

# MILL VALLEY RANCH

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## HORSES - LESSONS

### INTRODUCTION

The philosophy of the MVR Activity Program is to provide a positive experience to everyone involved in all aspects of the program, including the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of all participants. This document is part of a process to ensure that MVR meets its duty of care to the Staff, participants and the community at large. Each activity will have an appropriately qualified First Aid Officer in attendance and participants will be encouraged to participate actively, but it will always be up to the individual to accept each challenge by their own choice.

### PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

The purpose of horse lessons is to gain horse riding skills, experience, fun, to build encouraging relationships between Ranchers, staff and horses within a safe environment. No child should ever be forced into participation, but should be encouraged to expand their comfort zone. The lesson is an opportunity for personal individual challenge. In a Christian context, this activity allows participants to experience the outdoor world and to relate to animals as a part of creation and to draw parallels between a relationship with a horse to a relationship with Christ.

### AUTHORISATION

- Use of the Horse Riding Lesson must be authorised by the General Manager and Horse Riding Program Manager.
- Instructors must have undertaken the training and induction specific to MVR requirements including Horse Safety Australia certificates and have documented evidence of successful completion – Staff Competency Register.

### AGE SUITABILITY:

A minimum age of 10 is recommended but modified lessons are possible for younger children.

### STAFF REQUIREMENTS:

- **Person in charge:** Must have authority to undertake the activity and hold the relevant Certification from Horse Safety Australia (minimum Instructor) and Apply First Aid certificate (**HLTFA311A**).
- **Instructors:** Need to have demonstrated the ability to safely instruct and operate this activity, minimum of Buckaroo Level Horsemanship and attendance at Instructor's Clinic. They need to be registered on the MVR Horse Staff Competency Register.
- **Assistants:** Need to have been briefed on how to safely assist in the instruction and operation of this activity.

**Ratios:** A minimum of 1 instructor/s per 8 participants in the arena and up to 10 participants when there is an assistant instructor present.

- 1 Instructor per 1 student for mounting/dismounting beginners.
- 1 Assistant per 8 students if possible.

### PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS

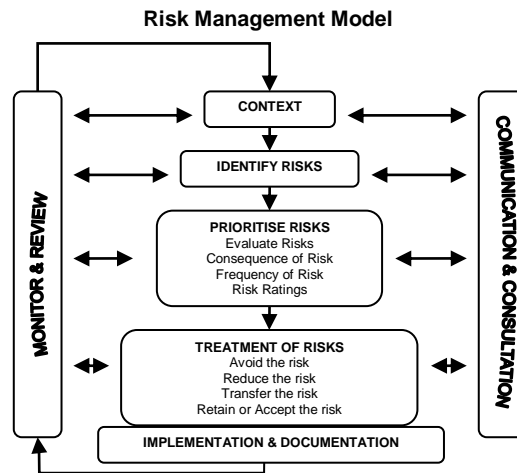
Participants are required to wear appropriate shoes (strong shoes with smooth sole and a heel), long pants, shirts with sleeves, badge. Approved helmets (ASNZ3838) must be worn. No scarves or clothing to be tied around waist or neck. No loose clothing to be worn. Sunscreen is to be worn when necessary. They must attend Safety Briefing prior to commencing any horsemanship activity.

**RELEVANT STANDARDS/CODES:** Horse Safety Australia, Safe Work Victoria

**LOCATIONS:** Arenas – sand and grass, occasional use of round yard for lunging and bareback riding.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk Management is an integral part of the preparation and the running of all MVR activities; it is the process of identifying, analysing, evaluating and treating risk, as depicted below:



The following table describes the process used to assess and rate risk. It is based on the Australian Standard: *Risk Management (AS/NZ 4360-2004)*.

CONSEQUENCE	Resulting in....
<b>CATASTROPHE</b>	Death or total loss of one or more bodily functions (eg loss of use of arm, sight etc.)
<b>CRITICAL</b>	Severe injury, permanent or partial loss of one or more bodily functions (hearing loss, significant property damage)
<b>MAJOR</b>	"Reportable" accident: person unable to continue with normal duties/lifestyle for more than 7 days
<b>MINOR</b>	Minor injury or property damage (broken window, bruising, minor sprain)
<b>NEGLIGIBLE</b>	First aid only, less than 30 minutes of time out due to accident (cut needing washing and bandaid)
PROBABILITY	
<b>FREQUENT</b>	Exposure to hazard likely to occur frequently
<b>OCCASIONAL</b>	Likely to occur but <u>not</u> frequently
<b>REMOTE</b>	Exposure <u>unlikely</u> to occur
<b>IMPROBABLE</b>	So unlikely you can assume it will not happen

## RISK RATING TABLE

	Frequent Very likely	Occasional Likely	Remote Unlikely	Improbable Unlikely
Catastrophic	Extremely serious	Extremely serious	Very serious	Serious
Critical	Extremely serious	Very serious	Serious	Not serious
Major	Very serious	Serious	Not serious	Not serious
Minor	Serious	Not serious	Not serious	None
Negligible	Serious	Not serious	Not serious	None

## PRIORITY RATING:

<b>Extremely Serious</b>	<b>Urgent</b> : First issues to deal with, as soon as possible
<b>Very serious</b>	<b>High</b> : As soon as possible after urgent priorities
<b>Serious</b>	<b>Medium</b> : Important but can wait until urgent and high risk matters dealt with
<b>Not serious</b>	<b>Low</b> : Important but can wait its turn
<b>None</b>	<b>None</b> : No action required

## RISK ASSESSMENT

<b>RISK</b>	<b>Minimisation Strategies</b>	<b>Risk Rating</b>
Equipment failure	All required equipment checked prior to activity commencement. All needed repairs to be reported to the Horse Riding Program Manager and to be entered in Horse Equipment Maintenance Log.	<b>M</b>
Horse Behaviour	Horses to be trained and assessed as suitable for the purpose by the Horse Riding Program Manager.	<b>M</b>
Weather	The weather conditions to be taken into account by Instructor in Charge. No lessons in thunderstorms or excessively windy weather.	<b>M</b>
Fall from height (Horse control)	Student skill assessment - Riders should be taught basic riding and horse control skills including as a minimum the ability to maintain a safe distance from the horse and rider in front, and the ability to stop, start and to turn the horse.  All riders to wear approved helmets (ASNZ3838).  Qualified staff with appropriate supervision for the needs of the group. Medical information on students must be available.	<b>M</b>
Kick by a horse	Brief students how to walk behind horses. Describe and enforce boundaries in the Horse Arena. Students are not permitted in Horse Arenas without staff supervision.	<b>M</b>
Injury when holding/leading a horse	Provide suitable horses, appropriate briefing and activity instruction and appropriate supervision by qualified/experienced instructor/s	<b>M</b>
Foot caught on hay band on fence	Put lead ropes on outside of fence	<b>L</b>
Gates open/not secure	Visual check of gates before and during lesson, make sure they are shut when not in use.	<b>L</b>
Objects in area - tripping	Remove Mounting Blocks and other un-necessary objects before riding commences.	<b>L</b>
Uneven surfaces - falling	Regular arena maintenance	<b>L</b>
Caught on fence	Make sure fences are safe – regular maintenance	<b>L</b>
Dehydration of horse	Water horses as appropriate	<b>L</b>

## HAZARD ANALYSIS ARENA

Risk Group	RISK	Risk Rating	Minimization Strategies	Risk Outcome	OK <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistants / officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ being knocked, kicked, or trampled by horses while assisting riders</li> <li>▪ overstepping authority</li> <li>▪ inappropriate directions resulting in incidents</li> </ul>	M/L	Safety training programs Waivers for Staff/officials Traffic control (Staff) Knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ emergency management plans</li> <li>○ their authority &amp; responsibilities</li> <li>○ rules of organization</li> <li>○ debriefing processes</li> </ul>	L	

Risk Group	RISK	Risk Rating	Minimization Strategies	Risk Outcome	OK <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Riders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Falls through loss of balance of rider during lesson</li> <li>• Falls through loss of balance of rider during competition</li> </ul>	H	Regulations on appropriate use of approved helmets, body protection Rules for participants First Aid and Instructor training for Staff Areas separate from the public for riding and vehicles/stables etc. Waivers Incident/Accident reports & debriefing	H/M	
	Injury caused by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• horse reacting to unfamiliar surroundings or occurrence</li> <li>• unruly or unexpected behaviour of horses.</li> </ul>	M	Rules re. elimination of dangerous horses Rules for participants First Aid available Appropriate horses to be used for specific purposes	M/L	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Injury through effects of environment (poor surfaces, loose dogs, flapping tarps etc.)</li> </ul>	H	No loose dogs – policy Appropriate surfaces Appropriate use of equipment ongoing maintenance, checklists & records	M	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Injury through failure of equipment</li> </ul>	H	Gear checks Materials check & monitoring (jumps/yards etc.)	L	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interaction between Ranchers/families/ intruders</li> </ul>	M	Signs warning restricted access to holding area and mounted areas Signs warning of dangers of horses. Fences and barricades separating families and rider areas. Clear signage for normal access routes for public. No loose dogs – policy.	L	
	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accommodation - inappropriate or inadequate facilities</li> </ul>	L	Audit of venue: checklist includes weather/security /resources available etc. Maintenance program for site during camp	L
Spectators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Undisciplined horse</li> <li>▪ Escaped horse</li> <li>▪ horse broken through the barricades</li> <li>▪ Stands &amp; other</li> </ul>	M	Effective barricades appropriate to event type signage – riding to take place in arenas Training of Staff re. responsibilities Assessment of Staff for skill levels – Competency Register Clear definition of areas: signage/barricades etc	L	

	structures collapsing/ causing injuries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inappropriate or inadequate facilities</li> <li>▪ Slips, trips falls etc</li> </ul>		Audit of buildings, arenas etc.  Crowd control measures Maintenance program & checklists Emergency Management Plans		
Property	Damage to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ vehicles</li> <li>▪ buildings</li> <li>▪ other property</li> </ul> Waste control	M/L	Restricted areas Enforcement of rules Traffic control  Waste control program	L	
External public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Horse escaping beyond the perimeter of the designated horse area and causing external damage</li> </ul>	M/L	Appropriate barricades/fences and regular maintenance procedures	L	

**NOTES**

## **A SOP: MOUNTING AND DISMOUNTING**

### **Ranchers receive demonstration lesson before they approach the horse**

1. Greet the Ranchers - staff relations are very important. Chatting to the Ranchers helps you understand their needs.

2. Check the tack:

(These procedures assume that the horse has been tacked up by staff and thoroughly checked by a professional before the Rancher comes to mount the horse. However, as the horse has been standing waiting, they still need another check before the mounting begins). Visually and physically inspect the tack again, unclip the horse and run your fingers under the cinch, ensure it is firm, but not too tight (should be able to fit your finger between cinch and horse).

3. Prepare the Rancher to mount:

Hold the halter (or cheek piece where the halter has been removed) with your left hand, your right hand is free to assist – only touch the rider below their elbow or below their knee in this process. Tell the rider to approach the horse from the left hand side, taking care to avoid walking up behind the horse. Check that the rider's helmet fits correctly and they are wearing appropriate boots and clothing. Ask the rider to climb to the relevant step on the mounting block and place their left hand on the reins in front of the saddle, together with some mane (this prevents the rider from accidentally pulling on the horse's mouth as they mount), their right hand on the horn and their left foot in the stirrup.

4. Mount

Place right hand under the heel of the rider and gently raise and steady their foot to assist them. Tell the rider to put their weight in their left stirrup, to stand in the stirrup, swing their right leg over the horse and sit gently in the saddle. Move mounting block out of the way immediately, while still holding onto halter/bridle.

5. Adjust reins

Help the rider to hold the reins properly (maintain two hands on reins at all times if possible), remind them that the reins are used to 'stop' and turn the horse.

6. Adjust stirrups

Tell the rider that you are going to adjust their stirrups. Ask the rider to move their leg backwards, being mindful to ensure they do not make contact with the horse's flank. Adjust stirrups to lie just next to their ankle bone, check the stirrups are even. Check the correct position of their foot in the stirrup (stirrup on the ball of the foot with their heels slightly lower than their toes).

### **DISMOUNT**

The rider should stop their horse parallel to the fence and wait for Staff assistance. The rider should then take both feet out of their stirrups, lean forward, hold the reins and some mane in their right hand, and left hand on the horn, swing their right leg over the back of the saddle and slide to the ground on the horse's left hand side.

NB The riders should be instructed to hold the reins until a staff member has taken the horse from them, and to watch they are not standing close to the back legs of another horse while waiting.

## **B SOP: COWPOKE LESSONS**

Run Lesson according to Lesson Plan, taking into account all risk minimisation strategies mentioned above. Only allow riders to jog when they are capable and refer to SOP for jogging.

## **C SOP: RANCH HAND LESSONS**

Run Lesson according to Lesson Plan, taking into account all risk minimisation strategies mentioned above. Only allow riders to lope when capable and refer to SOP for loping.

## **D SOP: BUCKAROO LESSONS AND ABOVE**

Run Lesson according to Lesson Plan, taking into account all risk minimisation strategies mentioned above.

## **E SOP: TRAIL RIDES**

See specific Trail Ride SOP

## **F SOP: HORSE SHOW**

Run Horse Show according to program – must discuss with Horse Program Manager prior to Horse Show due to added risks associated – taking into account all risk minimisation strategies mentioned above.

## Emergency Response

- Assess the situation.
- Most Senior Staff present to take control.
- Communicate with other Ranch Staff for backup if needed.
- Assign someone to supervise the remainder of the class and horses.
- Reassure participants.
- If necessary, dismount participants, remove from area, put horses in appropriate area.
- Attend injured party if there is an injury.
- Take action appropriate to the situation.
- Call appropriate Emergency Service if necessary.
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## Completion of Activity

- Announce to group that activity will finish in 5 minutes
- Dismount group, type of dismount depending on experience of group.
- Hold onto horse until Staff member comes to tie them up.
- Walk out of Arena, stay clear of horses, don't remove helmet until in shed.
- Take note that there has been nothing left behind.

## Participant Debrief

- Ask group whether they feel as though the activity was successful to its purpose
- Take note of other comments/ideas/criticisms etc.
- Report to person in charge of activity any issues of immediate concern

## Participant Briefing (Checklist)

- Meeting Point
- Activity briefing including:
  - purpose
  - hazards
  - elements
  - safety
- Emergency Response
- Completion of Activity
- Debrief with students
- Dismiss

## Staff Debrief

- At end of day, ensure maintenance log has been completed
- Report to person in charge of activity with checklists, and incident reports (if applicable)
- Report any concerns arising from days activities, including safety concerns, participants, equipment to Horse Riding Program Manager