



Report on Dog Control Activities 2008/2009



REPORT ON DOG CONTROL ACTIVITIES 2008/2009 MANAWATU DISTRICT COUNCIL

INTRODUCTION

The Dog Control Act 1996 requires Councils to produce an annual report on the administration of its dog control policy and its dog control practices. This document is the sixth such report for the Manawatu District, and covers the financial year from 1 July 2008 until 30 June 2009.

CONTENTS OF REPORT

Section 10A of the Act specifies that a dog control report must include the following information:

- (a) The number of registered dogs, probationary owners and disqualified owners.
- (b) The number of dogs classified as dangerous or menacing under the Act
- (c) The number of infringement notices issued by the territorial authority:
- (d) The number of dog related complaints received and the nature of those complaints, and
- (e) The number of prosecutions taken by the territorial authority under this Act.

Once a Council has adopted a report, public notice must be given that it is available for the public to peruse. The report was adopted on the 18 February 2010.

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Animal control involves dealing with animals, especially dogs that pose a danger to people, stock, domestic animals and protected wildlife in the district. Activities include:

- Dog registration under the Dog Control Act 1996. The goal is to register all dogs.
- Ranging and impounding animals that cause a nuisance or danger.
- Make available designated dog exercise areas. There are 16 areas district wide, some with serviced "doggy doo" bins.
- Education programmes are provided using the services of local groups and organisations.

Council provides a seven-day a week service, 24 hours a day. Animal control services are available via the Council's front counter and telephone services from 8am to 5pm on weekdays. After hours services are available through the Council's after hours telephone service.

Ranging services for this period were provided by the Palmerston North City Council under contract. Dog pound facilities are located in Awa Street. The rangers enforce the ranging components of the Dog Control Act 1996 and the animal control bylaws. They respond to about 1200 complaints annually, and carry out regular patrols and inspections. The Council registers on average 7000 dogs per year, and impounds on average 250 dogs. Offenders are warned, fined or prosecuted for breaches of Acts and Bylaws. Verbal

advice received by Council of an animal attack will be responded to within 15 minutes of the notification.

The Animal Control activity is split into three elements:

- policy (e.g. dog control policy)
- consents (e.g. dog registration system)
- monitoring and enforcement (e.g. impounding of problem animals)

DOG CONTROL POLICY AND BYLAW

When the Dog Control Act 1996 was introduced, it required all Councils to prepare a policy on dog control, which provides a context for any dog control bylaws that are made under the Act. Council's Dog Control Policy was updated in September 2004. Its objectives are to:

1. Minimise any danger, distress, or nuisance to the community.
2. Avoid the inherent danger in allowing dogs to have uncontrolled access to public places that are frequented by children, whether or not the children are accompanied by adults.
3. Enable, as far as practicable, the public (including families) to use streets and public amenities without fear of attack or intimidation by dogs, and
4. Provide for the exercise and recreational needs of dogs and their owners.

The main method of implementing this policy is the Dog Control Bylaw, reviewed and updated in April 2008. It forms Chapter 5 of the new Manawatu District Bylaw. The bylaw:

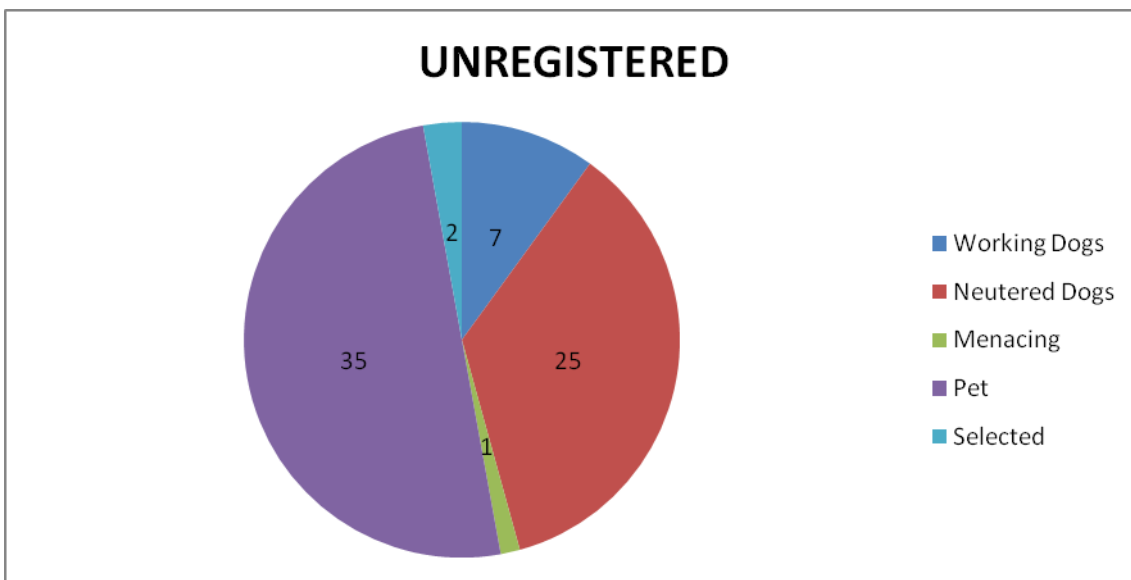
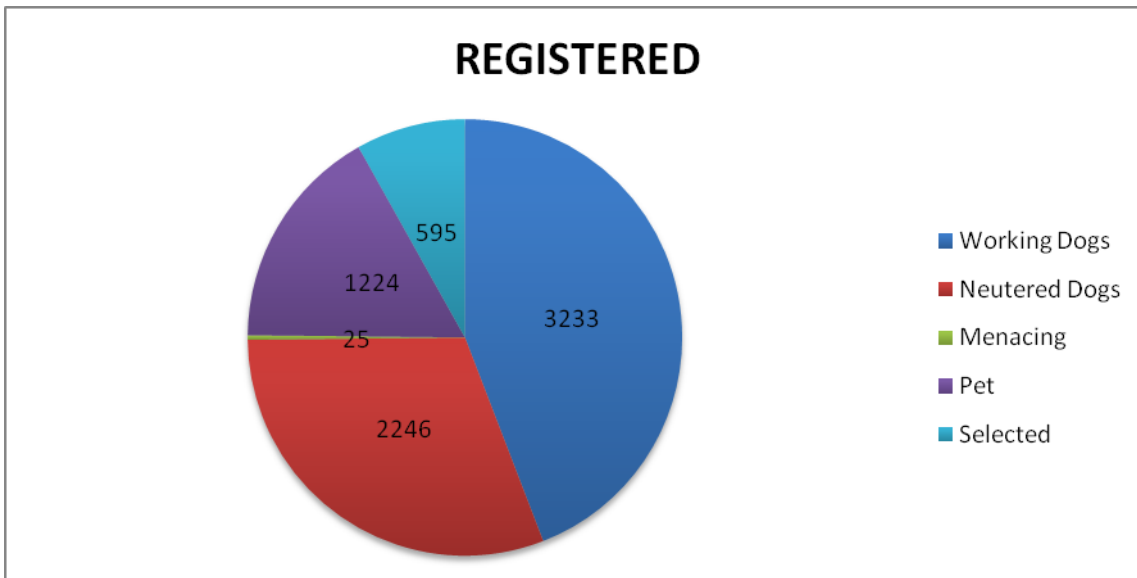
- Prescribes minimum standards for housing dogs.
- Regulates and control dogs in public places.
- Requires owners of dogs that defecate in public places (except as exempted by the Bylaw) to immediately remove faeces.
- Requires bitches in season to be confined, and
- Requires Council approval to be obtained if people wish to keep more than two dogs on an urban property.

DOG CONTROL INFORMATION

(2007/2008 figures are in brackets)

1. There were 7324 (7191) dogs registered in the Manawatu District, as at 20 May. Fig.1 below shows the breakdown of this figure by category of dog.

Fig.1 – Categories of Registered Dogs, Manawatu District



2. Number of probationary owners and disqualified owners: - None (0)
3. Number of dogs classified as dangerous under Section 31 of the Act: - None (1)
4. Number of menacing dogs classified under section 33A or Section 33 C: - Twenty Five (12)
5. The number of infringement notices issued by the Council was 27. These were made up as follows:

Dog Infringement Statistics for the year 01/07/07 to 30/06/08:

Section		Issued	Paid	Waived	O/S
S42	Failure to Register Dog (from 08/09 Registrations)	6	0	4	2
S52A	Failure to keep dog controlled or confined	8	1	3	4
S36	Failure to Microchip Dog	12	0	8	4
S19	Failure or Refusal to supply information or providing false details	1	0	1	0

Note - Outstanding infringements have been lodged with the Courts for collection.

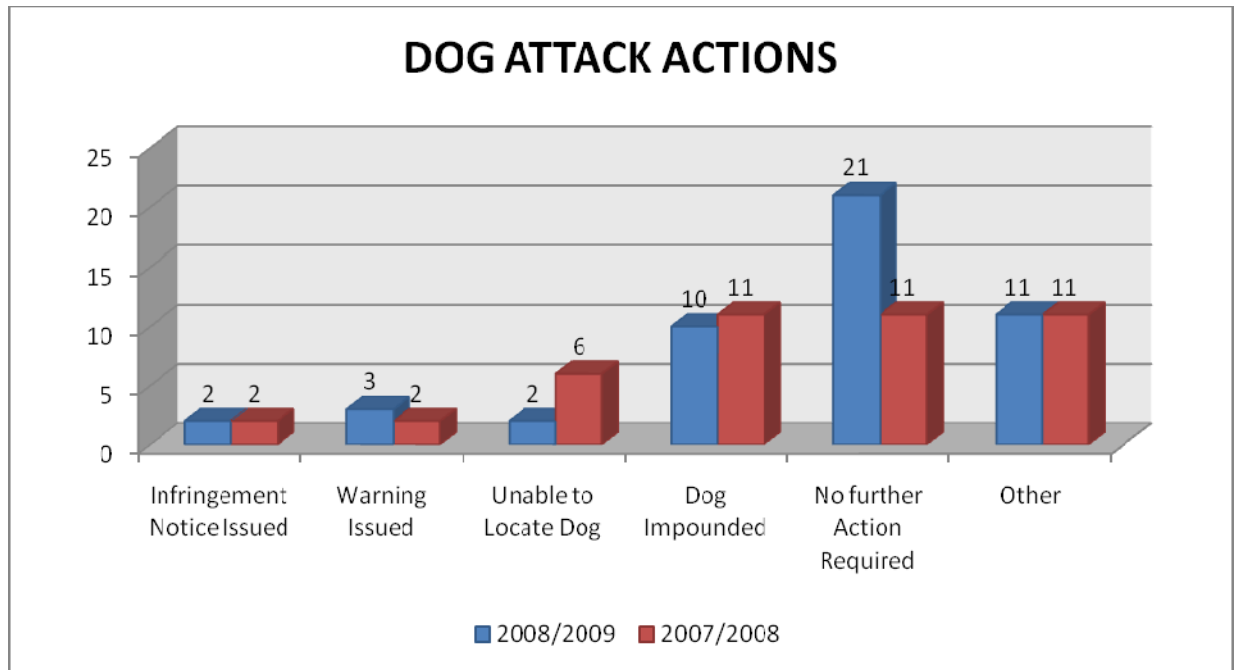
- 6 Number of dog complaints – 1207 (1129). Table 2 below shows the nature of the complaints, compared to the three previous years.

Table 2 – Nature of Dog Control Complaints

Type	(2008/2009)	(2007/2008)	(2006/2007)	(2005/2006)
Dog attacks - People	12	15	17	18
Dog attacks - Animals	37	28	40	51
Dog Barking	301	324	260	261
Dog caged/dog trap request	7	9	6	20
Dog found	228	185	176	200
Dog lost	101	90	84	87
Dog registration	6	5	12	9
Dog roaming	299	380	410	597
Dog rushing/aggressive	77	80	105	107
Other animal problems/dog welfare	139	13	46	24
Total All	1207	1129	1156	1374

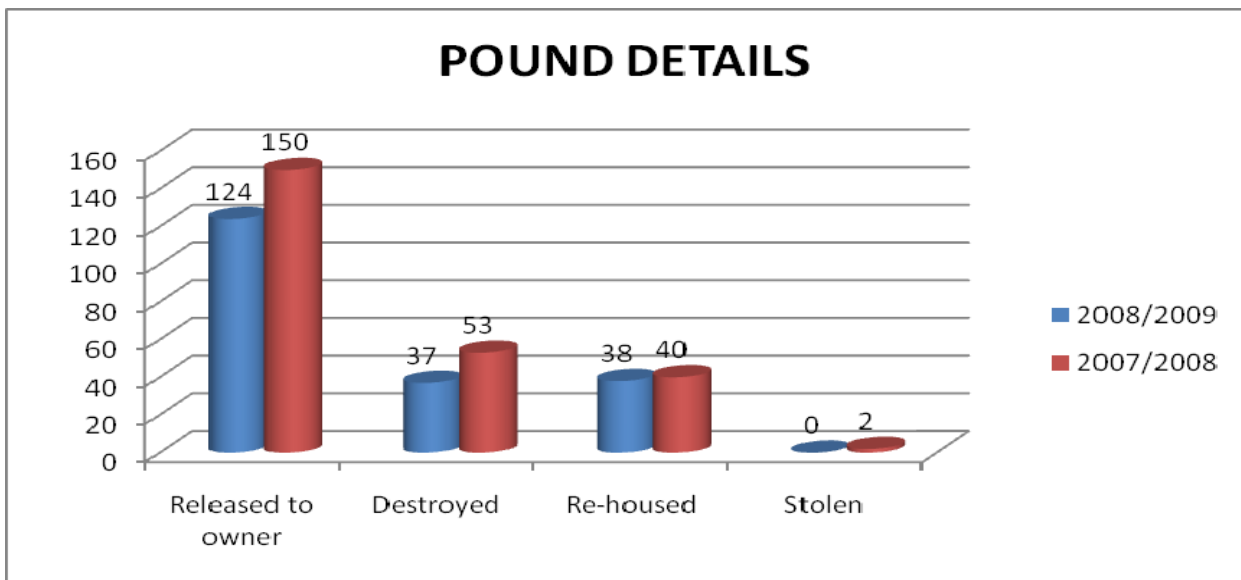
8. Number of dog attacks – 49 (43). Fig. 2 below shows the outcome of the incidents where dogs attacked people or other animals.

Fig.2 – Outcome of Dog Attacks



9. Number of dogs impounded – 199 (214). Fig. 3 below shows the subsequent outcome of these impounded dogs.

Fig.3 – Impounded Dogs, 2007/2008 and 2008/2009



10. Number of prosecutions taken – 1 (2) Council took 1 case to the District Court which was appealed in the High Court following a dog attack on another dog. In this case the defendant was found guilty and the dog has not been destroyed as it was stolen from a pound facility.

EDUCATION AND PROMOTION

Dog Education Programmes

The dog education programme started in 2004/2005 and has visited all schools in our District who expressed an interest in the programme. This year it started visiting all schools. To date 14 classes have been visited with 275 children receiving certificates and booklets to take home.

Dog Clubs

The Manawatu District Council also supports the Feilding Dog Training Club. By providing prizes for the prize giving at the end of each session, responsible dog ownership is rewarded.

It also supports dog owners by subsidising the Basic Canine Good Citizen certificates from the NZ Kennel Club. This rewards good dog owners who attend the dog training course being run through the Feilding Dog Training Club.

FEE STRUCTURE

Council aims to recover the new costs of registration and impounding through dog registration and impounding fees. The dog registration fees reflect the respective levels of service required by each category of dog owner. The “full fee” during the 2008/2009 financial year was \$42 per dog. A reduced fee of \$20 however applied to neutered or spayed dogs, working dogs and dogs belonging to preferred owners. The preferred owner system aims to provide an incentive within the registration fee structure that promotes responsible dog ownership. The fee structure rewards dog owners who:

- Adequately fence their section.
- Neuter or spay their dog.
- Have a good record of dog ownership.
- Register their dog on time.
- Care for their dogs properly, e.g. provide them with a secure yard and a kennel that is weatherproof, of sufficient size, clean, and sanitary.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information on Council’s animal control services is available in the Long Term Council Community Plan for the Manawatu District, and on Council’s website – www.mdc.govt.nz. The LTCCP document is available from Council’s offices.