

CRITICAL RISK STANDARD | WORKING WITH ANIMALS

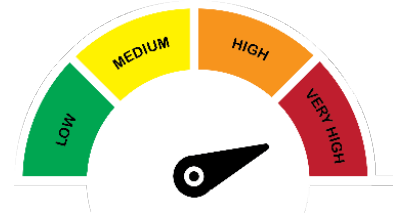
Version 1.0 | Issued September 2020
Review Due: September 2022

INTRODUCTION

Working with livestock and animals is a key part of the Universities teaching and research activities. Handling animals such as cattle, sheep and horses, if not managed correctly, carry a risk of fatal or serious injury and illness.

This critical risk standard has been developed to provide information to our people about the way the risk of working with animals is managed at Massey University. It applies to all our people (staff, students or others) who interact with animals for Massey University business purposes.

This standard should be read as the minimum standards that apply when working with animals at Massey University. It is acceptable to add controls at a local level, beyond what is prescribed here – however at no point may controls be removed or substituted without the express written permission of the relevant SLT member and the Director Health, Safety and Wellbeing.



CRITICAL RISK SCENARIOS

The following scenarios have been identified for this critical risk:

- Impact from animal
- Animal bites
- Crush by animal
- Exposure to zoonotic diseases



MINIMUM CONTROL REQUIREMENTS

Animal Selection



Before selecting an animal for teaching and/or research purposes an assessment must be completed that considers:

- Temperament with people and other animals
- Environment and surroundings the activities will be performed in
- Animal health status
- Ease of handling



Massey University shall ensure that an animal vaccination and parasite control programme is in place to minimise the risk of transmission of zoonotic diseases.

Massey University shall ensure there are processes and procedures in place to vaccinate stock by a Veterinarian or a person trained and deemed competent in vaccination techniques.

Any person handling animals should be up to date with recommended vaccines for protection against animal diseases.

Animal Welfare

Massey University shall ensure that all animals are treated and cared for in accordance to the Animal Welfare (AW) Act, Animal Welfare (Care and Procedures) Regulations and the Massey University Animal Ethics Committee provisions.

Massey University shall have processes and procedures to identify and assess unmanageable, injured or ill animals. Animals should be isolated and/or removed in a safe and ethical manner.

Massey University shall have processes and procedures in place to prevent and control animal illness, injury and control infections.

Measures to prevent and control animal illness, injury and infection should include at a minimum:

- Hand hygiene practices
- Animal hygiene practices
- Maintenance and sanitisation of medical equipment and instruments
- Cleaning and disinfection of surfaces
- Cleaning animal enclosures and bedding
- Effective biological waste and effluent disposal processes
- Safe isolation and animal handling methods
- Maintain vaccination and parasite control programme
- Free from noise sources that could distract or adversely affect animal behaviour
- Provide suitable shelter from weather

Massey University shall ensure that any animal treatment administered are done by persons with the appropriate qualifications, skill and experience or by competent people under supervision and dosages must be recorded. Routine preventative health treatments are regularly administered, monitored and recorded.




Where chemical restraint methods are used, this shall be determined and administered by or under the direction of a Veterinarian.


Animal Facilities and Equipment

Massey University shall ensure that professional design advice along with worker input when planning improvements for new and/or modified animal handling facilities.

The facility, plant and equipment must be maintained in a safe condition for use. Where third party facilities or farms will be used for research or teaching purposes, an assessment of the suitability of those facilities shall be undertaken prior to that location being approved.

A well-designed facility should be structurally sound and:

- Be fit for purpose to the type of animal using it, and considers ergonomic design principles for all users
 - Personal protective equipment and clothing (PPE/PPC) necessary to protect personnel should be available.
 - Appropriate areas for the storage of hazardous substances, chemicals and animal treatments and personal protective equipment and clothing
 - Provides protection in the working area from adverse weather for animals and users
 - Include fit for purpose restraint systems to enable safe handling, restrict, or control movement or behaviour of the animal
 - Be ventilated and have good lighting
 - Prevents accidental/unauthorised access to infectious animals
 - Appropriate flooring surfaces
-  ○ Have enclosures that provides easy access to support safe handling, protects from being hit by an animal and enables prompt exit in an emergency
-  ○ Have access to clean water, toilet facilities and a separate area for eating and rest
-  ○ Adequate drainage and effluent management system to ensure that faeces and urine do not accumulate

 Plant and equipment used to restrain, control or house animals must be inspected to detect suitability for use before using. Defective plant and equipment shall be isolated such that it cannot be used.

Animal Handling Training and Competency

Staff Selection

A list of minimum skills, knowledge and competency standards an individual needs to possess to work safely with animals is referenced when employing new staff. Pre-employment health checks relevant to the risk profile should also be considered.

Any person who is aware of a medical condition that may impact on their health and safety while working with any animal, plant or equipment must disclose the medical condition before starting work.

Vaccinations requirements shall be identified and an appropriate vaccination programme is implemented.

Training

An individual working with animals shall receive an induction prior to commencing work activities. Massey University shall ensure there are processes and procedures in place to ensure anyone working with animals is trained or is under the direct supervision of an experienced animal handler.

Live animal training shall be conducted by an experienced animal handler i.e. qualified veterinarian, animal technician or farm staff.

Training may include the following:

- Animal handling techniques including appropriate restraint methods, loading and unloading
- Isolation systems and physical containment
- Safe operation of the facility, plant and equipment
- How to respond to animals presenting with unmanageable/aggressive behaviour
- Animal emergency response procedures
- Manual handling techniques i.e. lifting
- Basic animal husbandry, health and hygiene practices
- Use of PPC and PPE including maintenance and storage
- Use of hazardous substances and Agrichemical handling including disposal
- Emergency response procedure

Competency

Massey University shall ensure that anyone handling animals for Massey University purposes will be assessed by an appropriate person. Supervision will remain in place until an individual is deemed competent to safely handle the animal, is familiar with Massey University processes and procedures and is able to operate any plant and/or equipment to a satisfactory standard.

The Competency assessments may be recorded.

Working Safely with Animals



Massey University shall ensure that all enclosures/confined spaces are fitted with an appropriate mechanism that enables safe evacuation, or prompt retrieval of an injured/unresponsive person or animal.

- Plan an escape route in advance when working with animals.
- There is an appropriate action plan to recover escaped animals.

Massey University shall ensure that it has effective processes and procedures in place to manage working after-hours, remote and/or lone worker situations.

Incident Management Procedures

Campus security shall be notified if emergency services are called so they can meet at an entrance and guide them to the scene. Massey University shall ensure that access ways are kept clear for emergency vehicles using signage and have processes in place to monitor.

Massey University shall ensure there are processes to manage incidents on campus and the rehabilitation of staff and a sufficient number of trained first aiders are present at all campuses. This includes appropriate support for those involved in and/or witnessing an incident that may have a psychological impact.

Emergency Response

Emergency equipment must be available at strategic locations so that users can prevent further harm or environmental damage e.g.

- First aid kits
- Suitable fire control equipment
- Containment equipment (spill kits)

Emergency equipment must be up-to-date and maintained, and checked at intervals recommended by the equipment manufacturers.

Massey University shall ensure that animal emergency response procedures are in place and tested at least annually. Emergency response procedures in these areas should consider:

- Escaped animals
- Trapped animals
- Animals in surgery during an emergency
- Rescue from buildings

Reporting

All incidents involving animals and people must be reported using the University's online health and safety reporting system, regardless of severity.

Incidents may require reporting to Regulators (for example WorkSafe New Zealand WSNZ or Ministry of Health (MoH)) in these cases Massey University will ensure there are processes and procedures in place to manage these incidents.

Property and infrastructure damages must be reported.

Insurance and Legal

Massey University shall ensure there is appropriate insurance to cover property and infrastructure damage.

Massey University shall ensure that there is a process in place should legal advice be required.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION OR POLICY

- Health and Safety at Work Act (2015).
- Animal Welfare Act (1999).
- Animal Welfare (Care and Procedures) Regulations 2018.
- Massey University Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

OTHER REFERENCES

- WorkSafe New Zealand Good Practice Guidelines:
 - Preventing manual handling injuries on farms.
 - Safe sheep handling.
 - Safe cattle handling.
 - Staying safe in and around farm dairies.
 - Preventing slips, trips and fall on farms.
- Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct – for the use of animals for research, testing and teaching.

DEFINITIONS

Animal: Any live member of the animal kingdom as defined by the Animal Welfare Act 1999.

Critical Risk: Any risk that carries the potential for a fatal or serious, life-altering injury.

Critical Control: A control that is *crucial to preventing the event or mitigating the consequences of the event*. The absence or failure of a critical control would *significantly increase* the risk despite the existence of the other controls. In addition, a control that prevents more than one unwanted event, or mitigates more than once consequence may be considered a critical control.

Competency: To demonstrate competence, an individual must be able to perform certain tasks with a required level of proficiency, have the knowledge, experience and skill to be able to perform a specific task.

Remote work: more than 30 mins walk from communication device or assistance

Zoonotic disease: an infectious disease caused by bacteria, viruses and parasites that spread from an animal to people i.e. leptospirosis, listeriosis and campylobacter.