NSW GOVERNMENT

Department of Planning and Environment

Trainers' guide

Marine Mammal Rehabilitation Training Standards for the Volunteer Wildlife Rehabilitation Sector

environment.nsw.gov.au

Cover photo: Striped dolphin (*Stenella coeruleoalba*), Wayne Reynolds/ORRCA

Acknowledgments: This training guide has been prepared for DPE by Shona Lorigan. We thank Dolphin Marine Conservation Park, Taronga Conservation Society, Sea World, and the Organisation for the Rescue and Research of Cetaceans in Australia (ORRCA) for their contribution.

Published by:

Environment and Heritage Group
Department of Planning and Environment
Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124
Phone: +61 2 9995 5000 (switchboard)
Phone: 1300 361 967 (Environment and Heritage enquiries)
TTY users: phone 133 677, then ask for 1300 361 967
Speak and listen users: phone 1300 555 727, then ask for 1300 361 967
Email: info@environment.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.environment.nsw.gov.au

Report pollution and environmental incidents
Environment Line: 131 555 (NSW only) or info@environment.nsw.gov.au
See also www.environment.nsw.gov.au

ISBN 978-1-922840-95-0
EHG 2022/0350
August 2022

Find out more about your environment at:

www.environment.nsw.gov.au

Contents

Summary 1

Part 1: Introduction to training, design, delivery and assessment 2

- Training requirements of the code 2
- Designing training 3
- Providing training 8
- Assessment 13

Part 2: Understanding the marine mammal rehabilitation training standards 15

- Introduction 15
- Understanding the format of the training standards 16
- Standard 1: The framework for marine mammal rehabilitation in New South Wales 17
- Standard 2: Work health and safety requirements of marine mammal rehabilitation 23
- Standard 3: Record keeping 27
- Standard 4: Biology and behaviour of marine mammals 32
- Standard 5: Stress management in marine mammals 39
- Standard 6: Rescue of marine mammals 42
- Standard 7: Transport of marine mammals 48
- Standard 8: Assessment of marine mammals 52
- Standard 9: Rehabilitation of whales, dolphins and dugongs 57
- Standard 10: Rehabilitation of seals 62
- Standard 11: Release of marine mammals 68

Further reading 74

More information 74

Appendix A: Training and assessment mapping tool 75

List of tables

Table 1	Body condition assessments for otariids (eared seals) and phocids (earless seals)	55
Table 2	Seal body score card	56

List of figures

Figure 1	The 4 different learning styles of the VARK model	5
Figure 2	Reducing hazards in the training environment	9
Figure 3	Using pictures and dot points to illustrate key messages on a PowerPoint slide	11
Figure 4	Required measurement for whales and dolphins	31
Figure 5	Deceased short-finned pilot whale	36
Figure 6	New Zealand fur seal hauled out on a step	36
Figure 7	Large stranded common bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*)	54
Figure 8	Subadult Australian fur seal hauled out on rocks with a huge shark bite	54
Figure 9	Stranded short-finned pilot whales	54
Figure 10	Injured leopard seal hauled out on a sandy beach with a clear nasal discharge	54
Figure 11	Large New Zealand fur seal	64
Figure 12	Juvenile New Zealand fur seal	64
Figure 13	Injured leopard seal	65
Figure 14	Pre-release seal enclosure	67

Summary

This trainers' guide has been developed as a companion resource to the Department of Planning and Environment, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) *Marine Mammal Rehabilitation Training Standards for the Volunteer Wildlife Rehabilitation Sector* (the marine mammal training standards). Training developers, trainers and assessors within the volunteer wildlife rehabilitation sector can use the guide to help them with ensuring their rehabilitation training complies with the training standards.

The standards ensure compliance with the NSW *Code of Practice for Injured and Sick and Orphaned Marine Mammals* (DPE 2022) and a minimum level of care for marine mammals across the sector.

The guide is divided into 2 parts:

- **Part 1: Introduction to training design, delivery and assessment** provides helpful hints for planning for and delivering training and assessing competency. This section of the guide has been designed to provide an overview of training, introduce adult learning, and explain how to engage learners in productive and efficient ways.
- **Part 2: Understanding the marine mammal rehabilitation standards** suggests topics to include in training programs and assessment types applicable to individual standards. There are 2 example assessments provided for each assessment. These assessments can be used to determine competency related to individual standards.

The guide has been developed as a resource to support the sector in implementing the training standards.

Part 1: Introduction to training, design, delivery and assessment

Training requirements of the code

The first thing you will need to look at when designing or evaluating your training is the NSW *Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Marine Mammals* (the Marine Mammal Code). The following notes on **Section 11 – Training** explain what is required.

11. Training

11.1 Requirements

Objective

To ensure wildlife rehabilitators have appropriate knowledge and skills to ensure the welfare of marine mammals in their care.

Standards

11.1.1 New wildlife rehabilitators must undertake an introductory training course (excluding paid staff in DPI-licensed facilities).

11.1.2 Before undertaking marine mammal rehabilitation, a person must undertake specialist training.

11.1.3 A specialist training course must:

- teach the standards and guidelines described in this code
- focus on what a person will be able to do as a result of completing the course (i.e. be competency-based)
- teach health and safety issues associated with marine mammal rehabilitation (e.g. disease transmission and operating in hazardous locations)
- have a written assessment component
- teach how to keep accurate records.

11.1.4 Wildlife rehabilitators must be assessed as competent in the relevant areas before undertaking rescue, rehabilitation or release of marine mammals.

11.1.5 Training must be accompanied by ongoing in-field support from experienced marine mammal rehabilitators.

11.1.6 All wildlife rehabilitators must undertake professional development and refresh their training for marine mammals every 3 years, e.g. refresher or advanced training course, attendance at marine mammal conferences or seminars.

11.1.7 Wildlife rehabilitators must have an understanding of:

- the objectives of marine mammal rehabilitation
- wildlife ecology (e.g. population dynamics, habitat selection, competition, and predator–prey interactions)
- marine mammal behaviour (e.g. feeding, predator avoidance, age-appropriate behaviour and social interactions)
- migratory and nomadic behaviours.

11.1.8 Wildlife rehabilitators must be proficient in:

- species identification
- marine mammal handling techniques
- first aid for injured marine mammals
- recognising the signs of disease, pain and stress
- animal husbandry
- marine mammal anatomy and physiology.

Guidelines

11.1.9 Wildlife rehabilitators should continue their professional development by keeping up to date with the latest findings from scientific papers on marine mammals.

Notes

- The department has prepared *Marine Mammal Rehabilitation Training Standards for the Volunteer Wildlife Rehabilitation Sector* (DPE 2022), including a marine mammal trainer's guide to ensure volunteers are trained to be competent in the implementation of this code.
- Attendance at marine mammal conferences or seminars may require pre-approval from a wildlife rehabilitator's group training coordinator to be eligible for consideration.

The objectives explain the overall purpose of marine mammal rehabilitation training, which is to ensure the welfare of marine mammals that come into rehabilitation.

This standard is saying there must be formal induction training for new members.

Marine mammal rehabilitation courses must teach these things and ensure that training is competency-based.

There **must** be an assessment completed in writing for anyone undertaking marine mammal rehabilitation training.

Coordinators, mentors or experienced marine mammal rehabilitators must be available to help new members.

Content to be included in training

Refresher training must be completed **within 3 years** from the time your last course was completed. Refresher training should include advanced topics and developments in rehabilitation practices and scientific research.

Designing training

Whether you are designing a new course or updating an existing course, there are several questions to ask to determine what your new training should look like. The best way to answer these questions is to organise them into a learning plan before jumping into the content of your training. To help you get started with designing your course, this section discusses what you might consider and how you might answer the broad questions: what, who, how and when.

What is the purpose of the course?

Are you designing a course that will combine all the training standards and look at marine mammal rehabilitation holistically, or will it be individual or multiple standards aimed at certain topics, for example, marine mammal rescue or mass stranding rehabilitation?

The 11 training standards have been grouped into 3 core areas:

- **Foundations of marine mammal rehabilitation – Standards 1 to 5** are mostly theoretical or cover multiple aspects of marine mammal rehabilitation. These standards are foundational for marine mammal rehabilitation training.
- **Rescue of marine mammals – Standards 6 to 8** address marine mammal rescue.
- **Rehabilitation and release of marine mammals** – Standards 9 to 11 cover the rehabilitation and release of marine mammals.

While you do not have to design your training according to these areas, you may want to consider if they fit with the purpose of your training.

If you are updating training that already exists, consider if all areas of the training standards are covered. Do you have assessments in place to determine competency and achieve the learning outcomes? If not, identify the gaps in your current program to work out what to include in your updated version to ensure it is meeting the standards. Appendix A is a mapping tool to assist you with this exercise.

By understanding the reasons behind your training, you can also be clear on the pathways learners can take throughout the learning process. These pathways can then be clearly communicated to the learners, so they understand their responsibilities and you can manage their expectations.

Questions to ask include:

- Will there be prerequisites and what are they?
- What will the learner be able to do upon completion of this training?
- What, if any, further training will be required?

Once you understand the purpose of the training you can start to incorporate other elements of training design into your plan.

Who is the training designed for?

Understanding the 'who' is very important to developing successful training.

The audience for a program aimed at marine mammal rehabilitation can be diverse and include people across genders, age groups, ethnicities and educational levels. Consider what you can put in place to account for this diversity and help learners who may have special learning requirements. One way to do this is to understand what skills are required for the role the learner is undertaking training for, and ensure the content and assessments are compatible with this skill level, i.e. don't make the training harder than it needs to be.

Some other ways to help learners include:

- Include some questions or an interview as part of the enrolment process, so you can determine whether a learner will require additional or alternative help throughout the training.
- Use simple and succinct language; for written materials use short, concise sentences.
- Use visuals such as pictures, diagrams and graphs.
- Factor in time for asking questions and evaluating information.
- Where appropriate, make reasonable adjustments to the assessment. For example, if a learner struggles with reading you could change a written test to a verbal one to determine competency.

Adult learning

One thing we do know about our learners is that they are all adults.

There are several theories surrounding adult learning with one of the most well-known being andragogy, which was popularised by Malcolm Knowles in the 1970s. Andragogy refers to adult learning, in contrast to pedagogy, which is child learning. What the theory of andragogy tells us is that adults:

- are self-directed learners
- need to know why they are learning something
- have a problem-centred approach to learning
- bring life and work experiences, skills and biases to learning
- are more willing to learn when they think it will provide skills to develop their life situations, i.e. it is relevant to them.

Adults learn best by being involved in their learning process, feeling respected and through a hands-on approach to learning. The trainer is a facilitator of learning rather than a director, providing guidance while allowing the learner greater ownership of the learning experience.

Understanding these concepts is important for developing effective and engaging adult learning programs.

Learning styles

Another important thing to know about your learners is their learning style. While it may not be possible to always know and account for every participant's learning style, understanding the styles and incorporating them into your training will allow you to be a more effective trainer.

The VARK model separates learning styles into 4 types (Figure 1), although learners don't have to be restricted to just one learning type.

For more information about the VARK model, including a quiz for you to find out your preferred learning styles, see *The VARK Modalities*.

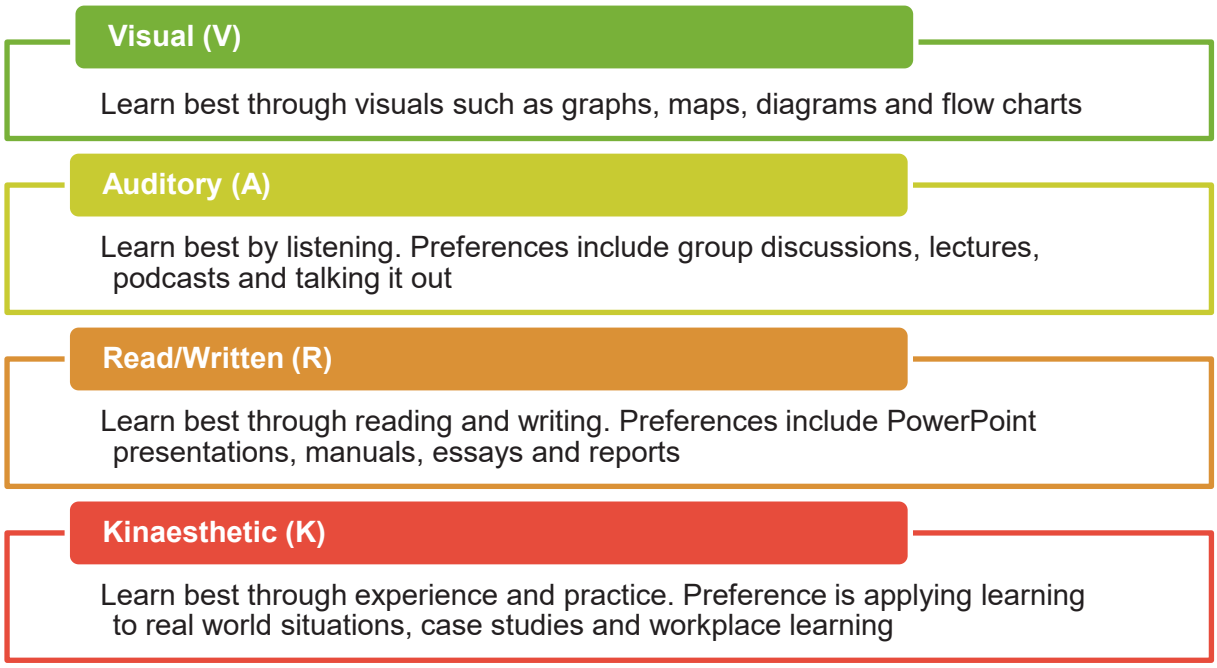


Figure 1 The 4 different learning styles of the VARK model

How will training be delivered?

Three of the most common delivery methods are face-to-face, online or one-on-one training. The different methods of delivery suit different learning styles, and there is no one method better than the others. When designing your program, you need to consider what resources are available and the methods that best suit your trainers' and learners' needs.

Face-to-face delivery

Face-to-face learning is the more traditional method for delivering training and includes presentations, lectures and demonstrations.

Pros	Cons
• Traditional, well-known to most learners • Can be completed at a faster rate than other methods • Additional learning can occur through interactions and exchanges between learners • Easier to adapt based on learner needs • Can be activity-based and increase learning by doing • Can build personal relationships and networks that continue to facilitate learning outside the structured training • Can be easier to ask questions and seek clarification from the trainer	• Can remind adult learners of school classrooms and create disinterest • Must be completed at a certain pace, which can leave some learners behind • Not very flexible, courses must happen at certain times with specific agendas • Can be expensive to attend and to run • Certain learners can monopolise conversations and more timid learners may be unable to engage well with the content

Online delivery

Online or eLearning is broadly defined as learning that takes place using a computer or electronic resource. eLearning has grown in popularity in recent years and has both advantages and disadvantages.

Pros	Cons
• Can be completed in the comfort of your own home or other convenient location • Flexible – can be accessed at any time and fit with learners' schedules • There is consistency in what is learnt as the content is the same for every learner • Can be easy to pull statistics and provide feedback • Can be more cost-effective than other types of delivery • Learning is self-paced • Can improve the learner's electronic and technical skills	• Little opportunity to engage with the trainer or other learners • Can be too flexible – leading to a lack of motivation, commitment and ultimately lack of course completion • Can require more of the student, e.g. more reading requirements or additional assessments • Can be discouraging for people who are not confident with computers • Lacks opportunities for hands-on learning • Can be impacted by poor internet connection or technical issues • Can require more instructions and detailed explanations than other methods where a trainer is present

One option used by training providers is 'blended delivery' which combines online learning with face-to-face learning to obtain the advantages of both delivery methods.

One-on-one delivery

One-on-one delivery is also known as mentoring and usually occurs in the workplace. It involves a more experienced person sharing knowledge, skills and expertise with the learner.

Pros	Cons
• Sole focus is on the learner, allowing learning to be tailored to their strengths and weaknesses • Usually practical in nature • Feedback between mentor and learner can be instant • Self-directed learning • Can broaden the learner's network quickly • Can be flexible to allow for personal circumstances	• Can be difficult to incorporate training into day-to-day tasks • May not allow for diversity of opinions or the ability for the learner to engage with other learners • Providing feedback can be awkward and taken more personally • Appropriate mentors can be difficult to find • Can take longer to complete training because of both learner and mentor schedules

Tips for delivery

When designing your learning plan, it can be helpful to consider these tips:

- Effective communication is key to effective training.
- Write for your learner – don't use jargon or big words without explaining them. Remember to consider your audience, e.g. is it a refresher course where learners will be familiar with the terminology or is it an introductory course where learners have no experience with rehabilitation and will need the terminology explained?
- Manage learner expectations by being clear at the beginning of the training what their responsibilities are and what they will be able to do upon completion of the course.
- Designing training to be accessible to all learning types will make the information more engaging and likely increase the success of the program.
- Think about your own experiences as a learner – what did you like? What didn't you like?

More information on delivery can be found in the training section of this document.

What content will be included in the training?

Organising training content can be one of the most enjoyable aspects of designing your training plan. It is also crucial to ensuring you are creating relevant, engaging and accurate training.

When deciding what will go into your training, the first thing you should do is consider existing materials. This can include:

- regulatory documents for the sector, including the Marine Mammal Code and the training standards
- relevant and useful organisational policies and procedures, including standard operating procedures, constitutions, codes of ethics, work health and safety (WHS) policies, role descriptions and risk management plans
- legislative requirements, including the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*
- existing materials – manuals, fact sheets, PowerPoint presentations, handouts and research papers; consider if these are still relevant or if they need updating, and who needs to be involved in this process
- previous feedback – have you received feedback about previous courses that you could incorporate into the update of training materials?

Using the training standards will be vital to ensuring your content is compliant and assesses competency at the required level. A way of confirming your content matches the standards is by using the standards as headings during your planning phase, putting existing content under these headings. From here you can see which areas require additional information.

When developing resources, you need to determine what the learners will need in order to complete their training and become competent, and whether any further materials could help them in their role. For example, home-based rehabilitators might require more take-home reference material than facility-based rehabilitators who are supervised and have access to materials at their facility. The method of delivery will also affect the type of resources required. For example, online training will require more instructional and detailed information than face-to face or one-on-one learning where a trainer is present to discuss content, answer questions and provide clarification.

When will training occur?

This is largely up to you and your organisation's needs. You should consider whether the training is ongoing, requiring regular attendance, and the frequency of the training. You also need to consult with your trainers on their availability.

If the training requires prerequisites, is there enough time to complete the required training first?

Providing training

As a trainer your role is to provide a productive, safe and supportive learning environment. As discussed in the previous section, with adult learning, trainers take on less of a director or teacher role and become more of a facilitator of learning. A facilitator is a trainer who encourages participation and takes a learner-centred approach.

The table below lists some common actions that trainers should and should not do.

Do	Don't
• Know your subject matter • Be organised • Communicate clearly • Apply active listening skills and use positive non-verbal communication, e.g. maintaining eye contact, using gestures, nodding, paraphrasing • Encourage questions and ensure enough time has been set aside for discussion • Take feedback on board and adjust accordingly	• Be unprepared • Use unnecessarily difficult words or jargon • Use negative non-verbal communication, e.g. stare, roll your eyes, cross your arms, stand too close • Be dismissive and discourage interaction • Get defensive if feedback is provided

In addition to these behaviours, it is also important to think about the environment the training will occur in and how you can maximise its advantages and minimise its disadvantages. For example, if you are doing one-on-one training in a facility you will have access to marine mammals and the ability to reinforce learning by having the learner complete tasks in a practical setting. Conversely, there may be emergencies that require attention or frequent interruptions from other people.

In a venue designed for face-to-face training, you can encourage ideas and discussions between learners, but you will not have access to real life situations and may need to simulate these environments to keep the learners engaged in the topic.

Ways to engage learners

Presentations are great for face-to-face training, however, an extended time without engaging the learners can create disinterest and learners may tune out altogether. Integrating more activities and engaging learners in other ways can incorporate different learning styles and enhance overall learning.

Some additional methods for encouraging learner participation include:

- demonstrations
- group activities
- case studies and scenarios
- group discussions
- brainstorming sessions
- blended delivery (combination of online, face-to-face and mentor training)
- videos, graphs, images and other visual aids.

The following advice is based predominantly on face-to-face training but could be adapted to fit other methods of delivery as required.

Preparation

Being prepared is vital to creating an effective and engaging learning environment. Develop a checklist for yourself that includes all the resources you need on the day and who is responsible for them, e.g. electronics (laptops, projectors, USB drives), training materials (presentations, handouts, manuals, reference materials), keys to the venue, catering organised, pens, notepads, power cords, backup presentations, equipment for any activities. The list can be long and will be specific to your training, but having a checklist can ensure the day starts in a positive and organised manner.

Another aspect of being prepared is ensuring you are familiar with all the technology needed to get started. If you don't have access to this before the course, ensure you arrive early enough to give yourself plenty of time to work it out.

On the day

Setting up

It is important you arrive before the learners and with adequate time to prepare yourself and the venue. As the trainer, you are responsible for providing a safe learning environment. You should identify and minimise any risks as they arise, and where this is not possible, bring them to the attention of your learners. For example, if there is an extension cord that could be a tripping hazard, tape it to the floor and ask learners to avoid the area (Figure 2).

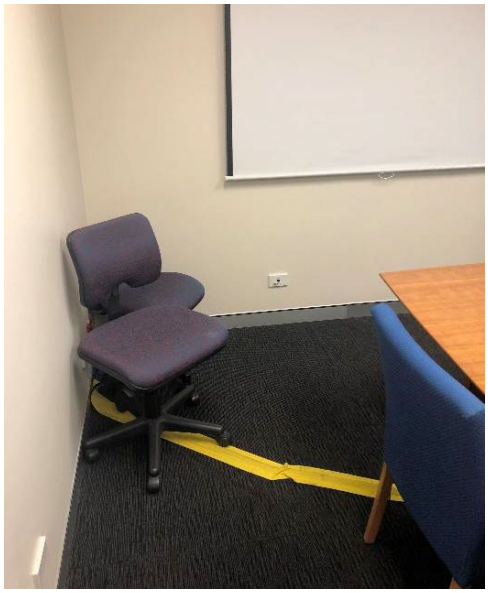
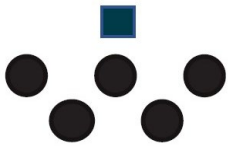


Figure 2 Reducing hazards in the training environment
Photo: Hannah Ryan.

Other hazards to be mindful of include slippery or uneven surfaces, poor lighting, inadequate ventilation and excess or broken furniture in the room. Locate the emergency exists, notify learners of their location, and keep access to them clear.

Arriving early also gives you an opportunity to set up the room. Consider how you want the tables to be arranged. See the table below for some examples.

Layout	Description	Suitability
	Typical classroom layout with tables set out in rows facing the trainer	Suited best to presentation or lecture-based training
	Tables are set up in a u-shape or semicircle shape	Suited best to training that has a lot of discussion and learner interaction
	Tables are clustered into groups	Suited best to training that has a lot of group discussion and activities

Agendas

Agendas are useful tools for organising a session. An agenda should include the day's goal and a breakdown of what participants can expect. Be sure to allow enough time for questions and incorporate this into your agenda. No-one minds their training finishing early, but many learners become frustrated and distracted when the day diverges from the agenda.

Icebreakers

An icebreaker is a good way of starting any training program because it allows participants to relax, feel motivated and connect with other learners. The possibilities for icebreakers are endless. You can be specific to the topic and ask 'Which is your favourite marine mammal?', 'Why have you decided to come today?' or 'What are you hoping to get out of today?'. Alternatively, icebreakers don't have to be about the course at all. Some other common icebreakers include 'What is your favourite colour and why?', 'List 2 truths and one lie' and 'What would be your ideal holiday destination and why?'. There are many online resources with icebreaker suggestions. For example, to get started and work out which icebreakers work for you, see *Best Ice Breakers for Meetings and Training Classes*.

Presenting

Presenting training requires skill, enthusiasm and continual practice. Your presentation will be vital to the learner feeling engaged and energised by the content. To deliver an engaging presentation:

- If you are using PowerPoint, don't just read from your presentation, use it as a guide only. You can use the 'Notes' feature to remind you of your points without overloading your slide. Don't put too much text on your slides. Use brief dot points and pictures to make slides more interesting. (See Figure 3: which one do you find easier to read?)
- Summarise and question learners on key points.
- Ensure technology is working – double check embedded videos before beginning the presentation.
- Look for visual cues from the audience – are learners reciprocating eye contact, are they interested in the content or are they looking bored or distracted? Adapt your approach accordingly.
- Go at an appropriate pace. If you feel nervous, breathe and slow down.

- Ensure all learners can hear you. Project your voice and adjust your tone.
- Be honest – if you don't know the answer to someone's question tell them, don't try to fumble your way through. If you offer to find something out for them, make sure you do.
- Be positive. Smile and make eye contact.
- Be passionate. Share your experiences and anecdotes to reinforce learning.

Figure 3 Using pictures and dot points to illustrate key messages on a PowerPoint slide

Dealing with difficult behaviour from learners

There are many different types of difficult behaviours that can crop up during training, and they can range from a one-off incident to disrupting the whole day. Some of the common difficult behaviours encountered during training sessions include:

- repeatedly disrupting the trainer to contradict points
- talking to other learners during a presentation
- one person monopolising the discussion and not giving other learners an opportunity to speak
- not paying attention to the training, e.g. appearing bored, playing on their phone
- a learner that is pushing an agenda and brings up the same argument repeatedly.

These behaviours can be addressed using different strategies, and it can be useful to ascertain what's causing the behaviour. For example, does the learner know the subject matter to a more advanced level, are they shy and afraid to speak to the entire group or are they just passionate about a particular topic?

Setting out the ground rules at the start of the day can assist with mitigating some of these behaviours. Ground rules can include everyone showing respect for others' opinions or clarifying whether questions are allowed during the presentation or at the end of each section. What do you expect from the learners and what can they expect from you?

Other methods you can use to manage difficult behaviours include:

- Ask the learner to hold their opinion until the end of the section.
- Address the learner who is talking to other learners by asking them their opinion on the topic, e.g. 'What do you think, Karen?'
- Thank the learner for their opinion and ask other learners their thoughts, e.g. 'Thank you for your opinion, what does everyone else think about this?'

- If there is a point that cannot be agreed upon, or that keeps getting brought up, you could say 'We have spent enough time on this topic and have to move on. If we have time at the end of the day, we can discuss it further.'
- If the behaviour is repeated, direct the learner to stop, e.g. 'You are interrupting a lot, so I am going to have to stop you there and give others a chance to speak.'
- If the behaviour continues, pull the learner aside during a break and ask them why they continue to do it and request that they stop.
- If the behaviour continues and you feel it's appropriate, ask the learner to leave the training session.

Getting feedback

Feedback is a valuable tool to evaluate your entire training program and your skills as a trainer. Don't take feedback too personally, instead see it as an opportunity to learn, grow and improve your training.

There are numerous ways to obtain feedback; we will discuss at a few of them here. One way to evaluate the overall effectiveness of your training and determine if your learners have obtained the relevant information is to quiz learners on the content, in accordance with the intended learning outcomes. Provide the quiz to the participants at the start of the day and then again at the end. This can be self-assessed by students, as a group or by the trainer alone. A consistent increase in scores indicates the training has been successful.

Feedback can also be based on informal or formal discussion throughout the day or at the end of the training. Ask learners what parts of the training they enjoyed and what could be done better. If using this method, be sure to ask specific questions and not just ones with yes or no answers. Find out why and how things can be improved.

A common type of feedback is asking people to complete a written questionnaire. When written well, this can be very useful for evaluating training programs. It can also be a good resource to refer back to when updating a training program, to see what worked well and what could be done better. Some tips for writing questionnaire-style feedback forms include:

- Use a sliding scale (i.e. numbered 1–5: strongly agree – strongly disagree).
- Ask questions you want to know the answer to and that are relevant to the training.
- Don't use language that is vague or unclear.
- Don't rely on people writing their own answers or responses, many learners will leave this section blank.
- Keep it simple – don't have too many questions or a busy format.

Some questions to consider adding to your feedback form include:

- Do you feel like you achieved the learning objectives of this training?
- Were the instructions clear and easy to follow?
- Are the course materials helpful to your learning?
- Was the facility appropriate for the training?
- Did the trainer demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter?
- Did the trainer communicate clearly?
- What did you like most about the training?
- What could be improved on?
- Would you recommend this course to a friend?
- Please provide any additional feedback in the space below.

Be sure to make use of your feedback. Unused feedback benefits no-one.

Assessment

What is competency-based assessment?

Competency-based assessment assesses a learner based on whether they can perform a task or have acquired the knowledge required for their workplace, i.e. do learners have the knowledge and skills required for their role in marine mammal rehabilitation. There is no grade in competency-based assessment, rather the learner is assessed as either competent or not yet competent.

In accordance with the Marine Mammal Code, all marine mammal rehabilitation training requires an assessment of competency and at least one written assessment component.

Assessment is required to collect evidence that shows a learner is competent in an area and can perform the relevant tasks required of their role. For example, if you were running a training course on marine mammal rescue, without assessing the learner you have no way of knowing if they can apply the knowledge to marine mammal rescue or use the skills learnt to safely rescue a marine mammal according to the learning outcomes in the standards.

Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 has principles of assessment and rules of evidence that are required of the vocational education and training (VET) sector. While your training may not be a VET-accredited course, these 2 tools are useful for ensuring your assessment methods are effective and ethical. These are summarised below.

Principles of assessment

There are 4 principles of assessment:

Fairness – Individual needs of the learners are taken into account and an assessment method must not discriminate against specific learners or groups.

Flexibility – Assessments are flexible to accommodate individual learners through reflecting their needs, applying reasonable adjustments where appropriate, and using multiple assessment methods.

Validity – Assessment is based on and assesses to the required benchmark, i.e. assessments meet the requirements in the standards. Assessment must also be based on evidence that demonstrates the learner can apply the skills and knowledge required of their role.

Reliability – Evidence is interpreted consistently and accurately regardless of who the trainer or assessor is.

Rules of evidence

When assessing the competency of a learner you must consider the following 4 rules of evidence:

Validity – You are confident the learner has the skills and knowledge outlined in the standards.

Sufficiency – There is enough quality evidence to assess competency.

Authenticity – You are confident the work submitted is that of the learner and no-one else.

Currency – The assessment evidence has been compiled within a suitable time frame and reflects the learner's current level of skill and knowledge. This could be applied to the refresher time frame where further training is required to be completed every 3 years.

Types of assessment methods

- **Questioning** – written or oral, e.g. conducting interviews, multiple choice quizzes, written short-answer questions
- **Direct observation** – observing performance during simulated or real-world tasks
- **Product-based methods** – structured activities, e.g. presentations, role plays, reports and work-based projects
- **Third-party evidence** – involves having a supervisor, manager or equivalent attest to the competency of your learner or providing a supporting statement or letter
- **Portfolio** – a collection of evidence compiled by the learner to demonstrate competency, e.g. a logbook, photographs or videos.

Use a variety of methods to ensure the assessment is valid and allows the learner to demonstrate competency in different ways. This also makes the assessment process more interesting and engaging for the learner.

Some methods such as questioning and product-based methods are more suited to assessing competency of knowledge, whereas other methods such as direct observation and third-party evidence can be used to assess competency in skill or practical application.

Record keeping

Record keeping is an important aspect of training. Having accurate records that are easily available to authorised people will go a long way to ensuring you have a smooth process in place for knowing who is trained in your organisation. As a minimum, you should keep a signed attendance register and a record of whether competency was achieved by the learner for each training session. In addition to this, you should keep records of each assessment event and whether competency was achieved.

Having these records will assist your organisation in knowing who is trained, who is due for refresher training and when training was last held. It is also useful information to maintain in the event your organisation is audited and needs to demonstrate compliance with the codes of practice and training standards.

Also consider what record you might provide to the learner so they can demonstrate competency and completion of a particular training session. A certificate of competency is a useful record for the learner as they can keep it in their personal files and provide it as evidence of training completed if needed.

Part 2: Understanding the marine mammal rehabilitation training standards

Introduction

This section looks at the marine mammal rehabilitation training standards in more detail.

This includes possible topics that could be included in the training courses (listed under the heading 'Training areas' for each standard). Not all these topics will need to be covered, as your training may be specific to a type of role so certain areas may not be applicable. The suggested training areas are listed to guide you in thinking about what may be considered in the context of each standard.

There are also recommendations for the types of assessments. Each standard is accompanied by 2 examples of assessments that could be used to assess competency. The assessments are examples only and do not have to be used. You may want to use them as ideas to create your own assessments. If you do use these assessments though, you must have covered the topics in your content to ensure your assessment process is fair and accurate.

Understanding the format of the training standards

Standard 1: The framework for marine mammal rehabilitation in NSW

Each standard has a heading that describes the overall topic of the standard.

Objective: To familiarise learners with the relevant policies and procedures of marine mammal rehabilitation and provide them with an understanding of the framework that exists to support and regulate marine mammal rehabilitation in New South Wales. Learners must be aware of and understand the Marine Mammal Code.

The objective of a standard explains what the standard is trying to achieve, i.e. its aim.

To be compliant with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

1.1 Discuss the Marine Mammal Code.

1.2 Ensure NPWS policies and procedures applicable to marine mammal rehabilitation are defined and understood by the learners.

1.3 Ensure organisational policies and procedures applicable to marine mammal rehabilitation are defined and understood by learners.

1.4 Ensure objectives of marine mammal rehabilitation are understood by learners.

These points explain what must be included within training for it to be compliant with the training standards. The organisation or trainer is responsible for ensuring this information is included in training.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: • identify and demonstrate understanding of the Marine Mammal Code • demonstrate understanding of NPWS policies and procedures for marine mammal rehabilitation • identify organisational policies and procedures on marine mammal rehabilitation • recognise the objectives of marine mammal rehabilitation.	All

Learning outcomes describe what a learner will be able to do upon completion of a standard. A learner is deemed competent when they can demonstrate the learning outcomes.

Standard 1: The framework for marine mammal rehabilitation in New South Wales

Objective: To familiarise learners with the relevant policies and procedures of marine mammal rehabilitation and provide them with an understanding of the framework that exists to support and regulate marine mammal rehabilitation in New South Wales. Learners must be aware of and understand the NSW *Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Marine Mammals* (the Marine Mammal Code).

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

1.1 Discuss the Marine Mammal Code.

1.2 Ensure NPWS policies and procedures applicable to marine mammal rehabilitation are defined and understood by the learners.

1.3 Ensure organisational policies and procedures applicable to marine mammal rehabilitation are defined and understood by learners.

1.4 Ensure objectives of marine mammal rehabilitation are understood by learners.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: • identify and demonstrate understanding of the Marine Mammal Code • demonstrate understanding of NPWS notifications and approvals for marine mammal rehabilitation • identify organisational policies and procedures for marine mammal rehabilitation • recognise the objectives of marine mammal rehabilitation.	All

Training areas

- The Marine Mammal Code can be accessed online: Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Marine Mammals.
- NPWS policies and procedures relevant to marine mammal rehabilitation could include:
  - NPWS policies for marine mammal response
  - Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS)
  - notifications, approvals and communication with NPWS
  - chain of command and communication in a multi-agency event
  - building strong relationships and working in multi-agency response incidents
  - legislative framework including the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and international statutory requirements (e.g. rehabilitation of Antarctic species).
- Organisational policies and procedures relevant to marine mammal rehabilitation could include:
  - standard operating procedures
  - organisational overview
  - work health and safety policies
  - role descriptions
  - constitution
  - code of ethics
  - code of conduct
  - conflict resolution

- reimbursement
- media and social media policy
- reporting requirements
- protocols for contacting veterinarians and more experienced wildlife rehabilitators
- release procedures.

Suggested assessments

The information covered in this standard is largely theory and so is best suited to written or verbal assessment.

Standard 1: Assessment 1 – the Marine Mammal Code quiz

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 1.

Learner instructions

Use the Marine Mammal Code to complete the following multiple choice questions.

1. The development of the Marine Mammal Code was guided by 5 key principles. From the list below, select the 5 key principles which apply to all aspects of marine mammal rescue, rehabilitation and release:
   a. Prioritise the welfare of marine mammals
   b. Avoid harm to wild marine mammal populations and other wildlife communities
   c. Contribute to research on marine mammal behaviour
   d. Minimise the risks to human health and safety
   e. Optimise capacity to care
   f. NPWS leads the response

Answer: A, B, D, E and F.

2. Who was the Marine Mammal Code developed for?
   a. Whale watchers
   b. Everyone who feeds seals at their boat ramp
   c. Those authorised to rescue, rehabilitate and release marine mammals
   d. All of the above

Answer: C. Those authorised to rescue, rehabilitate and release marine mammals.

3. Which of the following describes the mandatory specific actions for marine mammal rehabilitation, as described by the code?
   a. Guidelines
   b. Standards
   c. Notes
   d. Objectives

Answer: B. Standards.

4. What is the definition of a juvenile seal?
    a. All young seals that have not reached 50% of their parent's length
    b. A seal that is still nursing from its mother
    c. A seal that has just become sexually mature
    d. A young seal that has been weaned and is able to forage for itself

Answer: D. A young seal that has been weaned and is able to forage for itself.

5. What must a wildlife rehabilitator do if a small seal is hauled out on the Sydney Opera House steps?
    a. Post a story on Instagram or Facebook as it is so special
    b. Have it assessed from a distance and then monitored by a wildlife rehabilitator
    c. Have it assessed by a wildlife veterinarian, or seek expertise over the phone from a veterinarian experienced in this species
    d. Notify NPWS
    e. Capture the small seal and transfer it to a rehabilitation facility

Answer: B and D. As the seal is in a high-profile location, NPWS needs to be notified immediately. A wildlife rehabilitator attending the site completes an initial assessment from a distance, monitors the seal and keeps the public away.

6. Which of the following is the objective of **Section 6.2 Monitoring** in the Marine Mammal Code?
    a. To prevent the spread of diseases among marine mammals undergoing rehabilitation
    b. To check the health of a marine mammal undergoing rehabilitation so issues can be promptly identified and managed
    c. To identify the severity of wounds, injuries or disease to determine the best course of action for a marine mammal undergoing rehabilitation
    d. To ensure marine mammals have a care regime that encourages rapid recovery, supports growth in juveniles, and assists with behaviours necessary for survival in the wild

Answer: B. To check the health of a marine mammal undergoing rehabilitation so issues can be promptly identified and managed.

7. It is important to get a stranded dolphin back into the water as soon as possible, so dragging a dolphin by the tail fluke is often the quickest method when you don't have a mat.
    a. True
    b. False

Answer: False. A whale, dolphin and dugong can survive out of water and dragging them by the tail fluke will harm them further by causing damage to their tail fluke, which is how they swim. It is important to wait for trained rescuers and the correct equipment to move a dolphin.

8. Which of the following are not an approved method of euthanasia for a marine mammal?
    a. Gunshot to the brain for seals
    b. Suffocation via drowning
    c. Cranial implosion for a whale larger than 6 metres
    d. Anaesthesia followed by an intravenous injection of sodium pentobarbital performed by a veterinarian

Answer: B. Suffocation via drowning is not an approved method of euthanasia for marine mammals.

9. Which of the following practices while rehabilitating whales in a mass stranding is incorrect?
    a. Keeping the whale, dolphin or dugong moist at all times
    b. Gently stroking the side of the jaw where the whale or dolphin can see you to sooth and reduce stress
    c. Placing a young calf next to an adult female to reduce stress
    d. Placing light-coloured wet sheets over the whale except over the blowhole, tail flukes and pectoral flippers

Answer: B. Toothed whales and dolphins use echolocation to navigate and the sound receptors are on the lower jaw. Stroking the jaw will cause stress.

10. How often must a whale, dolphin or dugong be monitored in pre-release care?
    a. Every day and weighed once a week
    b. Twice a week
    c. At least 3 times a day
    d. Twice a day

Answer: D. Whales, dolphins and dugongs in pre-release care in a facility must be monitored at least twice a day.

11. Dedicated cleaning equipment must be used for enclosures housing marine mammals with a suspected or confirmed infectious disease. This equipment must not be shared.
    a. True
    b. False

Answer: True. To prevent disease transmission, equipment must not be shared.

12. Which statement is correct?
    a. Soft substrates such as straw, shredded paper and grass clippings are practical substrate options for pre-release enclosures
    b. A pool deep enough for diving is required for a dugong in a pre-release enclosure
    c. No shelter is required in pre-release enclosures as the marine mammal needs to get used to the prevailing weather conditions
    d. All marine mammals in intensive care must be kept warm (32–37°C) as they have serious injuries or are very young

Answer: B. A dugong requires a pool deep enough to dive and submerge replicating their normal behaviour of foraging for seagrass on the ocean floor.

13. Which of the following is not a requirement for whales, dolphins and dugongs in pre-release housing at a facility?
    a. A pool large enough to swim freely including in 2 directions
    b. Deep water for diving and submerging
    c. A range of balls, noodles and pool toys to show off a range of natural behaviours
    d. Shielding on the drain and pool grates

Answer: C. While it is important for a range of natural behaviours to be observed in pre-release care, noodles, balls and pool toys encourage habituation.

14. All wildlife rehabilitators must undertake professional development and refresh their training for marine mammals every 3 years.
    a. True
    b. False

Answer: True. Wildlife rehabilitators must undertake professional development and refresh their training every 3 years.

Standard 1: Assessment 2 – NPWS and organisational policies on marine mammal rehabilitation, questions

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 1. The answers provided for Questions 1 to 4 are examples only, and answers provided by learners must be specific to their organisation. Questions 5 and 6 apply to NPWS policies.

Learner instructions

Provide answers to each of the questions below.

1. What is the mission statement, or what are the guiding principles and objectives of rehabilitation for your group?

Answers could include:

- to rescue, rehabilitate and release marine mammals
- to conserve marine mammals and preserve and enhance their habitat
- to provide best practice standards of care to sick and injured marine mammals
- the main objective is to return all native fauna back to its wildlife habitat when fit to fend for itself (NSW Native Animal Trust Fund: NATF)
- to actively rehabilitate and preserve Australian wildlife and inspire others to do the same (NSW Wildlife Information, Rescue and Education Service: WIRES).

2. List 3 policies or documents you need to be familiar with to rehabilitate marine mammals.

Answers could include:

- Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Marine Mammals
- Rehabilitation of Protected Native Animals Policy
- the organisation's standard operating procedures including:
    - zoonotic disease policy
    - work health and safety (WHS) policies
    - petrol reimbursement policy
    - notification procedures while attending an event
    - reporting procedures
    - media and social media policy.

3. Within your organisation, who do you need to report a marine mammal rescue to?

Answers could include:

- Operations Manager
- Supervisor
- Hotline or Rescue Coordinator – oversees rescues and volunteers attending events.

4. List 2 positions within the organisation and explain their role in marine mammal rehabilitation.

Answers could include:

- Hotline Coordinator – coordinates the hotline roster and volunteer response for marine mammal events
- Rescue Coordinator – oversees rescues and animals brought into care
- Mentor – assists new volunteers with rehabilitation, providing advice and support
- Training Officer – updates training materials and informs existing and potential members of when training is available.

5. Which statement is not accurate about the Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS)?
    a. AIIMS is a framework that brings together personnel, procedures, equipment, facilities and communication to achieve incident objectives
    b. Each wildlife rehabilitation agency or group reports directly to the incident controller and advises them of their plans
    c. The framework applies across a whole range of incidents from small to large and provides a basis for an expanded response as an incident grows in size or complexity
    d. The system is based on 3 key principles: management by objectives, functional management and span of control
    e. When wildlife rehabilitators have an important idea about how to help in an incident, they only need to gain approval from their group's team leader before undertaking the action

Answers: B and E. The personnel from each wildlife rehabilitation agency may perform a range of different roles in different functional areas of an incident that best suits their skill set. Each wildlife rehabilitator will report to the team leader within their area and must seek approval via the incident's chain of command.

6. List 2 benefits of the AIIMS system and why they would be useful in a mass stranding.

Answers could include:

- adaptable and scalable approach
- defined structure
- defined roles and responsibilities
- economies for sharing resources
- clearly defined communication flow.

Standard 2: Work health and safety requirements of marine mammal rehabilitation

Objective: To ensure learners are able to prioritise their safety and that of the people around them when undertaking marine mammal rescue and rehabilitation.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

2.1 Explain the work health and safety (WHS) risks associated with the site, equipment or activity and how they can be minimised.

2.2 Explain the WHS risks associated with approaching, handling and restraining marine mammals and how they can be minimised.

2.3 Discuss the WHS risks associated with zoonotic diseases relevant to marine mammals and how they can be minimised.

2.4 Discuss rehabilitator wellbeing and potential mental health impacts of wildlife rehabilitation.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: • identify WHS risks associated with marine mammal rehabilitation • employ techniques to minimise the WHS risks to themselves and other people.	3. Rescue 4. Transport 6. Care procedures 7. Husbandry 8. Housing 10. Release considerations

Training areas

- WHS risks relating to the site, equipment or activity could include:
  - waves
  - slippery rocks
  - uneven surfaces
  - sea urchins and sting rays
  - boat safety and the use of life jackets
  - working in low light
  - weather and extremes of temperature
  - broken equipment
  - sharp edges
  - chemicals and other hazardous agents.
- WHS risks associated with handling and restraining marine mammals could include:
  - drowning or crush injury from a rolling animal
  - injury from tail flukes
  - bites and scratches
  - injury from heavy lifting.
- WHS risks associated with zoonotic diseases could include:
  - zoonoses associated with marine mammals (e.g. marine strains of brucella (*B. ceti and B. pinnipedialis*), salmonella, giardia, cryptosporidium, *Mycoplasma phocacerebrale* (seal finger), *Mycobacterium pinnipedii*, *Leptospira* spp. and *Toxoplasmosa gondii*).

  - personnel safety (hygiene and disinfection practices, personal protective equipment [PPE]).
- Minimising WHS risks could include:
  - ensuring correct training has been completed before undertaking a task
  - capture of seals only undertaken by approved personnel
  - not entering water in rough surf conditions or when a whale or large dolphin is parallel to the beach and rolling in the waves
  - not entering the water if other large marine predators are around
  - wearing correct PPE
  - using correct equipment
  - using the correct technique to restrain or lift a marine mammal
  - minimising handling.

Suggested assessments

This standard is best suited to written or verbal assessment methods, practical assessment or a combination of them.

Standard 2: Assessment 1 – WHS requirements of marine mammal rehabilitation

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 2.

Learner instructions

For each of the 4 activities listed below, identify 3 WHS risks and explain how you could minimise these risks.

1. Rescuing a common dolphin stranded in the shallow waves on the shoreline of a remote beach

WHS risks	How will you minimise these risks?

2. Rescuing a small Australian fur seal entangled in fishing line on the rocks at the beach

WHS risks	How will you minimise these risks?

3. Assessing a large, stranded orca with discharge from the eyes and abnormal breathing

WHS risks	How will you minimise these risks?

4. Assessing a stranded humpback whale rolling in the surf with bleeding lacerations

WHS risks	How will you minimise these risks?

Standard 2: Assessment 2 – Rehabilitator wellbeing

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 2. Split the learners into smaller groups with fewer than 10 learners to a group, and get them to discuss and answer the questions below. When the groups have completed their discussions, come together and discuss what each group came up with.

Learner instructions

In your group discuss and answer the questions below. Once this has been completed, choose a representative to speak on behalf of your group to explain your findings.

1. What is wellbeing?
2. What are some of the potential impacts on wellbeing for rehabilitators?
3. What are the signs of these impacts?
4. How can you minimise these impacts?
5. Who should you talk to in these situations?
6. What processes does your organisation have in place to support rehabilitator wellbeing?

Standard 3: Record keeping

Objective: To explain the record keeping requirements for marine mammal rehabilitation.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

3.1 Explain the NPWS reporting requirements.

3.2 Explain organisational reporting requirements.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: • keep records in accordance with NPWS and organisational requirements.	12. Record keeping

Training areas

- The Marine Mammal Code can be accessed online: Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Marine Mammals.
- NPWS reporting requirements could include:
  - notifying NPWS (local NPWS area office)
  - detailed record report
  - combined report
  - licence conditions
  - discussing the benefits of collecting robust data
  - methods to collect accurate rescue and release location data (e.g. GPS)
  - methods to collect accurate photographs for assessment and monitoring data
  - methods to collect accurate morphometric measurements and photographic reports of carcasses
  - standard length measurements for marine mammals
  - an overview of where the data is being used and why it is important
  - annual reports.
- Organisational reporting requirements could include:
  - husbandry plans
  - body weight
  - details of marine mammal mobility and behaviour
  - veterinary-prescribed medications and treatment plans
  - copy of records when transferring marine mammals between facilities
  - reporting disease outbreaks to relevant authorities
  - feeding charts
  - rescue details
  - release details.

Suggested assessments

The information covered in this standard is largely theory and so is best suited to written or verbal assessment.

Standard 3: Assessment 1 – Record sheet

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 3.

Learner instructions

Read the case studies below and answer the questions for each one.

Case study 1:

A member of the public, John Smith, called your organisation about a seal on 27 November 2021 at 2 pm.

What information is important to gain from this phone call?

Upon arrival, you identify a juvenile New Zealand fur seal on the beach at North Avoca, in front of the surf club. The seal is lethargic and looks thin.

What information would you need to record regarding the situation?

What photographs would you take to provide to NPWS and marine mammal veterinary specialists to assist with distance assessment?

The animal is ready for release 2 weeks later.

What information would you need to record regarding the release?

Case study 2:

A member of the public, Mary Bloggs, called your organisation about a large whale washed ashore after a huge storm on the northern end of Palm Beach on Friday 1 May 2022.

What information is important to gain from this phone call?

Upon arrival, you identify a deceased sperm whale. The whale is covered in whale lice and has many cookie-cutter shark bites.

What information would you need to record regarding the situation?

What photographs would you take to provide to NPWS and marine mammal veterinary pathologists?

Standard 3: Assessment 2 – Record keeping in your organisation

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 3. This is best completed as a practical assessment. Ensure there is enough equipment available to complete the assessment. An experienced marine mammal rehabilitator should complete the relevant section of the form after supervising learners to confirm that all required measurements and photographs are taken using the correct technique.

Learner instructions

Use the training dolphin, measuring tape, clipboard and pen to complete the deceased dolphin reporting form below, and use your phone to take the required photographs. Note the following:

- all measurements are in centimetres
- all measurements are in straight lines
- take measurements from the right side of the animal.

Deceased whale and dolphin reporting sheet	
Species	Date completed
Date of encounter	ID number
Location GPS	Location description
Life stage	Sex
Rehabilitator name	Signature
Supervisor name	Signature

Required measurements	Cm	Required photographs	Checklist
1. Total length (upper jaw to tail notch)		Full profile from each side	
2. Tip of jaw to tip of dorsal fin		Head profile	
3. Girth (front of dorsal fin, widest part if no dorsal fin)		Dorsal fin profile	
4. Rostrum (or beak) length		All injuries, wounds, distinctive markings or entanglements	
5. Tip of jaw to centre of anus		Genital and anus area (from umbilicus to the tail fluke)	
6. Depth of tail notch 7. Number of teeth: a. upper jaw b. lower jaw		Inside of the mouth	

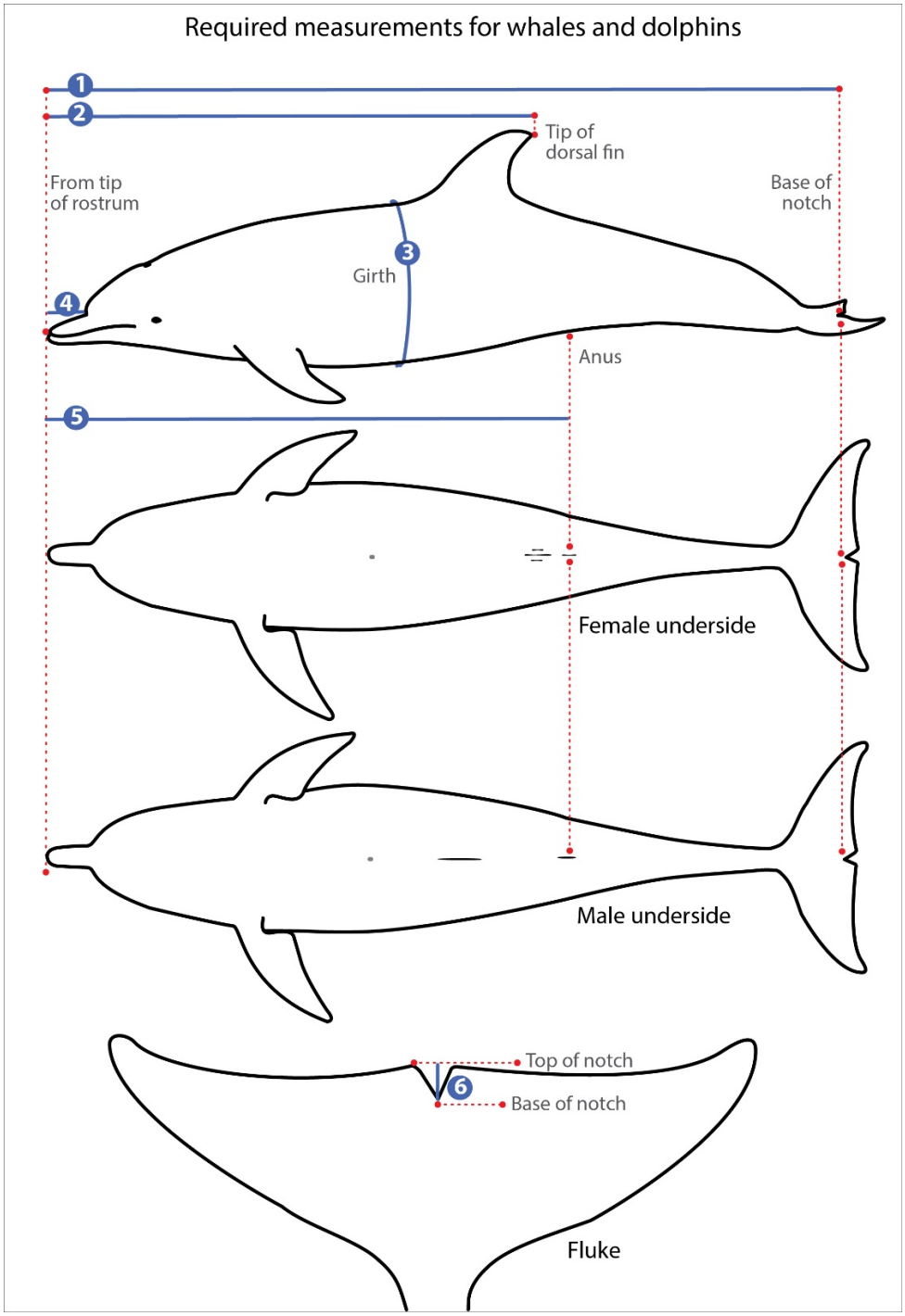


Figure 4 Required measurement for whales and dolphins

Standard 4: Biology and behaviour of marine mammals

Objective: To ensure detailed knowledge of marine mammals is taught to learners. This is done by providing learners with the foundational tools to understand marine mammal biology and behaviour and how these aspects inform interactions with these animals undergoing rehabilitation.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

4.1 Explain features of marine mammal biology including anatomy, physiology, social structure, stages of development, and habitat, and relate them to marine mammal rehabilitation.

4.2 Provide a basic understanding of marine mammal ecology including population dynamics, habitat selection, migratory behaviour competition and predator–prey interactions.

4.3 Provide the tools and understanding required to identify different species of marine mammals recorded in New South Wales.

4.4 Provide the tools and understanding required to identify normal behaviour in marine mammals.

4.5 Provide the tools and understanding required to recognise signs of abnormal behaviour in marine mammals.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: • relate marine mammal biology, ecology and behaviour to marine mammal rehabilitation • understand how to use the different tools to identify different species of marine mammals • recognise signs of normal behaviour in marine mammals • recognise signs of abnormal behaviour in marine mammals.	All

Training areas

- The Marine Mammal Code can be accessed online: Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Marine Mammals.
- Features of marine mammal biology could include:
  - anatomy
  - digestive system and diet
  - variation in anatomy between species
  - thermoregulation during different stages of development
  - life cycle
  - reproduction
  - social behaviour and home range.
- Basic understanding of marine mammal ecology could include:
  - habitat and species preferences
  - inshore versus offshore species for whales and dolphins
  - breeding and life cycle
  - diet and competition.
- The marine mammal species in New South Wales are listed in Appendix A of the Marine Mammal Code. Tools and understanding required to identify species include:

  - how to use a marine mammal field guide
  - distinguishing features of different species
  - identifying species in early development (i.e. neonates, calves and pups)
  - identifying fur seals and sea lions (otariids) versus true seals (phocids)
  - identifying Australian fur seals versus New Zealand fur seals
  - correct photographs to take to assist with species identification
  - species that are known to occur in the local area
  - Antarctic seal species.
- Normal behaviours for marine mammals could include:
  - social and solitary species
  - territorial behaviour (e.g. vocalisation and fighting)
  - migration patterns
  - hauling out for seals
  - breeding behaviour
  - thermoregulatory behaviours (e.g. jugging for seals)
  - grooming
  - foraging techniques.
- Abnormal behaviours for marine mammals could include:
  - circular swim pattern for whales and dolphins
  - listing to one side for whale and dolphins
  - not fleeing when approached
  - humanisation
  - lack of evasive behaviours when threats are present
  - stranding for whales, dolphins and dugongs.

Suggested assessments

The information covered in this standard is largely theory so is best suited to written or verbal assessment.

Standard 4: Assessment 1 – Marine mammal biology and behaviour, quiz

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 4.

Learner instructions

Complete the following quiz by selecting the correct choice for multiple choice questions and providing a written response for the short-answer questions.

1. Humpback whales have a single blowhole while southern right whales have a double blowhole which can be seen by the shape of their blows when they come to the surface to breathe (singular and bushy for a humpback whale and V-shaped for a southern right whale).
   a. True
   b. False

Answer: False. Both humpback whales and southern right whales are baleen whales which all have a double blowhole.

2. Which statement is correct about the anatomy of toothed whales?
   a. Toothed whales include both whales, dolphins and porpoises
   b. Toothed whales use echolocation which is a process of sending out sound waves from their nasal passages located just under the blowhole, to determine the distance, size and shape of objects in their environment from the echoes as the sounds bounce back
   c. Toothed whales can be identified by the shape and number of teeth which vary from species to species
   d. All of the above

Answer: D. All of the above.

3. There are only 2 species of marine mammal listed as threatened species in New South Wales.
   a. True
   b. False

Answer: False. There are 3 species (2 seals and 1 whale) listed as vulnerable and 3 species (2 whale species and the dugong) listed as endangered in New South Wales.

4. Toothed whale species live in groups known as pods. List the advantages of this social behaviour.

Answers could include foraging success, protection from predators.

5. Dugongs are predominantly herbivores.
   a. True
   b. False

Answer: True. Dugongs are often referred to as sea cows as they feed mainly on seagrass. However, there is evidence they will also eat invertebrates when seagrass is scarce.

6. What is the name for a group of seals floating or swimming near each other in the water?
   a. Colony
   b. Rookery
   c. Raft
   d. Pod

Answer: C. Raft.

7. List 4 differences between otariids (fur seals and sea lions) and phocids (true seals)?

Fur seals and sea lions	True seals
e.g. Can bring rear flippers forward	Cannot bring rear flippers forward

Answers for differences could include locomotion (on 4 flippers versus on belly), no claws on the rear flippers of phocids, presence of external ear flaps, one versus 2 layers of fur, visible testes on males.

8. Pelagic species (species that spend most of their time offshore in open waters) of toothed whales are the ones most commonly involved in mass strandings. Explain why this might occur?

Answers could include whale trap beach, echolocation, unfamiliarity with inshore environment, close ties between group members.

9. Name 3 different methods to differentiate between an Australian fur seal and a New Zealand fur seal (long-nosed fur seal) with a description of the differences for each species.

Description	New Zealand fur seal	Australian fur seal
e.g. Snout shape	Long pointed snout	Rounded with a bulbous nose

Answers for methods could include snout shape, flipper trailing edge, gait, ear colour and position, sitting position.

10. Name 2 features which help with identification of a beaked whale:

Answer: V-shaped groove under the lower jaw, and tail fluke notch (lack of notch or a reverse notch).

11. Why would a southern right whale be found just behind the surf line at Mollymook Beach near Ulladulla in mid-July?
    a. It is sick and is about to strand as it gets caught up in the surf
    b. It's been hit by a boat and has come close to shore to recover
    c. It is looking for company and is close to shore so swimmers can easily approach
    d. Southern right whales prefer shallow sheltered bays and beaches to nurse their calves as they gain strength for the migration to Antarctica.

Answer: D. Southern right whales migrate to the warmer waters in New South Wales from June to October to give birth and mate. They are regularly found very close to shore in shallow waters and need space to rest as they nurse their calves for the journey to Antarctica.

12. What is the name for an adult female dolphin?
    a. Calf
    b. Cow
    c. Delph
    d. Bull

Answer: B. Cow.

13. Which of the following statements is incorrect about normal seal behaviour?
    a. Seals haul out on land to give birth
    b. A seal hauled out on the land is resting and tired so will often yawn
    c. Seals can spend time alone or they can haul out with other seals in groups known as colonies
    d. Seals lift their flippers in the air to assist with regulating their temperature

Answer: B. Seals do not yawn because they are tired. It is a warning – they are baring their teeth to show they are dangerous and will use them to protect themselves.

14. List 4 features that could be used to identify if a whale or dolphin has been born recently (neonate):

Answer: presence of umbilicus, lines or creases known as foetal folds on the body, folded dorsal fin or tail fluke, feathering around the tongue.

15. Identify the sex of the animals in Figures 5 and 6.

Figure 5 Deceased short-finned pilot whale
Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE

Figure 6 New Zealand fur seal hauled out on a step
Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE

Standard 4: Assessment 2 – Marine mammal species identification quiz

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 4.

Learner instructions

Try and identify each of the marine mammals in the table below. If you don't know the exact species, then nominate what type of marine mammal (e.g. baleen whale, toothed whale, fur seal or true seal) and where they are found (e.g. coastal species or open ocean species, or both).

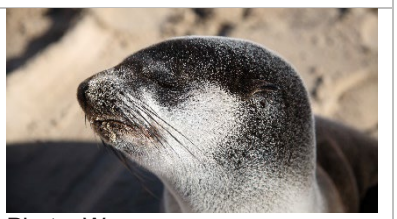
 Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE	 Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE	 Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE
Species: orca	Species	Species
Type: toothed whale	Diet	Diet
Habitat: open ocean	Habitat	Habitat
 Photo: Jodie Lowe	 Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE	 Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE
Species	Species	Species
Type	Type	Type
Habitat	Habitat	Habitat
 Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE	 Photo: Jodie Lowe	 Photo: Wayne Reynolds/ORRCA
Species	Species	Species
Type	Type	Type
Habitat	Habitat	Habitat

 Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE	 Photo: Jodie Lowe	 Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE
Species	Species	Species
Type	Type	Type
Habitat	Habitat	Habitat
 Photo: Jodie Lowe	 Photo: Samantha Hillman/ORRCA	 Photo: Jodie Lowe
Species	Species	Species
Type	Type	Type
Habitat	Habitat	Habitat

Standard 5: Stress management in marine mammals

Objective: To communicate the importance of managing stress in marine mammals and to provide mechanisms for minimising this stress.

To comply with this standard, rehabilitation organisations must:

5.1 Explain the effects of stress on a marine mammal at various stages of rescue and rehabilitation.

5.2 Provide the tools and understanding required to recognise signs of stress in a marine mammal.

5.3 Discuss methods for minimising stress on a marine mammal at various stages of rescue and rehabilitation.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: • recognise signs of stress in a marine mammal and its impact • apply methods for minimising stress on a marine mammal.	3. Rescue 4. Transport 5. Euthanasia 6. Care procedures 7. Husbandry 8. Housing 10. Release considerations

Training areas

- Effects of stress could include:
  - death
  - poor body condition
  - decreased immune function
  - physiological impacts.
- Signs of distress could include:
  - lack of appetite
  - repetitive behaviours
  - vocalisations
  - tail thrashing for whales, dolphins and dugongs
  - teeth baring for seals
  - swimming into the walls of the tank (whales, dolphins and dugongs)
  - increased heart and respiratory rate.
- Methods for minimising stress could include:
  - minimising handling
  - correct handling techniques
  - controlling water temperature
  - pain relief
  - limiting exposure to stressors such as domestic animals, loud noises, noxious smells, crowds of people
  - opaque tank walls to limit the animal's ability to see out
  - driving carefully when transporting.

Suggested assessments

This standard is best suited to written or verbal assessment methods, practical assessment or a combination of these.

Standard 5: Assessment 1 – Signs of stress

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 5.

Learner instructions

Choose either a seal, whale, dolphin or a dugong and use the space provided to explain the effects of stress on that marine mammal. In your answer include examples of the effect stress has on the body of a marine mammal, what indications you would be looking for to determine if a marine mammal is stressed, and what you would do to minimise this stress.

Standard 5: Assessment 2 – Minimising stress

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 5. This assessment can be provided as a written or verbal activity.

Learner instructions

For each of the scenarios below explain how you would minimise stress for a marine mammal.

1. Initial assessment of a leopard seal on a busy beach. There are many onlookers by the time you arrive, and some of them have dogs.

2. A small, stranded pilot whale calf in a mass stranding

3. A small juvenile New Zealand fur seal being transferred to a specialist facility that is 2 hours away from the rescue location

Standard 6: Rescue of marine mammals

Objective: To ensure learners have the skills to safely, efficiently and humanely rescue a marine mammal.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

6.1 Outline common reasons for marine mammal rescue.

6.2 Detail how to perform a situational assessment, including the use of the decision tree in the Marine Mammal Code, to establish the appropriate course of action.

6.3 Detail the correct method and equipment required to capture, handle and rescue a marine mammal, as suitable to common rescue situations, conditions and stage of development of the marine mammal.

6.4 Detail how to rescue a marine mammal to humanely minimise pain, stress and potential injury.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: • list the common reasons why marine mammals require rescue • assess a rescue situation and plan the rescue of a marine mammal • safely rescue a marine mammal using correct equipment • determine the type of intervention required at a rescue site.	2. Case assessment 3. Rescue 4. Transport 5. Euthanasia

Training areas

- The Marine Mammal Code can be accessed online: Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Marine Mammals.
- Common reasons marine mammals need to be rescued include:
  - stranding
  - entanglement
  - entrapment
  - foreign body ingestion
  - boat strike
  - disease
  - failure to thrive for juvenile seals
  - being orphaned
  - predator attack
  - oil spills.
- Performing a situational assessment could include:
  - assessing the situation – is it safe?
  - ensuring correct equipment
  - ensuring appropriate training has been completed
  - ensuring appropriate notifications and approvals are gained for removal or relocation from a rescue site
  - checking surrounding beaches in a mass stranding for other stranding sites
  - implications for Antarctic seal species
  - ensuring the correct number of trained people are available to conduct the rescue
  - identifying obstacles and WHS risks

  - identifying escape routes and risks to the marine mammal
  - performing a distance examination before approaching the animal.
- An appropriate course of action could include:
  - rescue
  - monitoring the marine mammal
  - relocating the marine mammal
  - assessment by a vet
  - transporting to an approved marine mammal facility
  - rehabilitation in situ
  - euthanasia on site.
- Methods for rescuing the marine mammal could include:
  - using specialised lifting mats and stretchers for whales, dolphins and dugongs
  - nets for small dolphins in shallow water
  - nets and herding boards for seals
  - rodeo capture technique for dugongs
  - pontoon system for large whales and dolphins
  - having large numbers of rescuers and a coordinated capture method.
- Equipment to rescue a marine mammal could include:
  - purpose-built mats, stretchers and slings for whales, dolphins and dugongs
  - nets
  - herding boards
  - towels
  - binoculars
  - light-coloured sheets made from natural fibres
  - buckets
  - PPE (e.g. gloves)
  - torch.
- Minimising stress and further injury could include:
  - ensuring correct training has been completed before undertaking a task
  - performing correct rescue and handling techniques for the condition of the animal
  - providing shade for stranded whales, dolphins and dugongs
  - covering with light-coloured sheets and pouring water over the bodies of stranded whales, dolphins and dugongs
  - covering the head to minimise stress for seals
  - removing onlookers and domestic pets
  - reducing auditory and visual stimuli.

Suggested assessments

This standard is best suited to practical assessment or in a simulated environment that accurately represents rescue conditions.

Standard 6: Assessment 1 – Marine mammal rescue, case studies

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 6.

Learner instructions

Read each of the rescue case studies and complete the corresponding questions.

Case study 1:

You have been called out to rescue a juvenile New Zealand fur seal from a small rocky headland. The seal is thin and lethargic and has coloured nasal discharge.

1. What WHS risks have you identified for the rescue site?

2. What WHS risks have you identified for capturing and handling the seal?

3. What will you do to minimise the WHS risks associated with this rescue scenario?

4. What information do you obtain from your visual assessment of the animal?

5. What outcome do you get when using the decision tree in the Marine Mammal Code?

6. Describe how you will rescue the seal:

7. What equipment will you use?

8. How do you intend to minimise further stress or injury to the seal?

Case study 2:

You are called out to rescue 2 stranded striped dolphins on a busy suburban dog-walking beach. The dolphins are rolling in the waves close to shore, surrounded by local beach goers keen to help and trying to push them back to sea.

1. What WHS risks have you identified for the rescue site?

2. What WHS risks have you identified for handling the dolphins?

3. What will you do to minimise the WHS risks associated with this rescue scenario?

4. What information do you obtain from your visual assessment of each dolphin?

5. What outcome do you get when using the decision tree in the Marine Mammal Code?

6. Describe how you will rescue the dolphins:

7. What equipment will you use?

8. How do you intend to minimise further stress or injury to the dolphins?

Standard 6: Assessment 2 – Marine mammal rescue practical assessment

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 6. This is best completed as a practical assessment completed in small groups of 5 to 8 people. Ensure there is enough equipment available to complete the assessment. An experienced marine mammal rehabilitator should assess the learners to ensure they demonstrate the correct techniques.

Learner instructions

A training dolphin or small training whale is weighted by filling it with water to replicate the real size and weight of a stranded whale or dolphin. As a group, use the provided mats, slings and stretchers to rescue the whale or dolphin and move it up the beach to a rehabilitation site.

To complete this assessment learners must:

- undertake a WHS assessment of the rescue site and situation
- use the correct folding, transfer and lifting technique for the type of mat or sling used
- move the animal over a 30-m distance
- organise and allocate roles and responsibilities to ensure the rescue is completed in a coordinated manner.

Standard 7: Transport of marine mammals

Objective: To ensure learners have the skills to safely, efficiently and humanely transport a marine mammal.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

7.1 Demonstrate how to appropriately contain a marine mammal for transport based on different sizes, stages of development and animal condition.

7.2 Outline how to secure the transport container to prevent escape and further injury.

7.3 Detail suitable transport conditions, including ambient temperature, to safely transport a marine mammal.

7.4 Discuss the most suitable person or location that a marine mammal should be transported to, based on different stages of development, animal condition and organisational policies.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: • prepare a carrier for transport • outline the transport conditions required to safely transport a marine mammal • understand the appropriate person or location to transport a marine mammal to, based on different stages of development, animal condition and organisational policies.	2. Case assessment 3. Rescue 4. Transport 5. Euthanasia 10. Release considerations

Training areas

The Marine Mammal Code can be accessed online: Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Marine mammals.

- Containing a marine mammal for transport could include:
  - transitioning a whale, dolphin, dugong or large seal from the beach into a trailer
  - securing a whale, dolphin, dugong or large seal in a whale trailer
  - using padding as a substrate for whales, dolphins, dugongs or large seals in whale trailers or uncovered utilities
  - using rolled towels to provide stability for whales, dolphins and dugongs
  - using pontoons for larger whales and dolphins for movement in water
  - using secure, well-ventilated transport containers for small seals
  - covering the container.
- Transport conditions could include:
  - avoiding noise disturbance
  - maintaining and monitoring ambient temperature (e.g. shade)
  - keeping whales, dolphins and dugongs cool (e.g. mist sprays, wet damp sheets)
  - using sturdy and secure transport containers
  - positioning a whale and dolphin (e.g. facing forward, ensuring breathing is not obstructed, and checking flipper position for whales and dolphins).

- Transporting to the most suitable person or location would depend on the species and animal's condition and could include a:
  - rehabilitation facility
  - another nearby rehabilitation site
  - release site.

Suggested assessments

This standard is best suited to practical assessment or in a simulated environment that accurately represents rescue conditions.

Standard 7: Assessment 1 – Marine mammal transport questionnaire

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 7. This is best completed as a practical assessment. Ensure learners have a whale mat, dolphin mat and access to the Whale Scale app.

Learner instructions

To be completed in groups. Each group should read the stranding scenario and provide answers to each of the questions.

Stranding scenario

When whales and dolphins strand, rehabilitation maybe undertaken in a second more appropriate site, requiring the whales or dolphins to be moved from the stranding site, usually a beach, and transported by trailer or truck to the second location.

1. For each mat provided, calculate the maximum number of people that can use the mat to lift a whale or dolphin, ensuring there is an even number of people on each side and each person has handles to hold.

Mat	Side 1	Side 2	Total number of people
Mat 1 (4.5-m whale mat)			
Mat 2 (2.5-m dolphin mat)			

2. Estimate the weight of the following whales and dolphins using the Whale Scale app. Then, using the dolphin and whale mat closest to the species length, and the results from Question 1, calculate the maximum number of people that can use a mat for each species and the weight they would each be lifting. Using a safe lifting limit of 20 kg per person, identify which type of mat would be used or if neither mat is acceptable.

Species	Length	Estimated weight	Number of people	Weight per person	Mat type
Pygmy sperm whale	2.5 m				
Common dolphin	2.1 m				
Risso's dolphin	2.8 m				
Beaked whale	3.3 m				
False killer whale	4.2 m				

3. What other lifting options can be used if a whale is too heavy to be manually lifted by a mat?

Answers include: adding rigid spreader bars to the rescue mat (so the lift is even and the animal is not crushed in the mat) and machinery to aid the lift (e.g. a small tractor, excavator or truck arm); using 2 mats linked together to increase capacity; refloating on higher tides with a pontoon system; and moving by water.

4. Given the whale or dolphin's body weight is not evenly distributed across the mat, list some actions to reduce the chance of someone carrying an increased weight.

Answers could include: strategic placement of the strongest and tallest lifters; careful coordination of the lift and movement; backing the trailer as close to the animal as possible (without the vehicle noise causing stress to other animals) to reduce distance and duration of a manual lift.

5. The tray of a whale trailer or utility truck ranges between 300 mm and 1 m above the road or beach surface. List 2 actions that can be taken to minimise the WHS risks of lifting the animal from the ground onto a trailer or utility truck, or further injuring the animal if it is dragged across the edge of the trailer.

Answers could include: digging channels for the trailer wheels to reverse into, so that as the trailer goes down the channels the trailer bed is closer to the sand surface; building a sand ramp behind the trailer so that as the rescue mat and animal is brought to the trailer the carrying people are elevated up the sand ramp, closer to the trailer bed level.

6. What other considerations are needed when assessing a suitable transport vehicle?

Answer: make sure the vehicle and trailer are capable of legally carrying the estimated weight, there are suitable restraints to secure the animal, there is a substrate such as sand or padding, and arrangements are in place for unrestrained passengers (e.g. speed limits, police escort).

Standard 7: Assessment 2 – Transporting a marine mammal, short-answer questions

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 7. This can be completed verbally or as a written assessment.

Learner instructions

1. List the equipment you might need to transport a juvenile New Zealand fur seal:

2. Explain how you would set up a whale trailer to transport 2 dwarf sperm whales which are a mother and calf pair:

3. What are some things you can do during transport to minimise stress to a marine mammal?

Standard 8: Assessment of marine mammals

Objective: To equip learners with the skills necessary to assess the health status of a marine mammal.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

8.1 Explain how to conduct an initial assessment of a marine mammal from a distance.

8.2 Explain the requirements of a thorough physical assessment of a marine mammal.

8.3 Emphasise the need to seek prompt advice and assistance for a marine mammal from NPWS or a veterinarian, as appropriate to its condition.

8.4 Distinguish signs of and ways to determine common diseases and injuries affecting marine mammals.

8.5 Explain how to manage an injured or diseased marine mammal based on the severity of its condition.

8.6 Outline criteria and approved methods for humane euthanasia.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: • conduct an initial assessment of a marine mammal from a distance • assess the health status of a marine mammal and recognise stages, symptoms and severity of common diseases and injuries • determine the appropriate course of action for a marine mammal based on its condition • outline criteria for and approved methods of euthanasia	5. Euthanasia 6. Care procedures 7. Husbandry 8. Housing

Training areas

- The Marine Mammal Code can be accessed online: Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Marine Mammals.
- Initial assessment of a marine mammal from a distance could include species identification, and looking for or noting:
  - external wounds or injury
  - entanglement
  - ingestion of marine debris
  - signs of stress
  - body condition
  - lethargic demeanour
  - eyes, mouth, flipper
  - respiratory rate
  - weak swim patterns
  - mobility for seals
  - signs of disease
  - parasitic load (e.g. whale lice).

- Thorough assessment could include:
  - veterinary assessment
  - handling and restraining for assessment
  - pain relief, sedation or anaesthesia prescribed by a veterinarian for a thorough physical examination
  - radiographs, blood tests, faecal examination.
- Advice and assistance could include consulting:
  - NPWS staff and marine wildlife team
  - an experienced marine mammal veterinarian
  - an experienced marine mammal rehabilitator.
- Symptoms of common diseases and injuries could include:
  - lethargic listless demeanour
  - dehydration
  - poor body condition
  - skin lesions
  - increased respiratory rate
  - coloured nasal discharge for seals and dugongs
  - frothing from the blowhole for whales and dolphins
  - eye injuries
  - increased whale lice load for whales and dolphins
  - cookie-cutter shark bites
  - abnormal odours
  - fishing lines or debris embedded in the skin
  - foreign materials extending from the mouth.
- Common conditions, injuries and diseases could include:
  - physical trauma – lacerations, puncture wounds or fractures
  - entanglements
  - stranding
  - abandonment for whale, dolphin or dugong calves
  - infectious disease (e.g. morbillivirus)
  - ingestion of marine debris
  - eye injuries for seals
  - dehydration
  - poor body condition.
- Managing a marine mammal based on the severity of its condition could include:
  - initial stabilisation
  - minimising movement
  - veterinary assistance for fluid therapy and medication
  - monitoring on site
  - reducing stress.
- Criteria for euthanasia are set out in Section 5 of the Marine Mammal Code. Further training could be provided to discuss the decision-making process.

Suggested assessments

This standard is best suited to written or verbal assessment methods, practical assessment or a combination of them.

Standard 8: Assessment 1 – Assessing a marine mammal, group exercise

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 8.

Learner instructions

In groups of 3 to 5 people, discuss the images on the following pages (Figures 7 to 10) and answer the questions below. Each group will need to present their findings for one image.

Figure 7 Large stranded common bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*)
Photo: Jodie Lowe/ORRCA

Figure 8 Subadult Australian fur seal hauled out on rocks with a huge shark bite
Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE

Figure 9 Stranded short-finned pilot whales
Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE

Figure 10 Injured leopard seal hauled out on a sandy beach with a clear nasal discharge
Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE

1. What signs of injury or disease can you see?
2. What level of severity is it at?
3. What internal issues might you suspect in relation to this injury or disease?
4. What is the likely prognosis for this animal?
5. What would be your next steps?

Standard 8: Assessment 2 – Assessment of a seal

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 8. This could be completed verbally while observing a live seal.

Learner instructions:

Using Table 1, which outlines features for scoring body condition in seals, evaluate the body condition of the seals in Table 2.

Table 1 Body condition assessments for otariids (eared seals) and phocids (earless seals)

Source: Dr Larry Vogelnest, Taronga Conservation Society Australia 2009

Score	Condition	Seal type	Neck	Abdomen	Body
5	Excellent	Otariids	Thick, rounded and bulging (especially in males)	Abdomen is convex and may be bulging	Body is rounded and plump
		Phocids	Neckline not present		
4	Good	Otariids	Neck not distinct and slightly thickened	Abdomen/waist is flat to slightly rounded	Loss of hourglass shape to waist. Pelvic bones not visible
		Phocids	Neckline slightly concave		
3	Fair	Otariids	Neck less distinct	Abdomen/waist slightly concave	Smooth hourglass shape to waist. Ribs and lumbar vertebrae not visible. Pelvic bones just visible
		Phocids	Neckline still present but less distinction between head and body		
2	Poor	Otariids	Neck obvious	Abdomen/waist slightly sunken/concave	Marked hourglass shape to waist. Ribs, lumbar vertebrae and pelvic bones visible
		Phocids	Obvious neckline		
1	Emaciated	Otariids	Neck thin and obvious	Abdomen/waist distinctly sunken/concave	Accentuated severe hourglass shape to waist. Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and other bony structures obvious and prominent. Obvious loss of muscle
		Phocids	Very obvious neckline making the head distinct from the body.		

Table 2 Seal body score card
Photos: Shona Lorigan/DPE

Body score card	
	
1. Body score	6. Body score
	
2. Body score	7. Body score
	
3. Body score	8. Body score
	
4. Body score	9. Body score
	
5. Body score	10. Body score

Standard 9: Rehabilitation of whales, dolphins and dugongs

Objective: To provide learners with an understanding of the requirements for the rehabilitation of whales, dolphins and dugongs, and equip learners with the skills to provide quality rehabilitative care at the relevant stages of rehabilitation.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

9.1 Explain the importance of and process for quarantining individual whales, dolphins and dugongs entering rehabilitation.

9.2 Detail the techniques required to safely rehabilitate whales, dolphins and dugongs in-situ relevant to the type of incident and stage of rehabilitation.

9.3 Detail the facilities required to safely rehabilitate whales, dolphins and dugongs, relevant to stages of housing (intensive and pre-release).

9.4 Describe appropriate equipment and furniture for each stage of housing (intensive care or pre-release).

9.5 Describe appropriate equipment for each stage of rehabilitation in situ.

9.6 Illustrate disease control and hygiene practices appropriate to stages of rehabilitation.

9.7 Explain how to appropriately provide food and water based on the condition of a whale, dolphin or dugong.

9.8 Detail common conditions and diseases that affect whales, dolphins or dugongs.

9.9 Discuss how to monitor a whale, dolphin or dugong in accordance with its condition, type of event and stage of housing if in a facility.

9.10 Demonstrate how to complete a husbandry plan for whales, dolphins and dugongs in a facility.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: • outline the requirements for whale, dolphin and dugong rehabilitation • demonstrate correct techniques for rehabilitating whales, dolphins and dugongs in situ • demonstrate correct set-up for housing whales, dolphins and dugongs • provide food and water appropriate to condition of the whale, dolphin or dugong • monitor a whale, dolphin or dugong undergoing rehabilitation • apply hygiene and disease control processes to whale, dolphin or dugong rehabilitation • complete a husbandry plan for a whale, dolphin or dugong in a facility.	2. Case assessment 5. Euthanasia 6. Care procedures 7. Husbandry 8. Housing

Training areas

- The Marine Mammal Code can be accessed online: Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Marine Mammals.
- Importance of and process for quarantining whales, dolphins and dugongs entering a facility could include:
  - principles of quarantine
  - monitoring for signs of infectious diseases
  - disease transmission between animals.
- Techniques required to safely rehabilitate whales, dolphins and dugongs in situ could include:
  - ensuring whales rest in a natural position (e.g. dig holes under pectoral fins)
  - moving or providing padding for animals stranded on rocks or sharp objects
  - keeping animal perpendicular to waves
  - keeping the head facing land
  - keeping the animal cool, moist and upright
  - protecting fragile skin
  - gentle rocking in the water to help whales and dolphins regain their balance, relieve muscle stiffness and restore circulation.
- Housing requirements and considerations for a whale, dolphin or dugong undergoing intensive care in a facility could include:
  - sufficient room to stretch out and swim a short distance
  - support to prevent drowning for mammals unable to keep their blowhole or nostrils above water
  - mitigating stress (noise, visual barriers)
  - natural light–dark cycles
  - shade
  - thermal control
  - access for capture if required.
- Housing requirements and considerations for a whale, dolphin or dugong undergoing pre-release care in a facility could include:
  - sufficient room to demonstrate natural behaviours
  - conditions to encourage natural behaviours
  - exposure to prevailing weather conditions
  - shade
  - waterflow to mimic natural sea currents
  - reduced exposure to humans.
- Appropriate equipment and furniture for facilities could include:
  - covering for enclosure
  - shade cloth
  - thermometer and thermostat
  - submerged feeding structures for dugongs
  - visual barriers.

- Appropriate equipment for in situ rehabilitation could include:
  - purpose-built mats, slings and stretchers
  - pontoon system
  - heavy equipment to dig trenches
  - shade cloth or portable gazebo
  - buckets and mist sprayer
  - light-coloured natural fibre sheets
  - boats, jet skis
  - trailers.
- Access to appropriate food could include:
  - diet specific to the species of whale or dolphin
  - offering submerged fresh leafy vegetables for dugongs
  - freshly mixed seafood
  - supplementary feeding
  - storage of food.
- Monitoring a whale, dolphin or dugong could include:
  - progression of disease or injury
  - frequency – too much or too little
  - weight (only for facilities)
  - body score
  - behaviour
  - indications of activity
  - eating patterns and food intake
  - foraging activity for free swimming whales, dolphins or dugongs
  - key photographs required to help off-site veterinary assessment for free swimming whales, dolphins, or dugongs
  - changes in respiration rate
  - faecal output.
- A husbandry plan could include:
  - consultation with vets
  - medications
  - enrichment
  - timeline for release
  - release site selection.
- Disease control and hygiene practices could include:
  - washing hands thoroughly and between animals
  - wearing gloves and masks
  - quarantining animals
  - removing faeces as soon as observed
  - removing uneaten food stuffs
  - cleaning the food preparation area
  - disinfecting all equipment between each whale, dolphin or dugong.

Suggested assessments

This standard is best suited to written or verbal assessment methods, practical assessment or a combination of these.

Standard 9: Assessment 1 – Rehabilitating a whale, dolphin or dugong, case studies

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 9.

Learner instructions

Working as a group, using one of the case studies below and discussing the rehabilitation required:

- list the actions needed (for case studies rehabilitating in situ)
- explain the housing set-up (for case studies in a rehabilitation facility)
- outline what hygiene and disease control procedures you would implement
- explain how you would monitor the whale, dolphin or dugong and what you would be monitoring the animal for.

Case study 1:

An adult dugong has been rescued after entering a coastal lake system on the NSW South Coast and losing body condition. It has been in care for 3 weeks and is being prepared for release.

Case study 2:

An inshore bottlenose dolphin has been trapped upstream in a predominantly freshwater section of a river due to falling tide levels. As the dolphin has been unable to return downstream and has skin lesions, it has been captured and relocated to the river mouth and is being prepared for release.

Case study 3:

A dwarf sperm whale has been rescued from a remote beach and brought into a facility for rehabilitation. The whale is unable to keep its blowhole above water and is leaning to one side.

Case study 4:

A pod of 5 Risso's dolphins have stranded on a flat whale trap beach. After initial rescue one of the dolphins has passed away, but the other 4 are all alert and showing no signs of illness or injury. While all of the dolphins are vocalising, the smallest dolphin, a young calf, is vocalising more than the others.

Standard 9: Assessment 2 – Rehabilitating whales or dolphins in a mass stranding,

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 9. This is best completed as a practical assessment. Ensure there is enough equipment available to complete the assessment. At least 2 experienced marine mammal rehabilitators should use multiple training dolphins to create a mock stranding scenario with at least 3 different animals, and assess the group of learners as they begin rehabilitation.

Learner instructions

This is a practical assessment to be completed in groups of at least 5 people. To complete the assessment:

- use the equipment provided to undertake rehabilitation of the animals on the beach
- undertake a WHS assessment of the site and situation
- demonstrate correct techniques for initial stabilisation
- demonstrate knowledge of monitoring requirements
- organise and allocate roles and responsibilities to demonstrate the rehabilitation is completed in a coordinated manner.

Standard 10: Rehabilitation of seals

Objective: To provide learners with an understanding of the requirements for the rehabilitation of seals, and equip learners with the skills to provide quality rehabilitative care at the relevant stages of rehabilitation.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

10.1 Explain the importance of and process for quarantining individual seals entering rehabilitation.

10.2 Detail the techniques required to safely rehabilitate seals in situ relevant to the type of incident and stage of rehabilitation.

10.3 Detail the facilities required to safely rehabilitate seals, relevant to stages of housing (intensive care and pre-release).

10.4 Describe appropriate equipment and furniture for each stage of housing.

10.5 Describe appropriate equipment for each stage of rehabilitation in situ.

10.6 Illustrate disease control and hygiene practices appropriate to stages of rehabilitation.

10.7 Explain how to appropriately provide food and water based on the condition of a seal.

10.8 Detail common conditions and diseases that affect seals.

10.9 Discuss how to monitor a seal in accordance with its condition, type of event and stage of housing if in a facility.

10.10 Demonstrate how to complete a husbandry plan for a seal in a facility.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: • outline the requirements for seal rehabilitation • demonstrate correct techniques for rehabilitating seals in situ • demonstrate correct set-up for housing seals • provide food and water appropriate to condition of the seal • monitor a seal undergoing rehabilitation • apply hygiene and disease control processes to seal rehabilitation • complete a husbandry plan for seal in a facility.	2. Case assessment 5. Euthanasia 6. Care procedures 7. Husbandry 8. Housing

Training areas

- The Marine Mammal Code can be accessed online: Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Marine Mammals.
- Importance of and process for quarantining seals entering a facility could include:
  - principles of quarantine
  - monitoring for signs of infectious diseases
  - disease transmission between animals.
- Techniques required to safely rehabilitate seals in situ could include:
  - capture and relocation
  - disentanglement.

- Housing requirements and considerations for a seal undergoing intensive care in a facility could include:
  - sufficient room to sit up and turn around without hitting its head
  - thermal control
  - mitigating stress (noise, visual barriers)
  - natural light–dark cycles
  - shade
  - access for capture if required.
- Housing requirements and considerations for a seal undergoing pre-release care in a facility could include:
  - sufficient room to demonstrate natural behaviours
  - conditions to encourage natural behaviours
  - exposure to prevailing weather conditions
  - shade
  - limited exposure to humans.
- Appropriate equipment and furniture for facilities could include:
  - shade cloth or covering for the enclosure
  - exposure to prevailing conditions
  - thermometer and thermostat
  - haul-out platforms to encourage mobility
  - visual barriers.
- Appropriate equipment for in situ rehabilitation could include:
  - nets and knives to capture and disentangle
  - barriers to protect a seal recovering from anaesthesia
  - camera
  - pen, paper, tablet for recording monitoring information.
- Access to water and appropriate food could include:
  - freshly mixed seafood
  - water
  - supplementary feeding
  - techniques to feed with a visual barrier to prevent habituation
  - storage of food.
- Monitoring a seal could include:
  - progression of disease or injury
  - frequency – too much or too little
  - weight (only for facilities)
  - body score
  - evidence of normal behaviour
  - indications of activity
  - eating patterns and food intake
  - foraging activity for seals being monitored in situ
  - key photographs required to help off-site veterinary assessment for seals monitored in situ
  - changes in respiration rate
  - faecal output.

- A husbandry plan could include:
  - consultation with vets
  - medications
  - enrichment
  - timeline for release
  - release site selection.
- Disease control and hygiene practices could include:
  - washing hands thoroughly and between animals
  - wearing gloves and masks
  - quarantining animals
  - removing faeces at the same time as feeding or handling a seal for treatment
  - removing uneaten food stuffs
  - cleaning the food preparation area
  - disinfecting all equipment between each seal.

Suggested assessments

This standard is best suited to written or verbal assessment methods, practical assessment or a combination of these.

Standard 10: Assessment 1 – Rehabilitating a seal, case studies

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 10.

Learner instructions

Working as a group, using one of the figures below to discuss the rehabilitation required:

- list the actions needed and who would undertake them (for case studies requiring rehabilitation in situ)
- explain the housing set-up (for case studies in a rehabilitation facility)
- outline what hygiene and disease control procedures you would implement
- explain how you would monitor the seal and what you would be monitoring the animal for.

Figure 11 Large New Zealand fur seal
Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE

Figure 12 Juvenile New Zealand fur seal
Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE

Figure 13 Injured leopard seal
Photo: Shona Lorigan/DPE

Notes about the photos

Figure 11 – A large male New Zealand fur seal adult is hauled out on a jetty but unable to move because of entanglement in fishing line and sinkers.

Figure 12 – A juvenile New Zealand fur seal has been rescued and has been bought in to a facility for rehabilitation. It is thin (body score of 2) and lethargic.

Figure 13 – A subadult leopard seal is hauled out on a beach with a fresh cookie-cutter shark bite on its head.

Standard 10: Assessment 2 –Seal rehabilitation, questions

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 10.

Learner instructions

Complete the following quiz by selecting the correct answer for the multiple choice questions or completing the question.

1. Which of the following scenarios would require a seal to be housed in intensive care?
   a. A young juvenile New Zealand fur seal whale that has just been rescued and thin and dehydrated
   b. A seal recovering from an entanglement that is currently feeding itself and swimming normally
   c. A seal that is having its fitness tested for release
   d. None of the above

Answer: A. A young New Zealand fur seal that is thin and requires supplementary fluid.

2. How often must a seal be monitored in pre-release care?
   a. Every day and weighed once a week
   b. Every 3 hours during the day
   c. Hourly
   d. Twice a day

Answer: B. Seals in pre-release care in a facility must be discretely monitored every 3 hours during the day.

3. Which of the following demonstrates good practices in hygiene and disease control?
   a. Quarantining new seals upon admission
   b. Washing hands after handling each seal
   c. Removing uneaten food and faeces from the enclosure
   d. All of the above

Answer: D. All of the above.

4. List 2 reasons a side-profile photograph is required when monitoring a leopard seal hauled out in different locations.

Answers could include: assess body condition, identify unique spot patterns for each seal.

5. Which of the following is not a requirement for seals in pre-release housing?
   a. A pool large enough to swim freely including in 2 directions
   b. A place to haul out
   c. A range of balls, noodles and pool toys to show off a range of natural behaviours
   d. Shielding on the drain and pool grates

Answer: C. While it is important for a range of natural behaviours to be observed in pre-release care, balls, noodles and pool toys encourage habituation.

6. List 5 photographs that should be taken when monitoring a hauled-out seal and explain what each would be used for.

	Photograph	Reason for photo
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Answers could include: All injuries and wounds, full side profile, photo from the rear, whole belly, snout profile, trailing edge of the front flipper, entanglements, photo with wet fur just after hauling out from water.

7. Which of the following statements about rehabilitating seals in situ is correct?
   a. Keep the seal wet at all times, they belong in the water
   b. Ensure the wildlife rehabilitator does not block the seal's access to water while monitoring
   c. Take a good photograph of the front of the seal to assist with social media posts
   d. Feed the seal as it has come ashore for a reason and needs help.

Answer: B. Ensure a seal's access to water is not blocked when monitoring. When a seal feel's threatened, it will attempt to return to water and the wildlife rehabilitator could be seriously harmed.

8. List 3 examples of housing design features to protect a seal from harm and explain why they are needed.

9. Look at the photo of a pre-release care enclosure (Figure 14). List at least 5 features that comply with the Marine Mammal Code.

Figure 14 Pre-release seal enclosure
Photo: Kieran Marshall/Dolphin Marine Conservation Park

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

10. Why can't Antarctic species of seals be rehabilitated in a facility and returned to the wild?

Answer could include: to prevent potential disease transmission from rehabilitated seals to wild seals and other Antarctic wildlife; provisions under the Antarctic Treaty System and the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, 1994 recommendation by the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR).

Standard 11: Release of marine mammals

Objective: To ensure learners understand suitability for release and criteria for releasing a marine mammal.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

11.1 Discuss release considerations for marine mammals, including timing and site selection.

11.2 Explain how to determine a marine mammal's suitability for release.

11.3 Detail the correct techniques and equipment for releasing a marine mammal.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: • assess a marine mammal for release suitability • competently release a marine mammal.	9. Suitability for release 10. Release considerations

Training areas

- The Marine Mammal Code can be accessed online: Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Marine Mammals.
- Release considerations could include:
  - timing including time of day and time of year
  - weather conditions
  - tides for whales, dolphins and dugongs
  - location of stranding
  - natural range of the species
  - release site selection
  - presence of the public.
- Suitability for release could include:
  - physical fitness (e.g. swim tests, submerge and dive test)
  - developmental stage
  - behaviour
  - body condition
  - acclimatisation to prevailing climate conditions
  - recovery from chemical restraint for seals rehabilitated in situ
  - approval by NPWS and a veterinarian experienced in marine mammal species.
- Appropriate methods and equipment could include:
  - boats
  - containers
  - use of pontoons and stronger females to entice pods seaward in a mass stranding release
  - noise barrier to reduce re-stranding for whales and dolphins
  - release together or in phased groups for mass stranding
  - releasing multiple seals
  - tagging, microchipping and monitoring.

Suggested assessments

This standard is best suited to written or verbal assessment methods, practical assessment or a combination of them.

Standard 11: Assessment 1 – Releasing a marine mammal, case studies

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 11. This can be completed verbally or in writing.

Learner instructions

Read each of the rescue case studies below and complete the corresponding questions.

Case study 1: Common dolphins in a mass stranding

A pod of 6 common dolphins has stranded on a sandy beach. One of the dolphins has died but as the weather and waves are calm, the other 5 have been rehabilitated both on the beach and then in shallow water for several hours.

1. Explain the criteria for assessing release suitability for the dolphins:

2. What are the release considerations for the dolphins?

3. Where will you release the dolphins?

4. Explain how you will release the dolphins:

5. How will you minimise WHS risks associated with the release site?

Case study 2: Dugong

An immature dugong was found on the far south coast of New South Wales and rescued with poor body condition and skin lesions. After 3 weeks in rehabilitation it is being assessed for release.

1. Explain the criteria for assessing release suitability for the dugong:
2. What are the release considerations for the dugong?
3. Where will you release the dugong?
4. Explain how you will release the dugong:
5. How will you minimise WHS risks associated with the release site?

Case study 3: Small Australian fur seal

A small male Australian fur seal was rescued thin, dehydrated and with multiple cookie-cutter shark bites on a suburban Sydney beach. After 10 days in a rehabilitation facility it is being assessed for release.

1. Explain the criteria for assessing release suitability for the seal:

2. What are the release considerations for the seal?

3. Where will you release the seal?

4. Explain how you will release the seal:

5. How will you minimise WHS risks associated with the release site?

Standard 11: Assessment 2 – Releasing a marine mammal, quiz

Trainer/Assessor instructions

This is an example of the type of assessment tool that could be used to assess competency in relation to Standard 11.

Learner instructions

Complete the following multiple choice quiz by selecting the correct answer for each question.

1. A seal can be released during storms or extremes of temperature as it is used to big waves in the ocean and cold temperatures.
   a. True
   b. False

Answer: False. A marine mammal must not be released during extremes of weather or temperature.

2. What attribute is not a sign that a dugong is ready for release?
   a. It is swimming strongly
   b. It has recovered from any injuries or disease
   c. It can submerge for an extended time
   d. It approaches and nuzzles a wildlife rehabilitator that enters the pool to clean it

Answer: D. Approaching the wildlife rehabilitator is an indication that the dugong has become habituated and must not be released.

3. When is the appropriate time of day to release a whale or dolphin? Select the correct answers from the list below:
   a. When it can immediately investigate its environment
   b. In the middle of the day for diurnal species
   c. With enough daylight to monitor for re-stranding
   d. Anytime of the day or night is fine

Answers: A and C.

4. What signs would rehabilitators look for when observing recovering common dolphins in a mass stranding to indicate they are ready for release? The dolphins are:
   a. Swimming strongly
   b. Able to keep their blowhole above water
   c. Not listing to one side
   d. Breathing regularly
   e. All of the above

Answer: All of the above.

5. A seal on a beach must be released as soon as possible after being darted by a veterinarian, restrained and the tightly wound rope is removed from its neck.
   a. True
   b. False

Answer: B. False. A seal must be closely monitored for several hours after chemical restraint and requires barriers to stop it immediately returning to the water.

6. Which of the following methods is not an appropriate form of marking to identify a seal after release?
   a. Microchip
   b. Non-toxic paint
   c. Freeze branding
   d. Hair dye

Answer: C. Freeze branding must not be used to mark a marine mammal.

7. Describe how a pontoon could be used to help with release at a mass stranding:

Answer could include: releasing a stronger adult female in a pontoon slightly offshore at the same time as the rest of the pod is released from the shoreline. Her vocalisations will entice the rest of the pod seaward.

8. Once a whale or dolphin has been rehabilitated, who must confirm its suitability for release?
   a. Veterinarian
   b. Experienced marine mammal rehabilitator
   c. Wildlife rehabilitator
   d. NPWS

Answer: A and D.

9. When can a marine mammal be released in a national park?
   a. Written consent for the release has been obtained from the relevant NPWS area manager
   b. The park contains appropriate habitat and adequate food resources
   c. The release complies with the relevant Department of Planning and Environment policies on translocation
   d. All of the above
   e. Answer: D. All of the Above.
10. From the list below, identify the release location which is **not** suitable for releasing a dugong rescued on the Central Coast. Is it one that:
   a. Contains appropriate habitat and adequate food resources
   b. Is located where it was captured
   c. Is within the natural range for the population
   d. Is not near a shark net?

Answer: B. Where it was captured is not suitable. It is not in the natural range of the species.

11. The Wildlife Team (wildlife.licensing@environment.nsw.gov.au) must be contacted by wildlife rehabilitators who wish to release a marine mammal outside the standards in the Marine Mammal Code.
   a. True
   b. False

Answer A. True.

Further reading

ASQA 2015, *Guide to Developing Assessment Tools*, Australian Skills Quality Authority, accessed 24 July 2019: https://www.asqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Guide_to_developing_assessment_tools.pdf.

Heathfield SM 2019, *Best Ice Breakers for Meetings and Training Classes,* The Balance Careers, accessed 24 July 2019: www.thebalancecareers.com/best-ice-breakers-for-meetings-and-training-classes-1918430.

Hill D, Hill T & Perlitz L 2011, *Vocational Training and Assessment*, McGraw-Hill Education, North Ryde, NSW.

Hill D, Hill T & Perlitz L 2013, *Professional Training and Assessment*, McGraw-Hill Education, North Ryde, NSW.

Standards for Registered Training Organisations, made under sections 185(1) and 186(1) of the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*, accessed at www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2019C00503.

NHS Education for Scotland 2012, *Train the Trainers Toolkit,* NHS Education for Scotland, accessed 24/7/2019, www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk/media/6866097/trainthetrainers__final_.pdf.

Smith M 2002, *Malcolm Knowles, informal adult education, self-direction and andragogy,* Infed, accessed 24/7/19, infed.org/mobi/malcolm-knowles-informal-adult-education-self-direction-and-andragogy/.

VARK 2019, *Introduction to VARK,* VARK Learn Limited, accessed 24/7/19, vark-learn.com/introduction-to-vark/the-vark-modalities/.

More information

- Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016
- Code of Practice for Injured and Sick and Orphaned Marine Mammals
- Giardiasis
- Malcolm Knowles, informal adult education, self-direction and andragogy
- Marine Mammal Rehabilitation Training Standards for the Volunteer Wildlife Rehabilitation Sector
- Rehabilitation of Protected Native Animals Policy
- Reporting requirements, Department of Planning and Environment
- Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015
- The Best Ice Breakers for Meetings and Training Classes
- The VARK Modalities
- Translocation operational policy

Appendix A: Training and assessment mapping tool

The table below is a tool you can use to determine if there are any gaps in your training. You can map your existing training materials to the standards to see if there are any parts of a standards you have omitted, or if you need to add further information to your training materials. You can match the learning outcomes to an assessment tool so you can see how you are determining the competency of your learner against each outcome. You can change or include additional training or assessment tools if the ones listed do not match what is provided in your training.

Standard	Training tools			Learning outcomes	Assessment tools			
	Slides on PPT	Pages in manual	Other resources		Multiple choice or short-answer questions	Demonstration (real or scenario-based)	Verbal questioning and answer	Assessor checklist
Standard 1: The framework for marine mammal rehabilitation in New South Wales								
1.1 Discuss the Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Marine Mammals				Identify and demonstrate understanding of the Marine Mammal Code				
1.2 Ensure NPWS policies and procedures applicable to marine mammal rehabilitation are defined and understood by learners				Demonstrate understanding of NPWS notifications and approvals for marine mammal rehabilitation				
1.3 Ensure organisational policies and procedures applicable to				Identify organisational policies and procedures for				

Standard	Training tools			Learning outcomes	Assessment tools			
	Slides on PPT	Pages in manual	Other resources		Multiple choice or short-answer questions	Demonstration (real or scenario-based)	Verbal questioning and answer	Assessor checklist
marine mammal rehabilitation are defined and understood by learners				marine mammal rehabilitation				
1.4 Ensure objectives of marine mammal rehabilitation are understood by learners				Recognise the objectives of marine mammal rehabilitation				
Standard 2: Work health and safety requirements of marine mammal rehabilitation								
2.1 Explain the WHS risks associated with the site, equipment or activity and how they can be minimised				Identify WHS risks associated with marine mammal rehabilitation				
2.2 Explain the WHS risks associated with approaching, handling and restraining marine mammals and how they can be minimised				Employ techniques to minimise the WHS risks to themselves and other people				

Standard	Training tools			Learning outcomes	Assessment tools			
	Slides on PPT	Pages in manual	Other resources		Multiple choice or short-answer questions	Demonstration (real or scenario-based)	Verbal questioning and answer	Assessor checklist
2.3 Discuss the WHS risks associated with zoonotic diseases relevant to marine mammals and how they can be minimised								
2.4 Discuss rehabilitator wellbeing and potential mental health impacts of rehabilitation								
Standard 3: Record keeping								
3.1 Explain the NPWS reporting requirements				Keep records in accordance with NPWS and organisational requirements				
3.2 Explain organisational reporting requirements								
Standard 4: Biology and behaviour of marine mammals								
4.1 Explain features of marine mammal biology				Relate marine mammal biology and behaviour to				

Standard	Training tools			Learning outcomes	Assessment tools			
	Slides on PPT	Pages in manual	Other resources		Multiple choice or short-answer questions	Demonstration (real or scenario-based)	Verbal questioning and answer	Assessor checklist
including anatomy, physiology, social structure, stages of development, and habitat, and relate them to marine mammal rehabilitation				marine mammal rehabilitation practices				
4.2. Provide a basic understanding of marine mammal ecology including population dynamics, habitat selection, migratory behaviour, competition and predator–prey interactions								
4.3. Provide the tools and understanding required to identify different species of marine mammals				Understand how to use the different tools to identify different species of marine mammals				

Standard	Training tools			Learning outcomes	Assessment tools			
	Slides on PPT	Pages in manual	Other resources		Multiple choice or short-answer questions	Demonstration (real or scenario-based)	Verbal questioning and answer	Assessor checklist
recorded in New South Wales								
4.4 Provide the tools and understanding required to identify normal behaviour in marine mammals				Recognise signs of normal behaviour in marine mammals				
4.5 Provide the tools and understanding required to recognise signs of abnormal behaviour in marine mammals				Recognise signs of abnormal behaviour in marine mammals				
Standard 5: Stress management in marine mammals								
5.1 Explain the effects of stress on a marine mammal at various stages of rescue and rehabilitation				Recognise signs of stress in marine mammals and its impact				
5.2 Provide the tools and understanding required to				Apply methods for minimising stress				

Standard	Training tools			Learning outcomes	Assessment tools			
	Slides on PPT	Pages in manual	Other resources		Multiple choice or short-answer questions	Demonstration (real or scenario-based)	Verbal questioning and answer	Assessor checklist
recognise signs of stress in a marine mammal				on marine mammals				
5.3 Discuss methods for minimising stress on a marine mammal at various stages of rescue and rehabilitation								
Standard 6: Rescue of marine mammals								
6.1 Outline common reasons for marine mammal rescue				List the common reasons why marine mammals require rescue				
6.2 Detail how to perform a situational assessment, including the use of the decision tree in the Marine Mammal Code, to establish the appropriate course of action				Assess a rescue situation and plan the rescue of a marine mammal				
6.3 Detail the correct method				Safely rescue a marine mammal				

Standard	Training tools			Learning outcomes	Assessment tools			
	Slides on PPT	Pages in manual	Other resources		Multiple choice or short-answer questions	Demonstration (real or scenario-based)	Verbal questioning and answer	Assessor checklist
and equipment required to handle and rescue a marine mammal, as suitable to common rescue situations conditions and stage of development				using correct equipment				
6.4 Demonstrate how to rescue a marine mammal to humanely minimise pain, stress and potential injury				Determine the type of intervention required at a rescue site				
Standard 7: Transport of marine mammals								
7.1 Demonstrate how to appropriately contain a marine mammal for transport based on different sizes, stages of development and animal condition				Prepare a carrier for transport of a marine mammal				

Standard	Training tools			Learning outcomes	Assessment tools			
	Slides on PPT	Pages in manual	Other resources		Multiple choice or short-answer questions	Demonstration (real or scenario-based)	Verbal questioning and answer	Assessor checklist
7.2 Outline how to secure the transport container to prevent escape and further injury								
7.3. Detail suitable transport conditions, including ambient temperature, to safely transport a marine mammal				Outline the transport conditions required to safely transport a marine mammal				
7.4 Discuss the most suitable person or location that a marine mammal should be transported to, based on different stages of development, animal condition and organisational policies				Understand the appropriate person or location to transport a marine mammal to, based on different stages of development, animal condition and organisational policies				
Standard 8: Assessment of marine mammals								
8.1 Explain how to conduct an initial assessment of a				Conduct an initial assessment of a				

Standard	Training tools			Learning outcomes	Assessment tools			
	Slides on PPT	Pages in manual	Other resources		Multiple choice or short-answer questions	Demonstration (real or scenario-based)	Verbal questioning and answer	Assessor checklist
marine mammal from a distance				marine mammal from a distance				
8.2 Explain the requirements of a thorough assessment of a marine mammal								
8.3 Emphasise the need to seek prompt advice and assistance for a marine mammal from NPWS or a veterinarian, as appropriate to its condition								
8.4 Distinguish signs of and ways to determine common diseases and injuries affecting marine mammals				Assess the health status of a marine mammal and recognise stages, symptoms and severity of common diseases and injuries				
8.5 Explain how to manage an injured or diseased marine mammal based				Determine the appropriate course of action for a marine				

Standard	Training tools			Learning outcomes	Assessment tools			
	Slides on PPT	Pages in manual	Other resources		Multiple choice or short-answer questions	Demonstration (real or scenario-based)	Verbal questioning and answer	Assessor checklist
on the severity of its condition				mammal based on its condition				
8.6 Outline criteria and approved methods for humane euthanasia				Understand the criteria for and approved methods of euthanasia				
Standard 9: Rehabilitation of whales, dolphins and dugongs								
9.1 Explain the importance of and process for quarantining individual whales, dolphins and dugongs entering rehabilitation				Outline the requirements for whale, dolphin and dugong rehabilitation				
9.2 Detail the techniques required to safely rehabilitate whales, dolphins and dugongs in situ relevant to the type of incident and stage of rehabilitation				Demonstrate correct techniques for rehabilitating whales, dolphins and dugongs in-situ				
9.3 Detail the facilities required to safely				Demonstrate correct set-up for housing whales,				

Standard	Training tools			Learning outcomes	Assessment tools			
	Slides on PPT	Pages in manual	Other resources		Multiple choice or short-answer questions	Demonstration (real or scenario-based)	Verbal questioning and answer	Assessor checklist
rehabilitate whales, dolphins and dugongs in situ relevant to stages of housing (intensive care and pre-release)				dolphins and dugongs in a facility				
9.4 Describe appropriate equipment and furniture for each stage of housing								
9.5 Describe the appropriate equipment for each stage of rehabilitation in situ								
9.6 Illustrate disease control and hygiene practices appropriate to stages of rehabilitation				Apply hygiene and disease control processes to marine mammal rehabilitation				
9.7 Explain how to appropriately provide food and water based on				Provide food and water appropriate to condition of immature and				

Standard	Training tools			Learning outcomes	Assessment tools			
	Slides on PPT	Pages in manual	Other resources		Multiple choice or short-answer questions	Demonstration (real or scenario-based)	Verbal questioning and answer	Assessor checklist
the condition of a whale, dolphin or dugong				adult marine mammals				
9.8 Detail common conditions and diseases that affect whales, dolphins and dugongs								
9.9 Discuss how to monitor a whale, dolphin or dugong in accordance with its condition, type of event and stage of housing if in a facility				Monitor a whale, dolphin or dugong undergoing rehabilitation				
9.10 Demonstrate how to complete a husbandry plan for whales, dolphins and dugongs in a facility				Complete a husbandry plan for a whale, dolphin or dugong in a facility				
Standard 10: Rehabilitation of seals								

Standard	Training tools			Learning outcomes	Assessment tools			
	Slides on PPT	Pages in manual	Other resources		Multiple choice or short-answer questions	Demonstration (real or scenario-based)	Verbal questioning and answer	Assessor checklist
10.1 Explain the importance of and process for quarantining individual seals entering rehabilitation				Outline the requirements for seal rehabilitation				
10.2 Detail the techniques required to safely rehabilitate seals in situ relevant to the type of incident and stage of rehabilitation				Demonstrate correct techniques for rehabilitating seals in situ				
10.3 Detail the facilities required to safely rehabilitate seals in situ relevant to stages of housing (intensive care and pre-release)				Demonstrate correct set-up for housing seals in a facility				
10.4 Describe appropriate equipment and furniture for each stage of housing								

Standard	Training tools			Learning outcomes	Assessment tools			
	Slides on PPT	Pages in manual	Other resources		Multiple choice or short-answer questions	Demonstration (real or scenario-based)	Verbal questioning and answer	Assessor checklist
10.5 Describe the appropriate equipment for each stage of rehabilitation in situ								
10.6 Illustrate disease control and hygiene practices appropriate to stages of rehabilitation				Apply hygiene and disease control processes to marine mammal rehabilitation				
10.7 Explain how to appropriately provide food and water based on the condition of a seal				Provide food and water appropriate to condition of immature and adult marine mammals				
10.8 Detail common conditions and diseases that affect seals				Monitor a seal undergoing rehabilitation				
10.9 Discuss how to monitor a seal in accordance with its condition, type of event and								

Standard	Training tools			Learning outcomes	Assessment tools			
	Slides on PPT	Pages in manual	Other resources		Multiple choice or short-answer questions	Demonstration (real or scenario-based)	Verbal questioning and answer	Assessor checklist
stage of housing if in a facility								
10.10 Demonstrate how to complete a husbandry plan for seals in a facility				Complete a husbandry plan for a seal in a facility				
Standard 11: Release of marine mammals								
11.1 Discuss release considerations for marine mammals including timing and site selection								
11.2 Explain how to determine a marine mammal's suitability for release				Assess a marine mammal for release suitability				
11.3 Detail the correct techniques and equipment for releasing a marine mammal				Competently release a marine mammal				