

DOG CONTROL POLICY AND PRACTICES REPORT

2024 – 2025 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 25th of June 2020. The policy establishes Council's criteria to be followed regarding controlling dogs.

Policy – Key Aspects:

- The requirement for all dogs classified as menacing and dangerous to be neutered.
- Dogs must be on a leash in public places except Rural General Zones or any dog exercise area (generally, most Council Controlled Tracks and Reserves). However, these two exceptions do not apply to playground or cemeteries.
- 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 to recognize and reward dog ownership behaviour that complies with the Act.

MICRO-CHIPPING

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

At the end of the 2024/25 registration year, there were 98 dogs without microchip numbers, compared with 190 the previous year. The Animal Control Officer's (ACO) have continued to observe that most dogs they interact with are microchipped. Those who are not microchipped receive email reminders informing them of the legal requirement to provide a valid microchip number and the consequences of not doing so. We continue to work towards compliance in accordance with the QLDC Enforcement Strategy and Prosecution Policy.

DOG REGISTRATION

Council registration fees are set out to recognise and reward responsible dog ownership, providing a discounted registration fee to dog owners that classify in the low-risk category. For example, if the dog's property is fenced, the dog is neutered, and the dog has positive history e.g. no impounding history or attacks.

There was a 3.21% increase in the number of registered dogs, from 6046 in 2023/24 to 6240 in 2024/25. This is a notable increase compared to the 0.82% decrease we saw last year. Typically, prior to Covid, council saw a 5% increase in dog registrations each year, so it is no surprise this number is starting to increase again.

More registrations mean better tracking of dog populations, which supports targeted initiatives for safety, welfare, and community engagement. It will be important to monitor trends to ensure resources are scaled appropriately to maintain high service standards.

Council was notified of 330 deceased dogs, which is a 21% decrease from the 418 dogs in 2023/34. There were also 286 dogs that were transferred out of the Queenstown Lakes District, seeing a 37.8% decrease from the 460 transferred in 2023/24.

Category	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Total number of Registered Dogs	5388	5728	5962	6099	6046	6240
a) Dangerous by owner conviction under s.31(1)(a)	1	1	0	0	0	0
b) Dangerous by sworn evidence under s.31(1)(b)	3	3	4	3	3	3
c) Dangerous by owner admittance in writing under s.31(1)(c)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of Dangerous Dogs	4	4	4	3	3	3
a) Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) – Behaviour	17	13	13	14	12	13
b) Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii) - Breed characteristics	0	0	0	0	0	0
c) Menacing under s33C(1) - Schedule 4 Breed/Type	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of Menacing Dogs	17	13	13	14	12	13
Total number of Probationary Owners	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of Disqualified Owners	1	1	0	0	0	0

DISQUALIFIED AND PROBATIONARY DOG OWNERS

There were no probationary or disqualified dog owners classified in 2024/25.

MENACING AND DANGEROUS DOGS

There were two newly classified menacing dogs and two newly classified dangerous dogs for 2024/25 registration period. Both menacing classifications were classified Menacing under S.33A for an attack on an animal. Both new dangerous classifications were classified under S.31(1)b for an attack on a person.

One dog previously classified as menacing moved out of district in 2024/25. Two previously classified as dangerous were marked as deceased in 2024/25.

DOG CONTROL RESPONSE

This section describes the number and type of complaints received and the way Queenstown Lakes District Council has responded to address the complaints and general issues regarding dogs over the last year.

Category of Complaint	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	20203/24	2024/25
Dog attack on people – minor	8	14	12	24	7	12
Dog attack on people – serious	0	2	2	3	3	3
Dog attack on animal – minor	44	25	25	39	34	44
Dog attack on animal – serious	9	9	10	12	15	13
Dog attack on stock (worrying stock)	1	4	2	4	3	5
Total attacks	62	54	51	82	62	77
Dog rushing	31	37	29	42	31	70
Roaming dogs	506	552	463	611	457	398
General concern	28	66	61	94	74	50
Lost dogs	242	256	180	222	199	164
Barking	164	251	268	267	184	220
Fouling	17	22	30	17	10	3
Total complaints	1050	1238	1082	1333	1017	982

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 previous

registration year, there have been 77 dog attacks, an increase from the 62 reported in 2023/24. This increase highlights the ongoing need for public education around responsible dog ownership, including containment and control in public spaces. Whilst there has been an increase of 10 minor dog on animal attacks this year, the number of serious dog on animal attacks has reduced by 2 from 2023/24, and serious dog on person attack statistics have remained consistent with previous years.

ROAMING DOGS

Roaming dogs can frighten, intimidate, or annoy others, in addition to attacking other animals and people. The number of roaming dogs has decreased by 12.9%, from 457 in 2023/24 to 398 in 2024/25.

This reduction not only improves community safety and animal welfare but also helps build public trust in our services.

LOST DOGS

The number of lost dogs reported to Council has decreased from 199 in 2023/24 to 164 in 2024/25.

BARKING DOGS

The number of complaints received for barking dogs has increased from 184 in 2023/24 to 220 in 2024/25. Council continues to provide the free use of anti-bark devices to dog owners as required and supports the community by offering free training classes to dog owners to remain pro-active in this space.

IMPOUNDINGS

There has been a decrease in the number of impounded dogs from 60¹ dogs in 2023/24 to 44 in 2024/25. When appropriate, ACO's provide education and the return of the dog to owner on first offences but continue to issue infringements for second time offences for impounding.

PROSECUTIONS

There has been one prosecution during the 2024/25 registration year. This case related to a dog-on-dog attack that occurred in October 2023.

GENERAL CONCERNS

Council received 50 general dog concerns in total for the 2024/25 registration year. This is a reduction of 32.4% from the 74 reported in 2023/24. Our ACO's have maintained their positive relationship with the SPCA and pass on any welfare concerns to them as the lead agency on animal welfare. Our community may be reporting welfare concerns direct to SPCA.

INFRINGEMENTS

The number of infringements issued has increased from 97 in 2023/24 to 220 in 2024/25. Most of these infringements have been issued for failure to register dog (100) or failure to keep dog under control (46) and failure to microchip (62). There were five issued for failure to keep dog control or confined on owner's property, four issued for failure to comply with any bylaw authorised by the section and three issued for failure to comply with classification. Of these three, one is for failing to comply with dangerous classification requirements and two were for failing to comply with menacing classification requirements. A total of 81 were waived; most notably, 41 being for failure to implant microchip. This aligns to councils' approach of education through to enforcement as outlined in the QLDC Enforcement Strategy and Prosecution Policy.

¹ Previous report stated 58 impounds, however the 23/24 statistic referenced in this report now accounts for two backdated impound events.

Offence	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Failure to comply with classification	0	0	0	0	2	3
Failure to register dog	43	36	39	39	64	100
Failure to advise of address change	0	0	0	0	0	0
Failure to keep dog controlled/confined on owners property	3	3	5	14	5	5
Failure to keep dog under control	4	4	3	10	22	46
Failure to carry a leash in public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Falsely notifying death of dog	0	0	0	0	0	0
Failure to supply owner information	0	0	0	0	0	0
Failure to comply with any bylaws authorized by the section	0	0	4	1	4	4
Failure to implant microchip transponder in dog	0	0	38	35	0	62
Failure to comply with barking dog abatement notice	3	0	0	0	0	0
Total	53	43	89	99	97	220