

## Travelling Head

Racehorse Training

### Job Summary

A travelling head is part of the stable staff team responsible for all duties required to take mares and foals to stallion farms during the breeding season, yearlings to sales, racehorses to the racecourse, or horses to the vet clinic.



### Main Duties

- Take charge of horse's travelling from the training yard to race meetings arranging all requirements to ensure the horses are kept in the best possible condition;
- Ensure horse's equipment is transported safely;
- Oversee the saddling of the horses at race meetings and leading into the paddock before the race;
- Take charge of the horse after the race and prepare them for their next journey;
- Manage and allocate workload to the stable staff team at the races;
- Represent the trainer when required, declaring and speaking to the jockey and owners;
- Maintain relationships with stable staff, owners and other industry personnel;
- Maintain an awareness of national & international racing industry trends and demands;

### Job Level

Supervisory Role

### Typical Employer

Training Yard;

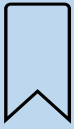


### Case Study

#### *Racehorse Training*

*Ireland has some of the leading trainers in the world amongst its 372 public trainers and 248 restricted licence holders. Whilst there are areas of concentration, notably the Curragh being a global centre of excellence for thoroughbred racehorse training, trainers are located in 31 of Ireland's 32 counties. The largest trainers account for a relatively high proportion of horses in training. In 2016 the largest 32 yards accounted for over 3,500 horses, 45% of all horses in training. At the opposite end of the spectrum the smallest 166 yards accounted for less than 900 horses (11%).*

*[Source: Economic Impact of Irish breeding and racing 2017]*



## Competencies (Behavioural)

- Passion - a love for horses or horse racing is the No. 1 motivating factor why people work within the horse racing industry (HRI Education & Training Survey 2020);
- Intrapersonal skills (perseverance; initiative; self-motivation), Critical thinking skills (problem solving), Interpersonal skills (communication; teamwork);

## Knowledge & Skills

### Equine Knowledge & Skills

Equine transportation;  
Horse care & welfare;  
Facility management & maintenance;  
Horse training, performance & fitness;  
Breeding operations & pedigrees;  
Equine nutrition, anatomy & physiology;  
Horsemanship skills;

### People Knowledge & Skills

Communication skills;  
People management skills;  
Health & safety at regulations;  
Self development;  
Staff welfare including safeguarding;

### Racing Knowledge & Skills

Racing industry knowledge;  
Racing rules & regulations;  
Integrity of the sport;  
Raceday operations:  
Race planning/Racecourses and racing calendar;

### Business Knowledge & Skills

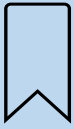
I.T. / digital skills;  
Media & communications skills;

## Education

While no specific qualification or training is required to become a career as a travelling head, many new entrants to the industry have qualification in Level 5 Horsemanship (Course Code 5M3371). See [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) for further information.

CPD - The Racing Academy Centre of Education (R.A.C.E.) provides specialised stable staff training throughout the year including: Basic safety training; Horse care and management; Equine transport certificate course and assessment; See [www.racingacademy.ie](http://www.racingacademy.ie) for further information.

Part time supervisory management / leadership and management training courses, both online and classroom based are available through various education providers throughout the country, see [see.fetchcourses.ie](http://see.fetchcourses.ie) for further information.



## Career Path (Alternative Careers)

Office Administration  
Equine Welfare and Integrity Officer  
Bloodstock Agent

## Experience

Travelling heads will typically have experience as stable staff and or exercise riders in racing yards and will have accompanied horses racing on numerous occasions prior to progressing to the role. High standards and a good work ethic are absolutely essential.

## Job Availability

Job availability is limited. Follow [www.equip.ie](http://www.equip.ie) for information on job opportunities within the breeding, racing and racing administration.



## Certification

No Certification is Required.

Trainers are required to apply for a Racing Establishment Card issued by the Irish Horse Racing Board (I.H.R.B.) within 5 days of commencement of employment for all staff within their stable yard.

## Working Conditions

Dedication is needed as travelling heads are up early and outside in all weathers, this role requires near constant travel to and from various racecourses.

## Pay & Benefits

Generally, the amount of pay you receive for working is a matter of agreement between you and your employer, these negotiations normally occur when you receive a job offer. The racing industry have an agreed minimum rate of pay as well as other minimum conditions of employment for Irish stable staff including entitlements to sick pay and stable employee bonus scheme. The agreement does not prohibit an employer from paying more favourable terms. Further information is available from the Irish Stable Staff Association at website: [www.issa.ie](http://www.issa.ie).