

# SDT Training News



**SERVICE DOG  
TRAINING**

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## PUBLIC ACCESS TEST©

The Public Access Test is what WE need to work towards so you and your dog pass the equivalent of the 'Assistance Dogs International public access test©'. Prepared by ADI back in 1997, the PAT is used the world over as the 'yardstick' against which service / assistance dogs are measured. It is a great and useful document—the goal towards which we will prepare our dogs and clients for what lays ahead—a public scrutiny that ensures that your dog is under effective control at all times, and is sociable, stable and unobtrusive in ANY environment or situation.

That may seem a big task, but we have the TOP DOG USA programme and material to take us closer to that goal. They have their own suitability test but it is very much aligned to that from ADI. Top Dog USA only conducts tests in the USA, but that isn't something that will stop SDT!

We announce with great pleasure that we have some Training Assistance / Aids (TA's) joining SDT, and an induction program is planned for the end of May. Hopefully you will learn more about these new helpers in the next edition, [with hopefully a photo] a write up on what was discussed...and our plans.

In the meantime, focus remains on the bottom line—the dog is safe in public with a handler who demonstrates their ability to control the dog at all times.

Back to the ADI© test, listed below are the main assessment criteria of the test:

- Controlled unload out of a vehicle
- Approaching a building
- Controlled entry through a doorway
- Heeling through the building
- Six foot (1.80m) recall on lead
- Sit on command
- Down/drop on command
- Noise distraction
- Restaurant
- Dog taken away by another person
- Off lead control
- Controlled unit—exit the building
- Controlled load of vehicle
- Team relationship

From a trainer's point, there are key issues which can be worked on without assistance or help from SDT. These are socialising your dog to noises, sights—and did you know that sitting near a roundabout and have your dog calmly lay next to you is a great way to start. Roundabouts are usually noisy with lots of moving things such as trucks, cars, motorbikes, people, bicycles, and sometimes trams and buses. .

Find a spot, make yourself comfortable and have your dog on a proper leash, and if need be ask a helper to hold the dog. Keep a comfortable distance from the

road—and as the dog's comfort level increases, go closer gradually, with the aim that the dog ignores things around it and relaxes. However, always remain a safe distance from the road.

Alternatives could be busy intersections, bus terminus or interchange.

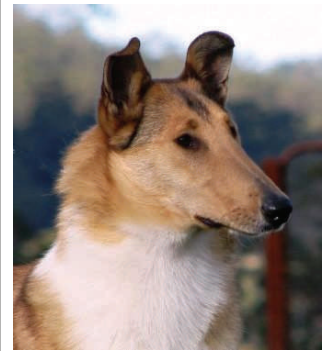
Another of those magic spots is near a large shop or shopping centre, with people coming / going, trolleys, doors that open and close, kids running in or out etc. As always, keep a safe distance and only bring your dog closer to the source of noise and activity as it's confidence grows. NEVER push a dog towards something that makes it anxious as the that will only increase anxiety. Call us to discuss how to make a start with informal socialisation and 'bomb' proofing your dog.

The next issue will have some hints on addressing some of the key qualifiers. Enjoy your training — and the do it at any time, anywhere, frequent short bursts gives better results. Training should be fun for you and your dog; if the dog enjoys it, it will want to learn more! Call us as needed for help!

The basis of this article is the 'Assistance Dogs International Public Access Test©' which is used by most in the service / assistance dog training industry as the standard to be achieved.

## UPDATE VARIOUS

I think it is really great how we are getting support from breeders that wish to help our clients, and Sorell is one of these special dogs—going to a new home with a young family in Melbourne, and travelling all the way from Tassie to find her new home! We will look after her Mim & Sue, I promise and many thanks for your support and welcome to Sorell. I am sure her new family will be wrapped with her!



### Accreditation Update:

*Not a lot of news, following submission of QLD accreditation application, we have been advised that it will be considered. They sound very professional. We are working on a few things for our local representation, but I think (regretfully) that this will be in the too hard basket for a while yet. Patience and persistence are a must....so stick with us!*

**COOKIE'S TIP: Here's one for all you short pooches out there. Mum taught me to turn on the touch lamp that was on the floor so I could reach it but then she couldn't reach it, so mum got a small foot stool to put it on and I do a 'Paws Up' to reach it. So now in the middle of the night when I need to go 'Potty' I turn on the light. Aren't I just so clever!**

