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Hon Adriana Taylor MLC
Chair
Joint Select Committee on Greyhound Racing in Tasmania
House of Assembly
Parliament House
HOBART TAS 7000

Dear Ms Taylor *Adriana*

I refer to your letter of 31 March 2016, addressed to Mr Tony Murray, Director of Racing, requesting an update on the progress of the implementation of recommendations made in the Review of Arrangements for Animal Welfare in the Tasmanian Greyhound Racing Industry.

Please find **enclosed** a report with respect to the current status of each recommendation.

Yours sincerely

Hon Adam Brooks MP
Minister for Racing

Review of Arrangements for Animal Welfare in the Tasmanian Greyhound Racing Industry

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROGRESS

RECOMMENDATION	Status as at 26 April 2016
5.1 Live Baiting 1 Create a mandatory penalty under the Rules of Racing that any person found guilty of live baiting is disqualified from the industry for life.	The following National Rule became effective in Tasmanian on 30 April 2015. GAR 86(B) states: “(1) A person who, in the opinion of the Stewards or Controlling Body- (a) uses in connection with greyhound training, education or preparation to race, or racing, any live animal, animal carcass or any part of an animal whether as bait, quarry or lure, or to entice, excite or encourage a greyhound to pursue it or otherwise; or (b) attempts to possess, or has possession of, or brings onto, any grounds, premises or within the boundaries of any property where greyhounds are, or are to be trained, kept or raced, any live animal, animal carcass or any part of an animal for the purpose of being, or which might reasonably be capable of being, or likely to be, used as bait, quarry or lure to entice or excite or encourage a greyhound to pursue it; or (c) causes, procures, permits or allows a greyhound to pursue or attack any live animal, animal carcass or any part of an animal; (d) fails to use reasonable endeavours to prevent a greyhound pursuing or attacking any live animal, animal carcass or any part of an animal; or (e) is in any way directly or indirectly involved in committing, or is knowingly concerned with, such conduct as set out in (a), (b), (c) or (d) of this Rule; or (f) aids, abets, counsels or procures any person to commit such conduct as set out in (a), (b), (c) or (d) of this Rule; or (g) is convicted in any Court of an offence in relation to the use of, or having in their possession, any live animal, animal carcass or part of an animal in connection with greyhound training, education or preparation to race, or racing shall be disqualified for a period of not less than 10 years and, in addition shall be fined a sum not exceeding such amount as specified in the relevant Act or Rules, unless there is a finding that a special circumstance exists, whereupon a penalty less than the minimum penalty may be imposed. (2) A person who witnesses conduct as set out in (1)(a), (1)(b), 1(c), or 1(d) above but fails to report that conduct to the Controlling Body as soon as reasonably practicable shall be disqualified for a period of not less than 5 years and/or fined a sum not exceeding twenty thousand (\$20,000) dollars.”
2 Create a rule which imposes a penalty not only on the person found guilty of live baiting, but also on any greyhound in the person's care and control.	Stewards have a range of powers which enable them to take action should such a matter come before them.

Review of Arrangements for Animal Welfare in the Tasmanian Greyhound Racing Industry RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROGRESS

RECOMMENDATION		Status as at 26 April 2016
3	Create an offence under the Rules of Racing for a person to keep or house on a property used for training or educating greyhounds, any small animals that could be used for live baiting.	In conjunction with GAR86(B), as outlined above, National Rule 86C(5) became effective in Tasmania on 30 April 2015. This rule deals with small animals being kept on a greyhound property. GAR 86C(5) states: <i>(5) A person shall not be in breach of Rule 86B(1)(b) where the animal is kept on or at the premises as a domesticated pet or is kept for rural or agricultural purposes with prior notification to and approval from the Controlling Body. For the purpose of this sub-rule, notification must be in the manner and form required by the Controlling Body for this exclusion to apply.</i> Further, the Office of Racing Integrity (ORI) has conducted a review of small animals kept on greyhound properties in Tasmania and is currently working with industry to put in place a set of standards that are consistent with the rule.
4	Create an offence under the Rules of Racing for a person to have on a property used for training or educating greyhounds any device for the trapping of small animals.	ORI stewards review such matters when conducting kennel inspections.
5	Only permit use of bullrings by a registered person who is in charge of the property on which the bullring is located & only permit greyhounds trained by that person to utilise facility.	This recommendation will be considered by the Director of Racing (DOR) in the conditions pertaining to the registration of bullrings, which will be implemented at the commencement of the 2016/17 racing season. The conditions will be comprehensive to ensure that a full record is kept of the usage of each bullring.

Review of Arrangements for Animal Welfare in the Tasmanian Greyhound Racing Industry

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROGRESS

RECOMMENDATION		Status as at 26 April 2016
6	Investigate the construction of bullrings on registered trial tracks under the control of Tasracing, with 24/7 CCTV monitoring which is only available to RST stewards or RSPCA officers (if this recommendation is adopted, consider the banning of all private bullrings).	The matter was investigated by Tasracing. Tasracing notes there are currently no trial tracks under its control Tasracing understands that bullrings are important training facilities for industry participants and supports their ongoing responsible use. Tasracing gave consideration to the practicalities of bullring facilities being constructed on its venues but could not support the idea as Tasracing venues are designed for racing and trialling only. The construction of bullrings, with CCTV, at Tasracing venues would not be practical due to the limited times they would be available for industry use outside of horse racing and trialling. Additionally, as only one dog can be trained in a bullring at a time, one bullring per venue would not meet the demand if no other training option was available to participants and therefore this would very likely be cost prohibitive.
5.2 Lifespan of a Greyhound		
7	Ensure races are programmed specifically for greyhounds with less ability and for mature age greyhounds.	New programming policy implemented by Tasracing, effective 1 November 15 with races now programmed for older greyhounds (masters' races) and races for greyhounds with lesser ability (non-penalty reverse order of choice selection).
8	Ensure that the Grading Schedule provides further racing opportunities for greyhounds that are no longer competitive in their current grade.	The DOR conducted a review of the grading schedule with changes implemented on 1 October 2015. The primary basis for the changes was to provide enhanced racing opportunities for greyhounds with limited ability and for those which were no longer competitive in their grade.
9	An assessment be made of funding and opportunities for greyhounds to be rehomed once they have completed their racing careers	Tasracing reviewed the Greyhound Adoption Program and doubled the funding provided in 2015/16 to \$214k. Ongoing review and strategic development is addressing issues surrounding future funding levels, purpose built facilities, equipment and staffing.

Review of Arrangements for Animal Welfare in the Tasmanian Greyhound Racing Industry RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROGRESS

RECOMMENDATION		Status as at 26 April 2016
5.3 Welfare-related Legislation, Rules, etc		
10	A review of the interaction between national and local rules be undertaken, noting that national rules should prevail over any local rules and that a harmonised national approach should be adopted.	Tasracing has advised that Greyhounds Australasia (GA) recently conducted an audit of States' local rules and the national rules and no conflicts were identified in Tasmania, meaning at this time a further review is not warranted.
11	Ensure breeding rules and policies are supported and informed by detailed statistical data and education.	In December 2013 the DOR commenced the tracking of all greyhounds whelped in Tasmania from the commencement of the 2011/12 racing season. This data is updated on a regular basis. Tasracing advises that Greyhounds Australasia's Welfare Working Party has been implementing strategies and rules to encourage responsible breeding, including education, which is articulated in the GA National Welfare strategy.
12	Regularly assess breeding rules and policies to ensure they are consistent and compliant with animal welfare legislation and contemporary animal welfare standards.	New national breeding rules and policies in relation to number of litters permitted implemented 1 August 2015. Tasracing advises that Greyhounds Australasia's Welfare Working Party has been implementing strategies and rules to encourage responsible breeding, including education, which is articulated in the GA National Welfare strategy. One of the objectives of this group is to review the rules and policies to ensure their consistency and compliance with animal welfare legislation and contemporary welfare standards

Review of Arrangements for Animal Welfare in the Tasmanian Greyhound Racing Industry

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROGRESS

RECOMMENDATION		Status as at 26 April 2016
5.4 Conflict between Policies		
13	Ensure incentives to breed are properly balanced with responsible breeding and welfare considerations.	Breeder rebates concluded. Initiatives to fulfil Tasracing's legislative obligations with respect to promoting the development of an efficient and effective horse and greyhound breeding industry, are regularly reviewed and assessed against responsible breeding and welfare considerations.
14	Transfer current funding allocated to a Vaccination, Microchipping and Rearing Rebate (formerly referred to as a breeder's bonus) to retirement and rehoming opportunities for greyhounds.	Tasracing, in consultation with the greyhound industry, has discontinued all breeding rebates (including rebates provided for the cost of DNA testing of the breeding female). Tasracing funds the Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP) of Tasmania which assists in the re-training and placement of retired greyhounds in the community. This funding was doubled to \$214K in 2015/16. Tasracing acknowledges that GAP provides an important service to the industry, however, this does not diminish the requirement that owners must take life-long responsibility for their dogs
5.5 Adequacy of Powers		
15	Enhance the powers of entry for animal welfare officers under the Animal Welfare Act 1993, and RST stewards under the Rules of Racing, to ensure they are properly supported with respect to live baiting and other animal welfare issues.	Amendments to the <i>Animal Welfare Act 1993</i> were introduced on 24 June 2015. The amendments enhanced the powers of animal welfare officers to enter, search and inspect premises and to collect evidence of an offence, and also extended the term of imprisonment to a maximum of five years for offences such as aggravated cruelty which results in an animal's death or serious disablement. The DOR has conducted a review of powers of the stewards. The review determined that the powers of entry for stewards and the ability to regulate licensed persons were satisfactory.
16	Consider an amendment to the <i>Racing Regulation Act 2004</i> to enable stewards to require unlicensed persons to appear before inquiries and provide documents if it can reasonably be determined that the person is of particular interest to an inquiry under the Rules of Racing.	The Minister is considering the matter with respect to the regulation of unlicensed persons.

Review of Arrangements for Animal Welfare in the Tasmanian Greyhound Racing Industry RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROGRESS

RECOMMENDATION	Status as at 26 April 2016
5.6 Education, Training and Competencies 17 Implement an industry education program with respect to contemporary animal welfare standards.	Tasracing has already implemented a progressive industry training programme for all codes of racing. Greyhound participants must complete the following requirements in order to be licensed in 2016/17: Attendants / Catchers to complete a 2 unit skill set, compromising the following units; RGRCMN201A Following OHS procedures and environmental work practices RGRPSG201A Handle Greyhounds Owner Trainer/Public Trainer to complete a 4 unit skill set, compromising the following units: RGRCMN201A Following OHS procedures and environmental work practices RGRPSG201A Handle Greyhounds RGRPSG205A Attend Greyhounds at meetings RGRCMN001A Comply with the rules of racing and related protocols Animal Welfare is an important component of the units. In addition, Tasracing published a Greyhound Animal Welfare Manual which is available on www.tasracing.com.au and printed copies are available at all race tracks. The GA's National Welfare Working Party is also reviewing the requisites and education requirements for all new licensed persons and animal welfare will form part of those educational requirements.
18 Link licensing requirements to attendance and assessment at education programs in respect of animal welfare standards.	Currently being implemented with effect from 2016/17 racing season.

Review of Arrangements for Animal Welfare in the Tasmanian Greyhound Racing Industry

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROGRESS

RECOMMENDATION		Status as at 26 April 2016
19	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.	Tasracing progressing with GA. GA's 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. The GA Welfare Working Party is developing registration and education requirements for breeders, whelpers, rearers and educators to help achieve this objective.
20	Establish a requirement that all bullrings and training tracks on properties used for the training and education of greyhounds are registered by the DOR.	The DOR has completed an audit of all bullrings and private training tracks in the State. The next step in the process is the registration of all such facilities, commencing in the 2016/17 racing season. The conditions of registration are currently being developed in consultation with key stakeholders.
21	Establish a process of inspection and audit of properties that have a bullring and/or training track on the property.	As part of the registration of all bullrings and training tracks by the DOR, a process of regular inspections by stewards, at least three times per year will be undertaken. This will be complemented by regular unannounced inspections by stewards.
22	Consider the employment of a Racing Integrity Manager and additional Steward Investigator to support DOR and enhance the delivery of integrity and animal welfare objectives.	Funding provided by Government for two new positions at the Office of Racing Integrity in the 2015/16 State budget. Racing Integrity Manager commenced duties 3 August 2015. Steward Investigator commenced 5 October 2015.
23	Review security and surveillance protocols and practices in place at all Tasracing-controlled racing and trialling venues.	Tasracing regularly reviews security protocols at its racing and training venues.

Review of Arrangements for Animal Welfare in the Tasmanian Greyhound Racing Industry

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROGRESS

RECOMMENDATION		Status as at 26 April 2016
5.10 Practices and Procedures		
24	Make it a requirement that any greyhound that travels interstate whilst still under the care and control of a Tasmanian licensed person must be notified in advance to stewards (except in the case of a greyhound travelling to fulfil an interstate racing commitment).	One objective of the GA National Welfare Strategy is that all greyhounds are to be under the care of a Registered Participant at all times during their lifecycle, unless retired as a pet. The GA Welfare Working Party is developing registration and education requirements for breeders, whelpers, rearers and educators. The goal of the national strategy is also to be able to identify where the greyhound is at any particular time during their lifecycle until they retire. The DOR is keeping a watching brief on these outcomes and will further consider this recommendation in the upcoming months.
5.12 Reporting		
25	Establish a central point of contact, that being the RSPCA, for persons with information in relation to live baiting or any greyhound animal welfare complaints. The contact details of the RSPCA to be included on all greyhound-related published documents.	Agreed in consultation with RSPCA during review that it would be central point of contact. The Office of Racing Integrity forwards all information received with respect to animal welfare concerns to the RSPCA, as well as conducting its own investigations on such matters, as required.
5.13 Communication		
26	Establish formal Memoranda of Understanding between RST, the RSPCA and Tasmania Police for the exchange of information.	MoU between the DOR and RSPCA Tasmania established and executed by the parties on 20 January 2016. MoU between the DOR and Tasmania Police established and executed by the parties on 16 December 2015.
27	Consider the establishment of an independent, national animal welfare taskforce to consider jurisdictional findings and to make joint recommendations to state and territory Racing Ministers and Greyhounds Australasia.	At the Australasian Racing Ministers' conference conducted in November 2015, Minister Rockliff raised the issue of having a national approach to the greyhound issues and other integrity matters. It was determined to re-establish a national body of senior government racing officers to review and co-ordinate such matters.

Review of Arrangements for Animal Welfare in the Tasmanian Greyhound Racing Industry RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROGRESS

RECOMMENDATION	Status as at 26 April 2016
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6.3 Governance Arrangements		
28	Consider the development of an appropriate formal arrangement between the RST division of the Department of State Growth and the Biosecurity Tasmania division of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment.	Racing Services Tasmania (RST) transferred from the Department of State Growth to the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment on 1 July 2015
29	Rebrand Racing Services Tasmania to the Office of Racing Integrity to emphasise its role and differentiate from the commercial body, Tasracing.	RST was rebranded to Office of Racing Integrity on 1 July 2015

