

# The Labrador Retriever Club Risk Assessment for Organised Shooting Activities involved with Field Trials

## Possible Hazards:

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

## At risk are:

- Persons using shotguns [Guns]
- Persons employed or volunteering to drive game towards the Guns [Beaters]
- Those Beaters placed in charge of the line [Steward of the Beat – normally the Gamekeeper].
- Employees, Volunteers or Competitors that collect and retrieve shot game with dogs.
- Volunteers, Officials and Judges who are present to run the Field Trial.
- Drivers of vehicles, on-lookers and Members of the public.

## Code of Practice to be observed by ALL persons attending an authorised Field Trial:

- The Chief Steward [Field Trial Secretary] will brief all present before moving off.
- A copy of this Risk Assessment will be displayed within the Organisation's registration area and in the 'Running Card'.
- Vehicles provided to transport Guns, Competitors and Officials must be suitable for the purpose and the terrain that is to be encountered. Adequate seating must be provided.
- Dogs will not be allowed in the driving compartment of the vehicles.
- The driver of each vehicle must be acquainted with the route and terrain over which they are to travel and be aware of the other vehicles in the party.
- All persons involved should wear suitable non-restrictive clothing, adequate to provide protection from the elements and stout, water resistant footwear.
- All Guns must be competent at handling shotguns in a safe manner and must be in possession of a valid shotgun certificated, have public Liability Insurance and a current Game Licence. The Shoot Captain or Steward of the Beat will be responsible for ensuring that all of the guns comply with these regulations.
- Shotguns and ammunition must not be left unattended under any circumstances. Guns must keep their weapons in a covered slip until arrival at their allocated position. After loading, guns to be closed with the barrels pointing to the ground.
- A pre-arranged signal will be given to indicate the start and completion of each drive; no shots should be fired outside of these two signals.
- The Judges or Chief Steward may request the stopping of shooting should there be sufficient game on the ground or the shooting of game whilst dogs are working. A shot should only be taken when it is safe to do so. Shots to the side will only be taken by the outside gun.

- Guns must be aware at all times of the proximity of those closest to them: other Guns, Beaters, Pickers- up, Officials, Judges, competitors and Members of the Public; the location of public footpaths, bridleways, highways and livestock in the vicinity.
- In the event of an emergency the drive/trial will be suspended immediately and all weapons must be unloaded and placed back in the covered slip.
- Should this occurrence be caused by the involvement of persons that are opposed to the activity, the Steward of the Beat, in consultation with the Chief Steward and Judges, must arrange to vacate the ground without the need for confrontation.
- All members of the party must respect the property on which they are invited guests, be aware of the local terrain and any likely hazards and conduct themselves in a friendly and environmental way.
- Members of the Public and Competitors that are not in line, must stay with the gallery by the red flag at all times and obey the instruction of Officials or Members of the Estate staff.
- Everybody involved MUST keep away from agricultural machinery although it will not normally be working in the areas where the shoot is taking place.

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

Hon Secretary

The Labrador Retriever Club - September 2009