

REPORT ON PROCEEDINGS BEFORE

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

GREYHOUND WELFARE AND INTEGRITY COMMISSION

CORRECTED

At Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney, on Friday 16 September 2022

The Committee met at 13:20.

PRESENT

The Hon. Robert Borsak (Chair)

Ms Abigail Boyd (Deputy Chair)

The Hon. Wes Fang

The Hon. Courtney Houssos

The Hon. Mark Pearson

The Hon. Mick Veitch

PRESENT VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

The Hon. Lou Amato

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The CHAIR: Welcome to this public hearing for the inquiry into the Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission. I would like to acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the traditional custodians of the land on which we are meeting today. I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of New South Wales. I also acknowledge and pay my respects to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people joining us today. Today we will be hearing from representatives from Greyhound Racing NSW, as well as CG Insight. I thank everyone for making the time to give evidence to this important inquiry.

Before we commence, I would like to make some brief comments about the procedures for today's hearing. Today's hearing is being broadcast live via the Parliament's website. A transcript of today's hearing will be placed on the Committee's website when it becomes available. In accordance with broadcasting guidelines, media representatives are reminded that they must take responsibility for what they publish about the Committee's proceedings. While parliamentary privilege applies to witnesses giving evidence today, it does not apply to what witnesses may say outside of their evidence at the hearing. I therefore urge witnesses to be careful about comments they may make to the media or to others after they complete your evidence.

Committee hearings are not a forum for people to make adverse reflections about others under the protection of parliamentary privilege. In that regard it is important that witnesses focus on the issues raised by the inquiry terms of reference and avoid naming individuals unnecessarily. All witnesses have a right to procedural fairness according to the procedural fairness resolution adopted by the House in 2018. If witnesses are unable to answer a question today and want more time to respond, they can take a question on notice. Written answers to questions taken on notice are to be provided within 12 days. I ask you to note that it is 12 days, not the normal 21.

If witnesses wish to hand up documents they should do so through the Committee staff. With regard to the audibility of the hearing today, I remind both Committee members and witnesses to speak into the microphones. Finally, could everyone please turn their mobile phones to silent for the duration of the hearing.

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Mr ROBERT MACAULAY, Chief Executive Officer, Greyhound Racing NSW, sworn and examined

Dr ALICIA FULLER, General Manager, Greyhound Development and Advocacy, Greyhound Racing NSW, affirmed and examined

The CHAIR: I now welcome our witnesses. Would you like to start by making a short opening statement? If you do, could you keep it to a few minutes, please.

ROBERT MACAULAY: Yes. Mr Chairman, if I could tender, please, a revised submission from Greyhound Racing NSW.

The CHAIR: Thank you.

ROBERT MACAULAY: I tender that because of the length of time that has transpired since our original submission.

The CHAIR: This is a supplementary?

ROBERT MACAULAY: It is.

The CHAIR: I will get a copy and then we'll circulate it. Please proceed.

The Hon. LOU AMATO: Could you ask the secretariat to email that to me as well, as soon as possible, so I can have a look at it?

The CHAIR: Yes.

ROBERT MACAULAY: Mr Chairman, the New South Wales greyhound ecosystem, as it exists today, is a vastly changed environment. That change, over a short period of time, has been extraordinarily positive. In many ways, it has been remarkable. I believe it is appropriate in a forum such as this to demonstrate the scale and pace of that change. As such, I wish to report the factual details of this transformation and provide further context that Greyhound Racing NSW believes is relevant and important for now and the future. But first, I'd like to note that while it is common to reference greyhound racing in New South Wales as an industry, that it is, first and foremost, a largely regional, family-based, wholesome sport. It is a sport enjoyed by thousands of participants across New South Wales. They include many husband-and-wife partnerships, and often their children, and small operations of hobby trainers.

The majority of participants reside in far-reaching corners and pockets of the splendid geographies of regional and rural New South Wales. It is a sport that delivers thousands of jobs and an economic contribution totalling more than \$500 million to New South Wales annually. It is a sport that has now well-established welfare pathways and programs built on whole-of-life greyhound care for its much-loved animals, all the way from whelping to rehoming. It is a sport, according to independently published research, that has now surpassed more than 1.2 million fans in New South Wales. It is also a sport that, not just with my own legally opined hat on, now operates as the most highly regulated racing code anywhere in the world.

The pace of this transformational change, including cultural and behavioural change, has been swift. It is little more than four years since the Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission became operational on 1 July 2018. It was on this date, which, as we know, was the culmination of well-publicised events, that Greyhound Racing NSW and GWIC each began their respective duties. This included a separation of functions and responsibilities, which were clearly defined as part of the New South Wales Government's legislated Greyhound Racing Act 2017. Greyhound Racing NSW's side of the bargain was defined by the Act. At its inception, it included funding the commission. The other core responsibilities for Greyhound Racing NSW under the Act are summarised in section 24 of the Act. They are commercial viability, rehoming and welfare of greyhounds, and the viability of clubs and tracks.

The outcomes delivered by Greyhound Racing NSW in each area of responsibility over the last four years alongside an independent GWIC have been an undeniable story of success. As a collective achievement, it is perhaps not as properly acknowledged or as celebrated as it should be. To make this point, I give you just a few facts and figures. Here is a sample of critical numbers that demonstrate the progress in a four-year period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June this year. Firstly, greyhound rehoming numbers are up 176 per cent in that period—from 729 in 2019 to what will be reported as 2,014 this financial year just ended. That's due to a very wide range of welfare program investments by Greyhound Racing. Catastrophic injuries have more than halved in the same period. They were at 1.2 catastrophic injuries per 1,000 starts in FY2019 to a soon-to-be-reported 0.5 per 1,000 starts in FY22. That can be ascribed to track improvements and a whole range of other welfare and safety programs.

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Importantly, prize money and returns paid to participants is up 62.5 per cent in the same period—that is, it has gone from \$28.5 million in FY19 to \$46 million in FY22. I am confident to predict to this Committee that it will probably exceed \$50 million in FY23. During the same period, wagering turnover is up 108 per cent, from \$1.495 billion in 2019 to \$3.11 billion this financial year. The dogs whelped that go on to race in New South Wales have also increased in percentage terms. That is what we call the "utilisation rate". That has increased from 68 per cent to 74 per cent during the relevant period.

These achievements are underpinned by Greyhound Racing NSW's financial operating performance—from a net loss of \$1.5 million in FY19 to three years of operating surpluses. Those operating surpluses allow substantial reinvestment in safety, welfare and prize money initiatives. That money nearly all goes to regional and rural New South Wales. About 75 per cent of participants in New South Wales are effectively from the bush. The platform of the successful business turnaround during that period has been built on strategic initiatives and implementation by a dedicated team at Greyhound Racing NSW. The outcomes, including financial performance, could not have been delivered without trust in the integrity of our racing and rehoming programs. I make these points in advance of anticipated questions because I believe they are a good reference for discussion about our sports journey from past to present and on into the future.

Before I outline the future, I want to touch base on just two aspects of the organisation that ought to be taken particular attention of. The first is what has emerged during the deliberations of this Committee on past organisational tensions that have existed between Greyhound Racing NSW and the Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission. It is my view that a significant degree of the tension that I referred to came from teething problems, some of which were alluded to in GRNSW's original submission that was filed in September 2020. The submission was made way back then, at a more immature phase of a relatively embryonic GWIC. I am very pleased to say that today much of the organisational tension has dissipated courtesy of the New South Wales Government's subsequent restructuring of the funding mechanism for GWIC, which now allows for moneys raised by Government from the point of consumption tax to be distributed to GWIC.

Furthermore, during the course of this commission of inquiry's existence, a new leadership at GWIC has been more collaborative and constructive. There now exists a greater level of maturity in the relationship; however, for the sake of our sports stakeholders, there are ongoing improvements that can still be made. Myself and all other GRNSW executives meet regularly with GWIC and its leadership team on a range of welfare- and racing-related issues. I have given my commitment to GWIC's CEO, Steve Griffin, that I want this relationship further improved in the best interests of all of our participants and all of our greyhounds. We may still have a clear fence of responsibility that separates Greyhound Racing NSW and GWIC but we are surely, at this point, in the same paddock.

This brings me very briefly to the future. If the past is well known for all of its addressable issues and if the present-day transformation of the collective industry is blindingly obvious, then the future funding of our sport, including long-term certainties to support greyhound welfare, depends on the biggest financial issue facing the sport, and that is tax dividend fairness. The big question for New South Wales greyhound racing participants is: When will tax fairness be delivered? In the face of any criticisms, questions or microscopic probity of greyhound racing in New South Wales, the fact is that every person in this room can directly influence the futureproofing for greyhound welfare at the stroke of a pen from this Parliament building. As highlighted in our original submissions and will no doubt be raised again today, Greyhound Racing NSW and the sport more generally is being denied fair and equitable funding redistributions of the money the sport generates to the tune of about \$29 million a year.

That is not the fault of the current Government or even its predecessor. It is a historical anomaly that first arose many years ago and has never been addressed. The unfair treatment of Greyhound Racing NSW is based on the money the sport generates not being proportionally redistributed according to the portions of contribution. It is self-generated money leaking out of three buckets, and those are the inequitable distributions of tax parity; the point of consumption tax, generally referred to as POCT; and a legislative cap on what is known as race field information use fees. It may seem complex, but it is simple. Greyhound Racing NSW and the industry more widely is being starved by the inequity of how a pie that is in fact rapidly growing is being thinly sliced for a return to participants. Mr Chairman and inquiry members, these are outlined in our original submissions and they have not changed from that date to this.

The summary bottom line of these inequities is that the New South Wales greyhound sport and GRNSW as the commercial body for the participants is being denied \$29 million per year—not cumulatively; per year, each and every year. That would be money spent on greyhound welfare solutions and supporting the livelihoods of participants, who are the original generators of these funds. GRNSW is, in effect, being handcuffed by this historical unfairness. Any suggestions that GRNSW should be doing more must keep this inequity in mind. After all, the greyhound industry in New South Wales has been fairly tested by the scrutiny and reform placed upon it

CORRECTED

over the past four years. But after having emerged and reformed from its past to its new and proud foundation of the present, the future of the sport should be about total fairness for the certainty of its animals and its people. Finally, just on this point, I would refer this commission of inquiry to the special commission of inquiry by Michael McHugh where, at recommendation 64, he recommended:

If the racing codes cannot agree on a more equitable distribution of TAB revenue—
being one of those buckets—

the Parliament of NSW should legislate to amend the current arrangements by providing for a distribution that reflects each code's contribution to TAB revenue.

Ladies and gentlemen, that report was dated 16 June 2016, more than six years ago. On behalf of our sport's participants, I submit that it is better late than never to address it now. Those are my submissions and my opening statement.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Thank you very much for your attendance today, Mr Macaulay and Dr Fuller. I want to start by looking at a report from May this year that was exposing the fact that most former industry greyhounds arriving at community-run greyhound rescue groups were in poor condition on arrival. Some 89 per cent of those dogs were reported to be in poor condition. This was corroborated by evidence to a hearing of this Committee earlier this year, provided by three New South Wales-based rescue groups. I will table a document containing photographic evidence that was provided to my office directly by two New South Wales-based rescue groups, Greyhound Rescue Inc. and Rescue Greyhounds NSW Central Coast, which document injury and neglect visible on arrival at their rescues. I will get that passed up to you.

As you can see, these photos show gaping wounds, untreated broken bones, decaying teeth, flea infestation and starved and emaciated bodies—again, 89 per cent of the dogs being presented to these rescue organisations. You said in your opening statement that you are now operating in a vastly changed environment, that this was a wholesome sport, that there had been transformational change, and yet what we see before us looks very similar to what we saw before this industry was reformed. What do you say to these photos?

ROBERT MACAULAY: I can't comment on these particular photos. This is the first time I have seen them. I don't know what their source is, but I'm happy to take it on notice and get back to you.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Is it true that GAP is turning away dogs who don't present in the most top condition, so that GAP is really only taking those dogs that can be easily rehomed and letting dogs like these ones be left for trainers and owners to take to rescue organisations?

ROBERT MACAULAY: No, I am very pleased that that's not true and I am very happy to let Dr Fuller, who is in charge of GAP rehoming programs, answer the question.

The CHAIR: Dr Fuller, sorry, I didn't realise you had an opening statement too.

ALICIA FULLER: No, sorry, I didn't actually. It was all incorporated in Mr Macaulay's, so I'm happy to answer the question. I can comment on the entry process to the GAP adoption centres in particular. We have what is now called a pet-ready assessment. When greyhounds are presented to Greyhounds As Pets, they need to be prepared to be a pet by their owners. That is a requirement under not only the code of practice but also the rehoming policy of the Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission. That greyhound can present to a pet-ready assessment as many times as is necessary. It is a behaviour assessment which relies, as all behaviour assessments do—no animal must be in pain when they undergo a pet-ready test. I cannot confirm the source of your photographs, but if greyhounds were presenting in this condition to Greyhounds As Pets, this would be a matter that was referred to the Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission immediately. Those participants would be responsible for the veterinary treatment of the animals under their care, as is dictated by their code, the Rules of Racing and the Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission policies, which they all agreed to adhere to.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: GWIC does have enforceable standards that dogs must meet when leaving the industry—clearly not in a state like we are seeing before us here. All of the rescuers that appeared before the Committee previously said that they informed GWIC. It is not a matter of no action being taken because they aren't reporting, and yet we are still having more dogs than these organisations can cope with being presented in conditions like this. Are participants scared to bring their dogs to GAP when they look like this? Or is it just the simple case that GAP goes, "There is no way that we're ever going to rehome this dog, so you're going to have to deal with it elsewhere"?

ALICIA FULLER: The other thing about the pet-ready test is that there is actually no refusal of entry to GAP. They can present as many times as is required. Also, now, after two pet-ready assessments from which an owner or trainer may not be able to move forward with the dog for whatever reason, they actually come into our pet prep program. We still see that participants do choose to use other rehoming groups. I would suggest that

CORRECTED

if any of these cases had been presented to the integrity commission, they would have been fully investigated, and I hope that is the case.

I would also say that the Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission needs to increase their regulation. Of the rehoming organisations themselves, we're looking at some accredited guidelines which will help us all to have best practice standards. That will hopefully help to make sure that these cases are flagged early and appropriately prevented or dealt with. We also work with the Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission to take in what are considered welfare seizures and intakes through GAP—so it's not through their normal process. The Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission inspectors come to us when they identify cases such as these and we look to house them separately from the normal intake program to the adoption centres.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Your most recent annual report states that Greyhound Racing NSW's assisted rehoming numbers rose to 1,880 for a single year, which includes figures of 521 dogs adopted at centres, 220 rehomed through GAP NSW regional programs and 1,139 through the Greyhound Racing NSW Homing Assistance Scheme. Your operating licence requires you to set an annual rehoming target and report against it. Can I confirm whether the target you have set includes all three of those rehoming pathway categories?

ALICIA FULLER: Yes, it does. Currently, the rehoming target is based off Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission reporting on their predicted number of retirements. At the moment, it was based off a previous average. We have a population model in development that will allow us to have a really clear guidance of the rehoming capacity that we will require each year within industry, and then how Greyhound Racing NSW and the Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission will work together to support the participants in meeting that rehoming requirement.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: What is the target?

ALICIA FULLER: The current target is 2,000.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: But to the extent that, for example, Greyhound Racing NSW assisted dogs accounted for 2,000, as opposed to rehomed dogs, would that meet the target?

ALICIA FULLER: It is assisted retirements. Yes, certainly. We don't see that all 2,000 greyhounds are looking to come into adoption centres or the shelter-type environments. What we have found is a much better rehoming route for our greyhounds, so that they are not kept in shelters for a long period of time, is actually the development of the regional program.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: What are the regional programs? Can you describe those?

ALICIA FULLER: The regional programs actually work—the owners and trainers or the custodians of the greyhounds keep them in their care within industry, and the regional coordinators assist in them preparing that greyhound as a pet and then matching them to a suitable adopter to be rehomed into the general public. It's a really great way of the industry actually having contact with the adopters. They provide advice to the new home and they also continue with ongoing contact and advice once that greyhound is in the new home. As well as being supported by the Greyhounds As Pets team, the industry participants themselves are actively involved in the rehoming.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: With the Homing Assistance Scheme, what needs to be done by GAP or Greyhound Racing NSW for a dog to be counted as part of that number?

ALICIA FULLER: The Homing Assistance Scheme pathway is to enable participants to meet their requirements under the Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission rehoming policy, which states that all greyhounds must be desexed and in good health to be rehomed. It provides rebates for desexing, dental, vaccination, worming and a blood test, if they are over a certain age. It's making sure that all of the greyhounds that are coming from industry and confirming that they will be in good health when they move forward into their next stage of life.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Does GAP ever see those dogs?

ALICIA FULLER: They're not actually part of the Greyhounds As Pets program. They are actually the Greyhound Racing NSW rehoming scheme's.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: So the 1,139? That's not rehomed?

ALICIA FULLER: When we're reporting numbers and when Greyhound Racing NSW is reporting its rehoming target or assistance rehoming target to GWIC, that is including GAP adoption centres, GAP regional programs and the GRNSW welfare schemes.

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Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: That might explain why there is this discrepancy, then. You're stating that you're rehoming or assisting about 1,880 greyhounds in 2020-21. GWIC's annual report said 1,420 retirements in the same year, including 229 rehomed privately to a non-participant, 447 accepted by a rescue organisation and only 339 accepted by GAP.

ALICIA FULLER: Yes. There's another—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Yes?

ALICIA FULLER: Sorry. Within that dataset as well there are two separate datasets. Actually GWIC is a participant-reported number and it's borne from compliance of the retirement notification form. From an assisted rehoming point of view, that's actually an output number. We're not reporting the intake into GAP, and we obviously have greyhounds in care for a period of time before they're adopted; we're reporting the adoptions as they occur, which is output. There are actually two separate datasets, and they're also derived from two separate, I suppose, inputs. Our inputs are that the microchips of the greyhound are recorded and that microchip number is unique to every greyhound. Then that is also a set of audited microchips at the end of every year to confirm that they have received assistance into retirement through Greyhound Racing NSW.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Okay. But in terms of direct rehoming, then, in 2020-21, what was the number for GAP?

ALICIA FULLER: I would have to take that one on notice.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Because clearly you get almost \$5 million a year while no community-run greyhound rehoming organisation receives any public money, but on these figures they're actually rehoming more greyhounds than GAP.

ALICIA FULLER: I think you're referring to the Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission numbers, which again are participant reported. They're certainly not even coming from the rehoming organisations themselves, which again is something, with GWIC and GRNSW, we would like to come to a point where actually those greyhounds that are going into other organisations are reported back to the integrity commission as well so that they actually understand the numbers fully. That is really important to keeping track of those greyhounds throughout their lives.

ROBERT MACAULAY: I might just add something to that. We are working constantly with GWIC to improve information-sharing between the organisations. The GWIC numbers are informed by participant notification. Our numbers are informed by microchipping of dogs. At the end of this month, only a couple of weeks away, will be the introduction of e-tracking. That, we're all entirely confident, will lead to entirely definitive numbers.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: Hallelujah!

The CHAIR: Mr Macaulay, I want to go to the question of the breeding of greyhounds. On page 4 of your original submission, you note that GWIC assumed responsibility—originally, of course, and I think it still is the case—for controls relating to breeding. The third or fourth dot point states:

GRNSW notes that whelping numbers are at historically low levels, and less than the ideal number.

What do you mean by that?

ROBERT MACAULAY: By the latter part, "less than the ideal number"?

The CHAIR: Yes, are you talking about dogs being able to participate in the industry?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Yes, certainly we are. Ultimately, to have greyhounds race, you obviously have to have dogs whelped about two years, roughly, before a dog is ready to race, so there is a long lead time between any whelping season and a subsequent racing season. There's a long planning phase, and to have more racing—or less racing, for that matter—will obviously change the demand for puppies coming through the system. We would like to always population plan, if you like, to ensure that there is neither an undersupply nor an oversupply.

The CHAIR: This is where I'm going: Who actually makes the decision on that?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Currently, that is us—sorry, it's GWIC in consultation with industry.

The CHAIR: How is that arrived at?

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ROBERT MACAULAY: Through—sorry, Mr Borsak, the best people to answer that are GWIC, but I will say just very broadly that it is an amalgamation of the known racing timetable and the known utilisation rate of dogs. That is what you might call the matriculation rate of dogs going from puppies to racing.

The CHAIR: Let me put it this way: What incentive does GWIC have, apart from your persuasive powers, to supply the industry with enough dogs that are of a quality that can actually race and win races consistently?

ROBERT MACAULAY: They have their obligations and responsibilities under the Act, which includes to make and keep the industry viable.

The CHAIR: Yes, but that's a bit fluffy, isn't it?

ROBERT MACAULAY: With great respect, you'll have to ask them that.

The CHAIR: Is a puppy bond still on the table somewhere?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Mr Borsak, we have covered puppy bond in our submissions. We do not support a puppy bond, notwithstanding it was a recommendation of the Greyhound Industry Reform Panel all of those years ago. We don't support it for a very good reason: Whelping numbers and greyhound breeding generally are very tightly regulated on a constant, ongoing basis by GWIC. If we need more dogs or less dogs, then that will work its way through the system and no puppy bond is necessary. This was covered in our written submissions.

The CHAIR: Turning now to greyhound racing tracks themselves, and funding upgrades and safety, I noticed in your preamble you talked about tracks being better designed, et cetera, as one of the reasons why you believe there are fewer injuries or less catastrophic injuries. What's the story in relation to funding the ongoing development and renewal of tracks and resources open to the industry?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Yes, Mr Borsak, there are effectively four sources of funding for track redevelopments and improvements. They are, firstly, the greyhound capital grants fund, which was established by the previous Government and provides a pool of \$30 million to expend on safety improvements and welfare improvements on tracks. Last year, in consultation with Government, we also established the greyhound future fund, the GFF, which provides another \$5 million over the next five years—so another \$25 million on top of that. The third pool of money is general funding that is supplied out of operating surplus, if you like, from Greyhound Racing into a whole slew of track improvements. And the fourth tranche of money is monies raised by clubs themselves or distributed to clubs through club funding arrangements between those clubs and Greyhound Racing NSW. Those monies arise largely as the result of dividends that are payable pursuant to the broadcast rights sale for Greyhound Racing vision.

The CHAIR: I don't think I've ever seen a document that does this, but do you actually have a document that outlines or specifies basically an audit of the condition of all of the tracks—the 32-odd facilities in the State that are being used?

ROBERT MACAULAY: We do, and I'm very happy to supply that to you.

The CHAIR: Can you table that?

ROBERT MACAULAY: I cannot here, but I certainly will take it on notice, yes.

The CHAIR: Yes, sorry, in due course. Does that actually attach a dollar number to each one of these potential improvements or are they just identifying improvements?

ROBERT MACAULAY: It identifies improvements, Mr Borsak, but at the same time we have, not on that document but within our own budgets, our own forward projections of capital works, the budget expenditures for those programs.

The CHAIR: So what's the total figure for the next 10 years? There's a trick for young players.

ROBERT MACAULAY: Yes. I did speak to this at an event here a couple of months ago. Our estimate over the next 10 years would be about somewhere between \$300 million and \$500 million, over the next 10 years.

The CHAIR: Then that being said, listening to the sourcing of your income and those areas of capital improvement funds that you've just mentioned, you're well and truly short of that, aren't you?

ROBERT MACAULAY: No, we're not, and that is because money continues to come in. There's a whole lot of sources of money. It's not just two capital fund or infrastructure fund programs. We have funds arising from distributions from TAB and funds arising from tax parity and other forms of sponsorship, income and broadcast rights. So there's a very significant income, and about 50 per cent of the income of Greyhound Racing NSW is applied to participant returns in one form or another—largely, that is prize money and travel subsidies

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for bringing dogs to races. And the other half of income is applied to welfare programs, safety improvements and track maintenance and renewal.

The CHAIR: I've got about 40 seconds left on the current time. I'll come to education next.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Thanks very much, Mr Macaulay and Dr Fuller. I appreciate your time. I just wanted to ask you, Mr Macaulay—you became the new CEO in August 2020. That's correct, isn't it?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Yes.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: And prior to that you were the legal counsel for Greyhound Racing NSW?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Yes.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Did you have contact with Minister Anderson in your previous role as legal counsel for Greyhound Racing NSW?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Very occasionally, yes.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Can you give us an idea of how many times you would have met with him?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Perhaps twice a year.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Did you attend a race meeting in Muswellbrook with the Minister and chair of Greyhound Racing NSW late last year?

ROBERT MACAULAY: No, not a race meeting. I attended a meeting.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: A meeting. Okay. What was discussed at that meeting?

ROBERT MACAULAY: It was largely about our track program and the rollout of our track program and, particularly, our new investments in tracks in Goulburn, Taree and Tamworth, and various other projects.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Was discussion at that meeting held about plans or an idea for Mr John Barilaro to become the new CEO of Greyhound Racing NSW?

The Hon. WES FANG: Point of order: As interesting as I am sure this is, I don't believe it is covered by the terms of the inquiry. I would ask the member to move on to other questions.

The CHAIR: Yes, I ask the member to explain how an inquiry into GWIC is relevant to Mr Barilaro.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: In relation to the terms of reference they are into the operation of GWIC. Obviously, Mr Macaulay is the new Chair and the new Chief Executive Officer of Greyhound Racing NSW. Greyhound Racing NSW and GWIC have a very close relationship. I am in no way reflecting on Mr Macaulay's role as the CEO and I welcome him into his new appointment. But I am interested to know if there were discussions about Mr Barilaro taking on—

The CHAIR: I will allow the question.

The Hon. WES FANG: I will put the point of order perhaps in other terms. I am reviewing the terms of reference which do not cover the question that has been raised by the member. I ask—

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Which part do they not cover?

The Hon. WES FANG: I don't believe any of it is actually covered by the terms of reference. This is an inquiry into the Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission, and it doesn't include conversations about potential roles in the organisation. It is clearly outside the terms of reference and I would ask you to rule it out of order.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: To the point of order: I put to you, Mr Chair, that you made a previous ruling that it is allowable—

The CHAIR: Let us move on. Let us let Mr Macaulay answer the question, take it on notice or whatever he wants to do. We will work it out from there.

ROBERT MACAULAY: The answer to the question is no.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: There were no discussions about Mr Barilaro coming on as CEO of Greyhound Racing NSW?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Not to the very best of my recollection.

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The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Were you aware of these discussions occurring between Greyhound Racing NSW and the Minister at any point during your time as legal counsel?

The Hon. WES FANG: Point of order: This time the question involves speculation. Again, it is not relevant to the terms of reference. Who might or might not be proposed for any position in Greyhound Racing NSW is not covered by the terms of reference. I ask you to rule the question out of order.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: To the point of order: This is clearly related to Greyhound Racing NSW. There is that provision at the end of the terms of reference which refers to "any other related matter". I think we should just be moving on.

The CHAIR: I will allow the question to be put because it is an extension of the previous one.

ROBERT MACAULAY: Ms Houssos, could you re-ask the question please?

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Of course, I understand that it is because of the delay. I am interested to know in your role previously as the legal counsel and the company Secretary for Greyhound Racing NSW, were you aware of informal discussions at any level about Mr Barilaro becoming the CEO of Greyhound Racing NSW?

ROBERT MACAULAY: No, I was not.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: This question might be for Dr Fuller. I turn now to the funding that is provided for the rehoming of Greyhounds As Pets program. My understanding is that that is \$950 for veterinary work. Is that correct?

ALICIA FULLER: The \$950 is the Rehoming Investment Scheme, yes. It is a rebate up to \$950.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Thank you for the clarification. How was that figure arrived at?

ALICIA FULLER: Originally, prior to it coming into existence we looked at the costings from Greyhounds As Pets veterinary treatment. So how much did our program spend on desexing and dentals? And there was actually a very generous cap to those things. As the program moves forward—obviously it has been in operation for a couple of years now—each year we review the costs against the caps. We will be continually adjusting them as necessary with the actual costs that occur in the veterinary profession.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: As part of that review process have you ever increased the funding?

ALICIA FULLER: Not at this stage because it obviously started off very generous and actually in the policy terms and conditions it requires the veterinary practices to charge their normal pricing. The majority of these are still below cap so until it comes to a point in time where their pricing for normal dogs within society would be higher, then we would review that cap.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Is that review process a formal process that people can make submissions to or is that an internal process done by you?

ALICIA FULLER: No. If it's an individual case, they can submit a review to have costs covered above cap. We do regularly cover dental costs, including dental extractions, above cap. It's certainly something everybody is welcome to submit. If their veterinary practices are costing more or they're not able to meet the costs, they can certainly come to us with a request and we will review it.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: When you say "everyone", who is that?

ALICIA FULLER: The Homing Assistance Scheme can be claimed by the participants themselves. It replaced the owner incentive scheme, so it assists them if they're retiring the animal as a pet to themselves. It can also be claimed by a member of the general public should they come into possession of a greyhound that hasn't yet been desexed, and it can also be claimed by the other rehoming organisations as well. We are trying to encourage participants to be the main accessors to the scheme because, under the rehoming policy, prior to them rehoming a greyhound it is supposed to be desexed already. If we are encouraging adherence to GWIC policy, we would like it to be a participant-based scheme and for them to be accessing it prior to the greyhound moving through from the industry.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: I understand. When you say that everyone is able to make submissions, are you able to provide on notice how many additional amounts you've been granting over the cap?

ALICIA FULLER: Yes, certainly. I will take it on notice.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Please. I don't expect you to have that here today.

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ALICIA FULLER: Yes, we can let you know the above cap costs. No problem.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Excellent. If you can give the figures to me for the last three financial years, if that works.

ALICIA FULLER: Yes, that would be possible.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: How many applications you received, how many were actually granted and what's the largest amount. That would be helpful as well.

ALICIA FULLER: Yes.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: I've met with some of the rescue organisations and they have raised with me that this cap is actually far too low. I appreciate what you're saying about reviewing the process, but they say that it's not enough for them to be able to do that. I take your point that this should be money for participants and that's where you anticipate it going, but it's an issue that's been raised with me and that's why I'm asking you about it.

ALICIA FULLER: We're happy to review it.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Excellent.

ROBERT MACAULAY: Ms Houssos, in relation to that issue, we do get constant feedback, and we take it on board, about levels of funding for any of our programs. Some of that feedback comes from participants and some of it comes from veterinary surgeons. Different veterinary surgeons have different capital costs that they need to cover. We are constantly trying to find the right ground without applying inflationary pressure to a vet cost and without providing too little. We certainly don't want to provide too little. We know as a matter of fact that of the three treatments that are supplied pursuant to this particular scheme, some vets charge less for one or two of them and more for another, or vice versa.

Overall, we try to make the package right. We think that we've got the package right at any particular time. But I can assure you that we are very receptive to the needs of both participants and veterinary surgeons. There is no cap, I can tell you, on how much we're willing to pay out in total under this scheme. Dr Fuller is not under some budget where we could only fund so many treatments. We will allow it to grow according to demand. If we're getting feedback from vets that it is not enough money, we will certainly attend to that.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: When you say you get feedback from vets, I appreciate that that's one part of it. Obviously, then, participants are one part that could be claiming it, the rehoming organisations, and what was the third one you said could be claiming it?

ALICIA FULLER: If a member of the general public has actually adopted an un-desexed greyhound not through the other routes then they are able to claim through it as well.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: It might be helpful—again, over those three financial years—to provide us with a list of the numbers in those three categories of who's actually claiming it.

ALICIA FULLER: Yes.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: I'm also interested in the number of greyhounds who are rehomed directly through the GAP program but then also through rehoming programs. My understanding is that the GAP figures do pick up—given the way that GAP can partner with rehoming organisations and provide this funding—some of those figures.

ALICIA FULLER: Yes. The homing assistance scheme, the last section of GRNSW contribution to rehoming, does pick up where those dogs have claimed that scheme. The Greyhounds As Pets Adoption Centres and the Greyhounds As Pets regional programs, they are the Greyhounds As Pets programs themselves.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Sorry, my apologies. Okay. All right. I understand the clarification.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: In your supplementary submission that was tabled today there are recommendations around the tribunal system that you are proposing, which is similar to the NRL and Vic tribunal down south. Can you just talk through with the Committee why you would prefer this model and how you see it coming about?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Thank you very much for the question. It's a very important issue, in our view. We all know that justice must be done, but it must be seen to be done. It needs to be seen and understood to be just. One of the very long-term problems in racing—as far as I know, it has been around for decades, at the very least—is that stewards and regulators are the police. They are the detectives, the investigators, and they are

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the prosecutor, and then their fellow stewards working for the same organisation are the judges. So you literally have judge, jury and executioner all under one roof, and there is a perception—and I say that very carefully and deliberately—that that does not deliver, always, a just outcome. I think it produces a much better outcome now than it probably ever has done in the past, and I think GWIC have made extraordinary advances in ensuring or doing whatever they can do to ensure that justice is perceived or seen to be done.

Ultimately, we accept in every other facet of life that there ought to be a distinction or a division between people prosecuting or people investigating, indeed, and deciding whether there is a charge and then people prosecuting and then people sitting in judgement. This is of huge importance to greyhound participants because a penalty in greyhounds—or, indeed, any other racing—might ruin your life entirely. I say that because a family who is sitting on what is generally a small family farm with greyhound facilities out the backyard, if they are disqualified from greyhound racing, they can be excluded from their premises. That, obviously, would be dysfunctional, for a start, but could be financially ruinous. For many people, this is an extraordinarily high-risk thing that they find themselves in, and people are entitled to a presumption of innocence. If we are going to treat people as innocent until proven guilty, then we ought to have—for public policy and perception reasons—a division between the people policing and prosecuting and the people sitting in judgement over them.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: Are there any other reforms you are proposing to the disciplinary system? The tribunal is one thing—and, in the time available I'm probably going to ask a couple more questions about it—but is that the only reform that you would see for the disciplinary system?

ROBERT MACAULAY: I think there is another problem that looms large—certainly, in my mind and, more broadly, in the industry—and that is where what is known as the presentation rule, which is a strict liability rule, intersects with what is now effectively a minimum sentencing regime in greyhounds. We have always wished—certainly, since the reform—and we continue to wish to have a zero-tolerance policy for the use of prohibited substances. Zero tolerance. That is fine on this side of the equation—the presentation rule. But where a presentation rule offence intersects with a minimum what is, effectively, a sentencing or penalty regime, the person handing down the penalty has no discretion, no matter how substantial the mitigating factors are in that particular case.

I know, from my long experience in the law, that every single case is different, and this is the problem with minimum or mandatory sentencing regimes. They take away the discretion of a decision-maker to end up with a decision that is just and seen to be just. We all would remember when they introduced in the Northern Territory minimum mandatory sentencing—what was called the "three strikes and you're out" rule. The result of that was a boy who went to jail for stealing a packet of biscuits. That is a perfect example of where a judge, a magistrate or a steward—any person who is meting out punishment, particularly by the State—ought to have a full range of discretion to go from zero to a maximum penalty. It's for justice. It's as simple as that.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: I've just got one more question in terms of the refunding of the money to participants. Are you able to give me a rough idea of what the average time is that a participant or a rehoming organisation should expect to get refunded within? Reimbursed, I should say.

ALICIA FULLER: Yes, reimbursement. We did have some issues with the efficiency of the system. It was being administered by one person within our organisation and, as it had grown so rapidly, that was causing some delay in processing times. So we've recently gone to an online submission form and increased resourcing for the program. Most of the time, the veterinary practices are actually giving people accounts. So they're not directly to the participants or the rehoming organisations; they're actually to the veterinary practices themselves. The majority of those claims, if they were submitted in full, were paid within the payment terms. Again, we had some issues with actually having full submissions of the completed form and the invoices, so we've increased the education around what is required and also made that form submission a more streamlined process.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Perhaps, on notice, if you can just tell me what the average time is, over those three years, of the reimbursement period?

ALICIA FULLER: Certainly.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: And, also, what is the longest time in each of those financial years?

ALICIA FULLER: No problem.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Thanks very much.

The Hon. WES FANG: Mr Macaulay, you have been involved with Greyhound Racing NSW for some time. Is that correct?

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ROBERT MACAULAY: Yes. A few years.

The Hon. WES FANG: In your time as the legal counsel before becoming the CEO, were you aware of any informal conversations that were happening within the Labor Party about their Minister appointing as CEO Mr Ian Macdonald, Mr Tripodi or anybody else from the Labor Party?

ROBERT MACAULAY: No.

The Hon. WES FANG: Would that be because the Minister doesn't appoint the CEO?

ROBERT MACAULAY: I suspect that would be the case.

The Hon. WES FANG: The question that was asked previously was probably pointless because it's actually the board that appoints the CEO. Is that correct?

ROBERT MACAULAY: My employer is the board, yes.

The Hon. WES FANG: Mr Macaulay, in relation to the funding model—the proposals that you've put to the Government—are you able to provide us some indication as to what they are and how the Government has looked at, reviewed and accepted some of those funding models and the difference they're making within the industry?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Yes. The most significant change that has occurred in the last two years is the funding of GWIC. This Committee would be aware of the fact that the 2017 Act provides for an indemnification of GWIC's costs by GRNSW. I'm sure it was written in good faith and then legislated in good faith and with high hopes, but it enacted what was a constant commercial tension between the regulator and the commercial body. In May or early June 2021, the Minister proposed a different funding model, one that would remedy that ongoing commercial tension. That is that, instead of us, being Greyhound Racing NSW, indemnifying entirely GWIC for its operating costs, we would simply pass through our point-of-consumption tax receipts directly to GWIC and that Government would fund the operation of GWIC, whether high or low, from some other source. That leaves us both without a commercial tension, which has facilitated, I must say, a much better relationship, but it also has left—it did produce surplus funds, that we otherwise would have been spending on GWIC, to the tune of about \$5 million a year. We've happily been able to utilise those funds by putting them in the greyhound future fund, which then will contribute to ongoing track renewal and safety improvements.

The Hon. WES FANG: We're seeing the results of that safety improvement, aren't we, in the numbers that you reported earlier?

ROBERT MACAULAY: It is remarkable, I might say. We have a number of relatively new tracks. The pink poster boy examples would be the Grafton circle track and the Richmond straight track. The Richmond straight track is turf and, as far as we can tell from looking at stats throughout the world, would be the safest straight track in the world. The Grafton track has been enormously successful. It is a loam circle track built to both our own minimum standard specifications and with the assistance of various professionals, including the work that's come out of the University of Technology Sydney, features bigger radiuses at each end of the track, different cambers, longer transitions into straights. It has made an enormous safety difference in racing. Also, it is on statistically equal footing with the Richmond straight track. That would make it also the safest greyhound track in the world.

We are working constantly to take the learnings from these things and insert them into other projects. This Committee would be aware of the fact that, about a month ago or five weeks ago, we announced a new straight track that we will build, subject to council approval, in Goulburn. I'm very pleased to say that we have the full support of council and the vocal support of our Minister to deliver a new straight track in Goulburn. It will be even better. It must be even better than what we've been able to deliver in Richmond because we've got all the data now coming out of Richmond. For the first time in greyhound racing history, we're now data rich because most of our dogs running in most races are wearing a little electronic tag right up on the top of their shoulders. It is an IsoLynx tag. It gives us all sorts of data about where a dog is on the track. In fact, it gives us so much data that we are now learning how to grab that data, both from a safety and welfare point of view and from a track design point of view, and take that data and apply it to improved engineering designs for tracks. So those are the sorts of projects that are going on that we are very proud of.

The Hon. LOU AMATO: Thank you, Mr Macaulay and Dr Fuller, for coming today. I think Abigail Boyd might touch on this but, Mr Macaulay, in your opening statement you mentioned that catastrophic injuries are at their lowest level on record. Is that right?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Yes.

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The Hon. LOU AMATO: I believe you used the metric of 0.5 per cent per thousand starters. Can you tell us what that means?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Yes, Mr Amato. For about seven years that statistic has been gathered and it literally is the number of catastrophic injuries per 1,000 dog starts. This past financial year we have had about 95,000 dog starts. I am not talking about individual dogs; I am talking about dogs starting races. We are down to about 0.5 of an injury per thousand starts. I might put it the other way around—out of 2,000 starts, you would expect a catastrophic injury, statistically.

The Hon. LOU AMATO: So basically it has come down.

ROBERT MACAULAY: It has come down dramatically, Mr Amato, in the seven years since this statistic has been reported. It started in FY16 as 1.6 per thousand starts, in FY17 it was the same and then since the inception of the new Act and the concentration on track safety and a whole lot of other programs—and that really is what it is; it is an amalgam of a whole lot of different factors that we work with. It has been consistently driving down. It was then 1.2 per thousand starts in 2019, 0.7 per thousand starts in 2020 and 0.7 in 2021. We will be very happy to report that in this year's financial reports and annual report it is down to 0.5. I might just show you and this Committee, Mr Amato, a graph which illustrates the reduction in injuries.

The CHAIR: Could you table that, please?

ROBERT MACAULAY: I am very happy to, Mr Chair. This is to the beginning of financial year 2021. The column that I am pointing my finger at was 2021 and this year there will be an even shorter column in that table and that is the direction we want it to go. We are very pleased with that. It's a compliment to both the safety and welfare teams and the track construction and design and maintenance teams that that is the result.

The Hon. LOU AMATO: For the financial year 2021-22, how many dogs have died on the New South Wales greyhound tracks and also how many deaths does Greyhound Racing NSW think is the acceptable amount?

ROBERT MACAULAY: I'm sorry, Mr Amato, can you just repeat the question? I am having difficulty hearing you on this end.

The Hon. LOU AMATO: For the financial year 2021-22, how many dogs have died on the New South Wales greyhound tracks and also how many deaths does Greyhound Racing NSW think is an acceptable amount or an acceptable level?

ROBERT MACAULAY: It's a very good question, Mr Amato. Ideally, we would have zero deaths, just like Roads and Maritime Services in New South Wales and their desire for zero, which they call Towards Zero. That is ultimately our aim as well. If you compare us perhaps with a road toll, for instance, 250-odd people in New South Wales perished last year on the roads and it is everybody's desire to track that down. It is our absolute desire to continue to make improvements to safety and welfare of greyhounds racing on tracks and we're heading in the right direction. There is every care taken to ensure that we continue down the path to deliver the right outcome. I might say in further answer to your question, that every participant in New South Wales wants the very best outcome for their greyhounds. Nobody wants to see a greyhound injured. Greyhounds are, though, elite athletes. They are taking part in racing and there is a level of injury that is just concomitant with any athletic pursuit. We accept it in all athletic pursuits, animal and human, and the best that we can aim for is to drive it down and down and down and have it the lowest possible. Everybody, there's not an owner in New South Wales or a trainer in New South Wales that doesn't want their greyhound coming home safe and sound after a race and that is our aim.

The Hon. LOU AMATO: Thank you, Mr Pearson, for your indulgence.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: Dr Fuller, I am just wondering, you obviously have a doctorate. What is it a doctorate in?

ALICIA FULLER: I don't have a doctorate; I'm actually a veterinary surgeon. My doctor title comes from my veterinary degree and I am a member of the New South Wales board of veterinary surgeons as well.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: I understand you oversee the Greyhounds As Pets program?

ALICIA FULLER: Yes.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: In our questioning during budget estimates of the Minister and the CEO of GWIC, it became clear that the numbers that GWIC was counting as rehomed and the numbers that Greyhound Racing NSW counts as being rehomed were quite different. I understand then from your statement, Mr Macaulay, that that is going to be rectified; that the numbers will come together so that the community and people concerned will always know how many greyhounds have been rehomed out of how many applications have been made.

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ALICIA FULLER: Yes. We will be sharing more closely our data with GWIC and we actually have their e-track scanners on site at our adoption centres now as well, which will help with the process. The difference in the data that they are actually reporting will always occur because they are reporting what would be a retirement from an industry participant, which we would consider an intake into an adoption centre or regional program. That greyhound will spend an average of six weeks with us and then come out the other side. But actually we give them as much time as they need to become pet ready and also to find that perfect home. There will always be a difference. If GWIC continue to report retirement from participant, and what would be our intake numbers on a yearly basis, that will differ from our output numbers.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: The 95,000 dogs that Mr Macaulay referred to as having a first start this year, is that correct, in the last financial year?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Correct.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: Will we know where those 95,000 dogs are when they are retired, all of them, if they haven't died from a catastrophic injury or otherwise?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Yes. I will clarify that, if I might, Mr Pearson. When I say 95,000 start time, I mean 95,000 dog starts of a race. The actual racing population of dogs in New South Wales is much less than that.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: Do you know what that figure is?

ROBERT MACAULAY: From time to time we can tell you exactly what it is.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: Shouldn't we know that, considering one of the major recommendations of all inquiries is about the ghost animals—those dogs that we don't know where they are, et cetera?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Yes. I might address that. It is a persistent myth that there are some ghost dogs. In its recent work—

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: Well, we saw the ghosts during the *Four Corners* program—

The Hon. WES FANG: Point of order—

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: —and several inquiries afterwards, Mr Macaulay, so I doubt if it's a myth. You can answer the question.

The Hon. WES FANG: Point of order: Mr Macaulay was trying to answer the question. He was rudely interrupted by Mr Pearson. Chair, I'd ask you to invite Mr Macaulay to continue answering the question and ask Mr Pearson to withhold his enthusiasm until the question has been answered.

The CHAIR: I'll uphold the point of order. Please answer the question and then Mr Pearson can proceed.

ROBERT MACAULAY: We are getting much, much better every month—consistently better at knowing where animals are and what stage of their life or retirement they are in. This is all culminating this month and we're all very pleased to see it in e-tracking, which will give us the best data ever. For instance, my colleague, Dr Fuller, now has at her disposal and the disposal of her GAP team these—what do you call them? Dazzles, razzles? The wands.

ALICIA FULLER: Scanners.

ROBERT MACAULAY: They're scanners.

ALICIA FULLER: From the Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission.

ROBERT MACAULAY: Where at every—

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: Sorry, Mr Macaulay, the time is running out. I just have a couple more critical questions. Dr Fuller, with your view of what's happening with rehoming, are the numbers of dogs going to reduce over time—needing to be rehomed—in the industry?

ALICIA FULLER: What we're looking at currently is developing a population model which will give us an accurate estimate based on whelping numbers over certain years—the number of dogs that are actually in the racing populations and the breeding populations and then who will require rehoming.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: But is the number of those animals going to decrease over time?

ALICIA FULLER: That will depend on a number of factors: breeding; the number of industry participants or syndicates that rehome or retire the greyhound as a pet to themselves, which would be a pathway we're encouraging; and also the number of greyhounds that are coming out to be pet ready in a socialised way and

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moving through the system. It will be a number that will be able to be clearly estimated by the population number that we're developing. That will allow Greyhound Racing NSW and the Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission to work together to make sure that there is the capacity to support all greyhounds to find a pet home or a retirement home.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: But there's no actual commitment to reducing numbers, from either GWIC or Greyhound Racing NSW?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Reducing which numbers?

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: The numbers of animals being born into the racing industry. Is there an actual specific objective to bring that about?

ROBERT MACAULAY: We think that they're relatively stable now and about where they should be, plus or minus a little bit. But I can indicate that there has been a very substantial reduction in dogs whelped in New South Wales. Back in financial year 2015 there were nearly 8,000 greyhounds whelped in New South Wales, whereas for each of the last four years—and I'm happy to supply these numbers to the Committee—there have been roughly a bit over 4,000 greyhounds whelped in New South Wales. The good news is that what we call the utilisation rate of those greyhounds whelped is increasing. So we have more efficiencies in greyhound racing where puppies are coming through, they're racing, they're staying longer in their racing career, they're retiring later and healthier. That is a good news story. Rehoming going up is actually a good news story. We're happily rehoming happy dogs and all of those indicators are going in the right way.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Can we just clarify that, though? Did you just say that the number of pups being whelped is actually lessening? Because it's going up 50 per cent a year, isn't it?

ROBERT MACAULAY: No, not even close. Nothing like it.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: So 2018-19 was 3,747. We're now looking at 4,567 in 2020-21.

ROBERT MACAULAY: In fact, if I look at the—it depends, of course, Ms Boyd, how you cut the numbers.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: It's from your annual reports.

ROBERT MACAULAY: For the numbers I can say that for the four years since reporting—since the inception of the new Act, the numbers have been 3,747, 3,935, 4,567 and 4,450.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Right, it's an increase.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: So they haven't gone down.

ROBERT MACAULAY: If you'd bear with me for a second, the average for the four years before that was higher. So, in fact, they have gone down.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: But that was pre-reform. Then there was reform. We had a significant drop and now we've been increasing pretty much every year.

The CHAIR: It's my turn now to ask a couple of questions before we run out of time. Mr Macaulay, regarding GWIC's costs, you mentioned earlier that there was, I think, \$5 million being supplied in direct revenue from the Government. Is that the removal of the total cost burden of GWIC on GRNSW or are there other costs involved?

ROBERT MACAULAY: No, that's complete removal of the costs burden.

The CHAIR: Based on that—this will feed into another question in relation to GWIC—is there a customer service level agreement that you have with GWIC?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Yes and no, if I could have both options. We have ongoing expectation if they have an expectation from us about—

The CHAIR: Shouldn't there be an MOU or customer service agreement that states this is what you're going to get, this is what you were paying for, this is what the Government is now paying for and this is what the expectations are of the outcomes of all of that?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Mr Borsak, we have an agreement with them that we work together to ensure that the use rate of tracks is at the very highest level possible. So they supply their staff when we need them at our nominated race meetings. That used to be a tussle when we had a funding tension; it's not now.

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The CHAIR: Yes, but the reality is in your submission you say they're about benchmarking GWIC to GR Victoria, the regulatory organisation. You say that the costs of GWIC are at least 50 per cent over the odds. Do you still support that?

ROBERT MACAULAY: No, I don't. The reason I don't—there's a very simple explanation, Mr Borsak. That submission was written in December 2020. Since that time there's been a complete reform of the funding model for GWIC. My organisation no longer funds it, and we wouldn't know what their budgets are. Their budgets, I presume, are reportable to Treasury and to the Minister.

The CHAIR: The funding arrangements have changed, so you don't have a line of sight into what GWIC's running costs are anymore?

ROBERT MACAULAY: That's correct.

The CHAIR: Regarding the tribunal system—my colleague Mr Veitch mentioned that earlier—you say in your recommendation 31 that GRNSW supports the review and reform of the disciplinary system currently administered by GWIC. Then you go on, in 32, to talk about the preferred model being the tribunal system, as in, for example, NRL, ARU, Racing Victoria, et cetera. Would you envisage that only relating to greyhounds or would you see that covering all codes, perhaps as it does, I think, in Queensland?

ROBERT MACAULAY: We would certainly like it for greyhounds. I would have thought if it was successful with greyhounds it was an easy step to take onwards from there.

The CHAIR: Who would fund that?

ROBERT MACAULAY: In one way or another it would be funded by the industry through the raising of taxes on the industry, as happens now. I might point out while we're here that all of the funding that industry gets back through government arose from the industry. So ultimately the industry is not only self-funding; it provides an enormous financial boon to the taxpayers of New South Wales and to the citizens and participants more broadly.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Mr Macaulay, you said that you did attend a meeting at the Muswellbrook racetrack?

ROBERT MACAULAY: I did.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: When was that, roughly? Do you know?

ROBERT MACAULAY: Yes. From memory, it was in about the first week of December last year.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Thanks very much.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: Mr Macaulay, you may be aware that some participants have been prosecuted for permitting the firing of their greyhounds. Are you aware of that case at all?

ROBERT MACAULAY: You'd have to tell me which case it is, Mr Pearson.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: It's very specific in that it relates to the firing of greyhounds and knowingly permitting that to be done. Are you aware of that case?

ROBERT MACAULAY: I'm happy to take questions on individual cases on notice.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: If you could take that on notice, please. Could you also tell me in your inquiry into it, or whether you know, did the person who performed the firing operation or the firing procedure—are they being dealt with by GWIC or yourselves in any investigative, with a view to prosecuting?

ROBERT MACAULAY: I can't answer questions about individual matters, but I'm happy to take—

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: I think you can. You have a policy position on firing—

The Hon. WES FANG: Point of order, Chair—

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: —and I think you can. Take it on notice, please.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Everyone else is getting one final question, so I'm going to have one. We were talking before about the numbers of dogs rehomed and the microchipping. Can I just check, do you share the microchip numbers of greyhounds that are rehomed with GWIC?

ALICIA FULLER: Yes, and we're now sharing them on a monthly basis.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Excellent, thank you.

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The Hon. WES FANG: I have no final questions. Thank you for coming. It's Friday afternoon. Good luck.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much for coming. I note that you've taken a number of questions on notice. You have 12 days to respond.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

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Mr ANTHONY ANGE, Director, CG Insight, sworn and examined

The CHAIR: Welcome. Would you like to make a short opening statement?

ANTHONY ANGE: After hearing Mr Macaulay, I'm just going to improvise something that he did mention in regard to the Northern Territory and how they had that gentleman who was shoplifting and ended up being incarcerated. In relation to that, the law is not black or white. That's what we learned in law school. The law is grey. In taking note of that, there's something we also learned, which was the trifecta principle, which means community engagement with the police and how things can escalate dramatically over a quick period of time. The trifecta principle was fundamentally—you could be jaywalking or offensive language. That could be escalated into resisting arrest, assaulting police and you are now in jail for something as simple as the f-word or jaywalking. The trifecta principle is something I really wanted to highlight, and I think Mr Macaulay also did that, where things can be escalated extraordinarily over a very short period of time when they shouldn't have. That is all.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I am just looking at your submission. I am looking at 28 and 29—talking about the restrictions and the charging for cocaine and cobalt. These amounts are, as we've heard in this inquiry, set by Greyhounds Australasia, not by GWIC; GWIC is just enforcing those national rules. Is it your argument that GWIC is doing something wrong there or that the national rules are in need of amending?

ANTHONY ANGE: I think I have taken note of that issue in the submission, that GWIC are there to enforce those rules, but there is also discretion in relation to common sense sometimes. Also that—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Can you explain that? For example, you say, "Current rules prohibit cobalt levels above 100 nanograms per millilitre." If there was testing that then found that, are you arguing that they should overlook that because the rule is too strict or are you asking GWIC to quibble with the rules that they are obliged to follow?

ANTHONY ANGE: I understand that the rules are implemented by Greyhounds Australasia, the Federal body.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Yes, which is the quantity and the type of substance. That is all set down by Greyhounds Australasia.

ANTHONY ANGE: Correct.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: So what's your argument here then? If you're arguing that the process of GWIC enforcing those rules can be quite devastating on a participant, isn't the problem with the rules rather than GWIC?

ANTHONY ANGE: Yes, and that is what this Committee is here for—that there are recommendations made in relation to the industry. I think Mr Macaulay also mentioned that one of the recommendations is that the absolute liability of presentation rules be varied.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Right, so it's not about the discretion of GWIC, it's about—

ANTHONY ANGE: Discretion up to the point of the conduct part that I wrote about towards the end of the submission, "conduct and other matters", starting from paragraph 37 onwards.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Yes, because then you've listed a whole bunch of people who have been done for having cobalt and stuff, but they were found to have breached the rules. It is just a little bit hard to understand what the argument is.

ANTHONY ANGE: What I have done is I have actually outlined those rules, how they are being interpreted and how they are being conducted. A lot of those were pre-race swabs. I think Dr Major was something I also quoted from paragraph 33 onwards, and Professor Bryan Hibbert from the University of New South Wales. These people have spoken at length to cobalt. The fact that cobalt is done through the urine might not necessarily be the best way about it. There might be other ways to conduct these samples. The inconsistency of the suspension periods, as you can see, varies dramatically. I also took note that I do understand the charges are different. Some people are charged over 200 nanograms and some people are charged over 100 nanograms. Sometimes there were—previously they have actually outlined what those quantities were. I think about a year or two ago they just got rid of the quantity and just charged for over 100 or over 200, but before that they actually outlined it. For example, paragraph 35, item no. 13, actually has 129 units of measurements, 130 units of measurements and whatnot.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Okay. Moving on to the recommendations, how would a separate tribunal that had to apply the same rules be helpful?

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ANTHONY ANGE: I would assume it would be something like drink driving. If you were 0.51 or if you were 0.10, it's a massive difference, right? The cobalt level might be one nanogram over, or maybe you're 50 or 100 or 200 nanograms over. Those things will be part of the mitigating circumstances and that discretion could be implemented in relation to those punishments and severities.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: To points 8 and 9 of your "Recommendations Summary", these things are pretty standard for regulators. GWIC has a tribunal and it is a pretty standard-looking regulator in this respect. What is different about regulation of greyhound participants that would require a different approach here?

ANTHONY ANGE: I think Mr Macaulay also mentioned this previously. You have the police, the prosecutor, the investigator and, fundamentally, the judge all in one government organisation. I can appreciate the argument that there is already a current panel in place, but that panel is made up of the legal and chief stewards and the commissioners themselves. How that is meant to be an impartial panel in determining the punishments—but, again, it comes all under the same organisation.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Because it is an independent regulator, like any other kind of independent regulator that is tasked with doing exactly that.

ANTHONY ANGE: Police is an independent regulator as well, but you can't have the police commissioner—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: No, that is a very different system. In terms of industry regulation, which is what this is—we are not talking about throwing people in jail. We are talking about disqualifying them for drugging dogs or doing whatever. We have heard many, many stories of quite horrific things still happening that GWIC are having to take participants to task for. They are not being put in jail; they are just being denied participation in an industry. This is an industry body. On that basis, why would we take away one of the core functions of that independent regulator?

ANTHONY ANGE: I don't think—and I could be wrong—I mentioned jail. Just go back to the driving example. If the police commissioner himself is taking driver licences off people for 12 months or 24 months, they might need that to provide for their family. People rely on that form of income or that form of employment that is now being stripped away from them. That is something similar with respect to the police and how they conduct things.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I take the point, but that is not how we do it. We have the police, we have criminal law, we have civil law and then we have industry bodies and regulation. This was the quid pro quo for allowing the industry to continue: that it would have this strong, independent regulator.

ANTHONY ANGE: Definitely. There is no saying that there shouldn't be a regulator. I think everyone here, including myself—I do believe GWIC needs to be there. The industry before that was a bit of an issue. However, I think they've really come strong. They've done really good. And I want to mention what GBOTA CEO Mr Noyce said previously at the opening of this Committee. He actually said—and I could be wrong here—95 per cent or 96 per cent of the industry are actually doing the right thing. It is that 3 per cent or 4 per cent that we need to address. I think GWIC has done a phenomenal job in addressing that 3 per cent to 4 per cent. You know, it's the new sheriff in town cleaning up the industry. But in doing so, I feel like they have also come and, being that sheriff, they have put Aussie Post for driving on the footpath on a motorbike—suspension. They have got the DHL driver jaywalking—suspension. I feel like they are just really going a little bit above. I think they have got rid of a lot of the baddies, but they are now coming after innocent minor infractions.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Because, apparently, people are getting cocaine off doorhandles and things?

ANTHONY ANGE: Cocaine, as in terms of 0.1 nanogram?

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Yes, apparently that is what is happening.

ANTHONY ANGE: You can get that off a banknote, you can get that off a barstool, you can get that off somewhere at the toilet just by touching the doorknob—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I must say, I do worry about the recent advertising campaign trying to get kids to racetracks if there is that much cocaine on the toilet doors. Anyway, I will hand over to someone else.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: I thank you for your attendance today. I appreciate your submission, which I had a chance to read through. I've just been listening with interest as you put forward the case for a tribunal. I'm not sure that you were here, but the Chair and I did ask some questions of Mr Macaulay about this tribunal proposal. Your recommendations, predominantly from about numbers 6 to 10, but mainly 8, 9 and 10, talk about this tribunal and different arrangements for the severity, I suppose—mitigating factors and severity. What I would

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pose to you is, you've got a chance now to succinctly put to this Committee your preferred model. If it is the tribunal, why is it the tribunal and how is it funded?

ANTHONY ANGE: These are just my opinions and the way I see things because I'm not GWIC or GRNSW or anything. But the way I see things is that the panel should be something similar to the AFL or the NRL system, where you have independent—and I appreciate that GWIC is independent to an extent, but real independence as in outside of that industry, outside of GWIC, outside of GRNSW—members sit on that panel, discuss and deliberate and, if possible, implement that disciplinary action required. In terms of budgeting and funding, that possibly comes from the point of consumption tax or it comes from one or two of the bodies that currently exist and regulate the industry.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: I have got several mates and their sons play NRL. They are not always necessarily overly enthused by their visits to the tribunal. Could this not be a case of "be careful what you are asking for"?

ANTHONY ANGE: I don't quite understand what the question is.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: The tribunal may not always deliver the results that people want. Sometimes they're pretty severe and harsh in their penalties, particularly the NRL. I guess I'm devil's advocate here. You are asking for it. You're in front of the Committee and you've got a chance to sell it, but have you looked at the pros and cons of such a model? What would you see as the cons, the downsides?

ANTHONY ANGE: It's a really good question and I appreciate it. The way I see things, the independent panel would consist of three, four, five or whatever members. They would deliberate, assess and then choose whatever disciplinary action they are going to enforce there. It is very similar to the NRL. They have category 1, 2 and 3 charges. I understand it, and everyone else that watches footy and the players understand it. They know what they are up for. If they take a plea bargain, it comes down to a plea bargain and gets reduced a bit. In the scheme of things, it makes sense. That's fine, right? GWIC initiates the proceedings, they do the investigation, they bring it before the panel, the panel chooses the punishment—done and dusted. If there is an issue, the New South Wales racing tribunal still stands. We're not saying get rid of that. That tribunal oversees the harnesses, the thoroughbreds and greyhounds. That avenue is still there in regards to appeals and whatnot. I hope that addresses your question.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: Yes, but the second part of the question that I posed was: In your view, what are the downsides to such a model?

ANTHONY ANGE: The downsides to a judiciary, an independent panel?

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: Yes, as you have proposed. Have you looked at both sides of this, the pros and the cons?

ANTHONY ANGE: The downsides would be, obviously, that these people aren't part of the industry, that they're not aware of greyhound terminology, greyhound practices or greyhound procedures. Maybe on prima facie they're not totally aware of what they're enforcing or what they're not enforcing. Maybe that could be a con.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: You also make some recommendations around education, that GWIC needs to better educate members of the racing rules, policies and legislation. You talk about formal and informal approaches. Could you maybe elaborate on how you see that being implemented?

ANTHONY ANGE: Definitely. I think the member raised a really good question there. Currently, as you are aware, the greyhound meetings or greyhound events are normally conducted at the racing venues. Greyhounds participate in race 1 to 10 or whatever it might be. During those events, you have all the trainers in attendance. You have all the handlers in attendance. You actually have everyone there that you need to talk to that is part of the industry. Something as simple as a little tent or a little cubicle or whatever it might be—GWIC might be able to engage with the participants and the trainers and do some sort of event there.

It's a good question you asked. There's something else I was thinking about on the way here in the car—something as small as a bit of education to get your yearly renewals, for example, like a 10-question questionnaire that you might have to do online that then qualifies you to get your renewal process through. That sort of 10-question questionnaire might involve rules and conduct and a bit of education there, something similar to your annual legal or accounting CP points that you need—you know what I mean? Something as small as that, in terms of education, could go a long way. Currently, in my opinion and from what I'm hearing from participants, there's not much out there. There really isn't.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: Have you tested your views with stakeholders within the sector?

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ANTHONY ANGE: A lot of this information, as you're aware, is from the industry. People that didn't want to get named, especially, did share their views and whatnot. I'm also a member of the GBOTA in my off time. I'm part of the metro district association, so that's one tier above the branch that I've been elected to, and we sort of deliberate and discuss all of this on a monthly basis. There are a lot of concerns and I could have written, instead of 15 pages, 50 pages. But in terms of efficiency, I sort of did what I can in my own personal time.

The CHAIR: Coming back to your submission, in the first section you talk about education and the relative sophistication of country-based people who have traditionally been involved in the industry—certainly not in a disparaging way. Your recommendation A, which I found a little bit interesting, talks about using the American standard of reading Miranda rights. I understand exactly what you're getting at there, and you explain it quite well. I'll get to the question in a minute. When industry participants have been breached or found to be in breach of swabs or whatever—that's the substance matter—many of them tend to explode.

ANTHONY ANGE: Yes.

The CHAIR: And then they automatically cop a conduct matter as well. Of the cases that I've heard or been updated about over the years, sometimes the conduct matter can be just as bad with regard to penalty as the prohibited substance matter. Putting aside all the arguments about the substance matter breaches in relation to cobalt, and whether it should be there at all, they're breached—bang. They open their mouth and swear at the steward and—bang—cop it again. They swear again—bang—and get it again. At what stage would they get the Miranda-rights-type warning? You also say it should be handed to them in writing so they have a chance to read it and update themselves, and that's part of an approach to the natural justice exercise. Do you want to elaborate on that?

ANTHONY ANGE: Yes, it's a very interesting topic that I've discussed with GWIC as well. GWIC are of the opinion—sorry, not of the opinion. GWIC are rightfully entitled to not be abused. Their members, their officers and their stewards should not go to work and be abused. That's not how things work, and if they are—

The CHAIR: But isn't educating the participants part of this exercise?

ANTHONY ANGE: That's pretty much what I'm trying to get at. Because they shouldn't tolerate such behaviours, that behaviour shouldn't occur or shouldn't be allowed to escalate. A prime example of that would be—and I'll give you a hypothetical here, or something that's happened in the industry—someone might be charged in relation to slapping a dog. That person is brought into an inquiry. That person stipulates that that dog headbutted him, that he has a broken nose; he's been injured. All he's done is smacked it on the bottom or something. The stewards might inquire and question again and again. This gentleman now might blow and go: Effing hell, this is a joke.

Then and there should the caution be issued saying, "Excuse me, I don't appreciate the terminology. Here's a laminate. Here are the rules we're highlighting. Here are the appropriate penalties that might be involved if you continue." If that gentleman goes: Eff you. Come on. This is an effing joke. I can't effing believe it. Then that's on them. But currently there's no caution in relation to what they're facing because people don't know. People don't know what they're facing. People don't know if it's a month or 10 months or whatever disciplinary process. They're expecting a couple-hundred dollar fine. Little do they know they're actually getting 10 months or five months.

The CHAIR: We've heard in evidence that 10 months can be exclusion from your own house because the greyhound facility, as is the case with many family operations, is on their property. So they get excluded from their own property and can't even live in their own house.

ANTHONY ANGE: Can I just expand on what I was saying before, Mr Chair, if that's okay? I can't stress the importance of things getting out of control and, like you said, blowing up. Because what happens is those members of GWIC are now being hostilely attacked. They're receiving abuse, and that's not on. Because then what? GWIC now have liability and go to court for that.

The CHAIR: No-one is questioning that.

ANTHONY ANGE: The issue is the education needs to be implemented.

The CHAIR: My questions to you relate to the angle you've taken in relation to better education, understanding and warning of the participants who have been found to be in breach or potentially in breach.

ANTHONY ANGE: Okay.

The CHAIR: Carry on.

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ANTHONY ANGE: I totally agree. That shouldn't happen and the caution should be issued at an early instance so those people are aware that what they're doing is not right, and that it's being taken seriously by GWIC.

The CHAIR: Any other questions? No more questions.

ANTHONY ANGE: GWIC want to punish people out of that behaviour, which I respect, but I don't appreciate that sort of view. I believe education, based on my submission, is the key to proceeding, going forward.

The CHAIR: Yes, I think that's duly noted. On page 11 you talk about the relative severity of penalties and I think this keys into what previous evidence was given, that there isn't currently any flexibility in what penalty can be applied. You're talking there in terms of minor and then major penalties?

ANTHONY ANGE: Yes. This isn't something that's outlined per se. These are just my understandings of how something is a major and a minor disciplinary action in my opinion. Going back to the member, Mick Veitch, what he mentioned was how the panel would work. I would stipulate that the major conduct and other matters are brought before the panel, and the minor matters still possibly stay within the purview of GWIC. So something like parking fines could stay with GWIC. Something that's more serious can then go before the panel, if that simplifies it for you.

The CHAIR: In your recommendation C, you're talking about just this sort of thing in terms of removing absolute liability for presentation rules, and that GWIC remove minimum sentencing to assist holistic consideration and mitigating circumstances and factors.

ANTHONY ANGE: Yes.

The CHAIR: You talk about a body other than GWIC to deliberate and sentence on serious charges. Is this what you're getting to go now?

ANTHONY ANGE: Exactly. We're going to a panel or a separate thing to deliberate on these sorts of matters.

The CHAIR: Who would wear the cost of this extra panel if you had to turn up to this tribunal? Would it be a no-cost jurisdiction like NCAT, for example?

ANTHONY ANGE: That's something for this Committee to look into.

The CHAIR: I just thought you might have a recommendation in relation to it.

ANTHONY ANGE: Possibly the POC system—the funding could come from there.

The CHAIR: In relation to advocacy for the industry, you talk about some sort of legal aid body or moneys. What have you got envisaged there? Only in terms of major changes or minor, or all or none or both? What's the story there?

ANTHONY ANGE: Again, it depends on the funding and how that's going to be structured and the amount of people involved in that group. The way I see it is it represents the industry as a whole across the State and that could be accessed by any handler, trainer or anyone in relation to a disciplinary action taken by GWIC. Again, just like Legal Aid, they might not represent the \$100 parking fine, but they might represent the 10-year sentence, incarceration or suspension, or something serious. Again, we use that similar model that Legal Aid has, because I know that greyhounds are out of Legal Aid's purview. We should incorporate something for the industry by the industry.

The CHAIR: By that you mean, for example, it would be funded perhaps by GRNSW in a pool?

ANTHONY ANGE: That's something outside of my scope so I'm not sure. But again there are point of consumption taxes that are there that possibly it could come out of. It could come out of both. That's entirely up to the Committee to sort of look into.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Mr Ange, I want to ask you a bit more about what you said in the beginning of your submission. What are greyhound ownership syndicates?

ANTHONY ANGE: The way a greyhound syndicate works is there's a group people. It could be, I think, GWIC have two or three as a minimum, whatever it is, and I think there is a maximum of 20 that could be incorporated into a syndicate. It is basically a registered body with GWIC but that body is now in charge of a specific greyhound or group of greyhounds.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: It is a group of you that come together, you purchase the greyhound and then you're sort of responsible for racing it and you share the prize money.

ANTHONY ANGE: Exactly.

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Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: You say that you are responsible for introducing over 100 new and young participants into the greyhound racing industry. Was that in the process of building those syndicates?

ANTHONY ANGE: Correct. Roughly we started with a greyhound—just me and my business partner. That was done through just two people in a syndicate. We then have grown that into another one called Dixie Gambles—that was our second purchase. We had a number of friends that jumped in together on that. We just sort of brought this industry to participants, to the general population, because before that people were unsure about how to get into a greyhound. For example, me and my business partner spent three or four months trying to work out the path of getting involved. It is just very, very difficult as opposed to the thoroughbreds.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: So you did that first one. Then how did you find the people to come into the next syndicate?

ANTHONY ANGE: That is a very good question. We operate a tipping service—I'm not sure if you're aware. That tipping service is on social media and through websites and whatnot. We actually have a very big following. A lot of friends are part of a tipping service where they procure our weekly tips. That might involve rugby, that might involve horses, that might involve greyhounds, that might involve NBA—whatever. Through that we met a lot of friends that would go to games, that would go to races, would have beers, would hang out and through that network we were able to grow this much more efficiently.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Is this like Facebook? Which social media is that?

ANTHONY ANGE: Everywhere. So we have Instagram, we have Facebook, we have websites, we had TikTok, I believe, until they took us down because we were putting money on too many races. It was a breach of their terms or something.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: How many people are we talking about that are following on something like—

ANTHONY ANGE: Thousands.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Thousands. You are doing a tipping service and were you then saying, "Hey, do people want to come into it and be a part of this syndicate?"

ANTHONY ANGE: People were coming to us. They saw us have a greyhound. They were very curious. They said "Geez, we want to join. Let us join, please, please." We said okay. We found a second dog so that is how the journey began.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Yes, right. You refer to them as friends but really it is just people who were kind of approached and then, presumably as part being in the syndicate, they are now acquaintances and stuff?

ANTHONY ANGE: My brothers, my mum, my family relatives, my partner's family relatives, our friends, our high school mates, our university mates—a variety of people of all ages.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: But also these people who are approaching you through the website or through socials?

ANTHONY ANGE: Potentially, yes, but of course we have met them. We have gone for beers, we've hung out. There are a lot of friends throughout, yes.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Because there's a distinction, isn't there, in the type of syndicate that you're running if its friends or if it's public?

ANTHONY ANGE: Correct.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: So you would want to be very careful when you are telling us that these are all friends.

ANTHONY ANGE: There is legislation in regard to what you're bringing up, specifically with hawking, with advertising, with promotion, definitely. We try to abide by all that.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Interesting, okay.

The CHAIR: Mr Ange, thank you very much for coming today. I don't think you took any questions on notice.

(The witness withdrew.)

The Committee adjourned at 15:19.