



Responsible Wool Standard 2.2



RAF-101a-V2.2-2021.10.01





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The RWS 2.2 replaces RWS 2.1 and is effective as of October 1st, 2021. All audits conducted after January 1st, 2022 shall be conducted using RWS 2.2.

English is the official language of the Responsible Wool Standard. In any case of inconsistency between versions, reference shall be made to the English version.

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The RWS will undergo a revision process at least every five years. The next revision is tentatively scheduled to begin in 2024. You may submit feedback to the standard at any time; send to ResponsibleWool@TextileExchange.org. Points of clarification may be incorporated into RWS guidance documents prior to 2024. More substantive feedback or suggested changes will be collected and reviewed as part of the next revision of the standard.

Document Revision History

Responsible Wool Standard, released June 2016
Responsible Wool Standard 2.0, released March 2020
Responsible Wool Standard 2.1, released May 2020
Responsible Wool Standard 2.2, released October 2021



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Introduction

About the Responsible Wool Standard

The Responsible Wool Standard (RWS) is an international, voluntary standard that addresses animal welfare in sheep farms and chain of custody of wool from certified *farms* to the final product.

Individual sites are certified by independent third-party certification bodies using annual audits. Material is tracked from the farm to the final product using transaction certificates, following the requirements of Textile Exchange's Content Claim Standard (CCS). For more information or to apply for certification, please visit: ResponsibleWool.org.

The goals of the Responsible Wool Standard are to provide the industry with the best possible tool to:

- Recognize the best practices of farmers;
- Ensure that wool comes from farms with a progressive approach to managing their land, and from sheep that have been treated responsibly;
- Create an industry benchmark that will drive improvements in animal care and land management and social welfare where needed; and
- Provide a robust chain of custody system from farm to final product so that consumers are confident that the wool in the products they choose is truly RWS.

About Textile Exchange



The Responsible Wool Standard is owned and managed by **Textile Exchange**. Textile Exchange is a global nonprofit that creates leaders in the sustainable fiber and materials industry. The organization develops, manages, and promotes a suite of leading industry standards as well as collects and publishes vital industry data and insights that enable brands and retailers to measure, manage, and track their use of preferred fiber and materials.

With a membership that represents leading brands, retailers, and suppliers, Textile Exchange has, for years, been positively impacting climate through accelerating the use of preferred fibers across the global textile industry and is now making it an imperative goal through its 2030 Strategy: Climate+. Under the Climate+ strategic direction, Textile Exchange will be the driving force for urgent climate action with a goal of 45% reduced CO2 emissions from textile fiber and material production by 2030.



Acknowledgements

The Responsible Wool Standard would not be possible without the help of the International Working Group (IWG) that worked to review, research, discuss, and approve the revision of the Responsible Wool Standard.

We would also like to extend special acknowledgment to wool growers around the world who have adopted the Responsible Wool Standard.



How to Use This Document

This document sets forth the overall requirements for compliance with the RWS. Guidance and support documents are available at ResponsibleWool.org.

This standard includes seven key sections (General Information, Principles of RWS, Animal Welfare Criteria, Land Management Criteria, Social Welfare Criteria, Farm *Group* Certification, and Chain of Custody), as well as additional Appendices.

In the RWS, the following terms are used to indicate requirements, recommendations, permissions, and possibilities or capabilities:

- “shall” indicates a requirement,
- “should” indicates a recommendation,
- “may” indicates a permission, and
- “can” indicates a possibility or a capability.

“Desired Outcomes” have been included to detail the intent of requirements, but they are not requirements themselves. They are designated by an icon before each module, see the following example:



Desired outcome: Access to sufficient feed and water suited to the animals’ age and needs to maintain normal health and to prevent prolonged hunger, thirst, malnutrition or dehydration.





Section A – General Information

A1. References

A1.1 All certified *organizations* are subject to the requirements of the following documents. All can be found at ResponsibleWool.org.

A1.1.1 *CCS-101 Content Claim Standard (CCS)* - The **Content Claim Standard (CCS)** is a chain of custody standard that provides companies with a tool to verify a specific input material in a final product. It requires that each organization along the supply chain take sufficient steps to ensure that the integrity and identity of the input material are preserved.

A1.1.2 *TE-301 Standards Claim Policy* - This document describes the language and design requirements for communication related to the RWS.

A1.1.3 *RAF-201a RWS User Manual* – This document accompanies the standard and should be used for interpretation and guidance for users of the standard.

A2. Requirement Levels

Each requirement is assigned to one of four levels:

C

CRITICAL

Critical requirements are the most important and they shall all be met during the audit to achieve and/or maintain certification. If non-conformity to any of the critical requirements is found, the scope certificate shall be immediately suspended or the site removed from the scope certificate and the supply chain shall be informed. In the case of an initial audit, the organization shall not receive a scope certificate until the critical non-conformity has been closed. A new evaluation is needed if the organization does not close the critical major non-conformity within 180 days.

Ma

MAJOR

Major requirements shall be met to achieve certification. Major non-conformities shall be closed within 30 days. Scope certificates may not be issued or reissued if there is an open major non-conformity. If a major non-conformity is not closed within 30 days after the audit, the certificate shall be suspended.

Mi

MINOR

Minor requirements shall be met. Minor non-conformities shall be closed within 60 days, though the organization remains certified through that time. If a minor non-conformity is not closed within 60 days after the audit, the minor non-conformity is upgraded to a major non-conformity with a timeline 30 days from the original deadline.



Minor non-conformities for LM requirements which are issued during an initial audit, or during a farm audit for a farm which has been part of a group for less than six months may be issued with a timeline of up to one year.

NOTE: Certification bodies may issue major non-conformities for minor requirements if, either alone or in combination with other non-conformities, the certification body believes they result in, or are likely to result in, a fundamental failure to achieve the objectives of the standard. Such fundamental failure may be indicated by non-conformities which continue over a long period of time, are repeated or systematic, affect a wide area, or are not corrected or adequately responded to by the client once they have been identified.

R

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are not required to achieve or maintain certification. They serve as guidance and are best practices in the industry. They could be integrated as requirements in future versions of the standard. All recommended requirements shall be fully audited and recorded by the certification body, but do not have any effect on the certification status of the organization.

Certification bodies may issue critical, major, or minor non-conformities.

Full requirements for issuing non-conformities are found in *ASR-101 Accreditation and Certification Procedures for Textile Exchange Standards*.





Section B – Principles of RWS Certification

B1. Scope

B1.1 RWS certification applies to all *supply chain sites* of wool: from the *farm*, processing of wool, assembly of the final products, up to the seller in the last business-to-business transaction. After the farm level, certification is under the umbrella of Responsible Animal Fiber, which includes both the Responsible Wool Standard and the Responsible Mohair Standard.

B1.1.1 The RWS may optionally be applied to slaughter sites, even though this is not required by the standard. See B1.6 and Appendix C.

B1.2 The RWS may be applied globally.

B1.3 The Standard applies to supply chain sites of wool only.

B1.3.1 *Recycled* wool is ineligible for certification.

B1.4 The *Standard* applies to products that contain at least 5% *RWS* wool, calculated as a percentage of the material. Final products containing non-certified virgin wool are not permitted to be labelled with the RWS name or logo. See Section B2 and *TE-301 Standards Claims Policy* for more information on allowed consumer communication.

B1.5 The Standard may also apply to by-products of wool processing (e.g. lanolin or wool grease) where 100% of the by-products of wool processing come from RWS wool.

B1.6 The Standard may also apply to non-food products of slaughter. Use of the RWS logo is not permitted, though text claims about the origin of the by-products are permitted. See B4 and Appendix C.

B2. Claims

B2.1 Claims related to the RWS may be either product-specific or general (non-product specific).

B2.1.1 RWS products that meet all of the following criteria qualify for product-specific labelling.

- a. Product is certified up to the seller in the last business-to-business transaction.
- b. All wool material in the product is RWS certified.
- c. All artwork and language meet the requirements of *TE-301 Standards Claims Policy*.
- d. Approval of final artwork has been obtained from an authorized certification body through a label release form.



- e. Only certified organizations may physically attach product-specific claims with reference to the RWS (e.g. hangtags, sewn-in labels).

B2.1.2 Organization that meet one or more of the following criteria may make general marketing claims (non-product specific) related to the RWS:

- a. Organizations with current certification to the RWS
- b. Organizations that purchase certified products or products that contain certified material (verified using transaction certificates)
- c. Organizations that have made public commitments to the RWS

B2.1.3 All claims related to the RWS are subject to the requirements of the *TE-301 Standards Claims Policy*.

B3. Farm Certification

B3.1 The following modules apply to all farms:

Section C: Animal Welfare Criteria

- AW1. Nutrition
- AW2. Living Environment
- AW3. Animal Management
- AW4. Handling and Transport
- AW5. Land Management

Section D: Land Management Criteria

- LM1. Soil
- LM2. Biodiversity
- LM3. Fertilizers
- LM4. Pesticides

Section E: Social Welfare Criteria

- SW1. Human Rights
- SW2. Child Labor
- SW3. Working Conditions and Conduct



SW4. Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining

SW5. Wages and Benefits

SW6. Communities

SW7. Health and Safety

Section G: Chain of Custody

G. Farm Chain of Custody Criteria

- B3.2** Farms may not carry both certified and non-certified sheep.
- B3.3** Farms shall provide certification body full access to all sites. Farms shall inform certification bodies of any biosecurity measures prior to the audit.
- B3.4** Farms may be certified to the RWS according to one of the following certification types:
 - B3.4.1** Individual Farm Certification,
 - B3.4.2** Farm Group Certification, or
 - B3.4.3** Communal Farmer Group Certification
- B3.5** Individual Farm Certification applies to farms wishing to become certified independently, or when the qualifications for Farm Group Certification are not met.
 - B3.5.1** Any farm may apply for Individual Farm Certification.
 - B3.5.2** Individual Farm Certification requires annual on-site audits of the farm.
 - B3.5.3** Individual Farm Certification may also include additional *confirmation visits* by the certification body without notice.
 - B3.5.4** Individually certified farms submit annual Farm Questions to the Certification Body.
- B3.6** Farm Group Certification and Communal Farmer Group certification applies to groups with a defined internal control system (ICS) in place for the group. The farm group shall meet the requirements of Section F of this Standard.
 - B3.6.1** Farm Group Certification and Communal Farmer Group certification requires annual on-site audits of the ICS and sample audits of farm *group members* according to the risk assessment of the certification body.
 - B3.6.2** Farm Group Certification and Communal Farmer Group certification may also include additional confirmation visits of farm group members by the certification body without notice.



B3.7 A farm may be part of more than one scope certificate, including one Individual Farm Certification per Responsible Animal Fiber (RAF) standard and one or more Farm Group Certifications. The group certifications may be to the same or to different RAF standards.

B3.7.1 Communal Farmer Group Certification is for those farmers who are unable to meet the requirements for certification as an individual farm or a Farm Group. A farm, farmer, or herder may be part of one Communal Farmer Group per RAF standard, and shall not be part of any other scope certificates. See Section F for further details.

B4. Slaughter Certification (Optional)

B4.1 The RWS may optionally be applied to slaughter sites.

B4.1.1 The following modules apply to any slaughter sites opting to produce non-food products from RWS origin:

Appendix C. Slaughter Site Module
Appendix D. Transport Guidance

B4.1.2 Slaughter sites shall provide certification body full access to all sites. Slaughter sites shall inform certification bodies of any biosecurity measures prior to the audit.

B4.1.3 Annual on-site audits of the slaughter site are required.

B4.2 If RWS claims for non-food products are to be made, the following module shall apply:

Section G: Chain of Custody
G2. Chain of Custody Criteria

B5. Supply Chain Certification

B5.1 The following modules apply to all supply chain sites subject to RWS certification:

Section G: Chain of Custody
G2. Chain of Custody Criteria



Section C – Animal Welfare Criteria

AW1. Nutrition



Desired outcome: Access to sufficient feed and water suited to the animals' age and needs to maintain normal health and to prevent prolonged hunger, thirst, malnutrition or dehydration.

Number	Requirement	Level
AW1.1	Sheep shall have access to adequate nutrition, suited to the animals' age and needs, to maintain normal health and to prevent prolonged hunger or malnutrition.	C
	AW1.1.1 Feeding shall be addressed in a management plan.	Mi
	<i>See AW5.7 for emergency feed and water provisions.</i>	
AW1.2	Sheep shall have an adequate supply of clean, safe drinking water each day.	C
AW1.3	The body condition of sheep shall be routinely monitored as part of the farm's management system to confirm health of the sheep.	Ma
	AW1.3.1 Farm workers shall be able to measure the <i>Body Condition Score (BCS)</i> of sheep.	Ma
	AW1.3.2 If BCS scoring identifies evidence of inadequate nutrition, appropriate action shall be taken to return the animals to good health. These actions should be recorded.	Ma
AW1.4	Feed shall be stored properly.	Mi
	AW1.4.1 Hazardous material shall not be stored near feed storage areas.	Mi
AW1.5	Routine checks and monitoring shall be conducted regularly to ensure feed and water quality and quantity is maintained.	Ma
	AW1.5.1 Equipment used to deliver feed and water shall be cleaned and maintained in good working order and any problems promptly rectified.	Ma



AW1.5.2 Water points supplied from troughs, drinkers or natural water sources shall be clean and be of good quality and an accessible level at all times.

Ma

AW1.6 Changes in diet shall be introduced gradually.

Mi

AW1.6.1 Sheep shall be introduced to crop grazing and or supplementary feeding at a rate that allows the sheep to adapt to the new feed.

Mi

AW1.7 Sheep shall only be deprived of feed and water for reasonable management practices (such as shearing, transport, or slaughter). Deprivation periods shall be no longer than 24 hours.

Ma

AW1.7.1 Sheep held in sheds or yards for management practices (such as shearing) shall be monitored for signs of distress during time held off feed and water and remedial action taken.

Ma

AW1.7.2 Animals in ill health or poor condition shall not be deprived of food or water until they recover.

Ma

AW1.7.3 Ewes in late pregnancy or lactating ewes shall not be deprived of water for more than 8 hours.

Ma



AW2. Living Environment



Desired outcome: Animals are kept in an environment that provides the conditions and facilities needed for health, safety, comfort, and normal behavior.

Number	Requirement	Level
AW2.1	Handling and housing systems (including shearing sheds) shall be designed, constructed, and maintained so as to minimize stress and the likelihood of injury to the sheep during handling.	Mi
	AW2.1.1 Buildings shall be structurally sound.	Mi
	AW2.1.2 Infrastructure shall be inspected and maintained regularly.	Mi
AW2.2	Housing shall be well ventilated.	Mi
AW2.3	Housing shall be kept in a sanitary condition.	Mi
AW2.4	Housed sheep shall be protected from either heat or cold stress.	Mi
AW2.5	Flooring in holding pens shall provide good traction.	Mi
AW2.6	Housed sheep shall have access to a dry bedding area sufficient to avoid discomfort.	Mi
	AW2.6.1 Sheep housed on solid concrete floor shall be given sufficient bedding.	Mi
	AW2.6.2 Buildings shall be constructed to provide drainage.	Mi
	AW2.6.3 Bedding from timber-based products sourced from chemically treated wood is prohibited.	Mi
AW2.7	Housed sheep shall have pens that provide sufficient freedom of movement and floor space to lie in a normal resting posture.	Mi
	AW2.7.1 Housing space required shall take into account the age, size and class of sheep and environment.	Mi



AW2.7.2 Each sheep should have at least the following minimum area per animal after 24 hours or more in housing:

R

Type of animal	Minimum area per animal m ² (ft ²)
Ewe	1.2 (15)
Ewe and single lamb	1.7 (21)
Additional lambs	0.4 (4)
Weaned lambs	0.9 (10)
Rams	1.5 (21)

AW2.8 Long term close confinement in crates or tethering is prohibited.

Ma

AW2.8.1 Tethering or use of crates shall only be used for a minimum time to address a special need such as the provision of medical care.

Ma

AW2.9 Housed sheep shall have access to a lit area for the normal period of daylight hours.

Mi

AW2.9.1 Sheep should have access to natural light.

R

AW2.10 Housed sheep should not be exposed to sudden or loud noise that could cause fear or stress.

R

AW2.11 Sheep shall have access to natural *pasture* at all times unless emergency or severe weather conditions would otherwise negatively impact on their welfare.

C

AW2.11.1 Where sheep are housed for lambing, access to natural pasture shall be restricted for the shortest period possible.

Ma

AW2.12 All sheep shall have access to effective shade, *shelter* and/or windbreaks if necessary to protect them from adverse weather conditions.

Mi

AW2.12.1 Shelter may be natural or artificial as long as it is available and provides effective protection against prevailing conditions as needed.

Mi

AW2.13 All fencing shall be appropriate, and shall be regularly inspected and maintained.

Mi

AW2.14 *Stocking rates* shall be determined based on land type, pasture quality, seasonal conditions, class of stock, available feed, and total grazing pressure.

Ma



AW2.14.1 Stocking rates shall be recorded and followed to plan pasture, feeding rations and water resource availability.

Mi

AW2.14.2 The amount of feed on offer should be measured to calculate the number of available grazing days.

R

AW2.15 Animals shall be protected from the threat of *predators*.

Ma

AW2.15.1 Predator control shall be humane.

Ma

See *Land Management section 2*



AW3. Animal Management



Desired outcome: Animals are managed in a way that promotes good health and prevents disease. Sick or injured animals are treated. Husbandry operations are carried in a way that minimizes pain and distress.

Number	Requirement	Level
AW3.1	The farm shall conduct routine welfare inspections and monitor for signs of disease or production disorders.	Ma
	AW3.1.1 The frequency of inspections shall be increased as required during, for example, extreme weather events, lambing times, flystrike etc.	Ma
AW3.2	The farmer shall have a written management plan for flock health and animal welfare.	Ma
	<i>For Communal Farmer Groups, the written management plan for herd health and animal welfare can be prepared at group level.</i>	
AW3.3	Sheep that are found suffering from health problems shall be treated promptly.	C
	AW3.3.1 Responsible personnel shall identify and treat sick and/or injured animals and obtain veterinary advice when needed.	Ma
	AW3.3.2 Sheep that can be treated that cannot move on their own shall only be moved using a humane conveyance method, such as a truck, sled, or cart.	Mi
	AW3.3.3 Animals who will not recover shall be promptly and humanely euthanized.	Ma
AW3.4	Any treatments for the health of the sheep shall be appropriately administered.	Ma
	AW3.4.1. Records should be kept detailing:	R
	a. Substance (product) administered and reason for treatment	
	b. Animal or group identification	



Number	Requirement	Level
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Number of animals treated d. Date of treatment 	
AW3.5	Measures shall be taken to prevent or control external and internal parasite infestations such as fly strike, ticks, lice, gastro-intestinal worms, and scab.	Ma
	AW3.5.1 Advice shall be sought as needed from a veterinarian or specialist advisor on prevention, treatment, and strategies to avoid the development of resistant parasites.	Mi
	AW3.5.2 When infestations are likely or are found to occur, sheep shall be treated to control the parasites.	Ma
	AW3.5.3 Grazing management is utilized to aid in parasite management, allowing for treatments to be administered during the most effective stage of the parasite's lifecycle.	Mi
	AW3.5.4 When dipping is carried out stress to the sheep shall be minimized and the health and safety of workers safeguarded.	Ma
AW3.6	The decision to carry out injurious husbandry procedures, including tail docking and castration, shall be based on a welfare risk/benefit analysis rather than as a routine.	Ma
	AW3.6.1 The risk/benefit analysis shall include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The methods used and steps taken to minimize suffering. b. Regular review of whether the procedures remain necessary, the procedures and pain management protocols used. c. Pain management options shall be discussed with a veterinary surgeon and options shall be reviewed regularly. 	Ma
AW3.7	Animal husbandry procedures shall be performed or supervised by a competent stockperson, using well maintained equipment designed specifically for the purpose.	C

See AW5.11.1 for requirements for contractors to sign the RWS Contractors Declaration.



Number	Requirement	Level
	AW3.7.1 Farm shall have written and/or visual standard operating procedures on how animal husbandry procedures are to be carried out.	Mi
AW3.8	Good hygiene practices shall be followed in relation to facilities, personnel, handling, and instruments.	Ma
AW3.9	Castration shall only be carried out on males that are being kept beyond puberty.	Ma
	AW3.9.1 For all methods, <i>pain relief</i> shall be applied when suitable pain relief is available.	Ma
	AW3.9.2 The procedure shall be performed using either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. bloodless <i>emasculator</i>; b. application of a rubber ring, including shortening of scrotum; or c. surgical methods with mandatory pain relief. 	Ma
	AW3.9.3 The procedure shall be carried out between the ages of 24 hours and 8 weeks.	Ma
	AW3.9.4 Farmers shall monitor for signs of post-operative complications and take appropriate corrective actions.	Ma
	AW3.9.5 Lambs shall not be castrated until the ewe/lamb bond has become established.	Ma
AW3.10	<i>Tail docking</i> shall only be carried out if failure to do so would lead to welfare problems.	Ma
	AW3.10.1 For all methods, pain relief shall be applied when suitable pain relief is available.	Ma
	AW3.10.2 The procedure shall be performed using either <i>thermocautery</i> (preferred method) or the application of a rubber ring.	Ma
	AW3.10.3 The procedure shall be carried out between the ages of 24 hours and 8 weeks.	Ma



Number	Requirement	Level
	AW3.10.4 Docked tails shall cover the vulva in ewes and the equivalent length in rams.	Ma
	AW3.10.5 Farmers shall monitor for signs of post-operative complications and take appropriate corrective actions.	Ma
	AW3.10.6 Lambs shall not be tail docked until the ewe/lamb bond has become established.	Ma
AW3.11	Mulesing is prohibited. <i>Farms with Ceased Mulesing status are accepted.</i>	C
	AW3.11.1 Freeze Mulesing (<i>Steining</i>) is prohibited.	C
AW3.12	Dehorning, disbudding and substantial horn trimming is prohibited unless needed to address animal welfare.	Ma
	AW3.12.1 Horned sheep should be inspected regularly to ensure the tip or other parts of the horn is not in contact with face.	R
	AW3.12.2 Minor horn trimming (removal of tips) shall be performed by a competent stockperson.	Mi
	AW3.12.3 Substantial horn trimming shall be performed by a veterinarian using anesthesia.	Ma
AW3.13	Any sheep marking for identification shall be in accordance with current legislation and best practices. <i>Tagging, tattooing and horn branding are permitted methods of identification.</i>	Ma
	AW3.13.2 Hot branding is prohibited.	Ma
	AW3.13.3 Earmarking (<i>notching</i>) is only permitted under the following conditions: a. Where there is a risk of loss of tags from the natural environment or theft;	Ma



Number	Requirement	Level
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Where ear notching does not remove more than 10% of each ear; and c. When ear notching tools or surgically sharp scalpels are used. 	
AW3.14	Action shall be taken promptly to treat lameness and to remove any causes of lameness.	Ma
	AW3.14.1 Flocks shall be monitored for lame sheep on a regular basis.	Mi
	AW3.14.2 Stock people shall be able to recognize lameness, assess severity and take prompt action to resolve the lameness as quickly as possible.	Mi
AW3.15	Shearing shall be performed by - or under the direct supervision of - a competent shearer.	C
	<i>Note: See AW5.11.1 for requirements for shearers to sign the RWS Contractors Declaration.</i>	
	AW3.15.1 Shearing shall be carried out under the direct supervision of the farmer or a person appointed by the farmer.	Ma
	AW3.15.2 Shearing shall be done using techniques and equipment designed to minimize stress and injury.	Ma
	AW3.15.3 Sheep shall be handled calmly and confidently to minimize stress. (see AW4.1)	Ma
	AW3.15.4 Particular care shall be taken not to cut or injure the animal, especially the teats/udders of female sheep and the penis/sheath and scrotum of rams.	Ma
	AW3.15.5 An action plan shall be instituted to address and prevent any recurring problems with injuries or mishandling.	Ma
	AW3.15.6 Written and/or visual “Shearing Standard Operating Procedures” shall be posted in a visible location of the shearing shed.	Mi
AW3.16	Pre-shearing planning shall consider climatic conditions and ensure that mitigation measures are in place in the event of changing conditions.	Ma
AW3.17	All shearing related injuries shall be attended to promptly.	Ma



Number	Requirement	Level
	AW3.17.1 In the event of a severe cut or injury the shearer shall cease shearing immediately to treat the injury.	Ma
	AW3.17.2 Pain relief shall be applied for serious injuries when suitable pain relief is available.	Ma
	AW3.17.3 Records of serious injuries shall be kept.	Mi
AW3.18	Breeding strategy shall address welfare traits and suitability for the type of environment in which the sheep are raised.	Ma
AW3.19	Artificial breeding procedures shall be carried out by competent operators.	C
	AW3.19.1 Cervical artificial insemination and pregnancy diagnosis shall only be carried out by persons trained and competent with the techniques.	Ma
	AW3.19.2 Routine electroejaculation is prohibited.	Ma
	AW3.19.3 Laparoscopic artificial insemination shall be carried out only by veterinarians or by trained and competent operators under veterinarian supervision. Appropriate pain relief shall be used.	Ma
AW3.20	Lambing shall be supervised and timely action taken while keeping disturbances to a minimum. In extensive systems, where animals are unaccustomed to daily supervision, breeds or strains suited to easy births and good maternal care should be used.	Ma
	AW3.20.1 All workers shall be able to recognize the signs of lambing difficulty and know when and how to provide appropriate assistance and when to seek assistance from an experienced producer or veterinarian.	Ma
	AW3.20.2 Any ewe with a prolapse shall be treated immediately using an appropriate technique and, where necessary, veterinary advice shall be sought.	Ma
	AW3.20.3 <i>Embryotomy</i> shall only be performed on dead lambs by a skilled person or veterinarian.	Ma
AW3.21	The lambing period shall be planned to coincide with local climatic conditions favorable to good welfare and survival.	Ma
AW3.22	Practices and procedures for lamb feeding and provisions for fostering shall be planned prior to the start of lambing.	Mi
	AW3.22.1 Artificially reared lambs shall receive a sufficient amount of <i>colostrum</i> after birth to ensure their welfare.	Mi



Number	Requirement	Level
	AW3.22.2 Close restraint of ewes for the purpose of lamb fostering is allowed only when other methods are not possible.	Mi
	AW3.22.3 Lambs shall have access to milk in their diet until they are at least four weeks old.	Mi
AW3.23	Isolation of individual sheep shall be minimized.	Ma
	AW3.23.1 In case individual isolation cannot be avoided, the confined sheep shall be given a companion or be able to maintain visual contact with other sheep. Exception to contact with neighboring sheep may be made for quarantine purposes.	Mi
AW3.24	When introducing rams to a new group, sheep shall be monitored for signs of aggression.	Ma
AW3.25	Sheep shall be euthanized without delay if they are experiencing severe pain or illness and do not have a reasonable expectation of improvement.	C
	AW3.25.1 All workers shall have clear set of criteria to recognize when an animal needs to be euthanized, and be instructed to act accordingly.	Ma
	AW3.25.2 The <i>euthanasia</i> shall be done using a method that is quick, causes minimal stress and pain, and results in a rapid loss of consciousness followed by death without the animal regaining consciousness.	Ma
	AW3.25.3 Except in situations of emergency euthanasia, <i>stunning</i> prior to killing is required. Stunning may only be skipped in cases where the animal is in severe pain and finding access to tools for stunning would prolong the suffering. If emergency euthanasia is carried out by cutting the throat best practice guidance shall be followed.	Ma
AW3.26	When an animal is slaughtered on-farm, it shall be done using a method that is quick, causes minimal stress and pain, and results in a rapid loss of consciousness followed by death without the animal regaining consciousness.	C
	AW3.26.1 Slaughter shall be carried out by either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. a trained, competent worker; b. a licensed slaughterman; or c. a veterinary surgeon 	Ma
	AW3.26.2 Acceptable methods of slaughter for sheep include:	Ma



Number	Requirement	Level
	a. Firearm	
	b. Penetrating and non-penetrating <i>captive bolt guns</i> . Use of the captive bolt gun shall be immediately followed by a secondary method to ensure death (such as exsanguination or <i>pithing</i>).	
AW3.26.3	The spinal cord shall not be severed or broken in any animal until after confirmation of death.	Ma
AW3.26.4	Death shall be confirmed through observation of pupils, heart beat and lack of respiration prior to disposal or further processing.	Ma
AW3.26.5	Sheep shall be slaughtered away from the view of other animals except in unavoidable cases.	Ma



AW4. Handling and Transport



Desired outcome: Good human-animal relationships are in place and animals are handled and transported around the farm and off the farm in a way that protects welfare.

Number	Requirement	Level
AW4.1	Animals shall be handled humanely; mistreatment of animals is unacceptable.	C
	AW4.1.1 Mistreatment includes rough physical contact such as kicking, striking, slamming gates on the sheep, tripping, throwing, or dropping animals, dragging, or pulling sheep by the fleece, tail, ears, head, horns, or neck, or dragging by the back legs.	C
	AW4.1.2 Extra care shall be taken when handling sheep with special needs, such as young lambs, heavily pregnant ewes, lame sheep and rams. Heavily pregnant ewes shall only be handled when absolutely necessary.	Ma
	AW4.1.3 <i>Electric prodders</i> shall not be used.	Ma
AW4.2	Audible or visual aids to handling (e.g. rattles or flags) should be used in preference to physical contact.	R
AW4.3	Sheep moved on foot shall not be forced to proceed at a pace that will cause exhaustion, heat stress or injury.	Ma
	AW4.3.1 Sheep shall be driven in a calm manner at a relaxed pace, natural to that animal, and not faster than the pace of the slowest animal.	Ma
	AW4.3.2 Sick, injured, disabled, severely lame, or heavily pregnant animals shall be moved only when necessary and at a pace to suit their condition.	Ma
	AW4.3.3 Contingency plans shall be made to move sheep that become lame or weak by vehicle.	Mi



Number	Requirement	Level
AW4.4	Stock people shall have good command of dogs and be in control when working sheep.	Ma
	AW4.4.1 Dogs shall not be allowed to force the sheep to move too quickly nor to continue to force the sheep when they have nowhere to go.	Mi
AW4.5	Livestock guardian animals shall be suitable for the farm environment and the expected predator threat.	Ma
AW4.6	In situations where the farm is responsible for or in control of the transport of sheep, the requirements of the RWS Transport Guidance (Appendix D) and regional legal requirements shall be met.	Ma
AW4.7	The farmer shall keep records of injury and death rates associated with all transport of their sheep, and take actions to address high rates.	Mi
AW4.8	Farmers shall not knowingly sell their sheep to traders or brokers who intend to export their livestock for slaughter internationally.	C



AW5. Management, Plans, and Procedures



Desired outcome: Farmers have a clear strategy and set of protocols to safeguard the welfare of their animals, and to demonstrate compliance to the relevant RWS.

Number	Requirement	Level
AW5.1	Farmer shall comply with all applicable legislation on animal welfare and land management.	C
AW5.2	Parallel production is prohibited: all sheep on the farm shall fall under RWS certification.	C
AW5.3	All other animals kept on the farm shall be treated humanely.	Ma
	AW5.3.1 Continuous confinement of any animal on the farm is prohibited. Animals shall receive nutrition, care, handling, and veterinary attention as required for their health, safety, and comfort.	Ma
AW5.4	Farmer shall give the auditor full access to the farm and operations that fall under certification.	C
	AW5.4.1 As directed by the auditor, this shall include access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. buildings b. land c. documents d. sheep e. workers 	C
AW5.5	Records shall be kept for a minimum of five years.	Mi
AW5.6	Mortality records shall be kept.	Mi
	AW5.6.1 If mortality rates fall outside expected levels, actions shall be taken and the problem resolved.	Mi



AW5.6.2	Unexpected deaths and disease outbreaks shall be investigated and remedial and preventive actions shall be taken.	Mi
AW5.7	An emergency plan shall be in place to maintain sheep welfare in exceptional circumstances. <i>For Communal Farmer Groups, the emergency plan can be prepared at group level.</i>	Ma
AW5.7.1	The emergency plan shall include measures that will be taken to ensure adequate feed and water are made available to sheep in the event of situations such as drought, wildfire, and other exceptional circumstances.	Mi
AW5.7.2	A strategy shall be in place for the provision of shelter in the event of emergency situations caused by extreme weather events.	Mi
AW5.7.3	If animal welfare is at risk, arrangements shall be made to relocate, sell, or humanely euthanize sheep to ensure their welfare is not adversely affected.	Mi
AW5.8	Quarantine procedures should be in place when new animals are introduced.	R
AW5.9	Farmer shall be knowledgeable on current and best practices regarding animal welfare and land management in sheep production.	Ma
AW5.9.1	Farmer shall have read and understood the RWS.	Ma
AW5.10	Workers shall be trained or experienced and competent in handling animals, and shall possess and practice the ability, knowledge, and competence necessary to maintain the health and welfare of the animals. They shall be knowledgeable in current best practices for animal welfare and land management for sheep production.	Ma
AW5.10.1	Training records should be maintained.	R
AW5.10.2	Workers shall have access to the RWS, and be made aware of the relevant requirements.	Mi
AW5.11	All external workers that come onto the farm to perform work involving the sheep shall be made aware of the relevant parts of the RWS.	Ma
AW5.11.1	All subcontractors shall sign the RWS Contractor Declaration.	Ma



Section D – Land Management Criteria

LM1. Soil



Desired outcome: Farmers have an understanding of what will impact the health of their soil, and have a strategy to mitigate damage and improve soil health.

Number	Requirement	Level
LM1.1	Land shall not be degraded by overgrazing and/or other management techniques.	Ma
	<p>LM1.1.1 Soil and land health including forage resources, soil erosion, compaction, organic matter, and any other areas of risk relevant to the farm, shall be addressed through actions and in a written management plan.</p> <p><i>For Communal Farmer Groups the written management plan for soil, land health, and biodiversity can be prepared at group level.</i></p>	Mi
LM1.2	Soil compaction shall be monitored and managed.	Ma
	LM1.2.1 Steps shall be taken to prevent or minimize soil compaction and to restore damaged areas.	Ma
LM1.3	Soil erosion shall be monitored and managed.	Ma
	LM1.3.1 Steps shall be taken to prevent or minimize soil erosion and to restore damaged areas.	Ma
	LM 1.3.2 The risk of sedimentation of water bodies with soil from fields should be assessed and managed (e.g. erosion control, avoidance of compaction, and riparian buffer strips).	R
LM1.4	Soil organic matter shall be monitored and managed.	Mi
	LM1.4.1 Steps shall be taken to prevent or minimize loss of soil organic matter and to restore damaged areas.	Mi



Number	Requirement	Level
LM1.5	The farmer shall monitor key indicators of land health.	Mi
	LM1.5.1 Monitoring sites shall be set for pasture composition and soil degradation. The number and distribution of the monitoring sites shall conform to the RWS Monitoring Guidance document.	Mi
	LM1.5.2. Where there is grazing on public lands, the farmer shall demonstrate that that the criteria designated by the permitting authority are met or exceeded.	Mi
LM1.6	Hazardous materials shall not be disposed of on the farmland unless specifically allowed by law and it is safe to use the affected land for grazing.	Ma



LM2. Biodiversity and Water



Desired outcome: Farmers have an understanding of what will impact of the biodiversity of their land, and have a strategy to protect and improve it over time.

Number	Requirement	Level
LM2.1	<p>The farm shall develop a Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) that conserves and enhances biodiversity on and around the farm.</p> <p><i>For Communal Farmer Groups the written management plan for biodiversity can be prepared at group level.</i></p>	Ma
LM2.2	<p>Forage resources shall be monitored and grazing will be managed to protect, restore, and enhance the biodiversity value of the farm.</p> <p>LM2.2.1 There shall be no grazing of areas important for biodiversity in times of the year when it could have a negative impact on natural ecosystems, native vegetation or on wildlife species.</p> <p>LM2.2.2 Livestock stocking rates and grazing management practices shall be adjusted to avoid negative impacts to areas important for biodiversity (e.g. from overgrazing, compaction, or erosion).</p> <p>LM2.2.3 Livestock stocking rates and grazing management practices shall encourage biodiversity and reflect the importance of native species within pastures.</p> <p>LM2.2.4 Any areas of degraded land shall be identified in the Biodiversity Management Plan, along with appropriate restoration measures.</p>	Mi
LM2.3	<p>The farmer shall monitor and manage invasive alien species of flora or fauna on the farm.</p> <p>LM2.3.1 The farmer shall not intentionally introduce any invasive alien species, and shall implement measures to avoid accidental or unintended introduction (e.g. through the transportation of soil, plant materials, water, etc.).</p> <p>LM2.3.2. Where invasive alien species are present on a farm, the farmer shall adopt measures to avoid their spread and eradicate them from natural ecosystems.</p>	Mi




Number	Requirement	Level
LM2.4	Farms shall implement measures to minimize livestock-wildlife conflicts.	Ma
	LM2.4.1. The population and behavior of predators shall be monitored.	Mi
	LM2.4.2. The farm should adopt proactive co-existence planning to deter predators.	R
	LM2.4.3 Wildlife corridors or routes used for migration should be maintained, if these are known to exist on the farm.	R
LM2.5	Hunting, fishing, or gathering of protected, threatened, or endemic plant or animal species is prohibited.	Ma
LM2.6	Lethal control of predators shall only be used as a measure of last resort, if permitted legally and when carried out humanely.	Ma
	LM2.6.1 Lethal control shall target the specific, individual animals(s) that is/are creating the conflict.	Ma
	LM2.6.2 Lethal control of any animal shall result in instantaneous unconsciousness and death.	Ma
	LM2.6.3 Use of poison, leg hold traps, and snares are prohibited.	Ma
	LM2.6.4 Lethal control is not permitted for protected, threatened, or endemic predator species.	Ma
	LM2.6.5 Each time lethal control methods are used, a record of all killed animals shall be kept (including date, species, and reason for use of lethal methods). The non-lethal methods to minimize livestock-wildlife conflicts shall be immediately reviewed to identify improvements to avoid further conflict.	Mi
LM2.7	Deforestation and the conversion of natural ecosystems to agricultural land is prohibited.	Ma
	LM2.7.1 Existing native vegetation within the productive areas of the farm shall be protected and maintained, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. existing vegetated zones adjacent to aquatic ecosystems; b. traditional field boundary features such as hedgerows and ditches; and c. large native trees. 	Ma



Number	Requirement	Level
	LM2.7.2 Deforestation and the conversion of natural ecosystems to agricultural land shall not have occurred, June 1, 2016 onwards.	Ma
LM2.8	Production activities shall not degrade or significantly impact the biodiversity values for which a Protected Area or Key Biodiversity Area are designated.	Ma
LM2.9	Aquatic ecosystems and water bodies shall be conserved and enhanced.	Mi
	LM2.9.1 River banks should be managed to keep erosion and soil run-off to a minimum.	R
	LM2.9.2 Riparian ecosystems should be protected and restored, as part of the Biodiversity Management Plan.	R
	LM2.9.3 Buffer zones should be maintained adjacent to wetlands and watercourses, within which fertilizer, manure and pesticide applications should be restricted.	R
	LM2.9.4 Natural wetlands shall not be drained.	Mi

LM3. Fertilizers



Desired outcome: Farmers use the minimum amount of inputs to meet the nutritional needs of their land to maintain their *carrying capacity*.

Number	Requirement	Level
LM3.1	There shall be a fertilizer management strategy that is reviewed annually.	Ma
	LM3.1.1 The strategy shall include calculations of likely crop requirements, taking account of available nutrients in soil, organic manures, composts, and crop residues is in place and be based on the principles of efficiency and reduction of use.	Mi
LM3.2	The farmer shall test and record soil nutrient levels, at intervals relevant to maintaining a healthy vibrant soil.	Mi
LM3.3	Fertilizers applied shall be appropriate and as specific to the situation as possible with minimal side effects.	Mi
	LM3.3.1 Manures and fertilizers that can have a negative effect on soil microbial life and/or which contain heavy metals shall not be used.	Mi
	LM 3.3.2 Fertilizers and manures shall only be applied to the intended crop area, specifically avoiding water bodies, riparian zones, and natural ecosystems.	Mi
LM3.4	Application methods and equipment that minimize waste and pollution shall be adopted.	Mi
	LM3.4.1 Application equipment shall be kept in good working order, cleaned after use, and regularly calibrated.	Mi



LM4. Pesticides



Desired outcome: Farmers use the minimum amount of *pesticides* to achieve adequate control of pest burden on their farm.

LM4 applies to land classes 1-3 (parasite control on animals is addressed in AW3.4-3.5)

Number	Requirement	Level
LM4.1	There shall be an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan or strategy that is reviewed annually.	Ma
	LM4.1.1 The IPM plan or strategy shall be based on the principles of prevention, observation, monitoring and intervention. The plan shall include the recommended thresholds or triggers to use pesticides where these are available.	Mi
LM4.2	Farmers shall have a monitoring program for crop and pasture.	Mi
	LM4.2.1 Decisions to use pesticides shall be based on monitoring and thresholds.	Mi
LM4.3	Biological, physical, and cultural control methods shall be used instead of chemical methods if they provide satisfactory control.	Mi
LM4.4	Pesticides applied shall be appropriate and as specific to the situation as possible with minimal side effects.	Mi
	LM4.4.1 Farmers shall apply pesticides in appropriate weather conditions, according to the directions on the label and/or manufacturers' directions, with appropriate and well-maintained equipment.	Mi
	LM4.4.2 Pesticides shall only be applied to the intended crop area, specifically avoiding water bodies, riparian zones, and natural ecosystems.	Mi
LM4.5	Farmers shall use the minimum amount of pesticides to achieve adequate control of pest burden on their farm.	Mi
	LM4.5.1 Prophylactic use of pesticides is prohibited.	Mi
LM4.6	Measures shall be in place to limit the impact of pesticide use.	Mi
	LM4.6.1 Farmers shall take care to avoid damage to beneficial organisms.	Mi



Number	Requirement	Level
	LM4.6.2 Risks from pesticide application for human and animal health or the environment shall be minimized.	Mi
	LM4.6.3 Systems shall be in place to ensure that pesticides reach all targeted areas and to minimize losses to non-target areas or the atmosphere.	Mi
LM4.7	Actions shall be taken to avoid pesticide resistance.	Mi
LM4.8	Application records shall be kept for all pesticides that have been used.	Mi
LM4.9	Farmers shall dispose of used pesticide containers safely, or through a collection and recycling program.	Mi
	LM4.9.1 Disposal of pesticides (including used sheep dip) in rivers, streams, drains or other surface or ground waters is prohibited.	Mi





Section E – Social Welfare Criteria

SW1. Hiring Practices and Forced Labor



Desired outcome: The farmer demonstrates good practices with regard to fair hiring, which is free of discrimination and intimidation and directly combats risk factors for forced labor.

Number	Requirement	Level
SW1.1	The farm shall have policies and codes of conduct to ensure fair hiring.	Ma
	SW1.1.1 Policies, codes of conduct, and information on grievance mechanisms shall be made available to workers upon hiring	Mi
	SW1.1.2 There should be procedures in place to record, track and document, all post-arrival legal requirements for migrant workers.	R
SW1.2	The farm shall not engage in or support the use of forced or compulsory labor, including prison labor, as defined in ILO Convention 29.	Ma
SW1.3	The farm shall operate in accordance with local laws and not engage in hiring practices that increase risk of forced labor and other human rights abuses.	Ma
	SW1.3.1 The farm shall not engage in hiring practices which increase the risk of forced labor including, but not limited to, charging fees for recruitment to workers; requiring that workers lodge deposits or security payments; withholding passports, other personal documentation, wages, or benefits; charging for document processing fees; or engaging in intimidation or coercion.	Ma
SW1.4	The farm shall orient all employees to the terms of their contract and provide them contracts in their native language, or a language that is understood by both parties.	Mi
	SW1.4.1 The farm shall maintain a copy of worker contracts in writing, and provide workers timely access to these at their request.	Mi



SW2. Child Labor



Desired outcome: Children are protected from exploitation, not engaged in dangerous work, and able to participate fully in formal education. Children are able to safely learn farming from their family members by engaging in age-appropriate activities outside of school hours and lessons.

Number	Requirement	Level
SW2.1	The farm shall not employ workers under the age of 15 or legal minimum (whichever is higher).	Ma
	SW2.1.1 Workers under the age of 18 shall not be engaged in the worst forms of child labor or hazardous child labor, as defined in ILO Convention No. 182 and Recommendation No. 190.	Ma
SW2.2	Farmers may engage their own children in work provided that children shall not be engaged in the worst forms of child labor or hazardous child labor, as defined by the ILO. Work shall not interfere with schooling.	Ma



SW3. Working Conditions and Conduct



Desired outcome: Workers work in a respectful environment, free from all forms of discrimination, harassment and abuse. Workers are enabled to speak out and have their concerns addressed in a clear, timely, and courteous manner.

Number	Requirement	Level
SW3.1	Discrimination, as defined in ILO Convention No. 111, is prohibited.	Ma
	SW3.1.1 Discrimination by employers in hiring, compensation, treatment, or daily activities of any kind is prohibited.	Ma
	SW3.1.2 Non-discrimination codes of conduct shall be shared with all employees. Employees shall be aware of their rights.	R
SW3.2	Harassment, verbal abuse, or physical abuse of any kind at any time is prohibited.	Ma
	SW3.2.1 Codes of conduct prohibiting harassment and abuse shall be shared with all employees. Employees should be aware of their rights.	R
SW3.3	Corruption, extortion and/or bribery of workers or families are prohibited.	Ma



SW4. Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining



Desired outcome: All workers are free to organize and collectively bargain without interference or penalty from farm management.

Number	Requirement	Level
SW4.1	The farm shall operate in accordance with local legislation related to freedom of association and collective bargaining.	Mi
SW4.2	Farmers should not discriminate, punish, or penalize in any way workers who choose to organize or collectively bargain.	R



SW5. Wages and Benefits



Desired outcome: Workers receive payment in a transparent and consistent manner that is non-discriminatory and provides for appropriate rest and leave for the worker.

Number	Requirement	Level
SW5.1	Workers shall receive wages that comply with local legal minimum wages or collectively bargained wages, whichever is higher.	Mi
	SW5.1.1 Farmers shall not use consecutive short-term contracts and/or false apprenticeship or other schemes to avoid meeting obligations to personnel under applicable labor laws and regulations.	Mi
	SW5.1.2 Farmers shall pay all wages in legal tender and provide benefits due in a manner convenient to workers, without delay or substitutions e.g. vouchers, coupons, or promissory notes.	Mi
SW5.2	Equal pay for equal work should be provided for all workers regardless of gender, work status, religion, political affiliation, nationality, or other factors.	R
SW5.3	Farmers should provide paid vacation leave for workers and should document said paid leave agreements in employment contracts.	R
SW5.4	In-kind benefits (e.g. meals, housing, etc.) may be provided as a portion of wages in compliance with local laws and regulations.	Mi



SW6. Communities



Desired outcome: Farm activities respect the rights of and have minimal negative impact on communities.

Number	Requirement	Level
SW6.1	Farms shall acknowledge and adhere to legal rights of communities regarding sites, land, and other resources.	Mi
	SW6.1.1 Farms shall respect the customary rights and religious and cultural significance to communities of locations and resources.	Mi
SW6.2	Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) should be obtained for any activity that may affect the lands, territories, and resources that Indigenous Peoples customarily own, occupy, or otherwise use.	R
SW6.3	Farms should engage local communities on farm management decisions that risk adversely affecting communities and should engage them on issues which create community concern.	R

SW7. Health and Safety



Desired outcome: Workers work in facilities and environments that are safe and healthy.

Number	Requirement	Level
SW7.1	Infrastructure shall be inspected regularly to ensure the safety of buildings.	Ma
	SW7.1.1 Fire risk assessment shall be conducted and steps taken to address risks.	Mi
SW7.2	Access to clean and potable water shall be provided at the main farm site.	Ma
	SW7.2.1 If risks have been identified, regular testing of water sources should be conducted.	R
SW7.3	Facilities for proper hygiene and comfort, including hand-washing facilities, toilets, and a place to store food shall be available at the main farm site.	Mi
SW7.4	Potentially hazardous work situations shall be clearly identified and unnecessary risks eliminated.	Ma
	SW7.4.1 Farmers shall conduct and document a risk assessment of potential health and safety risks and hazards, which is updated on a regular schedule or when new equipment or conditions are introduced and accompanied by preventative and corrective actions to address said risks.	Mi
	SW7.4.2 Clear signage shall exist to identify areas or equipment that are potentially hazardous.	Mi
SW7.5	Machines shall have clear instructions on safe usage, are maintained to limit hazards, and dangerous parts are guarded or encased.	Ma
SW7.6	For hazards that can be minimized through the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), the organization should provide workers with appropriate PPE at no cost to the worker.	R





Section F – Farm and Communal Farmer Group Certification

The following requirements apply for Farm Group and Communal Farmer Group Certification. Farm Group and Communal Farmer Group Certification applies for groups with a defined *internal control system* (ICS) in place for the group. The farm group shall meet the requirements of this section of this Standard.

Farm Group and Communal Farmer Group Certification requires annual on-site audits of the ICS and sample audits of farm group members according to the risk assessment of the certification body. Farm Group and Communal Farmer Group Certification may also include additional *confirmation visits* of farm group members by the certification body without notice.

References to a farm below refer to any member farm in the group.

F1. Eligibility for Farm Group and Communal Farmers Group Certification

Farm Group Certification

- F1.1** The farm group shall be managed by a legal entity which represents the entirety of the *farm group* and is considered to be the applicant or certified *organization*.
- F1.2** The following categories of sites may be *group members*:
 - F1.2.1** Farms.
- F1.3** The organization and all members shall be located in the same country or be within neighboring countries in the European Union.

Communal Farmer Group Certification

- F1.4** The Communal Farmer Group shall be managed by a legal entity which represents the entirety of the *communal farmer group* and is considered to be the applicant or certified *organization*.
- F1.5** The following categories of sites may be *communal farmer group members*:
 - F1.5.1** Farms
 - F1.5.2** Farmers
 - F1.5.3** Semi-nomadic and nomadic herders
- F1.6** Farms, Farmers, and herders may be eligible for participation in Communal Farmer Group certification if the following criteria are met:
 - F1.6.1** The farmer faces significant economic constraints, such as lack of capital assets and low access to finance (i.e. lack of economies of scale);



F1.6.2 The farmer faces significant information constraints, including lack of technical knowledge and low access to market information;

F1.6.3 The farm/farmer also meets at least two of the following criteria:

- a. The farmer has little or no land security;
- b. The farm is independent and not affiliated with a company for which they produce fiber;
- c. The farm has a small number of livestock;
- d. The farm relies on family labor;
- e. Animal fibers are the farmer's primary source of income;
- f. The farm uses relatively low levels of agricultural inputs and has comparatively low yields relative to the range of yields for the given commodity and context; and
- g. The farm has a relatively small land footprint.

F1.7 The organization and all members shall be located in the same country or be within neighboring countries in the European Union.

F2. Internal Control System Requirements

F2.1 The organization shall have an *internal control system (ICS)* in place.

F2.2 The organization shall appoint an *ICS Manager* who is responsible for the management of the ICS and for ensuring conformity to the RWS by all farms.

F2.3 The organization shall cooperate with the certification body's risk assessment process and with the coordination of information and auditing for member farms.

F2.4 The ICS shall maintain documented procedures which show how Farm Group and Communal Farmer Group Certification requirements are met, including procedures for at least the following elements:

F2.4.1 Accepting, adding and removing group members;

F2.4.2 Maintaining records;

F2.4.3 Training of group members and ICS personnel;

F2.4.4 Internal inspection of group members; and

F2.4.5 Use of RWS logos and promotional claims within the group.

F2.5 The ICS shall maintain the following records:

F2.5.1 A documented management structure of the ICS, and



F2.5.2 A complete list of group members.

F2.6 The ICS shall maintain the following records for each farm:

F2.6.1 A signed membership agreement which specifies rights and obligations of group members to conform with the RWS and permit inspections by the *ICS inspectors* as well as audits by the certification body;

F2.6.2 Maps or sketches of the farm showing where sheep are located;

F2.6.3 Completed Farm Questions for each farm;

F2.6.4 Records of internal inspection results, showing the farm's conformity or non-conformity with all applicable requirements; and

F2.6.5 Records of which farm group members are part of other scope certificates, including the name of the certified organization and type of certification (Individual Farm or Farm Group) in each case.

F2.7 The ICS shall ensure that

F2.7.1 all group members have access to a copy of the RWS or the relevant sections of the Standard; and

F2.7.2 all farm group members understand the relevant requirements of the Standard and are aware of consequences of non-conformity.

F2.8 Group members and ICS personnel (including ICS inspectors) shall be provided with training regarding the RWS which is sufficient to meet their responsibilities. Training records shall be maintained.

F3. Group Member Requirements

F3.1 Group members shall conform with the requirements of Section B3.

F4. Inspection of Members

F4.1 The ICS shall select one of the following two options:

F4.1.1 The ICS shall document and implement an inspection protocol to ensure that RWS requirements are met by all group members and shall meet requirements F4.2-F4.5. or

F4.1.2 The ICS shall decline to conduct internal inspections, in which case requirements F4.2-F4.5 shall not apply.

NOTE: If the ICS declines to conduct internal inspections, the certification body will audit all farms in the Farm Group or Communal Farmer Group annually, and will audit any new farms joining the group prior to the farm being approved to join.



- F4.2** The inspection protocol shall include a process for handling non-conformity, including the following elements:
- F4.2.1** Identification of non-conformities against all applicable requirements of the Standard;
 - F4.2.2** Grading of non-conformities according to the levels identified in A2. Requirement Levels.
 - F4.2.3** Follow-up to ensure that non-conformities are closed within a specified timeline which is not more than 30 days for major non-conformities and 60 days for minor non-conformities;
 - F4.2.4** Immediate suspension from the group in the case of critical non-conformities, until such non-conformities have been closed; and
 - F4.2.5** Documentation of non-conformities issued and closed, including explanation of corrective actions taken.
- F4.3** The ICS shall appoint one or more ICS inspectors to carry out inspections. The ICS manager may also be an ICS inspector. ICS inspectors shall not be responsible for inspections of family members or themselves.
- F4.4** The ICS shall carry out annual inspections of each group member. Inspections shall be carried out on-site.
- F4.5** A written inspection report shall be prepared for each inspection, including identification of all non-conformities. Photos or other verification of the date and location should be included.

F5. Adding and Removing Members

- F5.1** Members may be added to the group after the following steps have occurred:
- F5.1.1** Information required by F2.5 and F2.6 has been received by the ICS,
 - F5.1.2** The ICS Inspector has completed an inspection of the site, or the certification body has conducted an audit of the site in the case that the ICS has declined to conduct internal inspections,
 - F5.1.3** All critical and major non-conformities for the site have been closed, and
 - F5.1.4** The ICS has received approval from the certification body for the addition of the site.
- F5.2** The ICS shall have the authority to remove members from the group. If a member is removed, the ICS shall notify both the group member and the certification body of the removal in writing, including the reason for removal (e.g. voluntary, non-payment, non-conformity).





Section G – Chain of Custody



Desired outcome: The integrity of certified material is maintained through to the final consumer.

G1. Farm Chain of Custody Criteria

G1.1 Wool is eligible to be sold as RWS by a farm if:

G1.1.1 The farm is RWS certified at the time the wool is shipped from the farm; or

G1.1.2 The farm first becomes RWS certified no later than one year after the time the wool was shorn, providing the following points are met:

- a. At the time of the audit, no critical non-conformities are found.
- b. The farm has never mulesed or has achieved ceased mulesing status one year prior to the audit.
- c. Chain of custody of the previously shorn wool is confirmed.

G1.2 The farm shall maintain records of the following:

G1.2.1 Incoming and outgoing sheep;

G1.2.2 Volumes of wool produced;

G1.2.3 Volumes of wool sold as non-RWS, and as RWS under each applicable scope certificate; and

G1.2.4 Technical specifications (e.g. micron) of wool produced.

G1.3 The farm shall conduct an annual volume reconciliation which demonstrates that the volume of wool sold as RWS is plausible based on the number of sheep, yield per sheep and other relevant factors. For Farm Group Certification, this may be done by the ICS instead of by each farm.

G1.4 For Individual Farm Certification, the farm shall request transaction certificates from the certification body for each sale of RWS wool.

G1.5 For Farm Group Certification, the ICS shall request transaction certificates from the certification body for each sale of RWS wool from the ICS, or from the farm to anyone other than the ICS. A Farm Group Member may request transaction certificates from the certification body provided that prior notice to the ICS has been given and the ICS has granted permission to do so to the Farm Group Member.



NOTE: Transaction certificates are not required for sales of wool from a farm group member to the ICS. The ICS may restrict when it will request transaction certificates on behalf of a farm.

G1.6 For Farm Group Certification, if the ICS is taking physical possession of the wool, the ICS shall maintain farm-level traceability for the wool covered by each transaction certificate.

G1.7 If a certified organization is doing any of the following activities, Section G2. shall apply.

G1.7.1 Purchasing RWS wool from farms which are not part of the same scope certificate;

G1.7.2 Processing wool (e.g. scouring); or

G1.7.3 Conducting outsourcing activities, as defined in the CCS other than storage of discrete lots of RWS wool.

G2. Chain of Custody Criteria

G2.1 The organization shall conform the requirements of the *CCS-101 Content Claim Standard* (CCS) whereby:

G2.1.1 Each reference of “CCS” in the Content Claim Standard shall be understood as “RWS.” In the case of contradiction with the CCS, the RWS requirement supersedes that of the CCS.

G2.1.2 “Claimed material,” as defined in the CCS, refers to *RWS material* for the RWS.

G2.2 Certified organizations that are physically attaching consumer-facing RWS claims shall meet the following requirements:

G2.2.1 RWS hangtags or communication shall only be applied when a corresponding label release form has been issued by an authorized certification body, in accordance with *TE-301 Standards Claims Policy*.

G2.3 The organization shall maintain records of technical specifications for all RWS on file. This shall include both finished products and incoming material inputs.





Appendix A – Definitions

Refer to *TE-101 Terms and Definitions for Textile Exchange Standards and Related Documents* for definitions of terms used in these procedures. Key definitions are included below. Defined terms are shown in italics in the first usage in this document, and in some other uses for clarity.

Body Condition Score: System of measuring the fat and muscle cover of an animal – and therefore how good its nutrition and health has been - by reference to a standardized scale, normally from 1 (very thin) to 5 (obese).

Captive Bolt Gun: Device used to stun animals prior to *slaughter* or *euthanasia*. The gun has a retractable steel bolt that hits the forehead of the animal with sufficient force so as to render it instantly unconscious. Captive bolts may be penetrating or non-penetrating.

Carrying Capacity: The average number of animals that can be placed on a pasture for a year without harming it. It is a measure of the pasture's ability to produce enough forage to meet the requirements of grazing animals.

Ceased Mulesing: Wool from sheep where *mulesing* has ceased on the property. No *lambs* born on this property in the last 12 months have been mulesed. No purchased sheep are mulesed.

Colostrum: Milk produced by female mammals in the first days after giving birth. This milk has a higher fat content than normal milk and is particularly rich in proteins and antibodies. A young animal needs to receive sufficient colostrum so that it can acquire immunity.

Competent person: Someone who has acquired the knowledge to safely and humanely carry out a specific task or operation.

Electric prodder: Handheld object also known as 'hot shot' used to administer an electric shock when an animal is touched with it.

Electric stunning: Passing a current through the brain of an animal to render it instantly *insensible*. Stunning through the head can be followed by stunning the heart which causes death.

Emasculator: A tool for *castrating* a male animal. There are different types of emasculators. Some contain a blade/scalpel to completely remove the testes and others work by clamping the spermatic cords with no blade or cutting. Only the latter, bloodless emasculators, are permitted.

Embryotomy: Dismemberment of a [dead] fetus when natural birth is not possible.

Euthanasia: Ending the life of an animal using a method that produces rapid unconsciousness and subsequent death without evidence of pain or distress.

Farm: Any *site* where crops or livestock are raised for the production of food and/or textiles. Non-adjacent fields may be considered part of the same farm, provided they are under the same management (i.e. same farmer). For RWS: Limited to sheep farms.



Greasy Animal Fiber: Animal fiber as it is shorn from the animal, before any processing (e.g. greasy wool).

Group: A scope certificate which includes multiple, separately owned *sites* whose conformity with the standard falls under the responsibility of another separately owned legal entity with an *internal control system (ICS)*. The entity which manages the ICS is considered the *organization*. Group eligibility requirements are defined in RWS.

Group Member: A site which is part of a group certification. The word ‘member’ may be used to refer to a group member.

Internal Control System (ICS): The system used by an *organization* for the oversight and management of conformity with a Standard for multiple *sites*, such as a *group*.

ICS Inspector: A person responsible for conducting inspections of sites covered by an *ICS*.

ICS Manager: The ICS manager (or management group) is responsible for the implementation of the *ICS*.

Mortality: Percentage or proportion of a *flock* or herd that die.

Mulesing: Removal of wool-bearing strips of skin from between the hind legs of sheep (the “breach” area) and/or from the tail or tail stump that remains after *tail docking*, in an effort to avoid problems of fly strike.

Notching: Cutting the ears of sheep to permanently identify them. Notching is usually done in a pattern particular to the farm or ranch.

Organization: A legal entity which is *certified* to or in the process of becoming certified to the RWS. A scope certificate is held by an organization, and an organization has one or more sites.

Pain Relief: The administration of analgesic and local anesthetic drugs given with the aim of providing significant alleviation of pain.

Pasture: Land covered with vegetation suitable for grazing or foraging by animals.

Pesticides: Substances used for destroying insects or other organisms harmful to cultivated plants or to animals. Pesticides include bactericides, baits, fungicides, herbicides, insecticides, lures, rodenticides and repellents.

Pithing: Destruction of the brain by insertion of a metal rod. Carried out after the use of penetrating captive bolt gun.

Predator: Animal that hunts, kills, and eats other animals in order to survive.

RWS Material: The specific material that is being verified by the RWS as a content claim in a product which is sold.



Shelter: Something that gives animals protection either via natural features such as trees or artificial structures like buildings or shades, however, it will not necessarily provide the same level of protection as *housing*.

Site: Any geographically distinct unit within a certificate scope. Locations which are geographically distinct or have different civic addresses are considered to be separate sites (see exception for *farms*). *Subcontractors* are not considered to be sites.

Steining: Removal of wool bearing skin in the breech area by application of liquid nitrogen. This is a form of mulesing.

Stocking Density: Number of animals kept in a particular space (e.g. in a house or on a transport vehicle).

Stocking Rate: Number of animals kept on a particular area of land.

Stun: Action of rendering an animal insensible and unconscious.

Tail docking: Complete removal of all or part of an animal's tail.

Thermocautery: Use of a heated blade that cauterizes to stop the bleeding as it cuts. Used for *tail docking*.



Appendix B – Risk Assessment

Certification bodies conduct a *risk assessment* on each organization prior to each audit and assign a risk designation of low, medium, or high risk. Higher risk levels require certification bodies to visit more farms and/or to conduct more *semi-announced* and *unannounced audits*. Full requirements for risk assessments can be found in the documents *ASR-101 Accreditation and Certification Procedures for Textile Exchange Standards* and *RAF-102 RAF Certification Procedures*.



Appendix C – Slaughter Site Module (optional)

This appendix applies to slaughter sites. RWS certification is optional for slaughter sites; RWS wool may be sold from farms when the slaughter sites are not certified.



Desired outcome: The slaughter process prevents or minimizes pain and distress. All animals are stunned (rendered unconscious and insensible to pain) prior to slaughter.

Number	Requirement	Level
S1. Management and Training		
S1.1	All personnel unloading, handling, stunning, and slaughtering animals shall be trained and competent to carry out the tasks required of them, so as to protect animal welfare.	C
	<p>S1.1.1 Training shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Animal welfare principles; b. Good handling practices; c. Identification of sick/injured animals; d. Stunning methods and checking effectiveness of stunning; and e. Slaughter methods 	Ma
S1.2	There shall be a named person who is responsible for animal welfare and who has the authority to stop slaughter operations if there is a risk to sheep welfare.	Ma
S1.3	Documented standard operating procedures for all parts of the operation shall be developed and implemented.	Mi
S1.4	Records of training shall be kept.	Mi



Number	Requirement	Level
S2. Casualty Animals		
S2.1	Animals that are down and unable to rise shall be euthanized promptly using a method defined by these standards.	Ma
S3. Preslaughter Handling		
S3.1	Animals shall be handled calmly with no abuse.	C
S3.2	The use of electric prods is prohibited.	Ma
S3.3	Holding pens shall provide enough space for animals to move around and lie down together.	Ma
S3.4	Holding pens shall provide shade and shelter to maintain sheep thermal comfort.	Ma
S3.5	Water shall be provided in holding pens.	Ma
S3.6	If animals are held for 12 hours or more they shall be fed.	Ma
S3.7	Flooring in all areas accessed by live animals shall be non-slip to prevent animals slipping or falling.	Ma
S4. Slaughter Equipment		
S4.1	Suitable equipment including reserve equipment for the slaughter of sheep shall be available.	Ma
S4.2	Stunning/slaughter equipment shall be well maintained as per the manufacturer's instructions.	Ma
S5. Stunning and Killing Methods		
S5.1	Animals shall be stunned using a method that causes immediate unconsciousness that lasts until death. Acceptable methods for sheep are as follows: a. Head only electric stunning	C



Number	Requirement	Level
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Head/heart electric stunning c. Penetrating captive bolt guns d. Firearm 	
S5.2	The stunning or killing device shall be positioned correctly according to the species and the method being used.	Ma
S5.3	If electrical stunning is used a minimum current of 1.00 Amp shall be achieved.	Ma
S5.4	If electrical stunning is used electrodes shall be positioned to span the brain of the animal.	Ma
S5.5	If captive bolts or firearms are used the correct cartridge or propellant for sheep shall be used.	Ma
S5.6	Sheep shall not be shackled and/or hoisted unless they have first been effectively stunned.	C
S5.7	If animals show any sign of sensibility they shall be immediately re-stunned.	Ma
S5.8	Animals shall be checked to ensure they are insensible before being bled.	Ma
S5.9	Following stunning sheep shall be bled as soon as possible.	Ma
	S5.9.1 Sheep shall be bled within 15 seconds of head-only electrical stunning.	Mi
	S5.9.2 Sheep shall be bled within 60 seconds of head/heart electrical stunning, captive bolt stunning, or shooting with a firearm.	Mi
S5.10	The bleed wound shall sever the major blood vessels in the neck and allow rapid blood loss such that insensibility is maintained until the point of death.	Ma
S5.11	No further processing shall be carried out until the death of the sheep has been verified.	Ma
S5.12	Sheep shall not be slaughtered in sight of other animals.	Ma



Number	Requirement	Level
S6. Chain of Custody		
S6.1	The slaughter site shall have a plan that shows how incoming sheep are identified, how skins from certified flocks are identified from different herds/flocks, and how the skins are handled from removal from the carcass until the material leaves the facility.	Ma
S6.2	The slaughter plant shall have procedures for verifying that animals came from RWS-certified farms.	Ma
S6.3	Records shall be kept of the number of sheep slaughtered from RWS-certified farms and the corresponding number of skins from RWS certified farms.	Ma



Appendix D – Transport Guidance

Number	Requirement	Level
TG1. Responsibilities, Competency, and Stockmanship		
TG1.1	At every stage of transport, animals shall be cared for by a sufficient number of personnel, who collectively possess the appropriate ability, knowledge, and competence necessary to maintain the health and welfare of the animals.	C
TG1.2	The person in charge of an animal may change as it moves from the farm to its final destination. The responsibility for implementing the standard shall therefore lie with the person(s) selecting and presenting animals for transport, and also the person(s) or organization(s) accepting the animals for transport.	Ma
	TG1.2.1 Where the responsibility changes, the person(s) or organization(s) accepting the animals for transport shall provide a copy of their Standard Operating Procedures.	Mi
TG2. Documentation		
TG2.1	All required documentation shall be completed and accessible to the relevant personnel prior to embarking on and during travel, so that incomplete or inaccessible documentation does not cause any delay in animals reaching the destination or being unloaded at the destination.	Mi
TG2.2	There shall be a contingency plan in place that allows the needs of animals to be met in the event of any delays arising during the journey.	Mi
TG3. Fitness for Travel		
TG3.1	All sheep shall be assessed as fit for transport. The following animals shall not be transported unless it is for the purposes of veterinary treatment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. sick, injured, weak, or disabled animalsb. those that are unable to stand unaided and bear weight on each legc. those that are blind in both eyesd. those that cannot be moved without causing them additional suffering	C



Number	Requirement	Level
	<p>e. those whose body condition would result in poor welfare because of the expected climatic conditions.</p> <p>TG3.1.1 If animals meeting these conditions are suffering and unlikely to recover, they should be euthanized on the farm. They should not be transported to auction or slaughter.</p>	R
TG3.2	<p>The following animals shall only be transported if the journey is short (less than 50km) and the purpose is to improve conditions for the animal and the journey will not cause unnecessary pain or suffering. Otherwise, transport shall be delayed until they are fit to travel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Heavily pregnant ewes (past 90% gestation)b. New born lambs where the navel has not completely healedc. Ewes that have given birth in the previous seven days	Ma
TG4. Separation		
TG4.1	<p>Sheep shall be handled and transported separately from other species.</p> <p>The following separations shall also be applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Sheep of significantly different sizes or agesb. Sexually mature males from femalesc. Animals with horns from animals without hornsd. Animals hostile to each othere. Tied animals from untied animals <p><i>NOTE: TG4.1 does not apply where animals have been raised in compatible groups, are accustomed to each other and where separation would cause distress or where animals are accompanied by dependent young.</i></p>	Mi
TG5. Preparation for Transport		
TG5.1	<p>Animals shall be appropriately prepared for transport, including through the provision of sufficient food and water, as appropriate to the species, age, condition, and expected length and conditions of the journey, so that pain, injury, or distress to themselves or other animals is avoided.</p>	Ma



Number	Requirement	Level
TG5.2	Before undertaking a journey during which the animals will be fed and watered, animals shall be familiarized with the feed to be offered and the methods by which the feed and water are given.	Mi

TG6. Transport Vehicles and Facilities for Livestock

TG6.1	The vehicle and its loading and unloading facilities shall be designed, constructed, and maintained to avoid injury and suffering and to ensure the safety of the animals.	Ma
TG6.2	Ramps shall be set at an incline of no greater than 27 degrees and have measures in place to prevent injury.	Mi
TG6.3	Conveyances and containers shall be designed to ensure adequate ventilation or oxygenation to allow the free flow of air or oxygen to all animals, even when stationary, to prevent the build-up of harmful concentrations of gases or impurities, water vapor or temperature.	Mi
TG6.4	Conveyances and containers shall be designed to provide protection from adverse weather that may be a risk to the animal's health and welfare.	Mi
TG6.5	Where animals show signs of heat or cold stress or distress from exposure to noxious gases, immediate corrective action shall be taken.	Ma
TG6.6	Animals shall not be transported when climactic conditions are likely to cause significant discomfort or harm.	Mi

TG7. Loading and Unloading

TG7.1	Animals shall be loaded and unloaded in a way that minimizes the risk of pain, injury, or distress to the animals. The use of electric prodders is prohibited.	Ma
TG7.2	Sheep shall not be dropped, dragged, or pulled by the fleece, tail, ears, head, horns, or neck.	Ma
TG7.3	<i>Stocking density</i> shall be sufficient to allow animals to adopt a natural posture during the journey.	Ma

TG8. Recommended Space Allowance

TG8.1	Each sheep should have the following minimum area in transport:	R
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Number	Requirement	Level
	a. Shorn sheep and lambs of 26 kg or over: 0.20-0.30 m ² /animal	
	b. Unshorn sheep: 0.30-0.40 m ² /animal	
	c. Heavily pregnant ewes 0.40-0.50 m ² /animal	

TG9. Journey Times, Food, Water, and Rest

TG9.1	Journeys shall be direct, without any prolonged stops.	Ma
	TG9.1.1. All animals should be transported for the shortest possible time.	R
TG9.2	Water, feed, and opportunity to rest shall be made available to animals as appropriate to meet their health needs.	Ma
TG9.3	After each 24 hours of travel adult sheep shall have a rest period of at least 12 hours.	Ma
	TG9.3.1 Animals between weaning and 12 months of age shall have a rest period of at least 12 hours after every 18 hours of transport.	Ma
TG9.4	During every specified rest period, sheep of all ages shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. be unloaded; b. have access to food and clean water c. have enough space for exercise and rest. 	Ma
TG9.5	Water and feed shall be provided at least once in every 24 hours to animals older than 12 months, except for animals traveling on a journey that will be entirely completed within 30 hours.	Ma
	<i>The relevant period for determining feed and water requirement is the total period of deprivation of feed and water from the time of initial loading until unloading after the second or last journey.</i>	

TG10. Monitoring and Records

TG10.1	Animals shall be inspected for injury or signs of pain or distress at regular intervals during the journey, including at rest breaks taken by the operator of the conveyance and at refueling stops.	Ma
TG10.2	Animals found to be distressed or injured shall be assisted, treated or if necessary, euthanized as soon as practicable.	Ma



Number	Requirement	Level
TG10.3	The mortality and injury rate shall be recorded.	Mi