



RISK ASSESSMENT



Aim

The aim of this guide is to provide guidance on carrying out risk assessment in order to:

- ◆ Identify the risks involved with deer management activities;
- ◆ Put in place sensible measures to control them; and
- ◆ Make sure they stayed controlled.

Introduction

Carrying out practical deer management activities may involve a certain degree of risk, for example, risks associated with the use of firearms, knives, lone working in isolated environments or the use of high seats. It is therefore important for all those participating in practical deer management activities to consider these risks and to take steps to minimise them.

The aim of a risk assessment is to examine carefully what in the workplace could cause harm to people. This then enables an assessment to be made of whether enough precautions have been taken or whether more needs to be done to prevent harm. A risk assessment should be a practical exercise, aimed at getting the right controls in place – keep it simple and put the results into practice.¹

Responsibilities

For employed people, the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR)² describes duties regarding Health & Safety at Work. These regulations require: 'employers and self-employed people to make suitable and sufficient assessment of risks to employees and any others, such as contractors and members of the public who may be affected by their undertaking'.

All employers/self-employed must:

- 1 Assess risks at work.
- 1 Have a written health and safety policy, if more than five people are employed at any one time.*
- 1 Record the significant findings of the risk assessment if more than five people are employed at any one time.
- 1 Involve their employees or their employees' safety representatives where appropriate on health and safety matters.
- 1 Provide free health and safety training or protective equipment for employees where it is needed.

The MHSWR also outline procedures that can be applied to a recreational situation. It is recommended that everyone carries out some form of risk assessment before engaging in practical deer management.

All those taking part in deer management activities

- 2 Whether required by law or not, practitioners should carry out a risk assessment covering the activities they routinely undertake, for example:
 - Weapon handling and shooting safety;
 - Lone working;
 - Noise from rifle shot;
 - ATV and off road driving;
 - Lifting and handling carcasses;
 - High seats;
 - Other activities occurring on ground i.e. timber operations, horse riding;
 - Contamination of water supplies;
 - Operating in difficult terrain;
 - Use of knives.

2 Where undertaking an operation not listed, or where the circumstances differ from those ordinarily encountered, then a risk assessment specific to that situation should be carried out.

Maintaining a written record of risk assessment carried out, and any subsequent action, will help:

- ◆ Highlight hazards and ensure appropriate action is taken to reduce risks;
- ◆ Demonstrate that legal requirements have been fulfilled;
- ◆ Provide a means of communicating the findings to employees.

Procedure for assessing risks

Hazards: a hazard is anything that may cause harm (e.g. firearms, working at height, chemicals, machinery).

Risks: the chance (high or low) that someone could be harmed by these and other hazards, combined with an indication of how serious the harm could be. For example, a minor injury that is unlikely to happen will have a 'Low' risk score. Where a fatal injury is 'possible' the score is 'High'.

	Likely	Possible	Improbable
Fatal	High	High	Med
Major injury/disease	High	Med	Med
Minor injury/disease	High	Low	Low

Carrying out a risk assessment

There are five steps to consider when carrying out a risk assessment:

- 2** 1. Identify the hazards.
- 2** 2. Decide who might be harmed and how.
- 2** 3. Evaluate the risks (e.g. by determining the risk score).

Decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done.

Hazard	Who is at risk?	Control	Further action	Action by whom	Action by when	Action done
Falling from high seat	Self, co-workers, others with legal access, public	Regular maintenance. Check at each use. Exercise care when climbing. Attach 'not for public use' signs. Place away from most used public areas.	Check all of current high seat stock as of date to the right	Name	Date	Yes/no/ date
Accidental discharge of firearm	Self, accompanying persons, public	Follow safety advice from sources such as Best Practice Guidance and DSC Qualifications	Ongoing	Name	Ongoing	Ongoing

Ensure that:

- ◆ Specific legal requirements have been met, e.g. storage of firearms;
- ◆ Accepted industry standards are met;
- ◆ All reasonable steps have been taken;
- ◆ Adequate training is provided.

If more should be done, either avoid the hazard entirely or consider the following steps to reduce or control the risks:

- ◆ Look for alternative options with less risk;
- ◆ Prevent access or reduce exposure to the hazard;
- ◆ Provide further information, training or guidance;
- ◆ Issue personal protective equipment;
- ◆ Provide necessary facilities (e.g. first aid and washing facilities for removal of contamination).

Ensure that control measures put in place are maintained.

2 4. Record your findings and implement them.

Record your significant findings in written form (see example form below). This is a legal requirement if you employ five or more people. This record is also useful for personal use. You must be able to show that:

- ◆ Proper checks were made;
- ◆ You identified who might be affected;
- ◆ Significant hazards were dealt with;
- ◆ Precautions are reasonable and remaining risk is low.

2 5. Review risk assessment and update as necessary.

* See BPG Health & Safety Principles

¹ For further information regarding Health & Safety Issues and Risk Assessment contact Health & Safety Executive (www.hse.gov.uk). For further contact information see BP Contacts. ² The Management of the Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 available on-line at www.opsi.gov.uk or from the Stationery Office (see BP Contacts)