

SARG Guide

Surrey Amphibian and Reptile Group



SARG Health and Safety Guide



Steve Langham

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SARG Health and Safety Guide

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Surrey Amphibian and Reptile Group (SARG) conducts operations which are generally considered safe; however, there is a constant requirement to generate and review risk assessments and safe working procedures. This guide is a repository for health and safety issues that have been required over the years.

2. SARG Volunteer Working Agreement

- 2.1. Undertaking any activities organised by SARG requires an electronically signed Volunteer Working Agreement, available on the website.
- 2.2. This agreement informs SARG of any special requirements you may have, to enable us to carry out our duty of care. In addition, without the agreement you will not be covered by the personal liability insurance provided by ARG-UK, and could be personally liable. You must also be a current SARG member to be insured.
- 2.3. You only need to sign one SARG Volunteers Working Agreement, and this will be kept on file covering all SARG activities. Please inform us of any substantive changes to your circumstances.
- 2.4. There is a facility available on the ARGWEB website for you to amend details held on this form, under the Members' Area.
- 2.5. The aim of the Lone Working Procedures is to ensure that there is always someone who knows where you are working so that you can be located and/or contacted in the event of an emergency.
- 2.6. SARG strongly advises you to follow these procedures, however; it is up to you to use them appropriately and responsibly.
- 2.7. The Lone Working Procedures need to be applied to situations where a person is working alone. Lone Working should only take place if you are confident that you are safe and able to work alone.
- 2.8. An assessment should be made of whether Lone Working is appropriate. Can the risks be minimised if more than one person is involved? Is the scope of the work such that it should not (or must not) be undertaken on your own? The task needs to be assessed against our approach to undertaking Risk Assessments.
- 2.9. For all Lone Working, a Buddy System needs to be in operation, whereby a Buddy is nominated and informed of:
 - Location(s) of Lone Working (changes in itinerary need to be reported to the Buddy).

- Reporting-in times or estimated time of arrival (the frequency of reporting-in should be determined on the basis of risk and changes of location).
 - Contact details.
 - Travel and vehicle details (particularly important in the event of requiring emergency assistance).
 - The Emergency Procedure in the event of not calling in.
- 2.10. This information may most usefully be supplied to the Buddy on a SARG Lone Working Form. This form is designed to help in the event of an emergency. Please print this as many times as you need.
- 2.11. Any changes in itinerary should be communicated to the Buddy; this may require leaving messages on answer phones or mobile phones (Buddies should check for messages before implementing Emergency Procedures). A third party may also be used to convey a message.
- 2.12. The Lone Worker will be responsible for phoning (reporting in) on time. Take account of the possibility of poor mobile phone reception, phones being lost or damaged, phone batteries running out, or that your Buddy may be driving or doing some other activity that prevents them from using the mobile phone. A contingency must be in place for such events.
- 2.13. In the event of the Lone Worker not reporting in, the Buddy should go through the following Emergency Procedures:
- Between half an hour and an hour after the due 'reporting-in' time, the Buddy should call the Lone Worker on the number(s) given. If there is no response, they should leave a phone message with the time of the call, and state that the Lone Worker is overdue for reporting in.
 - Repeat this after 15 minutes, and a third time up to one hour after the due reporting-in time. This will give the Lone Worker one hour after the deadline to respond. If there is still no response then the Buddy should exhaust all other options before calling the emergency services.
 - If still unable to contact or locate the Lone Worker, the Buddy should call the local police (use 999 only if you are sure there is an emergency, though it is better to err on the side of caution). The police should be advised of the Lone Working procedure, the areas being visited, travel details, any known risks, reporting in times and any contact details; and they should leave a contact number should further information be required.
 - If any other emergency services are involved, the Buddy should also advise them of the details provided by the Lone Worker, notably the areas being visited, travel details, any known risks, reporting-in times and contact details.

Note: Mobile phones should not be used while driving or undertaking hazardous activities.

3. SARG Lone Worker Form

Surrey Amphibian and Reptile Group (SARG)

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SARG Lone Working Emergency Form

This form can be completed to help your 'Buddy' in the event of needing to implement the Emergency Procedures, or if information needs to be given to the emergency services. The Emergency Procedures are outlined on the back of this form. Please ensure that your Buddy is familiar with them. You may also find it useful to keep a copy for yourself.

Name of Lone Worker:

Mobile Phone Number:

Overnight Accommodation: (if relevant)

Home Phone Number:

Name of Buddy:

Buddy Contact Details:

Date of Lone Working:

Reporting-in Time:

Area of Lone Working

Travel & Vehicle Details:

Known Risks (to inform the Emergency Services):

4. Outdoor Working Risk Assessment

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation	Residual Risk
Assault: Physical injury, sexual assault.	High	Low	Try to defuse any potentially confrontational situations. If possible walk away. Contact police if unsure or feel threatened. Apply SARG UK lone working procedures.	Low
Biological/stings and Bites: Diseases, allergic reaction.	High	Med	Wear long trousers and long sleeved tops to limit tick bites. Wash hands before eating. If known allergy to stings take appropriate medication on site. If feeling unwell after a site visit seek medical attention.	Low
Cold: Hypothermia	High	Low	Wear appropriate clothing.	Low
Concealed holes/ Ditches: Physical injury, ankle injuries	Med	High	Take care when walking through areas of deep habitat or areas where there is poor footing visibility. Consider using a walking stick. Avoid areas of poor footing visibility is possible.	Low
Dogs: Bites, lacerations, disease	Med	Low	Be wary of dogs off leads. Disinfect any bites and seek medical attention.	Low
Soft sand/mud/bog: Quicksand, slipping	Med	Med	Take care with footing when walking on hazardous areas. Use a stick or similar to probe area being walked. Do not walk alone.	Low
Exposure to sun: sun burn	Med	High	Where appropriate sunscreen. Avoid midday sun if possible.	Low
Hazardous waste/ fly Tipping: Cuts, lacerations, chemical burns, infection	High	Med	Wear gloves when handling waste. If unsure of contents of containers or if known to be hazardous contact emergency services.	Low
Heat and difficult terrain: Exhaustion, dehydration	Med	High	Walking difficult terrain will cause extra fatigue in hot weather. Do not rush and drink plenty of water.	Low
Partially buried Structures: Tripping, ankle injuries	Med	High	Take care when footing is not clearly visible. Look for signs nearby of structures eg, partially collapsed fence.	Low
Ponds / deep water: Drowning	High	Med	Take care when near water bodies. Do not lone work near water bodies.	Low
Sharp grasses and thorny bushes: Eye injuries, cuts, lacerations, infection	Med	High	Do not bend down or kneel in areas of Sharp sea grass or other sharp plants. Disinfect any lacerations or punctures.	Low
Sharp objects (eg tins): Cuts, lacerations, infection	Med	High	Take care when picking up any potentially sharp objects. Where gloves if appropriate or desired.	Low
Shooting: Physical injury	High	Low	Do not approach any person suspected of carrying a weapon, contact police. If there is shooting allowed on site (eg MoD ranges) establish where and when shooting will take place and avoid.	Low
Steep slopes/unstable ground: Physical injury, trips, ankle injuries	Med	High	Try to avoid climbing steep slopes. Take care with footing.	Low
Stock animals: Physical injury, trampling	High	Low	Be aware of stock behaviour, if in doubt leave site. Do not take dogs on site.	Low
Motorcycles/horses being ridden recklessly	High	Low	Always be alert when walking in areas of poor visibility that may be used by horses or motorbikes.	Low
Military ordnance: Physical injury	High	Low	Never disturb unidentified objects, or objects known to be of military origin. This is particularly relevant when surveying on MoD owned land. Even if the site is not a current live firing range, it may have been in the past. Note grid reference and report to SARG or the range office (if appropriate), with a description of the device.	Low

5. Habitat Management Risk Assessment

Also applicable:	Outdoor working risk assessment			
Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation	Residual Risk
Physical injury from tools.	High	Med	Be aware of safe working distances. Always be aware of other working in your vicinity and be aware of others when working yourself	Low
Contact with harmful chemicals.	High	Med	Be aware of the COSHH safety sheet guidance for the product being used.	Low

6. Reptile Survey Risk Assessment

Also applicable:	Outdoor working risk assessment			
Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation	Residual Risk
Adder bite: poisoning, allergic reaction, paralysis	High	Low	Never attempt to pick up adders unless trained and equipped to do so. Take care to look at ground when kneeling or placing hands on ground. Wear stout boots. Take extra care when lifting refugia or other debris. Always use a handle or lifting tool when checking tins on sites where adders are present.	Low
Cuts from refugia sharp edges	Med	Med	Use the provided lifting handle when checking tins. If a handle is not present, lift with caution, or use a stick to lift the tin or use hand protection such as gloves. Awareness of the risk diminishes the likelihood significantly.	Low
Salmonellosis infection from contact with reptile faeces.	Med	Low	Use neoprene gloves when handling reptiles (eg taking biometrics). If gloves are not used, avoid eating or smoking until hands have been thoroughly washed.	Low

7. Public Events Risk Assessment

Also applicable:	Outdoor working risk assessment			Residual Risk
Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation	Residual Risk
Risk Assessment for Animal Wellbeing				
Animal thermoregulation	High	Med	Use of the SARG gazebo for shade. Water bowls in all vivaria. Water spray on hand for very hot conditions.	Low
Risk Assessment for Animal Handling				
Adders (envenomation)	High	Low	Adders will be locked into their vivarium and not brought out during the show. SARG procedures for the handling and transportation of adders to be applied without exception. SARG advice for adder envenomation to be provided to any on-site medics. Mobile phone is to be available for 999 calls.	Low
People being frightened of the animals.	Med	Med	The handler will introduce animals slowly in clear sight of the public. A clear escape route for nervous persons will be available at all times.	Low
People picking up germs from handling the animals.	High	Low	The public will be told to wash their hands after the event. Disinfectant hand wash will be available on the stall.	Low
People getting bitten or scratched by the animals.	Low	Low	Experienced handlers will supervise people handling animals and ensure they handle the animals correctly so as not to aggravate nor injure them.	Low
The animals escaping.	Med	Low	The handler will supervise the activity at all times. Only one animal per handler will be on show at a time.	Low
Injury to, or aggravation of the animals.	High	Low	The handler will ensure the animals are handled correctly and that temperatures and conditions are suitable. Only one animal per handler will be handled at any time.	Low
Risk Assessment for Meteorological Conditions				
Strong winds	Med	Med	Ensure all vulnerable items are appropriately secured.	Low
Heavy rain	Med	Med	Use of the SARG gazebo for protection.	Low
Risk Assessment for Event Environment				
Trip hazards	Med	Med	Identify any trip hazards and inform the event organiser.	Low
Vehicle movements	Med	Med	Identify vehicle movement corridors and exercise caution when using.	Low
Disposal of waste	Med	High	Bring a waste container to minimise fire and health issues.	Low
Manual handling	Med	High	Participants should be informed of the dangers of manual handling and instructed to assess the load before handling. Wear appropriate PPE including protective gloves, trousers and sturdy footwear to protect hands, legs and feet. Minimise repetitive bending wherever possible.	Low
Aggressive people	High	Low	Participants should always work in teams and should not work alone at any time during the activity. Use of tact and diplomacy at all times, showing respect for the individual. If anybody feels physically threatened, the police should be called via a 999 call, or by attracting the attention of local law enforcement officers.	Low