

Rangitikei District Council Report pursuant to Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996

for the period 1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026

PART 1 – Dog Control Policy and Practices

1. Dog Control in the District

As at 30 June 2026, the Rangitikei District had:

- 2,306 registered dog owners
- 4,824 registered dogs, comprising:
 - 2,337 working dogs
 - 1,845 dogs registered under the Good Dog Owner category
 - 642 other non-working dogs

Council employs five Animal Control Officers and one Manager Animal Control through its shared Animal Control service with Manawātū District Council. The shared service agreement is renewed on a three-year basis.

Under the shared service arrangement:

- Two Animal Control Officers are based in Rangitikei.
- Two Animal Control Officers are based in Manawātū.
- One Animal Control Officer operates as a permanent floater across both districts.
- The Manager Animal Control oversees Animal Control operations in both districts.
- A weekly roster provides after-hours Animal Control coverage across both districts.

Normal operating hours are 8.00 am to 5.00 pm on weekdays. A rostered Animal Control Officer remains available outside these hours to respond to Priority One incidents, including dog attacks, secured dogs requiring collection and stock presenting an immediate hazard on a road.

Complaints

During the reporting period, Animal Control Officers responded to 722 requests for service.

Wandering or stray animals accounted for 221 requests, representing approximately 31% of all recorded requests. A further 65 requests related to dogs that had been secured by members of the public. When considered together, wandering and found-dog incidents accounted for approximately 40% of all requests received.

While Animal Control Officers identify some wandering dogs through proactive patrols, Council remains reliant on members of the public reporting incidents. Increasingly, lost, found and roaming dogs are posted on social media rather than being reported directly to Council. This can delay Council's response, reduce the likelihood of officers identifying the circumstances in which a dog was roaming and allow some dogs to be returned without Council having an opportunity to address the owner's responsibilities.

Barking dogs accounted for 129 requests, representing approximately 18% of all requests received. Barking complaints can arise from a range of factors, including inadequate exercise or stimulation, separation-related behaviour, insufficient socialisation and dogs being left unattended for extended periods.

Council's barking dog process provides a structured framework through which complainants, dog owners and Animal Control Officers can work towards resolving ongoing barking concerns.

Infringements

A total of 49 infringement notices were issued during the reporting period, compared with 50 in the previous year. The majority related to dog registration non-compliance, including situations where owners had not advised Council that a dog had died, been relocated or moved out of the district.

Before enforcement action is taken, Animal Control Officers undertake follow-up enquiries to distinguish genuine non-compliance from situations where Council records simply require updating. This helps ensure that infringement notices are issued only where appropriate.

Infringement notices remain unpaid, Council may lodge them with the Ministry of Justice for collection once the statutory requirements have been met.

2. Dog Control Enforcement Practices

During the reporting period, Animal Control Officers responded to 722 requests for service, comprising:

- 76 attacks involving people or animals, including rushing incidents
- 129 barking complaints
- 221 wandering or stray animal complaints, including stock
- 14 animal welfare or property investigations
- 65 found or secured dogs
- 78 lost-dog reports
- 139 other matters, including microchipping, Good Dog Owner status, bylaw enquiries, multiple-dog permits and general enquiries

Council continued to apply a compliance-focused and graduated enforcement approach. Officers sought to resolve matters through education, engagement and warnings where appropriate, while retaining the ability to issue infringement notices, impound dogs or take further enforcement action in response to serious, repeated or deliberate non-compliance.

3. Dogs in Prohibited, Leash-Only and Exercise Areas

Issues involving dogs in prohibited public places are not common within the Rangitikei District.

Where dogs are reported as being unaccompanied, off-leash in leash-only areas or present within prohibited areas, Animal Control Officers respond and take action appropriate to the circumstances. This may include locating the dog and owner, providing education or a warning, issuing an infringement notice or impounding the dog where the relevant legal criteria are met.

4. Dog Registration and Other Fees

Registration fees changed as follows:

- Non-working dog: increased from \$160 to \$165
- Non-working neutered or spayed dog: increased from \$105 to \$110
- Good Dog Owner category: increased from \$75 to \$77

- Working dog: increased from \$55 to \$56

The registration fee structure reflects the different levels of service and regulatory oversight associated with each category.

The Good Dog Owner programme provides a financial incentive for responsible dog ownership. Eligibility is determined by assessing whether dog owners meet the following criteria:

- suitable and secure containment
- the owner's dog-control history
- registration being completed within the required timeframe
- compliance with the Dog Control Act 1996 and Council's Control of Dogs Bylaw
- appropriate care and accommodation for the dog

Council undertakes targeted follow-up of dogs that remain unregistered after the registration deadline. This includes contacting owners by telephone, email or text message and, where necessary, visiting properties previously recorded as housing registered dogs.

The purpose of these enquiries is to establish whether the dog remains at the property and to provide the owner with a reasonable opportunity to comply. Where a dog is confirmed as unregistered and compliance is not achieved, Council may issue an infringement notice or impound the dog under section 42 of the Dog Control Act 1996.

5. Dog Education and Dog Obedience Courses

Council contracts an experienced provider to deliver its dog-safety education programme to schools throughout the Rangitikei District. The programme has continued to receive positive feedback from participating schools.

The provider uses trained dogs during presentations to demonstrate and reinforce important dog-safety messages in a practical and engaging manner.

Council has also supported the provider through the purchase of a published dog-safety book aimed at children aged between five and eight years. Copies are distributed to children following dog-safety presentations, helping reinforce the messages delivered during the programme.

An Animal Control Officer attends and assists with presentations where operational commitments allow.

6. Disqualified and Probationary Dog Owners

No dog owners were classified as disqualified or probationary during the reporting period.

7. Menacing and Dangerous Dogs

Council maintains records of all dogs classified as menacing or dangerous under the Dog Control Act 1996.

Animal Control Officers undertake monitoring and physical compliance checks to ensure that owners comply with the requirements associated with each classification, including requirements relating to containment, muzzling, neutering, signage and registration where applicable.

No significant issues of non-compliance by owners of classified dogs were identified during the reporting period.

As at 30 June 2026:

- A further two dogs were classified as Dangerous during the reporting period, bringing the total number of Dangerous dogs to five.
- The number of Menacing dogs reduced from 36 to 30 during the reporting period.

8. Multiple-Dog Permits

Under Council's Control of Dogs Bylaw, owners in residential areas must obtain a multiple-dog permit before keeping more than two dogs on a property.

The permit process allows Council to assess whether the property is suitable for the number and type of dogs proposed. Consideration may be given to matters such as containment, housing, sanitation, the proximity of neighbouring properties and any previous history of barking, roaming or other nuisance.

The multiple-dog permit framework assists Council in managing potential nuisance and public-safety concerns associated with larger numbers of dogs being kept on residential properties. It also provides an opportunity to establish appropriate conditions and address concerns before they develop into ongoing complaints.

PART 2 – Statistical Information

Category	As at 30 June 2025	As at 30 June 2026
1) Total Registered Dogs	4969	4824
2) Total Probationary Owners	Nil	Nil
3) Total Disqualified Owners	Nil	Nil
4) Total Dangerous Dogs	3	5
Dangerous by Owner Conviction Under s31(1)(a)	Nil	Nil
Dangerous by Sworn Evidence s31(1)(b)	3	4
Dangerous by Owner Admittance in Writing s31(1)(c)	Nil	1
5) Total Menacing Dogs	36	30
Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) – i.e. by behavior	17	17
Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii) by Breed Characteristics	6	3
Menacing under s33C(1) by Schedule 4 Breed	13	10
6) Total Infringement Notices	50	49
7) Total Complaints Received	819	722
8) Total Prosecutions Taken	Nil	Nil
9) Infringements Sent to Court	29	30