

GREYHOUND RACING REFORMS

The Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission (GWIC) has been established to promote and protect the welfare of greyhounds, safeguard the integrity of greyhound racing and betting and maintain public confidence in the greyhound racing industry.

The Greyhound Industry Reform Panel recommended, and the NSW Government accepted, a number of reforms to improve the industry including separating the commercial and regulatory functions which are currently performed by GRNSW. The regulatory functions will transfer over to the Commission during 2018.

Whether you are a participant or avid follower of greyhound racing, the reforms mean a lot of changes for you and the industry.

Stakeholders will be consulted on reforms but here's an update on the changes coming down the track.

Bond

The Greyhound Industry Reform Panel recommended introducing a bond for each greyhound bred as a measure to reduce overbreeding and unnecessary euthanasia.

The Commission will consult with industry participants and stakeholders when assessing the cost and conditions of this bond.

A Code of Practice for the Welfare of Greyhounds

The code of practice will be based on the five domains of animal welfare. These include nutrition, environment, health, behaviour and mental state. The code of practice will deal with standards for the keeping, treatment and handling of greyhounds. The code will also include standards for the facilities, equipment and conditions at premises where greyhounds are kept, trialled, trained or raced.

The code of practice will apply to greyhounds that are required to be registered under the *Greyhound Racing Act 2017*. This captures all greyhounds that are owned or kept by a greyhound racing industry participant, including as a breeding dog or pet. It will be fully enforced by inspectors of the Commission. The code will ban certain practices including the use of barking muzzles and behaviour altering substances.

Breaches of the code of practice will be dealt with through new penalty options including work orders, penalty infringement notices, fines, suspension and disqualification from participating in the industry. Stronger penalties will be imposed for the more serious offences.

Animal Welfare Committee

The Greyhound Reform Panel recommended the creation of an Animal Welfare Committee to provide advice to the Commission on matters relating to greyhound welfare including the formulation of welfare policies and standards.

Members have now been appointed to the committee. The Commission will seek the advice of the Animal Welfare Committee as it prepares the Code of Practice for the Welfare of Greyhounds.

Strengthened Penalties for Animal Cruelty

The *Greyhound Racing Act 2017* introduced a number of strengthened penalties for animal cruelty offences including a life time ban for live baiting. The Act also amends the *Crimes Act 1900* to clarify that live baiting is regarded as serious animal cruelty and introduces a new offence of recklessly committing serious animal cruelty. The maximum penalty for this offence is three years imprisonment.

The Act prohibits keeping certain animals on premises where greyhounds are kept, trialled, trained or raced. These animals include any animal that is capable of being used as a lure for trialling, training or racing greyhounds.

Licensing and Registration

A new greyhound racing licensing scheme will be established to support improved animal welfare. It will apply to all industry participants. The standard conditions of the new licensing scheme will include mandatory education and training requirements, compliance with the code of practice, record keeping and reporting requirements and the maximum number of dogs that can be kept by the licensee. There will be several categories of some licence types and industry participants will be required to complete training to obtain and maintain their licence. There will be a transition period to enable existing participants to complete education requirements under the new scheme.

All public and private trial tracks will be assessed and licensed where necessary. The reform panel recommended the installation of CCTV at certain tracks based on an assessment of risks and other practical considerations. The installation of CCTV will deter illegal activity as it provides oversight of training practices. This would form part of the licensing process.

New Greyhound Racing Register

There will be a new greyhound racing register, managed by the Commission to capture the identity and whereabouts of all greyhounds throughout their lifecycle.

Greyhounds that retire and are rehomed with a non-industry participant will not be included on the register. New owners will be responsible for registering these animals on the companion animals register.

The owner of a registered greyhound will be required to update the greyhound racing register including when the greyhound is rehomed or euthanised. Euthanasia will be strictly controlled both by regulation and by the Code of Practice relating to the Welfare of Greyhounds.

Fee changes

The annual registration fee will be reassessed to reflect regulatory changes and the new registration framework.

For more information
Visit the website at

www.gwic.nsw.gov.au