



The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust

Defra Lead Shot Regulations 1999 Compliance: Steering Group Meeting 3

Friday 4th December 2009, 11am-1pm

Minutes

Attendees:

[redacted] - Defra
[redacted] Defra
John Harradine- BASC
Alison Loram- BASC

Ruth Cromie - WWT
Julia Newth - WWT

1. Apologies: [redacted] and [redacted] - Defra, Ian Carter- Natural England, Michelle O'Brien - WWT.

2. Minutes of last Steering Group Meeting:

- Minutes agreed and accepted.

3. Defra - contractual issues

- Defra happy to accept the revised schedule. BASC to invoice WWT for half of costs incurred within 2009 and half within 2010. Action [redacted]

5. Progress on Milestones

Game Dealer Survey Winter 1

- [redacted] provided preliminary results to the steering group in September 09.
- Results still to be full analysed and reported. Action [redacted]
- [redacted] provided a breakdown of species shot with shot type which demonstrated that compliance levels were greater with Teal (~18% shot with lead) and Wigeon (~9%) than with Mallard (~72%), although there was a lower sample size for Teal and Wigeon.
- [redacted] suggested that this information would help determine where non-compliance was occurring with Mallard mostly shot inland. [redacted] suggested that differentiation between offshore and onshore birds could be further investigated by correlating this data with the location of bird purchases. [redacted] agreed that further analysis is needed and such findings would be worth mentioning in the report.

Game Dealer Survey Winter 2 - Purchasing and post-mortem analysis

- Most of purchasing completed (311 birds bought and 9 birds left to buy) on original schedule.
- More Teal bought in Winter 2 than in Winter 1 although not many found with shot (28% of Teal had shot on X-ray compared with 78% of Mallard).
- [redacted] questioned whether the sample size for Wigeon (14 birds) may be too low for statistical testing. [redacted] and [redacted] suggested that the data should be represented but needs to be handled with care.
- Post-mortems will be completed by the end of December 09 on schedule.
- [redacted] commented that pathology suggested fewer birds contained old shot than in Winter 1 but was uncertain why this should be. [redacted] suggested that this could be an anomaly but perhaps useful to correlate data with supplier sources.

- [redacted] asked whether it was possible to determine from the post-mortems whether a pellet had passed through the body. [redacted] said that [redacted] and [redacted] are making notes during post-mortem examinations—however birds with no shot on X-ray were not being post mortemed.
- [redacted] raised the possibility that certain types of shot are more likely to go through the bird. [redacted] responded that 'harder' shots such as steel and tungsten were more likely to pass through the body than 'softer' shot such as lead. Potential biases were recognised but not thought to be particularly significant for this study.

Game Dealer Survey Winter 2 - Shot analysis

- Pellet analysis at Bristol University has started and will continue throughout December and January (on schedule).
- Electron microscopy had been investigated as an alternative method to determine other 'unknown' metals/alloys present in pellets analysed for Winter 2. All agreed that the same physical and chemical tests conducted for analysis in Winter 1 should be used for Winter 2 so that results are safely comparable across both winters.
- [redacted] suggested that confidence intervals should be used with results from shot confidently identified included in the headline results only. [redacted] and [redacted] commented that it would still be useful to report the results for shot not confidently identified.

BASC members' questionnaire

- [redacted] provided hard copies of the questionnaire and Defra & WWT commented on its professionalism and appreciated why such surveys often have a high response rate.
 - The questionnaire was sent to 3,000 members in England in September and October 09 (randomly selected from a database of ~65,500 members) of which there were 1,002 responses to date (33%).
 - [redacted] raised the point that the survey had been sent to a random sample of BASC members and not just wildfowlers so is not necessarily representative of wildfowlers alone. [redacted] commented that he is happy to use the data as representative of BASC membership although weighting measures should be considered for analysis.
 - [redacted] presented preliminary results.
 - Most members were over 50 years old (59.1%) and male (93.6%). [redacted] raised the possibility that differences between age groups may be biased by variation in the proportion of wildfowlers surveyed across age groups but commented that it was useful to highlight the age and sex breakdowns in the report nonetheless.
 - Most members surveyed were involved in driven game shooting (~75%), roughshooting (~70%) and inland duck shooting (~50%) with the least participating in coastal wildfowling (~12%).
 - Most respondents admitted using lead shot when participating in driven game shooting and roughshooting (~70%). Around 20% of respondents used lead when inland duck shooting and ~5% when coastal wildfowling. [redacted] commented that these data would probably represent minimum levels given that some respondents may not have been truthful. [redacted] questioned to what extent this also demonstrated a lack of understanding about the regulations and suggested that it would be useful to correlate this data with the understanding of regulations data.
 - 5.2% of respondents 'regularly' supplied game to game dealers. [redacted] suggested that it would be useful to correlate this with the type of shot used and understanding of regulations data.
 - Most respondents correctly thought that all shotgun shooting on/over foreshore was prohibited (53.7%).
 - Most respondents incorrectly thought that shooting on or over *all* wetland SSSI's was prohibited (41.7%) with only 6.8% correctly identifying that shooting on or over *certain* SSSI's was prohibited.
 - Most respondents thought that shooting *any* wildfowl was prohibited (74.5%) whilst 10.7% identified that shooting *certain* waterfowl everywhere was prohibited.
 - All agreed that cross-correlations of data are required for further insight into respondents' answers.
 - [redacted] asked for an initial analysis to be circulated to the steering group for comments and suggestions.
- Action [redacted]

- [redacted] asked whether the data lends itself to robust statistical analysis. [redacted] responded that it depended on the 'data cleaning' process and suggested that [redacted] included metadata to explain this process. [redacted] suggested that [redacted] advised [redacted] on the necessary 'data cleaning' processes. Action [redacted].
- [redacted] raised the issue that comments and suggestions made for the open-ended question (ie. Q. 18) would also need to be captured in the analysis.
- [redacted] announced a positive response from members to the recent lead article in Shooting & Conservation.

Shoot provider survey

- SCU turned the survey around quickly thanks to the efforts of [redacted]
- [redacted] showed an electronic copy to the group.
- The CLA has agreed to send out the survey on BASC's behalf to 3,000 of its members.
- The CLA have approved the covering letter. Surveys will be printed at BASC's end whilst collating and sending will be organised by the CLA.
- Original timeline maintained.
- [redacted] asked whether a second distribution was plausible. [redacted] responded that it would not be feasible given the deadline. [redacted] and [redacted] agreed that the CLA would not like to be asked again.
- [redacted] asked whether the CLA did its own surveys of its members. This is currently unknown.

Risk Register

- [redacted] commented that many of the issues have been resolved and that the overall risk was moving from 'medium' to 'low'.
- [redacted] suggested that the logistics of collating and sending the survey should be included as a risk given potential other arising priorities of the CLA. This risk can be reduced by sending the CLA printed copies as soon as possible to maximise their time.
- [redacted] raised the possible risk of a postal strike before Christmas. [redacted] commented that no strikes were planned.
- [redacted] to update the risk register. Action [redacted]

AOB

- None

Date of next meeting

- An interim teleconference to be held on 27th Jan 2010 to review progress.
- The 4th steering group meeting to be held at BASC HQ on 4th March 2010.
- Both dates to be confirmed. Action [redacted]