

REPORT ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF GORE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S POLICY AND PRACTICES IN RELATION TO THE CONTROL OF DOGS FOR THE YEAR 1 JULY 2004 TO 30 JUNE 2005

DOG CONTROL IN THE GORE DISTRICT

The total number of registered dogs in the Gore District as at 30 June 2005 was 3340. This is 33 dogs less than what was recorded at the same time the previous year. The majority (i.e. approximately 70%) of these dogs are pets domiciled in the urban areas of the Gore District.

Dog control in the Gore district is performed by an independent contractor. This contractor, Mrs Rae Evans, employs one Animal Control Officer to assist her in delivering an effective dog control service to the Gore District.

A significant feature of the year under review, was implementing the provisions of the Dog Control Amendment Act 2003. One of the upshots of this new Act, which required a considerable degree of attention by elected members of the Gore District Council, was a review of the Dog Control Bylaw. Following public consultation this revised Bylaw was adopted by the Council at its Ordinary Meeting on 28 September 2004.

DOG CONTROL ENFORCEMENT PRACTICES

During the year under review the Council received three formal complaints in regard to the behaviour of dogs and/or their owners. The three complaints concerned excessive barking, harassment due to a dog perceived to be menacing and an alleged dog bite. All three complaints were subject of an investigation and action to address the concerns of the complainants, when found to be legitimate, was implemented.

During the year a total of 36 infringement notices were issued.

No prosecutions were initiated by the Council for breaches of the Dog Control Act.

DOGS PROHIBITED, LEASH ONLY AND DOG EXERCISE AREAS

In the Gore district, dogs are prohibited from being on playgrounds. During the year it was felt that signage needed to be introduced to playgrounds warning owners that dogs were not allowed in these areas. These signs, which were planned for introduction in the following financial year, were in direct response to dogs being seen using the playgrounds as an exercise area.

The Main Street of Gore has a leash only rule for dogs, which has in the main, been well respected by dog owners. The off lead areas adjacent to the Mataura River in Gore and Mataura have been very popular for dog owners to exercise their dogs. Very little problems have been caused by these dog exercise areas.

DOG REGISTRATION AND OTHER FEES

A comparison of the dog registration fees for the year ending 30 June 2005 with the previous year is as follows:

	03/04	04/05
Registration Fee – Urban Dog	\$77.00	\$77.00
a. Less - fenced on a controlled property	-\$20.00	-\$20.00
b. Less – no dog complaints, impoundments or infringements within a two year period	-\$15.00	-\$15.00
c. Less – neutered or spayed	-\$7.00	-\$7.00
Registration Fee inclusive of a, b and c	\$35.00	\$35.00
Licence Fee – three or more dogs	\$100.00	\$100.00
Registration Fee – Rural Dog	\$11.00	\$11.00
a. Add – dog complaints, impoundment or infringement within a 2 year period	\$15.00	\$15.00
Late Registration Fee		
Urban Dog	\$15.00	\$15.00
Rural Dog	\$5.00	\$5.00
Poundage		
First impoundment	\$80.00	\$80.00
Every subsequent impoundment	\$110.00	\$110.00
Destruction costs for known owners of dogs	\$36.00	\$50.00
Sustenance – per day	\$10.00	\$10.00
Additional Fee for impounding or releasing dogs at weekends, public holidays or outside Council office hours	\$30.00	\$30.00

The Council takes a vigilant approach in regard to non-registration of dogs. Dogs not registered are the subject of prosecution under the Dog Control Act should owners not heed the urgings given via letter, personal visit and the issue of an infringement notice prior to these proceedings being instituted.

DOG EDUCATION AND DOG OBEDIENCE COURSES

The Council's Dog Control Contractor, has in the past run obedience courses for the community. More latterly the contractor has been referring to the Southland Dog Training Club, of which she is a member.

In addition, the Council's contractor has assisted teachers in schools with "The Dog Box", which is an excellent programme put out by the Department of Internal Affairs providing instruction on how to keep safe around dogs. The Council's contractor also issues owners with information on how to prevent dogs barking incessantly.

MENACING AND DANGEROUS DOGS

With the introduction of the Dog Control Amendment Act 2003, certain types of dog based on either behaviour or breed are required to be classified as either dangerous or menacing. In the year under review, no dogs in the Gore district were deemed to be dangerous. However, there were five dogs which were classified as menacing under Section 33A(1)(b)(i) of the Act. In the main, the common cause for these classifications was dogs rushing out and biting people. That said, there was not any incidences of a serious attack on a member of the public during the year.

The owners of dogs that have been given the menacing classification have respected the conditions imposed when walking or exercising their dogs.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Pursuant to Section 10A(2)(a) of the Dog Control Act 1996, attached is a schedule detailing relevant statistics covering dog control issues in the Gore District for the year ending 30 June 2005.

Steve Parry

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CATEGORY	AS AT 30 JUNE 2005	FOR PERIOD 1 JULY 2004-30 JUNE 2005
1) Total # Registered Dogs	3340	Not Required
2) Total # Probationary Owners	0	0
3) Total # Disqualified Owners	0	0
4) Total # Dangerous Dogs	0	0
➤ Dangerous by Owner Conviction Under s33(1)(a)	0	0
➤ Dangerous by Sworn Evidence s3(1)(b)	0	0
➤ Dangerous by Owner Admittance In Writing s 31(1)(c)	0	0
5) Total # Menacing Dogs		
➤ Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) – ie by Behaviour	5	5
➤ Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii) – ie by Breed Characteristics	0	0
➤ Menacing under s33C(1) – ie Schedule Breed 4	8	8
6) Total # Infringement Notices	Not Required	36
7) Total # Complaints Received	Not Required	3
➤ TA Complaint Category 1	Not Required	
➤ TA Complaint Category 2		
8) Total # Prosecutions Taken	Not Required	0

Complaints Received – Mr L Mitchell/barking dogs and lack of action
Angela Hall – harassment due to dog breed
Margaret Lewis – Dog bite