

# MILL VALLEY RANCH

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## HORSES – TRAIL RIDES

### 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 a Trail Rides is to increase participant awareness of horses, team bonding, achievement of goals – big or small – build confidence, and enjoy the creation God has given for us. No child should ever be forced into participation, but should be encouraged to expand their comfort zone. The Trail Ride is an opportunity for conversation, skill building, and enjoyment. In a Christian context, this activity allows participants to experience a sense of the wonder of creation in the outdoor environment.

### AUTHORISATION

- Use of the Horse Program must be authorised by the General Manager.
- Instructors must have undertaken the training and induction specific to MVR Horse Staff and hold the required certificates from Horse Safety Australia.

### AGE SUITABILITY:

Ages 10 and above are recommended

### STAFF REQUIREMENTS:

- **Person in charge:** Must have authority to undertake the activity and hold the required level of certification from Horse Safety Australia (minimum level of Trail Guide) and Apply First Aid (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 and hold the relevant Horse Safety Australia certification where applicable. They need to be registered on the MVR Horse Staff Competency Register.
- **Assistants:** Need to understand the safety principles to assist the instruction and operation of this activity.
- **Teachers:** Must be employed by the Department of Education in order to participate.

**Ratios:** A minimum of 2 instructors per 6 participants

- 1 Instructor per 6 students with a minimum of 2 instructors.

### PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS

Participants are required to attend lessons previous to attempting a trail ride, and to show an ability to control their horse. They 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.

### RELEVANT STANDARDS/CODES:

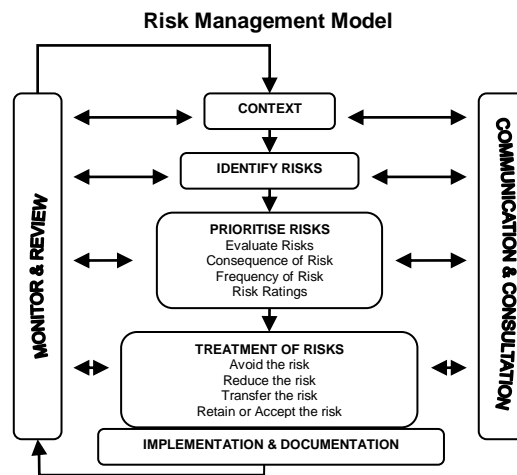
Horse Safety Australia Trail Riding, Safe Work Australia *Guide to Managing Risks When New or Inexperienced Persons Interact With Horses*.

### LOCATIONS:

Mill Valley Ranch Property

## 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>
Other animals along trail	Ensure trails and paddocks beside trails are clear of horses, and that stock are secured in paddocks prior to commencement of trail ride.	<b>H/M</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 Trail Rides in thunderstorms or excessively windy weather.	<b>M</b>
Fall from height (Horse control)	Student skill assessment - Riders should be able to demonstrate 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 turn the horse.  All riders to wear approved helmets.  Qualified staff with appropriate supervision for the needs of the group. Medical information on students is available.	<b>M</b>
Kick by a horse	Brief students not 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>
Miscellaneous Injury	Ensure that regular Riding Tracks are well maintained.  Ensure tracks are suitable for the riding ability of participants.	<b>M</b>
Trail blocked/impeded	Regular checks of trails for hazards prior to Trail Rides.  Gates to be set prior to ride when practical.	<b>L</b>

## TRAIL RIDES : HAZARD ANALYSIS

HAZARDS	RISKS	Hazard Rating	CONTROLS	risk result	responsible person
<b>SECURITY : SPECTATOR CONTROLS</b>					
Separate areas for riders and spectators (families seeing them off) Safe passage to facilities	Public :injury through contact with horses Injury to public: through crushing/ missiles/panic. Unruly members : dangers to others /animals. Excessive alcohol causes violence .	H	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.	M	
<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>					
Riders	Inappropriate behaviour threatens others. Inability to handle horse is risk to self and others.	M	Setting guidelines for behaviour, rules for ride; briefings on expectations. instructions of horse control and riding styles. warnings of difficult riding areas. staff training in communication of skills and allocation of horses, safety etc.	M/L	
<b>INTRUDERS</b>					
Unwanted intruders on ride (drunks/vandals/motor bike riders)	Theft, injury, threats from unwanted intruders.	L	Staff responsible for down times. Access to police (communications system).		

HAZARDS	RISKS	Hazard Rating	CONTROLS	risk result	responsible person
<b>EMERGENCIES</b>					
Fire:	Fire in district	H	Carry UHF Radio to communicate with Ranch Staff. Do not commence Trail Ride if Fire Danger Rating is in the Extreme or Catastrophic Zone, or if there is a known fire threatening. Knowledge of access routes; adequacy and location of fire fighting equipment, Evacuation procedures.	M	
Extreme weather	Damage to people or property through storm; dehydration through extreme heat	H	Weather conditions to be monitored. Staff to be briefed. Water to be available.	M/L	
Health of riders Emergency vehicles access to all areas	Injuries to people: Falls or sudden illness Deterioration of situation though no	H	Access for emergency vehicles predetermined to ensure effectiveness. First aid training. First aid kits.	M	

	access or delayed /restricted access of emergency personnel		Emergency procedures		

**ANIMALS**

Animals	Injury of animals through inappropriate handling or bad conditions	M	Yards containing animals are suitable for use. Procedures require humane treatment of animals.	L	
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**STAFF**

Volunteers Paid Staff	Unsure of responsibilities, procedures, rules of association resulting in lack of control of ride.	H	Staff training for volunteers. Job descriptions/qualifications and site specific training for paid staff.	M/L	
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**ADMINISTRATION**

Public relations	Booking mix-up. Confusion re numbers. Confusion re expectations of ride. Unsatisfied person complains. Disobeying rules.	M	Supply of waivers and procedures/expectations for all participants. Complaints process.	L	
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**NOTES**

## **STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES: A Summary.**

### **Preparation**

- Get horses in and check their health and suitability on that day.
- Set Gates, and make sure route is safe prior to departure.
  
- Tie up and groom horses.
- Saddle, checking the gear while saddling.
- Tie up in order along the fence. (Tie leadrope to hay band)
- Collect First Aid Kits, Staff horses.
- Make sure all Staff know their roles.
- Inform Program Director (or Management) of route and expected time of return.
- Meet Group and make sure that they are suitably attired. Check Helmets.
- Line Ranchers up inside arena, opposite their horse (standing in middle of arena).
- Mount from the back of the line, checking gear before Rancher mounts.
- Reiterate Safety Procedures and pray before heading out of the arena (see below).

### **Equipment**

- Saddles and gear well maintained.
- Helmets which comply to ASNZ3838 standard, in good condition.
- Supply of suitable footwear.
- Horse Grooming equipment tidy.
- Mounting Blocks in good condition.
- First Aid Kits stocked.
- Spare lead ropes carried by staff.
- Communication Equipment to be carried by Staff (Radios and Phone).

### **Participant and Staff Briefing at the Start of the Ride.**

- Have Fun.
- Stay In Line.
- Introduce the Staff and their positions on ride (front, middle, back).
- If the horse puts its head down to eat, pull the head up with both reins and give the horse a nudge with heels. Continue this until horse is moving and back in line.
- Explain which gaits will be used.
- Don't leave big gaps between you and the horse you are following; however expect the gap to be smaller than it would be in the arena.
- Follow the leader and try to keep horse in line with the tail of the horse in front.
- If you have any problems at all, call for assistance. Do not scream please.
- Pray.

### ***Elements: As Per Horse Staff Manual.***

#### **A Cowpoke Trail Ride**

##### **Pre-ride**

- Check waivers, application and medical forms, teams list, trail ride list
- Demonstration and introduction
  - danger of horse riding;
  - importance of helmets, correct clothing & footwear;
  - hazards around horses (kicking, herd instinct, etc.)
  - how to mount
  - how to sit on a horse (hands, feet, legs, weight)
  - communicate basics to rider: start, turn and stop;

- how to dismount, hold and lead a horse.
- Line up horses to ensure all riders and horses can be monitored /seen / controlled by instructor (s)
- Tack check by staff before rider mounts
- Check rider attire, helmet, footwear, cameras, medications

#### **First time up for beginners:**

- Hold horse and assist rider to mount
  - Only touching lower arm and/ or lower leg of rider
  - Use mounting block
- Horse must NOT be tied up during mount, once rider is up, or before rider dismounts at end of ride
- Ensure riders understand and can comply with basic riding before exiting arena or enclosed area
  - stopping horse, walking and turning (plus trotting: if it could happen – planned or by mistake on the trail)
  - Instructions should cover: foot, leg, and hand positions, weight
  - How to handle an emergency, low boughs, and other likely hazards

#### **Trail Rides:**

- Maintain appropriate ratios for staff : riders (Horse Safety Australia Standards) MINIMUM of 2 staff; plus ratio of 1:6
- On trails: take communication device and first aid kit
- Run trail ride to level of weakest rider
  - i.e. choose appropriate track and gaits, watch for gaps!
- Beginner riders to travel on horses in single file, with appropriate distances between horses
- Mounting and dismounting to be closely supervised by instructors : dismount - both feet out of stirrups before moving from saddle (Refer to Mounting SOP)
- If riders are holding / leading horses this is to be closely supervised by instructors with clear explanations on where to stand, how to lead horses etc.
- On ride: front staff to block forward passage of horses; not to leave position unless relieved by another staff member
- Side and drag (at back) riders to watch and assist riders as required. (Riding at the side may not be possible if the track allows only travel in single file)

#### **B Ranchand Trail Ride.**

Same as above, although may not need to hold horses for mounting, jogging is permitted.

#### **C Buckaroo Trail Ride**

Same as above; however riders may not always be required to remain in single file. Loping is permitted; however ONLY in a single file line.

#### **D Staff Trail Ride**

Same as for Buckaroo Trail Ride, keeping in mind that if participants are not Buckaroo level then no loping permitted. MUST discuss with Horse Program Manager before departing as risk assessment may be required due to increased speeds and distance of ride etc.

## Emergency Response

- Stop the Ride.
- Assess the situation.
- Trail Boss to take control.
- Communicate with Ranch for Backup.
- Assign someone to block front of line.
- Reassure participants.
- Attend injured party if there is an injury.
- Take action appropriate to the situation.
- Call emergency service if needed.

## Completion of Activity

- Announce to group that they are to stay in line and follow around close to the fence until they are where they started, then stop and wait.
- Dismount group, type of dismount depending on experience of group. Refer to Mounting SOP.
- 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.

### ▪ Participant Debrief

- Ask group whether they feel as though the activity was successful to its purpose
- Take note of other comments/ideas/criticisms etc.
- Encourage them.
- 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 day's activities, including safety concerns, participants, equipment