

# **Monitoring and Reporting of Dead and Injured Marine Mammals**

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# History of Emergency Shutdown Requirement

- IHAs have included a condition that an immediate shutdown of the airguns be conducted if an injured or dead marine mammal is sighted in the activity area
- The condition also required that the NMFS Office of Protected Resources (PR) be contacted and that airgun operations be suspended until the situation has been reviewed by NMFS and approval given by the PR Director or his designee

# Problems with the Condition

- Pinniped carcasses were commonly sighted in nearshore project survey areas
- Condition required immediate shutdown no matter the cause of death
- Problems with immediate notification on weekends and after core business hours

# Solution for 2008 Season

- Modified the condition to clarify when an emergency shutdown was required
- Points of clarification included:
  - Areas for shutdown
  - Separated out injured vs. dead
  - MMO certification of animal
  - Provided additional points of contact
  - Instances when NMFS approval was required to restart airguns

# Possible Future Solutions

- Contacting NMFS of stranded marine mammals within a reasonable time period (e.g., 24 or 48 hours after sighting)
- Possible types of information that should be collected about the stranded animal:
  - Species or description of animal
  - Condition of animal
  - Location and time of first discovery
  - Observed behaviors (if alive)
  - Photo or video (if available)