



ANIMAL WELFARE COMPLAINT

Complaint No. 07-178	Date Entered 04-Jun-07	Received By J. Wood
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Referred To Gaj/Porter	Reply Due 4-Jul-07
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Facility or Person Complaint Filed Against

Name Lancelot Kollmann	Customer/License/Registration No. 58-C-0816
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Address
12611 ANDREWS RD

City Balm	State FL	Zip 33503	Phone No (813) 633-7957
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Complainant

Name Vernon Yates	Organization Licensee 58-C-0400
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Address
9500 82ND AVENUE, NORTH

City Largo	State FL	Zip 33777	Phone No./Email address (727) 399-1525
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How was complaint received?
Phone call to G. Gaj and C. Porter

Details of Complaint: Mr. Yates is complaining about the handling of 2 tigers in transport from Savage Kingdom Facility to Big Cat Rescue facility in Tampa, FL.

Results: On June 7, 2007 I went to Big Cat Rescue to investigate the complaint regarding the four tigers from Savage Kingdom. I conducted an inspection of the four tigers and their enclosures with (b)(6),(b)(7)(C) and later Carole Baskin the owner of BCR. Two of the female cats "Mondnic" (14 years old) and "Trucha" (14 years old) were housed together and appeared to be fine. The other two cats "TJ" (8 year old male) and "Bella" (11 year old female) are normally housed together but "Bella" was at the on-site veterinary hospital where she was recuperating from being spayed earlier this week. Again both cats appeared to be fine. All cats were thin with poor hair-coats yet I was told that all had gained weight since arriving at the sanctuary on May 18, 2007.

I was told by Carole Baskin that she hired (b)(6),(b)(7)(C) to transport the animals because he was the only one in the area that had a vehicle large enough to transport the four tigers at once. (b)(6),(b)(7)(C) told me the same thing earlier during my inspection of the four tigers prior to Carole Baskin's arrival.

The animal in question was "Mondnic" and I was told that she was the only animal that had refused to transfer out of her cage. (b)(6),(b)(7)(C) stated that the crew from BCR had arrived at Savage Kingdom ~6:00 AM on May 18th and found all of the cats locked in their transport cages (an extension of their original enclosures). "Mondnic" was in her transport enclosure but the enclosure was constructed of wood (top and bottom panels) and the wood was rotting and bowing out. Both Carole and (b)(6),(b)(7)(C) stated that if the transport enclosure was lifted off the ground to load the cat the bottom would have fallen out allowing the cat to escape. They tried to lure the cat into a metal transport crate with wheels to no avail. They said they tried luring the cat with food, the cat's favorite person (unknown female keeper from Savage

JUN 29 2007

Kingdom), another cat, etc. with no luck. The BCR veterinarian that was present did not want to anesthetize the cat due to her age and thin condition so they allowed [redacted] to use a catch pole to "encourage" the cat into the transport trailer. Both Carole and [redacted] stated that it was indeed a catch pole and not just a rope around the animals' neck.

I found no violations during my focused inspection at Big Cat Rescue. They also had all of the paperwork associated with the transfer.

I did however question the method of transport that [redacted] used to transfer the animals from Savage Kingdom to BCR. He used what appeared to be a moving van. Carole Baskin and (b)(6),(b)(7)(C) [redacted] both confirmed that (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) [redacted] did leave all of the doors open on the van (both sides) to allow for ventilation during the transfer. The trip from Center Hill, FL to Tampa took approximately 1 ½ hours.

After having several members of the transportation team as well as the Big Cat Specialist view the photos and other related information (temperatures, position on van, etc.) it was determined that the method of transport was acceptable.

I therefore find this complaint not valid.

Application packet provided? Yes No

INSPECTOR
Carol Gaddy Porter

DATE
6/8/07

REVIEWED BY

DATE



Carol G
Porter/FL/APHIS/USDA
06/04/2007 04:46 PM

To: Joseph A Nelson/NC/APHIS/USDA@USDA
cc: Gregory S Gaj/FL/APHIS/USDA@USDA, Jeremy E
Wood/NC/APHIS/USDA@USDA

bcc:

Subject: (b)(6), (b)(7)c Complaint

Hi Joe:

Vernon Yates (58-C-0400) contacted me by phone a week ago to tell me that he saw a video clip on the news (Fox 13) that showed (b)(6), (b)(7)c loading a tiger into a transport cage with a rope around the tigers neck. He stated that (b)(6), (b)(7)c pulled the cat into the cage forcefully and could have possible injured the animal. Mr. Yates compared (b)(7)c it to the cougar death (killed with a rope around it's neck) that had occurred last year at Savage Kingdom. This event occurred at Robert Baudy's facility Savage Kingdom on May 18, 2007. Big Cat Rescue (58-C-0814) was contacted to come and pick up the four tigers that were left and employees of that facility were present during this alleged event. I'm not sure what (b)(6), (b)(7)c role in the "rescue" was or why he was present during the transfer. I have viewed the video several times and cannot tell if this was a violation or not as the video is not that clear. The video can be viewed at www.bigcatrescue.org. It's located about 3/4's of the way down the page under the heading of "Items of Special Interest".

I plan to visit Big Cat Rescue this week and check on the status of the animals in question. There is a lot of animosity between some of these licensees (and has been for many years) which I feel has prompted Mr. Yates to make this complaint.

Carol Gaddy Porter
USDA-Animal Care
Eastern Region
PO Box 656
Safety Harbor, FL 34695

Fax: 727-725-1680
Voicemail: 703-812-6033



Joseph A Nelson/NC/APHIS/USDA
06/04/2007 03:08 PM

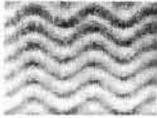
To: Jeremy E Wood/NC/APHIS/USDA@USDA
cc:
bcc:
Subject: Fw: complaint on (b)(6), (b)(7)c

Jeremy please send complaint.

Thanks,

Joseph A. Nelson
Program Manager
USDA APHIS Animal Care
Eastern Region Office
P:919-855-7106
F:919-855-7123

----- Forwarded by Joseph A Nelson/NC/APHIS/USDA on 06/04/2007 02:56 PM -----



Betty J Goldentyer/NC/APHIS/USDA
06/04/2007 01:10 PM

To: Gregory S Gaj/FL/APHIS/USDA@USDA
cc: Joseph.A.Nelson@aphis.usda.gov
Subject: Re: complaint on (b)(6), (b)(7)c

I think that we can just handle it like a regular complaint. (b)(6), (b)(7)c had a license when he did the transport. The revocation will go into effect I think 35 days from service - but I think you should just have Carol Porter or somebody look in to the tigers and see if there's anything to it.

Joe - would you book it in?

Thanks

Gregory S Gaj/FL/APHIS/USDA

06/01/2007 02:33 PM

To: Betty J Goldentyer/NC/APHIS/USDA@USDA
cc:
Subject: Re: complaint on (b)(6), (b)(7)c [Link](#)

Sorry for the confusion. Baudy had 2 tigers still on his property which he was trying to place. He ended up donating them to Carol Baskins of Big Cat Rescue (formerly Wildlife on Easy Street). Carol asked (b)(6), (b)(7)c to pick up the tigers for her and transport them from Baudy's place to her facility in Tampa. Vernon Yates is complaining to us about the way the tigers were handled during the move. I figured you would have to check with OGC before we did anything about the complaint. The complaint hasn't been sent to the office yet.

Gregory S. Gaj, D.V.M.
Supervisory Animal Care Specialist
Eastern Region- Animal Care

Voice Mail: 703-812-6555
Fax: 727-393-9243

Betty J Goldentyer/NC/APHIS/USDA

06/01/2007 02:25 PM

To Gregory S Gaj/FL/APHIS/USDA@USDA
cc
Subject Re: complaint on (b)(6), (b)(7)c [Link](#)

I'm lost - is (b)(6), (b)(7)c running Baudy's place? Is he Big Cat rescue? We should probably check with Colleen.

Gregory S Gaj/FL/APHIS/USDA

06/01/2007 01:33 PM

To Betty J Goldentyer/NC/APHIS/USDA@USDA
cc
Subject complaint on (b)(6), (b)(7)c

Carol received a complaint from Vernon Yates on the transfer and transport of 2 tigers from Baudy's place to Carol Baskin's Big Cat Rescue. How do we proceed since we are not to be contacting (b)(6), (b)(7)c ?

Gregory S. Gaj, D.V.M.
Supervisory Animal Care Specialist
Eastern Region- Animal Care

Voice Mail: 703-812-6555
Fax: 727-393-9243



MAR 24 2008

Animal Care

USDA, APHIS, Animal Care

ANIMAL WELFARE COMPLAINT

Complaint No. 08-107	Date Entered 26 Feb 2008	Received By T Brasfield
Referred To Gaj/Porter	Reply Due 26 mar 2008	

Facility or Person Complaint Filed Against

Name LANCELOT Kollmann		Customer/License/Registration No. 58-C-0816	
Address 12611 ANDREWS RD			
City BALM	State FL	Zip 33503	Phone No (813) 633-7957

Complainant

Name Vernon Yates		Organization Wildlife Rescue and Rehab INC	
Address 9500 82 nd Ave. N			
City Seminole	State FL	Zip 33777	Phone No./Email address 727-399-1525

How was complaint received?

Forward response to FOIA: Yes No

Details of Complaint: Choking and dragging a tiger into transport cage on May 17, 2007

Results: Review of the enclosed CD did not conclusively show a violation of the AWA regulations. Although the complainant did not agree with the methods and choices made by the veterinarian, the decision to not use chemical immobilization was a determination they chose to make based on the condition of the animal at time of transport.

Application packet provided? Yes No

INSPECTOR

Henry S. Gaj

DATE 3/18/08

REVIEWED BY

DATE

Wildlife Rescue and Rehab., Inc.
9500 82nd Ave. N.
Seminole, FL. 33777
(727) 3991525

FEB 26 2008

08-107

USDA-APHIS-AC
920 Main Campus Drive,
Suite 200
Raleigh, NC 27606-5210

Re: Big Cat Rescue/ May 18, 2007/ abuse

February 13, 2008

Elizabeth Goldenteyer, D.V.M.,

It is my understanding that my complaint for abuse which was filed against Big Cat Rescue for choking and dragging a tiger into a transport cage on May 18, 2007 was closed out and considered unfounded. Carol Baskin and (b)(6), (b)(7)c claim they used a catch pole and not a rope. Even if they used a catch pole, it was used inappropriately according to manufacturer's guidelines and the Humane Society of the United States (see attached). The catch pole was not intended for an animal to be choked and dragged with. The frames I am sending you clearly show they used a rope.

They also claimed they had a vet present which agreed to this technique instead of chemical immobilization. If this is true, it is proof of an unqualified vet working on those cats. I do not believe this was a proper method of transport. I believe it was cruel and abusive treatment which caused undue stress to the animal. (b)(6), (b)(7)c of Big Cat Rescue claims it does not hurt the tigers because they are large animals. I inquired with numerous veterinarians (both exotic and equine) who disagreed and confirmed that a tiger's neck is not the same as a horse or other livestock and this could cause damage and future health issues. I also understand that they chose not to use chemical immobilization due to the tigers being underweight. I believe proper dosing of chemicals and humane handling of the animals would have offered a safer, less stressful form of transport for the cat and less danger for the people present. I do not believe it is proper handling to choke and drag a tiger from one cage to another. In all my years of transporting for FWC and privately under many conditions and situations, I have never had to resort to this type of mistreatment or poor technique. If this is not cruel and abusive treatment, I can not imagine what is. And how is the public to perceive this and respect USDA when they allow such treatment and accept lies for answers? The Animal Welfare Act was intended to protect animals from this sort of abuse. This is not the 1920's. Is this also the standard of care USDA will endorse? Please review the frames included and investigate this report of abuse further and stop BCR, Carol Baskin and (b)(6), (b)(7)c from treating animals in this manner or leave the care to qualified people.

Sincerely,

Vernon Yates

Cc: Humane Society United States

Cc: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Wildlife Rescue and Rehab. Inc.
9500 82nd Ave. N.
Seminole, Florida 33777

The Humane Society of the United States
2100 L Street NW
Washington, DC 20017

February 13, 2008

To whom it may concern,

On May 18, 2007, Big Cat Rescue moved a large cat from savage Kingdom in a manner in which I believe was cruel and inhumane. The tiger was choked and dragged from one cage to another during loading. The pictures I enclosed appear to be that of a rope which is used to drag the large cat. Big Cat Rescue and (b)(6), (b)(7)c are stating they used a catch pole. According to your Documentation from your "How To" Series, which is distributed by Ketch All which purchase, to use a catch pole in this manner is not humane or a proper way to transfer a large cat from one cage to another. Weather it was a rope as the pictures support or a catch pole, it was cruel, causing undue stress and unsafe for the volunteers standing by. As a humane officer (since 1983) myself in Pinellas County, I have taken the time to include the photo's for your further investigation. Had this incident taken place in my county, I would have taken action against the parties involved. Previous investigation from USDA did not include supporting photos or sworn statements and was discharged without thorough investigation or facts.

Attached is my second letter of complaint to USDA, copied to all agencies of concern, for further investigation.

Thank you,

Vernon Yates

Cc: USDA

Cc: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

How to Use a Control Pole

The next time a call comes in, whether it's for a stray dog or a raccoon, remember that the control pole ("catch pole," "come-along," or "rabies pole" as it's sometimes called) is designed to gently coax animals to safety. Its use as a weapon is inappropriate, and could easily endanger the animal and the animal control officer. Remember that control poles should not be used on cats. The use of a net is the most humane and effective way of capturing a cat, and it will be detailed in the next issue of *Animal Shelters*.

Lastly, before you hop out of the truck, it's important to quickly examine the control pole, making sure that cable and release mechanisms are operating smoothly. Be sure the loop retains a rounded shape rather than a tear shape by storing the pole on a flat surface or using broom clips. Replace cables every 18-24 months as a part of regular maintenance.

Most animal control officers consider the control pole one of the most valuable tools of the trade. But like a carpenter's hammer or drill, a control pole is only as effective as the person holding it in his or her hands.

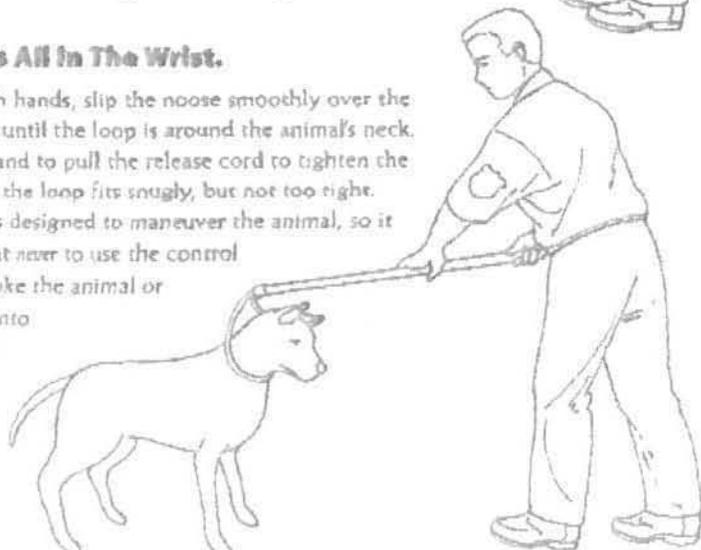
1: Easy Does It.

Approach the dog slowly, holding the control pole directly behind you or at your side, with the cable loop hanging loosely. Never approach a dog with a control pole held high, like a weapon, as this will set the tone for the entire encounter.



2: It's All In The Wrist.

Using both hands, slip the noose smoothly over the dog's head until the loop is around the animal's neck. Use one hand to pull the release cord to tighten the cable until the loop fits snugly, but not too tight. The pole is designed to maneuver the animal, so it is important never to use the control pole to choke the animal or force him into submission.



3: Lead By Following.

Keep both hands a slight distance apart on the pole. Once the loop is secured about the animal's neck, stand beside the dog and slowly guide the animal ahead. Most dogs will readily walk forward if you remain in their field of vision, but in some cases walking directly behind them may prompt them to move ahead.



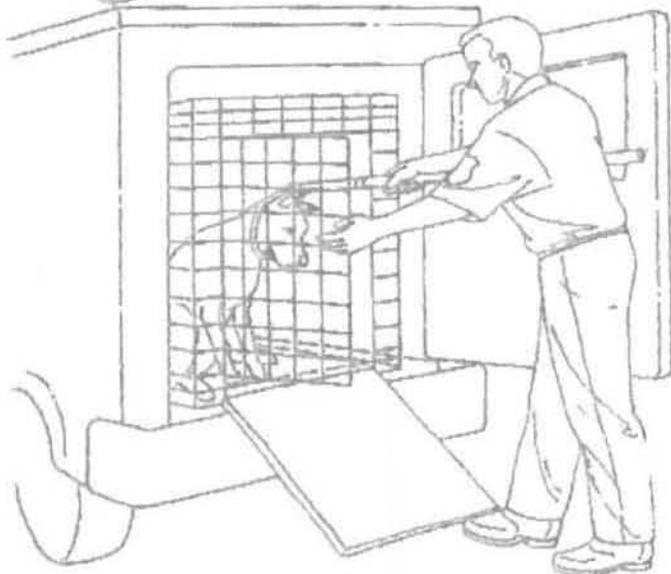
Continued on reverse side

FEB 26 2008



4: Don't Try To Pull One Over.

Never drag, yank, pull, or lift a dog with a control pole. Since dogs are often put in a truck for transport, it's a good idea to bring a ramp (a piece of plywood will do) to direct them into a cage. Then, just loosen the cord, and while carefully closing the cage door with one hand, remove the control pole with the other.



Wild Ones.

It may be necessary to temporarily restrain some wild animals (such as raccoons) using the control pole. These animals should never be looped solely around the neck or chest. Instead, the cable should be looped "bandolier-style" around the neck and under one of the front legs, and the animal should be guided in the manner described previously.

