

VISUAL EXAMINATION BY RESPONSES (V.E.R.) A PRACTICAL TEST TO A DOLPHIN WITH SIGNS OF VISUAL IMPAIRMENT BY OPERANT CONDITIONING TECHNIQUES.

Ruiz, R.*⁽¹⁾ ⁽²⁾, M.M.S.T. Henderson, C.* (
⁽¹⁾W.H.I.T. Welfare & Husbandry Innovative Training
⁽²⁾Adaland Sea Park, Kussadasy, Ad. Turkey

Over the last year, two bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) from the Marine park in Kussadasi Turkey, developed alterations in behavior responses.

The alterations identified during the assessment of one of the dolphins led to a specific location; the left eye, the diagnosis was inconclusive on how much damage was in the peripheral visual function. In this case there were doubts about the vision, but common medical examination was inconclusive, leading the team of trainers to create a practical examination based on responses.

Visual Examination by Responses (V.E.R.) is the systematic and orderly evaluation of visual functionality, a practical test to a Dolphin with signs of visual impairment in only one of the two eyes, using techniques with behaviorism (allowing for structure, direction and making the behavior measurable and observable) The V.E.R. It has two main objectives, to confirm or rule out the presence of a visual impairment and to determine quantitatively the extent to which this change modifies the development of the the dolphin behavior.

This paper will explain methods of desensitization, training and development of a program responses which suppresses the visual range of the functional eye (right), the percentages of responses by the eye with signs of visual impairment (left) and the comparison of results by reversing the process. Also detailing the challenge that supposed performing the test, because each of the responses should be tested on both sides of the face, with the animal in different lighting levels and two types of behavior; high and low impact. Resulting in a future training plan according to the visual ability of the dolphin.