



Department of
**Child Safety, Seniors
and Disability Services**

Mr Kevin Picker
Centre for Service and Therapy Dogs Australia Pty Ltd
26 Poplar Street
CAULFIELD SOUTH VIC 3162

Email: kevin.picker@dogsforlife.com.au

Dear Mr Picker

RE: Notice of Completion of Review under section 23(3) of the *Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dog Act 2009* (the Act)

I refer to the above matter and confirm that I have undertaken a review of Centre for Service and Therapy Dogs of Australia Pty Ltd (CSTDA) as an approved training institution under the Act.

When undertaking the review, I had to determine whether CSTDA continues to be suitable for approval under section 14 of the Act. In doing so, I considered the factors that I must and may have regard to under section 23 of the Act. I consider that CSTDA has demonstrated compliance with the requirements under the Act and remains suitable for approval as a training institution in the category of assistance dogs.

I note the following:

Section 12 of the Act and Regulation 4 of the *Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Regulation 2019*

The identification procedure for handlers and trainers outlined in section 12 of the Act specifies that a person complies with the identification procedure by ensuring the assistance dog accompanying the person is wearing an identifying coat that identifies the dog as a guide, hearing, assistance or trainee support dog and prominently displays the approved badge.

The image of CSTDA's identifying coat submitted as part of its response to the Notice of Review shows that the term 'working dog' is used on the identifying coat issued by CSTDA rather than 'assistance dog.' Accordingly, the identifying coat issued by CSDTA is not compliant with section 12 of the Act.

I recommend that CSTDA updates the identifying coats issued to handlers to state the dog is an assistance dog. This change will mean that CSTDA's handlers can comply with the identification procedure and engage their public access rights under the Act.

Section 31(2)(c) of the Act and Regulation 6 of the *Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Regulation 2019*

CSTDA's complaints guidelines lists the Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships' Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dog (GHAD) Team as an external agency a handler can escalate a complaint to. I recommend CSTDA update these details to the Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Team, Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety and include the team's contact phone number (07 3097 7203) and current email address (ghad@qld.gov.au).

Congratulations on the success of the review. Your commitment to ensuring people with disability who rely on assistance dogs are afforded high quality dog training services and support is to be commended.

I look forward to conducting the next review before **13 November 2027** and am pleased to enclose an updated *Certificate of Approval* for your records.

If you have any further questions, please contact Hayley Jackson, A/Principal Advisor, GHAD Team at ghad@qld.gov.au or on 07 3097 7203.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David McMurtrie', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David McMurtrie
**A/Director, Safety & Quality
Disability, Seniors and Carers
Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety**

13/11/2024