



REPORT ON OPOTIKI DISTRICT COUNCIL DOG CONTROL PRACTICES AND POLICY FOR THE YEAR 1 JULY 2007 TO 30 JUNE 2008

Introduction

The Dog Control Amendment Act 2003 requires territorial authorities to publicly report on dog control policy and practices pursuant to section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996.

Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 states that the report ".....*must, in respect of each financial year, report on the administration of-*

- (a) *its dog control policy adopted under section 10; and*
- (b) *its dog control practices.*

The report must also include, in respect of each financial year, information relating to-

- (a) *the number of registered dogs in the territorial authority district;*
- (b) *the number of probationary owners and disqualified owners in the territorial authority district;*
- (c) *the number of dogs in the territorial authority district classified as dangerous under section 31 and the relevant provisions under which the classification was made;*
- (d) *the number of dogs in the territorial authority district classified as menacing under section 33A or section 33C and the relevant provisions under which this classification is made;*
- (e) *the number of infringement notices issued by the territorial authority;*
- (f) *the number of dog related complaints received by the territorial authority in the previous year and the nature of those complaints;*
- (g) *the number of prosecutions taken by the territorial authority under this Act.*

Section 10A(3) specifies that "the territorial authority must give public notice of the report in One (1) or more daily newspapers circulating in the territorial authority district."

Section 10A(4) requires the Council, "within one month after adopting the report, to send a copy of it to the Secretary for Local Government".

This report contains information and statistics on the Council's dog control activity for the year 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008.

1 Dog Control in the District

Council since 1 September 2007 has employed a contractor working 5 days a week (Monday to Friday – 40 hours per week), with after hour coverage provided by a local security firm to deliver its dog control functions. This provides a 24 hour, seven days a week coverage to ensure compliance with the Dog Control Act 1996 and Council's Dog Control Policy 2004 and Dog Control Bylaw 2008. During the period between 1 July 2007 and 1 September 2007 Council employed a Dog Control Officer.

The contractor works closely with a local veterinarian and the SPCA. The Council provides fund assistance to enable the SPCA to look after the welfare of animals that are impounded.

2 Dog Pound

The pound is open to the public from between 9.00am - 11.00am and 4.00pm to 5.00pm Monday to Friday. There are 10 individual holding pens for dogs and 4 exercise pens and 3 kennels and runs. Dogs taken to the pound and wearing an identifiable tag, will result in the owner being contacted and/or a letter being sent to the owner requesting uplifting of the dog within seven days from the pound. Dogs not wearing a tag will be held for a minimum period of seven days awaiting possible enquiry from the owner or thereafter, re-homing of the dog can be considered.

A total of 285 dogs were impounded in 2007/2008. 48 were successfully returned to their owners and/or re-homed (excluding those stolen from the Pound – 12 dogs). The remainder were euthanized (225).

Pound Statistics

Dogs Stolen From Pound	12
Dogs Registered From Pound (including from the SPCA)	30
Registered Dogs Released with Warning	18
Dogs Euthanized from the Pound (including those from the SPCA)	225
Total Dogs Through Pound	285

3 Dog Control Enforcement Practices

This is undertaken either by the routine visitations (ranging) of the Dog Control Officer or during the investigation of complaints.

The Opotiki Town Centre is patrolled at least three times a day.

Patrols are also carried out to include the Opotiki Township, Woodlands and east coast settlements such as Te Kaha, Waihou Bay, Ohiwa, Bryant's Beach and Paerata Ridge.

A total of 342 complaints were received. Nearly all complaints were resolved within one day of complaints being lodged with Council.

There were 108 infringement notices issued of which 100 were resolved before the matter needed to be referred to the Court. 8 infringement notices were referred to the Court for action. Of the 8 infringement notices, 6 related to failure to register and the other two related to a dog attack on a cat and the obstruction of the Contract Animal Control Officer from carrying out his lawful duties.

There was one prosecution as a result of a dog exhibiting dangerous and threatening behaviour to the Contract Animal Control Officer over the 2007/2008 year.

4 Prohibited and Leashed Control Areas

The district is fortunate in having a number of varied locations where owners may freely exercise their dogs (providing they are under control and not causing annoyance to others) apart from the few areas where dogs are prohibited or restricted as outlined below. It is to be noted there is a large area (Volkner Island) between the Opotiki Township and the Waioeka River where dogs are permitted off lead. Other off lead areas include the Stop Banks that protect the Township from the Waioeka and Otara Rivers and beaches throughout the District, with the exception of those areas on beaches identified as dog prohibited areas.

Dog Prohibited areas are specified in the Dog Control Policy as follows:

- Church Street from Kelly Street to Richard Street
- Hikutaia Domain
- Rose Garden Pre-School
- Effluent ponds (Snell's Beach)
- Upton Park
- Waioeka Spit (east end)
- Waiaua Spits (Both)
- Waiotahi Spit (dotterel breeding area).

Dog Restricted areas, where dogs are to be under leash control, are specified in the Dog Control Policy as follows:

- Burdett Park: dogs are permitted on a leash
- Forsyth Park: dogs are permitted on a leash
- Memorial Park: dogs are permitted when no games are being played
- Rose Garden: dogs are permitted on a leash
- Rugby Park/Princess Street Reserve: dogs are permitted when no games are being played
- Waioeka domain on Otara Road: dogs are permitted when no games are being played

Dogs are required to have permits in the Conservation Area at Ohiwa Spit.

5 Dog Registration

Registration fees approved for the 2007/2008 year resulted in a fees being set for rural dogs at \$20.00 for the first two dogs and \$40 (neutered urban dog) or \$105 for an entire dog (Urban). There is also a good owner discount of \$25 for entire dogs within the urban area.

There were 1425 dogs recorded as being registered during the 2007/2008 year. This is a slight reduction of 27 over the 2006/2007 year.

6 Dog Education and Dog Obedience Courses

Council at regular intervals contracts an educator to undertake responsible dog ownership seminar/lessons in schools throughout the District. The seminar/lessons cover the needs of the dogs for adequate food, water, shelter and exercise. They also focus on dog safety issues and the legal requirement for dogs to be registered. During the 2007/2008 year no dog education seminars/lessons were undertaken.

Council has a number of pamphlets available to the public including:

- Why Dogs should not roam
- Changes to the Dog Control Act
- Better Dog Control = Safer Communities
- Dog Microchipping – the facts
- Dog Microchipping – What owners need to know

Council regularly features articles in the "Opotiki District Panui" on dog control matters. The Panui is a Council publication that features Council activities and is distributed to all ratepayers four (4) times a year.

Dog Obedience Courses are organised in Whakatane. The contact person is Trish Funnel (07 308 6058).

7 Disqualified and Probationary Owners

No persons within the Opotiki District have been classified as Disqualified or Probationary Owners.

8 Menacing and Dangerous Dogs

Council classified 6 dogs in 2007/2008 as menacing dogs under section 33A of the Act due to the behaviour of the dog concerned. A further 21 dogs are classified as menacing in terms of section 33C (dogs belonging to breeds listed in Schedule 4). All of the dogs classified as menacing in terms of section 33C were American Pitt Bull Terriers, both pure and cross breeds.

No dogs were classified as dangerous over the 2007/2008 year.

9 Review of Dog Control Policy and Bylaw

The Dog Control Bylaw was reviewed and the new Dog Control Bylaw became operative on 1 July 2008 to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 to have all Bylaws reviewed by that date.

10 Statistical Information

Category	For the period 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008
1) Total # Registered Dogs	1425
2) Total # Probationary Owners	-
3) Total # Disqualified Owners	-
4) Total # Dangerous Dogs	-
(a) Dangerous by Owner Conviction Under s31(1)(a)	-
(b) Dangerous by Sworn Evidence s31(1)(b)	-

(c) Dangerous by Owner Admittance in Writing s31(1)(c)	-
5) Total # Menacing Dogs	27
(a) Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) - i.e. by Behaviour	6
(b) Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii)- by Breed Characteristics	-
(c) Menacing under s33C(1) by Schedule 4 Breed.	21 (American Pitt Bull Terriers, pure & cross breeds)
6) Total # Infringement Notices referred to Court	108 Infringement Notices issued of which 100 were resolved without proceeding to Court 8 were referred to the Court for action.
7) Total # Complaints Received	342
(a) keeping dogs without consent	-
(b) aggressive behaviour	7
(c) attack bird / poultry	2
(d) cat attack	6
(e) attack dog	17
(f) attack livestock	16
(g) attack person	39
(h) attack on protected wildlife	-
(i) barking	34
(j) impounding on request	5
(k) failure to remove faeces	-
(l) failure to carry lead in public place	-
(m) leashed control area	-
(n) Miscellaneous	33
(o) neglect	9
(p) prohibited area	-
(q) roaming and fouling	174
(r) ripping open rubbish bags	-
(s) unregistered	-
(t) left in vehicle	-
(u) wandering	-
(v) Chase vehicle	-
8) Total # Prosecutions taken during the 2007/2008 year	1 – dog exhibiting dangerous and threatening behaviour to the Contract Animal Control Officer

5 August 2008
Robert Schlötjes
Environment and Planning Manager