

Control vertebrate pests and predators by shooting

Overview

This standard describes your role in shooting vertebrate pests and predators. It relates to the work activities that you undertake to control vertebrate pests and predators using a firearm.

To meet this standard you will be able to:

- identify the presence of vertebrate pests and predators
- legally and safely shoot vertebrate pests and predators.

This standard does not replace the need for individuals to hold the relevant shotgun/firearms licence and other licences which may be required by law.

This standard is for those who use firearms to control vertebrate pests and predators.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. carry out work safely in line with health and safety requirements
2. interpret signs to determine **vertebrate pest and predator** activity
3. select **shooting method**, firearm and ammunition appropriate to the vertebrate pest and predator species, site characteristics and legal requirements
4. use **firearms** according to relevant legislation and industry codes of practice
5. identify target species
6. effectively and safely shoot target
7. minimise the disturbance caused to non-target species
8. dispatch wounded vertebrate pests and predators humanely
9. dispose of dead vertebrate pests and predators correctly according to industry codes of practice and legal requirements
10. effectively clean, maintain and store firearms and ammunition according to legal requirements
11. maintain accurate vertebrate pests and predators records.

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the codes of practice covering all aspects of vertebrate pests and predators control
2. health and safety risks associated with shooting vertebrate pests and predators
3. firearms legislation in relation to shooting vertebrate pests and predators
4. the legal restrictions controlling the ownership and use of firearms
5. the effective application and ranges of firearms and ammunition
6. common vertebrate pest and predator species
7. the significance and potential effects of vertebrate pests and predators to the site and its purpose
8. behavioural characteristics of vertebrate pests and predators and how these can influence the shooting method selected
9. the effects of vertebrate pests and predators on animal/plant populations
10. how to recognise and interpret signs to determine pest and predator activity which could include direct sightings, runs, footprints, damage to habitat, dead animals, kills, sounds, smells, droppings
11. the habits of common vertebrate pest and predator species
12. how to minimise the impact of shooting on non-target species
13. how behavioural characteristics of vertebrate pests and predators can be used to increase the effectiveness of shooting
14. methods of humane dispatch
15. how to safely and legally dispose of vertebrate pests and predators
16. how to minimise the dangers of disease when handling dead animals
17. the reasons for keeping accurate, up-to-date vertebrate pest and predator records
18. when shooting becomes unsafe and must be stopped
19. other relevant wildlife and environmental legislation that impacts on the shooting of pests and predators
20. how to effectively and safely shoot both bird and mammal pest and predator species, taking account of absolute range

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Scope/range

This standard requires that you determine the activity of the following pest and predator types:

- mammals
- birds.

This standard requires that you select a **shooting method** to take account of:

- pest and predator type
- characteristics of shooting location (topography, habitat, other estate activity, public access)
- safety of self, other participants and the public.

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Glossary

vertebrate pests and predators -e.g. rabbits, stoats, weasels, grey squirrels, foxes, crows, magpies, mink, rats, cormorants, gulls, seals etc.

firearms - shotgun and/or rifle

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