

**Submission  
No 87**

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

**Name:** Mrs Susan Absalom

**Date Received:** 28 June 2022

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**From:** Susan Absalom  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 28 June 2022 10:30 AM  
**To:** GWIC  
**Subject:** S Absalom submission June 2022  
**Attachments:** S Absalom submission June 2022.docx; 2 GRCB.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

**Categories:** Submission

Dear Jessie

Please find attached my submission. As per our telephone conversation I was intending to speak about women in greyhound racing. This submission is on that topic.

I have also attached a page from a report in the 1970's from the then Controlling Body for greyhound racing. This document is to show that back then there were statistics showing the difference in numbers of participants among gender.

I have also attached three links as evidence to show how the attitude of the regulatory body to assaults on women has not changed. It is up to the committee what they do with these links as I did not think it appropriate to name people in my submission.

[7.30 Report - 17/5/2000: Whistleblowers ask why greyhound inquiry took so long](#)

[Female Kurri racing steward wins dismissal case | Newcastle Herald | Newcastle, NSW](#)

[Racing chief fought for her rights | The West Australian](#)

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in the inquiry.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards  
Sue Absalom

Sue Absalom

28 June 2022

SELECT COMMITTEE GREYHOUND WELFARE AND INTEGRITY COMMISSION

Dear Committee Members

I have been involved in the greyhound racing industry for around 48 years. I am currently an owner/trainer. I have also been involved in the industry in a voluntary administrative capacity. My husband and I are caring for five retired greyhounds at home. I was hoping to attend the Select Committee in person; however, my husband now has a medical appointment on that day. He fell ill last year and spent five months in hospital. I am therefore putting my issues in writing.

This submission concerns women. Greyhound racing is, to a considerable extent, a family pursuit. As such, women play an important part in its success. It is my view that there is not enough emphasis placed on the encouragement of women. In fact, I am concerned that decisions have been made that could be said to be disrespectful to women.

I have scanned the latest annual reports and strategic plans for both GWIC and GRNSW and there is a lack of statistics regarding female participation and no published plans to encourage female participation. Yet the Greyhound Racing Control Board published figures for 12 months until 31<sup>st</sup> January 1973 showing a table setting out registered participants by age group and gender. I have attached the page. The table showed that overall, the registered participants consisted of 82.8% male and 17.2% female. I have attached that document with the email.

The GWIC report does set out their own employment statistics which show the following:

Senior Executive and Commissioner

Band 2

2019/2020 – 1 male and 1 female

2020/2021 - 2 male and 0 female

Band 1

2019/2020 – 4 male and 1 female

2020/2021 – 4 male and 1 female

Non-Executive Officers

2017/2018 – 12 male and 13 female

2020/2021 – 45 male and 32 female

I think it is worth mentioning that the GWIC website lists the members of the Animal Welfare Committee, and these are all women. Can we say that the welfare of the animal improves when women are involved so any gender imbalance should be with women?

I would like to mention two cases that show little has changed in relation to the lack of respect for women by the regulatory authority. I will not include names because I do not think it appropriate however, I have attached with the email for the committee to peruse.

The first case is from a transcript from 7.30 report from May 2000. At the end of the document are details of how a mother requested the controlling body to discipline a trainer / committee man who pleaded guilty to assaulting her 13year old daughter at the racetrack. No action was taken by the controlling body. Recently, GWIC appointed a senior steward to the Hunter Region. The steward had been working in Queensland. He had been the subject of sexual harassment complaints from a female steward who won her case against dismissal in the Fair Work Commission. They had worked together as Harness NSW stewards. The female steward has moved on to become head of stewards in Harness Racing in Western Australia. The appointment of this male steward by GWIC shows nothing but disrespect for female participants in the Hunter region.

Another incident I would like to bring up may seem petty, but it is, again, symptomatic of the attitude by peak greyhound racing bodies to females. Usually, around early May there is feature race for bitches held at Wentworth Park called the Ladies Bracelet. It is the only metropolitan race meeting promoted to females. There are many activities held on the night specifically aimed at women. This year the Ladies Bracelet race shared the night with the postponed Million Dollar Chase. It meant that due to promotions for the MDC there were no specific ladies' promotions on the night. I had asked both my Association which conducts racing at Wentworth Park and GRNSW for another night. It did not eventuate. The thoroughbreds promote themselves to women by having a Ladies Day. Greyhound racing in Victoria celebrates women in racing. Harness racing celebrates women. GRNSW does not.

The lack of respect for women also extends to the greyhounds. GWIC does separate out male and female pups in the breeding statistics but that is as far as it goes. There are no other statistics given either by GWIC or GRNSW relating to racing. I was on a committee for racing and Wentworth Park and when we asked the GRNSW grading department for bitches only races we

were told we could only have them if we also had dog only races. They ignored the fact that bitches are often smaller than dogs, have enforced spells because they come on season and are vital as brood bitches for the continuation of greyhound racing.

In conclusion I believe that greyhound racing should be actively promoted to females. There are at least two reasons for this. The first is that the female population is significant and if racing is to continue and grow then they must be included. Secondly, the welfare of the greyhound is enhanced by having women involved in their breeding, rearing, training, and retirement. It can be done by ensuring the regulatory and commercial bodies report on statistics relating to the participation of women in the industry. The Commercial body could ensure that the business plan for each club sets out how it is promoting women. The Commercial body could give funding for each club to promote ladies' days. At the annual Greyhound of the Year function women can be recognized. Finally, statistics should be made public of the number of female vs male greyhounds in the racing arena as well as promoting female only races.

I would like to thank the committee for giving me the opportunity to contribute the Select Committee Inquiry.

Regards

Sue Absalom

# GREYHOUND RACING CONTROL BOARD

## REGISTERED PERSONS AGE GROUPS

	Percentage all ages	Percentage under 20	Percentage 20-29	Percentage 30-39	Percentage 40-49	Percentage 50-59	Percentage 60-69	Percentage over 70
Males .. ..	82.8	2.3	17.4	20.8	19.8	14.2	6.8	1.5
Females .. ..	17.2	.3	3.4	4.3	4.5	3.2	1.1	.4
Total Percentages	100.0	2.6	20.8	25.1	24.3	17.4	7.9	1.9

## NATIONALITIES

	Per cent
Born Australia .. ..	89.5
Born Elsewhere .. ..	10.5
	<hr/> 100.0

## Percentages

1. Australia .. ..	89.5
2. U.S.A. .. ..	.1
3. Great Britain .. ..	4.1
4. Germany .. ..	.4
5. Greece .. ..	.4
6. Holland .. ..	.3
7. Ireland .. ..	.3
8. Italy .. ..	1.0
9. Malta .. ..	1.6
10. New Zealand .. ..	.5
11. Elsewhere .. ..	1.8

# GREYHOUND RACING CONTROL BOARD

## SYDNEY METROPOLITAN AREA—MUNICIPAL AND SHIRE—OWNER AND TRAINER LOCATION FIGURES

Twelve months ended 31st January, 1973

Municipality or Shire	Number	Per cent	Municipality or Shire	Number	Per cent
Ashfield (M.) .. ..	74	1.15	Leichhardt (M.) .. ..	236	3.69
Auburn (M.) .. ..	181	2.83	Liverpool (M.) .. ..	625	9.77
Bankstown (M.) .. ..	650	10.16	Manly (M.) .. ..	37	.58
Baulkham Hills (M.) .. ..	192	3.00	Marrickville (M.) .. ..	189	2.95
Blacktown (M.) .. ..	557	8.71	Mosman (M.) .. ..	18	.28
Botany (M.) .. ..	110	1.72	North Sydney (M.) .. ..	49	.77
Burwood (M.) .. ..	44	.69	Parramatta (M.) .. ..	396	6.19
Canterbury (M.) .. ..	337	5.27	Randwick (M.) .. ..	333	5.21
Concord (M.) .. ..	40	.63	Rockdale (M.) .. ..	195	3.05
Drummoyne (M.) .. ..	67	1.05	Ryde (M.) .. ..	134	2.10
Fairfield (M.) .. ..	349	5.46	South Sydney (M.) .. ..	77	1.20
Holroyd (M.) .. ..	383	5.99	Strathfield (M.) .. ..	39	.61
Hornsby (S.) .. ..	102	1.59	Sutherland (S.) .. ..	299	4.67
Hunter's Hill (M.) .. ..	2	.03	Sydney .. ..	123	1.92
Hurstville (M.) .. ..	165	2.58	Warringah (S.) .. ..	139	2.17
Kogarah (M.) .. ..	53	.83	Waverley (M.) .. ..	76	1.19
Ku-ring-gai (M.) .. ..	37	.58	Willoughby (M.) .. ..	35	.55
Lane Cove (M.) .. ..	21	.33	Woollahra (M.) .. ..	32	.50

State Total—Owners-Trainers, 13,744 (12 months ended 31st January, 1973)

## Top Ten

1. Bankstown .. ..	650
2. Liverpool .. ..	625
3. Blacktown .. ..	557
4. Parramatta .. ..	396
5. Holroyd .. ..	383
6. Fairfield .. ..	349
7. Canterbury .. ..	337
8. Randwick .. ..	333
9. Sutherland .. ..	299
10. Leichhardt .. ..	236