SOP No:           ATT 051

SUBJECT:         Euthanasia in Horses (February 2016)

POLICY:          This procedure may only be performed by operators who have
                been educated in the correct techniques, and under the
                supervision of their skilled Demonstrator. Leather boots and
                clean overalls must be worn.

PRECAUTIONS:     The horse will be suitably restrained by a skilled handler
                standing on the same side of the horse as the operator. A skin
                or nose twitch will be used if additional restraint is required.

EQUIPMENT:       Halter & lead
                Twitch
                Animal Clippers
                19 – 21 Gauge Needles
                22 – 25 Gauge Needles
                14 Gauge 3.25 inch Intravenous Catheter (Angiocath)
                Large bore extension set
                Superglue
                2.5 ml syringes
                60 ml syringes
                Alcohol Swabs
                Xylazine 100 mg/ml
                Lignocaine 2%
                Pentobarbital solution (390 mg/ml)

PROCEDURE:       1. The horse is first sedated with Xylazine (see SOP ATT 053).

                2. An intravenous catheter is placed in the jugular vein (see SOP
                   ATT 049) and a large bore extension set is attached to the
                   catheter.

                3. 100 mg/kg of Pentobarbital solution is drawn up into 2 x 60 ml
                   syringes. To improve the ease of injection, the viscosity of the
                   pentobarbital may be reduced by making a 50% pentobarbital/50% water
                   solution and/or heating the pentobarbital in hot water prior to injecting
                   into the horse.

                3. The handler ensures he/she has good control over the head of
                   the horse. The operator then rapidly injects the solution of
                   pentobarbital through the extension set and catheter while
                   carefully monitoring the position and demeanour of the horse
                   at all times.

                4. The handler supports the horse’s head when the horse
                   collapses to the ground. If the horse collapses prior to the full
                   dose being administered, the injection is completed once the
                   horse is recumbent and the handler and operator are safely
                   positioned away from the horse.

                5. The operator confirms death of the horse by ensuring there is
                   no pulse or discernible heart beat. If death cannot be
                   confirmed, additional pentobarbital may be injected until there
                   is confirmed asystole.
6. The horse is then lifted using a fork lift or winch and moved to a suitable location for post mortem and/or disposal.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

DATE ISSUED: 24.06.2009

REVISED: 17.02.2016
20.03.2013

REFERENCES: