

**Information Kit**

**Seeing Eye Dogs Australia**

**Kennel and Puppy Centre**

**Vision Australia’s Seeing Eye Dogs Australia** is about to launch its new purpose-built, state of the art Kennel and Puppy Centre in Kensington.

The new facility has been funded on donations, including a $1 million grant from eftpos in 2013,

after Seeing Eye Dogs Australia was awarded the charity of choice for their Giveback campaign.

Thanks to eftpos and many generous sponsors, Seeing Eye Dogs Australia was able to build a facility that will allow them to breed and train a greater number of Seeing Eye Dogs. These dogs will go on to change the life of someone who is blind or has low vision.

Seeing Eye Dogs Australia are once again ‘leading the pack’ when it comes to first class training and facilities for Seeing Eye Dogs.

Take a look at some of the key features of this new facility.

**The Kennel** building is a new state of the art facility offering Seeing Eye Dogs Australia puppies comfort, good health and an incredible quality of life. A soundproofed public viewing platform allows visitors to the centre to look down onto the main kennels and watch the puppies in their environment. Direct camera links throughout the centre including the dog wash and grooming areas also allow viewing of the dogs’ activities on a large screen television in the kennel viewing area.

Visitors can also view a short video of daily activities in the kennels and the training Seeing Eye Dogs

Australia puppies receive at the centre.

This type of viewing area is a first for Australia and one of only 3 centres in the world that provide public access viewing directly into kennel areas. In designing the facilities, Seeing Eye Dogs Australia believed it was important to provide a look behind the scenes so loyal supporters and general public were able to see for themselves how these very special dogs are cared for and the environment provided to ensure their health and wellbeing.

**Unique Kennel Features:**

***Music speakers*** hang above every kennel that helps to relax dogs with calming music played throughout the day.

Each kennel has an ***inside ‘day yard’*** with see through walls, allowing dogs direct viewing of everything that is happening in the kennels. They are able see staff and all the other dogs, which helps reduce stress and limits anxious barking - a wonderful calming feature not only for the dogs but staff too!

Dogs have ***separate sleeping quarters*** with large raised beds. Each sleeping area has its own automatic filling water bowl and outside toileting yard.

Kennels have 24 hour ***climate control*** and are fitted with sprinklers in case of fire.

***CCTV cameras*** are located throughout the centre to enable kennel staff to monitor dogs from their workstations. This vision is also available to visitors via the large screen television in the kennel viewing area.

Each kennel has computer controlled dispensers that deliver a specific and precise measurement of ***disease control*** cleaning solutions to each kennel. This helps to prevent and reduce disease outbreaks that could cause sickness.

***Australian first kennel door management system***, which allows outside kennel doors to automatically open each morning or any other time as needed, including during an emergency such as fire.

***North West facing*** yards to capture sunlight all day, reducing the need for chemical intervention to manage waste and provide a healthy environment for the dogs and staff. Sunlight is one of the most successful disease management processes available.

Two ***isolation zones*** designed to protect the main training colony when dogs become ill or have returned from puppy carers, limiting the spread of any illness to other dogs. Isolation zones have separate air conditioning and filters to stop air-born transmission of diseases.

Another important method of ***eradicating illness*** in the centre is the design of the structural concrete building slabs in the kennel building and puppy centres. Each slab has been made with a unique crystalline (self-sealing) product, which will seal in any cracks that might form in the slab, ensuring germs and diseases are unable to penetrate the surface.

**The Puppy Centre** also has extensive public viewing areas including the puppy rearing areas, vet health check and meal preparation area as well as the indoor and outdoor play areas. CCTV video provides a direct feed of the newest litters from the whelping rooms on to the large screen TV in the public viewing area.

A staff bed has been built into the design of the puppy centre for occasions when veterinarian staff may need to stay overnight to supervise a whelping (delivery). Veterinarians will also be able to log on from home to monitor progress via CCTV video links.

Donors will be able to log on not long after birth and choose a pup they would like to sponsor, allowing them to follow the puppy’s progress and early training during the 8 weeks in the puppy centre before heading off to spend 12 months with a puppy carer.

The puppy centre also has its own disease control measures to combat airborne and contact transmitted diseases, including computer controlled dispensers delivering disease control solutions suitable for very young puppies to individual kennels if required.

Early training in the puppy centre includes many fun games that encourage and build confidence in the pups like walking on different surfaces, climbing miniature stairs, wobble boards, up and down see saws and walking through a small ladder laid on the ground, which helps the pup to develop an awareness of feet placement.

The **Rehabilitation Therapy Pool** is an important resource for all Seeing Eye Dogs Australia training dogs. As part of their health, wellness, socialisation and enrichment program, they will have supervised free playtime in the pool, which is heated to 16 degrees.

The rehabilitation pool will allow dogs to recover more quickly from injuries, bruising, soft tissue damage or surgery, by providing weightless exercise to prevent risk of further injury, while maintaining muscle strength. There is no question that Golden Retrievers and Labradors love water!