Dear Mr. Earley,


At this meeting, the panel were asked about the role of the SSPCA in the investigation of Wildlife Crime. Specific reference was made to two issues:

- The outcome of the Scottish Government’s consultation on extending the role of the SSPCA in this area;
- The reduction in the number of cases reported for prosecution by the SSPCA to the COPFS each year.

Table 11 of the 2014 Annual Report details the number of cases reported by the SSPCA to COPFS, showing this has reduced from 36 in 2009-10 to 18 in 2013-14. However, Tom Dysart, of the Wildlife and Environment Crime Unit at COPFS, said the number of cases reported to them in 2013-14 was 10 according to their records.

---


\(^2\) RACCE Committee, Official Report, 13 January 2016: [http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=10314](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=10314) The video is available to watch here: [http://www.scottishparliament.tv/Archive/Index/19f1a72a-7f47-4144-9624-e6b161e0969e?Area=&categoryId=e63c0ca2-800b-462c-b39e-813ee9e06cb7&parentCategoryClicked=False&pageNumber=0&orderByField=PlayCount&queryOrder=ASC](http://www.scottishparliament.tv/Archive/Index/19f1a72a-7f47-4144-9624-e6b161e0969e?Area=&categoryId=e63c0ca2-800b-462c-b39e-813ee9e06cb7&parentCategoryClicked=False&pageNumber=0&orderByField=PlayCount&queryOrder=ASC)
The Committee would be grateful if you could clarify which of these figures is accurate and account for the discrepancy between the figure provided by the SSPCA to the Scottish Government and the figure held by COPFS.

The Committee is concerned at the reduction in the number of reported cases at a time when it is proposed that further powers in this area are extended to the SSPCA. The Committee requests that you provide details of the reasons for this decline in the number of cases reported to COPFS by the SSPCA.

I would be grateful if you could send your response by Friday 22 January at 12:00 to racce.committee@scottish.parliament.uk in MS Word format.

Yours sincerely

Rob Gibson MSP
Convener