



## Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds

# Submission to the Joint Committee on the Statutes Amendment (Animal Welfare Reforms) Bill

## Executive Summary

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A Joint Committee of the South Australian Parliament has been established to inquire into and report on the Statutes Amendment (Animal Welfare Reforms) Bill. The South Australian Parliament has called for submissions to the Joint Committee from the public.

The Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds (CPG) is an organisation working to improve greyhound welfare. This submission is limited to commenting on the proposed amendments contained in Part 3—Amendment of *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* Part 5B—Special provisions relating to greyhound racing industry.

CPG supports all the amendments to the Dog and Cat Management Act proposed in this bill.

## Greyhound Racing Industry

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The Australian greyhound racing industry has a proven record of animal cruelty, neglect and abuse. The level of on-track cruelty is shown in the CPG produced Lethal Tracks 2020 report.<sup>1</sup> The industry operates with a culture of secrecy to prevent the public becoming aware of the extent of this cruelty, neglect and abuse. The last thing the industry wants is publicity about how it operates. The industry knows that the vast majority of the population find animal cruelty totally unacceptable.

The industry has been the subject of a number of government inquiries both before and after the Four Corners expose ‘Making a Killing’ which aired in 2015. This program exposed live baiting of greyhounds. As a result of this program the QLD<sup>2</sup>, NSW<sup>3</sup> and VIC<sup>4</sup> governments established inquiries into the industry. These inquiries not only addressed live baiting but the extent of cruelty, neglect and abuse inflicted on greyhounds.

## Welfare and Integrity

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As a result of these inquiries QLD and NSW established independent government welfare and integrity commissions while VIC decided that welfare and integrity should remain with Greyhound Racing Victoria (GRV). Both the QLD and NSW commissions and GRV are required to respond to FOI requests. SA has adopted the VIC approach with welfare and integrity responsibilities remaining with Greyhound Racing South Australia (GRSA).

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<sup>1</sup> [Lethal Tracks 2020: track-related greyhound deaths and injuries](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Queensland greyhound Racing Industry Commission of Inquiry by Mr Alan MacSporran Final Report dated 1 June 2015.](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Report of the Special Commission of Inquiry into the Greyhound Racing Industry in NSW dated 7 July 2016.](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Investigation into Animal Welfare and cruelty in the Victorian Greyhound Industry by Dr Charles Milne Final Report dated 30 April 2015.](#)

However, GRSA is not subject to FOI and has therefore been able to conceal the true extent of cruelty, neglect and abuse inflicted on greyhounds in SA. If GRSA is serious about greyhound welfare it should welcome any opportunity to be open and transparent. This is not the case.

## **Statutes Amendment (Animal Welfare Reforms) Bill 2020**

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To overcome this secrecy a Statutes Amendment (Animal Welfare Reforms) Bill 2020 which proposes amendments to the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* is currently before the SA Parliament. The bill calls for the insertion into the Act a Part 5B, included below, which provides special provisions relating to the greyhound racing industry. CPG supports this proposed amendment for the reasons detailed below.

### ***PART 5B—SPECIAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO GREYHOUND RACING INDUSTRY***

*Section 64H of the amendment requires GRSA to provide a report containing the following information to the Minister on or before 30 September in every year.*

*The number of greyhounds registered in the relevant financial year.*

*The number of registered greyhounds destroyed in this State in the relevant financial year.*

*The approximate number of unregistered greyhounds destroyed in the relevant financial year.*

*The methods by which greyhounds were generally destroyed in the relevant financial year.*

*Any other information required by or under the provisions of this Act or any other Act.*

## **CPG Comments**

***The number of greyhounds registered in the relevant financial year.***

**SUPPORTED.** The number of greyhounds registered in a given financial year is not contained in the GRSA Annual Report. This information is vital to allow calculations on the fate of greyhounds registered in SA. GRSA must be compelled to provide this figure. The NSW Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission (GWIC) provided this figure for all greyhounds registered in NSW in Section 41 of its Annual Report FY19/20 available [here](#).

In addition, the SA greyhound racing register must be a public document. This will allow the public to know the fate of racing greyhounds in SA. An analysis conducted by CPG on SA greyhounds end of life and retirements compared the number of greyhounds whelped in SA with the number that die or are adopted and shows that more greyhounds die or are adopted than are born. This is only possible if significant numbers of greyhounds are imported into SA. The number of greyhounds imported into SA must be disclosed to the public. Public access to the racing register will disclose the extent of these imports.

The CPG study “Greyhound End of Life and Retirements in South Australia, FY19/20” is attached to this submission as Attachment 1.

***The number of registered greyhounds destroyed in this State in the relevant financial year.***

**SUPPORTED.** This information is contained in the text on page 15 of the GRSA Annual Report FY19/20. The information is hard to find and requires anyone searching for this information to read the previous 14 pages. The information must be provided to the Minister in a table similar to Section 46 of the NSW GWIC Annual Report FY19/20.

***The approximate number of unregistered greyhounds destroyed in the relevant financial year.***

**SUPPORTED.** The fate of unregistered greyhounds is of great concern to CPG. We are concerned that greyhounds are transferred from the racing register to the SA dog register and then killed. GRSA breeds and imports greyhounds as a commercial operation. Under the principles of Extended Producer Responsibility, GRSA must account for all greyhounds which are included on the racing register.

***The methods by which greyhounds were generally destroyed in the relevant financial year.***

**SUPPORTED.** Again, part of this information is contained in the text on page 15 of the GRSA Annual Report FY19/20. The information is hard to find and requires anyone searching for this information to read the previous 14 pages. The information must be provided to the Minister in a table similar to Section 46 of the NSW GWIC Annual Report FY19/20.

***Any other information required by or under the provisions of this Act or any other Act.***

**SUPPORTED.** The greyhound racing industry must be fully transparent and must provide any information requested of it by the government.

#### ***64I—Freedom of Information Act to apply to Greyhound Racing SA***

*For the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 1991, Greyhound Racing SA will be taken to be an agency within the meaning of that Act.*

**SUPPORTED.** QLD, NSW and TAS have independent government welfare and integrity commissions to regulate the greyhound racing industry in those states. As government instrumentalities they are subject to FOI regulations. The welfare and integrity function for VIC, WA and SA have remained with the commercial racing operators. However, GRV and Racing and Wagering Western Australia (RWWA) are subject to FOI regulations. A GRV FOI response to a CPG member is attached to this submission as Attachment 2.

To ensure transparency in the SA greyhound racing industry, GRSA must be subject to the same FOI requirements.

## **Whole of life tracking**

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GRSA must disclose information that allows the for the whole of life tracking of all greyhounds whelped in SA or imported into SA. Without this disclosure the public cannot be confident that greyhounds are not being killed when they are no longer profitable.

### **Dennis Anderson**

National President

Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds