

**Submission  
No 372**

## **INQUIRY INTO GREYHOUND RACING IN NSW**

**Name:** Mr Anthony Duggan

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To:Legislative Select Committee on Greyhound Racing in NSW.  
Date: 05-11-2013

Submission heading:Greyhound Racing NSW-Associations NCA,GBOTA (Confidential)

Dear Committee,

Thank you very much for looking into the state of Greyhound Racing in NSW this review in my opinion is overdue.

My interest in Greyhound Racing began in 1989 when I purchased several greyhounds which were trained for me by registered trainers.

In the year 2000 I retired from full time employment sold my home of 30 years in Penrith,purchased a small acreage at Wyee the central coast of NSW.

The plan was to breed a few litters in my retirement and race them as a registered Trainer.The reason the Central Coast was selected was the nearness of tracks at Wyong-Gosford-Maitland-Cessnock and still only ninety minutes to Wentworth Park and Richmond. Not long after Greyhound Racing NSW was formed.

Chairman Percy Allen  
CEO George Bawtree  
Director Gabriel Mangafas  
Director Richard Zammit  
and others.

This Board in my humble opinion was a Board with a massive conflict of interests.

Richard Zammit also Chairman NCA

Gabriel Mangafas also Chairman GBOTA.

Some of the aims of GRNSW were to improve facilities for patrons and participants.

Increase prizemoney

Reduce admin costs

Fix the Grading policy

These aims have failed at different degrees over the past decade.

One of the first major decisions made by GRNSW was to allow the now Defunct NCA to purchase the Breakers Stadium at Newcastle and to build a greyhound Complex.

The initial purchase was made possible by a grant of \$1.5 mil by the GRA.

There was a period of time when the development stagnated because of the NCA's problems raising financing.

During this period the NCA and GRNSW decided to close Wyong straight track,this venue had the best facilities in the Central Coast Hunter Valley area.The racing at Wyong was Gazetted by the Government for straight track racing.This did not seem to worry Percy Allen or Richard Zammit.

After many attempts by a very large number of participants GRNSW allowed the NCA to take the dates to the Gardens.The reason given by Bawtry was the pie was only so big and more dates not feasible.Since the the Gardens has 130 race dates per year the 52 Wyong dates converted from Non Tab to 26 TabC and 26 Tab B.

Wyong generated approximately \$300K per year in commission from the TAB on off course betting.It is my opinion the NCA thought this source of income would follow them to the Gardens with the dates.

GRNSW granted the NCA a loan of \$2.1Mil to be repaid over a term of seven years which has since been forgiven.The NCA also borrowed approx \$5Mil from the CBA and were given another loan of \$1.8Mil to build track and kennel.

Recently the GBOTA paid \$1.8mil to the NCA to buy them out of Wentworth Park,this decision was made by the then Chairman Gabriel Mangafas and Ceo Brenton Scott.The deal was later ratified by the GBOTA board.

The dealings between GRNSW and the NCA were the subject of a FOI request,this request was never finalised because of objections by Richard Zammit and stalled by Bawtree.

There were a lot of participants who believed at the time the NCA were not in a financial position to enter into the project and should have been stopped by GRNSW.

It is now common knowledge the NCA is finished and the cost to the industry has been huge.The exact figure would be very interesting with the complex being 70% owned by GRNSW on a reported valuation of \$1.5Mil.

Percy Allen's final act in this saga was to take the 70% of the Gardens and pay the NCA a further \$1.5mil.

## GRNSW

Over the last ten years the cost of breeding rearing and racing a greyhound has soared, with prizemoney not increasing at anywhere near the same rate. GRNSW talk about the prizemoney increase but this has all gone in Category C Meetings provided to the TAB at no extra cost to them. GRNSW don't mention the cost increases in fees, Litter registrations, licences, naming of dogs and the large increases in fines. (late scratchings etc) GRNSW are living beyond their means. Office at Sydney Olympic Park when should be at Wentworth Park. The set up costs of office were enormous.

Senior Management reportedly 14-16 large and ever increasing staff reportedly 61 The figures relating to litter registrations and participant numbers would be very interesting. The last figures I have seen were produced by the then GHRRA and showed the decline would be 20% by now.

The results of GRNSW's management of the industry.

Admin costs in excess of 50% of Tab Distribution.

Short fields with noms extended regularly.

No reserves at meetings including Wentworth Park.

Fields being redrawn after posting on website.

Dogs transferred interstate and Overseas.

Dogs transferred to Victorian trainers were Greyhound Racing is booming. Not one NSW dog in this years Topgun.

GRNSW has managed to get into a position where they are self regulated, this needs to change before its too late to save the industry.

## GBOTA

Run by a ten person board, these people are elected on a popularity basis not on business experience or management skills. Directors are elected in areas all over NSW and travel at sometimes large expense to meetings in Sydney monthly. Some attend every Cup meeting in NSW at GBOTA tracks again at member expense.

The GBOTA is living in the 1950's. The Board should be reduced by half and be elected state wide not by area.

The management has restrictions on membership, being a prospective new member must attend three branch meetings before being granted membership. Ridiculous when you can join any registered club on the spot.

The GBOTA are the biggest supplier of racing in NSW with tracks at Bulli, Gosford, Maitland, Casino, Bathurst and non Tab at Gunnedah, Temora, and Appin. Some of these tracks Gosford and Maitland in particular are being neglected maintenance wise. Injuries are being sustained and staff are unable to repair tracks because of management failure. Gosford was known as the jewel in the GBOTA crown but now has become a disaster. 60% of participants racing at Gosford were from south of the Hawkesbury River and the track always had good fields and crowds. The majority of races were over the 515 metre distance. This distance being a good lead up to Wentworth Park 520 metres.

Programming and promotions have degenerated so much the majority of races at Gosford are 400 metre corner start. The corner start causes a lot of tightening thus more injuries. The track is a copy of Angle Park SA which does not have a corner start. All complaints re track management have fallen on deaf ears.

In summary if the industry is to be successful and have the inter code agreement amended so we are to receive the correct share, I believe the GBOTA and GRNSW should be subject to scrutiny and review.

Thank you for hearing my concerns and hopefully your enquiry will produce some positive results for our struggling industry.

Yours Sincerely

Anthony Duggan