**Schedule 12: Field General Model Risk Assessment**

Below is a Veterinary Service Field General Model Risk Assessment which you can use as a basis for forming or amending your practice Field Risk Assessment.

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| **Essential Information** |
| Managers **MUST** ensure that all staff, for whom they are responsible, have seen and understand this risk assessment and that all staff affected by the hazards are informed of and adhere to control measures.  This risk assessment **MUST** be supported by a dynamic risk assessment (see Field Section Dynamic Risk Assessment Guidance) which staff **MUST** carry out upon arrival on farm and **MUST** keep the situation under review at **ALL** times.  [Working with cattle on farm – dynamic risk assessment guidance | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (daera-ni.gov.uk)](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/working-cattle-farm-%E2%80%93-dynamic-risk-assessment-guidance)  Check also:  [Safe Cattle Handling Guidance | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (daera-ni.gov.uk)](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/safe-cattle-handling-guidance)  Staff with any underlying medical conditions which may affect their ability to work safely **MUST** bring this to attention of their line manager so that suitable controls can be considered and introduced where necessary. |

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| **General Controls/Requirements** | |
| **Supervisions** | * Periodic (and recorded) supervisions **MUST** be carried out to ensure that staff are implementing the controls identified in this Risk Assessment. * In general, at least 1 supervision to be carried out on each member of staff per year. * Where new work, new staff and/or young staff *i.e.* 16 to 18 years old are involved supervisions will need to be more frequent. When Managers are content that staff are operating in line with the controls identified in this Risk Assessment then the frequency of supervisions may be reduced. |
| **Training** | * Managers **MUST** ensure staff are provided with adequate H&S training to allow them to identify hazards, assess risks and implement suitable control measures – see VS H&S Training Requirements by Grade guidance available on the VS H&S intranet. |
| **First Aid** | * Details on First Aid provision within your practice are to be provided * All Field (Permanent and Temporary) Staff to receive emergency First Aid training. * All Field (Permanent and Temporary)Staff to carry travel First Aid container and to ensure that contents are replenished as required. |

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| **General Controls/Requirements** |

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| **PPE** | Standard items of PPE and Work Clothing are as follows:   * Safety Wellingtons – steel toe * Waterproof – Jacket, Trousers, Leggings (loop over belt type - ‘Chaps’) * Brown Coats * Body warmer OR Fleece Jacket * Disposable Nitrile Gloves * Boiler Suits – cotton   Some tasks may require additional items of PPE. These have been identified in this Risk Assessment and/or in COSHH assessments as referred to in this Risk Assessment and are as follows:   |  |  | | --- | --- | | * Safety helmet | * Boiler Suits – Disposable | | * Safety goggles or face shield | * High visibility clothing | | * Ear protection e.g. muffs or plugs | * Lifejackets | | * Disposable face masks (properly face fitted) | * Oxygen level monitor – AI Stores Inspections | | * Half mask – rubber with replaceable filters |  | |
| Staff MUST:   * Regularly check protective clothing and safety equipment that they have been issued with to ensure that it is clean and free from defect; * Report immediately to line management any defects or loss of items; * Never carry out work without the required, or damaged/faulty, PPE.   Inspections, tests and maintenance of PPE to be carried out as required by law, Practice policy or manufacturer’s instructions. |

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| **General Controls/Requirements** |

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| **Waste** | * All staff must dispose of sharps into a sharps container immediately after use. * All used, disposable gloves and paper hand towels/wipes are classed as Clinical Waste and must be placed in a yellow clinical waste bag for collection by a contracted Clinical Waste Disposal company. |
| **Accidents/Near Misses** | * All staff are to report accidents, near miss incidents and unsafe conditions to their line manager. * Line managers to ensure that all accidents are recorded in the Accident Book and reported to HSENI as legally required under Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). |
| **Storage of Work Items at Home** | * Vehicle/storage area to be kept locked with contents secured to prevent unauthorised access. * No unauthorised use of work items. * Flammable and/or hazardous substances to be stored in accordance with hazard data sheets. * Manual handling techniques to be observed when loading or unloading any work item. |
| **Occupational Hygiene** | Staff **MUST** observe strict occupational hygiene at all times:   * DO NOT eat, drink or smoke in the workplace. * Disposable Nitrile gloves MUST be worn when handling animals or animal products. * Wash hands (and arms if necessary) before eating, drinking, smoking, using the telephone, taking medication, applying make-up, inserting contact lenses. * Cover all new and existing cuts and grazes with waterproof dressings and/or gloves before starting work. If cuts and grazes occur, wash immediately with soap and running water and apply a waterproof dressing. * Take rest and meal breaks away from the main work area. * Wear appropriate protective clothing to stop personal contamination, eg waterproof/water resistant protective clothing, gloves, rubber boots. Ensure its safe disposal or cleaning. * Avoid hand-mouth or hand-eye contact – don’t put pens/pencils in mouths. * Brown coats must not be washed at home – a contracted Laundry Service must be used. * Dispose of all contaminated waste safely. |

In order to define the various levels of risk a qualitative approach will be used for this assessment as defined below:

**HIGH RISK - Imminent danger exists. Death or severe injury is likely to occur**

**MEDIUM RISK - Illness/injury reasonably probable**

**LOW RISK - Minor injury may occur in time**

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| **Activity** | **Hazard** | **Risk** | **At Risk** | **Control** |
| Travel at Work | Road Traffic | **MED** | All | * Highway Code. * Current driving licence * Roadworthy vehicle * **DO NOT** drive if: * tired, unfit or impaired; or * have uncorrected impaired eyesight, or other medical condition which may compromise safety. * Ensure that items being carried e.g. disinfectant are properly secured in vehicle. * Mobile phone must not be used when driving   Managers must ensure that any work related driving is necessary; that unreasonable constraints such as time and distance are not placed on staff; and that staff are working within requirements of Working Time Regulations.  Staff must ensure they inform their line manager if they are aware of any medical condition which may affect their driving. |
| Inclement Weather | **MED** | All | * See Driving at Work in Ice and Snow Guidance. * Dynamic risk assessment. * Take account of weather and drive within limits allowed by prevailing conditions. |

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| **Activity** | **Hazard** | **Risk** | **At Risk** | **Control** |
| Travel at Work contd. | Water | **MED** | All | * Lifejacket to be used when travelling by water. * All lifejacket users must be trained in their use, maintenance/inspection. * Lifejackets to be regularly maintained/serviced in line with manufacturer’s instructions. * If travelling by boat supplied by *e.g*. herd keeper, staff must satisfy themselves that the journey can be completed in reasonable safety. |
| Parking Car on Premises | Other Vehicles | **MED** | All | * Park own vehicle where it does not create a hazard for others. * Park vehicle to aid a quick getaway if required. * Change into PPE sheltered from moving vehicles eg between own car and wall. * Be aware of vehicle movements. * Remain alert to moving vehicles at all times |
| Personal Cleansing and Disinfection | Disinfectant | **MED** | All | * See COSHH assessment for disinfectant being used. * Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions for use. * Wear appropriate protective clothing to avoid skin, eye and body contact. * Ensure that containers are correctly labelled. |

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| **Activity** | **Hazard** | **Risk** | **At Risk** | **Control** |
| Working on Premises | Dog | **LOW** | All | * Observe warning notices and use car horn to summons assistance. * If there is a loose dog or dogs about stay in the car until the herd keeper arrives, particularly where the dogs have a threatening manner. * Put on wellingtons as soon as possible – boots give some protection * Always give chained dogs a wide berth. * Report all incidents of attacks by dogs to your manager. * If you encounter ‘problem’ dogs make sure you inform colleagues who may visit subsequently. * Tetanus vaccination up-to–date * First aid kit available |
| Slurry  *e.g*. during mixing,  Flooded areas in yards hiding open manholes/mixing points.  Housing where slurry is above slats hiding holes/open manholes/mixing points, missing and/or damaged slats.  Uncovered inspection or slurry stirring openings. | **MED** | All | * Assess the working area **BEFORE** work commences. * Dangerous areas to be marked as necessary. If high-risk areas cannot be made safe or isolated, work should be suspended or moved to a safe area. * Avoid areas where slurry is being mixed * Stay clear of slurry tanks, ponds etc. * Practice staffshould not wander around farm premises unless accompanied by the herd keeper or a member of their staff who knows the premises, unless absolutely necessary e.g. unannounced welfare visits. |

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| Working on Premises contd. | Vehicles and Machinery | **MED** | All | * Stay clear of moving machinery * Do not ride as passengers in or on farm/plant machinery/vehicles unless they are constructed to carry passengers. * Practice staff should not operate farm/plant machinery. * Avoid working in vicinity of moving machinery/vehicles. Separate pedestrians and vehicles. * When moving around premises be aware of routes taken by moving vehicles and machinery and avoid working near or standing in these routes. * Always follow local safety requirements and directions for safe routes, and do not wander into areas where you are not authorised to be. |

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| Working on Premises | Poor Lighting  *e.g*. roofed crushes in the late afternoon in winter. | **LOW** | All | * Never commence/continue work if poor lighting is a problem – have the problem addressed * The owner / occupier / person in control of the premises should be asked to provide supplementary lighting. See hazard ’Electricity’ below * If working in wet areas, exposed or otherwise hazardous areas, supplementary lighting should be powered from a low voltage supply. * In exceptional circumstances where no other option is feasible it may be necessary to use head torches. This should only be done where assessment of the situations deems it is safe to do so. |

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| Working on Premises | Unsafe structures. Damaged or poorly maintained walls, roofs, fences gates and plant. Leading to falling objects and slips and falls. Unsafe flooring, low roofs. | **MED** | All | * Never enter a building if you deem it unsafe to do so. * Unsafe areas should be identified and avoided. If necessary where visits are prolonged or multiple, areas should be cordoned off. The means of cordoning off ranging from warning tape to Security Fencing, depending on risk. * Where the possibility of falling objects or striking the head on low structures is identified, head protection should be worn. * appropriate warning signs should be posted. * Check gates and restraint facilities are in order before work commences. |
| Burns from hot surfaces, pipes, boilers, steam, liquids | **LOW** | All | * Follow warning signs * Be aware of sources of heat especially steam and stay clear of these |
| Burns from cold liquids e.g. liquid nitrogen | **LOW** | All | * Liquid Nitrogen not to be handled by Practicestaff. |
| Extremes of Temperature. Leading to and heat exhaustion/  heat stroke in hot conditions and exposure on cold days.  Working out doors on hot days is also likely to expose individuals to sunlight, (UV rays). | **LOW** | All | * Staff should avoid working in extremes of temperature, especially when working alone. * Staff should take regular breaks away from the extremes of temperature. * Refer to OHS Guidance – Care in the Sun No6/2009   In cold conditions sufficient warm clothing, to ensure a comfortable working temperature, should be worn. If individuals get too cold they should return to somewhere warm and sheltered. |

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| **Activity** | **Hazard** | **Risk** | **At Risk** | **Control** |
| Working on Premises | Slippery/  uneven surface underfoot  Flooded areas in yards hiding holes/open manholes/slurry mixing points.  Housing where slurry is above slats hiding holes/open manholes/mixing points, missing and/or damaged slats.  Pen or raised drains, pen frames, feed tracks, wet slippery surfaces/yards particularly in winter. | **MED** | All | * Assess the working area **BEFORE** work commences. * Anti-slip safety (steel-toed) footwear **MUST** be   worn   * Watch out for possible slip/trip/fall hazards e.g. water filled holes, uneven ground etc. and act accordingly. If these are in the general work area make sure these are dealt with/cordoned off **BEFORE** work commences and that controls remain in place at all times whilst work is ongoing. * Avoid, where possible, working at height. If it is necessary always use appropriate access equipment. * Always work where you can get a sound footing, with both feet firmly placed on the ground. Excessive stretching, leaning out and working at full reach should be avoided. * Dangerous areas to be marked as necessary. If high-risk areas cannot be made safe or isolated, work should be suspended or moved to a safe area. |

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| Working on Premises cond. | Violence | **LOW** | All | * Park vehicle to aid quick getaway if required. * If threatened with physical violence by an individual or individuals an officer   should abort the intended objective, retreat off the premises and report the incident to line management.   * Training in handling awkward/violent/potentially violent situations. * Records of individuals who were previously violent towards staff are held by D/SVOs. Staff **MUST** check for such records as part of any pre-visit prep work. Where a visit to such an individual is required an assessment of the situation must be carried out with the line manager and an appropriate line of action agreed. * All incidents of serious violence and/or abuse **MUST** be reported to the Iine manager for action. |

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| Working on Premises | Working at height | **LOW** | All | * See SWP 08 in the VS Safety Manual. |
| Lone Working | **MED** | All | * See SWP 11 – Lone Working * Generally animals should not be worked with alone in case of injury occurring and help therefore being unavailable. * Certain tasks by their nature require more than one person for them to be carried out safely eg blood sampling pigs. |
| Fire | **MED** | All | * Do not smoke during visits to farms or any other premises. * Take note of and observe fire precautions/prevention measures. * Observe COSHH risk assessment controls when using flammable liquids. |

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|  | Electricity.  *e.g*. unsafe or damaged installations around roofed handling facilities/yard, electric stock fencing | **MED** | All | * Avoid use of premises supply when not on VS premises. * Watch out for and avoid exposed wires/sockets. Report defects to the herd keeper and the line manager. * Avoid contact with live electric stock fencing. |
| Noise -  Machinery /animals | **LOW** | All | * If unable to carry on normal conversation wear hearing protection. * Always wear hearing protection in designated areas - signs * Hearing protection must be worn in pig houses. * Measurement of noise levels may be necessary. If in doubt contact the H&S Advisor. * Manufacturer’s instructions on use, maintenance and replacement of hearing protection must be followed. * User to regularly check PPE and refer to manager for replacement if lost or damaged. |

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| **Activity** | **Hazard** | **Risk** | **At Risk** | **Control** |
| Working on Premises | Harmful substance- *e.g*. pesticides, herbicides, acids, alkalis, sheep dip, warble fly dressing,  veterinary medicines, agri-chemicals, cleaning agent and disinfectants, dusts and biological agents causing zoonoses. | **MED** | All | * Detailed controls relating to substances and Zoonoses are to be found in the relevant COSHH assessments on the VS H&S intranet. The COSHH assessments provide details on additional PPE to be worn in particular work situations e.g. working with infected cattle. * Veterinary medicines to be used by or under the direct supervision of Veterinary Officers ONLY. * Refer to relevant COSHH assessment found on the VS H&S intranet. * Dust - wear disposable EN149/FFP3 disposable face piece respirator or other respirator of the same standard where dusts present a hazard e.g. poultry houses and pig houses. * Ammonia from breakdown of urine can be very irritating to mucous membranes. If a problem is identified ventilation should be improved before work commences. * Asbestos – DO NOT cut, drill, saw, break or in any way damage asbestos or asbestos containing materials. DO NOT work in areas where you may be exposed to airborne asbestos fibres. If in doubt seek expert advice. * Stay away from chemical stores. * See AEC 3/13 Health and Safety Guidance Occupational Health Surveillance, Screening and Information. Managers MUST ensure that staff under their control are complying with immunisation procedures etc. laid down in this policy.  Pregnant Staff: For specific controls see  * COSHH Manual. * VS Safety Manual Section 3 SWP16 * Departmental H&S guidance for ‘New and Expectant Mothers’. |

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| **Activity** | **Hazard** | **Risk** | **At Risk** | **Control** |
| Working on Premises | Repetitive strain from using a Handheld Computer | **LOW** | All | * Equipment should be strapped securely across the chest for even distribution of weight. Personal judgement should also be used as to what best suits the individual and the environment in which it is used e.g. strap to arm or leave on top of a barrel. * Regular breaks should be taken from any repetitive movements |
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| Working with Animals  Working with Animals contd. | Tiredness/  Repetitive Strain | **LOW** | All | * See SWP 24 Cattle, Sheep and Goat Blood Sampling and Inspection. * Staff should view the Field Occupational Health Service training DVD available on the VS H&S intranet. |
| Injuries from butts, crushing, bites kicks, gouges (horned, tusked, antlered animals), trampling, back strain, strains and sprains. | **MED** | All | Never work with animals where restraint facilities/assistance with stock is inadequate – see AEC 33/09 Cattle Restraint Facilities.i) Adequate/appropriate training and experience essential. Training records to be completed. ii) Safe systems of work to be employed. These will include:   * Handling/restraint facilities appropriate to the age/size/species of stock. * Check tail bars can be adequately secured. * Equipment should be in good repair and fit for purpose. Unfit equipment must not be used. * Ensure that other stock in the vicinity are kept under control. * Ensure animal is properly restrained **BEFORE** starting any type of work on it. * In certain circumstances it may be necessary to have an animal sedated by a VO. * Handling should whenever possible be done by farm staff under the direction of the animals’ keeper. * **DO NOT** work in space restricted areas, always have an “escape route” available. * Be aware of blocks, stones and loose bars underfoot. * Take regular breaks as required. * Wear appropriate PPE for the hazards to which you are exposed.  Specific points to note **Cattle**  **Whilst all animals are dangerous, bulls, some cows with young calves and isolated animals e.g. TB/BR Reactors can be especially dangerous. Always exercise extreme caution when dealing with these.**  **Remember there is no such thing as a quiet bull and that all breeds of bull can be dangerous.**  **BSE animals**  Such animals may be excessively aggressive/unpredictable in behaviour.  Ensure handling systems are adequate and all handlers aware of increased risk.  Make a careful assessment of risks and situation and decide whether sedation is required prior to slaughter. |

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| Working with Animals | Injuries from butts, crushing, bites kicks, gouges (horned, tusked, antlered animals), trampling, back strain, strains and sprains. | **MED** | All | Specific points to note (cont’d)  **Urine sampling cattle** – Line managers to ensure staff are trained in this procedure and use of relevant equipment. Use suitable equipment for gathering sample i.e. which keeps officer as far as possible from animal  **Farm Animals in open Fields** - only enter field accompanied by herd keeper or determine stock in field before entering. Avoid entering fields with bulls if at all possible. If unavoidable assess situation before entering field and have suitable and sufficient controls in place. |

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| **Activity** | **Hazard** | **Risk** | **At Risk** | **Control** |
| Working with Animals | Injuries from butts, crushing, bites kicks, gouges (horned, tusked, antlered animals), trampling, back strain, strains and sprains. | **MED** | All | Specific points to note (cont’d)  **Anthrax** - On farm a Veterinary Officer identifies carcass of( cattle, sheep ‘pigs and goats as corpse) and extracts drop of blood for smear. Smear is made on glass slide, air dried at DVO lab , strained and examined using light microscope Animals are usually dead so the greatest risk is contracting anthrax from animal or smear while investigating ; carcass location . However good personal C& D will make this a low risk operation with more risk from the environment than animal.- Controls for lab stains – see VS COSHH Manual Inadequate animal handling facilities/ assistance with stock – see AEC 33/09 Cattle Restraint Facilities.  * Joint BR PVP TB test –A safe working procedure must be agreed before work starts and be maintained while work proceeds. * Where a member of Veterinary Service staff is of the opinion that animal handling facilities and/or assistance and/or working procedures are unsafe and cannot be adjusted to render them safe, then work must stop and the matter be referred to the relevant DVO immediately.  Pregnant StaffFor specific Controls see  * VS COSHH Manual. * VS Safety Manual Section 3 SWP16 |
| Pathogenic infection | **MED** | All | See relevant COSHH assessments. |

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| **Activity** | **Hazard** | **Risk** | **At Risk** | **Control** |
| Application of Caisley’s Flexo Plus Geno Tissue Sampling Ear Tags using universal ear tag pliers  Cattle | Injuries from butts, crushing, kicks etc. | **MED** | All | * AEC 33/09 Health & Safety Guidance – Cattle Restraint Facilities must be applied in full. * Where a crush or any other handling facility allows unrestricted movement of cattle head and neck, and where there would be a significant risk of injury to personnel as a result, tagging must not be attempted. * A dynamic assessment must be completed and supported with an agreed safe working procedure. If conditions are considered to be unsafe, work must stop until the matter is resolved. |
| Biological Agent causing Zoonoses | **MED** | All | * Refer to the relevant VS COSHH Assessment for detailed controls on the agent. * Practice good occupational hygiene. * See AEC 3/13 Health & Safety Guidance – Occupational Health Surveillance, Screening and Information. * Managers **MUST** ensure that staff under their control are complying with immunisation procedures etc. laid down in this policy. |
| Tiredness/Repetitive Strain | **LOW** | All | * Tiredness - In cases of multi–sampling take regular breaks before the onset of fatigue. * Ensure tag pliers are well maintained according to manufacturers’ instructions. |

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| **Activity** | **Hazard** | **Risk** | **At Risk** | **Control** |
|  | Injuries from Tag Pliers | **LOW** | All | * Ensure tag pliers are well maintained according to manufacturers’ instructions and staff are provided with sufficient instruction/training in their use. * Tissue sampling ear tag should be positioned in the tag pliers ready for use before approaching the animal. * Animals head can still manoeuvre within the crush/skulling gate especially when the animal is fractious. An assessment of the behaviour of the animal must be carried out before work commences to ensure the animal is relatively calm, the head is positioned correctly and securely in the gate and sufficient time is available to apply the tag safely. * Ensure non-dominant hand has a firm grip on the ear of the animal and that it is positioned clear of the tag pliers before applying the tag. Care should be taken not to distress the animal when holding onto the ear and this should not be relied upon as a means of restraint. |

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| **Activity** | **Hazard** | **Risk** | **At Risk** | **Control** |
| Working with Animals | Blood sampling stock  Surgical Needles  /scalpels.  SHARPS  Leading to needle stick injuries with consequential infections.  Accidental self inoculation with sedative | **MED** | All | Ensure adequate/appropriate sampling and sharps training has been provided and that personal records reflect this.See VS Safety Manual Section 3 SWP14  * Veterinary medicines to be used by or under the direct supervision of a Veterinary Officer ONLY. * Use to be restricted to applications detailed in manufacturers data sheets unless additional risk assessment is carried out. Immobilon, Domitor, Rompun and Euthatal special advice cards (see COSHH assessment) should be carried where appropriate in a prominent place by users. Lone working arrangements must be considered when working with tranquilising/euthanising drugs. * Refer to COSHH risk assessments, manufacturers Safety Data Sheets and labels on containers. * Wear PPE, in accordance with COSHH assessment. |

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| **Activity** | **Hazard** | **Risk** | **At Risk** | **Control** |
| Working with Animals | Humane slaughter-  euthanising drugs | **MED** | All | * Pentobarbitone and Rompun to be used by VOs **ONLY**. * Firearms and dart guns to be used by members of the VS Humane Slaughter Team **ONLY** * TSE suspects must never be shot in the head * See also VS COSHH Manual for assessments for Immobilin, domitor, rompun and pentobarbitone |
| Transporting Samples | Pathogenic infection/Bio-Security | **MED** | All | All samples to be transported in UN approved packaging in compliance with the transport of dangerous goods regulations (ADR). |