



# Animal Ethics

## Ground Shooting of Large Feral Herbivores

*Camels, horses, cattle, donkeys, pigs*

The information in this factsheet has been collated directly from the National Standard Operating Procedures (NATSOPs) and Codes of Practice (CoPs) for the above listed large feral herbivores written by Sharp T (2011, 2012), Sharp T and Saunders G (2012) and the Terrestrial Vertebrate Working Group (2024) and available on the [PestSmart](#) website listed below under the Additional Online Resources section.

## General Guidelines

*Note: Information below is current as of February 2025*

### Why is ground shooting used?

Ground shooting can be undertaken easily by landholders to manage problem feral animals on their property. It is also a method to use when euthanising sick or injured large herbivores.

It can be a preferred option if the animal/s can be seen and within firing range, by using the correct firearm and ammunition.

Shooting can be a humane method of destroying large feral herbivores, when it is carried out by shooters with experience or continuous practice in this field.

### When to perform ground shooting culling?

Ground shooting can be used when the area is easily accessible and moderately flat terrain.

It is also a good use of resources to target small populations of large feral herbivores instead of aerial operations, which can be costly.

When feral animals are contained in traps, ground shooting is a preferred humane control option.

### Who can undertake shooting culling?

Qualified and professional sharpshooter contractors can increase your success numbers, but also your ranger group can undertake this work and develop your shooting skills with continuous practise and progress.



## How can Indigenous Ranger Groups undertake ground shooting?

For Indigenous Ranger Groups to undertake ground shooting, several key steps should be followed to ensure safety, legality, and effectiveness:

- **Training and Certification:** Rangers need to complete training in ground shooting, e.g. AHCPMG304 use firearm safely for humane destruction of animal.
- **Legal Permissions and Compliance:** Rangers must comply with local, state, and national laws on firearm use and feral animal management. This involves obtaining the necessary permits and adhering to regulations regarding protected species and shooting areas.
- **Cultural and Community Considerations:** Ground shooting should align with Indigenous cultural values and traditions, requiring community consultation and respect for traditional knowledge.
- **Safety Protocols:** Clear safety measures must be established, including protective gear, backup support, and effective communication. Safe firearm handling and storage are essential.
- **Collaboration with Organisations and Experts:** Working collaboratively with conservation organizations, and feral animal control experts can help ensure effective and humane ground shooting practices.
- **Corporate Firearms Licence:** Your corporation must hold a corporate firearms license for rangers to use firearms in the workplace. This is a process that has layers of policy, risk assessments and legislative requirements that are different in each jurisdiction.

Speak to your local and regional Police departments for more information about your State or Territory requirements. See below links under “Additional Online Resources” for each state and jurisdiction.

Refer to the NAILSMA Work, Health and Safety Training and Risk Mitigation Table for specific training units and legal guidelines for WA, NT and QLD.

## Training Requirements

It is important for the safety of yourself and the public that you are safety aware when using firearms, particularly in the workplace. Whilst it is different over organisations, it is recommended to complete firearms safety training to understand more about safely using firearms.

Undertake nationally accredited firearms training from a registered training organisation or trainer (see below). Recommended units to complete are - AHCPMG304 Use Firearms to Humanely Destroy Animals and WHS training. It is recommended to attend annual firearms refresher courses for continuous skills development and improvement.

## How do we measure its effectiveness?

- Understanding feral animal population change from ground shooting culling can be difficult to measure. However, there is more opportunities on Country to use this control method. There are opportunistic sightings while undertaking other work on Country and increasing rangers shooting skills over time to improve efficiency.
- It is recommended to use ground shooting as a control method in the situations above. To understand its effectiveness, you may develop a monitoring program that aligns with before and after culling efforts, aligned to seasonal changes and other variables. Monitoring damage levels by LFH can be an effective way to determine if your culling program is working.
- Apps such as Feral Counter can be used to assist in recording survey data.

## Community Education

It is important to work with Traditional Owners and community members and discuss any culturally and environmentally important sites that are starting to change due to large feral herbivore interactions. Working together with community to discuss preferred control options is a great way of developing community education of feral animals and the impact they could have on important sites.





## Additional Online Resources

[Primary Industries Standing Committee Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals – The Camel \(Camelus dromedarius\)](#)

[Primary Industries Standing Committee Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals – Feral Livestock Animals](#)

[PestSmart- National Code of Practice for the humane control of feral camels](#). This page contains the below resources as well as relevant Commonwealth and State or Territory legislation.

- [NATSOP-CAM001 National Standard Operating Procedure: Ground shooting of camels- PestSmart](#)
- [Humaneness assessment worksheet: Ground shooting of feral camels](#)

[PestSmart- National Code of Practice for the humane control of feral donkeys](#). This page contains the below resources as well as relevant Commonwealth and State or Territory legislation.

- [NATSOP-DON001 National Standard Operating Procedure- Ground Shooting of feral donkeys](#)

[PestSmart- National Code of Practice for the humane control feral horses](#). This page contains the below resources as well as relevant Commonwealth and State or Territory legislation.

- [NATSOP-HOR001 National Standard Operating Procedure: Ground shooting of feral horses](#)

[PestSmart- National Code of Practice for the humane control of feral pigs](#). This page contains the below resources as well as relevant Commonwealth and State or Territory legislation.

- [NATSOP-PIG003 National Standard Operating Procedure- Ground Shooting of Feral Pigs](#)
- [Glovebox Guide for Managing Feral Pigs](#)
- [NATSOP-PIG004 National Standard Operating Procedure: Use of Judas pigs](#)

NAILSMA [A Guide to Ethical Mustering](#)

[Feral Counter- Apps on Google Play](#) or [Feral Counter on the App Store](#), and [FeralScan](#)

## Firearms Licensing

[National Guidelines Firearms- 2017 National Firearms Agreement](#) | Attorney-General's Department  
Western Australia Government- [Licensing Services \(Firearms\)](#)

Queensland Government – [Weapons Licensing | QPS](#)

NT Government- [Licence and Permit Applications and Information | NT Police, Fire & Emergency Services](#)

## Firearms Training Providers

### Queensland

Cairns Firearms Safety Course  
0417395561 | [pgkl44@gmail.com](mailto:pgkl44@gmail.com)  
Cairns City, Queensland

Ballistic training Solutions Pty Ltd  
1300 738 098 | [ballistictraining.com.au](http://ballistictraining.com.au)  
Caloundra West, 4551 Queensland Australia

IMPACT- Townsville  
0417 069 961  
[impactfirearmstraining.com.au](http://impactfirearmstraining.com.au)

Asset College  
1300 731 602 | [Study@asset.edu.au](mailto:Study@asset.edu.au)  
[asset.edu.au](http://asset.edu.au)

### Northern Territory

[Firearms Training and Safety Course providers- NT](#)

Sureline Security & Firearms Training NT  
Humpty Doo, NT, 0836  
(08) 8988 2369 | 0427 612 789  
[surelinesecurity@bigpond.com](mailto:surelinesecurity@bigpond.com)

**Northern Territory *continued***

Australian Security Training (Gareth Graham)  
0412 387 178  
gareth.graham@itscomm.com.au

Survival and Field Safety Australia  
0400 296 179  
mark.butler@westnet.com.au

Paladin Firearm Solutions  
0428 588 515 | pat.paladin@gmail.com

Eagle Training Services (Gary Carter)  
0414 656 821  
gary@eagletraining.com.au

Morningstar Training (Mr David Farlam)  
0459 527 057  
info@morningstartraining.com.au

NT Firearms Training (Garry Miezis)  
0418 349 477 | garrrym26941@bigpond.com

BLP Training & INLOC Training (Darren North)  
1300 257 477  
training@blpts.com.au  
operations@inlocgroup.com

**Western Australia**

Paragon Corporate Training  
C4, 58 Newcastle Street, Perth WA 6000  
08 9227 5125 | 041 718 6380  
craig@paragontraining.com.au

Core Training Group  
113 Belmont Ave, Belmont 6104  
Postal: PO Box 441,  
Forrestfield, WA, 6058  
(08) 6336 8080  
admin@coretraining.wa.edu.au

**National / Other**

All States Training  
(07) 4123 0415  
info@centralsafetytraining.com  
Queensland 4650

Pest Animal Control and Training  
(Stuart Boyd-Law)  
0408 463 425  
sboyd-law@bigpond.com

Firearm Safety and Training Council Ltd  
P.O. Box 393, Terrey Hills NSW 2084  
Phone: (02) 9486 3077 Fax: (02) 9486 3497  
training@firearmtraining.com.au  
[firearmtraining.com.au](http://firearmtraining.com.au)  
ABN: 24 051 891 724  
National Provider No: 91258

