

Control vertebrate pests and predators by shooting

Overview

This standard is about controlling vertebrate pests and predators by shooting. 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 licenses that may be required by law.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. carry out work safely in line with relevant health and safety requirements
2. wear appropriate clothing and personal protective equipment for the activity
3. interpret signs to determine vertebrate pest and predator activity
4. select the shooting method, firearm and ammunition appropriate to the vertebrate pest and predator species, the site characteristics and the relevant legal requirements
5. transport, carry and prepare the firearm and ammunition safely in accordance with firearms legislation and industry codes of practice
6. carry out safe loading and unloading procedures
7. identify target species
8. determine the maximum effective range of firearm according to ammunition used and target species
9. handle the firearm safely, securely and effectively at all times, according to relevant industry codes of practice
10. aim and discharge the firearm effectively and safely to shoot the target
11. minimise the disturbance caused to non-target species
12. dispatch wounded vertebrate pests and predators humanely
13. dispose of dead vertebrate pests and predators correctly, in accordance with legal requirements and industry codes of practice
14. disassemble and assemble firearm in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and safe working practices
15. clean, maintain and store the firearm and ammunition after use, in accordance with relevant legislation and codes of practice
16. maintain accurate records

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the relevant legislation and codes of practice covering all aspects of vertebrate pest and predator control
2. other relevant wildlife and environmental legislation that impacts on the shooting of pests and predators
3. the health and safety requirements associated with shooting vertebrate pests and predators including the dangers of lone working
4. suitable clothing and protective equipment for the activity
5. the relevant legal restrictions controlling the ownership and use of firearms in relation to shooting vertebrate pests and predators
6. the legal requirements controlling storage, transport and carriage of firearms and ammunition
7. the effective application and ranges of firearms and ammunition
8. how to select the correct ammunition and what should be considered
9. common vertebrate pest and predator species and how to recognise and interpret signs to determine pest and predator activity
10. the habits of common vertebrate pest and predator species
11. the significance and potential effects of the presence of vertebrate pests and predators to the site and its purpose
12. behavioural characteristics of vertebrate pests and predators and how these can influence the effectiveness of the shooting method selected
13. how to effectively and safely shoot both bird and mammal pest and predator species, taking account of absolute range
14. when shooting becomes unsafe and must be stopped
15. when night shooting is appropriate and the relevant legislation and codes of practice that control its' use
16. how to minimise the impact of shooting on non-target species
17. methods of humane dispatch
18. how to safely and legally dispose of vertebrate pests and predators
19. how to minimise the dangers of disease when handling dead animals
20. how to disassemble and assemble firearms
21. how to clean, inspect and maintain firearms and why this is important
22. the reasons for keeping accurate, up-to-date records on vertebrate pests and predators

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Scope/range

Determine the activity of the following pest and predator types:

- mammals
- birds

Select a shooting method to take account of:

- the pest and predator type
- the characteristics of the shooting location (topography, habitat, other area activity, public access)
- the safety of yourself, 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

Signs to determine pest and predator activity - e.g. direct sightings, runs, footprints, damage to habitat, dead animals, kills, sounds, smells, droppings

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