried out and the results obtained. Who did the testing and sample collection, how were the equids chosen, and what quality controls are in place for the testing?

Describe the early warning system in place in the EDFZ.

Sound evidence should be provided that surveillance complies with the provisions of Chapter 1.4. and the relevant provisions of disease-specific chapters of the *Terrestrial Code*.

Surveillance and early warning outside the EDFZ

Surveillance outside the EDFZ may help to identify changes in risks identified from the introduction into the EDFZ of the diseases from which the EDFZ is self-declared free. What surveillance systems based on Chapter 1.4 of the *Terrestrial Code*, and relevant disease-specific chapters of the *Terrestrial Code*, are in place? What surveillance is there for diseases for which freedom cannot be demonstrated?

Describe the early warning system in place outside the EDFZ.

African Horse Sickness (AHS)

WOAH officially recognises freedom from AHS (Chapters 1.6., 12.1. and 1.7. of the *Terrestrial Code*). Therefore, freedom from AHS cannot be substantiated based on a self-declaration. The current AHS official status of the Member may be referenced.

- **Management and maintenance of the EDFZ**

Importation of horses

Tabulate how many horses are imported or exported annually in the country, and where to /from. List the countries that have established trading relations in equids and describe the movement protocols. Describe how imported horses will be transferred from their point of arrival to a Pre-Entry Isolation Facility or CZ. Will a biosecure highway passage system be established? If so, describe how.

Pre-Entry Isolation Facility

If applicable, describe how Pre-Entry Isolation Facility will be established and operated and provide a plan and location map of the facility. Pre-Entry Isolation Facility SOPs can be attached as an Annex. Indicate the management structure of the Pre-Entry Isolation Facility and how this relates to the National Veterinary Services. In some instances, international horses may need to be quarantined before entry into the CZ and this should also have a Standard Operating Procedure and set of conditions separate from the Pre-Entry Isolation Facility.

Movement control into and out of the EDFZ

Describe the animal movement controls that are in place for the EDFZ and inter-zonal movements. How will entry of local horses and imported horses into the EDFZ be regulated? Attach copies of the veterinary certificates as an Annex. What movements are anticipated within and between the zones and for what reason? Describe any control systems for movement within the zones and compare this with movements prior to creation of the zones. Indicate any compliance and enforcement measures and the role that the National Veterinary Services play in these movement controls.

Movement controls of equipment, feed, medicines and vaccines are necessary as they can pose major biological risks.

An important consideration for an equine event is separation of the public, who may have little training in biosecurity, from the horses. This is a two-way consideration. People from outside the EDFZ may bring an infectious agent into the CZ and the horses may give an infectious agent to a member of the public if separation is not maintained. Safety of both horses and people should also be considered as controls are put in place to ensure there is no contact between non-accredited personnel, or the public, and the horses.

The description of the management measures in place for the CZ should indicate how separation is maintained between the public and the equine athletes to prevent potential accidents and disease transmission.

Daily records

Daily records of biologic metrics, including body temperature, feed consumption, water intake, and observation of demeanor, are an important component of an early warning system. Indicate what daily records are maintained on the horses in the CZ and how this relates to an early warning system for ill-health. A copy of the Daily Report Form may be provided as an Annex. Describe the management oversight of the Daily Records and indicate trigger points for further investigation. List any stall side diagnostic tests that are available and onsite diagnostic monitoring capacity.

Roles and responsibilities in establishing and maintaining an EDFZ (event organizers, Veterinary Services, experts, etc.)

An EDFZ can only function effectively with good governance in place and with a clearly articulated partnership between the industry and the Veterinary Services. Within this partnership, roles and responsibilities in establishing and maintaining an EDFZ should be clearly defined. It is acknowledged that, in every EDFZ, it is likely that there will different strengths and relationships between the industry and the Veterinary Services, nevertheless the partnership can be strengthened through the use of an Operations Manual, or similar document, that defines and describes the roles and responsibilities in establishing and maintaining the EDFZ.

The different roles and responsibilities to oversee the EDFZ must be described and the line of command between the different parties to the agreement should be highlighted.

The regular auditing of the policies and procedures in the EDFZ should be documented.

Risk mitigation

Evidence should be provided that the requirements for maintaining freedom are being met in accordance with Article 1.4.6 and the relevant disease-specific chapters of the *Terrestrial Code* (for listed diseases). For example, the measures in place to prevent the (re)-introduction of the disease in the country or zone should be described.

For each disease for which the EDFZ is self-declared free, the possible routes of transmission should be identified, including but not limited to, vehicles, people, vectors, fomites, animals, birds, wildlife, water and wind. All risks of disease introduction should be addressed and managed.

Biosecurity

Describe the main provisions of the biosecurity plan. The Biosecurity Plan can be annexed to the self-declaration of the EDFZ.

Contingency plans

Describe the main provisions of the contingency plans (Pre-Entry Isolation Facility, event venue, CZ, SZ, PZ (if applicable)). The contingency plans can be annexed to the self-declaration of the EDFZ.

Should clinical signs of an infectious or contagious disease be observed during the quarantine period or during the period of the event, indicate what steps will be taken on suspicion of an infectious disease and what will be done on confirmation.

Outbreaks of infectious or contagious disease may require quarantine or destruction of the horses affected or in contact. These steps in an outbreak require legislative powers and the steps may be specified in legislation. Describe the legislative instruments and the powers that are given. Indicate any compensation that is payable in the event of destruction. A copy of the legislation may be attached as an Annex.

Animal welfare should be included, details of daily inspections in stables, supervision during exercise and in competition, the provision of hospital facilities, access to equine specialists in the case of a major accident(s), and the application of transport standards should all be included in the planning.

The contingency plan should also address horse welfare and cover incidents during transport as well as in competition as biosecurity could be potentially compromised in some situations. E.g. transfer of a sick or injured horse to an equine hospital outside the CZ.

Reporting procedures

A clear reporting line and management structure are essential for the smooth and timely operation of the EDFZ. Outline the reporting procedures in place within the EDFZ and within the Veterinary Services. The outline of reporting procedures should indicate actions that are available at each level and where the decision points are located for each action.

It is essential that information can flow both ways in a reporting line. Indicate the communication channels that are open to relay information from the management to the competitors and any regular briefing schedules.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion should include the following:

- Statement of the WOAHA Delegate about taking the responsibility for the self-declaration;
- Reference to the relevant chapters and articles of the *Terrestrial Code*;
- Delineation of the EDFZ;
- The starting date (and expiration date if appropriate) of the self-declaration of freedom.



SECTION 3 VETERINARY CERTIFICATES

1. MOVEMENTS FOR WHICH A VETERINARY CERTIFICATE IS NEEDED

A veterinary certificate should be written for each anticipated crossing of a zonal or country border. This would include but not be limited to:

- Foreign Country (specified) into the CZ (where the foreign country is able to enter the CZ direct);
- Local country into the CZ (for local competitors to enter the CZ for the competition);
- Local country into the Protection Zone (for horses outside the PZ to enter the PZ);
- PZ into the SZ;
- SZ into the CZ;
- Foreign Country into the Pre-Entry Isolation Facility (where foreign country required to complete Post Arrival Quarantine before entry into CZ);
- Pre-Entry Isolation Facility into CZ;
- CZ to Veterinary Hospital (where Veterinary Hospital is outside the CZ);
- A “return” certificate for each of the above.

2. PRINCIPLES FOR VETERINARY CERTIFICATION

Veterinary Certification should be in accordance with Chapters 5.1. and 5.2. of the *Terrestrial Code*. Importantly:

- Veterinary Certificates should bear a unique identification number.
- Veterinary Certificates should have a clear and unambiguous title that reflects the purpose of the certificate.
- Each page of a multiple page veterinary certificate should bear the unique identification number of the certificate and state the number of the page out of the total number of pages of the certificate.
- Each veterinary certificate should be signed by the certifying veterinarian at the time of certification and bear the stamp of the Veterinary Authority.
- Signature and stamp must be in a different color to that of the printing of the certificate.
- Veterinary Certificates should be written in the language of the importing country and in such circumstances, they should also be written in a language understood by the certifying veterinarian. English is recommended for International veterinary certificates and may include a second language if it is possible the certifying veterinarian will not understand English.
- Veterinary Certificates should not require the certifying veterinarian to certify matters that are outside their knowledge or for which they cannot ascertain and verify.
- Veterinary Certificates should require appropriate unique identification of the horse to which the certification refers.
- Where appropriate, guidance notes should be included to indicate the information to be provided in the certificate.

- Veterinary Certificates cannot be altered through deletions or insertions except where specifically indicated in the certificate.
- Any amendments agreed by way of derogation with the importing country should be signed and stamped by the certifying veterinarian.
- Only original certificates are acceptable for travel. Copies may be retained where needed (for example at border crossings) provided the original certificate travels with the horses for the duration of the journey.

3. FORMAT OF THE VETERINARY CERTIFICATE

It is recommended that veterinary certificates are based on the following format:

- **Unambiguous title**
- **Section 1 - Identification.** The unique identification of the horse, stating name, age, breed, sex, and color, microchip number, passport number and issuing authority of the passport.
- **Section 2- Origin and destination.** Origin and destination of the horse, including name and address of consignor and consignee.
- **Section 3- Health Information.**
 - Country requirements
What diseases should be notifiable and not present for a specified time period in the country / zone of origin? What residency period should there have been in the country/ zone?
 - Holding requirements
What conditions are relevant to the holding of origin? Diseases which could be in the country but not present in the holding and for how long these diseases were not present
 - Horse requirements
Including history of contact with other horses, blood tests and other tests required prior to shipment, vaccinations required, examination for fitness to travel
- **Section 4. Transport. Information on transport – this usually relies on an owners or transporter’s declaration as this will occur after the certificate is signed.**
- **Section 5. Validity. The validity period of the certificate after it is signed plus the signature and stamp of certifying veterinarian.**
- **Section 6. Declaration. Owner’s or representative’s declaration.**

4. TEMPLATE OF VETERINARY CERTIFICATES

VETERINARY CERTIFICATE FOR THE TEMPORARY IMPORTATION OF HORSES

INTO

TO COMPETE IN THE EQUESTRIAN EVENTS OF THE.....

Number of Certificate:

Country of dispatch:

Ministry responsible:

I. IDENTIFICATION OF THE HORSE

Name:Breed:

Sex:Age:Color:

Microchip number (if available):

Number of accompanying identification document (passport):

Authority that issued the identification document:

II. ORIGIN AND DESTINATION OF THE HORSE

The horse is to be sent from:

.....
(place of export)

Directly to:

- a. Pre-Entry Isolation Facility
- b. Core Zone

By Railway / Road transport/ Aircraft/ Ship

.....
(Indicate means of transport & registration marks, flight number or registered name as appropriate)

Name and address of consignor:

Name and address of consignee:

III. HEALTH INFORMATION

I, the undersigned, certify that the Horse described above meets the following requirements:

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)
- f)
- g)
- (...)

IV. INFORMATION ON TRANSPORT

After due inquiry and based on the owners or representative declaration, the transport of the horse has been arranged to ensure that the horse will be sent directly from the premises of dispatch to the premises of destination without coming into contact with other animals not accompanied by the same certificate, in a vehicle cleaned and disinfected in advance with a disinfectant officially recognised in the country of dispatch.

V. VALIDITY

The certificate is valid for days.

| Date | Place | Stamp (*) and signature of the official veterinarian (Name in block letters, qualification and title) |
|------|-------|--|
| | | |

(*) The colour of the stamp must be different to that of the printing.

Notes:

1. Delete as appropriate.
2. Insert date.
3. The post-arrival quarantine period is 21 days.
4. The vaccinations against equine influenza must be entered in the passport of the horse.

DECLARATION OF THE OWNER OR REPRESENTATIVE

I, the undersigned(insert name in block letters),
the owner or representative of the above named horse declare that:

- (a) The vehicle or container for the transport of the horse from the premises of dispatch to the premises of destination was thoroughly cleaned and disinfected with an officially approved disinfectant and was treated with an officially approved insecticide immediately prior to the loading of the animal.
- (b) The horse will be sent directly from the premises of dispatch to the premises of destination and during the transportation, the horse will have no contact with animals not accompanied by the same certificate.
- (c) I have been informed that after arrival in the horse will be transported to the International Quarantine Centre or to the Core Zone.
- (d) The horse has been resident in the country of dispatch continuously for a period of at least.....days immediately prior to dispatch to.....and during this period has not been used for breeding.

Date:Place:



SECTION 4 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information on the establishment of Equine Disease Free Zones, please contact WOAHP (disease.status@woah.org) and the IHSC (goran.akerstrom@fei.org)

Self-declaration of disease freedom to WOAHP

- o Procedure for the application for the publication by WOAHP of a self-declaration of disease freedom
https://www.woah.org/en/document/sops-self-declarations_a/
- o Recently published self-declarations (including EDFZ)
<https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-offer/self-declared-disease-status/>
- o Self-declaration of EDFZ for the 17th Asian Games, Republic of Korea, 2014_
http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Publications_%26_Documentation/docs/pdf/bulletin/Bull_2014-3-ENG.pdf
- o Self-declaration of EDFZ for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, Brazil, 2016_
http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Publications_%26_Documentation/docs/pdf/bulletin/Bull_2016-2-ENG.pdf
- o Self-declaration of EDFZ for the 5th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games, Turkmenistan, 2017
http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Animal_Health_in_the_World/docs/pdf/Self-declarations/Turkmenistan_EDFZ_self-declaration_ANG.pdf
- o Self-declaration of EDFZ for the 18th Asian Games, Indonesia, 2018_
http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Animal_Health_in_the_World/docs/pdf/Self-declarations/Indonesia_selfdeclaration_EDFZ_Final.pdf

Equine disease free zone

- o OIE, Principles for the temporary establishment of Equine Disease Free Zones, 2013_
http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Specific_Issues/docs/pdf/OIE_Guideline_for_establishment_of_an_EDF_Z.pdf
- o OIE, Framework for the establishment of an Equine Disease Free Zone, 2017_
http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Our_scientific_expertise/docs/pdf/Chevaux/EDFZ3.pdf
- o G. Murray, EDFZ, OIE Bulletin, 2016, (1) 55-59_
http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Publications_%26_Documentation/docs/pdf/bulletin/Bull_2016-1-ENG.pdf

Biosecurity

- o FEI Campus (include comprehensive training material on biosecurity), register to access the content
<https://campus.fei.org/login/index.php>
- o Handbook for the management of High health, High Performance Horses (“HHP Handbook”)
http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Our_scientific_expertise/docs/pdf/Chevaux/A_HHP_Handbook_Oct_2018.pdf

WOAHP Standards

- o WOAHP *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*
<https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/standards/codes-and-manuals/terrestrial-code-online-access/>
- o WOAHP *Terrestrial Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines*
<https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/standards/codes-and-manuals/terrestrial-manual-online-access/>

Official recognition of African horse sickness (AHS) free status by WOAH

WOAH does not publish self-declarations of freedom from AHS. WOAH Member Countries may request the official recognition by WOAH of their AHS free status.

- o List of WOAH Member Countries officially recognised free from AHS
<https://www.woah.org/en/disease/african-horse-sickness/#ui-id-1>
- o Standard Operating Procedure for official recognition of disease status of WOAH Member Countries
<https://www.woah.org/en/document/sop-for-official-recognition-of-animal-health-status-and-endorsement-of-official-control-programmes/>