





## **EQUIPMENT REQUIRED**

### **Firearms and ammunition**

- For distances out to around 80 metres, small bore rifles fitted with a telescopic sight are recommended eg. .22 rimfire. Centre-fire rifles eg. .22 Hornet, .223 Rem, could be used in areas where long shots are required. Hollow-point or soft-nosed ammunition should be used.
- For a moving target at ranges less than 20 metres, a 12-gauge shotgun with shot sizes between No. 4 and No. 6 may be used. However, shotguns are not recommended for shooting rabbits because their noise level will drive nearby rabbits to cover.
- The accuracy and precision of firearms should be tested against inanimate targets prior to the commencement of any shooting operation.

### **Other equipment**

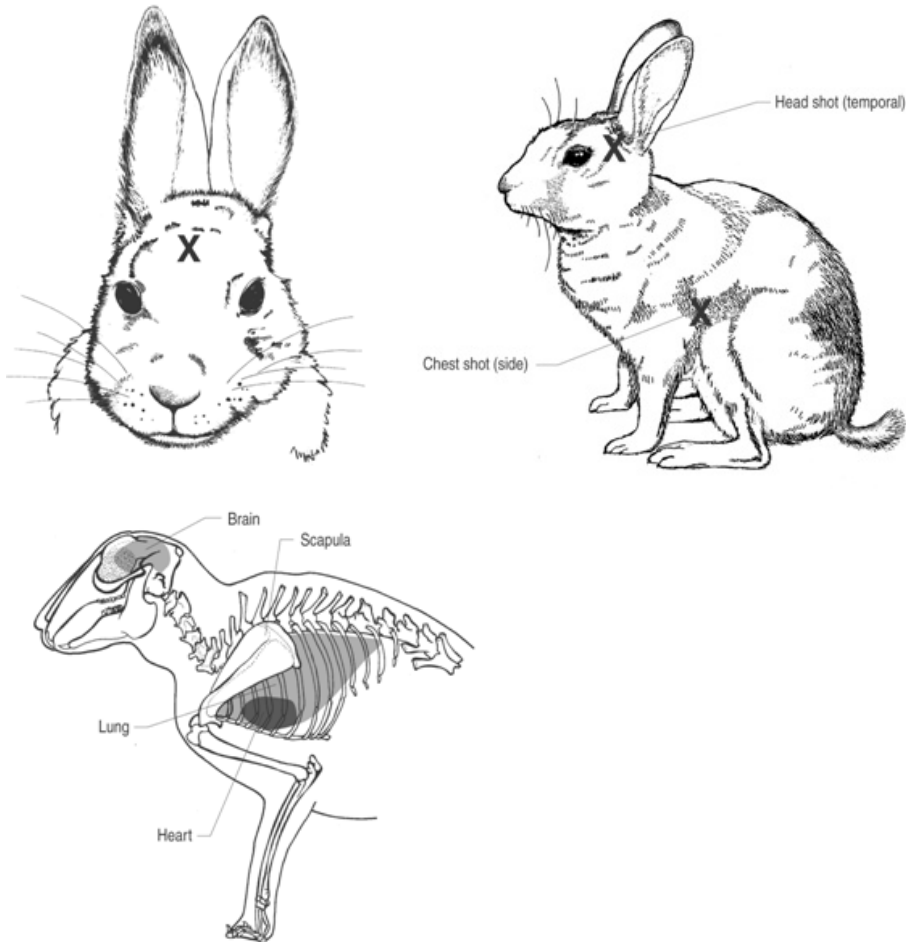
- if shooting at night, a handheld spotlight (at least 100 watt), or a helmet or headband mounted 12 volt (35 watt) spotlight
- first Aid kit
- lockable firearm box
- lockable ammunition box

## **PROCEDURES.**

### **Shooting at night**

- Most shooting of rabbits is done at night with the aid of a spotlight to locate them while they are feeding, or are away from cover. This method relies on the ability of the shooter to approach the animal until it is in shooting range.
- It is recommended that during daylight hours shooters familiarise themselves with the terrain they are to cover. Take note of potential hazards and also any landmarks that may help with navigation.
- Rabbits must NOT be shot from a moving vehicle or other moving platform as this can significantly detract from the shooters' accuracy. Ensure you are in a firm, safe and stable position before taking a shot.
- Shooting over the top of hills or ridges produces unacceptable risk. Be aware that the spotlight only illuminates a small portion of the danger zone and only a fraction of the projectile's range.
- When illuminated by the spotlight, rabbits have a pink/red eye shine.

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### Shooting in the day

- Rabbit activity is mainly nocturnal or crepuscular, so shooting during the day is less effective than shooting at night with a spotlight.
- If dogs are used to flush rabbits out from warrens or vegetation, they must be adequately controlled to prevent them from attacking rabbits. Dogs should only be trained to drive rabbits from cover, not to capture or attack them.
- Daylight drives not selective, so there is a risk of encountering other animals, including pet cats, which can be mistaken for a rabbit and shot. Also, if dogs are used, they may pursue and sometimes catch non-target animals. Capture of rabbits or non-target species by dogs is unacceptable on animal welfare grounds.

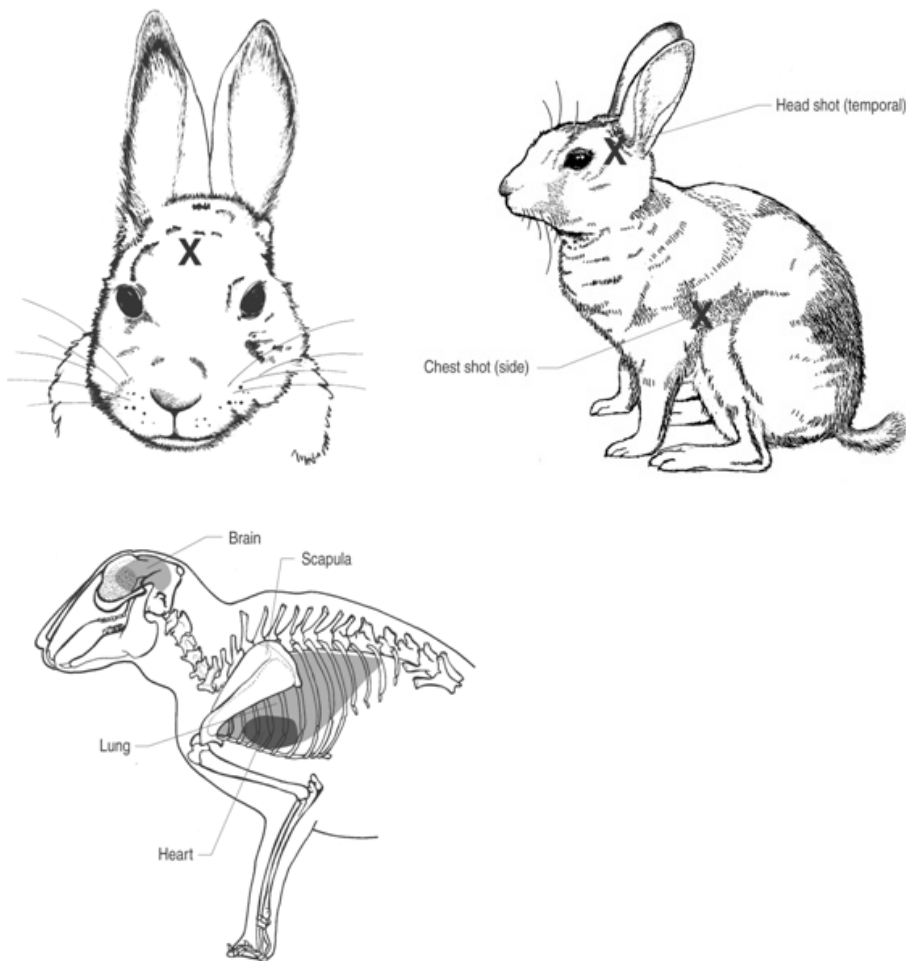
### Target animal and point of aim

- The objective is to fire at the closest range practicable in order to reduce the risk of non-lethal wounding. Accuracy is important to achieve a humane death. One shot should ensure instantaneous loss of consciousness and rapid death without resumption of consciousness.
- A rabbit should only be shot at when:

## NATSOP-RAB008 NATIONAL STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE: GROUND SHOOTING OF RABBITS

- it can be clearly seen and recognised;
- it is within the effective range of the firearm and ammunition being used; and
- a humane kill is probable. If in doubt, do NOT shoot.
- The shooter must aim either at the head, to destroy the major centres at the back of the brain near the spinal cord or, at the chest, to destroy the heart, lungs and great blood vessels. This can be achieved by one of the following methods (see diagrams in appendix):

### Head Shot (this is the preferred point of aim)



#### **Frontal position (front view)**

The firearm is aimed at the centre of the head between the eyes.

#### **Temporal (side view)**

The firearm is aimed at a point between the eye and the base of the ear directed towards the opposite eye.

## **NATSOP-RAB008 NATIONAL STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE: GROUND SHOOTING OF RABBITS**

### **Chest Shot**

#### **Side view**

- The firearm is aimed horizontally slightly to the rear of the shoulder.
- When using a rifle, the target animal must be stationary and within a range that permits accurate placement of the shot. Shots to the head are preferred over chest shots.
- When using a shotgun, the target animal may be stationary or mobile, but must be no more than 20 metres from the shooter. The pattern of shot should be centred on the head or chest. It is essential that the distance to the target animal is accurately judged. To achieve adequate penetration of shot, the animal must be in range. It is recommended that shooters practice estimating distances before a shooting operation.
- The target animal should be checked to ensure it is dead before moving on to the next animal. Death of shot animals should always be confirmed by observing the following:
  - absence of rhythmic, respiratory movements
  - absence of eye protection reflex (corneal reflex) or 'blink'
  - a fixed, glazed expression in the eyes
  - loss of colour in mucous membranes (become mottled and pale without refill after pressure is applied).
- If death cannot be verified, a second shot to the head should be taken immediately.

## NATSOP-RAB008 NATIONAL STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE: GROUND SHOOTING OF RABBITS

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