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March 2012

**Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs**  
Animal Welfare Division

### **Consultation on the Welfare of Wild Animals in Travelling Circuses**

1. Defra is seeking views on a proposed licensing scheme that would promote and safeguard the welfare of wild animals in travelling circuses.
2. Under the proposals, it would be an offence to operate a travelling circus that has wild animals without a licence that covers those animals.
3. A licence would not be issued to anyone who could not demonstrate that they comply with the conditions that a licence would contain.
4. The four conditions would be that:
  - Prescribed welfare standards are complied with, and due regard is given to guidance on specific species,
  - A “lead vet” is appointed and veterinary care provided for all the animals covered by the licence,
  - Staff are competent and available to provide care for the animals at all times, and that
  - “Care Plans” are prepared and followed at all times.
5. The prescribed welfare standards would be strict and cover all aspects of life for a wild animal in a travelling circus including specific reference to standards of housing and environment, training and performance, transport, diet and adding or removing animals from the collection.
6. Formal inspections would be undertaken by Government-appointed specialist vets before a licence may be issued or renewed.

7. Compliance checks would be carried out during the period of a licence, including a combination of announced and unannounced visits both to winter quarters and to tour sites.
8. Failure to comply with a condition or the welfare standards, planning or record keeping requirements could lead to enforcement action.
9. The proposals will apply to England only.

## **Consultation Documents**

10. The following items may be found on Defra's website:

- **Consultation Document**  
The consultation document contains the detailed proposals, and sets out the consultation questions.
- **Draft Guidance for Operators**  
The draft guidance includes the detail of the licence conditions and welfare standards. There is a question in the consultation document that seeks your views on the draft guidance.
- **List of Consultees**  
A list of the individuals and organisations that have been sent a copy of the consultation papers. Please note that responses are welcome from anyone with an interest.
- **Proforma for replies from individuals and organisations**  
If you are replying on behalf of an organisation, or if you find it more convenient than alternative ways to reply, please reply using our proforma. This has been produced in Microsoft Excel format – it should be compatible with all recent versions of the software and it has also been tested with Open Office software. Please note that the pro-forma asks for some personal information. This is so that Defra can validate responses from organisations are genuine. More information about this is included in the form and in the consultation document

11. We welcome your views and comments on the proposals.

## **Obtaining Copies of the Consultation Papers**

12. Electronic copies of the consultation papers may be downloaded from the Defra website at [www.defra.gov.uk/consult/2012/03/01/circus-animals-1203/](http://www.defra.gov.uk/consult/2012/03/01/circus-animals-1203/)

13. If you wish to obtain a printed copy of this consultation please contact the Circus Animal Welfare Team at:  
[circusanimalwelfare@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:circusanimalwelfare@defra.gsi.gov.uk)

or write to us at the contact address for responses below.

## Responses

14. We have produced a simple, online response form using an easy-to-use tool (Survey Monkey). A link to this is available on our website. If you find it convenient, please feel free to reply via this route (and then, there's no need to send anything to us). Please note that Defra is not collecting any personal information via this route.
15. However, if you are replying on behalf of an organisation (such as a charity, company or animal welfare organisation) then please use the Excel pro-forma instead, so that we know that your response is from an organisation and not a member of the general public.
16. If you use the Excel pro-forma, or would like to reply in another electronic format (such as in an email, or using a word processor) then please send your reply by email to:

[circusanimalwelfare@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:circusanimalwelfare@defra.gsi.gov.uk)

17. If you are replying with a printed copy, then please post your response to:

Circus Animal Consultation  
Animal Welfare Division  
Defra  
8B LMB  
c/o 17 Smith Square  
London  
SW1P 3JR

## Consultation Criteria

18. This consultation is in line with the Code of practice on Consultations. This can be found at [www.bis.gov.uk/bre/](http://www.bis.gov.uk/bre/).

**Animal Welfare Division**