



The peak body for security professionals

Submission:

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement:

Inquiry into an Australian Standard for the training and use of privately contracted security and detection dogs

20 December 2019

About the Australian Security Industry Association Limited (ASIAL)

ASIAL is the peak national body representing security professionals in Australia. The Association is comprised of over 2,600 members ranging from large corporate entities to small and medium sized operations.

ASIAL is:

- ✓ a Registered Organisation of Employers under the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009*
- ✓ an Approved Security Industry Association under security legislation in the Australian Capital Territory, Queensland and Victoria
- ✓ an accredited Registrar under the Australian Communications & Media Authority (ACMA) *Cabling Provider Rules*



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Introduction

The Australian Security Industry Association Limited (ASIAL) welcomes the opportunity to provide comment to the Inquiry into Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement: Inquiry into an Australian Standard for the training and use of privately contracted security and detection dogs.

Security detection dogs can be used in a variety of operational scenarios to indicate the presence of drugs and explosives. This is achieved using an appropriately trained canine and handler team indicating the presence of an odour which the dog has been trained to find in the operational environment in which they have been trained to work.

In the United States, United Kingdom and throughout Europe, contracted security and detection dog service providers are used extensively to support law enforcement agencies in proactively screening crowds at sporting events, concerts and other mass gathering venues.

In a changing security environment, demand for detection dog services as a risk management strategy is greater than the capacity for law enforcement agencies to fulfil them given current resources. As a result, there is demand for suitably qualified and accredited private contractors to help meet this demand.

Dogs form part of a broader security strategy when it comes to event security.

Development of a standard for security detection dogs would to be bring Australia into line with international best practice by developing a document which specifies the standard for the training care and use of detection dogs.

Introduction of a standard would provide a framework by which the use of security dogs can be measured and continually improved. Establishment of a standard for detection dogs would seek to improve the consistency and performance of their use and to optimise their combination with electronic detectors.

a) Adequacy of current Australian arrangements, and the potential benefits of introducing a National Standard;

Current arrangements in place governing the use and deployment of security detection dogs is inadequate, with significant variations across jurisdictions.

Development of a consistent national standard would provide a framework around which providers of contracted security and detection dogs could be measured against to ensure they are delivering an effective and trustworthy service.

There is a Code of Practice for keeping security dogs in South Australia, an Animal Welfare Code of Practice No. 9 – security dogs in New South Wales, the Domestic Animals Act in Victoria with dangerous dog classification for life for all guard dogs, and legislative instruments in other jurisdictions with predominance on domestic animals with little guidance or control over security working dogs.

Dog handler licensing does exist in many jurisdictions under their jurisdictional security licensing regime with limited training requirements and some guidance associated with basic dog welfare. National training competencies, CPPSEC3113 – Handling dogs for security patrols (approved in January 2019) is to be applied in some jurisdictions for the licensing of dog handlers.

There are little or no guidelines for the operation, training and/or management of security detection dogs.

Previous efforts through Standards Australia to develop a standard for security detection dogs have been frustrated as a result of objections raised by NSW Police.

The development and introduction of a consistent national standard would provide a framework around which providers of contracted security and detection dogs could be measured against to ensure they are delivering a professional, effective and trustworthy service.

b) Funding, administration, and enforcement implications of the introduction of a National Standard;

Development of a national best practice standard would provide a framework around which an independent certification program could be developed and operated on a cost recovery basis.

Administration and enforcement of an established standard could be linked to the existing security licensing regime. Security Regulators through the Security Industry Regulators Forum (SIRF) and collaboration with peak security industry body representation, could ensure national implementation and compliance.

The ASIAL certification program for monitoring centres which operates in accordance with AS2201.2-2004 Intruder Alarm Systems Monitoring Centres is an example of industry certification scheme operated on a cost-recovery basis. For more information visit <https://www.asial.com.au/resources/monitoring-centre-grading-2>

c) The nature and effectiveness of models adopted in overseas jurisdictions

Many overseas jurisdictions have encouraged and facilitated the use of security dogs including the use of private security detection dogs. Private security dogs are used in commercial contracted relationships providing services that include venue inspections for bombs and drugs, aviation industry pre-flight inspections, cargo clearance, warehouse areas and in some jurisdictions specialist cadaver dogs.

The European Union has introduced dog certification under the Free Running Explosive Detection Dog (FREDD) program. The program was primarily established for the aviation industry for pre-flight plane and cargo searches.

The United States recognises private security detection dogs where the certification standard as applied through the National Odour Recognition Testing Standard (NORT) as the proficiency standard used by the AFT, as the benchmark for effective canine explosives detection training. Professional handler / trainer proficiency certification is also provided to civilian handlers by the National Tactical Police Dog Association.

In the UK and Ireland, detection dogs are commercially engaged at airports, sporting and music events, schools and universities, prisons and the corporate areas including the economical means of reducing costs and increasing productivity when tackling drug use in the workplace.

Further independent investigation is required to ascertain the efficacy of models implemented in overseas jurisdictions to ensure they are appropriate for the Australian environment.

d) any issues arising in the context of the work of law enforcement agencies, including the Australian Federal Police, in relation to the training and use of privately contracted security and detection dogs, or insights from law enforcement that might help guide the development of an appropriate National Standard;

The expansion of private security detection dogs is an international trend in support of commercial opportunities for the protection of people and property. The availability of government agency detection dogs for commercial purposes, is at times limited and not a viable option or appropriate use of law enforcement resources.

The use of private security detection dogs are typically not used as a replacement of services provided by government agencies. The use is in a primary role as a risk management strategy to provide protection measures in a commercial environment. The decision to use private detection security dogs is a commercial one and depends on the application, in general pre-security measures. Where escalation to a government agency is required, depending upon the circumstance of detection, procedures are established to ensure appropriate communication and engagement of emergency response agencies or a formal investigative process.

Ensuring that providers of private security detection dogs have access to the results of the latest research regarding best practice and easy access to the full range of threat-relevant training materials is a challenge that needs to be addressed. However, the commercial environment for the provision of private security detection dogs is heavily managed by experienced operators with a police or military background in the management of canine services.

Law enforcement agencies should be actively involved in the training and certification of private security detection dogs and handlers. Their involvement could adequately be represented on a national committee to ensure industry standards, licensing and compliance.

(e) any related matters.

It is recognised that the training of detection dogs for the private security industry has been limited by the lack of real scent training opportunities with regards drug and bomb training where only pseudo scents have been legally permitted.

Development of private security detection dog capability will need legislative approval for the use of real scent training in the area of bomb and drug detection dogs where non-government trainers and handlers are approved to possess quantities of explosives and drugs for training purposes.

Conclusion

The private security industry performs a growing role in safeguarding the interests of business, government and the general community. Whether protecting crowded places, providing security at sporting events and concerts, hospitals, critical infrastructure, military bases, licensed premises, shopping centres, ports, airports, courts, cash management and transportation, installing alarms, access control and CCTV systems or physical security measures, the security industry performs a key role in the Australian economy.

The provision of security detection dogs is a further extension of the services provided by the industry. To ensure that this service is provided in a professional and effective manner, ASIAL supports the development of a national standard for security detection dogs. This will not only raise professional standards but as important, but will help build security capability.