



## **DOG CONTROL POLICY AND PRACTICES REPORT**

### **2019 - 2020 Financial year**

Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 (**Act**) requires that Council reports on its dog control policies and practices over the financial year.

#### **DOG CONTROL POLICY**

Section 10 of the Act requires Council to develop a policy on dogs, and sets out specific requirements for how the policy is to be adopted and what it must cover.

The Council's current policy was adopted on the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020. However, no substantial changes were made in comparison to the previous 2014 policy (which was in force for the majority of the 2019 – 2020 financial year that is covered by this report). The policy establishes Council's criteria to be followed regarding controlling dogs.

#### **Policy - Key Aspects:**

- The requirement for all dogs classified as menacing to be neutered;
- Dogs must be on a leash in public places except Rural General Zones (unless they are at a cemetery or a playground) or any dog exercise area, (generally, most Council Controlled Tracks and Reserves);
- The expectations for dog owners to maintain owner responsibility during an emergency;
- That any Probationary and Disqualified owners shall be classified for the maximum period, unless they can demonstrate to Council's satisfaction that the full period is unnecessary;
- The criteria for issuing a multiple dog licence have been clarified;
- Fees for dog registration have been set in recognition and reward of behavior that complies with the Dog Control Act 1996.

Note: The key aspects of the 2020 policy are the same as for the 2014 policy.

#### **MICRO-CHIPPING**

All dogs registered for the first time on or after 1 July 2006 (excluding working dogs) and all dogs classified as dangerous or menacing since 1 December 2003 are required to be micro-chipped.

The Animal Control Officers (**ACOs**) implemented a new system of monitoring dogs without microchip numbers in 2019/20. This was by creating a roll over system, which was monitored monthly. Owners of any new dogs registered for 6 months or more were contacted by an Animal Control Officer requesting microchip compliance. The requirement for microchips is an on-going matter that the ACOs will continue to work through as new dogs are registered throughout the year to achieve 100% compliance. At the end of the 2019/20 registration year there were 168 dogs without micro-chip numbers.

#### **DOG REGISTRATION**

Council registration fees provide a discount to dog owners with positive history for the previous two years, e.g. no impounding of a dog and also for having effective fencing at the property.

There was an increase of 7.05% in the number of registered dogs from 5033 in 2018/2019

to 5388 in 2019/20.

Council was notified of 360 deceased dogs, and 253 dogs that were transferred out of Queenstown Lakes District (**District**).

Category	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017- 2018	2018 - 2019	2019- 2020
Total number of Registered Dogs	4302	4485	4836	5033	5388
a) Dangerous by owner conviction under s.31(1)(a)	2	2	2	2	1
b) Dangerous by sworn evidence under s.31(1)(b)	2	2	2	2	3
c) Dangerous by owner admittance in writing under s.31(1)(c)	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of Dangerous Dogs	4	4	4	4	4
a) Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) – Behaviour	17	15	19	16	17
b) Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii) - Breed characteristics	7	8	0	0	0
c) Menacing under s33C(1) - Schedule 4 Breed/Type	2	0	0	1	0
Total number of Menacing Dogs	26	23	19	17	17
Total number of Probationary Owners	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of Disqualified Owners	0	1	1	1	1

### **DISQUALIFIED AND PROBATIONARY DOG OWNERS**

There is one disqualified owner in the District, who has a Disqualified status until October 2021. In previous years this owner has been misreported as Probationary, and therefore the report has been amended to reflect this. There have been no new Probationary or Disqualified dog owners in the District within the 2019/20 registration period.

### **MENACING AND DANGEROUS DOGS**

There were four dangerous classified dogs for the 2019/20 registration period. There was one dog newly classified as dangerous, and one dangerous dog notified as deceased, so the total number has remained the same as for the 2018/19 registration period.

One dog was newly classified as Menacing by behaviour, as a result of a minor attack on a human. No new Menacing dogs were transferred into the District in 2019/20.

### **DOG CONTROL RESPONSE**

This section describes the number and type of complaints received and the manner in which Council has responded to address the complaints and general issues regarding dogs over the last year.

Dog Control is a priority area of focus within the QLDC Enforcement Strategy 2014.<sup>1</sup> The priorities for the next three years are:

- a) To have all dogs that live in the district registered;
- b) Ensure all dogs are kept under control at all times; and
- c) Reducing ignorance and apathy of dog owners to their responsibilities.

<sup>1</sup> Available at weblink: <https://www.qldc.govt.nz/media/sjlbz02w/enforcement-strategy-and-prosecution-policy.pdf>

Category of Complaint	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	2019-2020
<b>Public Safety related complaints</b>					
Dog attack on people – Minor	14	14	34	16	8
Dog attack on people – Serious	0	0	2	4	0
Dog attack on animal – Minor	34	26	25	37	44
Dog attack on animal – Serious	11	14	7	3	9
Dog attack on stock (Worrying stock)	5	0	5	4	1
Dog rushing	33	49	36	25	31
Roaming dogs	491	548	563	498	506
General concern	64	32	63	69	28
<b>Non-safety Concerns</b>					
Lost dogs	319	332	321	334	242
Barking	172	166	205	159	164
Fouling	13	9	11	12	17
<b>Total complaints</b>	<b>1157</b>	<b>1190</b>	<b>1272</b>	<b>1161</b>	<b>1050</b>

### **ATTACKS**

When an attack occurs on a person or animal, the incident can be extremely distressing for all parties and it is imperative that there is a fast response to such matters.

Over the last year the number of attacks has remained relatively similar, with a small reduction from 64 reported attacks in 2018/19 to 62 reported attacks in 2019/20.

### **ROAMING DOGS**

Roaming dogs can frighten, intimidate or annoy others, in addition to attacking other animals and people. Despite a growth of 7.05% of dogs registered in the District, the number of reports received from the community of roaming dogs has stayed relatively similar, with a small increase from 498 in 2018/19 to 506 in 2019/20.

Roaming dogs is the area where we receive the most Request For Service (RFS) from the community and is where we spend the largest proportion of time responding, educating and enforcing, therefore it is pleasing to see the number of RFS received has only marginally increased, and proportionally decreased in consideration of the number of dogs registered in the District.

### **LOST DOGS**

There has been a significant decrease in the number of lost dogs reported to Council, from 334 in 2018/19 to 242 in 2019/20.

### **BARKING DOGS**

The number of complaints for barking dogs received has remained relatively similar, with a small increase from 159 in 2018/19 to 164 in 2019/20. Council continues to provide the free use of anti-bark devices to dog owners. This year the Animal Control Officers invested in voice recorded bark collars to meet current welfare standards, and also held free dog training classes in both Queenstown and Wanaka with a qualified dog behaviorist.

### **IMPOUNDINGS**

The Council has identified that the number of impounds recorded in previous years was incorrectly calculated (We do not consider that the errors were significant as the corrected figures are a reduced amount and therefore a positive change in numbers). The Council has now re-run the impounding statistics for the past 5 years, to clarify the recording of what has taken place in this space.

In 2019/20 there were 68 dogs impounded. This correlates to 1.26% of dogs registered in the District. The number is slightly lower than expected, given the rise in the number of dogs registered in the year and when compared to data in previous years. Lockdown may have contributed to the slightly lower number of impounds, as Council was more focused on reuniting dogs with their owners than impounding them over that time.

To clarify the records from previous years, the recalculated number of impounds from previous years is set out below:

2018/19 Number of impounds:	88	(Recorded as 144 in previous years)
2017/18 Number of impounds:	51	(Recorded as 110 in previous years)
2016/17 Number of impounds:	62	(Recorded as 92 in previous years)
2015/16 Number of impounds:	43	(Recorded as 99 in previous years)

### **PROSECUTIONS**

There were no prosecutions in 2019/2020.

### **General Concerns**

Council received 28 general dog concerns, with 25 involving animal welfare concerns and 3 being general enquiries relating to animals.

### **INFRINGEMENTS**

There has been an increase in the number of infringements issued from 38 in 2018/19 to 53 in 2019/20. A large number of those infringements were issued to owners for failure to register their dog at the start of the registration year.

Despite receiving 164 barking dog complaints, only three infringements were issued for failing to comply with a barking dog abatement notice. The majority of barking complaints are resolved as dog owners are cooperative with ACOs and successfully work towards reducing their dogs' barking behavior.

<b>OFFENCE</b>	<b>2015 - 2016</b>	<b>2016 - 2017</b>	<b>2017- 2018</b>	<b>2018 - 2019</b>	<b>2019- 2020</b>
Failure to comply with classification	0	0	0	0	0
Failure to register dog	45	30	19	18	43
Failure to advise of address change	0	0	0	0	0
Failure to keep dog controlled/confined on owner's property	26	3	13	8	3
Failure to keep dog under control	3	7	11	2	4
Failure to carry a leash in public	0	0	0	0	0
Falsely notifying death of dog	0	0	0	2	0
Failure to supply owner information	0	0	0	0	0
Failure to comply with any bylaws authorized by the section	1	0	3	2	0
Failure to implant microchip transponder in dog	0	0	20	5	0
Failure to comply with barking dog abatement notice	0	0	1	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>53</b>