
Overview

This standard covers the release of animals into their natural habitat. Habitats may include terrestrial, freshwater, coastal or marine.

It requires that you are able to assess the release site to determine suitability of the habitat as well as the suitability of the animal for release. You will also be able to assess the risks involved in releasing the animal, adopt appropriate methods of release and use these methods effectively and safely. You will transport and handle the animal in a manner that is appropriate, reduces stress and is safe.

You will need to be aware of your own limitations and ensure that you meet the legal responsibilities for duty of care under animal health and welfare legislation.

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

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 assess the release site to determine the suitability of the habitat
- P2 observe behaviour and condition of the animal in preparation for release
- P3 where required use an appropriate **method of identification** to allow monitoring of the animal after release
- P4 take action to manage the impact of **external factors** to the planned release
- P5 prepare and use any necessary equipment safely and correctly
- P6 transfer the animal safely to the release area in a way that minimises stress and maintains welfare
- P7 release the animal safely in an appropriate manner, which minimises stress and maintains welfare
- P8 keep accurate and up-to-date records as required by relevant legislation and the organisation
- P9 carry out all work in accordance with relevant environmental, health and safety legislation, risk assessment requirements, codes of practice and organisation policies

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 legislation affecting the release of species and individual animals
- K2 how to determine the suitability of the release site
- K3 how to determine the suitability of each individual animal for release
- K4 methods available to aid identification of animals after release
- K5 **external factors** that can affect the release and how they can be managed
- K6 how to minimise damage to natural habitat and other wildlife during release
- K7 the types of equipment used in the release process
- K8 conditions required to maintain the animals' health, safety and welfare during transfer and release
- K9 signs that indicate stress and disorder in animals
- K10 how to minimise the stress to animals
- K11 the appropriate action to take following the observation of stress or disorder
- K12 the appropriate methods of release for the animals concerned
- K13 expected behaviour during release and the actions to be taken if behaviour varies from the norm
- K14 the importance of maintaining complete and accurate records as required by relevant legislation and the organisation
- K15 your responsibilities under wildlife and environmental legislation and codes of practice
- K16 your responsibilities under relevant health and safety legislation, codes of practice and organisation policies
- K17 how and when post-release monitoring and recording should be undertaken

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Scope/range

External factors that can affect the release and how they can be managed include:

- 1 human interference
- 2 pests and predators
- 3 weather/season

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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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Relevant occupations	ranger; conservation officer; Animal care
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