Auckland Council Animal Management Annual Report

2016/17

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Auckland Council Animal Management Annual report for the Department of Internal Affairs covers the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017.

This year there have been a total of 37,699 requests for service received by Animal Management where 14,787 were recorded as requiring a priority one response (within one hour). Officers responded to 99.5% of the priority one requests within the optimal time frame, far exceeding our service delivery target of 95%.

100% of the adoptable dogs were re-homed again this year from the Animal Management shelters; this achievement is now considered to be business as usual rather than a target for us to reach. A total of 545 dogs were rehomed from the shelters. This is a testament to the ongoing dedication of the team to re-home every adoptable dog.

Following on from the success of the Menacing Dog Amnesty in 2016, central government provided funding for a nationwide subsidised neutering programme for menacing dogs. The program is designed to support the National Action Plan to reduce the risk and harm of dog attacks, announced by the then Associate Minister of Local Government, Hon Louise Upston in September 2016. An application from Auckland Council was successful to have grants approved for a total of $290,000.

From this funding the TXT2DESEX programme was implemented, allowing council the ability to de-sex a further 1000 menacing dogs over the coming year.

Continual business improvements, through technology and staff development have been a core focus. Animal Management began the process of replacing all current paper forms and processes with automated forms and information flow paths.

These flow processes and calculations built into an app make it simple for staff to use and in turn reduce service response time by removing the double handling of information.

Tablets have been rolled out to the field team to further compliment the automated forms with ease of use for both Officer and customer.

There has been a strategic focus on educating and working with adult at risk workers in the community – provide knowledge and strategies on how to protect oneself against dog attacks or threatening /aggressive dogs, as well as working closely within the communities of high risk areas to increase safety from animal related harm and the further promotion of responsible dog ownership.

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 requires each territorial authority to report on its dog control policy and practices, and provide specific statistical information.

This report acts as a medium for this information, and an update on the progress and processes of the Auckland Council Animal Management unit.

1.2 Regional team

Auckland Council Animal Management is a single regional unit.

This all in-house model includes field and shelter services, supported by a regional dispatch team as well as dedicated specialists.

Auckland Council Animal Management has 104 staff, five shelters, and 46 fit-for-purpose vehicles.

This year has seen a focus to build continuous ways of improving the way we work by further utilising the high level of reporting capabilities and applying further technology and customer focussed business improvement initiatives into our work.

1.3 Auckland Council Policy on Dogs 2012

The Auckland Council Policy on Dogs 2012 provides a single vision and guidance for Animal Management which:

- Aims to keep dogs as a positive part of Auckland life.
- Prioritises compliance and enforcement activities to include:
    • registration and micro-chipping of dogs,
    • de-sexing of uncontrolled dogs,
    • seizure and holding of dogs that threaten public safety,
    • classification of dangerous and menacing dogs, and
    • ensuring compliance with the requirements of classification.

- Identifies the nine key focus areas as Policy Statements, around which this report is based:
    • Responsible dog ownership
    • Dog welfare
    • Community education
    • Dog safe access
    • Registration
    • Dog safe communities
    • Bylaws
    • Funding
    • Monitoring.

1.4   Arrangement of the Report

Following an introduction to the background of the Animal Management department and services, the report utilises the key focus areas named as Policy Statements in the Auckland Council Policy on Dogs 2012, to summarise the 2016/17 year.
Each policy statement is addressed in regards to the achievements and activities of the 2016/17 year, and with projected plans for these focus areas over the 2017/18 year.

The structure of this report follows the similar arrangement of previous annual reports, to allow ease of assessing the success of each of our Policy Statement aims.

1.5   Our Purpose

To ensure that dogs and other animals are sufficiently controlled to prevent harm to the public or public amenity.

This helps to fulfil the overall purpose of the Licensing and Compliance Services Department, of protecting the public of Auckland from nuisance and harm, as well as improving, protecting and promoting the health of the public of Auckland.

1.6   Team services

These goals are achieved via a number of services:
-        Information and education relating to dog control and management
-        Incentives
-        Dog registration
-        Dog access to public places
-        Dog incident prevention (including finding unregistered dogs and the classification of, and enforcement of restrictions on, menacing and dangerous dogs)
-        Complaint response (including aggression, roaming and noise complaints)
-        Shelter services (including lost and found, adoption and micro-chipping).
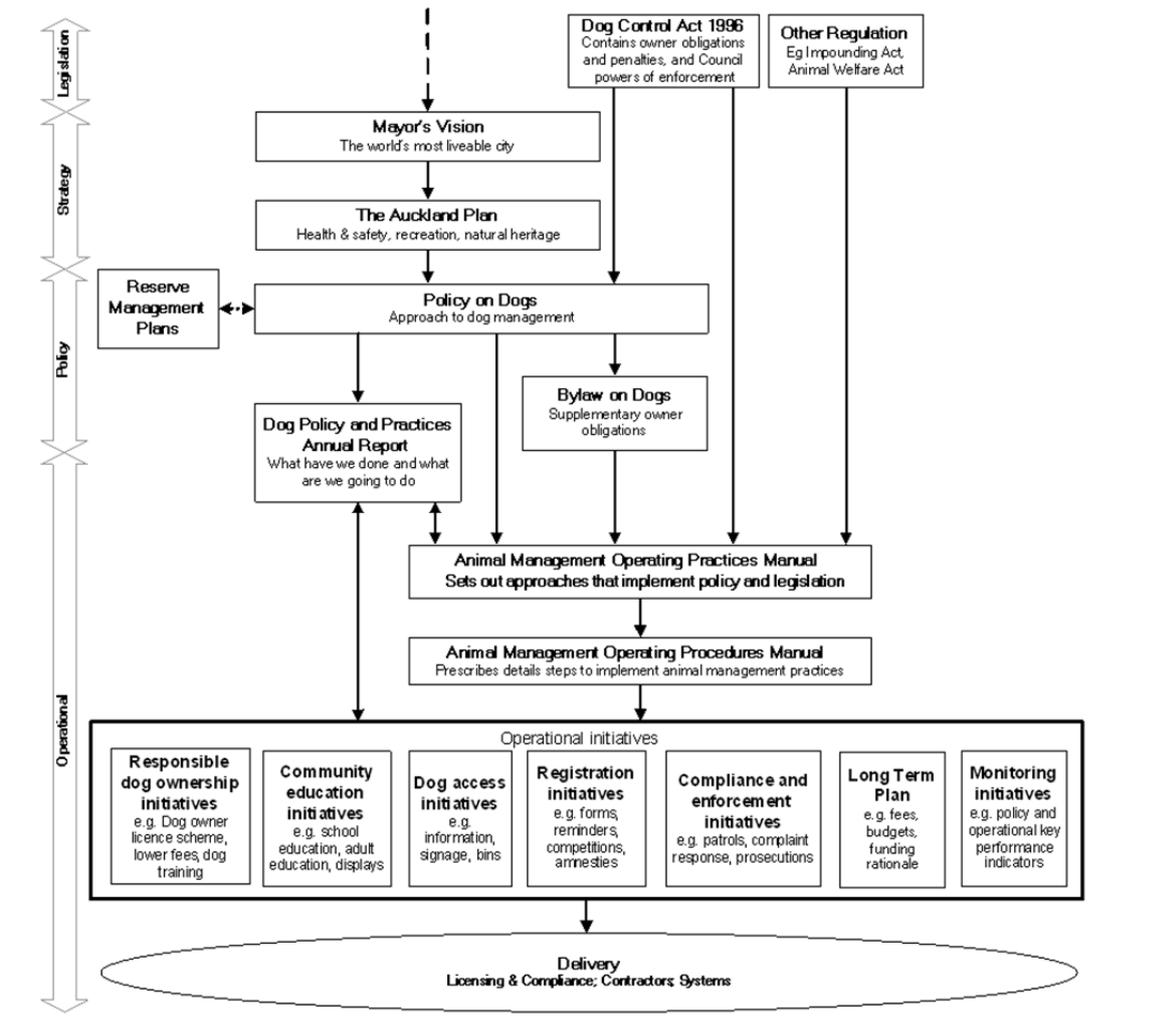
1.7   Animal Management Structure

Figure 1: Animal Management Process Chart

Animal Management manages Waiheke Animal Shelter, Great Barrier Animal Shelter, Henderson Animal Shelter, Silverdale Animal Shelter and Manukau Animal Shelter. Each of these shelters is responsible for the care of impounded animals, managing animals currently the subject of legal prosecutions, and the management of other animals that end in the shelter either by owner surrender or being found wandering at large, and not claimed.

There are also four teams of AMOs: North, Central, East and South. These areas refer to an AMO's 'home base' but their boundaries are fluid and all officers will attend requests for service in whichever area they can be of most assistance.

These teams are responsible for the field services of the department, including but not limited to reactive response to complaints about animals at large or causing nuisance, ensuring compliance with the Dog Control Act 1996, encouraging responsible dog ownership and registration of dogs by presence in public areas and proactive campaigns, as well as community education regarding animal management.

1.8   Animal Management: One Team

With all services in-house, Auckland Council Animal Management is the largest animal control unit in the southern hemisphere.

With 104 staff, five shelters, 46 fit-for-purpose vehicles, a Compliance Specialist and mobile dispatch technology, the aim is to deliver the *best* service, as well as the biggest.

2. POLICY STATEMENT ACTIVITIES-
Auckland Council Policy on Dogs 2012

2.1. Responsible Dog Ownership
"Proactively promote the responsible ownership of dogs, including care and control around people, protected wildlife, other animals, property and natural habitats."

2.1.1 Achievements:
- 24,380 primary dog owners now hold a Responsible Dog Owner (RDOL) licence. This is an increase of 3,742 from last year, ensuring these owners are fully aware of their responsibilities as a dog owner.
- Presence of Auckland Council Animal Management Field and Shelter staff at community events such as Pasifika, Sirens and Sounds, Mangere Community Day and Bark in the Pool to increase public awareness and knowledge of animal management and to attract people to listen to our messages and take up our offers.
- Presence at the Parnell Rose Festival and Auckland Pet and Animal Expo 2016, where we showcased the shelters adoptable dogs and provided dog safety messaging. The ability to register dogs was also available at these events.

2.1.2 Planned Activities:
- Continued presence at various animal-related community events.
- Specific attention will also be dedicated to community groups which may have increased barriers to compliance such as those with financial hardship, differing cultural perception of animal ownership or where English is not their first language.
- We aim to build community resources in order to have a collaborative prevention network throughout each region.
- Report regularly to local boards regarding activities and highlight issues in the area.

2.2 Dog Welfare
"Proactively promote the welfare of dogs."

2.2.1 Achievements:
- 100% of the adoptable dogs were re-homed again this year from the shelters; this achievement is now considered to be business as usual rather than a target for us to reach. A total of 545 dogs were rehomed from the shelters. This is a testament to the ongoing dedication of the team to re-home every adoptable dog.
- 60% of all impounded dogs were returned to their owners, which is consistent with 2015/2016.
- 2846 dogs were euthanased during the year, 73% of which were of menacing breeds/types.
- Relationships have been strengthened with external agencies for adoption of suitable working dogs. Six dogs have been adopted out to working dog groups this year, which includes K9 Detection and Mobility Dogs. One of the rehomed dogs is now working in the Australian Army.
- Presence at Easter Show, Parnell Rose festival and Auckland Pet and Animal Expo to show case adopting dogs from a council shelter.
- Completed an Asset Management Plan (AMP) to determine future forecast planning for the shelters in relation to capacity and renewal projects. The overall strategy is to

meet the demands of growth by providing appropriate facilities in the right regional location, at the right time, and guided by the spatial priorities identified in the Long Term Plan.

2.2.2 Planned Activities:
- Continue to explore further opportunities to keep adoption rates at 100% over the five shelters.
- Trial initiatives to prevent taking dogs to the shelters and increase return to owner rates.
- Implement individual enrichment plans for all section 71 dogs that are held at the shelters.
- Complete the enrichment facility at Silverdale Animal Shelter.
- Design and open a community veterinary clinic and adoption centre at Henderson Animal Shelter using money bequeathed for welfare purpose.
- Finalise a MOU for a joint ongoing de-sexing partnership with the SPCA Auckland, providing reduced cost de-sexing for community card holders.

2.3 Community Education
"Increase public awareness on how to be safe around dogs (target children, families and people working in the community).

2.3.1 Achievements
- Over 1200 at risk workers were reached with sessions on how to enter on to properties safely and how to stay safe around dogs.
- Dog related pages have been included in the website redevelopment project, enabling a much more customer friendly interaction, including improved understanding of dog access areas and more self-service capabilities.
- Present at public events such as 'Auckland Pet and Animal Expo', 'Ambury Park open day', 'The Big Dog Walk with Lots of Dogs', and 'The Big Swim' events

2.3.2 Planned Activities
- Further engagement with community groups, marae, local boards, and religious groups to help engage with 'hard to reach' communities.
- Link with Kohunga Reo and Puna Reo associated with the Marae, build partnerships within the organisation so they can start leading the education messages internally to tamariki and whanau.
- Engage Maori Wardens through the Animal Management Maori Responsiveness plan.
- Further utilise the Pedigree dog story safety app and related collateral – market further and provide information to schools and for take home messaging.
- Identify and increase partnerships with external organisations with an interest in keeping children safe from dogs.
- Further develop relations with Housing New Zealand to enable increased awareness, monitoring of and education about dog related issues in vulnerable areas.
- Improve current at-risk worker presentation content to ensure relative and quality of training, design and produce take away and office reference material
- Provide simple tailored messaging aligned to safety within the home environment. Create means to get these messages into the home as reminders (such as a fridge magnets)

- Work with Education providers to provide education to the most at risk Aucklanders and to increase Auckland Council Animal Management profile.
- Continue presence at public events

2.4 Dog Safety Access
 "Provide dog owners with reasonable access to public places and private ways in a way that is safe to everyone."

Auckland Council is commencing a review on the effectiveness of the Dog Management Bylaw 2012 and the Policy on Dogs 2012. This work will be carried out by the Social Policy and Bylaws Unit and will review:
- dog access rules at regional beaches, foreshore areas and parks
- the effectiveness of the existing bylaw and policy at giving effect to the statutory requirements under the Dog Control Act 1996

This project will be completed before November 2019 to comply with a statutory deadline to review the Dog Management Bylaw and Policy. There are four remaining local boards which have not yet reviewed their local dog access rules. This work will begin following the decision on the current policy and bylaw review.

2.5 Registration
"Identify the owner of every dog."

2.5.1 Achievements:
- The annual dog registration was a success this year with a total of 96 699 registered dogs in the Auckland region as at 30 June 2017. This equates 83.69% registration rate of known dogs. The apparent reduction in registered dogs from last year is due to a massive undertaking of data cleansing that occurred for the migration to SAP CRM for our central and south regions. Until this cleansing occurred, we had a number of duplicate dogs that were both registered and unregistered artificially inflating the population of dogs in the Auckland region.
- The central hub approach for registration renewals continued for 2016/2017 which enabled coordinated annual registration renewal across the regions, and was found to be convenient and efficient for customers in keeping with our customer centric values.
- For the first time ever all regions (all legacy councils) were able to offer online renewal for all customers. Our last legacy area to receive this feature was Manukau City Council, which saw a great uptake by customers.
- The migration of the north west region to the new system saw the introduction of a newly designed payment portal which included a new (no fee) payment option of Account 2 Account, whereby customers can transfer accounts from bank account to bank account by a third party engine. Service delivery of tags for this form of payment resulted in an average 3 working day turnaround, the quickest option for having a tag with the exception of visiting a Council service centre.
- Animal Management Officers in the field have mobile eft-pos machines enabling registration fees to be taken on the spot with registration forms paperless making it easier for customers to do business with us

- Registration capabilities were also offered at all community events that Animal Management attended such as the Auckland Pet and Animal Expo, to increase numbers and encourage compliance.

2.5.2 Planned Activities:
- A proactive campaign, to help increase registration rates in target areas and identify unknown dogs.
- Drive a marketing plan for the 2017/2018 year to keep and maintain dogs a regular topic throughout the year to communicate upcoming RDOL eligibility deadlines and registrations.
- Digital interaction will be a focus this year, encouraging customers to opt for email renewal and look at enhancements to our digital portal for online renewals and new registrations.

2.6 Dog safe communities
"Through encouragement, compliance and enforcement to the fullest extent necessary to ensure public safety and comfort, to change the attitudes and behaviours or irresponsible dog owners, and where appropriate to penalise irresponsible dog ownership."

2.6.1 Achievements:
- Auckland Council has identified and classified a total of 36 Dangerous dogs and 4,195 menacing dogs (85% of which are breed-related classifications). The significant increase in menacing dog numbers (up from 2737 in 2015/2016) is largely down to the Menacing Dog amnesty, which bought a large number of previously unknown dogs forward for classification. Having these dogs registered and council aware of their whereabouts helps to ensure adequate monitoring and control can be enforced on these dogs and their owners.
- 26 dog owners are classified as Probationary, meaning they are not allowed to acquire any new dogs, and 9 people are classified as Disqualified, whereby Animal Management can enforce the removal of all dogs in their care.
- 5,098 infringement notices issued. 2,109 of these were for failure to register a dog.
- A total of 8,323 dogs were impounded over the council's five shelters. This is a reduction of 198 dogs than in 2015/2016. This reduction can be a result of registering dogs in the field and the ability for a dog owner to pay directly to an Animal Management Officer.
- 217 people were prosecuted for breaches of the Dog Control Act.

2.6.2 Planned Activities:
- Pilot a diversion scheme for moderate offences.

2.7 Bylaws
"That broaden owner obligations to minimise dog aggression and nuisance not already covered in legislation."

The local dog access reviews which were scheduled for 16/17 did not going ahead due to the regional review. This was confirmed by the Regulatory Committee in March 2017.

2.7.1 Planned Activities:

Auckland Council is commencing a review on the effectiveness of the Dog Management Bylaw 2012 and the Policy on Dogs 2012. This work will be carried out by the Social Policy and Bylaws Unit and will review:

- dog access rules at regional beaches, foreshore areas and parks
- the effectiveness of the existing bylaw and policy at giving effect to the statutory requirements under the Dog Control Act 1996

This project will be completed before November 2019 to comply with a statutory deadline to review the Dog Management Bylaw and Policy. There are four remaining local boards which have not yet reviewed their local dog access rules. This work will begin following the decision on the current policy and bylaw review.

2.8   Funding

"Ensure adequate funding to maintain acceptable level of services to achieve this policy."

2.8.1 Achievements:

- Established vital informal relationships for future development of sponsorship and partnership opportunities.

2.8.2 Planned Activities:

- Seek further sponsorship, in line with council guidelines.
- Investigate and develop new revenue streams, to allow the continued improvement of service of Animal Management
- Save money by eliminating process waste, with all staff now trained in the Lean business improvement model across Animal Management.

2.9   Monitoring

"Gather information to measure success."

2.9.1 Achievements:

- Mobile dispatch technology has significantly improved Animal Management's capacity to measure success. GeoOp, the dispatch system, allows the capture of information relating to RFS response times, AMO efficiency, travel time, 'hot-spot' areas and a huge number of other meaningful statistics. These are being used to measure efficiency and find trends.
- More robust measurement of shelter statistics has also been implemented, allowing consistent reporting across the sites.

2.9.2 Planned Activities:

- Work is underway to improve shelter data systems to allow greater visibility and communication across the three mainland shelters.
- All Animal Management forms to become paperless on Easyforms and in use in the field.

3 OTHER ACTIVITIES

3.1 Achievements:
- Auckland Council has continued its support of the Dog Management Unit in Samoa, by further assisting with training, and advice. Field and shelter staff were involved in the training and orientation of new recruits to the Samoan Dog Management Unit when they visited Auckland at the end of 2016.
- Animal Management has invested in the development of its staff, with multiple in-house and external training and development opportunities presented over the year.
- Auckland Council has been a major contributor to reviewing and providing feedback for the proposed Draft Dog Control Amendment bill for the Department of Internal Affairs.

3.2 Planned Activities
- There is a drive towards utilising resources, communications and relationships that already exist in the community, and together delivering a better service than we could do alone. This will include partnering with commercial organisations, welfare organisations, local boards and community groups to bring about positive change.
- Continue to be a major contributor in all legislative reviews of the Dog Control Act 1996.
- The 2015-2025 Strategic Plan will be reviewed to determine what is completed and prioritise initiatives. This document continues to help drive the direction of Animal Management, ensuring all activities are striving towards a shared vision. This document sets out key activities, priorities and targets for Animal Management, and helps guide the team towards a world class future.
- Identify and train specific staff in the management of proactive and targeted campaigns.
- Identify and utilise community groups and local channels to identify most effective methods of communicating with targeted areas.
- Animal Management will continue to place emphasis on the importance of de-sexing dogs in the next year, in efforts to stem the flow of dogs entering the shelters. Planned activities include contributing towards a community campaign and continuing with the 'text2desex' campaign for menacing dogs made possible with the national government funding.

4   SUMMARY

The Auckland Council Animal Management team is well established as operating as a single regional Animal Management unit.

Throughout 2015-16 many of the Dog Management Operational strategies have begun to develop and formalise and we will see many come to fruition in the coming year.

In addition to increasing customer satisfaction by providing options for how customers might wish to interact with Animal Management, the move towards online and self service capabilities will also be essential for the continued service delivery levels as the Auckland population increases.

Ensuring that Animal Management is continually improving and remaining at the forefront of technological solutions will enable us to provide exceptional customer service, at the same time as delivering more efficient, more effective and more economical options.

There will also be a strategic focus on educating and working with adult at risk workers in the community – provide knowledge and strategies on how to protect oneself against dog attacks or threatening /aggressive dogs. This will be offered free for companies and community organisations that have workers who enter private properties on a daily basis (e.g. meter readers, Plunket).

The return on investment for animal management will be the having this group of adults who may also be care givers of children and dog owners who can be a valuable tool for taking dog safety messages back to the home and their community connections.

Reducing dog related harm will continue to be the primary focus for Animal Management in 2017-2018.

With an increased commitment to partnerships, community enablement and customer self-service options, 2017-18 is set to really embed the future direction of Animal Management.

5   APPENDICES
Key Data 1 July 2016 – 30 June 2017

5.1   Registration-related data

	TOTAL	2015-2016
Known dogs	**115,544**	114,519
Dogs registered	**96,699**	106,706
% Known dogs registered	**83.69%**	93.2%
RDOL holders	**24,100**	20,638
Classifications		
Probationary	**26**	25
Disqualified	**9**	7
Menacing		
By breed	**3565**	2325
By deed	**630**	412
Combined	**4,195**	2737
Dangerous		
Sect 31(1)a	**14**	13
Sect 31(1)b	**16**	20
Sect 31 (1)c	**6**	7
Total Dangerous	**36**	40

5.2   Request for service data

	North/ West	South	Central/ East	Central/ West	TOTAL	2015-2016
P1 RFS	3561	4397	3880	2949	14787	14835
Responded within 1hr	3861	3554	4363	2941	14719	14711
% Responded within 1hr	99.5%	99.8%	99.2%	99.7%	99.5%	99.2%
Non-priority RFS	6601	4897	5932	5482	22912	25525
Responded within 24hrs	4723	3822	4243	4705	17493	23410
% Responded within 24hrs	71.5%	78.0%	71.5%	85.8%	76%	91.7%
Total RFS	**10481**	**8458**	**10329**	**8431**	**37699**	**40360**

5.3   Request for service breakdown

Animal Management RFS's breakdown by Job Type (From 1st of July 2016 to 30th of June 2017)	
Job Type	**Total Number**
Aggressive dog behaviour to animals	222
Aggressive dog behaviour to people	1053
Aggressive dog behaviour to stock (incl. worrying stock)	66
Barking	8307
Bylaw breach	795
Classification Breach Inspection	54
Dog attack on animals	935
Dog attack on people	816
Dog attack on stock	124
Dog Traps	35
Dog/Stock on Motorway	184
Miscellaneous *	1204
Neuter Uncontrolled Dog	802
Pick up - Dog (contained)	6959
Pick up - Stock (contained)	141
Police/SPCA Assistance	128
Property Inspection	885
PW1 Patrolling Public Areas	177
PW2 Targeted compliance	362
PW4 Preventative stock fence checks	5
Relinquish dog	130
Roaming Dog - General	6804
Roaming Dog - Risk to Public	3774
Roaming stock	1151
Unregistered	2053
Welfare	533
Grand Total	**37699**

* Miscellaneous RFS are requests that require AMO assistance to the public and time travelled for the purpose of council business.

5.4 Compliance data

	Central	North	South	West	Total	2015-2016
Prosecutions						
No.of people prosecuted (note that there may be more than one charge in many of the prosecutions)	53	36	83	45	**217**	197
Infringements						
18 Wilful obstruction of dog control officer or ranger	12	-	6	5	**23**	25
19(2) Failure or refusal to supply information or wilfully providing false particulars	1	-	3	2	**6**	4
19A(2) Failure to supply information or wilfully providing false particulars about dog	-	-	-	-	**0**	3
20(5) Failure to comply with any bylaw authorised by the section	115	44	98	18	**275**	264
23A(2) Failure to undertake dog owner education programme or dog obedience course (or both)	-	-	-	-	**0**	0
24 Failure to comply with obligations of probationary owner	-	-	-	-	**0**	0
28(5) Failure to comply with the effects of disqualification	1	-	-	-	**1**	0
32(2) Failure to comply with the effects of classification of dog as dangerous dog	4	1	-	-	**5**	1
32(4) Fraudulent sale or transfer of dangerous dog	-	-	-	-	**0**	0
33EC(1) Failure to comply with effects of classification of dog as menacing dog	62	13	93	52	**220**	135
33F(3) Failure to advise person of muzzle and leasing requirements	1	-	-	-	**1**	0
36A(6) Failure to implant microchip transponder in dog	3	-	1	-	**4**	1
41 False statement relating to dog registration	-	-	-	-	**0**	1
41A Falsely notifying death of dog	1	-	1	-	**2**	2
42 Failure to register dog	660	287	694	468	**2,109**	1496
46(4) Fraudulent procurement or attempt to procure replacement dog registration label or disc	-	-	-	-	**0**	0
48(3) Failure to advise change of dog ownership	2	-	1	-	**3**	4
49(4) Failure to advise change of address	5	2	1	9	**17**	7
51(1) Removal, swapping, or counterfeiting of registration label or disc	1	-	1	-	**2**	1
52A Failure to keep dog controlled or confined	19	159	149	86	**413**	487
53(1) Failure to keep dog under control	757	355	526	364	**2,002**	1386
54(2) Failure to provide proper care and attention, to supply proper and sufficient food, and to provide adequate exercise	-	-	-	3	**3**	2
54A Failure to carry leash in public	-	-	-	-	**0**	3
55(7) Failure to comply with barking dog abatement notice	6	1	1	2	**10**	2
62(4) Allowing dog known to be dangerous to be at large unmuzzled or unleashed	-	-	-	-	**0**	0
62(5) Failure to advise of muzzle and leashing requirements	-	1	-	-	**1**	0
72(2) Releasing dog from custody	1	-	-	-	**1**	0
TOTAL	**1,651**	**863**	**1,575**	**1,009**	**5098**	**3,383**

5.5   Shelter Data

	Gulf Islands	Henderson	Silverdale	Manukau	TOTAL	2015-2016
Impounded	**(93)**	1878	1900	4545	**8416**	8614
Total returned to owner	**(82)**	1232	1347	2109	**4770**	4599
% returned to owner	**(88)**	60	72	47	**60**	59
% adopted of total dogs (after returned to owner)		28.1	18	28	**14.9**	9.7
% adopted (of adoptable dogs)		100	100	100	**100**	100
Euthanased		407	339	2100	**2846**	3172
% euthanased		21.6	17.8	51.5	**33.8**	30.8
% pit-bull type		60.8	41.9	80.5	**73**	58

* Gulf Island impounding figures have been separated from totals

Gulf Island adoption figures are included within our main shelter figures