



Background

Under EU REGULATIONS: COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 1099/2009 meat processing companies processing more than 1000 animals per annum are required to ensure the certified competency of personnel involved in animal handling, slaughtering and overseeing animal welfare . These regulations will come into force on January 1 2013.





“Imports from third countries

The requirements laid down in Chapters II and III of this Regulation shall apply for the purposes of Article 12(2)(a) of Regulation (EC) No 854/2004. The health certificate accompanying meat imported from third countries shall be supplemented by an attestation certifying that requirements at least equivalent to those laid down in Chapters II and III of this Regulation have been met.





General principle

Killing and related operations shall only be carried out by persons with the appropriate level of competence to do so without causing the animals any avoidable pain, distress or suffering.





Who has to be certified?

Business operators shall ensure that the following slaughter operations are only carried out by persons holding a certificate of competence for such operations, as provided for in Article 21, demonstrating their ability to carry them out in accordance with the rules laid down in this Regulation:

(a) the handling and care of animals before they are restrained;





Who has to be certified?

- (b) the restraint of animals for the purpose of stunning or killing;
- (c) the stunning of animals;
- (d) the assessment of effective stunning;
- (e) the shackling or hoisting of live animals;
- (f) the bleeding of live animals;
- (g) the slaughtering in accordance with Article 4(4).





What certification has to be provided

Certification has to be:

- provided by an external training organisation that is government registered
- certification has to be against a government registered training program

Certification can not be:

- just in-house training
- just assessed against internal work instructions.





Record Keeping

It is the employer's responsibility to keep up to date records of competency and certification. Likewise the employer has to record who is in training, when it started and who is **directly supervising the trainee.**

An initial review of industry practices shows **this is the weakest area when it comes to compliance.**





Animal Welfare Officers

The new regulations also require the designation and training of an animal welfare officer in each processing plant.





Duties of an AWO

Animal welfare officer shall:

1. assist in ensuring compliance with the rules laid down in this Regulation.
2. be under the direct authority of the business operator
3. report directly to the plant manager on matters relating to the welfare of the animals
4. be in a position to require that the slaughterhouse personnel carry out actions necessary to ensure compliance with the rules laid down in this Regulation.





Duties of an AWO (cont.)

5. have their responsibilities be set out in the standard operating procedures of the slaughterhouse and effectively brought to the attention of the personnel concerned
6. keep a record of the action taken to improve animal welfare in the slaughterhouse. This record shall be kept for at least one year and shall be made available to the competent authority upon request.





What is available to assist your company's response?

- Relevant government accredited training courses (Units of Competency)
- Industry specific training and assessment materials
- Training provided by competitive RTOs
- Traineeships for new entrants funded by the State
- State funding for Unit and Skills Set training
- Industry conducted fee for service AWO courses