

Appendix B
Huon Aquaculture Seal Management Framework






DOCUMENT CODE :	ASOP0011.3 - Use of Seal Scare Darts		
EFFECTIVE DATE :	7 January 2016	VERSION 4	Page 1 of 7
DOCUMENT TITLE :	Safe Operating Procedure - Use of Seal Scare Darts		

Purpose: To Safely and Correctly Load and Deploy Seal Scare Darts

Safety Warnings:						
						
Explosives	Fire-arms	NO naked flames	NO smoking	Manual Handling	Falls	Slip / Trip

Identified Hazards / Risk Assessment / Job Safety Analysis			
Fire-arms	Explosives (Black Powder)	Slips / Trips / Falls	Manual handling
Never use firearms for any purpose other than those stated	No smoking. No ignition sources	Wear appropriate PPE. Move slowly. Don't rush in wet/slippery conditions	Use safe manual handling techniques at all times

P.P.E requirements	
 High visibility Personal Floatation Device (PFD)	 Steel Capped Boots or Gum Boots
 Ear protection	

Pre-requisites
Must be competent in task prior to performing unsupervised

Pre-Start Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval to use seal scare darts is granted by supervisor or authorised delegate as identified in training / competency matrix. Operators must be endorsed by DPIPWE (Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment) and appropriately licensed to use seal scares. Operators must hold an appropriately endorsed Tasmanian Firearms Licence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Category A,B – Purpose 3

Origin date: June 2014	Prepared By: Cheryl Shepherd	Date: 28.09.15
	Authorised By: Ian Trotter	Date: 28.09.15



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Operating Principles

ALWAYS:

- Load darts in a clean and dry environment and minimise the possibility of static electricity.
- Operate firearms in accordance with best practice handling procedures.
- Have the firearm unloaded when travelling between leases.
 - Required to locked away when travelling
- Report to a DPIPWE Contact Officer (via the Environment Manager or company veterinarian) within one (1) hour if the impact of a Seal Scare Dart is seen to cause an obvious injury to a seal.
- Record the use and effect of devices on the appropriate forms.
- Report any faults to manager / supervisor.

NEVER:

- Use Seal Scare Darts to randomly harass seals remote from marine farming activities.
- Deliberately discharge Seal Scare Darts towards the head of a seal.
- Discharge Seal Scare Darts when the seal is within five (5) metres of the permit holder.
- Tie or attach anything to the firearm to secure the weapon, other than an approved carry strap or lanyard. (Photo 10)
- Carry or hold the firearm in general conditions with finger/s inside the trigger guard, use the fore end, butt or attached carry strap.
- Commit to the use of the weapon in conditions that are not conducive to safe operation and accuracy.

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Use and Storage

- Seal Scare Darts may only be deployed by accredited permit holders, on fur seals, and only within the boundaries of the marine farming lease area or marine farming operations defined on the permit.
- Seal Scare Darts may only be deployed by accredited permit holders holding a Category 'A' and/or 'B' Firearms licence with an exemption (Cat 3) under the *Firearms Act 1996*.
- Seal Scare Darts may only be discharged from a Pneu-Dart model 196 cartridge fired rifle.
- The issue and storage of a Pneu-Dart model 196/193 Cartridge Fired Rifle and Seal Scare Darts and 'Black Powder' is restricted to marine farming operational bases designated by marine farming management and agreed upon by DPIPWE.
- All applicable Workplace Standards Tasmania and *Firearms Act 1996* requirements for the use and storage of the Pneu-Dart model 193/193 cartridge fired rifle, darts and 'black powder' must be complied with.
- The Permit conditions for Deter by the use of Scare Darts cartridge fired rifle and the Pneu-Dart Seal Scare Darts are mandatory. Applicants **must** comply with all conditions of the permit.

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Load Seal Scare Darts

- Ensure that the surface where the Seal Scare Dart will be loaded with powder is clean and dry.
 - Use a surface that minimises static electricity, e.g. timber bench top.
- The loading of Scare Darts should be undertaken in a location, and at a time that minimises exposure to other personnel.

NO SMOKING. NO IGNITION SOURCES. NO FLAMES. NO NAKED LIGHTS.

- Unscrew the metal end of the dart and remove it. Place it on a dry surface (Photo 1)
- Insert the funnel into the top of the dart and fill with an approved "Black Rifle Powder" (Photo 2)

General Note: It is important to not overfill the dart. A space of approximately 2-3mm must be left free under the screw cap to ensure that the powder can ignite.

- Refit the screw top to the dart and tighten securely. (Photo 3)

Safety Note: Place the loaded dart in a location that it cannot fall from as the percussion cap may detonate the dart. Ensure that the dart is not exposed to ignition sources or heat.



PHOTO 1



PHOTO 2



PHOTO 3

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Check the Firearm

- Ensure that the firearm is **unloaded**.

Safety Note: It must be confirmed that the firearm is unloaded before performing operational checks. **The magazine must be removed and the breach checked to ensure there is NO cartridge present. (Photo 4)**

- Ensure that the magazine is **NOT** fitted. (This reduces the likelihood that the weapon can be unexpectedly loaded during checking).
- Fit and check the bolt corresponding to the rifle.
 - The number on the bolt matches the last numbers in the serial number on the barrel.
 - Ensure that the bolt moves freely and operates correctly within the breach.
- Break the barrel and check that there is **NO** obstruction within the barrel or gas inlet. (Photo 6)
- Close the barrel and cock the weapon to check the operation of the safety mechanism.
 - Move the safety to the “SAFE” position. (Photo 5)
 - Aim the weapon into the air and squeeze the trigger.

Safety Note: The weapon must **NOT** dry-fire with the safety in the “SAFE” position. If the safety does not operate as required the weapon **must** be “tagged out” and the issue reported to your direct supervisor immediately.

- Remove the covers from the scope and turn it “ON” to check the battery.
- Check the operation of the gas regulator (Photo 4)

Safety Note: The weapon is to remain **unloaded at all times** other than when being used to deter seals.





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Loading for Use

The weapon is to remain unloaded at all times until the need is established for use.

- Insert the bolt into the breach
- When required, break the barrel of the weapon.
- Insert a loaded Seal Scare Dart into the barrel.
 - Ensure the metal end is inserted first.
 - The Dart **must** be pushed into the barrel until the tail is flush with the barrel opening (Photo 7)
- Close the barrel of the weapon and check that it is securely locked in place.
- Check that the safety is in the **“SAFE”** position. (Photo 8)
- Insert the appropriate number of (.22cal) Ramset Cartridges into the magazine.
- Insert the magazine into the weapon. (Photo 9)

DANGER: At this point, cocking the weapon and moving the safety to **“FIRE”** allows the weapon to be fired. **Extreme caution** must be taken while the weapon is in this state of readiness. Slips, trips, or falls due to environmental conditions etc, may cause the weapon to be discharged accidentally.



PHOTO 7



PHOTO 8



PHOTO 9

Attached to Operator / Attached to Sling Eye

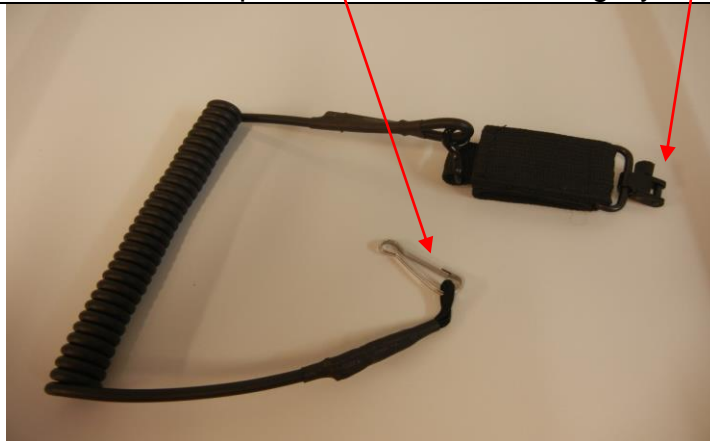


PHOTO 10

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Using the Weapon

The Permit conditions for “Deter by the use of Scare Darts - Cartridge Fired Rifle” and the “Pneu-Dart Seal Scare Darts” are mandatory. Applicants **must** comply with all conditions of the permit.

- The permit holder must be positioned within the approximate range of 5-35 metres of the seal being fired upon.
- DO NOT fire upon a seal that is closer than 5m away.
- Estimate the distance to the seal and select the appropriate ‘gas pressure’. (Photo 4)
 - 5m-20m = Pressure setting “3”
 - 20m-35m = Pressure setting “4”
 - Pressure 5 **MUST NOT** be used

PRESSURE SETTING “5” IS PROHIBITED

- Remove the caps from the weapons’ scope.
- Turn the scope “ON” by selecting the appropriate illumination for the ‘red dot’
- Take careful aim at the tail end of the seal.
 - DO NOT towards the head end of a seal.
- Move the safety to “FIRE”
- Fire at the seal when appropriate.

Safety Note: If the shot is not taken immediately, return the weapon to a safe state by moving the safety to the “SAFE” position and lifting the bolt. If the shot is not likely to occur the weapon must be fully unloaded.

- Reload and fire in accordance with preceding steps if required.
- Record the use and effectiveness of the shot/s on the appropriate log.

Remember to turn the ‘Red Dot’ scope off when not in use. This will preserve the battery life.

Origin date: June 2014	Prepared By: Cheryl Shepherd	Date: 28.09.15
	Authorised By: Ian Trotter	Date: 28.09.15



DOCUMENT CODE : ASOP0120 - Seal Removal by Sedation





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Purpose: Seal Removal by Sedation

Safety warnings			
			
Manual handling	Slips / Trips	Falling	Sharps handling

Identified Safety Hazard / Risk Assessment / Job Safety Analysis			
Working around firearms	Zoonotic disease transfer (from seal to human)	Bite injury from seal	Sharps injuries
Potential to be hit by a stray dart. Extreme caution to be taken.	Gloves and ventilation (half mask) to be worn. If seal appears sick (blood/mucus discharge) then DO NOT approach animal.	Extreme caution to be taken when working near seals.	Jabs from syringe or from broken vials. Take care when handling.

P.P.E requirements	
 Personal Floatation Device (PFD)	 High visibility clothing
 Steel capped boots or gumboots	 Eye protection when required
 Gloves	 Gath helmet (example picture)
 'Half' face mask	

Pre-requisites
Must be fully trained and competent in task prior to performing unsupervised

Origin date: September 2015	Prepared By:	Cheryl Shepherd	Date: 14.09.15
	Authorised By:	Steve Percival	Date: 11.11.15



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Equipment required

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pneu-Dart Rifle• Darts (recommended 3, 5 & 10 mL)• Sedative (Hypnovel)• Sterile saline solution• Gloves and half mask• Syringes (5mL)• Hypodermic needles (19G x 3.5" – for sedative; 21G x 1.5 – for saline)• Vaseline• Sharps disposal container | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seal net (Fuhrman net)• Seal holding pen• Retrieval dinghy• Paddles• Waterproof paper• Pencil• Support vessel with hiab• Gath helmet• Watch/phone |
|--|---|

Minimum staff required

- Marksman typically in the role of Team Leader
- Veterinarian's delegate (to administer sedative)
- Assistant
- Hiab operator (can be one of the above if qualified)
- Additional staff may be utilised as required, especially during seal transfer into holding pen
- Multiple roles can be filled by one person (such as Marksman and Vet delegate); however, a team of 4 individuals is the minimum required to undertake task

Permits and Reporting to DPIPWE (Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment)

- In the event that sedation of one or more seals occurs a DPIPWE officer must be informed within 48 hours of sedation taking place
- In the event of a seal becoming very distressed or there is an adverse effect on the seal, it must be reported to a DPIPWE officer within one hour of the incident
- **All contact with DPIPWE officers should be done through the Environment (Marine) Manager (Adam Smark), or Fish Health Manager (Alexander McLaran).**
 - If neither can be contacted the DPIPWE Officers can be contacted directly:
 - Mike Greenwood – 0418 123 772 or Mike.Greenwood@dpiuwe.tas.gov.au
 - Justin Febey – 0407 567 901 or Justin.Febey@dpiuwe.tas.gov.au

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Cheryl Shepherd

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Qualifications and requirements of staff



- Marksman **MUST** adhere to all of Huon Aquaculture's policies and procedures regarding the safe use of firearms.
- Marksman **MUST** also have a current Tasmanian Firearms Licence with a purpose 3 endorsement specific for fish farms, and have completed the 'Removal by Sedation' training with a DPIPW officer

Typical duties required from each staff member involved:

- **Vet's delegate** (Team Leader)
 - Brief staff on situation
 - Ensure correct dosage and fill darts with sedative
 - Record all relevant information (e.g. estimated seal weight, time of firing, dosage)
 - Assist with operation of seal retrieval vessel
 - Assist with on-water capture of seal
 - Liaise with DPIPW staff following sedation
- **Marksman:**
 - All firearm operations
 - Estimating seal weight
 - Remain on pen to assist in the securing and removal of seal
- **Assistants:**
 - Assist vet's delegate as required
 - Operate seal retrieval vessel
 - Facilitate the on-water capture of seal

1. Briefing

- **Veterinarian's delegate will:**
 - Brief staff of the planned procedure to capture seal(s) from pen, and each person's role
 - Confirm staff present are fit and capable of performing the required duties above
 - Ensure all required equipment is present and in good working condition
 - Confirm all required documentation is present and completed as necessary (as a minimum, DPIPW will require that the Vet Anaesthetic Monitoring Log is completed, refer **Attachment 1** – page 7 & 8)

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2. Prepare equipment

- **Veterinarian's delegate will:**
 - Consult with marksman and record seal species and estimated weight
 - Prepare darts appropriate to level of sedation required (refer **Attachment 2** – page 9, for dosing advice) top up with sterile saline solution so there is no air space left in dart
 - Snap top off hypnovel vial
 - Draw up the required amount of sedative with the longer needle attached
 - Insert needle the full length into dart tip and depress syringe
 - Top up dart with saline solution if not full
 - Dip the tip of dart in Vaseline to seal it
 - Ensure seal holding pen is suitable and in appropriate position on pen
- **Marksman will:**
 - Ensure firearm is in good working order
 - Load gun with filled darts and ensure pressure setting is appropriate
- **Assistants will:**
 - Assist vet's delegate with preparation of darts
 - Prepare seal recovery dinghy, ensuring paddles are present and capture net is in working order

3. Sedation

- **Marksman will:**
 - Fire dart at seal when a suitable shot presents itself and safe to do so. Aim for well muscled areas, such as the flank (near hip), lower back or shoulder. Darts **MUST** not be deliberately discharged towards the head or underbelly of the seal.
- **All staff will:**
 - Attempt to confirm by visual inspection that the dart successfully deployed – check that it has penetrated skin and is embedded in seal.
- **Veterinarian's delegate will:**
 - Record time and dosage of the fired dart
 - Monitor seal's behaviour and physical condition
 - Allow 20 minutes for sedative to take effect
 - Determine if level of sedation is enough to attempt retrieval or if further sedative is required
 - Prepare subsequent darts if additional sedative is required

Origin date: September 2015

Prepared By:

Cheryl Shepherd

Date: 14.09.15

Authorised By:

Steve Percival

Date: 11.11.15



- Notify DPIPWE within 48 hours that sedation of a seal has occurred
- If the seal becomes increasingly distressed and there is a genuine concern for the seals welfare, then **DPIPWE MUST be contacted within 1 hour**

If required, the **Marksman** can board seal recovery dinghy with **another staff member** in order to be manoeuvred into a better position to fire tranquiliser dart.

4. Capture



- **Any staff member** attempting to catch the seal while aboard the recovery dinghy **MUST** wear a Gath Helmet to protect from swinging net handles etc.
- **Any two staff will:**
 - Launch seal recovery dinghy
 - Paddle dinghy to suitable position, adjacent to sedated seal
 - Capture seal using appropriate net
 - One person will hold the net alongside recovery dinghy, ensuring seal's mouth/nose remains above water at all times – DO NOT attempt to bring seal into recovery dinghy
 - The other person paddles back to the removal point
 - Secure dinghy to handrail of pen

5. Transfer to holding pen

- **Assistant will:**
 - Remain in seal recovery dinghy until seal has been lifted onto collar/walkway. Whilst holding seal net, they will ensure the seal's mouth remains above water.
- When the seal is safely secured, the **Vet's delegate will** remove any embedded darts from the seal by pulling firmly and sharply on the shaft of the dart. This is easiest when seal is in the net rather than the holding pen.
- If deemed necessary, a qualified staff member may operate the hiab on the appropriate vessel, while remaining staff will work on the collar/walkway to attach seal net to the hiab. The seal will be lifted over handrail and placed adjacent to seal holding pen. All staff will then work to remove seal from net and enclose seal within the holding pen.
- If seal is of a manageable size for the team to remove from water by hand, this may be done so as an alternative to using the hiab.



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- Seal may be left within holding pen if attempting to remove additional seals, otherwise load pen onto suitable vessel and bring to base. Note that no more than one seal may be placed in a compartment of a pen.

6. Removal from site

- **Veterinarian's delegate will:**
 - Ensure DPIPWE is contacted **within 48 hours** and inform them of sedation
 - Arrange pickup from holding area (through Wildlife Relocation Services)
 - Continue to monitor sedated seal as required for up to two hours from time of capture, then occasionally until relocation vehicle arrives.

7. DPIPE Reporting



- A "DPIPWE accredited and permitted person" (typically the **Vet/Vet's delegate**) **MUST:**
 - Ensure DPIPWE contact officer is informed of sedation **within 48 hours** of sedation taking place
 - Complete all necessary documents (including Vet Anaesthetic Monitoring Chart and the Seal Trapping Monitoring Log) and forward onto Adam Smark and/or Alex McLaran
 - In the event of an adverse effect on a seal, **report this** to the DPIPWE contact officer **within 1 hour**

NOTE: All liaising with DPIPWE officers should be done through the Environment (Marine) Manager (Adam Smark), or Fish Health Manager (Alexander McLaran).

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Attachment 1 - SEAL TRAPPING MONITORING LOG

If seal was not landed in 6 hours you must complete the following - Monitoring Table

Date:	
Time Trapped:	

Condition & Behaviour of Seal (calm, resting, thrashing about etc.)		
Time checked (1)		
Time checked (2)		
Time checked (3)		
Time checked (4)		
Time checked (5)		
Time checked (6)		
Time landed:		

Comments: _____

Farm staff name: _____ Signed: _____
Reason (circle): **A B C D** (refer below guide)

Date:	
Time Trapped:	

Condition & Behaviour of Seal (calm, resting, thrashing about etc.)		
Time checked (1)		
Time checked (2)		
Time checked (3)		
Time checked (4)		
Time checked (5)		
Time checked (6)		
Time landed:		

Comments: _____

Farm staff name: _____ Signed: _____
Reason (circle): **A B C D** (refer below guide)

Please circle reason A, B, C, or D for each instance using the following as a guideline:	
A = No permitted staff available	B = Extreme weather conditions
C = Equipment breakdown	D = Other OH&S issue

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Attachment 1 (continued)

Veterinarian Anesthetic Monitoring Chart

Veterinarian /Anesthetist name:	
Permit no.	
Date:	Time:

Company:	Lease site:	Sedation Site Location:
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Species:	Male:	Female:	
Recapture:	micro-chip no:	New capture:	micro-chip no:

Pulse Oximeter:	Yes	No	(please circle)
Anesthetic system:	Tranquilizer dart gun IM	Jab stick IM	(please circle)

Drug and strength (mg/ml):	Estimated (or true) weight of seal (kg):
Dose rate (mg/kg):	Final calculated volume to be administered (ml)

Dart 1:			
Time deployed:	Dart size (ml/cc):	Distance:	T/gun pressure setting:

Dart 2:			
Time deployed:	Dart size (ml/cc):	Distance:	T/gun pressure setting:

Dart 3:			
Time deployed:	Dart size (ml/cc):	Distance:	T/gun pressure setting:

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Attachment 2 - SEAL SEDATION DOSING ADVICE

- Sedative of choice is Hypnovel (Midazolam) and the dose is based on the weight of the animal. An estimated weight of the animal is required to determine the dosage of sedative used.
- Typical concentration of sedative is 5mg/mL (15mg/3mL equivalent)
- Recommended sedative dosage is 0.45mg/kg of seal
- As sedative is 5mg/mL; then dosage is 0.09mL/Kg or 0.9mL/10kg of seal

Before using table below, ensure the concentration of sedative is 15mg/3mL (or 5mg/1mL)

Seal weight (KG)	Hypnovel (@5mg/mL)	Seal weight (KG)	Hypnovel (@5mg/mL)
40	3.6	230	20.7
50	4.5	240	21.6
60	5.4	250	22.5
70	6.3	260	23.4
80	7.2	270	24.3
90	8.1	280	25.2
100	9	290	26.1
110	9.9	300	27
120	10.8	310	27.9
130	11.7	320	28.8
140	12.6	330	29.7
150	13.5	340	30.6
160	14.4	350	31.5
170	15.3	360	32.4
180	16.2	370	33.3
190	17.1	380	34.2
200	18	390	35.1
210	18.9	400	36
220	19.8	410	36.9

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CONTACTS

HUON AQUACULTURE

NAME

CONTACT MOBILE

ADAM SMARK (Marine Environment Manager)	0418 452 430 or 03 6295 8115
ALEXANDER MCLARAN (Fish Health Manager)	0419 670 627
STEVE PERCIVAL (General Manager Fish Performance)	0429 146 048

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT CONTACT OFFICER (WMB)

NAME

CONTACT MOBILE

MIKE GREENWOOD	0418 123 772
JUSTIN FEBEY	0407 567 901

ACCREDITED SEAL RELOCATION SERVICE PROVIDER

NAME

CONTACT MOBILE

JASON ROFF (WILDLIFE RELOCATIONS)	0488 112 899
PHIL GREEN	0409 970 423

AQUACULTURE INDUSTRY VETERINARIAN

NAME

CONTACT MOBILE

KEVIN ELLARD	0418 131 212
ALISTAIR BROWN	0438 356 153
STEVE PERCIVAL	0429 146 048

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