Insert Vehicles & Animal Safety Addendum

Due to continuing issues with the use of **Insert Vehicles with Animals** in filming situations, American Humane Association is providing Production and the Animal Handlers with copies of our recent addendum. If you would like to discuss the research that led to these conclusions, please contact the Film & Television Unit: filmunit@americanhumane.org or 818-501-0123

Please share this information with your Assistant Directors Department, Stunt Department, Special Effects Department, Crane Operators, Locations, etc. and anyone who is part of your Safety Team. This addendum is in addition to our *Guidelines for the Safe Use of Animals in Filmed Media*, Page 41 Sections 5-34 to 5-46.

**Addendum**

The following may apply to the use of any Vehicle (including picture car) with any Animal being used for filming. American Humane Association shall use on-site judgment based on the types of equipment used, animals used, environmental and climatic conditions, special effects, etc. in safety determinations. Check with American Humane, prior to filming day(s), to determine whether or not the presence of a Veterinarian is warranted, based on the action and/or expectations.

**SPEED DOES NOT “READ” ON FILM!!!**

American Humane urges you to film at slow, safe speeds and speed up the film in Post-Production.

**Speed kills:**

Vehicle speed should remain as slow as possible, but shall not exceed 30 mph, unless prior approval is given by American Humane Association Film & TV Unit Office, or in a circumstance that would prevent an accident. Often, Animals may try to “pace” themselves off the Vehicle – which could lead to exhaustion. American Humane Association reserves the right to limit the number of takes of intense or “running” scenes.

**Distance and Duration:**

Safe distances between any moving Vehicle(s) – or parts of moving Vehicle(s) e.g. crane arm, camera – should be maintained with the recommendation of at least 25 feet be maintained between the Animal(s) and the vehicle under ideal conditions. More than 25 feet may be required depending on speed, terrain, equipment, species of animal, etc.

*The crane arm on the camera car can be offset to the side to resolve this issue.*

*Additional consideration must be given a crane arm that is operated remotely (increased risk) to one that is operated manually.*

*Driver reaction time and braking distances must be considered in this “safety zone”.*

*Vehicle(s) may NOT travel directly behind the Animal(s) as if to chase, nor toward the Animal(s) (as in “head-on”), nor may they be used to control the direction nor speed of the Animal.*

*The length of any given “run”, as well as the number of takes will be determined based on the combined circumstances involved in any given shot.*

*If the Animal is restrained / confined (including, but not limited to ridden, driven or on-leash) many of the safety issues are more controllable.*

**Loose or At Liberty Animals:**

If the Animal(s) are loose or liberty-trained Animal(s), Production and / or the Animal Handlers must provide a means of keeping the Animal(s) on the intended path (A to B), as well as away from the path of the moving Vehicle(s). This can be done in a variety of ways:

*Barriers between the Vehicle and the Animal(s) including, but not limited to:
  - fencing (e.g. visible hot wire, if the Animal is conditioned to its use, or corral paneling);*
• shrubs and bushes of a sufficient height and density for the particular species of Animal(s) used;
• set dressing, plastic orange construction barriers (which would be taken out in Post);
• a chute or funnel to direct the Animal(s) clearly from A to B;
• natural barriers (e.g. Vehicle drives along a ridge route while Animals move on a separate canyon path below;
• use of opposite sides of a river – please see additional Water Safety Guidelines) – that would probably require different lenses than when filming closer.

*Different lenses / cameras – e.g. spider camera (suspended on a cable); the use of long lenses will be required should the intended action be deemed unsafe at closer ranges.

*Plate shots, split screens, green screen, or other filming techniques that utilize the Animal(s) in separate shots from any implied risk or perceived danger.

NOTE: the above barriers are not a substitute for sufficient “bail out” areas for safety purposes.

**Runaway or Escaped Animals:**
Any animal escaping set may be excused from filming for the remainder of the day, and Production will cease filming until suitable safety precautions are put in place.

**Reminder, as per our Guidelines (5-46):**
“When filming with vehicles and animals, THERE SHALL BE NO CHANGE IN ACTION ONCE REHEARSAL OR FILMING HAS STARTED, with the exception of reacting to the spotters’ communication of any potential hazards. Any change of action, including, but not limited to, speed, length, and distance between vehicles and animals shall require another safety meeting to ensure that all members of the safety team and other people participating in the filming clearly understand and acknowledge the change and see no potential hazards in making the change. “