

Handle and care for working animals

Overview

This standard is about how to handle and care for working animals to enable them to work safely. The type of work undertaken by the animal is not specified but it includes a variety of situations where individuals need to handle animals so that the animals' skills can be used to carry out tasks.

This standard is relevant for anyone who handles and cares for working animals.

When working with livestock or machinery you need to be suitably trained in line with current legislation and hold a relevant award, where required.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. identify the hazards associated with handling and caring for working animals and assess the risks involved
2. carry out your work in accordance with the relevant environmental and 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 animal-related legislation, associated codes of practice and organisational policies
4. prepare the animal for work in accordance with workplace requirements
5. introduce the animal to the working environment in a way that minimises stress
6. check that the required resources are suitable for the planned work
7. handle and maintain control the working animal in a way that will enable it to work, maintain its safety and minimise stress
8. care for the working animal to maintain and promote its health and well-being
9. assess the health and condition of the working animal and take any action required
10. support the working animal during the activity and offer the necessary reward and praise
11. take the necessary action if the working animal is experiencing problems during the activity or if unexpected circumstances arise
12. use working methods and systems that promote the health and safety of yourself and those involved in or affected by your work and are consistent with the relevant legislation and organisation policies
13. prepare conditions for the safe receipt of the working animal following completion of the work
14. re-establish the working animal in its living conditions and check its comfort and safety

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. how to identify hazards and assess risks relevant to the handling and care of working animals
2. your responsibilities under the relevant environmental and health and safety legislation, risk assessment requirements, associated codes of practice and organisational policies
3. your responsibility under the relevant animal health and welfare and animal-related legislation, associated codes of practice and organisational policies
4. the preparation that is necessary to enable the working animal to work according to its type, breed, age and the work it has to do
5. the methods of handling and moving working animals, which promote their health and welfare and minimise stress
6. the resources that will be necessary for the work and their correct methods of use
7. the aspects of the environment that may affect the working animal and the signs that indicate this
8. the limitations of the animal breed and of the particular working animal concerned
9. the methods of handling and controlling the working animal in the situations in which it is being worked
10. the current handling techniques that relate to the specific working area
11. the ways to support the working animal to complete its work
12. the actions that may be necessary to respond to contingency situations
13. the methods of maintaining the health and safety of animals after they have worked and the particular health and welfare requirements that they may have
14. the methods of assessing the health and condition of animals and the health requirements that they may have following completion of work

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15. the methods of caring for the working animal to maintain its health and well-being
16. the rest requirements of working animals after different kinds of work and the rest periods that they need prior to starting work again
17. the living conditions that will promote the health and safety of the working animal, and any particular requirements for these following completion of work

Scope/range

Provide the following care to animals:

1. diet
2. exercise
3. grooming

Glossary

Current animal welfare legislation:

- England and Wales, Animal Welfare Act
- Scotland, Animal Health and Welfare Act
- Northern Ireland, Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland)
- Riding Establishment Act
- Performing Animals Act

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