

**INQUIRY INTO GREYHOUND WELFARE AND
INTEGRITY COMMISSION**

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Inquiry into the Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission Submission



Jason Bolwell

While I am not a conspiracy theorist, it is hard to believe that this wasn't always the plan to complicate the industry through a subversive regulator working under a totalitarian regime to ensure it dies a slow painful death through strangulation.

Stilton Lane Racing

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Contents

Introduction.....	page 1
My story.....	page 2
Welfare Ignored.....	page 3
GWIC employment strategies.....	page 4
Abandoned meetings.....	page 5
The Lure.....	page 7
Breeding.....	page 8
Irrelevant rules (why).....	page 9
In closing	page 10
Thought for Anti's.....	page 11

Introduction

While I welcome and thank Mr Borsak for speaking up in parliament and putting forward this inquiry into GWIC, which I strongly believe it to be well overdue. I also question the inquiries authenticity to deliver a fair assessment of the regulator in question considering there a number of members on this committee that want the industry shut down permantly.

How can a government commision take members from the AJP and Greens and expect to recieve a balanced and fair assessment when they have openly lobbied governments to shut down the industry? No matter what eviednce is provided they already have there minds made up, whatever they can do to make it harder for the industry to operate will be supported by them. Their opinions are and will be insignificant to this commisions findings, because it involves an industry they don't agree with.

Even though I believe the inquiry will have a very lopsided view with this committee I will attempt to provide my personal obseverations since the industry was unfairly discriminated against due to the cruelty displayed by a minority of participants.

Since live baiting the industry has been on a huge merry go round, firstly there was the inquiry (Mchugh report) where the majority of people interviewed had been caught doing the wrong thing and used the line 'everyones doing it' to justify their crimes. Then came the ban closely followed up by the re-instatement under massive over regulation, discrimination, prejudice and provincialism. Committees were formed to implement changes along with sub committees to confuse things more, information was sort from so called professionals (university graduates, domestic pet veterinarians, animal welfare groups and RSPCA) suddenly the sport was over run with regulators on top of regulators all with little to no expierence with greyhounds and all costing massive amounts of money. The results of the changes to be implemented were that GRNSW remained to look after the administrive side and GWIC was formed to look after welfare and intergrity.

All this activity has been and still is bleeding the sport dry, participants are leaving the sport due to the over regulation on pety things that are in no way detrimental to the well being of the greyhound which will inevitably lead to the sport to be branded with the "UNSUSTAINABLE" tag.

While I am not a conspiracy theorist, it is hard to believe that this wasn't always the plan to complicate the industry through a subversive regulator working under a totalitarian regime to ensure it dies a slow painful death through strangulation.

I personally strongly believe that the sport can thrive, self support and maintain the required welfare standards, whilst providing and income for all industry employees, suppliers and participants with the correct administration/regulators.

My Story

I started in the industry with the purchase of my first greyhound we named Lucy (Dynamic Shiraz) in 2010. Having a keen interest in genetics throughout my childhood breeding and rearing poultry for exhibition plus having the advantage of living on small acreage I decided to try my hand in the racing industry. This was something that whole family could be involved in and with the kids being young was a chance to educate them through the whole circle of life of the animal. Our small operation involved the breeding and rearing of greyhounds which in our peak produced 2-3 litters a year, we would always try and sell a few then rear the rest up to race.

Racing an animal that you've had from day 1 of its life provided us all with a multitude of emotion's and pleasure at the thought we had achieved that animals potential in being a greyhound. In the years to follow the kids while growing up themselves learnt invaluable lessons in animal husbandry, work ethics and responsibilities, we all got to experience some success with our dogs lucky enough to compete in group races and had regular family outings to the dogs. The sport was for the working family it gave everyone the opportunity to enter the racing industry at a grass roots level but this unfortunately has had the reverse effect in recent times being vulnerable to activist groups and weak governments because of its battler status. Our family operation now has had its first litter in 2 years and is questioning its existence due to ridiculous over regulation and the dictatorship being represented by both the government and the regulators.

For the record Lucy now preparing for her 13th birthday coming up in February 2021 still lives at home with us but most likely is dead according to regulators or activists as she hasn't raced in years.



Lucy enjoying retirement

Welfare Ignored

I reported the below to GWIC as I thought that this was a negligent action by a so called trainer that serverly impacted the welfare of the greyhound and was the purpose in which GWIC was set up for.

I reported this incident to GWIC that afternoon.

I have had 2 or 3 calls regarding this matter since reporting it but to my knowledge nothing has been done about it. I know that GWIC inspectors travelled to to investigate speaking with people attached to the track, the vet hospital and I imagine

This is what I believe that GWIC was set up to look after the welfare of the animal but 15 months on I still have not been informed of any outcome and to make matters worse I seen

But apparently he can still hold a trainer licence this is very ordinary to say the least.

GWIC Employment Strategies

When constructing a successful operation you would mostly likely seek out the people with the most knowledge of that operation, people with experience in industry, people willing to aggrandize the industry and specialists in their fields.

In GWIC's case it would be hard to comprehend that this was their thought process, it was more to the thinking of anyone who has an axe to grind. The lack of proficiency and balance within the organisation is bordering on fraudulent.

The vets employed at GWIC have little to no experience with the greyhound breed whilst specialists in this field like _____ were not even consulted. RSPCA involvement is hypocritical along with discriminative they are willing to sanction the Greyhound industry but when it comes to their own backyard the rules change, they still remain the largest killers of animals in the country.

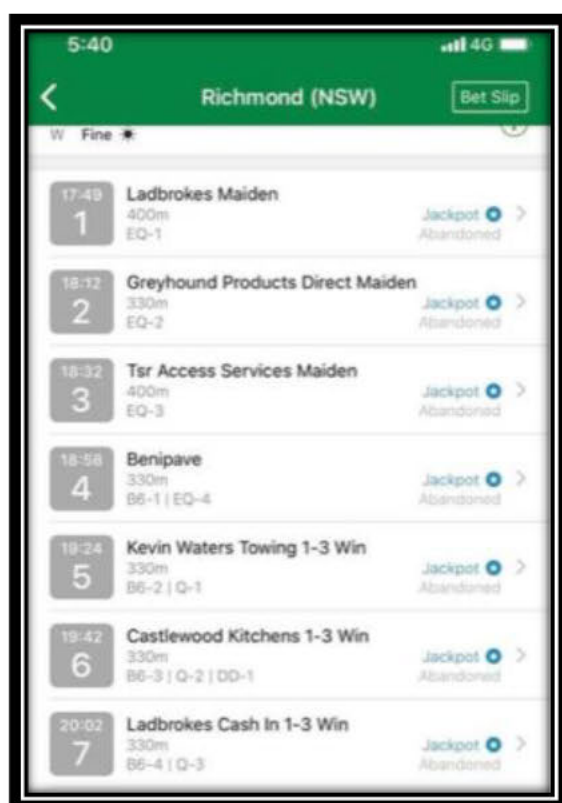
They say it starts at the top and flows down this would not be far from the truth, Judith Lind while she has resigned from her position was responsible for the way GWIC operates. GWIC which she presided over has developed rules and regulations just for the sake of having rules and regulations; it has been reported through the media to be a toxic workplace with bullying of stewards. Judith is also guilty of making rules up as she goes even to the extent of banning knackery meat? Dogs are carnivores they eat meat.

This mindset has been reiterated throughout the organisation, this is typical of a government body trying to justify its own existence, instead of acting purely in the best interests of the industry. GWIC has turned it into a complicated, discriminative, incomprehensible bureaucratic nightmare brandishing totalitarian constructed laws with more power than the police.

Abandoned Meetings

From 1928 we have been racing greyhounds in NSW in various conditions, but we now find ourselves going backwards. We now have heat policies, water bowls in race kennels, mandatory air conditioning for trailers and track preparation policies. How on earth did this sport ever function without these? There are a lot of manufactured figures flying about regarding injuries and deaths of greyhounds being used to by the government and regulators to justify the madness.

Firstly let's take track preparation, my dogs run in unprepared paddocks everyday but on race day we have to prepare the track as designed by university graduates. This process must be very complicated because they regularly stuff it up causing meetings to be abandoned. How is it that prior to the ban we very rarely had an abandoned meeting but now it is becoming a common occurrence? I had a few dogs nominated recently at Richmond 8/11/20 only to have my trainer call me on arrival to the track to say the meeting had been abandoned. The weather that day at Richmond was overcast top of 20 degrees so absolutely perfect for racing you would think.



How does this happen? Apparently the curator put too much water on the track making the inside too wet and the outside too hard, so the inspectors called off the meeting. Again I say how did they race for 90 years prior without all this propaganda, this is just pure utter incompetence.

This brings up another nonsensical rule water bowls in race kennels, we are the only state who has this rule why? The greyhounds are in an air conditioned controlled environment so what is the science behind this? At a guess I would say someone outside of the industry thought it was a good thing to have. At best this rule should be made optional again I can only keep thinking how the industry has survived for 90 years without it. Maybe there are some more fabricated statistics of greyhounds dying of dehydration in race kennels? The heat policy is another rule which should be optional my dogs in paddocks at home run in all conditions and for 90 years they have raced in them, so why is it necessary to change. Compulsory air conditioning once the temperature reaches 26 degrees again why if the trailer etc is ventilated what is the issue? I see horses being transported in horse floats in 40 degrees no water or air conditioning what is the difference? Yes I do believe times change but the weather in this country has been the same for the 50 years that I have been alive and animals have survived in it just fine.

For the majority of owners and trainers, greyhound care is straightforward, but the governing bodies have had a massive over reach of power by enforcing farcical protocols, procedures and rules to both diminish participation cause division within the industry all in the name of welfare.

The Lure

The decision to ban the use of animal matter on the lure is the major contributor of the downfall of the industry in my opinion. The changes made surrounding the lure have only increased the number of dogs for retirement, dramatically increased short course racing, severely effected the chase in the animal (dogs fighting, playing or just loosing interest) and caused added stress/anxiety to the animal. The decision to take away the animals natural instinct was like signing a death warrant for the sport and below I will explain my reasoning to why this is the case. Code of practice states; "Participants must provide greyhounds in their care with opportunities for expression of normal canine behaviours, to prevent stress and anxiety". This statement only proves GWIC itself is guilty, as running and hunting dogs such as greyhounds love to chase prey, fur and meat.

Why was this ever adopted?

Most obvious answer is "live baiting on the ABC" which lead to the McHugh report and just like that no more animal matter. This decision was adopted to appease the anti greyhound groups, animal justice party, the greens and the very noisy minority. Which I might add is an absolute waste of time, as they will never be happy whilst ever animals are racing.

Welfare was another lame excuse on why this needed to occur as the above groups again think using dead animal remains encourages the dogs to become vicious and anti social. Last and probably the main reason was that it was touted that live baiting was a common practice within the industry and that by banning animal matter this would solve this so called major problem within the industry. I strongly believe that before any of these decisions had been made or rules determined the people responsible for them really needed to understand the breed and the purpose in which the animal was bred for, which is "RACING".

Instead these committees adopted the strategy of breeding greyhounds for post racing, pets first and foremost and if they are keen enough to race then they can (much to the disgust of the activists).

Def; Greyhound

A dog of a tall, slender breed having keen sight and capable of high speed, used since ancient times for hunting small game and now chiefly in racing and coursing.

Understanding the breed it is hard to believe we are where we are today, it is like all the reform committees and governing bodies have totally ignored the animal's genetics. These bodies constantly talk about the welfare of the animal yet keep introducing rules and regulation to try and change the animals DNA. I strongly believe taking away animal matter from the lure has caused more stress and anxiety to the animal, how this can be better for the welfare of the animal is a

mystery. The animal needs to be able to perform its natural instincts which is to chase prey this was how they were trained prior to 2016, they got to finish with a reward for their efforts chasing. Live baiting has never been legal within the sport nor should it be, but to take away all animal matter is a massive failure on behalf of all the reform committees and governing bodies. We have laws in this state and country that we all must abide by e.g. speeding, drink driving and handling a mobile phone all have a variety of fines and jail time but we never stop everyone from driving because someone else fails to follow the law.

In the greyhound industry that is exactly what the government, reform committees and regulators have done actually they have gone one step further and punished the animal by taking away what it does naturally. I am able to go to the supermarket and purchase meat, whole chickens etc but it's illegal to use this on a lure WHY? Meat or animal matter is used in training domestic pet dogs at puppy schools as a reward but again government's arrogant prejudice towards the industry is indisputable.

Over the past 3 years in the mad scramble to try to pacify animal activists, anti greyhound racing groups etc the governing bodies have lost track of what the animal is bred for. They have performed all types of studies on cambers on tracks, lure positions, track incident hotspots etc all good data but I note that most incidents were found to be on bends.

My point here is that since the sport has been trying to confuse, cause stress and anxiety to the animal by asking it to chase a synthetic or should I say a pathetic lure that resembles nothing like prey they have taken away the animal's drive. So then the participant is faced with a 'fail to chase' because the animal is receiving no reward! Get 3 of these and the dog's career is over it's either move interstate or rehome as a pet. It has also led to shorter course racing and more bend starts, which they were meant to be avoiding due to the amount of injuries that occur. So the governing bodies again are being detrimental to the animal's welfare by increasing the chance of injury, which in my opinion all comes back to the removal of animal matter from the lure. The synthetic lure or no animal matter has also affected breeding as the cost to get a litter to the race track only to have to half the litter to go to rehoming for previously mentioned failures is just not worth it. Buyers won't return to purchase again if they have to rehome the animal instead of racing it and most breeders would be reluctant to breed again.

The sport going forward is facing a big problem if they fail to address the lure and the use of animal matter they will continue to produce half hearted chasers which will lead to less numbers, short course racing, less races, less gambling which means less revenue all leading to "UNSUSTAINABILITY".

The administrators and regulators need to realise fast that they need to act on this issue, if they keep ignoring this they won't have to worry about any of the thousands of rules and regulations they have created because not only will they not have a sport they won't have a job either.

Breeding

I have briefly discussed the effects that the breeding side of the industry is experiencing and will only become worse with the constant over regulation and the introduction of the new code of practice. Not only will we be governed on number of litters and age of bitch, we will now have defects to content with, an industry expert/vet who will decide if we can breed with the bitch or not.

In my opinion the sport was made up from grass roots people the everyday Australian family could become apart of this industry through either breeding your own champion or purchasing a dog in the hope you own the next Brett Lee. Unfortunately since 2016 this dream has turned into a nightmare for a vast majority of the sport, to be involved these days is unrealistic for most, especially if you wished to breed. While the costs vary depending on the sire you use the unavoidable costs of caesareans, worming, inoculations, feeding and litter registrations are outweighing the results. As explained above concerning the lure I can only speak on my own results which have suffered with the removal of animal matter, we are now breeding 50% for racing and 50% rehoming, with all the rules we put forward to reduce breeding we will in fact need to increase breeding to sustain TAB obligations as there will not be enough committed dogs to for fill the race meetings.

Irrelevant Rules (why)

Barking muzzles are another rule I just do not understand they are usable in other states but again it is an offence in NSW. Rule (7.12) Barking muzzles must not be used. Any muzzle used on a greyhound must not restrict normal behaviour such as panting or drinking. Before the introduction of this madness I used them on all my dogs after they had been fed at night and they were removed in the morning. While restricting barking they can still drink, I had cases where they hadn't finished all there food but it was gone the next morning. The dogs used to come up to me to have them on at night so they are in no way harmful, painful or stressful for the dog. Also once kennelling prior to racing they are great to calm a dog, stop it from continually barking causing anxiety and running there race before going out onto the track. Now we have caused another issue with our neighbours and the local council because of noise, we are not allowed encourage the dog to stop barking. So our pool of participants and race dogs gets even smaller as they can't keep their dogs at there home due to them being to noisy.



Over two separate 4-day periods, experiments involving 16 dogs (paired on sex and age) examined the risks to the welfare of dogs wearing the anti-barking muzzle. Using a functionally-based or homeostatic approach, behaviours indicative of maladaptation and an element of the stress response (i.e. cortisol saliva concentration) were measured. One dog per pair was allocated to the Muzzle Treatment or the Control Treatment. They found the anti-barking device to significantly reduce the occurrence of barking. While the initial response of dogs with muzzles was to display submissive behaviour, there were no significant behavioural differences indicative of a painful or aversive stimulus, nor was there evidence of physiological stress responses.

Kennel size is another ridiculous rule, if the reason behind this was welfare it couldn't be further from the truth. When kennel inspectors come to check your dogs wouldn't it be more sensible to use an inspector who has knowledge of the industry and a local area vet? Instead of the virulent riot squad tactics implied currently. Body cameras and tape measures are malignant clear evidence of

discrimination and a lack of knowledge of the breed. Race greyhounds through excitement or injury can do a great deal more damage to themselves in a larger area. If a vet was to inspect the animal and it was found to be in good health and the kennel was clean and dry who cares what size it is? It's about the welfare of the animal. Instead the regulators add more cost to the hobbyist to enlarge there kennels.

The rehoming of ex race dogs which is getting younger and younger due to the fail to chase issue, is another challenging task. The code of practice states (9.11) a greyhound owner must not transfer a greyhound in circumstances where the owner knows or has reason to believe that the greyhound may be euthanised punishment can be imprisoned for 2 years. Who determines whether or not the owner knew the dog was going to be euthanised? To think that the governing body is suggesting jail time for the original owner or breeder of a dog that was rehomed then mistreated or destroyed by the person it was rehomed to is ridiculous. This is another reason why the industry will struggle to survive as it will not attract any new participants. What is the reasoning behind (3.16) Participants must monitor the dental health of all greyhounds in their care, and seek veterinary advice if the greyhound shows signs of dental disease. I feed brisket bones once a week but if the greyhound has a tartar build up etc I need to take it to a vet, have it put under to have its teeth cleaned. Where has this come from? I have had both domestic and performance dogs all my life and never had this treatment before? Most humans I know don't go the dentist themselves but they need to take there dogs.

In Closing

I would like to thank this enquiry for the opportunity to put forward my observations on a moribund industry ruined by government and absurdly outrageous over regulation. The fact that the whole industry has been treated in this way is truly astonishing, the majority continually being punished due to the illegal acts of a hand full of participants.

All industries that involve animal participation require the best possible genetics and the ultimate nutrition/care to enable them perform at their peak and I honestly believe the majority of the greyhound industry has always done this.

GWIC in my opinion should not exist or should be amalgamated with GRNSW, the industry is being run into the ground with the cost to support this dysfunctional, ill informed arm of the industry.

The inclusion of GWIC with expectation the industry will self fund it is implausible, this organisation has been formulated to end the industry permanently with over reaching powers, agenda driven employment strategies and its lack of a working knowledge of the industry is evident. A lot of the rules and regulations are designed to limit participation, cause anxiety/stress to both the greyhound and the participant along with destroying the industry.

While ever government continues to appease minority groups all animal participation sports will continue to suffer, if they where really serious on animal welfare they would have started with pet ownership but there is most likely to many votes to be lost there.

Thought for Anti's

In the greyhound culture, the gold standard is a healthy, fit and happy dog. When a dog is healthy it is happier, Less stressed, exercises more, rests better, is mentally more acute and thus able to enjoy life to its fullest and balanced function.

In today's "Cancel Culture" and virtue signalling world it should never be acceptable to be hypocritical or discriminatory, especially when one doesn't use actual facts, firsthand knowledge and proper context. In order to do that, one must look to experts on the subject, apply scientific facts, and be educated and not filled with opinionated and oftentimes false, harmful and hate filled rhetoric.



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