

Lessons Learnt – Remote Wildlife Response



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This talk

Essential tools for wildlife response

What is remoteness?

Case study: *MS Oliva*,
Tristan da Cunha
Challenges, effect on
response, recommendations

Conclusion



Essential items for successful wildlife response operation?

- Wildlife contingency plans
- Tiered response system
- Integration at management level
- Health and safety
- Resources
 - Equipment
 - Human resources
 - Professional wildlife responders
 - Volunteer management
 - Facilities
- Response options
 - Monitoring
 - Euthanasia
 - Rehabilitation
- Best practice, standards and protocols
- Wildlife impact assessment
- Post-release survival monitoring
- Exercises and training
- Cost recovery and finances



= Wildlife Responder's Toolbox

Essential items for successful wildlife response operation?

Wildlife contingency plans

- Tiered response system
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Resources

Equipment

Human resources

- Professional wildlife responders**

- Volunteer management**

Facilities

- Response options
 - Monitoring
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Best practice, standards and protocols

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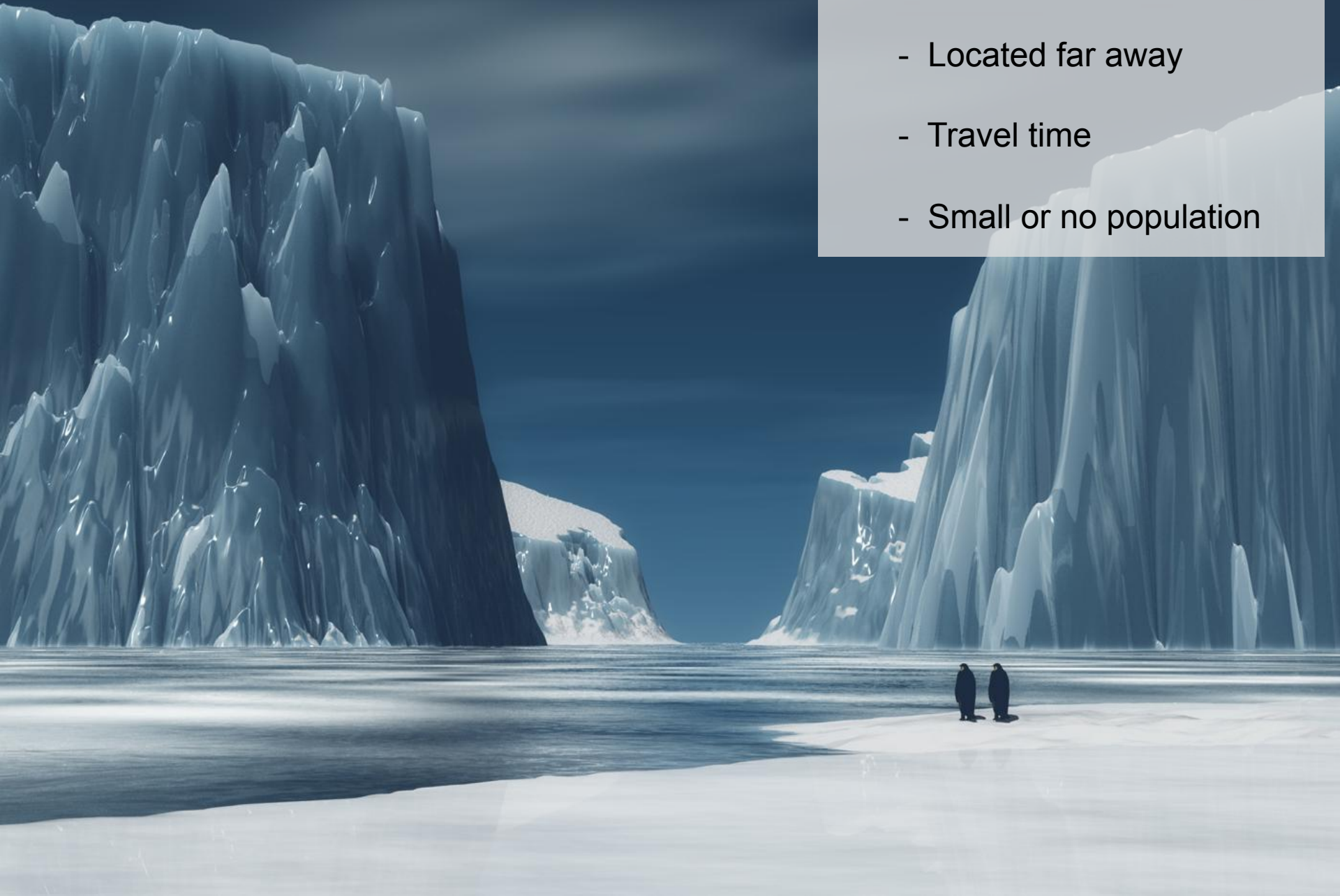
= Wildlife Responder's Toolbox

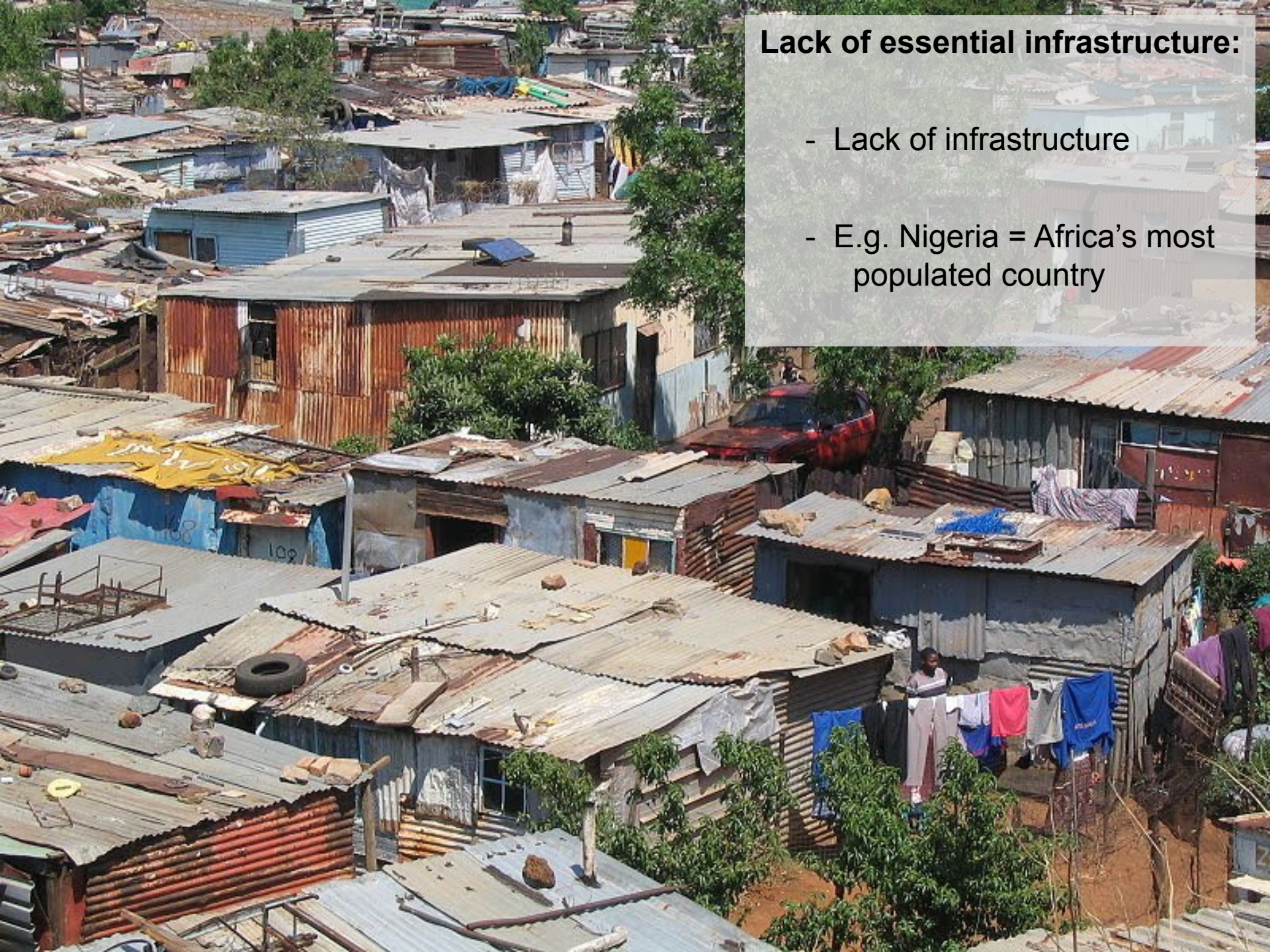
So what is “*remoteness*”?



Geographical remoteness:

- Located far away
- Travel time
- Small or no population

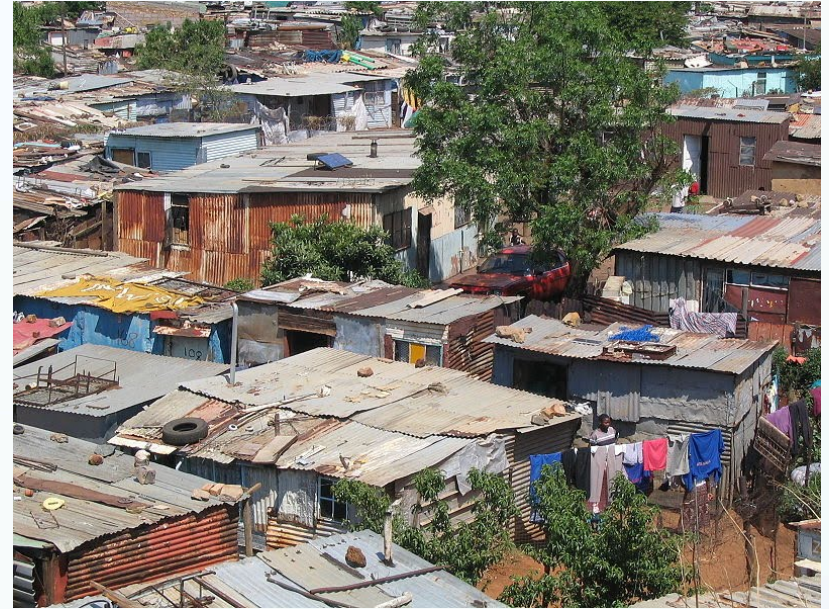




Lack of essential infrastructure:

- Lack of infrastructure
- E.g. Nigeria = Africa's most populated country

So what is “remoteness”?



Lack of essential items in the “Responders Toolbox” to achieve a successful wildlife response

What happened?

MS Oliva

Ran aground at 04.30 on 16th March 2011 at Spinners Point, the far north-west promontory of Nightingale Island.

17 March 2011, crew rescued
18 March 2011, broke in two

±1,500 t bunker fuel spilled
75,300 tonne bulk carrier: length
225 m, beam 32m)

En route from Santos in Brazil to
Singapore carrying soya beans.



remote?

Tristan da Cunha

- Group of active volcanic islands in the South Atlantic
- Most remote inhabited island in the world
- 2,816 km from the nearest land, South Africa and 3,360 km from South America
- Home to 261 British Citizens
- World Heritage site
- Extensive and diverse wildlife
 - Northern Rockhopper penguin
 - ±20,000 – 30,000 prs
 - Atlantic yellow-nosed albatross
 - shearwaters, seals, petrels...





Challenge 1: Planning

Apart from a handful of national Antarctic operators, there is a clear absence of contingency plans that specifically address oil spills adversely affecting wildlife within Antarctic Specially Protected Areas. (Ruoppolo et al. 2012, Polar Record)



- **CHALLENGE**

- No existing plan – reporting and decision making roles not clearly defined
- Hastily done – often all options are not evaluated
- Difference in objectives for success

- **EFFECT ON RESPONSE**

- Potential for the needs of the wildlife to not be sufficiently addressed

- **RECOMMENDATION**

- Contingency plan including wildlife component for high risk remote areas
- Planning and adaptation of command system during remote response
- Good cooperation needed between all stakeholders

Challenge 2: Logistical access



CHALLENGE

- Getting ready – getting there – getting started
- Distance
- Infrastructure
- Safety – high risk to team in case of emergency

EFFECT ON RESPONSE

- Limitations –
 - space
 - team size
 - logistical support
- Delay in response

Challenge 2: Logistical access



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Regional coordination and management of logistical supplies
- Stabilization equipment and stockpiling supplies in high risk areas
- Wildlife responders to maintain and update equipment and supply lists

Challenge 3: Facilities and Log support

“Planning, improvisation and crisis management”

● CHALLENGE

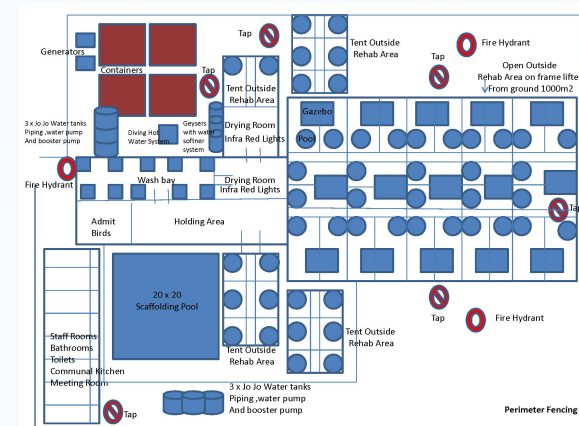
- Limited facilities or options available

● EFFECT ON RESPONSE

- Less than optimal facilities – lead to medical-related problems later on
- Risk of damage to equipment – transport, offloading

● RECOMMENDATIONS

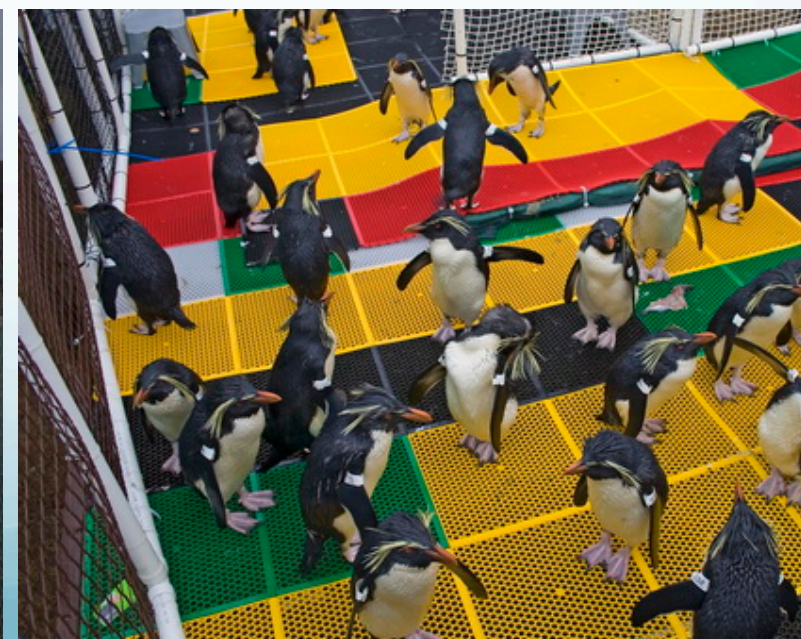
- Planning and information gathering in advance is essential
- Having stabilization equipment in place in high risk areas
- Multi-skilled logistical team required



ICU shed







Release pool



Challenge 4: Human capacity

- **CHALLENGE**

- Limitations in numbers, working hours, experience, availability, cultural diversity

- **EFFECT ON RESPONSE**

- Potential for the needs of the wildlife to not be sufficiently addressed
- Compassion fatigue

- **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- When you take responsibility for animals you have to be able to care for them
- Herd health management techniques must be considered
- Planning – team size need to be adjusted according to local capacity and skills available (tiered response principles)



Challenge 5: Bird care and SOP's

- **CHALLENGE**

- 3,718 Northern Rockhopper penguins admitted
- First time treatment on large scales, adjust SOP's
- Body condition at the time of oiling – post moult
- Window of opportunity – an opportunity to do something that will only be available for a short period of time



Challenge 5: Bird care and SOP's

- **EFFECT ON RESPONSE**
 - Delay in response caused the window of opportunity for successful rehabilitation and release to be missed
- **RECOMMENDATIONS**
 - Recognition and understanding at ICS level for wildlife needs and requirements to meet the window of opportunity to ensure success
 - Depth and experience needed from wildlife responders to manage situation and adapt protocols



Conclusion

Contingency plans

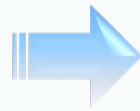


ESSENTIAL

To include wildlife response

Addressing unique aspects and limitations of remote response:

Logistical access



Stabilization equipment and stockpiling supplies in high risk areas

Facilities and log support



Planning, multi-skilled team

Human capacity



Planning, herd health management

Window of opportunity



Planning, depth and experience

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Islanders on Tristan da Cunha – for their dedication



Thank you!



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