



**National Council of  
Women of New Zealand**

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Wahine O Aotearoa

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**Submission to the Local Government and Environment Select Committee on the  
Local Government Law Reform Bill**

The National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) is an umbrella organisation representing 38 Nationally Organised Societies. It has 32 branches throughout the country attended by representatives of those societies as well as some 150 other societies, and many individual members. The Council's function is to work for the well-being of women, the family and the community at local, national and international levels through research, study, discussion and action.

NCWNZ has made numerous submissions over the years on Local Government legislation, on dog control and on litter.

**Introduction**

Most changes seem to be straightforward and would appear to have no serious consequences, but are needed to clarify details of legislation.

We would like to comment specifically on the following:

**PART 1 – Amendments to Dog Control Act 1996**

NCWNZ has made numerous submissions over the years on the topic of dog control, including one in 2004 supporting the need for territorial authorities to have policy.

**Clause 8 New section 32A inserted, and  
Clause 9 New sections 33EA to 33EC inserted**

It seems very sensible for classification of dangerous dogs and menacing dogs to extend all over New Zealand. We agree with the insertion and definitions.

**Clause 11 New sections 71A and 71B inserted**

We assume the dog control officers will work to the same basic requirements for water, food and shelter that are used by the SPCA, so that there is no conflict between SPCA inspectors and dog control officers employed by a territorial authority. Perhaps there needs to be a definition of 'proper and sufficient food, water and shelter' in the legislation.

**PART 2 – Amendments to Litter Act 1970**

Many of the amendments include dramatic increase in fines. While this will be a deterrent when the high fines and the prosecution changes are known, many people, especially the young, will not be able to pay. This will leave the justice system with more unpaid fines. Perhaps picking up litter over a period of time might be a more appropriate penalty, the length of time varying with the severity of the offence.



**Clause 21 New sections 19A and 19B inserted**

These changes to the Litter Act will be useful for local bodies to take action as there will be no need to prove that the defendant intentionally committed the offence. This will make the whole court argument cleaner and easier, with a higher probability of successful prosecution. NCWNZ supports this change.

**PART 3 – Amendments to Local Electoral Act 2001**

We agree with the amendments, which we perceive to be corrections.

**PART 4 – Amendments to Local Government Act 2002****Clause 28 Status and Powers**

One member suggested that making donations outside of the local body territory especially for emergency relief could not be done, unless it came from a separate Fund such as a mayoral relief fund.

**Clause 39 New sections 158 to 160A substituted**

Under the substituted 160A a bylaw not reviewed within specified time frame will be revoked. The consequences of this could put Council under undue pressure with constantly changing requirements and increasing responsibilities being downloaded from Government. An overworked council, particularly a smaller one, could overlook renewal of a bylaw and be placed in a position of finding some had expired. Councils need to use ratepayers' money wisely and special consultative procedures do cost to administer. There is no point in reviewing a bylaw simply for the sake of doing so.

**PART 5 – Amendments to Local Government Act 1974****Clause 52 Removal of abandoned vehicles from roads**

This amendment will assist local authorities with the daily increase in the number of abandoned cars in our towns and cities. Removal and disposal is a huge problem and at present is subsidised by the ratepayers collectively. A claim against the owner can also be costly. A small additional charge at licensing time paid over to each local Authority would be another means of collecting revenue to pay for crushing.

**Conclusion**

NCWNZ thanks you for the opportunity to comment on this Bill. Unfortunately the timing of the document did not allow us to undertake full consultation with our branch members throughout the country, or to research and prepare an in depth submission.

Christine Low  
**National President**

Queenie Ballance  
**Acting Convener, Public Issues Standing Committee**