

**Submission
No 412**

INQUIRY INTO GREYHOUND RACING IN NSW

Organisation: Animal Justice Party

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The Director
Select Committee on Greyhound Racing in NSW
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please accept this submission as representative of the Animal Justice Party's position on Greyhound Racing in NSW.

The Animal Justice Party is strongly apposed to the continuation of greyhound racing in NSW based on the ethical, welfare and legislative objections outlined below.

- High rates of over-breeding are a feature of the greyhound racing industry so as to ensure owners will, by sheer dint of numbers, have greyhounds that will bring them some racing and financial breeding sales success. The consequence of this significant overbreeding practice is large-scale killing of those animals that don't 'make the grade' on the racetrack because of a range of factors such as being 'non-chasers', too slow, or acquiring injuries. Thousands upon thousands are killed every year for 'non-performance'. Hundreds are exported to China each year. Thousands are surrendered to universities and vet labs for veterinary science training and experimentation. Thousands end up in pounds. Many are simply shot.
- High rates of injuries sustained during racing, often fatal, are regular occurrences as animals are pushed beyond their natural capacity. Injuries include broken legs, paralysis, head trauma and cardiac arrest from over exertion. There have also been reports of inappropriate confinement and malnourishment of racing dogs to maintain racing weight.
- There are reports that the use of performance enhancing drugs on the greyhounds is rife within the industry with positive drug swabs rising 82% in the year from October 2011 to November 2012, in NSW alone.
- There are reports of inhumane methods of greyhound killing, often to healthy animals. Under current Australian anti-cruelty statutes, killing a dog is not an offence unless the act of killing causes unnecessary suffering and pain. The Greyhound Racing industry is rife with the infliction of unnecessary suffering and pain to dogs.
- There are reports of links to organized crime in the greyhound racing industry. This has included instances of race fixing, violence and intimidation across the industry.

These instances have been highlighted in the paper by MCEwan & Skandekamur¹, the Lewis Report by Judge GD Lewis², and the Scott Review by Malcolm Scott³.

- A lack of close regulation of Greyhound Racing NSW's code of practice allows for poor welfare practices and lack of protection under animal welfare legislation. As there are insufficient penalties awarded for breaching animal welfare standards, there is no incentive for trainers and owners of greyhounds to adequately consider the welfare of the animals in their charge.
- An ineffective re-homing program adopted by Greyhound Racing NSW results in less than five per cent re-homing of healthy discarded animals. This practice regarding re-homing leaves the responsibility to private welfare groups with no funding support, no co-operation from the industry, and an inability to be able to find home for the thousands of disposed animals.
- Greyhounds are exported to countries with inadequate welfare regulations with no regard for their welfare post delivery. It has been well documented in a number of papers that the standards in the locations these animals are sent to are below our basic animal welfare legislative standards.

Please refer to our policy on-line at www.animaljusticeparty.org for further details on our position on Animals in Entertainment and specifically Greyhound Racing.

In the instance that greyhound racing is not banned immediately, we offer the following recommendations to improving the welfare of greyhounds in NSW in the short term:-

- Significant increase in Greyhound Racing NSW funds allocated to improve animal welfare needs across the industry.
- No incentives awarded which encourage over-breeding of greyhounds. This must stop immediately as it is simply incentivizing the vast overbreeding of animals that become waste in the industry.
- Close regulation of Greyhound Racing NSW Code of Practice by an external independent body to ensure adherence to standards and regulations across the board.
- Heavy penalties for those who fail to abide by Greyhound Racing NSW's code of practice applied each and every time. This would also provide an incentive for others to not break the rules if the penalties are high.
- Accurate transparent data collection by Greyhound Racing NSW on greyhound statistics to be made available publically.
- Increased funding allocated to greyhound re-homing programs to ensure healthy surplus animals are not treated as waste products of the industry.
- Percentage of betting funds used for animal welfare and re-homing programs to ensure the best welfare considerations are afforded to all animals used within the industry.

1 'The welfare of greyhounds in Australian racing: has the industry run its course?' Alexandra McEwan and Krishna Skandakumar, http://www.animallaw.info/nonus/articles/art_pdf/McEwan_Skandakumar_AAPLJ_Greyhound_2013.pdf

2 'The Lewis Report', Judge GD Lewis, <http://www.racingintegrity.vic.gov.au/resources/bc21774e-1c2b-4515-bd5b-ee859005a7ce/a%2Breport%2Bon%2Bintegrity%2Bassurance%2Bin%2Bthe%2Bvictorian%2Bracing%2Bindustry%2Baugust%2B2008.pdf>

3 'The Scott Review', Malcolm Scott, http://www.olgr.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/Malcolm_Scott_Report.pdf

- Independent government body to oversee welfare of racing greyhounds to ensure adequate welfare practices are adhered to across the board.
- Introduce more stringent monitoring on illegal drug use with high penalties and public results of positive testing.
- All greyhounds to be registered with councils and micro-chipped to enable appropriate monitoring of locations and real numbers of greyhounds bred.
- Phase out the use of cornered tracks to reduce injury toll and therefore consider more appropriate welfare conditions for the animals.
- Offer rewards to those who report inhumane killing methods with high penalties for those using these methods and public information about such reports.
- Offer rewards to those who report use of live baits during training, with high penalties for those using these methods and public information about such reports.
- Ban the killing of healthy greyhounds, forcing the industry to be accountable for the welfare of all animals within the industry that no longer are active.
- Ban the export of greyhounds to countries with inadequate welfare regulations ensuring that Australian standards on welfare are not compromised for Australian bred greyhounds.
- Ban the use of ex-greyhounds in research or for use in veterinary science or schools to protect the welfare of greyhounds no longer active in the sport of greyhound racing.

Yours faithfully

Professor Steve Garlick PhD
 President
 Animal Justice Party

Contact:
 Ms Jeanette Peterson
 Animal Justice Party

28 October 2013

1 'The welfare of greyhounds in Australian racing: has the industry run its course?' Alexandra McEwan and Krishna Skandakumar, http://www.animallaw.info/nonus/articles/art_pdf/McEwan_Skandakumar_AAPLJ_Greyhound_2013.pdf

2 'The Lewis Report', Judge GD Lewis, <http://www.racingintegrity.vic.gov.au/resources/bc21774e-1c2b-4515-bd5b-ee859005a7ce/a%2Breport%2Bon%2Bintegrity%2Bassurance%2Bin%2Bthe%2Bvictorian%2Bbracing%2Bindustry%2Baugust%2B2008.pdf>

3 'The Scott Review', Malcolm Scott, http://www.olgr.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/Malcolm_Scott_Report.pdf