

Report on the Administration of Wellington City Council's Policy and Practices in Relation to the Control of Dogs for the Year 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 (Section 10A Dog Control Act 1996)

Dog Policy and Practices

Background

Council has the requirement to manage provisions under the Dog Control Act 1996 and Dog Control Amendment Acts 2003, 2004 and 2006. Council adopted the "Dog Control Policy" in September 2004 making provisions relating to the Control of Dogs in public places, which are enforceable under the Wellington City Council Animal Bylaw.

The objectives of the policy are:

- To ensure that the owners of dogs comply with their obligations under the Act.
- To prevent the danger caused by dogs to the public and to wildlife and natural habitats.
- To minimise the distress and nuisance caused by dogs to the public and to wildlife and natural habitats.
- To actively promote the responsible ownership of dogs.
- To provide for the reasonable exercise and recreational needs of dogs and their owners.

Dog Exercise Areas

Council provides 48 designated off-leash exercise areas in the park and recreation areas. Several beach exercise areas are also provided. Some criteria used to determine these areas include determination of:

- other predominant uses
- assessment of size and access to the area
- the presence of wildlife
- consideration of lines of sight
- potential risk to other groups
- adjoining uses

Dog prohibited areas

Dogs are prohibited from certain specified areas. The following criteria are used in assessing prohibitions:

- is it a children's play areas

- is it a sports field
- is it ecologically sensitive

Comment

Regular patrols are carried out in prohibited areas. Publicity on Beach Restrictions was undertaken during October and December 2006.

Fear of Attack and Intimidation

- All complaints of dog aggression were investigated during the year. These are compared with previous years, as follows:

Year End	Number of attacks	Rushing People	Domestic Animal Attacked
2004	80	65	56
2005	101	125	65
2006	110	93	63

854 dogs were impounded in the 05/06 period. This includes dogs roaming, captured, trapped or seized. 758 dogs were released and 92 were euthanised (claim rate 88%), 4 stolen.

Fees

- Dog registration fees are set by Council resolution.
- Dog registration fees, fines and impound fees are used to fund dog control.
- A discounted dog registration fee is offered to those who register their dogs by 1 August. The Responsible Dog Owner scheme requires approved owner to register by 1 July.

Dog Education and Dog Obedience courses

- 28 education presentations were made to Wellington schools reaching 2970 children. Other areas addressed were Local Government and Community groups on dog bite prevention and dog awareness.
- A series of dog educational brochures are available and distributed.
- A copy of the Dog Control Policy and Animal Bylaw is available for every dog owner through the Council website and included in their original registration pack.
- The council provides free dog obedience training annually. Times and dates are available on the Council website.

Menacing and Dangerous Dogs

Category	As at 30 June 2006	For Period 01 July 2004 - 30 June 2005
Total # Dangerous Dogs	12	15
Dangerous by Owner Conviction Under s31(1)(a)	0	0
Dangerous by Sworn Evidence s31(1)(b)	12	15
Dangerous by Owner Admittance in Writing s31(1)(c)	0	0
Total # Menacing Dogs	116	98
Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) - by Behaviour	11	25
Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii) -by Breed characteristics	33	0
Menacing under s33C(1) by Schedule 4 Breed.	72	73

Registration Statistics as at 30 June 2006

Total number of registered dogs	8582
Total number of probationary owners	0
Total number of disqualified owners	1
Total number of dogs classified as dangerous	12
▪ S.31 (1)(a) Section 57A conviction	0
▪ S.31 (1)(b) Sworn evidence	12
▪ S.31 (1)(c) Owner admits in writing	0
Total number of dogs classified as menacing	109
▪ S.33A Observed or reported behaviour	37
▪ S.33A Characteristics associated with breed	0
▪ S.33C Dogs listed in schedule four	72
Number of infringement notices issued (not waived or cancelled)	415

Complaint Statistics as at 30 June 2006

Number of dog related complaints	2404
▪ Attacks on people	47
▪ Attacks on domestic animals	63

▪ Challenging	93
▪ Barking dogs	558
▪ Bylaw (excludes roaming dogs)	38
▪ Roaming dogs	1418
▪ Miscellaneous (education/advise/breed id/beaches)	187
Number of summary prosecutions	0

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