



MECHANICAL & MANUAL EXTRACTION (1)

Aim

Where carcasses are being extracted, the aim is to use the most appropriate method available, whilst ensuring safety of the operator, food safety, and taking into account environmental impacts. In certain cases, the use of a vehicle may not be possible or may be limited. The practitioner must therefore decide whether to extract using an alternative method, taking into consideration the degree to which manual handling of the carcass may be required.



Basic essentials

Health & Safety

For all extraction activities, ensure the following:

- 1 Carry out risk assessments for all mechanical extraction operations and ensure that operations are carried out accordingly.*
- 2 Familiarise yourself with relevant HSE Guidance.**

Vehicle extraction

Planning

- 2 Operators should prioritise safety and minimise environmental impact through route selection. Plan the extraction route and walk the ground prior to using a vehicle on a rough site. Attempt to avoid risk situations e.g. steep, slippery or rocky slopes, fragile habitats, river crossings etc.
- 3 Consider whether it is appropriate or essential to use a vehicle. Take into account the nature of the terrain in the context of both Health & Safety and potential impact on habitat. Select vehicles which are suitable for the application and terrain. They should be able to undertake the operation safely with minimal impact on the ground.

Machinery

- 1 Ensure that all machinery and associated equipment (vehicles, winches, ropes etc.) are in good working order, well maintained and regularly checked and serviced. Any equipment

that is used for lifting operations will need to comply with the Lifting Operation and Lifting Equipment Regulations (1998).¹

- 1 Ensure modifications made to machine/vehicle(s) do not invalidate existing insurance cover or constitute a potential hazard to the operator.

Operators

- 1 Ensure operators are aware of the relevant Health and Safety Executive requirements.**
- 1 Ensure that operators are trained.
- 1 Ensure operators are aware of the limitations of their equipment, including the manufacturer's stated carrying capacity for their specific machine (in terms of load and number of passengers).
- 1 ATC (All Terrain Cycles) operators must wear the appropriate personal protective equipment including a protective helmet.
- 1 When working alone, follow HSE guidance INDG73 (rev) C400 'Working alone in safety'.^{2*}
- 1 Ensure operators are only asked to undertake tasks within their capabilities.
- 2 Balance the load and secure it to ensure stability.
- 2 When loading, try to minimise manual handling and lifting, especially where large deer are being transported. This can be done by placing the carcass on a bank and sliding it onto or into the machine, or using a small winch.
- 2 Take extra care in adverse conditions such as snow, ice and on steep slopes.

- 2 Take extra care when operating winches particularly those using wire ropes. There are numerous things which can go wrong with winches not least the unforeseen release of loads.
- 2 Never smoke when operating or refuelling.
- 3 Care must be taken on soft ground. Prior route marking helps to ensure that machines do not become bogged.
- 3 Cover loads where carcasses are in view of the public.

Hygiene

- 2 Ensure that all load-carrying areas used for carcass extraction are made of impermeable material and are easily cleaned and dis-infected.
- 2 Ensure that areas holding carcasses are washed and scrubbed with cold water before and after use and periodically cleaned with food-safe sterilising fluid. Before using any chemicals the operator must read and understand any label instructions so as to comply with the manufacturer's recommendations and must also note any warning labels relating to Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH).^{1,2**}
- 2 Keep dogs, fuel and all other potential contaminants in a separate part of the vehicle or in containers separate from carcasses.
- 2 Cover loads where carcasses may become contaminated with dust, mud or water.

Habitat degradation

In respect of designated sites:

- 1 The use of an ATV (All Terrain vehicle) or ATC may be permitted under the provisions of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.
- 1 Ensure conditions are adhered to which may include the following:
 - Routes or habitats³ to be used or avoided;
 - Types of vehicles, e.g. ground pressure ratings, wheeled, tracked or skid-steering;
 - Timing or frequency of use – weather conditions, breeding seasons, maximum number of return journeys per route per year.
- 1 Ensure the following impacts are minimised:

- Tracking, rutting, bare peat or soil;
- Visible lines, erosion scars, changes to vegetation type and colour;
- Changes in hydrology, e.g. damage to pool systems and burn crossings;
- Loss of sensitive species, e.g. sphagnum;
- Disturbance to species, e.g. ground nesting birds, freshwater pearl mussels.

- 3 Using vehicles off road can cause unsightly scarring and lead to erosion. There will always be a delicate balance between using the same route or seeking to use a different route. Some simple rules can help reduce these impacts:
 - Use harder drier ground, but avoid repeated use of routes on dry heath which can kill or abrade vegetation.
 - Avoid wet ground where possible to reduce impacts through tracking. Change the route where excessive bare ground, rutting or water build up occurs.
 - When crossing rivers choose entry and exit routes and crossing points that minimise the silt loading in the water course, either through runoff or disturbance to the river bed.
 - Avoid steeper slopes which necessitate proceeding straight up and down, causing tracking.
 - Avoid actions which cut up the surface vegetation, i.e. sharp turning, speed, wheel spin.
 - Take account of ground conditions when accessing areas susceptible to cutting up, e.g. when frozen or covered in snow.
 - Limited manual dragging to a single pick up point can significantly reduce vehicle impact.
 - Single large loads will in many cases be less damaging than repeated use.
 - Use a vehicle with the minimum possible ground pressure.

- 3 Consider the visual impacts of tracking particularly within National Scenic Areas.

Pollution

- 1 Ensure vehicles are not leaking fuel or oil. This is particularly important where river crossings are involved.
- 1 Ensure when refuelling, spillage and contamination is avoided.

continued in Mechanical & Manual Extraction(2)

* See BPG Risk Assessment
** See BPG Health & Safety Principles

¹ Legislation available online at www.opsi.gov.uk or can be obtained from the Stationery Office. For addresses and contact details see BP Contacts
² Publications and useful information are available online at www.hse.gov.uk. Information can also be obtained from HSE Books. For addresses and contact details see BP Contacts
³ Montane heaths, wet heaths and blanket bogs are more sensitive than dry heaths, with grasslands being the generally more resilient. Recovery will be slower on more exposed slopes and at higher altitudes.