

## **NSPCA RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS**

The SPCA movement in South Africa has come under attack during 2009 from various sources, some issues having already been addressed and the response statements published on [www.nspca.co.za](http://www.nspca.co.za) <<http://www.nspca.co.za/>> .

Recent attacks and criticisms arose from an article in The Star newspaper on 02 December 2009. Photographs of deceased pets were published with staff from an SPCA van placing them on a landfill site.

This is a sad reality - a tragedy for which the SPCA movement is not to blame.

Breeding (of whatever kind) plus failure to sterilise pets has led to this over-population. The SPCA will not refuse admission to any animal.

The issue of euthanasia is emotive. Staff are not heartless. We have been challenged with statements that there are alternates such as donating dogs to the South African Police Service. Dogs which “fail” used to be auctioned off. Now they are donated to the SPCA and over 100 dogs were recently received from the SAPS. We ask people to check the reality of “no kill” organisations as some do not euthanase but have given animals to the SPCA for them to be euthanased. We know that animals given to people “who find homes for them on plots” have ended up in other parts of Africa having been sold to security companies. There are worse fates than euthanasia including the use of dogs in fights or as bait to train fighting dogs. This too is the sad reality.

Emotions have risen over the bodies of pets. Very few crematoria/incinerators exist in our country – and please bear in mind that animals cannot be cremated in the same facility as humans. Crematoria are expensive to build and to run.

The NSPCA wishes our hard-earned money to be spent on the living suffering animals.

If a Municipality does not have an incinerator, then animal bodies have to be taken to a landfill. In the instance highlighted in The Star newspaper, the animals had not been placed in plastic bags by the SPCA Randfontein on the specific instruction of the Municipality because plastic does not decompose.

The whole issue is emotive and sensitive. To give perspective, indeed in a perfect world, each SPCA would have an incinerator and crematorium to honour the memory of each animal who may have died for many reasons, not necessarily through euthanasia. But many SPCAs are struggling to survive financially. The SPCA is affected by the current economic situation and our hard-earned “reserves” are needed for the future to assist living animals and already being eroded to cover ongoing operational costs.

The detractors and critics of our movement have the right to speak out. People have the right to ask questions and be given explanations. One reaction we have encountered is to state that they will no longer support the SPCA. Crippling our movement will impact on the animals and there are countless animals out there in our country who are suffering and who need our help. This would impact on communities.

We invite you to spend a day in the life of an SPCA especially during this so-called “festive

season”.

Please spare a thought for our staff who are at the coal-face and bearing the brunt of criticisms and even insults. These are the people who carry out humane euthanasia (interpreted as “killing” or “murder” by some individuals) and who have to take responsibility for the removal and “disposal” of these animals. They deserve support, empathy and understanding.

We are NOT responsible for the situation. Irresponsible members of the public are to blame.

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