



Terra Johnston, Executive Director
Ken Dean, Director of Animal Protection Services

History of the Alberta SPCA

- Formed in 1959 by individuals who recognized a growing need for provincial legislation in rural Alberta
- Board and staff advocated and assisted on the formation of the *Animal Protection Act* which was proclaimed in 1967
- Received its first ever grant in 1968 from the provincial government enabling the agency to enforce the new law



Alberta SPCA

- Not All SPCAs are created alike
- Model is different in each Province
- In Alberta, all SPCAs and Humane Societies are independently operated



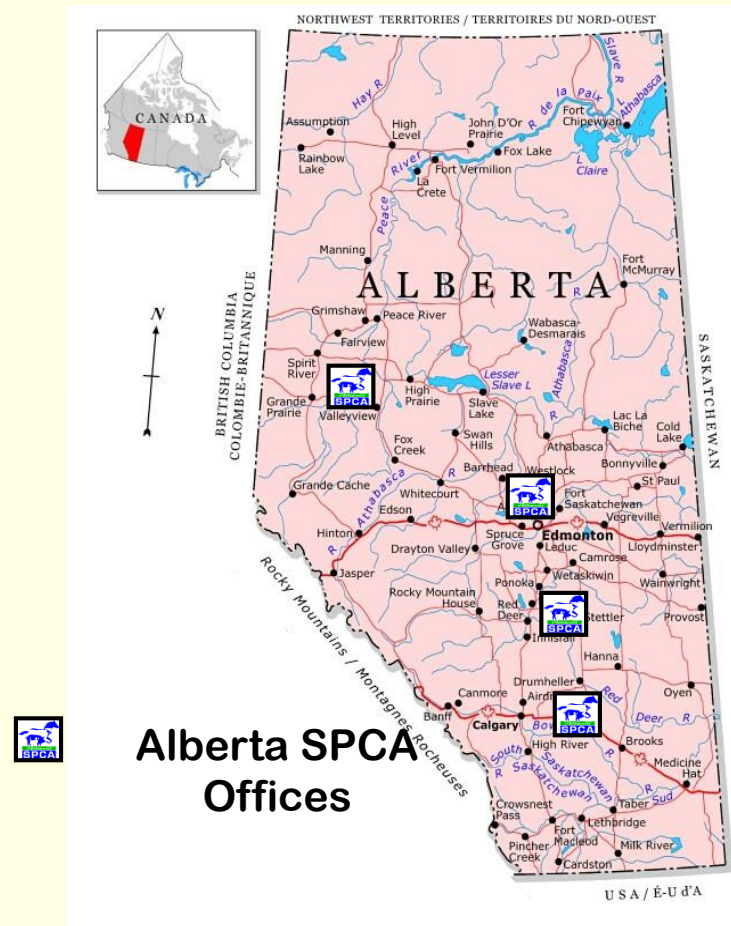
Alberta SPCA

- Board of Directors – max 9 members
- Current board membership made up from those in both rural and urban communities
- Producer, veterinarians, teacher, small animal rescues and those with experience in board governance
- Board is very mindful of their responsibility to ensure recruitment of those with animal welfare vs those with animal rights agenda



Alberta SPCA is...

- A province-wide, charitable organization
- Offices located in Edmonton, Grande Prairie, Innisfail and Okotoks.



Alberta SPCA has...

- Two main outreach programs



**Animal Protection
Services**



Education

The Alberta Protection Act

- Gives our Peace Officers legal authority to attend on private land if he/she believes there is an animal in distress.
- Gives our Peace Officers the legal authority to relieve distress including taking custody of the animal(s) and/or euthanizing or having the animal euthanized.



Definition of Distress

For the purposes of this Act, an animal is in Distress if it is:

- (a) deprived of adequate shelter, ventilation, space, food, water or veterinary care or reasonable protection from injurious heat or cold,
- (b) injured, sick, in pain or suffering, or
- (c) abused or subjected to undue hardship, privation or neglect.

Peace Officers/Investigators

- Alberta SPCA is an authorized employer of Peace Officers.
- Legislation governing peace officers is found in the *Peace Officer Act*, the *Peace Officer Regulation* and the *Peace Officer (Ministerial) Regulation*.
- Our peace officers are given specific powers and authorities, under the current Alberta *Peace Officer Act* (May, 2007).



Peace Officers/Investigators

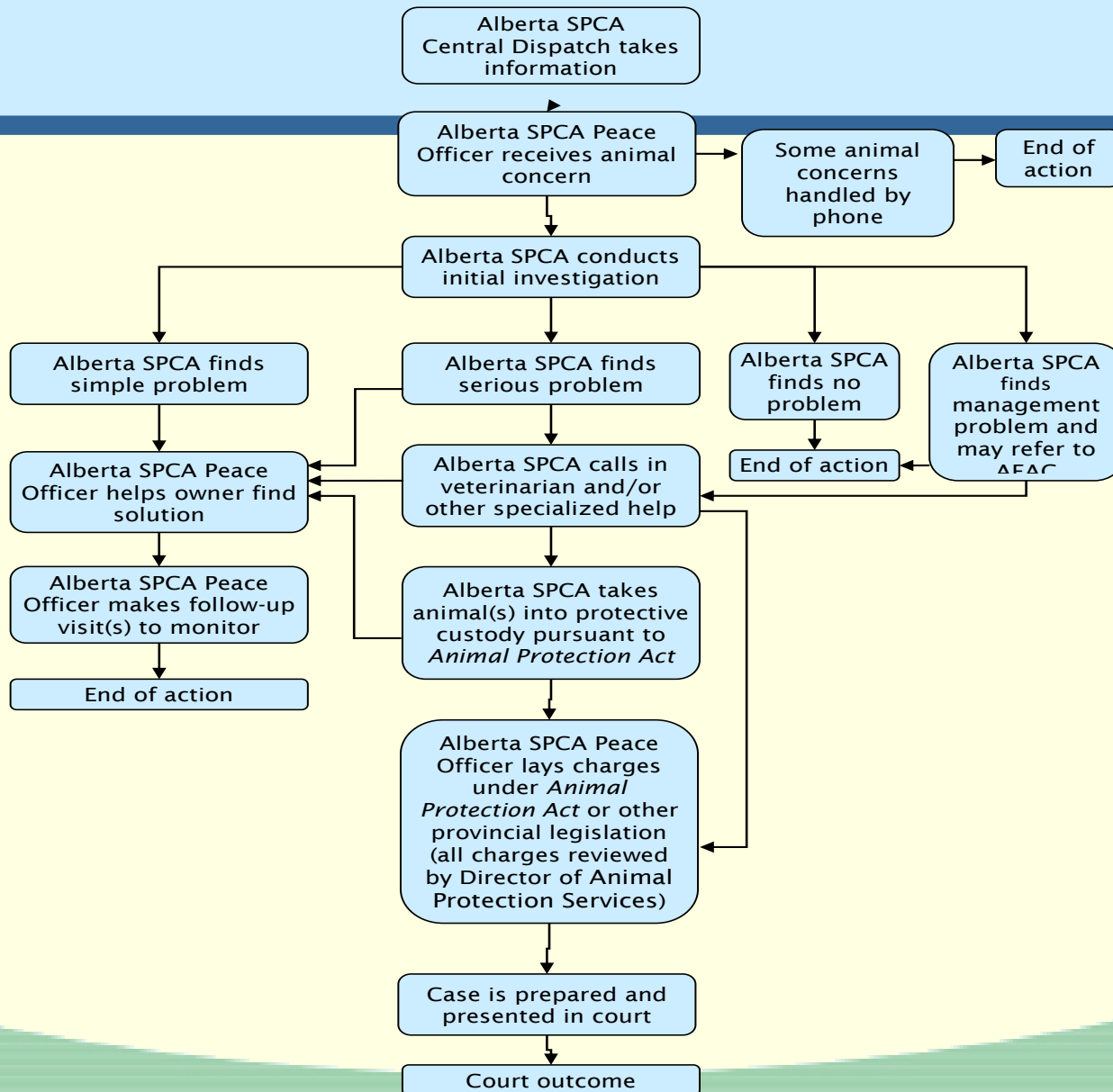
- Alberta Justice and Solicitor General has overall authority for the Peace Officer Program, and it is administered by the Public Security Division under the Assistant Deputy Minister/Director of Law Enforcement.



Investigations

- Complaint driven
 - ◆ Typically receive from a member of the public, or
 - ◆ Other agencies such as ARD, AFAC, SPCA/Humane Societies, and RCMP/Municipal Police
- Goal is to ensure animals are not in distress
- Situations vary considerably
- Response of our Peace Officer depends on severity of the situation





APS – Philosophy

- The goal of the Alberta SPCA's Animal Protection Services Philosophy is for all animal owners to demonstrate compliance.



APS – Philosophy cont.

■ Basic Principles:

1. Compliance is facilitated through a good understanding of the purpose and rationale of the specific requirements of any legislation or standard.
2. A severity of distress-based approach to compliance will be used.
3. Compliance tools will be deployed in a logical sequence of steps, with the starting point and speed of progression based on severity of distress.
4. The approach to compliance will take into account the animal owner's/caretaker's previous record of compliance, or beyond compliance, behaviour.

APS – Philosophy cont.

5. The Alberta SPCA has an obligation to assess overall compliance and will use monitoring activities as appropriate for the distress associated with the specific circumstances.
6. Responding to public complaints is part of the Alberta SPCA's Animal Protection Services Program. Each complaint will be assessed and where the Alberta SPCA has a role, investigated, and the appropriate action taken to resolve the complaint. Complainants will be advised upon resolution of the investigation.
7. Prosecution is a tool of compliance – not a goal.
8. Prosecution will be evidence-based, following a documented investigation and adjudicated by the courts.



Neglect

- Horses on Winter Pasture



Neglect

- Untreated medical conditions
 - ◆ **Founder and overgrown hooves**



Neglect

- Untreated medical conditions
 - ◆ Age Related



Neglect

- Lack of feed



Neglect

- Untreated medical conditions
 - ◆ **Cancer Eye**



Deliberate Acts of Cruelty

- Dragging animals behind vehicle
- Abusive training techniques
- Kicking/beating an animal

2015 Statistics

- Summary

Investigations	*2236
Investigations resulting in seizures	55
Animals Seized**	1265
Charges	16

* 173 investigations involving beef cattle

Alberta SPCA & the Role of the Veterinarian

- For general advice.
- To provide training for our Peace Officers.



Role of the Veterinarian cont'd

- As part of the investigation process:
 - ◆ If an animal(s) appears to be in distress, our Peace Officer will have the owner call his/her veterinarian for a diagnosis and recommended treatment.
 - ◆ If our Peace Officer determines a search warrant is necessary, then he/she will call a veterinarian to attend to provide expert advise regarding the condition of the animal(s).

Role of the Veterinarian cont'd

- At any point in an investigation euthanasia of compromised animals may be required
- Where possible veterinarians will euthanize a compromised animal(s)

Role of the Veterinarian cont'd

- Should charges be laid, a veterinarian may be called to provide expert testimony regarding the condition of the animal(s).

Alberta SPCA

Thank you! Questions?

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