



## **Risk Assessment for Organised Shooting Activities involved with Field Trials**

*This document applies to Field Trial and Test Secretaries, organisers, competitors, helpers and those involved in promoting Field Trial, Gundog Working Test and other club activities, such as Training.*

### **A. Possible Hazards**

1. Personal injury resulting from the intended or accidental discharge of a shotgun driven or falling shot, noise or blast.
2. Slips and falls on ground that may be wet, uneven, sloping or marshy.
3. Hazards associated with the crossing of water courses, hedges and fences, other natural and man-made obstacles. Whether shooting, beating, picking-up competing or members of public present.
4. Injury resulting from direct contact with barbed wire, thorn hedges, low branches or other naturally occurring or constructed features of the landscape and from livestock that may be alarmed or disturbed.
5. Hazards associated with the use of vehicles on private land or public highways or shoot transport such as trailers, gun buses, beaters transport etc.
6. Hazards associated with being in the vicinity of machinery on private land or public highway. This is to include crop spraying activities and chemicals that may be associated with this operation.

### **At risk are:-**

- Persons using shotguns (referred to as Guns) and their companions.
- Persons employed or volunteering to drive game towards the Guns (referred to as Beaters) or to act as Flankers/Flaggers or Stops.
- Those Beaters placed in charge of the line (Steward of the Beat), normally the Gamekeeper.
- Persons employed or Volunteers or Competitors that collect and retrieve shot game with dogs (referred to as Pickers-up)
- Those Volunteers, Officials and Judges who are present to run the Field Trial.
- Drivers of vehicles, On-lookers and Members of the Public.

**B. Code of Practice to be observed by all persons taking part or watching an authorised Field Trial, or other Gundog related activity such as Gundog Working Tests, Gundog Training Events and Demonstrations.**

1. The organiser will brief all present before moving off. A copy of this Risk Assessment will be displayed/made available for inspection within the Organisation's meeting point/registration area and in the 'Running Card'
2. Vehicles provided to transport Guns, Competitors and Officials must be suitable for the purpose and the terrain that is to be encountered. Adequate seating must be provided. Dogs will not be allowed in the driving compartment of the vehicles. The driver of each vehicle must be acquainted with the vehicle, the route and terrain over which they are to travel and be aware of the other vehicles in the party.
3. All persons involved should wear suitable non-restrictive clothing, adequate to provide protection from the elements and stout water-resistant footwear.
4. The Shoot Captain (Steward of the Beat) will be responsible for ensuring that the Guns comply with these requirements:
  - a. All Guns must be known to be suitably experienced Shots, competent at handling shotguns in a safe manner and must be in possession of a valid shotgun certificate and have Public Liability Insurance.
  - b. Guns to provide their own hearing and eye protection.
  - c. All participants: Guns, Competitors, Judges and Officials must be conversant with and support the BASC Code of Good Shooting Practice and Guns with the BASC Shotgun Safety Code of Practice.
5. Whilst the requirements of the Law and the conditions of holding a Shotgun Certificate prevail, Guns must not leave their shotguns and ammunition unattended under any circumstance.
6. Guns must be conversant and experienced in game shooting, additionally they must be conversant with the particular activity of shooting at a Field Trial, what takes place how this may require them to approach their taking of shots; particularly that greater numbers of people are present in various capacities and that those people may be located in positions different to those usually encountered on a customary game shoot.
7. Guns must keep their weapons unloaded in a covered slip until arrival at their allocated position. Whether loaded or unloaded, Guns must keep muzzle awareness of their weapon utmost in their mind at all times.
8. A pre-arranged signal will be given to Guns to indicate the start and completion of each drive, no shots should be fired outside of these two signals. Guns must be unloaded until the starting signal is given. Immediately the completion signal is given at the end of the drive Guns to unload their weapon and, until such time as they have returned them to a covered slip, carry them open to prove them unloaded.
9. A shot should be taken only when it is safe to do so. Guns must be aware at all times of the proximity of those closest to them: other Guns, Beaters, Flankers/Flaggers, Stops, Pickers-up, Officials, Judges, Competitors and Members of the Public; the location of footpaths, bridleways, highways and livestock in the vicinity.

10. In the event of an emergency the drive/trial will be suspended immediately and all weapons must be unloaded and placed back in the covered slip. Should this occurrence be caused by the involvement of persons that are opposed to the activity the Steward of the Beat in consultation with the Chief Steward and Judges must arrange to vacate the ground and avoid confrontation.
11. All members of the party must respect the property on which they are invited guests, be aware of the local terrain and any likely hazards and conduct themselves in a friendly and environmentally sensitive way.
12. Members or the Public and Competitors that are not in line must stay with the RED FLAG (if there is one in use) or in the area directed by the designated Stewards at all times and obey the instruction of Officials or Members of the Estate staff.
13. Everybody involved must keep away from agricultural and forestry machinery, installations and stacked timber/logs (which must not be climbed on), although they will not normally be in the areas where the shoot is taking place.

If this Code of Practice is observed, the risk to human health and safety posed by possible hazards that may be encountered during this authorised activity are deemed to be low.

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The Wiltshire Working Gundog Society supports the **BASC Code of Good Shooting Practice** and the **BASC Shotgun Safety Code of Practice**.

The Society requires Field Trial and Test Secretaries, organisers, competitors, helpers and those involved in promoting Field Trial, Gundog Working Test and other club activities, such as Training to comply.

***To obtain a copy of the codes visit [www.basc.org.uk](http://www.basc.org.uk)***

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