



**National Council
of SPCAs**

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



LEADERS IN ANIMAL WELFARE



**National Council
of SPCAs**

For over 65 years we have been protecting our country's animals.
We have entrenched ourselves as the most influential animal
welfare organisation in Africa.

Registration No. 003-189 NPO



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life-changing projects, or assisting with fuel costs, please
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Audited Financial Statements are available on request
from our offices.



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We are a certified B-BBEE contributor.
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BANKING DETAILS

Current Account

Account Name	National Council of SPCAs
Account Type	Current
Account No.	201 032 015
Bank	Standard Bank
Branch Name	Alberton
Branch Code	006 405 00

Internet Specific Account

Account Name	SPCA National Council of SA
Account Type	Current
Account No.	220 639 744
Bank	Standard Bank
Branch Name	Alberton
Branch Code	102 342 00



Annette Rademeyer Chairman

This past year has been very challenging for the National Council of SPCAs on many fronts and across a wide range of animal species. Not least of the challenges has been dealing with the working constraints which have become necessary due to the significant rise in fuel costs and a shrinking donor base. However, Marcelle Meredith and her dedicated team of staff have risen to the occasion and continued with both reactive and proactive work to protect animals.

One of the major issues dealt with during the past year has been the ongoing legal process to stop the live export of animals across the equator. Our legal team is thanked for the admirable work undertaken in heading up this all-important initiative to stop a cruel trade.

Details of the specialised work and focus of each of the units have been reported on by the relevant manager in the body of this report. Their reports highlight areas of animal welfare that require scrutiny and inspection. These include the monitoring of live animal cargo entering and leaving the country, ensuring the ethical treatment of animals used in science and addressing the captive lion industry. Community outreaches have been conducted during the period under review to help not only domestic and farm animals but also working donkeys in indigent areas. These undertakings are vital in the current economic climate. I am also pleased to report that our training programmes are back to full capacity after a long period of restrictions with reduced numbers and extra safety protocols.

During the past year, our trained Inspectors have had cause to institute criminal proceedings when serious contraventions of the Animals Protection Act 71 of 1962 were encountered. Successful prosecutions not only obtain justice for animals but also serve as warnings to others of the consequences of cruelty to animals.

Emergencies and disasters have affected many animals around South Africa and our teams were quick to respond to assist animals and relieve suffering. Attending to traffic accidents involving animals, searching for injured animals when fires strike and helping those caught in floods, were again all the order of the day.

The National Council of SPCAs went through a difficult time during the COVID-19 lockdown but after two years of fighting to keep everything together we can say that we managed to continue protecting animals. Then came the war in Ukraine which brought with it other challenges such as the contribution to fuel price hikes, and again we are thrust into tough times. It is becoming more and more difficult to raise funds when households and businesses are struggling to make ends meet, never mind being charitable. Sadly, the National Lotteries Commission has excluded animal welfare as a priority for funding in 2022/2023 which will also impact the National Council of SPCAs and limit the work that we can do. On behalf of the Board, I, therefore, thank those of our supporters and sponsors, both corporate and individual, who have made it possible for us to continue uplifting the lives of animals. We truly cannot do it without your continued support.

At every Annual General Meeting of the National Council of SPCAs, I am blown away by the amount of important work being carried out for animals, often in difficult circumstances. The presentations by unit managers cover such a range of issues; all of which are truly difficult to capture in just a few annual report pages. What you see is merely the tip of the iceberg. The entire team is commended for their determination, courage and hard work during 2022.

It has been a pleasure to be of service to the National Council of SPCAs. To my fellow Directors, thank you for your support and valued input. We look forward to an improved world in 2023 and commit ourselves to playing our part in bringing about positive improvements for animals.



OUR LEADERSHIP



**National Council
of SPCAs**

Our Vision is to prevent cruelty and promote the welfare of all animals. Our Mission is to end cruelty in South Africa and engender compassion for all animals.



*Back row: Ralf Degni, Marcelle Meredith, Annette Rademeyer, Christine Kuch, Brenda Lucas, Dr Chris Marufu
Front row: Vonjia Bauchop, Norma Roberts, Lize Pienaar, Karen Trendler, Dudu Moodley*

Board of Directors

Annette Rademeyer	(Chairman)
Brenda Lucas	(Vice-Chairman)
Ralf Degni	(Financial Director)
Marcelle Meredith	(Executive Director)
Vonjia Bauchop	
Christine Kuch	
Chris Marufu (Dr)	
Dudu Moodley	
Lize Pienaar	
Norma Roberts	
Karen Trendler	

Glen Kirby-Hirst	(removed June 2022 due to non-compliance)
Selma Landman	(removed June 2022 due to non-compliance)
Mary Nicolaou	(resigned April 2022)
Thea Smit	(resigned June 2022)
Karlien Botma	(resigned October 2022)

Preventing cruelty and promoting kindness

OUR LEADERSHIP

Management

Marcelle Meredith Esté Kotzé	Chief Executive Officer Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Bryce Marock (Dr)	Consulting Veterinarian

Unit Managers

Lebo Sentle	Animal Ethics
Morgane James	Donkeys and Outreach
Grace de Lange	Farm Animal Protection
Tercia Woest	Society Liaison
Nazareth Appalsamy	Special Investigations
Arno de Klerk	Special Projects
Alana Smal	Training
Douglas Wolhuter	Wildlife Protection



The National Council of SPCAs is the largest animal welfare organisation in South Africa and prevents cruelty, promotes kindness to, and alleviates the suffering of animals. Our objective is to serve and protect **ALL** animals, to uplift their welfare, and to ensure that the protection they have under South African law is upheld and respected.

For over 65 years we have been protecting our country’s animals. Our Mission is to prevent cruelty and promote the welfare of all animals, whilst our Vision is to end animal cruelty in South Africa and engender compassion for all animals.

The National Council of SPCAs operates on a national basis with teams of dedicated Inspectors, who are specialists in their fields dealing specifically with farm animals, wildlife, research animals, equine, and working animal issues. Animals used in entertainment and sport also receive our focused attention, as do aquatic species that fall under the banner of aquaculture.

In areas where there is no SPCA, no animal welfare organisations, and no veterinary services, our Inspectors play a vital role in bringing extraordinary support to people and their animals through our outreach programmes.



Top row: Marcelle Meredith and Esté Kotzé
 2nd row: Bryce Marock, Lebo Sentle, Morgane James
 3rd row: Grace de Lange, Tercia Woest, Nazareth Appalsamy
 4th row: Arno De Klerk, Alana Smal, Douglas Wolhuter



Marcelle Meredith Executive Director

Looking back on 2022, I echo the words once said by the late Queen Elizabeth II, *“that it has turned out to be an ‘Annus Horribilis’”*.

Our country’s animals were caught in terrible fire disasters across several provinces, with many farm and wild animals being burnt to death or found severely injured by the flames. The Jagersfontein flooding also caused the suffering and death of countless animals trapped in the sludge deposits following the collapse of a waste dam wall. Schools of fish and other aquatic animals, reptiles, and small and large mammals were all affected by this environmental disaster. Heavy rains in KwaZulu Natal resulted in devastating floods, recorded as the worst flooding disaster in recent South African history. People lost their lives and homes, and animals also fell victim to this tragic disaster. Our Disaster Response Teams and affected SPCAs are commended for their swift action and caring in dealing with these crises. Their intervention and hands-on assistance prevented casualties and relieved suffering.

The last three months of the year saw an upswing in media exposure of Pitbull attacks on people and calls by various bodies that dangerous animals be surrendered to the SPCA. This resulted in SPCAs around South Africa facing the difficult task of dealing with the aftermath of these tragic attacks. Not only did this involve handling the influx of surrendered Pitbulls but also dealing with horrific acts of cruelty where dogs were poisoned, stabbed, beaten, and set alight in retaliation by angry communities. We have appealed to the government to give urgent attention to this growing national problem.

If serious animal welfare issues were not enough to contend with, the ongoing rising cost of petrol and diesel to fuel our vehicles dealt a serious blow to the organisation. As a national body, fuel is not a luxury but rather an absolute imperative, for without it we cannot reach animals across the country. Despite the financial strain, all of our operational units have continued to deal with their respective portfolios – including wildlife, farm animals, animals in research, working animals, animal transportation, and animals used in sport. In the pages that follow, you will have insight into some of the work that has been undertaken and the achievements of the various units: real work undertaken by really committed, and compassionate people.

I am also pleased to report that post-COVID, our Training Unit has picked up the presentation of vital training courses for SPCA staff across the country, as well as bringing animal welfare information to various service providers dealing with animals.

Still high on the list of animal welfare concerns remains the live export of animals by sea. Our efforts in bringing an end to this cruel trade continue to receive the focused attention of our amazing legal team led by Adv Kevin Hopkins SC. Thank you to all concerned. While there have been setbacks, Part B of our application, which seeks to ban the export of live animals by sea north of the equator, is due to be heard in our Courts sometime during 2023.

I would be remiss if I did not make special mention of two specific wins in court with landmark sentences being handed down by magistrates – one case in respect of bestiality and the other involving the keeping of reptiles and the feeding of live prey. The sentencing in both these cases sent strong warnings of the consequences of animal cruelty. See pages 5/6 for details.

The devastating war in Ukraine brought with it a global crisis that has had a knock-on effect. Soaring costs and rising unemployment have not only reduced the availability of donor funds, but we have also faced a growing need to help more animals. We have therefore undertaken outreaches and brought much-needed assistance to people in poor communities who are struggling to care for their animals.

From a financial perspective, I believe that 2023 is going to be a tough year for the National Council of SPCAs. There is no doubt that the public has far less disposable income and fewer people can afford to be charitable. We are therefore most grateful to our supporters who continue to provide vital financial assistance. Without this support and that of new donors, we are not able to make the significant impact necessary to address animal welfare in this country.

I express my gratitude to the entire team of men and women who make up this organisation for their valued contribution to animal welfare during the past year. You are all truly the voice of the voiceless. To the Board of Directors who give of their time and support our work, I extend my appreciation.

LAW ENFORCEMENT



**National Council
of SPCAs**

The National Council of SPCAs works proactively to uplift the welfare of animals in this country and ensures that the protection animals have under South African law is upheld and respected.



Justice for Moana Eight years imprisonment

On 28 April 2022, Mr M Mofokeng was found guilty of bestiality after raping his neighbour's dog, Moana, in 2020. Criminal charges were brought against him by the National Council of SPCAs.

The honourable Magistrate found Mr Mofokeng guilty as charged and sentenced him to eight years of direct imprisonment. This is the highest direct imprisonment sentencing ever imposed for animal cruelty in Africa and will set the precedent nationwide.

With the original witness in this case being absent, the success of the case is owed solely to the National Council of SPCAs' veterinarian, Dr B Marock, and Inspector Shiven Bodasing. Without their excellent testimonies, Moana would have been robbed of the justice she deserves.

Moana made a full physical recovery under the watchful eye of the National Council of SPCAs, and was sterilised, vaccinated, microchipped, and dewormed before being returned to her loving family.

Bestiality is a serious concern in our country and is illegal. It is a shameful crime which may progress to the abuse of children and adults. The National Council of SPCAs' winning this case is of extreme significance. We hope that other bestiality cases being heard across the country will follow suit as a precedent has been set, and that animal rapists have been thoroughly cautioned of the consequences.



**THE HIGHEST DIRECT IMPRISONMENT
SENTENCING EVER IMPOSED FOR
ANIMAL CRUELTY**

WORKING PROACTIVELY AND SEEKING JUSTICE FOR ANIMALS THROUGH THE COURTS



Judgement in Thandi Modise Case Appealed

AfriForum's Private Prosecution Unit on 25 October 2022 served papers for the appeal against the Potchefstroom Regional Court's discharge of Thandi Modise in terms of section 174 of the Criminal Procedure Act. The Unit acts on behalf of the National Council of SPCAs who is privately prosecuting Modise, who at the time was the speaker of parliament and is the current Minister of Defence, on charges of cruelty to animals. The appeal will be heard on 10 March 2023 in the High Court in Mmabatho. This follows Magistrate Ben Mtebele finding Modise not guilty on 30 April 2021.

Background

In 2014, the National Council of SPCAs confiscated 120 animals from Ms Thandi Modise's Potchefstroom farm and euthanased a further 117 animals after they had been found in an emaciated condition, without any access to food or water. The property was also littered with the carcasses of animals that had perished as a result of sheer negligence and abuse. The animals that were still alive were found cannibalising off the carcasses and young in an attempt to survive.

Legal Win for Reptiles

February 2022 saw the Honourable Magistrate Mr Maboho pass down a groundbreaking judgement on a case of animal cruelty opened by the Special Projects Unit which involved reptiles. This judgement has gone on to become the **biggest legal win for reptiles in South African history** and will have a lasting impact on future cases of cruelty involving reptiles.

In 2019, the National Council of SPCAs received a tipoff regarding an individual who was illegally housing snakes in a warehouse and

participating in the illegal activity of feeding live animals as prey. National Inspectors accessed the property under a warrant and found snakes and rabbits being held in appalling conditions. In addition to the illegal practice of feeding live rabbits to the snakes, other animal welfare concerns noted included animals with untreated injuries and underweight animals.

Three Southern African Pythons were removed from the property as well as all the rabbits. The Pythons were taken to the Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital for treatment, and the rabbits were rehomed to loving families. Charges for contraventions of the Animals Protection Act were laid.

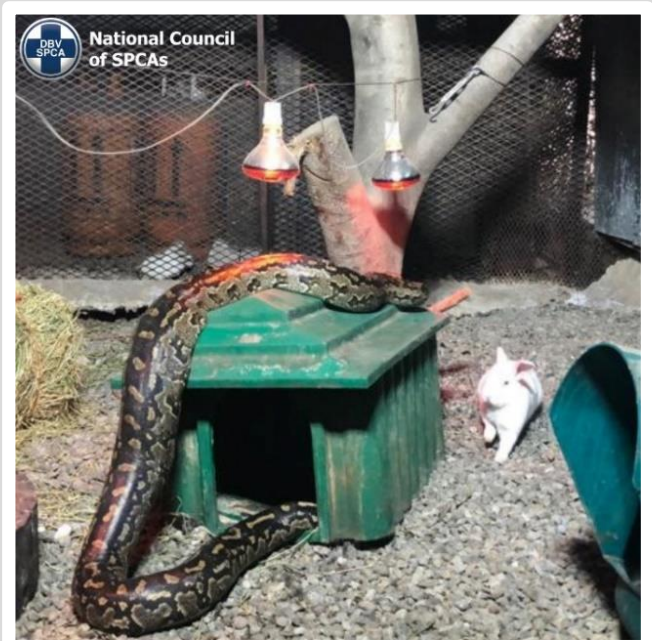
Justice for Reptiles

The Honourable Magistrate Mr Maboho found all the accused guilty of the charges presented by the National Council of SPCAs.

The following sentence was handed down –

- R50 000 fine for each of the accused or 5 years imprisonment.
- R80 000 was awarded to the Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital for the costs incurred in treating the pythons.
- R5 000 for the costs incurred by the National Council of SPCAs for travelling to and from the court for the duration of this case.
- The accused parties are prohibited from having ownership or overseeing reptiles or rabbits in the future.

The Honourable Magistrate expressed the hope that the sentence would not only demonstrate appropriate punishment for the abuse of animals but also deter individuals from committing such crimes in the future.



Live rabbit in snake enclosure

ENSURING THAT THE PROTECTION ANIMALS HAVE UNDER SOUTH AFRICAN LAW IS UPHELD AND RESPECTED

Inspectors

The functions of an Inspector are broad-based, requiring commitment, the ability to be objective and the willingness to learn. The Inspector has a critical role in animal welfare and carries out a variety of functions from sensitising children to compassion for animals to educating members of the public about the correct animal handling and care; inspecting facilities such as circuses and wildlife establishments, abattoirs and sale yards; and rescuing animals or investigating and laying criminal charges against people who have perpetrated deliberate or negligent acts of cruelty.

Our operational units each handle specific portfolios and Inspectors work proactively to improve the welfare of animals in the areas in which they operate by undertaking inspections. All complaints and reports of animal cruelty are also fully investigated and appropriate action is taken to protect animals. This action will include the issuance of warnings and notices, and in cases of neglect and cruelty, the seizure of abused animals and criminal charges will be laid.

Actions for Animals in the past Year

During the period under review, recommendations and warnings, where necessary, were issued for improvements to living conditions, management, handling, health and nutrition were issued. During the reporting period, 507 warnings, notices and letters of requirement were issued for improvements to living conditions and standards of animal care such as hygiene and providing veterinary care.

Justice for animals was achieved with 9 successful prosecutions during the reporting period. A further 110 cases are awaiting finalisation through the judicial system.



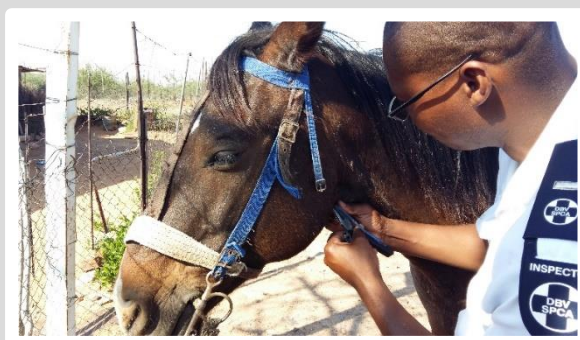
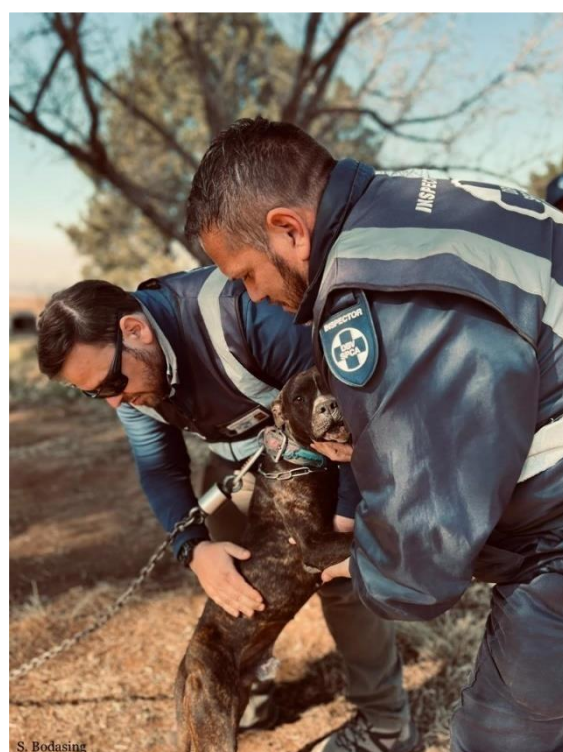
110
Pending Court Cases



130
Days Spent in Court



9
Successful Prosecutions



ANIMAL ETHICS UNIT

The use of animals in research is an extremely complex and controversial issue both locally and internationally. For this reason, broad-based practical initiatives are needed to address animal welfare concerns within this field.



**National Council
of SPCAs**

Replace, Reduce, Refine, Responsibility (the 4Rs)

Respect for animals is of cardinal importance in the care and use of animals. The respect is easily discernible when people involved in the care and use of animals for scientific and teaching purposes apply the 4Rs by –

- looking to replace animals with alternatives wherever possible;
- reducing the number of animals they use;
- doing everything possible to refine the procedures to reduce the impact on the animal;
- and that the people involved in any aspect of the care and use of animals for scientific/teaching purposes accept their responsibilities towards animals.

The University of Cape Town (UCT) has demonstrated its commitment to applying these principles by giving a prize for the best implementation of the 4Rs. The prize was presented to two individuals from the university: Associate Professor William Horsnell from the Division of Immunology, Institute of Infectious Diseases and Molecular Medicine, for the non-invasive use of mice

to prevent cervical cancer. This exemplary use of technologies reduced and refined the use of animals in research; and Sister Janet McCallum, UCT-Research Animal Facility (RAF) Conventional Unit Manager, for innovation and achievements in improving the housing and quality of life for the animals used in research at UCT.

Several animals are permanently housed at the UCT - RAF and all efforts are made to ensure their optimal well-being. McCallum was awarded the prize for excellent work in implementing a range of refinements taking into consideration all aspects of animal welfare, including the mental well-being of the animals.

These refinements include:

- Provision of gnawing blocks for rodents: this provides an activity for the rodents where they can express their natural behaviour of gnawing and improves their general well-being.
- Introduction of food treats for the animals: beyond nutritional benefits, this simulates the natural behaviour of foraging in rats, mice, guinea pigs, and rabbits as well as rooting in pigs. It also encourages natural stretching behaviour in rodents. In addition, the treats create a positive association with experimental procedures for the animals and promote a social bond between animals and humans.
- Provision of additional toys and bedding for pigs: this help to create a stimulating environment for the pigs. Additional bedding and oat hay add complexity to the pens and ensure a suitable rooting substrate.
- Increased human-animal interaction programmes for animals: this leads to a reduction in animal stress and anxiety during procedures and overall positive animal welfare.
- Refinements to the rat metabolic cage: rat cages were made larger to create a complex and interesting space where they can express their natural behaviours of climbing, stretching, and exploring.

This also shows the commitment of UCT to transparency in the use of animals in research and to ensuring the use of responsible and ethical practices. This move towards transparency in the use of animals in research is in line with international animal welfare trends. The UCT will be the first African university to open its use of animals in research to public scrutiny and work with animal welfare groups to ensure the highest ethical standards in all aspects of the use of animals in research.



Publication of the South African National Standard (SANS) 10386:2021 Edition 2 – The Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes

After many years of hard work and serving on the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) National Committee SABS/TC 1040/SC04 – *The care and use of animals for scientific purposes*, the updated edition was finally approved for publication in October 2021. The SANS 10386:2021 Edition 2 supersedes SANS 10386:2008 (edition 1). The new SANS is now available for purchase at the SABS.

The following are noteworthy additions to the latest edition:

1. Formal implementation of the 4Rs.
2. Clause 1.3 now states that ethical approval is required for “...all live non-human vertebrates and higher invertebrates such as the Cephalopoda and Decapoda. It also covers embryos, fetuses, and larval forms and their treatment in a humane manner once they have progressed beyond half the gestation or incubation period of the relevant species, or they become capable of independent feeding, whichever comes first.” With a note that the SANS 10386 “...cannot be interpreted to condone studies that are considered morally wrong or offensive.”
3. Clause 4.2.3 now specifies that a harms-benefit analysis must be made “... judgement shall balance whether the potential negative effects on the well-being of the animals involved is justified by the potential benefits”, and clause 4.2.4 refers to the “obligation to respect and preserve the dignity of animals...” and it is now required that the Institution “regularly monitor and review the institution’s compliance with this standard”.

4. Acceptable euthanasia methods have also been tabled, with emphasis on CO₂ as a sole method of euthanasia not being acceptable.

National Health Research Ethics Council

The National Health Act 61 of 2003 (NHA) provides statutory authority for the governance of health research and the necessary research ethics regulatory infrastructure. The National Health Research Ethics Council (NHREC) was established in 2006 in terms of section 72 of the National Health Act (NHA). Some of the most important duties of the NHREC are to set norms and standards for health research involving humans and animals and to register and audit research ethics committees. In terms of Section 73(1) of the NHA every organisation/institution, health agency, and health establishment at which health research using animals is conducted must establish or have access to a registered Animal Research Ethics Committee (AREC). ARECs that review health research using animals must register with the NHREC.

The NHREC has issued guidelines to ensure that research in South Africa is conducted responsibly and ethically. These guidelines ‘*Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures – 2015*’ together with The SANS 10386:2021 and MRC Guidelines on Ethics for Medical Research: Use of Animals in Research and Training (2004) provide the minimum benchmark to ensure ethical and humane care of animals used for scientific purposes as well as for teaching activities, in line with the fundamental principles of Replace, Reduce, Refine and Responsibility in animal use.

These documents ensure that the safety and welfare of animals in research are promoted, that researchers are accountable for their research activities, and that social and ethical values are promoted.

Animal Ethics Committees

The Animal Ethics Unit serves on 46 Animal Ethics Committees around the country and attended a total of 269 meetings during the reporting period.

Most of the Animal Ethics Committees the Unit serves on have either registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council (NHREC) or are in process of registering with them even though not all the institutions are involved in health research as defined in the National Health Act.

The Animal Ethics Unit is in support of all Animal Ethics Committees registering with the NHREC as it ensures the same set of standards across the board. It further ensures that no retrospective review and approval or clearance is given to any project and that researchers are suitably qualified and technically competent to carry out the proposed research.

ENSURING THE ETHICAL AND HUMANE CARE AND USE OF ANIMALS



Inspections and Corrective Actions

Inspections are conducted in accordance with SANS 10386: The Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes. Inspections include attention to housing, husbandry, handling and the health status of the animals at animal research facilities. Not only does the Unit conduct routine inspections but also undertakes follow-up, pre- and post-approval animal ethics committee inspections and complaints. The Unit conducted 72 Inspections during the reporting period.

33 corrective actions, i.e. notice to comply and warnings, were issued to facilities. The Animal Ethics Unit is placing emphasis on post-approval inspections to ensure the research is done in accordance with the ethics clearance and to actively monitor the welfare of the animals during the study.

Research Applications and Protocols

During 2022, the Animal Ethics Unit received 2 247 applications and spent 2 331 hours reviewing the protocols.

The Animal Ethics Unit always strives to apply the 4Rs during the review process. It is worthwhile to report that some facilities and researchers also strive to do this and they will make use of animal samples obtained from biobanks or abattoirs whenever possible instead of using live animals or they make use of secondary data obtained from previously completed and approved studies. The Animal Ethics Unit always asks for justification for the number of animals that will be used in a study as well as justification for why that specific specie will be used.

Training Sessions Attended and Presented

Training of researchers and members of an Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) is critical. The Department of Health 2015 Ethics in Health Research Guidelines requires that researchers should produce evidence of appropriate research ethics training within the previous three years and members of AECs should be expected to produce evidence of recent training. AECs, therefore, provide training opportunities to members as often as possible. The Animal Ethics Unit is often requested by the AECs to present certain aspects of the training to AEC members. Members of the Unit attended 11 and presented nine training sessions in 2022.

Food and Medicine Crisis at Agricultural Research Council Irene

During a visit to the facility on 3 May 2022, the Animal Ethics Unit discovered that there was a real risk that the facility could run out of feed for their animals as well as the unavailability of certain medications due to the poor management of procurement processes by the supply chain. A meeting was called with senior management at the facility to find a way to prevent the looming food and medicine crisis. The Unit established that there would be enough food available for at least two weeks and that purchase orders would be issued to get additional food and medicine delivered timeously.

On 19 May 2022, the Unit returned to the facility to find that the food supply was close to depletion and that there was no medication to treat the mastitis of the dairy cows and the medicine to treat the calves with diarrhea was also depleted. The managers and staff of the respective units were trying their best to make alternative plans to take care of the needs of the animals.

The Unit ensured that the general manager of the facility was fully aware of the dire situation and the consequences they would face should any animal suffer due to a lack of food or medicine. It was agreed that the necessary medication and feed would be obtained by using emergency procurement processes. Feed and medicine were delivered in time to prevent any of the animals from being without food and to provide the best treatment options for them.

The Unit continues to monitor the situation on an ongoing basis and has had several meetings with ARC management to ensure that something such as this does not re-occur in the future. Until such time that the facility has adequately addressed all our concerns for the welfare of the animals in their care, we have placed a hold on the start of any previously approved research at the facility, and no new research projects that involve the use of livestock will be approved.

SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT



**National Council
of SPCAs**

The Special Investigations Unit remains the only dedicated unit in the country specialising in the investigation and combatting of crimes pertaining to animal fighting and animal sexual abuse and animal maiming. The Special Investigations Unit specialises in the prosecution of serious offences in the Magistrates and Regional Courts, assisting the State in securing justice for the victims of animal abuse.

Criminal Chargers laid against Dog Breeder

Every year, more and more light is shed on the cruelty behind the breeding industry that is often kept hidden from the public by breeders. Glossy adverts of cute puppies on social media platforms pull the wool over the public's eyes - blinding them to the conditions that the parent dogs are kept in, and where the puppies were born.

Typically, dogs used in the breeding industry will never chase a ball in the park, they will never be taken for walks, and they will never get to curl up on the couch next to a loving member of their

family. Instead, at best, the dogs will be treated like breeding machines, forced to churn out litter after litter non-stop. At worst? Their lives will be a living hell - forced to eat, sleep and live in cages covered in faeces and urine, left without veterinary treatment, confined to chains and cages indefinitely, and denied everything that makes a dog's life worth living.

While the breeding industry remains unregulated in South Africa, SPCA Inspectors are still authorised to conduct inspections at any place where animals are kept. Often, the conditions under which animals are being kept at breeding facilities are unacceptable, and multiple laws have been contravened.

This is the case with a dog breeder in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal. The Special Investigations Unit inspected the property on two occasions with a warrant and on both occasions, shocking contraventions of the Animals Protection Act no 71 of 1962 were found.

Criminal charges were laid.



VIOLENT CRIMES AGAINST ANIMALS RECEIVE FOCUSED ATTENTION

Sexual Abuse of Animals

Bestiality is a serious concern in our country. It is a shameful crime that is often swept under the carpet to protect perpetrators. This crime has a proven propensity to escalate to other violent and sexual crimes against people.

During the past year, the Special Investigations Unit has seen a rise in the number of bestiality cases. All reports received were fully investigated and every attempt is being made to trace suspects and ensure that criminal cases that follow receive the necessary attention in the Courts.

In a case involving the rape of a dog brought to court by the National Council of SPCAs, the 8-year sentence handed down following a guilty verdict serves as a stern warning of the consequences of animal rape. For the full story, see page 5 of this report and visit <https://nspca.co.za/nspca-wins-animal-rape-case-8-year-direct-imprisonment-for-abuser-2/>

Dogfighting

The Special Investigation Unit continues to receive reports of dogfighting which remains a widespread problem across the country. However, in most cases, the information is vague and requires hours of laborious investigation to try and find locations and suspects.

A Premeditated Act of Cruelty

In one of the cruellest cases of dog fighting investigated, the National Council of SPCAs identified two teenage boys, both aged 17, as the suspected perpetrators of the crime. In July 2022, a graphic video of dogfighting was forwarded to the Special Investigations Unit by a detective at the Aliwal North Police Station. In the video, the teenagers can be seen inciting their two large breed Pitbulls to attack a dog that they had chained in a nearby veld. The dog can be heard screaming in pain and terror as the Pitbulls repeatedly tear into its flesh. The teenagers are seen laughing and encouraging their blood-covered Pitbulls to continue attacking the chained dog until eventually its bones could be heard being crushed and the dog passes away. Throughout the video, the dog could be seen repeatedly trying to escape the attack but failed because it was chained.

In a premeditated act of violence, cruelty, and brutality the teenagers had chained the dog to facilitate being tortured and killed in an illegal dog fight for entertainment.

Inspectors from the National Council of SPCAs, together with the detectives from Aliwal North SAPS, raided the properties of the teenagers in the Joe Gqabi area. Both the Pitbulls seen in the video were found chained and were removed, along with another dog

found on one of the properties. The National Council of SPCAs laid criminal charges against both the boys and three other spectators. Although the accused persons, in this case, are all under the age of 18, the National Council of SPCAs will relentlessly pursue justice for the dog which lost its life as well as the two Pitbulls that were subjected to being used for illegal dogfighting purposes.

Dogfighting Victim Rescued

In July 2022, Inspectors of the Special Investigations Unit removed a dog used for dogfighting purposes within the Mokopane region. The National Council of SPCAs was tipped off that the dog was being kept at the premises of an allegedly notorious drug den and that the owner of the dog was seen willfully inciting the dog to fight.



The dog was found on the premises in a depressed and lethargic state, surrounded by litter and a build-up of faeces and urine. He was covered in bite wounds and scars from the fights he was forced into. It was evident that his wounds were left untreated, which would have contributed to the state he was found in. He had no bed, no food and no access to clean drinking water.

The owner was nowhere to be found, most likely because of the alleged illegal activities taking place on the premises. The matter continues to be investigated to ensure that the owner of the dog is found to face the consequences of his actions.

Pitbull Shows and Events

The SPCA is opposed to the use of any animal in a sport that causes or may cause pain, suffering, distress, or lasting harm, whether during training, performance, or otherwise.

Pitbull shows are held in some areas and the organisers typically promote them as an alternative to dogfighting. Shows are a way for Pitbull owners to compete and to show their dogs and their capacity in a way other than dogfighting. Superficially this may seem like a good alternative. Unfortunately, these shows also provide an opportunity for the exhibition and marketing of bloodlines, and for owners to network for possible dubious activities such as dogfighting.

Various disciplines of Pitbull eventing are monitored, including weight pull, long hang, and high jump. Some of the dogs are made to pull weight in excess of 5 tons (5000 kgs) on a trolley, and therefore the various welfare concerns connected therewith are addressed.

The Special Investigations Unit conducts inspections at various Pitbull shows and events to ensure that compromised animals are not permitted to compete and that the welfare of the animals is protected at all times.

Legal Action Taken

The Special Investigations Unit has 45 cases pending and 8 people charged for animal cruelty during the reporting period. A total of 23 days were spent in court progressing cases to secure convictions.

The Unit has also had great success with having several cold cases reinstated and investigated. 13 Provincial dogfighting cases have been reinstated, and four out of six cases in Phokeng (wildlife trade) have also been reinstated

34 animals were removed from the cycle of violence.
47 dogfighting-related actions were taken.
101 premeditated violent cruelty cases were investigated.

Surrender of Pitbulls

Dog attacks have been a serious issue in our country for a long time, but following a series of deaths of the vulnerable, this issue was covered extensively by local media houses in the last few months of 2022.

This issue has gained the attention of major political parties, national unions, and national civic organisations and also resulted in a petition calling for a Ban on the Breed by the Sizwe Kapelo Foundation. The Kapelo Foundation is a Non-Governmental Organisation that does a lot of work to uplift children and families in impoverished areas. The petition collected over 138 000 signatures and was handed to the government on 15 December 2022.

SPCAs around South Africa faced the difficult task of dealing with the aftermath of these tragic attacks. Pitbulls were being surrendered to SPCAs in large numbers placing a huge burden on these Societies. As the number of aggressive dogs surrendered to SPCAs across South Africa increased, so too did the National Council of SPCAs' concern for the effect this will have on SPCAs (especially the smaller Societies operating in outlying areas) as well as what would happen in the areas where there are no SPCAs. Realistically, the SPCA movement does not have the resources to cover the cost of this national disaster without support from other relevant role-players in this matter.

In some communities where owners had not surrendered their aggressive/dangerous Pitbulls, the communities began taking matters into their own hands. In some cases, Pitbulls were being

attacked by angry mobs claiming justice for the victims. Animals have been stabbed, burnt alive, stoned, and tortured with many disturbing videos being circulated, all of which were investigated.

The National Council of SPCAs therefore formally addressed an enquiry to the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, and Land Reform to determine their strategy to solve this critical issue affecting the lives of humans and animals – and appealed for urgent intervention.

The National Council of SPCAs has issued numerous media statements cautioning the public that there will be no hesitation in taking action against people for acts of violence and cruelty to animals. A great deal of time has been spent trying to calm this situation and avoid harm to Pitbulls while at the same time promoting community safety. The National Council of SPCAs has indicated that we support stricter regulations on dangerous dogs including micro-chipping, mandatory sterilisation, and registration. Owners should ideally have permits/licenses to keep dangerous dogs/power breeds.

Coffee with a Cop

In June 2022, the Special Investigations Unit received an invitation from the Provincial Head of Police inviting all Law Enforcement stakeholders and role-players to take part in the "Coffee with a Cop" programme that seeks to bridge the gap between the police, the private sector and the community.



This was a great opportunity for the National Council of SPCAs to network with other law enforcement agencies and the general community at large. Three Inspectors attended and received great support and welcome from other enforcement stakeholders. The event was well supported, and the public and South African Police Services showed keen interest in the information shared by the National Council of SPCAs. The representatives from the National Council of SPCAs handed out information booklets and interacted with interested parties. We hope to strengthen the alliance we have with the South African Police Services to ensure we can jointly combat animal crime more efficiently.

WILDLIFE PROTECTION UNIT



**National Council
of SPCAs**

The Wildlife Protection Unit is a dedicated specialist operational unit equipped to ensure that wild animal welfare is always considered for any human-related activities for both free-living and captive wildlife. Wild animals are protected in terms of the Animals Protection Act No. 71 of 1962 and National Wildlife Inspectors enforce this Act where necessary to protect wild animals.

ENSURING THE WELFARE OF WILDLIFE

From an operational perspective, the Wildlife Protection Unit conducts ongoing on-the-ground proactive and reactive inspections; addressing both animal welfare and cruelty complaints and carries out rescues and confiscations of compromised animals.

This reporting period has seen Unit staff travel 122 298 kms to cover their objectives in curbing cruelty to wild animals.

The Inspectors from the Wildlife Protection Unit cover indigenous wildlife species as well as exotic wild animals ranging from arachnids to the largest feline such as the Siberian Tiger and need to keep up with the ever-changing nature of this industry.

In total, the Unit has carried out 284 inspections at facilities across South Africa with 100 Warnings being issued overall within the reporting period.

The Inspectors have also undertaken 93 investigations for serious offences and collaborated with provincial nature conservation, as well as the directorate for high priority crimes (HAWKS) to combat organised wildlife crimes. The inspectorate work of the Wildlife Protection Unit has resulted in the HAWKS sharing much interest in our work concerning crimes other than those committed purely in terms of the Animals Protection Act 71 of 1962 alone. The National Council of SPCAs has enjoyed the support of the HAWKS and looks forward to continuing its collaborative efforts to ensure justice for wildlife.

During the period under review, 22 days were spent in court dealing with 15 cases where people have been charged with animal cruelty. In total, 26 people have been charged under the Animals Protection Act No. 71 of 1962, specific to wildlife welfare.



Barn Owl rescued by the Wildlife Protection Unit

The Wildlife Protection Unit has handled and resolved 509 animal welfare cruelty complaints from across the country and has been part of rescues of 279 animals ranging in species from Barn Owls, Chameleons, Giraffes, Crocodiles, Tortoises, Vervet Monkeys to the magnificent Lion.

CAPTIVE LION INDUSTRY

The Wildlife Protection Unit has continued to place an enormous focus on the captive lion industry. There were 161 predator facility inspections during the reporting period relating only to the captive lion industry, with 73 warnings being issued for contraventions in terms of the Animals Protection Act.

The captive lion industry continues to be a blight on South Africa's reputation. Since the announcement on 2 May 2021 to bring an end to the industry, the Wildlife Protection Unit Inspectors have seen an escalation in the cruelty within the industry due to a slowdown in legal trade for the international market for exporting



lion trophies. The downturn in the facilities' income causes the facilities to avoid spending money on veterinary fees, cleaning and maintenance, and procuring cheaper less nutritious meat for the lions.

Severe and common animal welfare concerns include but are not limited to lack of/or inadequate veterinary care; unhygienic conditions; poor diet; starving or underfeeding; over-crowding; and permit-keeping condition contraventions.

The Wildlife Protection Unit has sent countless communications to the offices of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, including two separate letters escalating our concerns to Minister Barbara Creecy covering a plethora of welfare concerns, the need for interim measures and the National Council of SPCAs' intention to serve on the Panel of Experts to formulate and oversee the implementation of a voluntary exit strategy for lion farmers who wish to participate.

Leaving the industry may sound simple, however, there is a lot of red tape involved. Other facilities may not want to purchase the lions from those who wish to exit the industry, following the decision taken by Minister Creecy as supported by Parliament, to close the industry down. Voluntary exits would need to have many avenues considered for example; the lions' future in terms of rescue facilities or consideration to euthanase the lions, the health and safety of staff, and the future of the remaining staff members. The costs of running these facilities are astronomical as feeding, veterinary care, staffing etc. are overheads which should not be reduced as this will negatively impact the welfare of animals.

In addition, the Wildlife Protection Unit also provided comments and input into the Draft African Lion Biodiversity Management Plan Review Report. The African lion is listed regionally as Least

Concern on the 2016 Red List Assessment, and Vulnerable on the 2004 International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List, as well as on the South African list of Threatened and Protected Species (TOPS) in terms of Section 56 (1) of NEMBA. Furthermore, it is protected under Appendix II of the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES). In 2015, the Biodiversity Management Plan for the African Lion was approved for implementation for five years. The draft document reports on progress made in achieving the actions and objectives set out in the Biodiversity Management Plan.

ACTIONS FOR WILDLIFE

From a lobbying and legislative perspective, the Wildlife Protection Unit is actively involved through formal submissions and participation in all relevant stakeholder consultation processes; serves on various relevant wildlife forums; and engages with national and provincial governmental entities on matters relating to wildlife management practices, legislation, policy development and regulation.

Leopard Management and Conservation

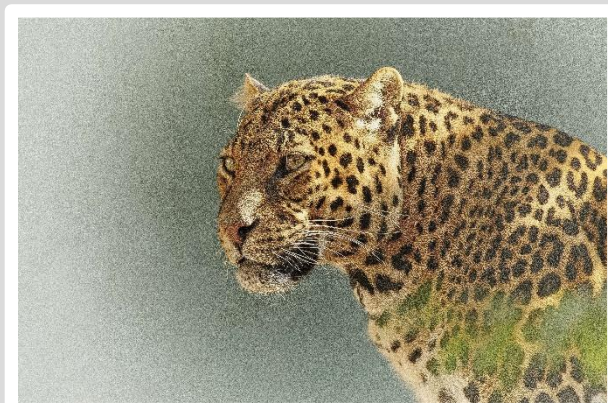
The Wildlife Protection Unit has been an active stakeholder through various platforms in terms of leopard management and conservation in South Africa since 2021. Leopard are regarded as an iconic species, with numerous recommendations adopted as part of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment's High-Level Panel Recommendations Report due to the recognition that the leopard is in dire need of improved management practices. This is specifically surrounding key documented threats such as legal and illegal excessive off-takes of putative damage-causing-animals; poorly managed trophy hunting; the illegal trade in leopard skins for cultural and religious attire; incidental snaring; and the unethical radio-collaring of leopards for research and tourism. The Department of the Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment has established a Leopard Advisory Forum with the objective of taking the work of leopard conservation forward. The Department called on all stakeholders to submit nominated representatives to serve on the forum. Wildlife Protection Unit representatives are now serving members on this forum.

The Wildlife Protection Unit provided input on two documents relevant to the Leopard Advisory Forum, *i.e.*:

- Draft Status Quo Report on the conservation and management of leopard in South Africa; and
- Draft Terms of Reference for the Leopard Advisory Forum.

The Wildlife Protection Unit submitted a formal submission via the public participation process on 8 November 2021 as per *Government Notice No. 1022 of Government Gazette No. 45294, 08 October 2021 – Consultation on the proposed hunting/export quota for elephant, black rhinoceros, and leopard hunting trophies for the 2021 calendar year*. The Wildlife Unit opposed the set hunting quota of 10 leopard based on the exclusion of animal welfare; lack of due process followed by the Department;

and that the quota was deemed unsustainable. Based on this, our submission specifically requested feedback from Department due to our concerns raised.



The Wildlife Protection Unit sent Minister Barbara Creecy a formal letter requesting clarification and justification on the range of concerns communicated both in our original submission that formed part of the public participation process for Government Gazette No. 45294, and our concerns outlined in our letter. Our concerns were answered in part only due to litigation.

In support of the Human Society International's (HSI) legal challenge against the quota, the National Council of SPCAs' management provided (HSI) with all the required information and documentation in terms of the Wildlife Protection Unit's contributions, participation and work completed in terms of leopard.

The Humane Society International (HSI) applied for an urgent interdict in the High Court of South Africa, Western Cape Division to prevent any hunting permits and exports thereof for elephant, black rhinoceros, and leopard for the calendar year 2022 pending the relief of part B of their court application soon after Minister Barbara Creecy's publicly approved the 2022 hunting quotas. Part A of HSI's application has recently been granted and none of the allocated animals, i.e., 150 elephant, 10 black rhinoceros and 10 leopards may be hunted pending the relief sought in Part B of HSI's court application.

The National Council of SPCAs is considering further action in the interest of leopard conservation, management, and welfare.

Wildlife Welfare Forum

Background

In October 2019, Minister Barbara Creecy from the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) established a High-Level Panel to review policies, legislation and practices related to the management, breeding, hunting, trade and handling of elephant, lion, leopard, and rhinoceros. The High-Level Panel released a Recommendations Report which recognised that the welfare and the humane and responsible treatment of wildlife was one of the key areas in respect of recommendations made, and for a forum or integrated wildlife welfare unit to be established.

The Wildlife Welfare Forum was established in 2022 by the DFFE as a result of the High-Level Panel outcome. The Wildlife Protection Unit attended the forum's inception meeting and provided input on two documents relevant to the Wildlife Welfare Forum:

- Draft Code of Conduct.
- Draft Terms of Reference for the Wildlife Welfare Forum.

National Environment Management Laws Bill

The recognition and need for wildlife welfare is finally accepted and set for imminent inclusion in the management and conservation of South Africa's biodiversity as per the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004 (NEMBA).

The National Council of SPCAs has been instrumental in bringing about change within the animal welfare regime in South Africa, including having collaborated and made key accepted recommendations to the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE). Whilst the set amendments to NEMBA have been assented to by the President and published in the *Gazette* on 24 June 2022 as per the National Environmental Management Laws Amendment Act, 2022, the amendments will come into operation on a date proclaimed by the President of the Republic of South Africa.



The National Council of SPCAs welcomes the long-overdue recognition of wildlife welfare to improve human-nature-based relationships and ensure that our wildlife has welfare as a priority and uphold the intertwined values of conservation and welfare. Animal welfare not only includes the more well-known categories of domesticated, captive, or farming animals, but needs to be incorporated into human-induced activities that do not promote positive wildlife welfare, and negatively impact the environment and the lives of animals that are dependent on it for their survival; such as open cast mining operations, deep sea exploration and the establishment of eco-estates in sensitive areas. The National Council of SPCAs is supportive of DFFE towards this positive step for increased protection of South Africa's wild animals and biodiversity.

FARM ANIMAL PROTECTION UNIT



**National Council
of SPCAs**

The Farm Animal Protection Unit experienced another challenging year in terms of inhumane practices involving farm animals. The rearing of farmed animals is dominated by profits and not always treating animals like the sentient beings that they are.

Animals are farmed globally for eggs, meat, milk, and hides. Most farmed animals are confined in situations that significantly compromise their quality of life and do not even provide basic needs of movement, interaction or comfort. They are also subjected to painful procedures deemed necessary by farmers and industry demands.



Improvements for Pigs

Phase-out of Gestation Crates

In the quest for humane farming, the National Council of SPCAs has achieved improved living conditions that allow pregnant sows to stand up, turn around completely and lie down without difficulty or touching the sides of the bars in gestation crates.

A gestation crate is a metal crate – usually with a bare concrete/slatted floor – which is so narrow that the sow cannot turn around, and she can only stand up and lie down with much difficulty.

The National Council of SPCAs has specifically accomplished full compliance at the Department of Correctional Services' farms

that previously had sows in traditional gestation crates. All the prison farms with pig herds have now either increased the size of their gestation crates or opted for group housing. This is a significant victory not only for the National Council of SPCAs but more importantly for pigs which remain one of the most intensively farmed animals.

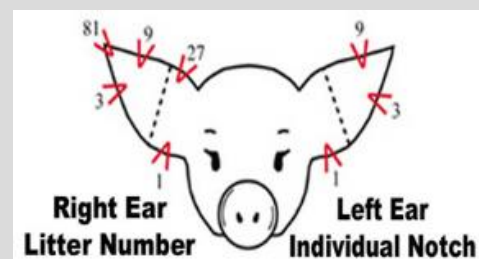
Whilst the phase-out period for traditional gestation crates is yielding positive results for pig welfare, many farmers have yet to comply and the National Council of SPCAs will not hesitate to seek legal relief if farmers do not consider the welfare of their animals.

Ear Notching: Unnecessary and Cruel

Ear notching is a cruel, inhumane, and unnecessary identification method for pigs. This form of identification involves the removal of pieces of the ear in piglets which consists mostly of cartilage and is often done without administering anaesthesia. Ear notching is not a lawful means of identification in terms of the Animal Identification Act, 6 of 2002. The Unit continues to strive to stop the inhumane practice of ear notching of piglets in South Africa.

The Farm Animal Protection Unit has engaged with the National Department of Correctional Services (DCS) as well as agricultural colleges and schools in the Limpopo Province regarding this inhumane practice. The Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (LDARD) has cooperated and committed to stopping this practice at all their agricultural colleges and schools in the province. Directives from the Head of Agriculture at the National DCS were sent to all prison farms with pigs and thus far, all the prison farms have committed to phasing out the ear notching of pigs.

Welfare training on this subject was presented to LDARD and various prisons, highlighting the illegality of ear notching and informing that action is being considered against those facilities that choose to remain non-compliant.



Inspections

Farm Animal Protection Unit Inspectors operate nationally and conduct proactive inspections in addition to reactively investigating all complaints received. During the period under review, 937 inspections were undertaken around South Africa to inspect the welfare of farm animals and ensure compliance with the Animals Protection Act, No. 71 of 1962 and relevant National Standards.

Facilities inspected included: abattoirs (red meat, poultry, crocodile, rabbit, ostrich), feedlots, poultry farms, hawkers, sale yards, dairy farms, ports of entry and exit, private and municipal livestock pounds, commercial and emerging piggeries, ostrich farms, prison farms, rabbit farms, crocodile farms, cull outlets, aquaculture farms, petting farms, alpaca farms, mohair farms, research farms, and agricultural colleges and schools. The Unit also monitored the live export of animals as well as Qurbani, and rodeos.

Appropriate action was taken in addressing welfare concerns encountered during inspections. These actions included recommendations for improvements as well as warnings to correct oversights.

Where contraventions of the Animals Protection Act No. 71 of 1962 were encountered, charges were laid. New cases were registered with the South African Police Services and one conviction was secured after the accused was found guilty of animal cruelty.

Successful Prosecution

In July 2020, an Inspector from the Farm Animal Protection Unit was conducting a routine inspection at a sale yard in Vryburg in the North West Province when she observed cattle that had been transported to the sale yard in an inhumane manner. Two cattle were tied down to the floor of a trailer in a recumbent position. The ropes prevented either of the cattle from being able to move, forcing them to lay in their own urine and faeces. Criminal proceedings were initiated against the owner. Two years later, we welcomed the judgement of Honourable Magistrate Mukhindi, who found the owner guilty of the charges brought against him by the Farm Animal Protection Unit. Magistrate Mukhindi sentenced the owner to two years imprisonment or a fine of R2 000.

Pending Cases

The Farm Animal Protection Unit has a further 28 cases pending finalisation through the legal system.

This includes the Thandi Modise case which dates back to 2014. See page 6 of this report for full details.

Transportation

The inhumane transportation of farmed animals is a serious welfare concern that should not be overlooked. These animals are often loaded into trucks in large numbers which causes overcrowding. No food or water is provided for the animals during transit, and some of the journeys take days to complete. Weaker and smaller animals are often trampled or bullied by bigger animals searching for space, resulting in many of the animals sustaining serious injuries or even death. Another concern of the Farm Animal Unit is that trucks carrying farm animals are not given preference at weighbridges across the country. Animals already spend long hours being transported only to be detained for prolonged periods at weighbridges. A letter was emailed to the Minister of Transport, Mr Fikile Mbalula, requesting the prioritisation of livestock vehicles at weighbridges. We requested the Minister's intervention on a national level and whilst we are cognizant that weighbridges are necessary, we outlined our concerns affecting animals and their welfare whilst in transit. The Unit has requested that the Minister considers publishing a regulation or directive which allows for trucks conveying live animals to be priority processed at all weighbridges and/or compulsory thoroughfares across the country.

Emerging Farmers

Poultry, equine, sheep, goats, pigs, and cattle are commonly kept, and typical concerns encountered include lack of food, water and shelter, poor hygiene, and the lack of veterinary care when animals are sick or injured. Inspections are undertaken to assess the welfare of animals and give the necessary advice or education to the owners, and also issue warnings as a last resort where necessary.



Training workshops and farmer days were held for small-scale or subsistence farmers who rely on their animals for food. Unfortunately, they often have limited finances and this is often used as an excuse. Finances are needed for items such as dip and medication, but improving management and hygiene needs planning and effort. We worked with owners to ensure they understood their responsibilities and took action to rectify

these problems. We distributed educational pamphlets, tick grease, and food to keep farmers interested and engaged, but at the same time providing key welfare messages on animal welfare, responsibility, the value and importance of animals, and how each one of the farmers can treat the animals in their care humanely.

Compromised Dairy Calves

In February 2022, the Farm Animal Protection Unit encountered numerous calves being offloaded at an abattoir in the Western Cape. Upon inquiry, it was ascertained that most of the calves originated from various dairy farms. The calves ranged in age from two days to a week and were primarily bull or bobby calves which have no financial value to dairy farmers. Many of the animals were in poor physical condition and at least eight of these calves had to be euthanased immediately to alleviate further suffering. This is the harsh reality that male calves born into the dairy industry are faced with.

A meeting was held with the management of the abattoir and a written warning was issued to the abattoir not to accept any calf younger than 10 days of age in line with SANS 1694:2018 Welfare of Dairy Cattle which states that calves under 10 days of age shall not be transported. The abattoir in question amended its policy for receiving animals and subsequently complied with the warning.



Various dairy farms in the area were also inspected with written warnings being issued for several contraventions of the Animals Protection Act, No. 71 of 1962, and for the transportation of calves under 10 days to cease. Follow-up inspections were conducted by the local SPCAs at the abattoir as well as the dairy farms and the situation is under control. Routine inspections remain in place.

A virtual meeting was held with the Milk Producers Organisation and Dairy Standards Agency on 31 March 2022, to discuss all the welfare issues experienced at dairy farms across the country. This included transportation of calves under 10 days, lack of shelter and bedding for calves, and minimum pen sizes for calves.

The dairy industry is currently working towards addressing the issues with its members and we have been invited to attend dairy audits with the appointed veterinarian for welfare audits.

A new dairy welfare guide was published by the Dairy Standards Agency and a copy was provided to the National Council of SPCAs.

National Standards and Regulations

The National Council of SPCAs has been active in initiating and developing several national standards through the South African Bureau of Standards over the years. The following standards are currently being developed with the SABS and industry role players with some reaching the final stages of completion.

SANS 1758 – Poultry Welfare Standard

SANS 3090 – Rabbit Welfare Standard

SANS – Aquaculture Standard

SANS 631:2009 – Crocodiles in Captivity



Indisputably, farmed animals remain the most subjugated and abused animals on the planet.

Ending the suffering of farmed animals in today's world is a moral imperative, and the Farm Animal Protection Unit strives for positive change and the improved welfare of all farmed animals.

SPECIAL PROJECTS UNIT



**National Council
of SPCAs**

The Special Projects Unit's animal welfare focus is varied and includes a diverse range of issues not covered by the other operational units of the National Council of SPCAs.

The Unit works toward improving, changing, and monitoring the welfare of animals that are used in illegal hunting, exhibition, safeguarding, recreational and sporting events. It also deals with animals that do not fit into the traditional production, companion, or wild categories such as pests and problem animals, and monitoring and improving the welfare of animals being transported through the country's ports of entry. Additional matters overseen by this Unit include animal breeders, hoarders, and animal shelters.

Initiatives at Borders

The trade and movement of animals is not illegal but the National Council of SPCAs continually expresses its concern about the standards of care in the movement of animals both within our own country and across our borders.

We work extensively to ensure that animals are transported and handled humanely and with compassion.

Airports

The Unit conducted 22 airport inspections at four different airports and visited 273 cargo companies during these inspections.

2 737 animals arriving and departing from these warehouses were observed. Animal species include day-old chicks, pigeons, exotic bird species, dogs, cats, rats, mice, livestock, horses, wild animals, and aquatic species such as fish, crayfish, crabs, and abalone. The Unit aims to uplift welfare standards at the cargo warehouses that handle live animal shipments. OR Tambo International Airport, which handles the largest number of animal shipments, is inspected weekly, and inspections are either proactive or complaint based.

A recent incident encountered by the Special Projects Unit at OR Tambo International Airport, which handles the largest number of animal shipments, involved a shipment of some 450 exotic birds in overstocked transport boxes. Deceased birds were found in the boxes as well as indigenous birds that were not listed on the packing list and were without the necessary transport permits. The shipment was stopped and the welfare of all the birds was addressed.

A criminal case is pending.



Animal crate inspection at OR Tambo International Airport

Land Borders

The Special Projects Unit continues to work at land borders across South Africa. Complaint-related and proactive inspections are conducted by both the Special Projects Unit and the Farm Animal Protection Unit Inspectors.

The Unit conducted 27 Border operations and undertook inspections at 21 different border posts.

Animal welfare problems associated with road transport include long-distance travel, overcrowding and associated injuries as well as long delays at border posts. Long-distance transport by road has severe animal welfare implications, including, but not limited to, stress, deprivation of feed and water, handling, road and vehicle conditions, and often, adverse weather conditions.

85 Border officials from various stakeholders such as South African Police Services, Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, Rural Development, South African National Defense Force, South African Revenue Services and others were provided with training. Meetings were attended and practical training sessions were undertaken to train officials on how to inspect animal shipments and how to handle certain cases when animals are involved. Raising awareness of how animal crime is conducted in South Africa empowers ports of entry staff not only to be vigilant for animal welfare concerns and illegal operations but also increases their awareness of associated crime that takes place using common animal transport avenues.

The Border Management Authority (BMA) was created and tasked to tighten border management by implementing an integrated and coordinated approach to the border management environment. The BMA was implemented at the Beitbridge border in Limpopo on 14 July 2022 with 200 guards deployed. Our Inspectors have met with the Managers and provided them with guidance and documentation to enhance their knowledge of animal welfare at the borders. The agency will later be rolled out to other ports of entry across South Africa.

The Unit also conducted Inspections at facilities that use animals in their duties along the borders. These facilities included SAPS K9 Units and SARS Dog Detection Units. Warnings were issued and recommendations were given to improve the wellbeing of the dogs and horses used.

The Unit's border initiatives have resulted in an increasing number of calls to the National Council of SPCAs to report suspicious activities involving animals in transit as well as enquiries for guidance on making transiting animals more comfortable or assistance to speed up the border crossing process for already travel-weary animals.

Animals in impoverished areas along the border line were also assisted by the team. Children and animal owners were educated on basic animal husbandry and provided with educational material.

Domestic animals were assisted with food, blankets, running chains and basic first aid. Farm animals were inspected, and advice was given to owners to improve the welfare and wellbeing of the animals in their care. External parasite control was also provided to these animals.

Endurance/Traditional Horse Races

The SPCA is opposed to the use of any animal in a sport that causes or may cause pain, suffering, distress, or lasting harm, whether during training, performance, or otherwise.

The Special Projects Unit monitors Endurance Racing and concerns usually observed at events include incorrect transportation, incorrect loading and offloading of animals and the housing of animals that is often neglected. The training techniques utilised may cause suffering and animals who are injured or otherwise unsound are often forced to compete.



Inspectors observe competing horses

The Unit monitored two Traditional Horse Races in KwaZulu Natal. Concerns observed included, horses not having access to potable water, incorrect transport, no loading ramps, unsuitable paddocks, injured animals pushed to compete, etc. Concerns were addressed and corrected, and all were put in writing to the event organisers to prevent any concerns from reoccurring in future races.

Working Animals

The Unit conducts inspections at facilities that use working animals (dogs and horses) for various reasons, which include safeguarding, detection, response, etc. During the period under review, the Unit conducted inspections at the premises of the South African Police Services (SAPS), South African National Defense Force (SANDF), South African Revenue Services (SARS), Department of Agriculture Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD), Airports Company of South Africa (ACSA) Runway dogs, Correctional Services, anti-poaching units, and private security companies.

WORKING TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF ANIMALS

Inspections Undertaken



A facility holding working dogs being inspected

Facility	No. of Inspections
Private Security Companies	5
South African Police Services K9 Units	46
South African Police Services Mounted Units	7
SARS Customs and Excise (detector dogs)	8
Department of Agriculture (detector dogs)	2
Department of Correctional Services	10
SANDEF K9 Unit	2
SANDEF Mounted Units	1
EMPD K9 Unit	2
ACSA Runway Dog Inspections	1
SANParks Anti-Poaching Dogs	1
SANParks Anti-Poaching Horses	1

The Special Projects Unit continues to assist with the transfer of unsuitable working dogs from the SAPS Training Academy to SPCAs for rehoming. A total number of 224 dogs have been donated by South African Police Services and transferred to SPCAs for rehoming.

Humane Deterrents

While the SPCA acknowledges that under certain circumstances, pest control and/or extermination may be required, the SPCA only supports the use of humane methods. The SPCA does not support methods of pest management that cause suffering, pain, or distress to any animal.

The increasing cruel use of glue traps is still a huge concern for the Special Projects Unit, and the public has been assisting with reporting these matters. The Unit is working extensively on this

matter through our engagement with government departments, and continuing to educate online suppliers. Our end goal is to prohibit the import, sale, and use of this product in South Africa.

We received 28 complaints and inquiries about humane animal control. A criminal case has been registered following investigations relating to the torture of two rats caught in glue traps. The Unit is hopeful that this case will assist in proving how cruel glue traps can be to target and non-target species.

Letters were issued to online retailers selling glue traps, inhumane animal equipment, and electronic training devices informing them of the extent of cruelty the animals are subjected to and requesting that the trade of such traps cease.

Hunting with Dogs

The Special Projects Unit has seen a rise in complaints received about individuals who take part in this illegal activity and as a result, the Unit has received 24 complaints and requests for assistance from local SPCAs. Charges of animal cruelty and illegal hunting have been opened against one individual, and ongoing investigations remain. Dogs were rescued from a life of cruelty.

Hunting investigated in Northern Cape

The Special Projects Unit received a video of a man on the Northern Cape training Saluki and Greyhound-type dogs to hunt using live bait such as small antelope and rabbits. He further was openly posting videos of his dogs hunting springbok. This was all in an attempt to market the puppies he gets from breeding these dogs. Thorough groundwork investigations led us to his details and an inspection was conducted at his property under warrant and various contraventions of the Animals Protection Act were observed. Compromised dogs were removed. A warning was issued for welfare concerns that were observed at the time of inspection and a follow-up inspection was conducted to ensure compliance.

A case docket has been opened against him for hunting with dogs.

Illegal Dog Racing Event Stopped

Information was received about a dog race that was planned in Dannhauser in KwaZulu Natal. Investigations were undertaken and a team was assembled to stop the event on 29 October 2022. A warrant was obtained from the local Court the day before and the teams managed to prevent the race from taking place and no dog raced at the racetrack.

The dog owners and spectators attempted to intimidate the National Council of SPCAs' Inspectors into leaving, but our Inspectors stood their ground to protect the animals and uphold the law. The event did not continue. The Inspectors were assisted and supported by the South African Police Service.

Dog racing is illegal in South Africa.

VETERINARY CONSULTANT



**National Council
of SPCAs**

The Veterinary Consultant of the National Council of SPCAs works alongside the Inspectors of the organisation's specialised Units and provides professional veterinary input on a variety of animal welfare issues.

Dogfighting and Bestiality

During the past year, the National Council of SPCAs has seen success in convictions for dogfighting activities, and a highlight this year was the eight-year direct imprisonment of an individual found guilty of the brutal rape of a dog. As a regional court matter, this conviction is likely to assist in the current cases that the National Council of SPCAs and SPCAs are currently engaged with. Since the magistrate involved in this case used the same approach to judging evidence based on human rape cases, though from veterinary evidence collection and testimony, it certainly sets a model for veterinarians involved in such cases going forward.

Live Export by Sea

Numerous major issues have been handled on the farm animal front. This includes the long-distance transport of animals across the equator which has received the focused attention of the National Council of SPCAs.



Background

In October 2019, the National Council of SPCAs urgently launched Part A of its case against live export at the Makhanda High Court when the first vessel from the Middle East arrived on our shores and exported 57,000 sheep. This vessel belonged to Al Mawashi, an exporter from Kuwait.

Part A aimed to prevent Al Mawashi from exporting any more sheep until Part B of the case was heard and a judgement was given. Initially, the National Council of SPCAs was successful in gaining an interim interdict prohibiting Al Mawashi from exporting. However, in August 2020, Acting Judge Dukada granted Al Mawashi an order allowing the export of live sheep by sea to continue.

Four shipments, carrying a total of 227 231 of our sheep have been made to the Middle East in the blistering heat. Typically, when live export vessels cross the equator, the live sheep are exposed to dangerous levels of ammonia, rough seas, extreme heat stress, the rapid spread of disease, injuries, bullying, dirty conditions, exhaustion and even death.

At the beginning of May 2022, The National Council of SPCAs withdrew part B, and instead issued a summons in the East Cape High Court Division, for this matter to be heard as an action trial, due to a supposed dispute of facts. This would allow expert witnesses from all parties to be cross-examined by opposing legal teams. The National Council of SPCAs' case focuses solely on achieving a complete ban against the live export of sheep north of the equator. The matter is set to be heard sometime in 2023.

It is worth noting that in this time, New Zealand has issued a full ban on the practice, with Germany following suit. These are the first countries to do so. Both countries have been at the forefront of live export, with millions of animals raised in their countries being subjected to this cruel and outdated mode of transport. The announcement for the full phase-out of the entire sheep trade to the Middle East by the Albanese government in Australia is also very significant. Australia is the most well-known country in this trade. It had been exporting millions of sheep to the Middle East annually for more than five decades.

Humane Solutions to Problem Animals

The past year has been an exciting time with the evolution of practical solutions to animals regarded as pests. In the past, methods that avoid cruelty have not been contemplated, even by welfare scientists or rodent specialists. With the imminent ban of

glue traps in the UK and parts of Australia, exciting new developments are being explored and the National Council of SPCAs is in contact with the companies involved. Most notably bait compounds that result in the sterilisation of rodents. As they are designed to require regular consumption, they have been receiving positive feedback from wildlife regulatory bodies such as the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in whose country the capital city recorded a 97% reduction rate of juvenile rodents over a year and a half long project.

SANDF – Animal Issues

The much-publicized criminal cases against the South African National Defense Force have been pursued with vigour, and the National Council of SPCAs has persistently been following through to seek justice for the horses that had been abused under the care of those responsible.

The National Council of SPCAs has also through much cost and expertise ensured that the SANDF finally implemented the more appropriate dog handler/dog and rider/horse ratio. The situation continues to be monitored, and advice is regularly given. Much of the improvements seen have been achieved at the ground level.



Equine

With regards to equines, the National Council of SPCAs has been focusing on horse racing, amid the trend of the growth of the unregulated and diminishing regulated parts. It was part of an exposé of the crossover between the two in the *Daily Maverick*, and with the Special Projects Unit going forward, we are in the early stages of bridging this crossover in terms of regulation. There is no welfare organisation other than the National Council of SPCAs which has wide and long experience with the many forms of the unregulated section of horse racing.

While the National Council of SPCAs opposes all horse racing, the growth of a bigger unregulated form is a more worrying trend. The appearance of the regulated horse racing oversight body at unregulated events recently is evidence of a recognised much-needed shift in ensuring a broader scope of responsibility. The future concerning invasive and unnecessary equipment even in the regulated sector is also under discussion.

Animal Welfare in Focus

Interacting with other professionals in the field of animal welfare and attending conferences enables the National Council of SPCAs to stay abreast of both challenges and solutions.

International Coalition for Animal Welfare (ICFAW)

The ICFAW's mandate is to primarily influence the formulation of welfare standards at the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH). ICFAW is the platform through which the National Council of SPCAs has access to the WOAH welfare working groups.

The National Council of SPCAs was selected to serve on the committee to prepare for the review of the chapter on land transportation and has attended several meetings in this regard during the past year. The value of this input can be based on the fact that the National Council of SPCAs has made strides in South Africa regarding land transportation, evidenced by the issuance of a transport guide and having given extensive input into the SABS national standard.

A document prepared for presentation at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Egypt (2022), was signed by most organisations, including the National Council of SPCAs. This document requested that intensive farming become a point of focus, and it was presented at the Food and Agriculture stream at COP 27. It is positive, as it was mostly local African organisations that requested this focus.

2022 Congress of the South African Veterinary Association

The National Council of SPCAs was invited to address members and stakeholders of the South African Veterinary Association (SAVA) Congress which took place in October 2022.

Council members presented on three topics:

- The State of Animal Welfare in South Africa (Marcelle Meredith - Executive Director)
- Live Export by sea from South Africa, and beyond (Dr Bryce Marock - Veterinary Consultant)
- The State of Welfare within the Captive Lion Industry (Douglas Wolhuter - Manager, Wildlife Protection Unit)

Each of the three speakers, on behalf of the National Council of SPCAs, brought forward compelling presentations on their topics. The presentations were factual and based on first-hand experience. Many members approached the speakers in shock at the reality faced in terms of animal cruelty in South Africa today.

Gratitude is expressed to the South African Veterinary Association for including the National Council of SPCAs in its programme of speakers, and for the opportunity to address the veterinary profession on these important matters in our country.

6th Africa Animal Welfare Conference

In November 2022, representatives from the National Council of SPCAs joined other speakers to present at the 6th Africa Animal Welfare Conference - Action 2022.



The conference was held in Gaborone and was a hybrid event comprising in-person attendance and live-streaming for online participants. The theme for the conference was animals, people and the environment in a rapidly changing 21st century. Speakers from globally renowned organisations across the world travelled to Gaborone, or joined virtually, to either present at the conference or form part of the delegation of various stakeholders among them academia, students, government officials, civil

society, United Nations staffers, practitioners in veterinary and animal health, animal welfare enthusiasts and researchers. Members from the African Union, World Organisation for Animal Health, and the United Nations were also present.

In his presentation, Dr Bryce Marock provided insight into the welfare of animals in livestock pounds in South Africa.



The Council's delegation was also able to engage with representatives from other renowned organisations and provide information on the state of animal welfare in South Africa and the role played by the National Council of SPCAs. The checklists and information for livestock pounds compiled by the Farm Animal Protection and Training Units over many years were welcomed by government and welfare officials alike. It was very valuable to meet up with old acquaintances and interact with new contacts who all carry out welfare projects on the continent.



Sincere appreciation is extended to the African Network for Animal Welfare for the opportunity to present and engage at this valued event.

DISASTER RESPONSE



**National Council
of SPCAs**

Disasters come in many forms and include floods, fires and droughts. They are all destructive. Not only do they impact heavily on the lives of people but animals also fall victim and are threatened with suffering and death. Our trained Disaster Response Teams are on standby 24/7 to respond and provide hands-on assistance to animals when disasters strike.

Floods

Relief efforts in Jagersfontein

As soon as news of the devastating tailings dam disaster in Jagersfontein was received, Disaster Response Team members began collecting information and preparing teams to step in to help. Early on the morning of 11 September 2022, the teams set off for the Free State to join colleagues from the Kimberly, Bloemfontein and Virginia SPCAs to assist animals and communities. Inspectors also linked up with the Joint Operations Committee set up in the area and worked alongside other emergency response teams at the forefront of the disaster which affected both people and animals.



Once the team arrived at the scene of the disaster, they were overwhelmed by the sheer destruction. Houses were destroyed and the entire area was engulfed by a thick silvery corrosive sludge. Reports from the community were that the flood had killed many farm animals owned by emerging farmers near the edge of the dam wall. Inspectors combed the 6 km radius for entrapped or compromised animals affected by the sludge. The team was able to rescue dozens of wild animals and found many more that had succumbed.

The hands-on assistance provided to animals involved walking the area looking for trapped and injured animals and pulling them out of the sludge deposits. Sadly, a few animals had to be euthanased due to them being severely compromised.

The team observed that the environmental impact was unprecedented, decimating entire schools of fish and other aquatic life found in the river just below the waste dam. Hundreds of fish, crabs and amphibians were found dead, either due to suffocation or exhaustion from trying to escape the viscous sludge.



Inspectors worked tirelessly, wading through the thick sludge that spanned kilometres. They found various animals entrapped and diligently collected them, washed them and evaluated them for any obvious physical injuries, before offering them a clean cool safe place to rest before sending them to a local veterinarian in Bloemfontein.



Assistance was also provided to residents in the area who had lost their homes and desperately needed help with their animals. The young lady pictured above pleaded for help with her cat since her house had all but washed away, and her other three cats had been killed in the flood. All she wanted was a safe place for her

pet to stay whilst she attempted to collect what remained of her belongings. Her cat, affectionately named Blue, was taken in by the Bloemfontein SPCA for safekeeping. But assistance to this struggling community went beyond the collection of displaced animals. Our efforts also focused on trying to provide much-needed feed for animals and water for both people and animals in this disaster-stricken area.

KwaZulu Natal Flooding

The province of KwaZulu Natal was devastated by severe floods in April 2022. This was recorded as the worst flooding disaster seen in recent South African history. The Communications Unit of the National Council of SPCAs approached AVBOB Mutual Assurance and put together an appeal for funding to assist during this disaster. As a result of this effort, the National Council of SPCAs was awarded a total of R500 000 from AVBOB. This funding allowed the NSPCA to send a team of inspectors to KwaZulu-Natal to assist the affected SPCAs, as well as assist animals in the affected communities. This donation was significant in the sense that it covered the costs of the trip to KwaZulu Natal, the accommodation, the food, the supplies, R200 000 in reserve for other disasters, and almost R40 000 being donated to different SPCAs across KwaZulu Natal.

Fires

This past year has also seen our Disaster Response Teams respond to fire outbreaks in various parts of the country.

Northern Cape

These fires have been some of the worst fires experienced with over 100 000 hectares of farmlands and veld reduced to ash in the Northern Cape. Two disaster teams were on the ground in Kuruman, Danielskuil and parts of Barkley West. Over 2 500 kilometres were covered in response to the fires, searching for affected and injured animals. The teams found animals that were unable to escape the fires. Some had burnt to death, many others succumbed to their injuries caused by the fires, and some animals that were found alive but with severe burns had to be humanely relieved of their suffering. The proactive approach by farmers who moved livestock to the Free State and Kalahari areas greatly contributed to saving many animal lives.

North West Province

The Disaster Response Team also responded to fires in the North West Province. Reports from North West Umbrella Fire Protection Association reported that some animals have already been moved, while other animals, especially wildlife, were still affected. Many animals faced the risk of being seriously injured or killed when unable to escape the flames. Animals caught in their circumstances depend on their owners and caregivers to move them to safety and protect them from the fires and Inspectors from the National Council of SPCAs jumped in to assist. A team of Inspectors travelled to the affected area and with the possibility that the fires would continue to spread, a second response team was placed on standby.

**INSPECTORS ARE ON STANDBY 24/7
TO RESPOND TO DISASTERS AND
ANIMAL EMERGENCIES**



TRAINING UNIT



**National Council
of SPCAs**



Training for a Kinder World

A vital component of the National Council of SPCAs work is the provision of training to field officers, inspectors and other role players to prevent cruelty to animals and to work with communities to protect animals. This includes educational work and practical assistance. The starting point is the upliftment of SPCA personnel who are actively involved in improving the lives of animals. The SPCA movement enforces 90% of the animal welfare legislation in South Africa.

Internal Training

Specialised training courses presented by the Training Unit are designed to ensure that SPCA staff around the country (Inspectors, Senior Inspectors and Field Officers) are highly trained and skilled in dealing with both people and animals.

The lecturers on training courses are all specialists in their fields and are thus able to answer questions and allow candidates an insight into a variety of subjects and provide a valuable learning experience.

Inspectorate Training

Inspectors and Senior Inspectors are at the heart of animal protection. They provide education and guidance on animal care and, where necessary, enforce national legislation to ensure the best possible care for all animals and that animal abusers are held accountable.

Inspectors Training Course

21 February to 4 March 2022

11 delegates attended – Eastern Cape (1); Gauteng (5); KwaZulu-Natal (1); North West (2); Mpumalanga (1); Western Cape (1).

The Inspectors Training Course in February 2022 saw 1 Refresher and 10 Trainee Inspectors attending training to qualify as Inspectors. Inspectors are at the forefront of animal welfare protection, advocating the well-being of all animals through education, leadership and when necessary, prosecution.

Inspectors Training Course

12 to 23 September 2022

12 Delegates attended the Inspectors Training Course – Eastern Cape (1); Gauteng (6); KwaZulu Natal (1); Mpumalanga (2); Western Cape (2).

The trainees undergo two weeks of intensive training which includes different aspects of animal welfare, learning and understanding of animal protection legislation and practical activities. The practical activities conducted in class as well as in the field provide the opportunity for delegates to build confidence and improve their knowledge.

THE TRAINING UNIT PRESENTS COURSES IN A PROFESSIONAL AND USER-FRIENDLY MANNER TO BENEFIT ALL WHO ATTEND

Refresher Training Course for Inspectors

Inspectors attend refresher courses every five years to revise and enhance their knowledge and abilities to protect the animals in their areas.



The first Refresher Inspectors Training Course of the year was held in May 2022, followed by a second course in November 2022. Delegates from all around the country attended the course. The course focused on aspects such as effective prosecutions, investigations, docket compilation and legislative discussions.

Refresher Inspector Training Course

16 to 27 May 2022

14 Delegates attended the Refresher Inspectors Training Course (12 Refreshers and 2 Trainee Inspectors) – Eastern Cape (2); Free State (1); Gauteng (6); KwaZulu Natal (1); Limpopo (2) Western Cape (2).



A practical component also forms part of the course and delegates went to different facilities including a chicken hawking site to conduct inspections and to assist animals in need.

Refresher Inspector Training Course

7 to 18 November 2022

13 Delegates attended the Refresher Training Course – Gauteng (5); Free State (1); KwaZulu Natal (2); Limpopo (1); Northern Cape (1); Western Cape (3).



Senior Inspectors Training Course

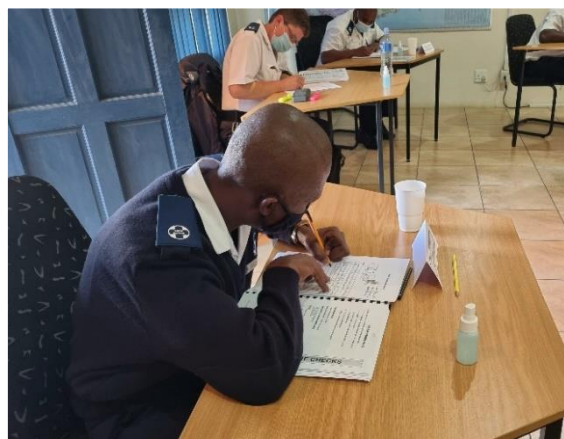
Qualified Inspectors are provided with the opportunity to enhance their careers. If they meet the necessary entrance criteria, they can apply to attend a course and qualify as Senior Inspectors.

The Senior Inspectors Training Course did not take place during July 2022 as planned due to an insufficient number of delegates. Delegates were still working on meeting the required application criteria and we look forward to presenting the course in 2023.

Field Officer Training

Field Officers cannot enforce the law but they have a vital role to play in community education, detecting animal cruelty and assisting Inspectors. There is a great deal of practical training and experiential learning in this course as well as workbook exercises and examinations and delegates must demonstrate their proficiency in key areas of animal welfare. Highlights are the practical days working with animals and community members. This is where the Field Officers in training can show their abilities as well as receive on-site learning.

Training courses have been scheduled for 2023.



TRAINING FOR A KINDER WORLD BY SHARING THE WELFARE MESSAGE AND BEST PRACTICE PROTOCOLS

SPCA Management Committee Training

Committee members play an important role in supporting the management and healthy development of Societies. This year, we have had the privilege of sharing knowledge through the training of 40 delegates representing 20 different Societies. The training consists of aspects such as staff management, legislation, pet adoptions, and committee responsibilities. These training events also provide Societies with opportunities to network and build relationships.

26 to 27 March 2022 - Gauteng

21 delegates attended – Benoni (2); Boksburg (2); Brakpan (2); Germiston (2); Heidelberg (2); Parys (2); Randburg (2); Sandton (1); Tshwane (2); Vereeniging (2); Welkom (2).

2 to 3 July 2022 – Western Cape

11 delegates attended – Cape of Good Hope (2); Franschhoek (1); Paarl (2); Swartland and West Coast (2); Swellendam (1); Wellington (1); Winelands (2).

30-31 July 2022 – Southern Cape

8 delegates attended – Beaufort West (2); Garden Route (6).

29 to 30 October 2022 – Richards Bay

15 delegates attended – Durban & Coast (2); Empangeni (4); Lower South Coast (1); Newcastle (2); Richards Bay (6).

19-20 November – Mpumalanga & Limpopo

19 delegates attended – Bethal (3); Carletonville (2); Dundee & District (1); Highveld Ridge (2); Lephalale (2); Parys (2); Phalaborwa (1); Roodepoort (1); Sandton (2); Tshwane (1); White River (2).

Educational Guides

To assist SPCAs and Inspectors, supplementary guides are compiled, printed and distributed. This year several animal welfare educational guides were reviewed and updated. These guides assist SPCA Inspectors and Field Officers as well as interested parties to identify a wide variety of animal welfare problems and achieve meaningful solutions.

Road Transport of Animals Welfare

Copies have been distributed to several provinces and the feedback has been very positive.

Flyer on dealing with stray monkeys

This flyer is designed to assist in specific problem areas where monkeys are entering high-risk areas and being harmed. It is hoped this will aid in community awareness and understanding of welfare issues.

Activity Book for Children

Following additional requests for this resource, additional copies have been printed and distributed for use especially in challenged communities and with youth education.

Veld Fire Guide

This material has been updated and distributed.

Qurbani Guide

This guide was updated and printed for distribution during Qurbani as an educational aid to improve the welfare of the animals.

SAPS Guide

This guide was updated, and a short-run print (small quantity) was conducted. The SAPS Guide is currently under review for further updates that are required.

Working Equine & Farm Animal Welfare Guide

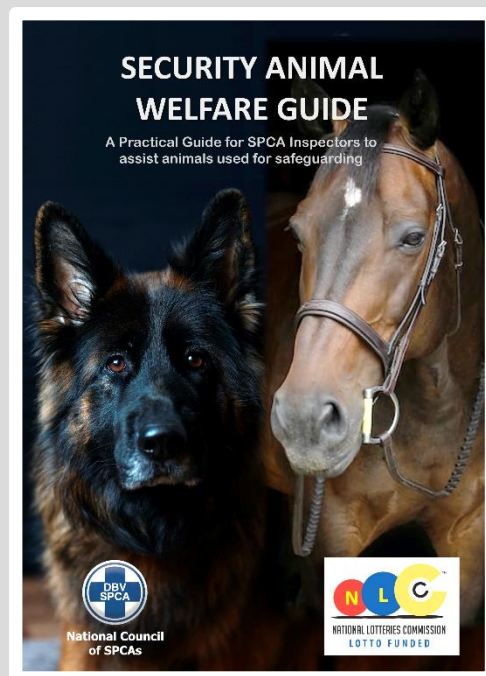
This material was updated for distribution.

Control Pole Padding Guide

A Control Pole Padding Guide has been drafted to illustrate how a control pole should be padded. This guide was reviewed and approved.

Security Animal Welfare Guide

This new guide was completed, printed and is in the process of distribution.



Educational Pamphlets

The Cattle, Pigs and Chicken pamphlets were updated, and some alterations were made before inclusion in new educational material.

WORKING DONKEYS and Community Outreach



**National Council
of SPCAs**



Working donkeys with new bridles to be followed by new breastplates

Through our outreach programmes, the National Council of SPCAs strives to assist poverty-stricken communities. We prevent animals suffering through sterilisation, the provision of emergency food and providing primary health care to domestic, farm and working animals as well as training and education.

During this period, work was undertaken in remote or underserved areas around the country. Some 48 155 kms were travelled to reach animals. 1 451 donkeys and 2 655 other animals (horses, farm animals, dogs and cats) were assisted.

Improved health and harnessing results in more productive animals and significantly reduces communication wounds such as whipping. We encourage and guide owners to take responsibility for their animals and to use harnessing humanely and sustainably. Good health care, parasite prevention and treatment and resting unwell animals are also key messages. Our ongoing efforts to educate and train owners and users on the needs of their animals have had good uptake and positive outcomes in many areas.

WORKING WITH DONKEYS

The National Council of SPCAs travels across South Africa to help working donkeys and the disadvantaged and isolated communities where they often live. The Donkey Upliftment Project is designed to assist donkeys and their owners through education and the transfer of skills – adopting a “hand-up and not a handout” approach to improving their lives. Replacing inhumane bits, and teaching people to make and correctly fit harnesses reduces the number of wounds on the donkeys.



ONE DONKEY AT A TIME WE WILL MAKE THEIR WORLD KINDER



Especially in rural areas the pace of life is slower and although tasks must be completed there is less rush to do this. Donkeys are worked at a suitable pace with time to rest and also graze which is vital to maintain good body condition and strength.

However, where animals have been neglected or harmed, warnings are issued and problems are rectified. The law applies to everyone and each year we have some cases where animals have been deliberately abused and the perpetrators are prosecuted. We strive to improve the lives of donkeys through education, but we will take the necessary action to prosecute offenders in terms of the Animals Protection Act and will continue to seek justice for any animal that is cruelly treated.

The welfare of commercially working donkeys is of significant concern as many owners have little regard for the welfare of their donkeys and overwork or overload them to earn more money. This combined with inhumane harnessing results in injured, exhausted and underweight animals who are whipped for being 'lazy' when in fact they are too weak to perform well. Inspectors are key role-players in changing this illegal and inhumane situation and together with individual inspections, warnings and education other means of communicating with owners includes putting up public notices in high-traffic areas and educating other role-players such as Traffic Officials and SAPS. All role-players need to understand that these illegal practices also negatively affect the safety of other road users and members of the public. Working donkeys need to be protected for the benefit of all.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Outreach work in communities is becoming increasingly more important as the economic situation worsens with fuel, food and electricity prices increasing. Poverty and unemployment impact people and the animals they own. These factors also have a massive impact on the National Council of SPCAs and the work we do. We have had an increase in complaints about compromised animals and more requests for assistance and we have an ongoing challenge to meet all of these needs.

Community Outreach is much more than just handing out bags of dog food or dipping animals. We have a holistic approach to improving the welfare of all animals in communities and this includes living conditions, use, management, primary health care and end-of-life issues.

This year we have provided vital services to communities across the country with each project tailored to the needs of that community. Examples of some of the projects include:

Phalaborwa, Limpopo – providing on-site training to the local Inspector while undertaking donkey harnessing and health workshops. Helping that team to become self-sufficient and able to resolve concerns in their community.

Manyeliti, Limpopo – as the only service provider for working donkeys our harnessing and primary health care workshops were gratefully received by community members.

Bertrams, Gauteng – a community with gang activities, drugs and poverty where we previously assisted the Special Investigations Unit to undertake outreach work again needed a short intervention. Further investigations and welfare work was undertaken with the Special Investigations Unit and more animals were sterilised.

Burgersdorp, Eastern Cape – community members called for assistance after a group of youth stole a dog and abused her. This investigation, working with SAPS, was successfully concluded but then we went on to help the working equine, small-scale farmers and pet owners by providing education, skills empowerment and primary health care.



Standerton, Mpumalanga – after the closure of the local SPCA as a result of poor community support the National Council of SPCAs took over providing services to the community. Collecting unwanted animals and providing primary health care was followed up by a sterilisation outreach. Unfortunately, the local veterinarians could not assist us, so we had to collect and transport animals to a nearby town and then later collect and return them to a very grateful community.

Highveld Ridge, Mpumalanga – providing on-site training to the local Inspector while undertaking primary health care and welfare

inspections with domestic and farm animals and assisting emerging farmers.



Warden, Free State- we had numerous complaints about the welfare and abuse of animals here, resulting in several trips to this area working with local people to remove compromised animals, issue warnings, provide education and address problems in general. This once thriving town is now very poor with a large population of people dependent on grants – especially pensioners and disabled people.

Over-population of dogs and cats was a significant challenge and we had ongoing requests for help with sterilisation. With the support and assistance of the excellent local veterinarians at the Warden Diere Kliniek, and after much planning, we were able to arrange all the necessary items and with a small team of 8 staff, we were able to undertake a 7-day Sterilisation Outreach (1.5 days travel and setup) and managed to sterilise 147 dogs and cats in 5.5 days.



Calvinia, Northern Cape - a distemper outbreak claimed the lives of many dogs and put other previously sterilised dogs at risk. Two teams assisted a local animal welfare organisation and undertook this outreach over 7 days and managed to vaccinate, deworm and assist nearly 500 dogs and cats as part of the ongoing sterilisation initiative. Law enforcement work was also undertaken to ensure

owners complied with good housing and management of their animals.



In conclusion, the Donkey Upliftment Project allows us to travel across Southern Africa, helping donkeys in need. We offer assistance to not only donkeys but to all animals in need. Inspectors also educate the youth about animal health care to foster positive attitudes toward animals. For Donkeys and Outreach, we remain focused on the prevention of cruelty to all living creatures and the promotion of the humane treatment of animals through leadership, education and law enforcement.

And of course, no community project would be complete without a progressive and engaging youth education component. Working today to improve tomorrow we must ensure that future animal owners and users know the value of and responsibility towards their animals.



With sincere thanks to the National Lotteries and Distribution Trust Fund



Communicating the Welfare Message



**National Council
of SPCAs**

Team members of the Communications Unit strive to convey animal welfare messages, raise funds and represent the National Council of SPCAs as a leader in animal welfare.

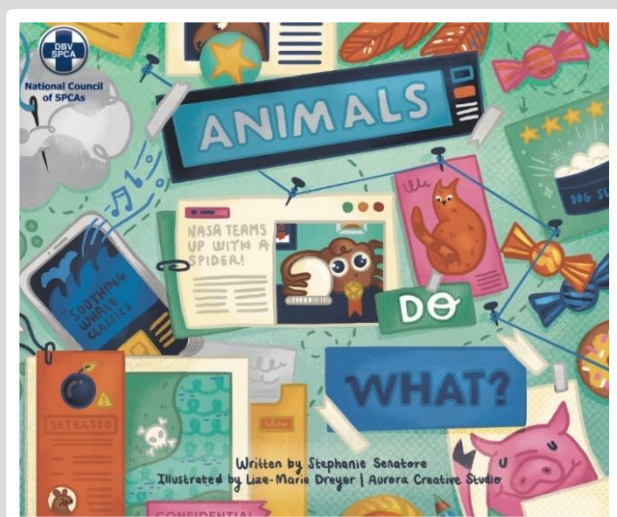
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Campaigns

Animals do What?

Back in July 2021, the National Council of SPCAs, in collaboration with MC Saatchi and Abel, launched a campaign called ANIMALS DO WHAT? which aimed to highlight the countless things that animals do for the human world every day. The campaign also played a role in educating the public on the importance of being respectful and appreciative of animals, without whom, the human world would not be able to function as it does every day.

The campaign was Twitter-based, and the public was asked to tweet any emoji to the National Council of SPCAs' Twitter account to receive a response with a fact linking that specific emoji to something an animal has done. A total of 3 147 emojis and facts were written for this campaign proving how much animals do for us!



As a spin-off of this very successful campaign, a children's book was produced that teaches children to appreciate all animals – both big and small. The book celebrates all the incredible things animals do that benefit humans and can be enjoyed by people of all ages. Visit our website for purchase details.

We extend our thanks to the MC Saatchi and Abel team for the wonderful support of animals through this valued campaign.

Awards



A Certificate of Appreciation was presented to the MC Saatchi and Abel team in recognition of their valued support of animals

The Effie Awards

The Effie Awards were launched in 1968 by the New York American Marketing Association as “an awards program to honor the most effective advertising efforts”. The award now honours all forms of effective marketing and the companies and individuals creating effective work across the globe.

In 2022, the National Council of SPCAs was a nominee and finalist for its *Animals Do What?* campaign. Together with MC Saatchi and Abel, the National Council of SPCAs took home a bronze Effie award!

The Loerie Awards

The National Council of SPCAs was amongst the nominees and finalists for the Loerie Awards in 2022. The Loeries is yet another prestigious awards ceremony to recognise brilliance in advertising and marketing. *The Animals Do What?* campaign secured two nominations for the awards, however, was not selected as the winner.

Valentine's Day

The Valentine's Day campaign on social media aimed to raise awareness of the animal welfare concerns which could potentially arise on this widely celebrated occasion. This day of love provided a perfect opportunity to encourage people to make informed and compassionate choices before buying gifts or visiting entertainment facilities/tourist attractions which hold captive animals. Cute free e-cards were also made available and played a role in spreading the animal welfare message.

Ban Live Animal Export Awareness Day

Members of the public were invited to join the National Council of SPCAs and Compassion in World Farming on BAN LIVE EXPORTS ANIMAL AWARENESS DAY which is commemorated on 14 June to call for a ban on live exports and help bring an end to this abhorrent trade! On this day in 2015, a live export disaster occurred which claimed the lives of 13 000 sheep. Now, every year animal activists from around the world come together on this date to call for an end to this trade in remembrance of this tragedy and the suffering endured by these animals. Since 2019 the National Council of SPCAs has actively been fighting to have the live export of sheep from South Africa to the Middle East banned. As such, the National Council of SPCAs put together a campaign in support of International Ban Live Exports Day along with many other international organisations in favour of banning live export. The campaign was Twitter-based and called our supporters to tag the Minister of Agriculture asking for a ban on live exports.

Media

During this reporting period, 36 media statements were composed and issued with subsequent enquiries handled. The media statements resulted in a wide coverage of the issues on TV, radio and print.

It is notable to mention that in November and December 2022, there was an unprecedented increase in media reach due to dog attacks having been sensationalised by the media. One in-studio interview was undertaken at the SABC studio for the 'Its Topical' programme.



The National Council of SPCAs' Wildlife Protection Unit also filmed scenes for a Terra Mata Studios series that may be released on *Netflix*. The series exposes the cruelty big cats are exposed to around the world. The Wildlife Protection Unit was

able to provide valuable input regarding the reality of captive lions in South Africa.

International Coverage

Voice of America

The National Council of SPCAs also secured a segment in *Voice of America* regarding the illegal donkey skin trade. In the segment, *Voice of America* shared with its viewers the cruelty behind the illegal trade. Senior Inspector Grace de Lange was able to provide valuable input on the work done by the National Council of SPCAs regarding the trade.



Searching for Michael Jackson's Zoo with Ross Kemp

In January 2022, the National Council of SPCAs was approached by *Rare-TV* which is an established factual producer of prime-time, factual entertainment. The production company works for the United Kingdom, American and European broadcasters. *Rare-TV* approached the Council searching specifically for our Executive Director, Marcelle Meredith, to do an interview which would be used in a feature documentary regarding Michael Jackson's Zoo.

Marcelle Meredith played an integral role in the show, by linking Riccardo Ghiazza, an animal abuser convicted of animal cruelty because of the Council's efforts, as the seller of the elephants to Michael Jackson. Marcelle further elaborated on the abuse that the elephants underwent, how their parents are culled, how the calves were tortured and abused to be tamed to be sold and the brutality behind a bull hook - a weapon that was still used on the elephants at Michael Jackson's Zoo in 'Neverland'.

Disasters

Financial Appeal for Ukraine

At the beginning of March 2022, the world was devastated as news broke out of the war between Russia and Ukraine. Hundreds of thousands of human and animal lives would be adversely affected because of the war. Homes would be lost, shelters destroyed, and people and animals would be injured or die.

The National Council of SPCAs refused to stand by and just be a witness to this devastation. The Council pledged R30 000 toward relief efforts for Ukrainian animal welfare organisations. A media statement was released and the National Council of SPCAs took to social media platforms to ask the South African public to help assist the Ukrainian animal welfare organisations. An insert on

ENCA was also secured which outlined the National Council of SPCAs' efforts in facilitating the collection of funds to help animals in Ukraine.

A total of R268 084.89 was raised and this money was sent to Gostomel Animal Shelter in Ukraine, which was very grateful for the generosity shown by the South African public.

KwaZulu Natal Flood Disaster

The province of KwaZulu-Natal was devastated by severe floods in April 2022 – the worst flooding disaster seen in recent South African history. According to national authorities, 443 people lost their lives, 40 000 people went missing, more than 40 000 people have been displaced, nearly 4 000 houses were destroyed, and more than 8 000 others were damaged. What people often forget is that animals also fall victim to these disasters, and they are also threatened with suffering and death when disasters strike.

The National Council of SPCAs released a media statement which informed the public that the Council would be assisting the affected SPCAs, and also assist other animal welfare organisations and sanctuaries across KwaZulu Natal, wherever possible.

Funding to the generous tune of R500 000 was received from AVBOB Mutual Assurance. This significant funding allowed the Council to send a team of Inspectors to KwaZulu Natal to assist the affected SPCAs, as well as assist animals in the compromised communities. This donation was significant in the sense that it covered the costs of the trip to KwaZulu Natal, the accommodation, food and supplies, leaving a balance of R200 000 for use in future disasters, and almost R40 000 being donated to individual SPCAs across KwaZulu Natal.

Website

www.nspca.co.za

The generous pro bono assistance of the Casson Media team, who host and update our website is acknowledged with great appreciation.



Thank You to our Supporters and Donors

We express our gratitude to our many backers who have shared our passion for animals throughout 2022.

Our pro bono supporters, with whom we have strong working relationships, are acknowledged with great appreciation.

To the various trusts and foundations, companies, individual donors and sponsors who have responded so enthusiastically to our campaigns, projects and financial appeals, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for your steadfast support.

Many others have nominated the National Council of SPCAs as a beneficiary in respect of shopper cards or pledged support through payroll giving – a special thank you to you all.

Our followers on the various social media platforms continue to grow and are thanked for their interaction and support in helping to spread the welfare message to benefit all animals.

Join the Campaign by adding your voice to help animals.



In our quest to improve the welfare of animals in South Africa, we seek and welcome additional and new support. Donate today by visiting our website at www.nspca.co.za and choose an easy and secure payment method.

All donations are tax-deductible for taxpayers in South Africa.

We are pleased to confirm that the National Council of SPCAs is a certified B-BBEE contributor. Level 1 (135% B-BBEE procurement recognition).

Actions for Animals in 2022

- ✓ We ended the suffering of animals.
- ✓ We helped animals caught in disasters.
- ✓ We protected animals and prevented cruelty.
- ✓ We empowered people through training.
- ✓ We achieved justice for animals through the legal system.
- ✓ We improved conditions for working animals.
- ✓ We influenced decision-makers to consider the welfare of animals.



ANIMAL INTERVENTIONS

- **51** dogfighting related actions were taken.
- **37** animals were removed from the cycle of violence.
- **13** animal sexual abuse cases were investigated.
- **290** wild animals were rescued.
- **25 461** animals were assisted in traffic accidents and disasters.



LAW ENFORCEMENT

- **507** warnings were issued to improve animal care.
- **9** successful prosecutions were secured.
- **110** court cases for animal welfare offences are pending.
- **130** days were spent attending to court cases.



COMMUNITY WORK

- **1 531** working donkeys and mules were assisted.
- **390** donkey owners and users were assisted.
- **55** working horses were assisted.
- **27** horse owners and users assisted.
- **850** dogs and cats were assisted.
- **800** dog and cat owners were assisted.
- **250** farm animal owners and **1 500** farm animals were assisted.



GENERAL INSPECTIONS

- **5 425** inspections were undertaken across South Africa.
- **405** cargo warehouses at airports where animals are held were inspected.
- **30** inspections at commercial land border posts were undertaken.
- **10** sporting/entertainment events were monitored.
- **91** inspections were undertaken at facilities holding working dogs.



ANIMALS USED IN SCIENCE

- **2 331** manhours were spent reviewing research protocols.
- **2 247** animal research protocols were reviewed.
- **269** Animal Ethics Committee meetings were attended.
- **16** meetings were attended with external parties to benefit animals.



TRAINING AND EDUCATION

- **167** practical training sessions were conducted on-site in the areas of SPCAs.
- **134** SPCA delegates attended internal training courses.
- **299** delegates attended our specialised external training courses.
- **11 755** learners were educated on donkey/ domestic/farm animal welfare (Community Work)

We went the Extra Mile for Animals

958 833 kms were travelled around South Africa in the line of duty.



A rescued owl is transported to safety

Every year, the National Council of SPCAs works to protect animals and confront animal cruelty in all its forms, and we could not do it without your support.

One of the most meaningful ways that you can make sure that your love for animals counts beyond your lifetime is by remembering the National Council of SPCAs in your Will.

This simple action will ensure that you leave a legacy of love in the caring hands of an organisation you can trust to do whatever it takes to prevent cruelty and protect animals in the years to come.

Write to us at nspca@nspca.co.za to sign up as a legacy partner.

PROTECT WHAT MATTERS TO YOU