

**MINUTES OF THE
GREYHOUND REFERENCE GROUP
meeting held at
TAB Racing Centre, Mowbray
on Wednesday 20 March 2019**

- Attendance:** Mr Michael Gordon (Board Member – Tasracing)
Mr Paul Eriksson (CEO – Tasracing)
Dr Alicia Fuller (Operations Manager – Tasracing)
Mr Liam Swan (Strategic Development Manager – Tasracing)
Mr Peter Wesley (Race Programming Manager – Tasracing)
Mrs Lana Castle (Racing Administrator - Tasracing)
Mr Richard Stamford (LGRC)
Mrs Karlene Cuthbertson (LGRC)
Mr Graeme Barber (GOTBAT & HGRC)
Mr Neville Allison (GOTBAT)
Mrs Robyn Johnson (NWGRC)
- Guests:** Mr John King (Director of Racing – ORI)
Mr Marc Hoyle (Chairman of Stewards – Greyhounds – ORI)
Mr Tony Latham (Racing Integrity & Steward's Manager – ORI)
Mr Susan Gittus (GAP Manager)
- Observer:** Mr Brennan Ryan (Liaison Officer - LGRC)

1. MEETING ADMINISTRATION

1.1 – Welcome

Michael Gordon opened the meeting at 11.06am and welcomed the delegates, guests and observers, he asked each person to introduce themselves to the meeting for the benefit of the newly appointed Tasracing CEO Mr Paul Eriksson.

Paul Eriksson gave a brief precis of his background.

Michael Gordon then suggested that the meeting move directly to section 2, Animal Welfare, to receive Mrs Gittus' report. This was accepted by the members.

2 ANIMAL WELFARE

Michael Gordon welcomed **Susan Gittus** to the meeting and congratulated her on the recent promotion of GAP at the IFMA Conference Dinner held at the Launceston race meeting on 4 March 2019.

2.1 – GAP Statistical Report

The statistical report for the second quarter of 2018/19 was tabled.

Susan Gittus gave a verbal precis of the report and also provided an overview of the community events attended, the need for more foster carers and the need for owners to assist GAP by taking their greyhounds out of their normal routines and getting them more used to change prior to their entry into the program

2.2 – GAP Facility Update

Michael Gordon gave a verbal report that the rezoning of the Pontville site had now been completed but Tasracing is currently doing a feasibility on different models and different options to determine if Pontville is the best option for the future. Following a group discussion raising concerns about the delay that completing the pending feasibility models would cause, **Paul Eriksson** agreed to drive the project and undertook to identify the best process to move this issue forward.

2.3 - GAP Return Policy

There was a discussion on the options of pre-assessment testing provided by Susan Gittus if the owner wished to have a greyhound anywhere on the list assessed for the purpose of a report on its suitability. It was recommended that GAP review the possibility of having up to two kennels available for such greyhounds and provide a report to the next meeting.

There was a discussion on the proposed policy of returning a greyhound to the person who sent the greyhound to GAP with a report on what steps they can undertake to help it should it fail the temperament test. It was resolved the policy be recommended and GAP maintain statistics on the number of returns and the success of subsequent assessments.

There was a discussion on the number of adoptions this year and GAP's focus on attending events which attract adoptions or interest in foster caring.

1 MEETING ADMINISTRATION (Cont.)

1.2 – Apologies were recorded for:

Ms T Price (Board Member – Tasracing)
Dr Annie Knox (Animal Welfare manager – Tasracing)
Mrs Ingrid Watkins (NWGRC)
Ms Denise Fysh (HGRC)
Mrs Katrina Gregory (HGRC)
Mr Sam Steven (Sales & Marketing Manager – Tasracing).

1.3 – Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2018 were tabled.

It was Resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted as a true and correct record and be confirmed.

1.4 – Business Arising

Greyhound Recovery Rebate Scheme

Peter Wesley advised that following the last meeting the policy was reviewed and subsequently submitted to the RR&PSC for approval and have been adopted effective from 1 April 2019.

Tasracing Key Staff Contact List

Peter Wesley advised that the updated contact list was distributed on 7 January 2019.

Local Welfare rules

Peter Wesley advised that a review of the draft Local Welfare rules is yet to be completed.

3. ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3.2 – GOTY Panel Appointment

A report advising of the requirements for the appointment of the GOTY panel was tabled. Following a discussion, it was recommended that invitations be extended to Peter Hayes, Rick Puccinelli, Shane Yates and Colin McNiff to be members of the 2019 panel and an invitation be extended to Greg Fahey to act as coordinator of the 2019 panel.

3.3 – Division of Races by Wins

A report on the status of the division of races by wins project was tabled, referencing the discussions at the last Programming Sub Committee meeting at which recommendations were made that guarding should be the criteria when any races are divided and seeking a recommendation on the continuation of the project for division by wins. Following a discussion, it was recommended that divided races should be done with guarding and as such the division of races by wins project be abandoned.

3.4 – Unexpended Funds

3.4.1 – HGRC Financial Assistance

A submission from the HGRC for financial assistance from the unexpended funds towards the cost of conducting trials was tabled. **Graeme Barber** spoke to the submission on behalf of the club.

There was a discussion on possible options for the club to consider, including the option of trialling without timing and a later start to the Tuesday night trials. **Liam Swan** committed to work with the club and the explore options available.

Ricky Aitken joined the meeting at 12.50pm

The meeting adjourned for lunch at 12.50 and resumed at 1.10pm

Susan Gittus left the meeting at 1.10pm

3.5 – Racing Programs

3.5.1 – Speed Star Racing Program.

Brennan Ryan provided a visual presentation and a verbal report on the concept of the 8 dogs with the fastest times over 515 metres going into four match races with each match race being \$2000 to the winner. It was suggested that the program was a marketing opportunity to attract the public to something different, not a wagering opportunity.

Following a discussion, it was resolved **Liam Swan** and **Brennan Ryan** review the proposal and table an options paper for discussion at the next meeting.

3.4 – Unexpended Funds (Cont.)

3.4.2 – Unexpended Funds

A report on the Code Funding Allocation as at 28 February 2019 was tabled together with the options of utilising those funds for stakes for the remaining 3 months of the year or carrying the funds forward to 2019/20 season to boost the funding available for next season bearing in mind that the welfare items (GAP and the Injury Rebate Scheme) would need to be funded from the Code Funding Allocation next season.

Following a discussion the clubs requested an adjournment to consider the options.

The meeting adjourned at 1.35pm and resumed at 1.39pm.

Robyn Johnson reported on behalf of the clubs and GOTBAT that the recommendation was to carry the funds forward to next season on the provision that it does affect the amount the code would otherwise receive under the funding model.

4. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

4.7 – Wide Arm Lure Development

A report on the wide arm lure development was tabled to which **Ricky Aitken** gave a verbal precis, including confirmation that the engineer's report had been received and quotes for the required changes to the catching pens were being sought.

Following a discussion, it was recommended to introduce the wide arm lure at trials, at Devonport initially in conjunction with trials with the current lure, so trainers had an option with the restriction that it cannot be used for run-on trials at this time, having been developed as a race lure.

Ricky Aitken suggested that the timeframe would be the introduction at trials at Devonport, obtaining the quotes and making the changes to the catching pens at Hobart and Launceston by which time any issues at Devonport should have been resolved to enable trials at those venues to commence.

4.8 – Track Maintenance and Processes

Ricky Aitken headed discussion on the paper tabled noting that all tracks in the State should be uniform in their sand, soil, irrigation and maintenance requirements. He advised Tasracing was committed to providing track staff with training and tools to monitor and maintain the quality of the tracks.

Alicia Fuller noted that conversation had been held between Greyhound Racing NSW and Tasracing regarding track maintenance processes. NSW have given access to a variety of information, reviews and tools including an app designed to simplify their track reporting.

It was also suggested by **Ricky Aitken** that all the track staff attend the track inspection with Stewards at the start of each meeting to provide the opportunity for feedback.

GRG supported for Tasracing continuing with the maintenance and the implementation of the required steps to ensure the tracks State-wide are uniform in standard and presentation.

3.5 – Racing Programs (Cont.)

3.5.2 – Feature Events 2019/20

Brennan Ryan advised the matter of the LGRC proposal regarding the number of heats for feature races, Breeders Classic Series and age restrictions on Feature Events had been brought forward from the previous meeting. It was decided that matter required no further discussion at this time.

3.5.3 – Greyhound Carnival

Michael Gordon made the suggestion that the Greyhound Carnival should take measures to pull away from the Thoroughbred Carnival dates. Discussions ensued highlighting the need to schedule features with Tasmanian participants in mind before Interstate participants. It was also noted that the name change for the Devonport Cup from Cup to the Devonport Chase was in place for 2019/20.

After discussions regarding the development of the 2020/21 Greyhound Carnival it was agreed the carnival be named The Tasmanian Chase Carnival. **Brennan Ryan** advised that the LGRC had determined to conduct the Launceston Cup on two Mondays early in 2020 and it was noted that the NWGRC had sought to host the Devonport Chase in early December 2019.

Michael Gordon suggested that a teleconference with a couple of representatives from each club be scheduled to develop a proposed model of a Greyhound Carnival to bring to the next meeting for further discussion. It was noted that the conduct of the Annual Awards dinner should be addressed in the considerations.

3.5.4 – Nationals

Peter Wesley sought a recommendation as to whether Tasmania wished to return to a hosting the Nationals or if the members wished to remain as participants only. It was recommended that Tasmania not return to hosting the finals but continue to pay the required levy to have a Tasmanian representative in the events.

3.5.5 – Devonport Show

Peter Wesley advised that Tasracing had verbal advice that DAPS would not be conducting a show in 2019 and had sought confirmation of that advice, however it was proposed that the race dates be allocated based on the advice that the show would not be proceeding.

4. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION (Cont.)

4.1 – Licencing Requirements 2019/20

Peter Wesley reported that Tasracing and ORI had held discussions on the licence requirements for 2019/20 and a list of proposed amendments were tabled for discussion.

There was a discussion on the need for new licensees being required to provide details of their kennel licence with the local Council and whether the stewards were seeking details from all licensees when a kennel inspection was conducted. It was resolved that the stewards would ask about a kennel licence when conducting a kennel inspection as a reminder and a form of education to participants as well as recording statistics on how many trainers did or didn't have a licence.

Graeme Barber asked the reason why greyhounds are the only code where owners have to pay a licence fee. **Peter Wesley** advised that the cost of licence fee for owners was being met by Tasracing. **John King** undertook to investigate the reasons behind the fee for an owners licence.

Robyn Johnson asked whether the information relative to a licence (the study booklet provided by TAFE) could be provided to participants when they apply for a licence. Following a discussion, it was recommended ORI review the option of having a reference on the application form along the lines of “go to www.xxx for information about your licence” which links to the booklet.

Karlene Cuthbertson asked about the reduction in the type of licence from a Public Trainer to an Owner/Trainer licence if the person isn't training greyhounds. **Michael Hoyle** confirmed that no activity over a period of more than 3 years may result in the person being required to show cause why their licence should be retained.

Neville Allison raised the issue of a Police Check being required for a person who is licensed in another code seeking to be registered in the greyhound code or being required to provide a police check for renewal after 2 years. He suggested a Statutory Declaration rather than a Police Check should suffice. **John King** highlighted the change in the conditions for next year whereby the licence will be issued pending receipt of the Police Check and undertook to review the requirement of a police check every two years.

It was resolved that the changes be recommended for adoption subject to ORI reviewing the period of time before another police check is required.

4.2 – Whelping Funding Assistance for Breeders

Alicia Fuller spoke to the proposal of whelping funding assistance for caesarean sections in emergency circumstances and for breeders. After discussions it was decided there were concerns that this proposed policy could be exploited and therefore was not supported.

There was discussion on the suggestion of the provision of a whelping kit and it was noted that the advice and recommendations varied between inseminators. It was resolved it be left with the breeder to obtain advice and support from the inseminator providing the service.

It was suggested that assistance for the desexing of greyhounds on retirement was a preferred option for funding and this be listed for consideration during the code funding budget allocation.

4.3 – Microchip Implants

Alicia Fuller spoke to the paper detailing the process for approval of a veterinarian or veterinary practice to microchip greyhounds, highlighting a number of new veterinary practices being established throughout the state and that they should be able to apply for approval.

Following a discussion **John King** advised that ORI was open to applications from any veterinarian or veterinary practice. It was resolved that if anyone had a veterinarian who was not approved, and it would be useful for them to be approved, they could advise their veterinarian that they can make application to ORI.

4.4 – Semi Finals for Breeders and Maiden Thousand Series

Neville Allison spoke to the paper submitted by GOTBAT to consider reducing the number of Semi Finals conducted according to the number of nominations received for the Breeders Classic and Maiden Thousand Series. Following a discussion, it was resolved the current conditions remain unchanged.

4.5 – Lodgement of Documents with ORI

Brennan Ryan gave a verbal explanation of the agenda item citing kennel inspection lists as having greyhounds on the list that have previously been notified as left the kennels and asked if a retired greyhound could be taken off the system altogether. **John King** advised he would need to review specific examples to correctly identify the issues and **Brennan Ryan** was requested to provide some examples for investigation.

John King advised that in situations where a greyhound, which is still on a person's kennel list, was euthanised some years ago, the date of retirement and euthanasia is back dated to the time of the occurrence to ensure correct figures in current reports.

4.6 – Advertising Bibs for Handlers

Alicia Fuller spoke to the proposal for handlers to wear bibs displaying advertising during meetings as done by handlers in the other codes, highlighting that the dress code was still required to be adhered to.

Discussions ensued and concerns were raised with participants wearing clothing that has been worn by another person. Following the discussion **Alicia Fuller** undertook to further review the proposal and suggested that it may be introduced as a trial.

4.9 – Industry Strategy and Development

The chairman deferred this item to the June meeting.

5. ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 – Wagering Turnover Summary

A report for the period ended 31 January 2019 was tabled and noted.

5.2 – Breeding Statistics

John King provided a verbal update on the statistics of litters, pups, euthanasia and retirements over the last five calendar years. **Robyn Johnson** requested that information on how many pups whelped in Tasmania remained in Tasmania and how many of them made it to the track be provided at the next meeting.

5.3 – Programming Sub Committee

The minutes of the meeting on 8 November 2018 were tabled and noted.

5.4 – Assets & Facilities Update

The Assets and Facilities report was tabled and noted.

5.5 – GA Update

Michael Gordon gave a verbal update of the last GA meeting including:

- The RSPCA is currently conducting a review on the Greyhound Industry on a state and territory basis with little communication with industry and GA was contacting the RSPCA to request information to provide feedback and in turn have an influence on the findings of the review.
- NSW and VIC are experiencing low dog numbers and in turn the number of races at the meeting are reducing. Tasmania had the best statistics Nationally in dog numbers.
- GA are scoping a national social and economic impact study on the contribution of Greyhound racing within each state and territory, which is estimated to be completed during the end of 2019.
- An investigation is being undertaken by GA on the political progress behind the closure of greyhound racing in Florida.
- The proposal of South Australia to introduce six dog races.

5.6 – GCA Update

Richard Stamford provided a verbal report on the GCA meeting and advised that Canberra was seeking financial support from GCA for legal fees but are still racing at Goulburn and were pinning their hopes on a return of racing to Canberra on the next election.

He advised the State Distance Championships would be held as a Best 8 only and suggested on the heat nights a prelude be scheduled.

Liam Swan reported on the Nation Group Calendar review at the GA and GCA racing committee meeting held in South Australia during March. He highlighted that the Hobart Thousand race required a review on prize money for heats and the final and the change of the Ballarat Cup is likely to impact the Hobart Thousand.

6. MARKETING

6.1 – Sales & Marketing Update

The Greyhound Marketing Report was tabled and **Alicia Fuller** provided a verbal precis on the report. The report was noted.

On a request by **Neville Allison**, **Alicia Fuller** reported on the marketing spend provided to all three codes from the Go Racing Tasmania budget. There was a discussion on the Summer Carnival Marketing for the thoroughbreds and it highlighted the need for the greyhound industry to formulate a carnival to possibly attract additional marketing support.

6.2 – Marketing Presentation

It was resolved the presentation be deferred to the June meeting.

3. ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION (Cont.)

3.1 – Meeting dates for 2019

Discussion was held to reschedule the dates for the June and November GRG meetings due to a clash with the Greyhound Australasia and Tasracing Board meetings. The recommendation was to hold the meetings on 12 June and 20 November.

5. ITEMS FOR NOTING (Cont.)

5.7 – Race Dates 2019/20

Brennan Ryan reported that the LGRC had sought a dual code meeting with the harness during daylight savings – probably in January 2020 – as an additional meeting.

Graeme Barber advised that there had been an issue with Sky coverage of the last Devonport combined meeting and Liam Swan undertook to investigate the report to ensure coverage of combined meetings going forward.

Robyn Johnson suggested that combined meetings could be considered for marketing as a carnival which would benefit both codes

7 Other Business

Richard Stamford noted that code funding model for 2020 had not been addressed and the scoping paper had not been provided. **Michael Gordon** advised that the matter had been raised at the Board meeting, but the Board had determined that the scoping paper was not going to be pursued until after the Summer Carnival had been finalised and the new CEO had been appointed. **Paul Eriksson** undertook to review the matter.

Graeme Barber noted that the current chair of Hobart Greyhound Club, Denise Fysh, would not attend further GRG meetings due to ill health.

Neville Allison sought the percentage turnover of each code. **Alicia Fuller** advised that Thoroughbreds were up 6% (not including carnival figures) Harness was down 7% and Greyhounds were up 8%.

Graeme Barber on behalf of the participants and the GRG members recorded a vote of thanks to **Alicia Fuller** for her work as Acting CEO and wished her the best in her permanent role as Operations Officer.

The next meeting is scheduled for 10:30am on Wednesday June 12 at The Grange, Campbell Town.

Meeting closed at 4:22PM

ACTION LIST

GAP Facility - ensure progression and outcome of studies	CEO
GAP Pre-assessment – review possibility of having two kennels available	SDM
GAP Return Policy – implement policy	SDM
GAP Return Policy – maintain statistics on returns	GAP
GOTY Panel – extend invitations	SDM
Division of races by wins – discontinue project with OzChase	RPM
HGRC Financial Assistance – explore financial options for club	SDM
Speed Star Racing Program – develop options paper for next meeting	SDM & B Ryan
Unexpended Funds – carry funds forward to 2019/20	SDM
Track Inspections – track staff attend inspection with stewards	OM
Track Maintenance and Processes – continue to develop procedures	R Aitken
Greyhound Carnival – teleconference with clubs to develop proposed model	SDM
Devonport Show – schedule race dates	RPM
Code Funding Budget – list desexing of greyhounds for funding option	SDM
Advertising Bibs – further review proposal	OM
Breeding Statistics – report on pups remaining in Tasmania and racing	ORI
State Distance Championship – schedule as a best date only	RPM
GRG Dates – seek venue for amended dates for June and November	SDM
Sky Coverage (combined meetings) – investigate no coverage of last Devonport meeting	SDM
Code Funding Model – scoping paper for review	CEO & M Gordon