

Assistance dogs new digital ID cards

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An 'assistance dog' is a dog specially trained and accredited to assist a person with a disability and that has met the state standards for public access rights. How can these animals be easily identified during emergencies when speedy co-evacuation of assistance animals is required?

Assistance dog fraud is not new, but only a few jurisdictions have laws that make it illegal to purport a dog as a bona fide assistance dog when it is not. In most places it is legal for people to purchase, without verification, a range of assistance dog identifications and paraphernalia. In this digital world it is also very easy to copy organisational logos and to make fake identification documents.

To combat this growing concern, Assistance Dogs International developed a convenient and easy-to-use ID card that is stored on a mobile device and that can be used by Assistance Dogs International accredited members.

The ID card has been trialled in Australia by Assistance Dogs Australia and will be trialled by Vet

Dogs and Guide Dogs for the Blind Foundation in the USA. It has already received positive reviews from clients and from service providers like Airlines for America.

The ID card provides public access opportunities for users and, at the same time, makes it difficult to fake assistance dog accreditation. The card also allows for easy identification by people, like emergency services personnel and evacuation centre staff, to quickly identify these animals.

More information about the ID card at at: www.assistedogs.org.au/about-us/public-access-rights.



Certified assistance dogs wear a branded jacket and can now be checked using a digital ID card.

Image: Assistance Dogs Australia