

**REPORT TO THE TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE
2016 REGULAR SESSION
STATE OF HAWAII**

**PROGRESS REPORT AND PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ANIMAL
QUARANTINE STATION
REGARDING H.R.35, SLH 2015**

PREPARED BY:

HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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BACKGROUND

At the request of the Animal Industry Division in 2014, USDA Animal Care conducted courtesy visits in January 2015 at the Division's Animal Quarantine Station (AQS) and Airport Animal Quarantine Holding Facility (AAQHF). The following plans and actions resulted from some of the recommendations and discussions associate with those visits.

The Animal Quarantine Station was constructed around 1992 after being relocated within the same property due to construction of the H-3 freeway. AQS is operated by the Rabies Quarantine Branch and the AAQHF is operated by the Animal Disease Control Branch. The AQS confines cats and dogs under rabies quarantine and the AAQHF inspects arriving domestic animals entering the state, including dogs and cats, that are transported in-cabin and as cargo by airlines to Honolulu International Airport. The AAQHF was put into operation in the early 1990s. During FY 2015 approximately 15,263 dogs and cats were processed for entry into the state with approximately 89.7% (13,687) of them qualifying for release at the airport after inspection.

ACTIONS TAKEN SINCE FEBRUARY 2015 AND PROJECTED TIMELINE

Both facilities were examined by an Inspector for USDA, Agriculture and Plant Inspection Service (APHIS), Animal Care in January 2015. The USDA Animal Care Inspector commented that "overall the kennels were in good condition and provide adequate housing." Structural issues with both facilities are due to aging. It was noted that corrosion and wear of surfaces in kennels was evident in some areas, worn cat perches were identified, and the Veterinary Dispensary roof was leaking. Actions completed at this stage included refurbishing and spot repairs of some kennels with limited corrosion areas. The program has prepared and forwarded an invitation for bid (IFB) to the State Procurement Office (SPO) for review. The IFB addresses facility repairs involving significant refurbishing of kennel structures that would include replacement of the wire fencing and roofs. The IFB specifies corrosion resistant materials and the final product will have to meet expectations with regards to animal safety, environmental durability, adequate security and ventilation. In addition, the IFB will project repairs to occur over time to accommodate logistics associated with minimizing construction related distractions for the pets and visitors. It is anticipated that evaluations of bids will occur during the third quarter of fiscal year 2016. The Veterinary Dispensary roof leak repair identified in the visit has already been in process on HlePRO, (state's electronic procurement system) and is anticipated to be completed by February 2016.

Other general conditions regarding housekeeping in unused kennels, building rooms, and some areas of landscaping were discussed with USDA, APHIS Animal Care. Significant projects that have been completed recently include clearing and cleaning of the identified areas. The removal of several large trees and additional pruning of other-trees was completed by August 2015. Large scale debris removal was completed in multiple stages utilizing general maintenance crews to collect and dispose of trash as part of annual

inventory audits performed in March 2015. During that same quarter, grounds crews cleared out debris and reduced vegetation of the older unused section of the Station. In July 2015 debris and vegetation were removed from the section adjacent to the visitor's parking lot. The Station Operations section is tasked with continued oversight in this area and activities are continuing in other areas.

Training for the Dispensary, Animal Caretaker and Office staff is an ongoing process. The Operations section reinforces the importance of care in day to day activities that the caretakers perform in relation to the pets. The concept of providing quality daily care of pets while housed at the Animal Quarantine Station is reinforced by Operations. All new caretaker employees are trained by knowledgeable and experienced Team Leaders and provided with written procedures that highlight appropriate care and treatment of pets housed at the Animal Quarantine Station.

In addition, program staff participated in specific communication training focused on active listening held in February 2015 and a session held in April 2015 focused on communication as it relates to the media. Plans for continued training include additional communication training and review of procedures.

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The Animal Quarantine Station facility will continue to maintain the current facility to provide appropriate housing for dogs and cats that are confined during the rabies quarantine period.

One factor discussed related to environmental temperature as it relates to outdoor kennels. Heat abatement modalities that have been tested locally in roofed construction such as spray-on or roll roof insulation, passive and powered ventilation, specialty wall paints, etc. are marginally effective or are not applicable to these type of outdoor kennels. The Division will need to seek design alternatives as funds permit. It is likely that substantially different new kennel facilities must be designed that incorporate air conditioning and/or other powered climate control systems or other additional shade covering to effectively address ambient temperature.

FUNDING REQUIREMENT AND PROPOSED LEGISLATION

Repair of existing Animal Quarantine Facilities along the projected timeline will be supported using operating funds that are generated by user fees. In the next legislative session, the the Animal Industry Division will be pursuing capital improvement funds to support the design of a new facility that will study the feasibility of constructing a facility to incorporate all the functional units of the Animal Industry Division into a single footprint. The functional units incorporated would include the Rabies Quarantine Branch, the Animal Disease Control Branch, the Aquaculture and Livestock Support Services and the Veterinary

Laboratory. The objective would be to modernize facilities that would address public expectation for appropriate housing for animal populations; improve laboratory design that address issues of appropriate sample handling and use of modern testing modalities to support the animal disease response; and increase efficiency of Animal Industry Division functions through consolidation of facilities.