



agriculture, land reform & rural development

Department:
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

GUIDELINES FOR MOBILE GAME MEAT ABATTOIRS

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1. Acronyms

NEO	National Executive Officer
PEO	Provincial Executive Officer

2. Definitions

Mobile abattoir	means an abattoir as defined under the Meat Safety Act, 2000, which is designed to be mobile, built on a mobile platform that can be relocated from one site to another.
National Executive Officer	means the officer designated as such in terms of section 2(1) of the Meat Safety Act, 2000.
Owner	means the owner of the mobile game meat abattoir, and who shall, for the purpose of operating a mobile game meat abattoir, also be regarded as the owner of the land on which the abattoir is operating
Provincial Executive Officer	means the officer of the province designated as such in terms of section 5(2)(a) of the Meat Safety Act, 2000
The Act	means the Meat Safety Act, 2000 (Act No. 40 of 2000)

3. Introduction

The game meat industry has grown significantly over the past years, and that has meant that there is a need for more abattoirs for the slaughter of game animals. The nature of game meat harvesting is such that fixed abattoirs may not be a viable solution to slaughter game animals and mobile abattoirs are able to provide the required service to ensure that the meat is slaughtered in a safe and hygienic environment.

The process of slaughtering game animals is multi staged with the shooting of the animal taking place in the field and the dead animal brought to a depot for evisceration and initial meat inspection. The partially dressed game carcass is then transported to an abattoir for further dressing and final meat inspection before release for human consumption. The presence of an abattoir on the farm enables all slaughter processes to be carried out on the farm.

A mobile abattoir has the ability to address the logistics challenges in game animals slaughter and can be moved between farms where slaughtering is taking place without a need for a permanent abattoir being constructed on such farms.

4. Purpose

- 4.1. To provide guidelines for the slaughter of game animals through a mobile abattoir.
- 4.2. To set requirements for a mobile game meat abattoir, in line with the provisions of the Act and regulations.

5. Legislative mandate

The slaughter of animals for human consumption is regulated under the Meat Safety Act, 2000 (Act No. 40 of 2000). Section 7 of the Act stipulates that no person may slaughter any animal at any place other than an abattoir; permit the slaughter of any animal at any place under his or her control, unless the place is an abattoir; or sell or provide meat for human and animal consumption unless it has been slaughtered at an abattoir.

6. Application for approval of a mobile game meat abattoir

The approval process of a mobile game meat abattoir is in two folds, the first being the approval of the design and structure of the mobile abattoir by the NEO, then the approval of the operations of the abattoir by the PEO in which the abattoir is to operate.

6.1. Registration of a mobile game meat abattoir by the NEO

For an abattoir to be registered for the first time, the owner must submit the following set of documents to the NEO for evaluation and approval:

- a. A properly completed application form obtainable from the National Directorate: Veterinary Public Health for approval of a mobile game meat abattoir.
- b. A complete set of design drawings of the facility.

The NEO may require the mobile unit to be subjected to a trial slaughter before approval. Once the NEO is satisfied that the facility is fit to operate as an abattoir, the facility will be registered as an abattoir by the NEO and issued with a national registration number. A mobile abattoir which is registered by the NEO may operate in any Province, pending approval of its operations by the PEO as detailed below.

The registration of a mobile game meat abattoir shall be valid for a period of 12 months. Re-registration of an abattoir by the NEO will be dependent on satisfactory audit and inspection reports by the NEO and PEOs. The owner of the abattoir must apply for re-registration by completing an application form obtainable from the NEO.

6.2. Approval of the operations of a mobile game meat abattoir by the PEO

In order for a mobile game meat abattoir to operate in a particular Province, the owner of the abattoir must apply to the PEO for permission to operate the facility as an abattoir in

the province. A mobile game meat abattoir becomes a fully operation abattoir when on location and set up for slaughter. Requirements for an abattoir such as access control, management of effluents, hygiene management system, meat inspection provision, etc., must be met in order for the PEO to approve the abattoir for operating in the Province.

The PEO may require a trial slaughter before granting permission for the abattoir to operate in the Province. The PEO may rely on the successful operations of a mobile game meat abattoir in another Province to grant permission to operate, without the requirement of a trial slaughter.

In order for the PEO to approve the operations of an abattoir at a specific location (Slaughter site) in the Province, the owner must submit the following documents to the PEO:

- a. A completed application form obtainable from the PEO for site inspection.
- b. Zoning confirmation of site for abattoir activity by the local municipality.
- c. Letter of no objection from the Department responsible for environmental affairs in the Province
- d. Written Hygiene Management System
- e. Agreement with a meat inspection service provider for the rendering of the meat inspection service.
- f. A schedule of the proposed period during which the slaughter will take place at the specified slaughter site(s).

Where the mobile game meat abattoir is intended for operations on more than one occasion at a specified site, e.g., on a seasonal basis, the applicant must specify the relevant details such as expected periods of operations. The PEO may approve the operations for a once off period or multiple operations as may be deemed appropriate.

7. Requirements for a mobile rural game meat abattoir

Considering the requirements for an abattoir to be graded as a mobile rural game meat abattoir-

- (a) the throughput may not exceed 6 units per day, provided that the PEO may determine a lower maximum throughput for an abattoir on grounds of the hourly throughput potential relative to available equipment and facilities including hanging space, chiller capacity;
- (b) the site must be secured and have controlled access for people, vehicles and animals;
- (c) the unit must be at least 5m (L), 2,2m (W), and 3,2m (H) in order to ensure effective and hygienic slaughter. The walls and floors must be built of durable materials impervious to moisture which can be cleaned and sanitised as necessary to prevent product contamination or creation of insanitary conditions. Wall to wall and floor to wall junctions must be rounded;
- (d) it must consist of a room equipped with hanging facilities where harvested game carcasses or partially dressed game carcasses are dressed;

- (e) The room mentioned in paragraph (d) must be fitted with an efficient ventilation system;
- (f) a room adjacent to the dressing room must be provided for the handling, washing and keeping of rough offal intended for human consumption, however if rough offal is condemned on the field the room is not needed.
- (g) the room mentioned in paragraphs (f) must be separate and adjacent to the dressing room and interconnected by means of a hatch, door or walkway;
- (h) a door must be provided where harvested game or partially dressed game carcasses are offloaded into the abattoir, dressed or partially dressed game carcasses and offal are dispatched and for personnel entrance into the abattoir.
- (i) the door mentioned in paragraph (h) must always be closed during slaughter operations or be fitted with a mechanism that prevent the entrance of flies and other vermin into the abattoir during slaughter operations.
- (j) a curbed and drained area adjacent to the unit must be provided to hold containers with inedible products prior to removal;
- (k) toilet with hand wash facilities must be provided;
- (l) provision must be made to store items needed in the daily process hygienically;
- (m) provision must be made to ensure that personnel do not sit or lie on the ground or soil their protective clothing during rest period.
- (n) chilling facilities must be provided for –
 - (i) partially dressed game carcasses but this is not applicable when harvested game and partially dressed game carcasses are transported directly from harvesting for immediate dressing in a unit;
 - (ii) game carcasses and red offal, provided that red offal may be removed from the abattoir on a continuous basis but within four hours after a game animal has been eviscerated; and
 - (iii) skin-on heads, feet and washed rough offal in case where they are used for human consumption; provided that the chilling facilities need not be attached to the unit, but their proximity to the abattoir must be such as not to compromise hygiene standards and must be approved by the PEO. The chilling facility may be omitted if rough offal is removed from the unit on a continuous basis but within four hours after evisceration, provided that the PEO may determine a shorter period;
- (o) facilities for treatment of conditionally passed game carcasses affected by parasitic intermediate stages (e.g. cysticercosis) must be arranged with the approval of the PEO.
- (p) a facility where transport vehicles must be cleaned and sanitized after offloading must be provided;
- (q) the abattoir must be provided with the following equipment:
 - (i) A hoist to lift the carcass of large animals to slaughter in a hanging position;
 - (ii) A rail system of suitable height to accommodate the species to ensure that the carcass is sufficiently above the floor to prevent carcass contamination;

- (iii) Hand wash basins with water pressure and hot water of about 40°C, within 3 meters from the work stations for personnel and equipment cleaning;
- (iv) Equipment for sterilizing knives and hooks either through hot water at 82 °C or an alternative method of sterilisation approved by the PEO;
- (v) Adequate provision of potable water with sufficient pressure for cleaning of the abattoir and equipment;
- (vi) Suitable and adequate power system for operating of the equipment and supplying lighting of 540 lux for meat inspection points and 220 lux for work areas as required;
- (vii) Equipment to slaughter the species as per the registration of the unit.
- (viii) External boot-wash and hand wash basin for personnel at the abattoir entrance.

8. Requirements for a mobile low throughput game meat abattoir

Considering the requirements for an abattoir to be graded as a low throughput game abattoir, all requirements mentioned under requirements for a mobile rural game meat abattoir must be met, and in addition –

- (a) a maximum throughput of 20 units per day may not be exceeded, provided that the PEO may determine a lower maximum throughput for an abattoir on grounds of the capacity of the receiving area, hourly throughput potential relative to available equipment and facilities, including hanging space and chiller capacity;
- (b) a door equipped with docking seals or similar facilities intended to minimize exposure of the product to the external environment must be provided for offloading harvested game or partially dressed game carcasses and red offal;
- (c) separate holding chillers must be provided to accommodate partially dressed game carcasses received prior to dressing if flaying is not carried out immediately;
- (d) the chillers referred to in paragraph (c) may be substituted with a mobile chiller vehicle connected to the receiving area by docking seals or similar facilities;
- (e) a side rail or hooks for game carcasses and containers for offal, must be provided for condemned or detained game carcasses and organs requiring secondary meat inspection;
- (f) a room must be provided where hides, skins, heads, feet and inedible products are kept prior to removal, unless these parts are removed on a continuous basis;
- (g) the room as mentioned in paragraph 7(f) must have an exterior door for the removal of those products and in the case of paunches and intestines from game animals that were eviscerated in the field it must be received for inspection purposes through this exterior door;
- (h) an area equipped to quarter, sort and mark game carcasses and red offal must be provided;
- (i) a door equipped with docking seals or similar facilities intended to minimize exposure of the product to the external environment must be provided for the dispatching of game carcasses, portions and red offal;

- (j) change rooms, showers, toilets as well as hand wash facilities must be provided on the site for persons working at the unit;
- (k) rooms or facilities must be provided for the –
 - (i) storage of cleaning equipment and materials;
 - (ii) cleaning and sterilization of movable equipment; and
 - (iii) a facility where meat transport vehicles must be sanitized must be provided

9. General structural and operational requirements

The following requirements for a game meat abattoir as contained in the game meat abattoir regulations shall apply to a mobile game meat abattoir; provided that where a mobile game meat abattoir slaughter operations necessitate a different approach to the provisions in the regulations, the owner must apply for deviation or exemption through a protocol for approval by the PEO:

9.1. Structural requirements:

- a. General requirements
- b. Premises
- c. Cross flow
- d. Requirements for interior of building and rooms
- e. Requirements for equipment
- f. Requirements for toilets and change rooms
- g. Sterilisers
- h. Hand wash-basins
- i. Apron-on wash cabinets
- j. Water supply
- k. Facilities and areas for handling of inedible, condemned products and refuse material
- l. Game meat inspection facilities
- m. Chillers and freezers

9.2. Game harvesting vehicles

9.3. Food safety practices and related matters:

- a. Offal handling
- b. Chilling and freezing at abattoirs
- c. Loading practices for transportation of meat
- d. Sanitation

9.4. Food safety management and evaluation systems

9.5. Requirements for persons entering abattoirs

9.6. Harvesting and dressing of game

9.7. Game meat inspections

9.8. Marks and marking

9.9. Treatment of condemned products

10. Responsibilities and accountabilities

10.1. Responsibilities of the owner

- a. Ensure that the abattoir is registered by the NEO and has a valid registration number.
- b. Procure a meat inspection service for the abattoir.
- c. Ensure that all meat inspection personnel are registered by the PEO.
- d. Comply with all provisions of the Act and its regulations.
- e. Provide and implement a hygiene management system.

10.2. Responsibilities of National Executive Officer (NEO)

- a. Registration and issuance of a registration number for a compliant mobile game meat abattoir.
- b. Inspect the mobile unit for compliance to the Act, regulations and guidelines.
- c. Maintain a database of registered mobile game meat abattoirs.
- d. Distribute the database of registered mobile game meat abattoirs to PEOs.
- e. Monitor the slaughter operations across the country to ensure compliance to the Act and standardization of the slaughter operations.

10.3. Responsibilities of the Provincial Executive Officer (PEO)

- a. Approval of slaughter sites for mobile game meat abattoirs in Provinces.
 - b. Issue instructions for any additional requirements that may be needed.
 - c. Audit and monitor slaughter operations for regulatory compliance.
 - d. Report non compliances to the NEO.
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