

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Animal Health and Welfare Committee  
TAB Building 106-110 Jackson Street, Petone  
10am Wednesday 8 February 2023**

**Present:** Allen Bryce, Chair (AB)  
Malcolm Jansen, Vet (MJ)  
Kat Littlewood, Vet and Massey Lecturer (via videoconferencing) (KL)  
Philip Morrison, Vet (PM)  
Dave Matheson, Vet (DM)  
Michelle Ledger, Vet, GRNZ Welfare Manager (ML) (via videoconferencing)

**In Attendance:** Edward Rennell, CE GRNZ  
Michael Dore, Racing Operations and Welfare Manager, GRNZ (MD)  
Candice Robbins-Goodman, GRNZ (CRG) (via videoconferencing)  
Anna Palmer in place of Nick Ydgren RIB, Observer (AP) (via videoconferencing)  
Paula Lemow, MPI (PL)  
  
Chantelle Askew, AHWC Secretary (CA)

**Apologies:** Sally Cory, NZVA

**Declarations of Interest**

Noted no changes to the members' declarations of interest as set out below and Allen Bryce is added:

Allen Bryce	Retired government veterinarian undertaking occasional consultancy work. Councillor/Director and Honorary Secretary of the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists.
Malcolm Jansen	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	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
Kat Littlewood	Veterinarian + FANZCVS Animal Welfare Science 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 EFAB Committee of NZVA
Dave Matheson	Retired vet (greyhounds – exams, treatments, surgery and reproduction) Involvement with greyhounds for 45 years Worked on greyhound tracks in Australia, England and America

Paula Lemow	Senior Advisor Animal Welfare Science MPI Vet Nurse
Sally Cory	Head of NZVA Veterinary Services Companion Animals Emergency Vet and Manager of Emergency Vet Clinic in Wellington Currently involved with GAP
Edward Rennell	GRNZ Chief Executive Former CE Harness Racing New Zealand Former TAB Broadcasting and Operations
Glenda Hughes	Consultant
Michelle Ledger	GRNZ Welfare Manager

### 1. Welcome and Chair's report

Chair's welcome and introductions. Clarification of what was mentioned in the minutes by PL for NAWAC noted. Minutes are confirmed for 23 November 2022.

The Action Register was discussed, there were no further actions from the November meeting.

Add to the agenda for the next meeting: – update on Track management programme. Considered crucial to greyhound welfare.

**Action CE**

There was discussion about the need for secondary identification with the removal of earbranding. Nose-print technology was noted as one potential option with developments in that field. Agreed GRNZ would continue to monitor and review options and consider progress with GA investigating DNA options.

**Action:**

**ML**

KL has looked into First Aid kits at Massey, looking at costings etc which started the conversation about the need for LPs to have one onsite or close access to them. Is this already a responsibility of LP in the car and transport, trials etc? RIB will start audits when the new standards are in place. Discussion about clubs on raceday requirements - balance on what you provide.

**Action - CE, ML and KL - to look at options for bulk purchase and make available to LPs**

The Chair gave a brief report on background, the Terms of Reference were discussed. Large part of the Committee's work is to be on the welfare standards. Committee should be making recommendations to the Board. Committee members to review Terms of Reference before next meeting - are any changes needed? - Terms of Reference to go on agenda for next meeting.

**Action: All**

Progress since last meeting: ongoing review of the draft standards, the removal of earbranding and the January Roadshows in relation to the new Rules and Standards.

### 2. GRNZ Chief Executive Report

The RIB's report was submitted to the Minister's office 12 December as well as GRNZ's progress report on the same date. At this stage there has been no feedback from the government. Meeting with DIA tomorrow, which may give an update on the timeline from here. Expected to receive a letter this week from the Minister. CE believes the RIB report will be distributed in February for consultation with NAWAC, GAP, SPCA, TAB and SAFE likely to get a copy. Decision looks like it will be by March / April.

There were Rule changes approved at the end of November that took effect 1st February. Key issues from a welfare perspective: New weight variation rule (4% scratching), Racing Frequency (under the new rules dogs can't race more than twice in 7 days and 7 times in 28 days), removal of ear branding. Adopted GA rules and amended where appropriate. Gave priority to welfare. Looking at stage 2 review to tidy up anything we missed in Stage 1 and review of judicial rules/powers given different Australian operating environments in the GA rules.

Roadshows were held in January 2023 in Cambridge, Addington, Palmerston North and Invercargill updating LPs and providing details of rule changes. People on the whole accepting of new rules. The Roadshows were well attended with Q & A's at the end of each meeting. PBD and weight trials were key areas of discussion. Going forward we should see an improvement with fewer racing injuries by implementing rule changes and other initiatives (track management). In general people were engaged. Intention is to now do Roadshows every 6 months.

Currently undertaking a Review of Rehoming. GRNZ has engaged Mauro Barsi, who will bring a report to the March Board meeting. There was a recent workshop where GRNZ met with adoption agencies about how we can work together to increase adoption rates and have better synergy across all organisations. Industry problem not just GRNZ - Ongoing focus.

Track management discussion - noting increased focus and emphasis by GRNZ. Committee updated on recent issues at Manukau and steps GRNZ have taken to improve track preparation and management across the country. GRNZ t, Racing Safety and Infrastructure Manager, Bill Wilson, is leading track diagnostic and preparation programmes across NZ to ensure the highest standards, this includes curator and club engagement, training, and new equipment and infrastructure purchases.

There have been issues with the Lure in Cambridge. GRNZ has suspended racing, and is looking at a full replacement lure system. Currently have Safe Chase Lure consultants out from Australia to look at all lures at all tracks - with a report to the February Board meeting. Committee discussed lure technology and battery operated lures. Noted the straight track at Wanganui would be grass with a centre drag lure.

Noted with the finalisation of Animal Welfare KPI's - progress against these would be reported to each Board meeting. Was agreed there would be merit in including these reports on this Committee's agenda as a standing item.

**Action CE**

### **3. Racing Update**

Injury data was discussed with papers circulated to the committee showing the current data regarding injuries and PBD races. MD noted a report would be considered at the February Board meeting seeking an expansion in the number of PBD races, specifically in the maiden and C2 classes.

The Committee was encouraged to note reports showing statistically a reduction in the number of serious injuries with PBD racing.

#### **Recommendation to GRNZ Board:**

The AHWC Committee strongly supports the expansion of PBD racing.

**Action: MD**

#### 4. GRNZ Welfare Manager

Discussion on the number of policies.

Hot Weather Policy was implemented across the country in January - on predicted hot weather days it was implemented, races were brought forward to earlier in the day in one instance and other mitigating steps taken (trials cancelled). Unfortunately one greyhound did suffer heat stress on one occasion, that case was picked up and the greyhound was treated. It was noted however the temperature where this occurred was not excessive (26 degrees). ML reports the Policy is working and doing what it is meant to do. So far the only heat-affected track has been Addington.

February 1st the new RTR (Rehabilitation to Rehoming) policy came into effect. A few teething issues with the new forms not being used.

All vets were being notified of the new policy in regards to microchips when puppies have their first vaccination, GRNZ to supply all microchips and pay for microchip implantation.

Vets now need to certify vaccinations - VOI's are not appropriate under the new standards. There have been a few issues with larger breeders about this.

Next policy or guidelines for development is Return to Racing policy given the risk of injury for greyhounds returning to race following a spell. GRNZ could promote guidelines on exercise and racing frequency to navigate return to racing. ML to review further in consultation with MJ. KL asked about feeding and nutrition when returning to racing, particularly protein - room to look at nutrition at different stages. MJ noted calcium is very important too, just as important as protein.

The Committee was supportive of the development of Return To Racing guidelines. **Action:**  
**ML**

Noted that MD had been asked to present a paper on PBD at the upcoming NSW Injury Reduction Summit at the end of the month. Committee looked forward to a report on this and then would consider the merits of whether NZ should host a similar event.

**Action: MD**

Draft Welfare Standards - Board felt in December we needed more consultation with LPs to provide feedback. A key concern subsequently raised was the transport standards sizes (ML paper in agenda). Considerable discussion ensued on this paper. ML is submitting this paper for the February Board Meeting. There was detailed discussion about whether the transport size is sufficient. The Committee agreed in relation to transport sizes to have an absolute minimum of 0.6 m width and 0.7 m length and to add behavioural outcome measures in concert with minimum size requirements - and no splitting of compartments. The Committee considered that advisory material for travelling with larger greyhounds, or longer times, and the selection of appropriate size travel compartments, should be included.

**Action: CE/ML**

The composition of the AHCW sub-panel, the Breeding Exemption panel, was discussed. The current panel is Jim Edwards (JE), MJ and DM. MJ is planning on retiring but happy to sit on this panel for another 12 months. JE had indicated that he was happy to also sit on the Breeding Exemption Panel. It was agreed this panel would remain the same with the addition of AB.

With respect to the RTR/Welfare Outcomes panel it was agreed that this would be AB, MJ, KL and PM. This panel makes decisions re additional treatments or euthanasia for seriously injured dogs under the RTR scheme.

**Action: Note composition of new panels CA/ML**

SIRC minutes were circulated and discussed.

Emerging Issues/Risks - discussion on SAI as GA position is seeking to change in line with new AVA policy, risk to breeding industry that we won't be able to move to TCI straight away but industry would move at some stage to this and cease surgical inseminations. PM asked how vets are going to be all trained, how they will be able to store straws for TCI. ML noted the initial intention is to develop a program where vets could have the opportunity to be trained at multiple sessions and can then practice to keep improving techniques. PM asked for a current list of FSI approved vets.

**Action - CA to circulate**

PM could draft a letter to all vets regarding the phasing out of routine surgical artificial insemination, find out the current success rate with TCI to give us a starting point to consider a position in NZ. Do we need to make exceptions to allow vets to seek exemption for surgical AI for specific cases? The Chair asked that this issue be on the agenda for the next meeting - ML will be able to give more detail on Australian developments at the next meeting. ML mentioned it would be good to get SCs view on this.

**Action: ML**

## **5. Rehoming Update**

CRG reported fewer adoptions than last year due partly to cost of living pressures. CRG noted recent adoption agency meeting discussions about initiatives and working together. Looking at more options to get greyhounds out there, to see them and fall in love with them. Greyhounds sell themselves.

CRG is in discussion with vets re: desexed etc and passing that information onto rehoming - vet health care. Looking at collecting data and information.

RTR policy - Management to ensure compliance with Policy requirements and necessary completion of forms for dogs treated.

Discussion took place on potential initiatives and funding sources for rehoming activities. CE noted the independent review being undertaken by Mauro Barsi and it was agreed an update on his report and recommended changes/enhancements to HRNZ rehoming activities would be included on the Committee's next agenda.

## **6. RIB Update**

AP gave an update on the Ministerial review, noting the RIB haven't heard anything back and are in the same situation as GRNZ.

Down to 20 outstanding improvement notices from 1,152 - was 27 when ministerial review was sent. AP mentioned trainers were more educated now with an overall improvement and understanding of the standards. Second round of visits generating fewer improvement notices than the first round.

## **7. Research Update**

KL noted the work of her PhD student (Sandrine Korver), funded by GRNZ - exploring how people feel about their role in the industry and where they sit. Included in this would be individual meetings and focus groups etc. Research will collect data about what the people from the industry want to say, including how they deal with change. Noted letter of introduction/support required from GRNZ for her to approach LPs.

**Action: CE**

#### **8. Workplan for AHCW**

Chair discussed the Report GRNZ provided to the government, outlining some of the ongoing work the committee will be involved in enhancing greyhound welfare. Agreed the next step would be to evaluate the RIB report and whether additional issues to take into account. AB felt that there would be merit in the Committee developing a forward workplan for the balance of 2023. Chair and ML put together a draft workplan before the next AHCW meeting.

**Action Chair/ML to draft and reconsider once things develop.**

#### **9. General Business**

MPI is publicly consulting on six proposed regulations on prolonged tethering in dogs and a proposed regulation on subgingival dental procedures in dogs and cats. Tethering proposal is not an issue for GRNZ as our standards do not allow tethering. MPI will begin work on the next set of regulations pertaining to confinement of dogs this year.

**Action: ML/GRNZ to submit comment to MPI on tethering proposal.**

The next year's meeting dates were discussed. It was agreed that the second Wednesday of every second month was the most suitable - except for October - 18th October. So dates would be 12 April, 14 June, 9 August, 18 October, 13 December.

Close of meeting at 2.35pm.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday 12 April 2023

**Minutes approved:**

**Signed:**



**Date:** 12, 4, 2023