

Temporary Operational Instruction

**Action note: 2024-12-19 - Chapter 2.2 of the
Manual for Official Controls (MOC)**

**Title: Emergency slaughter of domestic
ungulates outside the slaughterhouse**

Purpose

This action note is to inform Food Standards Agency (FSA) Field Operational staff of a new temporary operational instruction relating to new training and appointment of veterinarians (MRCVS) as Official Veterinarians (OVs) to perform ante-mortem inspection (AMI) of domestic ungulates outside the slaughterhouse in case of emergency slaughter, this is an OV-EMSL, with instructions to verify compliance with this new process and how to report related non-compliances.

Background

The FSA has changed the training and appointment process for veterinarians to be able to sign Emergency Slaughter certificates. The previous process required veterinarians to be members of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, hold the [OCQ\(V\) - ES](#) qualification and apply the FSA for an appointment as OV.

The new process, that started on 2 December 2024, will require veterinarians interested in becoming an OV-EMSL to be members of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, undergo an **online training** and pass an **online test** about ante-mortem inspection in domestic ungulates outside the slaughterhouse in case of emergency slaughter. More information about this can be found on [food.gov](#). **The deadline for veterinarians to complete the new process is 1 April 2025.**

Procedure

During the transition period, until **1 April 2025**, OVs in slaughterhouses receiving emergency slaughtered animals must verify compliance with the requirements of Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004 and Regulation (EU) 2019/627; where non-compliances are identified, the OVs at slaughterhouses must gather relevant evidence and report all emergency slaughter non-compliances cases identified to the FSA at: emergency.slaughter@food.gov.uk.

The checks to be performed in the slaughterhouses include:

Ante-Mortem Inspection and Certification: In emergency slaughter cases, the OV-EMSL must perform an ante-mortem inspection and issue an [official health certificate](#). This certificate should record the positive outcome of the ante-mortem inspection, the date, time, and reason for the emergency slaughter, and any treatment administered. The OV EMSL must be present at the time of slaughter in order to certify date, time and that the slaughter and bleeding have been performed correctly. Should the animal be intended for human consumption then the person that carries out the emergency slaughter must

hold a CoC for these operations. The official health certificate must accompany the slaughtered animal to the slaughterhouse.

Verification of Authorisation: Check that the OV-EMSL is listed on the appointed OVs list or, until 1 April 2025, in the list of OVs designated under the previous procedure and ensure the official health certificate is completed accurately without signs of fraud. The OV-EMSL number follows the format FSA/MRCVS No/Date of issue.

Transport to the Slaughterhouse: The animal, once slaughtered and bled, must be transported to the slaughterhouse hygienically and without undue delay. The removal of the stomach and intestines is allowed at the place of slaughter, under veterinary supervision, but no further dressing should take place. Any removed viscera must accompany the animal to the slaughterhouse and be clearly identified as belonging to that animal.

Refrigeration: If more than two hours elapse between slaughter and the arrival at the slaughterhouse, the carcass must be refrigerated. Where climatic conditions so permit, active chilling is not necessary.

Food Chain Information Document: This document must accompany the slaughtered animal to the slaughterhouse. [FCI](#) must be completed by the owner of the animal.

Post-Mortem Inspection: Verify eligibility for Emergency Slaughter: The legal definition of an eligible animal is one that is otherwise healthy but has suffered an accident that prevents its transport to the slaughterhouse for animal welfare reasons.

To be released as food the meat from that animal must be declared fit for human consumption after post-mortem inspection at the slaughterhouse, in line with the Official Controls Regulation, Commission Regulation (EU) 2017/625, Article 18, 7 (f). Additional tests may be required for emergency slaughter cases, as per MOC instructions Chapter 5.1.

Any suspicious findings during post-mortem inspection - such as: conditions not matching the description of the accident, signs of chronic illness or disease, evidence of tampering and/or falsification of an official health certificate, missing and/or misleading information in an official health certificate - must be reported to the FSA at

emergency.slaughter@food.gov.uk. The OV at the slaughterhouse should follow the MOC's current instructions regarding declaring the carcass fit for human consumption.

Note the contents of the action note, ensuring it is read by all front-line staff.

Where necessary, print a copy for the plant file.

Distribution

This action note will be:

- uploaded to the [Temporary Operational Instruction Folder held in the MOC area of SharePoint](#) (accessible only on an official FSA device)
- logged on the [Temporary Operational Instruction tracker](#) (accessible only on an official FSA device)
- published alongside the [MOC chapters on food.gov.uk](#)

The action note will remain live until either incorporated into the MOC or revoked.