



# MERGER UPDATE



*The use of Best Practice Guidance from August 1st 2010*

## *Aim*

The aim of this guide is to provide important information regarding the use of Best Practice Guidance from August 1st 2010, following the merger of the Deer Commission for Scotland with Scottish Natural Heritage.

## *Introduction*

On 25th March 2010, the Public Service Reform (Scotland) Bill was passed by the Scottish Parliament. As a result the Deer Commission for Scotland (DCS) has merged with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and all deer functions have been transferred from DCS to SNH as of 1st August 2010.

## *What does this mean for DCS?*

DCS has been abolished. There is no longer a separate organisation known as DCS. The Board has been dissolved and Members' appointments have ceased. Permanent DCS staff have transferred to SNH and become SNH staff.

## *What does this mean for SNH?*

SNH is now responsible for all DCS functions under the Deer (Scotland) 1996 Act including:

- A duty to take into account the impacts of deer on agriculture, woodland, the natural heritage and public safety.
- Issuing of Approvals and Authorisations
- Control Agreements and Control Schemes
- Statutory Returns and Records

## *What does this mean for deer managers?*

Legal responsibilities placed on deer managers through the Deer (Scotland) 1996 Act remain unchanged and deer managers are required to comply with the legislation as they have previously.

Where deer managers have sought advice or assistance from DCS staff, there will be equivalent members of SNH staff to deal with deer issues and matters.

## *Transfer to Scottish Natural Heritage of functions of Deer Commission for Scotland*

- (1) The functions conferred on the Deer Commission for Scotland by or under the Deer (Scotland) Act 1996 (c. 58) or any other enactment are transferred to Scottish Natural Heritage.
- (2) All property, rights, liabilities and obligations of the Deer Commission for Scotland are transferred to Scottish Natural Heritage.
- (3) The Deer Commission for Scotland is dissolved.
- (4) Anything done by or in relation to the Deer Commission for Scotland has effect, in relation to any time after this section comes into force, as if done by or in relation to Scottish Natural Heritage.

## *Changes to Best Practice*

Throughout the Best Practice guides, readers should assume that 'SNH' simply replaces 'DCS' where mentioned and along with it replaces the context of the information to that relating to SNH.

The main change to Best Practice will be in the interpretation of the section of guides entitled 'DCS Guides'. These are now essentially 'SNH' guides and all the information contained relates to the new legal duties and functions relating to deer placed on SNH as an organisation.

see: [www.bestpracticeguides.org.uk](http://www.bestpracticeguides.org.uk)

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