

Equestrian Safety Helmet Compliance – Information Bulletin 5/9/2012

Further to the advice issued by ACDS Federal Council on 16/7/12 that ‘where helmets are worn, they must comply with the specified standards in order to meet the requirements of the ACDS Insurance policy’, the NSW Branch would like to provide the following clarification with regards to the age of helmets;

Australian Standard AS/NZS3838 - Helmets for Horse Riding & Horse Related Activities, Appendix C 2.6 states in relation to Life Expectancy:

“The life expectancy of a helmet is variable, and no precise life can be stated. They are not indestructible, and they do not last forever. Helmet life depends on the frequency and conditions of use, care and storage. Helmets showing obvious signs of damage or wear should be replaced. In general helmets have a useable life of 5 years. Those used very frequently may require earlier replacement.”

Therefore, to achieve compliance with the Standard, ACDS NSW Branch recommends that members take the following actions:

1. Confirm that your helmet/s is manufactured in accordance with AS/NZS 3838 (or comparable standards EN1384 or ASTM F1163) – This will be indicated by text or markings on the helmet itself.
2. Conduct a self-assessment of the condition of your helmet/s, taking into account all of the factors described in Appendix C 2.6 reproduced above, and any history of significant impact etc.

Helmets cannot be tested to determine if they are still ‘safe’, therefore if you are in any doubt as to the condition or effectiveness of your helmet/s it is advisable to purchase a replacement and dispose of the old one. **It is the responsibility of the owner and user of the helmet to decide on its suitability for use.**

It is the responsibility of the Driver of the carriage to ensure that helmets worn by any grooms or passengers also comply with the above.

Please refer to the accompanying extract of Australian Standard AS/NZS3838 for further guidance on helmet condition and use.

Should you have any further queries on the above, please feel free to contact the NSW Branch President.