

COMPARABLE STANDARDS EVALUATION FOR FOREIGN FACILITIES

Under the Animal Welfare Act (AWA), regulations require compliance with standards for:

1.	Facilities: General, Indoor, Outdoor	§3.101-3.103
2.	Space	§3.104
3.	Feeding/ food handling	§3.105
4.	Emergency contingency plans	§3.101
5.	Adequate number of personnel	§3.108
6.	Adequate training of personnel	§3.108
7.	Water Quality	§3.106
8.	Separation and Isolation	§3.109, 3.110
9.	Adequate veterinary care/ attending veterinarian	§2.40, 3.110
10.	Protection from elements	§3.103
11.	Sanitation	§3.107
12.	Transportation	§3.112-3.118
13.	Handling	§2.131
14.	Interactive Programs	§3.111

Additional information and documentation may be required by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (F&WS), depending on species of marine mammals involved. This information may include verification of public access to the facility, documentation on the educational program(s) provided, inventory data needed, and CITES permit requirements. Please contact NMFS and/or F&WS directly for their requirements.

NMFS, Office of Protected Resources: 301-427-8400
F&WS: (800) 358-2104

Documentation required by APHIS

For evaluation under the AWA:

1. Supply diagrams of **all** marine mammal enclosures with measurements. The measurements must include: pool dimensions (length, width, depth, diameter, etc.) including depth variations and any underwater or surface obstacles such as islands and platforms (be sure to show measure for narrowest part of all pools; for indoor facilities, include airspace above the pools; dry resting area measurements; for outdoor enclosures, provide description of measures taken to provide protection from elements (shade, temperature extremes, etc.). All pools for **all** marine mammals, including medical and isolation pools must be included.
2. Inventory of **all** marine mammals, identifying each enclosure inventory with respect to species and sex. Designate what animals are currently held and what animals are being requested. Identify the proposed housing location for the requested animals.
3. Describe the feeding protocols and food handling protocols for the marine mammals, including method of storage once thawed and sanitation protocols.
4. Provide a written contingency plan, including description of emergency plans in case of loss of power and/or water, provisions for animal movement and care in the event of a natural disaster, and back-up systems.
5. Provide resumes for all employees responsible for or involved in caring for the marine mammals.
6. Provide description of water quality monitoring protocols, including testing schedules for coliforms (and any other microbes), pH, chlorine (if used), salinity, and any chemical added to the water. Provide protocols for dealing with high bacterial counts.
7. Describe/diagram isolation and medical pool/enclosure facilities.
8. Provide justification for any marine mammal not housed with other (conspecific) animals, including attempts to locate a companion and plans for increased keeper interactions, if indicated.
9. Describe your program of veterinary care. Provide assurance that individual animal records are kept. Outline frequency and protocol for examinations. Describe necropsy protocols.
10. Describe materials used in pool construction (sealing materials, paints, etc.), dry resting areas, holding pens, etc. Pictures of the enclosures, including fencing, doors, etc., would be very helpful.
11. Indicate perimeter and barrier fencing present, including placement and height. A perimeter fence (this means around the entire facility) is required if there are outdoor enclosures. Barrier fencing is required to keep the public away from direct contact with the animals.
12. Provide a written protocol for sanitation procedures, including programs for enclosures, food storage, and food prep. Verify that there is an ongoing maintenance program for the facility.
13. Provide detailed description of transportation arrangements, including enclosures, mode of transport, attendants, time (duration) of transport, etc. Verify that Health certificates will be

issued by the US attending veterinarian, and that copies of the medical records will accompany the animal to the importing facility. Certify that there is adequate lighting in the transport vehicle(s). All transports over 2 hours need a written transport plan. All marine mammal transports require experienced and knowledgeable attendants that have access to the animals throughout the transport.

14. Describe or provide examples of medical, feeding, behavioral, and water quality records.

14. Provide the documentation required for a “swim-with” or interactive program as outlined in Section 3.111 of the regulations. Facilities must meet these requirements for interactive programs.

In accordance with a request from the National Marine Fisheries Service, the following information is also requested:

16. Inventory information and necropsy reports on any marine mammal which has died at the facility within the previous five years.

Additional documentation required:

17. A letter from the appropriate government official/department (This means the office that has authority over the facility license and inspection) certifying that all submitted information is accurate.

***** AWA Regulations and Standards can be found on our website (www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare) or at https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/downloads/AC_BlueBook_AWA_FINAL_2017_508c_omp.pdf. The marine mammal specific sections are §§ 3.100-3.118. Also of importance are §2.40 (attending veterinarian) and §2.131 (handling)

or contact the Animal Care office at address below or (301)851-3751 *****

Inspection of a foreign facility by APHIS personnel, at the expense of the importer and/or exporter, may be an option for verifying comparable standards. For information on this option and its costs, please contact APHIS at

USDA, APHIS, Animal Care
4700 River Road, Unit 84
Riverdale, MD 20737-1234
(301) 851-3751

Please submit document package to Dr. Barbara Kohn at
USDA, APHIS, Animal Care
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