



## Clearwater Marine Aquarium Policies and Procedures

Policy: Animal Transport

Policy Number: CMA-AC-008.1

Date: 2/25/19 (rev)

Department: Animal Care

### Purpose

The goal of Clearwater Marine Aquarium's (CMA) Animal Care team is to safely and successfully transport animals due to various reasons, which may include, but is not limited to the rescue and release of animals, relocation animals within CMA as well as to/from other facilities. This policy is designed to ensure the implementation of quality standards and best practices when conducting any type of animal transport. The standardized practices in this document are essential for ensuring all animal transports are conducted in accordance with terms and conditions consistent with permitting, government agency requirements, as well CMA policies. Transport can be defined as moving an animal within CMA property, or travel by ground or air. This policy can be referenced for transport within the United States.

### Description

A comprehensive animal care program includes animal transport for various reasons, be it moving animals from one habitat to another, or moving animals off company property to another location altogether. This policy will outline considerations which must be evaluated for all animals regardless of species and transport situation. The goal, is a successful move of an animal(s) from one location to another. This is accomplished by proactive planning and risk assessment for both humans and animals. Please note that human safety is a priority and must be considered at all steps of the transport process. If human or animal safety is in question, a call can be made to modify, reschedule, or cancel the transport plan.

Prior to conducting an animal transport, CMA management will thoroughly address the proactive planning stage which will include the following considerations:

- Pre-Transport Activities
- Communication
- Transport and In-Transit Care (Ground and Air)
- Post Transport
- Contingency Plans and Emergency Situations

### **Prerequisites and Pre-Transport Activities**

- Health Assessment
  - This is performed by an experienced and licensed veterinarian. The animal must have clearance from the veterinarian prior to transport.
- Quarantine Considerations



- To be determined by the veterinarian and to be executed by the shipping staff.
- Transport Planning Meetings
  - Various meetings will be conducted prior to transport, with a minimum of one meeting 24 hours prior to transport. A written transport plan is developed specific to each transport. This plan is approved by CMA management teams and the Vet of Record.
  - One meeting to include outlining possible emergencies or unusual situations that may occur and identifying possible contingency plans for dealing with such challenges that may arise.
- Personnel
  - All personnel accompanying the animal during the transport are permitted, trained and qualified to execute such task. In all cases, when possible, transport personnel will include two people minimum for one to act as a backup for the other should one become unavailable.
- Transport Team Arrangements
  - Develop a schedule, procure lodging, secure finances, create a contact sheet, etc.
- Equipment, Supplies, Materials
  - Ensure all supplies are assembled and checked prior to actual transport.
  - Ensure equipment is duplicated in the event the primary equipment fails or arrangements are made to procure a backup in case the need should arise (e.g. vehicle, offloading equipment, radios, etc.).
- Transport Enclosure
  - Ensure all enclosures meet or exceed government regulatory standards for the particular species as well as the particular individual within the species.
  - Transport enclosure must have “live animal” signage affixed to the carrier/transport enclosure.
- Special Provisions
  - When transporting animals with special needs, additional provisions and considerations are required, (e.g. pregnant, young, injury, etc.).
  - When transporting more than one animal, the positioning of all animals in relation to one another must be considered. This includes social compatibility if/when appropriate.
- Pre-Transport Acclimation Plan
  - Determine the need to send staff to either the sending/receiving destination to become familiar with the animal and its specific requirements, including diet (type and amounts), habitat temperatures, etc.
  - Determine the benefits of a desensitization program in preparation for transport.
- Animal Fasting
  - Veterinarian(s) will determine the fasting requirements for the species.
- Ground Transportation
  - Layout and plan route, backup route, escort if necessary, time of day, traffic delays/roadwork/holidays/special events, weather conditions, vehicle checks, chase vehicle (if warranted).

## Communication



- Communication with Veterinarian
  - Ensure there are regular updates to veterinarian. The veterinarian will establish the preferred mode and frequency of communication as well as the type of information to be communicated in the regular updates.
- Marketing and Media
  - Consider media plans for both sending and receiving facilities, prepare media releases ahead of time when appropriate.
  - Team attire needs to be in line with CMA company uniform policy for all transports.
- Pre-Transport Communication
  - Notify all proper authorities prior to transport (e.g. fire, law enforcement, US Coast Guard, bridge operators, etc.).
- Itinerary, Contact Lists
  - Create an itinerary with the following considerations when applicable.
    - List of all applicable telephone numbers
    - Pertinent travel info (flight numbers, departure and arrival times)
    - Entry or security clearance at designation (i.e. non-public entrances, gates, etc.)
    - Weigh stations and clearance
    - Copy of all required permits and documentation
- Airline Transport
  - Prior communication with airport, ground personnel to ensure all equipment necessary is available for load/unload.
  - Crew is notified of arrival time.
- Communication with Final Destination/Receiving Facility
  - Ensure regular communications are maintained throughout travel regarding the transport process.
  - Establish the frequency of communication with the receiving facility.

### **Transport and In-Transit Care (Ground and Air)**

- Environmental Conditions
  - Be sure to consider temperature maintenance and possible changes throughout transit.
  - Establish time and frequency of temperature checks as this may change throughout transport.
  - If animals are left on tarmac, personnel must be hyper-vigilant and with the animals if appropriate.
  - Ensure proper ventilation is considered throughout transport. Exposure to fumes of any kind must be prevented.
  - When appropriate, water should be available to cool the animal (sprayer, wet towels, mist bottle, etc.).
  - Ensure adequate lighting is available for visual inspections if warranted.
  - For air transit, cabin pressure is to be considered.
  - For truck configuration, be sure to understand potential hazards or obstacles such as wheel wells or stairs in Rescue van.



- Reduce noise pollution when applicable.
  - Ensure there are no substances accompanying the animals that may harm or injure the animals during transit.
- Pre-Departure Considerations
  - For private air transport, communicate with the pilot prior to the departure date to establish his/her preferred takeoff and landing angles.
  - When transporting via ground, communicate to the driver importance of avoiding sudden stops or accelerations. Smooth transitions (lane changes, inclines, driving downhill, braking, etc.) occur throughout transit.
- Cargo Positions
  - Important to note that first in is the last out.
- In-Transit-Care
  - Staff will tend to animal(s) per vet recommendation.
- Interim Stops and Plane Changes
  - Arrangements will be made for staff and animals if an overnight stay is warranted. A government approved facility is required for overnight housing of certain species.
- Recordkeeping
  - Records must accompany an animal during transport as deemed appropriate by veterinarian. Records should include, but is not limited to, notes on animal behavior, any abnormal events, medications, etc.
- Ground Crew, Park Ranger, Etc.
  - Key transport personnel must stay current on arrival time based on time of departure from sending facility.
- Offloading
  - Large equipment is staged prior to arrival.
  - Remain cognizant of ambient temperature and noise levels to avoid exposing animals to extreme conditions.
  - Caution must be taken when handling animals to avoid causing physical harm, overexposure, and/or distress to an animal.

## **Post Transport**

- Introduction to new environment
  - Prepare and implement a desensitization plan or other behavior modification strategy to support the acclimation process.
  - Be sure to consider previous environmental stimuli vs new stimuli and the potential impacts on behavior. Continue to monitor acclimation phase accordingly.
- Acclimation Process
  - Staff from sending facility (most familiar with animal's normal behavior), should monitor and observe as deemed appropriate through acclimation phase, noting any abnormalities and communicating this information with appropriate personnel within appropriate timelines.
- Medical Exam
  - An initial visual inspection is conducted during acclimation process.



- A more thorough medical exam may be warranted. This will be determined by the Vet of Record.
- Debrief Meeting
  - A final discussion of the process with key personnel will transpire for the purpose of reviewing and modifying process improvement techniques if warranted.

## **Contingency Plans and Emergency Situations**

An animal should never be transported without an adequate number of properly trained and experienced personnel required to safely and successfully conduct the transport. The transport should be calm, quiet and as comfortable as possible for the animal, while ensuring human and animal safety. While the intention of this policy is to proactively plan for a successful transport, all parties involved are responsible for continuously re-assessing new information to identify and communicate necessary modifications to the plan in order to achieve the best possible outcome. When a plan changes, refer to management to troubleshoot the challenge at hand. Remaining calm, flexible, and diligent in thought are important keys to success.

A meeting prior to transport will outline potential emergencies or unusual situations that may occur as well as plausible contingency plans to deal with situations. These situations may include, but are not limited to the following scenarios:

- Repositioning an animal
- Calming an animal
- Animal escape
- Animal health and wellbeing concern
- Loss of resources (money, cell service, water, gas, medications, etc.)
- Loss of permits or paperwork
- Equipment failure
- Inability of staff/crew to perform duties
- Delays in transport

