



18 March 2025

LETTER OF CONCERN

RE: ACTION REQUIRED REGARDING WEEKEND CARE, DOG HANDLING, AND DOG RETIREMENT

Dear Mr Kanzi Wiseman,

Earlier today, 18 March 2025, I conducted an inspection at the Canine Unit's kennels at Pollsmoor Department of Correctional Services (Pollsmoor DCS). Following my inspection, Warning 13628 was issued addressing immediate concerns requiring immediate feedback and compliance. This letter pertains to additional concerns that could not be addressed on site.

During my visit, I observed that various dogs, including Racer, Mosa, and Aargo, are not receiving their prescribed treatments in accordance with veterinary/prescription instructions and that treatments are missed or delayed.

Notably, the found discrepancies in the administration of medications seem to align with the amount of weekend days that have passed since the treatment was first prescribed. It is concerning that treatments may not be consistently administered during weekends, which compromises the dogs' well-being and prognosis.

Some of the medication required by the dogs is pain management meaning that every time a treatment is missed, that dog is left in pain and discomfort.

1. Written confirmation pertaining to whether dogs receive care (feed, fresh water, walks, and kennel cleaning) and treatments on weekends must be sent to insp4@spca-ct.co.za by 16:30 on Monday, 24Tuesday, 25 March 2025. If such care is provided, then send feedback, including proof of weekend schedules, and clarity as to how it will be ensured dogs receive treatment consistently and as per veterinary instructions going forward.

Furthermore, it was confirmed with me that Racer's missed and delayed treatments are due to his aggression and him not allowing handlers to clean and treat his ears. I was told only two people were able to adequately handle Racer, Mr Mgidini (who is not always required to be at the kennels) and Mr Matika, a handler who will only be returning from leave tomorrow, Wednesday, 19 March 2025.

Racer cannot be adequately handled by all the staff currently on duty resulting in Racer not being provided with the prescribed treatment. The inability of handlers to manage dogs safely directly compromises the care that can be provided to such dogs.

Whilst it is common that some working dogs require more specialised handling, and that certain handlers may not have the required experience or training to handle more aggressive animals, it is the responsibility of the relevant department to provide relevant training and ensure that each handler is able to safely handle each and any of the working dogs so as to prevent lack of adequate care provision.

2. Written confirmation pertaining to the measures Pollsmoor DCS will be taking to ensure all dogs in the department's care can be safely and humanely handled by all employed handlers must be sent to insp4@spca-ct.co.za by 16:30 on Monday, 24Tuesday, 25 March 2025. Provide feedback, including a proposed timeframe and a plan, that confirms how these issues will be addressed to ensure effective and

humane handling of working dogs so as to prevent further compromises in the provision of care to such dogs.

Lastly, having reviewed records of the department's working dogs, I noted that at least four (4) of the dogs are either approaching eight (8) years of age or are already over eight (8) years of age, such as Racer who is approximately ten (10) years old and Milo who is approximately nine (9) years old. Such dogs should be approaching the end of their working lives, yet they are still being worked, even whilst under treatment.

Both Mosa and Racer are receiving treatment for pain management (one of which is specifically to manage discomfort and pain related to hip dysplasia). Given the ages and required medical treatment for the dogs mentioned above, it is strongly recommended that they be considered for retirement in the interest of their well-being.

3. Feedback pertaining to the department's policy on dog retirement, including what qualifies a dog to be considered for retirement and what thereafter happens to retired dogs, must be sent to insp4@spca-ct.co.za by Tuesday, 25 March 2025. Such feedback must include measures followed relevant to the care and possible rehoming of any retired dogs.

We look forward to receiving the requested feedback within the given timeframes.

Thank you.

Kind regards,

Nicole Venter
Inspector
Cape of Good Hope SPCA
Email: insp4@spca-ct.co.za