

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Animal Health and Welfare Committee
TAB Building 106-110 Jackson Street, Petone
10am Wednesday 14 June 2023**

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

In Attendance: Edward Rennell, CE GRNZ
Michael Dore, Racing Operations and Welfare Manager, GRNZ (MD)
Nick Ydgren RIB, Observer (NY) (via videoconferencing)
Paula Lemow, MPI (PL) (via video conferencing)
Peter Mason, NAWAC, (PM) (via video conferencing)
Bill Wilson, GRNZ (BW) (via video conferencing)

Chantelle Askew, AHCW Secretary (CA)

Apologies: Candice Robbins-Goodman, GRNZ (CRG)

Declarations of Interest

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

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

Peter Mason	Vet Nurse NAWAC, observer
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
Michelle Ledger	GRNZ Welfare Manager

Welcome

The full meeting commenced at 10.00am with the Chair welcoming everyone.

Minutes of Previous AHC Meeting

The minutes of the AHC Meeting held on 12 April were taken as read and confirmed as a **true and correct** record of the meeting.

Action Register

The Committee **noted** and **discussed** the status of the Action Register.

1. Chair's report

The Chair is really impressed with New Rules, New Standards and the Education Programme now that it is in place. Good outcomes with the KPIs in particular injuries and PBDs. The Chair met with MPI 3-4 weeks ago: Carolyn Guy, Director Animal Health and Welfare; Peter Hyde, Team Manager Animal Welfare Compliance; Lorelle Barrett, Principal Advisor, Animal Welfare Science; and Gavin Romaine, Manager Animal Welfare Policy. Significant points were -

- The main discussion was the boundary between what work MPI and SPCA does, it has been proposed SPCA would look after greyhound welfare apart from race day and MPI on race day. This differs in the way this works for horse racing: MPI looks after the whole thing and SPCA doesn't get involved. AB questioned if this is the best arrangement with SPCA, not only because they are not involved with horse racing but also they are anti-greyhound racing. MPI said SPCA knew more about dogs than MPI does; AB argued that there is good reason for MPI to do all of the greyhound work to be consistent with horse racing; MPI disagreed.
- MPI is keen to get more inspectors to race day meetings, it was agreed they would communicate this to GRNZ.
- They had the idea that RIB as a regulator could be viewed as an industry player, a conflict of interest as part of the industry.
- They were concerned about the rehabilitation programme, and that sometimes it may be more humane to euthanase; vets should decide on what is best for the dog, in trying to minimise euthanasias we may be going too far. PM agreed that a dog with a severe fracture should be put down as this involves weeks of rehabilitation and discomfort; each vet will have their own opinion as to where that line is. On race day dogs are given pain relief, sent to a vet where that decision should be made with x rays and proper assessments. There was discussion around this grey area. ML said both arguments have some validity. ML said the only thing we can do is to provide as much evidence as we can. Dave asked if we have a list of suggested injuries where they should be put down.

Overall the meeting with MPI was useful.

2. GRNZ Chief Executive Report

RIB Report to Minister

GRNZ received the RIB report on 22 May, one day before it was released. General comment was that it disappointed and didn't give due credit to the previous 12 months. In particular some of the assessments were suggestive and contentious - and this report was 6 months old. In our response to the Minister GRNZ will be giving where we are now not where we were 6 months ago. Disappointed that report painted a picture that injuries were increasing; there was discussion about how this is reported with stand-downs etc. We are 100% supportive of stand-downs being applied. Last season the number of vet inspections increased to 300 more than was done over the same period of last year (our quarterly report) - ER explained how this counts in the injury statistics, and paints a misleading trend. GRNZ will respond in the first week of July. The distributed quarterly report shows benefits with improved track management. KPIs report shows reducing injuries, new rules and return to racing changes have been introduced: ML. We believe good progress has been made in the last 6 months, any assessments should be at June 2023 not December 2022. Bill Colgan is currently reviewing with a focus to identify our systems and further enhance them. Systems are improving. Since the RIB report there has been huge support from GA and GWIC.

TAB Entain Deal

5 year funding to the codes. Certainly uplifting to where we were. Essentially the three codes will be getting 170M compared to \$125M.

Racing NZ signed off on a mental health program. Tri code initiative to provide support to participants with mental health issues. Monitor breeding closely looking at the decline (last few months) in terms of our race numbers 2 years out.

Trying to keep as much transparency as we can. Put out our quarterly report with more detail than normal. This is on our website for all LPs to read.

Education programme was launched yesterday, went out to 157 trainers and breeders - 32 had completed overnight. Very pleased with this result. Incentive if completed by 30 June their licence fee is nil. Have engaged Brenda to engage with all LPs to call and follow up and walk them through the steps to complete in the next few months. First racing code to introduce compulsory education training.

3. GRNZ Welfare Manager

Welfare Standards Education Update

ML gave a brief outline on the education program under the standards.

Exercise Socialisation & Enrichment (ESE) template

One of the requirements for new standards will be to require an ESE plan for each greyhound. GRNZ is producing a 90sec video, a template and Frequently Asked Questions to help comply with this requirement; also wants to develop an enrichment tool kit.

Serious Injury Review Committee (SIRC) analysis of injuries

Minutes from previous meeting and action items generated from previous meeting were discussed. Latest meeting was yesterday; will report about this at a later date. The committee wants to keep this on its workplan.

Return to Racing Policy

Return to Racing was discussed. Fitness to race concept. Canine fitbits are now available to monitor heartbeats etc. GRNZ will look at exploring possibilities and what can be done with such data.

ACTION: members to give feedback in the next 2 weeks on the Return to Racing policy that ML has circulated.

MJ bought up Whanganui race day Friday and trial Sunday. We need to get dogs back to exercising safely - single dog trials etc.

Hock Injury Screening

Has been discussed. Return to racing and hock screening concept - looking at injury model. UTS looking at NZ data using AI technology - AI tool to predict higher risk of injury.

4. Rehoming and Rehabilitation to Rehoming (RtR) numbers / outcomes update

CE discussed the number of dogs being adopted. Challenging with the current financial situation. GRNZ is recruiting an additional resource for this area.

5. Update on Track Management Programme

Refer to the quarterly report mentioned above dated 30 April. BW gave an update on the quarterly report.

1. Initial visitations, started process at looking at potential venue, is an agenda item.
2. Have had meetings with MPI following up belated complaints, this week came back as content back and comfortable with areas implemented in Auckland. Still monitored regularly.
3. Addington - big improvement - notable shift. Trial numbers and racing frequency does come with a set of challenges. Chair acknowledges this. Amount of racing means only Wednesdays and Saturday mornings to work on the track and if there is bad weather then this is compromised. Further impacted by harness racing times. MD: club has now changed the training schedule to not race Monday and Tuesday, built into racing calendar and the club is supportive. Quarterly maintenance built into the calendar. CE noticed increased engagement with Addington track team; positive results, engaging more positively with BW, huge progress in the last 2 months compared to the end of March. Two new staff members commencing today.
4. Cambridge - End of this month the safe chase lure will be ready. Also being purchased for Manawatu track. Next meeting will be able to provide an update on the safe chase lure and looking at future use across NZ tracks.
5. Have had direct communication with Scott Wallis in regards to diagnostic programme. Early July workshop for all stewards for educational purposes - trying to improve communication between track staff and stewards. Steps in the right direction.

ML asked about the SafeChase and why this is better. Financial perspective - NZ will have four different lures running over 7 tracks. Bill explained the different lures - SafeChase is safer.

6. Racing Update + KPI Report

MD: April and May were excellent in terms of low rate of injuries. Hopefully we can stay here. June four KPI injuries, not a great start but can still hit the KPI by the end of the season. For the first time across those 2 months 50% of the races were PBD. The percentage will grow each month. Feedback from LPs regarding whether it is a good idea to vaccinate an old dog (over 10 years). ML said we

had a provision where in regards to vaccination a vet can advise that it might be detrimental to the welfare of the dog to get vaccinated (if going through other treatment etc) Discussion around serology - this probably being more expensive than vaccination. PBDs have not yet been trialled for middle distance races. Discussion on MJ finding GDV (Gastric dilatation and volvulus) in a dog post-race earlier in the week, MJ will follow up on how the dog is doing this afternoon. (Dog is going well, eating and drinking,) CE said we will continue to circulate KPIs on a monthly basis, to be completely transparent and out there for people to see. Look at revising 0% euthanasia target, may reframe it slightly next year, basis will be consistent with what is there. Recently three euthanasias didn't follow the process but had legitimate reasons. Dave asked did the clubs decide if they used PBD and could GRNZ tell them to use it if they did not? **(Action - circulate Greyhound injuries PBD Update SIRC meeting yesterday)**

New regulations have been put in place for reserves in PBD races. Discussion about PBDs being presented to GWIC. Discussion about reserves. Draw relative and reserve would go into their number.

7. RIB Update

Update on audits. Completed 58 partial - noticed, this time around, the impact on retired greyhounds kept as pets which had been excluded from the standards last year. LPs haven't quite got the grasp of audits yet but hopefully will soon. Lists of dogs we expect to be at property are being sent out first. Completed 6 full audits encompassing new welfare standards. Other changes around impervious surfaces, quite a change from last year. Delay in getting audit reports out - a few issues in getting the reports ready. Have added some extra resource so hoping to get a few more reports out.

Investigations: one LP charged with improper handling at a race meeting. Hearing was rescheduled, then concluded in their absence.

RIB recently appointed a new head of welfare, comes from quality assurance, is frantically trying to upskill on all things greyhounds.

ML noted that ESE plans had not been created at audit time, because the requirement had not been implemented yet. Premature to be running full audits in the industry, yes standards implemented but not fully embedded. NY said it was never the intention of partial audits, always full audits. Discussion over this. NY: likely partial audits will cease and be replaced by full audits. ML said a meeting needs to take place outside of this meeting so all ducks are aligned.

CE asked for a timeframe: NY 3 weeks - 1 month turnaround. ESE discussed. Communication is poor and fair criticism: ML.

8. Research Projects

Attitudes held by LPs (Massey) - KL

KL: project has been converted to survey instead of focus group. Liz has been fantastic in getting this out. Results out now, propose to this committee to invite to the next meeting to present at the end of the next meeting. **(ACTION - this would be useful.)**

GA Injury Epidemiology research (Melbourne University) - ML

Project is looking at 5 years of injury data. mentioned above. Sheds a lot of light on epidemiology and certain injuries.

Pegasus dental research - ML

ML is still trying to get more information, keep on agenda for the next meeting. ML will provide information to the committee.

CE discussion and meeting with ML, Chris??, Kat and Edward... regarding research?? (Chair suggested including Malcolm, David and Philip)

Massey Hookworm resistance and BZM genetics study - MJ

Haven't had much back from Ian Scott. will contact again to see if he has any results. MJ to keep the committee updated.

9. General Business

Chair asked the observers, Paula and Peter if they wanted to say anything. Nothing from PL at this stage. Peter explained NAWAC has established a subcommittee on greyhounds and thanked AHCW for the opportunity to sit through this meeting. Encouraged to involve GRNZ or members of this committee for their subcommittee. NAWAC greyhound subcommittee made up of Peter, Arnja Dale, Sandra Faulkner and Ruth Palmer which sit under NAWAC and advise. Chair asked if there are specific issues that the committee is focusing on. Peter said this was more a general committee, welfare focus, not looking at governance. There is a new associate minister welfare Jo Luxton; also minister for customs and associate minister for education.

Chair mentioned he will be overseas. Unsure about involvement in the August meeting as could be difficult to get online etc. Looking at options - will resolve this before the next meeting.

Close of meeting at 1.52.

Next Meeting: Wednesday 9 August 2023

Minutes approved:

Signed:

Date: