



P.O. Box 30617, Kyalami, 1684, South Africa

Physical Address: South African Equestrian Federation, No 1 Dahlia Road, Kyalami, **Johannesburg.**

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South African Equestrian Federation AGM March 2014

Presidential update

The past year was a year of big change and turbulence within the Equestrian Fraternity of South Africa, especially within the old SAEA disciplines. Firstly the previous Vice President, Mr. Deon Augustyn resigned and then the previous President, Mr. Steve Rault also resigned due to his health. Both resignations came at a very difficult time for the Federation when continuity was of utmost importance and when the SAEA disciplines were about to join the Federation as independent Associations.

Shortly before the resignation of Mr. Rault, the Federation grew from the following 8 members:

- Endurance Ride Association of South Africa (ERASA)
- Equestrian Saddle Seat Association of South Africa (ESSASA)
- South African Equestrian Tent-Pegging Association (SAETA)
- Polocrosse Association of South Africa (PASA)
- South African Polo Association (SAPA)
- Western Riding Association of South Africa (WEASA)
- South African Equestrian Association (SAEA)
- South African National Equestrian Schools Association (SANESA)

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And then the following Associations have also joined the SAEF from the 1st of August taking its member total for constituent and associate members to 14:

- Carriage Driving Association of South Africa (CDASA)
- Dressage South Africa (DSA)
- South African Equitation Association (SAEQA)
- Eventing South Africa (ESA)
- Showing Association of South Africa (SASA)
- South Africa Show Jumping (SASJ)
- Vaulting Association of South Africa (VASA)

The above mentioned members were formed with the disbanding of SAEA, which was started under the guidance of Mr. Rault and Mr. Augustyn. It is important to remember that the SAEF is not a replacing body for SAEA. These individual Associations are there now to fulfill the roll that SAEA played for each of their own disciplines. Therefore independent rules, regulations and disciplinary codes are important to be created and complied with, within each discipline Association. We will also today formally address the ratification of these new members. The constitutions of these members were forwarded to all the older SAEF Associations. In accordance with the SAEF Constitution, the following requirements must be met for membership in accordance with section 10 of the SAEF constitution:

10.1.1 It has a constitution which provides for:

(a) Open elections to be held at intervals of not more than four (4) years; as well as holding Annual General Meetings for the membership.

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(b) Regular audited financial statements to be presented to its membership on an annual basis.

(c) file a declaration that it will always comply with the Constitution, Statutes, Regulations and decisions of SAEF, the relevant international member body to which that Constituent or associate member is affiliated, and SASCOC, and ensure that these are also observed and respected by its members, clubs, officials and riders.

(d) file a declaration that it recognizes the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Lausanne, as specified in this Constitution.

(e) file a declaration to the effect that the member guarantees that it can make decisions independently of any external entity.

(f) file a copy of the minutes of every Annual General Meeting within 90 days after the meeting.

10.1.2 It has complied fully with such provisions of its constitution and has provided proof of such compliance to SAEF.

A two thirds confirmation in regards to the acceptance was received from the old Associations. When the issue of ratification is discussed, the current members with voting rights must decide in regards to the ratification.

With regards to the disbandment of the SAEA, mistakes was made, this no one can deny, but the process was new to all and it was a definite learning process for all. Still the show had to go on and I do believe that we as a team working together, have come a long way in a short time to find a definite way forward for the Federation in the form of a structure that has now been agreed by all, subject to approval of SASCOC.

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Mrs. Gisela Pieterse from ERASA did a presentation regarding the club system of ERASA. It was decided that the club would be the portal of access to the sport and all registrations and payments of membership fees are done at the club. We have however now been informed by SASOC that although the club system is supported, we have been informed of the following by SASOC in regards to clubs:

You are also referred to the provision relating to the voting strength at an Annual General Meeting, specifically in regard to clauses 11.3.1 and 11.3.1.3. and are further advised that the clause relating to the membership of a club system as a pre-requisite, is unfortunately incorrect.

This does obviously, specifically in regards to the new Associations, change this situation and same will have to be discussed in more detail at the appropriate time.

Further with regards to the old SAEA Associations it was decided when the unbundling took place that these Association's riders would first register with the SAEF and pay the SAEF levy and then register with a club and the National Association of his or her choice. This was implemented and the levies for this current year has been received already. Thus money from the members of these new Associations has already been received.

It has since been decided that this is cumbersome with much duplication. Although the process cannot be changed in the middle of the registration cycle for these Associations, it was decided that from the next registration cycle the process would be changed to follow the systems of all the other Associations (such as ERASA).

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The responsibility for the paying over of the SAEF levy per athlete will also fall with each Association's national body.

Further in regards to the letter that was received from SASCOC, the following was also stated in the letter:

You are further advised that your executive should consist of the President of each province plus the duly elected representative of the Olympic Commission (which should come from an Olympic Sport). Your current system relating to the Constituent Members, is unacceptable.

The SAEF will need to receive more and precise information from SASCOC as to what is expected in regards to the formation of the SAEF council.

It must be remembered that each of our Associations are unique with each having its own rules and regulations, and there should not be a risk of the one Association interfering with the other in regards to that Associations internal discipline issues. How this can be achieved while still being in line with the requirements of SASCOC, will have to be addressed in constructive dialog with SASCOC. It must be remembered however that if internal processes is not followed in regards to complaints received, and if every complaint is addressed without it first be handled internally within the SAEF, it does make the running of the sport very difficult.

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We have all agreed on a structure and it may not be ideal to change such agreed structure totally again, it may very well be possible to tweak the said structure so as still to be able to comply with the requirements of SASCOC.

It must be agreed that we as the SAEF does want to comply with SASCOC, while still being in charge of our own sport.

It was already agreed that Provincial SAEF Federations will be formed in each Province that will adhere to the geo political borders of the country. These Provincial Federations are to have voting rights on the General Council of the SAEF. The exact structure still needs to be negotiated with SASCOC in good faith. It is important to note that the SAEF will not be returning to the old system of horse societies concerning the old SAEA disciplines. Horse societies still in existence are not in line with the SAEF's mandate and there is no obligation on members of the SAEF and its Associations to belong to these horse societies. The Provincial Federations that are being created will differ vastly from the old SAEA horse societies in that:

- The club system will still be the current system per province and each club must be on an equal footing with other Equestrian clubs with regards to the rights of that club, be it a single discipline club or a multi discipline club;
- There will have to be proper control with regards to ensuring that the competition act is not breached within the Provinces and that all clubs compete on an equal footing;
- There will be 9 Provincial Federations aligned with the Geo Political borders of South Africa;

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- The Provincial Federation will be representative of all the Associations that are present and active in that specific Province;
- The council of the Provincial Federations will consist of the Provincial Chairs from the various Associations, and within time Regions will also be incorporated;
- Issues that are in relation to a specific Association for example a dispute with regards to Polo in a province should still be handled by that specific Association;
- The Province will handle all issues and disputes that are in relation to the Province as a whole;

Apart from the above, how administration is handled in a Province and how funding is to be raised, will be for the Provinces to decide. I do however recommend that a levy be considered per entry at a show or competition as this will motivate the Provinces to hold more Equestrian competitions and grow the sport. It must however be done with the input and agreement of all the Associations in that Province and one Association should not have more rights than another.

With regards to the complaints that were received about the passport system that was introduced and the costs of R 285 per passport excluding postage, and that the passport had to be validated with the SAEF office in Johannesburg, it was decided that Passport agents would for the interim be appointed in each Province and the passport will be sold at a cost of R 150 per passport excluding postage. As soon as the Provincial Federations are up and running the issue of Passport agents in a Province can again be revisited.

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We are all very passionate about the Equestrian Sport. If this passion is aimed in a uniform direction and goal, we will be able to build a very strong and successful Federation that will act in the best interest of all Equestrian Athletes. Soon we will have to reach a place where we stop building structures and start practicing the sport in full swing again.

We will soon have a new Website and our Facebook page has more members than ever before. We were also provided with the opportunity to inform the equestrian public of the way forward via HQ magazine. Also the new Provincial Federations will be of great assistance to the Federation with regards to communicating with the public.

The Portfolio committees have been formed and are up and running. We will have a representative of the athletes' commission sitting on Council shortly. Hopefully a report back on the work of each Portfolio committee can be provided at the next Council meeting.

In regards to the new constitution that has to be finalized, we will not be in a position today to have a new constitution passed and the process is still to be finalized. As soon as same has been done a Special General Meeting will be called for the acceptance of the new constitution.

In regards to voting for the new President, we were also informed by SASCOC that same can only be done under the current constitution and that the new members are not

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reflected as such in the new constitution. Thus they will not have voting powers. This is very unfortunate as all the nominations that was received was from the new members.

The recommendation is that we proceed as we are currently doing, proceed with the decision in regards to the ratification of the new members. As stated, the forming Associations have already accepted our New Associations and the ratification of new members is an issue that the majority of the Council should decide upon. There has however been some requirements placed on this acceptance and more specifically that an assurance is provided by each Association that their committees provincially and nationally are elected democratically as are theirs. We have also been informed by SASCOC to ensure that all our Associations comply with good corporate Governance and therefore the elections in this regard will have to proceed.

Some of the new Associations are already in line with this requirement according to the information I have received. The cut off dates for these elections are the end of May 2014. I hope that all Associations will ensure that they are compliant so as to protect themselves from possible disputes and legal battles.

To the new Associations. We have come so far and we cannot turn back now. You have all been formed and we are in the final stretch of the race. Thank you for the hard work that you have put in so far. We must however face the reality that a lot of the members that compete in some of your disciplines are unhappy. The three major grounds of unhappiness that we have picked up are:

- Not sufficient flow of information to the people in the more rural areas;

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- Over control and regulation of training shows;
- Provincial and National councils of Associations that have not been voted for by the members after the forming of the Associations;
- Increase in fees for athletes who compete in more than one discipline and the registration of the same horse more than once. This complaint is apparently mostly with regards to the sports of Dressage, Eventing, Jumping, Showing and Equitation.

A suggestion in regards to a sliding scale for affiliation fees was forwarded to your Association heads and it will be appreciated if some solution can be found in this regard. If this is to be implemented, it will have to be decided between the relevant Associations. The SAEF will be more than willing to assist in arranging a meeting to discuss this and our offices are open for you to utilize if you so wish. It will do no harm to consider this suggestion. Also as each Association makes the decision if training shows are allowed, it may assist in boosting confidence in the members if training shows are more positively looked at and not over regulated.

As stated above, certain requirements have been set for acceptance and ratification and one of them is the assurance that Provincial and National Committees are elected democratically. All new Associations have already been informed of this requirement. Some new Associations have already adhered to this requirement.

I do believe that if the above issues are properly addressed and if the registration process is made easier for all, and if strong Provincial Federations are created, that do

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not interfere with the autonomy of individual Associations, much of the unhappiness that is in existence with regards to the dismantling of SAEA will be addressed.

The focus of delivering a strong, inexpensive and easily accessible Federation and Associations will require a united front and not the political battle field that has been evident.

I want to thank all who have given me support over the last few months, and ask that you focus your thoughts and efforts on building a strong, inexpensive and easily accessible Federation for all.

I would like to especially thank the team that I worked with in this short time namely Mr. Clive Peddle, acting Vice President, Mrs. Tana Martini, Treasurer, Mr. Wessel Strauss, Secretary General and the staff of the SAEF, Robyn, Amy and Helen for keeping the ship afloat in a very difficult time.

Yours Sincerely,

Dewald Villoen

Acting President SAEF

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