

Press release
10 June 2010

SPCA warns of dangers to animals from vuvuzelas

The Cape of Good Hope (CoGH) SPCA is preparing to receive many lost and stray pets, terrified by the loud sounds emitted by vuvuzelas and have appealed to pet owners to take extra measures to protect their animals from its negative effects.

“Whilst we are really excited about FIFA World Cup and welcome the festivities, we’re also dreading the effects that vuvuzelas may have on animals. We are expecting to receive many more stray and lost animals during the FIFA World Cup and fear that many more could become seriously or fatally injured, as they try and escape the loud noises from vuvuzelas”, said Allan Perrins, CoGH SPCA CEO.

According to the SPCA, animals are able to hear a wider range of sounds than humans can and the already loud noise from a vuvuzela will be at least seven times louder to animals. For most animals their natural response is to try and run away from the sound with sometimes tragic consequences such as trauma and injuries from motor vehicle accidents.

According to Perrins the Animals Protection Act clearly states that it is illegal for any person to terrify any animal. “We appeal to people to act responsibly and not blow a vuvuzela close to an animal, which may cause it to become traumatized”, he said.

The SPCA advises residents living in and around areas close to the CBD and Cape Town Stadium to adopt the following guidelines to help protect their pets:-

- Ensure all animals have identification (i.e. microchip and/or identity tag);
- If possible, stay at home with them and help to keep them calm;
- If you can't be at home, keep your pets inside and preferably in a room that is safe and secure;
- Try and mask any noise by drawing the curtains and playing calming music;
- Put familiar and comforting things around them;
- Give your pets a nutritious and balanced meal at night – this is likely to make them more sleepy;
- Give them something to chew on – a chewy bone or catnip toys for cats;
- If you suspect your pet will react badly to the vuvuzela's sound, then seek professional advice from your veterinarian who may prescribe a sedative to help them cope. There are also effective homeopathic remedies available that may be bought across the counter at vet shops to help keep your pet calm.

Concerned members of the public are to please report any acts of alleged cruelty to the SPCA 24 hr control centre - 700 4140 /59 or a/h to 083 326 1604. The SPCA Hospital will be open and should you require veterinary medical assistance please telephone (021) 700 4145.

Ends

Notes to the Editor

The comparative hearing ranges of dogs, cats and humans are as follows:-

Humans:	20Hz – 23Hz
Dogs:	45Hz – 60Hz
Cats:	45Hz – 64Hz

Cats and dogs can hear sounds at least two octaves higher than humans.