

## **New raceday officiating structure: Q&A**

### **Why do you need to change the officiating structure?**

The framework of raceday regulation currently in place in Britain has served us well. However, to ensure that Racing is best positioned to mitigate and manage the risks posed by contemporary integrity threats to so many sports, it's essential that we continue to evolve and improve our processes and systems.

It is best to anticipate potential problems and take action to address them *before* they happen. For racing, this means applying the highest possible standards of integrity, safety and welfare.

This starts with, but is not confined to, the “front line” of our raceday activities. All raceday regulatory officials are well placed to spot potential issues but there is currently no overall raceday lead, to whom all regulatory officials are accountable.

Having inadequate safeguards and processes in place exposes the sport to untenable levels of legal, reputational and financial risk.

Having a clearer and more transparent system of control will help us anticipate, mitigate and manage everything from day-to-day issues to worst case scenarios, when the sport would be under intense media, political and public scrutiny.

### **How is this an improvement on the current model?**

There are a number of ways in which the new approach is an improvement on the current model. These include:

- The officiating team will act as one team, with consistent professional standards, training and values
- The new Chief Steward role will provide clear accountability and escalation point for raceday decisions across a range of operational and regulated functions
- Greater consistency of decision-making across racedays
- More effective management and communication of major regulatory and/or welfare incidents
- Retains the involvement of honorary stewards, through the new Stewards' Panel Chair role, to provide valuable experience, an objective perspective and to contribute to independence of thought.
- Greater flexibility and efficiency of stewarding and operational resources, which is both essential and not possible under the current model
- It will include a programme of professional development of stewarding expertise amongst both new and existing stewards (both Chairs and professional stewards), as well as succession planning
- Brings British stewarding more in line with standards in other sports and best practice in international racing



**What do you mean by “one team”?**

The current raceday stewarding and operations system is complex, with multiple teams (e.g. stewarding teams, starters, clerks of the scales, judges, veterinary and doping control teams) operating together with a range of reporting lines and accountabilities.

While there are processes in place to ensure things run smoothly, there is no single raceday lead. This increases the level of risk if things go wrong, as they can – and will – do.

The “one team” approach ensures clear accountability and escalation point for raceday decisions across a range of operational and regulated functions, and consistent professional standards, training and values across the whole team.

**Why have you changed your mind after initially saying that you were going to move to an all-professional model?**

There has been much discussion around the issue of volunteer vs professional stewards. However, the proposals were not only about the distribution of professional and volunteer staff. They also included proposals around the training and upskilling of existing professional and volunteer staff, and also how accountability might be improved

When we started this process we initially, wrongly, announced that we would be consulting on a move to an all- professional model. However, it became clear very quickly that there were strong views on this issue. We took that on board and undertook an open consultation so we could gather a range of feedback and develop a broader range of options.

The Board took those views into account when choosing this model from a list of five potential stewarding models. Among those options was an all-professional model.

**Why couldn't you make the improvements you want within the current model?**

The current model is fractured, with a number of grey areas and blurred lines. We need all our raceday teams to work together as a single, coherent whole, to a consistently high standard.

The current model is, in effect, two different systems that were put together but never fully merged or integrated. This means that different cultures, practices and standards operate across the piece. It is important that we apply consistent standards across both voluntary and professional stewards.

The current model is also not sustainable and eventually we would have unmanageable gaps in our resourcing.

We need continuously to raise the standard, training requirements and time commitments of the role. The current model doesn't provide the flexibility or cost-effectiveness we need. Having said this, we have retained the best aspects of the current model.

**Were the consultation responses opposed to the removal of Honorary Stewards?**

As you would expect, there was a mixture of views, including some respondents who favoured a professional model and some who preferred the status quo.

However, there was a strong consensus that change was required, in one form or another.

We read all the responses and put forward five options to the BHA Board, with no guiding recommendation.

**Will the new panels be independent?**

The BHA is the independent regulator and its panels already operate in an independent and impartial manner. The Stewards' Panel Chairs will contribute to independence of thought, offering an objective perspective from a clearly defined and pivotal role.

On top of this, the main requirement of the stewarding panels is the need for them to be fair and procedurally correct. The new approach, using both a Stewards' Panel Chair and Chief Steward structure, will ensure that there are sufficient checks in place to ensure that the procedures followed are fair and impartial.

**Can the Chief Steward overrule the rest of the panel?**

No. However, they will have overall responsibility for ensuring that the rules of racing are followed and applied. Panels will continue to work as present, with a 2:1 majority carrying decisions.

**Who will have the deciding vote between the Chief Steward and Chair, in the event of a split decision?**

Split decisions are few and far between, as normally a consensus is reached. On a panel of three, the majority view prevails. This is consistent with other sporting tribunals and with racing panels internationally. If any one steward is outvoted, they would be expected to take collective responsibility for the decision. This is how a robust professional panel must work.

**The new model has fewer volunteer stewards on panels – does that mean you will be reducing the number of volunteer stewards?**

We have around 90 Honorary Stewards at the moment. While the new model does indeed move from two Honorary Stewards per panel down to one volunteer Stewards' Panel Chair, this does not necessarily mean that the working number of volunteers will also reduce by 50%. The number we need will continue to be dependent on geographical factors and the availability of stewards in different locations.

Because the time, training and development requirements of the new Stewards' Panel Chair role will increase, we recognise that some of our current Honorary Stewards may feel unable to commit to the role. If this were the case, we may actually need to do some recruitment to fill these roles. We won't know this for certain until we have gauged the level of interest from the current group of Honorary Stewards.



**Who will be responsible for performance management of the Stewards' Panel Chairs?**

The Chief Steward will be responsible and accountable for the management of the stewarding team on the day.

For longer term performance management and to ensure consistency of approach and standards the BHA is setting up a new Stewards' Consultation Forum, which will include the Deputy Heads of Stewarding and representatives of the Stewards' Panel Chairs.

**Will all current Honorary Stewards become Stewards' Panel Chairs?**

We will be asking our current Honorary Stewards to indicate whether they are interested in taking on this new and enhanced role via a simple expression of interest. All existing Honorary Stewards would be able to put themselves forward. There will be some minimum requirements for the Chairs, in terms of time, training and continuing development, so we are asking existing Honorary Stewards to consider carefully whether they are happy to make the necessary commitment.

**What happens to Honorary Stewards who are not willing or able to become Stewards' Panel Chairs?**

We are enormously grateful for the commitment and expertise of our Honorary Stewards. If any Honorary Stewards are unwilling or unable to take on the new Chairing role, then we will of course be keen to discuss other potential opportunities with them, e.g. as a BHA Raceday Assistants, as a member of a new Stewards' Consultation Forum, or on one of the various other BHA Committees.

**Will you be recruiting new stewards?**

We will be looking at the number and mix of current stewards, identifying gaps & recruiting as needed. As we recruit new stewards, we will seek to attract a greater diversity of applications.

**Will you be making any BHA staff redundant?**

No. Redundancies or staffing reductions were never an objective of this review and the new model includes more roles than we have now, not fewer. All current roles have been mapped to an equivalent role in the new Stewarding team structure, so all current staff are guaranteed a role.

**Who will be the new Chief Stewards? Will they be drawn from the existing Stipendiary Stewards, or from elsewhere?**

The raceday role of Chief Steward will be performed by the most senior Stipendiary Steward officiating at a fixture.

**What is the new raceday assistant role?**

This is a new, multi-skilled role that will provide support to a range of regulatory functions. The role help to provide some of the join-up between the stewards and other BHA raceday staff and teams. For example, the Raceday Assistant will help with:

- Parade ring duties (e.g. checking headgear, sponsorship, etc.)

- Gathering reports
- Gathering witnesses
- Requests (early/late)
- Withdrawals and monitoring horse identification
- Support for the Assistant Stewards
- Delegated tasks from the Stewards
- Assisting with other BHA raceday team roles
- Attending and contributing to briefings

**How much will it cost to introduce the new system?**

We had already included an additional £300k in the 2018 budget, which was based on initial cost estimates of the various options presented to the BHA Board, so additional costs are already being factored in to our budgets. This £300k is the amount that we will need to carry forward in the budget to make the changes in 2019.

Following the Board's decision, we undertook more detailed analysis of specific costs and the difference between the amount included in the 2018 budget and the amount needed in the 2019 budget is £30k. Experience suggests that we will find efficiencies as we implement the new system so we expect the costs to reduce over time.

**Will you be introducing new technology into your stewarding system, as other sports have done?**

Yes, we have a number of projects in progress, including one with Hawkeye. We are continuously assessing new technology, such as the new anti-doping technology introduced earlier in 2018.

We will continue to embrace a range of technological improvements and will continue to evolve in line with these, e.g. we will continue to consider the feasibility of centralised stewarding. While football has introduced VAR, it is not the end of the story and we imagine that they will continue to improve the process and technology around this.

**Who is paying for this?**

The budget will come from the BHA's regulatory costs, though we believe that these changes will help to improve confidence in the integrity of racing and its attractiveness as a betting product, which will by extension improve racing's income.

**When will you be introducing the new system?**

We expect the introduction of the new system to begin from early 2019.