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THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON GREYHOUND RACING TRANSITION MET IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, PARLIAMENT HOUSE, HOBART ON MONDAY 12 OCTOBER 2026.

The Committee met at 10.00 a.m.

CHAIR (Ms Johnston) - Welcome to today's hearing of the Joint Standing Committee on Greyhound Racing Transition, and thank you very much, Minister, for your attendance. As you'd be aware, on our online screen, we have Tania Rattray; Meg Webb, Dean Winter, myself, Kristie Johnston, and Cassy O'Connor. We do have an apology from Marcus Vermey who can't be with us today. Minister, if you can introduce Deidre at the table.

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you, Chair. To my left is Deidre Wilson, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania.

CHAIR - Thank you very much, Minister, and Deidre, can I confirm that you've received and read the guide sent to you by the Committee Secretary?

Ms WILSON - Yes.

CHAIR - Thank you. As you'd be aware, this hearing is covered by parliamentary privilege, allowing individuals to speak with freedom without fear of being sued or questioned in any court or place out of Parliament. This protection is not accorded to you if statements that may be defamatory are repeated or referred to by you outside of the parliamentary proceedings. This hearing is public, and the public and media may be present or, indeed, watching it online. Should you wish any aspects of your evidence to be heard in private, you must make this request to the Committee at the time.

Minister, you don't need to make the statutory declaration, but I'll ask you, Deidre, if you wouldn't mind.

Ms DEIDRE WILSON, DEPUTY SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT WAS CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WAS EXAMINED.

CHAIR - Thank you very much. Minister, would you like to begin by making a short opening statement?

Mr JAENSCH - I don't have an opening statement. I'm happy to go straight into questions and answers.

CHAIR - Thank you. Minister, last time we met, a month or so ago, we talked about the Deed and where the Government was progressing with the arrangements for the Tasracing funding Deed. Can you give us an update on where you might be at with that, please?

Mr JAENSCH - There's been a report presented to the shareholding Ministers by Treasury and NRE, who conducted that work, and we're considering the advice that's come up. The report raises a range of issues and options for Government to consider and we're working through those. I anticipate that in the not-too-distant future we'll have something that we can

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release so that people can see the matters under consideration. Our aim would be to consult and finalise a Government position with a view to making submissions into the upcoming budget process to start to schedule a new Deed into the forward Estimates.

CHAIR - Thank you. Do you have a timeline around that? You said it would come shortly, so at the end of the year or -?

Mr JAENSCH - We would aim to be feeding that into the budget process before the end of the year.

Ms O'CONNOR - Just on that, Minister, is it still the Government's position that it does not intend to continue funding for greyhound racing in the new Deed?

Mr JAENSCH - Our discussions around the Deed are recognising the Government's policy position of phasing out greyhound racing within the life of the existing Deed.

Ms O'CONNOR - Okay, so that would be confirmation that - I respect that you have a working document presented to you by Treasury and NRE, but that working document presumably lays out the pathway to give effect, at least in terms of funding, to the Government's policy to phase out greyhound racing?

Mr JAENSCH - What it includes is advice on the likely implications for the Tasracing deed of not continuing with greyhound racing, which is slightly different to looking at how the Deed would be funded. It looks at a change of costs and revenue that would be associated with closing out racing, as per the Government's policy position.

Ms O'CONNOR - Okay, thank you. I'm happy to move on and then come back.

Mr WINTER - Thanks for being here with us, Minister. On the Deed, we were told last year by the former Minister for Racing that she expected the Deed to be finalised by May of this year. The deed was originally drafted by Tasracing and submitted in 2023, more than three years ago.

Are you saying that we're not going to have finalisation on a new Deed until the budget next year? If so, do you understand what the implications of that will be for the Tasmanian equine breeding industry?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes. I became Minister in June this year and I picked up on the need to accelerate the process for establishing a new Deed as part of my incoming briefs so, yes, we've been working on that. There has been this review commissioned. It's now reported back to us. What we want to do is get the key parameters of that out for further consultation with industry and Tasracing to finalise as soon as possible. We've indicated to the industry, particularly the equine breeding sector, what we're doing so that they are aware that there is a process underway, that it hasn't just stalled or been forgotten or pushed back, that they're aware that our intention is to have a Deed. When we release the review report and finalise negotiations, they'll see what are the other matters in hand. I've had discussions with a number of people in the industry also to understand what their particular sensitivities are and what their needs would be, and I think that they'll see those matters canvassed in the review.

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Mr WINTER - Do you understand that without a Deed, the sale in February this year, particularly the Magic Millions sale that takes place up at Carrick, is going to be very, very difficult, if not unviable, because there is going to be - there are owners in Tasmania, and potential owners, who simply won't invest without a Deed in place?

Ms O'CONNOR - Do you mean in horses?

Mr WINTER - Yes, that's what happens at Carrick, Ms O'Connor.

Ms O'CONNOR - Well, not everyone knows that. Not everyone's attached to the racing industries like you are.

Mr WINTER - We've been holding this inquiry for quite some time, I would have expected Committee Members to be across that.

Ms O'CONNOR - I know that there's horse racing in Carrick. Whatever.

CHAIR - Let the Minister answer the question.

Mr WINTER - There we go. I think it's worth pointing out that we have Committee Members here who are happy to see an industry, who do not care -

CHAIR - Can we let the Minister please answer the question.

Mr JAENSCH - As incoming Minister in June, this is one of the absolute priorities identified for me by industry. I've picked up on the work that's been done. The review has now been concluded. We are considering some of the key matters in that before releasing the review and finalising our intentions regarding the Deed as soon as possible. I can't go back a couple of years and bring this on sooner. I'm working as hard and fast as I can to provide that certainty.

I've written to the industry laying out what our intentions are, that there will be a Deed, that we understand the need for certainty, that the place for the Deed to be - you know, given that there is a Deed through to the end of June 2029, that what I understand they need for comfort is that there is the form of a Deed and that they can see it in the forward Estimates. That's what we'd be aiming to achieve by securing it through the budget process.

Mr WINTER - Tasracing's provided evidence to this Committee, and the last time they were here, they outlined that there was, effectively, a drop-dead date for needing a Deed in place to provide the industry certainty, to be early next year. You're now confirming that the Government is going to go past that date and not have a deed in place ready for the coming sales season?

Mr JAENSCH - I think we would be aiming to have something that the industry can see and have confidence in by way of the form of a Deed, the terms of the Deed as well, and for us to capture that in some form of heads of agreement or similar arrangement that can provide certainty for them of the Government's intentions ahead of that Deed appearing reflected in the budget papers.

Mr WINTER - Contrary to all the rhetoric we've heard from your Government, from the Greens and Independents in relation to this, Tasracing has already submitted their annual

financials to ASIC and, within the submitted financials to ASIC, outlined that the expected revenue drop from ending greyhound racing will be matched by the expected expenditure drop. What that means is there'll be no savings from ending greyhound racing.

Ms O'CONNOR - That's what Tasracing says.

Mr WINTER - Is that consistent with the advice that you've received?

Mr JAENSCH - No, the advice I have received is that the net difference is in the order of \$3.2 million per year, in terms of effective saving in terms of the cost of running racing. I'll just seek the Deputy Secretary's advice.

Mr WINTER - So, the Government's position is that ending greyhound racing will save \$3.2 million a year, is that right?

Ms O'CONNOR - That's Treasury advice, isn't it?

Ms WILSON - That's correct. That's the, that's in order, the net effect of cessation of greyhound racing that the Bill has enacted.

Mr WINTER - Just put that in context, the annual grant -

CHAIR - I think you have had a number of questions -

Mr WINTER - is over \$40 million -

Ms O'CONNOR - I think I've got the call here. Thank you. Minister, as part of our workplan, we've agreed to focus on animal welfare aspects of greyhound racing. I want to take you to last Thursday night at Elwick Racecourse. That's the 8th of October [2026]. We had a dog euthanised on track after a catastrophic injury. That was Angry Mac. And then we had a dog called Black Brush Ben also very injured on the track, dislocation of the right hock, 90 days' standdown. We had evidence from the Commissioner last week that indicated injuries in greyhound racing are at a persistently high level. By our count, there's 46 dead greyhounds since 1 January this year [2026], obviously not all of them on track. But would you agree, Minister, that the animal welfare issues associated with this industry remain persistently and unacceptably outside of community expectations?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes. I think there's been improvement in the industry and the way the technologies, the design of tracks, the operating of races, the vet checks, the integrity matters. I also believe, having met a large number of greyhound owners, that there's a great level of care from owners for their dogs.

Ms O'CONNOR - Not all of them.

Mr JAENSCH - But the people I've met, I think they love their dogs, and I think their dogs love racing.

Ms O'CONNOR - Have you met Anthony Bullock?

Mr JAENSCH - I'm - where I'm going to in terms of your question is that despite all of that, the racing of greyhounds is inherently dangerous to the wellbeing of the animals in it. I think people can do everything they can to make it safer, but the racing itself is dangerous for dogs. It's traumatic for everyone when a dog is injured or dies or has to be put down. I believe that in the industry, it's something that they have a level of - they accept that risk, but the community more broadly I don't think accepts that anymore -

Ms O'CONNOR - And, of course, the greyhounds don't get a say.

Mr JAENSCH - particularly given the level of - frankly, I've watched them. I think the greyhounds love to run, I really think they do.

Ms O'CONNOR - Sure, but it's the track, it's the nature of the racing.

Mr JAENSCH - But they're part of an activity which has inherent risks for them that they don't choose, that they can't mitigate either. Our view and what our policy is based on is that this is no longer something that the Tasmanian taxpayer wants to support, at so many levels. There is Government money that enables and facilitates greyhound racing for entertainment. The risks to the animal welfare in it are, we believe, now something that the community doesn't accept any more.

Ms O'CONNOR - Thank you. I think it's easy to talk about the industry as a generic block but, as you know, it's not a generic block. When you say you've spoken to industry people who love their dogs, have you spoken with Anthony Bullock, have you met Anthony Bullock, have you visited the place where he has 80 or more dogs in his custody?

Mr JAENSCH - I don't want to talk about individual operators in this because I don't also want to characterise all operators or participants of the industry by talking about a few that you select. I prefer not to be discussing individual cases. I can talk about my experience of talking with people in the industry. It's a very large industry.

Ms O'CONNOR - But you haven't been to Bullock's place, have you?

Mr JAENSCH - There's a large number of participants. They're all very different.

Ms O'CONNOR - Notwithstanding those changes to some industry practices - better tech that you point to on track, a different euthanasia policy so dogs aren't being wasted, killed on a whim or unnecessarily, you would agree that there's been no significant improvement in the welfare of dogs on the track in terms of deaths and injuries to racing greyhounds? That's on the data. You'd have to agree with that.

Mr JAENSCH - Even just on the incidents at the meet the other day and the injuries there, clearly, all of that work hasn't been sufficient to remove that significant risk to animal welfare. I think that that's something that the community now draws a line and says this is not something that we should be supporting with Government money for the purposes of entertainment.

Ms RATTRAY - Just a comment. I didn't think we were here just to talk about one particular participant, and I trust that we move on from that.

Ms O'CONNOR - Did anyone say that to Mr Winter at the last hearing?

CHAIR - What was your question, Tania?

Ms RATTRAY - Minister, I'm interested in the quantum of funds that have been provided for any transition arrangements, certainly the Financial Assistance Package. We heard from our briefer last week that it was approximately \$4.8 million. Can we have some sort of indication of where the Government sits with that quantum, and how the tiers of any transition might look? And what happens when that \$4.8 million, if that's the quantum, doesn't meet what's required for those tiers for any people exiting the industry?

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you very much, Ms Rattray. The \$4.8 million you refer to is what's been budgeted so far for the transition process more broadly, including the processes of managing the transition and including the development of the Transition Plan itself. It also includes some provision for increased rehoming of greyhounds and a few other costs that were known and projected at the time. Importantly, that budget amount was developed and approved before the Transition Plan was finalised and the mechanism for financial support for participants leaving the industry was finalised.

You've seen in the Transition Plan the model that the Commissioner and his team have proposed for how different types of participants in the industry in different tiers of dependence on greyhounds as part of their income, and exposure to hardship as a result, potentially, of the cessation of racing and that part of their livelihood. You see the mechanism that's been proposed in the Transition Plan, but not dollar figures. I think that the Commissioner has made clear that those dollar figures are a matter for Government to consider.

To answer your question, the \$4.8 million is the existing budget allocation, which is a provision to get the transition process developed and underway. With the Transition Plan now in hand, we've been able to do some more work on what it will likely cost and what the budget will need to be for that. Now, that won't be something that we can finalise fully until the Bill is passed and we know what the timing is of the commencement of the transition, and we know of any changes that might happen to the Bill through its final stages through the Parliament.

Just like the Transition Plan itself, it is proposed, a draft, and we're looking at the costing question in the same context. That work is underway and we are looking at an additional funding ask that will be put through the normal budget process. That might be something which commences with the upcoming budget and is then added to over successive budgets, as we understand the way that people are moving through the transition.

Ms RATTRAY - Can you give me some idea of what's been spent so far when you talked about all of those aspects that have already been included in the \$4.8 million, if that's the correct figure? That was one of the questions. How much has already been spent? What's effectively left, given this process appears to be quite protracted?

Mr JAENSCH - I can take that on notice; I don't have those figures with me, Ms Rattray. But what I would say is that we believe there is sufficient in the budget allocation for us to commence the transition process should the Bill pass within this financial year. We have an understanding of what we believe the full costs will be, and so we expect to be putting budget bids in for this coming budget process and then subsequent budgets.

Ms RATTRAY - The timeline for progressing the Bill in the Legislative Council, can you provide us with some indication of whether you plan to bring that before the end of the sitting year? Or are you expecting that people continue to have to be in a very difficult state into next year? Can you give us some indication of where your thinking is?

Mr JAENSCH - No, I recognise that we have people who are awaiting the next steps in this, whose livelihoods and whose involvement in the industry is something which is -

Ms RATTRAY - Mental health.

Mr JAENSCH - That's right. That's why we have provided for a range of counselling services to be available to people, recognising that issue. It's also why I took the decision to release the draft Transition Plan, which is something that the Bill requires the Commissioner will do after the Bill has passed. It's not a requirement yet, but we've been progressing the work on it. I wanted to put it out there so that there was something in the void that people could see about what the Government's intentions are about how this transition would work, and that it's not a simplistic, sort of political thing that we're doing; that it's actually well thought out and there's good policy behind this.

Hopefully, with the Transition Plan now out there, even though it's a draft and will remain draft until after the bill passes, people can see that their circumstances have been heard and understood, and there is a Plan that responds to that. We're interested in people's feedback on it, but our aim would be to get the Bill through and that Plan in place as soon as possible. I want this Transition Plan to be on the ground and working as soon as possible in the interests of not only industry participants but also greyhounds. The earlier we can do it the better, but it all hinges on the Bill getting through. So, I want to be confident that we can answer the questions that people may have before returning the Bill to the Leg Co [Legislative Council] or resuming debate.

Ms RATTRAY - Is there a timeline? Is it before the end of this calendar year, or does it go into next year?

Mr JAENSCH - No, my hope would be to conclude it this year.

CHAIR - Minister, the draft Transition Plan, obviously, is in draft format and will still, once it's finalised, should the Bill pass, still be a dynamic document because there'll be changes in the industry; the way people exit will be different to what is necessarily planned. Does it concern you that since the Government announced its policy in August last year, we've seen an increase in the number of greyhounds racing and also an increase in breeding, contrary to what we would assume would be the caution that the industry should approach breeding and increasing the number of dogs in the industry? Does that concern you on how that might affect the Transition Plan?

Mr JAENSCH - That seems to be a trend or an anomaly that has been brought to my attention. I can't account for it. I don't know why this would be a time for people to be breeding up numbers. But it appears in the audits, so it's something we'll have to factor in when it comes to the costs, the timeframe and logistics of retiring those animals and those participants from the industry.

CHAIR - And that will speak to the urgency of the need to actually determine the matter one way or the other?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes.

Ms O'CONNOR - We learnt at last week's hearing with the Racing Integrity Commissioner that the latest audit of the number of dogs caught up in this terrible industry is at 1120, which was a significant jump from the previous audit's result of 1052. That's a lot of dogs that'll need rehoming should the Bill pass, in line with community expectations. We heard before Mrs Rattray talk about the mental health of industry participants. I'd like to note that people who are working in animal rehoming, in fostering these dogs, in taking one home to join their own families, also experience mental health challenges when they see dogs being injured and killed on the track.

Do you accept that the mental health impacts of this industry are much broader than the participants themselves? Noting that, of course, given that your Government has indicated a desire, in line with community expectations, to phase out greyhound racing, that participants will be suffering. But so too are people who love and want to see these animals live good lives, like all other household dogs.

Mr JAENSCH - Yes, I don't disagree at all. Certainly, nobody wants to see animals suffering at all or to know or hear reports that they are, and that this is happening frequently in what is otherwise a highly regulated and Government-supported sector. That's the issue here. That's the thing that we're responding to with our policy and now with a Plan. Noting that other places around Australia and the world have also grappled with these issues. Greyhound racing has been stopped in other jurisdictions.

Ms O'CONNOR - Most.

Mr JAENSCH - As far as I'm aware, and as far as the advice I have, no one else has had a Transition Plan like this to do it in an orderly way, that addresses the issue of numbers fundamentally, through legislation, the prohibition on breeding for racing, the introduction of a mandatory retirement age for dogs from racing, both of which can drop out numbers from that population that you're talking about at. No more recruitment and immediate retirement of a certain demographic of dogs as well. We also, on top of that, recognise that many of the greyhounds have bloodlines that have been improved over years and they have significant commercial value. This is one where our views may differ with some people with an animal welfare focus, but we believe one of the ways to accelerate out of greyhound racing in Tasmania is to allow people, within the transition period, to move their dogs to other jurisdictions and to sell them on the open market.

Ms O'CONNOR - Those poor dogs.

Mr JAENSCH - I've been introduced to puppies that I'm told are worth \$15,000 each. That's a credit to their breeding and their breeders.

But what I'm going back to is that the numbers that you're talking about and the transition that we want to achieve is not going to be solely done through the mechanisms of rehoming. There will be also, we expect, people who decide they want to stay in racing or they want to move their dogs to other jurisdictions to race or to be owned by somebody else. They can do

that in the market right now, and our Transition Plan doesn't prohibit that. Again, it's a difficult one in terms of our responsibility for animal welfare outcomes for the dogs, but in the interests of getting to our endpoint, it is a significant way that a significant number of dogs may be able to be moved out of Tasmanian racing.

Ms O'CONNOR - Can I ask, would the Government be providing financial support, potentially, to those industry participants to relocate?

Mr JAENSCH - Not in the transition plan model as I understand, but in the voluntary exit offer, which is time-limited to the end of December this year. If people are wanting to exit the industry and the state with their dogs, and to get out of the industry, we have an avenue there to engage them and assist them to a reasonable level.

Ms O'CONNOR - Can I just finally - just need to check. It's not clear in the draft Transition plan what the funding arrangements will be for rehoming organisations beyond Greyhounds As Pets [GAP], which do a great job but their powers are limited, as is their capacity. Does the Government recognise it'll need to provide extra funding to rehoming organisations that aren't GAP?

Mr JAENSCH - Yes, we recognise the need to provide for more capacity in the rehoming area. I think you'll see from some of the other documents that there's - we see that that might cost about \$2.4 million additional to what's already been budgeted for the transition.

Ms O'CONNOR - Thank you.

Mr WINTER - Minister, you said in an earlier answer to a question that greyhound racing is inherently dangerous, the racing itself is dangerous, and the loss of dogs is traumatic for everyone. Given that view, why is it that the Government's position is that it must shut down greyhound racing, but not the two equine codes, or even rodeos where there are fatalities and injuries?

Mr JAENSCH - Our policy, you're right, focuses on greyhound racing and its cessation. Our policy is also that we'll continue to support the equine codes, and continuing improvement in those codes on animal welfare and integrity in the sector. We've undertaken significant reforms you're well aware of over recent years. One of the factors that's particularly different is that in the equine codes there's a rider or a driver who is also able to manage what happens during the race, in a way that we cannot do when the dogs are released and they're off and running.

Ms O'CONNOR - That's right.

Mr JAENSCH - There's a human element in the managing of how their race plays out, how the animals and their welfare is managed throughout the race that we don't have in greyhounds.

Mr WINTER - Minister, there have been on-track deaths at, for example, the Launceston Cup early last year I believe, with The Inevitable. We've seen deaths of thoroughbreds on Devonport Cup Day in front of the main crowd. Given that you've said the reason you're shutting greyhound racing is because it's inherently dangerous, what confidence could the two equine codes have that your Government isn't going to shut them down as well?

Mr JAENSCH - Now we've made our commitment to that, to continuing, supporting and improving the equine codes plainly clear. That will also be underpinned in the new racing Deed. We know that there will be impacts on racing as a whole from the cessation of greyhound racing, and that there may be costs that the other codes, or the management of other codes, may need to absorb because they're not shared across three codes anymore, fewer participants. But the other things that we see - and it was included in the economic assessment or the financial assessment that was published with the Transition Plan - is that the other codes have some challenges of their own economically, and I'm looking forward in the new Deed to being able to chart a course with the harness racing and thoroughbred sectors on how we drive the commercial viability of those codes, as well as the integrity and animal welfare performance of the codes.

Mr WINTER - On that, the greyhound transition and racing feasibility studies, appendix 4 of the Transition Plan, and it outlines the costs per race, on point 2.4, it outlines that thoroughbred race held in Hobart loses almost \$26,000 per race compared to a greyhound race which is losing around 20 times less money. How are you going to resolve this problem if we have races that are costing \$25,000 every time they're run?

Ms O'CONNOR - You're making a case against thoroughbred and harness racing.

Mr WINTER - Absolutely not.

Ms O'CONNOR - It sounds like it.

Mr JAENSCH - If you want to announce a proper policy shift or anything, you could do that.

Mr WINTER - This is serious issue, Minister, and it's your responsibility to resolve that.

Mr JAENSCH - It's why I referred to that there are challenges in all the codes, the challenges regarding animal welfare in the greyhound code. Once that we've made a decision, we've done all we can, we are not able to eliminate that risk to an acceptable level for animals and we believe that the community is not prepared to continue to support that. We agree and that's why we're putting this plan in place.

In terms of the other codes, we believe there is still social licence and there is a higher degree of ability to manage the animal welfare matters, but also for there to be improvement in the sector so that Tasmania continues to be a competitive and commercially viable place for racing to take place, attracting sponsorship and wagering as well as investment in Tasmanian racing itself.

Mr WINTER - Tasracing submitted its financials to ASIC, as I said earlier, which outlined that in their view there'll be no real savings from shutting down greyhound racing.

Ms O'CONNOR - That is their claim.

Mr WINTER - Chair, is it okay if I get through my questions without interruption?

CHAIR - Continue.

Mr WINTER - Thank you. We also have the funding submission that was submitted to Government from Tasracing itself and the submission that we've received in b. 6 - The Funding Requests - outlines a request from Tasracing for \$1.2 billion over 20 years. That doesn't include the point of consumption tax distribution. Effectively, they're asking for about \$1 billion over 20 years in net terms. What's the Government's response to that and does the Government agree with Tasracing when it says in (b. 5.4) that there are major consequences for not being provided with that level of funding?

Ms O'CONNOR - Cash grab.

Mr WINTER - Chair, I'm really struggling with the interruptions here.

CHAIR - Minister, if you'd like to respond to the question.

Mr JAENSCH - In any budget process there are bids put forward and there's due diligence done. There's then a process of negotiation to find a manageable outcome, so what I'm looking at is the review of the Tasracing Deed that's been undertaken with fresh figures, very recently, by Treasury and NRE that the Government's been briefed on, and it raises a range of matters in there. It also looks at the changed cost structure and revenue for Tasracing and racing as a whole with the cessation of greyhounds. This is an area where there is significant Government investment.

On a surprising range of levels in greyhound racing, there's a range of costs that go from contribution to the stakes available for racing to subsidies for some owners to bring their animals to races. There are contributions to facilities that they race on, the stewards and the integrity structures of racing, the services of veterinarians pre and post each race, every dog. There are rebates for treatments of injuries to dogs. There are rebates for the euthanising of dogs where that's required on medical grounds, and there is the cost of rehoming. The is \$0.9 million every year in the Tasracing budget, which is specifically for rehoming.

There's a lot of costs associated with having greyhound racing at every turn that we will not have as costs if greyhound racing finishes, and we believe that the Tasmanian community doesn't want to spend its money on all those things to enable this industry for entertainment purposes, given its animal welfare risks that are inherent in it and can no longer be mitigated sufficiently to meet the community's expectation. So, we believe when you take those costs out and once the tail of rehoming the remaining dogs after the cessation of greyhound racing is met, and when the assets involved in greyhound racing activities are distributed, according to their constitutions, that, yes, there will be savings to the costs of running racing.

Mr WINTER - That goes against the evidence that we've got from the Tasracing submission to ASIC, from the Tasracing's submission to this Committee, from Tasracing's evidence that's provided to this. In fact, what they've said is that there will be no net savings from shutting down greyhound -

Ms O'CONNOR - They would say that, wouldn't they?

Mr JAENSCH - Just on this, one of the things that you'll see referenced in the Transition Plan - please correct me if I'm wrong - is that the Commissioner will require Tasracing to keep records of its changing services and costs associated with greyhound racing through the

transition period, including where there are fewer races because there are fewer dogs and there's a reorganising of the schedule. That needs to be counted. When there are assets or facilities retired from use or changes in the usage of things like the rehoming program over time, they'll all be recorded, so we'll document the changing costs of supporting and managing greyhound racing as part of this transition. Is that incorrect in any way.

Ms WILSON - No, that's correct.

Mr JAENSCH - No, good.

Mr WINTER - Minister, within that same submission where Tasracing's asking for \$1.2 billion over 20 years, it says -

The consequences for inadequate funding are,

two of them are -

complete rationalisation of racing clubs and facilities, and closure of regional racing clubs and facilities, and a broader review of the feasibility of operating ongoing a regulated harness racing or thoroughbred racing industry in Tasmania.

Do you accept that those two are real risks right now to the industry?

Mr JAENSCH - I think there will be changes which are linked to removing greyhound racing, but there are significant underlying challenges and risks to the economics of those codes regardless. I think that the analysis we've seen reflects that.

We are committed to a new Deed. We are talking with the industry and I'm listening directly to industry participants about what's important in that to them.

One of the things that you've referred to is the pitch for what a 20-year Deed might look like and if you extrapolate out what the current Deed provides year-on-year for 20 years, it is a big number.

One of the things that is clearer though for me now than when I first became Minister is the timeframes in which investments in the equine codes take place - the breeding through to when a horse is racing and competitive and has a chance of winning prize money.

Mr WINTER - We're over the horizon now, Minister. That's the point.

Mr JAENSCH - Yes, I know, and this is the point because 20 years ago, or 17, 16 years ago, there was a 20-year funding Deed which seemed like it solved the problem forever. We're now nearly at the end of forever and all of a sudden there are these anxieties, so whatever -

Mr WINTER - It's not all of a sudden, Minister. The industry's been talking about this for three years.

Mr JAENSCH - But in terms of how the Deed was set up in the first place, it didn't anticipate what happens at this end of the game. Now, what I believe we need to have built into

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the new deed is a mechanism by which there is a rolling arrangement where there is always a timeframe ahead of the industry that it can have confidence in which to invest, which means it doesn't necessarily need to be a 20-year deed to provide certainty. It could be a shorter period but with frequent renewal, so you always can see within your investment horizon, what's going to happen next.

Mr WINTER - Minister, Tasracing asked to renew this Deed three years ago. They provided a draft submission to then-Minister Ellis which was ignored.

We're in this position not because of the way it was set up -

Ms O'CONNOR - Tasracing doesn't call the shots.

Mr WINTER - because your Government has failed to renegotiate the Deed and sign anything.

Mr JAENSCH - Tasracing's a government-owned entity and we work with it and we're working with it right now on developing the new deed.

Mr WINTER - This is my last question, Chair.

Does your Government accept that the way it's run this industry over the last 13 years has directly led to this situation: the race-fixing that's been found, the massive animal welfare breaches, the lack of certainty from not having a Deed going forward, the performance of the Office of Racing Integrity and continued directors of racing who didn't know what they're doing, and the loss of confidence hasn't just come now it's actually come from repeated breaches of trust with this industry. Now they can't trust a single thing that you say. You said earlier that it's plainly clear that you support the two equine codes. How could anyone believe you? You wrote a letter to the greyhound racing industry in July last year offering your full support and now you want the other two codes to believe that you've got their back. How could they believe that?

Mr JAENSCH - You've sprayed a fair bit around in that speech, Mr Winter. What I would point to is the significant reforms to integrity in particular and animal welfare as well. Generational reforms of the Tasmanian racing industry that this Government has initiated and seen through to change systems that were unchanged, ignored, under-served for generations before. This Government has brought in substantial reform in terms of the integrity and reputation of racing generally and in responding to matters of social licence and animal welfare, with greyhound racing in particular with our policy.

Looking forward, I note that Labor has made statements about it, what it thinks should happen in the future regarding greyhound racing and Government funding for it and stopping Government funding for greyhound racing. As I understand it, that's the policy of your party.

Members interjecting.

CHAIR - Excuse me, we are coming to the end of our hearing. I have a question. I know Ms Rattray has a question.

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Mr JAENSCH - The Government's policy is to bring in a Transition Plan for the industry which deals with animal welfare as well as a sensitive, reasonable and affordable transition for participants. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR - Minister, I think it's important to note that there's hundreds of community service organisations who would dearly love the certainty of a 20-year deed that Tasracing has enjoyed so far and demanding a further 20 years. And certainly, the irony is not lost on me and I'm sure many in the community in regard to that.

Minister, the draft Transition Plan is out for community feedback. I understand from the Commissioner's evidence last week that people are invited to provide feedback to your office.

What's the timeframe for that when you're having to collate that feedback and provide that back to the Commissioner? How can community members be engaged in that process? Importantly, are you seeking feedback from Legislative Council members who raise questions either in their second reading or with you directly or more publicly, contributions about the information that they need to see to be able to answer questions about what a transition might look like to the end of greyhound racing?

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you, Chair. I've written to Legislative Councillors advising them that the Commissioner is available to them to answer questions or to provide a briefing on the Transition Plan drafting that he has overseen. That's something that he's the most appropriate person to answer questions that people have.

With regard to the Transition Plan itself, it's a draft, it's something which isn't complete until the enabling legislation is passed, so it's highly provisional. We've released it in good faith in the interests of being able to describe what our intentions would be should the Bill pass, both for industry participants and those concerned about the issues that it addresses, but also so that we've got something with more structure to it so that Government can prepare in regard to budgets and other things to make the transition happen. It is a draft and it is highly provisional because it's dependent on a Bill that may still change. It can't operate without the Bill. If we took away, for example, the prohibition on breeding dogs for racing, this Transition Plan doesn't work, the mandatory retirement doesn't work, and you'd have to question any payments for any sort of transitions for any participants at all because it would be like digging a hole in water, there would be replacements there straight away.

We are not running a formal consultation process with dates and submissions and reviews on this draft at this time, partly because we may have to do it all over again. We're putting it out there to socialise so that people can see what the Government's intentions are, to provide some information where there's not enough, including for the Legislative Councillors who like to have lots of information available to them before they make their decisions, so those independent in particular who have not yet made their position clear.

CHAIR - Just to be very clear for the record, although there is no formal consultation, members of the community, whether it be industry, community members, rehome organisations, Legislative Councillors, anyone interested in the draft can forward to you, ask questions, provide feedback and that will be calculated and provided either in a number of iterations or one iteration to the Commissioner for tweaking.

Mr JAENSCH - That's right. We'll be collecting that now. The other critical part is this Committee, which has throughout the process been a forum for opening up these questions, people who are interested, being able to see their questions asked, the answers given, et cetera. This is an important mechanism and will continue to be and will be in itself providing reports and feedback to Government and the public and the Parliament on the matters covered in the Transition Plan.

Ms RATTRAY - Just a point of clarification, if I can Minister. When you talked about all the aspects of facilitating greyhound racing and you talked about Tasracing, that they will have a saving and I think I wrote down \$3.2 million of savings, but isn't it already the case that the allocation of all of that comes out of the code's allocation? That's not a separate allocation. Do you understand what I mean?

Mr JAENSCH - Not quite, no.

Ms RATTRAY - Well, the allocation for all those things that you ticked off, it actually doesn't come from Tasracing, it comes from the code. The code provides those, or is that not the case?

Mr JAENSCH - I might ask Ms Wilson if she would care to provide a bit more of an unpacking of how those funding flows work.

Ms WILSON - There are different pots of money that go towards the current greyhound racing industry.

Ms RATTRAY - Right, so they don't all come from Tasracing? That's probably the question I should have asked. They don't all come from the Tasracing pot?

Ms WILSON - There are different sources of funding, I would need to look at Tasracing's accounting for how they account for these, but at the highest level, there is a net cost in running greyhound racing of around \$3.2 million net.

Mr JAENSCH - Net, which is cost minus attributable revenue.

Ms WILSON - That's correct. Tasracing put some figures into the hearing around the net cost of racing. That's on the record.

Mr WINTER - Which is the same.

Ms RATTRAY - All right. Can we have a breakdown of those costs? Can the Committee receive a breakdown of those costs and if that's not possible, Chair, if we can't get that, I will put it into the Transition Plan process.

CHAIR - I think, Tania, if I may, we already have that. It was in the Tasracing submission, if I understand correctly. Is that the one you're referring to, Tania?

Ms RATTRAY - A complete breakdown of all those aspects that the Minister referred to.

Mr JAENSCH - I think they're taken up as sort of net costs in that figure that Mr Winter was referring to before. The thing I was raising before with that list, Ms Rattray, was there are the costs of running greyhounds and that Tasracing's funds provided by Government contribute to are more than prize money. They're sort of every aspect and it's very hard to see how not doing greyhound racing anymore doesn't represent a saving because there's all these things you're just not paying for anymore, which cost someone somewhere in the mix. We're not pursuing the cessation of greyhound racing in order to make a saving, but when I look at the taxpayers' liability, from what I'm looking at at the moment, and our modelling of the costs of delivering this transition, in whole, the cost of the transition will be largely met over time, compared to business as usual, through the savings accrued from not doing racing anymore. That, in itself, is mentioned in the feasibility study report that was appended to the Transition Plan. I think that that's something that we need to be able to reassure the taxpayer, that they're not comfortable with their money being used to support this industry anymore, it's going to cost money to have a transition but, in total, those costs will be largely recovered in savings from doing it.

Ms RATTRAY - So, why is Tasracing still looking for the same type of funding for two codes? Give us some understanding of what your understanding is of that.

Mr JAENSCH - They're putting a bid into a budget process. They're not going to come and ask for less.

Ms RATTRAY - Ask more and then hope to get less?

Mr JAENSCH - Well, might be. You'll have to ask them. Where the costs are less, we would expect them to be deducted from the bid going forward. However, there are a lot of other things that we need to consider in the review of the Tasracing deed in terms of the future viability and commercial operation of the industry as well. It's one factor amongst many that's being looked at in the review.

Ms O'CONNOR - I want to talk about the role that Tasracing has played since the announcement of the Government's policy to phase out greyhound racing. We found in our first report that was tabled in parliament that Tasracing provides unreliable data. We had a submission presented to this Committee which made some hysterical claims about animal welfare issues that would be consequent of the transition and phase-out, which we very quickly debunked. It seems to me, at least on the evidence, that the current leadership of Tasracing does not support the phase-out of greyhound racing. I ask for your thoughts on that, and whether there's any thinking about adjusting the Ministerial Statement of Expectations to Tasracing to make it very clear that it is the Government's intention to phase out and defund greyhound racing?

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you. Tasracing operates the industry in accordance with legislation of the time. That's what they do. Tasracing is aware of the Government's policies regarding greyhounds. That's not in law yet. It hopefully will be reflected when the legislation passes and we'll be on a different footing then.

I can't account for the views of individuals in the past. What I do know is that we have a Government-owned entity which is performing its functions under the legislation of the time. If and when that legislation changes, the rules change, but the statement of expectations might

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not, because it'll say, 'Conduct yourself according to these acts and rules and requirements, codes and standards', et cetera.

Ms O'CONNOR - Okay. To be clear though, and you indicated this in an earlier answer, there's been a lot of stock put into Tasracing's budget bid, as well as its various statements on this issue by some Committee Members. But you're not surprised that Tasracing's put in an ambit claim for the same, if not more money, on the basis of just the two codes operating post the cessation of greyhound racing?

Mr JAENSCH - I'm relatively new into my relationship with Tasracing and the whole process of budgeting for it, et cetera. The greyhound cessation policy and Transition Plan, and the implications of that for budgets, is all quite new information and it's still evolving. What a bid might have been much earlier this year maybe hasn't been informed by the information that we've had since then. And we have a matter there which is Government policy subject to parliament's decision-making. I suppose that Tasracing, as a Government entity, has to do the job it's got now, which will change if greyhound racing cessation becomes law.

CHAIR - Thank you, Minister and Deidre. We have come to the end of our hearing today. Thank you very much for your appearance before us. Just to remind you that what you have said to us here today is protected by parliamentary privilege and once you leave the table, you need to be aware that privilege is not attached to comments you may make to anyone, including the media, even if you're just repeating what you said to us today. Do you understand that?

Mr JAENSCH – Yes, thank you.

CHAIR - Thank you very much for your attendance. We will stop the broadcast there.

The witnesses withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 11 a.m.