FINAL REVIEW REPORT

INDEPENDENT MUNICIPAL REVIEW

Prepared for:
TOWN OF AURORA
Animal Services Division

Review Focus:

2026-05-04 Animal Services Incident
City-Operated Service Call

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Canine Foundations Inc.

PO BOX 29029, Barrie, ON, L4N 7W7

705.835.3177

info@caninefoundations.com

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SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION & INVESTIGATIVE FRAMEWORK

1.1 Introduction

This report presents the findings of an independent multidisciplinary operational review conducted by Canine Foundations Behaviour & Obedience Training Inc. following an Animal Services incident involving the Town of Aurora. The review was commissioned by the Town of Aurora to provide an objective, evidence-based assessment of the circumstances surrounding the incident and to identify opportunities to strengthen future operational practices and reduce organizational risk.

Recognizing the complexity of incidents involving public safety, officer safety, animal behaviour, and municipal animal services operations, the Town elected to undertake a multidisciplinary review. The Review brought together subject matter expertise in canine behaviour and bite assessment, municipal animal services operations, veterinary medicine and animal welfare, legislative and operational analysis, and officer safety. By examining the incident from multiple professional perspectives, the review sought to ensure that the available evidence was evaluated objectively, comprehensively, and without reliance on any single discipline or source of information.

The analyses and conclusions presented throughout this report are based upon a systematic evaluation of the available evidence and reflect the professional opinions of the multidisciplinary review team. The report has been structured to guide the reader through the Review in a logical and transparent manner, progressing from the investigative framework and incident reconstruction through the various analytical components of the review before concluding with the contributing factors, findings, and recommendations arising from the Review.

1.2 Purpose of Review

The purpose of this review was to conduct an independent multidisciplinary operational assessment of the Animal Services incident that occurred on May 4, 2026, within the Town of Aurora. Canine Foundations Behaviour & Obedience Training Inc. was retained by the Town of Aurora to objectively evaluate the behavioural, operational, organizational, procedural, and environmental factors associated with the incident and to identify opportunities to standardize operational practices, reduce future operational risk, and support continuous improvement within municipal animal services operations.

The review was intended to provide the Town with an evidence-based understanding of the circumstances surrounding the incident and to identify the factors that influenced the outcome. The review further sought to identify opportunities for operational improvement and support informed decision-making aimed at enhancing future operational safety and reducing organizational risk.

1.3 Scope of Review

The scope of this review was established through the terms of the engagement between the Town of Aurora and Canine Foundations Behaviour & Obedience Training Inc. The review encompassed a comprehensive multidisciplinary assessment of the incident, including the examination of behavioural, operational, organizational, procedural, environmental, and equipment-related factors that may have influenced the outcome.

Consistent with the scope of the engagement, the review included the examination of witness interviews and statements, incident chronology and timeline reconstruction, canine behavioural analysis, operational decision-making, organizational policies and procedures, training standards, equipment and operational resources, communication and coordination, scene management considerations, and contributing factor analysis. The review also considered available documentary, photographic, video, veterinary, and other relevant information provided during the course of the Review.

The review was conducted within the scope of the information made available to the review team during the Review. Matters outside the agreed scope of the engagement, including activities specifically identified as being outside the contractual mandate, were not examined except where necessary to provide context to the issues under review.

Lead Author: Julie Speyer
Technical Review: Amanda Barrett, Andrew Reynolds

1.4 Investigative Framework

Scope of the Investigative Framework
This section provides an independent assessment of the actions undertaken immediately following the incident with respect to scene management, scene preservation, evidence identification, evidence preservation, and continuity of evidence.

The assessment examines whether the investigative response following the incident was consistent with accepted investigative principles that support the preservation of evidence and the integrity of subsequent administrative Reviews.

This assessment does not determine civil liability, employee misconduct, negligence, or statutory compliance unless specifically addressed elsewhere within this report. Rather, it evaluates the investigative processes employed following the incident and the impact those processes had on the availability, reliability, and integrity of evidence.

Investigative Standard
Regardless of the agency conducting an Review, certain investigative principles are universally recognized as essential to maintaining the integrity of evidence.

These principles exist because evidence is often transient in nature. Once an incident scene has been altered, disturbed, contaminated, or released without appropriate documentation, opportunities for independent examination and objective reconstruction may be permanently lost.

Accepted investigative methodology therefore requires investigators or those assigned to follow up on an escalation to approach every significant incident with the understanding that the evidentiary value of a scene is greatest immediately following the occurrence.

Scene management is not solely intended to support criminal Reviews. The same investigative principles apply to administrative, regulatory, occupational health and safety, insurance, civil, municipal, and independent third-party Reviews.

Principles of Scene Integrity

This section outlines the fundamental principles associated with maintaining scene integrity following a critical incident. These principles are intended to preserve the reliability of evidence, support an objective Review, and ensure that decisions, actions, and circumstances surrounding an incident can be accurately reconstructed. Each principle will be assessed against the specific circumstances of the May 4, 2026, incident, including the actions taken following the event, available documentation, witness accounts, and evidence collected during the independent review.

Immediate Recognition of a Critical Incident

- What factors should trigger recognition of a critical incident:
    - unexpected death or serious injury;
    - potential legal exposure;
    - allegations of misconduct or inappropriate actions;
    - significant public interest;
    - involvement of multiple agencies;
- Who has responsibility for recognizing the escalation:
    - field officers;
    - supervisors;
    - managers;
    - senior leadership.
- Expected actions once identified:
    - notify appropriate leadership;
    - restrict unnecessary access;
    - preserve evidence;
    - document actions taken;
    - determine investigative responsibilities.

Preservation of the Scene

- Preventing unnecessary movement or disturbance of:
    - equipment;

    - animal-related items;
    - personal property;
    - physical surroundings.
- Recording any unavoidable disturbance

Documentation Prior to Disturbance

- Photographs/video should be obtained before:
    - moving vehicles;
    - removing equipment;
    - cleaning;
    - returning equipment to service;
    - altering the environment.
- Documentation should include:
    - overall scene photographs;
        - Full scene
        - Midway
        - Various angles
    - detailed evidence photographs;
    - vehicle condition;
    - equipment condition;
    - positioning/location;
    - environmental conditions.

Identification and Preservation of Evidence

- Physical evidence
    - vehicles;
    - equipment;
    - tools;
    - restraints;
    - animal-related items;
    - physical locations.
- Documentary evidence
    - officer notes;
    - reports;
    - communications;
    - dispatch records;
    - veterinary records;
    - policies and procedures.
- Digital evidence
    - video surveillance;
    - photographs;
    - phone Logs
    - body-worn cameras (if applicable);
    - electronic communications.

- Witness Management
    - Identifying all individuals present.
    - Obtaining contact information.
    - Documenting observations separately.
    - Avoiding contamination of witness accounts.
    - Ensuring involved personnel document their independent recollections.
    - Identifying civilian and enforcement witnesses.

Continuity of Evidence

- Evidence must be:
    - identified;
    - collected;
    - documented;
    - stored securely;
    - transferred appropriately;
    - accessible only to authorized individuals.
- Documentation should show:
    - who collected evidence;
    - when it was collected;
    - where it was stored;
    - who accessed it.

Assessment of the Initial Investigative Response

Based upon the available evidence, the investigative team determined that accepted scene management and evidence preservation practices were not fully implemented following the incident. Consequently, opportunities to preserve, document, and independently examine original physical evidence were significantly reduced prior to the commencement of this Review.

The available evidence indicates that the incident location was not secured in a manner consistent with accepted evidence preservation practices following the incident. Consequently, the original condition of the scene could not be independently examined during the commencement of this Review.

These limitations include:

- inability to independently examine the original scene;
- reduced opportunity to document transient evidence;
- diminished ability to accurately reconstruct the physical sequence of events;
- increased reliance upon witness recollection;
- greater dependence upon secondary documentary evidence; and
- permanent loss of certain forms of physical evidence.

These limitations do not invalidate the Review; however, they require findings to be developed through corroboration of multiple independent sources of evidence and therefore a relevant consideration throughout the investigative process.

Investigative Impact of the Delayed Independent Appointment

The independent investigative team was appointed approximately one month after the May 4, 2026, incident. As a result, opportunities normally available during the immediate post-incident period to preserve, examine, and document original evidence had substantially diminished prior to the commencement of the independent review.

The passage of time fundamentally altered the investigative approach that could reasonably be undertaken. Under normal investigative circumstances, an independent investigator attending shortly after a critical incident would expect to examine the scene in its original condition, document the location of physical evidence prior to disturbance, inspect vehicles and equipment in their post-incident state, identify and secure available digital evidence, and obtain witness accounts while recollections remained recent.

By the time the independent Review commenced, many of these opportunities were no longer available. The incident location had returned to normal use, transient physical evidence could no longer be examined in its original condition, operational vehicles and equipment had remained in service, and the ability to recover time-sensitive digital evidence, including residential video surveillance, had been significantly reduced due to routine retention periods. Additionally, the passage of time introduced the potential for natural deterioration of witness recollection, requiring greater reliance on contemporaneous documentation and independent corroboration during subsequent interviews.

These circumstances did not prevent a comprehensive Review from being conducted; however, they significantly influenced the methodology required to achieve an objective assessment. Rather than relying primarily upon original scene examination and physical evidence preservation, the Review necessarily transitioned to an evidence recovery and reconstruction model. This approach required investigators to identify, collect, and evaluate all remaining available sources of evidence, including documentary records, witness interviews, operational documentation, photographs, communications, vehicle and equipment examinations, and independent civilian observations.

The delayed appointment also increased the importance of corroborative analysis. Individual witness accounts, documentary records, physical evidence, and digital information could not be considered in isolation but instead required systematic comparison to identify areas of consistency, explain apparent discrepancies, and assess the reliability of each evidentiary source within the context of the complete investigative record.

Investigative Impact	Effect on Review
Scene integrity	Original scene could not be examined or documented in its post-incident condition.
Physical evidence	Transient evidence may have been altered, removed, or lost.
Vehicles and equipment	Equipment could only be assessed in its operational state weeks later, not as deployed during the incident.
Digital evidence	Surveillance footage and electronic records may have exceeded retention periods.
Witness evidence	Recollections were naturally affected by the passage of time, increasing the need for corroboration.
Evidence continuity	Opportunities to document and maintain continuity from the time of the incident were reduced.
Investigative methodology	Required a reconstruction-based Review rather than a contemporaneous scene examination.

Accordingly, the findings contained within this report have been developed through the totality of the available evidence rather than reliance upon any single source of information. Where evidentiary limitations existed as a result of the delayed commencement of the independent Review, those limitations have been identified and considered throughout the investigative analysis. This approach ensures that conclusions are based upon objective assessment of the available evidence while recognizing the investigative constraints created by the inability to preserve and examine the original scene immediately following the incident.

Independent Evidence Recovery and Reconstruction Following Appointment
Despite these limitations, the investigative team undertook a structured approach to identify, preserve, and assess all evidence reasonably available at the time of engagement.

This included a comprehensive review of available documentation, interviews with involved personnel and independent witnesses, examination of vehicles and operational equipment, field attendance at the incident location, photographic documentation, neighbourhood canvassing, identification of potential surveillance evidence, and ongoing analysis of operational decision points.

These investigative activities were conducted to reconstruct the circumstances of the incident as accurately as possible while the investigative strategy shifted from scene preservation to evidence recovery and reconstruction.

Investigative Coordination and Evidence Collection Strategy

June 15, 2026

On June 15, 2026, the investigative team established internal roles and responsibilities to coordinate the investigative strategy and ensure a structured approach to evidence collection, review, analysis, and reporting. The assignment of investigative functions was completed to support the orderly progression of the Review, maintain consistency in evidence management, and ensure that all relevant areas of inquiry were appropriately addressed.

As part of the initial evidence collection process, the investigative team obtained and began reviewing operational documentation relevant to the incident, including:

- Animal Control Officer notes;
- Officer reports; and
- Incident reports.

The review of these materials was initiated to establish an initial understanding of the incident chronology, identify key decision points, assess available information, and determine areas requiring further investigative examination.

In addition to the collection and review of operational evidence, the investigative team developed an interview and site attendance schedule to support the next stages of the Review. This included planning interviews with involved Animal Control Officers, management and leadership personnel, and independent witnesses identified as having relevant information. Site visits and additional investigative activities were also scheduled to assist with the reconstruction of events, evaluation of physical circumstances, and identification of any further evidence requiring collection or review.

These initial coordination activities established the foundation for a comprehensive and methodical Review, ensuring that evidence collection, witness engagement, and analytical review proceeded in a structured manner consistent with an independent investigative process.

Documentary Evidence Review and Interview Preparation

June 16, 2026 – June 19, 2026

Between June 16, 2026, and June 19, 2026, the investigative team conducted a comprehensive review of all documentary evidence provided to date. This review was

undertaken to establish a preliminary understanding of the incident, identify relevant timelines, assess available information, and prepare for the upcoming scheduled interviews with individuals directly involved in the incident and supporting operational personnel.

The review of available documentation assisted the investigative team in identifying key areas requiring clarification through witness interviews, including individual observations, operational decision-making, communications, actions taken, and circumstances known to personnel at various stages of the incident. This preparatory review ensured that subsequent interviews were structured, focused, and informed by the evidence available at that stage of the Review.

Initial Involved Personnel and Supervisory Interviews

June 19, 2026

On June 19, 2026, the investigative team conducted scheduled interviews, both in person and virtually, with individuals directly involved in the May 4, 2026, incident, as well as the first-line supervisory support personnel available during the response. The purpose of these interviews was to obtain individual accounts of the incident, document observations and actions taken, establish timelines, and identify areas requiring further investigative examination.

The following individuals were interviewed:

[redacted] – *Acting Supervisor*
[redacted] was interviewed regarding her role as the Acting Supervisor during the time of the incident. Although not actively deployed in the field at the time, [redacted] was available by telephone to provide supervisory support to Officer [redacted] from the time Officer [redacted] arrived on scene until her departure. [redacted] was also available to provide support to Officer [redacted] following her departure from the scene, including during communications regarding transport of the animal to the Emergency Veterinary Hospital and providing directions to assist with the arrival of the animal. Further analysis of [redacted] involvement and supervisory decision-making is addressed within the applicable Decision Point Analysis section.

[redacted] – *Responding Animal Control Officer*
[redacted] was interviewed regarding her role as the [redacted] Animal Control Officer who attended the scene following a request for assistance from Officer [redacted]. The interview examined her observations upon arrival, understanding of the circumstances, actions taken, communications, and operational decisions throughout her involvement in the incident. Further analysis of [redacted] involvement and decision-making is addressed within the applicable Assigned Decision Point Analysis section.

[redacted] – *Initial Responding Animal Control Officer*
[redacted] was interviewed regarding her role as the [redacted] Animal Control Officer to arrive on scene. The interview focused on her initial observations, assessment of the situation, actions taken throughout the incident, transportation of the animal to the Emergency Veterinary Hospital, and subsequent return of the German Shepherd to the owner. Further analysis of [redacted] involvement and decision-making is addressed within the applicable Assigned Decision Point Analysis section.

Initial Case Assessment and Investigative Direction

June 20, 2026 – June 21, 2026

Following completion of the initial witness and involved-person interviews, the investigative team conducted a comprehensive case assessment to evaluate all information obtained to that point. This review included detailed analysis of interview notes and recordings, documentary evidence provided by the City, relevant policies and procedures, dispatch and communications records, photographs, and all other material available at that stage of the Review.

The purpose of this assessment was to identify areas where information was consistent, determine where evidentiary gaps or conflicting accounts existed, and establish the additional investigative steps required to obtain a complete and objective understanding of the incident. This structured review informed the development of the ongoing investigative plan, including the identification of additional witnesses requiring interviews, further documentary evidence to be requested, locations requiring examination, and specific issues requiring clarification through subsequent investigative activities.

Conducting this evidentiary assessment ensured that the Review progressed in a systematic, impartial, and evidence-based manner, with investigative resources directed toward addressing identified gaps, validating obtained information, and developing a complete understanding of the incident circumstances rather than relying on assumptions or incomplete information.

Investigative Activities – Management Interview and Vehicle/Equipment Examination

June 22, 2026

The investigative team attended the Joint Operations Centre to conduct an interview with the Manager of By-law Services, who has overall operational oversight of the Animal Services division. The purpose of this interview was to obtain information regarding divisional operations, policies, supervisory practices, training, equipment, and operational procedures relevant to the Review. The interview was not intended to examine the Manager's direct knowledge of the incident itself but rather to provide

organizational and operational context to assist in evaluating the actions undertaken by staff during the incident.

Following the management interview, the investigative team conducted a detailed examination of three Animal Services response vehicles located at the Joint Operations Centre. Two of these vehicles were identified as those deployed during the May 4, 2026, incident. The examination included documentation of each vehicle's overall condition, interior and exterior configuration, storage systems, and operational equipment. Investigators also examined the equipment carried within each vehicle, documenting the type, location, condition, and apparent state of readiness of items relevant to Animal Services field operations.

To accurately preserve the observations made during the inspection, investigators obtained a comprehensive series of photographs documenting the condition of the vehicles, the placement and condition of operational equipment, vehicle interiors and storage compartments, and any other features considered relevant to the Review at the time of examination. These photographs formed part of the investigative record and provided a visual reference to supplement the written documentation of the inspection findings.

Field Examination and Neighbourhood Canvass

June 22, 2026

The investigative team attended the location where the incident occurred to conduct a field examination and neighbourhood canvass. The purpose of this attendance was to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the physical environment, assess the layout and characteristics of the area, identify locations of investigative significance, and determine whether additional evidence could be located or preserved despite the passage of time since the incident. This site examination also assisted investigators in evaluating witness accounts and understanding the spatial relationships between the reported events, responding personnel, and surrounding properties.

During the field examination, investigators conducted a systematic assessment of the area and obtained a comprehensive series of photographs documenting the location as it existed at the time of the inspection. Photographs were taken to record relevant physical features, sightlines, access routes, property layouts, and any conditions or observations considered pertinent to the Review. These photographs were retained as part of the investigative record to supplement the written documentation of the scene examination.

While attending the area, investigators also conducted a neighbourhood canvass in an effort to identify additional witnesses and obtain further information relevant to the Review. One independent witness was located and voluntarily participated in an

interview, during which a statement was obtained and documented. Several additional residences identified for follow-up were attended; however, the occupants were not present at the time of the investigative team's attendance. Investigative notices requesting contact with the investigative team were left at those residences to facilitate any subsequent witness interviews or collection of relevant information.

One notable observation made during the neighbourhood canvass involved [redacted]. Investigators observed [redacted] Based on its apparent positioning and coverage, the camera was identified as having the potential to have captured all or part of the incident, subject to the camera being operational and recording at the relevant time. The investigative team identified the delayed contact with the property owner as a potential evidentiary concern, recognizing that many residential video surveillance systems retain footage only for a limited period before it is automatically overwritten.

During the canvass, an occupant answered the door following a second attempt to make contact; however, a [redacted] The investigative team provided contact information and requested that it be shared with [redacted] with the objective of facilitating follow-up to determine whether any relevant video evidence remained available for review.

Ongoing Evidence Review and Investigative Analysis

June 23, 2026 – July 8, 2026

Between June 23, 2026, and July 8, 2026, the investigative team continued a comprehensive review and analysis of additional documentary evidence submitted by the Corporation. This material included records and information not previously available during the initial stages of the Review. The ongoing review assisted in addressing several identified evidentiary gaps while simultaneously identifying new lines of inquiry requiring further examination. As additional information was assessed and corroborated with witness statements and previously collected evidence, the investigative team identified the need to conduct follow-up interviews with previously interviewed Animal Services personnel and management to clarify specific issues, reconcile inconsistencies, and obtain further detail relating to identified decision-making processes and operational actions.

During this period, additional investigative efforts also confirmed the existence of further independent witnesses who were identified as having potentially relevant information. Appropriate arrangements were subsequently made to schedule and

conduct these interviews in order to obtain additional independent evidence capable of assisting in reconstructing the circumstances surrounding the incident.

In addition to the review of direct evidentiary material, the investigative team undertook a comprehensive assessment of the Corporation's policies, standard operating procedures, operational guidelines, training material, and other governance documents that were in effect at the time of the incident. This review was conducted to determine which documents were applicable to the circumstances under Review, evaluate whether operational expectations had been clearly established, identify opportunities for procedural improvement, and assess whether any departures from established procedures may have influenced the actions taken during the incident.

Throughout this analytical phase, the investigative team also continued an evidence-based decision point analysis for each individual involved in the incident. This process examined the information known to each person at each stage of the event, the decisions made based on that information, and the operational options reasonably available at the time. Complementing this review, investigators completed a broader working decision point analysis of the overall incident chronology, a canine behaviour decision point analysis to evaluate behavioural indicators and associated response considerations, and a fleet and equipment decision point analysis to assess the availability, suitability, deployment, and operational use of vehicles and equipment. The results of these assessments were incorporated into the overall investigative findings and informed the ongoing evaluation of organizational practices, operational decision-making, and opportunities for improvement.

Independent Witness Interviews

July 9, 2026

On July 9, 2026, the investigative team conducted interviews with two independent civilian witnesses who were identified as having direct involvement in, and observations of, the events that occurred on May 4, 2026. These interviews were undertaken to obtain independent accounts of the incident, clarify the sequence of events, and compare the witnesses' observations with the evidence previously obtained throughout the Review.

The first witness interviewed was [redacted], whose involvement in the incident consisted of being the finder of the dogs and called animal services while she and her family held the dogs. The witness provided information regarding dogs’ behaviours upon finding them, interaction with dogs, interaction and observations of the officers on scene and the after-death evidence, correspondence and observations. Offered to provide photographs and video evidence taken during their involvement.

The second witness interviewed was [redacted], whose involvement consisted of animal handling and present during arrival of officers to the officer's departure. The

witness provided information relating to dogs' behaviours upon finding them, interaction with dogs, interaction and observations of the officers on scene and the after-death evidence, correspondence and observations. Confirmed evidence of EVC and necropsy reports were shared and reviewed by them. Offered to provide photographs and video evidence taken during their involvement.

The information obtained during these interviews will be assessed in conjunction with previously collected witness statements, documentary evidence, physical evidence, and investigative findings. Any corroborative information, inconsistencies, or additional investigative requirements identified as a result of these interviews will be documented and addressed within the subsequent stages of this Review.

Follow-Up Interviews – Investigating Animal Control Officers

July 10, 2026

On July 10, 2026, the investigative team conducted follow-up interviews with the two Animal Control Officers who responded to the incident on May 4, 2026. The purpose of these re-interviews was to obtain additional clarification regarding matters identified during the ongoing investigative review, evidence analysis, and decision point assessment. These interviews formed part of the investigative team's continuing efforts to address evidentiary gaps, reconcile information obtained from multiple sources, and ensure that all relevant operational decisions and actions were fully understood within the context of the incident.

The first follow-up interview was conducted with the [redacted] Animal Control Officer ([redacted]), who responded to the scene after being requested to provide operational assistance. This interview examined the officer's understanding of the situation upon arrival, information received prior to and during the response, operational role, observations, decision-making process, communications with other personnel, and actions undertaken throughout their involvement in the incident. Particular attention was given to areas previously identified through the investigative team's decision point analysis where additional context or clarification was required.

A subsequent follow-up interview was conducted with the Animal Control Officer ([redacted]) who was the initial responding officer and first to arrive on scene. The interview focused on clarifying the officer's observations, assessment of the evolving situation, operational decision-making, communications, and actions taken from the time of arrival through the progression of the incident. As with the first interview, the discussion was directed toward clarifying matters identified through the ongoing investigative analysis and addressing outstanding evidentiary gaps. The interview had to be stopped without completeness due to the officer's timeline limitations. A new date has been set for follow-up on July 15th, 2026.

The information obtained through these follow-up interviews will be evaluated in conjunction with all previously collected evidence, documentary material, witness statements, and analytical findings. Any additional information relevant to the investigative findings, decision point analyses, or organizational review will be incorporated into the subsequent sections of this report.

Independent Witness Interview

July 13, 2026

On July 13, 2026, the investigative team conducted an interview with an independent civilian witness who was identified as having direct observations of the events that occurred on May 4, 2026. The witness's observations were sought to assist the investigative team in further establishing and validating the incident timeline, including the sequence of key milestones, actions taken by involved individuals, and behaviours observed throughout the progression of events. This information was intended to support the continued reconstruction of the incident chronology and assist in evaluating individual and operational decision points within the context of the circumstances known at each stage.

The witness interviewed was [redacted], whose involvement in the incident consisted of arriving shortly after both catchpoles were applied to the dog. The witness provided information regarding the timeline gaps, the location of the officers, the condition of the dog at the time and offered video footage that she took while observing from her property.

Information obtained through this interview will be analyzed in the context of the complete investigative record, including witness evidence, documentary records, physical evidence, and investigative findings. Any corroborating information, discrepancies, or further investigative actions identified during this analysis will be documented and addressed as appropriate.

Follow-Up Interview – Investigating Animal Control Officer

July 15, 2026

On July 15, 2026, recommenced interview from July 10, 2026, with Officer [redacted] focusing on additional observation, action, timelines and decision point clarifications

Independent Enforcement Witness Interview

August 7, 2026

The investigative team conducted an interview with Special Constable, [redacted] who attended the incident on May 4, 2026, following a request for assistance from the responding Animal Control Officers as the situation escalated. Although present in an enforcement capacity, the Special Constable was not directly involved in the operational decision-making or investigative responsibilities of Animal Services and was therefore interviewed as an independent enforcement witness capable of providing an objective account of the events observed.

The purpose of the interview was to obtain the witness's independent observations regarding the progression of the incident, the actions and behaviours of the involved parties, the environmental and operational conditions encountered, communications observed or participated in, and any other information considered relevant to the Review. The witness' observations were also sought to assist the investigative team in further establishing and validating the incident timeline, including the sequence of key milestones, actions taken by involved individuals, and behaviours observed throughout the progression of events. This information was intended to support the continued reconstruction of the incident chronology and assist in evaluating individual and operational decision points within the context of the circumstances known at each stage.

The information obtained during this interview will be assessed alongside all previously collected witness statements, documentary evidence, physical evidence, and analytical findings. Any additional investigative leads, corroborative evidence, or issues requiring further examination identified through this interview will be incorporated into the continuing investigative analysis and reflected within the subsequent findings of this report.

Summary of Scene Management and Evidence Preservation Findings

The independent review determined that opportunities to preserve the original incident scene and associated evidence immediately following the May 4, 2026, incident were not fully realized. As a result, the investigative team was unable to examine the scene in its original condition or preserve certain forms of transient physical evidence that would ordinarily be available during the immediate post-incident period.

The inability to preserve the scene at the time of the incident significantly influenced the investigative methodology adopted following the appointment of the independent investigative team. Rather than undertaking a traditional scene examination, the Review required an evidence reconstruction approach based upon the collection, preservation, and corroboration of all remaining available evidence. This included documentary

records, witness interviews, operational documentation, photographs, video, vehicle and equipment examinations, site inspections, digital evidence, and independent witness accounts.

Although the delayed commencement of the independent Review resulted in permanent evidentiary limitations, those limitations did not preclude the Review from proceeding. Instead, they required increased reliance upon multiple independent sources of evidence, objective analytical review, and systematic corroboration to reconstruct the circumstances of the incident.

Throughout the Review, every reasonable effort has been made to identify additional evidence, recover information that remained available, and objectively evaluate the reliability of each evidentiary source. The investigative process therefore shifted from preservation of an original scene to the reconstruction of events through accepted investigative methodology designed to compensate, where possible, for evidence that was no longer capable of being preserved.

The findings contained throughout the remainder of this report should therefore be considered within the context of these evidentiary limitations while recognizing that conclusions have been developed through the totality of the available evidence rather than reliance upon any single witness, document, or source of information.

Ongoing Evidence Review and Investigative Analysis

The investigative process extends beyond the collection and preservation of evidence. Following the completion of witness interviews, documentary reviews, scene examinations, and evidence collection, the Review entered an analytical phase focused on evaluating the reliability, consistency, and evidentiary value of all available information.

This phase of the Review is intended to establish an objective understanding of the incident through the systematic comparison of witness testimony, documentary evidence, physical evidence, organizational policies, training records, and operational procedures. The objective is to identify corroborated facts, resolve inconsistencies where possible, determine whether additional investigative avenues remained available, and develop evidence-based findings and recommendations.

Witness Evidence Assessment

All witness interviews were reviewed collectively rather than in isolation. Statements provided by involved officers, supervisory personnel, independent witnesses, and other relevant individuals are being compared against one another to identify:

- Areas of corroboration between witness accounts.
- Variations or inconsistencies requiring further examination.

- Differences between recollected events and contemporaneous documentation.
- Additional investigative opportunities arising from information obtained during interviews.
- Evidentiary gaps requiring clarification through supplementary interviews or additional evidence collection.

Each witness account is being evaluated within the context of all available evidence, recognizing that recollection may differ due to individual perception, positioning, stress, passage of time, or involvement during the incident.

Behavioural/Bite Assessment of the Dog

An independent behavioural analysis was conducted using all available evidence relating to the dog's actions throughout the incident.
This assessment considers:

- Witness observations.
- Officer descriptions.
- Physical evidence.
- Scene characteristics.
- Previous records of the dog.
- Photographic and video evidence, where available.

The purpose of this assessment is to establish, as objectively as possible, the behavioural presentation of the dog at each stage of the incident and determine how those behaviours may have influenced officer observations, risk assessments, tactical decisions, and subsequent actions.

This review is intended to remain evidence-based and does not rely solely upon any individual witness account.

Incident Timeline Reconstruction

A comprehensive chronological timeline was developed using all available evidence obtained throughout the Review.

The timeline incorporates:

- Communication records (i.e., phone logs, emails, etc)
- Officer activities.
- Witness observations.
- Documentary records.
- Photographs.
- Digital evidence.
- Radio communications.
- Significant investigative milestones identified during interviews.
- Video Surveillance

The purpose of the timeline is to accurately reconstruct the sequence of events from the initial response through the conclusion of the incident while identifying decision points, elapsed time between critical events, and opportunities where actions or outcomes may have differed.

The timeline also serves as the primary framework for comparing witness accounts against objective evidence.

Training and Operational Competency Review

A comprehensive review was conducted regarding the training received by all involved Animal Control Officers relevant to the duties performed during this incident.

This review includes consideration of:

- What experience is required for the position
- What experience did the officers have prior to starting their employment with Aurora Animal Services
- Initial internal training.
- Refresher training.
- Certification Training
- Specialized operational instruction.
- Policy awareness.
- Practical application of training.
- Officer experience.

The Review was assessing whether decisions made throughout the incident were consistent with the knowledge, competencies, and expectations reasonably associated with the training provided by the organization.
Consideration is also being given to whether additional training, enhanced guidance, or organizational improvements may reduce future operational risk.

Operational Decision-Making Assessment

Each significant operational decision made during the incident was being independently examined within the context of the information reasonably available to officers at the time the decisions were made.

The assessment considers:

- Available information at each decision point.
- Dynamic risk assessment.
- Officer safety.
- Public safety.
- Animal welfare considerations.

- Available tactical options.
- Environmental conditions.
- Time constraints.
- Applicable legislation.
- Organizational procedures.
- Operational resources

This review is intended to determine whether operational decisions were reasonable, proportionate, and consistent with accepted professional practices based upon the circumstances that existed at each stage of the incident.

Policy and Standard Operating Procedure Review

The Review includes a detailed review of all organizational policies, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), directives, and operational guidance applicable to the incident.

Each action undertaken during the incident was compared against the procedures that were in effect at the time to determine:

- Whether established procedures were followed.
- Whether any procedural deviations occurred.
- Whether any deviations were reasonable under the circumstances.
- Whether current procedures adequately address the operational circumstances encountered.
- Whether revisions to existing procedures may be warranted.

The review also considers whether organizational expectations were clearly communicated and supported through policy and training.

Continuing Evidence Development

As the Review progressed, additional investigative opportunities continued to be identified through ongoing analysis.

Where evidentiary gaps were identified, consideration were being given to the feasibility and investigative value of obtaining additional evidence, including but not limited to:

- Supplementary witness interviews.
- Additional documentary records.
- Digital evidence.
- Surveillance footage.
- Communications records.
- Organizational documentation.
- Expert consultation.
- Technical analysis.
- Veterinary Reports

Each additional investigative step was assessed for its potential to clarify disputed facts, corroborate existing evidence, or improve the overall completeness of the Review.

Development of Findings and Recommendations

The analytical review described throughout this section forms the foundation upon which the Final Investigative Report will be developed.

Following completion of all evidence review and investigative analysis, the Review will present findings supported by objective evidence and will include recommendations where appropriate.

Recommendations may address operational practices, training, supervision, policy development, documentation, evidence preservation, organizational procedures, and other systemic considerations identified during the course of the Review.

All findings and recommendations will be based upon the totality of evidence obtained throughout the Review and will be presented independently, objectively, and without speculation.

Section Review

Lead Author: Amanda Barrett
Technical Review: Julie Speyer and Andrew Reynolds

SECTION 2 – INCIDENT RECONSTRUCTION

2.1 Incident Overview

On May 4, 2026, Aurora Animal Services received multiple reports of two dogs running at large within the Town of Aurora. The dogs, later identified as an intact male Rottweiler and a female German Shorthaired Pointer, were reported at several locations before ultimately being contained by members of the public on a private residential property.

Animal Control Officer [redacted] attended the location and initiated containment and intake procedures. The German Shorthaired Pointer was successfully photographed, scanned, and loaded into the Animal Services vehicle. The Rottweiler was also initially loaded without reported difficulty; however, during the intake process, while a photograph was being obtained, the dog exited the vehicle before transport could be completed.

Following the dog's exit from the vehicle, Officer [redacted] undertook a series of cooperative handling strategies intended to encourage the dog to voluntarily re-enter the vehicle. These efforts included verbal encouragement, the use of food rewards, assistance from a civilian who had participated in containing the dogs, and an attempted temporary slip-lead muzzle intended to facilitate loading. Despite these efforts, the dog remained outside the vehicle and transport could not be completed. As the interaction continued, Officer [redacted] requested assistance from a [redacted] Animal Control Officer.
Animal Control Officer [redacted] subsequently attended the scene and received a briefing regarding the previous handling and loading attempts before conducting her own assessment of the situation. Additional cooperative loading strategies were attempted; however, they were unsuccessful. During an attempt to physically guide the dog by the collar area, the Rottweiler turned and bit Officer [redacted] on the [redacted] resulting in puncture wounds. The dog immediately released following the bite.

Following the bite, the officers transitioned from cooperative handling techniques to physical restraint using catch poles while continuing to evaluate available response options. During the containment period, owner information was confirmed, the owners were contacted, police assistance was requested, and supervisory guidance was obtained. Throughout this period, the dog's behavioural presentation fluctuated, with observed periods of increased activity interspersed with periods of reduced activity while officers maintained containment, monitored the dog's condition, and continued evaluating the situation.

Following the arrival of the Special Constables in response to the request for police assistance, a notable change in the pattern of the dog's activity was identified. The Special Constable observed that, whereas periods of increased activity had previously appeared to be more prolonged than periods of reduced activity, the pattern had shifted. The periods of reduced activity were becoming increasingly prolonged, while periods of increased activity were becoming shorter and less frequent. This change in the dog's observable presentation was specifically noted by the Special Constable during their attendance and formed part of the circumstances observed as the incident progressed.

As the incident progressed, the dog became unresponsive while still under containment. The owners arrived shortly thereafter, and arrangements were made for the dog to be transported to the 404 Emergency Veterinary Clinic for assessment. Officer [redacted] transported the dog to the veterinary clinic while Officer [redacted] attended Southlake Regional Health Centre for medical assessment and treatment of her bite injury.

Lead Author: Julie Speyer
Technical Review: Amanda Barrett and Andrew Reynolds

2.2 CF Aurora Timeline

PHASE 1 – DOGS RUNNING AT LARGE

Time	Event	
12:30 hrs	First report received regarding two large dogs running at large near Queensville Sideroad and 2nd Concession Road.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes
12:35 hrs	[redacted] attended the reported area and conducted a patrol. Dogs were not located.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes
15:01 hrs	Second report received indicating a Rottweiler and German Shorthaired Pointer were running at large near Anchor Park.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes
15:19 hrs	[redacted] attended Anchor Park and conducted a patrol. Dogs were not located.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes
15:23–15:43 hrs	Additional patrol conducted in the Holland Landing Prairie area. Dogs were not located.	**Single Source** [redacted] CRM Notes

PHASE 2 – CONTAINMENT & INITIAL LOADING ATTEMPTS

Time	Event	
16:20 hrs	[redacted] reported two dogs contained at [redacted]. Dogs had reportedly been running at large throughout the day.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes
Approx. 16:20–16:55 hrs	While en route, [redacted] recognized the pair as dogs involved in a previous incident and contacted Georgina Animal Shelter requesting owner information.	**Corroborated** [redacted] CRM

Time	Event	
		Notes; [redacted] Interview
Approx. 16:20–16:55 hrs	Shelter responded with owner information for both dogs.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes; [redacted] Interview; Email from shelter
Prior to officer arrival	Residents reportedly separated the dogs. [redacted] was advised that the male Rottweiler had been repeatedly mounting the female German Shorthaired Pointer prior to containment.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes; Independent Interview
16:56 hrs	[redacted] arrived on scene.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes
Shortly after arrival	German Shorthaired Pointer was photographed, scanned, and loaded into the vehicle without reported difficulty.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes
Shortly after arrival	Rottweiler was loaded into the vehicle. While a photograph was being taken, the dog exited the vehicle.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes; Independent witness interviews
Following vehicle exit	Multiple attempts were made to reload the dog using treats being placed inside the truck, use of the public member who built a report with the dog and verbal encouragement. The dog was not successfully loaded.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes; independent witness interview

Time	Event	
Following failed loading attempts	[redacted] assisted with loading efforts. While attempting to help load the dog into the vehicle, the dog turned its head toward [redacted] and made oral contact with her head, dislodging her sunglasses. No injury was reported.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes
Following [redacted] contact	[redacted] attempted to use a slip lead as a temporary muzzle to facilitate loading. The attempt was unsuccessful because the slip lead was too short and the dog was not loaded.	**Partially Corroborated** [redacted] CRM, Notes; [redacted] Interview
Following failed muzzle attempt	[redacted] contacted [redacted] requesting assistance.	**Corroborated** [redacted] CRM Notes; [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Interview
While awaiting [redacted]	Additional loading attempts were made using the vehicle side compartment and a towel. The dog was not successfully loaded.	**Corroborated** [redacted] CRM Notes; [redacted] Interview, Independent Interview
While awaiting [redacted]	[redacted] attempted to encourage the dog into the vehicle. [redacted] expressed concern regarding [redacted] safety around the dog.	**Corroborated** [redacted] CRM Notes; [redacted] Interview; Independent Interview

PHASE 3 – ASSISTANCE REQUEST & [redacted] ARRIVAL

Time	Event	
Approx. 17:20 hrs	[redacted] received [redacted] request for assistance. [redacted] understood that the German Shorthaired Pointer had already been secured and that [redacted] was having difficulty loading the Rottweiler.	**Corroborated** [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview
Approx. 17:20 hrs	[redacted] suggested attempting to load the dog through the side compartment of the vehicle using a towel or blanket.	**Corroborated** [redacted] CRM Notes; [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview
17:41–17:42 hrs	[redacted] arrived on scene.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] Statement
Upon arrival	[redacted] received information from [redacted] and [redacted] regarding previous loading attempts and [redacted] contact incident.	**Partially Corroborated** [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Interview
Upon arrival	[redacted] observed the dog standing, alert, panting, and resistant to loading. [redacted] did not recall growling or barking.	**Single Source** [redacted] Interview
Following arrival	[redacted] attempted to encourage the dog into the vehicle using movement, upbeat verbal encouragement, and enthusiasm. The dog did not load.	**Partially Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Interview
Following unsuccessful loading attempts	[redacted] took hold of the leash near the dog's neck and reached toward the collar.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview; Independent Interview

Time	Event	
Approx. 17:45 hrs	The dog turned and bit [redacted] causing puncture wounds.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview, Photographs
17:45 hrs	[redacted] retreated briefly and contacted [redacted] [redacted] didn't answer.	**Corroborated** [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Interview
17:49 hrs-17:57 hrs	[redacted] connected with [redacted] by phone and remained connected intermittently throughout the incident. (Call lasted 8 mins)	**Corroborated** [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview; Phone logs

PHASE 4 – RESTRAINT & BEHAVIOURAL FLUCTUATION PERIOD

Time	Event	
Shortly after bite	[redacted] applied the first catch pole applied.	**Partially Corroborated** [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview
Shortly after	[redacted] applied the second catch pole applied.	**Partially Corroborated** [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview
Following application of dual restraint	The dog entered a period of increased emotional arousal characterized by increased movement, pulling against restraint equipment, biting restraint equipment, rolling behaviour, and attempts to evade control.	**Corroborated** [redacted] Statement; [redacted] CRM Notes; [redacted] Summary; [redacted] Interview

Time	Event	
Following dual restraint	Blood was first observed coming from the dog's mouth area.	**Corroborated** [redacted] Statement; [redacted] CRM Notes; [redacted] Summary
17:58 hrs	Video of [redacted] retreating home with witness statement in hand provided to her by [redacted] prior to [redacted] arrival. [redacted] was visibly upset and identifying there was so much blood.	**Corroborated** Video Evidence; Independent witness Interview
17:58 hrs -18:05 hrs	[redacted] called [redacted] (7 mins)	**Corroborated** Phone Logs
Approx. 18:00 hrs	[redacted] directed [redacted] to contact police for assistance. [redacted] completed call to request assistance due to dog bleeding and officers not able to load. Police not available as per communications	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview; Independent Interview
Approx. 18:01 hrs	[redacted] advised that owner information may be available through previous shelter records.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes; [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview
Approx. 18:07 hrs	Owner contacted and advised to attend immediately.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview
Unknown duration (possibly 20–30 minutes)	Dog entered a period of reduced emotional arousal characterized by decreased movement, lying on the ground, lowered head position, reduced interaction with restraint equipment, and cessation of visible oral bleeding.	**Single Source** [redacted] Interview

Time	Event	
18:11 hrs - 18:20 hrs	[redacted] took a photograph of Rottweiler laying down with head between legs with both catchpoles affixed around his neck at same time as taking injury #4 photograph. Observed blood on back of vehicle bumper	**Corroborated** Photograph taken next to another photograph which was timestamped
Approx. 18:35 hrs	[redacted] calls [redacted] again (38 mins). [redacted] recalls hearing reports of increased activity, jumping, thrashing, and biting restraint equipment.	**Partially Corroborated** [redacted] Summary; Phone Logs
18:40 Hrs	Officers with dog on pole at North side of driveway furthest from the vehicle, with bum up in air and then lays down. Little activity seen by dog.	**Corroborated** Doorbell Cam
Approx.18:30-18:50 hrs	Water was offered to the dog.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Summary; [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview; Independent Interview ([redacted] & [redacted])
Following water placement	Dog entered a period of increased emotional arousal characterized by spinning, rolling, biting restraint equipment, increased physical activity, and renewed visible oral bleeding.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] Statemnt: [redacted] Summary; [redacted] Interview
Approx. 18:48 hrs	Special Constables arrived on scene.	**Corroborated** [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Interview Special Constable Interview
Following Special Constable approach	Reports of increased activity by the dog. Officers directed the special constables to stay to bottom of driveway and not advance further. Special Constables got within 10 feet away.	**Corroborated** [redacted] Interview Special Constable Interview

Time	Event	
Shortly before 19:00 hrs	Special Constable advised the dogs level of activity was within 6 ft by 6 ft upon their arrival and pattern of increased activity eventually became less with more frequent and longer periods of decreased activity.	**Single Source** Special Constable Interview
Shortly before 19:00 hrs	Special Constable identified the dog laid down after an alligator role. Observed the dog's chest rise a couple times, then the dog fell onto its side and became unresponsive.	**Corroborated** [redacted] statement; [redacted] Summary; [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview; Independent Interviews; Doorbell Cam
Shortly before 19:00 hrs	Toe/pinch response assessment performed. No response observed.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Summary; [redacted] Interview; Independent Interview

PHASE 5 – OWNER ARRIVAL & VETERINARY TRANSPORT

Time	Event	
19:00 hrs	Owners arrived on scene.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Summary; [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview; Independent Interviews
Shortly after arrival	Male owner made contact with the dog's hind leg and then returned to his vehicle.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Summary; [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview

Time	Event	
Shortly after arrival approx.. 19:03 hrs	Catch poles were loosened and/or removed. [redacted] removed first.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Interview; [redacted] Interview; Independent Interview; Doorbell Cam
Shortly after arrival	Neighbours, residents, and dog owners were yelling and recording officers.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes; [redacted] Statement; [redacted] Summary; Doorbell Cam
Shortly after arrival	[redacted] offered to transport the dog to 404 Emergency Veterinary Hospital.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes; [redacted] Statement
19:18 hrs	Officers cleared the scene.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline; [redacted] CRM Notes; [redacted] Statement
19:22 hrs	[redacted] attempts to call [redacted] again missed call recorded	**Corroborated** Call Log
19:25 hrs	[redacted] called [redacted] back (3mins)	**Corroborated** Call Log
19:31 hrs	[redacted] arrived at Southlake Hospital for treatment.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline
19:36 hrs	[redacted] arrived at 404 Emergency Veterinary Clinic with the dog.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline
19:44 hrs	[redacted] cleared the veterinary clinic.	**Corroborated** Official Timeline
19:55 hrs	[redacted] calls [redacted] (1 min)	**Corroborated** Call Log

Time	Event	
23:44 hrs	[redacted] calls [redacted] (7 mins)	**Corroborated** Call Log

Lead Author: Julie Speyer
Technical Review: Amanda Barrett and Andrew Reynolds

2.3 Interview Comparison and Discrepancy Findings

Event 1 – Initial Discovery and Containment of the Dogs
Start: The first moment [redacted] observes or physically interacts with the dogs.
End: The moment [redacted] arrives on scene.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Whether [redacted] witnessed the dogs being leashed, or arrived after both were already secured. [redacted] account has [redacted] arriving and taking hold of the already-leashed [redacted] while [redacted] was still unleashed. [redacted] states she handed [redacted] to [redacted] and then leashed [redacted] meaning [redacted] would have been present for at least the second leashing. [redacted] own statement says the opposite: that by the time she got involved at all, [redacted] "had both of them, the dogs leashed, and secured on the property", meaning [redacted] didn't witness either dog being leashed.
- [redacted] statement describes the neighbour telling him the dogs "had no tags" during the leashing scene, before animal control was called. Neither [redacted] nor [redacted] own statement mentions checking for tags or saying this out loud at that point, the detail only shows up in [redacted] account.

Event 2 – [redacted] Initial Contact with Reporting Party
Starts: [redacted] arrives at the residence.
Ends: Immediately before [redacted] physically approaches [redacted]

Areas of Discrepancy:

- How [redacted] first reached the group. [redacted] Interview 2 states that "the caller" ([redacted], since she placed the call) came out to greet her and led her to where the dogs were, implying a separate encounter before [redacted] reached the family. Both [redacted] and [redacted] own accounts describe it differently: the family was already waiting together in the backyard, and [redacted] simply walked around the

side/front of the house directly to where they were standing. Neither [redacted] nor [redacted] describes [redacted] going out separately to meet and lead her in.
- [redacted] quotes [redacted] saying, upon seeing the dogs, "Oh, you have both of them." [redacted] was standing right there for the same exchange but doesn't mention this line in her own account, she only describes them having "chit chatted a little bit."
- [redacted] statements (both interviews) don't mention [redacted] request to walk [redacted] to the front herself, or [redacted] agreement to that, a detail only [redacted] reports, despite it being framed as an exchange directly with [redacted].

Event 3 – [redacted] Initial Contact with the Dogs
Starts: The moment [redacted] first approaches [redacted]
Ends: The moment [redacted] begins loading dogs into the van.

Areas of Discrepancy:
- When [redacted] was slip-leashed. Both of [redacted] interviews place this within Event 3's window, she describes leashing [redacted] in the backyard, before ever departing for the vehicle, prompted by his whining as [redacted] was walked out. [redacted] and [redacted] accounts both place this later, at or near the van (Event 4), describing [redacted] leashing [redacted] alone, saying she'd come back for [redacted], and only interacting with him again once they'd reached the vehicle. [redacted] version has it happening a full event earlier than [redacted] and [redacted] versions do.
- Order of operations for [redacted]: leashed first, or scanned/photographed first? [redacted] own accounts (both interviews) describe her routine as photo → scan → check tags → then load/leash, and Interview 2 explicitly follows that order for [redacted] (scan, no tags, photo, enlarged teats, then "began the process of loading her"). [redacted] account has it reversed: slip lead placed on [redacted] first, then scanned and photographed.
- Both of [redacted] interviews specifically note [redacted] enlarged teats as a possible sign of a recent litter. [redacted], who was standing a few feet away, doesn't mention this detail at all in her own account.

Event 4 – Initial Loading of the Dogs into the Vehicle
Start: [redacted] begins walking [redacted] toward the van.
End: [redacted] jumps out of the cage after the door is reopened.

Areas of Discrepancy:
- Who held/walked [redacted] leash to the vehicle and at the moment he was first loaded. [redacted] (both interviews) and [redacted] both state [redacted] ("[redacted]

[redacted]" per [redacted]; herself, per [redacted]) held [redacted] leash and walked him to the van, and that [redacted] was holding it when he first jumped into the crate. [redacted] own account states that she was the one holding [redacted] leash the entire time, including while [redacted] was being loaded, she doesn't describe handing it off to [redacted].

- When and where [redacted] applied the slip leash to [redacted]. [redacted] (both interviews) describes leashing [redacted] in the backyard, before departing for the vehicle, prompted by his anxious whining/pulling as [redacted] was walked out. [redacted] and [redacted] both describe [redacted] leashing [redacted] alone first, saying she'd come back for [redacted] and only interacting with [redacted] again once at or near the van.
- Whether treats were used to load [redacted] the first time. [redacted] follow-up interview explicitly states no treats were used and that she got him in with a "running start." [redacted] and [redacted] both independently describe a bacon strip/treats being used to get him into the crate.
- Whether a treat was used to load [redacted] [redacted] states no treat was involved, [redacted] jumped in on her own. [redacted] states [redacted] went in "with a prompt of a treat."
- Whether the crate door was ever fully latched on [redacted] before it reopened. [redacted] and [redacted] both state they heard the door latch completely closed before [redacted] reopened it. [redacted] follow-up interview states the opposite, that she left only a small gap, just enough for her phone, and never fully closed it, because she was trying to get the photo she'd skipped.
- Whether [redacted] kept continuous hold of the leash through the escape. [redacted] (both interviews) states she never lost her grip on the slip leash, including through the moment [redacted] jumped out. [redacted] account describes uncertainty about who had the leash at that point and says the group had to "try to catch him," suggesting he may have been loose momentarily.
- Both [redacted] and [redacted] describe telling [redacted], right as she reached for the door, that they already had plenty of photos of [redacted] neither of [redacted] statements mentions this exchange at all.

Event 5 – Initial Loading of the Dogs into the Vehicle

Start: [redacted] left the van.
End: [redacted] was contacted for backup.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Trigger for the backup call. [redacted] Interview 1 and Interview 2 both state that [redacted] swung his head and his tooth grazed [redacted] forehead while she was helping lift him into the vehicle, and that this is what led [redacted] to call for backup.

[redacted] statement does not describe this incident. [redacted] statement does not describe this incident either, and states that the process was calm and free of aggression up through the moment [redacted] called for backup.

- [redacted] sunglasses falling off. [redacted] Interview 1 states the sunglasses were knocked off during the head-swing/graze incident described above. [redacted] statement describes her sunglasses falling off separately, while she was crouched down with [redacted], and attributes this to losing her balance when he jumped or leaned on her; she does not connect it to any bite or head movement from the dog.
- Whether [redacted] sustained any injury. [redacted] Interview 1 states she checked and [redacted] told her she had only felt the tooth graze her forehead, with no wound. [redacted]statement does not describe any contact between the dog's mouth and her in this window.
- Order of the side-compartment/towel attempt relative to the backup call. [redacted] Interview 2 and [redacted] statement both place this after the backup call, describing it as a method suggested by [redacted] during that call. [redacted] statement places it before the backup call, describing it as [redacted] own suggestion, carried out, followed by [redacted] calling for backup.
- Who was directing the effort to load the dog. [redacted] Interview 2 states she was primarily the one trying to load the dog, that the family initially just watched, and that they asked to help once it wasn't working. [redacted] statement describes it as herself and [redacted] doing the work. [redacted] statement describes herself as the one making suggestions, with [redacted] staying quiet and standing back to observe.
- [redacted] demeanor. [redacted] statement describes [redacted] as appearing [redacted] [redacted] during this period and making a comment that she was [redacted] [redacted] Neither of [redacted] own statements mentions this.
- Sunglasses incident. Neither of [redacted] statements mentions the moment [redacted] describes where [redacted] jumped or leaned on her while she was crouched, causing her sunglasses to fall.
- Whether a muzzle-wrap attempt was made. Both of [redacted] interviews describe this attempt. [redacted] statement, when asked directly whether the slip lead was ever used to wrap the dog's mouth like a makeshift muzzle, says she does not recall this happening and did not think the leash was long enough for it.

Event 6 – Interval Between Backup Request and [redacted] Arrival

Start: The moment [redacted] radios [redacted] to request backup.

End: The moment [redacted] arrives on scene and reaches the group (before she makes physical contact with the dog).

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Whether [redacted] was informed, before arriving, about the earlier incident where the dog swung his head toward [redacted]. [redacted]s Interview 2 states she told [redacted] this over the radio. Both of [redacted] interviews describe being told only that the dog was "not aggressive, just difficult," with no mention of a specific incident.
- Whether a muzzle-wrap attempt occurred. Both of [redacted] interviews describe this happening. [redacted] statement says she does not recall this happening and did not believe the leash was long enough for it.
- The wait-time conversation between [redacted] and [redacted]. [redacted] statement describes an extended personal exchange — about their respective work, advocacy, [redacted] "spoken like a true mama" comment, and [redacted] offer to ride along in the van, or take the dog in her own vehicle. This conversation does not appear in either of [redacted] statements.
- [redacted] demeanor on arrival. [redacted] statement describes her as cold, curt, sighing, and seeming annoyed, and states [redacted] never introduced herself. [redacted] specifically recalls commenting on a pin on [redacted] shoulder in an attempt to ease the tension, and states [redacted] was quick to answer and did not seem receptive to conversation. Neither of [redacted] own statements characterizes her demeanor this way. [redacted] statements do not characterize [redacted] tone or attitude, but describe a similarly rapid approach: according to [redacted], she was only able to give a brief, one-line answer ("we're having a hard time, we can't load this guy in") before [redacted] said "hey fella" and moved to reach for the dog's collar, without further exchange of information.
- [redacted] arrival time. [redacted] statement gives a specific time of 5:45 p.m. Neither of [redacted] own statements provides a specific arrival time. [redacted] account also notes that [redacted] left the house to pick up pizza at approximately 5:39 p.m., a time confirmed by the family's [redacted], placing this just minutes before [redacted] stated 5:45 p.m. arrival time for[redacted]. This does not independently confirm [redacted] arrival time, but it anchors [redacted] recollection to a camera-verified timestamp close to the event, rather than pure memory alone.

Event 7 – [redacted] Attempts to Load the Dog

Start: The moment [redacted] takes over the leash and begins actively trying to get the dog into the vehicle (picking up right where Event 6 left off).

End: The moment [redacted] reaches for the dog's collar (immediately before the bite).

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Number and nature of attempts made before touching the collar. [redacted] Interview 1 describes multiple distinct attempts, a "happy-go-lucky" excited-voice approach tried at both the back door and the side door, consideration and rejection of bringing [redacted] out, and then a separate, firmer "big loop" leash technique, before she touched the collar. Neither of [redacted] statements nor [redacted] statement describes any of these attempts; their accounts move directly from [redacted] taking the leash to her reaching for the collar/neck.
- Number of attempts described between [redacted] own two interviews. Interview 1 describes at least three distinct methods across two locations (back door, side door, then the leash/"big loop" technique). Interview 2 describes two attempts total, both using the same excited/patting approach, with the second attempt, made at the side of the vehicle, being when she touched the collar. Interview 2 does not mention a separate back-door attempt or a distinct big-loop technique as a third method.
- How much information was exchanged before [redacted] reached for the collar. [redacted] Interview 2 states directly that "not a lot" of information was exchanged, she says [redacted] "was pretty quick to move in and reach," and that she didn't get the chance to tell [redacted] the dog had been hesitant around the neck area before [redacted] made contact. This describes a fast, brief sequence, which conflicts with the multi-step process [redacted] Interview 1 describes.

Event 8 – Collar Contact, Bite, and [redacted] Retreat to Her Vehicle
Start: The moment [redacted] touches/reaches for the dog's collar.
End: The moment [redacted] reaches her vehicle.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- The dog's posture immediately after the bite. [redacted] Interview 1 and [redacted] Interview 1 both describe the dog remaining standing, alert, and upright immediately after the bite, not lowered, not cowering. [redacted] statement describes the dog dropping to the ground the instant the leash was released, lying down with his head between his front paws, and staying in that position.
- Whether the dog's attention stayed fixed on [redacted] during this period. [redacted] Interview 1 states his focus remained "dialed in" on her specifically, even as she stepped away and later returned. [redacted] Interview 1 also states she believed his attention stayed on [redacted] rather than on her. [redacted] statement, describing the dog as lying down and not moving from his spot, does not describe him tracking or orienting toward [redacted] during this window.

- Whether the incident is described as a bite or a nip. [redacted] statements (both interviews) and [redacted] statements (both interviews) describe it as a bite — "grabbed and snapped," "bit," "clenched down." [redacted] statement characterizes it as a "nip," stating that a more serious bite could have caused significantly more damage.
- Who took control of the dropped leash. [redacted] statement states she herself stepped on the leash (though later in the same interview, asked again, she said she could not recall for certain who did). [redacted] Interview 1 states she herself stepped onto the slip leash, however in interview 2 when asked how she grabbed her catchpole if she was controlling the slip leash she states that [redacted] was stepping on the slip leash. [redacted] Interview 2 states she believes it was [redacted] who picked it up.

Event 9 - Retreat to Vehicle, Contact with Supervisor, and Catch Pole Retrieval
Start: Begins the moment [redacted] reaches her vehicle after retreating from the dog
End: Ends when [redacted] returns to the scene with her catch pole and directs [redacted] to retrieve hers as well.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- [redacted] Interview 2 account includes taking photos of her injury as part of this sequence (calling [redacted], taking photos, then retrieving the catch pole); Interview 1's account of the same window covers calling [redacted] and retrieving the catch pole but does not mention photos.
- In Interview 1, [redacted] described her calls to [redacted] as going unanswered; the call log she reviewed during that same interview shows a missed incoming call from [redacted] at 1748, shortly after her own outgoing attempt, before the two connected at 1749.
- [redacted] recalled [redacted] telling her during the initial call that she was putting a catch pole on the dog at that moment; [redacted] own account has her retrieving the catch pole and directing [redacted] to do the same only after her call attempts to [redacted], not narrated as happening during the call itself.
- [redacted] stated she suggested [redacted] or [redacted] hold [redacted] while the other used bite gloves or a towel to lift him for loading into the vehicle; neither [redacted] nor [redacted] describe this suggestion, or acting on it, in their own interviews.
- Interview 1 attributes [redacted] urgency to get the situation under control to her awareness of a fatal dog-attack incident the week prior; Interview 2 attributes her hurry back to the scene to concern for [redacted] and [redacted] safety. Neither interview mentions the reasoning given in the other.

Event 10 – Pole Application and Initial Loading Attempt
Start: Begins when [redacted] returns to the group with her catch pole.
End: Ends immediately before [redacted] comes out of the house and [redacted] asks her to call the police.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Order of catch pole application: [redacted] states in both interviews that her own catch pole went on first, with [redacted] added second. [redacted], in both interviews, and [redacted] all state [redacted] catch pole went on first, with [redacted] added second.
- Which catch pole's application triggered the dog's intense reaction: [redacted] states the dog began "going ballistic" with the first pole applied (which she identifies as her own). [redacted] and [redacted] both describe a milder initial reaction to the first pole (which they identify as [redacted]), with the more significant reaction beginning once the second pole ([redacted], per their account) was added.
- A statement attributed to [redacted] upon being told the dog was bleeding: [redacted] states [redacted] responded [redacted] and told [redacted] to tighten and twist her pole harder. Neither [redacted] nor [redacted] interviews mention this exchange.
- The noose momentarily catching around the dog's mouth during application: described only in [redacted] account.
- [redacted] and needing to switch hands due to cable tightness: described only in [redacted] account.
- Source of the blood: [redacted] describes it coming from the dog's tongue; [redacted] describes it coming from his nostril in her first interview and from both his mouth and nostril in her second; [redacted] describes it as coming from his mouth.
- Timing of when blood was first noticed relative to the loading attempt: [redacted] account places it within seconds of both poles being secured, before they moved him to attempt loading. [redacted] account (both interviews) places it later, after they had already turned him toward the back of the vehicle and attempted to load him. [redacted] account places it earliest, tied to the moment the dog bit at [redacted] pole shortly after [redacted] went on.
- Whether an actual lift occurred: [redacted] describes a specific, sustained attempt, [redacted] directing [redacted] to help lift the dog by the poles, with his front paws visibly off the ground for roughly 60–90 seconds. [redacted], asked directly, denies lifting him by the front legs with the poles. [redacted] accounts (both interviews) describe trying to get him up and into the vehicle but stop short of confirming a lift, and her second interview explicitly avoids the word "lift." [redacted] in her [redacted] interview, indicated that she bent at the knees, lifted the end of her catchpole to be aligned with her shoulder height, to assist her in lifting with her legs.

- Within [redacted] own second interview, her account shifts in specificity on this same point: earlier she describes trying "no matter how hard" to get him "lifted into the vehicle," but later, asked pointedly about lifting him by the front legs with the poles, she says it didn't happen.
- Within [redacted] own interview, she initially places the lift as occurring before her 911 call, matching [redacted] and [redacted] sequencing and her own earlier, more detailed narrative account, then corrects herself moments later to say the 911 call came first.
- Reasoning given for asking [redacted] to call the police: [redacted] states her intention was specifically to get an officer to hold her catch pole so she could use bite gloves and a towel to lift the dog into the vehicle. Neither [redacted] nor [redacted] accounts mention this specific plan; both describe the request more generally, as needing help because an officer had been bitten and the dog could not be loaded.

Event 11 – Continued Loading Attempts and First Period of Reduced Resistance
Start: Begins when [redacted] is asked to call police.
End: When the dog stops actively resisting for the first time.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- [redacted] describes a "tug of war," with the dog pulling toward a grassy slope near the neighbor's fence line during this struggle. Neither of [redacted] interviews mentions this movement at all, her account moves from the failed load attempt directly to getting the dog to lie down at the back of the vehicle, without reference to being pulled toward the slope.
- [redacted] account describes ongoing visible distress, active bleeding, gurgling, labored breathing, right up to when she was sent inside, with no mention of the dog settling. [redacted] and [redacted] accounts both describe the bleeding slowing or stopping and the dog settling into reduced activity within roughly this same window. This may reflect [redacted] being sent inside before the reduced-activity point was reached, but the accounts don't line up on the dog's apparent condition during the time they overlap.
- [redacted] overheard [redacted] tell [redacted] she had the owner's information while still on her fire Division call, before being sent inside at 5:57 p.m. [redacted] and [redacted] accounts both place the ownership information coming up only once the dog had already reached reduced activity and the poles had been loosened, meaning [redacted] own timeline suggests she was still outside, and the dog may not yet have been fully settled, at the point this conversation happened.

Event 12 – Water Offering, Renewed Struggle, and Arrival of Special Constables
Start: Begins when [redacted] brings out the water bowl.
End: Ends when the special constables arrive on scene.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Who moved the water bowl, and how: [redacted] account has her placing it directly in front of the dog and the dog trying to stand to reach it (which triggers the officers re-tightening the poles). [redacted] account has [redacted] placing it beside [redacted], not the dog, with [redacted] then sliding it closer using her foot, and [redacted] specifically attributes the dog's reaction to the sliding sound. [redacted] account doesn't mention a slide at all, describing the reaction as immediate upon [redacted] placement. [redacted] account has the dog not reacting to the water being placed down at all, only sometime after.
- Whether a second period of reduced activity occurred at all: [redacted] (both interviews) describes a distinct "second calm" between the water-triggered struggle and the special constables' arrival. [redacted] second interview explicitly denies this, when asked if he became calm again, she said no, that he continued declining until he became unresponsive, with no second calm described.
- Timing of special constables' arrival relative to the water incident: [redacted] account has them arriving essentially as soon as the water-triggered reaction begins, while the struggle is still escalating. [redacted] account, using her own timestamps, places the water incident and her going inside at 6:39–6:40 p.m., with special constables arriving between 6:43 and 6:50, a gap of several minutes. [redacted] account has them arriving while the dog is already bleeding heavily mid-struggle. [redacted] account places their arrival only after a full second calm-down had already occurred. [redacted], [redacted], and [redacted] are broadly consistent with special constables arriving during or shortly after the active struggle; [redacted] account places a completed calm period in between.
- Cause of the dog's reaction to the water: [redacted] attributes it simply to the water being placed near him. [redacted]attributes it specifically to her own foot-sliding the bowl closer. [redacted]attributes it to the dog's own attempt to stand and reach the water, catching a yelp, followed by the officers' response of tightening the poles.
- The dog's movement pattern during the struggle: [redacted] and [redacted] both describe rolling, spinning, and "alligator rolling." [redacted], watching from her kitchen window, explicitly says she did not see any vertical jumping or the dog going down and rolling, only biting at the poles and backing away, though she also says her view was partially obstructed at times and this portion of her observation may not cover the full struggle.

- Special Constable [redacted] states upon arrival the dog appeared to have increased activity and confirmed [redacted] was the one to advise he and his partner to not progress any further on scene. Special Constable [redacted] advised they were approximately 10 feet from where the officers and dog were struggling at this time.
- Reason for the [redacted] constables being asked to stay back: [redacted] attributes this to her own request, concerned their presence was upsetting the dog. [redacted] attributes the same instruction to "the [redacted]" (consistent with [redacted]), which is one point of agreement worth noting alongside the conflicts above.

Event 13 – Special Constables' Arrival and the Dog Becoming Unresponsive
Start: Begins when the special constables arrive on scene.
End: Ends when the dog becomes unresponsive / stops moving.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Who responded to the "choking the dog to death" accusation, and who made it: [redacted] attributes the comment to an unnamed neighbor and says a special constable replied that everything was under control. [redacted] own statement has him making that exact accusation directly, with animal control (not a special constable) replying "not at all." These may be the same exchange described differently by two participants, or two separate incidents, worth noting either way. Special Constable [redacted] confirmed [redacted] had made a comment directed at him inquiring if he was there to “Murder the dog”. Special Constable [redacted] advised he did respond to [redacted] comments in attempts to reduce the escalations observed by the constable.
- Special Constable [redacted] stated he observed both the officers twisting the poles while the dog would turn his head to the left and right with enough force to cause the blood to spray from the dog. The dog was actively moving side to side but no vertical movement within a 6’X6’ space. He stated that he also observed a large gap between the one pole’s rope to the dog’s neck which he described as big enough to place a hand between. SC [redacted] also describes a slow shift from more active movement periods then reduced activity to more reduced activity and shorter periods of increased activity prior to the dog laying down.
- Whether the dog was actively vocalizing/struggling continuously or had already gone quiet before collapse: [redacted] describes hearing grunting and wheezing and the dog visibly slowing down before it went to its knees. [redacted] describes the dog going still and the officers becoming motionless together, with his tail twitch as

the only sign of continued life. Special Constable [redacted] describes the dog alligator rolling and then laying down, when he observed a couple chest raises then the dog became unresponsive. [redacted] account has a more abrupt transition, reactive thrashing followed almost immediately by him laying still on his side, without describing an intermediate slowing period the way [redacted] does.

- Bladder emptying and its meaning: [redacted] places him emptying his bladder as part of the transition to unresponsiveness, reported live to [redacted]. [redacted] describes noticing the urination alongside his tail wagging, and reads both together as signs that "this was the end." Neither frames it as alarming in the moment so much as a marker of what was happening, worth flagging since it's the kind of physical detail that could be read differently.
- Whether respiration or pulse was ever checked: [redacted] confirms neither she nor [redacted] checked breathing or pulse themselves, only the toe check, which is consistent with [redacted] account from her phone call notes (that she directed a toe check and didn't recall giving explicit instruction to check pulse or respiration). [redacted] account, from an outside vantage point, describes seeing the '[redacted] (matching [redacted] description of the [redacted]) feel for a pulse, which would mean a pulse check did happen, just possibly performed by the other officer rather than [redacted], or observed by [redacted] slightly later than the window [redacted] is describing. Worth checking against the next event's timeline rather than resolving here, since [redacted] vantage point continues past this boundary. When asked if lifesaving actions were taken or confirmation of life by the animal control officers, Special Constable [redacted] stated that [redacted] did move towards the dog and bend down after a short period of the officers looking at each other in a manner that he read as them not knowing what to do. He was not sure what she was looking for or could confirm exactly where she went to check and initially only assumed she was checking for a pulse.

Event 14 – Owners' Arrival, York Regional Police Arrival, and Final Loading of the Dog
Start: Begins when the dog has just become unresponsive, and the owners arrive.
End: Ends when the dog is loaded into the vehicle.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Special Constable [redacted] confirmed he reached out to dispatch to request Officer attendance as believed the scene was becoming too escalated and needed assistance to control the scene.
- Who responded to [redacted] "choking the dog to death" comment, and when: [redacted] places this comment as happening after YRP had already arrived, during the tail

end of the commotion, and doesn't record any specific reply. This is worth comparing to [redacted] account, where she recalls a similar comment being met by a special constable saying everything was under control, raising the possibility these are being placed at different points in the timeline by different witnesses, or that [redacted] may be describing a separate, earlier comment from a different neighbor. Special Constable [redacted] confirms a comment from [redacted] which was more directed to him requesting if he was there to “Murder the dog” and SC [redacted] advised he had responded to [redacted].

- Focus and conduct of the responding officers: [redacted] account describes the special constables and police as more focused on filming and documentation than on the dog itself, declining to touch him despite being asked. [redacted] account doesn't characterize their conduct this way, focusing instead on the timeline and dialogue.

Lead Author: Julie Speyer
Technical Review: Amanda Barrett, Victoria Blondin, and Andrew Reynolds

SECTION 3 – CANINE BEHAVIOURAL ASSESSMENT & BITE ANALYSIS

3.1 Canine Behaviour Analysis

Behavioural Phase 1 – Initial Containment and Voluntary Loading

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Two dogs were present together when [redacted] arrived on the scene.
- Multiple reports indicated the Rottweiler had been pursuing and attempting to mount the German Shorthaired Pointer prior to containment.
- Reports indicate the behaviour continued after containment and that the dogs were separated by the finder.
- The reproductive status of either dog was unknown.
- [redacted] reported observations that caused her to question whether the German Shorthaired Pointer may have recently had a litter; this observation was not independently verified.
- The dogs had reportedly been running at large for an extended period before containment.
- Based on Animal Control call logs, the dogs are estimated to have been running at large for approximately 1.5–3 hours, based on reports received between 12:30 p.m. and 3:01 p.m. with Animal Control officers arriving on the scene at 4:20 p.m.
- The true duration at large and intensity of exertion cannot be fully known but likely exceeded the objectively documented period.
- Ownership had not yet been confirmed.
- The dogs were physically contained at the time of officer arrival.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The dog's voluntary entry into the vehicle suggests that, at this stage, entry into the vehicle was not acting as a significant behavioural barrier.
- No overt signs of aggression were reported during the initial loading process.
- The dog's behaviour suggests a level of tolerance for human proximity and handling sufficiently to allow containment and loading.
- At this stage of the incident, the available evidence does not indicate active resistance to transport.
- Multiple reports suggest that gaining access to the German Shorthaired Pointer may have represented a significant competing behavioural objective for the Rottweiler prior to containment.
- The extent to which pursuit, mounting behaviour, separation from the German Shorthaired Pointer, or possible reproductive influences affected the dog's emotional state cannot be determined from the available evidence.
- Prior exertion, prolonged activity, and ongoing interest in the second dog may represent relevant setting events when considering the dog's behavioural state during later phases of the incident.
- No clear indicators of handling sensitivity, collar sensitivity, or restraint sensitivity were documented during this phase.

Behavioural Phase 2 – Vehicle Exit

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Residential driveway environment.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the Animal Services vehicle.
- Photographing and documentation procedures were underway.
- Ownership had not yet been confirmed or communicated.
- Reports indicated the Rottweiler had previously been pursuing and attempting to mount the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- The dogs had reportedly been separated by the finder prior to officer arrival.
- Prior running-at-large duration is estimated at 1.5–4 hours based on Animal Control call logs, with officers responding to reports since 12:35 p.m. The full duration at large remains unknown.
- Prior exertion level remained unknown.
- Reproductive status of either dog remained unknown.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The dog's exit from the vehicle represents the first documented divergence from cooperative containment.
- Voluntary entry into the vehicle did not predict voluntary maintenance within the vehicle once the containment environment changed.
- No overt aggressive behaviour was reported during the exit itself.

- At this stage, the behaviour is more accurately characterized as loss of containment or refusal of confinement than aggression.
- The available evidence does not establish the dog's motivation for exiting the vehicle.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained a potentially relevant environmental stimulus during this phase.
- Previous reports of pursuit and mounting behaviour, combined with subsequent observations of interest in the German Shorthaired Pointer, suggest that access to the second dog may have remained behaviourally relevant.
- Prior exertion, unresolved access to the German Shorthaired Pointer, and transition into confinement may represent potential contributors to the dog's behavioural state; however, the relative influence of these factors cannot be determined from the available evidence.
- No documented indicators of handling sensitivity, restraint sensitivity, or overt conflict behaviour were reported during the exit itself.

Behavioural Phase 3 – Failed Reloading Attempts

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the Animal Services vehicle.
- [redacted] reported that the Rottweiler continued showing interest in the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- [redacted] reported that the dog was whining and attempting to access the German Shorthaired Pointer through the compartment area.
- Multiple reports indicated the Rottweiler had previously been pursuing and attempting to mount the German Shorthaired Pointer prior to containment.
- The dogs had reportedly been separated by the finder prior to officer arrival.
- Prior running-at-large duration was estimated at 1.5–4 hours, with the full duration remaining unknown.
- Prior exertion level remained unknown.
- Reproductive status of either dog remained unknown.
- Ownership had not yet been confirmed or communicated.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The dog's refusal to re-enter the vehicle represents the first sustained resistance to a requested behaviour.
- At this stage, the available evidence suggests behavioural non-compliance rather than overt aggression.
- Continued refusal despite repeated opportunities to reload suggests that the dog's motivation to remain outside the vehicle exceeded the value of the incentives being offered.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained a potentially relevant environmental stimulus throughout this phase.

- [redacted] observations of whining and attempts to access the German Shorthaired Pointer suggest continued behavioural interest in the second dog.
- Repeated loading attempts, continued separation from the German Shorthaired Pointer, prior exertion, and unresolved access to the second dog may represent cumulative factors influencing the dog's behavioural state.
- As the interaction continued without resolution, opportunities for behavioural recovery may have become increasingly limited.
- The available evidence suggests the potential for increasing conflict surrounding the loading process; however, no overt aggressive behaviours were documented during this phase.
- No documented indicators of handling sensitivity, restraint sensitivity, or direct aggression were reported during the failed reload attempts themselves.

Behavioural Phase 4 – [redacted] Interaction and First Documented Response to Physical Manipulation

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Multiple unsuccessful loading attempts had already occurred.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The dog had reportedly continued demonstrating interest in the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- The duration of the interaction was increasing.
- Ownership had not yet been confirmed or communicated.
- The loading process remained unresolved.
- Physical assistance was introduced after cooperative loading efforts had failed.

Behavioural Analysis:

- This is the first documented behavioural response associated with physical manipulation during the incident.
- The available evidence indicates that the dog's response occurred during an attempt to physically influence or assist movement into the vehicle.
- The head turn toward [redacted] suggests a behavioural response directed toward the source of physical contact or pressure.
- The available evidence does not establish whether the contact with the sunglasses represented an intentional bite, an inhibited bite, a warning response, an attempt to create distance, or another behavioural response.
- Importantly, no injury was reported during this interaction.
- The dog's response occurred in the context of repeated unsuccessful loading attempts and increasing duration of interaction.
- The interaction may represent an early indicator that the loading process itself was becoming a source of conflict for the dog.
- At this stage, the available evidence suggests the dog's behavioural responses remained closely associated with loading and physical handling attempts rather than indiscriminate aggression.

- The event may indicate increasing sensitivity to physical manipulation associated with the loading process; however, the extent of that sensitivity cannot be determined from the available evidence.

Behavioural Phase 5 – Muzzle Attempt

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- The dog had already refused multiple loading attempts.
- The head turn and subsequent grazing of the sunglasses on [redacted] head with the teeth had already occurred.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- [redacted] reported ongoing interest in the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- Full extent of prior running-at-large duration remained unknown.
- Prior exertion level remained unknown.
- Ownership had not yet been confirmed or communicated.
- The duration of the interaction was continuing to increase.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The attempted muzzle application represents an increase in the level of physical control being applied during the interaction.
- The dog's continued refusal to re-enter the vehicle persisted despite multiple changes in handling strategy.
- At this stage, the loading process remained unresolved and continued to be the central focus of the interaction.
- The available evidence suggests increasing conflict surrounding the loading process, as successive handling strategies were introduced without achieving the desired outcome.
- Repeated unsuccessful attempts, prolonged interaction duration, unresolved access to the German Shorthaired Pointer, and continued efforts to alter the dog's behaviour may represent cumulative factors influencing emotional arousal.
- Importantly, the available evidence does not indicate indiscriminate aggression during this phase.
- The inability to successfully apply the muzzle may suggest increasing sensitivity to handling associated with the loading process; however, the available evidence does not permit determination of the specific factors contributing to the failure of the muzzle attempt.
- At this stage, the behavioural picture continues to be characterized by resistance to handling and loading rather than overt aggression.

Behavioural Phase 6 – Arrival of Second Officer and Information Transfer

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Two Animal Control officers were present: [redacted] and [redacted].
- Prior loading attempts had been unsuccessful.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The duration of the interaction continued to increase.
- Ownership had not yet been communicated to [redacted].

Behavioural Analysis:

- No overt aggressive behaviours were reported during the initial assessment period.
- The dog's behaviour continued to be characterized by refusal to load rather than active aggression.
- Reported rigidity, forward weight distribution, and sustained attention are consistent with an elevated state of arousal but are not independently diagnostic of aggression.
- The available evidence suggests the dog's behavioural state remained sufficiently stable to permit additional cooperative handling attempts.
- At this stage, both officers continued to interpret the primary issue as resistance to loading rather than active aggression.

Behavioural Phase 7 – Cooperative Loading Attempts by [redacted]

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Two officers were present and actively engaged in the interaction.
- Multiple previous loading attempts had already been unsuccessful.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- The duration of the interaction continued to increase with 45 minutes of attempted loading and handling by the time [redacted] arrived on the scene.
- Ownership had not yet been communicated to [redacted].
- The dog remained outside the vehicle and transport had not yet been achieved.

Behavioural Analysis:

- Despite the introduction of a second handler and a modified handling approach, the dog continued to refuse voluntary vehicle entry.
- No overt aggressive behaviours were reported during these cooperative loading attempts.
- The available evidence suggests the dog's behavioural state remained characterized by resistance to the requested task rather than active aggression.
- The dog's continued refusal despite repeated changes in handling strategy suggests that the factors maintaining the behaviour had not been resolved.

- At this stage, the dog's behaviour remained organized and goal-directed rather than indiscriminate or chaotic.
- Repeated unsuccessful loading attempts, increasing interaction duration, separation from the German Shorthaired Pointer, and unresolved access to the second dog may represent cumulative contextual factors influencing the dog's behavioural state.
- The available evidence suggests the dog remained below the threshold at which overt aggressive behaviour was expressed, despite ongoing conflict surrounding the loading process.

Behavioural Phase 8 – Collar Contact and Bite Event

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Multiple loading attempts had been unsuccessful.
- The dog had previously exited the vehicle after voluntarily entering it.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- The duration of the interaction continued to increase.
- The dog had been exposed to repeated loading attempts over an extended period.
- Ownership had not yet been confirmed or communicated to the responding officers.
- Prior running-at-large duration remained unknown.
- Prior exertion level remained unknown.
- Reproductive status of either dog remained unknown.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The bite occurred immediately following physical interaction with the collar area.
- The bite represents the first documented behaviour during the incident that resulted in injury.
- The bite consisted of a single bite followed by immediate disengagement.
- No sustained grip, repeated biting, or re-engagement was reported.
- The available evidence suggests a close temporal relationship between collar contact and the bite event.
- The bite occurred following an extended period of unsuccessful loading attempts, increasing interaction duration, repeated handling efforts, and unresolved access to the vehicle.
- The behavioural characteristics of the bite differ from those typically associated with prolonged offensive attack behaviour.
- The available evidence supports the conclusion that the bite was directed toward the immediate source of physical interaction.
- The extent to which the bite was influenced by handling sensitivity, restraint sensitivity, cumulative stressors, conflict associated with the loading process,

separation from the German Shorthaired Pointer, or other behavioural factors cannot be determined with certainty from the available evidence.
- The behavioural significance of the bite, including bite inhibition, bite pressure, contextual influences, and potential motivation, will be examined separately within the Bite Assessment.

Behavioural Phase 9 – Post-Bite Reassessment and Catch Pole Application

Environmental / Contextual Factors:
- A bite resulting in injury had occurred.
- The dog remained outside the vehicle.
- Transport had not been achieved.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- The duration of the interaction continued to increase.
- No attempts were made to provide an opportunity to decompress or disengage from the interactions, offer water, or remove the dog from the situation to allow for a reset and reduction in any accumulating stress.
- Ownership had not yet been communicated to [redacted].
- Information regarding the dog's earlier response to [redacted] became available following the bite.
- Oral and/or nasal bleeding was observed during the restraint period.
- The cause of the bleeding was unknown.

Behavioural Analysis:
- The application of the catch pole represents a significant change in the nature of the interaction.
- Prior phases were characterized primarily by attempts to obtain voluntary compliance or direct handling.
- This phase marks the transition to restraint-based management.
- The dog's interaction with the catch pole suggests active engagement with the restraint equipment following its application.
- The available evidence suggests the dog's level of emotional arousal remained elevated following the bite event.
- The behavioural environment at this stage included accumulated handling attempts, increasing interaction duration, unsuccessful loading efforts, and a recent bite event.
- The transition from direct handling to restraint-based management likely altered both the physical and behavioural dynamics of the interaction.
- The available evidence does not permit determination of the relative contribution of the bite event, restraint application, prior handling attempts, or other contextual factors to the dog's behavioural state during this phase.
- The appearance of oral and/or nasal bleeding represents an additional factor that may have influenced the dog's behavioural state.

- The extent to which the bleeding reflected injury, physiological stress, exertion, restraint-related factors, pre-existing medical conditions, or other causes cannot be determined from the available evidence.
- The behavioural significance of the bleeding cannot be determined without additional medical information.
- Oral and/or nasal bleeding was first observed during the restraint period.
- The appearance of the bleeding represents a physiological change occurring during the incident.
- The cause and behavioural significance of the bleeding cannot be determined from the available evidence.

Behavioural Phase 10 – Dual Catch Pole Restraint and Continued Loading Attempts

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- The dog had already bitten a handler.
- A single catch pole had already been applied.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- Ownership had not yet been communicated to [redacted].
- The duration of the interaction continued to increase.
- Repeated loading attempts had already occurred over an extended period.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The application of a second catch pole represents an increase in the level of physical control being applied during the interaction.
- The dog's continued resistance to loading persisted despite the introduction of additional restraint.
- The available evidence suggests that the central behavioural conflict surrounding vehicle entry remained unresolved.
- At this stage, the behavioural objective of the handlers remained unchanged; however, the methods being used to achieve that objective had become progressively more restrictive.
- The dog's continued movement and interaction with the restraint equipment suggest that restraint alone did not resolve the underlying behavioural conflict associated with loading.
- Repeated handling attempts, increasing duration of interaction, physical restraint, separation from the German Shorthaired Pointer, and unresolved transport objectives may represent cumulative influences on the dog's behavioural state.
- The available evidence suggests the dog's behaviour remained directed toward resisting restraint and loading efforts rather than indiscriminate aggression toward individuals in the environment.
- The extent to which the dog's behaviour was influenced by restraint sensitivity, handling sensitivity, cumulative stressors, frustration, social factors, or other

contextual variables cannot be determined with certainty from the available evidence.

Behavioural Phase 11 – Owner Information Becomes Available

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Dual catch-pole restraint remained in place.
- The dog had not been successfully transported.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- A bite incident had already occurred.
- Ownership information became available for the first time during the incident.
- The duration of the interaction continued to increase.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The available evidence suggests a reduction in behavioural intensity relative to the immediately preceding phase.
- The dog's behaviour during this period differed from the continuous movement, resistance, and interaction with restraint equipment reported earlier.
- The reduction in activity was sufficient to allow one officer to maintain control while the second officer reviewed information and initiated owner contact.
- The available evidence suggests that the dog's behavioural state fluctuated throughout the incident rather than remaining continuously elevated.
- The reduction in activity may reflect behavioural recovery, physical fatigue, reduced emotional arousal, changing environmental conditions, or a combination of factors.
- The relative contribution of these factors cannot be determined from the available evidence.
- The discovery of owner information represented a significant change in the operational environment; however, the available evidence does not indicate that owner identification itself resulted in an immediate observable behavioural change.
- Importantly, this phase demonstrates that periods of elevated behavioural intensity were interspersed with periods of lower behavioural intensity throughout the incident.

Behavioural Phase 12 – Reduced Emotional Arousal Period

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Dual catch-pole restraint remained in place.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- Owners had been contacted and were reportedly en route.
- The duration of the interaction continued to increase.

- No additional handling attempts were being actively pursued during this period.
- The dog remained in the same general environment in which the previous escalation had occurred.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The available evidence suggests a meaningful reduction in behavioural intensity relative to the immediately preceding phases.
- Movement, resistance, and interaction with the restraint equipment decreased during this period.
- The reduction in activity demonstrates that the elevated behavioural intensity observed earlier was not continuously maintained throughout the incident.
- The observed reduction in activity may reflect behavioural recovery, physical fatigue, reduced emotional arousal, changing environmental conditions, or a combination of factors.
- The available evidence does not permit determination of the relative contribution of these factors.
- Importantly, the dog's behavioural presentation during this phase differed substantially from the periods of active resistance that preceded it.
- This phase demonstrates that the dog's behavioural state remained dynamic and responsive to changing circumstances throughout the incident.
- The available evidence suggests that periods of elevated activity were interspersed with periods of lower activity rather than occurring as a single continuous escalation event.

Behavioural Phase 13 – Water Event

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Dual catch-pole restraint remained in place.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- The dog had been under restraint for an extended period.
- The duration of the incident continued to increase.
- Owners had been contacted and were reportedly en route.
- The dog had recently transitioned into a period of reduced activity.
- A novel object and associated auditory stimulus (water bowl moving across the ground) were introduced into the environment.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The water event occurred during a period of reduced behavioural intensity.
- The available evidence establishes a temporal relationship between introduction of the water bowl and the subsequent increase in activity.
- [redacted] reported that the sound and/or movement associated with the bowl being slid across the ground appeared to coincide with the behavioural change.

- The available evidence does not establish whether the dog's response was influenced by the sound of the bowl, the movement of the bowl, the presence of water, anticipation of access to the water, or other concurrent factors.
- The increase in movement demonstrates that the reduced behavioural intensity observed in the preceding phase was not maintained.
- The dog's behavioural state continued to fluctuate throughout the incident rather than progressing in a single linear direction.
- The behavioural presentation observed during this phase is consistent with renewed activation following a period of reduced activity; however, the factors contributing to that change cannot be determined with certainty from the available evidence.
- This phase further supports the observation that behavioural intensity throughout the incident was dynamic, with periods of both increased and reduced activity occurring over time.

Behavioural Phase 14 – Management During Renewed Increased Emotional Arousal

Environmental / Contextual Factors

- Dual catch-pole restraint remained in place.
- The dog had previously exhibited a period of reduced activity.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- Owners had been contacted and were reportedly en route.
- The duration of the incident continued to increase.
- [redacted] remained involved remotely and was providing guidance.
- Officers reported actively managing restraint tension throughout this phase.

Behavioural Analysis

- This phase represents a renewed period of increased behavioural intensity following a documented period of reduced activity.
- The behavioural presentation differed substantially from the preceding phase.
- Increased movement, spinning, rolling, and interaction with the restraint equipment were reported.
- The available evidence suggests officers were required to continually adapt their positioning and restraint management in response to the dog's movement.
- Despite the increase in activity, officers continued reporting periods in which restraint tension was actively monitored and adjusted.
- The behavioural presentation during this phase is consistent with ongoing resistance to restraint and containment.
- The available evidence does not permit determination of the relative contribution of restraint, environmental stimuli, physiological factors, fatigue, frustration, social factors, or other contextual influences to the observed behaviour.

- This phase further supports the observation that behavioural intensity fluctuated throughout the incident rather than progressing in a single uninterrupted direction.

Behavioural Phase 15 – Special Constables Approach

Environmental / Contextual Factors:
- Dual catch-pole restraint remained in place.
- Oral and/or nasal bleeding had previously been observed.
- The dog remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- The duration of the incident continued to increase.
- Attempted loading, restraint, and repeated handling occurred over a period of one hour and fifty-six minutes before water was offered.
- Additional unfamiliar individuals entered the immediate environment.
- Owners had reportedly been contacted and were en route.

Behavioural Analysis:
- The approach of the Special Constables represents a discrete environmental change occurring during the incident.
- The observed increase in activity following the approach of the Special Constables provides additional evidence that the dog's behavioural presentation remained responsive to environmental changes throughout the incident.
- The available evidence establishes a temporal relationship between the approach of the Special Constables and the subsequent increase in behavioural activity.
- Both officers reported observing increased activity following the approach.
- The available evidence does not establish whether the behavioural change was attributable to visual stimuli, movement, proximity of unfamiliar individuals, auditory stimuli, or a combination of factors.
- The behavioural response suggests that the dog remained responsive to changes occurring within the environment despite the duration of the incident and ongoing restraint.
- This phase further supports the observation that behavioural intensity fluctuated throughout the incident and was influenced by changing environmental conditions.
- The available evidence suggests that the dog's behavioural presentation remained dynamic rather than static throughout the incident.

Behavioural Phase 16 – Loss of Responsiveness Assessment

Environmental / Contextual Factors:
- Dual catch-pole restraint remained in place.
- Oral and/or nasal bleeding had been observed.
- Owners had been contacted and were reportedly en route.

- The incident had become prolonged in duration, nearing two hours of prolonged handling and restrictive restraint.
- The dog had recently experienced alternating periods of increased and reduced behavioural activity.
- [redacted] remained involved remotely and was providing guidance.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The dog's behavioural presentation changed substantially during this phase.
- Active resistance, movement, and interaction with the restraint equipment decreased markedly relative to earlier phases.
- The transition from active movement to apparent unresponsiveness represents one of the most significant behavioural changes observed during the incident.
- Officers' focus shifted from managing behaviour and containment to assessing physical condition and responsiveness.
- The available evidence suggests the dog's behavioural state could no longer be interpreted solely through a behavioural lens, as physiological considerations had become increasingly relevant.
- The observed reduction in responsiveness may have been influenced by physiological factors, exhaustion, injury, medical compromise, restraint-related behavioural suppression factors, restraint-related pain or injury, behavioural recovery, or the combination of above factors and other related stress factors over a prolonged period of time.
- The relative contribution of these factors cannot be determined from the available evidence.
- This phase represents a transition from behavioural management to assessment of physical condition.

Lead Author: Julie Speyer
Technical Review: Amanda Barrett, Victoria Blondin and Andrew Reynolds

3.2 [redacted] Bite Case Evaluation

VICTIM SIZE IN RELATION TO THE ACCUSED:

Findings

The victim was an adult Aurora Animal Control Officer interacting with an adult Rottweiler during an attempted containment and transport procedure on May 4, 2026, in East Gwillimbury. The interaction occurred at close proximity while the officer attempted to physically guide the dog into the Animal Control vehicle by reaching with her left hand to make contact with the dog's collar.

Behavioural Interpretation

The relative size of the victim in comparison to the dog is an important consideration when evaluating behavioural significance. From an ethological perspective, animals generally attempt to avoid conflicts that present a high likelihood of injury, and assessment of an opponent's relative size and fighting ability forms part of that decision-making process. Consequently, aggression directed toward an adult human of substantially greater size may provide insight into the behavioural significance of the response and should always be interpreted within the surrounding circumstances, behavioural sequence, and context in which the interaction occurred.

References

- **Giovannini, E., et al.** *Medico-legal Implications of Dog Bite Injuries: A Systematic Review.* (Victim characteristics, injury interpretation, medico-legal assessment of dog bite incidents.)
- **Lindsay, S.R.** *Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training, Volume II: Etiology and Assessment.* (Ethology, conflict assessment, behavioural significance of aggression.)
- **Lockwood, R.** *Ethology, Ecology and Epidemiology of Canine Aggression.* In J.A. Serpell (Ed.), *The Domestic Dog: Its Evolution, Behaviour and Interactions with People.* Cambridge University Press. (Behavioural ecology, conflict assessment, opponent assessment.)

INCIDENT DESCRIPTION / CIRCUMSTANCES:

Findings

The bite occurred during an attempt by Animal Control Officers to safely contain and transport an adult Rottweiler that had been reported running at large with a female German Shorthaired Pointer. The initial report of the dogs running at large was received at approximately 12:30 p.m., and Animal Control was notified that the dogs had been successfully contained by local residents at approximately 4:20 p.m., indicating the dogs had been loose for approximately four hours prior to initial containment.

Witness information reported that, prior to the officer’s arrival, the Rottweiler had repeatedly pursued and mounted the female German Shorthaired Pointer. The dogs were subsequently separated by the residents before Animal Control arrived. This behaviour was reported to the responding officers but was not directly observed by them.

Upon arrival, both dogs had already been successfully contained by local residents. The German Shorthaired Pointer was photographed and loaded into the Animal Services vehicle without difficulty. The Rottweiler also voluntarily entered the vehicle without signs of overt aggression. The Rottweiler then exited the vehicle, and multiple attempts to encourage voluntary re-entry were unsuccessful.

Over an extended period, several cooperative loading strategies were attempted, including verbal encouragement, food lures, assistance from [redacted], an attempted temporary slip-lead muzzle, and additional loading techniques following [redacted] arrival. Throughout these attempts, the dog consistently refused to voluntarily re-enter the vehicle. Prior to the bite, no tooth display, barking, lunging, or snapping was otherwise reported. In her second interview, however, [redacted] described one instance during which [redacted] attempted to lift the dog from behind and the dog “kind of snarled” and moved toward [redacted] head. This behaviour was not described by the other witnesses and represents the only reported instance of snarling, identified in the available evidence prior to the bite.

After repeated cooperative loading attempts proved unsuccessful, [redacted] attempted to physically guide the dog by reaching with her left hand to make contact with the dog's collar. Immediately following collar contact, the dog turned and delivered a single bite to [redacted] before immediately releasing and disengaging on his own accord. The dog did not pursue or re-engage, allowing [redacted] to safely withdraw from the interaction.

Behavioural Interpretation

The circumstances surrounding the bite indicate that it occurred following a prolonged interaction involving several repeated attempts to achieve voluntary loading. Prior to the bite, the dog had been exposed to multiple setting events (antecedent or triggering conditions) that may have been behaviourally relevant, including an extended period running at large, prolonged physical activity, reported social interaction with the accompanying German Shorthaired Pointer, separation from the dog that witnesses described as appearing bonded to, repeated unsuccessful loading attempts, and an increasing duration of direct interaction with multiple unfamiliar handlers.

Environmental conditions were also considered as a potential antecedent factor. Ambient temperature and humidity can contribute to physiological stress by impairing a dog's ability to dissipate heat, particularly during sustained physical exertion. Official hourly weather observations obtained from the nearest Environment and Climate Change Canada monitoring station (King City North), located approximately 5–6 km from the incident location, recorded temperatures ranging from 19.1°C to 21.9°C and relative humidity between 30% and 45% during the relevant period. These environmental conditions alone would not be strongly suggestive of clinically significant environmental heat stress in a healthy dog. However, ambient temperature cannot be considered in isolation from the duration and intensity of physical exertion. Exertional heat-related illness can occur at comparatively moderate ambient temperatures, with exertion representing a significant source of endogenous heat production. In this case, the prolonged period of running at large, followed by continued physical exertion associated with attempted loading and active resistance to restraint, provides a reasonable basis

to consider exertional hyperthermia or heat-related physiological stress as a potential contributing factor. The absence of contemporaneous core temperature measurements or veterinary assessment prevents determination of whether clinically significant hyperthermia or heat-related illness was present.

Collectively, these antecedent conditions represent plausible behavioural influences that may have contributed to cumulative physiological or emotional arousal prior to the bite. As voluntary loading attempts proved unsuccessful, the handling strategies progressed from verbal encouragement and food lures to increasing levels of direct human intervention, including physical assistance, the application of a temporary slip lead, and ultimately direct physical contact with the dog's collar. This progression reflects an increasing degree of physical interaction between the handlers and the dog over the course of the incident.

The behavioural sequence is also consistent with trigger stacking, a process in which multiple antecedent events occur in succession without sufficient opportunity for behavioural recovery, resulting in a gradual accumulation of emotional or physiological arousal that may influence subsequent behaviour. Witness accounts suggest that pauses occurred between some loading attempts during which the dog engaged in environmental Review, including sniffing. However, the available evidence is inconsistent regarding the frequency, duration, and behavioural significance of these intervals. Consequently, it cannot be determined whether these reported pauses provided sufficient opportunity for meaningful behavioural recovery. Likewise, the available evidence does not permit the relative contribution of any individual antecedent condition to be determined. Accordingly, the presence and extent of trigger stacking cannot be determined with certainty.

The available evidence establishes a clear temporal relationship between physical contact with the collar and the bite. However, temporal association alone does not establish behavioural motivation and should be interpreted alongside the complete behavioural sequence, injury analysis, and subsequent behavioural assessment.

References

- **Godbout, M.** *Dog Aggression: Assessing the Risk.* (Behaviour should be evaluated as a complete sequence rather than an isolated event.)
- **Lindsay, S.R.** *Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training, Volume II: Etiology and Assessment.* (Antecedent conditions, behavioural context, ethology, aggression assessment.)
- **Pageat, P.** *Evaluation of the Aggressive Dog: What is a Really Dangerous Dog?* (Importance of context, behavioural evaluation, differential assessment.)
- **Lockwood, R.** *Ethology, Ecology and Epidemiology of Canine Aggression.* In J.A. Serpell (Ed.), *The Domestic Dog: Its Evolution, Behaviour and Interactions with People.* Cambridge University Press. (Conflict assessment, behavioural ecology, opponent assessment.)

- **Environment and Climate Change Canada.** *Hourly Climate Data – King City North, Ontario (May 4, 2026).* (Official hourly temperature, relative humidity, wind speed, and other meteorological observations for the date and time of the incident.)
- **University of California, Davis School of Veterinary Medicine.** *Heat-Related Illness in Dogs.* (Veterinary overview of canine thermoregulation, heat dissipation, environmental and exertional heat illness, and contributing risk factors.)
- **Hall, E.J., Carter, A.J., Chico, G., Bradbury, J., Gentle, L.K., Barfield, D., & O'Neill, D.G.** (2022). Risk Factors for Severe and Fatal Heat-Related Illness in UK Dogs—A VetCompass Study. Veterinary Sciences, 9(5), 231. (Canine heat-related illness, exertional heat-related illness, ambient temperature, environmental conditions, and risk factors for severe and fatal heat-related illness.)
- **Young, A., & Jandrey, K.** (2020). Heat-Related Illness in Dogs. University of California, Davis School of Veterinary Medicine. (Canine thermoregulation, heat gain and dissipation, environmental and exertional heat illness, clinical signs, and contributing risk factors.)

METHODS / INTERVENTION REQUIRED TO DISENGAGE THE DOG FROM THE ATTACK:

Findings

No physical intervention was required to disengage the dog from the bite.

Immediately following tooth contact with [redacted] [redacted] the dog voluntarily released its bite without hesitation and without assistance. No sustained grip, pulling, shaking, or repeated biting was reported. Following disengagement, the dog remained oriented toward [redacted] but did not advance, pursue, or re-engage with her, allowing her to safely withdraw from the interaction. The dog remained available for continued management following the incident.

Behavioural Interpretation

The manner in which an aggressive interaction concludes is an important component of behavioural assessment because it assists in evaluating the dog's level of behavioural control and the degree of intervention required to terminate the event. In this case, the aggressive interaction concluded without external intervention.
The dog voluntarily released its bite immediately following tooth contact without observable hesitation and did not require physical removal, verbal interruption, aversive intervention, or assistance from another individual to terminate the interaction. Following release, the dog did not pursue, re-engage, or redirect aggression toward [redacted] or other individuals present.

Behaviourally, the aggressive response remained brief, consisting of immediate bite contact followed by voluntary release. The absence of prolonged gripping, head shaking, repeated biting, redirected aggression, or continued attempts to reach the

victim provides additional evidence regarding the limited duration and expression of the aggressive response. These findings should be interpreted alongside the injury pattern, bite mechanics, behavioural sequence, and overall context of the incident.

The manner in which the interaction concluded supports the conclusion that the aggressive response remained confined to the immediate behavioural context in which it occurred. Following voluntary release, the dog demonstrated no behavioural evidence of continued offensive engagement, pursuit, or escalation beyond the initial handling event.

References

- **Fonseca, G.M., et al.** *Forensic Studies of Dog Attacks on Humans: A Focus on Bite Mark Analysis.* (Interpretation of bite mechanics, injury patterns, prolonged gripping, head shaking, and bite termination.)
- **Giovannini, E., et al.** *Medico-legal Implications of Dog Bite Injuries: A Systematic Review.* (Behavioural significance of bite expression, injury severity, and factors associated with more severe attack patterns.)
- **Godbout, M.** *Dog Aggression: Assessing the Risk.* (Evaluation of the complete behavioural sequence, including initiation, action, and termination of aggressive behaviour.)
- **Lindsay, S.R.** *Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training, Volume II: Etiology and Assessment.* (Behavioural regulation, aggressive sequences, and interpretation of aggressive responses.)

DOG BITE INJURY ANALYSIS

Findings

The available injury photographs and medical documentation identify injuries to [redacted]. The medical report documents puncture wounds to the [redacted] consistent with a dog bite injury.

Review of the available injury photographs demonstrates the following injury characteristics:

- [redacted]

These observations are consistent with [redacted] account that the dog delivered a single bite and immediately released without holding or shaking.

Behavioural Interpretation

The injury pattern demonstrates partial mouth engagement rather than complete mouth engagement. The presence of one primary canine puncture, shallow premolar pits, and only minor opposing dentition marks supports the interpretation that the dog applied sufficient jaw pressure to puncture the [redacted] while engaging only a limited portion of the [redacted] within the oral cavity.

The injury pattern demonstrates that oral contact was brief and limited in expression. The combination of partial mouth engagement, [redacted], and the limited opposing canine puncture is consistent with moderate jaw pressure applied over a short contact duration without progression to prolonged oral engagement.

The mechanics of the bite provide important behavioural information regarding how the aggressive response was expressed. Collectively, the injury pattern demonstrates partial mouth engagement, moderate bite pressure, and brief contact duration without progression to prolonged oral engagement. These findings should be interpreted alongside the injury location, bite severity, behavioural sequence, and surrounding behavioural context when evaluating the behavioural significance of the bite.

References

- **Fonseca, G.M., et al.** *Forensic Studies of Dog Attacks on Humans: A Focus on Bite Mark Analysis. (Bite mechanics, canine dentition, injury interpretation, forensic bite analysis.)*
- **Giovannini, E., et al.** *Medico-legal Implications of Dog Bite Injuries: A Systematic Review. (Injury severity, bite patterns, medico-legal interpretation of bite injuries.)*

INJURY LOCATION & POSITION OF THE VICTIM:

Findings

The bite injuries were confined to [redacted]. The injuries were sustained while [redacted] was standing adjacent to the dog and reaching with her left hand toward the dog's collar in an attempt to physically guide the dog into the Animal Services vehicle. Medical documentation and injury photographs demonstrate that the [redacted]

Behavioural Interpretation

The anatomical location of a bite is behaviourally significant because it provides information regarding the interaction occurring at the moment contact was made. Current literature indicates that injuries involving the head, neck, shoulders, and upper torso are generally associated with more serious offensive attacks, whereas injuries to the distal upper extremities commonly occur during close-range interactions where the limb is actively engaged in the interaction. (Giovannini; Fonseca.)

In this incident, the bite was delivered to the portion of the victim's body actively reaching toward the dog's collar immediately before contact occurred. The injury location is therefore consistent with contact occurring to the [redacted] that entered the dog's immediate reach during the handling attempt.

The injury location also contributes to the interpretation of the bite mechanics. Rather than demonstrating evidence of anatomical target selection, the available evidence indicates that contact occurred with the immediately available moving stimulus presented during the physical interaction. This distinction is behaviourally significant because it assists in differentiating bites delivered to an immediately available point of contact from bites involving apparent anatomical targeting of more vulnerable regions.

When interpreted alongside the bite mechanics, bite severity, behavioural sequence, and surrounding behavioural context, the injury location provides important information regarding how the aggressive response was expressed and contributes to the overall behavioural interpretation.

References

- **Fonseca, G.M., et al.** *Forensic Studies of Dog Attacks on Humans: A Focus on Bite Mark Analysis. (Bite mechanics, anatomical injury interpretation, forensic bite analysis.)*
- **Giovannini, E., et al.** *Medico-legal Implications of Dog Bite Injuries: A Systematic Review. (Behavioural significance of injury location, anatomical targeting, medico-legal interpretation.)*

DOG BITE FEATURES & INJURY PATTERN (severity):

Findings

Review of the injury photographs demonstrates a bite pattern consisting of:

Collectively, the injury pattern demonstrates partial oral engagement involving only a limited portion of the dog's dentition during a single bite event. [redacted]

Behavioural Interpretation

The injury pattern provides important behavioural information regarding how the aggressive response was expressed. Bite mechanics are behaviourally significant because they demonstrate the degree to which the dog modulated oral engagement, bite pressure, and contact duration during the interaction.

In this incident, the injury pattern demonstrates partial mouth engagement involving a single canine tooth, adjacent premolar contact, moderate bite pressure, and a single isolated bite of brief duration. Collectively, these findings demonstrate that the dog modulated oral engagement, bite pressure, and contact duration throughout the aggressive response.

The observed modulation of oral engagement, bite pressure, and contact duration is behaviourally significant because it provides insight into the behavioural regulation expressed during the aggressive interaction. Based on the observed bite mechanics, it is reasonable to conclude that the dog retained a measurable degree of behavioural regulation during the aggressive response, as evidenced by the modulation of oral engagement, bite pressure, and contact duration. These observations describe how the bite was physically expressed and should not, in isolation, be interpreted as establishing behavioural motivation or aggression type.

References

- **Fonseca, G.M., et al.** *Forensic Studies of Dog Attacks on Humans: A Focus on Bite Mark Analysis. (Bite mechanics, canine dentition, oral engagement, injury interpretation, forensic bite analysis.)*
- **Giovannini, E., et al.** *Medico-legal Implications of Dog Bite Injuries: A Systematic Review. (Behavioural significance of bite patterns, injury severity, medico-legal interpretation of injury mechanics.)*
- **Pageat, P.** *Evaluation of the Aggressive Dog: What is a Really Dangerous Dog? (Behavioural control, modulation of jaw pressure, evaluation of self-control during aggressive responses.)*

BITE PRESSURE EVALUATION & PROGNOSIS (Dr. Ian Dunbar):

Findings

Based on the available medical documentation and injury photographs, the bite is most consistent with a [redacted] bite under Dr. Ian Dunbar's Dog Bite Scale.

This classification is supported by the following observations:

- Single bite event;
- [redacted]
- Single isolated bite;
- [redacted]

Behavioural Interpretation

Dr. Ian Dunbar's Bite Scale provides an objective method of evaluating the bite pressure expressed during an aggressive interaction based on wound pathology. This scale assists in assessing how much pressure was applied during the bite and the degree of bite inhibition demonstrated.

In this incident, the [redacted] classification demonstrates that the dog applied sufficient bite pressure to puncture the [redacted] while retaining the ability to modulate the amount of force expressed during the interaction. Behaviourally, the degree of bite pressure is significant because it provides further information regarding how the aggressive response was expressed.

When considered together with the bite mechanics, the observed bite pressure provides additional evidence that the aggressive response was delivered with a measurable degree of behavioural regulation. Based on the observed wound pathology, it is reasonable to conclude that the dog retained the ability to modulate jaw pressure during the bite rather than expressing the maximum pressure of which it was physically capable.

Dr. Ian Dunbar's Bite Scale Prognosis

Dr. Ian Dunbar describes the prognosis for a [redacted] bite as fair to good, provided there is appropriate owner compliance and behaviour modification. Within the context of this assessment, the prognosis is not being applied as a prediction of future behaviour. Rather, it provides an objective point of comparison for understanding where the bite falls within the spectrum of bite pressure described by the Dunbar Bite Scale.

References

- **Dunbar, I.** *Dr. Ian Dunbar's Dog Bite Scale (Official Authorized Version). (Objective evaluation of bite pressure, bite inhibition, and wound pathology.)*

- **Pageat, P.** *Evaluation of the Aggressive Dog: What is a Really Dangerous Dog? (Behavioural control, modulation of jaw pressure, evaluation of self-control during aggressive responses.)*

BEHAVIOUR SEQUENCES DEMONSTRATED:

Findings

Immediately preceding the bite, [redacted] described the dog as standing still, alert, and exhibiting increased body tension. The dog was reported to be rigid rather than relaxed, with ears forward, weight carried forward, and attention directed toward the approaching handler. The dog remained stationary while [redacted] reached toward the collar.

Upon physical contact with the collar, the dog immediately turned and delivered a single bite to [redacted] [redacted] Following the bite, the dog immediately released, remained in place, and maintained visual attention toward [redacted]. No repeated biting or continued oral engagement occurred.

Behavioural Interpretation

Dr. Martin Godbout emphasises that behaviour should be interpreted as a complete sequence rather than an isolated action, with the initiation, action, and termination of aggressive behaviour providing important information regarding the nature of the behavioural response. Steven Lindsay and Randall Lockwood further describe canine aggression within broader behavioural and ethological frameworks, supporting interpretation of aggressive behaviour in relation to its behavioural organization and context.

The behavioural sequence observed during this incident was organised and remained closely associated with the immediate physical interaction. Rather than progressing through multiple aggressive actions, the sequence consisted of orientation toward the handler, increased muscular tension, behavioural stillness, a single bite immediately following physical collar contact, immediate voluntary release, and continued behavioural orientation without further aggression.

Behaviourally, this pattern demonstrates that the aggressive response was expressed as a discrete behavioural event rather than a sustained or progressively escalating aggressive interaction. The organisation of the behavioural sequence, together with its clearly identifiable beginning and end, provides evidence that the aggressive behaviour remained linked to the immediate handling event throughout its expression.

Based on the observed behavioural sequence, it is reasonable to conclude that the aggressive response remained behaviourally organised throughout its expression and

remained closely associated with the immediate physical interaction that elicited it. The sequence provides no behavioural evidence of progression to sustained, indiscriminate, or generalized aggression.

References

- **Godbout, M.** *Dog Aggression: Assessing the Risk.* (Behavioural sequences, initiation–action–termination model, behavioural organization, aggression assessment.)
- **Lindsay, S.R.** *Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training, Volume II: Etiology and Assessment.* (Behavioural action patterns, aggression sequences, ethology, interpretation of aggressive behaviour.)
- **Lockwood, R.** *Ethology, Ecology and Epidemiology of Canine Aggression.* In J.A. Serpell (Ed.), *The Domestic Dog: Its Evolution, Behaviour and Interactions with People.* Cambridge University Press. (Behavioural organization, agonistic behaviour, behavioural responses to conflict, ethological interpretation of aggression.)

WARNING SIGNS DEMONSTRATED:

Findings

Immediately preceding the bite, [redacted] described the dog as alert, standing, panting, rigid rather than relaxed, carrying its weight forward, maintaining forward ear carriage, visually tracking movement, and remaining relatively still while observing the approaching handler.

Throughout the repeated loading attempts, the dog consistently refused to voluntarily enter the vehicle despite multiple changes in handling strategy. The available evidence does not indicate that the dog displayed overt aggressive behaviours such as barking, growling, lunging, repeated snapping, or repeated attempts to bite before physical contact with the collar occurred. One witness described a single instance of snarling during an earlier lift attempt by [redacted]; however, this was not corroborated by the other witnesses present, nor was it repeated when that witness was asked further about the dog's body language later in her interview. Given its isolated and uncorroborated nature, this report is not treated as an established overt warning signal for purposes of this analysis. The absence of consistently corroborated overt behaviours does not preclude the presence of more subtle forms of behavioural communication. Following the bite, the dog immediately disengaged and did not continue aggressive behaviour toward [redacted].

Behavioural Interpretation

The BSAVA (British Small Animal Veterinary Association) Ladder of Aggression, developed by Kendal Shepherd, describes aggression as a progressive behavioural

sequence in which dogs typically communicate increasing levels of discomfort through a series of escalating behaviours before resorting to biting. Behaviourally, these warning signals are significant because they provide information regarding the dog's attempt to communicate conflict and influence the outcome of an interaction before aggression is expressed. Not every dog will demonstrate every step of the ladder; therefore, the significance lies in evaluating the pattern of behaviours observed rather than the presence or absence of any single warning signal. Accordingly, each behaviour should be interpreted within the context of the complete behavioural sequence, the environmental conditions, and the events immediately preceding and following the behaviour.

In this incident, the observed warning signals consisted primarily of behavioural stillness, increased muscular tension, sustained visual orientation toward the approaching handler, and changes in body posture. Behaviourally, these observations are significant because they demonstrate that the dog continued to communicate through posture and body language immediately before the bite occurred.

Of particular significance is the reported stillness. Within canine communication, behavioural stillness or freezing is frequently associated with behavioural conflict and heightened attention immediately preceding a behavioural response. Rather than indicating relaxation or passive acceptance of the interaction, behavioural stillness may represent a period during which the dog is assessing the immediate situation before responding. In this case, it is reasonable to conclude that the reported stillness formed part of the dog's behavioural communication immediately preceding the bite.

Taken together, the observed warning signals demonstrate that the dog's communication immediately preceding the bite was expressed primarily through posture, body tension, sustained orientation, and behavioural stillness rather than overt vocalization or explosive aggressive displays. Behaviourally, this pattern is consistent with communication through subtle postural signals rather than conspicuous threat displays.

References

- **Horwitz, D.F., & Mills, D.S. (Eds.).** *BSAVA Manual of Canine and Feline Behavioural Medicine* (2nd ed.). (Progressive warning signals, canine communication, behavioural escalation.)
- **Shepherd, K.** *Behavioural Medicine as an Integral Part of Veterinary Practice*. In Horwitz, D.F., & Mills, D.S. (Eds.), *BSAVA Manual of Canine and Feline Behavioural Medicine* (2nd ed., pp. 10–23). (Introduces the Canine Ladder of Aggression as a model describing the progressive escalation of canine communication in response to perceived stress or threat.)
- **Godbout, M.** *Dog Aggression: Assessing the Risk.* (Behavioural sequences, context, interpretation of aggressive communication.)

- **Lindsay, S.R.** *Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training, Volume II: Etiology and Assessment.* (Canine communication, behavioural signalling, aggression sequences.)
- **Lockwood, R.** *Ethology, Ecology and Epidemiology of Canine Aggression.* In J.A. Serpell (Ed.), *The Domestic Dog: Its Evolution, Behaviour and Interactions with People.* Cambridge University Press. (Ethology, conflict behaviours, behavioural communication.)

RATE OF AGGRESSION ESCALATION:

Findings

Immediately prior to the bite, [redacted] described the dog as remaining stationary while exhibiting increased body tension, forward ear carriage, forward weight distribution, sustained visual orientation, and behavioural stillness.

The available evidence does not indicate that the dog displayed overt aggressive behaviours such as barking, growling, lunging, repeated snapping, or repeated attempts to bite immediately preceding physical contact with the collar. A single, uncorroborated report of snarling during an earlier, separate loading attempt was described by one witness but not confirmed by others present or repeated on further questioning (see Incident Description / Circumstances); given its isolated and unconfirmed nature, it is not treated as an established warning signal in this analysis. The absence of consistently corroborated overt behaviours immediately before the bite does not preclude the presence of more subtle forms of behavioural communication.

The bite occurred immediately following direct physical contact with the collar area. The aggressive response consisted of a single bite, immediately followed by voluntary disengagement. No continued oral engagement, repeated biting, or pursuit of the officer was reported following the bite.

Behavioural Interpretation

The rate at which aggressive behaviour escalates provides important behavioural information regarding how the dog responded to the interaction. Behaviourally, escalation should be evaluated in the context of the complete behavioural sequence rather than by considering the bite in isolation. The speed with which a dog progresses from communication to aggression assists in understanding the nature of the behavioural response and its predictability.

In this incident, the available evidence indicates that the dog progressed rapidly from behavioural communication to physical aggression immediately following direct physical contact with the collar. Behaviourally, this demonstrates a rapid transition from

behavioural communication to physical aggression once the interaction progressed beyond the dog's apparent threshold for response.
Importantly, the observed escalation occurred following multiple unsuccessful attempts to load the dog into the vehicle over an extended period, with little opportunity for significant decompression between attempts. These repeated unsuccessful loading attempts formed part of the broader behavioural sequence and should be interpreted alongside the progressive changes in posture, body tension, orientation, behavioural stillness, and the eventual physical manipulation of the collar. Based on the available evidence, it is reasonable to conclude that the rapid escalation was event-dependent rather than occurring independently of the interaction.

Behaviourally, the rapid transition from behavioural stillness to physical aggression should not be interpreted in isolation. Rather, it represented the final stage of a broader behavioural sequence that included prolonged antecedent events, repeated unsuccessful loading attempts, increasing body tension, sustained orientation, and behavioural stillness prior to physical contact with the collar. Collectively, these observations indicate that the aggressive response developed within an identifiable behavioural progression, while the final transition from communication to physical aggression occurred rapidly once direct collar contact was made.

References

- **Shepherd, K.** *Behavioural Medicine as an Integral Part of Veterinary Practice*. In Horwitz, D.F., & Mills, D.S. (Eds.), *BSAVA Manual of Canine and Feline Behavioural Medicine* (2nd ed., pp. 10–23). (Introduces the Canine Ladder of Aggression as a model describing the progressive escalation of canine communication in response to perceived stress or threat.)
- **Godbout, M.** *Dog Aggression: Assessing the Risk.* (Behavioural sequences, progression of aggression, interpretation of escalation.)
- **Lindsay, S.R.** *Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training, Volume II: Etiology and Assessment.* (Aggression sequences, behavioural thresholds, interpretation of aggressive behaviour.)
- **Lockwood, R.** *Ethology, Ecology and Epidemiology of Canine Aggression.* In J.A. Serpell (Ed.), *The Domestic Dog: Its Evolution, Behaviour and Interactions with People.* Cambridge University Press. (Conflict behaviour, behavioural escalation, ethological interpretation.)

INTERPRETING MOTIVATION

Behavioural Interpretation

Behavioural motivation cannot be determined by evaluating a bite in isolation. Rather, it is inferred through the integration of the antecedent conditions, behavioural sequence, warning signals, injury location, bite mechanics, bite pressure, and the dog's behaviour

immediately following the aggressive event. Collectively, these observations provide the behavioural context necessary to interpret why the aggressive response occurred.

In this incident, the available evidence demonstrates that the bite occurred within a clearly identifiable behavioural context. Prior to the bite, the dog had been exposed to multiple behaviourally relevant antecedent conditions, followed by a prolonged period of unsuccessful loading attempts, increasing direct interaction with unfamiliar handlers, and progression from cooperative handling techniques to direct physical manipulation of the collar. Physical contact with the collar immediately preceded the bite and represented the identifiable eliciting event for the aggressive response.

The dog's behavioural response remained closely associated with the immediate physical interaction. The bite was directed toward the [redacted] immediately involved in the handling event, was expressed as a single bite involving partial mouth engagement, moderate bite pressure, and brief contact duration, and concluded immediately following voluntary disengagement. No further aggressive behaviour toward [redacted] occurred after the interaction ceased.

Taken together, these observations demonstrate that the aggressive response remained closely associated with the identifiable behavioural context in which it occurred rather than arising independently of human interaction. Based on the available evidence, it is reasonable to conclude that the dog's behavioural motivation was most closely associated with the immediate physical interaction occurring within the broader behavioural context described throughout this assessment.

The specific nature of that motivation is considered in the following section, where the observed behavioural characteristics are evaluated against established classifications of canine aggression.

References

- **Godbout, M.** *Dog Aggression: Assessing the Risk.* (Behavioural sequences, context, interpretation of aggressive motivation.)
- **Lindsay, S.R.** *Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training, Volume II: Etiology and Assessment.* (Aggression motivation, behavioural action patterns, ethology.)
- **Lockwood, R.** *Ethology, Ecology and Epidemiology of Canine Aggression.* In J.A. Serpell (Ed.), *The Domestic Dog: Its Evolution, Behaviour and Interactions with People.* Cambridge University Press. (Behavioural ecology, conflict behaviour, interpretation of motivation.)
- **Pageat, P.** *Evaluation of the Aggressive Dog: What is a Really Dangerous Dog?* (Behavioural assessment, interpretation of aggression, context.)

TYPE OF AGGRESSION DEMONSTRATED:

Findings

The aggressive behaviour occurred immediately following direct physical contact with the dog's collar during an attempt to physically guide the dog into the Animal Services vehicle. The behaviour consisted of a single bite directed toward the officer's [redacted] followed by immediate voluntary disengagement. No repeated biting, pursuit, or re-engagement was observed following the officer's withdrawal.

Behavioural Interpretation

Current behavioural literature recommends first determining whether the observed behaviour represents aggression and then evaluating whether the aggressive response occurred within a predictable behavioural context. Classification of the behaviour should be based upon the complete behavioural sequence, behavioural motivation, warning signals, injury mechanics, bite pressure, and the dog's behaviour immediately following the aggressive event rather than the bite in isolation.

In this incident, the aggressive response occurred immediately following direct physical manipulation of the dog's collar during an attempt to guide the dog into the Animal Services vehicle. The behaviour remained directed toward the [redacted] immediately involved in that physical interaction and was expressed as a single bite involving partial mouth engagement, moderate bite pressure, and brief contact duration. The interaction concluded immediately following voluntary disengagement, with no further aggressive behaviour directed toward the officer once the physical interaction had ceased.

Behaviourally, defensive aggression is characterised by aggression expressed within an identifiable and predictable behavioural context in response to a perceived threat, unwanted physical interaction, or other aversive stimulus. Rather than occurring independently of human contact, the aggressive response remains closely associated with the immediate event that elicited it. The behavioural sequence, warning signals, injury mechanics, bite pressure, and manner in which the interaction concluded are all considered when determining whether the observed behaviour is consistent with this classification.

Collectively, the behavioural evidence demonstrates that the aggressive response remained closely associated with the immediate handling event and occurred within a clearly identifiable and predictable behavioural context. Based on the available behavioural evidence, it is reasonable to conclude that the aggressive response demonstrated during this incident is most consistent with defensive aggression.

References

- **Pageat, P.** *Evaluation of the Aggressive Dog: What is a Really Dangerous Dog?* (Classification of aggression, behavioural assessment, defensive aggression, evaluation of self-control.)
- **Lindsay, S.R.** *Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training, Volume II: Etiology and Assessment.* (Aggression classification, defensive aggression, behavioural motivation, ethology.)
- **Godbout, M.** *Dog Aggression: Assessing the Risk.* (Behavioural sequence, context, interpretation of aggressive behaviour.)
- **Lockwood, R.** *Ethology, Ecology and Epidemiology of Canine Aggression.* In J.A. Serpell (Ed.), *The Domestic Dog: Its Evolution, Behaviour and Interactions with People.* Cambridge University Press. (Conflict behaviour, agonistic behaviour, behavioural interpretation of aggression.)

BEHAVIOURAL HISTORY:

The available behavioural history consists of one documented Animal Services interaction occurring approximately one year prior to the current incident, together with observations documented immediately preceding and during the current incident. No owner interview, veterinary behavioural history, previous behavioural assessment, or information describing the dog's typical behaviour outside of these documented events was available at the time of this assessment.

Animal Services records document that on April 21, 2025, the same male Rottweiler and female German Shorthaired Pointer were reported running at large before being successfully contained by a member of the public. The dogs were subsequently collected by Animal Services officers and transferred to the Georgina Animal Shelter. The available records do not document aggressive behaviour, resistance to handling, or other behavioural concerns during containment or transport.

According to witness statements and officer accounts, the dog had reportedly been running at large with a female German Shorthaired Pointer for several hours prior to containment. Witnesses reported that the Rottweiler repeatedly pursued and mounted the German Shorthaired Pointer before the dogs were separated by local residents.

Following the officer's arrival, the dog voluntarily entered the Animal Services vehicle without displaying overt aggression. After exiting the vehicle, the dog consistently refused repeated attempts to voluntarily re-enter despite multiple cooperative loading strategies. Throughout these repeated loading attempts, the dog remained available for interaction and handling.

The first documented mouth contact occurred during [redacted] attempt to physically assist with loading, resulting in contact with her sunglasses but no injury. A subsequent attempt by [redacted] to apply a temporary slip-lead muzzle was unsuccessful,

although no bite occurred. The only bite resulting in injury occurred immediately following [redacted] attempt to physically manipulate the dog's collar. The dog immediately disengaged following the bite and did not pursue or re-engage with the officer.

Behavioural Interpretation

The dog's behavioural history is an important component of behavioural risk assessment as previous behavioural responses often provide context for interpreting current behaviour. Historical information may identify recurring behavioural patterns, previous responses to handling, known eliciting stimuli, or evidence of behavioural stability or change over time. Consequently, behavioural history should be considered alongside the observed behaviour during the incident when evaluating aggressive responses.

The scope of the available behavioural history in this assessment is limited to information documented immediately preceding and during the incident. The prior Animal Services record demonstrates that the same two dogs had previously been found running at large and successfully handled by Animal Services approximately one year earlier. However, the available documentation from that incident does not describe aggressive behaviour, resistance to handling, or other behavioural concerns. Consequently, the behavioural conclusions that can reasonably be drawn from that event are limited.

Within the available behavioural history, the dog demonstrated a consistent behavioural pattern. Initial voluntary cooperation during loading was followed by persistent refusal to re-enter the vehicle after exiting. Throughout repeated loading attempts, the dog remained available for interaction and handling while consistently resisting the requested behaviour. The first documented mouth contact occurred during [redacted] attempt to physically manipulate the dog during loading, followed later by the bite delivered during [redacted] attempt to physically manipulate the dog's collar. Both behavioural responses occurred during direct physical handling associated with loading.

Based on the available behavioural history, including the prior Animal Services record and the observations documented during the current incident, it is reasonable to conclude that the documented episodes of mouth contact remained consistently associated with direct physical manipulation during loading attempts. While this assessment cannot determine whether these behaviours reflected an established behavioural pattern outside of the current incident, the available historical information does not demonstrate that similar aggressive behaviour had been documented during previous Animal Services interactions.

References

- **Lindsay, S.R.** *Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training, Volume II: Etiology and Assessment.* (Behavioural history, aggression assessment, interpretation of behavioural patterns.)
- **Pageat, P.** *Evaluation of the Aggressive Dog: What is a Really Dangerous Dog?* (Behavioural assessment, historical information, dangerous dog evaluation.)
- **Hsu, Y., & Serpell, J.A.** (2003). *Canine Behavioral Assessment & Research Questionnaire (C-BARQ).* (Behavioural history, interpretation of recurring behavioural patterns.)

BEHAVIOURAL SUMMARY:

The purpose of a behavioural assessment is not to determine what a dog was thinking or feeling at the time of an incident, but rather to evaluate the observable behavioural evidence and determine the most scientifically reasonable interpretation of that behaviour. Accordingly, the following conclusions are based upon the documented behavioural sequence, warning signals, injury location, bite mechanics, bite pressure, behavioural history, and surrounding circumstances available at the time of this assessment.

The available evidence demonstrates that the aggressive response occurred within a clearly identifiable behavioural context. Prior to the bite, the dog was exposed to multiple behaviourally relevant antecedent conditions, followed by repeated unsuccessful loading attempts and a progression from cooperative handling strategies to progressively more direct physical intervention, culminating in physical manipulation of the collar. The bite occurred immediately following that physical interaction and remained directed toward the [redacted] involved in the handling event.

The aggressive response was expressed as a single, isolated [redacted] bite involving partial mouth engagement, moderate bite pressure, brief contact duration, and immediate voluntary disengagement. Collectively, the injury mechanics, bite pressure, behavioural sequence, warning signals, and manner in which the interaction concluded demonstrate that the aggressive response remained behaviourally organised and occurred within a clearly identifiable behavioural sequence with a recognisable beginning and end.

When the available behavioural evidence is considered collectively, it is reasonable to conclude that the aggressive response is most consistent with a contextually predictable defensive aggressive response occurring during direct physical handling. The available behavioural evidence does not support the interpretation that the aggressive response occurred independently of human interaction or outside the identifiable behavioural context in which it was expressed.

Although several antecedent conditions may have influenced the dog's behavioural state, including prolonged activity, repeated handling attempts, separation from the accompanying dog, and increasing duration of interaction with unfamiliar handlers, the relative contribution of each antecedent condition cannot be determined from the available evidence. Consequently, while the available behavioural evidence supports a scientifically supportable interpretation of the dog's behavioural motivation and the type of aggression expressed, it does not permit definitive conclusions regarding the dog's underlying emotional experience at the time of the incident.

References

- **Shepherd, K.** *Behavioural Medicine as an Integral Part of Veterinary Practice*. In Horwitz, D.F., & Mills, D.S. (Eds.), *BSAVA Manual of Canine and Feline Behavioural Medicine* (2nd ed., pp. 10–23). (Introduces the Canine Ladder of Aggression as a model describing the progressive escalation of canine communication in response to perceived stress or threat.)
- **Dunbar, I.** *Dr. Ian Dunbar's Dog Bite Scale (Official Authorized Version).* (Objective evaluation of bite pressure, bite inhibition, and wound pathology.)
- **Fonseca, G.M., et al.** *Forensic Studies of Dog Attacks on Humans: A Focus on Bite Mark Analysis.* (Bite mechanics, injury interpretation, forensic bite analysis.)
- **Godbout, M.** *Dog Aggression: Assessing the Risk.* (Behavioural sequences, behavioural context, interpretation of aggressive responses.)
- **Giovannini, E.**, et al. *Medico-legal Implications of Dog Bite Injuries: A Systematic Review.* (Behavioural significance of injury location, bite patterns, medico-legal interpretation.)
- **Lindsay, S.R.** *Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training, Volume II: Etiology and Assessment.* (Aggression classification, behavioural motivation, ethology, interpretation of aggressive behaviour.)
- **Lockwood, R.** *Ethology, Ecology and Epidemiology of Canine Aggression.* In J.A. Serpell (Ed.), *The Domestic Dog: Its Evolution, Behaviour and Interactions with People.* Cambridge University Press. (Behavioural ecology, conflict behaviour, agonistic behaviour.)
- **Pageat, P.** *Evaluation of the Aggressive Dog: What is a Really Dangerous Dog?* (Behavioural assessment, aggression classification, behavioural control, interpretation of aggressive responses.)

BEHAVIOURAL RISK ASSESSMENT:

Findings

Behavioural risk cannot be assessed by evaluating a single observation in isolation. Rather, risk is determined by considering the collective behavioural evidence, including the behavioural sequence, warning signals, rate of escalation, injury location, bite mechanics, bite pressure, behavioural history, and the context in which the aggressive response occurred. When considered collectively, these factors provide the most

scientifically supportable assessment of the behavioural risk demonstrated during this incident.

The collective behavioural evidence demonstrates that the aggressive response occurred within a clearly identifiable and predictable context. The dog demonstrated subtle behavioural communication before the bite, followed by a rapid transition to a single aggressive response immediately after direct physical manipulation of the collar. The bite remained limited in expression, demonstrating partial oral engagement, moderate bite pressure, immediate voluntary disengagement, and no subsequent pursuit or continued aggression.

Taken together, these observations support the conclusion that the dog's behavioural risk was context-dependent. The available behavioural evidence indicates that the dog presented an elevated behavioural risk to individuals attempting direct physical manipulation associated with handling, restraint, or transport, particularly involving the head, neck, or collar area, while individuals who were not attempting direct physical interaction or control were not shown to be exposed to the same level of risk.

This distinction reflects the established behavioural principle that agonistic responses are typically elicited by the nature of the physical interaction and the immediate stimulus involved, rather than by the identity of the individual present. Since the demonstrated risk appears to be associated with the type of physical contact, rather than any characteristic unique to the responding officer, the available evidence does not support treating this risk as specific to Animal Control personnel. Based on this evidence, it is reasonable to assume that an individual attempting similar direct physical handling under comparable circumstances, whether an Animal Control Officer or a member of the public, may have faced a similar, context-dependent risk of a defensive response. The available evidence does not, however, support a generalized or indiscriminate risk to people at large.

Risk-Mitigation Implication

From a behavioural standpoint, because the identified risk was specifically associated with direct physical contact involving the collar and head region during a period of resistance, methods that minimize or avoid this specific type of contact during future handling would be expected to reduce the likelihood of a similar response. This observation is offered as a behavioural consideration arising from the findings of this assessment and does not constitute an operational or procedural recommendation, which falls outside the scope of this bite assessment.

References

- **Shepherd, K.** *Behavioural Medicine as an Integral Part of Veterinary Practice.* In Horwitz, D.F., & Mills, D.S. (Eds.), *BSAVA Manual of Canine and Feline Behavioural*

Medicine (2nd ed., pp. 10–23). (Canine communication, warning signals, behavioural escalation, conflict behaviour.)
- **Dunbar, I.** *Dr. Ian Dunbar's Dog Bite Scale (Official Authorized Version).* (Objective evaluation of bite pressure, bite inhibition, wound pathology, behavioural significance of bite severity.)
- **Fonseca, G.M., et al.** *Forensic Studies of Dog Attacks on Humans: A Focus on Bite Mark Analysis.* (Bite mechanics, injury interpretation, forensic bite analysis, behavioural significance of injury patterns.)
- **Godbout, M.** *Dog Aggression: Assessing the Risk.* (Behavioural sequences, behavioural context, interpretation of aggressive responses, behavioural risk assessment.)
- **Giovannini, E., et al.** *Medico-legal Implications of Dog Bite Injuries: A Systematic Review.* (Behavioural significance of injury location, bite patterns, injury severity, medico-legal interpretation.)
- **Lindsay, S.R.** *Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training, Volume II: Etiology and Assessment.* (Aggression classification, behavioural motivation, ethology, interpretation of aggressive behaviour, behavioural risk.)
- **Lockwood, R.** *Ethology, Ecology and Epidemiology of Canine Aggression.* In J.A. Serpell (Ed.), *The Domestic Dog: Its Evolution, Behaviour and Interactions with People.* Cambridge University Press. (Behavioural ecology, conflict behaviour, agonistic behaviour, behavioural risk interpretation.)
- **Pageat, P.** *Evaluation of the Aggressive Dog: What is a Really Dangerous Dog?* (Behavioural assessment, aggression classification, behavioural control, interpretation of aggressive responses, dangerousness assessment.)

Lead Author: Julie Speyer
Technical Review: Victoria Blondin, Amanda Barrett and Andrew Reynolds

3.3 Canine Behavioural Findings

Finding 1 – The dog's behavioural communication was expressed primarily through subtle behavioural changes rather than overt aggressive displays.

The available behavioural evidence demonstrates that, prior to the bite, the dog's communication was expressed primarily through behavioural resistance, changes in posture, increasing body tension, sustained orientation, and behavioural stillness rather than overt aggressive displays such as barking, growling, lunging, or repeated snapping. The behavioural assessment supports the conclusion that the absence of overt aggression should not be interpreted as the absence of behavioural communication.

Finding 2 – The dog's behaviour remained context-dependent throughout the incident.

The available behavioural evidence does not support the conclusion that the dog displayed generalized or indiscriminate aggression. Rather, the dog's behaviour remained closely associated with the evolving circumstances of the incident, particularly the repeated loading attempts and subsequent physical handling. Behavioural responses were consistently linked to identifiable events occurring during the interaction rather than occurring independently of those events.

Finding 3 – The bite occurred within an identifiable behavioural sequence.

The behavioural assessment supports the conclusion that the bite did not occur in isolation. It occurred following an identifiable progression of antecedent events that included repeated unsuccessful loading attempts, increasing physical interaction, and ultimately direct collar contact. The available evidence supports the conclusion that the bite formed part of an observable behavioural sequence rather than representing an isolated or unpredictable aggressive act.

Finding 4 – The behavioural evidence is most consistent with a context-dependent defensive aggressive response.

When considered collectively, the behavioural sequence, warning signals, injury mechanics, bite characteristics, and post-bite behaviour support the conclusion that the aggressive response is most consistent with defensive aggression occurring within an identifiable behavioural context. The available behavioural evidence does not support the conclusion that the bite represented sustained offensive or indiscriminate aggression.

Finding 5 – Multiple antecedent factors were identified; however, their relative behavioural significance cannot be determined.

The behavioural assessment identified numerous antecedent and contextual factors that may have influenced the dog's behavioural state, including prolonged physical activity and the potential for associated exertional heat-related physiological changes, repeated handling attempts, insufficient opportunities for decompression, lack of access to water and other measures that may have assisted with physiological and behavioural recovery, separation from the accompanying dog, and the increasing duration of the interaction. While these factors are behaviourally and physiologically relevant, the available evidence does not permit determination of the relative contribution of any individual factor to the dog's behavioural response.

Finding 6 – The behavioural assessment supports a context-dependent assessment of behavioural risk.

The available behavioural evidence supports the conclusion that the behavioural risk demonstrated during the incident was associated primarily with direct physical handling and restraint within the observed behavioural context. The assessment does not support the conclusion that the dog demonstrated a generalized pattern of aggression independent of the circumstances in which the bite occurred.

Finding 7 – The bite materially changed the behavioural risk presented during the incident.

The behavioural assessment supports the conclusion that the bite represented a significant change in the behavioural risk presented during the incident. Following the bite, the responding officers were no longer managing a dog that had demonstrated only behavioural resistance to loading. They were managing a dog that had demonstrated a context-dependent injury-producing aggressive response during direct physical handling. Consequently, any subsequent decisions involving direct physical interaction required consideration of the demonstrated potential for a similar behavioural response under comparable circumstances, as well as the potential for the intensity or severity of the behavioural response to escalate with continued or repeated physical interaction. These factors were relevant to the assessment of risk associated with subsequent direct handling.

Lead Author: Julie Speyer
Technical Review: Victoria Blondin, Amanda Barrett and Andrew Reynolds

SECTION 4 – OPERATIONAL DECISION ANALYSIS

4.1 [redacted] Decision Point Findings

Decision Findings 1 – Owner Information Available Before Arrival
Based on the information available at this stage of the incident, it was reasonable for [redacted] to prioritize the immediate containment and transport of the dogs before reviewing or acting on the owner's information received from the shelter. At the time of her arrival, both dogs were already safely contained, there had been no reported aggression toward the reporting parties, and there was no indication that transporting the dogs would present any unusual difficulty. Under these circumstances, proceeding with the routine transport process before contacting the owner was consistent with the objective of securing the dogs and completing the call efficiently. Reviewing the shelter's email while approaching the property, or diverting attention to it immediately upon arrival, would have interrupted the more immediate task of managing and transporting the dogs.

Decision Findings 2 – Initial Behavioural Assessment

[redacted] interpretation of the dog's body language at this stage, panting stopping, the mouth closing, and the eyes widening and shifting upward, is consistent with recognized indicators of canine stress or discomfort rather than overt aggression. Her interpretation of the dog as being "unsure" reflects a reasonable behavioural assessment based on the information available at the time. Her decision not to scan the dog for a microchip, thereby avoiding unnecessary handling around the neck and collar area, represented a proportionate response to the behavioural cues she observed while still allowing the overall containment and transport process to continue. At this stage of the interaction, the observed behaviour was localized to handling near the dog's neck and, on its own, did not reasonably indicate the need for a materially different containment strategy.

Decision Findings 3 – Vehicle Loading and Exit

At the point the photograph was attempted, the Rottweiler had already been successfully loaded and contained within the transport compartment. Attempting to obtain the photograph before the compartment was fully secured required the door to remain open or partially open, creating the opportunity for the dog to exit the vehicle. Whether the door was reopened or intentionally left slightly ajar differs between [redacted] two interviews; however, both accounts consistently identify the photograph attempt as the event that immediately preceded the loss of containment. The available evidence therefore supports the conclusion that the decision to complete the photograph before fully securing the compartment directly resulted in the dog's escape from the vehicle and the need to re-establish containment.

Decision Findings 4 – Failed Reloading Attempts

By this stage of the incident, the loading process had transitioned from a routine transport into an extended, unsuccessful containment effort involving repeated attempts to reload the dog. The available evidence demonstrates that members of the public became active participants in those efforts, including handling the leash, offering treats, and directly assisting with repeated loading attempts. This occurred despite [redacted] having previously identified behavioural cues that caused her to modify her own handling of the dog by avoiding unnecessary contact near his neck and collar.

Whether the sunglasses incident involved oral contact or simply resulted from [redacted] losing her balance cannot be determined from the available evidence, as the accounts differ. Regardless, the available evidence supports the conclusion that members of the public continued to play an active role in managing the dog throughout this period. As the incident became increasingly prolonged and unsuccessful, it would have been reasonable to reassess the continued involvement of members of the public in the physical handling of the dog.

Decision Findings 5 – Behavioural Recovery Opportunity

[redacted] account of this period is limited to general references to redirecting the dog's attention and taking breaks from the loading attempts. She does not describe any specific behavioural indicators she was monitoring, nor does she identify what behavioural changes, if any, would indicate that the dog had sufficiently recovered to justify another loading attempt. As a result, the available evidence does not demonstrate that a structured behavioural reassessment occurred between successive loading attempts. Whether such an assessment was taking place but simply not articulated, or whether loading attempts were resumed without reference to specific behavioural criteria, cannot be determined from the available evidence.

Decision Findings 6 – Muzzle Attempt

The reported slip-lead muzzle attempt cannot be independently corroborated and is supported only by [redacted] account. Based on her description, she attempted a single slip-lead muzzle technique but abandoned it after determining there was insufficient leash remaining to both maintain the muzzle and continue guiding the dog. The available evidence does not demonstrate that any alternative muzzling method or additional equipment was attempted before assistance was requested. As a result, the attempted intervention did not resolve the ongoing containment problem. Consequently, the decision to discontinue the attempted slip-lead muzzle represented the end of the documented handling strategies employed by [redacted] before transitioning to assistance from a second officer.

Decision Findings 7 – Request For Assistance

Based on the operational circumstances at this stage of the incident, [redacted] decision to request assistance was reasonable. Multiple-loading attempts had been unsuccessful, the attempted slip-lead muzzle had failed to resolve the containment problem, and [redacted] stated that she was no longer confident she could safely manage the dog on her own. Requesting assistance from a second officer represented a reasonable escalation in response to an unresolved and increasingly complex containment situation.

At the same time, the available evidence demonstrates that members of the public continued to participate directly in handling the dog while assistance was being awaited. This included maintaining physical control of the leash and continuing to assist with loading efforts. Given [redacted] own assessment that the situation had progressed beyond what she could safely manage alone, it would have been reasonable to reassess the continued involvement of members of the public in the physical handling of the dog until additional assistance arrived.

This interval also allowed for reassessment of the dog's behavioural state and the level of risk associated with further handling. Consideration could have been given to whether a period of reduced interaction and decompression was appropriate before further handling attempts were undertaken, as well as to providing access to water in

the context of the dog's preceding physical activity and continued exertion during handling and restraint. It cannot be determined whether reduced interaction, access to water, or other supportive measures would have resulted in behavioural de-escalation or otherwise altered the dog's behavioural or physiological state. As these measures were not implemented during this interval, their potential effect on the subsequent course of the incident cannot be determined from the available evidence.

Decision Findings 8 – Pre-Arrival Owner Contact Opportunity
Earlier in the incident, prioritizing containment and transport before contacting the owner was a reasonable operational decision based on the information then available. By this stage, however, the operational circumstances had changed materially. Multiple loading attempts had been unsuccessful, the attempted slip-lead muzzle had failed to resolve the containment problem, and [redacted] had concluded that she required assistance to continue safely managing the dog.

At the same time, [redacted] knew the shelter had responded to her request for owner information, although the email had not yet been reviewed. Given the prolonged inability to safely load the dog and the recognition that the existing handling strategy had been unsuccessful, reviewing the available owner information and considering owner attendance represented a reasonable operational option warranting reassessment.

Decision Findings 9 – Information Transfer Upon [redacted] Arrival
The available evidence demonstrates that [redacted] communicated the immediate operational problem, that repeated attempts to load the dog had been unsuccessful and that she required assistance. However, by the time [redacted] arrived, [redacted] had accumulated substantially more operational information than was conveyed during the initial briefing.

Over approximately 45 minutes, [redacted] had observed the dog's behavioural response to handling around the neck and collar area, attempted multiple loading strategies, attempted a slip-lead muzzle, determined that she could no longer safely manage the dog alone, and had owner information available through the shelter. Although [redacted] stated that she believed [redacted] engaged the dog before she had the opportunity to communicate all of this information, the available evidence indicates that the operational briefing remained focused primarily on the immediate loading difficulty rather than the broader operational context that had developed.

Decision Findings 10 – Catchpole Application
Following [redacted] bite, the operational circumstances changed significantly. At this stage, the circumstances had progressed beyond unsuccessful loading and behavioural resistance, with [redacted] now assisting the [redacted] following an injury-producing response by the dog during physical handling. The available evidence indicates that [redacted] assumed responsibility for directing the containment strategy, including

instructing [redacted] to retrieve and apply a catch pole and directing the subsequent application of a second catch pole.

Within this context, it was reasonable for [redacted] to follow the tactical direction of the [redacted] The available evidence does not indicate that [redacted] independently selected the catch-pole strategy or directed its application. Rather, her role at this stage was to assist in implementing the containment strategy being directed by [redacted].

While [redacted] retrieved the catch pole from the rear of her vehicle, the dog remained under the control of [redacted], a member of the public. This temporarily placed responsibility for controlling the dog with a civilian at a point when the circumstances had already escalated sufficiently to prompt the use of additional physical restraint equipment. Regardless of its duration, this introduced an additional public-safety consideration into the management of the incident.

Shortly after the second catch pole was applied, the dog began biting at the restraint equipment and bleeding from the mouth was observed. While the precise source of the bleeding cannot be determined from the available evidence, its appearance represented a material change in the circumstances. The dog's response to the restraint equipment and the observed bleeding created new information requiring consideration as the containment strategy continued.

Decision Findings 11 – Attempted Loading Under Dual Restraint
Following the establishment of dual catch pole restraint, the operational objective remained to load the dog into the transport vehicle. During the continued loading attempts, the dual catch poles were manipulated in a manner that lifted the dog's front end from the vehicle surface in an effort to facilitate movement into the vehicle. This represented a further escalation in the physical handling approach as efforts shifted from restraint and guided loading to more direct physical manipulation of the dog.

Despite the increased level of restraint and physical handling, the dog remained resistant to loading and the attempts continued to be unsuccessful. Bleeding from the mouth had also become evident. The combination of continued resistance, unsuccessful loading, observable injury, and increasingly forceful physical intervention demonstrated that the existing strategy was not achieving the intended outcome while the operational circumstances continued to evolve.

At this stage, the combination of continued unsuccessful loading attempts, observable injury, and the availability of owner information represented a materially different operational picture than existed only minutes earlier. While safely containing the dog remained an appropriate operational objective, the available evidence indicates that the existing strategy continued without resolving the underlying problem.

Taken together, these developments represented a significant opportunity to reassess the operational approach before further loading attempts continued. Consideration of alternative operational options, including utilizing the owner information already available, would have been reasonable at this stage given the continued inability to safely achieve the intended outcome through the existing strategy.

Decision Findings 12 – Reduced Emotional Arousal Period
This period represents the first documented instance of a deliberate reduction in operational intensity. Active loading attempts ceased, handler interaction with the dog was intentionally minimized, catch-pole tension was reduced while maintaining restraint, and both officers redirected their attention toward locating and contacting the owners. During this same period, the dog's observable resistance decreased and the previously noted oral bleeding also diminished.

The available evidence indicates that the officers appropriately recognized the opportunity to pause active loading attempts and pursue an alternative means of resolving the incident through owner attendance. This represented a meaningful shift away from continued physical attempts to load the dog and toward a less intrusive operational approach.

At the same time, while reduced tension on the catch poles was appropriate to facilitate the dog's relaxation, continued safe restraint remained dependent on maintaining the equipment in accordance with its intended application. If the catch poles had been correctly positioned and safety-checked when initially applied, subsequent reductions in tension should not have required repositioning or adjustment to maintain safe control.

Decision Findings 13 – Water Event
This decision point contains one of the more significant unresolved discrepancies in the record. All three accounts agree that water was offered and that the dog's activity escalated sharply afterward, resulting in renewed struggling, a knocked-over water bowl, and increased oral bleeding. Beyond that shared sequence, however, the accounts differ materially regarding the placement of the water, the dog's initial response, and the immediate cause of the renewed struggle.

Despite these differences, the available evidence consistently supports that the decision to provide water during this period of reduced activity was reasonable. The dog had been physically active for an extended period, environmental conditions were warm, and the officers had shifted away from active loading attempts while awaiting the owners' arrival. Offering water under those circumstances was consistent with the dog's immediate welfare.

The unresolved issue is not whether water should have been offered, but rather the manner in which it was introduced while the dog remained under dual catch-pole restraint. Given the continuing need to maintain safe control of the dog, the involvement

of a member of the public in placing the water in close proximity to the dog introduced an additional variable into an already dynamic situation. Because the witness accounts differ significantly regarding how the water was presented and what immediately followed, the Review cannot determine from the available evidence whether the renewed escalation resulted primarily from the presentation of the water, the dog's response to it, officer actions, or a combination of these factors.

Decision Findings 14 – Management During Renewed Increased Emotional Arousal
During this period, [redacted] described repeatedly managing entanglement between the two catch poles as the dog moved, rolled, and changed position throughout the driveway. The available evidence indicates that resolving these entanglements involved loosening and repositioning the poles, temporarily transferring control of both poles to a single officer while the other repositioned, and, at one point, exchanging catch poles between officers so that each assumed control of the other's equipment.

While the dog's movement undoubtedly created operational challenges, each of these actions represented a transition in the officers' physical control of the restraint system. During periods of heightened movement and resistance, maintaining continuous, stable control of the equipment is a critical component of safe catch-pole management. Temporary transfer of both poles to one officer, removal of hands from the normal control position to manipulate the cable and exchanging catch poles between officers all introduce additional complexity into an already dynamic situation and increase the importance of careful coordination between officers.

Decision Findings 15 – Veterinary Transport
Offering veterinary transport reflected a reasonable and compassionate response to an uncertain situation. Although [redacted] believed the dog had likely died based on her observations, she did not have the authority or expertise to formally pronounce death. Transporting the dog for veterinary assessment rather than simply releasing him to the owners was therefore a reasonable operational decision.

This stage of the incident also represented the final opportunity to preserve evidence associated with a dog that had died while under municipal care and control. Given the significance of the incident, it would have been reasonable to recognize the potential evidentiary value of a veterinary necropsy and communicate that need through the supervisory chain so that the municipality could determine whether authorization for the examination should be provided. In the absence of that discussion, no necropsy was obtained, leaving the Review without what could have been a critical source of objective medical evidence regarding the dog's injuries and cause of death.

Similarly, although the scene itself remained dynamic and emotionally charged, the dog's arrival at the veterinary clinic provided a controlled environment in which additional photographic documentation could reasonably have been obtained before the body was removed from the transport vehicle or otherwise altered. Such

photographs would have provided valuable contemporaneous documentation of the dog's condition, including the location and extent of observable injuries and bleeding. The absence of both a necropsy and comprehensive photographic documentation represent a significant evidentiary limitation that restricts the extent to which aspects of the incident can now be independently verified.

Decision Findings 16 – Return of the German Shorthaired Pointer
Returning the German Shorthaired Pointer directly to its identified owner was consistent with the Shelter Intake SOP, which directs officers to return an animal to its owner where practical before proceeding with shelter intake. Under the circumstances described by [redacted], returning the dog to its owner rather than transporting it to the shelter was therefore consistent with established divisional procedure as well as a reasonable operational decision.

Equally significant was [redacted] recognition that the owner's reported hostility created a potential officer's safety concern. Rather than proceeding alone, she sought supervisory guidance, communicated her safety concerns, and followed the direction provided by requesting assistance from the Special Constables before attending the residence. This reflected an appropriate reassessment of operational risk and the use of available supervisory and policing resources to mitigate that risk prior to completing the return.

Decision Findings 17 – Post-Incident Notification
[redacted] post-incident reporting followed the Division's expected process. She completed her incident report, documented the incident while it remained relatively fresh in her memory, and remained at the office after her shift to complete her notes. These actions were consistent with preserving an accurate record of the incident while events were still recent.

The available evidence also indicates that [redacted] sought assistance from a coworker to refresh her recollection while preparing her notes. During her interview, she explained that her intention was to assist her own independent recollection rather than adopt another person's account of events. [redacted], however, described the reporting process as having been completed independently without discussion between them. Because these accounts differ, the available evidence cannot determine the extent to which any discussion occurred before the reports were finalized.

Regardless of whether any discussion took place, the incident highlights the importance of preserving independent recollections following significant operational events. Completing reports independently and capturing as much operational detail as reasonably possible while memories remain fresh substantiates the evidentiary value of the record and supports accurate reconstruction and organizational learning.

4.2 [redacted] Decision Point Findings

Decision Findings 1 – Information Received Prior to Arrival
Providing [redacted] with an alternative loading strategy by suggesting use of the vehicle's side compartment represented a reasonable operational response based on the limited information available during the initial request for assistance. Offering an alternative approach before attending the scene demonstrated an effort to resolve the situation remotely and, if successful, may have eliminated the need for a second officer to attend.

The available evidence indicates that no further operational update was obtained after this alternative strategy was suggested. As a result, it could not be determined whether the suggested approach had been successful before [redacted] committed to travelling to the scene. Similarly, beyond the dog being described as difficult to load, the available evidence does not indicate that additional information regarding the dog's behaviour, body language, previous handling attempts, or other operational considerations was obtained before arrival.

[redacted] also stated that she was aware attending the call could extend beyond the end of her scheduled shift. The available evidence does not establish whether supervisory authorization for overtime was required under these circumstances. However, obtaining a further operational update from [redacted] before continuing to the scene would have provided an opportunity to determine whether attendance remained necessary and, if appropriate, whether supervisory consultation should occur.

During her later interview, [redacted] stated that had she known the dog had demonstrated aggressive behaviour, she likely would have notified her supervisor, formulated a plan, considered different equipment, and taken additional time to assess the situation before physically engaging the dog. Her own reflection illustrates how additional operational information available before arrival may have influenced her planning and approach.

Decision Findings 2 – Information Transfer Upon Arrival
At the time [redacted] arrived, the incident had already progressed beyond a routine loading difficulty. [redacted] had spent a considerable period attempting to load the dog using multiple techniques, with assistance from [redacted], without success. These circumstances indicated that a significant amount of operational information had already been developed before [redacted] became directly involved.

The available evidence indicates that some information was exchanged before [redacted] physically engaged the dog. However, the witness accounts differ regarding the extent of that discussion. [redacted] described asking questions about the dog's behaviour and previous handling, while [redacted] and [redacted] described a much shorter exchange before [redacted] reached toward the dog's collar. Although the precise content of that conversation cannot be fully reconciled, the available evidence consistently indicates that only a brief period elapsed between [redacted] arrival and her physical interaction with the dog.

Given the length of time the incident had already been ongoing and the number of unsuccessful handling attempts that had preceded [redacted] arrival, obtaining a more comprehensive operational briefing represented a reasonable opportunity before initiating physical contact. A fuller understanding of the handling techniques already attempted, the dog's behavioural responses, and the observations made during the preceding 45 minutes may have supported a more informed behavioural and operational assessment before selecting the next course of action.

Decision Findings 3 – Initial Behavioural Assessment
The available evidence indicates that [redacted] made numerous behavioural observations before initiating physical contact with the dog. She described the dog's posture, ear position, head carriage, panting, body rigidity, and changing level of resistance in considerable detail, demonstrating that she was actively observing the dog's behaviour as the interaction progressed.

While these observations were clearly identified, the available evidence does not establish how they were incorporated into her operational decision-making at the time. Although she later described the dog becoming progressively more rigid and "holding his ground," she continued to interpret the behaviour primarily as resistance to loading rather than reassessing the potential behavioural significance of those changes before reaching for the dog's collar. In her later interview, she reflected that she "should have watched his behavior more," indicating that she later attached greater significance to the behavioural changes she had observed.

Behavioural assessment involves not only observing body language but interpreting those observations within the context in which they occur. By the time [redacted] arrived, the dog had already undergone a prolonged period of unsuccessful handling, multiple loading attempts, and increasing physical interaction. Integrating the dog's observable behavioural changes with that broader operational context represented a reasonable opportunity to further inform the decision-making process before progressing to physical contact.

Decision Findings 4 – Cooperative Loading Attempt
[redacted] account describes an initial attempt to encourage the dog to voluntarily enter the vehicle before making physical contact. However, this aspect of the incident could

not be independently corroborated. Neither [redacted] nor [redacted], both of whom were present throughout this portion of the incident, described observing a cooperative loading attempt before [redacted] reached toward the dog's collar.

The documented timeline provides additional context regarding the duration of this interaction. [redacted] arrived on scene at approximately 17:41–17:42 hrs, with the bite occurring at approximately 17:45 hrs. Within this interval, [redacted] reports receiving information from [redacted] and [redacted] regarding the preceding events, assessing the dog's presentation, attempting to encourage the dog to enter the vehicle, and subsequently progressing to physical handling when those efforts were unsuccessful. While the available evidence does not permit the duration of each of these individual actions to be established, the overall interval was limited.

The available evidence therefore does not establish whether a cooperative loading attempt occurred as described by [redacted] or the extent of any such attempt. The accounts differ regarding the actions taken during this interval, and the available timeline does not provide sufficient precision to resolve those differences. As a result, no definitive finding can be made regarding the cooperative loading attempt itself.

Decision Findings 5 – Collar Contact / Physical Guidance
The available evidence demonstrates that a comprehensive behavioural and operational assessment had not been completed before physical contact with the dog's collar was initiated. By this stage of the incident, the dog had already been the subject of prolonged and unsuccessful loading attempts involving multiple handling strategies and the assistance of members of the public. These circumstances represented a reasonable opportunity to pause, obtain a more complete understanding of the dog's responses to previous handling, and reassess the operational approach before introducing another physical handling technique.

In her later interview, [redacted] reflected that, had she appreciated the significance of the information available at the time, she would not have approached the dog in the manner that she did. She stated that she would have taken more time to assess the situation, considered different equipment, formulated a plan, and would not have simply reached for the dog. Her own reflection supports the importance of completing a more comprehensive behavioural and operational assessment before initiating physical contact.

Decision Findings 6 – Post-Bite Response
Following the bite, the operational context changed significantly. Up to that point, [redacted] had been attempting to encourage or physically guide the dog into the vehicle. The bite represented important new behavioural and operational information and created an opportunity to reassess the handling strategy before further attempts to engage with the dog continued.

The behavioural evidence available immediately following the bite demonstrated that the dog delivered a single bite during direct physical manipulation of the collar, immediately released without maintaining a grip, did not pursue [redacted], and remained available for continued management. The bite assessment further concluded that the bite occurred within a clearly identifiable handling context, remained limited in duration and severity, and was most consistent with a context-dependent defensive response rather than generalized aggression.

Taken together, these observations indicated that the dog's response was closely associated with the direct physical interaction that immediately preceded the bite and did not continue once that interaction ceased. This presented an opportunity to pause and reassess the dog's behavioural presentation, the immediate need for continued intervention, and whether additional recovery time, alternative handling strategies, or other behaviourally informed options could reasonably have been considered before re-engaging with the dog.

Decision Findings 7 – Initial Catch Pole Application
Following the bite, [redacted] determined that further direct hands-on handling of the dog was no longer appropriate and transitioned to the use of a catch pole. From [redacted] perspective at that time, the dog was still believed to be an unclaimed stray that required continued containment and transport, and the bite had demonstrated that further direct physical contact presented an increased risk of injury.

Within this context, transitioning to equipment that allowed greater working distance represented a reasonable operational response. The use of a catch pole reduced the need for further direct hands-on contact while allowing the officers to maintain physical control of the dog and continue efforts toward safe containment and transport.

Decision Findings 8 – Direction to Apply a Second Catch Pole
Following the bite, transitioning from direct physical handling to equipment that provided greater working distance represented a reasonable operational response. At that stage of the incident, [redacted] reasonably concluded that continued hands-on handling was no longer appropriate while containment of the dog remained necessary.

The available evidence does not establish why a second catch pole was applied immediately after the first rather than first assessing whether the dog could be safely managed using a single catch pole. None of the witness accounts describe an attempt to evaluate the dog's response or level of control with one catch pole before the second was introduced.

The available evidence further indicates that the dog's significant behavioural escalation occurred only after both catch poles had been applied. While it cannot be determined whether a single catch pole would have provided sufficient control, assessing the dog's behavioural response to the initial catch pole before introducing

additional restraint would have permitted a more gradual, response-dependent increase in physical restraint. Such an approach allows the degree of restraint to be adjusted according to the dog's behavioural response and the level of control achieved, while taking into consideration officer safety, public safety, effective animal control, and animal welfare within a difficult containment situation.

Decision Findings 9 – Attempted Loading Under Dual Restraint
Following the application of the catch poles, continuing attempts to safely load the dog into the vehicle remained a reasonable operational objective. At this stage, [redacted] reasonably believed the dog still required containment and transport, as owner information had not yet been identified and alternative disposition options were not yet available.

The available evidence demonstrates that force was applied through the catch poles that elevated the dog's front paws while attempting to move him toward the rear step of the vehicle. Although the witnesses differ in their descriptions of the degree of lifting, the available evidence consistently establishes that the dog was being moved primarily through pressure applied to the catch poles, with sufficient force to raise his front paws off the ground. Catch poles are intended to maintain safe control while the dog remains weight-bearing and are not intended to serve as the primary means of lifting or supporting a dog's body weight during loading. While the extent to which the dog's front end was elevated cannot be determined from the available evidence, the loading technique had progressed beyond the intended use of the equipment.

The available evidence further indicates that two catch poles were being used throughout the loading attempt, leaving no officer available to assist in supporting the dog's body during loading. Had the dog been safely manageable with a single catch pole, the second officer would have been available to assist with body support or alternative loading techniques. While the available evidence cannot determine whether that approach would have resulted in successful loading, it represented a reasonable operational option that was not documented before continued attempts were made using dual catch-pole restraint.

Decision Findings 10 – Police Assistance Request
Following the unsuccessful loading attempts under dual catch-pole restraint, requesting additional assistance represented a reasonable operational decision. At that stage of the incident, the officers remained responsible for safely containing the dog, no additional Animal Services officers were available to assist, and [redacted] had identified a specific operational need for another trained person to safely support the loading process.

The available evidence also demonstrates that the purpose of the request for assistance was not effectively communicated. [redacted] instructed [redacted] to call 911 but did not provide further direction regarding the specific assistance being requested, and

[redacted] stated she did not know what information should be relayed to the dispatcher. As a result, the responding agency was not provided with a clear explanation of the operational circumstances, or the specific role additional officers were being asked to perform.

Clear communication of the operational need represented a reasonable opportunity to improve the likelihood of an effective response. Providing the dispatcher with a concise explanation of the situation and the specific assistance required, or communicating directly with the dispatcher via speaker phone to maintain scene safety, may have improved the responding agency's understanding of the request and supported a more informed decision regarding the deployment of assistance.

Decision Findings 11 – [redacted] Becomes Aware of Owner Information
Once owner information became available, [redacted] decision to pursue immediate telephone contact represented a reasonable operational response and shifted the focus from continued physical loading attempts toward reunification with the owner. This approach was consistent with resolving the situation without prolonging the physical struggle with the dog.

The available evidence indicates that [redacted] communicated the urgency of the situation by advising that the dog had bitten her, was on a catch pole, was actively bleeding, and required prompt attendance. She also challenged the owner's estimated arrival time, indicating that a 45-minute response was not acceptable under the circumstances. Because neither owner was interviewed as part of this review, the available evidence cannot determine how that information was understood or what factors contributed to the stated arrival time.

Decision Findings 12 – Reduced Emotional Arousal Period
This period represents the first documented reduction in operational intensity following the bite and the unsuccessful loading attempts. Active loading ceased, catch-pole tension was deliberately reduced while maintaining safe restraint, and the officers redirected their attention toward owner contact while allowing the dog an opportunity to settle. During this same period, the dog's observable resistance decreased, and the previously noted oral bleeding also diminished.

The available evidence demonstrates that the officers appropriately recognized the opportunity to discontinue active loading attempts and pursue an alternative means of resolving the incident through owner attendance. This represented a meaningful shift away from continued physical handling and toward a less intrusive operational approach while maintaining safe containment of the dog.

Decision Findings 13 – Water Event
This decision point contains one of the more significant unresolved factual discrepancies in the available evidence. All three accounts agree that water was offered

and that the dog's activity escalated sharply afterward, resulting in renewed struggling, a knocked-over water bowl, and increased oral bleeding. Beyond that shared sequence, the accounts differ materially regarding the placement of the water, the dog's initial response, and the immediate cause of the renewed struggle.

Despite these differences, the available evidence consistently supports that the decision to provide water during this period of reduced activity was reasonable. The dog had been physically active for an extended period, environmental conditions were warm, and the officers had shifted away from active loading attempts while awaiting the owners' arrival. Offering water under those circumstances was consistent with the dog's immediate welfare.

The unresolved issue is not whether water should have been offered, but the manner in which it was introduced while the dog remained under dual catch-pole restraint. Given the continuing need to maintain safe control of the dog, involving a member of the public in presenting water introduced an additional variable into an already dynamic situation. Because the witness accounts differ significantly on how the water was presented and what immediately followed, the available evidence does not establish what primarily caused the renewed escalation or the relative contribution of the water presentation, the dog's response, officer actions, or a combination of these factors.

Decision Findings 14 – Management During Renewed Increased Emotional Arousal
During this period, [redacted] described repeatedly managing entanglement between the two catch poles as the dog moved, rolled, and changed position throughout the driveway. The available evidence indicates that resolving these entanglements involved loosening and repositioning the poles, temporarily transferring control of both poles to a single officer while the other repositioned, and, at one point, physically switching positions and exchanging catch poles so that each officer assumed control of the other's equipment.

While the dog's movement undoubtedly created operational challenges, each of these actions represented a transition in the officers' physical control of the restraint system. During periods of heightened movement and resistance, maintaining continuous, stable control of the equipment is a critical component of safe catch-pole management. Temporary transfer of both poles to one officer, removal of hands from the normal control position to manipulate the cable and exchanging catch poles between officers all introduced additional complexity into an already dynamic situation and increased the importance of careful coordination between officers.

As the [redacted] directing the overall management of the incident during this stage, [redacted] was responsible for coordinating the team's handling strategy while simultaneously maintaining control of her own assigned catch pole. Effective coordination between officers remained an important component of safe restraint management throughout these transitions.

Decision Findings 15 – Special Constables Approach
Once the special constables' approach was identified as contributing to the dog's renewed reactivity, asking them to stop and maintain their distance represented a reasonable operational response. At that stage of the incident, the dog was already reacting to multiple environmental stimuli, and reducing additional activity in the immediate area was consistent with allowing the dog an opportunity to settle while maintaining safe containment. The available evidence indicates the special constables complied with that request and did not continue advancing toward the officers.

This decision also demonstrates an important shift in operational assessment. Rather than continuing to introduce additional people into the dog's immediate environment, the officers recognized that the special constables' approach was contributing to the dog's behavioural response and adjusted their management accordingly. The available evidence supports this as an appropriate operational decision based on the information available at the time.

Decision Findings 16 – Loss of Responsiveness Assessment
[redacted] hesitation to physically approach the dog immediately after he became unresponsive is understandable in light of the circumstances. Only moments earlier, she had sustained a bite, participated in a prolonged and physically demanding restraint, and observed the dog exhibiting repeated episodes of intense struggling. Her description of feeling "dumbfounded" and uncertainty of how to proceed is consistent with the significant physical and emotional demands of the incident and should be considered within that context.

At the same time, the dog's sudden transition from active resistance to stillness, urination, and lack of response to the toe-response check represented a significant change in his condition. The available evidence indicates that no assessment of respiration or pulse was performed before the owners arrived, and that the only documented assessment of responsiveness was the toe-response check performed at [redacted] direction. Given the change in the dog's condition, a more comprehensive assessment of his medical status represented a reasonable operational opportunity once it could be completed safely.
The available evidence also indicates that the owners were asked to touch the dog before either officer performed any further physical assessment themselves. Whether this reflected continued officer safety concerns, the emotional impact of the incident, uncertainty regarding the dog's condition, or some combination of these factors cannot be determined from the available evidence. It can be concluded, however, that a more complete assessment of the dog's medical condition was delayed until after the owners arrived.

Decision Findings 17 – Owner Arrival
Offering veterinary transport once the dog's condition had changed represented a reasonable and compassionate operational response. Likewise, [redacted] decision to

seek medical treatment for her own documented bite injury while [redacted] transported the dog to the veterinary clinic was appropriate under the circumstances.

[redacted] hesitation to physically approach the dog remained understandable given the recent bite and the uncertainty surrounding the dog's condition. However, the available evidence indicates that she repeatedly asked the owners to physically touch the dog despite its recent history of significant reactive behaviour and the uncertainty regarding his medical status. Although the owners were familiar with the dog, they were also emotionally involved in the incident and had not participated in the restraint or assessment process. Asking them to physically interact with the dog introduced an unnecessary risk to members of the public at a time when the dog's condition remained uncertain.

The available evidence indicates that the owners declined to do so, and [redacted] and [redacted] ultimately completed the physical handling themselves. Given the uncertainty surrounding both the dog's behavioural and medical condition, maintaining responsibility for the assessment and handling of the dog within the trained responding officers represented a safer operational approach.

Decision Findings 18 – Post-Incident Notification
[redacted] post-incident notification followed the Division's expected process. She promptly notified her supervisor and manager, sought medical treatment for her injury, documented the incident through the Division's reporting process, and photographed both her injury and aspects of the incident. Collectively, these actions demonstrate appropriate compliance with her post-incident reporting responsibilities.

While the required reporting was completed, the available evidence indicates that substantially greater detail regarding the sequence of events, operational decision-making, and behavioural observations emerged during her later interviews than was documented in the initial reporting. Capturing that level of operational detail as close to the incident as reasonably possible would have better positioned the Division's ability to reconstruct the event, review operational decision-making, and identify opportunities for organizational learning.

Lead Author: Julie Speyer
Technical Review: Amanda Barrett**,** Victoria Blondin and Andrew Reynolds

4.3 SOP Decision Point Analysis

Decision Point 1 – Information Gathering Prior to Response

Operational Requirement:
The Customer Service Calls SOP requires officers to obtain sufficient information before responding by contacting the complainant, clarifying the complaint, documenting

relevant information and assessing the urgency of the response. The Dog Bite Procedure similarly emphasizes collecting available information before operational decisions are made.

Evidence Considered:
The Review confirmed that the [redacted] officer contacted the complainant prior to attendance to confirm the dogs remained confined and advised the complainant of the anticipated arrival time. This demonstrates partial compliance with the Customer Service Calls SOP.

However, there is no evidence that the officer sought additional information regarding the dogs' behaviour, demeanour, level of agitation, or any immediate safety concerns before attending. These questions would have assisted in assessing operational risk and determining an appropriate response strategy.

The Review further determined that the [redacted] officer attended to assist without first receiving a briefing regarding the available information or operational concerns before directly engaging with the dogs.

Assessment Findings:
The officers demonstrated partial compliance by confirming confinement and attendance; however, they did not fully satisfy the intent of the SOP requiring information gathering to support operational decision-making. Additional behavioural information could reasonably have influenced tactical planning, equipment selection, officer positioning, and communication prior to engaging the dogs.

Decision Point 2 – Consideration of Previous History

Operational Requirement:
Divisional procedures require officers to determine whether previous incidents, enforcement actions or behavioural concerns exist before interacting with a dog.

Evidence Considered:
Evidence indicates the primary officer believed the dogs were known to Animal Services and that historical information may have existed. Despite this awareness, the officer did not wait to receive confirmation of the dogs' history before exiting the vehicle and beginning contact.

The Review also found no evidence that the Animal Services records were reviewed before physical interaction with the dogs, despite the opportunity to do so. Additionally, information known by the [redacted] officer was not fully communicated to the assisting officer before that officer became involved in the incident.

Assessment Findings:
The officers recognized that previous history may exist but did not incorporate that information into their operational planning. Reviewing available records and communicating known information between responding officers may have provided valuable insight regarding previous behaviour, handling considerations, or officer safety concerns by allowing the owners to attend and obtain their dog and not require additional assistance or assertive handling.

Decision Point 3 – Differentiating Dogs Running at Large from Dangerous Dogs

Operational Requirement:
Division policy distinguishes between dogs running at large and dogs legally classified as dangerous or aggressive. Operational responses should reflect the available evidence rather than assumptions.

Evidence Considered:
The available evidence indicates the officers responded to dogs reported at large. Prior to physical interaction, investigators identified no confirmed evidence that either dog had displayed aggression toward members of the public during this occurrence.

Although officers may have believed the dogs had previous involvement with Animal Services, that information had not been confirmed before engagement and this information would have also only provided owner information which could have been searched on Trim for previous potential dangerous dog or muzzle orders.

Assessment Findings:
The available information supported attendance for dogs running at large. Operational decisions should remain proportionate to the information confirmed at the time rather than assumptions regarding possible history.

Decision Point 4 – Risk-Based Response

Operational Requirement:
Customer Service Calls are prioritized according to demonstrated risk to public safety.

Evidence Considered:
The Review confirms officers responded promptly following notification that the dogs were loose. However, available evidence suggests the dogs had subsequently become confined before officer arrival.

No evidence was identified that the priority level was reassessed after confinement was confirmed.

Assessment Findings:

Although the initial response was appropriate, reassessing the level of operational urgency after learning the dogs were secured may have allowed additional planning time, review of available information, or coordination between responding officers before attempting capture. The attending officer indicated that they felt rushed and did not follow their own checklist for the response and impounding of the dogs. This decision was one of the turning points to this interaction causing the officer to take additional steps unnecessary for this impound.

Decision Point 5 – Review Prior to Enforcement Decisions

Operational Requirement:
Division procedures require Review before significant enforcement decisions are made.

Evidence Considered:
While no enforcement orders were issued before the incident, the Review considered whether officers gathered sufficient information before initiating physical control measures.

Available evidence indicates limited investigative activity occurred before attempting physical capture.

Assessment:
Although this requirement primarily addresses enforcement proceedings, the underlying principle of evidence-based decision making remains applicable. Greater information gathering before physical intervention would have been consistent with Divisional expectations and continued reassessment based on findings.

Decision Point 6 – Supervisory Oversight

Operational Requirement:
Division procedures consistently require supervisory involvement during significant operational events in various SOPs.

Evidence Considered:
The Review reviewed supervisor notifications, communications and actions following the incident.

Supervisory involvement occurred after the bite with limited controls due to supervisor not being immediately available to the officers.

Supervisory expectations from the Division.

Assessment Findings:
Although no SOP specifically requires pre-event supervisory consultation for routine loose dog incidents, Divisional procedures demonstrate an organizational expectation that supervisors remain available to provide direction, oversight, and support when operational circumstances become complex or significant.

The Review identified that supervisory involvement occurred after the bite incident and that the responding officers had limited access to immediate supervisory guidance during the escalation of events due to the supervisor not being available in the immediate area. While officers are expected to make operational decisions independently within their training and authority, the availability of supervisory support is intended to assist with risk assessment, resource allocation, decision-making, and escalation of significant incidents.

The Review further considered the Division's operational expectation that field staff have access to supervisory support, including during periods where a primary supervisor may be unavailable due to leave or other circumstances. The ability to provide timely supervisory direction is particularly important during dynamic incidents involving officer safety concerns, use of restraint equipment, animal welfare considerations, potential evidence preservation issues, and significant public interest.

Given the circumstances of this incident, including the use of physical restraint equipment, the dog's deteriorating condition, and the eventual death of the animal, additional supervisory involvement may have provided an opportunity for independent assessment, operational support, preservation of evidence, coordination of resources, and immediate post-incident direction and debriefing for involved staff.

The Review cannot determine whether earlier supervisory involvement would have changed the outcome; however, the absence of immediate supervisory availability represents an organizational factor to consider when assessing the overall incident response, decision-making environment, and Divisional preparedness for significant animal enforcement events.

Decision Point 7 – Owner Identification and Reunification

Operational Requirement:
Division policy emphasizes owner reunification whenever practical.

Evidence Considered:
The owner was known and available during the incident.
The Review examined whether owner assistance could have been utilized before physical apprehension was attempted.

Assessment Findings:
The availability of the owner presented a potential opportunity to assist with the apprehension of the dog before physical restraint measures were escalated. Evidence indicates the primary officer experienced difficulty loading the dog into the transport vehicle and subsequently requested assistance from a [redacted] officer who was not in the immediate vicinity. Despite these challenges, there is no evidence that owner assistance was requested at that stage of the incident. Following the bite incident and the application of the catch poles, when the dog began exhibiting signs of distress, the officer subsequently identified the owner as a potential resource to assist with the dog's apprehension. The timing of this consideration suggests that owner involvement was recognized after physical restraint efforts had already escalated. Whether earlier involvement of the owner would have altered the outcome cannot be determined; however, it represented an operational option that could reasonably have been considered as part of the ongoing assessment and reassessment of available apprehension strategies.

Decision Point 8 – Veterinary Response

Operational Requirement:
The Veterinary SOP requires that animals sustaining injury receive timely veterinary assessments and that appropriate notifications and documentation be completed. Officers are not authorized to diagnose or independently determine medical treatment beyond limited stabilization measures permitted by Divisional procedures.

Evidence Considered:
Following the incident, veterinary assistance was sought, and the dog was transported for emergency veterinary assessment. The available evidence, including witness statements, officer accounts, and video evidence, indicates that during the course of the apprehension the dog exhibited observable changes in condition, including significant bleeding and increasingly laboured respirations before veterinary transport was initiated.

Assessment Findings:
The available evidence indicates that the officers ultimately sought veterinary assessment following the incident. However, the Review identified observable changes in the dog's physical condition before that decision, including significant bleeding and progressively laboured respirations. These observable indicators provide important context for evaluating the officers' ongoing assessment of the incident and their response to the dog's changing condition.

The inquiry should therefore consider whether the deterioration in the dog's condition was recognized at the earliest reasonable opportunity, whether those observations warranted reassessment or modification of the restraint and apprehension strategy,

and whether veterinary consultation or transport could reasonably have been initiated earlier within the authority available to the officers and the operational circumstances present at the time. This assessment should also consider what veterinary resources or emergency consultation options were reasonably available to the officers while the incident was unfolding.

Decision Point 9 – Documentation

Operational Requirement:
Division procedures require comprehensive documentation of significant events.

Evidence Considered:
Investigators reviewed CAD records, CRM entries, notebooks, witness statements, photographs and other available documentation.

Assessment Findings:
Documentation was generated in relation to the incident; however, investigators compared each source to assess its consistency, completeness, and chronology. The Review identified that the responding officers' notebook entries contained limited detail regarding their involvement and observations throughout the incident. In particular, the notes provided minimal documentation of the sequence of events, the arrival and involvement of all parties present, key decision points, the timing of significant actions, the use of restraint techniques, observations of the dog's condition, and the officers' ongoing assessments and reassessments during the apprehension.

Similarly, a review of the incident and accident reports identified deficiencies in the level of detail recorded, limiting the reports' ability to provide a comprehensive account of the incident. Comprehensive documentation serves not only to create an accurate factual record but also to demonstrate the rationale for operational decisions, support accountability, and facilitate subsequent supervisory review and Review.

The limited level of detail contained within the officers' notes and reports reduced investigators' ability to independently reconstruct the chronology of events and assess the decision-making process throughout the incident. As a result, greater reliance was placed on other sources of evidence, including CAD records, witness statements, photographs, video evidence, and subsequent interviews, to establish an accurate timeline and evaluate the officers' actions.

Decision Point 10 – Evidence Preservation

Operational Requirement:
Significant incidents require preservation of relevant evidence.

Evidence Considered:

The Review examined photographs, witness statements, vehicle inspections, equipment, officer's notes/statements, intake forms and available video evidence.

Assessment Findings:
Although this incident did not involve a traditional dog bite Review, the investigative principles of identifying, preserving, and documenting evidence remain equally applicable following the death of an animal during an enforcement encounter. The seriousness of the incident heightened the importance of maintaining scene integrity and preserving all available evidence to support an accurate reconstruction of events and any subsequent review. The Review therefore examined the extent to which evidence preservation practices were implemented, with those findings addressed separately in the Scene Management and Evidence Preservation section of this report.

Decision Point 11 – Catch Pole Guidance

Operational Requirement:
Catch poles are recognized operational equipment, and the Animal Services Officer Training Guide identifies catch pole use, including proper positioning and restraint techniques, as an officer competency. However, no comprehensive written operational SOP or procedure governing the tactical deployment and ongoing management of catch pole restraint during domestic-dog apprehensions was identified within the documents reviewed.

Evidence Considered:
The Review identified policies and training materials addressing the availability, maintenance, inspection, and use of catch poles, including initial instruction in proper positioning and restraint techniques. However, the written operational materials reviewed did not establish detailed procedures addressing tactical selection and deployment, coordinated use by multiple officers, ongoing monitoring and management of restraint, assessment of the animal's behavioural and physical condition, duration of restraint, transition to alternative control methods, or criteria for modifying or discontinuing restraint.

Assessment Findings:
The Review identified an opportunity to enhance the written operational framework supporting the practical application of existing catch pole training. While catch pole use forms part of the municipality's intended officer competency framework and the responding officers had received catch pole instruction, the documents reviewed did not provide a comprehensive written procedure governing how that training was to be applied during a developing domestic-dog apprehension.

More specifically, no written operational guidance was identified establishing Divisional expectations regarding selection and progression of restraint methods, coordinated multi-officer or dual catch pole use, ongoing assessment and reassessment of the

animal's behaviour and physical condition, monitoring for signs of physiological or respiratory distress, duration of restraint, transition to alternative handling or containment methods, or criteria for reducing or discontinuing restraint once control had been achieved.

The absence of this written operational framework does not indicate an absence of catch pole training. Rather, it creates a gap between the practical competencies identified within the organization's training program and the written operational guidance available to support consistent field application, supervisory oversight, competency reinforcement, and post-incident review.

Given that this incident involved prolonged catch pole restraint during an attempted apprehension that ultimately resulted in the death of the dog, this distinction is significant. The absence of a comprehensive written operational procedure does not, in itself, determine whether individual officer actions were appropriate or inappropriate; however, it represents an important organizational consideration when assessing training, operational decision-making, supervisory expectations, and procedural consistency.

Decision Point 12 – Equipment Readiness

Operational Requirement:
Vehicles and equipment must be inspected before deployment.

Evidence Considered:
Vehicle inspections identified deficiencies involving equipment security within vehicles used during the incident.
The Review also examined inspection logs and officer statements regarding equipment availability.

Assessment Findings:
The available evidence indicates that vehicle inspections were completed in accordance with Divisional policy prior to deployment. However, the Review identified concerns regarding the effectiveness of those inspections in confirming the presence, condition, and operational readiness of required equipment.

During interviews, one officer was specifically asked about the availability of a particular piece of equipment within the assigned vehicle. The officer was unable to confirm whether the equipment had been present at the start of the shift and acknowledged that this may not have been identified during the vehicle inspection. This raises questions regarding whether the inspection process consistently verifies both the presence and functionality of required equipment, or whether it has become primarily an administrative exercise.

The Review also reviewed the Vehicle Summary Report, which identified multiple concerns relating to equipment availability, equipment storage, cleanliness, and the security of equipment within Divisional vehicles. Collectively, these findings suggest that equipment readiness may not have been consistently maintained in accordance with Divisional expectations.

The Review further considered whether additional quality assurance measures exist to support the inspection process. Based on the information reviewed, it could not be determined whether periodic supervisory or management audits are conducted to verify that daily inspections accurately reflect the condition, functionality, and availability of required equipment, or whether the operational readiness of critical equipment is routinely documented and tested.

While the Review cannot conclude that these deficiencies directly contributed to the outcome of this incident, equipment readiness is a fundamental component of officer safety, animal welfare, and operational effectiveness. A reliable inspection and verification process provides assurance that officers have immediate access to properly functioning equipment when responding to dynamic incidents and supports organizational accountability for maintaining operational readiness.

Decision Point 13 – Humane Treatment

Operational Requirement:
Division procedures consistently emphasize humane treatment, minimizing suffering, and accountability during serious animal welfare incidents.

Evidence Considered:
Across multiple SOPs, there is an emphasis on:

- veterinary care where appropriate;
- humane euthanasia;
- animal welfare;
- minimizing suffering;
- proper documentation following serious animal welfare events.

The Review considered the officers' handling techniques, ongoing assessment of the dog's condition, timing of veterinary intervention, and available training records.

Assessment Findings:
While officers were attempting to secure the dog, the Review identified several points where continued reassessment of restraint methods, animal behaviour, and physiological condition may have altered the outcome. These considerations are discussed further within the report's training, tactical response, and scene management analyses.

While officers were attempting to secure the dog, the Review identified several points at which animal welfare considerations were relevant. These included delays in obtaining and communicating information necessary to facilitate owner contact; continued handling after visible blood became evident around the mouth and/or nose, the source and cause of which cannot be determined from the available evidence; continued behavioural and physiological signs of stress; an increase in the degree of physical restraint without an intervening opportunity to assess the dog's behavioural response to a lower level of control; and the absence of access to water until approximately two hours into repeated containment and loading efforts. The latter occurred following information indicating that the dogs had been running at large for an estimated 1.5–4 hours before Animal Control attendance.

These circumstances provided multiple points at which, when operational conditions permitted, consideration could have been given to reassessing the dog's behavioural and physiological condition, the degree of restraint being employed, and available animal welfare measures. The Review recognizes that during periods of active resistance or increased movement, maintaining safe physical control of the dog remained an immediate operational priority and may have limited the officers' ability to implement other measures at that time. However, as the incident evolved and periods of reduced activity or other opportunities for reassessment occurred, consideration could reasonably have been given to whether the existing restraint strategy remained necessary and proportionate to the circumstances, and whether adjustments to the approach or supportive measures could safely be implemented. The available evidence does not permit determination of whether any individual measure or alternative course of action would have changed the dog's behavioural or physiological response or the ultimate outcome of the incident. These matters are examined in greater detail in the relevant behavioural, training, tactical response, and scene management sections of this report.

Lead Author: Amanda Barrett
Technical Review: Julie Speyer, Victoria Blondin, and Andrew Reynolds

4.4 Physiological Deterioration and Potential Contributing Factors

Context Preceding Restraint

The circumstances preceding catch-pole restraint established a cumulative behavioural and physiological context that remained relevant to the subsequent restraint period. As detailed elsewhere in this report, the dog had experienced preceding physical exertion, repeated unsuccessful loading attempts, continued handling and physical resistance, with limited evidence of substantial recovery periods between attempts. While the relative physiological effect of these factors cannot be quantified from the available evidence, they represent relevant considerations when assessing the dog's subsequent behavioural and physical responses.

The subsequent injury-producing bite materially changed the handling risk presented to responding personnel. Although the behavioural assessment identified the bite as context-dependent, involving a single bite followed by voluntary disengagement without pursuit or continued aggression, the injury demonstrated that further direct physical handling presented an identifiable risk. In this context, the decision to introduce catch-pole restraint represented a reasonable operational response, provided that the equipment was subsequently applied and managed in accordance with its intended use and applicable training.

Catch-Pole Restraint and Equipment Management

As detailed in the preceding operational analysis, one catch pole was initially applied to the dog, followed shortly thereafter by the application of a second catch pole. The Review identified no evidence that the officers assessed the dog's response to the first catch pole or attempted movement or loading using single-pole restraint before the second pole was introduced. Multiple accounts indicate that significant physical resistance, including rolling and thrashing movements, developed following the application of dual catch-pole restraint.

Control-pole use carries a recognized risk of injury, particularly where an animal demonstrates substantial physical resistance or where excessive force or inappropriate equipment management occurs. The equipment is intended to function as a restraint and guidance device, with handling principles intended to reduce the risk of significant injury, including appropriate management of cable tension, avoidance of airway restriction, and avoidance of lifting, dragging, or otherwise using the pole to force movement.

The Review identified aspects of the management of the catch poles during this incident that were not consistent with the equipment's intended use and the training principles reviewed during the Review. These included the immediate progression to dual catch-pole restraint without a documented assessment of the dog's response to single-pole restraint; repeated tightening and loosening of the catch-pole cables; management of entangled lines through the transfer of poles between officers, resulting at times in one officer controlling both poles; and the use of the catch poles to elevate and manipulate the dog's body during attempted loading. The officers' training records establish that both had received and successfully completed training in the use of this equipment.

Observable Injury and Subsequent Deterioration

Visible bleeding from the region of the dog's mouth and/or nose was first reported after dual catch-pole restraint had been applied. No visible bleeding was reported by those present before application of the two catch poles. The dog continued to demonstrate periods of physical resistance and periods of reduced activity while remaining under

restraint. The available evidence does not establish the anatomical source of the blood, the nature or extent of any associated injury, or the mechanism responsible for the bleeding.

Later in the restraint period, the dog demonstrated a final documented episode of substantial physical resistance and subsequently became non-responsive. No veterinary professional was present to assess the dog at the time it became non-responsive. No evidence from an external veterinary post-mortem examination or veterinary necropsy was available for the Review.

Assessment of Potential Contribution

The occurrence of injury during catch-pole restraint does not, in isolation, establish inappropriate equipment use or predict the severity of the resulting injury. Physical resistance by an animal during restraint may itself create a risk of injury, including where equipment is being used for its intended purpose. Conversely, inappropriate application or management of restraint equipment may increase the potential for injury. The presence of observable injury must therefore be considered in conjunction with the manner of equipment use, the animal's physical response, and available medical evidence rather than being treated independently as evidence of either appropriate or inappropriate restraint.

Evidence that equipment was used inconsistently with established handling principles does not, by itself, establish that the manner of use caused the dog's subsequent loss of responsiveness. The temporal relationship between the period of dual catch-pole restraint, the dog's physical resistance, and the appearance of visible bleeding is relevant to the assessment; however, temporal association alone does not establish the mechanism or cause of the observed injury.

At the time of assessment, the Review lacked objective medical evidence from the time of the incident. No evidence from an external veterinary post-mortem examination or veterinary necropsy was available to the Review. As a result, the available evidence does not establish the anatomical source or medical significance of the observed bleeding, the presence or extent of internal injury, the dog's underlying medical status, or the physiological mechanism associated with the loss of responsiveness.

Accordingly, while restraint-related injury cannot be excluded as a potential contributing factor, the available evidence does not permit the Review to determine whether inappropriate catch-pole management caused or materially contributed to the dog's subsequent loss of responsiveness. The same evidentiary limitation prevents reliable determination of the relative contribution of preceding exertion, cumulative behavioural and physiological stress, repeated handling and loading attempts, physical resistance during restraint, hydration status, potential underlying medical conditions, or interactions among these factors.

Overall Evidentiary Assessment

Taken together, the available evidence supports the identification of multiple factors that may reasonably be considered relevant to the dog's subsequent deterioration. These include the cumulative behavioural and physiological circumstances preceding restraint; the dog's substantial physical resistance during restraint; the appearance of observable bleeding during the period of dual catch-pole restraint; and identified aspects of catch-pole management that were inconsistent with the equipment's intended use and the training principles reviewed during the Review.

The temporal relationship between these events is relevant, but temporal association does not establish medical causation. The Review can identify circumstances and practices capable of increasing the potential for injury and can identify observable changes in the dog's physical condition as the incident progressed. It cannot, on the available evidence, determine the physiological mechanism by which the dog became non-responsive or reliably attribute that outcome to any individual factor.

Accordingly, restraint-related injury remains a potential contributing factor that cannot be excluded; however, it cannot be established as the cause of the dog's loss of responsiveness or ultimate outcome. Neither can the available evidence reliably determine the relative contribution of preceding exertion, cumulative behavioural and physiological stress, repeated handling and loading attempts, physical resistance during restraint, hydration status, potential underlying medical conditions, or interactions among these factors. In the absence of contemporaneous veterinary assessment, an external veterinary post-mortem examination, or veterinary necropsy evidence, any more definitive conclusion regarding physiological causation would extend beyond what the available evidence can support.

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Lead Author: Victoria Blondin
Technical Review: Julie Speyer, Amanda Barrett and Andrew Reynolds

SECTION 5 – ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW

5.1 Training Analysis

Existing Training Program

As part of this independent Review, a review was conducted of the training records for the Animal Services personnel directly and indirectly involved in the May 4, 2026 incident. The purpose of this review was to determine the formal training each employee had received prior to the incident, assess whether that training was current, and evaluate whether the actions taken during the incident were consistent with the knowledge and competencies expected from that training.

Training records, certifications, and course completion documentation were reviewed for Animal Services Officers [redacted] and [redacted], along with Acting Supervisor [redacted].

[redacted] advised that she has [redacted] which confirmed her animal handling experience. She was recently promoted to the role of acting Supervisor on November 28, 2025, due to a vacancy.

Training records indicate that [redacted] maintained current operational certifications while performing supervisory responsibilities.

Documented Training Includes:

[redacted]

raining records indicate that maintained current certification in several operational competencies relevant to enforcement duties.

Documented Training Includes:

[redacted]

Documented Training Includes:

[redacted]

The Review confirmed that the involved Animal Services personnel received formal training in several operational competencies relevant to a portion of their duties, including [redacted] Training records also

demonstrate that several certifications were maintained through scheduled recertification delivered by recognized external training providers.

Organizational Training Gaps Identified
While the available records demonstrate that foundational operational training has been provided, the review identified areas where additional training may further support the specialized knowledge and competencies associated with municipal Animal Services operations. The observations that follow are intended to identify opportunities for continued development of the organizational training program and should not be interpreted as an assessment of the performance of any individual employee.

A. Canine Behaviour Assessment:
The review did not identify evidence of structured or recurring training specifically addressing canine body language, behavioural assessment, stress recognition, fear responses, defensive behaviours, escalation indicators, or behavioural forecasting.

Animal Services Officers routinely encounter animals presenting a range of behavioural and emotional states that may influence handling and operational decision-making. The ability to recognize and interpret canine behavioural cues can assist officers in assessing changes in an animal's presentation, identifying increasing stress or risk, adapting handling strategies, and determining when an operational approach may warrant reassessment.

While operational experience may contribute to the development of behavioural recognition skills, the records reviewed did not identify a structured training program or periodic competency assessment specifically focused on canine behaviour and behavioural assessment. This represents an opportunity to build on the existing training framework through more formalized education and ongoing competency development in this area.

B. Catchpole Competency Maintenance
Although [redacted] through Canine Foundations, the records reviewed did not identify a formal recertification process or periodic practical competency assessments following completion of that training.

Unlike other operational training, including Personal Safety Concepts and Use of Force, ASP Baton, and OC Spray, which were subject to regular recertification, the available records indicate that catch pole competency maintenance was primarily supported through the initial instruction provided.

Given the potential officer safety, public safety, and animal welfare considerations associated with catch pole use, periodic practical recertification may assist in reinforcing appropriate techniques, identifying areas where skills may require reinforcement, and supporting consistency in operational practices.

C. Scenario-Based Animal Handling
Although officers participated in scenario-based use-of-force exercises, the Review found limited evidence of scenario-based training specifically focused on complex animal capture events involving multiple officers, evolving risk assessments, equipment transitions, supervisory direction, and coordinated decision-making.
Such training would provide opportunities to practice communication, role assignment, tactical reassessment, and coordinated responses within realistic Animal Services environments.

D. Team Communication
Throughout the Review, communication challenges were identified between responding personnel during both operational activities and post-incident processes.
Effective communication during high-risk animal incidents is a critical safety function. Structured team-based exercises emphasizing concise communication, role clarity, leadership, confirmation of instructions, and shared situational awareness would likely improve operational consistency during dynamic events.

E. Supervisory Development
The Review also identified an opportunity for enhanced supervisory and leadership development for employees performing acting supervisory responsibilities.
Supervisors responding to critical incidents must balance operational decision-making, officer safety, scene management, communication, resource deployment, evidence preservation, public interactions, and post-incident responsibilities simultaneously.
Specialized supervisory training focusing on training and competency maintenance for staff, incident command, leadership during critical events, coaching, tactical decision-making, and critical incident management would strengthen organizational capacity during complex responses.

F. Dynamic Risk Assessment
The Review identified an absence of structured training specifically dedicated to dynamic risk assessment during animal control incidents.

While elements of risk assessment are incorporated within broader operational courses, there was no evidence of a formal framework requiring officers to continually reassess:

- animal behaviour;
- officer positioning;
- environmental hazards;
- effectiveness of equipment being used;
- alternative restraint options;
- changing risks to the public;
- transition points requiring modification of tactics.

Dynamic reassessment is a fundamental principle of modern emergency response. The Review found that formalizing this process through policy, training, and scenario-based exercises would likely improve operational decision-making and overall safety outcomes.

This would also fit extremely well with catchpole SOP/SOG, where officers are expected to assess and reassess before, during, and after using a control tool.

Operational Training Program Overall Assessment
The current training program is largely adapted from law enforcement defensive tactics, whereas Animal Services Officers require a specialized competency framework that integrates officer safety, animal behaviour science, humane capture techniques, dynamic scene management, and incident leadership.

Specifically, opportunities exist to strengthen training in canine behavioural assessment, recurring catchpole competency validation, dynamic risk assessment, scene management, supervisory leadership, multi-officer communication, and complex scenario-based animal handling.

These observations should not be interpreted as criticism of individual employees who completed the training made available to them. Rather, they identify opportunities for the organization to further develop a comprehensive, profession-specific training program that better reflects the unique operational environment of municipal Animal Services.

Application of Animal Handling and Equipment Training
The Review examined the actions of the responding officers in relation to the handling of the dog and the application of animal restraint equipment throughout the incident. In addition to reviewing the incident itself, the Review examined the organization's Animal Services Officer Training Guide, available training records, competency documentation, and the officers' practical application of the skills expected during a dynamic animal handling event.

The Animal Services Officer Training Guide establishes a structured training framework intended to prepare officers to safely and effectively respond to animal-related incidents. The guide outlines an eight-week field training program supported by documented competency evaluations and sign-offs prior to officers performing operational duties independently. Training topics include pre-shift vehicle and equipment inspections to verify that all required equipment is present, operational, and immediately available for deployment; canine apprehension; proper catchpole positioning and restraint techniques; animal handling and containment skills; safe deployment of capture nets for domestic animals and wildlife; containment of domestic animals; safe loading and unloading procedures; kennel management within transport

vehicles; handling aggressive dogs and cats; and other practical field skills designed to support safe and effective animal control operations.

Training records provided during the Review confirm that the responding officers received formal instruction in [redacted] However, despite the structured eight-week field training program, competency signoffs, or any subsequent practical competency validation both officers identified during their structured training it was based on their supervisor's availability and [redacted] Accordingly, the Review was unable to verify that all practical components of the organization's prescribed training program had been completed or that ongoing competency maintenance had occurred following the officers' initial training.

This distinction is significant because effective animal control is important and extends beyond personal experience and classroom instruction. The safe application of restraint equipment, behavioural assessment, dynamic decision-making, coordinated team responses, and medical intervention following critical incidents rely upon practical skill development, supervised competency assessment, operational experience, and recurring refresher training to ensure techniques remain consistent with organizational expectations.

The Review also identified inconsistencies regarding pre-shift vehicle and equipment inspections. The Animal Services Officer Training Guide and SOP instructs officers to inspect their assigned vehicles at the beginning of each shift to verify that all required operational equipment is present and in proper working conditions. Officer [redacted] documented that the required inspection had been completed prior to deployment. However, during the Review she was unable to confirm whether all required operational equipment was present within the vehicle at the commencement of the shift. This observation raises questions regarding the effectiveness of the inspection process and the practical application of the inspection procedures taught within the organization's training program, which emphasize confirming both the presence and operational readiness of required equipment before responding to service calls.

Animal restraint is not a static process. Effective handling requires officers to continually observe an animal's behaviour, assess changing risk factors, communicate effectively with one another, and continually reassess the effectiveness of the chosen restraint method throughout the interaction. Decisions regarding the use of equipment should remain fluid and be modified as the animal's behaviour, officer positioning, environmental conditions, available resources, and overall risk evolve.

The Review identified several occasions where opportunities existed for further assessment before additional restraint measures were introduced. The exchange of information between responding officers was limited during the initial stages of the

incident, reducing the ability of the [redacted] officer to conduct an independent assessment upon arrival. Following the dog's initial behavioural reaction, catchpoles were deployed almost immediately through [redacted]. Evidence indicates that a second catchpole was applied [redacted] shortly after the first without a clearly identifiable pause to reassess the effectiveness of the initial restraint, evaluate the dog's behavioural response, or consider whether an alternative approach may have reduced the overall risk to both the animal and the responding officers.

The Review further identified opportunities to utilize additional resources that were readily available at the scene. Once concerns regarding the dog's behaviour had been identified, information available from the finder and the [redacted] officer regarding the dog's temperament, handling preferences, known triggers, response to verbal commands, or previous handling techniques could have assisted in developing an alternative management strategy before escalating physical restraint measures. While officer safety must always remain paramount, incorporating available knowledge into the ongoing risk assessment may have provided additional options for safely controlling the animal.

Evidence also demonstrates inconsistencies between the officer's expressed assessment of the dog's behavioural risk and certain tactical decisions made during the incident. Statements from both officers and independent witnesses indicate that members of the public were permitted to assist in holding or restraining the dog during portions of the encounter. If officers believed the dog presented an immediate and significant aggression risk requiring the rapid deployment of multiple catchpoles, reliance upon untrained civilians to maintain physical control of the animal appears inconsistent with that assessment. The use of civilians under such circumstances unnecessarily exposes members of the public to potential injury while simultaneously reducing officers' ability to maintain coordinated control of the incident.

The Review identified additional concerns regarding the practical application of catchpole techniques throughout the encounter. These observations included the positioning and handling of the catchpoles, management of cable tension, monitoring and adjustment of the restraint as the dog's behaviour changed, officer movement while maintaining control, and coordination between officers simultaneously operating restraint equipment. Collectively, these observations suggest inconsistencies between the techniques demonstrated during the incident and the principles taught during formal catchpole instruction.

The Review also identified inconsistencies in the officers' handling of the equipment itself. During interview, one responding officer demonstrated a method of holding the catchpole that differed from the techniques outlined within formal training. In addition, statements from both officers and independent witnesses indicate that catchpoles were passed between officers during portions of the incident, resulting in one officer

temporarily maintaining control of both restraint devices while managing a dog simultaneously described as aggressive. This transfer of equipment raises questions regarding role assignment, communication, coordination, and the maintenance of effective control during a rapidly evolving event.

Statements further describe attempts to partially lift or suspend the dog using the catchpoles. The Review notes that this technique is inconsistent with the instruction provided during formal catchpole training, which identifies the catchpole as a restraint and control device rather than a lifting or carrying device. Such use has the potential to increase the risk of injury to the animal while reducing effective control.

The Review further considered Officer [redacted] statement that she attempted to create an improvised muzzle during the incident but was unsuccessful due to the length of the leash available. The Review reviewed the available photo evidence and other investigative materials and was unable to substantiate that the leash itself presented a limitation that would have prevented the application of an improvised muzzle. Rather, the available evidence indicates that the leash appeared to be of sufficient length to permit such a technique if properly applied.

The Review also considered the officer's position and approach while attempting this alternative restraint method. Statement of the officer demonstrates that the officer positioned herself standing within the vehicle above the dog and would have been required to reach downward over the animal in an attempt to apply the restraint. This body positioning resulted in the officer leaning over the dog and placed her in a posture that may be perceived by the animal as increased pressure or threat. When handling a dog displaying fear-based, defensive, or potentially aggressive behaviour, positioning directly over the animal can increase stress responses and may reduce the likelihood of successful restraint application. A tactical approach to alternative restraint methods requires consideration not only of the equipment being used, but also officer positioning, animal body language, environmental factors, and the potential impact of human posture and movement on the animal's behaviour.

While the Review cannot conclusively determine why the improvised muzzle attempt was unsuccessful, the available evidence raises questions regarding the officer's practical proficiency and confidence in applying this technique under operational conditions. The Review was unable to identify evidence that the responding officers had received formal practical instruction, documented competency validation, or recurring refresher training in the application of improvised emergency muzzles. Accordingly, the incident identifies an opportunity to strengthen practical training and competency validation in alternative restraint techniques that may be required when conventional restraint methods are ineffective, impractical, or inappropriate.

The Review also reviewed the officers' response following the dog's apparent medical deterioration. Video evidence demonstrates that the dog exhibited visible signs of

physical distress, including collapsing to the ground, before becoming completely non-responsive. Despite officers having received animal first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training, the Review did not identify evidence that a structured medical assessment was undertaken during this period. Specifically, there is no evidence that respirations or a pulse was assessed after the dog's collapse. Instead, available evidence indicates that responsiveness was evaluated primarily through the application of a toe-pinch stimulus.

While officer safety considerations may initially limit direct contact with an animal under restraint, the circumstances presented opportunities to transition from a control-focused response toward medical assessment and intervention once the animal's condition visibly deteriorated. The Review therefore identifies an opportunity for enhanced practical training emphasizing recognition of medical compromise, transition points from restraint to patient care, and the application of animal first aid and CPR following critical incidents.

A recurring observation throughout the Review is that officers appeared to continue with their initial tactical approach despite significant changes in the dog's behaviour, level of control, and physical condition. Dynamic incident management requires continual reassessment of both risk and response, with officers adapting tactics as circumstances evolve rather than continuing with the original operational plan. This principle extends beyond equipment selection and includes ongoing behavioural assessment, communication between responding officers, effective utilization of available resources, consideration of owner-provided information, recognition of changing medical conditions, and determination of when operational priorities should transition from restraint and control to medical intervention.

When considered collectively, these observations do not necessarily indicate an absence of effort by the responding officers. Rather, they demonstrate the challenges associated with rapidly evolving animal incidents while identifying broader organizational opportunities to strengthen training delivery, competency verification, practical skills development, refresher training, and scenario-based exercises. The Review further identifies opportunities to reinforce instruction in canine behavioural assessment, dynamic risk reassessment, communication between responding officers, coordinated animal handling, equipment selection, restraint application, utilization of available resources, transition from control to medical intervention, and practical competency validation. Collectively, these measures would better support officers in adapting to evolving incidents while ensuring that operational practices remain consistent with the organization's own training standards and expectations.

Lead Author: Amanda Barrett
Technical Review: Julie Speyer, Amanda Barrett and Andrew Reynolds

5.2 Policy Assessment Report

Scope of Review

This review examines the policies, procedures, SOPs, and related documents provided for the purpose of assessing their relevance to the response to and handling of a dog-at-large incident involving Animal Services Officers and the use of catch poles. The documents establish a broad administrative and investigative framework for Animal Services operations, including complaint intake, call prioritization, evidence gathering, owner identification, impoundment, veterinary care, shelter intake, vehicle and equipment readiness, dangerous dog orders, wildlife handling, and officer training.

While the materials reviewed establish operational expectations and training competencies relevant to animal handling, including catch pole use, they do not contain a comprehensive written operational procedure governing the physical apprehension and restraint of a domestic dog at large through the use of catch poles or similar restraint devices.

1. Responding to Customer Service Calls – SOP #11.14

The most directly relevant policy reviewed is SOP #11.14 – Responding to Customer Service Calls, which establishes the initial response framework for service requests. The SOP requires officers to contact the complainant or reporting party, clarify the details of the service request, obtain additional relevant information, document the information within the CRM system, and initiate the Review or attend the location based upon the urgency and risk associated with the complaint.

The SOP establishes priority categories, including:

- *Priority 1* – Immediate Public Safety Concerns, which includes dogs actively running at large where there is an immediate or significant public safety risk, such as aggressive behaviour, traffic hazards, or proximity to schools or other high-use areas.
- *Priority 5* – Active Running at Large, where no immediate public safety risk is identified, such as calm behaviour in a low-traffic area with no proximity to schools or high-use public spaces.

This distinction is significant because it demonstrates that the Division intends for dog-at-large complaints to be managed using a risk-based approach rather than a single operational response.

2. Animal By-law Comparison

The Animal By-law Comparison document is also highly relevant, as it establishes the legislative authority under which Animal Services Officers operate. It confirms that the applicable municipal by-laws prohibit owners from allowing dogs to run at large and

provide Animal Services Officers with the authority to seize and impound dogs found running at large. The document further outlines owner notification requirements and identifies enforcement mechanisms relating to aggressive or dangerous dogs and impoundment.

While the document establishes the legal authority to intervene, seize, and impound a dog, it is not intended to provide operational direction regarding how officers are expected to safely approach, restrain, capture, or transport a domestic dog during a dog-at-large incident.

3. Dog Bite Procedure – SOP #8.4

The Dog Bite Procedure (SOP #8.4) provides significant guidance relevant when an incident involves a reported dog bite. The procedure requires officers to conduct a comprehensive Review, including obtaining witness information, photographs and videos, owner information, reviewing previous muzzle orders, and examining previous cases involving the dog. The SOP further requires witness statements and the collection of licensing information, rabies status, microchip information, and photographs of the dog.

The procedure also requires officers to complete a full Review and review the available information and evidence before issuing orders or charges, with dog bite cases to be reported to the supervisor for further advice before specified orders or DOLA proceedings are initiated. These requirements demonstrate that the Division places importance on comprehensive information gathering, consideration of previous history, evidence preservation, and supervisory consultation when determining subsequent enforcement action following a bite incident.

4. Training Order, Muzzle Order and Dangerous Dog Order Procedure – SOP #8.5

The Training Order, Muzzle Order and Dangerous Dog Order Procedure (SOP #8.5) establishes processes for the issuance and ongoing administration of orders following a dog bite or aggressive act. The procedure requires collection of relevant information and evidence and provides that cases should be discussed with a supervisor before proceeding with an order. Following issuance, specified information concerning the dog, owner, order, and associated CRM case is to be entered into the Division's centralized “Muzzle Order” tracking system maintained within TRIM.

The procedure further establishes requirements for Training Orders, Muzzle Orders, Aggressive Dog Orders, and Dangerous Dog Orders, including service of orders, compliance monitoring, follow-up inspections, and applicable appeal processes. These provisions demonstrate that the Division maintains structured processes for responding to documented bite or aggressive behaviour and for monitoring subsequent compliance with imposed requirements.

5. Georgina Animal Shelter Intake SOP – SOP #11.15

The Georgina Animal Shelter Intake SOP (SOP #11.15) establishes procedures for the intake and transfer of found or contained stray domestic animals to the shelter. The procedure requires officers to check for identification tags, scan for a microchip, attempt to return the animal home where ownership information is identified, obtain and forward a photograph and description of the animal, review available lost-animal reports, and canvas the area before transferring the animal to the shelter. Where an owner cannot be located, the officer is required to coordinate transfer with shelter staff and communicate any identified health or behavioural concerns prior to arrival.

The SOP also establishes documentation and equipment-care requirements associated with shelter intake, including completion of the intake sheet and cleaning and disinfection of tools, carriers, leashes, bedding, and other equipment associated with the transfer. Separate provisions address after-hours intake and the handling and documentation of deceased domestic animals.

The procedure is principally directed toward owner identification, shelter intake, transfer, and associated care and documentation once a stray domestic animal has been found or contained; it does not establish the method by which an uncontained domestic dog is to be physically apprehended.

6. Animals Requiring Medical Care by a Registered Licensed Veterinarian – SOP #11.1

The Animals Requiring Medical Care by a Registered Licensed Veterinarian SOP (SOP #11.1) establishes procedures for coordinating veterinary assessment and treatment for domestic animals requiring medical care. The SOP provides that officers are not to diagnose medical conditions or direct specific treatments and that medical assessments, treatment decisions, and euthanasia determinations are to be made by a registered licensed veterinarian in collaboration with and approval from the shelter manager. The procedure also provides that owner contact and reunification efforts are to be made where applicable and reasonable.

The SOP establishes procedures for accessing veterinary care during regular and after-hours periods and permits officers to authorize limited, immediately necessary interventions required to stabilize an animal after hours. It further identifies circumstances requiring additional authorization, documentation, supervisory notification, and follow-up or transfer-of-care decisions. These provisions provide officers with a defined process for accessing qualified veterinary assessment and transferring medical treatment decisions to appropriately qualified veterinary personnel when an animal requires medical care.

The SOP provides clear direction regarding the process to be followed once the need for veterinary assessment or treatment has been identified. It does not, however, establish

specific guidance for recognizing or assessing changes in an animal's physical condition during active apprehension or restraint.

7. Vehicle Cleaning, Equipment Readiness and Inspection – Vehicle SOP

The Vehicle SOP establishes responsibilities relating to the cleanliness, condition, and operational readiness of Animal Services vehicles and associated equipment. Vehicle operators are responsible for daily cleaning and reporting identified issues, while supervisors are responsible for ensuring compliance with the SOP and that required maintenance or repairs are completed. Before use, officers are directed to conduct a vehicle walk-around inspection to identify concerns involving tires, wipers, damage, or other observable deficiencies.

The SOP also addresses equipment used in animal handling. Following animal transport, areas and equipment that have come into contact with animals, including cages, catch poles, gloves, and nets, are to be cleaned and disinfected. Transport cages are to be inspected for damage or wear, and the weekly vehicle process includes inspection of animal cages, ventilation systems, and other equipment to ensure that they are clean and functional. Vehicles with identified mechanical deficiencies are to be removed from service until repaired.

The SOP further establishes a record-keeping process through a laminated checklist maintained in each vehicle and signed at the end of the officer's rotation. The checklist records the date and time of cleaning, identified damage or wear, and the employee completing the process, with identified issues to be reported to the supervisor. These requirements establish a written framework for vehicle and equipment inspection, maintenance, reporting, and operational readiness.

While the Vehicle SOP recognizes catch poles as operational equipment and establishes expectations concerning their cleaning and general equipment condition, it is not intended to provide technical or operational direction concerning catch pole deployment or the physical apprehension and restraint of domestic dogs. Those operational considerations are addressed separately within this review.

8. Personal Appearance – SOP #8.3

The Personal Appearance SOP (SOP #8.3) establishes standards relating to officer uniform, personal appearance, hygiene, footwear, and assigned equipment while on duty. The SOP requires officers to wear a complete uniform unless otherwise approved and identifies required duty equipment, including soft body armour, a duty belt with assigned equipment, approved safety footwear, a notebook and pen, and communication devices such as a radio or Town-issued cellular phone. The procedure also requires uniforms and equipment to be maintained in good condition, with damaged or worn items reported to the supervisor or designate.

While this SOP contributes to the broader framework for officer preparedness and safety, it provides limited direction specific to the operational response to, or physical apprehension of, a domestic dog at large.

9. Wildlife Handling SOP

The Wildlife Handling SOP establishes guidelines for the safe, humane, and efficient handling of wildlife, with the stated objective of protecting both personnel and animals while minimizing stress and injury. The procedure requires a pre-handling risk assessment that considers potential risks to both the handler and the animal, the use of appropriate personal protective equipment, and confirmation that handling equipment is in good condition and appropriate for the size and species of wildlife being handled. It further directs officers to consider the surrounding environment and to approach animals quietly and slowly in order to minimize stress and avoid unnecessary agitation.

The SOP provides species-specific handling guidance and establishes additional expectations concerning containment, transport, monitoring, and documentation. During transport, officers are directed to monitor an animal's condition for signs of stress or injury and to check the animal where changes such as thrashing, vocalization, or other concerning behaviour are observed. Following handling, officers are required to document the animal's condition, observed injuries, handling procedure, and outcome. The SOP also requires initial practical training, ongoing refresher training, and immediate supervisory reporting of incidents involving injury to wildlife or personnel.

This SOP applies specifically to wildlife handling and should not be interpreted as establishing the operational standard governing the apprehension of a domestic dog. However, it demonstrates that principles including pre-handling risk assessment, appropriate equipment selection, minimizing animal stress, monitoring an animal while under Animal Services control, documentation, supervisory reporting, and ongoing training are already reflected within the municipality's broader written animal-handling framework.

10. Animal Services Officer Training Guide

The Animal Services Officer Training Guide establishes an eight-week training framework with competency sign-off for Animal Services Officers. The guide addresses foundational knowledge, animal handling and containment, field enforcement and Review, vehicle and equipment maintenance, documentation and reporting, case management, and other operational responsibilities. Within animal handling and containment, the guide specifically identifies catch pole use, including proper positioning and restraint techniques, together with net use, containment of domestic animals, safe loading and unloading, kennel management, and handling of aggressive dogs and cats.

The guide also identifies chain of command, call triage, review of prior history, evidence preservation, duty book and electronic case documentation, vehicle and equipment readiness, and circumstances in which officers may need to seek additional assistance or direction. It concludes with a final evaluation and training-officer sign-off process addressing call taking, animal handling, case management, documentation, and adherence to SOPs.

Overall, Policy Assessment

Overall, the policies, procedures, SOPs, and supporting training materials reviewed establish a broad administrative, investigative, animal-care, equipment, and training framework for Animal Services operations. Collectively, the documents address complaint intake and prioritization, information and evidence gathering, owner identification and reunification, impoundment and shelter intake, veterinary care, supervisory involvement in identified circumstances, vehicle and equipment readiness, animal handling, officer training, and documentation requirements.

The materials also establish that catch poles are recognized operational equipment and that catch pole use, including proper positioning and restraint techniques, is identified within the Animal Services Officer Training Guide as an officer competency. While the documents provide substantial direction concerning many aspects of Animal Services operations, they do not establish a comprehensive written operational procedure governing the physical apprehension and restraint of domestic dogs, including the coordinated application and management of catch pole restraint as circumstances evolve. The collective significance of these policies, procedures, and supporting materials is examined further in Section 5.3.

Lead Author: Andrew Reynolds
Technical Review: Amanda Barrett, Julie Speyer

5.3 Summary of Relevant Policies, Procedures and Operational Requirements

1. Information Gathering, Risk Assessment and Operational Decision-Making.

The policies and training materials reviewed establish a consistent expectation that Animal Services Officers gather and assess available information before determining an appropriate operational response. The Responding to Customer Service Calls SOP requires officers to clarify the circumstances of a service request, obtain additional relevant information, document that information in CRM, and determine investigative actions based on the nature, urgency and risk level of the matter. The accompanying priority framework further distinguishes between animals running at large that present

an immediate or significant public safety risk and those for which no immediate public safety concern has been identified.

This expectation is reinforced elsewhere within the operational framework. The Dog Bite Procedure requires officers investigating bite incidents to gather comprehensive information and review previous cases and muzzle orders involving the dog, while the Animal Services Officer Training Guide identifies evidence gathering, review of prior history, call triage and case management as expected officer competencies. Although those requirements arise in different operational contexts, collectively they demonstrate that available history and current circumstances are intended to inform officer assessment and subsequent decision-making.

The existing policy framework establishes meaningful expectations for information gathering review of available history and risk-based decision-making. The framework could be further strengthened by providing guidance regarding how information developed during an active field response should be consolidated, communicated and incorporated into a shared operational assessment when circumstances change or additional officers become involved. This would extend the information-gathering and risk-assessment principles already established within the existing framework into the coordination of developing field responses.

2. Classification and Response to Dogs at Large.

The policies and municipal by-law materials reviewed establish a distinction between a dog that is running at large and a dog that has demonstrated behaviour warranting additional controls associated with aggression or dangerousness. A dog found running at large may be seized and impounded under the applicable municipal by-law, while Training Orders, Muzzle Orders and Dangerous Dog Orders are addressed through separate processes that require consideration of the circumstances, collection of evidence and, where applicable, supervisory consultation. The policy framework therefore does not treat a dog's at-large status, in itself, as establishing that the dog is aggressive or dangerous.

This distinction is reinforced by the Responding to Customer Service Calls SOP. An actively running-at-large dog may constitute a Priority 1 response where circumstances create an immediate or significant public safety risk, including aggressive behaviour, traffic hazards, or proximity to schools or other high-use areas. Conversely, an active running-at-large call where no immediate public safety concern is identified is assigned

to a lower response priority and may be addressed as operationally feasible following higher-priority calls. The framework therefore contemplates that the operational significance of a dog at large is determined not solely by the fact that the dog is loose, but by the circumstances and risk factors present at the time.

Taken together, these materials provide officers with a reasonable framework for determining the priority and general enforcement context of a running-at-large occurrence. The framework could be further strengthened by extending this risk-based approach into written guidance concerning how changes in a dog's behaviour or the surrounding circumstances should inform the method, pace or continuation of an apprehension effort. In this respect, the existing framework provides clear direction regarding why and with what priority a dog at large should be addressed, while presenting an opportunity for further guidance regarding how the apprehension should proceed as circumstances encountered in the field evolve.

3. Animal Handling, Capture and Equipment.

The SOPs and supporting training materials provided for review demonstrate that Animal Services Officers are equipped and expected to use specialized equipment in the handling and containment of animals. The municipality's Animal Services Officer Training Guide identifies catch pole use, including proper positioning and restraint techniques, as an animal handling and containment competency, together with net use, safe loading and unloading, kennel management, and the handling of aggressive dogs and cats. The Vehicle SOP further identifies catch poles as equipment used in animal handling and requires equipment that has come into contact with animals to be cleaned and maintained following use. The Vehicle SOP and Training Guide also establish expectations concerning vehicle and equipment readiness, including inspection, maintenance and stocking of equipment used during field operations.

The documentation reviewed therefore establishes that catch poles are recognized operational equipment and that their proper use forms part of the municipality's intended officer training framework. The written operational framework could be further strengthened by providing guidance specific to the physical apprehension and restraint of domestic dogs, including the selection and progression of handling methods based on the circumstances encountered, application and management of catch pole restraint, coordination where multiple officers or catch poles are involved, monitoring of the animal during restraint, criteria for modifying or discontinuing an approach, and transition from restraint to secure containment.

The Wildlife Handling SOP provides a useful example of how several comparable principles have already been incorporated within another area of the Division's operations. While not the governing procedure for domestic-dog apprehension, it addresses pre-handling risk assessment, appropriate equipment selection, minimizing stress during approach, safe containment, monitoring for signs of stress or injury, and documentation of handling outcomes. The materials reviewed therefore demonstrate an existing foundation of equipment, training expectations and animal-handling principles that could be further supported through written operational guidance specific to domestic-dog apprehension and restraint.

4. Training, Competency and Operational Preparedness.

The municipality's Animal Services Officer Training Guide establishes a structured approach to officer development through an eight-week training program with competency sign-off. The guide addresses foundational knowledge, animal handling and containment, field enforcement and Review, vehicle and equipment maintenance, documentation and reporting, case management, and scenario-based learning. Within animal handling and containment, the guide specifically identifies catch pole use, including proper positioning and restraint techniques, as a training competency, together with net use, containment of domestic animals, safe loading and unloading, kennel management, and handling of aggressive dogs and cats.

The training framework also reflects an expectation that officer competency extends beyond individual animal-handling skills. The guide addresses evidence gathering, review of prior history, case management, call triage, and circumstances in which officers may need to seek assistance or supervisory direction. It also provides for a final evaluation involving review of call taking, animal handling, note entries, case management and adherence to SOPs, with training received subject to sign-off by the training officer.

Taken together, these materials demonstrate that the municipality has established a broad competency-based training framework encompassing animal handling and wider operational responsibilities. The written framework could be further strengthened by documenting the key operational principles and techniques associated with competencies identified in the Training Guide, particularly those relating to catch pole use, positioning and restraint, and coordinated domestic-dog apprehension. This would complement the existing competency-based training model by providing officers with a

written operational reference that supports the consistent application and reinforcement of skills addressed through practical training.

5. Owner Identification, Animal Welfare and Veterinary Care.

The SOPs reviewed establish owner identification, reunification and animal welfare as recurring considerations within Animal Services operations. The Shelter Intake SOP directs officers handling a found or contained stray domestic animal to check identification tags, scan for a microchip, review lost-animal reports and canvass the area before transferring to the shelter, with an identified owner to be contacted where possible. The Veterinarian Care SOP similarly provides that owner contact and reunification efforts are to be made where applicable and reasonable.

The written framework also provides direction when an animal requires medical care. The Veterinarian Care SOP establishes that officers are not to diagnose medical conditions or independently determine treatment and assign medical assessment, treatment and euthanasia decisions to a licensed veterinarian within the approval structure set out in the SOP. It authorizes limited immediate necessary stabilization measures after hours and requires documentation and, in specified circumstances, supervisory notification and follow-up. These provisions provide officers with a defined process for transferring medical decision-making to appropriately qualified veterinary personnel when an animal requires assessment or treatment.

Taken together, these SOPs provide meaningful written direction concerning owner reunification and veterinary care once the need for those processes has been identified. The written framework could be further strengthened by connecting these established animal-welfare and veterinary-care processes more directly to field apprehension activities, including guidance concerning the recognition and response to changes in an animal's physical condition during or immediately following restraint. This would provide a clearer operational bridge between animal apprehension and the existing procedures governing veterinary assessment, treatment and subsequent care.

6. Supervisory Involvement, Escalation and Serious Occurrences.

The SOPs and supporting training materials reviewed incorporate supervisory involvement at a number of identified operational decision points. The Dog Bite Procedure requires bite cases to be reported to the supervisor before specified orders or DOLA proceedings are initiated, while the Training Order, Muzzle Order and

Dangerous Dog Order Procedure requires cases to be discussed with a supervisor before proceeding with an order. Other procedures similarly require supervisory involvement in defined circumstances involving animal care, wildlife handling, euthanasia, operational delays, or situations requiring additional direction.

Collectively, these provisions demonstrate that supervisory consultation and escalation are established components of the municipality's operational framework where particular circumstances or decisions warrant additional oversight. The Animal Services Officer Training Guide reinforces this approach by identifying chain of command as foundational knowledge and by directing officers to seek assistance or supervisory direction in a number of specified operational situations, including cases an officer does not know how to handle.

The written framework could be further strengthened by providing clearer escalation guidance for serious or unexpected occurrences arising during the apprehension or restraint of a domestic animal. This could include identifying circumstances in which supervisory notification or consultation should occur when an apprehension becomes unusually prolonged, complex, or results in a significant change in the animal's condition. Such guidance would build upon supervisory practices already reflected throughout the existing SOPs and provide officers with a clearer written reference for escalation when circumstances move beyond a routine apprehension.

7. Documentation, Evidence Preservation and Organizational Accountability.

The SOPs and supporting training materials reviewed establish detailed expectations for documentation and preservation of information across Animal Services operations. The Responding to Customer Service Calls SOP requires officers to document information received, investigative actions, site attendances, communications and attempted contacts in CRM. The Dog Bite Procedure similarly requires collection and preservation of photographs, witness statements, owner and animal information, previous case history, veterinary information where applicable, timelines, duty book and CRM notes, and other materials required to support an evidence package. The Animal Services Officer Training Guide further identifies electronic case management, duty book notes and evidence preservation as core documentation and reporting competencies.

Documentation requirements also extend beyond enforcement Reviews. The Shelter Intake SOP requires photographs and intake documentation in specified circumstances,

including procedures for deceased domestic animals, while the Wildlife Handling SOP requires documentation of the animal's condition, observed injuries, handling procedure and outcome, together with reporting of incidents involving injury to wildlife or personnel. These provisions demonstrate that documentation serves not only an enforcement function but also supports continuity of animal care and the organizational record of significant events.

Taken together, the materials demonstrate a well-established organizational expectation for officers to create and preserve a meaningful record of their activities. The written framework could be further strengthened by establishing documentation and evidence-preservation expectations specific to serious or unexpected events occurring during domestic-animal apprehension or restraint. This could provide greater clarity regarding the information to be recorded and preserved when an apprehension results in significant injury, an unexpected deterioration in an animal's condition, or death, while building upon documentation practices already established elsewhere within the existing framework.

Overall Investigative Assessment

Considered as a whole, the framework provides officers with meaningful written direction for many of the decisions that occur before and after the physical apprehension of a domestic dog. It establishes how service requests are assessed and prioritized, identifies information that should inform decision-making, provides processes for owner identification and veterinary care, incorporates supervisory involvement in specified circumstances, and establishes documentation and evidence-preservation expectations. The review also identified opportunities to strengthen the written framework at the point where these established principles must be translated into a developing field apprehension. In particular, greater written guidance concerning the progression and coordination of handling methods, application and management of restraint, monitoring of the animal during restraint, operational reassessment, escalation when circumstances become atypical or serious, and transition to veterinary care would provide officers with a more complete operational reference.

Importantly, these observations should not be interpreted as indicating an absence of animal-handling training or an absence of an established operational framework. Rather, the materials demonstrate that many of the principles necessary to support safe and effective animal handling are already present across the municipality's SOPs and training structure. The opportunity identified through this review is to bring those

existing elements together more explicitly within written guidance specific to domestic-dog apprehension and restraint, thereby strengthening continuity between policy, training and field application and providing officers with clearer written direction when an otherwise routine running-at-large response becomes more complex.

Lead Author: Andrew Reynolds
Technical Review: Amanda Barrett, Julie Speyer

5.4 Organizational and Operational Considerations

Purpose

As part of this Independent Review, consideration was given not only to the actions of individual personnel involved in the incident, but also to the organizational environment in which those actions occurred. Organizational structure, staffing levels, supervisory availability, operational capacity, and interDivisional support all contribute to the ability of personnel to effectively manage dynamic and high-risk incidents.

The purpose of this section is to identify organizational factors observed throughout the review that may have influenced operational decision-making and to identify areas where organizational improvements could reduce future operational risk.

Organizational Structure

The Town of Aurora Animal Services Division operates as the municipal service provider for three separate municipalities through partnership agreements. In addition to providing Animal Services within the Town of Aurora, the Division is responsible for service delivery throughout the Town of East Gwillimbury and the Town of Georgina.

Municipality	2025 Population	Approx. Land Area
Aurora	~66,440	50 km²
East Gwilliambury	~41,988	244.91 km²
Georgina	~53,409	287.69 km²
Combined Service Area	**~161,837 residents**	**582.6 km²**

The Animal Services Division provides municipal Animal Services to the Town of Aurora, the Town of East Gwillimbury, and the Town of Georgina. Collectively, these municipalities represent an estimated population of approximately 162,000 residents (2025 York Region population estimates) across an operational service area of approximately 583 square kilometers (Statistics Canada 2021 Census land area). This geographic area and population base form the foundation upon which staffing resources, supervisory capacity, and operational deployment should be evaluated.

This service delivery model significantly expands the geographic area, call volume, travel requirements, and operational responsibilities expected of Animal Services personnel while relying on a relatively small staffing complement.

At the time of this Review, the Division consisted of:

- Three (3) full-time Animal Services Officers;
- One (1) of the full-time officers also serving as the Divisional Acting Supervisor while maintaining operational road responsibilities; and
- Two (2) part-time Animal Services Officers.

Unlike larger municipal Animal Services organizations, the Supervisor is not dedicated solely to supervisory responsibilities but is also required to perform front-line enforcement duties. This operational model necessarily limits supervisory availability during active incidents, Reviews, administrative responsibilities, employee coaching, and emergency response.

Operational Capacity on the Date of Incident

Evidence reviewed during this Review identified that on the date of the incident only two (2) full-time Animal Services Officers were available to provide service across all three municipalities.

The Divisional Supervisor was on scheduled leave at the time of the incident. Despite being away from duty, the Supervisor was contacted by responding officers and provided operational assistance remotely.
While this demonstrates a commitment to supporting staff, it also highlights the organization's reliance upon off-duty supervisory involvement during significant incidents when no alternate supervisory coverage exists.

The Review found no evidence that another trained Animal Services supervisor or operational manager was immediately available to assume command, provide scene oversight, or assist with tactical decision-making.

Availability of Operational Support

The Review further identified that Animal Services Officers generally operate independently with limited opportunities for immediate assistance during high-risk calls.

During regular operating hours, there is no established internal operational backup available beyond the officers already assigned to the road.

After normal business hours, municipal By-law Services may attend in support of Animal Services when available. However, evidence reviewed during this Review

identified that these personnel have not received specialized Animal Services training relating to:

- animal behaviour assessment;
- canine restraint techniques;
- catchpole deployment;
- animal capture tactics;
- dynamic scene management involving aggressive animals; or
- specialized officer safety considerations unique to Animal Services operations.

Accordingly, while additional personnel may be present after hours, they cannot reasonably be expected to perform operational animal handling functions or provide the same level of tactical assistance as a trained Animal Services Officer.

This significantly limits the practical effectiveness of available backup during high-risk incidents.

Operational Risk Assessment

Animal Services Officers routinely respond to incidents involving unpredictable animals, emotionally charged owners, public safety concerns, confined environments, traffic hazards, and evolving circumstances requiring rapid risk assessment.

These incidents frequently require simultaneous management of:

- officer safety;
- public safety;
- animal welfare;
- evidence preservation;
- enforcement responsibilities; and
- effective communication.

The Review identified that the current staffing model provides limited redundancy should multiple high-priority calls occur simultaneously or should officers require immediate assistance during a dynamic event.

Where only two officers are available across three municipalities, organizational resilience is significantly reduced. Any incident requiring prolonged attendance, hospitalization, court proceedings, Reviews, emergency veterinary transport, or major animal seizures has the potential to substantially diminish service capacity across all jurisdictions.

Similarly, periods of scheduled leave, illness, training, vacation, or vacancies further reduce operational flexibility.

While these conditions do not excuse deficiencies in operational decision-making, they create an environment in which personnel may experience increased operational pressure, delayed supervisory access, limited tactical support, and reduced opportunities for collaborative decision-making during critical incidents.

Organizational Findings

Based upon the evidence reviewed, the Review identified several organizational considerations that warrant review by the Town.

These include:

- The sustainability of providing Animal Services across three municipalities with a limited staffing complement.
- The operational impact of requiring the Divisional Supervisor to maintain both supervisory and front-line enforcement responsibilities.
- The absence of dedicated supervisory coverage during periods of leave or operational absence.
- Limited availability of trained operational backup during high-risk incidents.
- Reliance upon personnel from outside Animal Services who have not received specialized training in animal handling or tactical response.
- Increased organizational risk associated with staffing shortages, employee absences, and simultaneous emergency responses.

Collectively, these factors increase operational vulnerability and may contribute to reduced organizational capacity during complex or rapidly evolving incidents.

Conclusion

The evidence reviewed during this Review indicates that the incident occurred within an operational environment characterized by limited staffing resources, broad service delivery responsibilities, restricted supervisory availability, and minimal access to trained operational support.

Although these organizational conditions should not be interpreted as the sole cause of the incident, they represent systemic considerations that have the potential to influence operational effectiveness, decision-making, officer safety, public safety, and animal welfare outcomes.

Accordingly, it is the opinion of this Independent Review that the Town should undertake a comprehensive assessment of its Animal Services organizational structure, staffing model, supervisory capacity, operational deployment, and emergency support resources to ensure that service delivery expectations across Aurora, East Gwillimbury, and Georgina can be safely and effectively maintained while reducing organizational risk and improving preparedness for future critical incidents.

Lead Author: Amanda Barrett
Technical Review: Julie Speyer and Andrew Reynolds

SECTION 6 – EQUIPMENT & OPERATIONAL RESOURCES

6.1 Fleet and Equipment Inspection Review

On June 22, 2026, an inspection was conducted of Animal Services fleet vehicles Units 408-25, 409-25 and 405-23 to evaluate vehicle configuration, equipment availability, equipment condition, maintenance practices and operational readiness. The review identified several common deficiencies across the fleet, including inconsistent equipment inventories, deficiencies in catch pole maintenance and storage, lack of equipment identification for wildlife versus domestic animal use, and several vehicle-specific maintenance concerns. While the overall vehicle configurations support operational requirements, opportunities exist to improve standardization, preventive maintenance, safety, and supervisory oversight.

Vehicle Inspection Findings Summary

Summary of missing equipment, concerns, and recommendations for each inspected vehicle.

Vehicle	Missing Equipment	Concerns Identified	Recommendations
408-25	• Separate Catch Pole for Domestics • Muzzles • Snappy Snare • Animal First Aid Kit	• kennel doors won't stay open; • catch pole kinked, unlabeled; • bite gloves unlabeled to identify if wild or domestic use • additional medical supplies loosely stored. • No division of wildlife and domestic equipment • Step located at hitch level could prevent officer loading position to be inadequate and unsafe.	• Add missing equipment • install kennel door retainers • service/lubricate catch pole, reminder on proper storage of equipment and supervisory checks • label equipment • Retraining of staff on proper storage and maintenance of equipment • organize supplies • assess Kennel door and closure to ensure it closes and secures adequately. • Make back step as a quick release • Addition of a ramp that can be pulled out and utilized by officers while loading a dog into back

409-25	• Separate Catch pole for Domestics • Muzzles • Snappy Snare • Animal First Aid Kit	• Dirty catch pole with poor release under load; • Right back kennel door difficult to close; • bite gloves unlabeled to identify as wild or domestic • No division of wildlife and domestic equipment • Height of vehicle for loading • Step located at hitch level could prevent officer loading position to be inadequate and unsafe.	• Add missing equipment • clean/service catch pole • reinforce cleaning and sanitization of all equipment • retraining on proper storage of equipment as catchpoles were found to be pulled to tight and no excess lines tucked • repair kennel door • install kennel door retainers • Label equipment • Make back step as a quick release to allow officers to remove if required • Addition of a ramp that can be pulled out and utilized by officers while loading a dog into back
405-23	• Separate Catch Pole for Domestic • Animal First Aid Kit	• Catch pole difficult to access as too close to door frame. • Catch pole cable stored too tight and kinked; • bite gloves unlabeled. • Step located at hitch level could prevent officer loading position to be inadequate and unsafe.	• Modify storage tube for catch pole to move it away from the door frame for easy access; • install kennel door retainers • Regular service of catch pole • Retraining staff regarding appropriate storage of equipment and follow-up checks by management • label bite gloves; • Make back step as a quick release • Addition of a ramp that can be pulled out and utilized by officers while loading a dog into back.

Observations

- Unit [redacted] identified as vehicle operated by [redacted] on May 4, 2026
- Unit [redacted] identified as vehicle operated by [redacted] on May 4, 2026
- Unit [redacted] was available and completed inspection, however not identified as a vehicle subject to May 4, 2026, incident

Similarities to the structures of the three vehicles inspected:

- All vehicles were outfitted with customizable inserts allowing for spaces to confine the animals which were segregated from the drivers' cabin as well as the storage area for equipment and supplies necessary for the work in the field.
- There was a defined segregation of the side entrance which included a total of 6 compartments of various sizes stacked behind the driver's side. – 4 kennels (2 larger along bottom and 2 smaller with Plexi glass coverings along the door fronts), 2 storage lockers/portals (One which housed towels along the top and second which had a door and held supplies). See Photo PXL_20260622_155103728.jpg
- Towel storage portal and a supply closet were also present through the side door
- Able to locate a fully equipped first aid kit for human use in each vehicle, however no identified animal first aid kits were located in either of the vehicles.
- There was a distance of floor from the door to the kennels allowing a level to work or an animal to rest prior to entering a kennel.
- Measurements of the vehicles are as follows for the side entrance; Distance from ground to first step approximate height of 22 ¼" with ground to the main interior surface where Kennels are located was approximately 25 ¾ ". See photo PXL_20260622_161324138.jpg
- The back had the main exterior doors which were on a swivel hinge allowing them to open beyond the working space and hold tight when fully open.
- Measurements of the back were taken to provide an estimate of height for the dogs to be loaded into the back kennels. Measurements were as follows:
    - Ground to Bumper approximately 19 ¼". See Photo PXL_20260622_161056188.jpg
    - Bumper to main interior surface where kennels were located approximately 7 ¾". See Photo PXL_20260622_161107762.jpg
- There were two kennel inserts which had a metal screening allowing some air flow but not big enough holes or openings to allow a dog to get any portion of their body out unless the door was opened. For reference see photo PXL_20260622_154956658.jpg
- The kennel doors could not be affixed open so if vehicle was off set and not balanced the doors would close if not held open by the operator. This was observed while inspecting unit 408-25.
- There were two upper portals where supplies and equipment were stored which included tubes allowing equipment that consisted of a pole structure i.e.; catchpole, net, snappy snare.
- A metal step affixed within the hitch of the back bumper was available to step up and gain access to the upper compartments. Concerns identified were the size and location which obstructed movement of the handler to the kennels while loading, off-loading or accessing the kennel space. Measurement taken for this step which had an average approximate height of 15" from ground to top of step. See Photo PXL_20260622_161049782.jpg

- Passenger compartment was standard with an outfitted computer, lighting and radio system, also a metal divider that separated the back from the front, however not solid to keep smells or noises out of the passenger compartment. See Photo PXL_20260622_163459491.jpg
- All vehicles were equipped with safety lighting, work lighting and insignia to identify them as with the township and unit numbers
- Located a stethoscope within the passenger compartment of each of the vehicles within a carry case. The stethoscope appeared to be in excellent condition with minimal visible signs of wear. See Photo PXL_20260622_164630929.jpg
- Each unit had only one catch pole (5-foot stainless steel) which was also not identified as wild or domestic. Each pole had concerns for their storage as kinking in the lines were present in each. Structural integrity of the poles was not compromised based on the kinks identified. – This was already identified with management as a quick fix solution to identify the need for additional poles specific to domestic use.

Differences between the three vehicles inspected:

- Unit 409-25 right kennel door was not latching unless slammed or pushed with greater force. This provides concern for the operator and the animals being transported within the kennel in the interest of safety. – See video demonstrating the concerns PXL_20260622_162952561.mp4. - These concerns were identified with management already due to the concern and need for immediate attention.
- The catch pole inspected from Unit 409-25. Catch pole contained biological debris and exhibited delayed release when tested under tension. Delayed release could reduce operator effectiveness during animal handling while biological contamination indicates cleaning procedures were either not completed or not verified. See Photo PXL_20260622_162252022.jpg
- All catch poles inspected and used repeatedly to show consistency and functionality.
- All poles appeared to be in new condition. No evidence of recent oiling or maintenance. Poles from 409-25 and 408-25 had minimal bite marks on the bite sleeve and the defects observed appeared to be older in nature. See Photos PXL_20260622_162331278.jpg, PXL_20260622_162402790.jpg and PXL_20260622_160457696.jpg
- No muzzles or snappy snare were located in either 409-25 or 408-25
- Snappy snare observed in unit 405-23 appeared very new and very little wear appeared to the piece of equipment. See Photos PXL_20260622_164338666.jpg and PXL_20260622_164308390.jpg
- Each unit had at a minimum 2 pairs of bite gloves available to the operators, however, none were labelled or identified as wild vs domestic causing some concerns for cross contamination. Further they were either stored in same area as each other and in two units resting on top of each other.

- See Photos PXL_20260622_164602501.jpg for unit 405-23 Glove Storage concerns
- See Photo PXL_20260622_163406863.jpg for two variations of bite gloves and no marking to indicate which are wild or domestic use.
- See Photo PXL_20260622_163323725.jpg for unit 409-25 glove storage concerns

Analysis and Recommendations

Equipment Standardization

- Ensure required consistency for required equipment. Use a standardized inventory checklist for operational readiness and management confirmation of equipment available or requiring replacement.
- Ensure all frontline vehicles carry required equipment including 2 designated catch poles, muzzles and Snappy Snares as noted were missing within each identified unit.
- Standardized equipment available and label items for domestic vs. wildlife use.
- Prepare an animal specific first aid kit for each vehicle to be equipped with.
- Provide procedures with respect to the keeping of equipment allowing for segregation to avoid cross contamination

Maintenance and Inventory Control of Equipment

- Implement reinstruction of all staff regarding the need for appropriate inspections and storage of all equipment. With routine inspections completed by management for compliance.
- Create SOP/SOG for appropriate inspections of equipment to set out standardized expectations for all operators to utilize and ensure effective reporting of equipment needing maintenance or replacement. Inclusive of documented repair or replacement of deficiencies and equipment.
- Implement routine inspection, cleaning, and maintenance of catch poles with a documented record.

Fleet Recommendations and Maintenance

- Repair vehicle-specific deficiencies such as kennel doors and storage accessibility.
- 409-25 Kennel door not closing and locking in place
- Move the equipment holders at back of unit 405-23 to allow the equipment to be accessed easily and with no obstruction. See Photo PXL_20260622_164205294.jpg
- All back kennel doors do not stay open, look for possibilities to have retainers applied to keep the doors open until operator closes
- Look into options for a foldable ramp that can be utilized in the back of the vehicle to keep the dogs 4 paws on a surface and increase effectiveness for loading a difficult dog into the vehicle that has a higher bumper.

- Look into options for the step to have quick release options allowing the officer to remove or move the step when loading a difficult dog as the step has been identified as a potential obstruction causing a loading and off-loading hazard.

Conclusion

The inspection identified recurring deficiencies across multiple vehicles rather than isolated concerns affecting a single unit. The majority of findings relate to equipment standardization, maintenance practices, storage methods, and fleet consistency. Addressing these deficiencies through standardized equipment inventories, documented inspection procedures, preventive maintenance schedules, and supervisory oversight will improve operational readiness, officer safety, animal welfare, and consistency across the Animal Services fleet.

Lead Author: Amanda Barrett
Technical Review: Julie Speyer and Andrew Reynolds

SECTION 7 – CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

7.1 Contributing Factors Analysis

Purpose
The purpose of this section is to identify the operational, tactical, procedural and organizational factors that contributed to the incident. The analysis is intended to determine how individual actions, environmental conditions, equipment, communication and decision-making collectively influenced the outcome. The objective is not to assign blame, but to identify opportunities to improve officer safety, animal welfare, public safety and organizational practices.

Equipment Readiness and Inspection

- [redacted] identified within her interview that she was not able to recall if she had all the leashes necessary to do her role during this incident.
- When asked in her interview if she completed her inspection she indicated she did, however also in the same statement could not advise if she had the applicable equipment as outlined, she should have within her vehicle.
- The lack of access to the required equipment reduced available tactical options to allow the dog to be handled and loaded safely into the vehicle.

Data Collection and documentation

- [redacted] followed the process by reaching out to the finder prior to attendance and identified the dogs that were contained and confirmed their location.
- The available evidence does not indicate that [redacted] obtained or documented further information regarding the dogs, including the behaviours reportedly observed while they were at large, whether they had previously been observed in

the area, or other information that may have informed subsequent handling and loading decisions. No such information was identified in the contemporaneous notes, [redacted] statement or interview, or the independent witness interviews reviewed as part of the Review.

Initial Scene Assessment

- [redacted] arrived on scene and identified she rushed through her own check list and did not check the email response from the shelter prior to exiting her vehicle.
- [redacted] approached the scene without the required equipment to follow the SOP for intake of a dog (ie; camera and scanner).
- [redacted] did not perform a greeting with each of the dog's allowing assessment and comfort of the dogs prior to handling.
- [redacted] identified in her interview that when she applied the slip lead over the Rottweiler's head, she observed the dogs eyes widen therefore she was able to recognize an emotional shift however she could not understand what the shift indicated, nor was this assessment considered contextually during her next steps towards apprehension (Passive resistance vs. treating as aggression)
- [redacted] took a photo of the GSP and scanned, however indicated in her own statement that she did not scan the Rottweiler as she knew the dogs from past interactions and knew the dog did not have a microchip. She also did not follow procedures for taking a photo of the dog therefore causing her to feel she had to open the kennel door once again to take such photo, which allowed the dog to escape the enclosure.

Scene Control and Public Involvement

- [redacted] in her interview identified that when she placed the slip lead over Rottweiler's head, she felt uncomfortable with the dog and used caution.
- After attempts to reload the dog were made and [redacted] identified she was not comfortable to muzzle the dog further in the interest of safety, yet she still allowed the member of the public, [redacted], to have more intimate handling of the dog and assist with the loading of the Rottweiler.
- A further concern relates to the continued involvement of a member of the public after [redacted] determined that the situation had become sufficiently challenging to require assistance from a [redacted] officer. Despite requesting additional officer support, [redacted] continued to participate directly in the management and handling of the dog, including maintaining close physical contact and interacting with the dog at the side of the vehicle. The continued involvement of a civilian at a point when [redacted] had identified that she was no longer confident managing the situation alone created additional public safety consideration and was inconsistent with the increased level of operational concern that had prompted the request for officer assistance.
- Members of the public remained actively involved in managing, physically handling, and attempting to load the dog during the containment efforts, rather than these activities transitioning fully to Animal Control personnel.

- Continued public involvement increased the complexity of scene management by introducing additional individuals into the handling process and requiring coordination of their actions alongside the officers' containment efforts. This had implications for maintaining consistent control of the dog, officer and public safety, and animal welfare.
- No Divisional procedure was identified that specifically addressed the involvement of members of the public in animal-control incidents, including the circumstances in which public assistance may be appropriate, the roles or activities members of the public may undertake, or when their direct involvement should be limited or discontinued.

Multiple attempts of loading by [redacted]

- [redacted] made the decision to continue to load the dog into the vehicle knowing she had the owner's information available to her.
- [redacted] provided the finder with a witness statement to be completed based on her finding the dog running at large and wished to proceed with Review into the owner, which drove the decision to load the dogs and made multiple attempts to reload the Rottweiler.
- The available evidence indicates that one type of food reinforcement was used by [redacted] in an effort to encourage the dog to enter the transport vehicle. No alternative or higher-value food reinforcement was identified in the available evidence.
- An attempt was made to create a muzzle using a slip lead; however, the available evidence does not identify the application or use of a purpose-designed muzzle. Independent witness evidence did not describe a conventional muzzling procedure being undertaken.
- Neither [redacted] account nor the independent witness evidence identified the use of alternative equipment, handling strategies, or behavioural techniques intended to redirect the dog's attention away from the kennels, reduce competing environmental focus, or re-establish voluntary engagement with the loading process.

Communication Breakdown

Communication from [redacted]*:*

- The available evidence does not indicate that [redacted] communicated to [redacted] that the Rottweiler had previously been successfully loaded and subsequently escaped, or the methods that had been used during that earlier loading attempt.
- Upon requesting assistance, the information communicated to [redacted] appears to have focused primarily on the immediate difficulty loading the dog. The available evidence does not identify a broader briefing regarding [redacted] observations of the dog's behaviour or the progression of the incident prior to [redacted] arrival.

- The available evidence does not indicate that information regarding the Rottweiler's mounting behaviour toward the German Shorthaired Pointer prior to Animal Control attendance was communicated to [redacted].
- The available evidence does not indicate that [redacted] communicated the number of loading attempts already undertaken, the methods used during those attempts, the dog's behavioural responses to each approach, or the circumstances associated with the unsuccessful attempts.
- The available evidence does not indicate that [redacted] communicated her safety concerns associated with the attempted application of the slip lead as a muzzle, the dog's sensitivity to handling around the collar area, the dog's abrupt turn when [redacted] attempted to assist by physically handling the dog's hindquarters during loading, or the safety concerns that resulted in discontinuation of further attempts to apply the slip-lead muzzle.
- The available evidence does not indicate that [redacted] was briefed regarding the dogs' previous history of running at large or [redacted] prior observations of, and interactions with, the dogs.
- Owner information for the dog was available to [redacted] through the shelter; however, the available evidence does not indicate that the availability of this information was communicated to [redacted] during the initial briefing.

Collection of data from [redacted]:

- The available evidence indicates that [redacted] proceeded to engage with the incident without first obtaining a detailed operational briefing from the individuals already present. No initial inquiry was identified regarding the number or nature of previous loading attempts, the methods already used, the timing and outcome of the most recent attempt, or the dog's behavioural responses throughout the preceding handling efforts.
- The available evidence also does not identify an initial inquiry regarding changes in the dog's behaviour from the commencement of containment efforts through to [redacted] arrival.
- Both [redacted] and [redacted] described limited communication with [redacted] before she proceeded to interact directly with the dog. Their statements characterize [redacted] as proceeding with the containment effort without first obtaining the broader information available from those who had been involved before her arrival.

[redacted]

- [redacted] described apparent tension between [redacted] and [redacted] during the incident, including during telephone communication and when [redacted] arrived at the scene. [redacted] characterized [redacted] interactions with [redacted] as appearing dismissive and upset.
- [redacted]

[redacted]

The consistency of these accounts provides relevant context for assessing communication and coordination between the officers during the incident. The available evidence demonstrates that information held by [redacted] regarding the preceding handling attempts and behavioural observations was not fully communicated before [redacted] engaged with the dog, while [redacted] did not obtain a detailed operational briefing before commencing direct interaction. The documented interpersonal dynamics therefore represent a relevant contextual factor when considering the incomplete exchange of operational information between the officers. However, the available evidence does not permit determination of the extent to which the pre-existing interpersonal relationship influenced their communication, individual actions, or the subsequent progression of the incident.

[redacted] ***Approach & Attempt to Load***

- [redacted] stated during her interview that, upon arrival, she observed [redacted] and [redacted] positioned beside the transport vehicle with the Rottweiler.
- [redacted] reported taking control of the leash and initially attempting to encourage the dog to enter the vehicle using an animated vocal approach while advancing toward the vehicle. When this attempt was unsuccessful, she reported repositioning the dog before attempting again. According to [redacted], the dog resisted forward movement by stopping and lowering himself to the ground. These initial handling attempts were not independently corroborated by [redacted] or [redacted].
- [redacted] subsequently reported taking hold of the dog's collar with her left hand and attempting to move the dog forward, at which point the dog turned and bit her. This portion of the reported sequence was corroborated by both [redacted] and [redacted]
- The available timestamped video evidence, photographs, statements, interview evidence, and telephone records establish a relatively limited period between [redacted] arrival and the reported bite. [redacted] arrived at approximately 5:41–5:42 p.m., with the bite reported to have occurred at approximately 5:45 p.m. This provides approximately three to four minutes between her arrival and the injury. Within this interval, [redacted] described entering the scene, interacting with those present, undertaking an initial leash-based loading attempt, repositioning the dog by moving in a loop, undertaking a further unsuccessful loading attempt, and subsequently taking hold of the collar immediately before the bite. The available evidence does not permit precise determination of the duration of each individual action within this sequence. However, the limited overall interval is relevant when considering the extent of the opportunity available for operational briefing, behavioural observation, reassessment, and implementation of the handling strategies described.
    - 5:41–5:42 p.m.: [redacted] arrived at the scene.

    - Approximately 5:45 p.m.: [redacted] sustained the bite to her [redacted] based on her statement/interview and [redacted] interview.
    - 5:49 p.m.: [redacted] telephone records document telephone contact with [redacted].
    - 5:58 p.m.: [redacted] video records her entering the residence and referring to substantial visible blood after two catch poles had been applied. No visible blood was reported by those present before application of the two catch poles.
    - 6:11–6:20 p.m.: A timestamped photograph taken by [redacted] depicts the dog lying on the ground with two catch poles already applied, based on the timestamp information associated with Injury Photograph #4.
- Following the bite, [redacted] reported returning to her vehicle, which [redacted] estimated was parked approximately 160 feet down the driveway, before the documented 5:49 p.m. telephone contact with [redacted].

[redacted] ***Bite***

- The available evidence indicates that behavioural changes displayed by the dog were observable during the handling and loading attempts. However, the subsequent handling sequence does not demonstrate that these observations were consistently interpreted within the broader behavioural context or used to inform subsequent handling decisions.
- The sequence of events preceding the bite does not demonstrate consistent application of the behavioural assessment process reflected in [redacted] documented training. That process emphasized slowing the interaction when behavioural concerns emerged, assessing the dog's response, taking an action informed by that assessment, and then reassessing whether the intervention improved, worsened, or did not change the dog's behavioural response, before determining the next course of action.

Public Safety

- Following the bite, [redacted] determined that catch-pole restraint was required due to public-safety concerns and directed [redacted] to retrieve a second catch pole. During the period in which the equipment was being retrieved, the dog was not under officer-applied physical restraint.
- All three individuals present reported that the leash was dropped when [redacted] disengaged and returned to her vehicle following the bite. Two accounts indicate that [redacted] subsequently maintained control of the dog until the catch poles were brought to the scene. [redacted] reported discontinuing her involvement due to concerns for her own safety and uncertainty regarding what would occur next.
- A further communication gap was identified during the transition following the bite. The available evidence does not identify a discussion between the officers regarding immediate next steps or how control of the dog would be maintained while the catch poles were retrieved. Similarly, no evidence was identified that [redacted] was advised of the intended response, what actions she was expected to

undertake while awaiting the officers' return, or what to expect when catch-pole restraint was initiated.

Application of Catchpole

- [redacted] decision to introduce catch-pole restraint followed the bite and appears to have been primarily informed by the occurrence of the injury and the continuing need to contain the dog. The available evidence does not demonstrate that the behavioural context in which the bite occurred was reassessed before the decision was made to increase the level of physical restraint.
- Given that the dog remained uncontained and an injury-producing bite had occurred, the decision to introduce additional restraint through the use of a catch pole was a reasonable operational consideration in addressing officer and public safety and achieving containment.
- However, the period immediately following the bite also represented an opportunity to slow the interaction, reassess the dog's behavioural state and the circumstances associated with the bite, and consider the range of available tactical options before proceeding with increased physical restraint. A graded approach, in which the dog's response to each level of intervention was assessed before increasing restraint, would have provided additional behavioural information while balancing the operational requirements of officer safety, public safety, effective containment, and animal welfare. The available evidence does not permit determination of whether an alternative approach would have resulted in successful containment or altered the subsequent outcome.

Application of Second catchpole

- The available evidence does not identify any attempt to move or load the dog following application of the first catch pole before the second catch pole was introduced. Three separate accounts indicate that the second catch pole was applied shortly after the first. As a result, there was no documented opportunity to assess the dog's behavioural response to restraint with a single catch pole, determine the degree of control achieved, or evaluate whether loading could be attempted at that level of restraint before progressing to dual catch-pole restraint.
- The available accounts indicate that significant thrashing occurred following application of the second catch pole. Visible blood was subsequently observed around the dog's mouth and/or nose; however, the source and cause of the bleeding cannot be determined from the available evidence.
- A more gradual, response-dependent increase in restraint would have allowed the dog's behavioural response and the degree of control achieved with the first catch pole to be assessed before additional restraint was introduced. This would have provided an opportunity to determine whether further restraint was operationally necessary while balancing officer safety, public safety, effective containment, and animal welfare. It cannot be determined from the available

evidence whether restraint with a single catch pole would have provided sufficient control or permitted successful loading.

- The immediate application of a second catch pole also affected the available loading strategy. With both officers required to control the catch poles and direct public involvement having been discontinued due to safety concerns, no additional individual was available to physically support or assist with control of the dog's hindquarters during loading. This created an operational consideration regarding how the dog could be loaded using the personnel and equipment then available.
- Catch poles are intended for restraint and control and are not intended to be used to lift an animal. The subsequent use of the catch poles to elevate the dog's front end during loading therefore represented use of the equipment outside its intended handling function and further demonstrates the importance of considering the complete loading method, available personnel, and equipment before progressing to dual catch-pole restraint.
- The available evidence does not identify a clearly established loading plan before dual catch-pole restraint was applied. Once both officers were committed to controlling separate catch poles and direct public involvement had been discontinued due to safety concerns, no additional individual was available to assist with physical support and control of the dog's hindquarters during loading. This limited the available options for completing the intended containment process without using the catch poles for functions beyond restraint and control. Consideration of the complete containment and loading process, including the personnel, equipment, and handling roles required to complete each stage, prior to increasing the level of restraint represents an opportunity for improved tactical planning in similar incidents.

Catch Pole Management

Tightening and Loosening the Catch Pole Loop:

- The available evidence indicates that both catch poles were repeatedly tightened and loosened after application. This was described by two independent witnesses and was also acknowledged by both officers during their interviews.
- Neither officer identified use of the two-point check system described within the catch-pole training provided to Animal Control personnel. Appropriate application of this system is intended to establish and maintain the required cable position following placement, reducing the need for repeated tightening and loosening during restraint.
- The repeated adjustment of the catch-pole cables observed during this incident was not consistent with the catch-pole management process identified within the training materials reviewed as part of this Review.

Hand Positioning:

- The available evidence indicates that hand positioning on the catch poles was associated with the repeated tightening and loosening of the cables during restraint. Positioning the hands toward the end of the pole reduced the available points of physical control over the equipment.
- During her interview, [redacted] demonstrated her usual method of holding a catch pole. The demonstrated hand position placed both hands in similar positions relative to the movement and leverage of the pole, rather than at opposing control points. This configuration provided fewer effective points of control than the hand positioning demonstrated within the catch-pole training reviewed during the Review.

Transfer of Catch Poles Between Officers:

- Both officers reported transferring catch poles between one another during the restraint process in an effort to address entanglement of the lines. This resulted in periods during which a single officer was responsible for controlling both catch poles simultaneously.
- The officers reported that these transfers occurred during periods when the dog appeared behaviourally calm. However, the available evidence also demonstrates rapid transitions between periods of relative behavioural stillness and significant physical escalation. The specific antecedents for each escalation cannot be determined from the available evidence. Transferring both points of restraint to a single handler therefore reduced the available margin for responding to an abrupt change in the dog's behaviour and introduced additional considerations for officer control, public safety, and animal welfare.
- The transfer and simultaneous control of two catch poles by a single officer was not consistent with the catch-pole handling procedures identified within the training materials reviewed during the Review.

Lifting the Dog Using the Catch Poles:

- An independent witness reported observing the dog being lifted from the ground while restrained by both catch poles, with the lifting force applied through the poles and associated restraint around the neck.
- [redacted] interview provides additional information regarding the degree of elevation, describing the position of her catch pole as approaching shoulder height during the manoeuvre. [redacted] described the officers as attempting to “manipulate” the dog during the loading process.
- Catch poles are designed as restraint and control devices and are not intended to be used to lift an animal. The use of the poles to elevate the dog's body therefore represented a departure from their intended handling function and from recognized catch-pole handling guidance.
- This method also demonstrates the importance of establishing a complete loading plan before restraint is applied, including consideration of how the animal's body will be physically supported, the personnel required to complete

the loading process, and how restraint will be maintained without requiring the catch poles to perform a lifting function.

Reassessment of Animal Welfare During Restraint:

- The available evidence does not identify a structured reassessment of the dog's physiological or behavioural condition during the period of dual catch-pole restraint. During this period, the dog displayed episodes of significant physical resistance and thrashing, interspersed with periods of relative stillness, and visible blood became evident around the mouth and/or nose. The source and cause of the bleeding cannot be determined from the available evidence.
- These observable changes represented points at which reassessment of the dog's condition, the effectiveness and management of the restraint, and the continuing loading strategy were relevant. Such reassessment would have allowed subsequent handling decisions to incorporate the dog's current behavioural and physiological presentation alongside the continuing requirements for officer safety, public safety, containment, and animal welfare.

Backup Called – YRP Involvement

- York Regional Police (YRP) was contacted by a member of the public at the direction of the officers. The available evidence does not indicate that Animal Services personnel communicated directly with YRP communications at that stage to provide operational context regarding the nature of the incident, the type of assistance being requested, or the level of urgency associated with the request.
- The Review did not identify an established service agreement, inter-agency protocol, or other formalized response arrangement between YRP and Aurora Animal Services addressing circumstances in which police assistance may be required during animal-control incidents. This included no identified framework outlining the circumstances for requesting assistance, the respective roles of responding personnel, or the types of operational support that YRP personnel may be able to provide.
- Additional Animal Services support was not readily available during the incident. The available evidence indicates that the officers perceived limited alternative options for obtaining additional assistance while awaiting the arrival of YRP Special Constables. There was also no identified shared understanding regarding the specific assistance or operational capabilities the Special Constables could provide upon arrival.
- [redacted] interview further identified broader organizational limitations regarding access to additional municipal personnel. Although By-law personnel provide on-call coverage outside regular hours, [redacted] indicated that their availability to assist Animal Services during daytime operations was restricted by factors including contractual arrangements, budgetary considerations, operational responsibilities, training limitations, and willingness or authorization to participate in animal-related calls.

- The incident therefore identified an organizational opportunity to establish clearer contingency and inter-agency response procedures for animal-control incidents requiring additional personnel. Such planning could define available sources of assistance, processes for requesting an appropriate level of response, expected roles and limitations of responding personnel, and communication requirements necessary to provide responding agencies with sufficient operational context before arrival.
- This identifies a gap in inter-agency planning and communication rather than an individual response issue. A defined protocol for requesting external assistance, including communication of the nature of the incident, the specific operational need, the competencies required, and the roles that responding personnel are authorized and trained to perform, would assist in ensuring that appropriate resources are requested and that responding personnel understand the anticipated role before arrival.

Dog Deceased

- The available evidence indicates that only limited steps were undertaken by the officers to confirm the dog's condition following the cessation of observable movement. Both officers reported safety concerns regarding approaching or physically interacting with the dog and indicated that, because the owners arrived shortly thereafter, they considered it preferable for an owner to approach and check the dog. This resulted in a member of the public, rather than Animal Services personnel or another appropriately trained professional, undertaking the initial physical assessment of the dog despite the officers' stated concerns regarding the safety of approaching the animal. This identifies an operational inconsistency in the management of potential risk to personnel and members of the public and highlights the absence of a defined process for safely confirming an animal's condition following a serious or critical incident.
- The Review did not identify an established Divisional procedure for responding to a major or critical incident involving the serious injury or death of an animal during Animal Services operations. This included no identified process addressing immediate notification or escalation, confirmation of the animal's condition, veterinary involvement where appropriate, preservation and continuity of the scene, documentation, or the identification and preservation of potentially relevant evidence.
- The absence of a defined critical-incident procedure represents an organizational opportunity to establish clear responsibilities and response requirements following the serious injury or death of an animal during an Animal Services interaction. Such a procedure could address immediate scene management, appropriate veterinary or other professional involvement, supervisory notification, documentation, evidence preservation, and the respective responsibilities of personnel present.

Organizational systems and governance
The Animal Services Division currently provides municipal Animal Services for the Town of Aurora, the Town of East Gwillimbury, and the Town of Georgina. Collectively, these municipalities represent an estimated population of approximately 162,000 residents distributed across an operational service area of approximately 583 square kilometres. This expansive service area requires officers to respond to a wide variety of enforcement, public safety, emergency animal welfare, wildlife, and investigative calls while travelling considerable distances between municipalities.

Supervisory Capacity:

- The available evidence identifies limitations in the availability of direct supervisory involvement during complex or escalating incidents. Supervisory consultation can provide an additional opportunity for independent reassessment, consideration of alternative tactical approaches, and identification or authorization of additional resources when frontline strategies are not achieving the intended outcome. During this incident, operational decision-making remained primarily with the officers directly managing the scene.
- The supervisory position also forms part of the Division's regular operational road complement. This requires the supervisor to balance frontline response responsibilities across the service area with supervisory functions, including staff oversight, operational management, and availability for consultation during complex incidents.
- The supervisor is additionally responsible for the provision and maintenance of staff training while simultaneously fulfilling road-response and supervisory responsibilities. The combination of these functions limits the time and capacity available for dedicated supervision, training delivery, competency maintenance, and operational oversight.
- The current structure therefore identifies an organizational opportunity to review whether sufficient supervisory capacity exists to provide timely operational consultation, training oversight, and incident support while maintaining required frontline service coverage.

Operational Resources:

- The incident identified limitations in the availability of additional trained personnel and specialized resources when an Animal Services response exceeded the capacity of the officers initially assigned. During this incident, additional Animal Services personnel were not readily available, other municipal personnel had identified limitations on their ability to assist with animal-related calls, and responding external personnel did not have clearly established roles or applicable animal-handling training for the assistance required.
- These limitations reduced the range of immediately available options when additional personnel were required for containment and loading. The incident therefore identifies an opportunity to review the resources available for complex

animal-control events, including access to appropriately trained backup personnel, specialized equipment, veterinary support where required, and established external-agency assistance.

Operational Coverage and Deployment:

- The geographic size of the service area and the requirement to provide Animal Services across three municipalities create operational considerations regarding travel time, officer availability, and the ability to provide timely backup when multiple personnel are required at a single incident.
- The available evidence demonstrates that backup was not immediately available during this incident and that the officers had limited options for obtaining additional personnel with relevant animal-handling competencies. This placed greater reliance on the personnel already at the scene and subsequently on external agencies whose roles in animal-control incidents had not been clearly established.
- The incident identifies an organizational opportunity to review staffing and deployment arrangements for circumstances requiring multiple trained personnel, including how backup is accessed across the service area, how operational coverage is maintained when multiple officers are committed to one incident, and what contingency resources are available when an incident exceeds the capabilities or resources of the attending personnel.

Lead Author: Amanda Barrett
Technical Review: Julie Speyer, Victoria Blondin and Andrew Reynolds

SECTION 8 – FINDINGS

8.1 Review's evidence-based findings

The findings presented in this section represent the culmination of the multidisciplinary Review and are based upon the totality of the available evidence examined throughout this review. They consolidate the evidence-based conclusions arising from the incident reconstruction, behavioural assessment, operational decision analyses, policy and procedural review, training assessment, organizational review, fleet and equipment inspection, and contributing factors analysis.

Rather than repeating the individual findings contained within each section of this report, the following findings integrate the common themes and conclusions identified across the Review. Collectively, they represent the Review's overall determination of the key behavioural, operational, procedural, organizational, and environmental factors that were relevant to the progression and management of the May 4, 2026, incident and the circumstances surrounding its outcome.

Each finding is supported by the detailed analyses presented elsewhere in this report and should be considered in conjunction with the relevant supporting sections. Together, these findings provide the foundation upon which the recommendations contained in Section 9 have been developed.

Finding 1 - Evidentiary Limitations Influenced the Review

The Town initiated discussions regarding an independent review shortly after the incident. The review did not commence immediately after the retainer of the review team due, in part, to the availability and pre-existing professional commitments of the multidisciplinary review team. As the review was retrospective in nature and was not intended to constitute a contemporaneous scene investigation, the original scene had not been preserved for later examination and certain transient physical and time-sensitive digital evidence was no longer available. These circumstances required the review team to rely primarily upon contemporaneous documentation, photographs, video evidence, interviews, available physical evidence and other independent sources to reconstruct and assess the incident.

The passage of time also affected the review process itself. Evidence collection, site attendance, and other investigative activities occurred over an extended period as the Review progressed and additional information was obtained.

Witness and participant engagement presented additional scheduling challenges. Interviews required coordination with involved personnel, independent civilian witnesses, and subject matter experts, with availability further affected by scheduling constraints associated with the summer months.

As expected in any Review conducted after a significant passage of time, natural deterioration of witness recollection required increased reliance upon contemporaneous documentation and corroboration across multiple independent sources.

In addition, several potentially significant sources of evidence were unavailable for review, including a veterinary necropsy, which may have provided objective medical information regarding the dog's injuries and cause of death. Although the Town made multiple requests to the owner for a copy of the veterinary necropsy for purposes of the independent review, it was not provided to the review team. Other opportunities to

examine the original scene, vehicles, equipment, and time-sensitive digital evidence were similarly no longer available by the time the Review commenced.

Consistent with its retrospective mandate, the review was conducted through the systematic examination and corroboration of documentary records, interviews, physical inspections, photographs, video evidence, and independent witness accounts. The evidentiary limitations identified above did not prevent a comprehensive review from being completed; however, they affected the evidence available for consideration and the degree of certainty achievable in specific areas. The findings that follow should therefore be considered within the context of these evidentiary limitations.

Supporting: Section 1, "Assessment of the Initial Investigative Response" and "Investigative Impact of the Delayed Independent Appointment"; Section 4.3, Decision Point 10; Section 5.3, Point 7.

Finding 2 - Cause of Death Could Not Be Independently Verified

The Review found that the dog's physiological condition and ultimate cause of death could not be independently verified because contemporaneous veterinary assessment, external veterinary post-mortem examination, and veterinary necropsy evidence were unavailable. A Veterinary necropsy had been conducted and was requested for purposes of this review but was not provided to the Town. These evidentiary limitations restricted the Review's ability to independently examine the dog's injuries, determine the physiological mechanism associated with its deterioration, or establish a definitive cause of death.

Further, photographic and video evidence available to the review was limited. The available photographs documented only portions of the dog's condition and from limited perspectives, reducing the Review's ability to independently assess the location, extent, and progression of observable injuries and bleeding or to correlate physical findings with witness accounts and the reported sequence of events.

Accordingly, while the Review was able to reach evidence-based conclusions regarding the behavioural, operational, organizational, and procedural aspects of the incident, the dog's precise physiological mechanism and cause of death could not be independently established from the available evidence. The potential factors associated with the dog's physiological deterioration and the limitations affecting assessment of their individual contribution are addressed separately in Finding 19.

Supporting: Supporting: Section 1, "Assessment of the Initial Investigative Response"; Section 4.2, Decision Findings 16.

Finding 3 - Material Factual Discrepancies Remain Unresolved on Several Key Sequences

The Review identified recurring discrepancies between witness accounts, some of which were material in nature. These discrepancies involved specific aspects of the incident, including the sequence of certain operational events, the application and management of the catch poles, the source and progression of the dog's bleeding, the extent to which the dog was lifted during restraint, the dog's response to the introduction of water, and aspects of the bite event itself. Despite extensive Review, these discrepancies could not be fully reconciled using the available evidence.

The existence of these discrepancies did not prevent the Review from reaching evidence-based conclusions. Rather, they required individual witness accounts to be assessed alongside documentary records, photographs, video evidence, operational documentation, and other independent sources to determine where the evidence was corroborated and where uncertainty remained. Where material discrepancies could not be independently resolved, they have been acknowledged throughout this report and considered when determining the weight that could reasonably be assigned to the available evidence.

Accordingly, the findings presented throughout this report have not been based upon any single witness account or isolated piece of evidence, but upon the totality of the available evidence considered collectively. Where unresolved discrepancies remained, the Review has identified those limitations and avoided drawing conclusions beyond what the available evidence reasonably supports.

Supporting: Section 2.3, Events 1–13 (in particular Events 10, 11, and 12).

Finding 4 - Organizational Capacity Influenced the Operational Environment

The Review found that the Animal Services Division was responsible for providing services across three municipalities, encompassing a large geographic area and substantial resident population. These service responsibilities were supported by a relatively small staffing complement. On the date of the incident, only two full-time Animal Services Officers were available to provide frontline service across the entire service area, while supervisory availability was also limited.

This operating model requires a small number of personnel to respond to routine service calls, high-risk enforcement activities, prolonged Reviews, emergency animal welfare incidents, and simultaneous operational demands across multiple municipalities. Within this structure, the availability of immediate operational support, supervisory involvement, and additional trained Animal Services personnel during complex incidents may be limited. The Review further found that no formal mutual-aid framework or shared operational protocol existed to provide appropriately trained operational assistance during high-risk animal incidents, which further affected the availability of specialized support when additional resources were required.

The Review found that staffing levels, supervisory capacity, operational coverage, and access to trained operational support formed part of the broader operational environment in which the incident unfolded. These organizational factors influenced the resources available to responding personnel throughout the incident and represent important considerations in evaluating both the operational response and the Division's preparedness to manage future complex or resource-intensive incidents.

Supporting: Section 5.4, "Organizational Structure"; "Operational Capacity on the Date of Incident"; "Availability of Operational Support"; "Organizational Findings"; Section 7.1, "Organizational systems and governance" (Operational Resources; Operational Coverage and Deployment).

Finding 5 - Supervisory Availability Was Limited Throughout the Incident

The Review found that the Animal Services Division's supervisory model requires the Divisional supervisor to fulfill both frontline operational and supervisory responsibilities. This dual role requires the same individual to balance operational response, administrative responsibilities, employee support, leadership, and supervisory oversight. As a result, the supervisor's capacity to provide dedicated supervisory oversight during complex or evolving incidents may be limited when they are engaged in frontline duties, other Divisional responsibilities, or are otherwise unavailable.

On the date of the incident, the Divisional supervisor was on scheduled leave and was therefore not available to provide direct on-scene supervisory support. Despite being away from duty, the supervisor responded when contacted and provided operational guidance remotely following the bite. This demonstrated a commitment to supporting the responding officers under the circumstances. However, reliance upon an off-duty supervisor for operational guidance also illustrates the limitations of a structure in

which dedicated alternate supervisory capacity is not consistently available when the designated supervisor is absent.

The Review found that this limitation relates primarily to the structure and capacity of the supervisory model rather than the actions of the individual performing the supervisory role. Requiring one individual to maintain both frontline operational responsibilities and broader supervisory functions may limit the time and availability necessary to provide consistent operational oversight, employee development, coaching, quality assurance, incident management, and other leadership responsibilities. The Review also identified limited evidence of formal leadership or supervisory development for personnel who may be required to assume supervisory responsibilities in the designated supervisor's absence.
Timely access to supervisory support represents an important component of complex incident management, particularly where operational priorities, officer safety, animal welfare, evidence preservation, and resource deployment require continual assessment as circumstances evolve.

Supporting: Section 4.3, Decision Point 6; Section 5.3, Point 6; Section 5.4, "Operational Capacity on the Date of Incident"; "Organizational Findings"; Section 7.1, "Organizational systems and governance" – Supervisory Capacity.

Finding 6 - Several Individual Operational Decisions Were Reasonable Given the Information Available at the Time

The Review found that, notwithstanding the opportunities for improvement identified throughout this report, a number of individual operational decisions made during the incident were reasonable when considered within the context of the information available to the responding officers at the time those decisions were made. The Review recognizes that officers were required to assess a dynamic and evolving situation, balance competing operational priorities, and make decisions in real time while responding to changing behavioural, environmental, and safety considerations.

The Review found that [redacted] decision to request assistance from a [redacted] Animal Services Officer after repeated loading attempts proved unsuccessful was reasonable and appropriately recognized that the situation had progressed beyond what she believed she could safely manage alone. Similarly, following the bite, transitioning away from direct hands-on handling to the use of a catch pole represented a reasonable

response to the increased risk associated with further direct physical contact while the dog was still understood to require containment.

The Review also identified several other decisions that represented reasonable efforts to obtain additional information, support, or resources as the incident evolved. Prior to attending the scene, recognizing that the dogs may have been previously encountered by Animal Services and taking steps to determine whether identifying or owner information was available represented a reasonable effort to gather information that could assist in the response. Following the bite, seeking supervisory guidance was also reasonable given the material change in the operational circumstances and the increasing complexity of the incident. The subsequent offer of veterinary transport for assessment represented an appropriate course of action, as did the decision to return the German Shorthaired Pointer to its identified owner in accordance with Divisional procedures. In relation to the latter, recognizing the officer-safety concerns associated with attending the owner's location and obtaining additional support before proceeding further also demonstrated appropriate consideration of the changed operational circumstances.

These findings do not indicate that every subsequent action associated with these decisions, or the timing and manner in which they were implemented, was necessarily optimal. Rather, they recognize that the underlying decisions themselves were reasonable when assessed within the circumstances and information available at the relevant points in the incident.

Supporting: Section 4.1, Decision Findings 1, 7, 12, 15, 17; Section 4.2, Decision Findings 1, 7, 11, 12; Section 4.3, Decision Point 3.

Finding 7 – Pre-Handling Information Gathering, Animal Assessment and Documentation

The Review identified opportunities to strengthen the consistency of information gathering, initial animal assessment, and documentation prior to physical handling, restraint, or loading. Information available at the initial point of contact may provide important context regarding the circumstances surrounding the animal, previous interactions or handling, observable behaviour, physical condition, and potential safety considerations relevant to the operational response.

The Review further identified the importance of establishing an initial behavioural and physical baseline, where circumstances permit and it is safe to do so. Observations

made before physical intervention can provide information regarding the animal's body language, level of arousal, mobility, observable injuries, and other conditions that may inform subsequent handling and decision-making. They may also provide a useful point of comparison where the animal's presentation changes as the incident progresses.

Similarly, animal identification and photographic documentation completed at an early stage of the response, where safe and practicable, can assist in establishing the animal's identity and condition and provide a contemporaneous record for subsequent comparison. Where these processes are delayed until after handling, restraint, or loading has occurred, the resulting documentation may not reflect the animal's presentation at the initial point of contact.

Collectively, the Review found that greater consistency in pre-handling information gathering, initial observation and assessment, identification, and documentation would strengthen the information available to officers when making handling and transport decisions and provide a clearer record of the animal's condition and presentation at the beginning of an operational response.

Supporting: Section 4.1, Decision Findings 2, 3; Section 4.2, Decision Findings 2, 3; Section 4.3, Decision Point 1, 9.

Finding 8 - Equipment Readiness Was Not Reliably Verified Before Deployment

The Review found that, although pre-shift vehicle inspections were documented as completed, the inspection process did not consistently verify the presence, condition, and operational readiness of required equipment. During the Review, recurring deficiencies were identified across multiple Animal Services vehicles, including inconsistent equipment inventories, catch-pole maintenance and storage concerns, unlabeled equipment intended for wildlife and domestic animal use, and deficiencies affecting equipment accessibility and vehicle functionality.

These observations indicate that the identified deficiencies were not isolated to a single vehicle or incident but reflected broader inconsistencies in fleet management, equipment maintenance, and operational readiness. The Review also found that officers were not always able to confirm the availability or condition of required equipment, raising questions regarding the effectiveness of existing inspection and verification practices.

Operational readiness is a fundamental component of officer safety, animal welfare, and effective incident management. The Review found that reliable verification of equipment availability, condition, and functionality is necessary to ensure that responding personnel have immediate access to the equipment required to safely and effectively manage dynamic operational incidents.

Supporting: Section 4.3, Decision Point 12; Section 5.1, "Application of Animal Handling and Equipment Training" – pre-shift equipment inspection; Section 5.2, item 7; Section 5.3, Point 3; Section 6.1, "Vehicle Inspection Findings Summary" and "Analysis and Recommendations – Equipment Standardization"; Section 7.1, "Equipment Readiness and Inspection."

Finding 9 - Operational Information Was Not Fully Communicated Between Responding Officers

The Review found that the operational context developed by the [redacted] officer over approximately forty-five minutes, including behavioural observations, previous handling attempts, operational concerns, available owner information, and the strategies already employed, was not fully communicated to the [redacted] officer before she became actively involved in managing the dog. As a result, the [redacted] officer commenced her assessment and engagement without the benefit of the full operational picture that had developed prior to her arrival. At the same time, establishing a shared operational understanding required information to be both communicated and actively clarified between the responding officers. The available evidence indicates that this two-way exchange did not occur to the extent necessary before the [redacted] officer became directly involved, resulting in both officers proceeding without a clear shared understanding of the circumstances.

Effective communication during dynamic incidents extends beyond the exchange of factual information. It provides responding personnel with a shared understanding of the evolving situation, supports coordinated decision-making, promotes consistent behavioural assessment, and assists in the development of safe and effective operational strategies. The Review found that opportunities existed to strengthen both the completeness of the information exchanged and the coordination of the operational response as the incident progressed.

The available evidence also identified opportunities to strengthen operational decision-making, effective communication, role clarity, and coordinated teamwork to safely manage complex incidents involving multiple responding personnel.

Supporting: Section 4.1, Decision Findings 9; Section 4.2, Decision Findings 2; Section 7.1, "Communication Breakdown" (Communication from [redacted] Collection of data from [redacted]).

Finding 10 - Civilians Were Repeatedly Involved in Physically Handling and Restraining the Dog

The Review found that members of the public remained actively involved in physically handling, loading, and assisting in the management of the dog at multiple stages of the incident. Their involvement continued as the incident became increasingly prolonged and operationally complex, including after behavioural concerns had been identified and the responding officers had recognized an elevated level of operational risk.

The Review found that the members of the public were acting with the intention of assisting the responding officers and remained cooperative throughout the incident. However, as the operational environment evolved, continued civilian involvement introduced additional considerations relating to scene management, officer coordination, public safety, and the ability to maintain consistent control of the incident. Opportunities existed to reassess the role of civilians as the operational strategy changed and the risks associated with the incident increased.

The Review further found that, following the bite, civilians continued to play an active role in managing a dog that had demonstrated an injury-producing behavioural response. As the operational risk increased, opportunities existed to reassess civilian involvement, clarify roles, and maintain consistent operational control of the scene.

The Review also found that Divisional policies and procedures provide limited guidance regarding the circumstances under which civilian assistance should be utilized during active animal apprehensions. As a result, decisions regarding public involvement were left largely to the judgment of the responding officers based upon the circumstances they encountered.

Supporting: Section 4.1, Decision Findings 4; Section 5.1, "Application of Animal Handling and Equipment Training" – reliance on untrained civilians to restrain the dog; Section 7.1, "Multiple attempts of loading by [redacted] and "Public Safety.".

Finding 11 - The Dog's Behaviour Was Context-Dependent, and the Bite Reflected a Defensive Response Within an Identifiable Sequence

The Review found that the dog's behavioural presentation remained closely associated with the circumstances of the incident and changed in response to the evolving operational environment. Throughout the interaction, the dog's behavioural communication was expressed primarily through subtle changes in posture, body language, and behavioural resistance rather than overt aggressive displays. The available behavioural evidence does not indicate that the dog demonstrated generalized or indiscriminate aggression during the incident.

The behavioural assessment also considered the cumulative context preceding the bite. The dog had reportedly been running at large for an extended period before Animal Services attendance and was subsequently exposed to repeated loading and handling attempts involving multiple individuals, with limited evidence of substantial opportunities for decompression between attempts. Access to water was not provided until later in the incident. These circumstances increased the duration and demands of the interaction and may have contributed to the dog's behavioural and physiological state. However, the available evidence does not permit determination of the degree to which exertion, hydration status, physiological stress, or other individual factors influenced the dog's behaviour.

The Review further found that the bite occurred within an identifiable behavioural sequence following a prolonged period of repeated handling and loading attempts, increasing physical interaction, and direct physical contact with the dog's collar. Based upon the behavioural assessment conducted during this Review, the bite was most consistent with a context-dependent defensive response occurring within the specific circumstances of the interaction rather than an unprovoked or generalized aggressive act.

The Review emphasizes that these conclusions are based upon the behavioural evidence available for review and should not be interpreted as diminishing the seriousness of the bite or the injury sustained by the responding officer. Rather, they describe the behavioural characteristics of the incident as supported by the available

evidence and provide important context for evaluating the operational decisions, risk assessment, and management strategies examined throughout this report.

Supporting: Section 3, Findings 1, 2, 3, 4.

Finding 12 - The Bite Materially Changed the Behavioural and Operational Risk Presented

The Review found that the bite represented a significant change in the behavioural and operational circumstances of the incident. Up to that point, the responding officers had been managing a dog that had demonstrated resistance to loading but had not caused injury to a responding officer. Following the bite, they were required to manage a dog that had demonstrated a context-dependent, injury-producing response during direct physical handling. This represented a material change in the operational risk and required subsequent decisions to be made within a different behavioural and safety context.

The behavioural assessment concluded that the bite was most consistent with a context-dependent defensive response occurring during direct physical interaction and that the dog did not subsequently demonstrate generalized or indiscriminate aggression. However, the behavioural characteristics of the bite did not diminish the significance of the injury sustained by the responding officer or the demonstrated potential for further injury should similar direct physical handling continue. Within the operational understanding that the dog still required containment and transport, transitioning away from direct hands-on handling to a method that provided greater working distance represented a reasonable response to the changed risk. The use of a catch pole was therefore a reasonable containment option at this stage of the incident.

Accordingly, the Review found that the bite materially changed both the information available to the responding officers and the range of handling options that could reasonably be considered. This finding relates specifically to the decision to transition away from direct physical handling and consider catch pole restraint following the bite; it does not determine the appropriateness of the manner in which catch pole restraint was subsequently applied, managed, or continued. Those subsequent decisions must be assessed independently within the behavioural, operational, organizational, and environmental circumstances existing at each stage of the incident.

Supporting: Section 3, Findings 6, 7.

Finding 13 - Behavioural Observations Were Not Consistently Integrated into Operational Decision-Making

The Review found that the responding officers recognized and described a number of changes in the dog's behavioural presentation throughout the incident, including changes in body language, emotional arousal, behavioural resistance, and physical condition. These observations demonstrate that behavioural assessment formed part of the officers' ongoing evaluation of the incident as it progressed.

The Review further found that, while these behavioural observations were recognized, they were not consistently incorporated into the ongoing assessment of operational risk or reflected in subsequent tactical decisions as the incident evolved. As circumstances changed, opportunities existed to more fully integrate the dog's changing behavioural presentation into the continual reassessment of operational priorities, handling strategies, and overall incident management.

The Review further identified limited evidence of structured, recurring organizational training specifically focused on canine behavioural assessment, reinforcing the importance of integrating behavioural science into ongoing operational decision-making.

The Review recognizes that behavioural assessment during dynamic incidents is inherently complex and must be balanced alongside officer safety, public safety, animal welfare, available resources, and evolving operational demands. Nevertheless, the ability to continually integrate behavioural observations into operational decision-making remains an important component of effective incident management and formed a recurring theme throughout this Review.

Supporting: Section 3, Findings 1–7; Section 4.1, Decision Findings 2, 5, 8, 11, 12; Section 4.2, Decision Findings 3, 5, 6, 12; Section 5.1, "Organizational Training Gaps Identified – A. Canine Behaviour Assessment"; Section 7.1, "[redacted] Bite" and "Application of Catchpole.".

Finding 14 Operational Reassessment Did Not Consistently Keep Pace with the Evolving Circumstances of the Incident

The Review found that the operational circumstances changed repeatedly throughout the incident as new information became available, behavioural observations evolved, additional resources were identified, and the dog's physical condition changed. These developments created multiple opportunities to reassess the operational approach and determine whether modifications to the existing strategy were appropriate.

The Review further found that, while individual operational decisions were made throughout the incident, the overall management strategy remained largely consistent despite these changing circumstances. Opportunities existed at several key decision points, including following repeated unsuccessful loading attempts, the availability of owner information, changes in the dog's behavioural presentation, the continued involvement of members of the public in handling and loading efforts, the application of restraint equipment, periods of reduced emotional arousal, and the dog's subsequent physiological deterioration, to reconsider the operational approach in light of the information then available.

Dynamic incident management requires continual assessment and reassessment as circumstances evolve. The Review found that the operational response did not consistently adapt to the changing behavioural, operational, and medical circumstances that developed throughout the incident. This recurring pattern was identified across multiple independent analyses and represents one of the most consistently supported findings arising from this Review.

Supporting: Section 4.1, Decision Findings 5, 8, 11, 14; Section 4.2, Decision Findings 3, 5, 6, 8, 9; Section 4.3, Decision Point 1, 4, 8, 13; Section 5.1, "Application of Animal Handling and Equipment Training" – ongoing reassessment paragraphs; Section 7.1, "Multiple attempts of loading by [redacted] "Application of Catchpole"; "Application of Second catchpole."

Finding 15 - The Organization Lacked a Comprehensive Operational Framework Governing Tactical Catch-Pole Deployment

The Review found that catch poles are recognized Divisional equipment and that catch pole use, including proper positioning and restraint techniques, is identified within the municipality's Animal Services Officer Training Guide as an officer competency. The

Review also confirmed that officers received practical instruction in catch pole use. However, the written policies, procedures, and supporting operational materials reviewed did not establish a comprehensive framework governing the deployment and management of catch pole restraint during domestic-dog apprehensions. In particular, the written framework could be strengthened through clearer direction concerning deployment and progression of handling methods, coordinated multi-officer use, management and monitoring of restraint, reassessment as circumstances change, transition to alternative handling or containment methods, and criteria for modifying or discontinuing an approach.

The Review further identified limited documented structure for the ongoing maintenance and reinforcement of catch pole competency following initial training. While the municipality's training framework identifies catch pole use as a required competency, the materials reviewed did not identify a formalized process for periodic practical reassessment or refresher training specific to catch pole handling. This creates an opportunity to strengthen continuity between initial instruction, written operational expectations, and ongoing competency maintenance.

The Review found that this limitation formed part of the broader organizational environment in which the incident occurred. The issue identified is therefore not an absence of catch pole equipment, training, or recognized competency expectations, but an opportunity to more fully connect these existing elements through written operational guidance and ongoing competency reinforcement. A more integrated framework would provide officers and supervisors with a consistent organizational reference for training, field application, operational decision-making, and post-incident review.

As the incident evolved beyond a routine animal-at-large response into a prolonged and increasingly complex operational event, officers were required to apply their training and make operational decisions without the benefit of comprehensive written guidance addressing how catch pole restraint should be managed as circumstances changed. This distinction between the training available to officers and the written operational framework supporting its field application was identified across the operational, policy, and training reviews.

Supporting: Section 4.3, Decision Point 11; Section 5.1, "Organizational Training Gaps Identified – B. Catchpole Competency Maintenance"; Section 5.2; Section 5.3, Points 3 and 4.

Finding 16 - Catch-Pole Techniques Observed During the Incident Were Not Consistently Aligned with the Organization's Available Training

The Review found that the responding officers had received practical training addressing both animal apprehension and the use of catch poles. This training included techniques relevant to managing animals before progressing to specialized restraint, including opportunities for decompression, alternative methods of motivation and cooperative handling, and adjustment of the handling approach in response to the animal's behaviour. The officers had also received practical catch pole instruction addressing principles and techniques relevant to the restraint methods employed during this incident. Accordingly, the Review found that sufficient foundational training and guidance had been provided to support the selection and application of appropriate handling and restraint strategies within the circumstances encountered.

Despite this training, several aspects of the handling and catch pole techniques observed during the incident were not consistent with the principles and practices in which the officers were trained. Prior to the application of catch pole restraint, opportunities existed to more fully apply trained approaches relating to decompression, alternative motivation, and adaptation of the handling strategy in response to the dog's behavioural presentation. Following the transition to catch pole restraint, identified differences included the immediate application of a second catch pole without a documented assessment of whether a single point of restraint provided sufficient control, the management of cable tension, officer hand positioning, the transfer of restraint equipment between officers during active restraint, and the use of the catch poles while attempting to elevate the dog during loading attempts.

The Review recognizes that the responding officers were managing a dynamic and evolving situation and were required to make decisions in real time while balancing officer safety, public safety, animal welfare, and the need to maintain control of the dog. Those operational circumstances do not alter the finding that aspects of the handling and catch pole techniques employed during the incident differed from the training the officers had received. Based on the available evidence, the Review establishes that the relevant training had been provided and that key safety elements of that training were not applied during portions of the incident.

This finding addresses consistency between operational technique and available training and does not establish that any particular techniques caused or medically contributed to the dog’s death.

Supporting: Section 4.1, Decision Findings 14; Section 4.2, Decision Findings 8, 9, 14; Section 5.1, "Application of Animal Handling and Equipment Training" – hand positioning, pole transfer, and lifting; Section 7.1, "Catch Pole Management" – Hand Positioning; Transfer of Catch Poles Between Officers.

Finding 17 - Owner-Assisted Resolution Was Not Fully Integrated into the Evolving Operational Strategy

The Review found that owner information became available while the incident was still actively evolving and before physical restraint measures had reached their highest level of escalation. As the incident progressed and repeated loading attempts proved unsuccessful, the availability of the owner represented an additional operational resource that could reasonably have been considered as part of the ongoing assessment of available response options.

The operational strategy, however, continued to focus on containment and transport using the approach that had already been established. Following unsuccessful loading attempts involving dual catch pole restraint, the officers continued to seek additional resources to support containment of the dog, including contacting York Regional Police (YRP) for assistance. This occurred before owner-assisted resolution was incorporated into the operational strategy.

As the circumstances continued to evolve, including unsuccessful loading attempts, continued difficulty in safely controlling and transporting the dog, and the need to seek additional external resources, opportunities existed to pause and reassess the available operational options. At this stage, reassessment could reasonably have included consideration of whether continued efforts to contain and transport the dog using the existing approach remained appropriate, as well as whether owner involvement represented a viable alternative within the circumstances then present.

The Review identified that the timely integration of new information into evolving operational decision-making is an important component of dynamic incident management. The availability of owner information represented one such opportunity for reassessment and formed part of the broader pattern of operational decision-making identified throughout this Review.

Supporting: Section 4.1, Decision Findings 8; Section 4.3, Decision Point 7; Section 7.1, "Multiple attempts of loading by [redacted]

Finding 18 - Opportunities Existed to Strengthen the Ongoing Assessment of the Dog's Physical Condition

The Review found that, as the dog's physical condition changed throughout the incident, responding personnel observed a number of indicators relevant to the dog's condition, including changes in respiratory effort, posture, movement, responsiveness, and visible bleeding. However, the available evidence does not demonstrate that these observations were brought together through a consistent process of ongoing assessment and reassessment to assist in evaluating changes in the dog's condition as the incident progressed.

Following the dog's collapse and loss of responsiveness, the documented assessment included a toe-pinch response check. The Review recognizes that Animal Services Officers are not veterinary professionals and should not be expected to undertake diagnostic or medical assessments beyond their training and operational role. However, the significant change in the dog's presentation created an opportunity to more systematically consider and document observable indicators of the dog's condition, where safe and practicable, and to use those observations when determining whether the operational approach or priorities required reassessment.

The Review identified an opportunity to strengthen operational guidance and training regarding the observation and reassessment of an animal's physical condition during prolonged or complex incidents. Such guidance could assist personnel in recognizing and documenting observable changes within the scope of their operational role and in determining when those changes should prompt reconsideration of handling or restraint strategies, supervisory consultation, or veterinary assessment.

Supporting: Section 4.2, Decision Findings 16; Section 5.1, "Application of Animal Handling and Equipment Training" – the toe-pinch check and absence of a structured medical assessment; Section 7.1, "Catch Pole Management" – Reassessment of Animal Welfare During Restraint.

Finding 19 – Multiple Factors Were Relevant to the Dog's Physiological Deterioration, but Their Relative Contribution Cannot Be Determined

The Review found that the dog's physiological deterioration occurred within a cumulative behavioural and physiological context that developed before and continued throughout the restraint period. Prior to restraint, relevant factors included prolonged

physical exertion, repeated unsuccessful loading attempts and continued handling, limited evidence of substantial recovery periods between attempts, and unknown hydration status. During restraint, additional relevant factors included substantial physical resistance, the appearance of observable bleeding during dual catch pole restraint and identified aspects of catch pole management that differed from the training the officers had received. The potential relevance of underlying medical conditions or interactions among these factors also cannot be excluded.

The Review recognizes that injury occurring during catch pole restraint does not, in isolation, establish inappropriate equipment use. Catch pole restraint involves physical interaction between the animal and the restraint equipment, and an animal's own movements or resistance during that process may create a risk of injury. Where an animal exhibits a particularly intense or sustained physical response to restraint, that risk may increase, even when the equipment is being appropriately applied and managed.

Conversely, inappropriate application or management of restraint equipment may increase the potential for injury. In this incident, visible bleeding developed during the period of dual catch pole restraint; however, the available evidence does not establish the source of the bleeding, the mechanism by which it occurred, or whether it was associated with the dog's physical resistance, the application or management of the restraint equipment, or another factor. The observed bleeding therefore cannot, in itself, establish whether the restraint equipment was appropriately or inappropriately applied or managed.

The identified differences between aspects of catch pole management during the incident and the training the officers had received are relevant when assessing the manner in which the restraint equipment was managed. However, those differences do not, in themselves, establish that the manner of equipment use caused or contributed to the dog's subsequent loss of responsiveness. The temporal relationship between dual catch pole restraint, the dog's physical resistance, the appearance of visible bleeding, and the subsequent deterioration is also relevant to the assessment; however, temporal association alone does not establish the mechanism or cause of the observed injury or subsequent deterioration.

Accordingly, restraint-related injury remains a potential contributing factor that cannot be excluded; however, the available evidence does not permit the Review to determine whether inappropriate catch pole management caused or materially contributed to the

dog's subsequent loss of responsiveness. Nor can the available evidence reliably determine the relative contribution of the multiple factors identified throughout the incident. In the absence of contemporaneous veterinary assessment, an external veterinary post-mortem examination, or veterinary necropsy evidence, any more definitive conclusion regarding physiological causation would extend beyond what the available evidence can support.

Supporting: Section 3, Finding 5; Section 4.1, Decision Findings 11–14; Section 4.2, Decision Findings 8, 9, 12–16; Section 4.3, Decision Point 8, 11, 13; [redacted] 4.4; Section 5.1, "Application of Animal Handling and Equipment Training" – equipment-management inconsistencies and the medical-assessment gap; Section 7.1, "Catch Pole Management" – Hand Positioning; Transfer of Catch Poles Between Officers; Lifting the Dog Using the Catch Poles; Reassessment of Animal Welfare During Restraint.

Finding 20 - Operational Documentation Did Not Fully Capture the Evolution of the Incident

The Review found that the responding officers' notebook entries, incident reports, and accident reports documented the primary events of the incident but did not consistently capture the evolving operational context, behavioural observations, decision-making processes, or the rationale supporting key tactical decisions. As a result, the documentation contained substantially less operational detail than was later provided through interviews and follow-up investigative review.

The Review further found that comprehensive operational documentation serves a purpose beyond recording the outcome of an incident. It provides an accurate record of the information available at the time, the factors influencing operational decisions, the behavioural observations made throughout the incident, and the reasoning supporting significant changes in operational strategy. This information is essential to effective incident reconstruction, organizational learning, supervisory review, and post-incident accountability.

The Review found that the limited operational detail contained within the original documentation increased the Review's reliance upon subsequent interviews and corroborative evidence to reconstruct the progression of the incident and evaluate the operational decision-making that occurred. Comprehensive contemporaneous

documentation therefore represents an important component of effective operational practice and organizational learning.

Supporting: Section 4.1, Decision Findings 17; Section 4.2, Decision Findings 18; Section 4.3, Decision Point 9; Section 5.3, Point 7.

Review Summary

The Review found that the progression and management of this incident cannot be attributed to any single action, decision, individual, or circumstance. Rather, the incident developed through the cumulative interaction of behavioural, operational, organizational, procedural, communication, equipment, documentation, and environmental factors identified in this report.

While the Review identified numerous opportunities to strengthen operational practices, training, policy, supervision, documentation, and organizational preparedness, many of these opportunities relate not to individual decisions viewed in isolation, but to the cumulative effect of multiple decisions, circumstances, and contributing factors as the incident evolved. The findings contained within this report should be considered collectively rather than as isolated criticisms of individual actions.

The Review recognizes that responding personnel were required to make complex decisions in real time while balancing competing operational priorities within the resources and information available to them. The review has therefore sought to evaluate those decisions objectively, fairly, and within the context in which they were made. Collectively, the findings presented in this section provide the evidence-based foundation upon which the recommendations contained in Section 9 have been developed.

Lead Author: Julie Speyer
Technical Review: Amanda Barrett, Victoria Blondin, Andrew Reynolds

SECTION 9 – RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Recommendations

The recommendations presented in this section have been developed directly from the evidence-based findings identified throughout this Review. Each recommendation addresses one or more of the organizational, operational, procedural, training, supervisory, equipment, or communication themes identified during the

multidisciplinary review and is intended to strengthen the Animal Services Division's ability to safely and effectively manage future incidents of a similar nature.

These recommendations are intended to support organizational learning by identifying practical opportunities to strengthen policies, procedures, operational practices, training, supervisory support, equipment readiness, and interagency coordination based upon the findings of this Review.

While each recommendation responds to one or more specific findings, they should be considered collectively as components of an integrated organizational improvement strategy. Many of the recommendations complement one another and are intended to work together to enhance officer safety, public safety, animal welfare, operational consistency, and organizational preparedness.

The recommendations that follow are intended not only to address the findings identified during this Review, but also to strengthen organizational preparedness, support responding personnel, promote continuous organizational learning, and reduce the likelihood of similar incidents occurring in the future. Similarly, the identification of an opportunity for organizational improvement should not be interpreted as establishing that the absence of the recommended measure rendered a particular decision or practice unreasonable at the time of the incident.

Recommendation 1 – Develop and Implement a Critical Incident Response Protocol for Significant Animal Services Incidents

The Review identified an opportunity to improve the management of significant Animal Services incidents through the development of a formal Critical Incident Response Protocol. Such a protocol would provide a consistent organizational framework for managing incidents involving serious injury, death, or other events likely to require administrative review, legal proceedings, or independent investigation/review. It would also establish clear expectations for scene preservation, evidence collection, investigative notification, documentation, and coordination between responding personnel, supervisory staff, veterinary professionals, and partner agencies.

Consideration should be given to establishing standardized procedures for identifying what constitutes a significant incident, identifying witnesses, coordinating with police, veterinary, legal and other qualified professionals where further investigation is required and preserving transient physical evidence, securing and documenting incident scenes

through comprehensive photography and video, identifying and preserving time-sensitive digital evidence and records/evidence within the Town's possession or control, maintaining continuity of evidence, documenting operational decision-making, and identifying circumstances requiring early notification of supervisory personnel or independent investigators. Significant incidents should also be subject to a structured operational debrief or review focused on identifying lessons learned, equipment or training issues, policy gaps and opportunities for improvement.

The Review further identified an opportunity to improve the timely identification, separation, and independent documentation of witness accounts following significant incidents. Early collection of witness information assists in preserving individual recollections before they are influenced by subsequent discussions, media reporting, or the natural passage of time. Where significant discrepancies arise, early documentation also supports the organization's ability to compare independent accounts against available physical, documentary, and digital evidence during any subsequent Review.

Consideration should also be given to identifying any legal authority and establishing a structured process for preserving objective medical evidence following significant incidents involving serious injury or death. This may include comprehensive photographic documentation of injuries and the scene, consultation with appropriate veterinary professionals, and clearly defined criteria to guide decisions regarding obtaining additional veterinary forensic examination or post-mortem assessment where the circumstances of an incident warrant further independent evaluation.

Implementation of a comprehensive Critical Incident Response Protocol would support organizational learning, improve investigative reliability, support transparency and accountability, provide guidelines to obtain and preserve objective evidence, and reduce uncertainty during future Reviews involving complex or high-profile incidents.

Recommendation 2 – Enhance Organizational Capacity and Service Delivery

The review identified an opportunity to build upon the organizational capacity of the Animal Services Division through a comprehensive review of its staffing model, supervisory structure, and service delivery framework. Such a review would assist in determining whether operational resources remain appropriately aligned with the geographic area, population served, legislative responsibilities, and operational resiliency and demands placed upon the Division.

Consideration should be given to evaluating frontline staffing levels, supervisory coverage, deployment practices, operational redundancy, emergency response capability, workload distribution, and the Division's ability to respond effectively to routine service calls, complex Reviews, high-risk enforcement activities, simultaneous incidents, and prolonged operational events. Consideration should also be given to the development of formal mutual-aid agreements with neighboring municipalities or collaborative response models capable of providing appropriately trained operational assistance during significant or resource-intensive incidents.

The review would further provide an opportunity to assess the availability of specialized operational support, succession planning, leadership capacity, and overall organizational resilience to ensure that responding personnel have timely access to appropriate resources, supervision, and operational assistance when managing complex incidents.

Periodic review of organizational capacity would support informed operational decision-making, improve resilience during high-demand incidents, enhance officer and public safety, promote animal welfare, and assist in ensuring that the Division's operational model continues to reflect the evolving needs of the communities it serves.

Recommendation 3 – Expand Supervisory Capacity and Operational Support

The Review identified an opportunity to further develop supervisory support within the Animal Services Division by reviewing the Division's supervisory model, leadership development practices, and the availability of operational guidance during complex or evolving incidents. Expanded supervisory capacity would enhance the Division's ability to provide operational oversight, support decision-making, coordinate available resources, and assist personnel responding during high-risk, complex, or prolonged events.

It is recommended that the Town evaluate the feasibility of establishing dedicated supervisory capacity to support consistent operational oversight, coaching, incident command, scene management, quality assurance, employee development, and emergency decision-making without requiring the individual providing that oversight to simultaneously perform routine frontline enforcement responsibilities.

Where dedicated supervisory capacity is not immediately feasible, it is recommended that formal supervisory coverage procedures be established to ensure qualified

operational oversight remains available during scheduled leave, absences, training, emergencies, and other periods of supervisory unavailability. This should include mechanisms for timely supervisory consultation and support when direct on-scene attendance is not immediately available, as well as consideration of leadership development and succession planning for personnel who may assume supervisory responsibilities.

Modernizing supervisory capacity and coverage would improve organizational resilience by supporting consistent operational decision-making, effective resource coordination, organizational learning, and the ongoing development of frontline personnel. It would also provide additional support during dynamic incidents while reinforcing officer safety, public safety, animal welfare, and organizational preparedness.

Recommendation 4 – Improve Pre-Handling Animal Assessment, Documentation, and Transport Practices

The Review identified an opportunity to expand on the Division's existing Animal Intake SOP by incorporating clearer expectations for pre-handling information gathering, initial animal observation, identification, and documentation before physical intervention occurs, where circumstances permit. Incorporating these elements within the existing SOP would provide responding personnel with a more consistent framework for assessing the circumstances and the animal prior to handling or loading, while supporting officer safety, animal welfare, informed decision-making, and effective incident management.

Consideration should be given to enhancing the existing Animal Intake SOP to identify information that may be relevant to obtain from persons who have possession or custody of an animal before physical handling occurs. This may include how long the person has had contact with the animal, whether they have previously encountered or interacted with the animal, how the animal came into their possession or custody, where and how the animal was confined, and whether any concerning behaviours, injuries, physical conditions, or other notable observations were identified. Incorporating these considerations into the intake process would assist responding personnel in developing a more complete understanding of the circumstances before selecting an appropriate handling approach.

The Animal Intake SOP should also establish expectations for initial observation of the animal before physical intervention, where safe and practicable. This may include

observable behaviour, body language, responsiveness, mobility, visible injuries, physical presentation, and other relevant characteristics. Establishing and documenting an initial baseline may assist officers in identifying potential risks, selecting appropriate handling methods, and distinguishing conditions or behaviours observed before intervention from those identified following handling or restraint.

Consideration should also be given to establishing expectations for identification scanning and photographic documentation at the earliest safe and practicable opportunity. Where circumstances do not reasonably permit these processes to occur before handling or loading, the SOP should provide sufficient operational flexibility for identification and documentation to occur once the animal has been safely contained or when circumstances otherwise permit.

The Review further identified the importance of maintaining continuity once an animal has been safely contained for transport. Where an animal has been loaded and secured and there is no identified safety, medical, legal, or operational reason for further intervention, unnecessary unloading, handling, and reloading should be minimized until arrival at the intended destination.

Clarifying these elements within the existing Animal Intake SOP would support a more consistent operational sequence of information gathering, initial observation and assessment, identification and documentation where safe and practicable, followed by appropriate handling, containment, and transport. This approach would support informed decision-making, improve documentation and continuity, minimize unnecessary handling, and promote officer and animal safety during routine and complex animal responses.

Recommendation 5 – Enhance Fleet, Equipment Oversight, and Operational Readiness

The Review identified an opportunity to refine the Division's fleet and equipment management practices through enhanced organizational oversight, quality assurance processes, and operational readiness standards. These organizational processes would help ensure that operational equipment remains consistently available, properly maintained, and ready for deployment while supporting officer safety, animal welfare, and effective incident management.

Consideration should be given to reviewing existing equipment inspection procedures, inventory management practices, preventative maintenance schedules, vehicle

configuration, storage methods, and documentation processes to ensure that operational expectations are being consistently achieved. Policies and processes may include standardization of vehicles, a pre-shift inspection list to ensure equipment/supplies are checked before responding to a call, a remove from service process, labelling equipment with a replacement identifier, maintaining an inventory list. Opportunities also exist to implement supervisory oversight through periodic verification of completed inspections, routine equipment audits, and quality assurance processes designed to identify deficiencies before they affect operational response.

The Review further identified an opportunity to improve consistency through standardized fleet equipment inventories, documented maintenance schedules, clear equipment identification, and regular review of operational readiness across all Divisional vehicles. Establishing a structured oversight process would support accountability, improve consistency, and reinforce the importance of equipment readiness as an integral component of safe and effective operational practice.

Enhanced fleet management, equipment oversight, and operational readiness would enhance organizational resilience, improve operational consistency, support informed decision-making, promote officers and public safety, and help ensure that responding personnel have reliable access to the equipment required to safely manage both routine and complex incidents.

Recommendation 6 – Advance Operational Communication, Team Coordination, and Collaborative Decision-Making

The Review identified an opportunity to further support operational communication and team coordination during dynamic incidents through the development of a more structured approach to information sharing between responding personnel. Effective operational communication extends beyond the exchange of factual information and supports the development of a shared understanding of evolving circumstances, coordinated decision-making, consistent behavioural assessment, and the effective management of operational risk.

Consideration should be given to developing standardized operational briefing practices for incidents involving multiple responding personnel. Such practices may include the communication of behavioural observations, previous handling attempts, operational concerns, available resources, owner information, identified hazards, and the rationale supporting the operational strategy in place at the time additional personnel become

involved. Establishing a consistent briefing process would assist responding personnel in developing a common understanding of the circumstances and reduce the potential for information gaps or differing perceptions of the operational situation.

The Review also identified an opportunity to further develop collaborative team performance through structured scenario-based exercises emphasizing communication, leadership, role clarity, shared situational awareness, and coordinated decision-making under operational stress. Providing personnel with opportunities to practice these skills in realistic operational environments would promote operational coordination, reinforce effective teamwork, and support more consistent decision-making during complex incidents involving multiple responders.

The Review identified existing interpersonal and working dynamics between the responding officers that may have influenced communication and collaboration during portions of the incident. While the available evidence does not establish the extent to which these dynamics affected operational decision-making or the outcome, their presence reinforces the importance of ensuring that personnel are able to maintain effective professional communication, coordination, and mutual operational support during high-stress incidents, regardless of existing interpersonal or working differences.

The Review further identified an opportunity to build upon existing leadership practices that encourage open communication, collaboration, and engagement between supervisors and staff. Expanding opportunities for regular operational debriefings, team discussions, collaborative problem-solving, and open communication regarding operational challenges would support a culture of continuous learning, foster positive professional working relationships, and encourage the early identification and resolution of concerns that may otherwise affect field operations.

Consideration should also be given to incorporating these principles into team development and scenario-based training. Training may provide opportunities to practice professional communication, role clarity, conflict management, mutual support, and coordinated decision-making in circumstances where responders have differing perspectives, working relationships, or operational approaches. The objective should be to ensure that interpersonal or working differences do not interfere with effective communication and coordinated operational response.

Continued development of operational communication, collaborative team performance, and leadership engagement would improve shared situational awareness,

support informed operational decision-making, enhance officer and public safety, promote animal welfare, and reinforce organizational capacity to effectively manage complex operational incidents.

Recommendation 7 – Develop Operational Guidance for Scene Management and Public/Owner Involvement

The Review identified an opportunity to further formalize operational guidance relating to scene management and the involvement of members of the public during active Animal Services incidents. Developing clear organizational expectations regarding public involvement would support consistent operational decision-making while assisting responding personnel in maintaining effective scene control as incidents evolve.

Consideration should be given to developing operational procedures that assist personnel in assessing when assistance from members of the public, including owners or other persons familiar with the animal, may be appropriate, how public roles should be communicated and managed, and the circumstances under which those roles should be modified or discontinued as operational complexity or risk increases. Such guidance should recognize that members of the public frequently become involved with the intention of assisting officers while also acknowledging that changing operational conditions may require responding personnel to reassess and redefine those roles as incidents progress.

The Review also identified an opportunity to further incorporate training relating to scene management, operational control, and role clarity during dynamic incidents. Scenario-based exercises that incorporate public involvement, changing behavioural risk, and evolving operational priorities would assist personnel in developing the confidence and judgment necessary to effectively balance public cooperation, officer safety, animal welfare, and operational control.

Increasing operational guidance for scene management and public involvement would support consistent operational practice, improve role clarity, enhance officer and public safety, promote animal welfare, and assist responding personnel in maintaining effective operational control during complex or evolving incidents.

Recommendation 8 – Implement Practical Application of Behavioural Assessment During Dynamic Incidents

The Review identified an opportunity to advance the practical application of behavioural assessment during dynamic Animal Services incidents. While the Review found evidence that behavioural observations were recognized throughout the incident, opportunities existed to more consistently integrate those observations into evolving operational decision-making as circumstances changed.

Consideration should be given to expanding practical, scenario-based training that emphasizes the application of behavioural assessment during realistic operational situations. Such training would provide personnel with opportunities to practice recognizing subtle behavioural changes, interpreting behaviour within its operational context, continually reassessing risk as incidents evolve, and incorporating behavioural observations into tactical decision-making under realistic field conditions.

The Review further identified an opportunity to integrate behavioural assessment more consistently throughout operational training rather than presenting it as standalone competency. Reinforcing behavioural observation as an ongoing component of dynamic incident management would assist personnel in recognizing changing behavioural presentations, adapting operational strategies as new information becomes available, and further integrating behavioural science into practical field operations.

The Review further identified an opportunity to reinforce the recognition of significant behavioural events as decision points within an incident. Behavioural events such as an injury-producing bite, marked changes in behavioural presentation, or other significant changes in operational risk provide important opportunities to formally reassess the operational strategy considering the new information available. Incorporating these decision points into practical scenario-based training would further support dynamic incident management and support timely adaptation of operational tactics as circumstances evolve.

The Review also identified an opportunity to further support behavioural assessment competencies through recurring professional development, practical exercises, case reviews, and periodic scenario-based training. Behavioural assessment is a skill that benefits from continual discussion, reflection, and practical application within realistic operational environments. Reinforcing these competencies on an ongoing basis would further support personnel in consistently integrating behavioural observations into

operational decision-making while promoting confidence, consistency, and professional judgment during dynamic incidents.

Consistent practical application of behavioural assessment would support informed operational decision-making, improve officer and public safety, promote animal welfare, and enhance personnel confidence when managing complex incidents involving changing behavioural presentations.

Recommendation 9 – Develop a Structured Dynamic Incident and Animal Apprehension Decision-Making Framework

The Review identified an opportunity to further support dynamic incident management through the development of a structured operational decision-making framework to support responding personnel during complex and evolving Animal Services incidents. Such a framework would assist personnel in recognizing significant operational developments, reassessing existing strategies, and adapting operational priorities as circumstances change throughout an incident.

Consideration should be given to developing practical guidance that identifies common operational decision points requiring formal reassessment. These may include

- Behavioural Changes;
- Unsuccessful tactics
- Injury
- Animal condition
- New personnel/equipment/resources
- Owner involvement
- Veterinary resources
- Transition, reduction or discontinuation of restraint

Rather than prescribing specific actions, the framework would encourage personnel to pause, reassess the available information, evaluate alternative operational options, and determine whether the existing strategy remains appropriate.

The Review further identified an opportunity to incorporate dynamic incident management principles into operational policies, supervisory practices, and scenario-based training. Reinforcing structured reassessment as a routine component of operational decision-making would foster greater adaptability, strengthen professional

judgment, and assist personnel in responding effectively to changing operational circumstances.

Implementing a structured dynamic incident management framework would promote informed decision-making, improve operational flexibility, enhance officer and public safety, support animal welfare, and reinforce a consistent organizational approach to managing complex and evolving incidents.

Recommendation 10 – Develop an Adaptive Apprehension Response Framework for Animal Apprehensions

The Review identified an opportunity to further establish operational consistency through the development of a comprehensive Adaptive Apprehension Response Framework to guide personnel during animal apprehensions. The framework would establish a structured decision-making process that assists personnel in selecting, applying, reassessing, and modifying operational strategies as incidents evolve while recognizing that every incident presents unique behavioural, environmental, and operational considerations.

Consideration should be given to developing operational guidance that identifies appropriate decision points throughout an incident, including initial assessment, information gathering, behavioural evaluation, selection of handling techniques, deployment of specialized equipment, reassessment following significant behavioural or operational changes, transition to alternative management strategies, and criteria supporting the reduction or discontinuation of restraint as circumstances improve. Rather than prescribing fixed responses, the framework would provide personnel with a structured process for evaluating available options and selecting the most appropriate operational response based upon the circumstances present at the time.

The Review further identified an opportunity to integrate this framework through Divisional policies, operational procedures, competency development, and scenario-based training. Consistent application of a structured operational response model would provide personnel with a common decision-making framework, support supervisory oversight, improve consistency between training and field operations, and promote organizational learning through a shared operational philosophy.

Implementing an Adaptive Apprehension Response Framework would support informed professional judgment, encourage continual reassessment as incidents evolve, promote

officer and public safety, enhance animal welfare, and provide consistent organizational guidance during routine and complex animal apprehensions.

Recommendation 11 – Maintain and Develop Practical Competency in Specialized Restraint Techniques

The Review identified an opportunity for continued development in the practical application of specialized animal restraint techniques through structured operational training and ongoing competency maintenance. While the Division has established training in the use of catch poles, the Review identified opportunities to further reinforce the consistent application of those techniques during dynamic operational incidents.

Consideration should be given to expanding practical, scenario-based training that provides personnel with opportunities to apply restraint techniques under realistic operational conditions. Such training should emphasize equipment selection, coordinated multi-officer deployment, cable tension management, officer positioning, transitions between restraint techniques, safe movement of restrained animals, approved techniques and equipment limitations, practices that should be avoided, circumstances requiring a technique to be modified or discontinued, and continual reassessment as operational circumstances evolve.

The Review also identified an opportunity to formalize ongoing competency maintenance through a structured in-house practical skills development program led by appropriately qualified Divisional personnel. Regular hands-on practice sessions, practical demonstrations, operational debriefings, and scenario-based exercises would provide personnel with opportunities to refine perishable skills, reinforce established operational techniques, and maintain confidence in the use of specialized equipment between formal certification or recertification courses. This approach represents a practical and cost-effective method of supporting continual professional development while promoting greater consistency between organizational training and field operations.

Consideration should also be given to establishing periodic documented competency assessments for key practical skills, including the use of specialized restraint equipment, animal handling, lifting and movement techniques, and containment procedures. These assessments may be conducted internally by appropriately qualified personnel and should require personnel to demonstrate practical competency against established Divisional procedures and training standards. The frequency of assessment

should reflect the complexity, frequency of operational use, and potential safety implications of each skill. Where competency gaps are identified, additional training and reassessment should occur before personnel are expected to independently perform the affected technique in operational circumstances. In addition to supporting organizational assurance, regular competency assessment provides personnel with structured opportunities to refresh perishable skills, identify areas requiring additional practice, and maintain confidence in their ability to perform specialized operational tasks safely and effectively.

The Review further identified an opportunity to incorporate practical competency development into routine supervisory oversight and professional development activities. Regular review of operational techniques, discussion of emerging best practices, and practical reinforcement of established procedures would help ensure that specialized skills remain current while fostering a culture of continuous learning, mentorship, and operational excellence throughout the Division.

Maintaining practical competency in specialized restraint techniques would support consistent operational decision-making, enhance officer and public safety, promote animal welfare, reinforce organizational expectations, and ensure that specialized operational skills remain current through continued practice, mentorship, and professional development.

Recommendation 12 – Incorporate Operational Resource Reassessment into Incident Management Procedures

The Review identified an opportunity to provide greater structure to operational decision-making by incorporating the reassessment of available operational resources into the Division's incident management procedures. As incidents evolve, new information, personnel, equipment, and other resources may become available that have the potential to influence the operational strategy. Establishing a structured process for evaluating these resources would support informed decision-making and encourage continued adaptation as circumstances change.

Consideration should be given to incorporating operational resource reassessment into Divisional policies and operational guidance. This may include the evaluation of owner involvement, additional responding personnel, specialized equipment, veterinary consultation, external agency support, or other resources that become available during the progression of an incident. Rather than requiring specific operational responses, the

guidance should encourage personnel to actively consider whether newly available resources create opportunities to modify or improve the existing operational strategy.

The Review further identified an opportunity to reinforce this principle through scenario-based training and operational debriefings that encourage personnel to continually evaluate the resources available to them and to recognize when evolving circumstances create opportunities to adopt alternative approaches. Integrating operational resource reassessment into routine incident management would contribute to informed professional judgment, encourage operational flexibility, and support more effective management of dynamic incidents.

Routine consideration and integration of available operational resources would support adaptive decision-making, improve operational effectiveness, enhance officer and public safety, promote animal welfare, and reinforce the Division's commitment to thoughtful, evidence-informed incident management.

Recommendation 13 – Expand Operational Guidance for Recognizing and Responding to Signs of Animal Distress or Deterioration

The Review identified an opportunity to expand existing operational guidance relating to recognizing and responding to signs of animal distress or deterioration during Animal Services incidents. The development of a structured observational assessment and reassessment process would provide Animal Control Officers with a practical and dynamic decision-making framework that can be applied as operational circumstances change. The objective would be to support consistent monitoring of observable indicators of stress, health, welfare, and safety from the time Animal Control assumes responsibility for an animal, throughout containment and transport procedures, and while the animal remains under the care and control of the Town.
Such a framework would provide Animal Control Officers with practical methods to monitor and document the animal's condition, where safe and practicable, and incorporate those observations into ongoing operational decisions. This would support opportunities, as operational circumstances permit, to pause, reassess, modify the operational approach, or provide an appropriate period of recovery or decompression before continuing containment efforts. It may also assist personnel in recognizing emerging concerns that warrant modification of the operational approach or consideration of veterinary assessment or intervention.

Consideration should be given to incorporating practical observational guidance into Divisional policies, procedures, and operational training. This may include recognition and documentation of observable changes in respiratory rate and effort, panting, posture, movement, responsiveness, behavioural resistance, the intensity and duration of physical resistance or exertion, ability to settle following activity, visible injury or bleeding, and other observable changes in the animal's condition that may warrant reassessment or veterinary consultation, while maintaining appropriate officer safety. Assessment should also consider relevant contextual factors, including environmental temperature and humidity, duration and intensity of preceding activity, repeated handling or restraint attempts, access to water, and the cumulative demands of the interaction.

In addition to identifying practical observational measures, the framework should provide flexible operational guidance regarding how those observations may inform subsequent handling and containment decisions. This should include circumstances in which operations may reasonably continue, when a pause and reassessment should be considered, when the handling or restraint strategy should be modified, and when animal health or welfare considerations may require a change in operational priorities, while continuing to account for officer safety, public safety, and the need for effective containment.

The framework should also provide practical guidance regarding recovery and decompression. Consideration should be given to the quality and duration of decompression periods, observable behavioural and physiological indicators of recovery, access to water where safe and appropriate, and the appropriate use of food or treats where these may facilitate cooperative handling, reduce the need for physical restraint, or assist in establishing rapport before containment efforts resume. The appropriate duration and form of decompression should remain responsive to the individual animal, the preceding level of exertion or handling, the operational environment, and prevailing safety considerations rather than relying solely on a predetermined period of time.

This assessment and reassessment process should remain within the operational scope of Animal Control Officers and should not require personnel to make veterinary diagnoses or undertake assessments requiring veterinary expertise. Where observable indicators raise concerns regarding significant physiological deterioration, injury, or other potential medical concerns, personnel should transition to the veterinary

assessment and veterinary intervention procedures addressed in the subsequent recommendation.

A more consistent approach to the routine assessment and reassessment of animal health, welfare, behavioural state, and observable physiological condition would support informed and adaptive operational decision-making. Providing personnel with a consistent framework for recognizing changes, allowing appropriate recovery where circumstances permit, and modifying handling strategies may reduce the risk of continued operational activity contributing to physiological deterioration while supporting animal welfare, officer safety, the public's safety, and effective containment.

Recommendation 14 – Enhance Operational Documentation Practices

The Review identified an opportunity to further refine operational documentation practices by reinforcing the importance of documenting not only the actions taken during an incident, but also the operational context, behavioural observations, decision-making processes, and rationale supporting significant tactical decisions. Comprehensive documentation provides an essential record of the information available to personnel at the time decisions were made and supports effective incident reconstruction, organizational learning, supervisory review, and accountability.

Consideration should be given to incorporating operational documentation principles into Divisional policies, onboarding programs, and ongoing professional development. Practical instruction and scenario-based exercises should encourage personnel to document behavioural observations, evolving operational circumstances, changes in risk assessment, significant decision points, and the reasoning supporting modifications to operational strategies throughout an incident. Consideration should also be given to developing forms and checklists, such as a Critical Incident Documentation form or checklist that includes timelines; behavioural observations; significant decision points; restraint/equipment used; changes in strategy; animal condition; injuries; owner/public involvement; veterinary contact; photographs/video; witnesses; external-agency involvement; and supervisory notifications.

The Review also identified an opportunity to reinforce documentation practices through supervisory review, mentoring, and operational debriefings. Regular feedback regarding notebook entries, incident reports, and investigative documentation would support consistency, further develop report-writing skills, and assist personnel in developing

documentation practices that accurately reflect both the operational actions taken and the professional judgment that guided those actions.

Continued development of operational documentation practices would improve the quality of operational records, support informed supervisory oversight, promote organizational learning, enhance investigative reliability, and provide greater transparency regarding the decision-making processes that occur during complex operational incidents.

Implementation Summary

The recommendations presented throughout this section have been developed to support the continued evolution of the organizational systems, operational practices, supervisory support, training, policies, and decision-making frameworks that assist Animal Services personnel in the performance of their duties. Collectively, they reflect opportunities identified through this Review to enhance organizational preparedness, reinforce existing strengths, and support continual professional development.

The Review recognizes that many of the individual operational decisions made during the incident were reasonable when considered within the context of the information available to the responding officers at the time. Accordingly, these recommendations should not be interpreted as criticism of individual actions viewed in isolation. Rather, they represent practical opportunities to build upon the organizational environment, operational guidance, and professional support systems that influence decision-making during complex and evolving incidents.

Implementation of these recommendations should be viewed as an investment in the continued evolution of the Animal Services Division. Collectively, they provide a practical framework for advancing officer and public safety, promoting animal welfare, supporting organizational learning, and enhancing the Division's ability to effectively manage future incidents through consistent operational practice, informed professional judgment, and evidence-based decision-making. Together, these recommendations are intended to build upon the professionalism and dedication demonstrated by Divisional personnel while supporting the continued development of a modern, resilient, and evidence-informed Animal Services program.

Lead Author: Julie Speyer
Technical Review: Amanda Barrett, Victoria Blondin, Andrew Reynolds

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – INCIDENT RECONSTRUCTION SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

A.1 Complete Interview Comparison and Discrepancy Analysis

Event 1 – Initial Discovery and Containment of the Dogs
Start: The first moment [redacted] observes or physically interacts with the dogs.
End: The moment [redacted] arrives on scene.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- [redacted] came into the house and advised there were two dogs running on the sidewalk and asked [redacted] to get some leashes.
- [redacted] and [redacted] searched for the dogs.
- A neighbour advised the dogs were in his backyard.
- The dogs ran into [redacted] yard.
- [redacted] approached the Rottweiler carrying leashes and treats.
- [redacted] called the dog to her, she estimated that she was approximately 50–60 feet away when she called him.
- The dog looked at [redacted], looked at the female dog, and then came toward her.
- [redacted] petted the dog.
- [redacted] checked for a collar.
- [redacted]gave the dog a treat.
- [redacted] leashed the dog.
- [redacted] stated there was "no issue."
- [redacted] described the dog as approaching without hesitation.
- [redacted] described the dog as excited.
- [redacted] stated the dog repeatedly looked toward the female dog.
- [redacted]stated the dog's tail was wagging.
- [redacted] stated the dog licked the side of her hand.
- [redacted] stated the dog leaned into the petting.
- The female dog came back into the yard.
- [redacted] held the Rottweiler while [redacted] leashed the female dog.
- [redacted] stated both dogs were calm.
- [redacted]stated the dogs turned toward one another and licked each other's faces.
- [redacted] believed the dogs appeared bonded.
- [redacted] and [redacted] walked both dogs to the backyard.

- [redacted] was secured to the basketball net.
- [redacted] remained with [redacted].
- [redacted] brought water for both dogs.
- Both dogs drank water.
- [redacted] and her family took photographs and videos.
- [redacted] partner arrived home and [redacted] responded by standing up with his tail wagging.
- [redacted] partner asked [redacted] to sit, he sat, and her partner petted him.
- [redacted] described both dogs as "very, very happy dogs."
- [redacted] walked into the garage and laid on the cool floor.
- [redacted] estimated they spent approximately ten minutes petting both dogs.
- [redacted] stated the dogs became anxious when separated.
- [redacted] stated they periodically allowed the dogs to reunite and lick each other's faces before separating them again.
- [redacted] contacted Animal Control.
- [redacted] stated [redacted] advised Animal Control had been looking for the dogs all day.
- [redacted] stated the Rottweiler mounted the female dog once.
- [redacted] told him to get down.
- [redacted] stated he immediately got down.
- [redacted] stated she did not observe any further mounting behaviour while the dogs were in her care.
- [redacted] stated that at one point she placed her hand through the handle attached to the dog's prong collar.
- [redacted] stated the dog turned and looked at her.
- [redacted] stated she did not repeat that action.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- [redacted] observed two dogs running free north on the sidewalk.
- The dogs entered two neighbours' yard and went to the north side of the house.
- One dog went over the fence into [redacted] backyard.
- [redacted] observed the dog running around his backyard smelling everything.
- [redacted] stated that, because they were unknown dogs, he stayed approximately 40 feet away.
- [redacted] observed two neighbours return home from the south.
- [redacted] observed the neighbours call to the dogs.
- [redacted] stated the dogs did not initially pay much attention.
- [redacted] observed one neighbour eventually walk close to the larger dog.

- [redacted] stated the larger dog did not resist while the neighbour clipped a leash onto its collar.
- [redacted] observed the second dog cross back over the fence from his yard into the neighbours' yard.
- [redacted] observed a leash being attached to the second dog.
- [redacted] stated, "I saw no baring of teeth, heard no growling, just two dogs having fun."
- [redacted] stated the neighbour was concerned the larger dog was trying to mount the other dog.
- [redacted] stated the neighbour commented that maybe the other dog was in heat.
- [redacted] observed both dogs under control on leash.
- [redacted] observed the dogs following the neighbour.
- [redacted] stated the neighbour said the dogs had no tags and that Animal Control would be called.
- [redacted] stated he left the backyard and saw nothing further until later.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- [redacted] arrived at [redacted] residence shortly after 4:00 p.m. to go for a walk with [redacted].
- [redacted] observed [redacted] and [redacted] at the side of the house.
- [redacted] stated [redacted] told her to stay where she was because there were two loose dogs.
- [redacted] stated that by the time she had [redacted] sit with [redacted], [redacted] already had both dogs leashed and secured.
- [redacted] took one of the leashes from [redacted] because there was not much room at the side of the house.
- [redacted] and [redacted] moved the dogs from the side of the house, around the front, and into the backyard.
- [redacted] stated [redacted] was secured to the basketball net while [redacted] got water.
- [redacted] held [redacted] leash while [redacted] got water.
- [redacted] stated they brought the dogs into the backyard at approximately 4:08 p.m.
- [redacted] called Animal Services at 4:11 p.m.
- [redacted] stated the call lasted 3 minutes and 39 seconds.
- [redacted] stated dispatch advised her to keep her phone available because an officer might call from a blocked number.
- [redacted] stated both dogs were given water and shade while waiting for Animal Services.
- [redacted] received a return call from [redacted].

- [redacted] stated the return call lasted 1 minute and 37 seconds.
- [redacted] stated [redacted] told her she had been looking for the dogs for most of the day.
- [redacted] advised [redacted] the dogs were secured in the backyard and asked her to come directly around back upon arrival.
- [redacted] stated both dogs appeared well cared for, social, and friendly.
- [redacted] stated both dogs willingly came with them with no hesitation or caution from either dog.
- [redacted] stated neither dog showed aggression or discomfort, and tails were wagging.
- [redacted] stated both dogs approached them and both dogs licked their hands.
- [redacted] stated she observed no fear or aggression from either dog.
- [redacted] stated she first met the female dog, who sniffed her hand and rubbed against her.
- [redacted] then presented her hand for [redacted] to sniff before taking the leash.
- [redacted] stated there was no hesitation from [redacted] when she approached him.
- [redacted] stated [redacted] appeared happy.
- [redacted] stated [redacted] tail was wagging.
- [redacted] stated [redacted] appeared anxious whenever [redacted] was out of his sight.
- [redacted] stated both dogs whined when separated.
- [redacted] described [redacted] as energetic and "puppy-like."
- [redacted] stated she observed [redacted] attempt to mount [redacted] once.
- [redacted] stated she snapped her fingers and told him to get off.
- [redacted] stated [redacted] got off immediately.
- [redacted] stated they waited with the dogs in the backyard while they waited for Animal Services.
- [redacted] stated the dogs remained in the shade with water available.
- [redacted] stated they attempted to move [redacted] farther into the backyard, but noticed both dogs became anxious when they could not see each other.
- [redacted] stated [redacted] arrived at approximately 4:58 p.m.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Whether [redacted] witnessed the dogs being leashed, or arrived after both were already secured. [redacted] account has [redacted] arriving and taking hold of the already-leashed [redacted] while [redacted] was still unleashed. [redacted] states she handed [redacted] to [redacted] and then leashed [redacted], meaning [redacted] would have been present for at least the second leashing. [redacted] own statement says the opposite: that by the time she got involved at all, [redacted] "had both of them,

the dogs leashed, and secured on the property", meaning [redacted] didn't witness either dog being leashed.
- [redacted] statement describes the neighbour telling him the dogs "had no tags" during the leashing scene, before animal control was called. Neither [redacted] nor [redacted] own statement mentions checking for tags or saying this out loud at that point, the detail only shows up in [redacted] account.

Event 2 – [redacted] Initial Contact with Reporting Party
Starts: [redacted] arrives at the residence.
Ends: Immediately before [redacted] physically approaches [redacted]

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*
- She received the call already advised that the dogs had been contained in a backyard.
- Both dogs had already been leashed by the time she was called.
- She was told the dogs had been separated because the male Rottweiler had been mounting the female German Shorthaired Pointer.
- She didn't consider the call urgent, since the dogs were already contained.
- She still attended right away, not wanting the residents to hold onto the dogs any longer than necessary.
- She was advised the dogs had already been given water, as they appeared thirsty or dehydrated.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*
- Upon arriving, the caller came out to greet her and led her to where the dogs were.
- The caller, her parents, and the two dogs were present when she arrived; she understood there was also a [redacted] inside the house, though she didn't see the [redacted] herself.
- Both dogs were already under control and on leash when she arrived.
- She described her normal procedure with a contained dog: look at the dogs, take photographs, scan for a microchip, check for tags, load them into the vehicle, then search the database once they're secured.

[redacted] *Stated:*
- [redacted] arrived at 4:58 p.m.
- She came around from the front of the house to the backyard, where the family was waiting with the dogs.

- She approached the group, looked at the dogs, and said, "Oh, you have both of them."
- She said she'd take [redacted] to the front of the van first, then come back for [redacted]
- [redacted] asked if she could walk [redacted] up to the front herself, since the dogs got anxious when separated.
- [redacted] agreed.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- [redacted] arrived at 4:58 p.m.
- She'd called [redacted] ahead of arriving and mentioned she'd been looking for the dogs for most of the day.
- [redacted] had told her the dogs were secured in the backyard and asked her to come around to the back of the house.
- [redacted] came around the side of the house toward the backyard, where they were waiting.
- [redacted] told her they'd seen a local Facebook post noting the dogs had been spotted earlier that day, around 1:00 p.m.
- She said they "chit chatted a little bit" while she and [redacted] still had the dogs on leash.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- How [redacted] first reached the group. [redacted] Interview 2 states that "the caller" ([redacted], since she placed the call) came out to greet her and led her to where the dogs were, implying a separate encounter before [redacted] reached the family. Both [redacted] and [redacted] own accounts describe it differently: the family was already waiting together in the backyard, and [redacted] simply walked around the side/front of the house directly to where they were standing. Neither [redacted] nor [redacted] describes [redacted] going out separately to meet and lead her in.
- [redacted] quotes [redacted] saying, upon seeing the dogs, "Oh, you have both of them." [redacted] was standing right there for the same exchange but doesn't mention this line in her own account, she only describes them having "chit chatted a little bit."
- [redacted] statements (both interviews) don't mention [redacted] request to walk [redacted] to the front herself, or [redacted] agreement to that, a detail only [redacted] reports, despite it being framed as an exchange directly with [redacted].

Event 3 – [redacted] Initial Contact with the Dogs
Starts: The moment [redacted] first approaches [redacted]
Ends: The moment [redacted] begins loading dogs into the van.

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- She approached the German Shorthaired Pointer first, since she was the closest dog.
- She preferred to handle the dogs one at a time.
- She put a slip lead on the German Shorthaired Pointer, who accepted it without any issue.
- She photographed the dog and scanned her for a microchip.
- The dog was wearing a collar but had no identification tags, and no microchip was found.
- She noticed the dog had enlarged mammary glands, which she believed suggested a recent litter.
- She then began walking the German Shorthaired Pointer toward the van.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- Once the caller led her to the dogs, she began her routine process.
- She described her normal checklist for a contained dog as: look at the dogs, take a photo, scan for a microchip, check for tags, load into the vehicle, then search the database once secured.
- She was moving a little quicker than usual that day, having spent most of it chasing the dogs and feeling relieved they were finally contained.
- She preferred to handle one dog at a time, starting with the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- She scanned her and found no microchip; the dog had a collar but no identification tags.
- She took her photograph and noticed the dog had enlarged teats, which she believed could indicate a recent litter.
- The caller had already clipped leashes onto both dogs before she arrived.
- She placed a slip leash over the German Shorthaired Pointer, removed the residents' leash, and handed it back to them.
- Realizing the Rottweiler would need to come along to the vehicle, she planned to repeat the same process with him.
- She approached from the side, positioning her shoulders toward the dog's shoulders rather than facing her directly, when she slipped the leash on that way, she said the dog "didn't really care."

[redacted] *Stated:*

- [redacted] walked up to [redacted] described it simply as, "she just walked up" to her.
- She placed a slip lead on [redacted]
- Both dogs were standing with their tails wagging, panting since it was hot and they'd been drinking water.
- [redacted] described both dogs as showing "zero aggression."
- Neither dog changed posture or seemed interested in going to greet [redacted] when she approached.
- [redacted] didn't greet the dogs before placing the slip lead on [redacted] she was talking to [redacted] instead.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- [redacted] asked if she could take the female dog.
- She placed a slip lead over [redacted] head, and [redacted] stayed calm while it was put on.
- [redacted] photographed [redacted] and scanned her for a microchip.
- She then walked [redacted] toward the van.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- When [redacted] was slip-leashed. Both of [redacted] interviews place this within Event 3's window, she describes leashing [redacted] in the backyard, before ever departing for the vehicle, prompted by his whining as [redacted] was walked out. [redacted] and [redacted] accounts both place this later, at or near the van (Event 4), describing [redacted] leashing [redacted] alone, saying she'd come back for [redacted] and only interacting with him again once they'd reached the vehicle. [redacted] version has it happening a full event earlier than [redacted] and [redacted] versions do.
- Order of operations for [redacted] leashed first, or scanned/photographed first? [redacted] own accounts (both interviews) describe her routine as photo → scan → check tags → then load/leash, and Interview 2 explicitly follows that order for [redacted] (scan, no tags, photo, enlarged teats, then "began the process of loading her"). [redacted] account has it reversed: slip lead placed on [redacted] first, then scanned and photographed.
- Both of [redacted] interviews specifically note [redacted] enlarged teats as a possible sign of a recent litter. [redacted], who was standing a few feet away, doesn't mention this detail at all in her own account.

Event 4 – Initial Loading of the Dogs into the Vehicle
Start: [redacted] begins walking [redacted] toward the van.
End: [redacted] jumps out of the cage after the door is reopened.

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- Asked the reporting parties to keep the Rottweiler in the backyard while she walked the German Shorthaired Pointer toward the vehicle.
- Observed the Rottweiler begin whining and pulling as soon as she started walking the German Shorthaired Pointer away.
- Described the Rottweiler's behaviour as "almost like a separation anxiety" because he did not want to be apart from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- Re-evaluated the situation and retrieved a second slip leash for the Rottweiler.
- Placed the second slip leash on the Rottweiler.
- Described the Rottweiler as "a bit hesitant," but stated that no issues arose at that time.
- Stated the reporting parties removed the clip leash after the slip leash was in place.
- Stated [redacted] held the Rottweiler while she loaded the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- Stated [redacted] walked the Rottweiler toward the vehicle while [redacted] walked the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- Loaded the German Shorthaired Pointer into the vehicle.
- Went back to the Rottweiler after loading the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- Loaded the Rottweiler into the vehicle.
- Stated the Rottweiler got out before she could properly close the back door.
- Later explained that she wanted to take a photograph of the Rottweiler.
- Stated she opened the compartment door to take the photograph.
- Clarified she was holding the compartment door slightly open to take the photograph when the Rottweiler pushed through the opening.
- Stated she was not successful in obtaining the photograph before the Rottweiler exited the compartment.
- Estimated the Rottweiler was in the compartment for approximately 5–10 seconds before turning around and coming back out.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- Her normal checklist when she has a contained dog is: look at the dogs, take their picture, scan for a microchip, check tags, then load them into the vehicle, once secured, she checks her database for a match to return them home.

- That day, she was moving a little quicker through this routine than usual, out of relief that the dogs were finally contained after chasing them.
- With two dogs, she normally prefers to take her time and do one at a time.
- When she arrived, the finders already had clip leashes on both dogs' collars.
- She put a slip leash over [redacted], unclipped the resident's leash from her, and gave it back to the finders.
- [redacted] was calm and "docile", she pet her head and [redacted] didn't react, flinch, or move.
- She photographed and scanned [redacted]: no microchip, had a collar but no tags; she noted Bella had enlarged teats, a possible sign of a recent litter.
- She began the process of loading [redacted] into the vehicle.
- At that point, [redacted], still with the finders, was pulling and trying to follow, and the finders couldn't hold him back, so she ended up needing to manage both dogs rather than truly one at a time.
- She then put a slip leash on [redacted] as well, applying it before they walked to the vehicle (not once already there); she stood from the side with her shoulders facing his shoulders rather than looking at him directly, and did it quickly, nothing happened.
- She noted that any time she got close to [redacted] neck/collar area during the interaction, he would close his mouth, stop panting, and his eyes would widen and shift toward her, not extreme, but something she noticed.
- She asked the woman holding [redacted] leash (the caller's [redacted]) to follow her toward the vehicle while she led with [redacted]
- [redacted] farther back at this point, wasn't standing still, he was moving back and forth and seemed "kind of excited."
- The caller's [redacted] had a hard time controlling [redacted] on the way to the vehicle; he was pulling hard and she struggled to keep pace.
- [redacted] described [redacted] as active and strong, stating he didn't want to be far from [redacted] he was whining at this point.
- She loaded [redacted] into the right-hand (passenger-side) kennel of the vehicle.
- As soon as she closed the kennel door on [redacted], she took over holding [redacted] slip lead from the caller's [redacted]
- She didn't notice any change in [redacted] pulling, reactivity, or vocalization when she took the leash, she believed this was because he was fixated on [redacted] being contained.
- She guided [redacted] toward the driver's-side kennel of the vehicle.
- There was a little hesitation from [redacted] but she got him in without treats, using a "running start", it took about two attempts.

- No treats were used, and the caller's [redacted] was not involved in getting him in this first time.
- He got in, but then turned around.
- She explained she'd been rushed and had loaded him before taking his photo (out of her normal order), so she left the door only slightly open, just enough of a gap for her phone, to take his picture after the fact.
- She had one hand (her left) through a small gap holding the slip leash, and was reaching through the crate door gap with her right hand to take the photo when [redacted] pushed through the door and landed on the ground.
- She put her phone back in her pocket but stated she still had hold of him via the slip leash at that point.
- She stated she never did get a picture of him.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- [redacted]walked up and put a leash ([redacted] believed a slip leash) on [redacted] without any particular greeting to the dogs, [redacted] stated [redacted] was mostly talking to [redacted] at that point.
- [redacted] stated neither dog showed any posture change or interest in greeting [redacted] when she approached.
- Both dogs were standing there with tails wagging, panting from the heat, having just been given water, [redacted] stated there was "zero aggression" from either dog.
- [redacted]said she was going to bring [redacted] to the front of the van and then come back for [redacted]
- [redacted]asked if she could walk with [redacted] to the front, since the dogs get anxious when separated; [redacted]agreed.
- They all walked to the front together; [redacted] stated [redacted] walked "like he was going home," with no issue whatsoever.
- At the van, [redacted] scanned [redacted] and took her picture while she was still outside the vehicle.
- [redacted] was loaded into the passenger-side (right-hand) crate.
- [redacted] jumped up into the crate on her own with no issues, [redacted] stated there wasn't even a treat involved, and described her as excited and happy.
- [redacted] shut the crate door on [redacted]
- While this was happening, [redacted] was standing beside [redacted] being petted, "loving life."
- When it was [redacted] turn, [redacted] described him as "a little bit hesitant."

- [redacted] had a bag of bacon strips in the van; [redacted] grabbed one and threw it into the crate.
- [redacted] jumped in after the treat.
- [redacted] stated she was holding [redacted] leash at the moment he jumped in.
- [redacted] shut the crate door behind him; [redacted] stated she heard the latch fully close.
- [redacted] had begun closing one of the van's back doors, as if signaling they were done, then said words to the effect of "Shoot, I didn't take a picture" and reached back for the door.
- At the same moment, [redacted] and [redacted] both told her they already had a "ton" of pictures of [redacted] from before he was caught.
- Before they could finish saying that, [redacted] opened the door back up, and [redacted] jumped out.
- [redacted] believed [redacted] was still wearing the slip leash when he came back out, though she wasn't fully certain.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- [redacted] told [redacted]what they'd found on the local Facebook page (that the dogs had been spotted around 1:00 p.m. that day); they chit-chatted briefly while [redacted] and her mom still held the dogs' leashes.
- [redacted] asked if she could take [redacted] then took her slip leash and placed it over [redacted] head.
- [redacted] scanned [redacted] and photographed her with her phone, [redacted] believed this happened by the van, at the back of it, in their driveway.
- [redacted]then walked around from the side of the house to the front, to her van.
- [redacted] was kept a couple of feet back the whole time, with [redacted] still holding his leash, to give [redacted] and [redacted] room to load her.
- [redacted] jumped up into the crate on the prompt of a treat, with no problem.
- [redacted] was loaded into the passenger-side (right-hand) crate of the van; there were two crates in the back, plus a crate [redacted] later noticed accessible from the side of the van.
- The crate door was shut on [redacted]
- [redacted] meanwhile, was standing beside [redacted], panting, leaning his weight against her right leg, tail wagging.
- [redacted] became "a little hesitant" as [redacted] approached him.
- [redacted] described [redacted] as seeming "a little bit shaky," not super confident, and anxious herself.

- [redacted] took a slip leash and placed it over [redacted] neck; [redacted] believed her own family leash was still on him at that moment, though she wasn't sure if it was removed before or after (possibly by herself or her [redacted]
- [redacted] was still panting, wiggling his rear, friendly, and leaning his weight against [redacted] throughout this.
- [redacted] stated there were no verbal cues from [redacted] during this.
- [redacted] was offered treats and ate a couple before willingly moving toward the back of the van.
- With verbal encouragement ("come on, good boy") and treats placed in the back of the crate, [redacted] attempted to jump up, the first time, he bumped his leg on the metal step at the back of the van, which [redacted] thought made him briefly hesitant.
- He then stepped onto the step and into the crate.
- The crate was shut and latched, [redacted] stated she audibly heard it latch, wanting to confirm for herself that he was contained.
- His slip leash was left hanging out through the crate door.
- [redacted] noted [redacted] had scanned and photographed [redacted] before loading her, but there was no scanning and no photograph taken of [redacted] before he was loaded.
- Both dogs were now contained in the van, with the back doors still open.
- [redacted] then said she'd forgotten to take a photograph of [redacted]
- [redacted] and her mom told [redacted] they had videos and photos of both dogs, together and separately, that they were happy to send her.
- The crate door was opened, and [redacted] jumped right back out.
- [redacted] couldn't recall who grabbed his leash, but said they all tried to catch him to keep him from running off again.
- When the door opened and he came out, [redacted] said, "Oh, oh shoot."
- [redacted] ended up a couple of feet behind the van, still wearing his slip lead.
- [redacted] stated he was not aggressive at this point, still friendly and energetic, and likely thought it was a game.
- He became hesitant to go back in, which [redacted] attributed to lost trust, especially given he was a pup.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Who held/walked [redacted] leash to the vehicle and at the moment he was first loaded. [redacted] (both interviews) and [redacted] both state [redacted] ("[redacted] per [redacted]; herself, per [redacted]) held [redacted] leash and walked him to the van, and that [redacted] was holding it when he first jumped into the crate. [redacted] own account states that she was the one holding [redacted] leash the entire

time, including while [redacted] was being loaded, she doesn't describe handing it off to her [redacted]

- When and where [redacted] applied the slip leash to [redacted] [redacted] (both interviews) describes leashing [redacted] in the backyard, before departing for the vehicle, prompted by his anxious whining/pulling as [redacted] was walked out. [redacted] and [redacted] both describe [redacted] leashing [redacted] alone first, saying she'd come back for [redacted] and only interacting with [redacted] again once at or near the van.
- Whether treats were used to load [redacted] the first time. [redacted] follow-up interview explicitly states no treats were used and that she got him in with a "running start." [redacted] and [redacted] both independently describe a bacon strip/treats being used to get him into the crate.
- Whether a treat was used to load [redacted] [redacted] states no treat was involved, [redacted] jumped in on her own. [redacted] states [redacted] went in "with a prompt of a treat."
- Whether the crate door was ever fully latched on [redacted] before it reopened. [redacted] and [redacted] both state they heard the door latch completely closed before [redacted] reopened it. [redacted] follow-up interview states the opposite, that she left only a small gap, just enough for her phone, and never fully closed it, because she was trying to get the photo she'd skipped.
- Whether [redacted] kept continuous hold of the leash through the escape. [redacted] (both interviews) states she never lost her grip on the slip leash, including through the moment [redacted] jumped out. [redacted] account describes uncertainty about who had the leash at that point and says the group had to "try to catch him," suggesting he may have been loose momentarily.
- Both [redacted] and [redacted] describe telling [redacted], right as she reached for the door, that they already had plenty of photos of [redacted] neither of [redacted] statements mentions this exchange at all.

Event 5 – Initial Loading of the Dogs into the Vehicle
Start: [redacted] left the van.
End: [redacted] was contacted for backup.

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- After landing on the ground, [redacted] started veering toward the backyard; [redacted] redirected him in a wide circle to bring his attention back to the vehicle.
- What followed was an extended effort to regain his trust, treats, a higher-pitched coaxing voice, walking away and encouraging him to run back toward her, none of it worked. [redacted] began helping around this point too.
- He was initially stiff and reluctant, leaning away and refusing to lift his front legs.

- Using a "mini trail" of treats toward the back of the vehicle, he'd put his front legs up on the step (or higher) to reach them, but would never lift his hind legs, pulling himself back out each time.
- Between attempts he kept drifting to the right side of the compartment, toward where [redacted] was; at one point he got his nose close to the gap where the slip leash came through, and [redacted] snapped toward his nose, [redacted] thought she seemed "a little tired of him."
- He ate a fair number of treats over this process, roughly five bacon bits (quartered, placed deeper in the compartment as better bait) and about a handful of small liver treats.
- He became "slobbery" and was panting heavily; [redacted] gave him water, thinking he must be exhausted, he drank without any concerning reaction, and his breathing and eyes appeared normal.
- They also tried loading him through the side compartment, laying a towel down inside, that didn't work either.
- Back at the rear of the vehicle, while [redacted] was up higher trying to maneuver him in, one of the finders ([redacted]) grabbed his rear to help lift him; he swung his head toward her, and his open mouth/tooth grazed her forehead.
- No actual wound resulted. [redacted] checked, and [redacted] said she'd only felt the tooth graze her; her sunglasses were knocked off in the motion.
- [redacted] noted this echoed an earlier moment when the finder's [redacted] reached for [redacted] collar and got a similar reaction, she'd sensed from when she first applied the slip lead that he wasn't comfortable with hands near his collar/neck.
- When later asked at what point she attempted to muzzle the dog, [redacted] stated it was after he swung his head toward [redacted].
- She stated she had been told you could loop the slip leash around a dog's snout to guide it, and attempted this, but wasn't able to keep enough leash length free afterward to guide him, given the size of his head.
- She stated he went still and appeared "weirded out" during this, his mouth had been open, but once the leash was around it, he closed his mouth and his eyes went wide, and he froze.
- After this, [redacted] felt she needed help and wasn't confident handling him alone going forward.
- She led him to the side of the vehicle for more shade, redirecting his attention and creating space, without focusing much on his body language in that moment.
- [redacted] followed her over, keeping some distance from the dog; [redacted] was still there, though the [redacted] had left by this point.

- [redacted] urged [redacted] to leave it to the professionals and go inside; [redacted] declined, saying she was fine.
- That's when [redacted] radioed [redacted]. [redacted] was on another call and said she'd phone back shortly; when she did, [redacted] explained she needed help loading a dog she couldn't get into the vehicle.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- After putting her phone away, she kept hold of the slip leash and tried to bring him back to the vehicle, this went on for a long time using different methods and treats.
- He'd sometimes get his front legs up on the step but would veer toward the side where [redacted] was; at one point he got close enough that [redacted] bared her teeth and barked, making clear she didn't want him near her.
- She estimated somewhere between five and ten loading attempts, probably more.
- The methods were largely repeats from different angles, walking him away to sniff and calm down before trying again, some light running, laying a trail of treats, nothing worked consistently.
- He grew "iffy or unsure" specifically around [redacted].
- [redacted] began actively helping, sitting partway to block him from drifting toward [redacted] and trying to coax him closer to the vehicle; whenever [redacted] got close to shut the door, he'd step back out.
- He would almost commit but never fully jump in, front legs up reaching for treats, never lifting his hind legs.
- [redacted] mostly held the slip leash herself but handed it to [redacted] a few times, since [redacted] no longer trusted her enough to get near the back of the vehicle when she was close.
- She described herself as the one primarily trying to load him, with the family mostly watching at first; once they saw it wasn't working, they asked to help, and she said she'd take whatever help she could get.
- At one point, when [redacted] tried to lift him from behind, he snarled and turned toward her, that's when [redacted] realized she needed help and didn't want to risk [redacted] getting hurt further.
- When separately asked about a muzzle-wrap attempt she had referenced in her first interview, [redacted] described looping the slip leash around his snout to guide him, but said she couldn't keep it secure enough afterward, there wasn't enough leash length left once wrapped, given the size of his head.

- She stated that during this attempt she was standing on the step at the back of the vehicle, elevated above him and facing him.
- She stated she felt nervous during this and sensed that he did too.
- She told [redacted] it was okay, to leave it, that she'd either keep trying or call for backup. [redacted] didn't want to step back, she said she felt responsible and wanted to keep helping. [redacted] watched on and off, growing increasingly uncomfortable.
- That's when [redacted] called for [redacted] assistance.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- Once [redacted] was out of the vehicle, all three of them kept trying to get him back in with treats and encouragement, this went on for about 25 minutes.
- He stayed calm the whole time, tail wagging, and they continued petting him.
- [redacted] was building a strong rapport with him, face to face, petting him, and at one point he licked the side of her cheek.
- [redacted] described him as not panicked and not aggressive, "just loving life", but he still wasn't going into the van.
- When he first came out, he simply sat down.
- [redacted] pulled the leash at one point to bring him a little closer to the van, and he backed away.
- [redacted] observed that [redacted] seemed [redacted] at that point; when [redacted] asked her about it, [redacted] mentioned she was [redacted] to the role.
- [redacted] felt it was really she and [redacted] doing the work of trying to get him in.
- She suggested letting [redacted] out so [redacted] could see her, thinking it might encourage him back in since they seemed bonded, [redacted] said she couldn't do that.
- [redacted] then suggested trying the side of the van instead.
- [redacted] opened the side door; there was a blue and white towel inside.
- [redacted] climbed into the side of the van, sat down, and called [redacted] over, he jumped up on her, paws on her lap.
- [redacted] pointed out his tail was still wagging; [redacted] agreed. [redacted] described it as "not a drop of aggression."
- Everything felt calm and good, [redacted] told [redacted] she was building a relationship with him and planned to get him into the side of the van and shut the door herself.
- [redacted] called for backup.
- Believing everything was fine, [redacted] said she was heading out to get her pizza.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- After [redacted] jumped out and landed on the pavement, [redacted] and her mom, standing just a couple of feet from the van, tried to grab his leash and catch him, she can't recall who actually got hold of it.
- His tail was wagging and he was panting, seemingly treating the whole thing as a game.
- [redacted] showed him [redacted] through the crate to try to rebuild his trust, sitting on the back end of the van with her foot braced on the hitch, giving him constant verbal reassurance.
- His tail kept wagging and his panting eased somewhat; [redacted] described him as calmer but still playful.
- Noticing he'd taken a liking to her, [redacted] asked [redacted] if she could hold the leash, and [redacted] handed it over.
- He jumped partially onto her lap, front paws up, back legs on the ground, nuzzling and giving her kisses; she kept feeding him treats and reassuring him.
- They tried building momentum a few times, with [redacted] walking briskly around the van hoping he'd jump in as if it were a game, he wasn't interested, though he stayed comfortable with her.
- [redacted] compared this to techniques she uses in her own work: redirect, re-approach, give downtime to settle before trying again.
- She estimated they worked at this for about 15–20 minutes.
- [redacted]called for backup after about 20–25 minutes of being unsuccessful getting him into the van.
- [redacted] noted that she was the one making suggestions throughout, [redacted] stayed quiet, mostly just holding her bag of treats and observing while [redacted] did the hands-on work.
- Separately, [redacted] recalled her sunglasses being knocked off while she was crouched with [redacted] she attributed this to losing her balance when he leaned or jumped on her, not to any bite or aggressive move on his part.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Trigger for the backup call. [redacted] Interview 1 and Interview 2 both state that [redacted] swung his head and his tooth grazed [redacted] forehead while she was helping lift him into the vehicle, and that this is what led [redacted] to call for backup. [redacted] statement does not describe this incident. [redacted] statement does not describe this incident either, and states that the process was calm and free of aggression up through the moment [redacted]called for backup.

- [redacted] sunglasses falling off. [redacted] Interview 1 states the sunglasses were knocked off during the head-swing/graze incident described above. [redacted] statement describes her sunglasses falling off separately, while she was crouched down with [redacted] and attributes this to losing her balance when he jumped or leaned on her; she does not connect it to any bite or head movement from the dog.
- Whether [redacted] sustained any injury. [redacted] Interview 1 states she checked and [redacted] told her she had only felt the tooth graze her forehead, with no wound. [redacted] statement does not describe any contact between the dog's mouth and her in this window.
- Order of the side-compartment/towel attempt relative to the backup call. [redacted] Interview 2 and [redacted] statement both place this after the backup call, describing it as a method suggested by [redacted] during that call. [redacted] statement places it before the backup call, describing it as [redacted] own suggestion, carried out, followed by [redacted] calling for backup.
- Who was directing the effort to load the dog. [redacted] Interview 2 states she was primarily the one trying to load the dog, that the family initially just watched, and that they asked to help once it wasn't working. [redacted] statement describes it as herself and [redacted] doing the work. [redacted] statement describes herself as the one making suggestions, with [redacted] staying quiet and standing back to observe.
- [redacted] demeanor. [redacted] statement describes [redacted] as appearing "very nervous" during this period and making a comment that she was [redacted] to the role. Neither of [redacted] own statements mentions this.
- Sunglasses incident. Neither of [redacted] statements mentions the moment [redacted] describes where [redacted] jumped or leaned on her while she was crouched, causing her sunglasses to fall.
- Whether a muzzle-wrap attempt was made. Both of [redacted] interviews describe this attempt. [redacted] statement, when asked directly whether the slip lead was ever used to wrap the dog's mouth like a makeshift muzzle, says she does not recall this happening and did not think the leash was long enough for it.

Event 6 – Interval Between Backup Request and [redacted] Arrival
Start: The moment [redacted] radios [redacted] to request backup.
End: The moment [redacted] arrives on scene and reaches the group (before she makes physical contact with the dog).

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- When [redacted] called back, she asked what was wrong; [redacted] explained she needed help loading a dog she couldn't get into the vehicle.
- [redacted] gave her an ETA of about 25 minutes and told her to try the side compartment, and to let her know if that worked.
- They put down a long towel and tried to lead him into the side compartment; he'd get his front paws in but nothing more; a treat trail didn't work either.
- [redacted] sat in the side compartment and tried to slowly regain his trust, that didn't work; if [redacted] got too close, he'd immediately retreat, which she took as a sign, he'd lost trust in her completely.
- She tried giving him space; that didn't help either.
- Once enough time had passed that she assumed [redacted] would be arriving soon, she gave the dog more water.
- She also gave [redacted] a witness statement form to fill out, for her own records regarding the dogs running at large.
- Communication with [redacted] was mostly over the radio, a brief message ("I'm having issues containing a dog, are you able to assist?") and the address, sent by text or Teams (she wasn't sure which); [redacted] gave an ETA of about 25 minutes.
- Before radioing her arrival, [redacted] did a radio check to see if the side-compartment loading had worked; [redacted] advised it hadn't.
- When [redacted] arrived, she radioed that she was on site. [redacted] saw her vehicle, parked a bit further back from the house, and then saw her walking up.
- Just before [redacted] arrived, the dog was lying on his stomach in the shade, having had some water; his head was resting, and he did not appear to still be panting.
- [redacted] didn't think the dog saw [redacted] approaching at first, since her own vehicle blocked his line of sight.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- She attempted a "muzzle wrap" using the dog's slip leash around his snout, but couldn't get it wrapped even once, the leash wasn't long enough and kept unraveling. She had no second slip leash available, since the other one was on [redacted] she'd had [redacted]
- During this attempt she felt nervous and sensed the dog was nervous too; she was standing on the vehicle's back step, facing him.
- The dog's activity level noticeably decreased over this period; he became slower and more tired after his earlier exertion.

- Water was given again before [redacted] arrived, this time in a blue plastic bowl brought from inside the house; she set it down at a distance in the shade and let him approach it on his own.
- She recalled telling [redacted], over the radio, that the dog had reacted when [redacted] touched him from behind, but she did not mention the muzzle wrap attempt to her.
- [redacted] remained present when [redacted] arrived.
- [redacted] parked on the road and walked up the driveway; [redacted] watched her approach. [redacted] asked what was going on; [redacted] told her they were having a hard time and couldn't get the dog loaded.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- [redacted] held [redacted] leash through most of this period.
- She and [redacted] chit-chatted while waiting, about their respective work, misunderstood people and animals, and [redacted] own advocacy work; [redacted] commented "spoken like a true mama" in response.
- [redacted] offered to be transported in the van with the dog if they got him loaded successfully.
- An open bag of [redacted] liver treats fell over at one point during an attempt, and the dog ate from it.
- [redacted] apologized to [redacted] at one point, saying she was new to the job; [redacted] noted her voice was shaky and she seemed nervous around both dogs.
- At one point [redacted] got [redacted] into the back driver's-side crate, but he got back out before she could stand up and latch the door.
- [redacted] told [redacted] they had some time while waiting for [redacted], and handed her an East Gwillimbury witness statement form to complete; [redacted] did not end up filling it out or sending it in.
- When specifically asked whether the slip lead was ever used to wrap around the dog's mouth as a makeshift muzzle, [redacted] said she did not recall that happening, and guessed the leash was too short for that.
- No additional leash or equipment was introduced during this period, and no attempts were made to physically lift the dog.
- [redacted] arrived at 5:45 p.m. [redacted] was still with [redacted] [redacted] was standing in front of her, facing her.
- [redacted] noticed a pin on [redacted] shoulder and commented on it to try to break the ice; she described [redacted] as seeming cold, answering quickly, and not receptive to conversation.

- [redacted] parked at the end of the driveway and walked up, [redacted] later measured the distance at approximately 129–137 feet.
- [redacted] never introduced herself to [redacted]. [redacted] tried to give her a report of what had happened, but the conversation was cut short; she described [redacted] as seeming annoyed and sighing.
- [redacted] was given only a brief account of what had transpired before she walked up to [redacted]
- At that point, the leash was in either [redacted] or [redacted] hand, [redacted] doesn't recall which.

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- She was on-site for an unrelated complaint (a "stoop and scoop" call) when she received a radio call from [redacted]; she was already engaged with a complainant and told [redacted] she was unavailable, asking her to call back once she was clear.
- When she called [redacted] back, [redacted] told her: she was working in East Gwillimbury; two dogs had been running at large all afternoon; both were now contained at a property.
- [redacted] asked if the Rottweiler was aggressive; [redacted] said no, just difficult.
- [redacted] suggested the side compartment instead of the back, explaining their vehicles have two dog compartments, and recommended laying a blanket down so his feet wouldn't slip.
- [redacted] told [redacted] she'd come to give her a hand.
- She didn't wait to hear whether the side-compartment attempt worked before heading over, she started driving immediately, given the time (around 5:20 p.m.) and her shift ended at 6:00 p.m.
- She would normally need supervisor approval to justify overtime, but didn't formally make that call, hoping she'd hear the dog was loaded while en route.
- She parked on the roadway, per standard practice, since the driveway was long enough that the house wasn't immediately visible.
- She could see [redacted] van in the driveway but didn't see anyone until she walked up, [redacted] and the finder were positioned between the van's open side compartment and [redacted] vehicle, with the dog between them.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- [redacted] called her originally on the radio and asked if she was available; [redacted] told her to stand by, since she was on another call in Aurora.
- Once clear, she called [redacted] back on the radio; [redacted] asked if she was available for a phone call, and [redacted] called her.

- [redacted] told her the German Shorthaired Pointer was contained, but she couldn't contain the Rottweiler.
- [redacted]asked if he was being aggressive; [redacted]said "well, no," with an upward inflection at the end, clarifying he was just unwilling to get into the vehicle.
- [redacted] asked what methods had been tried, including treats; [redacted] said she'd tried the back of the vehicle.
- [redacted] told her to try the side compartment instead, since it's a different shape.
- [redacted] stated that had she known the dog was being aggressive, she would have notified her supervisor and changed her approach entirely.
- She parked at the bottom of the driveway and walked up; [redacted] and the finder were at the side of the vehicle.
- As she approached, she asked if they'd used treats; they said yes, but he wasn't very responsive.
- She asked again whether the dog had been aggressive; the answer was no. They mentioned he'd knocked [redacted] glasses off her face; [redacted] asked whether that happened out of aggression or if "his head just turned around."
- She doesn't recall who was holding the leash at that point but guessed it may have been [redacted].

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Whether [redacted] was informed, before arriving, about the earlier incident where the dog swung his head toward [redacted]. [redacted] Interview 2 states she told [redacted] this over the radio. Both of [redacted] interviews describe being told only that the dog was "not aggressive, just difficult," with no mention of a specific incident.
- Whether a muzzle-wrap attempt occurred. Both of [redacted] interviews describe this happening. [redacted] statement says she does not recall this happening and did not believe the leash was long enough for it.
- The wait-time conversation between [redacted] and [redacted]. [redacted] statement describes an extended personal exchange — about their respective work, advocacy, [redacted] "spoken like a true mama" comment, and [redacted] offer to ride along in the van, or take the dog in her own vehicle. This conversation does not appear in either of [redacted] statements.
- [redacted] demeanor on arrival. [redacted] statement describes her as cold, curt, sighing, and seeming annoyed, and states that [redacted] never introduced herself. [redacted] specifically recalls commenting on a pin on [redacted] shoulder in an attempt to ease the tension, and states [redacted] was quick to answer and did not seem receptive to conversation. Neither of [redacted] own statements characterizes her demeanor this way. [redacted] statements do not characterize

[redacted] tone or attitude but describe a similarly rapid approach: according to [redacted], she was only able to give a brief, one-line answer ("we're having a hard time, we can't load this guy in") before [redacted] said, "hey fella" and moved to reach for the dog's collar, without further exchange of information.

- [redacted] arrival time. [redacted] statement gives a specific time of 5:45 p.m. Neither of [redacted] own statements provides a specific arrival time. [redacted] account also notes that [redacted] left the house to pick up pizza at approximately 5:39 p.m., a time confirmed by the family's [redacted], placing this just minutes before [redacted] stated 5:45 p.m. arrival time for [redacted]. This does not independently confirm [redacted] arrival time, but it anchors [redacted] recollection to a camera-verified timestamp close to the event, rather than pure memory alone.

Event 7 – [redacted] Attempts to Load the Dog
Start: The moment [redacted] takes over the leash and begins actively trying to get the dog into the vehicle (picking up right where Event 6 left off).
End: The moment [redacted] reaches for the dog's collar (immediately before the bite).

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- On arrival, she described the dog as an intact male Rottweiler, black-and-tan, wearing a green Kong collar, panting but looking relaxed, standing, with no signs of aggression on initial approach and no hackles up.
- She described him as aware of her presence but rigid; looking back, she'd say there was nothing in his behavior suggesting he was a friendly dog looking to play — no tail wag, no excitement.
- She approached him, rather than the other way around; while gathering information from [redacted] and [redacted], he stood nearby but didn't interact with her much. His weight was on his front legs, ears forward, head elevated and alert; no growling or barking, just panting.
- After the fact-finding conversation, she took over holding the lead.
- Her first approach was "happy-go-lucky", a high-pitched, excited voice to try to coax him toward the vehicle willingly. As soon as she touched the loop lead and got excited, he lay down and wouldn't move.
- She tried this at the back door first, then the side door, he wasn't responsive to either.
- She considered bringing [redacted] out to encourage him, given the dogs seemed bonded, but decided against it, concerned that since he was an intact male who'd reportedly been mounting [redacted] all day, and she hadn't personally observed their behavior together, it could escalate things.

- She described a shift in his demeanor around this point, more actively resistant, "dominant," rigid, head and ears up, staring straight ahead at nothing/no one in particular.
- Having had the happy-go-lucky approach fail, she decided to try a firmer technique, using the leash to do a "big loop" around toward the vehicle, a method she described as asserting more control, which she said has worked with some dogs in her experience.
- With the leash in hand and unable to get him to move, she ran her hand down the leash toward his collar.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- After the fact-finding conversation, she, [redacted], and, to some degree, [redacted] (who was also there, trying to coax him toward the side compartment) attempted to get the dog into the vehicle by patting the side; he wouldn't move.
- She took the loop lead and tried acting excited to get him moving; he lay down instead.
- She described this as her first attempt, stating the first and second attempts happened immediately after each other, separated only by a short exchange with [redacted].
- She recalled getting him to walk in a small circle, roughly from the side of the vehicle toward the back, though she wasn't sure how far; he lay down again fairly quickly, then stood back up as she continued acting excited.
- She stated she was standing at the side of the vehicle, between the transit and the other parked vehicle, when she made her second attempt.
- That second attempt is when she touched his collar.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- [redacted] was only able to give [redacted] a brief report of what had happened before [redacted] walked up to [redacted] she described the conversation as cut short.
- At that point, the leash was in either [redacted] or [redacted] hand, [redacted] doesn't recall which.
- [redacted] took the leash and went to grab the back of his neck to try to coerce him from the side of the van toward the back.

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- [redacted] didn't think the dog saw[redacted] approaching at first, since her own vehicle blocked his line of sight.

- When [redacted] did approach, the dog stood up onto all fours, appearing to look at what was happening.
- Her account does not describe any independent loading attempts by [redacted] before this, it moves directly from [redacted] approaching to her greeting the dog and reaching for the collar.

[redacted]*Interview 2 Stated:*

- [redacted] parked on the road and walked up the driveway; [redacted] watched her approach.
- [redacted] asked what was going on; [redacted] told her they were having a hard time and couldn't get the dog loaded.
- When asked how much information she'd been able to give [redacted] before [redacted] reached for the dog's collar, [redacted] said "not a lot", she stated she would have told [redacted] the dog had been hesitant around the neck area if she'd had the chance, but [redacted] moved in and reached for him quickly.
- Her account moves directly from that exchange to [redacted] saying "hey fella" and reaching for the dog, no independent loading attempts by [redacted] are described in between.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Number and nature of attempts made before touching the collar. [redacted] Interview 1 describes multiple distinct attempts, a "happy-go-lucky" excited-voice approach tried at both the back door and the side door, consideration and rejection of bringing [redacted] out, and then a separate, firmer "big loop" leash technique, before she touched the collar. Neither of [redacted] statements nor [redacted] statement describes any of these attempts; their accounts move directly from [redacted] taking the leash to her reaching for the collar/neck.
- Number of attempts described between [redacted] own two interviews. Interview 1 describes at least three distinct methods across two locations (back door, side door, then the leash/"big loop" technique). Interview 2 describes two attempts total, both using the same excited/patting approach, with the second attempt, made at the side of the vehicle, being when she touched the collar. Interview 2 does not mention a separate back-door attempt or a distinct big-loop technique as a third method.
- How much information was exchanged before [redacted] reached for the collar. [redacted] Interview 2 states directly that "not a lot" of information was exchanged, she says [redacted] "was pretty quick to move in and reach," and that she didn't get the chance to tell [redacted] the dog had been hesitant around the neck area before

[redacted] made contact. This describes a fast, brief sequence, which conflicts with the multi-step process [redacted] Interview 1 describes.

Event 8 – Collar Contact, Bite, and [redacted] Retreat to Her Vehicle
Start: The moment [redacted] touches/reaches for the dog's collar.
End: The moment [redacted] reaches her vehicle.

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- Just before the bite: the dog was standing, weight on his front legs, ears forward, head up and alert, staring straight ahead at nothing or no one in particular; he wasn't panting excessively.
- The moment she touched his collar, before she could even complete a pull, he turned suddenly; there was no growl or bark beforehand.
- He grabbed her [redacted] in a snap, not a hold-and-shake bite; she said she was grateful it wasn't worse, given his size and strength.
- It hurt; she stated she had never been bitten by a dog before. She instantly let go of the leash.
- Describing his disposition through the period between the bite and the catch poles going on (i.e., through her retreat): he remained standing, alert, weight on his front feet, ears forward, mouth open, and stayed "dialed in" on her specifically, [redacted] and [redacted] were positioned behind him, and his focus reportedly stayed on her even when she stepped away and later came back.
- She knew someone had picked up the leash; she said she needed to step away for a minute to compose herself, then walked back to her transit and got into the driver's seat.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- The moment she touched his collar, he turned and bit her [redacted] then released, she recalled being focused on the pain in her [redacted] rather than his behavior in that instant.
- He didn't continue to attack her afterward; she described his body as rigid and stated he was "locked in" on her.
- Her attention shifted toward retreating and removing herself from the situation, she stated she didn't run but backed away quickly.
- She let go of the leash; she believes [redacted] took hold of it afterward.
- [redacted] stayed with the dog; she did not follow [redacted] back to her vehicle.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- [redacted] took the leash and went to grab the back of [redacted] neck to try to coerce him from the side of the van toward the back.
- When he turned his head toward her, there was no vocalization, no growl, no bark, and [redacted] stated there was no sign of aggression at that moment.
- His head came around and he nipped her arm. [redacted] characterized this as a "nip" rather than a bite, stating that if it had been an aggressive attack he was capable of doing far more damage, in her view, it read more as a warning.
- [redacted] immediately dropped the leash and started walking away from the side of the van toward the back; [redacted] heard her say, "well, that was a first."
- [redacted] found this concerning, given [redacted] was a professional in the field, and this was apparently her first time being bitten.
- The dog dropped down onto the ground as soon as the leash was dropped, lying down with his head between his front paws on the driveway. He stayed in that spot; he did not pursue [redacted], come toward [redacted], or go toward [redacted].
- As [redacted] continued walking away, still before reaching her vehicle, she called out, not addressed to anyone by name, asking if the dog was contained. [redacted] responded that she was standing on his leash and that he was lying on the ground.
- Still while walking, [redacted] told [redacted] to get her catch pole.
- [redacted] asked [redacted] if [redacted] was okay; [redacted] shrugged, indicating she wasn't sure.
- [redacted] did not see any active bleeding or a wound serious enough to need immediate attention at that point.
- [redacted] stated that once the leash was dropped, nobody had hold of it, and that she herself stood on it, though later in the interview, when asked again, she said she couldn't recall for certain whether she or someone else had stepped on it.

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- Before the bite: she didn't hear any growling; she thought his ears possibly went back slightly, though noted that's hard to read on a Rottweiler given how small their ears are. She didn't notice his hackles go up, and there was no clear warning sign, she described it as sudden, similar to the earlier moment when [redacted] reached from behind him.
- She said "hello, fella" or something similar and reached for the collar to guide him; he turned and bit the inside of [redacted] [redacted]
- Describing the bite: he turned his head toward her arm and clenched down; [redacted] yelled and pulled her arm out from under the bite. He didn't bite and shake.

- Immediately after: she stated he was either neutral or higher in posture, not lowered, not cowering. He stayed in the same stance and didn't move away; she didn't recall his exact leg positioning, but said he basically remained in the same spot. She didn't see any blood on his face at that point.
- [redacted] walked away fairly quickly; [redacted], in shock, quickly stepped onto the slip leash to keep him from going anywhere.
- She turned her body, so she wasn't facing him head-on, angling her shoulder toward him while maintaining eye contact, and slowly bent down to pick up the leash, then stood back up.
- She believed his attention stayed focused on [redacted] rather than on her during this.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- [redacted] said, "hey fella" and immediately reached for his collar; the dog bit her.
- She reached for the collar; he turned and bit the [redacted]
- Describing the bite: he turned his head toward her [redacted] and clenched down; [redacted] screamed and yanked her [redacted] back. He didn't bite down a second time or shake his head, he bit, she got her [redacted] free, and he just stood there.
- Describing his general disposition in this window: he remained facing forward, positioned near the vehicle's tail end, and didn't really move from that spot; she doesn't recall any vocalization.
- [redacted] doesn't recall for certain whether she still had hold of the slip leash at the exact moment [redacted] pulled her [redacted] away, she recalls stepping on the leash afterward but isn't sure of the exact sequence.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- [redacted] Interview 2 account includes taking photos of her injury as part of this sequence (calling[redacted], taking photos, then retrieving the catch pole); Interview 1's account of the same window covers calling [redacted] and retrieving the catch pole but does not mention photos.
- In Interview 1, [redacted] described her calls to [redacted] as going unanswered; the call log she reviewed during that same interview shows a missed incoming call from [redacted] at 1748, shortly after her own outgoing attempt, before the two connected at 1749.
- [redacted] recalled [redacted] telling her during the initial call that she was putting a catch pole on the dog at that moment; [redacted] own account has her retrieving the catch pole and directing [redacted] to do the same only after her call attempts to [redacted], not narrated as happening during the call itself.

- [redacted] stated she suggested [redacted] or [redacted] hold [redacted] while the other used bite gloves or a towel to lift him for loading into the vehicle; neither [redacted] nor [redacted] describe this suggestion, or acting on it, in their own interviews.
- Interview 1 attributes [redacted] urgency to get the situation under control to her awareness of a fatal dog-attack incident the week prior; Interview 2 attributes her hurry back to the scene to concern for [redacted] and [redacted] safety. Neither interview mentions the reasoning given in the other.

Event 9 - Retreat to Vehicle, Contact with Supervisor, and Catch Pole Retrieval
Start: Begins the moment [redacted] reaches her vehicle after retreating from the dog
End: Ends when [redacted] returns to the scene with her catch pole and directs [redacted] to retrieve hers as well.
[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- Upon reaching her transit van, [redacted] sat in the driver's seat and cried briefly, then told herself her [redacted] hurt but she was okay.
- She called [redacted], who didn't answer, she initially wondered if [redacted] wasn't working, and a second attempt also went unanswered.
- Her phone's call log, reviewed during the interview, showed an outgoing call at 1745, a missed incoming call from [redacted] at 1748, then a connected 8-minute outgoing call at 1749, followed by a 7-minute outgoing call at 1758.
- She explained her state of mind: the week before, a woman had died after being attacked by her own dog, and knowing that history made her feel she needed to get the situation under control given [redacted] size and the fact he'd already bitten her.
- She said she felt there was no option left but a catch pole, since she wasn't willing to make physical contact with [redacted] again after being bitten.
- She retrieved her catch pole from the van, returned to the group, and told [redacted] she needed to get her catch pole too, "we have to catch pole him."

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- [redacted] said she walked back to her vehicle, called [redacted], and took photos of her injury before grabbing her catch pole.
- She took a deliberate minute at the vehicle to compose herself, explaining she hurried back because she was concerned about the dog's reactiveness and didn't want to leave [redacted] and [redacted] exposed to being bitten or attacked.
- Asked directly when the decision to use catch poles was made and who made it, [redacted] said she made the decision, following being bitten, because she didn't feel

it was safe to handle the dog without equipment, she was fearful of his quick reactions and felt catch poles were the only remaining safe option to secure him.
- She returned to the group and directed [redacted] to get her own catch pole.
- She placed the timing of her injury photos at around 1744, shortly after reaching the vehicle.

[redacted] *(Interview Notes) Stated:*
- [redacted] believes the initial call came right after [redacted] returned to her truck following the bite.
- She asked [redacted] how she was doing; [redacted] said she was okay and intended to finish the call, but noted she'd been bitten and was bleeding a little.
- [redacted] recalled [redacted] saying during this call that she was putting a catch pole on the dog and had advised [redacted] to do the same.
- [redacted] noted [redacted] would have been using her personal cell phone, kept in her vest.
- [redacted] also recalled that during the phone call, she suggested to [redacted] that either she or [redacted] hold onto [redacted] while the other used bite gloves or a towel to lift him from the back, to help get him into the vehicle.

Areas of Discrepancy:
- [redacted] Interview 2 account includes taking photos of her injury as part of this sequence (calling [redacted], taking photos, then retrieving the catch pole); Interview 1's account of the same window covers calling [redacted] and retrieving the catch pole but does not mention photos.
- In Interview 1, [redacted] described her calls to [redacted] as going unanswered; the call log she reviewed during that same interview shows a missed incoming call from [redacted] at 1748, shortly after her own outgoing attempt, before the two connected at 1749.
- [redacted] recalled [redacted] telling her during the initial call that she was putting a catch pole on the dog at that moment; [redacted] own account has her retrieving the catch pole and directing [redacted] to do the same only after her call attempts to [redacted] not narrated as happening during the call itself.
- [redacted] stated she suggested [redacted] or [redacted] hold [redacted] while the other used bite gloves or a towel to lift him for loading into the vehicle; neither [redacted] nor [redacted] describe this suggestion, or acting on it, in their own interviews.
- Interview 1 attributes [redacted] urgency to get the situation under control to her awareness of a fatal dog-attack incident the week prior; Interview 2 attributes her

hurry back to the scene to concern for [redacted] and [redacted] safety. Neither interview mentions the reasoning given in the other.

Event 10 – Pole Application and Initial Loading Attempt
Start: Begins when [redacted] returns to the group with her catch pole.
End: Ends immediately before [redacted] comes out of the house and [redacted] asks her to call the police.

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- Only [redacted], [redacted], and [redacted] were present at this point, no bystanders, and the house wasn't visible from where they stood.
- [redacted], visibly shaking and scared, said she couldn't hold the leash, handed it to [redacted], and left the immediate area before the poles went on.
- [redacted] retrieved her catch pole quickly since they were right at her vehicle.
- [redacted] applied her own catch pole first; [redacted] applied hers immediately after, from the opposite side.
- She said the dog began reacting the moment the first pole went on, and it intensified once the second was added, she specified it was the first pole, not the second, that triggered the initial "ballistic" reaction.
- She described him attacking the metal end of the pole, reaching around and biting at it, and said it's possible his mouth or nose made contact with the loop as they were putting it on, given how quickly he escalated once they got near his head.
- She said both poles were on before any blood appeared, and only seconds passed before he began bleeding "instantly" from his tongue.
- They brought him around to the back of the vehicle to load him in, but he put all his weight down and refused to enter; he briefly stopped resisting but still wouldn't go in.
- During this loading attempt her phone rang, her first successful contact with [redacted], whom she told: "I've been bitten. We have a dog on a catch pole. He's not doing well, he's fighting us. He's bleeding everywhere."
- [redacted], who had gone off toward the house, came back out crying and asking what she could do, which is when [redacted] asked her to call the police.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- Asked directly when the decision to use catch poles was made and by whom, [redacted] said it was her own decision, made after being bitten, because she didn't feel it was safe to handle the dog without equipment.

- On her return, [redacted], visibly shaking and saying she didn't want to be around for it, handed the leash to [redacted], who held the dog while [redacted] applied the first pole.
- She said she moved quickly to secure it, aware that introducing equipment like a catch pole can be triggering for some dogs; she didn't note any particular reaction from him as she put it on, beyond wanting to move fast.
- The dog reacted the instant her pole touched him, standing up, jumping around, and grabbing at the metal nub end of the pole with his mouth.
- [redacted] pole went on "pretty much immediately" after hers, and both were likely on by the time he started bleeding from biting at the pole's end.
- She described her grip: sliding the pole over the dog's head, one hand positioned near the loop so she could tighten or loosen as needed; the poles were roughly five feet.
- They brought him to the back of the vehicle to load him in next to the German shorthaired pointer, but he was strong and wouldn't go in no matter the pressure applied.
- First mention of loading with the catch poles: "No matter how hard or how much we tried to get him lifted into the vehicle. He was putting the brakes on. He wouldn't go... I was being very mindful about the pressure I was willing to manipulate on the dog's neck... I didn't want to put too much pressure."
- Second mention: "What I wanted to do was if I could have an officer hold my catch pole, I was gonna put on bite gloves so that I could put a towel underneath his back end and we could lift him in that way."
- Third mention, later in the same interview, asked directly: "At any point did you guys lift with the catch pole where the dog's front legs were?", [redacted]: "He was too heavy to do that and I wasn't willing to put that much pressure on his neck to lift him up that way and I wasn't comfortable getting closer to him to try and lift him without that distance of the catch pole."
- She said she continuously adjusted her own pole's tightness and checked in with [redacted] to make sure hers wasn't too tight either.
- [redacted] had been sitting outside, then went toward the front of the vehicle for a few minutes once the poles went on the dog's neck, before returning very upset about the blood; it was while they were still trying to load him that [redacted] asked her to call 911.

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- Her catch pole went onto the dog first, with [redacted] added second from the opposite side.

- The dog was fairly still with no notable body language or facial expression while the poles were being retrieved; [redacted] may have stepped on the slip lead while [redacted] went to get hers, though she wasn't certain.
- The dog only began reacting once she started tightening her pole after sliding it on "nice and slow", beforehand he was "a little unsure," and once tightened, he began shaking and trying to wiggle free.
- It was [redacted] decision to add the second pole, prompted by the dog thrashing and pulling away.
- She didn't notice blood right when the second pole went on, it wasn't until they turned him around and began trying to lead him into the back compartment, and he pulled back against both poles shaking his head, that she first saw blood, from his nostril.
- Her mention of loading the dog with the catch poles: "He wouldn't even like really lift his front legs up. We were trying to urge him or lead him into the back, but it wasn't working."
- They asked [redacted] to call 911 because they'd been unable to load the dog and an officer had been bitten.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- She said that after [redacted] pulled away holding her [redacted] radioed her from her vehicle to grab her own catch pole; hers was stored in the back of her vehicle, driver's side compartment.
- She said [redacted] may have stepped on the slip lead while she went to retrieve her pole.
- She said the dog was pretty still, with no notable body language or facial expression, while the poles were being retrieved.
- She confirmed [redacted] told her to apply her pole "nice and slow"; the dog was a little unsure as she slid it over his head, and only began reacting once she started tightening it.
- She confirmed it was [redacted] decision to add the second pole, and that [redacted] went on fairly soon after hers, though she couldn't give an exact interval; she wasn't sure whether [redacted] had any difficulty applying hers.
- She said the dog stayed facing forward at the side of the vehicle and didn't move from that spot while the poles went on, and recalled no vocalization from him.
- She said blood wasn't noticed until later, after both poles were on, and after they had already attempted to move him toward the back of the vehicle to load him, describing it as coming from both his mouth and his nostril.

- On loading with the catch poles: she said they tried to maneuver him toward the back compartment, but didn't believe his front legs ever got up onto the vehicle's step, and wasn't certain whether his paws came off the ground during the attempt: "I don't think he had... even if he had his front legs up, we could have used more [to guide him]... I don't even think he had his legs up on the vehicle... no, he didn't."
- She confirmed the 911 request came after this failed loading attempt, once the dog was at the back of the vehicle with both poles on and they couldn't get him inside.
- She said the dog made no crying or barking, only possible grunting as he tried to escape.
- She demonstrated her catch pole grip using a broom during the interview: hands guided by the pole's molded grips, never placing a hand on the back end where the cable comes out.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- Before [redacted] returned, [redacted] was lying down with his head between his paws, appearing frightened, nervous, and scared; once he gave body language [redacted] read as comfortable, she crouched down, let him sniff her hand, and pet him — he wagged his tail and panted.
- She personally felt the earlier bite was more of a "nip" or warning than a full aggressive attack, based on his body language and that he hadn't caused more severe injury.
- [redacted] kept her updated as [redacted] walked up the driveway with her catch pole; [redacted] already had her own pole in hand by the time [redacted] came around the side of the van.
- [redacted] asked the officers to wait, saying she wasn't comfortable being in the vicinity while the poles were applied, and stepped back; no one explained beforehand what to expect. She stepped off the leash and asked [redacted] to stand on it, though she couldn't say for certain whether anyone did.
- [redacted] pole went on first, placed around [redacted] neck and tightened, and he became a little frightened, going from lying down to sitting with front legs raised, then to fully standing once it was tightened; he tried to turn and bite at the pole.
- [redacted] then came around with her pole, and as she applied it, the loop momentarily caught around the dog's mouth "almost like a horse bit" before being loosened and repositioned around his neck and tightened.
- The dog turned his head back and bit at [redacted] pole, and that's when [redacted] first noticed blood, appearing to come from his mouth. She told [redacted], who relayed it

to [redacted], [redacted] said [redacted] replied [redacted] and told [redacted] she needed to tighten and twist her pole harder for control.

- She described the officers on opposite sides of the dog, each twisting and tightening their pole's cable in hand; [redacted] had to switch hands and shake hers out after [redacted] noticed discoloration in her fingertips from how tightly the cable was wound.
- She described the dog as very fearful, jumping and flailing, trying to free himself, unsure which pole to react to as they came from both directions.
- [redacted] said [redacted] instructed [redacted] to help lift [redacted] with the catch poles to get him into the van; both had their hands on the poles and lifted for roughly a minute to a minute and a half, and his front paws came up off the ground, hovering near the metal step.
- When first asked whether this happened before or after she was told to call 911, she said it was before, consistent with her fuller narrative account, before correcting herself mid-answer to say her 911 call came first.
- [redacted] then said they needed help and asked her to call 911; [redacted] asked whether to call it directly or the non-emergency line, and [redacted] directed her to call 911 directly.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Order of catch pole application: [redacted] states in both interviews that her own catch pole went on first, with [redacted] added second. [redacted], in both interviews, and [redacted] all state [redacted] catch pole went on first, with [redacted] added second.
- Which catch pole's application triggered the dog's intense reaction: [redacted] states the dog began "going ballistic" with the first pole applied (which she identifies as her own). [redacted] and [redacted] both describe a milder initial reaction to the first pole (which they identify as [redacted]), with the more significant reaction beginning once the second pole ([redacted], per their account) was added.
- A statement attributed to [redacted] upon being told the dog was bleeding: [redacted] states [redacted] responded [redacted] and told [redacted] to tighten and twist her pole harder. Neither [redacted] nor [redacted] interviews mention this exchange.
- The noose momentarily catching around the dog's mouth during application: described only in [redacted] account.
- [redacted] hand discoloring and needing to switch hands due to cable tightness: described only in [redacted] account.
- Source of the blood: [redacted] describes it coming from the dog's tongue; [redacted] describes it coming from his nostril in her first interview and from both his mouth and nostril in her second; [redacted] describes it as coming from his mouth.

- Timing of when blood was first noticed relative to the loading attempt: [redacted] account places it within seconds of both poles being secured, before they moved him to attempt loading. [redacted] account (both interviews) places it later, after they had already turned him toward the back of the vehicle and attempted to load him. [redacted] account places it earliest, tied to the moment the dog bit at [redacted] pole shortly after [redacted] went on.
- Whether an actual lift occurred: [redacted] describes a specific, sustained attempt, [redacted] directing [redacted] to help lift the dog by the poles, with his front paws visibly off the ground for roughly 60–90 seconds. [redacted], asked directly, denies lifting him by the front legs with the poles. [redacted] accounts (both interviews) describe trying to get him up and into the vehicle but stop short of confirming a lift, and her second interview explicitly avoids the word "lift." [redacted] in her [redacted] interview, indicated that she bent at the knees, lifted the end of her catchpole to be aligned with her shoulder height, to assist her in lifting with her legs.
- Within [redacted] own second interview, her account shifts in specificity on this same point: earlier she describes trying "no matter how hard" to get him "lifted into the vehicle," but later, asked pointedly about lifting him by the front legs with the poles, she says it didn't happen.
- Within [redacted] own interview, she initially places the lift as occurring before her 911 call, matching [redacted] and [redacted] sequencing and her own earlier, more detailed narrative account, then corrects herself moments later to say the 911 call came first.
- Reasoning given for asking [redacted] to call the police: [redacted] states her intention was specifically to get an officer to hold her catch pole so she could use bite gloves and a towel to lift the dog into the vehicle. Neither [redacted] nor [redacted] accounts mention this specific plan; both describe the request more generally, as needing help because an officer had been bitten and the dog could not be loaded.

Event 11 – Continued Loading Attempts and First Period of Reduced Resistance
Start: Begins when [redacted] is asked to call police.
End: When the dog stops actively resisting for the first time.

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- [redacted] called 911; police said they were too busy and that this was an animal control matter, not something they'd respond to.

- [redacted], panicking, asked about running to a nearby fire station; [redacted] told her not to, that everyone and the dog were fine, the dog "not attacking anything, just standing there."
- Her phone call with [redacted] continued throughout this period, phone in her pocket.
- [redacted] mentioned she might have ownership information; this is when [redacted] first learned they had prior history with these dogs.
- Both catch poles stayed on the dog; [redacted] remained mindful of her pole's tightness while [redacted] held primary control, since the dog "wasn't doing anything" at that point and [redacted] was focused on phone calls.
- [redacted] made a chain of calls trying to reach an owner: the German shorthaired pointer's owner (who identified the Rottweiler as belonging to a neighbor and gave permission for the neighbor to collect their dog), then "Mr. Yang" (who didn't speak English and gave his wife's number), then the wife, who confirmed ownership but said she'd be 45 minutes, [redacted] pushed back that this wasn't fast enough, but the estimate held.
- The dog was guided to lie down at the back of the vehicle, doors open, [redacted] and [redacted] standing on either side.
- The heavy bleeding from attacking the poles slowed and then stopped once he settled and the phone calls were underway.
- With police not responding and owners now en route, [redacted] said there was no sense continuing to try to load him, it wasn't working and was putting strain on him, so they stopped attempting to load and kept both poles on for safety.
- She described this as the point he first stopped resisting: lying down, still panting, no longer fighting, while she and [redacted] stood nearby talking.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- She described [redacted] as having "a bit of a meltdown," crying and screaming, at the point she asked her to call police.
- She confirmed only one loading attempt occurred in total; once [redacted] raised the possible ownership lead, [redacted] called the owner, and the dog reduced his activity, at that point she saw no need to keep trying to load him.
- She described physically switching sides and catch poles with [redacted] because the poles had become crossed, but placed this specifically at a point when the dog was already lying down and not reactive, meaning it falls within this reduced-activity window rather than during active struggle.
- She reiterated her grip technique: one hand near the pole's molded grip, one hand able to tighten or loosen the loop end as needed.

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- She said they asked [redacted] to call 911 because they'd been unable to load the dog and an officer had been bitten; [redacted] called and was told police don't assist with this kind of situation.
- She described a "tug of war", the dog pulling back toward the grassy slope near the neighbor's fence line, and them pulling him forward again.
- Around this time, [redacted] called [redacted] and put her on speakerphone in her vest pocket for advice.
- [redacted] described herself as scared and breathing shakily, not expecting the situation to escalate this much; she said [redacted] tried to calm her down.
- She placed the first period of reduced activity as occurring once they'd gotten the dog closer to the back of the vehicle and he lay down in a "frog" position — that's when they called the registered owner.
- She said the poles were loosened at this point since he was no longer fighting them, and that she and [redacted] stopped talking to or looking at him directly, to let him settle; she checked her email for the shelter's ownership lead only after this.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- She confirmed the 911 request came after the failed loading attempt, once the dog was at the back of the vehicle with both poles on and they couldn't get him inside.
- She said the dog made no crying or barking, only possible grunting as he tried to escape.
- She confirmed telling [redacted] about the ownership information came shortly after the 911 response, while the dog was lying down with both poles still on.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- She said the 911 dispatcher transferred her to police, who, after hearing the details, said they were very busy, this wasn't something they typically handled, and would send someone only if available.
- After relaying this to [redacted], [redacted] searched for and called the local fire Division directly (logged at 5:54 p.m., lasting 2 minutes 41 seconds) to ask for help.
- While on that call, she overheard [redacted] tell [redacted] she had the owner's information, and [redacted] ask if she'd called yet, she couldn't catch the rest of the exchange.
- [redacted] returned from the pizza run during this window; her [redacted] then came out and told her to come inside, logged at 5:57 p.m.

- Through this point, her account describes ongoing blood, gurgling, and labored breathing, she does not describe witnessing the dog reach a period of reduced activity before she went inside.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- [redacted] describes a "tug of war," with the dog pulling toward a grassy slope near the neighbor's fence line during this struggle. Neither of [redacted] interviews mentions this movement at all, her account moves from the failed load attempt directly to getting the dog to lie down at the back of the vehicle, without reference to being pulled toward the slope.
- [redacted] account describes ongoing visible distress, active bleeding, gurgling, labored breathing, right up to when she was sent inside, with no mention of the dog settling. [redacted] and [redacted] accounts both describe the bleeding slowing or stopping and the dog settling into reduced activity within roughly this same window. This may reflect [redacted] being sent inside before the reduced-activity point was reached, but the accounts don't line up on the dog's apparent condition during the time they overlap.
- [redacted] overheard [redacted] tell [redacted] she had the owner's information while still on her fire Division call, before being sent inside at 5:57 p.m. [redacted] and [redacted] accounts both place the ownership information coming up only once the dog had already reached reduced activity and the poles had been loosened, meaning [redacted] own timeline suggests she was still outside, and the dog may not yet have been fully settled, at the point this conversation happened.

Event 12 – Water Offering, Renewed Struggle, and Arrival of Special Constables
Start: Begins when [redacted] brings out the water bowl.
End: Ends when the special constables arrive on scene.

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- About 10 minutes before the owners arrived, [redacted] called out from the house asking if they wanted anything; [redacted] declined for herself but asked her to bring the dog some water, since he'd been panting and she wanted him comfortable.
- [redacted] came back out a couple of minutes later with a large blue bowl of water, carried in front of her, and brought it down close to the dog.
- As soon as she set it down, the dog "just started flipping", on his back legs, flipping, biting at the catch poles again, bleeding again, and [redacted] says this is the same moment two special constables started walking up the driveway.

- Using her drawn diagram, she described the sequence spatially: he'd been given water near the back of the vehicle, then went berserk and began pulling/dragging them across the driveway; the special constables arrived and stood watching from a distance while the struggle continued, spins, barrel rolls on the ground.
- She described staying focused on catch pole tightness throughout, tightening for control when he was upright, loosening once he was back on all fours, and repeatedly telling [redacted] to check her own pole's tightness.
- She said she asked the special constables to stay back because their presence was upsetting him further.
- She called the owners again during this, telling them it had been 45–50 minutes and she needed them there urgently.
- Within about 4 minutes of that call, she says the dog did "an alligator spin or several" and then was lying on the ground; she checked her own pole's tightness, saw he'd urinated, and became concerned he was becoming unresponsive.
- She described the dog's posture before the water as: front legs forward, head down (possibly resting on the pavement, not necessarily his paws), back legs tucked underneath, "a little stiff" but relaxed, this was the reduced-activity state just before the water was introduced.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- She confirmed [redacted] called out asking if they wanted water, and [redacted] asked her to bring some for the dog, mindful of the heat (she estimated it was about 20 degrees) and that he'd been running and fighting the catch pole.
- [redacted] walked up and placed the water down from the side of the dog, without any verbal introduction that [redacted] recalled.
- At the moment the water was offered, [redacted] said the dog had been calm for a long period, breathing normally, not bleeding, she described specific behavior markers she was reading as relaxed: body not stiff, ears relaxed, normal (not excited or exhausted) panting, not jumpy or reactive, head often down.
- Asked how much time passed between the water going down and the dog's activity increasing, she said it was immediate: "she set it down and the dog... just got up and started attacking the catch pole and jumping and thrashing," biting the pole again, causing his mouth to bleed, now "more uncontrolled than at the beginning", jumping high, rolling, attacking the poles.
- She quoted [redacted] as saying, "He was fine until I set down the water. It's my fault, I did that."
- Asked directly whether it ever became calm again after this, [redacted] said no: "He didn't become calm again. He continued to roll until he essentially relaxed on the

catch pole, which is when I became concerned, and that's when he became unresponsive." This is a direct contradiction of a "second calm", in her account, the decline is continuous from the water reaction straight through to unresponsiveness, with no intervening calm period.
- Asked directly whether special constables arrived before or after the water was put down, she said after, and added that their presence walking up the driveway was itself an additional factor causing him to react.

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*
- She said it was [redacted] idea to bring water out, prompted by feeling for the dog; [redacted] carried it out in both hands, full.
- Because [redacted] didn't want to get too close to the dog, she placed the bowl beside [redacted], not directly next to the dog.
- [redacted] then slid the bowl closer to the dog herself, with her foot, and said, "I guess the sliding noise of it or something spooked him", she confirmed the dog did not react when [redacted] first placed it down, only once she'd nudged it closer.
- She said she barely got the bowl in front of herself before the dog reacted; his focus wasn't on the bowl or any particular target, "his intent was just to escape," throwing himself back and thrashing, nearly pulling them with him.
- He stepped in the bowl and knocked it over during this; the catch poles became tangled as he rolled down the driveway, requiring them to loosen and untangle them the same way as before.
- She described a stretch of "back and forth", calm for a moment, then not, before they got him to calm down again, which she explicitly labeled the "second calm": "once the dog was catch poled, there was a calm during the phone call [first]. There was a calm after the water flipping [second]."
- She said special constables arrived after that second calm, and that their arrival, along with a civilian who'd approached from a parked truck, stressed the dog further, triggering renewed thrashing and "alligator rolling." She specified the special constables arrived 4 minutes before the dog's owners did, and that the civilian arrived before the special constables.
- She described the dog's breathing becoming more labored around the time he was lying flat, noting blood may have been pooling in his mouth given his head position, making breathing harder.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- She reiterated that[redacted] brought the water in a plastic bowl with both hands, and that [redacted] herself slid it closer with her foot, not very close, and not far, before the dog reacted.
- She confirmed the dog did not react when[redacted] initially set the bowl down; the reaction began only once [redacted] moved it.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- She said she knelt down and placed the water about a foot or less in front of the dog's face; at that moment he was panting, breathing through blood and gurgling, but not aggressive, she described him as looking "sad" and "scared," with no growling or bared teeth.
- She said he then tried to stand up to get the water and yelped, both catch poles were still on him, and the officers responded to the yelping by tightening and twisting the poles again, which caused him to jump and flail, moving them from the middle of the driveway to where the grass met the asphalt.
- She confirmed the bowl was not moved deliberately after she placed it, she believes it was knocked over during the ensuing struggle, and recalls a water mark near the blood markings on her video.
- She described the officers' twisting technique in detail: the cable had some slack, wrapped around their hands, with [redacted]twisting one direction and [redacted] twisting the opposite direction, "rotating the swivel."
- She described him flailing, going side to side, trying to free himself; she wasn't certain if he rolled on the ground at one point because she'd turned away.
- She said she went back inside to recompose herself, logged at 6:40 p.m., telling [redacted] the dog was "dying" and "choking on his own blood."
- She said two special constables arrived at her house between 6:43 and 6:50 p.m. and walked up to speak with the animal control officers.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- When she first looked out, the dog was already prone on the driveway; she couldn't tell if he was breathing or panting from that distance.
- She saw "the daughter who lives in the house" ([redacted]) come out with a bowl of water for the dog and water for the officers, put the bowl down in front of them, speak to them briefly, and back away.
- She said the dog did not react when the water was put down, he was calm during it, lying down, and couldn't really move much since the officers had their poles angled down toward the ground.

- She said blood was not present when she first saw the dog, it didn't start until after the water.
- After looking away briefly, she returned to see the dog struggling, biting and backing away from the poles; she believed he'd bitten his tongue or broken a tooth given the bleeding.
- She described two officers initially standing near each other in front of the dog, one instructing the other on positioning, one with a phone on her chest that looked like a radio call; as the struggle continued, two more agents (men) arrived, and the [redacted] told them to stay back, which they did.
- She described the dog's movements as biting at and backing away from the poles, no vertical jumping and no rolling on the ground, from what she observed.
- She described the officers' hand positions on the poles (demonstrated with a broom): one hand lower, one hand higher but not at the very top, and described a twisting/turning motion she interpreted as loosening or tightening.
- She noted the officers appeared to have crossed poles at one point, then uncrossed and switched positions.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Who moved the water bowl, and how: [redacted] account has her placing it directly in front of the dog and the dog trying to stand to reach it (which triggers the officers re-tightening the poles). [redacted] account has [redacted] placing it beside [redacted], not the dog, with [redacted] then sliding it closer using her foot, and [redacted] specifically attributes the dog's reaction to the sliding sound. [redacted] account doesn't mention a slide at all, describing the reaction as immediate upon [redacted] placement. [redacted] account has the dog not reacting to the water being placed down at all, only sometime after.
- Whether a second period of reduced activity occurred at all: [redacted] (both interviews) describes a distinct "second calm" between the water-triggered struggle and the special constables' arrival. [redacted] second interview explicitly denies this, when asked if he became calm again, she said no, that he continued declining until he became unresponsive, with no second calm described.
- Timing of special constables' arrival relative to the water incident: [redacted] account has them arriving essentially as soon as the water-triggered reaction begins, while the struggle is still escalating. [redacted] account, using her own timestamps, places the water incident and her going inside at 6:39–6:40 p.m., with special constables arriving between 6:43 and 6:50, a gap of several minutes. [redacted] account has them arriving while the dog is already bleeding heavily mid-struggle. [redacted] account places their arrival only after a full second calm-down

had already occurred. [redacted], [redacted], and [redacted] are broadly consistent with special constables arriving during or shortly after the active struggle; [redacted] account places a completed calm period in between.

- Cause of the dog's reaction to the water: [redacted] attributes it simply to the water being placed near him. [redacted] attributes it specifically to her own foot-sliding the bowl closer. [redacted] attributes it to the dog's own attempt to stand and reach the water, catching a yelp, followed by the officers' response of tightening the poles.
- The dog's movement pattern during the struggle: [redacted] and [redacted] both describe rolling, spinning, and "alligator rolling." [redacted], watching from her kitchen window, explicitly says she did not see any vertical jumping or the dog going down and rolling, only biting at the poles and backing away, though she also says her view was partially obstructed at times and this portion of her observation may not cover the full struggle.
- Special Constable [redacted] states upon arrival the dog appeared to have increased activity and confirmed [redacted] was the one to advise he and his partner to not progress any further on scene. Special Constable [redacted] advised they were approximately 10 feet from where the officers and dog were struggling at this time.
- Reason for the special constables being asked to stay back: [redacted] attributes this to her own request, concerned their presence was upsetting the dog. [redacted] attributes the same instruction to [redacted] (consistent with [redacted]), which is one point of agreement worth noting alongside the conflicts above.

Event 13 – Special Constables' Arrival and the Dog Becoming Unresponsive
Start: Begins when the special constables arrive on scene.
End: Ends when the dog becomes unresponsive / stops moving.

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- The two special constables walked up and stood watching from a distance while the struggle continued, the dog doing spins, attacks, and barrel rolls on the ground, actively bleeding.
- She said she felt she still had control of the situation but was increasingly worried and needed the owners to arrive; she called them again, saying it had been 45–50 minutes and she needed them there now.
- Within about 4 minutes of that call, she says the dog did "an alligator spin or several" and then ended up lying on the ground.

- She checked her own catch pole's tightness, confirmed it wasn't too tight, and then noticed he'd urinated and was becoming unresponsive; she was telling [redacted] throughout, who told her he was okay and to do a toe check.
- She was afraid to touch him, worried he might still react, but did the toe check anyway; around this point the owners pulled in.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- She confirmed the special constables had arrived after the water was set down, and that their presence walking up the driveway was itself an additional stressor for the dog.
- She said she asked them to stay back and they didn't come too far up the driveway.
- Using her diagram, she described the dog dragging them from the back of the vehicle across the driveway, roughly 25–35 feet, ending up facing the road near a green patch of grass, with the special constables positioned a little further down the driveway at that point.
- Asked to describe what "unresponsive" looked like: his behavior shifted abruptly from reactive jumping, thrashing, and alligator-rolling to lying still on his right side, head oriented toward the house, a sudden shift she wasn't expecting and found concerning.
- He emptied his bladder around this time; she told[redacted] he was becoming unresponsive, and [redacted] directed her to do a toe squeeze. She was hesitant, fearing he'd react, but did it, he showed no response.
- She said she'd called the owners again for an ETA (told 4 minutes) shortly before he went unresponsive, making that call one-handed while [redacted] kept two hands on her catch pole.
- She confirmed neither she nor [redacted] checked his respiration or pulse, only the toe check, which got no response.
- When the owners arrived immediately after, she asked them to touch the dog herself, since she still didn't feel safe approaching him despite what she was seeing.
- She and [redacted] later loaded him onto a blanket to place him in [redacted] vehicle; she said his body was stiff at that point.

[redacted]*nterview 1 Stated:*

- She described the special constables' arrival, plus a civilian who'd approached from a parked truck, as stressing the dog further and triggering renewed thrashing and "alligator rolling."

- A neighbor made comments during this, she doesn't recall exactly what was said but recalls a special constable responding that everything was under control, after the neighbor suggested they were "choking the dog to death."
- The catch poles became badly tangled during the alligator-rolling; they fully loosened one pole and took over, at which point the dog laid on his side and "wasn't really reacting."
- She recalled watching his tail wag and him urinating, which she took as signs this was the end; she said she was in shock and wanted to see if he'd react again but didn't want to touch him.
- She said the owners arrived moments after this.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- She confirmed a member of the public accused them of choking the dog, consistent with her first interview, but didn't add further detail on the unresponsive moment itself in this second interview.

[redacted] *stated:*

- She had gone inside at 6:40 p.m., before the special constables arrived (6:43–6:50 p.m.), and her transcript doesn't describe her returning outside during this window, she has no direct observations to contribute to this specific event.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- She described the two special constables (two men) arriving while the dog was already bleeding heavily and the struggle was ongoing; the [redacted] told them to stay back, and they did, standing roughly across from her window.
- She said the dog was bleeding heavily from the mouth at this point, and the officers had moved slightly down the driveway, closer to a parked white car.
- Demonstrating with a broom, she described the officers' grip as one hand positioned low on the pole and one hand up near the top, though not at the very top.
- She described the "twisting" motion she'd observed as the officers turning the pole in their hands; she wasn't certain whether this was loosening or tightening, only that they were rotating it.
- She described the officers as having crossed their poles at some point, causing more pressure, then uncrossing and switching positions.
- She said the dog then really stopped moving, was breathing heavily, and the officers weren't moving either; then his tail twitched, she said, "I don't think I can

watch this" and walked away. Her girlfriend, still watching, said, "They've killed him, they killed the dog, his tail just did the death twitch."

- [redacted] grabbed her camera and went outside to record from [redacted]; she asked the two men if the dog was dead, and they shook their heads at her.
- She saw the younger agent remove the catch pole from around the dog's neck; the older woman was still cautious about getting close, clearly not wanting to risk him reacting.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- He described the dog now having two poles with loops around its neck, with an animal control officer holding on tightly and a [redacted] special constable standing watch alongside the first.
- He said the dog was jumping and trying to pull away from the nooses, biting at the poles, not at the people, and this continued for a while.
- He heard the dog grunting and wheezing at times and said it slowed down a lot; he saw the side of its face covered in blood and noticed a patch of blood on the driveway.
- He said loudly enough for them to hear, "Did you give it a shot?" (meaning an injection), they told him nobody shot it. He said, "So you're choking it to death", animal control replied, "Not at all."
- Shortly after, he says the dog fell to its knees, then its side, and he could see it was dead; he saw the [redacted] animal control officer feel for a pulse, then remove the noose from the dog's neck.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Who responded to the "choking the dog to death" accusation, and who made it: [redacted] attributes the comment to an unnamed neighbor and says a special constable replied that everything was under control. [redacted] own statement has him making that exact accusation directly, with animal control (not a special constable) replying "not at all." These may be the same exchange described differently by two participants, or two separate incidents, worth noting either way. Special Constable [redacted] confirmed [redacted] had made a comment directed at him inquiring if he was there to “Murder the dog”. Special Constable [redacted] advised he did respond to [redacted] comments in attempts to reduce the escalations observed by the constable.
- Special Constable [redacted] stated he observed both the officers twisting the poles while the dog would turn his head to the left and right with enough force to cause the blood to spray from the dog. The dog was actively moving side to side but no

vertical movement within a 6’X6’ space. He stated that he also observed a large gap between the one pole’s rope to the dog’s neck which he described as big enough to place a hand between. SC [redacted] also describes a slow shift from more active movement periods then reduced activity to more reduced activity and shorter periods of increased activity prior to the dog laying down.

- Whether the dog was actively vocalizing/struggling continuously or had already gone quiet before collapse: [redacted] describes hearing grunting and wheezing and the dog visibly slowing down before it went to its knees. [redacted] describes the dog going still and the officers becoming motionless together, with his tail twitch as the only sign of continued life. Special Constable [redacted] describes the dog alligator rolling and then laying down, when he observed a couple chest raises then the dog became unresponsive. [redacted]account has a more abrupt transition, reactive thrashing followed almost immediately by him lying still on his side, without describing an intermediate slowing period the way [redacted]does.
- Bladder emptying and its meaning: [redacted] places him emptying his bladder as part of the transition to unresponsiveness, reported live to [redacted]. [redacted]describes noticing the urination alongside his tail wagging and reads both together as signs that "this was the end." Neither frames it as alarming in the moment so much as a marker of what was happening, worth flagging since it's the kind of physical detail that could be read differently.
- Whether respiration or pulse was ever checked: [redacted]confirms neither she nor [redacted] checked breathing or pulse themselves, only the toe check, which is consistent with [redacted] account from her phone call notes (that she directed a toe check and didn't recall giving explicit instruction to check pulse or respiration). [redacted]account, from an outside vantage point, describes seeing the [redacted] (matching [redacted] description of the [redacted]) feel for a pulse, which would mean a pulse check did happen, just possibly performed by the other officer rather than [redacted], or observed by [redacted] slightly later than the window [redacted] is describing. Worth checking against the next event's timeline rather than resolving here, since [redacted] vantage point continues past this boundary. When asked if lifesaving actions were taken or confirmation of life by the animal control officers, Special Constable [redacted] stated that [redacted] did move towards the dog and bend down after a short period of the officers looking at each other in a manner that he read as them not knowing what to do. He was not sure what she was looking for or could confirm exactly where she went to check and initially only assumed she was checking for a pulse.

Event 14 – Owners' Arrival, York Regional Police Arrival, and Final Loading of the Dog
Start: Begins when the dog has just become unresponsive, and the owners arrive.
End: Ends when the dog is loaded into the vehicle.

[redacted] **Interview 1 Stated:**

- When the owners pulled in, [redacted] asked them to check on the dog; she said they responded, "You've already ******* killed him."
- Everyone then came out of the house screaming, asking why she'd killed the dog; she said the dog reflexively kicked one of them when touched, and [redacted] asked them not to kick him, she said they wouldn't touch the dog, and instead got out their phones and stood there recording her.
- The dog's owner asked why she'd brought "her" dog there; [redacted] explained he'd been found running at large.
- She said [redacted] [redacted] then came out, she hadn't seen him at all until this point, visibly angry, saying it had been a friendly dog and "everything was fine until you ******* showed up."
- She confirmed no one besides [redacted] had been outside the whole time up until the owners arrived.
- The owners were a man and woman with a young son (about three); based on the delay, she assumed they'd made stops on the way.
- She confirmed the special constables were there first, and York Regional Police arrived after the owners.
- She said the special constables told her everyone had been filming them; she hadn't realized how many people inside the house had apparently been recording the whole time.
- She said once police arrived, no one offered to touch the dog until someone finally asked if they wanted him taken to the vet, and they agreed, but she felt the officers were more focused on documenting the scene with their cameras and getting her business card than on the dog itself and never touched him despite being asked multiple times.
- She and [redacted] got a blanket, loaded the dog onto it, and placed him in the vehicle; it was decided [redacted] would drive him to the vet (and drop off the German shorthaired pointer at home), while [redacted] went to the hospital for her [redacted]
- She said police then asked her to wash the blood off the driveway herself, sending her back into the middle of the scene while people continued to yell at her; she did so, then got in her car after confirming [redacted] had left, and went to the hospital.

[redacted] *Interview 2 Stated:*

- She confirmed that when the owners arrived, she asked them to touch the dog herself, since she still didn't feel safe approaching him, they didn't.
- She and [redacted] placed a blanket out behind the vehicle, picked him up onto it, lifted the blanket, and placed him in the side of the vehicle.
- Asked whether the dog appeared to be in rigor mortis at that point, she said his body was stiff.

[redacted] *Interview 1 Stated:*

- She described the owners arriving calmly, taking their time walking up the driveway with their [redacted] the man approached first, and [redacted] asked if he'd interact with the dog to see how he'd react, since they were still afraid to.
- He kicked the dog's hind leg; the dog remained still and unresponsive, and he said, "You killed my dog." The woman then came out screaming, and everyone else followed.
- She confirmed York Regional Police arrived around the time she and [redacted] were loading the dog into her vehicle, after the owners, not before.
- She said she didn't interact much with York Regional Police, since she and [redacted] were being filmed and yelled at and were focused on re-explaining the situation; this is when she offered, and the owners accepted, to drive the dog to the vet herself.
- She said [redacted] helped her load the dog while they were being yelled at by "the finders," with blame directed unfairly at [redacted]; neighbors came out around this time to watch the commotion.
- She left the property before [redacted], seeing York Regional Police walking up the driveway as she got into her vehicle to leave; she waited on the road until [redacted] also left.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- She said the special constables, present since 6:43–6:50 p.m., were conversing with the animal control officers while [redacted] was still alive, still breathing with effort, blood still coming from his mouth and nose. She places his death as occurring sometime between 6:50 and 7:00 p.m.
- She went to the front of the house and saw him lying on his side, legs stretched out toward the van; she asked her [redacted] to check whether his chest was rising. Her [redacted] said she didn't think so, and [redacted] herself confirmed at 7:01 p.m. that he wasn't breathing.

- The owners arrived at 7:02 p.m. in a [redacted], a [redacted], a [redacted] and a [redacted] Seeing the blood and the dog's condition, [redacted] put their [redacted] back in the [redacted] before returning to ask [redacted] what had happened and who had done this, all captured on video.
- At 7:04 p.m., [redacted] approached the officers and owners while the owners were raising their voices trying to understand what happened; he came back to the deck and, per his own video, said people "don't know how to do their effing job" and were "unprofessional."
- [redacted] was in the driveway speaking with Special Constable [redacted]; [redacted] told [redacted] they needed a supervisor there, then pointed at [redacted] and said she "needs better effing training" and had killed the dog. [redacted] cut him off, said nothing could be done now, and [redacted] ended the exchange by asking him to clear the property.
- The dog's owner, [redacted], began recording on her phone, video shows [redacted] lying in the driveway surrounded by blood and urine, with [redacted] catch pole still around his neck at the time the owners arrived; [redacted] pole had already been removed, though [redacted] isn't sure exactly when.
- She said York Regional Police arrived seconds after the owners, though with everything going on she couldn't pin an exact time; they spoke first with the animal control officers and special constables.
- YRP Officer [redacted] then spoke with [redacted], who told her she'd been bitten; [redacted] asked if she needed first aid, which [redacted] declined, [redacted] notes this was the second time medical attention had been offered and refused and says she and neighbor [redacted] both witnessed this exchange.
- She noted the neighbor to the south ([redacted]) was recording and had been overheard saying she believed "animal control just killed this dog"; [redacted] flagged this to [redacted] as concerning. She said she only noticed [redacted] once [redacted] was already lying down and deceased, and doesn't know what [redacted] witnessed before that, though she notes [redacted] [redacted] visually saw the officers twisting the poles in opposite directions, despite not giving his own written statement.
- The neighbor to the north ([redacted]) came out and asked if they'd "given him a shot" (a tranquilizer) and whether they'd choked the dog to death, she places this as happening after YRP had already arrived, during "the end of the commotion."

[redacted] *Stated:*

- She said the [redacted] tested the dog's paw and got no response, and the owners arrived about two minutes after that; she stopped recording once the owners arrived, not wanting to capture their private conversation.

- She recalled the officer, and separately the owner, each nudging or kicking the dog's paw/leg with their foot to check for a response.
- She said police arrived after the owners.
- She noticed the [redacted] had a cut on her hand with visible blood, which she hadn't registered until a police officer asked if she was bleeding and needed help; the officer said she was fine.

[redacted] *Stated:*

- His statement ends immediately after this point: "A minute or two later, dog owners showed up." He doesn't describe anything beyond that.

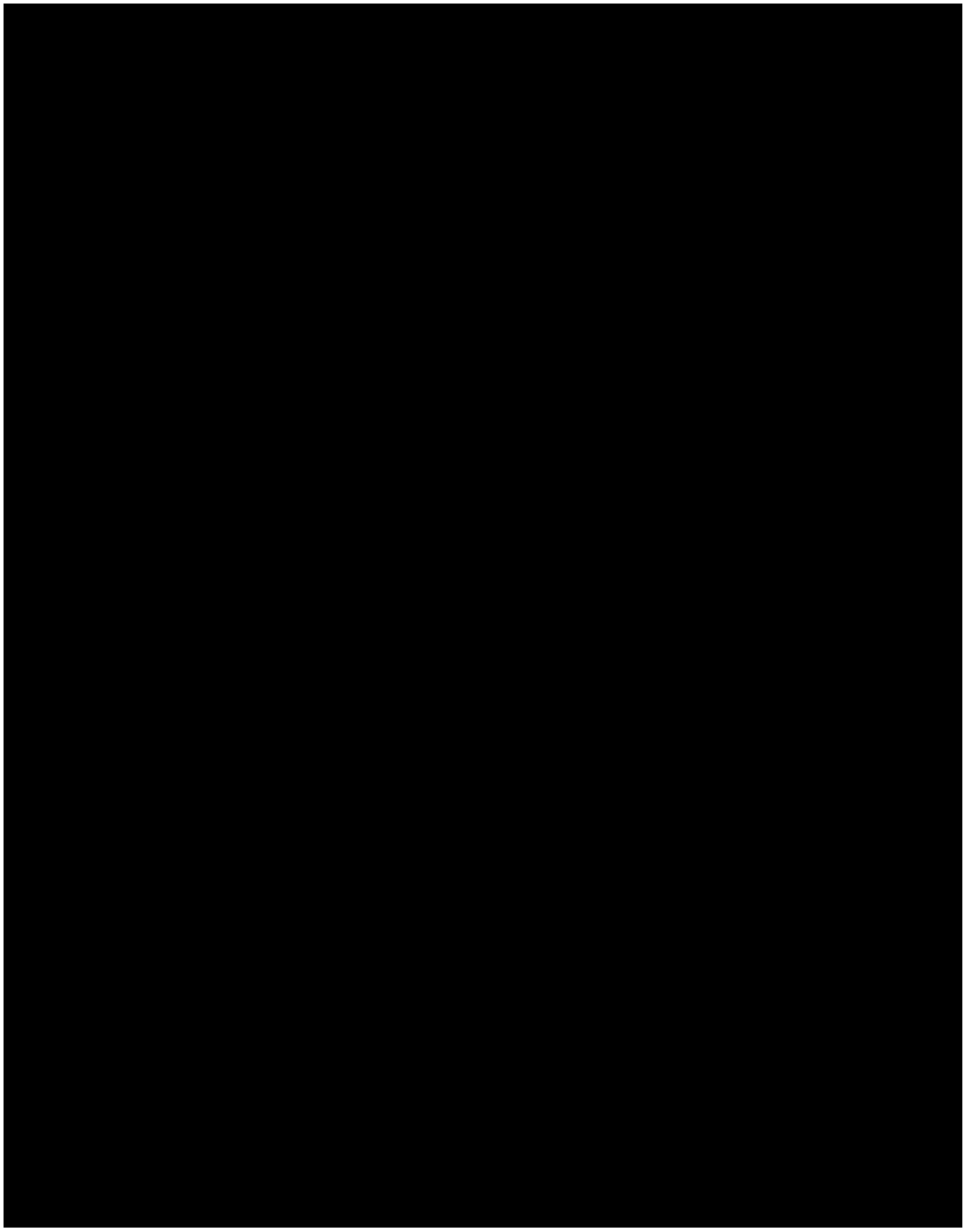
Event 14 – Owners' Arrival, York Regional Police Arrival, and Final Loading of the Dog
Start: Begins when the dog has just become unresponsive, and the owners arrive.
End: Ends when the dog is loaded into the vehicle.

Areas of Discrepancy:

- Special Constable [redacted] confirmed he reached out to dispatch to request Officer attendance as believed the scene was becoming too escalated and needed assistance to control the scene.
- Who responded to [redacted] "choking the dog to death" comment, and when: [redacted] places this comment as happening after YRP had already arrived, during the tail end of the commotion, and doesn't record any specific reply. This is worth comparing to [redacted] account, where she recalls a similar comment being met by a special constable saying everything was under control, raising the possibility these are being placed at different points in the timeline by different witnesses, or that [redacted] may be describing a separate, earlier comment from a different neighbor. Special Constable [redacted] confirms a comment from [redacted] which was more directed to him requesting if he was there to “Murder the dog” and SC [redacted] advised he had responded to [redacted].
- Focus and conduct of the responding officers: [redacted] account describes the special constables and police as more focused on filming and documentation than on the dog itself, declining to touch him despite being asked. [redacted] account doesn't characterize their conduct this way, focusing instead on the timeline and dialogue.

A.2 Incident Scene Photographs

AURORA PHOTO – DOG 1



AURORA PHOTO – DOG 2

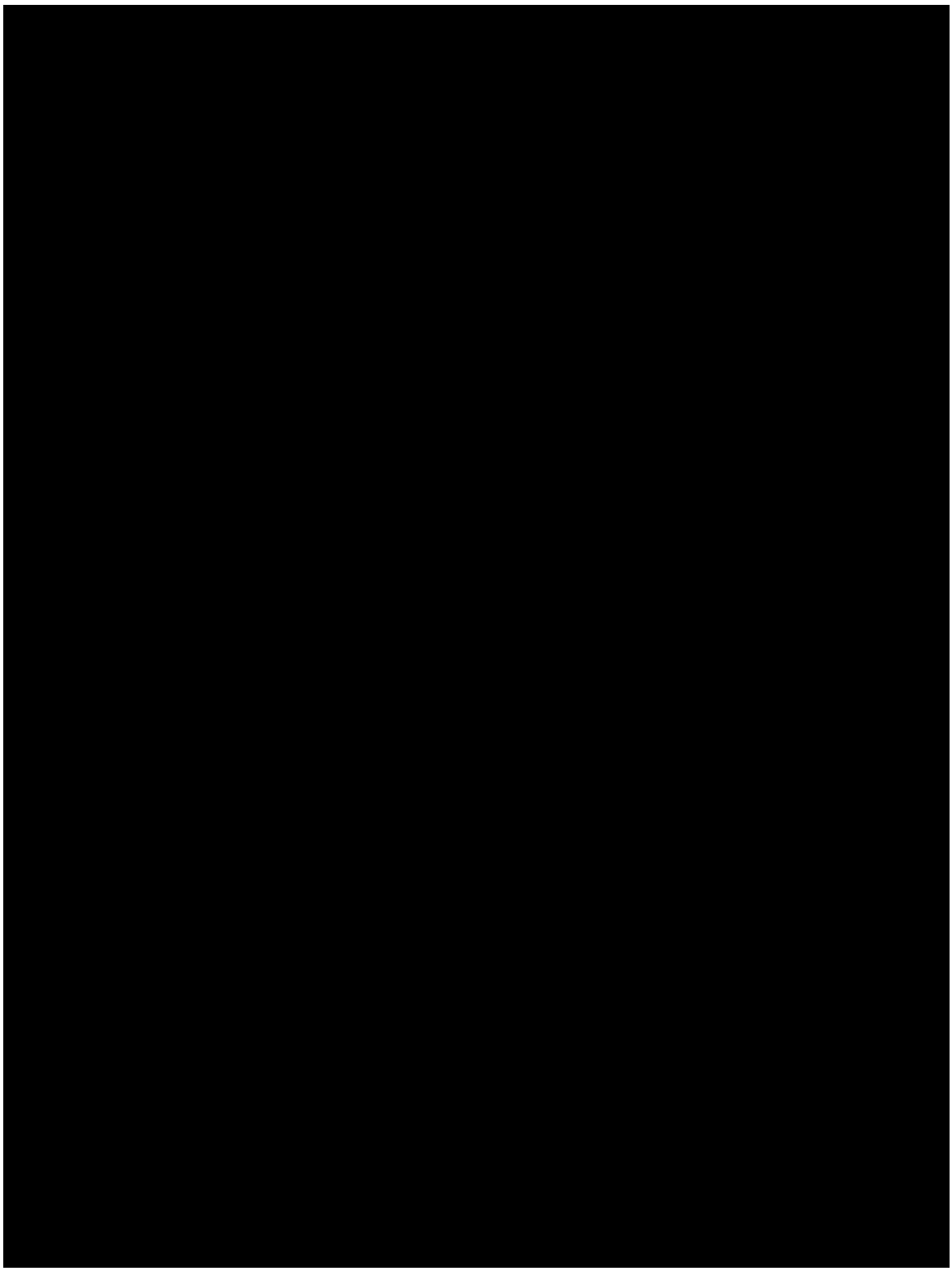


PHOTO 7 - [redacted] AND [redacted] CELL PHONE PHOTO - 22187

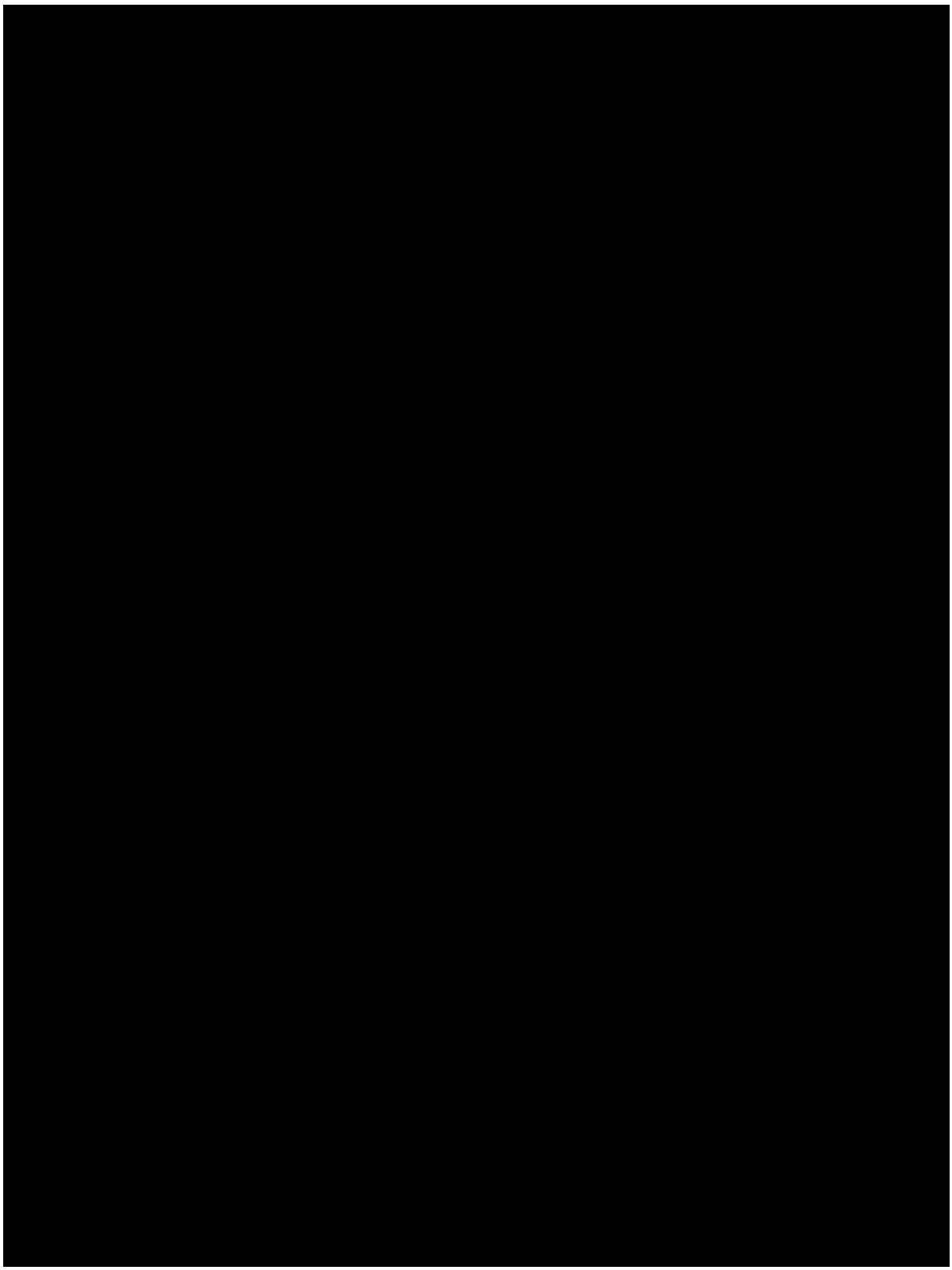
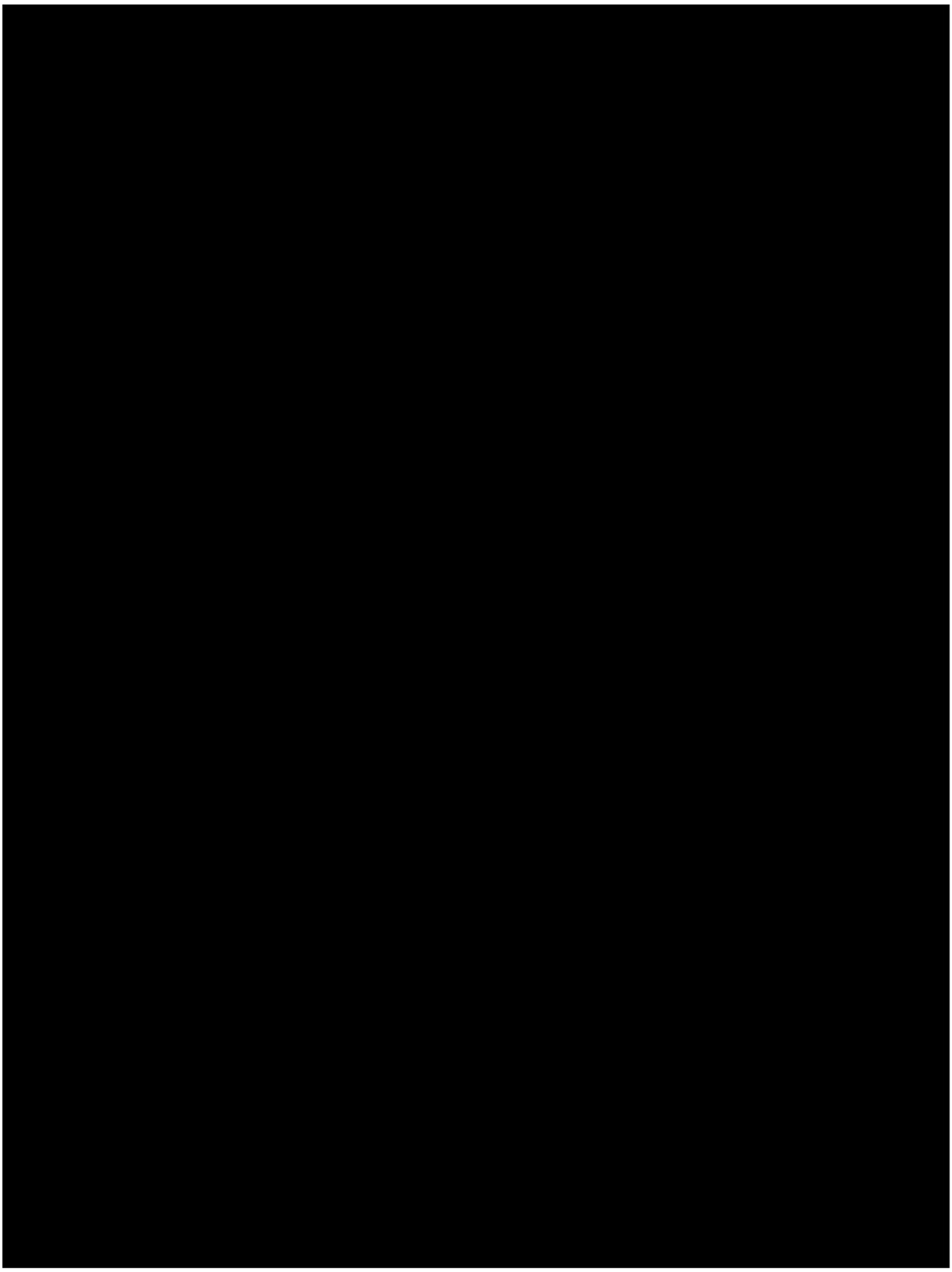
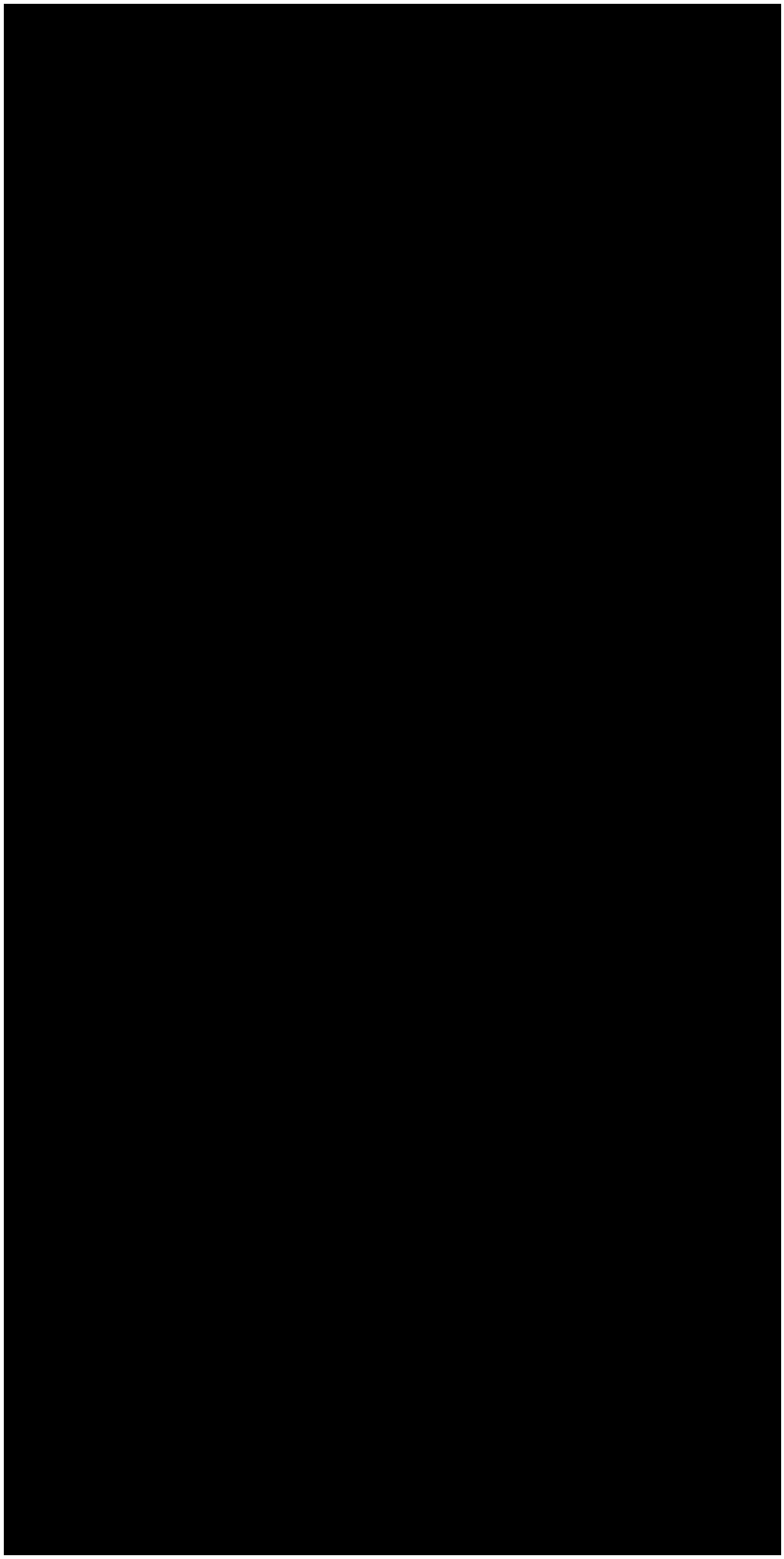


PHOTO 8 - [redacted] AND [redacted] CELL PHONE PHOTO - 22188

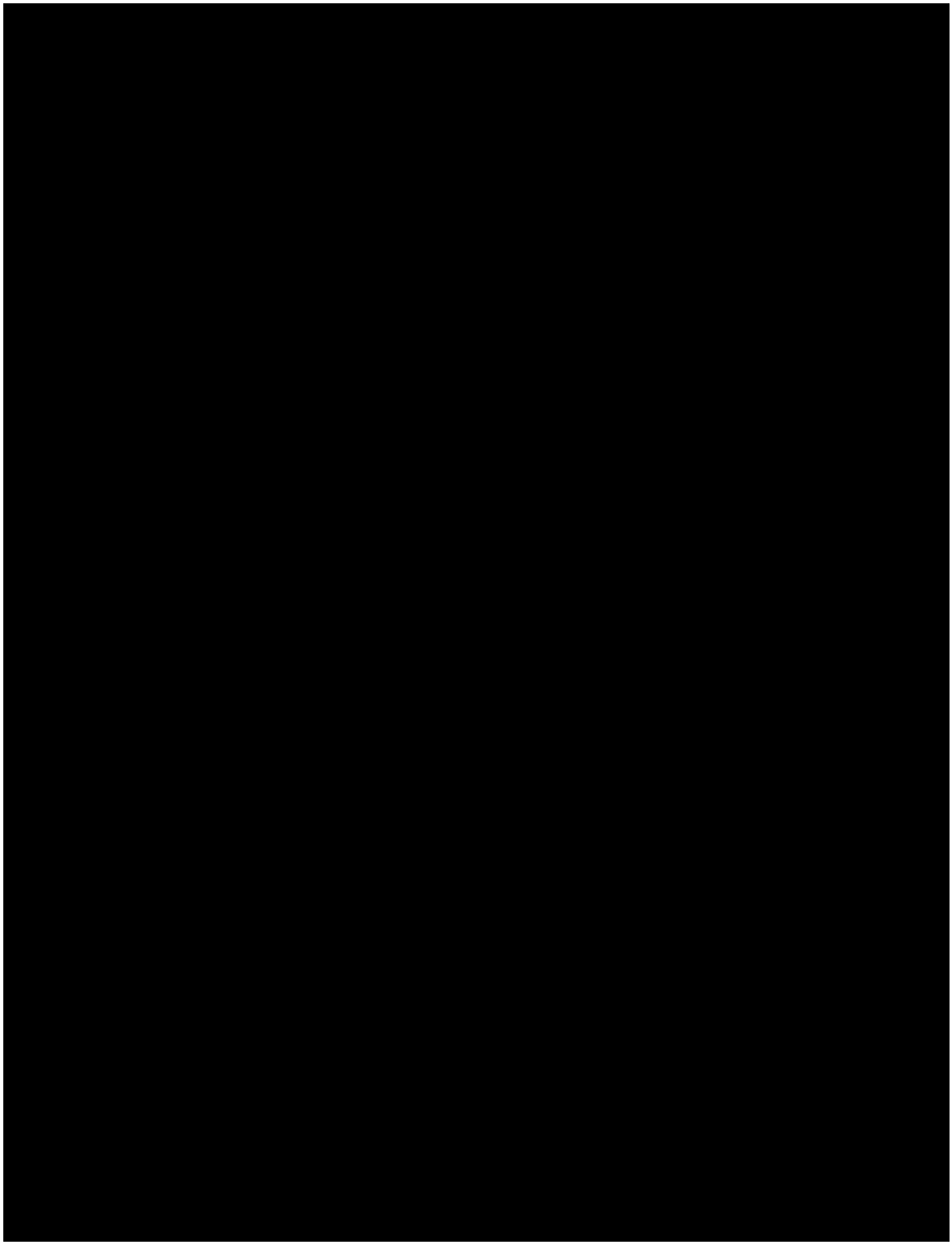


A.3 Google Earth / Aerial Site Map

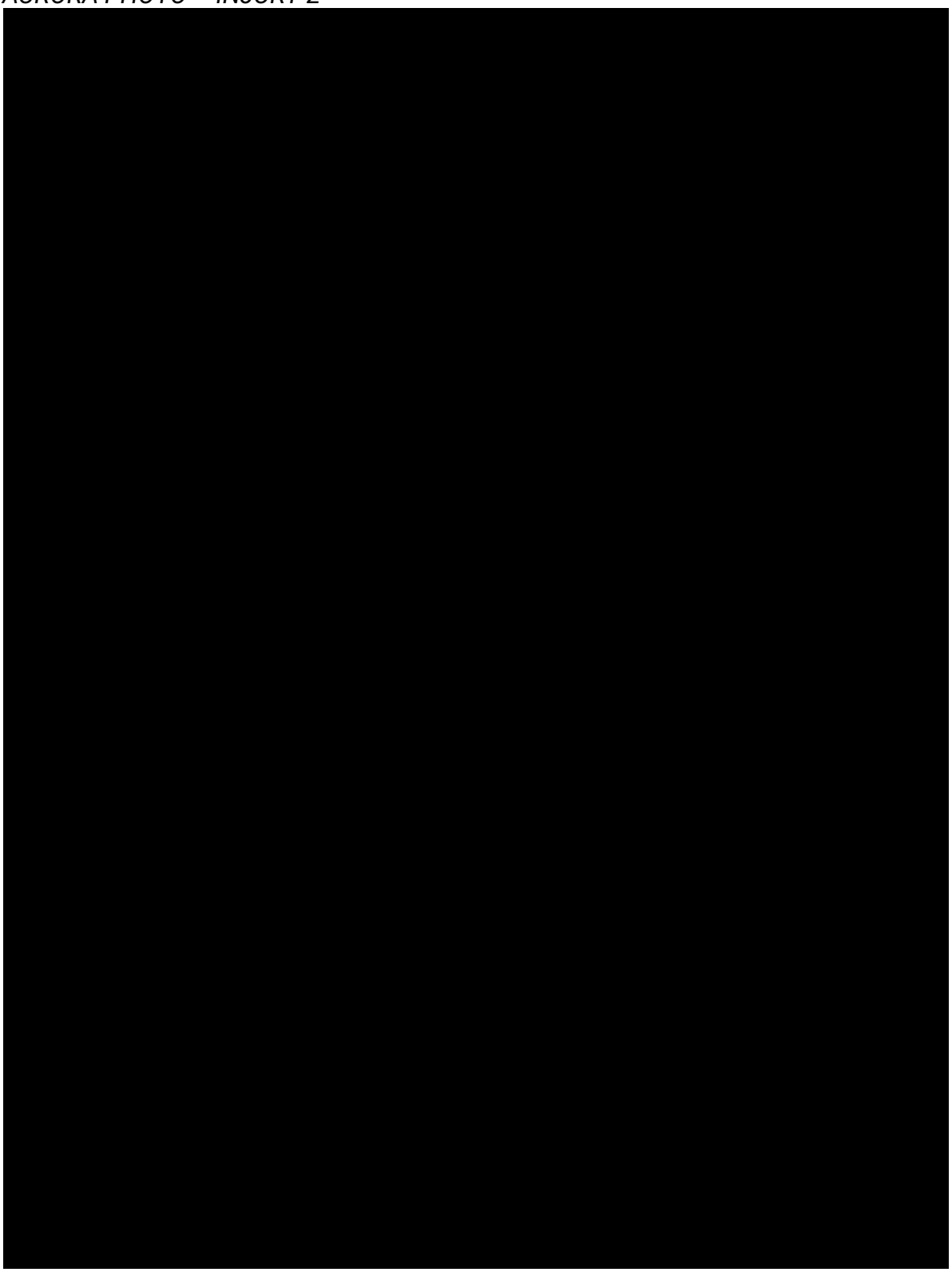


A.4 Officer Injury Photographs

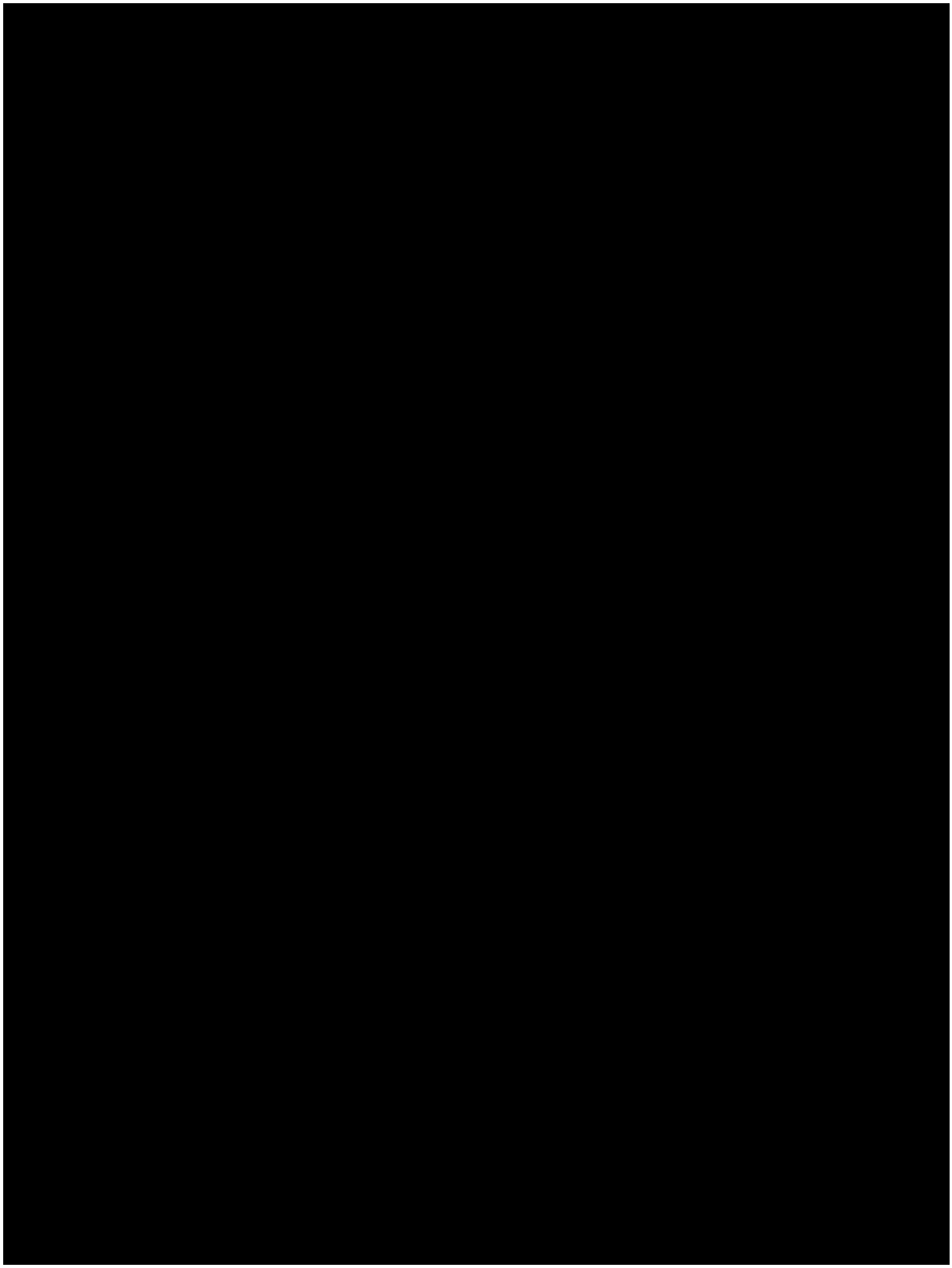
AURORA PHOTO – INJURY 1



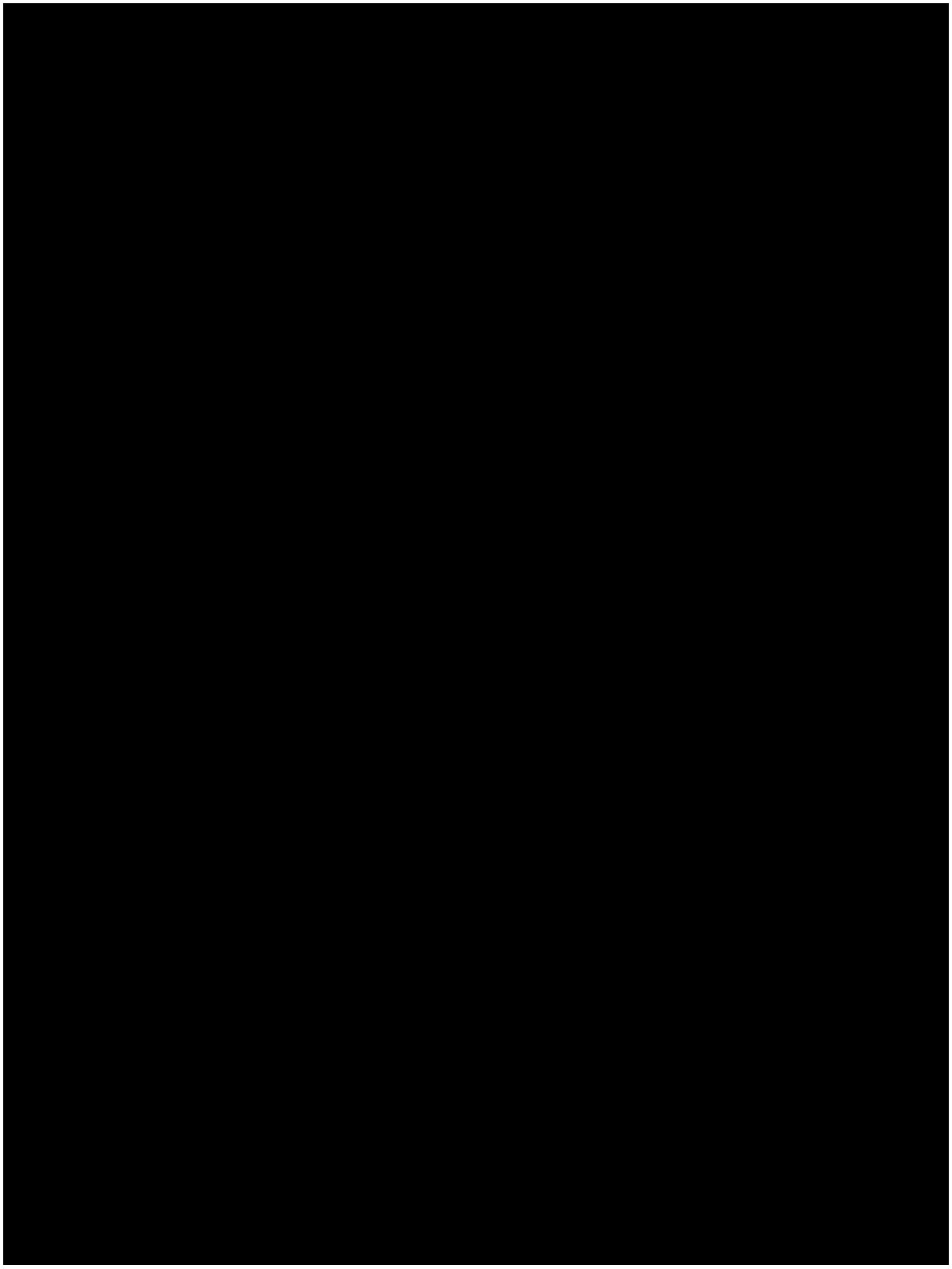
AURORA PHOTO – INJURY 2



AURORA PHOTO – INJURY 3



AURORA PHOTO – INJURY 4



APPENDIX B – BEHAVIOURAL ASSESSMENT SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

B.1 Complete Canine Behaviour Analysis

Behavioural Phase 1 – Initial Containment and Voluntary Loading

Relevant Human Actions

- Residents successfully contained both dogs on private property.
- [redacted] attended the scene.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer was handled and loaded into the Animal Services vehicle.
- [redacted] approached and handled the Rottweiler.
- The Rottweiler was loaded into the Animal Services vehicle.
- Preparations were being made to photograph the dog and transport both dogs.

Objective Canine Behaviour

- The Rottweiler remained in proximity to the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- The Rottweiler allowed sufficient proximity and handling to permit loading into the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler entered the vehicle voluntarily.
- No growling, barking, lunging, snapping, or biting were reported during the initial loading process.
- No active resistance to entering the vehicle was reported.
- According to [redacted], the Rottweiler displayed continued interest in the German Shorthaired Pointer.

Officer Interpretation

[redacted]

- The dog was manageable.
- Containment had been successfully achieved.
- Transport could proceed normally.

[redacted]

- Not present during this phase.

Officer Decision

[redacted]

- Proceed with normal containment and transport procedures.
- Load both dogs into the Animal Services vehicle.
- Photograph the dogs.
- Discontinue efforts to identify ownership at that time.

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Two dogs were present together when [redacted] arrived on the scene.

- Multiple reports indicated the Rottweiler had been pursuing and attempting to mount the German Shorthaired Pointer prior to containment.
- Reports indicate the behaviour continued after containment and that the dogs were separated by the finder.
- The reproductive status of either dog was unknown.
- [redacted] reported observations that caused her to question whether the German Shorthaired Pointer may have recently had a litter; this observation was not independently verified.
- The dogs had reportedly been running at large for an extended period before containment.
- Based on Animal Control call logs, the dogs are estimated to have been running at large for approximately 1.5–3 hours, based on reports received between 12:30 p.m. and 3:01 p.m. with Animal Control officers arriving on the scene at 4:20 p.m.
- The true duration at large and intensity of exertion cannot be fully known but likely exceeded the objectively documented period.
- Ownership had not yet been confirmed.
- The dogs were physically contained at the time of officer arrival.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The dog's voluntary entry into the vehicle suggests that, at this stage, entry into the vehicle was not acting as a significant behavioural barrier.
- No overt signs of aggression were reported during the initial loading process.
- The dog's behaviour suggests a level of tolerance for human proximity and handling sufficient to allow containment and loading.
- At this stage of the incident, the available evidence does not indicate active resistance to transport.
- Multiple reports suggest that gaining access to the German Shorthaired Pointer may have represented a significant competing behavioural objective for the Rottweiler prior to containment.
- The extent to which pursuit, mounting behaviour, separation from the German Shorthaired Pointer, or possible reproductive influences affected the dog's emotional state cannot be determined from the available evidence.
- Prior exertion, prolonged activity, and ongoing interest in the second dog may represent relevant setting events when considering the dog's behavioural state during later phases of the incident.
- No clear indicators of handling sensitivity, collar sensitivity, or restraint sensitivity were documented during this phase.

Information Gaps

- Duration of time spent running at large prior to containment.
- Physical condition of the dog before officer arrival.
- Hydration status.
- Medical history.
- Reproductive status of either dog.

- Previous experience with vehicles, kennels, or restraint equipment.
- Behaviour exhibited while being contained by residents prior to officer arrival.

Behavioural Phase 2 – Vehicle Exit

Relevant Human Actions
- The Rottweiler had been successfully loaded into the Animal Services vehicle.
- [redacted] began the intake and documentation process.
- A photograph of the dog was being taken.
- The vehicle door or containment area was open during the photography process.
- No physical handling of the dog was reported immediately prior to the exit.
- [redacted] remained in close proximity to the vehicle.

Objective Canine Behaviour
- The Rottweiler exited the vehicle.
- The dog left the vehicle without reported force or physical prompting.
- No growling, barking, lunging, snapping, or biting were reported during the exit.
- The dog remained within the general area following the exit.
- The dog remained available for subsequent handling attempts.

Officer Interpretation
[redacted]
- The dog needed to be reloaded into the vehicle.
- The situation remained manageable.
- Containment had been lost but could likely be re-established.

Officer Decision
[redacted]
- Continue efforts to reload the dog.
- Utilize food as a handling and loading tool.
- Attempt cooperative re-entry into the vehicle.
- Continue containment efforts without immediately escalating to more restrictive handling methods.

Environmental / Contextual Factors:
- Residential driveway environment.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the Animal Services vehicle.
- Photographing and documentation procedures were underway.
- Ownership had not yet been confirmed or communicated.
- Reports indicated the Rottweiler had previously been pursuing and attempting to mount the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- The dogs had reportedly been separated by the finder prior to officer arrival.

- Prior running-at-large duration is estimated at 1.5–4 hours based on Animal Control call logs, with officers responding to reports since 12:35 p.m. The full duration at large remains unknown.
- Prior exertion level remained unknown.
- Reproductive status of either dog remained unknown.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The dog's exit from the vehicle represents the first documented divergence from cooperative containment.
- Voluntary entry into the vehicle did not predict voluntary maintenance within the vehicle once the containment environment changed.
- No overt aggressive behaviour was reported during the exit itself.
- At this stage, the behaviour is more accurately characterized as loss of containment or refusal of confinement than aggression.
- The available evidence does not establish the dog's motivation for exiting the vehicle.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained a potentially relevant environmental stimulus during this phase.
- Previous reports of pursuit and mounting behaviour, combined with subsequent observations of interest in the German Shorthaired Pointer, suggest that access to the second dog may have remained behaviourally relevant.
- Prior exertion, unresolved access to the German Shorthaired Pointer, and transition into confinement may represent potential contributors to the dog's behavioural state; however, the relative influence of these factors cannot be determined from the available evidence.
- No documented indicators of handling sensitivity, restraint sensitivity, or overt conflict behaviour were reported during the exit itself.

Information Gaps

- Exact mechanism of the exit.
- Dog's body posture immediately before exiting.
- Dog's orientation within the vehicle prior to exit.
- Whether any environmental stimulus immediately preceded the exit.
- Whether signs of stress, discomfort, frustration, or conflict were present but undocumented.

Behavioural Phase 3 – Failed Reloading Attempts

Relevant Human Actions

- [redacted] made multiple attempts to encourage the dog back into the vehicle.
- Food was repeatedly used as a loading incentive.
- The dog was repeatedly presented with opportunities to voluntarily re-enter the vehicle.
- Loading attempts continued over an extended period.

- [redacted] remained in close proximity to the dog.
- The loading process became the primary focus of the interaction.

Objective Canine Behaviour
- The dog did not voluntarily re-enter the vehicle.
- The dog remained outside the vehicle despite multiple opportunities to reload.
- The dog remained within the general containment area.
- No growling, barking, lunging, snapping, or biting were reported during this phase.
- The dog continued engaging with the environment while refusing the requested behaviour.
- The dog remained available for subsequent handling attempts.

Officer Interpretation
[redacted]
- The dog remained capable of being loaded.
- Continued loading attempts were viewed as a viable strategy.
- Food remained an appropriate handling tool.
- The situation had not yet escalated to the point where additional resources were immediately required.

Officer Decision
[redacted]
- Continue treat-based loading attempts.
- Continue encouraging voluntary re-entry.
- Delay escalation to more restrictive handling methods.
- Continue working toward cooperative loading.

Environmental / Contextual Factors:
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the Animal Services vehicle.
- [redacted] reported that the Rottweiler continued showing interest in the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- [redacted] reported that the dog was whining and attempting to access the German Shorthaired Pointer through the compartment area.
- Multiple reports indicated the Rottweiler had previously been pursuing and attempting to mount the German Shorthaired Pointer prior to containment.
- The dogs had reportedly been separated by the finder prior to officer arrival.
- Prior running-at-large duration was estimated at 1.5–4 hours, with the full duration remaining unknown.
- Prior exertion level remained unknown.
- Reproductive status of either dog remained unknown.
- Ownership had not yet been confirmed or communicated.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The dog's refusal to re-enter the vehicle represents the first sustained resistance to a requested behaviour.
- At this stage, the available evidence suggests behavioural non-compliance rather than overt aggression.
- Continued refusal despite repeated opportunities to reload suggests that the dog's motivation to remain outside the vehicle exceeded the value of the incentives being offered.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained a potentially relevant environmental stimulus throughout this phase.
- [redacted] observations of whining and attempts to access the German Shorthaired Pointer suggest continued behavioural interest in the second dog.
- Repeated loading attempts, continued separation from the German Shorthaired Pointer, prior exertion, and unresolved access to the second dog may represent cumulative factors influencing the dog's behavioural state.
- As the interaction continued without resolution, opportunities for behavioural recovery may have become increasingly limited.
- The available evidence suggests the potential for increasing conflict surrounding the loading process; however, no overt aggressive behaviours were documented during this phase.
- No documented indicators of handling sensitivity, restraint sensitivity, or direct aggression were reported during the failed reload attempts themselves.

Information Gaps

- Degree of food motivation during repeated loading attempts.
- Exact body posture throughout the loading attempts.
- Whether signs of conflict, frustration, stress, or avoidance were present but undocumented.
- Whether the dog was actively moving away from the vehicle or simply refusing to approach it.
- The degree to which the German Shorthaired Pointer influenced the dog's behaviour during this phase.
- The reproductive status of either dog and whether it played any role in the behavioural context.

Behavioural Phase 4 – [redacted] Interaction and First Documented Response to Physical Manipulation

Relevant Human Actions

- Multiple cooperative loading attempts had been unsuccessful.
- [redacted] became involved in the loading effort.
- [redacted] approached the dog to assist with loading.

- [redacted] attempted to physically assist by helping lift or encourage the dog into the vehicle.
- Physical contact and/or physical manipulation associated with loading was attempted.

Objective Canine Behaviour
- The dog did not voluntarily enter the vehicle.
- During the loading attempt, the dog turned its head toward [redacted].
- The dog's mouth made contact with [redacted] sunglasses.
- [redacted] sunglasses were dislodged.
- No injury was reported.
- No sustained bite or grip was reported.
- Following the interaction, the dog remained outside the vehicle.
- Additional loading attempts continued.

Officer Interpretation
[redacted]
- The loading attempt was unsuccessful.
- The dog's response contributed to concerns regarding subsequent handling attempts.
- The dog remained capable of being managed and loaded.
- Additional loading strategies continued to be considered.

[redacted]
- Not present during this phase.

Officer Decision
[redacted]
- Continue attempting to load the dog.
- Continue exploring alternative loading options.
- Continue containment efforts.
- Progress toward additional handling strategies.

Environmental / Contextual Factors:
- Multiple unsuccessful loading attempts had already occurred.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The dog had reportedly continued demonstrating interest in the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- The duration of the interaction was increasing.
- Ownership had not yet been confirmed or communicated.
- The loading process remained unresolved.
- Physical assistance was introduced after cooperative loading efforts had failed.

Behavioural Analysis:

- This is the first documented behavioural response associated with physical manipulation during the incident.
- The available evidence indicates that the dog's response occurred during an attempt to physically influence or assist movement into the vehicle.
- The head turn toward [redacted] suggests a behavioural response directed toward the source of physical contact or pressure.
- The available evidence does not establish whether the contact with the sunglasses represented an intentional bite, an inhibited bite, a warning response, an attempt to create distance, or another behavioural response.
- Importantly, no injury was reported during this interaction.
- The dog's response occurred in the context of repeated unsuccessful loading attempts and increasing duration of interaction.
- The interaction may represent an early indicator that the loading process itself was becoming a source of conflict for the dog.
- At this stage, the available evidence suggests the dog's behavioural responses remained closely associated with loading and physical handling attempts rather than indiscriminate aggression.
- The event may indicate increasing sensitivity to physical manipulation associated with the loading process; however, the extent of that sensitivity cannot be determined from the available evidence.

Information Gaps

- The exact positioning of [redacted] relative to the dog at the moment of contact.
- The dog's body posture immediately before turning toward [redacted].
- Whether additional behavioural signals occurred before the contact and were not documented.
- The degree to which physical pressure, proximity, or movement influenced the response.
- Whether the response represented increasing conflict with the loading process, increasing sensitivity to handling, or another behavioural factor.

Behavioural Phase 5 – Muzzle Attempt

Relevant Human Actions

- Multiple cooperative loading attempts had been unsuccessful.
- Physical assistance attempts had been unsuccessful.
- [redacted] elected to attempt a slip-lead muzzle.
- [redacted] approached the dog for the purpose of applying the muzzle.
- [redacted] attempted to position the slip lead to create a temporary muzzle.
- The muzzle attempt was not successful.
- Following the unsuccessful attempt, [redacted] requested assistance from [redacted].

Objective Canine Behaviour

- The dog remained outside the vehicle.
- The dog continued refusing voluntary re-entry into the vehicle.
- The dog did not permit successful muzzle application.
- Dog reportedly lowered head, became still, and looked upward toward [redacted].
- No bite occurred during the muzzle attempt.
- No injury was reported during the muzzle attempt.
- The dog remained available for continued handling attempts.

Officer Interpretation

[redacted]

- The dog remained capable of being managed and loaded.
- [redacted] reported feeling uncomfortable with the behaviour.
- [redacted] interpreted the behaviour as potentially concerning.
- A temporary muzzle could facilitate safer handling and loading.
- Additional loading attempts remained possible.
- The situation remained unresolved but manageable.

Officer Decision

[redacted]

- Attempt temporary muzzle application.
- Continue efforts to safely load the dog.
- Request assistance from [redacted] when the muzzle attempt was unsuccessful.

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- The dog had already refused multiple loading attempts.
- The head turn and subsequent grazing of the sunglasses on [redacted] head with the teeth had already occurred.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- [redacted] reported ongoing interest in the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- Full extent of prior running-at-large duration remained unknown.
- Prior exertion level remained unknown.
- Ownership had not yet been confirmed or communicated.
- The duration of the interaction was continuing to increase.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The attempted muzzle application represents an increase in the level of physical control being applied during the interaction.
- The dog's continued refusal to re-enter the vehicle persisted despite multiple changes in handling strategy.
- At this stage, the loading process remained unresolved and continued to be the central focus of the interaction.

- The available evidence suggests increasing conflict surrounding the loading process, as successive handling strategies were introduced without achieving the desired outcome.
- Repeated unsuccessful attempts, prolonged interaction duration, unresolved access to the German Shorthaired Pointer, and continued efforts to alter the dog's behaviour may represent cumulative factors influencing emotional arousal.
- Importantly, the available evidence does not indicate indiscriminate aggression during this phase.
- The inability to successfully apply the muzzle may suggest increasing sensitivity to handling associated with the loading process; however, the available evidence does not permit determination of the specific factors contributing to the failure of the muzzle attempt.
- At this stage, the behavioural picture continues to be characterized by resistance to handling and loading rather than overt aggression.

Information Gaps
- The dog's body posture during the muzzle attempt.
- The dog's specific behavioural response to the attempted muzzle application.
- Whether avoidance, withdrawal, freezing, conflict behaviours, or other responses were present but undocumented.
- The degree to which the muzzle attempt altered the dog's emotional state.
- Whether additional behavioural indicators were present but not recorded by observers.

Behavioural Phase 6 – Arrival of Second Officer and Information Transfer

Relevant Human Actions
- [redacted] arrived on scene.
- [redacted]provided information regarding previous loading attempts.
- Information regarding the [redacted] interaction was communicated.
- [redacted] observed the dog prior to becoming physically involved in handling.
- Two officers were present and participating in management of the situation.

Objective Canine Behaviour
- The dog remained outside the vehicle.
- The dog had not been successfully reloaded.
- The dog remained available for handling attempts.
- No growling, barking, lunging, snapping, or biting were reported during the initial assessment period.
- The dog was reported to be standing and panting.
- The dog was reported to be alert.
- [redacted] described the dog as rigid rather than loose or relaxed.
- [redacted] reported ears forward and weight carried forward.

Officer Interpretation
[redacted]

- The dog remained difficult to load.
- Additional assistance was required.

[redacted]

- The dog was not initially assessed as overtly aggressive.
- The dog was assessed as resistant to loading.
- Cooperative loading remained a viable option.

Officer Decision
[redacted]

- Conduct an independent assessment of the dog.
- Attempt cooperative loading strategies.
- Delay progression to more restrictive handling methods.

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Two Animal Control officers were present: [redacted] and [redacted] [redacted].
- Prior loading attempts had been unsuccessful.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The duration of the interaction continued to increase.
- Ownership had not yet been communicated to [redacted].

Behavioural Analysis:

- No overt aggressive behaviours were reported during the initial assessment period.
- The dog's behaviour continued to be characterized by refusal to load rather than active aggression.
- Reported rigidity, forward weight distribution, and sustained attention are consistent with an elevated state of arousal but are not independently diagnostic of aggression.
- The available evidence suggests the dog's behavioural state remained sufficiently stable to permit additional cooperative handling attempts.
- At this stage, both officers continued to interpret the primary issue as resistance to loading rather than active aggression.

Information Gaps

- Exact body posture throughout the initial assessment period.
- Degree of attention directed toward individual handlers or the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- Whether additional behavioural indicators were present but undocumented.

Behavioural Phase 7 – Cooperative Loading Attempts by [redacted]

Relevant Human Actions

- [redacted] conducted an independent assessment of the dog.
- [redacted] attempted to encourage the dog into the vehicle using verbal encouragement.
- [redacted] utilized an upbeat and enthusiastic tone of voice.
- [redacted] moved with the dog in an effort to build momentum toward the vehicle.
- [redacted] attempted to make the loading process appear positive and inviting.
- Multiple cooperative loading attempts were made.
- No physical restraint or force-based handling was applied during this phase.

Objective Canine Behaviour

- The dog remained outside the vehicle.
- The dog did not voluntarily re-enter the vehicle.
- The dog remained available for interaction.
- No growling, barking, lunging, snapping, or biting were reported during this phase.
- The dog remained responsive to the movements and actions of the handlers.
- The dog continued to resist the requested behaviour of entering the vehicle.

Officer Interpretation

- [redacted]
- The dog was not initially assessed as overtly aggressive.
- The dog was assessed as resistant to loading.
- The dog remained capable of being cooperatively loaded.
- Additional cooperative loading attempts were considered appropriate.

[redacted]

- Continued loading efforts remained a viable option.
- Additional assistance had improved available handling options.

Officer Decision

[redacted]

- Continue cooperative loading efforts.
- Utilize verbal encouragement and movement-based handling techniques.
- Delay progression to more restrictive handling methods.
- Continue attempting voluntary vehicle entry.

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Two officers were present and actively engaged in the interaction.
- Multiple previous loading attempts had already been unsuccessful.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.

- The duration of the interaction continued to increase with 45 minutes of attempted loading and handling by the time [redacted] arrived on the scene.
- Ownership had not yet been communicated to [redacted].
- The dog remained outside the vehicle and transport had not yet been achieved.

Behavioural Analysis:

- Despite the introduction of a second handler and a modified handling approach, the dog continued to refuse voluntary vehicle entry.
- No overt aggressive behaviours were reported during these cooperative loading attempts.
- The available evidence suggests the dog's behavioural state remained characterized by resistance to the requested task rather than active aggression.
- The dog's continued refusal despite repeated changes in handling strategy suggests that the factors maintaining the behaviour had not been resolved.
- At this stage, the dog's behaviour remained organized and goal-directed rather than indiscriminate or chaotic.
- Repeated unsuccessful loading attempts, increasing interaction duration, separation from the German Shorthaired Pointer, and unresolved access to the second dog may represent cumulative contextual factors influencing the dog's behavioural state.
- The available evidence suggests the dog remained below the threshold at which overt aggressive behaviour was expressed, despite ongoing conflict surrounding the loading process.

Information Gaps

- Degree of food interest during [redacted] loading attempts.
- Whether subtle conflict behaviours were present but undocumented.
- Whether the dog's attention was primarily directed toward the handlers, the vehicle, or the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- Whether behavioural indicators of increasing arousal were present but not recognized or recorded.

Behavioural Phase 8 – Collar Contact and Bite Event

Relevant Human Actions

- Multiple cooperative loading attempts had been unsuccessful.
- Multiple treat-based loading attempts had been unsuccessful.
- Physical assistance attempts had been unsuccessful.
- [redacted] approached the dog in an effort to facilitate loading.
- [redacted] took hold of the leash near the dog's neck.
- [redacted] reached toward the collar area with the intention of physically guiding the dog toward the vehicle.

Objective Canine Behaviour

- The dog remained outside the vehicle.
- The dog did not voluntarily enter the vehicle.
- Upon contact being made with the collar area, the dog turned toward [redacted].
- The dog bit [redacted]
- A single bite was reported.
- The bite resulted in puncture wounds.
- The dog released immediately following the bite.
- No sustained grip was reported.
- No repeated biting was reported.
- No re-engagement was reported following the bite.
- The injury was classified as a [redacted] bite under the Dunbar Bite Scale.

Officer Interpretation

[redacted]

- The dog was not initially assessed as overtly aggressive.
- The dog was assessed as resistant to loading.
- Physical guidance was believed to be a reasonable next step.
- The bite was not anticipated at the time the collar contact was attempted.

[redacted]

- The dog remained difficult to load.
- Additional handling strategies remained necessary to achieve transport.

Officer Decision

[redacted]

- Transition from cooperative loading efforts to physical guidance.
- Obtain control through the collar area.
- Physically guide the dog toward the vehicle.

[redacted]

- Continue efforts to achieve containment and transport.
- Support [redacted] during the loading attempt.

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Multiple loading attempts had been unsuccessful.
- The dog had previously exited the vehicle after voluntarily entering it.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- The duration of the interaction continued to increase.
- The dog had been exposed to repeated loading attempts over an extended period.
- Ownership had not yet been confirmed or communicated to the responding officers.
- Prior running-at-large duration remained unknown.
- Prior exertion level remained unknown.

- Reproductive status of either dog remained unknown.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The bite occurred immediately following physical interaction with the collar area.
- The bite represents the first documented behaviour during the incident that resulted in injury.
- The bite consisted of a single bite followed by immediate disengagement.
- No sustained grip, repeated biting, or re-engagement was reported.
- The available evidence suggests a close temporal relationship between collar contact and the bite event.
- The bite occurred following an extended period of unsuccessful loading attempts, increasing interaction duration, repeated handling efforts, and unresolved access to the vehicle.
- The behavioural characteristics of the bite differ from those typically associated with prolonged offensive attack behaviour.
- The available evidence supports the conclusion that the bite was directed toward the immediate source of physical interaction.
- The extent to which the bite was influenced by handling sensitivity, restraint sensitivity, cumulative stressors, conflict associated with the loading process, separation from the German Shorthaired Pointer, or other behavioural factors cannot be determined with certainty from the available evidence.
- The behavioural significance of the bite, including bite inhibition, bite pressure, contextual influences, and potential motivation, will be examined separately within the Bite Assessment.

Information Gaps

- The dog's precise body posture immediately before collar contact.
- Whether additional behavioural indicators occurred prior to the bite but were not documented.
- The degree to which collar contact altered the dog's behavioural state.
- Whether conflict, avoidance, handling sensitivity, restraint sensitivity, or other behavioural factors were present but undocumented.
- The relative contribution of environmental, social, physiological, and handling-related factors to the bite event.

Behavioural Phase 9 – Post-Bite Reassessment and Catch Pole Application

Relevant Human Actions

- [redacted] disengaged following the bite.
- [redacted] returned briefly to her vehicle.
- [redacted] contacted [redacted] and advised that she had been bitten.
- [redacted] remained on scene and continued managing the incident.
- Information was exchanged regarding the dog's previous response to [redacted] [redacted] when he attempted to leash the dog.

- [redacted] reassessed the situation.
- [redacted] retrieved a catch pole from her vehicle.
- [redacted] applied the first catch pole to the dog.

Objective Canine Behaviour
- The dog remained outside the vehicle.
- The dog had not been successfully loaded.
- Following catch pole application, the dog displayed increased interaction with the restraint equipment.
- The dog bit and engaged with the catch pole.
- Increased movement and resistance were reported following application of the catch pole.
- The dog remained under control but was not successfully transported.'
- Blood was observed originating from the mouth and/or nose following restraint.
- The source of the bleeding was not determined on scene.

Officer Interpretation
[redacted]
- The bite significantly changed her assessment of the situation.
- Direct physical handling was no longer considered appropriate.
- The dog represented an increased safety risk.
- A higher level of containment was required.

[redacted]
- Additional control measures were required.
- Loading efforts remained unsuccessful.
- Continued containment was necessary.

Officer Decision
[redacted]
- Discontinue direct physical handling.
- Utilize a catch pole for containment.
- Establish a safer method of control before further handling attempts.

[redacted]
- Support containment efforts.
- Continue assisting with management of the dog.

Environmental / Contextual Factors:
- A bite resulting in injury had occurred.
- The dog remained outside the vehicle.
- Transport had not been achieved.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- The duration of the interaction continued to increase.

- No attempts were made to provide an opportunity to decompress or disengage from the interactions, offer water, or remove the dog from the situation to allow for a reset and reduction in any accumulating stress.
- Ownership had not yet been communicated to [redacted].
- Information regarding the dog's earlier response to [redacted] became available following the bite.
- Oral and/or nasal bleeding was observed during the restraint period.
- The cause of the bleeding was unknown.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The application of the catch pole represents a significant change in the nature of the interaction.
- Prior phases were characterized primarily by attempts to obtain voluntary compliance or direct handling.
- This phase marks the transition to restraint-based management.
- The dog's interaction with the catch pole suggests active engagement with the restraint equipment following its application.
- The available evidence suggests the dog's level of emotional arousal remained elevated following the bite event.
- The behavioural environment at this stage included accumulated handling attempts, increasing interaction duration, unsuccessful loading efforts, and a recent bite event.
- The transition from direct handling to restraint-based management likely altered both the physical and behavioural dynamics of the interaction.
- The available evidence does not permit determination of the relative contribution of the bite event, restraint application, prior handling attempts, or other contextual factors to the dog's behavioural state during this phase.
- The appearance of oral and/or nasal bleeding represents an additional factor that may have influenced the dog's behavioural state.
- The extent to which the bleeding reflected injury, physiological stress, exertion, restraint-related factors, pre-existing medical conditions, or other causes cannot be determined from the available evidence.
- The behavioural significance of the bleeding cannot be determined without additional medical information.
- Oral and/or nasal bleeding was first observed during the restraint period.
- The appearance of the bleeding represents a physiological change occurring during the incident.
- The cause and behavioural significance of the bleeding cannot be determined from the available evidence.

Information Gaps

- The dog's precise body posture immediately before catch pole application.
- Whether additional behavioural indicators occurred during the transition from direct handling to restraint.

- The degree to which catch pole application altered the dog's behavioural state.
- Whether signs of conflict, avoidance, frustration, or restraint sensitivity were present but undocumented.
- The source of the oral and/or nasal bleeding observed during the restraint period.
- The timing of the onset of the bleeding.
- Whether the bleeding was associated with exertion, restraint, trauma, a pre-existing medical condition, physiological stress, or another factor.
- The extent to which the observed bleeding may have influenced the dog's behavioural presentation during subsequent phases of the incident.

Behavioural Phase 10 – Dual Catch Pole Restraint and Continued Loading Attempts

Relevant Human Actions
- [redacted] directed [redacted] to apply a second catch pole.
- A second catch pole was applied.
- Dual catch-pole restraint was established.
- Officers continued attempting to move the dog toward the vehicle.
- Officers continued attempting to load the dog into the vehicle.
- Officers maintained physical control through the restraint equipment.
- Loading efforts continued following application of the second catch pole.

Objective Canine Behaviour
- The dog remained outside the vehicle.
- The dog continued resisting loading efforts.
- The dog continued moving while under restraint.
- The dog interacted with the restraint equipment.
- The dog did not voluntarily enter the vehicle.
- Loading attempts remained unsuccessful.

Officer Interpretation
[redacted]
- Additional control of the dog's movement was required.
- A second point of restraint would improve control.
- The dog remained difficult to safely transport.
- Continued containment and transport remained necessary.

[redacted]
- Additional control measures were required.
- Continued loading efforts remained appropriate.

Officer Decision
[redacted]
- Apply a second point of restraint.
- Continue efforts to safely load the dog.

- Maintain control while attempting transport.

[redacted]

- Apply a second catch pole.
- Continue assisting with loading efforts.
- Maintain containment.

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- The dog had already bitten a handler.
- A single catch pole had already been applied.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- Ownership had not yet been communicated to [redacted].
- The duration of the interaction continued to increase.
- Repeated loading attempts had already occurred over an extended period.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The application of a second catch pole represents an increase in the level of physical control being applied during the interaction.
- The dog's continued resistance to loading persisted despite the introduction of additional restraint.
- The available evidence suggests that the central behavioural conflict surrounding vehicle entry remained unresolved.
- At this stage, the behavioural objective of the handlers remained unchanged; however, the methods being used to achieve that objective had become progressively more restrictive.
- The dog's continued movement and interaction with the restraint equipment suggest that restraint alone did not resolve the underlying behavioural conflict associated with loading.
- Repeated handling attempts, increasing duration of interaction, physical restraint, separation from the German Shorthaired Pointer, and unresolved transport objectives may represent cumulative influences on the dog's behavioural state.
- The available evidence suggests the dog's behaviour remained directed toward resisting restraint and loading efforts rather than indiscriminate aggression toward individuals in the environment.
- The extent to which the dog's behaviour was influenced by restraint sensitivity, handling sensitivity, cumulative stressors, frustration, social factors, or other contextual variables cannot be determined with certainty from the available evidence.

Information Gaps

- The dog's precise body posture during initial dual restraint.
- Whether additional behavioural indicators were present but undocumented.
- The degree to which dual restraint altered the dog's behavioural state.

- Whether signs of escalating conflict, frustration, or restraint sensitivity were present but not documented.

Behavioural Phase 11 – Owner Information Becomes Available

Relevant Human Actions
- [redacted] advised [redacted] that owner information may be available.
- [redacted] had previously requested owner information from Georgina Animal Shelter.
- Ownership information was reviewed and discussed.
- Efforts were initiated to contact the owners.
- [redacted] accessed her phone to review information and initiate owner contact.
- Officers continued monitoring and managing the dog while owner contact efforts were underway.

Objective Canine Behaviour
- The dog remained under dual catch-pole restraint.
- The dog remained outside the vehicle.
- The dog had not been successfully loaded into the vehicle.
- The dog's activity level was reduced relative to the preceding phase.
- The dog was not continuously struggling against the restraint equipment during this period.
- The dog remained responsive to environmental stimuli.
- The reduction in activity permitted one officer to maintain control of the dog while the second officer reviewed ownership information and made telephone calls.

Officer Interpretation
[redacted]
- Owner involvement became a potential option for resolving the situation.
- Continued loading efforts were no longer the only available resolution strategy.

[redacted]
- The dog's owner was no longer believed to be unknown.
- Additional resolution options became available.
- Containment remained necessary while owner contact efforts were underway.

Officer Decision
[redacted]
- Review owner information.
- Initiate owner contact efforts.
- Continue monitoring the dog while awaiting owner response.

[redacted]
- Maintain containment.

- Continue monitoring the dog's behaviour and condition.
- Await additional information regarding owner attendance.

Environmental / Contextual Factors:
- Dual catch-pole restraint remained in place.
- The dog had not been successfully transported.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- A bite incident had already occurred.
- Ownership information became available for the first time during the incident.
- The duration of the interaction continued to increase.

Behavioural Analysis:
- The available evidence suggests a reduction in behavioural intensity relative to the immediately preceding phase.
- The dog's behaviour during this period differed from the continuous movement, resistance, and interaction with restraint equipment reported earlier.
- The reduction in activity was sufficient to allow one officer to maintain control while the second officer reviewed information and initiated owner contact.
- The available evidence suggests that the dog's behavioural state fluctuated throughout the incident rather than remaining continuously elevated.
- The reduction in activity may reflect behavioural recovery, physical fatigue, reduced emotional arousal, changing environmental conditions, or a combination of factors.
- The relative contribution of these factors cannot be determined from the available evidence.
- The discovery of owner information represented a significant change in the operational environment; however, the available evidence does not indicate that owner identification itself resulted in an immediate observable behavioural change.
- Importantly, this phase demonstrates that periods of elevated behavioural intensity were interspersed with periods of lower behavioural intensity throughout the incident.

Information Gaps
- The degree to which physical fatigue contributed to the reduction in activity.
- The degree to which restraint influenced the reduction in activity.
- The degree to which separation from the German Shorthaired Pointer influenced behaviour during this period.
- Whether additional behavioural indicators were present but undocumented.
- The relative contribution of environmental, physiological, social, and handling-related factors to the observed reduction in activity.

Behavioural Phase 12 – Reduced Emotional Arousal Period

Relevant Human Actions

- Dual catch-pole restraint remained in place.
- Officers continued maintaining containment.
- Officers continued monitoring the dog's behaviour and physical condition.
- Owner contact efforts were ongoing.
- Officers awaited owner attendance.
- No new handling strategies were introduced during this period.
- Physical interaction with the dog was minimized.

Objective Canine Behaviour

- The dog's activity level decreased relative to the preceding phases.
- Movement decreased.
- Interaction with the restraint equipment decreased.
- The dog spent periods standing quietly.
- The dog spent periods lying down.
- Panting continued.
- Visible oral bleeding reportedly decreased or stopped.
- The dog remained under dual catch-pole restraint.
- The dog remained responsive to environmental stimuli.

Officer Interpretation

- [redacted]
- The dog's level of emotional arousal appeared reduced relative to the preceding period.
- The dog appeared more manageable than during the earlier periods of active resistance.
- Continued containment remained necessary.

[redacted]

- The dog appeared less active than during earlier phases.
- Containment remained necessary while awaiting owner attendance.

Officer Decision

[redacted]

- Continue containment.
- Continue monitoring the dog's condition.
- Continue monitoring catch-pole tension.
- Await owner attendance.

[redacted]

- Continue containment.
- Continue monitoring the dog's condition.
- Continue owner contact efforts.

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Dual catch-pole restraint remained in place.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- Owners had been contacted and were reportedly en route.
- The duration of the interaction continued to increase.
- No additional handling attempts were being actively pursued during this period.
- The dog remained in the same general environment in which the previous escalation had occurred.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The available evidence suggests a meaningful reduction in behavioural intensity relative to the immediately preceding phases.
- Movement, resistance, and interaction with the restraint equipment decreased during this period.
- The reduction in activity demonstrates that the elevated behavioural intensity observed earlier was not continuously maintained throughout the incident.
- The observed reduction in activity may reflect behavioural recovery, physical fatigue, reduced emotional arousal, changing environmental conditions, or a combination of factors.
- The available evidence does not permit determination of the relative contribution of these factors.
- Importantly, the dog's behavioural presentation during this phase differed substantially from the periods of active resistance that preceded it.
- This phase demonstrates that the dog's behavioural state remained dynamic and responsive to changing circumstances throughout the incident.
- The available evidence suggests that periods of elevated activity were interspersed with periods of lower activity rather than occurring as a single continuous escalation event.

Information Gaps

- The degree to which physical fatigue contributed to the observed reduction in activity.
- The degree to which reduced handling pressure contributed to the observed reduction in activity.
- The degree to which environmental changes contributed to the observed reduction in activity.
- Whether additional behavioural indicators were present but undocumented.
- The relative contribution of physiological, environmental, social, and handling-related factors to the observed behavioural change.

Behavioural Phase 13 – Water Event

Relevant Human Actions

- Officers continued maintaining containment using dual catch-pole restraint.
- Officers continued monitoring the dog's condition.
- A decision was made to offer water to the dog.
- A water bowl was placed on the ground and moved toward the dog.
- The bowl was slid across the ground toward the dog.
- Containment remained in place throughout the event.
- Officers continued awaiting owner attendance.

Objective Canine Behaviour

- Prior to the water event, the dog had been displaying reduced activity relative to earlier phases.
- The dog was reported to be standing quietly and panting.
- The dog was also reported to spend periods lying down.
- Water was introduced into the dog's environment.
- The water bowl was moved across the ground toward the dog.
- Following introduction of the water bowl, the dog's activity level increased.
- Increased movement was observed.
- Increased interaction with the restraint equipment was observed.
- Increased spinning, pulling, and rolling behaviours were reported.
- Visible oral bleeding reportedly resumed or increased following the renewed activity.
- The dog remained under dual catch-pole restraint throughout the event.

Officer Interpretation

[redacted]

- The dog appeared sufficiently stable for water to be offered.
- Providing access to water was appropriate given the duration of the incident and the dog's physical activity level.
- The increase in activity following the water event was not anticipated.

[redacted]

- The dog's welfare remained a consideration during containment.
- The dog appeared less active than during earlier phases prior to the water being offered.
- [redacted] reported that the sound and/or movement associated with the bowl being slid across the ground appeared to coincide with the subsequent increase in activity.

Officer Decision

[redacted]

- Offer water to the dog.

- Continue monitoring behaviour and condition.
- Maintain containment.

[redacted]

- Continue containment.
- Continue monitoring behaviour and condition.

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Dual catch-pole restraint remained in place.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- The dog had been under restraint for an extended period.
- The duration of the incident continued to increase.
- Owners had been contacted and were reportedly en route.
- The dog had recently transitioned into a period of reduced activity.
- A novel object and associated auditory stimulus (water bowl moving across the ground) were introduced into the environment.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The water event occurred during a period of reduced behavioural intensity.
- The available evidence establishes a temporal relationship between introduction of the water bowl and the subsequent increase in activity.
- [redacted] reported that the sound and/or movement associated with the bowl being slid across the ground appeared to coincide with the behavioural change.
- The available evidence does not establish whether the dog's response was influenced by the sound of the bowl, the movement of the bowl, the presence of water, anticipation of access to the water, or other concurrent factors.
- The increase in movement demonstrates that the reduced behavioural intensity observed in the preceding phase was not maintained.
- The dog's behavioural state continued to fluctuate throughout the incident rather than progressing in a single linear direction.
- The behavioural presentation observed during this phase is consistent with renewed activation following a period of reduced activity; however, the factors contributing to that change cannot be determined with certainty from the available evidence.
- This phase further supports the observation that behavioural intensity throughout the incident was dynamic, with periods of both increased and reduced activity occurring over time.

Information Gaps

- The extent to which the dog actually consumed the water.
- The dog's precise behavioural response at the moment the bowl was introduced.
- Whether the sound, movement, or location of the bowl was behaviourally significant.

- Whether other environmental or handling-related changes occurred concurrently with the water event.
- The degree to which physiological factors contributed to the increase in activity.
- The relative contribution of environmental, social, physiological, and handling-related factors to the observed behavioural change.

Behavioural Phase 14 – Management During Renewed Increased Emotional Arousal

Relevant Human Actions
- Dual catch-pole restraint remained in place.
- Officers continued maintaining containment.
- Officers repositioned as the dog moved throughout the area.
- Officers adjusted their positions in response to the dog's movement.
- Officers continued monitoring loop tension and restraint placement.
- Officers continued communicating with [redacted] during portions of this phase.
- [redacted] provided guidance and support while officers managed the situation.
- Officers continued attempting to prevent excessive tightening of the restraint equipment.
- Officers continued awaiting owner attendance and/or additional assistance.

Objective Canine Behaviour
- Following the water event, the dog's activity level increased.
- The dog exhibited increased movement.
- The dog spun while under restraint.
- The dog pulled against the restraint equipment.
- The dog rolled on the ground.
- The dog interacted with the restraint equipment.
- The dog moved throughout portions of the driveway while under restraint.
- The dog remained under dual catch-pole restraint throughout the phase.
- Visible oral bleeding reportedly resumed or increased during periods of heightened activity.

Officer Interpretation

[redacted]
- The dog's level of emotional arousal had increased relative to the preceding phase.
- Continued containment remained necessary.
- Restraint equipment required ongoing monitoring.
- Maintaining control while minimizing pressure remained a priority.

[redacted]
- The dog's activity level had increased relative to the preceding phase.
- Ongoing management of restraint equipment was required.
- Continued containment remained necessary.

Officer Decision
[redacted]

- Continue containment using dual catch-pole restraint.
- Reposition as necessary in response to the dog's movement.
- Continue monitoring restraint tension.
- Continue monitoring the dog's condition.

[redacted]

- Continue containment.
- Assist with repositioning and restraint management.
- Continue monitoring the dog's condition.

Environmental / Contextual Factors

- Dual catch-pole restraint remained in place.
- The dog had previously exhibited a period of reduced activity.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained secured within the vehicle.
- The Rottweiler remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- Owners had been contacted and were reportedly en route.
- The duration of the incident continued to increase.
- [redacted] remained involved remotely and was providing guidance.
- Officers reported actively managing restraint tension throughout this phase.

Behavioural Analysis

- This phase represents a renewed period of increased behavioural intensity following a documented period of reduced activity.
- The behavioural presentation differed substantially from the preceding phase.
- Increased movement, spinning, rolling, and interaction with the restraint equipment were reported.
- The available evidence suggests officers were required to continually adapt their positioning and restraint management in response to the dog's movement.
- Despite the increase in activity, officers continued reporting periods in which restraint tension was actively monitored and adjusted.
- The behavioural presentation during this phase is consistent with ongoing resistance to restraint and containment.
- The available evidence does not permit determination of the relative contribution of restraint, environmental stimuli, physiological factors, fatigue, frustration, social factors, or other contextual influences to the observed behaviour.
- This phase further supports the observation that behavioural intensity fluctuated throughout the incident rather than progressing in a single uninterrupted direction.

Information Gaps

- The exact sequence of officer repositioning during this phase.

- The specific process used when officers repositioned and exchanged control of the catch poles.
- The origin of the decision to exchange or transfer control of the catch poles during movement.
- Whether the handling approach was based on prior training, prior experience, supervisory direction, or situational adaptation.
- The degree to which catch-pole management influenced the dog's behaviour during this phase.
- Whether additional behavioural indicators were present but undocumented.

Behavioural Phase 15 – Special Constables Approach

Relevant Human Actions

- Special Constables attended the scene in response to the request for assistance.
- Special Constables approached the area where the dog was being managed.
- Officers continued maintaining containment using dual catch-pole restraint.
- [redacted] observed the dog's response to the approaching Special Constables.
- [redacted] directed the Special Constables not to approach further.
- The Special Constables remained available but did not become directly involved in handling the dog.

Objective Canine Behaviour

- The dog remained under dual catch-pole restraint.
- The dog remained responsive to environmental stimuli.
- As the Special Constables approached, the dog's activity level increased.
- Increased movement was reported following the approach of the Special Constables.
- The period of reduced activity previously observed was interrupted.
- The dog remained under control but continued displaying increased behavioural activity.

Officer Interpretation

[redacted]

- The approach of additional people appeared to be contributing to increased behavioural activity.
- The dog's level of emotional arousal appeared to increase as the Special Constables approached.
- Reducing environmental stimuli was considered appropriate.

[redacted]

- Continued containment remained necessary.
- The dog's activity level appeared to increase in response to changes in the environment.

Officer Decision

[redacted]

- Direct the Special Constables not to approach further.
- Reduce environmental stimuli in the immediate area.
- Continue containment and monitoring.

[redacted]

- Continue containment.
- Continue monitoring the dog's condition and behaviour.

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Dual catch-pole restraint remained in place.
- Oral and/or nasal bleeding had previously been observed.
- The dog remained separated from the German Shorthaired Pointer.
- The duration of the incident continued to increase.
- Attempted loading, restraint, and repeated handling occurred over a period of one hour and fifty-six minutes before water was offered.
- Additional unfamiliar individuals entered the immediate environment.
- Owners had reportedly been contacted and were en route.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The approach of the Special Constables represents a discrete environmental change occurring during the incident.
- The observed increase in activity following the approach of the Special Constables provides additional evidence that the dog's behavioural presentation remained responsive to environmental changes throughout the incident.
- The available evidence establishes a temporal relationship between the approach of the Special Constables and the subsequent increase in behavioural activity.
- Both officers reported observing increased activity following the approach.
- The available evidence does not establish whether the behavioural change was attributable to visual stimuli, movement, proximity of unfamiliar individuals, auditory stimuli, or a combination of factors.
- The behavioural response suggests that the dog remained responsive to changes occurring within the environment despite the duration of the incident and ongoing restraint.
- This phase further supports the observation that behavioural intensity fluctuated throughout the incident and was influenced by changing environmental conditions.
- The available evidence suggests that the dog's behavioural presentation remained dynamic rather than static throughout the incident.

Information Gaps

- The exact distance between the dog and the approaching Special Constables.

- Whether specific visual, auditory, or movement-related stimuli contributed to the behavioural response.
- Whether additional behavioural indicators occurred prior to the increase in activity but were not documented.
- The relative contribution of environmental, physiological, social, and restraint-related factors to the observed behavioural change.

Behavioural Phase 16 – Loss of Responsiveness Assessment

Relevant Human Actions
- Officers continued maintaining containment using dual catch-pole restraint.
- Officers continued monitoring the dog's condition.
- [redacted] remained in communication with [redacted].
- [redacted] advised [redacted] that she believed the dog's condition had changed.
- [redacted] directed [redacted] to assess responsiveness.
- A toe-response assessment was performed.
- Officers continued monitoring restraint tension while assessing the dog's condition.
- Officers shifted focus from behavioural management toward assessment of the dog's physical condition.

Objective Canine Behaviour
- The dog's activity level decreased significantly relative to the preceding phase.
- The dog stopped actively resisting restraint.
- The dog lay down on its side.
- The dog urinated.
- The dog appeared less responsive than during previous phases of the incident.
- A toe-response assessment was performed to evaluate responsiveness.
- Oral and/or nasal bleeding remained present.
- The dog remained under dual catch-pole restraint.

Officer Interpretation
[redacted]
- The dog's condition had changed significantly from earlier observations.
- The dog appeared to be becoming unresponsive.
- Assessment of responsiveness became a priority.
- Continued monitoring of restraint tension remained necessary.

[redacted]
- The dog's condition appeared different from earlier phases of the incident.
- Continued monitoring remained necessary while awaiting owner arrival.

Officer Decision
[redacted]
- Assess responsiveness.

- Continue monitoring the dog's condition.
- Continue communicating with [redacted].
- Maintain containment while evaluating the dog's status.

[redacted]

- Continue containment.
- Assist with monitoring and assessment.
- Continue awaiting owner arrival.

Environmental / Contextual Factors:

- Dual catch-pole restraint remained in place.
- Oral and/or nasal bleeding had been observed.
- Owners had been contacted and were reportedly en route.
- The incident had become prolonged in duration, nearing two hours of prolonged handling and restrictive restraint.
- The dog had recently experienced alternating periods of increased and reduced behavioural activity.
- [redacted] remained involved remotely and was providing guidance.

Behavioural Analysis:

- The dog's behavioural presentation changed substantially during this phase.
- Active resistance, movement, and interaction with the restraint equipment decreased markedly relative to earlier phases.
- The transition from active movement to apparent unresponsiveness represents one of the most significant behavioural changes observed during the incident.
- Officers' focus shifted from managing behaviour and containment to assessing physical condition and responsiveness.
- The available evidence suggests the dog's behavioural state could no longer be interpreted solely through a behavioural lens, as physiological considerations had become increasingly relevant.
- The observed reduction in responsiveness may have been influenced by physiological factors, exhaustion, injury, medical compromise, restraint-related behavioural suppression factors, restraint-related pain or injury, behavioural recovery, or the combination of above factors and other related stress factors over a prolonged period of time.
- The relative contribution of these factors cannot be determined from the available evidence.
- This phase represents a transition from behavioural management to assessment of physical condition.

Information Gaps

- The exact source of the oral and/or nasal bleeding.
- The physiological significance of the observed bleeding.

- The timing and mechanism underlying the change in responsiveness.
- Whether underlying medical factors contributed to the observed presentation.
- The relative contribution of physiological, behavioural, environmental, and restraint-related factors to the dog's condition at this stage.
- Findings from veterinary examination and/or necropsy relevant to the observed loss of responsiveness.

APPENDIX C – OPERATIONAL DECISION ANALYSIS SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

C.1 Complete [redacted] Decision Point Analysis

Decision Point 1 – Information Received Prior to Arrival

Corroborated Information:

- [redacted] radioed [redacted] to ask for assistance; [redacted] was on another call in Aurora and told [redacted] to stand by, then called her back once she was clear.
- During that call, [redacted] told [redacted] she needed help because she was unable to load the dog into the vehicle, described as "being difficult."
- [redacted]asked whether the dog was being aggressive; [redacted] responded with no.
- [redacted] suggested [redacted] attempt loading the dog into the vehicle's side (wildlife) compartment rather than the rear (domestic) compartment, and to lay down a towel or blanket for traction.
- She told [redacted] she would come to assist and gave her an ETA of approximately 25 minutes.
- She began driving toward the property without waiting for a further update on whether the side-compartment method succeeded.
- Beyond the dog being described as difficult to load, no further behavioural detail, body language, signs of stress, what had already been tried, was exchanged during this pre-arrival contact.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted]stated that she asked [redacted]whether the dog was being aggressive and that [redacted] told her no; this was part of the information she was working from as she decided how to respond to the call. [redacted] own account of this call doesn't address this exchange one way or the other, so it's included here as [redacted] stated consideration rather than corroborated fact.
- [redacted]stated that because it was approximately 5:20 p.m. and her shift ended at 6:00 p.m., she was concerned that if she waited for a further update before

deciding whether to attend, she could end up too far away, or effectively off shift, by the time help was actually needed; she decided to begin driving toward the call rather than wait.

- She stated her reasoning for suggesting the side compartment was that it's a different shape and more open than the rear compartment, and dogs unfamiliar with a small enclosed crate sometimes have more success with it.
- She acknowledged that [redacted] answer didn't read to her as fully confident, but stated she didn't ask further clarifying questions about it at the time.
- She stated she didn't seek supervisor approval for the overtime this would involve, reasoning that she was hoping the matter would be resolved by the time she arrived.
- Asked in a later interview whether her response would have differed had she known the dog was aggressive, [redacted] stated she probably would have notified her supervisor, formulated a plan, used different equipment, and taken more time to assess before touching the dog.

Analysis Findings:
Providing [redacted] with an alternative loading strategy by suggesting use of the vehicle's side compartment represented a reasonable operational response based on the limited information available during the initial request for assistance. Offering an alternative approach before attending the scene demonstrated an effort to resolve the situation remotely and, if successful, may have eliminated the need for a second officer to attend.

The available evidence indicates that no further operational update was obtained after this alternative strategy was suggested. As a result, it could not be determined whether the suggested approach had been successful before [redacted] committed to travelling to the scene. Similarly, beyond the dog being described as difficult to load, the available evidence does not indicate that additional information regarding the dog's behaviour, body language, previous handling attempts, or other operational considerations was obtained before arrival.

[redacted] also stated that she was aware attending the call could extend beyond the end of her scheduled shift. The available evidence does not establish whether supervisory authorization for overtime was required under these circumstances. However, obtaining a further operational update from [redacted] before continuing to the scene would have provided an opportunity to determine whether attendance remained necessary and, if appropriate, whether supervisory consultation should occur.

During her later interview, [redacted] stated that had she known the dog had demonstrated aggressive behaviour, she likely would have notified her supervisor, formulated a plan, considered different equipment, and taken additional time to assess the situation before physically engaging the dog. Her own reflection illustrates how additional operational information available before arrival may have influenced her planning and approach.

Decision Point 2 – Information Transfer Upon Arrival

Corroborated Information:

- [redacted]arrived at the property and joined [redacted] and [redacted], who had already made several unsuccessful attempts to load the dog into the vehicle, including treat-based coaxing and attempts using the vehicle's side compartment.
- [redacted]advised [redacted] that the dog had not yet been successfully loaded.
- [redacted] remained present throughout this portion of the incident.
- [redacted] had been managing the incident for a substantial period before [redacted] arrived. Later review of the available evidence places this period at approximately 45 minutes or more, although [redacted] was advised only that [redacted] had been attempting to load the dog since arriving and was not given a specific duration.
- The Georgina Animal Shelter had already responded to [redacted] email inquiry regarding possible owner information; however, [redacted] had not yet reviewed the email and no owner information had been communicated to [redacted] at this stage.
- Unresolved discrepancy regarding information conveyed: [redacted] stated that, before making contact with the dog, she was advised the dog had knocked [redacted] sunglasses off during an earlier lifting attempt. The incident itself is corroborated by both [redacted] and [redacted] accounts. However, neither [redacted] nor [redacted]describe communicating that information to [redacted] before she physically engaged the dog. As this bears directly on the information available to [redacted] at the time, the timing of that discussion could not be independently corroborated.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- Stated that she asked whether the dog had responded to treats and whether he had displayed aggression, and was told he had not been treat-responsive and had not displayed aggression.
- Stated that she was advised the dog had knocked [redacted] sunglasses off during an earlier attempt to lift him into the vehicle and that she asked whether this had occurred because of aggression or simply because the dog had turned his head, but did not receive a clear answer.

- In her later interview, reflected that she now believes the earlier interaction involving [redacted] was more consistent with aggression than she appreciated at the time, stating, "I don't feel that I was receiving accurate information."
- Stated that she deliberately chose not to use the German Shorthaired Pointer to encourage the Rottweiler into the vehicle because she had not personally observed the dogs' interactions and knew the Rottweiler had previously been mounting the female. She was concerned introducing the female could escalate the situation rather than assist with loading.
- Stated that she could not recall with certainty who was holding the dog's leash at this stage, although she believed it was more likely [redacted]

Analysis Findings:
At the time [redacted] arrived, the incident had already progressed beyond a routine loading difficulty. [redacted] had spent a considerable period attempting to load the dog using multiple techniques, with assistance from [redacted] without success. These circumstances indicated that a significant amount of operational information had already been developed before [redacted] became directly involved.
The available evidence indicates that some information was exchanged before [redacted] physically engaged the dog. However, the witness accounts differ regarding the extent of that discussion. [redacted] described asking questions about the dog's behaviour and previous handling, while [redacted] and [redacted] describe a much shorter exchange before [redacted] reached toward the dog's collar. Although the precise content of that conversation cannot be fully reconciled, the available evidence consistently indicates that only a brief period elapsed between [redacted] arrival and her physical interaction with the dog.

Given the length of time the incident had already been ongoing and the number of unsuccessful handling attempts that had preceded [redacted] arrival, obtaining a more comprehensive operational briefing represented a reasonable opportunity before initiating physical contact. A fuller understanding of the handling techniques already attempted, the dog's behavioural responses, and the observations made during the preceding 45 minutes may have supported a more informed behavioural and operational assessment before selecting the next course of action.

Decision Point 3 – Initial Behavioural Assessment

Corroborated Information:

- The dog remained outside the vehicle and had not been successfully loaded despite the attempts already made before [redacted] arrived.
- No growling, barking, or other vocalization was observed by anyone present in the lead-up to [redacted] making contact with the dog.
- The dog remained outside the vehicle and had not been successfully loaded despite previous attempts.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated that when she first arrived and observed the dog, his ears were positioned forward and his weight was on his front legs; she described his head position as elevated because "he was alert that I was there." She did not observe growling or barking, and described his panting and tongue as normal.
- She stated that during her first attempt to coax the dog toward the vehicle (the "excited," high-energy approach), she observed his body become "very rigid", more rigid than his baseline. She described this shift as him "holding his ground" and becoming more actively resistant and dominant in his behavior, which she distinguished from the more passive resistance he'd shown when she first arrived.
- She stated that immediately before she reached for his collar on her second attempt, he was standing with a "very rigid body, head up, ears up," and that she did not believe he was panting at that point, a change from the normal panting she'd observed earlier.
- Reflecting on this progression in her later interview, she stated plainly: "hindsight's 2020... I should have watched his behavior more" before making contact.
- Despite these observations, she stated she did not initially assess the dog as overtly aggressive, viewing him instead as resistant to loading, and believed cooperative, lower-force handling remained a reasonable option to continue attempting before considering more restrictive measures.

Analysis Findings:

The available evidence indicates that [redacted] made numerous behavioural observations before initiating physical contact with the dog. She described the dog's posture, ear position, head carriage, panting, body rigidity, and changing level of resistance in

considerable detail, demonstrating that she was actively observing the dog's behaviour as the interaction progressed.

While these observations were clearly identified, the available evidence does not establish how they were incorporated into her operational decision-making at the time. Although she later described the dog becoming progressively more rigid and "holding his ground," she continued to interpret the behaviour primarily as resistance to loading rather than reassessing the potential behavioural significance of those changes before reaching for the dog's collar. In her later interview, she reflected that she "should have watched his behavior more," indicating that she later attached greater significance to the behavioural changes she had observed.

Behavioural assessment involves not only observing body language but interpreting those observations within the context in which they occur. By the time [redacted] arrived, the dog had already undergone a prolonged period of unsuccessful handling, multiple loading attempts, and increasing physical interaction. Integrating the dog's observable behavioural changes with that broader operational context represented a reasonable opportunity to further inform the decision-making process before progressing to physical contact.

Decision Point 4 – Cooperative Loading Attempt

Corroborated Information:

- The available evidence does not independently corroborate [redacted] account that a cooperative loading attempt occurred before she reached for the dog's collar.
- [redacted] described attempting to encourage the dog to voluntarily enter the vehicle before making physical contact.
- Neither [redacted] nor [redacted] describe a cooperative loading attempt occurring during this period.
- [redacted] stated that [redacted] approached the dog and reached for his collar shortly after arriving.
- [redacted] similarly described [redacted] approaching the dog, taking the leash, and reaching for the collar within a short period of arriving, without describing any preceding cooperative loading attempt.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- Believed the dog had already demonstrated a willingness to voluntarily enter the vehicle.

- Did not initially assess the dog as overtly aggressive.
- Considered a cooperative loading approach to be a reasonable option before progressing to more restrictive handling methods.
- Preferred to attempt lower-force handling strategies before considering more restrictive techniques.
- Believed the dog could potentially be encouraged to enter the vehicle voluntarily without physical manipulation.
- Intended to create a positive interaction rather than increase pressure on the dog.
- Stated that, before reaching for the dog's collar, she made two attempts to encourage the dog toward the vehicle without physical contact:
    - an "excited," high-energy approach intended to motivate the dog to move voluntarily, a technique she stated had been successful with other dogs in the past; and
    - a more directive approach by taking hold of the leash and attempting to build forward momentum toward the vehicle.
- Stated that during the first attempt she observed the dog's body become more rigid and resistant, describing him as "holding his ground."
- Stated these were techniques she considered reasonable to attempt based on previous experience before progressing to more restrictive handling.

Analysis Findings:
[redacted] account describes an initial attempt to encourage the dog to voluntarily enter the vehicle before making physical contact. However, this aspect of the incident could not be independently corroborated. Neither [redacted] nor [redacted] both of whom were present throughout this portion of the incident, describe observing a cooperative loading attempt before [redacted] reached toward the dog's collar.

The documented timeline provides additional context regarding the duration of this interaction. [redacted] arrived on scene at approximately 17:41–17:42 hrs, with the bite occurring at approximately 17:45 hrs. Within this interval, [redacted] reports receiving information from [redacted] and [redacted] regarding the preceding events, assessing the dog's presentation, attempting to encourage the dog to enter the vehicle, and subsequently progressing to physical handling when those efforts were unsuccessful. While the available evidence does not permit the duration of each of these individual actions to be established, the overall interval was limited.

The available evidence therefore does not establish whether a cooperative loading attempt occurred as described by [redacted] or the extent of any such attempt. The accounts differ regarding the actions taken during this interval, and the available timeline does not provide sufficient precision to resolve those differences. As a result, no definitive finding can be made regarding the cooperative loading attempt itself.

Decision Point 5 – Collar Contact / Physical Guidance

Corroborated Information:

- The dog remained outside the vehicle when [redacted] reached toward him.
- [redacted] took hold of the leash near the dog's neck.
- [redacted] reached toward the dog's collar in an attempt to physically guide him toward the vehicle.
- As soon as contact was made with the collar area, the dog turned and bit [redacted]
- The bite caused puncture wounds to [redacted]
- The dog released immediately and did not maintain a grip.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- Stated that the earlier cooperative loading attempts had not been successful.
- Believed the dog could potentially be physically guided toward the vehicle.
- Did not anticipate the dog biting at that moment.
- Believed the situation remained sufficiently controlled to attempt physical guidance.
- Later identified the collar contact as the action that immediately preceded the bite.
- Stated she had reflected extensively on that decision following the incident.

Analysis Findings:

The available evidence demonstrates that a comprehensive behavioural and operational assessment had not been completed before physical contact with the dog's collar was initiated. By this stage of the incident, the dog had already been the subject of prolonged and unsuccessful loading attempts involving multiple handling strategies and the assistance of members of the public. These circumstances represented a reasonable opportunity to pause, obtain a more complete understanding of the dog's responses to previous handling, and reassess the operational approach before introducing another physical handling technique.

In her later interview, [redacted] reflected that, had she appreciated the significance of the information available at the time, she would not have approached the dog in the manner that she did. She stated that she would have taken more time to assess the situation, considered different equipment, formulated a plan, and would not have simply reached for the dog. Her own reflection supports the importance of completing a more comprehensive behavioural and operational assessment before initiating physical contact.

Decision Point 6 – Post-Bite Response

Corroborated Information:

- [redacted] sustained a bite to her [redacted] the dog released immediately and did not maintain a grip. This is consistent across [redacted] [redacted] and [redacted] accounts.
- The dog did not pursue [redacted] after the bite. Both [redacted] and [redacted] independently describe him remaining in place and settling into a crouched or lying position.
- [redacted] dropped the leash, disengaged from the dog, and walked back toward her own vehicle; all three accounts agree on this.
- While still walking back to her vehicle, [redacted] directed [redacted] to retrieve her catch pole. Both [redacted] and [redacted] corroborate this, [redacted] describes it as a radio call, [redacted] describes hearing it said aloud as [redacted] walked down the driveway, which is consistent with a radio transmission [redacted] could hear nearby rather than a contradiction. [redacted] had her catch pole in hand by the time [redacted] returned.
- [redacted] photographed her injury; copies of these photographs exist in the record.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated that after being bitten, she needed "a minute" to compose herself, she described going to her vehicle, sitting in the driver's seat, and briefly crying before assessing that she was physically okay.
- She stated that once bitten, she no longer considered touching the dog by hand to be a safe option, and viewed a catch pole as the only remaining tool available to safely manage him.
- She stated that, after the bite, she believed the dog's behaviour had changed from a loading issue to an officer safety and public safety issue requiring a different operational approach.
- She stated she checked and began attending to her own wound, and photographed it at the time.

- She stated she attempted to reach her supervisor, [redacted] by phone for guidance, though she didn't reach her on the first attempt.
- She stated she connected the incident to a fatal dog-mauling case her Division had responded to the week before, which contributed to her sense that she was dealing with a dog with "a lot of power."
- She described her state of mind at this point as calm and logical rather than emotional, stating she "wasn't crying" and was "thinking about this logically" when she retrieved her catch pole.

Analysis Findings:
Following the bite, the operational context changed significantly. Up to that point, [redacted] had been attempting to encourage or physically guide the dog into the vehicle. The bite represented important new behavioural and operational information and created an opportunity to reassess the handling strategy before further attempts to engage with the dog continued.

The behavioural evidence available immediately following the bite demonstrated that the dog delivered a single bite during direct physical manipulation of the collar, immediately released without maintaining a grip, did not pursue [redacted] and remained available for continued management. The bite assessment further concluded that the bite occurred within a clearly identifiable handling context, remained limited in duration and severity, and was most consistent with a context-dependent defensive response rather than generalized aggression.

Taken together, these observations indicated that the dog's response was closely associated with the direct physical interaction that immediately preceded the bite and did not continue once that interaction ceased. This presented an opportunity to pause and reassess the dog's behavioural presentation, the immediate need for continued intervention, and whether additional recovery time, alternative handling strategies, or other behaviourally informed options could reasonably have been considered before re-engaging with the dog.

Decision Point 7 – Initial Catch Pole Application

Corroborated Information:
- Following the bite, [redacted] made the determination, following the bite, that catch-pole equipment was required to continue safely managing the dog.

- Note — timing discrepancy: [redacted] and [redacted] accounts both describe [redacted] directing [redacted] to retrieve her own catch pole while [redacted] was still walking back down the driveway toward her vehicle, shortly after the bite. [redacted] own account, consistent across both of her interviews, places this direction later, after she had already reached her vehicle, called her supervisor, photographed her injury, and retrieved her own catch pole. The available evidence does not resolve which sequence is accurate.
- The dog had still not been successfully loaded into the vehicle.
- [redacted] was still unaware that owner information had already been obtained.
- [redacted] retrieved a catch pole from her vehicle.
- The dog was stationary upon her approach and application of the catchpole.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated: "I didn't feel that it was safe to handle the dog without equipment like a catch pole. I was fearful of the dog's behavior and his quick reaction, and so I felt that our real only option to safely secure the dog was to utilize catch poles."
- She stated that her concern at this point extended beyond herself to a public safety concern for [redacted] and the finder, explaining: "now that he's already attacked, I felt like I had to get the situation under control... I didn't feel at this point that there was any other option, but a catch pole. I couldn't touch him again. He's already proven that he's reactive."
- She stated she had prior experience catch-poling other dogs before this incident, through both formal wildlife-handling training and field experience working alongside a [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]
- She described her state of mind at this point as calm and logical rather than emotional, stating she "wasn't crying" and was "thinking about this logically" when she retrieved her catch pole.
- She stated that once she had her own catch pole in hand and began applying it, she was quick to get it fully secured, reasoning that introducing catch-pole equipment "can be quite triggering to some dogs" and she wanted to establish proper control quickly rather than prolong that trigger period.

Analysis Findings:

Following the bite, [redacted] determined that further direct hands-on handling of the dog was no longer appropriate and transitioned to the use of a catch pole. From [redacted] perspective at that time, the dog was still believed to be an unclaimed stray that

required continued containment and transport, and the bite had demonstrated that further direct physical contact presented an increased risk of injury.

Within this context, transitioning to equipment that allowed greater working distance represented a reasonable operational response. The use of a catch pole reduced the need for further direct hands-on contact while allowing the officers to maintain physical control of the dog and continue efforts toward safe containment and transport.

Decision Point 8 – Direction to Apply a Second Catch Pole

Corroborated Information:

- Both [redacted] and [redacted] accounts state that [redacted] directed [redacted] to retrieve and apply a catch pole following the bite. [redacted] account confirms the sequence of events but does not identify who gave the verbal direction.
- A second catch pole was subsequently applied to the dog. All three witnesses describe the dog being managed with two catch poles following the bite.
- Order of application not corroborated: [redacted] stated that she applied her catch pole first and that [redacted] applied hers immediately afterward at [redacted] direction. [redacted] consistently stated, in both interviews, that she applied her own catch pole first after [redacted] instructed her to do it "nice and slow." [redacted] also described [redacted] catch pole being applied first. The order in which the two catch poles were applied therefore could not be independently reconciled from the available evidence.
- Reason for the second catch pole not established: The available evidence does not establish why a second catch pole was applied rather than initially attempting to manage the dog with a single catch pole. None of the witness accounts describe an attempt to assess the dog's response using one catch pole before the second was applied. Instead, all three accounts describe the application of the two catch poles occurring in rapid succession as part of one continuous sequence.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- Stated that she directed [redacted] to retrieve and apply her catch pole immediately after applying her own.
- Believed additional control of the dog's movement was required following the bite.
- Believed using two catch poles would improve officer safety while maintaining control of the dog.

- She was concerned about the risk of further injury to officers and members of the public.
- Considered continued containment of the dog to be necessary.
- Was mindful of the dog's welfare while attempting to safely manage him.
- Stated that she was continuously monitoring the amount of pressure being applied through the catch poles and directing [redacted] to ensure the loops remained loose enough to avoid unnecessary pressure.

Analysis Findings:
Following the bite, transitioning from direct physical handling to equipment that provided greater working distance represented a reasonable operational response. At that stage of the incident, [redacted] reasonably concluded that continued hands-on handling was no longer appropriate while containment of the dog remained necessary.

The available evidence does not establish why a second catch pole was applied immediately after the first rather than first assessing whether the dog could be safely managed using a single catch pole. None of the witness accounts describe an attempt to evaluate the dog's response or level of control with one catch pole before the second was introduced.

The available evidence further indicates that the dog's significant behavioural escalation occurred only after both catch poles had been applied. While it cannot be determined whether a single catch pole would have provided sufficient control, assessing the dog's behavioural response to the initial catch pole before introducing additional restraint would have permitted a more gradual, response-dependent increase in physical restraint. Such an approach allows the degree of restraint to be adjusted according to the dog's behavioural response and the level of control achieved, while taking into consideration officer safety, public safety, effective animal control, and animal welfare within a difficult containment situation.

Decision Point 9 – Attempted Loading Under Dual Restraint

Corroborated Information:
- With both catch poles applied, and the dog already bleeding from attacking the catch pole equipment (established in the previous decision point), the officers attempted to move him toward the rear of the vehicle for loading.
- Throughout these attempts, the dog actively resisted movement and did not voluntarily move toward the vehicle.

- Blood was observed on the rear metal step of the vehicle during the loading attempts.
- Force was applied through the catch poles that elevated the dog's front paws off the ground while attempting to move him toward the rear step. [redacted] described the dog's front paws "hovering over the grate." [redacted] stated his front paws came off the ground "maybe slightly." [redacted] stated she was not willing to apply enough pressure to lift him by the neck and did not believe his front feet reached the rear step. Although the witnesses differ in how they characterize the movement, all three describe force being applied through the catch poles that elevated the dog's front paws while attempting to move him toward the vehicle.
- The mechanism responsible for the blood on the rear step could not be determined. [redacted] described the dog striking his head or mouth on the metal step, whereas [redacted] attributed the blood to the dog's continued bleeding while biting the catch pole equipment.
- Supported only by [redacted] account: [redacted] stated that she advised the officers the dog appeared to be choking and that the catch poles appeared too tight. She stated [redacted] responded that the equipment was not too tight and briefly loosened her catch pole to demonstrate slack. Neither officer addresses this exchange in their accounts.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- Stated that, at this stage, she believed the dog still needed to be loaded into the vehicle to safely resolve the incident.
- Stated her objective was to guide the dog up the rear step using the catch poles while maintaining control and minimizing unnecessary pressure on the dog's neck.
- Stated she was not willing to apply what she considered excessive force through the catch poles to force the dog into the vehicle.
- Stated that, when the loading attempts were unsuccessful, she decided to stop and "switch tactics."
- Stated she believed an additional person was required because the dog was too strong to safely manage with the available resources.
- Stated her intention in requesting police assistance was to obtain another person to assist with loading the dog so she could transition to bite gloves and a blanket-assisted lift rather than continue relying solely on the catch poles.

Analysis Findings:
Following the application of the catch poles, continuing attempts to safely load the dog into the vehicle remained a reasonable operational objective. At this stage, [redacted] reasonably believed the dog still required containment and transport, as owner information had not yet been identified and alternative disposition options were not yet available.

The available evidence demonstrates that force was applied through the catch poles that elevated the dog's front paws while attempting to move him toward the rear step of the vehicle. Although the witnesses differ in their descriptions of the degree of lifting, the available evidence consistently establishes that the dog was being moved primarily through pressure applied to the catch poles, with sufficient force to raise his front paws off the ground. Catch poles are intended to maintain safe control while the dog remains weight-bearing and are not intended to serve as the primary means of lifting or supporting a dog's body weight during loading. While the extent to which the dog's front end was elevated cannot be determined from the available evidence, the loading technique had progressed beyond the intended use of the equipment.

The available evidence further indicates that two catch poles were being used throughout the loading attempt, leaving no officer available to assist in supporting the dog's body during loading. Had the dog been safely manageable with a single catch pole, the second officer would have been available to assist with body support or alternative loading techniques. While the available evidence cannot determine whether that approach would have resulted in successful loading, it represented a reasonable operational option that was not documented before continued attempts were made using dual catch-pole restraint.

Decision Point 10 – Police Assistance Request

Corroborated Information:

- At the time of the request, [redacted] and [redacted] were the only Animal Services officers available to respond. No additional Animal Services personnel were available to provide assistance.
- During the extended, unsuccessful effort to load the dog into the vehicle under dual catch-pole restraint, [redacted] directed [redacted] to call 911. [redacted] did so and was advised that police were too busy to attend and that this wasn't a matter they typically handled. This was communicated back to [redacted]

- [redacted] direction to [redacted] was limited to asking her to call the police; she did not give any further direction on what to say. This is corroborated by both accounts — [redacted] states she simply told [redacted] to call, and [redacted] states she did not receive any further direction on what to relay.
- [redacted] also asked, unprompted, whether she should instead try to reach the nearby fire Division; [redacted] told her this wasn't necessary and that the situation remained under control.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- Stated that her intention in requesting police assistance was to obtain an additional trained person to hold her catch pole while she put on bite gloves and used a blanket to support the dog's hindquarters during loading.
- Stated that she could not ask a member of the public to hold restraint equipment because of safety concerns.
- Believed an additional trained person was required because the dog was too strong to safely manage the manoeuvre with the resources available.
- Stated that, because control was being maintained through the catch pole, she was not willing to apply what she considered unreasonable pressure to the dog's neck in an effort to force him into the vehicle.
- Stated that, once she learned police would not be attending, she reassessed the situation and turned her attention toward locating the dog's owner.

Analysis Findings:

Following the unsuccessful loading attempts under dual catch-pole restraint, requesting additional assistance represented a reasonable operational decision. At that stage of the incident, the officers remained responsible for safely containing the dog, no additional Animal Services officers were available to assist, and [redacted] had identified a specific operational need for another trained person to safely support the loading process.

The available evidence also demonstrates that the purpose of the request for assistance was not effectively communicated. [redacted] instructed [redacted] to call 911 but did not provide further direction regarding the specific assistance being requested, and [redacted] stated she did not know what information should be relayed to the dispatcher. As a result, the responding agency was not provided with a clear explanation of the operational circumstances or the specific role additional officers were being asked to perform.

Clear communication of the operational need represented a reasonable opportunity to improve the likelihood of an effective response. Providing the dispatcher with a concise explanation of the situation and the specific assistance required, or communicating directly with the dispatcher via speaker phone to maintain scene safety, may have improved the responding agency's understanding of the request and supported a more informed decision regarding the deployment of assistance.

Decision Point 11 – [redacted] Becomes Aware of Owner Information

Corroborated Information:

- After the failed loading attempt and the declined police assistance request, [redacted] told [redacted] she might have ownership information from a prior year's shelter intake record. This is corroborated between [redacted] and [redacted] accounts. [redacted] states she overheard this initial exchange while separately on the phone with who she believed was the fire Division, but was not able to hear the remainder of the conversation.
- [redacted] then placed the calls using the number [redacted] provided. She first reached a man who confirmed he owned the German Shorthaired Pointer but said the Rottweiler belonged to his neighbour, and gave her a contact number for that neighbour. This is corroborated between [redacted] and [redacted] accounts.
- [redacted] called that number and reached a man who said he didn't speak English and referred her to his wife.
- [redacted] called the wife, who confirmed she owned the Rottweiler. [redacted] told her the dog was on a catch pole, had attacked her, wasn't doing well, and was actively bleeding, and asked her to come right away. The wife said she would attend but gave an ETA of approximately 45 minutes; [redacted] told her that wasn't fast enough and asked if she or anyone else could arrive sooner, and the wife's answer didn't change.
- The available evidence corroborates that [redacted] advised the owner the dog had bitten her, was on a catch pole, was actively bleeding, and required prompt attendance. [redacted] account is generally consistent with the substance of the information communicated, although she recalls the conversation as "we explained," whereas [redacted] describes making the calls herself.
- [redacted] did not hear the content of any of the calls. Her knowledge of the outcome came from being told afterward, by [redacted] that the owners had been reached and were about 45 minutes away.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- Stated that, until [redacted] recalled the previous shelter intake, she believed the dog's owner was unknown.
- She stated she felt the situation was "emergent" and pushed back on the 45-minute estimate, telling the owner that timeframe wasn't going to work.
- She stated that throughout this period she remained mindful of catch-pole tightness and continued to check in with [redacted] about the tension on her pole.

Analysis Findings:
Once owner information became available, [redacted] decision to pursue immediate telephone contact represented a reasonable operational response and shifted the focus from continued physical loading attempts toward reunification with the owner. This approach was consistent with resolving the situation without prolonging the physical struggle with the dog.

The available evidence indicates that [redacted] communicated the urgency of the situation by advising that the dog had bitten her, was on a catch pole, was actively bleeding, and required prompt attendance. She also challenged the owner's estimated arrival time, indicating that a 45-minute response was not acceptable under the circumstances. Because neither owner was interviewed as part of this review, the available evidence cannot determine how that information was understood or what factors contributed to the stated arrival time.

Decision Point 12 – Reduced Emotional Arousal Period

Corroborated Information:

- Once the failed loading attempt ended and owner contact was being pursued, the dog entered a period of markedly reduced activity, lying in what [redacted] described as a "frog stance," with his back legs splayed to the sides. This is corroborated between [redacted] and [redacted] accounts.
- [redacted] account is consistent with this general picture: she describes the dog during this period as lying down, calmer, and panting less than he had been earlier.
- Visible oral bleeding decreased or stopped during this period, although residual blood remained visible from the earlier struggle.
- Both officers kept the catch poles on the dog throughout this period but reduced tension while doing so.

- [redacted] estimated this period lasted approximately 20 to 30 minutes. This specific duration comes from [redacted] own account; neither [redacted] nor [redacted] offers a matching estimate, so it could not be independently corroborated.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated she was "constantly evaluating" and mindful that her catch pole not be too tight, and that she repeatedly checked in with [redacted] to confirm the same regarding her own pole.
- She stated that once the dog was calm and the owners were en route, she saw "no sense" in continuing to attempt loading him, reasoning the method had already failed and continuing would put unnecessary strain on him.
- She stated she did not consider removing either catch pole entirely during this period, citing ongoing safety concerns given the dog's demonstrated behaviour.

Analysis Findings:
This period represents the first documented reduction in operational intensity following the bite and the unsuccessful loading attempts. Active loading ceased, catch-pole tension was deliberately reduced while maintaining safe restraint, and the officers redirected their attention toward owner contact while allowing the dog an opportunity to settle. During this same period, the dog's observable resistance decreased and the previously noted oral bleeding also diminished.

The available evidence demonstrates that the officers appropriately recognized the opportunity to discontinue active loading attempts and pursue an alternative means of resolving the incident through owner attendance. This represented a meaningful shift away from continued physical handling and toward a less intrusive operational approach while maintaining safe containment of the dog.

Decision Point 13 – Water Event

Corroborated Information:

- Water was brought out and offered to the dog by [redacted] while the officers awaited owner attendance.
- The catch poles remained on the dog throughout.
- Shortly after the water was offered, the dog's activity level increased sharply, described across accounts as jumping, spinning/flailing, and renewed interaction with the catch poles.
- The water bowl was knocked over during this renewed activity.

- Visible oral bleeding resumed or increased following the renewed activity.

Beyond these points, the accounts diverge significantly and cannot be corroborated:

- Who placed the water in its final position, and how close it was to the dog: [redacted] stated that [redacted] placed the bowl near her ([redacted] not directly at the dog, and that she then slid it closer using her foot, estimating the bowl never got very close before the dog reacted. [redacted] stated that [redacted] herself set the bowl down within the dog's reach but not directly next to him, then stepped back. [redacted] stated that she personally knelt down and placed the bowl approximately a foot or less directly in front of the dog's face, and that it was not moved again after being placed.
- What triggered the renewed struggle: [redacted] stated she believed the dog reacted to the sliding motion/noise of the bowl and that his intent appeared to be escape rather than reaching for the water. [redacted] did not identify a specific trigger, describing the dog as relaxed and not oriented toward [redacted] as she stepped back, with the barrel-rolling beginning shortly after. [redacted] stated that the dog attempted to stand up to reach the water and yelped while doing so, and that both officers responded to this by tightening and twisting the catch poles, which she stated directly caused the ensuing flailing and jumping.
- The "yelp" and the claim that officers tightened/twisted the poles in direct response to it are described only by [redacted] This is not mentioned in either of [redacted] interviews or in [redacted] interview.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated she wanted to ensure the dog had access to water, explaining she was concerned about him, given the dog had been running at large for an extended period and the ambient temperature was approximately 20°C.
- She stated that just prior to the water being offered, the dog had been calm for an extended period, his breathing was normal, and he had stopped bleeding, having not attacked the catch pole for some time.
- She stated the escalation following the water was immediate, as soon as [redacted] set the bowl down, the dog got up and began attacking the catch pole, jumping and thrashing, and his mouth began bleeding again, with his behavior becoming more uncontrolled than it had been at the outset.
- She stated that once the dog began reacting, she focused on keeping her own catch pole snug enough to maintain control without over-tightening, and that she managed this by constantly checking and loosening as needed. She stated she also relied on verbal check-ins with [redacted] repeatedly telling her to make sure

her own pole wasn't too tight, rather than describing any visual monitoring of [redacted] equipment.

Analysis Findings:
This decision point contains one of the more significant unresolved factual discrepancies in the available evidence. All three accounts agree that water was offered and that the dog's activity escalated sharply afterward, resulting in renewed struggling, a knocked-over water bowl, and increased oral bleeding. Beyond that shared sequence, the accounts differ materially regarding the placement of the water, the dog's initial response, and the immediate cause of the renewed struggle.

Despite these differences, the available evidence consistently supports that the decision to provide water during this period of reduced activity was reasonable. The dog had been physically active for an extended period, environmental conditions were warm, and the officers had shifted away from active loading attempts while awaiting the owners' arrival. Offering water under those circumstances was consistent with the dog's immediate welfare.

The unresolved issue is not whether water should have been offered, but the manner in which it was introduced while the dog remained under dual catch-pole restraint. Given the continuing need to maintain safe control of the dog, involving a member of the public in presenting water introduced an additional variable into an already dynamic situation. Because the witness accounts differ significantly on how the water was presented and what immediately followed, the available evidence does not establish what primarily caused the renewed escalation or the relative contribution of the water presentation, the dog's response, officer actions, or a combination of these factors.

Decision Point 14 – Management During Renewed Increased Emotional Arousal

Corroborated Information:

- Following the water event, the dog's activity increased sharply, including jumping, spinning, and rolling ("alligator rolling") while under dual catch-pole restraint.
- The dog moved across portions of the driveway during this struggle, and both officers repositioned themselves as he moved.
- The catch poles became entangled with one another on multiple occasions during this period. Officers loosened and repositioned the poles to undo the tangling, at times resulting in one officer briefly holding both poles while the other repositioned and worked to detangle them.

- At one point, the officers switched poles with each other (each taking over the pole the other had been holding) to keep the poles from remaining crossed on the dog's neck.
- [redacted] was in phone contact with [redacted] (the training officer) during portions of this event, with the call on speakerphone; [redacted] provided guidance while the officers continued managing the situation.
- A civilian arrived by vehicle near the end of this period, was initially thought to possibly be the dog's owner, and was asked to leave once he confirmed he was not.
- [redacted] remained present for part of this renewed struggle before going back inside to compose herself; she did not witness the remainder of this period, including the later arrival of the special constables.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] remained concerned about maintaining safe containment of the dog, and about the risk of further injury to officers, members of the public, and the dog.
- She and [redacted] repositioned throughout this period to prevent the catch-pole loops from becoming twisted or tangled as the dog rolled and moved.
- She stated she was actively monitoring loop tension, trying to keep it snug enough for control without being excessively tight, and managed this by constantly loosening and re-checking.
- When the poles became crossed, she and [redacted] physically switched positions and exchanged catch poles with each other so that each took over the other's equipment.
- She stated trading poles and positions "made sense at the time" to resolve the crossing, though she couldn't fully reconstruct or explain her reasoning for it when asked to walk through it in detail.
- She continued assessing the dog's condition throughout this period of increased activity.
- She remained focused on maintaining containment until either additional assistance or the owners arrived.

Analysis Findings:

During this period, [redacted] described repeatedly managing entanglement between the two catch poles as the dog moved, rolled, and changed position throughout the driveway. The available evidence indicates that resolving these entanglements involved loosening and repositioning the poles, temporarily transferring control of both poles to a single officer while the other repositioned, and, at one point, physically switching

positions and exchanging catch poles so that each officer assumed control of the other's equipment.

While the dog's movement undoubtedly created operational challenges, each of these actions represented a transition in the officers' physical control of the restraint system. During periods of heightened movement and resistance, maintaining continuous, stable control of the equipment is a critical component of safe catch-pole management. Temporary transfer of both poles to one officer, removal of hands from the normal control position to manipulate the cable, and exchanging catch poles between officers all introduced additional complexity into an already dynamic situation and increased the importance of careful coordination between officers.

As the [redacted] directing the overall management of the incident during this stage, [redacted] was responsible for coordinating the team's handling strategy while simultaneously maintaining control of her own assigned catch pole. Effective coordination between officers remained an important component of safe restraint management throughout these transitions.

Decision Point 15 – Special Constables Approach

Corroborated Information:

- Special Constables attended the scene. The dog remained under dual catch-pole restraint at the time, having cycled back into an active, reactive state following the water event.
- As the special constables walked up the driveway toward the area where the dog was being managed, calling out something to the effect of asking if everything was okay, the dog's activity level increased. Both [redacted] and [redacted] accounts independently identify this approach as a contributing factor to his renewed reactivity.
- The dog, already struggling against the restraint, was also moving backward toward the special constables as they approached.
- The officers asked the special constables to stop and give space; both [redacted] and [redacted] accounts confirm this was communicated by "we," not one officer alone. The special constables complied, stopping at a distance down the driveway, [redacted] estimates roughly 30 to 40 feet from where she and [redacted] ultimately ended up with the dog, and did not become directly involved in physically handling him.

- The special constables arrived only a few minutes after the water had been placed down, while the dog was already reactive from that event; his condition progressed to unresponsiveness only a few minutes after their arrival.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- Stated that the special constables' approach was another factor contributing to the dog's renewed reactivity.
- Stated that the dog had already become reactive following the water event before the special constables arrived, and that their approach added another environmental stimulus during an already escalating situation.
- Stated that she and [redacted] immediately asked the special constables to stop advancing once they observed the dog's reaction.
- Stated that she believed reducing additional movement and activity around the dog was important while they continued attempting to safely manage him.
- Stated that the special constables complied with that request and remained at a distance.
- Stated that the sequence from the water event, to the special constables' arrival, to the dog's collapse occurred within only a few minutes, describing the entire progression as happening very quickly.

Analysis Findings:

Once the special constables' approach was identified as contributing to the dog's renewed reactivity, asking them to stop and maintain their distance represented a reasonable operational response. At that stage of the incident, the dog was already reacting to multiple environmental stimuli, and reducing additional activity in the immediate area was consistent with allowing the dog an opportunity to settle while maintaining safe containment. The available evidence indicates the special constables complied with that request and did not continue advancing toward the officers.

This decision also demonstrates an important shift in operational assessment. Rather than continuing to introduce additional people into the dog's immediate environment, the officers recognized that the special constables' approach was contributing to the dog's behavioural response and adjusted their management accordingly. The available evidence supports this as an appropriate operational decision based on the information available at the time.

Decision Point 16 – Loss of Responsiveness Assessment

Corroborated Information:

- The dog's activity decreased sharply; he came to rest on his side and urinated. His tail was observed to wag briefly and then stop.
- [redacted] remained in phone contact with her supervisor, [redacted] and told her she believed the dog was becoming unresponsive; [redacted] directed her to check for a response, and [redacted] performed a toe/paw pinch check, which produced no reaction.
- Neither [redacted] nor [redacted] checked the dog's respirations or pulse. Asked directly, [redacted] confirmed plainly: "No" — the only check performed was the toe test.
- Two independent neighbouring witnesses — [redacted] and [redacted] watching from different vantage points — separately describe seeing the older, [redacted] (consistent with [redacted] test the dog's paw with no response observed, shortly before the owners arrived. This corroborates that a physical responsiveness check occurred and is consistent with [redacted] own account of the toe check.
- [redacted] catch pole was removed while the dog was already unresponsive and before the owners arrived. [redacted] own catch pole remained on the dog — she states she "didn't remove it," describing herself as unable to process what had happened, and that removing it felt "so final." Her pole was still on the dog when the owners arrived.
- When the owners arrived, [redacted] asked them to touch the dog rather than doing so herself, explaining she still didn't feel comfortable approaching him directly even though she could see he was unresponsive, out of concern he might still react.
- Unresolved discrepancy: [redacted] written statement describes the sequence differently, stating that the '[redacted] checked for a pulse before removing the noose from the dog, with the owners arriving shortly afterward. This differs from the accounts provided by [redacted] and [redacted] all of whom describe [redacted] catch pole being removed first while [redacted] remained on until after the owners arrived. [redacted] account, which describes the officer testing the dog's paw rather than checking for a pulse, is more consistent with [redacted] own description of performing a toe-response check. The available evidence does not permit this discrepancy to be resolved.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated she remained hesitant to physically approach or touch the dog even after he became still, out of concern he might react again given how quickly and unexpectedly his condition had changed.
- She stated she performed the toe check at [redacted] direction and that he showed no response.
- She stated that, because the dog had only moments earlier been actively attacking the catch poles, she remained concerned he could suddenly become reactive again despite appearing unresponsive.
- She stated that she was relying on [redacted] guidance during this period and performed the toe-response check at [redacted] direction.
- When the owners arrived, she asked them to touch the dog rather than doing so herself, because she didn't feel comfortable, even though she could see he was unresponsive.
- She stated she requested the owners touch him specifically so that she wouldn't have to determine whether any life-saving measures were warranted herself.
- She stated she does not fully know why she kept her own catch pole on the dog for as long as she did, she described it as feeling too "final" to remove it, and said that in the moment she felt "dumbfounded" and unable to process what had happened, even as bystanders were yelling at her.
- She continued monitoring catch-pole tension throughout this period.

Analysis Findings:

[redacted] hesitation to physically approach the dog immediately after he became unresponsive is understandable in light of the circumstances. Only moments earlier, she had sustained a bite, participated in a prolonged and physically demanding restraint, and observed the dog exhibiting repeated episodes of intense struggling. Her description of feeling "dumbfounded" and uncertain how to proceed is consistent with the significant physical and emotional demands of the incident and should be considered within that context.

At the same time, the dog's sudden transition from active resistance to stillness, urination, and lack of response to the toe-response check represented a significant change in his condition. The available evidence indicates that no assessment of respiration or pulse was performed before the owners arrived, and that the only documented assessment of responsiveness was the toe-response check performed at [redacted] direction. Given the change in the dog's condition, a more comprehensive

assessment of his medical status represented a reasonable operational opportunity once it could be completed safely.

The available evidence also indicates that the owners were asked to touch the dog before either officer performed any further physical assessment themselves. Whether this reflected continued officer safety concerns, the emotional impact of the incident, uncertainty regarding the dog's condition, or some combination of these factors cannot be determined from the available evidence. It can be concluded, however, that a more complete assessment of the dog's medical condition was delayed until after the owners arrived.

Decision Point 17 – Owner Arrival

Corroborated Information:

- The owners arrived to a highly emotional scene involving raised voices, accusations, and filming by members of the finder's family.
- [redacted] asked the owners to touch the dog, explaining she remained too nervous to approach him herself given he had already attacked her. Despite repeated requests, the owners did not touch the dog; [redacted] and [redacted] ultimately handled him themselves, using a blanket to move him.
- The topic of veterinary transport was raised. [redacted] account states she asked the owners, "did you want to take the dog to the vet?" and that when they responded with anger and accusation, [redacted] then said, "we'll take the dog to the vet." [redacted] own account describes the offer as her own initiative, made more than once, without reference to [redacted] raising it first.
- [redacted] physically assisted [redacted] in transferring the dog onto the blanket and loading him into [redacted] vehicle; the dog's body was stiff at the time of loading.
- Both [redacted] and [redacted] accounts confirm that the male owner made forceful contact with the dog's hind leg with his foot while stepping over him, and that [redacted] asked him not to kick the dog.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated she believed the owners, as people familiar with the dog, might be able to elicit a response the officers hadn't been able to get.
- She stated she remained too fearful to touch the dog herself, even though she could see he was unresponsive.

- She stated she remained concerned that, despite the dog's apparent lack of responsiveness, he could suddenly react again given how abruptly his condition had changed.
- She stated she believed the owners, as individuals familiar with the dog, might be more likely than the officers to safely obtain a response if one remained.
- She stated she felt the situation with the owners had become untenable, that she and [redacted] "can't stand here being berated", and that raising the question of veterinary transport was a practical step to move things forward.
- She stated she assisted physically with loading the dog because [redacted] couldn't manage it alone.
- She confirmed she did not accompany the dog to the veterinary clinic because she needed to go to the hospital for her own bite injury, and that [redacted] transported the dog while she went to the hospital.

Analysis Findings:
Offering veterinary transport once the dog's condition had changed represented a reasonable and compassionate operational response. Likewise, [redacted] decision to seek medical treatment for her own documented bite injury while [redacted] transported the dog to the veterinary clinic was appropriate under the circumstances.

[redacted] hesitation to physically approach the dog remained understandable given the recent bite and the uncertainty surrounding the dog's condition. However, the available evidence indicates that she repeatedly asked the owners to physically touch the dog despite its recent history of significant reactive behaviour and the uncertainty regarding his medical status. Although the owners were familiar with the dog, they were also emotionally involved in the incident and had not participated in the restraint or assessment process. Asking them to physically interact with the dog introduced an unnecessary risk to members of the public at a time when the dog's condition remained uncertain.

The available evidence indicates that the owners declined to do so, and [redacted] and [redacted] ultimately completed the physical handling themselves. Given the uncertainty surrounding both the dog's behavioural and medical condition, maintaining responsibility for the assessment and handling of the dog within the trained responding officers represented a safer operational approach.

Decision Point 18 – Post-Incident Notification

Corroborated Information:

- [redacted] contacted [redacted] immediately following the bite and remained in phone contact with her, providing updates as the incident evolved, with one brief disconnection during the call. This is corroborated by [redacted] own account.
- [redacted] called [redacted] her manager, before leaving the scene to notify him of what had occurred.
- [redacted] subsequently attended Southlake Hospital for treatment of her bite injury.
- [redacted] authored and submitted her own incident/accident report; a copy of this report has been obtained, reviewed and is consistent with the reporting process she described during interview.
- [redacted] photographed her own injury at three separate points as it progressed, and photographed the dog once while he was still alive; copies of these photographs have been obtained and confirm what she described.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated she called [redacted] specifically to give him advance notice of what had happened, [redacted]
- She stated she understood management notification was required given the bite and the broader officer-safety and public-safety dimensions of the incident.
- She completed her notes the same evening because she wanted to document the incident while it was still fresh in her memory.
- She stated she took photographs of her own injury at multiple points specifically to document how it changed and progressed over time.
- She stated she authored her own incident report, referencing relevant Divisional policies, and confirmed in that report that those policies had been clearly communicated to her.

Analysis Findings:

[redacted] post-incident notification followed the Division's expected process. She promptly notified her supervisor and manager, sought medical treatment for her injury, documented the incident through the Division's reporting process, and photographed both her injury and aspects of the incident. Collectively, these actions demonstrate appropriate compliance with her post-incident reporting responsibilities.

While the required reporting was completed, the available evidence indicates that substantially greater detail regarding the sequence of events, operational decision-making, and behavioural observations emerged during her later interviews than was documented in the initial reporting. Capturing that level of operational detail as close to the incident as reasonably possible would have strengthened the Division's ability to reconstruct the event, review operational decision-making, and identify opportunities for organizational learning.

C.2 Complete [redacted] Decision Point Analysis

Decision Point 1 – Owner Information Available Before Arrival

Corroborated Information:

- [redacted] recognized the pair of dogs while en route to the call, based on the descriptions provided and her familiarity with the area, she recalled handling a strikingly similar incident with what she believed to be the same two dogs (a Rottweiler and German shorthaired pointer running at large together) the previous year.
- Before reaching out to the shelter, she checked her own prior CRM notes and the dogs' licensing records but found nothing on file.
- She then emailed the Georgina Animal Shelter while still en route to the call, asking whether they had records from the prior year's intake.
- The shelter responded with owner information; [redacted] received the email as she was driving down the street, approximately a house or two away from the address, she chose not to pull over to review it since she was already nearly there.
- Both dogs were already physically contained on the property by residents when she arrived.
- [redacted] did not review or act on the shelter's email upon arrival. She proceeded through initial containment, the failed attempts to load the dogs, and the application of both catch poles without reviewing it.

- She only opened and reviewed the email once the dog had settled following the initial catch-pole struggle, she asked [redacted] permission to loosen her grip on her catch pole in order to check it at that point.
- Owner contact was not initiated until after this review, once loading attempts had failed and the two were no longer able to safely load the dog into the vehicle themselves.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- Immediate containment and management of the dogs was her stated priority upon arrival; securing and transporting them took precedence over pursuing the ownership lead.
- She specifically deferred opening the shelter's email while approaching the property because she judged herself close enough to the address that reviewing it in the vehicle wasn't necessary or worth the delay.
- She said that once it became clear the dog could not be safely loaded, contacting the registered owner became the more practical path forward, her reasoning was that since the dog appeared to be in generally good condition and they intended to release him home regardless, having the owner come to the property made more sense than continuing to force a loading attempt.
- She sought her partner's acknowledgment before diverting her attention from physical control of the dog to check the email, reflecting that dog containment remained her primary focus even after the ownership lead became actionable.

Analysis Findings:

Based on the information available at this stage of the incident, it was reasonable for [redacted] to prioritize the immediate containment and transport of the dogs before reviewing or acting on the owner information received from the shelter. At the time of her arrival, both dogs were already safely contained, there had been no reported aggression toward the reporting parties, and there was no indication that transporting the dogs would present any unusual difficulty. Under these circumstances, proceeding with the routine transport process before contacting the owner was consistent with the objective of securing the dogs and completing the call efficiently. Reviewing the shelter's email while approaching the property, or diverting attention to it immediately upon arrival, would have interrupted the more immediate task of managing and transporting the dogs.

Decision Point 2 – Initial Behavioural Assessment

Corroborated Information:

- The reporting party told [redacted] prior to her arrival, that the Rottweiler had been continuously mounting the female German shorthaired pointer.
- When [redacted] applied the slip lead to the Rottweiler, she observed his panting stop, his mouth close, and his eyes widen and shift upward, showing the whites of his eyes. while he remained standing.
- She subsequently did not scan the Rottweiler for a microchip, citing this behavior as her reason for not wanting to bring her hands, and the scanner, near his neck and collar area.
- Asked whether she'd had any similar sense of caution with these same two dogs during a prior encounter the previous year, she said no, attributing this to being [redacted] to the role at that time.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- She interpreted the panting stopping, mouth closing, and upward eye movement as the dog being "unsure," rather than as a sign of aggression.
- This reading directly shaped her decision not to scan him for a microchip, to avoid bringing her hands near his neck.
- She described this as a behavioral signal she specifically noted and was more attuned to this time than in the earlier encounter with the same dogs, when she said she likely wouldn't have recognized it.

Analysis Findings:

[redacted] interpretation of the dog's body language at this stage, panting stopping, the mouth closing, and the eyes widening and shifting upward, is consistent with recognized indicators of canine stress or discomfort rather than overt aggression. Her interpretation of the dog as being "unsure" reflects a reasonable behavioural assessment based on the information available at the time. Her decision not to scan the dog for a microchip, thereby avoiding unnecessary handling around the neck and collar area, represented a proportionate response to the behavioural cues she observed while still allowing the overall containment and transport process to continue. At this stage of the interaction, the observed behaviour was localized to handling near the dog's neck and, on its own, did not reasonably indicate the need for a materially different containment strategy.

Decision Point 3 – Vehicle Loading and Exit

Corroborated Information:

- The German shorthaired pointer was loaded into the vehicle first; the Rottweiler whined and pulled toward her, which [redacted] described as resembling separation anxiety.
- The Rottweiler was successfully loaded and fully contained shortly after, which stopped his whining.
- The slip lead remained on the Rottweiler and threaded through a slit at the back of the vehicle even while he was contained, giving [redacted] a continued line of control.
- The photograph of the Rottweiler was not taken before he was loaded and the door secured. [redacted] wanted a photo of him once he was in the compartment, which required the door to be held open or left ajar after loading in order to attempt it.
- In her first interview, she describes opening the door, or holding it slightly open, to take the photo, and the dog pushing through that opening. In her second interview, she describes already closing the door after full loading, leaving a small gap for her phone, with the dog exiting through that gap. Either way, the photo attempt required the door to not be fully secured.
- She was not able to get the photograph; she describes the dog as very quick to exit.
- The German Shorthaired Pointer remained successfully contained in the vehicle throughout.
- After the Rottweiler exited, he consistently veered toward the right side of the compartment, where the pointer was located, during subsequent attempts to reload him.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

Regaining containment remained her immediate objective after the exit.

- She noted the Rottweiler was an intact male and the pointer an intact female, and that he had been reported mounting her prior to her arrival, she connected his fixation on the right side of the compartment to this dynamic, and it factored into her difficulty reloading him on the left side.
- Food/treats became a handling tool during the extended effort to regain his trust after this exit, not used during the initial successful loading, only in the roughly 30–60 minutes of attempts that followed.

- She described this moment, attempting to photograph him rather than ensuring the door was secured first, as the one she holds herself most responsible for in hindsight.

Analysis Findings:
At the point the photograph was attempted, the Rottweiler had already been successfully loaded and contained within the transport compartment. Attempting to obtain the photograph before the compartment was fully secured required the door to remain open or partially open, creating the opportunity for the dog to exit the vehicle. Whether the door was reopened or intentionally left slightly ajar differs between [redacted] two interviews; however, both accounts consistently identify the photograph attempt as the event that immediately preceded the loss of containment. The available evidence therefore supports the conclusion that the decision to complete the photograph before fully securing the compartment directly resulted in the dog's escape from the vehicle and the need to re-establish containment.

Decision Point 4 – Failed Reloading Attempts

Corroborated Information:
- Multiple treat-based attempts to reload the dog occurred, corroborated by both [redacted] and [redacted] both describe an extended, unsuccessful effort involving encouragement and treats.
- [redacted] became actively involved in handling the dog directly during this period, at points taking the lead on the leash while [redacted] stood back and observed.
- At one point, the dog got his front paws up onto [redacted] while she sat in the vehicle, eating treats she offered, before slipping back out before she could secure the door.
- [redacted] sunglasses were knocked off her head at some point during this period. [redacted] attributes this to the dog turning his head toward [redacted] with his mouth open, grazing her forehead. [redacted] own account does not describe any mouth or tooth contact — she attributes it to losing her balance, possibly from the dog leaning against her or jumping up. No injury was reported by either account.
- The dog remained outside the vehicle throughout this period, and additional loading attempts continued following the interaction.

Officer's Stated Considerations:
- [redacted] described the specific treats used: small, cubed liver treats and bacon strips, with the bacon treated as higher-value and placed deeper in the compartment.
- She described the German shorthaired pointer snapping toward the Rottweiler's nose at one point, which she attributed to the pointer being "tired of him" given his earlier mounting behavior.

- She connected the sunglasses incident, as she recalled it, to two other data points, her own earlier hesitation reading during the initial slip lead application, and a secondhand account that the dog's initial handler ([redacted]) had a similar reaction when first leashing him.
- She stated that afterward she wasn't focused on interpreting the dog's body language, prioritizing instead creating physical space by redirecting him to the shaded side of the vehicle.
- She stated this is when she radioed [redacted] for assistance, feeling she could not safely continue alone.

Analysis Findings:
By this stage of the incident, the loading process had transitioned from a routine transport into an extended, unsuccessful containment effort involving repeated attempts to reload the dog. The available evidence demonstrates that members of the public became active participants in those efforts, including handling the leash, offering treats, and directly assisting with repeated loading attempts. This occurred despite [redacted] having previously identified behavioural cues that caused her to modify her own handling of the dog by avoiding unnecessary contact near his neck and collar.

Whether the sunglasses incident involved oral contact or simply resulted from [redacted] losing her balance cannot be determined from the available evidence, as the accounts differ. Regardless, the available evidence supports the conclusion that members of the public continued to play an active role in managing the dog throughout this period. As the incident became increasingly prolonged and unsuccessful, it would have been reasonable to reassess the continued involvement of members of the public in the physical handling of the dog.

Decision Point 5 – Behavioural Recovery Opportunity

Corroborated Information:
- Following the interaction with [redacted] the dog remained outside the vehicle.
- The dog had not been successfully loaded into the vehicle.
- Additional loading attempts continued following the [redacted] interaction.
- Treats continued to be utilized during loading attempts.
- A slip-lead muzzle attempt was subsequently made.
- Assistance was later requested from [redacted]

Officer's Stated Considerations:
- [redacted] own account offers minimal detail on this period. She refers briefly to "redirecting" the dog's attention and "taking a break" from attempting to load him but does not describe specific behavioral indicators she was watching for, a deliberate methodology, or a rationale for when to re-engage.

Analysis Findings:

[redacted] account of this period is limited to general references to redirecting the dog's attention and taking breaks from the loading attempts. She does not describe any specific behavioural indicators she was monitoring, nor does she identify what behavioural changes, if any, would indicate that the dog had sufficiently recovered to justify another loading attempt. As a result, the available evidence does not demonstrate that a structured behavioural reassessment occurred between successive loading attempts. Whether such an assessment was taking place but simply not articulated, or whether loading attempts were resumed without reference to specific behavioural criteria, cannot be determined from the available evidence.

Decision Point 6 – Muzzle Attempt

Corroborated Information:

- The reported slip-lead muzzle attempt could not be independently corroborated. [redacted] was specifically asked whether she recalled any attempt to wrap the slip lead around the dog's muzzle and stated that she did not recall this occurring.
- [redacted] stated that she attempted to use the slip lead as a temporary muzzle after the interaction involving [redacted]
- [redacted] stated the attempt was unsuccessful because there was insufficient leash remaining to both maintain the wrap and continue guiding the dog.
- The dog remained outside the vehicle following the attempt.
- [redacted] subsequently requested assistance from [redacted]

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] described looping her slip lead around the dog's snout in an attempt to create a temporary muzzle, intending to use it to help guide him.
- She said this attempt occurred after the dog had swung toward [redacted]
- She stated that because of the size of the dog's head, wrapping the slip lead around his snout left her without enough remaining leash length to also guide or lead him, meaning the technique could not accomplish both functions (restraint and guidance) at once.
- She described the dog's response as freezing and watching her, appearing "weirded out" and uncomfortable, his mouth closed and then immediately tightened, and his eyes went wide.
- Following the unsuccessful attempt and the earlier interaction involving [redacted] she concluded that she was no longer comfortable managing the situation alone and requested assistance from [redacted]

Analysis Findings:
The reported slip-lead muzzle attempt cannot be independently corroborated and is supported only by [redacted] account. Based on her description, she attempted a single slip-lead muzzle technique but abandoned it after determining there was insufficient leash remaining to both maintain the muzzle and continue guiding the dog. The available evidence does not demonstrate that any alternative muzzling method or additional equipment was attempted before assistance was requested. As a result, the attempted intervention did not resolve the ongoing containment problem. Consequently, the decision to discontinue the attempted slip-lead muzzle represented the end of the documented handling strategies employed by [redacted] before transitioning to assistance from a second officer.

Decision Point 7 – Request For Assistance

Corroborated Information:

- Following unsuccessful loading attempts and an unsuccessful muzzle attempt, [redacted] requested assistance from [redacted]
- During the request for assistance, [redacted] advised that she was unable to successfully load the dog into the vehicle.
- [redacted] understood that [redacted] required assistance with containment and loading efforts.
- During the period leading up to the request for assistance and afterwards, members of the public continued to actively participate in handling the dog, including maintaining physical control of the leash during portions of the unsuccessful loading attempts.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- Previous loading attempts, including treat-based methods and the attempted slip-lead muzzle, had been unsuccessful.
- Following the interaction involving [redacted] [redacted] stated that she was uncertain how the dog would respond to further handling and concluded that she could no longer safely manage the situation alone.
- She advised [redacted] that she required assistance because she was unable to safely load the dog into the transport vehicle.
- While awaiting [redacted] arrival, she continued attempting to load the dog using methods suggested over the radio.

Analysis Findings:
Based on the operational circumstances at this stage of the incident, [redacted] decision to request assistance was reasonable. Multiple loading attempts had been unsuccessful, the attempted slip-lead muzzle had failed to resolve the containment problem, and [redacted] stated that she was no longer confident she could safely manage

the dog on her own. Requesting assistance from a second officer represented a reasonable escalation in response to an unresolved and increasingly complex containment situation.

At the same time, the available evidence demonstrates that members of the public continued to participate directly in handling the dog while assistance was being awaited. This included maintaining physical control of the leash and continuing to assist with loading efforts. Given [redacted] own assessment that the situation had progressed beyond what she could safely manage alone, it would have been reasonable to reassess the continued involvement of members of the public in the physical handling of the dog until additional assistance arrived.

This interval also allowed for reassessment of the dog's behavioural state and the level of risk associated with further handling. Consideration could have been given to whether a period of reduced interaction and decompression was appropriate before further handling attempts were undertaken, as well as to providing access to water in the context of the dog's preceding physical activity and continued exertion during handling and restraint. It cannot be determined whether reduced interaction, access to water, or other supportive measures would have resulted in behavioural de-escalation or otherwise altered the dog's behavioural or physiological state. As these measures were not implemented during this interval, their potential effect on the subsequent course of the incident cannot be determined from the available evidence.

Decision Point 8 – Pre-Arrival Owner Contact Opportunity

Corroborated Information:
At multiple stages before [redacted] arrived:

- [redacted] believed she recognized the dogs from a previous running-at-large incident.
- Before arriving, she had contacted the Georgina Animal Shelter requesting any available owner information related to the previous incident.
- She was aware that the shelter had responded to her request, although she had not yet reviewed the email.
- Multiple loading attempts had been unsuccessful.
- The dog remained outside the vehicle.
- Treat-based loading attempts continued.
- The attempted slip-lead muzzle did not resolve the containment problem.
- Owner contact had not yet been initiated.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated that her normal practice was to secure and transport dogs before contacting the owner.

- She stated that she intentionally did not review the shelter's email upon arrival because she was already at the residence and intended to proceed with the routine transport process.
- She explained that owner attendance was not considered until it became apparent that the dog could not be successfully loaded. At that stage, she believed having the owner attend the scene was the more practical option because the intention was to return the dog home rather than continue unsuccessful loading attempts.

Analysis Findings:
Earlier in the incident, prioritizing containment and transport before contacting the owner was a reasonable operational decision based on the information then available. By this stage, however, the operational circumstances had changed materially. Multiple loading attempts had been unsuccessful, the attempted slip-lead muzzle had failed to resolve the containment problem, and [redacted] had concluded that she required assistance to continue safely managing the dog.

At the same time, [redacted] knew the shelter had responded to her request for owner information, although the email had not yet been reviewed. Given the prolonged inability to safely load the dog and the recognition that the existing handling strategy had been unsuccessful, reviewing the available owner information and considering owner attendance represented a reasonable operational option warranting reassessment.

Decision Point 9 – Information Transfer Upon [redacted] Arrival

Corroborated Information:
- [redacted] attended in response to [redacted] request for assistance.
- Prior to [redacted] arrival, [redacted] had been managing the incident for approximately 45 minutes.
- Multiple loading strategies had already been attempted, including treat-based loading efforts and the attempted slip-lead muzzle.
- The dog had not been successfully loaded into the vehicle.
- Owner information had been received from the Georgina Animal Shelter but had not yet been utilized.
- During their initial conversation, [redacted] advised [redacted] that she was unable to load the dog into the vehicle.
- [redacted] understood the primary problem to be an inability to load the dog rather than a behavioural safety concern.

- No specific considerations regarding the behavioural concerns were identified and communicated with [redacted] prior to her handling or interacting with the dog within [redacted] notes, statement or interview.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated that she advised [redacted] they were having difficulty loading the dog into the transport vehicle.
- She stated that only a limited amount of information was exchanged before [redacted] approached the dog.
- [redacted] stated that she would have advised [redacted] about the dog's earlier hesitation around handling near the neck and collar area, but believed [redacted] moved in to engage the dog before she had the opportunity to communicate that information.

Analysis Findings:

The available evidence demonstrates that [redacted] communicated the immediate operational problem, that repeated attempts to load the dog had been unsuccessful and that she required assistance. However, by the time [redacted] arrived, [redacted] had accumulated substantially more operational information than was conveyed during the initial briefing.

Over approximately 45 minutes, [redacted] had observed the dog's behavioural response to handling around the neck and collar area, attempted multiple loading strategies, attempted a slip-lead muzzle, determined that she could no longer safely manage the dog alone, and had owner information available through the shelter. Although [redacted] stated that she believed [redacted] engaged the dog before she had the opportunity to communicate all of this information, the available evidence indicates that the operational briefing remained focused primarily on the immediate loading difficulty rather than the broader operational context that had developed.

Decision Point 10 – Catchpole Application

Corroborated Information:

- Following [redacted] bite, [redacted] directed [redacted] to retrieve and apply her catch pole.
- [redacted] applied a catch pole to the dog.
- [redacted] applied a second catch pole shortly afterward.
- Dual catch-pole restraint was established.
- The dog remained outside the transport vehicle.

- The purpose of the second catch pole was to assist in safely controlling the dog following the bite and during continued containment efforts.
- Both officers subsequently attempted to move the dog toward the transport vehicle using the catch poles.
- Once the second catch pole was applied and the dog began biting at the restraint equipment, bleeding from the mouth was observed.
- The blood was associated with the dog biting or contacting the catch pole, although the precise mechanism (tongue, mouth, lips, etc.) cannot be definitively established from the interviews alone.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated that following [redacted] bite, [redacted] directed her to retrieve and apply her catch pole.
- She stated that [redacted] instructed her to apply the catch pole slowly.
- [redacted] stated that the decision to apply a second catch pole was made by [redacted] after the dog began reacting to the initial catch pole.
- [redacted] described herself as following [redacted] direction throughout the catch-pole application because [redacted] was the [redacted] on scene.

Analysis Findings:

Following [redacted] bite, the operational circumstances changed significantly. At this stage, the circumstances had progressed beyond unsuccessful loading and behavioural resistance, with [redacted] now assisting the [redacted] following an injury-producing response by the dog during physical handling. The available evidence indicates that [redacted] assumed responsibility for directing the containment strategy, including instructing [redacted] to retrieve and apply a catch pole and directing the subsequent application of a second catch pole.

Within this context, it was reasonable for [redacted] to follow the tactical direction of the [redacted]. The available evidence does not indicate that [redacted] independently selected the catch-pole strategy or directed its application. Rather, her role at this stage was to assist in implementing the containment strategy being directed by [redacted]

While [redacted] retrieved the catch pole from the rear of her vehicle, the dog remained under the control of [redacted] [redacted] a member of the public. This temporarily placed responsibility for controlling the dog with a civilian at a point when the circumstances had already escalated sufficiently to prompt the use of additional physical restraint

equipment. Regardless of its duration, this introduced an additional public-safety consideration into the management of the incident.

Shortly after the second catch pole was applied, the dog began biting at the restraint equipment and bleeding from the mouth was observed. While the precise source of the bleeding cannot be determined from the available evidence, its appearance represented a material change in the circumstances. The dog's response to the restraint equipment and the observed bleeding created new information requiring consideration as the containment strategy continued.

Decision Point 11 – Attempted Loading Under Dual Restraint

Corroborated Information:

- Dual catch-pole restraint had been established.
- Both officers attempted to move the dog toward the rear transport compartment.
- The dog actively resisted the loading attempts.
- The dog remained outside the vehicle throughout the loading attempts.
- The dog's front feet were lifted toward the rear step of the transport vehicle during at least one loading attempt, but he was not successfully loaded.
- The loading attempts remained unsuccessful.
- Following the unsuccessful attempts, owners' information was discussed and the owners were contacted.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated that the objective remained to load the dog safely into the transport vehicle.
- She stated that she followed [redacted] direction while using the catch pole to assist in guiding the dog toward the rear compartment.
- She described attempting to control the dog's movement while minimizing unnecessary pressure through the catch pole.
- She stated that the loading attempts ceased once owner information became available and the decision was made to contact the owners.

Analysis Findings:

Following the establishment of dual catch pole restraint, the operational objective remained to load the dog into the transport vehicle. During the continued loading attempts, the dual catch poles were manipulated in a manner that lifted the dog's front end from the vehicle surface in an effort to facilitate movement into the vehicle. This

represented a further escalation in the physical handling approach as efforts shifted from restraint and guided loading to more direct physical manipulation of the dog.

Despite the increased level of restraint and physical handling, the dog remained resistant to loading and the attempts continued to be unsuccessful. Bleeding from the mouth had also become evident. The combination of continued resistance, unsuccessful loading, observable injury, and increasingly forceful physical intervention demonstrated that the existing strategy was not achieving the intended outcome while the operational circumstances continued to evolve.

At this stage, the combination of continued unsuccessful loading attempts, observable injury, and the availability of owner information represented a materially different operational picture than existed only minutes earlier. While safely containing the dog remained an appropriate operational objective, the available evidence indicates that the existing strategy continued without resolving the underlying problem.

Taken together, these developments represented a significant opportunity to reassess the operational approach before further loading attempts continued. Consideration of alternative operational options, including utilizing the owner's information already available, would have been reasonable at this stage given the continued inability to safely achieve the intended outcome through the existing strategy.

Decision Point 12 – Reduced Emotional Arousal Period

Corroborated Information:

- Following the establishment of dual catch-pole restraint, the dog's resistance decreased and he moved into a lying-down, frog-leg position, remaining there for an extended period (approximately 20–30 minutes, per [redacted] estimate).
- Both officers loosened tension on their catch poles during this period, leaving them visibly relaxed on the dog's neck.
- Visible oral bleeding decreased or stopped during this period and did not resume until the dog later began actively engaging with the catch poles again.
- During this period, [redacted] reviewed the email she had received from the Georgina Animal Shelter, and she and [redacted] placed a series of calls: first reaching the pointer's owner, who identified his neighbor as the rottweiler's owner and provided contact information for that neighbor, and then reaching the neighbor's wife, who confirmed ownership of the rottweiler and stated she would attend, with an estimated arrival time of approximately 45 minutes.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated that once the dog settled into the frog-lying position, she and [redacted] deliberately loosened the catch poles and reduced direct interaction with him, including not speaking to or looking at him, to allow him to relax and de-stress.
- She stated that she asked [redacted] permission before loosening her own grip on the catch pole so she could check the shelter email.
- She stated that, at this point, she believed there were no remaining options for successfully loading the dog, and that contacting the owners so they could retrieve him directly was the more practical path forward.

Analysis Findings:

This period represents the first documented instance of a deliberate reduction in operational intensity. Active loading attempts ceased, handler interaction with the dog was intentionally minimized, catch-pole tension was reduced while maintaining restraint, and both officers redirected their attention toward locating and contacting the owners. During this same period, the dog's observable resistance decreased, and the previously noted oral bleeding also diminished.

The available evidence indicates that the officers appropriately recognized the opportunity to pause active loading attempts and pursue an alternative means of resolving the incident through owner attendance. This represented a meaningful shift away from continued physical attempts to load the dog and toward a less intrusive operational approach.

At the same time, while reduced tension on the catch poles was appropriate to facilitate the dog's relaxation, continued safe restraint remained dependent on maintaining the equipment in accordance with its intended application. If the catch poles had been correctly positioned and safety-checked when initially applied, subsequent reductions in tension should not have required repositioning or adjustment to maintain safe control.

Decision Point 13 – Water Event

Corroborated Information:

- Water was brought out and offered to the dog by [redacted] while the officers awaited owner attendance.
- The catch poles remained on the dog throughout.

- Shortly after the water was offered, the dog's activity level increased sharply, described across accounts as jumping, spinning/flailing, and renewed interaction with the catch poles.
- The water bowl was knocked over during this renewed activity.
- Visible oral bleeding resumed or increased following the renewed activity.

Beyond these points, the accounts diverge significantly and cannot be corroborated:

- Who placed the water in its final position, and how close it was to the dog: [redacted] stated that [redacted] placed the bowl near her ([redacted] not directly at the dog, and that she then slid it closer using her foot, estimating the bowl never got very close before the dog reacted. [redacted] stated that [redacted] herself set the bowl down within the dog's reach but not directly next to him, then stepped back. [redacted] stated that she personally knelt down and placed the bowl approximately a foot or less directly in front of the dog's face, and that it was not moved again after being placed.
- What triggered the renewed struggle: [redacted] stated she believed the dog reacted to the sliding motion/noise of the bowl and that his intent appeared to be escape rather than reaching for the water. [redacted] did not identify a specific trigger, describing the dog as relaxed and not oriented toward [redacted] as she stepped back, with the barrel-rolling beginning shortly after. [redacted] stated that the dog attempted to stand up to reach the water and yelped while doing so, and that both officers responded to this by tightening and twisting the catch poles, which she stated directly caused the ensuing flailing and jumping.
- The "yelp" and the claim that officers tightened/twisted the poles in direct response to it are described only by [redacted] This is not mentioned in either of [redacted] interviews or in [redacted] interviews.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated she did not want [redacted] to get too close to the dog, so she had [redacted] place the water near her rather than at the dog directly.
- She stated she then slid the bowl closer to the dog with her foot, and that even after doing so, the bowl was not close to him when he began reacting.
- She stated she did not believe the dog's attention was on the water itself; she believed his intent was to escape, and he began thrashing, shaking, and stepping in multiple directions, nearly pulling the officers with him.

Analysis Findings:
This decision point contains one of the more significant unresolved discrepancies in the record. All three accounts agree that water was offered and that the dog's activity escalated sharply afterward, resulting in renewed struggling, a knocked-over water bowl, and increased oral bleeding. Beyond that shared sequence, however, the accounts differ materially regarding the placement of the water, the dog's initial response, and the immediate cause of the renewed struggle.

Despite these differences, the available evidence consistently supports that the decision to provide water during this period of reduced activity was reasonable. The dog had been physically active for an extended period, environmental conditions were warm, and the officers had shifted away from active loading attempts while awaiting the owners' arrival. Offering water under those circumstances was consistent with the dog's immediate welfare.

The unresolved issue is not whether water should have been offered, but rather the manner in which it was introduced while the dog remained under dual catch-pole restraint. Given the continuing need to maintain safe control of the dog, the involvement of a member of the public in placing the water in close proximity to the dog introduced an additional variable into an already dynamic situation. Because the witness accounts differ significantly regarding how the water was presented and what immediately followed, the Review cannot determine from the available evidence whether the renewed escalation resulted primarily from the presentation of the water, the dog's response to it, officer actions, or a combination of these factors.

Decision Point 14 – Management During Renewed Increased Emotional Arousal

Corroborated Information:

- Following the water event, the dog's activity increased sharply, including jumping, spinning, and rolling ("alligator rolling") while under dual catch-pole restraint.
- The dog moved across portions of the driveway during this struggle, and both officers repositioned themselves as he moved.
- The catch poles became entangled with one another on multiple occasions during this period. Officers loosened and repositioned the poles to undo the tangling, at times resulting in one officer briefly holding both poles while the other repositioned and worked to detangle them.

- At one point, the officers switched poles with each other (each taking over the pole the other had been holding) to keep the poles from remaining crossed on the dog's neck.
- [redacted] was in phone contact with [redacted] (the training officer) during portions of this event, with the call on speakerphone; [redacted] provided guidance while the officers continued managing the situation.
- A civilian arrived by vehicle near the end of this period, was initially thought to possibly be the dog's owner, and was asked to leave once he confirmed he was not.
- [redacted] remained present for part of this renewed struggle before going back inside to compose herself; she did not witness the remainder of this period, including the later arrival of the special constables.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated that when the poles became tangled, she and [redacted] would loosen one pole, walk it around to undo the tangle, and re-tighten it as needed, repeating this process each time entanglement recurred.
- She described this as an alternating process between the two of them: one officer would hold both poles briefly while the other repositioned and worked to detangle them.
- She stated that her focus during this period was on maintaining control of her catch pole and preventing the dog from pulling it out of her grip, rather than actively attempting to move him toward the vehicle.
- Consistent with the preceding decision points, [redacted] described herself as following [redacted] direction throughout this period, as [redacted] was the [redacted] [redacted] on scene.

Analysis Findings:

During this period, [redacted] described repeatedly managing entanglement between the two catch poles as the dog moved, rolled, and changed position throughout the driveway. The available evidence indicates that resolving these entanglements involved loosening and repositioning the poles, temporarily transferring control of both poles to a single officer while the other repositioned, and, at one point, exchanging catch poles between officers so that each assumed control of the other's equipment.

While the dog's movement undoubtedly created operational challenges, each of these actions represented a transition in the officers' physical control of the restraint system. During periods of heightened movement and resistance, maintaining continuous, stable

control of the equipment is a critical component of safe catch-pole management. Temporary transfer of both poles to one officer, removal of hands from the normal control position to manipulate the cable and exchanging catch poles between officers all introduce additional complexity into an already dynamic situation and increase the importance of careful coordination between officers.

Decision Point 15 – Veterinary Transport

Corroborated Information:

- The dog had become unresponsive, and the owners had arrived on scene.
- The topic of veterinary transport was raised with the owners amid a hostile, chaotic exchange (officers being filmed, yelled at, and accused).
- [redacted] account and [redacted] account are not fully consistent as to who first raised the offer: [redacted] stated that she asked the owners "did you want to take the dog to the vet?", and that when the owners responded with anger and accusation, [redacted] then stated "we'll take the dog to the vet." [redacted] own account describes the offer as her own initiative, made more than once, without reference to [redacted] first raising the question.
- [redacted] physically assisted [redacted] in loading the dog into [redacted] vehicle for transport.
- York Regional Police arrived on scene around the same time as this loading.
- Only one photograph is documented as having been taken in connection with the dog's condition at this stage. No photographs were taken of the dog upon arrival at the veterinary clinic or once he was declared deceased.
- [redacted] transported the dog to the 404 Emergency Veterinary Clinic.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated that she offered transport because she did not want to simply return the dog to the owners without exploring whether veterinary care might still be available.
- She stated that offering transport was consistent with how Animal Services assists owners in obtaining veterinary care in other circumstances (e.g., animals struck by vehicles).
- She stated she was hopeful there might still be something that could be done for the dog, though based on her observations (the emptying of the bladder, a final tail wag, and glazed/open eyes) she believed the dog had likely already died, and felt a veterinary assessment was still the appropriate step.

- She stated that upon arriving at the clinic, veterinary technicians came out with a stretcher, helped load the dog onto it, and noted that he was very stiff, with uncertainty expressed as to whether anything further could be done.
- She stated she called [redacted] in advance to let her know she was en route to the clinic, and that [redacted] called ahead to notify clinic staff.

Analysis Findings:
Offering veterinary transport reflected a reasonable and compassionate response to an uncertain situation. Although [redacted] believed the dog had likely died based on her observations, she did not have the authority or expertise to formally pronounce death. Transporting the dog for veterinary assessment rather than simply releasing him to the owners was therefore a reasonable operational decision.

This stage of the incident also represented the final opportunity to preserve evidence associated with a dog that had died while under municipal care and control. Given the significance of the incident, it would have been reasonable to recognize the potential evidentiary value of a veterinary necropsy and communicate that need through the supervisory chain so that the municipality could determine whether authorization for the examination should be provided. In the absence of that discussion, no necropsy was obtained, leaving the Review without what could have been a critical source of objective medical evidence regarding the dog's injuries and cause of death.

Similarly, although the scene itself remained dynamic and emotionally charged, the dog's arrival at the veterinary clinic provided a controlled environment in which additional photographic documentation could reasonably have been obtained before the body was removed from the transport vehicle or otherwise altered. Such photographs would have provided valuable contemporaneous documentation of the dog's condition, including the location and extent of observable injuries and bleeding. The absence of both a necropsy and comprehensive photographic documentation represent a significant evidentiary limitation that restricts the extent to which aspects of the incident can now be independently verified.

Decision Point 16 – Return of the German Shorthaired Pointer

Corroborated Information:

This decision point is supported only by [redacted] own account. Neither [redacted] nor [redacted] were present for these events, and none of the sequence below could be independently corroborated by another witness:

- [redacted] stated that she contacted the individual who had identified himself as able to accept the German Shorthaired Pointer, to arrange returning the dog to him.
- [redacted] stated that during this call, the individual became verbally hostile toward her.
- [redacted] stated that she advised [redacted] that she did not feel safe attending the address alone.
- [redacted] stated that [redacted] instructed her to contact the Special Constables who had attended the scene earlier to see if they could accompany her, or alternatively to take the dog to the shelter.
- [redacted] stated that the Special Constables agreed to attend with her.
- [redacted] stated that she attended the residence with the Special Constables and returned the dog to its owner.
- A discrepancy exists regarding who placed the initial call to the owner: [redacted] interview includes a secondhand account, attributed to the GSP's owner ("[redacted] from his own statement/video, indicating that [redacted] not [redacted] made this call, and that no address was provided before the call ended. This is inconsistent with [redacted] account of personally placing the call. As this is a thirdhand account relayed through a witness who did not observe the call directly, it carries less evidentiary weight than a direct transcript, but it remains an unresolved discrepancy that should be noted rather than set aside

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- [redacted] stated she did not feel safe attending to the owner's address alone following the hostile response during the phone call.
- She stated she sought supervisory guidance before proceeding further.
- She stated she considered the potential impact that taking the dog to the shelter might have on it and did not believe that was the most appropriate option under the circumstances.

- She stated she was aware that taking the dog to the shelter would leave an already-escalated individual to be dealt with by shelter staff instead, which she felt was not fair to them.
- She viewed Special Constable attendance as a means of improving officer safety during the return.

Analysis Findings:
Returning the German Shorthaired Pointer directly to its identified owner was consistent with the Shelter Intake SOP, which directs officers to return an animal to its owner where practical before proceeding with shelter intake. Under the circumstances described by [redacted] returning the dog to its owner rather than transporting it to the shelter was therefore consistent with established Divisional procedure as well as a reasonable operational decision.

Equally significant was [redacted] recognition that the owner's reported hostility created a potential officer safety concern. Rather than proceeding alone, she sought supervisory guidance, communicated her safety concerns, and followed the direction provided by requesting assistance from the Special Constables before attending the residence. This reflected an appropriate reassessment of operational risk and the use of available supervisory and policing resources to mitigate that risk prior to completing the return.

Decision Point 17 – Post-Incident Notification

Corroborated Information:
- [redacted] authored and submitted her own incident/accident report; a copy has been obtained, reviewed, and is consistent with the reporting process she described during interview.
- [redacted] documented her initial on-site arrival time in her notebook at the time, then stayed late at the office that evening to write the remainder of her notes at the JOC while the incident was still relatively fresh.
- [redacted] did not take any of the photographs of [redacted] injury or of the dog; she confirmed these were taken by [redacted]
- Unresolved discrepancy: [redacted] stated that, while completing her notes later that evening, she asked a coworker to help refresh her memory because so much had occurred during the incident. She clarified that the information refreshed her own recollection rather than replacing it. [redacted] by contrast, stated that although they completed their reports in the office at the same time, they prepared them independently without discussing the incident. The available evidence does not

establish whether any discussion occurred beyond the type of memory-refreshing [redacted] described, and this discrepancy cannot be resolved from the available evidence.

Officer's Stated Considerations:

- She stated that in her incident report, the section indicating a "near miss, incident only" was marked, despite the report separately noting an injury [redacted], [redacted], which she clarified referred to [redacted] injury, not her own.
- She stated that when asked which written procedures, she was referencing in confirming that relevant work procedures existed and had been communicated to her, she described general, trained practice around managing a contained dog and escalating to catch-pole use when required by safety, rather than identifying a specific written SOP document.
- Stated that she believed written procedures existed within the Division, but that her operational practice was based primarily on her hands-on training, mentoring, and scenario-based instruction.
- She stated that in asking a coworker for help while writing her notes, her intent was to refresh her own independent recollection given how much had happened, rather than to adopt someone else's account of events.

Analysis Findings:

[redacted] post-incident reporting followed the Division's expected process. She completed her incident report, documented the incident while it remained relatively fresh in her memory, and remained at the office after her shift to complete her notes. These actions were consistent with preserving an accurate record of the incident while events were still recent.

The available evidence also indicates that [redacted] sought assistance from a coworker to refresh her recollection while preparing her notes. During her interview, she explained that her intention was to assist her own independent recollection rather than adopt another person's account of events. [redacted] however, described the reporting process as having been completed independently without discussion between them. Because these accounts differ, the available evidence cannot determine the extent to which any discussion occurred before the reports were finalized.

Regardless of whether any discussion took place, the incident highlights the importance of preserving independent recollections following significant operational events. Completing reports independently and capturing as much operational detail as

reasonably possible while memories remain fresh strengthens the evidentiary value of the record and supports accurate reconstruction and organizational learning.

APPENDIX D – PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITS

D.1 Site Examination Photographs

SITE PHOTO 1 - PXL_20260622_175759496

SITE PHOTO 2 - PXL_20260622_181105607

D.2 Vehicle Inspection Photographs

VEHICLE 405-23 - PXL_20260622_164154248

VEHICLE 405-23 - PXL_20260622_161324138

VEHICLE 409-25 - PXL_20260622_162931402

VEHICLE-408-25 - PXL_20260622_154956658

D.3 Equipment Inspection Photographs

VEHICLE 405-23 - PXL_20260622_164205294

VEHICLE 409-25 - PXL_20260622_162114756

VEHICLE 409-25 – PXL_20260622_162230433

VEHICLE 409-25 – PXL_20260622_162402790

VEHICLE 409-25 – PXL_20260622_162331278

VEHICLE-408-25 - PXL_20260622_160457696

VEHICLE-408-25 - PXL_20260622_161948231

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VEHICLE-408-25 - PXL_20260622_161049782

VEHICLE-408-25 - PXL_20260622_155103728

APPENDIX E – INVESTIGATOR QUALIFICATIONS

E.1 Julie Speyer, CDBC, CPDT-KA, SDC

Julie Speyer is the Founder and Director of Canine Foundations, bringing over 25 years of experience in canine handling and rehabilitation. Specializing in extreme fear, aggression, and phobia-related behaviour issues, Julie takes a holistic, compassionate approach to behaviour modification. She advocates for positive reinforcement techniques, using scientifically backed methods to help dogs achieve lasting improvements in both shelter and home environments.

Julie is a Provincial Court Recognized Expert Witness in Dog Assessment, Behaviour, and Training, known for her ability to integrate her extensive experience in behaviour science with practical, real-world applications. Drawing on her training as a Veterinarian Assistant and background as a former Animal Cruelty Investigator and Animal Control Officer, Julie works closely with animal shelters, municipal law enforcement, and animal service providers to develop comprehensive Canine Bite Assessment evaluations, Safety Training and Animal Handling programs.

Her work emphasizes the importance of safety, empathy, and effective communication when working with both animals and people. Julie is committed to fostering collaboration between animal welfare professionals, behaviour consultants, and law enforcement to ensure the well-being of both animals and the communities they serve.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Canine Behaviour Consultant specializing in Territorial Aggression, Resource Guarding, Developmental Delay Disturbances, Dog to Dog Aggression, Stranger Fear Aggression, Separation Anxiety, and Repetitive Behaviour Disorders
- Director and Instructor for Georgian College's Canine Behaviour Series
- Director and Instructor for Georgian College's Canine Foundations' Training Academy
- Certified Dog Behaviour Consultant through the IAABC (International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants)
- Certified Trainer through the CCPDT (Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers) – Knowledge Assessed
- Certified Service Dog Coach through Cooperative Paws Service Dog Education
- Service Dog Coach Mentor for Cooperative Paws Service Dog Education
- Provincial Court Recognized Expert Witness in Dog Assessment, Behaviour and Training - Requalified in 2022
- Member of the ASPO (Animal Shelter Professionals of Ontario)
- Member of ILEETA (International Law Enforcement Educators & Trainers Association)
- Previous Animal Cruelty Investigator for the Ontario SPCA
- Previous Animal Control Officer for the Ontario SPCA and Humane Society
- Graduate of Sheridan College Animal Care / Veterinary Assistant program

E.2 Amanda Barrett

Amanda Barrett is a highly accomplished Municipal Law Enforcement Officer with over 20 years of experience in animal welfare, law enforcement, and animal protection. Specializing in municipal by-laws, the Dog Owner's Liability Act (DOLA), and Animal Welfare laws within Ontario, Amanda is widely regarded as an expert in her field. Her career includes significant roles in enforcement, veterinary medicine, animal shelter operations, and animal care management, where she has demonstrated leadership and a deep commitment to ensuring public safety and animal welfare.

With a post-secondary education in Veterinary Technology, Amanda brings a unique combination of technical knowledge and practical experience to her work. Her expertise in interpreting and enforcing complex legal frameworks has made her a trusted authority in animal protection law. She is skilled in navigating the nuances of animal welfare regulations and effectively addressing legal challenges in her community.

As a seasoned trainer and subject matter expert, Amanda excels at delivering engaging and impactful training sessions. She is highly adept at translating complex legal concepts into clear, actionable information, ensuring law enforcement officers, animal care professionals, and organizations gain a comprehensive understanding of animal welfare laws and best practices. Amanda's dedication to education and her passion for animal welfare make her an invaluable asset to any organization focused on improving standards of safety and compliance.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Behaviour Management in a Shelter- Pacific University
- OSPCA Agent and Inspector
- Municipal By-Law Officer
- Manager Animal Protective Services
- Supervisor Animal Services
- Member of ASPO (Animal Shelter Professionals of Ontario)
- Member of MLEOA (Municipal Law Enforcement Officers' Association)
- Member of NACA (National Animal Care & Control Association)
- Expert Panel Member for HASS for Field Services Stream (Human Animal Support Services)
- Subject matter Expert and trainer of Dog Owner's Liability Act
- Municipal Law Enforcement Canine 101 & K9 Self Defense- Canine Foundations

E.3 Victoria Blondin, BVM&S, MSc., BSc., Cert.SAPT

Victoria Blondin is a Pet Behaviourist with over 25 years of experience in animal training and behaviour. She holds a Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery (BVM&S) and a Master of Science in Animal Welfare and Behaviour, combining a strong academic foundation with extensive hands-on expertise.

Specialising in canine separation anxiety, Victoria is a Certified Separation Anxiety Pro Trainer (Cert. SAPT) and has supported countless families in helping their dogs feel safe and comfortable when left alone. Beyond this focus, she offers comprehensive behaviour consulting in areas such as obedience, trick training, child safety with dogs, and addressing complex behaviour challenges. Her academic background in feline behaviour also enables her to guide multi-pet households toward harmony and balance.

Victoria's career began with a commitment to animal welfare, working directly with neglected horses before expanding her practice to companion animals. Today, she combines evidence-based science with a compassionate, reinforcement-based approach that emphasises trust, safety, and emotional well-being for both pets and their people. She is particularly passionate about fostering safe, positive relationships between dogs and children, helping families build confidence and understanding in everyday interactions.

Dedicated to ongoing professional development, Victoria remains at the forefront of behaviour science, ensuring her clients benefit from the most effective, humane, and up-to-date strategies available. Her advanced training and family-focused expertise strengthen the support offered to dogs, their families, and professional partners alike.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Separation Anxiety Pro Trainer
- Previous Veterinary Surgeon for Vets4Pets Colne
- Canine Aggression Directed Towards Humans, Veterinary Information Network
- Previous Veterinary Surgeon for YourVets Solihull
- University of Edinburgh- Equine Nutrition Course
- Veterinary Medicine and Surgery (BVM&S)
- Hills Pet Foods Ltd.- Veterinary Student Representative
- Master of Science (MSc.) Animal Welfare & Behaviour
- Fish Nutrition Laboratory NSERC USRA (National Science and Engineering Research Council Undergraduate Student Research Award)
- Bachelor of Science (BSc.) Animal Biology

E.4 Andrew Reynolds

Andrew Reynolds brings over 30 years of law enforcement experience to Canine Foundations' Continuing Education team, offering a diverse and extensive background in areas such as Reviews, martial arts, defensive tactics, situational de-escalation, court procedures, and defensive weapons training. As a highly qualified Use of Force instructor, Andrew has developed a comprehensive approach to training that emphasizes both safety and effectiveness in high-stress, real-world scenarios.

In addition to his Use of Force expertise, Andrew is a Certified ASP Expandable Baton and OC Aerosol Projectors Instructor, with certifications from Armament Systems and Procedures, Inc., and Safariland Training Group/Defence Technology. His knowledge and experience in these areas enable him to teach essential skills for managing force situations with precision, control, and confidence, ensuring his students are well-prepared for any challenges they may face in the field.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Municipal Law Enforcement/Property Standards Officer
- Investigator for ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES-Compliance and Enforcement Division
- Inspector for the CITY OF TORONTO – Ministry of Health Promotion
- Inspector under the Tobacco Control Act, Smoke Free Ontario Act (SFOA)
- Provincial Offences Officer for the ONTARIO JUDICIAL SERVICE
- Communications Analyst for the ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE
- Community Officer for the TORONTO COMMUNITY HOUSING – Toronto, ON
- Crisis Management & Effective Communications certification
- Force Continuum for Law Enforcement Certification
- Use of Force and Restraint Devices certification
- Handcuff Training Certification
- Confined Space Awareness Certification
- Edge Weapons Awareness and Tactics Certification
- First Aid, CPR and AED certification
- ASP Baton Instructor (International Certification)
- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System Certification
- Inspections, Reviews & Enforcement (II&E Secretariat Standard) Certification
- Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear CBRN Awareness Certification
- Police Workers Health & Safety Rep. II
- General Investigators Course (Police Foundations 1)
- Ontario Workers Health & Safety Training

APPENDIX F - ACCOMPANYING ELECTRONIC FILES

Supporting Documents

01 – Aurora Animal Services Personnel Interviews

- [redacted] – Interview Notes
- [redacted] – Interview Follow-up Email
- [redacted] – Interview 1 – Recording and Transcripts
- [redacted] – Interview 2 – Part 1 - Recording
- [redacted] - Interview 2 – Part 2 - Recording
- [redacted] – Interview 1 -Recording and Transcripts
- [redacted] – Interview 2 – Recording and Transcripts
- [redacted] – Interview – Recording and Transcripts

02 – Civilian Witness Interviews

- [redacted] – Interview – Recording and Transcripts
- [redacted] – Interview – Recording and Transcripts
- [redacted] – Interview – Recording and Transcripts
- [redacted] – Statement

03 – External Agency Interviews

- [redacted] – Special Constable Interview - Recording

04 – Call Logs

- Call logs with [redacted]
- [redacted] Coll Log with [redacted]
- Call Logs with [redacted]
- [redacted] Call Log with [redacted]
- [redacted] Call Logs

05 – Duty Notes

- [redacted] – Duty Notes
- [redacted] – Duty Notes
- [redacted] – Statement
- [redacted] - Statement

06 – CAD/Dispatch Records

- Incident Notification – [redacted]
- [redacted] CRM Notes May 4, 2026

- Case Assignment email - [redacted]

07 - Bite Injury Documentation

- [redacted] Medical Report
- [redacted] Incident Report
- Officer Injury – Taken at Scene – 01
- Officer Injury – Taken at Scene – 02
- Officer Injury – Taken at Scene – 03
- Officer Injury – Taken at Scene – 04
- Officer Injury – Taken at Scene – 05
- Officer Injury – Taken at Hospital – 01
- Officer Injury – Taken at Hospital – 02
- Officer Injury – Taken at Hospital – 03
- [redacted] Incident Report
- Hourly Climate Data Report for May 04, 2026

08 – Policies and Procedures Reviewed

- Wildlife Handling SOP Introduction Email
- SOP Wildlife Handling
- SOP Creation Request Supervisor to Officer
- SOP and New Forms Communication Email
- SOP 11.15 – Georgina Animal Shelter Intake Procedure
- SOP 11.14 – Responding to Customer Service Calls
- SOP 11.1 – Animals Requiring Medical Care by a Registered Veterinarian
- SOP 8.5 – Training Order, Muzzle Order and Dangerous Dog Order Procedure
- SOP 8.4 – Dog Bite Procedure
- SOP 8.3 – Personal Appearance
- SOP – Vehicles
- SOP – Shades of Hope Euth Program
- By-Law Comparisons Breakdown for Animal Services

09 – Training Records

- Trident Training Details
- Training Summary [redacted] and [redacted]
- Training Summary [redacted]
- Training Checklist Original 2021
- Onboarding Training Checklist Blank
- By-Law Summer Student Training Presentation
- Animal Services Training Guide Blank

10 – Operational Documentation

- Standard Vehicle Equipment Checklist
- Shelter Notes [redacted] Condition 2025-APR-22
- Prior History Summary 2025-APR-21
- Photo of [redacted] 2025
- Photo of [redacted] 2025
- [redacted] Vehicle Check 2026-May-5 Page 1
- [redacted] Vehicle Check 2026-May-5 Page 2
- Licensing Records Confirmation Email
- Intake Form [redacted] 2025-APR-21
- Intake Form [redacted] 2025 2025-APR-21
- Incident Timeline 2026-May-04
- [redacted] Vehicle Check 2026-MAY-6 Page 2
- [redacted] Vehicle Check 2026-MAY-6 Page 1

Digital Evidence

11 – Additional Vehicle & Equipment Videos & Photographs

- Additional Vehicle Inspection Photographs
- Vehicle Inspection Video
- Additional Equipment Inspection Photographs

12 – Video Recordings Provided by [redacted]

13 – Photographs Provided by [redacted]

14 – Video Recordings Provided by [redacted]