Race Incident Communications Guideline

In the immediate aftermath of a race incident involving a horse or jockey, timely and transparent communication is critical. Concerned individuals will typically search for the horse or jockey name on social media soon after the incident, or Google the horse or jockey name later in the day. The following guidelines are designed to help manage communications effectively, ensuring that concerned individuals can easily access information and feel reassured about the well-being of those involved.

Aims to be balanced:

1. **Ease of information access to build trust**
   - Our primary aim is to ensure that anyone seeking updates on the condition of a horse or jockey can find this information swiftly and effortlessly. This approach helps to build trust with the public, demonstrating our commitment to transparency and the welfare of all participants in the sport.

- **Minimize unnecessary attention to minor incidents**
   - While transparency is key, it's also important to avoid drawing undue attention to minor incidents that are resolved without significant consequences. This requires a delicate balance in how information is presented and shared.

The role of Light Up Racing

Compliment Racetrack efforts
Use the Light Up Racing social media channels and platforms, and engage the community network to step in on information corrections and clarification, particularly where it is inappropriate for the racetrack to do so.

Accuracy and empathy
Prioritize the accuracy of information, reflecting a genuine commitment to the welfare of those involved and the broader community's concerns. Create authentic and empathetic connections between the public and the grassroots racing industry.

Proactive Community involvement
Leverage and integrate the Light Up Racing community for a broader, more personal perspective, enhancing the authentic narrative.

Incident Status

Incident level: E
A drama-free incident.
Horse and jockey appear to be fine.

Incident level: D
A serious health issue for the horse.
Not fatal and the incident not visible to race attendees.
Not a Grade 1 race, feature raceday or high-profile horse.

Incident level: C
A non-fatal health issue to a horse in a public area, in view of race attendees.
A non-fatal, non-serious incident in a Grade 1 race or high-profile horse.
A fatal incident not visible to race attendees, not on a feature raceday.

Incident level: B
A fatal incident not visible to race attendees, on a feature raceday.
A serious incident in a Grade 1 race or high-profile horse.

Incident level: A
A visible fatal incident on a feature raceday.
A serious incident in a Grade 1 race or high-profile horse.

Communication platforms

Racetrack Commentator
- Whenever an incident occurs with a horse, no matter how minor or visible, it is recommended the raceday commentator provides an update on the horse's health and veterinary clearance status.
- Integrating updates on horse welfare into the raceday commentary serves as a proactive measure to promote a culture of care and transparency at the racetrack. This approach ensures that all attendees, from casual visitors to seasoned enthusiasts, are aware that the well-being of the horses is paramount.
- By making these updates a staple of the raceday commentary, it reassures spectators that horse welfare is not just a policy but a core value of the racing experience, enhancing the public's trust.

On-air TV Commentator
- Whenever an more serious or visual incident occurs with a horse, (Level C and above), the on-air commentator should provide an update, keeping the audience informed respectfully and calmly, maintaining a focus on the welfare of the horse and the sport's commitment to safety.

Racetrack Twitter
- A simple update on the horse's health and veterinary clearance status can be supplied at any incident level, however it is highly recommended for an incident status of Level C and above.
- Retweets of all trainer horse health updates following an incident.

Trainer, Owner Social Media
- A simple update on the horse's health and veterinary clearance status can be supplied at any incident level, however it is highly recommended for an incident status of Level C and above.
- Photos and videos are highly recommended.
- Multiple updates can be posted, even if the horse health status has not majorly changed.
- Only post on social media after the content has been sent to the horse's connections.

The Light Up Racing Community Group on WhatsApp will be utilized to make contact with the trainer and connections to encourage participation in this open communication strategy, support them through it and assist with the content gathering process if required.

Light Up Racing Social Media
- For any incident, Light Up Racing will promptly post updates on Twitter and Instagram Stories. This includes sharing original content or retweeting posts from trainers, owners, or any official connections to provide real-time information.
- This will ensure that concerned viewers, fans or attendees can find an update on the horse after completing a quick social media search for the name.
- The content will be posted on Twitter and Instagram Stories. Positive content will be posted on Instagram and TikTok.
- Light Up Racing will also monitor social media for questions, negative responses or misinformation to clarify.

Incident Response

1. Information gathering and verification
- Establish clear communications channels with the racetrack.
- Quickly connect with the racetrack team for accurate details.
- Compile preliminary information, ensuring it is fact-checked , verified and receives necessary approvals for public release.

2. Utilizing Light Up Racing Community
- Aim for visual content to accompany the written update, such as photos or videos. These should be natural and authentic, such as the horse having a pick of grass, eating dinner in its box, or being hand walked.
- Solicit content (updates, stories, visuals) from trainers or owners using the Light Up Racing community groups and photographers.
- If there is a fatality, use the photography network to find an image of the horse with a person, perhaps the raceday groom or connections.

3. Release the post on the required channels
- Ensure all contributed content is verified for approvals, accuracy and appropriateness before dissemination.
- Include educational content such as links to 'Common Questions' that explains common racing injuries and their treatments. This can help demystify medical terms and procedures, reducing anxiety and speculation among the public.

3. Ongoing updates and transparency
- Provide regular updates on the condition and progress of the horse or jockey, even if there's no significant change. Consistent communication helps to reassure the public that the situation is being monitored closely.
- Monitor public feedback actively, ready to adjust communication strategies to maintain engagement and trust.

Communications Style

Personalize Language

Always refer to horses and jockeys by name, using appropriate pronouns rather than depersonalizing terms like "it" or "the horse/jockey." This personal touch emphasizes our respect and care for the individuals involved.

Clarity and Precision

Use simple, clear language to describe the incident and its aftermath. When necessary, employ medical terms to explain conditions or treatments accurately, but avoid jargon that could confuse the layperson. This ensures that the information is accessible to all, regardless of their familiarity with racing or medical terminology.

Empathy is Key

Lead all communications with empathy, acknowledging the concern and emotions of the audience. Expressions of care and concern should be genuine and forefront in any update or statement.

Sensitive Language

Avoid phrases like "broke-down" that may carry negative connotations or cause distress. Choose language that is factual yet sensitive, focusing on the wellbeing of the horse or jockey rather than the severity of the incident.

Visual and Emotional Connection

Whenever possible, pair updates with images or videos that evoke a positive emotional response. For instance, a photo of the horse in a stable setting post-incident, looking calm and cared for, can be very reassuring. Ensure that any visuals used respect the dignity and privacy of those involved and do not sensationalize the incident.

Immediate Response

As soon as an incident occurs, quickly gather accurate information from reliable sources, including veterinary staff or race officials. This ensures that communications are based on facts and can be disseminated promptly.

Incident Level Flow-chart

Was the health of the horse or jockey visibly compromised during the incident?

YES	NO
	Level E

Was the incident visible to the public,
or did it involve a high-profile horse or a Grade 1 race?

YES	NO
	Level D

Was the incident fatal, even if not in public view?

YES	NO
	Level C

Did the incident occur in clear view of attendees OR during a feature raceday?
OR Is it a serious incident involving a Grade 1 race or high-profile horse?

YES	NO
	Level B

Level A

Connect with Us

🌐	Our website	**www.lightupracing.com**
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📢	Social media handle	**@lightupracing**