

ENGLAND &
WALES **BEST
PRACTICE
GUIDES**

Risk Assessment.

Legislation, Health & Safety and Welfare





Introduction



- There are many aspects of practical deer management where personal health and safety or that of others should be considered.
- The aim of this guide is to highlight areas of risk and to encourage deer managers to consider the hazards and take steps to minimise them.
- There are legal requirements for employed/self-employed people and employers which are described in the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR).
- Health and safety law generally requires that precautions are taken to avoid risk “**so far as is reasonably practicable**” and this is a good principle for individuals to adopt.

Risk assessment

The usual way to minimise risk is to carry out some form of risk assessment. Risk assessments do not need to be overly complicated and can be filled out by following the 5 simple steps below:

- Identify the hazards,
- Decide who might be harmed and how,
- Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions,
- Record your findings and implement them,
- Review your assessment and update if necessary.

In most cases the steps are easy to follow and you do not have to be a health and safety expert to carry out a practical risk assessment.



Hazards

Hazards in wild deer management fall into the 3 main areas of personal safety, third party/public safety and food safety. The list below gives just a few of the aspects that should be considered:

Public safety

- Who may have access to the ground and when
- Risk of confrontations when carrying a firearm

Use of firearms

- Security of firearms and ammo
- Safe handling and shooting of firearms
- Hearing protection

Lone working

- Personal injury
- First aid
- Communication measures

Vehicle use

- Off road driving
- Loading and unloading
- Choice of routes

Working at height (high seats)

- Falls
- Maintenance
- Vandalism

Carcass handling

- Injury from antlers, hooves, tusks
- Manual handling concerns
- Risk of disease or cross contamination

Use of knives and other tools

- Personal injury
- Maintenance
- First aid

Disease

- Disease risk from carcasses
- Lyme disease risk

The HSE website give comprehensive guidance, with examples, on how to conduct a risk assessment. There are also many safe practice guides in the agriculture topic area which are relevant to wild deer management.

Recording your risk assessment

- If you carry out a risk assessment, keep a record of it.
- This is a legal requirement if you are self-employed or employ 5 or more people.
- The legislation does not generally apply to the recreational stalker in circumstances where they are not formally employed and have no responsibility for the deer management. However, stalkers who do have responsibility for deer management and undertake such, whether or not under lease or licence, have a legal duty to take all reasonable and practical measures to ensure no one is put at risk. Such undertaking need not involve employment or commercial gain.
- A simple written record is equally useful for personal use, for volunteers, could form part of a lease agreement, and could support you if an incident occurs.
- If regular actions such as checking high seats need to take place the details of checks made should also be recorded.
- The bulk of the work of maintaining a risk assessment record is done when it is first created but is important to review your risk assessment from time to time or if circumstances change and to record that you have done so.

An example of part of a Risk Assessment record can be found below:

Risk matrix							
Risk rating guidance Likelihood (L) x Severity (S) = Risk Rating (RR).	Likelihood (L)	5 - certain	5	10	15	20	25
		4 - likely	4	8	12	16	20
		3 - possible	3	6	9	12	15
		2 - unlikely	2	4	6	8	10
		1 - remote	1	2	3	4	5
			1 - trivial injury	2 - minor injury	3 - notable injury	4 - major injury	5 - fatal
		Severity (S)					
Acceptability of risk guidance	High-risk: 15-25		High-risk activities should cease immediately. Further effective control measures to mitigate risks must be introduced.				
	Medium-risk: 8-12		Medium-risks should only be tolerated for the short-term and only whilst further control measures to mitigate the risks are being planned and introduced.				
	Low-risk: 1-6		Low-risks are largely acceptable. Where it is reasonable to do so, efforts should be made to reduce risks further.				



Risk assessment

Activity	Persons at risk	Significant hazards	Initial			Risk control measures	Residual		
			L	S	RR		L	S	RR
Stalking – gunshot injury	Deer management participants Members of public	Injury to person through unsafe shot or accidental discharge of firearm	2	5	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All deer management participants to be suitably qualified with the DSC1 and DSC2 certificates All participants will be assessed on the range before stalking begins, in presence of trained RCO/RSO Adherence to DI current Best Practice Guidance on safe handling of firearms Safety briefing to be given to all participants prior to stalking 	1	5	L
Carcass handling	Deer management participants	Injury through improper handling of carcasses or accident when handling carcasses	3	3	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proper handling techniques to be used at all times Manual handling qualification to be held Care taken of hooves and antlers PPE worn to limit risk 	1	3	L
High seat use	Deer management participants Members of the public	Accident or injury from falling from high seat	3	3	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adherence to Best Practice Guidance when using high seats All seats to feature signage prohibiting unauthorised use Regular checks and maintenance of high seats 	2	3	L
Lone/remote stalking	Deer management participants	Risk to safety in event of accident with no immediate emergency help	3	4	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deer management participants to carry first aid kit and mobile phone, map and GPS unit Details of destination, route and time of return to be exchanged 	2	2	L



Further Information

- **HSE risk management**
[hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm)
- **HSE safe practice guides**
[hse.gov.uk/pubns/index.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/index.htm)
- **The HSE can be contacted at:**
[hse.gov.uk/contact/index.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/index.htm)