



Media Release for immediate release

NED makes swift changes to protect horse owners

The recent emergence of several incidents of horses being re-passported when out on loan has prompted the National Equine Database (NED) team to introduce measures to reduce the opportunity for this to happen.

Cases coming to light recently have involved freezemarked horses being put on loan and subsequently sold on for slaughter with new passports, causing great distress to their owners.

Under European Union legislation it is not mandatory for Passport Issuing Organisations (PIOs) to collect freezemark information and supply it to NED, although many of them do. Recent cases of re-passported horses have revolved around freezemarks associated with horses' original passports either not being marked on those passports, or the freezemark details not being supplied to NED. When the PIO being approached to issue the new (second) passport checked NED to see if there was already a passport for a horse with that freezemark, they did not find a passport linked to the freezemark supplied.

To minimise the possibility of this situation recurring, Defra is due to suggest to all PIOs that they check NED for existing freezemarks and microchips before issuing passports to adult horses. However, to strengthen the response, NED will shortly be launching an online facility for horse owners to notify NED directly of their horse's freezemark and/or microchip details. This information will clearly be marked as data which has been entered by owners, rather than supplied by PIOs, but it will mean that a warning flag is raised if a second passport is applied-for and will indicate to the PIO that further investigation might be required before a passport is issued.

"Once it goes live, the success of this initiative relies on horse owners making sure that they have checked and entered security information for all the horses they own on to NED" says NED spokesman Jan Rogers "NED is clearly the place where all horse information comes together to protect and inform the horse owning community and we are pleased to be able to work with horse owners to deliver the service they need by constantly reviewing what NED can offer".

Additional information

From July 2009 it will be mandatory for all equines to be microchipped at first registration.

The microchipping of adult horses with pre-existing passports is strongly recommended by Defra. The supplying of microchip information for such horses to by PIOs to NED is also strongly recommended.

NED: www.nedonline.co.uk Defra: www.defra.gov.uk

Jan Rogers: T: 07725 332595 E: janrogersequine@aol.com