

Dog and Cat Management Board

Dangerous Dog Training



Government of South Australia

Dog and Cat Management Board

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Dog and Cat Management Board 24 JUNE 2014

Definitions:

The Act	<i>The Dog and Cat Management Act 1995</i>
Trainer	A dog trainer who has relevant qualifications to deliver an approved course of training.
The Board	The Dog and Cat Management Board
Board Secretary	The Board Secretary of the Dog and Cat Management Board
Board Staff	Staff that service the Dog and Cat Management Board
Dangerous dog	A dog that is subject to a control order which requires training in the Act or conditions to resolve behavioural concerns
Dog owner	Registered owner or person responsible for the dog
Positive Reinforcement	Encouraging desired behaviour through the use of rewards (food treats, praise, and play) and discouraging unwanted behaviour by removing rewards.

Policy

1. Policy Statement

Under Section 50(3) of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* dogs that are subject to a Control (Dangerous Dog) Order must complete an approved training course which is defined under the Act as one approved by the Board. This policy sets out the criteria that must be met for the Board to approve a dangerous dog training course.

2. Policy Implementation

a) Board Approval of Dangerous Dog Training Course

Training courses must be approved by the Board to fulfil the requirements of a Control Order under the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* (the Act).

Training courses that meet the following criteria are eligible for approval:

- Employ positive reinforcement training techniques.
- Include no fewer than three consultations.
- The trainer delivering the training course:
 - Has qualifications in dog behaviour.
 - Has experience in dog training.

Applications to the Board for approval of a dangerous dog training course must be made on the 'Dangerous Dog Training Course Application Form' at Attachment A. Applications that meet the minimum criteria as assessed by the Dog and Cat Management Board staff and in accordance with this policy, will be recommended to the Board for approval. A course will be approved for an initial period of 12 months during which time the trainer delivering the course must fulfil the requirements of this policy.

b) Renewal of Approval

In renewing approval, the Board will consider the number of dogs that have been successfully trained by the course and the outcomes achieved. The Board may query with a council if the training provided through an approved course was satisfactory and complied with the dangerous dog order.

Where an approved course has failed to meet legitimate council outcomes, renewal of approval may be denied.

c) Revocation of Approval

The Board may revoke approval of training courses if they no longer meet the required standard. The Board can require that a training course is reassessed due to a complaint from the public or council or if the dogs trained by the course provider do not meet the required outcomes.

3. Council Management of Control Orders – Dog Owners

Councils are responsible for advising dog owners of their obligations in relation to the Control Order. Councils that have placed a Control Order that requires the owner and dog to complete an approved course must make the dog owner aware that they:

- must provide information requested by the council or trainer
- must have the dog assessed by a veterinarian
- must successfully complete the training course
- are permitted to request a second opinion if the trainer determines that the dog cannot be rehabilitated and should be euthanised
- must meet all costs associated with compliance with a Control Order including veterinary and dog trainer costs

Failure to comply with their obligations may result in the Control Order being contravened under Section 55 of the Act.

A council may require the dog to commence a training course within a set time frame, to ensure that the owner cannot delay or ignore the requirement.

If the owner of the dog cannot meet the time frames set by the council officer then the owner is deemed to have contravened the order. Timeframes for the full behavioural modification cannot be set because each dog and owner relationship and capabilities are different and there is no guarantee that a dog completing a training course will not re-offend.

The trainer provider may indicate an estimate of the duration of the program after the first consultation.

4. Dangerous Dog Training Course

The responsibilities of trainers that deliver an approved training course are summarised in the 'Dangerous Dog Trainer Checklist' at Attachment B which is provided to trainers when they are notified that the training course has been approved by the Board. It is recommended that trainers that deliver an approved training course use the Dangerous Dog Trainer Checklist to ensure that they are fulfilling the requirements of this policy.

When contacted by an owner to undertake dangerous dog training, trainers must:

- provide a quote for services (based on a minimum of three consultations)
- provide information, support and guidance about dog training and dog behaviour
- contact the council and seek any relevant information about the attack that gave rise to the order

5. Training Course

The training course must include no fewer than three consultations with the dog and owner. It is recommended that the trainer requires that the owner completes and signs a training agreement prior to beginning the training course.

a) First Consultation

At the first consultation with the dog owner, the trainer must complete and retain the 'Dangerous Dog Training Questionnaire' at Attachment C.

Based on the information provided by the dog owner, the council and their observations of the dog, the trainer must develop a curriculum that will mitigate or resolve the risk that the dog will be involved in a repeat attack.

b) Completion of Training Course

On completion of the training course the trainer must advise the Council as follows:

- the dog owner complied with the training course and risk of the dog attacking again has been mitigated or resolved
- the dog owner did not comply with the training course
- the dog's aggression cannot be mitigated or resolved and euthanasia is recommended

Councils must be advised immediately if a dog owner refuses to meet the costs, or requirements, of the trainer or the veterinarian as they may be in contravention of the Control Order under Section 55 of the Act.

c) Case Reporting

Trainers that deliver an approved training course are required to provide the Board with a case report for each dog subject to a Control Order that they train. A sample Case Report is at Attachment D.

Trainers must provide a case report to the Board no less than 14 days after completion of training. Provision of this information will allow the Board to analyse how dangerous dogs respond to training courses and what may be causing dogs in the community to be aggressive.

6. Dog Owner

Dog owners must:

- comply with a Control Order as directed by council and meet all associated costs including trainer and veterinarian fees
- provide information requested by the trainer or the council
- to the best of their ability, comply with the training course provided by the trainer including training the dog for the prescribed number of hours and only using training techniques recommended by the trainer
- advise the veterinarian that examines the dog, that they are authorised to disclose information about the dog to the trainer and the council

a) Second Opinion/Appeal

Dog owners are permitted to request a second opinion if the veterinarian or trainer recommends to the council that the dog is euthanised.

Dog owners are permitted to appeal a Control Order in accordance with Section 58 of the Act.

7. Veterinarian

It is recommended that a veterinarian that has been engaged to examine a dangerous dog under a Control Order:

- Makes recommendations to the trainer and the council about the dog's prognosis as requested.
- Completes and sign the 'Dog Assessment Veterinarian Report' (Attachment E) form as appropriate.

8. Causes of Aggression

The Board recognises that aggressive or nuisance dog behaviour can result from a physiological illness, learned behaviour or temperament. In assessing dangerous dogs, the Board defers to the trainer and veterinarian as the experts in this field, however does encourage all parties to consider the following in identifying the causes for dog aggression.

a) Types of Aggression

There are many underlying motivations for aggression and in many cases more than one type of aggression will be occurring at any time. The majority of aggression cases have an underlying anxiety disorder. Dogs may display multiple types of aggression at any time. The main types of aggression are:

Type of Aggression	Example
Anxiety-induced	'Fear biters' – generally from incomplete socialisation or previous trauma e.g. a dog that develops a fear of veterinarians etc.
Protective – territorial	Protection of territory
Protective – resource guarding / possessive	Protection of material resources (bed, toys) and owner
Learned	Trained to show aggression. Threat behaviour results in praise
Maternal	Presence of neonates and the hormonal state of the bitch make her prone to aggression
Predatory	Hunting behaviours e.g. prey chasing of cars, joggers, animals
Medical related	Medical condition manifesting in the dog's behaviour
Pain-induced	Dog's response to painful stimulus
Redirected	Separation of dogs during a fight resulting in a bite

b) Medical Condition Related Aggression

Medical related aggression can have many causes and the Board encourages veterinarians to consider this issue when assessing aggressive dogs. The following are examples of some disorders that may give rise to aggressive behaviour:

- **Anxiety Disorder** – the majority of aggression cases are anxiety based
- **Neurological Disorder** – epilepsy, brain tumour brain trauma
- **Metabolic Conditions** – hyperthyroidism, Cushing's disease, pseudo-pregnancy
- **Chronic Pain** – dental disease, arthritis
- **Sensory Impairment** – eye sight, hearing loss

9. Responsibilities

Dog and Cat Management Board	The Board must approve / reject dangerous dog training course applications. The Board will maintain a list of approved training courses
Board staff	Board staff are to ensure that all required documentation is available to the Board to consider an application.
Councils	Councils that place Control Orders that require the owner and dog to undergo an approved training course must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• determine if the requirements of a Control order have been met.
Trainers	Trainers must provide support, advice and guidance to owners of dogs subject to a Control Order. Trainers must also provide information to the Board and Council as requested
Dog Owners	Dog owners must comply with the requirements of a Control Order as determined by the Council

10. References

Beaver, B.V. (1982) '*Clinical Classification of Canine Aggression*', Applied Animal Ethology, vol. 10, pp 35-43

Blackshaw, J.K. (1990) '*An overview of types of aggressive behaviour in dogs and methods of treatment*', Applied Animal Behaviour Science vol. 30, pp 351-365

11. Attachments

Attachment A: Dangerous Dog Training Course Application Form

Attachment B: Dangerous Dog Trainer Checklist

Attachment C: Dangerous Dog Training Questionnaire

Attachment D: Dangerous Dog Training Case Report

Attachment E: Dangerous Dog Training Veterinary Report



Dangerous Dog Training Course Application Form

Trainer: _____

Company Name /ABN: _____

Address: _____

Contact Details:

(p) _____ (m) _____ (e) _____

Training Qualification/s: _____

Experience in dog training: _____

I confirm that (please tick):

- I use positive reinforcement training methods.
- I will not employ training methods, techniques or apparatus that cause a dog pain or anxiety.
- I have read the Board's Dangerous Dog Training Policy and I understand my obligations in training dogs and owners subject to a Control Order.
- I have read and understand Section 50 to Section 58 of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*

I verify that the information I have provided is true and accurate.

Signed _____ Date _____

Additional information or evidence may be requested by the Dog and Cat Management Board (the Board) prior to approval of this application. The Board will collect and store the information you voluntarily provide to enable processing of trainer application. The information will be provided to relevant staff and Board members where necessary. Any personal information provided will only be used for the purpose it was collected and in line with the South Australian Government's Information Privacy Principles. Approval will be for a period of 12 months, unless otherwise determined by the Board.



Dangerous Dog Trainer Checklist

Please ensure that you fulfil the below requirements when training a dog and owner subject to a Control Order. Please contact the Dog and Cat Management Board for guidance and clarification.

Information to be provided to the Trainer by Council

- Information about the attack/harass incident/s
- Time frame for commencement of training

Trainer's initial contact with the dog owner:

- Provide a quote for services
- Organise at least three consultations
- Request veterinary information

First consultation

- Dog owner to sign the Training Agreement (recommended)
- Complete the Dangerous Dog Questionnaire

Completion of training course

- Provide advice to the Council
- Complete a Case Report and provide to the Board within 14 days



Dangerous Dog Training Questionnaire

Trainer Name _____

Owner Name _____

Number of people in household _____ Age/s _____

Number of dogs in household _____

Dog Name _____ Age _____

Sex M F Year desexed _____ Breed _____

Why was this breed acquired? _____

How was the dog acquired? Shelter Pet Shop Registered Breeder Online Friend/ Family Other Breeder Other _____

Size of property where the dog is usually kept Small Medium Large Rural

Enrichment provided Yes No Frequency Daily Weekly Other _____

Exercise provided Yes No Frequency Daily Weekly Other _____

Social contact with dogs Yes No Frequency Daily Weekly Other _____

Training completed previously _____

Date/s completed _____

Puppy pre-school attended? Yes No

Dog response to the following commands when given by owner:

Sit Excellent Average Poor Comment: _____

Down Excellent Average Poor Comment: _____

Here/Come Excellent Average Poor Comment: _____

Heel Excellent Average Poor Comment: _____

Comments: _____



Dangerous Dog Training Case Report

Trainer Name _____

Owner Name _____

Dog Name _____ Age _____

Sex M F Year desexed _____ Breed _____

Type/s of Aggression Exhibited:

Anxiety-induced Protective - territorial Protective - possessive Learned

Predatory Medical related Pain-induced Redirected Maternal

Details/Case Presentation:

Relevant Background/Training Provided

Outcome/Follow up

Advice provided to Council

The dog owner complied with the training course and risk of the dog attacking has been mitigated or resolved

The dog owner did not comply with the training course

The dog's aggression cannot be mitigated or resolved and euthanasia is recommended

Comments

Signed _____ Date _____

Please provide a case report to the Board within 14 days of completion of the training course. The Case Report can be sent by email to domb@sa.gov.au or by post to GPO Box 1047, Adelaide, SA 5001, AUSTRALIA. Attach additional information as required.



Attachment E

Dangerous Dog Training - Veterinary Report

Veterinarian Name _____

Practice _____

Contact (p) _____ (e) _____

Owner Name _____

Dog Name _____ Registration # _____

Council Where the dog is registered _____

Based on your examination, does the dog exhibit symptoms of conditions or diseases that may cause aggression including but not limited to the following:

- Central Nervous System Disease
- Dietary deficiencies
- Epilepsy
- Hydrocephalitis
- Brain Tumour
- Hyperthyroidism
- Head trauma
- Chronic pain

Comments:

Does the dog exhibit any diseases or conditions that should be considered when determining a training course to mitigate or resolve the dog's aggression?

The owner has provided me with permission to discuss the above information with:

- The trainer engaged to work with the dog and owner
- Authorised Officer's from the Council that placed a Control Order on the dog.

Yes No

I give permission to be contacted in relation to this information

Yes No

Signed (veterinarian) _____ Date _____