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Centro de Reabilitação de Animais Marinhos de Quiaios (CRAM-Q)

Dear sirs,

It has been brought to our attention that *Centro de Reabilitação de Animais Marinhos de Quiaios* (CRAM-Q) has in its possession a short-beaked common dolphin named Martinha, who was rescued in 2007.

On Wednesday, 6 August 2014, the Born Free Foundation, a leading animal rescue organisation with experience in cetacean rehabilitation efforts, sent a letter enquiring about Martinha and offering assistance. At the time, the response from CRAM-Q was that Martinha's case was in the hands of an "international expert commission" and that the "plan for Martinha's release is established and has been defined by the expert commission". SPVS also stated "external support from Born Free or any other organisation would not benefit Martinha".

Despite these statements two years ago, Martinha has now spent more than eight years languishing in the rescue centre's back-yard pool.

A quick and commonplace form of evaluating animal welfare is The Five Freedoms, which are:

- 1 **Freedom from hunger or thirst** by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour.
- 2 **Freedom from discomfort** by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
- 3 **Freedom from pain, injury or disease** by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
- 4 **Freedom to express (most) normal behaviour** by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.
- 5 **Freedom from fear and distress** by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.

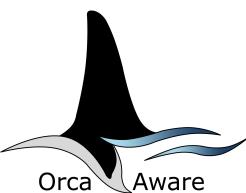
We believe the environment in which Martinha is being held violates a minimum four of these freedoms. Common dolphins are highly intelligent, social and physically active marine mammals; therefore, the conditions that Martinha is currently kept in at CRAM-Q do not fulfil her physiological or behavioural needs.

We believe that very little has changed for Martinha in these two years. We appreciate that sometimes animal rescue is underfunded and that conditions aren't always ideal for those individuals who may not be able to be released back into the wild, yet we have the experience and the means to make a difference for her.

If you have this individual's best interest at heart, we urge you to please contact us before 19 August 2016. We consider this of the utmost importance and wish to find a resolution in partnership with CRAM-Q. There are many documented cases of successful dolphin rehabilitation and there are plans for marine sanctuaries specifically for cetaceans already underway. Providing immediate and real improvement for Martinha would ultimately benefit other stranded cetaceans and our understanding of how best to help them. This is particularly true for those who may not be able to fully return to the wild.

We look forward to your prompt response to this urgent matter.

4 August 2016, signed:



& John Hargrove, Former SeaWorld Trainer