



President: Graeme Barber

Secretary: John Cameron
28 Goodwin's Road, Mangalore, 7030,
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Greyhound Owners, Trainers and Breeders Association of Tasmania (Inc).

SUBMISSION TO THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON GREYHOUND RACING IN TASMANIA

The Greyhound Owners Trainers and Breeders Association (GOTBA) of Tasmania is an incorporated body. The Association was formed prior to World War Two, with its inaugural Chairman being Mr. Roy Cazaly of Australian Football fame.

The Association was initially established to foster the sport of greyhound racing and represent the interests of Owners Trainers and Breeders in the Tasmanian industry.

In 1972 the Association built a straight trialing track on land leased from the Brighton Council next to the Brighton racecourse. The "Brighton Straight Track" is staffed by volunteer members of the Association and conducts trial sessions twice weekly on Friday and Sunday mornings. The track uses a drag lure system and is now maintained by staff of TasRacing.

A drag lure system is a carriage dragged along the grass track by way of a reel rope retraction, where as an arm lure, used at the three race tracks in Tasmania, is set on a rail system above the ground.

The Association is currently governed by a committee of six elected financial members. The current Executive Committee is:

Chair	Mr. Graeme Barber (JP)
Vice Chair	Mr. Keith Nichols
Secretary	Mr. H. John Cameron
Treasurer	Mr. John Wilton
Committee	Mrs. Susan Gittus and Mr. Nathan Gittus.

The Association at its Annual General Meeting of 2010 adopted a new updated Constitution which outlines the objectives of the Association as:-

- (a) To provide access to organized trial facilities in Southern Tasmania for registered greyhound participants;
- (b) To manage and co-ordinate organized trials on days to be determined by the Association;
- (c) To promote the sport of greyhound racing;
- (d) To promote the breeding of greyhounds in Tasmania;
- (e) To provide prize money for racing events sponsored by the association;
- (f) To donate the funds of the Association for wreaths or memorials for deceased members;
- (g) The accepting of any gift for any one or more of the objectives or purposes of the Association;
- (h) The taking of any step the committee or members in a general meeting consider expedient for the purpose of procuring contributions to the funds of the Association;
- (i) The printing and publishing of any newsletters, or other material or documents that is considered desirable for the promotion of the objectives and purposes of the Association;
- (j) The borrowing or raising of any money in a manner and on terms –
 - (i) The committee thinks fit; or
 - (ii) Approved or directed by resolution passed at a general meeting;
- (k) Subject to the provisions of the Trustee Act, 1898, the investment of any moneys of the Association not immediately required for any of its objectives or purposes in any manner the committee determines;
- (l) The doing of any lawful thing incidental or conducive to the attainment of the basic objectives of the Association or of any of the objectives and purposes specified in this rule.

The Association currently has seventy five financial members and a positive general trading account as well as substantial money in a long term investment and is therefore financially viable. The Association also has a number of life members.

ADDRESSING THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

- (a) Practices in the Tasmanian Greyhound Industry, including whether live baiting, “wastage” and “draining” of greyhounds is occurring, and if so, to what extent.**

LIVE BAITING:

The Director of Racing and the Chief Veterinarian for Tasmania, in a recent investigation and report to the Minister for Racing found no evidence of live baiting being conducted in Tasmania.

Tasmania does not have any private greyhound trial tracks, which is where the live baiting problems occurred on mainland Australia.

The three race tracks at Hobart (Elwick), Launceston and Devonport are all administered by registered race clubs. All tracks are open to the public and all three race clubs conduct regular race meetings and also trial sessions. All three tracks are maintained by TasRacing.

At the Launceston venue there is also a straight trialing track which is again administered and operated by the Launceston Greyhound Racing Club (LGRC).

The straight trialing track at Brighton is administered by the GOTBA and also maintained by TasRacing. This track is also registered with Racing Services Tasmania and operated under strict rules and guidelines. Only GOTBA track volunteers and TasRacing maintenance staff have keyed access to the driving tower, so it is not possible for any other person to use this facility to live bait a greyhound on the lure.

WASTAGE:

The Association believes that this terminology has been used in reference to the euthanasia of greyhounds. The Association has not been able to access any reliable data to provide evidence to the Select Committee in relation to the number of greyhounds that could be deemed to come under this heading.

Breeding:

Number of litters whelped

Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
No. of litters	109	81	75	82	87	94	80

Statistics from Racing Services Tasmania.

Please note that the Association had not been able to access the 2013/14 season figures at the time of writing this report. The number of litters whelped in Tasmania have reduced by almost 25% since the 2006/07 racing year.

There are two large breeders of greyhounds in Tasmania, one family in North West Tasmania who breed about twenty five percent of all registered litters and a Southern based breeder who is responsible for approximately a further twenty five percent of litters. The remaining breeding over the State is made up of small breeders who breed either one or two litters per season.

Breeding and rearing a litter of greyhounds is an expensive exercise. Stud dog fees range from around \$1,000.00 per service up to as much as \$10,000.00. Most breeders now use frozen semen implants which allow access to stud dogs around the world. The down side of using frozen semen is that it has around about a 95% success rate for pregnancies and also generally produces larger litters, anything up to 10 to 12 pups, but mostly around 6 to 8.

Veterinary costs when breeding include frozen implant, regular blood tests, and possible caesarian section with an all up cost of about \$1,500.00. The litters are usually reared with the mother up to three months of age. The cost of feeding the mother and pups again usually runs out to about a further \$1,500.00.

When the pups attain the age of 3 months they are weaned from the mother and reared separately. At this point they must be immunized and implanted with a microchip at a cost of \$50.00 per pup. The cost of rearing a pup from this point on is around \$50.00 per week per pup. Forty weeks @ \$50.00 equals around \$2,000.00 per pup. To get a litter of six pups to 12 months point has cost the breeder around \$15,000.00 plus the service fee for the stud dog (anything from a further \$1,000 to \$10,000).

The next point in the life of a young greyhound is educating to race (referred to as breaking in). The education process takes anything from four to six weeks, depending upon the aptitude of the dog. Cost of breaking in is usually \$100.00 per week per dog (litter of six costs about \$1,440.00 for a four week period).

After break-in the dogs are then trained at the race track and given between one and two trial runs per week. The usual cost of this event called pre-training is around \$70.00 per dog per week. Pre-training process takes around 6 to 8 weeks.

By this time a pup has reached the age of around 16 to 18 months and is then put into full training. Trainers have different cost arrangements with owners so it is difficult to provide accurate information to the Committee for this particular event.

Suffice to say that the breeding and rearing of a greyhound pup is an expensive event, so therefore breeders do take seriously the evaluation process of providing a good mating with their bitch when selecting a stud dog.

There are around 800 racing stock currently in Tasmania. With the end of career age at about 4 years there is a requirement for around 25% (200) dogs to enter and exit this stock figure per year.

Breeder's Classic Races

There are also three races per season called Breeder's Classic events, one at each of the three race tracks. These races are restricted to dogs that have been bred in Tasmania and have not attained the age of two years old.

Breeder's Classic Stakes:

All three tracks	1/3/2009	12/10/2009	30/8/2010	10/10/2011	1/10/2013
Semi final stakes	2935	2935	2935	3435	3435
Semi final breeder	2255	2255	2255	3255	3255
Final stakes	9200	9200	9200	9200	9200
Final breeder	8050	8050	8050	8050	8050

The stake-money is dispersed from first to eighth place in these events.

On each occasion that a Tasbred dog wins a race in Tasmania a bonus of \$100.00 on top of the stake-money is paid to the owner.

The racing life of a greyhound is generally about two to two and a half years. There is a lot dependant on that estimation, being the greyhound has racing ability, it stays fit and healthy and does not suffer any serious injury during that time. The racing life cycle commences at around eighteen to twenty months of age and may go until the greyhound nears four years of age. There are around 800 racing stock currently in Tasmania. With the end of career age at about 4 years there is a requirement for around 25% (200) dogs to enter and exit this stock figure per year.

A huge problem with the Greyhound Racing Industry in Tasmania is the current race Grading Policy. This policy is administered by Racing Services Tasmania and is again under review. It seems that reviews of the policy have been frequent but no actual improvement has been witnessed to be able to extend the racing life of either aging greyhounds (masters or veterans events) or younger greyhounds with restricted ability. The Association would like to see the Grading Policy updated to include a Tier 3 racing system similar to Victoria.

Under our current policy a greyhound can win its first race called a Maiden race without penalty. It then enters the Grading system as a Grade Five dog on the track that it has won its first race. Once the dog wins another race on that track it is elevated to Grade Four status and then Grade Three and so on. A Grade Three greyhound after having three unplaced runs can drop back to Grade Four until it wins again. A Grade Four dog cannot drop back to Grade Five under the current policy which severely restricts the racing life of that dog.

The Association urges the Committee to recommend to the Director of Racing that the Grading Policy review be completed with haste.

BLOODING:

The Association has reached an assumption that this matter refers to Veterinarians removing the blood from a greyhound prior to euthanasia. The Association has no evidence to offer the Committee on this matter but makes a general comment that animal blood products, especially dogs, are required in Veterinary Centres to treat domestic pets under various circumstances.

(b) The role of regulatory authorities in upholding animal welfare standards in the industry and encouraging best practice.

Racing Services Tasmania (RST), under the leadership of the Director of Racing, is the lead Government organization in enforcing rules, regulations and standards within the Greyhound Industry in Tasmania.

RST stewards conduct regular inspections both announced and un-announced at registered kennels in this State. RST Stewards are also present on each race day at all tracks and can also attend trial sessions.

Prior to being entered for its first race a greyhound must be presented to stewards for inspection. This allows for the proper identification of the animal, but also a general view of the overall health of the animal. At each race event a registered Veterinarian carries out a health and soundness check on every dog that is to race on that program.

Owners and Trainers have their own Veterinarian who also provides a further back up to ensure that the greyhound is being provided for in the proper manner.

TasRacing has produced a manual for the proper care and welfare of registered greyhounds in this State. Recently TasRacing has also introduced a Certificate Two training course for Trainers and Handlers to further ensure best practice standards are properly understood by racing participants.

Racing Stewards also perform pre-race, after race and out of race swabbing of racing greyhounds in the State to ensure that dogs are not administered performance enhancing substances.

(c) The level of state government funding provided to the industry in Tasmania in the form of a 20 year funding deed signed in 2009.

Prior to 2009 all funding for the three codes of racing in Tasmania was provided by the "Tote". After the giveaway fire sale of our Tote by the previous government, the industry was then under funded by the 2009 deed to the tune of some \$5 to \$6 million.

The industry has then had to find the shortfall within its annual budget allocation. Wagering growth, restricted prize money increases and race field fees has enables TasRacing to continue to meet its current financial commitments.

Industry participants however, are concerned that continued growth in wagering, which this financial year is up about 10%, may not be sustainable, and there is ongoing concern that race prize money will not increase to the required level to sustain a viable greyhound industry.

Last year the Association did a comparison study with South Australia, and provides the Committee with this information.

Comparison with Greyhound Racing South Australia

Greyhound Racing South Australia is the most likely area to draw a comparison with greyhound racing in Tasmania. Previously stakes between the two States were on about a par, however over the past five years GRSA stake money has doubled up from \$2.77 million to the current funding of \$5.5 million. The GRSA strategic plan identifies that spending in the 2016/17 financial year will be a target of \$7 million. By comparison in Tasmania stakes paid out in the season 2009/10 were \$3.11 million increasing to \$3.96 million in this current season, an increase of only \$0.85 million.

GRSA Stake money schedule 2013/14 season:

Category 1 – Angle Park (Thursday night)

515m events	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	Total
Grade 6	1590	455	225		2270
Grade 5	2075	590	295		2960
Grade 4	2265	650	325		3240
Grade 3	2470	705	350		3525
Grade 2	2705	770	385		3860
Free for all	2985	855	425		4265

600m events	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	Total
Grade 6	2075	590	295		2960
Grade 5	2265	650	325		3240
Grade 4	2470	705	350		3525
Grade 3	2705	770	385		3860
Grade 2	2985	855	425		4265
Free for all	3250	880	440		4640

731m events	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	Unplaced	Total
All grades	2745	880	440	115	4640

Hobart Greyhound Racing Club (Thursday night) effective 10/10/2011

Sprint

461m & 340m events	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	Total
Juvenile	1325	380	190	60	1945
Grade 5	1325	380	190	60	1945
Grade 4	1375	395	195	60	2015
Grade 3	1415	405	205	60	2075
Grade 2	1485	425	215	60	2175
Free for all – B 8	1570	450	225	60	2295

Middle and distance events:

599m & 709m	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	Total
Juv / Grade 5	1325	380	190	60	1945
Grade 4	1375	395	195	60	2015
Open	1415	405	205	60	2075

Note that prize money at Launceston and Devonport is exactly the same as the HGRC. Devonport do not run races beyond the middle distance of 580 metres.

Stakes Grid - Total prize money

Graded races:

All tracks	1/3/2009	12/10/2009	30/8/2010	10/10/2011	1/10/2013
Invitation, B 8	2030	2065	2155	2355	2385
2/3	1910	1945	2035	2235	2265
Progressive	1810	1845	1935	2135	2165
Grade 3 / 4	1780	1815	1905	2105	2135
Trial	1750	1785	1875	2075	2105
Grade 4 / 5	1700	1735	1825	2025	2055
Grad. / Juvenile	1680	1715	1805	2005	2035
Maiden	1320	1355	1445	1645	1675

Once again it is dis-appointing to note the dismal increase to stake-money for this current 2013/14 season of only \$30.00 per race, with no addition to Breeder's or Feature races. This per race increase equates to less than 3%.

Tasmanian Feature Races:

Total stake-money

Race	1/3/2009	12/10/2009	30/8/2010	10/10/2011	1/10/2013
Hobart Thousand	107,100	107,100	107,100	107,100	107,100
1000 Consolation	4,725	4,725	4,725	4,725	4,725
Launceston Cup	57,100	57,100	57,100	57,100	57,100
L'ton Consolation	4,725	4,725	4,725	4,725	4,725
Devonport Cup	35,700	35,700	35,700	35,700	35,700
Illingworth Classic	17,775	17,775	17,775	17,775	17,775
Ministers Gift	14,810	14,810	14,810	14,810	14,810
Maiden Thousand				10,390	10,390
Nationals	7,430	7,430	7,430	7,440	7,440

Note that there has been no stake-money increase in these feature races for the period shown.

This comparison clearly shows just how far greyhound racing in this State has fallen behind our closest comparable area because of the under -funding of racing by the current funding deed.

(d) The comprehensive report already completed by the Director of racing and the Chief Veterinary Officer into these issues and the 29 recommendations for consideration by the State Government.

The Association fully supports the findings in the above mentioned report which has been tabled by the Racing Minister. The Association re-iterates that there was no finding of live baiting in Tasmania by the above review.

(e) Any other matters incidental thereto.

Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP)

The Association fully supports the GAP. Over the past two seasons the Association has made two substantial financial donations to the GAP program. Currently the program is being run by a licensed greyhound trainer who is providing her own kenneling facility at her property, for approximately twenty GAP dogs. The Association would like to see TasRacing prepare a business plan to map the future of the program including a stand-alone kenneling facility, motor vehicle and trailer owned or leased by the program and adequate money available for staffing a stand-alone centre.

The biggest issue at the moment is the waiting time that owners / trainers have in getting a dog into the program. The Association understands that the current issues surround the number of external active "foster carers" available to the program.

The Association commends the current GAP co-coordinator on her excellent work.

Greyhound Grading Policy

To enable the racing life of a greyhound to be extended, the Association requests that the Committee makes a recommendation to speed up the process of the current review of the grading system.

Economic Impact Review – Tasmanian Racing Industry

In November, 2013, TasRacing published a report titled "Size and Scope of the Tasmanian racing Industry". The report and the executive summary are attached for the information of the Committee.

In relation to racing industry the report found that:-

- (i) The racing industry in Tasmania generates recurrent expenditure of more than \$103.4 million annually;
- (ii) Owners, trainers and breeders are responsible for more that 52% of this expenditure through their breeding, and training activities;
- (iii) Regional Tasmania is responsible for generating more than \$31.5 million in value-added contribution to Gross State Product;
- (iv) In total there are 5,571 individuals who are employed or are direct participants in the Tasmanian racing industry, with more that 47% of those in regional areas;

- (v) The Tasmanian racing industry is responsible for sustaining just under 1,000 full time equivalent jobs with 313 of these jobs in regional Tasmania;
- (vi) Breeders invest more than \$13 million in the production of racehorses and greyhounds for racing.
- (vii) Racing patrons and customers spend more than \$10.5 million in relation to their involvement in racing.

In relation to Greyhound racing the report found that:-

- (i) \$15.6 million of recurrent expenditure was generated;
- (ii) There were 153 FTE jobs generated in the State with half of those in the north and north west;
- (iii) There are 493 participants involved in the sport;
- (iv) There are approximately 800 racing animals in the State;
- (v) Of the 506 pups bred last year, 305 were bred in regional areas;
- (vi) 158 race meetings were held in the State which catered for race fields of 26,700 participating dogs.

The Association urges the Committee to consider these financial and employment matters when making final recommendation about the future of greyhound racing in Tasmania.

Dog Control Act

When giving any consideration to making recommendations regarding the longevity of either racing dogs reaching retirement age or young dogs not up to racing standards, the Committee needs to keep in mind the requirements of the Dog Control Act in relation to the number of dogs being able to be kept on a property.



Graeme Barber (JP)
Chair, GOTBA (Tas)

Annexure A – Executive Summary – Size and Scope of Tasmanian Racing Industry

Annexure B – Report – Size and Scope of Tasmanian Racing Industry