



# Southland District Council Dog Control Annual Report

For the year 2022/2023

Author: Adrian Humphries



## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Dog Control Policy and Practices .....</b>	<b>1</b>
2.1	Dog Control in Southland District .....	1
2.2	Dog Control Enforcement Practices .....	1
2.3	Dogs Prohibited, Leash Only and Dog Exercise Areas .....	1
2.4	Dog Registration and Other Fees .....	2
2.5	Dog Education .....	2
2.6	Disqualified and Probationary Dog Owners .....	2
2.7	Menacing and Dangerous Dogs .....	2
<b>3</b>	<b>General Information .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Dog Control Statistical Information .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>4</b>

## Document Revision

Date	Amendment	Amended by	Approved by	Approval date

## 1 Introduction

In accordance with Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 (SDC) the Southland District Council is required to publicly report each financial year on the administration of their dog control policy and their dog control practices [Section 10A(1)] and on a variety of dog control related statistics [Section 10A(2)].

The primary purpose of this report is to allow the community to see how the Council is managing its dog control responsibilities. This report is for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

## 2 Dog Control Policy and Practices

### 2.1 Dog Control in Southland District

The Southland District Council covers a large geographical area, which includes both urban and rural dog owners. As at 30 June 2023 there were 11,687 registered dogs of which 55% were pet dogs. This is a drop of 758 dogs from the same time last year. It is believed that many people have “dropped off of the radar” due to financial concerns. We are actively seeking these dogs and aiming to assist those that cannot pay for the whole registration up front.

In order to deliver an animal control service, the Council has a Compliance team with a staff establishment of three, consisting of a Dog Control Officer and two Compliance Officers, we also have out of hours cover through a contractor 24/7.

The team has a close working relationship with key stakeholders in the community such as the Society for the Protection of Animals (SPCA), local veterinarians and dog clubs.

### 2.2 Dog Control Enforcement Practices

The team operates a five-day service from 8.30am to 5pm. In addition, the team operates a 24-hour standby service for emergency call outs.

Over the last 12 months the team responded to 659 complaints (650 in the previous year), which included ones in regard to aggression, attack, barking, fouling, wandering dogs and to collect dog that were “contained” by members of the public. Of the total number of complaints over 90% were in relation to barking or wandering dogs.

In addition, 57 dogs were impounded (19 more than the previous year) over the period and during the course of enforcing the dog control legislation and policies, 103 infringement notices were issued to dog owners (129 in the previous year). The Council took no prosecutions in the last year (none in the previous period) for breaches of the Dog Control Act.

### 2.3 Dogs Prohibited, Leash Only and Dog Exercise Areas

There has been an ongoing improvement in the compliance of owners in regard to not exercising their dogs in prohibited areas and in the use of a leash in “leash only” areas. It is felt that this is due to pro-active education.

## 2.4 Dog Registration and Other Fees

---

Dog registration fees have been maintained at the same level for the last three years, with the cost to register a dog being \$40 - \$110 dependent on type (working and non-working) and conditions (where kept, owner status and neutered status).

To ensure there is ongoing compliance of owners registering their dog, the team visited all addresses where a dog had been registered the previous year but had not been re-registered in this financial year. A number of non-registrations were identified in this exercise.

In addition, the team also targeted urban areas that had a high concentration of dogs to ensure that all dogs were registered and again, a number of non-registrations were identified in this exercise.

## 2.5 Dog Education

---

The team is proactive in conducting radio advertising programmes promoting the good behaviour of dog owners. This occurs primarily around registration time.

A school education programme has been conducted previously, however, this programme has stalled due COVID recovery. It will be reinstated in the near future.

A range of information booklets are also available for dog owners.

## 2.6 Disqualified and Probationary Dog Owners

---

Over the last 12 months, one dog owner was classified as being probationary, no owners were disqualified from owning a dog.

## 2.7 Menacing and Dangerous Dogs

---

The Council classified three dogs as dangerous with the majority of these classifications being as a result of sworn evidence from the public. In addition, 59 dogs were classified as menacing with 37% of these being classified by breed.

## 3 General Information

The number of complaints received regarding dogs has remained fairly static over the last four years and this indicates an ongoing awareness by the general public of the responsibilities of dog owners.

## 4 Dog Control Statistical Information

Category	For Period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022	For Period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
1) Total: Registered Dogs	12,445 as at 30 June 2022	11,687 as at 30 June 2023
2) Total: Probationary Owners	0	1
3) Total: Disqualified Owners	0	0
4) Total: Dangerous Dogs	2	3
• Dangerous by Owner Conviction under s31(1)(a)	1	1
• Dangerous by Sworn Evidence s31(1)(b)	1	2
• Dangerous by Owner Admittance in writing s31(1)(c)	0	0
5) Total: Menacing Dogs	52	59
• Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) - by behaviour	20	24
• Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii) - by breed characteristics	7	13
• Menacing under s33C(1)(ii) - by Schedule 4 Breed	25	22
6) Total: Infringement Notices	129	103
• Obstructed a dog control officer or dog ranger	0	0
• Failed to comply with bylaw	1	0
• Failed to comply with disqualification	0	0
• Failed to comply dangerous dog classification	0	1
• Kept an unregistered dog	93	75
• Failed to keep dog controlled or confined	28	22
• Failed to keep dog under control	5	0
• Failed to provide proper care	0	0
• Failed to comply with menacing dog classification	1	1
• Providing false particulars	1	2
• Failed to comply with barking abatement notice	0	2
7) Total: Complaints Received	650	659
• Aggressive - dog rush / threaten (nil bite)	37	32
• Attack	33	28
• Barking	331	333
• Wandering	249	266
8) Dogs Impounded	38	57
9) Total: Prosecutions	0	0

## 5 Conclusion

A review of dog control functions will be carried out at the same time as the Dog Bylaw and Dog Control Policy which will be reviewed in 2025.

Moving to a “one tag for life” system is also being considered.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrian Humphries', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Adrian Humphries

Group Manager Regulatory Services