

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

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## **Greyhound Industry in NSW**

Gandhi said, “The greatness of a Nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way it treats its animals.” Certainly, in Australia we are quick to judge, considering the public outcry when we are confronted with pictures from overseas regarding the treatment of animals in abattoirs. Further, we will take action within Australia, as long as it does not affect our economy. The best example is that of tail docking. We have banned such practice in dogs, but not in sheep.

In the utilization of animals for either food or entertainment we most certainly have a duty of care towards those creatures we use. In the Greyhound industry, the duty of care is both towards the dogs themselves as well as the animals that are utilized to train the dogs to chase. Therefore, there are three areas of concern for this industry:-

1. The animals used for live kills. One might believe that the animals that are being utilized to train dogs are covered sufficiently under the POCTA Act. Perhaps so, but in truth, the practice of live kills still continues so one must decide who could ensure that POCTA is adhered to within the industry. The RSPCA and the Animal Welfare League are obvious choices but there seems little done to pursue this area. The questions are:- are we prepared to put money and energy into stopping this practice? Are we prepared to pass laws that state anyone convicted of “live kills” will be banned for life from the industry? This might already be a law however there seems few if any convictions yet the practice continues.
2. The Greyhounds themselves need protection when they have finished being raced. Far too many are killed and not all by a humane method. Many animals have been killed by trainers who elect to shoot them or bludgeon them to death rather than paying veterinary fees. Yet this area would be very easy to regulate. These animals carry tattoos and a certificate of euthanasia must accompany each animal's demise. If owners do not provide them they should be prosecuted. The certificate must be signed by a veterinarian who states they carried out the procedure. Alternatively, owners may get a certificate of surrender once the animal goes to a welfare organization that will care for the dog's needs.

3. The use of illegal drugs in the industry is as old as the industry itself. Various compounds have been utilized over the years to make dogs go faster or chase harder or slow the dog down. They are still in use today but the detection methods have improved so the type of drug or method of use has become more sophisticated. Endeavouring to stamp out this practice would take funds and this could come from registration fees of racing animals.

To consider stopping the industry is most likely not practical at this time because of the number of people employed in Greyhound racing. However, one must consider the dog itself; far too many seem to have to give up their life so the industry can exist. Hardly a civilized society.

Dr. Robert A. Zammit