

DOG CONTROL POLICY AND PRACTICES REPORT

2021 – 2022 Financial Year

Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 (Act) requires that Council reports on its dog control policies and practices over the financial year.

DOG CONTROL POLICY

Section 10 of the Dog Control Act 1996 requires Council to develop a policy on dogs and sets out specific requirements for how the policy is to be adopted and what it must cover.

The Council's current policy was adopted on the 25th of June 2020. The policy establishes Council's criteria to be followed regarding controlling dogs.

Policy - Key Aspects:

- The requirement for all dogs classified as menacing and dangerous to be neutered.
- Dogs must be on a leash in public places except Rural General Zones or any dog exercise area (generally, most Council Controlled Tracks and Reserves). However, these two exceptions do not apply to playground or cemeteries.
- The expectations for dog owners to maintain owner responsibility during an emergency.
- That any probationary and disqualified owners shall be classified for the maximum period, unless they can demonstrate to Council's satisfaction that the full period is unnecessary.
- The criteria for issuing a multiple dog licence have been clarified.
- Fees for dog registration have been set to recognise and reward dog ownership behaviour that complies with the Dog Control Act 1996.

MICRO-CHIPPING

All dogs registered for the first time on or after 1 July 2006 (excluding working dogs) and all dogs classified as dangerous or menacing since 1 December 2003 are required to be microchipped.

In the 2021/22 registration year, the Animal Control Officers (ACO's) contacted owners of any new dogs registered in the district in the last year that had not provided microchip information, requesting microchip compliance. The requirement for microchip compliance is an ongoing matter that the Animal Control team continue to work through and follow up on as new dogs are registered to achieve compliance. A new system of monitoring non-microchipped dogs was implemented by the Animal Control team in the 2021/22 registration year which has resulted in a decrease in figures for dogs without microchips. The new system involves following up non-compliant dog owners by sending two reminders. 28 days after the second reminder is sent, infringements are issued for those owners who have still not complied.

At the end of the 2021/22 registration year there were 129 dogs without microchip numbers compared to 219 in 2020/21.

DOG REGISTRATION

Council registration fees are set out to recognise and reward responsible dog ownership and provide a discounted registration fee to dog owners that classify in the low-risk category. For example, if the dog's property is fenced, the dog is neutered, and the dog has positive history e.g. no impounding history.

There was a 4.08% increase in the number of registered dogs from 5728 in 2020/21 to 5962 in 2021/22. Although there was an increase in registered dogs, this percentage has continued to decline for the past two years, since seeing a peak in new registrations over the 2019/20 period.

Council was notified of 477 deceased dogs and 495 dogs that were transferred out of the Queenstown Lakes District.

Category	2017-2018	2018 - 2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Total number of Registered Dogs	4836	5033	5388	5728	5962
a) Dangerous by owner conviction under s.31(1)(a)	2	2	1	1	0
b) Dangerous by sworn evidence under s.31(1)(b)	2	2	3	3	4
c) Dangerous by owner admittance in writing under s.31(1)(c)	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of Dangerous Dogs	4	4	4	4	4
a) Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) – Behaviour	19	16	17	13	13
b) Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii) - Breed characteristics	0	0	0	0	0
c) Menacing under s33C(1) - Schedule 4 Breed/Type	0	1	0	0	0
Total number of Menacing Dogs	19	17	17	13	13
Total number of Probationary Owners	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of Disqualified Owners	1	1	1	1	0

DISQUALIFIED AND PROBATIONARY DOG OWNERS

As of the 7th October 2021, there are no longer any disqualified owners in the district and there was no new probationary or disqualified dog owners classified.

MENACING AND DANGEROUS DOGS

There were two newly classified menacing dogs and one newly classified dangerous dog in the 2021/22 registration period. The classification of the dangerous dog was due to a dog-on-dog attack with human injury and the two menacing classifications were the result of an occurrence of aggressive behaviour demonstrated by two dogs against another dog.

There were two dogs transferred into the district with a previous menacing classification, three menacing dogs and one dangerous dog notified as deceased, and three menacing dogs transferred out of the district. As a result, the overall figure of four Dangerous Dogs and 13 Menacing Dogs in the district has remained the same as the previous registration year.

DOG CONTROL RESPONSE

This section describes the number and type of complaints received and the manner in which Council has responded to address the complaints and general issues regarding dogs over the last year.

Category of Complaint	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	2019- 2020	2020- 2021	2021 – 2022
Dog attack on people – Minor	34	16	8	14	12
Dog attack on people – Serious	2	4	0	2	2
Dog attack on animal – Minor	25	37	44	25	25
Dog attack on animal – Serious	7	3	9	9	10
Dog attack on stock (Worrying stock)	5	4	1	4	2
Dog rushing	36	25	31	37	29
Roaming dogs	563	498	506	552	463
General concern	63	69	28	66	61
Lost dogs	321	334	242	256	180
Barking	205	159	164	251	268
Fouling	11	12	17	22	30
Total complaints	1272	1161	1050	1238	1081

ATTACKS

When an attack occurs on a person or animal, the incident can be extremely distressing for all parties, and it is imperative that there is a fast response to such matters. Over the previous registration year, there has been a minor reduction in reported attacks from 54 reports in 2020/21 to 50 reports in 2021/22.

ROAMING DOGS

Roaming dogs can frighten, intimidate, or annoy others, in addition to attacking other animals and people. The number of roaming dogs remains the single largest issue within the district. The number of reports received from the community of roaming dogs has decreased from 552 in 2020/21 to 463 in 2021/22. ACO's have understood the decrease may be in relation to the amount of people now working from home.

LOST DOGS

The number of lost dogs reported to Council has decreased significantly from 256 in 2020/21 to 180 in 2021/22. Animal Control Officers have seen a decrease in these numbers due to changes in individual lifestyles with a large increase of dog owners now working from home.

BARKING DOGS

The number of complaints received for barking dogs has continued to increase from 251 in 2020/21 to 268 in 2021/22. Council continues to provide the free use of anti-bark devices to dog owners as required.

Over the 2021/22 registration period, the ACO's have seen a pattern with the increase in barking complaints likely relating to an increase of people working from home.

IMPOUNDINGS

There has been a decrease in the number of dogs impounded from 53 dogs in 2020/21 to 31 dogs in 2021/22 which correlates to 0.52% of registered dogs in the district. When compared to the previous year's data of 0.93% of registered dogs, this number is declining.

ACO's continue to issue infringements for 2nd offences for impounding, however where appropriate on first offences the ACO will return the dog and provide education to the owners.

PROSECUTIONS

There were no prosecutions in 2021/2022.

GENERAL CONCERNS

Council received 73 general dog concerns in total for the 2021/22 registration year. 34 involving animal welfare concerns and 39 general enquiries relating to animals.

While there was an increase in overall general concerns, the concerns relating to animal welfare dropped significantly from 55 reports in 2020/21 to 34 reports in 2021/22.

INFRINGEMENTS

There has been a significant increase in the number of infringements issued from 43 in 2020/21 to 89 in 2021/22. The majority of these infringements being issued for failure to register dog or failure to implant microchip transponder in dog.

Whilst 38 infringements were issued to dog owners for failure to implant microchips, 24 of these infringements were written off due to compliance from dog owners.

Despite the increase in barking dog complaints, no infringements were issued for failing to comply with a barking dog abatement notice. All barking complaints were resolved as dog owners were cooperative with ACO's and successfully work towards reducing their dogs' barking behaviour.

OFFENCE	2017-2018	2018 - 2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Failure to comply with classification	0	0	0	0	0
Failure to register dog	19	18	43	36	39
Failure to advise of address change	0	0	0	0	0
Failure to keep dog controlled/confined on owner's property	13	8	3	3	0
Failure to keep dog under control	11	2	4	4	8
Failure to carry a leash in public	0	0	0	0	0
Falsely notifying death of dog	0	2	0	0	0
Failure to supply owner information	0	0	0	0	0
Failure to comply with any bylaws authorized by the section	3	2	0	0	4
Failure to implant microchip transponder in dog	20	5	0	0	38
Failure to comply with barking dog abatement notice	1	1	3	0	0
Total	67	38	53	43	89