

1 This is an additional stress to an already
2 environmentally stressed out area.

3 I really want to thank you for your
4 information. It's been very helpful to me. It's
5 sort of changed my mind in some ways. It is the
6 key, and with my 30 seconds I just want to say to
7 the Navy please be honest with the public. If
8 there is a problem, do not keep it from us.

9 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you, Ms.
10 Mosher.

11 Ms. Barco. Am I reading that
12 correctly?

13 MS. BARCO: Yes.

14 THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay, thank
15 you.

16 MS. BARCO: [Thank [✓] you for the
17 opportunity to speak tonight. My name is Susan
18 Barco and I'm representing the Virginia Aquarium
19 and Marine Science Center in Virginia Beach,
20 Virginia. I'm the stranding response coordinator
21 for that organization and I work regularly with
22 stranded marine mammals and sea turtles.]

23 [✓][While we support the Navy and want
24 our troops to be well-trained, we also want to
25 express our concern for the marine mammal

1 population, especially along the eastern seaboard
2 and in the Navy's operation area.] [302 We recognize
3 the Navy has conducted analyses of the currently
4 available data to develop their results of when
5 and where marine mammals occur. Although we
6 understand the decisions must be made with this
7 current data, we ask the Navy to recognize the
8 uncertainties associated with this data and with
9 their analyses due to a lack of published material
10 on marine mammal presence in our area.] [303 We ask the
11 Navy to continually update and reanalyze the best
12 available data that they can get.] [304 We believe that
13 the lack of directed marine mammal surveys and the
14 unique environment of the Chesapeake Bay, Norfolk
15 Canyon and Cape Hatteras area is an endangered
16 area, especially important and sensitive marine
17 environment. We strongly encourage the Navy to
18 support continued data acquisition and to
19 corroborate with stranding networks in future
20 analysis.

21 A good example of why this is
22 important is that two of our most common marine
23 animals are harbor porpoises and harbor seals, two
24 species that were specifically mentioned as not
25 being sufficient in the data records to create an

1 analysis for. The reason they are not in the data
2 records is because there have been no directed
3 surveys in the winter months in our area which is
4 when those animals occur, not because those
5 animals are not in our area.]

6 Finally, we encourage the Navy to
7 attempt to avoid training in areas and at times
8 when marine mammals are present [305 and to constantly
9 and continually seek new data, new collaborations
10 to update the marine mammal density analyses.

11 Thank you very much.]

12 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you, Ms.
13 Barco.

14 Mr. Asher.

15 MR. ASHER: I'm grateful for the
16 privilege of speaking. I would like to speak from
17 the perspective of these mammals that are affected
18 by this activity.

19 THE HEARING OFFICER: Mr. Asher,
20 before you do that, can I ask you to state your
21 full name please and are you from Virginia?

22 MR. ASHER: I'm Ron Asher and a
23 citizen of Virginia Beach.

24 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

25 MR. ASHER: Science indicates