

SAFETY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Amended August 2007)

The Safety Assessment will comprise 10 questions selected from the 24 questions listed below. In England (or lowland situations) only one Question will be selected from the second section. Question 11 and either Question 9 or 10 will be compulsory in all Assessments and Question 20 and 21 compulsory in all Highland Assessments. All selected Questions must be answered correctly to the standard stated.

QUESTIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL STALKERS

QUESTION 1. The candidate is told that he has just arrived at his stalking ground and is met by a friend who is to accompany him. The examiner [representing the friend] asks to examine the candidate's new rifle, which may be in a case or slip.

Candidate must demonstrate safe weapon handling with a deer-stalking rifle:

- Candidate to demonstrate muzzle awareness at all times
- Candidate to open bolt
- Physically check that the chamber and magazine/magazine housing are clear
- Show that the weapon is clear and obtain confirmation before handing it over with bolt open.

DMQ Standard is: *Demonstrate all four actions correctly.*

QUESTION 2. How should you carry your rifle while stalking alone in woodland?

Candidate must demonstrate complete safe handling when stalking. Points should include:

- Muzzle awareness demonstrated at all times.
- Rifle is fully loaded and charged - (to be covered by Questioning)
- Safety catch applied and periodically checked
- Slings and swivels in good working order

DMQ Standard is: *Demonstrate all four actions correctly.*

QUESTION 3. If there are three or more people stalking together, what extra precautions are required to ensure safety in the following circumstances?

Candidate must demonstrate knowledge of what precautions to implement.

- a. When all the party are stalking together.
- One leader must be nominated from the party.
 - Person in front must carry the ONLY loaded rifle.
- b. When the party are stalking separately. All must be aware of overall plan and contingencies
- Allocate clear areas of operation/boundaries and no straying
 - All party to know where all others are whenever party is split up.
 - All are aware as to how communications are to be used if available i.e. mobile phones or estate radios
 - All are aware of the designated rendezvous point and the time window to await arrival before instigating emergency procedures.
 - All are aware of the plan for using other methods of signalling in an emergency, i.e.
 - Use of whistle,
 - Use of rifle to fire a series of shots into a safe area
 - Displaying a high visibility vest or panel
 - All must know predetermined plan if the weather suddenly turns bad or visibility is seriously reduced
 - All must know time of last shot

DMQ Standard is: *Correctly give both answers to circumstance (a) plus*

Correctly give three answers to circumstance (b)

QUESTION 4. You have to crawl to get within range of your quarry - what three safety precautions should you implement?

Candidate must demonstrate knowledge of the actions to be taken to ensure complete safe handling. Points should include:

- Ensure that at no time anyone can get into the line of fire whilst crawling.
- Guard against accidental discharge by approaching with an empty chamber or protecting the safety catch and trigger.

- Protect against an obstructed barrel by using extreme care or using tape to shield the muzzle.

DMQ Standard is: *Correctly give three answers.*

QUESTION 5. Knives are dangerous and can easily cause serious accidents, how can the risks be minimised?

Candidate must explain the actions to be taken. Points should include:

a. Whilst being carried

- Ensure that there is a lock blade on any folding knife
- Never carry opened knife in a pocket.
- Ensure that any fixed blade knife is secured in a sheath
- Use a sheath with a protective insert or made from imperious impenetrable material

b. Whilst in use

- Ensure animal is dead before opening or unsheathing a knife
- Use a sharp and clean knife
- Never use undue force or haste
- Cut away from yourself
- Use protective glove

DMQ Standard is: *Correctly give two answers to circumstances (a) and (b).*

QUESTION 6. What two safety precautions must be observed before climbing into a high seat?

Candidate must demonstrate knowledge of how to climb up and down from a high seat.

- Check seat for condition i.e. in proper repair, no sabotage, tampering and secure
- Unload rifle to climb up or down

DMQ Standard is: *Correctly give both answers.*

QUESTION 7. While crawling towards a deer you plug your barrel with mud or frozen snow - what should you do?

Candidate must demonstrate knowledge of what to do if barrel becomes plugged.

- Unload rifle completely
- Clear obstruction and clean barrel with correct equipment for task.
- Reload
- If cleaning kit is not carried then abandon stalk

DMQ Standard is: Correctly give all four answers.

QUESTION 8. You take over the stalking rights on a new piece of ground before going out stalking what must you do?

Candidate must demonstrate the knowledge of what to do prior to stalking on new ground.

- *Study maps and learn exact boundaries
- *Find out where high-risk areas are e.g. footpaths, roads, and houses
- Find out who else might be expected on the ground e.g. farm workers or contractors
- Where pheasants/farm stock are kept and regularly fed
- Where ground allows safe shooting and best lines of approach to it
- Where ground appears unsafe i.e. high seats may be required.

DMQ Standard is: Both answers marked * plus one other.

QUESTION 9. While woodland stalking on your own you encounter a physical obstacle such as a fence or ditch, how do you cross it safely?

Candidate must demonstrate complete safe weapon handling whilst negotiating obstacle.

Points should include.

- *Unload rifle completely and close bolt having ensured chamber and magazine/housing are clear.
- *Negotiate the obstacle ensuring rifle is carried or is laid down in a safe manner.
- Retrieve rifle
- *Reload having checked that the barrel is clear.
- *Apply safety catch.

DMQ Standard is: All actions marked *

Negotiating the obstacle is not mandatory.

QUESTION 10. You are stalking in forestry with a friend and have to cross a fence - there is no gate - how do you cross it safely?

Candidate must demonstrate complete safe weapon handling while crossing a fence/ditch in the company of a partner. Points should include.

- *Unload rifle completely ensuring chamber and magazine/housing are clear.
- *Hand rifle to friend with bolt open
- Climb fence
- *Take rifle back from him and reload and apply safety catch
- *Demonstrate muzzle awareness at all times.

DMQ Standard is: *All four actions marked **

Climbing the fence not mandatory.

QUESTION 11. Imagine you are stalking. You will be shown 4 deer (simulated by cut out targets) tell your invigilator whether it would be safe to shoot each if it were a live deer and if not - why not.

Candidate must demonstrate the knowledge of when to engage or not engage deer in a field-stalking situation where the Invigilator has placed some targets in risk situations e.g.:

- On skyline
- Deer in front of unsafe backstops
- In front or near to buildings
- In front of other deer
- Against ricochet hazards
- Only half visible etc

One deer silhouette is to be in range and have a safe backstop. Candidates should come across the targets in a realistic situation. Candidates must not be allowed to view all four targets from one static point.

Note. Candidates must be able to discuss the situation giving reasons for deciding to shoot or not to shoot. Only heart and lung shots acceptable.

DMQ Standard is: *All four scenarios to be correctly answered.*

QUESTION 12. You are about to fire your rifle at a deer, what checks should you make before squeezing the trigger to ensure a safe and humane shot?

Candidate must demonstrate the knowledge of what to check for prior to taking the shot.

Points should include:

- Steady shooting position preferable supported
- No obstructions in the line of fire
- Animal stood in a position to allow a humane shot
- There is a safe backstop immediately behind the animal

DMQ Standard is: Correctly answer all four points

QUESTION 13. You shoot and the deer runs off before collapsing in long grass -how do you approach it?

Candidate must demonstrate the knowledge of what actions to take. Points should include:

- Approach with rifle and ready to fire i.e. uncased, loaded with safety catch applied.
- Keep a safe backstop in case you have to shoot again
- Approach deer whilst always attempting to ascertain condition of deer
- Touch eyeball to ensure no reaction (but not with rifle or finger).

DMQ Standard is: Correctly answer all four points.

QUESTION 14. You fire at a deer, which falls and rolls down a hill. When you approach, it is struggling violently but seems to be unable to get up, what should you do?

Candidate must demonstrate the knowledge of what actions to be taken. Points should include:

- Keep anyone with you well back
- Try to stay out of sight and down wind
- Move round to ensure a safe angle and safe backstop
- Shoot deer again once a safe despatching shot presents itself.

DMQ Standard is: Correctly answer all four points.

QUESTION 15. From the moment a deer is shot it must be treated as food and all contamination avoided. What are the five main sources of contamination?

Candidate must demonstrate the knowledge of the likely sources of contamination. Points should include:

- The bullet
- The gralloch
- From the environment
- From equipment
- From transport/storage.

DMQ Standard is: Any three of the five above.

QUESTION 16. Security of firearms and safety in the home is the responsibility of the stalker - give three major risks.

Candidate must demonstrate the knowledge of the major security and safety risks.

- Accidental Discharge
- Theft
- Unauthorised Use

DMQ Standard is: Candidate must identify the three main areas of risk

QUESTION 17. You are driving home after stalking and stop at a cafe for a meal. If it is absolutely necessary for you to leave your rifle in an unattended vehicle, what safety precautions must you take with your rifle?

Candidate must demonstrate the knowledge of what actions to be taken. Points should include:

- Remove bolt and FAC from car and carry with you.
- Take ammunition with you if the quantity involved makes this feasible and appropriate.
- Ideally lock the rifle in the boot and preferably attached to car but always out of sight
- Try to park the car in a well-lit area where you can see it.

DMQ Standard is: Correctly answer all four points.

QUESTION 18. What measures can you take to reduce safety risks when stalking in popular country areas well used by the general public.

Candidate must demonstrate the knowledge of what actions to be taken. Points should include:

- Take extra precautions at weekends/bank holidays or periods of mass public presence
- Make maximum use of high seats
- Extreme vigilance before taking a shot.

DMQ Standard is: *Correctly answer all three points.*

QUESTION 19. When loading a stag carcass into the back of a vehicle what safety precautions should be taken?

Candidate must demonstrate the knowledge of what actions to be taken. Points should include:

- Restrain deer's head and hooves
- Lift awkward load correctly
- Ensure carcass firmly secured and will not shift or become contaminated in any way.
- Do not overload vehicle in any way.

DMQ Standard is: *Correctly answer three of the four points.*

QUESTIONS MAINLY APPLICABLE TO REMOTE AREAS/UPLAND/SCOTTISH STALKING

QUESTION 20. How should you carry your rifle while hill stalking before you approach deer to take a shot?

Candidate must demonstrate and explain complete safe handling when high ground stalking. Points should include:

- *Slings, swivels and attachments on slip are checked to ensure they are in good working order*
- *Rifle is fully loaded with bolt carefully closed on an empty chamber*

- *Safety catch applied and checked before placing rifle in slip*
- *Slip is fastened securely and carried as appropriate.*

DMQ Standard is: *Demonstrate all four actions correctly*

QUESTION 21. How should you carry your rifle while hill stalking once you closely approach deer to take a shot?

Candidate must demonstrate complete safe handling when high ground stalking. Points should include:

- *At an appropriate time during the final approach the rifle is removed from the slip*
- *Muzzle awareness demonstrated at all times once weapon is removed from slip.*
- *Rifle is pointed in a safe direction whilst a round is chambered.*
- *Safety catch is applied, periodically checked, and only removed when in final position and about to take the shot.*

DMQ Standard is: *Demonstrate all four actions correctly*

QUESTION 22 When the deer is confirmed dead what action would you take with your rifle and ammunition?

- Unload rifle completely ensuring chamber and magazine/housing are clear.
- Double check the empty condition of rifle before placing back into slip
- Place rifle away from work area

DMQ Standard is: *Demonstrate all three actions correctly*

QUESTION 23. You are going out hill stalking alone, what safety precautions should you take in regard

a. To planning and preparation?

Candidate must demonstrate the knowledge of what actions to be taken. Points should include:

- Assess weather conditions and time available
- Choose an appropriate area
- Take radio or mobile telephone communications

- Leave details of route or area to be stalked with someone and tell them
- Give your expected time of return
- Detail when to worry and seek help if you do not return
- Be prepared to come home immediately if the weather turns nasty
- Know your own limitations and plan accordingly
- Always stick to your plan!

b. In regard to equipment?

Candidate must demonstrate the knowledge of what equipment is to be taken. Points should include:

- Take warm clothes
- Take waterproof clothes
- Take sustaining food/hot drink
- Take safety equipment e.g.
 - Compass
 - Map
 - Torch
 - Flares
 - Survival blanket
 - Mobile phone
 - Small first aid kit
 - Whistle

DMQ Standard is: *Correctly answer five points from part one and seven points from part two.*

QUESTION 24. If your stalking companion becomes unable to walk further through injury or exhaustion in bad weather on the hill, what should you do? [There is no mobile phone signal.]

Candidate must demonstrate the knowledge of what action is to be taken. Points should include:

- Give first aid
- If possible get him to some sort of shelter
- Give him plenty of clothes, warm drink or food.
- If he cannot go on and is NOT delirious, make him comfortable and reassure him
- Tell him to stay put and go to get help
- If he is delirious, stay with him until help arrives unless he may die before then, in which case you have to risk leaving him to seek assistance.
- If you leave ensure that you note and mark his location and note the OS grid reference of his location.

DMQ Standard is: *Correctly give all answers.*