

# Deer Management





## Table of Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>Foreword .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Background.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Deer Management Policy .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Deer Density and Damage Assessment.....</b>	<b>8</b>
4.1	<b>Damage Assessments .....</b>	<b>9</b>
4.2	<b>Population Counts .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>The Controls.....</b>	<b>12</b>
5.1	<b>Population Control.....</b>	<b>12</b>
5.2	<b>Forest Design .....</b>	<b>12</b>
5.3	<b>Fencing .....</b>	<b>13</b>
5.4	<b>Firearms .....</b>	<b>13</b>
5.5	<b>Control Methods.....</b>	<b>14</b>
5.5.1	<b>Culls .....</b>	<b>14</b>
5.5.2	<b>Shooting .....</b>	<b>14</b>
5.5.3	<b>Dogs to Assist Deer Management.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Responsibilities .....</b>	<b>16</b>
6.1	<b>Relations with Neighbours.....</b>	<b>16</b>
6.2	<b>DCS Code for Night Shooting.....</b>	<b>16</b>
6.3	<b>Deer Feeding .....</b>	<b>16</b>
6.4	<b>Out of Season Shooting .....</b>	<b>17</b>
6.4.1	<b>In Scotland.....</b>	<b>17</b>
6.4.2	<b>In England and Wales.....</b>	<b>18</b>
6.5	<b>Public Highway Injuries.....</b>	<b>18</b>
6.6	<b>Sporting Considerations .....</b>	<b>19</b>
6.7	<b>Deer and Recreation .....</b>	<b>20</b>
6.8	<b>Tenancies of FE Land .....</b>	<b>20</b>
6.9	<b>Acquisitions and Disposals .....</b>	<b>20</b>
6.10	<b>Marketing and Quality Assurance .....</b>	<b>21</b>
6.11	<b>Carcass Tagging and Larder Records .....</b>	<b>21</b>
6.12	<b>Deer Cull Records.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Permit Stalking.....</b>	<b>23</b>
7.1	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>23</b>

7.2	Objectives of Permit Stalking .....	23
7.3	Is Permit Stalking for You? .....	24
7.4	Administering the System.....	25
7.4.1	Scotland.....	25
7.4.2	England.....	25
7.5	Stalking Services .....	26
7.5.1	Charges.....	26
7.5.2	Trophies.....	27
7.6	General Conditions for Accompanied Stalking	27
7.7	Our Customer's Views.....	29
7.8	Rules of Conduct. ....	29
7.9	Procedures to Witness Stalking in Support of DSC2.....	29
7.10	Concessions to a Sporting Agent .....	30
7.10.1	Benefits of the Scheme .....	31
<b>8.</b>	<b>People Issues.....</b>	<b>32</b>
8.1	Training Managers .....	32
8.2	Ranger Management.....	32
8.2.1	Ranger Training and Development .....	32
8.2.2	Deer Stalking Certificates .....	33
8.2.3	Ranger Exchange.....	33
8.2.4	Ranger Equipment and Facilities .....	33
8.2.5	Authorised Helpers.....	34
8.3	Contractor Management.....	34
8.4	Sandwich Year Students .....	34
<b>9.</b>	<b>The Legislation .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Health &amp; Safety .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>'The Wild Venison Standard' .....</b>	<b>41</b>
11.1	Proficiency of Rangers, Stalkers, Lessees and Contractors.....	42
11.2	Qualifications .....	42
11.3	Permit Stalkers .....	43
11.4	Lessees .....	43
11.5	Contractors.....	45
11.6	Dispatch and Transport to Larder .....	45

11.6.1	Dispatch.....	45
11.6.2	Transport.....	47
11.7	Larder Work.....	48
11.8	Hygiene and Safety Requirements.....	48
11.9	Carcass Inspection, Notification and Storage.....	49
11.10	Monitoring and Record Keeping.....	51
11.11	Larder Hygiene.....	52
11.12	Larder Design and Maintenance.....	53
11.13	Audit Procedures.....	55
12.	The Self Assessment Questionnaire.....	57
13.	Supporting Documents.....	68
13.1	References and Further Reading: Literature and Legislation.....	69
13.1.1	Literature.....	69
13.1.2	Legislation.....	70
13.2	Close Seasons and Out of Season Shooting: Legislative Background.....	71
13.2.1	England & Wales.....	71
13.2.2	Scotland.....	72
13.3	Tenancies on FC Land: Legislative Background.....	73
13.3.1	England and Wales.....	73
13.3.2	Scotland.....	73
13.4	Rangers' Dog Reimbursements.....	75
13.5	Deer Management Qualifications.....	76
13.6	Night Shooting Application Form.....	80
13.7	Deer Cull Form S105.....	82
13.8	Deer Permit Stalking Questionnaire.....	84
13.9	Deer Permit Stalking Feedback Form.....	87
13.10	Notification of Arrival of Client.....	88
13.11	Key Requirement Checklist.....	89
13.12	Wildlife Ranger's Safety Check Booklet.....	91



# 1. Foreword

This Guidance Booklet is one of a series covering various aspects of operations in the Forestry Commission (FC).

We have written it to help you through the process of making sure that deer are managed in a professional way paying attention to animal welfare, food hygiene, legislation and health and safety. The booklet takes you through the policy and procedures involved in managing deer in FE.

We have designed it for reference as well as a supporting and instructional document. We hope you find it useful.

The booklet is also the basis for follow up support visits and audits. It is a guide and procedural approach document designed to help staff. Some of its procedures are mandatory and must be followed, but for the rest of it, and how much of it will be implemented on the ground will be the responsibility of the Forest District Manager (FDM).

Updates will be posted on the Operational Guidance Intranet site and we will inform you by a linked e-mail. If you have any concerns regarding the content of this booklet, the implementation of its procedures, or any new ways of addressing this subject please do not hesitate to contact the Operational Support Unit in Silvan House.

***Much of this booklet contains elements that are mandatory. These are detailed in the text with a ⚡ symbol in the margin.***



*As well, you will find recommendations shown in Green Italics with an 'R' symbol in the margin.*



*In some sections we may wish to caution against certain actions and will use a cautionary triangle and dark red italic text.*



*We may also want to just give you a bit of additional information and to do this we will put the text in blue italics with an 'i' symbol in the margin.*

## 2. Background

Deer occur widely in Britain and are present in most woodland ecosystems. Of the six species present in the wild, red and roe are native whilst fallow, sika, muntjac and Chinese water deer are naturalised introductions. In general, all deer species are increasing both their range and their numbers.

Deer are capable of causing significant damage to forests and woodlands, mainly through browsing and bark stripping and can adversely affect biodiversity through over-grazing of ground flora and the suppression of natural regeneration. They are, however, a natural component of woodland ecosystems, they can provide recreational sporting opportunities; venison is a high quality food and the presence of deer can enhance the experience of visitors to our forests.

We must manage both the numbers and distribution of deer to make sure that their impact on forest habitats is acceptable. It is mainly the impact of deer that we are concerned with, rather than the deer numbers themselves, but we also need to make sure that numbers are not allowed to build up to levels where there is an adverse effect on deer welfare.

Reducing the impact of deer is likely to be through a combination of individual tree protection, fencing and culling, with culling as the preferred method.

## 3. Deer Management Policy

Our aim is to practice cost effective and humane management to maintain deer density at a level which is consistent with acceptable impacts on forests and other habitats. In doing this we will seek to:

- ▶ Carry out deer culling in an exemplary and humane way.
- ▶ Work closely with relevant organisations and neighbours to make sure that there are integrated deer management plans which seek to recognise the interests of all parties.
- ▶ Take opportunities to optimise income from venison from sporting where this does not conflict with our primary objective of maintaining impact at an acceptable level.
- ▶ Take all practicable steps to slow the expansion of deer species into areas where they are not currently present.

## 4. Deer Density and Damage Assessment

Unacceptable levels of deer damage in the uplands and in larger forest areas in the lowlands will be prevented primarily by reducing deer numbers. Populations will be maintained at a level at which their impact on the forest is acceptable. There are a number of examples, throughout Britain, of the success of this approach when properly implemented. Similarly, there have been numerous examples of the problems which can arise when there is no effective control of deer numbers within the forest. Red and sika deer numbers must be controlled throughout the forest rotation because of their potential to cause stripping and other habitat damage. Fencing may have a role in such situations (Section 5.3) but it is unlikely to be a major one. In woodlands with no crops in the regeneration phase, control of roe, muntjac and fallow may not be necessary unless unacceptable damage occurs to ground flora.

## 4.1 Damage Assessments

Expenditure associated with preventing damage should be related to the cost of that damage. Unfortunately there is no recognised procedure whereby the extent and intensity of damage can be converted into a cash loss. Considerable research will be necessary before a reliable predictive model can be developed. Until a model is available, forest managers must rely on their experience and judgement to decide what constitutes an acceptable level of damage. However, it is essential that we record some objective measurement of damage levels, and the change in those levels from year to year. This measurement will be used to work out the effectiveness of our population control measures and to guide local policy decisions, e.g. whether to fence in particular situations.

There are three main methods readily available for assessing the impact of deer on forest vegetation; two relate to young tree crops and the other to ground flora and natural regeneration.

- a) Damage recording carried out in association with OGB4 stocking density assessments – counting of damaged leaders allows calculation of an overall damage index, normally expressed as a percentage of total stem numbers, for individual coupes, forests, woodlands, or the Forest District as a whole, for one year old crops.
- b) Nearest neighbour method – this enables year on year assessments of changing damage levels on individual coupes.
- c) Exclosure plots – these allow a subjective assessment of the impact of grazing on the ground flora, and are very useful in indicating whether or not natural regeneration is likely with or without grazing pressure.

You will find the relevant training courses that are available for your staff in the [FTS Prospectus](#). Where neighbouring deer populations are implicated in damage to crops, formal records of damage assessments should be retained indefinitely. In other circumstances records should be retained until crops are recorded as established (e.g. OGB4 year 5 assessment).

## 4.2 Population Counts

All cull calculations for areas where overall population control is the main means of damage prevention need to be based on consistent and reasonably accurate population estimates. Once a baseline assessment of density has been established it should be re-measured at appropriate intervals or when a detectable change for vulnerable areas is noticed. From this type of population monitoring we can assess whether our control measures are effective. Only by calculating culls on a sound scientific basis can we justify them to our stakeholders.

In upland situations deer densities are most accurately assessed through dung counting methods. These need to be supported by fecundity assessments in culled females and cohort analysis in red, sika and fallow (for which jawbone ageing is a cost-effective technique).

Dung counts are a measure of deer occupancy and give most reliable estimates of population size when carried out over large areas of the deer range. Where populations of deer are migratory in small woodlands, dung counting will provide a good index to monitor change or trends, but ranger time can be better employed using other methods to assess populations. Thermal imaging is effective in lowland situations and can be viewed as an alternative method to dung counting. Visual counts give an indication of deer densities, but are less precise.

To allow proper cull calculation in future, those parts of the FC estate holding hefted deer populations will be broken down into individual deer management units (DMUs). You may assume that this requirement will cover the bulk of forest areas greater than 1000 hectares in size. However, it is impossible to be precise and the decision to apply this will rest with Forest Management Officers (FMOs).

Deer populations for each DMU will be assessed on one of three bases:

- a) Firm figures based on dung counts and subsequent cull information over a number of years.
- b) Interim figures based on dung counts and, where available, limited cull information.
- c) Estimates.

**✦ All FDs should have a Deer Management Strategy defining DMUs. DMUs must have population counts meeting the requirements above.**

All cull information should be recorded using the Deer Management System (DMS). This is an Oracle database that will hold long-term cull records from Forestry Commission land. The system is used in Forest Districts as a local larder record and it can be used to produce summary information that is necessary to set culls for the DMUs.

**🔑 All FDs will use the DMS to record cull data.**

Data can be entered into the package directly at the larder where facilities are in place or, more normally, by input from the larder record form. The system uses a number of summary reports but can also be used to generate reports through Business Objects. Training is available in the system and Business Objects ([see FTS Prospectus](#)).

Population modelling is achieved by using the Excel package that is supported by Forest Research. The source data for this spreadsheet should be taken from the DMS. The package is designed for large deer management units with discrete populations of deer. Consideration should be given to amalgamating small management units for cull setting to give a greater coverage of the deer range concerned.

Amalgamation can prove difficult and impractical to achieve in areas with small woodland blocks where deer are migratory and land is under different ownership. In these cases, it is acceptable to consider alternative methods of cull setting to prevent damage.

# 5. The Controls

## 5.1 Population Control

When you are confident about deer numbers and damage to your estate it is now logical to look at the controls you can use.

Red and sika deer numbers need to be controlled throughout the forest rotation because of their potential to cause stripping and other habitat damage. In woodlands with no crops in the regeneration phase, control of roe, muntjac and fallow to prevent damage may not be necessary unless unacceptable damage to the ground flora occurs. Remember that a lead-time of at least 3–10 years is normally necessary for populations to be reduced to levels enabling the successful establishment of trees. Any expansion of range by any species needs to be vigorously controlled whatever the age-class of the crops.

Relatively small, and isolated, woodlands may require a different management strategy. The FC holding may comprise only a small proportion of the area used by a particular deer population, and hence control of overall population numbers by FC rangers may be nearly impossible. In these circumstances a choice must be made between intensive shooting on and around vulnerable areas and reliance on fencing for protection. Bear in mind that control may be necessary outside the fenced area.

## 5.2 Forest Design

High quality forest design can help to minimise future deer problems, and rangers should contribute to the design process. At the very least they should be part of the internal consultation process whenever individual design plans are drawn up or revised. In particular, their advice should be sought on:

- ▶ Selection and location of vulnerable crop species;
- ▶ Fencing needs;
- ▶ Deer glades and other open space, including rides and ride edges;
- ▶ Track location and construction;
- ▶ Retentions and their management.

**🔑 Forest District Managers need to put procedures in place to ensure that rangers are involved in Forest Design Planning, and that this is recorded.**

## 5.3 Fencing

The erection and maintenance of boundary fences where forests border on deer ranges are often essential. This situation is confined, with very rare exceptions, to the Scottish Highlands. Elsewhere, boundary fences need only be erected where there is a legal obligation and not as a defence against deer. Where neighbours also benefit from the erection of a boundary fence they may, if appropriate, be asked to share costs.

Guidance on the appropriate use of fencing is given in FC Guidance Note No.11.

Internal fencing should be kept to a minimum. However, it may be necessary to protect vulnerable areas or species if deer densities cannot be reduced in time by shooting. It may also be used in small and/or isolated woodlands where control of the deer population is not a practical option. Internal fencing must be properly maintained and should be removed when its job has been done. It should never be an excuse to cut back on cull programmes designed to reduce overall deer population densities to an acceptable long-term level. You should not use internal fencing to protect Sitka spruce. There is a presumption against the use of tree-shelters, which are considered unsightly and are of limited use against the larger deer species.

## 5.4 Firearms

Guidance on the use of firearms, the relevant legislation and certification procedures are contained in Operational Guidance Booklet No 14 - [‘Using Firearms’](#). Any staff involved in the use of firearms must be familiar with this document.

Normally the only groups of staff we require to use firearms on official duty are:

- ▶ Wildlife Rangers, including Wildlife Ranger Managers and Chief Rangers;
- ▶ New Forest Keepers including Head and Chief New Forest Keepers;
- ▶ Deer and Wildlife Management Officers;

But other staff may be authorised where this would reduce the net cost of deer management.

## 5.5 Control Methods

### 5.5.1 Culls

Culls may be carried out by authorised FC employees, specialist contractors or by letting. In specific circumstances approved by the FDM, rangers may be accompanied by permit stalkers or authorised helpers (see Section 8.2.5), to assist with the cull. Where deer rights are reserved or there are concurrent rights, other parties will inevitably be involved. In the latter case, every effort should be made to obtain the other party's agreement to a deer management plan with monitoring of achievements against target culls.

Where deer rights are reserved to the lessor, and the level of population control achieved by them is insufficient to prevent significant damage, legal action should be considered, but only after the failure of negotiation.

Any legal action must be preceded by the collection of sufficient evidence, including comprehensive damage assessments.

### 5.5.2 Shooting

Deer may be shot from the ground or high seats as appropriate, and rangers may use dogs to move deer towards locations where there is the maximum chance of a clean shot and humane dispatch. However, organised deer drives are forbidden on Forestry Commission land, except under licence for research purposes.

For the disposal of deer grallochs please refer to WRM2, a copy of which is in Supporting Documents Section 13.12.

### 5.5.3 Dogs to Assist Deer Management

The use of a properly trained dog contributes significantly to the efficiency of deer culling operations. A dog can be used for: -

- ▶ 'Pointing' to deer, which may otherwise go unnoticed.
- ▶ Speedily locating deer, which move after being shot.
- ▶ Increasing the safety of rangers who work alone and in remote areas.

For these reasons, rangers whose duties include spending a major part of their time on deer culling are encouraged to acquire, train and use a dog for this work.

The following information is also relevant:

- ▶ Specialist territorial staff can give guidance to FDMs on the need for dogs and the suitability of different breeds.
- ▶ Ranger training will be provided by Forestry Training Services (FTS), (normally using external trainers or in-house by Wildlife Ranger Managers (WRMs)).
- ▶ Any ranger who is expected to provide, train and keep a dog will be eligible for various reimbursements, at the discretion of the FDM (see Section 13.4).
- ▶ Adequate time should be allowed for dog training, bearing in mind that rangers have operational status.

## 6. Responsibilities

To successfully manage deer you will have to be aware of your responsibilities, which we discuss in this section.

### 6.1 Relations with Neighbours

Liaison with neighbours is essential to the efficient implementation of FE deer management objectives. FDM's or designated staff must be active participants on local Deer Management Groups (DMG). These groups provide a forum for explaining and gaining acceptance of FE policy, and for agreeing forms of mutually beneficial co-operation on deer management matters. It should be borne in mind that it is not FE policy to regulate deer populations solely for the benefit of neighbours. However, we have no objection to staff taking a lead role in culling operations that have major benefits for neighbours provided they also prevent or reduce damage in our woodlands.

Any shooting that needs to be carried out on neighbouring land will need the written consent of the landowner (See Operational Guidance Booklet No 14 – [‘Using Firearms’](#)).

### 6.2 DCS Code for Night Shooting

To keep up to date please use this link to the DCS internet site for their latest guidance on night shooting:

[http://www.dcs.gov.uk/bestpractice/il\\_night.htm](http://www.dcs.gov.uk/bestpractice/il_night.htm)

### 6.3 Deer Feeding

There is no evidence that deer feeding assists in the achievement of cull targets for any of the species commonly occurring in the uplands, or roe in the lowlands, and there is a strong presumption against its use in these situations.

## 6.4 Out of Season Shooting

### 6.4.1 In Scotland

Our culling operations in Scotland follow the legal framework of the 1996 Deer (Scotland) Act. We observe the close seasons contained in the Act (see Section 13.2) but we will cull inside these to prevent serious damage to woodland and the natural heritage under the relevant Sections of the Act. Out of season shooting has proved essential in Scotland to prevent significant damage and there is an ongoing need to continue this practice where there are high densities of deer. Where out of season shooting is carried out the practice is strictly controlled to ensure high standards of deer welfare. The practice of shooting out of season has to be considered against the wider context of deer welfare at high population densities.

The procedure to apply for out of season shooting is as follows:

- ▶ Applications will be made by Deer Management Units.
- ▶ Forest Districts will submit a justified application to their FMO who must confirm and approve the need.
- ▶ The period sought for out of season shooting will only be that detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Dates permitted for out of season shooting in Scotland

<b>RED</b>	<b>ROE</b>	<b>SIKA</b>
Hinds – 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct-20 <sup>th</sup> Oct 16 <sup>th</sup> Feb-31 <sup>st</sup> Mar	Does – 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct-20 <sup>th</sup> Oct No shooting in early close season	Hinds – 15 <sup>th</sup> Sep-20 <sup>th</sup> Oct 16 <sup>th</sup> Feb-31 <sup>st</sup> Mar
Stags – 21 <sup>st</sup> Oct-30 <sup>th</sup> Jun	Bucks-21 <sup>st</sup> Oct-31 <sup>st</sup> Mar	Stags – 21 <sup>st</sup> Oct – 30 <sup>th</sup> Jun

Where red and sika females are to be culled there is a preference for culling after the end of the open season rather than before the start of the season when dependent young are present. Every effort is made to shoot dependent young before their mother at all times of the year. Under no circumstances would a female deer be shot before its young before the beginning of the open season.

While there is no welfare issue concerning male deer shot in the close season our staff will be mindful of the need to shoot only where damage is occurring. Every effort will be made to carry out this practice in such a way that does not adversely affect the interests of sporting estates.

Out of season shooting will only be permitted for fallow deer under exceptional circumstances. This is because where these occur we should be able to control populations effectively inside the open season.

All lessees and contractors shall be made aware of the legislation regarding out of season shooting and, if required, applications for permission to shoot out of season on Forestry Commission land will be made on their behalf via the Country Office to DCS.

Wildlife Ranger Managers will monitor adherence to this policy through periodic inspection of larders and larder records.

### 6.4.2 In England and Wales

In England and Wales our culling is regulated by the 1991 Deer Act. We observe the close seasons contained in the Act (see Section 13.2) and will only rarely consider any exception to these where deer are causing serious damage to woodland under Section 7(3) of the Act.

**☛ FDMs in England and Wales must discuss any case for out of season shooting with their FMO, and gain their written approval before proceeding.**

## 6.5 Public Highway Injuries

It is our policy to deal with deer injured by traffic on public roads adjacent to Forestry Commission property. Where such incidents are rare, you need not charge for this work, even if a ranger is called out by the police rather than by other FC staff. In one forest district in southern England, where call-outs average several per week, charges to cover dispatch and carcass disposal have been agreed with local district councils. Other forest districts, in a similar position, should endeavour to do the same, but should continue to put down injured beasts whenever necessary whatever the outcome of such negotiations.

**☛ The carcasses of deer injured or killed on the road must not be sold into the food chain.**

BASC produce an excellent leaflet *entitled 'Road traffic accidents and the humane dispatch of deer'* – we recommend it.

## 6.6 Sporting Considerations

Lets and accompanied permit stalking can generate significant revenue for FC. You should take all sensible opportunities to raise income in this way, but please remember that the over-riding objective of our deer management is damage prevention. Forest Districts undertaking lets and day permit stalking must have risk assessments for these activities which take account of the general public's use of the forest area for recreation. Please see Section 7 for the full picture on Permit Stalking replacing FMM 6.

Letting the deer shooting rights to an individual, syndicate or club must be on the following terms:

- ▶ To a Management Plan agreed with the FC including appropriate cull targets.
- ▶ For no more than three calendar years.
- ▶ Always be made subject to the concurrent rights of the Forestry Commission.
- ▶ Lets exceeding one calendar year should be subject to annual review.
- ▶ The Forestry Commission must retain the right to cancel the let in appropriate circumstances.
- ▶ FDM's must use the [Shooting Lease](#) published in 2001 in consultation with Area Land Agents (ALAs).

Day permit stalking has the advantage, compared with lets, that the stalkers involved remain under direct ranger supervision throughout their visit. However, day permit stalking is demanding of rangers' time and, unless managed carefully, can yield very low net revenues, but can have significant rural development returns in some areas. It should normally be confined to those ranger beats where deer damage is generally insignificant, and where the rangers' skills can find suitable targets quickly.

It is better to set day permit prices at Country level, although price setting for stalking does or hinds may be left to the FDM. Prices should be set at a level which maximises the financial return to FE within current market constraints.

## 6.7 Deer and Recreation

In some forest areas, generally ones with high public usage, you may want to make sure that it is relatively easy for the visiting public to see deer. We can accommodate this wish in ways that do not result in unacceptably high levels of deer, with their consequent damage to tree crops and conservation interests. The organising of regular ranger guided 'deer safaris' has proved very successful in several forest districts in southern England. It also ensures that interested members of the public do see deer in our forests, and we strongly recommend it. An alternative approach is the creation of an enclosure, which should not be obvious, with suitable viewing facilities. However, this option may have the disadvantage of not enabling visitors to see completely wild deer in their natural environment.

## 6.8 Tenancies of FC Land

The rights of the Forestry Commission and the tenant are both dealt with in the Estate Code to which reference may be made. In addition ALAs will give advice to FDM's on such issues. The legal position in Scotland differs from that in England and Wales.

## 6.9 Acquisitions and Disposals

In negotiating acquisitions every effort must be made to acquire the exclusive right to shoot deer, whether or not other shooting is reserved. If exclusive rights on acceptable terms cannot be obtained, concurrent rights must be obtained.

Within its area of interest the Deer Commission for Scotland (DCS) should be consulted about the impact of proposed acquisitions and new plantings over 50 ha upon deer management in the area, and about related new perimeter fencing. (See Estate Code Ke27.)

Country Directors must take into account the following when drawing up proposals for the disposal of unplanted bare land within the red deer range in Scotland:

- ▶ the need to retain land to help deer management;
- ▶ the conservation value of the land retained in FC ownership;
- ▶ the revenue which can be obtained from the sale of property for deer stalking.

## 6.10 Marketing and Quality Assurance

The effective marketing of venison is an essential aspect of deer management. Procedures for handling venison will follow those in the 'Wild Venison Standard' (see Section 11). Deer shot as part of the cull programme will normally be extracted and sold as venison (although when extraction is not feasible, culling should still take place for forest protection). The responsibility for venison marketing will rest with Country Directors. The best method of sale will normally be through large-scale tenders to venison processors, but you may develop local outlets if you think it is worthwhile. In the latter case sales should be based on an agreed price per carcass and not by weight, unless weighing can satisfy the Weights and Measures Inspectorate.

Some by-products are destined for the human food chain and the FC is responsible for making sure, as far as possible, that the product is fit to enter the food chain. By products should no longer become the property of Rangers and all staff should be aware of our responsibilities for food hygiene and public accountability.

Please refer to Section 9 on Legislation and Section 11, 'The Wild Venison Standard,' for further detail on legislation and food standards.

## 6.11 Carcass Tagging and Larder Records

All deer killed by FC staff, contractors or licensed sportsmen, and which are taken to FC larders, must be tagged using a system to ensure traceability. This is a requirement under the UKWAS certification and the Wild Venison Quality Assurance Scheme (WVQAS). An entry in the larder record will be made in respect of every carcass, which will show the following:

- ▶ the tag number;
- ▶ date of kill;
- ▶ species of deer;
- ▶ sex;
- ▶ clean carcass weight;
- ▶ place of kill;
- ▶ the name of the person who killed it.

These records will be retained indefinitely.

In Scotland the layout of the record form will be as prescribed in the Licensing of Venison Dealers (Prescribed Forms etc.) (Scotland) Order 1984. Any local authority officer or any constable authorised under the Deer (Scotland) Act 1959 will be allowed to inspect:

- a) The records kept at Forest District Offices;
- b) Any venison held in Forest District cold stores or larders;
- c) Any invoices and other documents relating to entries in the records mentioned at a. above, and to take copies of these records and documents.

Deer larder records must be entered into the Deer Management Package at least weekly.

This computer package, which is supported by the Operational Support Unit (OSU) in Silvan House, also provides the end of year returns on culls in the format of S105 that are required by statutory bodies responsible for deer in Scotland.

## 6.12 Deer Cull Records

The Deer Cull form (S105) must be completed annually by FDMs, covering the 12 months ending 31 March. Please send it to the OSU in Silvan House to arrive not later than 15 May. Nil returns are required. A copy should also be sent to your Country Office. A copy of Form S105, together with notes on its completion, is in Section 13.7 (Supporting Documents).

# 7. Permit Stalking

## 7.1 Introduction

The policy on Permit Stalking was reviewed in March 2000. This Section now replaces FMM6 and cross-references to other relevant documents that we recommend you look at.

The Forestry Commission is the single largest deer manager in Britain and our highly trained rangers are qualified to provide some of the best opportunities for recreational stalking. Stalking provides our clients with access to the countryside where they can enjoy a healthy lifestyle and contribute to sustainable rural development. When we accompany stalking clients we must make sure that they are treated to the highest standards of professionalism and customer care.

## 7.2 Objectives of Permit Stalking

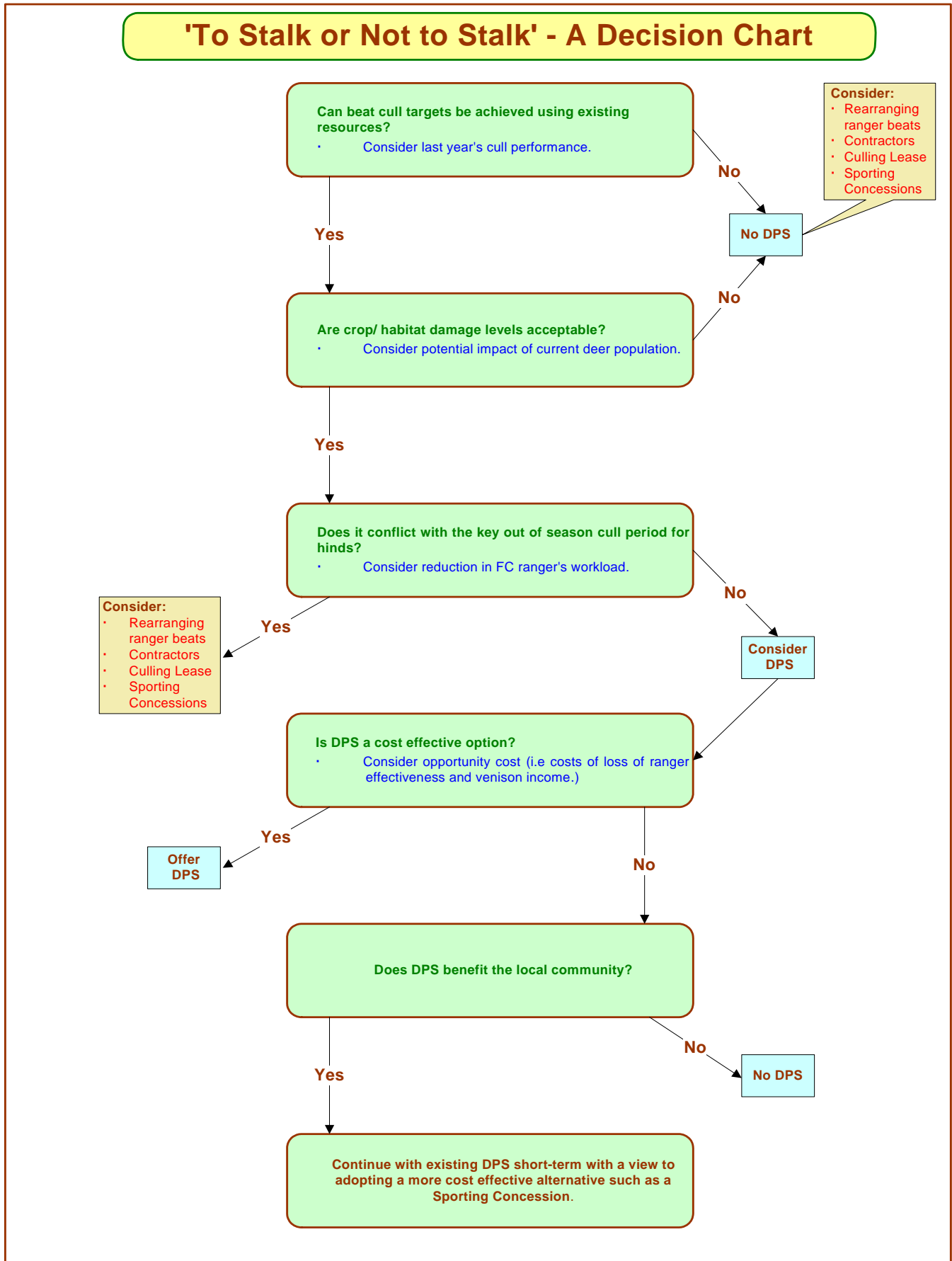
- ▶ To provide a viable opportunity for deer stalking throughout FC, while at the same time helping to fulfil our policy and objectives for deer management as shown in Section 3:
  - ▶ that the development of improved standards of deer management and venison handling amongst woodland stalkers is supported;

In addition permit stalking can be used to:

- ▶ Maximise financial gain to FC.
- ▶ Contribute positively towards the local community's socio-economic benefits.

Forest District Managers must consider whether the benefits of permit stalking justify the input of ranger time. You may wish to refer to the chart in Section 7.3.

## 7.3 Is Permit Stalking for You?



## 7.4 Administering the System

### 7.4.1 Scotland

Deer permit stalking (DPS) in Scotland is administered centrally from North Scotland Country Office, this offers a number of benefits:

- ▶ the level of expertise;
- ▶ in particular with legal documentation;
- ▶ a one-stop contact for clients.

The current administration system has been greatly streamlined to make payment in full on confirmation of a booking. The introduction of the Credit and Debit Card payment facility and extensive use of external e-mail has also made the process more customer friendly and significantly reduced administration costs.

### 7.4.2 England

DPS administration is undertaken in Forest Districts. This system works well with each District tailoring their own programme to suit their needs and being able to fill their quota without having to advertise.

## 7.5 Stalking Services

### 7.5.1 Charges

Forestry Commission stalking products are very competitive in comparison to other bodies, in particular, the prices currently charged in Scotland are comparable to the private sector.



*In an effort to standardise prices in the 3 countries, the following pricing structure is recommended:*

Pricing zones are based on 8 or 9\* (\*see Section 7.5.2) outings in the following areas:-

**Zone 1** – All N(S) Districts plus Cowal and Trossachs.

**Zone 2** – Galloway, Borders, Ae and Scottish Lowlands Forest District.

**Zone 3** – All England Forest Districts.

<b>Species</b>	<b>Zone 1 (ex VAT)</b>	<b>Zone 2 (ex VAT)</b>	<b>Zone 3 (ex VAT)</b>
<b>Red</b>	£850	£850	£850
<b>Sika</b>	£850	£700	£700
<b>Roe</b>	£650	£725	£725
<b>Muntjac/CWD</b>			£650
<b>Fallow</b>	£700	£700	£700
<b>Female Roe</b>	£500	£350	£500
<b>All other females</b>	£500	£500	£500

*Please note that the prices shown exclude VAT, this appears more attractive, and will maintain the level of income should VAT be increased.*

N.B. In the event of more than one species, the higher weekly price will be charged.

Forest Enterprise and customer opinion supports the continued practice of shared week permits at district's discretion, with a surcharge of 15% imposed for the administration element. Client's views suggest that Scotland is seen as affordable only to the wealthy and to stop the option of shared weeks may deter potential clients from considering stalking in this country.

## 7.5.2 Trophies

Some clients will seek to retain trophies; please consider the following:

- ▶ FC does not encourage shooting solely for trophies;
- ▶ Preparation of trophies is time consuming and must not conflict with duties of a higher priority;
- ▶ If you agree to prepare a trophy in official time only 8 outings can be considered and an appropriate charge made;
- ▶ FC will no longer award national medals for trophy heads.

The FC will charge a fee of £25 per head for preparation by Rangers as part of their main duties (see Section 7.8 – Code of Conduct). We see this as the way forward to allow the FC to bring the standard of deer heads for export in line with SERAD regulations and generate additional income for work already undertaken by many of the rangers.

Before implementing this charge, please consider the following: -

- ▶ FC will be responsible for the quality and condition of the trophy head.
- ▶ FC must provide equipment and training to all rangers undertaking this duty as part of their FJP.
- ▶ Risk Assessments must be in place where rangers are required to work with chemicals for cleansing.

## 7.6 General Conditions for Accompanied Stalking

Each client will be issued with a 'permit to stalk'. All permit holders will abide by the 'Wild Venison Standard' as shown in Section 11 or as published on the [Operational Guidance Intranet](#) Site in the Forest Operations folder.

The permit conditions are:

1. Deer Stalking is a weekly package and should be regarded as a week's sport, not trophy hunting. In certain locations it may be possible to accept bookings for less than a week. Further details on request.
2. Clients will be expected to shoot all deer specified by the Ranger and no special conditions regarding trophy quality will be accepted.

3. Each client will be issued with a permit which will authorise the shooting of specified deer, over a part or whole of a particular forest, on a certain date or between certain dates. Please note that stalking is not permitted on Sundays and certain public holidays.
4. The permit holder is to a degree acting as the Ranger's assistant and will be required to:
  - a) Follow the Ranger's instructions regarding firearm safety at all times.
  - b) Fire a group of sighting shots to within 10cm at 100 metres range to the satisfaction of the Ranger. At least 40 rounds of ammunition should be brought for this purpose.
  - c) Produce on request a valid Firearms Certificate or a Visitors Firearms Permit and third party insurance to the value of at least £5,000,000 (pounds Sterling).
  - d) Indemnify the Forestry Commission against any loss, damage or injury however caused.
  - e) Shoot deer as directed by the Ranger. On no account should any animal be shot without the Ranger's permission.
  - f) Have a reasonable standard of fitness as much of the terrain is rough.
5. Clients must use a rifle with a minimum calibre and muzzle energy for the country and species of deer concerned.
6. For reasons of safety, outings in certain forests can only be arranged in the early morning. Shooting from any vehicle or by artificial light is prohibited. Any seats or stands provided by the Forestry Commission may be used by the Permit Holder at their own risk.
7. Should an injured deer be encountered it will be shot. If the outing is spoiled as a result another outing will be arranged.
8. If a deer is wounded stalking will stop until it has been despatched or otherwise accounted for.
9. It may be possible to arrange outings for the purpose of photography, drawing or merely watching deer, at the Forestry Commission's discretion.
10. Whilst arrangements for satisfactory outings are made in good faith the Forestry Commission cannot give any guarantee regarding the success of the outing(s) in either quality or quantity.
11. The carcass will remain the property of Forestry Commission.
12. Forestry Commission reserves the right to suspend or withdraw a permit at any time and its decision in any matters arising from the granting of a permit will be final. Failure to meet any of the Terms and Conditions given may result in the stalking being suspended and the withdrawal of the permit.
13. Forestry Commission reserves the right to vary both the Terms and

Conditions and the Charges contained in its brochure without prior notice.

## 7.7 Our Customer's Views

At present feedback from a permit stalking customer is a one way process, with rangers reporting on the client at the end of each outing. See example form in Section 13.9. This helps us build up a database of preferred clients and the statistics of deer and numbers shot.



*We recommend that a 'post- stalking questionnaire' is introduced as a matter of routine. This will provide the opportunity for clients to give us their views on the experience and service provided by our staff. We will also get suggestions for improvement and be able to determine any financial benefit to local communities. Please use the form shown in Section 13.8.*

## 7.8 Rules of Conduct.

All staff are required to be, and seen to be, honest and impartial. Our responsibilities are fully explained in the [Staff Handbook – Chapter 4](#) 'Guidance on gifts and hospitality' and these should be made clear to rangers and clients before any outing. These outline terms are given for simplicity:

- ▶ In principle, the clients should not expect to offer gifts nor should staff be expected to receive them.
- ▶ If a member of staff is in any doubt about the propriety of accepting a gift hospitality, then it must be refused.
- ▶ Common sense should be applied and trivial gifts can be accepted where to refuse them would cause offence.

## 7.9 Procedures to Witness Stalking in Support of DSC2

We have a strong commitment to DMQ and to demonstrate this we will provide information on a client's cull as part of their portfolio for DSC2 at no additional charge. Any client who wishes to have a stalk witnessed by the FC will already be qualified to DSC1 and must be

registered for DSC2 with an assessment centre. Requests for witnessed stalks will be logged when clients apply for a package and FDs or Countries will allocate these clients to Rangers who are qualified as accredited witnesses. Rangers are under no obligation to act as witnesses for clients but those that show the necessary aptitude should be encouraged to do so by their line managers.

## 7.10 Concessions to a Sporting Agent

Forest Districts can opt to select a sporting agent to manage a stalking concession over selected areas of the Forest District. All proposals must be approved by their FMO before inviting offers.

- ▶ The aim is to select a sporting agent who offers the most attractive partnership proposals with wide ranging local benefits whereby an accompanied guest stalking business is tailored to meet the exacting demands of the Forestry Commission's Deer Management Strategy.

The selected agent would have the opportunity, on satisfactory completion of the first year, to negotiate an extension to their shooting concessions.

The selection system needs to be a 2-stage process. The first stage is to make a shortlist of agents from written submissions that encompass the following:-

- ▶ A proven record in sporting client management;
- ▶ A recognised qualification in practical deer management;
- ▶ Staff with all relevant firearms certification;
- ▶ A comprehensive safety policy with well constructed risk assessments which are relevant to the proposed shooting concession;
- ▶ A concession management proposal that caters for:-
  - ▶ The needs of the client;
  - ▶ The aims of the Forestry Commission in deer management;
  - ▶ The support of the local community;
  - ▶ Local employment enhancement;
  - ▶ A workable, attractively priced and structured framework.

The agents' submission will be scored on each of the above headings. Those with the highest scores would be offered the chance to take part in the second stage of the process.

In the second stage agents with the highest overall ratings will attend an interview to make a presentation supporting their written proposals. The selection of the successful candidate will be based on the interview panel's overall rating of the interviewees' proposals.

### **7.10.1 Benefits of the Scheme**

- ▶ The FC would have the required management input to the partnership scheme;
- ▶ Local community benefit (B&Bs etc);
- ▶ Culling targets met with positive income;
- ▶ Cull data is provided to the FC;
- ▶ Close contact can be maintained with sporting agent;
- ▶ Sporting agent would have the required qualifications/experience/insurance etc;
- ▶ Sporting agent would undertake all necessary administration/legal documentation for clients;
- ▶ Input to the scheme from FC rangers (selection of suitable stalking areas etc).

## 8. People Issues

### 8.1 Training Managers

Wildlife Managers need high quality training to play their full part in deer management within FC forests. The [FTS Prospectus](#) contains full details of all relevant training courses.

### 8.2 Ranger Management

Rangers involved in deer management are an integral part of a Forest District team. They have, as a principal objective, the achievement of OGB4 target stocking densities on all relevant sites within that Forest District.

The management structure within which Rangers operate must reflect that principal objective. The most suitable management structure will therefore depend upon local circumstances.

A management structure, which has proved very effective, when properly organised and staffed, involves primary responsibility for deer management resting with an individual Chief Ranger. The area of responsibility of the Chief Ranger may cover more than one Forest District. The Chief Ranger will report to the FDMs concerned, or their nominated deputies. Ideally, Wildlife Ranger Managers and through them, Rangers will work directly to the relevant Chief Ranger rather than to local Forest District staff. It is accepted that this might not be the best approach in all situations but, if other management structures fail to deliver effective deer management, local managers will be expected to carry out a review to get the best option.

#### 8.2.1 Ranger Training and Development

Proper training is essential if rangers are to operate effectively. The latest FTS Prospectus details all available ranger courses. Some of the courses are optional, depending upon individual ranger needs, but others are compulsory for all ranger grades involved in deer management (see Section 11.2). It will be the responsibility of FDMs to ensure that any of their ranger staff attend the appropriate training courses.

## 8.2.2 Deer Stalking Certificates

A company called Deer Management Qualifications has been set up through a combination of interests, professional and sporting, concerned with raising the general level of expertise amongst those involved in the culling of deer. It is our policy to encourage this development; indeed the FE is represented on the management board of the company. E will ensure that all rangers involved in deer culling are awarded the relevant certificates (DSC 1 & 2), with the Operational Support Unit (OSU) at 'Silvan House' being responsible for submitting the necessary applications and paying all associated fees. The Supporting Documents Section 13.5 contains details of the certification scheme.

The Forestry Commission runs its own Assessment Centre to assess and verify candidates for DSC1 and DSC2. The centre will accept candidates from our own staff, contractors, other Government agencies, lessees and permit stalkers when asked. Other enquirers will be referred to alternative assessment centres such as colleges, BDS and BASC. The routes for candidates to follow are shown in Section 13.5 and the procedure for dealing with applicants through permit stalking is given in Section 7.9.

Rangers may act as verifiers, assessors or witness for external assessment centres, so long as this commitment is declared in writing to their line managers. Staff involved in external training will do so in their own time, using their own equipment, on privately owned land.

## 8.2.3 Ranger Exchange

This scheme of rangers spending time in other locations as a 'swap' has proved very effective in broadening the experience of ranger staff and has much to offer. Responsibility for administration of this scheme rests with OSU at Silvan House, together with the responsibility for funding the associated T&S expenditure.

## 8.2.4 Ranger Equipment and Facilities

Our rangers are a valuable and expensive resource. It is essential that they are provided with the equipment necessary to do a cost-effective job including, where needed, suitable on-road and off-road transport and good quality ancillary equipment. Country specialists should be

consulted regarding the best means of meeting any particular requirements. FDMs in the uplands may also need to consider providing and maintaining a network of tracks to allow access to, and carcass extraction from, unroaded sections of forest. Budgetary provision should be made for this at the time of Business Plan preparation.

### 8.2.5 Authorised Helpers

Forest District Managers may authorise the involvement of suitably qualified persons to assist rangers subject to formal written agreement. These arrangements will be exceptional and in every case will require a full risk assessment and rigorous application of controls by designated Forest District staff. The approval of the relevant FMO/Operations Manager will be needed before proceeding with these arrangements.

## 8.3 Contractor Management

Contractors are used in many areas of operations and deer management is no exception. It is essential that only **competent** contractors with a good track record, the necessary qualifications and who can provide a professional service are used for any areas of deer management. All contractors must have obtained the relevant DSC levels as per 'The Wild Venison Standard' (Section 11). Please refer to Operational Guidance Booklet No.3 '[Contract Management](#)' for guidance on setting up and managing contracts and the relevant Health and Safety Issues.

The contractor questionnaire has much to recommend it in the initial selection of contractors and should be used by FD staff. The Standards and Procedures detailed in Section 11 of this booklet provide detailed guidance for contractors on what is required for various areas of deer management and copies must be made available to all contractors undertaking this type of work.

## 8.4 Sandwich Year Students

It is our policy to provide employment, during their sandwich year, to students attending suitable wildlife management courses. We should remember that the employment of young people requires an increased duty of care and will need formal risk assessment. The number of students employed at any one time will depend upon the availability of

suitable students and any financial constraints at the time. The performance of individual students will be monitored by the Chief Ranger, or equivalent, covering the area they are employed in. This employment provision gives us the opportunity to assess potential rangers in their future working environment and potential rangers to assess us. Responsibility for making the necessary arrangements regarding recruitment and placement will lie with Forestry Training Services (FTS), although in respect of particular colleges this may rest with Country FMO. Fifty percent funding is available for such placements through Personnel Division.

## 9. The Legislation

The following documents relate directly to forest protection and deer management. All are relevant and must be complied with. *HSE* refers to HSE Books. (For reference to the Deer Acts see Section 13.1.)

Food Safety Act 1990 and relevant Codes of Practice	HSE
Disease of Animals Act	HSE
Food Premises (Registration) Regulations 1991	HSE
Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995	HSE
Guidance on the Recommended Standards for Wild Game, LACOTS, 1997	LACOTS
Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974	HSE
Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999	HSE
Noise at Work Regulations	HSE
United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standards	HSE
The Wild Game Meat (Hygiene and Inspection) Regulations 1995	HSE
Animal By-Products Order 1992	HSE
Waste Management Regulations 1994	HSE
COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Regulations 1999	HSE
Wild Game Directive, EC Council Directive 92/45/EEC	HSE
Reporting of Injuries, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995	HSE
Dogs Act 1906	HSE
Venison Dealer (Prescribed Forms) (Scotland) Order 1984	HSE
Consumer Protection Act 1987	HSE
Foot and Mouth Orders 2001 & 1983	HSE

There is a lot of legislation that is referred to in the text of this booklet and it could not be separated easily. However, one of the most important and relevant parts of legislation that we need to highlight refers to the marketing of venison and the hygiene standards. Much of this is referred to in Section 13.1.2 but is also here under Legislation.

Diseased carcasses must not be sold into the food chain and, under the Tuberculosis (Deer) Order 1989, any carcass suspected of being infected with tuberculosis must be notified promptly to the appropriate Divisional Veterinary Officer (DVO) of DEFRA or SEERAD. Pending an inspection by the DVO, the suspect carcass should be retained out of the cold store, and subsequently destroyed, whether infected or not, because of possible deterioration during the period before inspection.

Standards of hygiene in the preparation of deer carcasses for sale must be high within FE, throughout the entire process from preliminary preparation in the field to final dispatch from the larder. Guidance on the means of achieving the required standards is given in two publications, *'The Culling and Processing of Wild Deer'* by Adams and Dannatt and *'Wild Game'* published by LACOTS (local authorities co-ordinating body on food and trading standards), and should be followed.

Training is available (see [FTS Prospectus](#)) and the relevant course must be attended and satisfactorily completed by all rangers involved in deer culling. The responsibility for ensuring that larder conditions and procedures meet the appropriate requirements will rest with Forest District Managers or their nominated deputy.

The Consumer Protection Act 1987 upholds the rights of consumers who can demonstrate that they have suffered damage because of eating a particular food. They can hold the producer, supplier or retailer of that food responsible, without proof of intention, negligence or recklessness. The Food Safety Act 1990 protects the public against the production and sale of unsafe food. However, it also stipulates that, in any proceedings for an offence, it will be a defence for the person charged to prove that he took all reasonable precautions and exercised all due diligence to avoid committing the offence. This Act also introduced the Food Premises (Registration) Regulations 1991 which requires premises handling food to be registered with the local authority so they may be subject to inspection by the Environmental Health Officer (EHO). Although it appears that the Regulations may not apply to deer larders, and in some cases EHOs have stated that registration may not be necessary, it is our policy to have all deer larders registered. Registration cannot be refused and it is a further safeguard to ensuring hygienic practices. The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 were made under the Food Safety Act 1990 and are binding on the Crown. They apply to food businesses involved in, among other things:

- ▶ Preparation;
- ▶ Storage;
- ▶ Transportation;
- ▶ offering for sale;

and require that these operations are carried out in a hygienic way.

The Regulations also require that a proprietor must identify any step in the activities of the food business which is critical to ensuring food safety, and must ensure that adequate safety procedures are in place and maintained. He must also plan and implement effective control and monitoring procedures at critical points. Rules of Hygiene made under the Regulations relate to specific food handling activities.

In Scotland The Deer Act of 1996 requires any person wishing to sell venison from his premises at any time to anyone other than a licensed venison dealer to become a licensed venison dealer and to keep the prescribed records. The Crown is bound by the 1996 Act, which is administered by local authorities within the areas for which they are individually responsible. In order to ensure that all FC sales of venison meet the provisions of this Act, it will be the responsibility of Country Directors to obtain individual game dealer's licences for each local authority area in the Country in which FC venison sales take place. Only a single licence is necessary to cover all FC sales within a local authority area..

In England and Wales Sections 2 and 3 of the Deer Act 1996 make provisions relating to the sale of venison. It requires any person wishing to sell venison:

- a. to anyone during the prohibited period (i.e. the close seasons for the species less the first 10 days);
- or;
- b. at any other time to anyone other than a licensed game dealer;

to become a licensed game dealer and keep the prescribed records. The Crown is not bound by the 1996 Act and therefore the FC will not obtain game dealers' licences, but it will keep the prescribed records.

## 10. Health & Safety

The Management of Health & Safety is an integral part of deer management. Staff involved in deer management must be aware of the contents of the documents listed below: -

HSM 3            Noise at Work  
 HSM 4            First Aid at Work  
 HSM 8            Working in Isolated Conditions  
 HSM 12          Accidents at Work  
 HSM 35          Risk Assessment  
 Wildlife Ranger Manager's Safety Booklet  
 FESS Gen 5 Ladders  
 Fastco 701    ATV  
 Fastco 702    ATV

The Safety Standards and FASTCo/AFAG Guides are field safety documents to be used by Rangers and as supervisory checks. Such forms must be completed as in the table below and filed in the district office in accordance with local instructions:

<b>Ranger</b>	<b>Times per Yr.</b>	<b>Ranger Manager</b>	<b>Times per yr.</b>
Self Assessment Questionnaire	2	Self-Assessment Qu.	2
Firearms Skills Test	1	WRM1	2
		WRM2	2
		WRM3	2
		WRM4	2
		FASTCo 701	2
		FASTCo 702	2
		Arrange Firearms Skills Test	1
		Arrange External Inspection of Firearms	1

All the field forms and noise assessments can be found as separate electronic documents on the [Operational Guidance Intranet](#). Copies may be taken, but in the case of safety documents, the content should not be changed.

HMS 35 Risk Assessment gives guidance on the completion of risk assessments in compliance with the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations.

**➤ Risk assessments must be undertaken for all deer management operations.**

This may include:

- ▶ Ranger use of firearms;
- ▶ Contract Rangers – Outline risk assessment;
- ▶ Day Permit Stalking;
- ▶ Dispatch of deer on the public highway;
- ▶ Lease – risk assessment on public usage;
- ▶ Ranger – site specific risk assessment.

# 11. 'The Wild Venison Standard'

There is an increasing public awareness of every aspect of a Rangers work and of the processes involved in producing high quality meat fit for human consumption. Due to this interest, any problem with safety, hygiene or animal welfare that comes to the public attention is likely to have a significant impact on venison sales. This impact, demonstrated by the Foot and Mouth crisis, will increase our expenditure, reduce our income and threaten our ability to meet OGB4 restocking standards. The Wild Venison Standard has been produced to assist rangers in taking every precaution to try to avoid such problems. The Standard is also available as separate document on the Operational Support Unit (OSU) Intranet site in the [Operational Guidance folder](#). Please feel free to take copies.

The production of the Venison Standard has allowed us to timetable and cost improvements that we might want to make to our larders, equipment, marketing and training.

Before the standard was produced there were some 14 main documents and a number of minor documents that outlined the process of producing venison in a safe, hygienic and professional manner. The standard brings together the various instructions an FE ranger has to be familiar with and provides information to customers on our standards and those expected of them.

Production of the Venison Standard has involved not just FMOs and Rangers but also a number of external organisations, e.g. DCS, Scottish Association of Game Dealers and Processors, Scottish Game Keepers Association and members of ADMG.

The Venison Standard is a clear public demonstration that professional rangers follow best practice.

*The word ranger encompasses keepers and wildlife rangers and is generic.*

## 11.1 Proficiency of Rangers, Stalkers, Lessees and Contractors

All venison supplied under this standard will be culled by persons holding Deer Stalking Certificate (DSC), or under the supervision of someone holding a DSC.

Rangers must be able to demonstrate competence and training, validated by full records retained by the Forest District Manager. A record of training for all rangers must be retained; detailing courses attended and training received. All training must be annually reviewed and updated. As a minimum, rangers must undergo the following qualifications, monitoring and training. Evidence of this must be retained on record.

## 11.2 Qualifications

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Deer Stalking Certificate - Levels 1 & 2	Once only
<b>Internal monitoring</b>	
WRM1 Checklist - Use of firearms	Every 6 months
WRM2 Checklist - Carcass treatment	Every 6 months
Firearms Skills Testing	Annual
<b>External monitoring</b>	
Inspections of Firearms by Gunsmith	Every 12 months
<b>Training</b>	
Marksmanship Basic – on appointment	Once
Marksmanship Refresher	Every 5 Years
Marksmanship Assessor – on appointment to Wildlife Ranger Manager/Chief Ranger	Once
Initial Woodland Deer Management Course	Once
Woodland Deer Management Update Course	Every 5 years
Carcass Handling	Every 5 years
Manual Handling Course	Every 5 years
First Aid	Every 3 years
ATV Training	Every 5 years
Dog Handling (if required)	Every 5 years

- a) Rangers must have access to all the relevant regulations, guides and codes of practice listed in Sections 9 & 10.
- b) Ranger Managers must ensure compliance with qualifications, monitoring and training for directly employed rangers, and retain copies of full records relating to permit stalkers, lessees and contractors, which demonstrate compliance.

### 11.3 Permit Stalkers

- a) Unaccompanied permit stalkers and their guests from January 2002 must be in possession of DSC, or an equivalent qualification accepted by the 'Qualifications in Deer Management Company.'
- b) Permit stalkers must be supplied with information on the legal requirements for deer shooting in Great Britain;
- c) Permit stalkers must have a pre-commencement meeting with an FC ranger to clarify safety and welfare requirements and to ensure that they are properly equipped for stalking;
- d) A ranger must undertake a DSC style shooting test with accompanied permit stalkers who do not have a DSC, and a standard FC skills test with permit stalkers who do hold DSC, prior to the first stalk;
- e) Permit stalkers must hold an appropriate Firearms Certificate.

### 11.4 Lessees

(Supplying Venison under the Wild Venison Standard)

Please consult your local Land Agent for guidance on drawing up leases well before any meetings/interviews are held. Reference may also be made to The Estates Code for guidance in the area.

The following points must apply to all leases:

- a) All new leases agreed after January 2002 will require that the lessee and guests have DSC, or an equivalent qualification accepted by the 'Qualifications in Deer Management Company.'

- b) Prospective lessees will be interviewed to ensure:
- ▶ Awareness of safety issues.
  - ▶ Experience.
  - ▶ References.
  - ▶ Ability to appreciate local issues.
  - ▶ Ability to achieve cull targets.
- c) Where no suitable prospective lessees are identified, the stalking will be retained or re-advertised.
- d) All leases will contain a clause that allows termination of the lease where a serious breach of procedures can be proven, and will require the lessees to have a minimum of £5 million public liability insurance cover.
- e) A copy of this standard (Section 11) will be issued to all lessees and the agreement will require them to comply with the standard.
- f) Lessees shall be made aware of the legislation regarding out of season shooting and night shooting contained in the relevant Deer Acts (Section 13.1.2), and, if required, applications for permission for lessees to shoot out of season or at night on Forestry Commission land will be made via the Territorial Office to the relevant authority.
- g) Lessees must have access to all the relevant regulations, guides and codes of practice listed in Sections 9 & 10.
- h) Lessees must hold the appropriate Firearms Certificate.
- i) A copy of the relevant qualification and a record of interview should be retained.

## 11.5 Contractors

- a) Contracts will only be issued to contractors who have obtained DSC. A copy of this standard will be issued to each contractor and the contract will require them to comply with the standard and have a minimum of £5 million public liability insurance cover.
- b) Contractors need to be aware of the legislation regarding out of season shooting and night shooting contained in the relevant Deer Acts (Section 13.1.2). Applications for permission for contractors to shoot out of season or at night on Forestry Commission land will be made via the Country Office to the relevant authority.
- c) Contractors must have access to all the relevant regulations, guides and codes of practice listed in Section 9 & 10.
- d) Contractors must hold an appropriate Firearms Certificate.
- e) All contracts must be managed in accordance with Operational Guidance Booklet No.3 [‘Contract Management’](#).

## 11.6 Dispatch and Transport to Larder

### 11.6.1 Dispatch

- a) Rangers must observe the behaviour of deer prior to culling, record any suspected behavioural disorders and inform the Divisional Veterinary Officer of this information if this is linked to a carcass suspected of being infected with a notifiable disease (Section 11.9g).
- b) Deer must be humanely dispatched with a firearm and ammunition of the correct legal specification.
- c) Where females are to be shot before the commencement of the open season every effort must be made to shoot dependent young first.
- d) Where the ranger inadvertently injures or apparently misses a deer, it must be followed up using the appropriate procedure and if necessary humanely dispatched.
- e) Deer shall only be dispatched within safe and appropriate range limits.
- f) Disposable rubber gloves must be used during the gralloch. Disposable gloves must be disposed of at the larder in accordance with Section 11.8k).
- g) All field knives used by rangers must be either one-piece or able to be dismantled for ease of cleaning and carried in a plastic scabbard.

- h) The beast should be bled immediately and gralloched as soon as possible after dispatch and the mesenteric lymph nodes inspected. Any evidence of disease should be recorded in the larder record. (See Adams & Dannatt.)
- i) Where the ranger suspects a notifiable disease (e.g. TB), the gralloch/viscera must be taken back to the larder in an impervious container, (for example a strong, sealed plastic bag) and retained with the carcass and pluck outwith the larder in secure storage for inspection by the Divisional Veterinary Officer (DVO).
- j) If head and feet are removed in the field they must be inspected for signs of foot and mouth disease.
- k) The gralloch must be disposed of in accordance with guidance laid down in WRM2 (see Section 13.12).
- l) Head and feet must not be removed from the carcass in the field, unless a roe sack or washable drag bag is used for transporting the carcass to vehicle.
- m) The time and date of culling, and the time and date of entry into the chiller at the larder must be recorded.
- n) In exceptional circumstances, a gralloched carcass may be left on site overnight for 12 hours from mid October to mid March, or during the hours of darkness during the rest of the year if it is not practicable to move it immediately. The use of a specialist muslin cover to protect the carcass should be considered, and the carcass must be inspected on retrieval and a record must be maintained of the storage method used.
- o) If the beast cannot be gralloched immediately after culling, (for example, due to proximity to an area of high public usage,) then the gralloch may be performed in the larder within one hour of culling.

## 11.6.2 Transport

- a) Sufficient vehicles of suitable design must be available to ensure efficient recovery of beasts. These must include vehicles fitted with appropriate winches and ATVs fitted with capstan winches, where the deer species require it. If access does not allow vehicle recovery, then washable roe sacks or drag bags must be used.
- b) Vehicles used for transport must be kept clean and disinfected between loads using appropriate methods. They must be designed, constructed and maintained to enable venison to be transported in a hygienic condition and to minimise the risk of deterioration of game in transit.
- c) Carcasses must not be transported in open vehicles.
- d) Rifles and ammunition must be kept in steel gun safes of approved design while they are in transit in vehicles. If a vehicle has to be left unattended a vital component of each firearm should be removed and/or an approved disarming mechanism used.
- e) Other game must only be transported in separate compartments from eviscerated deer carcasses.
- f) All vehicles must allow dogs and equipment to be stored in a separate compartment from the carcasses.
- g) Personal washing/hygiene facilities must be carried in all vehicles i.e. disposable gloves, hand-washing fluid, antiseptic wipes and paper towel roll, and be effectively utilised to avoid risk of contamination. All material waste must be stored in an impervious bag and disposed of in an approved manner as per Section 11.8 below.
- h) Stacking of carcasses should be avoided, but where necessary carcasses should be stacked with the body cavities closed to minimise contamination.
- i) Blood trays must be used in all vehicles which do not have purpose-built washable floors.
- j) Carcasses must be raised to allow blood to drain and ensure that they are not left lying in their own blood or that of other deer.

## 11.7 Larder Work

- a) All game must be handled and stored in accordance with the Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995, and where appropriate the Wild Game (Hygiene and Inspection) Regulations 1995 and the EEC Wild Game Directive 92/45/EEC (on public health and animal health problems relating to the killing of wild game and the placing on the market of wild game meat).
- b) Venison not culled on Forestry Commission land may be stored in Forestry Commission larders if the private owner can adhere to all the conditions contained in this standard. Venison culled on Forestry Commission land may be stored in privately owned larders if such larders comply with this standard.

## 11.8 Hygiene and Safety Requirements

- a) Rangers must attend to personal hygiene regularly. Hands must be washed before and after visiting the toilet. Cuts and sores must be kept covered with waterproof dressings. There must be no smoking in the larders. Rangers must report to line management if they are suffering from, or exhibiting, symptoms of any disease or condition likely to be transmitted through food. This includes infected wounds, skin infections, any sores or diarrhoea.
- b) Rangers must be aware of the correct procedure for dealing with tick bites to reduce risk of Lyme disease.
- c) Dogs must not be allowed into the larder or dressing area and must not be given uncooked/uninspected meat (even if no parasites are visible). Dogs must be wormed at least every four months and appropriate veterinary and medical records maintained.
- d) Only essential visitors may be granted access to the larder.
- e) The boots of all personnel and visitors must be washed and disinfected before entering the larder. Once boots are washed no person must leave the hard standing until leaving the larder. Boots must be washed again on leaving the larder. Alternatively, disposable booties may be used.
- f) Protective clothing must be worn where this is an essential requirement of the job risk assessment. When handling carcasses disposable rubber gloves and an apron must be worn. Chain-mail or

kevlar gloves with easy to clean wristbands must be worn on the free hand when dressing carcasses and skinning heads. A safety helmet must be worn when overhead equipment is in use.

- g) Larder and equipment must be kept as clean as possible during the dressing of carcasses.
- h) Chemical contamination of the carcass must be avoided. Cleaning chemicals shall be fit for the purpose and be stored and used in compliance with manufacturer's recommendations and COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Regulations 1988 and in a manner which prevents accidental contamination of foods.
- i) Waste must be put in specially provided containers which are leak-proof and covered and lined with a bin liner for ease of cleaning. Waste must not be put on the floor.
- j) Larder waste arising from carcasses must be disposed of using an approved method.
- k) Disposal of any other waste from the larder must comply with the Waste Management Regulations 1994.
- l) Once the carcasses and pluck have been removed to the chiller, the larder and all equipment used must be cleaned and sterilised using DEFRA approved disinfectants in the correct concentrations.
- m) Knives and steels must be sterilised between dirty and clean operations or at times when a risk of cross-contamination could ensue.

## 11.9 Carcass Inspection, Notification and Storage

- a) Carcasses must be transferred to the running rail by using the larder hoist, where required, and direct contact with the floor must be avoided.
- b) Head and feet must be removed and inspected for signs of foot and mouth disease, if this has not already been done.
- c) The pluck must be removed from the carcass and hung on a separate pluck rail (on a stainless steel or aluminium hook) to avoid contact with the floor.
- d) A general inspection of the carcass must be carried out to ensure suitability for human consumption. Any suspected contamination, disease, abnormality or parasitic infection must be brought to the attention of the processor and the DVO.
- e) The bronchial and mediastinal lymph nodes on the lungs, and the

portal lymph nodes on the liver, must be examined. The lymph glands must be inspected for TB and the spleen must be examined for enlargement and if necessary removed for further examination.

- f) The sub-maxillary and retro-pharyngeal lymph nodes in the head and tongue must be inspected for signs of TB and, if necessary, removed for further examination.
- g) Any suspected notifiable disease e.g. foot and mouth or anthrax, must immediately be reported to the DVO, (plus the Police, DEFRA, the Chief Environmental Health Officer and the Animal Health Inspector) and the relevant supervisor informed. In the case of anthrax, the Medical Officer for Environmental Health must also be informed, and advice sought by mobile phone if possible, on whether or not the carcass should be moved from the point of dispatch. In all cases the carcass must be retained outside the larder in secure storage, with the head, pluck and gralloch and away from other carcasses. A grid reference for where the deer was shot is required
- h) A Carcass must be condemned if any of the following apply:
  - I. TB is suspected;
  - II. the carcass is a result of a roadside casualty;
  - III. the deer was found dead;
  - IV. the meat is fly-blown;
  - V. if two or more tumours are found;
  - VI. the carcass is not gralloched within one hour of being culled;
  - VII. where the chiller unit temperature records suggest that the internal temperature of the carcass may have exceeded 7°C (i.e. a standard setting for an average size chiller is usually 4°C);
  - VIII. if it is in extremely poor physical condition;

and will be disposed of in approved manner according to the advice of the DVO if TB is suspected, or as per the guidance contained in Section 11.8 j) above.

- i) Carcasses may be washed out internally with cold, potable (approved drinking) water, if there has been spillage of stomach contents. The carcass must be allowed to drain, and paper towels must not be used to dry out the carcass, as this could spread contamination. Any remaining contamination should be excised.
- j) Carcass and pluck must be weighed separately and labelled using the approved FE tags to ensure traceability.

- k) Carcasses hung in the chiller unit must not touch one another to allow free circulation of air. The plucks must be hung separately on a pluck rail.
- l) A larder should not be used for the storage of other game at the same time as eviscerated (disembowled) deer carcasses, other than by the provision of a separate larder, or a designated area so designed to prevent cross-contamination.

## 11.10 Monitoring and Record Keeping

- a) The game processor must be notified by fax of the number of new carcasses awaiting collection as soon as they are available. Collection must be achieved within three days maximum, if carcasses are to meet this standard. If the processor does not collect within three days, the carcass becomes the property of the venison dealer but is not considered part of this venison quality assurance scheme.
- b) Sale of venison direct to the public will not be part of this Wild Venison Standard. If such a sale is deemed necessary, then Scottish districts must be licensed by the relevant local authority to deal in venison and they must keep the prescribed records, and English and Welsh districts must keep the same records that are required of a licensed game dealer.
- c) Larder records for all carcasses must be maintained including records of losses from disease and post-mortem reports. Larder records must demonstrate traceability by recording a dedicated tag number, deer management unit number (DMU No.), FD No, compartment number where the deer was shot, date and time of cull and date and time of entry into chiller unit; this for each carcass.
- d) Records of larder waste disposal must be kept and retained for two years.
- e) Chiller temperature must be set to ensure that the internal temperature of carcasses does not exceed 7°C (usually requires the air temperature in the chiller to be 4°C or 5°C) and must offer vermin and fly-proof conditions. Records of temperature must be kept using a thermometer which measures temperature over time. Chiller records must be checked before uplift of carcasses by the processor to ensure proper functioning of the chiller unit during the storage of the carcasses. Temperature records should be retained for two years.
- f) The chiller should be left clean by the game processor and checked by a ranger as soon as possible after the carcasses are uplifted.

- g) A record of all visitors must be maintained. This must include date, time of arrival, name, purpose of visit and organisation. Visitors must be asked if they are suffering from any disease or ailment likely to be transmitted through food, before entering the larder.
- h) All records must be maintained in an ordered and up-to-date fashion.
- i) Records of any diseases and abnormal conditions, or carcasses which do not meet this standard, must be obtained from the processor to monitor the performance of the unit in producing deer in accordance with purchasers' requirements.

## 11.11 Larder Hygiene

- a) Each larder must be registered with the local authority. Records of visits by the Environmental Health Officer must be kept and actions required must be monitored, implemented and recorded.
- b) Each larder must have a written cleaning and disinfection policy. This policy must be strictly adhered to and must contain as a minimum the following:
  - I. cleaning and disinfection procedures for all equipment and surfaces, including frequency;
  - II. procedures for handling of waste materials such as packaging, animal waste, used disinfectants;
  - III. details of disinfectants (DEFRA-approved only) and detergents used, including safe storage, usage and dilutions.
- c) Adequate facilities must be provided for the cleaning and disinfecting of work tools and equipment. These facilities must be constructed of materials resistant to corrosion and must be easy to clean. Adequate sterilising facilities must be provided for the regular disinfection of knives (knife sterilising unit), scabbards, sharpening steels and other tools. The sterilising facilities should be supplied with water maintained at not less than 82°C. A pressure washer which can dispense chemical cleaning agents must be available.
- d) Adequate written procedures must be in place to ensure pests are controlled. Pesticides must not be accessible by wild birds and bait boxes must be tamper-proof. An accurate location plan of all bait points must be drawn up and numbered, along with a written pesticide programme detailing types of pesticide administered, replenishment dates and visual inspections of bait points. Pest control must make provision for the control of rats, mice, and birds.

Insectocutors must be used.

- e) Pesticides must be stored in a secure area outside the larder and in line with COSHH recommendations and in a separate area. If traps are used they must be inspected daily.

## 11.12 Larder Design and Maintenance

In addition to demonstrating compliance with this standard, all units must comply with relevant codes of practice and legislation (see Sections 9 & 10).

- a) Larders must be designed, constructed and maintained to enable all game to be stored in a clean, hygienic condition, free from contamination.
- b) The building must have a concrete apron in front of the doors for the loading/unloading of vehicles. The apron must be drained into the common effluent system for the larder, allowing wash down of vehicles used for the transport of carcasses.
- c) Exterior areas around the larder and entranceways must be kept clear of debris and non-essential equipment. Vegetation must be kept short and well managed.
- d) An overhead rail system must extend out of doors to facilitate loading and unloading of carcasses. A mechanical hoist must be mounted higher than the rail used to help move the carcasses.
- e) The size of the larder must be adequate to store comfortably the volume and type of species being brought to the larder; and also to accommodate the number of rangers who may be working in the larder at any one time.
- f) Doors must be wide enough to accommodate the size of animals coming into the building.
- g) All larders must have a properly equipped first aid kit.
- h) The larder and any other entrance rooms must be maintained in a clean and tidy condition.
- i) Floor surfaces must be maintained in a sound condition and must be easy to clean and disinfect. This will require the use of impervious, non-absorbent, washable and non-toxic materials. Floors must fall in each room to a drain which must be adequately trapped. Drainage must be connected to the public sewage system or otherwise effluent must be linked to a septic tank.
- j) Wall surfaces must be maintained in a sound condition and be easy

to clean and disinfect. This will require the use of impervious, non-absorbent, washable and non-toxic materials and require a smooth surface up to a height appropriate for operations. Wall to floor jointing must be coved.

- k) Ceilings and overhead fixtures must be designed, constructed and finished to prevent the accumulation of dirt and reduce condensation, the growth of undesirable moulds and the shedding of particles. Ceiling to wall joints must be coved. Ceilings must be high enough to accommodate the largest animals coming through the larder.
- l) If windows and other openings exist, they must be constructed to prevent the accumulation of dirt. Those which can be opened to the outside environment must be fitted with insect-proof screens, which can be easily removed for cleaning. Where open windows would result in contamination of foodstuffs, windows must remain closed and fixed during processing.
- m) Doors must be easy to clean and disinfect. This will require the use of smooth non-absorbent surfaces. Doors must be self-closing and openable from inside and out.
- n) Surfaces (including surfaces of equipment) in contact with food must be maintained in a sound condition and be easy to clean and disinfect. This requires the use of smooth, washable and non-toxic materials. Wood surfaces must not be used.
- o) Personnel must be able to change into protective clothing without introducing contamination into the processing area.
- p) Food premises must have adequate natural and/or artificial lighting. The larder area must be a minimum of 540 lux and the chiller 220-lux.
- q) There must be suitable and sufficient means of natural or mechanical ventilation. Rooms should have a high ceiling to allow heat to disperse over the hanging carcasses. Wild game carcasses should be hung with adequate separation to allow good air circulation for rapid cooling. Mechanical airflow from contaminated area to clean area must be avoided. Air inlets and outlets must be fitted with screens to prevent the entry of birds, insects and rodents.
- r) An adequate supply of potable water must be available to ensure that foodstuffs are not contaminated. If mains water is not used samples of water should be taken for laboratory examination at regular intervals to ensure water supplies are safe and wholesome and comply with the requirements of Council Directive 80/778 EEC.
- s) Flush lavatories must be available within the vicinity of the larder

and connected to an effective drainage system.

- t) Wash basins for cleaning hands must be provided with hot and cold (or appropriately mixed) running water. Materials for cleaning hands and hygienic drying (e.g. paper towels) must be provided. All water taps must be arm, knee or foot operated.

## 11.13 Audit Procedures

This standard will be audited by the Self-Assessment Questionnaire on a six monthly basis. Ranger managers will audit rangers against the standard at six monthly intervals using the Self-Assessment Questionnaire, and through the checking of the records kept by the Ranger during the previous six month period.



## 12. The Self Assessment Questionnaire

This section is devoted to The Self-Assessment Questionnaire that has been developed to standardise the approach across the FC to the treatment of Deer and Venison. This will ensure that all duties in this area are carried out to a high standard and in a professional way.

It has been designed as a document that can stand alone and is available in this format on the Operational Support Unit (OSU) intranet page in the [Deer Management page](#).

***Its use is mandatory and should be used as per Section 11.13 Audit Procedures – copies of completed questionnaires must be filed in line with district policy – they are staff safety checks.***

## The Self Assessment Questionnaire

Please complete this questionnaire as fully and honestly as you can. Use the Remarks boxes at the end of each section for any clarification that you feel is appropriate.

Please note that this questionnaire is directly related to Section 11 of the Operational Guidance Booklet No. 5 and should be referred to when completing this questionnaire when it is a separate document.

<b>1</b>	<b>Ranger &amp; Keepers proficiency</b>	✓ = Yes ✗ = No Blank if n/a
a)	Do you have records of your qualifications and courses attended?	
b)	Do you have access to relevant legislation and guides?	
c)	Do you always accompany permit stalkers who do not have DSC Levels 1 and 2?	
d)	Do you have a pre-commencement meeting with permit stalkers?	
e)	Do you undertake the appropriate shooting test with accompanied permit stalkers, before the first stalk?	

Remarks

<b>2</b> <b>2.1</b>	<b>Dispatch and Transport to Larder</b> <b>Dispatch</b>	✓ = Yes ✗ = No Blank if n/a
a)	Are deer checked for behavioural disorders before dispatch?	
b)	Are deer dispatched humanely with the correct ammunition?	
c)	Is every effort made to dispatch dependent young before hinds/does?	
d)	Are injured or apparently missed deer followed up and, if necessary, humanely dispatched?	
e)	Are deer dispatched within safe and appropriate range limits?	
f)	Do you use disposable rubber gloves for gralloching and dispose of them back at the larder?	
g)	Do you use an approved style of knife, which can be easily cleaned and has a plastic scabbard?	
h)	Do you gralloch the beast as soon as possible after dispatch and inspect the mesenteric lymph nodes, and record any evidence of disease?	
i)	Do you keep impervious containers for transporting the gralloch/viscera where disease is suspected?	
j)	Do you inspect head and feet which are removed in the field for signs of foot and mouth?	
k)	Do you dispose of the gralloch in accordance with WRM2 guidelines?	
l)	Where head and feet are removed in field, is a roe sack or drag bag used to retrieve the carcass?	
m)	Do you record the time and date of culling and the time and date of entry of the carcass into the chiller in the larder record?	
n)	Do you only leave carcasses on site overnight in exceptional circumstances? Do you consider the use of a muslin cover, and do you record the storage method?	
o)	Where the beast is not gralloched on the hill is this done in the larder within one hour of dispatch?	

Remarks

<b>2.2</b>	<b>Transport</b>	✓ = Yes ✗ = No Blank if n/a
a)	Do you have access to suitable vehicles and ATVs with winches, do you use them where the deer species requires it, and do you use a washable roe sack or drag bag where access is difficult?	
b)	Is your vehicle kept clean and disinfected between loads?	
c)	Are carcasses only transported in covered vehicles?	
d)	Are your rifles and ammunition stored in steel gun safes during transit?	
e)	If the vehicle is left unattended, is a vital component of your firearm removed and/or an approved firearms disarming mechanism used?	
f)	Do you transport other game separately from deer?	
g)	Do you store dogs and equipment in your vehicle separately from carcasses?	
h)	Do you keep personal hygiene facilities in your vehicle and use them effectively?	
i)	Do you avoid stacking carcasses, but where necessary stack with the body cavities closed?	
j)	Do you use a blood tray in vehicles that do not have purpose built washable backs?	
k)	Do you ensure that carcasses are raised so that they are not lying in their own or other deer's blood?	
Remarks		

<b>3. 3.1</b>	<b>Larder Work Hygiene and Safety Requirements</b>	✓ = Yes ✗ = No Blank if n/a
a)	Do you attend to personal hygiene in the larder, not smoke, report relevant disease or ailments to your line manager and cover cuts and sores with waterproof dressings?	
b)	Do you know how to deal with tick bites?	
c)	Do you ensure that your dog(s) does not enter the larder or dressing area, that it is not given any uncooked or uninspected meat and that it is wormed regularly and records are retained?	
d)	Do you ensure that only essential visitors are granted access to the larder?	
e)	Do you ensure that all boots are washed before entering the larder, once boots are washed people do not leave the hard standing until departure, and that boots are washed again on departure? Alternatively, are disposable booties used?	
f)	Protective clothing must be worn where this is an essential requirement of the job risk assessment. When handling carcasses disposable rubber gloves and an apron must be worn. Chain-mail or kevlar gloves with easy to clean wristbands must be worn on the free hand when dressing carcasses and skinning heads. A safety helmet must be worn when overhead equipment is in use.	
g)	If chain-mail gloves are worn, do they have easy-to-clean wristbands?	
h)	Is the larder and equipment kept as clean as possible during the dressing of carcasses?	
i)	Do you avoid chemical contamination of the carcasses?	
j)	Is waste kept in lined, covered and leakproof containers and not on the floor?	
k)	Do you dispose of larder waste arising from carcasses using an approved method?	
l)	Do you dispose of other waste as per the Waste Management Regulations and guidelines issued by line	

	management?	
m)	Once carcass and pluck are removed to the chiller, do you clean and sterilise the larder and all equipment used?	
n)	Do you sterilise knives and steels between dirty and clean operations or if a risk of cross-contamination arises?	
Remarks		

3.2	<b>Carcass Inspection, Notification and Storage</b>	✓ = Yes ✗ = No Blank if n/a
a)	Are all carcasses transferred to the running rail using the larder winch, where required, with direct contact with the floor being avoided?	
b)	Do you remove head and feet and examine for signs of foot and mouth?	
c)	Do you remove the pluck from the carcass and hang on a separate pluck rail on a stainless steel or aluminium hook?	
d)	Do you examine the carcass generally and inform the game dealer and DVO of any abnormality?	
e)	Do you examine the bronchial, mediastinal and portal lymph nodes, the lymph glands and the spleen?	
f)	Do you examine the sub-maxillary and retro-pharyngeal lymph nodes for signs of TB?	
g)	Would you refer TB or any other notifiable disease to the relevant bodies, store the carcass, head, pluck and gralloch separately from other carcasses, note the grid reference where shot and inform your supervisor?	
h)	<b>Do you condemn a carcass where:</b> I. TB is suspected; II. The carcass is a result of a roadside casualty; III. The deer was found dead; IV. The meat is fly-blown; V. If two or more tumours are found; VI. The carcass is not gralloched within one hour of being culled; VII. The chiller unit temperature records show inappropriate temperatures; VIII. It is in extremely poor physical condition; and dispose of all carcasses in an approved manner?	
i)	Do you wash out carcasses internally with cold potable water, if there has been spillage of stomach contents, allow the carcass to drain rather than using paper towels, and excise any remaining contamination?	

j)	Do you ensure carcass and pluck are weighed separately and labelled using FE tags?	
k)	Do you allow air to circulate between the hanging carcasses and hang plucks separately on a pluck rail?	
l)	Do you store species other than deer in a separate compartment from deer, or designated area to prevent cross-contamination?	
Remarks		

4	<b>Monitoring and Record Keeping</b>	✓ = Yes ✗ = No Blank if n/a
a)	Do you notify the game processor of carcasses awaiting collection as soon as they are available, and ensure pick up within three days?	
b)	Do you avoid selling meat direct to the public except where deemed necessary?	
c)	If meat is sold direct to the public, do you ensure that full records are kept and that, where necessary, the Forest District is licensed to deal in venison?	
d)	Do you ensure that larder records are maintained for all carcasses, including losses from disease and post-mortem reports, and do you record DMU No. and time/ date of cull and entry to chiller?	
e)	Do you ensure that full records of waste disposal are kept and retained for two years?	
f)	Do you ensure that the chiller temperature is set to ensure that the internal temperature of carcasses never exceed 7°C and that vermin and flyproof conditions are maintained?	
g)	Are chiller temperature records checked before uplift and are they retained for two years?	
h)	Do you check that the chiller has been left clean after carcass pick up by the processor?	
i)	Do you ensure that records are kept of all visitors to the larder?	
j)	Do you ensure that all records are kept orderly and up-to-date?	
k)	Do you ensure that records of any diseases come back from the processor in order to monitor performance?	
Remarks		

<b>5</b>	<b>Larder Hygiene</b>	✓ = Yes ✗ = No Blank if n/a
<b>a)</b>	Do you comply with the cleaning and disinfection policy for the larder?	
<b>b)</b>	Do you comply with the written pest control procedures?	
<b>c)</b>	Do you store pesticides as per the COSHH recommendations?	
Remarks		

Please read and sign below:

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge, the information I have supplied is correct.

Date..... Ranger's Signature.....

Print Name..... Forest District .....

Supervisor's Signature.....Date.....

## 13. Supporting Documents

This section contains copies of forms/checklists and procedures that are currently seen as best practice and are placed here for everyone. Electronic copies are held on the Operational Support Unit (OSU) Intranet site to which you have access.

It is hoped that you will find them of some benefit. If you tailor the forms or use them for a design of your own please make sure that a copy is sent to OSU at Silvan House for review and sharing with other staff.

**Please do not attempt to tailor the contents of safety documents,** as they are standard across the FC. If you have suggestions on improvements please contact Emily Ramsay in Safety, Health and Environment in Silvan House.

## 13.1 References and Further Reading: Literature and Legislation

### 13.1.1 Literature

- FC Bulletin No 71 - *'Management of Red Deer in Upland Forests'*.  
FC Bulletin No 102 - *'Forest Fencing'*.  
FC Bulletin No 105 - *'Roe Deer Biology and Management'*.  
FC Forest Record No 99 - *'The Roe Deer'*.  
FC Forest Record No 124 - *'The Fallow Deer'*.  
FC Leaflet No 74 - *'High Seats for Deer Management'*.  
FC Leaflet No 82 - *'Assessment of Wildlife Damage in Forests'*.  
FC Leaflet No 86 - *'Glades for Deer Control in Upland Forests'*.  
DCS (formerly RDC) Booklet- *'Red Deer Management'*.  
DCS (formerly RDC) Booklet - *'Code of Practice for Shooting Deer'*,  
(applicable only to Scotland).  
DCS Booklet - *'A Policy for Sika Deer in Scotland'*.  
Forestry Practice Guide: - *'Forest Design Planning'*.  
Forestry Commission Handbook 10: - *'Wildlife Rangers Handbook'*.  
Guidance Note: - *'Counting Deer Populations in Woodland Habitats'*,  
B Mayle WEB.  
Field Book 18: - *'How Many Deer?' A Field Guide to Estimating Deer  
Population Size.*  
Forest Practice Note 1 - *'Nearest Neighbour Method for Quantifying  
Wildlife Damage to Trees in Woodland'*.  
Forestry Commission Practice Note 6: - *'Managing Deer in the  
Countryside'*.  
*Wild Game'*, Local Authorities Co-ordinating Body on Food and Trading  
Standards, 1997.  
*The Culling and Processing of Wild Deer*, Adams and Dannatt, 1989.  
*'Road Traffic Accidents and the Humane Dispatch of Deer'* - An Advice  
Note BASC Jan 2001.  
BFSS: *'Sporting, Firearms and the Law'*, Frost, 1989.  
FMM4: *'Stocking Density Standards'*.  
Operational Guidance Booklet No.14 - *'Using Firearms'*.  
FMM26: *'Management of Broadleaved Woodlands'*.  
HSM15: Forest Enterprise Safety Standards:  
WRM Safety Booklet.  
Estates Code.  
Deer Management Package *'User Manual'*.

## 13.1.2 Legislation

### **A Applicable throughout UK**

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981  
Tuberculosis (Deer) Order 1989  
Consumer Protection Act 1987  
Food Safety Act 1990  
The Food Hygiene (General) Regulations 1970

### **B. Applicable to England and Wales only**

Agriculture Act 1947  
Agricultural Holdings Act 1948  
Deer Act 1963  
Roe Deer (Close Seasons) Act 1977  
Deer Act 1980

Note: The 1977 and 1980 Acts, and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, amend the 1963 Act and should be read together.

### **C. Applicable to Scotland only**

Agriculture (Scotland) Act 1948  
Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act 1949  
Deer (Scotland) Act 1959  
Deer (Close Seasons) (Scotland) Order 1966  
Deer (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 1967  
Deer (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 1982  
Deer (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 1996

Note: The 1967, 1982 and 1996 Acts amend the 1959 Act and should be read together.

There is available also a consolidated version of all the Deer (Scotland) Acts from 1959 to 1996.

## 13.2 Close Seasons and Out of Season Shooting: Legislative Background

### 13.2.1 England & Wales

#### a) Close Seasons

The relevant legislation is the Deer Act 1963 as amended by the Roe Deer (Close Seasons) Act 1977. This does not bind the Crown, but the FC will observe all the legal close seasons subject to the exceptions provided in the legislation (see Out of Season Shooting below). The close seasons are as follows, dates inclusive.

Species	Sex	Close Season Dates
Red and Sika	Stags	1 <sup>st</sup> May to 31 <sup>st</sup> July
	Hinds	1 <sup>st</sup> March to 31 <sup>st</sup> October
Red/Sika Hybrids	Stags	No legal close season
	Hinds	No legal close season
Fallow	Bucks	1 <sup>st</sup> May to 31 <sup>st</sup> July
	Does	1 <sup>st</sup> March to 31 <sup>st</sup> October
Roe	Bucks	1 <sup>st</sup> November to 31 March
	Does	1 <sup>st</sup> March to 31 <sup>st</sup> October
Muntjac		No legal close season

#### b) Out of Season Shooting

The relevant legislation is Sec 10 and 10A of the Deer Act 1963 as amended by paras 4 and 5 of Schedule 7 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

- a) Under this legislation it is lawful to shoot out of season to prevent suffering by an injured, or diseased deer.
- b) Also out of season shooting is lawful by certain authorised persons in enclosed woodlands and on enclosed farmland if it is likely that otherwise the deer will cause serious damage to property; but there must also be reasonable grounds for believing that the deer have already caused damage (not serious damage).
- c) The right to shoot out of season to protect property is, as at any other time of the year, restricted to persons already having the right to kill deer on the land concerned, but they may authorise in writing anyone to do so on their behalf (see Subsec 6 of Sec 10A of the Deer Act 1963).

- d) Where the Forestry Commission does not have the right it is necessary to obtain written authorisation from the persons who do.
- e) Requests for permission for out of season shooting must be submitted to the FMO for approval.

## 13.2.2 Scotland

### a) Close Season

The relevant legislation is the 1996 Deer (Scotland) Act 1996, Section 5. The legislation binds the Crown in Scotland. The Forestry Commission will observe all the legal close seasons subject to the exceptions provided in the legislation (see para 2). The close seasons are as follows, dates inclusive.

Species	Sex	Close Season Dates
Red and Sika	Stags	21 <sup>st</sup> October to 30 <sup>th</sup> June
Red/Sika Hybrids	Hinds	16 <sup>th</sup> February to 20 <sup>th</sup> October
Fallow	Bucks Does	1 <sup>st</sup> May to 31 <sup>st</sup> July 16 <sup>th</sup> February to 20 <sup>th</sup> October
Roe	Bucks Does	21 <sup>st</sup> October to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 1 <sup>st</sup> April to 20 <sup>th</sup> October
Muntjac		No legal close season

### b) Out of Season Shooting

The relevant legislation is Section 5(6) and Section 26(2) of the Deer (Scotland) Act 1996.

Under this legislation it is lawful to shoot out of season to prevent suffering by an injured or diseased deer.

Also out of season shooting is lawful by certain authorised persons in enclosed woodlands and on farmland if it is likely that otherwise the deer will cause serious damage to property. Authorised persons include Forestry Commission employees and subject to DCS approval, any other person authorised in writing by the Forestry Commission to shoot deer

out of season on FC land.

The DCS can also give approval for out of season shooting via Section 7 Agreements, but approval must also be obtained via your FMO and you must make sure that a copy of the Section 7 Agreement accompanies your application to your FMO.

Enclosed woodland is defined in the 1996 Act as 'enclosed by a stock proof fence or other barrier'. Out of season shooting is lawful in unenclosed woodland in circumstances as described in b. above, but only with prior authorisation from the DCS.

## 13.3 Tenancies on FC Land: Legislative Background

**Put simply, under common law wild game does not belong to anyone.**

### 13.3.1 England and Wales

On leased land the right to kill and take deer belongs to the tenant unless an agreement exists that confers that right on someone else, for example the landowner.

The person who owns the right and anyone authorised by him, may kill and take deer during the open season and, subject to the usual damage conditions (see Section 4.1 – Damage Assessments) during the close season. Where someone other than the tenant holds the right, the tenant has no right to kill deer at any time, even if they are damaging his property, unless he has concurrent rights or has been authorised by the person who has the right.

However under Section 20 of the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986, if the tenant of an agricultural holding sustains damage to his crops from deer, and the right to kill is vested solely in the landlord, the tenant may be entitled to compensation from the landlord for the damage. In order to prevent damage the Minister may, under Section 98 of the Agricultural Act 1947, serve a notice to kill deer on the person who has the right so to do.

### 13.3.2 Scotland

As the right to kill game goes with ownership of the land, a tenant has no right to take deer, unless authorised to do so in writing by the landowner.

Although the landowner and those authorised by him may shoot deer during the open season without reference to the tenant, they are not permitted to shoot during the close season unless they have been authorised to do so in writing by the tenant. In addition, they may only shoot at night during the open or the close season, if they have been nominated by the tenant and authorised by the Deer Commission Scotland in accordance with Section 33 of the Deer (Scotland) Act 1949, as amended, and subject to the usual damage conditions (see Section 5.1 – Damage Assessments).

However, Section 33 of the Deer (Scotland) Act 1959, as amended, provides that, irrespective of the landowner's rights and of anything in an agreement with the landowner, tenants of agricultural holdings or of woodlands have the right to kill any species of deer found on their land to prevent serious damage to their crops. Under certain circumstances they or their authorised agents can do this outwith the close season and during the hours of darkness but any person authorised to shoot at night must comply with the Deer Commission's Code of Practice, see the DCS website: [http://www.dcs.gov.uk/bestpractice/il\\_night.htm](http://www.dcs.gov.uk/bestpractice/il_night.htm)

- Code of Practice for Shooting Deer at Night).

Notwithstanding these rights, under Section 52 of the Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act 1991, tenants who do not have written permission to kill deer may claim compensation from the landlord for damage caused by deer.

In order to prevent damage the Secretary of State for Scotland may, under Section 39 of the Agricultural (Scotland) Act 1948, as amended, serve a notice to kill deer other than red, sika or red/sika hybrids, on the person who has the right so to do. In the case of tenanted land that person would be the landlord where the rights remain vested in him.

Under Section 6 of the 1959 Act, as amended by the 1996 Act, the Deer Commission Scotland has similar powers.

Further advice on the law relating to tenancies and land holding may be obtained from Territorial and Area Land Agents and from Section Hb of the Estate Code.

## 13.4 Rangers' Dog Reimbursements

This comprises a list of the costs of acquiring, keeping and training a dog for use in deer control which may be reimbursed (on evidence of receipts) at the discretion of the FDM. In exercising this discretion account will be taken, with appropriate advice from a Country specialist as necessary, of the following: -

- a) The time spent by the ranger on duties to which a dog will contribute.
- b) The potential benefit in increased efficiency and humanity of culling.
- c) The need for a trained dog where rangers accompany stalkers.
- d) The advantage in personal security to the ranger on duty.

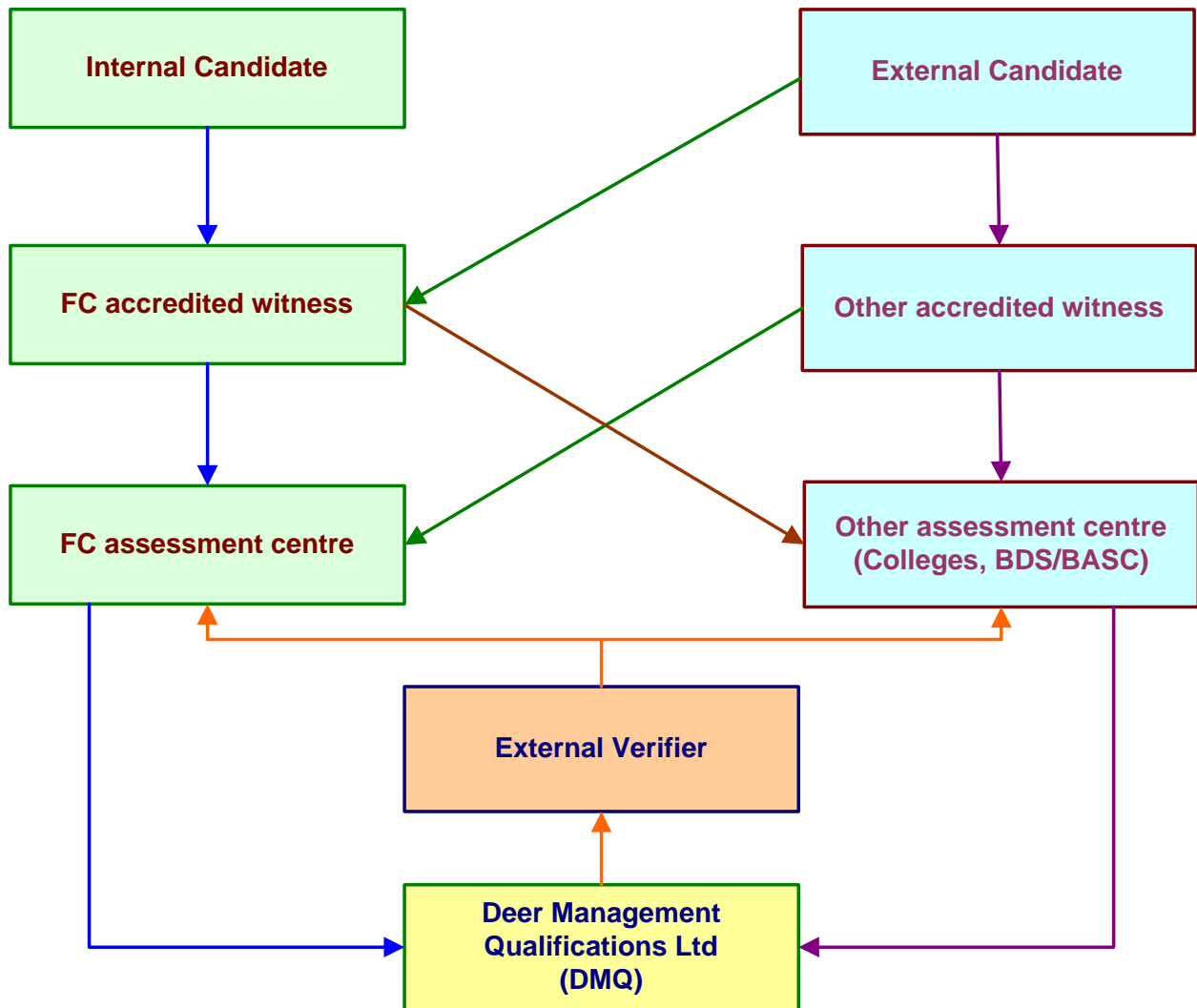
Costs:

- a) Purchase of a suitable dog: £400 max.
- b) Breeding of a suitable dog: £250 max.
- c) Reasonable charge for veterinary services including routine inoculation and parasite control.
- d) Reasonable charges for kennelling.
- e) Normal allowance as per salary agreements for ranger staff.

Normally only one dog will be eligible though for some periods two will be appropriate to cover training of a new dog and during a period of retirement of a dog after its working life.

## 13.5 Deer Management Qualifications

### DMQ Chart for Candidates to DSC2



On the next pages are examples of the relevant DSC Certificates that can be obtained to provide authority for deer stalking and related activities.

EXTRACTS FROM DMQ LTD GUIDE TO DEER STALKING CERTIFICATE  
THE DEER STALKING CERTIFICATE  
A BRIEF GUIDE

In outline, the Deer Stalking Certificate will be awarded to candidates achieving satisfactory levels of competence. Level One certificate holders will have demonstrated theoretical knowledge of the ecology and behaviour of the six wild deer species in the UK and proved their proficiency in firearm safety in a simulated stalking environment. Level Two Certificate holders will, in addition to Level One, have proved their competence in stalking and carcass preparation in the culling of deer on three separate occasions.

In recognition of the standards already achieved by many stalkers and deer managers, stalkers who hold the National Stalkers Competence Certificate will automatically qualify for the award of Level One. There are also many other organisations and colleges, such as the St Hubert Club, who have been running deer management training and it is intended that those with other qualifications can apply for consideration of the automatic award of Level One.

Assessment is based (in the same way as Government VQs) on the production of a portfolio of evidence. It is the candidate's responsibility to produce this portfolio, but the Record of Achievement which candidates are given when they register for the Certificate guides individuals in the collection of the necessary evidence. This evidence can take a number of forms, such as cull records, letters from the Game Dealers, witness statements or direct evidence from observation by an assessor. It should be emphasised however, that the Assessor does not need to see every candidate, indeed it will probably only be in exceptional circumstances that a face to face assessment is required.

The Assessors are individuals chosen by Centres who are licensed to assess the award by DMQ Ltd. Assessors must fulfill two major criteria before they will be accepted by DMQ Ltd. They must have the necessary experience within the industry to be credible, they must hold, or be working towards a Government recognised assessment qualification and they must also have completed a DMQ training package. Each of the Assessment Centres has initially nominated a small number of Assessors who fulfill these criteria.

DSC ASSESSMENT CENTRES (PROVISIONAL)  BASC BDS  SPARSHOLT COLLEGE THURSO COLLEGE
---

A copy of the "Guidance to Assessors and Advisors" is enclosed. This shows the detailed requirements of both Level One and Two of the Deer Stalking Certificate.

The organisations and Colleges shown below have registered an interest in awarding the new Certificate and have been given provisional Assessment Centre status.

There are a large number of organisations within the industry that have offered support and will in future recognise the DSC and these are shown on the rear of the "Guidance to Assessors and Advisors".



## The Deer Stalking Certificate - Level 2

Name &amp; address of holder:

Photograph of holder:



Certificate N°

Usual signature of holder:

Awarded to:

Date:

17th January 2002

To achieve a pass at Level Two candidates must have demonstrated an ability to stalk and humanely despatch deer and prepare them for storage. They will have demonstrated a successful performance in the humane culling of at least three deer on separate occasions. The performance criteria required are shown below.

### Stalk and despatch deer

- Throughout the process, working methods and practices promote health and safety and are consistent with relevant legislation and codes of practice.
- Tools and equipment are in a safe and secure condition suitable for culling activities.
- Deer to be culled are identified to meet given requirements.
- Deer are stalked and efficiently despatched according to legal requirements and approved codes of practice.
- Shot deer are located and approached according to established conditions.
- Wounded deer are found using the appropriate method and despatched humanely.
- Firearm is handled and used safely and efficiently according to approved codes of practice.
- Firearms and ammunition are returned to safe approved locations after use consistent with relevant legislation.

### Prepare deer for storage

- Throughout the process, working methods and practices promote health and safety and are consistent with relevant legislation and codes of practice.
- Preparation and storage areas are in a hygienic condition suitable for receiving deer carcasses.
- Carcass is bled and gutted correctly.
- Carcass is transported to the preparation and storage area in a hygienic manner which maintains its quality.
- Deer are prepared and hung in storage according to legal requirements and production specifications.
- Tools, equipment and facilities are clean and serviceable according to legal requirements.
- Accurate records are maintained in respect of the cull.
- Waste from deer preparation is disposed of in a safe manner and place.

## 13.6 Night Shooting Application Form

### DEER COMMISSION for SCOTLAND

Application for authorisation to shoot deer at night under the terms of  
Section 18(2) of the Deer (Scotland) Act 1996

**This form must be completed by the occupier of agricultural land or the  
occupier of woodland.**

**All sections must be completed.**

<b>1. APPLICANT</b>	
Name	
Address	
Post Code	Telephone No:
<b>2. AUTHORISED NOMINEE(s) (if appropriate)</b>	
Name(s)	
Address(es)	
Post Code(s)	
Telephone No(s):	
<b>3. FIREARM CERTIFICATE DETAILS.</b>	
Holders name(s):	
FAC No(s):	
Calibres of Firearms:	
Issuing Authority:	
Expiry Date:	
<b>4. STATE REASONS FOR REQUESTING NIGHT SHOOTING AUTHORISATION</b>	

**5. STATE EXACT LOCATIONS WHERE DAMAGE IS BEING CAUSED (give OS reference and/or name of area and quoting boundaries).**

---



---



---

**6. In relation to the locations specified at section 5 above, PROVIDE FULL DETAILS OF ALL OTHER METHODS OF CONTROL ATTEMPTED.**

---



---



---

**7. DETAILS OF DEER INTENDED TO BE KILLED, TICK AS APPROPRIATE:**

Red	Sika	Roe	Fallow	Other (Specify)
-----	------	-----	--------	-----------------

**8. I CONFIRM THAT**

(a) I am the occupier of the land mentioned in section 5 above;

(b) the killing of deer is necessary to prevent serious damage to crops, pasture, human or animal foodstuffs, or to woodland;

(c) all other information is, to the best of my knowledge, correct; and

(d) I undertake to return the authorisation, if issued, within the prescribed period.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Notes to Applicant

- a. The attached “Code of Practice for Shooting Deer at Night” should be read, with particular attention given to the conditions set out in Section 2.
- b. Commission staff reserve the right to inspect the site prior to the issue of an authorisation.
- c. Commission staff may investigate cases where no deer are shot during the authorised period.

Please return the completed form to Deer Commission for Scotland, 82 Fairfield Road, Inverness, IV3 5LH. Fax No. 01463 – 712931.

## 13.7 Deer Cull Form S105

A copy is shown on the next page of this form.

### ***Notes on completion***

1. A separate line should be completed for each species.
2. FC Rangers (cols. 2-4) covers both direct employees and contractors.
3. The column 4 figure should include both sexes, and the remarks column should be used to give male/female split.
4. Lettings (cols. 7 & 8) should include all deer shot by landlords, tenants, FC tenants and under woodland lettings.
5. Other deaths (col. 9) should include known deaths by disease, accident, poaching and hunting.
6. Submit to Supervisor as directed with a copy to the Operational Support Unit (OSU) and Country Director by 15<sup>th</sup> May each year covering the 12 month period ending 31<sup>st</sup> March each year.



## 13.8 Deer Permit Stalking Questionnaire

We need your views to help us improve our service for Deer Permit Stalking. Please take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire and either hand it to your host or send it to the address at the foot of the form. Please tick the boxes that best fit your experience, please tick more than one if you feel it is appropriate. Thank you.

1. *Where did you first find out about deer stalking packages with FC?*

- Friend or colleague
- Hunting magazine
- Mail from the FC
- FC Staff
- Internet
- Other

2. *Where do you prefer to stalk in GB?*

- Scottish Highlands
- Central Scotland
- Scottish Lowlands
- North England
- Central England
- South England
- Wales

3. *How often do you visit GB for deer stalking with the FC?*

- Less than once a year
- Once a year
- 2-3 times a year
- More than 3 times a year

4. *Do you stalk with other organisations in GB/Europe?*

- Yes
- No

5. *Main reasons for coming to stalk in the UK?*

- Abundance of deer
- Variety of deer
- Scenic Location
- Value for money
- Good Services
- Other

6. *Why do you prefer GB to other European countries?*

- Lots of deer
- Live in UK
- Satisfied previously
- Beautiful country
- Live here
- Local Ranger
- Experience
- Convenience
- Nice people
- Friends nearby

7. *How far in advance of your trip would you like to be able to book a stalking week with the FC?*

- Up to 3 months
- Up to 6 months
- Up to 12 months
- More than 12 months

8. *How would you rate the pre-stalking service and information provided by FC staff?*  
 Very Good   
 Good   
 Acceptable   
 Not Good
9. *How would you rate the knowledge and assistance provided by the FC Ranger during your stalking week?*  
 Very Good   
 Good   
 Poor   
 Unacceptable
10. *In what type of accommodation do you normally stay while deer stalking in GB?*  
 Hotel   
 B&B/Guest House   
 Self catering   
 At home   
 Ranger's house   
 Caravan   
 Friends
11. *How much do you normally pay for accommodation while deer stalking in GB (£ per night)?*  
 Less than £40   
 £40 to £80   
 More than £80
- 11a. *How much do you spend locally in addition to your stalking?*  
 Less than £100   
 £100 to £300   
 More than £300
- 11b. *How much do you spend in the rest of GB in addition to your stalking?*  
 Less than £100   
 £100 to £300   
 More than £300

12. *On your visit to GB are you normally accompanied by companions who do not stalk?*  
 Yes   
 No
- 12a. *What do your companions do?*  
 Sightseeing   
 Shopping   
 Relaxation   
 Walking   
 Other Sports   
 Eating out   
 Other (please state)  .....
13. *If deer stalking with the FC could be booked over the internet, would you use this method?*  
 Yes   
 No
14. *Do you have any comments on stalking with the FC?*

If you have, please write them here:

Please give this form to your host or if you wish, send it to:  
 Operational Support Unit (OSU)  
 Forestry Commission  
 231 Corstorphine Road  
 Edinburgh  
 EH12 7AT

Thank you for your time

.

## 13.9 Deer Permit Stalking Feedback Form

This form is can be completed by the Ranger after a Stalking Session and sent to the relevant Country Office.

Client's Name:													
<b>Outings</b>													
<b>Date</b>													
<b>Day</b>	<b>Monday</b>		<b>Tuesday</b>		<b>Wednesday</b>		<b>Thursday</b>		<b>Friday</b>		<b>Saturday</b>		
<b>Time</b>	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	Totals
<b>Stalking Hours</b>													
<b>Number of Kills</b>													
<b>Shootable Deer seen.</b>													
<b>Client Rating</b> ( <i>Tick or comment as needed</i> )													
<b>Recommended?</b>													
<b>Satisfactory</b>	<i>1 Outstanding, 2 Very Good, 3 Competent, 4 Not Fully competent, 5 Unsatisfactory</i>												
<b>Level of communication / language?</b>													
<b>Fitness?</b>	Fine												
	Acceptable												
	Unfit												
<b>Safety Awareness?</b>													
<b>Firearms Competency?</b>													
<b>Deer Stalking Experience?</b>													
<b>Understanding to FC Deer Management objectives</b>													
<b>Takes instruction?</b>													
<b>Other comment?</b>													
<b>Signed by Ranger</b>	<b>Date</b>												

## 13.10 Notification of Arrival of Client

FROM: FOREST OPERATIONS SECTION, COUNTRY OFFICE

TO: FOREST DISTRICT

**Can you please pass the following information to the ranger concerned :-**

<b>Ranger</b>	
<b>Forest</b>	
<b>Dates</b>	
<b>Client</b>	
<b>Age</b>	
<b>Nationality</b>	
<b>FC experience</b>	
<b>Accommodation Address &amp; Tel no.</b>	
<b>Arrival date</b>	
<b>Time</b>	
<b>Comments</b>	

From:.....

Date .....

## 13.11 Key Requirement Checklist

<b>No.</b>	<b>🔑 Key Requirement</b>	<b>✓ = Yes ✗ = No blank.n/a</b>
<b>1</b>	All Forest District Managers in areas where the potential for deer damage exists are expected to use one or more of the above methods, as appropriate, to monitor the levels of deer damage in their Forest District and any changes resulting from their chosen control policy.	
<b>2</b>	All FDs should have a Deer Management Strategy defining DMUs. DMUs must have population counts meeting the requirements above.	
<b>3</b>	All FDs will use the DMS to record cull data.	
<b>4</b>	Forest District Managers need to put procedures in place to ensure that rangers are involved in Forest Design Planning, and that this is recorded.	
<b>5</b>	FDMs in England and Wales must discuss any case for out of season shooting with their FMO, and gain their written approval before proceeding.	
<b>6</b>	The carcasses of deer injured or killed on the road must not be sold into the food chain.	
<b>7</b>	Risk assessments must be undertaken for all deer management operations.	



# 13.12 Wildlife Ranger's Safety Check Booklet

Year.....

Ranger Signature: ..... Supervisor Signature: .....  
 Name: ..... Name: .....  
 Date: ..... Date: .....

RANGERS CHECKLISTS	Agreed Frequency	
	Self-check	Supervisor
The Wild Venison Standard - Self Assessment Questionnaire for Ranger Staff		
Wildlife Ranger Managers (WRM1) Firearms		
Wildlife Ranger Managers (WRM2) Deer Carcass Handling		
Wildlife Ranger Managers (WRM3) Manual Handling of Loads		
Wildlife Ranger Managers (WRM4) Working in Isolated Conditions		
FESS FM3 Use of Gas to control Rabbits		
FESS FM4 Use of Warfarin to control grey squirrels		
FESS FM5 Use of Traps to control rabbits/grey squirrels		
FESS GEN 5 Ladders		
FASTCo Safety Guide 701 All Terrain Cycles		
FASTCo Safety Guide 701 All Terrain Vehicles		
FASTCo Safety Guide 401 Tree Climbing Operations		
FASTCo Safety Guide 402 Aerial Rescue		
FASTCo Safety Guide 301 Petrol Driven Chainsaws		
FASTCo Safety Guide 203 Clearing Saw		

**SAFETY STANDARD - WILDLIFE RANGER MANAGERS (WRM)**

**WRM1 SELF-CHECK**

**USE OF FIREARMS**

To be completed by Rangers and/or Supervisor. Supervisor **must** complete at least one check each year and must sign off all Ranger self-checks.

ACTION	Check Complete d ✓ or ✗	Comments If applicable or if ✗ in previous box.
1. <b>Never raise the safety catch until ready to shoot.</b>		
2. Always ensure a safe background to a shot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>never shoot where you cannot see;</b></li> <li>• <b>do not aim through cover;</b></li> <li>• <b>trees are not a safe background;</b></li> <li>• <b>never point a firearm in an unsafe direction.</b></li> </ul>		
3. Use only firearms that have been inspected annually by a gunsmith.		
4. Store firearms and ammunition separately in approved safes.		
5. Never leave firearms in unoccupied buildings or unattended vehicles except in a gunsafe.		
6. Never leave a firearm loaded when not in use.		
7. Inspect for serviceability before and during use. <b>If in doubt report for expert examination.</b>		
8. Ensure zeroing areas are covered by a site specific risk assessment approved by WRM.		
9. Carry only factory loaded ammunition of the correct calibre.		
10. Check muzzle for obstruction after falling or negotiating obstacles.		
11. Be aware of hazards of ricochet.		
12. Position hearing protection before taking the shot. Ensure any companion is also wearing protection.		
13. Any companion must be behind the marksman when shot is taken		
14. Carry out maintenance as per manufacturers' instructions.		
15. Night Shooting – read and conform to DCS guidelines.		
16. Deer Permit Stalking - You are in direct control of the Permit Holder, ensure his equipment is in good order and he adopts safe practices.		
17. Use only high seats of an approved design and visually inspect before use.		
Completed by: .....	Supervisor Check: .....	
Signature: .....	Signature: .....	
Date: .....	Date: .....	

## SAFETY STANDARD - WILDLIFE RANGER MANAGERS (WRM)

**WRM2 SELF-CHECK****TREATMENT OF CARCASSES**

To be completed by Rangers and/or Supervisor. Supervisor **must** complete at least one check each year and must sign off all Ranger self-checks.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>Check Completed ✓ or ✗</b>	<b>Comments If applicable or if ✗ in previous box.</b>
<b>IN THE FIELD</b>		
1. Wear disposable gloves.		
2. Use knife design approved by WRM – with non-slip handle and hand stop.		
3. Do not cut towards any part of your body.		
<b>IN THE LARDER</b>		
<b>4. Ensure all equipment is in good condition. Use knife design approved by WRM – with non-slip handle and hand stop.</b>		
5. Do not cut towards any part of your body.		
6. Wear suitable protective clothing in accordance with job risk assessment, examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apron when handling carcasses;</li> <li>• boots when entering preparation areas;</li> <li>• chainmail or kevlar glove on free hand when dressing carcasses, skinning heads;</li> <li>• safety helmet if overhead equipment is in use.</li> </ul>		
7. Store hooks so that they do not create a hazard – particularly of head/eye injury.		

Completed by: ..... Supervisor Check: .....  
Signature: ..... Signature: .....  
Date: ..... Date: .....

## SAFETY STANDARD - WILDLIFE RANGER MANAGERS (WRM)

**WRM3 SELF-CHECK****MANUAL HANDLING OF LOADS**

To be completed by Rangers and/or Supervisor. Supervisor **must** complete at least one check each year and must sign off all Ranger self-checks.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>Check Completed ✓ or ✗</b>	<b>Comments If applicable or if ✗ in previous box.</b>
1. If means other than manual handling are practicable, use them i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• winches</li> <li>• drag bags, trailers</li> <li>• roller rails</li> </ul>		
2. Assess the safety of load for lifting/dragging.		
3. Check surroundings – ground conditions – plan best route – get assistance if necessary.		
4. Adopt kinetic method for lifting - feet hip width apart one slightly in front, bend knees, spine straight, arms close to body, grip with palm and roots of fingers, look up as hands take the load, use body weight to obtain momentum.		
5. Load safely. Minimise lifts above shoulders and below knees.		
6. Consider any special factors that may affect the lift/drag - e.g. physical condition, confined space Never attempt to lift beyond personal capability		
7. Use aid tools where appropriate.		
8. Team lifts - Clear commands, plan of action.		
9. Ranger completes Short Job Risk Assessment when appropriate.		

Completed by: ..... Supervisor Check: .....  
Signature: ..... Signature: .....  
Date: ..... Date: .....

## SAFETY STANDARD - WILDLIFE RANGER MANAGERS (WRM)

**WRM4 SELF-CHECK      WORK IN ISOLATED CONDITIONS**

To be completed by Rangers and/or Supervisor. Supervisor **must** complete at least one check each year and must sign off all Ranger self-checks.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>Check Completed ✓ or ✗</b>	<b>Comments If applicable or if ✗ in previous box.</b>
1. Means of raising alarm carried eg mobile phone.		
2. Ranger able to state a fail to safe Lone Working safety procedure. eg Buddy System, Log On etc.		
3. Ranger able to state search procedure. ie report to Duty Officer.		
4. Ranger able to state evacuation procedure. Time limit for raising alarm, locate casualty/vehicle. Guide emergency services to site, unlock barriers etc.		
5. Personal survival equipment is carried at all times eg waterproof clothing; survival bag; spare pullover; extra food; first-aid kit; whistle; /strobe light.		
6. Ranger can state self-help procedures in an emergency.		
7. Dealing with Members of the Public. Ranger can state what to do if he/she encounters members of the public acting suspiciously – if concerned, do not approach/keep 2m away/retreat/be non-confrontational, plan escape route.		
8. Ranger completes Short Job Risk Assessment when appropriate.		

Completed by:.....

Signature:.....

Date: .....

Supervisor Check.....

Signature.....

Date.....