

EQUESTRIAN VICTORIA

DRESSAGE HIGH PERFORMANCE PATHWAY STRATEGY

2021 – 2028



EQUESTRIAN VICTORIA HIGH PERFORMANCE AND PATHWAYS | SEPTEMBER 2021



Photo: Stephen Mowbray

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live your equestrian dream

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EQUESTRIAN VICTORIA DRESSAGE HIGH PERFORMANCE PATHWAY

INTRODUCTION

Equestrian Victoria and Dressage Victoria are committed to supporting our members to live their equestrian dream.

To do this, we need to provide a clear, visible and achievable pathway for our riders to progress through as they work towards state and national squad selection ... and beyond.

A collaborative approach was taken in designing this Dressage High Performance Pathway, bringing together a range of stakeholders to help inform the document and ensure the pathway met the needs of the Dressage community. Over 4 months, we:

- Identified and consulted with the relevant stakeholders
- completed a SWOT analysis
- identified key priority areas
- agreed a set of strategic priorities against our key performance areas
- developed an action plan to guide the development, launch and embedding of the Performance pathway

We thank those who contributed to this piece for their generosity of time and for sharing their knowledge and experience in developing this pathway.

The Dressage High Performance Pathway should provide riders with a visible snapshot of 'what's possible' in Dressage, and help them identify where they are today, and guide them to progress further through the Pathway in the future.

We are delighted to launch this important tool to support the development of Victoria's Dressage community.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During 2019-2020 Equestrian Victoria (EV) undertook extensive member research, conducted a strategic resourcing review, and conducted a mid-plan review of the 2018-2023 Equestrian Victoria Strategic Plan. With the revised Strategic Plan published, EV has continued its focus on achieving the plan's objectives. This includes reviewing the development pathways in Victoria for riders across all disciplines and pathways.

This Performance Pathway Plan aims to support the development of Victorian riders, coaches and competitions, and the enhancement of governance and leadership structures in Victoria, to give our community the best opportunity to live their equestrian dream as they progress through Equestrian Australia's national performance pathway.

This plan also aims to underpin both the national equestrian performance pathway and Equestrian Australia's High Performance Strategic Plan.



VISION

Provide leadership and pathways to enable all participants to live their equestrian dream



MISSION

A high performance pathway structure that enables the sustainable success of Victorian riders at national and international events



OBJECTIVES

A clear rider pathway
Riders progressing along the pathway towards national squads
Strong results by Victorian riders at national and international events



VALUES

- Professionalism**
 - Striving for excellence
- Integrity**
 - Ethical, responsible and accountable
- Transparency**
 - Open and honest communication
- Respect**
 - Partnerships, collaboration and inclusive engagement
- Horse Welfare**
 - Underpinning these values is the welfare of the horse



STAKEHOLDERS

Those who influence or are influenced by what we do include:

- Riders
- Coaches and Officials
- Administrators
- Volunteers
- Member Clubs
- Parents and Supporters
- Equestrian centre owners and managers
- Victorian Government including Sport & Recreation Victoria, Victorian Institute of Sport (VIS) and Visit Victoria
- Equestrian Australia (EA)
- Sponsors, Suppliers and Commercial Partner
- Local and national media

DRESSAGE SWOT ANALYSIS



STRENGTHS

- A popular discipline with healthy participant numbers
- Good diversity of ages across rider community – it is a sport for all ages
- There is an existing EV squad structure to support rider development
- Squads have access to knowledgeable EA-accredited coaches and other industry professionals, e.g. vets
- Good number and variety of competitions to support rider development
- Quality facilities are available to support rider development
- Good number and geographical spread of clubs
- Dedicated volunteers passionate to assist in enhancing the development of Dressage in Victoria on many levels
- Riders' representative acting as an advocate for riders and a conduit between riders and relevant Dressage bodies



WEAKNESSES

- There is no clear, publicly available rider pathway diagram
- Some coaches in the system have no formally recognised coaching qualifications
- Some riders and coaches do not buy in to EV's squad system
- Talented riders sometimes do not have access to, or are not matched with, good horses



THREATS

- Unaccredited coaches who are working outside of EV's structure
- No structured system to support high quality horse development and retention in Victoria
- The high expense of the sport
- High cost of competition entries/membership compared to HRCV/PCV events
- High coach accreditation costs



OPPORTUNITIES

- EA's off horse programs enables access to good quality off-horse education materials
- The recent appointment of a performance pathway coordination staff resource in the EV office
- Good inter-squad collaboration and communication
- Access to a good variety and geographical spread of quality dressage venues and clubs in Victoria
- Provide a diverse range of squad activities that address a variety of rider learning styles
- Engage a range of coaches for state squads, with coach selection criteria that ensures both quality and continuity within and between the squad structure and pathways
- Illustrate to members a clear pathway to, and progression through, Victorian squads
- Deliver Victorian squads in a manner that promotes learning in an inclusive and supportive environment
- Promote good quality EA accredited coaches within the Squad system
- Foster stronger relationships with HRCV and PCV
- Facilitate access to international coaches where appropriate

DRESSAGE HIGH PERFORMANCE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

THE PERFORMANCE PATHWAY STRATEGY IS FOCUSED ON SIX KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS THAT UNDERPIN SUCCESS:

1. Riders
2. Coaches
3. Governance and Leadership
4. Training Environment
5. Competition
6. Welfare of the Horse

RIDERS

- Publish a clear rider and horse pathway diagram, explaining what riders need to do to progress, and the support and rider requirements associated with each step
- Encourage Victorian squad riders to set individual performance plans (IPP) to clarify goals and expectations, and to foster rider accountability
- Increase opportunities for riders in regional areas
- Regularly assess the effectiveness of the current squad programs in order to guide future growth and planning

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

- Foster a culture and deliver squad training sessions that support rider and horse development at all stages of the pathway
- Dressage Victoria to monitor and advise EV on the Dressage performance pathway strategy
- Engage regularly with Equestrian Australia to ensure the Victorian Dressage pathway functions in a way that supports EA's pathway for rider development

COMPETITON

- Provide a range of competitions for all riders, from club to state and national level. Both metropolitan and regional areas to be included.
- Competition schedules for state squad riders to be managed through individual performance plans to ensure they are appropriate for rider development
- Develop a positive and encouraging approach to Peer Support at competitions.

COACHES

- Support coach development with fit for purpose educational tools
- Ensure regular coach development workshops
- Support coach involvement in the Victorian squad program and in the individual performance planning of their riders
- Where appropriate, initiate individual development plans with squad coaches
- Ensure all squad coaches are currently accredited and insured

TRAINING ENVIRONMENT

- Rider safety and horse welfare to be the top priorities in all training
- The curriculum of off-horse education for state squad riders to be structured around EA training modules.
- Training to be planned and monitored to produce horses that are fit for purpose for Dressage competition
- Riders to be exposed to educational opportunities that enhance their development as athletes within the sport (eg: rider fitness and well being, mindset, organisation, competition routine)

WELFARE OF THE HORSE

- Equestrian Victoria, Equestrian Australia and the FEI expect all those involved in equestrian sport to adhere to and acknowledge, the FEI Code of Conduct for the Welfare of the Horse.
- EV, EA & the FEI urge all involved with the sport to attain the highest levels of education in their areas of expertise relevant to the care and management of the competition horse.

TARGETS AND TIMELINES

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA	STRATEGIC PRIORITY	ACTION	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
RIDERS				
	Publish a clear rider pathway diagram, explaining what riders need to do to progress, and the support and rider requirements associated with each step	Develop Dressage High Performance Pathway map	High	Sep 2021
	Encourage Victorian squad riders to set individual performance plans to clarify goals and expectations, and to foster rider accountability	Establish IPP format and implement for higher level squad riders (EV office to coordinate)	High	Sep 2021
		Determine a system for implementing to lower level squad riders	Medium	Feb 2022
	Increase opportunities for riders in regional areas	Dressage Victoria Committee to plan and coordinate with clubs	Medium	Sep 2021
	Regularly assess the effectiveness of the current squad programs in order to guide future growth and planning	EV to annually review the squad programs	High	May 2022
COACHES				
	Support coach development with fit for purpose educational tools	Engage coaches in group development workshops alongside the EV Coaching Committee	Medium	Sep 2021
		Draw on EA's coach education modules	Low	EA dependent
	Support coach involvement in the Victorian squad program and in the individual performance planning of their riders	Invite coaches to be involved in riders' IPP planning and squad activities	Medium	May 2022
	Where appropriate, initiate individual development plans with identified squad coaches	Working with the EV Coaching Committee to implement the IPPs for coaches, leveraging off Equestrian Australia where possible	Low	May 2022
	Ensure all squad coaches are currently accredited and insured	EV to audit current squad coach accreditation and insurances	High	Sep 2021

TARGETS AND TIMELINES

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA	STRATEGIC PRIORITY	ACTION	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
	Foster a culture and deliver squad training sessions that support rider and horse development at all stages of the pathway	Review current squad system, including culture and attitudes within it	High	Sep 2021
		Develop a process for obtaining rider feedback on the pathway	Medium	Dec 2021
		Staff and volunteers to promote EV's values and lead by example	High	Sep 2021
	Dressage Victoria to monitor and advise EV on the Dressage High Performance Pathway strategy	Discipline committee to monitor pathway and provide feedback to EV	High	Sep 2021
	Engage regularly with Equestrian Australia to ensure the Victorian Dressage Performance pathway functions in a way that supports EA's pathway for rider development	Establish regular contact with EA's Dressage Committee	High	Nov 2021

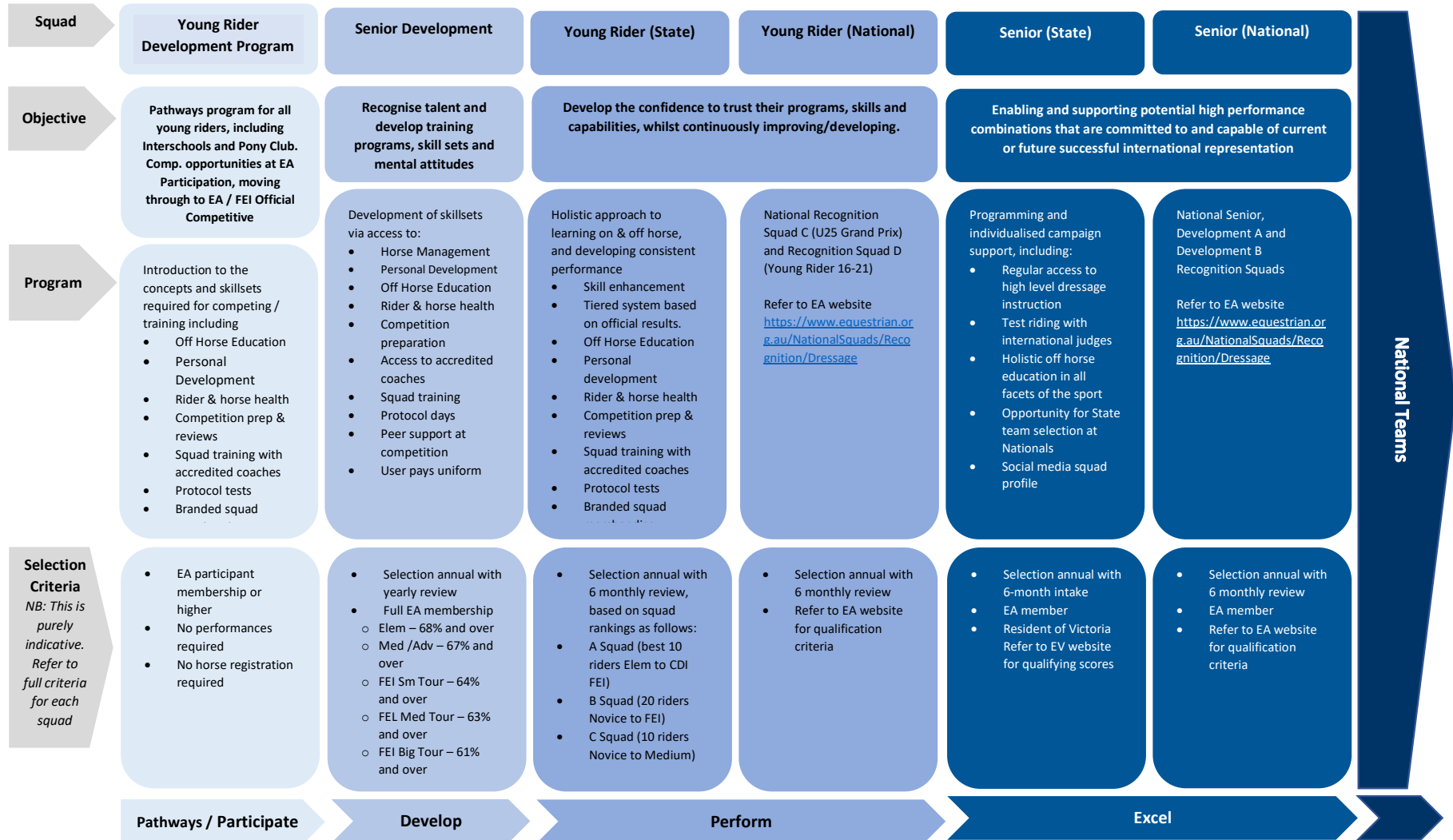
TARGETS AND TIMELINES

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA	STRATEGIC PRIORITY	ACTION	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
TRAINING ENVIRONMENT				
	Rider safety and horse welfare to be the top priorities in all training	EV to ensure riders accept EA and EV safety and welfare policies and rules via member registration process	High	Sep 2021
		Squad education to emphasize safety and horse welfare	High	Sep 2021
	The curriculum of off-horse education for state squad riders to be structured and delivered through EA training modules	Launch and implement EA training modules in Victoria	High	Nov 2021
	Training to be planned and monitored to produce horses that are fit for purpose for Dressage competition	Develop state-based education of what is required for a staged progression of horses	High	Dec 2021
		Include horse development in IPPs	High	Sep 2021
	Riders to be exposed to educational opportunities that enhance their development as athletes within the sport (eg: rider fitness and well being, mindset, organisation, competition routine).	EV and DV to develop an educational plan and schedule for delivery	Medium	Dec 2021

TARGETS AND TIMELINES

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA	STRATEGIC PRIORITY	ACTION	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME
COMPETITION				
	Provide a range of competitions for all riders, from club to state and national level. Both metropolitan and regional areas to be included.	DV calendar planning subcommittee to address	Medium	Sep 2021
	Competition schedules for state squad riders to be managed through individual performance plans to ensure they are appropriate for rider development	Establish IPP format and implement for higher level squad riders (EV office to coordinate)	High	Sep 2021
		Determine a system for implementing to lower level squad riders	Medium	Dec 2021
	Develop a positive and encouraging approach to peer support at competitions.	DV to discuss with clubs and encourage and lead good communication.	Medium	Dec 2021
WELFARE OF THE HORSE				
	Ensure the welfare of the horse is held with the utmost importance and remains an integral part of all aspects of riding, coaching, governance and leadership, training and competition.	Educate riders, coaches, judges and officials regarding all aspects of horse welfare.	High	Ongoing

DRESSAGE VICTORIA SQUADS AND PERFORMANCE PATHWAY 2021 - 2028



For more information go to: <https://www.vic.equestrian.org.au/dressage#> and <https://www.equestrian.org.au/NationalSquads/Recognition/Dressage>