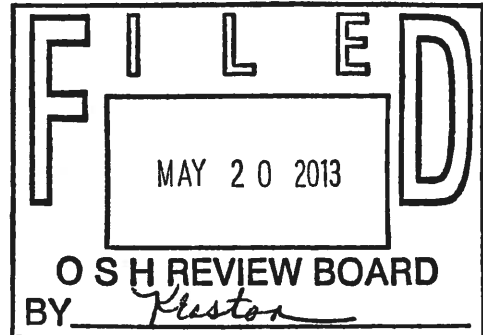


1 NEVADA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH
2 REVIEW BOARD
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5 CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
6 OF THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND
7 HEALTH ADMINISTRATION, DIVISION
8 OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS OF THE
9 DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND
10 INDUSTRY, STATE OF NEVADA

Docket No. LV 12-1512



Complainant,

vs.

11 THE CAT HOUSE, INC.,

Respondent.

12
13 _____/
14 DECISION

15 This matter having come before the **NEVADA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND**
16 **HEALTH REVIEW BOARD** at a hearing commenced on the 10th day of April,
17 2013, in furtherance of notice duly provided according to law, MR.
18 MICHAEL TANCHEK, ESQ., counsel appearing on behalf of the Complainant,
19 **Chief Administrative Officer of the Occupational Safety and Health**
20 **Administration, Division of Industrial Relations (OSHA)**; and MR. KEITH
21 EVANS, President on behalf of Respondent, **THE CAT HOUSE, INC.**; the
22 **NEVADA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH REVIEW BOARD** finds as follows:

23 Jurisdiction in this matter has been conferred in accordance with
24 Nevada Revised Statute 618.315.

25 The complaint filed by the OSHA sets forth allegations of
26 violation of Nevada Revised Statutes as referenced in Exhibit "A",
27 attached thereto. The alleged violations remaining in contest after
28 negotiated settlement or other resolution involve Citation 4, Item 1,

1 and Citation 4, Item 2.

2 At Citation 4, Item 1, complaint charges a violation of NRS
3 618.375(1). Complainant alleged the respondent employer failed to
4 furnish employment free from recognized hazards by requiring employees
5 to work in direct contact with lions located in an enclosed
6 environment at the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada.

7 At Citation 4, Item 2, complainant charges violation of 29 CFR
8 1910.132(d)(1). Complainant alleged the respondent employer did not
9 ensure that a hazard assessment was done for the Lion Habitat located
10 at the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada, to determine if personal
11 protective equipment (PPE) was needed when working directly with lions
12 that would aid lion trainers in the avoidance of incidents that may
13 cause serious injury or death.

14 stipulation of counsel.

15 Counsel for the Chief Administrative Officer presented testimony
16 and documentary evidence with regard to the alleged violations.
17 Certified safety and health officer (CSHO) Angela Valerie Muffley
18 testified she was assigned to investigate an incident involving a lion
19 attack on a trainer employed by respondent. Ms. Muffley identified
20 the complainant exhibit packet which was stipulated in evidence by the
21 parties and included Exhibits 1 through 6. She identified two
22 employees who were subject of a lion attack at the Lion Habitat which
23 injured one lion handler on September 1, 2010, inside the MGM Grand
24 Hotel. CSHO Muffley presented a video and identified two respondent
25 employees depicted in the video as the individuals subject of the
26 attack. She testified in furtherance of her narrative report at
27 Exhibit 1. Two lion handlers were in the habitat at the time of the
28 lion attack. One lion handler was bitten in the lower leg and treated

1 at the hospital and required "30 staples". She further testified the
2 employees subject of the attack were in direct contact with lions but
3 not provided personal protection equipment (PPE) or given safety
4 procedures to prevent attacks or injuries. She identified photographs
5 at Exhibit 2 as depicting the workplace and scene of the attacks in
6 addition to the video presented at Exhibit 6. She identified
7 documents at Exhibit E as rules and notices provided by the respondent
8 for handling big cats, including employee directives and related
9 materials. She testified Exhibit 4 to be the company safety policies
10 provided by respondent and stipulated in evidence.

11 Counsel continued direct examination and questioned the basis for
12 citing the employer under NRS 618.375(1) commonly known as the
13 "general duty clause", and particularly asked what feasible means
14 existed to prevent injuries to the employees. Ms. Muffley testified
15 she cited the general duty clause because there were no specific
16 standards governing employee safety when working in direct contact
17 with lions. She further testified that feasible means could have been
18 utilized to stop an attack referencing her opinion that pepper spray
19 or an air horn would have been appropriate.

20 At Citation 4, Item 2, CSHO Muffley testified that based upon her
21 investigation, the employer failed to conduct a workplace hazard
22 assessment to determine if hazards were present or were likely to be
23 present which would necessitate the use of personal protective
24 equipment (PPE). At the Lion Habitat inside the MGM Grand, the
25 employees were required to work in close proximity with the lions up
26 to eight hours per day. Employee duties included feeding and playing
27 with the lions within the enclosure which placed them subject to
28 direct contact with the animals to provide an entertainment experience

1 for guests at the hotel observing the show from outside the enclosure.
2 She testified the required hazard assessment would have permitted the
3 employer to determine if personal protective equipment was needed in
4 working directly with the lions which would help or aid lion trainers
5 in the avoidance of contact incidents that may cause serious injury or
6 even death.

7 CSHO Muffley explained the hazards of lion and human trainer
8 employee contact and rendered her opinion of feasible means to prevent
9 serious injury or death. She testified that during the investigation
10 Mr. Evans informed her there was no PPE available that would work in
11 the enclosed environment. Mr. Evans informed her that he raises and
12 trains lions differently than those in zoos or wild animal parks. He
13 told her no PPE would work because it would be ineffective.

14 CSHO Muffley concluded her direct testimony by describing the
15 potential serious injury or death that could occur from an employee
16 being eaten or seriously injured or killed by an unrestrained lion.

17 Respondent conducted brief cross-examination. CSHO Muffley
18 identified complainant's Exhibit 3 as material provided to her by the
19 respondent after the initial inspection and her report to satisfy the
20 hazard assessment documentation required by the standard at Citation
21 4, Item 2. She confirmed that OSHA had no specific standards
22 applicable to the specific working conditions of lion trainers in the
23 lion habitat which required her to reference NRS 618.375(1), commonly
24 known as the "general duty clause" at Citation 4, Item 1.

25 The complainant presented witness testimony from Dr. Ron Tilson
26 who identified himself an expert in the field of "big cat" study,
27 conservation, and habitat. He identified Exhibit 5 and explained his
28 background, experience, and qualifications in the field to establish

1 himself as an "expert witness". Dr. Tilson testified his primary
2 expertise applies to tigers, but there are many similarities in
3 dealing with all large cats, even though there are specific
4 differences in their behavior. He testified that ". . . cats are
5 unpredictable . . ." so great care must be taken to avoid personal
6 human relationships. He testified there were approximately 13
7 injuries and 5 deaths each from cats in zoos or private ownership. On
8 continued direct examination, Dr. Tilson testified that he encourages
9 handlers to carry pepper spray but opined it could not reliably work,
10 mitigate, or stop an attack. On direct questioning as to how he would
11 minimize an attack from a lion or big cat, Dr. Tilson responded that
12 the only assured way is to avoid all human contact.

13 Respondent presented testimony through Mr. Wes Pipper. The
14 witness identified himself as the handler identified in the photos,
15 Exhibit 2, and the video, Exhibit 6, who was directly attacked and
16 injured by the lion which caused the OSHA investigation. He testified
17 he was bitten and received serious injuries during the attack. Mr.
18 Pipper testified he believed the respondent's training program was
19 sufficient to protect him or other handlers from an attack by the
20 lions. He further testified that in his opinion pepper spray in the
21 enclosed pen environment could result in blinding and prevent ability
22 to get away from a beast during an attack. He testified the use of
23 pepper spray would be ". . . as much a hindrance as a potential aid
24 . . ." Mr. Pipper stated he considers his job hazardous, but wants to
25 work with lions and take the training steps required for hands on
26 personal contact.

27 On cross-examination Mr. Pipper testified as to his background,
28 including a University degree in Animal Science, experience in animal

1 training and conservation, previous work as an animal trainer at
2 Safari Land in Santa Rosa, California and his training experience with
3 the respondent.

4 At the conclusion of the presentation of evidence and testimony,
5 complainant and respondent presented closing argument.

6 The complainant asserted it is OSHA's job to make the work place
7 as safe as possible. He argued the subject hazard was unique because
8 an employee was working with a wild, unpredictable animal in an
9 entertainment environment. He asserted that respondent employees have
10 no defense against big cats other than "techniques," but no PPE to
11 stop or prevent an attack.

12 Respondent, Keith Evans, presented closing argument. Mr. Evans
13 asserted that cats (lions) respond differently to him because he
14 raised every cat from a cub status and utilizes a special method to
15 permit him to safely deal with the large beasts in a controlled
16 environment. He testified that in 43 years of experience with such
17 animals in the entertainment, theatrical and movie industries, as well
18 as animal parks, he found that hand and voice control is the best
19 technique to control lions. He argued that it is up to OSHA to
20 determine that no employees can be in proximity to big cats without
21 PPE, restraint or other intervening means, then no live or theatrical
22 performances could exist in Las Vegas shows, movies, or anywhere else.
23 He asserted that while he has now added pepper spray and air horns to
24 his show, it was done merely to accommodate OSHA as he does not
25 believe sprays or horns will work. He asserted that he has done
26 everything feasible to protect his employees, including measures that
27 might work (spray, horns) even though he has no belief in them. Mr.
28 Evans concluded by asserting that if you stop all contact with lions

1 by trainers you will ". . . kill the entertainment business." There
2 is simply no feasible means to protect employees in a controlled work
3 place environment (explaining his position is not applicable to zoos
4 or open animal parks) and the best position is training techniques and
5 methods that he has employed for his entire life working directly in
6 personal contact with lions.

7 The board in reviewing the facts, documentation, testimony and
8 other evidence must measure same against the established applicable
9 law developed under the Occupational Safety & Health Act.

10 In all proceedings commenced by the filing of a
11 notice of contest, the burden of proof rests with
the Administrator. N.A.C. 618.788(1).

12 All facts forming the basis of a complaint must be
13 proved by a preponderance of the evidence. Armor
Elevator Co., 1 OSHC 1409, 1973-1974 OSHD ¶16,958
14 (1973).

15 At Citation 4, Item 1, the complaint cited the respondent for a
16 violation of NRS 618.375(1) commonly known as the "**General Duty**
17 **Clause**" which provides in pertinent part:

18 . . . Every employer shall:

19 1. Furnish employment and a place of employment
20 which are free from recognized hazards that are
21 causing or are likely to cause death or serious
physical harm to his employees . . ." (emphasis
added)

22 The elements of a **general duty clause** violation
23 identified by the first court of appeals to
interpret Section 5(a)(1) have been adopted by
24 both the Federal Review Commission and the courts
in subsequent cases. The court in *National Realty*
25 *and Construction Co., Inc. v. OSHRC*, 489 F.2d 1257
(D.C. Cir. 1973), listed three elements that OSHA
26 must prove to establish a general duty violation;
the Review Commission extrapolated a fourth
27 element from the court's reasoning: (1) a
condition or activity in the workplace presents a
28 hazard to an employee; (2) the condition or
activity is recognized as a hazard; (3) the hazard

1 is causing or is likely to cause death or serious
2 physical harm; and (4) **a feasible means exists to**
3 **eliminate or materially reduce the hazard.** The
4 four-part test continues to be followed by the
5 courts and the Review Commission. E.g., *Wiley*
6 *Organics Inc. v. OSHRC*, 124 F.3d 201, 17 OSH Cases
7 2125 (6th Cir. 1997); *Beverly Enters., Inc.*, 19
8 OSH Cases 1161, 1168 (Rev. Comm'n 2000); *Kokosing*
9 *Constr. Co.*, 17 OSH Cases 1869, 1872 (Rev. Comm'n
10 1996). The *National Realty*, decision itself
11 continues to be routinely cited as a landmark
12 decision. See, e.g., *Kelly Springfield Tire Co.*
13 *v. Donovan*, 729 F.2d 317, 321, 11 OSH Cases 1889
14 (5th Cir. 1984); *Ensign-Bickford Co. v. OSHRC*, 717
15 F.2d 1419, 11 OSH Cases 1657 (D.C. Cir. 1983); *St.*
16 *Joe Minerals Corp. v. OSHRC*, 647 F.2d 840, 845
17 n.8, 9 OSH Cases 1946 (8th Cir. 1981); *Pratt &*
18 *Whitney Aircraft Div. v. Secretary of Labor*, 649
19 F.2d 96, 9 OSH Cases 1554 (2d Cir. 1981); *R.L.*
20 *Sanders Roofing Co. v. OSHRC*, 620 F.2d 97, 8 OSH
21 Cases 1559 (5th Cir. 1980); *Magma Copper Co. V.*
22 *Marshall*, 608 F.2d 373, 7 OSH Cases 1893 (9th Cir.
23 1979); *Bethlehem Steel Corp. v. OSHRC*, 607 F.2d
24 871, 7 OSH Cases 1802 (3d Cir. 1979). Rabinowitz
25 Occupational Safety and Health Law, 2008, 2nd Ed.,
26 page 91. (emphasis added)

27 When the Secretary has introduced evidence showing
28 the existence of a hazard in the workplace, the
employer may, of course, defend by showing that it
has taken all necessary precautions to prevent the
occurrence of the violation. *Western Mass. Elec.*
Co., 9 OSH Cases 1940, 1945 (Rev. Comm'n 1981).
(emphasis added)

The general duty clause, Section 5(a)(1) of the
OSHA Act, as codified at NRS 618.375(1), mandates
that each employer 'furnish to each of his
employees employment and a place of employment
which are free from recognized hazards that re
causing or are likely to cause death or serious
physical harm to his employees.' 29 U.S.C.
§654(a)(1). The breadth of the general duty
clause has made it one of the most frequently
litigated provisions of the Act. The general duty
clause is a 'catchall provision' designed to
redress hazardous conditions that are not covered
by agency standard setting. E.g., *Reich v.*
Arcadian Corp., 110 F.2d 1192, 1196, 17 OSH Cases
1929 (5th Cir. 1997). *Anoplate Corp.*, 12 OSH
Cases 1678, 1687

A determination of violation in this matter requires an
evidentiary finding of an essential element under the cited general

1 duty clause, namely ". . . proof of a **feasible means** . . . to
2 **eliminate or materially reduce the hazard.**"

3 The **general duty clause requires the elimination**
4 **only of preventable hazards.** Although the literal
5 terms of Section 5(a)(1) may appear to hold the
6 employer accountable for every known on-the-job
7 hazard, the hazard must be **realistically**
8 **remediable.** The final element of proof of a
9 general duty violation requires the Secretary to
10 specify the steps the employer should have taken
11 to avoid citation and **demonstrate the feasibility**
12 **and likely utility of those steps.** *National*
13 *Realty*, 489 F.2d at 1265-66, 1 OSH Cases 1422.
14 The **requirement that OSHA provide a feasible**
15 **method of abatement** was born in *National Realty* as
16 a way of analyzing whether the employer had
17 rendered the workplace free of the hazard under
18 the first element. In later cases, the Review
19 Commission listed the feasibility and likely
20 utility of abatement as a fourth element distinct
21 from the 'free from recognized hazards' element.
22 See, e.g., *Jones & Laughlin Steel Corp.*, 10 OSH
23 Cases 1778, 1781 (Rev. Comm'n 1982); *Beaird-*
24 *Poulan*, 7 OSH Cases 1225, 1228 (Rev. Comm'n 1979).
25 The Commission applied the fourth element to cases
26 involving the **feasibility of physical means of**
27 **abatement as well as those involving the**
28 **effectiveness of an employer's safety program.**
The courts of appeals have accepted the addition
of the fourth element. *Baroid Div. Of NL Indus.*
V. OSHRC, 660 F.2d 439, 446-47, 10 OSH Cases 1001
(10th Cir. 1981); *St. Joe Minerals Corp. V. OSHRC*,
647 F.2d 840, 844, 9 OSH Cases 1646 (8th Cir.
1981); *Babcock & Wilcox Co. v. OSHRC*, 622 F.2d
1160, 1164, 8 OSH Cases 1317 (3d Cir. 1980).
Rabinowitz Occupational Safety and Health Law,
2008, 2nd Ed., pages 99-100. (emphasis added)

21 **Feasibility, not customary use, is the question.**
22 If OSHA proves that a proposed abatement method is
23 technologically and economically feasible, a
24 citation will be sustained even if it exceeds the
25 standard of protection used by the employer or the
26 industry. Of course, widespread use in an
27 industry of a certain means of protection is
28 strong evidence of the precaution's feasibility .
29 . . . **To be 'feasible,' a method of abatement must**
30 **significantly reduce the hazard** but need not
31 completely eliminate it. *Beverly Enters.*, 19 OSH
32 Cases 1161, 1191 (Rev. Comm'n 2000). See, e.g.,
33 *Magma Copper Co. v. Marshall*, 608 F.2d 373, 7 OSH
34 Cases 1893, (9th Cir. 1979); *General Dynamics*
35 *Corp., v. OSHRC*, 599 F.2d 453, 7 OSH Cases 1893

1 (9th Cir. 1979). Rabinowitz Occupational Safety
2 and Health Law, 2008, 2nd Ed., page 101. (emphasis
3 added)

4 **Proposed methods of abatement that mandate changes**
5 **in personnel or hurt product quality will likely**
6 **not be upheld.** In *Pepperidge Farm*, 17 OSH Cases
7 1993, the Secretary argued that the measures taken
8 by the employer to reduce the incidence of upper
9 extremity musculoskeletal disorders among
10 employees working on the factory line were
11 inadequate to free the workplace of the hazard.
12 The Review Commission found that the employer had
13 implemented various administrative and engineering
14 controls to counteract the repetitive motion
15 disorders, including employee awareness programs,
16 medical programs, exercise programs, and physical
17 changes to the workplace that included automation
18 and better work methods. The Secretary listed four
19 additional steps that could further abate the
20 hazards: (1) adding workers to each of the lines,
21 (2) introducing micropauses into the conveyors to
22 interrupt the work flow periodically, (3) reducing
23 the line speeds, and (4) rotating employees from
24 highly repetitive jobs to jobs that were less so.
25 The Commission found that the second, third and
26 fourth **proposals were infeasible** because testimony
27 showed that micropauses and slower line speed
28 would adversely impact product quality, and
because there were no jobs available into which
production line employees could rotate. The
Commission refused to affirm the citation when the
only feasible abatement method shown was a mandate
to add workers. *Royal Logging Co.*, 7 OSH Cases
1744, 1751 (Rev. Comm'n 1979), *aff'd*, 645 F.2d
822, 9 OSH Cases 1755 (9th Cir. 1981) Rabinowitz
Occupational Safety and Health Law, 2008, 2nd Ed.,
page 102. (emphasis added)

Violations of the general duty clause are the most difficult to
prove.

The breadth of the general duty clause has made it
one of the most frequently litigated provisions of
the Act. The general duty clause is a 'catchall
provision' designed to redress hazardous
conditions that are not covered by agency standard
setting. *E.g.*, *Reich v. Arcadian Corp.*, 110 F.2d
1192, 1196, 17 OSH Cases 1929 (5th Cir. 1997).
Anoplate Corp., 12 OSH Cases 1678, 1687 (emphasis
added)

To satisfy the burden of proof for a general duty clause citation

1 under Occupational Safety and Health Law, the **division must establish**
2 **all the elements to prove a violation by a preponderance of evidence.**

3 Clearly the recognized hazard element was demonstrated from the
4 unrefuted evidence of respondent employee Mr. Pipper working in close
5 proximity to a lion. However, the essential element of proof here for
6 a general duty clause violation is evidence of a **feasible means for**
7 **the respondent employer to prevent or mitigate injury to the employee.**

8 The evidence presented by complainant did not satisfy the burden of
9 proof that there existed a feasible and realistic means to prevent,
10 mitigate or certainly eliminate or even materially reduce the hazard
11 **under the facts presented in this case.**

12 CSHO Muffley testified that in her opinion the use of pepper
13 spray or an air horn for PPE would have helped under a premise that
14 ". . . something was better than nothing . . .".

15 Employee witness Pipper testified he was trained as a direct
16 contact animal handler and believes there is no PPE that would have
17 assisted him under the factual circumstances to any greater extent
18 than his training. He further testified that use of pepper spray,
19 which was that recommended by CSHO Muffley, would not have helped and
20 could have aggravated the situation to a **greater hazardous condition.**
21 He testified that pepper spray in a closed controlled environment such
22 as the Lion Habitat, as opposed to an outdoor animal park or zoo,
23 could confine the toxic fumes creating potential blindness to the
24 victim or disorientation, and thus no viable means of escape from an
25 attacking beast.

26 Expert witness Dr. Tilson testified there was simply no assured
27 means of protecting a human being from a large cat other than absolute
28 avoidance of proximity or direct human contact.

1 Certainly the hazard was **recognized**, but while that proof element
2 was satisfied, respondent's arguments and the witness testimony
3 demonstrated reasonable measures were taken to control the animal in
4 the confined environment through training. The weight of evidence
5 demonstrated the training to be the only realistic means that could
6 serve to protect an employee who chooses to work in such conditions
7 **mandated by a theatrical or entertainment venue**. Clearly no member of
8 the public nor other employees of respondent were exposed to the
9 hazard. The only hazard exposure was to the handler/trainer employees
10 working in **direct proximity** with the animals in the Lion Habitat
11 enclosure. OSHA did not demonstrate or prove there were **feasible**
12 **realistic means of PPE** or other personal protection which would not
13 destroy the theatrical environment or create a greater hazard (the
14 drifting of pepper spray fumes for example).

15 To establish a violation of the general duty clause, Nevada OSHA
16 must do **more than merely show that a hazard was present**. *Southern*
17 *Ohio Building Systems v. OSHRC*, 649 F.2d 556, 558 (6th Cir. 1981).
18 (emphasis added)

19 The board finds insufficient evidence to meet the burden of proof
20 to establish a violation of the general duty clause at Citation 4,
21 Item 1. Given the facts of this case, the theatrical environment and
22 venue to present a "Las Vegas style show" or movie scenes, magic acts,
23 and/or performances where wild animals are exhibited for
24 entertainment, there were no **reasonably applicable or feasible means**
25 **for protection in evidence** other than the existent training. **This**
26 **finding is limited and restricted to the evidence in the record**.

27 The evidence and arguments demonstrated that risk factors of
28 direct proximity work with unrestrained lions cannot be controlled by

1 any recognized assured means, other than the training of handlers and
2 animals. The testimony of Mr. Pipper who was attacked by a lion
3 demonstrated his desire to continue direct contact work with lions in
4 entertainment venues. He and other trainer/handlers employed by
5 respondent have elected to work in a high risk environment.

6 CSHO Muffley testified in a forthright fashion; however she could
7 not, with any degree of certainty, provide competent evidence to
8 demonstrate a **feasible means existent to eliminate or materially**
9 **reduce the hazard.** Further, expert witness Dr. Tilson whose
10 credentials were extensive, and established him as an expert in the
11 field, could provide **no evidence of any assured feasible means to**
12 **protect individuals from attackthrough PPE working in the direct**
13 **proximity of any big cats.** He opined there was . . . **no protection,**
14 **feasible or otherwise, available except for the lack of any proximity**
15 **or personal contact by an individual with a big cat . . .** He
16 testified "The only way to bring this probability (attack) down to
17 zero is not to be in contact with it. It's as simple as that." (See
18 Transcript, page 71).

19 The board is confronted with the need in the present case to
20 extrapolate a violation without required evidence, factual data or an
21 essential element subject of proof by a preponderance under the
22 established occupational safety and health law.

23 . . . The Secretary's obligation to demonstrate
24 the alleged violation by a preponderance of the
25 reliable evidence of record **requires more than**
26 **estimates, assumptions and inferences . . . [t]he**
27 **Secretary's reliance on mere conjecture is**
28 **insufficient to prove a violation . . . [findings**
must be based on] 'the kind of evidence on which
responsible persons are accustomed to rely in
serious affairs.' *William B. Hopke Co., Inc.*, 1982
OSAHRC LEXIS 302 *15, 10 BNA OSHC 1479 (No. 81-
206, 1982) (ALJ) (citations omitted). (emphasis
added)

1 Congress has not promulgated or codified specific standards to
2 control the wide based entertainment industry for direct contact work
3 with wild animal acts, shows or performances. The Nevada Occupational
4 Safety & Health Review Board is without authority or jurisdiction to
5 create new law or legislate an industry that is surely well known to
6 the nations lawmakers.

7 At Citation 4, Item 2, it was alleged the respondent failed to
8 assess the workplace to determine if hazards were present or were
9 likely to be present, which necessitate the use of personal protective
10 equipment (PPE).

11 To prove a violation of a **specific standard**, the
12 Secretary must establish (1) the applicability of
13 the standard, (2) the existence of noncomplying
14 conditions, (3) employee exposure or access, and
15 (4) that the employer knew or with the exercise of
16 reasonable diligence could have known of the
17 violative condition. See *Belger Cartage Service, Inc.*, 79 OSAHRC 16/B4, 7 BNA OSHC 1233, 1235, 1979
18 CCH OSHD ¶23,400, p.28,373 (No. 76-1948, 1979);
19 *Harvey Workover, Inc.*, 79 OSAHRC 72/D5, 7 BNA OSHC
20 1687, 1688-90, 1979 CCH OSHD 23,830, pp. 28,908-10
21 (No. 76-1408, 1979); *American Wrecking Corp. v. Secretary of Labor*, 351 F.3d 1254, 1261 (D.C. Cir.
22 2003). (emphasis added)

23 A respondent may rebut allegations by showing:

- 24 1. That the standard was inapplicable to the
25 situation at issue;
- 26 2. That the situation was in compliance; or
27 lack of access to a hazard. See, *Anning-
28 Johnson Co.*, 4 OSHC 1193, 1975-1976 OSHD ¶
20,690 (1976).

29 A "serious" violation is established in accordance with NRS
30 618.625(2) which provides in pertinent part:

31 . . . a serious violation exists in a place of
32 employment if there is a substantial probability
33 that death or serious physical harm could result
34 from a condition which exists or from one or more
35 practices, means, methods, operations or processes

1 which have been adopted or are in use at that
2 place of employment unless the employer did not
3 and could not, with the exercise of reasonable
4 diligence, know the presence of the violation.

4 The complainant did not satisfy the burden of proof to establish
5 a violation at Citation 4, Item 2 for employer failure to assess the
6 workplace hazards. Complainant's evidence packet at Exhibits 3 and 4
7 demonstrate that respondent did undertake reasonable efforts to not
8 only assess the work place but also provide recommendations and
9 training for employees working in close proximity to the lions.
10 Further, Mr. Pipper testified he received training sufficient to
11 protect himself. This was testimony under oath by the very employee
12 who was attacked by the lion causing the investigation and citation.

13 The evidence effectively rebutted the allegations of violation by
14 showing that respondent was in compliance because it had indeed
15 performed the required duties to satisfy the requirements of the
16 standard to conduct a hazard assessment. While the formalities and
17 the timing may have been less than optimal, the result demonstrated
18 that respondent had "taken all necessary precautions to prevent the
19 occurrence of the violation."

20 When the Secretary has introduced evidence showing
21 the existence of a hazard in the workplace, the
22 **employer may, of course, defend by showing that it**
23 **has taken all necessary precautions to prevent the**
24 **occurrence of the violation.** *Western Mass. Elec.*
25 *Co., 9 OSH Cases 1940, 1945 (Rev. Comm'n 1981).*
26 (emphasis added)

24 Based upon facts, evidence and testimony, it is the decision of
25 the **NEVADA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH REVIEW BOARD** that no
26 violation of Nevada Revised Statutes did occur under Citation 4, Item
27 1, NRS 618.375(1), the general duty clause, and the proposed
28 classification and penalty is denied.

1 It is the further decision of the **NEVADA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND**
2 **HEALTH REVIEW BOARD** that no violation occurred at Citation 4, Item 2,
3 29 CFR 1910.132(d)(1) and the classification and proposed penalty are
4 denied.

5 The Board directs respondent to submit proposed Findings of Fact
6 and Conclusions of Law to the **NEVADA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH**
7 **REVIEW BOARD** and serve copies on opposing counsel within twenty (20)
8 days from date of decision. After five (5) days time for filing any
9 objection, the final Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law shall be
10 submitted to the **NEVADA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH REVIEW BOARD** by
11 ordered counsel. Service of the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of
12 Law signed by the Chairman of the **NEVADA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND**
13 **HEALTH REVIEW BOARD** shall constitute the Final Order of the **BOARD**.

14 DATED: This 20th day of May 2013.

15 NEVADA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH
16 REVIEW BOARD

17 By /s/
18 JOE ADAMS, Chairman