



**U.S. Customs and
Border Protection**

FEB 18 2011

Mr. William E. Reukauf
Associate Special Counsel
Office of Special Counsel
1730 M Street, Suite 218
Washington, D.C. 20036-4505

RE: OSC File No. DI-10-2335 – Supplemental Response

Dear Mr. Reukauf:

By letter dated November 9, 2010, this office transmitted a report to your attention in response to your referral of allegations that constituted potential gross mismanagement and a substantial and specific danger to public safety at the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Canine Center Front Royal, Front Royal, Virginia. Upon reviewing the agency's report of findings, your staff requested responses to several follow up questions regarding the case. The questions and CBP management's responses are detailed below.

1) Did the cease and desist issued by CBP management on September 22, 2010, in response to the alleged use of abusive training techniques at the Canine Center Front Royal (CCFR) apply only to the CCFR or to the Canine Center El Paso (CCEP) as well?

Response: The cease and desist issued on 9/22/10 applied to and was put into effect at both CCFR and CCEP immediately upon issuance.

2) Is there an established age when dogs start getting trained on the so-called "choke off" technique?

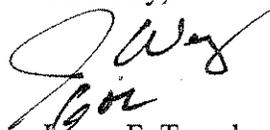
Response: There is no established age when dogs start getting trained on the "choke-off" (a technique that causes the dog to release the toy by initiating a gag reflex – not by choking). Although CBP Canine Program management has previously consulted with veterinarians on the use of the choke-off and received affirmation that CBP's training practices were safe, Canine Program management will engage in further consultations with veterinarians to evaluate current practices and make changes if appropriate.

3) Does the Canine Program Executive Steering Committee (ESC) have participation from individuals with medical or veterinary backgrounds?

Response: To date, the Canine Program ESC has not had any participation from individuals with medical or veterinary backgrounds. It would, however, be very beneficial to have individuals with veterinary backgrounds participate in ESC discussions that involve or potentially impact the dogs' health or well-being. The Canine Program ESC will begin this practice immediately.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office at (202) 344-1800 should you require further information regarding these matters.

Sincerely,



James F. Tomsheck
Assistant Commissioner
Office of Internal Affairs

cc: General Counsel, Department of Homeland Security