

**INQUIRY INTO GRANTING OF CONTRACT NUMBER
OoS17/18-021 BY THE OFFICE OF SPORT**

Name: Ms Meredith Branson

Date Received: 24 August 2021

I am 100% in support of the arena upgrade at SIEC. The facility should have a world class surface as it is important for our competition horses and the environment.

I have officiated at two World Equestrian Games, at Kentucky in 2010 and at Normandy in 2014. The same surface as put down at SIEC was used at both events and was appreciated by horses, athletes and ground crew alike.

I watched Edward Gall and Moorlands Totilas magic record breaking performance which could only be achieved on the best of surfaces where the horse is confident because the footing is even and it has the right amount of give.

I understand the surface would not have been the cheapest quote however I think world wide it is recognised as the best. The ability to water from below with the ebb and flow system also means it is the most environmentally friendly as far as water use goes. It also seems to be fair to all competitors as it does not move between grooming in the competition arena and the warm up arena stays pristine despite no grooming at competitions.

All up I think it has been a brilliant choice and I am really proud to ride on it and officiate at competitions there where I see happy confident horses.

Meredith Branson

FEI Steward, EA Technical Delegate and rider