

Session 3 – ATHLETE WELFARE

BIOGRAPHIES

Dr Peter Whitehead (GBR), Equine veterinarian and Chair of the FEI Medical Committee

Peter Whitehead trained at Guy's Hospital Medical School, London and, mid-way through his career in General Practice, achieved an MSc in Sport and Exercise Medicine. The dissertation was entitled "Factors influencing the severity of rider injuries at horse trials".

He has provided medical care at equestrian events for over thirty years, from local competitions and Pony Club up to major international level. Among these, Peter was Team GB Chief Medical Officer from 2002 until 2017 and attended two Olympic Games in this role as well as three FEI World Equestrian Games™. In London 2012, he was Venue Medical Manager for Greenwich and attended both FEI World Equestrian Games™ 2014 and Rio 2016 as FEI CMO.

At home, Peter has Eventers, Dressage horses and Polo ponies, with a variety of home-bred young stock. He has two sons who both competed for Great Britain at junior level, one in Eventing, the other in Polocrosse. Over the years he has experienced a varied medical career, but also enjoyed the roles of supportive parent, owner, breeder and sport official.

He has been on the FEI Medical Committee since 2012, first as a member for three years and as Chair since then.

Laurent Mekies (FRA), FIA Safety Director

Laurent Mekies is a graduate mechanical engineer of the ESTACA School in Paris, which included a final year at the UK's Loughborough University.

A large part of Laurent's working life has been spent trackside, eventually tasting F1 with the Arrows team in 2001. A year later he joined Minardi as a race engineer and has stayed in Faenza for the following 12 years, taking on the role of Chief Engineer when Scuderia Toro Rosso was born in 2006. In this role, he was responsible for all track operations, from the construction of the car at the factory to the race team at the track.

Since the end of 2012, the Frenchman has been given a much broader role, with the team creating the new position of Head of Vehicle Performance. In that position, he notably managed six departments working on core car performance.

At the end of 2014, Laurent left Toro Rosso to join the FIA.

He manages there the activities of the Safety Department and works on defining a global strategy for safety in motor sport. He was also appointed General Manager Research of the Global Institute for Motor Sport Safety, the research partner of the FIA.