

Part 3 - Dog Section staff management

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Summary

Introduction

This part of the 'Police dogs' chapter provides information about the role and responsibility dog section members and the recruitment and appointment of dog handlers.

Definitions and role descriptions

These two tables provide definitions and role descriptions relevant to Dog Section members.

Term	Definition
Police dog handler	'Police dog handler' means a Police employee who is undergoing or has successfully completed a course of instruction at the Police Dog Training Centre that qualifies the employee to perform duties as a Police dog handler. Section 4 of the Policing Act 2008 refers.
Trainee dog handler	'Trainee dog handler' means a Police employee who is appointed to a position to train as a dog handler or is otherwise training to be a dog handler.

Role	Responsibilities
National Co-ordinator: Police Dogs	<p>Co-ordinates the development, implementation, maintenance and quality management of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - national operational practice - national training practice - national policy. <p>Manages support functions for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - breeding and the supply of dogs - training.
OC Dog Section	<p>Manages the district dog section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - personnel - service delivery - dogs and resources - district training - quality assurance.
Supervising Instructor: Practice Leader	<p>Manages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - design development and delivery of national training courses - training and qualification of dog handlers - dog training centre resources.
Instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinates and delivers dog training courses at the Police Dog Training Centre - assesses dog teams on courses
Supervisor/Trainer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinates and delivers training for dog teams - supervises dog handlers.
Breeding Services Manager	<p>Manages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - breeding programme - puppy development programme - kennel services - Police dog population.

Recruitment

Recruitment of dog handlers

District dog sections are responsible for promoting dog handling to Police personnel, providing opportunities for staff to identify their suitability for the role of a dog handler, and developing animal care and handling skills.

OC Dog Section should provide opportunities for Police employees to:

- participate in dog training sessions
- work alongside operational teams
- foster puppies and young dogs.

The OC Dog Section should provide prospective handlers with feedback as to their suitability for dog section positions and what skills or knowledge they need to develop to apply for a dog section position.

Prospective dog handlers should:

- identify their interest to the OC Dog Section
- participate in dog training sessions
- work alongside operational teams
- foster a puppy or young dog
- discuss their suitability with the OC Dog Section.

Selection of dog handlers

District dog sections are responsible for the selection and appointment of dog handler positions.

Position descriptions

Generic position roles and accountabilities for dog section positions will be determined by the National Co-ordinator: Police Dogs in consultation with the dog section working group, districts and human resources groups.

Districts will determine other roles and accountabilities for dog section positions in their district that do not relate to the management and deployment of dogs.

Application for dog handler positions

Only permanently appointed Police constables can apply to become dog handlers.

Applications to become dog handlers may be accepted from permanently appointed employees and must be submitted in accordance with '[Appointments process](#)' chapter.

Filling a dog handler vacancy

This table shows the different stages of filling a dog handler vacancy.

Stage	Description
1	Police employees interested in dog handling role contact <u>OC</u> Dog Section to express interest and arranges to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - participate in dog training sessions - observe operational teams - foster a puppy or young dog (if and when one is available).
2	The <u>OC</u> Dog Section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assesses the suitability of the applicant to participate in training, observe operational teams and or foster a puppy or young dog - provides opportunities for the applicant to participate as above - provides applicant with feedback as to their suitability for dog section position and identify what skills or knowledge they need to develop to apply for a dog section position.
3	The applicant applies for advertised position and goes through the selection and appointment process.
4	The trainee dog handler is appointed to the vacancy as a 'trainee dog handler' and attends the initial dog handler training programme.
5	When the trainee dog handler graduates as an operational handler they are then appointed as an operational dog handler.

Applicant's ability to house a Police dog

Applicants for dog handler positions must demonstrate ability to kennel and care for a Police dog at their home in the manner required by dog section policy and practice.

Home location

Applicants must live within a radius from their home station to ensure:

- effective response to calls for service when on-call
- efficient training practice
- efficient administration and logistics for moving dogs, vehicles and equipment.

The OC Dog Section, in consultation with their District Commander, is responsible for establishing the distance parameters (radius) that meets the needs of their respective district or area and ensures an effective and efficient use of Police resources.

Relocating residence

Where a dog handler moves residence, the new residence must be located within the designated radius and

comply with all homing requirements. Dog handlers must advise the OC Dog Section of their intention to move residence as soon as possible before the move. The OC Dog Section will consider the suitability of the home in terms of policy relating to location and ability to house a Police dog.

Resources

Dog vans

Applicants must demonstrate ability to keep a dog van at their home in accordance with the '[Police vehicle management](#)' chapter.

Other dogs on handler's property

Applicants must inform the OC Dog Section that they have other dogs (whether or not they are the owner) on their property.

They will need to demonstrate to the OC Dog Section that other dogs on a handler's property will not interfere with the care development and training of a Police dog in the home environment. That decision will be made by the OC Dog Section.

Where the OC Dog Section identifies that another dog in the ownership or care or on the handler's property does or could interfere in the care development and training of a Police dog, then the handler, trainee or applicant must either re-home that other dog, or ensure that it is managed in a manner as directed by the OC Dog Section.

If the handler, trainee or applicant does not comply, then the Police dog must be removed from them and the matter managed in terms of '[Performance management](#)' chapter.

Care and maintenance of Police dogs

Police dog handlers must care and maintain all Police dogs allocated to them in accordance with the [New Zealand Police Dogs related chapters](#) and other dog section policy and good practice.

Inspection and reporting

OC Dog Section must view the applicants housing to ensure:

- suitability of the property for the kennelling and safety of a Police dog
- that the care of and welfare of a Police dog can be provided at the property
- ability to park a dog van in accordance with '[Police vehicle management](#)' chapter.

Where an applicant's property does not comply or the applicant will be unable to care for a dog as required, the applicant must be informed in writing and advised what is required to comply.

Training

Qualification

Trainee dog handlers must complete the prescribed dog training courses and successfully meet all course requirements to be appointed as operational dog handlers.

Appointment to dog section

Trainee dog handlers may be transferred to the district dog section at any time prior to their initial training course at the Dog Training Centre, at the discretion of the district commander.

All trainee handlers should be transferred to their district dog section on commencement of the initial training course at the Dog Training Centre.

Policing duties while training

All trainee dog handlers and operational handlers undergoing full-time training may be required to carry out other policing duties in addition to the training of a Police dog.

The OC dog section in consultation with the district will assign duties.

Where a dog handler or trainee dog handler is temporarily without a dog that is suitable for training, the handler should be assigned other suitable duties either in the dog section or on other district policing duties, or a combination of both.

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