

# Application Form 8b Commercial Shore-Based Operations involving Marine Mammals



Department of  
Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*  
New Zealand Government

## Is this the right application form for me?

This form is to be used when applying for a new permit or the renewal of an existing permit, and where the proposed activity involves shore-based marine mammal viewing.

View marine mammals, including:

- New Zealand fur seal
- New Zealand sea lion
- Other seal species

## Update staff member and vessel

If you have a permit for a commercial operation to interact with marine mammals complete [Application Form 8f Commercial Operations involving Marine Mammals Update staff member, vessel, vehicle, or aircraft](#)<sup>1</sup> to apply for:

- Any new staff member – driver, guide or other staff member – who will have contact with marine mammals as part of your commercial operation; or
- Any new vehicle which will be used to undertake your permit.

Please complete this application form, providing all information requested in as much detail as possible. Attach any other applicable forms and information and send to [permissions@doc.govt.nz](mailto:permissions@doc.govt.nz).

## How do I complete this application form?

- If you are applying for a **new permit** e-mail [permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz](mailto:permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz) for a pre-application meeting before lodging your application. There is location, species and treaty partner consultation information that the Department of Conservation (DOC) needs to make you aware of.
- Complete all sections of this form.
  - If your application involves Vessel-based marine mammal viewing, please also fill in Form 8a.
  - If your application involves aircraft-based marine mammal viewing, please also fill in Form 8c.
  - If your application involves swimming with marine mammals, please also fill in Form 8e.
- DOC encourages electronic applications (e.g. email a typed Word document), rather than handwritten applications. Electronic applications are easier to read and less likely to be returned to you for clarification.
- If you require extra space, attach or include extra documents and label them according to the relevant section. Record all attachments in Section 'Q Attachments'.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/concessions-and-permits/marine-mammal-permits/update-staff-member-8f.doc>

Personal and sensitive information (e.g. criminal convictions or criminal charges pending before the court relating to the mistreatment of animals) will be managed by DOC confidentially. For further information check [DOC's privacy and security statements](#)<sup>2</sup>.

## **Have you considered DOC's Conservation General Policy and statutory planning documents?**

Your permit must not be inconsistent with DOC's [Conservation General Policy](#)<sup>3</sup> and [relevant statutory planning documents](#)<sup>4</sup>, as they set out how DOC and our Treaty partners manage public conservation land. Statutory planning documents can have a direct impact on your application, with conservation management strategies identifying where human interactions with marine mammals should be managed to avoid or minimise adverse effects on populations and individuals.

## **Have you undertaken Treaty Partner consultation?**

DOC has a responsibility to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and may consult with our Treaty Partners about your permit application.

Contact [permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz](mailto:permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz) for further information about consultation.

## **Have you undertaken Customary Marine Title consultation?**

If you are applying for a new permit to view marine mammals, under the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011, you must:

- Notify the Customary Marine Title Applicants about your application.
- Seek the views of the Customary Marine Title Applicants.

To identify the Customary Marine Title Applicants relevant to your application, please visit [Te Tari Whakatau - Applications](#)

## **Have you confirmed that your activity does not fall within a moratorium?**

A moratorium is a temporary suspension that restricts the viewing of marine mammals in specific areas or for certain species. It prohibits the initiation of new activities as well as increases to existing permitted activities. To determine whether your application is affected by a moratorium, it is recommended that you contact [permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz](mailto:permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz).

## **If you need some help, where do you get more information?**

- Check the DOC [interacting with marine mammals](#)<sup>5</sup>. This page includes information on the types of permits available, fees, reporting, and processing timeframes.
- Read [sharing our coasts with marine mammals](#)<sup>6</sup>.
- Become a DOC [Sustainable Marine Mammal Actions in Recreation and Tourism \(SMART\) operator](#)<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.doc.govt.nz/footer-links/privacy-and-security/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/our-policies-and-plans/conservation-general-policy/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/our-policies-and-plans/statutory-plans/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/interacting-with-marine-mammals/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.doc.govt.nz/sharingcoasts>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/smart-operator-programme/>

- Arrange a pre-application meeting (either face to face or over the phone) by contacting the Christchurch Permissions team [permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz](mailto:permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz).

## How do I submit my application?

Email your completed application, and any attachments (recorded in section 'Q Attachments') to: [permissions@doc.govt.nz](mailto:permissions@doc.govt.nz)

## What happens next?

Your application will be assessed by DOC. If it is complete, DOC will begin processing the application.

If it is incomplete or requires amendment it will be returned to you for you to amend and incorporate the matters that DOC has specified in writing.

## Why does DOC ask for this information?

The questions in this application form are designed to cover the requirements set out in DOC's conservation legislation. Your answers allow us to assess:

- The details of your proposed operation against the requirements in sections 6 and 7 of the Marine Mammals Protection Regulations 1992.
- The effects of your proposed operation (including proposed encounter times with marine mammals) and your proposed methods to avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects.
- Your qualifications and resources (e.g. vessel, skills and experience) to adequately conduct the proposed operation in marine areas.
- The educational material you will be using in your proposed operation.

Note:

- Under regulation 10 of the Marine Mammals Protection Regulations 1992, the Department must determine whether or not the application is acceptable and may require the application to be amended. The Department will advise applicants if, and what, amendments are required before this application can be processed by the Department.
- The Department will process the application and issue a permit if it is satisfied that the application meets all the requirements for granting a permit under the Marine Mammals Protection Regulations 1992.
- If the application is approved, it is deemed to form part of the permit which is issued and must be complied with accordingly. Your application, therefore, must be clear, complete and accurate.
- Your application will also assist us in undertaking consultation with our Treaty Partners.
- Your creditworthiness is a factor in determining whether DOC should extend credit to you and set up a DOC customer accounts receivable credit account. To make this assessment DOC will supply your information to a credit checking agency.

**Note:** Information collected by DOC will be supplied to a debt collection agency in the event of non-payment of fees.

## What fees will I pay?

You may be required to pay a processing fee for this application regardless of whether a permit is granted or not. You may request an estimate of the processing fees after your application has been submitted. If you request an estimate, DOC may require you to pay the reasonable costs of the estimate prior to it being prepared. DOC will not process your application until the estimate has been provided to you. In addition, if you are granted a permit you may be required to pay annual research or management fees. These fees are listed on the [interacting with marine mammals](https://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/interacting-with-marine-mammals/)<sup>8</sup> page of the DOC website.

If you are applying for a new permit, see information in the 'Will my application be publicly notified?' section below.

DOC will invoice your processing fee after your application has been considered. If your application is large or complex, DOC may undertake billing at intervals periodically during processing until a decision has been made on your application. If you withdraw your application DOC will invoice you for the costs incurred up to that point.

### **Will my application be publicly advertised?**

Your application will be **publicly advertised**<sup>9</sup> on the DOC website and appropriate newspapers if:

- the application is for a new permit
- the application is for a renewal of a permit (and the renewal is not substantially the same as the existing permit) or an amendment to an existing permit.

Publicly advertising may increase the time and cost of processing of your application.

If you believe public advertising may be required for your application email: [permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz](mailto:permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz) to arrange a pre-application meeting.

### **What does an approved DOC permit include / require?**

A permit approved by DOC (in accordance with section 10(2) Marine Mammals Protection Regulations 1992):

- Includes your 'Application for commercial operations from a vessel to view and swim with marine mammals'.
- Requires you to comply with all the information supplied in your 'Application for commercial operations from a vessel to view and swim with marine mammals'.

**Note:** It is a condition of this permit that DOC retains the right to suspend or revoke this permit, or restrict the operation authorised by the permit, where the information on which the permit was granted contained material inaccuracies.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/interacting-with-marine-mammals/>

<sup>9</sup> Marine Mammals Protection Regulation 1992 section 11.

## A. Applicant details

Legal status of applicant (tick)	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual (Go to ①)	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Registered company (Go to ②)	<input type="checkbox"/> Trust (Go to ②)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Incorporated society (Go to ②)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Go to ②)

①	Applicant name (individual)			
	Phone		Mobile phone	
	Email			
	Physical address		Postcode	
	Postal address (if different from above)		Postcode	

②	Applicant name (full name of registered company, trust, incorporated society or other)		The OPERA - Otago Peninsula Eco Restoration Alliance Limited	
	Trading name (if different from applicant name)			
	NZBN (To apply go to:)	9429049925593	Company, trust or incorporated society registration number	
	Registered office of company or incorporated society (if applicable)			
	Company phone	034780286	Company website	<a href="https://theopera.co.nz/">https://theopera.co.nz/</a>
	Contact person and role		Jordan Gamage Head of Operations	
	Phone		Mobile phone	
	Email			
	Postal address		Postcode	9077

## A. New or renewal of an existing permit

I am applying for a new permit. <b>You need to have a pre-application meeting with DOC</b> before you submit this application as there are location restrictions and consultation requirements that you need to be aware of. E-mail <a href="mailto:permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz">permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz</a> .	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I am applying for a like-for-like renewal of an existing permit	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am applying to renew an existing permit with a major amendment <sup>10</sup> .	<input type="checkbox"/>
Permit number	

## B. Activities applied for

Please fill in all the forms that are applicable. Please tick below the forms that have been completed and attach with this form. Please note that even if you are applying for a renewal of an existing permit, these forms are a necessary requirement of the application process and must be filled out in full.

ACTIVITY	FORM	✓
Vessel Based Viewing	8a	<input type="checkbox"/>
Land Based Viewing	8b	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Aircraft Based Viewing	8c	<input type="checkbox"/>
Filming only	8d	<input type="checkbox"/>
Swimming with marine mammals	8e	<input type="checkbox"/>

## C. Pre-application meeting

Have you had a pre-application meeting with a DOC Permissions Advisor?

No <b>If your application is for a new permit your application will not be processed without a pre-application meeting</b> as there are location restrictions and consultation requirements that you need to be aware of. E-mail <a href="mailto:permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz">permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<sup>10</sup> Marine Mammals Protection Regulation 1992 section 11.

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, state when and who with.	
Levi Barton, Permissions Advisor – 12/8/25	

## D. Consistency with DOC's Conservation General Policy and statutory plans

**Note:** DOC's [Conservation General Policy](https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/our-policies-and-plans/conservation-general-policy/)<sup>11</sup> and statutory planning documents can have a direct impact on your application. For example the statutory planning documents may set the specific locations or number of landings allowed.

List the [DOC's statutory planning documents](https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/our-policies-and-plans/statutory-plans/)<sup>12</sup> relevant to your application:

Are you aware of any potential inconsistency your activity may have with DOC's Conservation General Policy or statutory planning documents?

No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, explain why it is inconsistent with the statutory planning documents.	

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/our-policies-and-plans/conservation-general-policy/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/our-policies-and-plans/statutory-plans/>

## B. Consultation undertaken under the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011

Have you notified and sought the views of the relevant Customary Marine Title Applicants<sup>13</sup> prior to submitting this application?

**Note:**

- You are required to notify affected iwi, hapu or whanau even if you have previously held a permit. We recommend you speak to DOC about this requirement prior to lodging your application.
- You may submit an application before receiving communication from Customary Marine Title applicants.

No. **Your application will not be processed.**  
You need to speak to DOC before you can submit this application form.<sup>14</sup>  
E-mail [permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz](mailto:permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz)



Yes



**If yes, supply details for each Customary Marine Title Applicant you have consulted with.** Copy and paste the table below and complete for each Customary Marine Title Applicant. Record all attachments in section 'Q Attachments'.

Attachments may include:

- Additional pages with the required information
- Any written response to your notification from the Customary Marine Title Applicant.

<b>Customary Marine Title Applicant notified</b>	Te Runanga O Otakou Ngāi Tahu Whānui
<b>Name of individual you notified and sought views on your application</b>	Shené Holtzhausen Kōmiti Coordinator Andrew Rouvi Gabrielle Huria Tom Gilmour
<b>Date /s of notification and views sought</b>	Aug 18, 2025
<b>Form of notification and means of views given (e.g. email, meeting)</b>	Email : <a href="mailto:shene@tro.org.nz">shene@tro.org.nz</a> Email: <a href="mailto:maca@ngaitahu.iwi.nz">maca@ngaitahu.iwi.nz</a> Email: <a href="mailto:kaimahi@tro.org.nz">kaimahi@tro.org.nz</a> Email: <a href="mailto:Tom.Gilmour@ngaitahu.iwi.nz">Tom.Gilmour@ngaitahu.iwi.nz</a>

<sup>13</sup> A "Customary Marine Title Applicant" is a person or group who has applied for recognition of customary marine title either under section 95 or sections 100 and 103 of the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011 in an area to which your application relates and where no customary marine title order or agreement applies.

<sup>14</sup> It is a statutory requirement under section 62(3) to notify and seek the views of a Customary Marine Title Applicant on your application before it is lodged with the Department.

## Outcome of consultation

As part of the consultation process under the *Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011*, we engaged with both Te Rūnaka o Ōtākou and Ngāi Tahu regarding our marine mammal viewing permit application.

### **Te Rūnaka o Ōtākou**

We contacted multiple relevant addresses associated with Te Rūnaka o Ōtākou and the listed Customary Marine Title applicants. An automated reply advised that *kaimahi@tro.org.nz* was no longer monitored and provided alternative contacts. We subsequently reached out to Shené Holtzhausen, Kōmiti Coordinator, who responded to our enquiry. In a follow-up phone conversation, Shené confirmed that the committee had **no objections** to our applying for and being granted the marine mammal viewing permit.

### **Ngāi Tahu**

Following Department of Conservation guidance, we contacted Ngāi Tahu at the address provided by DOC, with the expectation it would be directed internally to the appropriate contact. After a series of clarifying conversations and emails, the enquiry was confirmed as received by Andrew Rouvi and Tom Gilmour, who acknowledged the notification. This confirmed that Ngāi Tahu had been properly notified as part of the consultation process.

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## C. Consultation undertaken with Treaty Partners

DOC has a statutory obligation to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. This often requires consultation with our Treaty Partner (iwi/hapū/whānau of local Māori) on your application. If you have already consulted with our Treaty Partners, DOC would like to know about it.

Have you carried out any consultation with Treaty Partners?

No



Yes



**If yes, supply details for each Treaty Partner you have consulted with.** Copy and paste the table below and complete for each Treaty Partner. Record all attachments in section 'Q Attachments' including:

- Additional pages with any required information.
- The written response to your consultation with Treaty Partners.

<i>Whānau/hapū/iwi consulted with</i>	
Name of individual you consulted with	
Date of consultation	
Form of consultation (e.g. email, meeting)	
Outcome of consultation*	

Provide details of any cultural interpretation or activities that you are providing to support the cultural values of the Treaty Partners, Customary Marine Title Applicants or other interested stakeholders.

## E. Consultation with interested stakeholders

Have you carried out any consultation with interested stakeholders?

No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>

**If yes, supply details for each Interested Stakeholder you have consulted with.** Copy and paste the table below and complete for each Interested Stakeholder. Record all attachments in section 'Q Attachments' including:

- Additional pages with any required information
- The written response to your consultation with Interested Stakeholders.

<b>Other interested stakeholders consulted with e.g. Conservation Boards or community groups</b>	
<b>Name of individual you consulted with</b>	
<b>Date of consultation</b>	
<b>Form of consultation (e.g. email, meeting)</b>	
<b>Outcome of consultation*</b>	

## F. Educational material

Provide details of the education material (including the source of the material) and education aspects of your proposed operation.

Below is an example of the educational material that will be part of our tour.

**New Zealand Fur Seal:** The New Zealand Fur Seal has been a conservation success story. In the 1880's it was hunted close to extinction but has made a dramatic recovery over the last few years. There are now healthy populations around the Otago Peninsula.

Adult male fur seals can grow up to 2.5 metres and weigh up to 185 kg. The females are smaller, growing up to 1.5 metres and weighing 50kg.

Breeding occurs in November and December with large males defending breeding territories containing many females. Females reach sexual maturity at four years and usually have their first pup at five years. About eight days after the birth of their pup, the female mates with the group's male. By August the pups are weaned and females return to sea to feed until November.

**Hooker's Sealions (New Zealand Sealions)** are the rarest of the world's five species of sealion.

They are endemic to New Zealand and are making a comeback. Colonies are now established on the Otago Peninsula and the Catlins.

Sealions are gregarious animals and enjoy each other's company. They are highly agile and dive to over 200 metres.

Adult male reach up to three metres in length, weigh up to 400 kg and can live to 25 years old. Females are smaller and generally lighter in colour.

Sources for Educational Material:

New Zealand Department of Conservation – Species Profiles

New Zealand Fur Seal (*Arctocephalus forsteri*)

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/native-animals/marine-mammals/seals/nz-fur-seal/facts/>

MarineBio Conservation Society

New Zealand Sea Lion (*Phocarctos hookeri*)

<https://www.marinebio.org/species/hookers-sea-lions/phocarctos-hookeri/>

Pinnipeds.org

New Zealand Sea Lion (*Phocarctos hookeri*)

<https://www.pinnipeds.org/seal-information/species-information-pages/sea-lions-and-fur-seals/new-zealand-sea-lion>

## G. Conservation, management, and the protection of marine mammals

State how your proposed operation is in the interests (advantage and benefit) of the conservation, management or protection of marine mammals?

The OPERA — Otago Peninsula Eco Restoration Alliance is fundamentally dedicated to the conservation and long-term protection of native species and habitats, including marine mammals. Our guided eco-tours are designed to educate the public about the ecological significance of New Zealand's marine ecosystems, promote responsible wildlife viewing practices, and foster support for conservation initiatives.

Our activities directly contribute to the management and protection of marine mammals by:

- Limiting human impact through small group tours with controlled viewing protocols.
- Supporting ongoing habitat restoration and predator control efforts adjacent to key marine mammal habitats.
- Funding and partnering with local conservation projects through tourism revenue.
- Gathering observational data and reporting marine mammal sightings or concerns to DOC and relevant agencies.
- By combining ecological education with carefully managed public access, OPERA ensures that all marine mammal encounters occur in a way that aligns with best-practice guidelines and strengthens both awareness and protection outcomes.

## H. Details of the proposed operation

### ① Proposed base and area of operation

**Attach a map of the proposed area of operation.** It must clearly show:

- Proposed area of operation
- Boundaries of the area
- Any specific locations where contact with marine mammals is likely
- Expected routes

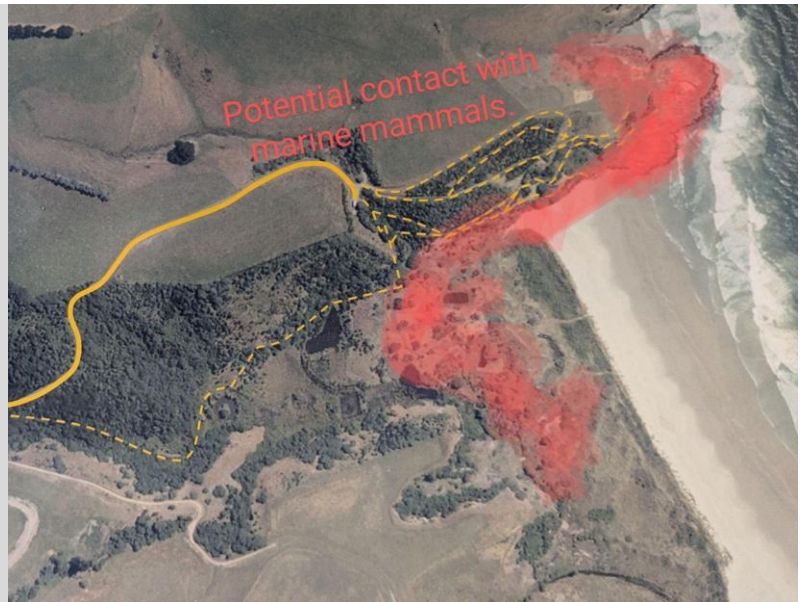
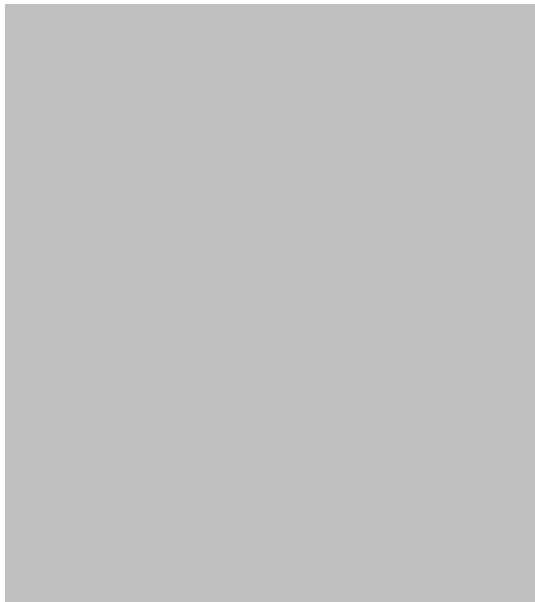
Record your map details in section 'Q Attachments'.

Map questions	Written description
Proposed base of operation	The OPERA—Otago Peninsula Eco Restoration Alliance

Proposed area of operation


The OPERA - Tour routes on the property.  
Please see attached tour routes map





Proposed locations for viewing contact with marine mammals	The OPERA property at the point and along prospective tour routes near Pipikaretu Beach. We also provide bespoke tours, which may opt to see the seal colony off the Pipikaretu Headland.
Proposed route to, along and across the shore	Walking access to proposed areas as shown on the attached maps. All routes are dependent on where marine mammals are located so all options have been shown that are formed tracks to view or avoid MM locations. Routes are via trench system linking hides to avoid any disturbance as groups navigate viewing opportunities. Vehicles are parked over 100m away from any prospective marine mammal viewing to minimize any disturbance.

2 Term of operation	
Record the proposed term of operation (months and years)	10 years
3 Trip duration and frequency	
Duration of trips proposed	1-3 hours depending on tour type
Maximum number of trips proposed per day	We anticipate a maximum of 12 trips per day (noting that trips may overlap within the reserve and may vary based on tour group size)
Maximum number of trips proposed per annum	We estimate that the maximum number of trips per annum would be 4,000 should tourism return fully to (or exceed) pre-covid numbers. However, it is noted that current per annum numbers are estimated to be closer to 1,600.
Maximum number of vehicles you propose to operate at any one time	2 vehicles

Vehicle approach route and orientation of approach relative to seals or sea lions	Walking access only to areas containing marine mammals. Vehicles will not be heard or visible. See attached maps
Position of vehicles relative to seals or sea lions, the shore and the sea while viewing	<p>More than 200m away from vehicle parking in all locations. Please see attached map</p> 
Maximum number of passengers	We anticipate a maximum of 15 guests per tour leader.
How groups of people will be managed in the vicinity of seals or sea lions in particular to manage noise and behaviour	<p>Before entering any area containing marine mammals, all group participants will be given verbal instructions. They will be guided around the area in a tight group and will keep noise to a bare minimum.</p> <p>In the event that any group member fails to follow these instructions our guide will immediately move the group away from the area or the wildlife.</p> <p>Guest will be verbally instructed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow your guide's instructions at all times.</li> <li>• No flash photography.</li> <li>• Stay behind your guide and within the group at all times.</li> <li>• Do not stop to take photos when your group is moving from one area to another.</li> <li>• Keep noise to a quiet whisper or remain silent if the guide informs guests.</li> <li>• Your guide will cease contact and move away from the area if any animal shows signs of being disturbed or alarmed by the presence of our tour.</li> </ul>

Behaviour around breeding colonies, nurseries and pups	Our bespoke and photography tours are able to view from a distance the local colony and potentially pups.
What other actions you will take to minimise disturbance of the marine mammals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay at least 20 metres away from seals and sea lions; give more space to pups or resting animals.</li> <li>• Keep noise to a minimum – no shouting, loud music, or sudden movements.</li> <li>• Use Blinds, Hides and Trenches whenever available to view animals.</li> <li>• Never block the animals' path to or from the sea.</li> <li>• Limit viewing to 10 minutes in each location and leave if the animal shows signs of distress.</li> </ul>
Vehicle departure route and orientation of departure relative to seals or sea lions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All vehicle movements will occur on designated access tracks and parking areas only, well outside the minimum 20-metre buffer zone from any seals or sea lions. Please see attached map on where vehicles will be located.</li> <li>• Vehicles will be parked facing away from known haul-out or resting areas, ensuring no direct headlights or engine noise is directed toward marine mammals during departure.</li> </ul> <p>If marine mammals are near the vehicle route:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff will conduct a visual assessment before departure.</li> <li>• If necessary, departure will be delayed until animals have moved safely away from the area. Local DOC authorities can be contacted in the unlikely event a situation occurs where animals will not move on their own volition.</li> </ul>

#### ④ Species of marine mammal you seek to view or come in contact with from land

New Zealand fur seal	✓
New Zealand sea lion	✓
Other (please list)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nature of contact with marine mammals	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary purpose <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Secondary purpose

#### ⑤ Proposed viewing or contact times with marine mammals

State the maximum time you will view or be in contact with each marine mammal (or group of mammals) you encounter per trip.

#### New Zealand fur seal viewing or contact

Not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual viewing or contact time in minutes	10 minutes
Cumulative viewing or contact time per trip in minutes	30 minutes

#### New Zealand sea lion viewing or contact

Not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual viewing or contact time in minutes	10 minutes
Cumulative viewing or contact time per trip in minutes	30 minutes

#### Other viewing or contact

Not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Individual viewing or contact time in minutes	
Cumulative viewing or contact time per trip in minutes	

## I. Vehicle information – (refer to Appendix 1 for detailed guidance)

If your operation involves more than two vehicles, copy and paste the table below and complete for each vehicle. Alternatively attach additional pages with the required information and record all attachments in section 'Q Attachments'.

#### Vehicle 1 description:

Registration	QEB550
Make	Toyota
Model	Coaster
2WD/4WD	2WD
Colour	White and Purple
Carrying Capacity	22 pax + 1 driver

#### Vehicle 2 description:

Registration	QQQ986
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Make	Toyota
Model	Coaster
2WD/4WD	2WD
Colour	White and Purple
Carrying Capacity	22 pax + 1 driver

#### Vehicle 3 description:

Registration	QEP601
Make	Toyota
Model	Hiace
2WD/4WD	2Wd
Colour	11 pax + 1 driver
Carrying Capacity	White

#### Vehicle 3 description:

Registration	QDG382
Make	Toyota
Model	Hiace
2WD/4WD	2Wd
Colour	11 pax + 1 driver
Carrying Capacity	White

#### Vehicle 4 description:

Registration	N/A
Make	Polaris
Model	Ranger Crew
2WD/4WD	2Wd and 4Wd
Colour	3 pax + 1 driver
Carrying Capacity	Black

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## J. Background of proposed operator

State the applicant's experience operating with marine mammals (e.g. the number of years the company / business has been operating around marine mammals).

The OPERA has extensive experience operating in sensitive coastal and marine environments, particularly in areas inhabited by New Zealand sea lions, New Zealand fur seals. As a conservation-driven organisation based on the Otago Peninsula, The OPERA's staff and guides are trained in marine mammal identification, behaviour monitoring, and best-practice wildlife viewing protocols in accordance with the Marine Mammals Protection Regulations 1992.

Key aspects of our background and qualifications include:

**Trained Wildlife Guides:** All tour staff undergo comprehensive training in marine mammal awareness, species behaviour, and ethical viewing distances, with an emphasis on minimising disturbance.

**DOC Engagement & Reporting:** The OPERA maintains active relationships with the Department of Conservation (DOC), reporting sightings and incidents involving marine mammals and regularly consulting on local conservation practices.

**Experience in High-Sensitivity Zones:** Tours operate in the Otago Peninsula marine environment home to several nationally endangered species—and are managed to strict environmental standards developed in consultation with DOC and local conservation bodies.

**Public Education & Outreach:** The OPERA's educational tours contribute to public awareness of marine mammal conservation, including interpretation on species vulnerability, threats, and recovery efforts.

**Habitat Protection:** Through habitat restoration efforts and predator control on coastal land adjacent to marine mammal habitats. Our operation is built on a foundation of ecological integrity, scientific knowledge, and conservation advocacy, ensuring responsible and informed interactions with marine mammals at all times.

State the applicant's knowledge of operating within the local area, and of the sea and weather conditions (e.g. number of years' experience operating within the area).

The OPERA has extensive operational experience on the Otago Peninsula. Our team possesses in-depth, practical knowledge of the region's unique weather patterns, sea states, tidal conditions, and seasonal ecological changes.

Key points of experience include:

- **Local Operational Base:** The OPERA operates year round from our eco reserve located on the Otago Peninsula, giving staff consistent, real time familiarity with local marine and coastal conditions.
- **Weather and Sea Condition Monitoring:** Our team uses a combination of regional weather forecasts, and on the

ground observation to inform daily operational decisions. We are well versed in managing tours around sudden changes in wind direction, swells, fog, and rain.

- **Adaptation to Seasonal Patterns:** The OPERA staff are experienced in adjusting tour timing and access based on seasonal variations in daylight, wildlife presence, and the frequent southerly fronts and marine surges that affect the coastline.
- **Proximity to Marine Wildlife Zones:** The OPERA is familiar with local marine mammal movements and how these intersect with changing sea states and weather conditions.
- **Staff Familiarity and Training:** Many of our team members live locally and have extensive maritime and fieldwork backgrounds, including past work in marine tourism, DOC conservation projects, and ecological monitoring across Otago.

Our deep regional knowledge ensures that all activities are conducted with a high degree of environmental awareness, safety, and responsiveness to local conditions, thereby supporting both visitor safety and the protection of vulnerable coastal ecosystems.

**Has the applicant been convicted of any offence involving the mistreatment of animals?**

No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
If "yes", provide details	

**Does the applicant have any current criminal charges pending before the court involving the mistreatment of animals?**

No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
If "yes", provide details	

**Does the Applicant agree to DOC undertaking a check of their criminal convictions or pending current criminal charges involving the mistreatment of animals?**

**Note:** DOC may require the proposed operator to fill out and sign a form that allows DOC to receive their criminal conviction history to enable the Director-General of DOC to be satisfied that the proposed operator does not have convictions for offences involving the mistreatment of animals.

No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## K. Background experience of individual staff members

Complete the table below for every staff member who may come into contact with marine mammals during the operation. Copy and paste the table and complete for each staff member. Alternatively attach additional pages with the required information and record all attachments in section 'Q Attachments'.

Staff member	
Full name:	Ike Haldan
Job Title:	Owner
Has this person had any convictions or prosecutions for offences against the Act or any other Act involving the mistreatment of animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If "yes", please provide details:	
Relevant experience with marine mammals (including species and years operating around):	Has experience and training at the OPERA on wildlife encounters and what is recommended by DOC as a safe distance practice. Species: Sea Lions & Fur Seals The type of experience: Viewing, Guiding & Research Years of experience: ~2 years – Viewing ~2 years – Research ~2 years – Guiding

Staff member	
Full name:	Janelle Wierenga
Job Title:	Head of Wildlife Management & Lead Wildlife Ranger
Has this person had any convictions or prosecutions for offences against the Act or any other Act involving the mistreatment of animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If "yes", please provide details:	

Relevant experience with marine mammals (including species and years operating around):	<p>Five years experience volunteering with DOC for yellow-eyed penguin hatching and chick health checks during November and December which includes interaction with fur seals and sea lions on the beach and rocks on the Otago Peninsula</p> <p>20+ years work as a veterinarian in clinical practice, teaching at Massey University (9 years), working with wildlife (4 years) and training in Avian medicine and care (Otago Polytechnic and Dunedin Wildlife Hospital)</p> <p>Two summers (2022-23 Enderby Island, 2 months; 2023-24 Campbell Island, 3 months) contracted through DOC to do sea lion monitoring and tagging</p> <p>Training through DOC in safe sea lion and fur seal interactions, safe distance practice and education to others (other volunteers, public interactions, cruise ship passengers, etc)</p>
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Staff member	
Full name:	Jason Van Zanten
Job Title:	Lead Penguin Ranger & Head of Penguin Rehabilitation
Has this person had any convictions or prosecutions for offences against the Act or any other Act involving the mistreatment of animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If "yes", please provide details:	
Relevant experience with marine mammals (including species and years operating around):	<p>Species:</p> <p>Fur seal</p> <p>Hookers sealion</p> <p>Leopard seal</p> <p>Elephant seal</p> <p>8 years of Viewing, Guiding, Research, Monitoring programme, Wildlife Policy Development (through DOC &amp; relevant trusts), Engaging with local Iwi</p>

Staff member	
Full name:	Jordan Gamage
Job Title:	Head of Operations

Has this person had any convictions or prosecutions for offences against the Act or any other Act involving the mistreatment of animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If "yes", please provide details:	
Relevant experience with marine mammals (including species and years operating around):	Jordan is a skipper and has experience with marine mammals from his time on ships and near wharves, docks, harbours etc. 7 years of viewing and guiding experience.

Staff member	
Full name:	Ariel Daubney
Job Title:	2IC Operations, Staff & Volunteer Coordinator
Has this person had any convictions or prosecutions for offences against the Act or any other Act involving the mistreatment of animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If "yes", please provide details:	
Relevant experience with marine mammals (including species and years operating around):	Species: Sea Lions & Fur Seals The type of experience: Viewing, Guiding & Research Years of experience: ~10 years – Viewing ~5 years – Research ~2 years – Guiding

Staff member	
Full name:	Ainsley McIntosh
Job Title:	Ranger
Has this person had any convictions or prosecutions for offences against the Act or any other Act involving the mistreatment of animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If "yes", please provide details:	
Relevant experience with marine mammals (including species and years operating around):	Species: Sea Lions & Fur Seals The type of experience: Viewing, Guiding & Research Years of experience: ~20 years – Viewing ~20 Years – Guiding

Staff member	
Full name:	Adrian Foote

Job Title:	Ranger & Chief Arborist
Has this person had any convictions or prosecutions for offences against the Act or any other Act involving the mistreatment of animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If "yes", please provide details:	
Relevant experience with marine mammals (including species and years operating around):	Species: Sea Lions & Fur Seals The type of experience: Viewing, Guiding & Research Years of experience: ~10 years – Viewing ~10 years – Research ~10 years – Guiding

<b>Staff member</b>	
Full name:	Saskia Buhrs
Job Title:	Ranger & Head of Sustainability
Has this person had any convictions or prosecutions for offences against the Act or any other Act involving the mistreatment of animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If "yes", please provide details:	
Relevant experience with marine mammals (including species and years operating around):	Sea Lion and Leopard seals - viewing and guiding experience, fur seals - catch and release science research, monitoring, guiding and viewing.  The number of years of experience is ~5 years – Viewing ~5 years – Guiding

<b>Staff member</b>	
Full name:	John Sinclair
Job Title:	Ranger & Fleet Manager
Has this person had any convictions or prosecutions for offences against the Act or any other Act involving the mistreatment of animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If "yes", please provide details:	
Relevant experience with marine mammals (including species and years operating around):	Species: Sea Lions & Fur Seals The type of experience: Viewing, Guiding & Research Years of experience: ~2 years – Viewing ~2 years – Guiding

<b>Staff member</b>	
Full name:	Ashley McMillan

Job Title:	Ranger, Science Communication Specialist
Has this person had any convictions or prosecutions for offences against the Act or any other Act involving the mistreatment of animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If "yes", please provide details:	
Relevant experience with marine mammals (including species and years operating around):	Species: Sea Lions & Fur Seals The type of experience: Viewing, Guiding & Research Years of experience: ~ 2 years – Viewing ~ 2 years – Research ~ 2 years – Guiding

Staff member	
Full name:	Euan Whitton
Job Title:	Penguin Ranger, Head of Pest Animal Control
Has this person had any convictions or prosecutions for offences against the Act or any other Act involving the mistreatment of animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If "yes", please provide details:	
Relevant experience with marine mammals (including species and years operating around):	Species: Sea Lions & Fur Seals The type of experience: Viewing, Guiding & Research Years of experience: ~2 years – Viewing ~ 2 years – Research ~ 2 years – Guiding

Staff member	
Full name:	Emma Keheley
Job Title:	Ranger
Has this person had any convictions or prosecutions for offences against the Act or any other Act involving the mistreatment of animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If "yes", please provide details:	
Relevant experience with marine mammals (including species and years operating around):	Species: Sea Lions & Fur Seals The type of experience: Viewing, Guiding & Research Years of experience: ~3 years – Viewing ~1 Year – Guiding

<b>Staff member</b>	
Full name:	Frankie Manukau
Job Title:	Ranger
Has this person had any convictions or prosecutions for offences against the Act or any other Act involving the mistreatment of animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If "yes", please provide details:	
Relevant experience with marine mammals (including species and years operating around):	Species: Sea Lions & Fur Seals The type of experience: Viewing, Guiding & Research Years of experience: ~2 years – Viewing ~2 Years – Guiding

<b>Staff member</b>	
Full name:	Kate Bonne
Job Title:	Restoration Coordinator, Research & Science Specialist, and Ranger
Has this person had any convictions or prosecutions for offences against the Act or any other Act involving the mistreatment of animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If "yes", please provide details:	
Relevant experience with marine mammals (including species and years operating around):	Species: New Zealand sea lion 1.5 years-Volunteering with the NZ Sea Lion Trust to manage interactions between members of the public and sea lions, in places where this can be an issue. This involved learning to recognise concerning behaviour and condition in sea lions, and how to manage emergency situations.  1 year - Guiding

<b>Staff member</b>	
Full name:	Lisa Hagerty
Job Title:	Ranger, Animal Husbandry Manager
Has this person had any convictions or prosecutions for offences against the Act or any other Act involving the mistreatment of animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If "yes", please provide details:	

Relevant experience with marine mammals (including species and years operating around):	Species: Sea Lions & Fur Seals The type of experience: Viewing, Guiding & Research Years of experience: ~2 years – Viewing ~1 years – Guiding
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## L. Marine Mammals Protection Regulations 1992

Tick the following boxes to confirm you will operate in accordance with each of the following behaviours as required under Part 3 of the Marine Mammals Protection Regulations 1992.	Tick
Marine mammals will not be disturbed or harassed	✓
Best endeavours will be used to operate vehicles in a way that the normal movement or behaviour of any marine mammal is not disrupted	✓
Contact with any marine mammal shall be abandoned at any stage if it becomes or shows signs of becoming disturbed or alarmed	✓
Marine mammals are not to be separated from a group of marine mammals, or caused to scatter	✓
Rubbish or food is not to be thrown near or around any marine mammal	✓
No person shall make any loud or disturbing noises around any whale, dolphins or seals	✓
Vehicles must remain above the mean high water spring tide mark and shall not approach within 50 metres of a marine mammal unless in an official carpark or on a public or private slipway or on a public road	✓
No person or vehicle shall cut off the path of a marine mammal or prevent a marine mammal from leaving the vicinity of any person or vehicle	✓

## M. Operational best practice based on recommended DOC guidelines

Tick that you understand and will comply with the following conditions relating to seals and sea lions specific behaviours	Tick
Not applicable as not applying to view seals and sea lions	<input type="checkbox"/>
When seals and sea lions are hauled out on shore or rocks, the vehicle and people will remain 20m or more from animals	✓
Tick that you understand and will comply with the following conditions relating to location specific best practice. <i>You will have been given information on best practice recommendations when you contacted <a href="mailto:permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz">permissionschristchurch@doc.govt.nz</a> prior to making your application. If any location specific best practices apply to your area of operation, attach the relevant schedule.</i>	Tick

Not applicable as there is no location specific best practice	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location specific best practices for my area of operation are attached and recorded in section 'Q Attachments'	<input type="checkbox"/>
All proposed operations will be undertaken in accordance with the best practice guidelines for the area of operation	✓

## N. Attachments

Attachments should *only* be used if there is:

- A specific question that requires an attachment e.g. map of the proposed base and area of operations
- Not enough space on the form to finish your answer
- Additional information that supports your answer
- An additional request you wish to make of DOC regarding the application.

Label each document clearly and complete the table below.

Section of the application form the attachment relates to	Document title	Document format (e.g. Word, PDF, Excel, jpg etc.)	Description of attachment
<u>Correct example ✓</u> <i>E</i>	<i>Proposed base and area of operation</i>	<i>.shp</i>	<i>Map of proposed base and area with locations of where contact with marine mammals is proposed.</i>
<u>Correct example ✓</u> <i>K</i>	<i>Educational Material</i>	<i>Word</i>	<i>Educational material provided to clients undertaking marine mammal journey.</i>

## O. Checklist

Application checklist	Tick which apply
I have completed all sections of this form relevant to my application and understand that the form will be returned to me if it is incomplete.	✓
I certify that the information provided in this application form and any attached additional forms and information is, to the best of my knowledge, true and correct.	✓
I have supplied a map with the departure location, boundaries of operation, expected tour routes of operation specific locations where viewing of marine mammals are likely, and if applicable specific location where swimming with marine mammals are likely as required in and section 'Q Attachments'.	✓
I have appropriately recorded all attachments in section 'Q Attachments'.	✓
I understand that in accordance with Regulation 10(2) of the Marine Mammals Protection Regulations 1992, this application shall form part of any permit issued and shall be complied with accordingly.	✓

## P. Terms and conditions for a credit account with the Department of Conservation

Have you held an account with the Department of Conservation before?	Tick
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If "yes", under what name:	<b>Penguin Place</b>

In ticking this checklist and placing your name below you are acknowledging that you have read and agreed to these terms and conditions for an account with the Department of Conservation

Terms and Conditions	Tick
I/We agree that the Department of Conservation can provide my/our details to the Department's credit checking agency to enable it to conduct a full credit check.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I/We agree that any change which affects the trading address, legal entity, structure of management or control of the applicant's company (as detailed in this application) will be notified in writing to the Department of Conservation within 7 days of that change becoming effective.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I/We agree to notify the Department of Conservation of any disputed charges within 14 days of the date of the invoice.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I/We agree to fully pay the Department of Conservation for any invoice received on or before the due date.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I/We agree to pay all costs incurred (including interest, legal costs and debt recovery fees) to recover any money owing on this account.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I/We agree that the credit account provided by the Department of Conservation may be withdrawn by the Department of Conservation, if any terms and conditions (as above) of the credit account are not met.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I/We agree that the Department of Conservation can provide my details to the Department's debt collection agency in the event of non-payment of payable fees.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Applicant Name/s</b> (of authorised person/s)	Jordan Gamage
<b>Date</b>	19/08/2025

Email your completed application, and any attachments (e.g. recorded in section 'Q Attachments') to: [permissions@doc.govt.nz](mailto:permissions@doc.govt.nz)

For Department of Conservation use

<b>Credit check completed</b>			
<b>Comments :</b>			
<b>Signed:</b>		<b>Name</b>	
<b>Approved (Tier 4 manager or above)</b>		<b>Name</b>	

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **GUIDANCE INFORMATION FOR FILLING IN THE FORM**

#### **Location information**

“Base of operation” -specify the location where passengers board the vehicle.

“Proposed area of operation” -provide a written description of the general extent of the operation where you will be likely to have contact with marine mammals – please specify the boundaries (e.g. key landmarks) and the location as it is generally known; e.g. Wellington coast or Wairarapa coast.

“Specific locations where contact with marine mammals is proposed” - you need to list any particular sites you will visit where marine mammals are known or expected to be encountered; e.g. Red Rocks, Ohau Stream lookout I, Point Kean, Barney’s Island, Adele Island.

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#### **Trip details**

Clearly identify where there are seasonal differences in the trip details

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#### **Type and number of vehicles to be used**

If you have more vehicles than the spaces provided please copy the fields and paste to the bottom of the table in the section.

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#### **Drivers, guides and other relevant staff**

If you have more staff members than the spaces provided please copy the fields and paste to the bottom of the table in the section.

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#### **Additional information**

**Please be specific for each class of marine mammal or for individual species.**

**Maximum time spent with marine mammals per individual encounter:**

“Encounter” means being less than 100 metres from a seal or sea lion.

**Nature of the contact with marine mammals:**

“Primary purpose” means the operation’s main focus is to seek out and encounter seals or sea lions e.g. seal encounter tours and trips to known seal colonies.

“Secondary purpose” means that viewing seals or sea lions is not the operation’s main focus but will still be viewed if encountered; e.g. certain scenic cruises, tourist bus trips.

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#### **Educational Material**

Please briefly describe the educational aspects of the proposed operation and supply any proposed educational material, copies of brochures or information booklets as an attachment (note, these may be returned if requested).