

**HOW TO SET UP SOCIETY FOR
PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO
ANIMALS (SPCA)**



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WHY AN SPCA HAS TO BE SET UP

Collectors/Commissioners all over India have now realised the vital need for animal welfare services as part of their civic duties. This helps farmers, keeps the towns clean and provides protection to the inhabitants of the districts as all animals/birds are essential for the survival of man.

The best way to set up these services is to start a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals which, under law, is supposed to exist in every district. This Society is a semi government body, headed by the Collector and SP, but manned by an elected body whose term is one year. Under the law the Collector is supposed to provide a building and land so that the SPCA can function.

Here is a note on how SPCAs are formed and the purpose they serve.

HOW TO SET UP THE SPCA

The DC and the SP are the two statutory heads of the body. The SPCA is a voluntary body, supported by the district government and has two functions:

- (a) The rescue and care of all animals in the district. To rescue sick/abandoned animals, to home and rehabilitate such animals.
- (b) The enforcement of laws related to animal cruelty. SPCA officers act as special police officers and are given the power by the SP and Collector. They can challan anyone breaking the laws on animals : overloading, illtreating, selling illegal animals, bad and open slaughter houses/butcher shops, trucks bringing in animals etc.

- (c) To proactively look after the local tanga wallah's horses, village cows etc

To achieve these objectives the SPCA requires :

- Membership
- An elected board that runs it along with a secretary who looks after day to day management.
- A doctor
- Inspectors to patrol the district. Each inspector has to read the PCA Act and all the other relevant Acts and the rules framed thereunder.

In physical terms it requires :

- Land and a building to house the dispensary, office and rescued animals. Often trucks with overloaded animals will be caught and these animals will be confiscated so it is important to have space of a minimum of 4-5 acres.
- An ambulance for rescue of sick and stray animals.
- A minimum of two motorcycles for the inspectors

According to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, it is mandatory for each district to have a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. This society has as its head, the local administrative head of the area but it is run as an NGO. The local administrative head **HAS** to give it land and a building and a grant for its inspectors.

- (a) The first step is for the administration to announce the making of the SPCA and give advertisements in the papers asking for those interested to sign the forms and fill in the membership fees before a particular date - within 15 days of issue of the advertisement - at a particular designated office.
- (b) The date of an election is then announced and the members have to stand for the posts of President/ Vice president/Secretary/Treasurer.
- (c) Elections are held for the various posts and then the land, building is handed over. Doctors and Inspectors are employed by the SPCA and it works both to pick up and treat suffering animals and to catch offenders breaking the PCA Act.
- (d) Regarding the financing, for the first few years an annual grant is given to the SPCA from the district administration in order to employ people, medicines, petrol to run its rescue and policing work. Then the fines that are collected by the SPCA from people violating the Act can either be given to the SPCA so that it becomes self sufficient or the grant continues and increases as its work expands.
- (e) Where SPCAs exist and do not work, orders should be given to the Commissioner to call for fresh membership via the newspapers and to have a fresh elections. Very often the SPCAs have been monopolised by a small coterie of retired animal husbandry people and have never worked. The membership is sealed and no one is allowed to come into the organisation.

In order not to let the SPCAs fail or be misused even in spirit, It is suggested that persons with a background in animal husbandry should not be appointed to these SPCAs. It is found that SPCAs are usually cornered by retired animal husbandry officials and they are completely uninterested in actually helping animals. After all they have spent an entire life producing animals for meat and pushing files. Another problem is businessmen who capture SPCAs and then do nothing except use them as cattle sheds. Therefore, we have defunct SPCAs in most parts of India. The best way to get young blood, fresh enthusiasts, private vets etc. and people who genuinely want to do something for animals and work for an institution is to put an advertisement in the papers, make members, have an election and then they should be taught the laws & start work.