



GREAT LAKE TAUPŌ
Taupō District Council

Taupō District Council
Annual Dog Control
Report 2021/2022
Dog Control Act 1996 Section 10A

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1. Introduction

In accordance with section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 (the Act), territorial authorities are required to report each financial year on the administration of their dog control policy and dog control practices.

The report must include information relating to:

- The number of registered dogs in the territorial authority district;
- The number of probationary owners and disqualified owners in the territorial authority district;
- The number of dogs in the territorial authority district classified as dangerous under section 31 and the relevant provision under which the classification is made;
- The number of dogs in the territorial authority district classified as menacing under section 33A or section 33C and the relevant provision under which the classification is made;
- The number of infringement notices issued by the territorial authority;
- The number of dog related complaints received by the territorial authority in the previous year and the nature of those complaints; and
- The number of prosecutions taken by the territorial authority under the Act.



2. Section 10A(1)(a) Dog Control Policy

Taupō District Council updated the Dog Control Policy in 2021. The objectives of this Policy are:

- To provide for exercise and recreational needs of dogs and their owners.
- To minimise the fear of dogs attacking or intimidating people.
- To avoid danger from uncontrolled dogs entering children's play areas.
- To minimise danger, distress and nuisance caused by dogs.
- To have all dogs registered and micro-chipped.

The principles of the Policy are:

- Taupō District Council places a high priority on ensuring that dogs are registered.
- Taupō District Council recognises that the large majority of dog owners are very responsible and, as a result, the interaction between dogs and the public is generally positive.
- Dogs need the ability to exercise unrestrained and within a social setting. There are designated dog exercise areas throughout the District. Dog owners are encouraged to act responsibly, evaluate the circumstances and then to take all reasonable steps to ensure that their dogs do not cause a nuisance, in these areas.
- Taupō District Council believes that conflicts can be resolved and managed in a way that protects the public, manages the pet population, prevents cruelty to animals and balances the interests of many people in the community.

The Compliance Team is committed to supporting the Policy, Legislation and Bylaws and how it relates to the control of dogs alongside the obligations of the Taupō District Council.



3. Section 10A(1)(b) Summary of Practices

The Animal Control functions of the Dog Control Act 1996 are managed by our Compliance Team. This is made up of:

- A Manager
- A Team Leader;
- A Senior Compliance Officer;
- 6 x Compliance Officers;
- A Pound Keeper Compliance Officer; and
- A Part time Pound Keeper Assistant

The Council Animal Control facility is located at 131 Centennial Drive Taupō along with the Pound/ Animal Shelter. There is also a small Pound/ Animal Shelter located at Turangi, this is not open to the public and houses dogs on a temporary basis only.

This Taupō facility is operated by Council staff and acts as a welfare centre for day to day care of animals as well as being available for companion animals during a major event such as a natural disaster. It has kennelling for 42 dogs, an exercise yard and three amnesty drop cages.

The Council Animal Control facility is co-located next to the Taupō SPCA which we work closely with when dealing with animal welfare issues and rehoming of dogs. Rehoming is also undertaken with other animal rescue centres, pet shops and through our own dedicated Facebook page.

Registration services are available at our Taupō facility as well as low cost micro-chipping, leads and collars.

4. Summary of Animal Control Activity in 2021/22

Insights into a portion of our activity

Our Compliance Officers continue to build great relationships with our community and this is evidenced by a decrease in criticism and a rise in support through various means social media platforms.

Through positive interactions we are able to support our community and offer information and advice in regard to animal control and promote the benefits of compliance.

When we are required to carry out enforcement action we do it with reason and compassion taking into account individual circumstance where appropriate. This creates a safer place for our community and their dogs.

Dog Registration

Dog registration for the 2021/22 year was completed at 98.2 percent of known dogs in the district – taking into account the strain on our community by Covid 19 this should be considered a successful registration period.

We did not apply penalty rates due to the difficulties people faced during the pandemic. Our process involved an initial letter and then a reminder letter and or phone call. If dog owners continue to fail to register their dogs, they were infringed and the dog(s) were then seized and impounded unless they are able to pay immediately and provide proof of payment.

Dog owners have the capacity to make an objection to the infringement and these explanations are considered case by case. If the explanation provided is valid then the infringement was cancelled and we will monitor those owners in the future to ensure compliance continues.

Our Pound

Our pound is a great success story and we continue to monitor our procedures to ensure that best practice is undertaken for the care of dogs.

We focus heavily on the way the facility is cleaned and maintained to ensure that the appropriate precautions are taken to mitigate the introduction of illness and diseases such as Parvovirus etc. We have an ongoing upgrade project taking place over the next 2 years to bring our facility and equipment up to a higher standard for our dogs and our team.



Our Team

The Compliance Team aims to promote responsible dog ownership and deliver the highest quality of animal care & control services through engagement with the people and dogs in our communities.

We continually seek to improve our practices to ensure that the response from Council is fair, measured and in the best interest of the community and our dogs. Our Compliance Officers respond (in most cases) immediately to complaints and everything we do is with the intention of getting the best outcome for all while achieving cooperative compliance.

Staff safety when dealing with dogs and or people is paramount in our operation. Previously compliance tasks saw personnel often working alone and isolated through location and or the ability to get immediate assistance in sometimes difficult and dangerous situations. 2021/22 financial year saw an increase in team numbers which mitigates some safety concerns, provides a better response time to requests for service and facilitates an increase in patrolling hours during our district's busy summer and holiday periods.

Barking Dogs

In Taupō district nuisance barking complaints continue to account for a moderate number of our complaints. Most complaints are resolved once the owner is advised of the issue and our team engages with dog owners to provide advice on methods to resolve the issue.

Roaming Dogs

We have seen a reduction in roaming dog complaints this is in part because our Compliance Officers are more active in the community and our open spaces. Another factor is the team's ability to engage with and provide advice to dog owners and assess why the dog was able to roam.

In most instances if a registered dog is picked up the dog might be returned to the owner with a warning, rather than impounding. This means that less dogs are required to be processed through the pound. Reducing the risk of bringing contamination into our facility and less strain on our team and our resources.

Where we encounter repeat offenders we maintain the ability to enforce through warning notices and or infringements.



Dog Attacks and Aggressive Behaviour

Every reported incident is investigated, and a report completed (including an attack rating matrix). Upon completion of the investigation and reporting, a decision is made as to what action is appropriate in accordance with the requirements of the Dog Control Act 1996.

When an investigation is completed we use a matrix to determine a guideline of enforcement options. We have been able to work alongside NZ Police when we have serious incidents and have been successful in gaining appropriate outcomes. Our primary aim in these matters is the safety of the community and other animals. The final enforcement options taken vary as each incident is assessed on its merits.

Dog Education

Dog education is provided by the Compliance Team and the Dog Smart Programme is presented mainly to primary school and preschool age children and community groups. This has been impacted by the Covid 19 environment and we are looking forward to be able to run our programs again in 2022.

Relevant information for dog owners of their responsibilities are displayed through signage and regular features through the Council information systems, local newspapers and radio advertising.

Our success story for 2020/21

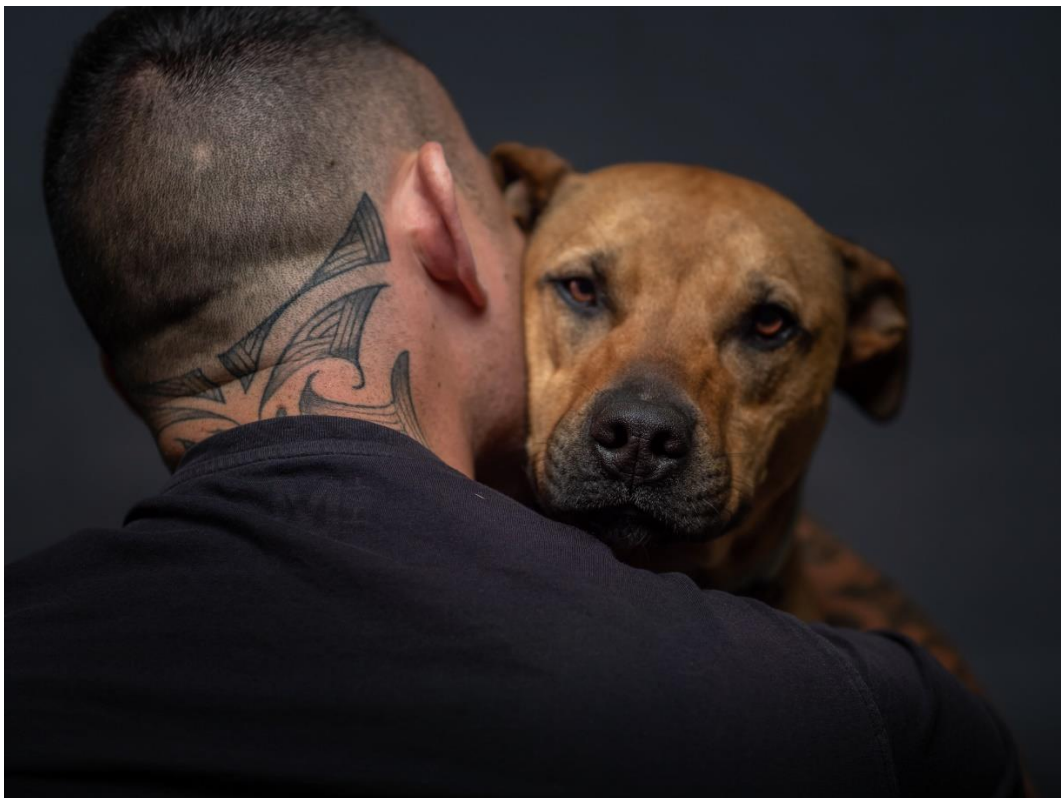
This report is a great opportunity to acknowledge the Taupo District Council Compliance Team for mahi they do to ensure all dogs have a chance to live a happy and healthy life.

The work that they undertake is anything but easy and even more challenging for the team due to the number of dogs that continue to come into our care. In every case where we have dogs that are either found roaming and unregistered, abandoned or surrendered due to owners unable to cope we make every effort possible to ensure they have the opportunity to be adopted.

In this financial year we adopted/rehomed over 150 dogs!

Our success is due to our people and in particular the relentless efforts of our Pound Keeper, Taylor Hori. Through Taylor's commitment to his work and of course the team as a whole, we have had amazing success in reuniting dogs with their owners or adopting dogs nationwide in 2021/22.

We work closely with our community and rescue groups as well as utilising our official Facebook page Taupo District Adopt a Dog to find as many suitable homes as possible. We ensure that we capture great pictures along with a narrative of our dogs that communicates their personality and needs, this captures people attention and inspires people to consider a rescue dog as a pet. The page has a great online presence and now has over 6.1k followers (a rise of over 1k in the last 12 months).



5. Section 10A(2)(a-g)

Dog Control Act 1996 Section 10A Report - End of Financial Year 2021/22		
10A(2)(a)	The number of registered dogs	7,537
	The number of owners	5,168
10A(2)(b)	The number of probationary owners	2
	The number of disqualified owners	3
10A(2)(c)	The number of dogs in the territorial authority district classified as dangerous under section 31 and the relevant provision under which the classification is made:	27
	Section 31(1)(a) Conviction under Section 57A(2)	0
	Section 31(1)(b) Sworn Evidence	19
	Section 31(1)(c) Owner admission	8
10A(2)(d)	The number of dogs in the territorial authority district classified as menacing under section 33A or section 33C and the relevant provision under which the classification is made:	133
	Section 33A	93
	Section 33C	40
10A(2)(e)	The number of infringement notices issued by the territorial authority:	830
10A(2)(f)	The number of dog related complaints received by the territorial authority in the previous year and the nature of those complaints:	
	Animal Care/Welfare	48
	Dogs/Animal Management and After Hours	214
	Attack	100
	Barking	370
	Lost/Found	278
	Pound/Impounding	509
	Registration checks	513
	Roaming/Fouling	378
	Rushing/Aggression	57
10A(2)(g)	The number of prosecutions taken by the territorial authority under this Act.	0

ANNEX A

Dog Control Act 1996 Section 10A

Territorial authority must report on dog control policy and practices

- (1) A territorial authority must, in respect of each financial year, report on the administration of—
- (a) its dog control policy adopted under section 10; and
 - (b) its dog control practices.
- (2) The report must include, in respect of each financial year, information relating to—
- (a) the number of registered dogs in the territorial authority district:
 - (b) the number of probationary owners and disqualified owners in the territorial authority district:
 - (c) the number of dogs in the territorial authority district classified as dangerous under section 31 and the relevant provision under which the classification is made:
 - (d) the number of dogs in the territorial authority district classified as menacing under section 33A or section 33C and the relevant provision under which the classification is made:
 - (e) the number of infringement notices issued by the territorial authority:
 - (f) the number of dog related complaints received by the territorial authority in the previous year and the nature of those complaints:
 - (g) the number of prosecutions taken by the territorial authority under this Act.
- (3) The territorial authority must—
- (a) give public notice, as defined in section 5(1) of the Local Government Act 2002, of the report; and
 - (b) make the report publicly available, as described in section 5(3) of that Act.

Please contact the Taupō District Council Compliance Team if you have any questions regarding this report.