



at the heart of horse sport

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Lausanne, 30 November 2009

## **Re. Hyperflexion**

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Dear Dr McLean,

Thank you for your recent letter concerning hyperflexion. The alleged incident at Odense is still under investigation by the FEI Headquarters and I cannot comment further. However a number of experts have already stated that there is some doubt in their minds as to whether there was any ischaemia of the tongue as you suggest.

During its meeting in Copenhagen (DEN) on 15 November, the FEI Bureau had extensive discussion on the issue of hyperflexion. Some hyperflexion can be part of a normal stretching regime during the warm up, but as was clarified by the FEI report in 2006, we will not tolerate excessive or prolonged use of this technique. The FEI Bureau insisted that, with immediate effect and to promote clarity in this area, stewards in all disciplines use the disciplinary measures available to them, such as verbal warnings and yellow warning cards, to prevent any infringement of FEI rules.

The FEI is now engaged with World Horse Welfare, a leading international equestrian organisation, in addition to continued consultation with riders, trainers, officials and veterinarians to thoroughly research the issues. The further education of stewards will also continue to ensure that welfare issues at FEI events are dealt with promptly and professionally. We will be issuing them further guidance in the near future.

The FEI Veterinary Department is aware of the technology now available in this area, including rein tension meters and would like to investigate their potential uses further. Hence thank you for your offer and I ask you to contact the director responsible, Graeme Cooke, with further detail of your proposed trail so that it can be evaluated further. Please send this material by 20 December.

Yours,

HRH Princess Haya  
President

**President**  
HRH Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein