

**Submission
No 547**

INQUIRY INTO GREYHOUND RACING IN NSW

Name: Miss Nicole Hughes

Date received: 1/11/2013

Submission for NSW parliamentary inquiry into greyhound racing

Better management of the breeding and sale of greyhounds is urgently needed to help control the high euthanasia rates of dogs not wanted for the industry.

The number of greyhounds killed by the racing industry is shocking and unacceptable. There were 80133 greyhounds born between 2003 - 2011. This figure does not include accidental matings or puppies discarded for other reasons. By 2011 there were only 2552 greyhounds registered as companion greyhounds at councils and 6150 greyhounds registered as racing greyhounds. This means that 71431 greyhounds simply vanished.

I myself saw where some of these dogs end up, being dumped at vet clinics to be put down with nothing wrong with them except that they weren't winning for their trainer/owner. It was also distressing that it is well known in the veterinary industry that the greyhounds they put down almost weekly are only a small fraction of the hounds being put down by their trainers/owners personally. This must be better monitored and better policed, so fewer dogs are being bred just to be put down. Maybe introducing some sort of incentive would help to reduce the high numbers of greyhounds euthanized each year.

There is also the issue of the inadequacy and questionable integrity of data collection in the industry: including the number of pups born, the number of dogs euthanized and injury rates.

In 2012; 517 greyhounds either died at the track or broke bones. 90% of these greyhounds disappeared from the racing industry altogether. So, it seems that broken bones generally equates with death.

In 2013 from Jan to Sept; 339 greyhounds died at the track or broke their bones. 12 dogs collapsed and died on the track or the catching pen from cardiac arrest or lungs collapsing or an undetermined reason.

These figures were collected by Greyhound Freedom and to my knowledge they will be provided with their submission. It does not include about 1/3 of the tracks in Australia and not all states record all information. NSW and WA do not report deaths. SA does not report injuries. So the number of greyhounds killed and broken bones are definitely higher than this.

I also have great concerns about the welfare of animals in the industry and the conflict of interest represented by Greyhound Racing NSW's role in establishing and enforcing standards for the treatment of animals in the industry.

To my knowledge there is no government department that is responsible for the welfare of racing greyhounds. The DPI and the Minister of Racing have no involvement with the racing industry even though they administer the prevention of cruelty to animals act. The only exception is if a person rings up to report a cruelty case. Members of the public are generally not privy to this information. We believe there should be a separate and independent body to oversee and investigate animal welfare issues. Including inspecting kennels and inspecting training; in particular

when breaking dogs in. Live baiting still occurs in the industry and there is no one to prevent it.

GRNSW administers the Racing Act 2009, where there is no mention of the welfare of greyhounds. They also are a self regulated body that is not answerable to the govt or public on welfare issues. Their charter is to promote and expand greyhound racing which is in conflict with the welfare of greyhounds. This has to change. The reporting of welfare and cruelty issues should be mandatory to an independent body. All death, injury, breeding statistics must be available to the public and this independent welfare body. All activities in this industry need to be transparent. Animal welfare needs to be ensured and cruelty needs to be prosecuted.

There are also many issues within the industry with doping and drugging of the hounds, this must be stopped as it affects the welfare of the animals and makes it very unfair on other racers. Better policing of this must happen.

The ongoing export of greyhounds to countries where there are no effective animal cruelty laws is another worrying issue as these dogs will have to endure long trips only to most likely be treated poorly and killed after running a few races without winning.

Thank you for reading my submission.