

5. REVIEW OF DOG REGISTRATION AMNESTY

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The purpose of this report is to review the effectiveness of the recent amnesty on dog registration.

BACKGROUND

The Council at its meeting on 28 February 2002 approved the implementation of an amnesty on dog registration penalty fees to encourage dog owners who had overlooked or avoided registration for the 2001/02 year to register their dogs without the added \$30 penalty fee. The amnesty was to last for the month of March 2002 and was offered as a last chance to register before the Council's Animal Control Officers called on the owners issuing infringement notices carrying a fixed \$200 fee.

THE AMNESTY

In conjunction with the amnesty, a letter was sent to approximately 3,400 owners of unregistered dogs in the city suggesting that they take advantage of the Council's offer, and warning of the consequences of non registration. A press release by the Council also resulted in a number of articles appearing in local media.

As a result of the amnesty, the number of registrations processed during the month of March increased considerably over recent months and the corresponding month last year. The Council has also received notification from a number of dog owners that their dog has died or is no longer in their possession. Noticeable too were a number of reports back from counter staff that some owners who had not registered for several years were trying to get back on side by taking advantage of the amnesty.

DOG REGISTRATIONS PROCESSED

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2001	225	239	245	184	16	15496	7868	1214	274	269	292	305
2002	313	361	1124									

CONCLUSION

As a one-off initiative to increase registrations, the amnesty would appear to have been successful. To have an amnesty each year would of course provide an incentive for owners who are late registering to delay registration further until the penalty fees come off during the amnesty, so it is not anticipated that the Council would be asked to consider such an amnesty as a regular occurrence.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Council's Dog Control Officers be congratulated on their efforts with the amnesty.
 2. That statistical information relating to dog registration and prosecutions be supplied to the Regulatory and Consents Committee