

# Buller District Council Annual Report on Dog Control Policy and Practices 2010/11

## 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*. This policy, which was adopted in 1997, was reviewed and reaffirmed in August 2004. In 2010 all of Council's policies relating to dog control were combined into one document under the title *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. Most of these requirements are specifically reflected in the *Control of Dogs Bylaw*, which has been adopted from NZS 9201 Part 12:1999 as the Model General Bylaw produced by Standards New Zealand, with local amendments based on this policy.

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

With the combining of all dog related policies into one document, the *Spay/Neuter Reduction and Unclaimed Dogs Destruction Fee Policy* that was adopted in 1993 now forms part of the *Dog Control Policy*.

While parts of the current policy are working well and are well understood by the majority of dog owners, some parts are now 18 years old and are in need of review. We will be reviewing our *Dog Control Policy* and *Bylaw* during the 2011/12 financial year.

## 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 and Council's Animal Control staff have noticed an improvement in all areas of dog control over the last five years. However there remains a minority of non-compliant owners who do not take the responsibility of dog ownership seriously. These owners remain a challenge for Dog Control Officers as we aim to achieve responsible ownership District wide.

### **Public Education and Information**

Current activities include recognition for dog owners displaying positive behaviour and provision of information about responsible dog ownership. There has been a noticeable increase in the number of dog's being microchipped as people are becoming more aware of the requirements.

Throughout the year Animal Control Officers carried out microchipping days in Reefton. These days are becoming increasingly popular with 15 dogs being chipped at the most recent day. This provides a good opportunity for Officers to talk with owners and provide education and information about responsible dog ownership.

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, (ie metre readers, Posties etc). The programme will be delivered by officers from all Councils in the Branch.

### **Statistical Information**

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

### **Outcomes of the Report**

The 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**  
**During the 2010/2011 Financial Year**

Number of registered dogs	2,439
Number of probationary owners	0
Number of disqualified owners	0
Number of dogs classified dangerous under Section 31 1B due to sworn evidence	6
Number of dogs classified as menacing under Section 33C (by breed)	6
Number of dogs classified as menacing under Section 33A 1 (b) (i) (by threat)	0

Number of infringement notices issued for:

▪ Failing to register a dog	10
▪ Failure to comply with menacing classification	0
▪ Failure to comply with dangerous classification	1
▪ Failure to keep dog under control	11
Total Infringement Notices	22

Number of dog related complaints consisting of:

▪ Barking complaints - Section 55 - notice of barking dog issued causing nuisance	74
▪ Dogs impounded - wandering dogs	106
▪ Dog/s attack stock	12
▪ Dog/s attack other dog/s	6
▪ Dog/s attack on people	9
▪ Aggressive dog behaviour	30
▪ Miscellaneous (including lost, found, neglected and defecating dogs)	213
Total Dog Related Complaints	450

Number of prosecutions	0
------------------------	---

## **WHAT YOUR DOG REGISTRATION PAYS FOR**

### **RESPONSE TO COMPLAINTS**

1. Response to all complaints within one business day

### **IMPOUNDING SERVICE**

1. Maintenance of pound facilities in Westport
2. Portable traps and cages
3. Re-homing of dogs
4. Destruction of unwanted dogs
5. Catching equipment/safety equipment

### **ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY**

1. Property inspections
2. House to house dog registration checks
3. Issuing permits
4. Court costs
5. Dangerous dog classification and follow-ups
6. Issue and processing of infringement fines

### **ANNUAL COSTS**

1. Two full-time officers that cover the areas of Westport, Karamea, Reefton, Punakaiki and Springs Junction
2. Registration tags/forms/ postage
3. Pamphlets – forms/advertising
4. Vehicle maintenance, replacement, mileage
5. Maintenance of the National Dog Database and collection and accounting of National Dog Database levies

### **ASSOCIATED COSTS**

1. Maintenance of dog register
2. Office space, computer system
3. Phones and On-call numbers
4. Maintenance of signs
5. Secretarial work
6. Ranger education
7. Public education and information

The 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.