

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 27 April 2020 14:46
To: [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: Re: Seal shot under licence - reporting

Hi [Redacted],

Just to follow up on this, as [Redacted] points out the information provided to us on seals shot under licence is limited, so meaningful oversight is not possible under the current system. Whilst it is appreciated that recovery of a grey seal from the water for examination isn't trivial, the lack of data or samples means we cannot assess species, confirm the 'identity' of cases shot and reported vs those shot illegally, establish if the animal was shot humanely, or assess stomach contents for prey analysis.

If and when the legislation around seal management is reviewed, can we suggest that a requirement of the licence is all, or almost all (eg 80%) of shot animals are photographed and reported to SMASS, and it is made incumbent on those issued with licences to recover at least a proportion of cases and courier them to us for necropsy? The current system doesn't allow assessment of the welfare aspect of seal management or help establish if the culling of suspect 'rogue seals' as a measure of last resort even works.

Happy to discuss this in more detail if you wish, appreciate this is politically very complex, especially given the wider issue of ADD and the MMPA, but it probably needed flagging.

Best

[Redacted]

[Redacted]
Scottish Marine Animal Stranding Scheme
SRUC Northern Faculty
An Lòchran, Inverness Campus, IV2 5NA
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

On Mon, 27 Apr 2020 at 10:27, [Redacted]> wrote:

Morning [Redacted],

We have had 14 reports the majority from Scottish Sea Farms Ltd. None were recovered and sent to us for necropsy none were sampled. Five animals, all grey seals were confirmed with photos, the remainder 9 were not. Details of all the cases are below.

1. Reported as grey seal shot at Wyre, Shetland 09/01/20 grid ref HU456253 no photos to confirm the species carcass sunk. Scottish Sea Farms Ltd.
2. Grey seal confirmed by photos of live animal prior to shooting Taranaish, Great Bernera, Lewis 16/01/20 NB 1626539463 carcass sunk. Scottish Salmon Ltd.
3. Grey seal confirmed by photos at Miavaig, Uig Lewis NB12555 34433 22/01/20 carcass sunk. Scottish Salmon Ltd.

4. Grey seal confirmed by photos at Miavaig, Uig Lewis NB12555 34433 22/01/20 carcass sunk. Scottish Salmon Ltd.
5. Reported as grey seal shot near Hawn, Shetland 03/02/20 grid ref HU456253 no photos to confirm the species carcass sunk. Scottish Sea Farms Ltd.
6. Reported as grey seal shot at Wyne, Orkney 03/02/20 grid ref HY456253 no photos to confirm the species carcass sunk. Scottish Sea Farms Ltd.
7. Reported as grey seal shot at Swarta Skerry, Vidlin, Shetland 28/02/20 grid ref HU485676 no photos to confirm the species carcass sunk. Scottish Sea Farms Ltd.
8. Grey seal confirmed by photos of live animal prior to shooting Swarta Skerry, Vidlin, Shetland 25/03/20 grid ref HU484676 carcass sunk. Scottish Sea Farms Ltd.
9. Grey seal confirmed by photos of live animal prior to shooting Swarta Skerry, Vidlin, Shetland 26/03/20 grid ref HU484676 carcass sunk. Scottish Sea Farms Ltd.
10. Reported as harbour seal shot at Shuna, Loch Linnhe 09/01/20 grid ref NM 925497 no photos to confirm the species carcass sunk. Scottish Sea Farms Ltd.
11. Reported as grey seal shot at Swarta Skerry, Vidlin, Shetland 04/04/20 grid ref HU485676 no photos to confirm the species carcass sunk. Scottish Sea Farms Ltd.
12. Reported as harbour seal shot at Shuna, Loch Linnhe 03/04/20 grid ref NM 925497 no photos to confirm the species carcass sunk. Scottish Sea Farms Ltd.
13. Reported as grey seal shot at Wyne, Orkney 16/04/20 grid ref HY456253 no photos to confirm the species carcass sunk. Scottish Sea Farms Ltd.
14. Reported as grey seal shot at Swarta Skerry, Vidlin, Shetland 21/04/20 grid ref HU485676 no photos to confirm the species carcass sunk. Scottish Sea Farms Ltd.

Most of reports we receive are like this "I am writing to report the sinking of a seal carcass at Vidlin (Grid Reference - HU485676) on 21.04.2020. 1 Grey seal was culled using a single shot to the head by a licenced marksman – this has been reported to Marine Scotland and RSPCA. Unfortunately there are not photos available."

I always ask for a photo of the animal when we get a report, though as you can see they aren't particularly good at providing them.

Hope this helps?

Best wishes

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Scottish Marine Animal Stranding Scheme,

SRUC Northern Faculty,

An Lòchran, Inverness Campus,

Inverness

Scotland

IV2 5NA

[Redacted]

www.strandings.org

From: [Redacted]

Sent: 24 April 2020 17:07

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

Subject: RE: Seal shot under licence - reporting

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Sorry [Redacted], I probably was not clear. Reports that you have received where they have recovered the carcasses and reported these to SMASS.

Thank you

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 24 April 2020 17:03
To: [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: Sealshot under licence - reporting

Good evening [Redacted]

I hope that this email finds you safe and well in these current trying times.

In February you kindly provided me with details of the number of seals shot under licence that has been reported to SMASS. I am working on a number of issues in relation to seals and it would be really helpful to get the following information from you, preferably in a table.

- Number of seals reported to the scheme in 2020, including species, date of reporting/shooting and location (name of farm or river board)
- Number of seals recovered for necropsy (if not, it would be helpful to know why we couldn't, although I appreciate that this has not been possible since the lockdown was announced)
- Number of seals which were sampled or photo's provided.

I am conscious that we made a concerted effort when the 2020 licences were issued, for people to recover carcasses where possible and report them to you for reporting and collection purposes. It would be good to know if this message has got through.

Many thanks and have a lovely weekend as the weather is looking beautiful.

Kind regards,

[Redacted]

[Redacted]
Marine Scotland – Marine Planning and Policy

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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From: SMASS <stranding@sruc.ac.uk>

Sent: 10 May 2020 16:25

To: [Redacted]

Subject: Fwd: Seal Cull

Hi [Redacted]

And another one. I appreciate these reports are perhaps better collated and sent periodically as you suggested, but this report highlights the recurrent theme. Given the proforma nature of these reports, we asked if it may be possible to get more information from these cases. Short answer was no; they have no willingness, intention or, to fair in some cases, capacity, to collect any more detailed information. In some cases we get photos of damaged stock or, as you say, seals in the water, but nothing at a resolution which can assess if these culls are being undertaken in adherence with regulations.

All the best

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Scottish Marine Animal Stranding Scheme
SRUC Northern Faculty
An Lòchran, Inverness Campus, IV2 5NA

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [Redacted]

Date: Sun, 10 May 2020 at 14:50

Subject: Seal Cull

To: Stranding@sruc.ac.uk <Stranding@sruc.ac.uk>

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Good Afternoon

I would like to report a seal cull (Site Co-ordinates - 57.3854 N 5.6142 W) on 08/05/2020. No photos have been taken during this execution.

1 Common seal was culled using a single shot to the head by a licenced marksman – this has been reported to Marine Scotland and RSPCA.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me.

Best Regards

[Redacted]

Scottish Sea Farms Limited

South Shian, Benderloch, Argyll & Bute, Scotland, PA37 1SB

[Redacted]

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From: SMASS <stranding@sruc.ac.uk>

Sent: 07 May 2020 17:38

To: [Redacted]

Subject: Fwd: Seal Cull

Hi [Redacted], for info. Hope things otherwise well with you?

Cheers

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Scottish Marine Animal Stranding Scheme
SRUC Northern Faculty
An Lòchran, Inverness Campus, IV2 5NA

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [Redacted]

Date: Thu, 7 May 2020 at 16:29

Subject: Seal Cull

To: Stranding@sruc.ac.uk <Stranding@sruc.ac.uk>

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Good Afternoon

I would like to report a seal cull (Site Co-ordinates - 56.5087 N 5.5412 W) on 05/05/2020. No photos have been taken during this execution.

1 Common seal was culled using a single shot to the head by a licenced marksman – this has been reported to Marine Scotland and RSPCA.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me.

Best Regards

[Redacted]

Scottish Sea Farms Limited

South Shian, Benderloch, Argyll & Bute, Scotland, PA 37 1SB

[Redacted]

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