

Plan and release animals into their natural habitat

Overview

This standard is about planning and releasing animals into their natural habitat. Habitats may include terrestrial, freshwater, coastal or marine environments.

It requires that you are able to plan the release of animals and assess the release site to determine the suitability of the habitat, as well as the fitness of the animal for release. You will also be able to assess the risks involved in releasing the animal, adopt the required methods of release and use these methods safely. You will transport and handle the animal in a way that is relevant, safe and minimises stress.

You will need to be aware of your own limitations and confirm that you meet the relevant responsibilities for providing a duty of care under current animal health and welfare legislation.

This standard is suitable for those who are involved in the planning and releasing of animals into their natural habitat.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1.
assess the risks associated with the releasing of animals into their natural habitat and complete a risk assessment where required
2.
carry out your work in accordance with the relevant environmental, health and safety legislation, risk assessment requirements, associated codes of practice and organisational policies
3.
carry out your work in accordance with the relevant animal health and welfare and other animal-related legislation, associated codes of practice and organisational policies
4.
assess the release site to determine the suitability of the habitat for the animals
5.
plan when to release the animals into their natural habitat, taking into consideration time of day, season, and environment
6.
observe the behaviour and condition of the animals when planning their release
7.
use a relevant method of identification to allow monitoring of the animal after release, where required
8.
take action to manage the impact of external factors on the planned release
9.
prepare and use the required equipment in accordance with the relevant legislation, the manufacturer's guidelines and organisational policies
10.
check that the personal protective equipment (PPE) is relevant for the activity
11.
transfer the animals safely to the release site in a way that minimises stress and maintains welfare
12.
release the animals safely, in a manner that minimises stress and maintains

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welfare

13.

confirm that records are maintained and stored as required by the relevant legislation and organisational policy

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1.
the relevant legislation affecting the release of species and individual animals into their natural habitat
2.
your responsibilities under the relevant environmental and health and safety legislation, risk assessment requirements, associated codes of practice and organisational policies
3.
your responsibilities under the relevant animal health and welfare and animal-related legislation, associated codes of practice and organisational policies
4.
how to assess the suitability of the release site
5.
how to determine the fitness of each individual animal for release
6.
how to plan the release of animals and the importance of timing, season and environment
7.
the methods available to aid the identification of animals after release
8.
the external factors that can affect the release and how these can be managed
9.
how to minimise damage to the natural habitat and other wildlife during release
10.
the types of equipment required for releasing animals, and how to prepare and use these in accordance with the relevant legislation, the manufacturer's guidelines and organisational policies
11.
the conditions required to maintain the animals' health, safety and welfare during transfer and release
12.
indications of stress and disorder in the animals being released and to minimise these

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13.
the action to take following the observation of stress or disorder in the animals
14.
the required methods of release for the animals concerned
15.
the potential behaviour during release and the actions to be taken if behaviour varies from the norm
16.
how and when post-release monitoring and recording should be undertaken
17.
the records that need to be kept in relation to the release of animals into their natural habitat and the importance of completing these in accordance with the relevant legislation and organisational policy

Scope/range

Manage the following external factors when releasing animals into their natural habitat:

1.
human interference
2.
pests and predators
3.
weather/season
4.
local farming activities

Glossary

Methods available to aid identification of animals after release include:

- ringing
- tagging
- microchip
- use of satellite/GPS tracking
- radio transmitters
- tattoo
- individual markings
- centre records
- photographs/drawings
- hair clippings

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