

The Australian Wild Camel Corporation

Operational Policy: Certified Support Dogs and Assistance Animals

Date: 21/03/2024

Policy Overview:

This policy provides guidance on the conditions under which certified support dogs and assistance animals are permitted at Summer Land Camels, due to the unique considerations of biosecurity and the potential impact on camels and camel rides. Our goal is to ensure the safety and well-being of all our animals, staff, and visitors, including those who require the aid of assistance animals.

Background:

The Australian Wild Camel Corporation (TAWCC), trading as Summer Land Camels, provides an inclusive environment while also maintaining the highest standards of safety and animal welfare. Due to the sensitivity of camels to the presence of other animals, especially dogs, and the potential for biosecurity risks, strict protocols are necessary.

Purpose:

To establish a clear and consistent policy for the access of certified support dogs and assistance animals at Summer Land Camels, ensuring compliance with relevant disability discrimination laws and the protection of our biosecurity interests.

Policy Specifics:

Admission of Certified Support Dogs and Assistance Animals

Only animals certified under the Guide, Hearing, and Assistance Dogs Act 2009 (Qld) (GHADA) or equivalent accreditation bodies are permitted.

Such animals must have completed a Public Access Test ensuring appropriate behaviour and hygiene in public settings.

Animals must be easily identifiable with an official harness, coat, or badge/tag as per GHADA guidelines.

All assistance animals and support dogs must be always under effective control by their handler.

Guidelines for Visitors with Assistance Animals Not Certified Under the GHADA at Summer Land Camels

TAWCC recognises the importance of assistance animals in supporting individuals with disabilities, even when such animals may not be certified under the Guide, Hearing, and Assistance Dogs Act 2009 (Qld) (GHADA). To ensure that we adhere to the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (DDA) while maintaining our biosecurity standards, the following guidelines have been established for such assistance animals:

Professional Verification

Visitors seeking access with an assistance animal not certified under GHADA must present a letter from a registered health professional (such as a medical practitioner, psychologist, occupational therapist, or diversional therapist). This letter must state that the visitor has a 'disability' as defined under the DDA and that the effects of the disability are alleviated by the assistance animal. The letter should be on official letterhead and include a contact number for verification.

Training and Behavioural Standards

A statutory declaration or certification from a recognised animal trainer or organisation must be provided, confirming:

- The breed and identification details of the animal. A council dog registration may be accepted as proof of the breed.
- The training the animal has received to respond to control and assistance commands.
- The animal's toilet training for public spaces.
- The training the animal has received to ensure hygiene and behaviour are appropriate for a public setting.
- That the animal's demeanour is suitable for public interaction, without causing fear, disturbance, or harm to others.

Alternative Documentation

If the animal has been trained by a person or organisation not officially recognised, visitors should submit alternative documentation. This documentation should demonstrate that the animal has been trained to:

- Alleviate the effects of the visitor's disability.
- Meet the standards of hygiene and behaviour equivalent to those required by the Public Access Test (PAT).

Application of Guidelines

These guidelines will be applied with consideration to individual circumstances and the overarching need to ensure the safety of our camels and all visitors to Summer Land Camels. We reserve the right to request additional information or documentation as deemed necessary to establish that the animal in question qualifies as an 'assistance animal' under the DDA.

Please note that Summer Land Camels has the discretion to modify these guidelines as necessary to uphold our biosecurity measures and operational practices. All assistance animals must be managed in such a way that does not compromise the well-being of our camels, other animals, or visitors.

Biosecurity Measures

Prior to entry, handlers must provide documentation proving their animal is free from diseases and has not been exposed to environments that may introduce pathogens to our camels.

Handlers are required to ensure their animals do not come into direct contact with the camels or enter the camel riding areas or camel pens.

Access Restrictions

Certified support dogs and assistance animals are restricted from certain zones within the farm to prevent any distress or disruption to the camels and ongoing farm operations.

Specific pathways and facilities will be designated for visitors accompanied by assistance animals to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all visitors.

Visitor Responsibilities

Handlers of assistance animals must collect and dispose of their animal's waste properly. In the event of any disruptive behaviour or non-compliance with this policy, the handler and their animal may be asked to leave the premises.

Compliance with Legislation

This policy complies with the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld), the Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009 (Qld), and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth).

Summer Land Camels will not discriminate against persons with certified support dogs or assistance animals and will provide equitable access within the constraints of this policy.

PRE-APPROVAL PROCESS:

Visitors with assistance animals are encouraged to contact Summer Land Camels prior to their visit to ensure all requirements are met and to receive pre-approval for entry with their animal.

Pre-approval requests can be sent to info@summerlandcamels.com.au with sufficient time allowed for assessment before the intended visit date.

Definitions and Abbreviations

Definitions and abbreviations of key terms used in this policy are as per the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld) (ADA), the Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009 (Qld) (GHADA), or the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (DDA).

Camel Riding Areas (CRA): Designated zones within Summer Land Camels' premises where camel riding activities are conducted. These areas are clearly marked and communicated to visitors to Summer Land Camels. The CRA designation is dynamic and may be modified at the discretion of Summer Land Camels staff based on operational needs or safety considerations.

Camel Pens (CP): Enclosures or designated spaces allocated for the housing and care of camels at Summer Land Camels. Like CRA, the layout and designation of CP are communicated to visitors and are subject to change as deemed necessary by Summer Land Camels staff to ensure the well-being of our animals and the safety of staff and visitors.

Limitation of Liability for Assistance Animals

The Australian Wild Camel Corporation prioritises the safety of all our guests and animals. However, handlers of assistance animals are responsible for the control and well-being of their animals at all times while on the premises. TAWCC will not assume liability for any injuries, harm, or accidents that may occur to an assistance animal during their time on the premises, including, but not limited to, incidents in camel riding areas or camel pens. Handlers are advised to exercise caution and follow all guidelines to prevent such occurrences.

Disclaimer

While this document has been prepared with care, it contains general information and does not offer legal, professional, or commercial advice. TAWCC accepts no liability for any external decisions or actions taken in reliance on this document

Approved By

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