

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

for the period 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023

PART 1 – Dog Control Policy and Practices

1. Dog Control in the District

- Number of dog owners in District – 2328
- Number of dogs in District
 - 5065 comprising
 - 2526 working dogs
 - 1968 Good Dog Owners and
 - 571 non working dogs.
- The Council employs five Animal Control Officers and one Manager Control.
- A shared service agreement for animal control has continued with the Manawatu District Council. The contract is renewed tri-annually.
- Two Animal Control Officers are based in the Rangitikei, and two in the Manawatu and one is a permanent floater. Throughout the month a weekly roster provides an Animal Control Officer for afterhour on call cover for both Districts with regards to animal control complaints. The Manager Animal Control supervises activities in both districts.
- Animal Control Officers respond to priority one calls after hours. Priority one calls include dog attacks, secured dogs and stock on roads.

There was an decrease of the number of infringements compared to last year (32 versus 83). This decrease can be attributed to an increase of infringements to dog owners the previous year not being registered through neglectfulness by the owners, or the owners moving their dogs out of the district, retirement or death and not notifying Council.

Court action is permitted once the infringement fine is 56 days overdue.

Wandering dogs relate to 12% percent of all requests for service. While some wandering dogs are identified during patrols, we rely on people reporting them. Unfortunately a large number of people find it easier to post lost, found or roaming dogs on social media platforms rather than contacting Council in the first instance. In some cases days can go by before council is informed. This practice cannot be controlled and some owners are getting their dogs back without consequence.

Barking dog complaints relate to 19% of all requests for service. This can be attributed to owners not being with their dogs as much as due to work commitments creating separation anxiety in some cases. Other factors that contribute to this is dogs not being socialized correctly, dogs that were kept indoors now outside while the owners are at work and owners now not spending as much time with their dogs

now that they are back at work. Our Barking Dog Policy is useful to assist complainants and owners achieve good results.

2. Dog Control Enforcement Practices

- Animal Control Officers responded to 894 service requests/complaints during the reporting period in response to the following:
 - 95 attacks (human and animal – includes rushing)
 - 171 barking
 - 112 wandering/stray (includes stock)
 - 43 Animal Welfare/Property Investigation
 - 116 Found
 - 102 Lost
 - 153 Other (e.g. microchipping, Good Dog Owner status/Bylaw/General, MDP)
- 32 infringement notices were issued.

3. Dogs Prohibited, Leash Only and Exercise Areas

The problem of dogs in public places or otherwise prohibited areas is not one that is common within this District. When dogs are reported as wandering unaccompanied within such areas, the Animal Control Officers respond promptly.

4. Dog Control Registration and Other Fees

- Non working dogs registration went from \$140 to \$149
- Non working neutered/spayed went from \$94 to \$100
- Good Dog Owner went from \$66 to \$70
- Working Dogs went from \$45 to \$48

The dog registration fees reflect the respective levels of service required by each category of dog owner. The good dog owner system aims to provide an incentive within the registration fee structure that promotes responsible dog ownership. The fee structure will reward dog owners who:

- adequately fence their section,
- de-sex their dog,
- have a good record of dog ownership,
- register their dog on time, and
- care for their dogs properly, i.e. provide them with a secure yard and a kennel that is weatherproof, of sufficient size, clean and sanitary.

Council's approach to dogs that remained unregistered after the usual warnings and penalties etc. is for the Animal Control Officers to visit all known properties previously recorded as housing a registered dog. Checks are made to ascertain whether a dog was still housed at that property. If such

a visit verifies that a dog is still owned, infringements are sent to owners, and if required dogs have been impounded under Section 42 of the Dog Control Act 1996, for failing to be registered.

5. Dog Education and Dog Obedience courses

The Council contracts an instructor to deliver its quality dog education programme targeted at schools within the Rangitikei District. Positive feedback has been received from schools in response to the education programme to date. The service provider uses her own dogs to enforce the message during her presentations.

This year Rangitikei District Council supported our dog education provider in purchasing a book she had published which taught children aged between 5-8 years of age about dog safety. It has been well received by the schools visited to date and Council continues to sponsor books that are handed to the children after her safety presentation on our behalf. An ACO assists where possible.

6. Disqualified and Probationary Dog Owners

No owners were classified as disqualified or probationary during the year.

7. Menacing and Dangerous Dogs

The Council has not had any issues with owners of menacing dogs not complying with the requirements relating to their classification.

There are 5 dogs classified as dangerous in the District.

8. Multiple Dog Permits

The Council introduced a new policy under the Control of Dogs Bylaw, for multiple dog permits to be required by owners in any residential area having more than two dogs.

This has proved beneficial and has reduced barking dog complaints, roaming dogs and dogs causing general disturbance due the numbers on a property.

PART 2 – Statistical Information		
Category	As at 30 June 2022	As at 30 June 2023
1) Total Registered Dogs	5058	5065
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	5

Category	As at 30 June 2022	As at 30 June 2023
Dangerous by Owner Admittance in Writing s31(1)(c)	Nil	Nil
5) Total Menacing Dogs	44	40
Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) – i.e. by behavior	16	19
Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii) by Breed Characteristics	6	4
Menacing under s33C(1) by Schedule 4 Breed	22	17
6) Total Infringement Notices	83	32
7) Total Complaints Received	976	894
8) Total Prosecutions Taken	Nil	Nil
9) Infringements Sent to Court	63	13