

## Poster topic 03

## Poster 2

### **Analysis of enquiries to a South African radio programme on animal matters**

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Over a period of six years a total of 2,385 letters and e-mail messages were submitted for veterinary advice to a weekly veterinary information programme on a South African national radio station (Radio Sonder Grense (RSG)), in the native Afrikaans language. A total of 1,839 (77%) of this correspondence contained one or more questions on veterinary and animal matters. This concerned mostly companion animals within the canine (68%), feline (13%), avian (14%) and equine (1%) species. A total of 892 (48.5%) of these enquiries were answered during a period of five and a half years. The most common enquiries involved issues of behaviour (45%) and skin conditions (11.5%). The most common behavioural correspondence was regarding social interaction (55%), followed by normal but unacceptable behaviour (15%) and elimination behaviour (14%). The most common reported skin complaint was pruritus (32%), followed closely by alopecia / feather loss (29%). 18% of dog breeds were not specified, but where the breed was indicated the Jack Russell Terrier was the highest represented breed (9%), followed by the Dachshund (7%) and the South African Boerboel (6%). In contrast 90% of cat breed type was not specified in the enquiries. Although a bias toward the interest of the veterinary presenter can influence the perceived need for information and the listener population requiring veterinary advice is skewed compared to the client base in general veterinary practice, the extent and distribution of the most common and general information needs were expected to be very similar. This is benchmarked against published data and compared with accurate listener figures, which were obtained from the broadcaster. The mode of communication is also explored as ease of access to the presenter was vastly improved by internet radio (audio streaming). The facility of allowing listeners to send e-mails directly to the studio during broadcastings significantly increased the enquiry rate since its introduction during 2007.