

Setting and enforcing breeding targets



Introduction

Overbreeding is a major cause of unnecessary euthanasia of young and healthy greyhounds. Greyhound Racing NSW (GRNSW) has no idea how many greyhounds are required to be whelped per year. Varying whelping figures over the last five financial years show that no one is controlling breeding numbers. The NSW Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission (GWIC) must be empowered to set and enforce breeding numbers.

Special Commission of Inquiry into the Greyhound Racing Industry in NSW

The Special Commission of Inquiry into the Greyhound Racing Industry in NSW addressed the issue of 'wastage', that is the unnecessary killing of young and healthy greyhounds. The Report produced by the Special Commission found that *'the most significant contributor to immediate wastage is the number of greyhound pups whelped each year that are simply uncompetitive. Some of these greyhounds are discarded by the industry without having any racing careers. Additional greyhounds are discarded following a racing career of short duration.'*¹

To deter overbreeding, Recommendation 48 of the Report stated that *'A significant fee should be imposed upon the breeder of any greyhound which is transferrable and recoverable by the last person who has the care and control of the greyhound before it is rehomed or has been retired as a pet of an industry participant. In the latter case the fee should not be recoverable for a period of two years.'*

¹ Special Commission of Inquiry Report Chapter 12

Greyhound Industry Reform Panel

The Greyhound Industry Reform Panel also addressed the issue of overbreeding. The Reform Panel response to the Special Commission's recommendation was that *'The panel recommends a modest fee on the owner, followed by annual payments for each year the greyhound is still registered with the industry. The bond would be held by the integrity commission. The accumulated funds will incentivise whole of lifecycle management and care.'*²

The Reform Panel recommendations of February 2017 and the NSW Government response are as follows:

Recommendation

63. *Industry should continue to advocate a national approach to breeding controls for greyhounds.*
64. *Additional options for breeding controls and other total lifecycle management initiatives, including a target date for achieving zero unnecessary euthanasia, should be considered in two years informed by more robust data.*

The NSW Government accepted both these recommendations.

Greyhounds required

In 2015, GRNSW informed the Special Commission *'that 7,548 will be required to be whelped each year to meet the 2015-16 Race Schedule.'*³ In August 2016 GRNSW proposed to the Review Panel that a *'cap of 2,000 greyhounds be bred for racing in NSW each year.'*⁴

Clearly, either GRNSW has no idea how many greyhounds are required to be bred or they are deliberately lying to either the Special Commission or the Review Panel.

² Attachment 2 to the Review Panel Report page 75

³ Special Commission Chapter 12 Para 11

⁴ Review Panel Report page 41

Breeding numbers

GWIC has published the following whelping figures:

FY15/16	4,415
FY16/17	3,056
FY17/18	3,975
FY18/19	3,747
FY19/20	3,674

Note: The drop in numbers from FY15/16 to FY16/17 was due to the announcement of a ban on greyhound racing in NSW.

Analysis

As shown above the industry has no idea how many greyhounds it requires nor can it control the number of whelpings conducted by industry participants. As identified by the Special Commission this results in unnecessary euthanasia.

Solution

The solution to this problem is for GWIC to impose a cap on the number of greyhounds bred in NSW.

Recommendation

GWIC must be empowered to set and enforce breeding numbers.