



# GRNZ Welfare Report

## Q1 2022

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# Quarterly report to the Minister for Racing

## 1 Introduction

This report provides an update to the Minister for the first quarter of the 2021/22 racing season.

Included are the statistics on raceday euthanasia and non-raceday mortalities, as well as injury data.

It also provides an update to the Minister on the progress against the recommendations made in the Hansen Report and the recommendations from the review conducted by Sir Bruce Robertson in 2021.

The final section includes comments on governance in relation to the Animal Welfare Committee, and Animal Welfare Lead and regular quarterly reporting.

Key results in the first quarter include:

- No greyhounds died or were euthanised on raceday in the quarter under review, this represents the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter with zero raceday mortality
- There were no unnecessary euthanasia reported in this quarter; 35 greyhounds were euthanised by veterinarians for medical reasons
- Injuries continue to trend downwards relative to last season's full data
- Progress is being made on implementing the Robertson Review recommendations
  1. On-going data analysis has identified gaps on the status of greyhounds from birth to death and work is being done to close those gaps
  2. Working with the RIB to develop a population model for the number of animals required in the industry
  3. Animal welfare standards, Rules and policies are being reviewed and rationalised to provide best practice, consistent and accessible information that covers all aspects of greyhound welfare in the industry, including socialisation.
  4. Developing reporting metrics to understand socialisation issues that impact on successful rehoming and address any issues that impact on successful rehoming
  5. GRNZ is collaborating with the RIB to take action on findings from their kennel audit and inspections, including education for industry participants and requiring participants to provide up to date information to GRNZ on greyhounds in their care
  6. Review of the Wanganui track by Dr Michelle Ledger, with the terms of reference for this review also including an injury data review of all tracks. The review will inform the development of track standards and practices. There is a plan to assess the feasibility of introducing a straight track
  7. We will be working on an approach to assess greyhound welfare in large scale kennels
  8. Dr Michelle Ledger has been appointed Manager of Greyhound Welfare for GRNZ
  9. New comprehensive Terms of Reference for the Animal Welfare Committee are currently being developed with the makeup of this committee being finalised
  10. GRNZ will be issuing quarterly reports to the relevant Ministers
- The Hansen Report recommendations continue to be a focus for GRNZ and we are working with the RIB to strengthen the outcomes of these recommendations. Detail in each of the Hansen Report recommendations is provided in this report.

## 2 Raceday euthanasia and injuries

**No greyhounds died or were euthanised on raceday in the quarter under review.**

A number of factors contributed to this positive outcome:

- The GRNZ injury scheme for race and trial injuries where GRNZ takes responsibility for the treatment and rehabilitation of raceday injuries that otherwise may have resulted in euthanasia.
- Track preparation and management improvements with curators being supported by the GRNZ Track Advisor.
- The replacement of the sand at Addington in April has provided a more consistent and therefore safer racing surface. As noted in the Annual Report, there has been an overall reduction in injuries and euthanasia of 23.7%

Figure 1 below shows the number of euthanasia/deaths per quarter on Raceday from Q1 2016.

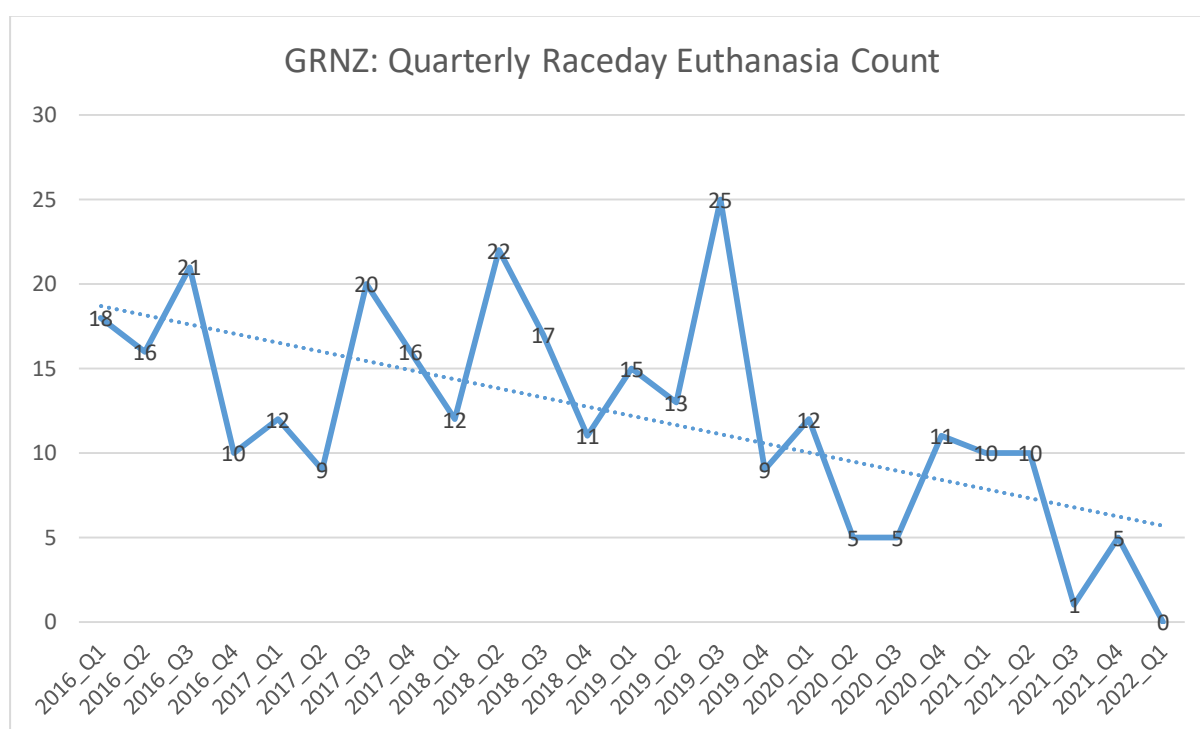


Figure 1

## 3 Non-raceday deaths

There was zero unnecessary euthanasia of healthy greyhounds, with 35 greyhounds euthanised by veterinarians for a medical reason. Of those, 16 were euthanised due to accident or injury. Four other deaths occurred due to accident or injury.

The data for the first quarter of this year are 'as reported' – GRNZ has not yet completed a verification audit of the greyhound population as was completed for the 2021 season. GRNZ will carry out quarterly audits that will be complemented by the Racing Integrity Board (RIB) conducting greyhound audits during their kennel inspections.

Figure 2 below is the Q1 data for the 2021/22 Season

Count	%	Mortality Type & Cause
<b>Euthanasia</b>		
8	6.3%	Medical Euthanasia-Aggression
11	8.7%	Medical Euthanasia-Illness
16	12.6%	Medical Euthanasia-Accident/Injury
0	0.0%	Unnecessary Euthanasia
<b>35</b>	<b>27.6%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Death</b>		
4	6.7%	Accident / Injury
15	25.0%	Illness, Age or Natural Causes
<b>19</b>	<b>31.7%</b>	<b>Total</b>

Figure 2

In August 2021 the GRNZ Board directed that no greyhounds are to be euthanised for the reason of aggression. Greyhounds that a trainer thinks are aggressive must be put through the GRNZ rehoming programme for specialist behavioural assessment.

The GRNZ rehoming programme has continued to make an impact on (unnecessary) euthanasia for non-medical reasons, with trainers confident that greyhounds at the end of their racing career will be accepted into the rehoming programme in a timely manner.

GRNZ is actively monitoring trends in non-raceday deaths and euthanasia. Where there are concerns these are raised with the GRNZ Board and follow up action is taken.

## 4 Injury data

Injuries continue to trend downwards relative to last season's full data. Figure 3 below provides the total injuries per 1000 starters for Q1 of 2021/22 season. For comparison, the full injury data per starter for last season are detailed in Figure 4.

Figure 3 demonstrates that 69.5% of injuries are fully recoverable, with greyhounds returning to racing after no more than 21 days' rest. Serious injuries represent only 8.5% of injuries and are covered by the race injury and rehabilitation scheme, introduced by GRNZ in February 2021. It is thought this scheme has made a significant contribution to ensuring there were no raceday euthanasia reported this quarter.

To note in respect of the injury data is that the COVID-19 lockdown, and the closure of the Forbury Park and Wanganui tracks reduced the number of races run in the quarter to 1,156 compared to 1,450 last season.

Injury Category & Stand Down 2021/22 Q1		Injuries per 1000 starts	Cumulative Proportion
Count			
60	Minor 1-10 days	6.9	33.9%
63	Medium 11-21 days	7.2	69.5%
39	Major I 22-42 days	4.5	91.5%
15	Major II more than 42 days	1.7	100.0%
0	Euthanised by vet on track or sudden death	0.0	
177	<b>Total Veterinary Exams detecting Injury</b>	<b>20.3</b>	

Figure 3

Injury Category & Stand Down 2020/21		Injuries per 1000 starts	Cumulative Proportion
Count	from 41,743 starts		
348	Minor 1-10 days	8.3	38.7%
265	Medium 11-21 days	6.3	68.1%
207	Major I 22-42 days	5.0	91.1%
53	Major II more than 42 days	1.3	97.0%
27	Euthanised by vet on track or sudden death	0.6	100.0%
900	<b>Total Veterinary Exams detecting Injury</b>	<b>21.6</b>	

Figure 4

Over the preceding 5 years the percentage of serious injuries is shown in Figure 5 below, which suggests that the 2019/20 year was anomalous. However 2019/20 was the season that GRNZ engaged the track advisor and this data encouraged us to consider an injury scheme to eliminate economics from any raceday decisions.

Stand downs 43-90 days and Euthanasia – per 1000 Starts	
2016/17	8.8%
2017/18	9.6%
2018/19	8.2%
2019/20	4.7%
2020/21	8.9%
2021/22	8.5% (First quarter)

Figure 5

The data needs to be explored in more detail and GRNZ has given the RIB full and open access to all datasets. The GRNZ and RIB teams are working in a highly collaborative manner to validate the accuracy of the databases and insights.

## 5 Update on progress on Hansen and Robertson Reviews

We provide an update below on progress against the recommendations in the Hansen report and the 2021 Robertson report. We are working closely with the RIB on focus areas that cover welfare, governance and the review as a whole to deliver the required outcomes by the end of 2022.

The Hansen recommendations are listed below with associated relationship to the Robertson report.

### 5.1 Finalise health and welfare standards

Hansen recommendation 1: The Health and Welfare Standards currently under consideration by NZGRA should be finalised and made binding on members as soon as is practically possible. They should include provision for best practice standards for the socialisation and habituation of greyhounds.

#### **Work has started on revising the current Health and Welfare Standards.**

The standards referred to in the Hansen report were finalised in 2018 and have been available to all Licensed Persons since that time. The Robertson report made further recommendations to ensure that all Rules, policies and standards, including welfare provisions, are rationalised so that they are simple, transparent and accessible and that they cover all aspects of the greyhound welfare.

We are currently working with the RIB on revising the Health and Welfare standards to ensure they are fit for purpose and that the industry is aligned with welfare priorities. The outcome of this work will see the new standards modernised and incorporated fully into the revised GRNZ Rules. We will make changes to how the standards and Rules are communicated to the participants, including using surveys to obtain feedback from the participants.

### 5.2 Annual inspection of all kennels by RIU

Hansen recommendation 2: All kennels used for breeding, rearing and training greyhounds for racing should be inspected by the RIU at least once a year.

#### **The need for further improvements on kennel inspections is recognised and further action is underway.**

Post the Hansen report, the RIU were conducting kennel inspections, this was identified as an area for improvement in the Robertson report. The RIB have been developing their audit and inspection planning and have conducted a kennel inspection using the existing welfare standards as a measurable basis. The outcome of this has identified improvements needed to the standards and some immediate actions being taken which include:

- Using the results of kennel inspections to inform on-going participant education material and the development of fact sheets and alerts to remind participants of their obligations to maintain and retain treatment and vaccinations records
- Supporting the RIB with kennel inspections by amending the reports that the RIB use as part of their visits to identify all the greyhounds that are on the participant's property
- A commitment from GRNZ to take appropriate action based on the outcome of the audits
- GRNZ is now supplying RIB with 'smart' Gallagher microchip readers that immediately identify greyhounds by name as well as creating a file for each audit that can be downloaded later.

### 5.3 Ongoing emphasis on new Health and Welfare standards

Hansen recommendation 3: NZGRA should continue to encourage and facilitate training assessments and to publish educational materials for trainers with particular emphasis on generating awareness of the new welfare standards.

#### **Education on the injury rehabilitation scheme provided to stakeholders in the last quarter.**

In the last quarter the emphasis has been on the policies and processes relating to the successful introduction of the injury rehabilitation scheme (RTR). Education material regarding the scheme has been provided to trainers, stewards, vets and the RTR team.

GRNZ has regularly provided information and education through our website, emails and conferences to trainers on the health and welfare of greyhounds which has covered topics such as emergency preparedness and kennel cough.

As the new health and welfare standards are developed and implemented GRNZ will ensure that there is ongoing communication about the expectations of the industry participants and advisory material regarding how they may successfully comply with the new standards.

We are working with Racing NZ on the development of an education programme within the NZ qualifications framework that will include an emphasis on health and welfare of greyhounds.

### 5.4 Vaccinations

Hansen recommendation 4: Steps should be taken to ensure that the vaccinations of greyhounds remain current by requiring proof of vaccinations on registration for naming and thereafter annually and/or as a condition of permission to race.

#### **The vaccination policy is in place and GRNZ is developing its processes and systems to track and enforce compliance.**

The policy for this took effect from 1 February 2019, and proof of vaccinations is required and sighted by GRNZ at 4 months of age and at 16 months when the greyhound is registered to race.

As noted above the RIB have noted that there is some non-compliance with this policy. GRNZ will develop an education programme for licensed persons (LPs) to ensure they understand and comply with the standards for vaccination and retention of records. The new Rules which will come into effect will incorporate the requirements for current vaccinations, which are being implemented across Australasia for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in the 2021/2022 season.

GRNZ is scoping the changes required to the database for the system to automatically manage some of the vaccination recording and verification process. In conjunction with the RIB, we will investigate options for off-the-shelf software for management of treatment records, which will set NZ ahead of other greyhound racing jurisdictions.

### 5.5 Ear branding

Hansen recommendation 5: The NZGRA should consider whether it is necessary for ear branding to continue and, if it is, to require ear branding to be done under local anaesthetic or otherwise so as not to cause pain to puppies.

#### **We are working actively with Greyhounds Australasia to remove ear branding.**



GRNZ mandated the use of a topical anaesthetic cream and this has been used by ear branders since 16 May 2018 to mitigate the pain associated with ear branding and improve welfare outcomes for puppies undergoing this procedure. Greyhounds Australasia (GA) animal welfare committee is working on a formal process to eliminate ear branding – GRNZ is a member of GA.

In line with GRNZ's commitment to best practice animal welfare, we are keen to eliminate the use of ear brands. The issue preventing this being stopped immediately is that all Australian States, and including NZ, as members of GA, require two forms of identification under the Rules of Racing (microchip and earbrand markings). All member controlling bodies send their greyhound identification data to the GA systems, including the ear brand identification. All systems and the communication protocol for the data transfers need to be changed in a coordinated manner to remove the ear brand as an essential form of identification and replace it with an alternative. We will be actively working with the member states to achieve this.

## 5.6 Establish separate register of breeding stock

Hansen recommendation 6: The NZGRA should introduce a rule change to establish a separate register of breeding bitches, to require registration of a brood bitch prior to service and for deregistration on ceasing to be used for breeding purposes.

### **A separate register was established in 2018.**

The "Registering a Breeding Female" policy was published on 1 August 2018 and amended 1 March 2019. The policy sets out that a breeding female (broodbitch) must be registered and the criteria for registration.

In line with GRNZ's commitment to best practice animal welfare standards and the risks associated with breeding after 7 years of age or more than 3 litters, GRNZ introduced a policy in 2019 which sets out specific criteria under which these higher risk breeding activities may take place. Increased scrutiny to protect the welfare of these breeding females includes:

- Approval to breed a fourth litter or to breed from a greyhound after seven years requires a veterinary check and must be approved by a panel of 3 vets. Factors considered in the approval process include:
  - How previous litters were delivered (caesarean/natural) / number of prior caesareans.
  - Number of prior missed services.
  - Number of prior surgical inseminations.
  - Any complications during gestation or whelping previously.
  - Past litter sizes.
  - Any previous welfare issues with the breeder.
  - If breeder intends to have this litter by nominated caesarean.
  - If the Breeder is the same Breeder for the previous litters so they know the breeding female.

In the 2020/21 season there were 22 approvals for breeding an extra litter, and three applications were declined.

Under exceptional circumstances, including but not limited to an exceptional racing history or unusual patterns for coming into season, an independent panel, appointed by the GRNZ Board will consider whether a breeding female should be allowed to breed one additional litter after she turns

eight years of age or she may whelp a final fifth litter. A written application, outlining the reasons why the breeding female should be considered, can be submitted by the Breeder to the panel. The Panel will take into consideration the factors set out above, the racing performance of the breeding female, and the performance of her progeny when making their decision.

Changes to the GRNZ database were made to support the policy including:

- A separate register of broodbitches and stud dogs
- Recording in the database the DNA fingerprint of the breeding female
- A special registration card that must be provided on demand to the vet and/or stud master
- Maintenance of broodbitch registration and deregistration
- Ensuring the breeder has the correct licences and automatic assigning of ownership of the puppies to the breeder at the time they are whelped
- Automatic maintenance of the broodbitch as active or inactive depending on criteria
- Recording the service method and whelping method in the database
- Recording how many and what sex the puppies are
- Information available in reports - e.g. whelping reports

When the greyhound retires from breeding they must be retired in line with our deregistration requirements. This means they will either be kept as a pet by the Licensed Person, privately rehomed or entered into the GRNZ Great Mates rehoming programme.

## 5.7 GRNZ should track all greyhounds from birth to deregistration

Hansen recommendation 7: The NZGRA should take steps to ensure that its database is revamped so as to ensure that up-to-date, easily accessible and accurate information is available on every greyhound born in New Zealand or imported into New Zealand until it is deregistered.

### **GRNZ has identified and is working on further changes to its database to improve the tracking of greyhounds.**

Post the Hansen report GRNZ made significant changes to the database to improve the tracking of the greyhounds as detailed in GRNZ's submission to the Robertson review.

The Robertson review emphasised that comprehensive accessible data should be available on the position of all animals from birth to death. The greyhound verification audit completed at the end of the season identified some gaps in the data, as did an internal review of the data held in relation to the rehoming programme. We are also working with the RIB to analyse our data in more depth, and identify further improvements to our records.

Work currently underway or being done includes:

- Three-monthly verification audits of greyhound status in the database
- Changes to the GRNZ system to associate a 'custodian' to greyhounds where they are not necessarily in the care of a trainer or breeder – for example, puppies that are being reared at another licensed kennel by a licensed person. These changes flow through to reports so we know who has the care of greyhounds at all times
- Changes to the rehoming programme software and reports to have more complete and in-depth data about greyhounds from retirement from racing until adoption. For example, how long the greyhound was in each stage of the programme, behavioural assessment status at time of entry into the programme and then at adoption etc.

- Development of a population model to understand inter-dependencies and effects of changes to the population dynamics over time and allow an adaptive response to risk factors.

## 5.8 RIU kennel inspections should audit greyhounds against the database

Hansen recommendation 8: The NZGRA should verify the accuracy of its database by:

- Making provision for the RIU to report on the dogs present in each kennel in the course of annual kennel inspections and by updating its database accordingly;
- Requiring trainers to provide a return of all dogs in their kennels when relicensing;
- Agreeing that thereafter the RIU audit the dogs recorded as present in kennels at the time of its annual inspection.

**The RIB kennel audits will provide an audit of greyhounds in each kennel and GRNZ has provided additional resources to assist with this.**

As noted in point 2, the RIB are redeveloping their audit plan. All RIB greyhound stewards now have access to all system reports.

GRNZ is providing additional information in key reports so that the RIB have the complete information about the greyhounds at the kennels.

In the last quarter, GRNZ has supplied RIB with 'smart' Gallagher microchip readers that immediately identify greyhounds by name as well as creating a file for each audit that can be downloaded later.

## 5.9 Private adoptions

Hansen recommendation 9: The recommendation of WHK that audits of greyhounds registered as privately rehomed should be performed to verify their whereabouts should be acted on.

**GRNZ will develop additional processes to ensure that greyhounds that are privately rehomed or kept by owner are appropriately adopted and their whereabouts are verified.**

GRNZ records the details of people who have privately adopted a greyhound from a trainer, and the rehoming kennel staff contact them to check if there is any assistance that GRNZ can provide.

This is an area that GRNZ accepts needs to be better managed. Included on the programme of work for the coming year is an item to change how these adoptions are managed to provide GRNZ with much better oversight of greyhounds that have been privately rehomed or kept by owner.

## 5.10 Greyhounds should be de-sexed as part of deregistering

Hansen recommendation 10: NZGRA should give consideration to requiring the de-sexing of greyhounds as a condition of deregistration.

**Status: De-sexing has been implemented.**

De-sexing has been standard practice prior to the Hansen report. All greyhounds that are retired from racing (or breeding) as a pet to the GRNZ Great Mates rehoming programme are desexed. This is either done by the trainer or done on entry into the GRNZ Rehoming kennel.

Greyhounds that are privately rehomed or kept by owner must provide a de-sex certificate to GRNZ, and GRNZ will arrange for de-sexing if this has not been done by the trainer.

### 5.11 GRNZ to ensure greyhounds are also registered under the territorial authority

Hansen recommendation 11: NZGRA should take steps to ensure that greyhound owners comply with their obligations under the general law including by requiring proof of registration with a territorial authority as a condition of registration for naming and checks on raceday to ensure that registration is up-to-date.

#### **Status: Ongoing implementation**

GRNZ has undertaken to remind LPs of their obligations for their greyhounds to be appropriately registered.

The RIB is checking total greyhounds present at the kennel with their entitlement under the local Territorial Authority as part of the kennel audit programme. GRNZ will follow up on breaches and work with the RIB to determine how any penalties may be applied.

### 5.12 All greyhounds, not just racing greyhounds, must be tracked in the GRNZ database

Hansen recommendation 12: NZGRA should ensure that from registration as a puppy or following importation into New Zealand until deregistration every greyhound is tracked in its database. This will include:

- Making clear, if need be by a rule change, that the obligation to deregister applies to every greyhound, not just those registered for naming.
- Introducing a rule change to ensure that a registered greyhound is at all times kept in licensed premises in the care and control of a licensed person.
- Rigorously monitoring compliance with registration and deregistration obligations including by follow-up action when non-compliance is suspected and by the checks to be undertaken in the course of kennel inspections.

#### **Status: All greyhounds are tracked in the database and greyhound tracking audits implemented.**

New Rules were introduced in August 2018 (Rule 85.1). In addition, refer to 6 & 7 above in regard to the information kept about greyhounds and the changes underway in relation to additional reporting.

GRNZ has started verification audits of greyhound whereabouts. This audit is done every three months.

GRNZ also has introduced the concept of a custodian and parent custodian - for example, if a trainer has retired a greyhound as a pet to the GRNZ Great Mates rehoming programme, while the greyhound is on the waiting list and still living with the trainer, the trainer is classed as the Custodian of the greyhound (as they aren't training it anymore). When the greyhound goes to the Great Mates kennel facility, the kennel is listed as the parent custodian and if it changes location (e.g. goes to the prison programme) the prison is listed as the custodian. Note that the managers of the four GRNZ Great Mates rehoming kennels are licensed people.

As noted in point 7, the custodian concept is in the process of being expanded to cover greyhounds not physically in the care of the breeder or trainer – for example puppies that are being reared with a litter master.

### 5.13 Introduce a rule to make it mandatory to seek approval before euthanasia

Hansen recommendation 13: NZGRA should introduce a rule change to require approval before a dog is euthanised. This will include an assessment of whether the animal is suitable for rehoming.

**The Board has directed those greyhounds considered aggressive must have specialist behavioural assessment before any decision on euthanasia.**

A Rule allowing GRNZ to establish a euthanasia policy was put in place 2018. As noted in the data on non-raceday deaths, greyhounds cannot be euthanised for 'aggression' and must be put through the GRNZ rehoming programme for specialist assessment.

Every greyhound that is unnecessarily euthanised, for reasons other than a veterinary condition, are investigated by following up with the trainer or owner and the veterinarian concerned.

In the last quarter GRNZ has put in place a decision framework for considering a pathway for euthanasia for 'red' greyhounds in the rehoming programme whose behaviour have not improved with specialist training. Decisions on these greyhounds will be made by the Animal Welfare Committee. The Animal Welfare Committee will also make decisions on euthanasia for greyhounds in the GRNZ rehoming programme that require significant medical intervention due to illness or injury.

As noted later in the report, the Animal Welfare Committee is still in the process of being set up and there is a work programme item to establish the protocols for the Committee on making these decisions. In the meantime, GRNZ continues to seek specialist animal behavioural and veterinary advice for greyhounds in the rehoming programme.

A review of the GRNZ euthanasia policy is included in the RIB Greyhound Review work programme. This review will cover race track and non-race track euthanasia. Euthanasia trends are actively monitored and all euthanasia is reported transparently.

### 5.14 Expand racing opportunities to extend the racing careers of greyhounds

Hansen recommendation 14: The NZGRA should continue efforts to expand racing opportunities and extend the racing careers of greyhounds.

**Status: COVID-19 has temporarily delayed further implementation on this recommendation.**

Additional races were scheduled every year since the Hansen Report, however COVID-19 has impacted on the racing programme.

GRNZ and RIB analysis of injuries is likely to result in strategic changes to the greyhound racing calendar and race programming to minimise the likelihood of injuries.

GRNZ and the RIB are working together on understanding the greyhound population and development of a population model in relation to breeding, racing and rehoming. The outcome of this will also inform the greyhound racing calendar and future racing opportunities.

### 5.15 Expand rehoming operation

Hansen recommendation 15: NZGRA should continue to increase rehoming opportunities for greyhounds while recognising that rehoming alone cannot solve the problems created by excessive numbers of greyhounds entering the industry each year.

**Status: GRNZ rehoming programme implemented with additional capacity added in May 2021.**

The establishment of the GRNZ Great Mates rehoming programme has been very successful with 607 greyhounds adopted through the programme last season and a further 127 retired as a pet kept by trainer, owner or privately rehomed.

We have established a fourth rehoming kennel in the South Island to cater for the greyhound population there.

The Robertson report recommended comprehensive socialisation programmes for all greyhounds so they can have the potential to be meaningfully rehomed later in life. We will ensure that greyhound socialisation is included in the education programme for LPs and develop further policies and resources for trainers.

We are in the process of making system changes to the rehoming programme software to provide more insights on the greyhounds going through the programme, including the progress of greyhounds assessed as 'red' that need specialised behaviour training. These changes will also allow us to identify trainers whose greyhounds are assessed as 'red' so that we can follow up on these.

We have a process in place for greyhounds that have ongoing behavioural issues in the rehoming programme with ultimate decisions on these greyhounds being made by the GRNZ Animal Welfare Committee.

#### 5.16 Population management and rehoming capacity

Hansen recommendation 16: NZGRA should continue to develop the means of making accurate projections of future requirements for greyhounds and by education or, if necessary, regulation ensure that the numbers of greyhounds bred and/or imported do not exceed the requirements of the industry having regard to the capacity to rehome greyhounds who do not race or cease racing.

**Status: GRNZ is working with RIB on the development of a population model.**

The Robertson report noted the need for a focussed and professional assessment of the number of animals required and the avoidance of over breeding.

As noted above, GRNZ and the RIB are working together on analysing the greyhound population and development of a population model in relation to breeding, racing and rehoming.

GRNZ also has the levers of import restrictions and limits on the number of litters that a broodbitch can have.

The expansion of the rehoming programme from being purely managed by Greyhounds as Pets to the GRNZ Great Mates Rehoming programme has significantly increased rehoming capacity.

#### 5.17 Euthanasia due to racetrack injuries to be made public in Stewards' Reports

Hansen recommendation 17: NZGRA should remove restrictions on the inclusion in the steward's report of information relating to euthanasia at racetracks.

This has been in place since December 2017.

#### 5.18 Trainers must report injuries to greyhounds

Hansen recommendation 18: Trainers should be required to report injuries to greyhounds that occur or are detected outside the racetrack.

The new injury reporting rule was introduced in August 2018. This Rule (56.11) was added to Rule 56 Greyhounds Suffering an Injury or Illness. Trainers are required to report injuries or illness to the Stipendiary Steward however there are no clear processes for recording this information against the greyhound in the GRNZ database. Advice from the RIB indicates that compliance with the rule is low.

GRNZ will educate trainers about complying with this rule and investigate options for recording this information. The commercial software products noted in point 19 below may be able to provide a solution.

Software development is underway to make changes to the GRNZ system so that injuries and stand down times can be recorded against greyhounds that are injured in trials. This then provides more comprehensive reporting and monitoring of track injuries. The software is currently being tested and GRNZ expects that this will be implemented in early 2022.

### 5.19 GRNZ to keep track of greyhounds' veterinary care records

Hansen recommendation 19: NZGRA should give effect to the recommendation in the WHK report to record the veterinary care of all greyhounds in a central database.

#### **GRNZ will investigate commercial software available for recording of veterinary care.**

As noted in point 2, treatment and vaccination records must be provided on request to GRNZ and/or RIB. However, this is an area where weaknesses have been identified. There are some commercial products and technological advances that have been developed for equine health management that the RIB and GRNZ will investigate to see whether they are suitable for greyhounds so that we have world-class management of health records.

### 5.20 Improve safety of racetracks

Hansen recommendation 20: NZGRA should continue with its programme of improving safety at racetracks including:

- Undertaking or promoting further research into the causes of death and injury including into possible explanations for differences in casualty rates between race tracks.
- The completion of trials on the positioning of the lure and giving effect to any changes recommended as a result.
- Investigating the introduction of straight tracks.

#### **GRNZ has invested in track safety measures to reduce injuries.**

GRNZ is investing in improving track safety to reduce track injuries.

A Massey PhD study was commissioned to investigate risk factors relating to track injuries. The Palmer research will be used to inform track safety initiatives.

GRNZ has appointed an experienced Track Advisor responsible for overseeing the track curators at each track with a mandate to improve track safety.

A number of initial recommendations, based on research conducted in other jurisdictions, have already been identified and actioned, including the building of six track groomers, modifying the roll out of extended arm lures and establishing best practice schedules for track preparation and



maintenance. Further recommendations will continue to be identified and actioned across all greyhound racing tracks.

Where track surfaces are deemed unsafe for racing, both GRNZ and the RIB are taking immediate action to either cancel racing prior to the meeting or in the case of damage during racing, cancel immediately. Racing does not restart until the track condition has been approved as safe. The current season has demonstrated that GRNZ and RIB have enforced this action.

GRNZ has engaged with a track and sand expert to assess the sand properties across the greyhound tracks. Sand is a critical factor in ensuring track injuries are minimised. As a result, the recommendation to completely replace the racing surface at Addington to reduce race day injuries has recently been implemented.

GRNZ engaged Dr Michelle Ledger to review the Hatrick track and the terms of reference for this review are as follows

1. Injury data review of Wanganui track.
2. Injury data review of all GRNZ tracks, with ranking of tracks by normalised total injury rate and serious injury rates.
3. Benchmarking of injury data with other jurisdictions.
4. Review of track design parameters at Wanganui and an assessment against known Greyhound Track Minimum Standards developed in NSW, including expert review of design by Prof David Eager and original track builder.
5. Recommendations for track and distance design improvements, renovations, and development of a schedule of works by experts.
6. Assessment of track preparation and maintenance practices at Wanganui and gap analysis against known established metrics for assessing track surface preparation.
7. Assessment of capabilities and current training needs for curators and track maintenance staff at Wanganui track against industry best practice.
8. Recommendations for training and further development of track maintenance curators and Stewards assessing tracks.
9. Standardisation of GRNZ injury reporting metrics and intervention points.
10. Recommendations for regular investigation of serious injuries and development of appropriate mitigations.
11. Recommendations for further research and investigations into multifactorial causes of serious injuries.

The Hatrick Review is being finalised.

## 6 Governance

The following sections provide information on governance recommendations made in the Robertson review.

Robertson recommendation 8: A reintroduction of a standalone Animal Welfare Manager whether within GRNZ or in the RIB

RIB have seconded an Animal Welfare Manager from M.P.I.



GRNZ have appointed Dr Michelle Ledger who was originally appointed to lead the review of Hatrick Racetrack. She has also been assisting GRNZ with other animal welfare initiatives and has agreed to continue in this role as Manager Animal Welfare for GRNZ.

She is an experienced racing regulatory veterinarian who graduated from the University of Pretoria, Onderstepoort in 2001. She has a strong interest in the welfare of sporting animals and has recently completed a Masters degree in International Animal Welfare, Ethics and Law via the University of Edinburgh.

Dr Ledger has recently vacated her role as the Chief Veterinary Officer at the NSW Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission, where she implemented welfare enhancements with a strong focus on injury reporting, improving welfare standards and understanding the contributing factors to greyhound racing injuries and how they can best be mitigated.

Dr Ledger will also be a key lead working with the RIB and the Animal Welfare Committee.

Robertson recommendation 9: A Health and Welfare Committee with full participation of all relevant stakeholders and the ability to implement and effect change as required

We are currently working on the terms of reference and make-up of the committee. We see this committee as sharing their work with both GRNZ and RIB and having following mandate:

### **1. Purpose**

To advance the care and wellbeing of racing Greyhounds. The Animal Welfare Committee is sanctioned by Greyhound Racing NZ to report back to the GRNZ Board recommendations supported by evidence, expertise and research focused on the wellbeing and care of Racing Greyhounds. This will include recommendations for changes in protocols, rules and standards that will benefit the wellbeing of all racing Greyhounds from birth to adoption.

To develop and recommend and collaboratively exchange information to encourage consistent national application to greyhound welfare and breed development including:

- a. Welfare Risk Management
- b. Lifecycle tracking protocols, adoptions and associated welfare management related matters.

Once agreed by the committee, all research and recommended policies and actions are to be presented to the GRNZ Board with recommendations as to the implementation. Under the GRNZ constitution GRNZ Board and the RIB is to make any final decisions.

We have not yet finalised the makeup of this committee. We have approached Massey University for some recommendations

Once confirmed we will work with the RIB to prioritize the work plan for this committee.

Robertson recommendation 10: A continuation, as promised, of the quarterly reports to both the relevant Ministers and the RIB on operations and progress.

This being the first of the quarterly reports produced by GRNZ since the Robertson review. We have also attached a copy of our Annual Report which contains details in relation to the statistics and

activities covered in this report. As per our normal business practice these will both be distributed and placed on our website.

## 7 Summary

GRNZ is committed to full implementation of the recommendations in the Hansen and Robertson reports. GRNZ appreciates the work that the RIB is doing to develop a full work programme and our joint endeavours to achieve outcomes to ensure the health and welfare of our greyhounds and by doing so, establish public confidence in the greyhound racing industry in New Zealand.

Planning is still in its early stages and while some activities are underway, we will have greater clarity in the next quarter on the progress of specific actions.