

## Chapter 2.3 Animal Welfare

This chapter describes animal welfare controls in FSA approved establishments.

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### 1. Introduction

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#### 1.1 Purpose

##### 1.1.1 Key principle

Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009, Article 3(1) states 'Animals shall be spared any avoidable pain, distress or suffering during their killing and related operations'.

This requirement is the key principle underpinning the guidance which follows in this chapter.

##### 1.1.2 FSA role

FSA Operations staff should verify compliance with relevant domestic legislation on animal welfare prior to and during slaughter and killing, taking proportionate enforcement action.

**Every time animal welfare is compromised, and an animal is suffering, enforcement action should be taken. A risk based and proportionate approach to enforcement should not be**

## **perceived as supporting bad practices or compromising animal welfare.**

Retained Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 only refers to Business Operator (BO) not Food Business Operator (FBO). Throughout this chapter this reference is used where appropriate to ensure the correct use of terminology as used in the regulation.

The hygiene and welfare regulations require the BO to have procedures in place to guarantee that the welfare of each animal is not compromised on farm, during transport and on arrival at the slaughterhouse and the Official Veterinarian (OV) is required to verify compliance with this requirement.

### **1.1.3 Data collection**

The FSA collects data to inform Defra and the Welsh Government of trends in animal welfare in England and Wales.

### **1.1.4 Welfare surveillance**

The OV and FSA team must identify welfare issues in live / dead animals and carcasses at post-mortem, which appear to have originated on the farm of provenance or during transport, gather evidence and report as appropriate.

- Serious breach: Failure to comply with legislation relating to the transport of animals has led to suffering being caused to animal(s) and that suffering is serious, unnecessary and directly attributable to the actions, or the failure to act, of the transporter and/or the keeper who caused the journey to be undertaken
- All other breaches: All other instances where the condition of animals and/or transport give cause for concern and represent potential non-compliance with legislative requirements. This would include less severe welfare issues, accidents and incidents that could not reasonably have been avoided. Annex 4 (report to APHA for Triage) should reflect the OV's assessment of why the incident has been determined as non-urgent

For serious breaches, the local authority must always be contacted immediately and given the opportunity to attend.

Reporting to APHA should be carried out as below.

Delays in reporting incidents may affect the ability to gather further evidence. In cases of serious breaches, the LA Inspector must be given the opportunity to visit the abattoir as soon as possible and collect evidence gathered by the OV or gather evidence themselves. Alternatively, the LA may wish to direct the OV as to evidence gathering requirements in their absence if they are unable to attend the abattoir immediately. Annex 4 should reflect any contact made with the LA for serious cases and the outcome of the request to attend.

The OV should inform the BO about any Annex 4 referrals they make to APHA, for information and to allow the BO to take rectification action with their suppliers. A copy of the Annex 4 referral must be provided to the BO upon request. A PDF copy of the Annex 4 & 5 is automatically emailed to the OV.

In every case the owner of the animal must be given the opportunity to examine the evidence. They will usually be informed by the BO or their representative. It is not the role of the OV to inform the owner.

The BO should be informed by the OV and asked to contact the owner of the animal (where they are not the owner) giving the owner the opportunity to examine the evidence. A record must be made in the day book of this request.

Do not delay action to safeguard the welfare of animals. If there is immediate pain or suffering that cannot be resolved, (for example a broken leg) then the animal must be killed or slaughtered as soon as possible. Photographs and / or video evidence should always be taken. When an animal has an injury that is only apparent on moving, video evidence must be obtained. Detain the carcass for further examination and retain any relevant body parts as evidence for any enforcement action. Ensure that you maintain correlation of body parts with the animal's ID should this be required as evidence.

Fitness for human consumption should not be a consideration in the decision to kill an animal on welfare grounds.

Other FSA staff, particularly Meat Hygiene Inspectors (MHI), must take an active role in welfare monitoring and when made aware of welfare issues, record them in the day book or personal note book and report to the OV for action to be taken. If there is suffering, the MHI, and/or OV, must take immediate action to prevent further suffering. In the absence of the OV, the MHI must ensure that the BO is instructed on action to be taken.

## **1.2 Legislation**

### **1.2.1 Welfare legislation - EC legislation is now referred to as “Assimilated Regulation”**

At the point of the UK's exit from the EU, most operative EU Regulations and Decisions were incorporated into domestic law as retained direct EU legislation under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018. From 1 January 2024, under the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023, retained EU law became 'assimilated law'. Legislation that was, prior to 1 January 2024, referred to as “retained direct EU legislation” (which may often have 'EU' or 'EC' included in its title) should now be identified as 'assimilated law' where applicable to GB.

Key pieces of legislation relating to welfare include:

- Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing
- The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Wales) Reference 2014 SSI 951 (WATOK)
- The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (England) Reference 2015 SI 1782 (WATOK)
- Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations
- Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006 SI 3260
- Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Wales) Order 2007 SI1047
- Council Directive 2007/43/EC (the 'Broiler Directive')
- The Mandatory Use of Closed Circuit Television in Slaughterhouses (England) Regulations 2018 ('CCTV regulation') SI556
- [The Mandatory Use of Closed Circuit Television in Slaughterhouses \(Wales\) Regulations 2024 \(Senedd Wales\) SL\(6\)471](#)

### **1.2.2 Assimilated Council Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009**

Provides key animal welfare standards which must be achieved. It places a responsibility on the BO to ensure animals are provided with physical comfort and protection; protected from injury; handled and housed appropriately; do not show signs of avoidable pain or fear or exhibit abnormal behaviour; do not suffer prolonged withdrawal of food or water (Annex III); and are prevented from avoidable interaction with other animals which may harm their welfare.

Key requirements of the Regulation are:

- Standard Operating Procedures (**SOP**)

- Guides to Good Practice (**GGP**)
- Animal Welfare Officer (**AWO**)
- Certificate of Competence (**CoC**)
- keeping of records for 1 year

The regulation is also directly applicable across all Member States and is implemented through domestic legislation in the UK.

### 1.2.3 Domestic legislation

Domestic implementing legislation provides powers to appoint inspectors, details enforcement powers, specifies penalties, time limits for taking formal action, and maintains national rules.

**England:** The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015 SI 1782

**Wales:** The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Wales) Regulations 2014 SSI 951

### 1.2.4 Guides to good practice

Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 Chapter II, Article 13 requires Member States to encourage the development of guides to good practice. The following guides have been developed by industry and are validated by the Competent Authority (Defra).

[British Meat Processors Association Guidance](#)

[British Poultry Council Guidance](#)

[Animal Transport Guides Guidance](#)

[Transporting animals in Great Britain](#)

[European Animal Welfare Network Guidance](#)

### 1.2.5 Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1/2005 and Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006 SI 3260 and (Wales) Order 2007 WSI 1047 (WATO)

Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport sets out the statutory provisions that apply to the welfare of animals transported for an economic activity. National implementing legislation is required to provide for enforcement, powers, penalties, time limits, derogations, and additional national measures. This is done through The Welfare of Animals (Transport) Orders / Regulations in England and Wales (WATO).

Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1/2005 provides key welfare standards that must be achieved during transport.

The FSA does not enforce WATO or Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1/2005. If the OV or MHI identifies a suspected non-compliance with welfare during transport, they must

- ensure appropriate action is taken immediately to safeguard the welfare of the animal, this may be slaughter where the animal is injured
- advise the haulier and the BO of the non-compliance
- where the incident is serious, telephone the relevant LA as soon as possible, see 3.2.2 for guidance on serious breaches
- collect evidence and report to the APHA dedicated email:  
[CSCOneHealthWelfare@apha.gov.uk](mailto:CSCOneHealthWelfare@apha.gov.uk)

- record details of the haulier, including driver name, vehicle registration number and trailer number; this should be recorded on Annex 4
- complete Annex 5 evidence form to accompany and be submitted with Annex 4 report form
- upload Annex 4 & 5 and evidence documents to Digital Asset Management System (DAMS), see Annex 21 of Chapter 2.3 for DAMS User Guide

### **1.2.6 Legislative responsibilities**

Assimilated Regulations No (EC) 853/2004, No (EC) 2017/625, No (EC) 2019/624 and No (EC) 2019/627 all refer to duties in relation to animal welfare.

In addition, the FSA collects information required under assimilated Regulation No (EC) 2007/43/.

### **1.2.7 Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 853/2004**

BOs transporting live animals to slaughterhouses must ensure that during collection and transport, animals are handled carefully without causing unnecessary distress.

**Reference:** Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 Annex III, Section 1, Chapter I, 1.

### **1.2.8 Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 2017/625**

Article 21, 1 of assimilated Regulation No (EC) 2017/625 (Specific rules on official controls and for action to be taken by the competent authorities in relation to the welfare requirements for animals) require official controls to verify compliance to be performed at all relevant stages of production, processing and distribution along the agri-food chain.

Article 17(c) defines ante-mortem inspection as:

‘... the verification, prior to slaughtering activities, of human and animal health and animal welfare requirements, including, where appropriate, the clinical examination of each individual animal, and the verification of the food chain information as referred to in Section III of Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 853/2004’.

### **1.2.9 Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 2019/624**

Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 2019/624 establishes certain rules around the use of MHIs in the process of verification that animals presented for slaughter comply with animal health and welfare requirements. These are described in more detail in Chapter 2.2 of the MOC.

### **1.2.10 Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 2019/627**

Title III, Chapter II, Section 2, Article 11, 3 of Assimilated Regulation No(EC) 2019/627 requires that ante-mortem inspection shall determine whether, as regards the particular animal inspected, there is any sign that the health and welfare of the animal has been compromised. Section 5 of this Regulation establishes controls on animal welfare, in particular Article 38 (verification of rules concerning protection of animals during transport and at the time of slaughter) and Article 44, setting measures in all cases on non-compliance with requirements for animal welfare.

### **1.2.11 Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 2007/43 (the Broiler Directive)**

Lays down minimum rules for the protection of conventionally reared meat chickens (broilers) on holdings with 500 or more birds (known as the ‘Broiler Directive’).

Under this Directive, the maximum on-farm stocking density (SD) for conventionally reared meat chickens is 33 kg/m<sup>2</sup>.

SD in excess of 33 kg/m<sup>2</sup> and up to 39 kg/m<sup>2</sup> is allowed, providing that the keeper complies with and records on the Food Chain Information (FCI) the extra requirements as detailed in the implementing legislation as listed below:

- cumulative daily mortality rate
- breed / line information

If FCI is received with SD over 39 kg/m<sup>2</sup>, please refer this to APHA immediately and notify the Animal Welfare team.

Whilst foot pad dermatitis (FPD) is also one of the on-farm welfare indicators monitored under the Broiler Directive, this is only to be scored on an exception basis where there is a welfare concern that the FPD is severe. Please see section 3.3.5 and link below for further details on reporting FPD: [The Code of Practice for Meat Chickens and Meat Breeding Chickens](#)

**Note:** refer to chapter 2.4 on 'Post-Mortem, Health and Identification Marking', section 7.

Defra is the Competent Authority (CA) under the terms of this Directive. FSA collects the information required under Annex III of the Directive (required elements of poultry FCI) and reports back to the CA where there are indications of poor animal welfare conditions.

## 2. Business Operator Role

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### 2.1 Standard operating procedure

#### 2.1.1 Introduction

Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing requires all slaughterhouses to have an SOP. This means written instructions aimed at achieving uniformity in the performance of specific functions or standards. There should be SOPs for all the different operations, for example, lairage, restraint, stunning, bleeding and assessment.

The SOP should detail the process such that it explains fully the role of each individual in the activity it covers and all of their duties and responsibilities. It should also detail who is responsible for ensuring that the process is carried out correctly, carrying out assessments on the key parameters as in Annex 1, including monitoring for signs of unconsciousness, and taking any action necessary to ensure that the process is fully compliant with welfare legislation.

**Reference:** Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009, Chapter II, Article 6

Recital 27 states: Standard operating procedures should be developed at all stages of the production cycle and should be risk-based. They should include clear objectives, responsible persons, modus operandi, measurable criteria, as well as monitoring and recording procedures. Key parameters set out for each stunning method should be specified in a way ensuring proper stunning of all animals submitted to the process.

## **Annex 16 of this chapter links to further guidance on SOPs.**

### **2.1.2 SOP requirements**

Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009, Chapter II, Article 6 states:

- BOs shall plan in advance the killing of animals and related operations and shall carry them out in accordance with standard operating procedures. (EC) 1099/2009 Article 2, (i) states: "standard operating procedures" means a set of written instructions aimed at achieving uniformity of the performance of a specific function or standard;
- BOs shall draw up and implement such standard operating procedures to ensure that killing and related operations are carried out in accordance with Article 3(1)

**Note:** Article 3(1) states 'Animals shall be spared any avoidable pain, distress or suffering during their killing and related operations'.

A business operator may use standard operating procedures as described in the guides to good practice.

As regards stunning, the SOP shall:

a) take into account the manufacturers' recommendations

b) define for each stunning method used, on the basis of available scientific evidence, the key parameters set out in Chapter I of Annex I, ensuring their effectiveness to stun the animals

c) specify the measures to be taken when the checks indicate that an animal is not properly stunned or, in the case of animals slaughtered in accordance with Article 4(4) (religious slaughter), that the animal still presents signs of life

- The BO must show SOPs to the OV on request. Article 6, (4) states: BOs shall make available to the competent authority their standard operating procedures upon request
- When non-compliances are found during normal operations for which there is a SOP, the SOP should be checked by the OV. Where the circumstances leading to the non-compliance are not covered, the BO must be required to make amendments to the SOP in order to prevent further similar non-compliances occurring
- The SOP in pigs and poultry establishments using gas stun systems, should detail action to be taken in the event of a breakdown. WATOK Schedule 1, requires that there is a means of flushing the gas stunner with atmospheric air with the minimum of delay and that there is a means of access to any pigs or poultry with the minimum of delay. (Pigs: WATOK, Schedule 1, paragraph 29 (2)(e) and (f) and Poultry WATOK, Schedule 1, paragraph 30 (3)(c) and (d))
- **Poultry gas stun systems only.** Defra have agreed that where the business can demonstrate flushing of the system with a high concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> will kill all the birds there is no requirement to remove birds with the minimum of delay in the event of a breakdown

## **2.2 Animal Welfare Officer**

### 2.2.1 Legislative requirements

Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 requires the BO to designate an AWO if the establishment slaughters more than 1,000 livestock units (definition of livestock unit below) or 150,000 poultry or rabbits per annum. The AWO must hold a CoC for all species and activities they are responsible for. The BO can appoint more than one AWO. For example, the BO could appoint an AWO for the lairage operations and another for the restraint and stunning / bleeding operations. Where slaughter without prior stunning takes place the AWO for that operation must be the holder of a CoC for activity 61. The responsibilities of the AWO are detailed in the legislation and should be specified in the SOP as they apply to the slaughterhouse operation.

**Reference:** Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009, Chapter III, Article 17.

### 2.2.2 Advisory booklet for BOs

The EU Commission has produced an [advisory booklet](#).

This provides an outline of the envisaged role and examples of the checks that an AWO could carry out with a suggested record keeping format.

### 2.2.3 Role of the AWO

The AWO must:

- report directly to the BO on matters relating to the welfare of the animals; they shall be in a position to require that slaughterhouse personnel carry out any remedial action necessary to ensure compliance with the rules laid down in Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009
- comply with the responsibilities set out in the standard operating procedures of the slaughterhouse; these responsibilities shall be effectively brought to the attention of the personnel concerned
- hold a CoC issued for all the operations taking place in the slaughterhouses for which they are responsible; where activities include slaughter by religious rites, it may be necessary to designate the person holding a CoC for code 61 activities as the AWO for those activities

**Note:** Refer to section 5 on 'CoC' further details.

Keep a record of the action taken to improve animal welfare in the slaughterhouse in which they carry out their tasks.

Keep the above record for at least one year and make it available to the competent authority upon request.

### 2.2.4 Definition of a livestock unit

'Livestock unit' (LU) means a standard measurement unit that allows the aggregation of the various categories of livestock (red meat species) in order to enable them to be compared.

The conversion rates for **1 LU** are summarised below:

- 1 adult bovine animal or horse
- 2 bovine animals under 8 months
- 5 pigs with a live weight of over 100 kg
- 6.66 other pigs
- 10 sheep and goats



- 20 lambs, kids and piglets less than 15 kg live weight

### 2.2.5 Restraining and stunning

Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing Article 9 requires that the AWO (BO) ensures all equipment used for restraining or stunning animals is maintained and checked in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions by persons specifically trained for that purpose.

The AWO (BO) must keep a record of maintenance on restraining and stunning equipment and retain these records for at least one year.

The OV should regularly ensure that these are kept up to date. In the event of any equipment failure, the OV should examine the maintenance records. If they are missing or not up to date, the OV should take appropriate enforcement action.

Appropriate back up stunning equipment must be immediately available, on the spot, at all times the slaughterhouse is operating. This may differ from the first method used.

For slaughter by religious rites without prior stunning, **in poultry only**, this is not a requirement and a repeat incision with a knife is permitted. When stunning is used for religious slaughter in poultry a suitable back up method must be available at all times and used in the case of a failure to stun.

Animals must not be placed in restraining equipment, including head restraints, until the person in charge of stunning or bleeding is ready to stun or bleed them as quickly as possible.

## 2.3 Restraining and stunning

### 2.3.1 Checks on stunning

Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing Article 5 requires the BO to ensure that persons responsible for stunning, or other nominated staff e.g. AWO, carry out regular checks to ensure that the animals do not present any signs of consciousness or sensibility in the period between the end of the stunning process and death.

These checks must be carried out on a representative sample of animals and the frequency established by taking into account the outcome of previous checks and any factors which may affect the efficiency of the stunning process. A record must be kept of the checks carried out. It is for the BO to determine how these checks are carried out and detail in the SOP

The SOP should determine the frequency of checks and any factors used to reduce the checks. When the checks indicate that an animal is not properly stunned, the person in charge of stunning must immediately take appropriate measures as specified in the standard operating procedures.

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has produced guidance on the signs of consciousness in bovine, sheep and goats, pigs and poultry:

[Bovine Guidance](#)

[Sheep and Goat Guidance](#)

[Pig Guidance](#)

[Poultry Guidance](#)

## 2.4 Delay in slaughter in white meat slaughterhouses and the provision of food and water

### 2.4.1 BO responsibility: contingency plan for delayed poultry slaughter

BOs should have contingency plans in place for delays in slaughter as part of the SOP, and as normal practice, arrange the catching, transport and the delivery of poultry in such a way that waiting times are kept to a minimum.

Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1/2005 and Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006 SI 3260 and (Wales) Order 2007 WSI 1047 (WATO) require that poultry are provided with food and water after 12 hours from the start of their journey.

Poultry that are still aboard the transport vehicle are considered to still be in transit and the journey not completed. The journey starts when the animals start to be loaded onto the vehicle and ends at the point they start to be unloaded. When they are unloaded, this should be done without delay.

**If it will not be possible to unload the birds and put them in the lairage within 12 hours of their journey starting, arrangements must be made by the FBO or haulier to provide them with feed and water or make alternative arrangements in accordance with their contingency plan procedures.**

Subject to Avian Influenza or similar restrictions on movement it is permissible to return poultry to the farm of origin.

Liaison will be required with the LA if the 12-hour transport time is likely to be exceeded when birds remain on the transport as this comes under the responsibility of the LA.

In the case of a major breakdown in plant operations, the welfare of birds is paramount, and the BO should:

- Immediately notify farms and hauliers to ensure that no further birds are despatched to the slaughterhouse until the problem has been resolved
- Put in place measures to ensure bird welfare is protected whilst the breakdown is rectified. This may include:
  - Keeping vehicles moving to ensure ventilation or placing transport containers in the shade and / or providing forced air ventilation. It is important to monitor both ambient temperatures as well as those within the transport vehicle
  - Contact other slaughterhouses with compatible crate handling systems which may be able to accept live birds for killing / slaughtering
  - Consider whether to return birds to the **farm of origin** for water and feeding. Sending birds to farms other than that of origin is not good biosecurity practice and may increase disease risk. Birds must be returned to the farm and unloaded within 12 hours of the start of the journey or feed and water will need to be provided
- Take all necessary action to rectify the breakdown

When the modules / containers are unloaded from the vehicle, (EC)1099/2009 will then apply and the provisions in Annex III for feed and water will need to be considered if slaughter is delayed.

The provision of feed and water may be by a method other than using water or feed in a recognisable form. FSA are aware that there are products available that provide a fluid and nutrient source to poultry. If clarification is required on the suitability of a product used, please consult with your FVL, FVC or E&J Technical Manager.

The BO should be able to demonstrate that the method used to provide feed and water is capable of achieving nutrient and fluid intake.

BOs must ensure that they plan the delivery and processing of birds taking into account their operational hours or make alternative arrangements where slaughter of all the birds delivered is not possible within the working day.

In exceptional cases, when birds remain between operating shifts, they must be supplied with water (and feed after 12 hours) and adequate ventilation provided, or alternative arrangements be put in place, such as transport to an alternative slaughterhouse.

## **2.5 Movement of oversize animals to another slaughterhouse**

### **2.5.1 Moving oversize cattle when not unloaded at the slaughterhouse**

When an animal is identified as too large or has horns that prevent it being moved to the abattoir's stun box the following procedure agreed with APHA shall be followed.

Cattle that have not been unloaded at the slaughterhouse, are deemed not to have been delivered and no licence is required for their onward movement. The DCO (Disease Control Order) general licence allows drop-off at more than one slaughterhouse as long as these are the last points of call for the vehicle involved.

**It is vital that slaughterhouses have routine procedures in their SOP to assess the size of animals before unloading so that oversize cattle can be moved to an abattoir with suitable facilities.**

### **2.5.2 Protocol for movement of oversize cattle to another abattoir after being unloaded.**

Cattle that have been unloaded at the slaughterhouse and are then found to be too large to enter the stunning box can potentially be moved in exceptional circumstances to another abattoir with suitable facilities under a licence issued by an APHA veterinary inspector.

This process will not allow an animal to be returned to the farm of origin, only to another slaughterhouse that has suitable facilities for larger cattle.

The DCO Article 10b states: **No person shall receive any animal from a slaughterhouse unless, in the case of any animal other than a pig, under the authority of a licence issued by a veterinary inspector.**

The policy intention behind this is to allow such moves only in exceptional circumstances, not for commercial expediency. Any movement out of a slaughterhouse constitutes a potential extra risk and needs to be considered carefully before any such movement is licensed, though the risk will be less for moves to other slaughterhouses as opposed to moves elsewhere.

'Exceptional circumstances' mean that an animal's welfare is compromised with no other resolution than to move it elsewhere. Legitimate reasons include:

- production-line breakdowns
- fire / flood
- a situation compromising welfare in a lairage with no other obvious solution (e.g. an oversized animal that cannot safely be killed in the lairage)

Commercial expediency cannot not be considered a legitimate reason.

When the slaughterhouse operator determines that they require a movement licence they should request the OV to assess the case and verify that the circumstances will meet the requirements for a licence. For example, that the animal is too large to handle safely within the raceway and stun box, that it cannot safely be killed in the lairage, and all other solutions have been considered and exhausted.

The OV assessment should consider where and when the animal is to be moved, as well as the fitness of the animal to be moved.

The FBO must maintain an up-to-date list of slaughterhouses that have suitable facilities for handling oversize cattle that can be referred to in the event of an animal needing to be moved for slaughter elsewhere.

Once satisfied that the animal should and can be moved, the OV shall contact APHA providing full details of the case and their personal contact details.

The OV at the receiving abattoir shall also be contacted to familiarise them with the case details.

Contact with APHA will be through the advice line:

- in England (0300 0200 301)
- in Wales (0300 303 8268)
- or alternatively information about the incident and OV contact details can be emailed to [customeradvice@apha.gov.uk](mailto:customeradvice@apha.gov.uk) between the hours of 08:30 am and 17:00 pm (Monday to Friday) where this will be communicated to the duty vet who can contact the OV directly.

The OV must inform the FVC and animal welfare team [animalwelfare@food.gov.uk](mailto:animalwelfare@food.gov.uk) of all movements approved with details of the animal, including ID and the premises from which the animal will be moved and those it will move to.]

## **3. FSA role**

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#### **[3.1 Inspection duties](#)**

#### **[3.2 Verification of animal welfare](#)**

#### **[3.3 Referral to LA / APHA](#)**

#### **[3.4 Entry of compliance level in animal welfare database](#)**

#### **[3.5 Suspected breach of animal welfare](#)**

#### **[3.6 Welfare folder](#)**

### **3.1 Inspection duties**

#### **3.1.1 OV checks**

The OV should carry out checks:

- to monitor welfare of live animals
- to monitor slaughter operations
- to monitor slaughter by a religious method\*

- on restraint facilities for religious slaughter\*

\* **Note:** See section 4 on 'Religious slaughter' in this chapter.

The OV must record welfare scores of 2, 3 or 4 on the FSA animal welfare and enforcement system (Chronos).

### 3.1.2 FSA duties

The following inspection and verification duties are to be undertaken at the given frequency.

Duty	By	How often
Inspect and verify BO compliance with welfare legislation – see following paragraphs for details of daily welfare reports to be completed.	OV and MHI MHIs must report any welfare incident to the OV.	During each killing period and at least several times daily. The FSA team should establish clear guidelines on welfare checks and frequency.  This must be reflected in the agreed welfare checks protocol. A copy of this must be retained in the site FSA office.
Confirmation of compliance with welfare legislation, or where welfare incidents occur, appropriate enforcement action taken and entry of details in Chronos, the animal welfare and enforcement system.	OV and MHI	Daily
MHI's should record in the day book any welfare non compliances noted during post-mortem examination and in particular during head inspection if there are multiple captive bolt shots. See guidance on recording repeat shots in section 3.1.4.	MHI	Daily when identified
The communication of inspection results to farmers and private veterinary surgeons.	OV Management of the database may be by an MHI.	Same day
Reporting of animal welfare incidents to APHA / LA.	OV	Same day where possible; non-urgent cases by 17:00 the next day.
CoC checks. The FSA team should maintain a welfare folder containing copies of SOPs, where not readily available, and a record of TCoC's and CoC's (name, ID number, species, activities, and expiry date of the TCoC ) for all staff handling live animals, verified with the WATOK team, Corporate Support Unit (CSU) York. The CoC record should be updated each time a new member of staff begins work in the premises together with any updates to the CoCs held. This record may be either electronic or hard copy.	OV	For new staff and as required for all BO staff handling live animals.
Log welfare incidents on Chronos. Ref. chapter 7 on 'Enforcement'.	OV	As required
Welfare surveillance	OV	As required – see below

### 3.1.3 Welfare checks: OV responsibility

The OV has overall responsibility to ensure daily welfare inspections are conducted in plant. The delegation of specific monitoring duties to MHIs should be established at plant level by the OV. This will include CCTV monitoring in England or where permitted in Wales. The OV and MHIs should work together to ensure the highest standards of welfare are maintained. The Animal Welfare Verification Protocol pro-forma should be completed and maintained as a plant specific record of the duties carried out and an up to date copy retained in the site FSA office. This document can be found at Annex 8.

The OV will need to establish that each MHI is aware of the required welfare standards and that their welfare training is up to date.

On each day of operation, the OV and MHIs should ensure that the BO and staff follow the procedures laid down in the SOP.

The SOP should be reviewed regularly – at least monthly or following any change to the slaughter process introduced by the BO.

[The database for CoCs](#) can be accessed via K2.

You will need the date of birth or CoC ID number to check the details.

EU CoCs are no longer valid.

Citizens from the Republic of Ireland (ROI) can apply for a UK CoC when they have a current ROI CoC.

### **3.1.4 Daily welfare assessment reports**

The WEL 3/1 (Red Meat) / WEL 3/2 (White Meat) Welfare Assessment Reports must be completed as appropriate on a daily basis when slaughter is carried out on the premises. The forms are located in Chapter 9 'Forms'.

#### **Recording of second or successive shot in cattle with captive bolt**

**Updated:** [Whilst electrical stunning must have a means of recording there is currently no similar system for captive bolt devices. The AWO in PATOK Art. 17 is required to take action to improve welfare and keep a record of these actions. Together with the actions on monitoring in Art 16, these records should include checks on repeat stuns and actions taken to prevent further incidents.

##### **1. Animal showing no signs of recovery**

A CoC holder applying a second precautionary shot where there is no indication of failure or recovery should always be considered good practice. FSA staff do not need to record these instances in Chronos.

##### **2. Animal showing signs of recovery**

A CoC holder applying second or successive shot where there is an indication of failure or recovery.

The application of a second shot by a slaughterman without delay should always be considered as good practice where that person has any concerns about the effectiveness of the initial shot. A second shot is not a failure by an individual. The reason for ineffective stun attempts is multifactorial. When a repeat shot is required because the slaughterman assesses that the first shot has not achieved a satisfactory stun this should be applied as quickly as possible. The circumstances of second / successive shots must be properly investigated. Please see Tec Files 117 explaining captive bolt methodology and reasons for ineffective stuns.

##### **3. When enforcement should be taken**

FSA staff should only record in Chronos repeat / multiple stuns in cattle where there is also a welfare concern such as a failure to achieve unconsciousness or signs of recovery, following the initial stun. These will be subject to the normal enforcement hierarchy. The nature of the incident must be investigated whether the incident was avoidable or unavoidable.

Examples when enforcement should be taken:

- animal not effectively stunned, and no corrective action taken
- operative failed to recognise signs of recovery listed in the SOP
- operative did not re-stun the animal which was showing signs of recovery without delay
- operative did not follow the SOP for re-stunning
- operative's actions or lack of actions compromised AW during re-stunning
- systemic failure due to lack of operative or AWO corrective actions]

FSA staff can access Tec Files 117 captive bolt stuns in cattle in internal files.

### **3.1.5 Completion of daily welfare assessment reports**

The workload in plants and time restraints will often result in these assessments being populated as a collective effort from the FSA team over the course of the working day. The time of each check should be entered and initialled in the relevant boxes by the OV / MHI who conducted the check for the specific area.

Where Health and Safety considerations mean that it is not considered safe to enter the stunning area or other areas to verify welfare, then checks should be carried out regularly using CCTV, (both live and recorded). The person carrying out the checks should record that they were done remotely for H&S reasons. The ITL should be informed so that a review of H&S can be carried out.

Welfare competent MHIs should be designated by the OV for specific assessments. In OV only plants, the OV should initial the box after completion of the checks.

If the MHI is the only FSA team member remaining (due to OV flexibility), then the OV should check the assessment form when next attending the plant. The OV should verify that the daily welfare sheet has been completed, where MHIs complete the checks and make a note of this in the daybook.

In plants where 'cold inspection' is carried out, the frequency of welfare checks should be established in consultation with the local field veterinary team.

Additional visits by a Welfare Assurance Team member should be facilitated to ensure local managers are assured that welfare standards are maintained when FSA staff are not present.

### **3.1.6 Team responsibility**

Where non-compliance with legislative requirements is identified by an MHI they must inform the OV immediately, **having first taken action** to ensure the welfare of the animal(s) is protected.

In doing so, the evidence gathering for potential enforcement should not be jeopardised and prompt action must be taken to seek witnesses to corroborate events. Carcase parts or the entire carcase, as appropriate, must be detained when they are evidence for a potential welfare case.

Where appropriate, a WATOK Enforcement Notice (WEN), suspension or in serious cases a revocation of the CoC should be used by the OV in liaison with the VEDM. Details on the procedure for extension of a WEN when requested by the BO can be found at 7.1.5.

The use of the contemporaneous notebook, camera and video equipment by the OV is essential during these checks. OVs and MHIs should record details of any welfare incident observed in their contemporaneous notebook or in the day book as soon as possible after the incident. A camera should be used to obtain further evidence of a welfare incident if the OV is not present or unable to attend.

In England FSA staff must monitor the CCTV of the stunning and killing process at random during each working day. In Wales the FSA has agreed a CCTV viewing protocol with the main industry bodies and this should be followed by the OV in agreement with the BO.

The OV must close off the assessment report at the end of the day by making a note in the daybook.

A proactive approach to welfare monitoring should be exercised at all times and reality checks undertaken throughout the day by all FSA staff where the opportunity arises. These reality checks may sit outside recorded checks already undertaken and be reported and acted upon as with any other welfare issue and recorded in the daybook.

## **3.2 Verification of animal welfare**

### **3.2.1 Introduction to the animal welfare assessment database**

Chronos is the verification programme for animal welfare in slaughterhouses. Data is shared with Defra and the Welsh Government on a monthly basis.

It is used where welfare incidents have occurred, to record the level and nature of such welfare incidents and action taken.

#### **3.2.2 Daily input**

When a welfare incident is recorded, appropriate enforcement action should always be taken and recorded. A WEN should always be considered for scores of 4, other than in cases where the incident is an unavoidable accident, or the evidence is lacking. In every case, a score of 4 should be actioned by giving at least written advice to the BO except, where an incident or accident is considered to be unavoidable and no fault of the operator when a 4 score should still be applied and a verbal warning given. This should be clearly explained in Chronos and recorded in the daybook.

Should the welfare incident relate to an incident in transport or on farm, referral to APHA is required. **In serious cases, the LA must be informed as soon as possible.**

Where welfare issues are identified in live/dead animals, the OV should give consideration to the nature of the condition and whether the animal has suffered unnecessarily either on farm, in transport or both, and also whether that suffering is attributable to an act, or a failure to act, by a person responsible for that animal at any time. There are a number of outcomes depending on the circumstances and the OV's considered judgement.

- Fitness for transport - where the condition of the animal would have been present on the farm and the welfare of the animal would have been seriously compromised during transport (and where the transporter could reasonably be expected to be fully aware of the condition when loading the animal), for example, broken legs, severely lame animals, very sick/dehydrated animals; the OV should treat these as serious breaches and make immediate contact with the LA, gather all available evidence (either on behalf of or in conjunction with the LA) and refer to the APHA email contact. Any potential offences committed by the keeper and/or transporter will be investigated further by the LA and any appropriate action taken. APHA may also consider regulatory action in order to prevent further non-compliance by the transporter
- Where the condition of the animal would have been present on farm but the welfare of the animal would not have been compromised during transport, for example, sheep scab, ringworm; the OV should refer these to the dedicated APHA email contact as a non-urgent breach referral and collect any available evidence (photos). These may trigger an on-farm



inspection

- Where the condition of the animal would have been present on the farm and the welfare of the animal may have been compromised to some degree during transport but there is the possibility that the transporter may not have been aware of the condition when loading the animal for example, bruising, pig with prolapsed rectum, last 10% of pregnancy, slight lameness; the OV should refer these to the dedicated APHA email contact as a non-urgent breach referral and collect any available evidence (photos). These may trigger an investigation referral to the LA in relation to the transporter and/or a farm inspection
- Where the condition of the animal is the result of an accident or an unexpected event (and includes death) and the cause cannot reasonably be attributed to the actions, or failures, of the transporter. For example, injuries from unavoidable emergency stopping, animals unexpectedly experiencing a heart attack and knocked horns. The OV should refer these to the dedicated APHA email contact as non-urgent breach referrals which APHA will keep a record of and, if necessary, discuss further with transporters if levels become unacceptable and could be representative of a wider issue
- Where the OV observes actions of the transporter that are not in line with legislative requirements and cause unnecessary suffering to animals. For example, beating/kicking animals, excessive goad use and dragging animals, these should be treated as serious breaches and reported to the LA and to APHA for the attention of the Welfare In Transport team

Where animal welfare complies with all aspects of the legislation and a 1 score applies the OV will not need to take any action.

### **3.2.3 Frequency of observation**

Some aspects require observing several times each day – this will depend on the throughput and risk:

**Example:** Effectiveness of stunning, bleeding operations.

Other aspects can be checked on a less frequent basis – at least monthly.

**Example:** The provision of a SOP as required by assimilated Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 (see page 2-1).

These will also be verified at audit but the OV should ensure that checks are carried out monthly to verify that the BO has procedures in place to comply with all legislative requirements. It is a good idea to initial and date documents when a check is made.

### **3.2.4 Welfare incident recording**

Select a welfare score when entering daily data in Chronos and provide explanatory details in the action boxes. See below for guidance on scoring.

Also, include any reference number that you may have been given by the LA or APHA and / or use the unique reference number allocated in the format: plant number / date / time offence was observed.

## **3.3 Referral to LA / APHA**

### **3.3.1 Referral process**

Where a suspect animal has arrived at the slaughterhouse, the OV should determine if, in their opinion, avoidable pain, suffering or distress has been caused to the animal(s), if this can be

attributed to the person transporting the animal or causing the transport of the animal, or both, and ensure evidence is gathered (assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 uses the word 'avoidable' but in other legislation the word 'unnecessary' is used).

- The OV shall ensure that the welfare of the animal is protected (for example, immediate slaughter, isolation, etc)
- 

Welfare breaches concerning transport considered to be serious and urgent, per section 3.2.2, should be reported as soon as possible by phone to the Local Authority (Trading Standards) for the slaughterhouse in addition to following the Annex 4 and 5 reporting process. Welfare breaches concerning the farm should be reported to LAs and APHA by phone as soon as possible. When the LA phone contact is unavailable the OV should leave a message and also communicate by e-mail with details of the case. This should be recorded on the Annex 4. All calls and emails should be logged in the daybook or personal notebook to support the evidential chain.

- The OV shall ask for instructions from LAs/APHA with regards to evidence collection

Completed Annex 4 and Annex 5 reports must be returned to the APHA One Health mailbox: [CSCOneHealthWelfare@apha.gov.uk](mailto:CSCOneHealthWelfare@apha.gov.uk).

OVs must identify each Annex 4 and Annex 5 with a unique serial number made up of Establishment no / date (ddmmyy) / time (hhmm) (for example, UK 1234 / 110517 / 1330).

Any incident that requires the completion of an Annex 4 must be reported to the FBO (and the driver/haulier when possible or deemed appropriate) with the aim of ensuring that the haulier and/or originating farm is made aware and can take any appropriate action as soon as possible to ensure that a similar incident does not occur in the future.

### **Serious breaches (covered by part (a) and (e) in section 3.2.2 Daily input)**

Where a serious welfare breach requires urgent attendance of the LA, either to gather/ collect evidence in relation to animals or the means of transport/ transporter, the OV must contact the LA as soon as possible to explain the situation. It is expected that the LA will engage to either attend in person or explain what they require the OV to do in terms of evidence gathering/ retention. Where the LA is able to attend, please provide details of the action taken. Reasons for non-attendance or lack of assistance by the LA must be recorded on the Annex 4 and in the daybook, together with the details of the individual contacted, where known.

It is likely the animal will need to be immediately slaughtered so the OV must first ensure that a member of the FBO staff is contacted in order to slaughter the animal without undue delay. If the animal is suffering this must be done even if the LA plan to attend.

A member of the BO staff at a slaughterhouse who has had suitable training but no CoC may kill an animal in the lairage where it is injured, suffering or in pain, provided that the individual is suitably competent and the animal does not enter the food chain.

Retain the carcase or body parts affected as evidence (for the LA) and secure with appropriate identification, as per MOC instructions.

For all potential welfare in transport breaches, the required information is the transporter name and address and/or transporter authorisation number, full driver name and certificate of competence number (if available), vehicle registration / trailer number and vehicle approval number if available.

Where there are concerns that welfare of animals on the premises of origin could also be at immediate risk, an urgent visit by APHA and or the LA must be triggered within the next 24-48 hours. Therefore, the OV must contact the APHA customer advice team providing full details including which LA they have contacted:

- in England (0300 0200 301 options 3-2-1)
- or alternatively information about the incident and OV contact details can be emailed to [customeradvice@apha.gov.uk](mailto:customeradvice@apha.gov.uk) between the hours of 8.30am and 5pm (Monday to Friday) where this will be communicated to the duty vet who can contact the OV directly to discuss and assign a visit as appropriate
- in Wales (0300 303 8268 working hours or 0700 0780 144 out of hours) as soon as possible to inform them of the incident and provide the welfare reference number

The associated Annex 4 and Annex 5 should be emailed by 5pm that day to [CSCOneHealthWelfare@apha.gov.uk](mailto:CSCOneHealthWelfare@apha.gov.uk) (and for England also to [customeradvice@apha.gov.uk](mailto:customeradvice@apha.gov.uk)).

**APHA will log the incident but the expectation will be that the LA has already been notified by the OV.** Any failure to contact/liaise with the LA immediately by the OV at the time of incident may lead to further investigation not being possible.

APHA may also consider taking regulatory action alongside any investigation to prevent further non-compliance or bring a transporter back into compliance.

The relevant LA will be the primary authority for the area in which the slaughterhouse is based.

A summary of any communications with the LA/APHA should be entered in the FSA daybook or personal notebook if away from the establishment.

### **Non-urgent breaches (covered by parts (b), (c) and (d) in section 3.2.2 Daily input)**

Reports must be submitted to [CSCOneHealthWelfare@apha.gov.uk](mailto:CSCOneHealthWelfare@apha.gov.uk) by 17:00 the next working day. The LA will be notified in a later email from APHA.

In all cases, gather the evidence as you would for a serious breach. The OV should contact a member of the FBO staff in order to ensure that any animals with identifiable welfare conditions that are causing pain, distress or suffering are slaughtered without undue delay. Body parts or carcasses required for evidence in a potential investigation should be retained as per MOC instructions.

A diagram for the referral process is provided at Annex 7.

No involvement of the VEDM (Veterinary Enforcement Delivery Manager) is required at this reporting and communicating with the LA/APHA.

### **3.3.2 Dead on Arrival (DOA) animals**

#### **Red Meat Animals DOAs**

All red meat DOA animals should be reported to APHA. The OV should not carry out a post-mortem because this requires suitable facilities and expertise should the case result in a prosecution. The OV should consider whether there are any indications of why the animal may have died and whether there are any identifiable reasons as to why the animal should not have been transported. Notifiable disease should always be considered.

Animals that are dead on arrival may indicate serious breaches or may be unexplainable and unavoidable incidents. The OV should determine which, in their opinion, is the case when

inspecting the animal.

Where it is suspected that the Stocking Density in transport is too high, the details of the vehicle should be recorded together with the number of animals, approximate weights, and type (for example, sheared sheep would require less space than those in full wool).

## Poultry DOAs

In white meat premises if, after carrying out a sample of post-mortem examinations, the OV believes that welfare in transport or on farm has been compromised this should be reported to APHA as a suspected non-compliance of Welfare on farm or in Transport.

Broiler chickens over 1.5% DOA should be reported for investigation and other large poultry should be referred where there are over 2.5% DOA. Where there are regular occurrences at levels below these, they should also be reported after discussion with the E&J Technical Manager, FVL or FVC.

Although the legislation sets out minimum stocking densities, it does permit some flexibility on this for animal welfare reasons. The aim is to ensure the physical and thermal comfort of the birds. To determine whether an adjustment to a stocking density level is appropriate, transporters should consider the weight, size, and physical condition of the birds, as well as the weather conditions and overall journey time including loading and unloading. Where stocking density levels are thought to have caused welfare issues the incident must be reported and include the details of the vehicle, the number of animals, approximate weights, and type.

Poultry SD can be calculated from the table below, these figures may vary depending not only on the weight and size of the birds but also on their physical condition, the meteorological conditions and the likely journey time.

Kgs	Min cm <sup>2</sup> /kg
< 1.6 kg	180 - 200
1.6 – 3 kg	160
3 – 5 kg	115
> 5 kg	105

## Reporting Procedure

If a welfare issue is suspected to originate on-farm then it should be reported to APHA following the process previously described.

In urgent cases, initial contact with the LA and APHA should ideally be by telephone (leave an answerphone message if necessary), with details of the case and confirm referral using the Annex 4 notification form and a completed Annex 5 evidence form. All calls and emails should be logged in the day book or personal note book to support the evidential chain.

The LA will inform the owner of any referral for investigation and the owner will be allowed to invite their own veterinarian to attend any post-mortem (diagnostic) examination undertaken in the course of an investigation. Failure to do so could jeopardise any court action. The BO should contact the owner of the animals where they have not been purchased by the BO.

Annexes 4 and 5 must be retained in the premises Animal Welfare folder.

All reports must be sent by email to APHA and a unique identifying number allocated to each case. This should be in the format:

WRN Plant number / date / time offence was observed. For example: WRN 7312/23.02.2015/10.36

This number should be used as the title for emails and other correspondence allowing traceability of all messages.

### 3.3.3 Assessing lame animals

When examining a lame animal, it is useful to record the degree of lameness using a scoring system. The descriptions below should be used to score the lameness and can then be referred to in statements and notes.

Score	Level of Lameness
1	Visibly lame but can keep up with the group
2	Unable to keep up with the group
3	Requires assistance to rise; non-weight bearing on one or more legs
4	Requires assistance to rise; non-weight bearing on one or more legs; reluctant to walk; halted movement; unable to climb steep ramps
5	Unable to rise or remain standing; extreme discomfort or vocalisation with assisted movement

Animals with lameness scores 3, 4 and 5 must not be dragged to the place of slaughter and should be immediately killed. (Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009, Annexe III, 1.11.) In cases where an animal is unable to move, on welfare grounds the animal needs to be humanely killed where they lie, its entry into the food chain should be a secondary consideration.

Slaughter does not have to be for human consumption and this should not determine the approach and timescale for dealing with the animal. Lame animals must not be loaded for transport to a slaughterhouse and transport of a lame animal must be reported to LA/APHA.

When cattle are delivered to a slaughterhouse with shackles on their hind legs the details of premises of origin, any subsequent stops such as a collection centre and the transporter details should be recorded on an Annexe 4 to APHA and LA, as per MOC instructions.

The course of action taken by the OV may range from a serious breach requiring immediate contact with the LA followed by a referral, to a non-urgent breach requiring only an APHA referral.

Examples of a serious lameness breach:

- The condition of the animal would have been present before loading, resulting in the welfare of the animal being seriously compromised during transport. The transporter could reasonably be expected to be fully aware of the condition when loading
- The animal was likely injured during transport and this injury can be attributed to the actions of the transporter or the construction of the vehicle

Examples of a non-urgent lameness breach:

- The condition of the animal may have been present before loading, resulting in the welfare of the animal being compromised to some degree during transport. There is the possibility that the transporter may not have been aware of the condition
- The animal was likely injured during transport through no fault of the transporter or transporter

When determining whether a case is to be reported as a serious breach or a non-urgent breach it should be judged on its own merits regardless of the lameness scoring.

For animals that may have been injured during transport, the OV should assess whether this can be attributed to the actions of the transporter or the construction of the vehicle. If this is the case, then they should indicate this on the Annex 4 referral (and consider immediate LA engagement for serious breaches). If the injury and circumstances surrounding it cannot be explained, then this should be referred via the Annex 4 process and the OV should clearly state that an accident/unavoidable incident may have occurred.

The OV must complete the declaration that avoidable/unnecessary suffering has occurred where they have suitable evidence that the condition of the animal is such that it should not have been transported or should not have been transported in the manner that it has been.

**When collecting evidence, video footage of the lame animals is essential to convey the degree of lameness and suffering. Still photographs are of very little use in these cases.**

### **3.3.4 Assessing heavily pregnant animals**

It is illegal to transport an animal that is unfit for travel. What is deemed as 'unfit for travel' includes heavily pregnant females where more than 90 per cent of the expected gestation period has passed, unless they are being transported for veterinary treatment.

**FSA responsibility** When it is suspected that a heavily pregnant animal has been transported, the OV must record this on the daily welfare exception report. In determining if the animal is in late pregnancy, the OV should take into account the following

#### **3.3.4.1 Ante-mortem examination - potential signs of heavily pregnant animal:**

- obvious udder development, this occurs earlier in younger animals
- obvious enlargement of the abdomen and in cattle this will be particularly noted on the right hand side
- enlargement and swelling of the vaginal area and vulval lips
- mucous discharge from the vagina in advanced pregnancy
- tail slightly raised and appear in discomfort if very close to birthing

Where these or other findings are noted at ante-mortem, the OV should notify the MHI and ensure they monitor the carcase during dressing and that their observations are recorded.

#### **3.3.4.2 Slaughter**

When uterine, placental or foetal tissues, including foetal blood, are not to be collected as part of the post-slaughter processing of pregnant animals, all foetuses should be left inside the unopened uterus until they are dead. This is especially important if the foetuses are apparently mature, i.e. close to birth at the end of a full-length pregnancy.

It is best practice that foetuses should not be removed from the uterus until at least 15-20 minutes after the maternal neck or chest cut. Foetal death or irreversible brain damage will usually have occurred by 15-20 minutes after slaughter of the dam. In some cases the foetus may show obvious signs of recovery and even commence breathing. In such cases the foetus should immediately be humanely killed.

When uterine, placental or foetal tissues are to be collected arrangements must be made to ensure that the foetus is humanely killed as soon as possible. If the OV is not present at the time of dressing the foetus must be examined by the OV and a professional opinion reached. Photographs are essential in any cases where an element of doubt may exist should the decision be challenged or result in prosecution.

#### 3.3.4.3 Post-mortem examination - potential signs of heavily pregnant animal:

- enlarged uterus
- foetus will be obviously close-to-term:- showing hair formation over the entire body, eyelashes, open eyes and teeth in cattle, sheep and goats. In cattle, there will usually be 'golden slippers' present on the feet

The foetus, after removal from the uterus, must be examined by the OV before a decision is made on the stage of pregnancy.

Any of these findings will need to result in consideration by the OV of whether the animal was in the last 10% of pregnancy. The stage of gestation can be calculated using the formula below.

#### 3.3.4.4 Estimating gestation

The OV should take measurements of the Crown to Rump Length (CRL) in cms (top of head to buttocks) to be able to estimate the gestational period. Calculate this based on the formula:

The stage of gestation can be calculated using the following SRUC published formula:

$$\text{Days of gestation} = 2.5 \times (*\text{CRL} + 21) \quad *\text{CRL} = \text{top of head to buttocks length (in cms)}$$

This formula is applicable to all animal species.

#### Typical duration of pregnancy in common species

Species	Duration
Solipeds (Horses)	330-342 days
Cattle	279-292 days
Goats	145-155 days
Sheep	144-151 days
Pigs (Sows)	112-115 days

#### 3.3.4.5 Evidence gathering

Ensure that all evidence is recorded, signed and dated and secured appropriately. The OV should ensure that the calf (evidence) can be cross referenced to the dam's carcass and identity.

Photographs or video capture of the dam and the parts of the foetus identified as being indicative of late pregnancy must be obtained. Use a ruler or similar to show scale / size.

Freeze a fore and hind limb as evidence for further investigation. Freezing the mammary gland and blood samples from the dam and foetus will provide additional evidence and allow DNA checks. In all cases the owner of the animal must be contacted and allowed to have an independent examination of the foetus and dam's carcass.

#### 3.3.4.6 Biosecurity Implications

Additional PPE should be worn during the collection of samples and evidence gathering. Take into consideration potential hazards, (Brucellosis, Leptospira and Q fever).

Any person likely to have contact with a woman that is or might be pregnant must consider the risks posed by handling foetal material and if necessary arrange for a colleague to gather evidence under supervision.

### 3.3.4.7 Legislation and MOC references

MOC Chapter 2.3 Annex 2 section 1.4. Condition of animals at unloading applies.

Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations Annex I, Chapter 1 states: “Ill, injured, infirm or fatigued animal are not transported e.g. pregnant females for whom 90% or more of the expected gestation period has already passed.”

### 3.3.5 Assessing Foot Pad Dermatitis (FPD) in Poultry

FPD is one of the measures to assess whether welfare standards are being met during rearing, alongside post-mortem rejections and on-farm mortality.

A number of factors have been shown to influence the occurrence of FPD such as litter type and quality, litter depth, water drinker type, bird age, ventilation and drinker management, feed source and its quality, rearing system, and breed (genotype) used among others. Enteric disease may be a predisposing factor.

The severity of FPD will depend on the area affected and the type of lesion. The OV should score FPD from 0 to 2 as described in the condition card in Annex 3. Scoring is broadly based on the size of the lesion but any lesions with deep ulceration will be scored 2 regardless of the size.

When severe FPD is suspected in a flock, the OV should score feet from a minimum of 100 birds and the number of feet in each category 0, 1 and 2 should be recorded. The score shall be calculated using the Swedish Score System:

a)  $(\text{number of birds with score } 1 \times 1) + (\text{number of birds with score } 2 \times 2) = A$  b) Threshold A? 167

When exceeded threshold is detected within a flock, the OV should inform the FBO, and also should inform APHA through an Annex 4 that will be automatically generated when the info is introduced in the relevant animal welfare section in Chronos. APHA will decide if they need to investigate the rearing conditions further.

All FPD verification checks carried out by the OV, regardless of these triggering reporting or not, are to be entered in the IRIS system alongside the rest of PMI data for the flock.

For further information please check [The Code of Practice for Meat Chickens and Meat Breeding Chickens](#)

### 3.3.6 Guidance for OVs to aid enforcement authorities

If the welfare of an animal is compromised, always ensure it is killed as soon as possible.

When a welfare incident is suspected, it is important that appropriate evidence is obtained at the earliest stage of the investigation. The following notes should be used as a guide together with the OV checklist at Annex 5 when gathering evidence.

1. **In every case the OV must ensure that suitable evidence is gathered for the investigation.** The aim should be to take pictures / video showing any lameness and or wounds while the animal is still alive. Clear notes at this stage will help in the preparation of a statement, should this be required
2. Where the relevant enforcement officer cannot attend the slaughterhouse or the animal needs to be dispatched immediately to protect welfare, the OV must gather the following evidence:



- a) Video and photographic evidence of the 'live' animal must clearly show the cause of any welfare or health issue and any identification markers on the animal. It is useful to record yourself on the video evidence stating date and time of location with details of the case
  - b) Photographs must be annotated with the date, time and by whom the pictures are taken
  - c) Any relevant physical evidence including whole carcasses or parts of carcasses. Without physical evidence, further investigation is often not possible. The OV should also provide any veterinary evidence in relation to the samples for example the aging of lesions, etc
  - d) Details of the livestock vehicle (name of the driver, transporter including their authorisation number, registration number and trailer number) should be recorded. The APHA welfare in transport team will monitor and log these details
  - e) Details of other livestock arriving from the same holding (numbers and conditions)
  - f) Copies of original paperwork including passports and relevant documentation that indicates the identification of the animal, details of the owner and transporter and time of arrival
3. The OV must provide a clear, professional opinion of the case, verbally in the first instance then in writing (see paragraph 5). The OV in this event is a witness of fact (not an 'expert') asked by the court to analyse evidence and give an opinion on their observations in relation to their professional role. However, if it becomes necessary to give evidence in court in a prosecution case, the OV would have to comply with the Expert Witness Rules in order to give specific parts of their evidence. If the OV's opinion is that the animal has been caused 'unnecessary or avoidable pain, distress or suffering' this should be stated in the initial written report. (Assimilated Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 uses the word 'avoidable' but in other legislation the word 'unnecessary' is used.)
  4. The evidence will be collected at the earliest opportunity. The date until which evidence will be retained should be completed on the Annex 4 referral form. This should allow reasonable time for collection of the evidence where suitable storage facilities are available. If large items need to be retained as evidence, contact your Inspection Team Leader (ITL) or Area Manager (AM) who should be able to locate premises with more suitable storage facilities
  5. There may be a request for a witness statement. This should be produced without delay and must be clear, detailed and unambiguous. The statement needs to tell the factual points of the events in a chronological order:
    - a) Identify the person making the statement and their qualifications, experience and job profile
    - b) Clearly state what the issue / concern is and when applicable state that the animal 'has been caused unnecessary or avoidable pain, distress or suffering', plus reasons why. **Without this statement there is no offence.** The wording used should reflect the legislative requirement
    - c) If veterinary terminology is used, this needs to be explained in layman's terms
    - d) Include any video footage / photographs taken and refer to this in the statement
  6. Include any ante / post-mortem report and exhibit this as an item in the statement

## 3.4 Entry of information in Chronos

### 3.4.1 Purpose

Compliance data is collected daily at all slaughterhouses to provide reports on welfare issues in plants on a monthly basis that subsequently allows trends in animal welfare to be assessed by Defra and the Welsh Government.

### 3.4.2 OV responsibility

The OV should verify compliance with relevant national rules on animal welfare prior to and during slaughter and killing, using a systematic approach, taking proportionate enforcement action where necessary.

Suspected breaches occurring outside the slaughterhouse must be reported immediately to LA and APHA when serious. Non-urgent reports must be made before 5pm the next working day.

The OV must log all calls and contact in the daybook or their personal note book with details of date time and reason for contact, even where no reply or response was received from the officer being contacted.

Details of conversations must be recorded in the EDP (Enforcement Decision Process) form in cases of escalation of enforcement.

Where a lack of positive response is evident from the BO, after taking proportionate enforcement action, then the OV must report the circumstances to the Veterinary Enforcement Delivery Manager (VEDM).

Where agreed by the FSA, compliance with animal welfare can be verified as part of ante-mortem checks at the holding of provenance on those animals being sent to a slaughterhouse by an OV /AV. Further checks will then be carried out at the slaughterhouse on the health and welfare of the animals and to verify information supplied with the animals concerning the ante-mortem checks undertaken at the holding of provenance. More information on ante-mortem checks at the holding of provenance and subsequent checks at the slaughterhouse can be found in chapter 2.2 of the MOC.

### 3.4.3 Score definition

Reporting requires a score to be given for each score 2, 3 or 4 incident in accordance with the information below.

Score	Description
<b>1 Welfare compliant</b>	Compliant with welfare regulations; the BO is operating fully in compliance with the regulations and their own welfare controls and SOPs.
<b>2 No immediate risk to welfare</b>	Low risk of compromising animal welfare or an isolated low risk situation that poses no immediate risk to the welfare of animals.
<b>3 Potential risk to welfare</b>	Potential to risk of significantly compromising animal welfare but where there is no immediate risk to animals. This may lead to a situation that poses a risk to animals, causing pain, distress or suffering.
<b>4 Welfare critical</b>	Poses a serious and imminent risk to animal welfare or one where avoidable pain, distress or suffering has been caused.

Examples:

2 score – minor issue with SOP

3 score – slippery floor with potential risk of animals falling

4 score – animal not effectively stunned and no corrective action taken

Score	Definition	The OV should apply the score if
2	An isolated low risk situation observed with the requirements of legislation but with no immediate risk of injury, avoidable pain distress or suffering.  There was a technical infringement that does not impact on the welfare of animals.	Lapses in compliance are observed which are rectified immediately on request and no harm occurred. BO compliant and good records. These may be subject to the use of enforcement notices.

Score	Definition	The OV should apply the score if
3	<p>Welfare practices were observed as failing to comply with the requirements of legislation and there was no potential risk to animals.</p> <p>There were no animals suffering any avoidable pain, distress or suffering during their killing and related operations. This may lead to a situation that poses a risk to animals, causing pain, distress or suffering, which would result in a 4 score. Welfare of animals during transportation was suspected to be compromised.</p>	Any technical NCs have been noted during the period. These may be subject to the use of enforcement notices.
4	<p>Welfare practices were observed as failing to comply with legislative requirements, and there <b>was evidence of</b> animals suffering avoidable pain, distress or suffering during their killing and related operations or a contravention poses a serious and imminent risk to animal welfare. Welfare of animals during transportation was seriously compromised with evidence of animals suffering unnecessary or avoidable pain, distress or suffering.</p> <p>DOAs, female red meat animals transported in the last 10% of pregnancy and a failure to provide water at all times all require a 4 score. DOA and females transported in the last 10% of pregnancy must be referred to the LA.</p>	<p>There have been NCs causing or that can cause actual harm to animals (whether prosecutable or non-prosecutable) during the period. In every case appropriate enforcement will have been carried out.</p> <p>Transport / on farm incidents will have been referred to the LA / APHA immediately.</p>

Where an incident or accident is considered to be unavoidable and no fault of the operator a 4 score should be applied. These cases are referred to the VEDM and they are reported to the BO in form of written advise. This must be clearly explained in the Chronos entry and recorded in the daybook

### 3.4.4 '1' scores

No entry is required on Chronos for a score of '1' as this indicates compliance.

### 3.4.5 '2' '3' or '4' scores

If a '2' '3' or '4' score is awarded, the deficiency and action taken boxes must be completed with a brief description of the issue (for example, 'no water available for X time'). **The OV must record the number of animals on Chronos.**

If a '4' (and '3' where applicable) is scored, the OV must select from the 'action drop down list' and if relevant provide the following:

- the date it has been referred to the LA and / or APHA
- if an enforcement notice was served at the time of the incident as per section 5 guidance; enter in the enforcement section of Chronos
- if a CoC is suspended or revoked
- the date referred for investigation by the FSA and the investigation reference number, if held
- justification details if the incident has not been referred for investigation, for example unavoidable accidental incident, not witnessed

## 3.5 Suspected breach of animal welfare

### 3.5.1 LA / APHA contact

All referrals must be made to the dedicated APHA email contact point in the first instance:  
[CSCOneHealthWelfare@apha.gov.uk](mailto:CSCOneHealthWelfare@apha.gov.uk)

The LA for the area where the slaughterhouse is located will be notified of any suspected breach of welfare, either in transport or on farm by APHA. They will then liaise with the LA responsible for the premises where the breach occurred when necessary.

In serious and / or urgent cases both the LA and APHA in the area where the slaughterhouses are located must also be contacted and informed of the suspected breach.

APHA can be contacted by using their central contact number:

England: **0300 020 0301**

Wales: **0300 303 8268**

A summary of any communications with LA / APHA should be entered in the FSA daybook or notebook if away from the establishment.

### 3.5.2 Inadequate neck cut (red neck) birds using a 'simple stunning' method

Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009 states: "The methods referred to in Annex I which do not result in instantaneous death (hereinafter referred to as 'simple stunning') shall be followed as quickly as possible by a procedure ensuring death, such as bleeding, pithing, electrocution or prolonged exposure to anoxia."

Identifying an inadequately cut bird indicates that the bird did not receive a neck cut or adequate neck cut resulting in a rapid loss of blood and death. Such incidents indicate non-compliance with a number of requirements in (EC) 1099/2009 and WATOK legislation.

Where the BO uses a stun (kill) method, the bird will be dead and an inadequately cut bird will not be a non-compliance unless there has been a failure of the stun system.

### 3.5.3 FSA action

Where an OV, MHI or Plant Inspection Assistant (PIA) identifies an uncut / inadequately cut bird (red neck) on the shackle line, they must gather evidence and record the details.

The FSA team must identify NCs that have been observed using the legislative references shown below.

Scenario	Legislative reference
Bird could have been subject to avoidable pain when using 'simple stunning'	<b>Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009 Article 3 (1)</b> states that "Animals shall be spared any avoidable pain, distress or suffering during their killing and related operations."
Procedure (neck cut) did not ensure death in a 'simple stunned' bird	<b>Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009 Article 4 (1)</b> states that "Animals shall only be killed after stunning in accordance with the methods and specific requirements related to the application of those methods set out in Annex I. The loss of consciousness and sensibility shall be maintained until the death of the animal."
Procedure failed to ensure bird unconscious until death	<b>Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009 Article 5 (1)</b> states that "Business operators shall ensure that persons responsible for stunning, or other nominated staff, carry out regular checks to ensure that the animals do not present any signs of consciousness or sensibility in the period between the end of the stunning process and death.  Those checks shall be carried out on a sufficiently representative sample of animals and their frequency shall be established taking into account the outcome of previous checks and any factors which may affect the efficiency of the stunning process.  When the outcome of the checks indicates that an animal is not properly stunned, the person in charge of the stunning shall immediately take the appropriate measures as specified in the standards operating procedures drawn up in accordance with Article 6 (2).

Scenario	Legislative reference
BO has not ensured line speed allowed sufficient time for adequate neck cut	<b>WATOK Schedule 1, Paragraph 21 (1) (b)</b> states that "No person may operate a shackle line unless the speed at which the shackle line is operated is such that any act or operation intended to be performed in relation to, or on, poultry suspended from it can be performed without undue haste and with proper regard for the welfare of the poultry."
BO or slaughterer has not ensured neck cut is such that bleeding is rapid and profuse	<p><b>WATOK Schedule 1, Paragraph 31 (1)</b> states that "A person engaged in the bleeding or pithing of an animal that has been simple stunned must ensure that the animal has been bled or pithed without delay after it has been simple stunned."</p> <p><b>Paragraph 31 (2)</b> states that "A person engaged in the bleeding of an animal which has been simple stunned must ensure that the bleeding is:</p> <p>(a) rapid, profuse and complete; and</p> <p>(b) completed before the animal regains consciousness.</p> <p><b>Paragraph 31 (3)</b> states that "Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph 3.1 of Annex III of WATOK, if an animal is bled after simple stunning, no person may cause or permit any further dressing procedure or any electrical stimulation to be performed on the animal before the bleeding has ended and in any event not before the expiry of:</p> <p>(a) in the case of a turkey or goose, a period of not less than two minutes</p> <p>(b) in the case of any other bird, a period of not less than 90 seconds."</p>

After each incident, the OV must give written advice to the BO detailing the non-compliance and actions required to achieve the objectives of the legislation. Where the line speed, shortage of slaughterers or lack of rotation is a contributory factor, a WEN should be served to slow down the line.

After each incident, the OV must complete an EDP form and draft a written advise for the VEDM team to consider. After VEDM evaluation, if the case is supported the letter and EDP form will be sent to the OV. In cases where it is not supported the VEDM will send the OV the EDP form with the rationale for not supporting the case.

### 3.5.4 Evidence gathering

The OV and FSA team must ensure that every incident where a bird is identified as not bled or poorly bled is recorded and evidence gathered at the time of the incident. This will help to demonstrate that the BO is failing to take action to spare animals' avoidable pain, distress or suffering. It will also help avoid systemic failures of SOPs and prevent problems recurring.

a) The information below should be reflected in the EDP form, letter or enforcement notice

b) Notes to include as evidence:

- the line speed on the day and time of the incident, and whether it is different to normal for that premises
- the daily throughput and hours worked on the day of the incident
- the names of slaughterers at the time of the incident; this will help to identify if there is a pattern with some slaughterers more often involved
- where there is clearly one slaughterer failing to carry out adequate neck cuts, the OV should consider suspension or revocation of the CoC
- the amperage and voltage of the equipment to demonstrate that it was a simple stun / stun to establish that the bird will have suffered
- any discussions with BO staff, and allow the BO to add comments to the day book

The OV / MHIs should record the outcomes of the discussions carried out with the BO, animal welfare officer and operatives including their comments and intentions about how to solve the problem. These notes should be recorded in the EDP form.

Evidence should be obtained on whether the SOPs have been reviewed by the BO in order to prevent recurrence.

Photographs of the affected bird(s) must be taken and secured as advised in MOC Chapter 7 Enforcement.

Where possible, a representative sample of affected birds should be retained if there are suitable freezer facilities available. If not, facilities may need to be secured off site. Contact your ITL or AM for facilities off site.

If, after discussion with the FVL or FVC, it is considered necessary to send birds for post-mortem, arrangements will be made by the FSA.

### **3.5.5 Verification procedures**

SOPs should describe the procedures and checks necessary to ensure there is adequate stunning and bleeding of the animals. The AWO should keep records on the checks they carry out and of the actions taken when shortcomings are identified. The FSA team should check the SOPs and records regularly, record any deficiencies identified and discuss these with the BO representative.

Verification by the FSA team should include checks on the stunned animals at the point before they enter the plucking machine in order to verify that they are unconscious and properly bled at that moment. Evidence should be recorded of any animal that is inadequately cut, poorly cut or conscious along with actions taken and the reason why this happened.

### **3.6 Welfare folder**

The OV must have and keep an up to date welfare folder. This must contain, as a minimum, the following information:

- The approval document showing the species that can be processed and the layout map. Also, cattle box approval if applicable (hard copy and / or electronic copy)
- A list showing methods of killing that have been used, including back up and religious slaughter (hard copy and / or electronic copy)
- The CCTV cameras location map (hard copy and / or electronic copy)
- If partnership / sole trader: FBO name, address and contact details or incorporation details (as registered with Companies House or equivalent) including full company name, registered office address (including postcode) and company registration number (always hard copy)
- AWO names and contact details (for example, e-mails, phone numbers) as applicable (always hard copy)
- Either a version-controlled copy of the SOPs if they are not readily available (hard copy and / or electronic copy) or if they are readily available, a note with the relevant contact point (hard copy). Note: The OV must always verify with the BO that the SOP is the most recent version before taking enforcement action
- **Updated:** [Details of individuals' CoC's and TCoC's working in a premises must only be recorded in the Field Operations Documents. Details of CoC and TCoC holders that have left employment must be removed. When an individual works at more than one site within a company the CoC record may be retained in each premises at which they work]
- Note: A check must be made with the WATOK team in York that CoCs are valid when new staff commence employment
- Local LA and APHA contact numbers and e-mails (always hard copy)
- The FSA welfare checks protocol, showing how the work is organized and shared within the FSA team (always hard copy)

- FSA aide memoire for the daily welfare checks (always hard copy)
- Blank copies and records of the daily welfare checks (always hard copy)
- Blank copies of the relevant enforcement notices that might need to be served immediately / urgently (always hard copy)
- Letters and notices served (always hard copy)
- Updated local protocols and agreements (hard copy and / or electronic copy)
- Copies of relevant meetings and communications (hard copy and / or electronic copy)

**Note:** The folder must be organized in such a way that the information is easily identifiable and should document what information is stored electronically and how it can be accessed.

## 4. Religious Slaughter

### In this section

#### [4.1 Compliance with religious slaughter requirements: BO responsibility](#)

#### [4.2 Compliance with religious slaughter requirements: FSA responsibility](#)

### 4.1 Compliance with religious slaughter requirements: BO responsibility

#### 4.1.1 Legislation: slaughter

WATOK (England), (Wales) Schedule 3, 1, (c) states:

'killing in accordance with religious rites' means killing without the infliction of unnecessary suffering:

- a) by the Jewish method (Shechita) for the food of Jews by a Jew who is licensed by the Rabbinical Commission and holds a certificate for that purpose
- b) by the Muslim method (Halal) for the food of Muslims by a Muslim who holds a certificate for that purpose.

#### 4.1.2 Legislation: species

WATOK (England) and (Wales) Schedule 3, Part 1 2, (1) sets out the species that are permitted to be slaughtered by a religious method. These are sheep, goats, bovine animals or birds killed in a slaughterhouse.

WATOK (England) and (Wales) Schedule 3, Part 1, 1 (a) defines 'bovine animal' as an ox, bullock, cow, heifer, steer or calf; and 1 (b) defines 'bird' as a turkey, domestic fowl, guinea-fowl, duck, goose or quail.

**These are the only species permitted to be slaughtered according to religious rites without prior stunning.**

#### 4.1.3 Legislation: method of slaughter

WATOK (England) and (Wales) Schedule 3, Part 2, 5 for sheep goats and bovines and Part 3, 7 for birds, requires that:

Any person that kills an animal in accordance with religious rites must inspect the knife immediately before killing to ensure that it is:

- a) undamaged
- b) of sufficient size and sharpness to kill the animal

For ruminants, the incision must ensure it is killed by the severance of both its carotid arteries and jugular veins by rapid, uninterrupted movements of a hand-held knife.

For birds, the incision must ensure the bird is killed by the severance of both of its carotid arteries by rapid, uninterrupted movements of a hand-held knife.

#### **4.1.4 Compliance with religious slaughter requirements**

In establishments where killing by a non-stun religious method takes place, there must be checks by the slaughterer, verified by the BO (this could be through the AWO), that animals are unconscious before being released from restraint and checks that the animal does not present any sign of life before undergoing dressing or scalding.

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has produced guidance on the signs of consciousness in bovine, sheep and goats, pigs and poultry – see section 2.3.1 above. A guide to the signs of effective stun and unconsciousness can also be found in the welfare indicator cards at Annex 11 Signs of properly stunned or dead poultry and Annex 12 Signs of a properly stunned or dead animal by stunning method.

**Note:** The requirements in WATOK Schedule 3 for killing by a religious method also apply.

#### **4.1.5 Legislative requirements**

The EC Regulations permit slaughter by a religious method without prior stunning. **Reference:** assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009 Article 4 (4).

Where animals are killed without stunning by a religious method the persons responsible for slaughtering must carry out systematic checks to ensure that animals do not present any signs of consciousness or sensibility before being released from restraint and do not present any sign of life before undergoing dressing or scalding. The person carrying out these checks must have a CoC for the activities being checked and report to the AWO. A record should be kept of the checks carried out. **Reference:** assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009 Article 5 (2).

BOs engaged in religious slaughter without stunning must specify in the SOP measures to be taken when the checks indicate **the animal still presents signs of life**. **Reference:** assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009 Article 6 (2), (c).

BOs must also ensure that all animals that are killed by religious rites without prior stunning are individually restrained; in particular, ruminants should be individually mechanically restrained. **Reference:** Assimilated Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009 Article 15 (2).

Bovines can only be killed in an approved restraining pen. **Reference:** WATOK (England) (Wales), Schedule 3, Part 2, 3.

The animals must not be placed in restraining equipment until the CoC holder is ready to make the incision immediately. **Reference:** assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009 Article 9 (3); WATOK (England) (Wales), Schedule 3, 6 (1) a.



If the restraining equipment was not in operation before 1 January 2013, then it must also comply with the requirements in paragraph 3, Annex II of assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009; that is, it must:

- optimise the application of the killing method
- prevent injury or contusions to the animal
- minimise struggle and vocalisation when an animal is restrained and
- minimise the time of restraint

**Note:** The use of V-shaped restrainers for sheep / goats is permitted since these are a type of mechanical restraint. Only one live animal can be restrained at a time. The belt must be stationary for the duration of the bleeding, until the animal is unconscious and for 20 seconds as a minimum when the animal is killed without prior stunning.

**Reference:** assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009 Art 15, 2 and Article 9(3).

Restraining equipment must be checked and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

#### **4.1.6 Adult bovine restraint**

Note that adult bovines can only be restrained upright in a stunning box approved under:

- Schedule 3 Part 2 of WATOK (England) and (Wales)

Young bovines must be individually mechanically restrained for non-stun religious slaughter. The process / restraint used must not result in any avoidable pain distress or suffering and in particular consideration should be given to the contact of any body parts with parts of the equipment which would result in avoidable pain.

WATOK (England) and (Wales) Schedule 3, 6 (1) requires that animals are not placed in restraining equipment until the person is ready to make the incision.

FBOs shall contact approvals for an application form which must be submitted along with copies of the plans of the box. An on-site assessment will then be conducted by a Field Veterinary Leader. If they are content the way the restraint is operated, they may recommend approval. The decision maker for approval will be the Head of Operational Assurance and Excellence. The restraint facilities must be approved by the FSA prior to their use.

If during routine checks on approved adult bovine restraint facilities the OV is of the opinion that the facility is not being used as originally approved or may cause adult bovine's pain distress or suffering they should discuss this with their Field Veterinary team who may make a recommendation for an approval review. If a review is required the restraint box cannot be used until the review has been completed. A WEN may be required to prevent the use of the box for non stun slaughter.

The SOP for the bovine restraint box slaughter method should be reviewed at least monthly and include the process that the BO uses to assess signs of unconsciousness and after what period of time a post cut stun is applied.

If a review is required or the restraint facility is causing pain distress or suffering during use then the OV should serve an enforcement notice preventing its use with immediate effect. See section 6 for enforcement details.

#### **4.1.7 Handling of sheep, goats and bovine animals**

Where sheep, goats or bovines are killed by religious rites without stunning, the slaughterer and BO must ensure:

- that animals are not shackled, hoisted or moved in any way until the animal is unconscious and in any event not released from restraint before the expiry of:
  - sheep and goats: a period of not less than 20 seconds
  - bovines: a period of not less than 30 seconds
- there is appropriate back up stunning equipment close to the restraining pen / equipment for use on ruminants in case of emergency; this is to be used immediately where the animal is subject to avoidable pain, suffering or agitation or has injuries or contusions

**Note: The animal must be unconscious before it is moved;** some animals may require longer than the above times before they become so. **The BO must ensure that checks for consciousness / unconsciousness are made** by the responsible CoC holder before animals are released from restraint. A record must be kept of the checks carried out.

The BO, and any person engaged in the killing of a bird in accordance with religious rites without prior stunning, must ensure that where the bird has not been stunned without bleeding, no further dressing procedure or any electrical stimulation is performed on the bird if it presents any sign of life and in any event not before the expiry of:

- turkey or goose: a period of not less than 2 minutes
- any other bird: a period not less than 90 seconds

No dressing or scalding can take place until the absence of signs of life has been verified.

#### **England only:**

A premises stunning and then killing by a religious method with Jewish or Muslim slaughterers does not have to comply with the parameters set out in (REUL) No 1099/2009 Annex I. The animal must be immediately rendered unconscious and remain unconscious until dead before any further procedures take place.

## **4.2 Compliance with religious slaughter requirements: FSA responsibility**

### **4.2.1 OV checks**

The OV should carry out checks:

- to monitor slaughter by a non-stun religious method
- on restraint facilities for non-stun religious slaughter
- to monitor the period of time that the animal remains restrained after neck cut has taken place and ensure this complies with both domestic and EU regulations requiring unconsciousness and minimum standstill times
- ensure that animals are checked by persons responsible for slaughtering and they carry out systematic checks to ensure that the animals do not present any signs of consciousness or sensibility before being released from restraint and do not present any sign of life before undergoing dressing or scalding
- monitor records of checks carried out by the BO on signs of unconsciousness
- during non-stun religious slaughter it is usually necessary for the slaughterman to hold the head in sheep, goats and poultry to make the neck cut. This is not considered as restraint, therefore no additional restraint code is required and an individual with only code 61 can carry this out

### **4.2.2 Welfare incident recording**

All welfare incidents observed must be recorded in Chronos.

Where animals are released from restraint whilst still conscious or before the required time has elapsed, appropriate enforcement action must be immediately taken.

This could include using an enforcement notice to slow down the slaughter process, which would allow sufficient time for the required monitoring of signs of unconsciousness / consciousness; restraint times to be observed and / or in cases where the CoC holder is failing to comply with these requirements, suspension or revocation of the CoC.

Details of animals released before unconsciousness should be recorded.

Any enforcement proposal must be sent by e-mail to the Veterinary Enforcement Delivery Team (VEDM Team) at [enf.delivery@food.gov.uk](mailto:enf.delivery@food.gov.uk) for a decision to be made. The e-mail must include a draft of the appropriate enforcement document together with a completed EDP form and any relevant evidence (see Chapter 7, Point 4.1.2.2). Enforcement of the CCTV regulations can be carried out directly by the contract OV without the involvement of the FSA VEDM Team.

#### 4.2.3 Enforcement

For guidance on enforcement of animal welfare regulations refer to:

- topic 6 on 'Enforcement' of this chapter
- chapter 7 on 'Enforcement'

**Note:** In the event that users require technical guidance on enforcement issues, they should follow the escalation through lines of communication as detailed in chapter 1 on 'Introduction', section 3.

## 5. Mandatory use of CCTV

### In this section

#### [5.1 Requirements](#)

#### [5.2 Viewing and monitoring CCTV](#)

#### [5.3 Enforcement](#)

#### [5.4 Appeals](#)

The Mandatory Use of Closed Circuit Television in Slaughterhouses (England) Regulations 2018 ('CCTV regulation') and [SL\(6\)471 - The Mandatory Use of Closed Circuit Television in Slaughterhouses \(Wales\) Regulations 2024 \(Senedd. Wales\)](#) ('CCTV legislation') lay down rules on the installation, operation and retention of CCTV systems, images and information.

Coming into force, Welsh Regulation.

Subject to Senedd approval, the Regulations will come into force in two parts:

- Part one will come into force on 1 June; these are the requirements to install and operate a CCTV system and keep CCTV footage and information
- Part two will come into force on 1 December; these are the offences and powers to inspect, seize and enforce the Regulations

Please note that all entries below in relation to Wales have to be read in conjunction with the updates provided as the implementation is rolled out.

## 5.1 Requirements

Regulation 3(1) of the CCTV legislation requires that the BO of a slaughterhouse must install a CCTV system that provides a complete and clear image of killing and related operations in all areas of the slaughterhouse (includes any land, building, shed, pen, receptacle or vehicle of any description) where live animals are present.

The Mandatory Use of Closed Circuit Television in Slaughterhouses (England) Regulations 2018 ('CCTV regulation') and SL(6)471 - The Mandatory Use of Closed Circuit Television in Slaughterhouses (Wales) Regulations 2024 (Senedd. Wales) ('CCTV legislation') lay down rules on the installation, operation and retention of CCTV systems, images and information.

CCTV cameras should cover unloading, lairage, handling, restraining, stunning, bleeding and killing areas. This should include animals that are alive but unconscious post stunning or during bleeding.

Given the complexity of gas systems, Defra and Welsh Government have agreed that a camera is required at entry, at the expected point of unconsciousness in the CAS system and after exit. They have also agreed that this does not always require a complete and clear view of all animals because there will be circumstances where animals will naturally block a view of each other.

Slaughter by a method that results in instantaneous death would not require CCTV after that point in the process. For example, bullet (free projectile). Regulation 3(3) requires that the system be operational at all times when live animals are present.

This includes overnight and on non-working days if animals are delivered or held at the slaughterhouse outside of normal operating hours. Where there are fields or buildings associated with the slaughterhouse that have the same CPH number as the slaughterhouse, these are classed as field lairages so will require CCTV coverage and the following rules apply:

- CCTV in the field lairage is mandatory
- Animals can move to and from the slaughterhouse to the field lairage without further requirements
- Animals from a holding under standstill, can be moved to slaughter, directly or indirectly via an approved slaughter-market or collection centre (DCO Schedule 1). In doing so they may go into the slaughterhouse field lairage
- Animals from TB restricted farms, or untested animals, can be moved either directly or through exempt markets and approved collection centres to a slaughterhouse. In doing so they may go into the slaughterhouse field lairage
- 

If the field used in connection with the slaughterhouse business has a different CPH number then, even if adjacent, it is effectively a separate holding and subject to different rules, including:

- they are not field lairages, and therefore CCTV is not mandatory
- the animals cannot move from the slaughterhouse back to the field

Regulation 4(1) requires that the BO retains and stores any images and information obtained by the CCTV system for 90 calendar days from the date the images or information are obtained. The OV and FSA Inspection staff (Inspector) can view live and historical CCTV images and the OV should verify monthly that images are retained for at least 90 calendar days.

Regulation 5(1) (England) gives an inspector power to view, copy or seize CCTV equipment as well as images or information obtained by a CCTV system when executing and enforcing The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015 or the EU Regulation.

Regulation 5(1) (Wales) gives an inspector power to view, copy or seize CCTV equipment as well as images or information obtained by a CCTV system when executing and enforcing The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Wales) Regulations 2014 or the EU Regulation or the Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Wales) Order 2007.

Access to CCTV equipment, images and information must be provided by the BO to any inspector appointed by the CA.

An inspector is any authorised officer for the purposes of executing and enforcing the Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015 or the EU Regulations. Inspectors include OV's, E&J Technical Managers, MHIs, FSA Field / Audit veterinarians and criminal investigators. In Wales an inspector can also be a person authorised under section 51 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

England only. Should an LA officer in England wish to obtain footage in relation to a transport non compliance the OV cannot request footage under the CCTV regulations on their behalf. Should the FBO agree to share the footage then the LA should liaise directly with the FBO. CCTV footage can only be formally requested where the suspected offence has taken place under WATOK (England) or Regulation 1099/2009 in England.

Wales only. An inspector means a person appointed under section 51 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006. The LA officer will normally be authorised under this section. CCTV footage can be formally requested where the suspected offence has taken place under WATOK (Wales), Regulation 1099/2009 or the Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Wales) Order.

## **5.2 Viewing and monitoring CCTV**

FSA staff must ensure that CCTV footage is monitored on each operational day. CCTV footage viewed should be a combination of live footage and, where possible, footage randomly selected from historical operational and non- operational periods. If it is not possible to review historical footage on each operational day this should be noted in the daybook and a process should be put in place to review it at regular intervals. The OV should ensure that all cameras are fully operational. As a minimum the OV must view CCTV at least daily for a total of 15 minutes.

If the OV, MHI, or other FSA authorised Inspector identifies a contravention, they should conduct further verification checks of historical CCTV footage to support any enforcement decision making. They should request to view the footage from the locations, dates, and times where they suspect such contraventions to have occurred. It is not reasonable or practical to request a copy of 90 days footage, whether from one or multiple cameras, unless there is evidence of systemic contraventions over the entire period. The request to view historical footage should take place on site initially to determine any dates/times of concern, before requesting copies of footage that may be further examined later.

If Meat Hygiene Inspectors (MHI) form part of the team, they can also assist the OV by completing additional CCTV checks where time permits. A protocol should be in place to outline which team members will view the CCTV. Viewing of CCTV must be recorded in the daybook with the time and length viewing period observed. The WEL 3-1 or 3-2 must also be completed under the CCTV section.

CCTV is a very useful source of evidence where a welfare breach is suspected. FSA OV's have powers to seize CCTV footage if a breach of the welfare regulations is suspected.

A request should be made in writing to the BO for a copy of CCTV footage relating to any suspected breach using the CCTV Regulations provisions, Regulation 5.

The CCTV footage should be handed to the FSA by the BO or their representative to maintain the evidential chain. The OV must not allow the CCTV copy to pass out of the direct control of the OV or BO until such time as an FSA investigator collects the footage where appropriate.

An Inspector may record CCTV footage on their mobile phone as evidence at any point in time up to the receipt of the CCTV footage from the BO that has formally been requested.

### **5.3 Enforcement**

The CCTV Regulations give enforcement powers to the FSA. Enforcement of the CCTV regulations can be carried out directly by the contract OV without the involvement of the FSA VEDM Team. Failure to have CCTV that complies with the CCTV Regulations, failure to retain images for 90 days and failure to provide access or obstruction of an inspector will constitute offences under the CCTV Regulations.

You should encourage the BO to inform you of any issues or problems with any CCTV equipment and the likely timescale that problems will persist. All enforcement action should be proportionate and in line with the hierarchy of enforcement at Chapter 7 of the MOC. An inspector may issue a written CCTV Enforcement Notice (WEL 11/38) requiring the BO and/or their staff to take specific actions, which may include timescales to rectify contraventions of the CCTV Regulations.

Once an inspector is satisfied that the contravention has been remedied, they must serve a CCTV Completion Notice (WEL 11/39).

If an inspector is not satisfied that the contravention has been remedied in the timescale required and so the CCTV Enforcement Notice has not been complied with, they may choose not to issue a CCTV Completion Notice but, in this case, must provide a CCTV Refusal to Issue a Completion Notice (WEL 11/40), this will detail:

- the reasons for the decision not to serve a Completion Notice
- provide details on how to appeal the appointed inspector's decision

An inspector may vary or withdraw a CCTV Enforcement Notice in writing at any time, for example where rectification of an issue becomes more urgent or it is evident a solution will take more time, or where an alternative solution is presented. A breach of a CCTV Enforcement Notice will be referred for formal investigation.

Extension of a CCTV EN when requested by the BO, details on the procedure can be found at 7.1.5. The documentation related to the referral for formal investigation must be sent by e-mail to the Veterinary Enforcement Delivery Team (VEDM Team) at [enf.delivery@food.gov.uk](mailto:enf.delivery@food.gov.uk) for a decision to be made. The e-mail must include a draft of the referral document together with a completed EDP form and any relevant evidence (see Chapter 7, Point 4.1.2.2).

### **5.4 Appeals**

A person may appeal against a decision

- to serve a CCTV Enforcement Notice
- not to issue a CCTV Completion Notice

England and Wales.

The appeal will be heard by the First-tier tribunal in the General Regulatory Chamber.

A CCTV Enforcement Notice will not be suspended pending the appeal, unless the First Tier Tribunal orders otherwise.

Appeals should be made to: [grc@justice.gov.uk](mailto:grc@justice.gov.uk)

Alternatively, the Ministry of Justice form T98 may be lodged with the General Regulatory Chamber, HM Courts and Tribunals Service, PO Box 9300, Leicester, LE1 8DJ within 28 days of the decision.

Where an OV is aware that an individual intends to appeal a decision, they should notify the SLA and Contracts team in York and FSA legal.

## 6. CoC

### In this section

#### [6.1 Training and registration of BO staff](#)

#### [6.2 CoC species and operations](#)

#### [6.3 Suspension or revocation](#)

#### [6.4 Appeals process](#)

### 6.1 Training and registration of BO staff

#### 6.1.1 BO responsibility

It is the BO's responsibility to ensure that staff are correctly trained, with the relevant CoC, to carry out tasks assigned to them.

#### 6.1.2 Requirements for BO staff: Certificates of Competence

Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 requires that any person involved in the handling or slaughter of animals has a CoC or TCoC for all operations they will carry out.

**Reference:** Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009, Chapter II, Article 7.

Animal handlers, lairage workers and poultry shacklers (plus those who kill an animal by means of a free bullet in the field for human consumption) require a CoC or TCoC.

Employees or others that are carrying out ancillary duties not related to the slaughter process in the lairage, for example clipping / shearing cattle and sheep prior to slaughter or fork truck drivers in poultry premises that do not carry out any other handling of live animals will not need a CoC or TCoC.

#### 6.1.3 Who needs a CoC?

CoCs will be required by persons undertaking the following operations, for human consumption in an approved slaughterhouse:

- the handling and care of animals before they are restrained
- the restraint of animals for the purpose of stunning or killing
- the stunning (including methods resulting in instantaneous death) of animals

- the pithing and assessment of effective pithing of animals
- the assessment of effective stunning
- the shackling or hoisting of live animals
- the bleeding of live animals
- the slaughtering in accordance with Article 4(4) (slaughter in accordance with religious rites)

**Reference:** Assimilated Regulation (EC) 1099/2009 Chapter II, Article 7.

**Updated:** [The OV should ensure that FBO operatives hold the required CoC / TCoC to perform their activities. Checks can be made by reviewing the slaughterman database with full name, CoC number or DOB of the individual or by contacting the WATOK team, Corporate Support Unit (CSU ). Hard copies of personal details for CoC / TCoC holders must not be retained in the welfare file. Details of individuals CoC's and TCoC's working in a premises must only be recorded in the Field Operations Documents.]

When an animal is unable to enter the food chain due to ante-mortem issues, for example cattle with no ear tags, Defra have confirmed that as the animal is not being slaughtered for human consumption a WATOK licence holder can kill the animal and remove the carcase from the slaughterhouse. The requirements for restraint, particularly for cattle, will still apply.

A member of the BO staff at a slaughterhouse site at night who has had suitable training but no CoC may kill an animal in the lairage where it is injured, suffering or in pain, provided that the individual is suitably competent and the animal does not enter the food chain. Assimilated Regulation No (EC) 1099/2009 Chapter IV Article 19: In the case of emergency killing, the keeper of the animals concerned shall take all the necessary measures to kill the animal as soon as possible.]

Where animals are delivered outside normal operating hours, the driver of the livestock lorry, owner of the animals or their employee may unload animals without holding a CoC as they are considered competent as animal handlers. Where the FBO allows this to take place there must be clear signage indicating pen capacity, the need to ensure bedding and water in pens and a contact number should any animals be injured so that a slaughter person can be called in to kill the animal. The provision for BO staff on site with suitable training would also apply. In either case as the animal will not have had a Veterinary ante mortem it cannot enter the food chain.

Animals killed on farm for Emergency slaughter or fractious animals must be slaughtered by a CoC holder. When an animal escapes from a slaughterhouse, and subject to satisfactory ante-mortem, is killed outside the slaughterhouse this must be done by a CoC holder. There are exemptions from having a CoC which include a Veterinary Surgeon in the pursuance of their Professional duties.

Where calves are slaughtered a new V code was introduced in May 2017. Anyone with a CoC prior to that date and code A for cattle can also slaughter calves. After that date an operative must have the V code for calves. There has been no retrospective update of CoC cards.

Additional guidance for restraint and religious slaughter.

When the animal is released after the required period of restraint it is likely to be unconscious but still alive. The operative carrying out shackling is required to have a CoC with activity 43 (shackling or hoisting of live animals) if the animal is unconscious but not dead.

Where there is a delay in shackling an assessment should be made on the absence of signs of life at this point. If the OV is satisfied that there are no signs of life at the point of shackling, then a CoC with activity 43 (shackling or hoisting of live animals) will not be required.



Holding the head of an animal in non-stun religious slaughter (sheep/goat/poultry) to make a neck cut, is not considered restraint. Holding the head or the leg to make a neck cut of a stunned animal is not considered restraint. CoC holders do not require Activity 42 (restraint). The activity 61 code (bleeding using religious rites) is intended for slaughter without prior stunning.

Halal slaughter of previously stunned animals and birds does not require code 61, the CoC holder needs activity 53 only for bleeding in these circumstances.

#### 6.1.4 Slaughterers transferring to or commencing duties at an alternative slaughterhouse

Where a person transfers to or commences work at another slaughterhouse to carry out duties involving the slaughter or handling of animals, the OV must verify that the individual holds a valid CoC for the operations that they will be undertaking.

The OV should check new individual's CoCs on the FSA's slaughterers registration database by contacting the WATOK team in CSU.

If you have access to K2, the CoC details [can be accessed online](#).

You will need the name and date of birth or CoC ID number to search.

These checks should be completed as soon as possible, and before the individual undertakes any duties involving the handling, restraint or stunning of animals. Obtain a copy and retain in the welfare file.

**Note:** EU CoCs other than those issued in the UK are no longer valid.

Citizens from the Republic of Ireland can apply for a UK CoC when they have a current ROI CoC. Citizens from Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway and Switzerland can apply for a UK CoC using a slaughter qualification awarded in their country that is considered equivalent to a UK qualification.

More details can be obtained from the WATOK team at [WATOK@food.gov.uk](mailto:WATOK@food.gov.uk)

#### 6.1.5 Training for CoCs

Training for a CoC and the award of qualifications is carried out by external bodies. The body awarding qualification certificates in England and Wales is currently only [Food and Drink Qualifications \(FDQ\)](#).

**Reference:** Retained Council Regulation (EC) 1099/2009, Chapter V, Article 21.

To access a list of the training modules and link to TCoc / CoC species and activities [see the qualification specification sheet on the FDQ website](#).

#### 6.1.6 Types of CoC

(EC) No 1099/2009 states which tasks require a CoC. The following table details the various types of CoC / certification which will be issued.

Type	Purpose
------	---------

CoC (TCoC)	<p>This allows person, while training, to carry out those tasks requiring a CoC. A TCoC holder must work under the permanent supervision of a full CoC holder at all times for the tasks and activities being undertaken.</p> <p><b>The applicant must register for training with FDQ prior to applying for a TCoC.</b></p> <p>Further guidance on the TCoC application process is available at: <a href="#">Temporary Certificate of competence to slaughter or kill animals application</a> (GOV.UK)</p> <p>The digital application form is available at: <a href="#">Apply for a temporary certificate of competence to slaughter or kill animals</a></p> <p>For activity codes: <a href="#">Temporary Certificate of competence to slaughter or kill animals application, get an activity code</a> (GOV.UK)</p> <p>For on farm game slaughter establishments where an individual requires a TCoC an application can be made online or alternatively a paper copy can be downloaded and sent to the WATOK team.</p> <p>A copy of the paper application form can be found online at: <a href="#">Temporary certificate of competence to slaughter or kill animals - GOV.UK (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a> Please send your completed application form to:</p> <p>WATOK CoC Transactions Team Food Standards Agency Foss House, Room 112 Peasholme Green York YO1 7PR</p> <p>A temporary CoC can only be issued for 3 months and will not normally be renewable for the same species / operations. (In exceptional circumstances, a TCoC can be extended if evidence is supplied to show that the failure to complete training was beyond the control of the individual. The applicant should submit an appeal to the FSA.) Further guidance on application procedures is available on the FSA website. Conversion of a TCoC to a full CoC will involve the applicant obtaining a qualification certificate. On receipt of a copy of the qualification certificate and payment of a fee, a full CoC will be issued by FSA.</p>
Qualification certificate	This is issued by the training award body when the candidate has been assessed as competent. A qualification certificate is required to obtain a full CoC.
Certificate of Competence	This will allow a person to carry out those tasks specified on the CoC without supervision.
WATOK Licence	Issued only in England and Wales. Not valid for slaughterhouse activities. This allows a person to carry out those tasks specified on the licence outside of a slaughterhouse only. It is assessed by APHA.

### 6.1.7 Obtaining a CoC

There are two methods of obtaining a CoC:

- holding a qualification certificate issued by an awarding body or a licence granted by the Rabbinical Commission
- holding a veterinary qualification, recognised by Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), along with suitable RCVS recorded Continual Professional Development

Qualification certificates are granted by awarding bodies regulated by Ofqual in England and Wales (currently FDQ).

BOs asking for guidance on training and assessment of their staff should be directed to the awarding bodies in their country for a list of providers. In England and Wales, FDQ is currently the only awarding body. As a government department, the FSA cannot recommend individual suppliers.

A list of the FDQ modules and link to species and activities can be found on the [FDQ website](#).

Applicants using a qualification certificate to apply for a CoC should complete the relevant form in the guidance.

[Further guidance on application procedures](#) is available on the FSA website.

### 6.1.8 Working following an assessment

A TCoC holder who has passed their assessment can be allowed to work unsupervised for the species and operations for which they have been successfully assessed for a period of 30 days.

The assessor must communicate the decision to the OV either verbally or in writing and a note should be made by the OV in the day book that the individual has been assessed and which species and activities they were successful in.

The OV must verify that any person who has been successfully assessed has obtained a full CoC within 30 days of the assessment and ensure that a copy of the CoC is retained in the premises welfare folder.

Where the individual is unable to provide a full CoC within 30 days, they must provide evidence of their application and the OV must verify with the WATOK team that the application has been received.

If the CoC or application cannot be verified after 30 days, the OV must instruct the individual to stop working with the species and activities they were assessed for until such time that the person can demonstrate that they have a full CoC.

## 6.2 Certificate of Competence: species and operations

### 6.2.1 CoC species and operations

The chart on the following pages shows species and operations from which the applicant will select the operations required for their CoC. A check will be made when the application is processed that the applicant has a qualification certificate for these operations.

### 6.2.2 White meat

Operation 15 cervical dislocation: it should be noted that manual dislocation is only permitted up to 3 kg live weight and between 3 and 5 kg mechanical cervical dislocation must be used. A person cannot do more than 70 birds per day using manual cervical dislocation.

There is currently only one device for mechanical cervical dislocation which Defra consider is mechanical and effective. HSA give details of the device considered by Defra to be mechanical cervical dislocation in their practical slaughter of poultry publication at [Manual - Humane Slaughter Association \(hsa.org.uk\)](http://Manual-HumaneSlaughterAssociation.hsa.org.uk)

This cannot be used as a routine method, but only for back up stunning.

### 6.2.3 Summary of species and activities

**Cattle:** Includes water buffalo and bison **Pigs:** includes farmed wild boar **Large Game:** includes feral wild boar, deer, alpacas, llamas, guanaco **Horses:** includes mules and donkeys **Ratites:** includes ostrich, emu and rhea **Rabbits:** includes hares

### Summary of species and activities

Red Meat	Cattle Bison Water Buffalo	Calves After 1 May 2017	Horses	Sheep & Goats	Pigs	Large Game
Reference	A	V	B	C	D	E
11. Penetrative captive bolt device	-	-	-	-	-	-

Red Meat	Cattle Bison Water Buffalo	Calves After 1 May 2017	Horses	Sheep & Goats	Pigs	Large Game
12.Non-penetrative captive Bolt device Simple Stun Only	N/A	up to 10 Kg	N/A	up to 10 Kg	N/A	up to 10 Kg
12 (a) Non-penetrative captive bolt device England only 2022 amendment STUN (KILL)	-	-	-	Lamb less than 6kg Kids less than 4kg	Piglets less than 10kg	
13.Firearm with free projectile	-	-	-	-	-	-
14.Pithing and the assessment of effective pithing	Not for human or animal consumption	Not for human or animal consumption	-	Not for human or animal consumption	-	-
21.Head-only electrical stunning	-	-	-	-	-	-
22.Head-to-Body electrical stunning	-	-	-	-	-	-
31.Carbon dioxide at high concentration	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	N/A
32.Carbon dioxide in two phases	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
33.Carbon dioxide associated with inert gases	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	N/A
34.Inert gases	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	N/A
41.the handling and care of animals before they are restrained;	-	-	-	-	-	-
42.the restraint of animals for the purpose of stunning or killing;	-	-	-	-	-	-
43.the shackling or hoisting of animals;	-	-	-	-	-	-
51.the stunning of animals;	-	-	-	-	-	-
52.the assessment of effective stunning;	-	-	-	-	-	-
53.the bleeding of live animals; monitoring the absence of signs of life	-	-	-	-	-	-
54. WATOK ONLY. monitoring the absence of signs of life	-	-	-	-	-	-
61.Slaughtering in accordance with Article 4 (4) of Regulation EC 1099/2009	-	-	N/A	-	N/A	N/A

Poultry, Ratites and Lagomorphs.	Chicken & Guinea Fowl	Quail	Turkey	Ratites	Ducks	Geese	Lagomorphs (Rabbits & Hares)
Reference	K	L	M	N	Q	P	R
11.Penetrative captive bolt device	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Poultry, Ratites and Lagomorphs.	Chicken & Guinea Fowl	Quail	Turkey	Ratites	Ducks	Geese	Lagomorphs (Rabbits & Hares)
12.Non-penetrative captive bolt device	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13.Firearm with free projectile	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14.Cervical dislocation	Manual to 3Kg mechanical to 5 Kg	Manual to 3Kg mechanical to 5 Kg	Manual to 3Kg mechanical to 5 Kg	N/A	Manual to 3Kg mechanical to 5 Kg	Manual to 3Kg mechanical to 5 Kg	N/A
15. Percussive blow to the head  (WATOK Schedule 1 - 26. (1) No person may stun an animal using a non-mechanical percussive blow to the head.  (2) But the prohibition in sub-paragraph (1) does not apply to rabbits, provided that the operation is carried out in such a way that the rabbit is immediately rendered unconscious and remains so until it is dead. N	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Rabbits only up to 5 Kg
21.Head-only electrical stunning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
22.Head-to-Body electrical stunning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
23.Electrical waterbath	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	N/A
31.Carbon dioxide at high concentration	Not in abattoir	Not in abattoir	Not in abattoir	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
32.Carbon dioxide in two phases	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	N/A
33.Carbon dioxide associated with inert gases	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	N/A
34.Inert gases	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	N/A
35. low Atmospheric pressure stunning	Chicken less than 4kg	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
41.the handling and care of animals before they are restrained;	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
42.the restraint of animals for the purpose of stunning or killing;	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
43.the shackling or hoisting of animals;	-	-	-	-	-	--	-
51.the stunning of animals;	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
52.the assessment of effective stunning;	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Poultry, Ratites and Lagomorphs.	Chicken & Guinea Fowl	Quail	Turkey	Ratites	Ducks	Geese	Lagomorphs (Rabbits & Hares)
53.the bleeding of live animals; monitoring the absence of signs of life	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
54. WATOK ONLY. monitoring the absence of signs of life	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
61.Slaughtering in accordance with Article 4 (4) of Regulation EC 1099/2009	-	-	-	N/A	-	-	N/A

Assessment for Activity 53 (the bleeding of live animals and monitoring the absence of signs of life) includes monitoring the effectiveness of stunning and the absence of signs of life. CoC holders with Activity 53, do not require Activity 52 (assessment of effective stunning) in their CoC to carry out bleeding operations. Note: See Annex IV of 1099/2009.

## 6.3 Suspension or revocation

### 6.3.1 Terms

The term CoC includes a Temporary CoC (TCoC).

### 6.3.2 Return of a suspended or revoked CoC by holder

The OV should consider either CoC suspension or revocation if, during welfare assessments, they are of the opinion that the holder:

- is no longer a fit and proper person
- is no longer competent to carry out the operations which the CoC authorises
- has failed to comply with any provision of the assimilated Regulation or WATOK
- has been convicted of an offence under any animal welfare legislation, this includes incidents outside approved premises

### 6.3.3 Contraventions

If an individual is responsible for an incident that poses a serious and imminent risk to animal welfare or one where avoidable pain, distress or suffering has been caused, suspension or revocation of the **Updated:** [Certificate of Competence (CoC) should be considered.

In cases where there is clear evidence that the incident was not solely the fault of the individual - such as where the failure arose due to faulty line design, unclear instructions within the standard operating procedures (SOP), or actions taken under the instructions of a senior person in the company - suspension or revocation of the CoC may still be considered, particularly in cases of repeated failure. The decision should take into account the broader context and whether the individual had reasonable opportunity to prevent the incident.]

Contraventions may occasionally occur where the OV deems that suspension or revocation of the CoC is not required. However, the OV must verbally advise the person and BO of the contravention, following up with written confirmation, and record the details in the daybook and / or pocketbook and on Chronos. The OV may still consider issuing a WEN where there is a need to impose conditions.

When retraining is considered the appropriate course of action, suspension of the CoC should be used.

Any incident that results in a referral for investigation would usually result in a revocation of the CoC of any individuals that are considered responsible for the incident.

#### **6.3.4 Immediate action**

Where an individual has caused pain, distress or suffering to an animal, the OV should consider immediate suspension or revocation of their CoC. Evidence of breaches should always be gathered to justify the decision and this should include CCTV footage where available. Only when this was an accident would this action not be appropriate.

When suspension or revocation is considered the correct course of action, the OV must submit the draft suspension/revocation letter to the VEDM (available at Annex 2b or 2c) as soon after the incident as possible, setting out the reasons for the suspension / revocation, the date from which it is effective and details of any rights of appeal.

Following an incident, the OV should inform the BO and CoC holder as soon as possible, that the incident will be investigated, and suspension or revocation will be considered, setting out the reasons and possible consequences. If it is not possible to speak to the CoC holder the OV should ensure that the BO is informed and has made the CoC holder aware.

The CoC holder should be advised of the procedure for a non statutory review as per 6.3.5 below.

The OV must ask the BO to remove the CoC holder from any duties that require a CoC. Where the BO does not comply, the OV must request the VEDM to issue the BO with a WEN prohibiting the CoC holder from carrying out any activity that requires a CoC.

Suspensions should be used for the purposes of retraining only. The suspension letter must set out the retraining activities to be undertaken before the suspension is lifted. Suspensions are intended to be temporary in nature and we would expect training to be completed within 3 months. If the FSA has not been provided with evidence of the retraining activities within this period, the FSA will contact the CoC holder to check if it is the intention for the retraining activities to be completed. Failure to complete the retraining activities may result in revocation.

It is possible for the suspended CoC holder to request a reasonable extension to the three month suspension to permit retraining to take place. Extensions of any agreed time limits should be put in writing and the CoC holder notified that failure to complete retraining will result in revocation.

The current incident, together with any previous suspensions of the individual, should always be considered when deciding whether to revoke or suspend the CoC. Revocation should always be considered where the individual has previously been suspended and retrained for the same offence.

In some cases, it may be appropriate to provide written advice for the BO and / or AWO to implement additional controls such as increased supervision of the suspended individual. The FSA team led by the OV should check that the AWO is taking any additional action to ensure that the individual is working correctly in line with legislative requirements.

Any formal letters sent to notify CoC holders of the suspension or revocation of CoCs must be copied to the WATOK Team, the Animal Welfare Team, the BO, FVL, the Veterinary Enforcement Delivery Manager (VEDM), Head of Delivery, Veterinary Delivery Leader and to the Operations Head Veterinarian.

#### **6.3.5 Certificate of competence suspension or revocation triage**

Process for OV decision making following a 4 score welfare incident

# Process for OV decision making following a 4 score welfare incident

Step in decision making process	Details
Step 1: Evaluating the incident	<p>The initial welfare incident will be reviewed by the OV (including viewing CCTV where available) and placed into one of three categories using the OV's professional judgement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Error of judgement by the individual</li> <li>2. Unjustifiable or deliberate act by the individual</li> <li>3. Accidental incident</li> </ol> <p>In each case, the enforcement hierarchy should be used dependent on the severity of the incident. For 4 score welfare incidents, written (not verbal) advice must always be used and revocation considered. <b>Updated:</b> [Where a case is to be referred for investigation, revocation of the CoC should be considered.]</p> <p>Where a specific individual cannot be identified as responsible, in the case of slaughter teams for example, there will be no revocation or suspension of a CoC but as an alternative response to the incident the OV may consider using a WEN requiring retraining of the team. A WEN may also be used in these cases to slow down the line speed allowing each slaughterer more time to complete their duties.</p> <p><b>1. Error of judgement by the individual</b></p> <p>This may involve a usually competent person involved in a one-off welfare incident. This must not be as a result of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• failure to take action to avoid pain, distress or suffering</li> <li>• a deliberate or considered act</li> </ul> <p>Where the OV considers that the actions of the CoC holder are not those usually seen and are as a result of an isolated failure, consideration can be given to using written advice. This written advice must be shared with the WATOK team who will log the written advice on the individual's CoC record. When considering written advice, the CoC database must be checked and if there is already written advice recorded on two occasions within the previous 12 months, further written advice is not an appropriate course of action.</p> <p>When retraining is considered the appropriate course of action, suspension of the CoC should be used. Any retraining must follow the process laid down in Step 4 and should address the cause of the failure, the correct procedures, the plant SOP and applicable legislation. Retraining must be carried out by an FDQ trainer / assessor who is responsible for the content and timing of any retraining. The OV has no role in determining the time taken for retraining or in the practical assessment.</p> <p>If the incident is a serious error of judgement, or occurs on more than one occasion, <b>Updated:</b> [the OV should consider revocation of the CoC.]</p> <p>A person whose CoC has been revoked may apply for a new TCoC however this will not normally be considered where criminal investigations or proceedings are underway. Where an individual has been convicted of welfare matters, they may apply for a new TCoC but must declare the previous conviction within the previous 3 years and the application will then be considered on its merits. REUL 1099/2009 Article 21, 6.</p> <p>There is a right of appeal to the First Tier Tribunal (FTT) up to 28 days after the date of revocation or suspension.</p> <p><b>2. Unjustifiable or deliberate act by the individual</b></p> <p>Where an individual is observed to be involved in systematic welfare abuse, or an unjustifiable or deliberate act that causes avoidable pain, distress or suffering, the OV must take immediate action to prevent that person working with live animals.</p> <p><b>These cases should always result in immediate revocation of the CoC</b> where there has been a breach of welfare legislation.</p> <p>There is a right of appeal to the FTT up to 28 days after the date of revocation.</p> <p><b>3. Accidental incident</b></p> <p>When the OV identifies an incident involving a live animal and a 4 score applies due to no fault of the individual, suspension or revocation of a CoC will not usually be appropriate.</p> <p>No action will be required to be taken against individuals. The SOP must be reviewed to ensure that any factors leading to the incident are covered. If not, a WEN must be used to require the BO to modify and / or to properly implement the SOP.</p> <p>A WEN must be served if the incident was caused by equipment failure. BO actions will need to be monitored by the OV. If the BO fails to take action, the case must be referred for investigation.</p> <p>In all circumstances where formal action is not considered appropriate, the OV must send a warning letter recording details of the incident and providing information as to good practice. The letter must inform the individual that a copy will be held on file and the incident may be taken into consideration should any further incident occur. A copy of the letter should be retained by the WATOK team. Verbal advice is not suitable for such incidents and must not be used.</p> <p>The OV must ensure that the decision, as above, is made and communicated to the BO as soon as possible. A justification of the decision should be recorded in Chronos.</p>



Step in decision making process	Details
<p>Step 2: Review of the evidence within 14 days</p>	<p>The FSA will carry out an internal review of a suspension or revocation decision, when requested and evidence is supplied for a review within 14 calendar days of notification to the CoC holder of the incident. All suspended or revoked CoC holders should be asked to provide the OV with any evidence they think will assist in the review and which could result in a change to the decision. The evidence must be provided within 7 calendar days from notification of the suspension or revocation, after which time the available information (for example, plant day book, pocket book entries, CCTV) supporting the decision will be reviewed by the OV and E&amp;J Technical Manager.</p> <p>In each case, the available information will be copied by the E&amp;J Technical Manager to the FVL (FVC), VEDM who will then review the decision. On review of the case, the FVL (FVC), VEDM with assistance of the E&amp;J Technical Manager if required, will consider the circumstances and information available, including any available CCTV footage.</p> <p>The FVL is the ultimate decision maker and must ensure that the CoC holder is informed of the outcome when a review is carried out.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If the evidence is considered to be strong, suspension or revocation of the CoC is the correct course of action and will be supported.</li> <li>2. Where the original decision is not upheld on review the decision must be substituted with an appropriate decision and the CoC holder notified in writing. Notification of the decision must accord with the requirements of Regulation 19 of WATOK in the same way as the original decision letter (but should not refer to the internal review process) and should make clear that it supersedes the original decision. It should be noted that this review decision attracts the same rights of appeal as the original decision</li> <li>3. The decision must be communicated in writing to the CoC holder</li> <li>4. Where the FVL/FVC VEDM has any concerns about the evidence or circumstances of the incident, advice should be sought from FSA Legal and the FSA welfare team to ensure consistency of decision making</li> <li>5. When no further evidence is provided, the FVL and VEDM should record that no review took place in the absence of any further evidence. This can be done remotely by FSA staff on instruction from the FVL or VEDM.</li> <li>6. In every case a note should be made in the plant day book that either a review was carried out and the outcome or, that no review was carried out</li> </ol> <p>The WATOK team will issue a reminder to all those involved in assessing the decision at 14 days post suspension to ensure that where a review takes place this is properly recorded and where appropriate notified to the CoC holder, BO and WATOK team.</p>
<p>Step 3: Appeals to FTT</p>	<p>If the CoC is suspended or revoked, the individual concerned has 28 days to appeal the decision to the FTT. This right of appeal also applies to the use of a WEN and also to substituted decisions. If the decision is appealed, the case will pass to FSA Legal.</p> <p>Early responses to FSA legal in these cases is essential to ensure that the FSA can meet the timescales for defending an appeal.</p>

Step in decision making process	Details
Step 4: Retraining after a CoC or TCoC suspension	<p>This must be carried out by an FDQ trainer / assessor. Retraining will be based on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The suspension letter requirements</li> <li>2. The SOP(s) relevant to the operation(s) for which the individual was suspended</li> <li>3. The contents of FDQ unit L/615/2957: Principles of protecting the welfare of animals at time of killing</li> <li>4. The contents of FDQ unit/s directly related to the suspension, species and operations</li> <li>5. Any available CCTV concerning the alleged incident, subject to FBO approval and releasing footage</li> <li>6. The individual being retrained must register with FDQ for the relevant units</li> </ol> <p>The trainer for the retraining must receive the above information before developing the bespoke session for the individual. The duration of the training is a matter for the trainer to ascertain. The practical appraisal of the individual can only take place <b>AFTER</b> the training.</p> <p><b>THE TRAINING</b></p> <p>The individual's understanding of what "suspension" means.</p> <p>The individual's understanding of why they were suspended (including any CCTV).</p> <p>Discussion between the individual and the trainer about lessons that could be learned from the alleged incident.</p> <p>Review of the SOP(s) of that activity &amp; consideration to the circumstances surrounding the suspension – this should be pitched at a level appropriate to the individual.</p> <p>Overview of the general requirements (not activity specific) of the requirements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• L/615/2957</li> <li>• AWOs</li> <li>• SOPs</li> <li>• Maintenance</li> <li>• CCTV</li> <li>• Consequences of breaches</li> <li>• Responsibility as a CoC holder</li> </ul> <p>The FDQ unit/s directly related to the species and operations that the suspension is for. It is essential that the OV clearly states what the suspension relates to in the suspension letter so that training can be correctly targeted.</p> <p><b>THE APPRAISAL</b></p> <p>In line with assessment criteria for practical activities for recognised WATOK qualifications, the trainer will need to observe the individual undertaking the task or activity that was the cause of the suspension.</p> <p>The means and method of observation is down to the trainer, and may be in person, or remotely, depending on accessibility. The observation must, however, be "live", i.e., in real time and not pre-recorded.</p> <p>As the individual's CoC/TCoC is suspended, the OV will return the CoC or TCoC at the time of retraining to allow the individual to carry out the relevant tasks for a practical assessment.</p> <p><b>THE FEEDBACK</b></p> <p>The trainer should supply the individual, the OV, and the BO with confirmation that the training has been undertaken, and the outcome of the appraisal.</p> <p>Where the trainer appraises the individual to be competent the suspension is considered immediately lifted, allowing the individual to return to duties permitted by the CoC/TCoC.</p> <p>The OV should send the draft COC return letter after suspension to the VEDM with the evidence of the training</p> <p>When an individual is no longer working in an approved premises but wishes to have their CoC returned they should inform the WATOK team, <a href="mailto:WATOK@food.gov.uk">WATOK@food.gov.uk</a>, when they have completed the required training, including a copy of the completion of training document from the FDQ assessor. The WATOK team will notify the VEDM.</p> <p>The VEDM should then supply a letter (annex 2d) to the individual that confirms the lifting of the suspension, the letter must be copied to the WATOK team to update their records.</p> <p>Where the trainer appraises the individual not to be competent, the CoC or TCoC must be returned to the OV pending further action.</p> <p>The trainer may feed back to the BO on the content of the relevant SOP(s).</p>

### 6.3.6 Return of a suspended or revoked CoC by holder

Where a CoC has been suspended or revoked, the holder is required by WATOK (England and Wales) to return the CoC to the FSA within 14 days of the letter of suspension or revocation. In the case of immediate suspension, the CoC should be returned to the OV who suspended the CoC. The OV will normally retain the CoC pending successful retraining. When the OV retains the CoC it must be held in a secure place in the FSA office. Where the retraining does not take place within a period of 3 months from the date of the letter of suspension then the OV should return the CoC to the WATOK team. In the case of CoC revocation the CoC should be returned within 14 days to the WATOK team either by the OV or the operative.

Where revocation / suspension of a CoC takes place and the case is referred for further investigation, the WATOK team / CSU should liaise with FSA Legal Services to ensure that the Investigating Officer (IO) responsible for the investigation conducts the interview as quickly as possible.

**Reference:** WATOK (England) (Wales) Chapter 3, Article 19 (3).

### **6.3.7 Issuing a CoC refusal notice**

When the person making an application for a temporary CoC has failed to answer all the relevant questions on the application form, or has declared a previous welfare offence, the FSA WATOK team will refuse to issue a temporary CoC.

If a period of more than three years has elapsed since a previous revocation or conviction of a welfare offence a person can still apply for a TCoC provided that they declare the previous revocation or conviction. Such an application will be considered on an individual basis.

The evidence will be reviewed by an FVL who will request further evidence if they feel it necessary. You should notify the person that they have a right to appeal a refusal to grant a temporary CoC. The FVL will liaise with the WATOK team / CSU and notify the OV and the applicant of their decision.

## **6.4 Appeal process**

### **6.4.1 Applicant / holder rights**

An applicant or CoC holder may appeal against the decision to:

- refuse to grant a temporary or full CoC
- suspend a CoC
- revoke a CoC

The appeal will be heard by the FTT.

[Guidance can be found online.](#)

Appeals should be made to: [grc@justice.gov.uk](mailto:grc@justice.gov.uk)

Alternatively, the Ministry of Justice form T98 may be lodged with the General Regulatory Chamber, HM Courts and Tribunals Service, PO Box 9300, Leicester, LE1 8DJ within 28 days of the decision.

Where an OV is aware that an individual intends to appeal a decision, they should notify the SLA and Contracts team in York and FSA legal.

### **6.4.2 Return of CoC after FTT decision**

Where a CoC is to be returned or replaced after a decision has been made by FTT to overturn a suspension or revocation, the WATOK team / CSU should use the template letter at Annex 2g.

## 7. Enforcement

### In this section

#### [7.1 Introduction](#)

#### [7.2 Non-compliances](#)

### 7.1 Introduction

#### 7.1.1 Purpose

These enforcement arrangements apply to all slaughterhouses and farmed game establishments approved in England and Wales and under veterinary control.

Enforcement action is taken in accordance with the FSA enforcement policy.

This section must be read in conjunction with chapter 7 on 'Enforcement' of the MOC.

#### 7.1.2 Terminology

Note that for the purposes of enforcing welfare legislation the operator responsible is referred to as BO and this term should be used in formal notices.

#### 7.1.3 Provisions of Assimilated Regulation No (EU) 1099/2009

Article 22 of 1099/2009 is repealed by Article 159 of assimilated Regulation No (EU) 2017/625 and replaced with [Article 138 of 2017/625](#). This sets out that where the non-compliance is established, the competent authorities shall take:

- a) any action necessary to determine the origin and extent of the non-compliance and to establish the operator's responsibilities; and
- (b) appropriate measures to ensure that the operator concerned remedies the non-compliance and prevents further occurrences of such non-compliance.

Examples of these measures might include (but not be limited to):

Article 138(2)(e) - order the operator to increase the frequency of own controls;

Article 138(2)(i) - order the cessation for an appropriate period of time of all or part of the activities of the operator concerned;

Article 138(2)(j)- order the suspension or withdrawal of the registration or approval of the establishment

Article 138(2)(k) - order the slaughter or killing of animals provided that this is the most appropriate measure to safeguard human health as well as animal health and welfare.

The competent authorities shall provide the operator concerned, or its representative, with:

(a) written notification of their decision concerning the action or measure to be taken under Article 138 together with the reasons for that decision; and

(b) information on any right of appeal against such decisions and on the applicable procedure and time limits with respect to such right of appeal.

#### **7.1.4 Use of welfare notices**

Authorised Officer (AO) has powers under Regulation 38 of WATOK to serve a formal WEN (WEL 11/34). The same notice can be used in three ways:

1. To require steps to be taken to remedy contraventions of the regulations (for example updating the SOP or where equipment did not have a regular maintenance record)
2. To require the rate of operations to be reduced until steps have been taken to remedy contraventions of the regulations (for example, slowing down the line where animals are not adequately stunned as a result of high line speed or to slow down the slaughter operation where a premises undertaking religious slaughter without pre stunning does not comply with the requirements in WATOK Schedule 3 for animals not to be moved until unconscious)
3. To stop an activity, process or operation or the use of facilities or equipment until steps have been taken to remedy contraventions of the regulations (for example, stopping the use of equipment that is causing pain distress or suffering, for example, if equipment is not giving an effective stun)

Regulation 38,9 of WATOK permits an AO at any time to withdraw or vary an enforcement notice in writing. A template letter for the withdrawal of a WEN is provided at annex 19.

Once the BO or the person on whom the notice is served has complied with the WEN, the AO must serve a Welfare Completion Notice (WEL 11/35) to confirm that they are satisfied the BO / person has taken the steps specified to correct the contravention.

You may refuse to serve a Welfare Completion Notice if you are not satisfied that the terms of the WEN have been met. In such cases, you must complete and serve a Refusal to Serve a Welfare Completion Notice (WEL 11/36), setting out the reasons for the refusal.

It is an offence to fail to comply with a WEN under Regulation 30 (2) of WATOK. Where a notice has been breached, the OV must gather evidence of the contravention that led to the service of the formal notice, together with evidence to demonstrate the breach of the notice and refer both matters for investigation.

The BO can appeal an enforcement notice through the FTT details can be found earlier in this chapter.

The BO or person upon whom a notice has been served can appeal against the inspector's decision to serve the WEN or issue a Welfare Completion Notice through the FTT.

A WEN may remain in force if not complied with until FTT considers the case. If the WEN has been complied with a completion notice must be issued in accordance with Regulation 38 of WATOK.

Details can be found earlier in this chapter.

**Note:** Where enforcement action is being taken against an individual responsible for any pain, distress or suffering to an animal, the OV should consider whether it is also appropriate to suspend or revoke the persons CoC in line with the provisions of Article 19 of the domestic regulations.

**Note:** Where a CoC is suspended, notify the WATOK team / CSU York Transactions Team at: [WATOK@food.gov.uk](mailto:WATOK@food.gov.uk).

### **7.1.5 Extension of a WEN when requested by the BO**

Whilst there is no legal basis for the inspector to extend a notice, Regulation 38(9) of WATOK allows inspectors to withdraw or vary any enforcement notice.

If a BO wishes to request an extension to a WEN, they must do so in writing prior to the expiry of the notice and must:

- confirm that welfare will not be compromised by the extension
- explain how they are going to manage the welfare risk in the interim period
- identify genuine reasons why they are seeking an extension
- provided details of the length of the extension they are seeking and copies of agreements for the work if it is to be carried out by external contractors

If the inspector is happy with the BO's past record of compliance, and agrees with the proposed extension period and reasons, they should agree with the BO the length of time required to comply and confirm this agreement in writing.

The inspector must review the works carried out by the BO after the agreed extension date has expired and:

- withdraw the WEN if compliance has been achieved through the service of a Welfare Completion Notice, or
- serve a Refusal to Issue a Welfare Completion Notice, with reasons for the refusal if they are not content with the actions; the inspector must refer the breach of a WEN for formal investigation

### **7.1.6 Prosecutable non-compliance**

In terms of welfare enforcement, a prosecutable non-compliance is one where there is evidence of a clear contravention of the regulations and / or the incident involves any avoidable pain, distress or suffering.

The OV should gather evidence to assist an investigation if there is a suspicion that an offence has taken place (WATOK Part 5 lists offences).

## **7.2 Non-compliances**

### **7.2.1 Non-compliance assessment**

The OV must use their professional judgment to assess if what has been observed is a 'prosecutable' non-compliance, before referring the matter for investigation. The assessment should include the following:

- details of the regulation(s) that have been contravened
- the severity of the incident (for example, were any animals subject to any avoidable pain, distress or suffering during their killing and related operations?)
- evidence of avoidable pain, distress or suffering caused to the animal(s) (for example, whole bodies of dead animals, post-mortem examination results, detained carcase, heads or other body parts, animal behaviour such as panting, evidence of thirst / hunger, video evidence)
- whether the incident was accidental or caused by negligence

- details of all relevant suspects, names, positions and any training they have received
- the species and operations listed on the CoC
- details of specific directors (for limited companies) where contraventions have occurred, and it can be additionally demonstrated that they have occurred through the direct consent, connivance or neglect or those directors
- whether there have been previous incidents of a similar nature
- whether the abuse was deliberate (for example, kicking or inappropriate use of goads)
- Whether any previous verbal or written warnings have been issued
- whether a Welfare Notice has been used and not complied with
- the nature of the response from the AWO or BO when the OV advised them of the incident
- whether the operative / BO took effective corrective action
- details of all available witnesses
- whether there is evidence to confirm the witness statements (for example, clinical signs, contemporaneous notes, drawings, maps, photographs, temperature readings, calculations and measurements showing SD)

### **7.2.2 Body parts for evidence that are SRM**

Bovine heads / whole bodies and body parts of various species may be SRM by definition; however, it should be remembered that such bodies or body part must not be disposed of as ABP where they are required as evidence.

This material must be identified, seized, secured and stored safely until after all appropriate enforcement action has been taken by the FSA or where it has been passed to another enforcement authority as essential evidence for their case.

Once the case is concluded, the material will then be disposed of as the appropriate class of ABP.

### **7.2.3 Enforcement notice and / or suspension / revocation of CoC**

If a non-compliance is observed, then appropriate enforcement action must be taken.

Where an individual is responsible for a non-compliance, then Suspension or Revocation of the CoC should always be considered and taken forward along with any routine enforcement action. Notify the WATOK team / CSU York Team at: [WATOK@food.gov.uk](mailto:WATOK@food.gov.uk).

Providing a verbal warning only, without further escalation, is not proportionate action to take in cases of potential or suspected cruelty to animals.

### **7.2.4 Recording evidence**

All action taken on non-compliances must be transferred to the Enforcement Programme.

Where a Welfare Enforcement Notice (WEN) is issued requiring immediate action the Remedial Action Notice (RAN) column should be populated with the date of service. Where a WEN is issued requiring an improvement to be made, the Hygiene Improvement Notice (HIN) column should be used.

All welfare incidents where there is non-compliance with legislation must be recorded in Chronos. Where the breach causes no risk of pain, distress or suffering and is corrected immediately, a 2 score should be used. If the contravention is not a 2 score, but there is still no evidence of pain, distress or suffering, a 3 score should be used and if there is evidence of pain, distress or suffering a 4 score should always be used.

Incidents not leading to a referral for investigation:

If the incident was assessed as 'non-prosecutable' and no further action is required on this occasion, the appropriate 'Action required' box of Chronos must be selected. Written advice to the BO must be applied as a minimum intervention for 4 score incidents and a brief summary of the reason for non-referral should be included when entering details of the non-compliance, for example, 'unavoidable accidental incident' or 'no witness'.

### **7.2.5 Reporting Non-compliance for WATO**

Non-compliances observed for welfare during transport should be documented and referred to the LA immediately, and subsequently confirmed in writing, using the notification form at Annex 4 (see referrals process in paragraph 3.3.1) and should be recorded on the Chronos. All cases must have a unique identification number allocated to them to aid traceability of cases. Keep a copy in the plant welfare folder.

### **7.2.6 Reporting of on farm welfare NCs**

Identified welfare issues which appear to have originated on the holding of provenance, should be documented and referred in writing to APHA as well as being reported to the LA. Keep a copy of the report in the plant welfare folder.

### **7.2.7 Use of CCTV footage**

The use of cameras and video equipment is essential to evidence an animal's ability to move, support their weight on all limbs or their general condition.

If the BO has CCTV installed and a welfare issue has been identified, request access to the footage and ask for a copy to be provided as soon as possible, both verbally and in writing.

The CCTV footage should be requested from BOs if a breach of the welfare regulations is suspected. Failure to provide footage of a contravention should be referred for investigation under the obstruction provisions.

## **8. Annexes**

The following documents can be accessed by FSA staff in internal files:

- [Annex 1: Examples of Certificate of Competence; photo ID card](#)
- [Annex 2a: Aide memoire CoC suspension and revocation letters](#)
- [Annex 2b: CoC suspension letter](#)
- [Annex 2c: CoC revocation letter](#)
- [Annex 2d: Return of CoC after suspension letter](#)
- [Annex 2e: Failure to retrain revocation letter](#)
- [Annex 2f: Return of CoC after review letter](#)
- [Annex 2g: Return of CoC after FTT decision letter](#)
- [Annex 3: Foot pad dermatitis condition card](#)
- [Annex 4: LA notification form: welfare breaches](#)
- [Annex 5: OV checklist for animal welfare incident on farm or during transport](#)
- [Annex 6: Procedures for heavily pregnant animals](#)
- [Annex 7: Referral process](#)
- [Annex 8: Animal Welfare Verification Protocol pro-forma](#)
- [Annex 9: Aide Memoire – welfare checks in red meat](#)
- [Annex 10: Aide Memoire – welfare checks in poultry](#)



- [Annex 11: Signs of properly stunned or dead poultry](#)
- [Annex 12: Signs of a properly stunned animal by stunning method](#)
- [Annex 13: Q and A on the Mandatory Use of Closed Circuit Television in Slaughterhouses \(England\) Regulations 2018](#)
- [Annex 14: Welfare Referral Aide Memoire](#)
- [Annex 15: Requirements of the Business Operator Standard Operating Procedures \(SOP\) Regulation \(EC\) No 1099/2009](#)
- [Annex 16: Questions and Answers on Annex II of Council Regulation \(EC\) No 1099/2009](#)
- [Annex 17: \*\*Update:\*\* \[REMOVED\]](#)
- Annex 18 REMOVED
- [Annex 19: Withdrawal of a Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing Enforcement Notice](#)
- Annex 20: REMOVED
- [Annex 21: Digital Asset Management System \(DAMS\) User Guide](#)

Local Authorities should check in the Food Law Code of Practice and available on [FSA LINK](#) or within your local Food Liaison Group or on the Knowledge Hub to see if there are other LAs that are willing to share their template forms.