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Dzongkhag Administration, PemaGatshel



**Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Stray Cattle Management in
Denchhi Town**

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Purpose.....	2
3. Scope.....	3
4. Supporting Agencies.....	4
5. Existing Rules and Regulations.....	5
6. Offences and Penalties.....	6
7. Procedures.....	7
7.1 Public Awareness and Enforcement.....	7
7.2 Identification and Reporting.....	8
7.3 Imposition of Penalties and Accountability on Cattle Owners	9
7.4 Capture and Transportation.....	9
7.5 Record Keeping.....	9

1. Introduction

The management of stray cattle is important to address the issues caused by unattended cattle. The presence of stray cattle on roads and public spaces poses significant threats to traffic, damages property, and potential spread of diseases. Effective stray cattle management will ensure the safety of both public and animals and peace within the communities.

With the development of Denchhi town and developmental works hindered by the stray cattle, stray cattle management has become vital. It has been observed that people let their stray cattle into the town area causing huge inconveniences and damage to development works including ornamental trees, plants, flowers and human settlement. This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines the approach to manage stray cattle in the town, ensuring their humane treatment, and reducing the issues caused in the town areas. This SOP will help to ensure the development of the town smoothly without damage to public infrastructure and private properties by stray cattle with proper accountability on cattle owners.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to develop an effective framework to manage stray cattle in Denchhi town. This SOP aims to:

1. Ensure public safety by reducing the risks of accidents and injuries caused by stray cattle on roads and town areas.
2. Promote animal welfare through provision of humane treatment as per the Livestock Rules and Regulations of Bhutan 2022 and holding the owners accountable.
3. Facilitate effective coordination between the relevant agencies in managing the stray cattle effectively with clear roles and responsibilities.
4. Conduct monitoring to ensure compliance with existing laws, rules and regulations and policies with direct accountability on cattle owners.
5. Enhance public advocacies on the need for proper measures for cattle management as per the existing laws, regulations and policies and importance of responsibility of cattle owners.

3. Scope

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) applies to all activities related to the management of stray cattle within Denchhi town. The SOP covers the following areas:

1. Geographical Coverage:

- Denchhi town area
- Roads leading to Denchhi Town and Dzongkhag Administration.

2. Target Population:

- Unattended stray cattle in the town area
- Cattle reported by residents, businesses, or authorities as stray or causing disturbances.

3. Stakeholders:

- Shumar Gewog
- Chongshing Gewog
- Khar Gewog
- Municipal office
- BFDA
- Dzongkhag Livestock Sector
- Dzongkhag Veterinary Hospital
- Thromde Thuemi
- Residents of Denchhi town and cattle owners

4. Activities Included:

- Public awareness campaigns and educational programs.
- Identification and reporting of stray cattle.
- Capture and transport of stray cattle.
- Enforcement of regulations pertaining to stray cattle management.

This SOP shall be implemented in Denchhi Town, PemaGatshel Dzongkhag.

4. Supporting Agencies

Stray cattle management requires effective collaboration between relevant agencies to ensure that the SOP is implemented effectively. The following entities play a crucial role in supporting and executing the various tasks involved in stray cattle management:

- **Shumar Gewog Administration:**

- ❖ Coordinate with relevant agencies in advocating the existing rules and regulations, offence and penalties and SOP for effective stray cattle management.
- ❖ Identifying the owners of the cattle left unattended in the town area upon request from monitoring teams.
- ❖ Advocate and sensitize the people in their jurisdiction on the need to manage their own cattle responsibly.

- **Chongshing Gewog Administration:**

- ❖ Coordinate with relevant agencies in advocating the existing rules and regulations, offence and penalties and SOP for effective stray cattle management.
- ❖ Identifying the owners of the cattle left unattended in the town area upon request from monitoring teams.
- ❖ Advocate and sensitize the people in their jurisdiction on the need to manage their own cattle responsibly.

- **Khar Gewog Administration:**

- ❖ Coordinate with relevant agencies in advocating the existing rules and regulations, offence and penalties and SOP for effective stray cattle management.
- ❖ Identifying the owners of the cattle left unattended in the town area upon request from monitoring teams.
- ❖ Advocate and sensitize the people in their jurisdiction on the need to manage their own cattle responsibly.

- **Municipal office**

- ❖ Provide such civil and other services as are essential for the general well-being of the residents of the Municipality
- ❖ Ensure that the development occurs in a planned and harmonious manner;

- ❖ Undertake any activity, consistent with the other relevant laws and policies of the Royal Government, which may preserve and promote the environment within the limits of a Municipal office.
- ❖ Undertake animal control activities as per the Municipal Act of Bhutan 1999.
- ❖ Minimizing public inconveniences caused by stray cattle as per the Municipal Act of Bhutan 1999
- ❖ Preventing and Reducing nuisance caused by stray cattle as per the Municipal Act of Bhutan 1999
- **BFDA**
 - ❖ Carry out inspections to ensure standards are met for cattle management.
- **Dzongkhag Livestock Sector**
 - ❖ Ensure compliance with laws and regulations related to animal welfare and stray cattle management.
- **Dzongkhag Veterinary Hospital**
 - ❖ Provide medical treatments, vaccinations and health check-ups for wounded cattle.
- **Thromde Thuemi**
 - ❖ Work closely with monitoring teams, reporting of unattended cattle, ensuring public safety and reducing hindrance on developmental works.
 - ❖ Coordinate with relevant agencies in advocating the existing rules and regulations, offence and penalties and SOP for effective stray cattle management.
 - ❖ Identifying the owners of the cattle left unattended in the town area upon request from monitoring teams.
 - ❖ Advocate and sensitize the people in their jurisdiction on the need to manage their own cattle responsibly.
- **Residents of Denchhi town and Cattle Owners**
 - ❖ Cattle owners should monitor and manage their cattle and uphold responsible cattle ownership
 - ❖ Reporting unattended cattle in the town area and their hindrance to developmental works.
 - ❖ Assisting the concerned authorities in stray cattle management in the town area
 - ❖ Supporting awareness programs and stray cattle management activities.

5. Existing Rules and Regulations

Effective stray cattle management requires existing laws and regulations that concern animal welfare and public safety. The following are key regulations and legal frameworks relevant to stray cattle management:

1. Municipal Act of Bhutan 1999

- **Section 48:** A Municipal Corporation constituted under this shall have the following functions:
 1. Provide such civil and other services as are essential for the general well-being of the residents of a Municipality
 2. Ensure that the development occur in a planned and harmonious manner
 3. Undertake any activity, consistent with the other relevant laws and policies of the Royal Government, which may preserve and promote the environment within the limits of a Municipal Corporation
- **Section 49:** The Municipal Corporation carries out the following specific functions in consultation with the relevant government Authorities:
 1. General Public services: animal control, waste impounding and public safety.
 2. Social and Other Community Services: Public conveniences, Prevention and abatement of nuisance and Sanitary inspection.

2. Livestock Rules and Regulations 2017

- **Chapter IX: Welfare of Animals**
 1. Pursuant to the section 22.1 of the Livestock Act of Bhutan 2001, management and care of animals shall be implemented as per the “Standard for Animal Welfare in Bhutan” prescribed by the Ministry.
 2. Pursuant to sections 22.2 and 22.4 of the Livestock Act of Bhutan 2001, an owner or individual keeping the animal shall pay due attention to health and welfare as follows:
 1. The owner or caretaker should provide animal with sufficient food, water and appropriate shelter;

2. The owner should provide prompt treatment for any sick and injured animals and provide vaccination and deworming as prescribed by the Technical Department
- Pursuant to section 22.3 of the Livestock Act of Bhutan 2001, an individual shall not subject an animal to unnecessary suffering or injury as follows:
1. The owner should not beat, kick, over-ride, over-drive, over-load, torture or otherwise treat any animal so as to subject it to unnecessary pain and suffering;
 2. The animal with wound, sore or any disease condition should not be employed in any work;
 3. The owner should not keep for an unreasonable time, any animal chained or tethered upon an unreasonably short or heavy chain or cord;
 4. **The owner should not abandon an animal in any circumstances, which is likely to suffer pain by reason of starvation, thirst or willfully permit an animal to go at large in any street and should not let an animal with contagious or infectious disease or disabled animal to die in the street.**
3. **Waste Prevention and Management Regulations 2012**
- **Waste nuisance caused by stray animals:** Considering the waste and nuisance caused by stray domestic animals in and around human settlements and highways, the implementing agencies may formulate mechanisms to prevent and control their presence by holding its owners responsible for their care and confinement. However, in case of ownerless stray dogs and other animals, the implementing agency shall formulate an appropriate mechanism to put an end to such nuisance.

In view of the above legal provisions, understanding and complying with these regulations is crucial for the effective and lawful management of stray cattle. Authorities and stakeholders must stay informed about any updates or changes to these laws to ensure ongoing compliance.

6. Offences and Penalties

➤ **Livestock Rules and Regulations 2017**

- ❖ 217. Pursuant to section 23.3 of the Livestock Act of Bhutan 2001, an individual, owner or the custodian of the animal failing to comply with the prescribed animal welfare standards specified for rearing, handling and care of animals or causing any unnecessary sufferings to animals as provided in sections 173-177, shall be liable for the penalties as given below:

1. If an owner or custodian of the animal fails to comply with the prescribed animal welfare standards for rearing (feeding, watering and sheltering), handling and transport of animals, the Regulatory Authority shall issue a formal notice requiring the owner or custodian of the animal to improve the welfare standard of the animal within one week, failing which, the authorized officer shall impose a fine of Nu. 500/- (Ngultrum five hundred) per animal or for up to every birds.

➤ **Livestock (Amendment) Rules and Regulations of Bhutan 2022**

- ❖ CHAPTER X OFFENSES AND PENALTIES: Penalties for violation of zoonoses management

1. **217A. Any animal welfare organization, Tshethar Tshogpa, animal shelter owner or individual who releases the animal in contravention to prescribed standards and guidelines shall be liable for payment of fines of Nu. 5,000.00 per animal.**
2. **217B. Any person or agency who feeds stray animals in public places, highways or roadsides shall be liable for payment of fines of Nu. 5,000.00 per instance.**
3. **217C. The fine amount for the repeated offense shall be double the previous amount imposed for the same offense.**

7. Procedure

The following procedures outline the step-by-step approach to managing stray cattle, ensuring their humane treatment, and addressing the issues they cause in public areas. The procedures are divided into several key stages: public awareness and enforcement, identification and reporting,

imposition of penalties and accountability on cattle owners, capture and transportation and record keeping.

7.1 Public Awareness and Enforcement

1. Awareness Campaigns:

- Conduct a sensitization program on the importance of responsible cattle ownership and the impacts of stray cattle on properties and developmental activities.
- Sensitize and issue public notification regarding the stray cattle, offences and penalties and accountability on cattle owners.

2. Community Engagement:

- Collaborate with Gewog leaders and Thromde Thuemi in stray cattle management efforts.
- Encourage community participation in managing, reporting stray cattle and supporting shelter activities.

3. Regulatory Enforcement:

- Enforce existing laws and regulations related to cattle ownership and stray cattle management.
- Impose fines or penalties on owners who abandon their cattle.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Regularly review and assess the effectiveness of stray cattle management procedures.
- Collect feedback from stakeholders and the community to improve practices and policies.

7.2 Identification and Reporting

1. Public Reporting:

- Encourage residents, businesses, and community organizations to report stray cattle.
- Photograph all stray cattle at the time of reporting and share with Gewog Administration for further sharing to villages to identify the cattle owners.

2. Patrol and Surveillance:

- Deploy patrol teams in areas with frequent stray cattle sightings.

7.3 Imposition of Penalties and Accountability on Cattle Owners

- 1. The cattle owners will be penalized for abandoning their cattle as per the Livestock Rules and Regulations 2017. The cattle owners will be held accountable for any damage to government and private properties.**
2. During the reporting, cattle will be scanned for any injuries and diseases. If cattle are discovered with injuries/diseases, the cattle owners will be penalized for failing to provide immediate treatment to the cattle.
3. For defaulting cattle owners, an undertaking statement will be obtained from the cattle owners to ensure that the cattle are managed well and prevented from entering the town area in future.
- 4. Repeat offenders, despite submitting undertakings, will be penalized based on Section 217C of the Livestock Rules and Regulations 2017.**

7.4 Capture and Transportation

The stray cattle will be transported to safer areas without any human settlements or auctioned if the cattle owners do not claim the cattle within one week from the issue of the notification after the consultation meetings and issuance of SOP.

7.5 Record Keeping

- Maintain a database of reported stray cattle, including their locations, health conditions, any identifying marks, owners and penalties imposed.