

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Animal Health and Welfare Committee at
TAB Building, 106-110 Jackson Street, Petone from 10am on Wednesday, 27 July 2022**

Present: Jim Edwards, Chair
Malcolm Jansen, Vet
Dave Matheson, Vet (via videoconferencing)
Kat Littlewood, Vet and Massey Lecturer (via videoconferencing)
Philip Morrison, Vet
Michelle Ledger, Vet, GRNZ Welfare Manager (via videoconferencing)
Mairi Stewart, Animal Welfare Consultant, RIB (observer)
Gwyneth Verkerk, NAWAC Observer (via videoconferencing)
Sally Cory, NZVA Observer (via videoconferencing)

In Attendance: Glenda Hughes, CEO GRNZ (from 11.30am)
Michael Dore, Racing Manager, GRNZ
Liz Whelan, (Chief Operating Officer) GRNZ
Karen Waterreus, Minutes Secretary

Apologies: All present

1. Welcome and Chair's Report

The Chair welcomed everyone to the July meeting with a special welcome to Sally Cory, a guest from the NZVA.

This meeting continued the business of the last few meetings. The Chair thanked the Committee members for their contribution since the last meeting to the work that was included in the agenda of this meeting.

The Chair concluded that it will be necessary to either confirm or change the scheduled meeting date because 18 October will likely clash with a GRNZ roadshow that is currently being planned.

2. Declarations of Interest

Noted no changes to the members declarations of interest as set out below:

Jim Edwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Retired vet
Malcolm Jansen	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Soon-to-be retired vet● Involvement with greyhounds since early 1980s● Owns and breed greyhounds, but not part of any syndicate racing those dogs
Philip Morrison	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Full-time vet working mostly with large animals● On-track veterinarian most Thursdays at Cambridge, and occasionally at Auckland● Has clients who are greyhound owners and trainers, but does not own greyhounds personally
Mairi Stewart	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Animal Welfare Consultant, RIB

Michelle Ledger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Employed by GRNZ on contract
Kat Littlewood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Veterinarian ● Lecturer at Massey University in undergraduate and postgraduate animal welfare, behaviour, ethics, and law ● Employs the Five Domains Model as a framework for animal welfare assessment and training
Gwyneth Verkerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NAWAC Chair ● Retired vet
Glenda Hughes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GRNZ Chief Executive
Dave Matheson (DM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Retired vet (worked with greyhounds - exams, treatments, surgery and reproduction) ● Involvement with greyhounds for 45 years ● Worked on greyhound tracks in Australia, England and America
Sally Cory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Head of NZVA Veterinary Services Companion Animals ● Emergency Vet and Manager of Emergency Vet Clinic in Wellington ● Currently involved with GAP

3. Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting 22 June 2022

Noted minutes had been circulated and were on the website. The Chair stated that the minutes should draw out major points of discussion and record follow-up actions. Committee confirmed the minutes of the 22 June 2022 meeting as a true and correct record.

4. Matters Arising

Noted many of the items on the Matters Arising Schedule had been completed. Work is on-going on some matters and others are taken care of in the agenda.

7. Welfare Report Updates

7.1 Population Management including Registrations, Statistics and Management of Breeding

MD tabled the July 2022 Welfare Committee Report providing a detailed update on Preferred Box Draw. The Committee discussed possible causes of the unexpected increase in minor injuries (1-10 days stand down) at Addington which may be due to an increase in the number of dogs examined post-race. Noted that it may be necessary to start recording the number of examinations and record those with nil findings on examination.

MD reported that the overwhelming participant feedback has been in favour of PBDs in the two regions as well as an appetite for PBD in the higher grade races.

GV asked about guidelines for stewards to determine which dogs are sent for race day examinations. MJ responded this is based on their observation of the race as well as watching the video review. The Chair suggested GV and SC visit races to see how it works with stewards.

Action Item: Committee to let MD know if they want anything in the season summary.

7.2 Injuries and deaths

ML gave an oral report on injuries and deaths stating that the draft Injury Reduction Strategy concentrated on three areas: greyhound fitness; racing incidents and track preparation and design factors. ML added that SIRC is analysing and collating data on a quarterly basis. UTS is looking at the entire Australasian injury database for risk factors identified to confirm recommendations made by the SIRC. This

acknowledges the very small New Zealand serious injury data and ensures that mitigating actions are based on more robust data.

Rehabilitation to Rehoming (RtR) has been running for about a year and has reduced the euthanasia rate. There is a need to monitor longitudinal welfare outcomes of greyhounds treated via the RtR programme. It is also necessary to create a pathway to return healthy greyhounds to breeding following treatment via the RtR program. This will be formalised into a RtR policy. GRNZ work has identified a separate welfare benevolent fund may be needed to assist in cases of financial stress.

Action Item: ML keep Committee informed on RtR policy and benevolent fund.

7.3 Euthanasia

ML reported euthanasia policy had been published for industry wide consultation but without much feedback, as the majority of people either agree or are already conforming to the policy. Now working on documentation and business processes to support the policy which will be circulated for feedback. The proposed roadshow may bring forward further questions and the need for further education.

ML added that consultation had involved an invitation to read the policy and provide feedback. As well larger trainers have been asked for feedback and clubs have been provided with hard copies for distribution. Currently it is a discussion of the policy, active targeted consultation will be the next phase. Feedback on euthanasia policy will be sought at the same time as there is consultation on the housing policy.

MJ spoke about greyhound veterinary opinions on amputations. Noted overall consensus was that greyhounds cope quite well with no immediate problems with the dog's welfare. The public perception about 3-legged dogs needs to be considered quite carefully.

GV stated that caution is needed around the age of the dog because of problems with amputations with pups that are still growing and may require significant rehabilitation. GV stated it was good to see this work happening and encouraged its continuation.

MD stated the choice may be euthanasia rather than amputation for dogs under 2 years with pre-existing conditions.

SC stated other limbs need to be looked at alongside the age and health of the dog when finding a home that can handle the dog.

The Chair noted we are moving in the right direction.

Action Item: ML and DM to discuss euthanasia policy directly.

Action Item: SC to circulate the veterinary certificate of euthanasia, created under the policy within NZVA and Seton Butler recommended to be the contact for circulation at VCNZ.

7.4 Rehoming

The Committee received NY's Rehoming update and noted CR-G's report has been circulated. Adoption is a difficulty around the world. GRNZ is looking at extra kennels to deal with the slow down which seems to have resulted due to adopters who want to go overseas before they adopt.

Action Item: CE to send research on adoptions to KL.

7.5 Kennel Standards and Audit

MS reported that 125 audits had been done with 3 trainers remaining. Focus is turning to ensuring all the other corrective actions are completed and planning for the next round of audits. As well there will be visits to facilities requiring intensive remedial work. Some charges have been laid and a couple need investigations because of issues raised since the June Committee meeting. One issue is currently with adjudicators.

Replying to the Chair, MS stated the future focus should be bringing unhygienic kennels up to standard, LPs not seeking vet advice in a timely manner and a number of issues with unregistered pet greyhounds. MS stated RIB would be issuing an advisory on these matters.

ML explained that in the past there were less avenues for rehoming and there remain lots of retired greyhounds who have been retained by LPs as pets, these are currently considered unregistered greyhounds. The move has been made by all racing jurisdictions and the new Australasian Rules to include retired greyhounds and unregistered puppies, kept by licenced people, in the definition of a 'greyhound' in the Rules and Codes of Welfare. She has contributed to an issues paper for which legal advice will be sought about how to effect this change within the GRNZ Rules.

Action Item: ML to circulate paper on policy options for retired and deregistered greyhounds at kennels.

Action Item: Committee to issue an advisory once all audits have been completed and there is a plan.

7.6 Greyhound Review Programme

MS reported that GRNZ and RIB have completed a Red, Amber, Green, progress assessment. They are fairly well aligned and there is work to do before December. Currently updating plan and looking at what will be in the 2023 plan. There will be a workshop on the working model for population management.

CE joined the meeting at 11.30am.

6. GRNZ Chief Executive Report

CE announced the building of a straight track in Whanganui. Experts will advise on whether grass or sand is likely to be the safest. There will be trials on the track before it is opened. The CE continued that safety would be considered over fiscal concerns. The Turf Institute in Palmerston North was looking at Experts' advice.

Action Item: MJ to have a look at Experts' advice on Whanganui Track.

CE stated most other items are covered elsewhere in the agenda.

7.7 Track Standards

ML reported interim reports had been received from the Australian experts. The recommendations are still before the GRNZ Board and will have to be put into a policy for implementation across the industry. Noted there will be a need to re-programme fixtures or support tracks while they are being upgraded including renovations at Hattrick. The Turf Institute is capturing data for track surface monitoring purposes.

The CE stated that there was a problem at Waikato with the new extended arm lure not going fast enough and that this led to the recent meeting being called off. If the problem is not solved before the next meeting, it will need to be called off.

7.8 Industry Standards and Education

Proposed Standard: Exercise, Socialisation and Enrichment (ESE)

ML spoke to the draft standard and ESE plan including consultation process and timing for implementation.

GV states she will need time to digest and ponder the Standards to provide feedback noting it is not compulsory but advising what can be done towards a standard. Noted a template might be useful for people to fill out as well as looking at the process for compliance.

Noted CR-G has developed an e-book for socialisation. ML stated the industry problem is not likely socialisation but enrichment which should be the focus for the LPs and assessments.

Action Item: KL to propose socialisation indicators for case study.

Action Item: GV to provide feedback to ML about what should be compulsory and what is advisory.

Action Item: Chair to convey feedback on 3.2, 3.8 and 3.9 to ML.

Action Item: Committee to provide feedback on whether everything is included or if there is anything contentious for consideration at the 7 September meeting.

Chair thanked SC for her attendance and invited her to attend the September meeting. SC responded that the meeting provided a helpful initial insight and overall impression was fantastic.

Meeting adjourned for lunch at 12.30pm and reconvened at 1pm.

Proposed Standard: Greyhound Health and Wellbeing

ML explained that the draft standard included content from a number of previous standards.

Action Item: Committee to provide feedback on grouping together in terms of minimum standards as well as the appropriateness of prohibited practices, whether it belongs in this paper and whether there is anything not included from a New Zealand context.

The Committee had a lengthy discussion about the use of the terms “welfare”, “wellbeing” and “quality of life”. A further discussion on the negative connotations associated with the word ‘welfare’ and how the public sentiment and education regarding positive welfare might be managed. KL discussed alignment with the “5 Domains”.

Action Item: CE and KL to develop GRNZ definition of ‘welfare’ so it is not used negatively.

Action Item: KL to draft a short standard statement for the bottom of all media and public statements and circulate to the Committee.

Action Item: ML to look at GA document on prohibited practices as well as the reference to relevant surgical procedures in NZ legislation.

Action Item: Include secondary form of identification on the agenda for the National Conference at the end of August.

Committee agreed to prepare a paper for the GRNZ Board suggesting alternatives to ear tattooing.

Action Item: CE and LW to work on paper and circulate to the Committee prior to consideration by the Board

MS stated more participants should be encouraged to use TCI services.

Action Item: Housing Standards: DM to provide feedback to ML on parvo i.e. the need to keep pups off dirt and the need for appropriate hygiene for lactating females as parvo can live for some time.

Action Item: KL to provide feedback to ML on grooming.

CE stated teeth need to be considered as part of health and wellbeing.

GV stated that the definitions around 'impervious' in proposed housing standards may need to be reviewed where there have been problems about sanitation raised during inspections.

Committee agreed that the use of the word "greyhounds" covers all greyhounds.

Action Item: Committee to provide appropriate full advice on what should be scrutinised during kennel inspections.

Action Item: Chair to convey his feedback to ML and asked the Committee to send their comments to ML noting that the Health and Wellbeing Standard would be considered separately from the Socialisation Standard.

Additional Item: Roadshow

LW reported on the roadshows likely to be in Cambridge, Palmerston North and Addington on 16/19 October. LPs would be encouraged to attend and the full round of kennel audits would be available for discussion. The Chair, ML, MS and NY would be present and the proceedings will be recorded so that they can be posted on the internet and YouTube. LW commented that the policy would include support through assessment so that LPs can be credited for it.

LW left the meeting at 2.05pm

7.9 Research Project Updates

MJ reported on Chris Rogers' proposed research work on bone density. He hoped to study 60 dogs who have retired from racing, within 14 days of their last race. Research is planned to be completed in 18 months. Noted the PhD student is not available until the end of the year. Agreed that the benefit of this research has to be communicated to trainers to aid voluntary inclusion

CE stated research will not be held up by a 21 day issue because looking at phasing results to get the most useful results first.

MJ reported on-going liaison re parasite/eye lesion research. Nothing further to report.

GV raised privacy concerns which may limit participation in research. ML stated it was important for trainers to guard their training practices and that research is presented in a way that does not identify trainers.

KL to send final research proposal for CE approval. KL expressed appreciation for the support received and stated that more participation enabled the GRNZ voice to be heard.

8 General Business

Students at the Track

KL asked whether it was viable for about 30 students to attend the races to have exposure to performance animals. Committee consensus was “yes”.

Action Item: KL liaise with MJ for students attendance at races.

NAWAC Observer

GV reported that she was finishing with NAWAC at the end of October. Paula Lemoux will be the Secretariat person and may end up being the ongoing observer for NAWAC. Paula will attend the next Committee meeting.

Action Item: Committee to discuss what expectations they have from a NAWAC observer.

Action Item: GV to send an outline on Paula Lemoux to the Committee.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, 7 September 2022 in Wellington. Thereafter 18 October and 23 November 2022.

Closure

There being no further business the meeting closed at 2.40pm

Minutes approved:

Signed:

Date:
