

LANAnC42

Evaluate information pertinent to animal related incidents



Overview

This standard covers evaluation of the information available as potential evidence for action against individuals for animal related incidents. This would include suspected failure to meet the welfare needs of animals, including abuse, harm or neglect.

It includes evaluating the information in terms of its significance, validity and reliability. Where necessary, you must clarify information that is vague or unclear, and seek expert opinions. The standard also covers recommending action to decision makers.

The term "keeper" is used to denote the individual responsible for the control and welfare of the animal; this may or may not be the owner.

This standard is suitable for those who are responsible for the enforcement of animal welfare legislation by investigating reported failure to meet animal welfare needs and working with other law enforcement agencies to support the prosecution of those that have failed to meet the welfare needs of animals.

Those who undertake this role are likely to be working for a recognised body that has responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of animals.

LANAnC42

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 evaluate information using appropriate methods, against these relevant criteria:
 - P1.1 the urgency of action
 - P1.2 the seriousness of the allegation
 - P1.3 the effect of delay on the welfare of the animal
- P2 identify facts from available **evidence** and information pertaining to reported **animal related incidents** or failure to meet the **welfare needs of animals**
- P3 evaluate and record the significance, validity and reliability of information prepared by others, and identify the contribution it makes to the body of evidence
- P4 seek clarification from appropriate sources where information is vague or ambiguous
- P5 evaluate the sum total of evidence for sufficiency, validity and reliability
- P6 seek additional material from appropriate sources where the sum of evidence is incomplete
- P7 review evidence and information systematically using valid and reliable methods, and record factors that are likely to influence the outcome of the investigation
- P8 obtain expert advice on specific problems identified as relevant to the investigation
- P9 evaluate options for action to determine the constraints and opportunities that arise from each piece of expert advice
- P10 justify your **recommendations for action** in terms of the law, the likely consequences of proceeding and the chances of a successful outcome
- P11 present your recommendations for action in an appropriate format and forward them to the decision maker for action:
- P12 advise the individual concerned of their rights and the intended course of action where there is a probability of legal proceedings.

LANAnC42

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 the methods available for evaluating information pertaining to reported animal related incidents or failure to meet animal welfare needs
- K2 the methods available for analysing information and gathering data
- K3 how to determine the significance and relevance of the information
- K4 how to determine the sufficiency, validity and reliability of the information
- K5 where to seek additional material where evidence is incomplete
- K6 the importance of completing records accurately and contemporaneously
- K7 the scope, application and relevance of legislation relating to the care of animals (e.g. Dangerous Dogs Act 1991) and the conduct of investigations (e.g. Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE))
- K8 your own responsibilities under relevant legislation
- K9 the methods available for evaluating and deciding upon options for action and the criteria that should be used
- K10 the signs of normal health and behaviour of animals
- K11 how to recognise abnormal states of animals
- K12 how failure to meet the welfare needs of animals can affect their health and behaviour

LANAnC42

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Scope/range

Recommendations for action:

- 1 legal proceedings
- 2 informal warning
- 3 advice and guidance
- 4 no action

LANAnC42

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Glossary

Current animal welfare legislation:

England and Wales, Animal Welfare Act 2006

Scotland, Animal Health and Welfare Act 2006

Northern Ireland, Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

Evidence could include:

- visual media e.g. photographs, CCTV
- specimens
- veterinary records
- written statements
- physical items
- records relating to animal's behaviour and training history
- behavioural assessment
- intelligence

Animal related incidents:

- abuse
- harm
- neglect
- abandonment
- straying
- nuisance

Welfare needs of animals:

- suitable environment (place to live)
- suitable diet
- ability to exhibit normal behaviour
- protection from pain, suffering, injury and disease
- housed with, or apart from, other animals (where applicable)

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Developed by	Lantra
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Version number	2
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Date Approved	January 2014
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Indicative review date	January 2019
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Validity	Current
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Status	Original
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Originating organisation	Lantra
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Original URN	LANAC11
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Relevant occupations	Animal Care
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Suite	Animal Care and Welfare
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Keywords	animal; abuse; harm; evidence
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