

I. Title of Application:

“Application for a Permit to Import 2.0 Atlantic bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) into the United States from Hamilton, HM FX,BD”

II. Date of Application:

April 15, 2009

III. Applicant:

The Mirage Casino-Hotel
3400 Las Vegas Blvd. South
Las Vegas, NV 89109
Primary and Responsible Official is David Blasko, Director of Animal Care
Telephone: 702-792-7797
Facsimile: 702-792-7679
Email: dablasko@mirage.com

Animal Holder:

Dolphin Quest/Quest Global Management
1880 Harbor Island Drive
San Diego, Ca 92101
Primary and Responsible Official is Jeff Jouett, Chief Executive Officer
Telephone: 619-542-1503
Cell: 619-405-0008
Facsimile: 619.542.1513
Email: jjouett@dolphinquest.org

IV. Description of the Marine Mammals and the Proposed Activity

A. Statement of Work

The Mirage is requesting an import permit for 2.0 (male.female) mature captive born Atlantic bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) from Dolphin Quest in Hamilton, HM FX, Bermuda, for public display. The animals will be on breeding loan to The Mirage, from Dolphin Quest to help broaden the genetics of the managed dolphin population in the United States. The initial term of this breeding loan will be for three years and can be renewed as needed to optimize the genetic diversity of the respective populations. No non-targeted marine mammals or ESA-listed species will be affected by this import. We are requesting a permit for the period of June 1, 2009-May 31, 2010.

B. Summary of Marine Mammals to be Taken or Imported

The 2.0 captive born Atlantic bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) will be imported as part of a long-term breeding loan agreement set forth between **Dolphin Quest**, Hamilton, Bermuda and **The Mirage**, Dolphin Habitat, Las Vegas, NV, USA. The import of the 2.0 Atlantic bottlenose dolphins will not have a negative impact on wild or the captive dolphin populations. In fact, the import will benefit the genetics of the captive population as a whole. Dolphin Quest and The Mirage discussed multiple options, including artificial insemination, to accomplish breeding goals and it was determined that the relocation of these two animals best suited these long term goals. *Tursiops truncatus* as a species is not ESA-listed, it is CITES Appendix II.

C. Description of the Proposed Activity

1. The proposed date for import of 2.0 captive born Atlantic bottlenose dolphins is June 1st, 2009. The animals will be transported from Dolphin Quest, Hamilton, HM FX, BD to The Mirage, Las Vegas, NV, USA. The dolphins will be lifted in a dolphin stretcher and placed in the transport boxes on a flat bed truck. The boxes will then be filled with water to a depth of approximately 18". The dolphins will be transported by truck from Dolphin Quest to the airport in Hamilton, Bermuda, (BDA). The dolphins will be then flown by exclusive charter cargo aircraft to Las Vegas, (LAS), stopping in Memphis for customs clearance and re-fueling. Once in Las Vegas the boxes with the dolphins inside will be placed on a truck and transported to The Mirage. The dolphins will be placed in the Mirage quarantine pool. Ground transport in Bermuda will be one hour, total air transport including refueling/custom stop is 12 hours, and ground transport in Las Vegas will be 20 minutes. Total transport time from pool to pool estimate is less than 14 hours. Transport will be a "wet" transport. An experienced veterinarian and a minimum of three experienced dolphin husbandry and training staff will accompany the dolphins throughout the entire trip.
2. The requested duration of the permit is one year from time of issue.
3. This is a request for import of 2.0 Atlantic bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) from Dolphin Quest, Hamilton, Bermuda to The Mirage, Dolphin Habitat, Las Vegas, NV, USA. One mature male Atlantic bottle-nose dolphin; 415 pounds; 102 inches long; 10 years old; NOAA ID# NOA0005838; JU99 M-1 (Sire-NOA0000668/Dam-NOA0004927). One mature male Atlantic bottlenose dolphin; 385 pounds; 101 inches long; 11 years old; NOAA ID# 0005767; 598 M-1 (Sire-NOA0000668/Dam-NOA0000691). Neither animal is a proven breeder; however both show no reproductive deficiencies upon examination.

D. If Marine Mammals are to be Collected from the Wild

N/A (All questions pertaining to section D are not applicable. There will be no animals collected from the wild for this permit. Both animals were born in captivity.)

E. If Marine Mammals are to be Imported into the U.S.

1. The names and qualifications of the personnel who will be accompanying the animals during transport are Daniel Blasko, Jim Hudson, Michelle Campbell and Sam Dover, DVM. Please see the attached (**CV folder**) for the curriculum vitae for each individual mentioned above.
2. The transport containers are 125 inches long, 35 inches wide and 45 inches tall. (**Transport Unit folder**) Average depth of the water is 28 inches, which totals to approximately 500 gallons of water. The dolphins will be suspended by a sling in the water to maintain their comfort and will be monitored throughout the transport in accordance with IATA (2004) regulations. These containers have been used before with no adverse impact to the animals. Water temperature and animal temperatures will be monitored throughout the transport. Ice will be available to prevent overheating. Cabin pressure will be maintained at <5000ft. Lighting and noise will be minimal to maximize comfort for the animal. Animals will be fasted 18 hours prior to transport. Sam Dover DVM will be the Veterinarian that will accompany the animals during transport.

3. The 2.0 Atlantic bottlenose dolphins will be transported from Dolphin Quest, Hamilton, Bermuda (BDA). The dolphins will then be flown by exclusive charter cargo aircraft to Las Vegas (LAS), stopping for customs clearance, FWS and/or USDA clearances as needed and for re-fueling of the charter. Options for re-fueling and clearances to include Atlanta GA, Newark NJ or Memphis TN. Ground transportation in Bermuda will be one hour. The total air transport including the stop in Memphis is 12 hours. Ground transportation in Las Vegas will be 20 minutes. The total transport time from pool to pool estimate is less than 14 hours. The transport will be a “wet” transport.
4. Please see attached **(Letter of Cert. folder)** for written certification from attending veterinarian responsible for the animals during import and post-import care.
5. The 2.0 Atlantic bottlenose dolphins will be exported from the country of Bermuda. The two animals were captive born at Dolphin Quest, Hamilton, HM FX, BD.
6. The 2.0 Atlantic bottlenose dolphins were captive born in Hamilton, HM FX, Bermuda, not taken from the wild. Not applicable.
7. The 2.0 Atlantic bottlenose dolphins were not captured from the wild and Dolphin Quest Bermuda is licensed by the Government of Bermuda to hold marine mammals for public display. They were captive born at Dolphin Quest in Hamilton, HM FX, BD a member of the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums. The dolphins housed at Dolphin Quest Bermuda are held in compliance with the laws of the country to hold animals for public display purposes.
8. The 2.0 Atlantic bottlenose dolphins were captive born at Dolphin Quest, Hamilton, HM FX, BD and will be on breeding loan to The Mirage Dolphin Habitat. The agreement set forth will not result in an increased demand for marine mammals to be taken from the wild or impact the wild population. In fact, it will help to expand the genetics of the captive population in the United States.
9. The import is not necessary for the protection or welfare of the marine mammals. However the import of these 2.0 Atlantic bottlenose dolphins will help with diversifying the genetics of the dolphin population at The Mirage.

F. Effects of the Proposed Activity

(a) The proposed activity should not have any effect on the individual animal’s behavior or physiology. Dolphin transports are done quite often and have not shown any long term effects on the animals. We will have several Mirage trainers go to Bermuda to help with the transport and gain experience with the animals prior to transport. Dolphin Quest will have a trainer familiar with the animals accompanying the animals during transport.

Trainers from Bermuda will stay as needed in Las Vegas to make sure the transition goes smoothly. The behavior modification techniques at Dolphin Quest are very similar to the techniques used at The Mirage. One of the current Mirage trainers is a former trainer of these dolphins in Bermuda and is very familiar with them. The animal care staff at Dolphin Quest and at The Mirage has extensive experience in transitioning animals into new social settings.

(b) There will be no effect on the wild population. We anticipate little or no effects on the Dolphin Quest population because the animals are frequently mixed and separated within their population. These animals will not be released to the wild.

(c) No member of the general public will have access to the animals during transport. Both animals will be given a thorough medical exam 30 days prior to transport as well as

an additional exam one week prior. Once the animals arrive in Las Vegas another exam will be given to make sure the animals are still healthy.

(d) There will be no effect on the marine ecosystem, because the animals were born in captivity and they will not be released to the wild.

V. Export Requirements

N/A (We are requesting import of 2.0 Atlantic bottlenose dolphins. This section is not applicable to our application.)

VI. General Requirements for Public Display

A. Siegfried and Roy's Secret Garden and Dolphin Habitat at The Mirage

AKA: Mirage Resorts Inc.

AKA: The Mirage Dolphin Habitat

3400 Las Vegas Blvd. South

Las Vegas, NV 89109

Hours of operation vary by season:

Winter:

- 11:00 am to 5:30 pm (Monday through Friday)
- 10:00 am to 5:30 pm (Weekends and Holidays)

Spring:

- 11:00 am to 6:30 pm (Monday through Friday)
- 10:00 am to 6:30 pm (Weekends and Holidays)

Summer:

- 10:00 am to 7:00 pm (Daily)

Fall:

- 11:00 am to 6:30 pm (Monday through Friday)
- 10:00 am to 6:30 pm (Weekends and Holidays)

Admission Costs:

- \$15.00 per adult
- \$10.00 per child (Age 4-12)
- Children 3 and under are free.

Please see **(Brochures folder)**

B. USDA License # 88-C-0074 (USDA folder)

C. The educational content and programs offered by Siegfried and Roy's Secret Garden and Dolphin Habitat at The Mirage are in accordance with:

- The Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums, Education Standards
- The National Science Standards
- The Nevada State Education Standards K-12

The Secret Garden & Dolphin Habitat at the Mirage offers multiple levels of learning through programs designed for visitors who have different levels of knowledge and interest.

Basic

- Viewing of animals in habitats above and below water.
- Educational presentation about the Mirage dolphins via television monitor (available continuously and located in the underwater viewing area).
- Educational signage for each species is located throughout the facility.
- Educational personnel (Tour Guides) are located throughout the facility and are available for questions.
- Educational presentations (Animal Training Sessions) are scheduled throughout the day and narrated by education staff (Tour Guides).

Advanced

- Formal Education Programs (program descriptions attached):
 - o Teacher's Guide
 - o Kindergarten Education Program
 - o First Grade Education Program
 - o Second Grade Education Program
 - o Third Grade Education Program
 - o Upper Grade Education Program
 - Job Shadow Program (program description attached):
 - Animal Care Job Shadow Program
 - Animal Care Education Job Shadow Program
 - Aquarist Job Shadow Program
 - Life Support Job Shadow Program
 - Clark County School District & The Mirage's Dolphin Trainer Work Experience Job Shadow Program
 - University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Animal Care Internship Program
 - University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Aquarist Internship Program
 - University of Nevada, Las Vegas – College of Education – Science Methods Workshop.
 - Trainer for a Day Program
1. VIP – Behind the Scenes Tour
 2. Brochures: **(Brochures folder)**
 - Siegfried and Roy's Secret Garden and Dolphin Habitat General Brochure
 - Careers in Marine Science
 - Life Support System
 - Trainer for a Day
 3. Fact Sheets for Job Shadow Program:
 - The Mirage Dolphins
 - Anatomy of a Dolphin
 - Cetacean/Dolphin Information
 - General Dolphin Information
 4. Additional educational information is available online.

VII. Previous Permits

There are no previous permits submitted for the taking or import of marine mammals for The Mirage. All areas in section VII are not applicable.

VIII. Certification and Signature

"I hereby certify that the foregoing information is complete, true, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that this information is submitted for the purpose of obtaining a permit under the following statute and the regulations promulgated there under, as indicated in section I. of this application:

The Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) and regulations (50 CFR Part 216).

I also understand that any false statement may subject me to the criminal penalties of 18 U.S.C. 1001, or to penalties provided under the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972."

Signature of Applicant and Date of Signature

Typed or Printed Name of Applicant

David R. Blasko

Title of Applicant

Director of Animal Care