



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

DEC 13 2013

Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet  
Attn: Code N01CE1 Fleet Environmental Readiness  
250 Makalapa Drive  
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3131

Dear Sir or Madam:

Enclosed is Letter of Authorization (LOA) issued to the Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, under the authority of Section 101(a)(5)(A) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq.) and the regulations governing the take of marine mammals incidental to the Navy's training activities in the Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing Study Area. This authorization is effective for five years and covers the taking of marine mammals incidental to Navy training activities, as identified in the final rule, provided the mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements are undertaken as required by the regulations and the LOA.

If you have any questions concerning the LOA or its requirements, please contact Michelle Magliocca, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service at 301-427-8426.

Sincerely,

Donna S. Wieting, Director  
Office of Protected Resources

Enclosures

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Letter of Authorization

The Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, 250 Makalapa Drive, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, 96860-3131, and persons operating under his authority (i.e., Navy), are authorized to take marine mammals incidental to Navy training exercises conducted in the Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing Study Area in accordance with 50 CFR Part 218, Subpart H—Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; U.S. Navy’s Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing (HSTT) subject to the provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*; MMPA) and the following conditions:

1. This Authorization is valid for the period December 26, 2013, through December 25, 2018.

2. This Authorization is valid only for the unintentional taking of the species of marine mammals and methods of take identified in Section 5(b) of this Authorization incidental to the training activities specified in Section 4(a) of this Authorization and occurring within the HSTT Study Area, (as depicted in Figure ES-1 of the Navy’s FEIS/OEIS). In addition, the Study Area includes U.S. Navy pierside locations and areas on the high seas where maintenance or training may occur.

3. This Authorization is valid only if the Holder of the Authorization or any person(s) operating under his authority implements the mitigation, monitoring, and reporting required pursuant to 50 CFR §§ 218.74 & 218.75 and implements the Terms and Conditions of this Authorization.

4. (a) This Authorization is valid for the training activities identified below:

(1) The use of the following non-impulsive sources during training:

- (i) MF1 – an average of 11,588 hours per year
- (ii) MF1K – an average of 88 hours per year
- (iii) MF2 – an average of 3,060 hours per year
- (iv) MF2K – an average of 34 hours per year
- (v) MF3 – an average of 2,336 hours per year
- (vi) MF4 – an average of 888 hours per year
- (vii) MF5 – an average of 13,718 items per year
- (viii) MF11 – an average of 1,120 hours per year
- (ix) MF12 – an average of 1,094 hours per year

- (x) HF1 – an average of 1,764 hours per year
- (xi) HF4 – an average of 4,848 hours per year
- (xii) ASW1 – an average of 224 hours per year
- (xiii) ASW2 – an average of 1,800 items per year
- (xiv) ASW3 – an average of 16,561 hours per year
- (xv) ASW4 – an average of 1,540 items per year
- (xvi) TORP1 – an average of 170 items per year
- (xvii) TORP2 – an average of 400 items per year

(2) The use of the following impulsive source detonations during training:

- (i) E1 (0.1 lb to 0.25 lb NEW) – an average of 19,840 detonations per year
- (ii) E2 (1.26 lb to 0.5 lb NEW) – an average of 1,044 detonations per year
- (iii) E3 (>0.5 lb to 2.5 lb NEW) – an average of 3,020 detonations per year
- (iv) E4 (>2.5 lb to 5 lb NEW) – an average of 668 detonations per year
- (v) E5 (>5 lb to 10 lb NEW) – an average of 8,154 detonations per year
- (vi) E6 (>10 lb to 20 lb NEW) – an average of 538 detonations per year
- (vii) E7 (>20 lb to 60 lb NEW) – an average of 407 detonations per year
- (viii) E8 (>60 lb to 100 lb NEW) – an average of 64 detonations per year
- (ix) E9 (>100 lb to 250 lb NEW) – an average of 16 detonations per year
- (x) E10 (>250 lb to 500 lb NEW) – an average of 19 detonations per year
- (xi) E11 (>500 lb to 650 lb NEW) – an average of 8 detonations per year
- (xii) E12 (>650 lb to 1,000 lb NEW) – an average of 224 detonations per year
- (xiii) E13 (>1,000 lb to 1,740 lb NEW) – an average of 9 detonations per year

(b) This authorization is also valid for the activities and sources listed in 4(a) should the amounts (i.e., hours, items, detonations) vary from those estimated in 4(a), provided that the variation does not result in exceeding the amount of take indicated in 5(a), below.

5. (a) The incidental take of marine mammals under the activities identified in 4(a), above, and § 218.70(c) is limited to the species listed in 5(b) and 5(c) below, by the indicated method of take and the indicated number of times (estimated based on the authorized amounts of sound source operation):

(b) Level B Harassment for all Training Activities:

(1) Mysticetes:

- (i) Blue whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*) – 21,559 (up to 4,325 per year)
- (ii) Bryde's whale (*Balaenoptera edeni*) – 1,197 (an average of 240 per year)
- (iii) Fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*) – 8,531 (up to 1,707 per year)
- (iv) Gray whale (*Eschrichtius robustus*), Eastern North Pacific – 47,750 (an average of 9,550 per year)

- (v) Gray whale (*Eschrichtius robustus*), Western North Pacific – 50 (up to 10 per year)
- (vi) Humpback whale (*Megaptera novaengliae*) – 46,365 (up to 9,273 per year)
- (vii) Minke whale (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*) – 4,030 (an average of 806 per year)
- (viii) Sei whale (*Balaenoptera borealis*) – 2,996 (up to 630 per year)

(2) Odontocetes:

- (i) Baird’s beaked whale (*Berardius bairdii*) – 22,100 (an average of 4,420 per year)
- (ii) Blainville’s beaked whale (*Mesoplodon densirostris*) – 48, 172 (an average of 10,316 per year)
- (iii) Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), California Coastal – 1,755 (an average of 351 per year)
- (iv) Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), CA/OR/WA – 133,090 (an average of 26,618 per year)
- (v) Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), Hawaii Pelagic – 19,709 (an average of 3,942 per year)
- (vi) Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), Oahu – 3,641 (an average of 728 per year)
- (vii) Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), 4-Islands Region – 938 (an average of 188 per year)
- (viii) Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), Kauai and Niihau – 901 (an average of 180 per year)
- (ix) Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), Hawaii Island – 625 (an average of 125 per year)
- (x) Cuvier’s beaked whale (*Ziphius cavirostris*) – 314,790 (an average of 66,246 per year)
- (xi) Dwarf sperm whale (*Kogia sima*) – 101,291 (an average of 22,359 per year)
- (xii) Dall’s porpoise (*Phocoenoides dalli*) – 184,455 (an average of 36,891 per year)
- (xiii) False killer whale (*Pseudorca crassidens*), Main Hawaiian Islands Insular – 220 (up to 49 per year)
- (xiv) False killer whale (*Pseudorca crassidens*) – 2,892 (an average of 657 per year)
- (xv) Fraser’s dolphin (*Lagenodelphis hosei*) – 8,809 (an average of 2,009 per year)
- (xvi) Killer whale (*Orcinus orca*) – 2,427 (an average of 503 per year)
- (xvii) *Kogia* spp. – 64,715 (an average of 12,943 per year)
- (xviii) Long-beaked common dolphin (*Delphinus capensis*) – 365,440 (an average of 73,088 per year)

- (xix) Longman's beaked whale (*Indopacetus pacificus*) 17,296 (an average of 3,666 per year)
- (xx) Melon-headed whale (*Peponocephala electra*) – 6,733 (an average of 1,511 per year)
- (xxi) Mesoplodon beaked whales – 9,970 (an average of 1,994 per year)
- (xxii) Northern right whale dolphin (*Lissodelphis borealis*) – 257,980 (an average of 51,596 per year)
- (xxiii) Pacific white-sided dolphin (*Lagenorhynchus obliquidens*) – 192,255 (an average of 38,451 per year)
- (xxiv) Pantropical spotted dolphin (*Stenella attenuate*) 48,429 (an average of 10,887 per year)
- (xxv) Pygmy killer whale (*Feresa attenuate*) 2,603 (an average of 571 per year)
- (xxvi) Pygmy sperm whale (*Kogia breviceps*) – 1,093 (an average of 229 per year)
- (xxvii) Risso's dolphin (*Grampus griseus*) 437,407 (an average of 87,589 per year)
- (xxviii) Rough-toothed dolphin (*Steno bredanensis*) 22,765 (an average of 5,131 per year)
- (xxix) Short-beaked common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*) 4,996,410 (an average of 999,282 per year)
- (xxx) Short-finned pilot whale (*Globicephala macrorhynchus*) 42,300 (an average of 9,458 per year)
- (xxxi) Sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*) – 15,920 (up to 3,332 per year)
- (xxxii) Spinner dolphin (*Stenella longirostris*) – 11,060 (an average of 2,2012 per year)
- (xxxiii) Striped dolphin (*Stenella coerulealba*) – 33,147 (an average of 7,043 per year)

(3) Pinnipeds:

- (i) California sea lion (*Zalophus californianus*) 634,205 (an average of 126,841 per year)
- (ii) Guadalupe fur seal (*Arctocephalus townsendi*) 13,015 (an average of 2,603 per year)
- (iii) Harbor seal (*Phoca vitulina*) – 29,495 (an average of 5,899 per year)
- (iv) Hawaiian monk seal (*Monachus schauinslandi*) – 6,334 (an average of 1,292 per year)
- (v) Northern elephant seal (*Mirounga angustirostris*) – 112,580 (an average of 22,516 per year)
- (vi) Northern fur seal (*Callorhinus ursinus*) – 100,415 (an average of 20,083 per year)

(c) Level A Harassment for all Training Activities:

(1) Mysticetes:

(i) Gray whale (*Eschrichtius robustus*), Eastern North Pacific – 10 (an average of 2 per year)

(2) Odonotocetes:

(i) Dwarf sperm whale (*Kogia sima*) – 214 (an average of 46 per year)

(ii) Dall's porpoise (*Phocoenoides dalli*) – 235 (an average of 47 per year)

(iii) *Kogia* spp. – 165 (an average of 33 per year)

(iv) Long-beaked common dolphin (*Delphinus capensis*) – 10 (an average of 2 per year)

(v) Northern right whale dolphin (*Lissodelphis borealis*) – 5 (an average of 1 per year)

(vi) Pacific white-sided dolphin (*Lagenorhynchus obliquidens*) – 5 (an average of 1 per year)

(vii) Risso's dolphin (*Grampus griseus*) – 5 (an average of 1 per year)

(viii) Short-beaked common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*) – 350 (an average of 70 per year)

(3) Pinnipeds:

(i) California sea lion (*Zalophus californianus*) – 125 (an average of 25 per year)

(ii) Harbor seal (*Phoca vitulina*) – 55 (an average of 11 per year)

(iii) Northern elephant seal (*Mirounga angustirostris*) – 110 (an average of 22 per year)

(iv) Northern fur seal (*Callorhinus ursinus*) – 25 (an average of 5 per year)

(d) Injury or Mortality for all Training Activities

(1) No more than 35 mortalities (7 per year) applicable to any small odonotocete (i.e., dolphin) or pinniped (with the exception of Hawaiian monk seal and Guadalupe fur seal) species from an impulse source. No more than 4 mortalities of any one species per year.

(2) No more than 10 beaked whale mortalities (2 per year).

(3) No more than 12 large whale injuries or mortalities or serious injuries (no more than 4 in any given year) from vessel strike. No more than 2 of any one species of blue whale, fin whale, Western North Pacific gray whale, humpback whale, sei whale, or sperm whale in any given year.

6. Mitigation - The Holder of this Authorization, and any individuals operating under his authority, must implement the following mitigation measures when conducting activities identified in Section 4 of this Authorization:

(a) Lookouts – The following are protective measures concerning the use of Lookouts:

(1) Lookouts positioned on ships will be dedicated solely to diligent observation of the air and surface of the water. Their observation objectives will include, but are not limited to, detecting the presence of biological resources and recreational or fishing boats, observing mitigation zones, and monitoring for vessel and personnel safety concerns.

(2) Lookouts positioned in aircraft or on small boats will, to the maximum extent practicable and consistent with aircraft and boat safety and training requirements, comply with the observation objectives described above in § 218.74 (a)(1)(i).

(3) Lookout measures for non-impulsive sound:

(i) With the exception of ships less than 65 ft (20 m) in length and ships which are minimally manned, ships using low-frequency or hull-mounted mid-frequency active sonar sources associated with anti-submarine warfare and mine warfare activities at sea will have two Lookouts at the forward position of the ship. For the purposes of this rule, low-frequency active sonar does not include surveillance towed array sensor system low-frequency active sonar.

(ii) While using low-frequency or hull-mounted mid-frequency active sonar sources associated with anti-submarine warfare and mine warfare activities at sea, vessels less than 65 ft (20 m) in length and ships which are minimally manned will have one Lookout at the forward position of the vessel due to space and manning restrictions.

(iii) Ships conducting active sonar activities while moored or at anchor (including pier-side maintenance) will maintain one Lookout.

(iv) Surface ships or aircraft conducting high-frequency or non-hull-mounted mid-frequency active sonar activities associated with anti-submarine warfare and mine warfare activities at sea will have one Lookout.

(4) Lookout measures for explosives and impulsive sound:

(i) Aircraft conducting IEER sonobuoy activities will have one Lookout.

(ii) Surface vessels conducting anti-swimmer grenade activities will have one Lookout.

(iii) During general mine countermeasure and neutralization activities using up to a 500-lb net explosive weight detonation (bin E10 and below), vessels greater than 200 ft will have two Lookouts, while vessels less than 200 ft or aircraft will have one Lookout.

(iv) General mine countermeasure and neutralization activities using a 501 to 650-lb net explosive weight detonation (bin E11), will have two Lookouts. One Lookout will be positioned in an aircraft and one in a support vessel.

(v) Mine neutralization activities involving diver-placed charges using up to a 29-lb net explosive weight detonation (bin E7) conducted with a positive control device will have a total of two Lookouts. One Lookout will be positioned in each of the two support vessels, or one in a support vessel and one in a helicopter. All divers placing the charges on mines will support the Lookouts while performing their regular duties. The divers placing the charges on mines will report all marine mammal sightings to their dive support vessel or Range Safety Officer.

(vi) When mine neutralization activities using diver-placed charges with up to a 29-lb net explosive weight detonation (bin E7) are conducted with a time-delay firing device, four Lookouts will be used. Two Lookouts will be positioned in each of two small rigid hull inflatable boats or on one boat and in one helicopter when aircraft are used. The divers placing the charges on mines will report all marine mammal sightings to their dive support vessel or Range Safety Officer.

(vii) Surface vessels or aircraft conducting small- and medium-caliber gunnery exercises against a surface target will have one Lookout.

(viii) Surface vessels conducting large-caliber gunnery exercises against a surface target will have one Lookout.

(ix) Aircraft conducting missile exercises (including rockets) against surface targets will have one Lookout.

(x) Aircraft conducting bombing exercises will have one Lookout.

(xi) During explosive torpedo testing, one Lookout will be used and positioned in an aircraft.

(xii) During sinking exercises, two Lookouts will be used. One Lookout will be positioned in an aircraft and one on a surface vessel.

(xiii) Each surface vessel supporting at-sea explosive testing will have at least one Lookout.

(xiv) During pile driving, one Lookout will be used and positioned on the platform that will maximize the potential for marine mammal sightings (e.g., the shore, an elevated causeway, or on a small boat).

(xv) Surface vessels conducting explosive and non-explosive large-caliber gunnery exercises will have one Lookout. This may be the same Lookout used during large-caliber gunnery exercises with a surface target.

(5) Lookout measures for physical strike and disturbance:

(i) While underway, surface ships will have at least one Lookout.

(ii) During activities using towed in-water devices, when towed from a manned platform, one Lookout will be used.

(iii) Activities involving non-explosive practice munitions (e.g., small-, medium-, and large-caliber gunnery exercises) using a surface target will have one Lookout.

(iv) During activities involving non-explosive bombing exercises, one Lookout positioned in an aircraft will be used.

(v) During activities involving non-explosive missile exercises (including rockets) using a surface target, one Lookout will be used.



(b) Mitigation Zones – The following are protective measures concerning the implementation of mitigation zones.

(1) Mitigation zones will be measured as the radius from a source and represent a distance to be monitored.

(2) Visual detections of marine mammals within a mitigation zone will be communicated immediately to a watch station for information dissemination and appropriate action.

(3) Mitigation zones for non-impulsive sound<sup>1</sup>:

(i) When marine mammals are visually detected, the Navy shall ensure that low-frequency and hull-mounted mid-frequency active sonar transmission levels are limited to at least 6 dB below normal operating levels, for sources that can be powered down, if any detected marine mammals are within 1,000 yd (914 m) of the sonar dome (the bow).

(ii) The Navy shall ensure that low-frequency and hull-mounted mid-frequency active sonar transmissions are limited to at least 10 dB below the equipment's normal operating level, for sources that can be powered down, if any detected marine mammals are within 500 yd (457 m) of the sonar dome.

(iii) The Navy shall ensure that low-frequency sonar and hull-mounted mid-frequency active sonar transmissions are ceased, for sources that can be turned off during the activity, if any visually detected marine mammals are within 200 yd (183 m) of the sonar dome. Transmissions will not resume until one of the following conditions is met: the animal is observed exiting the mitigation zone; the animal is thought to have exited the mitigation zone based on a determination of its course and speed and the relative motion between the animal and the source; the mitigation zone has been clear from any additional sightings for a period of 30 minutes; the ship has transited more than 2,000 yd (1.8 km) beyond the location of the last sighting; or the ship concludes that dolphins are deliberately closing in on the ship to ride the ship's bow wave (and there are no other marine mammal sightings within the mitigation zone). Active transmission may resume when dolphins are bow riding because they are out of the main transmission axis of the active sonar while in the shallow-wave area of the bow.

(iv) The Navy shall ensure that low-frequency and hull-mounted mid-frequency active sonar transmissions are ceased for sources that cannot be powered down during the activity, if any visually detected marine mammals are within 200 yd (183 m) of the source. Transmissions will not resume until one of the following conditions is met: the animal is observed exiting the mitigation zone; the animal is thought to have exited the mitigation zone based on a determination of its course and speed and the relative motion between the animal and the source; the mitigation zone has been clear from any additional sightings for a period of 30 minutes; the ship has transited more than 400 yd (366 m) beyond the location of the last sighting.

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<sup>1</sup> The mitigation zone would be 200 yd (183 m) for low-frequency non-hull mounted sources in bins LF4 and LF5.

(v) When marine mammals are visually detected, the Navy shall ensure that high-frequency and non-hull-mounted mid-frequency active sonar transmission levels are ceased if any visually detected marine mammals are within 200 yd (183 m) of the source. Transmissions will not resume until one of the following conditions is met: the animals is observed exiting the mitigation zone; the animal is thought to have exited the mitigation zone based on a determination of its course and speed and the relative motion between the animal and the source; the mitigation zone has been clear from any additional sightings for a period of 10 minutes for an aircraft-deployed source; the mitigation zone has been clear from any additional sightings for a period of 30 minutes for a vessel-deployed source; the vessel or aircraft has repositioned itself more than 400 yd (366 m) away from the location of the last sighting; or the vessel concludes that dolphins are deliberately closing to ride the vessel's bow wave (and there are no other marine mammal sightings within the mitigation zone).

(4) Mitigation zones for explosive and impulsive sound:

(i) A mitigation zone with a radius of 600 yd (549 m) shall be established for IEER sonobuoys (bin E4).

(ii) A mitigation zone with a radius of 350 yd (320 m) shall be established for explosive sonobuoys using 0.6 to 2.5 lb net explosive weight (bin E3).

(iii) A mitigation zone with a radius of 200 yd (183 m) shall be established for anti-swimmer grenades (bin E2).

(iv) A mitigation zone ranging from 600 yd (549 m) to 2,100 yd (1.9 km), dependent on charge size, shall be established for general mine countermeasure and neutralization activities using positive control firing devices. Mitigation zone distances are specified for charge size in Table 11-2 of the Navy's application.

(v) A mitigation zone ranging from 350 yd (320 m) to 850 yd (777 m), dependent on charge size, shall be established for mine countermeasure and neutralization activities using diver-placed positive control firing devices. Mitigation zone distances are specified for charge size in Table 11-2 of the Navy's application.

(vi) A mitigation zone with a radius of 1,000 yd (914 m) shall be established for mine neutralization diver placed mines using time-delay firing devices (bin E7).

(vii) A mitigation zone with a radius of 200 yd (183 m) shall be established for small- and medium-caliber gunnery exercises with a surface target (bin E2).

(viii) A mitigation zone with a radius of 600 yd (549 m) shall be established for large-caliber gunnery exercises with a surface target (bin E5).

(ix) A mitigation zone with a radius of 900 yd (823 m) shall be established for missile exercises (including rockets) with up to 250 lb net explosive weight and a surface target (bin E9).

(x) A mitigation zone with a radius of 2,000 yd (1.8 km) shall be established for missile exercises with 251 to 500 lb net explosive weight and a surface target (E10)

(xi) A mitigation zone with a radius of 2,500 yd (2.3 km) shall be established for bombing exercises (bin E12).

(xii) A mitigation zone with a radius of 2,100 yd (1.9 km) shall be established for torpedo (explosive) testing (bin E11).

(xiii) A mitigation zone with a radius of 2.5 nautical miles shall be established for sinking exercises (bin E12).

(xiv) A mitigation zone with a radius of 1,600 yd (1.4 km) shall be established for at-sea explosive testing (bin E5).

(xv) A mitigation zone with a radius of 60 yd (55 m) shall be established for elevated causeway system pile driving.

(xvi) A mitigation zone with a radius of 70 yd (64 m) within 30 degrees on either side of the gun target line on the firing side of the vessel for explosive and non-explosive large-caliber gunnery exercises.

(5) Mitigation zones for vessels and in-water devices:

(i) A mitigation zone of 500 yd (457 m) for observed whales and 200 yd (183 m) for all other marine mammals (except bow riding dolphins) shall be established for all vessel movement, providing it is safe to do so.

(ii) A mitigation zone of 250 yd (229 m) for any observed marine mammal shall be established for all towed in-water devices that are towed from a manned platform, providing it is safe to do so.

(6) Mitigation zones for non-explosive practice munitions:

(i) A mitigation zone of 200 yd (183 m) shall be established for small, medium, and large caliber gunnery exercises using a surface target with non-explosive practice munitions.

(ii) A mitigation zone of 1,000 yd (914 m) shall be established for bombing exercises with non-explosive practice munitions.

(iii) A mitigation zone of 900 yd (823 m) shall be established for missile exercises (including rockets) using a surface target.

(7) Mitigation zones for the use of Navy sea lions:

(i) If a monk seal is seen approaching or within 100 m of a Navy sea lion, the handler will hold the Navy sea lion in the boat or recall the Navy sea lion immediately if it has already been released.

(c) Humpback Whale Cautionary Area

(1) The Navy will maintain a 5-km (3.1-mi) buffer zone between December 15 and April 15 where conducting mid-frequency active sonar exercises will require authorization by the Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet (CPF).

(2) If authorized, the CPF will provide specific direction on required mitigation prior to operational units transiting to and training in the area.

(3) The Navy will provide NMFS with advance notification of any mid-frequency active sonar training and testing activities in the humpback whale cautionary area between December 15 and April 15.

(d) Stranding Response Plan: The Navy shall abide by the letter of the “Stranding Response Plan for Major Navy Training and Testing Exercises in the HSTT Study Area,” to include the following measures:

(1) Shutdown Procedures - When an Uncommon Stranding Event (USE – defined in § 218.71 (b)(1)) occurs during a Major Training Exercise (MTE) in the HSTT Study Area, the Navy shall implement the procedures described below.

(i) The Navy shall implement a shutdown (as defined § 218.71 (b)(2)) when advised by a NMFS Office of Protected Resources Headquarters Senior Official designated in the HSTT Study Area Stranding Communication Protocol that a USE involving live animals has been identified and that at least one live animal is located in the water. NMFS and the Navy will maintain a dialogue, as needed, regarding the identification of the USE and the potential need to implement shutdown procedures.

(ii) Any shutdown in a given area shall remain in effect in that area until NMFS advises the Navy that the subject(s) of the USE at that area die or are euthanized, or that all live animals involved in the USE at that area have left the area (either of their own volition or herded).

(iii) If the Navy finds an injured or dead animal floating at sea during an MTE, the Navy shall notify NMFS immediately or as soon as operational security considerations allow. The Navy shall provide NMFS with species or description of the animal(s), the condition of the animal(s), including carcass condition if the animal(s) is/are dead, location, time of first discovery, observed behavior (if alive), and photo or video (if available). Based on the information provided, NMFS will determine if, and advise the Navy whether a modified shutdown is appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

(iv) In the event, following a USE, that qualified individuals are attempting to herd animals back out to the open ocean and animals are not willing to leave, or animals are seen repeatedly heading for the open ocean but turning back to shore, NMFS and the Navy shall coordinate (including an investigation of other potential anthropogenic stressors in the area) to determine if the proximity of mid-frequency active sonar training activities or explosive detonations, though farther than 14 nautical miles from the distressed animal(s), is likely contributing to the animals’ refusal to return to the open water. If so, NMFS and the Navy will further coordinate to determine what measures are necessary to improve the probability that the animals will return to open water and implement those measures as appropriate.

(2) Within 72 hours of NMFS notifying the Navy of the presence of a USE, the Navy shall provide available information to NMFS (per the HSTT Study Area Communication Protocol) regarding the location, number and types of acoustic/explosive sources, direction and speed of units using mid-frequency active sonar, and marine mammal sightings information associated with training activities occurring within 80

nautical miles (148 km) and 72 hours prior to the USE event. Information not initially available regarding the 80-nautical miles (148-km), 72-hour period prior to the event will be provided as soon as it becomes available. The Navy will provide NMFS investigative teams with additional relevant unclassified information as requested, if available.

7. Monitoring and Reporting – When conducting operations identified in Section 4, the Holder of the Authorization and any person(s) operating under his authority must implement the following monitoring and reporting measures. All reports should be submitted to the Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring MD 20910.

(a) General Notification of Injured or Dead Marine Mammals – Navy personnel shall ensure that NMFS (regional stranding coordinator) is notified immediately (or as soon as clearance procedures allow) if an injured or dead marine mammal is found during or shortly after, and in the vicinity of, any Navy training activity utilizing mid- or high-frequency active sonar, or underwater explosive detonations. The Navy shall provide NMFS with species or description of the animal(s), the condition of the animal(s) (including carcass condition if the animal is dead), location, time of first discovery, observed behaviors (if alive), and photo or video (if available). The Navy shall consult the Stranding Response Plan to obtain more specific reporting requirements for specific circumstances.

(b) Vessel Strike – In the event that a Navy vessel strikes a whale, the Navy shall do the following:

(1) Immediately report to NMFS (pursuant to the established Communication Protocol) the:

- (i) Species identification if known;
- (ii) Location (latitude/longitude) of the animal (or location of the strike if the animal has disappeared);
- (iii) Whether the animal is alive or dead (or unknown); and
- (iv) The time of the strike.

(2) As soon as feasible, the Navy shall report to or provide to NMFS, the:

- (i) Size, length, and description (critical if species is not known) of animal;
- (ii) An estimate of the injury status (e.g., dead, injured but alive, injured and moving, blood or tissue observed in the water, status unknown, disappeared, etc.);
- (iii) Description of the behavior of the whale during event, immediately after the strike, and following the strike (until the report is made or the animal is no long sighted);
- (iv) Vessel class/type and operation status;
- (v) Vessel length
- (vi) Vessel speed and heading; and
- (vii) To the best extent possible, obtain

(3) Within 2 weeks of the strike, provide NMFS:

- (i) A detailed description of the specific actions of the vessel in the 30-minute timeframe immediately preceding the strike, during the event, and immediately after the strike (e.g., the speed and changes in speed, the direction and changes in the direction, other maneuvers, sonar use, etc., if not classified); and

- (ii) A narrative description of marine mammal sightings during the event and immediately after, and any information as to sightings prior to the strike, if available; and
- (iii) Use established Navy shipboard procedures to make a camera available to attempt to capture photographs following a ship strike.

(c) Annual HSTT Monitoring Plan Report - The Navy shall submit an annual report for the HSTT Monitoring Plan in April of each year, describing the implementation and results from the previous calendar year. Data collection methods will be standardized across range complexes and study areas to allow for comparison in different geographic locations. Although additional information will be gathered, the protected species observers collecting marine mammal data pursuant to the HSTT Monitoring Plan shall, at a minimum, provide the same marine mammal observation data required in Section 7(a) and (b) of this Authorization.

As an alternative, the Navy may submit a multi-range complex annual Monitoring Plan report to fulfill this requirement. Such a report would describe progress of knowledge made with respect to monitoring plan study questions across all Navy ranges associated with the ICMP. Similar study questions shall be treated together so that progress on each topic shall be summarized across all Navy ranges. The report need not include analyses and content that does not provide direct assessment of cumulative progress on the monitoring plan study questions.

(d) Annual HSTT Exercise Reports - The Navy shall submit preliminary reports detailing the status of authorized sound sources within 21 days after the end of the annual authorization cycle. The Navy shall submit detailed reports 3 months after the anniversary of the date of issuance of the LOA. The detailed annual reports shall contain information on Major Training Exercises (MTE), Sinking Exercise (SINKEX) events, and a summary of sound sources used, as described below. The analysis in the detailed reports will be based on the accumulation of data from the current year's report and data collected from previous reports. The detailed reports shall contain information as indicated below.

(1) Major Training Exercises/SINKEX

(i) This section shall contain the reporting requirements for Coordinated and Strike Group exercises and SINKEX. Coordinated and Strike Group Major Training Exercises include:

- (A) Sustainment Exercise (SUSTAINEX)
- (B) Integrated ASW Course (IAC)
- (C) Composite Training Unit Exercises (COMPTUEX)
- (D) Joint Task Force Exercises (JTFEX)
- (E) Undersea Warfare Exercise (USWEX)

(ii) Exercise information for each MTE:

- (A) Exercise designator
- (B) Date that exercise began and ended
- (C) Location (operating area)
- (D) Number of items or hours (per the LOA) of each sound source bin (impulsive and non-impulsive) used in the exercise
- (E) Number and types of vessels, aircraft, etc., participating in exercise

- (F) Individual marine mammal sighting info for each sighting for each MTE:
- Date/time/location of sighting
  - Species (if not possible, indication of whale/dolphin/pinniped)
  - Number of individuals
  - Initial detection sensor
  - Indication of specific type of platform the observation was made from (including, for example, what type of surface vessel)
  - Length of time observers maintained visual contact with marine mammal(s)
  - Sea state
  - Visibility
  - Sound source in use at the time of sighting
  - Indication of whether animal is <200 yd, 200-500 yd, 500-1,000 yd, 1,000-2,000 yd, or >2,000 yd from sound source
  - Mitigation implementation – whether operation of sonar sensor was delayed, or sonar was powered or shut down, and how long the delay was; or whether navigation was changed or delayed
  - If source in use is a hull-mounted sonar, relative bearing of animal from ship and estimation of animal's motion relative to ship (opening, closing, parallel)
  - Observed behavior – watchstanders shall report, in plain language and without trying to categorize in any way, the observed behavior of the animal(s) (such as closing to bow ride, paralleling course/speed, floating on surface and not swimming, etc.), and if any calves present

(G) An evaluation (based on data gathered during all of the MTEs) of the effectiveness of mitigation measures designed to minimize the received level to which marine mammals may be exposed. This evaluation shall identify the specific observations that support any conclusions the Navy reaches about the effectiveness of the mitigation.

(iii) Exercise information for each SINKEX:

(A) List of the vessels and aircraft involved in the SINKEX

(B) Location (operating area)

(C) Chronological list of events with times, including time of sunrise and sunset, start and stop time of all marine species surveys that occur before, during, and after the SINKEX, and ordnance used

(D) Visibility and/or weather conditions, wind speed, cloud cover, etc. throughout exercise if it changes

(E) Aircraft used in the surveys, flight altitude, and flight speed and the area covered by each of the surveys, given in coordinates, map, or square miles

(F) Passive acoustic monitoring details (number of sonobuoys, area and depth that was heard, detections of biologic activity, etc.)

(G) Individual marine mammal sighting info for each sighting that required mitigation to be implemented:

- Date/time/location of sighting
- Species (if not possible, indication of whale/dolphin/pinniped)

- Number of individuals
  - Initial detection sensor
  - Indication of specific type of platform the observation was made from (including, for example what type of surface vessel or platform)
  - Length of time observers maintained visual contact with marine mammal(s)
  - Sea state
  - Visibility
  - Indication of whether animal is <200 yd, 200-500 yd, 500-1,000 yd, 1,000-2,000 yd, or >2,000 yd from the target
  - Mitigation implementation – whether the SINKEX was stopped or delayed and how long the delay was
  - Observed behavior – watchstanders shall report, in plain language and without trying to categorize in any way, the observed behavior of the animals (such as animal closing to bow ride, paralleling course/speed, floating on surface and not swimming, etc.), and if any calves present
- (H) List of the ordnance used throughout the SINKEX and net explosive weight (NEW) of each weapon and the combined ordnance NEW

(2) Summary of Sources Used

(i) This section shall include the following information summarized from the authorized sound sources used in all training events:

(A) Total annual hours or quantity (per the LOA) of each bin of sonar or other non-impulsive source

(B) Total annual expended/detonated rounds (missiles, bombs, etc.) for each explosive bin

(C) Total annual airgun use

(D) Improved Extended Echo-Ranging System (IEER)/sonobuoy summary, including:

- Total expended/detonated rounds (buoys)
- Total number of self-scuttled IEER rounds

(3) Sonar Exercise Notification – The Navy shall submit to NMFS (specific contact information to be provided in LOA) either an electronic (preferably) or verbal report within fifteen calendar days after the completion of any major exercise (RIMPAC, USWEX, or Multi Strike Group) indicating:

- (i) Location of the exercise.
- (ii) Beginning and end dates of the exercise.
- (iii) Type of exercise (e.g., RIMPAC, USWEX, or Multi Strike Group).

(4) Geographic Information Presentation – The reports shall present an annual (and seasonal, where practical) depiction of training exercises geographically across the Study Area.

(5) Special Reporting Requirements – To the extent practicable, and as it applies to the specific Study Area, these reports will also include:

(i) The total hours (from 15 December through 15 April) of hull-mounted active sonar operation occurring in the dense humpback areas generally shown on the Mobley



map (73 FR 35510, 35520) plus a 5-km buffer, but not including the Pacific Missile Range Facility (as illustrated in the HSTT FEIS/OEIS)

(ii) The total estimated annual hours of hull-mounted active sonar operation conducted in the Humpback Whale Cautionary Area between 15 December and 15 April

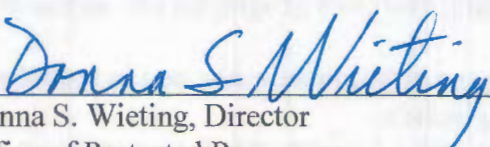
(h) 5-year Close-out Exercise Report – This report will be included as part of the 2019 annual exercise report. This report will provide the annual totals for each sound source bin with a comparison to the annual allowance and the 5-year total for each sound source bin with a comparison to the 5-year allowance. Additionally, if there were any changes to the sound source allowance, this report will include a discussion of why the change was made and include the analysis to support how the change did or did not result in a change in the FEIS and final rule determinations. The report will be submitted 3 months after the expiration of the rule. NMFS will submit comments on the draft close-out report, if any, within 3 months of receipt. The report will be considered final after the Navy has addressed NMFS' comments, or 3 months after the submittal of the draft if NMFS does not provide comments.

8. Prohibitions - Notwithstanding takings contemplated in Section 5 of this Authorization and authorized by a Letter of Authorization issued under §§ 216.106 and 218.77, no person in connection with the activities described in Section 4 of this Authorization may take any marine mammal specified in Section 5 of this Authorization other than by incidental take as specified in Section 4; take a marine mammal specified in Section 5 if such taking results in more than a negligible impact on the species or stocks of such marine mammal; or violate, or fail to comply with, the terms, conditions, and requirements of these regulations or a Letter of Authorization issued under §§ 216.106 and 218.77.

9. This Authorization may be modified, suspended, or withdrawn (pursuant to 50 CFR § 216.78 if the Holder or any person operating under his authority fails to abide by the conditions prescribed herein or if the authorized taking is having more than a negligible impact on the species or stock of affected marine mammals.

10. A copy of this Authorization and the attached Subpart H of the regulations, or a document containing the equivalent requirements specified in this Authorization or 50 CFR Subpart H, must be in the possession of the on-site Commanding Officer in order to take marine mammals under the authority of this Letter of Authorization while conducting the specified activity(ies).

11. The Holder of this Authorization and any person operating under his authority is required to comply with the Terms and Conditions of the Incidental Take Statement corresponding to NMFS' Biological Opinion as they pertain to listed marine mammals.

  
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Donna S. Wieting, Director  
Office of Protected Resources  
National Marine Fisheries Service

DEC 13 2013

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Date