



Dog Control Annual Report

For the 12 Months Ending 30 June 2021

Section 10A Dog Control Act 1996



Table of Contents

What we do	3
Why we do it	3
Dog Control in the Southland District	3
Commentary on statistical information.....	3
Wandering dogs:.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Infringement notices:	4
Attacks/rushing:.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Working smarter	4
Attacks	4
Dog registration fee discounts / classes	5
Dog Education.....	6
Collaboration	6
Free microchipping	6
Observations from the dog control Officers.....	6
Appendix 1 - Statistical Information.....	7

Southland District Council is required to publicly report each financial year on the administration of its Dog Control Policy and its dog control practices.

What we do

This activity provides for the control of dogs to protect the public, and promotes responsible dog ownership. The activity involves registering dogs, investigating complaints about dogs, education, monitoring and enforcement.

Why we do it

Dog control contributes to creating safe places (homes, public places and roads), the abatement of nuisances from dogs, and the protection of protected wildlife. Council is required to comply with the legal requirements of the Dog Control Act 1996 and the Impounding Act 1955.

Dog control in the Southland District

Southland District Council covers a large geographical area, which includes both urban and rural dog owners.

In order to deliver an animal control service, Council has an animal control unit consisting of:

- a manager
- two full-time and one part time (0.8 FTE) animal control officers, based in Te Anau, Otautau and Invercargill
- a 0.5 FTE co-ordinator
- an afterhours contractor (Armourguard)
- a shared service with Invercargill City Council

The animal control unit has a close working relationship with key stakeholders in the community such as the Society for the Protection of Animals (SPCA), Furever Homes, local veterinarians, police and other local authorities.

The animal control unit operates a seven day, 24 hour service.

Staff believe that resourcing is currently adequate to fulfil its statutory duties. A quality management officer has been employed by Council to assist with the development of a quality system across Environmental Services.

Commentary on statistical information

Some commentary on the statistical information in Appendix 1 is as follows:

Complaints received

There is a general downwards trend in complaints received, though the number of complaints received each year does vary from year to year. While there has been an increase in the number of attacks, they are of a minor nature, as the data above shows.

Covid 19 is another reason why fewer complaints have been received.

Infringement notices

Less infringements were issued this year, this is to be expected with less complaints received. For some complaints, an infringement is an outcome.

Classified dogs and owners

These number are also dropping, as dogs leave the district or pass away; and owner classifications are time limited and expire.

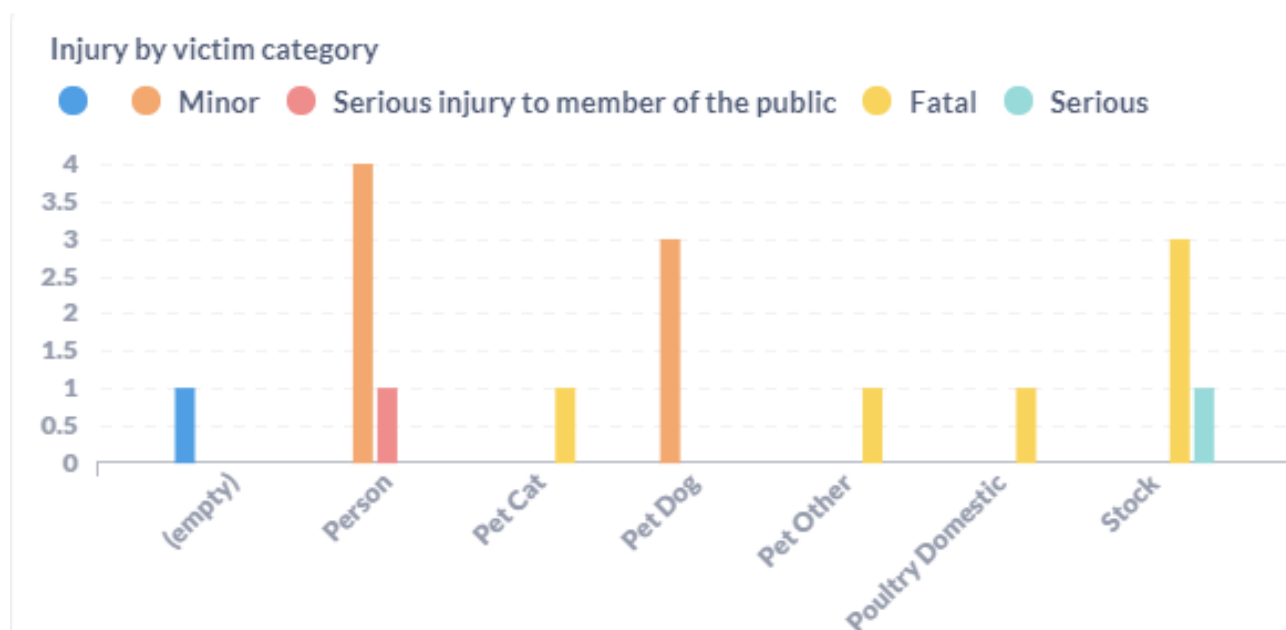
Working smarter

A lot of work has been completed in early 2021 to improve the customer experience with online registration. A summary of some of the changes from last year:

- changes in recording and processing of customer queries and changes, and how these queries are distributed around customer services staff.
- a variety of internal processing improvements.
- second reminder to be all postal, and sent prior to late penalty coming into effect.

Attacks

A questionnaire has been added to Council's systems to drill down into the circumstances behind dog attacks. The following bar graph summarises injury by victim category:



The serious attack on a person involved a courier driver being attacked when entering a private property in Otautau. Serious consideration was given to prosecution. Reasons why the team chose not to prosecute:

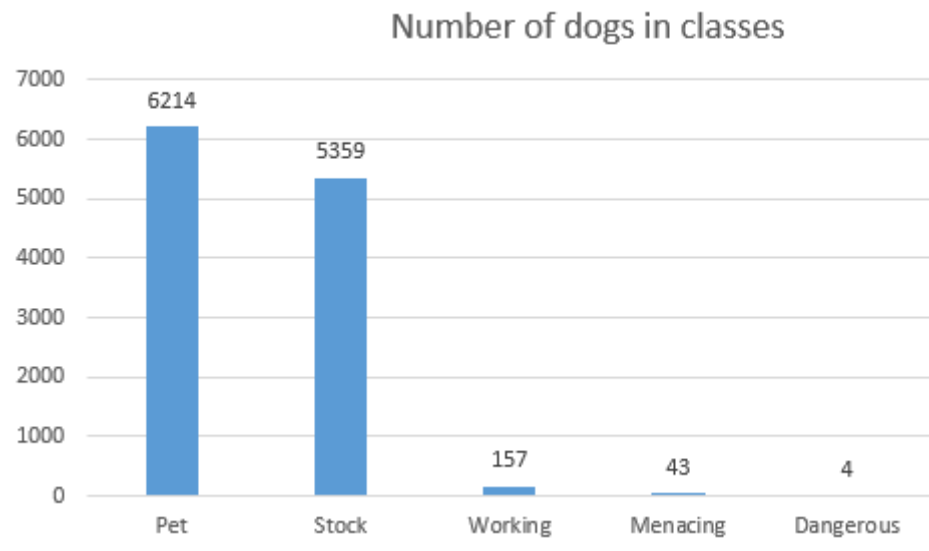
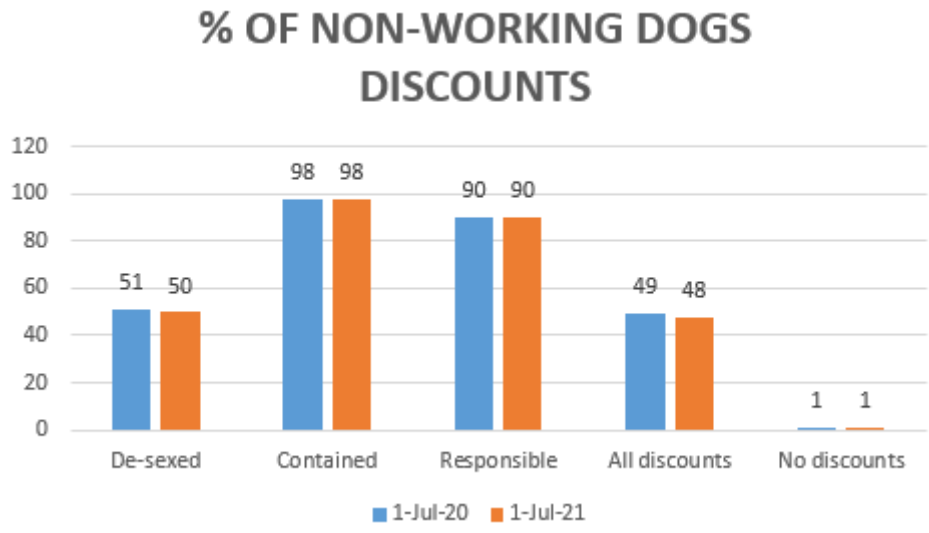
1. The three dogs involved were voluntarily surrendered to Council, and euthanised.
2. The level of responsibility shown by the owners. The dogs are usually kept in a cage, within a contained property. Unfortunately, it was terrible timing that the dogs were let out at the same time as, unbeknown to the owner, the victim was entering the property.
3. The attack took place on the dog owner's property.

4. Cost vs benefit. Public awareness can be achieved through education, as well as via prosecution. Council intends to run another training programme for courier drivers and those in similar jobs, along with re-running the 'signs on gates' promotion.
5. Infringement fines were issued.

The “empty” category above refers to an attack on a pet rabbit, the attack was not observed by any person.

Dog registration fee discounts / classes

The number of non-working dogs that qualified for the discounts is shown in the graph below, and the number of dogs per class, are represented in the following graphs:



[Office reference R/19/7/13572]

Dog education

Dog education is achieved in a number of ways, including during registration process, patrols, site visits, articles and Facebook. The unit also places promotional material in Council's First Edition which is sent quarterly to all ratepayers in the Southland District Council area.

Collaboration

The team are active in the New Zealand Institute of Animal Control Officers, with Mrs Munro being the branch president.

Council has a close working relationship with Furever Homes, who rehome Council's impounded dogs.

Council operates a combined dog control facility with ICC. Five of the 28 kennels are dedicated for use by Council. SDC paid a one-off capital contribution and has an arrangement for paying for ongoing expenses and a daily tariff for each kennel when in use by SDC.

Free microchipping

Council continues to offer free microchipping for dogs registered with it. Council spent \$2,400 on chips in 20/21 (excl. GST).

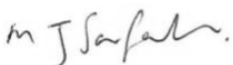
Observations from the dog control Officers

The officers have noticed that there has been a reduction in complaints overall, including wandering and barking dogs. They believe that this has been achieved with regular patrolling and ongoing education with dog owners.

Free microchipping still continues to be well received and they use these sessions to educate new dog owners on the responsibilities of owning dogs and answer any questions they may have. The service increases compliance and the proportion of owners that receive the responsible owner discount.

Where possible providing an educational approach to dog owners has improved actions of many dog owners within the community, whereby they have tried to act more responsibly whilst at large with their dog in a public place.

Te Anau being a tourist hotspot has posed and will continue to be at times a destination where visitors sometimes have a less responsible approach with their dogs. Praise must be given to the local population for being tolerant and communitive with the local officer in trying at times to aid in an educational approach to those less responsible with their dogs.



Michael Sarfati

Manager Environmental Health

Appendix 1 - Statistical Information

CATEGORY	FOR PERIOD 1 JULY 2019 TO 30 JUNE 2020	FOR PERIOD 1 JULY 2020 TO 30 JUNE 2021
Registrations for dogs	Approximately 11,890 as at 30 June 2020	Approximately 11,781 as at 30 June 2020
% pet dogs	52%	53%
Probationary owners	0	0
Disqualified owners	3	1
Dangerous dogs - still active	6	4
Menacing dogs - active	44	43
Infringement notices	100	81
• obstructed a dog control officer or dog ranger	0	0
• failed to comply with bylaw	3	1
• failed to comply with disqualification	0	0
• fail to comply dangerous dog classification	1	0
• kept an unregistered dog	74	45
• failed to keep dog controlled or confined	19	30
• failed to keep dog under control	3	4
• failure to provide proper care	0	0
• failure to comply with menacing dog classification	0	0
• providing false particulars	0	1
• failure to comply with barking abatement notice	0	0
Complaints received	584	384
• dog attacks	31	36
• barking dogs	201	139
• found dogs	93	71
• dog rush/threaten (nil bite)	31	28
• wandering dogs	151	110
Number of prosecutions	0	0