

Submission
No 45

INQUIRY INTO GREYHOUND WELFARE AND INTEGRITY COMMISSION

Organisation: New England Greens Armidale Tamworth

Date Received: 4 December 2020

New England Greens Armidale Tamworth (NEGAT) thanks the NSW Legislative Council's Select Committee for the opportunity to contribute to its inquiry into the Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission (GWIC), and in particular its success and ability to regulate welfare in the greyhound racing industry in New South Wales.

NEGAT has followed the discussion of greyhound racing in NSW with great interest: we have particular concerns for the welfare of the animals involved and about the deleterious effects of gambling on young punters and on family life.

The Report in our local newspaper, 'The Armidale Express', 25 August 2020 'Greyhound racing ban Tamworth: Guardiola's death at Tamworth race track sees activists push for ban on greyhound racing industry' [here](#) was a timely reminder of the toll of greyhound racing. The report records that the death reported in Tamworth was the 30th in the state for the year, that another dog, Invictus Raider, sustained a torn back muscle and three other greyhounds were scratched prior to the event in Tamworth due to injury or illness. The death toll in NSW for 2019 was 40 dogs, while 2600 were injured.

Our on-going concerns about the conditions endured by greyhounds were heightened by accounts such as [NSW's new greyhound 'welfare' code will only make things worse \(crikey.com.au\)](#), June 11 2020 which recounts that the New South Wales government approved a "welfare code of practice" which increased the space in which dogs can be kept from three square metres to 3.5 square metres, and requires only half an hour out of their cages a day. However, the industry will not have to comply with even these meagre space requirements for housing dogs until 2035.

A third reason for our concern is the growth of problem gambling and especially the impact on young punters. Roy Morgan research, 'Greyhound races most popular among Generation Y', January 20 2016 [here](#) reveals that in 2016 the average greyhound punter was 8 years younger than the average race punter. As a young NEGAT member observed, 'the greyhound racing industry is DESPERATELY trying to engage young people and will throw money at anything (even live djs at races ☹️) to make this happen'.

Terms of reference:

That a select committee be established to inquire into and report on the Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission (the Commission) as the independent regulator of the greyhound industry in New South Wales, and in particular:

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

The greyhound rehoming policy must be amended to prohibit the euthanasia of healthy greyhounds.

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

The maximum penalties allowed for the administering of prohibited substances must be significant and imposed

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

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

Greyhound Racing NSW (GRNSW) must not be permitted to directly or indirectly influence GWIC regarding policies and procedures. GWIC must be responsible for enforcing welfare standards in the greyhound racing industry. The Government must provide full support to the Commission and expand the functions of the GWIC.

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

The funding model for GWIC must be changed so that GWIC is totally funded by the NSW Government (rather than Greyhound Racing NSW) with the Government recouping the full cost of this funding from GRNSW and the gambling industry via taxation

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

Steps taken to improve the welfare of greyhounds should include:

- 1. Implementing whole of life tracking for all greyhounds.*
- 2. Ensuring that all healthy greyhounds live out the full term of their natural lives in either private homes or sanctuaries.*
- 3. Ensure that maximum penalties are awarded for administering of prohibited substances.*
- 4. Reducing breeding.*
- 5. Making tracks safer.*

(g) any other related matter

A person reporting greyhound cruelty must be protected from harassment

The costs of assistance to those suffering a gambling addiction to greyhound racing should be factored into the moneys retrieved from the greyhound racing industry

NEGAT acknowledges the Submission to the Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission prepared by the Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds in the preparation of our response see [GWIC-Inquiry-final-1.pdf \(greyhoundcoalition.com\)](#).