

INQUIRY INTO GREYHOUND RACING IN NSW

Organisation: Grafton Greyhound Racing Club Ltd.

Date received: 27/10/2013

Submission re Parliamentary enquiry into Greyhound Racing.

(a) To ensure the economic viability of the Greyhound racing industry in NSW, it must be addressed in a way consistent with the recommendations of the Cameron report which was commissioned by the previous Labor government who failed to act on its deliberations and the current Liberal/ National party consider it to be a private 3 party deal between the racing codes and they should come to a consensus deal that apportions the dividend returned via the NSW Tab to be more equitable, relative to the percentage turnover generated by each code, this of course will never happen and the Minister or Government must intercede and direct NSW Tab to allocate dividends to each industry according to the percentage that each industry actually generates on the NSW Tab.

By altering the funding model to recognise each industries ability to attract gaming dollars and be rewarded at the correct percentage of earnings generated we would then be following best business practices and not having one section subsidising another section who may not be performing as expected and continues to free ride on the back of another business.

The Greyhound industry if it received its correct distribution percentage return would then be in a position to make the industry more viable in the future by having money available to increase prize money to an acceptable level to keep participants actively engaged in future years, and money could be given to clubs so that they could up-date facilities and infrastructure which currently is in need of renewal or refurbishment. By doing this the ambience around each club would be such that more spectators could be attracted to on course activities.

The funding shortfall of the Greyhound Industry could be overcome with the introduction of the following.

1. Changing the current funding model of the 3 codes where the following approximate percentages apply, Horses 70%, Tots 17% and Greyhounds 13%, to better reflect the actual turnover total recorded by each code.
2. The current 1.5% limit set on rebate of each dollar bet with the corporate bookmakers or other totes should be increased immediately to 2.0% on all Greyhound race meetings.
3. Revenue received from gaming on NSW tote should be reduced to the same level as set by the Victorian Government. This will immediately flow to each industry and could be used to revitalise aging infrastructure and track alterations that may be needed to ensure improved racing safety.

(b) The financial performance and conduct of the G/H Industry.

We consider GRNSW with limited funding under the existing agreement does an excellent job of distributing funding that it receives, to clubs and participants and is light years ahead of the previous GRA organisation. Keeping head office costs at less than 20% of revenue received means it is frugal in its endeavours that not only encompasses administration but also integrity.

(C) Government Assistance.

The Greyhound industry as a valuable contributor to the economy both directly and indirectly should receive Government support for infrastructure and capital works programs that can be seen to have benefits to our industry as well as the state in general.

(D) The effectiveness of current industry regulations.

With clubs required to meet set governance levels for reporting purposes etc. this has ensured compliance in many areas including safety and compliance must be met or clubs registration may be revoked.

(E) Selection process for GRNSW Board.

We consider the current requirements and guidelines set for an independent board meet the criteria for personnel appointed to act in a fair and impartial way.

(f) The effectiveness and accountability of the Board of GRNSW.

It is our belief that the newly appointed Board of GRNSW have demonstrated to the industry that they have the necessary credentials to make and implement strategies that will ensure the industry can move forward free of any previous perceived loyalties and are capable of making decisions to ensure the industry evolves in a programmed way and this is evidenced by their recent decision to revoke the racing licence of the NCA.

(g) Integrity Officer

This is a very important role and the person chosen must be free to make decisions, but must act within the guidelines set as expected by GRNSW and also within agreed budgets.

(h) The performance of GRNSW and Governance of industry.

The management team of Brent Hogan and Darren Simpson acting on behalf of the board of GRNSW have performed their duties without fear or favour and have always attempted to carry out their duties in a direct and efficient manner, they continue to grow in stature and the industry is lucky to have such dedicated personnel acting on their behalf. Clubs and personnel can not always receive what they ask for, however whether your request is granted or denied you will always get a decision that is in the best interests of a sustainable industry. good governance is utmost in their minds.

(i) Drugs in industry.

Swabbing in recent times has increased dramatically because of the perceived thoughts that our industry may have a problem and approximately 50% of all winners plus other random greyhounds are tested, the rate of positive swabs is small, however we believe this testing is necessary not only to ensure punters that bet on our product can do so with confidence, but it also takes into account the welfare of the racing greyhound. GRNSW in this area is showing the way to the other 2 codes and is regarded as leaders in integrity.

(j) Sale and Breeding of Greyhounds.

With a lot of the participants working in what may be called a cottage industry because of the diversity of litters born, that can at times number 10 pups it is difficult to introduce limits on individuals breeding for sale or for retention re racing, however their will need to have some type of structured breeding implemented in coming years.

(k) Welfare and standards set for animals by GRNSW.

GRNSW currently through its steward panel carry out kennel inspection on the premises of all licenced personnel that is meant to ensure that greyhounds are housed in secure, safe and a clean environment and are fed and exercised to a given standard, this has in the past led to people being excluded from the industry until they can continue to meet acceptable standards.

(l) Financial incentives.

Where possible GRNSW should introduce a scheme that will enable older greyhounds to compete against similar age groups in veteran events that could be held at country and Tab c tracks initially this could prolong the racing life of most dogs and may lead to a reduction in the amount of re-stocking that currently exists. GRNSW currently finance the greyhound adoption program and this is proving to be very popular and coupled with most owners keeping their retirees or finding homes for them with friends, the need for disposal of unwanted dogs is rapidly being reduced.

(m) Data collection.

This already exists as forms are available for stud services, whelpings and if deceased via the return of papers.

and this has had positive results regarding gaming with greyhounds on the NSW Tab now accounting for over 20% of all wagering.