

Response To Joint Select Committee Report Into Greyhound Racing

Recommendation	Intended Actions	Progress	Status June 2017
<p>1 That the Government review the legal framework underpinning the prohibition of live baiting in Tasmania.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This recommendation is relevant to the Animal Welfare Act (DPIPWE) and changes to legislation may be required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be progressed by the Office of Racing Integrity (ORI) in conjunction with other relevant departmental policy and legal divisions. Minister to refer to the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAC) for consideration as part of a second tranche of Animal Welfare Act amendments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of Animal Welfare Act is upcoming and live baiting could be proposed as a specific offence and carry a specific penalty in new proposed legislation.
<p>2 That the Government instruct the Office of Racing Integrity to educate industry participants and the general public of the contemporary legal framework underpinning the prohibition of live baiting in Tasmania.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement an industry educational program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through input and assistance from the new regulatory vet, ORI will work with the RSPCA to develop a working model for the implementation of a suitable and relevant program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an ongoing part of education and is linked with the social licence of the industry. If live baiting is identified in the Animal Welfare Act as a specific offence it can be advertised accordingly and will assist in the education of both participants and the general public.
<p>3 That the separation between the Office of Racing Integrity and Tasracing be maintained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A key recommendation of all interstate inquiries to date has been the separation of commercial and integrity functions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This model already exists in Tasmania, and will be maintained. The rebranding of Racing Services Tasmania to the Office of Racing Integrity, and transfer to DPIPWE from the Department of State Growth has made the separation of commercial and integrity bodies clearer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This continued separation has been confirmed and announced by the Minister.
<p>4 That all training facilities including but not limited to trial tracks, training tracks and bullrings be registered with the Office of Racing Integrity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ORI has commenced discussions with Tasracing to bring in new local rules with regard to the registration of these facilities. New local rules are to be drafted and implemented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actions that address this recommendation commenced in 2015 and ORI has completed an audit of all bullrings and private training tracks in the State. The Director of Racing is to provide a recommendation on local rule requirements to Tasracing. Funds being allocated to ORI for workplace health and safety enhancements, additional staff training, technology and racing software improvements will assist in the implementation of this recommendation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Local Rules are to be reviewed again to strengthen registration and create penalties for non-compliance. The Minimum Standards for facilities be listed as a high profile document to be developed particularly for persons looking to enter the industry. ORI WH&S enhancements, additional staff training, technology and racing software improvements continue.

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<p>5 That the Government review the legal framework underpinning animal welfare and the prohibition of live baiting in Tasmania with a view to increasing regulation and investigative powers with an emphasis on training facilities and industry practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Animal Welfare Act (DPIPWE) and Racing Regulation Act need further review and changes may be required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ORI to work with Tasracing, racing industry, the RSPCA and other relevant bodies to review and provide recommendations. This will be progressed following recruitment of the new Director of Racing. The appointment of a regulatory vet will be important for the recommendation process. Minister to refer to AWAC for consideration as part of a second tranche of Animal Welfare Act amendments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission under Recommendation 1 will underpin legal framework. Stewards' investigative powers have been substantially increased.
<p>6 That the Government support the Office of Racing Integrity and Tasracing's stated commitment to Greyhound Australasia's "Towards Zero Euthanasia" 26 framework and to actively monitor progress towards this goal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ORI and Tasracing to develop a framework to support its full rehoming strategy. This framework will include the introduction of local rules regarding rehoming requirements, as well as building infrastructure to support growth in Tasracing's Greyhound Adoption Program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a framework to support a full rehoming strategy is still ongoing and totally dependent on availability of GAP facility. Government is yet to finalise availability of land for development. Commitment is unattainable unless a fully operating dedicated GAP facility is available. Draft rules and policy are under development but are dependent on above. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Zero' euthanasia not attainable due to some behavioural, legal and medical reasons for euthanasia. Industry will commit to rehoming as many greyhounds as possible. Data collection system in place with ORI to better track registered greyhounds until retirement from racing.
<p>7 That the Office of Racing Integrity develop and maintain a comprehensive database to enable all greyhounds whelped in Tasmania, or imported, for the racing industry to be tracked at all stages of life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to national and local rules will be required, both of which are being progressed at a local and national level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently ORI records life time tracking of every greyhound born in Tasmania since 1 August 2011 until it is notified as retired from the industry. Funds are being allocated to ORI for additional staff training, technology and racing software improvements to help implement this recommendation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is already happening for greyhounds whelped and raced in the State. Assistance of other organisations is needed to monitor greyhound movements into the State. Ongoing improvements to the National Greyhound Body (Greyhounds Australasia) database 'Ozchase' are assisting this tracking.

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<p>8 That the Government implement, as a matter of priority, Recommendation 19 of the Review Report: Create a rule of racing that at all times (from whelping onwards) a greyhound must be in the possession of, and under the ownership, care and control of a licensed person.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greyhounds Australasia’s (GA) National Welfare Strategy has an objective that all greyhounds are to be under the care of a registered participant at all times during their lifecycle, unless retired as a pet. • Changes to national and local rules are required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasracing supports this and it is progressing with GA. • The GA Welfare Working Party is developing registration and education requirements for breeders, whelpers, rearers and educators to help achieve this objective. • ORI will implement the rules once ratified. • This will also be supported with the appointment of the regulatory vet and stipendiary steward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This has commenced with a breeder licence being brought in from 1 August 2017. • Whelper, Rearer and Primary Educator will require licences once software developed in the next 12 months.
<p>9 That the Office of Racing Integrity undertake a review of the standards, guidelines and policies in place for the housing and rearing of greyhounds to consider how best welfare practice requirements can be improved and enforced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Recommended Standards for the Care of Greyhounds is a standard adopted by Tasracing and is included as part of the Greyhound Animal Welfare Manual. • Changes to local rules may be required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the regulatory vet has been appointed a working group will be set up comprising ORI, Tasracing, industry and the RSPCA to review this recommendation. • ORI will then provide recommendations to Tasracing with regard to changes to local rules. • An update to the national racing software is to be released in early November 2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasracing has Recommended Minimum Standards for greyhounds. • The Minimum Standards for facilities be listed as a high profile document for persons looking to enter the industry. • Put in place a requirement that standards must be met when re-building or building new facilities.
<p>10 That Tasracing and the Office of Racing Integrity collect data, information and report on injuries sustained during trialling and racing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To collect data on all Tasmanian trials requires an unsustainable level of resources. • Instead, ORI will develop a data collection strategy using quantitative statistical methods. • National racing software changes are being trialled interstate. Implementation in Tasmania is due December 2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasracing produces monthly reports on injuries incurred at race meetings. • Veterinary officers are not currently in attendance at trial sessions, but are on call. • When appointed the regulatory vet will work with the Chairmen of Stewards to develop appropriate strategies and reporting mechanisms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This information is currently collected for all Qualifying Trials and Races. • Development of OzChase being undertaken to record all injuries and allow database to be queried.

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<p>11 That Tasracing and the Office of Racing Integrity investigate the reasons for injuries and if the design and/or condition of the track is identified as a contributing factor, improvements must be undertaken to the track.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of track design and conditions to be conducted. Appropriate improvements to be costed and provided for in future capital budgets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tasracing monitors injuries and reports on those injuries to the assets team and the track curators so that any abnormal numbers or injuries can be investigated and the track rectified if necessary. Tasracing will engage a track expert to investigate track design issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This review requires expert analysis. ORI and Tasracing are seeking to obtain an analysis of the injury data as a thesis by a University student. ORI stewards inspect tracks before each race meeting commences.
<p>12 That the Office of Racing Integrity undertake a review to ensure the penalties imposed for the use of prohibited substances reflect the seriousness of the offence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A national study is currently being undertaken by Dr Steve Karamatic (Industry Veterinarian at Greyhound Racing Victoria) and results will be provided to all jurisdictions for review and implementation once completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the regulatory body, penalties issued by ORI are consistently applied and fully reflect the seriousness of participant offences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ORI to review penalty guidelines operating in other jurisdictions with a view of introduction in consultation with the stewards.
<p>13 That the Office of Racing Integrity be appropriately resourced in order to increase inspections of properties and strengthen its capacity to undertake effective routine swabbing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ORI to employ a regulatory vet and an additional steward to increase the level of service delivery in relation to animal welfare issues across all three codes of racing. ORI are to continue the drug detection regimen through the stewarding function overseen by the regulatory vet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ORI's current budget allocation has allowed for an increase in sampling as well as a more strategic approach to drug detection. The appointment of a regulatory vet and an additional stipendiary steward will enable an increase in property inspections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ORI to continue to seek resourcing at appropriate levels particularly for the Stewards' Investigation Unit. ORI investigating staffing by secondment from other Controlling Bodies.

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<p>14 That the Minister for Racing requires the Office of Racing Integrity to review and report on the number of litters bred in Tasmania, five years from the introduction of the new breeding rules, to determine whether the breeding rules have reduced wastage rates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure breeding rules and policies are supported and informed by detailed statistical data and education. • Regularly assess breeding rules and policies to ensure they are consistent and compliant with animal welfare legislation and contemporary animal welfare standards. • ORI will review and report to the Minister in 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New national breeding rules and policies in relation to number of litters permitted were implemented 1 August 2015. • The appointment of an additional stipendiary steward and a regulatory vet along with funds allocated to provision of technology and racing software will provide the basis for addressing this recommendation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing. • ORI will review and report to Minister in 2020.
<p>15 That the Government commission an independent review of the Greyhound Adoption Program and other adoption services. This review is to include examination of existing funding and resources for greyhound rehoming/adoption programs as well as investigating additional mechanisms to support such programs with a view to increasing the number of greyhounds rehomed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government supports a nationally accredited program for greyhound rehoming (GAP) that is under ongoing review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasracing operate the Greyhound Adoption Program and have more than doubled its funding from \$118,000 in 2014/15 to \$265,000 in 2015/16. • Ongoing review by Tasracing is addressing issues surrounding, purpose built facilities, equipment, and staffing, having regard to future funding levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehoming Providers who offer muzzle free greyhounds will have to be registered with ORI and meet specific standards.

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<p>16 That the Minister for Racing require the Office of Racing Integrity and Tasracing to review and report on the new grading schedule annually to determine whether it is reducing wastage rates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first review of the new grading schedule will commence in January 2017. • This is further supported by funding allocated to the provision of technology and racing software training and development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New race programming providing more opportunities for older greyhounds and those with lesser ability were implemented in October/November 2015. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following were identified as factors which could be reported on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Average Age of Starters (b) Average Number of Starts.
<p>17 That the Government further investigate whether provisions regarding mental suffering should be incorporated in the <i>Animal Welfare Act 1993</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This recommendation is relevant to the Animal Welfare Act and changes to legislation may be required, having regard to the complexity of defining “mental suffering”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be progressed by ORI in conjunction with other relevant departmental policy and legal divisions. • The Minister to refer to AWAC for consideration as part of a second tranche of Animal Welfare Act amendments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rejected as amendment to <i>Animal Welfare Act 1993</i>. • No action justified based on insufficient scientific evidence.
<p>18 That mandatory education and training on contemporary animal welfare standards and the provisions of the Animal Welfare Act 1993 be required for all licensed participants within the greyhound industry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has been identified by both ORI and Tasracing that there is a need for significant formal and mandatory education for racing participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasracing, in consultation with the Director of Racing, is currently developing appropriate rules with regard to mandatory animal welfare training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem identified with no recognised course currently available. • Follow-up with GR NSW re their on-line training package. • Possibility of utilizing same programme as online DPIPWE WHS courses.

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<p>19 That Tasracing provide timely information and ongoing education to the industry when the Rules of Racing are amended.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication around rules of racing is sufficient and requires no changes at this stage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whenever rule changes are made, a general fact sheet is issued by Tasracing. The amendment is published on the Tasracing website, copies are made available at tracks and club offices, advice is published in the Statewide Formguide, and an SMS message is distributed advising the rules have been changed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Already implemented and will continue for any future rule amendments.
<p>20 That the Minister for Racing engage formally with the appropriate Federal Minister(s) to address the issue of greyhound export.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Racing Ministers are supportive of this. Greyhounds Australasia has and continues to engage with the Federal Government to address this issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will be discussed at the next national racing ministers' meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This matter is being actively pursued by GA at a national level.
<p>21 That the Government review the powers of stewards under the Rules of Racing and the Animal Welfare Act 1993: to seize evidence; to question and obtain evidence from unlicensed persons; and to compel unlicensed persons to appear before an inquiry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislation has been implemented which addresses the unlicensed persons matter. Further discussions need to be held with the Solicitor-General to explore the possibility of enhanced powers for regulators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The changes to legislation with regard to the unlicensed persons matter received Royal Assent on 17 October 2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This has been completed.
<p>22 That the Office of Racing Integrity progress the registration and unannounced inspections of all private training facilities as a matter of priority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the registration of all bullrings and training tracks, a process of regular inspections by stewards will be undertaken. This will be complemented by regular unannounced inspections by stewards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This process has commenced. The appointment of an additional stipendiary steward will assist this process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This has been undertaken and will remain an ongoing task of ORI.

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<p>23 That the Government require Tasracing and the Office of Racing Integrity to reach an agreed position on rules affecting animal welfare standards. This position be presented to Greyhounds Australasia with the aim of achieving best practice in animal welfare through consistent application and improvement of national standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tasracing agrees to the recommendation, however, suggests that if national standards are not adopted by GA that these be implemented by local rules and/or policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be advanced between Tasracing and ORI following the appointment of the new Director of Racing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local rules have been drafted with comment from reference group. Currently underway.
<p>24 That the Government advocate for the Board of Greyhounds Australasia to be expanded to have Tasmania's separate integrity and commercial bodies equally represented on the board.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This has been raised with Greyhounds Australasia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greyhounds Australasia is currently reviewing its constitution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a matter for GA which may require changes to constitution. Tasracing CEO to again raise at GA level.
<p>25 That the Government undertake an independent cost-benefit analysis of the Tasmanian racing codes to inform a review of the current funding model for the racing industry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a matter for the Department of Treasury and Finance to consider revisions to the Funding Deed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government does not consider that conducting a cost benefit analysis of the Tasmanian racing industry would offer any meaningful new information. The Government is committed to the current funding model for the Tasmanian racing industry, under which the industry receives approximately \$30 million per annum over twenty years. The Government has no plans to review the current funding model for the Tasmanian racing industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An independent analysis is not required. The Funding Deed is in place for the industry.

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<p>26 That continued government funding of the greyhound racing industry be conditional on upholding contemporary animal welfare outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government has an expectation of industry to uphold contemporary animal welfare standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ORI maintains and publishes key performance indicators in relation to animal welfare standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contemporary animal welfare outcomes are continually reviewed to ensure industry meets best practice standards.
<p>27 That a lifetime ban be implemented for a person found guilty of live baiting in Tasmania.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government must provide procedural fairness and judge each case on its merits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Rule GAR 86(B) became effective on 30 April 2015. Lifetime ban implements on 30 April 2015. The rule states that anyone found guilty of live baiting will be disqualified for no less than 10 years and fined a sum specified in the relevant Act or Rules, unless a special circumstance exists where a lesser penalty may be imposed. The rule also states that a person witnessing such conduct and failing to report that conduct will be disqualified for not less than 5 years and/or fined up to \$20,000. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to legal opinion, local rules are to be introduced for disqualification for life.
<p>28 That Tasracing and the Office of Racing Integrity review their current communication methods to effectively engage with industry participants to improve animal welfare.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ORI and Tasracing agree. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both Tasracing and ORI will review their communication strategies on an on-going basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This has commenced. This will continue as an ongoing process.
<p>29 That the Minister for Racing instigate a review of existing penalties and appeal provisions to determine whether changes should be introduced, particularly pertaining to issues of animal welfare.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to the <i>Racing Regulation Act 2004</i> or the <i>Animal Welfare Act 1993</i> will be considered. On the appointment of the new Director of Racing a working group will be formed with the appropriate stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To commence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to the Animal Welfare Act will determine appropriate penalties for breaches of requirements.

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30	<p>That the Government establish standards and identify benchmarks for improving animal welfare outcomes to be reported in Tasracing's annual report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tasracing would support disclosure in its annual report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of animal welfare standards and disclosure requirements is under consideration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benchmarks will be identified and published in Tasracing's Annual Report.
31	<p>That the Government review the differentiation of greyhounds under the Dog Control Act 2000 with the intent to exempt greyhounds from wearing a muzzle while on lead in public.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is currently being considered by the Minister for Local Government, who was awaiting the outcome of the Joint Select Committee report before progressing. Tasracing also supports GAP approved greyhounds to wear a 'green' collar. A draft Bill is to be sent through for consultation with various stakeholders to provide comment, and it is proposed that this Bill be approved and go before the Autumn Session of Parliament next year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Director of Local Government is currently reviewing the Dog Control Act 2000. In September 2013 an issues paper was distributed inviting stakeholders to provide comment on certain proposals, one of which was an exemption for greyhounds from the requirement to wear a muzzle while in a public place that have graduated through the Greyhound Adoption Program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Already underway. Changes to the Dog Control Act being considered in Spring session of Parliament.