

# Saboteurs and Shooting

practical advice for shoot managers

## Considerations before the day:

### **Build a strong working relationship with your local rural crime officers**

Creating a rapport with your local rural crime team helps improve security and allows contact details to be exchanged. Pass on details of your shoot, such as grid references, boundaries and access points. This will give you peace of mind that the police can respond quickly if they are needed.

### **Liaise with your local hunt**

Having unfortunately borne the brunt of saboteur activity for many decades, the local hunt may well have useful information that will be of use to you for your day.

### **Know your ground**

Know exactly where the footpaths, bridle paths and other access points are on the land, and make sure you are aware of the legislation surrounding public land use. For example, a footpath can be used for passage only. The saboteurs will arrive well briefed and it is essential that you are too.

### **Shoot cancellation policy**

Consider taking out shoot cancellation insurance, so that you are insured if the day is cancelled through saboteur activity.

**“Stay calm and let the shoot organisers and police deal with the saboteurs.**

**Remember the saboteurs are breaking the law, not you.”**

## If saboteurs turn up on the day:

### **End the drive**

The guns' briefing must include a signal to unload, put guns in slips and gather at a pre-agreed meeting point. Safety is everything when it comes to shooting, and all precautions should be taken to avoid injury.

### **Phone the police or local rural crime officers**

If saboteurs are interrupting a legal activity on private property they are committing the criminal offence of aggravated trespass. This is where a strong relationship with the local police and rural crime officers is helpful; as they will know where to come and how to deal with the situation appropriately. Any incident involving saboteurs should be logged with the police. It is essential that the police understand the extent of the issue. Far too much animal rights activity does not get recorded, resulting in police failing to understand the extent of the problem.

### **Stay calm**

Saboteurs will try everything to intimidate, provoke a verbal threat or aggressive comment and consequently put your shot gun licence at risk or being revoked by the police. Stay calm and let the shoot organisers and police deal with the saboteurs. Remember the saboteurs are breaking the law, not you.

### **Have an early lunch**

Leaving the ground for an hour or two might make the shoot day shorter; however, it will help move the saboteurs on and leave you to enjoy the rest of the day.

### **Notify the Countryside Alliance**

The Countryside Alliance has decades of experience dealing with the consequences of saboteuring. Contact the shooting team on **020 7840 9220** or on **shooting@countryside-alliance.org** after the event and we can help with proceedings including contacting the local police and Police and Crime Commissioner, so they have a full picture of the crime and any knock-on effects.