

The Animal Welfare Policy

Creating a culture of lasting compassion and care



DATE UPDATED	POLICY HOLDER	NEXT REVIEW DATE
JUNE 2015	SENIOR WELFARE ADVISOR	JUNE 2017

PURPOSE

The Animal Welfare Policy describes the standard behaviours and actions that all employees of the Brooke, and those representing the Brooke within partner organisations or as consultants, are expected to demonstrate in order to respect the needs and feelings of animals involved with any aspects of the Brooke's work.

These standards reflect actions which are within our control. Brooke employees that understand and act in accordance will be equipped to demonstrate how to have a positive impact on working equine animals.

AIMS

For employees of the Brooke, and those representing the Brooke within partner organisations, this policy aims to:

- State non-negotiable behaviour expected when working for, or representing, the Brooke
- Clarify who is responsible for managing animal welfare risk

BROOKE'S CONCEPT OF ANIMAL WELFARE

The Brooke recognises that animal welfare is a concept which applies to all animals. Animal welfare encompasses both physical and mental components which are influenced by the environment in which the animal lives and works, human attitudes and practices, and the resources available. Animals have the capacity to enjoy positive emotions and suffer from negative emotions. Animal welfare will remain poor if comfort, health and life-sustaining needs of animals are not met.

The Brooke acknowledges that equine animals work in the service of humans, particularly in the developing world. It is our position that people who use or keep these animals to support their livelihoods have a responsibility, and should be supported, towards ensuring that the animals' welfare is optimised now and for the future.

BROOKE'S NEED FOR A PROACTIVE AND EFFECTIVE WORKFORCE

The Brooke's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable working horses, donkeys and mules in developing countries. Through the relief of immediate suffering and the creation of an environment around the animal which can and will provide for their needs, working equine animals around the world will be cared for, managed and used in a welfare-friendly manner.

In order to achieve our mission the Brooke requires an effective global workforce, dedicated to responding to animals in need and creating cultures of lasting compassion and care for animals. Brooke employees ought not to expect others to change how they care, manage, use and communicate about equine animals without being able to demonstrate the change needed to bring about an improved quality of life for animals.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

The following documents will further support employees to demonstrate best practice with regards to animal welfare and in how best to manage animal welfare risk. (Hyperlinks to be included)

- Capturing Good Practice Guidelines
- Euthanasia Policy
- Guidelines on the Use of Animals in Training: creating a culture of responsible use
- Handling Guidelines for Welfare Assessors
- The Brooke's Basic Ethical Frameworks Policy
- The Brooke's Good Research Practice (BGRP)
- UK Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Interactions with and around working equids
- Working with Universities

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR WORKING EQUINE WELFARE PRACTICES

The following minimum standards are to be respected and implemented by all staff within Brooke UK, USA, Netherlands and countries hosting direct or partner projects. Failure to meet these minimum standards is considered unacceptable by the Brooke and may affect future funding or result in a mandatory animal welfare audit.

1. Employees involved in any programme planning and implementation must

- a. Work within local and national legal requirements relating to animals and animal welfare.
- b. Specifically state in planning documentation how the animals will benefit from the funded work.
- c. Use and reference the evidence used to reach conclusions on animal welfare targets and exit plans.
- d. Identify and prioritise welfare issues using methods agreed with Brooke UK.
- e. Include animal welfare assessments and agreed sampling strategies as a component of baselines, monitoring and evaluations (exception being advocacy activities).
- f. Ensure quality of care to animals is never compromised in efforts to reach target numbers of coverage and uptake.
- g. Identify welfare risks associated with each activity and identify measures to reduce and monitor these risks.
- h. Have the required animal-welfare skill sets and be provided with support where needed.
- i. Equip field staff with locally sourced equipment when available and suitable.

2. Employees involved in Veterinary activities must

- a. Make the patient's short and long term welfare the priority in clinical decision making (i.e. do no harm).
- b. Work constructively with local veterinary and para-veterinary trained professionals.
- c. Use all anti-infective medications strategically to reduce resistance.
- d. Utilise optimal pain relief as the first priority (pharmacological and non-pharmacological actions).
- e. Ensure stakeholders are capable to administer the full course of prescribed treatment to an animal, demonstrating welfare-friendly approaches where necessary.
- f. Provide clear and simple messages on issue prevention.
- g. Attend to emergency cases which are within the capabilities of available health care professionals, always providing basic symptomatic treatment.
- h. Not attempt any veterinary procedure, including surgery, requiring a degree of sterility, expertise or equipment that is not available or mastered in the area.
- i. Initiate euthanasia discussions with owners early, once all treatment and recovery options have been clearly thought through, and the animal is diagnosed with intractable pain or is unfit to ever return to work.

3. Employees involved in Euthanasia procedures must

- a. Avoid animals being transported live before euthanasia wherever possible.
- b. Gain informed consent from the owner or recognised authority.
- c. Be carried out by trained staff, using a recognised, legal and most humane method.
- d. Carry out and monitor safe and legal disposal of animal carcasses.
- e. Carry out as soon as possible to avoid further suffering.

4. Advocacy, Research and Welfare Assessment findings must

- a. Be communicated to the UK and wider organisation.
- b. Be applied to programmatic work, where appropriate to help animals.

5. Employees involved in Community Engagement activities must

- a. Include plans to address any relevant welfare issues which have not been identified by the community members themselves.
- b. Have acquired, or be supported to develop, adequate knowledge, skills and experience to be able to deliver welfare messages which are technically correct and relevant to the needs of the animals.

6. Employees involved in producing welfare messages within Information Education Communication (IEC) materials, animal care manuals or any other Brooke branded communication materials must

- a. Have content approved by a relevant, nominated person (in the UK, Country Programme or both) for technical accuracy and agreed Brooke practice prior to printing and dissemination.
- b. Ensure the welfare of animals is never compromised in the process of producing materials.

7. Employees and relevant third parties coming into contact with animals must

- a. Receive theoretical and practical training relevant to their role before commencing work with animals unaccompanied
- b. Be competent and confident to meet Brooke's expectations prior to commencing work with animals unaccompanied.
- c. Manage their personal health and safety risk.
- d. Be attentive and non-threatening to the animal at all times, ensuring that unnecessary suffering is avoided.

8. Employees handling and restraining animals must

- a. Understand the theory behind restraint methods and techniques, using this to inform decision-making during any interaction.
- b. Use a lead rope and halter/head-collar of appropriate size and fit for the animal (foals the exception).
- c. Make handling and restraint decisions based on the principle that the 'cost' to the animal is in proportion to the 'benefit' to the animal in the short and long term. This could include terminating the procedure if the animal becomes disproportionately distressed by the restraint.
- d. Only use any additional restraint (blindfold, leg lift, nose twitch, hobbles, additional people) after other methods of restraint have been attempted and found to be unsuccessful.
- e. Only use chemical restraint (sedatives) where justified, and ensure that the animal has adequately recovered from sedation following the procedure before being returned to owner.
- f. Never use casting, ear twitching, tongue/jaw twitching, excessive number of handlers or any other form of severe, painful or distressing restraint.
- g. Never pull the tail, ears or legs; never hit, kick, beat or block the nostrils of animals for any reason, or use any other means to move the animal which may cause pain or distress.
- h. Not ignore unacceptable handling and restraint techniques observed by stakeholders during field work and immediately advise on a suitable alternative.

9. Employees using animals for training must

- a. Have the necessary skills and experience to teach the material.
- b. Have the ability to appraise when the animal's welfare is being compromised.
- c. Create a safe environment for the animals, staff and trainees involved.
- d. Conduct a status check on the animals prior to training to ensure they are fit for inclusion.
- e. Supervise those who are interacting with the animals to ensure welfare-friendly practicals.
- f. Remove animals from training activities if welfare becomes compromised.

- g. Never perform veterinary procedures on animals unless it is necessary and proportionate for diagnosis or treatment of the animal.
- h. Provide the same level of care for all animals regardless of ownership or purpose.
- i. Not transport animals for training purposes.
- j. Not delay treatment that will relieve the animal's suffering.
- k. Not delay euthanasia unnecessarily, prolonging suffering.

10. Employees using animals within research activities must

- a. Not carry out invasive procedures.
- b. Read and follow procedures of the Research Policy and Good Research Practice Guidelines, which includes an ethical review.
- c. Adhere to the approved research methodology; prioritising and addressing any concerns which arose relating to the welfare of the animals used prior to commencing.

11. Employees and visitors using animals for fundraising, publicity and other non-programmatic activities must

- a. Adhere to Capturing Good Practice Guidelines.
- b. Consult the Animal Welfare & Research Team at the concept stage of a visit to be briefed on welfare risk management and support consistent with the animal's needs.
- c. Never interfere with programmatic activities addressing an animal in need in the field.
- d. Never load, stop a loaded animal or request that the animal repeat a journey for any reason.
- e. Not stage photographs which compromise welfare.

12. Employees in country programmes hosting visitors must

- a. Brief visitors, for example as part of security briefings, on how visitors must communicate and behave in situations where they feel the welfare of an animal is being compromised and wish to take action.
- b. Expose visitors to the true welfare state of animals, programmatic successes and challenges and never hide them or present false circumstances.

Roles & Responsibilities

The UK Board of Trustees

The Brooke Board of Trustees is responsible for review and approval of the organisation's Animal Welfare Policy every two years.

Country CEO or Regional Reps

The Country CEO or Country Director is responsible for ensuring that employees understand the Animal Welfare Policy, and that all employees (including partner programmes) comply with the minimum standards relative to their roles.

Managers in the UK and Overseas

Managers are responsible for ensuring that their team members understand the Animal Welfare Policy, and comply with the minimum standards relative to their roles.

The UK Animal Welfare and Research Team

The AW&R Team is responsible for making recommendations for the revision of the Animal Welfare Policy as needed, but at a minimum of every two years. Additionally, this team is responsible for the development of guidelines to support employees to meet and exceed the minimum standards specified in this document.

All Employees in UK and Overseas

The welfare of working equine animals is the responsibility of everyone. Even when employees are not directly working with animals, all must assist in ensuring that the Animal Welfare Policy and minimum standards are being implemented in all country programmes. If there is doubt that this is occurring, this must be raised with the Senior Welfare Advisor in Brooke UK to enable follow-up and support to be arranged.

Approved by the Board 26 June 2015

Brooke UK's Senior Welfare Advisor (SWA)

The UK's Senior Welfare Advisor is the Policy Holder for the Animal Welfare Policy. The SWA serves as the first point of contact on revisions or questions pertaining to this policy.

DISTRIBUTION LIST

(New: to make it clear where the UK has distributed the Policy and why).