



# **Animal Training SOP**

SeaWorld, Orlando

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#### SUMMARY

Throughout this entire document, any mention of killer whales implies all whales except for Tilikum. Any regulations or protocols related to Tilikum are within Section X.

#### I. WATER RESCUE

In the first three parts of this chapter, the basics, the equipment, and the procedures for rescuing a victim, along with key points to remember, are reviewed. There is also mention of the dynamics involved in any type of scenario that may arise.

#### **II. EMERGENCY SYSTEMS**

This is the Emergency System protocol that is in-place in all parks, to be activated in the event of an injury or emergency situation involving trainers, guests, or non-departmental personnel with animals. This chapter describes in detail the procedures to be followed in any Animal Training area. The Emergency Action Plan defines specific steps during a rescue situation. The Safety Equipment for each area and Emergency System Initiation procedures are detailed as well.

#### **III. SCUBA GUIDELINES**

Here the proper procedures to be followed during maintenance dives, animal interaction dives, and parameters for swimming without the aid of SCUBA are given.

#### IV. SPOTTER RESPONSIBILITIES

"Spotters" are required for any animal interaction. In this chapter, the general responsibilities of the spotter are outlined.

#### V. NON-ANIMAL TRAINER GUIDELINES IN ANIMAL AREAS

This section covers the parameters for which non-animal trainers can exist within each area's perimeter.

#### VI. GENERAL PUBLIC INTERACTIONS

This chapter describes each type of interaction involving Animal Training animals and the general public. For the purposes of this discussion, we are defining "interactions" as those involving touch or very close proximity. Specific guidelines have been established for each interaction describing safety protocol, trainer experience, and animal experience. The interactions are listed by area. The guidelines for the "Trainer for a Day" program are listed as well for each area, if applicable.

#### **SECTION XI - TILIKUM**

- A. General Guidelines
- **B. Emergency Action Plan**
- **C. Interaction Guidelines**
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- **E. Pool Observation Guidelines**
- F. Non-Department SeaWorld Personnel Guidelines
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#### XI. TILIKUM

#### A. General Guidelines

- 1. During park hours, there must be four approved trainers in the Shamu Stadium area to meet water rescue procedure requirements.
- 2. When Tilikum is in B or C pools, he must be held under stimulus control before any trainers can cross the slide over in his environment.
- 3. All trainer escorted tour groups, park employees, and other non-Shamu stadium personnel must position themselves five feet behind pool walls at all times and must have an approved Associate or above escort to approach Tilikum's pool.
- 4. During any approved guest interaction with Tilikum, guests must position themselves three feet behind the furthest exterior point of Tilikum's head at all times.
- 5. Any interaction with Tilikum, occurring from the back stage island, requires that a tactile team member, with an approved non-tactile team member or above spotter. Both must stay positioned behind bars and both must be wearing wetsuits. Control trainer may not cross legs over backstage bars at any time.
- 6. When Tilikum is in A pool, approved personnel may **ONLY** enter water in B or C pools if pool is locked out and appropriate slideover barrier is strapped down (cargo net is optional).
- 7. When Tilikum is in B or C pools, approved personnel may **ONLY** enter water in A pool if pool is locked out and appropriate slideover barrier is strapped down (cargo net is optional).
- 8. When Tilikum is on slideout in A pool, or scale in G pool, trainers must stay positioned in front of his pectoral flippers.
- 9. When Tilikum is on slideout in E pool, Tilikum must be positioned alongside and parallel with outer wall for a trainer to be positioned behind pectoral flippers.
- 10. Security personnel must always observe Tilikum poolside, no closer than five feet from wall and no further than one hundred feet. Security personnel should be stationed at pool closest to guest access.
- 11. Prior to Tilikum access to A or G pool during park hours, the underwater tone system must be in working order for Tilikum to have access to A or G during park hours.
- 12. Two tactile team members must be present during shows that include Tilikum participation.
- 13. When Tilikum has access to G pool and is under control, an approved non-tactile team member or above may position inside pool walls on lower rock area around pool except for area between the two skimmers located to the right and left of the slideout. Trainer may also walk along rocks except for rocks surrounding slideout area.

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- 14. An approved non-tactile team member or above, in a wetsuit, may walk over the front side of a gate surrounding a pool to which Tilikum has access only if Tilikum in under stimulus control and gate has a safety rail.
- 15. An approved Trainer level or above, in a wetsuit, may cross only behind the safety rail of gate surrounding a pool to which Tilikum has access without Tilikum under stimulus control.
- 16. An approved non-tactile team member or above may "lock-out" a Tilikum gate if lock can be secured from opposite side of his pool, with a wall barrier. Tilikum is not required to be under control unless there is no wall barrier. Trainer is required to wear a wetsuit in both scenarios.

## **B.** Emergency Action Plan <u>Tilikum</u> Involvement Rescue Procedures

#### 1. Purpose

a. This plan is to aid trainers to effectively respond to any injury or emergency situation in which trainers, guest, or non-department personnel fall or otherwise enter the water with Tilikum without authorization. All trainers should attend to any emergency in a safe manner with the most senior person assuming the leadership role, designating assignments if necessary.

#### 2. Rescue Procedures

- a. Start A.A.R.M. sequence:
  - 1) A larm (sound siren immediately; automatically triggers a 911 call to Security)
  - 2) **A** ir (attempt to get air in form of pony bottle)
  - 3) **R** eel (get appropriate reel at appropriate pool)
  - 4) **M** ove animals (prepare to get animals to appropriate pools)
- b. The first person on the scene must sound **emergency siren**. This will activate the 911 call and set the emergency response systems in place. This will engage several other areas of assistance to include Security, Health Services, and several animal areas.
- c. Once the Emergency System has been initiated, the net pull should begin immediately to aid with control, separation, animal removal, or rescue of victim. The most desirable net movement directions are toward D pool, for false bottom raising purposes, or toward an empty pool.
- d. The senior-ranking trainer should attempt to establish control of Tilikum, and if possible additional animals in the environment.
- e. If Tilikum, and possibly other animals respond to the recall stimulus, the victim should be instructed to exit the water if capable. If victim needs assistance, Emergency Equipment (see details in SWO Animal Training SOP, Section II, B) may be utilized for immediate extraction of victim, and Fundamental Water Rescue procedures (see details in SWO Animal Training SOP, Section I) may be performed **once person is extracted.**
- f. If Tilikum, and possible additional animals do not respond to the recall stimulus, the senior ranking trainer maintains leadership role remaining

poolside of the situation while others follow his/her direction. Depending on the situation, the following steps may be taken but in no particular order.

- g. Person designated to be on standby, ready to assist victim:
  - 1) Person(s) designated to get trot line, pony bottle(s) and/or spare air containers to victim.
  - 2) Person(s) assigned to gather shepherds hooks, target poles, pony bottle hooks, and other rescue equipment for usage and opportunities to assist victim when in reach.
  - 3) Person(s) in position ready to or assigned to, open gates or gateways to empty pool(s).
  - 4) Person designated to bring large food bucket poolside.
  - 5) Person(s) designated to move animal(s) in other pools to different locations to assist with emergency plan.
  - 6) Person(s) designated to move net to ready position for possible usage.
- h. Attempts to control animal(s) will continue.
- i. Attempts to move Tilikum and possible additional animals toward designated pool should proceed with or without all animal(s) under control.
- j. If unable to assist person with rescue equipment, the net should be utilized to aid with animal control, separation, animal removal, or rescue of victim.
- k. Various distractions such as food, rescue equipment, etc. may be employed throughout the emergency.
- I. As soon as the immediate emergency has passed, the following individuals should be contacted:
  - 1) VP Corporate Zoological Operations
  - 2) VP Zoological Operations
  - 3) Curator, Animal Training
  - 4) Salaried Management, Shamu Stadium
  - 5) Entire Staff
- m. Emergency Equipment (See Section II B.1.a-b.)
- n. Emergency System and Initiation (See Section II B.2.a-h.)

#### C. Interaction Guidelines

# 1. Non-control interactions from five (5) feet behind pool walls or glass in A or G pool (fish toss, visual play, etc.)

- a. There must be two trainers present in the area.
- b. A spotter is always required. One trainer for a non-control play session must be an approved non-tactile or tactile team member. Approval is granted by Assistant Curator(s).
- c. Interaction must occur from at least five feet behind pool walls, or behind glass.
- d. Wetsuits are not required.

### 2. Non-tactile interactions from behind glass in A pool or behind glass at G pool

- a. There must be two trainers involved in the interaction.
- b. Control trainer must be an approved non-tactile team member or above. Approval is granted by Assistant Curator(s).
- c. Spotter must be an approved non-tactile team member or above. Approval is granted by Assistant Curator(s).
- d. Spotter trainer may also interact with other animals in the environment.
- e. Only an approved non-tactile team member or above may interact with other animals in the environment.
- f. Wetsuits are not required.

#### 3. Non-tactile Interaction from behind pool wall

- a. Basic free feed Only
  - 1) There must be a minimum of two trainers involved in the interaction.
  - 2) Control trainer must be an approved non-tactile team member or above. Approval is granted by Assistant Curator(s).
  - 3) Spotter trainer must be an approved non-tactile team member or above. Approval is granted by Assistant Curator(s).
  - 4) Wetsuits are not required.
- b. Interactions not to include gating interactions
  - 1) There must be a minimum of two trainers involved in the interaction.
  - 2) Control trainer must be an approved non-tactile team member or above. Approval is granted by Assistant Curator(s).
  - 3) Spotter trainer must be an approved non-tactile team member or above. Approval is granted by Assistant Curator(s).
  - 4) Spotter trainer may also interact with other animals in the environment.
  - 5) Only an approved non-tactile team member or above may interact with other animals in the environment.
  - 6) Wetsuits are not required.

# 4. Non-tactile or Tactile Interaction with NO barrier between Tilikum and trainers (e.g. backstage behind bars, on stage, G-pool island, inside pool walls)

- a. Control trainer must be an approved tactile team member. Approval is granted by Assistant Curator(s).
- b. Spotter trainer must be an approved non-tactile team member or above. Approval is granted by Assistant Curator(s).
- c. Spotter trainer may NOT be in control of another animal and must be within the environment of the interaction.
- d. Each trainer involved in interactions within pool walls must be an approved non-tactile team member or above, and must be wearing a wetsuit. Wetsuit skins are not permitted without a barrier for control trainers in Tilikum's environment.

e. Other trainers being utilized as prompts, gating, etc. must be wearing wetsuits, and are allowed to wear wetsuit skins.

#### 5. Gating Interactions

- a. There must be four trainers present in the area.
- b. When moving Tilikum forward toward A pool, he must be moved one gate at a time. If Tilikum participates in a show segment in A pool, and he is then sepped back behind the columns for waterwork to occur in A pool, the front A pool gate must be relatched before G 4,5,6, or 7 can be reopened for Tilikum to re-join for the show.
  - 1) Exception: If other whale(s) in Tilikum's environment are incorrect and not under control, the front A pool gate may remain open so that the Tilikum trainer can go on with the show utilizing Tilikum around the incorrect whale(s).
- c. Gate operator must be an approved non-tactile team member or above in a wetsuit. A wetsuit skin may be worn over his/her wetsuit.
- d. Tilikum's control trainer must perform moves from behind wall or glass if he/she is not in a wetsuit, or is wearing a wetsuit skin over his/her wetsuit.

#### 6. Tooth Flushing Interactions

- a. Tilikum tooth flushing may only occur in B, D, E or F pool by an approved tactile team member.
  - 1) If Tilikum is being flushed in F pool, Tilikum may not have access to C or G pool during the flushing interaction.
  - 2) If Tilikum is being flushed in D pool, Tilikum may have access to B and/or E pool.
  - 3) If Tilikum is being flushed in B or E pool, D pool must be available in case of emergency.
- b. The spotter trainer may not be in control of another animal.
- c. The spotter must be an approved non-tactile team member or above.
- d. Both control trainer and spotter trainer must be in a wetsuit.

#### **D. Pool Specific Interaction Guidelines**

#### 1. A Pool Interactions

- a. Interaction on stage
  - 1) Control trainer and spotter must both be positioned at stage, unless spotter is executing a gating operation.
  - 2) The spotter trainer may not be in control of another animal.
  - 3) Trainers utilizing prompts around pool do not require spotters.
  - 4) A trainer must be positioned on tones during shows. The spotter trainer can be the tone spotter.
  - 5) Other whales may not be asked to profile on stage or stage slide when Tilikum is present in A pool.
- b. Interaction on slideout
  - 1) Control trainer and spotter must both be positioned in slideout, neither trainer can be positioned past Tilikum's pectoral flippers.

- 2) The spotter trainer may not be in control of another animal, unless executing a gating operation.
- 3) Trainers utilizing prompts around pool do not require spotters.
- 4) A trainer must be positioned on tones during shows.
- c. Interaction on Hug Dunk
  - 1) Control trainer and spotter must both be positioned at hug dunk, unless spotter is executing a gating operation.
  - 2) The spotter trainer may not be in control of another animal.
  - 3) Trainers utilizing prompts around pool do not require spotters.
  - 4) A trainer must be positioned on tones during shows.

#### 2. B - G Pool Interactions

- a. Control trainer and spotter trainer must be positioned on same side of pool, unless executing a gating operation.
- b. The spotter trainer may not be in control of another animal.
- c. Trainers utilizing prompts around pool(s) do not require spotters, unless those trainers are inside Tilikum's pool walls.
- d. Trainers must stay positioned behind bars if interacting with Tilikum from backstage area.

#### 3. D Pool False Bottom Interactions

- a. Control trainer and spotter trainer must be in close proximity of each other.
- b. If false bottom is not completely elevated, spotter trainer must stay in control of head position and an additional trainer must stay positioned on the control panel.
- c. Must have a trainer positioned on the control valves of the false bottom while bottom is raised.

#### 4. **G Pool Interactions**

- a. Interaction on island or scale
  - 1) Control trainer and spotter must both be positioned at island or scale, unless spotter trainer is executing a gating operation.
  - 2) The spotter trainer may not be in control of another animal.
  - 3) Trainers utilizing prompts from behind rock or around pool do not require spotters.
  - 4) An approved non-tactile team member or above must be positioned on tones at all times during the interaction when guests have access to The Cove, and is not required when guests do not have access.
  - 5) If on scale, trainer may not be positioned behind Tilikum's pectoral flippers.
- b. Interaction along rocks
  - 1) Control trainer and spotter trainer musst both be positioned on same side of pool.
  - 2) Control trainer must be a tactile team member. Spotter may be an approved non-tactile team member or above.
  - 3) The spotter trainer may not be in control of another animal.

- 4) Trainers may carry buckets or prompts along the rocks, except along slideout.
- 5) Trainers utilizing prompts from behind or around pool do not require spotters.
- 6) An approved non-tactile team member or above must be positioned on tones at all times during the interaction when guests have access to The Cove, and is not required when guests do not have access.

#### **E. Pool Observation Guidelines**

#### 1. Pools to which the Public has access

- a. G-pool/Cove spotting rules during public access to above water viewing area.
  - 1) An approved Tilikum spotter must be positioned on the island near recall tone and emergency siren.
  - 2) Four trainers present in the area.
  - 3) Security personnel must directly observe pool from within one hundred feet of pool.
  - 4) If in weather code Gold, an additional spotter is required. One approved spotter must position themselves near tone box on guest side of G-pool (tone must be turned on before it can be used) and the other spotter must position themselves on the far end of the pool (near the last set of tables by underwater viewing).
- b. The A pool spotting rules during park operating hours
  - 1) Below promenade level open to public
    - a) An approved non-tactile team member or above on stage in a wetsuit.
    - b) An approved Tilikum spotter positioned in front of slideout in a wetsuit.
    - c) Two other trainers in the area.
    - d) Security personnel must directly observe pool from within one hundred feet of pool.
    - e) Security personnel must be on guest side of pool in approved position, unless during a show transition.
  - 2) Below promenade level roped off from public
    - a) An approved Tilikum spotter observing pool with primary position on stage or stage left porch area.
    - b) Three other trainers in the area.
    - c) Security personnel must be on guest side of pool in approved position.
    - d) If in weather code Gold, spotter must be positioned in stadium while still able to observe entire pool, but able to get to emergency siren.
- c. The A pool spotting rules between park close hours and before the Operations "sweep" of Shamu stadium is the same as during park hours.

# F. Non-Department Personnel Guidelines and Approved Guest Guidelines

Non-department personnel and guests may not have loose items about their persons and all tools and supplies must be well secured. An approved guest refers to individuals specifically approved by a Supervisor or above.

#### 1. Tilikum in B or C pools

- a. Non-department personnel and approved guests may enter onto deck and walk across slide over if Tilikum is not located in the backstage pool adjacent to deck and pathway to stage.
- b. Non-department personnel and approved guests must be escorted and spotted by an approved Tilikum spotter at all times.
- c. Non-department personnel and approved guests must maintain a distance of five feet from pool with a barrier between individual and Tilikum's pool at all times.

#### 2. Tilikum in A Pool

- a. No non-department personnel or approved guests on stage while Tilikum has access to A-pool.
- b. Non-department personnel and approved guests must be escorted and spotted by an approved Tilikum spotter at all times.

#### 3. Tilikum in E-pool Only

- a. Non department personnel and approved guests may enter onto island by utilizing steps and then position behind rocks or follow pathway behind rocks and proceed over bridges to F pool wall.
- b. Non-department personnel and approved guests must be escorted by an approved Associate or above to cross pathway around pool at all times.
- c. Non-department personnel and approved guests positioned behind rocks must remain five feet from pool wall and must be visually spotted at all times.
- d. Non-department personnel and approved guests may not position on deck adjacent to E & D pools.

#### 4. Tilikum in G Pool Only

- a. Non department personnel and approved guests may enter onto island by utilizing steps and then position behind rocks or follow pathway behind rocks and proceed over bridges to F pool wall.
- b. Non-department personnel and approved guests must be escorted by an approved Associate or above to cross pathway around pool at all times.
- Non-department personnel and approved guests positioned behind rocks must remain five feet from pool wall and must be visually spotted at all times.

#### I. Interaction Level Approvals

#### 1. First Six Months Associate Trainer

a. An approved First Six Months Associate may spot A pool with Tilikum when the stadium is roped off.

- b. An approved First Six Months Associate may spot Tilikum in G pool with general public access.
- c. An approved First Six Months Associate, in a wetsuit, may spot slideout with the bars up when Tilikum in A pool with general public access.
- d. An approved End-Date Seasonal Associate or First Six Months Associate may walk unescorted around Tilikum pools following all normal spotter and distance guidelines.
- e. An approved End-Date Seasonal Associate or First Six Months Associate may escort guests near Tilikum pools maintaining a distance of five feet from wall, and escort non-department personnel to stage with Tilikum in A, E, or G pool.
- f. An approved First Six Months Associate may perform a non-control visual playtime or fish toss from behind glass or at least five feet behind wall with a Tilkum non-tactile team member or above present.

#### 2. Post Six Months Associate- none

#### 3. Trainer Level

- a. An approved Trainer level may walk across a Tilkum gate behind bars.
- b. Non-Tactile Team Member
  - 1) Spot Tilikum on stage while ropes are down and general public has access (not during an interaction)
  - 2) Perform a "lockout" procedure on a Tilikum gate
  - 3) Open and close Tilikum gates in sessions
  - 4) Open and close Tilikum gates in shows
  - 5) Spot an approved Non-Tactile team member performing a gating interaction.
  - 6) Spot a First Six Month Associate with a non-control visual playtime or fish toss from behind glass or at least 5 feet behind wall
  - 7) Spot a Tactile team member for a free feed
  - 8) Spot a Non-tactile team member for a free feed
  - 9) Spot a Tactile team member with all tactile interactions
  - 10)Perform a free feed or non-tactile gating interaction with Tilikum
  - 11)Perform a non-tactile interaction from behind the glass or 5 feet behind the wall spotted by a Non-Tactile team member
  - 12)Interact with whales inside pool walls in which Tilikum has access

#### 4. Senior Trainer- Tactile Team Member

- a. Perform tactile interactions spotted by an Asst. Sup.
- b. Perform tactile interactions spotted by a Tactile team member
- c. Perform tactile interactions spotted by a Non-Tactile team member
- d. Perform tooth husbandry procedure spotted by an Asst. Sup.
- e. Perform tooth husbandry procedure spotted by a Tactile team member
- f. Perform tooth husbandry procedure spotted by a Non-Tactile team member

#### **SIGNATURE DOCUMENT:**

#### **SWO Animal Training SOP**

I have read, fully understand, and agree to abide by the guidelines and policies stated in this document. I realize that this document contains information necessary to perform the duties of my employment, and that I am responsible for familiarizing myself with this document's contents. I understand that my skills, experience, and application of training techniques paired with my ability to evaluate animal behavior are the key to safe trainer/animal interactions. I understand that it is my responsibility to begin and end all trainer/animal interactions in a safe manner. I realize that there are inherent risks in performing my job description and I agree to communicate to my Supervisor if I become uncomfortable with or are unable to take the calculated risks. I understand that if the management of the Animal Training Department is not comfortable with my abilities to interact with these animals in a safe manner that I may be taken off interactions with some animals, or asked not to perform certain behaviors until I can demonstrate that I understand and apply safe behavior and techniques. I understand that I also may be assigned to another area.

This document is not a contract and contains no promises that could be legally enforced.

Please print your name:	
Please sign your name:	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Date:	
Supervisor print your name:	
Supervisor sign your name:	· · · ·
Date:	