

## **Explanatory note for Article 440 (and 441) Update**

Equestrian Sports New Zealand (**ESNZ**) and Dressage New Zealand (**DNZ**) have been considering the rule contained in Article 440.3, putting in place an age restriction on Judges of 75 years. This consideration followed a legal challenge made against Equestrian Sports New Zealand challenging the rule.

The rule was put in place to try and recognise, and to assist ESNZ and DNZ to manage, the qualification requirements imposed by the FEI for Judges of FEI classes/events. In short, the FEI require Judges of such events to meet a range of requirements, including imposing an age limit on Judges. If a Judge does not meet the FEI's qualification requirements, ESNZ's ability to hold FEI events in New Zealand may be impacted.

Following consideration of the matters raised with ESNZ and DNZ, the Boards of both organisations have resolved to amend the relevant provisions of the rules to remove the age restriction from the rule, and instead to make it clear that competency requirements will be the only requirements that need to be met to be eligible to judge non-FEI classes/events in New Zealand. In order to enable athletes competing in FEI classes/events to rely on their results, such events will continue to be governed directly by the relevant FEI rules and regulations.

Neither ESNZ nor DNZ believe that age should be a determining factor in relation to someone's ability to act as a Judge or an Official, and this view has been expressed several times to the FEI. However, in terms of compliance with FEI rules and regulations, both ESNZ and DNZ are unable to depart from the FEI's requirements without this resulting in severe disadvantage to the New Zealand equestrian community, and in particular those riders who wish to rely on results obtained in FEI classes/events judged in New Zealand.

With respect to the legal action taken against ESNZ, both ESNZ and DNZ are working pro-actively to try and resolve the matters raised, in the interests of all involved in the sport. However, at this stage neither ESNZ nor DNZ are able to say anything further as the challenge remains ongoing.

If anyone has questions regarding the amended rules, please contact Genevieve Denize - Dressage NZ Rules Officer at [gen@denize.co.nz](mailto:gen@denize.co.nz)