

Preface

Horse activities are enjoyed widely across Australia. They make a major economic and cultural contribution to our country as well as being integral to our heritage. Upwards of 250 000 people ride horses each year in Australia, and while the rate of accidents is low in comparison to the total number of participants, serious and preventable accidents do occur. Any effort to reduce accidents associated with horses is to be commended.

To facilitate safe interaction between horses and people, in 2003 with assistance from the Federal Government, the Australian Horse Industry Council (AHIC), a representative organisation serving the Australian horse industry, produced a Code of Practice for horse activities. Commonly referred to as the 'HorseSafe' Code of Practice, the document includes requirements and guidelines for managing horse activities. Details of the Code and the AHIC can be found in Appendix 2 and at www.horsecouncil.org.au.

The publication of this book on horse safety is applauded by the AHIC. Indeed, to assist with the spreading the message of safety around horses the AHIC agreed to the use of the Horse Safe words for the title. However, readers should not confuse this book with the HorseSafe Code of Practice. This book is a 'how to' guide aimed largely at educating individuals on how to behave around horses. Conversely, the Code of Practice, while being useful for individuals is largely aimed at the businesses and organisations that run horse activities.

The AHIC is confident that practicing the principles in this book will make the reader a better and safer horseman or woman. After all, safe horsemanship equals good horsemanship.

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