

**NMFS Office of Protected Species**  
**Review of long beaked common dolphin USE in Oxnard, CA**  
**October 5, 2017**

NMFS completed its review of the Uncommon Stranding Event (USE) for two (2) long-beaked common dolphin (*Delphinus capensis*) strandings reported to NMFS and the California Stranding Network on April 19, 2017. These two dolphins stranded separately, but within 24 hours and 10 nmi of each other. Therefore, this is considered an USE under the terms of the Letters of Authorization for the U.S Navy's Hawaii Southern California Training and Testing (HSTT) under 50 CFR 218 Subpart (H). As previously reported, the Navy verified permitted explosives use within 72 hours before the stranding and 80 nm of the stranding sites.

As reported, on April 19, 2017, two stranded long-beaked common dolphins were reported to the Channel Islands Cetacean Research Unit (CICRU). One animal stranded on Silver Strand Beach in Oxnard, California, and responders were able to necropsy the animal on the beach the same day. The results of the field necropsy were inconclusive, and samples were collected for lab analyses. Based on completed analyses, the animal showed high levels of domoic acid (a neurotoxin produced by diatoms) and heavy metals. At this time, the complete histopathology report is still pending. Because the available information does not support causal connection between the stranding and the Navy's training or testing authorized under the HSTT Letters of Authorization, NMFS concludes that this event does not warrant any actions pursuant to 50 CFR 216.106(e) or 50 CFR 218.78(c). If histopathology findings support a cause of death or stranding other than domoic acid or heavy metal toxicosis, we will update this published report.

The second animal stranded on Reef Way in Oxnard, California, and did not receive a response on the same day. When the team returned on April 20, the carcass had washed off the beach and was not relocated. Consequently the available information regarding the stranding is limited and insufficient to allow NMFS to determine the likely cause(s) of the stranding. Because the available information does not support causal connection between the Navy's training or testing authorized under the HSTT Letters of Authorization and this common dolphin stranding, NMFS concludes that this event does not warrant any actions pursuant to 50 CFR 216.106(e) or 50 CFR 218.78(c).