

Auditing of Possum Monitoring Operations

MONITOR AUDITS

What to Audit

Compliance with Acts and Regulations

- Animal Welfare Act – particularly in relation to use of traps.
- Territorial authority by-laws are being adhered to.

Compliance with consenting authority requirements and conditions

- Check to ensure all relevant permits and consents have been obtained and supplied to Vector Manager prior to the commencement of work.
- DoC trapping permit conditions met.
- TA consent conditions met if relevant (e.g. when working on their land).

Compliance with landholder consents

- Review consents, check activities against conditions – field or telephone audit.

Compliance with contractual requirements

- Audit against operational plan (what, when and who) – refer clause 3.8 of the Vector Monitoring Contract.
- Audit against the Vector Managers Monitoring plan – which includes lines placement and line direction, use of raised sets (see section 4 of this document).

Compliance with protocol requirements

- Lure placement, line length, and trap setting as per NPCA Monitoring Protocol and section 4 of this document.

Personnel

- All staff are certified by NPCA to carry out duties (from staff training records).

Compliance with Operators Health and Safety Plans

- Relevant Health and Safety plan and company SOP and conditions reviewed and assessed in the field
- Plant and equipment audited for WOF and other safety requirements

Equipment

- Check contractor has equipment appropriate to the task, including: No.1 double coil sprung traps, hipchain, cotton, compass, lure, hammer, staples, tying wire or cord, leaning boards (if required), backing boards (if required), map.
- Traps are inspected for wear, tear and cleanliness.

- For monitor's that have an escape (determined as per NPCA monitoring protocol) rate of more than 20% (calculated as: number of escapes/(number of possums caught + escapes) x 100), all the traps that monitorer owns should be audited for a minimum clamping force (and also for other factors which may contribute to increased escapes as per the recommendations in the research).

When to Audit

- All new field staff and each of the contractor's field staff will be audited on their first monitor.
- At least one subsequent audit that year then at least annually thereafter.
- All input contracts are audited.
- Repeat audits of non-conformances (i.e. anything that does not comply with section 1) are found. Should occur on the same operation if at all possible and must occur on the next operation if this is not possible – but in either case the repeat audit must be carried out within one month.
- It is recommended that a minimum of 10% of lines for each monitoring operation that is audited are checked.

Audit Processes

- Audits may be unannounced or under notification.
- Audit outcomes will be relayed to contractor on the day of the audit.
- Written audit report to contractor within 10 days (clause 9.2 of the Vector Monitoring Contract) of completion – invite feedback from contractor and copy to file.

Consequences of failed audit

- If a critical point* is failed on a monitoring line, the results of that line are deleted from the result and the contractor will be required to establish a contingency line at monitor contractor cost.
- Check out a further 10% of lines.
- Any fraudulent activity should result in the Vector Manager immediately terminating the contract and a re-monitor of project at the contractor's expense. Vector Manager notifies the police and other Vector Managers.
- Failure to meet critical points results in the issue of a non-compliance notice.

****Critical points as per Protocol***

Line placement – line to be within 50m of start point in bush and other stratum which has a rigid start point and 200m on farmland and 100m bush pasture strata.

Line bearing – All lines to be on specified bearing, unless farm trap patch or Bush/pasture margin. ($\pm 10^\circ$).

Line length – 200m \pm 20 m

All traps must set in accordance with the protocol.

Lure – where trap backing allows lure to be applied from backing base to 50cm high \pm 10cm (where possible). Traps sites with a trap backing <20 cm must not be used. Lure must be replaced as required.