

# Service Level Agreement

between

Project Jonah New Zealand Inc.

and

Department of Conservation

2024-2027



Department of  
Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

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# 1 Document Control

## 1.1 Document information

Document ID	DOC-7700909
Document Owner	Deputy Director General, Biodiversity, Heritage and Visitors

## 1.2 Document history

Version	Issue Date	Status update or version-specific comment
1		Initial draft created within DOC
2	26/06/2024	Initial draft reviewed by Daren Grover, Project Jonah
3	09/07/2024	Second draft reviewed by Kirstie Knowles
4	14/07/2024	Second draft reviewed by Project Jonah
5 (DOCDM1)	23/07/2024	Final draft

## 1.3 Signatories

### Provider – Project Jonah

Version	Issue date	Issued to	Role	Signature and date
5	DD/MM/YYYY	Tahnee Gudsell	Acting Chair Project Jonah	9(2)(a)

### Internal Customer

Version	Issue date	Issued to	Role	Signature and date
5	23/07/2024	Stephanie Rowe	Deputy Director General - BHV	9(2)(a)  1 August 2024

## 2 Document Purpose

The purpose of this Service Level Agreement (SLA) is to formalise the arrangement between the Department of Conservation (DOC; customer) and Project Jonah NZ Inc. (PJ; service provider) for a further three-year period, 2024-2027. This document outlines the funding and in-kind support provided by the Department to Project Jonah, in exchange for the defined level of services. This agreement follows on from a previous Service Level Agreement of 2021-2024.

## 3 Service Review

This SLA is valid from the Commencement Date shown below. This SLA should be reviewed annually, by the signatories, prior to 30 June (30 June 2025 being the date for the first annual review, annually thereafter).

At each annual review an assessment of the key performance indicators (KPIs) will be conducted to review success and progress, using the annual review template.

Review of this SLA can also occur in the event of significant change to the customer need, service delivery, or funding situation (i.e. in the case that third party funding becomes available).

### **COMMENCEMENT DATE**

01 July 2024

### **DATE OF TERMINATION**

30 June 2027

## 4 Description of Service Provider

PJ is a registered charity with a volunteer network that works toward the conservation and individual welfare of marine mammals. PJ aims to take positive action for conservation through direct assistance and/or support to incidents involving marine mammals, more specifically:

- through the provision of first aid to stranded or injured marine mammals,
- maintaining of a network of trained volunteers,
- maintaining of equipment to assist with stranding responses,
- implementation of education and awareness campaigns to promote marine mammal conservation.

PJ provides a significant contribution to the management of marine mammal strandings across New Zealand. This involves the building and maintaining of a trained volunteer network to respond and assist at strandings, a training and currency programme that is valued by DOC, Iwi and broader communities. It also provides an education and advocacy programme that is well received by communities.

## 5 Commitment to SLA

DOC has retained a close working relationship with PJ, with many instances of good collaboration in support of marine mammal incidents. This positive engagement resulted in the establishment of a memorandum of understanding between these parties. DOC considers there is potential to grow the relationship to support greater conservation outcomes for New Zealand. For this reason, a shared commitment to work together under an SLA was identified in 2015. This commitment was reaffirmed in 2018 with a further three years of funding to continue the relationship, but also ensure that Project Jonah have the opportunities they need to become a self-sustaining entity. In 2021 it was recognised that PJ continued to provide a valuable service to DOC, but that there was potential for improvements in DOC's stranding capabilities through an expanded training programme. During the 2024 review, it was once again recognised that Project Jonah provides an essential service to DOC, however concerns were raised regarding the sustainable, long-term financing of Project Jonah. For this reason, we have included reporting requirements (in section 7.5) relating to the assumption that is outlined in 6.3.

## 6 Scope of SLA

### 6.1 In scope services

PJ will provide and undertake the following services and actions:

- A fit for purpose marine mammal medic training course
- An annual marine mammal medic training programme
- A database of volunteers trained and available to assist with marine mammal incidents
- Under timely and reasonable request from DOC, an appropriate level of support at marine mammal incidents, including remotely
- Safe equipment suited to assist with marine mammal incidents
- Provision of staff able to represent PJ at the SLA review meetings as well as other ad hoc meetings identified as necessary to progress the SLA
- Organisation and delivery of one regional stranding response training workshop per year (focus and priority given to DOC staff and Iwi partners, although at times some external stakeholders may also be included)

DOC will provide the following:

- Funding of \$60k per annum for three years from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2027
- Advice and opportunities for PJ staff and key volunteers to train in key areas in relation to marine mammal incidents (e.g. CIMS) in line with the Key Performance Indicators listed below
- An agreed process, timetable and staff to support the annual review of the SLA, as well as other ad hoc meetings identified as necessary to progress the SLA
- Guidance on regions that should be prioritised for the regional stranding response workshop (and a list of key contacts)

## 6.2 Out of scope services

PJ is not responsible for managing stranding incidents, unless mutually agreed upon by DOC and PJ representatives.

PJ is not responsible for managing lwi relationships or consultation during stranding events.

PJ is not responsible for training DOC staff in marine mammal euthanasia techniques or providing advice on techniques.

## 6.3 Assumptions

PJ will continue to seek a third-party sponsor that would enable the delivery of the services identified under the SLA, and other activities as agreed between PJ and the sponsor. This sponsor may be a single entity, a commercial organisation, or a combination of many parties, with the goal of providing sustainable income to ensure PJ exists beyond the term of this SLA.

# 7 Service management

Delivery of the SLA will be undertaken by PJ staff and volunteers in collaboration with relevant DOC staff.

Oversight of the SLA as a whole will be administered by PJ staff in collaboration with DOC's Manager of Marine Species Team. Risks, benefits, opportunities and threats that arise from the SLA to be shared and discussed openly between PJ and DOC staff. These discussions to be undertaken as appropriate throughout the life of the SLA.

## 7.1 Key performance indicators (KPIs)

- 1 PJ and DOC share, review and agree upon the content of the marine mammal medic course beginning 1 July and finalised by 1 September of each year.
- 2 PJ and DOC agree an annual training schedule by 1 September of each year.
- 3 PJ provide DOC with at least 24 guaranteed places on the marine mammal medic course over the three-year period.
- 4 Requests for participation by DOC staff to attend public training sessions beyond these guaranteed places to be considered and, if reasonable, facilitated on a case-by-case basis following discussion between PJ and DOC officials.
- 5 PJ document and provide evidence to DOC by 1 June of each year that the relevant training is undertaken with full regard to the safety and wellbeing of participants, and with full account of relevant legislative requirements.
- 6 PJ maintain an up-to-date database of volunteers and provides evidence of this to DOC in an annual report on the 1 June each year, including evidence data is held securely and with approval from each volunteer.
- 7 PJ staff and key volunteers, provide to DOC annual evidence of their commitment to support the CIMS structure and process as and when implemented by DOC in support of a marine mammal incident.

- 8 DOC to provide timely advice and information to PJ on any legislative, health & safety and/or procedural changes that directly affect the response to marine mammal incidents and strandings.
- 9 PJ staff and volunteers provide support to DOC as and when reasonably requested to assist with marine mammal incidents.
- 10 PJ to maintain, and document, that all equipment used during training or actual stranding incidents meets all relevant statutory requirements and that staff and volunteers are trained in the safe operation of the equipment.
- 11 DOC regional staff to enable participation by PJ staff and key volunteers in support of any debrief undertaken following a marine mammal incident.
- 12 DOC and PJ undertake an annual review of this SLA by no later than 30 June with any mutually agreed recommendations recorded and reviewed into the SLA by no later than 1 July.
- 13 DOC and PJ work collaboratively on media enquiries relating to marine mammal incidents or matters that fall to this SLA based on the established media protocols and messages in Appendix II.
- 14 PJ and DOC to create standard course content and structure for a two day expanded staff training, this should be reviewed annually based on feedback.
- 15 DOC to consult with Ops Managers and Directors annually and nominate one Region or District for expanded training course per year.
- 16 DOC and PJ to deliver a two-day expanded training course based on agreed course content and structure in the suggested region or district each year.
- 17 If an exclusive (or private) training session is requested by DOC, on top of the one provided under KPIs 14-16, (to train staff, key stakeholders, members of related agencies, Iwi, etc.), PJ will make every effort to accommodate this request at a mutually agreeable time and location, with DOC meeting any reasonable and related expenses incurred by PJ.

## 7.2 Key performance assessment

KPI	Assessment criteria	By when	By who
1	DOC has seen, reviewed, and approved content for the medic course, assuring it is in line with DOC Marine Mammal Readiness and Response SOP.	1 July - 1 September	Daren Grover (PJ) and Hannah Hendriks (DOC)
2	DOC and PJ agree on an annual training schedule, with at least one training session implemented annually in each of the key regional areas.	1 September	Daren Grover (PJ) and Hannah Hendriks (DOC)
3 - 4	When the year's training programme is released: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The training schedule is communicated internally within DOC via intranet notices, distribution lists, and emails to Ops Managers.</li> <li>ii. interest of attendance is gathered from staff to determine spaces required.</li> </ol>	When the training schedule is released (around July) and throughout	Hannah Hendriks (DOC)  Operations Managers and staff (DOC)

5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. There is a Health and Safety (H&amp;S) section of the training to inform trainees of H&amp;S requirements at a stranding.</li> <li>ii. A H&amp;S plan is produced in preparation for the physical afternoon session of the training.</li> </ul>	Throughout	Daren Grover/Louisa Hawkes (PJ)
6	Statement of meta data describing the system, security, data collection and data exists and is provided to DOC annually.	1 July	Daren Grover/Louisa Hawkes (PJ)
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. CIMS resources are available via the <a href="#">National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)</a>. Resources specific to whale strandings are outlined in the DOC SOP. These are studied by PJ staff and key volunteers regularly in preparation for use at stranding events. Copies of these resources are kept in stranding kits for reference.</li> <li>ii. Key PJ staff will attend CIMS training where possible with guidance from DOC.</li> <li>iii. When CIMS structure implemented by DOC, PJ will be included and participate where necessary. Recording of this process should be completed by both parties in any debrief documentation. DOC staff managing a significant stranding with PJ assistance may be contacted by National Office staff to reflect on this KPI.</li> </ul>	Throughout	Hannah Hendriks (DOC) and PJ staff and senior volunteers
8	DOC will inform PJ of any relevant changes to legislation, H&S, and/or procedure, including changes to the SOP, in sufficient time that any changes necessary can be made to training course material and procedures.	Throughout, as changes occur	Hannah Hendriks, in consultation with DOC's Health and Safety Team
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. On DOC's request PJ will respond to a stranding in accordance with the flow chart in Appendix I.</li> <li>ii. PJ senior stranding coordinator/s and trained volunteer medics to attend the marine mammal incident as soon as is practicable.</li> <li>iii. Success of PJ (and trained volunteer support) response to a marine mammal incident to be discussed and measured at that incident's debrief.</li> </ul>	Throughout	Relevant DOC and PJ staff
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Asset register is kept up to date and provided to DOC annually.</li> <li>ii. A comprehensive audit of equipment is undertaken annually by PJ after the summer stranding season and prior to medic</li> </ul>	By 1 July	Daren Grover (PJ) and Hannah Hendriks (DOC)



	<p>courses beginning. Equipment will be assessed for safety during this time.</p> <p>iii. Stock assessment should also occur with any equipment taken to and used at a stranding or training event.</p>		
11	If requested by DOC, PJ staff participate in stranding debriefing.	Throughout	Relevant DOC and PJ staff
12	Annual review of SLA undertaken by DOC and PJ with all recommendations recorded and a change process agreed between DOC and PJ, as per template in Appendix III.	Start 1 March, finalise by 1 July	Hannah Hendriks (DOC) and Daren Grover (PJ), with other staff as considered necessary
13	<p>i. When responding to media enquiries, or preparing a media release specifically relating to a marine mammal incident or matter that falls under this SLA, each party will inform and consult with the other where necessary to ensure full clarity and alignment in messaging.</p> <p>ii. Any conflicts, complaints, or issues will be discussed between the two parties in the first instance and attempts will be made to address and resolve directly and not through the media or any third party.</p>	Throughout	DOC staff (those leading on the stranding incident) and PJ staff
14	<p>i. A two-day course outline is available that covers elements of classroom and practical training including stranding response and SOPs, working with tangata whenua, health and safety, euthanasia, sampling and data collection, mass strandings, whale/dolphin refloatation methods.</p> <p>ii. Course content and structure is reviewed after each course based on feedback.</p> <p>ii. The appropriate course and skills are added to DOCLearn to record staff training records.</p>	<p>i. TBA</p> <p>ii and iii. After each course</p>	<p>Hannah Hendriks, Mike Ogle, other relevant DOC staff, Daren Grover (PJ)</p> <p>Hannah Hendriks (DOC), Daren Grover (PJ)</p> <p>Hannah Hendriks (DOC)</p>
15	<p>i. One identified DOC Region or District per year for expanded course</p> <p>ii. Ops Manager/Director approval to commit staff time and resources to receiving and assisting with the training</p> <p>ii. Approval for national staff to commit time and resources to running/assisting with course</p>	Arranged by December annually.	Marine Species Team and relevant DOC Operations Manager/Directors

16	i. One expanded training course for DOC staff is run each year in nominated area (from KPI 15), to the satisfaction of hosting Region or District. ii. Local iwi are invited where relevant ii. Feedback is received at the end of the course v. Trained staff are recorded in DOCLearn.	Annually, timing will vary.	Daren Grover (PJ), Hannah Hendriks, relevant local DOC staff.
17	i. When the year's training programme is being developed, interest is gathered from staff for private trainings ii. Requests for additional private trainings are considered by Project Jonah	When the training schedule is released and throughout	Relevant DOC staff  Daren Grover (PJ)

### 7.3 Roles and responsibilities

Organisation	Position in SLA	Name (as of July 2024)	Responsibilities
Project Jonah	Chair	Tahnee Gudsell	Strategic oversight & direction of Project Jonah
Project Jonah	General Manager	Daren Grover	Manages and directs day to day operations of Project Jonah
Project Jonah	Office Manager	Louisa Hawkes	Performs day to day operations of Project Jonah
DOC	Relationship Manager for SLA	Malene Felsing	Manage Project Jonah relations nationally and end-of-term review of this SLA
DOC	Assistant relationship manager	Hannah Hendriks	Manage annual review of SLA, general SLA implementation, and day-to-day relationship management

### 7.4 Service costs

DOC agrees to pay Project Jonah \$60,000 per annum for three years, starting from the commencement date of this SLA.

Note all monetary values mentioned are excluding GST.

## 7.5 Service level reporting

Using the Annual Review Template, Project Jonah and DOC will review the performance of the parties against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and their associated assessment criteria annually between 1 March and 1 July. This will include:

- Annual budget planning and account for spend under the SLA
- General comments on the year
- Successes and challenges
- Joint recommendations for improvement
- Progress against KPIs and relevant evidence, including:
  - Volunteer database statement of metadata
  - Asset register and annual audit
  - Feedback from DOC staff (collected by Relationship Manager)
- Update on sustainable, long-term financing of Project Jonah

## 7.6 End-of-term review

The SLA term ends on 30 June 2027. During the final year of the SLA, thought should be given to reviewing the Service Level Agreement.

The suggested approach is to:

- Provide Project Jonah the opportunity to outline their preference for the ongoing relationship
- Assess Project Jonah current financial status
- Collate feedback and assessments from annual reviews
- Obtain feedback from DOC Regional Operations
- Identify options (with risks and opportunities) for the continued relationship and present these to the Deputy Director General, Biodiversity Heritage and Visitors.

9(2)(b)(ii)

Released under the Official Information Act

## Appendix II – DOC and Project Jonah marine mammal strandings media protocols and media messages

Agreed between DOC and Project Jonah February 2016

### **Roles**

#### **Department of Conservation**

The Department of Conservation (DOC) administers the Marine Mammals Protection Act 1978 and accordingly is responsible for leading management of marine mammal stranding events. DOC consults and works closely with mana whenua iwi, Project Jonah and any other marine mammal rescue groups involved on the direction of rescues and decisions taken.

DOC's responsibilities include:

- Protecting the welfare of stranded animals
- Disposing of any dead marine mammals
- Ensuring the health and safety of staff, volunteers and the public
- Enabling research including the collection of scientific samples

#### **Project Jonah**

Project Jonah is a registered charity and voluntary organisation promoting marine mammal welfare and protection. Project Jonah runs Marine Mammal Medic training programmes throughout New Zealand to train volunteers in the techniques for rescuing stranded marine mammals.

Project Jonah volunteer members assist DOC staff in rescuing stranded marine mammals and can mobilise large numbers to assist particularly at mass strandings. Experienced Project Jonah members may be part of the DOC incident management structure for managing mass stranding events.

### **DOC and Project Jonah media protocols and joint media messages**

#### **Media protocols**

- In line with DOC's responsibility for managing and directing marine mammal strandings, DOC leads the provision of information to media about the management of marine mammal strandings and decisions taken.
- Project Jonah staff provide information to media about their role and involvement in stranding events.
- Both DOC and Project Jonah may provide updates on the progress of marine mammal rescues through websites and social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter.
- As far as is practicable, DOC and Project Jonah will coordinate and share media and Internet information and material, including sharing images as appropriate.

- DOC and Project Jonah will as much as possible acknowledge in media information the key role played by each and our working closely together in rescues of stranded marine mammals.

#### **Joint media messages**

- New Zealand has one of the world's highest rates of whale strandings and is recognised as a world leader in successful whale rescues. Much of this success is thanks to DOC and Project Jonah working together, as well as the important support of iwi, local communities and other marine mammal rescue groups and volunteers.
- DOC is responsible for managing rescues of stranded whales and dolphins but makes decisions on the direction of the rescue response in consultation with mana whenua iwi, Project Jonah and other marine mammal rescue groups when they are involved.
- DOC appreciates the assistance and support of Project Jonah in working with DOC staff to rescue stranded whales and dolphins. Project Jonah marine mammal medics can play a key role in rescues of stranded marine mammals. Those with considerable experience, in particular, can valuably assist DOC staff in the response and management of whale strandings.
- Project Jonah's ability to mobilise large numbers of its marine mammal medics for mass whale and dolphin stranding rescues greatly assists DOC with managing such events.
- DOC encourages people wanting to be involved in rescues of stranded marine mammals to attend a Project Jonah Marine Mammal Medic course. Medics who complete this course will be well equipped in rescuing stranded whales and dolphins and can act as a role model to untrained rescuers. Knowing the rescue process, including health and safety risks, enables the process to run more safely and smoothly.
- DOC also appreciates other logistical assistance Project Jonah medics can provide at stranding events, including taking on tasks such as providing safety briefings to volunteers or managing traffic and car parking.

## Appendix III – Annual review template

### Department of Conservation and Project Jonah Service Level Agreement Annual Review – Template

This document should be used to review the performance of the Department of Conservation (DOC) and Project Jonah (PJ) against the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and their associated assessment criteria as agreed in the Service Level Agreement (SLA; DOC-2213663), signed June 2015. The KPIs and associated assessment criteria as presented in this document have been shortened. Please see pages 6-9 in the SLA for full details.

Space for general comments and recommendations on the overall process, SLA, and relationship has been made at the top of this document.

#### **Overall Review**

**Key summary points from Project Jonah's perspective on working through SLA through the previous year:**

- 

**Success elements:**

- 

**Challenges, focussing on critical issues that would resolve the challenge:**

- 

**Key summary points from DOC's perspective on working through SLA through the previous year:**

- 

**Success elements:**

- 

**Challenges, focussing on critical issues that would resolve the challenge:**

Joint recommendations for improvement:

Key Performance Indicators review						
No.	Key performance indicator (summarised)	Assessment criteria (summarised)	Timeline	Comments and evidence	Critical issue present that is limiting successful delivery of KPI	Recommendations
1	Marine medic course	DOC has seen, reviewed, and approved content for the medic course	Annually, 1 July – 1 September			
2	Annual training schedule	DOC and PJ agree on an annual training schedule	Annually, by 1 September			
3	DOC 24 guaranteed spaces	i. The training schedule is communicated internally within DOC via intranet notices, distribution lists, and emails to Ops Managers	When the training schedule is released (around July) and throughout			
4	Requests for extended participation	ii. Interest of attendance is gathered from staff to determine spaces and/or private sessions required				
5	Health and safety requirements	i. There is a H&S section of the training to inform trainees of H&S requirements at a stranding ii. A health and safety plan is produced in preparation for the physical afternoon session of the training	At creation of course content and throughout			
6	Volunteer database	Statement of meta data describing the system, security, data collection and data exists and is provided to DOC	Annually, by 1 July			
7	Commitment to CIMS structure	i. CIMS resources are provided by DOC to PJ to study. Copies are kept in stranding kits	Ongoing	<a href="#">See NEMA CIMS third edition resources</a>		



		<p>ii. Key PJ staff will attend CIMS training where possible</p> <p>iii. When CIMS structure implemented by DOC, PJ will be included and participate where necessary. Recording this process should be completed by both parties in any debrief documentation.</p>				
8	Updates on any legislative, H&S, or procedural changes	DOC will inform PJ of any relevant changes to legislation, H&S, and/or procedure, including changes to the SOP,	in sufficient time that any changes necessary can be made to training course material and procedures			
9	PJ support to DOC at marine mammal incidents	<p>i. On DOC's request PJ will respond to a stranding in accordance with the flow chart in Appendix I.</p> <p>ii. PJ to attend the marine mammal incident ASAP</p> <p>iii. Success of PJ (and trained volunteer support) response to be discussed at debrief.</p>	Case by case			
10	PJ equipment safety	<p>Asset register is kept up to date and provided to DOC annually.</p> <p>ii. An audit of equipment is undertaken annually by PJ after the summer stranding season and prior to medic courses beginning. Equipment will be assessed for safety during this time.</p>	Annually, by 1 July			

		iii. Stock assessment should also occur with any equipment taken to a stranding or training event				
11	DOC and PJ debriefs	If requested PJ staff participate in stranding debrief	Case by case			
12	Annual review of SLA	Annual review of SLA undertaken by DOC and PJ with all recommendations recorded and a change process agreed between DOC and PJ	Annually, 1 March-1 July			
13	Media response	i. When responding to media enquiries, or preparing a media release specifically relating to a marine mammal incident or matter that falls under this SLA, each party will inform and consult with the other where necessary to ensure full clarity and alignment in messaging ii. Any conflicts, complaints, or issues will be discussed between the two parties in the first instance and attempts will be made to address and resolve directly and not through the media or any third party.	Case by case			
14	Creation of expanded staff training course	v. A two-day course outline is available that covers elements of classroom and practical training including stranding response and SOPs, working with tangata whenua, health and safety, euthanasia, sampling and data collection, mass strandings, whale/dolphin refloatation methods vi. Course content and structure is reviewed after each course based on feedback	December 2021			

		i. The appropriate course and skills are added to DOCLearn to record staff training records.				
15	DOC nominate region for expanded training	v. One identified DOC Region or District per year for expanded course v. Ops Manager/Director approval to commit staff time and resources to receiving and assisting with the training Approval for national staff to commit time and resources to running/assisting with course	By August			
16	Expanded DOC staff training course	v. One expanded training course for DOC staff is run each year in nominated area (from KPI 15), to the satisfaction of hosting Region or District. vi. Local iwi are invited where relevant ii. Feedback is received at the end of the course viii. Trained staff are recorded in DOCLearn.	Annually, timing will vary			
17	Additional requests for private medic courses	ii. When the year's training programme is being developed, interest is gathered from staff for private trainings v. Requests for additional private trainings are considered by Project Jonah	When the training schedule is released and throughout			

Any other matters of note: