

# The Joint Measurement Board Ltd

PO Box 322  
Horley  
RH6 0WS

Tel: 01293 862101  
Fax: 01293 863302

The Stewards of the JMB are commissioning research into several matters that will interest you and your members.

It is several years since any research and investigation has been done by or for the JMB into various aspects of the scheme. There have been several papers published and at least one research project carried out recently.

The measurement method used has to be, in the opinion of the Stewards, both accurate and reproducible with a low margin of error and not compromise the health and welfare of horses and ponies.

With this in mind the Stewards are in the process of commissioning some research that will address such questions as:

1. Does the measuring stick need modifying to ensure it is vertical in every plane when used.
2. How repeatable is a measurement on different days.
3. How repeatable is a measurement between measurers.
4. Would the introduction of laser beams facilitate accuracy.
5. How long should a horse or pony be given to relax.
6. What is the maximum difference between relaxed height and fit, "show or jumping", height.

To address the areas where errors can be made the following matters will also be addressed:

1. Using the wrong point of the withers.
2. Incorrect positioning.
3. Incorrect position of the horizontal part of the stick - i.e. it is not horizontal.
4. Inaccurate stick.

The Stewards have received unsubstantiated reports that some animals are being prepared for measurements using techniques that may involve mistreatment. It has been shown in the past that such methods may result in stressed animals and no difference in relaxed height.

Because of the welfare implications the Stewards feel obliged to also commission research to:

1. Identify what these techniques are.
2. Assess whether they make any difference to the relaxed height.
3. Find laboratory tests or other procedures that can be used to detect, at the time of measurement, whether they have been used.

The Stewards hope to be able to review the findings of this research in the first half of next year. They will take immediate steps, in the form of rule changes, where necessary.

The Stewards also receive, from time to time, unsubstantiated reports concerning the accuracy of measurement certificates and the honesty of Official Measurers.

The Stewards can only react to information they actually receive. What might be "common knowledge" to your members is invariably unknown to the JMB and its Stewards. For your members to allow a justifiable suspicion to go unreported perpetuates the problem.

To avoid your members having to go through the Objection procedure, which involves them sending the JMB a fee, the Stewards urge you and your members to inform them or the JMB Secretary, in confidence and with no cost being involved, of anything that may help them with regard to the improper preparation of animals for measurement, the accuracy of measurement certificates and the behaviour of Official Measurers.

Any information received will be collated and reviewed by the Stewards who will take whatever action, within the Rules, they deem necessary.