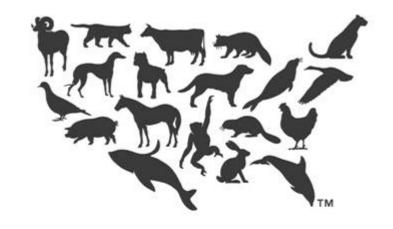
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THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

[Shelter Evaluation Program]

DALLAS ANIMAL SERVICES

Dallas, Texas

Report Delivery – November 2010

The Humane Society of The United States
2100 L Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

INTRODUCTION

The Humane Society of the United States (The HSUS) believes that the objective examination of shelter procedures and operations is best accomplished through independent consultations. The HSUS is the nation's largest animal protection organization and is uniquely positioned to serve local humane societies and animal care and control agencies. Recognizing the need within the animal sheltering community for professional, standardized analysis, The HSUS has developed the professional Shelter Evaluation program.

In July 2009, The HSUS provided a proposal for a review and evaluation of select areas of Dallas Animal Services' current operations, services, and programs. A site visit was conducted April 27th through April 30th, 2010.

The team for this evaluation included the following HSUS representatives:

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Jennifer Landis, DVM, Consultant Shelter Operations, Shelter Health

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Community Outreach, Executive Leadership, Human Resources, Financial Management

Carolyn Machowski, Manager, Shelter Evaluation Program Site Coordinator/Report Development

Footnotes marked by a plus sign (+) have been included. Footnotes marked "CR" are credit references but can be supplied upon request.

Note

The HSUS team would like to applaud Dallas Animal Services for taking this initial step towards improving services for both the people and animals of the City of Dallas. We are optimistic that positive change will result from the collaboration of those overseeing, working for, and working with Dallas Animal Services.

Included in this report are many recommendations, some requiring substantial change, which we understand can be overwhelming. To start, we suggest reviewing the report several times and forming a task force in order to prioritize the recommendations. Some of the recommendations can be implemented immediately with just a change in procedure, while others may take months or even years. Indeed, it will be an ongoing process.

The recommendations are derived from the expertise of The HSUS team as well as The HSUS's guidelines, which are based on what has been identified as best practices in the sheltering field. The recommendations in this report have been carefully chosen for the agency based on the environment at the time of the site visit. While this report has been written specifically for Dallas Animal Services, some of the recommendations are those that we would make for any agency receiving a report.

The HSUS team has attempted to make recommendations that are feasible; however, unbeknownst to The HSUS team, Dallas Animal Services may have already tried some of them in the past, and some may not be achievable with available resources. In short, The HSUS team does not imply that Dallas Animal Services must implement every recommendation to be successful.

The observations included in this report are based on information gathered by The HSUS team from discussions with staff, officials, community members, and information from written procedures, forms, statistics, etc. The HSUS has tried to ensure the integrity of the observations and the information used to derive them, but recognizes that some of the statements made to The HSUS team may not have been accurate.

By their nature, our reports focus on areas that need improvement, but the observations throughout this report are not meant to be unfavorable. Rather, they should be viewed as a snapshot of where the agency was at the time of the site visit and used as a departure point to where management wants the agency to go. In addition, we do our best to highlight areas that are commendable. Unfortunately, some agencies that have received evaluations have been unfairly criticized by individuals and groups taking observations and recommendations out of context and using them to place blame on individual shelter staff and the organization. Some of the issues discussed in this report are not uncommon in sheltering agencies around the country, and The HSUS urges those reading the report to use it as a tool for positive change.

Please note that hereafter Dallas Animal Services will be referred to as "DAS". The HSUS would like to thank the people involved with DAS for their assistance and cooperation with The HSUS team. We are extremely pleased to assist in their efforts to improve programs and services for both the animals and humans within their community, and we remain available as a continued resource. With that in mind, The HSUS respectfully presents the following report.

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1.0 TASK FORCE

Once a task force is developed to review this document and create a working plan of action, the task force should recommend priorities and action items and specify due dates. The document the task force develops then becomes DAS's working document to implement the recommendations in this report. The structure of the task force and the people selected for it are critical.

This process will help DAS prioritize and plan for the future both in response to this report and to other potential changes and plans. This process has been used successfully with other agencies that have received evaluations.

DAS management, in concert with the task force, should prioritize and weigh each recommendation against available resources and decide whether it is to be implemented as suggested, or used as a departure point for what is most realistic.

Recommendations

- ✓ Put together a committee of no more than seven members who are willing to commit up to four months and who can work well in a group. It is important to appoint unbiased individuals to the task force. The task force should include the following:
 - Department of Code Compliance Services managers
 - > The DAS division manager
 - ➤ A shelter staff representative
 - A veterinarian with a strong shelter medicine background

Other members may include:

- An Animal Shelter Commission member
- City of Dallas budget officials
- Community members with expertise in short-term and long-term strategic planning
- Citizens interested in animal welfare, but without personal agendas
- ✓ Consider hiring a professional facilitator, if the agenda does not move forward due to disagreements.
- ✓ Create written guidelines outlining expected behavior and conduct for task force members. These guidelines should include stipulations for missed meetings.
- ✓ Convey the task force's responsibilities, which include:

- > reviewing the report
- prioritizing each recommendation using a standardized form to rate each recommendation by expected financial/labor cost, time, potential benefits, etc. The recommendations can be divided among the task force members, which will allow the agency, through the task force, to evaluate the recommendations as they relate to each other.
- ✓ Develop a reporting mechanism so the recommendations of the task force can be presented and DAS can begin to implement the changes.
- ✓ Created a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that outlines the above sections and the role and outcome of the task force. All task force members should be required to sign the MOU so it is understood that the task force is to be a professional undertaking.

2.0 GENERAL OVERVIEW

The Dallas Animal Services and Adoption Center is located at 1818 N. Westmoreland Road, Dallas, Texas 75212, which is the northern quadrant of the intersection of I-30 and Westmoreland Road. According to DAS's division manager, the facility opened in the spring of 2008, but according to a press release from Dallas City Hall, DAS had its grand opening on October 20, 2007. The building was designed as a "green building," meeting the criteria for LEED Silver certification.

2.1 SHELTER EXTERIOR/GROUNDS/PARKING AREAS

Observations

The building blends well into the industrial setting in which it is located. The landscaping fit with the modern design of the building. There were six large stone planters in the parking lot that served a double purpose: housing decorative native plants and grasses and, according to the City of Dallas's website, housing cells from the wastewater treatment system, which recycles up to 10,000 gallons of water a day. Nuisance Abatement, a subdivision of Code Compliance Services Department (DCCS), was responsible for the landscaping services and was called when needed and responded promptly. The grounds were noticeably well-maintained and uncluttered. The division manager stated that an animal keeper was assigned to clean and sweep the front parking lot each morning because of the amount of litter that was dumped overnight, presumably by loiterers.

The parking lot was divided into two sections, one for employee parking and one for visitor parking. Seventeen cars were parked in the customer-designated area prior to the opening of the building. The division manager admitted that staff parked in this area since a theft had occurred in the employees' section several months ago and staff felt safer parking closer to the building's entrance. The parking lot was well lit, and there were eight designated handicapped parking spaces, which were appropriately marked.

Fire lanes were marked around the building, but the paint appeared to have faded. The HSUS team observed that owners surrendering and reclaiming animals at the Lost and Found entrance parked in front of that door, in violation of the fire code.

A fenced area in the back of the building served as additional space for employee parking and for the parking of DAS vehicles. This area also contained large storage sheds—wildlife traps, sections of dog pens, and other equipment were propped against their sides.

The waste disposal area was kept clean and free from odor. According to the shelter manager, City Services maintains the dumpster and DAS participates in a city-wide recycling program.

Recommendations

- ✓ Monitor the parking lot for loiterers and vehicles parked overnight. Contact the police department about the problem and ask for their assistance. Display signs warning that the lot is monitored by security cameras.
- ✓ Repaint the fire lanes and put up "No Parking" signs, especially near the entrances.
- ✓ Direct staff to park in the designated employee parking lot. Advise them to remove valuables from their vehicles.
- ✓ Store all wildlife traps and dog pens inside the large storage sheds.

Discussion

As visitors approach a shelter, the impression that they receive should be warm, friendly, and inviting. A community's animal shelter is the heart of its animal care and protection program and as such, the building and grounds should be maintained so that they are attractive and welcoming to the public. The exterior of the physical building itself can be, or can appear to be, reflective of the professionalism and effectiveness of the organization's internal programs. DAS should be commended for its state-of-the-art, environmentally-friendly facility.

2.2 HOURS OF OPERATION

Observations

Business hours differed between Animal Intake and Adoption as follows:

Lost and Found

Days of Operation	Hours of Operation
Monday-Friday	8:00 am to 5:30 pm
Saturday	8:00 am to 4:30 pm
Sunday	12:00 pm to 5:00 pm
Night Surrender	Open After Hours

Adoption Services

Days of Operation	Hours of Operation	
Monday	Closed	

Tuesday-Saturday	11:00 am to 6:30 pm	
Sunday	12:00 pm to 5:00 pm	

An 8"x11½" sign displaying the hours of operation was posted on the entrance door to the Adoption Center; a letter board displayed the hours on the Lost and Found entrance. The HSUS team noted that the 8:00 am opening of Lost and Found was misleading for the public. Although animals could be surrendered as early as 8:00 am (with the exception of Sunday), according to intake staff, the Kennels and Stray Cat rooms were not open to the public until 10:00 am.

Recommendations

- ✓ Use the same type of signage at both entrances.
- ✓ Consider having homogenous hours of operation for Adoption and Lost and Found or clarify the times for the services offered at Lost and Found. The public can become frustrated and inconvenienced by the different hours for each.

Discussion

Accessibility and convenience encourages the community to choose their animal shelter as a resource for animal-related information and as the destination when looking for a new pet. The hours of operation of many animal shelters throughout the United States include weekday evenings and weekends, usually the busiest visiting and adoption times.

2.3 EXTERNAL AND DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE

Observations

The external signage on the building was modern and professional in design. The Lost and Found and Adoption Center were clearly marked.

Upon driving to DAS, The HSUS team did not observe any street signs directing the public to the shelter. The animal shelter manager stated that no street signs were necessary because DAS was conveniently located at an intersection with which most Dallas residents were familiar.

Recommendations

✓ Provide directional signs at all major intersections and off the main road.

Discussion

Exterior signage should be designed and installed with the intention of directing and welcoming shelter visitors. Visitors should be able to find the shelter simply by following the posted signage.

2.4 BUILDING SECURITY

Observations

According to the shelter manager, DAS did not have a written protocol for building security. DAS did have an alarm system provided and monitored by ASG Security. The only staff who had the security code was the division manager and the three department managers. Because the shelter was manned 24 hours/day, the alarm usually was not set.

DAS had a digital camera system, which was used to monitor specific areas of the building by the division manager.

Number of Cameras	Room
One	Adoption Lobby
Three	Dog Adoption Room
One	Lost and Found Lobby
One	Spay and Neuter Clinic
Two	Outside the Veterinary Clinic
One	Euthanasia Room

Information was not provided as to whether cameras also monitored the exterior of the building.

DAS had a controlled access system that permitted staff's admittance to various areas of the building based on their job responsibilities. According to the shelter manager, the system was fully functional, but because it had recently been implemented, there were several minor glitches which were being resolved. There did not appear to be any restrictions to staff and/or public access in the animal housing areas.

Recommendations

- ✓ Create and implement a Work Instruction for building security.
- ✓ Install security cameras to monitor the exterior of the building, if they do not already exist.
- ✓ Monitor the Quarantine and Protective Custody Kennels. The public should be restricted from these areas unless accompanied by staff.

Discussion

Because day-to-day operational issues often arise and require immediate attention, building security and precautions that ensure human and animal safety are often overlooked. Animal shelters can be targets for criminals since many of them have controlled drugs and desirable animals on the premises. Good security systems and procedures will deter most attempts at theft and vandalism.

2.5 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES/DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Observations

An evacuation route was posted in the hallway leading from the Administration offices to the Adoption Center. According to the animal shelter manager, there was no evacuation plan for the animals or the people in the shelter. The division manager stated that DAS was in the process of creating a disaster preparedness plan but no completion date had been set. At the time of the site visit, three locked storage sheds behind the building had been designated to store disaster and other equipment; however, the contents were not organized and it took a manager and a supervisor almost an hour to find the keys.

Recommendations

- ✓ Create an emergency manual for the organization that details staff actions in the event of fire, power outages, chemical spills, severe weather, potentially violent individuals, and human medical emergencies. Include procedures for animal evacuation. Make certain staff responsible for specific species (example: [name of staff members] responsible for cats, [name of staff members] responsible for dogs, etc.). Although it would be emotionally devastating for the staff to leave the animals behind during a catastrophic event, evacuating the animals should be part of the plan only if they can be removed without jeopardizing human safety. In all cases, staff should exit and then follow the instructions of emergency personnel.
- ✓ Schedule fire drills quarterly and record the dates in a log.
- ✓ Participate in any drills or training provided by the City and conduct disaster preparedness drills at least once a year to include a partial evacuation of the public, staff, and animals to an area of safety.

Discussion

By definition, a disaster is an event for which you are ill-prepared. An emergency may consist of a broken water line, a gas leak, or someone sustaining an injury. It is critical that staff know and understand the importance of reacting properly and professionally to these situations. One of the primary reasons for having an emergency plan is to teach staff how to mitigate injuries, damage, and losses. DAS staff should be prepared to assist in the event of a disaster in the community.

2.6 FACILITY MAINTENANCE

Observations

According to the division manager, the City's Maintenance Department was responsible for the maintenance at DAS; work orders were submitted by the animal shelter manager

as needed. Management did not know when the HVAC system had last been checked or cleaned. When asked about an exposed electrical outlet that was noticed in the Puppy Room, the animal shelter manager stated that a work order had been submitted but could not produce it.

An independent company was responsible for cleaning the non-animal areas of the shelter, such as the offices, restrooms, and hallways, five days/week from 7:00 am to 3:30 pm. The public bathroom in the Adoption Center had one broken soap dispenser.

Recommendations

- ✓ Develop a comprehensive facility maintenance plan that includes regularly scheduled inspections of all runs, cages, floors, walls, doors, equipment, lights, and the HVAC system, including the vents, filters, etc.
- ✓ Establish an overall preventive program for areas requiring maintenance. City maintenance personnel should work with shelter management to target specific areas at certain times of the year. Emphasize which systems, like HVAC, plumbing, and drains, are top priority and must be repaired immediately.
- ✓ Maintain a written log of all requested and completed repairs.

Discussion

An animal shelter is no different from other municipal buildings, requiring constant attention and funds to adequately maintain the property. Routine problems, such as drains clogging, guillotine doors not functioning properly, and hoses leaking, commonly occur and must be addressed. The City has a responsibility to ensure that the facility is kept in a manner that is functional, safe, and attractive, and that crucial equipment, such as HVAC systems, is maintained and in good operating condition.

3.0 SHELTER OPERATIONS

3.1 RECEPTION/LOBBY

Observations

DAS had two separate entrances to the facility, one for the Adoption Center and the other for Lost and Found/Animal Intake. Each had its own service counter, adequate seating for the public, and designated staff. Both sections had staff that was polite and pleasant but did not actively engage visitors.

The Adoption Center was an inviting space with a retail area located directly across from the service counter. The "store" had items such as Greenies™, some collars (including prong collars and randomly-sized adjustable collars), and mini-rawhide chews for sale. Much of the space was empty, including the leash racks and food shelves.

Recommendations

- ✓ Stock the retail area with the items first-time pet owners need, such as:
 - Assorted leashes
 - Dog collars, buckle collars, martingales, Gentle Leaders™, harnesses
 - Cat supplies (litter boxes, litter)
 - Dog and cat treats
 - Food and water bowls
 - Grooming supplies
 - Books on animal care
 - Dog and cat beds
 - Dog and cat toys
 - Temporary ID tags
- ✓ Discontinue the sale of items that are potentially hazardous and/or inhumane. For example, choke and prong collars can be dangerous when used by an inexperienced or poorly educated pet owner.
- ✓ Communicate to visitors that profits from the shelter store benefit homeless animals. This may encourage them to buy their regular pet supplies from DAS rather than frequenting area pet stores.

Discussion

The goal of a shelter store should be to provide a new adopter with all of the basic items needed to introduce a new pet into a household. The emphasis in the animal care and control industry is training through positive reinforcement, and the items sold and the advice given by DAS should reflect these standards.

3.2 TELEPHONE SYSTEM/INTERNAL SIGNAGE

Observations

Many of the calls to the agency were routed through the City of Dallas's 311 system; however, staff could not explain which calls came through 311 and which calls came directly to the shelter. A supervisor did not know DAS's direct telephone number.

No after-hours phone number was listed on the DAS's website. When an HSUS team member called the telephone number posted online (214-670-8246), a recording stated that no one was available and instructed callers to leave a message or press 4 for a directory, which was not functioning. The messaging did not contain the agency's name or any other information on what to do.

Since there was no PA system and staff did not carry two-way radios or pagers, there was no easy way to locate/contact staff in the building other than actively looking for them.

Each area of the facility was identified by professionally made signs.

Recommendations

- ✓ Create an after-hours message that includes the agency's name, which directs the public who to call if they have an animal emergency.
- ✓ Make certain that staff can communicate contact information for DAS to the public.
- ✓ Equip employees with pagers or 2-way radios so that they can be contacted when assistance is needed.

3.3 OPERATING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Observations

At the time of the site visit, the City was transitioning to ISO 9001, an internationally recognized standard for the quality management of businesses. Work Instructions served as detailed procedures, reflecting what the key operational functions of the City were and how they were achieved. A description of the quality management framework and 27 Work Instructions for DAS were posted on the City's Intranet.

101—Euthanasia	144—Injured/Sick Impoundment	
102—Intact Animal Permit	145—Transporting Animals	
103—Sanitary Conditions	146—Prohibited Animals	
110—Animal Bite Investigation and Quarantine	147—Rescue Placement	
111—Collection of Rabies Specimen	149—Dangerous Dog	
112—Adoption	150—Sale of Animal From Public Property	

113—Unlawful Placement of Poisonous Substance	151—Animals as Prizes
128—Vacation	152—Redemption
129—Limitation	153—Disturbance by Animal
131—Pet Registration	154—Loose Dogs on School Grounds
140—Defecation Law	155—Prohibited Regulated Animals App. Process
141—Registration Revocation	165—Rescue of Wildlife
142—Humane Trapping	167—Wildlife Exotic /Wild Routine
143—Proper Restraint /Tethering Dogs	

While In the early stages of the process, The Work Instructions for DAS were developed by employee teams (who were incumbents in the job for which the Work Instructions were being written), and then approved by the division manager. Each Work Instruction was numbered; had an effective date; contained an approval signature; stated its purpose, scope, authority; and the required procedural steps. After training programs were conducted, management was expected to hold all employees accountable for following the Work Instructions. Employees in "noncompliance" with the Work Instructions were subject to "correction."

DAS management had been instructed to discontinue using their existing procedures and to convert to the new system by completing the Work Instructions for their major operations first. This left management and staff without Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for procedures not yet created in the new format. Furthermore, management and staff said that they were not made aware of all of the Work Instructions that had been completed or were in progress. There did not appear to be a schedule for completing the transition.

Recommendations

- ✓ Create a leadership team, which includes a representative from DAS, to
 coordinate and accelerate the completion, staff training, and implementation of
 key Work Instructions.
- ✓ Refer to the resources of the Texas Animal Control Association, the National Animal Control Association, the ASPCA and The Humane Society of the United States in developing Work Instructions for animal care and control policies and procedures.

3.4 NIGHT SURRENDER

Observations

There were eight cages for night surrenders next to the Lost and Found Lobby. The area was easily recognizable from the parking lot, well-lit, and the necessary paperwork was attached to each cage. The cages were auto-locked from the outside as well as locked from the inside because homeless people had attempted to enter the shelter through

the opening. The cages were temperature-controlled, clean, and the water bowls were filled. However, The HSUS team observed that animals surrendered overnight were left inside the cages for longer than the Work Instructions directed. The document titled "Injured Animals/Sick Animals/Impoundment of Animals", section 8.3, stated that at 6:00 pm daily, the assigned shelter staff is to begin checking the night drop cages on an hourly basis. While at an evening meeting at DAS, The HSUS team observed the same five dogs in the night drop cages for over three hours.

According to the animal services manager, the high number of animals surrendered after hours could be attributed to the fact that many residents were reluctant to relinquish their animals during normal business hours because of the fear of penalties.

Recommendations

✓ Ensure that the Work Instructions for removing animals from the night drop boxes within an hour are followed.

Discussion

Enabling citizens to relinquish animals after hours is controversial in the field of animal care and control. Those who oppose after-hours relinquishment argue that animals often are left without sufficient background information and should not be treated like disposable goods. Proponents of after-hours relinquishment stress that without this option, some people will simply abandon their animals or tie them to the shelter's gate. In any case, night surrender boxes must be designed and managed in the best interest of the animal.

3.5 ANIMAL INTAKE PROCEDURES AND IDENTIFICATION

Observations

The Lost and Found Lobby was the intake area for stray and owned animals brought in by Dallas residents—if a person could not show proof of residency, admittance of the animal was denied. The Impoundment Record cards used to collect information about the animal were not consistently completed according to the Work Instruction, section 5, "Injured Animals/Sick Animals/Impoundment of Animals". Furthermore, intake staff was not overheard asking about the reason for relinquishment or questions about the animal's temperament.

Examples of intakes observed by The HSUS team are as follows:

 While a family was waiting to surrender three pit bulls, another person, who had found a Chihuahua, dropped the dog when it attempted to bite him. Fortunately, the pit bulls ignored the Chihuahua as it ran past them and hid under a table. An animal keeper was called to capture the dog, which took approximately 10 minutes, during which time the exterior door was opened as more people entered and exited. Once the

- Chihuahua was secured, the intake staff placed the pit bulls in a grocery cart and transported them to the Kennel but the owners had to accompany them to assist with placing them in a cage.
- A four-month-old puppy was surrendered by a couple who claimed that
 they had found the puppy two weeks prior. Intake staff did not ask any
 additional questions. The puppy was put in the grocery cart, hooked to
 the side with a leash, and wheeled back to the Kennel. Staff left the
 puppy unattended while they set up the cage. Later in the day, The HSUS
 team noted that this puppy had been paired with another puppy that had
 come in the same day.

The HSUS team observed that the animal intake holding cages located adjacent to the Lost and Found Lobby were not being used as originally designed. Instead, these cages had had their doors removed and were being used for storage. Newly admitted animals were placed directly into the general population without being examined.

Upon the intake of each dog or cat, a numbered metal tag was tied around his/her neck with a string. The HSUS team observed the following problems with this identification method:

- The string was tied either too tightly or loosely. In some cases, the tag hung down to the animal's chest and was too heavy for cats, kittens, and puppies.
- Tags lay on the floor of many of the cages/runs, some missing the string.
- Puppies were observed chewing on the strings of run mates.
- On several animal enclosures, the tags were attached to the cage cards.

In addition to getting a metal tag, each animal was assigned an ID number through Chameleon and a computer-generated cage card was produced. The HSUS team was puzzled by the assignment of two very different numbers for animal identification and staff could not offer a reasonable explanation.

Although cage cards were intended to stay with the animal, many cages/runs either contained an animal without a cage card or a cage card without an animal in the enclosure. In one example, an orange cage card for a cat in CPC was propped behind the eye flush station on the wall. No cat in the room was missing a card so it remained unknown to which cat the cage card belonged. Staff said that sometimes cage cards were lost when they were removed to find information about a particular animal. Furthermore, an animal's paperwork was sent to the Adoption Center before the animal was moved.

Since some animals had no metal tags, and cage cards were missing for others, The HSUS team asked a staff member how they were certain of an animal's identity if two or

more animals looked similar. The animal keeper answered that he didn't know. The integrity of animal tracking and identification was highly compromised by the above described process.

Although DAS had written protocols for animals that were brought to the shelter as strays, owner surrenders, drop box surrenders, and ASO impoundments, The HSUS team observed several instances when procedures were not followed.

- Several dogs in the Lost and Found section had owner identification tags but this information was not written on the cage card nor was it entered into the computer.
- Not all of the animals had pictures taken upon intake.
- Many of the Impoundment Cards did not include a description of the animal.

Recommendations

- ✓ Require all intake staff, including ASOs, to enter the animal's information directly into Chameleon[©], print a cage card for the animal, attach any relevant information, and input any identification the animal may be wearing, including microchips and tags.
- ✓ Identify every animal in the building with a number and corresponding paperwork. An animal's paperwork should remain with that animal at all times. If original paperwork is removed or lost, replace it immediately with a temporary cage card that contains the date, the animal's identification number, and why the paperwork is missing.
- ✓ Restore the area adjacent to the Lost and Found lobby to its original purpose, a temporary housing area for surrendered animals. Either the owner or an animal keeper can place the animal in a cage. Discontinue the use of the grocery cart to transport animals throughout the facility.
- ✓ Transport animals needing immediate medical care to the Veterinary Clinic; these animals should not be housed in the general population, even temporarily.
- ✓ Conduct a daily animal census. Physically check each animal to ensure that they are in the correct run/cage. If there are similar looking animals, their shelter identification numbers should be matched with their collar numbers and cage card.
- ✓ Place ID bands on all animals upon intake with the Chameleon[©] assigned number. There are several types of collars available and DAS should decide which will work best for them. Options include:

- Hospital-type insert bracelets, which are water resistant and are secured by a clip.¹
- Paper collars with sticky tape on one end that can be purchased inexpensively from a veterinary medical supplier or through Animal Care Equipment and Services, Inc. (ACES).²
- Martingale collars (for dogs only) prevent dogs from backing out of them.
 The benefits are that dogs will not tear off the collars and that staff will
 not have to put a collar on a dog (risking a poor fit and a dog escaping)
 each time they are placed outdoors. Once a dog has left the shelter the
 collar should be washed, and a new identification number put in the
 temporary tag.
- ✓ Discontinue the use of the metal identification tags, which are unnecessary and do not achieve their purpose.
- ✓ Include the entry date on the animal's ID band to easily identify those who are ready to be processed through the shelter.
- ✓ Affix identification on the animal before he/she is placed into an enclosure to prevent confusion and mistakes.
- ✓ Remove identification tags from previous owners after the animal's mandatory holding period is satisfied. This information should be considered confidential and should not be left on the animal for visitors to see.
- ✓ Attach cage cards to clipboards or cover with heavy-duty plastic sheet protectors to preserve paperwork hanging on cages and prevent documentation from getting lost, damaged or destroyed.

Discussion

Intake processing serves as a critical control point in an animal shelter. Careful examination on intake ensures, among other things, that the animals are correctly identified and housed appropriately according to age and physical condition. Identification is invaluable if an animal escapes and it prevents errors in reclamation or euthanasia, which can be a public relations and liability nightmare.

3.6 GENERAL RECORD KEEPING

Observations

Chameleon[©] software was used to manage and track DAS's animal data; however, it was first collected on paper, mostly in the form of colored index cards, and then transferred

www.pdcorp.com/int/animal-id/

² Animal Care and Equipment Services, Inc, <u>www.animal-care.com</u>, 1-800-338-ACES

into the software. The hard copy original records and documents were kept on-site or sent to City archives consistent with records retention requirements.

There was no Work Instruction about what animal information was to be collected or by whom or how it was to be entered into Chameleon[©]. Although the administrative staff appeared very proficient in its use, other staff seemed to know how to use only the basic functions of the system. When The HSUS team asked the Lost and Found supervisor and the rescue coordinator to run a daily intake report on Chameleon[©], both were unsure how to do so.

When The HSUS team asked for a daily inventory of all the animals housed at the facility, the Chameleon[©] report listed over 800 animals. Many of the animals on the list showed an intake date of January 2010. The HSUS team also had the shelter staff run a random printout of the cage cards generated through Chameleon[©]. Much of information was incomplete, with key items such as photographs, medical history (including physical examinations), vaccinations, age, and markings missing.

It was obvious by their responses that staff did not have an understanding of the features and advantages of Chameleon[©] software and how it could help reduce repetitive processes, manage information in real time, and create a variety of reports.

A senior animal services officer at DAS served as the internal IT person and was responsible for all IT systems within the shelter. The computers were networked internally.

Recommendations

✓ Train all staff in the capabilities of Chameleon[©]. If each department wishes to keep their own paper records, allow staff time at the end of their shift to input information into the software. Consider adding computer workstations in animal housing areas and other places where animal information input is necessary.

Discussion

Having accurate data is vital for shelter administrators to plan budgets and programs effectively. Although subscribed to an animal management program, DAS staff preferred to rely on less accurate manual record-keeping. However, beginning at intake, Chameleon[©] could create a complete, easy to access record of the animal's shelter stay, medical history, and adoption information, which could be made available to any future caregiver.

The advantages of computerizing shelter operations are numerous and include:

 Standardization of the data-collection process for animals sheltered by DAS

- Collection of more extensive information regarding the animal and the owner
- Expansion and simplification of the report-generation process
- Professionalize the appearance of cage cards, intake forms, adoption contracts, etc.
- Faster and more comprehensive data-retrieval capabilities
- Increased ability to analyze performance, trends, demographic data, etc.

A paper or manual method of recording animal data can be accurate if all forms are well-designed to meet the needs of daily operations and if all staff are properly trained in the completion and routing of such forms. Often, paper forms are incomplete and can easily become misfiled, lost, or damaged. When compared with computerized methods, a manual data collection system is time-consuming and less thorough, and data retrieval is extremely slow.

Like most businesses, animal sheltering agencies are expected to maintain detailed records regarding their activities. This includes, but is not limited to, the accurate accounting of all animals received and their dispositions. An accurate and easy-to-use data-collection and analysis system is essential for reporting such information to local government officials and other funding sources. In addition, such reporting is essential for assessing the organization's performance, formulating strategic plans, and setting goals.

Shelters of all sizes benefit from keeping accurate statistics on every aspect of their work. Numbers tell people what the organization does and the challenges it faces:

Accountability

Numbers will justify the shelter's existence to a board of directors, government entities, and the general public. Staff knows they are productive, but the board must know this as well.

Public Image

Numbers increase public awareness of the magnitude of a shelter's mission. Numbers help convey the results of a facility's efforts.

Budgets/Fund-raising

A good budgeting process requires statistics to identify needs. Numbers assist in planning for the future and paint pictures that open checkbooks for donations.

Program Evaluation/Planning

Strengths and weaknesses are exposed through statistics. Analysis of shelter numbers will identify successful as well as ineffective programs. Statistical analysis can assist in the design of future programs. Comparison of statistics may expose animal population trends (local, regional, and national).

3.7 LOST AND FOUND PROCEDURE

Observations

According to the statistics from October 2009 to March 2010, 14,266 animals entered DAS. Of those, only 794 animals were returned to their owners. DAS did have clear Work Instructions for the holding period for impounded animals, which was outlined in section 2 of the "Redemption of Impounded Animals" document.

There was a bulletin board dedicated to the posting of lost/found animals in the Lost and Found lobby. According to the intake staff, reports were posted on the board for 10 days and then put into a binder for an additional 10 days. Either shelter staff or the public could complete and post a notice, with the resulting effect of a jumble of notices on the board. No specific DAS staff was responsible for monitoring the bulletin board, but if an impounded animal was recognized, staff said that the owner was contacted. The HSUS team did not hear staff offering owners looking for lost pets the option of filing a report or advising them to continue to come to the shelter in person to look for their animal and to check the board. Owners were not required to file a lost report before viewing the animals in the housing areas.

DAS's website contained information for the Redemption of Impounded Animals and the fee structures, which were based on several factors: how the animal had arrived at the shelter, length of stay, proof of rabies vaccination, and animal registration and sterilization. Owners were re-directed to www.PetHarbor.com to view stray dogs and cats but it was unclear to The HSUS team how quickly postings occurred and how often the information was updated. Many listings did not contain a photo.

Recommendations

- ✓ Develop a comprehensive plan for assisting pet owners who have lost animals.

 Many animal care and control agencies have had overwhelming success with such programs, resulting in greatly increased return-to-owner ratios. A designated lost and found coordinator could:
 - Greet people
 - Assist visitors in completing lost reports
 - Escort pet owners through the shelter
 - Ensure that visitors review the DOA and Found Pet reports
 - Provide advice and counseling on how best to look for their pets
 - Maintain and update both the Lost and the Found files
 - Perform daily cross-checking on stray animals in the facility with the lost and found reports and listings in the local newspaper

- ✓ Organize and standardize the way lost and found animals are posted on the bulletin board. Use four different colored forms: one for lost cats, one for found cats, one for lost dogs, and one for found dogs. This will make it easier for both reporting and searches. Include the following minimal information on the new forms:
 - Location where the animal was lost or found
 - Detailed description of the animal
 - Whether or not the animal was sterilized
 - > The date the animal was lost or found
 - Animal's name, if lost
- ✓ Ensure that Lost Reports are checked against incoming animals daily. Each report should be initialed and dated to indicate that the check was done and to validate the system.
- ✓ Suggest that owners searching for lost pets visit the shelter every three days to view the impounded animals and check the Found Reports. Recommend other search tips for owners such as how and where to post notices and flyers.
- ✓ Assign a staff member who speaks fluent Spanish to the Lost and Found Lobby.
- ✓ Require that people fill out a Lost Form before being allowed into the animal areas so that the information can be used to determine if the animal truly belongs to them. This will help ensure that when someone claims to have found his or her pet at the shelter, the animal is, in fact, theirs.
- ✓ Continue posting stray animals on the website, but ensure that it is done within 24 hours of the animal's arrival, and includes a photo and is dated.
- ✓ Scan every incoming animal for a microchip or inspect for any other form of identification (rabies tag, license tag, etc.).

Discussion

Placing the burden of searching for a lost pet solely on the pet owner will result in a very low return-to-owner rate. Because the general public is often not sure how to properly identify a lost or found dog or cat by breed, accurately matching such information from lost reports with that of found reports usually results in a low percentage of successful reclamations. An initial cross-check system should rely on only a few physical factors, such as coat color, hair length (in cats), gender, and weight (in dogs). If the initial cross-check produces a possible match, other factors, such as age, location lost/found, breed, etc., should be used.

Searching for a missing pet is extremely distressing to an owner and shelters should make every effort to make it less so.

3.8 ANIMAL CARE

3.81 DOG HOUSING/HANDLING/ENRICHMENT

Observations

DAS's revised floor plan listed the following sections for housing impounded dogs:

- 5 General Impound sections
- 1 section for dogs with identification tags
- 1 section for protective custody and dangerous dogs
- 1 section for small dogs
- 1 section for puppies
- 1 section for family groups
- 1 section for whelping mothers

The HSUS team observed that these sections were not used as designed. For example:

- Dogs wearing identification tags were located throughout the General Impound sections
- Small dogs and puppies were also located throughout the General Impound section
- A miniature horse was housed in the protective custody section in a run adjacent to two dogs
- A whelping dog, housed in the Dangerous Dog section, barked constantly at the dog across from her

The HSUS team noted that many dogs were housed with run mates. When asked how these pairings were determined, staff said that if two dogs seemed friendly through the gate, they were placed together, but not by sex, size, age, etc. Dogs were also paired if they were impounded together; however, in one instance, two stray pit bulls that had been impounded by an ASO were housed in the same run even though both had noticeable fight wounds on their faces and ears. In another instance, a female pit bull was paired with two unweaned puppies although a staff member admitted that she was not their dam but "looked like" she wanted to take care of them. On one morning of the site visit, in this same area, three dogs that were housed together were running loose in the hallway.

The following sections contained guillotine runs equipped with guillotine doors:

- General Impound sections
- The section for dogs with identification tags
- The section for protective custody and dangerous dogs

The section for small dogs

Although The HSUS team observed that the guillotine doors were being used appropriately, several DAS staff reported that normally the guillotine doors are closed to accommodate dogs on both sides. As mentioned above, there were multiple dogs per run in many of the Impound sections, which contributed to crowding and inadequate minimum space requirements for individual dogs.

DAS did not have protocols or a formal training program that guided humane animal handling. Shelter staff told the team that they were trained "on the job" by other senior staff. This lack of standardized training was obvious as illustrated in the following examples:

- A staff member was observed taking about five minutes to try to coax a frightened dog from a carrier using treats. This method is not successful for fearful animals that are retreating.
- Some dogs were picked up to be placed in the grocery cart when they should have been placed in a carrier or leashed. In one instance, a wideeyed dog's mouth was next to the face of staff
- A cat surrendered by its owner for euthanasia was carried through the shelter to the Euthanasia Room rather than placing the cat securely in a carrier.
- An injured, intact male Pit Bull that was brought to the Clinic was tied with a short leash to the cold water faucet. Another dog was tied with a short leash during his examination that prevented him from lying down when he tried.

Only a few runs were furnished with Kuranda™ beds in Lost and Found, and there was only one, even in runs which housed multiple dogs and litters; no additional soft bedding was provided. Dogs at DAS had very little stimulation other than being moved during the cleaning process and at feeding time. There were no toys available, even in the Real Life Rooms—staff said that toys were not provided because dogs fought over them. Although DAS had exercise yards adjacent to the kennels, on the first day of the site visit, they remained unused, but when asked, staff said dogs were placed outdoors every day. On the following day, approximately 15 dogs were in one of the yards without supervision or water. The HSUS team observed several dogs exhibiting mounting behavior, a dominant dog guarding toys, and a mixed border collie drinking stagnant water from a drainage hole.

While staff expressed concern for the animals in their care, they were seldom observed interacting with the animals or directly monitoring their care.

Recommendations

- ✓ Segregate the dog population into the kennel areas as originally intended.
- ✓ Refer to The UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program suggestions for minimum space allowance (floor area) for short-term individual shelter housing of dogs of different sizes based on a combination of standards for laboratories and recommendations for animal shelters:
 - Extra small dogs (<10lb): 12.0 sq. ft. (1.1 m²)
 - Small dogs (11-20 lb): 18.0 sq. ft. (1.67 m²)
 - Medium dogs (21-40 lb): 24.0 sq. ft. (2.2 m²)
 - Large dogs (41-60 lb): 32.0 sq. ft. (3 m²)
 - Giant breeds (>80 lb): 48.0 sq. ft. (4.5m²)
- ✓ House only one dog per run in the General Impound Kennel. If they come in together, they may be housed across from or adjacent to each other. Manage the population so that dogs are not housed on both sides of the guillotine door.
- ✓ Make sure the gates to dog runs are fastened securely.
- ✓ Monitor animals for any signs of discomfort, such as shaking, excessive barking, pacing, etc., and interactions of dogs facing each other across aisle ways and run mates. Move them to a better-suited location. Utilize a form to document animals who are exhibiting signs of stress.³
- ✓ Create a Work Instruction for general dog care, including enrichment. To ensure consistency, a supervisor should be responsible for making rounds, at minimum, in the early morning and late afternoon to confirm that all aspects of the protocol are being carried out.
- ✓ Tie dogs to sturdy objects such as tie rings attached to the wall or the floor. Use leashes long enough that allow dogs to comfortably lie down.
- ✓ Create a schedule for using the outside exercise area for dogs. Ideally, all dogs should receive two 10 to 15 minute exercise periods outside of their runs each day. This provides mental as well as physical stimulation and reduces the risk of the development of behavioral problems related to continuous confinement. This is particularly necessary for the dogs in protective custody since they are usually housed for long periods.
- ✓ Consider subdividing the outside exercise areas to allow more dogs to have access to the outdoors. Assign a staff member to supervise their interactions. Provide fresh water.

³ Kennel Walk Through Form CR

✓ Provide formal handling and behavior training to shelter staff who routinely handle animals. Inadequate training could result in serious injury to staff or to the public.

3.82 CAT HOUSING/HANDLING/ENRICHMENT

Observations

Cats were housed in five main areas:

- Cat Adoption Center for cats available for adoption
- Cat Lost and Found (CLF) for strays
- Cat Isolation (CI) for cats with upper respiratory infections
- Cat Protective Custody (CPC) for cats that were seized
- Cat Quarantine (CQ) for bite cases

The Cat Adoption area was very nicely arranged with cages along the walls and a bench in the middle of the room for the seating and observation of visitors. Singly, the cages were too small to house cats, but portals between them transformed them into larger cages. They had bedding, toys, free-choice dry food, and water, and the litter boxes were placed away from the food and water. Each cat had a shelf to perch on. DAS also utilized group housing for adoptable cats. Each room was well-furnished with climbing trees and perches, bedding, dry food and water, and clean litter boxes. The rooms were appropriately populated and the cats appeared to be comfortable.

There were 92 stainless steel cages, stacked two high, in the CLF room. They lined the walls of the room, with two back-to-back banks extending into the center of the room, forming two U-shaped areas. Most of the cages measured 27'' wide $\times 27''$ high $\times 29''$ deep; small cages measuring 21'' wide $\times 27''$ high $\times 29''$ deep had been installed in the corners. Concrete pads beneath the cages elevated them approximately three to four inches off the floor. There was natural and artificial lighting.

The Cat Quarantine, Cat Isolation, and Cat PC rooms had similarly-sized stainless steel cages stacked two high, but there were cages on only one wall in each of those rooms. Some, but not all of the cages had perches.

Cats housed in rooms other than the Adoption Center were not provided with bedding, (their cages were lined with newspaper), a place to hide, or any other type of enrichment.

There was no special housing exclusively for feral cats—they were housed with the general population in CLF and only one feral cat box was provided. "I Will Bite" signs on cages indicated to staff that the cat was feral or aggressive. In one instance, a senior

ASO was observed peering into several cages containing feral cats to determine which would be the easiest to move into a transport cage.

On the first day of the site visit, there was a sign on the CLF room door indicating that the cat that belonged in CLF 41 had gotten loose. The cat was not found and the sign remained on the door throughout the site visit.

An animal keeper told the team that feral cats routinely escaped either during cleaning or while attempting to transport them to the Euthanasia Room. Staff said they were previously able to tranquilize feral cats in the CLF room prior to euthanasia, but that protocol was discontinued since the public looking for lost cats had access to that area.

Within approximately 30 minutes of the team's observation, two feral cats had escaped— one while staff attempted to place it into a transport cage, another while its cage was being cleaned. One of the cats jumped to the floor, then to the top of the bank of cages, then onto the windowsill, where it tried to escape into the ceiling. The other was cornered and eventually caught in the transport cage, the door of which was slammed on the cat's tail as it was closed. In another instance, staff attempted to remove a feral cat that was housed in a top cage adjacent to another cage, which created a 90-degree angle and limited maneuverability. Although staff attempted to remove the cat using a catch pole as a last resort, the cat was caught around the abdomen and then struggled for approximately 30 seconds when the loop could not be released.

Staff said that there was a lack of restraint equipment, including nets, for capturing cats; catch poles were used for feral cats. Supplies often "disappeared" from rooms and time was wasted looking for them.

Most of the cat housing areas had lights connected to a motion detector that automatically turned the lights off after a certain period of inactivity, which left some rooms in darkness unless staff or the public were in them. In one instance, the lights in CLF turned off while three people were in the room.

The temperature and humidity in all of the cat housing areas were subjectively comfortable and within acceptable limits but a staff said that it could get hot during morning cleaning. Many of the ceiling tiles in the cat housing areas had evidence of staining and vents in these areas had moderate dust buildup.

The average litter boxes in CLF were plastic and measured 13"long x 9"wide x 3¾"high and used for both adult cats and kittens; they were typically larger in the Cat Adoption Center. Staff indicated that large cats might only be provided with a small litter box due to a shortage in supply of larger boxes. Clumping-type litter was used in Cat Adoption; non-clumping litter was used in the other cat areas.

Recommendations

- ✓ Develop and implement protocols for all aspects of cat handling and care. Expand staff awareness of requirements beyond routine cleaning and feeding. Provide training for all staff on recognizing, reducing, and preventing stress in cats. ^{4,5}
- ✓ Adhere to the following recommendations by UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program⁶ which states in part: "Cages in which cats are unable to stretch their full body length are acceptable only for very short-term housing (maximum 24 hours). Cages for housing cats longer than 24 hours must be large enough to allow separation of at least 3 feet between feeding, resting, and elimination areas and sufficient floor space for locomotion and play." Retrofit the small cages to conform to the above space requirements as resources allow.
- ✓ Provide all cats with:
 - a soft bed that is at least three inches thick, e.g., a folded towel.
 - a place to perch such as a cardboard or feral cat box.
 - enrichment items. All shelter cats should have some type of accessory either in or affixed to their cage to provide stimulation⁷; this is especially important for individually housed animals that lack the opportunity for social play. Plastic shower curtain rings, pipe cleaners tied to the cage, and cardboard paper rolls are all inexpensive ways to furnish stimulation.
- ✓ Put the artificial lighting in the animal housing areas on a timer to ensure that lights are on during the day and off at night. The regular light cycles of day and night are very important because they help create a "routine" for shelter animals, which contributes to stress reduction.
- ✓ Use appropriately-sized litter boxes for kittens and small cats; provide large cats with larger litter boxes. Difficulty using a litter box may create aversions and result in inappropriate elimination.
- ✓ Discontinue the use of control poles for handling cats. Use of control poles on cats is not recommended as a primary restraint or capture tool. A control pole should be used only when other alternatives for restraint have been exhausted and restraint of the animal is necessary so that the cat can be transported from one location to another. Humane and safe handling of cats and tranquilization can be achieved using the following products:

The HSUS Animal Sheltering magazine, "Keeping Shelter Cats Healthy Through Stress Reduction," January–February 2007+

Impacts of Shelter & Housing Design on Shelter Animal Health, 'Housing that minimize stress and maximizes welfare,' UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program

www.sheltermedicine.com/portal/is shelter design.shl#crowding

www.stretchandscratch.com

- ➤ The Campbell Pet Company "EZ Nabber"⁸
- ➤ The ACES "Cat Bagger"
- The ACES "Feral Cat Den" (usually left open in the cat cage at all times)

It is essential that proper tools are used when handling feral cats in order to minimize stress and injury to the cats as well as staff members.

- ✓ Create an intake procedure to determine whether a cat is truly feral— a frightened pet cat may behave as a feral upon entering the shelter. If DAS chooses to hold truly feral cats, consider housing them in a separate, quiet area with minimal traffic. As an alternative, euthanizing feral cats before the mandatory 72-hour holding period will save them from several days of misery with the same outcome.
- ✓ Tranquilize feral/aggressive cats prior to euthanasia in their cage when the shelter is closed to the public. House aggressive cats in bottom and non-corner cages to make handling and cleaning less difficult.

Discussion

In many shelters across the country, cats are accorded an inferior status to dogs and are treated as such. DAS appears to be no exception. Cat animal keepers were barely able to provide the essentials of care, much less enrichment and stimulation to cats. It was difficult to determine staff's interest in the cats' well-being since they seemed overwhelmed by completing their minimum daily responsibilities. The HSUS team inferred that DAS management and staff, although well-intentioned, did not comprehend the daily needs of the cats in their care. This lack of understanding, coupled with minimal supervisory oversight, created a general lack of care, appropriate handling, and stimulation for cats. The HSUS team did not think that this neglect was intentional, but rather due to inadequate training, a lack of oversight, accountability, and written protocols.

Any animal in a shelter environment will experience some level of stress due to the change of environment, separation from family, and daily handling by strangers. Cats and kittens are particularly susceptible to stress when removed from familiar surroundings and subjected to the noises of other animals. It is important for staff to realize that the normal sights, sounds, and smells of the shelter environment are unfamiliar to the animals and can be terrifying to one that is confused and frightened.

In order for the animals to maintain their sociability in the shelter environment, some toys and amenities are recommended. These enhancements also signal to the community that the animals' caregivers are taking extra time to ensure that the animals'

⁸ www.campbellpet.com

needs are being met and are actively engaged in the process of mental stimulation and improving their environment.

3.83 SMALL ANIMALS/EXOTICS HOUSING AND CARE

Observations

With the exception of three budgies in a small cage on top of a filing cabinet in the Lost and Found Lobby, there were no small animals or exotics at the shelter at the time of the site visit. The Small Critter Room had one wall of stainless steel cages similar to the ones that housed the cats. Some were dusty and others had not been cleaned after they were used last, which appeared to have been for some time. The floor was littered with paper.

Recommendations

- ✓ Purchase housing and equipment specific to the types of small animals and exotics (e.g., small mammals, birds, reptiles, etc.) that are likely to be housed at DAS and cannot be accommodated in stainless steel cages.
- ✓ Clean the enclosure immediately after it is vacated to prevent the spread of disease.

Discussion

Animal shelters today must house and care for exotic, unusual, and "fad" animals, including birds, snakes, reptiles, fowl, fish, rabbits, gerbils, hamsters, guinea pigs, and other small mammals. Many agencies struggle with their ever-changing housing issues; however, these animals have special housing and care needs that must be addressed. There is no single correct or best approach to housing small domestic or exotic animals; however, there are commercial cages that work well and shelter enclosures that can be retrofitted. Whatever space is available for or dedicated to this use should have a fair degree of flexibility so that the shelter can accommodate the needs of the various animals that are in its care. Some small and exotic animals are easily stressed, so their housing should be located out of high-traffic and noisy areas, especially those with public access. In addition, staff access is best restricted to those trained in the care of small animals and exotics. This space should also function to some degree as a quarantine and/or isolation area, allowing some control of potential medical problems.

Following are examples of traditional and nontraditional caging and the species of animals that they can accommodate:

 <u>Aquariums:</u> Various sizes; appropriate for both aquatic and terrestrial amphibians and reptiles, as well as for small exotics such as hedgehogs and prairie dogs. As with any aquarium, make sure there is a tight-fitting screen or other suitable top, with a device or system for locking down the top.

- Household storage containers: Various sizes; clear and opaque plastic; usually with snap-on lids that can be punctured for ventilation. They are suitable for amphibians, reptiles, small exotics, and bats.
- <u>Livestock equipment:</u> Watering troughs for cattle and other livestock, in either plastic or metal. These can also be used for larger aquatic or terrestrial reptiles and non-climbing mammals.
- <u>Commercial wire cages for mammals:</u> Various sizes and configurations; manufactured for use with rabbits, guinea pigs, ferrets. They provide suitable housing for small to medium exotics such as sugar gliders and flying squirrels, for which glass may not be the best choice.
- <u>Commercial cages for birds:</u> Various sizes. Cages that allow horizontal
 movement are preferable to tall, narrow ones. Be aware of the gauge of
 bars when housing large parrots; gauge is used to determine the
 thickness and strength of the bars, and large parrots can easily bend or
 crush small-gauge bars.
- <u>Miscellaneous/other:</u> In the event that an animal is too large for the caging discussed above, freestanding sectional dog pens and large dog crates can be utilized.

3.84 FARM ANIMAL/EQUINE HOUSING AND CARE

Observations

There was a concrete structure with metal-barred doors near the vehicle bays. Because it was used as storage for hay and miscellaneous equipment, it was unusable as farm animal housing, as it was originally intended. As a result, a miniature horse impounded by ASOs was housed in a dog run in PC 2, next to two dogs.

The HSUS team observed the above-mentioned horse being unloaded from the animal control vehicle. A rope was wrapped around the horse's neck to try to get the horse to stand. When this was unsuccessful, an animal keeper clipped the rope to the halter on the horse. Another rope was then placed just behind its front legs, and when the ropes were pulled, the horse stood up. When staff was unable to coax the horse to jump to the ground, one of them pulled on its front legs. The horse fell on its abdomen onto the concrete from a height of approximately three feet. When it got up, the horse would not move so the rope lead was replaced with a chain dog leash. After staff tried unsuccessfully for several minutes to get the horse to walk, a staff experienced in handling horses was called to help and was able to move the horse into the building.

A barn at the County fairgrounds was used to house horses in protective custody when it not in use for another event. During the site visit, there were three horses at this location, which were cared for once daily by DAS staff. The HSUS team observed that

dirty bedding was not removed from the stalls, but instead was turned over and covered with bedding that was fresh; when the stalls became too soiled, the horses were moved to freshly bedded stalls.

The horses were fed an adequate amount of coastal grass hay, water was provided in plastic containers that resembled the bottoms of large barrels and cat litter pans were used for grain. The horses' hooves were moderately overgrown, but staff said there were no funds available for hoof trimming.

The fence in the turnout area was made of vertical wood slats but there were gaps between them. There was debris, including trash and long, thin metal bands in the horses' turnout area.

Recommendations

- ✓ Restore the concrete building to an acceptable place to house farm animals and livestock. Hay and grain can be stored in a partitioned area.
- ✓ Discontinue the practice of housing predator/prey animals in close proximity.
- ✓ Obtain appropriate transport vehicles and handling equipment for horses and the other livestock that DAS handles. Purchase feed and water buckets designed for horses. Makeshift equipment can cause injuries when damaged.
- ✓ Provide species-specific animal handling techniques to designated staff. Proper equipment and training will help decrease stress and reduce the potential for injury to both animals and staff.
- ✓ Remove dirty bedding and manure from stalls daily. Thrush and canker are both caused by keeping horses in dirty, wet conditions. Unclean stalls can also attract biting flies and other disease-carrying insects.
- ✓ Provide regular farrier care. At minimum, this should consist of hoof trimming every eight to 12 weeks. Hooves that are not trimmed properly and are allowed to become or remain excessively long can lead to medical problems such as laminitis.
- ✓ Clear the debris from the horse turnout area and repair the fence to prevent injuries.

Discussion

The existing concrete building is very suitable for the housing of horses and livestock. Although it is close to the shelter, it is away from the daily bustle of the facility, thus providing a quiet and comfortable environment for horses and farm animals.

4.0 SHELTER HEALTH

4.1 VETERINARY SERVICES

Observations

There were three full-time veterinarians on staff, all of whom worked Monday through Friday, with two providing coverage from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm in the Medical Clinic and one from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm in the Spay/Neuter Clinic. Each of the veterinarians reported directly to the division manager; no single veterinarian was in charge of the other two. There were seven veterinary assistants, five of whom worked in the Medical Clinic and two who worked in Spay/Neuter. Of the five, they rotated working one weekend day in addition to four weekdays. There was no schedule for the veterinarians to be "on-call"; however, The HSUS team was told that one doctor usually was available on Saturdays and the other on Sundays. If the veterinary assistants could not contact one doctor, they tried the other. The team was also told that the senior animal services officer who worked the night shift had the authority to euthanize animals from night surrender, if they were in poor condition.

The Veterinary Clinic was small for the number of people potentially working in it at the same time, but overall it was well-arranged. There were two examination rooms, and a 'wet' table was available, if needed. Euthanasia was not performed in this area.

Scheduled drugs were kept in a combination safe behind a lockable door in both the Veterinary Clinic and the Spay/Neuter Clinic.

Recommendations

- ✓ Create a rotating night and weekend on-call schedule for the veterinarians in the event the veterinary assistants and/or a senior ASO needs advice about the condition of an animal.
- ✓ Encourage the staff veterinarians to network with other shelter veterinarians in order to maintain and continually improve the level of veterinary care available to the animals within DAS. A network of veterinarians interested in and familiar with animal shelter practice has been developed and a specialized training conference for shelter veterinarians is presented annually. 9
- ✓ Utilize the veterinary staff to provide on-going training classes for staff. These classes can include topics related to the humane care and treatment of shelter animals, such as preventative medicine, examination of incoming animals, medical treatments, proper disinfection protocols, and disease recognition and control. It is critical that staff have a thorough understanding and working

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⁹ www.sheltervet.org/

knowledge of the acceptable standards of care and their role in providing that care.

Discussion

Veterinarians are increasingly involved in the day-to-day operations of shelters and are asked to design and comment on policies and procedures that are not strictly medical. Animal shelter practice is a unique field of veterinary medicine, and it brings with it topics, procedures, and dilemmas that do not arise in other veterinary practice situations.

It is imperative that everyone working in the shelter environment understand the importance of herd management, vaccination protocols, and disease prevention and transmission. The veterinarian's knowledge and experience is an outstanding resource in developing policies and in training personnel.

4.2 INCOMING ANIMAL EXAMINATIONS/VACCINATION PROTOCOLS

Observations

There were no Work Instructions for animal examinations or vaccination protocols nor did the veterinary clinic have its own procedural manual.

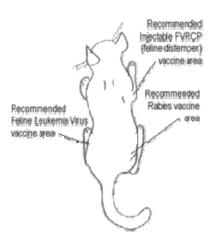
Intake staff or ASOs determined where an incoming animal would be placed in the shelter population; a dry erase board in the hallway was used to identify empty runs. They also determined whether a newly admitted animal needed immediate veterinary care and either took the animal to the Clinic or placed the animal in a run/cage and alerted the veterinary staff. For the most part, the veterinary staff did not participate in the intake process. It was not until the completion of the mandatory stray holding period that an animal, as determined by the veterinarian's selection during morning rounds, was scheduled for a physical examination and vaccinations by a veterinary assistant. It appeared that the average wait time for an animal to be seen by the veterinary staff averaged between three to five days. In some cases, if the veterinary staff thought that an animal was highly adoptable, it was vaccinated before the hold period ended.

Dogs were vaccinated against canine distemper virus, adenovirus type 2, parainfluenza virus and parvovirus and Bordetella; cats were vaccinated against feline rhinotracheitis, calici, and panleukopenia viruses. The team observed a vaccine being given to a cat between its shoulder blades.

Vaccinations, diagnostic tests, deworming, and other treatments were hand-written on pink Veterinary Health Record cards, which were later given to the new pet owner. This information was only rarely entered into Chameleon $^{\circ}$.

Recommendations

- ✓ Create Work Instructions for examining animals upon intake. Assign a veterinary technician/veterinary assistant to all animal intake areas. Each animal should be examined for obvious or subtle signs of illness prior to being placed into the general population. The exam should include scanning the animal for a microchip, photographing and describing the animal, including age, sex, approximate weight, any identifying markings, injuries, etc. and administering appropriate vaccinations and deworming. The results of the examination should dictate where the animal is placed in the shelter.
- ✓ Develop written, detailed vaccination protocols for both dogs and cats. A shelter veterinarian should be responsible for developing these protocols, and the protocols should be implemented consistently. The HSUS recommends that when DAS develops its vaccination protocols, it reviews those created by the UCDavis Koret Shelter Medicine Program. ¹⁰ Include pregnant and nursing cats and dogs in the vaccination protocols.
- ✓ Follow the current recommendations for the injection sites for vaccinations. Feline and canine combination vaccines should be administered in the right shoulder and rabies vaccinations in the right hip. In general, it is good practice to give each vaccine in a specific location.



Discussion

Documenting an animal's condition upon arrival will assist staff in determining if the condition developed while the animal was at the shelter, was a pre-existing condition, or whether the animal's condition is worsening.

www.sheltermedicine.com

Every animal needs to be examined within a short period of time upon entering the shelter in order to identify potential infectious threats to the other shelter animals and staff, as well as to identify animals in need of immediate medical attention. No animal should be placed in the general population until it has been examined.

With animals constantly entering and leaving a facility, each entering and resident animal is at risk for infectious disease. Vaccinating each animal upon intake is essential to providing immunity as quickly as possible. This protects both the individual animal and the surrounding animals known as "herd immunity."

It is very important to understand that vaccination is just one strategy for preventing infectious diseases and one tool in a disease-prevention program. It is also critical to take into consideration animal husbandry practices, disinfection procedures, isolation and separation protocols, and animal-handling practices. ^{11,12}

Vaccination protocols should be designed based on a shelter's available resources, the number of animals handled, the turnover rate of animals within the shelter, applicable state laws (e.g., those concerning rabies), the relative incidence and severity of particular diseases in the area, and the manner in which the animals are housed, as well as the resulting risk of disease being spread throughout the shelter. Vaccination protocols for companion animals have changed in recent years, and various associations (the American Veterinary Medical Association, American Animal Hospital Association ¹³, Association of Feline Practitioners ¹⁴, and most veterinary colleges) have introduced new vaccination recommendations. However, vaccination continues to be a controversial subject in veterinary medicine, and there is no universal consensus among veterinary practitioners regarding routine vaccination. Typical vaccination regimens are intended for companion animals in normal household situations, not shelters.

The UC-Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program discusses the issues of shelter vaccines and core vaccines, and it recommends, with agreement from The HSUS, immediate vaccination:

When Should the Vaccine Be Given? Immediately upon intake, if not sooner! In almost all cases, shelter animals should be vaccinated immediately upon intake. A delay of even a day or two will significantly compromise the vaccine's ability to provide protection. In a

Miller, Lila, & Zawistowski, editors, (2004). *Shelter Medicine for Veterinarians and Staff*. Ames, IA:

 [&]quot;Establishing a Shelter Preventive Medicine Program," Brenda Griffin, DVM, MS, Kate Hurley, DVM CR
 2006 AAHA Canine Vaccine Guidelines Revised CR

¹⁴ The 2006 American Association of Feline Practitioners, Feline Vaccine Advisory Panel Report CR

cost-saving effort, some shelters delay vaccination until the animal is made available for adoption, or even until it is adopted. While this does provide a service to adopters, the protective effect of the vaccine within the shelter is greatly reduced or eliminated. (In some cases, the chance of the vaccine's preventing disease may be 90% or better if given the day before exposure but will drop to less than 1% if given the day after exposure.) When possible, vaccination prior to intake is ideal (e.g., for owner-surrendered animals or those returning from foster care).

4.3 ILLNESS RECOGNITION, TREATMENTS, DISEASE CONTROL

Observations

The HSUS team was told that sick and injured animals were recognized by animal keepers, veterinary assistants, and veterinarians. However, with the exception of morning rounds and treatment times, The HSUS team rarely observed the veterinary staff monitoring the animals in the general population. The veterinary staff indicated that the animal keepers were fairly reliable in reporting illnesses; however, the team thought otherwise:

- when an animal keeper was asked if a dog with a mucoid ocular discharge and a grossly swollen left front leg with a deep laceration had been seen by the veterinary staff, he replied that he did not know
- there was no indication on the runs of two dogs with open wounds nor did the animal keeper know whether they had been evaluated by the veterinary team
- runs containing bloody diarrhea were evident throughout the shelter
- one kitten in a litter in CLF Room had muscle tremors. The veterinary staff was unaware of its condition until notified by The HSUS team

Laminated signs throughout the facility indicated that a particular animal was "Under Treatment", but not for what. For example, there were two dogs in the Adoption Center with signs that indicated that they were "Under Treatment" and "Do Not Touch Or Expose to Other Animals". It was confusing to The HSUS team how animal keepers could report a new condition or a change in an existing condition if they did not know why an animal was being treated. When asked, a veterinarian said that she really had not thought of that but a request to revise the sign to include a diagnosis would have to be approved by DCCS.

There were several incidences that The HSUS found particularly alarming. In the first, a veterinary assistant was asked if he had noticed that a charcoal bully-breed dog in the Real Life pod had profuse bloody diarrhea and was extremely lethargic. He responded that it was noticed the day before and the dog had tested positive for parvovirus. The veterinarian had ordered that the test be rerun because she wanted to be sure it wasn't a false positive due to vaccine interference. The veterinary assistant entered the run without any protective clothing to collect a new sample and then continued his regular

duties, which was dispensing medications, without even washing his hands. It is also notable that this pod was shared with another dog.

In a second incident, while observing cleaning procedures in the Family Group Kennel, the team saw two very sick puppies lying on top of dog food in a bowl. Bloody diarrhea was present on the run floor. When the animal keeper was asked if the veterinary staff had been notified, she replied that she did not think that they had come in yet but collected a sample of the bloody diarrhea for a parvovirus test. Since it was obvious that the puppies were moribund and required immediate intervention, The HSUS team asked why the puppies were not removed to be euthanized. She stated that she thought that hookworms might be causing the bloody diarrhea, and she wanted to give them a "chance". Nevertheless, shortly thereafter, she carried them to the Euthanasia Room, again without any protective clothing. She returned to cleaning without washing her hands and, without disinfecting the bowl, replenished it with food for the adult dog and the remaining puppies still in the run.

During the site visit, a parvovirus-positive puppy was being treated in the pre-surgical room of the Spay/Neuter Clinic; in the same room, a cat was in a cage and two dogs were running loose. Even if the other dogs were adults or fully vaccinated, they might still become infected or act as fomites, carrying the disease to other dogs in the shelter. Furthermore, cats should not be housed in the same room as dogs.

The HSUS team could not determine whether the disregard for the rigid protocols necessary for the control of infectious diseases was due to a lack of training or carelessness.

Prescribed treatments and medications were communicated verbally to veterinary assistants who transcribed them on red or blue index-sized Veterinary Health Record cards. Every day, a veterinary assistant stocked a mobile cart with the prescribed medications, canned food, and stacks of cards and administered the treatments. Each card contained hand-drawn boxes, which corresponded to the number of days for the course of treatment; if the medication/treatment was to be given more than once daily, the box was split into two sections. The veterinary assistant admitted that with the number of treatments that were prescribed, he barely finished the morning ones before it was time to begin the afternoon ones.

There were no written criteria that determined which illnesses/injuries DAS had the resources and space to treat; however, one of the veterinarians said that she used the Asilomar Accords as a guideline.

Recommendations

✓ Schedule the veterinary staff to make medical rounds at least three times throughout the day.

- ✓ Consider hiring a certified or registered veterinary technician to oversee the veterinary assistants.
- ✓ Modify the "Under Treatment" signs to include the illness/injury for which the animal is being treated. A space can be added to list any special instructions or cautions. Unless they are informed about an animal's diagnosis, animal keepers will not know when to report changes in the animal's condition.
- ✓ Use color-coded stickers on cage cards to indicate that an obviously sick or injured animal has been recognized by the veterinary staff.
- ✓ Implement a written procedure for animal keepers and ASOs to alert the veterinary staff to a sick or injured animal. This could be accomplished by creating a form, which would include the date and time of the report; the staff member's name; the animal's identification, description, and location; and a brief description of the signs or problem. These forms should be easily accessible for all staff and completed forms would be placed in an in-box in the Veterinary Clinic. A designated veterinary assistant or technician should be responsible for checking this box frequently throughout the day and examining the animals in a timely manner.
- ✓ Provide each impounded animal with the necessary treatment to alleviate suffering from injury or illness during the mandatory holding period. Regardless of its length of stay and eventual disposition, every animal should be afforded the Five Freedoms:
 - <u>Freedom from thirst, hunger and malnutrition</u> by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigor.
 - <u>Freedom from discomfort</u> by providing a suitable environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
 - <u>Freedom from pain, injury and disease</u> by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
 - <u>Freedom to express normal behavior</u> by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animals own kind.
 - <u>Freedom from fear and distress</u> by ensuring conditions that avoid mental suffering. ¹⁵
- ✓ Define the categories of critically ill, critically injured, and un-weaned animals to protect DAS from the liability of euthanizing an owned sick or injured stray animal. Ideally the staff veterinarian and/or the division manager should approve euthanasia of these animals.

www.afac.ab.ca/fivefreedoms.htm

- ✓ Develop a program and train all applicable staff in recognizing and reporting signs of common shelter diseases such as upper respiratory infections (URI), feline panleukopenia virus (FPLV), kennel cough, and canine parvovirus (CPV) and how to recognize signs of pain and suffering such as dehydration, abnormal breathing, or animals not eating or drinking on their own.
- ✓ Immediately isolate any animal that has been diagnosed as having or has been exposed to an infectious or contagious disease. Remove any animal in the Adoption Center that is identified as receiving treatment, which may be misinterpreted by potential adopters, to another location.
- ✓ Pay careful attention to staff movement within the Kennels and Cat Rooms. An employee who has handled a sick animal, potentially contagious animal, or who has entered a room housing sick or contagious animals, should not be permitted to enter the healthy animal or intake areas. This person should be regarded as "contaminated" until he or she has fully showered and changed clothing unless he or she was wearing a gown. The HSUS team recommends that staff be specifically assigned to work in only one of the healthy, sick, or potentially exposed animal housing areas. No movement between these areas or the dog and cat areas during the course of the day is permissible unless the staff member starts in the healthy area and finishes in the sick/isolation area. It is imperative that the staff understand that the most common vector of disease transmission in an animal shelter is human contact and transference on skin and clothing.
- ✓ Enter all diagnoses and treatments in Chameleon[©] in standardized form— diagnosis, treatments ordered and administered with specifics as to medication type, dose, route, and frequency. Print a daily Chameleon[©] report of animals receiving treatment, and check that report against the index cards. This provides a system to ensure that no treatments are overlooked.
- ✓ Dispense medications in clearly labeled individual vials to include the date dispensed, the animal's name and identification number, the name of the medication, and complete dosage information. Stock bottles should not be taken into the animal housing areas.
- ✓ Develop Work Instructions for the illnesses and injuries that DAS can/cannot treat using the Asilomar Accords¹⁶ as a foundation. DAS needs to decide whether it has the proper isolation facilities, protective gear, and trained staff to treat highly infectious, chronic, zoonotic, and potentially fatal diseases.

1.

www.asilomaraccords.org

Discussion

While it is impossible to totally prevent the spread of disease within a shelter setting, it is possible to reduce it. It is essential that the care of all animals be monitored and that treatments are provided when necessary in order to: a) control the occurrence of diseases and parasites in the shelter; b) best protect the health and comfort of the animals; c) protect the public health; d) provide overall humane care and treatment of sheltered animals; and e) engender public trust in the level of care being provided to their homeless animals.

Although decisions should be made within the philosophy of herd management — weighing how decisions affect the entire animal population—they should not be made to the detriment of individual care. Furthermore, the amount of time spent in a shelter and the anticipated disposition should be irrelevant to the level of care provided.

The responsibility of caring for stray and homeless animals is a serious one. It brings with it the responsibility to individually assess the health status and special needs of every animal admitted to DAS soon after admission and to provide care for those needs throughout the animal's stay at the shelter.

4.4 CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

Observations

There was a Work Instruction for the cleaning and disinfection of cat cages and dog runs, but it was inconsistently followed and some staff was not aware of it. When asked what the protocol was, staff said there was no standardized training for animal keepers and that various staff cleaned differently, depending on who initially trained them.

Dog runs were cleaned using KennelSol[®], a quaternary disinfectant, dispensed by a hose proportionator and then rinsed and dried. For the most part, solid waste was removed prior to the application of the solution but the Kuranda bed and water bowl remained in the run. Most of the solution was sprayed on the run floor, excluding the sides, gate, etc. Scrub brushes were not used, even when the run was vacated. Staff said that if a run/cage was empty, it was presumed to be clean. The HSUS team observed that newly admitted animals was placed in obviously dirty enclosures.

While runs were being cleaned, dogs were either turned out into the exercise yards, moved to the opposite side of the guillotine door, if it was not occupied, or placed in rolling cages. The rolling cages or the shopping carts used to move animals were not cleaned and disinfected between uses, even after they contained a dog possibly exposed to an infectious disease.

Trifectant[®], a broad-spectrum disinfectant, was used for cleaning the cat areas on Mondays, Wednesdays, Saturdays, and as needed, if a cage was very dirty. Spot cleaning

was performed on the other days. The cat was moved to a transport cage or an empty cage, which was sprayed with Trifectant[®] and wiped out between uses. The dirty cage was sprayed with Trifectant[®] and wiped with a hand towel. Litter boxes were scooped out, if not very dirty, or completely dumped out if very dirty; they were completely replaced if they were unable to be cleaned in the room. (A supervisor told The HSUS team that cats should be getting all new litter boxes and bowls during cleaning, which was contrary to the Work Instruction.)

The litter scoop was not sanitized or switched between cages. The staff member wore gloves but did not sanitize, or change them before handling another cat. She was not wearing any protective clothing over her DAS T-shirt.

The team was told that cleaning began at 7:00 am and was performed once per day, with spot cleaning throughout the day. When the HSUS team walked through the Lost and Found area in the afternoon, many dogs had excrement in their runs.

There were minimal hand washing stations in the building and virtually none in the animal housing areas; there were hand sanitizer dispensers throughout the building, but not in all of the animal rooms. On the first day of the site visit, the hand sanitizer dispenser in LFC was empty and remained so on the last day of the site visit.

Recommendations

- ✓ Distribute the Work Instruction and provide training to all animal keepers and supervisory staff to ensure consistency in cleaning and disinfection. Every employee should clean the same way, every day.
- ✓ Place a sign on an empty cage/run which reads "clean" to indicate that it is ready to be occupied.
- ✓ Include the following steps in any cleaning and disinfection protocol¹⁷:

Remove all grossly visible debris.

The presence of gross contamination or organic material, especially feces, will inactivate most disinfectants.

Scrub the area or item with water and detergent.

Petersen, Christine A., DVM, PhD, Dvorak, Glenda, MS, DVM, MPH, DACVPM, & Spickler, Anna, DVM, PhD, editors. (2008). Ames, IA: *Center for Food Security and Public Health*. CR

Thoroughly rinse the cleaned area to remove any detergent residue.

Some disinfectants may be inactivated by detergents; therefore, it is very important to rinse well after washing the area or item.

Select and apply an appropriate, effective disinfectant.

Allow the proper contact time!

This is one of the most overlooked steps!!

Contact time may vary depending on the disinfectant selected, but is usually at least 10 minutes. Consult product label.

Thoroughly rinse away any residual disinfectant and allow the area or item to dry.

- ✓ Use a bristled scrub brush of medium stiffness to scrub all surfaces within the run, including the floor, sides, top, gate, and Kuranda beds after applying the cleaning solution. Run gates should be cleaned and scrubbed on a daily basis. Scrubs runs with either a detergent/disinfectant combination or first with a detergent and then apply a disinfectant.
- ✓ Remove and wash and disinfect water and food bowls separately.
- ✓ Clean the tops of all of the cages regularly. Keep the cage tops free of dirt, dust, and supplies.
- ✓ Use the following steps to spot-clean cat cages. Minimizing the number of times a cat is moved will decrease stress that is known to contribute to its susceptibility to disease.
 - Never use a detergent or disinfectant while the cat remains in the cage. Spot cleaning should only be performed with a moistened paper or cloth towel.
 - ➤ If the cat is timid or frightened, create a makeshift refuge from a cardboard box or paper bag, allowing the cat to hide while the cage is being cleaned. The less the cat is handled, the better for disease control.
 - If canned food is offered, the food bowl should be cleaned or replaced every day; however, if dry food is offered and the bowl is not visibly crusted or grimy, it is acceptable to dump any day-old food and refill. Water dishes

- should be emptied, rinsed, and refilled.
- Clay litter should be dumped and replaced daily. If clumping litter is utilized, use disposable food service gloves to pick up the feces and urine clumps; change them between each cage, ensuring that disease is not being spread from box to box. If litter scoops must be used, use stainless steel ones, which can be disinfected. Have at least two on hand and label them by number so that they can be used in consecutive order, making sure to let each sit in a bucket of disinfectant at least ten minutes before it is reused. Be sure to change the water several times during cleaning so that the level of contaminants does not overwhelm the solution's disinfecting capability; replace any scoops that become too soiled with caked-on debris. In some cases, the use of disposable litter boxes is recommended to expedite the cleaning process. If non-disposable cat boxes are used, then they must be sized appropriately for cats. Vertical space for cats and a place for them to hide during their stay is an integral part of the sanitation and cleaning protocol.
- If towels or bedding are used, shake out clean items and place them back in the cage, but remove and replace any wet or visibly dirty towels and newspapers. Leaving any clean cage furnishings and toys with the cat's scent increases comfort.
- ✓ Install hand washing station wherever possible. At a minimum, a hand sanitizer should be available in every animal housing room.
- ✓ Use paper towels or a clean hand towel for each cat cage. A hand towel will act as a fomite and transmit disease organisms from one animal to the next when it is used to clean multiple cages.
- ✓ Continue the current morning cleaning schedule, but increase the number of spot cleanings performed throughout the day. To ensure conformity, a supervisor should regularly walk through the animal housing areas. Spot cleaning will keep animals comfortable, present a better image of DAS to the public, and reduce the amount of time staff must spend cleaning each animal enclosure. Confinement is particularly stressful for animals when they are forced to rest and eat near accumulation of their waste.
- ✓ Provide readily accessible plastic or disposable aprons and gloves for the cleaning staff to prevent the spread of fomites via clothing and hands. Plastic aprons/gloves can be easily cleaned and disinfected by lightly wiping with disinfectant. If this is not possible, protective equipment should at least be disinfected or disposed of after exposure to a sick animal and between each area of the shelter.

Discussion

The goal of all cleaning programs/protocols for animal shelters is to keep the facility clean, the healthy animals healthy, and prevent the spread of disease. All too often the practices of the staff and the agency actually create problems by spreading disease.

It is important to remember that cleaning and disinfecting are not the same things. Disinfecting is accomplished with a disinfectant, which is a chemical solution that destroys microorganisms and must be applied after detergent. Cleaning is accomplished with a detergent which is a cleansing agent that helps remove dirt and debris that interferes with the disinfecting process. It is very important to completely remove detergents before applying disinfectants.

Quaternary ammonium compounds are good disinfectants and they also have some detergent action. However, some quaternary ammonium compounds are inactivated in the presence of soap or soap residues, so careful product selection is important. Their antibacterial activity is reduced in the presence of organic material such as feces and hair so it is critical that fomites that attach to the walls, floors, chain link, etc. are physically removed to allow for disinfection of the surface. Proper cleaning protocols that are effective involve physical scrubbing of the surface after the fomites have been removed and the disinfectant applied.

While it is impossible to totally prevent the spread of disease it is possible to dramatically reduce it. Circumstances and finances may affect the choice of cleaning materials and methods, but a daily cleaning schedule must be observed unfailingly. Any area of a shelter in which animals are housed or through which animals pass must be cleaned and disinfected daily.

Even the best shelter, by definition, is an inherently unhealthy place. Animals enter from different locations with unknown medical histories and often little or no past vaccinations against disease. Animals that have been recently exposed to disease may show no initial symptoms during the incubation period. The need for good health care protocols is crucial, and the rationale is two-fold—to uphold the shelter's responsibility to care humanely for animals and to maintain the reputation of the organization as a well-run community resource.

Effective cleaning requires not only a good scrub brush, but also a dedicated individual.

4.5 FEEDING PROTOCOLS

Observations

At the time of the site visit, cats and dogs were fed dry Science Diet[®] but the shelter manager said that DAS would be switching to Purina[®] products in the near future. The food bins were located in the Food Prep room and although there was both puppy and

adult dry food on the premises, the bins were not labeled. When The HSUS team questioned why a puppy with an injury to his jaw was being fed canned kitten food, a veterinary assistant indicated that DAS had run out of canned dog food the prior week.

A shelter supervisor told The HSUS team that all dogs were fed once daily at 2:00 pm but puppies and underweight dogs were fed twice daily; however, this separate feeding did not occur during the site visit, although some bowls that were empty and not removed from the runs for washing were replenished with food.

Since a Work Instruction had not yet been developed, The HSUS team had difficulty in determining who had established and oversaw the feeding schedule and instructions. There was no system in place that monitored whether a dog/puppy was eating or how or to whom it should be reported. In some cases, only one food bowl was provided for multiple dogs housed together and food-guarding was observed.

Cats were fed free-choice dry Science Diet. During the site visit, only cats in the Adoption Center had their bowls dumped and given fresh food daily; food bowls in the other cat areas were replenished. Kittens were offered canned food. In some cases, however, the water and food bowls were too high for them to access.

Recommendations

- ✓ Create and implement a Work Instruction that includes feeding protocols for all animal species housed at DAS. Include a system that allows staff to monitor the food intake, special needs, feeding behaviors, and eliminations of animals.
- ✓ Develop an inventory system to ensure that an adequate supply of all types of food is available on the premises.
- ✓ Provide each dog/cat with a sufficient quantity of food based on age, size, weight, overall condition, medical needs, etc. At minimum, animals should receive adequate portions—more food should be offered to those who consume their normal rations in a short time, and the veterinary staff should be alerted to animals that are not eating.
- ✓ Observe feeding time to make sure that dogs are not guarding the food from other dogs that share their run. House food-aggressive dogs separately, and reevaluate their adoptability. Malnutrition and dehydration can occur quickly, especially in puppies.
- ✓ Provide dry food to adult cats at all times, since cats prefer to eat several small meals per day. This dry food may be supplemented with canned food, if necessary.

- ✓ Feed puppies and kittens diets formulated for their age, never adult food. Label food bins appropriately. Supplement with small amounts of canned food, preferably puppy or kitten formula.
- ✓ Feed puppies and kittens six to 12 weeks of age three times a day, feed puppies and kittens 12 weeks to 12 months twice a day, and feed adult dogs twice a day. Nursing dams should be fed kitten/puppy dry and acid food to meet their nutritional requirements.
- ✓ Provide soft food to geriatric animals and those with dental problems.
- ✓ Discard uneaten food and wash food and water bowls daily. Replenish with fresh food and clean water. Offer food in appropriately-sized bowls since difficulty accessing food and water may result in nutritional deficiencies.
- ✓ Attempt to keep food changes to a minimum, and document when they occur to track suspected dietary upsets.

Discussion

Providing proper nutrition is a basic requirement in the sheltering of animals, and staff should be trained to modify individual diets. The stress of a kennel environment, combined with condition and age at entry, can dramatically affect an animal's appetite and nutritional needs. Observations relating to appetite can provide important information that relates to general health and continued adjustment to the shelter environment. If necessary, nutritional protocols may need modification to allow for more/less food and special diets.

When housing multiple dogs in a run, consideration must be given to food aggression. Some dogs that show no other signs of aggression will display dominance when food is present. If not monitored closely, some dogs and puppies will overeat while others are denied. In addition, serious fights over food can occur and segregation will be necessary.

All shelter animals regardless of their length of stay should receive a good-quality balanced diet that is appropriate for their life stages, their health, age and physical condition. Because animals are in a stressful situation, they are more susceptible to digestive upsets from poor quality foods and changes in brands. Feeding one brand exclusively, especially a premium brand, cuts down greatly on the number of animals who experience gastrointestinal problems while at the shelter, as well as the amount of waste matter produced.

5.0 ADOPTIONS

5.1 SELECTION CRITERIA/BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENTS

Observations

The HSUS team was told by the adoption supervisor that the veterinarians decided which stray animals that completed their mandatory hold period were selected as potential candidates for adoption. These decisions were not based on any written criteria or formal behavioral assessment but rather from discernable personality traits and health status during rounds, and of course years of experience. Despite the team's inquiries, it remained unclear who made decisions about owner-surrendered animals. Transfer to the Adoption Center did not occur until the animal was given a physical examination and vaccinated.

The HSUS team observed and was told that many stray animals were held several days beyond the required three-day holding period awaiting an examination by the veterinary staff; others that were not medically or behaviorally sound for DAS's adoption program were being held until a rescue organization could be contacted. For example, a heartworm-positive Rottweiler remained in Lost and Found and although a rescue group had been contacted, there was no scheduled date for release. In the Family Group Kennel, one of the nursing mothers had whelped her puppies at the shelter and the puppies were approximately five weeks old at the time of HSUS's visit.

The team was told that implementation of a behavioral assessment program was unrealistic for the following reasons: the number of animals; insufficient staff, and time constraints. It was the opinion of The HSUS team that the liability faced by the organization by adopting an unsuitable pet into a home, the disappointment by the adopter if the animal had to be returned because it could not be integrated into the household or worse, keeping the animal in an ill-suited environment far outweighed the obstacles.

Recommendations

- ✓ Create a Work Instruction that better defines the adoption selection process. It should include who performs the evaluation, where it is performed, and what characteristics to look for in an adoptable animal. Although age, breed, and size may factor into some decisions, potential adopters have various preferences, and offering a diverse selection is key. For instance, many people may consider an older animal to be the most appropriate choice for their lifestyle.
- ✓ Develop a basic, check-list type form to record observations of an animal's temperament and behavior at the time of the intake examination. (See section 4.2, Incoming Animal Examinations/Vaccination Protocols) This form should become part of the animal's permanent paperwork.

- ✓ Encourage the animal keepers to provide information about an animal's behavior during feeding (for food possessiveness) and exercise (activity level, sociability with other animals, etc.) These observations should be a continuation of and recorded on the form created at intake.
- ✓ Provide the animal keepers with basic training in animal behavior so that they can assist in recommending whether an animal should be considered for adoption.¹⁸ Many self-paced courses are offered for free on-line.
- ✓ Pay close attention to the animals available for adoption. These animals should be evaluated every day to ensure that they remain healthy and well-adjusted to life in the shelter. If their behavior or health deteriorates, they should be removed from the adoption area. In addition, as new animals arrive, the ones that would be good candidates for adoption should be compared to the ones already available for adoption. When space is limited, the best candidates for adoption should be chosen to occupy the available space in the designated adoption areas.
- ✓ Conduct physical examinations on animals selected to be transferred to the Adoption Center within 24 hours. The goal of DAS should be to eliminate barriers which prevent the movement of animals through the shelter as quickly as possible.

Discussion

Behavioral programs are unique to each shelter's situation, staff time and expertise. The behavioral health of an animal is as important as physical health. The behavioral assessment of animals is also extremely crucial to the adoption process and its success. It assists with the determination of the type of home that will best meet the needs of the individual animal. Additionally, it provides potential adopters with information to assist them in determining the appropriateness of a particular animal for their lifestyle and if they can meet the needs of a particular animal. Additionally, behavior assessment also plays a key role in enhancing the safety of staff and the public, and greatly reduces adoption liability.

Evaluating animals for adoption, transfer, or euthanasia is a core responsibility of openadmission animal shelters. Consistently adhering to established criteria regarding which animals are made available for adoption and which are euthanized is crucial to helping staff cope with these difficult decisions.

www.humanesocietyuniversity.org/coursesandprograms/

5.2 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Observations

A comprehensive Work Instruction detailed the adoption process. In practice, when a prospective adopter requested to see the available animals, they were asked to sign in and show identification at the Adoption Center Lobby and then directed to the appropriate area. They were unescorted by staff and in many cases, there was no staff available to answer questions; throughout the site visit, The HSUS team members were approached for help. Visitors were not assisted by staff in selecting a pet suitable for their lifestyle. If a visitor wanted more information or to interact with a particular animal that appealed to them, they were told to return to the counter with the animal's number or location. An animal keeper was then paged to take the animal into the "Get Acquainted" Room.

If the prospective adopter wished to proceed, an Adoption Application (available in English and in Spanish), which asked the traditional questions, was completed and reviewed by staff assigned to the Adoption Center. Reasons for denial were detailed in the Work Instructions. After the adoption fee was paid, if the animal had already been sterilized, paperwork, which included a rabies certificate and tag, sterilization certificate, and a Dallas registration tag, was given to the new owner. If the animal had not previously been microchipped, it was implanted in the Lobby by Adoption Center staff and the associated paperwork for national registration was explained to the owner. The animal was then released to the owner. If the animal had not yet been sterilized, an appointment was made, usually within two to three days, with the in-house clinic for the surgery and the implantation of the microchip, and the new owner was told when the animal would be ready for release.

The owner was given an adoption packet which contained some reproductions from the "Pets for Life Behavior Series" about:

- introduction to a new home
- heartworms
- crate training and house training
- appropriate toys
- training

The packet also contained post-surgical care instructions, a certificate for a free physical examination by a participating veterinarian, and a red Veterinary Health Record card, which detailed the vaccinations, diagnostic tests, and any other medical treatment administered by the veterinary staff.

An HSUS team member observed the activities in the Adoption Center at 2:20 pm. The Lobby was very busy with only one staff member at the desk. He was helping a woman inquiring about a Basset Hound that she had called about that morning while four other people waited. After some research, it was determined that the dog had been

transferred to a rescue organization and the woman was given their contact information. The second patron had come in to fill out an Adoption Application for a grey cat that she had previously selected. While that paperwork was underway, the staff member was completing the paperwork for a mixed Collie/Shepherd puppy that was being adopted by a Spanish-speaking man. While the contents of the packet, the appointment for sterilization, and the veterinary services were explained, it was done very quickly to the visibly confused man. There was not an opportunity provided for questions, even if the adopter could formulate them and the physical setting was conducive, without other customers waiting and overhearing the conversation. A fourth customer had come to DAS to register his intact Chihuahua but left when he was told about the mandatory class and \$100.00 registration fee. No further dialogue occurred and an educational opportunity was missed.

Although the staff member was very polite, patient, and thorough in every encounter and demonstrated his skillfulness in multi-tasking, the clients of DAS would be better served by scheduling additional staff in the Lobby. Even when the adoption supervisor arrived to help until another staff member returned from lunch, she was unfamiliar with all the procedures and deferred some tasks to her subordinate.

Recommendations

- ✓ DAS is commended for the comprehensiveness of the Work Instruction, which details the adoption process.
- ✓ Page an animal keeper to accompany prospective adopters through the Adoption Center to answer questions and show animals, rather than requiring the visitor to return to the Lobby to ask for help.
- ✓ Develop and implement an interactive program to match individual animals with the characteristics that a potential adopter is seeking. For example, sporting breeds can be suggested to an active, athletic person while a first time dog owner can be directed towards the calmer, well-mannered dogs.
- ✓ Recruit interested animal keepers to act as adoption counselors. These employees should have excellent client service skills and have a genuine desire to place animals in qualified homes. The adoption supervisor and adoption counselors would be responsible for working with potential adopters from selection through the application process and paperwork.
- ✓ Designate at least one private area at the facility where potential adopters can meet with counselors. At DAS, this could be the conference room or the table to the right of the entrance.
- ✓ Consider holding group sessions, much like those required for Intact Animal Permits, to discuss the information contained in the adoption packet with the

new pet owner. A veterinary assistant could be invited to explain vaccinations, deworming, heartworm, feline leukemia, etc. and future medical requirements.

✓ A group dynamic can facilitate a dialogue among the new pet owners and encourage them to ask questions.

5.3 ADOPTION OUTCOMES

Observations

According to the adoption supervisor, DAS did not conduct any type of survey to determine the outcome of individual adoptions or the overall success of the program. The adoption fee could be refunded if the animal was ill (documented by either a DAS staff veterinarian or private veterinarian) or for certain other reasons.

Recommendations

- ✓ Devise a telephone survey, which should be conducted by an adoption counselor for all adopted animals. Phone calls are a friendly way to check on the well-being of the animal and identify any health and/or behavior concerns before they result in a return.
- ✓ Maintain a list of area dog trainers and behaviorists to give to adopters experiencing a behavioral issue with a newly adopted pet. This can provide an alternative to an owner's relinquishing of a pet due to behavioral issues.¹⁹

Discussion

Tracking the outcome of adoptions will help DAS determine if its selection process is sound or whether health and behavioral screening methods need improvement.

The relative success of a shelter's adoption program can be determined by the percentage of adopted animals returned to the shelter plus those animals that were relinquished by their adopters to other sources. High return rates of adopted animals and high rates of adopted animals abandoned/relinquished within the first year of adoption can indicate possible deficiencies in animal selection, screening of potential adopters, and inadequate post-adoption resources. Such statistics are not always tracked by shelters but can be very helpful in program evaluation.

¹⁹ Association of Pet Dog Trainers, <u>www.apdt.com</u>

5.4 ANIMAL PLACEMENT PARTNERS

Observations

According to the Work Instructions, any impounded animal may be eligible for placement with a rescue group after the mandatory 72-hour holding period; also included were animals that have been in the adoption program for at least 45 days but have not yet been adopted. Several additional conditions that allowed an animal to be placed with a rescue group were outlined in the Work Instruction.

DAS required the completion of the following paperwork before an animal could be released:

- Affidavit Release Agreement (release of liability form)
- Conditions for Release of Non-Adoptable Animal
- Rescue Program Confirmation Letter (sterilization compliance form), if the animal did not come from the Adoption Center

The HSUS team was provided with lists of various breed-specific rescue groups and animal welfare organizations, along with individuals, that assisted DAS with the placement of its animals. According to the rescue coordinator, an updated rescue group list was being developed since some of the contacts were outdated.

On a daily basis, the rescue coordinator was provided with a list, prepared by the adoption supervisor, of those animals eligible for transfer. It did not include the inventory of all the animals at DAS.

Although the Work Instruction referred to "approved" rescue groups, it did not contain a procedure for verifying their credentials. However, The HSUS team was told that if a rescue group was found to be illegitimate or was not providing proper care to the animals, DAS would no longer work with them.

Animals released from the Adoption Center were already vaccinated and sterilized; if they came from Lost and Found, it was the responsibility of the rescue group. Proof had to be submitted within 14 days unless a veterinarian assessed the animal as unhealthy. A group who failed to comply was issued a citation and removed as a rescue participant.

A staff member stated that occasionally, DAS participated in off-site adoption events. However, the staff person said the events were not productive and were hard to staff.

Recommendations

✓ Re-evaluate the 45-day imposed stay for animals in the Adoption Center before release to another organization is considered. Even in the best of circumstances, the amount of attention, affection, exercise and care provided to animals at DAS does not compensate for placement in a home.

- ✓ Expand upon the current program. Although the DAS program already has some of these components in place, consider the following:
 - Program design. Using examples from other shelters or national organizations as a starting point, design a workable program specific to DAS that includes:
 - Setting goals for the program. DAS should prioritize potential placement groups by evaluating data such as:
 - What number and types of animals most need assistance at the shelter?
 - Which animals tend to be euthanized for reasons of space or time?
 - Which ones deteriorate rapidly in the shelter environment or are difficult to house?
 - Do certain animals make up a large percentage of returns or failed adoptions?
 - Determining philosophical alignment guidelines. Identify which of the shelter's philosophies the placement partners must share. For example, mandatory sterilization is commonly a critical area of philosophical alignment between shelters and placement groups. Alternately, euthanasia of animals that bite is an important area about which there appears to be more philosophical variation. Limit alignment priorities to those philosophies that are considered the most important.
 - Developing a screening procedure. Having a standard screening protocol in place for all placement partners will help ensure fairness. The basic elements include:
 - An application
 - Required attachments (i.e., nonprofit registration status, standard forms used by the group, etc.)
 - References (veterinary, etc.)
 - An interview
 - A site visit
 - Developing a selection process. Selecting groups with which to partner involves reviewing their applications and attachments, calling references, and conducting interviews and site visits. A checklist may be helpful in summarizing the results. Placement partners should be identified as "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory," and a notification protocol should be established. For those not chosen as partners, the reasons for that choice should be clearly explained and a time period should be established to reapply.
 - Record keeping. All original application materials should be organized by

- placement partner and maintained in a centralized location at the shelter for a designated period. Because most placement partners are comprised of several individuals, make sure DAS knows each group's main contact person.
- Developing written guidelines/policies and eligibility requirements for working with placement partners. These guidelines may be determined by answering the following questions:
 - Is DAS willing to transfer animals to any group or individual?
 - Do placement partners need to be nonprofits, or can they be for profit dealers, pet store owners, breeders, etc.?
 - How does the placement program guard against contributing to a hoarder's collection?
 - What is the mission statement/overall goal of the placement partner, and does it match the goals set forth by DAS?
- Program approval. Once the committee redesigns the program, it should go to shelter management for approval and be modified if necessary.
- ✓ Continue to work with rescue groups and animal welfare organizations in an ongoing effort to place as many animals in qualified homes as possible. However, in doing so, DAS should not compromise the welfare of the animals in its care and release them without considering the qualifications of the groups or organizations.
- ✓ Develop and document animal housing and care standards for adoption partners to ensure that adequate animal care is provided. DAS should inspect every placement facility prior to the transfer of animals. If a group has numerous locations, each one should be inspected. Inspections should be done initially and then once a year, to ensure compliance.
- ✓ Consider contacting breed-specific groups while a purebred animal is still in the mandatory holding period if the animal will not be a candidate for DAS's adoption program. This decision can be based on the intake examination and notes on behavior. This would give the adoption partner time to schedule the animal's pickup without extending the animal's time in the stressful shelter environment.

Discussion

In many communities, animal shelters have forged formal working relationships with adoption partners. In these relationships, animals of a particular breed, type, or special need are transferred from a shelter to a rescue group. In order for these relationships to work, there must be clearly stated expectations and a formal written agreement between all parties. Prior to releasing an animal to an adoption partner, a shelter must be sure that the transfer is in the best interest of the animal and the community.

It is always preferable for the various groups involved in animal care, sheltering, and control efforts within a community to work well together. However, differences of opinion, philosophy, mission, and emotion often stand in the way of complete harmony. DAS should be commended for assigning a staff member to act as a liaison between the shelter and outside groups and adoption organizations.

5.5 FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT

Observations

The HSUS team was told by the adoption supervisor that DAS did not have an official foster care program but some staff had taken orphaned or poorly socialized animals home.

Recommendations

- ✓ Discontinue the practice of permitting staff to remove animals from the shelter. If an animal cannot receive appropriate care at DAS, it should be sent to an animal transfer partner or humanely euthanized.
- ✓ Do not create a foster care program until DAS has the infrastructure to implement one. The following questions should be answered:
 - Do you have the time, staff, and resources needed to maintain a foster program?
 - Can your organization afford the general operational costs?
 - Can your organization provide food, litter pans, and other supplies that are necessary to provide care in a foster home?
 - > Is there a revenue source that can provide for the care of fostered animals?
 - Will there be a place for the animal at DAS when it is ready to be released from the foster home?

Discussion

Fostering is the placement of special needs animals into temporary homes until they are suitable for adoption. A foster care program can increase responsible adoptions, decrease the numbers of animals euthanized, and boost employee morale. Or, conversely, a foster program can drain a shelter's limited resources, cause the organization to lose sight of its mission, and even jeopardize the lives of shelter animals. In order to maintain control, management must set realistic goals, develop strong policies and procedures, and adhere to them. All foster programs must have criteria for carefully choosing foster animals and caregivers. Remember that fostering is not a solution to pet overpopulation or irresponsible pet ownership.

It is extremely important to understand that a foster care program cannot save all the animals, replace a crowded facility, or mend holes in organizational policies. However, when a foster care program is managed correctly, it can greatly assist an organization, the animals in its care, and even the community. It can give certain animals an improved chance of adoption, provide a caring home environment for animals, and boost the morale of staff and volunteers who confront the tragedies of pet overpopulation every day.

However, no organized foster program should be based on emotional impulses. Everyone involved must agree on both the concept as well as the practice. These are difficult concepts, but ones that must be addressed in order to develop realistic expectations for how the program will function successfully. An effective program is more than just getting an animal out of the shelter. To operate a constructive and positive foster care program, time and resources need to be devoted to the program, and DAS must be prepared to provide the oversight necessary to keep the program running effectively should one be implemented in the future.

6.0 EUTHANASIA

6.1 SELECTION CRITERIA

Because selection for euthanasia or adoption is interrelated, please also refer to Section 5.1, SELECTION CRITERIA/BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENTS.

Observations

A comprehensive Work Instruction had been developed for the euthanasia process. It did not specifically address the selection process but provided the following guidelines: "The Dallas City Code, Chapter 7 Animals, Section 7-2.8 and the Texas State Health and Safety Code, Section 821.052, Subchapter C specify that if an animal is not redeemed within the appropriate time period specified in Section 7-2.6, the animal will become the property of the City and may be placed for adoption, euthanized, or otherwise disposed of as recommended by the Director."

A Crystal Chameleon Report[©] of the euthanasias performed by senior ASOs from March 1, 2010 through April 30, 2010 was provided to The HSUS team. It was categorized by Cats; Dogs; Wildlife; Exotics (small mammals); and Livestock, and contained the reason for euthanasia, the animal's Chameleon[©] "A" number, kennel number, breed, age, sex, initials of the euthanasia technician, and dosage of Fatal Plus[®]. Most of the ages were listed as "0" years.

For the most part, the justification for euthanasia was time/space; medical; behavioral observations, or too young. It appeared that the selection for euthanasia occurred when the veterinarians were conducting morning rounds.

Recommendations

- ✓ Include euthanasia/adoption selection criteria in the Work Instruction. Formulate guidelines, which are compatible with the mission of the organization and take the following variables into consideration:
 - The number and type of animals received
 - The regional location of the agency
 - The capacity of the facility
 - Staffing level
 - The services that are provided
 - The availability of a responsibly-operated foster program
 - ➤ The animals' best interest
 - Available resources

✓ Consider establishing categories similar to the following when developing protocols to determine an animal's adoption potential:

CATEGORY	STATUS	EUTHANASIA
Adoption Potential	Animals that, given the space, time, staff, money, or availability of an appropriate home, could live well in a new home.	is most often due to a lack of resources and/or appropriate homes.
Medical, Treatable	Animals in good physical condition with treatable, noncontagious medical conditions such as skin problems, bad flea or mite infestations, broken limbs, abscesses, or problems that could be fixed with treatment and/or time.	is most often a result of a lack of the resources, space, or time to treat the animals.
Medical, Contagious	Animals in good physical condition with medical conditions such as upper respiratory infections, kennel cough, ringworm, or less severe cases of mange that may be very treatable but are highly contagious in a shelter environment.	is often not only because of the symptoms of the illness but also to prevent the contamination of others.
Physical Condition	Animals in poor general overall condition and/or health (for example, old, emaciated, weak).	is often the result as these animals can be poor candidates for adoption placement due to the extensive medical rehabilitation necessary.
Unweaned, Too Young	Animals that are too young to survive on their own or in a shelter setting and need extensive care and socialization.	is often due to the labor- intensive nature of care and the lack of foster homes.
Breed	Animals of breeds that are banned or at an increased risk in a community (such as areas where dogfighting occurs).	may be performed if no other options are available.
Behavior Problems	Animals with behavior problems such as chewing, inappropriate urination, separation anxiety, timidity, destructiveness, or lack of socialization.	is generally due to a lack of an appropriate placement that will provide a commitment to adequate training, socialization, and the proper environment.
Kennel-Stress	Animals with a marked change in behavior due to stress as a result of an extended stay in the shelter.	is generally performed for humane reasons, to prevent further suffering.
Space	Animals who would continue to make good adoption candidates but whose cage space is needed for others.	is generally necessary when space in the shelter is limited and room must be made for other animals needing housing and care.
Inappropriate for Adoption	Certain species of animals.	is appropriate even if the resources (space, time, money, staff, and isolation) and a potential home is available.
Medical, Untreatable	Animals with terminal illnesses or injuries, severe chronic illnesses, or other serious medical conditions.	is appropriate to eliminate the ongoing suffering of the animal.

Temperament Issues	Animals that are extremely shy, timid, high-strung, stressed, or distressed.	is generally necessary due to an unlikely chance for successful adjustment into a new home.
Aggressiveness	Animals that show signs of aggression, have attacked another animal or person, or have a history of aggression.	is generally appropriate for humane, safety, ethical, and liability reasons.
Feral or Unsocialized	Animals that have not and cannot be handled and do not adjust to the shelter setting.	is generally appropriate for animals with no hope of socialization.
Court Order	Animals that have been ordered to be euthanized by a judge, a hearing officer, or another public official with that authority.	is performed to comply with this ruling.

- ✓ Use the variables of age, health, temperament, physical condition, behavior²⁰, and available space to guide adoption and euthanasia decisions but also address the more thought-provoking questions of:
 - What are the prospects for providing this animal with a quality life? Is it destined to spend day after day in the shelter?
 - Is the animal in physical pain or mental distress and is there hope of alleviating it within a reasonable amount of time in order to allow for quality of life? 21
 - > Does this animal, in its present condition, present health or safety risks to other animals or people?
 - ➤ Given the fiscal and practical limitations faced by DAS, does maintaining this animal reduce the organization's ability to humanely care for other animals?

Discussion

A shelter's responsibility is to provide a temporary safe haven for homeless and lost animals. The concept of "average length of stay" is one measure of the extent to which a facility is truly a transitional shelter for animals rather than a long-term sanctuary.

The goal of every organization should be to move the animals through the shelter and place them in a permanent setting as soon as possible. The HSUS does not believe it is a kindness to animals to keep them in a shelter environment indefinitely where they may be stressed, depressed, and possibly exposed to disease, with little hope for adoption.

A notion persists that any shelter, if committed enough or large enough, can easily place all the animals it receives. This perception belies the complexity of companion animal

Cat Evaluation Matrix, Kate Hurley, DVM CR

Bernard E. Rollins, "Euthanasia and Quality of Life," JAVMA, Vol 228, No 7, April 1, 2006 CR

overpopulation. Communicating honestly about the reality of euthanasia does not imply complacency, nor that one condones it as "the solution." Animals are individuals, and each should be evaluated against established criteria to determine their ultimate disposition. Consistently adhering to an established policy regarding which animals are made available for adoption and which are euthanized is crucial to helping staff cope with these difficult decisions.

6.2 EUTHANASIA PAPERWORK

The senior ASOs assigned to perform euthanasia while The HSUS team was on-site followed the paperwork procedures outlined in the Work Instruction meticulously. The steps observed in every case were as follows:

- verified that the animal was eligible for euthanasia, i.e., approved by the veterinary staff, completed the mandatory hold period, and checked for identification tags or microchip
- verified that the animal matched the description on the Impoundment Record and the Chameleon[©] cage card.
- verified that the number on the shelter metal tag matched the Impoundment Record and the "A" number in Chameleon[©]
- entered the amount of the drugs used in the Drug Usage Report and Tranquilizer Log books located in the safe
- entered the animal's details in the Euthanasia Log
- updated the animal's record in Chameleon[©]
- recorded the amount of drugs used on the back of the Impoundment Record and filed the Impoundment Records by the "A" number located at the Lost and Found desk

Although the Work Instruction was comprehensive, as previously explained, DAS had deficiencies in initial animal identification (See section 3.5, ANIMAL INTAKE PROCEDURES AND IDENTIFICATION), which could compromise the best efforts of the senior ASOs to confirm that the right animal was before them.

The log books and daily supply of the controlled drugs were kept in a bolted floor safe with a keypad-type lock in the Lab (Euthanasia Room). Only the senior ASOs and Manager IIs had access. The rest of the inventory was kept in another locked location.

The mixture of Rompun[®] and Ketaset[®], used as the anesthetic agent prior to a intracardiac injection, was prepared by the staff veterinarians. It was mistakenly called a "Tranquilizer" in the Work Instruction.

Recommendations

- ✓ DAS is to be commended for maintaining an accurate accounting of controlled substances and for carefully confirming the identity of each animal to be euthanized.
- ✓ Follow the recommendations previously made for animal identification.
- ✓ Ensure that the daily entries in the Euthanasia Log includes the following:
 - > The animal's identification number
 - Animal description (species and breed)
 - ➤ The estimated or actual weight of the animal (It is acceptable for an experienced euthanasia technician to estimate weight as long as death has been properly verified.)
 - Signature, not initials, of the person administering the drugs
 - Reason for euthanasia
 - Number of cc's used
 - Remaining balance of the drug

Eliminate "age" as a description in the Euthanasia Report and replace it with "weight", which is important for reconciliation of the drugs that are used.

- ✓ Correct the word "Tranquilizer" in the Work Instruction to "Anesthetic Agent". It is imperative to understand the differences between these words and to know which pre-euthanasia drugs create what effects:
 - Sedation refers to the state resulting from the administration of a drug which calms an animal, causing some drowsiness or sleepiness but does not affect its ability to feel pain. The most common sedative used for pre-euthanasia in combination with other drugs is xylazine, often referred to by the brand name, Rompun® (although there are other xylazine products available). Xylazine alone does not anesthetize animals and therefore should not be used alone prior to an IC injection.
 - Tranquilization refers to the state resulting from the administration of a drug which depresses the sensation an animal feels but does not render unconsciousness; tranquilization does not generally cause drowsiness or sleepiness, although it may allow an animal to relax. An example of a commonly used tranquilizer in the shelter environment is acepromazine.
 - Anesthesia refers to the state resulting from the administration of a drug that produces a loss of sensation or feeling. Examples of anesthetic agents are: tiletamine-zolezepam (Telazol®) or a mixture of ketamine-xylazine. Both of these combinations offer anesthesia and allow for an IC injection when properly administered.

All three of these levels can be appropriate for use prior to euthanasia, depending on the circumstances. However, the level of sedation, tranquilization, or anesthesia provided by any drug or drug combination is dependent on many factors, including body weight, animal health condition, dose used, route by which the euthanasia drug is administered, and other factors.

Discussion

Implementing and maintaining a verification system for euthanasia is essential for any animal shelter in order to prevent errors that may result in the wrong animal being euthanized. An irreversible mistake, such as euthanizing an owned or stray animal before the hold time has expired, can result in tragedy for the pet, heartbreak for the owner, and damage to a shelter's reputation. The burden of guilt caused by this type of mistake will also greatly increase the stress level for staff performing euthanasia.

The accurate record-keeping of controlled drugs is a serious legal issue for animal care and control organizations. Sodium pentobarbital (Fatal Plus®) is a schedule II barbiturate which means it is a federally controlled substance. It can only be purchased using a DEA registration and order form, and is subject to and controlled by federal and state security and record-keeping requirements. It is imperative that every animal shelter ensure the safe management and accurate records of controlled drugs.

6.3 EUTHANASIA METHODS

Observations

The HSUS team observed euthanasia performed by different senior ASOs at different times of the day, using different routes of administration. All demonstrated compassion, skill, and confidence in performing this burdensome task.

Either an animal keeper or an ASO brought the animal into the euthanasia room (Lab) and assisted with restraint. Depending on the temperament and behavior of the animal, the senior ASO decided which method would be most appropriate:

- A small, brown mixed breed dog was securely and properly held by the assistant. The senior ASO applied a tourniquet to the right front leg and performed an intravenous injection of Fatal Plus®.
- Two small puppies were euthanized by intraperitoneal (IP) injections
- Several friendly cats were euthanized by intraperitoneal (IP) injections with only manual restraint
- Eight cats, surrendered as feral in a wire cage, were given the Ketaset® and Rompun® mixture by syringe pole. After lapsing into

unconsciousness, the cats were individually removed and an intracardiac (IC) injection was administered.

On the Euthanasia Report, most of the doses of Fatal Plus® listed for cats was 2.00 cc's; however, presuming that the majority of cats were able to be handled, of average weight, and an IP injection was the route of administration, a dosage of 3 cc's should have been given.

The senior ASOs followed the procedure of verifying death outlined in the Work Instruction. Animals were bagged, placed in a container, and moved into the cold room.

Overall, The HSUS team was impressed by staff's approach to euthanasia and the level of competence displayed during the site visit.

Recommendations

- ✓ Research and post the appropriate doses of the anesthetic agent and Fatal Plus® based on the route of administration and the animal's weight.²²
- ✓ Place animals that have received an IP injection in an environment that lacks external stimulus, such as light, sound, and touch. A quiet, dark place, preferably a small carrier covered with a towel, is appropriate.

Discussion

One of the most critical responsibilities for those in the animal care and sheltering field—and the function that is often most demonstrative of an organization's level of compassion and concern—is an agency's commitment and ability to provide the most humane death possible when euthanasia is necessary.

The word euthanasia is of Greek origin and means "good death." In order to provide a humane death, the euthanasia process must result in painless, rapid unconsciousness followed by cardiac and/or respiratory arrest and ultimately death. For euthanasia to be truly euthanasia, the animal should be as free from stress and anxiety as possible. The use of sodium pentobarbital and proper administration of sodium pentobarbital by injection does not in and of itself ensure a humane death. The manner and route by which the drug is given and the circumstances surrounding administration will have a great impact on the humaneness of the procedure. Simply requiring euthanasia by injection is no guarantee that the manner in which the drug is given is humane or compassionate. It is a binding obligation of shelter administrators to evaluate current euthanasia procedures frequently, ensure that animals are being properly handled, and verify that employees are competent, compassionate, and properly trained.

²² The HSUS Euthanasia Training Manual, 2002, Rebecca H. Rhoades, DVM+

It is also imperative that the death of each animal be absolutely verified prior to disposal. All eye reflexes are absent by the early part of stage IV of anesthesia, and even a strong beating heart can be relatively difficult to palpate in some animals. Therefore, cardiac standstill (placing a needle into the heart and assuring the cessation of movement) and, preferably, rigor mortis (rigidity) are the only two sure methods of verifying death.

6.4 EUTHANASIA ROOM/ENVIRONMENT

Observations

The euthanasia room at DAS was called the "Lab". It was institutionally stark with tile walls, non-skid flooring, and equipped with a stainless steel examination table. The room could be accessed from the hallway or from the off-loading bays. The doors were slightly propped open while euthanasia was taking place.

Recommendations

- ✓ Display an external sign at the entrance to the area where euthanasia is taking place so that the process will not be interrupted. The sign can be simple and laminated—green on one side that reads "enter slowly" and red on the other side that reads "do not enter".
- ✓ Stock the room with appropriate restraint equipment, including muzzles, cat bags, nets, cat grabbers, squeeze/transfer cages, and control poles.
- ✓ Brighten the room with paint and wall decorations. Allow staff members who perform euthanasia to make the decorating decisions.

Discussion

It is important to give animals about to be euthanized a calm and quiet area in order to reduce their stress as well as provide staff with a safe working area. The euthanasia room should be the quietest, most respected, least interrupted, and most relaxed room in an animal shelter. Cats and dogs immediately react to the ambience of a room and the people in it. While animals do not "know" they are about to be euthanized, they do recognize that they are in an unfamiliar environment, and efforts should be made to reduce their stress prior to euthanasia. Animals will generally relax and feel more trusting if the environment is pleasant and they are comforted and reassured. Staff's demeanor can contribute to allaying or intensifying animals' fears. Calm, gentle, and slow movements are preferred and do much to relax the animals and reduce stress. For the benefit of both the animals and the staff, a euthanasia room should be made to look and feel warm, comfortable, clean, and peaceful.

6.5 EUTHANASIA TECHNICIANS

Observations

According to the representative schedule provided in advance of the site visit, senior ASOs were assigned to perform euthanasia on a rotating day shift; one senior ASO had requested that he be scheduled for the afternoon shift on a permanent basis.

The State of Texas required that euthanasia technicians were initially certified and recertified every three years. The senior ASOs who were interviewed by The HSUS team appeared to be knowledgeable, skilled, and had a positive and professional attitude.

Technicians were not offered compassion stress or compassion fatigue counseling, but they had not asked for it.

Recommendations

- ✓ Set standards of performance that are expected of all staff who perform euthanasia.
- ✓ Explore continuing education opportunities to refresh and strengthen skills for euthanasia technicians. Enlist the assistance of the staff veterinarian to train and review the techniques of the staff performing euthanasia. Provide some type of formal assessment of each person's ability to carry out this task. The review should not only include an assessment of technical skills, but it should also serve to ensure the humane components of the process.
- ✓ Require all managers and supervisors to attend euthanasia training so that they can teach new staff the proper techniques for dosing sodium pentobarbital, routes of administration, pre-euthanasia anesthesia, anatomy, pharmacology of the drugs used, and accurate determination of death by establishing cardiac standstill prior to disposal.
- ✓ Offer employee assistance and/or counseling to combat the emotional aspects of working in the animal control industry. Compassion stress is a common phenomenon among animal welfare professionals who have the often thankless job of dealing with the pet overpopulation problem and can manifest in many ways including depression, substance abuse, and time lost from work.

Discussion

The performance of skilled, humane euthanasia is a critical component of an openadmission animal shelter. It is a binding obligation of shelter administrators to evaluate euthanasia practices and procedures frequently, ensure that animals are being properly

²³ Compassion Fatigue in the Animal-Care Community, Charles Figley, Ph.D., and Robert Roop, Ph.D.+

handled, and verify that employees are competent, compassionate, and properly trained.

Euthanasia should be entrusted to the most conscientious and qualified personnel only, never to a person who is careless, indifferent to animal suffering, or untrained in animal behavior and euthanasia techniques. Euthanasia technicians must be able to cope emotionally with euthanizing numbers of animals while maintaining a concern for the well-being of each individual animal.

The 2007 American Veterinary Medical Association's Panel on Euthanasia states that any technique used should "minimize distress and anxiety experienced by the animal prior to loss of consciousness."²⁴ Staff members that demonstrate a high level of technical proficiency, are knowledgeable about animal behavior and handling, demonstrate respect, compassion, and sensitivity for animals, and are committed to providing a dignified death can minimize the stress and anxiety the animals' experience.

An understanding of the emotional investment each staff member has in the process is equally important. Team work, support, patience, attitude, and an understanding of one's convictions and personal commitments to their job are all involved in giving an animal a dignified death.

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²⁴ AVMA Guidelines on Euthanasia, June 2007 CR

7.0 COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS

7.1 DEFINITION AND RECOGNITION OF AGENCY'S ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY

Observations

The City of Dallas conducts an annual Community Survey for residents to identify the public safety services that they think should be top priorities and to rate their satisfaction with a variety of provided services. In 2009, Animal Control was rated the third highest priority, with 19.7%, behind Crime Prevention at 59.7%, and Police Response Time at 44.0%. It was notable that Animal Control was ranked higher than Traffic Enforcement, Fire Department Response Time, Fire Prevention and Education, and Municipal Courts.

The survey included questions about Animal Services in the Public Safety Services section of the survey. The 2009 findings were as follows:

- 5.0 % of those surveyed rated performance as Excellent.
- 24.1% rated performance as Good.
- 27.0% rated performance as Fair.
- 23.7% rated performance as Poor.
- 20.3% Answered Don't Know.

In a second survey question, which excluded those who had answered Don't Know, citizens rated the performance of Animal Services as 6.3% Excellent, 30.2% Good, 33.9% Fair, and 29.7% Poor. At 36%, the report concluded that Animal Control had the lowest performance rating of all of the City's public safety services.

In 2009, DAS initiated a Customer Survey at the shelter with the stated purpose of gaining feedback from visitors. The HSUS team reviewed the results for the initial fivementh period, between October 1, 2009, and February 28, 2010. The survey results showed the following:

- 365 customers completed the survey.
- Respondents had used adoption or lost and found services, or had come to the shelter for a tour.
- 92.5% of those surveyed rated the Cleanliness of the Shelter and the Condition of the Animals as Good or Excellent.
- 97.5% rated Services Received as Good or Excellent.
- 94 of the respondents said they were interested in volunteering.

 When asked how they had learned about the shelter, the largest percentage responded that it had been through a friend or on the Internet.

Recommendations

- ✓ Continue to use the Customer Survey at the shelter. Explore ways to systematically and proactively survey all customers who visit the shelter. Expand the program to include Field Services. Publish the results on an annual basis.
- ✓ Add "customer satisfaction" as a performance measure in employee evaluations.
- ✓ Create specific, measurable goals for improving customer service, and implement methods for achieving them.

Discussion

Dallas's Community Survey is an excellent tool for gauging how well citizens understand the role of Animal Services in their community, as well as their level of satisfaction with such services.

7.2 PROMOTION/SOCIAL MARKETING/SPECIAL EVENTS

Observations

DAS did not have a procedure or a strategy for media inquiries. The City's public information officer (PIO) was the official spokesperson for DAS but the division manager told The HSUS team that he frequently served as the representative for the shelter on animal-related issues. The DAS division manager produced press releases in conjunction with the PIO and also wrote a monthly pet column for the City's website.

DAS had a comprehensive, informative, well organized, and easy to navigate website. The site featured:

- online search of adoptable pets, which linked to Petfinder's website, although only a few animal photos had been posted
- online complaint reporting, which linked to the Web intake feature of the City's 311 system
- the Pet of the Week, which linked to a video on YouTube
- DAS's mission; a list of services; tips for pet owners; information about volunteering, pet registration, the Trap-Neuter-Return program, and homeless, wild, and untamed City cats; Frequently Asked Questions; and an events calendar.
- City code information for spay and neuter, pet permits, tethering and confinement, dangerous dogs, and the new Intact Animal Permit.

The site was managed and maintained by staff of DCCS.

Recommendations

- ✓ Establish a Work Instruction for media inquiries. Generally, the division manager or a designate speaks for the organization. Employees should be coached not to say, "No comment," but rather, "I am not the spokesperson for the agency. I will put you in contact with the right person." Whenever a request for an interview is made, authorized staff should alert the director.
- ✓ Develop training for staff so that they are better able to answer questions from the public about the mission, vision, and services of DAS.
- ✓ Meet with various local media representatives to discuss the issues, role, goals, and changes being implemented at the agency. Map out a communication plan for the year, focusing on building support for events, and generally raising support for DAS, its programs, and animal welfare messages.
- ✓ Encourage relationships with the media by regularly releasing positive news stories. This may lessen the impact when negative stories occur. Develop a template for DAS media releases.
- ✓ Develop and implement additional services on the DAS website to include online pet registration, volunteer applications, and donations. Work with the City's IT department to accommodate bank card payment capability.
- ✓ Utilize social media to engage the public.
- ✓ Include a photo for all of the adoptable animals listed on the DAS website.
- ✓ Explore ways to post timely stories and content, as well as event listings, videos, and links to educational content and other relevant sites.

Discussion

Social marketing is the use of marketing principles and techniques to influence a target audience to voluntarily accept, reject, modify, or abandon a behavior for the benefit of individuals, groups, or society as a whole.

Education and promotion include public relations (publicity, media relations, and community relations), direct marketing (website, direct mail), and personal outreach (presentations, one-on-one). Promotion is part of marketing, but marketing includes much more. Social marketing encompasses the analysis, planning, testing, execution, and evaluation of integrated programs designed to influence people to trade their old ideas, beliefs, and behaviors for new ones. Social marketing complements, but does not replace, legislative or legal efforts.

Answering the following five questions will give DAS a great start toward incorporating social marketing in its advocacy.

- 1. What behavior am I trying to achieve? What are competing behaviors?
- 2. Who are my clients? Do I believe there are different segments of my audience? Whom should I target?
- 3. What do I believe to be their perception of the benefits and barriers?
- 4. How can I listen to my clients to confirm or invalidate my assumptions?
- 5. How can I use the four P's (product, price, place, and promotion) to influence the perceived benefits and barriers of the desired behavior versus undesirable ones? ²⁵

7.3 HUMANE EDUCATION AND OTHER PROGRAMS

Observations

DAS had a formal community education program staffed with a full-time community outreach coordinator, the only budgeted item for the program.

DAS had a structured, in-school program with a curriculum that met the requirements of the Texas Academic Skills Program. DAS developed and used approved lesson plans as part of its in-school education program. The lesson plans covered a wide range of topics that integrated responsible pet ownership—picking up pet poop—with a public health and environmental message. The HSUS team reviewed educational materials on the following animal-related subjects:

- Just One Litter—a spay and neuter message
- Overpopulation and the Environment
- What a Pet Needs, which included a crossword puzzle for students
- Pet Ownership 101, in English and in Spanish
- The Connection Between Living Things
- Careers in Animal Services
- Green Initiatives at DAS
- Bite Prevention.

"The Connection Between Living Things" served as a good example of the quality of the curriculum materials. The lesson plan included specific goals and objectives, including age-specific materials, with games and puzzles for younger students and specific activities tailored for more advanced students.

www.Strategic-Idealist.com

DAS had brochures on TNR, Spay/Neuter, Pet Sterilization, Poop Scoop Law, Animals for Auctions, Living With Urban Coyotes, Being a Good Renter With Pets, Bite Prevention, Intact Animal Permits, and Overpopulation. Many of the materials were in English and Spanish.

The recently enacted City Code on Intact Animal Permits required all owners of fertile pets to attend a class on Responsible Pet Ownership (RPO) and pass an exam in order to obtain a permit. The RPO class covered the ordinance, the benefits of spay and neuter, bite prevention and rabies, pet owner responsibilities, and animal cruelty laws, using a well-developed PowerPoint presentation. The program was delivered primarily by DAS's community outreach coordinator, as well as other key staff.

DAS's outreach programs also consisted of traditional animal information booths at community events, regularly attending neighborhood association and neighborhood crime watch meetings, and conducting school tours at the shelter. Since there was no budget for the program, The HSUS team was told that DAS attended community events only when the vendor fees were free or waived.

DAS held low-cost vaccination and registration clinics in the community. Flyers advertised the clinics scheduled for March, April, and June 2010, which were held at different City recreation centers.

The community outreach coordinator maintained a log of all educational activities, outreach events, school presentations, code-required RPO classes, trainings, and shelter tours. The log listed the date of the event/activity, the number of people attending, and the name of the presenter. The log from April 2009 to April 2010 listed approximately 250 community events, presentations, and trainings. The log also served as a listing of all internal training activities for DAS employees.

Recommendations

- ✓ Establish a budget for the community outreach program for necessary materials and supplies, printing, and vendor fees for attending events.
- ✓ Post all of the educational materials used in the program online.
- ✓ Create an online RPO test to eliminate the staff time required for the one-hour presentation. Alternatively, a kiosk with a computer could be placed in the Lobby, where the public could view the program and take the test.

Discussion

The City of Dallas and DAS are to be commended for their investment in community education. DAS had a comprehensive education program that reached students, neighborhood groups, business partners, and pet owners. The recommendations in this section can only expand an already excellent program.

7.4 COLLABORATION WITH AREA ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS

Observations

Like most major metropolitan areas, Dallas had a large network of government and nonprofit animal welfare organizations. The primary government agencies in the immediate area, in addition to DAS, were Dallas County Animal Services, which operated a program in the unincorporated areas of the county, and Fort Worth Animal Care and Control, which served the nearby city of Fort Worth. The most notable nonprofit organization in the City of Dallas was the SPCA of Texas, which operated three facilities within the city: the Lone Star Campus, the Dealey Animal Care Center, and the Martin Spay/Neuter and Animal Welfare Clinic. The SPCA of Texas also operated the Perry Animal Care Center and Spay/Neuter and Wellness Clinic in the nearby City of McKinney.

A coalition of nonprofit animal welfare organizations in the Dallas metro area, Metroplex Animal Coalition (MAC), was an alliance of more than 50 nonprofit animal welfare and rescue organizations in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. The mission of MAC was to "work together in a spirit of cooperation to save as many dog and cat lives as possible." Its stated purpose was to "strive to reduce the killing of dogs and cats in municipal animal shelters and humane societies through a free spay/neuter program that provides surgeries, free of cost, to low-income pet owners." The HSUS team noted that the public shelters in the Dallas-Fort Worth metro area were not listed as members of MAC.

According to the July/August 2008 issue of *Animal People*, 82,000 dogs and cats were euthanized in the Dallas-Fort Worth area in 2005. This represents a euthanasia rate of 14.2 per 1,000 residents; the City of Dallas had a euthanasia rate of 15.8 per 1,000. The national average is 13.8 per 1,000 population. The following is a list of some of the major cities in Texas and their euthanasia rates:

	Dog & Cat	Euthanasia
Jurisdiction	Euthanasia	per 1,000
City of Dallas (2009)	26,505	15.6
Dallas-Fort Worth	82,000	14.2
Austin/Travis County	14,000	15.2
Houston	71,395	18.4
San Antonio	30,000	23.1
Fort Worth	15,000	24.9
National Average		13.8
Source: <i>Animal People</i> , 2008		

DAS did not have a nonprofit "friends" organization. It had a formal Animal Shelter Commission. (See section 9.3, ANIMAL SHELTER COMMISSION.)

DAS management reported a good relationship with the SPCA of Texas. In the last year, DAS and the SPCA of Texas had begun a partnership to transfer some of DAS's shelter animals to the SPCA. In addition, DAS and the SPCA of Texas had jointly applied for a data grant from Maddie's Fund²⁶ to develop and post shelter statistical information on the Web, using the Asilomar Accords reporting method.

DAS management also reported a good working relationship with the Dallas Police Department and the District Attorney's Office. The three agencies had coordinated dog fighting cases, cockfighting cases, and cruelty investigations. This partnership had recently expanded to include the SPCA of Texas. During The HSUS team's visit, DAS and the Dallas Police Department had seized roosters as part of a cockfighting case. DAS, the Dallas Police Department and the SPCA of Texas have held joint cruelty investigation trainings at DAS with the Law Enforcement Training Institute of Missouri.

Recommendations

- ✓ Propose that the Metroplex Animal Coalition include the municipal animal services agencies in the Dallas metro area. Work with MAC to create a more inclusive mission, establish community-wide goals and adopt the reporting method of Asilomar Accords for all of the shelter organizations within MAC.
- ✓ Track and report the euthanasia rate per 1,000 human population. This is the community's performance gauge on reducing euthanasia. Emphasize that the burden of responsibility for pet overpopulation must be shared by all members of the community. For example, rather than stating that "Dallas Animal Services handled XX stray and homeless animals in 2010", management should instead accentuate the public's role in shelter numbers through language such as "The City Of Dallas generated XX stray and homeless animals in 2010", or "XX% of the animals generated by the City of Dallas were euthanized."

Discussion

When communities bring together all of the animal welfare and animal services organizations around a shared community vision, the community experiences the most success. Following are some examples of communities in which public and private organizations work together:

- Metro Denver Shelter Alliance ²⁹
- Mayor's Alliance for NYC's Animals Inc.³⁰

www.maddiesfund.org

²⁷ Animal Sheltering Trends in the U.S.," by Andrew N. Rowan, Ph.D., The HSUS, March 11, 2009 CR

²⁸ Coalition Building for Animal Care Organizations, Katherine McGowen, Humane Society Press, 2009+

www.mdsalliance.org

www.animalalliancenyc.org/new/index.php

Animal Shelter Alliance of Portland ³¹

Successful coalitions help organizations share a common mission, set community-wide goals, and can prevent divisiveness over philosophies, therefore improving the effectiveness of each member.

7.5 FERAL CATS

Observations

Although DAS did not have a written plan for feral cats entering the shelter, there was a Work Instruction for Trap, Neuter, and Return (TNR). The Dallas City Code, Chapter 7, Section 7-3.1, had specific language that permitted TNR, defined feral cat caretakers, and established a colony manager program. The DCCS director approved TNR programs. There was an exemption to the cat registration requirement and the Intact Animal Permit program for cats that were part of an approved colony.

DAS worked with two organizations on feral cat issues: Kittico Cat Rescue and Feral Friends Community Cat Alliance. Caretakers were required to apply to Kittico or Feral Friends to become a colony manager. In this partnership program, Kittico and Feral Friends were authorized to issue colony manager registration certificates, with DAS giving the final approval. DAS partnered with Kittico and Feral Friends to educate neighborhood associations about feral cats and the colony manager program. DAS distributed a brochure about the spay/neuter services available for feral cats as well as posting information on its website.

DAS did not rent or lend cat traps to the public; the field services Cat Trapping Team responded to reported cat problems in neighborhoods.

Recommendations

✓ Continue to work with Kittico Cat Rescue and Feral Friends Community Cat Alliance to expand the new feral colony manager registration program.

Discussion

The Dallas City Code provided the legal foundation for establishing a progressive, community approach to feral cats. DAS's partnership with Kittico and Feral Friends was an excellent model of how public and nonprofit animal-related organizations can work together to address the needs of feral cats in the community.

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www.asapmetro.org

8.0 FIELD SERVICES/ANIMAL CONTROL

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Observations

The Field Services division of DAS was charged with the responsibility of protecting public health and safety for approximately 1.2 million residents through the enforcement of Dallas's Animal Control Ordinances. During the course of the site visit, The HSUS team interviewed the manager II, two supervisor IIs, and many senior and frontline officers for the purpose of this section.

The team also observed routine field activities through ride-alongs with Animal Service Officers (ASOs) assigned to different teams: Cruelty; Sweep; Rapid Response; Tethering, Trap, etc. Based upon these observations, The HSUS team had concerns about officer productivity, safety, and public relations.

As in shelter operations, The HSUS team was often provided with several different answers to the same question; in some cases, responses appeared evasive and misleading.

8.1 STAFFING AND OFFICER TRAINING

Observations

According to the staff classification list provided to The HSUS team, The Field Services Department had approximately 60 staff—one manager II, two supervisors II, 22 senior officers and 35 ASOs. At the time of the site visit, one senior ASO was acting as an interim supervisor; other senior officers functioned as leads, with some assigned to perform euthanasia. The ASOs were deployed in geographic districts and special teams as listed above.

With slight variations, the senior ASOs and ASOS worked from 11:30 pm to 7:00 am, 7:00 am to 3:30 pm, 3:00 pm to 11:30 pm with the majority of the staff working the second and third shifts and a skeleton crew working overnight.

During the 2007 session, the Texas legislature passed SB 1562, which created the Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 829, Animal Control Officer Training. The law provides that, within a year of employment as an ACO, a person must satisfactorily complete an ACO basic training course; additionally, the person must complete 30 hours of continuing education during each 3-year period following the date the person completes the basic course. The law also states that an ACO who completed a basic

training course before June 30, 2008, must complete 30 hours of continuing education during each 3-year period following June 30, 2008. 32

It was beyond the scope of this evaluation to verify that each of the incumbent field services staff met the Texas training requirements for ACOs, but The HSUS team ascertained that there was no DAS training manual. Additional in-house training, which could take from three days to two weeks, was conducted by senior officers; the timeframe for completion was determined by the training officer. There did not appear any guidelines or benchmarks that assured that all new ASOs were uniformly trained and tested for competency.

DAS provided The HSUS team with the following list of training topics, which were coordinated and provided by an ASO.

Basic certification	Euthanasia	Rabies
Shelter sanitation	Sexual harassment	Defensive driving
Cruelty investigation	Bite prevention	Basic animal ID
Customer service	Vehicle & radio protocol	Fire extinguisher
Back safety	Cleaning & feeding protocol	Stress management
Workplace violence	Basic capture & restraint	Impoundment & disposition
Courtroom survival	Court conduct	Chapter 7 City Code
Intact Animal Permit	City registration	Wildlife
ISO 9001	Record retention	Personnel rules
Accident/Injury prevention	Slips, trips, and falls	Drugs & alcohol

DAS maintained a detailed log of all training received by staff.

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www.taca.org

Specialized training for the Cruelty Investigation team was provided through the National Animal Cruelty Investigations School at the Law Enforcement Training Institute.³³

Most officers who were interviewed agreed that additional training was needed to improve their skills and maintain their certification.

Recommendations

- ✓ Ensure that all officers meet their initial training requirement before the completion of one year of service. Schedule each officer for a minimum of ten continuing education credits every year in order to refresh their current level of training and remain current on industry standards. Document the training provided to each in their respective personnel file.
- ✓ Develop an internal training manual and program specific to DAS's ordinances, procedures, and expectations to accompany the Work Instructions. All incumbent and new staff should complete the curriculum to ensure consistent application of procedures and protocols.

Discussion

Citizens expect trained professionals to respond to their requests for assistance with animal-related problems. The public cares deeply about the treatment of animals and they want, at a minimum, the appearance of compassion and competence when they see ASOs doing their jobs.

8.2 POLICIES AND FORMS

Observations

As with shelter operations, the field services department was converting its policies and procedures into Work Instructions; the field manager was awaiting approval from administration to approve the additional Work Instructions that had been submitted. According to a Supervisor II, staff was updated on changes to policy on a weekly basis.

When a HSUS team member asked the field manager for a copy of all the policies and procedures relevant to his department, he advised that only the completed Work Instructions were available electronically and he had been directed to dispose of any previous versions.

The forms that were used were uncomplicated and had spaces for information; however, the required information was often lacking, particularly on Impoundment Records, which affected the animal's Chameleon® cage card.

www.leti.missouri.edu/animal-cruelty.aspx

According to managers and supervisors, only two administrators were able to retrieve monthly or quarterly reports.

Recommendations

- ✓ Train incumbent field officers in all aspects of the ISO-9001 system and how they expect each provision to be applied. This training will ensure that all current officers are able to apply all of the requirements consistently and will be familiar with the consequences if failing to do so.
- ✓ Allow managers and supervisors to access Crystal Chameleon Reports[©] to gauge the performance of their respective areas of responsibility on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis.

Discussion

Written procedures should be considered works in progress that should be reviewed and updated at regular intervals or when deficiencies are identified. Due to the nature of the job, some communities feel an inherent distrust for animal control programs and services. Written procedures ensure fairness, provide for consistency of service, and may help resolve allegations to the contrary.

8.3 COMMUNICATIONS/DISPATCH

Observations

As mentioned earlier in this report, The City of Dallas had a centralized *311* Information and Services Call Center that received calls from the public and routed them to the appropriate City department. In FY08-09, 10% of 79,000 calls were requests for the services provided by DAS.

The *311* operators solicited information from callers by using a prepared script of questions, entered the information into the computer system, and transferred it electronically to DAS. A communications specialist then dispatched the calls to the ASOs via two-way radio or cellular phone; for those vehicles equipped with mobile computer terminals (MDT), the call was also forwarded electronically. It was also recorded on the Dallas Animal Services Daily Call Sheet.

DAS officers that were part of the Rapid Response Team also kept a written log, but this paperwork was not reviewed.

Recommendations

✓ Generate and maintain statistics on incoming calls based upon geographic area and type of complaint. Management should review these statistics to determine what kind of educational or enforcement programs may benefit these areas, and then designate work teams to spend time focusing on resolutions.

- ✓ Provide the Call Center operators with supplementary training in the Animal Control Ordinances so that callers can be better advised of the level of service and/or results that they may expect.
- ✓ List the questions that complainants need to answer so that the call-takers can determine the nature and priority of their calls, with a progression of priority calls from most important to least important, which will help both the call takers and the ASOs identify emergencies.
- ✓ Require each officer to keep a field logbook, which details everything and everywhere he/she does and goes when not at the shelter. This log should have the beginning and ending vehicle mileage for the day, state the nature of the call, its location, travel time, time of arrival and departure, and action taken. Every action or response by an ASO should be accounted for, easily verified, and accessible upon request.
- ✓ Implement a "hot-case" board so that off-duty officers can follow up on cases in process or left uncompleted from the previous day.

Discussion

The prompt handling of calls and field response times are critical when dealing with animal control issues. The public does not call for animal services unless there is a problem, usually one that has escalated into what is perceived to be an emergency. How a dispatcher or an operator responds to a request for service reflects on the credibility and reliability of the agency.

Communication by staff is of the utmost importance and the public should not be treated rudely or feel rushed when calling for assistance or advice. Many of the calls into an animal control facility are complex and require a sizeable time commitment on the part of staff. Animal issues are emotional and callers expect advice, affirmation, understanding, and, above all, polite service for their tax dollars.

Requiring vehicle logs and activity reports that allow for exact documentation of what the ASO does, how long it takes, and the types of calls which are answered can be important tools in evaluating productivity. Citizens often complain about animal control's lack of response— perhaps they did not see the animal control truck driving through their neighborhood and then assume no one answered their complaint or concern. It is much easier to clear up this type of misunderstanding if truck logs are kept describing the day's activities and location of all ASOs and their vehicles.

8.4 EMERGENCIES/AFTER HOURS

Observations

The late night ASO shifts primarily responded to emergencies such as sick, injured, dangerous animals, and bite case investigations; they were also responsible for the hourly monitoring of the night drop boxes. Stray injured animals wearing identification were taken to the emergency animal hospital under contract. If the animal was without identification and had a life-threatening injury or sickness, the animal would be humanely euthanized. If the officer was uncertain about how to proceed, they were instructed to contact the veterinary staff or a supervisor.

Recommendations

None

8.5 INVESTIGATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT

Observations

In addition to an ASO assigned to a zone/district for usual animal-related complaints, as mentioned in the General Overview of this section, DAS field services were divided into specialized teams for enforcement: Rapid Response Team, Community Control (Sweep Team), Tether Team, Trapping Team, Cruelty Investigators, and Rabies Control. The HSUS team rode along with a Rapid Response Team, Cruelty Investigators, and a Community Control Team (Sweep Team).

Rapid Response Team

A total of three calls were answered in 3½ hours; each call had a drive time of at least one hour, crossing the City several times.

- The first call, called in by a code enforcement officer, concerned two
 aggressive dogs running at large. Upon arrival, both dogs had already
 been contained by the owner. Although the code enforcement officer
 and police officers were at the scene, neither canceled the complaint.
 The owner was not cited.
- Near the same location, two dogs that were in violation of the leash law were pointed out to the Response Team. When asked why no attempt was made to apprehend them, the reply was it is "not my problem, it's the regular ASO working the area".
- The second call, also called in by a code enforcement officer, regarded kittens allegedly stuck in a wall. After a drive time of over an hour, neither the homeowner nor the code enforcement officer was there to help locate the kittens. The ASO advised the owner by telephone to contact a contractor to cut a hole in the sheetrock.

• Like the previous two, the third call involved an hour's drive to the location for an aggressive dog. Upon arrival, the code enforcement officer who had initiated the call admitted she had forgotten to cancel it when the dog was no longer a threat.

The above investment in time and manpower produced no measurable outcomes.

Cruelty Investigations

The Cruelty Investigations team's assignment was to deliver two seizure warrants issued by a local judge. The first warrant was posted on the property from which 50 fighting roosters were seized the previous night. The second warrant had been issued for the impoundment of two abandoned dogs and, with assistance from the Dallas Police Department, both dogs and seven puppies were removed.

The HSUS team member asked one of the cruelty investigators to call the Sweep Team to arrange for a ride-along with them. After making the call, the senior ASO transmitted the following message over the radio to his team members: "That HSUS [vulgar slang] wants to ride with us, so use the new equipment that you were given, watch what you say to him, and make me proud."

Sweep Team

The Sweep Team drove through several neighborhoods looking for dogs running at large and several dogs were spotted. The owner, a small-statured, elderly woman, was identified and confronted by six ASOs in her yard and persuaded/intimidated to surrender several of her dogs. Although the owner was very emotional about the relinquishment of her pets, the situation appeared to be resolved. However, the same senior ASO as referenced above, advised a team member to "hook that [vulgar slang] up with tickets"; she was then written 12 citations for various violations. Some of the Sweep Team members thought that her penalty was excessive.

During the patrol, The HSUS team member pointed out several dogs that were tied out on short chains or ropes. The Sweep Team responded that "it is the tether team's problem, not ours".

It was the observation of The HSUS team that the degree of enforcement of a violation depended upon the individual officer's interpretation of the infraction.

Recommendations

✓ Develop an unambiguous philosophy on enforcement, which can vary from moderate to strict, depending on the infraction. If warnings are permitted, then the circumstances for issuance must be identified. If strict enforcement is preferred, then all officers must adhere to that position. Field services personnel

must have comprehensive knowledge of all sections of the ordinance and apply them consistently and impartially.

- ✓ Analyze the effectiveness and productiveness of the specialized teams charged with the enforcement of Dallas's ordinances. Disbanding the teams and assigning additional ASOs in each zone/district would give officers the ability to address all violations issues, reduce response times, and improve community relations. Rotate the assigned districts or zones periodically so that each officer remains familiar with different areas of the City.
- ✓ Designate only one ASO to communicate with an animal owner unless there is evidence of an impending threat. This lowers the likelihood of the situation becoming volatile and decreases any feeling of intimidation by the animal owner.
- ✓ Provide additional training in conflict resolution, "verbal judo," and mediation techniques, as well as enhanced self-defense techniques.

Discussion

Successful animal control is a combination of education and enforcement. The key to success is the careful balance of each of these aspects. Many animal control agencies apply too much enforcement and too little education. Others do not enforce and are therefore ineffective. The goal should be to educate owners and help them improve the conditions in which their animals live. If the improvements are not made in a timely manner, enforcement action should be taken.

8.6 ANIMAL HANDLING

Observations

DAS did not have formal training for humane animal handling; new ASOs were trained "on the job" by tenured officers.

During the ride-alongs, dogs were handled carefully and appropriately during apprehension in the field and off-loading at the shelter:

- The two adult dogs, described above, were carried to the vehicles by the ASOs with a leash around the dog's necks and looped into a muzzle wrap. The adult dogs were placed in separate cages. The puppies were very gently carried, three at a time, by an ASO. The puppies were placed together in a cage above their mother.
- A large, black, stray dog was apprehended by the ASO using only a leash, walked it over to the van, and the dog loaded up on its own.
- Four out of the five dogs that were surrendered by their owner were secured only with a leash. The fifth dog was frightened and put on a control pole for safety.

Except for the mishandling of the miniature horse during off-loading, The HSUS team did not witness any mistreatment of animals in the field.

Recommendations

- ✓ Incorporate techniques for humane animal handling in the Work Instructions. Information is available through national and state organizations.
- ✓ Schedule refresher training on capture and animal restraint techniques on a quarterly basis. Monitor the ASOs' ability to understand and execute particular tactics and indicate such in their performance evaluations.

Discussion

It is important to note that an ASO's most important tool cannot be found in any catalog; the greatest asset, by far, is knowledge. To make quick assessments, officers must be able to accurately interpret a situation (including an animal's behavior) and choose an appropriate response within minutes, often seconds. The more humane the restraint or capture technique, the more efficient and effective that staff member will be.

8.7 EQUIPMENT/VEHICLE/UNFORMS

Observations:

DAS had 22 animal transport vans and one flatbed pickup truck used to carry cat and dog traps. Each van was outfitted with stainless steel caging units, configured with larger cages on the bottom and smaller cages on the top; most also had a small carrier for cats. Two of the 22 vans had the agency's name and phone number, but the others only had "Code Compliance" on them.

Each vehicle had a check list for ASOs to complete prior to leaving the shelter but at the time of the site visit, they were not being used. When the ASOs were asked about them, they indicated that they stopped filling them out because no one ever reviewed them.

In comparison to other agencies of the same size, DAS's vehicles lacked most of the basic equipment that is needed to perform safe and humane animal capture in the field. The only equipment found in the four vehicles inspected were a pair of lightweight leather garden gloves, a leash, and a rope that ran through a five foot long metal pipe that functioned as a home-made capture pole. All were missing a basic first aid kit, a fire extinguisher, and two did not have working air-conditioning for the cargo area. Hand sanitizer was not provided by the department; each ASO has to purchase their own. Each officer who was interviewed suggested that their supervisors had the best of all the gear needed to do their job.

The HSUS team indentified three different uniform combinations: navy polo shirts with a

logo; tee shirts with "Animal Services" printed on the back; BDU pants and BDU shirts with the logo and patches on the sleeves. Footwear ranged from tennis shoes to low and high cut boots of different brands and styles. Officers did not wear name tags. Although each had a City identification card, it was kept inside the vehicle, to prevent loss.

Recommendations

- ✓ Display DAS's name and logo, phone number, physical address, and website address prominently on both sides of each vehicle. Printed messages such as "Spay or Neuter Your Pet" or "Report Cruelty" can improve the department's public image and the delivery of its philosophy.
- ✓ Develop an equipment checklist for each vehicle. All animal handling equipment should be assigned to that vehicle and not removed. Each ASO should be responsible for all of his/her equipment and its working condition.
- ✓ Compare the current ASO equipment with the following suggested list:

Animal Handling Equipment	Health and Safety Items
Restraint pole(s)	Waterless disinfectant
Cable leashes	Biohazard protection kit
Regular leashes	Breathing apparatus and protective clothing
Long-handled net	for hoarding cases
Capture gloves	First aid kit for animals
Leather shelled, Kevlar lined gloves	First aid kit for people
Disposable gloves	Thermometers for animal's temperature
Heavy rubber gloves	Digital Infrared Thermometers for
Plastic carriers	temperature of surroundings during cruelty
Raccoon/cat trap	cases
Dog trap on wheels	Eyewash
Trap transfer cage(s)	Hand wipes
Animal stretcher with wheels	Hand warmers
Blankets (for scared, trapped, and injured	Safety glasses and hard hat
animals)	Life jacket
Lead shank for large animals	Fire extinguisher
Animal grasper	Flares/triangles
Fowl leg grasper	Gate Openers so ACOs don't have to stop
Horse halter	and open window to open gate creating an
Rope halter (cows/horses)	unsafe environment after-hours in the dark
Rope (cotton)	Bullet-proof vest
Snake tongs and snake bag	
Plastic bat container	
Food and Comfort Items for Animals:	Tools:
Towels (cloth and paper)	Bolt cutters
Squeak toy/ball	Shovel
Bottled drinking water	Pocket knife
Dog food	Ice scraper and snowbrush
Dog treats	Regular screwdriver and Phillips screwdriver
Cat food	Hatchet

Cat treats	Dust tana
Cat treats	Duct tape
Sweet feed in coffee can (to attract equines	Toolbox
and farm animals)	Garbage bags
Food and water bowls	Crowbar Povisos
Record Keeping Forms and	Investigation Devices:
Educational Materials:	35mm or digital camera
Citations	Polaroid camera
Summons	Video camera
Complete Animal Control Laws, including	Tape recorder
abbreviated versions for distribution	Notepaper
Mileage Log Sheet	Tufts Animal Care and Condition Scales
Citation and Warning and Ticket Books	(dogs) ³⁴
License reminder postcards	Horse conformation chart
License Applications	Henneke Body Scoring Chart ³⁵
Trap Agreements	Horse weight tape
Deer tags (for deer who have been hit by	Cattle weight tape
cars)	Large evidence envelopes
Door notices	Small and large plastic zipper-lock evidence
Business cards	bags
Incident Reports	Stickers/labels (for labeling evidence)
Bite Reports	Indelible markers
Microchip scanner	Pens
Maps	
Directions to shelter	
Sample Lost/Found Flyers	
Responsible Pet Owner Information Handouts	
Stapler and staples	
Weather and Vision Aids:	Communications Equipment:
Binoculars	Handheld radio that connects to dispatchers
Flashlight and batteries	In-vehicle mounted radios
Magnetic floodlight	In-vehicle mounted computers for updating
Raincoat	call information and improve response time
Heavy gloves	Cellular telephone
Boots	Pager
Waterproof tarp	
Sunglasses	
Vehicle safety light bars with amber covers	
on top of cab of trucks, including alley and	
take down lights to increase visibility at night	
Spot mirrors on side-view mirrors on all	
trucks	
Miscellaneous:	
Deodorizing spray (for skunk and other odors)	
Air freshener	
High-quality, up-to-date, laminated maps of	
areas, kept in a ring binder	
Navigational units for officers vehicles to	
locate addresses	
Disinfectant for cleaning cages and	

Tufts Animal Care and Condition Scales CR
Henneke Body Scoring Chart CR

equipment	
Spare uniform	

- ✓ Discontinue the use of the home-made "rods" used for capturing and restraining dogs and replace them with stainless steel capture poles. 36 Supply handled nets to be used for capturing cats.
- ✓ Ensure that all animal control vehicle air conditioning units are working properly in order to reduce heat-related stress on animals.
- ✓ Incorporate a program to ensure routine inspection and maintenance of field service vehicles. Create a comprehensive checklist and a Maintenance Request form for items that require attention.
- ✓ Provide each ASO with one pair of outdoor boots.
- ✓ Require all field staff to wear visible name tags.

Discussion

The HSUS team recognizes that standard professional animal handling and personal protection equipment can be relatively expensive; however, it is well worth the investment for the safety of staff as well as for the animals.

8.8 ANIMAL CONTROL ORDINANCE REVIEW

Observations:

DAS is responsible for the care and control of the City's pet population by enforcing Dallas City Code, Chapter 7 - Animals and the Texas Rabies Control Act. The ordinance covered the following:

Article 1 – General

<u>Sec 7-1.1</u> Definitions American Legal Publishing - Online Library

Article II – ANIMAL SERVICES, CITY SHELTER. SHELTERS

Sec. 7-2.1	State law; local rabies control authority designated
Sec. 7-2.2	Shelters established
Sec. 7-2.3	Policies and procedures
Sec. 7-2.4	Quarantine of animals
Sec. 7-2.5	Impoundment of animals
Sec. 7-2.6	Redemption of impounded animals

³⁶ Animal Care and Equipment Services, Inc, <u>www.animal-care.com</u>, 1-800-338-ACES

Sec. 7-2.7	Adoption of animals
Sec. 7-2.8	Killing or euthanasia of animals
Article III – C	CARE AND TREATMENT OF ANIMALS
Sec. 7-3.1	Proper restraints
Sec. 7-3.2	Sanitary conditions; maintenance of premises
Sec. 7-3.3	Trapping animals
Sec. 7-3.4	Unlawful placement of poisonous substances
Sec. 7-3.5	Transporting an animal in an open bed of a motor vehicle
Article IV – S	PECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR DOGS AND CATS
Sec. 7-4.1	Vaccination of dogs and cats
Sec. 7-4.2	_
Sec. 7-4.3	Revocation and denial of registration
Sec. 7-4.4	Authorized registrars
Sec. 7-4.5	Sale of dogs and cats
Sec. 7-4.6	Limitation on the number of dogs and cats in dwelling units
Sec. 7-4.7	Tethered dogs
Sec. 7-4.8	Defecation of dogs on public and private property; failure to carry
	materials and implements for the removal and disposal of dog excreta
Sec. 7-4.9	Confinement requirements for dogs kept outdoors
Sec. 7-4.10	Restrictions on unsterilized dogs and cats
<u>Sec. 7-4.11</u>	Intact animal permit
Article V – D	ANGEROUS DOGS
Sec. 7-5.1	Definitions
Sec. 7-5.2	State law; animal control authority
Sec. 7-5.3	Determination as a dangerous dog
Sec. 7-5.4	Appeals
Sec. 7-5.5	Requirements for ownership of a dangerous dog; noncompliance hearing
Sec. 7-5.6	Attacks by dangerous dog; hearing
Sec. 7-5.7	Prohibition on owning a dog determined dangerous by another
Coc 7 F 9	jurisdiction Surrender of a dangerous deg
Sec. 7-5.8	Surrender of a dangerous dog
Sec. 7-5.9 Sec. 7-5.10	Dangerous dog owned or harbored by minor Defenses
	PROHIBITED AND REGULATED ANIMALS
C 7.C4	Duckileitad onimala
Sec. 7-6.1 Sec. 7-6.2	Prohibited animals Regulated animals
JEL. /-D.Z	neruialen gilliligis

Article VII – MISCELLANEOUS

Sec. 7-7.1	Interference with an animal services officer
Sec. 7-7.2	Sale of animals from public property
Sec. 7-7.3	Keeping of roosters
Sec. 7-7.4	Disturbance by animals
Sec. 7-7.5	Vaccination of ferrets
Sec. 7-7.6	Animals as prizes, promotions, and novelties

Article VIII – VIOLATIONS, PENALTIES, AND ENFORCEMENT

Sec. 7-8.1	Violations; criminal and civil penalties.
Sec. 7-8.2	Additional enforcement provisions.
Sec. 7-8.3	Parent's ultimate responsibility.

In an effort to reinforce responsible pet ownership and education, the City Council adopted new amendments to the Animal Ordinance in 2008. The new regulations strengthened the City's laws governing animal ownership. They included:

- Establishing a \$70 fee for Intact Animal Permits
- Limiting the number of dogs and cats in a detached single-family home
- Prohibiting the use of animals as prizes
- Allowing the seizure and impoundment of a dog deemed dangerous
- Restricting tethering of unsupervised dogs to the amount of time necessary to complete a temporary task

Recommendations

- ✓ Review ordinances yearly to gauge effectiveness of the animal control program and to ensure that the mission of creating safe neighborhoods for both people and pets are being met.
- ✓ Promote the agency's website as a source of information about animal control ordinances.
- ✓ Provide ASOs with a synopsis of local animal control laws as well as pertinent state cruelty laws for distribution to the public.

8.9 PET REGISTRATION/MICROCHIPPING

Observations

To obtain a license, a citizen had to show proof of a current rabies vaccination by a licensed veterinarian either by mail or physically going to DAS or City Hall or in some cases, private veterinary hospitals. Renewal notices were sent by mail.

The annual license fee was \$7.00 for sterilized dogs and cats and free for up to three sterilized pets owned by senior citizens over 65 years of age. The fee for an intact animal was \$30.00 with a valid Intact Animal Permit, for a total of \$100. The fine for non-compliance could be between \$150 and \$2,000. The age of the juvenile animal when registration was required was not included in the ordinance.

ASOs said that they promote registration requirements by leaving brochures and verbal reminders while patrolling neighborhoods but there was no follow up.

The fee for mandatory registration was not included in the list associated with the redemption of a lost pet, but mandatory microchipping for a reasonable fee of \$15.00 was. Animals adopted from the shelter were microchipped as part of the adoption package.

Recommendations

- ✓ Consider adding an amendment to the City Code to establish multiple-year pet registration.
- ✓ Require that ASOs check for vaccinations and licenses during every encounter with pet owners. Enforcing registration at every call will remind Dallas's residents of the requirements while bringing in regular revenues.
- ✓ Develop a promotional campaign to educate the public about the benefits of mandatory registration.³⁷ Licensing should be advertised and promoted through the local print media, radio stations, schools, and continued to be featured prominently on the website.
- ✓ Impose penalties for failure to register an animal after a period of amnesty. Fines for failing to license can not only be a source of additional revenue, but also acts as an incentive for voluntary compliance.
- ✓ Provide additional staff to enforce pet licensing and spay/neuter requirements through canvassing. Areas such as Los Angeles County Animal Control have revenue officers that target neighborhoods to check for current registration and issue citations for non-compliance.
- ✓ Continue partnerships with veterinary hospitals to offer registration to their clients. Both DAS and the veterinarian benefit if the animal needs a rabies vaccine, a routine check-up, or other medical treatment. The citizen also benefits from the convenience.

³⁷ The HSUS *Animal Sheltering* magazine, Ohio Study Says, "Tag—You're Home!" July-August 2007+

✓ Equip all animal control vehicles with universal scanners so that microchipped animals can be identified at the time of pickup, especially if emergency medical care is needed

Discussion

Mandatory animal registration (licensing) programs are commonly one of the most mismanaged programs of local governments across the United States. They are inherently set up to fail from the beginning because their purpose is often misunderstood and promotion is nonexistent or limited. Mandatory registration serves eight functions:

- As a lost pet recovery service
- As a statistical tool
- Ensures rabies vaccinations
- As a revenue source
- As cat and dog control
- Promotes spaying and neutering
- Helps ensure compliance with city ordinances
- Pet owners share the expense of an animal services program

There are many local governments that believe animal registration programs should be expected to generate a significant portion of the animal control agency's budget. However, that would be the equivalent of saying that revenue from police citations should underwrite the cost of the police department—a totally erroneous assumption. Actually, the biggest benefits of a well run registration program are that animals are identified and hopefully, with the right fee structure, the majority are sterilized. This can save an animal control agency and taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars in reduced response to citizen complaints, reduced numbers of animals impounded, and reduced sheltering costs. It also expedites the process of getting a lost animal with an identification tag back to his owner, with a citation when necessary, instead of costly impoundment, transport, and sheltering.

According to the American Pet Products Association's (APPA) 2009-2010 National Pet Owners Survey³⁸, 39% of U.S. households own at least one dog and 33% of U.S. households own at least one cat, with the average number of dogs owned per dogowning household as 1.67 and the average number of cats owned per cat-owned household as 2.3. Using 2008 census numbers³⁹ and the pet estimate formula, the City of Dallas has a population of 877,372 dogs and cats. With licenses issued to approximately 54,402 dogs and cats in FY08-09, only 6.2% of the pet population was registered. There is significant untapped potential in uncollected pet registration

www.appma.org

www.quickfacts.census.gov

revenue that can help fund DAS. A focused campaign to raise compliance will result in higher revenues for the City. Without enforcement of the City's licensing requirements DAS will have a difficulties tracking pet ownership, increasing return-to-owner rates, or increasing revenue to support the agency's programs.

8.91 DOG FIGHTING

Observations

Like most metropolitan cities, DAS had organized dog fighting within its boundaries substantiated by the impoundment of dogs with injuries consistent with this activity. The team was told that prosecution for the actual offense of dog fighting was rare; more often, DAS had to deal with the wounds and abandonment of the participating dogs. The HSUS team was told by the field services manager that a draft for the handling of dog fighting cases was being prepared.

Dog fighting and the possession of dogs for fighting are felonies in Texas; being a spectator at a dogfight and possessing dog fighting equipment "with the intent that the equipment be used to train a dog for fighting or is used in the furtherance of dog fighting" are misdemeanors.

Recommendations

- ✓ Develop written procedures regarding the investigation of dogfighting in conjunction with law enforcement and the State prosecutor's office. They should include how to safely make inquiries and gather information from the public and how that information is to be presented to the appropriate investigators.
- ✓ Encourage ASOs to utilize The HSUS Animal Fighting and Cruelty campaign website and to read related articles in *Animal Sheltering* magazine. 40, 41, 42
- ✓ Provide all ASOs with training on the recognition of wounds, training equipment, and other signs indicative of dogfighting.
- ✓ Provide the opportunity for every ACO to attend dogfighting investigation workshops when available. The HSUS can provide contact information for future dogfighting training courses.⁴³

Discussion

Over the last few years there has been an unprecedented increase in both illegal cockfighting and dog fighting activities in this country. These tortuous "blood sports"

www.humanesociety.org/issues/dogfighting/end_dogfighting.html

The HSUS Animal Sheltering magazine, "Dogfighting Investigations," July–August 2006+

⁴² The HSUS Animal Sheltering magazine, "The Costs of Dogfighting," November–December 2007+

www.humanesocietyuniversity.org/files/illegal-animal-fighting-investigations-hosting-information.pdf

results in anguish and acute suffering and pain for those animals that are forced to fight. In addition, dog fighting is a dehumanizing and degrading activity—a serious offense to the sensibilities of a civilized society—and certainly an offense warranting a felony penalty.

Owners often train their dogs for fights using smaller animals such as cats, rabbits, or small dogs. These "bait" animals are often unwanted litters, stolen pets, or animals obtained through "free to good home" advertisements. The numerous raids across the country have unearthed many disturbing facets of this illegal "sport":

- Young children are often allowed or forced to watch, which promotes an insensitivity to animal cruelty, an enthusiasm for violence, and a lack of respect for the law;
- Illegal gambling is often the norm at dogfights. While owners and spectators enjoy watching dogs injure and maim one another, they spend thousands of dollars wagering on their favorites;
- Firearms and other weapons are quite common at dogfights because of the large amounts of cash present
- Illegal drugs are often sold and used at dogfights

The investigation of illegal animal fighting activities by local law enforcement, animal control, and humane agencies is frequently difficult, frustrating, and unsuccessful. The lack of success is most often due to circumstances beyond the control of the investigating agency. Because of the specialized nature of the criminal activity, participants are often scattered over a wide area involving multiple jurisdictions. The broad distribution of participants may present certain difficulties unless the investigation effort is tightly coordinated among a number of law enforcement agencies.

8.92 WILDLIFE

Observations

Work Instructions titled "Rescue of Wildlife" outlined procedures for releasing wildlife to a rehabilitator upon intake. If the animal could not be placed, it was euthanized. Nonpoisonous snakes were relocated to a field.

The Work Instructions "Wildlife/Exotic, Wildlife/Routine" outlined procedures regarding wildlife service requests and specified that the responding officer must make every effort to capture the animal. If attempts are unsuccessful, the complainant was referred to the DFW Wildlife Coalition. If the animal posed a threat, a field supervisor was notified for an alternative solution. Calls were prioritized by location and request type; priority was given to those involving bites, police assistance, animals on school grounds.

DAS statistics for October 2009 through March 2010 recorded the total wildlife intake at 860. If a rabies vector animal such as a raccoon or skunk was accidently trapped by DAS, it was transported to the animal shelter and euthanized.

There were no protocols for the care and housing of wildlife. A storage room labeled "Animal Services Equipment" near the sally ports was used to house wildlife, as well as for storage. During the site visit an opossum, a squirrel, and a pigeon were housed in individual plastic carriers or in a trap placed within a cage. All had water, with the exception of the opossum, which was to be released to a rehabilitator later that day.

Recommendations

- ✓ Refer complainants to DFW Wildlife if a resident insists on removal of an animal that is not causing damage to property, is not sick or injured, is not confined to an area from which it cannot escape, and is not posing an immediate health or safety threat. If a wild animal must be trapped and relocated, a licensed professional should determine if the site and conditions are appropriate since random relocation can be a death sentence for wild animals. The determination should include such factors as time of year, food and water sources, saturation of the species in the area, predators, etc.
- ✓ Provide complainants with information on wildlife control methods, including humane exclusion practices, that might help resolve current and future issues.
- ✓ Post information on rabies and solutions to wildlife conflicts on the DAS website to encourage people to resolve situations without DAS intervention. For those without Internet access, hard copies of the information should be provided. Many organizations, including The HSUS, have online information that DAS can link to on its website. 44
- ✓ Advise citizens to watch orphaned wildlife from a distance and see if an adult returns. If an adult does not return, the citizen should be advised to keep the animal safe and warm until it can be brought into the shelter or picked up by an ASO. A rehabilitator would be a valuable contact in this situation.
- ✓ Keep detailed records for the wildlife cases that DAS handles. The following data should be kept for each case:
 - Complainant's name, address, and phone number
 - Date(s) of service
 - Nature of complaint
 - Methods employed to alleviate the problem

www.humanesociety.org/animals/wild neighbors

Disposition of the animal, including location of release site, method of euthanasia, or name, address, and phone number of wildlife rehabilitator

A yearly summary should include the following:

- > Total number of complaints received
- Total number of complaints answered
- Number and kinds of animals released at the site of capture or relocated
- Number and kinds of animals transferred to a wildlife rehabilitator
- Number and kinds of animals euthanized and method of euthanasia employed

Discussion

The rapidly growing number of human-wildlife conflicts in urban and suburban areas directly affects the operation of animal shelters and the work of animal control professionals. People generally misunderstand the normal behavior of urbanized wildlife, fear the animal or the possibility of contracting rabies, or feel, without any real foundation, that the animal is a nuisance. Educating the public is the first and perhaps the most crucial role that animal control professionals can play in a community. It's normal to see raccoons, opossums, and other urbanized wildlife during the day, despite the fact that these animals were once nocturnal. Wild animals have become accustomed to being near people, and the loss of habitat to development has led to their adaptation to residential areas. Although wild animals once sought shelter and food in the woods, they are now forced to find shelter in attics, basements, and garages and to eat food left out for pets or in trash containers.

The public should be educated about rabies. It is extremely rare to find a rabbit, a squirrel, or an opossum with rabies; they are low-risk animals, typically viewed as "dead-end" hosts.

Trapping and relocation of wildlife should occur only when alternatives have been unsuccessful. In some cases, euthanasia may be the most humane option. Adverse climatic conditions (heat and cold), competition from others of the same species, predation by different species, difficulty locating shelter and food, and abandonment of their young are often overlooked in "nuisance" animal control situations and make relocation a less than desirable option. Strategies and exclusion techniques that allow wild animals to stay within their known home ranges while addressing the immediate conflicts they cause are far superior to any other approach.

9.0 EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

9.1 MISSION, VISION, AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

Observations

The mission of DAS, as stated in the FY10 Adopted Budget document, was as follows:

"Dallas Animal Services (DAS) organizes resources to provide a cleaner, healthier City environment through the care and control of animals within the City of Dallas. DAS partners with various animal welfare organizations, such as the SPCA of Dallas, the Metroplex Animal Coalition, and the Dallas County Veterinary Medical Association, to address the City's animal issues."

The City Council monitored DAS's progress on reaching its goals using a monthly Performance Report. In FY09-10, the City Council adopted the following objectives for DAS:

- 1. Increase the number of adopted animals to 2,600 in FY09-10.
- 2. Increase the number of animal impoundments from 20,380 in FY08-09 to 37,713 in FY09-10.
- 3. Increase the number of pets registered from 51,996 in FY08-09 to 55,612 in FY09-10.
- 4. Reduce the number of loose and loose/aggressive animal calls from citizens to 24,857 in FY09-10.

The general attitude of leadership was that DAS was a traditional animal care and control organization, responsible for protecting the health and safety of the public through enforcement of the City Code and impoundment of stray animals. In contrast, when The HSUS team met with the City's Animal Shelter Commission, the members stated that they saw the DAS mission as having a stronger animal welfare focus. Commission members told The HSUS team that their "master plan" for DAS was for it to be the best animal services organization in the country and to find a home for every adoptable, treatable animal entering the shelter. The Commission stated that the most important goal was to reduce the number of animals euthanized. The Commission had independently developed its own goals, which can be found in the section titled Animal Control Advisory Board. (See Section 9.3, ANIMAL SHELTER COMMISSION.)

Recommendations

✓ Plan a work session among City Council, DCCS leadership and DAS senior management to openly discuss, clarify, and establish consensus on DAS's priorities, goals, objectives, and direction.

- ✓ Create a system of tracking and reporting outcomes of all special requests for services made by City Council members.
- ✓ Participate in a community-wide strategic plan to reduce euthanasia at the shelter and in the community.
- ✓ Invest more resources in a strategy for increasing the number of dogs and cats that are spayed and neutered.

Discussion

Based on the above, there was obvious dichotomy between the City Council's goals and the goals of the Animal Shelter Commission as well as the animal welfare community. The latter two placed a high priority on moving the community toward lower euthanasia rates. On the other hand, The City Council established a goal to increase impoundment—the FY09-10 City Council objective to impound 37,713 animals represented an 85% increase over FY08-09. Industry data reveals a strong relationship between animal impoundment and animal euthanasia; as animal impoundment numbers increase, so will euthanasia numbers. This disparity in goals was fueling a continuing conflict between the City Council, DCCS leadership, DAS management and staff, the Animal Shelter Commission, the nonprofit animal welfare community, and the public.

The emerging industry best practice in public animal services agencies is a dual mission of protecting the health, safety, and welfare of people *and* of animals in the community. Historically, animal control has been charged with preserving public health and safety through rabies control programs, stray animal apprehension, and enforcement of ordinances. Animal welfare has been charged with caring for and re-homing unwanted animals and educating the public. However, the line between animal control and animal welfare is no longer clear. The community expects public animal shelters to protect the public with the goal of saving animals' lives. 45

9.2 OVERSIGHT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Observations

Dallas Animal Services was a division within the Department of Code Compliance Services (DCCS) of the City of Dallas. The director of the DCCS reported to one of four assistant city managers. At the time of the site visit, the DAS division manager reported to the assistant director of the Code Compliance Services Department

Reporting to the division manager were three managers: one responsible for shelter operations and adoptions; one responsible field services; and one responsible for

⁴⁵ The HSUS *Animal Sheltering* Magazine "Out of Control, Into Compassion," July/August 2009+

administration, in addition to the three veterinarians overseeing the Clinic. Both the shelter manager and field services manager had two and three supervisors respectively, reporting to them.

Staff repeatedly expressed alienation from managers and supervisors who used retaliatory disciplinary actions to achieve desired behavior. At the time of the site visit, these allegations had escalated to such a level that progressive discipline had been suspended, except for poor attendance. Furthermore, some staff said that they had been instructed by managers to reply to The HSUS team's questions by saying "I don't know", and refer the team member to their supervisor..

The tension was obvious and there did not appear to be the cooperative spirit and camaraderie that usually exists among colleagues who work alongside each other. This was further exemplified by the lack of participation in the Shelter Diagnostic Survey, (see enclosure), despite The HSUS's team efforts to explain the intent and assure confidentiality. There was a morale crisis at DAS, reflective of ineffective leadership in the management ranks.

Some staff, DAS management, and the Animal Shelter Commission attributed this climate of distrust to the recent changes in DCCS leadership who "micromanaged" the division manager and set either unclear or unachievable expectations. Conversely, DCCS leadership told The HSUS team when DAS's management ignored or failed to resolve internal problems and needs, frustrated staff then contacted DCCS to intervene.

The HSUS team met with the DCCS's department director, assistant director, and interim assistant director. They were forthright with The HSUS team in stating the improvements needed for the animal services division. A summary of major concerns are as follows:

- poor communication between management and staff
- retaliatory actions from supervisors toward staff
- lack of follow-though on projects and goals
- miscommunication with City Council members
- the dissension with the Animal Shelter Commission
- citizen complaints about the ASOs' aggressive approach
- DAS management and staff excusing poor service due to budget constraints

In January 2010, DCCS held a series of mandatory focus groups for DAS staff with the intent of improving the work environment, training, and employee safety. The staff identified issues, including persistent problems about inadequate uniforms and incidents in which DAS management "berated" employees in front of other staff.

Recommendations

- ✓ Establish the parameters of the DAS division manager's authority with a clear reporting structure within the DCCS.
- ✓ Provide training for DAS managers and supervisors. Establish clear expectations and outcomes for DAS management, and hold DAS management accountable
- ✓ Use the results of the Shelter Diagnostic System⁴⁶ included with this report to help improve staff morale.
- ✓ Follow up on the focus groups that were held in January 2010. Suggest improvement opportunities, develop a plan to address them, and provide feedback on progress to management and staff.
- ✓ Conduct team building exercises to improve staff and management communication, performance, and morale.

Discussion

In a large metropolitan government, effective communication within the chain of command presents genuine challenges. The situation is exacerbated by changing leadership, major City initiatives, special service requests from 14 City Council members, a politically active Animal Shelter Commission and a demanding public. DCCS leadership can help DAS manage the competing interests and expectation from City Council, the Animal Shelter Commission, and the public.

The HSUS team saw proof that DCCS was well-managed and had successfully improved the operation of other divisions within the department. A commitment and plan to focus management resources on DAS could yield the same kind of positive outcome.

9.3 ANIMAL SHELTER COMMISSION

Observations

The City of Dallas had an Animal Shelter Commission, whose stated mission was "To assist the City of Dallas in ensuring that animal shelters operated by the City meet certain standards required by Texas state law." 47

The Commission had 15 members, one member appointed by each City Council member, with the mayor appointing the chair, and the full City Council appointing the vice chair. Commission membership required that one member must be a licensed veterinarian, one a city or county official, one must have duties that included the daily operation of an animal shelter, and one must be a representative from an animal

http://sds.uncc.edu

⁴⁷ Texas Statutes and Codes Title 10. Health and Safety of Animals. Chapter 823. Animal Shelters CR

welfare organization. The remaining members were to be chosen from the general public. A DAS staff member attended the meetings and took the minutes.

The Commission met every other month, followed State public meeting laws, and posted its agenda on the City's website. Each year, the Commission submitted an Annual Report containing DAS's accomplishments for the year, a summary of media stories about DAS, short- and long-term goals, performance measures, and other key information to the City Council. These Annual Reports were a good source of historical data for DAS.

The Commission's FY 08-09 Annual Report identified the following long-term goals:

- 1. Separate DAS from the DCCS
- 2. Hire a marketing/public relations person
- 3. Expand the volunteer program
- 4. Open a public spay/neuter clinic at the shelter
- 5. Focus on cruelty cases
- 6. Develop creative ways to assist low-income residents to keep and care for their companion animals.

It was clear that the goals and priorities established by the Commission were in conflict with the DCCS'S goals, as well as with the stated goals of the City Council.

The Commission's immediate concerns centered on the following:

- animal care at the shelter
- high rate of euthanasia
- deteriorating relationship with DCCS and DAS
- aggressive enforcement tactics of animal service officers
- rising number of stray dogs
- slow response to problems due to bureaucracy
- erroneous information from 311 operators

The HSUS team suspected that differences in philosophy, expectations, and goals as well as the direct access and reporting relationship with the Mayor and City Council was the basis for the tension among DCCS, DAS, and the Animal Shelter Commission.

Recommendations

- ✓ Clarify the mission and the vision of DAS, and align the Commission's goals with that of the City of Dallas.
- ✓ Explore opportunities for the City Council, DCCS, DAS, and the Commission to hold a joint work session to reconcile shared goals.

- ✓ Engage the Animal Shelter Commission and the Metroplex Animal Coalition to work collaboratively to address the high euthanasia rate in the community.
- ✓ Establish the division manager's parameters for working with the Animal Shelter Commission.

Discussion

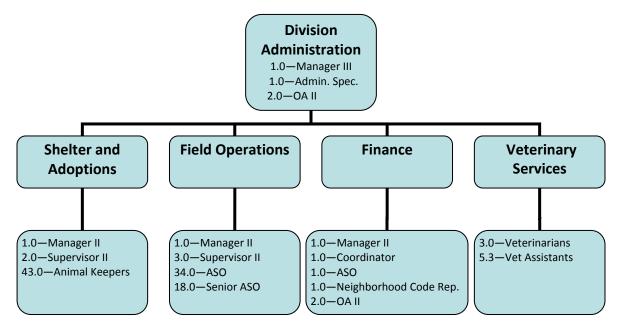
An effective advisory board can be a meaningful way to provide advice to City officials on the operation of its animal control program and to assist in the achievement of goals; however, the relationship should be supportive, rather than adversarial.

10.0 HUMAN RESOURCES

10.1 STAFFING LEVELS

Observations

The organizational chart provided to The HSUS team reflected a traditional animal care and control structure. DAS was organized into five primary sections: Division Administration, Shelter and Adoptions, Field Operations, Finance, and Veterinary Services. The FY09-10 Adopted Budget listed 120.3 full time positions for staffing at DAS.



Although the above chart listed 5.3 veterinary assistants, 7 were listed on the staff list provided to The HSUS team.

The City of Dallas's Human Resources Department provided the oversight for the classification structure.

The Shelter and Adoptions programs were the most amply staffed, with 45 animal keepers who were primarily responsible for animal caretaking, but some fulfilled the clerical functions relating to adoptions and intake. There were one manager and two supervisors responsible for supervising this staff, resulting in a manager/supervisor-to-staff ratio of 1:15. Most of the animal keepers in Lost and Found worked from 7 am to 4 pm, while those assigned to the Adoption Center worked a variety of day shifts beginning at 6 am, 7 am, 8 am, etc. seven days/week. From the schedules provided to The HSUS team, there did not appear to be adequate staffing in Lost and Found after 4:00 pm. Furthermore, all of the managers were scheduled off on Saturdays and Sundays.

The Division Administration, Finance, and Veterinary Services program areas appeared to be well-staffed, although management stated that more data entry staff was needed for pet registration and other administrative functions. The division management ratio to supervisors and staff was 1:9; 1:5 in Finance; and approximately 1:5 in the Medical Clinic and 1:2 in the Spay/Neuter Clinic.

DCCS provided a human resources representative who was on-site two days/week to address personnel issues.

Unlike other municipal animal care and control organizations that are typically responsible for taking phone calls for service, The City's 311 system relieved DAS from having to staff a call center. In addition, dead animal removal and disposal is provided by the City's Sanitation Services Department, which relieved DAS of another staffing requirement for a function provided by many animal care and control agencies. The FY09-10 Sanitation Services Department budget for dead animal pickup and removal was \$516,663 and included a staff of 9.6 FTE.

At the time of The HSUS team visit, there were only a few vacancies, and all of the management positions were filled. The staff per 100,000 human population was 10.2. The HSUS team reviewed historical staffing levels, and in the three years between FY1999-00 and FY2001-02, DAS averaged 60.0 FTE, but the staffing increase certainly was necessary with the expanded facility.

Recommendations

✓ Conduct a workload assessment study to determine appropriate staffing levels for Lost and Found and the Adoption Center. Determine the number of animal keepers needed by using the following recommendations for animal caretaking:

(Human Population)	Multiplied by 7% =	(Incoming Animal Population Per Year)
(Incoming Animals Per Year)	Divided by 365 (days per year) =	(Incoming Animals Per Day)
(Incoming Animals Per Day)	Times Four* Day Holding Period =	(Animals in Shelter Per Day)
(Animals in Shelter Per Day)	Times fifteen minutes** per animal =	(Number of Minutes Needed)
(Minutes Needed)	Divided by 60 (minutes) =	(Number of Hours Needed)
(Number of Hours Needed)	Divided by 3*** (hours for cleaning/feeding) =	(Staff Needed Per Day)

^{*} The HSUS is using the average holding period of four days as a basis for this study. Some animals may be held for a much shorter period; however, many animals may be held for a period exceeding the four day requirement.

^{**}This formula is based on a per-animal time of nine minutes for cleaning and six minutes for feeding.

- ***These three hours are solely for the performance of these two tasks, but allowing for further time in the day to perform routine maintenance tasks such as laundry, dishes, lost and found checks, etc.
- ✓ Evaluate staffing levels and scheduling to ensure that there is sufficient staffing in the client services lobbies and the animal housing areas during all of the hours that the shelter is open to the public, particularly in the late afternoon and early evening. This could be accomplished by staggering shifts.
- ✓ Rotate the managers' days off so that at least one is on duty on Saturdays and Sundays.
- ✓ Audit the management-to-employee staffing ratios and make appropriate changes to improve effective supervision. Consider reclassifying qualified employees to create additional supervisory or lead positions.
- ✓ Create the permanent positions of intake and adoption counselors to achieve the recommendations in Sections 3.0 and 5.0.

Discussion

Proper staffing levels are critical to staff safety, animal health and well being, public safety, employee morale, and client service. Animal care must be the central focus of DAS; an animal shelter must have enough staff to provide at least the basics of food, water, shelter, health care, and enrichment on a daily basis. Furthermore, the shelter has a responsibility to provide services that ensure public safety and programs that promote adoption and sterilization. Each shelter is different, based on the human population served, the estimated number of animals owned in the community, the size of the area covered, etc.; however, every shelter has an obligation to maintain high standards of service and quality animal care.

In order for an organization to achieve its goals, it requires not only a committed staff but one that is sufficient in numbers and specifically hired and trained for the required tasks. Although having staff that can substitute when needed, a certain amount of staff specialization is essential.

The upcoming three-year anniversary of the opening of DAS's new facility may be an opportune time to analyze staffing levels and the possibility of reclassification of certain jobs. DAS appeared to be adequately, if not overstaffed, but it was difficult for The HSUS team to evaluate due to the design and physical floor space, the redundancy of some procedures identified throughout this report, and a lack of supervisory oversight. Of particular concern, was the low ratio of managers/supervisors per line staff in a business that essentially operated 24 hours/day, 365 days/year. According to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness, best

practices in human resources management typically strives for a 1:6.5 to 1:7.4 managers-to-employee ratio.⁴⁸

10.2 VOLUNTEERS

Observations

DAS had three primary ways for recruiting volunteers: a volunteer program page on its website; a brochure available at the shelter and distributed at events; and word of mouth. The Web page provided an overview of the following opportunities that were available:

- <u>Shelter Care and Adoptions:</u> providing care for animals housed in the shelter, including socializing shy animals, walking dogs, cleaning cages and toys, and providing assistance in the laundry room
- Off-Site Adoptions: assisting with unloading animals, setting up crates, walking animals, and displaying animals for adoption
- <u>Public Outreach:</u> assisting at schools and other events/locations by educating the public on responsible pet ownership

The program's oversight was the responsibility of the community outreach coordinator but did not have a designated budget.

The application process consisted of completing a form, an interview, a background check, and signing a liability waiver and a confidentiality statement. DAS required volunteers to be 18 years of age or older. All volunteers were required to attend an orientation. There was a comprehensive, written Volunteer Manual, which was produced in October 2009, and included a welcome letter from the division manager, the DAS mission statement, a map of the shelter, hours of operation, the history of DAS, services provided by DAS, important contact phone numbers, an organizational chart, volunteer position descriptions, volunteer "rights," volunteer policies and procedures, expectations regarding conduct, animal handling, safety, and answers to Frequently Asked Questions.

The community outreach coordinator scheduled volunteers and made shift assignments. Volunteers were required to record the date, time in and out, their total hours and the activities performed each time they worked. These hours were tracked monthly and annually. In FY09-10, the same four volunteers volunteered each month while six others came once or twice and were then listed as "inactive" on the monthly report. The total volunteer hours for the first six months of FY09-10 were 352. In FY08-09, the four volunteers had logged hours every month of the year along with another five to seven volunteers during the summer months. The report showed a total of 924 volunteer

www.opm.gov/studies/downsize.txt

hours for FY08-09. There was no formal exit interview process to determine why volunteers left.

The HSUS team was told that there was no formal volunteer recognition program or event. The community outreach coordinator sent thank-you cards to volunteers in appreciation of their efforts.

There were no short or long range plans for the volunteer program. As mentioned previously, the Animal Shelter Commission advocated for the expansion of the program; however, it was the opinion of The HSUS team that the infrastructure to support the growth of the program was not in place at this time.

Recommendations

(These recommendations can be considered after DAS restores its core programs.)

- ✓ Develop short- and long-range goals for the volunteer program. ⁴⁹ Conduct a survey of current volunteers to identify their needs, concerns, motivations, and thoughts toward enhancing programs and care at DAS.
- ✓ Budget funds for the program for training materials and recognition options.
- ✓ Hire a volunteer coordinator. This can be accomplished by reclassifying an existing position or reassigning some of the community outreach coordinator's present responsibilities.
- ✓ Continue to track volunteer hours worked. Report hours in a "full-time employee equivalent" method, i.e., if there were a total of 924 volunteer hours recorded for FY08-09, this would be 0.44 FTE.
- ✓ Meet with staff to determine their comfort level with volunteers and address any concerns that they may have. Designate supervisors and staff to plan and oversee departmental assignments.
- ✓ Develop a basic program to provide enrichment, exercise, and playtime for the dogs and cats and recruit volunteers accordingly.
- ✓ Conduct a formal exit interview to better understand why volunteers leave.
- ✓ Create and hold a formal volunteer recognition event once a year.

Betsy McFarland, "Volunteer Management: A Guide for Animal Care Organizations", Humane Society Press, 2005+

- ✓ Add the volunteer recruitment link to the City's home page and to the 311 information page.
- ✓ Communicate with volunteers through e-news, a Yahoo group, or a Facebook page.

Discussion

For a full volunteer program to be successful, DAS must lay a strong foundation for the program. Clear guidelines must be set or there is risk of damaging an organization's programs and reputation. Volunteers must be provided with established boundaries and staff supervision.

While the long list of benefits offered by a volunteer program is immediately compelling, the pitfalls of a poorly conceived and/or poorly managed program can be crippling. Difficulties involving volunteers are rarely brought about solely by the volunteers themselves; they nearly always occur because a shelter lacks sufficient structure for the program or the resolve to manage volunteers effectively. If the staff is not involved in the volunteer program, the organization may never hear or fully understand why volunteers leave the program.

More often than not, poorly organized programs leave shelters with dozens of ineffective, uncommitted volunteers who stop by only on rare occasions to walk a dog or two; or worse, a handful of well-meaning but often ill-informed volunteers who seek to change the organization's philosophy and eventually, undermine its mission. Moreover, a few unhappy volunteers who quit in frustration may tell others of the shelter's failing program, ruining the shelter's reputation in the process.

For some shelters, a volunteer program is not worth the investment. Certain animal care and control facilities, for example, do without volunteer programs because liability concerns or labor issues make it impractical or impossible to place volunteers in positions of responsibility. Other organizations lack the resources necessary to oversee such a program. Simply put, a shelter can be successful without volunteers; however, the organization will also miss the great benefits of a well-managed program.

If DAS is willing to invest in the many benefits that volunteers can bring to the shelter and the animals, remember that volunteers give their time and talents for free. Keep in mind that it will still require considerable time and energy to make the program successful. It takes a great deal of work to recruit, screen, train, and retain volunteers in an animal shelter.

It is crucial that the DAS staff and the volunteers have a mutual respect for one another, and see themselves as part of a team—working together for the benefit of the animals and the community. Just as crucial is that volunteers understand the hierarchy of leadership, who is in charge, and who has the final say in all shelter matters. A well-run

volunteer program can be an organization's best publicity in the community, and happy workers, its best ambassadors.

A volunteer coordinator should act as the human resources department of a volunteer program. The volunteer coordinator works with the staff to identify which job functions can be fulfilled by volunteers. The coordinator creates volunteer job descriptions, sets goals, implements training programs, and provides ongoing program evaluation. It is important to remember that the day-to-day management and training of individual volunteers falls primarily on the managers and staff members working side-by-side with them. While the volunteer coordinator can lay the foundation for a successful program, he or she cannot be expected to individually manage, train, and evaluate every volunteer in the program. Frontline managers and staff must be committed to managing and working with volunteers, and why the organization needs to ensure that staff support the program.

While DAS exists to serve the community, a volunteer program exists to serve DAS. It is important not to lose sight of the goal of the program, and to maintain control so it works to help the operation, not hinder it.

10.3 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Observations

The City of Dallas's performance review process evaluated each employee and manager on a set of competencies and established individual goals. Each manager and supervisor developed written expectations for their subordinates, meeting at mid-year to measure progress. A final written performance evaluation was conducted at the end of the year. Each employee's, supervisor's and manager's merit pay increase was linked to the annual performance review.

The City of Dallas had a program that recognized employees who exhibited behavior that supported the "core values" of the City. This program, which was called Witnessed Outstanding Work, went by the acronym WOW. The City's core values were:

- Accountability
- Commitment
- Customer Service
- Environmental Stewardship
- Innovation
- Integrity
- Leadership
- Sensitivity

Teamwork

WOW cards, which could be filled out to acknowledge that a shelter employee had exhibited a behavior exemplifying the City's values, were present at the shelter. Staff members and the public were invited to fill out a card whenever they observed or experienced outstanding work. The card was a way of showing recognition and appreciation for a job well done.

Recommendations

None.

Discussion

The City's performance management system was comprehensive. The process documented specific work and developmental goals for both managers and employees. Recognition based on performance created a clear link between the core values of the City and the behavior of employees.

10.4 JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Observations

There were comprehensive, written classification specifications for all of the positions at DAS. The City of Dallas's Department of Human Resources managed the classification specifications. Each document addressed: the position's purpose; essential functions of the position; the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the work; and working conditions and hazards. A copy of the classification specifications for each of the positions at DAS were provided to The HSUS team and were available on the City's Human Resources website.

For the most part, the classification descriptions accurately reflected the work being done by managers, supervisors, and line staff.

Recommendations

- ✓ Review staff job descriptions on a regular basis, annually at a minimum, to ensure that they remain relevant and that as employees' responsibilities change, their job descriptions also change. Solicit input from incumbents while writing revisions.
- ✓ Issue copies of job descriptions upon hire, and signed copies should remain in the employee's personnel file. Regularly review the descriptions to ensure that staff has a clear understanding of their responsibilities.
- ✓ Develop job standards that are specific in measuring success in job performance and achievement.

Discussion

The primary purpose of a job description is to identify the essential functions of a position. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), essential functions are those tasks or functions that are fundamental to a particular position.

Having clear and concise job descriptions is a key to recruiting and hiring staff. Listing the skills and attributes that are sought will help make the hiring process more objective. Job descriptions also provide measurable standards by which to determine qualifications. They are also a tool to assist with performance appraisals, promotions, and salary increases.

10.5 COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS SYSTEM

Observations

Each job classification was associated with a salary as follows:

Starting	Midpoint	Top Range
\$21,651	\$28,687	\$35,724
\$26,197	\$34,711	\$43,226
\$32,010	\$42,941	\$53,872
\$26,197	\$34,711	\$43,226
\$38,732	\$51,958	\$65,185
\$32,010	\$42,941	\$53,872
\$51,552	\$69,157	\$86,762
\$62,378	\$84,194	\$106,010
\$35,211	\$47,235	\$59,259
\$28,817	\$38,182	\$47,548
\$56,707	\$76,540	\$96,373
	\$21,651 \$26,197 \$32,010 \$26,197 \$38,732 \$32,010 \$51,552 \$62,378 \$35,211 \$28,817	\$21,651 \$28,687 \$26,197 \$34,711 \$32,010 \$42,941 \$26,197 \$34,711 \$38,732 \$51,958 \$32,010 \$42,941 \$51,552 \$69,157 \$62,378 \$84,194 \$35,211 \$47,235 \$28,817 \$38,182

Compensation for the positions at DAS was competitive with those of other cities and counties in the Dallas metro area and the State.

Classification/Equivalent	DAS	Houston	Austin
Animal Keeper	\$21,651	\$20,800	\$22,000
Animal Services Officer	\$26,197	N/A	\$25,661
Veterinarian	\$56,707	N/A	\$55,332
Supervisor	\$38,732	\$35,204	\$36,414

In addition, all DAS employees were eligible for benefits as established in the Personnel Rules and the Dallas City Code, which included health benefits, life insurance, disability, paid leave, and a retirement plan.

The City of Dallas had faced the consequences of the recent economic downturn by imposing a 2% pay reduction for all City employees through five scheduled furlough days.

Recommendations

- ✓ Obtain and review a copy of the SAWA Salary Report⁵⁰. In this report, the pay rates and benefits of like-size agencies are compared.
- ✓ Prepare employee benefits statements once a year to outline the value of their benefits packages. Many employees have difficulty seeing beyond the amount of their paychecks and do not place a monetary value on benefits such as health insurance and paid time off.

Discussion

The general economy and regional differences, unemployment trends and their impact on hiring, and the resources of the organization all influence what staff is paid. For these reasons, The HSUS team refrains from making specific recommendations about the levels at which staff should be paid and offers only general observations and suggestions.

Wages and salaries are traditionally the largest percentage of an organization's budget, with over 60% allocated to human resources. This is appropriate since the animal care and control profession is a service industry. Employees expect fair remuneration for the services they perform. However, what is often lacking is the understanding that compensation is affected by many factors: the expectation of fairness by employees, competitive labor market wages, the value of the other benefits provided to employees, and the organization's ability to pay, federal and local laws, etc.

Often, salaries for animal care and welfare agency staff are under-estimated because the individuals conducting the classification review do not fully understand the many nuances of these jobs. Positions at animal shelters enforce the laws, ensure public safety, rescue animals from cruelty and neglect, use computers, handle controlled substances, and provide direct care for pets belonging to residents of the community. The impact of these jobs on the quality of life for the people and animals of a community, as well as the liability issues facing the employing agency, are extensive. Classification and compensation specialists that study these positions should be mindful of all these considerations while developing salary ranges.

⁵⁰ Society of Animal Welfare Administrators Salary Survey, <u>www.sawanetwork.org</u>

As in many cities and counties across the country, the economic downturn had resulted in layoffs, the "freezing" of positions, suspension of cost of living increases, suspension of merit and step increases, and the use of innovative cost-saving approaches such as furlough days.

10.6 STAFF UNIFORMS (EXCLUDING FIELD SERVICES)

Observations

Overall, the appearance of DAS staff was professional. The animal keepers wore easily identifiable logoed t-shirts; the veterinary staff wore scrubs. The non-uniformed employees and managers were dressed in business casual attire, which is standard for the animal services industry. Some employees wore their City-issued Identification cards but others did not.

Recommendations

✓ Require all non-uniformed employees and employees assigned to customer service areas to wear a name tag that also indicates their title. Name patches can be sewn onto animal keepers' uniforms so there is no need to wear clip-on or hanging cards that can become caught on animals or objects.

Discussion

A uniform and name tag is an element of any good customer service policy. A neatly presented, practical uniform specifically designed for direct animal care work enhances morale, easily identifies employees, and signifies pride in an organization. Equally important in this age of heightened security concerns and employee safety is photo identification.

10.7 PERSONNEL POLICY

Observations

The director of the Department of Human Services for the City of Dallas was appointed by the city manager to administer the personnel system for the City. The City had comprehensive Personnel Rules that were part of the Dallas City Code. The Personnel Rules established formal requirements, rules, and expectations governing compensation, leave policies, benefits, rules of conduct, discipline, grievance and appeal processes, and wages. There was no separate employee handbook for DAS. The City's Personnel Rules were available to all managers and employees on the City's Intranet.

All personnel files were kept at the City's Department of Human Resources.

Recommendations

✓ Explore development of an employee handbook to address specific division policies, expectations, procedures, and guidelines for DAS employees.

Discussion

None.

10.8 TURNOVER/RECRUITMENT/DISCIPLINE

Observations

Recruitment to fill vacant positions at DAS was managed at the department level in collaboration with the City's Human Resources Department. The City had a comprehensive online job announcement program on its website; applicants for vacant positions could apply online. The recruitment process for each job vacancy resulted in the creation of a certified list of eligible candidates. The division manager had the authority to hire employees contingent on the outcome of the candidate's drug test and background check. The staffing report reviewed by the team indicated only a few job vacancies at DAS at the time of the site visit.

The HSUS team was told that there had been turnover in management positions at DAS over the past three to four years resulting in key managers being in their positions for only a short period of time. The DCCS reassigned managers from within their department.

Discipline, grievance, and appeal procedures were governed by the City's Personnel Rules and by the Civil Service Board. Employees at DAS were not represented by a union. The Personnel Rules contained clear, comprehensive procedures for a formal disciplinary process, which included reprimands, suspension, demotion, and discharge. The Personnel Rules provided for letters of counseling that were not considered to be disciplinary action, but were meant to advise employees about deficiencies in their conduct or performance, possible violations caused by the employees' conduct or performance should improve.

DAS managers and supervisors had the authority to initiate disciplinary actions. The procedure required that the employee was given a written notice stating the violation and the resulting action that would be taken. As noted earlier in this report, at the time of the site visit, the disciplinary process was temporarily suspended due to allegations that managers/supervisors were using it inappropriately.

The steps in the grievance process were established in the Personnel Rules.

Recommendations

✓ Create a "willingness" checklist to prepare the applicant for the intensity of the animal sheltering experience. This checklist should include things like euthanasia, the smells, noise, and physical danger posed by working with animals.

- ✓ Develop and implement an exit interview procedure for all employees who resign from DAS. The City's Human Resources Department can be an excellent resource for creating a questionnaire.
- ✓ Provide training to managers and supervisors on conducting effective disciplinary sessions with subordinates.

11.0 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Observations

DAS's budget was funded by a combination of program revenues, i.e., pet registration fees and shelter fees, and was supplemented by the City's general fund. The FY09-10 adopted budget was \$7,729,841. The City of Dallas utilizes the AMS Advantage ERP® data system, an industry standard, for its financial management and performance budgeting. The budget is developed and overseen at DCCS, but DAS has a finance department, staffed with a manager and support personnel who are responsible for purchasing and accounts payable.

The HSUS team reviewed the financial performance for FY08-09, which was the last complete fiscal year. The following is a high-level summary comparing actuals to budget.

FY08-09	Budget	Pct	Actual	Pct
Program Revenue	\$505,000	6.9%	\$827,472	12.5%
General Fund	\$6,809,843	93.1%	\$5,844,586	87.5%
Total	\$7,314,843	100%	\$6,672,058	100%

REVENUE SOURCES

Revenue Source	FY08-09 Bud	FY08-09 Actual	Difference
Dog Registration	\$275,000	\$364,606	\$89,606
Cat Registration	\$55,000	\$70,634	\$15,634
Animal Control Fees	\$150,000	\$360,324	\$210,324
Donations	\$0	\$6,908	\$6,908
Ivor O'Connor Trust	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0
Total	\$505,000	\$827,472	\$322,472

The HSUS team reviewed the FY08-09 budget in comparison with the FY09-10 budget. FY09-10 adopted budget line item details were provided to The HSUS team and were found on the City's website. The adopted budget detail was broken out at the object level. The subtotals for personnel and supplies were as follows:

Description	FY08-09	FY09-10
Personnel	\$ 5,454,472	\$ 5,293,828
Supplies & Materials	\$ 1,885,201	\$ 1,936,013
Subtotal	\$ 7,339,673	\$ 7,229,841
Add'l Resource (Trust)	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000
Total	\$ 7,839,673	\$ 7,729,841

Employee salaries and benefits represented 74.5% of the total budget.

There were no budget details for program level activities such as shelter operations, field services, administration, finance, or veterinary services.

In addition to the operating budget, DAS received funding from a trust fund, the Ivor O'Connor Morgan Trust. The trust provided \$100,000 annually to DAS for dog adoption expenses. The trust was a multi-year fund in the accounting system and did not have an annual expense. The FY09-10 adopted budget listed a \$500,000 budget. The HSUS team was told that in FY08-09, trust fund expenses included grooming services, the purchase of artificial turf for exercise yards, installation of an awning for the exterior exercise yards, Photoshop® software and other supplies for the dog adoption program. There was no expenditure detail available for the Ivor O'Connor Morgan Trust fund.

The FY09-10 adopted budget document included the following note:

"Major budget item: Key positions (animal officers/keepers) remained unchanged. General fund decrease due to furlough days, reduced fuel, workers' compensation, programming, electricity, and cancellation of day labor. The budget showed a \$160,646 reduction in personnel costs (2.9%), which reflected the citywide four-day furlough policy."

The human population of the City of Dallas was 1,279,910 (2008). The cost per capita for the City of Dallas to provide animal services is \$6.12. The following are the animal services costs per capita from other major Texas cities:

Jurisdiction	Population	Budget	Cost/Capita
Austin	718,912	\$4.45 m	\$6.19
Houston	2,144,491	\$3.65 m	\$1.70
San Antonio	1,296,682	\$8.58 m	\$6.61
Dallas	1,279,910	\$7.73 m	\$6.12

DAS did not have a formal private donation program. However, DAS received \$6,908 in unsolicited donations in FY08-09.

Recommendations

- ✓ Budget DAS expenditures at the program level to better monitor expenses and hold managers accountable for controlling their allowance.
- ✓ Explore the creation of a trust fund or restricted account through which private donations can be accepted. Solicit donations and pursue private grants to help supplement DAS animal care programs.

Discussion

DAS is a well funded animal services organization at \$6.04 per capita with 93.1% of its total funding coming from the City's general fund.

Budgeting at program levels enables elected officials and administrators to better understand the cost of providing services, such as cost per sheltered animal, veterinary cost per patient, cost to respond to field service calls, etc.

The Humane Society of the United States is the nation's largest and most effective animal protection organization—backed by 11 million Americans, or one in every 28. Established in 1954, The HSUS seeks a humane and sustainable world for all animals—a world that will also benefit people. We are America's mainstream force against cruelty, exploitation and neglect, as well as the most trusted voice extolling the human-animal bond.

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