

# Criminal investigation police use metal detectors to conduct health exam on penguin

## 刑警用金屬探測器 為企鵝健檢

Savings gone amok? The annual penguin health checkup at the National Museum of Marine Biology & Aquarium was conducted with the help of X-ray equipment last year, but this year, Hengchun police were called upon to use their metal detectors to determine whether the penguins had swallowed any metal objects.

The assisting investigation criminal police officers gave a wry smile, saying the **bird-brained** mission was the dumbest they had encountered, and a veterinarian at the National Pingtung University of Science and Technology said the results would be limited.

A few days ago, two criminal investigation police officers from the Hengchun police precinct brought their metal detectors to the penguin area at the aquarium. With the help of aquarium staff, they conducted their first ever body search of a penguin.

The police officers said the situation felt as if the penguins had been at an ecstasy party and were being given strict individual body searches. They said the whole exercise painted a **comical** picture, but hoped it would help the penguins.

Tu Chieh-hsien, a veterinarian at the National Pingtung University of Science and Technology, stressed that, clinically speaking, metal detectors have been used to determine whether cows had swallowed metal objects, but that X-ray equipment was recommended for better accuracy when checking more delicate animals like penguins.

Kaohsiung veterinarians say the metal detectors used by police may not be sensitive enough to detect metal objects lodged deep inside a body, while X-ray equipment will detect metal objects as well as other foreign objects made of plastic or other materials that metal detectors will not see.

Critical museum staff said in private that the museum has not been well managed in recent years and that old structures and equipment were not renewed. They also said that by not wanting to spend money on X-ray examinations of the penguins in their vital annual health check but instead using metal detectors, Haijing Co, the company managing the museum, had gone too far in their attempts to save money.

A Haijing representative said that after the penguins were flown into Taiwan they had remained in the aquarium and had not had a chance to swallow any foreign objects. The company also says it hired an expert team to conduct X-ray exams last year to determine that everything was normal, but that an X-ray health check is very time consuming because the penguins need to be **anesthetized**. That was why the biology department suggested that the Hengchun police precinct be asked to help with their metal detectors this year in the spirit of serving the public. Huang Jung-shan, deputy chief of the Hengchun police, said that after Haijing approached him he consulted with the county police bureau and was told that, as long as it didn't interfere with normal police work, there would be no harm in helping out for a couple of hours.

(LIBERTY TIMES, TRANSLATED BY PERRY SVENSSON)



An criminal police officer from Hengchun police precinct uses a metal detector as part of the health exam of penguins at the National Museum of Marine Biology & Aquarium on June 15.

六月十五日，恆春警分局刑警用金屬探測器幫海生館的企鵝健檢。

PHOTO: TSAI TSUNG-HSIEN, TAIPEI TIMES  
照片：自由時報記者蔡宗憲

**省**錢省過頭？國立海生館每年一度的企鵝健康檢查，去年以X光為企鵝檢查，今年竟找來恆春警方以金屬探測器為企鵝檢查體內是否有吞進金屬異物，奉派協助的刑警苦笑說這是碰過最「瞎」的一件任務，屏科大獸醫也認為效果有限。

兩名恆春警分局刑警日前帶著查緝犯罪用的金屬探測器，前往海生館企鵝區後場。在館方人員協助下，硬著頭皮第一次替「企鵝」搜身。協助的刑警說，感覺好像企鵝參加完搖頭派對，一個一個接受盤檢搜身，過程嚴謹，整個畫面卻非常搞笑，只希望能對企鵝們有幫助。

屏科大獸醫杜杰惠強調，金屬探測器在臨床上，的確會拿來做為牛隻誤吞金屬異物的研判，不過像企鵝這般嬌貴的生物，還是建議以專業的X光設備檢查，提高準確度。

高雄獸醫界人士說，以警方的金屬探測器來說，敏感度可能難以檢測出體內深層的異物；況且以X光檢查不僅能看出金

屬異物，也能看到企鵝體內是否有塑膠或其他材質異物，都不是金屬探測器所能偵測。

館方人員私下批評，海生館近年來營運不佳，許多結構或設備老舊也不更新，連攸關企鵝生命的年度健康檢查，也捨不得花錢添購X光設備，竟借用警方金屬探測器，營運的海景公司高層簡直省錢省過頭。

海景公司解釋，企鵝空運來台後，長期都在館場內，應無吞食異物的可能，去年找來專業團隊以X光機檢驗，確定沒有異狀。由於企鵝照X光前須先麻醉，頗為費時，今年才會在生物部門的建議下，向恆春警方以「為民服務」的名義申請借用金屬探測器檢查。恆春警分局副分局長黃榮山說，海景上門求助後，他向縣警局請示，縣警局認為在不影響正常勤務下，利用備勤撥個一、二個小時過去幫忙，應該無妨。

(自由時報記者蔡宗憲)

### TODAY'S WORDS 今日單字

1. **comical** /'kɑmɪkl/ adj.

滑稽好笑的 (gu3 ji1 hao3 xiao4 de5)

例: My ice skating accident would have been comical if it hadn't hurt so much.  
(我的溜冰意外如果沒那麼痛，其實還蠻好笑的。)

2. **anesthetize** /ə'nesθə,taɪz/ v.

使麻醉 (shi3 ma2 zui4)

例: The vet advised us that our dog would have to be anesthetized before the operation.  
(獸醫告訴我們，我們的狗在手術前得先麻醉。)

### IDIOM POINT 重要片語

**bird-brained**  
愚蠢的

A **bird-brained** idea is a particularly foolish one. In the article, the police officers thought it was foolish to use a metal detector to check the penguins.

Example: "Mitch soon abandoned his **bird-brained** idea of cycling the entire length of the country."

一個「bird-brained」的主意指的就是一個極為愚蠢的主意。文章中提到，警察覺得用金屬探測器檢查企鵝是個愚蠢的主意。

例如：「米契很快就放棄騎車橫越全國的愚蠢計畫」。