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Greyhounds Australasia Rules Rework Project - FAQs

The rules governing Australia's greyhound racing industry, the Greyhounds Australasia Rules (GARs) have undergone a review and a draft is now available for public consultation. This version includes a number of changes already made in response to feedback received in the first stage of key stakeholder feedback.

Greyhounds Australasia's main purpose in commissioning this project was to:

- improve the structure of the GARs;
- make the GARs easier to read for people in the greyhound racing industry;
- simplify and/or modernise the language used in the rules where possible.

There has been substantial discussion and consideration given to clarifying certain existing rules, as well as considering the appropriateness at the national level of the introduction of some new rules to apply across all Controlling Bodies. There has been minimal change to the substance or effect of the vast majority of existing rules, however, there has been some more substantial changes in some rules, particularly those relating to animal welfare and integrity.

To assist with understanding the changes, a table of contents has been provided within the proposed GARs and a new Schedule has been included at the end of the rules document. These comparative tables cross-reference the existing (where present) and new version of all rules. Most changes are also listed and explained within *Table 1 – New and/or Substantially Amended Rules*, and the substantive changes are addressed in an individual FAQ in this document.

What's the next step?

Greyhounds Australasia and its member Controlling Bodies are working together to ensure everyone has an opportunity to consider and make a submission on the proposed rule changes as well as communicating any changes to generate awareness.

All interested stakeholders are invited to review the proposed GARs and relevant documents and provide feedback either through their peak body (through its own respective submission process) or directly to Greyhounds Australasia prior to 5pm on 7 June 2021 to rulesrework@galtd.rog.au. Greyhounds Australasia will consider all feedback received and make any recommended changes prior to considering endorsing updated GARs.



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Aims of the proposed Greyhounds Australasia Rules

Greyhounds Australasia commenced a major project to review and modernise the national rules of greyhound racing after recognising a need to adopt a consistent approach to the many proposed reforms and ensure the rules were simplified and easily understood by current and future participants.

The aims of the proposed new GARs are to:

- promote, enhance and protect the welfare of greyhounds;
- regulate greyhound racing so that public confidence in its integrity is upheld;
- provide for a level playing field in greyhound racing;
- record the rules which, together with the Local Rules of Controlling Bodies, regulate greyhound racing; and
- promote the long term sustainability of greyhound racing and the conduct of it in a socially responsible manner.

What does this mean for me?

The majority of amendments are logical, non-controversial changes or reflect current industry practices. Many significant changes are listed and explained within the *document Table 1 – New and/or Substantially Amended Rules*, and the substantive changes addressed in an individual FAQ within this document.

There will continue to be the normal requirement for persons bound by these rules to ensure they are aware of those rules that relate to any activities undertaken by them in greyhound racing. Therefore everyone is encouraged to review the proposed rules to ensure they understand and are able to comply with them, and provide any feedback to enable further refinement prior to Greyhounds Australasia considering endorsing updated GARs.

When would the rule changes apply to me?

The proposed rules will not apply until endorsed by Greyhounds Australasia and then subsequently by each individual Controlling Body.

Following this next consultation period, the GA Rules Sub-Committee will review the feedback provided and make recommendations for any further changes to the Board of Greyhounds Australasia, who will ultimately decide whether to adopt the new GARs. It will then be up to the Board of each jurisdiction's Controlling Body to adopt the new GARs. In some cases a Controlling Body may not be able to adopt all GARs and Local Rules will clarify if a particular GAR does not apply in that jurisdiction (See Rules 3-7 of the proposed new rules).



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It is anticipated that the new GARs would be able to be adopted later this year, following appropriate consultation.

How can I see which rules are proposed to change?

The proposed new rules involve a modernisation and reordering of all the GARs, with a significant change to the language, structure and numbering of the existing rules including the introduction of a logical structure of subject specific Parts and Divisions of the GARs, with the topics of the Parts and Divisions set out in a logical order. For example, Part 4 deals with “Animal Welfare”, and Part 8 deals with “Prohibited Substances and Prohibited Methods.”

To assist with understanding the changes, a new “*Schedule 1 - Tables of Comparative Provisions*” has been included at the end of the GARs with comparative tables cross-referencing the existing and new version of all rules.

Many significant changes are listed and explained within *Table 1 – New and/or Substantially Amended Rules*, and the substantive changes addressed in an individual FAQ. The purpose of the explanatory table is to set out many of the main changes proposed, either as new provisions (appear as [NP]) or substantially amended provisions to the current rules (current equivalent rule will appear in brackets e.g. 46 [R15] or 46[15] is proposed GAR 46 comparable to current GAR 15).

The table identifies the majority of the new or substantially altered rules, but is not exhaustive. The summaries and/or descriptions of the new rules and/or substantially altered rules referred to in the table are typically brief – those summaries identify the substance of the new rule (or substantial alteration to an existing rule) but should be used as a guide only and are no substitute for reading the text of the relevant provision itself.

Where can I access the current Greyhounds Australasia Rules?

<https://galtd.org.au/industry/rules>

Where can I access the proposed new Greyhounds Australasia Rules?

News - (galtd.org.au)

Where can I access Table 1 – New and/or Substantially Amended Rules?

News - (galtd.org.au)

How else can I compare the current rules to the proposed rules?

Two tables exist at the end of the rule book occupying pages 87 to 99 that do not exist in the current rule book (*Schedule 1 - Tables of Comparative Provisions*). Table A shows the rule number in the proposed new rule book



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compared to the existing rule book, and Table B shows the existing rule number compared with the rule number in the proposed new rule book.

As can be seen in Table B, many of the existing rules have been split up into multiple new rules to help improve the structure and readability of the rules. While the number of rules has increased from 140 in the current rules to 183 in the proposed rules, the number of entirely new rules (NP – new provision) is quite limited, as shown in Table A on pages 87 to 93.

Will these proposed changes affect current matters?

The introduction of any new version of GARs will not affect decisions made or procedures commenced under the existing rules.

What are liability standards and are they proposed to be changed?

There are three liability standards for offences i.e. the extent to which an offence must be proved for a charge to be proven. They are:

- Absolute Liability – meaning that if a relevant act (or omission) occurs, then by virtue of the relevant fact of it occurring (or not occurring), the charged person is guilty of an offence. No defence of “honest and reasonable mistake of fact” is permitted.
- Strict Liability – meaning that if a relevant act (or omission) occurs, then by virtue of the fact of it occurring (or not occurring), the charged person is guilty of an offence, except that the charged person is able to run and potentially succeed with a defence of “honest and reasonable mistake of fact”.
- Ordinary Liability – this means that for each of the relevant parts of an offence, a physical element (the relevant act or omission), and the relevant mental element (or mens rea) that relates to the relevant offence, must be proved. In the case of greyhound racing rules, the standard of proof is on the balance of probabilities, so that a relevant element of an offence (and/or offence itself) is only proved if a decision maker is satisfied that it is more likely than not that the element of the offence (and/or offence) has been established.

An example of an absolute liability offence is current GAR 83 (3) i.e. a trainer who presents a greyhound for an Event with a prohibited substance in its system is guilty of an offence. Such absolute liability has been recognized world wide as acceptable for the regulation of racing and for the common good of participants.

On the other hand current GAR 83 (1) is an example of an ordinary liability offence and deals with e.g. the deliberate administration of a prohibited substance with the intent to affect a greyhound’s performance in an Event. The relevant mental element must be proved on the balance of probabilities.



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Within the proposed rules there is intent to make it clear that some current strict liability offences are to be changed to absolute liability as detailed in *Table 1 – New and/or Substantially Amended Rules*. Changing these specific offences to absolute liability offences is consistent with a stronger regulatory approach for these extremely serious matters that have the ability to significantly damage the reputation and ongoing longevity of greyhound racing.

What are the changes proposed to luring and live baiting rules?

In Part 9: Offences, Division 2: Animal welfare offences relating to luring and baiting (including live baiting offences), it is clarified that a number of offences have been changed from strict liability to absolute liability offences. These offences have no place in the sport at all and the stronger regulatory approach promotes the long term interests of the industry and its participants.

The baiting offences contained in proposed new subrules 159(1)(a) to (1)(e) and 162(b) are proposed to be “absolute liability” offences and references to “live animal”, “animal carcass”, or “any part of an animal” refer to the fact of the existence of each of those conditions, whether or not the charged person knew or believed of the applicable condition. In the case of a live animal the offence will be committed if the relevant animal is alive, whether or not a charged person knew or believed that it was alive. An additional proposed absolute liability offence is that any person convicted in a Court for an offence relating to live baiting, baiting with an animal carcass, or baiting with a part of an animal, would be guilty of an offence under R159(1)(h).

Why does the definition of greyhound include retired greyhounds?

The definition of greyhounds includes all greyhounds that are under the control of, or in the custody of, greyhound racing participants. The reason retired greyhounds are included is to make it clear (as per existing practice) that participants with greyhounds are responsible for the care of all greyhounds in their possession, this includes greyhounds that are no longer racing and are retired. This is also consistent with the definition used in other legislation or Codes of Practice relating to greyhounds.

What are the proposed changes to failing to pursue and marring offences?

The application of failing to pursue and marring rules by Stewards remain unchanged however the penalties associated with these offences will change as detailed in *Part 7: Events and Meetings, Division 6: Marring, and where a greyhound fails to pursue*.

Failing to pursue by reason of injury remains for the first time only (R125). If a greyhound is found to be severely injured, it will not be charged with failing to pursue. It is recognised that on some occasions, veterinarians fail to diagnose a significant injury immediately after the event, that may result in a greyhound being unfairly charged with a failing to pursue offence. In these situations, participants are encouraged to



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promptly contact their Chief Steward with appropriate evidence (e.g. photos, veterinary certificates) to provide this feedback. In several jurisdictions a review or appeal will be possible.

If a greyhound mars and fails to pursue during an Event, the rules make it clear that the offence for marring will be applied by Stewards to ensure a consistent approach by all Controlling Bodies (R126). The allowance remains for an endorsement for either failing to pursue or marring to be cancelled after 10 clear runs, but will occur automatically rather than needing to apply to have it removed (R128).

The major change is that penalties for failing to pursue (excluding first time injury) and marring will be treated together with the removal of 12-month penalties (considered to be too harsh a penalty) and the addition of a requirement of two satisfactory trials having to be performed for third time offenders (R127).

For example, if a greyhound fails to pursue without injury in an Event, and then subsequently mars in another Event, this marring will be treated as the second offence. The penalties if a greyhound either fails to pursue or mars during an Event are proposed to be:

- in the case of a first offence, 28 days at the track where the offence occurred and until the completion of a *satisfactory trial*;
- in the case of a second offence, 28 days at all tracks and until completion of a *satisfactory trial*; and
- in the case of a third or subsequent offence, three months at all tracks and until the completion of two *satisfactory trials*.

Why are the rules relating to seizure of greyhounds proposed to be changed?

The ability to seize a greyhound is necessary for severe cases on the rare occurrence where it is required to do so to protect the animal, and reputation of the industry where failure to do so may place the animal in serious harm and/or bring the industry into disrepute.

For controlling bodies exercising these powers pursuant to the rules, it is reasonable to suggest that seizing animals for a set time period e.g. 72 hours does not provide for each case to be treated on its merits. For example, in extreme animal welfare cases, it may not be reasonable to return an animal back to the responsible person where it may still place the animal in jeopardy.

The requirements for identification, receipt, return and supported reasoning when seizing an animal is a matter for procedure and process as managed by the Controlling Body.

It is important to remember that any official that takes enforcement action is required to apply the principles of procedural fairness when making a decision or taking an action under their authorised powers which includes being able to reasonably justify their actions.



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In the proposed rules there is reference to timeframes, including use of the term ‘immediate’ or ‘immediately’ – What does this mean?

Where a participant is required to do something, such as notify the Controlling Body about the euthanasia or retirement of a greyhound, immediate, or immediately, means that something is required to be done very quickly, without delay and as soon as is reasonably possible.

In many cases this can be done electronically, including notifying via an email or updating a kennel return online, especially if outside of normal business hours. Some Controlling Bodies also operate after hours services to ensure notifications can occur for important matters, which may not be resolved immediately, but the notification can occur to ensure awareness.

The use of the term ‘person’ versus ‘registered person’ is common in the rules – Why would the rules apply to non-registered persons?

Throughout the rules, the term *‘person’* and *‘registered person’* is used frequently.

The reason the term *‘person’* is used is so that the rules capture situations where a person is conducting a specific activity that brings them within the rules of greyhound racing, even if they are not a registered person.

It is not the registration component which brings the person within the rules, it is the activity that they are conducting. The definition of *‘person’* therefore is broader than that of a *‘registered person’*.

What does the use of the term ‘reasonable’ mean in the rules?

What is *‘reasonable’* will depend on the circumstances of what is required. It is an objective standard. The term *‘reasonable’* has its ordinary and common meaning.

For each of the times the word *‘reasonable’* is used, an objective assessment of the relevant circumstances of a case or scenario will need to be made as to what steps, endeavours or time were taken. It is a legal test and when making decisions under the rules as to what is reasonable, the circumstances of each matter will be taken into account by the decision makers.

What is the proposed change regarding the identification record and the Digital Footprint about?

New definitions have been proposed to reduce the repetition of wording and restrictions in the rules in relation to identification and records of a greyhound, enabling the future enablement of digital recording e.g. weight cards or ID cards.

The Digital Footprint refers to any part of a greyhound’s identification record which is stored electronically or digitally and the identification record means one or more relevant identifying documents or records in relation



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to a greyhound, whether stored in hard copy or electronically. It includes the documents and/or information contained on a, *greyhound identification card weight record card*, and/or in the *greyhound's Digital Footprint*.

Do any proposed changes impact officials?

Many changes will affect the way officials apply the rules, but some will directly affect officials to enhance the integrity of the sport.

For example, proposed new R75(7)(d) increases the prohibition on Steward's betting directly or indirectly on greyhound racing to a complete ban rather than limiting it to a ban on betting when a Steward officiates at a meeting, which is similar to current policies of several Controlling Bodies.

R75(6) also makes it clear that officials that have the capacity to affect the result of an Event must not directly or indirectly place a bet on that Event or provide information that is not publicly available.

R75(1) also places restrictions on officials that are in a close personal relationship with an *owner, trainer or attendant of a greyhound* competing at a meeting, to not act as an official at a meeting unless approved. Controlling Bodies will apply any local procedures that deal with such conflicts of interest.

What are screening limits and therapeutic substances?

The concept of screening limits for specified therapeutic substances (R146) has long been applied in other racing codes in Australia and internationally and definitions for each are provided within the proposed new rules. Essentially a screening limit is a limit of detection applied by a laboratory to a screening test and below which the laboratory does not confirm the presence of a prohibited substance i.e. the sample will not be positive.

Improvement of analytical methods to detect banned performance modifying drugs is unambiguously a good thing for racing and sport. However as analytical methods improve it becomes more likely that positives are called on either irrelevant levels of genuine therapeutic medications that are used legitimately for welfare reasons or contaminants from feed and environment. For laboratories to report the presence of certain therapeutic substances in a consistent manner, screening limits have been internationally harmonised with other greyhound regulatory bodies for these substances.

The screening limit is the urine or plasma concentration adopted for the screening of a specified therapeutic prohibited substance; it is derived from a review of administration studies followed by a risk analysis consisting of two components: a risk assessment (evaluation of the effect of the substance and factors related to its control) and a risk management (decision step for harmonisation).

Screening limits are harmonised detection limits agreed following input by international consensus and are conveyed by instruction from racing authorities to their laboratories. Screening limits are simply the detection



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limits to be used by the laboratories when screening for certain therapeutic substances as instructed by the authorities; they are not thresholds. When the screening procedure indicates the screening limit, in either urine or plasma, has been exceeded, all that is required is qualitative confirmatory analysis to confirm the presence or absence of the prohibited substance. Quantification is not required.

The proposed rules identify several potential screening limits for identified therapeutic substances and it is expected that more will be introduced in future following appropriate review. The introduction of screening limits will ensure irrelevant levels of the specified therapeutic substances in a sample are not reported by laboratories e.g. flunixin and dexamethasone, while still maintaining the importance of drug free racing. The majority of the studies deriving these screening limits have been peer reviewed and published in scientific literature.

What are residue limits and residue substances?

The concept of *residue limits for specified residue substances* (R147) is a concept similar to screening limits except the substances are identified as more likely to occur as a result of e.g. feed contamination rather than administration as a medication, even though they could be used by a veterinarian for therapeutic reasons.

The proposed rules identify several potential residue limits for identified residue substances and it is expected that further will be introduced in time following appropriate review. The introduction of residue limits will ensure irrelevant levels of the specified residue substances are not reported by laboratories e.g. morphine, ketamine and xylazine, while still maintaining the importance of drug free racing.

Is prohibited substance testing otherwise changing?

Other than the introduction of screening or residue limits, there will be no change in the practice by laboratories of which substances they report as a prohibited substance. Australian racing prides itself on having a 'zero tolerance' approach to prohibited substance use in racing animals, along with many other racing jurisdictions worldwide. This is what the public expects of racing codes.

Regulatory bodies are not, and never have been, concerned with applying the racing rules unreasonably so as to capture the provision of food and water (or the vitamins and electrolytes (including potassium, bi-carb, etc.) that are present in normal foodstuffs). To do so is clearly not in the interests of the sport or the regulation of it.

Greyhounds Australasia will continue to review potential limits for therapeutic substances or residue substances and introduce them where appropriate.

What does ‘reliable means’ in relation to the administration of prohibited substance mean?

The anti-doping rules within Part 8 of the proposed new GARs introduce the notion that certain prohibited substance offences can be proved through a concept known as ‘*reliable means*’. Clarifying the methods of establishing facts or presumptions in relation to an offence under Part 8 of the GARs describes how the regulators will approach these cases. The concept is informed by findings in, or practical learning from, previous cases.

‘Reliable means’ includes scientific analysis or testing, but may also include proof by admissions, through witness statements, documentary evidence and other analytical information which of itself does not satisfy all the requirements to scientifically establish a *prohibited substance being in a sample*.

What is a prohibited method?

A prohibited method is a proposed new provision (R150) that prohibits certain identified doping methods that have no place in racing or sport e.g. artificially enhancing the uptake, transport or delivery of oxygen or any method of intravascular manipulation of the blood or blood components by physical or chemical means.

What are the proposed new evidentiary provisions in relation to prohibited substances?

There is a new proposed rule (R152) that contains provisions designed to clarify the process of conducting prosecutions relating to *prohibited substances offences*. It generally reflects current legal precedent in these cases and provides more clarity to participants and decision makers. Among other things, the rule provides that when there is a prohibited substance charge the person or body bringing the charge does not have to prove that:

- a *person* charged with an offence knew that a *prohibited substance* was in fact a prohibited substance;
- a *person* charged with an offence knew that a *prohibited substance* was a *prohibited substance* of a particular kind or name;
- a *prohibited substance* has a particular effect on a *greyhound*, such as a particular performance or behaviour effect;
- a *prohibited substance* has been scientifically proven to enhance the performance of either a *greyhound* or other mammal.

How is the evidentiary value of laboratory certificates of analysis proposed to change in the rules?

When a laboratory notifies of a positive swab it issues a *certificate of analysis*. The proposed rules clarify the testing requirements of samples in more detail than the current GARs and refer to the testing of the B portion of a sample occurring at either a different approved laboratory or by a different chemist where that is not possible, providing more protections to participants in the testing of positive samples.



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Given the security generated by the procedures in the rules, it is proposed to provide that the result of two analyses contained in two signed certificates of analyses from one or more approved laboratories (in relation to an “A” portion and a reserve “B” portion) constitutes “conclusive evidence” of the matters contained in them regarding the presence of a prohibited substance (unless the certification, testing or analysis process which preceded the production of the certificate was “materially flawed”). This has been the approach taken in harness racing for some years and provides a more streamlined way to establish the presence of a prohibited substance in a sample.

Is the possession of prohibited substance rule proposed to change?

The equivalent of current GAR84 is made more detailed in R148 to reflect in a clearer manner what the current regulations in relation to veterinary medicines are. It has been refined to not refer to just prohibited substances but also the possession of any exempted substance or other substance (including any other medication, medicine, injectable substance, supplement, herbal product or therapeutic good).

The rule addresses that any veterinary chemical product that claims to provide a therapeutic benefit to an animal including any product administered to an animal by injection must be approved and registered by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicine Authority (APVMA) before being legally manufactured, imported, sold, advertised or bought in Australia.

Sourcing these substances from overseas for use in animals is may be considered as importation and you can be liable for penalty if the medications are not registered in Australia.

It is also clarified that the use of compounded substances can only be for the treatment of an animal if prescribed by a veterinarian. The active constituents of herbal products can lead to findings of a prohibited substance and are not exempt from regulation in the rules. The APVMA must approve herbal remedies that claim to treat animals and the Therapeutic Goods Administration must approve human remedies, unless exemptions apply.

It remains an offence to possess any permanently banned prohibited substance.

Why are there obligations to report matters affecting performance or health or welfare?

The current GAR 75 is largely unchanged (see proposed R122), and participants are encouraged to continue to report this information to Controlling Bodies. Although this rule is traditionally aimed at providing feedback to the punter, it also provides important feedback to Controlling Bodies regarding track safety. For example, if multiple hock injuries occurred at a race meeting or trial session but were not diagnosed on track, unless the participant notified the Controlling Body, they are unable to take that information into account when reviewing the status of the track and identifying any issues for attention.



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If my greyhound is scratched on track for illness, can I get a re-vet to have the penalty revoked?

Although the current GAR73 allows a greyhound scratched by the on-track veterinarian due to injury to be re-assessed at a subsequent meeting to have the penalty period revoked, this does not apply for illness or other condition and the penalty imposed must stand. The intent of this rule is not to allow ill, or recently ill greyhounds that may still be infectious, present on the racecourse with healthy greyhounds.

Although most of these scratchings receive a minor stand-down period, the rule is proposed to change to allow the Stewards, upon application of the trainer, to reduce a stand-down period to 10 days if a veterinarian certifies the greyhound is free of the illness or condition and is fit to start: see proposed R41.

What are minimum vaccination requirements?

The introduction of a stand-alone (R25) that specifies the minimum vaccination requirements for the entire lifecycle of a greyhound makes it clearer for a participant to navigate the requirements of vaccination. The only significant changes of substance to the current GARs are that a greyhound must remain protected to a C5 vaccination level throughout its life in the industry and unless a Controlling Body determines otherwise, a greyhound must not compete in an Event for seven days after being administered a vaccine, which has generally been advised by veterinarians anyway.

The intent of the vaccination rule changes is to ensure adequate protection for C5 diseases is maintained throughout the racing population, particularly given outbreaks of kennel cough that not only affect greyhound welfare, but also significantly affect race fields and increase costs to the industry. Although kennel cough vaccination will not prevent all forms of kennel cough, it will reduce the severity and spread of those specific forms of infectious kennel cough.

The proposed rule is intended to allow the flexibility to ensure a greyhound is not unnecessarily over-vaccinated, which causes unnecessary costs to participants and some increased risk to already protected greyhounds. Once an adult, vaccination review will be required annually, as is the case with most relevant Codes of Practice and most standard boarding kennel requirements, and if veterinarians follow WSAVA vaccination guidelines (as accepted by Controlling Bodies), not all components of the C5 vaccination will be required each year, thereby reducing the financial cost to participants.

A Controlling Body will also have the ability to increase the minimum vaccination requirements, which would be based on expert veterinary advice, most likely in response to a reportable disease such as an exotic disease or threat to the racing population (e.g. canine influenza).



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What is the list of reportable diseases?

There is now a clear list of reportable diseases in proposed R40 that includes already notifiable diseases under government legislation and others that have the potential for significant animal welfare, emotional and economic impacts and on that basis it is recommended that they be included as reportable diseases in order that effective control measures can be instituted in a timely manner.

A draft Reportable Disease Management Plan has been developed by Greyhounds Australasia and Controlling Bodies and the procedures within it outline the steps to be followed to minimise the impact on the industry, while limiting any burden on participants who in most cases will be able to manage mild illness. The list of disease includes common illnesses such as kennel cough to ensure there is awareness early on in any outbreak so that the industry can minimise the impact and spread of any illness to protect the industry.

What are the proposed changes to the notification requirements for a greyhound retiring from racing?

There is no major change to the current application of these rules as outlined in R22 and R23 in that the owner or person responsible for a greyhound is required to notify a Controlling Body of the greyhound's activity after retiring from racing. Registered persons must be accountable for the greyhounds under their care and that includes reporting the whereabouts and activity of those greyhounds when retiring from racing. Further responsibilities may apply under Local Rules.

Proposed new R23 also makes it clear that a greyhound being retired for breeding purposes is not retired from the industry and Controlling Bodies need to be advised by their owner where it has not been registered for breeding purposes within 12 months.

What is the proposed requirement for mandatory sterilisation (de-sexing) of greyhounds retiring from the industry?

A similar rule to WA LR 106A is proposed that makes sterilisation (desexing) of greyhounds retired as pets mandatory to ensure that greyhounds retired from the racing industry are rehomed responsibly. R24 provides that unless a greyhound is being accepted by a Controlling Body approved adoption agency that undertakes sterilisation, the owner or person responsible for the greyhound at the time of such retirement as a pet must ensure that the greyhound has been surgically sterilised by a veterinarian before allowing the greyhound to leave their care and custody, unless an exemption applies for medical reasons.

Various Codes of Practice also already stipulate that a greyhound must be desexed prior to rehoming.

What is proposed to change with the use of barking muzzles?

WA LR105A was introduced in 2017 following the NSW McHugh Report and banned the use of barking muzzles. The new provision (R30) proposed on a national basis makes it clear that except under circumstances approved



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by a Controlling Body, or when used by a veterinarian for the sole purpose of examination or treatment, a barking muzzle cannot be used on a greyhound.

Some restrictions already apply in other states including on hot weather days at race meetings, and the NSW Code of Practice prohibits their use. These decisions to prohibit the use of barking muzzles were due to their use being highlighted as a potential animal welfare issue as:

- barking muzzles have the potential to limit panting and heat exchange;
- muzzled greyhounds are not under close observation whilst kennelled;
- by restricting opening of the mouth there is risk of aspiration of vomit &/or suffocation; and
- they do not alleviate the underlying reason for barking and as such risk increasing a dog's anxiety and frustration by restricting its ability to perform a behaviour that can be a coping mechanism (a displacement behaviour).

For some participants accustomed to the use of barking muzzles in some limited circumstances this may be a significant change. Participants will need to identify and address underlying behaviours that trigger excessive barking from an early age, to reduce the underlying anxiety and frustration in those dogs that require the use of barking muzzles, leading to improved welfare outcomes over the life of the animal.

In recognition of the practical impact of this ban, some jurisdictions are considering a phased in approach where Controlling Bodies would set out the circumstances in which barking muzzles could be used during a transition period (e.g. in line with a minimum requirement in an existing Code of Practice).

Is anything changing with ear tattooing?

Greyhounds Australasia is conducting a review into alternate methods of satisfactory identification that ensures integrity, with a view to phasing out ear tattoos in future.

What are the changes to lay betting and why is it a form of prohibited betting?

Improper or prohibited betting means you are betting **against** your greyhound winning and/or running a place, and you collect if it doesn't win or place in an Event. It is important to have rules such as this (see proposed R87) to protect the punter and ensure that public confidence in our sport's integrity is upheld. The principle of this rule is unchanged, but minor changes to its wording have been made to reflect its intent.

An addition to the rule makes it clearer that placing a bet by a person directly involved with a greyhound on a bet type that excludes their greyhound is now a contravention of the rules.

A person must not offer an inducement to a participant in greyhound racing with the intention of profiting from a greyhound not participating in an Event to the best of its ability. A person who has provided a service/s



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connected with the keeping, training or racing of a greyhound in the period of 21 days prior to an Event must not lay that greyhound. An owner or nominator must not lay any greyhound that is or may be entered by that owner or nominator or on that person's behalf.

What happens if a person is not in a condition to handle a greyhound properly?

Similar to the application of the current rule (GAR45), if the Stewards are of the opinion that a person handling a greyhound is incapable of properly handling a greyhound by reason of intoxication, illness, or any other cause, they will order that the greyhound be handled by another registered person (see proposed R95) or otherwise the greyhound will be scratched. Stewards will take a reasonable approach to this rule, and any sudden illness experienced on-track would not be a breach of this rule unless the person, after experiencing the illness, continues to or attempts to handle a greyhound. The same standards apply to officials in proposed R75 as applies to participants in proposed R95.

Will there be further rule changes in future?

Yes. All GARs are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain appropriate – as a result of these reviews, changes are typically required.

It is noted that some valid proposals for new or amended rules raised during stakeholder feedback are beyond the scope of this rules project and will require further investigation, consideration, and refinement prior to being consulted on.