

DMQ Newsletter

October 2005



This newsletter

As you know, DMQ are now issuing the latest version (Fifth Edition) of the DSC2 portfolio. There have also been a number of witness briefing sessions, which we hope were both useful and informative. The aim of this newsletter is to bring Accredited Witnesses, Assessors and Internal Verifiers up to date with changes and some of the topics that have been brought up at the briefing sessions.

The new DSC2 Portfolio

There is scope for confusion over some PCs in the new portfolio. Until these are clarified, Accredited Witnesses and Assessors need to ensure that the PCs listed below are properly evidenced.

For PC 2.6, the Performance Criteria says "Dispatch wounded deer humanely *if necessary*." If the candidate does *not* wound a deer then this PC *must* be evidenced by questioning or simulation.

In PC 4.3 and PC 4.4 Observation is underlined. For those candidates who do not have their own larder (or, for example, those who use an estate larder) you, as a witness, should ask them questions about the legal requirements and codes of practice for a larder.

If a candidate has any disability or learning difficulty that may affect their performance or ability to complete their contribution to the portfolio, this should be recorded on the Witness notes page.

Trained Hunter and DSC1

New EU regulations on meat hygiene come into effect from 1 January 2006. These introduce the concept of a "Trained Hunter" who will have certain rights and responsibilities. There is separate training for large game (deer) and for small game (rabbits, birds etc). The good news is that the Food Standards Agency (FSA) have accepted that those who hold DSC1 can be considered to be Trained Hunters for Large Game, once they have certified that they have read the *Guidance on Wild Game* issued by the Food Standards Agency. DMQ will then issue a new certificate covering Large Game, and there will be a charge to cover the cost of this. DMQ will be writing to DSC1 holders about this. In the meantime, DMQ are revising DSC1 assessments to cover Trained Hunter requirements for Large Game. The new assessments should be introduced early in 2006.

In this Issue:

Witness rebriefings	2
Looking after AWs	2
Some Statistics on DSC1 & 2	2
Legal matters	2
Meat Hygiene Regulations	2
Out of season ?	2

An apology

In the last DMQ Newsletter we included a photograph of a muntjac deer, without the permission of Andy Rouse, the holder of the copyright. We apologise unreservedly for this oversight.

This Newsletter is compiled and edited by:
Peter Anderson
Drove Cottage
Low Road
Westmuir
Kirriemuir
Angus
DD8 5LN

01575 575792
deermanager@tesco.net

Witness re-briefings

The main series of rebriefings for Accredited Witnesses are now completed but there are still a number of witnesses who have not been rebriefed. If you are one of those, you should contact your sponsoring Assessor and make arrangements to be re-briefed. Any Accredited Witnesses who have not been re-briefed by 30 November 2005 will be removed from the AW list until such time as they have been re-briefed and DMQ advised.

Some Accredited Witnesses were sponsored by Assessors who are no longer on the DMQ list. If you are one of these AWs, and you have not found another Assessor to sponsor you before 30 November 2005, your name will also be removed from the AW list.

Looking after AWs

Each Accredited Witness is sponsored by an Assessor - *not* by DMQ. It is Assessors who are responsible for looking after their witnesses, for guiding and advising them. So if you have any questions about your role as an AW you should contact your sponsor. Assessors are expected to make contact with their witnesses at least twice a year.

Legal matters

There have been changes in the Firearms law in Northern Ireland. Witnesses will want to be aware that it is now legal to use someone else's rifle there, under their supervision, in accordance with the conditions on their Firearms Certificate.

Some Statistics

The number of candidates who have registered for and passed DSC1 and DSC2 are shown below. This includes data up to 31 August 2005.

	Registered	Passed
DSC1	9445	8712
DSC2	3787	1860

Out of Season ?

In Scotland, the Deer Commission for Scotland (DCS) may authorise out of season shooting where serious damage is being caused by deer. Only the person(s) named on the authorisation may actually shoot deer out of season on the land stated. It is perfectly acceptable for a candidate who is authorised by DCS to shoot a deer out of season as one of the culls for DSC2.

There is a provision in Section 26 of the Deer (Scotland) Act 1996 whereby occupiers of agricultural land or enclosed woodland, or their employees, may also shoot deer out of season in these circumstances without authority from DCS. DCS are now interpreting this provision to include sporting tenants as occupiers. Witnesses need to be aware of this change, as it may be acceptable for a candidate who is a sporting tenant to shoot a deer out of season for DSC2 without authorisation from the Deer Commission, if serious damage is being caused.

In either case this must be written up in the portfolio, with a copy of any DCS authorisation held by the candidate.

Meat Hygiene Regulations

New Meat Hygiene Regulations come into force on 1 January 2006. From this date, candidates for DSC2 will have to demonstrate their knowledge of and compliance with these new Regulations, as they apply to Large Game.

Accredited Witnesses also need to be up to date with these Regulations, and the *Guidance on Wild Game* issued by the Food Standard Agency can be found at:

www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/wildgameguide.pdf

While some candidates may not need to have Trained Hunter status, depending what they do with the deer they shoot, *all* candidates need to understand all the legal requirements placed on hunters by these regulations. You may wish to consider what questions you can ask candidates to demonstrate this.