

Buller District Council Annual Report on Dog Control Policy and Practices 2013/2014

Purpose of Report

Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 (the Act) requires that territorial authorities report annually on specified requirements relating to their dog control policy and practices. This report addresses those requirements. Section 10A of the Act is included in this Report as Annex C.

Policy

Council has a *Dog Control Policy* adopted under section 10 of the Act.

This Policy was originally adopted in 1997 and was reviewed and reaffirmed in August 2004.

Provisions relating to enforcement procedures and neutering of classified menacing dogs were added to the Policy in 2006.

In 2010 all of Council's policies relating to dog control were combined into one document under the title *Dog Control Policy*. This incorporated the *Spay/Neuter Reduction and Unclaimed Dogs Destruction Fee Policy* into the *Dog Control Policy*.

The Policy identifies dog control areas and places restrictions and requirements on dog owners in regard to:

- Prohibited dog areas
- Leash control areas
- Dog exercise areas
- Conservation prohibited areas
- Menacing dogs

The Policy also contains provisions relating to the issue of infringement notices, delegations and procedures for the return of roaming dogs.

Section 10 of the Act also requires territorial authorities to give effect to their policies on dogs by "*making the necessary bylaws*".

Council has made the *Control of Dogs Bylaw*, which has been adopted from *NZS 9201 Part 12:1999* (the Model General Bylaw produced by Standards New Zealand), with local amendments based on the Policy.

The Bylaw was reviewed and reaffirmed, under section 158 of the Local Government Act 2002, on 10 June 2008. It is due to be reviewed again in 2018, under section 159 of the Local Government Act 2002. Section 10AA of the Dog Control Act requires that policies adopted under the Act be reviewed when the bylaw implementing the policy requires review.

Dog Control Practices

The *Dog Control Policy* and the supporting Bylaw are enforcement tools for ensuring that the legislation is complied with.

Day to day dog control is enforced initially through an education policy and only in the event of continued non-compliance are infringement notices or prosecution options pursued.

The majority of the district's dog owners are responsible and compliant.

Animal Control Officers have focused on educating the non-compliant owners and while this is more time consuming, we generally achieve a positive result. This can be seen in the continued reduction in the number of infringement notices issued and dog related complaints received.

An outline of the dog control activities undertaken by Animal Control Officers, entitled "*What Your [Dog] Registration Pays For*" is attached as Annex B. This document is used as an education tool for dog owners.

Public Education and Information

Current activities include recognition for dog owners displaying positive behaviour and provision of information about responsible dog ownership.

Throughout the year Animal Control Officers carried out several micro chipping days in Reefton and Westport. The number of people bringing in their dogs to take advantage of these discounted chipping days has increased each time and feedback shows dog owners appreciate us providing this service.

Animal Control Officers started a Dog Socialisation Group that meets once each week at various places in Westport. The group is designed to get dogs socialized and owners educated. This has turned out to be very popular with the group growing every week and there has been very positive feedback from participants.

The Executive of the Top of the South Branch of Animal Control Officers has devised an education programme for pre-schools, primary schools and at risk groups, (e.g. meter readers, posties etc.). The programme was offered/delivered by Officers from all councils in the Branch during the 2013/2014 financial year

Statistical Information

Attached as Annex A is the statistical information required to be reported on under section 10A(2) of the Act.

Outcomes of the Report

This report is required to be adopted by Council and publicly notified before a copy is sent to the Secretary for Local Government.

Dog Control Statistics for the 2013/2014 Financial Year

	2013/14	2012/13
Number of registered dogs	2,351	2,366
Number of probationary owners	0	0
Number of disqualified owners	0	0
Number of dogs classified dangerous under Section 31 1B due to sworn evidence	8	0
Number of dogs classified as menacing under Section 33C (by breed)	3	5
Number of dogs classified as menacing under Section 33A 1 (b) (l) (by threat)	4	2

Number of infringement notices issued for:

	2013/14	2012/13
▪ Failing to register a dog	18	22
▪ Failure to comply with menacing classification	0	0
▪ Failure to comply with dangerous classification	0	0
▪ Failure to keep dog under control	8	5
▪ Failure to comply with Bylaw	0	1
Total Infringement Notices	26	28

Number of dog related complaints consisting of:

	2013/14	2012/13
▪ Barking complaints - Section 55 notice of barking dog issued causing nuisance	72	92
▪ Dogs impounded - wandering dogs	146	80
▪ Dog/s attack stock/cats/poultry/wildlife	3	13
▪ Dog/s attack other dog/s	13	15
▪ Dog/s attack on people	3	2
▪ Aggressive dog behaviour	36	16
▪ Miscellaneous (including lost, found, neglected and defecating dogs)	89	245
Total Dog Related Complaints	362	463

There were no prosecutions in the 2013/2014 financial year (none in 2012/2013).

WHAT YOUR REGISTRATION PAYS FOR

Response to Complaints

Barking
Wandering
Attacks on people
Attacks on stock
Animal welfare concerns

Impounding Service

Maintenance of Pound facilities Westport
Portable traps and cages
Extensive Re-Homing of dogs
Destruction of unwanted dogs
Catching equipment and safety equipment

Enforcement Activity

Property inspections
House to house registration checks
Issuing permits
Court costs
Dangerous dog classification and follow ups
Issue and processing of infringement fines

Annual Costs

Two officers covering Westport, Karamea Reefton, Punakaiki & Springs Junction
Registration tags/forms/postage
Pamphlets– forms, advertising
Vehicle maintenance, replacement, mileage
Maintenance of National Dog Database

Associated Costs

Maintenance of dog register
Office space, computer system
Phones and on call numbers
Maintenance of signs
Secretarial work
Ranger education
Public information

DOGS NEED TO BE REGISTERED BEFORE 12 WEEKS OF AGE

Dog Control Act 1996

Section 10A Territorial Authorities must report on dog control policy and Practices

- (1) A territorial authority must, in respect of each financial year, report on the administration of –
 - a. Its dog control policy adopted under Section 10; and
 - b. Its dog control practices.

- (2) The report must include, in respect of each financial year, information relating to –
 - a. The number of registered dogs in the territorial authority district;
 - b. The number of probationary owners and disqualified owners in the territorial authority district;
 - c. The number of dogs in the territorial authority district classified as dangerous under Section 31 and the relevant provision under which the classification is made;
 - d. The number of dogs in the territorial authority district classified as menacing under Section 33A or Section 33C and the relevant provision under which the classification is made;
 - e. The number of infringement notices issued by the territorial authority;
 - f. The number of dog related complaints received by the territorial authority in the previous year and the nature of those complaints;
 - g. The number of prosecutions taken by the territorial authority under this Act.

- (3) The territorial authority must give public notice of the report –
 - a. By means of a notice published in –
 - i. 1 or more daily newspapers circulating in the territorial authority district; or
 - ii. 1 or more other newspapers that have at least an equivalent circulation in that district to the daily newspaper circulating in that district; and
 - b. By any means that the territorial authority thinks desirable in the circumstances.

- (4) The territorial authority must also, within 1 month after adopting the report, send a copy of it to the Secretary for Local Government.