

# Thames-Coromandel District Council Annual Dog Control Report 2023/2024

Section 10A report in accordance with the Dog Control Act 1996

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## 1. Requirement to report

Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 (the Act) requires every territorial authority to report each financial year on the administration of its dog control policy and its dog control practices. The report must address specific information requirements and be publicly notified and available.

The information reported below responds to this legislative requirement and provides the community with information on the Council's dog control policy and practices for the 2023/2024 year.

## 2. Dog control policy and bylaw

On 16 May 2023, the Council resolved to adopt both the Revised Policy on Dogs|Kaupapa mō ngā Kurī (the Policy) and the Dog Control Bylaw 2023|Te Ture ā-Rōhe mō ngā Kaupapa Kurī (the Bylaw).

### Thames-Coromandel District Council Policy on Dogs|Kaupapa mō ngā Kurī

The Policy provides for dogs and their owners in a way that protects animals, wildlife and the community by focusing on the following objectives:

#### Objective 1

Minimising potential danger, distress and nuisance to the community generally and to native wildlife.

#### Objective 2

Encouraging and supporting responsible dog ownership.

#### Objective 3

Enabling people to enjoy the benefits of dog ownership and providing for the controlled exercise and recreational needs of dogs and their Owners.

#### Objective 4

Enabling, to the extent that it is practicable, the public to use streets and public amenities without fear of attack or intimidation by dogs.

### Dog Control Bylaw 2023|Te Ture ā-Rōhe mō ngā Kaupapa Kurī

The Bylaw was designed to ensure dogs and their owners have sufficient opportunities for exercise, recreation and socialisation, while also minimising any potential danger, distress or

nuisance to wildlife or people. The Bylaw was successfully implemented and has generally been well received by our community.

### **Work with the Department of Conservation**

Clause 10 of the Bylaw provides the ability for the Chief Executive to establish temporary area restrictions when considered necessary for the protection of wildlife. Each year, prior to the dotterel nesting season, we work with the Department of Conservation to identify areas that require additional restrictions, so that we can establish them where needed.

## **3. Summary of dog control practices**

The animal control functions of the Act are managed by the Council's compliance team which consists of a manager, team leader, six compliance officers and two pound keepers. An officer is on call at all times and staff are rostered on over weekends.

The information below describes the dog control activities performed by the Compliance Team in accordance with the Policy and Bylaw. It also explains the proactive campaigns we undertook during the 2023/2024 year.

### **Dog Control Activities**

The Council's compliance team proactively patrols and monitors for dog control issues across the district. The patrols are focussed on public places such as beaches, town centres, children's playgrounds, and sports areas. These patrols increase over summer and holiday periods when additional restrictions are in place.

The compliance team responds quickly to complaints (requests for service) about dog control issues including reports of concerns for dog welfare, roaming dogs, excessive barking, dogs rushing and dog attacks on people and animals. Priority response is provided where there is immediate danger to people and animals.

The Council actively use all powers available to confirm whether dogs classified as menacing and dangerous are neutered, and that muzzles are worn when these dogs are in a public place. The team undertakes annual property inspections to ensure every owner of a classified dog is compliant with the requirements of the Act. We also continue to offer a competitively priced microchipping service to assist dog owners with meeting s36A of the Act, which requires a microchip transponder to be implanted in certain dogs.

The team attempt to re-home all dogs that pass temperament testing. This includes advertising dogs available for re-homing on the Council website, social media pages and working closely with adoption agencies. If dogs are unable to be re-homed, the Council use qualified veterinarians to ensure they are euthanised in a humane manner.

### **Proactive Campaigns**

#### ***Annual Registration***

The Council take a proactive approach to remind all registered dog owners of the need to register their dogs annually. This includes messaging via the Council website, social media, and letters to all dog owners. For the 2023/2024 year, our messaging tagline was "Yello! It's dog rego time" (the communications creative is shown below). This messaging was displayed on the side of the compliance officers' vehicles.



Online payments and forms make it easy for dog owners to renew their registration. For the 2023/2024 year, dog owners were able to submit both renewal and new registration forms through the Council's website.

**Lead the Way Campaign**

The annual Lead the Way campaign continues to assist with the promotion of responsible dog ownership across the Thames-Coromandel District. For the 2023/2024 year the team ran an intensive 6-week education campaign from October to December with each week focusing on a different message. These messages were tailored to cover topical summer messaging.

*Messaging Theme:*

- Week 1 – Dog rules change for summer
- Week 2 – Requirement for dogs to be on-leash in public places
- Week 3 – Dogs are prohibited from playgrounds and sports surfaces
- Week 4 – Keeping your dog cool over summer
- Week 5 – Pick up your dog's waste
- Week 6 – Dog control rules on beaches.

Examples of some of the creatives used for the campaign are below:



Throughout the campaign the compliance officers engaged with dog owners who were exercising their dogs in public places, and often provided them with TCDC branded leads, waste bags and brochures to promote our communities' understanding of our dog rules and responsible dog ownership. The team aimed to have 600 educational interactions with the public and the team went over and above, reaching 715. Additionally, the social media aspect of the campaign reached over 79,000 Facebook and Instagram accounts.

#### **4. Dog control statistics as required under section 10A(2) of the Act**

##### **(2)(a) Registered dogs**

There were 5,292 registered dogs in the district in 2023/2024.

##### **(2)(b) Disqualified and probationary dog owners**

There were three new disqualified owners and two new probationary owners in the district. There were two existing disqualified owners and one existing probationary owner, of which disqualification/probationary periods ended during the year.

##### **(2)(c) Dangerous dogs**

There were five dogs classified as dangerous (under s31 of the Act).

##### **(2)(d) Menacing Dogs**

There were 11 dogs classified as menacing under s33A and s33C of the Act.

##### **(2)(e) Infringements issued**

We issued 132 infringement notices over the year. The details of these are shown in the table below.

Offence type and description	Number
Failure to comply with effects of menacing classification	1
Failure to comply with effects of dangerous classification	1
Failure to comply with bylaw/20(5)	1
Failure to implant microchip transponder	4
Failure to keep dog controlled or confined / 52A	29
Failure to keep dog under control / 53(1)	26
Failure to register Dog / 42	70
<b>Total infringements</b>	<b>132</b>

##### **(2)(f) Dog related incidents / requests for service**

There were 1201 incidents / requests for service over the 2023/2024 year. The details of these are shown in the table below.

Category	Number
Dog attack person	32
Dog attack animal	73
Dog aggressive / rushing	84
Dog barking	245
Dog collection	101
Dog fouling	14
Dog loose / uncontrolled	381
Dogs microchipping	81

Miscellaneous dog issue	103
Dog ownership	19
Dog in a prohibited area	11
Welfare check	45
Unregistered dog	12
<b>Total incidents / request for service</b>	<b>1,201</b>

**(2)(g) Dog prosecutions**

There were no prosecutions lodged over the year. One existing prosecution was completed.

**Comparison to 2022/2023 year**

<b>Category</b>	<b>2022/2023</b>	<b>2023/2024</b>
Registrations	5152	5292
Dangerous	4	5
Menacing	6	11
Infringements	159	132
Requests for service	1106	1201
Prosecutions	1	0