



**Greyhound Racing New Zealand**

# **Media Pack**

**Re: Report to New Zealand Racing Board on Welfare  
Issues Affecting Greyhound Racing in New Zealand**

## **Media statement : Greyhound Racing Board welcomes report**

Greyhound Racing New Zealand has welcomed the publication of the second external review of animal welfare in the sport.

The review, undertaken by Rodney Hansen QC, looked at progress on welfare over the four years since the first report by WHK in 2013.

The governing body, Greyhound Racing New Zealand, says it is actively working on all 20 recommendations in the report. It says that some can be implemented relatively quickly, while others will require further research and time, working with other governing bodies.

“We have made significant progress since 2013,” says Chair, Sean Hannan. “Rates of rehoming are up and injury rates are down. We have a strong independent welfare committee that includes the RNZSPCA and the NZVA, and we’ve also tightened up our welfare rules considerably.”

“We appreciate, and share, the concerns raised by the report. Animal welfare is one of the cornerstone priorities within our new strategic plan released in May this year. Many of the recommendations contained within the report are initiatives that we have already commenced work on, and in some cases addressed.”

“We are and will be making significant new investments in rehoming and in population management tools in particular. This, along with tougher rules, more enforcement, and continued track safety initiatives, will bring euthanasia and injury rates down even further.”

“But we’re not complacent. We acknowledge and accept that there are still areas where real improvements are imperative. We are committed to addressing those areas and have today published a three-year plan showing exactly how we plan to tackle the gaps identified.”

By 2020 Greyhound Racing New Zealand will have:

- Delivered equilibrium in the greyhound population through the use of our new population management tool
- Implemented a new database
- Implemented an annual census of greyhounds in NZ
- Implemented an additional greyhound fostering programme
- Annually published the key data across breeding, euthanasia, racing opportunities and rehoming.

“We’re very committed to openness and transparency in relation to our welfare initiatives, data collection and reporting moving forward,” he says.

“Animal welfare remains at the core of our operating focus. In 2016/17 financial year, just over one fifth of our operating budget was allocated to animal welfare. In 2017/2018 this has increased to over a quarter of our budget, which is reflective of our commitment to this work.

ENDS

For further information, please contact: Phil Holden, Chief Executive, on 027 467 1670.

## **Executive Summary of GRNZ Responses to Hansen Report - December 2017**

This is the second independent external review of greyhound health and welfare issues commissioned by GRNZ's parent body, the New Zealand Racing Board. The first was in 2014, and this review is designed to track progress made and also make recommendations for the future.

There are 20 recommendations in the report. All have been acknowledged. Some have already been enacted by the Board, a few will require further research and time. Detailed responses to each of them can be found in the document - Letter to NZRB.

However, for summary purposes they are grouped under four distinct headings:

- Overall animal health and welfare
- Registry and database
- Dog tracking, de-registration and euthanasia
- Track safety.

### **1. Overall animal health and welfare**

The Report's recommendations in this section are centred around new, higher standards that owners and trainers must meet for animals in their care, and a new central health database of all greyhounds.

New standards are just about ready to go. In July 2015 we created an independent animal welfare committee comprised of members and observers from:

- An Independent Chairperson
- RNZSPCA
- New Zealand Veterinary Association
- The National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Primary Industries
- The Racing Integrity Unit.

This has been intensive work, that has included looking at international best practice. All parts of the industry will be expected to adhere to it. The new standards are nearing completion, and a communication and training programme will accompany the roll-out of the new standards during 2018.

We're also actively working to plan a national health database of all dogs. To do this we need to partner with the New Zealand veterinary profession to scope a suitable strategy and response.

We also agree with all the specific recommendations in this section: mandatory annual kennel inspections, mandatory annual vaccinations and the phasing out of ear branding and we will seek procedural and operational guidance from the RIU with regard their implementation.

### **2. Registry and database**

The central recommendation here is to revamp our database - the software that allows us to track the movement of all greyhounds in New Zealand.

Our current database was designed to support racing operations only and as a result it has limited functionality and is at the end of its useful life. Reports have to be compiled manually and in some cases painstakingly. We also have a problem with inconsistent data entry prior to 2013. While the accuracy has improved considerably since then, and all forms and materials have been updated, the database is at the end of its useful life and not fit for purpose.

We have committed to a major two year modernisation investment and allocated capital expenditure of up to \$500k to address it. This will involve moving to a cloud base, upgrading the framework, moving to a Customer Relationship Management platform, significantly improving the reporting functionality, and standardising the format of all data.

The report identifies that there are inconsistencies in relation to council registration for greyhounds. GRNZ wants all licensed people to comply with Council registration requirements. We will work with local and central government to try and create consistent national fees and processes for potential reclassification as working dogs.

### **3. Dog tracking, de-registration and euthanasia**

The report correctly identifies that there are several gaps in our knowledge of where dogs are located through their life cycle.

We have invested in ground-breaking new population management software which we will roll out progressively from 2018. This will enable us to model the impact of breeding and importation, and then actively work with owners and trainers to ensure overpopulation is avoided. This is a key tool. It will, for the first time enable the industry to bring down rates of euthanasia and reduce pressure on re-homing of non-racing and retired dogs.

We're also undertaking a review of our re-homing efforts through a project led by KPMG. Our existing provider(s) has been doing a great job, increasing annual re-homing from 186 in 2013 to 414 in the 2016/ 2017 year. But it is not enough. We'll be deepening our partnership with them in the future and investing to increase their capacity. We're also scoping and identifying other rehoming partners and programs in a focused effort to increase greyhound rehoming numbers.

We are introducing tougher processes around euthanasia of greyhounds. We accept that 309 greyhounds euthanised this year is too high and we need to really lift our efforts to reduce that number.

Other recommendations in the report we'll be picking up include tighter processes to register and deregister racing dogs, an annual census including RIU led independent kennel audits, de-sexing and longer racing careers.

### **4. Track safety**

GRNZ and our clubs have been investing in a variety of ways to bring injury rates down such as: better track surfaces, safety rails and pads and improved camber. 44 individual track improvements have been implemented. The current rate is 15 injuries per 1,000 starts which compares favourably with NSW, Australia at 25 injuries per 1,000 starts and Victoria, Australia at 36 per 1000 starts.

Longer-term, promising initiatives are being investigated. We will investigate the potential for introducing a straight track to complement our existing track infrastructure, and we are monitoring Victoria and NSW initiatives in this area to understand their applicability here. We're also continuing our trial of 'hoop arm' lures - these extend further out onto the track, reducing bunching.

Better systems to record injuries to dogs on race days will also be implemented.

	<b>LAST REVIEW IN 2013</b>	<b>TODAY</b>	<b>BY 2020</b>
<b>Welfare Standards</b>	GRNZ Code of Welfare (2013) implemented.  Animal Welfare Manager appointed 1 October 2013.	GRNZ Code of Welfare reviewed.  GRNZ Health and Welfare Standards (2017) drafted.	GRNZ Health and Welfare Standards (2017) in place and education campaign implemented.
<b>Welfare Committee</b>	No committee in place.	Committee established and met for first time in July 2015.  Today the Committee is made up of representatives and observers from RNZSPCA, NAWAC, NZVA, RIU and MPI.	Continued improvements in welfare policies as recommended by the Animal Welfare Committee.
<b>Kennel Inspections</b>	No formal process in place.	Public Trainer kennels inspected every year and owner/trainer kennels every second year at least.	All properties where dogs are kept are inspected at least once a year. All dogs audited and passed to GRNZ.
<b>Education Program</b>	ITO was in place - but inactive.	Head of Welfare engaged with Tertiary Education providers.	Education program implemented.
<b>Vaccination</b>	Proof of vaccination required at 4months of age.	Proof of vaccination required at 4months of age.	Proof of ongoing vaccination program required as a condition of racing.
<b>Greyhound Identification</b>	Ear branding Microchipping Markings.	Ear branding Microchipping Markings.	Microchipping Markings (Ear branding banned).
<b>Veterinary Records</b>	No visibility or requirement.	No visibility or requirement.	Treatment log book and race book implemented.
<b>Breeding Female Registration</b>	None.	New forms created and implemented for registering a breeding female.	All breeding females required to be registered with GRNZ.
<b>Database</b>	Out of date forms, racing operations platform, limited ad hoc reports, and online services introduced as and when required.	Forms and process overhauled. Capital expenditure of up to \$500k approved for new database. Independent audit of data validity and collection process.	Cloud based database in place to future proof data, reporting and operations. Customer Relationship Management tool and full suite of reporting. Annual independent audits ongoing.

	LAST REVIEW IN 2013	TODAY	BY 2020
<b>Racing Dog population</b>	<p>No understanding of population needed or expected. No management processes in place.</p> <p>849 puppies were whelped 322 greyhounds imported 2,858 greyhounds registered to race.</p>	<p>GRNZ invested in a population modelling tool. We can now assess the number of dogs entering the sport, and the impact on breeding, imports &amp; rehoming.</p> <p>675 puppies were whelped 279 greyhounds imported 3,225 greyhounds registered to race.</p>	<p>Balance achieved between population needed for a sustainable sport and number of dogs rehomed.</p>
<b>Registration/ De-registration</b>	<p>Introduced a rule where a vet must perform euthanasia, and certified to GRNZ. Rules introduced if not adhered too. Rule introduced 1/2/14.</p>	<p>New forms implemented which require details of new owner for improved tracking and requires more accountability regarding the reasons if the dog is to be euthanised.</p>	<p>All dogs de-sexed as a condition of de-registration.</p> <p>Automated alert system implemented into the database to alert GRNZ to dogs not racing and not de-registered.</p>
<b>Euthanasia</b>	<p>The number of greyhounds registered with GRNZ that were euthanised was unknown as there was no requirement to report to GRNZ.</p>	<p>309 greyhounds registered with GRNZ were euthanised.</p> <p>This equates to 10% of 2016/17 registered racing population.</p> <p>This compares to 357 greyhounds euthanised on a registered population of 2,386 or 15% in South Australia.</p> <p>New rule to be adopted tightening deregistration process, making it mandatory to independently assess temperament and a genuine attempt to rehome as the first steps before approval given for euthanasia.</p>	<p>Zero avoidable euthanasia.</p> <p>Every retired greyhound professionally assessed as suitable for rehoming is rehomed.</p>
<b>Unaccounted for Dogs</b>	<p>Limited reporting requirements on dog registrations to GRNZ.</p>	<p>1,271 greyhounds whose location is unknown.</p>	<p>All greyhounds accounted for via annual census.</p>
<b>Racing Opportunities</b>	<p>5022 races.</p>	<p>5624 races, including 303 extra sprint races.</p>	<p>6584 races (subject to code negotiations).</p>

	<b>LAST REVIEW IN 2013</b>	<b>TODAY</b>	<b>BY 2020</b>
<b>Rehomed Greyhounds</b>	186 Greyhounds were rehomed by GAP.	414 Greyhounds were rehomed.	Every retired greyhound professionally assessed as suitable for rehoming is re-homed.
<b>GRNZ Funded Rehoming agencies</b>	1 – GAP	2 – GAP & Nightrave	3 - GAP, Nightrave, and other service providers and programs.
<b>Track Safety</b>	17 injuries per 1,000 starts (2014/2015 season).	15 injuries per 1,000 starts, compared to 25 per 1,000 starts in NSW, and 36 per 1000 starts in Victoria Australia. 44 track improvements Hoop arm trial.	Continue to reduce injuries as able. Straight Track scoped. Hoop Arm at all tracks.

# FACT SHEET



# Greyhound Racing New Zealand



## OPERATIONS

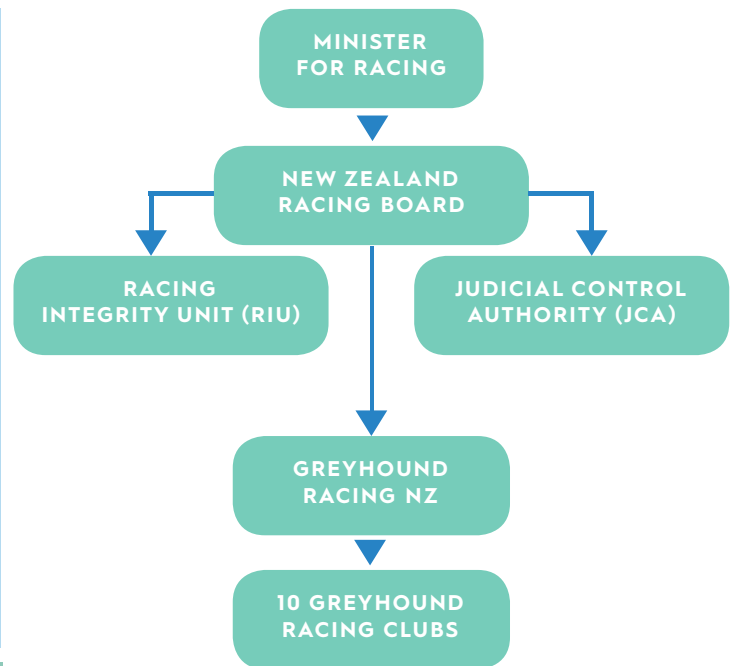
- Greyhound Racing New Zealand (GRNZ) is an incorporated society consisting of 10 affiliated greyhound racing clubs (7 race venues) throughout NZ.
- GRNZ employs 11 FTEs and has 712 Licensed Persons
- The RIU uphold the respective Rules of Racing of each Code. Controls race meetings, obtains samples for drug testing. When required investigates and prosecutes breaches.
- The JCA improve judicial processes in the racing industry, and appoint judicial panels to adjudicate raceday protests/charges and non-raceday investigations.

## RACING

- In the 2016/2017 season there were 5,624 races held.
- Average field size 7.9
- The 2016/2017 season saw growth in export turnover of 11%, and an increase in domestic gross betting margin of 4%
- Turnover of \$152m
- In the 2016 calendar year there were 77,478 unique greyhound bettors

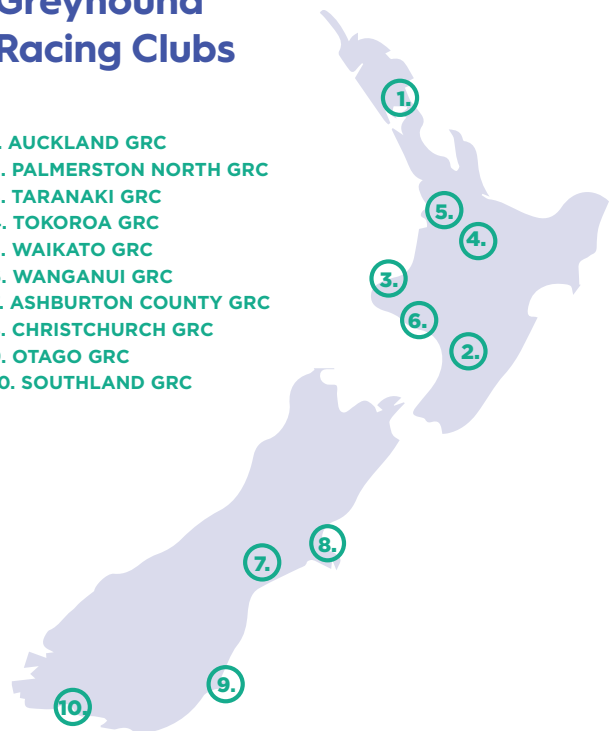
## WELFARE

- Increased funding by 60% to rehoming agencies
- Funding a 3 year PhD research study aimed at determining optimal racing frequencies
- Greyhounds As Pets is a national charity programme focused on the rehoming of retired greyhound racers. They are funded by GRNZ and through charity grants.
- Nightrave Greyhounds is a rehoming facility based in Fielding. Partially funded by GRNZ.



## Greyhound Racing Clubs

1. AUCKLAND GRC
2. PALMERSTON NORTH GRC
3. TARANAKI GRC
4. TOKOROA GRC
5. WAIKATO GRC
6. WANGANUI GRC
7. ASHBURTON COUNTY GRC
8. CHRISTCHURCH GRC
9. OTAGO GRC
10. SOUTHLAND GRC





# Our Greyhounds

## New Zealand Greyhounds

**0 days** Puppies born

**0-14 days** Litter registered

**4 months** Each pup registered, microchipped, ear-branded and vaccinated

**4+ months** Race registration naming

Un-raced



De-registered

**15+ months** Breeding  
Registration of service  
(0-14 days past service)

## Imported Greyhounds

Limit 20 per month nationally  
(max 5 per month per facility)

Import registration in NZ



**16+ months**  
Greyhound starts  
racing career

Re-homed as pets

GAP, Nightrave or Private adoption

Veterinary Euthanasia  
(Vet. certification required)

2016/17

# Our year in numbers

**279**  
Greyhounds imported into New Zealand



**675**  
Bred in New Zealand



Registered for Racing in 2016/17

**1040**



**3,225**  
Total Registered to Race



## Retirement



**40**

died naturally.



**46**

for breeding.



**309**

were Euthanised.



**414**

found new homes.

Please note that the numbers shown on this diagram represent the year 1 August 2016 - 31 July 2017, otherwise known as the 2016/17 Racing Season. This diagram does not try to show the tracking of the same group of greyhounds through the stages, but instead give visibility to the numbers at each stage in the 2016/17 season. As with all racing animals (greyhounds, horses) the length and timing of each stage can vary significantly. For example some of those registered for racing in 2016/17 may have been born in the 2015/16 season, some in the 2014/15 season and others even before that.