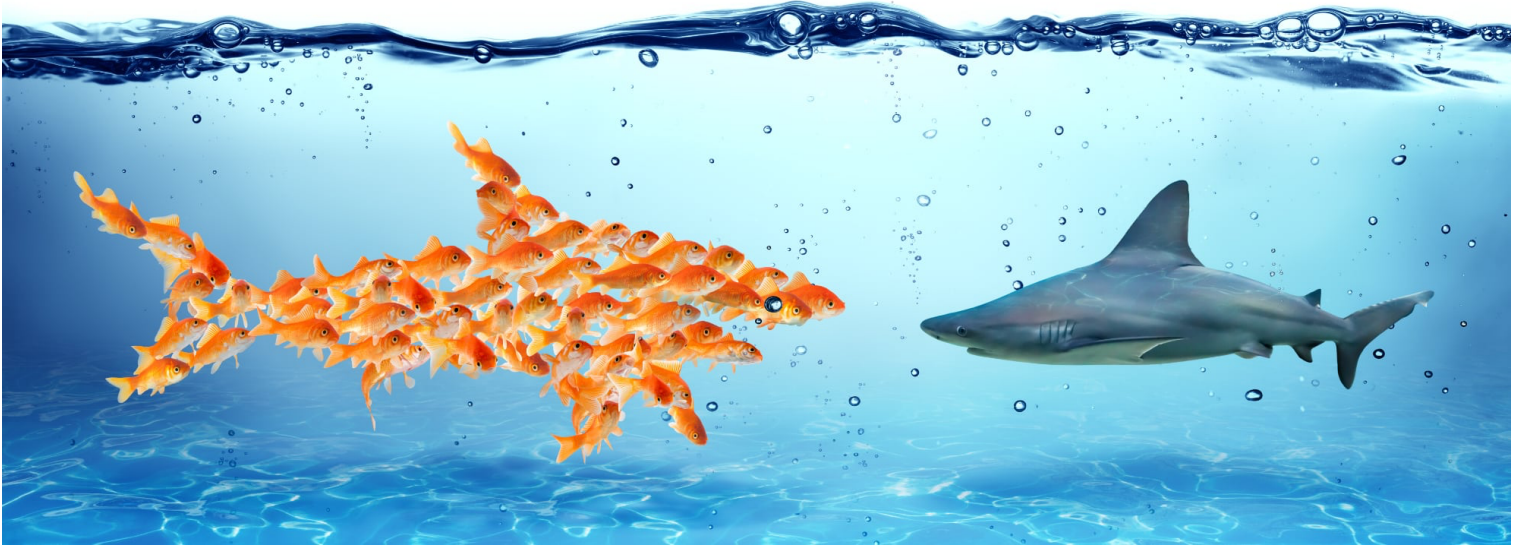


# The Power of a Collective Rescue Voice



*The “waste” of the greyhound racing industry is its public relations nightmare.*

*by Dr Eleonora Gullone*

*Founder, Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds (CPG)*

**I**n 2016, based on the NSW Commission of Inquiry, the number one recommendation was to shut down greyhound racing. The primary reason for this recommendation was the large (huge) number of dogs bred and killed for the industry – what the industry calls “waste”. As stated in the report, “The normal life expectancy of a greyhound is between 12 and 15 years. Over the last 12 years 97,783 dogs have been whelped in NSW. Currently, there are about 6,809 registered greyhounds in NSW alone. Absent death through misadventure or illness, the average life expectancy of a greyhound indicates that another 90,974 greyhounds should still be alive. Some pups that were whelped in the last 18 months may be within litters, being reared, broken in or in pre-race training and not registered. However, even assuming that none of these juvenile animals (approximately 10,253) has been destroyed, where are the remaining 80,721 greyhounds? What has happened to them?”

The above numbers do not include dogs bred and killed in other Australian states and the Northern Territory – particularly Victoria, which is a larger industry than that in NSW. What is clear from the response to the Commission of Inquiry report is that the issue of the killing of hundreds of thousands of young and healthy dogs every single year for the purposes of gambling is not acceptable to Australians. The industry knows this and the industry response has been to address it by proposing 100% adoption rates. This is fantasy land! It will never happen.

A 100% adoption rate aspiration by the industry has been shown in Victoria to be a gross failure. Not only does such an aspiration depend on independent self-funded rescue groups, even with the adoptions made by these groups, in the 2018 financial year, the adoption rate fell far short of 100%. In its 2018 annual report, Greyhound Racing Victoria reported that 2,641 dogs were homed. Importantly, only 1,163 of these dogs were homed by the industry GAP program. The remaining dogs were homed by independent groups. A total of 975 dogs were killed. This represents a far cry from the 100% adoption rate the industry aspired to.

The NSW Greyhound Racing Act (2017) states that the Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission (GWIC) is responsible for welfare and that the industry must meet 100% of the costs of the GWIC. Greyhound rescue is an integral part of welfare and thus ALL greyhound rescues should be funded by integrity arms of the industry, in all states. **This should not be left to independent self-funded rescue groups.**

Prior to the focused attention on the industry brought about by the live baiting exposure, Greyhound Racing Australasia included on its website the numbers of puppies bred in each industry around the country along with

a huge raft of other statistics. Following the exposure and a number of government inquiries recommending more transparency, the response by Greyhound Racing Australasia has been the direct opposite. Rather than increase transparency, it has been significantly reduced. The amount of information currently available on the Greyhound Racing Australasia website is now significantly less than previously. Most notably, it no longer informs about breeding numbers.

“  
**Rescue groups are relieving the industry of their “waste” problem FOR FREE... helping it to look sustainable. They are handing the industry a fabulous public relations life jacket.**  
 ”

***Independent, self-funded greyhound rescue groups directly mitigate against industry “waste” and are a Godsend for the industry.***

In Australia, we have a notable number of greyhound rescue groups which operate purely for the purpose of rescuing dogs who have been bred and then discarded by the greyhound racing industry. With minor exceptions, these groups are determinately independent from the industry. This is a moral decision. Albeit a strong decision on ethical grounds, it is not so strong on pragmatic grounds since it may actually be undermining the very outcome that most greyhound rescuers are hoping for.

As we wrote sometime ago in one of our blogs [1], rescue groups are crucial to saving the lives of hundreds if not thousands of dogs around the nation from a certain death if left at the mercy of the industry. Rescue groups are crucial in helping the industry address its number one evil: the killing of hundreds of thousands of healthy dogs. Every single year, more puppies are bred and added to the pool of the hundreds of thousands of dogs bred by the industry nationwide.

But, by not being held responsible for the lives of these rescued dogs, the industry participants are being handed a

(continued on next page)



(continued from previous page)

huge financial and public relations favour. Rescuing costs a lot of money. Rescue groups are relieving the industry of their “waste” problem FOR FREE and are helping it to look sustainable. They are handing the industry a fabulous public relations life jacket.

Worse, the industry has come to EXPECT this free service from kind-hearted individuals who spend their precious time and personal money rescuing dogs who they are often being emotionally blackmailed to take from morally bankrupt racing participants. This was recently made strongly evident in Victoria, when **Greyhound Racing Victoria calculated independent rescues within their proposed 100% rehoming rate.**

Meanwhile, state governments remain more than happy to pour hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars into the industry but make no effort to offer compensation for the rescue of dogs who are discarded by the very industry they financially and politically support.

### ***A powerful proposal – Make the industry pay!***

Collectively, the rescue groups have the power to turn this around. Imagine how powerful it would be if the rescue groups banded together and demanded industry integrity money to home dogs. If the industry integrity arms refuse, they are revealing their token existence since rescuing dogs bred for the industry who are discarded is the industry’s biggest animal welfare issue.

The industry must be held responsible for the dogs’ lives that form its foundation and enable its existence. By being held responsible, the true cost of doing business would – and should – be paid by the industry, not compassionate people who wish there was no industry.

Currently, the true cost of the industry business model is diluted because it is being allowed to depend on independent rescue groups to address the very issue that is the industry’s biggest welfare issue. Let’s turn this around. If the industry is truly focused on welfare, as it claims, then why does it not include the cost in its operational business model?

If it is completely unpalatable for the rescue groups to accept industry money, then a second strategy would be to demand money from the governments



**Liz Povah's greyhound Boots, the high school therapy hound who likes the therapist's couch himself!**

who insist on keeping the industry going. They are quite happy to prop up the cruel industry with tax payer money. Given their mantra of ensuring animal welfare reforms, why not demand that they demonstrate their stated commitment to animal welfare by financially supporting rescue groups?

I urge those of you who are reading this and who are involved in rescuing greyhounds to think deeply about this. Will you let us, the Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds, organize open discussion among you all so that we can establish financial demands that are made to the industry (or state governments) and so hold them to account. Are you prepared to collectively place the industries (or state governments) around the nation in a position where they are required to take responsibility for the dogs they breed for business (or, in the case of state governments, for the industries they continue to financially support)?



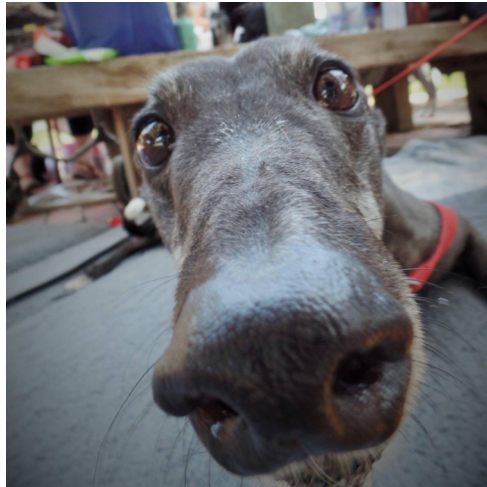
1. Greyhound racing: Being a rescuer in an industry based on exploitation <https://coalitionprotectgreyhounds.wordpress.com/2017/06/20/greyhound-racing-being-a-rescuer-in-an-industry-based-on-exploitation/>

### Greyhound Rescue Groups

In NSW, there are **six** greyhound rescue groups. In the Northern Territory there is **one**. In Queensland, there are **seven**.

In South Australia there is **one**. In Tasmania, there are **two**. In Victoria, there are **seven** and in Western Australia there are **three**.

See the list on page 45 of this issue.



Michelle Koros's Jasper



Felicia Richards's Moon



Sandra Oberosler's very stylish Nellie