



**“Stop  
leaving  
money in  
the ground”**

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**The Muddy Pawz  
Method™  
Powered by  
The Dual Detection  
Framework™**

**How to Build a Real Truffle Detection Dog**

**By Emma McPherson**

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**Stop leaving money in the ground**

*By Emma McPherson*

*For AYL*



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Melbourne Victoria  
Australia  
[www.muddypawz.com.au](http://www.muddypawz.com.au)



# Intro

Most people train their dog to recognise an odour.

That is not enough.

A dog that only knows odour will struggle the moment the environment changes.

Wind shifts. Ground conditions vary. Scent moves.

This is why so many truffle dogs miss product, give weak indications or lose confidence.

A reliable detection dog is not built on odour alone.

It is built on two separate skills working together.

This is the foundation of everything I teach.



## **THE PROBLEM**

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### **Why Most Truffle Dogs Fail**

Most training focuses on one thing:  
Odour recognition

What gets missed is the other half of the job:  
The ability to hunt

Without a strong hunt, your dog:

- Waits for direction
- Becomes handler dependent
- Struggles in new environments
- Misses difficult hides
- Lacks confidence

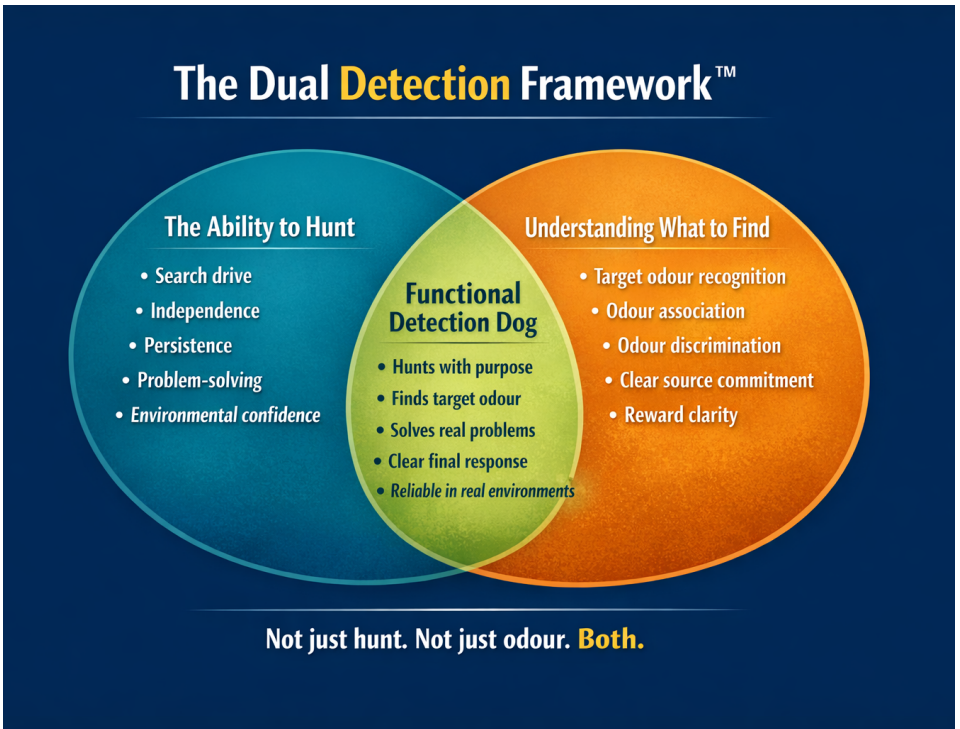
This is where performance breaks down in real orchards.

# THE SOLUTION

## The Dual Detection Framework™

A reliable detection dog is built on two skills:

1. The Ability to Hunt
2. Understanding What to Find



## The Dual Detection Framework™

*“When these come together, you get a dog that can actually perform.”*

# THE DIFFERENCE

## Why Odour Training Alone Fails

Dogs trained only on odour:

- Expect predictable setups
- Struggle with depth
- Fail in changing scent conditions
- Become reliant on the handler

Real truffle work is not controlled.

Your dog needs to think, solve and commit.



# **THE MUDDY PAWZ METHOD™**

**The Muddy Pawz Method™ is how we build both skills.**

It is not about training odour first or hunt first.

It is about developing both as separate skills, then bringing them together.

## **How the Muddy Pawz Method™ Builds a Detection Dog**

### **1. Build the Hunt**

Develop search drive

Encourage independence

Remove handler influence

Build problem-solving

Train in different environments

### **2. Build the Odour Understanding**

Clear scent association

Strong reward connection

Accurate indication

Odour discrimination

Gradual increase in difficulty

### **3. Bring It Together**

Controlled search setups

Real-world environments

Variable conditions

Reduced patterning

Reliable performance

# **MAINTENANCE ODOUR**

## **Why We Don't Train on Truffle Alone**

Truffle is not always available. So we train the hunt using a maintenance odour (like black tea).

This allows:

- Year-round training
- Stronger search behaviour
- Better problem-solving
- A more adaptable dog

This gives us the ability to train all year round getting in as many reps as we can. Then we layer in real truffle work.

This creates a dog that is prepared for anything.

## **WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU**

When trained correctly, your dog:

- Searches independently
- Commits to odour
- Works through difficulty
- Adapts to changing conditions
- Finds more truffle

This is where the real value is.

Most dogs are trained to recognise odour.

Very few are trained to hunt for it.

That is the difference between:

- A dog that finds truffle occasionally
- And a dog that consistently produces results.

# Ready to Train Your Dog Properly?

If you want a step-by-step system to build this in your own dog:

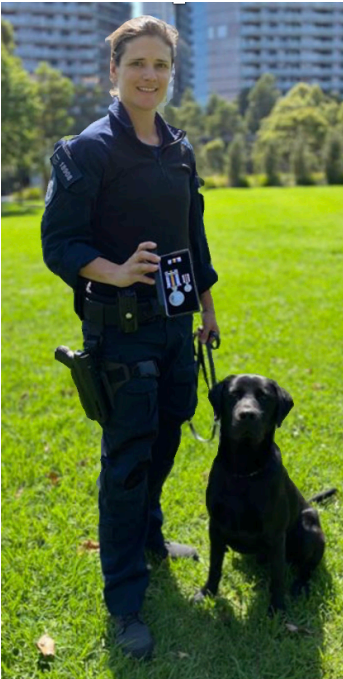
## *Join the 90 Day Truffle Dog Training Course*

Inside, I show you exactly how to:

- Build the hunt
- Train the odour

Combine both into real detection performance

👉 <https://www.muddypawz.com.au/courses>



## About the Author

**\*\*Emma McPherson\*\***

Emma McPherson is not a hobby trainer.

She is a professional detection dog trainer with over two decades of operational experience in environments where performance is non-negotiable and results matter.

Emma served more than 21 years in law enforcement, including specialist roles with the Australian Federal Police (AFP). She worked as a Firearms and Explosives Detection Dog Handler and went on to become the first and only (to date) female General Purpose Dog

Handler within the AFP, working dogs trained in apprehension, tracking and real operational deployment.

This is not theory-based training.  
This is real-world application.

Emma has trained and handled dogs in high-pressure environments where dogs must perform without constant guidance, in changing conditions and with real consequences if they fail. That standard now underpins everything she teaches.

She is the founder of Muddy Pawz Truffle Detection, working with truffle growers across Australia and the United States to develop reliable, field-ready truffle dogs.

Her training system, the Muddy Pawz Method™, powered by the Dual Detection Framework™, is built on a simple but often missed principle:

A reliable detection dog is not built on odour alone.

It is built on two separate skill sets:

- \* The ability to hunt
- \* The understanding of what to find

These are developed independently and then combined to produce a dog that can work confidently in real environments, not just controlled setups.

Emma has trained dogs across multiple disciplines including detection, general purpose work and truffle hunting. She has also assessed and trained dogs for growers internationally, giving her direct insight into what separates dogs that find truffles consistently from those that don't.

Her approach is direct, practical and built for outcomes.

She does not train for appearances. This creates financial loss for growers.

She trains dogs that work.

Dogs that create financial gain for growers.