

AML 4.3

Richard Simpson

30 August 2011

REPORT ON DOG CONTROL POLICY AND PRACTICES

This report is prepared pursuant to the provisions of Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 for the year ended 30 June 2011. This is the seventh annual report prepared pursuant to the Act.

Statistics:

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
The number of registered dogs in the District.	1472	1455	1449	1441	1489	1484	1511
The number of probationary owners and disqualified owners in the District.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The number of dogs classified as dangerous or menacing in the District.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The number of infringement notices issued by the Council.	56	26	10	11	18	26	19
The number of dog related complaints received by the Council and (since August 2007) the Contractor.	34	47	51	130	109	86	110
The number of prosecutions taken by the Council under the Act.	10	6	3	11	18	13	12

Staff

The Council continues to employ a contractor to undertake dog control duties throughout the District. A long contractual arrangement ceased in August 2010 when a new contractor (the Hokitika Branch of the RSPCA) was the successful tenderer for the dog control contract. The Council was pleased to enter into a three year contractual relationship with the Society as Council believes that a better standard of dog control can be achieved by having an emphasis on animal welfare as well as the statutory dog control function. The contractor's performance is monitored on a monthly basis.

Policy on Dogs

The current Policy on Dogs was adopted in April 2010 after completing the Special Consultative Procedure.

A feature of the new Policy on Dogs is that there is a determined movement towards a more effective relationship with the Hokitika Branch of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) with a strategic alliance focusing on animal welfare. The Council has always regarded “dog control” as the statutory minimum and the new policy seeks an overall improvement in animal welfare knowledge and practice leading to an improvement in dog control. The awarding of the dog control contract to the SPCA is an anticipated outcome of the adopted policy.

Dog Control

Dog Control continues to be concentrated on Hokitika and Kaniere. Periodic control functions are undertaken at Ross and Kumara with other areas of the District being covered on an as-required basis.

The number of complaints received about dogs has increased during the year in comparison with the slight decreases for the preceding 2 years. There are two possible reasons for the increase; better record keeping and a distortion because of a single frivolous complainant.

Dog Registration

Dog control fees for the year were \$74.00 for dogs registered within the Hokitika and Kaniere Townships and \$58.50 for dogs registered in other areas. Dog registration fees also included a 50% penalty additional to the registration fee for late payment. Council continues to recognise that there was a wider public good relating to effective dog control and a contribution of \$5,000 of funding for dog control activities is made through general rates.

In recent years the Council has made a contribution to the work of the Hokitika Branch of the SPCA. The grant has now been discontinued as part of the new financial arrangements between the Branch and the Council.

Future Activities

Last year the Council reported that it was too early to tell if the reviewed Policy on Dogs would bring about changes to the way in which dog control was undertaken. Council also reported that in light of the new direction within the Policy on Dogs, the Council saw a growing relationship with the SPCA being of benefit to both parties.

The outcome of the awarding of the new dog control contract to the SPCA was especially gratifying under these new circumstances.

The number of received complaints alone is not necessarily a good measure of success in a changing environment and the Council will be asking specific questions about its dog control functions in a forthcoming District wide survey.

Adopted 25 August 2011