



**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**SEA SHEPHERD ATTACKS JAPAN'S RESEARCH VESSELS**

Two Japanese research crew and two Japanese coastguard officers were injured today after a planned attack by the Sea Shepherd Conservation Group in the Antarctic.

The four people were injured after being hit in separate incidents where butyric acid was thrown at them by activists from the Sea Shepherd vessel, the Steve Irwin.

“Sea Shepherd terrorists threw more than one hundred bottles from their vessel the Steve Irwin onto the Nisshin Maru deck. As a result butyric acid hit two of the Nisshin Maru crew members and two Japanese coast guard officers,” the director general of the Institute of Cetacean Research (ICR), Mr Minoru Morimoto said today.

Evidence of the attack by the group is document on the ICR website:

<http://www.icrwhale.org/eng-index.htm>

“We have, in the past, expressed our concerns for the safety of our crew and scientists in the Antarctic. Unfortunately, these concerns are now a reality.”

Among the concerns are that this terrorist group is receiving positive media coverage in Australia and, as a result, is receiving large donations that allow it to fund its activities. “Whether they realize it or not, the Australian media and some of the Australian public are directly funding or promoting terrorism,” Mr Morimoto said.

“Sea Shepherd is not an environmental group. It is a terrorist vigilante group that operates outside of the law”, Mr. Morimoto said.

Article VIII of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW), explicitly provides that member countries may issue permits for scientific research. Mr Morimoto said this was important because the ICRW requires that the IWC's regulations be based on scientific findings.

“The explicit nature of the ICRW to allow for scientific whaling, as well as the requirement that the meat from such research be processed to the greatest extent practicable, demonstrates this is not a ‘loophole’ and shows Japan is following the ICRW to the letter.

“Contrary to the claims of anti-whaling interests, the Scientific Committee of the IWC has commended Japan's research program noting that it is providing valuable scientific information required for the management of these resources,” Morimoto said.

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