

## // NEW SEAL LICENSING SYSTEM



### **Background**

From 31 January 2011, any fishery or fish farm in Scotland that requires to manage seals at any time of year, to prevent serious damage to fisheries or fish farms or to protect the health and welfare of farmed fish, will need an annual Seal Management Licence.

### **Application forms**

Application forms and associated guidance will be available from September 2010. Applications may be submitted either by individual fisheries or fish farms or by organised local or regional seal management groups consisting of a number of fisheries and/or fish farms. Completed applications will be accepted from September 2010 and must be submitted by 15 November 2010 at the latest. Failure to submit an application for a licence by the deadline will mean that a licence 'may be delayed or, in some circumstances, may not be considered.

### **Requested information on applications**

It is important that applicants provide the information requested on application forms to the fullest extent possible. This is especially important with regard to information about damage that seals have already done to a fishery or fish farm, evidence of negative effects on the health and welfare of farmed fish, and information about non-lethal alternatives that have been used. Failure to provide information requested may result in delays in processing or refusal of an application.

### **Consultation**

Marine Scotland will consult the Sea Mammal Research Unit, Scottish Natural Heritage and Marine Scotland Science about applications and will consider any comments received before deciding to grant or refuse a licence.

## Licences

Each licence granted will usually apply for a calendar year. Licences will specify a maximum number for each seal species (grey and common or harbour) for the licence period. This will be determined by reference to a Potential Biological Removal (PBR) i.e. the number that may safely be taken from a population without adversely effecting overall numbers. It will be an offence to exceed the maximum number specified on the licence.

## Marksmen

The only persons permitted to shoot seals will be individual marksmen nominated on the seal licence. They must have completed the relevant Seal Management Training Course, or achieved accreditation. This course is currently being developed in partnership with the Scottish Qualifications Authority. A further Topic Sheet on the Seal Management Training Course will be available shortly.

## Licence conditions

Each seal licence will include a list of conditions which must be observed including the type of firearm to be used, weather conditions, maximum range and carcase recovery. It will be an offence to breach any of the licence conditions. Licence holders must adhere to the Scottish Seal Management Code of Practice. It is a general principle of the new licensing system that seals should only be shot as a last resort.

## Reporting

The licensee must complete and submit a Seal Licence Return Form at the end of each quarter, providing details of seals shot during that period, including a nil return if no seals have been shot.

For further information please visit our website: [www.scotland.gov.uk/seallicensing](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/seallicensing)



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