

**Submission  
No 40**

## **INQUIRY INTO GREYHOUND WELFARE AND INTEGRITY COMMISSION**

**Organisation:** PETA Australia  
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PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

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**SUBMISSION TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE  
GREYHOUND WELFARE AND INTEGRITY COMMISSION**

**3 DECEMBER 2020**

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**Affiliates**

- PETA US
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## **About PETA Australia**

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) Australia is an affiliate of PETA US – the world’s largest animal rights organisation – and is opposed to speciesism, a human-supremacist worldview.

## **Responses to the Terms of Reference**

### **(a) the policies, procedures, mechanisms, and overarching principles of the Commission in relation to industry participants**

PETA supports the Commission’s objective to “promote and protect the welfare of greyhounds” as an independent regulator of the greyhound-racing industry in New South Wales.

The separation of the commercial and regulatory functions of the industry was important in order to reduce the conflict of interest inherent in making money by exploiting animals and being responsible for protecting the welfare of those animals.

The overarching principles of the Commission are presently inhibited by a reliance on funding from the industry. More than half of its funding now comes from Greyhound Racing New South Wales (GRNSW), leaving it financially dependent on the industry it is supposed to regulate.

PETA is also concerned about the lack of provisions for the Commission to track and monitor the welfare of greyhounds throughout their lives. In order to submit an accurate annual report, which is a function of the Commission, all dogs must be tracked from birth to death.

The Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds (CPG) has analysed the fate of greyhounds in NSW who are no longer required by the racing industry and has found that thousands of animals are unaccounted for.<sup>1</sup> The general public demands greater transparency for dogs used for racing, which can be achieved only by a better-funded, more robust Commission.

### **(b) the appropriateness of disciplinary action for those industry participants breaching legal requirements as set out by the Commission**

PETA’s position is that the penalties imposed upon industry participants for breaching legal requirements are too lenient. The Final Disciplinary Action Decisions on the Commission’s website read as a list of prohibited substances, some with suspension penalties lasting only six weeks. In 2020, the maximum penalty was not imposed on anyone, despite the long-term detrimental effects on animals subjected to doping.

### **(c) the options for appeal by industry participants who breach legal requirements as set out by the Commission**

No comment.

### **(d) the combined relationship of the Commission, the industry operator Greyhound Racing NSW, and industry participants in relation to the overall greyhound racing industry**

It is not advisable to entrust advocating for the welfare of animals (something of increasing general public concern following reports of cruelty to animals in greyhound racing) to the same parties that intend to exploit them for financial gain. This is why greater separation is

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<sup>1</sup>Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds, “Case Study: The Disappeared Greyhounds, FY19/20.” Accessed 30 November 2020 <<http://greyhoundcoalition.com/the-disappeared-greyhounds/>>.

needed between the Commission and GRNSW, especially in relation to funding, as discussed in section (e).

**(e) the existing funding agreement between the Commission and Greyhound Racing NSW with a view to considering recommended options**

As mentioned in section (a), more than half the Commission's funding currently comes from GRNSW, leaving it financially dependent on the industry it is supposed to regulate. This conflict of interest must be rectified in order to protect animals.

However, an independent regulator should not be propped up by taxpayers, most of whom would rather see the industry shut down entirely.<sup>2</sup>

To this end, PETA supports the funding model recommended by the CPG, whereby the Commission would be funded independently of the greyhound-racing industry through increased taxation of gambling and of GRNSW profits.<sup>3</sup>

To support this step, the government must cease investing public money into GRNSW by providing prize money for or promoting events like the Million Dollar Chase and by funding new or upgraded racetracks.

**(f) the actions, conduct and effectiveness of the Commission and GRNSW, in particular in relation to its role in improving the welfare of greyhounds**

From January to October 2020, 42 greyhounds<sup>4</sup> died in track-related incidents in New South Wales alone and hundreds were injured.

According to an analysis by the CPG, there are discrepancies between the number of greyhounds "retiring" and the number being rehomed, kept by the trainer, or given to a third party each year. Without publicly accessible data showing whole-of-life tracking for each dog, the public can only assume that overbreeding and the discarding of "underperforming" or old dogs continue to be pervasive in the industry.

Given the reports of doping, mass greyhound graves, and deaths on the track, the changes implemented by the Commission have so far failed to protect animals. It's little wonder that community expectations are that issues regarding the welfare of greyhounds bred for racing can be fully addressed only by shutting down the racing industry, a view shared by PETA.

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<sup>2</sup>Brigid Andersen, "Greyhound Racing: 82 Per Cent Want Australia-Wide Industry Shutdown, Poll Finds," *ABC News*, 15 July 2016 <<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-07-15/82-per-cent-want-australia-wide-ban-on-greyhound-racing-poll/7633998>>.

<sup>3</sup>Dennis Anderson and Fiona Chisholm, "Submission to the Parliamentary Committee Inquiry Into Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission," Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds, November 2020 <<http://greyhoundcoalition.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/GWIC-Inquiry-final-1.pdf>>.

<sup>4</sup>Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds, "2020 Track Deaths and Injuries." Accessed 30 November 2020 <<http://greyhoundcoalition.com/2020-track-deaths-and-injuries/>>.