

**Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan**

# **Annual Report**

**April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022**



**Animal Protection Services**  
SASKATCHEWAN



# APSS Annual Report 2021-2022

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## Chairperson's Report

The objective of the Board for 2021 /2022 year was to obtain an adequate and sustainable funding (a least three years) agreement with the Ministry for APSS. This is to ensure that APSS employees would be employed into the future and APSS will continue to be an operational entity in Saskatchewan.

The Executive Committee, and the Executive Director held several meetings with the Ministry to explain the requirements for more APO'S, a dispatcher, and an increase in funding. These meetings were held both virtually and in person. To accomplish this objective the ED, Don Ferguson continually compiled 'what if' statistical data and actual data that was required to convince the Ministry of the funding required.

The Ministry advised the Cities of Regina and Saskatoon that funding requested from them to continue investigating animal welfare cases would not be provided. The City of Regina felt they would continue to investigate animal welfare cases while the City of Saskatoon decided not to investigate animal welfare complaints, turning these cases over to APSS.

The Board was advised that the new contract would be for three fiscal years with increased funding to hire a dispatcher and APO'S to deal with animal welfare complaints in Saskatoon. There would be funding to increase staff to support the current complement of APO'S in completing the increased work within Saskatchewan.

During the past six years APSS has grown into a respected enforcement agency dealing with both livestock and companion animals. Police forces are now readily assisting, cooperating, and relying on APSS to deal with investigations involving animals. These agencies are finding that there is a great deal of over lapping of cases as they deal with domestic abuse, mental health issues and various types of other criminal activity.

I am extremely proud of the work that the ED, Don Ferguson did it providing the Board and the Ministry with the required information to obtain the new contract. I am grateful for the work each Board Member completed in obtaining the contract with the Ministry. I would also like to thank the Ministry staff for their support and understanding in working through the contract process.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to extend my extreme gratitude to the office staff and Animal Protection Officers for continuing to work so diligently through the tumultuous time of contract negotiations, they are truly a credit to the organization.

Thank you everyone for a great year in promoting animal welfare in Saskatchewan.

Dave Hoeft  
Chairperson APSS Board of Directors

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## Staff & Office

Our staffing has increased over the past year. We welcomed a 7<sup>th</sup> fulltime Animal Protection Officer in May 2020. We have five officers dispatched out of our northern region office along with our Operations Assistance and Executive Director located in Saskatoon. The other two officers are dispatched out of our southern region office located in Moose Jaw. Despite this increase in staffing, it still only allows for primarily reactive investigations and still little in the way of a proactive approach to *The Animal Protection Act, 2018* enforcement. Like the rest of the world our operations continued to be disrupted by COVID-19. On several occasions we were operating short staffed as a result of requirements by Public Health for Animal Protection Officers to self isolate due to exposure and/or potential exposures to COVID-19. Hopefully with a new long term funding agreement in place with the Ministry of Agriculture the APSS will be hiring three additional Animal Protection Officers and a Dispatcher while absorbing the jurisdiction of the city of Saskatoon in the fall of 2022. These hires will likely improve response times and will hopefully reduce the amount of overtime currently being accumulated by animal protection officers in the province.

## Case work

We opened a total of 738 new cases in 2021-2022 which was the most since APSS' inception. This was an increase of 72 cases over the previous year. Case work returned to a normal case load pattern this year compared to the initial year of dealing with COVID-19. It still appears that the general public are now more willing to call about what they perceive to be an animal welfare problem. Whether there are actually more animal welfare issues or whether Animal Protection Services is just being made aware of it more now still remains to be seen. This year's numbers were much higher than the average of 697 for the previous 4 years (Table 1). Of those complaints, 371 of those involved dogs (43% of the total), with 160 (19%) horse complaints, 144 (17%) cattle complaints, 102 (12%) cat complaints, 21 (about 2%) sheep/goat complaints, 12 hog complaints, 16 fowl complaints, eight camelid complaints, 18 (2%) "other" complaints, and 10 bison and one cervid complaint. (Table 2, Figure 1). This case distribution by species follows the expected pattern however, we saw an increase of 55 individual complaints related to cattle.

**Table 1** Number of cases per month for the last five years, including a four-year average

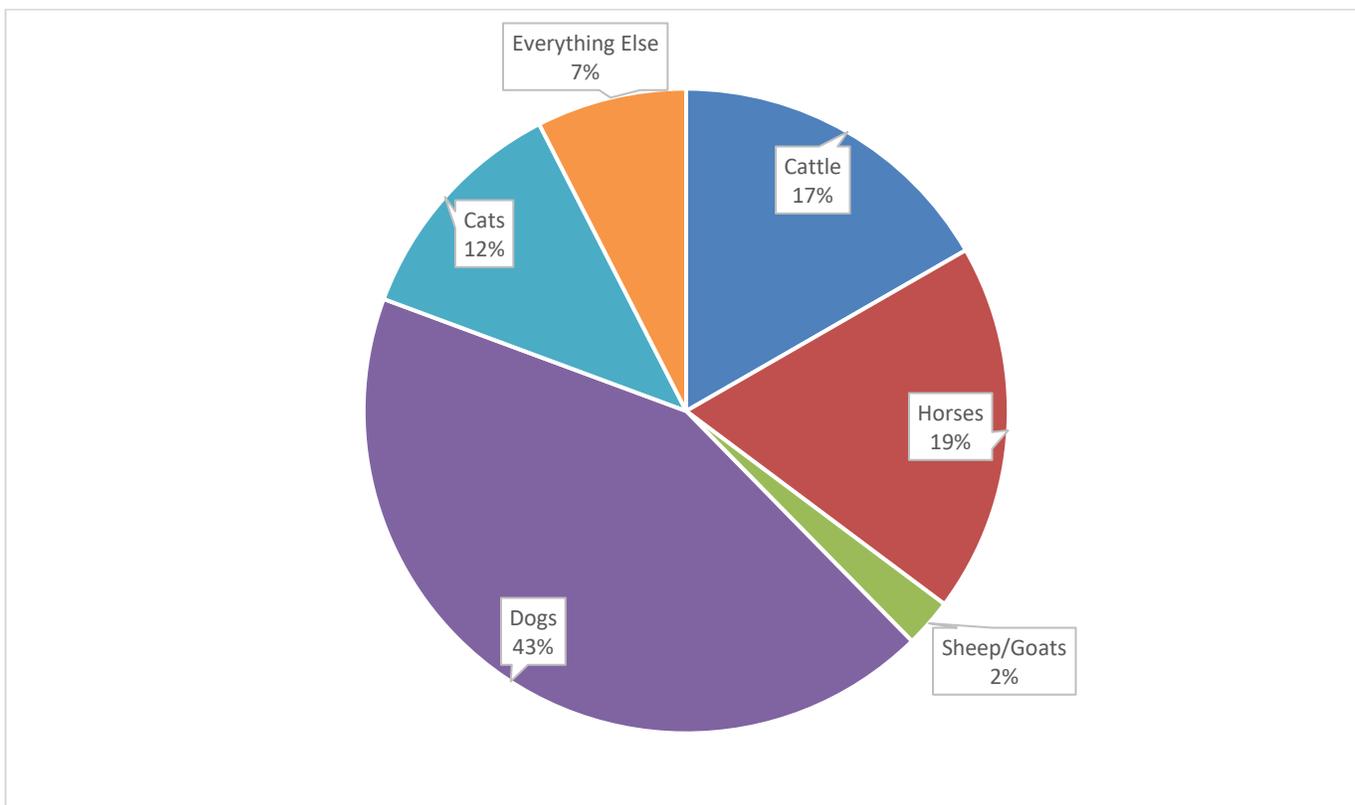
Total # Cases	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	total
2017-2018	47	72	57	65	70	48	62	54	36	69	62	51	693
2018-2019	49	45	77	64	66	42	64	56	55	76	53	50	697
2019-2020	57	90	63	68	76	49	53	48	44	78	48	57	731
2020-2021	31	41	61	63	71	67	54	60	47	56	77	38	666
4 year Avg	46	62	65	65	71	52	58	55	46	70	60	49	697
2021-2022	57	64	64	78	69	59	51	69	62	65	45	55	738

**Table 2** Number of complaints by species and month for 2021-2022. Note that the total number of cases is lower than the total per species – this is because many complaints involve more than one species.

Table 2

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	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	total
Cattle	9	9	10	17	12	9	15	19	7	12	6	19	144
Horses	16	14	11	12	16	9	11	9	14	22	9	17	160
Bison	0	1	0	3	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	10
Sheep/Goats	1	1	4	4	3	0	2	0	0	2	1	3	21
Hogs	0	2	0	2	0	0	3	2	0	1	0	2	12
Cervids	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Camelids	0	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	8
Fowl	0	3	1	3	1	2	0	1	2	1	0	2	16
Dogs	26	31	37	43	37	32	24	33	31	30	24	23	371
Cats	11	11	8	12	7	12	5	10	9	6	8	3	102
Other	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	3	1	0	1	18
Total cases	57	64	64	78	69	59	51	69	62	65	45	55	738



**Figure 1** Proportion of cases by species 2021-2022

We classify our cases as either “Founded”, “Unfounded” or “Inconclusive”. Founded cases are those where some action or Animal Protection Officer follow up is required. Unfounded cases are those where there is no concern for the well-being of the animals, and inconclusive cases are those where we are unable to assess the animals, generally because our access on to private property and into dwellings is limited under The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The percentage of founded and unfounded complaints varied considerably between species. (Table 3). Overall, our cases were 46% founded, 32% unfounded, and 21% inconclusive. There was a 11% increase in inconclusive files over the past

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year. The unfounded and inconclusive cases are time consuming for our Animal Protection Officers; however, they must initially be treated in the same manner as the founded cases until the nature of the complaint can be determined.

**Table 3** Number and percentage of founded, unfounded, and inconclusive cases by species for 2021-2022

Table 3

	Total	founded		unfounded		Inconclusive	
Cattle	144	75	52%	46	32%	23	16%
Horses	160	81	51%	49	31%	30	19%
Bison	10	3	30%	7	70%	0	0%
Sheep/Goats	21	15	71%	2	10%	4	19%
Hogs	12	8	67%	2	17%	2	17%
Cervids	1	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Camelids	8	6	75%	1	13%	1	13%
Fowl	16	12	75%	1	6%	3	19%
Dogs	371	157	42%	131	35%	83	22%
Cats	102	58	57%	18	18%	26	25%
Other	18	9	50%	4	22%	5	28%

Animal Protection Officers seized animals on 32 separate cases, this was a slight increase than the number of cases from the previous year of 26 (Table 4). In total, 371 animals were seized, comprised of 92 cats, 24 cattle, 50 dogs, 57 horses, 87 bison, 58 hogs, and three alpacas. Livestock seizures can be particularly demanding in terms of time, specialized equipment and people required to capture and transport the animals, and usually require significant amounts of pre-planning. A further 116 cats, 34 dogs, and one rabbit were voluntarily surrendered. Animals were placed with SPCAs/Humane Societies, with veterinarians, with private caretakers, sold at auction, or euthanized. We rely heavily on the services of SPCAs/Humane Societies around the province, and there are usually limitations on the number and type of animals that the facilities can house. Arranging for caretaking of seized animals for the five business day hold period continues to be a challenge for our Animal Protection Officers.

Animal Protection Officers obtained Search Warrants 14 separate times in 2021-2022, two of these files required multiple warrants. We had charges laid in 16 cases compared with 12 cases last year. Founded files also resulted in 74 Corrective Action Orders being issued which is nearly double from the previous year. These orders compel an owner to rectify conditions that are or may lead to an animal's distress. In 19 cases formal written warnings were issued, these warnings advise owners that charges may be laid in the future should a similar incident occur. This is also an increase from the previous year. Finally, the remaining 346 files were dealt with by way of education for and compliance by the owner. In all cases the animal's distress was relieved either by the owner or by the animals being seized and taken into protective custody by APSS.

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**Table 4** Listing of seized and surrendered animals in the 2021-2022 year (PDS indicates animal remains that were sent for testing)

File Number	Date	Warrant ?	Column1	location	delivered to	number of animals	type of animal
644MR21-O	21-Apr-21	y	seized	Gravelbourg	Artistique Acres	26	cat
148JN21-O	17-Jun-21	n	seized	Nipawin	pds	1	dog
152JN21-O	17-Jun-21	n	seized	Star City	vet	1	dog
158JN21-O	25-Jun-21	n	seized	Hepburn	Prince Albert SPCA	1	cat
167JN21-O	30-Jun-21	n	seized	St. Denis	Buena Vista Kennels	1	cat
194JL21-F	28-Sep-21	y	seized	Chaplin	Russell Dean	21	pig
	28-Sep-21	y	seized	Chaplin	Russell Dean	2	cattle
	28-Sep-21	y	seized	Chaplin	Russell Dean	3	alpacas
200JL21-O	09-Jul-21	n	seized	Vonda	Buena Vista Kennels	1	dog
209JL21-O	12-Jul-21	n	seized	Melville	Artistique Acres	1	dog
226JL21-F	19-Jul-21	n	seized	White Bear FN	Artistique Acres	3	dog
276AU21-F	14-Oct-21	n	seized	Carnduff	held on site	26	horse
	14-Oct-21	n	seized	Carnduff	held on site	10	pig
351SE21-F	18-Oct-21	y	seized	Biggar	pds	7	bison
	07-Feb-22	y	seized	Biggar	Heartland Livestock Moose Jaw	1	horse
	07-Feb-22	y	seized	Biggar	Heartland Livestock Moose Jaw	9	cattle
	07-Feb-22	y	seized	Biggar	pds	2	cattle
	07-Feb-22	y	seized	Biggar	pds	1	bison
	08-Feb-22	y	seized	Biggar	Quill Creek	84	bison
	08-Feb-22	y	seized	Biggar	pds	2	bison
	09-Feb-22	y	seized	Biggar	Quill Creek	3	bison
	22-Feb-22	n	seized	Beardy's and Okemasis	vet	1	dog
389SE21-O	30-Sep-21	y	seized	Piapot	Artistique Acres	28	cat
404OC21-O	06-Oct-21	n	seized	Disley	Artistique Acres	4	cat
419OC21-F	23-Nov-21	y	seized	Fort Qu'Appelle	pds	3	dog
	15-Dec-21	y	seized	Fort Qu'Appelle	Buena Vista Kennels	30	dog
	15-Dec-21	y	seized	Fort Qu'Appelle	vet	1	dog
	15-Dec-21	y	seized	Fort Qu'Appelle	Artistique Acres	1	dog
427OC21-F	03-Feb-22	n	seized	Wawota	caregivers	3	horse
470NV21-O	16-Nov-21	n	seized	Saskatoon	Buena Vista Kennels	7	cat
479NV21-F	09-Dec-21	n	seized	Choiceland	vet	1	dog
	24-Nov-21	n	seized	Shamrock	Heartland Livestock Moose Jaw	2	cattle
SR519DE21	21-Mar-22	n	seized	Wakaw	Buena Vista Kennels	5	dog
533DE21-O	17-Feb-22	y	seized	Fenwood	Artistique Acres	14	cat
618JA22-F	19-Jan-22	n	seized	Big River	pds	1	pig
	20-Jan-22	n	seized	Big River	Russell Dean	12	pig
637JA22-O	01-Feb-22	n	seized	Regina Beach	Artistique Acres	1	dog
	01-Feb-22	n	seized	Regina Beach	Artistique Acres	1	cat
656FE22-F	23-Mar-22	n	seized	Dundurn	vet	1	cat
	23-Mar-22	n	seized	Dundurn	pds	1	cat
	23-Mar-22	n	seized	Dundurn	pds	1	dog
663FE22-F	22-Feb-22	n	seized	Burr	Prince Albert SPCA	3	dog

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	02-Mar-22	n	seized	Burr	vet		4	cat
694MR22-O	16-Mar-22	y	seized	Melville	Artistique Acres		4	cat
	17-Mar-22	y	seized	Melville	vet		1	cat
697MR22-F	11-Mar-22	n	seized	Keeseekoose FN	Heartland Livestock Yorkton		1	horse
	11-Mar-22	n	seized	Keeseekoose FN	pds	Heartland Livestock Moose	1	horse
701MR22-F	23-Mar-22	y	seized	Mossbank	Jaw		15	pig
	23-Mar-22	y	seized	Mossbank	pds		1	pig
	23-Mar-22	y	seized	Mossbank	Artistique Acres		1	dog
	23-Mar-22	y	seized	Mossbank	Jaw	Heartland Livestock Moose	11	cattle
	23-Mar-22	y	seized	Mossbank	pds		3	cattle
	23-Mar-22	y	seized	Mossbank	pds		3	horse
	24-Mar-22	y	seized	Mossbank	Jaw	Heartland Livestock Moose	26	horse
714MR22-F	17-Mar-22	n	seized	Wawota	pds		6	cattle

File Number	Date	Warrant ?	Column1	location	delivered to	number of animals	type of animal
520JA21-O	06-Jun-21	n	surrendered	Bankend	Yorkton SPCA	5	cat
306SE20-O	15-Jun-21	n	surrendered	Craven	Yorkton SPCA	4	cat
654MR21-O	14-Apr-21	n	surrendered	Turtleford	Battelfords Humane Society	2	cat
	14-Apr-21	n	surrendered	Turtleford	Prince Albert SPCA	1	dog
	14-Apr-21	n	surrendered	Turtleford	Prince Albert SPCA	4	cat
	14-Apr-21	n	surrendered	Turtleford	Lloydminster SPCA	9	cat
	14-Apr-21	n	surrendered	Turtleford	Moose Jaw Humane Society	9	cat
	14-Apr-21	n	surrendered	Turtleford	Swift Current SPCA	4	cat
	14-Apr-21	n	surrendered	Turtleford	vet	1	cat
658MR21-F	27-May-21	n	surrendered	Fairy Hill	Yorkton SPCA	8	cat
666MR21-O	15-Apr-21	n	surrendered	Spalding	Mozart Sympathy Animal Control & Rescue	1	cat
039AP21-F	22-Apr-21	n	surrendered	Paynton	Lloydminster SPCA	1	rabbit
050AP21-F	06-May-21	n	surrendered	Steelman	Moose Jaw Humane Society	1	dog
074MY21-O	12-May-21	n	surrendered	Weyakwin	Prince Albert SPCA	1	dog
080MY21-F	09-Jul-21	n	surrendered	Regina	Artistique Acres	7	cat
095MY21-O	09-Jun-21	n	surrendered	Swift Current	Swift Current SPCA	4	cat
	09-Jun-21	n	surrendered	Swift Current	Artistique Acres	6	cat
	16-Jun-21	y	surrendered	Swift Current	Artistique Acres	7	cat
156JN21-O	10-Aug-21	n	surrendered	Moose Jaw	Artistique Acres	5	cat
	16-Aug-21	n	surrendered	Moose Jaw	vet	2	cat
	17-Sep-21	n	surrendered	Moose Jaw	Artistique Acres	22	cat
160JN21-O	24-Jun-21	n	surrendered	Weyakwin	vet	1	dog
166JN21-O	09-Jul-21	n	surrendered	Bienfait	Artistique Acres	1	dog
208JL21-O	15-Jul-21	n	surrendered	Shaunavon	Artistique Acres	7	cat
225JL21-O	22-Jul-21	n	surrendered	Warman	pds	1	cat
272AU21-F	31-Mar-22	n	surrendered	Claybank	Artistique Acres	4	dog
282AU21-F	09-Mar-22	y	surrendered	Lemberg	vet	1	cat

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371SE21-F	04-Oct-21	n	surrendered	Montreal Lake Cree Nation	vet	1	dog
	26-Oct-21	n	surrendered	Montreal Lake Cree Nation	Saskatoon SPCA	1	dog
378SE21-F	01-Dec-21	n	surrendered	Onion Lake FN	Battelfords Humane Society	1	dog
419OC21-F	15-Dec-21	y	surrendered	Fort Qu'Appelle	Moose Jaw Humane Society	12	dog
	15-Dec-21	y	surrendered	Fort Qu'Appelle	Moose Jaw Humane Society	1	dog
463NV21-O	06-Dec-21	n	surrendered	Melville	vet	1	dog
499NV21-F	25-Nov-21	n	surrendered	Sturgeon Lake FN	Saskatoon SPCA	1	dog
541DE21-O	16-Dec-21	n	surrendered	Moose Jaw	Artistique Acres	1	cat
	17-Dec-21	n	surrendered	Moose Jaw	vet	3	cat
597JA22-F	19-Jan-22	n	surrendered	Sakimay FN	Artistique Acres	1	dog
610JA22-O	24-Jan-22	n	surrendered	Cupar	Moose Jaw Humane Society	1	dog
641FE22-O	14-Feb-22	n	surrendered	Rouleau	Moose Jaw Humane Society	4	cat
657FE22-F	25-Feb-22	n	surrendered	Manor	Artistique Acres	1	dog
665FE22-O	18-Feb-22	n	surrendered	Lumsden	Moose Jaw Humane Society	1	dog
668FE22-F	28-Feb-22	n	surrendered	Prince Abert	Prince Albert SPCA	3	dog

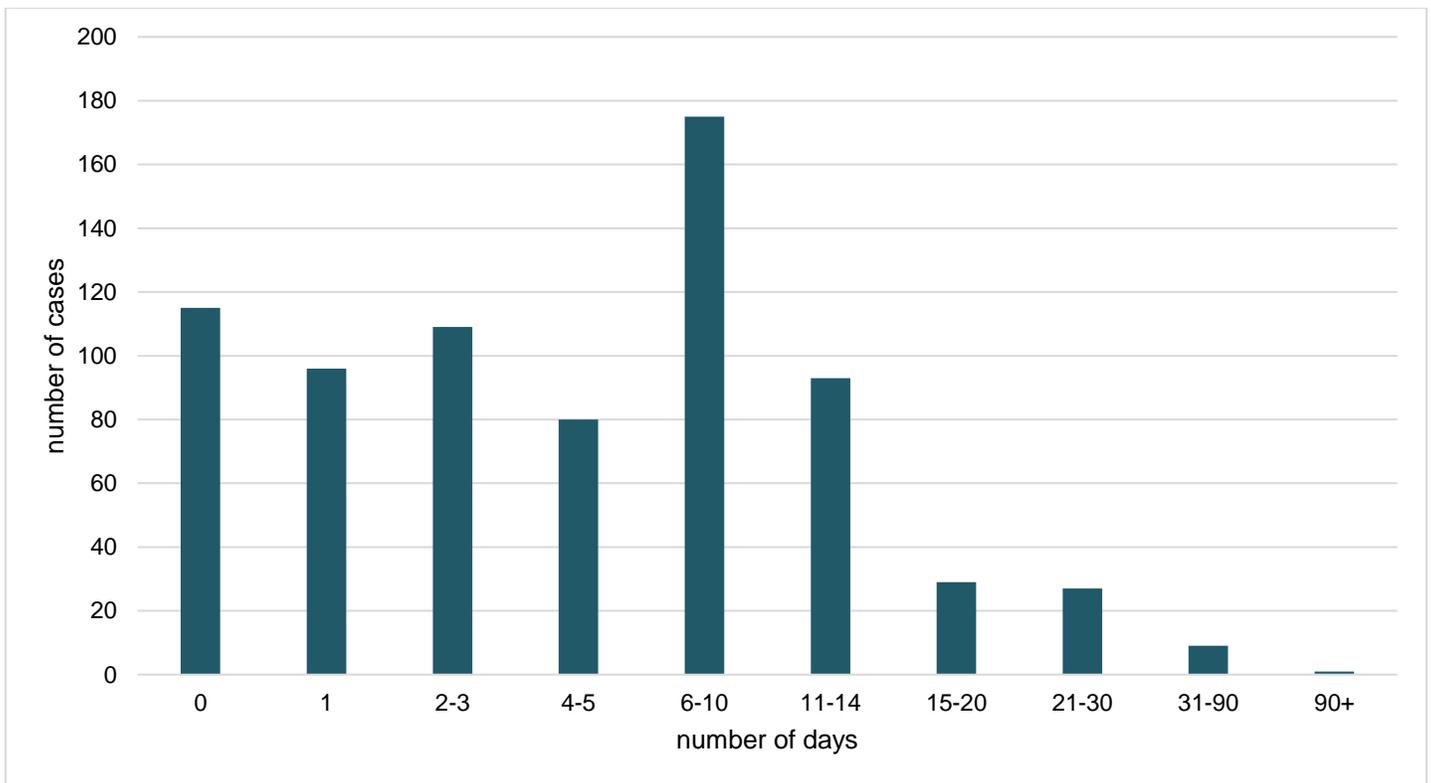
Managing the investigative case load and associated paperwork within a normal 40-hour work week for the Animal Protection Officers has improved slightly with the increase to staffing. Overtime is banked, and the Animal Protection Officers take time off in lieu as they can, however our staff still occasionally have significant amount of time in lieu accrued. We have transitioned our time period for accounting for vacation and time in lieu to be the time period from September to August rather than follow the fiscal year. This has allowed for time in lieu and vacation time to be used at a traditionally slower call volume time rather than take it during what is typically our busiest time of year.

Public expectations regarding the response to complaints continue to increase. Some complainants are dismayed to learn that there are only seven Animal Protection Officers employed by Animal Protection Services to investigate for the entire province. Their belief is that a response to their complaint will be immediate and similar to a 911 emergency call.

We classify complaints as either Priority 1 or 2, depending on their apparent severity and the urgency of the required response. In 2021-2022, we classified 62 complaints as Priority 1, which was an increase of 14 calls from the previous year. The target response time for Priority 1 calls is less than three business days; our APOs were able to respond within the targeted window in 87% of the Priority 1 cases which is a decrease compared to 96% last year.

Timely response to new complaints has declined over last year, and it still remains slower than we would like. The target response time is three to four business days but not to exceed 14 calendar days for Priority 2 complaints; in 400 cases, or 54% of the time, an Animal Protection Officer attended in less than five days, however in 175 cases or about 23% of the time response took between six and 10 days, with a further 149 (20%) of cases taking between 11 and 30 days for a first response (Figure 2). 90% of our complaints were actioned within the 14-calendar day response time. This response time will likely improve significantly with the hiring of additional Animal Protection Officers in 2022 -2023 to better meet the public's expectations.

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**Figure 2** Response times for cases opened between April 1, 2021, and March 31, 2022, showing number of days from the complaint until an APO attended.

## Finances

The accounting firm Baker Tilly LLP has audited the 2021-2022 financials and found APSS is complying with standard accounting practices.

We were over budget in some expenditures, those being primarily with the costs associated with legal fees and Animal Protection Officer travel expenses. It is difficult to accurately budget for seizure related expenses, including animal shelter and care costs since costs are unpredictable and highly variable. This budget overage was also resulted from additional staff members requiring training and equipment. There was also a budget overage in the area of legal costs. A number of claims were brought against APSS by individuals who had their animals taken into protective custody. We have continued to operate vehicles for APOs from the Central Vehicle Agency. This has addressed APO safety and agency liability but has come with a slightly increased cost and is expected to increase as fuel prices increase. While we attempt to estimate APO expenses as accurately as possible. This is another area that is highly variable depending on the case load and seriousness of incoming cases, therefore prediction and budgeting are difficult.

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## Making a Difference

In 2021-2022, APOs removed 522 animals from cruel and abusive situations. From large animal hoarding cases and substandard breeding operations to starving and neglected farm animals, APOs were there to protect and relieve the suffering and distress of at-risk animals and to ensure their abusers were held accountable through our justice system.

This is just one of those animal stories. APSS was contacted by a rural RCMP detachment after a check on welfare had been conducted on an isolated, older adult at their residence. RCMP were concerned not only for the human welfare but the animal welfare as well. An APO attended the location along with RCMP. They met with the owner who was living in significant at-risk conditions. The conditions inside the residence were extremely unsanitary, and the owner appeared not to be oriented to time, place, or events. There was no food in the residence for the owner as well as the 15 cats. The APO purchased food for both the owner and the cats at their own expense. The owner was given a brief period of time to rectify the conditions for the cats on the property. In the meantime, the APO along with RCMP attempted to make contact with next of kin as well as human services to assist the owner with their living situation.

APOs along with RCMP followed up with the owner and observed that no significant improvements had been made to the living conditions inside the residence. As a result, all the cats were removed and taken into protective custody. The intervention by RCMP and APSS was the catalyst for the next of kin to become involved in the situation. Family members were able to convince the owner after an assessment by the Saskatchewan Health Authority to move into a long-term care facility. The cats were delivered to Humane Societies or SPCAs and placed up for adoption after receiving care.



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## Executive Director's Report

2021-2022 was a challenging but rewarding year for Animal Protection Services for many reasons. APSS continued operations as a designated Critical Public Service and operations were not curtailed as a result of COVID-19. I am immensely proud of the staff for executing their duties safely and enthusiastically day in and day out under extremely difficult circumstances. In addition to supervising the day-to-day operations of the organization, I again had the pleasure and opportunity to facilitate training for Animal Protection Officers in the province. Officers participated in Violence Link webinars involving interpersonal violence and animal issues in Canada. This training looked at the link between domestic or interpersonal violence, child or older adult abuse and animal abuse and how they interrelate. This training was essential in keeping our officers current and knowledgeable in the latest animal welfare issues in both the province and the country.

2020-2021 was further spent helping educate other agencies, stakeholders, and interested groups on the enforcement of *The Animal Protection Act* by APSS. I was able to provide presentations to the following groups:

- Western College of Veterinary Medicine 1<sup>st</sup> year students and interns
- Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association
- Ministry of Agriculture's Animal Welfare Stakeholder's
- Saskatchewan Association of Veterinary Technologists
- Registered Veterinary Technology students at Saskatchewan Polytechnic

APSS hosted a Violence Link Training for Law Enforcement webinar with multiple police services, RCMP, Community Safety Officers and Victim Services Staff participating from different areas throughout the province and Country. The Board along with APSS staff conducted a very positive Strategic Planning Day. This day helped set the roadmap for APSS to align its functional activities to achieve its vision and mission.

2021-2022 also saw my continued participation on a number of working groups. My role is to provide input to the respective groups regarding how *The Animal Protection Act* is enforced and how it may impact their objectives. I was able to continue to work with the following groups:

- Interagency Human and Animal Welfare Task Team
- Animal Welfare Engagement Working Group
- Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association Animal Welfare Committee
- Federal-Provincial-Territorial Animal Welfare Enforcement Group

We continue to move forward with the planning and training for our Animal Protection Officers to become Peace Officers. This transition will improve the quality of enforcement of the *Animal Protection Act* throughout the province. *The Animal Protection Act* was implemented to enforce society's belief that all animals must receive adequate care and to protect animals. Animal Protection Officers continue on a daily basis to protect those that cannot protect themselves. I am extremely proud of the Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan. The incredible accomplishments that took place last year highlighted the quality of our staff as well as the value of forging strong community partners to find solutions to both human and animal issues. I want to thank everyone involved who is doing this challenging work throughout the province for their professionalism. Each and everyone of them makes a difference with their service to the animals and citizens of Saskatchewan.