

(2) appropriate scientific literature on marine mammal health, disease, and rehabilitation;

(3) strandings, which the Secretary shall compile and analyze, by region, to monitor species, numbers, conditions, and causes of illnesses and deaths of stranded marine mammals; and

(4) other life history and reference level data, including marine mammal tissue analyses, that would allow comparison of the causes of illness and deaths in stranded marine mammals with physical, chemical, and biological environmental parameters.

**(c) Availability**

The Secretary shall make information collected under this section available to stranding network participants and other qualified scientists.

(Pub. L. 92-522, title IV, § 402, formerly title III, § 302, as added Pub. L. 102-587, title III, § 3003(a), Nov. 4, 1992, 106 Stat. 5061; renumbered title IV, § 402, Pub. L. 103-238, § 24(b), Apr. 30, 1994, 108 Stat. 565.)

IMPLEMENTATION

Pub. L. 102-587, title III, § 3003(b), Nov. 4, 1992, 106 Stat. 5066, provided that: “The Secretary of Commerce shall—

“(1) in accordance with section 302(a) and (b) [now 402(a), (b)] of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 [16 U.S.C. 1421a(a), (b)], as amended by this Act, and not later than 24 months after the date of enactment of this Act [Nov. 4, 1992]—

“(A) develop and implement objective criteria to determine at what point a marine mammal undergoing rehabilitation is returnable to the wild; and

“(B) collect and make available information on marine mammal health and health trends; and

“(2) in accordance with section 304(b) [now 404(b)] of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 [16 U.S.C. 1421c(b)], as amended by this Act, issue a detailed contingency plan for responding to any unusual mortality event—

“(A) in proposed form by not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act; and

“(B) in final form by not later than 24 months after the date of enactment of this Act.”

**§ 1421b. Stranding response agreements**

**(a) In general**

The Secretary may enter into an agreement under section 1382(c) of this title with any person to take marine mammals under section 1379(h)(1) of this title in response to a stranding.

**(b) Required provision**

An agreement authorized by subsection (a) of this section shall—

(1) specify each person who is authorized to perform activities under the agreement; and

(2) specify any terms and conditions under which a person so specified may delegate that authority to another person.

**(c) Review**

The Secretary shall periodically review agreements under section 1382(c) of this title that are entered into pursuant to this subchapter, for performance adequacy and effectiveness.

(Pub. L. 92-522, title IV, § 403, formerly title III, § 303, as added Pub. L. 102-587, title III, § 3003(a),

Nov. 4, 1992, 106 Stat. 5061; renumbered title IV, § 403, Pub. L. 103-238, § 24(b), Apr. 30, 1994, 108 Stat. 565.)

**§ 1421c. Unusual mortality event response**

**(a) Response**

**(1) Working group**

(A) The Secretary, acting through the Office, shall establish, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, a marine mammal unusual mortality event working group, consisting of individuals with knowledge and experience in marine science, marine mammal science, marine mammal veterinary and husbandry practices, marine conservation, and medical science, to provide guidance to the Secretary and the Secretary of the Interior for—

(i) determining whether an unusual mortality event is occurring;

(ii) determining, after an unusual mortality event has begun, if response actions with respect to that event are no longer necessary; and

(iii) developing the contingency plan in accordance with subsection (b) of this section, to assist the Secretary in responding to unusual mortality events.

(B) The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 App. U.S.C.) shall not apply to the marine mammal unusual mortality event working group established under this paragraph.

**(2) Response timing**

The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, shall to the extent necessary and practicable—

(A) within 24 hours after receiving notification from a stranding network participant that an unusual mortality event might be occurring, contact as many members as is possible of the unusual mortality event working group for guidance; and

(B) within 48 hours after receiving such notification—

(i) make a determination as to whether an unusual mortality event is occurring;

(ii) inform the stranding network participant of that determination; and

(iii) if the Secretary has determined an unusual mortality event is occurring, designate an Onsite Coordinator for the event, in accordance with subsection (c) of this section.

**(b) Contingency plan**

**(1) In general**

The Secretary shall, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior and the unusual mortality event working group, and after an opportunity for public review and comment, issue a detailed contingency plan for responding to any unusual mortality event.

**(2) Contents**

The contingency plan required under this subsection shall include—

(A) a list of persons, including stranding network participants, at a regional, State, and local level, who can assist the Secretary