

Woolnorth Wind Farm Holding Injured Bird and Bat Reponses Procedure



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1. Purpose

The purpose of the procedure is to detail the process for collecting, treating and/or caring for a dead or injured bird or bat found at the wind farm sites, and the reporting and other tasks required.

2. Scope

The procedure applies to all Woolnorth Wind Farm Holding (WNH) personnel and contractors working at WNH Wind Farm sites.

3. Process steps and considerations for managing and collecting dead or injured bird and bats

3.1 Initial Alert

If a bird or bat (dead or injured) is found at a WNH operated Wind Farm, the Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) Manager or HSE Advisor must be contacted immediately (or in accordance with contractual requirements).

3.2 Injured birds

3.2.1 Safety precautions for collection of injured birds and bats

General:

Caution - Injured birds can cause serious and permanent injuries.

If an injured bird is found, it should be captured if possible. Personnel who are attempting to catch injured birds or bats should consider their personal safety and the safety of others. Any persons not competent to undertake the task (or not trained in capture and management techniques) should seek help from relevant personnel. This is because some species of birds when injured have the potential to inflict **SERIOUS** injury.

It may be necessary to conduct a risk assessment, implemented specific control measure or source additional equipment and PPE to protect yourself and the injured bird or bat. A standard risk assessment/method statement can be found in the Injured/dead Bird Recovery Kit but should be reviewed and 'on the day controls' inserted where applicable.

Take precautions against being bitten, scratched, beak-pieced or talon-pieced by the bird or bat. Additional task specific PPE is provided at each site (control building or ancillary building) in the Injured/dead Bird Recovery Kit and this shall be worn at all times when attempting to capture injured birds or bats (see further details below). Follow the job steps listed in the standard risk assessment/method statement located in the Recovery Kit.

Note that a 'spotter' may be required to observe the injured bird or bat (to avoid it being lost) while the risks are being considered or additional equipment or PPE is obtained.

In addition to the equipment contained in the Injured/dead Bird Recovery Kit, an Eagle Transport tube is available at Bluff Point Wind Farm and Musselroe Wind Farm. A 'pet' transport cage may also be co-located with the Eagle Transport tube to assist in the capture, storage and transport of injured birds. It

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may be necessary to gather the available equipment prior to attempting to capture the injured bird or bat.

Approach the injured bird or bat in a crouched position to help reduce alarm to the animal. Approach it slowly, but confidently, and capture it as quickly as possible to prevent escape or further injury. Attempt to capture the animal by placing a bag, cloth or blanket over it. Where possible and practicable handle the injured bird or bat 'lightly'. Contact the HSE Advisor or HSE Manager if advice on capture is required.

If any personal injury or near miss results from the collections of an injured bird or bat then an incident report form shall be used to document the incident.

For eagles – exercise caution: If an injured eagle is identified, only personnel trained in, or informed about, eagle capture and management should attempt to capture the injured bird. This is because injured eagles have the potential to cause serious harm through the use of their talons and biting. White-bellied Sea Eagles in particular have an ability to reach a long distance with their legs and talons. If a trained person is not available at the site then the HSE Manager or HSE Advisor should be contacted prior to attempting to capture the bird. As outlined above, where practical the injured bird should be observed until it is captured to ensure that if it moves it can be found.

For long-billed waders and diving birds – exercise caution: Handling of birds that have long sharp beaks such as cranes, egrets and cormorants, can be particularly hazardous. Such beaks have often evolved for stabbing and piecing of prey and they can therefore cause severe eye and fascial injuries can be inflicted due to the beak being used for defence.

For Bats - exercise caution: Lyssaviruses are known to have been transmitted through open wounds (bites, sores, etc.), and through mucous membranes (e.g. eyes, nose or mouth). Bats can easily bite through cloth or leather gloves, so take particular care to hold the head to prevent bites. Avoid direct contact with saliva of bats. Note that simply touching animals or coming into contact with their urine or faeces will not transmit lyssavirus or other closely related viruses, but may expose you to other micro-organisms that cause disease. If bitten or scratched, immediately wash the wound thoroughly (e.g. for approximately 5 minutes) with soap and water. (If available, a virucidal antiseptic should be applied after washing). Proper cleansing of the wound is regarded as the single most effective control measure for reducing transmission of lyssaviruses. If you get bat saliva in your eyes, nose or mouth, you should flush the area thoroughly with water. In all cases you should then seek medical advice immediately even if you have been vaccinated.

3.2.2 Handling and transporting injured birds and bats

The minimum PPE for this activity is eye protection, heavy jacket and long riggers gloves (for eagles) and short work gloves for smaller birds including long-billed waders and divers. Eagles should be covered with a blanket until the wind tips, tail and legs can be held together in an "air guitar" position i.e. low down on the handler's torso. Slide the bird head first into an eagle transport tube which is located either at the control building of Bluff Point and Musselroe Wind Farms, or other designated locations on those sites. The injured eagle should be carefully place head first into the tube and pushed slowly to the head of the tube. The tube shall be secured for transport to ensure the eagle does not slide out of the tube in transit. Care should be taken not to wrap or cover the tube as this may 'over-heat' the injured eagle.

Long-billed waders and divers should also be covered with a blanket for capture, but their head should always be kept covered until placed into a transportation vessel. These and other smaller injured birds and bats should be handled with wings folded in their natural position and transported in a cloth bag or darkened cardboard box or pet cage. Note: many birds and bats are very delicate and susceptible to overheating, so handle them carefully and also provide as much airflow and circulation as possible. Covering the bird or bat's head with a cloth (while allowing them to breathe) will often calm them when they are handled.

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Injured birds or bats should be taken to a suitable veterinary practise for treatment and appraisal. The HSE Advisor or Manager will need to be notified of the activity and will provide advice on where to take the bird or bat.

3.2.3 Report form

A Bird/Bat Report Strike Report form shall be completed for each injured bird or bat found. The form should be referred to before collecting the injured bird or bat to ensure that all relevant information is obtained. Photographs must be taken where possible. A Bird/Bat strike form should be located in the Injured/dead Bird Recovery Kit. The form must be provided to the HSE Advisor or HSE Manager as soon as possible (who will register the incident and conduct the external reporting if required).

3.3 Dead birds and bats

The bird or bat or their remains (feathers, bones etc.) need to be collected, and this should be done so immediately upon discovery (details in 3.1). Prior to collecting remains, the location of the evidence should be determined and photographs taken for future reference and analysis. Remove all remains from where it was found as per section 3.3.1.

Note - in some cases it may be necessary to contact the HSE Advisor or Manager prior to collection. Such cases would include dead eagle or threatened species such as an orange-bellied parrot or where more than 3 carcasses are identified.

3.3.1 Collecting dead birds or bats

The following equipment and task specific PPE are required for the collection of dead birds and bats. An Injured/dead Bird Recovery Kit is held at the control buildings on site and contains the following:

- Latex gloves
- Plastic bags (garbage and/or zip lock)
- Waterproof tape
- Permanent markers
- Fridge or esky and ice for storage
- Bird/bat strike form

Store the remains as follows:

- Seal in 2 layers of plastic garbage or zip lock bags
- Secure bags with tape or zip-tie
- Enclose a copy of the Bird/Bat Report Strike Form in the outside plastic bag.
- Place the sample on ice or in the freezer (if available on site).

3.3.2 Report form

Complete a Bird/Bat Strike Form as per section 3.2.3 of this Procedure.

4. Accountabilities

Employee

Implement this procedure

HSE Advisor/Manager

Ensure employees and contractors are aware of and comply with this procedure.

5. Consequences of breaching the procedure

Any breaches of this procedure may lead to disciplinary action.

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