



## A Suggested Elephant Translocation Standard.

Alan Roocroft 2008.

- Request for elephant from an institution.
- Knowledgeable person or selected expert representative from the sending institution goes to review receiving institutions facility, staffing and veterinary capabilities.
- Knowledgeable person or, selected expert representative from sending institution makes recommendations to receiving institution on what as to be changed so elephant will receive a higher or equal standard of care and husbandry as sending at institution. In the case that no standards existed at receiving institution a beneficial medical & husbandry access program should be introduced before the elephant is moved. The BIAZA & EAZA Elephant Management Standards can be used to augment & accompany a beneficial Medical & Husbandry Access Program. Please see below an example of an institutional “Medical & Husbandry Access Program” which could be the basis or start of any training and access program.
- Keepers from the receiving institution will be sent for one month to sending institution for training in the methods used at sending institution so consistency will prevail for the elephant during the translocation. If the sending institution does not have an elephant care program, a zoo will be selected that’s has a proactive elephant training and care philosophy and their program will be adopted.
- If the receiving institution cannot complete recommended changes because of financial reasons or will not because of philosophical grounds, the elephants should not be sent.
- Receiving institution will send sending institution photos and drawings of modifications and changes needed to the receiving institution’s facility in preparation for the elephant’s arrival.
- Knowledgeable person or, selected representative from sending institution will go to inspect receiving institutions facility modifications. Changes will be made to the modifications and or clearance will be given for the transaction to move to the next level.
- In the meantime at the sending institution if it appears that the elephant will be moved previously written transport training goals will be initiated. The elephant will be trained to accept bracelets and chains on both front and rear legs in preparation for the transport. Every consideration for the elephant’s acclimation and comfort will be adopted. A system of transport will be decided; crate, truck or other, depending on vehicle accessibility to the elephant facility and the elephant will be trained and accustomed to the method of transport needed. \* In the case of an air flight, a shipping airline will be contacted so correct standard of elephant accommodation for a plane are known, crate dimensions and crate weight, fitted traveling sumps to collect urine and faeces are standard now, no reach out places are allowed so to protect the planes

wiring and hydraulics. A safe watering system should be considered so extra water being given to the elephant does not end up on the floor of the plane and into the wiring. The identification of accompanying staff, experienced elephant people should be use so all fore seen situations can be anticipated & covered.

- All necessary medical information and records will be obtained and sent to receiving institution. Also the elephants profile and all pertinent physical and mental over views particularly information concerning past incidents of aggressive towards zoo staff and other elephants.
- Select time of the year if the translocation is to be done between a southern institution as sending institution and a northern institution as receiving zoo. Recommended time frame for moving elephants from a warm southern institution to a cold northern institution would be spring when the weather is getting warmer and the elephants can spend more time outside as part of the acclimation process at the new zoo.
- Once the appropriate time frame has been chosen the elephant can be moved. A reputable elephant hauler will be contacted and dates discussed. Or the zoo can move the elephant itself with correct preparation & equipment, this is becoming more popular by the zoo community.
- Persons to accompany the elephant on its journey to the receiving institution would be keepers from both institutions, and an experienced elephant vet.
- Elephant keepers from the sending institution should stay with the elephant at the new institution no less than three weeks as part of the acclimation process.
- Regular status up dates will be sent from the receiving institution to sending institution so the health and welfare of the elephant can be monitored and all possible avenues of support can be given to the animal, staff and zoo.

Many elephants are moved every year without a translocation consideration plan. Elephants in our zoos develop keeper relationships, daily routine expectations, habits and alliances with other elephants should be considered when contemplating an elephant move to another zoo. The move to colder climates for elephants that live in warm all year climates has proven to be one of the hardest transitions for any elephant to make, that combined with minimal attention to idiosyncratic behaviours social likes and dislikes, strengths and weaknesses and individual tolerances can be devastating to an elephant without pre-consideration.

### **Medical and Husbandry Access in Free and Protected Contact.**

Below are listed husbandry access behaviours that are required in a fully operational free or protected contact training program and might be recognized by the BIAZA, EAZA and AZA as the foundation of elephant welfare at a zoo.

1. Blood draws, blood assays, health & viability testing.
2. Tail access, removal of in-growing hairs tail soaks removal of dead skin and immediate treatment if bitten.

3. Foot access, for foot trims, inspections and washes.
4. Mouth inspections, teeth transition and oral health.
5. Eye inspections, ability to recognize & treat eye ailments.
6. Full body washes, skin care and removal of dead skin.
7. Trunk washes, TB testing.
8. \*Rectal access, delivery of large doses of antibiotics and other medications.
9. Stretch position & lie-down, back inspections and dead skin removal.
10. Injection training.
11. Radiograph training, foot structure knowledge.
12. Urine collection training.
13. \*Vulva & penis inspections & access.
14. Tusk washing in male elephants and tusk socket washing in females they have broken there tush.
15. Weighing of the elephant so pregnancies can be followed and so illness and weight loss can be detected.
16. Movement and exercise programs. A to B's in PC and the keeping of a daily exercise log are important.
17. Restraining behaviour, in case restricted movement is necessary.
18. \*Skin biopsies.
19. Saliva collection.
20. Gravity & Hydro-training access for stiff legged elephants.

\* Rectal, vulva, penis & skin biopsy access will probably only be possible for PC handled elephants when there is an ERC, (Elephant Restraint Chute) available.