

SAFETY SUMMIT – DAY 1 **Section 1: Monday, March 24 (8:00 am - Noon)** **Room: Madera**

Safety Around Aquatics Workshop:

A half-day deep dive into aquatic safety, compliance, and technology for zoo and aquarium professionals. Uncover best practices, emerging technologies, and inclusive approaches to ensure your institution's dive program is safe, compliant, and future-ready. Join us to prioritize guest and staff safety, delve into dive safety, and gain practical insights from lessons learned. Join us to elevate safety in aquatics!

Diving into Compliance: Breaking Down AZA Accreditation Standards for Diving, Snorkeling, and Emergency Drills - Dive into the AZA accreditation standard for diving and snorkeling, offering a comprehensive breakdown of their development, application, and real-world implementation by member institutions. Guided by experienced dive professionals and AZA accreditation inspectors, we will explore key requirements, best practices, and common challenges in meeting these standards.

Navigating Occupational Diving Regulations: choosing between Scientific and commercial Diving Standards for your Institution - Building on insights from our previous workshop, this session will examine the regulatory landscape of occupational diving. We will explore the distinctions between scientific and commercial diving standards, their implications for institutional compliance, and their alignment with AZA accreditation requirements. Through an in-depth breakdown of these frameworks, participants will gain a clearer understanding of which set of regulations best suits their institution's diving operations.

Diving Technology: Advancing Operations, Enhancing Experiences, and Bridging Beyond - Dive operations extend far beyond routine maintenance and educational presentations—they serve as a vital link across multiple facets of an institution. This session will explore how innovative diving technologies can enhance operational efficiency, improve compliance and reporting, and elevate the guest experience. From exhibit maintenance and restoration, conservation and research initiatives, to fundraising, marketing, and animal wellness, dive programs have the potential to support and amplify AZA's mission in transformative ways. Join us as we examine emerging technologies that are shaping the future of dive operations and discover how they can be leveraged to create new opportunities for engagement, sustainability, and institutional growth.

Rethinking Safety: Equity and Inclusion in Zoo and Aquarium Dive Programs - explore how historical biases have shaped dive standards and how institutions can adopt more inclusive practices ensuring the safety of all staff, volunteers, and guests within AZA-accredited institutions. Through real-world case studies, we can examine the impact of inequitable protocols and discuss actionable strategies to create a culture of safety and inclusion

Does My Dive Program Measure Up? Insights from Industry Example Practices - How does your dive program compare to industry standards? This brief yet insightful presentation will explore key dive practices from multiple institutions, highlighting benchmarks in safety, efficiency, and compliance. Through real-world examples, attendees will gain a better understanding of example practices in training, operations, and program management. Whether you're looking to enhance your existing dive program or validate your current approach, this session will provide valuable insights to help ensure your program measures up to industry expectations.

Section 2: Monday, March 24 (1:00 pm - 5:00 pm)

Safety Starts with You Workshop: Building Resilient Teams and a Culture of Care:
Panelist will explore the link between psychological safety and physical safety, fostering an environment where

communication about safety concerns thrives. Practice tough conversations and utilize tools to drive home the importance of psychological safety, leading with empathy, and having productive conversations, even during conflict. Take tools back to your organization that can be used hand in hand to improve safety culture and prioritize employee wellbeing. Join us for an enlightening session that uncovers the intricate interplay between Employee Wellbeing & Safety!

Safety in Action: Achieving Psychological Health & Safety 1TZ Cares Approach - *An overview of Toronto Zoo's implementation of a comprehensive staff wellbeing program, "1TZ Cares." We'll hear about the process Toronto Zoo used, insights gained, and their journey forward.*

Post-Crisis and Psychological Readiness - *We will explore the brain science of post-crisis, fit for duty, evaluate critical event management, and explore how these tools and ideas come together to set our teams up for success following a critical incident. Feedback at all levels is crucial for an effective program.*

Intersection of Stress and Safety - *We will talk through how everyday stress can show up in our lives, and the difference between good and bad stress. We'll also address how speaking up can keep both you and your coworkers safe, especially on days when you are not at your best.*

IDEAI & EHS - *We will build on a talk from the morning, focusing on the costs of being reactive vs proactive, and discuss ways in which we should be planning for a diverse group of staff in programming. We'll hear about tangible tools you can take back to your teams about planning for diverse populations and safety training and response.*

Do You Feel Safe? - *We will discuss the different cultural components of safety. From physical, environmental, and financial, to social and psychological, including emotional safety. We'll discuss what compliance vs. defiance may reveal about your surroundings and how your emotional intelligence may allow you to transcend the structure you were hired into.*

Afternoon Activities - *These are meant to practice skills—tough conversations, active listening, leading with empathy, being a good human—in low stakes environments.*

Psychological Safety Activity - *Using prescribed scenarios and small-group work, participants will identify safe/unsafe conditions, discuss how conditions could be addressed, and how feedback can be shared respectfully in a way that's beneficial to all. This allows participants to practice skills in a low-stakes setting.*

SAFETY SUMMIT – DAY 2

Section 3: Tuesday, March 25 (8:00 am to Noon)

Room: Madera

Safety Elevated: Keeping Staff And Visitors Safe Through Active Prevention And Response Planning:

Join us as experts from across our profession discuss vital aspects of workplace safety in zoos and aquariums through prevention and planning for the worst. Our panelists and presenters will cover practical insights and expert guidance on safety in zoos and aquariums. Recall training to Venomous Animal Training, Harness Rescue Techniques, and Crisis Communication Planning, you'll gain the tools and knowledge to strengthen safety practices and mitigate risks. Hear real-life case studies and experiences, including a Komodo Dragon risk assessment that saved a life, and learn how to implement 2 Key 2 Lock protocols for enhanced safety across diverse animal areas.

Venomous Training - *This presentation provides an in-depth look at Venom Day at John Ball Zoo, a program*



designed to educate, inspire, and promote safety around venomous animals. We'll walk through the key elements of this successful event, highlighting its impact on staff training, public education, and conservation awareness.

Harnessing Safety: Rescue Training for Zoo & Aquarium Teams - *From scaling exhibits to working above aquatic habitats, harness rescue training is crucial for keeping teams safe in high-risk environments. Learn how customized rescue techniques and real-world practice build confidence, enhance safety, and prepare your team to respond swiftly and effectively when it matters most.*

Akron Zoo Komodo Dragon Incident: How a Risk Assessment Saved a Life - *Risk Assessments are a vital part of any safety program, to allow us better understand the risks involved in everyday tasks. We will look at how a simple risk assessment altered the safety program in Akron's Komodo Dragon holding area, resulting in staff saving a life.*

The Importance of Crisis Communications - *Having a communication plan for any type of crisis is vital to your organization. We'll talk about the importance of developing a crisis communications plan before anything happens and how implementing it during an incident is crucial to your success.*

2 Key 2 Lock: Unlocking Safety Across Animal Areas - *Join a diverse panel of industry experts as they share real-world insights on implementing 2K2L systems across various animal areas—from big cats and primates to venomous species. Learn how this safety protocol enhances daily operations, reduces risks, and adapts to the unique needs of different institutions.*

Section 4: Tuesday, March 25 (1:00pm - 5:00pm)

Safety Elevated Part 2: Building Resilient And Safe Operations Through Awareness, And Security Operations:

Join this half-day workshop to strengthen your institution's preparedness across multiple fronts—from industry trends in safety concerns to cybersecurity defenses to protecting facilities during disasters. Explore key strategies in duty of care for traveling staff, securing federal non-profit safety grants, and learn from real-world examples to safeguard your people, animals, and operations.

Duty of Care while Traveling - *This presentation explores the variable nature of Duty of Care for Zoos and Aquariums, examining legal concepts, employer responsibilities, and sample practices that guide employers in mitigating risks and enhancing of safety and security. We will also cover the growing complexity of geopolitical events, types of risk assessment, and considerations for reacting to an incident involving a travelling employee.*

Dos, Don'ts, and How-to-Federal Non-Profit Security Grants for Zoos and Aquariums - *This presentation will cover lessons learned from Hogle Zoo's four years of applying for FEMA's NSGP program and other related grants.*

Cyber Security in Zoos & Aquariums: Safeguarding Digital and Physical Worlds - *In today's fast-paced digital landscape, protecting our zoos and aquarium assets requires a comprehensive approach that goes beyond traditional cybersecurity measures. This presentation will equip you with the essential knowledge to safeguard your data by merging cyber and physical security strategies. We will explore how physical security forms a critical pillar in defending against cyber threats and why a unified security strategy is essential for modern zoos and aquariums.*

Facility Protection Considerations Before, During and After Disaster - *Facility protection is essential for safeguarding animal welfare and maintaining operational continuity before, during, and after adverse events. This presentation will explore practical strategies for hardening facilities against environmental and human threats, addressing vulnerabilities, and implementing robust protocols to mitigate risks. Attendees will gain actionable insights into strengthening facility defenses and ensuring the security of critical resources during crises. As part of this*

presentation, Zoological Disaster Response, Rescue, and Recovery (ZDR3) will be sharing specific insights learned from previous response efforts

Developing an EMS Team - *Have you had to wait a while for an ambulance to show up? Does the turnover in EMS concern you about the response you will receive to the unique emergencies you have at your facility? In this session, we will review the benefits of having an in-house EMS team and how this might benefit your facility. We will also discuss what to think about if you are considering starting an EMS Program, and similar options if you do not want to go the in-house EMS route.*

SAFETY SUMMIT – DAY 3

Section 5: Wednesday, March 26 (8:00 am to Noon)

Room: Madera

When Disaster Strikes: Be Ready for Things to Go Wrong Through Preparation and Planning:

Disasters can strike at any time—are you prepared? This half-day workshop will provide practical tools and expert insights to strengthen your organization’s emergency response. From adopting aviation safety strategies to enhance communication, to real-world lessons on emergency readiness at the Oregon Zoo, you’ll leave equipped to build a resilient safety and preparedness culture. Sessions will cover contingency planning, personnel protection, and the benefits of developing an in-house EMS team. The day concludes with a diverse panel of professionals sharing how they’ve implemented the Incident Command System to improve coordination and crisis response. Join us to ensure your team is ready for anything!

Aviation Safety Improvements: How they can be implemented into AZA Organizations - *Aviation safety improvements can be directly tied to training, which is continually updated to reflect studies in human factors. This presentation will focus on communication skills and how they can be easily and effectively be implemented in the animal industry.*

Prepared for Anything: Emergency Readiness at Oregon Coast Aquarium - *Discover how the Oregon Coast Aquarium builds a culture of preparedness through proactive planning and real-world training. This session will highlight key strategies, lessons learned, and practical tools used to ensure the safety of staff, animals, and guests in the face of unexpected events.*

Personnel Protection Considerations Before, During and After Disaster - *Protection of personnel is a critical aspect of disaster and emergency response that cannot be overlooked. Safeguarding staff and responders from risks must be a central component of planning before, during, and after disaster. Key considerations for integrating personnel safety into preparedness, response, and recovery efforts will be laid out, ensuring staff and responders remain protected while maintaining operational continuity during adverse events*

Reviewing Your Contingency Plan and Assessing Risks - *Comprehensive and dynamic risk assessments are vital for protecting zoological and aquarium facilities, their personnel, and animals. Building on the principles outlined in USDA’s Contingency Plan Rule, this presentation will provide actionable insights into evaluating risks, updating contingency plans, and avoiding common planning pitfalls. Participants will explore strategies to strengthen collaboration with organizations like Zoo All Hazards Partnership (ZAHP) and Zoological Disaster Response, Rescue, and Recovery (ZDR3) and utilize tools such as the CISA Security Planning Workbook to ensure their plans are robust, actionable, and compliant*



Commanding Success: Incident Command in Action - Join a diverse panel of zoo professionals as they share how they've implemented the Incident Command System (ICS) in their institutions. Hear real-world insights from organizations of various sizes and experience levels, and learn how ICS can enhance emergency response, coordination, and communication across your team.

Section 6: Wednesday, March 26 (1:00 pm - 5:00 pm)

Crisis Response & Tactical Readiness: Building Safer, Stronger Teams:

This half-day workshop is packed with practical strategies to enhance your organization's emergency preparedness and tactical response. Explore the AZA Firearms Survey for industry trends and hear how zoos like Hogle and Akron have built robust response teams through chemical immobilization training and multi-agency collaboration. Learn how involving veterinary teams in firearms training can create a cohesive, unified response unit. The session concludes with a powerful case study on active shooter preparedness at Monterey Bay Aquarium, offering lessons on building community partnerships, running large-scale drills, and implementing life-saving technologies.

Ready, Set, Recall: Mastering Recall Training for Safer Operations - Learn how the St. Louis Zoo and Columbus Zoo have developed and implemented robust recall training programs. Discover the benefits of well-practiced recall procedures, from enhancing animal welfare to improving staff response and overall safety across your facility.

Increasing your Chemical Immobilization Team Membership - Learn how Utah's Hogle Zoo set up a "Darting Team" with existing Animal Care staff to increase our ability to respond to animal emergencies. With the team in place, we have a more robust response force, and a larger time window that staff are available to respond. Find out what obstacles we faced, and what benefits we gained.

Involving Vet Teams with Firearms Training - Emergency response teams at zoological facilities are often composed of people responsible for lethal force, tranquilizing, recalling of the animal. There have been many unintended benefits to this joint training, one example being the comfortability of the veterinary staff members around firearms. We have also noted the importance of including staff from various departments. This increases options for having firearms-trained staff on any given day, and it also builds comradery and trust among the departments

Firearms Survey Review - Hear from the Safety Committee as we review the results of the AZA Firearm survey and see trends in the industry on what is happening with firearms, trainings and Immobilization teams

Upgrading Firearms Teams and Equipment - In a dynamic environment where safety, security, and rapid response are paramount, specialized emergency response training plays a critical role in protecting both people and animals. This presentation will explain the unique rationale behind implementing firearms training in a zoo setting, detail the training methodologies used, and outline the evaluation process that ensures our team is prepared to handle high-stress scenarios with confidence and professionalism.

Falling to the Level of Our Training: How the Akron Zoo was able to Cultivate a Culture of Training - Taking the principles of the Incident Command System with buy-in from the top of the organization and achieve an SOP with the Akron Police Department. Culminating in the first, but not last, unified, mass-scale drill held on zoo grounds with every local agency in attendance.

Active Shooter: Diving into the first Active Shooter Drill at the Monterey Bay Aquarium - This presentation will discover how to establish partnerships, planning phases of a tabletop exercise (TTX), socializing the topic of the drill, the planning phases of the functional exercise (FNX), the execution of the FNX and the After Action Review (AAR) to enhance incident action plans, and technology (Life Spot and CRG) to aid ASI detection and response. Additional topics will include Run/Hide/Fight or ALERT training, understanding 5th man police response, EMS Rescue Task Force (RTF) application, Incident Command liaison with public safety, and long-term impacts to an institution if an ASI occurs.

