



Animal Welfare Policy for Industry Participants of the New Zealand Greyhound Racing Association (Inc.)

Issued By: *Jeremy F Kennerley, Chief Executive*
Date: *15 September 2008*
Approved By: *New Zealand Greyhound Racing Association (Inc.) Board
of Directors*
Date Approved: *15 September 2008*
Last Updated: *15 September 2008*

Contents

- 1 Application**
- 2 Statement of Purpose**
- 3 Philosophy and Objectives**
- 4 Definitions**
- 5 Policy**
- 6 Declaration of Compliance**
- 7 Enforcement**
- 8 Offences**
- 9 Review**

1.0 Application

For the sake of consistency, ease of understanding and application, this policy and its restrictions apply to **all** licensed persons, employees and contractors of the New Zealand Greyhound Racing Association and entirely supersedes all previous New Zealand Greyhound Racing Association policies concerning animal welfare.

Any persons who have any questions about the application of this policy should raise these with the Chief Executive.

2.0 Statement Of Purpose

This policy's purpose is to formalise and express the greyhound racing industry's commitment to its animal welfare obligations with a view to achieving consistency and improvement in current practices.

In preparing this Policy the NZGRA has incorporated comments from the Greyhounds Australasia Policy Framework for National Animal Welfare.

3.0 Philosophy and Objectives Animal Welfare Policy

The greyhound racing industry in New Zealand has always maintained good welfare standards. There is now an increasing importance placed on animal welfare generally and Greyhounds Australasia has recently developed a policy on welfare specifically. With this in mind, it is now considered an appropriate time for GRNZ to provide both a definitive source and clear direction to welfare issues.

The policy's objective is to ensure that all persons with responsibility for greyhound care, including member clubs and racing officials, understand their obligations and have the appropriate knowledge and skills to ensure that the welfare of the greyhound bred for racing purposes is never compromised.

The Association believes that greyhounds in New Zealand have a right to expect proper and sufficient care. The NZGRA acknowledges their responsibility to animal welfare to ensure that the industry operates with integrity and fairness. The expectation is placed upon industry participants to at all times apply the tenets of basic humanity and decency to all greyhounds in their care.

The NZGRA recognises that to achieve a united consistent approach for a high standard of animal welfare, all industry participants have a part to play.

- Greyhounds Australasia undertakes research or gathers relevant information to advance knowledge of animal welfare. This information is passed to the New Zealand industry to promote uniform welfare practices throughout Australasia.
- NZGRA has the primary responsibility for the control of greyhound racing and animal welfare in New Zealand through implementation and upholding of policy, rules and regulations. The Association also undertakes relevant research and obtains information for sharing to the greyhound racing community.
- Greyhound Racing Clubs need to recognise the importance of welfare through their race day operations and promotion to their members.
- All registered Licenced Persons (LP's) are expected to take personal responsibility for the welfare of their greyhounds including when their greyhounds are in the care of other LP's.
- At all times participants must strictly adhere to all animal welfare legislation and policy at a national and local level.

The process for the united consistent approach will involve:

- Ensuring that all administrative and legislative regulations support the effective management of animal welfare.
- Continuing to improve and develop all areas of animal welfare.
- Effective communication, education and training across the wider greyhound racing industry.

4 Definitions

Nil.

5 Policy

5.1 Legal Obligations

The NZGRA recognises the international Five Freedoms:

- Proper and sufficient food and water;
- Adequate shelter;
- The opportunity to display normal patterns of behaviour;
- Physical handling in a way which minimises the likelihood of unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress;
- Protection from, rapid diagnosis of and adequate treatment of any significant injury or disease.

All persons are legally bound by the Animal Welfare Act 1999. This Act prescribes the obligations required of persons in charge of animals and regulations surrounding all areas of animal welfare. It creates the framework and platform for animal welfare in New Zealand.

The NZGRA Rules of Racing contains various rules which are concerned with animal welfare. These Rules must be adhered to by all Licenced Persons registered with the Association. NZGRA Stipendiary Stewards (who are present at each race meeting) work under the expectation that they use their power to control and regulate the race meeting in accordance with the Rules of Racing and as such can charge any person for an offence and impose a penalty provided for in the Rules.

5.2 General Care

The welfare of the greyhound is paramount and the NZGRA supports the promotion of all best practice among its members and the enforcement of minimum standards.

The Association has developed and issued an Operational Guidelines Manual that details the recommended minimum standards that are acceptable to the greyhound racing industry in New Zealand.

All persons wishing to register to handle greyhounds or house greyhounds for racing purposes must register with the Association. It is a requirement that all Trainers undergo an initial Kennel Inspection and all Handlers interaction with greyhounds is witnessed before registration approval is given.

A regular system of spot checks of kennels is undertaken for all licenced trainers throughout the year.

The NZGRA explicitly condemns:

- Any form of cruelty and neglect of greyhounds and any other animals.
- The use of any live animal in the training or racing of greyhounds.
- The use of greyhounds for any unjustifiable medical or other experiments.
- The export of greyhounds to countries where the greyhound racing industry is not regulated or is poorly managed.

5.3 Breeding

The industry supports the concept of efficient breeding. Efficient breeding is that which increases the racing performance and/or raises the ratio of dogs within each litter reaching and maintaining racing standard. The industry undertakes to keep abreast of developments in breeding research and promote breeding practices which have been shown to improve health and efficiency.

5.4 Racetrack Standards

The welfare of the greyhound at the track and the underlying integrity of the sport are prime considerations. The Association has ensured that procedures are in place to minimise the risk of injury to the greyhound and to ensure each race is held in a fair and proper manner.

The Association has a National Track Curator to assist with increasing the standards of the racing surface.

5.5 Health and Veterinary

Due regard should be given to the health of all greyhounds regardless of stage of life and unnecessary suffering should be avoided at all times. Injuries, illnesses and debilities requiring veterinary attention should receive such attention as soon as practically possible. Where euthanasia is necessary this will be performed by a Veterinarian or other Authorised Persons.

The industry is aware of contagious diseases which may have the potential to affect greyhounds and the NZGRA has developed an Emergency Dog Disease Preparedness Plan detailing procedures to minimise the affect and spread of an outbreak.

There are veterinarians at all race tracks on race days. All greyhounds have a veterinary inspection before kennelling (prior to racing) and where required post-race inspections are completed. Racing stand-downs are issued as required for all injuries that occur.

5.6 Retirement

The industry maintains that when no longer required for racing purposes all suitable greyhounds should ideally be rehomed as pets. The industry has established and continues to financially support the Greyhounds As Pets programme to achieve this goal.

The Association actively promotes the use of the programme to its members.

5.7 Export

GRNZ does not support the export of greyhounds to countries with inadequate welfare standards or where the greyhound racing industry is not regulated sufficiently to ensure minimum standards of welfare are adhered to.

5.8 Research

The Association is committed to conducting research into areas that are important for greyhound racing in New Zealand. It is vital for the industry to keep abreast of new developments and to be made aware of any improvements that can be made to greyhound welfare, racing or breeding. Through joint support and commitment of the New Zealand Racing Board and Greyhound Racing New Zealand, funding has been made available for this purpose.

5.9 Best Practice Guidelines

The NZGRA has issued an Operational Guidelines manual to assist the development of a consistent approach to the location, management and regulation of greyhound training establishments in New Zealand and also to provide advice to industry participants.

The Guidelines comprise:

- Guidelines for establishment and approval of greyhound training facilities.
- Recommendations in regard to the rearing, education and training of racing greyhounds.
- Recommended guidelines as to the safe handling and caring of racing greyhounds.
- Recommended guidelines pertaining to nutritional requirements of racing greyhounds.
- Accreditation guidelines and recommendations for those handling greyhounds at greyhound race meetings.
- Recommended occupational Health and Safety procedures for greyhound racing participants.

5.10 Education

The Association is committed to providing the industry with recent relevant information about animal welfare.

The Association has also developed a formal Kennel Hand qualification with the New Zealand Equine Industry Training Organisation Inc. This is certified by the New Zealand Qualification Authority. One of the aims of this qualification is to provide best practice advice and standards to the industry through formal training.

6.0 Declaration of Compliance

Each three years, every licenced person of the New Zealand Greyhound Racing Association is required to sign a registration application, for placement on the individual's file, declaring that they will treat animal welfare as an absolute priority and abide by the Rules of Racing and any other authorised decisions made by the Association.

7.0 Notification and enforcement

The New Zealand Greyhound Racing Association may enforce this policy through the Rules of Racing as a result of complaint by a licenced person, member of the public, staff member or through any other investigation.

8.0 Offences

Any breaches of this policy, the Rules of Racing and/or any legislation will be treated as serious and will be handled accordingly.

Alleged breaches will be investigated by the New Zealand Greyhound Racing Association and appropriate action will be taken under the Rules of Racing and/or the necessary legislation.

9.0 Review

The Association supports the continuing improvement of welfare standards and should review this policy on an annual basis. The review should take into consideration:

- Current environment.
- New or reviewed legislation.
- Policies from GA or other member jurisdictions.
- Media reports.
- Recent research findings or relevant information.
- Reports received from Track Curator and/or Stipendiary Stewards.
- Relevant comments from industry participants.