

RACING INTEGRITY ACT 2016
SUBMISSION BY
THE COALITION FOR THE PROTECTION OF GREYHOUNDS

Introduction

The Queensland Government is currently reviewing the racing Integrity Act 2016 and has invited the racing industry and the wider community to provide feedback on the current model. The review provides an opportunity to enhance the current legislative framework. The following submission is made by the Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds (CPG) in accordance with Discussion Question number 21. - Do you have any other comments to make about racing integrity or animal welfare issues?

Concern

The CPG is concerned that the Racing Integrity Act 2016 contains no provision for the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) to track and monitor the welfare of greyhounds throughout their entire lifecycle. The Racing Integrity Act 2016 enables industry participants to 'retire' greyhounds no longer required by the industry and then to euthanise them.

While it is generally understood that the QRIC will track and monitor greyhounds on the greyhound racing register, the CPG seeks legislation that specifies that the QRIC must also track and monitor greyhounds throughout their entire lifecycle.

The CPG believes that this lack of tracking and monitoring of greyhounds 'retired' from the industry is not in the best interest of greyhound welfare. It is also noteworthy that this is contrary to Recommendations 4, 5 and 10 of the Queensland Greyhound Racing Industry Commission of Inquiry (the MacSporran Report).

The CPG is also concerned about the ability of all greyhounds who are deemed not fast enough to race as young pups or are of an age where they are no longer competitive. Based on historical rehoming figures it is clear that the number of people willing to adopt a greyhound is not sufficient to rehome all greyhounds no longer required by the greyhound racing industry.

Queensland Greyhound Racing Industry Commission of Inquiry

The MacSporran report made a number of recommendations specifically related to the welfare of greyhounds throughout their entire lifecycle. These recommendations are shown below.

Recommendation 4

“53. The Commission recommends that a review be carried out of the adequacy of the current rules of racing (GAR and LR) to ascertain whether the rules enable individual greyhounds to

be traced at **all times during their lifecycle**. It is recommended that there be a requirement that each pup be registered as soon as ear branding and micro chipping is possible so that the greyhound is fully traceable from this time.” (Bolding by CPG).

Recommendation 5

“The Commission recommends that there be a requirement that the QRIC maintain a database of information such as Ozchase, available to the public on request and payment of a reasonable fee, to enable the identification of a particular greyhound from the time it is registered, as contemplated in Recommendation 4 above, until it leaves the industry **or is deceased** whether or not it ever races.” (Bolding by CPG).

Recommendation 10

“61. The Commission recommends that when a greyhound pup is registered as contemplated by Recommendation 4 above, the required registration fee should include a component for the future welfare of the dog. It is clearly unacceptable to breed dogs for racing and not take responsibility **for the welfare of all dogs which are bred**, irrespective of their racing ability.” (Bolding by CPG).

Queensland Premier’s response to MacSporran Report

The Queensland Premier issued a response to the MacSporran report on Tuesday 2 June 2015. Part of this response dealt with the unacceptable number of deaths in the greyhound racing industry. The Premier’s response stated:

“Among the most confronting findings, Mr MacSporran uncovered evidence that between 2003 and 2013 more than 24,200 greyhound pups were born but only 16,968 were named and registered with Racing Queensland.

That means that more than 7,200 pups—30 per cent of all of these animals—are unaccounted for.

Over the same period, 1,462 greyhounds were registered as retired when the actual number should have been as high as 8,500, meaning that 7,000 animals are unaccounted for.

The average number of greyhounds which die after being retired is 76 per cent.

In 2013 alone, 74.4 per cent of retired animals were reported as euthanased while 6.8 per cent were reported as dead, but many of these deaths simply could not be explained.”

The Queensland Racing Integrity Act 2016

The Queensland Racing Integrity Act 2016 addresses greyhound welfare in Part 2 Functions and powers which state:

10 Functions

(1) The commission has the following functions—

(h) to keep records that provide for the identification and monitoring of animals;

Example— records that show the ‘end-to-end tracking’ of an animal

(i) to safeguard the welfare of any animal involved, whether directly or indirectly and whether lawfully or unlawfully, in racing;

(l) to promote compliance and integrity, and to promote animal welfare and prevent animal cruelty, by educating, providing information for, and working with, participants;

Case Study

The lack of specific legislation requiring QRIC to track and monitor ‘retired’ greyhounds is failing to protect the welfare of these dogs. A case study is presented as evidence of this welfare failure. The information in the case study was sent to the Chief Executive Officer of Greyhounds Australasia.

“I am Colleen Collier the coordinator for Greyhound Rehoming Cairns and Tablelands District (GRCATD). I was approached a few months ago by a trainer from Brisbane, Glen Monkman and his partner Kryz, about the female greyhound registered as "Hara's Flyer" Microchip 95600004110514 who they had bred in 2014 as well as another greyhound. They were concerned about the whereabouts of Hara's Flyer after hearing that she had been sent to Cairns to race. They wondered if I had possibly rehomed her as inquiries suggested that she may have retired even though she is still listed as racing. Further investigations revealed that the dog had been owned by Jeffry Down and trained by Arthur Gosper, Emma Bryant's partner as Emma was suspended at the time, until March 2019. But the dog's whereabouts after that were not clear as Emma Bryant and Arthur Gosper were not contactable. It was feared she may have been euthanised as she hadn't been through GAP either.

However, 10 days ago Hara's Flyer was found wandering the streets of Cairns by a member of the public and was handed into a veterinary clinic nearby suffering from head injuries possibly sustained from another dog and in an almost emaciated state. This greyhound is currently listed as still racing.

The original breeder in Brisbane, Glen Monkman and his partner Kryz, who had approached me looking for this dog, were contacted by the veterinarian because they were the contact on the microchip. They in turn called me to see if I could possibly go and collect the greyhound which I of course agreed to do. However, the veterinary clinic office manager had other ideas and decided unnecessarily, to send the greyhound to the Cairns Council Pound where she was forced to stay for one week and do stray time even though she was in a sad and injured condition as well as being almost emaciated. She weighed only 19 kgs yet raced at 27kgs.

The Cairns Pound wouldn't allow her to do her stray time outside of the pound which was absolutely disgusting in her condition. Thankfully we were able to make arrangements with the council to release her to me when her seven days of stray time was up to ensure her needs would be met through our rescue organisation GRCATD.

In the meantime, a similar dog was discovered to be advertised for Sale on Gumtree as a pig hunting dog for \$250 in Innisfail, 95 kms away from Cairns. It was obvious by the description, the collar and the kinked tail that these two dogs were the same and that the dog was obviously taken to Cairns at some point and dumped (very close to Petstock and Pet Barn) probably due to no takers in the pig hunting business.

This greyhound is in very poor condition and quite withdrawn after being neglected for the past three months. Her breeders are distraught at what has happened to her as they have always rehomed their dogs with reputable organisations themselves and followed their lives as pets. Together we have worked to have this dog released to my rescue organisation so that they can actually adopt her back after she recovers and puts on weight.

My complaint is - how is this allowed to continue happening. There are no deterrents or proper penalties for those who hand retired greyhounds over to just anyone without completed retirement forms and with no apparent concern for the dogs welfare and future to people who clearly want them as anything but a family pet? This is the third dog in my area who we have rescued under similar circumstances from pig hunters.

I am informing you of my intentions to pass this incident over to the RSPCA and QRIC. Too many greyhounds are ending up in the hands of unscrupulous people particularly pig hunters in our region in Far North Queensland including my own first rescued greyhound Pip seven years ago after being irresponsibly given away to a pig hunter.

Your urgent investigation into this matter is appreciated.

Colleen Collier
Greyhound Rehoming Cairns and Tablelands District
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The CPG Position

The CPG position is that for the welfare of greyhounds to truly be protected, recommendations 4, 5 and 10 of the MacSporran Report must be enacted. These recommendations support the position that the QRIC track greyhounds for their entire lifecycle. The current Legislation does not provide for this and is therefore contrary to the recommendations of the MacSporran Report.

The CPG seeks an amendment to the Queensland Racing Integrity Act 2016 that specifies that QRIC will track and monitor greyhounds after they retire from racing.

The CPG also proposes that greyhound sanctuaries be established to address the fact that all greyhounds not required in the greyhound racing industry can live their full natural lives in conditions that meet accepted animal welfare standards. The CPG proposal for greyhound sanctuaries is enclosed to this submission.

CPG Proposed Amendment

The CPG seeks clauses to be included in the Queensland Racing Integrity Act 2016 that:

- a. requires QRIC to track and monitor greyhounds throughout their entire lifecycle.
- b. gives QRIC the powers to track and monitor greyhounds throughout their entire lifecycle.
- c. establishes greyhound sanctuaries.

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Enclosure:

GREYHOUND SANCTUARIES FOR QUEENSLAND