



Minutes of the Meeting of the Animal Health and Welfare Committee at TAB Building, 106-110 Jackson Street, Petone from 10am on Wednesday, 23 November 2022

Present: Jim Edwards, Chair (JE)
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)
Allen Bryce, Incoming Chair (AB)

In Attendance: Glenda Hughes, Interim CEO GRNZ (GH)
Edward Rennell, CEO GRNZ (ER)
Michael Dore, Racing Operations and Welfare Manager, GRNZ (MD)
Candice Robbins-Goodman, GRNZ (CRG)
Nick Ydgren on secondment to RIB (NY)
Sally Cory, NZVA (SC)
Paula Lemow, MPI (PL)
Bill Wilson, Track Specialist (BW)
Karen Waterreus, Minutes Secretary

Apologies: SC may not be able to stay for the duration of the meeting due to a prior commitment.
DM and PM would depart early afternoon to make flight departures.

Welcome and Chair's report

The Chair stated that today was the final Committee meeting in what has been a very busy year for Greyhound Racing in New Zealand. GRNZ will submit its final report to the Minister in just over two weeks. The Chair thanked the Committee for the work they contributed during 2022.

There has been massive input from the GRNZ staff, especially Michelle Ledger.

ML will be taking the lead during this meeting taking the Committee through the final phase of the consultation of the revised Welfare Standards.

This would be JE's last meeting after serving as Independent Chair since 2015. AB will succeed Dr Edwards as the next Independent Chair.

Declarations of Interest

There were no changes to the members' and observers' declarations of interest as set out below:

Jim Edwards	Retired vet
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
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	Interim GRNZ Chief Executive
Michelle Ledger	GRNZ Welfare Manager

5. GRNZ Chief Executive Report

ER stated the priority was getting the final draft Welfare Standards out for a second round of consultation. Once the report is submitted to the Minister, it will be on the website and circulated to members of the Committee.

GH continues to work on matters for GRNZ, including appointment of a Chief Vet for GRNZ. Further discussions were to take place with the RIB regarding a perceived issue with conflict of interest if a Race Day Vet is to be appointed as GRNZ Chief Vet.

GH is also working on resolving three media complaints regarding misinformation from other agencies.

GH acknowledged Michelle Ledger for the amount of work she has produced, and Jim Edwards and Malcolm Jansen, whose wisdom and experience helps to mitigate emerging risks to greyhound health and welfare.

6. Discussion Paper Greyhound Welfare Standards Stakeholder Consultation

ML spoke in-depth on post-consultation updates to the Welfare Standards ending at 31 October. All feedback is being considered. Her paper set out the issues raised by stakeholders on which she seeks advice from this Committee on the most sensible solutions, which satisfy welfare needs and are practically achievable.

On Transport Sizes, feedback from LPs is that they would like to see standards which reflect the status quo in the industry without negating welfare. Issues discussed included –

- Vans with 2 rows of adjacent cages – difficult to increase length of cages.
- Splitting existing cages is not acceptable.
- Potential safety issues associated with too large cages.
- LPs have been asked to measure large and small greyhounds to see what size guidelines may be deduced according to the IATA recommended measures for flight travel crates.
- Data gathered from kennel audits is also being considered.

- ML asked the Committee to consider proposed sizes and transport areas. There are currently only industry standards for flight crates, no MPI Code standards for road travel.

ML noted that SPCA had provided a well-referenced and considered, fulsome submission. As with other stakeholders who have provided submissions, GRNZ will respond, thanking them.

ML spoke to the issues for VOIs and specifically the role of the Committee with deciding on the necessity of VOIs. She noted that VCNZ is happy for paraprofessionals to administer vaccines and other products under veterinary supervision. SC cautioned on the over-reliance on veterinarians who were currently under-resourced. The Committee agreed that VOIs were not acceptable for vaccinations, where certification is required. Other substances could be the subject of VOIs should the individual veterinarian attending to the treatment consider this appropriate.

ML noted a new process for puppies for removal of ear branding.

ML spoke to the Rules and Standards necessary for vaccinations (based on WSAVA guidelines and new Rules).

SPCA have raised the issue of immediate care and treatment of wounds. There is a need for guidance and to decide where to draw the line on where veterinary advice must be immediately sought.

ML stated it had been helpful to complete the table on Prohibited Practices, including a consideration of a position on surgical AI. She was seeking feedback from the Committee on how this should be worded. SAI is on the agenda for next meeting.

Housing Standards are a key concern. There is a 10 year deeming provision to bring housing up to the proposed 3sqm standard. SPCA and RIB assert this puts the greyhounds in a situation of being housed in sub-standard or sub-sized housing for a further 10 years. SPCA would like to see a 2 year timeframe to bring up to standard or leave. Consideration of a 10 percent variation in any single measure to account for design differences and building standards discrepancies. Many current facilities are currently not up to the 3sqm standard. It may be that NAWAC can provide guidance. ML stated 3 square metres for housing works under the Code of Welfare.

ML asked whether a 2-year timeframe was reasonable for a planned exit. AHCW considered it was reasonable to require an upgrade plan, or decision to leave the industry, within 2 years with an additional 3 years to complete exit.

PL reminded ML that the current code of welfare for dogs contains a best practice guideline and the proposed sizes therein are recommended best practice and the code does not contain a minimum standard for kennel size. If owners or people in charge of animals meet the minimum standards in a code of welfare then they are meeting their obligations under the Animal Welfare Act. The recommended best practices shown in the codes set out standards of care and conduct, over and above the minimum required to meet the obligations in the Act.

PL said that MPI does not currently have on its agenda an update to the COW for dogs. NAWAC determines which codes of welfare should be reviewed or developed.

ML then flagged issues relating to training greyhounds. SPCA prefers a veterinarian to be at the training tracks to supervise training. There is an issue of imbalance between this scenario and training on private properties and what is provided for good welfare outcomes for one must be provided for all. Is it reasonable to expect veterinarians to be at the trials? SC again cautioned regarding the shortage of veterinarians in NZ currently.

There is RtR support in place for training and trials. There is a knowledge gap and improvement in communications is the first step for training. There is a need for clear definition of trials and training.

Committee discussed whether it might be a steward's role to observe training at tracks. Agreed standards should include a reasonable timeframe to receive veterinary care and there should be first-

aid training provided to those involved in training trials. The way of the future is to look at how technology can assist. It may also be that retired vets could make themselves available one day a week.

Education in socialisation being developed through online resources. Easier for LPs if they have one central point for animal welfare. Standards will be a rationalisation of all existing policies.

The goal is to make every Standard a good standard and then have an education base underneath. Knowledge of Standards is how you are invested in your socialisation programme. Noted education is necessary for relicensing.

Feedback on breeding has highlighted exactly what is happening in the current exemption process. Greyhounds (Rules) may have three litters, no more than 2 in 18 months. Then additional litters are considered via the exemption application process. There are very few applications for a 5th litter currently and these are heavily scrutinised. Then the greyhound becomes inactive for breeding after each additional litter and permanently at 5. ML detailed that a new application form and process is being finalised for this process.

7. Track Standards

BW joined the meeting at 1.00pm and reported on his visits to the North Island tracks. He said that minimum standards for track infrastructure and management and surface preparation were the number 1 priority. The GRNZ role is to mitigate risk by ensuring all tracks are presented in the best condition for racing. Injuries are multifactorial with less than 10% attributable to the track.

8. RIB Update

NY reported that there were currently 60 outstanding improvement notices involving 25 LPs of the 1172 notices issued. This represented good progress. Re-audits had commenced. The RIB report would be sent to the Minister on the 12th of December. NY reported that he had been appointed to be the Operations Manager of the RIB Animal Welfare Department. He was to be joined by a chief vet and supported by an administrator/coordinator.

9. Population Management

MD presented data on progress with the use of Preferred Box Draws (PBD) which would continue to increase in number. He reported that a total of 31 euthanasias to date for the year included pet (retired) greyhounds. This is a significant improvement on the previous years.

10. Rehoming

CRG reported that there had been a decline in the numbers rehomed over that previous three years. A recent marketing campaign had received 20 responses. GRNZ were working to get better alignment of the adoption agencies.

GRNZ is planning a roadshow for mid-January.

Next Meeting: 8 February 2023

Minutes approved:

Signed:

Date: