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The HCMR Musical Ride is an equine display team that has been performing both in Britain and abroad since 1882. It serves a number of functions, which include allowing the public proximity to the military in a unique environment; demonstrating to the country the skills and discipline that can be acquired by its young men and women in the Army; and giving the participating soldiers an opportunity to display themselves with pride, in a public forum, as being soldiers in the British Army. The Ride has consistently performed internationally as well as prominent national events such as the Royal Windsor Horse Show, the Horse of the Year Show and Olympia.

The Ride will typically attend between 6 and 8 shows per year. Demand is always high with the maximum number of shows per year being about 10 and availability being based upon:

- The State Ceremonial program (Queen's Birthday Parade, State visits etc.)
- Regimental programs and training (All participants are active soldiers who have/will soon deploy as armoured reconnaissance soldiers.
- Show requirements and logistics.

If your show is interested in inviting the Ride to perform please consider the following:

1. **Accommodation.** This will have to be provided by the show itself, potentially through direct use of third parties. Rooms or tented accommodation will have to be found for all participants considering rank and gender. Accommodation should be as close as possible to the show and certainly not more than 20 minutes away by vehicle to ensure that quick responses can be made to any emergencies. If tented accommodation is chosen power sockets are to be made available.
2. **Stabling.** All the horses will need stabling and the show will need to provide bedding for the duration of the stay. An average performance will consist of 28 horses which will require individual loose boxes as well as a double stall for the drum horse. A further two double stalls are required for the storage of kit and of feed. Space is required for the soldiers to clean their kit, which is a laborious process, and usually what works best is the provision of a large room or marquee for kit and cleaning. Tables and chairs will need to be provided for kit cleaning.
3. **Feeding.** Exact quantities will need to be worked out for each show depending on arrival and departure times.
 - a. **Soldiers** will each require 3 meals per day for the duration of their time at the show. This can take the form of meal vouchers, cash in advance or access to a canteen or cookhouse. The physical nature of the Ride means that a fridge permanently stocked with drinking water will be needed around the stabling. Where possible a hot tea/coffee machine for the men would be greatly appreciated. Early departures from shows after completion will usually require some form of early breakfast and a packed lunch for the road.

- b. **Horses.** The Ride will provide its own hard feed. However, the show is asked to provide horsage, quantities of which can be worked out with the Ride Officer – usually approximately 12kg per horse, per day.
 - c. **Scoping.** The Ride horses have all been scoped, free of equine flu and are a strangle free herd. To maintain this, we ask that any horses on site are kept away, with separate wash down facilities and stable lines. This is to reduce the risk of cross infection and enables the Regiment to remain at full strength.
- 4. **Veterinary Cover.** The Ride will provide a Military Vet. If the show is able to provide 24-hour veterinary cover for the duration of the Ride's stay, this may reduce costs. If this is the case, the Ride Officer should be notified at the earliest opportunity with the details of the show's vet.
- 5. **Farrier Cover.** The Ride will provide its own farrier. Sufficient propane in 13kg gas bottle form will need to be provided by the client for the duration (approximately 1 bottle per 4 days).
- 6. **Medical Cover.** The show will need to provide medical cover for the men throughout their stay. Any injuries or problems which arise during the stay will need to be treated or treatment paid for by the show.
- 7. **Clearance Passes.** All members of the Ride will need to be given clearance passes to enable their free movement around the grounds.
- 8. **Arena.** The Ride will need to warm up the horses before each performance (c. 15 mins) and will require a separate arena in which to achieve this. The Ride will train to perform in an arena 30m x 60m. Should the show main arena be larger than this, there will need to be a smaller area cordoned off or markers placed before the performance. The Ride will do this but this will add time and should be factored into the scheduling. The conclusion of the performance is a gallop out and so a suitable run-out area is also required. For a planning guideline, each display is 20 mins long (this can be tailored if required), and 5 mins should be given to set up and collapse.
- 9. **Night Guard.** It should be remembered that as a military body the Ride must observe military security procedures. A guard of 3-4 soldiers will remain at the stables throughout the night and will need access to water and lavatories.
- 10. **Tickets.** The Ride Officer will liaise with the show as to how many tickets it is willing to provide the Ride with for distribution to families of the soldiers and friends of the Regiment. Where possible some form of hospitality should be offered to the Commanding Officer of the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment, and possibly more offered in larger shows.
- 11. **Music.** The Ride performs to a musical background. This can be a live orchestra rehearsed to play the required songs, or preferably an electronic sound system. The Ride provides the 'soundtrack' on both CDs and a USB stick. This will need to be rehearsed to ensure no problems occur during the show. If an electronic sound system is to be used, it must be provided by the show.
- 12. **Scheduling.** Consideration needs to be had to the slot given to the Ride. While the soldiers are able to work late into the night if required, putting the Ride on late in an evening's performance will tire the horses. After other displays finish, they simply undress; for the Ride there is untacking, grooming, watering and feeding and so men and horses will usually be working for an extra hour and a half after riding off. Also,

previous displays can leave debris on the arena, such as spent cases from firing of weapons or loose horseshoes. These pose a risk to the horses, and either an arena party will need to clear such items, or the Ride be put on before the relevant displays. Should the Ride be performing twice in a given day, it is required to have a minimum gap of three hours. This allows the kit to be turned around whilst giving enough time for both the horses and men to be fed and rested.

13. **Media.** The Ride Officer will need to be informed of other displays and events occurring at the show, and of any advertising that is to be associated with the Ride during the build-up and performance of the show. This is to prevent associations or misunderstandings which might be detrimental to the Ride, which holds a prestigious position of being the display team of Her Majesty's Mounted Bodyguard, the Household Cavalry.
 - a. **Imagery.** A show is asked to provide the Ride Officer with copies of any footage or still photographs taken of the Ride, for the Ride's own future use and documentation.
14. **Finance.** The charge for the Ride is currently being reviewed by the Army and will be discussed with any relevant parties. All relevant booking forms and contact information will be provided by the Ride officer once interest and costs are confirmed.