

## **PSA Submission Regarding Review of Role Description for Grooms**

*The following analysis presents the PSA's preliminary arguments for a review of the Role Description of Grooms in the Mounted Unit of NSW Police.*

*It is submitted on a without prejudice basis to facilitate the commencement of meaningful negotiations with the Department. The PSA reserves the right to alter, amend, or expand, its positions throughout the process.*

### **Additional points for Key Accountabilities**

- Administration of oral, superficial, Intra-muscular and Intra-venous drugs to livestock and recording of these prescribed substances as per veterinary advice.
- Assisting the ongoing fitness of horses by way of lunging and using other training devices, schooling and determining work requirements according to horse soundness.

### **Additional points for Essential Requirements**

- Equestrian Australia Introductory Stable Management qualification or willingness to undertake
- Forklift drivers licence, or willingness to undertake
- Qualifications in equine massage and ability to understand parasitic faecal egg counts, or willingness to undertake relative study
- Willingness to work shift work, weekends and public holidays

**The following two Capabilities should be amended from "Foundational" to "Intermediate"**

1. **RESULTS - Plan and Prioritise**
2. **BUSINESS ENABLERS - Procurement and Contract Management**

### **Results - Plan and Prioritise - Intermediate**

- ***Understand the team/unit objectives and align operational activities accordingly***

Grooms look ahead and assess not just their own tasks and expectations, but also those of the Mounted Unit and NSW Police, and manage accordingly. They understand police objectives and as a result, action tasks to ensure the smooth running of deployment rather than merely waiting for tasks to be allocated to them. For example – packing gear, vet supplies, feed, bedding and necessities for deployment in trucks and vehicles. Being proactive and

packing according to the needs of the horse, officer and job expected including duration. Grooms understand the type of jobs the horses will be attending and will think ahead and ensure that gear is functional and ready. Grooms foresee and plan farriery and veterinary needs around patrol expectations as well as understand requirements of particular horses sometimes days or weeks in advance.

- *Initiate, and develop team goals and plans and use feedback to inform future planning*

Grooms are constantly assessing the condition, health and welfare of each horse and take initiative to create management plans for each horse. Assessing horses involved a constant feedback loop that requires them to adjust horse management and future planning. Grooms are aware of upcoming deployments and will foster the welfare of the horse with the operational deployment in mind. For example, a groom may notice that a horse is sore in the back – efforts will then be made to massage and care for that horse to enable it to be at its peak work effectiveness at large scale jobs such as New Year's Eve.

- *Respond proactively to changing circumstances and adjust plans and schedules when necessary*

Grooms are often the first line of response when police are urgently required to attend a job. Grooms will 'down tools' and proactively prepare horses and assist officers wherever necessary. This involves not just reprioritising their tasks but changing the plans and schedules of numerous horses based on dynamic needs of NSW Police. For example, if there is a call for a public order incident, the grooms will be made aware of it and prepare horses in appropriate gear for the event whilst officer themselves get ready. Grooms will then manage the structure of the day around such sudden needs. Additionally, the flow of the shift may also change suddenly due to weather, horse illness, spelling, bedding or feed availability or waste disposal issues to name a few. The grooms' ability to adapt and respond proactively to sudden changing circumstances is paramount. Often the grooms must make decisions and adapt proactively as to how the goals and scheduling for the day are going to be achieved around particular unplanned circumstances.

- *Consider the implications of immediate and longer term organisational issues and how these might impact on the achievement of team/unit goals*

The Grooms decision making processes need to consider the issues affecting the immediate, the medium term and the long term goals of the unit. For example, bedding, feeding and horse welfare are all factored into long term forecasted issues. Decisions need to be made when ordering bedding and feed well in advance of public holidays when businesses may be closed. Without this forethought and knowledge of feeding stock and associated logistics, the management of the business would be compromised. The grooms' knowledge of particular horses and their stabling behaviours is used

to establish what bedding each horse prefers. This in turn leads to particular types of bedding being ordered and implementations such as 'slow feeders' being introduced. The grooms have been proactive in the decision-making process regarding various improvements in the stable complex, which have led to improvements in horse fitness and welfare. This knowledge and careful forethought is imperative to allow police to achieve the long-term objectives of Mounted Policing unimpeded.

- *Accommodate and respond with initiative to changing priorities and operating environments*

Grooms are expected to display initiative in their day to day management of the stable complex. Using initiative with sick or injured horses is a regular occurrence, especially when there is a contagious disease in the stable complex. These outbreaks can occur suddenly, and the grooms must show initiative according to the sudden changing environment. Quarantining of horses, hygiene and proper stable management is at the forefront of containment in these circumstances. Decisions regarding injured horses and the wrapping of injuries is an area where grooms taking the initiative based on their experience and sound practical application is imperative to the recovery of injured horses.

### **Business Enablers – Procurement and Contract Management – Intermediate**

- *Understand and comply with legal, policy and organisation guidelines and procedures in relation to procurement and contract management.*

Grooms manage all ordering of feed, bedding, chemicals and cleaning products for stable management and hygiene. A thorough understanding of product needs and current requirements regarding stock and storage logistics is required. A thorough understanding of systems, policy and organisational guidelines regarding procurement of stock is imperative. This includes record keeping and administration of paperwork, stock taking and fielding enquiries from suppliers and contractors. Grooms will also assess needs of the business and research products or systems which may assist the running of the stable. These product suggestions are trialled and assessed for suitability within the business. Grooms advice is held highly when it comes to procurement of new products.

- *Conduct delegated purchasing activities, complying with prescribed guidelines and procedures.*

Grooms' responsibility is adhering to Standard Operating Procedures when purchasing stock from contractors and suppliers. Record keeping of stock orders, overseeing and checking deliveries and signing off paperwork as correct. Communication with contractors upon delivery and quality oversight is the responsibility of the grooms.

- *Work with providers, suppliers and contractors to ensure that outcomes are delivered in line with time and quality requirements.*

Any deviation of quality standards is brought to the attention of the Contractors by the Grooms. Refunds for, or exchanges of, inferior or faulty product is managed by the grooms. Stock is inspected by the grooms and any issues are communicated back to the supplier immediately by the grooms. Waste disposal is vital to the running of a stable complex. At times, there are issues with the available waste removal and grooms will alter the bedding management to alleviate problems with waste storage. Grooms will forecast issues with feed supply and advance plan ordering to ensure the smooth and uninterrupted running of the complex.