

# **TORONTO** STAFF REPORT

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March 28, 2006

To: Board of Health

From: Dr. David McKeown, Medical Officer of Health

Subject: Response to Internal Audit Division Review of Toronto Public Health's Animal Services Program

Purpose:

To respond to the recommendations contained in the Internal Audit Division's review of Toronto Public Health's Animal Services Program.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) this report be forwarded to the Animal Services subcommittee of the Board of Health;
- (2) the Medical Officer of Health report to the Board of Health in one year on the status of action taken to address Internal Audit recommendations regarding the Animal Services program; and
- (3) the appropriate City Officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

In late 2004, Toronto Public Health requested that the City Manager's Internal Audit Division review the operations of Toronto Animal Services (TAS) to identify opportunities for improvement. The scope of the audit was set to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the following:

- (1) Revenue controls – over cash receipts, billing of fees, licenses;
- (2) Policies and procedures – additional work necessary to finalize critical policies and work processes to ensure consistency of application; and
- (3) Management of data – gathering and analysis of data to assist management in decision making.

This report responds to the recommendations contained in the Internal Auditor's review of Toronto Public Health's Animal Services Program (see Attachment 1).

Comments:

The Internal Audit Division conducted a review of the TAS program in 2005 and made 17 recommendations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the program. The recommendations generally addressed program areas including revenue controls, quality assurance, program infrastructure, program design and the implementation of recommendations.

In response to the Internal Audit review, TPH has already addressed or is in the process of addressing most of the recommendations and has developed a plan to address all of the recommendations by the end of 2006. Attachment 2 provides the response from the Medical Officer of Health to each of the recommendations.

Conclusions:

TPH has taken steps to address the Internal Auditor's recommendations for the Animal Services program and a plan has been developed to address all the recommendations by the end of 2006. Any additional resources required for 2007 and beyond will be considered within the 2007 Public Health Operating Budget.

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Dr. David McKeown  
Medical Officer of Health

List of Attachments:

Attachment 1: Review of Toronto Animal Services Program, Internal Audit Division  
Attachment 2: Toronto Public Health Response to Internal Audit Recommendations

# **Review of Toronto Animal Services**

Internal Audit Division  
City Manager's Office  
City of Toronto

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November 2005

*“Internal Audit – Your partner in managing risk”*

## BACKGROUND

### *Overview*

Toronto Animal Services (TAS) is a unit of the Healthy Environment Division of Toronto Public Health.

The mission of the TAS is to promote and support a harmonious environment where humans and animals can co-exist free from conditions that adversely affect their health and safety. TAS operates five full service animal centres (and one limited service centre) and is responsible for sheltering animals that are lost or surrendered by owners, animal redemptions and animals that are available for adoption to new homes. TAS provides a 24 hour emergency response to calls for stray animals and wildlife that are injured, in distress or are jeopardizing the safety of the community. TAS also offers low-cost companion animal sterilizations at their two spay/neuter clinics. In addition, TAS promotes responsible pet ownership through the enforcement of the Municipal Code, Chapter 349 and other animal related laws.

### *Financial Highlights*

Funding for the program is borne 100% by the City, with expenditures being partially offset by revenue received from the sale of licenses and other fees.

The 2005 gross expenditure budget for TAS is \$8.4 million. Salaries and benefits totalling \$6.1 million represent the largest expenditure (73%) of the TAS' annual budget.

Revenue generation has been incidental to the mission of Animal Services. However, there has been recent direction from the Board of Health, calling for TAS to pursue revenue generating opportunities. Staff has indicated the purpose of this effort is to offset service delivery improvements to the program and respond to pressures resulting from the implementation of newly amended provincial legislation regarding the Dog Owners' Liability Act.

Revenue has increased gradually since 2001 with total revenue in 2004 being \$726,000. The majority of the revenue is derived from the issuance/renewal of licenses for dogs and cats (approximately 23,000 dog and cat licences per year). Other revenue sources include fees for adoptions, redemption of impounded animals, sterilization and owner surrender fees.

Any fines collected under the Provincial Offences Act relating to animals are allocated to general revenues of the City and not to TAS.

## OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

This audit was initiated in response to a request made from the Director, Healthy Environments for a review of animal services operations.

As a first step to conducting this audit, Internal Audit facilitated a Control Co-assessment Workshop with management staff, including the Manager, Animal Service, to determine the strengths, challenges, risks and opportunities for the program. The Workshop identified several operational areas that needed further attention. Based on the information gathered during this workshop, the scope of the audit was set to:

- Determine the existence and consistent application of policies and procedures;
- Assess the management and use of data to assist management in decision making; and
- Assess the controls surrounding the collection and recording of revenue.

We visited four locations to gather information; namely, the South, East and West animal shelters, and 35 Spadina Avenue where centralized services are located. We interviewed and reviewed procedures with shelter employees, field officers, dispatchers, administrative staff and management. Internal Audit staff also observed field officers in the field and shelter operations.

The scope of our audit did not include direct comparison of TAS operations to that of other animal control agencies. However, we did do some research to determine best practices in the field of animal services in other jurisdictions.

## RESULTS

### *Overall Conclusions*

In pursuing its mission “to promote and support a harmonious environment where humans and animals can co-exist free from conditions that adversely affect their health and safety”, TAS is dedicated to several objectives which are reflected in the core services:

- Provision of animal adoption services.
- Sheltering and impounding of stray and owned animals.
- Provision of emergency medical care for injured and ill stray domestic animals.
- Provision of lost and found animal services.
- Investigation and response to animal threats to health and safety of people and animals in the community.
- Investigation and enforcement of animal related provisions of the Municipal Code and Dog Owners’ Liability Act.
- Registration and licensing of dogs and cats.
- Promotion of responsible pet ownership and education of public regarding animal issues related to core services.

Key factors essential to the success of a community animal control program such as TAS include but are not limited to: adequate funding; effective management; efficient, timely, and accessible services to the public; clear service standards and performance measures; and skilled employees.

Our review found that Toronto Animal Services' ability to effectively meet its objectives are being compromised by:

- A lack of strategic direction for the program;
- A reactive mode of operation and management;
- Absence of appropriate performance measures to determine and monitor performance;
- Inadequate data and information with which to make management decisions relating to operations or to support requests for additional resources; and
- Lack of complete and up-to-date policies and procedures to ensure a harmonized level of service to the public.

Staff also indicated that an inadequate level of human resources for the program are negatively impacting TAS' ability to fulfill its core responsibilities and meet additional demands being placed on the program. Staff have indicated that they need additional help in various areas including:

- resources to respond to anticipated (but as yet unknown) pressures resulting from the implementation of amended provincial legislation regarding the Dog Owner's Liability Act;
- resources to assist with marketing and developing revenue generation opportunities;
- an information technology resource dedicated to Animal Services who understands its information systems and business requirements;
- dedicated quality assurance and policy and research staff; and
- one-time resource to develop and implement policies and procedures.

However, in the absence of clear service standards and performance indicators, reliable information, as well as effective and consistent policies, it is difficult and premature to make a proper determination on what ongoing additional resources are required for Toronto Animal Services.

Nevertheless, some one-time resources are necessary to enable Animal Services to address some of the issues (e.g., development of policies and procedures, clean up of Chameleon system, development of performance indicators) identified in this report, as well as pursue opportunities (increased revenue generation) available to it.

Finally, this report has made a number of recommendations that if acted on should improve the effectiveness of the program and better ensure its activities are value added. It is difficult for staff to implement the recommendations and at the same time perform their regular duties. A dedicated team should therefore be assigned the specific task of implementing the recommendations, and developing an implementation plan to ensure action is taken in a well thought-out and logical manner.

Our detailed observations, conclusions and recommendations follow.

*Strategic Direction  
and Vision needed for  
TAS*

TAS has been asked by the Toronto Board of Health to look at the Calgary animal services model of operations, with the aim of generating more revenue in Toronto Animal Services. In response to this request, the Medical Officer of Health, in July 2005, requested the assistance of City Service Improvement and Innovation staff to develop a strategy to increase revenues to enable TAS to self-finance enhancements and increases in services.

Increasing revenue is important. However, based on the findings and observations of our review, a much broader and more strategic perspective needs to be applied to the program to ensure operations are cost effective and efficient and all funds allocated to the program are properly managed. In this regard, a review should be undertaken to identify best practices in other jurisdictions. This review should include:

- Core services provided
- Differences in by-laws and governing legislation, and taking into account the specific needs of the community
- Service levels/standards and key performance measures tracked, comparing performance with TAS
- Alternative strategies for revenue generation (Note: at the time of our audit, a strategy for revenue generation was under development)
- The use of information technology and efficiencies gained (e.g. GPS, computers in vans)
- Resources/staffing levels
- Staffing approaches used, including competencies and skill sets
- Marketing and education approaches used to promote animal services and the health, safety and well being of animals and the public
- Relationship with local humane societies and stakeholders
- Organizational structure and fit, with benefits and concerns identified
- Powers assigned to Animal Control Officers to enforce by-laws

*Performance Indicators and Service Levels Targets must be adopted.*

Performance indicators and service level targets are an essential management tool for program improvement and should be used on an ongoing operating basis. They are also important in order to justify and support any requests for additional resources or the redeployment of resources within the unit. In addition, they enable management to measure how effectively they are meeting program objectives and Council directives.

TAS does not have performance targets for their operations. TAS therefore needs to develop and monitor performance against measurable service delivery standards to be applied in each district (e.g. response time for high priority calls within X minutes; low priority calls within Y minutes), and for the program as a whole.

The availability of quality data will be critical for the implementation of performance measurement. For example, no report is currently available to provide information on all revenue earned/licences issued by district. Given the direction from the Board for increasing revenue, it is critical that revenue targets be set and actual revenue/licences monitored at the district and perhaps even at the ward level. In doing so, it is important to have standard reports available and written procedures for collecting, reporting and validating the data collected so as to ensure the integrity of data used for decision making purposes.

The following types of performance measures are examples of those used in the animal services field and that could be considered for adoption by TAS:

- Percent of dog/cat population licensed;
- Percent of dog/cat licenses issued within 2 weeks of completed application and payment;
- Percent of sheltered dogs and cats adopted (quarterly data reports by facility);
- Percent of stray dogs and cats returned to owner;
- Response times by field officers to low priority vs. high priority calls (measure performance against set targets for response); and
- Response time by field officers to after hours calls.

*Use of Information to Improve Resource Management and Operations*

The availability of relevant and reliable information is critical for the management and oversight of any program. TAS is lacking in this regard and has no formalized and regular reporting requirements of information.

In addition, there has been insufficient effort expended in standardizing data definitions and training staff in consistent data entry protocols. The Manager, Animal Services, has advised that an interim manual for data entry in Chameleon has been created and provided to staff, and that staff have received some training by the software provider. However, there are still inconsistencies in data entry among staff in the districts, which affect the integrity and reliability of available data.

Chameleon is the information system used by TAS to assist in the management of daily operations. A cursory review of this system indicates that it is more than capable of handling the operational needs of TAS. The system allows for the assimilation and reporting of data. However, due to the inconsistencies in data entry noted above, adhoc requests for information such as those made by Internal Audit, require significant effort to gather and adjust the data to provide the requested information.

Tracking of statistics is important to monitor overall trends. If information on service calls attended in the field, shelter visitors, cat and dog adoptions and redemption of lost animals by shelter, and any other service or program provided, is systematically tracked by district, and reported regularly, management would have a better basis for making key decisions. This information for example could be used to re-schedule employees to meet peak demands or to shift resources to areas of greatest demand, as well as to prioritize or discontinue programs.

TAS does not use “calls for service” data to ensure consistent service within district boundaries. This type of information if generated and analyzed would enable better allocation of field staff and help determine how well the needs of the public are being met.

Some information extracted from the system by TAS in response to our queries is provided in the table below. Our review of this information indicated at least one area that should be analyzed/investigated by TAS (to enable key resource management and operational decisions), is average activity per officer.

Based on statistics and estimated FTE’s provided by Animal Services, activity per field officer in the South district is significantly more than that of the North district (1368 activities per officer in the South vs. 859 activities per officer in the North). This difference should be analysed to determine whether staff are properly deployed in the various districts.

**2004 Regional Activities** (as provided by management)

Type of Activity Undertaken in the field	South	West	North	Central	East	Total
By-law Enforcement	3,276	2,658	1,487	1,410	1,818	10,649
Bite Investigations	904	409	319	403	646	2,681
Injured/Distress Dog & Cat	326	156	224	148	110	964
Wildlife and Other (includes injured)	697	218	316	195	305	1,731
Cadavers	2,303	836	586	877	103	4,705
West Nile Virus *	661	409	505	217	516	2,308
Other **	1,409	833	858	802	1,022	4,924
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,576</b>	<b>5,519</b>	<b>4,295</b>	<b>4,052</b>	<b>4,520</b>	<b>27,962</b>

\* - As per WNV protocol, includes activities where caller disposed of bird themselves

\*\* - Includes calls for pick up of confined stray animal, transportation of animals, assisting police, sheriff, owner surrender or quarantine animal pick up.

**NOTE:** Due to change in Ward boundaries in May 2004, some of the activities from South, North and Central may be from one of the former jurisdictions. Pulling data by Ward only was too cumbersome.

*Policies and Procedures need to be finalized and issued.*

Inconsistent practices in Toronto Animal Services have the potential to create confusion for the public, and have a negative impact on staff productivity, animal care and service to the public.

TAS has expended significant effort and resources since 1999, towards standardizing policies and procedures to be used in all districts and, ensure consistent practices. A few staff have been given the responsibility at one time or another to draft policies. However, the majority of policies still have not been issued, and some remain in draft form partly due to lack of resources, constantly changing priorities, and a lack of agreement among the management team as to the form and content of policies and procedures. Staff have indicated that clear project plan with set deadlines to complete this task has recently been put in place, but also indicated that a lack of resources to properly complete this task is still an issue.

Approximately 21 key policies have been completed and issued since amalgamation, some of which now require updating. Many other policies, which relate to shelter operations, licensing, field activities, and proper use of Chameleon have not been issued.

In the absence of such policies, each district in some ways still operates under practices used by the “former municipality” (pre-amalgamation). This has negatively affected many areas of operations, including the ability to effectively supervise staff. Examples of operational inconsistencies among districts include on-call practices, use and process for temporary tag applications, and pick up of dead animals.

A plan should be developed immediately, with realistic timelines for finalizing, updating and issuing all necessary policies and procedures. In this regard, it is

important that business rules relating to the use of Chameleon and input of information are incorporated and integrated into policies wherever applicable.

Staff throughout TAS need to understand and be trained in the policies and procedures issued and be held accountable by their supervisors for following them. Policies and procedures issued should be revisited annually and revised as necessary.

*Controls Over Cash/Revenue Collected Need Improvement*

Animal Services generates revenue from the issuance and renewal of dog and cat licenses, fees charged for various services such as adoptions, impounding of animals and sterilization.

The majority of license fees are received in the mail in response to the mail-out of renewal notices, and are handled at one central location at 35 Spadina Road. The majority of these receipts are in the form of cheques, and the controls over the receipts at this location are adequate.

TAS staff in all district locations also collect monies from the public for license applications, as well as for other services provided at the district locations. Payment for these services is in the form of credit cards, cheques, debit or cash. Receipts are issued to the public upon payment of monies, using the Chameleon system. Further, Animal Care Control Officers in the field collect cash or cheques from the public relating to the surrender and pick-up of animals or license fees. These Officers may issue one of two types of manual receipts to the public for monies received and bring in these monies to the cashier at the district office for deposit and issuance of an official receipt.

The controls in place for monies collected in the field for services provided or licences issued by TAS, are inadequate. Without appropriate controlled numerical receipts, there is no means of ensuring that all money is collected, recorded and deposited to the City's accounts for services rendered. Proper controls over receipts will also ensure that appropriate staff are held responsible for potential losses of revenue.

Performing regular reconciliations, such as the daily cash box reconciliation performed by TAS, is a good control to ensure monies collected are accounted for and deposited to City accounts. However, TAS does not, even at a high level, reconcile services rendered to the corresponding revenue received for the services. For example, licenses issued/renewed (pre-numbered tags issued or renewed) is not reconciled to licensing revenue received, and number of adoptions is not reconciled to adoption fees received to ensure reasonableness of revenue on a district by district basis. Without such reconciliations, it is difficult for management to ensure the overall reasonableness of revenue received.

*No Standard Procedures for Deposit of Monies Collected*

While staff are expected to make weekly deposits, there are no standard written procedures relating to timeliness of deposit of monies collected at shelter locations. Our review found that at one location (East District), bank deposits were not made on a regular basis, increasing the risk of loss or theft.

*Access to safes must be restricted*

With the exception of one location (West District), a number of staff at the other shelter locations visited have access to safes in which deposits are stored. Combinations to these safes are not regularly changed. This affects the security of monies collected and stored, prior to deposit.

Staff access should be restricted to the float, which should be stored separately such as in a locked desk drawer. This would also help keep monies, awaiting bank deposit, more secure. Combinations to safes should also be restricted to only those staff who require access and should be changed regularly, at least annually, and when circumstances warrant, such as upon change of staff who knew the combination or identification of potential threats such as theft or suspected unauthorized access.

*Generalist role for ACCO needs review*

In order to provide staffing flexibility to management, particularly within the current staffing levels, “Animal Care and Control Officers” are currently expected to work in the shelter, caring for animals, and also be by-law enforcers out in the field. The responsibilities for animal care and by-law officers require different skill sets. Consequently, staff may not have the skill set or be comfortable in performing one or the other of the roles. Although there were some exceptions, our discussions with staff indicated that this expectation of dual responsibility causes low morale among staff and negatively impacts the amount of effort expended in the field or in the shelter by those staff unwilling or uncomfortable doing one or the other responsibility. Some staff have managed to avoid being regularly assigned to these dual responsibilities through informal arrangements. Other staff do, however, enjoy the variety of working in both areas.

There is a need for management to review this generalist role, taking into account the greater emphasis that is needed in respect of by-law enforcement, possible increased resource levels, the separation of duties recommended by the 1999 HSUS report for TAS, and other relevant factors.

*Supervisory practices need enhancement.*

Supervision is an important control that helps detect problem areas and ensure resources are effectively utilized and program objectives are being achieved. Our review found that supervision of staff within TAS requires improvement. It is our understanding that there are plans to replace some ACCO 2 positions with Animal Care and Control Officer (ACCO) 1’s. In our opinion, this action by itself will not be sufficient to ensure adequate supervision.

We noted that there are no standards to assess the reasonableness of time spent on various types of actual calls attended to by field staff. In addition, time spent on calls is currently not input into Chameleon. Without standards and information relating to calls, assessing the reasonableness of actual performance and balancing fieldwork schedules of staff, which is fundamental to effective supervision, is difficult. In this regard, making available mobile wireless

computers with access to Chameleon to field staff would improve access to and input of fieldwork related information in Chameleon, and facilitate communication with dispatchers.

*Extending hours of operation during summer be reconsidered*

Dispatch staff indicated that the call volume increases greatly during the summer due to an increase in daylight hours and a corresponding increase in animal activity. The public also tend to be more aware of animal activity during the summer. TAS' hours of operation do not take this increased need for service into account and a number of calls received at the end of the day in the summer are not serviced until the next day.

An answering service is used by Animal Services for after hour calls. The answering service, requests callers to contact TAS the next day unless in case of an emergency when field officers on call are paged for response. If a call relates to a stray animal, they give the public the option of holding on to the animal until the next day or letting the animal continue to stray. Staff advised that many irate calls from customers are received by Animal Services the next day relating to this inadequate response. The answering service processes approximately 12,000 calls a year and costs the City \$25,000 per year.

Staff have advised that TAS previously piloted extended hours of operations for field and dispatch operations to cover daylight hours during the summer at one central shelter to enable servicing stray animals. The pilot confirmed a need for this extended service during the summer. However, a lack of resources did not allow the extended service to be implemented. This increase in service standard should be revisited with the MOH and the Board, by outlining the benefits and additional costs required to implement extended service on an on-going basis.

*Working conditions for staff need improvement*

The office that houses the dispatchers (2<sup>nd</sup> floor, 35 Spadina Road) is poorly ventilated and with 5 dispatchers working there in the summer (11 hour shifts), the air quality may not be conducive to a healthy environment. Many dispatchers we spoke to complained of the onset of headaches by the afternoon due to lack of air circulation. The windows in the room cannot be opened (few windows on the site can be opened) and as such, no fresh air is available. The ventilation appears to be inadequate preventing sufficient air circulation and conditioning in a manner that provides relief to dispatchers. In addition, the high noise level in the room is not conducive to providing good service to the public and adversely impacts the quality of communication with field officers.

TAS should request that an Occupational Health and Safety representative from TPH, assess and report on noise levels and air quality in the Dispatch office at 35 Spadina Road.

In addition, shelter staff expressed concerns relating to working alone. Management must ensure that all reasonable action is taken to address the health (air quality) and safety (working alone) issues identified by TAS staff.

*Address  
Communication  
issues to enhance  
customer service*

There are problems with the telephone system when calls from the public are referred by Central Dispatch to a shelter. When the transferred call is not answered at a shelter due to office closure, staff unavailability or telephone queue being full, the call bounces back to Central Dispatch. The dispatchers are then faced with irate members of the public, whose call can not be effectively serviced.

Further, dispatchers have limited means of determining the location of field officers who are on the road, compromising their ability to efficiently dispatch field officers to calls. The cost/benefits of a GPS system, as well as making mobile wireless computers available to field staff, that would help in more efficiently responding to service calls and provide better customer service, as well as a means to track the actual time spent on calls, should be explored.

*Inconsistencies in  
service within the  
City need to be  
eliminated*

There are inconsistencies among the regions relating to servicing public requests for the pick up of dead animals.

In the East district (former Scarborough), the pick up of dead animals found on the street is a Transportation Division responsibility. In North District (former North York), Transportation Division will pick up dead animal if they are on the road, but not if they are on sidewalk or on private property. In this latter case, pick up becomes the responsibility of TAS. In the West District (former Etobicoke), Central District and South District, pick up is the responsibility of TAS.

These varying practices within one City, impacts service to the public when calls come in for a pick up or subsequent complaints about animals not being picked up. Dispatchers have been advising the public to move the animal on to the street in some cases, or advising them to call the Transportation Division in others.

This inconsistency in service to the public must be addressed by TAS, in consultation with the City's Transportation Division.

*Avenues for  
Increasing Revenue  
should be pursued*

Animal Services is currently in the process of addressing means by which revenue could be increased and a report will be submitted to the Board in this regard in the near future.

It appears that there has been minimal effort by Animal Services since amalgamation to maintain licensing revenue at pre-amalgamation levels, partly due to limited staffing and promotional resources, lack of priority given to licensing related by-law enforcement and various other factors. As indicated in the chart below, the estimates of the numbers of dog licenses alone issued just prior to amalgamation as compared to current dog and cat licenses issued indicates a large discrepancy between the number of licenses pre and post amalgamation. This discrepancy amounts to over \$250,000 in revenue foregone for 2005 based on information provided by staff.

<b>Name of former Municipality</b>	<b>Estimate of Licenses prior to amalgamation</b>	<b>Amalgamated City of Toronto 2005</b>
City of Toronto	10,700	
Scarborough	16,300	
North York	10,000	
Etobicoke	7,800	
York	4,100	
East York	1,000	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>49,900*</b>	<b>22,654**</b>

\* Includes grandfathered in life time licenses for cats in Etobicoke and both cats and dogs in Scarborough for a total of about 14,000 lifetime tags which do not generate new revenues.

\*\* Renewals only, does not include new registrations in 2005 per staff.

TAS staff indicates that several licenses may have been missed in the billing process or original billings have not been followed up as a result of improper conversion of data from legacy systems of the former municipalities into the Chameleon system when it was upgraded in September 2002. Unless the approximately 95,000 records on the Chameleon system are “cleaned up”, the number of true billable licenses will remain unknown. These records of tags issued may include for example duplicate tags and tags issued for animals that are since deceased.

As previously indicated, the MOH, in response to the Board of Health’s request, is currently in the process of developing an action plan to increase revenue for TAS. Part of the plan to increase licensing revenue, should include the “clean up” of old records in the Chameleon system. This would enhance the accuracy and reliability of the information in the system, and help identify potential new billings. The supervisor responsible for the Chameleon system has indicated that the clean up would not be an onerous task, provided a resource person is dedicated to this assignment for a few months.

The action plan to increase TAS revenue should also consider the following:

- Follow up of results from the 95,000 records once they are “cleaned up”;
- Follow up of non-renewals of licenses that occur in any given month (our review indicated that at least 20% of license renewal notices sent out in January 2005 were not responded to by pet owners by March 2005);
- Campaign door to door to solicit new licenses. This is done by other Ontario jurisdictions, in many cases using summer students;
- Monitor licensing fee structures in other municipalities and ensure that Toronto’s fees are in line with those charged by comparable municipalities;
- Initiating a City-wide marketing effort at veterinarian offices and pet stores to promote the sale of licenses for cats and dogs and increase education and awareness campaigns aimed at owners of dogs and cats highlighting benefits of acquiring a license;
- Increasing enforcement effort related to unlicensed dogs and cats;
- Review potential to provide special constable status for enforcement staff; and
- Tracking and reporting licenses issued by district and setting targets of achievement to enable measurement of efforts undertaken by each district.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

<i>Strategic Vision and Direction</i>	<p>It is recommended that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In addition to developing an action plan to increase revenue, TAS should identify methods and best practices in other jurisdictions to ensure the program's overall objectives are effectively achieved and funds allocated to it are properly managed. Areas to be reviewed include, but are not limited to, organizational structure, performance measures and service level targets, enabling information technology initiatives, and staffing strategies.</li> </ol>
<i>Policies and Procedures</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. A dedicated resource be assigned the sole responsibility of revising, finalizing and issuing all policies and procedures for TAS. The staff member assigned this responsibility should:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Formulate a project plan with set deadlines for completion of each policy or set of policies, such that all policies are issued by May 31, 2006;</li> <li>b) Ensure the business rules relating to the use of the Chameleon system are incorporated and integrated into the policies issued, as appropriate;</li> <li>c) Ensure staff are trained on the policies and procedures issued, as necessary, and develop processes/mechanisms to help assure that staff are adhering to the policies/procedures consistently; and</li> <li>d) Develop a process/plan to review the policies and procedures within a prescribed timeframe, so that they can be revised as necessary.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<i>Performance Indicators and Service Level Targets</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Clear and measurable service standards and performance indicators be developed for the various components and functions of Toronto Animal Services, performance measured against standards/indicators on a regular basis, and corrective action taken as required to ensure objectives are achieved and operations continuously improved.</li> </ol>
<i>Use of Information</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. The accuracy, completeness and reliability of information in Toronto Animal Services be improved by:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Determining the type of data that is necessary for key managerial decisions and supervision;</li> <li>b) Incorporating data entry standards into the policies and procedures to be issued;</li> <li>c) Providing training to staff to ensure the input of data in a standard format that facilitates the integrity of information and reporting; and</li> <li>d) Ensuring that regular reports are provided to management for operational, workload/trend analysis, performance/ service standard measurement and decision-making purposes.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

*Controls over Cash/Revenue Collected*

5. The controls over cash/revenue collected be improved by:
  - a) Standardizing types of receipts issued in the field in all districts and conducting regular supervisory review of these receipts and monies collected to ensure that:
    - a standard sequentially controlled receipt is issued for all money transactions for which individual staff can be held accountable;
    - the integrity of the sequential control of receipts is maintained; and
    - all monies are being deposited promptly;
  - b) Centrally performing reconciliations by regional animal centre on a regular basis (in addition to the daily cash box closings performed at each centre), to assess the reasonableness of various revenue collected, and investigating any discrepancies/anomalies identified as follows:
    - tags issued to revenue from new license fees; and
    - each main type of revenue generating activity as recorded in Chameleon to actual revenue recorded; and
  - c) Reminding staff of the need to ensure all monies collected are deposited in a timely manner to the City’s accounts, and of the consequences if staff are found to not adhere to this requirement.

*Standard Procedures for Deposit of Monies*

6. All locations be formally advised in writing of the requirement to deposit monies at least weekly and more frequently where warranted.

*Access to safes*

7. Procedures be developed and communicated to staff to better control access to the safes at shelter locations, such that:
  - a) Floats are stored in a separate secure location and not in the safe that stores monies awaiting deposit;
  - b) Combinations to the safes are changed at least annually, as well as whenever there is a change of staff who know the combination or if there is a theft/break-in, or staff believe someone may have unauthorized access to the safe; and
  - c) Only staff who require regular access are given the combination, and that the number of staff in this regard be kept to an absolute minimum.

*Roles and Responsibilities*

8. The current generalist role of Animal Care and Control Officers be reviewed and reconsidered to ensure it best meets the needs and overall objectives of Toronto Animal Services. The review should confirm the roles, responsibilities and skill set required by staff to perform shelter care and by-law enforcement duties. It should also consider the current skill set of staff, recent legislative changes, upcoming revenue generating requirements, and

<i>Supervision</i>	<p>compare cost and benefits of the current structure to a model where staff are assigned to either shelter care or by-law enforcement, or a hybrid model.</p> <p>9. Supervision in Toronto Animal Services be enhanced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Clarifying/confirming the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and Animal Care and Control (ACCO) 1 positions with respect to overseeing staff;</li> <li>b) Reviewing and determining the effectiveness of the ACCO 1 position and its impact on the supervisors roles and responsibilities six months to one year following the implementation of these new positions;</li> <li>c) Establishing standards by which to assess the reasonableness of response time and time to complete activities in the field by type of call, and ensuring supervisory staff are given timely and reliable information to monitor and oversee the activities of front-line staff;</li> <li>d) Providing necessary training to all staff with supervisory responsibilities; and</li> <li>e) Reviewing the workload statistics of field and shelter office staff regularly to ensure staff are being properly deployed and to identify other potential issues that require corrective action.</li> </ul>
<i>Hours of Operations</i>	<p>10. A cost/benefit analysis of extending the hours of operation for field and dispatch operations during the summer should be presented to the MOH and the Board.</p>
<i>Working Conditions</i>	<p>11. The office working conditions at 35 Spadina (2<sup>nd</sup> floor) be reviewed by Occupational Health and Safety to ensure that the health and safety concerns expressed by dispatch staff at this location are addressed.</p>
<i>Communication</i>	<p>12. A cost/benefit analysis be completed and presented to the MOH and the Board (as necessary) of installing a GPS system and providing field staff with mobile wireless computers with access to Chameleon, to improve the dispatching of calls received, such that calls are responded to in a more efficient and timely manner, and to enable activities to be tracked in a complete and timely manner.</p> <p>13. Action be taken as necessary to resolve problems (e.g., calls disconnecting) relating to the internal telephone system with regard to handling calls that are not answered in the shelters.</p>
<i>Harmonizing practices within the City</i>	<p>14. Action be taken to eliminate service inconsistencies relating to the pick up of dead animals in various areas of the City, as well as other services that should be standard across the City. Toronto Animal Services should work with other City divisions (e.g. Transportation) as required to resolve these service issues.</p>

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| <i>“Clean up” of data</i>                | 15. A dedicated resource be assigned the responsibility of cleaning up existing data in the Chameleon system. This assignment should be completed by January 31, 2006 and the results of the clean-up considered in the Increasing TAS Revenue project, as appropriate.   |
| <i>Implementation of recommendations</i> | 16. The MOH, in consultation with the Director of Healthy Environments and the Manager, Animal Services, assign a dedicated staff person to oversee the implementation of the recommendations contained in this report, and ensure any one-time resources required to facilitate corrective action required is allocated to this project.                                     |
|  | 17. The Recommendations Implementation Lead should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• develop a project plan that includes action to be taken, lead responsibility, dedicated resources required and timelines; and</li><li>• provide regular status reports on the implementation to the MOH, Director of Healthy Environments and Manager, Animal Services.</li></ul> |

**Toronto Public Health  
Animal Services (TAS) Program Review  
Response to Internal Audit Recommendations**

March 21, 2006

	<b>Internal Audit Recommendation:</b>	<b>TPH Response:</b>
1	<p><b>Strategic Vision and Direction:</b> In addition to developing an action plan to increase revenue, TAS should identify methods and best practices in other jurisdictions to ensure the program's overall objectives are effectively achieved and funds allocated to it are properly managed. Areas to be reviewed include, but are not limited to, organizational structure, performance measures and service level targets, enabling information technology initiatives, and staffing strategies.</p>	<p><b>In progress, estimated completion date is October 1, 2006:</b> In line with Public Health's strategic plan and vision, "A healthy city where all people enjoy the highest level of health and well being", TAS has developed a mission statement "To promote an environment where people and animals coexist free from conditions that adversely affects their health and safety." TAS has also identified core services that align with this mission statement. Healthy Environments (HE) – Quality Assurance (QA) Manager is currently working with TAS to address performance measures and service level targets. Further resources will be provided to address the service review in regard to strategic planning, organizational structure and delivery on the revenue strategy (if passed by Council). Recommendations regarding these three areas will be provided to the HE Director and Medical Officer of Health (MOH).</p>
2	<p><b>Policies and Procedures:</b> A dedicated resource be assigned the sole responsibility of revising, finalizing and issuing all policies and procedures for TAS. The staff member assigned this responsibility should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Formulate a project plan with set deadlines for completion of each policy or set of policies, such that all policies are issued by May 31, 2006;</li> <li>b) Ensure the business rules relating to the use of the Chameleon system are incorporated and</li> </ul>	<p><b>In progress, estimated completion date is May 31, 2006 (completion status to be reassessed April 28, 2006):</b> The HE QA Manager has been assigned to work with TAS on the Total Quality Improvement Project which will implement all aspects of this recommendation and some of recommendations 1, 3, 4, 14 and 16. A project plan has already been created including tracking the project progress with timelines up to completion.</p>

	<b>Internal Audit Recommendation:</b>	<b>TPH Response:</b>
	<p>integrated into the policies issued, as appropriate;</p> <p>c) Ensure staff are trained on the policies and procedures issued, as necessary, and develop processes/mechanisms to help assure that staff are adhering to the polices/procedures consistently; and</p> <p>d) Develop a process/plan to review the policies and procedures within a prescribed timeframe, so that they can be revised as necessary.</p>	
3	<p><b>Performance Indicators and Service Level Targets:</b> Clear and measurable service standards and performance indicators be developed for the various components and functions of Toronto Animal Services, performance measured against standards/indicators on a regular basis, and corrective action taken as required to ensure objectives are achieved and operations continuously improved.</p>	<p><b>In progress, estimated completion date is October 1, 2006:</b> The HE QA Manager plus additional resources will be working with TAS to develop clear and measurable service standards and performance indicators and establish benchmarks for application in 2007 and onwards.</p>
4	<p><b>Use of Information:</b> The accuracy, completeness and reliability of information in Toronto Animal Services be improved by:</p> <p>a) Determining the type of data that is necessary for key managerial decisions and supervision;</p> <p>b) Incorporating data entry standards into the policies and procedures to be issued;</p> <p>c) Providing training to staff to ensure the input of data in a standard format that facilitates the integrity of information and reporting; and</p> <p>d) Ensuring that regular reports are provided to</p>	<p><b>In progress, estimated completion December 1, 2006:</b> The work done in the Total Quality Improvement Project will help to inform this recommendation. Additional resources will be provided to work with TAS in response to this recommendation.</p>

	<b>Internal Audit Recommendation:</b>	<b>TPH Response:</b>
	management for operational, workload/trend analysis, performance/ service standard measurement and decision-making purposes.	
5	<p><b>Controls over Cash/Revenue Collected:</b></p> <p>a) Standardizing types of receipts issued in the field in all districts and conducting regular supervisory review of these receipts and monies collected to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a standard sequentially controlled receipt is issued for all money transactions for which individual staff can be held accountable;</li> <li>• the integrity of the sequential control of receipts is maintained; and all monies are being deposited promptly;</li> </ul> <p>b) Centrally performing reconciliations by regional animal centre on a regular basis (in addition to the daily cash box closings performed at each centre), to assess the reasonableness of various revenue collected, and investigating any discrepancies/anomalies identified as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tags issued to revenue from new license fees; and each main type of revenue generating activity as recorded in Chameleon to actual revenue recorded; and</li> </ul> <p>c) Reminding staff of the need to ensure all monies collected are deposited in a timely manner to the City’s accounts, and of the consequences if staff are found to not adhere to this requirement.</p>	<p><b>In progress, estimated completion date is October 1, 2006:</b></p> <p>a) In field receipts have been reviewed and will be appropriately redesigned for the intake of moneys. Procedures are being developed to ensure appropriate use and control of receipts and monies collected.</p> <p>b) A procedure in relation to the Total Quality Improvement Project will be developed to address this recommendation.</p> <p>c) This is complete.</p>
6	<p><b>Standard Procedures for Deposit of Monies:</b> All locations be formally advised in writing of the</p>	<b>Completed</b>

	<b>Internal Audit Recommendation:</b>	<b>TPH Response:</b>
	requirement to deposit monies at least weekly and more frequently where warranted.	
7	<p><b>Access to safes:</b> Procedures be developed and communicated to staff to better control access to the safes at shelter locations, such that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Floats are stored in a separate secure location and not in the safe that stores monies awaiting deposit;</li> <li>b) Combinations to the safes are changed at least annually, as well as whenever there is a change of staff who know the combination or if there is a theft/break-in, or staff believe someone may have unauthorized access to the safe; and</li> <li>c) Only staff who require regular access are given the combination, and that the number of staff in this regard be kept to an absolute minimum.</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
8	<p><b>Roles and Responsibilities:</b> The current generalist role of Animal Care and Control Officers be reviewed and reconsidered to ensure it best meets the needs and overall objectives of Toronto Animal Services. The review should confirm the roles, responsibilities and skill set required by staff to perform shelter care and by-law enforcement duties. It should also consider the current skill set of staff, recent legislative changes, upcoming revenue generating requirements, and compare cost and benefits of the current structure to a model where staff are assigned to either shelter care or by-law enforcement, or a hybrid model.</p>	<p><b>To be initiated, estimated completion date is December 1, 2006:</b> Review of issues indicated in recommendation #1, including organizational structure and implementation of the Dog and Cat Licensing Revenue Strategy will help inform this review. Will also require consultation with CUPE Local 416.</p>

	<b>Internal Audit Recommendation:</b>	<b>TPH Response:</b>
9	<p><b>Supervision:</b> Supervision in Toronto Animal Services be enhanced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Clarifying/confirming the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and Animal Care and Control Officer 1 (ACCO 1) positions with respect to overseeing staff;</li> <li>b) Reviewing and determining the effectiveness of the ACCO 1 position and its impact on the supervisors roles and responsibilities six months to one year following the implementation of these new positions;</li> <li>c) Establishing standards by which to assess the reasonableness of response time and time to complete activities in the field by type of call, and ensuring supervisory staff are given timely and reliable information to monitor and oversee the activities of front-line staff;</li> <li>d) Providing necessary training to all staff with supervisory responsibilities; and</li> <li>e) Reviewing the workload statistics of field and shelter office staff regularly to ensure staff are being properly deployed and to identify other potential issues that require corrective action.</li> </ul>	<p><b>In progress, estimated completion date is December 1, 2006:</b> This set of recommendations 9 (a) to (e) will be considered in concert with the response to Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8.</p>
10	<p><b>Hours of Operations:</b> A cost/benefit analysis of extending the hours of operation for field and dispatch operations during the summer should be presented to the MOH and the Board.</p>	<p><b>Completed:</b> This is a resource related issue. TPH agrees that extended hours during the summer is a beneficial idea and will implement as sufficient staffing resources become available.</p>

	<b>Internal Audit Recommendation:</b>	<b>TPH Response:</b>
11	<p><b>Working Conditions:</b> The office working conditions at 35 Spadina (2<sup>nd</sup> floor) be reviewed by Occupational Health and Safety to ensure that the health and safety concerns expressed by dispatch staff at this location are addressed.</p>	<p><b>In progress, estimated completion date is April 28, 2006:</b> Some measures have already been taken to address the concerns that are related to indoor air quality. Occupational Health and Safety will be requested to attend the location and ensure that the health and safety concerns are addressed.</p>
12	<p><b>Communication:</b> A cost/benefit analysis be completed and presented to the MOH and the Board (as necessary) of installing a GPS system and providing field staff with mobile wireless computers with access to Chameleon, to improve the dispatching of calls received, such that calls are responded to in a more efficient and timely manner, and to enable activities to be tracked in a complete and timely manner.</p>	<p><b>To be initiated, estimated completion date is December 31, 2006:</b> A cost/benefit analysis will be completed by Public Health, I &amp; T in consultation with TAS.</p>
13	<p><b>Communication:</b> Action be taken as necessary to resolve problems (e.g., calls disconnecting) relating to the internal telephone system with regard to handling calls that are not answered in the shelters.</p>	<p><b>To be initiated, estimated completion date is October 1, 2006:</b> Public Health, Support Services will assess the internal telephone system to improve service response.</p>
14	<p><b>Harmonizing practices within the City:</b> Action be taken to eliminate service inconsistencies relating to the pick up of dead animals in various areas of the City, as well as other services that should be standard across the City. Toronto Animal Services should work with other City divisions (e.g. Transportation) as required to resolve these service issues.</p>	<p><b>In progress, estimated completion date is May 31, 2006:</b> A resolution to the issue of harmonizing the pick up of dead animals in various areas of the City has been achieved and completion of the agreement is pending Council approval of the transfer of resources from Transportation Services to Public Health – Animal Services in the 2006 Operating Budget process. Other inconsistencies are being addressed through response to recommendations 1, 2 and 4.</p>

	<b>Internal Audit Recommendation:</b>	<b>TPH Response:</b>
15	<p><b>“Clean up” of data:</b> A dedicated resource be assigned the responsibility of cleaning up existing data in the Chameleon system. This assignment should be completed by January 31, 2006 and the results of the clean-up considered in the Increasing TAS Revenue project, as appropriate.</p>	<p><b>In progress, estimated completion date is May 31, 2006:</b> Initially had sufficient staff to complete task, however due to staff resignations and the time it is taking to hire replacements and sufficiently train staff the completion date has been postponed.</p>
16	<p><b>Implementation of recommendations:</b> The MOH, in consultation with the Director of Healthy Environments and the Manager, Animal Services, assign a dedicated staff person to oversee the implementation of the recommendations contained in this report, and ensure any one-time resources required to facilitate corrective action required is allocated to this project.</p>	<p><b>In progress, estimated completion date is to be determined:</b> The HE QA Manager has been assigned to address all aspects of recommendation 2 and aspects of recommendations 1, 3, 4, and 14. Additional resources are to be assigned.</p>
17	<p><b>The Recommendations Implementation Lead should:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop a project plan that includes action to be taken, lead responsibility, dedicated resources required and timelines; and</li> <li>• provide regular status reports on the implementation to the MOH, Director of Healthy Environments and Manager, Animal Services.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ongoing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project plan is partially developed and implemented by the Manager of Animal Services. Further dedicated resources other than the HE QA Manager are to be determined. Most time lines are indicated.</li> <li>• The MOH, Director of HE and the Manager of Animal Services will receive status reports on the implementation of the internal audit recommendations on a regular basis.</li> </ul>