

# “Special Circumstances” dogs

**There are certain groups of dogs which receive special consideration under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.**

## **Disability, Guide and Hearing Dogs**

### **Guide Dogs**

Guide dogs are used to lead legally blind persons. They must be given access to all public areas including public transport. Guide dogs are provided by two organizations, the Guide Dogs SA.NT and The Royal Society for the Blind. The Dog and Cat Management Board accredits guide dogs on their advice. A guide dog in training is a guide dog for the purposes of the Act. Guide dogs and dogs being trained to guide are to be given free registration. Guide dogs in training wear a distinctive coat and guide dogs are generally seen in public wearing a harness.

### **Hearing Dogs**

The only hearing dogs in South Australia are trained by the Lyons Hearing Dog Association. They hold the register on behalf of the Board and dogs are accredited by the Board on the advice of Lyons. Any dog that is a bona fide hearing dog (or hearing dog in training) will have a certificate issued by Lyons Hearing Dogs. Hearing dogs, like guide dogs, have unlimited public access and are given free registration.

### **Disability Dogs**

These dogs are eligible for free registration and have the same access rights as guide dogs. The following criteria must be satisfied for a dog to be accredited as a disability dog.

Any person wishing to apply for disability dog accreditation must prove to the Dog and Cat Management Board that they cannot carry out functions as an able bodied person without the aid of a dog. For example, the dog may pick up dropped items, empty the washing machine, provide warning to it's owner if they are about to have a diabetic seizure or some other function on which its owner depends.

- The dog must not be a prescribed breed. (Japanese Tosa, Filo Brasileiro, Dogo Argentino, Presa Canario, American Pit Bull).
- The dog must be of sound temperament. The dog's temperament and suitability for public access (for example public transport and restaurants) must be assessed and verified by an assessor appointed by the Dog and Cat Management Board.
- The dog must observe any conditions specified by the Dog and Cat Management Board.

### **Evidence Required for the Board**

- The applicant must provide the Board with a letter from both a General Practitioner and a Specialist who are treating the person, stating both the illness and details of the disability and certifying that the dog is necessary for them to carry out the activities of daily living.
- The dog must be assessed for its temperament and capabilities by the accredited trainer appointed by the Dog and Cat Management Board.

### **Evidence required by the Council**

For a dog to be afforded the rights of a disability dog, the owner must produce a certificate from the Board stating that this is the case. These dogs must be registered at no charge.

For further information on guide, hearing and disability dogs, please contact the Dog and Cat Management Board.

### **Dogs owned or used by the Crown**

Police, customs, the air force, army and the SES all have dogs. These are not dogs for the purposes of the Act so do not need to be registered at all and cannot be prosecuted, no matter what they do. (If such a dog attacks a person, the person can sue the officer or the police for undue force, not seek to have the dog put down. Similarly, councils cannot impose orders on these dogs.)