The type approval process of trapping devices - legislation, purpose and procedure in Sweden

Key legislation

- The hunting law
- The regulation on hunting
- The regulation on type approval of trapping devices

Scope and purpose

- Killing and non-killing trapping devices for wild animals

- *“The provisions in these regulations aim to ensure that only the trapping devices that are safe for humans and property, selective and do not expose wild animals to unnecessary suffering are used in Sweden.”*

Starting point

The applicant needs to prove that the device should be approved.

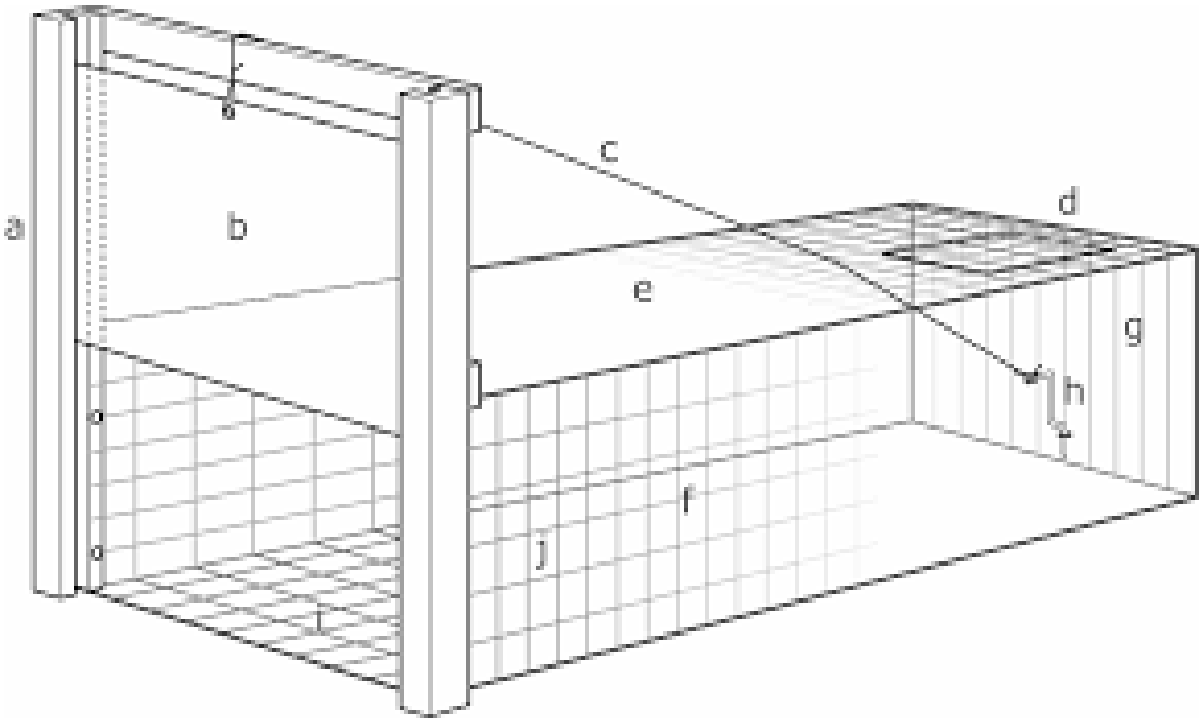
What is a “type”?

The system is based on “types”, not on trademarks or tradenames

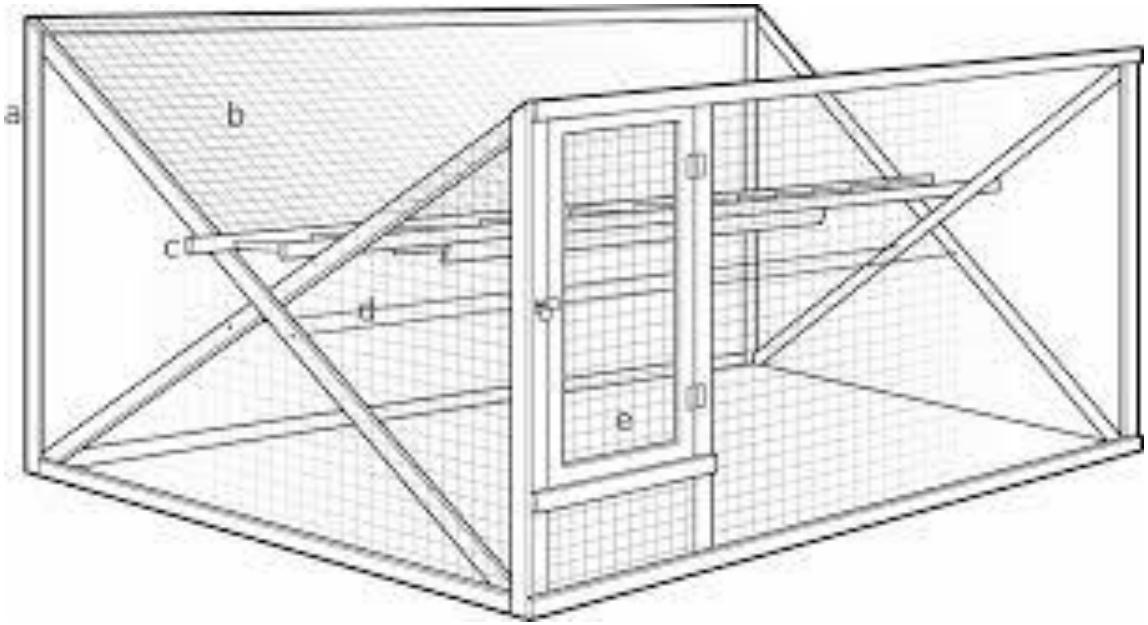
“Type: trapping devices that do not differ from each other, at least in the following important respects

- *killing or non-killing trapping device,*
- *dimensions such as height, width and length of the device and components, the weight and angles of the device*
- *choice of material, quality, density, strength of springs, friction in trap and bait device,*
- *animal species or group of animal species the device is intended for,*
- *method of effect and*
- *design in general that affects the well-being of the wild animal in accordance with Annexes 1 and 2.”*

Example, SWEPA webbpage
L 48, ”Net trap, Badger”



Example, SWEPA webbpage
L 12, ”Norwegian Crow Trap”



The procedure - overview

Notification of trapping device that already been examined in another EU country etc. – a different procedure

Standard procedure – Swedish type approval

1. Application to the SWEPA or notification of trapping device
2. Preliminary assessment
3. Denial without testing / Approval without testing
4. Testing (if not already available)
5. Test report
6. Opinion from the Swedish Board of Agriculture
7. Evaluation and decision of approval/denial of approval

Recall of approval

Application to the SWEPA and preliminary assessment

- Application fee (ca 240 euro)
- is the application complete?
- is the device an already approved type?
- is the device already tested?
- Should the application be denied or approved without any testing?

Preliminary assessment - decision to deny approval without any testing

"…may decide to reject an application for type approval of a trapping device without tests being performed if it is clear from the application that it is obvious the trapping device will cause wild animals unnecessary suffering or expose humans or property to danger."

"…may allow exemptions to the requirement for tests if these are obviously unnecessary."

General standards for approval of trapping devices

- Designed to limit suffering
- Designed to be selective
- Emergency exit for humans
- Sufficiently strong
- No use of explosives, gas, smoking, choking, drowning, glue or hooks
- No use of blind or mutilated animals as live bait

Special requirements for killing trapping devices

"…killing trapping devices may only be approved for martens, polecats, mink, stoats, weasels, beavers, squirrels, wild rabbits, moles, voles (also muskrats), lemmings, rats, mice, shrews and grouse."

"Trapping devices with striking appliances must be designed so that the blow strikes the wild animal in the intended manner.."

"Killing trapping devices for muskrats, polecats, martens or mink must have protective covers with an adapted entrance hole to make the device safe and selective.."

L58, Nordic tree trap, made by beaver

Special requirements for non-killing trapping devices

- No sharp or pointy details inside
- No cracks or holes to get stuck in
- No slippery floor
- No metal that may cause injury at low temperatures
- Proper ventilation
- Possibility to inspect, kill or release in a safe way

Trapping device to be tested

- The applicant pays for the tests
- No changes allowed after the application is complete, the fee is paid and testing been initiated

Testing and evaluation of tests

- General requirements for testing
- Requirements on the testing institute and testing staff
- Specific requirements for non-killing trapping devices
- Specific requirements for killing trapping devices
- Evaluation the test results

General requirements

- Testing should be in accordance with the regulations and the manufacturer’s instructions for use
- Following good scientific practice
- At least three copies of the device should be tested, triggered five times before testing

Requirements on the testing institute and testing staff

"…good laboratory practices equivalent to the OECD series on principles of good laboratory practice and compliance monitoring number 1."

"For field tests, the testing body must comply with requirements equivalent to the OECD Series on Principles of GLP and Compliance Monitoring Number 6 (Revised)."

"Personnel performing tests must have suitable training and experience."

Specific requirements for testing killing trapping devices

- 12 animals of intended species, if less approval is not possible
- In laboratory if possible, otherwise in the field
- Correspond to natural conditions
- Realistic manner, no forcing into the trap
- Filmed, device and surroundings photographed
- Killed or captured animals X-rayed and an autopsy carried out

Specific requirements for killing trapping devices, laboratory

"…with a view to establishing the time of occurrence of permanent unconsciousness in animals."

- Time measured in seconds
- Unconsciousness confirmed by veterinary surgeon
- Unconsciousness and insensibility maintained until the animal dies
- Animal considered dead when the heart stopped

Stopping of tests

Testing of killing trapping devices must be interrupted prematurely if

- three animals have not become unconscious within the specified time
- a striking plate, mounting, etc. has clearly struck three animals in an incorrect manner
- the trapping device obviously does not satisfy the described functionality or breaks during normal handling

Specific requirements for non-killing trapping devices

- 20 animals of the intended species
- Field testing
- Realistic, no forcing, etc.
- Filmed, also inside the device
- Surroundings and device photographed
- Bycatch released urgently
- Autopsy carried out on animals of intended species

Field testing vs. laboratory

Field testing:

- Seasonal – winter, snowing etc.
- Ethical aspects – no hunting allowed during certain periods etc., risk of bycatch etc.
- Lack of proper experience/method/bait/etc.
- Generally time consuming process (weathering of traps, animals needs to get used to them over time, baiting needs to be optimized and so on)

= Risk of not catching enough of the intended animals within a reasonable timeframe

Field testing vs. laboratory

Laboratory testing:

- Less realistic?
- Selectivity usually not tested
- Unforeseen problems relating to use in the field?

How to evaluate the test results – killing trapping devices

"…at least 9 of the animals tested must be unconscious and, in laboratory tests, have permanent insensibility until they die, all within the specified time limit."

"A device will comply with the selectivity requirements if, during field tests, no more than one individual of a species other than the species the device is intended for is trapped."

How to evaluate the test results – non-killing trapping devices

”A type of trapping device will comply with the selectivity requirements if, during tests, no more than one animal of a species other than the species the device is intended for is trapped.”

Classified according to points - points scored according to chart

Formal decision of approval

- Formal decision for applicant
- A new type is registered in SWEPA list of approved types with “type-number”, description etc.
- Combine approval with conditions?

- In case of denial – decision can be tried by our administrative courts.

Revocation of approvals

Decisions on type approval may be reviewed or revoked if it emerges

- that the trapping device exposes wild animals to unnecessary suffering, that the trapping device is not selective or that humans or property are exposed to danger

- that misleading or incorrect information was presented at the time of the decision on type approval