
Overview

This standard is about stalking and culling deer. It relates to the activities that you undertake to control deer populations using a firearm.

This standard is designed to support those who control deer populations using firearms, either in an employed, vocational or recreational capacity.

To meet this standard you will be able to:

- prepare for a stalk
- identify individual and groups of deer
- approach deer close enough to ensure a humane kill
- shoot deer
- locate the shot deer and ensure the animal is dead
- confirm that the shot deer meets cull requirements.

For you to fully understand the content of the standard, and the activities it describes, it is important that you are able to understand the terms used within the standard. See Glossary for some definitions that should help you with this.

Stalk and cull deer

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. carry out activity safely, in line with relevant health and safety requirements
2. wear appropriate clothing and personal protective equipment for the activity
3. prior to stalking, identify the species, sex, age class and condition of animals that will meet cull requirements on that occasion
4. select, transport and prepare firearm and ammunition to meet the requirements of the planned cull, in accordance with firearms legislation and industry codes of practice
5. select, prepare and use appropriate tools and equipment needed for culling activities, safely and effectively
6. zero the firearm for accuracy
7. demonstrate accuracy in the use of the firearm from appropriate firing positions
8. select an individual deer to meet cull requirements and assess according to trained hunter requirements
9. stalk deer to a distance where a safe, effective, humane and hygienic shot can be taken, taking account of the characteristics of the location
10. handle the firearm safely, securely and effectively at all times, according to relevant industry codes of practice
11. shoot deer safely, humanely and hygienically according to the features of the location and legal requirements, using shooting aids where appropriate
12. observe the reaction of the deer to the shot to determine its condition
13. approach shot deer safely according to its presumed condition
14. locate and confirm the condition of the shot deer
15. dispatch wounded deer humanely
16. confirm the status of deer against cull requirements
17. clean, maintain and store firearm and ammunition safely and securely after use, in accordance with relevant legislation and codes of practice
18. maintain accurate records

Stalk and cull deer

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the relevant wildlife and environmental legislation that impacts on deer culling
2. the health and safety requirements associated with stalking and culling deer, including the dangers associated with lone working
3. suitable clothing and protective equipment for the activity
4. the reasons for culling deer as part of deer management
5. the legal requirements controlling the ownership and use of firearms
6. the legal requirements controlling storage, transport and carriage of firearms
7. the legal requirements and industry codes of practice for stalking and culling different deer species
8. specific life cycle and population dynamics, including family group dynamics, of the different deer species
9. how deer species are identified and classified for age, sex and condition
10. the normal anatomy, physiology and behaviour of deer, including signs that indicate ill health
11. the common deer diseases including those that are notifiable
12. the habitat requirements for different species of deer
13. the potential carcass contamination from environmental causes that can impact on the quality of game meat, including the factors that can affect human health after consumption
14. how the characteristics of the location, time of day and weather conditions can affect stalking and culling deer
15. how to use habitat and terrain to assist the stalk
16. the different firearms that can be used on a cull
17. how to select the correct ammunition and what should be considered
18. why it is important to zero rifles
19. the required range and bullet placement that will ensure a safe, humane and hygienic kill
20. the methods of locating and stalking deer and how to select the individual deer to be culled
21. the use of high seats as an adjunct to stalking, including how to climb quietly and safely into the seats
22. how to make a safe humane and hygienic shot on different terrain and how supports can be used to assist with the accuracy of shooting
23. how to locate shot deer, including when it is appropriate to use dogs
24. the reaction of deer to being shot in different parts of the body and how to approach shot deer
25. the signs that indicate a strike

- 26. how to confirm the condition of a shot deer
- 27. the methods used to humanely dispatch wounded deer
- 28. how to clean, inspect and maintain rifles and why this is important
- 29. the records that need to be maintained

Stalk and cull deer

Scope/range

Stalk and cull deer:

- Any one of the six wild deer species
- Red
- Fallow
- Sika
- Roe
- Chinese Water Deer
- Muntjac
- their hybrids or closely related species/sub-species in the wild

Any legal means of shooting may be used to cull deer

Any legal equipment may be used to assist with stalking and culling

Locate, approach and shoot deer in locations that include one of the following features:

- wooded
- open
- flat
- undulating
- hilly
- mountainous

Locate deer to be culled using:

- optical aids
- senses
- local knowledge

Locate shot deer using:

- optical aids
- signs
- dogs

Confirm the following condition of shot deer:

- wounded
- dead

Glossary

Stalk – locate and approach

Cull – select and kill surplus animals according to cull plan

Zero – adjust a firearm for accuracy

Hygienic kills – shot locations, and bullet tracts, that kill and avoid contamination from gut contents

Humane kills – a compassionate killing method that causes minimal stress and pain

Characteristics of location:

- topography
- habitat
- other area activity
- public access

Strike – the evidence left where the deer was standing, when it was shot

Tools and equipment:

- binoculars
- personal safety equipment
- knife
- communication equipment

Stalk and cull deer

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