

WAITAKI DISTRICT COUNCIL
DOG CONTROL – POLICY AND PRACTICES REPORT
1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024

Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 (the Act) requires territorial authorities to publicly report each financial year on:

- The administration of their dog control policy and their dog control practices; and
- A variety of dog control related statistics

PART ONE – ADMINISTRATION OF POLICY AND DOG CONTROL PRACTICES

Dog Control in the District

In 2023-24 Waitaki District was home to 5409 registered dogs. The greatest number of those were in the working dog category (1287 dogs) and selected owner (1465) categories.

Dog control services are conducted by three Animal Management Officers on a 24/7 basis.

Administration of Dog Control Practices and Policy

Key outcomes for dog management and control in the Waitaki District are:

- There is responsible ownership of dogs across the district, including compliance with dog owner obligations under the DCA.
- Opportunities are provided for dogs and their owners to exercise and recreate in public places.
- Conflicts between the public, dogs, stock and animals and dog owners are minimised.
- Potential or actual danger, distress, intimidation, and nuisance caused by dogs in the community are minimised.
- Council meets its statutory obligations for dog control and management under the Act.

Our Approach to Dog Control

Council's Dog Control Policy, Compliance and Enforcement Policy and the Act inform the approach we take to dog control activities.

If advice and education are unsuccessful and an owner repeatedly fails in their obligations to control their dogs, enforcement action may be taken. This can include the issuing of notices to improve fencing, written warnings, infringement notices, classification of dogs as dangerous or menacing, and prosecution.

The views of victims and complainants are also considered when deciding on an outcome.

Promoting responsible dog ownership is key to reducing nuisance or harm caused by dogs. In every interaction we have with dog owners, we aim to promote responsibility and accountability. Despite this, nuisance and harm caused by dogs continues to be a problem in Waitaki. Ultimately, this means that response to complaints and investigations tends to make up most of our animal management team's work.

Community Safety

Community safety is a priority. Dangerous dogs and those which are classified as dangerous or menacing represent the greatest known risk to communities.

The number of dogs classified as menacing under section 33A of the Act and the number of dog owners disqualified from dog ownership under section 25 of the Act, each increased by 100% in comparison to the previous year. Consistent application of these provisions in the Act helps reduce risk of harm and dog related complaints. This may be a factor in the reduction this year in the number of complaints, attacks and infringement notices (refer 'Trends').

Instances of non-compliance with menacing and dangerous classifications have resulted in nine infringement notices being issued. These were issued to owners of dangerous and menacing dogs for failing to comply with classification requirements.

The owner of two dogs classified as menacing and later responsible for an attack, was also prosecuted during the reporting year.

Education and Engagement

Animal Management Officers created and delivered a dog safety education program for schools.

Officers visited three primary schools and took part in a safety program at the Waitaki Recreation Centre in which all schools in the Waitaki visited over a two-day period.



Animal Management Officer Sheridan Newson and 'Milo' ready to take on questions from pupils at Te Pākihi o Maru

A public demonstration was organised with an expert dog behaviourist, with a focus on reading and understanding dogs' behaviour and managing responses when using public dog parks.



Dog behaviourist Stuart Barnes presenting to dog owners at Awamoa North Park.

A review of the Dog Control Bylaw and Policy commenced during the reporting year, with Council's 'Let's Talk Dogs' platform being a key engagement tool through the process. 'Let's Talk Dogs' was promoted through various channels and enabled the community to access key information for the review, and at the same time raising awareness of dog control in the district.

Trends

During the reporting year, 465 complaints were recorded in comparison to the previous reporting year where 633 complaints were recorded. This is a decrease of 27% and the lowest number of complaints recorded in a six-year period.

89 infringement notices were issued in comparison to the 2022/23 reporting year when 134 notices were issued. This represents a decrease of 33%.

The number of dog attacks decreased from 34 to 25, and the number of impounded dogs decreased from 158 to 73, of which seven dogs were euthanized.

As well as decreased impounding, the number of dogs signed over to Council for rehoming was lower than the previous year.

Dog Registration Fees

Council fees (inclusive of GST) for the year 2024/25.

Working Dog	\$26.00
Non – Working Dog	\$87.00
Neutered Non-working Dog	\$70.00
Selected Owner dog	\$35.00
Farm Pet	\$26.00
Disability Assist Dog	Free
Probationary owner dog	Registration fee plus 50%
Dangerous Dogs	Registration fee plus 50%
Late registration Fee	Registration fee plus 50%

Selected owner/Multiple dog permit application and Assessment	\$40.00
Selected owner/multiple dog permit Reassessment	\$25.00
Adoption fee – application and assessment	\$200.00
Replacement Tag	\$10.00
New Tag – dog transferred from another district/changed owner (for dog that is currently registered)	No fee

Impounding Fees

First offence – Registered Dog	\$75.00
First Offence – Unregistered Dog	\$150.00
Second Offence	\$150.00
Third Offence	\$200.00
Seizure and Custody	\$80.00
Sustenance per day	\$20.00
Destruction Fee	\$60.00

PART TWO – STATISTICAL INFORMATION 2023-2024

Dog Related Complaints

Complaint Type	
Barking Dog	113
Bylaw	2
Dog Attack on Animal	8
Dog Attack on Dog	7
Dog Attack on Person	6
Dog Attack on Stock	4
Dog Found	70
Dog Lost	57
Dog Rushing	14
Dog Welfare	4
General Enquiry	69
Wandering Dog	111
Total	465

Prosecutions

Two prosecutions were commenced under section 57 of the Act for dogs attacking animals.

Infringements and Warnings

89 Infringements were issued.

No.	Section	Offence
44	Section 42	Failure to register dog
18	Section 52.A	Failure to keep Dog controlled or confined
5	Section 36	Failure to implant microchip transponder in dog
9	Section 20	Failed to comply with any bylaw authorised by section 20 Dog Control Act
3	Section 53	Failure to keep dog under control
5	Section 33.EC	Failure to comply with effects of classification of dog as menacing dog
3	Section 32	Failure to comply with effects of classification of dog as dangerous dog
2	Section 49	Failed to advise change of address

Hearings

Objection to Menacing Classification – September 2023: Menacing classification rescinded

Dangerous and Menacing Dogs 2023-24

Dangerous Dogs under section 31 A & B	6
Menacing Dogs under section 33 A	20
Menacing Dogs under section 33 C	10

Probationary/Disqualified owners 2023-24

Probationary owner	2
Disqualified owner	14

Impounding & Euthanised Dogs 2023/24

Returned to Owner	63
Re-homed	3
Euthanised	7
Total Impounded	73