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THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON GREYHOUND RACING IN TASMANIA MET IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, PARLIAMENT HOUSE, HOBART, ON TUESDAY, 30 JUNE 2015

Dr SALLY-ANNE RICHTER, PRESIDENT, TASMANIAN DIVISION, AUSTRALIAN VETERINARY ASSOCIATION LTD, WAS CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WAS EXAMINED.

CHAIR - Sally-Anne, welcome to the committee. This committee hearing is a proceeding of parliament and is protected by parliamentary privilege. Once you leave the proceedings you need to be aware that privilege does not attach to comments you may make to anyone, including the media.

Dr RICHTER - Our 8 500 members come from all fields within the veterinary profession. Clinical practitioners work with companion animals, horses, farm animals such as cattle and sheep, and wild life. Government veterinarians work with our animal health, public health and quarantine systems, while other members work in industry for pharmaceutical and other commercial enterprises. We have members who work in research and teaching in a range of scientific disciplines.

The recent *Four Corners* story exposed serious, widespread and unchecked animal welfare abuses in the greyhound racing industry and has placed a question mark over the future of greyhound racing in Australia. It revealed a failure to adequately investigate, address and remedy unacceptable animal welfare attitudes and practices.

The AVA has not heard concerns from members about specific animal welfare issues such as live baiting taking place in Tasmanian greyhound racing, however given the scale of problems uncovered in three states by *Four Corners* and now emerging in other reviews, it would be naive to think that animal welfare concerns did not exist in the Tasmanian greyhound racing industry.

Tasmania is in a better position than many other jurisdictions, as there is already independent regulation of the greyhound racing industry through Racing Services Tasmania. The AVA supports many of the recommendations made by the recent review of arrangements for animal welfare in the Tasmanian greyhound racing industry by the Tasmanian Chief Veterinary Officer and Director of Racing.

Live baiting is only one of numerous animal welfare issues associated with greyhound racing nationally. Veterinarians have concerns about how greyhounds are bred and reared, trained, raced and their post-racing fate, including the unacceptable rates of animal wastage. The use of greyhounds as blood donors is not considered a problem in itself by the veterinary profession, providing the procedures are done humanely. It is more of a concern that healthy greyhounds are being presented for euthanasia in the first place rather than being re-homed.

Whatever improvements are made in the Tasmanian greyhound racing industry, there is a clear role for a significant increase in veterinary input. This will ensure that standards of animal welfare are maintained and enforced and that they will meet community expectations.

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CHAIR - Thank you, Sally-Anne. The Veterinary Association says in the submission that it would be naive to think there are not animal welfare practices of concern happening here in Tasmania. Can you expand on that a little?

Dr RICHTER - Sure. Given how the *Four Corners* report outlined issues occurring in the other states despite having regulations in place, I think it would be naive to think we are so far removed from what is occurring, given that now it is a national sport and Greyhounds Australasia oversees it. At the same time, I would be surprised if it isn't occurring. I suppose that's where I'm coming from.

CHAIR - In representations made by industry it has been put to us that it is not occurring here. How do you explain that difference in perspective between the Veterinary Association and industry organisations?

Dr RICHTER - Prior to that investigation on *Four Corners* I'm fairly sure those other states also thought it wasn't occurring there either. I think it's important for stewards and the RSPCA to be able to investigate to see whether it is occurring or not and part of that is also giving them the power to do spot checks on properties that are breeding, rearing and using greyhounds within bullrings so they can see whether or not it is occurring. I think we have a lack of information. We don't have any evidence that it is occurring but we're also not looking enough into it to see that it isn't specifically to make sure.

CHAIR - Do representatives of the Australian Veterinary Association in Tasmania have cause from time to time to attend private bullrings or other greyhound kennels and training facilities?

Dr RICHTER - Yes, there are vets who work within the industry itself who would go out to properties usually for vaccinating, microchipping, ear branding. That is usually at the initial stage before they hit four months. In the actual training stage there is less veterinary input. We don't engage as much during that stage unless an injury or something that occurs. Usually at that stage we will see them at the clinic, not on the property.

Part of what AVA is trying to highlight is that between four months to 12 months, the naming period, there is very little involvement of vets and also less regulation from the Government in that time period. On that note, that is also a time when a lot of greyhounds do not reach racing stage and when I looked at some of the statistics, 50 per cent do not make it to racing from when they are born to when they are actually meant to be racing.

CHAIR - Do you believe they are euthanased?

Dr RICHTER - Some, potentially. I would not say all of them are euthanased. Some might be sent elsewhere. They might get re-homed. They might not be eligible, so they might enter a GAP program at a young age. I wouldn't say all of them are being euthanased, no.

CHAIR - But there is a concern there is a very high rate of wastage of pups.

Dr RICHTER - Yes, definitely.

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Mr VALENTINE - Are there any statistics the AVA keeps on the number of dogs that are euthanased?

Dr RICHTER - The Australian Veterinary Association doesn't keep statistics on that. That is overseen by Racing Services Tasmania and we rely on their statistics.

Mr VALENTINE - Because they track the dogs and therefore should know?

Dr RICHTER - Yes. Racing Services Tasmania oversees the tracking of the dogs. I believe that was initially set up in 2013 and they set up a report that tracked the dogs from whelping right through to retirement or where they went.

Mr BACON - So you think 50 per cent of them don't get to that stage where they are tracked?

Dr RICHTER - Looking at the numbers listed on page 26, I was surprised, I didn't realise there were that many that weren't reaching racing or entering the racing fields.

Mrs RYLAH - I have a question on their statistics. I think they go across a number of years, so they are not just necessary for one year, so can you compare one column of numbers against the other and get a valid measure? That is a question I will be putting to them on their statistics.

Dr RICHTER - They have done 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14. I have looked more generally at the numbers presented.

CHAIR - How do you believe the pups that are not making it to racing age are being euthanased? Are they being euthanased by vets? What's the procedure there to your knowledge?

Dr RICHTER - To my knowledge, they should be euthanased by a vet. You will potentially need more clarification from Racing Services Tasmania. I know when we euthanase dogs that are already racing we have to fill in required sheets which ask the reason for them being put to sleep and that is crucial for RST to assess the reasons they are being presented with. The reasons can vary from injury to illness right through to lack of racing ability.

CHAIR - Sorry, the question was about how the puppies that are not making it through to racing age are being euthanased. Is there a view among vets in Tasmania about what's happening there?

Dr RICHTER - I can't speak for all the vets in Tasmania in regard to that. I don't have that information but I can take it with me and ask. From my personal perspective within the clinic that works with greyhounds, we get some greyhounds at that age that come through and we put them to sleep humanely. I don't know if that is reflective of the whole number of greyhounds going through.

Mr VALENTINE - In your submission you talk about implementing the recommendations of the review of arrangements for animal welfare in the Tasmanian greyhound racing industry. What are the most urgent recommendations in the life of a greyhound that you see as being necessary to be implemented?

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Dr RICHTER - There are two main recommendations AVA feels are most urgent to deal with. The first of those is making sure live baiting is completely outlawed and that any greyhounds under the control or care of that trainer are also banned from racing as well. The second big issue is the wastage that occurs within the industry. Looking at those statistics again, in 2013-14 there were 486 dogs euthanased due to lack of racing ability or reaching the end of their racing career, et cetera.

Mr VALENTINE - Is this an Australian statistic?

Dr RICHTER - No, this is Tasmania - and that is greater than one dog a day being euthanased. That is concerning. In that time there were 121 that were retired or re-homed. What we should be addressing is increasing the number who go into GAP if we can so that less of them are euthanased. Dogs that reach the end of their racing career are usually three and a half to four years of age. The average life span of a greyhound is 12 to 15 years. There are a lot of years left where a greyhound could be with a family, providing the family is educated on how that greyhound will operate in the family. Also, that greyhound has that bridging through GAP or similar adoption program - going from a racing lifestyle to one that fits in with a family or an every day household in Tasmania.

Ms RATTRAY - You said in your submission that Tasmania is in a better position than any other jurisdiction and yet you still highlight that we should expect to see live baiting. That does not really make sense to me. If we have the best practices in place, why wouldn't we expect, in a small state like Tasmania, that doesn't go on?

Dr RICHTER - I will address first why we are in a better position. We are in a better position because we have the separation between Racing Services Tasmania and Tasracing.

Ms RATTRAY - The only state, I believe, to have that

Dr RICHTER - Yes, we are. Which is excellent.

Ms RATTRAY - So we get a tick.

Dr RICHTER - So that definitely helps in that we have the integrity of assessment separate to the corporate responsibility of the racing industry in Tasmania.

To think that live baiting is not occurring is being naive. A lot of what happens on the bullring when greyhounds are being trained is done on private property where there are not people out there looking at what happens. Obviously, stewards can go out and investigate but their powers need to be elevated so they can do spot checks - randomly assess and make sure there are not small animals on the property that potentially have been used.

I am afraid I did not get clarification, but in the *Four Corners* report Amanda Hill was the chief steward of Tasmanian racing in 2008. She is one of two successful convictions. I do not know whether that was based in Tasmania. I could not get clarification unfortunately.

CHAIR - It is a case from the north and it was with a carcass.

Dr RICHTER - Sure, it was not live baiting. There was a carcass.

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Ms RATTRAY - No, it was called a greenskin, I believe.

Dr RICHTER - Okay, I apologise for that.

CHAIR - It was a dead animal.

Dr RICHTER - Thank you. If that is occurring as well - if a dead animal is being used - I would be suspicious. We do not have the evidence on what is happening in the bullrings, and that is the AVA's concern.

Ms RATTRAY - So given that you obviously see a lot of people in the practice you are involved in, have you ever heard of that happening?

Dr RICHTER - No, I spoke to trainers at the Launceston Racing Club. They said that in the past - and this was 20 or more years ago - it was a practice that was used. Now it is considered completely taboo, so it should not be used at all.

Ms RATTRAY - Also, can I ask one more question. Are you aware that there is a National Greyhound Welfare strategy on breeding that started on 1 July, which is tomorrow for other states, and it will be implemented in Tasmania on 1 August? Are you aware that is being undertaken?

Dr RICHTER - Personally I am not aware, but I am sure that the national head office of AVA has been alerted of that.

Ms RATTRAY - Which will obviously look at breeding numbers of puppies in the industry. There might be some homework for you.

Dr RICHTER - Definitely.

Mrs RYLAH - My question goes back to the subject we were talking about - about pups. You said vets are involved - I assume when they get their distemper injections and micro-chipping, et cetera. How difficult would it be for you to keep statistics and provide statistics to Tasracing, or to RST, on the number of pups that are micro-chipped or immunised, or whatever?

Dr RICHTER - Sure. There are documents we fill in that then get submitted to Racing Services Tasmania based on when they get micro-chipped and branded. There are certain microchips that have to be implanted. That paperwork is usually signed by the veterinarian who does it and then it gets sent to Racing Services Tasmania.

Mrs RYLAH - Is that only for named dogs or is that for all dogs?

Dr RICHTER - That is for all pups.

Mrs RYLAH - I understand bitches that are impregnated by artificial insemination - it was alleged in one of our submissions - have much larger whelpings, 10 to 12 pups, as opposed to six. Is that correct?

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Dr RICHTER - No. It depends whether you are talking about frozen AI or AI using a dog you can milk. There are reports that the quality of frozen AI might be less, so you might get smaller numbers with frozen AI versus using a dog that you milk. Apart from that, I have not seen any studies to suggest that. A lot of the transcervical AIs we have had come through our clinic are much lower numbers than a routine mating, or assisted mating with two dogs.

CHAIR - For the benefit of *Hansard*, AI is artificial insemination.

Ms RATTRAY - In relation to that, are you aware that most dogs that are used for breeding go to the mainland - is that the case?

Dr RICHTER - There are some that go to the mainland. I don't know if it is most. There are some that go to the mainland for breeding. There is a lot that stay here and they might have frozen AI.

Ms RATTRAY - What do they call a lot? Are you talking about 50 per cent of the dogs?

Dr RICHTER - I would have to take that on notice. I don't know but I can ask the national office of Racing Services Tasmania and find out.

Mr GAFFNEY - If we look at horses that are bred to race and we look at dogs that are bred to race - at the end of a horse's racing career, it can be put out to pasture. It might take some looking after, but not a great deal. But an active dog, like a greyhound, is very intense once it has finished training - it has to be exercised and kept well.

Our dog's homes have a lot of dogs already looking for owners. Is it not realistic that wastage has to occur in this industry because of the number of dogs that are already available? If a person has a dog that finishes its racing career at four, and they have six or seven dogs in their kennel, they cannot afford to keep it on until it is 13 or 14. It might not be a humane way of looking at it, but it is a racing industry. There is a bit of a dilemma there, because finding people who could look after a greyhound and look after it well is not as easy as with other types of dog, like a poodle that can just sit in the backyard.

It is an issue, isn't it, because we would like to never put down a dog and we would like to never put down a horse, but realistically, it is an industry? Are we better off to see some greyhounds put down rather than go to a family that doesn't exercise them, and doesn't look after them as a greyhound needs to be looked after?

Dr RICHTER - The AVA considers the welfare of the dog should be put before the welfare of the industry. Greyhounds, from personal experience, are generally quite timid dogs. They are fairly easy to look after. Every type of dog has its own behavioural issues, concerns and medical issues that any family would have to take on board if they adopt.

In regard to euthanasia, it is the numbers that are being euthanased that is concerning. We do not want to have large numbers at the end and write them off. I don't think that one dog a day, or greater than one dog a day euthanased, because we need to have the numbers at the beginning to make sure we have the standard of racing or the fast speed of racing, is necessarily acceptable to have that more than one dog a day euthanasia activity.

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Mr GAFFNEY - To ensure that they prolong the life of a greyhound racing, I noticed that you agree with the recommendation 7 about less ability for mature-aged greyhounds to continue. Interestingly, you raise the question about the greyhound as a dog, as quite a timid dog and a beautiful animal. Do you think therefore it is unfair that in the Dog Management Act they are singled out as having to be muzzled? There would be some people who would say, 'That is no different to walking your bloodhound or your little chihuahua'.

Dr RICHTER - Yes and no. If they have come from a racing background and they have been trained to chase, I think it is acceptable that they do have the muzzle on if they are out walking and there is a chance they might come into contact with other dogs. Often they go for the little white dogs or smaller dogs where they may have that instinct, which has been in them for the last three years to chase. Dog attacks can occur outside the industry as well. We see more dog attacks outside the industry than in the industry; that is for sure. If we can put that precaution in there, hopefully it makes other people feel safer with having greyhounds around.

Mr GAFFNEY - The Veterinary Association would say, 'We might as well keep that there'.

Dr RICHTER - Yes.

Ms RATTRAY - Even though they have been through the GAP program, and they have been socialised with other parts of our community?

Dr RICHTER - Yes. The GAP program is an excellent program. Even though they go through that, there is still the chance.

Ms RATTRAY - There is a chance any dog will bite you.

Dr RICHTER - Correct, but I suppose there is a slightly increased chance given that they have been around a track; they have been chasing and they have that instinct in them so there is chance that they may come back.

Ms RATTRAY - I know I would rather be around a greyhound than a pit bull terrier.

Mr GAFFNEY - The industry also said that one greyhound attack unmuzzled would actually do damage to the industry itself so that could impact on the GAP program, and on people wanting to volunteer, if they read in the paper that a greyhound has attacked somebody.

CHAIR - The representation from industry is that there is no difference between a racing dog in terms of its quality that has been blooded through live baiting or one that has been trained through chasing a squeaky toy or something. Does that make sense to you? Do you think that dogs that are blooded potentially do go faster on the track?

Mrs RYLAH - More motivated, I think, would be better.

Dr RICHTER - Going faster would depend on the ability of the dog quite significantly, and on genetics and training as well. In terms of them going faster, I think for some dogs, yes, it would. That is because they have had the thrill of the kill, so to say, and it would potentially influence their ability on the track because they will potentially run faster.

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Studies in that area would be very hard to do because we don't agree with live baiting so we cannot run the study based on that. There would be theories based on animal behaviour that would say, yes, that would be the case.

Ms RATTRAY - Say 20 years ago, were the times faster then? If that was happening 25 years ago were the times that dogs were running around a track quicker than they are today?

Dr RICHTER - No, they weren't faster.

Ms RATTRAY - So how do you say that, then?

Dr RICHTER - Genetics from that time were not as specific, either. There have been improvements not only in the welfare of the animal over that time, but looking after, feeding, nutrition, veterinary care, track adjustment, ways that they are handled before and after the race - all those sorts of things will decrease or increase their speed on the track. I would say that the times that we are seeing now that are faster are a combination of genetics. We have had puppies from a dog that was from overseas - an Irish dog or from somewhere. Genetics has become a much bigger industry than it ever was 20 years ago; so that is contributing.

CHAIR - Do you think one of the issues with the industry and here in Tasmania is over-breeding and what is called the breeder's bonus, so that there are financial incentives to owners and trainers to breed a higher number of dogs?

Ms RATTRAY - Madam Chair, that is finished.

CHAIR - Well, it is not yet. The breeder's bonus is not yet. They are bringing in changes to finish it. When we were in Estimates the other day and I asked the minister about it, he said they were going to change it but they haven't yet.

Ms RATTRAY - My understanding was it was finished.

Dr RICHTER - The breeding bonus can be viewed in a few different ways. One good way that is viewed is ensuring that breeders do vaccinate, microchip and look after their pups, and that is really important. Having spoken to some of the older vets within the industry, they say that 20-30 years Parvo virus was rampant amongst greyhound pups and now that we have vaccination a lot of that has been got rid of, so it is almost unheard of.

In terms of where we probably want that bonus to go is more to the retirement of dogs and that is where the AVA would probably prefer that money to be directed. They are in agreement with the submission from the Chief Veterinary Officer and Director of Racing that if we can move that money into retirement or rehoming and retraining of the dogs, then we might get rid of a lot of the unwanted wastage that is present.

CHAIR - Do you agree that effectively in the greyhound industry dogs are being bred to die?

Dr RICHTER - It is probably too harsh a comment. They are being bred obviously to race. If all of them were winners, then all of them would stay in there. The problem is that not all of them can be winners and that is where I think a lot of them, due to the protection issues, and the grading as well, do not have anywhere to go; they cannot meet the times,

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they are not suitable for a GAP program and the trainer cannot keep them on due to not only financial constraints of the industry; then, yes, they will end up being euthanased.

CHAIR - I was going back to the puppies partly too. You are seeing larger litters being bred and not all puppies making it through.

Dr RICHTER - Yes, I suppose in that frame of those pups that are born, yes, there will be quite a lot. Based on the statistics that the Racing Services Tasmania have put forward, a few of them will definitely be put to sleep.

CHAIR - Does the Australian Veterinary Association have any concerns about the way greyhounds are kept and the conditions in some kennels and the standards that are in place?

Dr RICHTER - The standards in place are good. We are happy that there are standards. That is the most important thing. That there are standards and guidelines that can be followed by the greyhound industry and by trainers and breeders alike. The AVA has also raised socialisation as one of the big things which might help in terms of re-homing at the time of retirement. Socialisation usually happens amongst the litter. It does not necessarily happen with other dogs, say differing breeds of dogs, other people that might come to the property, or children, and things like that. That is one area they have highlighted as a way that could improve the socialisation of the dogs that might improve their chances later on of being re-homed. That is one other area that they put.

In terms of the other standards, they are in agreement with what Greyhounds Australasia puts forward on their website and they have got a standard of welfare guidelines that are followed. On that note, though, they would like to see maintenance of that, or regulation of that, so that you are visiting properties to inspect and see that all of those are being carried out.

CHAIR - You do raise effective enforcement as one of the issues for the industry in Tasmania. Do you think the enforcement at present is not effective enough?

Dr RICHTER - There is enforcement there, which is great. It is an industry that is constantly evolving and there is always room to increase the enforcement and be able to visit properties that are situated further away from Burnie, Launceston or Hobart. Definitely, there is always room for continuous improvement.

Ms RATTRAY - I have a follow-on question in relation to socialisation. My understanding is that there are rules around what else you can have on your property when you have a greyhound. How do you see that working? You can have other animals but they have to be registered with the association, with RST. How is that going to work?

Dr RICHTER - There is a section of the AVA designated specifically to greyhounds and they would be keen to work with Racing Services Tasmania in that area. I think it is important that the other animals on the property are microchipped and identified to avoid having issues when inspectors, if they find a pet rabbit, are not suspicious that that rabbit is just a pet and it is not being used for live baiting or something like that. It just gets rid of that cloudiness in what is going on. In terms of -

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Ms RATTRAY - It would be pretty difficult, I expect, to keep a running commentary on every animal you had on and off a property, particularly rabbits. I mean, they run off, they die. They do all sorts of things.

Dr RICHTER - I suppose I am making a distinction there. Pets definitely can be microchipped and followed. There are registrations through local councils so they know which animals belong to which owners and where they come from. That in itself is already in place through the microchipping system.

Ms RATTRAY - Can you microchip a bird? I suppose you can microchip anything.

Dr RICHTER - Yes, you can tag a bird. You can put a little ring tag on a bird that would identify it.

Ms RATTRAY - Then if he drops off the perch you have to go and present him to RST to prove he's dead but he's not been eaten by the dog? These are serious issues and there is an expectation from the industry about what they are supposed to do in caring for their animals.

Dr RICHTER - We are getting away from the socialisation aspect but it is important that those dogs are socialised, within reason. You wouldn't necessarily put a chicken in with any dog because there is a chance that any dog, through instinct, would go after that chicken. That being said, if that dog has seen an animal, it should not be scared of it later in life. Aggression problems and things like that often result from a lack of experience. It is called timid fear aggression. The peak time for socialisation is between three to 12 weeks and after that, up to six months is ideal. If they don't get exposed to a lot of things in that time they can find it extremely frightening as they hit three or four and they are being asked to engage with these animals or with people and things like that that they've never potentially had exposure to previously.

Ms RATTRAY - It will be interesting to pursue that later.

Mr GAFFNEY - Sally, you mentioned in your submission about blood donating. We have had other vets quite offended by the use of the word 'draining'. It would be good if you made some comment because there is good justification for using a greyhound's blood in the proper way. Could you explain that for us a little more? It is an important one to get off the table because most people see that as a cruel practice and it really is not.

Dr RICHTER - Yes. If an animal presented for euthanasia is free of disease, which is the other big area, the AVA sees it as not abnormal or a terrible practice if that animal donates blood humanely. To donate blood humanely, the animal is anaesthetised, intubated and put under anaesthetic and completely unaware of what is happening. At that stage it wouldn't be a draining, as so called, it would be a specific amount of blood that is collected. Usually it is around 350 ml for one bag and at the most it would be two bags of 350 ml each. It would not be draining until that dog has no blood left. At the point of filling those bags, that animal would then be euthanased humanely, so it would be given an overdose of anaesthetic.

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Mr GAFFNEY - The general public see or read that and think it is a nasty practice, but all the vets that have sent submissions to us and even people who are not vets say it is a well-regulated and a proper ethical practice that actually helps other animals as well.

Dr RICHTER - Yes, it does. Having the blood there definitely helps. If another animal comes in injured or in shock or has lost a lot of blood, we can use that. Most greyhounds are what we call universal donors, so their blood can be given to a lot of different other dogs. In terms of its use, it needs to be clarified to the public that it is done humanely so the animal is unaware, it does not feel any pain, and that is the most important thing.

CHAIR - The review of arrangements for animal welfare in the Tasmanian greyhound industry final report makes this statement:

The panel believes that no level of regulation or compliance inspection could absolutely ensure that live baiting was not occurring. The motivation to make sure it does not occur must come from the industry participants and there must be a degree of self-regulation.

Do you have a comment to make on that statement?

Dr RICHTER - We always have rules and regulations in place and, unfortunately, we are all human and there is always a chance someone will break those rules. It is important the regulations continue to improve and look out for those things, and the AVA supports that. It is a changing industry. The community's perception of animal welfare is changing constantly and it is important the industry moves with that perception and ensures it is doing the best practices for the greyhounds involved.

Ms RATTRAY - Sally-Anne, in your submission you talked about more veterinarians in leadership and other roles. Don't enough veterinarians in your organisation participate in this industry? Is that what you are saying?

Dr RICHTER - It has to be a cooperation between Racing Service Tasmania, Tasracing, the RSPCA, the Australian Veterinarian Association and veterinarians within Tasmania. Vets have the scientific knowledge and background that allows them to assess welfare. The RSPCA has the power to prosecute on behalf of the animal.

Ms RATTRAY - So more volunteering from your lot? Sounds good.

Mr VALENTINE - Are the types of injuries greyhounds present with any different to the general dog population? Is there anything that is different to the general population with greyhounds coming in for treatment?

Dr RICHTER - Not really. For injuries sustained at the track there is a difference but for injuries sustained on the property, usually not. Any dog could have done that and there is no increase in any certain area. On the track the most common are lameness injuries due to sprains, fractures, stones in feet et cetera. They are the most common we would see.

CHAIR - Thank you very much, Sally-Anne, for coming in today. What you have said to us today is protected by parliamentary privilege but once you leave the table you need to be

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aware that privilege does not attach to comments you may make to anyone, including the media, even if you just repeat what you said to us.

THE WITNESS WITHDREW.

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Ms EMMA HASWELL, FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT, BRIGHTSIDE FARM SANCTUARY, WAS CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WAS EXAMINED.

CHAIR - Welcome, Emma. This committee hearing is a proceeding of parliament and is protected by parliamentary privilege. Once you leave the proceedings you need to be aware that privilege does not attach to comments you may make to anyone, including the media.

Ms HASWELL - I have owned greyhounds for 13 years and I have rescued, rehabilitated and re-homed them for the last 10 years, more so in the last few years after meeting one particular trainer who helped me source greyhounds. Up until that time it was very hard to get trainers to actually surrender dogs, probably partly due to the fact that I have been a strong advocate when it comes to greyhound welfare and they did not particularly want to give me dogs, I guess. I did make a couple of good contacts and now I am getting large numbers of dogs.

I have been an advocate for them for 10 years and currently I have over 20 greyhounds for adoption. It has got to the point now where I am unable to take the number of dogs that I am being offered. The reason is that the trainer I have been working with has promoted me so much, and part of it is we charge a \$50 surrender fee whereas GAP charges \$110, and the euthanasia of a greyhound is between \$40 and \$55. I am not sure why people would put them into a programme where they are paying double to surrender them.

I am the founder and president of Brightside Farm Sanctuary and have re-homed thousands of dogs in the last eight years - probably between two and three thousand dogs and hundreds of greyhounds. I find greyhounds to be an exceptionally gentle, sensitive breed and find them to be the most responsive breed of all when it comes to rehabilitation and retraining. Those two-and-half-thousand dogs, most of those have had issues. They have been dogs that other shelters have not wanted. To compare those dogs with greyhounds, greyhounds are much easier to retrain, even when they have quite a high chase instinct. I find it is not that hard to get them back on the right side of things.

The Brightside Greyhound adoption programme has been a huge part of why people now care so much about the treatment, killing and disregard of this breed. Greyhounds are not livestock. They are like other dogs; they are man's best friend.

CHAIR - They may be women's too.

Ms HASWELL - Yes, they are mine.

CHAIR - We have had submissions and representations from industry asserting it is highly unlikely live baiting is happening in Tasmania. Do you have a view on that?

Ms HASWELL - I do. Because of the position I have held over the last 10 years, which has been for farm animals and greyhounds, I have had a high public profile and media profile. I find wherever I go, people pull me up and want to tell me something. On many occasions they have told me that their father, or their brother or their uncle used possums for live baiting, cut the claws or hands off possums so that they could not cause damage to the greyhounds, hung them from washing lines and spun the washing line. I do have one piece

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of evidence that could be detrimental to a trainer which I would like to give as well, but with people coming up, they never want to name anyone, never want to tell you who it is, but it has happened so many times that people have come up and said that to me. It is usually been possums that they mention.

There was another one who explained that someone he knew on the north-west coast used to take possums and stake them down to the ground by putting bale string around the wrist of the possum, staking them out and then letting the greyhounds in to tear them apart. These are all people that have told me these stories.

Ms RATTRAY - Recently?

Ms HASWELL - Yes. Not since all of this stuff has come out, but in the last probably two years. Over the last two years there would have been half a dozen times where people have actually come up to me, but they never want to tell you who it is.

Ms RATTRAY - They are not willing to name these people.

Ms HASWELL - No. I had people come to me and say that breeders of Shih Tsus put puppies they find as being substandard in the freezer to kill them, but they will not tell you who the person is. That is the problem I have always had and I have tried to get names. There is one trainer -

CHAIR - Emma, if you want to pass that information to us confidentially, we can make an arrangement to do that.

Ms HASWELL - I would like to tell the story now. I don't have a problem with naming the person. Because I take greyhounds from all around the state, I had a trainer from the north-west coast call me and ask me to take a greyhound. I said I couldn't get to the north-west coast and he wasn't coming down. He had another trainer to bring the dog halfway, which is common. That trainer lives near Campania and I couldn't meet the trainer on the side of the road, so they took the dog back to their property. Whenever I get greyhounds, I go to the trainer's properties as much as I can because I like to see how well they are looked after, see the conditions the dogs are living in. There has been quite a few trainer I have been to and some have appalling conditions for their dogs and others do a reasonable job.

Ms RATTRAY - Perhaps you would like to name those as well.

Ms HASWELL - This particular trainer took the dog home. I couldn't go to collect it so I sent two of my volunteers. They are people who foster dogs for me regularly. When they turned up at the property she was not going to let them out the back, but where they did go was near the greyhound shed. In a row along, as they walked in, there were cages of rabbits and at the door of the shed into the greyhound shed there was a pile, I am not sure how many, I think she said about three rabbits, that had obviously been mauled. They had blood on them and they were dead outside the greyhound door. Having heard everything I have heard over the years and looking at Tasmania and other states, I cannot imagine why we would be different to any other states. Going on the greyhounds I have had it is likely that live baiting is more prevalent on the mainland but I am certain it has been happening in Tasmania.

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CHAIR - This incident you talk about and the trainer in Campania, how long ago did that happen?

Ms HASWELL - That was only a couple of months before the *Four Corners* story, so within the last six months, leading up to the *Four Corners* story this year.

CHAIR - Did the volunteers report this to the RSPCA or police?

Ms HASWELL - No, because I didn't see it. The plan was that we try to collect some more evidence and be sure. Because of what has happened in the past with other animal welfare issues I wanted to get it right. Then *Four Corners* came out and I had not reported it at that point. I have been asked whether I reported it to the RSPCA, but during my years of helping pigs and chickens, I have not had any joy there, so I wanted to get it right. It might have been a mistake but I didn't feel I had the right avenue to go down until I had some more information. That is what I chose to do.

Ms RATTRAY - Why wouldn't you have at least made a call and then someone from the authorities could have gone and checked?

Ms HASWELL - Because I didn't see it and I wanted us to look into it ourselves, and then *Four Corners* came out and we did not have the opportunity.

Ms RATTRAY - Are we talking about days before the *Four Corners* report or weeks?

Ms HASWELL - I don't remember the exact time line of when it was. I would have to go back to those volunteers and find out. I have known of baiting. It was no surprise to me, I have known it has been happening for a long time. It is just that no-one ever believes you. Until *Four Corners* came out, nobody ever believed when you said live baiting was going on. Nobody ever accepted it was happening.

I had an informant in the greyhound industry for about eight years, both when I lived in Victoria and when I lived in Tasmania, and I was campaigning against greyhound racing. That informant used to regularly call me about things. They told me you could turn up to a track in Tasmania - I don't know how true this is, but this is what I was told - and they would refer to vitamin p. They would say, if your dog was running well, I guess your dogs have had some vitamin p, which was a code word for possum or whatever other animal you wanted to bait your dog with. The informant was within the industry and they told me that was a very common term.

CHAIR - Is the difficulty here in part, and it was what we saw in *Four Corner* too, the capacity to gather evidence?

Ms HASWELL - It is impossible.

CHAIR - The review of arrangements for animal welfare in Tasmania says there has been no evidence found, the RSPCA says there has been no evidence found, so is gathering evidence the big difficulty?

Ms HASWELL - It was so hard. We have trainers - and I don't know how many - who have their own bullring, which is a corrugated iron ring in the back paddock. It is a fence in a

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circle and no-one can see inside there and no-one knows what goes on. I would love to ask someone why it has to be a corrugated iron fence, because the obvious answer to me is what animal can climb a corrugated fence. You can throw a possum or a rabbit or a chicken or whatever you want in there and it cannot get out. If it was just greyhounds chasing a lure, why is it always a solid circular fence? Bullrings should be banned. No property that has greyhounds on it should be allowed to have a bullring, because I cannot see why you would have to have that impenetrable barrier.

CHAIR - Have you been to a private bullring in Tasmania? Have you see one?

Ms HASWELL - I've seen one.

CHAIR - Where was that?

Ms HASWELL - That one was at Exeter, but they are fairly common. You see them when you look at properties on Google, because you see a big ring, a circular ring, and that is a bullring. For me that is one of the big issues. As long as you allow people to have a bullring they have a very easy place to -

Mrs RYLAH - Why would you suggest you can't have a bullring, or is it just that you shouldn't have a bullring that has an impenetrable wall?

Ms HASWELL - Impenetrable fence, exactly.

Mrs RYLAH - I can see that it could be used as a legitimate training method.

Ms HASWELL - Absolutely.

Mrs RYLAH - But the transparency of the wall and the ability if there was ever anything in there that you didn't want to have in there perchance or put in there, that it could get out.

Ms HASWELL - Exactly.

Ms RATTRAY - In your submission you said in recent years about the trainer who had been charged with a live baiting issue. From my understanding that is not correct.

Ms HASWELL - I think Julie might have been slightly confused there. I think she might be referring to -

Ms RATTRAY - It is in the submission under Brightside Farm Sanctuary. Does that belong to you?

Ms HASWELL - Julie wrote the submission and signed it, but I have a feeling she is referring to a woman at Carrick, but I am not sure, who was caught with a warm possum on the lure.

CHAIR - Did that go to court?

Ms HASWELL - I don't know; I forgot to ask her before I came in as to what she was referring to.

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Ms RATTRAY - Can I suggest that you should never put what is not factual in a submission to the committee. Can I ask a question around the statement that Brightside is aware of dogs aged eight to 10 years used as breeding bitches. Where do you get that information?

Ms HASWELL - I get them surrendered to me. I had one 11-year-old bitch that had been used for breeding. I get a lot of Victorian dogs. Tasmanian trainers take Victorian dogs that are too slow, so a number of the dogs I get are Victorian dogs. I have had bitches between the age of seven and eleven-and-a-half years old that were still being used for breeding.

CHAIR - Why do Tasmanian trainers take Victorian dogs that are a bit slow?

Ms HASWELL - I think our dogs are slower, so I guess they think those Victorian dogs can have another chance. I've always wondered, too, whether those dogs are included in the Tasmanian statistics of how many dogs we are killing because a fairly reasonable percentage of the dogs I get are from Victoria.

The other thing that concerns me is that I have taken hundreds of greyhounds, and yet I very rarely have had phone calls from Racing Services confirming that I have those dogs. There is one particular trainer I take a lot of dogs from and they always ring me about his dogs, but most of the dogs I take they would not know where they are.

CHAIR - In fact that is an issue that has been raised in a number of submissions, the tracking of the dog from birth through to natural death or euthanasia.

Ms HASWELL - Also the funding. We have GAP, who do a wonderful job. I think in the last four years they have re-homed an average of 50 dogs a year. I think they were receiving \$60 000 a year funding; I am not sure how much it is now. In four years it is 167 dogs, \$110 surrender fee. It costs a trainer between \$40 and \$55 to euthanase a dog, and a member of the public \$120. Then you look at Brightside, who re-home more greyhounds, get no funding and charge a \$50 surrender fee. Accredited rescue groups should be able to re-home greyhounds and have them go through a program where they do not need to wear a muzzle.

There was a submission about me. I have rehomed 2 500 or 3 000 dogs. Every dog has been desexed, vaccinated, microchipped, wormed and deflead.

Ms RATTRAY - What happened to this one, then?

Ms HASWELL - I am just about to explain. There is human flaw. I admit that I must have made a mistake. I was in and out of hospital at the time with suspected heart problems and I was under a lot of stress. I remember taking the dog to the lady's house. She was wonderful. I wanted her to have a chicken-friendly greyhound. I am guessing that somehow that slipped through by accident. I do not deny it. I was absolutely certain in my mind looking back on it that the dog was desexed, but maybe I made a mistake. What I regret is that she did not ring me and tell me that the dog had come in season and then I would have had it desexed. I did not want to send her an email until I had been interviewed here today because I did not want to enter into a discussion with her until I had given my evidence, but my plan would always be to apologise and offer her the \$270 adoption fee back. The dog was vaccinated and I cannot believe that one slipped through the system, but we all make mistakes and I made a mistake with one dog.

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Ms RATTRAY - Is it possible to have the paperwork that you provide for every dog that comes in to your care before it goes out? Can we have a copy of the paperwork that goes with an adoption or replacement from your organisation?

CHAIR - You mean a single copy of the paperwork that goes with a dog?

Ms RATTRAY - Yes, of what somebody would fill in and what goes with each dog.

Ms HASWELL - Yes, absolutely.

Mrs TAYLOR - A blank copy we are talking about.

Ms HASWELL - With any animal, with a pig, a greyhound or whatever, when I am re-homing them I will give people all the bad information I can think of about the animal first. I do not want it coming back and we have an adoption form that states that if someone no longer wants the animal they agree to return to us. My aim is to put every animal in the right home. I tell them that the dog, under the Dog Control Act, has to wear a muzzle, and what is in that statement is incorrect. Every dog has to wear a muzzle, they have to be walked on a lead. Under the Dog Control Act they cannot be let off the lead. I explain all of that. I do tell people that under no circumstances will I muzzle my greyhound and I do not care if I am fined for it. I have Brightside Farm Sanctuary with hundreds of farm animals and my greyhounds wander with all the farm animals - pigs, chickens, cats, whatever, all the time.

Ms RATTRAY - The day after they arrive?

Ms HASWELL - No, not the day after they arrive. I have re-homed one greyhound two days after it arrived and that was a couple of weeks ago. I took six greyhounds from the north-west coast; three of them had never raced, trained or trialled. They were siblings and three of them had trialled and trained and never raced. The three that had not raced, trained or trialled were all very timid, submissive dogs. There was one that went, I think it was a week by the time I had it desexed and vaccinated, to people at Franklin who have a house rabbit which is free range and a cat that is free range. I obviously supplied a muzzle. They never needed to use it. That was an exceptional case where the dog might well have been the most submissive, animal-friendly dog, but there are greyhounds like that. When they have not raced, trained or trialled they often have no chase instinct at all.

Mr VALENTINE - In relation to desexing dogs and the like, you would be prepared to open your books to show that you desex the dogs and how many you have done over whatever period?

Ms HASWELL - I spoke to Hobart Community Vet Clinic the other day because they have one file for us. They do not have a separate file for each dog. They have one file and it lists thousands of dogs and they have said they are quite happy. Before that, we used the RSPCA. Years ago we used their veterinary clinic; now we use the Hobart Community Clinic.

Ms RATTRAY - Because you are not getting on with the RSPCA. Is that why?

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Ms HASWELL - No. It is a long story, but it was to do with funding with Jan Cameron. She pulled funding from the RSPCA and she was assisting us with vet bills, whereas now we are with Hobart Community Vets that offers us a 40 per cent discount of desexing to help us cover our costs.

Mr VALENTINE - You say the breeding incentive schemes should be abolished. Can you explain a bit about that?

Ms HASWELL - Until we start having a no-kill policy with greyhounds we have to control the breeding. If we can't be re-homing them all we have to be responsible and not funding the industry to rampantly breed any greyhound and have masses of litters born and then kill hundreds of dogs, many of them that have never even raced. It seems incredible to me that we have an industry that is funded to breed when we don't have an industry that is putting back in to help re-home the dogs.

Ms RATTRAY - But isn't the industry funding the re-homing? The Government is not funding the re-homing.

Ms HASWELL - No, the industry, but we are talking 167 dogs in four years. It was \$60 000, so multiply that by four and that's a lot of money to re-home less than 200 dogs.

CHAIR - And in 2013-13, 486 dogs were euthanased so there's a big differential there.

Ms HASWELL - That's what I'm saying. We're paying them to breed them and then we give them subsidised euthanasia. The fact that a trainer can have his dog destroyed for \$40 but a pensioner has to pay \$80 for a dog she's had for 15 years seems extraordinary to me. Why would we give the industry cheap euthanasia of dogs? They're no different to anyone else except they are using them for racing, gambling and entertainment. They are still a dog and they are the gentlest breed of dog on the planet. They are the oldest breed of dog on the planet. They used to be treated like royalty and now we keep them often in squalid little pens, concrete cells that are 2 metres by -

Ms RATTRAY - Do you have evidence of that?

Ms HASWELL - Yes.

Mr GAFFNEY - The muzzling is an interesting issue. Greyhounds are beautiful dogs but our Dog Management Act says they must be muzzled. We have heard from people who say they shouldn't have to have those conditions but we have also heard this morning from industry and a vet saying that for different reasons perhaps it needs to stay. Is there some way within the act, if a greyhound had been reschooled and gone through a training program, that you could go to a vet and say, 'Here is my dog. Is it any worse than a chihuahua? Can it be not muzzled?' I don't think it will be removed from the act so we have to come up with an amendment to it. What would you suggest?

Ms HASWELL - Some greyhounds certainly have to wear a muzzle for life and there is no two ways about it. If it is a greyhound that is that far down the scale, I am quite happy to admit it will not go through my adoption program. When you have so many dogs to choose from, you want to put the best dogs out there. When people ring up and inquire they get a lecture, then they get another one when they come to see the dog and then they get another

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one when they take the dog about how important a muzzle is. I say to some people, 'This particular dog will always need to wear a muzzle because she has a higher prey drive than other greyhounds'. Then you get other greyhounds, like the one I re-homed the other day - and I get a lot of them - that can go straight out within a few weeks to live with cats, rabbits and other animals, and those dogs shouldn't be wearing a muzzle.

I know in that submission about me they said there are Brightside greyhounds running around on Kingston Beach without a muzzle. As far I know there are two, and every other Brightside greyhound I have seen there is muzzled and on a lead. Those two are better trained than any other dog on the dog beach. They will sit and stay and are absolutely exceptional dogs. When they were in Brightside they didn't have prey drive even though they had trained; they just didn't run fast enough to race. I think there has to be a point where you say, 'This greyhound doesn't need to wear a muzzle'.

Mr GAFFNEY - If we did try to amend the Dog Act so some greyhounds would be allowed not to be muzzled, who do you think would be the best person to give that qualified assessment? Would it be a vet?

Ms HASWELL - I am not sure who does the accreditation for GAP in Victoria that the dogs do not have to wear a muzzle. I'm not sure how they do it but in Victoria the GAP greyhounds wear a GAP collar and they don't have to wear a muzzle. I am not sure who does the assessment -

Mr GAFFNEY - Okay. That is something for us to look into.

Ms HASWELL - but for me at Brightside it is a really easy thing to see because you've got cats, chickens, rabbits, dogs, pigs, all running around the car park and the greyhounds out there as well. I can see really clearly what dog is going to become - it is so amazing.

Mr VALENTINE - I was going to ask that question.

Ms HASWELL - After 300 greyhounds I can almost tell before they get out of the car just by looking at their eyes and the way they are when they're driven in - it's extraordinary. I have a dog at the moment that was given to me by a Tasmanian trainer from Sydney and one that was sent over from Melbourne because no-one could get him into a rescue group. The bitch from Sydney is not re-homeable. She is the sweetest dog with people but she would tear any animal apart. You cannot have her out in the car park. Even on a lead, you have to be so careful. She's a tiny little dog but she's just such a killer. Then you get -

CHAIR - Do you think she's been trained with live bait?

Ms HASWELL - Absolutely, because I've had hundreds of greyhounds and I've only had a small number of Tasmanian greyhounds that have had that level of intensity. Unless something is moving fast, 90 per cent of them won't even look at the chickens or the cats until they run, and that's when they go, but when you get dogs like Myrtle the animal does not have to be moving. With pigs she goes completely off and it's the same with the one from Melbourne. The one from Melbourne is lovely with dogs, and so is Myrtle, but with any other living creature she's not so I can't re-home that dog.

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CHAIR - You have had dogs come to Brightside that to you have clearly been trained with live bait, that have been blooded?

Ms HASWELL - In my opinion, with what I have seen across the spectrum, yes.

CHAIR - How did they behave and were they Tasmanian dogs?

Ms HASWELL - I was thinking about it last night. Out of the 300 greyhounds I have had, I have probably had maybe 10 or 15 euthanased. You might have to have them for five or six months, but at the end of the day they come right. Often they start to come right just by sitting them in a paddock where they can see all the animals and letting them calm down over a month. But there are some dogs, like that one from Sydney, that are in a frenzy. Their eyes are on stalks and they are so wired. The animal could be dead beside them and they would still go berserk. That is not, in my opinion, the way a greyhound behaves, having had hundreds of them. The ones I have had range from 15 months to 11 years and they've all been racing greyhounds. It is just not characteristic of them to go berserk over the animals in the car park.

Mr GAFFNEY - That is very good information because at the end of the day it is the local councils that have to look after the dogs within their municipality. If we are going to allow greyhounds to walk on leads unmuzzled there has to be a mechanism with the registration of the dog in the municipality that says, 'This greyhound is friendly. It is not a danger. It can walk unmuzzled.'

Ms HASWELL - In Victoria they have to wear, I think it is a green collar which is the GAP collar. They have to have that collar on to not have their muzzle on. They are identifiable straight away. Maybe you could have a Tasmanian GAP collar that was green and a Tasmanian Brightside collar that was orange and if the dog was not wearing it, it has to wear a muzzle. I would be the first person to be strict about who wore that collar because every dog is an ambassador for its kind. When I started re-homing greyhounds, it would take me months to find one greyhound a home. Now I can find six beautiful homes in a week. The more you get out there, the more they sell themselves. They are the perfect dog. You only want the good ones out there and you certainly don't want them not wearing a muzzle unless they are a perfect dog.

Mr GAFFNEY - That is the issue. When trying to re-home greyhounds, the fact that every one that is muzzled gives the indication to the person that the dog has to be muzzled so they must be dangerous, which is not really the truth. It is misrepresenting the breed.

Ms HASWELL - As a breed, they are amazingly gentle; they are the easiest dogs. If you have one that chases cats when it comes off the track, it is so easy to stop most them having an interest in cats.

CHAIR - How do you do that?

Ms HASWELL - You have to be really firm, really consistent and have really good timing. They hate getting into trouble. If given a verbal reprimand at the right time, when it is focused on a chicken, it will go, 'Sorry, I didn't mean to do that', most of the time. Not all the time, but it is incredibly easy. If you had a Labrador that killed chickens or a pointer or a shepherd, you can't stop them killing chickens; but you can stop a greyhound killing

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chickens. The second one I ever had was the worst killer. I had her for 11 years and she lived with all the Brightside animals. It took me maybe a month with that dog to stop her killing chickens. They are so smart and so sensitive that you can retrain a greyhound.

Mrs RYLAH - In the second section of your submission, you say that 'for the hundreds of dogs Brightside have taken over the years, we have been contacted on very few occasions by racing services to confirm the whereabouts of the dogs'. Seeing Brightside has taken ownership of that dog, whose responsibility, under the current regulations you are working under, is it to tell Racing Services? Or is for Racing Services to find out where the dog is?

Ms HASWELL - It is for Racing Services to find out where the dog is. On once occasion I said, 'I am a bit disappointed about the number of dogs you are following through with'. They said, 'Would you be interested in getting back to them on every dog you take?'. I said, 'No, because I am one person who works seven days a week and 18 hours a day. I do not have the resources to be getting back to you all the time'. It is their job. They run the industry; they exploit dogs; they have to be accountable for them. I am just picking up the mess at the end of the day and re-homing the dogs. It is their jobs to do that.

Mrs RYLAH - There is no transfer of ownership that goes to anywhere?

Ms HASWELL - I received a dog the other day and a trainer sent me a form where I had to fill out Brightside Farm Sanctuary, Emma Haswell, for re-homing and then send it back to him. I don't know what the others do, or what they fill out. There is a trainer called Michael Sherrieff and I take all his dogs; he is the reason I get so many dogs. He is fabulous. His greyhounds are always easy to cat-train. I love working with him. Even though he is a greyhound trainer, he is a good person. They always check up on his dogs. Last time I said to them, 'There is another six or seven trainers I get dogs from and you have never called me about any of those'. She admitted it was their job to do it but she said, 'Maybe they haven't put their forms in'. I thought that it was up to them to put the form in to say the dog has gone. How many dogs don't get a form put in?

Mrs RYLAH - The data seems to be an issue that we are coming across in a number submissions - how to get verifiable data so we know how many dogs there are, what is happening, and all those things. At the moment it seems there is a lack of quality data.

Ms HASWELL - Yes. The other thing that concerned me - and in this month I have taken about 25 - the six that came were siblings and three of them never race-trained or trialled. They were not named. I don't think they even had an ear brand. I wonder how many other greyhounds are born like that. They were little and they were not big enough; they were really timid, so they were not worth training. They would not chase anything. Are they in these figures? They are not; they don't exist. How many others get bred?

Mrs RYLAH - Were they vaccinated?

Ms HASWELL - I had no history on them at all. What concerns me is that if we are saying 500 greyhounds are killed in Tasmania every year - they are your government or industry statistics - we say we need to know how many litters are born, what the average litter size is and whether there is a discrepancy there in the number of dogs because it concerns me that they need to get their euthanasia under control.

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CHAIR - This is a concern that has been expressed by the RSPCA.

Mrs RYLAH - The AVA have provided evidence today of the numbers of animals they are chipping, vaccinating, et cetera. That is provided to the regulator, so it would seem to me that there is some evidence of at least the number of dogs. I think we need to get to the bottom of that.

CHAIR - One of the concerns that was expressed by the Australian Veterinary Association of Tasmania is that there is a lack of knowledge about how many dogs are born and what happens to puppies. Have you had dogs from Tasmanian trainers that you believe have been blooded?

Ms HASWELL - Yes, a small number.

CHAIR - Recently?

Ms HASWELL - Probably not for maybe a couple of years, but there are a lot of trainers that refuse to give me dogs. To that particular trainer who sources dogs for me, I will say, 'Come on. I don't have enough dogs; find me some more. What about so and so?'. He will say, 'No, he won't give you his dogs'. There has to be a very good reason why a lot of those larger trainers will not let one of their dogs go into an adoption program. There is one particular trainer who gave me one dog and he said to me, 'This is the first dog that I have ever let go to a home or be re-homed.' He said, 'The list of dogs that I have killed is as long as my arm'. That is what he said to me.

Ms RATTRAY - Do you want to name him?

CHAIR - No, I don't think that is appropriate.

Ms HASWELL - I can later. The mass of large trainers kill dogs. When you look at how many are being re-homed, there are hundreds that are being put down every year. That is a fact. It is not all of them because with the ones I work with, some of them are giving me all of their dogs; some of them are giving me a couple; some of them are giving me no dogs at all and they refuse to put a dog into GAP or anywhere else. There has to be a reason why they refuse to let their dogs be re-homed by an organisation that is being doing it successfully for years.

Ms RATTRAY - You said 'the mass'. How many are you talking about? Are there 10, 20, 30 owners?

Ms HASWELL - There are a lot of trainers in Tasmania and I do not know how many deal with GAP, but a very, very small number surrender dogs to me. We are talking maybe seven at the most out of - I don't know - I can only see the list of names on a couple of pages, but it is a lot of trainers that we have.

Ms RATTRAY - And you think all those others are euthanasing dogs?

Ms HASWELL - They have to be, because where are their dogs going? Some are going to GAP definitely, but if GAP is not taking them and I am not being offered them and taking them, they are being euthanased.

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Ms RATTRAY - When the dog gets out of the car, you can tell by their eyes whether they have been on live baiting?

Ms HASWELL - Their eyes and their ears. Not on live baiting, but you can tell whether they are going to be an easy dog to retrain or a hard one. Then you can see some of them are extreme cases of, 'I want to kill everything.' You can see it by the way they stand, the way they hold their ears, and the look in their eyes; you can read greyhounds like a book. It is quite an amazing thing to see. I had one that the RSPCA in Launceston asked me to take a few years ago. It was from down the Tamar, this dog. I do not know how it ended up at the RSPCA but it was so depressed that they are asked me to take it. I took her home and drove into the car park. I had a bag of bird seed on the back seat of the car next to the greyhound. She saw a piglet out of the window and she picked up the bag of birdseed, shredded it, spread it all around the inside of the car, and started scratching at the windows. She got out of the car and went absolutely berserk. I put her in a pen and she spent about three days trying to dig through the concrete.

Ms RATTRAY - And you think that is because of live baiting?

Ms HASWELL - Yes, because I think when you have had hundreds and hundreds of dogs and you see the occasional one like that, there has to be a reason. I am talking about something so off the rails compared to 99 per cent of the greyhounds. It was a frenzy. If you watched *Four Corners*, you would know that with those dogs it is like a frenzy to get to that lure when they are being held. I have had a lot of greyhounds; I am not just judging it on a handful. I have had hundreds of them and they are a really gentle breed.

Ms RATTRAY - You have mentioned the welfare of the animals. You say that you have visited pens where the ammonia levels are high?

Ms HASWELL - Yes.

Ms RATTRAY - How often do you visit greyhound training sites?

Ms HASWELL - I have probably been to five trainers and of three of them the dogs are in ammonia levels that I can hardly breathe.

Ms RATTRAY - Could you pass that over at the end of this session?

Ms HASWELL - I took a greyhound last week that had so many fleas on it the vet could not spay it. They were all over its stomach. I took it straight to the vet. I picked it up and took it straight to the vet, which I don't normally do but I had so many and I was on the way past and I had appointments. That dog - they treated it for fleas and three days later it still had too many fleas to be desexed. That is quite common - getting dogs with heavy flea burdens. And ammonia levels are sometimes through the roof. That is no way to keep a dog.

Ms RATTRAY - I would really appreciate that, Emma. And the person you know that made the submission about when they took the dog from your program - have you provided that person with its papers yet?

PUBLIC

Ms HASWELL - I only realised the other day, and I did not want to contact her until after I had been interviewed today.

Ms RATTRAY - So she is still waiting.

CHAIR - Emma, what would you like to see happen to the greyhound racing industry in Tasmania?

Ms HASWELL - There are only a few countries left in the world where it still exists and there is a good reason for that. They are companion animals and I don't believe in using animals for entertainment and for gambling purposes.

Until we have an industry that is accountable for every dog, I do not think there is an argument to continue an industry where we are killing them. They are dogs. If they were poodles, people would go off. They would go berserk. People would not tolerate us killing poodles or golden retrievers for sport, entertainment and gambling. It won't be long before -

Ms RATTRAY - Isn't that what they are bred for?

Ms HASWELL - No, they are the oldest breed of dog in the world and they are not meant for racing. As I was saying, it won't be long before people understand that they are a gentle, beautiful dog. People are not going to tolerate them being bred and killed. Most greyhounds are dead by the time they are three or four years old. They are the oldest breed of dog in the world. They are shown on couches in paintings. They are an amazing regal breed.

If you rescue a greyhound and it has only been in a cage and slept on a board with a blanket and you take it into a house, within 10 or 15 minutes it has seen the couch and knows what it is. They are amazing dogs. The most regal, gentle dogs and they deserve far better treatment than we give them.

Mrs RYLAH - Emma, you allege that more of these dogs, as a proportion, are euthanased than other dogs. What evidence do you have of that? We heard recently about dogs in New York where there is a massive increase in the number of pets, and then an enormous flood of dogs after a couple of years into adoption facilities, and then euthanasia. What is your evidence?

Ms HASWELL - First, we are in Tasmania and if you look at Tasmania, Brightside euthanases almost no dogs. It is very rare for a dog to come into Brightside and be put down. The Dogs Home euthanasia rate is significantly down, and we have a memorandum of understanding with the Dogs Home. We take a lot of the dogs that fail their assessment at the Dogs Home.

I am not sure about the RSPCA figures. Between the Dogs Home and Brightside, we have got the euthanasia rate of dogs very low, and people are adopting more dogs. I find people often come to Brightside - they have had a purebred dog last time, but they want a rescue dog now.

PUBLIC

The culture and people's way of thinking is changing, but it is not changing fast enough in the greyhound industry. We are not seeing welfare being as big a component as it needs to be.

CHAIR - Thank you very much, Emma. As I advised you at the commencement of your evidence, what you have said today is protected by parliamentary privilege. Once you leave the table, you need to be aware that privilege does not attach to comments you may make to anyone including the media, even if you are repeating what you have said to us.

Ms HASWELL - When should I give you the name of the person with the rabbits.

CHAIR - We will talk about that afterwards and come to an arrangement. It would be good to have that name.

Ms HASWELL - Thank you.

CHAIR - Thank you very much.

THE WITNESS WITHDREW.

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Mr GRAEME BARBER, CHAIR, GREYHOUND OWNERS, TRAINERS AND BREEDERS ASSOCIATION OF TASMANIA INC, WAS CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WAS EXAMINED.

CHAIR - Welcome, Graeme. A committee hearing such as this one is a proceeding of Parliament and has the protection of parliamentary privilege. You can speak with complete freedom without fear of being sued or questioned in a court, or any other place outside parliament. This protection does not apply to any statements you might make outside the confines of these parliamentary proceedings. This is a public hearing, so your evidence may be reported. If you wish to give evidence in private you must request to do so beforehand.

Mr BARBER - Thank you, yes.

My name is Graeme Barber, and I live at Enfield Lane in Campania. I am a retired state service senior executive. I have been involved in greyhound racing as an owner and breeder for about 20 years and I have held a public trainer's licence for approximately 15 years. I appear today as the president of the Greyhound Owners, Trainers and Breeders Association of Tasmania, and I have been chair of the association for approximately six years. The association represents 75 industry participants.

The Director of Racing and the Chief Veterinary Officer in a recent investigation found no evidence at all of live baiting in Tasmania. The association fully supports the findings in that review.

Breeding a litter of greyhounds involves many components - science, genetics, industry knowledge but most of all, good luck. I have personally bred from outstanding race bitches only for the entire litter not to make the race track. An exercise that costs approximately \$30 000 per litter. No-one that I know breeds greyhounds to have them euthanased. The association understands that more needs to be done to prolong the life of the racing greyhound but I do not believe that anyone at the moment has an immediate fix to this issue.

Greyhound stake money has been stagnant now for over five years. The only increase of stakes in the industry is a small amount to cover CPI each year. The comparison provided by the association to the committee of racing in South Australia clearly shows that Tasmania has been left behind mainland states and is last on the list of the major players. Given an average growth in betting turnover of around 10 per cent per annum for the last few years the greyhound industry does not receive a fair deal in the allocation of stakes. It is my personal opinion that the funding deeds set up by the previous government left the racing industry about \$6 million short of what Tasracing requires to properly fund and grow the whole of the Tasmanian racing industry.

In November 2013 Tasracing funded an economic impact review of the Tasmanian racing industry. The published reports, which are part of the association's submission, found the racing industry generates recurrent expenditure of more than \$103 million annually and greyhound racing contributes \$15.6 million of that. The racing industry is responsible for sustaining just under 1 000 FTE jobs, 153 of those in the greyhound industry. There are approximately 800 racing greyhounds in this state, 493 participants involved in the sport,

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and 506 greyhound pups were bred last financial year. There were 158 race meetings held in the state last year, catering for 26 700 participating dogs.

The association is of the view that greyhound racing in Tasmania is a key plank of the whole racing industry and if greyhound racing were not supported and funded by the funding deed the whole Tasmanian racing industry would be at risk of folding.

CHAIR - Thank you, Graeme. I note your submission states there has been no evidence found of live baiting happening in Tasmania but it doesn't definitively state it does not believe live baiting is happening in Tasmania.

Mr BARBER - From my background of where I have worked for many years, all I would rely on is evidence. As you are aware, Chair, people can come along and say they have heard A, B, C, D and E, but to have factual evidence in front of them is where the burden of proof of criminal behaviour needs to be, as we have seen in the disgusting behaviour of people in Victoria and Queensland on the *Four Corners* program. That type of evidence is there and people have been prosecuted and put out of the industry for life, and that is what deserves to happen to those people.

CHAIR - Given the amount of time you have personally been involved in the industry and the evolution of standards and thinking around the industry, have you ever practised live baiting to train your animals?

Mr BARBER - Certainly not, and I don't know a trainer in Tasmania who does that. If I had had any information to the contrary I would have provided that to the stewards and requested they act on it.

CHAIR - Your submissions says Tasmania does not have any private greyhound trial tracks, but that's not quite true, is it?

Mr BARBER - Yes, that's true.

CHAIR - There are a number of private backyard bullrings. There is a private track that is advertised called 'Sonic' in the Derwent Valley. Are you saying there are no private bullrings in Tasmania?

Mr BARBER - No, I didn't say that, I said there are no private training tracks or trial tracks - which is where the offences were occurring in Victoria and Queensland. They were tracks set up to replicate a racing track with a mechanical lure, starting boxes, and circle tracks.

CHAIR - Can you explain to us the difference between what you describe as a private greyhound trial track and a backyard bullring?

Mr BARBER - They are two totally different things. A trial track is a track that is possibly anything up to 300-400 metres in circumference, with a rail, a mechanical lure, starting boxes. A bullring on a private property is a small circular area that replicates a track but it may only be 20 metres in circumference.

CHAIR - Do you have a bullring on your property?

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Mr BARBER - No, I do not.

Mr VALENTINE - Do straight tracks for training purposes exist, as opposed to replicating a race track?

Mr BARBER - There are three straight trialling tracks in Tasmania. One is at Brighton, which my association is responsible for administering.

Mr VALENTINE - Is it government owned?

Mr BARBER - It was privately owned by our association - our members built it themselves in the 1970s - but it has now been handed over to Tasracing to be administered. There is another straight trialling track at the Mowbray complex, called the Ebony Minder Straight Track, that is administered and maintained by Tasracing. There was a third track at Penguin in the north-west that I think the local trainers up there used to maintain themselves but that has been closed down now for a little while. The Devonport Greyhound Racing Club just got some funding to build a new straight track at Ulverstone, which again will be administered by Devonport but maintained by Tasracing.

Mr VALENTINE - You don't think there are any straight tracks in private hands for private use, not for public use?

Mr BARBER - Not that I know of.

Mrs RYLAH - I see one on the side of the road at Ulverstone next to the Ulverstone pet works. Are you saying that doesn't exist?

Mr BARBER - I would think that is more of a slipping training area than a straight track.

Mrs RYLAH - What does that mean?

Mr BARBER - I don't think that area has a law attached to it.

Mrs RYLAH - Could you explain that to me? I don't understand the difference.

Mr BARBER - With straight tracks, and certainly in particular I can talk of the straight track at Brighton, it is simply a straight stretch of grass with an agricultural fence either side of it. It has a wire running up the middle of the track from the starting boxes at the bottom to the finishing post. We operate what is called a drag lure which is a little metal carriage that sits over the top of the wire so it goes straight and then it is pulled up by a motor wound up to make it go faster at whatever speed to stay in front of the dog, so the dog chases it and gets exercise.

CHAIR - What's on the lure?

Mr BARBER - It is a pair of fluffy pyjama things we bought from one of the convenience stores that - it is rather colourful material.

Mrs RYLAH - I think you mentioned a slip track or something. What is that? Is that different?

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Mr BARBER - Yes. That is an exercise area where there is no lure to be chased. The dog is put in there and it runs up and down.

Mrs RYLAH - Freely, without any motivator?

Mr BARBER - They may put two dogs in there together to race each other. It is referred to as a slipping.

Mrs RYLAH - They are private and there is no regulation around those?

Mr BARBER - No.

Mrs RYLAH - They have agricultural fences on the side of them?

Mr BARBER - Mainly, yes.

CHAIR - What is the fencing material mostly?

Mr BARBER - Wire mesh.

Mrs RYLAH - Cyclone.

Mr BARBER - Yes.

CHAIR - Graeme, do you believe dogs that are blooded make better racing dogs than dogs that aren't?

Mr BARBER - I really can't comment on that because I've never participated in that particular way of training. I have always trained my dogs starting with tennis balls and moving to soccer balls, and then as they grow to material skins such as lambs wool, that type of thing. That always has worked for me. What other people have done, I am not sure. I note the last witness talked a lot about rehoming animals from the mainland that seemed to be more aggressive than the local Tasmanian dogs. Again, I have not had a lot of experience with mainland animals because I am an owner and breeder and breed my own and race my own and don't generally take anyone else's in. I really can't comment.

CHAIR - The Australian Veterinary Association Tasmania in its submission says:

Given the scale of the problems uncovered in three states by *Four Corners* and now emerging in other reviews, it would be naive to think that animal welfare concerns did not exist in Tasmania.

Do you have a response to that?

Mr BARBER - Animal welfare concerns? I take offence to that because certainly in recent years I believe the industry itself has been very proactive in moving forward. It was only perhaps in about the 1920s or 30s that greyhound racing in Tasmania was live coursing, where they chased live hares and rabbits. That is the way they did it. In the 1930s the Hobart Greyhound Racing Club was finally established in Hobart to start what they called 'tin hare' racing, chasing an artificial lure.

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Certainly in recent times, in the last five to ten years, I think the standards in the industry have really gone forward. That is partly because of the evolvement of the AGRA group, the Australian Greyhound Racing Association, so that all states are now coming together and coming up with better standards, better methods, better enforcements and better animal welfare strategies.

Back some time ago Tasracing developed a greyhound animal welfare manual for people coming into the industry and people who had been in the industry for a while that talked about the different phases of owning a dog and getting a dog to racing standards, the type of care it needed, the type of nutrition, the type of veterinary care. We have seen in that time the industry evolve under generally self-regulation to improve out of sight.

CHAIR - What were the incentives there, do you think, Graeme?

Mr BARBER - I think people were starting to realise that there were a large number of animals being bred that were not getting to the racetrack for one reason or another. Many years ago there was an instance in northern Tasmania where a person was charged by the RSPCA with cruelty to a number of greyhounds. That person was banned for life from being registered. Whether he was banned from owning a greyhound again I don't really know. I think he can be probably, as long as he is complying with the council regulation if he hasn't got a racing dog.

CHAIR - I think you can be.

Mrs TAYLOR - Graeme, can you take me through the numbers of dogs. You have said you need about 200 to enter and exit the industry each year and you are saying something like there are about 80 litters a year or something. Tell me what happens to all the dogs that are bred? There is probably more than 200 out of 80 litters.

Mr BARBER - In the economic impact review for the financial year 2013-14, there were 506 greyhound pups.

Mrs TAYLOR - So tell me what happens. The 200 that exit are probably ones that go into GAP or whatever.

Mr BARBER - Or retire on the farm.

Mrs TAYLOR - But if you have 500-plus that are bred and 200 of them probably go into the industry that year, what happens to the rest?

Mr BARBER - Some die of natural causes. about 18 months to two years ago here in the south of the state we had an outbreak of Parvo that killed a number of young pups from two or three weeks of age through to probably six months. A number of breeders lost entire litters through that.

Mrs TAYLOR - We are talking about 500 dogs a years.

CHAIR - A significant number are euthanased and that hasn't been disputed.

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Mr BARBER - There would be, yes.

Mrs TAYLOR - As pups?

Mr BARBER - Not as young pups. How old is a pup?

Mrs TAYLOR - You have talked about the first three months.

Mr BARBER - From 12 months of age onwards there would be a considerable number of dogs that were euthanased, yes.

CHAIR - Do you think they were all euthanased by veterinarians?

Mr BARBER - Yes. Now, yes.

CHAIR - I guess I need to ask how can you be sure of that?

Mr BARBER - It is a requirement under the licence now. That changed probably about three or four years ago. Before that you could humanely euthanase the dogs yourself, but that changed and it's now regulated under the rules of racing that a dog must be euthanased by a qualified veterinarian. The only exception to that rule is if a dog has been seriously and extremely injured and you're not able to get hold of a vet. It might be 10 p.m. or something like that. If that is the case, the person who euthanases that dog now must put in a statutory declaration to Racing Services to say how the dog was euthanased, why it was euthanased and when. Recordkeeping in the industry up until four or five years ago about where dogs went was very lax.

CHAIR - The RSPCA has the view - in fact it is not just the RSPCA - that there is a lack of understanding about how many dogs are born, how many make it through to racing and what happens to all of them after that.

Mr BARBER - I don't know, I think that information is now reasonably accurate and certainly over the last two years would be.

Ms RATTRAY - I want to talk about Racing Services and their role. We have heard some evidence that nobody seems to have the records, but you're telling me that Racing Services would have the records about a particular dog and when they go into a program like GAP or when they go into a program like Brightside?

Mr BARBER - Not so much Brightside, but certainly GAP. As I said, in the last couple of years the requirements on owners and trainers to keep appropriate records and inform Racing Services of the movement and location of greyhounds has increased to the level where it should have been some years ago. If I am a breeder and I want to breed a litter I have to have the bitch DNA fingerprinted and put on the Australian database before I can breed with her. Once the mating has occurred with the stud dog, the stud master must fill in a form and inform AGRA of the breeding, the date, the sire, the bitch and all the details about that.

Mr VALENTINE - How long after the births do you have to do that?

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Mr BARBER - This is before the births, this is at the service. After the birth the breeder has 14 days to notify Racing Services of the birth of the litter. Then after that each pup must be vaccinated with C3 vaccination by a veterinarian, they have to be implanted with a microchip and ear-branded in one ear with a tattoo of that particular number.

Mrs TAYLOR - That is for every pup?

Mr BARNETT - Yes, and that has to be done by three months of age and those papers then sent to Racing Services, otherwise that litter can't be registered and the dogs can't race.

Mrs TAYLOR - I just have a follow-up question on the numbers because we are saying 200 a year, in and out. The GAP program, we were told by the last witness, has only handled 165, I think it was, over four years, so that is only around 40 a year.

Mr BARBER - I think they handle more than that.

CHAIR - They re-home, so the average is 50 dogs re-homed each year and they have re-homed 167 dogs in four years.

Mrs TAYLOR - So the others have been euthanased, I would presume?

Mr BARBER - Or there are still a lot waiting for a home.

Mrs TAYLOR - That is hundreds over four years.

Mr BARBER - I think the drop-off of enthusiasm for re-homing the dogs occurred after February when the ABC viewed that program. It is gradually starting to pick up and build again, but I think that had a huge impact.

CHAIR - Why is that? A drop-off in enthusiasm from trainers?

Mr BARBER - No, from the general public to have them as pets.

CHAIR - I didn't realise there had been a drop-off in take-up because we've had testimony from Brightside, for example, that they have no problems rehousing greyhounds.

Mr BARBER - I don't know what their methods are. I've never dealt with that organisation. I've only ever dealt with GAP because it's recognised and funded by the industry, so in my opinion that is the way we should be going as registered people in the industry.

Mr GAFFNEY - I wanted a little more information about the profile of the industry itself and where it is going. There were 493 participants involved in the sport in 2013. Is that just owners, trainers, breeders or is that people at the track, the officials or is it just the industry itself?

Mr BARBER - No, it's people in the industry itself. It is owners, trainers, breeders, handlers, et cetera.

Mr GAFFNEY - The demographics of that group - we have heard about elderly people who have been interested in greyhounds for a long time. Is there a younger contingent coming

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through? I am trying to get an understanding of where the industry is going? Is it fading out or is there youth coming through to sustain it?

Mr BARBER - That is a very good point. The demography of owners, trainers and breeders age wise - there are a number of older people in the industry. I am talking about a number of people in their 80s that are still active participants in the industry. How many young people do we have coming through? Not enough, in my opinion.

We have a number of young people coming into ownership of greyhounds, whether it be in syndicates or outright ownership. We have Thursday night meetings at the race track and a number of different groups come along and use it as a social activity and a fundraising event. We see a number of young people there and it is great to see them turn up to the races, but generally the training group is an ageing group. There does not seem to be the financial incentive for younger people to outlay the funds required.

To be a trainer nowadays - it is difficult to train out of a backyard in suburbia where you are only allowed to have two dogs. You need a property of some acreage. I am on a property of seven acres and I have spent too much money setting up infrastructure for the industry, but it is my hobby and passion and that is why I do it. What sort of return have I got on my investment? It is a hobby. Younger people probably don't have the support or someone behind them to properly set up for the industry.

Mr GAFFNEY - I suppose with only around 500 people, they would be well known to each other. There would be a fraternity of greyhound owners and you would know each other reasonably well. With the industry being highlighted by *Four Corners* there would be more concern with doing the right thing within the industry. It must be talked about a lot at the racing meets. Have you noticed a change in the conversations at the meets because of the impact of that program, and this committee hearing, and the ones in Victoria and Queensland where people have been banned for life? It must be fairly topical.

Mr BARBER - Yes, it is very topical. I noticed probably some three or four years ago a change in attitude - a more professional approach. Currently, all handlers - people who handle dogs for a trainer at a meeting or catch them in races - have to undertake a certified training program. It is a Certificate II level program and there are a number of different things they must have knowledge of and have some training in. That is a marvellous thing. It shows that the people who want to remain in the industry are committed to the industry and looking after their dogs the best way they can. They are committed to learning the current proper methods.

There are two levels. One is for trainers, which is level 4, and the other one is for handlers, and that is level 2. To have their licence renewed, people must now get that qualification - be assessed as being able to operate to that level. As I said, that started to really bring forward the animal welfare issues surrounding greyhounds and greyhound training and retirements and injuries and treatments and all those sorts of things. Certainly, the viewing in February of the footage was just horrific and it certainly sparked a lot of comment in the industry and a lot of disgust in the industry.

Mr GAFFNEY - When I have been to greyhound meets, it seems to be a family sort of activity. You see a lot of husbands and wives and fathers and sons or daughters, whatever, involved

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in it. You see a lot of little kids running around as well and going up and patting the dog and that sort of thing. So it is a family type of entertainment.

Mr BARBER - It is.

Mr GAFFNEY - Yes, and I was pleased when you mentioned other interest groups going along to use it as a fundraiser or something to bring the community together.

CHAIR - Graeme, we have heard some concerns raised by animal welfare organisations about the level of enforcement of standards in Tasmania and the number of inspections of trainers' properties and breeders' and owners' properties. As an example, when was the last time your premises was inspected?

Mr BARBER - About four months ago.

CHAIR - How regularly do you expect an inspection?

Mr BARBER - Three to four times a year.

CHAIR - Three to four times a year? We heard evidence this morning that it was about once a year. So you think it is three or four?

Mr BARBER - I have personally have had more than one visit a year.

Mr VALENTINE - Do they arrange it with you or is it ad hoc?

Mr BARBER - Sometimes they have been, but most of the time it is ad hoc.

Mr VALENTINE - Sorry, not ad hoc, but you are not notified.

Mr BARBER - Yes, it is unannounced the majority of the time.

CHAIR - One of the things we are grappling with here is that we have all seen the *Four Corners* report and in the three mainland states where damning evidence of criminal conduct was found, prior to *Four Corners* gathering the evidence, the industry had been saying there was no live baiting - that it was not an issue. What makes you so sure Tasmania is so different from the mainland states?

Mr BARBER - The stretch of water.

CHAIR - Do you think that is enough?

Mr BARBER - It appears to me to be. The difference I saw - and I have been to the Tooradin Trial Track many years ago when a previous owner had it, and it is like a race track. It is identical to a race track. For that filming to be done over that period of time and for no-one in control of greyhound racing in Victoria to respond to it or know about it - I am confounded and amazed. Did they know and not act? I do not know. It seemed to be absolutely widespread - walk up, get out of the public carpark, walk across and do as you like, free for all.

PUBLIC

CHAIR - Do you know trainers or owners who send their dogs to Victoria for training?

Mr BARBER - I used to - personally.

CHAIR - Did you do so knowing there would be a level of training, or potentially bleeding, happening in Victoria that would make your dog a better racer?

Mr BARBER - Not so much bleeding, but at the time I was sending dogs over there, carcasses - dead carcasses of animals - were allowed to be used in the break-in tracks in Victoria. That is some time ago now.

CHAIR - Why did you stop sending your dogs to Victoria?

Mr BARBER - I found they were coming back in very poor condition. They had not been properly looked after and for the welfare and benefit of my dogs I stopped sending them there.

CHAIR - Have you, in all your years in the industry, ever know anyone who has practised live baiting in Tasmania?

Mr BARBER - No-one has told me about it. No-one has come forward and certainly from February onwards, no-one has come forward and said, 'I have done it, or Bill has done it'. There was a reference to the track at Carrick. That used to be our only private trial track. A lady at Carrick ran that but it was closed down by Racing Services and the stewards when they found they were using carcasses on the training track. Carcasses have been banned as a training method in Tasmania for many years. Victoria has only just introduced it since February.

CHAIR - Since *Four Corners* went to air, any number of us have received numerous pieces or correspondence or emails. I have received a number of anonymous letters alleging, with quite specific detail, that live baiting is happening in Tasmania. Yet you are willing to state on oath that it is not?

Mr BARBER - I am willing to state on oath that I do not know of any greyhound trainer who has live-baited in Tasmania. No-one has come forward to me and told me that they have done it. I have not been to any facility and witnessed it personally. That is the evidence I can provide.

I have heard of people falling out of the trees, telling stories about how Bill Smith down the road does this and that and something else. I say, 'Okay, you have seen that?'. 'Oh, no. I haven't seen it but I have heard it.' I rely on what the witness saw, heard, smelt, felt and spoke.

Mrs RYLAH - If I can go back to the training issue, in the greyhound industry, is the trainer and the breeder synonymous? Are they one and the same thing?

Mr BARBER - No.

Mrs RYLAH - Is it like the thoroughbred industry where the breeder is often an entirely separate person to the trainer?

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Mr BARBER - Yes, it can be.

Mrs RYLAH - What training do the breeders get? I understand the breeders have these dogs until six months of age or something like that, through that very important -

Mr BARBER - Yes, they can have them up to 12 months of age.

Mrs RYLAH - What training is provided for breeders?

Mr BARBER - Previously, breeders did not have to be licensed. You could have owned a greyhound bitch and bred a litter without being licensed. Since February, that has all been changed so that now breeders are going to be required to be licensed persons. I am not sure when that rule comes in or whether it has already come in.

Ms RATTRAY - 1 August 2015 for Tasmanians.

Mr BARBER - Okay. Prior to that they were not required to have any particular training or were not required to be licensed.

Mrs RYLAH - Under these regulations, are they required to have any training?

Mr BARBER - I believe they will be required to complete the level 2.

Mrs RYLAH - You also referred to a Certificate II, or are they one and the same thing?

Mr BARBER - I am not sure.

Mr VALENTINE - With respect to your association or knowledge, have there been any trainers or owners who have been decommissioned over recent years?

Mr BARBER - A number of trainers have been suspended for breaching rules and most of those have been related to positive swabs.

CHAIR - Positive swabs for what?

Mr BARBER - Performance enhancing drugs.

Mr VALENTINE - Any other reasons?

Mr BARBER - No, none that I can think of in recent times. There was a northern one which was 15 to 20 years ago. That gentleman was prosecuted by the RSPCA and banned for life.

Mr VALENTINE - Over the last decade, as a window, how many trainers or owners would have been decommissioned?

Mr BARBER - I wouldn't have a clue.

Mr VALENTINE - Can you count them on one hand or is it 20?

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Mr BARBER - No. It would probably be 20 over a decade. There is usually two or three a year.

Mr VALENTINE - The reasons being, you were saying, related to doping for the main part.

Mr BARBER - Yes, there were some other aspects of animal welfare.

Mr VALENTINE - What sort of drugs are we talking about that you are aware of?

Mr BARBER - Just recently, amphetamine.

Mr VALENTINE - So, they were uppers?

Mr BARBER - Yes, caffeine.

Ms RATTRAY - No chocolate milk.

Mr BARBER - No, that was the excuse.

CHAIR - Have you heard of practices where a dog that has been too successful needs to be slowed down so that stakes come down. So the dog is fed porridge or bread - this is another allegation that has been made.

Mr BARBER - Cans of tomatoes?

CHAIR - I do not know if it is cans of tomatoes, but doughy, heavy substances to slow the dog right down so that the stakes can go up for the next race.

Mr BARBER - When you take your dog to the races from the time that it has its first start it gets what is called a weight card. The weight of the dog is measured and it is measured every start. If the weight of that dog goes either up or down by more than 1kg at its next start it is automatically scratched by the steward.

Mrs RYLAH - What percent is 1kg of a dog's weight? One sixteenth?

Mr BARBER - My biggest dog is 35 kg and my smallest racing one at the moment is about 25 kg. That means that you have got to religiously measure out all their food. You have got to feed them at roughly the same time of the day.

Mrs RYLAH - You cannot let them have a drink of water.

Mr BARBER - Water is okay. They pass through reasonably quickly. There is always a bowl of water there for them. They have a drink when they want to. The allegation that if someone wanted to feed a heap of kibble or bread or something, it generally would show in the dog's weight and it would not be allowed to start. The stewards do not allow it to start.

Mrs TAYLOR - As you say, we have all had letters and this particular one is anonymous so it may or may not be true. I would not worry too much about anonymous letters but I

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understand why people do it. This letter says that a couple of years ago Tasracing had 24-hour surveillance video cameras installed on the track - at Elwick, I presume. Is that correct?

Mr BARBER - I don't know.

Mrs TAYLOR - The suggestion is that they were installed because people had been cutting the fence at night and using the track illegally, I suppose - possibly with live baiting, one presumes; I don't know. You know nothing about that at all?

Mr BARBER - No. I note that Dr Forbes is on the list of attendees tomorrow. He might have some knowledge. I do know that there is video surveillance at the major tracks and that Tasracing have approached us, the Association, to install video cameras at the Brighton trial track as well, obviously since February.

Mrs TAYLOR - I suppose that might be to make sure that -

Ms RATTRAY - It has been suggested that Tasracing are not always as approachable and as supportive as the industry would like it to be. Particularly they referred to education around what breeders and trainers and owners and the like might like to do. I have been around this place a while now. I think every second year when we have GBEs we hear the same message. Tasracing always defend themselves very strongly that that is not the case and I always hope that they get better at it for the next time around. How are things travelling within the industry? Do you think there is enough support from Tasracing? - other than that they are not getting enough money, and we hear that as well.

Mr BARBER - The money is the issue.

Ms RATTRAY - You think the support is not there because the money is not there?

Mr BARBER - Yes, but I can only speak from my personal point of view. Tasracing and Dr Eliot Forbes, the CEO, chairs four quarterly meetings of what is referred to as the Greyhound Reference Group. That is made up of participants from the three racing clubs, Devonport, Launceston and Hobart and also from our association. That meets four times a year in a full-day forum and we are able to raise our particular issues with Tasracing in that forum. If we have anything else that comes up between meetings we have a greyhound liaison officer at Tasracing who we can approach for answers or input. I have had a number of meetings with Eliot Forbes outside of those meetings.

The greyhound industry doesn't - and I agree with it - think that we get a fair cut of the prize money because of our improved growth in betting turnover - and unfortunately that is what we operate on, betting turnover.

Ms RATTRAY - Which is about 40 per cent of the pool now, is that right?

Mr BARBER - No, I wish it was.

Ms RATTRAY - Your cut is only 19 per cent, but you contribute 40 per cent.

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Mr BARBER - Yes, we are contributing about 40 per cent of the betting pool, you're quite right.

Ms RATTRAY - Greyhounds contribute 40 per cent and they get 19 per cent back.

Mr BARBER - Yes, so each time that we've gone to the table asking for more money there are reasons why there can't be any more money. We accept those reasons, but we're not happy about them.

CHAIR - I think one of the reasons might be until the industry's animal welfare standards are impeccable there would be public concern about providing taxpayer dollars to support the industry if the state is supporting potentially cruel practices in the industry.

Mr BARBER - I don't know what Tasracing's annual budget is now, I think it may be in the vicinity of about \$28 million or something. Greyhound racing gets about \$3.5 million of that \$28 million.

CHAIR - Is it \$3.5 million, because I heard it was about \$4.5 million in state government funding, or is that different from the prize pool money?

Mr BARBER - Yes, I'm just talking prize money.

Ms RATTRAY - I think I can take from that that the relationship is pretty healthy but there is not enough money to roll out enough of the education programs that probably would help the breeders, owners and trainers lift their profile a bit.

Mr BARBER - The training program is in its infancy and there have been a few hiccups with it. Is it still TAFE?

CHAIR - TasTAFE.

Mr BARBER - TasTAFE, so they are the final accreditation and certificate issuing body that the work goes to. There have been some problems between the TasTAFE assessors and the industry training assessors, so that has been put on hold while they get that sorted out. I think they just about have it sorted and it is about to roll out again. Yes, there can be improvements, but it's a big improvement on what was there only a few years ago.

Mr GAFFNEY - I am not certain whether your group have had a look at the Victorian report by Sal Perna, the Racing Integrity Commissioner. He came up with about 18 recommendations and some of those are Victoria-specific, but I think some of them are across industry as well. I am just wondering if your group has had a chance to look at those recommendations to come back to us with, 'Well, we think this is a good idea. This wouldn't work in Tasmania. This one has nothing to do with us.'

Mr BARBER - I haven't had a chance yet to dissect the report. I have a copy of the report. It was sent out by our greyhound racing coordinator from Tasracing to the different groups. We will certainly over the next few weeks be sitting down and dissecting that and if there are good things to support that come out of other areas, for sure.

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Mr GAFFNEY - I think that would be really handy for us and for you. There is a wealth of information there but from your industry perspective it would be interesting to know what you thought about some of those recommendations.

Mr VALENTINE - Graeme, in your submission you have the objectives of your association and it is quite all-encompassing. Is there anything that would point to the interests of the association being concerned about the welfare of the dogs? There does not seem to be anything in there so I am just wondering whether it is covered in some other manner through your association.

Mr BARBER - We certainly signed up to the greyhound animal welfare manual that Tasracing produced. I agree there is no direct reference in the association's objectives about that but we fully support Tasracing's steps in providing these documents and trying to provide further information and training. It is incumbent on all participants in the industry to look after the animal properly. If they don't, they shouldn't be in the industry. The regulators of the industry, that is the stewards, should be banning those people from the industry.

Ms RATTRAY - It is a huge investment.

Mr BARBER - It is, and I hope my wife does not find out how much I have invested -

CHAIR - We won't tell her.

Mrs RYLAH - Graeme, in your submission you eloquently draw the connection between the amount of prize winnings and how it has not increased and what is appearing to be perhaps the decline in the industry. The concern we have all heard in these submissions is the common concern regarding greed and using animals to fulfil that horrible human trait we have. I am wondering how you see that conundrum we are facing in terms of adequately providing for an industry and in particular, for the support of the animal welfare side of that industry, and prize money. Can you talk to that for me, please? I would be pleased to hear more.

Mr BARBER - Yes. I see Ms Rattray has a race coupon.

Ms RATTRAY - I've been to the races.

Mr BARBER - That clearly indicates for every race there are three meetings in that book, weekly meetings, and every race's prize money is there. We are racing in Tasmania for somewhere between first place of \$1 300 - that is the lower grade - up to about \$1 700, I think. Second place is about \$400 and third place is about \$200. We have three big races a year. The Hobart 1000, which is in December, has prize money of about \$80 000.

Ms RATTRAY - That is your interdominion race, if you like?

Mr BARBER - Yes, that's our top race. The Launceston Cup in Launceston is \$40 000 and the Devonport Cup is \$20 000.

Mrs RYLAH - That is total prize money for that event?

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Mr BARBER - No, that is first prize money, I think. I know for Devonport and Launceston that is first place money. For Hobart I think it is \$80 000 for the winner. Unfortunately, who wins most of those races? Mainland trainers coming here with mainland dogs.

CHAIR - Do you think they've been blooded, those dogs?

Mr BARBER - I don't know but they're taking the majority of our prize money out of the state in the space of three weeks. The Launceston club have been proactive in this, though, because their cup now runs over three race meetings. There is heats, semi finals and then a final, whereas the Hobart one is just the best eight heats into the final. Launceston has been proactive in trying to keep the local people enthused. If you look at the prize money of \$ 300 it is not a great incentive to break the law to operate outside the rules of racing and put yourself in a position where you are going to be banned for life for that meagre result. People are in the industry in Tasmania really as a hobby.

Mrs RYLAH - But is it an adequate return?

Mr BARBER - No.

Ms RATTRAY - So that would be a question for Tasracing.

CHAIR - Graeme, we have exhausted the questions for now. Thank you for giving evidence today. I need to make a short statement for process reasons at the end of your evidence. As we advised you at the commencement of your evidence, what you have said to us here today is protected by privilege. Once you leave the table you need to be aware that privilege does not attach to comments you may make to anyone including the media, even if you are repeating what you have just said to us.

THE WITNESS WITHDREW.

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Ms HEATHER NEIL, CEO; Ms JADE NORRIS, SCIENTIFIC OFFICER; Mr PAUL McGINTY, CHIEF INSPECTOR, RSPCA TASMANIA; AND Ms CAROLINE WILLIAMSON, STATE OPERATIONS AND ANIMAL CARE MANAGER, RSPCA AUSTRALIA, VIA TELEPHONE, WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WERE EXAMINED.

CHAIR - Welcome, everyone. Before we begin I will remind you that a committee hearing is a proceeding in Parliament. This means it receives the protection of parliamentary privilege. This is an important legal protection that allows individuals giving evidence to a parliamentary committee to speak with complete freedom without the fear of being sued or questioned in any court or place out of Parliament. It applies to ensure Parliament receives the very best information when conducting its inquiries. It is important to be aware this protection is not accorded to you if statements that may be defamatory are repeated or referred to by you outside the confines of the parliamentary proceedings. This is a public hearing and members of the public and media may be present and this means your evidence may be reported. It is important that should you wish all or part of your evidence to be heard in private you need to make this request and give an explanation prior to giving the relevant evidence.

Ms NORRIS - The RSPCA welcomes this inquiry on greyhound racing in Tasmania. For many years the RSPCA has held serious concerns about the extensive animal welfare problems associated with greyhound racing, including illegal live baiting. These concerns were confirmed in the recent *Four Corners* ABC program. Multiple greyhound trainers, including those with a high profile in the industry, are directly implicated in live baiting practices, indicating that animal cruelty is widespread and entrenched in the industry. For example, in Queensland alone the initial investigations have seen 68 charges of serious animal cruelty against 25 people. Given the extent of the issues uncovered so far in the greyhound industry across multiple states, it would be naive to think live baiting is not occurring in Tasmania and therefore stringent measures must be implemented to ensure it is effectively prevented.

The RSPCA generally supports the recommendations contained in the review of arrangements for animal welfare in the Tasmanian Greyhound Racing Industry Report and commends the Government on the amendments already introduced to the Tasmanian animal welfare legislation. However, further additional action needs to be taken.

The RSPCA submission to this inquiry outlines a number of further recommendations and we urge the committee to consider them closely and recommend their implementation urgently. These include recommendations put forward by the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee that were not part of the final Animal Welfare Act Amendment Bill. Relevant recommendations are recommendation 3, the inclusion of mental suffering; recommendation 26, that animals kept for commercial purposes under section 16(2) include animals kept for the purpose of breeding animals for sale; and recommendation 39, that a court can order costs or bonds or the disposal of animals with any funds held in trust where a person has been charged with the relevant offence but not yet attended court and there is a risk of suffering to the animals. For broader canine welfare we also recommend that the act prohibits prong and electric collars as per recommendation 10.

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Greyhounds are referred to as sighthounds because they primarily use their sight to first acknowledge a moving object and then to chase the object rather than tracking using their sense of smell like scent hounds.

Greyhounds have been selectively bred for the instinct to chase small fast moving objects over many years. Their natural instinct is to chase moving objects and it is the movement of the object that they are most attracted to and respond to. This explains why many greyhounds will chase a moving object regardless of its composition. They can be successfully trained to chase using artificial objects only.

The use of animal skins of any type including professionally tanned animal skins must not be allowed and the current exemption removed. Use of animal skins is unnecessary, sets a dangerous precedent and fuels misperceptions that the use of animal tissue is in some way advantageous.

Clearly a significant factor in the use of live animals as bait was related to the misguided perception that using animals or animal tissue would create an advantage or increase chase motivation. These practices are based on long standing traditional beliefs and ideas that are considerably outdated and not evidence based. A total prohibition on animal tissue would also importantly remove the temptation for participants to escalate from treated animal skins to fresh animal skins and then on to dead animal parts or carcasses, which in turn may, and already has, advanced to live animal use. This position was supported in the Tasmanian report, which states that all industry participants spoken to during this review are confident that a greyhound could be taught to chase using an artificial lure, and this was demonstrated to the panel.

This position is consistent with the Greyhounds Australasia rules and the position of Racing Queensland, Greyhound Racing Victoria and Racing and Wagering Western Australia. Tasmania must amend its current lure policy to ensure consistency with the national rules and other state greyhound racing bodies. This would also ensure the policy meets current community expectations and contemporary best practice training methods.

Live baiting is just one of the many serious animal welfare issues associated with greyhound racing requiring urgent attention. It is vital that this inquiry effectively addresses these additional animal welfare issues and that action is taken to meet increasing community expectations about the treatment of greyhounds involved in greyhound racing. There must be an expectation and formal processes in place to ensure that each individual greyhound born will become a companion pet when they leave the racing industry, whether they race or not.

This necessitates fundamental cultural change within the industry. Puppies must be socialised particularly during the critical canine socialisation period so they are set up for success as a pet in the future. Mandatory requirements to provide adequate socialisation for all greyhounds, combined with education programs, must be implemented in Tasmania.

The alarming wastage rates revealed in the Tasmanian report for both unnamed and named greyhounds is a significant finding because it indicates there are fundamental problems in the quality of the breeding, the rearing and the training practices that currently occur in Tasmania. Unfortunately only a very small proportion of these unwanted greyhounds are re-homed, which means many of these otherwise healthy dogs are euthanased. Injuries,

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inadequate housing conditions and a lack of environmental enrichment are also key welfare problems that must be addressed through the implementation of enforceable standards for greyhounds at all life stages to ensure living conditions meet the physiological, behavioural and social needs for all greyhounds and that a good quality of life is provided.

While the current regulatory structure in Tasmania appears to separate commercial and integrity functions and this must be maintained, there appear to be some elements of self regulation within the current framework. For example, Tasracing officials apparently supervise tracks. In the RSPCA's view it is inappropriate for the commercial body to take a supervisory role and these functions should be transferred to Racing Services Tasmania. RST should also have greater oversight in order to prevent policy conflicts such as the breeders bonus scheme, which exacerbates the problem of over breeding and the animal skin lure exemption, which maintains dangerous outdated practices.

It is critical that this inquiry raises the bar by providing the highest level of protection to greyhounds and other animals. We look forward to your questions. Thanks.

CHAIR - In your opening statement when you were talking about live baiting, you said it would be naive to think that live baiting wasn't happening here in Tasmania. We have had the exact same language put to us by the Australian Veterinary Association of Tasmania, yet in its written records to the review, I understand the RSPCA stated there had been no evidence of live baiting here in Tasmania. That was also in the report of the review. How do you marry those two statements, that it would be naive to think it is not happening but there is no evidence?

Ms NORRIS - Given the extent of the issues in other states, that is why we made the statement that it would be naive that it wouldn't be occurring over here. We are not aware of any distinct differences between the mainland and Tasmania that would create any differences to explain that. In terms of live baiting evidence, I will hand over to Paul.

Mr McGINTY - The most recent complaint we received that was specific to live baiting was prior to the *Four Corners* episode, in 2008. That was jointly handled by the RSPCA and Racing Services Tasmania. Since then we haven't received any specific complaints purely pertaining to live baiting. However, as a result of that story, we received a subsequent nine statewide complaints specifically alleging live baiting. We attended all nine of those and from a legal point of view were unable to find any evidence that could have taken any case forward, so we haven't been able to prove beyond reasonable doubt that live baiting has occurred.

CHAIR - You talk about the nine properties you attended and I think your language was clear that it was about an evidentiary test, not having enough evidence that would hold up in court. Are you able to tell the committee if there was any suggestion, when you went to the properties, that there had been live baiting occurring?

Mr McGINTY - Some of the properties had apparently recently disused bullrings. They had stuffed, squeaky toys covered in fleece and the like and there was an amount of skins or carcasses within the vicinity. Unfortunately, a lot of the properties back onto bushland where possums habituate anyway so there is a suggestion that the possums may have become close to or within the confines of where the greyhounds were. Those things we cannot prove or disprove from a legal point of view.

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Mr BACON - Would it be a common thing for a possum to be keen to go where the greyhounds are? Wouldn't they have some natural instinct to stay away from them?

CHAIR - How stupid are these animals?

Mrs RYLAH - They do go where dogs go. I've seen possums come down where they shouldn't and dogs chase them.

Mr McGINTY - Correct. The things we can prove and the things we believe, unfortunately within the framework of our role, are two different things. I personally went to three of those nine properties and I have received information from the inspectors in relation to the other six. My personal belief, from what I have seen and heard from my staff and from a background of over 20 years as an investigator, is that it would be very likely that this was occurring prior to the episode and, as a result of that episode, there was a removal of potential evidence. Unfortunately, that's just my opinion and not a legal opinion.

CHAIR - At those nine properties, did all of them have backyard bullrings?

Mr McGINTY - No.

CHAIR - Do you recall how many?

Mr McGINTY - I believe four.

CHAIR - What fencing material was used for those bullrings?

Mr McGINTY - They were all different. The two bullrings that I saw appeared to have been disused for quite a while; there was grass almost halfway up to your knee in height, so it would appear they had not been used in some time. Those same two properties had the long races instead. They had the lure pulled along or held at one end and were 25 to 30 metres long by three or four metres wide and the dogs would travel from one end to the other to either get the lure at the end or chase the lure to the end. The bullrings themselves appeared to not have been used for quite some time.

CHAIR - What sort of fencing material was used? We have had testimony about corrugated iron fencing being used in bullrings in order to conceal what is happening behind them.

Mr MCGINTY - The two that I saw were in full view. Any fencing that was near them would have been 50 to 60 metres away and it was just your standard wire diamond mesh. They were not visibly concealed. You couldn't see them from the road, but they were easily seen upon entry to the property.

Mr BACON - Some people have come to me and said they had made allegations about live baiting that could be seen from a public road and the evidence could have been gathered particularly before the *Four Corners* program came out.

Mr MCGINTY - Of the three I attended you couldn't see anything like that from the road. For the other six, I asked for the information along the lines of prosecutorial evidence so I don't know whether those six could be seen from the road or not. They were all over the state.

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The accusations were from the north-west, north and south. I attended the ones here in the south.

Ms NEIL - If you had asked the chief inspector of any of those other states where *Four Corners* captured evidence and there has been subsequent investigations if there was any clear evidence or whether they were receiving regular complaints about live baiting, they all would have said they certainly received suggestions from time to time and investigated complaints as best they could but the evidence has not been able to meet the requirements of their respective acts.

CHAIR - Given your national oversight in the RSPCA, what is your view on the likelihood of live baiting happening here in Tasmania?

Ms NEIL - I know Tasmania is a lovely place, but I don't think there is anything different with the greyhound industry. There is nothing that makes the greyhound industry in Tasmania any different than the greyhound industry anywhere else. It seems a sad fact that it is an entrenched practice in many other places and there is evidence being collected on a daily basis and three reports so far from various jurisdictions showing that they have clear evidence and there are investigations being pursued as we speak. It would be nice to think Tasmania was different but I am not sure you have the evidence to suggest that.

Mr VALENTINE - Except in the size of the operations, perhaps?

Ms NEIL - I couldn't comment on whether there is a relationship between the size of the trainer or the operations and the facility.

Ms RATTRAY - It has been suggested by the Australian Veterinary Association that Tasmania is in a better position than many jurisdictions because we already have an independent regulation for the greyhound industry. Do you not accept that that is working better in Tasmania than anywhere else?

Ms NEIL - I think it sets you up for success better, but remembering that live baiting has been legal in every jurisdiction in Australia for some time, if those practices want to be underground the best regulator may not find them. We really support the regulatory system in Tasmania. The split between the industry and the integrity function is a very good thing to have. There are a few more tweaks that could be made to that to make it even better but certainly you are leading the way in terms of other jurisdictions.

Ms RATTRAY - It has been suggested that it varies between one to two inspections to up to four inspections a year for breeding and training facilities, and there hasn't been any evidence found, so do you still stand by the fact that it must be happening?

Ms NEIL - I think those same inspection regimes have been occurring in the jurisdictions that we saw on *Four Corners*.

Ms RATTRAY - I don't think that's fair to say, not in Victoria, especially.

Ms NEIL - My understanding is that there have been inspections required under their act as well and -

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Ms RATTRAY - Seventeen a year?

Ms NEIL - I cannot speak for the racing authorities.

Mr BACON - I think it was Queensland where they mentioned that.

Ms NEIL - I would like to think that it wasn't happening in Tasmania. However, I think as a committee it is better to take a precautionary approach and put in place procedures and structures to ensure that if it is occurring, it ends, and if it isn't occurring, it never starts.

Mr VALENTINE - I would just ask a question about injuries suffered by greyhounds. You make a statement in your submission that 'while injury statistics are not published for all tracks, based on the available industry figures the RSPCA estimates that more than 600 greyhounds are injured every month during races across Australia'. Do you have any comment on how prevalent that is in Tasmania? Do you have any statistics of any sort?

Ms NORRIS - The 600 figure is a national estimate.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, I realise that; I just wondered whether you had any understanding -

Ms RATTRAY - We are talking about Tassie.

Ms NORRIS - Yes, I realise that. In terms of Tas industry stats, there are some in the Tasmanian report. I think they are on page 9, but that does provide some injury statistics. We did raise in our submission that there appears to be a higher injury rate in Devonport compared to Hobart and Launceston. We suggested that that be investigated to find out what factors are contributing to that difference. Obviously, the track designs or the track surfaces are different. If we can minimise the injury rates, that will then reduce the wastage rates as well. Injuries are a pretty key animal welfare issue.

In terms of other injuries, they are not recorded. I am not aware of any training injuries that are being recorded by RST, for example, and whether or not that information would be used or published, or when they get injured during trialling. It would be more comprehensive to have injuries in training, trialling and racing.

Mr GAFFNEY - Some people would say that greyhounds love to run. They like to race and chase things. My dad has hounds and they chase things as well when they go hunting. Often at the end of a hunt, they will come back with sore feet and they have lost a little bit of weight because that is the nature of what they have been doing. Some people could say that that is an injured dog because of its feet or whatever, but that is what it has been doing. If an animal is going flat out at full pace, there is a greater chance that it is going to do something to a muscle or whatever. When you say 'injury' I am getting the impression that the dog is limping back with a broken foot. So what is the extent of the injury? An injury might mean that it has just twinged something and two days later it is fine. Is there a category?

Ms NORRIS - Sure. In terms of the Tasmanian statistics availability it just says that they are injured. It also includes data about how many are euthanased and it includes a few stats on hypoxia cramp, which is a type of injury. When we look nationally, for example in New South Wales, the steward's reports are much more specific. They will include leg

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fractures, broken tails, dislocated toes, muscle injuries and soft tissue injuries like lacerations. Some of those injuries like ankle fractures are very serious and often career-ending.

It would be great if Tasmania could publish the specific injury types so that we have more information about the magnitude of certain types of fractures. We have had cases in New South Wales where dogs have broken their backs, broken their necks and also died immediately post-race, and that suggests physical over-exertion. I think there is a difference between the racing contest where an animal is being raced on a particular track design and a particular surface, compared to a dog running around in a park, for example.

Mr VALENTINE - With respect to hypoxia, over-exertion, are you suggesting there that in fact they not be raced as often? I think that is mentioned in your submission?

Ms NORRIS - I think our main recommendation was to go into that and examine exactly how many cases are occurring and what are the predisposing factors - whether there are multi-factorial factors involved like genetics, whether some dogs might be more predisposed, and whether it is related to training, frequency of racing, or rest periods between races. We are suggesting that is a very serious -

Ms RATTRAY - Are you going to negotiate with Sky when they race, then? Good luck with that.

Ms NORRIS - Sorry, no. We are just suggesting that the industry -

Ms RATTRAY - That is when they race. It is all about Sky, is it not? The racing schedule is all about Sky and the product into the market.

Ms NORRIS - I guess we are just focussing on the animal welfare issues here, which is that hypoxia cramp is a serious type of injury where animals can collapse and actually die. We have highlighted that as a particular example in our recommendations to be looked at, because it is a welfare issue. It also relates to wastage. Injuries and wastage levels are very closely linked.

CHAIR - We have formal figures here of the number of dogs put down in 2013-14, which is 486 dogs. Do you want to articulate a little bit the RSPCA's view on the rates of euthanasia from birth through to the premature end of their lives?

Ms NORRIS - The available statistics to us were in the Tasmanian report. They actually do mention that these should be taken as minimum numbers. Until they do an audit of all the facilities, the actual number of dogs born is unknown because it relies on the participants reporting. There could be animals not being captured by the system.

We could see even in the available statistics that the initial waste rates were very high. About 50 per cent of the puppies born in the 2011-2012 cohort were never named. That includes unnamed and deceased prior to registration at four months. It is about 50 per cent unnamed. We consider that to be a very high wastage rate. We also found that most of those dogs are now deceased. We queried what 'deceased' meant, because the statistics are not specific enough.

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There is a difference between dying from a natural cause or being euthanased. We have requested that that data be more specific. Then we also looked at the euthanasia rates, which in the RSPCA's view are unacceptably high, and we compared those to the rehoming rates, which we also consider to be unacceptably low.

Ms RATTRAY - Chair, can we have the number for how many animals are euthanased by the RSPCA?

Ms NEIL - It is important to put these into context. The RSPCA does not raise. It does not breed. It does not select. It is not actually -

Ms RATTRAY - I am not suggesting that.

Ms NEIL - No. We are receiving animals that are unwanted by the community. To give a perspective, in 2013-14 the RSPCA in Tasmania received 1 596 dogs, and 14.5 per cent of those were euthanased because they were unsuitable for adoption. That was 232. They are our last published figures; we publish all of our data. That obviously goes across every breed and mixed breed that the RSPCA receives in Tasmania.

CHAIR - One of the main issues that is raised with us by Tasmanians who have made submissions and communicate with us, is the level of wastage in the industry, as well as concerns about potential live baiting. I just want you to talk briefly through the recommendations. How do you bring down the number of dogs that are being born and then the wastage rates? What are the simple steps that we can take as a community to ensure that?

Ms NORRIS - There are a number of strategies that you would have to put in place. There would not just be one. You have to target the quantity and the quality. A high initial wastage rate of 50 per cent is very significant because it means there is a quality problem in the breeding - the selection of the breeding animals, and the way in which greyhounds are reared - the conditions under which they are reared. There are problems with the training methods as well. The strategies would have to address quantity and quality.

You could create breeding limitations, like litter limitations, for example. You would also need to significantly improve practices - doing things like introducing mandatory socialisation of puppies, for example.

Ms WILLIAMSON - When I have spoken to people in the industry they are targeted at the moment on the number. They have to have a breeding program that gives them at least 600 puppies a year at the moment and they don't need anywhere near that number of dogs to race. What Jade is saying is exactly right, they need to move their target away from a quantitative number and move it to a quality standard because at the moment they are being targeted on how many puppies they produce every year.

Mr BACON - How does that take effect? Is it an incentive?

Ms WILLIAMSON - As I understand, Tasracing has to run what they call a successful breeding program where they encourage the breeders to breed. I don't know who incentivises whom but I know at the moment they have to produce at least 600 puppies a year and there is no way 600 will go on to race in Tasmania.

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CHAIR - Caroline, is that number in the public domain anywhere?

Ms WILLIAMSON - I don't know, I couldn't tell you that. They have to report how many puppies are born and named each year. I don't know if they have to say how many are born but they certainly have to say how many are named. Just going back to the initial question and Jade's answer, they really need to move their target to a qualitative measure rather than a quantitative measure.

Ms NORRIS - One way of doing that is placing a litter limit based on the success rate of the breeder and owner. What are the success rates of the rehoming rates for that particular breeder and only permit further breeding where they can show a high success rate, so a high naming rate, a high starting rate, and where they can demonstrate they have rehomed their greyhounds as a pet. In our view, each and every greyhound born in Australia once they leave the racing industry should become a companion pet, whether they ever race or not.

Ms NEIL - That is part of the cultural change that is needed. These aren't animals that are born to race. They have a racing pathway but the expectation is that they should be a companion animal, so that is why socialisation in those early weeks is very important so they, like every other puppy born, is experiencing the day-to-day noises of life and understands people, cats et cetera and are socialised to set up to be a pet. At the other end, in the community it is those issues you were discussing with some witnesses earlier about green collar programs so that greyhounds don't need to wear muzzles and those sorts of integrated programs in the community so we see greyhounds as good pets. They are fantastic pets in areas of increasing density because whilst they might like to run fast it is only for relatively short distances and they spend a lot of time sleeping and chilling out. They make very good pets in today's society where people have less time to take them on 10-kilometre walks. They are a great dog and have a great personality, they are very calm and family-friendly. There are too many born now and we need to reduce that number but those that are born need to be born with the expectation that when they finish their racing they will be a pet and a system is in place to deal with that. That won't happen overnight, obviously.

Mr VALENTINE - Something you will have observed over time is the issue of housing of greyhounds. You mentioned in your submission about poor housing, so can you explain what you are finding and whether it is general thing? What level of poor housing are you seeing?

Ms NORRIS - In our submission we talked about inadequate housing conditions and a lack of environmental enrichment. We know kennelling is a very common way to house greyhounds. We also know based on contemporary best practice standards that kennelling is not the best way to house dogs. In fact a lot of working dogs who have been studied exhibit a lot of stress when they are in a kennel environment and this can be related to a lack of environmental enrichment.

Mr VALENTINE - Are you talking about farm dogs when you say workings dogs?

Ms NORRIS - Yes. Farm dogs or military dogs can be kept in kennels as well so there is international research looking at different dogs kept in kennel environment and how that

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can produce high physiological stress in those animals which compromises their welfare but also there are links between poor welfare and stress in a kennelling environment and poor performance. We talk about reducing wastage rates and this also relates to the environment in which they are kept because if you're a stressed dog or have poor welfare the research shows that performance levels might be affected by that as well.

Mr BACON - Is there a role in education for the industry around those things?

Ms NORRIS - We think education is part of it but also having enforceable standards in place that are specific to greyhounds about how you should house them.

Ms RATTRAY - What are you suggesting, then? Can you give me some indication of what you are suggesting? If you don't want them in a kennel but you need them secure, what do they do? Do they roam or what?

Ms NORRIS - Because we have just talked about how eventually we want them to become companion animals and pets, in an ideal situation you would have them in a housing situation that complements the environment in which they are going to be living when they retire. That would be the ideal situation. We raised the inadequate housing conditions and lack of enrichment because we have also looked at the available information from the industry and some of the documents that the Tasmanian industry produce like manuals on how you keep greyhounds and how to house them. We looked at those in close detail and could see they were deficient. For example, they do not even mention environmental enrichment which is a key welfare issue for housing dogs.

Ms NEIL - That is things to do in the kennel. If you were sitting in a kennel for hours and hours and hours on end with nothing to do -

Ms RATTRAY - As most dogs do.

Ms NEIL - If they are in a kennel, yes. There is an animal choice there as well. It is quite different if you are a dog in a family environment and you choose to do nothing to being a dog in a kennel where you have nothing to do.

Mr BACON - When you mentioned those examples of literature, were they Tasmanian?

Ms NORRIS - They were, and I think we mentioned them in our submission - section 6, I think.

Ms NEIL - We can certainly provide you with the details of the references for that research.

Mr BACON - You think they can be improved?

Ms NORRIS - Yes, they don't reflect best practice contemporary standards.

Ms NEIL - Paul, did you want to make any comment about any inspections or conditions you have seen?

Mr McGINTY - Sure. I was glad that Jade mentioned best practice. Where the bar is set legally, unfortunately best practice is not relevant. We have seen on many occasions,

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whether it is greyhounds or hunting dogs, they are confined all day for a week or more in between hunts or races.

Ms RATTRAY - A week or more?

Mr McGINTY - For hunting dogs, yes, for sure. Our burden of proof is reliant upon veterinary advice to prove a level of pain or suffering to the animal. Whilst a dog is on a 1.5 metre chain tethered to a small, old, partially holed wooden box half-full with dirt, we would not, in my experience, be able to get a vet to formally suggest that that animal was suffering and therefore we would not progress that case.

Ms RATTRAY - We're not talking about the same thing here, though, are we?

Mr McGINTY - It is the same with the greyhounds. If they are kennelled for long periods of time in a dry, dirty environment with no enrichment, no toys, no sort of bedding, whilst a vet would not suggest that was formally suffering to a level of court, I would definitely not consider that best practice. I don't have my dogs like that. My dogs have blankets, for example.

Ms RATTRAY - But if Racing Services Tasmania do the checks on the kennels where the greyhounds are - and that is what I am interested in today - if they found a dog in that situation there would not be a kennel licence. Is that correct?

Mr McGINTY - I don't know what their powers are in relation to those offences. They ideally can and do call us if they come across a welfare issue.

Ms RATTRAY - How many of those calls have you had for the RSPCA from Racing Services Tasmania about the condition of premises for greyhounds in Tasmania?

Mr McGINTY - I don't have the numbers here but if I was to suggest, it would be low.

Ms NEIL - What we need to be clear about what is allowable under a manual that is produced by Greyhound Racing Tasmania or Australasia, what the law says and what is best practice and all those things are different. We are saying, with contemporary animal welfare science, we know dogs require more stimulation and being in a barren pen with nothing to do, perhaps they may have a pen mate, they may not and with no or minimal bedding, that is not a good environment in which -

Ms RATTRAY - We don't know that, do we? There is not any evidence of that.

Ms NEIL - That would be a fairly standard kennel environment as what you saw on *Four Corners*, as a kennel environment that was brand new that was indoors, that was a kennel has wire, that has a dog that is fed and watered. It would be very difficult to suggest they were not meeting their legal obligation, but it doesn't mean that it is best practice. What we are talking about is best practice kennelling and housing for dogs doesn't include a barren, small space. We can provide you with some more background if you would like, outside. I know we are short of time.

CHAIR - Paul, can you describe what you have seen when you have gone out to inspect a greyhound kennel?

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Mr McGINTY - Sure. I will finish off something that Heather was saying. When the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee put forward recommendations in relation to the Animal Welfare Act Amendment Bill recently, one of them was in relation to mental suffering of an animal. That did not go through in the bill. Other states have words like, mental suffering, stress, psychological suffering, whereas in Tasmania it is physical. These examples that we are talking about here would be, in my opinion, why the recommendation was put through, that mental suffering be included in the legislation.

To answer your question. Of the premises I have been to, the high majority of them are dry. The enclosure the dogs are in are either a kennel area or a race area or a fenced off yard or one of those long training track. Most of them, if not all of them, have been dry. Dirt and dust covered virtually all of it, including the inside of any kind of kennel. There is often various bones or carcasses or partial carcasses of some sort of animal in or near the vicinity and there is rarely any soft or grassy area, it is normally barren. I have not seen any sort of bedding and I have seen anything like that. Best practice is very different to a legal standard. That is where we hit the hurdle.

Ms RATTRAY - What you have just described is what you have witnessed in the three properties that you have attended since you have undertaken your inspections, since the *Four Corners* report, is that what you are saying?

CHAIR - Sorry, Tana, the question wasn't describing a kennel in any time since *Four Corners*. The question was asking Paul about his experience of looking at greyhounds and how they are kept.

Ms RATTRAY - But he has been since the *Four Corners* report, that is correct, Paul?

CHAIR - I know, but I do not want you putting words in the witness's mouth or my mouth.

Ms RATTRAY - I was asking for a clarification.

Mr McGINTY - I have been to premises containing greyhounds on many occasions. The three I was referring to before were subsequent to *Four Corners*. They were part of the nine that were subsequent to *Four Corners*.

Prior to that we have received calls in relation to animals or dogs generally, and that may include greyhounds. We have had limited specific calls about live baiting at a residence, but we have attended residences for various other reasons in relation to welfare complaints, either for greyhounds or other dogs. We have seen this same set up across the board.

We get a lot of calls about the set up of greyhounds and dogs generally and their living conditions, but I was referring before to calls specific to live baiting. But we still attend premises on a regular basis and see dogs and/or greyhounds living in the conditions I have just described.

Mrs RYLAH - Further to your suggestions, I am interested in the best practice in regard to housing dogs. Are you able to describe to the committee how a pack of sight hounds should be housed? What is best practice? Are you able to table or provide to the committee any research that shows what we should be targeting?

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Ms NEIL - If we could take that on notice, we certainly can provide you with that information in terms of the research -

Mrs RYLAH - You cannot describe to us what it looks like?

Ms NORRIS - It is quite a complex process providing best practise, but we have a number of papers that we can -

Mrs RYLAH - The housing, I am just interested in the housing.

Ms NORRIS - Yes, even just for housing, but we can provide you with some science-based research and journal papers describing that.

CHAIR - We know greyhound racing has been banned in a number of countries, but is there anywhere to your knowledge where greyhound racing is done to the highest possible standard, where animal welfare standards are clearly a priority?

Ms NEIL - Not from what I have heard. I have certainly heard about other places that have greyhound racing and have very similar sorts of issues. We haven't undertaken a detailed review of greyhound racing around the world. For example, Australia exports greyhounds to Macau and the conditions for those greyhounds is less than ideal. That is on top of the export process and what happens to dogs when they finish racing over there. We haven't done an extensive review of practices but we haven't heard any animal welfare advocate or others talking about having been able to address some of these really fundamental welfare issues in the greyhound industry.

CHAIR - One of the statements in the review document - this is the state's review into animal welfare standards in the industry - 'the panel believes that no level of regulation or compliance inspection could absolutely ensure that live baiting is not occurring'. It points to the problems in obtaining sufficient evidence. Would you agree with that statement?

Ms NEIL - I think that is definitely the case. It is something that for decades people have heard about. RSPCA inspectors in various states have tried to investigate but there hasn't been sufficient evidence beyond reasonable doubt to really pursue it in a large scale way. Clearly the evidence to date - the investigations and charges laid to date in other jurisdictions - shows that it has been quite widespread.

Mr McGINTY - Much like the committee, we receive anonymous pieces of information and anecdotal evidence and so forth, but every year or two all the chief inspectors from around the country meet for two or three days and discuss a broad range of issues. More often than not we discuss issues about greyhounds or dog fighting and cock fighting and all these other things that are spoken of anecdotally, but we all seem to be in the same boat when it comes to finding the evidence beyond a reasonable doubt. Prior to the episodes of *Four Corners* of course, it just seemed to be quite difficult to do that. It is a conversation that happens quite regularly among all of the states, all of the RSPCAs. I am not trying to draw a line between greyhound racing and dog fighting, but those kinds of activities that are not in the public arena are always discussed. We are all in the same boat - trying to find sufficient, beyond reasonable doubt, evidence.

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Mrs RYLAH - Of the nine cases reported to the RSPCA, why did the RSPCA chose only to inspect three and why were those three in the south?

Mr McGINTY - Sorry, we went to all nine. I went to three but I am based in the south. I personally went to three of the nine, but all nine were investigated.

Mrs RYLAH - If you did not go there, can I ask how they were investigated, or is it just that you didn't investigate?

Mr McGINTY - Other inspectors within our organisations - there are five of us. We have staff in Launceston and Devonport and they went to their respective complaints.

Mr VALENTINE - In your submission you talk about extending the racing career of greyhounds. Could you expand on that for the record? It is to do with the length of time dogs race and that there is a benefit in extending that.

Ms NORRIS - One of the contributing factors to wastage is that dogs that are not competitive at the very high level don't have opportunities to attend race meetings and that contributes to the unwanted greyhound population. Even industry participants have suggested that they also support - I think it was in New South Wales - providing more opportunities for dogs in the slower ability categories because that would enable them to still race and not be leaving the industry so quickly.

Mr VALENTINE - A bit like a canine Masters.

Mr GAFFNEY - In the horseracing code they extended the life of running horses because they graded them.

Ms RATTRAY - But that is all about opportunity and stake money and we know how much the greyhound industry gets compared to other codes. It is a well-known fact - 19 per cent.

CHAIR - One of the recommendations is that there be a prohibition on private training and trialling tracks in Tasmania. Do you have any sense of how many private training tracks and bullrings there are in Tasmania? Has there ever been any information come to the RSPCA about that?

Mr McGINTY - Not to myself. That may be a question best answered by Racing Services. We are very highly reactive and most of our work is responding to complaints. Only a small portion of our work is proactively attending premises so I don't know specifically how many there would be in the state.

CHAIR - Jade, there is a recommendation in here that carcass material be prohibited. You talked earlier about national standards where they are moving away from carcasses, so what difference would that make?

Ms NORRIS - There were two different types. The use of dead animal carcasses is prohibited across the board but the use of professionally treated tanned animal skins is a remaining exemption in Tasmania. Our recommendation is to remove that to ensure greyhounds are only trained with purely artificial and synthetic materials. In the opening statement we went through some of the rationale for that, and it is to do with industry perception of

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advantage where animal tissue is involved. Once you are starting at that point it can escalate to dead animal parts and advance, as it already has, to live animals. Our recommendation is to remove animal tissue entirely, and this is consistent with the Greyhounds Australasia national rules which were amended on 20 April. It is also consistent with Greyhound Racing Victoria, Racing Queensland and Racing and Wagering WA.

CHAIR - So other Australian states are moving away from animal materials of any type?

Ms NORRIS - Yes, of any type.

Ms NEIL - It is part of that cultural change process, too. These are sight hounds, they are not scent hounds; they are chasing something. It is about changing that view within the industry and it needs to go hand in hand with education material and other discussions within the industry. It is the rules supporting that whole idea that these are dogs that like to chase. The witness you were speaking to from the greyhound industry was talking about training his young dogs on tennis and soccer balls but then goes over to sheepskin, I think he said. It is about changing that, because if they are chasing a ball, let them keep chasing a ball or some artificial material and not use animal material. It takes away all of those issues. If there are tanned skins found on a training property, from an enforcement point of view and keeping the standards of greyhound racing higher, it makes it much easier for people like RSPCA inspectors to ensure that things are not slipping.

Ms RATTRAY - In your understanding, who has the responsibility of doing the paperwork for a greyhound you receive? Do you send back that information to Racing Services that you have in your possession a greyhound and from its microchip you can tell which one it is? Do you send that back?

Ms NEIL - The RSPCA has re-homed 13 greyhounds over the last few years, but if Caroline is still there she may be best placed to talk about what you do in Tasmania. I don't think there is a legal requirement. Caroline, when the RSPCA receives a greyhound and then adopts a greyhound from one of the shelters here, do you know what paperwork, if any, goes back to Racing Services Tasmania as part of the records of that dog?

Ms WILLIAMSON - I don't think we ever sent any paperwork back to Racing Services Tasmania because we got them not through the Greyhound Adoption Program.

Ms RATTRAY - No, but they'd still have papers. They're still registered.

Ms WILLIAMSON - I think the breeder or trainer would have retired them before they surrender them to us.

Ms RATTRAY - But they would still be chipped.

Ms NEIL - I know you're short on time, so should we come back with some information about what the process is?

Ms RATTRAY - Yes, what your process is.

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CHAIR - Caroline, is there anything more you wanted to say before we finish with this testimony?

Ms WILLIAMSON - Not too much. I have just looked up on the computer about the breeder's bonus, which I think is being phased out over this year, but at the moment breeders get paid \$1 300 by Racing Services Tasmania when they register a litter. I think things like that really need to be looked at in terms of why they are breeding and how many litters need to be bred, rather than blanket bonuses that go out to all the breeders.

CHAIR - That is exactly the direction the Government and Racing Services Tasmania is moving in, Caroline.

Ms WILLIAMSON - Yes, good.

CHAIR - Thank you. Did any of you have a final word?

Ms NEIL - It is good that you're pursuing the issues. Just having a community discussion about greyhounds will also help sell them as great pets.

Ms WILLIAMSON - I think last year through the Greyhound Adoption Program about 60 greyhounds were re-homed. I think we really need to look at how many it is possible to re-home through that program. I would think at a maximum in Tasmania we could probably re-home 80 greyhounds in a year so we need to look at how many we are breeding in relation to that as well.

CHAIR - Thank you all.

THE WITNESSES WITHDREW.

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DISCUSSION WITH **Ms LISA WHITE**, PRESIDENT, FRIENDS OF THE HOUND INC.
GREYHOUND ADOPTION GROUP, VIA TELEPHONE.

CHAIR - Given that you are interstate, you are not covered by parliamentary privilege, but I do need to advise you that this is a public hearing and that members of the public and journalists are present, which means that your evidence may be reported. If there is anything you wanted to explain to us confidentially, you need to ask us to do that and explain why you would need to do so.

Ms WHITE - As the president and founder of a not-for-profit organisation that has been saving and re-homing greyhounds now for over 12 years, I have had considerable first-hand experience and dealings with the people involved in the industry and, of course, with the dogs.

Ms RATTRAY - Were they Tasmanian breeders of dogs?

Ms WHITE - No, we work mainly within New South Wales and South-East Queensland. I did state in my submission that I have had no direct dealings with the Tasmanian industry except for once re-homing a dog that was flown up to us from Tasmania. So, no.

The greyhound racing industry ultimately exists by breeding, racing and killing dogs. Due to this, their social licence, we feel, is questionable.

Wagering revenue is the major reason for the government's support but dog racing has a relatively small market share and generates a small percentage of total wagering revenue. If greyhound racing were gone, we feel that punters would still spend that money on something else - some other form of betting or gambling, given the choices available, and that wagering revenue would not in fact be affected.

The industry cannot claim to be all hobbyists to evoke community support or sympathy and then claim employment as a justification for their being. I find that quite frustrating that they try and work it both ways. The animals are the products of a business whose main aim is to make money. Unfortunately, it doesn't value welfare as the priority that it should be. The meaning of the term seems to somehow get lost we feel. Dogs are not livestock and the public perception is that they are not livestock. Whilst they are being bred for a purpose, the end result should not be carnage.

CHAIR - Thank you very much, Lisa. You are a resident of New South Wales?

Ms WHITE - Yes.

CHAIR - The issue that has come before us has been one of a necessary evidentiary test in order to prove live baiting or to secure a conviction for live baiting. We have just heard from the RSPCA who said if you had asked industry leaders on the morning of 14 February whether live baiting was happening in New South Wales, Queensland or Victoria the answer would have been 'no'. What was your understanding of what the industry's practices were before *Four Corners*?

Ms WHITE - I believe live baiting was taking place. In the 12 years that I have been rescuing and re-homing greyhounds I have heard a lot of anecdotal evidence about live baiting

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taking place. A lot of the trainers tell us. They say, 'I have got a dog for you. This one would not take the bunny', or, 'This one would not do this, or wouldn't do that'. We want to rescue the dogs, so our focus is on saving them and re-homing them as pets. We are a rescue group. Over the years, we have become more advocacy-based. It has just been a natural progression to that, but over the years I have heard a lot of stories. It has been anecdotal evidence. There is one local trainer that I pick up dogs from. I see a little bunny cage in his back yard but it is my word against his when it comes down to it. As far as me seeing it happen - no, I have never seen it with my own eyes but I have heard lots and lots about it and I do not believe there is anybody in the industry who hasn't heard about it. We raised it with authorities in our New South Wales submissions last year. Live baiting was raised in a number of submissions, and basically ignored.

Ms RATTRAY - You obviously do not have a lot of understanding of what goes on in Tasmania because Tasmania is in a better position than most jurisdictions. We already have an independent regulation around the racing industry and the greyhound industry. Are you aware that that happens in Tasmania or are you purely going on what happens?

Ms WHITE - No, as I said, I have not had any direct dealings with the Tasmanian racing industry.

Ms RATTRAY - Purely, your knowledge and your understanding is -

Ms WHITE - It is state-based in New South Wales and Queensland, yes.

Ms RATTRAY - You are saying, 'Shut down the industry tomorrow and everything will be hunky-dory'. What happens to the 20 000 greyhounds that are bred in Australia? What happens to those?

Ms WHITE - The same thing that happened to them every year for 80 years.

Ms RATTRAY - What - 20 000 of them killed?

Ms WHITE - Wouldn't an end be better than a continuation of it?

Ms RATTRAY - You are advocating that that would possibly be -

Ms WHITE - If that is what has to happen. I cannot see it as an argument to ask, 'What happens to all the dogs that are currently alive?'. They are going to kill them anyway, so what is the argument?

CHAIR - What is your understanding of the life expectancy of a racing greyhound?

Ms WHITE - They can live 12 to 14 years.

CHAIR - Of a racing greyhound?

Ms WHITE - A racing greyhound is probably between two and four years for most of them. There are some that are kept for breeding and those that are lucky enough to be re-homed as pets or kept by the racing owners, but the majority of dogs are probably killed between the ages of two and four years of age.

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CHAIR - In New South Wales specifically, have the problems that have been identified where charges have been laid been on trainer properties outside major centres?

Ms WHITE - No. Western Sydney was one of the locations and I know in Queensland it was Western Brisbane, but you're only talking an hour out of the city.

CHAIR - When you make contact with trainers or breeders to pick up dogs, do you semi-regularly see bullrings on the properties?

Ms WHITE - We have been out to properties with bullrings. Most of the time we are meeting trainers on the sides of highways and not going to their properties, because we do a lot of driving around in collecting dogs as it is so we're getting them from some distances away. Although I believe there is a culture in this industry that has evolved over many years, a lot of these owner/trainers see no other way. They're involved in an industry where they have a dog for a certain time, they train it, race it, try to make a profit from it, and then there is nothing else for them to do than try to re-home the dog or put it to sleep. The re-homing opportunities are fairly scarce. There aren't a great deal of greyhound re-homing groups in Australia. I don't know what it is like in Tasmania, I don't know the figures there but on the whole the greyhound racing industry in Australia does not have much other way. There is no other way for these people to dispose of these products once their racing careers are finished.

Mr VALENTINE - Lisa, you mentioned in your submission about the problems that exist with the racing of greyhounds. You talked about regulation and compliance and corruption, overbreeding, wastage and other animal welfare problems. Can you expand on the other animal welfare problems that you see as existing?

Ms WHITE - It would come down to the code of practice within the racing code and the way the dogs are kept in two-by-one-metre kennels. There's a lot of different things that some people would consider cruel and some would think inappropriate. Dogs are left tied to treadmills for walking. There is a lot of general care and maintenance issues. The big issue a lot people don't realise is the injuries. If welfare is at the core of this industry, why do we have round greyhound tracks, why do they run in a circle? If you speak to any vet and ask them what sort of strain it would put on a dog to run at that speed in a circle and around a bend, they would tell you about the injuries they sustain. With a bend in a racetrack with eight dogs running 70 kilometres an hour in a pack together, of course you are going to get injuries. These dogs bump into each other, they knock each other, they go flying into the rails. Dogs are injured and killed on these tracks.

CHAIR - We have heard testimony from people who house greyhounds about their nature and there has also been discussion about the muzzling of greyhounds, which is prescribed by regulation in Tasmania but looks likely to have some modification made to it. What do you want to tell us about the nature of greyhounds and the kinds of pets they make?

Ms WHITE - I guess this is why you get so many passionate people once they understand the breed and know the dog. They are a very placid, friendly, sociable, beautiful animal and when you have a greyhound as a pet you really understand that. One of the common justifications for racing these dogs is, 'Oh, but they love to run'. I don't consider that a justification to race these dogs. I own greyhounds. I stopped counting at around 380, but

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I think I've had around 550-600 greyhounds through my home in the last 12 years. They are very beautiful animals. They are lazy; these dogs will sleep on your lounge for 12-20 hours a day. They are great with kids and older people and we have had success in re-homing greyhounds into nursing homes. I know I am biased but I really love this breed. They are amazing dogs and it is testament to their nature that they can come from living for three years in a small cage without what another breed of dog would receive growing up as a pup. They have a completely different way of being housed and treated and we take them in and they are so forgiving and affectionate that it is a testament to their temperament and nature as to how gorgeous they are as pets.

CHAIR - When a dog comes to you can you tell the difference between one that has been blooded and one that hasn't?

Ms WHITE - Yes, we do have an idea. There are many greyhounds we re-home that end up going to homes with cats or other small animals. A lot of those are more the younger dogs that didn't chase where the trainer will ring up and say, 'You can take this one, it doesn't want to chase'. There are a lot of dogs that come to us that end up being cat-friendly, chook-friendly, even rat-friendly. I live in New South Wales and my children have pet rabbits. I have cats and chooks and it's quite common for my two greyhounds to be on the lounge with the rabbits. There are many greyhounds that can live with small animals.

We can tell from the body language of the dogs and the way they are if they have perhaps been trained in that way. It takes more time to what we call 'let down' one of those dogs but most dogs, I think, can come out of that. There are some you just can't retrain but most of them, once they are given a home and treated as part of the family, forget that past life and can be fine around small dogs and other animals. They may be never be cat-friendly and able to live with one but they can be controlled and harmonious in a home and family situation.

Mrs RYLAH - Further to those comments you were just making, do you believe you can tell the difference between a dog that has been given EPO or testosterone and a dog that has been blooded?

Ms WHITE - As far as the drugs go, I know my colleague has had dogs she believes have been doped. In saying that, I think there are dogs she has had that she felt had been given coffee or various stimulants. We have also had dogs that have had medical issues that we have taken into our program. It has affected their organs and we have had vets give us statements about what they consider has happened, so prolonged substance abuse maybe in a dog that then ends up with medical issues and one of them had to be put to sleep in the end. Unless you get them pretty soon after they have been given substances there is probably no way of telling.

Mrs RYLAH - Between whether they have been blooded or whether it is some aggressive -

Ms WHITE - No, we don't feel that aggression is part of the doping thing or that it is related, if that's what you're asking.

Mrs RYLAH - Or bleeding?

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Ms WHITE - A dog that has been blooded and a dog that has been doped are two completely different things.

Mrs RYLAH - Right, and you believe you can tell the difference in their behaviour?

Ms WHITE - No, I wouldn't be able to tell the difference in that case.

CHAIR - All right, Lisa, we might let you get back to your offspring now. Thank you very much for taking the time out of your day to talk to us, it has been good.

DISCUSSION CONCLUDED.

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Dr ROD ANDREWARTHA, CHIEF VETERINARY OFFICER, BIOSECURITY TASMANIA, WAS CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WAS EXAMINED.

CHAIR - Would you like to make an opening statement, Dr Andrewartha?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - My only statement would be that I am one of authors of the report that was written in March and also you have the submission from Dr Lloyd Klumpp from Biosecurity Tasmania. I can address that. I do not have any particular issues I want to draw out of that submission or that report; it is probably better just to answer questions.

CHAIR - Was the *Four Corners* episode that went to air that exposed extreme cruelty in the three mainland states, catalytic in some ways for the way the industry is perceived and regulated here in Tasmania?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - During our work for the report, the industry here was somewhat shocked by the *Four Corners* program. I know I was. Yes, it was definitely a critical point in the industry looking at itself around the country.

CHAIR - So you would agree that is a positive thing.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Oh, yes.

CHAIR - Had you previously in your position heard allegations of live baiting happening here in Tasmania?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - No, I have not. I have been Chief Veterinary Officer for nearly 16 years and before that I worked in a clinical practice for the Government, and at no time have I ever heard or seen evidence of live baiting.

CHAIR - Do you think that Tasmania would be any different from the other three mainland states where the *Four Corners* program revealed that it was quite widespread?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - The fact it was shown to be present in three states means it would be a little naive to think it could not happen elsewhere. There are some differences in how training is done in the other states. The private trial tracks, for example, which we do not have here. So there are some differences, but as we said in the report, we could not say it definitely does not occur in Tasmania. The fact that we do not have private trial tracks suggests that it is less likely, but you could not rule it out.

CHAIR - When you say we do not have private trial tracks, do you mean we do not have large private trial tracks? Because we have had evidence put to us that there are small training tracks on private properties in various locations around Tasmania.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Some of the trainers have short, straight tracks on their properties and what are called bullrings. But by trial tracks I mean something set up like a greyhound racing track with the mechanical lure and that style of thing. We do not have them in Tasmania. It is only the tracks associated with the racing clubs. I know you are talking to the director of racing when you are in Launceston. He is probably in a better position to answer that question in detail.

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CHAIR - One of the recommendations from the RSPCA, that has just given evidence, is that those private training tracks and bullrings should be prohibited. Do you have a comment to make about that?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - In our report to the director of racing we suggested they need to at least register with Racing Services. But they have got the tracks. In an ideal world, yes, I think it would be good for the dogs to be taken to a track that was under third party supervision. But some of the trainers that are training now have upwards of 100 dogs. Just the sheer logistics of moving the greyhounds backwards and forwards may make that a difficult exercise. I do not know how often they use the tracks on their properties, but there would need to be a balance between logistics and any extra confidence it would give the public and the industry.

Mr GAFFNEY - What is the main purpose of the bullring?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - A bullring is a circular track with an arm in it. It is a mechanism for training a dog to chase a lure and to jump from the box. It is a very tight circle compared to a racing track. One of the trainers who demonstrated this to us emphasised the sound. It also creates the sound of the lure. A mechanical lure on a racetrack makes quite a loud sound. That as much as anything stimulates the dogs to jump from their boxes.

Mr GAFFNEY - Your recommendation five in the final report is only to permit the use of bullrings by a registered person who is in charge of the property on which the bullring is located, and only to permit greyhounds trained by that person to utilise the facility. If I lived next door and I had a greyhound and the person down the road is a friend of mine and he has a bullring, why would you have that as a recommendation as long as they were not doing anything untoward or illegal?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - It is partly the balance, as I was just saying, between the logistics of it. If you have a trainer who is training 100 dogs and he has a bullring on his property, he can use it. But if the trainer next door wants to load the dogs up to take them there, he could just as easily load them up and take them to an authorised track under supervision.

Ms RATTRAY - He could walk them up the road though.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - He could.

Mr GAFFNEY - I found that an interesting recommendation because there would not be a lot of people in the industry who would have their own bull ring.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - If we look at the circumstances brought up by *Four Corners*, it was people taking dogs to somebody else's private facility. That was an issue and that is the basis behind that recommendation - so there is no option for that happening.

Mr GAFFNEY - If the bullrings were registered and inspected by greyhound racing authorities there wouldn't be such an issue, would there? Would you still stand by that recommendation?

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Dr ANDREWARTHA - Yes, I would. The training tracks that are run by the various clubs - there is always an official there, be it a club official or a Tasracing official, attending. If somebody is taking a dog to a track other than their own track for training, it should be under the supervision of a third party.

Mr VALENTINE - A couple of questions with respect to the movement of dogs out of the state. Can you explain how Biosecurity Tasmania is involved in that, if at all? If someone is sending their dog to the mainland for training, which we heard from one submission, or to be inseminated - lots of reasons why it might go - can you explain how that occurs and what involvement you have?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Biosecurity Tasmania has very limited involvement in that. From a biosecurity point of view, a greyhound is a dog and the issue we are looking at is hydatids control. Greyhounds coming into the state for racing are exempted from the treatment provisions because of the risk - they are in training and we do not want something that will swab, and they are also not going to be in an environment where they could spread hydatids. Whereas dogs that aren't in racing would require hydatids treatment like any other dog.

Mr VALENTINE - Sorry, can you explain that hydatids thing again, on the mainland - why they would not be exposed to hydatids?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - No, when they come back. It is a long-standing exemption with our hydatids requirements - to exempt greyhounds. It was very early in our dog control - I can't remember how long. It is pre-1980. Greyhounds that were coming in to race, did not have to have a hydatids treatment.

Mr VALENTINE - Isn't there a possibility they could have hydatids?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Yes, but the dog is in training and has been brought into the state to race. It has come in for a race that night, it is going to go the track, it is going to be put on the track and it is going to go back.

Mr VALENTINE - Limited movement.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - It is not going to have much option to defecate where sheep could graze. That is the biosecurity thinking behind it.

Mr VALENTINE - It can't pass from dog to dog, can it?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - No.

Mrs RYLAH - But it can pass from dog to human, a child could pat it.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Yes.

Mrs RYLAH - That could be a problem, is that right? I can't remember the life cycle of hydatids.

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Dr ANDREWARTHA - With our biosecurity requirements for entry into Tasmania, we do not go on nil risk, we go on minimising risk to an acceptable level. If we were looking at the hydatids policy, there are a few things you could look at and if you wanted to completely remove the risk, you would tighten them up. But, it minimises the risk to an acceptable level.

Mr GAFFNEY - In the last 30 years has hydatids has been found in a greyhound that has been brought from the mainland?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - We don't test them.

Mr GAFFNEY - There has been no incidents?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - No.

Mr GAFFNEY - I would hate to see we were introducing more red tape.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - We treat greyhound movements into the state like any other dog, from a Biosecurity Tasmania point of view. We do not have any specific controls on greyhounds because they are greyhounds.

Mrs RYLAH - Except a racing greyhound.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - In which case they are exempted. And some other dogs are exempted from the requirement for treatment. The exemption is purely and simply so you are not getting interference from the drug in a dog that is racing that night.

Mr VALENTINE - In regard to the Director of Racing and Chief Veterinary Officer Report - the submission of Biosecurity Tasmania by you and Dr Lloyd Klumpp talks about the fact that draining is not covered in that report. Can you explain a little about that and whether you see that as an issue or not an issue?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - There is a quick mention of that. The report I did with the Director of Racing, we did in a very tight time frame, so we had to exclude a number of things. By draining, I assume you mean the practice of collecting blood from a greyhound prior to euthanasia for use in later transfusion.

Mr VALENTINE - Always prior to euthanasia?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Yes. You have a submission from Kim Barrett, which describes the process very well. So, a dog is identified that is going to be euthanased, it is taken to the vet practice, it is sedated - anaesthetised - and blood is taken. They don't drain the dog, they take one or two packets of blood from the dog, which is used later. The dog is already anaesthetised when it is done and then the dog is euthanased.

Mr VALENTINE - So there are no welfare issues?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Because Biosecurity Tasmania is responsible for management of the Animal Welfare Act, it is done in a way that there is no pain or distress to the dog. Therefore, there is no concern from the Animal Welfare Act perspective.

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Ms RATTRAY - The Australian Veterinary Association submission talked about improved integrity arrangements and suggested that there should be an increased input by the veterinarian arm to ensure adequate standards. Can you give me some idea of what increased input there could be by the veterinarians? I've seen what happens at a greyhound meet and how they are looked over on the stand as they come in and checked out. If they are one kilogram either way, they don't race; if they don't look like they are in good condition, they don't race. Are there any other things that you could add to that?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - I am sure that is the sort of thing they are looking for. Dogs on race day are very well-vetted. I don't think there is any concern with that. In putting the report together, I was impressed by the documentation that the racing industry already had describing what good welfare was for a greyhound. There is a lot of information there. When that is reviewed, there is probably an opportunity for people like the Veterinary Association to have input.

Ms RATTRAY - What else could they add? I am looking to get clear in my mind what else you could do to have input into that, given the Australian Veterinarian Association suggested that you would need to have a higher level of input into racing integrity. What else could you do? Is there anything?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - I am not sure. Nothing comes to my mind. Obviously, there are guidelines and we are looking at the standards of dogs that are kept in kennels. These things get reviewed and there could be input at that sort of level.

Ms RATTRAY - Do you see any way that you could assess the mental welfare of a greyhound? It has been suggested that that is one of the areas that we don't know about - how they are feeling, or whether they are stressed or not. Do you see that there is capacity for that?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - If you are suggesting a program to assess individual greyhounds whilst in the care of trainers for wellbeing, I don't know that it is going to -

Ms RATTRAY - The RSPCA is suggesting that we look at that; that is all.

CHAIR - It was the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee recommendations.

Ms RATTRAY - Well, the RSPCA talked about that and I am wondering how it might be undertaken, if at all?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - When there is nobody about, greyhounds in kennels spend most of their time sleeping. I cannot talk for the AVA perspective. If it was mentioned from the AWAC, I should point out the Veterinary Association is a member of AWAC. During the review, the documentation that I saw was good. I see there is a role for organisations like AVA and people to have an input into making sure that that is well developed. I personally don't see significant advantage in having vets actually checking dogs - apparently healthy dogs - in kennels at home. The vet checks you have on race day are quite important, particularly post-racing checks on the dogs. I think it is important that, having set a set of standards, somebody is monitoring the standards in kennels and making sure that the standards are being complied with.

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Ms RATTRAY - Which is what RST does?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Racing Services Tasmania, yes. I think that is important. Whether there is a role for the Veterinary Association in that, I -

Ms RATTRAY - I was interested in your view, that is all.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - As long as an appropriate person is doing it, I think it is fine.

CHAIR - Have you been to a greyhound kennel?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - The most recent time I went to a greyhound kennel was preparing for this report.

Mrs TAYLOR - Rod, you have been out to significant trainers who have lots of dogs?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - During the review, we were taken and these were announced visits. We were looking at the system. We were not trying to catch people out. We went to one trainer who had two dogs in a garage and they were in absolutely wonderful conditions - right through to a trainer,

Ms RATTRAY - Did they have the heater going that day?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - No, it was summer. He would do now, I would think. As for the others, one had over 100 dogs in kennels. So there was quite a range of standards.

Mrs TAYLOR - We have heard a number of people give evidence to say that they are kept in very small cages, on concrete, and that there is a terrible, overpowering smell of ammonia and stuff like that. If you were on an announced visit, obviously, it is not the same as an unannounced visit. Would you have said that they were not good welfare standards? I am not trying to lead you here. I want to know what you saw.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - I have not had any clinical dealings with a greyhound kennel since the 1980s. One of the kennels we saw during the review was of about that standard. Let us just say there was significant room for improvement and the Racing Services steward was working with them on those improvements. Yes, it could be better..

As for the other kennels - yes, they were big. There are a lot of dogs. If you have got a lot of dogs you do have quite pungent aromas. However, in general I was quite happy with the standard the dogs were kept in. They could have done with a lick of paint and all that sort of stuff, but the dogs generally were warm. As for bedding, if you give a big dog bedding they usually shred it up. In most cases, you would be looking at a wooden platform or something like that rather than bedding necessarily.

In one of the facilities I saw - and this is the one the steward was working with - I thought when we do bring in animal welfare standards, that probably is sub-standard and is not up to the standard of the guidelines for the racing industry and they are working with them. The others were. It is an animal industry.

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Mrs TAYLOR - How did the Racing Services person get on to this one that needs improvement?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - I understand that they have now got a steward who is not involved in race days and she is trying to get round all the kennels. I think they have got 50 per cent of the kennels done in the last 12 months. They are going round and inspecting them, looking for the standard the dogs are kept under and looking for improvements.

Mrs TAYLOR - Would that steward be going announced or unannounced?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Both probably. From memory there were something like 200 and something kennels in the state. You have got one steward, I think, they are employing a second one to do this sort of work. Even with unannounced visits, they are only going to be there occasionally.

There is a problem with unannounced visits. We have it with our own work with animal welfare. You need to make sure people are going to be home so as you can get into these places. If you are trying to catch people out feeding something they shouldn't, you need to go on unannounced. If you are looking at the general standard of how things are managed, or how well the area is maintained, there is not a lot of change people can make in a 24-hour period. I think they are getting a pretty good look at the standard the dogs are managed at.

Mrs TAYLOR - My other question arose also from other evidence we heard today. We know that there has been blooding in the other states. It was suggested that the dogs that come in from interstate might well have been blooded and that they are therefore probably faster, but they are also more 'aggressive' than our dogs - I do not know what the word is, really. The suggestion was that that probably encourages our trainers to try to compete. I am not sure if I am putting the suggestion right.

Ms RATTRAY - Particularly if they come and take the big bucks in the money races, and we do not have many of them.

Mrs TAYLOR - That is right because they come in for the big prize money races and our dogs cannot compete. Does that make sense to you? If so, would you say that we should do something by perhaps only allowing local dogs to race?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - I don't know whether we could do that. It was demonstrated to us that you can easily train a dog to chase an artificial lure.

It is an industry with an older demographic and we are talking about a dog that originally was bred to chase and hunt prey. Whilst I have not heard it directly, I could accept that there would be a thinking that blooding a dog would make it run better. There is a chance that we have got a culture like that there. If they saw dogs from the mainland they thought had been blooded, running better, then yes, they would look at it. This is what we put in the report, that the industry has to have the culture that this is unacceptable. You can train a dog to run on true merit by training it to an artificial lure.

It is a cultural thing. We are dealing with an older demographic where change is a little bit harder. I suspect that sort of thinking you are trying to outline is there and it is important

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for the industry to ensure they have a culture where that sort of thinking does not occur. They have really got to be open and transparent with the public to show that their culture would not allow that sort of thinking.

CHAIR - If you acknowledge that the thinking is potentially there, then you would acknowledge there is a risk that live baiting is happening in Tasmania?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Yes.

CHAIR - Quite a real risk.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - I cannot rule it out. Similarly I couldn't rule it out that dogs are taken for training on the mainland.

CHAIR - That has actually been acknowledged in testimony given to us.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - If we could prove that dogs have been taken to the mainland for that type of training, that would probably be evidence that it was less likely to be occurring in Tasmania.

We put the question to a couple of trainers. If you knew somebody was live baiting what would you do with it. Their attitude was, well we wouldn't. We would ignore and we wouldn't do tell anybody. That's their business and not my business. I don't think all members of the industry would be open to reporting it if it were occurring. Some members of the industry, yes, definitely, but I couldn't say all.

Mrs RYLAH - We have heard today that there is no education currently for breeders of greyhounds. We have also heard today that the key, with horses, the period of imprinting, to teach them how to chase, what they are doing, is in that period from, I am guessing, opening their eyes until six or 12 months of age. In that critical period, that is when the issue of the culture, if there is a culture, of using live animals is likely to occur. What do you think we need to do in regard to the education and training because that is a key focus of where this report is going to go? What do we need to do to change that so that we have a greyhound industry that is looking to the welfare of the animals appropriately?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Dogs, during breeding and when they have come into training, currently have to be under control of a registered establishment. One of the recommendations in the report is to make sure that throughout their life, until they are retired out of racing, dogs should be on a registered establishment. That solves where dogs are potentially going to face that first breaking-in stage; it will be on a premise that is known to racing services and where they can do inspections. That is your whole-of-life tracing a dog. That also fits in with tracing of dogs that have gone to the mainland and come back. Racing Services can go and inspect and see what is going on.

The second aspect of that is the actual training of the trainers. As you say, there does not appear to be an education process there.

Mrs RYLAH - There is training for trainers, we heard today, but there is no training of the breeders. So there is no training in the first place for the people who have control.

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Dr ANDREWARTHA - I probably should say training of people who run establishments registered with Racing Services. Everybody involved in the industry probably should be having some form of training so they are aware of contemporary community expectations, learning it from somebody who has the latest information rather than word of mouth from old hands.

Mr GAFFNEY - If you were a breeder of a greyhound, you want your greyhounds to be successful so that people will buy them. Although there is education, and you have highlighted a gap, I would not think there would be any breeders out there who would not know how to train their pups so that they were good for sale.

CHAIR - Aren't we talking about education in animal welfare standards and expectations and best practise?

Mrs RYLAH - And world's best practise. I know from horses there is a vast difference between people who use traditional methods and people using very different methods in terms of best practise to get the same outcomes, and in many cases better animal welfare outcomes. I think we are talking about transitioning an industry.

CHAIR - Yes, cultural change.

Mr GAFFNEY - My question is regarding the identified injuries at racetracks that are coming from the RST database. The Devonport track is significantly higher in that year and yet there is no recommendation in your report saying that should be further investigated, or was that of concern to you?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - There is also a comment in the report that because of the time frame we were working in we were really addressing the issues directly from live baiting, and that we really did not have time to look at the track-type injury issues.

Mr GAFFNEY - Can I ask whether you looked at injuries from other years and whether that was consistent or it was just a one-off year?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - In preparing the report we just didn't focus on that because we were focused on other areas in the time frame.

Mr VALENTINE - You went out and visited the facilities and some were less ideal than others. Can you give us an understanding as to how the level of care is compared to, say, a working dog on a farm? I know you have had experience on farms.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Better than some, worse than some.

Mr VALENTINE - What do you find on farms, for instance, compared to this?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Again, farms vary completely. Probably a better comparison would be look at the pound - the RSPCA. If you go into a dog shelter or a pound you will see dogs in quite often a damp environment because it has just been hosed out usually. It is concrete, it looks barren, it's noisy, it smells of dog urine and they are not a pleasant place. That is just the environment if you have a lot of dogs housed.

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Mr VALENTINE - Do they have bedding?

CHAIR - They do have bedding.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Some have bedding. Again, some of the bigger dogs will pull it out and just keep pulling it out.

Mr VALENTINE - Is that because of some stress-related thing or just their habit?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Could be boredom or could be stress-related. Some of the facilities I have seen with greyhounds in them are as good or better that I would expect to see at RSPCA at Mornington. What I am trying to emphasise here is that a dog kept in that sort of environment is quite different to the dog in your backyard. It is noisier, smellier and everything else than the dog in the backyard.

Mr VALENTINE - With the RSPCA they might be there, you would hope, for a shorter period of time.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Some of them are in there quite a long time.

Mr VALENTINE - Some are. I was interested in getting some comparison between the industry and working dogs, which are a similar sort of thing, kept for a purpose as opposed to befriending.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - They are in a confined area but it is not as if the dog is just locked in that space and that is the only area it gets to exercise. It gets out of that space to exercise. If you talk to somebody who has a greyhound as a pet, they spend an awful long time sleeping. They do get out. Using your working dog analogy, if the dog is not being used that day, it is either left on the chain or left in the pen.

Mr VALENTINE - That is right, and it could be for a week or longer.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - It could be for a very long time.

Mr GAFFNEY - The difference with a professional breeder too is that owners do not want their greyhounds running around the backyard in case of injury. They want them confined in a space so that they take it out to weigh, to drink, to feed and to exercise, and they put it back in there to protect their investment in the professional environment.

Mrs RYLAH - I was stunned by that other evidence suggesting that they run in a pack. If anyone had a valuable animal they would be very concerned about them running in a pack.

Mr GAFFNEY - Recently Tasmanian greyhounds were the best in the nation. When we were saying that Victorians are coming over to win everything, we have had dogs from Tasmania that have won national championships. It is a bit like the horses sometimes.

CHAIR - One of the concerns raised by the RSPCA and by Animals Australia is the number of puppies born and then disposed of. I note when you were talking earlier about checking and monitoring and knowing what is happening with the dogs, there is a period during breeding where there is a notification to Racing Services Tasmania. Then there is a period

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after they are born before there is another notification when they come into training. How is it possible to have any true understanding of how many pups are born to greyhounds in Tasmania if there is a three or four-month gap there potentially where there is no registration, as I understand it?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - That question is probably better put to Tony Murray. The puppies have to be marked at some point and vaccinated. I am not too sure exactly at what point the official count is given. It is while they are still with their mother. It is actually in the report somewhere. Short of puppies that are stillborn or die within the first couple of days, I think the figure is probably a fairly accurate count. That was my impression of it.

CHAIR - That 50 per cent of pups that are born are unnamed?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Yes, they do not get to naming. That is a lot later in life. The figures for puppies born I think is pretty accurate. It would miss out on puppies that might die in the first day or two or be stillborn. I think the numbers whelped are fairly accurate. That sets your standard. Those puppies have been born. They have to be accounted for somewhere. If they do not get to be named, obviously something has happened with them.

CHAIR - That is the question that has been raised by the RSPCA, Brightside and Animals Australia. It is consistent in the animal welfare submissions. In 2011-12, for example, 50 per cent of the pups that were born in Tasmania were unnamed, which means we have got a potential euthanasia rate there of half of all the puppies that are born.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - In our report on page 26 there is a table. That was produced by Racing Services Tasmania. It gives you an idea of the number of greyhounds deceased. It is a large number, a large percentage.

CHAIR - That would be a concern to yourself as chief vet and to Tony Murray too, would it not? The level of wastage in an industry where it is clear that, whatever structures and regulations are in place, about half of the puppies born are not named, and then the majority of greyhounds born to race do not live past the end of their racing life.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - From a strict animal welfare perspective, as in the Animal Welfare Act, provided those dogs have been euthanised in a humane fashion, it is not an animal welfare issue.

CHAIR - It is the difference between the law and ethics here.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Working in this area, as I do, it gets very confusing. I have to separate animal welfare from animal rights. The wastage issue here is an issue of legitimate community concern. To me, it is an animal rights issue rather than an animal welfare issue. If we compare it to any other industry, if we talking about horses or cattle, unwanted animals tend to wind up in a meatworks so there is a use for them. Here there is no use for the animals. People have a close affinity with dogs because the average person has more of an understanding of dogs and cats than most other animals. From a strict point of view, if we assume people can use animals for a purpose, provided the animals are euthanased in a humane fashion, that is dealt with. We are breeding animals here to race - and I am not trying to support or not support the industry. We are breeding animals to race

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and to get elite animals you have to have a pool to select from. You have to breed more than will win races.

Because I have to work in the area of animal welfare, I try to avoid confusing my thinking with animals rights. If it is acceptable to the community, I need to focus on whether the animals are managed in a humane manner. It is up to Parliament, as a reflection of the community, as to whether it is acceptable for us to use animals in this way. It is a concern. I would like to see less dogs euthanased, and at the end of life a number of dogs are euthanased. Even with things like the GAP program, there is a limited number of places where dogs can be placed.

CHAIR - Perhaps that comes back to the breeding numbers issue and the controls you can put in place to limit the number of pups that are born to die?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - In this industry, the pups are bred to race. That is the primary purpose for breeding them, not to re-home them post racing.

It is a livestock industry. Where I come from with Biosecurity Tasmania, this is an industry which is legal and it is our job to make sure the animals are handled in a humane manner, consistent with the act.

Mr GAFFNEY - I know it is Australia-wide, but I am still worried about the injuries when the dogs race around the track. They have anywhere between 8 to 10 dogs in a race, depending if they can fill all the boxes. Has there ever been any consideration whether that is a lot of dogs running around a tight track? It would seem to me there would be a greater chance for knocking into one another if you have more dogs in a race.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - It is the corner rather than the number of dogs. This is not my field so I am speaking on anecdotal evidence, but they seem to get less injuries on a straight track than a track with a corner on it. All human athletes get injuries, running, playing football or whatever. There will be a certain level of injury. By a good track design and things you can minimise the injury. You have to expect there will always be some.

CHAIR - It looks like the statistics in the north-west are pointing to a real problem with the track. Isn't there some follow-up?

Mr GAFFNEY - I think we will ask the industry tomorrow.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - We didn't look at that as part of our review.

Mr VALENTINE - There is no push or impetus to have straight tracks?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - You are better off directing that question to the Director of Racing. It is not my area of expertise. The anecdotal evidence I was hearing is that you get less injuries on a straight track, but there is a limit to the length of race you can have that way.

Mrs RYLAH - I know you did not create the figures on the greyhound breeding data, but I know you have looked at them. When we look at the 2012-13 cohort of 608 dogs, what we see down the bottom is the number of greyhounds deceased. You add those figures and you get your 608. Am I correct in saying that, for the period we are reviewing, of that

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2013 cohort some 247 of that cohort were killed and that if we looked at a later period you would update the 2011-12 cohort number for the number of deceased and that would become an increased number? Am I reading the table correctly?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Yes, you are correct. You have got the three years there and somewhere it does tell us how old is the oldest dog in the 2011-12 cohort. In the first column of figures those dogs have probably all got to a decent racing age and you have lost 384, with only 200 still alive and racing. The proportions change as you get into younger dogs and they still have dogs that have not reached their potential to go onto a track yet.

Mrs RYLAH - For the year 2013-14 we have had nearly 100 dogs, and 12 per cent of the dogs are already deceased.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Yes.

Mrs RYLAH - That would be dogs that are likely to have been sick or unsuitable?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Definitely any with severe sickness or something like that, yes, and dogs that have failed to chase or they did not think had potential.

CHAIR - There is a real problem, would you acknowledge, in obtaining evidence of live baiting? We have heard it not just from the RSPCA but also from Brightside, and obviously there are problems gathering evidence because *Four Corners* required a remote camera and some quite interesting ways of getting into a property and obtaining evidence. Is it very difficult to obtain evidence of live baiting in Tasmania?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - If it is occurring. Looking at the facilities, we made announced visits. Just where they are, the people coming up the road are visible for two or three kilometres away. It would be very hard to sneak up on these properties unannounced. You can see them coming. A couple of the bull rings we saw were well down the property. In one case your car would have been visible for a couple of kilometres coming up. You have then got to walk. You have got to get past a locked gate and then walk probably 500 metres through open ground with no cover to get to the bull ring, assuming that was the site you were concerned about. They are not places you are going to sneak up on. It is unlikely that unannounced visits are going to catch many people out if they were trying to do it. The comments have been made in some of the submissions that people had been warned. If we had found evidence of live baiting within four weeks of that program going to air somebody would have not been doing very much thinking because obviously everybody was hyped up to it.

We looked at the concept of closed circuit television on the bull rings and things like that. Who is going to watch the video? Who is going to make sure the cameras are working? We did put the question to a couple of people and it was a case of 'we are not stupid'. If we were going to do it we would go somewhere where the camera wasn't. I do not think calling for closed circuit television on people's private land is the way to go.

I am not sure on the legality of the way the evidence on *Four Corners* was collected, whether that would be allowable as evidence in a court here.

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CHAIR - Because they would have trespassed to gather the evidence?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - They trespassed to gather the evidence. I am not too sure whether somebody has got to be able to say this is what I say when I was looking down the view of the camera, because it is a fixed camera. I just do not know whether it would have been admissible evidence.

CHAIR - If they had identified a trainer or trainers or breeders taking part in live baiting that was very clear from the picture that this was X person who is known in the greyhound industry as a key player.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - Yes, but whether that was admissible evidence or not is outside of my skills; I just do not know.

Mr VALENTINE - They have to prove it is within Tasmania?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - I don't know what would be required to put it in as evidence in court. We did have a discussion with a police commander and we were talking about things like covert surveillance and things like that. We would have had to have a person behind the camera basically to do that, obviously very expensive, and you would have to have a very good reason to believe. Yes, it would be very difficult to catch somebody without very good prior intelligence.

Mr VALENTINE - So a drone is not something that will capture that?

Dr ANDREWARTHA - I don't know if it is admissible. Again, they are fairly obvious. If it was occurring and even if you suspect it was occurring, collecting the evidence would be a difficult task. I am not saying an impossible task, but difficult.

CHAIR - Thank you very much, Dr Andrewartha. As advised at the commencement of your evidence, what you have said to us here today is protected by parliamentary privilege. Once you leave the table you need to be aware that privilege does not attach to comments you may make to anyone, including the media, even if you are just repeating what you said to us. Thanks very much.

Dr ANDREWARTHA - I hope it has been helpful.

THE WITNESS WITHDREW.