

**Submission  
No 524**

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

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## Submission to the Inquiry into Greyhound Racing in NSW

I strongly oppose the racing of greyhounds in New South Wales (and indeed all Australian States) in an industry that clearly lacks an independent authority to advocate for the welfare of greyhounds, as do I oppose the exporting of greyhounds to overseas countries with inadequate welfare regulations. My opposition stems from the following issues in the greyhound racing industry:

- (1) No independent authority to oversee greyhound racing in NSW. GRNSW (Greyhound Racing NSW) governs the regulatory and commercial facets of the industry (*Reference A*) which directly conflict one another.

GRNSW operates under the Greyhound Racing Act 2009 (NSW). This act, nor any other regulatory document requires GRNSW to report welfare issues or cases of inhumane treatment of greyhounds (*Reference B*). I believe that significant issues surrounding the welfare of greyhounds- their living conditions, quality of life, and the value placed on their lives- arise from having an industry that deals in commercial racing and gambling not being independently regulated.

- (2) The overbreeding of greyhounds, and lack of regulation to restrict such excessive breeding which leads to the undervaluing of life for greyhounds. From 2003 to 2011 there were 80,133 Greyhounds born in NSW (*Reference C*). In 2012 there were 6150 registered racing greyhounds, and 2552 registered greyhound pets (*Reference D*). If greyhounds live for an average of 10-12 years, there should have been more than 80133 greyhounds alive, however as above only 8702 of these dogs were accounted for... GRNSW indicates that over 3000 greyhounds are put to sleep for reasons such as being too slow, injured through racing or training, or having reached the end of

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their racing career each year (*Reference E*). Over the ten years from 2002 to 2011 there would therefore have been over 30,000 greyhounds put to sleep for these reasons... however there still remains over 50, 000 greyhounds unaccounted for over this period... What fate did they suffer? The lack of knowledge of what happened to these greyhounds (and the potential that the fate that they did suffer was inhumane) directly stems, I believe, from the lack of an independent authority advocating for the welfare of greyhounds in the racing industry. GRNSW revealed that just 300 greyhounds had been rehomed since 2009 under their 'Greyhounds as Pets' program (*Reference F*), which is grossly inadequate when an average of 8900 greyhounds have been born each year over the past 5 years (*Reference G*).

- (3) Insufficient provision for the welfare of greyhounds under the GRNSW Greyhound Racing Rules through the lack of penalty's linked to breaching rules such as the following: Rule 106 of GRNSW Greyhound Racing Rules states: (1) A registered person must ensure that greyhounds, which are in the person's care or custody, are provided at all times with a) proper and sufficient food, drink and protective apparel b) proper exercise c) kennels constructed and of a standard approved by the Controlling Body which are adequate in size and which are kept in a clean and sanitary condition and d) veterinary attention when necessary (2) A registered person must exercise such reasonable care and supervision as may be necessary to prevent greyhounds pursuant to the person's care or custody from being subjected to unnecessary pain or suffering. However, there are no penalty's attached for breaching these standards, rendering them ineffective. Rule 105 requires owners to notify GRNSW of change to circumstances of a licensed greyhound- that is if the

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greyhound has been retired as a pet, made a breeding greyhound, surrendered to a rescue organisation, exported, humanely euthanized by a veterinarian or is deceased: Subsequently Rule 106 requires an owner to provide a veterinary certificate of Euthanasia to GRNSW if the greyhound has been euthanized by a veterinarian, however it does not require that a greyhound must be euthanized by a veterinarian. There is no doubt that this leads to many greyhounds being killed by other, unregulated methods. Indeed, there is no record of the fate of thousands of greyhounds who have been 'retired' from racing after their career ends at around the age of 4. There is no record of how many greyhounds are exported overseas to places such as Macau (where they face terrible standards of living, due to the lack of adequate welfare regulations, with no hope for rehoming), of those greyhounds given to universities for teaching and use as live blood donors, or of how the thousands of dogs which are 'deceased' actually died.

- (4) The high rate of injury and/or death associated with racing for greyhounds, and the lack of public transparency of this. Greyhound Freedom, a greyhound advocacy group, reports that from January to September 2013, 849 greyhounds have died or were killed as a result of their injuries from racing and there were 12,084 injuries from racing in Australia (*Reference H*). There are 20 non-TAB greyhound racing tracks in NSW where the number of deaths and injuries are indeterminate due to stewards' reports being inaccessible to the public.

In conclusion I call that, if banning the racing of greyhounds in NSW is not possible at this point, that at the very least a new independent body is formed to oversee the

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welfare of greyhounds being bred into the racing industry in NSW, and that this body introduces a new set of regulations to ensure that each greyhound that is born is given the appropriate living standards and quality of life they deserve, as well as every opportunity to be rehomed after their racing career is over. The regulations associated with the breeding, racing, rehoming, and deaths of greyhounds must also be tightened to require transparency in reporting the life cycle of greyhounds from birth to death. The export of Greyhounds to places such as Macau with such poor welfare regulations must be ceased immediately, with heavy penalties put in place for noncompliance.

Furthermore, I believe that money generated from the racing industry should be directed to assisting both greyhound rehoming groups AND owners and trainers of racing greyhounds to rehome them post racing, and that veterinarians and universities must only be able to use greyhounds for blood donation or teaching purposes if they commit to the rehoming of these greyhounds after a period of time (and in the interim their conditions of living are acceptable).

### References:

A: John Kaye, 8 October 2013, *Have your say on greyhound racing in NSW*,

<http://johnkaye.org.au/have-your-say-on-greyhound-racing-in-nsw/>

B: Letter to the editor, *Animal Welfare issues in the Greyhound Industry* (2013) 9 AAPLJ 1 at 108

C: This figure does not include puppies discarded from unplanned litters. *Answers to questions on notice lodged by MP for Sydney Alex Greenwhich* 23 May 2013. Full text of questions and answers available at

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<http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/la/qala.nsf/18101dc36b638302ca257146007ee41a/73129441ba2b6f30ca257b750000790d?>

D: *Greyhound Freedom*, <http://facebook.com/pages/Greyhound-Freedom/341841249187362?fref=ts>

E: *'Greyhound racing euthanasia rates slammed'*, 10 November 2012, ABC News

F: *Answers to questions on notice lodged by MP for Sydney Alex Greenwich* 23 May 2013.

John Kaye, 8 October 2013, *Have your say on greyhound racing in NSW*,  
<http://johnkaye.org.au/have-your-say-on-greyhound-racing-in-nsw/>

G: James Cockington, *This is no slumdog*, SMH 20 June 2012

H: *Greyhound Freedom*, <http://facebook.com/pages/Greyhound-Freedom/341841249187362?fref=ts>