
Overview

This standard is about being able to drive pairs of horses for commercial purposes. It includes being able to select horses for commercial work according to their physical ability and fitness, temperament, experience and appearance. You will be able to match pairs of horses together for their physical ability, temperament and training. You will be able to select and fit harness for a range of commercial purposes, and select from a range of suitable horse-drawn vehicles. You will understand how to set up and adjust the harness for optimum performance.

The standard includes being able to direct the activities of the harness horse grooms crew while preparing horses to be driven, putting-to/taking out and while driving.

The standard includes being able to drive pairs of horses for specialist commercial purposes, and ensure they are trained and familiarised with working in a range of commercial situations.

You will need to be fully aware of the importance of health, safety and animal welfare in connection with this activity.

You will need to ensure the safety of yourself and others, and the welfare of the horses, at all times.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. identify the commercial purposes for which the pair of horses will be used
2. ensure appropriate clothing and personal protective equipment is worn for the activity
3. assess the temperament of individual horses, and evaluate their suitability for a range of commercial uses
4. ensure horses are trained to work in close proximity to spectators, crowds, other horses, and to cope with flash photography, the use of drones and other distractions
5. match pairs of horses for their physical ability, temperament, training and appearance
6. select horse-drawn vehicles for a range of purposes which are suitable for the intended commercial purpose
7. select and fit harness to the horses
8. carry out routine pre-drive checks on horses, harness and vehicles
9. direct the activities of the crew of harness horse grooms to assist with maintaining the safety and welfare of the horses, passengers, spectators and other road and area users
10. drive pairs of horses for commercial purposes in accordance with legislative requirements and codes of practice for commercial harness horse driving, and with consideration for other road users
11. monitor the behaviour of the horses while driving, and take positive action to minimise their stress and maintain their wellbeing
12. ensure appropriate records of training are maintained and stored as required by relevant legislation and the organisation you work for
13. assess hazards and control the risks to horses, yourself and others in connection with this activity

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. your role and responsibilities in driving pairs of horses for commercial purposes
2. the clothing and personal protective equipment that should be worn for the activity
3. how to assess the fitness and ability of individual horses for commercial work
4. how to assess the temperament and behaviour of individual horses
5. how to train horses to work in close proximity to spectators, crowds, other horses, and to cope with flash photography, the use of drones and other distractions
6. how to select horses to work together as a pair
7. how to determine on which side of the pole each horse should work
8. how to select, fit, set up and adjust the harness for optimum performance
9. how to select suitable commercial horse-drawn vehicles
10. how to monitor individual horses while driving
11. how to minimise stress and how to promote the wellbeing of horses while driving
12. how to direct the crew of harness horse grooms to assist effectively with maintaining control, and the safety and welfare of the horses and passengers while driving
13. how to manage the safety of spectators and participants in commercial activities while driving
14. the legislative requirements and codes of practice relating to driving pairs of horses on the public highway for commercial purposes
15. the importance of training horses to cope with unusual sights, sounds, and equipment used by photographers and others
16. the importance of establishing and maintaining records of horse training
17. the risks to horses, yourself and others and how to control these
18. your responsibilities under relevant animal health and welfare and health and safety legislation and codes of practice.

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Suite Equine

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