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ASSOCIATION OF PET  
BEHAVIOUR COUNSELLORS

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# ANNUAL REVIEW OF CASES 2004

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# The Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors in 2004

Membership continues to grow with more student, provisional and academic and full members joining. The APBC members-only online discussion list, known as the 4-um, provides a huge amount of data and support for members who are free to discuss cases and other relevant issues. The increase in academic courses now available in the field has continued and combined with necessary practical experience we look forward to a large number of applications for Full membership in the coming years, providing veterinary surgeons and pet owners with a much larger pool of able practitioners throughout the UK and internationally.

The Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour (ASAB) certification scheme continues to develop and grow, and the APBC continues to support it. A link from the APBC website will take you to the ASAB website for more details, including example case studies for those considering applying for certification.

The seminar programme during 2004 included The Behavioural Effects of the Dog's Lifecycle in Buckinghamshire and Pet Behaviour 2004 in Scotland, which encompassed a number of pertinent issues. We also ran a large conference at Stoneleigh Park in Warwickshire called Thinking Outside the Box, which included an excellent presentation by Robert Phipps on body language, which will be expanded upon during 2005. We are very grateful to Ceva Animal Health for supporting these events.

Published by Souvenir Press, The APBC Book of Companion Animal Behaviour became available in April 2004 and has proved popular with students, trainers, veterinary practices and with pet owners themselves. The book is available from book shops or mail order direct from the APBC website.

The APBC website was entirely re-designed in 2004. Easier to navigate and carrying information on clinics, membership criteria, courses and the mail order bookshop etc, it also now includes details about committee members and Top Tips for Pet Owners, which includes features on rabbits, cats, dogs, horses, rats and guinea pigs.

The APBC can be contacted at PO Box 46, Worcester, WR8 9YS. Tel: 01386 751151 or visit our website [www.apbc.org.uk](http://www.apbc.org.uk)

The Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors has produced an Annual Review of Cases since 1994. The data, which represents a portion of the cases seen by the whole membership, provides useful information for both general and specific interest. The authors of this report, Emma Magnus BSc (Hons) MSc CCAB and David Appleby MSc CCAB would like to thank the members of the APBC that contributed their data.

**The APBC would like to thank Intervet UK Limited for their continuing support and interest in this venture**

# Introduction

For the 2004 Annual Review of Cases, a representative sample of members of the APBC submitted data for 748 canine and 185 feline cases which presented a total of 1772 problems. The cases were categorised according to gender, species and the percentage of individuals neutered. This information can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1. Cases categorised by gender and species**

	<b>Male Dogs</b>	<b>Female Dogs</b>	<b>Male Cats</b>	<b>Female Cats</b>
<b>Total</b>	446	302	108	77
<b>% Neutered</b>	63.7	71.5	100	99

The average number of problems per dog - 1.98

The average number of problems per cat - 1.54

The first APBC Annual Review was produced in 1994, at that time the average number of problems per dog was 1.55 and the number of problems per cat was 1.4. A comparison with the above data suggests that the average dog or cat is referred for an increased number of problems. This could be due to a higher incidence of client reporting.

## Most Common Breed to be referred

### Dogs

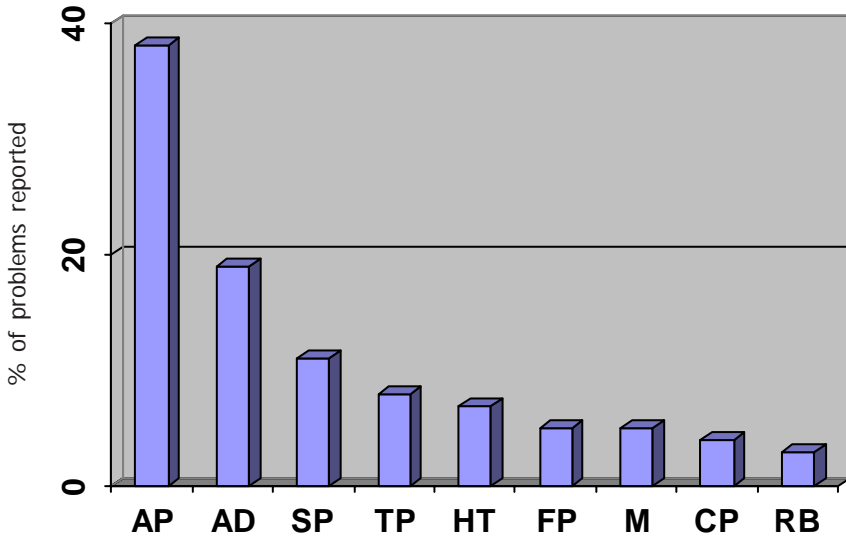
- 1 Mongrel
- 2 Border Collie
- 3 Labrador
- 4 GSD
- 5 Cocker Spaniel
- 6 West Highland White Terrier  
and Springer Spaniel
- 8 Staffordshire Bull Terrier
- 9 Cavalier King Charles Spaniel
- 10 Yorkshire Terrier

### Cats

- 1 Domestic Short Hair
- 2 Persian
- 3 Burmese
- 4 Siamese
- 5 Bengal
- 6 Birman

Interestingly, Jack Russell Terriers were in the top ten dog breeds referred in 2003 but in 2004 there were only 10 out of 748 cases analysed in this review.

## Analysis of canine behaviour problems

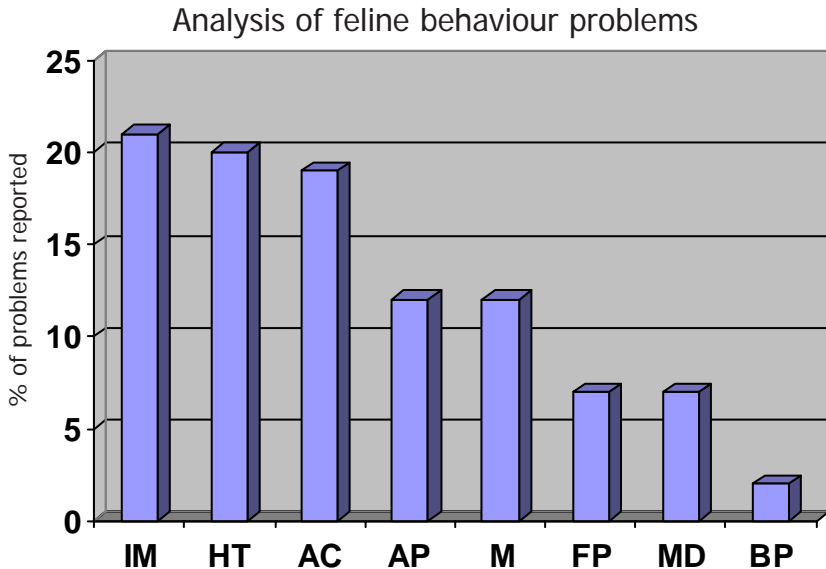


**Figure 1:** Breakdown of canine problems reported. Key: AP = Aggression towards people; AD = Aggression towards dogs; SP = Separation problems; TP = Training problems; HT = House training problems; FP = Fears and phobias; M = Miscellaneous problems such as attention seeking behaviours and over-activity; CP = Chasing problems and RB = Repetitive behaviours

As can be seen from Figure 1, 57% of the problems treated were related to aggression. The majority of which were directed to dogs and people outside the family group. 38% (564) of problems referred involved aggression towards people. 325 (57.6%) of these related to people approaching the home or strangers in or away from the home. 288 (19%) of problems referred involved aggression towards other dogs. 225 (78.1%) of these related to dogs encountered away from home.

## Environment obtained from

Of 748 canine cases sampled for this report, 33.9% (254 cases) were obtained from a breeder who reared the dog within the home environment. 33.2% (248 canines) were obtained from a breeder who reared the puppies in an out-building such as a kennel. 28.1% (210 cases) were obtained from a rescue environment and the remaining 4.8% (36 cases) were obtained from a puppy farm, pet shop, were found as a stray or the owner did not know which environment their dog was reared in.



**Figure 2:** Breakdown of feline problems reported. Key: IM = Indoor marking; HT = House training problems; AC = Aggression towards cats; AP = Aggression towards people; M = Miscellaneous (including attention seeking and self mutilation); FP = Fears and phobias; MD = Medical disorders and BP = bonding problems.

As can be seen from Figure 2, 117 (42%) of the problems treated related to house soiling which was almost evenly divided between indoor marking, such as spraying and middening, and house training problems. Indoor marking was presented in 60 cats, of which 43 were male and 17 female and all were neutered.

51 problems (19%) related to aggression towards other cats of which 46 (90.2%) was directed to cats within the home, which is as to be expected as most owners are tolerant of aggression to cats outside the household.

### Environment obtained from

Of the 185 feline cases sampled for this report, 44.3% (82 cases) were obtained from breeders who reared the cat within the home environment. 41.1% (76 cases) were cats obtained from a rescue environment. 6.5% of cats (12 cases) were obtained as a stray and 4.9% (9 cases) were obtained from breeders that were rearing the cat in a cattery or similar outbuilding. The remaining 3.2% (6 cases) were obtained from either a kitten farm or a pet shop.

## Incidence of dog bites

For the purposes of this report, the authors considered the incidence of dog bites, the link with specific behaviour problems and the impact of early experience. Of the 748 canine cases, 138 (18.4%) were reported to have bitten at least one person. Table 2 outlines the incidence of these bites.

**Table 2 - Incidence of dog bites**

One bite	56	40.6%
Two bites	24	17.4%
Three bites	27	19.6%
Four to ten bites	27	19.6%
Over ten bites	4	2.8%

The number of dogs that had bitten more than ten times is comparatively low. It is possible that many owners of dogs that had bitten this many times would have considered euthanasia, rehoming or keeping dogs on a lead and/or muzzled or would not be inclined to seek behaviour treatment. Table 3 outlines the direction of the recorded bites. The bites are expressed as percentages of the overall number of bites.

**Table 3 - To whom the bites were directed**

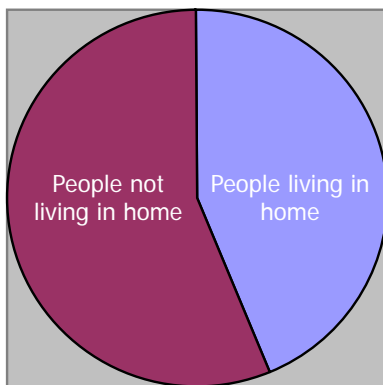
	Adult member of family	Family member 10 - 18y	Family member 0 - 10y	Adult stranger	Stranger 10 -18y	Stranger 0 - 10y	Vet
<b>1 bite</b>	39.3%	3.6%	8.9%	28.6%	-	12.5%	7.1%
<b>2 bites</b>	37.9%	3.4%	-	44.9%	-	6.9%	6.9%
<b>3 bites</b>	51.9%	7.4%	22.2%	14.9%	-	-	3.6%
<b>4 to 10 bites</b>	41.1%	10.7%	8.9%	21.4%	1.8%	3.6%	12.5%
<b>Over 10 bites</b>	21.4%	14.3%	14.3%	21.5%	7.1%	7.1%	14.3%

Adult family members or adult strangers were most likely to have been the recipient of the recorded bites.

## Behaviour problems associated with dog bites

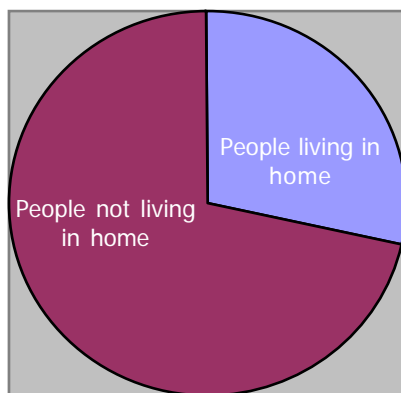
The authors of this report considered the referred behaviour problem associated with the recorded bite(s). The data was grouped according to the number of bites and is outlined in the following charts. As the numbers of dogs that had been referred for biting more than ten times were low, it was not possible to conclude anything from the data.

**Pie Chart 1 : Behaviour problems reported for dogs that have bitten once**



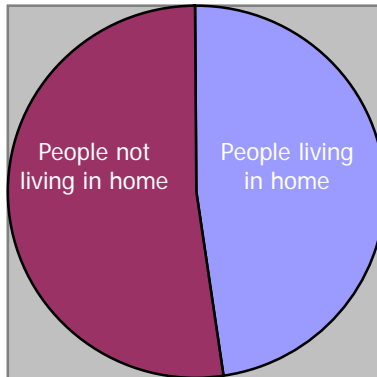
Dogs that were recorded as having bitten once were most likely to have been referred for aggression towards people not living in the home (56.5%).

**Pie Chart 2 : Behaviour problems reported for dogs that have bitten twice**

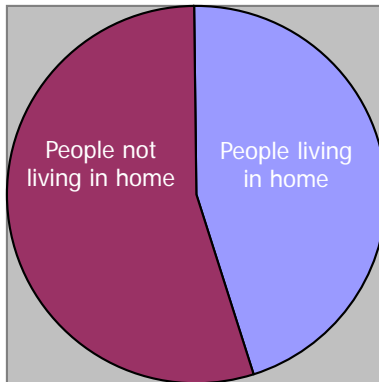


For dogs that were recorded as having bitten on two separate occasions the probability of the bite being towards someone not living within the home was greater (71.4%) than if the bite was directed towards a person living in the home.

**Pie Chart 3 : Behaviour problems reported for dogs that have bitten three times**



**Pie Chart 4 : Behaviour problems reported for dogs that have bitten between four and ten times**



Dogs that were recorded as having bitten between three and ten times, on separate occasions, were also likely to bite a person not living within the home (54.9%) but the probability of this being the reported problem was similar to dogs that were recorded as having bitten on one occasion.

**Key to pie charts:**

Behavioural problems associated with aggression towards **people not living in the home** included fear aggression towards strangers encountered in and out of the home and territorial aggression. Behavioural problems associated with aggression towards **people living in the home** included status related problems, aggression over food and a fear of family members.

## Link between dog bites and early experience

The link between aggression and early experience is well documented. For the purposes of this report, the dogs that had been referred for biting people were considered in terms of the environment that they were obtained from, the age at which they were obtained and whether, in the counsellor's opinion, the dog had been adequately exposed to people and other dogs .

In the opinion of the individual behaviourists, only 31.4% of the dogs that had bitten were considered to have been adequately exposed to appropriate stimuli by their owners during puppyhood. Tables 4 and 5 highlight the age purchased and the environment that the dogs referred for biting people were obtained from.

**Table 4 Age obtained**

**Table 5 Environment obtained from**

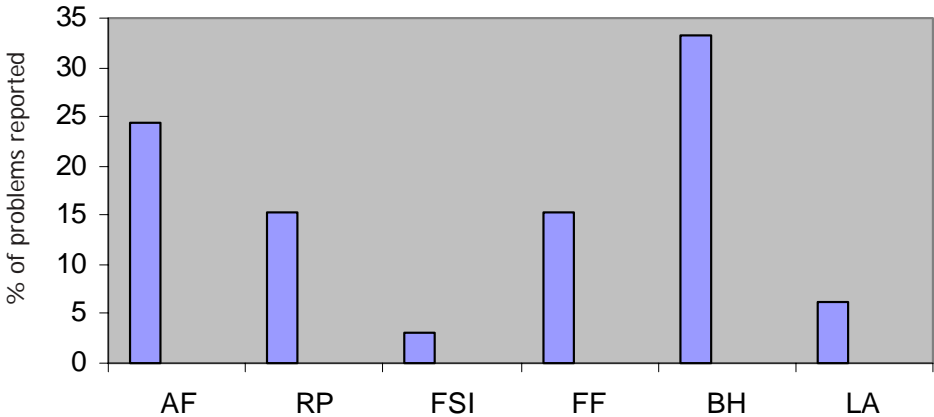
ENVIRONMENT	PERCENTAGE
Non-Domestic	36.4
Domestic	28.6
Rescue	30.1
Puppy Farm	2.8
Stray	1.4
Pet Shop	0.7

Of the 143 cases involving dog bites towards people, 105 (73.4%) of the dogs were neutered and (101) 70.6% were male.

# Incidence of feline aggression

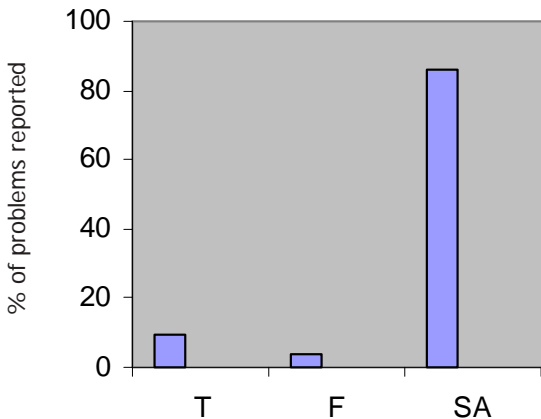
Of the 185 cats sampled for this study, 31% were referred for problems associated with aggression. 12% had exhibited aggression towards people and 19% towards cats. Graphs 7 and 8 show the breakdown of these into more specific diagnoses as provided by the APBC members.

## Graph 7 Aggression towards people



**Key to graph:** AF - Aggression due to frustration directed to owner; RP - Redirected predatory; FSI - Fear of strangers outside the home; FF - Fear of family members; BH - Biting during handling; LA - Learned aggression.

## Graph 8 Aggression towards cats



**Key to graph:** T - Territorial; F - Due to frustration redirected onto another cat and SA - Social aggression between cats resident in the same household.

## Incidence of cat bites

As has been the case in previous years, the majority of feline cases were referred for problems associated with house soiling in the form of inappropriate toileting and marking more often than for aggression. 33.3% of the cases that were referred for aggression towards people were attributed to biting the owner during handling. This behaviour is generally associated with a lack of appropriate social experience. 80% of these cases were presented in cats that had been obtained from a rescue centre. The data is too low to be valid for any further analysis.

## Summary of Review

The most common type of dog referred to a member of the APBC was a mongrel (crossbreed). Border Collies, Labradors and German Shepherd dogs were the most common pedigree breeds.

The most common type of cat referred to a member of the APBC was a Domestic Short-hair ("moggy"). Persians and Burmese cats were the most common pedigree breeds.

57% of dog problems and 31% of cat problems treated related to aggression. 42% of cat problems treated related to housesoiling and indoor marking.

18.4% of the canine cases considered were reported to have bitten at least one person.

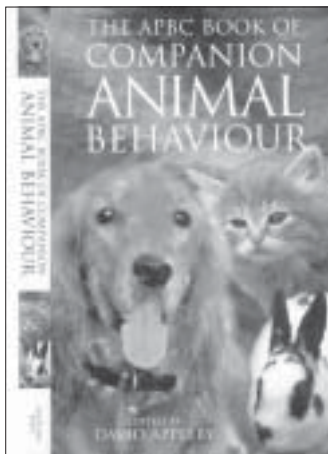
Adult family members or adult strangers were most likely to have been the recipient of a recorded bite. Strangers were more likely to be bitten than family members, particularly if the dog had bitten on two separate occasions. This remained true despite an increase in the number of recorded bites.

68.6% of the dogs that had bitten were considered to have been inadequately exposed to appropriate stimuli by the owners during puppyhood.

12% of the cats referred for problems associated with aggression had directed the aggression towards people. 19% had exhibited aggression towards other cats, particularly other cats that were resident in the same household.

To access copies of the APBC Annual Review from 1994 to 2003 visit  
<http://www.apbc.org.uk/data.htm>

**The APBC Book of Companion Animal Behaviour** published by Souvenir Press. Editor: David Appleby. £14.99 plus £1.50 p&p



**The APBC & CABTSG Manual Of Behavioural First Aid** published by the APBC. *What every veterinary practice needs to know!* Price £17.99 plus £1.50 p&p



Both titles are available from the APBC website or by calling 01386 751151

## The APBC Website

Visit [www.apbc.org.uk](http://www.apbc.org.uk) - the site is updated regularly, making it a worthwhile addition to your bookmarks or favourites. On the site you will find:

- More information about the APBC
- The UK Clinic List
- Details of how members can help treat behaviour problems
- A guide to those interested in a career in pet behaviour counselling
- Information on courses
- Details of how to become a member
- A diary of talks and courses relevant to the profession
- Articles about specific behaviour problems
- A shop selling books and products related to pet behaviour

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