

4 June 2021

The Hon. Robert Borsak  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

**Via Email Only:**

**CC:**

**Ms Abigail Boyd**  
**The Hon. Louis Amato**  
**The Hon. Wesley Fang**  
**The Hon. Samuel Farraway**  
**The Hon. Mark Pearson**  
**The Hon. Walter Secord**  
**The Hon. Michael Veitch**  
**The Hon. Mark Latham**

Dear Mr Borsak,

**RE: SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE GREYHOUND WELFARE AND  
INTEGRITY COMMISSION (GWIC)**

I have recently become aware of the evidence provided by former GWIC Chief Steward Ms Gail Thorsby concerning my departure from the Commission when appearing before the Committee on 26 May 2021.

I have had the opportunity of viewing the transcript of this sitting of the Committee and the submission provided by Ms Thorsby received on 1 February 2021.

**Gail Thorsby Submission – 1 February 2021**

In Ms Thorsby's submission received 1 February 2021 she states relevant to me:

*My initial replacement lasted a month of the dictatorship and resigned<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Submission No. 71 – Gail Thorsby 1 February 2021 – Page 7.

I completely refute Ms Thorsby's evidence in her submission that I "lasted a month of the dictatorship and resigned".

I resigned from my position as Manager Race Day Operations (Chief Steward) for family medical reasons only. Further information to this effect is detailed below under the heading "Family Medical Reasons".

### **Gail Thorsby Evidence – 26 May 2021**

Whilst giving evidence on 26 May 2021, Ms Thorsby is questioned by The Hon. Mr Mark Latham. During this questioning it is put to Ms Thorsby by Mr Latham that:

***The Hon. MARK LATHAM:*** *Can I ask about what happened with your successor, Brett Day, because there is speculation as to whether or not it was really true. It seems a bit unbelievable that he sold up in Victoria, he moved to regional New South Wales, there were no medical services there for a family member, and he lasted only a month as your successor as chief steward. If you are moving from Victoria, you would obviously check whether medical services were there in the first place rather than just go there and ask about it subsequently. Is it true that the bigger problem was conflicts of interest?*

To which Ms Thorsby answered:

***Ms THORSBY:*** *No. The picture I was aware of—yes, he had conflict of interest, but the bigger issue was that he had huge arguments with Ms Ledger and Mr Griffin, and he hightailed it back. If you had to have medical treatment, you would be aware—if there was something that serious, you would be doing your homework before you moved from Victoria to Bathurst. I was told he was told to be quiet.<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>2</sup> Select Committee on Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission, Transcript 26 May 2021 – Page 8.

The exchange continued:

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** *Is it true that in that situation and others, no-one at GWIC survives if they challenge or cross the Griffin-Ledger partnership?*

**Ms THORSBY:** *Yes. Yes, I have been told that.*<sup>3</sup>

I reaffirm that I resigned from my position for family reasons only.

I did not resign from my position due to any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest. Any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest were known by the Commission as they were disclosed during the recruitment and employment screening process.

I was never told to be quiet.

There is no truth to Ms Thorsby's evidence that I had "huge arguments" with Ms Ledger and Mr Griffin and "I hightailed it back" for this reason. I only had very limited dealings with Mr Griffin and Ms Ledger due to being at the Commission for a very short period. These dealings were of a professional nature and unremarkable.

The commentary regarding the level of medical services in regional New South Wales and the due diligence exercised prior to relocating, or otherwise, is addressed below under the heading "Family Medical Reasons".

Ms Thorsby is questioned by The Hon. Sam Farraway:

**The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY:** *I want to rewind and jump in from my colleague Mark Latham's questioning with Mr Day. Obviously there is some commentary in your submission about Mr Day. I notice that when Mr Latham asked you the question, you said, "I've heard." Have you ever met or spoken with Mr Day about*

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<sup>3</sup> Select Committee on Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission, Transcript 26 May 2021 – Page 8 – Page 9.

anything GWIC-related?

**Ms THORSBY:** No.

**The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY:** Is it fair to say from reading your submission and the commentary you have on Mr Day's departure, that is only an assumption because you do not know because you never actually spoke to him?

**Ms THORSBY:** No. That information was given by his uncle, who runs the Goulburn track.

**The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY:** It certainly did not come from Mr Day? You never met or spoke with Mr Day?

**Ms THORSBY:** No. That was from his uncle to one of our stewards.

**The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY:** I think you referred to him as running a bit of a dictatorship or something. Is that correct?

**Ms THORSBY:** Yes.

**The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY:** You are using the view of Mr Day running a dictatorship as the view of his uncle?

**Ms THORSBY:** Yes.<sup>4</sup>

The last contact I have had with Ms Thorsby was in 2010 when we were both employed by Racing Queensland Limited. Any interaction was fleeting at best due to Ms Thorsby officiating in the Greyhound code and myself in Harness Racing.

To date I have not discussed my resignation or the reasons for such with my

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<sup>4</sup> Select Committee on Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission, Transcript 26 May 2021 – Page 9 – Page 10.

uncle Mr Patrick Day. I cannot comment on what he may have told others, however if he has commented, these comments were not based on any information I have provided.

### **Family Medical Reasons**

I repeat again, I resigned from the position of Manager Race Day Operations (Chief Steward) for family medical reasons only.

This was clearly communicated in a media statement issued by GWIC on 6 October 2020. This statement included quotes directly attributable to me.

This statement was published on the Greyhound Recorder website on 6 October 2020 in an article entitled "GWIC Chief Steward Brett Day Resigns". The article in full read:

*BRETT Day, recently appointed Chief Steward of the Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission (GWIC), has resigned.*

*Day only assumed his role as the commission's head steward in late August but has resigned from his post due to family health issues.*

*"Mr Day took up the role in late August but has advised the Commission that due to medical treatment being required for a member of his family, Mr Day and his family have no choice but to return to Melbourne where they can receive the ongoing specialist medical treatment," said a GWIC statement.*

*Day's resignation begins with immediate effect.*

*"The medical treatment that we receive is highly specialised," Day said.*

*"Since relocating with family to New South Wales we have not been able to maintain the same level of specialised care that was provided on a long-term basis in Melbourne.*

*"Family and health are always the most important considerations for anyone, so whilst the decision to return to get the treatment was a necessary one, I leave behind a regulatory body that I was already starting to enjoy."*

*Day is planning to return to Melbourne with his family in the next few days but has expressed his gratitude to the Commission for its support and the support he has received from the industry and the stewards panel during his short tenure.*<sup>5</sup>

I provide the following health information with the consent of my wife Holly Day.

My wife suffers from

Due to a combination of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ she was in remission from July 2017 up until late September 2020.

Prior to accepting the position with the Commission my wife and I had discussions with \_\_\_\_\_ her treating specialist. Due to her being in remission for an extended period it was decided that the move was permissible. It was determined that she would remain under his care remotely as due to her being in remission it was only for maintenance therapy purposes. I highlight that the decision to relocate from Victoria to Bathurst NSW was done so in the context of my wife having been in remission for a period of 3 years. There was no active disease present.

My wife and I were excited by the fresh opportunity presented by the new role and the ability to be living closer to both our extended family who reside in Goulburn, NSW. The main reason we had not relocated back to NSW previously

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.thegreyhoundrecorder.com.au/news/gwic-chief-steward-brett-day-resigns-30971>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.centralmelbournegastro.com.au/professor-michael-a-kamm>

was due to the high level of specialist care my wife received in Melbourne when previously required.

We were fully committed to relocating having sold the family home, signed a 12-month residential tenancy agreement and entered mandatory hotel quarantine with our then 3-year-old child due to the border closure between NSW and Victoria. If we were not committed to the move and had any intentions on returning quickly, we would not have sold our home or signed a 12-month tenancy agreement and certainly not subjected ourselves to the 14-day hotel quarantine between 10 September and 24 September 2020.

Towards the end of our hotel quarantine period my wife noticed symptoms of her returning which unfortunately quickly escalated.

Shortly afterwards multiple consultations were had with remotely. It was during these discussions the lack of specialist care in and around Bathurst was apparent. It was obvious that if we wished to maintain a high level of specialist care it would require multiple weekly trips from Bathurst to Sydney.

After further discussions we determined this to not be feasible given the distance (400km round trip), our family situation which required our 3-year-old child to also travel and my wife's worsening condition which would only be exacerbated with the significant travel.

The relationship and trust we had formed with my wife's medical team was, and remains, extremely high. Given they had managed her condition exceptionally well previously it heavily influenced our decision to return to Melbourne. Travelling back and forwards to Melbourne from Bathurst was not an option due to ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the distance and considerable expense involved.

A very relevant factor was whether considering my wife's worsening health I could dedicate myself to the required standard professionally. In these considerations we were extremely mindful I was learning a new racing code and commencing at a new organisation. I wanted to do my best for the Commission and the industry, and I did not feel I could do so in these circumstances. Consequently, I resigned with immediate effect.

I was aware due to the highly politicised environment there would be some conjecture regarding my resignation, however my family must, and will always, take priority.

Since returning to Melbourne my wife has undergone treatment on a consistent basis and further major surgery

We returned to Victoria in mid-October and my wife is still recovering now some 8 months later from this latest flare of her disease.

My wife and I are more than willing to provide medical records to this effect should they be required.

To suggest I resigned for any reason other than to care for the health and overall wellbeing of my young family is false.

For Mr Latham and Ms Thorsby to suggest that my family and I failed to do our due diligence prior to relocating is ill-informed, ignorant and in my view extremely disrespectful of the unfortunate situation we found ourselves in. This is only compounded considering I have never had any prior discussions with Mr Latham and/or Ms Thorsby regarding these matters. In my view it appears apparent that rather than seek the truth, Mr Latham and Ms Thorsby are content to rely on speculation and third-hand information to advance their own agendas at my, and my family's expense.

Should you require any further information please feel free to contact me via return email or on

Yours sincerely,

Brett Day