17. Liability for Animals

Liability for Animals raises further questions about the role, and future, of strict liability in the context of the law of tort. This chapter examines the special rules of strict liability under the Animals Act 1971, including those concerning liability for straying livestock, liability for ‘dangerous animals’, and liability for dogs. This is followed by discussions of defences, remoteness of damage and strict liability, and liability for dogs. The wording of the Animals Act 1971 is notoriously complex, and the law in this area is, for this reason, the object of must frustration for courts, and tort law students, alike. Even so, the law governing liability of animals concerns matters of social concern and, for the time-being at least, it seems that the Act is here to stay.

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