



How the whip should be used

1. Use of the whip for safety purposes should continue to be a fundamental principle of regulation.
2. The Rule requiring the whip to be carried (though not necessarily used) should be retained.
3. Use of the ProCush whip should continue to be permitted for encouragement, with strong and appropriate regulation for its use.
4. The whip rules will be amended to restrict use for encouragement to the backhand position only.
5. Harmonisation of whip rules and penalties is a positive aspiration. The BHA should continue to play a leading role in discussions about harmonisation with its international counterparts, particularly Ireland and France.



Changes to regulation

6. The regulatory approach to the whip should be reframed to drive continuous improvement, both in standards of whip use and in the consistency of stewarding.
7. Official guidance notes relating to some aspects of the whip rules should be refined and improved, so they are less ambiguous and open to interpretation, and to ensure greater consistency in the enforcement of the rules.
8. A review panel will be established, which will assess all potential whip offences and apply sanctions or remedial actions where appropriate. The panel will deal with referrals from the Stewards, as well as having the power to initiate its own review.



Changes to enforcement

9. The threshold for the application of some whip penalties will be lowered, to increase the deterrent effect and ensure earlier intervention.
10. Penalties will be increased for some specific offences where the current penalty is considered inadequate.
11. Financial penalties applied to amateur riders for whip offences will be increased.
12. The penalty structure for use of the whip above the permitted level, which are the most frequently committed offences, will be revised to increase the deterrent effect.
13. Penalty structure for use of the whip above the permitted level in major races to be revised as a doubling of the suspensions for the same offence in standard races.
14. Repeat whip offences should be addressed at an earlier stage, and the penalties for repeat offences increased to deter further repetition.
15. Disqualification of the horse will be introduced into the penalty framework for particularly serious use of the whip above the permitted level, where there has been a clear and flagrant disregard for the rules.



Other Recommendations

16. The BHA, on behalf of the racing industry, should commission and support further objective research into the effects of the whip, using any relevant scientific advances to inform policy.
17. The BHA should regularly consider the design and specifications of the approved whip, with a view to incorporating any technological innovations or advances that could further improve equine welfare and safety.
18. Reasonable efforts should be made by British racing to explain the design, use and regulation of the whip to key audiences.
19. While changing the name of the whip is not a direct, formal proposal, racing participants and media should be encouraged and supported to speak about the whip using appropriate and responsible language.
20. The BHA and racecourses should agree a standard rider contract for charity and legends races, to ensure riders in such races are clear on their obligations in relation to use of the whip.