

From: 9(2)(a)
To: Ngajo Beausoleil
Subject: Charlie Girl, negative interactions, part 2
Date: Friday, 13 December 2024 8:41:57 am



*wire Biting flees wire biting flees flees attacked by av2.mp4



*flees Ceasar stalks off etal.mp4



*flees oct13ish.mp4



*grooming toes and then flees.mp4



*in manuka and flees on oct 13.mp4



*in shrubs and climbs away from Caesar.mp4



*just after setting up and she had fled to corner.mp4



*weaving et al after moving away from Ceasar.mp4



*chase chase weave reducedfilesizee.mov

Just videos in this email.

s.9(2)(a)

From: 9(2)(a)
To: Ngaio Beausoleil
Subject: Fwd: Physical Therapy Programme Records
Date: Friday, 13 December 2024 8:02:05 am
Attachments: [Baseline Scale training.Feb14.2024.mp4](#)
[Charlie on Scale 2.mp4](#)
[Charlie Fly on Cue.MOV](#)
[Charlie Leg PT and Observations.MOV](#)

9(2)(a)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: 9(2)(a)
Date: Fri, Aug 9, 2024 at 2:27 PM
Subject: Re: Physical Therapy Programme Records
To: 9(2)(g)(ii) <[9\(2\)\(g\)\(ii\)@doc.govt.nz](mailto:9(2)(g)(ii)@doc.govt.nz)>

Kia ora,

Thank you for asking for information about Charlie's Voluntary Physical Therapy program and training while at Punanga Manu o Te Anau. Here is the requested information. The attached videos and google drive links to videos are supplementary to the PDF file.



CG Charlie Voluntary PT MPI.pdf

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)



Charlie enthusiastic recall.MOV



Charlie Targeting with [REDACTED].mov



Charlie early PT training.MOV



Charlie and [REDACTED] Targeting 1.MOV



Charlie and [REDACTED] Targeting 2.mov



Charlie and [REDACTED] Targeting 3.mov

9(2)(a)

From: 9(2)(a)
Date: Wed, Aug 7, 2024 at 12:00 AM
Subject: Re: Physical Therapy Programme Records
To: 9(2)(g)(ii) <[9\(2\)\(g\)\(ii\)@doc.govt.nz](mailto:9(2)(g)(ii)@doc.govt.nz)>

Good afternoon

Thank you for inquiring about Charlie and her training program. I will work on assembling that information from notes, conversations, and videos, and will hopefully have it compiled by the end of the day tomorrow.

In the meanwhile, I would like to request detailed information about Charlie's current care. Can you please send:

All enrichment programs, description, and frequency/schedule (browse, foraging toys, etc)

All medications and frequency (dose not required) including any changes in medications or frequency, from her initial arrival to present. How is medication being given?

Any positive reinforcement that is being done. Please include a description and schedule.

How often is she being weighed and what procedure is being used? (While weight is not an indicator of mental or physical wellbeing, DOC mentioned her weight being normal recently. Charlie was scale trained in Te Anau, meaning she would get on the scale voluntarily with no handling or stress.)

Does she engage with and interact with any staff members or volunteers? What types of behaviours does she perform in relation to people in her enclosure (or just outside the door)? (ex- coming down to investigate a person, taking a food item from a hand or a bowl held in the hand, etc.)

What type of monitoring of her behaviour and stereotypies is being done and what frequency? Is there a treatment plan for her repetitive behaviour and/or to reduce stress?

What is included in the treatment plan?

The reason for these inquiries is that Charlie benefited from the extensive positive reinforcement training, social interactions and engagement, and foraging enrichment programs in Te Anau. These programs provided a high level of behavioural and mental welfare to Charlie. Birds should experience the same level of care and enrichment when moved to a novel environment. When a parrot no longer has these positive experiences, it will negatively impact their welfare.

In addition, I have not received a reply from DOC to my emails. I would like to request a reply from the appropriate person by the end of the week.

I look forward to hearing from you and will provide a detailed answer for you and MPI as soon as possible.

Sincerely,
9(2)(a)

On Tue, Aug 6, 2024 at 9:46 PM 9(2)(g)(ii) <[9\(2\)\(g\)\(ii\)@doc.govt.nz](mailto:9(2)(g)(ii)@doc.govt.nz)> wrote:

Good afternoon

I have received a request from a MPI Animal Welfare inspector for records relating to a Physical Therapy Programme for a female SI kākā (Charley) when it was located at the Te Anau Sanctuary.

I understand from colleagues at Te Anau that this was work you undertook when you were present.

I would be grateful if you could send me by email or courier original or copies of any work you completed on this bird.

Any originals will be returned.

Sincerely

9(2)(g)(ii)

9(2)(g)(ii)

Lead TSO for captive Kea and South Island Kaka

Ōtepoti/Dunedin Office, Department of Conservation, PO Box 5244, DUNEDIN

s.9(2)(a), 9(2)(g)(ii)

Caution - This message and accompanying data may contain information that is confidential or subject to legal privilege. If you are not the intended recipient you are notified that any use, dissemination, distribution or copying of this message or data is prohibited. If you received this email in error, please notify us immediately and erase all copies of the message and attachments. We apologise for the inconvenience.

Thank you.

Charlie Girl Kākā Behaviour Questionnaire

Your name: A. Anon, Te Anau resident

Today's Date: 13/08/2024

1) How long have you known Charlie? What was your relationship (visitor, volunteer, keeper, etc)
I have known Charlie for 9 years. My relationship with her was as a Te Anau local.

1A) How often have visited Charlie Girl in the past few years? How long did your visits last?
(approximate dates and times)

Casually and periodically, when passing through, over the 9 years I have known her. The length of my visits varied, anywhere from 10 minutes to a couple of hours.

1B) When was your last visit to see her?
Approximately March of 2024.

2) Did you ever observe Charlie performing repetitive, stereotypical behaviours? Examples include repeated weaving, frantic toe licking or 'biting' (this is different from normal relaxed grooming behaviour of the feet), and pacing (going back and forth repeatedly, rather than moving along her enclosure to different areas). Stereotypical behaviours are repetitive behaviours which do not have an apparent use or function.

I did not ever observe any of this behaviour, or if I did, I did not connect it to be this.

2A) When did you see these behaviours occur? List approximate dates/months/years and describe what she was doing, and roughly how long. (When seen, What seen, and Duration).
N/A

3) If you visited Charlie over several years, and saw stereotypical behaviours, did you notice any change in stereotypical behaviours in different years?
I did not witness any, so cannot see or say any change.

4) Have you seen the videos of Charlie at the Dunedin aviary on Facebook? How does this compare to the behaviour you have seen of her in Te Anau in the last 2 years?
Yes I have seen these videos. The behaviour in the videos was extremely different to any I had seen of her in Te Anau in the last 2 years, as I had not seen any of it displayed by her before now.

5) Any additional information you would like to add about Charlie's behaviour, welfare, or health while she was in Te Anau?
N/A

Charlie Girl Kākā Behaviour Questionnaire

Your name: 9(2)(a)

Today's Date: 18th Aug 2024

1) How long have you know Charlie? What was your relationship (visitor, volunteer, keeper, etc)

With Grand children we visited Charlie every time they came to visit from at least 15 years ago.

1A) How often have visited Charlie Girl in the past few years? How long did your visits last?
(approximate dates and times)

It would have been every school holiday the children would go first to Charlie's cage and call in the hope she would come down to see them. They would usually then visit any other birds then go back to say goodbye Charlie being their favorite to visit.

1B) When was your last visit to see her?

In the summer when riding past on my bike.

2) Did you ever observe Charlie performing repetitive, stereotypical behaviours? Examples include repeated weaving, frantic toe licking or 'biting' (this is different from normal relaxed grooming behaviour of the feet), and pacing (going back and forth repeatedly, rather than moving along her enclosure to different areas). Stereotypical behaviours are repetitive behaviours which do not have an apparent use or function.

Only ever the enjoyment of company and attention moving along the edge of cage closer to the children.

2A) When did you see these behaviours occur? List approximate dates/months/years and describe what she was doing, and roughly how long. (When seen, What seen, and Duration).

I do not have dates as our visits have always been random.

3) If you visited Charlie over several years, and saw stereotypical behaviours, did you notice any change in stereotypical behaviours in different years?

As far as I was concerned she was an entertaining and happy bird who gave my grand children a love of Kaka.

4) Have you seen the videos of Charlie at the Dunedin aviary on Facebook? How does this compare to the behaviour you have seen of her in Te Anau in the last 2 years?

I had hoped to see Charlie myself over the last week but unfortunately time constraints made this impossible.

5) Any additional information you would like to add about Charlie's behaviour, welfare, or health while she was in Te Anau?

In my opinion Charlie was healthy and living in excellent conditions in Te Anau she was an excellent educational bird to teach both Children and adults (we often talked to many from overseas) about Kaka and make people want to care and protect them. She was able to raise young in that environment and also was safe and protected from ill health. Remembering always Charlie was found wounded on the Milford road and would not have survived had it not been for the care she received in Te Anau.

Charlie Girl Kākā Behaviour Questionnaire

Your name: s.9(2)(a)

Today's Date: 12/8/24

1) How long have you known Charlie? What was your relationship (visitor, friend, family member, etc.)?

s.9(2)(a)

1B) When was your last visit to see her?

One year ago

2) Did you ever observe Charlie performing repetitive, stereotypical behaviours? Examples include repeated weaving, frantic toe licking or 'biting' (this is different from normal relaxed grooming behaviour of the feet), and pacing (going back and forth repeatedly, rather than moving along her enclosure to different areas). Stereotypical behaviours are repetitive behaviours which do not have an apparent use or function.

Not on recent visits

2A) When did you see these behaviours occur? List approximate dates/months/years and describe what she was doing, and roughly how long. (When seen, What seen, and Duration).

s.9(2)(a)

3) If you visited Charlie over several years, and saw stereotypical behaviours, did you notice any change in stereotypical behaviours in different years?

No.

4) Have you seen the videos of Charlie at the Dunedin aviary on Facebook? How does this compare to the behaviour you have seen of her in Te Anau in the last 2 years?

Yes.

The behaviour I saw on the video was distressing - she was obviously unhappy. Never seen her like this before -

5) Any additional information you would like to add about Charlie's behaviour, welfare, or health while she was in Te Anau?

s.9(2)(a)



DOC-7754468

18 September 2024

9(2)(a)

Kia ora 9(2)(a)

Following the concerns and information you have provided me over the previous weeks, the DOC team have been working with the Dunedin Botanical Garden Aviary (DBGA) staff to understand the plan for caring for Charlie, and her current condition. This has included DOC staff members visiting Charlie, and discussions with relevant experts. To reiterate, while we acknowledge your observations, we have no concerns about the ability of DBGA to maintain good welfare for Charlie. We have full confidence in the DBGA staff, and the local vet expertise they utilise from Dunedin Wildlife Hospital when required. Charlie was checked yesterday and no signs of head injury or any other concerns were observed.

We are, however, concerned about reports we have received that your presence at the DBGA is causing measurable, detrimental change in Charlie behaviour. Specifically, she is showing greater stereotypical behaviours in your presence. We suspect that Charlie remembers you and your training from when you were with her at the Te Anau Bird Sanctuary, and that this is leading to a change in behaviour in your presence. In your absence the stereotypical behaviour is reduced or absent. Further, we consider that your voice is influencing Charlie in her behaviours, and the close presence of your video camera (I have reports that you are standing with the lens against the aviary mesh) is unsettling Charlie and the other kākā present.

We request that you please immediately stop your surveillance activities that are causing distress to Charlie.

As stated previously, we acknowledge your concerns regarding Charlie's stereotypical behaviours, but are confident that these are long-term stereotypical behaviours and that other behaviours you have described as concerning are typical kākā behaviour (including breeding behaviours as the birds move into courtship season). These behaviours, and Charlie's health and welfare, can be well managed at DBGA. The Aviary staff, with the Dunedin Wildlife Hospital, have put a robust plan in place to support Charlie as she adjusts to her new home, which includes regularly monitoring her. We are pleased that she is continuing to maintain her weight, a good sign that she is experiencing positive welfare overall.

Department of Conservation

National Office

PO Box 10420

WELLINGTON 6143

www.doc.govt.nz

In addition, Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) has visited DBGA twice and, while their investigation continues, they have indicated no immediate concerns regarding Charlie's welfare and that they are confident in the ability of Aviary staff to manage Charlie's welfare, with the support of an external wildlife veterinary team. We understand MPI are looking also to recommend an independent and suitability qualified expert is engaged to conduct a robust assessment of Charlie's welfare based on the Five Domains of Animal Welfare model. We would like to see this happen at DBGA and inform her ongoing care.

The Zoo and Aquarium Association (Australasia) is also monitoring the situation and has not reported any concerns to us.

We are confident that Charlie's welfare is sound and very well-supported by those involved in her care.

Unfortunately, Dunedin City Council have informed us that they are no longer in a position to hold Charlie at DBGA, due to your presence and continual surveillance of Charlie and their staff. Dunedin City Council have a duty to ensure a safe working environment and the wellbeing of staff, which is compromised by your activities at DBGA. DOC understands and supports Dunedin City Council's position. Our priority remains ensuring that Charlie's welfare is maintained going forward. With this in mind, we don't consider that relocating Charlie so shortly after her recent shift will be in her best interests, but will ensure her welfare is maintained throughout the relocation process and beyond. We are also disappointed by the impact this shift will have on the breed-for-release programme.

DOC's South Island Kākā Captive Coordinator is currently looking at alternative homes to move Charlie to in the South Island. It has been decided that Charlie will not be returning to Te Anau Bird Sanctuary, as there are no other kākā there for her to socialise with and no local wildlife vet expertise in Te Anau. As such, her welfare would be negatively impacted by a move to Te Anau Bird Sanctuary.

While we appreciate that you are motivated to ensure Charlie's welfare is maintained, your approach to this matter has not been constructive or in good faith. As the above letter explains, we have undertaken a robust investigation, are confident in Charlie's care and welfare, and therefore will not be engaging with you further on this matter.

Naku noa, na



Tim Bamford
Director Terrestrial Biodiversity (Acting)
Department of Conservation

Re: [EXTERNAL] - Charlie Girl

2 messages

s.9(2)(a) @rnz.co.nz>
9(2)(a)

Mon, Sep 23, 2024 at 3:27 PM

Here's a statement we received from DOC - similar to content that you have already shared with me

Attributable to 9(2)(g)(ii)

We appreciate people are concerned for Charlie's wellbeing.

While we acknowledge the observations provided to us, we are confident Charlie's welfare is sound and being prioritised.

We have been working with Dunedin Botanic Garden Aviary staff and wildlife veterinary experts at the Dunedin Wildlife Hospital to understand Charlie's condition and ensure a good plan is in place to care for her, this has included DOC staff visiting Charlie.

As well as accessing specialist wildlife veterinary expertise from the Dunedin Wildlife Hospital, the aviary can access other kākā experts across the country if required and we are confident in their ability to care for her.

Additionally, the Dunedin aviaries are large and environmentally complex, which offers Charlie greater enrichment, as well as more social interactions with other kākā and future chick-rearing behaviours.

We are also working with MPI regarding undertaking an assessment of her based on the Five Domains of Animal Welfare model.

In spite of these circumstances, and that MPI have visited multiple times and indicated that they have no concerns, and that the Zoo and Aquarium Association (Australasia) is also monitoring the situation, we are considering moving Charlie due to on-going disturbance of her and Aviary staff by a member of the Te Anau advocate group.

Moving her will mean she cannot foster eggs at Dunedin Botanical Gardens Aviary and contribute to what is otherwise a very successful breed to release programme.

A decision on this has yet to be made.

9(2)(a)(ii) | Studio Director & Multimedia Producer – Checkpoint

Radio New Zealand House | 171 Hobson Street

PO Box 2209 | Auckland 1140

9(2)(g)(ii)

www.rnz.co.nz/checkpoint

From: 9(2)(a)
Sent: 12/23/2024 12:18 PM
To: s.9(2)(a) @rnz.co.nz>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] - Charlie Girl

Background:

Charlie Girl is a kākā parrot who was moved from her home of 24 years in Te Anau (Punanga Manu o Te Anau / Te Anau Bird Sanctuary), where she successfully raised chicks for release and had a Cooperative Care Training Program (Positive Reinforcement training and Voluntary Physical Therapy Program). The D.o.C. moved her to boost chick numbers in their facility in Dunedin. She had experienced trauma as a juvenile, being hit by a car and kept in a small cage in a living room, but the keepers, volunteers, and community in Te Anau helped her recover and successfully raise chicks and thrive.

My summary:

Charlie Girl was moved from Te Anau despite concerns. She is not doing well in Dunedin and her welfare is continuing to decline, and multiple veterinarians have raised these concerns.

We have three major concerns:

Excerpt from a draft letter. This section was outlining the multiple welfare concerns at DBGA. I am sending you this as it summaries multiple issues I have observed or (for Jimmy's broken bone) read about in the OIA. I can provide supporting video/evidence for all of this, though my 'Jimmy displaces Cleo' videos are minimum. I have observed this behaviour multiple times on different days.

Charlie Girl was moved from the Punanga Manu o Te Anau, the Te Anau Bird Sanctuary, to the Dunedin Botanic Garden Aviaries despite concerns for her health. She was moved in June, and the concerns for her mental and physical health were realised. Charlie's welfare continues to decline while DOC fails to acknowledge or address concerns.

Furthermore the concerns are growing:

- 1) Charlie Girl, a female kākā who experienced physical and mental trauma as a juvenile, is distress weaving frequently in Dunedin, a behaviour that started within the first hour of her arrival at DBGA. She is also wire biting and obsessive toe grooming from distress, behaviours she never performed previously. She has a significant wing sag, indicating pain, an issue which began at Dunedin and has become worse over time. She is being chased and harassed by the male she is forced to cohabitate with (Caesar), and this is being labeled as 'courtship' by DOC, contrary to the Kaka Husbandry Manual and three behaviour veterinarians. Charlie and Caesar are not showing any social behaviours such as allopreening or resting together on a perch comfortably, highlighting that they are not bonded. Caesar's aggression is clearly not courtship, and Charlie has a strong fear response with slicked feathers and jerky body movements when he approaches. In addition; on Sept 28th Caesar approached Charlie while she was weaving from the ceiling and struck her with her beak. This escalating violence had been predicted but was dismissed by DOC. Physical violence, particularly from a healthy male towards an arthritic female, should not be dismissed. Tim Bamford and others were made aware of this incident and failed to respond.
- 2) Ceasar, the male kākā living with Charlie is also experiencing distress and frustration. He is flight pacing in multiple repetitive patterns, including across the aviary, climbing up the side wall, and flying back to the original location. This has been well documented. He chases, harasses, and has physically struck Charlie Girl across the chest. The Kākā Husbandry Manual states incompatible birds should be separated. This is for good reason, as parrots who show aggression towards other parrots can cause distress and physical injury. Caesar has also been documented wire biting while clutching his left foot repeatedly on different occasions, another stereotypical distress behaviour.
- 3) Cleo, a female kākā who has had her right foot amputated, has been pacing on a metal bar. She has recently been moved to a different aviary where she not only continues to pace, but is also obsessive toe grooming and wire biting. Her partner Jimmy has been seen displacing her from her perch repeatedly and I have not observed any social behaviours, though the previous aviary had a barrier blocking the view.
- 4) Jimmy, a male kākā with a frozen wing, was previously kept in a tall aviary despite concerns he could fall and injure himself as he can not break his fall like a normal bird. The tall aviary had a smooth metal bar, increasing his risk of a fall. Jimmy has broken a bone at DBGA, and the details have not been explained properly in the OIA. Jimmy was returned to the same tall aviary despite the risk to his health. A few weeks ago, Jimmy was moved with Cleo. He is showing a degree of pacing behaviour, going back and forth for short periods, then looking back towards the location of his previous aviary and former neighbouring kākā, including Charlie and vocalising. He is no longer responsive to his name, which is a significant change in his

behaviour. There is still a potential fall risk for him in this new aviary. He is repeatedly displacing Cleo, marching towards her with his head extended. He often does so a few times in a row before she flies further away and the displacement behaviour stops.

- 5) Rotoroa (Name provided by a visitor), a male kea with a damaged wing, and his partner, were recently moved to the tall aviary where Cleo and Jimmy were once housed. Rotoroa is now pacing on the same metal bar where Cleo was previously pacing. I and others have observed him pacing multiple times a day, often for several minutes. No effort has been made to cover the bar with a natural branch, despite two perches being added to the aviary at the same height of the metal bar around the time the kea were moved into this aviary. Due to this kea's wing injury and twisted primary feathers, it is unlikely he could break a fall, yet he has been placed in an aviary where another disabled parrot, Jimmy, has previously broken a bone. Nothing has been done to address the pacing or reduce the fall risk. There are other concerns and questions for these two kea and I would like more information on their history and situation. While the aviary is tall, it seems otherwise too small for kea, even ones with disabilities.
- 6) Other Kākā show repetitive, functionless, stereotypical behaviours including pacing on perches and flight pacing. Parrots in the large arched aviary have been observed pacing and weaving on occasion as well, despite the substantial size of this aviary and an active flock of kākā living together.

These systemic issues clearly indicate that the native parrots in Dunedin are not receiving the level of care they need, and that they are not in a suitable environment. Putting Charlie Girl into this environment because she's a good mother and can 'boost' Dunedin's breeding program, has failed to acknowledge that Charlie has special needs. Charlie is not coping well in Dunedin, adjustments have not been made to accommodate her needs, and it is unlikely the environment could be altered sufficiently to reduce her ongoing stress. Charlie would be most successful back home in Te Anau.

Furthermore, the kea and kaka in Dunedin are not having their welfare concerns acknowledged or addressed. Even if birds arrive at a facility with existing behaviour concerns, the issues need to be treated. Just as with a broken bone or infection, stereotypical behaviour needs to be assessed and treated. Behaviour science is a growing field, and it is unacceptable to fail to address the distress being shown by multiple native parrots at Dunedin.

Stereotypical behaviours can be successfully treated, and zoos and sanctuaries across the world have successfully addressed these issues in many different species of birds and mammals...

To DOC and MPI

We are writing to re-iterate our growing concerns for Charlie Girl and her fellow Kākā housed at the Dunedin Botanic Gardens (DBG) aviary and the ongoing shiftless response by DOC to expert advice regarding welfare concerns.

Varied observers consistently identify signs of distress indicating that Charlie Girl's welfare remains poor at DBG. Signs of distress and poor welfare have only escalated since her arrival at DBG. These distress signs include

Stereotypes (Abnormal Repetitive Behaviours) indicating behavioural and emotional distress especially extended periods of intensive weaving and overgrooming of feet, wire chewing, beak striking on wire.

Physical posture changes indicating chronic pain especially worsening wing sag, asymmetric resting posture, asymmetric foot posture, and extended time hanging on side walls with beak.

Aggression by neighbouring and cohabiting Kākā. This includes physical violence by the cohabiting male with documented aggressive blows as well as chasing behaviour forcing Charlie to flee on her arthritic wing.

Onset of learned helplessness/depressed mentation. This is a profound state of chronic distress due to the ongoing trauma that Charlie cannot escape.

We are concerned that DOC staff lack familiarity and compliance with their own Kākā Husbandry Manual which identifies aggression as an atypical behaviour requiring urgent identification and changes to address. Claims that this is somehow "normal" courtship are frankly incorrect and dangerous as DOC are allowing conflict to continue unabated, placing Charlie Girl at ever increasing risk for grievous physical injury or even death.

We are concerned that DOC continue to reply dismissively to concerns raised by New Zealand citizens and experts in animal and avian behaviour and care. Replies indicate that DOC views this situation as "sound" welfare and that they have no greater aspiration than to "maintain" the status quo and have "no concerns regarding Charlie's welfare" despite admitting that there were "risks to her health" with the move to DBG to meet goals of "increasing productivity".

We recommend that Charlie be urgently returned to her home of best physical and behavioural health at Punanga Manu o Te Anau. This is for her own immediate safety as well as to give her the best chance possible to begin recovering from the extended chronic trauma of her stay at DBG. DOC have confirmed that "Te Anau aviaries can accommodate their needs" regarding special needs birds (Stumpy and Gimp); they will be capable of meeting Charlie's needs. Appropriate Kākā companion could be resourced for transfer to a small-scale facility as demonstrated by recent transfer of Tussock to the Invercargill Queens Park aviary to be companion for Rata.

Signed

9(2)(a) [REDACTED]

9(2)(a) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

9(2)(a) [REDACTED]

9(2)(a) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Released under the Official Information Act

To DOC and MPI

We the undersigned are very concerned regarding the ongoing management of Kākā at Dunedin Botanic Gardens, especially female Kākā Charlie. Based on footage, in-person observation, and objective data analysis we conclude that Charlie continues to experience unreasonable and unnecessary pain and distress in her current situation and recommend that as a priority she be relocated to her prior situation of best physical and behavioural health which was at Punanga Manu o Te Anau.

Concerns regarding suitability of the transfer of Charlie to Dunedin were raised prior to and subsequently following her transfer. Her history of juvenile trauma is well documented and left her with special needs that rendered her unsuitable for release to the wild. Her wing arthritis limits her flight capability and her emotional trauma increased her risk for displaying stereotype behaviours. Her behavioural and physical special needs were well-served in Te Anau with records of positive interactions with other Kākā, vigorous engagement with enrichment/browse, well-maintained physical function and capability, successful role in helping to rear Kākā chicks, and abatement of stereotypical behaviours.

Since being transferred to Dunedin, Charlie has been displaying stereotypical behaviours which are worsening and a decline in her physical capability over her 3-month residence there evidencing chronic distress relating to her environment and management. Special provisions, if any, have been ineffective in meeting Charlie's special needs at this location. It is our professional opinion that if appropriate interventions could be achieved in place, we would have seen improvements in Charlie's behaviour by now rather than the stagnant to worsening symptoms. Specific symptoms of concern include:

Stereotypies (Abnormal Repetitive Behaviours) especially intensive weaving for extended periods, overgrooming of feet, and onset of NEW stereotypies (wire chewing, beak striking on wire). Ethograms indicate that approximately 30-40% of Charlie's time is currently spent in these purposeless distress behaviours (locomotor and oral ARBs), indicating the environment is inadequate for her needs ([DOC] Kākā Husbandry Manual 5.3.2 Behavioural enrichment activities). She is also displaying these during an expanded range of occasions including during rain which previously would motivate normal resting posture. At Te Anau, her stereotypies were abated by appropriate interventions to support her special behavioural needs.

Physical posture changes especially worsening wing sag and resting posture changes (eg extended time hanging on side walls with beak) indicating chronic pain that will be exacerbated by her stereotypical movement patterns. In Te Anau she had a comprehensive cooperative physical therapy programme that accommodated and improved her physical special needs as evidenced by normalised posture and movement patterns. Charlie's optimised physical status in Te Anau demonstrates that pain and disability are not inevitable for individuals with osteoarthritis and that with appropriate intensive management affected animals can maintain their quality of life.

Lack of positive interaction with neighbouring and cohabiting Kākā, aggression by cohabiting male, Ceasar. Repeated chasing by Ceasar is documented with fleeing (forced flight) by Charlie despite her flight limitations. In addition, Charlie displays freezing responses and stress postures when watching Ceasar move (slicked feathers, hard stare). It is noted that chasing by Ceasar is NOT typical courtship behaviour and evidences aggressive social housing that increases risk of infections ([DOC] Kākā Husbandry Manual 4.5 Reproductive Behaviour and Courtship and 5.2.2 Health Management) and injuries. For a bird with wing arthritis such as Charlie, this chasing will cause her to push herself beyond what her arthritis can reasonably tolerate, resulting in increased pain and pain-related distress. Charlie demonstrated positive relationships with appropriately paired Kākā in Te Anau, including grooming, receptivity to feeding and mating, and voluntary roosting together.

We conclude the Charlie's needs are not being met in an effective and timely manner at Dunedin Botanic Gardens and recommend urgent remedial action with return to Punanga Manu o Te Anau. "Monitoring" alone will not bring about welfare improvement for Charlie. Allowing Charlie to continue to rehearse stereotypes unabated creates a feedback loop wherein she is more likely to continue to display them both due to habituation as well as due to physical pain from repetitive motion injury which will compound her distress and motivate her further to engage in stereotypical behaviours.

By returning to Te Anau and restoring Charlie to her prior optimised care environment and management plan, we would expect to see Charlie finally make progress in improving her physical and behavioural health, better equipping her to continue to support a breeding programme. In her current state, even if she manages to become broody she is not going to provide optimum care to chicks, and there will be risks to the behavioural development of chicks to be exposed to chronically distressed adults, even those in neighbouring aviaries.

In addition to achieving better welfare for Charlie, her return to Te Anau would allow keepers at Dunedin Botanic Gardens to give additional attention to optimising the management for their other special needs resident Kākās such as those with mobility

limitations (one with foot amputation, one unable to fly) in the aviary close to the main path, for whom we also have concerns.

We wish to remind DOC of their obligations under the Animal Welfare Act to ensure the physical, health, and behavioural needs of their charges and to alleviate any unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress. We also wish to draw attention to the NZ Code of Welfare: Zoos Minimum Standard 12 requiring alternative provisions, including relocation, for individuals showing chronic signs of distress.

We are happy to discuss these concerns further with yourself and DOC staff including those responsible for Charlie's direct care at Dunedin Botanic Gardens, although we would like to emphasise that alternative provisions for Charlie should not be delayed in the interest of scheduling a discussion on these matters.

Signed

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a)

May 15th, 2024

Dear Punanga Manu o Te Anau DOC Staff,

Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your volunteer team, and utilizing my professional experience as a veterinarian and as a behaviour consultant.

I first met Charlie Girl in 2005, and first started volunteering at Te Anau in 2015. At that time, Charlie was successfully raising chicks, and it was wonderful to see her contributing to the captive breeding program.

During my recent visit to Te Anau, we were able to work together to further improve Charlie's health and welfare. After discussing her medication plan, prescribed by [REDACTED] and observing her behaviour, we split her anti-inflammatory medication into an AM and PM dose. We soon observed an improvement in her overall willingness to take her meds quickly, an improved grip around her perches at rest, and an improved posture and gait.

In March, we also discussed initiating a physical therapy program that utilized Positive Reinforcement training and Cooperative Care principles to train Charlie to fly on cue. I began the initial steps of training Charlie to participate voluntarily in her Physical Therapy program. This training continued after my departure, and your team soon reported that Charlie was now flying on cue. I then received a video of Catherine successfully cueing Charlie to fly to a higher perch, and I was greatly pleased to see her progress.

Charlie's voluntary physical therapy program has a range of benefits. Physically, it improves her mobility, reduces her arthritis symptoms and pain, strengthens her muscles, and supports the goal of weaning Charlie off her medication in the future. It is also a source of social and mental enrichment for Charlie, reducing the likelihood that past behaviour issues will reoccur.

Being familiar with Charlie's history, I am also pleased to see she exhibits a range of normal behaviours and social interactions at Te Anau. During the hours spent with her, I have observed her exhibiting normal parrot behaviour throughout the day. Any episodes of potential behaviour concerns - such as weaving and vocalizing - have been limited to less than 15 seconds and she stopped on her own accord. Thus, there were no concerns for stereotypical behaviours or other problem behaviours during my recent visit.

Having discussed the potential relocation of Charlie for the 2024/2025 breeding season, I share the team's concerns that Charlie's health and behaviour may suffer as a result of the proposed move. Due to her history, there is an increased risk that a large change could trigger stress and behaviour issues for Charlie. Her improved health and well-being are a direct result of the support and care she receives from her current team. I know your dedication, continuity of care, and skill sets will allow Charlie to best contribute to the 2024/2025 breeding season in her home aviary, and allow her to expand on her past breeding success at Punanga Manu o Te Anau.

Charlie Girl is currently thriving and overcoming chronic health and well-being concerns. The passion, dedication, and skills the Te Anau staff apply to Charlie's care have allowed her to live a healthier, more enriched life. This ongoing dedication is reflected in the over 20 chicks Charlie has reared for release and in her recent voluntary Physical Therapy training success. I am grateful to have played a small role in her care, and to have worked with your team over the years. Please let me know if I can be of any help in the future.

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a)

Hon Tama Potaka

Minister of Conservation
Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti
Minister for Māori Development
Minister for Whānau Ora
Associate Minister of Housing (Social Housing)



Ref: CORM-1451

22 October 2024

Tēnā koe

Thank you for your email regarding your concerns about the wellbeing of South Island kākā, Charlie.

I appreciate the concerns for Charlie's wellbeing and want to assure you that the Department of Conservation (the Department) takes matters of animal welfare seriously.

Charlie is under the care of the Dunedin Botanic Gardens Aviary, where she is looked after by bird husbandry experts, and supported by wildlife veterinary expertise from the Dunedin Wildlife Hospital. Since her arrival from the Department's Te Anau Bird Sanctuary, Charlie has settled in well to her new home. Her aviary provides more space and environmental enrichment, as well as other kākā to interact with. Regular checks show Charlie is maintaining good health and body condition, and that her pre-existing health conditions and stereotypical behaviours are under effective management.

Following concerns raised about Charlie's wellbeing, the Department has worked closely with Aviary staff and wildlife veterinarians to understand Charlie's condition and ensure an appropriate plan is in place to care for her. In addition, the Ministry for Primary Industries and the Zoo & Aquarium Association of Australasia have investigated and not identified any concerns for Charlie's welfare.

As such, I am confident that Charlie is being well cared for and that her wellbeing continues to be a priority for all involved in her care.

I encourage the public to allow Charlie the peace and quiet she needs to settle in, bond with her mate and enjoy her life in Dunedin. If the disturbances by some members of the public continue, the Department may need to relocate Charlie to another suitable facility, and it is proactively considering such a move.

I appreciate your concern and thank you for taking the time to write.

Mauriora

Hon Tama Potaka
Minister of Conservation

Concerns and discussion on why DOC is stating Charlie Girl can not return to Te Anau and her welfare would be negatively effected there.

Tim's September Letter:

DOC's South Island Kākā Captive Coordinator is currently looking at alternative homes to move Charlie to in the South Island. It has been decided that Charlie will not be returning to Te Anau Bird Sanctuary, as there are no other kākā there for her to socialise with and no local wildlife vet expertise in Te Anau. As such, her welfare would be negatively impacted by a move to Te Anau Bird Sanctuary.

Discussion:

- 1) No other kaka there for her to socialise with:
 - 1) DOC control kaka movements, so they can have a suitable bird there with her (in addition, there are kakariki there she's familiar with, and the KHManual allows for kaka to be temporarily alone for quarantine).
 - 2) In addition, OIA records show Charlie was alone in Te Anau for several weeks when Jimmy went for a vet check and was then put in with Cleo. Emails indicate the full plan was not made clear to Te Anau keepers.
 - 3) The DWH report, Tim's earlier statements, and my own observations show Charlie is not bonded with Caesar and there is conflict. She is not allopreening, perching next to, or enjoying good socialisation at Dunedin.
 - 4) DOC had planned to move Stumpy and Gimpy to Te Anau after Charlie left. As I understand it, there were concerns as both were amputees and did not use feed-hoppers and the Te Anau aviary is not sparrow proof (s.9(2)(g)(ii) discussed with me the sparrow concern and food disappearing as sparrows flocked in, and I discussed training both birds for the hoppers using small approximations). Then the pair were not moved, and now DOC is saying it's because the Te Anau aviary is too small (more on this below). Regardless, DOC is in control of kaka movements and 'No kaka in Te Anau' is something DOC management controls.
- 2) No local wildlife vet expertise in Te Anau.
 - 1) This is not a requirement of the KHManual
 - 2) DWH notes cite Charlie arrived in good physical health. (Page 17-18 of vet report. Found in good health by DWH and "Te Anau vet" (Riverdale??))
 - 3) I was developing her Voluntary PT program in consultation with keepers earlier this year, and they then implemented it. I have relevant expertise and have been volunteering my time, experience, and knowledge towards Te Anau birds.
- 3) Her welfare would be negatively impacted by a move to Te Anau Bird Sanctuary.

—1 and 2 have been countered and the concerns could be addressed satisfactorily by management; IE- these are not 'dealbreakers' that would prevent a parrot from returning to a familiar environment of 24 years.

—Related concern: s.9(2)(a) stated he was working closely with the Dunedin Team repeatedly to myself and s.9(2)(a) (email and phone conversations); and we requested he consult Te Anau and there's no indication he did so. He then wrote his September letter shutting down communications. There is a repeat pattern of DOC management deferring to the Dunedin team and stating there were no issues or concerns for Charlie in Dunedin, but they had only worked with Charlie for about two months at the time of Tim's letter.

—Related concern 2: DWH report repeatedly cites lack of information from Te Anau but no indication there was clear communication. DWH report is also critical of Te Anau notes, but still no indication of an attempt to secure detailed information. Resulting speculation and incorrect information.

Attributable to **9(2)(a)**: (provided by RNZ and other sources, Sept 23rd.)

Additionally, the Dunedin aviaries are large and environmentally complex, which offers Charlie greater enrichment, as well as more social interactions with other kākā and future chick-rearing behaviours.... we are considering moving Charlie due to on-going disturbance of her and Aviary staff by a member of the Te Anau advocate group. Moving her will mean she cannot foster eggs at Dunedin Botanical Gardens Aviary and contribute to what is otherwise a very successful breed to release programme.

A decision on this has yet to be made.

- 1) The Te Anau aviary is large (but not tall) and environmentally complex, and also familiar.
- 2) More social interactions: we raised concerns the different and busy environment could cause Charlie distress, and there is a report of her weaving within the first hour. The vet report also has early observations of weaving and an attempt to move Charlie next to Bling increased stereotypical pacing in Bling. As stated, I have never observed a positive interaction such as allopreening. Negative interactions with Caesar and with neighbouring birds (behaviour clearly consistent with KHManual)
- 3) Similarly, DOC cites Charlie having 'friends' in neighbouring aviaries, and this includes Jimmy who was kept in aviary 1 but around mid October, moved him and Cleo down the hill. I was not in Dunedin at this time and when I returned to resume observations Jimmy was non-responsive to me after that. I observed him frequently calling in Charlie's direction initially, and other concerns. While it is unlikely that Bling and Jimmy being near Charlie but inaccessible was a positive for Charlie without physical contact, DOC cites her having friends nearby as a benefit but then moves a familiar bird completely out of sight. Charlie continued her repetitive behaviours after Jimmy was moved and it was not possible to determine what effect Jimmy's move had on her.
- 4) Future chick rearing: She successfully raised chicks for release with her partner Bling. When partnered with Jimmy, it was apparently no fault of hers that they could not raise chicks (Jimmy unable to mount and balance; OIA records show Te Anau was willing to address AI concerns). A suitable partner in Te Anau was and is an option.
- 5) 'moving her will mean she cannot foster eggs.' No indication she is 'settled in' and willing to brood eggs and raise chicks now.

—related concern. The vet report notes speculate that Charlie is not weaving from distress but from boredom at Dunedin. Attempts to address the 'boredom' and weaving have been ineffective. In addition the notes also acknowledge she may not breed this year. This issue and the thought process are complex and warrant further examination, but the overall plan was that she would be moved to Dunedin to foster chicks, and might return to Te Anau after a season. As Charlie is continually distress weaving several times a day she is increasingly unlikely to discontinue daily weaving without severe intervention. In this state she is not able to contribute to the breeding program.

—If improvements are made to Charlie's welfare and she is able to respond quickly and begin sitting on eggs and raising chicks, there is a high probability that a sudden stressor at Dunedin could cause her to abandon the nest and resume weaving for extended periods.

—She has been and could again be successful in Te Anau.

Tama Potaka:

If the disturbances by some members of the public continue, the Department may need to relocate Charlie to another suitable facility, and it is proactively considering such a move.

Discussion: Linking Charlie's movements to those concerned for her. Still unclear why Te Anau is unsuitable after 24 years. There were also DOC statements that said Charlie's next location may not be revealed.

Hilary Aikman Dec 5th OIAD:

In my second OIA, I asked: 10d) DOC was planning to move senior and disabled kaka named Stumpy and Gimpy to Te Anau. How is Te Anau suitable for them, but not for Charlie to return to after a few months?

Answer: If these kākā had been moved, they would have been a pair – not a single bird, as Charlie would have been. DOC has decided not to relocate these kākā to Te Anau. Sanctuary staff expressed concerns, and it was determined that the aviary in Te Anau was unsuitable for flighted kākā, as well as not meeting minimum size requirements as per the Kākā Husbandry Manual for a pair of kākā.

*We have repeatedly requested Charlie be placed with a suitable partner in Te Anau.

*The aviary exceeds KHM guidelines, exact measurements pending. It is approx twice the minimum size.

—Why is aviary size suddenly being cited as a concern and why is the aviary being reported as too small?

—I wrote to DOC that if the information is incorrect, then the conclusion is incorrect and requested the measurements. This has been turned into an OIA and it is unclear when the measurements will be provided.

—Continued pattern of DOC providing questionable reasons Te Anau is not suitable, and in this instance an aviary is easily measurable.

*As I have previously mentioned, Te Anau was suitable for 24 years and is familiar to Charlie. In my opinion, based on observations and discussions with keepers, Charlie would prefer a quieter partner. Charlie had friendly but non-courtship bonding with Rata (she allopreened him, he enjoyed and moved off. And though it was not breeding season when Rata was in Te Anau, he continues this pattern with his new partner in Invercargill). We have used the label 'more sensible' in discussing Charlie's perceived preference for a partner.

(I did not have much opportunity to see many interactions between Charlie and Bling as I only visited in 2015 for a few days and she was raising chicks, however, he would obtain a treat from a foraging toy and provide it to her. She was bonded to Jimmy from my observations and they performed activities together and allopreened).

Hilary also stated:

Charlie has specialist health needs, including being on long-term medication. As such, being located distantly to wildlife veterinary expertise is not in her best interests. This is not a general approach for all kākā, just those with specialist health needs.

Discussion: The DWH vet report outlines concerns in managing Charlie in Dunedin. Distance from a vet is not the issue for Charlie, and as above, she arrived in good health from Te Anau.

Additional thoughts on Te Anau:

In reviewing the Kea Husbandry Manual, which was recently updated, they list training as a Best Practice:

Best Practice 11.

Training and Conditioning.

(Training can also be used as an enrichment tool to increase complexity).

Methods

- a) Only positive reward methods must be used. No food deprivation techniques may be used to train or condition birds.
- b) Training/conditioning to be conducted twice weekly for 5-10 minutes per bird/or 30 minutes for a larger group (whichever is less). The goal being to illicit the following behaviours that enable health checks and husbandry procedures:
 - Targeting and stationing: basic training to allow for development of other behaviours (refer below) and for ensuring stress free interactions (particularly when there are dominant/subordinate interactions between birds).
 - Weighing: for the purpose of attaining regular weights of birds.
 - Crate training: to allow for stress free movement of birds between enclosures.
 - Body presentation (spreading wings, allowing touch on keel and feet) for parasite and basic health checks.

Training must be at a level and speed which is comfortable to the individual bird/s (some birds may remain uncomfortable in close proximity to staff and only accept targeting/stationing while others require increasing stimulus).

Relevance

- a) Training must include the following basic management techniques; stationing, body presentation, weighing and crating.
- b) All other behaviours sought are relevant to captive management, aid in behavioural research and/or send important advocacy messages to the public.

Staff

- a) A minimum of two committed persons who are confident and competent in basic kea training methods. Staff must detail each training session's objectives and results in a daily diary.

Those birds involved in breeding behaviour may not respond to training between the months of June - January however training must resume once reproductive activity has finished or if a bird within the pair is expressing stereotypic behaviours

I have sent DOC my PT training PDF and supporting videos, so they have information on Te Anau's training program in regards to Charlie.

Te Anau keepers meet the Best Practice training program for Kea with their Kaka, and also perform training with the Antipodes Island Kakariki, and were continually improving and progressing their training. They followed A as regular food (chop, pellets, etc) were available throughout the day and were present during training. They have implemented Targeting, voluntary scale training, etc.

Charlie would willingly present her vent for visual examination and health monitoring. Keepers ensured the level and speed of training were suitable and they exceeded my predictions for having Charlie fly on cue. Te Anau keepers have also done Voluntary Syringe Training with Antips and Kaka (Charlie takes meds with liquid treats or treat balls).

Te Anau has a minimum of two committed persons who are confident and competent in basic parrot training methods. They could implement detailed record-keeping on training and we have discussed basic record-keeping and implemented some training record-keeping.

General thoughts from my point of view: Te Anau is a small sanctuary, in a small town, in a rural area. The keepers and volunteers are knowledgeable, engaged, and a pleasure to work with. They continuously go above and beyond for the animals in their care.

The paragraph in italics is also of note, and Charlie is not currently occupied with nesting or chick rearing.

25/6/25

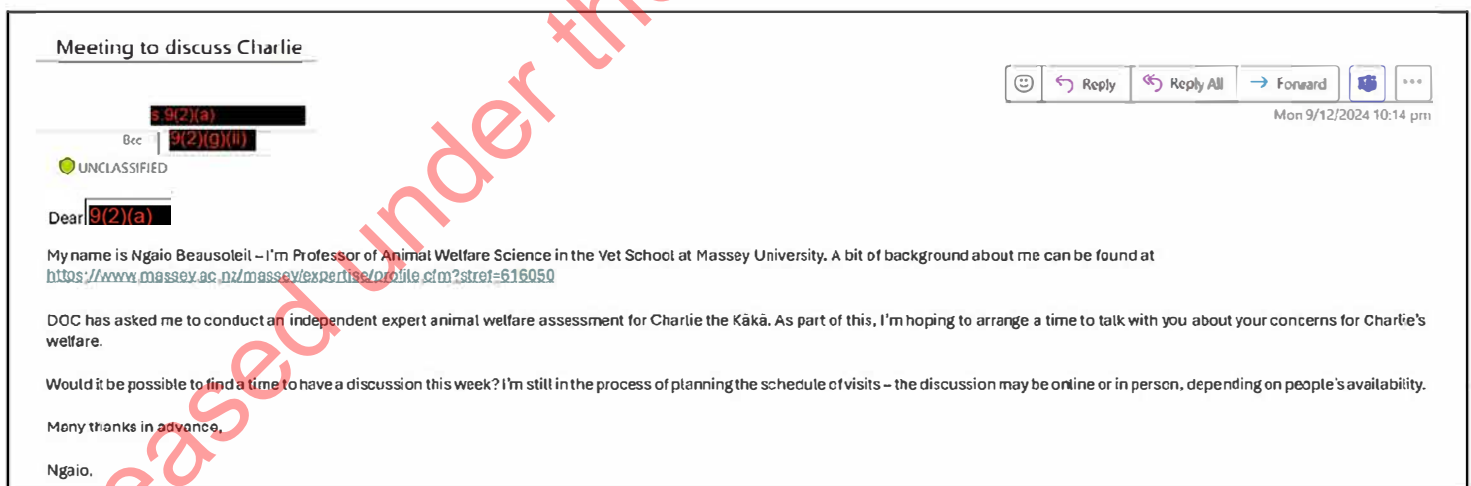
**DOC OIA requested correspondence and documents from parties other than DOC
and DCC**

Associated documents/files from 9(2)(a)

- Two PDFs attached to 10/12/24 email
- Multiple video files attached to 12/12/24 email titled Charlie Girl, Negative Interactions (email won't open, crashes my computer every time I try and I can't save it to send to you without being able to open it)
- Four video files attached to 13/12/24 email titled Physical Therapy Program Records (email attached)
- Multiple video files/links attached to/in 13/12/24 email titled Charlie Girl, Negative Interactions Part 2 (email attached)
- Tama Potaka letter PDF attached to 13/12/24 email
- Four PDF files attached to 13/12/24 email
- Punanga Manu DOC Team letter PDF attached to 13/12/24 email
- 14 image files attached to 15/12/24 email
- Three PDF files (questionnaires) attached to 15/12/24 email
- Draft excerpt with 6 concerns outlined PDF attached to 16/12/24 email

Associated documents from :

- Two PDFs attached to 8/1/25 email



Re: Meeting to discuss Charlie

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward Tue 10/12/2024 9:02 am

9(2)(a)
9(2)(a)
Follow up Completed on Friday, 3 January 2025.
You replied to this message on 10/12/2024 11:23 am.

OpenLetterDOCandMPI.pdf 112 KB
OpenLetterCharlieGirl.pdf 157 KB

Kia ora

Thank you for writing to me and for taking the time to do the welfare assessment on Charlie Girl.

I would be happy to have a discussion with you this week, and I can make time most days. I am available this afternoon, and 9(2)(a) who has viewed Charlie at Dunedin and is a rehabilitation veterinarian, would also like to speak with you. She has worked closely with me in documenting and raising concerns for Charlie's welfare. We would both be available at 4:30pm today.

As this has been an ongoing issue, and with DOC management making several statements about Charlie's welfare in Te Anau, I hope we can schedule multiple discussions as you work through your investigation. I also have materials I would like you to review, including my Voluntary Physical Therapy Summary, requested by MPI via DOC, and echogram data and supporting video.

If you would like to meet me in Te Anau as well, I am happy to arrange that.

In addition, my colleagues and I have outlined our concerns in two Open Letters, attached.

9(2)(a)

RE: Meeting to discuss Charlie

s.9(2)(a), 9(2)(g)(ii)

Reply Reply All Forward Tue 10/12/2024 11:24am

UNCLASSIFIED

9(2)(a)

Thank so much for your reply, your willingness to meet with me and the information you've provided.

I've got some other meetings scheduled this afternoon but it's looking like I will make it over to Te Anau and I'd be grateful to catch up with you sometime on Thursday morning.

I'll get back in touch tonight or tomorrow morning to make a firmer plan.

Cheers

9(2)(a)

Re: Meeting to discuss Charlie

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward Tue 10/12/2024 11:59 am

(1) This sender s.9(2)(a) is from outside your organization.

Ngaio

Thank you for the contact.

out of scope & contains personal information - administrative in nature i.e. arranging a meeting

9(2)(a)

Re: Meeting to discuss Charlie

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward Tue 10/12/2024 5:25 pm

You replied to this message on 11/12/2024 9:36 am.

Kia ora,

Thursday morning will work for me, but later morning would be preferable.

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a)

RE: Meeting to discuss Charlie

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward Wed 11/12/2024 9:36 am

Thank 9(2)(a) can make that work. Is there somewhere we could meet for coffee in Te Anau?

Cheers

Ngaio.

9(2)(a)

 Reply
  Reply All
  Forward
 


9(2)(a)

Sincerety

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a)

H 9(2)(a)

Cheers
Ngaio.

9(2)(a)

 Reply
 Reply All
 Forward

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a)

I will please for roughly 10:30am to meet you.

$$H(2)(a)$$

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a) no

[↩ Reply](#)
[↩ Reply All](#)
[→ Forward](#)
[📧](#)
[⋮](#)
Mon 16/12/2024 6:10 am

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a)

 Reply
  Reply All
  Forward
 


9(2)(a)

RE: Meeting to discuss Charlie

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward

Wed 18/12/2024 10:16 am

UNCLASSIFIED

H 9(2)(a)

Apologies for not replying earlier - s.9(2)(a)

At the moment I've got an impressive amount of data to look through so, if its OK with you, I'll get back in touch in the new year to get your perspectives on the situation.

Many thanks for your willingness to discuss this with me and happy holidays.

Ngalo.

Re: Meeting to discuss Charlie

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward

Wed 18/12/2024 11:53 am

Ngalo

Thank you, new year will be fine. I agree, quite a lot of information to consolidate and consider!

s.9(2)(a)

Fwd: Physical Therapy Programme Records

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward

Fri 13/12/2024 8:00 am

If there are problems with how this message is displayed, click here to view it in a web browser.

Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.

Baseline Scale training Feb 14 2024.mp4 2 MB Charlie on Scale 2.mp4 4 MB Charlie Fly on Cue MOV 5 MB Charlie Leg D1 and Observations MOV 14 MB

9(2)(a)

duplicate email train removed

Fwd: Charlie Girl ATTACKED

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward

Fri 13/12/2024 8:44 am

If there are problems with how this message is displayed, click here to view it in a web browser.
Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.

DOC never replied to us. Their official statement aired on One News.

9(2)(a)

Forwarded message

9(2)(a)

Date: Mon, Sep 30, 2024 at 6:25 AM

Subject: Re: Charlie Girl ATTACKED

To: 9(2)(a)

9(2)(g)(ii) cc-ed recipients are DOC, DCC & MPI

Sept29 24 CG flee from lunge.mp4

Sept 29 24 CG attacked nov

Sept 30 24 CG runs away

Sept 29 24 CG lower frame.mp4

Examples of negative interactions today. Charlie also fought with the bird in the neighboring aviary 3 separate times. The enclosed four clips are only some of the negative behaviours seen. Charlie was weaving and obsessive toe grooming throughout the day.

These aggressive interactions are not consistent with minimum standard 10 of the kaka husbandry manual.

9(2)(a)

On Sun, Sep 29, 2024 at 9:34 PM 9(2)(a) wrote:
Link to video of Charlie being attacked as the fb watch link might not work on all browsers.
<https://www.facebook.com/helipchadlink/aka/videos/1564112347543397>

On Sat, 28 Sept 2024 at 18:52, 9(2)(a) wrote:

DCC

While I have been advised that you do not wish to engage on the matter of Charlie Girl, she is now being physically assaulted by her cohabiting male. You can witness an example of this attack behaviour <https://fb.watch/16boqWNHir>. We have previously stressed the risks that the persistent co-housing with this aggressive male presents to Charlie. Will you insist on waiting until she suffers grievous physical injury before you act? This is unacceptable and urgent action is necessary and Charlie should receive veterinary attention to ensure she is not carrying wounds from this escalating violence by the male.

9(2)(a)

Right-click or tap and hold here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of this picture from the

9(2)(a)

Fwd: Charlie Girl ATTACKED

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward

Fri 13/12/2024 8:45 am

If there are problems with how this message is displayed, click here to view it in a web browser.
Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.

We also sent those emails.

9(2)(a)

Forwarded message

From: 9(2)(a)

Date: Sun, Sep 29, 2024 at 11:19 AM

Subject: Re: Charlie Girl ATTACKED

To: 9(2)(a)

9(2)(g)(ii) cc-ed recipients are DOC, DCC & MPI

I would like to note that per the DOC Kaka Husbandry Manual, minimum standard 10, aggression/stress should be "picked up early and appropriate changes made quickly". We have been advising of signs of both aggression and stress between Charlie and the cohabiting male for many weeks, now without evident change in their management. This does not fulfill DOC's own internal requirements, much less broader legal welfare standards. I cannot stress the urgency of this matter enough as the increasingly violent aggression by the cohabiting male risks grievous injury to Charlie.

9(2)(a)

On Sun, 29 Sept 2024 at 08:24, 9(2)(a) wrote:

9(2)(a)

On Sat, Sep 28, 2024 at 7:50 PM 9(2)(a) wrote:

And I would recommend DOC follow the recommendations made by ourselves and three additional veterinarians.

9(2)(a)

On Sat, Sep 28, 2024 at 6:52 PM 9(2)(a) wrote:

DCC

While I have been advised that you do not wish to engage on the matter of Charlie Girl, she is now being physically assaulted by her cohabiting male. You can witness an example of this attack behaviour <https://fb.watch/16boqWNHir>. We have previously stressed the risks that the persistent co-housing with this aggressive male presents to Charlie. Will you insist on waiting until she suffers grievous physical injury before you act? This is unacceptable and urgent action is necessary and Charlie should receive veterinary attention to ensure she is not carrying wounds from this escalating violence by the male.

Fwd: CORTP-2127 Charlie Girl Kaka, Taonga Mana o Te Anau

9(2)(a)

Follow up. Start by Friday, 3 January 2025. Due by Friday, 3 January 2025.

This is also related to my next email summary.

Please note [REDACTED] is happy to speak with you and asked me to share her email with you. She is the best person to explain Charlie's early history and initial treatment plan.

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: 9(2)(a)
Date: Tue, Oct 22, 2024 at 4:40 PM
Subject: Fwd: CORTP-2127 Charlie Girl Kaka, Taonga Mana o Te Anau
To: s.9(2)(a)

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Tama Potaka (MIN)" <T.Potaka@ministers.govt.nz>
Date: 22 October 2024 at 11:42:59 AM NZDT
To: 9(2)(a)
Subject: RE: CORTP-2127 Charlie Girl Kaka, Taonga Mana o Te Anau

Tenā Koe 9(2)(a)

On behalf of Hon Tama Potaka, thank you for your email. Please see letter attached.

Ngā mihi,

9(2)(g)(ii)

Private Secretary (Administration)
Office of Hon Tama Potaka
Minister for Māori Development | Minister for Whānau Ora | Minister of Conservation |
Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti | Associate Minister of Housing

DDI: 04 817 6811 | EW4.5L
Email: [REDACTED] Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz
Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

----- Original Message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 5 October 2024 12:59 PM
To: Tama Potaka (MIN) <T.Potaka@ministers.govt.nz>
Subject: CORTP-2127 Charlie Girl Kaka, Taonga Mana o Te Anau

Minister,

s.9(2)(a)

for those who are unable to.

The Department of Conservation surely for the protection of our Taonga, not for the protection of those who abuse and mismanage them.

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)

Sent from my iPad
Te Anau statements

9(2)(a)

Gmail - RNZ Attributable to - Charlie Girl.pdf 150 KB
9(2)(a) letter - DOC-7754468 (1).pdf 81 KB
Te Anau statements and discussion.pdf 837 KB
9(2)(a) letter - 7754572.pdf 79 KB

Please see attached concerns and discussion, along with supporting documents.

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)

Fwd: FW: Charlie Girl lack of courtship

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward Fri 13/12/2024 10:10 am

If there are problems with how this message is displayed, click here to view it in a web browser.

Please see below for an additional video clip of Charlie and Caesar and the concerns I raised with MPL. Please let me know if you can not access the video.

One of my concerns has been that DOC and DCC have been unwilling to separate an incompatible pair and are apparently feeling reinforced in their decision-making as Caesar is copulating with Charlie. However, her fear response means she would not be able to comfortably brood eggs or raise chicks, and would not have a supportive male providing food and positive social bonding.

The result is it is mid December and I have multiple recent reports that Charlie is keeping away from Caesar when resting, moving away from him frequently, and still weaving from the ceiling.

This is not consistent with 'settling in.'

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: 9(2)(a)
Date: Wed, Oct 2, 2024 at 12:12 PM
Subject: Fwd: FW: Charlie Girl lack of courtship
To: 9(2)(a) <[redacted]@mpi.govt.nz>
Cc: 9(2)(a)

Resending it directly attached to this email. Please let me know if this doesn't work either.

Sincerely,

Sept28tries.to.file.mp4

Sept28tries.to.file.mp4

In the attached clip you see the male approach Charlie and she moves away from him, her head tense and her feathers slicked. He then leaves but comes back from the other direction. He again approaches and she moves away from him before he leaps, she freezes, and he lands on her. She is an arthritic parrot housed with an aggressive mate. This is not normal parrot courtship. Parrots are very social and display a range of courtship behaviours before mating such as head bobbing, feeding, etc. His body language is also very forward and aggressive. This was on the 28th around sunset.

Copulation is not always 'pretty', however, this is well outside the norm for parrots, with an incompatible pair of kakas. Courtship and bonding are typically very involved, regular, and ongoing. Bonded pairs perch together, preen each other, display for each other, etc.

May letter

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward Fri 13/12/2024 12:28 pm

PunangaManuDOCTeam.pdf

This is my May letter raising concerns and in support of To Anau keepers.

It was forwarded to DOC and I see no actual discussion, action plan, or transition plan in the OIA documents I received.

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)

Additional footage, et al

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward Sun 13/12/2024 11:31 am

If there are problems with how this message is displayed, click here to view it in a web browser.

Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.

These are some more negative interaction clips and other concerning behaviours. I don't believe any are accidentally repeat clips, but my file system is a bit random, unfortunately. These are still only a sample and not every negative interaction or issue I documented. This is the last email of short clips I will send, but I will send you two longer videos on Charlie's behaviour.

Also, at one point there were two other birds in with Charlie and she was hiding from both. This was mid-October. We don't have any information about this or why they would put another bird in with her.

Additionally, 9(2)(a) spoke to DCC about her concerns and experience with Charlie. This is on their youtube stream, and she is introduced right after 22:15: https://www.youtube.com/live/tW1NtU4_a-g?si=SYPySOpsObkjpH&t=1343

no audio wave front side end reacts caesar.mp4

*another displacement and flee.mp4

*avoiding and fleeing.mp4

*Caesar flies at Charlie near head on.mp4

*Caesar flies at Charlie while weaving oct 16.mp4

*flown at from behind on branch.mp4

*resting on perch then Caesar flies in.mp4

*while eating.mp4

*adjusts feet wire biting IMG_6044.mov

Caesar pacing Charlie weaving et al Oct 5 IMG_6676 MOV

Caesar pacing Charlie weaving Oct 1 IMG_6575 mov

Caesar pacing Charlie weaving Oct 1 IMG_6576 mov

Caesar pacing three patterns Oct 1 712pm IMG_6599.mov

dip from q20 ethogram IMG_5897 MOV

IMG_6566 weaving on arrival and diff angle.MOV

neg av2 IMG_5741.MOV

paceweave IMG_6681.MOV

*wire biting IMG_6043.MOV

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward Sus 15/12/2024 11:54 am



s.9(2)(a)

Forwarded message

From: [REDACTED]

Date: Wed, Sep 11, 2024 at 9:06 PM

Subject: Charlie Girl ethograms

To: animalwelfare@s.9(2)(a)

I have been monitoring Charlie for long periods of time since Thursday afternoon. I have documented a high level of weaving and other behaviour concerns. Please see the attached ethograms.

Along with stereotypical behaviour and a severe wing droop that is increasing as she weaves, she is having negative interactions with the male in her enclosure and the neighboring kaka. I have seen no neutral or positive social interactions. She is moving away from the male, often at a higher speed than her normal pace, and frequently running or flying from the male. I have observed zero situations where she flies voluntarily. [REDACTED] has documented fleeing behaviour in a previous visit. With other kaka, when she comes in close contact with them through the aviary wires, she shows alarm (slicked body feathers and tense jerky movements), often vocalizes, and makes jolting motions at the other bird. In one instance I filmed another bird biting Charlie's toe and her jerking away.

Though parrots are highly social animals, Charlie is having multiple negative interactions with the kaka around her throughout the day. This environment is not suitable for her, and is

likely overwhelming to her. Furthermore, the aviary management has done nothing to separate Charlie from the male or otherwise promote and create positive interactions between Charlie and the kaka around her.

I have been filming Charlie during the majority of the time I gathered ethogram data, but do not wish to burden your office with hours of footage. If you would like to request some random footage times, or see video from specific times from my notes, I can provide any requested evidence (with some gaps when I was not able to capture video evidence).

I do wish to send the office some short (few second) clips of Charlie fleeing the male, and will endeavor to do so tomorrow. This situation is particularly alarming as it is adding to Charlie's emotional distress and physical distress as she is forced to flee him despite her arthritic concerns and wing droop. I have also seen Charlie watching the male with slicked feathers and an alert posture- her head craned and her body tense as she stares at him, often interrupting her rest periods to monitor his activity when he is moving below or around her. This often occurs when she is perched on the upper right portion of the aviary near the top and he is just visible on a lower perch near the bottom of the aviary, which is a significant distance apart, yet she still monitors and tracks his movements with alert and alarmed body language. At other times she has moved her head jerkily back and forth and shown slicked feathers and an alert posture when he comes near her, and if he comes within several feet of her she will either move away at a regular pace when he is moving slowly, or completely flee at speed by running, climbing, or flying from him.

Lastly I want to address a few of the concerning comments DOC has made as I have communicated my concerns with them this week. They claim Charlie 'did this in Te Anau'. Not only is that an unacceptable reason to allow high levels of stereotypical behaviour, but the statement is misleading. Charlie showed high levels of stereotypical behaviour as a juvenile after being kept in a small cage in a living room illegally. She was rehabilitated by DOC staff and volunteers in Te Anau. She did not show significant stereotypical behaviours in recent years, and the high level of stereotypical behaviour I have documented is an alarming decline in Charlie's welfare. Your office confirmed receipt of the three questionnaires I provided outlining the differences between Charlie's behaviour in Te Anau and Dunedin. I myself worked with and around Charlie as a volunteer earlier this year for two weeks and did not see any significant concerns, as outlined in my letter dated May 15th, which your office also has.

The aviary in Te Anau was a good environment for Charlie and she showed normal behaviours while utilizing the space. It is suitable in size and design for two kaka and has a central divider that can be used for management. The contrast between the behaviour I saw from Charlie in Te Anau and the behaviour I have seen and documented in Dunedin is extreme.

Thank you for your time and for investigating concerns. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to see video evidence.

9(2)(a)

Fwd: Welfare of captive SI Kākā parrots

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward Sun 15/12/2024 11:57 am

You replied to this message on 16/12/2024 9:40 am

Charlie Girl Questionnaire Anon.pdf 47 KB Charlie Girl Questionnaire 714 KB Charlie Girl Questionnaire 49 KB

Forwarding you this as well.

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: 9(2)(a)
Date: Mon, Aug 19, 2024 at 8:11 AM
Subject: Re: Welfare of captive SI Kākā parrots
To: animalwelfare <animalwelfare@mapi.govt.nz>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: 9(2)(a)
Date: Mon, Aug 19, 2024 at 8:11 AM
Subject: Re: Welfare of captive SI Kākā parrots
To: animalwelfare <animalwelfare@mapi.govt.nz>

Kia ora MPI Welfare Team,

As DOC has been stating Charlie showed the same stereotypical behaviours in Te Anau, I sent out a questionnaire to some of my contacts who have known Charlie for a long time. Please see the three completed questionnaires attached.

Can you please confirm you received my summary and videos on Charlie Girl's training and physical therapy?
Are you able to share any general information about your investigation and its progress?

As always, I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)

On Tue, Jul 23, 2024 at 5:20 PM animalwelfare <animalwelfare@mapi.govt.nz> wrote:

Kia ora

Thank you for contacting MPI. Please note any additional correspondence can be directed to this inbox as the MPI Animal Welfare Team monitors it regularly.

We appreciate you raising this concern regarding the kākā at the Te Anau Bird Sanctuary and for providing specific information about Charlie Girl.
The MPI Compliance Team will be looking into the situation.

As I mentioned, you are welcome to direct any other animal welfare related queries to this inbox.

Ngā mihi,
The MPI Animal Welfare Team

From: 9(2)(a)
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2024 12:51 PM
9(2)(g)(ii) & 9(2)(a)

Subject: Welfare of captive SI Kākā parrots

To the Department of Conservation, Ministry of Primary Industries, and whom it may concern:

I am a veterinarian and volunteer at Punanga Manu o Te Anau, the Te Anau Bird Sanctuary. I have been raising concerns about the South Island Kākā Captive Breeding Program's poor management, and I am highly concerned about the welfare of Charlie Girl, a female kākā, and other parrots at the Dunedin Botanical Gardens Aviary (DBG).

Multiple birds at the DBG are showing stereotypical behaviours, which have been defined as a repetitive, invariant behaviour pattern with no obvious goal or function. The behaviours are considered an indication of poor psychological well-being in animals. At DBG, the behaviours seen include weaving for long periods, pacing back and forth, toe biting, and flying in a pacing manner while also landing hard on the aviary walls. These behaviours have been seen among multiple birds in multiple aviaries, including Charlie Girl.

MPI covers behaviour and stress in their Code of Welfare for Zoos under Section 5.2.

"Possible indicators of distress in animals include:

-behavioural changes:

- performance of abnormal behaviours that are not normally in the animals' repertoire, and which appear to be of little benefit to the animal, e.g. running at bars, pacing
- stereotypes i.e. the performance of repeated behaviour fixed in all details and apparently purposeless (e.g. crib-biting, wind-sucking, weaving, head twisting, or pacing)"

Animals in captivity must be free to express normal behaviours, and though DBG provides enrichment and good husbandry, they house multiple birds with stereotypical behaviours, which is alarming and inappropriate. Birds who are displaying stress-related behaviours will also cause stress to spread among other birds.

I need to emphasize this point. The Dunedin Botanical Gardens provide good husbandry and enrichment. However, their environment is highly stressful for multiple parrots in their care. Having so many stressed birds in close quarters is creating an extreme welfare problem, and these birds will not simply 'settle in' as they are too stressed to enjoy normal behaviours. The environment is not appropriate for multiple individual birds.

Furthermore, the birds at the Dunedin Botanical Gardens are freely viewable to the public. This means that our distressed captive parrots are on display to New Zealanders and to international visitors. This has repercussions for the birds, and for New Zealand's image as a leader in Animal Welfare.

DOC has stated that they moved Charlie to "concentrate captive breeding pairs to one site to help boost the number of chicks available for release into new wild sites." [Stuff article. Concerns for kākā 'Charlie Girl' as DOC moves her from Te Anau to Dunedin, June 08, 2024] This, added to the unacceptable situation at the DBG, sends a message to the public that breeding goals override multiple birds' welfare.

Link to article: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/nz-news/350301002/concerns-kaka-charlie-girl-doc-moves-her-te-anau-dunedin>

"Concentrating breeding birds" also sends a message to keepers at other aviaries that they do not have a role to play. It destroys cooperation between facilities. New Zealand has a diverse team caring for captive wildlife across many distinct and wonderful facilities. All of them have a role to play, and Charlie should not have been moved from her home of 24 years to boost chick numbers at another aviary.

Charlie has a past history of being raised in a home in a small cage, and developed stereotypical behaviour at this time. She was removed from the home and placed at the Te Anau Bird Sanctuary. I have spoken with multiple people who knew her when she was a juvenile, and I myself met her in 2004. Charlie's keepers and caretakers have worked hard to reduce and eliminate her stereotypical behaviours. It takes time and dedication to reduce these stress-related behaviours, and Charlie's team has done so successfully.

And that success has been undone. Charlie is now weaving and toe biting throughout the day at DBG and has been seen weaving over multiple days. This is distressing to see, and unacceptable for an accredited facility. Charlie Girl must be returned home immediately. The captive coordinator and the DBG have shown themselves unable to manage Charlie's welfare.

As with Paora the Kiwi at Miami Zoo, the public need to know that inappropriate husbandry is not acceptable for our native manu. And just like with Paora, a multi-step correction must be taken for the stressed birds at DBG. Consultants must be brought in, and a comprehensive plan created and followed.

Video of Charlie's behaviour can be viewed via this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/HRocSSTfsveA2uEC/?mipextid=WC7FNe>

You will note this is a public social media post. As with Paora, an open and honest conversation needs to be held on proper husbandry and welfare needs of kākā in our care. We have multiple birds showing problematic and distressing behaviour, and management ignoring the issue. We can not fail our captive manu in this way.

I have tried to resolve this conflict internally.

Earlier this year, I became concerned about a planned move for Charlie Girl. I spoke with 9(2)(g)(ii) SI Kākā Captive Coordinator, back in May. He was not familiar with Charlie's history or current medications. Despite this, he was not willing to discuss Charlie's welfare and dismissed my concerns. I had also hoped that the Captive management team would work more closely with the keepers who knew Charlie. I wrote a letter, which was shared with DOC management and the Captive Management Team. The concerns outlined in this letter were again dismissed. I am attaching the letter to this email. No transition plan was made for Charlie, she was to be moved before the breeding season, and the details would allegedly work themselves out.

Since the captive coordinator failed to work with Charlie's team, and repeatedly dismissed concerns, I created a petition to keep Charlie Girl at home, which rapidly gained support. DOC responded to this by moving Charlie a week early, moving her from Te Anau to Dunedin. They again failed to engage in discussion on Charlie's welfare, her importance to the community, and a plan to ensure a smooth transition from her home of 24 years, to a larger, busier facility.

We can not have a Captive coordinator who does not prioritize the welfare of the birds they are managing. This applies to any of our native manu, but especially our parrots who are highly sensitive to stress.

We need an immediate solution for Charlie Girl by returning her to Te Anau. We also need a comprehensive plan for other parrots showing a high level of stereotypical behaviour throughout the day. This plan must include reviewing the current welfare of individual birds, creating a custom plan for each bird, and measuring the success of that plan in reducing stress over time. Stress can not be turned off with a 'quick fix' or a single approach. It takes a multifaceted and well-thought-out plan. After that plan is implemented, the birds must continue to be observed to see the success or failure of the program over time.

As we go forward, I would like to request a point of contact with both MPI and DOC. It is important to continue to discuss how to best support our captive native manu and work together. I would much rather celebrate successes of New Zealand's conservation programs, and have frequently done so in the past.

I hope you will agree that Charlie Girl needs to be returned to Punanga Manu o Te Anau immediately. I look forward to seeing her safely at home, and to working with management in the care of our captive manu. By working together, we can best support our unique and wonderful native birds, and that will provide the best outcomes.

Sincerely,

s.9(2)(a)

Ethogram selected video

s.9(2)(a)

☺ Reply Reply All Forward 📧 ...
Sun 15/12/2024 12:00 pm

ⓘ If there are problems with how this message is displayed, click here to view it in a web browser.
Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.

I recorded as much video evidence of my ethogram data as possible (some gaps for battery swaps, data card, and one morning when it was raining I forgot my camera.) I selected this sample to send you. I removed the audio and compressed the video the best I could (it's still over 1gb). I can show evidence of the original file and original metadata upon request. This video starts at 6:05pm on Sept 7th. (and you can match it to the ethogram data).

I will send only one additional selected long video, but can certainly provide more upon request.

no audio cmpr5 IMG_3717 Sept 7 ends 1839hr.mov

Sincerely,

s.9(2)(a)

Re: Welfare of captive SI Kākā parrots

9(2)(a)

☺ Reply Reply All Forward 📧 ...
Mon 16/12/2024 9:53 am

Kia ora,

Thank you, I am just finishing up one final email for you I will be sending that shortly. Thank you for the update and I hope you have a happy holidays as well.

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a)

On Mon, Dec 16, 2024 at 9:41 AM I wrote:

Dear 9(2)(a)

Many thanks for the time you took to speak with me last week and for providing the various pieces of additional information.

I will be working my way through all the information provided and the observations made over the next few weeks.

I hope you have a restful break and happy holidays.

Cheers,

Last email with video and notes

9(2)(a)

☺ Reply Reply All Forward 📧 ...
Mon 16/12/2024 10:07 am

draft_emailpt with 6 concerns outlined.pdf
40 KB

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wuZ9JEQixYDFsRVKH6FXMqCDuo9BwmlU/view?usp=sharing>

Kia ora

Attached (see link) is the last video I will send you unless you would like to see more examples or something specific. It's a long video of Charlie, mostly weaving. When she is looking below her, she is often tracking Caesar's movements. I have often observed her tracking his movements and can see him pacing in different areas when he's not out of sight below the barriers. Charlie will often watch Caesar when he's pacing or active, whether she is resting on the upper perch, moving along the side walls or a perch, resting in the browse, or off and on when weaving. If Caesar is moving slowly and pausing she will usually turn her head to watch him then return to a normal resting posture, but if he moves significantly she will turn her head to track his movements. If he moves enough she will change locations (either hanging on the side wall for long periods, sometimes moving into the browse, or going to weave.) In the attached video, you can see the difference between when she drops her head down and looks out in general and when she turns her head to track movement, which is usually Caesar.

I am also enclosing part of a draft letter with a list of systemic concerns at DBGA (attached). You may quote from any part of that needed for your investigation and I am happy to answer questions or provide supporting evidence.

Additional observations and discussion of Charlie's behaviour:

█████ showed me a video a few weeks ago of Charlie in Te Anau a few years ago, coming up to her and dancing for attention. This was clear attention-seeking behaviour, and both █████ and Charlie 'woo'd' back and forth as part of their own personal contact call behaviour. Having seen █████ video, I have a better understanding of what may have motivated Charlie to 'weave' (dance) when I was training Rata: she was most likely seeking attention, but my view was blocked from where I stood in the aviary. I also have a clearer understanding of █████ concerns about finding Charlie unresponsive in Dunedin, given how engaged Charlie was with her in the video.

Having spent a large amount of time observing Charlie's behaviours in Dunedin, and discussing her with other members of the Te Anau community, it is easier to understand and piece together her individual behaviours. Charlie was well adapted to the Te Anau environment and had a wide range of reinforcers and social bonds. She enjoyed being able to approach people like █████ and given her history as a caged bird in a living room, this makes sense. If she were weaving from boredom in Dunedin, she would come down to people like █████ and myself and the other people she has known from Te Anau.

One day █████ and I went to visit Charlie together. At this point we had gone to visit Charlie together a few times. Charlie was hanging on the wire in the corner close to the path, a bit above head height. We were talking and Charlie was oblivious to us. A person came by and started chatting and revealed she knew Charlie and █████ and was there to check on Charlie but didn't want to give her name (not even to us). She was an older woman. We kept chatting and Charlie moved a little and █████ started talking to Charlie and trying to get her attention. Charlie stared right over and past us, still hanging on the wall, occasionally shifting her grip or moving a little but mostly just hanging and staring off towards the exotics. There was a pause, and Anon started talking to Charlie to try and get her attention. Charlie was unresponsive. We chatted a bit and Charlie almost looked our way and then completely over our heads again. █████ tried again, and then I started talking to Charlie, calling her a good girl, anything familiar that I could think of (e- things I would say to her in Te Anau). Charlie still did not look at us or respond. We were all upset and could not understand how she could be so close and completely tuned out to three familiar people. Even with my behaviour knowledge, this was such an odd thing to witness with a parrot who I have known. She didn't even give a calming signal or indication that our calls were adding to her stress, there was simply nothing. She had no response, positive or negative, to three familiar people chatting among themselves and intermittently trying to engage her. In addition, she was not weaving or monitoring Caesar's movements, so she was not in visible distress or focused on anything in particular. She was looking out but not seeing us or seemingly anything. I have observed Charlie react to the DBGA environment and other birds. I have seen her getting overwhelmed and weaving, and I see her often times tracking Caesar closely; and despite this, she could not respond to visitors like she used to in Te Anau, even when three of us were there talking and reflecting in between trying to coax her to give us her attention. I personally don't see how she can heal in that environment, but if it were to happen it would take an immense effort, a behaviour vet, and medications. I believe if she returns to Te Anau it would take a normal effort plus some extra training and attention, monitoring for new triggers at Te Anau, and a behaviour vet, addressing her wing sag, etc. She needs a companion kaka who is overall 'lower energy' like her.

Towards the end of October, sometimes in the late afternoon, if she was resting in the browse near the front I could approach the aviary and talk to her and say her name and she would look at me briefly, but she didn't otherwise respond. She would stay perched, occasionally shift around to the left or right, or move a bit closer but she would stay overall disengaged, or go down for food. The best I could get is a short look, and it wasn't consistent on the various days I tried. I even tried saying 'good' every time she looked my way and then reward her with positive chatter in an attempt to shape attention and it wasn't a reinforcer for her. She still occasionally looked at me but there was no consistency. No matter how other people or I tried to coax a response, Charlie no longer considered social connections a reinforcer.

I have multiple concerns from the vet report, and can certainly discuss it in detail. Please let me know if you have not been provided the 26 page vet report or the MPI report and appendixes, or have any questions about them.

One thing (of several) that stood out in the Vet report is the idea that 'Te Anau said Charlie doesn't like keepers or visitors in her enclosure: She loved people and had so many strong relationships. She might not always come down right away, but when she did she was engaged and social. If I was changing out chop or some basic husbandry task she might ignore me to nap in her room, especially if it was warm, but would come down if coaxed.

Which only reminds me of another detail: She loved her 'small' resting nook in Te Anau, and was usually napping in the entrance around midday and occasionally throughout the day. Occasionally she would be tucked further in, and completely out of sight, but when she wasn't foraging on flax or other browse/enrichment, eating her food, or exploring and socialising, I could pretty reliably point her out to visitors as she would be there in the entrance of her nook, resting contently. If Rata was on 'her' side she would prefer to rest on the other side of the nook, though I once found them roosting together, a body width apart. (As they had not been together long, and I have seen many parrots living in aviaries who synchronise their activities but only sometimes get close enough to touch, I considered this normal, particularly as I saw Charlie preening Rata sometimes, only for Rata to bounce off).

The contrast with Dunedin, where the shelter is very large and open is another concern I have for Charlie at DBGA. Not only is the shelter much larger and more open, it doesn't give her any actual privacy or the chance to be tucked in on three sides. I had two bonded parrotlets who were thick as thieves and often perched and slept leaning into each other. But one liked his 'alone time' and would park himself on a boing (when all four parrotlets were out in my bird-safe living room) and tuck himself between two toys and have a nap. If a bird landed close by on the boing, he would send them off with an open beak and go right back to napping. It became such a habit that I joked that when he wasn't attached at the hip to his partner, I could find him there, secure on three sides, as this was almost always the case. Similarly, Charlie seems to benefit from having close quarters on three sides but still likes to be facing out and where she can see rather than totally hidden. I worry she doesn't have suitable (for her) shelter in Dunedin, and though she often rests on the one top perch, this is at the edge of the sheltered area, and I have rarely ever (about five times) seen her move further back into the shelter. She's certainly not optimally utilising the space, and she's not getting privacy from the busy activity and close quarters of the other birds. I have seen on the MPI report that they have a rear space that's enclosed, but my 'not visible' observations rarely lasted long and she usually came back up with food, indicating she's not going back into the rear space or not going there significantly or for long. This paragraph is part anecdotal/speculation and part actual observation, but the concern remains that she's further stressed by the very different environment, with the large shelter not allowing her to be out of sight of birds that are at the front of their aviaries, etc. She can tuck up in that upper perch area but she's not tucked away, and this is another factor putting her above threshold. There is a great deal of trigger stacking occurring for Charlie, often made clear by her body language.

Based on my experience with Charlie, decade of behaviour CE and experience, and my observations of her at DBGA, I believe it is important for her welfare to return to her familiar environment, familiar keepers, and familiar routines. She would strongly benefit from a vet behaviour consult once in Te Anau to further support her after six months of repetitive weaving.

Having sent you a plethora of information, I will not send anything else unless you request it. If you would like to see the draft letter outlining multiple concerns and covering a general timeline of events, please let me know and I can send that (as noted, it contains welfare information but is not focused on that aspect primarily).

I do have members of the public randomly sending me footage and testimonials about Charlie's behaviour and could share those, mostly anon reports.

If you need any more information or have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)

duplicate

duplicate

Fwd: Charlie Girl

9(2)(a)

Mon 13/01/2025 9:05 am

You replied to this message on 14/01/2025 8:31 am.
If there are problems with how this message is displayed, click here to view it in a web browser.

MG_8290 MOV

Kia ora Professor Ngaio,

My friend (see below) provided these videos of Charlie from Friday. I am forwarding some of the 'highlights' of what he documented. I know I have sent a number of videos already, but since I went to check on Charlie and document how she was doing, I wanted to send these recent videos as well. I am concerned that the videos show Charlie is still weaving, obsessive toe grooming (the right foot while weaving, and long periods of foot grooming while perching); her head feathers are still missing; wing sag still significant; and avoiding and moving away from Caesar along with some freezing when he is near.

I am sending you nine videos from (see below). Also included is a video from me showing the files on my laptop and the date modified/created because I am going to remove the audio and that will change the date modified. I can show the opening to each of the videos to confirm they are the same if needed.

I am sending you nine videos from (see below). Also included is a video from me showing the files on my laptop and the date modified/created because I am going to remove the audio and that will change the date modified. I can show the opening to each of the videos to confirm they are the same if needed.

Thank you for taking the time to investigate Charlie's welfare. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)

Shorter videos:

na.Charlie hanging IMG_4587.mp4
na.Charlie weaving and toe, focus off IMG_4582.mp4
na.hanging frozen and apparently watching Caesar IMG_4586.mp4
na.hanging frozen IMG_4585.mp4
na.weave and toe IMG_4573.mp4
na.weave and toe IMG_4500.mp4
na.weaving IMG_4572.mp4

Two longer videos:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1L9UaAm3JubyOq8fHAh1y1bUbt7P7-Kll/view?usp=sharing>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Cb0YLGKCOzb-hcOVsYpyllR-zlSCU3j2/view?usp=sharing>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: 9(2)(a)
Date: Sat, Jan 11, 2025 at 3:53 PM
Subject: Charlie Girl
To: 9(2)(a)

Thank you for letting me borrow your camera. I hope the footage came out ok.

When I visited Charlie yesterday I saw a lot of that weaving behavior and I also saw her grooming one foot for long periods.

I saw a lot of her licking one toe over and over, I saw the male off and on and Charlie seemed to be avoiding him and moving away a few times.

While she was weaving she was hanging from the cage ceiling, she just looked wrong while she was up there.

You are welcome to share this email and video with the welfare investigator but I would like to be otherwise anonymous.

The welfare investigator is welcome to refer to me as a concerned male citizen and she can email me at this address if she has any questions.

Regards

Re: Charlie Girl

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward Tue 14/01/2025 9:25 am

If there are problems with how this message is displayed, click here to view it in a web browser.
Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.

Nga o

I just wanted to let you know if you want to catch up with me at any stage. I'm only available Thursday this week, then I'm on leave for two weeks.

Fwd: FW: Charlie Girl lack of courtship

9(2)(a)

Reply Reply All Forward Wed 15/01/2025 4:35 pm

If there are problems with how this message is displayed, click here to view it in a web browser.
Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.

Kia ora,

I was reviewing sent materials and noted I left off this related observation from 9(2)(a)

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: 9(2)(a)
Date: Wed, Oct 2, 2024 at 12:50 PM
Subject: Re: FW: Charlie Girl lack of courtship
To: 9(2)(a)
CC: 9(2)(a)(II)

I would like to add my observations, as well. On one of my last visits to Charlie I observed a pair of Kaka in an adjacent aviary courting and copulating as well--no attempts to move away by female, no avoidance, some nice bobbing and perching next to each other and leaning towards each other directly preceding the copulation--so very stark contrast to the videos 9(2)(a) has supplied. Sadly this pair was unceremoniously jettisoned off their slippery metal perch mid-copulation when the female lost purchase on the sticks surface, which was rather disappointing to watch. I can't imagine how painful it must be for Charlie to have to attempt balancing the weight of BOTH herself and Cesar on that slippery metal with both left limbs compromised by prior fractures when he finally forces himself on her.

9(2)(a)

Meeting to discuss Charlie

9(2)(a)

Bcc: 9(2)(g)(ii)

UNCLASSIFIED

Dear 9(2)(a)

My name is Ngaio Beausoleil – I'm Professor of Animal Welfare Science in the Vet School at Massey University. A bit of background about me can be found at <https://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/expertise/profile.cfm?stref=616050>

DOC has asked me to conduct an independent expert animal welfare assessment for Charlie the Kākā. As part of this, I'm hoping to arrange a time to talk with you about your concerns for Charlie's welfare.

Would it be possible to find a time to have a discussion this week? I'm still in the process of planning the schedule of visits – the discussion may be online or in person, depending on people's availability.

Many thanks in advance,

Ngaio.

Mon 9/12/2024 10:14 pm

Re: Meeting to discuss Charlie

9(2)(a)

Follow up: Completed on Friday, 3 January 2025.
You replied to this message on 10/12/2024 11:23 am.

OpenLetterDOCandMPI.pdf 112 KB
OpenLetterCharlieGirl.pdf 157 KB

Kia ora

Thank you for writing to me and for taking the time to do the welfare assessment on Charlie Girl.

I would be happy to have a discussion with you this week, and I can make time most days. I am available this afternoon, and 9(2)(a) who has viewed Charlie at Dunedin and is a rehabilitation veterinarian, would also like to speak with you. She has worked closely with me in documenting and raising concerns for Charlie's welfare. We would both be available at 4:30pm today.

As this has been an ongoing issue, and with DOC management making several statements about Charlie's welfare in Te Anau, I hope we can schedule multiple discussions as you work through your investigation. I also have materials I would like you to review, including my Voluntary Physical Therapy Summary, requested by MPI via DOC, and ethogram data and supporting video.

If you would like to meet me in Te Anau as well, I am happy to arrange that.

In addition, my colleagues and I have outlined our concerns in two Open Letters, attached.

9(2)(a)

Tue 10/12/2024 9:02 am

RE: Meeting to discuss Charlie

9(2)(a)

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi 9(2)(a)

Thanks so much for your reply, your willingness to meet with me and the information you've provided.

I've got some other meetings scheduled this afternoon but it's looking like I will make it over to Te Anau and I'd be grateful to catch up with you sometime on Thursday morning.

I'll get back in touch tonight or tomorrow morning to make a firmer plan.

Cheers,

Tue 10/12/2024 11:24 am

duplicate

duplicate

Ethogram selected video

9(2)(a)

☺ Reply Reply All Forward [Share icon] [More icon]
Sun 15/12/2024 12:00 pm

ⓘ If there are problems with how this message is displayed, click here to view it in a web browser.
— Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.

I recorded as much video evidence of my ethogram data as possible (some gaps for battery swaps, data card, and one morning when it was raining I forgot my camera.) I selected this sample to send you. I removed the audio and compressed the video the best I could (it's still over 1gb). I can show evidence of the original file and original metadata upon request. This video starts at 6:05pm on Sept 7th. (and you can match it to the ethogram data).

I will send only one additional selected long video, but can certainly provide more upon request.

no audio cmprs IMG_3717 Sept 7 ends 1839hr.mov

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)

Re: Welfare of captive SI Kākā parrots

9(2)(a)

☺ Reply Reply All Forward [Share icon] [More icon]
Mon 16/12/2024 9:53 am

Kia ora,

Thank you, I am just finishing up one final email for you I will be sending that shortly. Thank you for the update and I hope you have a happy holidays as well.

Sincerely,

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a)

On Mon, Dec 16, 2024 at 9:41 AM 9(2)(a) wrote:

Dear 9(2)(a)

Many thanks for the time you took to speak with me last week and for providing the various pieces of additional information.

I will be working my way through all the information provided and the observations made over the next few weeks.

I hope you have a restful break and happy holidays.

Cheers,

9(2)(a)