



**CONCLUDED
PROBLEM REPORT
PS-1**

Problem ID: 67

Reporting Division : NORTH

District: YELLOWHEAD CORRIDOR

Neighbourhood: KENNEDALE

Address : 50 STREET/YELLOWHEAD TRAIL

Reg	Rank	Last Name	First Name
1554	CST	SCHRADER	D

Key Description : LIVESTOCK AT LARGE

Problem Description :

A wide area centered around 50 Street and Yellowhead Trail has been the location of a recurrent problem for **years**. In a situation unique to that area of the city, these have been frequent reports of livestock at large on major thoroughfares and in residential neighbourhoods.

Because this type of occurrence was cleared as a "general complaint" through police dispatch, exact numbers of incidents could not be determined. However, discussion with long-standing North Division members suggested it occurred "a few times a month". Reports of as many as 13 cows at one time, and in one case a 2,000 (plus) pound bull provided for interesting times along Yellowhead Trail.

While comical at first glance, the incidents have more serious potential. They have inconvenienced the CNR main line, caused substantial traffic disruption on north Edmonton's major east/west bound routes, been responsible for damage to residential property and have occasionally tied up significant police resources for extended time periods. On one occasion in the past public had to resort to shooting a panic-stricken animal that posed a danger to area children.

Problem solving strategies and results :

The area houses a number of animal facilities including a major slaughterhouse, smaller processing plants and the public stockyard. It became clear that the only source of note was the Edmonton Public Stockyard. The stockyard handles a volume of 250,000 animals a year, mostly cattle but also hogs, goats, and sheep. It is a large penned structure covering 23 acres with a further eight acres of open land.

While the surrounding area to the North and West is quite open, sparsely populated, industrial land, the escaping cows inexplicably head south, across the heavily travelled rail line, and Yellowhead Trail to the quiet residential area beyond.

With the source of the problem properly pinpointed, a meeting was set up to explore the underlying causes of such escapes. Two primary means were identified. The first was Through holes in the perimeter fence. The stockyard is an aging structure that had been kept in poor repair by the previous owner. Weakened, rotting boards would give way to determined cows who simply kicked their way out. However, the most common source of escape was the unloading area. Hobby farmers with improper equipment such as horse trailers lacked the expertise to properly back into the clutes. This allowed animals to squeeze out during the unloading process.

With the support and cooperation of the new management, several action steps were agreed upon:

- 1 First and foremost, a rebuilding of the gates, fences and loading docks was undertaken. This ended up being a \$250,000 refurbishing project that effectively eliminated escapes through the perimeter fence.
- 2 Alert the staff to the problem around the unloading chutes for the smaller vehicles. More supervision and assistance could be provided here for unexperienced haulers.
3. A large sign near the unloading clutes informing haulers of their responsibilities and possible liability.
4. A formalized policy in place, including 24 hour contact numbers to assist police in the event of an escape.
- 5 Agreement on regular meetings to keep the plan on track.

It was learned that two pieces of legislation could conceivably be drawn upon if required. Both the Alberta Stray Animals Act, and Bylaw 9199 to control animals within the City of Edmonton provide for enforcement in such situations.

But, quite frankly, this is obscure legislation that serves better as a deterrent and for information purposes than to proceed with charges under Acts no one is terribly familiar with. And this information was received as a polite reminder in just that fashion.

These changes were implemented in late 1994 and there have been but two incidents since then. On one of them a particularly determined Billy Goat actually jumped the eight foot high fence. Clearly the incidence of stray animals has been drastically reduced through Cst. Shraders initiatives.

There is an interesting note to this initiative. The EPS had previously compiled a procedural manual on how to deal with livestock at large. It dealt at length on what to do once a report of a large animal was received. Entirely reactive. This initiative addresses the problem before the animal escapes. An interesting change of focus.