

**The Self Help Group for Farmers, Pet Owners and Others
Experiencing Difficulties with the RSPCA (The SHG)**

Press Release

For Immediate Release
30th August 2009

RSPCA Slaughter Ten German Shepherds with Bolt Pistol

Animal Lovers besiege RSPCA Facebook page in protest

The RSPCA's Facebook page has been inundated with posts from angry animal lovers protesting about the RSPCA slaughter of ten German Shepherd dogs using a bolt pistol.

According to RSPCA e-mail responses relatives contacted the RSPCA after the dog's owner died and the dogs were left living on their own.

An RSPCA inspector decided that the dogs were unsocialised, had a skin condition and therefore were unfit for rehoming and should be put down.

The RSPCA said that if the relatives could not find a rescue to take the dogs the RSPCA would take and euthanase them.

When there is a death in the family people have other, more pressing matters to deal with and are likely to be too distressed to think clearly. How are they going to find the local shelters in these circumstances?

A furious Jayne Shenstone of German Shepherd Rescue said:

"There is a large network of GSD rescues in the UK yet not one of us was contacted by either the owners or by the RSPCA. The fact that the RSPCA would not attempt to contact any other rescue suggests that they couldn't be bothered and that it was easier and cheaper to shoot the dogs."

"The GSD is naturally very protective and territorial so will guard home and owner. With regard to the ten, their owner had died so one would assume that they would be confused and frightened."

"To an inexperienced person they would have appeared aggressive."

"They should have been separated and they would have calmed down."

"If they had a skin condition what was it and why couldn't it be treated?"

"GSD's that come into rescue often need experienced help which is why even other non-GSD rescues will approach us for help with rehoming any that come into their care."

The SHG has accused the RSPCA of utter hypocrisy.

Anne Kasica of the SHG said:

"The RSPCA used the case of David Smith who shot unwanted greyhounds with a bolt pistol to promote a massive publicity campaign aimed at obtaining increased regulation of greyhound breeding, training and racing, despite the claims that the RSPCA made use of Mr. Smith's services."

"Either it is acceptable to shoot excess unwanted dogs or it is not."

"This is not the first time the RSPCA has been criticised for shooting dogs with a bolt pistol. They were fully aware after their shooting of two basset hounds in Ipswich in 2004 that the public do not find this acceptable practice."

"If the RSPCA believes it is acceptable to shoot dogs with captive bolt pistols then they should make it quite clear that this is what will happen to dogs that come into their care."

Ernest Vine also of the SHG asked:

"What qualifications does an inspector have to assess dogs in this situation? Is he a vet? The RSPCA uses the yardstick of 'failure to seek veterinary advice' in their prosecutions. How was it possible to assess the mental state of each dog in these circumstances?"

"We are told that a dog's mental capacity is that of the average two year old toddler. Imagine the reaction of a toddler who had been left alone like this and then faced with strangers. Would he be upset? Perhaps be aggressive and try to escape? Or maybe even bite? Could it be that too much is expected of dogs in difficult circumstances and that these dogs were far better behaved than they were given credit for?"

"We are calling for some check on what happens to animals that pass through large organisations like the RSPCA. Animals are killed before their owners have a chance to claim them. Owners are told their animals are not in RSPCA shelters when they are there and in the process of being rehomed."

"For these reasons the SHG wants a cooling off period for animal sign overs to the RSPCA similar to the protections provided when buying double glazing. Perhaps 28 days would give time for people to reflect on their actions. After all, if the dogs were in need of rehabilitation that would not be an excessive time period and nothing would stop prospective adopters from registering their interests."

"Could it be that the RSPCA is being driven by financial cuts (£54million) to seek the cheapest alternative without adequately considering the animal's welfare?"

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Word Total: 720

Notes to Editors: -

References

The RSPCA facebook page can be viewed at

<http://www.facebook.com/RSPCA>

Should it be removed the SHG has saved a copy and will provide it on request.

The RSPCA Head of Inspectorate is Tim Wass whose e-mail is

twass@rspca.org.uk

No justice for murdered greyhounds

<http://www.greyhoundaction.org.uk/NoJustice.htm>

RSPCA shoots basset hounds

<http://www.germanshepherdrescue.freeforums.org/basset-hounds-shot-by-rspca-t590.html>

10 German Shepherds slaughtered by captive bolt

<http://www.germanshepherdrescue.freeforums.org/10-german-shepherds-slaughtered-by-rspca-with-captive-bolt-t585.html>

Information on Captive Bolt Pistols, types and uses

<http://www.reference.com/browse/captive+bolt>

Rusty alive despite being shot by captive bolt pistol

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/this-britain/a-dogs-life-aint-what-it-used-to-be-486989.html>

Better dead than fed PETA claims

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2005/06/23/EDG11DC9BK1.DTL>

No Kill Now - Ingrid Newkirk should resign
<http://www.nokillnow.com/PETAIngridNewkirkResign.htm>

The petition to the Prime Minister for a public inquiry into the policies and running of the RSPCA obtained over 2,029 signatures and can be seen at <http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/rspcainquiry>

RSPCA to reduce expenditure by Â£54million
<http://www.charityfinance.co.uk/home/content.php?id=2837>

Contacts:

Jayne Shenstone of German Shepherd Rescue can be contacted on 01568 797957 or by e-mail at info@germanshepherdrescue.co.uk

For further comment from the SHG please contact Anne Kasica on 01559 371031 or Ernest Vine on 01559 370566. Mobile 07534 056634. e-mail:shg@the-shg.org

The SHG was officially formed in June 1990 and has been helping people to defend themselves and their animals from the RSPCA ever since.

The national help line number is 0844 700 66 90

A copy of this and previous press releases from The SHG are online at <http://www.the-shg.org/SHGPressReleases.htm>

Background information on the Self Help Group for Farmers Pet Owners and Other Experiencing Difficulties with the RSPCA can be found at <http://www.the-shg.org>

Details of further criticisms of the RSPCA can be found at the RSPCA-Animadversion website:
<http://cheetah.webtribe.net/~animadversion>