



# THE NSW GREYHOUND BREEDERS, OWNERS & TRAINERS' ASSOCIATION

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## REMINDER!!!

As previously advised by notice dated November 10, 2017, the Annual General Meeting of the Association has been set down for **Sunday, December 10, 2017** on **Level one** of the **Wentworth Park Grandstand, Wentworth Park** at **10am**.

Parking is available on site with entry off Wattle Street.

### Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 2017 Bi-Annual Meeting and signing by the Chairman
3. Business Arising from the Minutes
4. Chairman's Report
5. Financial Performance Overview
6. Adoption of the 2016/2017 Annual Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Statement
7. Management Presentations



GUEST SPEAKER:  
**MORRIS IEMMA, CHAIRMAN OF GRNSW**

*The meeting will be completed by 1pm  
and a barbecue luncheon will be available  
immediately following.*

# NEW SOUTH WALES GREYHOUND BREEDERS, OWNERS AND TRAINERS ASSOCIATION LIMITED

## Minutes of the 2017 Bi-Annual Meeting of the Association

Held on Sunday 28 May 2017  
At the Kurri Kurri Bowling Club,  
3 Tarro Street, Kurri Kurri

The meeting opened at 11.05am

**Chairman:** Mr G Rose  
**Mr B Scott (Executive Officer)**  
**Directors:** Mrs S Absalom (Deputy Chairman)  
Mr N Curby  
Mr B Sabotic  
Mr W Schwencke

### (Attendance as per attendance register)

#### Apologies:

W and M Bright (Maitland)	F Carpenter (Maitland)
D Cotroneo (Lismore)	B and D Curby (City/Parramatta)
A and M Edmunds (Maitland)	M Enright (Maitland)
J and R Green (Kurri Kurri)	P and R Groizard (Direct)
G and R Hayes (City/Parramatta)	R Penny (Camden)
J Seldzianowski (Greta)	W and E Sharman (Muswellbrook)
J Tracey (Leichhardt/Annandale)	M Watts (Maitland)
D Widows (Temora)	G Minter (Director)
J Cotroneo (Director)	G Mangafas (Director)

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and after apologies were dealt with, he drew attention to the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 27 November 2016 and pointed out that they omitted to record Director N Curby as an attendee. A motion that the minutes be amended to include Mr Curby was moved, seconded and carried. A motion that the minutes as circulated and amended be confirmed was moved by G Masters, seconded by A Pole and carried. The Chairman signed the minutes and called for any business arising from. As there was no business arising from the minutes the Chairman called upon the Executive Officer, Mr Scott, to provide an abridged financial report.

### Abridged Financial Report of the Association's Trading

The Executive Officer, Brenton Scott, thanked the members for their attendance and reported that the Association would trade with an operating deficit in 2016/17 but the sale of the Lidcombe property would ensure an influx of cash.

Major extraordinary costs were anticipated at Lismore for yet to be finalised works as a consequence of floods. In addition, considerable costs had been incurred in overturning the greyhound racing ban. Costs associated with the overturning of the ban were expected to be around \$1.4m. The costs included Government and Public relations, Media relations, advertising, legal and event co-ordination around the rally.

NSW GBOTA was the contracting party for all contractors. Reimbursement of some expenses was being provided by the Greyhound Racing Industry Fighting Fund. Once this reimbursement was completed, the NSW GBOTA exposure was expected to reduce to between \$800,000 and \$900,000.

Whilst the costs were high, the campaign had been successful and this was largely because the expertise of the consultants used. Government and media relations have been highly effective and the advertising campaign, whilst dwarfed by the Government's bitter and untruthful campaign, was targeted and influential. The legal strategy, driven by former Federal Government Solicitor General, David Bennett QC, was powerful and, importantly, viewed as creditable by Government.

Directors made the decision to divest the Lidcombe building during the mid-stages of the ban. It was clear that, if government and media relations strategies failed, then a long and costly legal battle would have been the only option left. Directors recognised that the funding of these costs would, in all likelihood, fall to the NSW GBOTA, hence the decision to war chest and divest Lidcombe.

The property had previously been valued at \$4.8m. Directors engaged a property consultant and two leading commercial agents and believe that the end sales price of \$7m was above market expectations.

Full details of NSW GBOTA exposure to the costs of overturning the ban will be presented to the Annual General Meeting.

The Chairman, in calling for questions from the floor, said that without Alan Jones, without Ray Hadley and without Paul Murray the task would have been much more difficult, but it was important to recognise the professionalism behind the team that was in place to ensure highly influential government and media relations.

#### **Questions from the floor:**

##### **Alfie Hayes (Matrville) asked were advertisements paid for on 2GB?**

Mr Scott confirmed that the overall advertising campaign included approximately a \$50,000 spend with 2GB.

### **Management Presentation Executive Officer**

#### **The Alliance and the GBOTA**

Mr. Scott provided a brief overview of the Government's decision to ban greyhound racing, the passing of legislation to bring prohibition into effect, the overturning of the ban and the repealing of the legislation and replacement with the Greyhound Racing Act 2017.

An outline of the crucial role of the NSW GBOTA was also provided to members. Mr Scott explained that whilst the NSW GBOTA Board of Directors had been the contracting party and the driver of strategy associated with overturning the ban, an industry Alliance had been formed to provide steering committee advice and to also be seen as the 'brand' of the protest movement. The Alliance Steering committee was composed of:

Geoff Rose and Sue Absalom (NSW GBOTA)  
Brad Adam and Shane Stiff (Independent clubs)  
Kevin Gordon (participant stakeholders)

Mr. Scott further explained that the administrative workload was carried by himself and NSW GBOTA Operations Manager, Ellen Harris.

The Alliance members had worked together on a daily basis in the period July 9, 2016 to November 2016.

The major undertakings were as follows:

- Appointment and management of support advisors – (a) government, media and public relations (b) advertising, web-site, social media (c) legal (d) rally management (e) media management.
- Daily media briefings and daily media management.
- Daily political strategy.
- Parliamentary briefings and meetings
- Stakeholder communication
- People power – rally, Gunnedah field day, Orange field day

The NSW GBOTA used a combination of Barton Deakin and Hawker Britton to assist with government and parliamentary relations. PR Dynamics drove media and public relations and Ogilvy Mather were used for the advertising campaign.

The NSW GBOTA Board of Directors met at least monthly and often fortnightly so as to ensure the campaign had appropriate oversight.

The Premier and Deputy Premier, in announcing the decision to overturn the ban on May 2016, had requested the NSW GBOTA's Executive Officer, Brenton Scott, to be the sole greyhound racing industry on a body to be known as the NSW Greyhound Racing Industry Reform Panel. This panel was headed by former State Premier, the Hon. Morris Iemma.

Recommendations of the Reform Panel were handed down in February 2017 and 121 of the 122 recommendations had been supported by the Government. The recommendations had subsequently been used as the base for the Greyhound Racing Act 2017.

With the Greyhound Racing Prohibition legislation now repealed and replaced by the Greyhound Racing Act 2017 (applicable from July 1, 2017). Attention had now turned to the appointments of the new Board of the GRNSW and the Animal Welfare and Integrity Commission.

Beyond July 1, 2017 it is expected that both the Commission and GRNSW will start to look at their organisation structures, undertake key recruitment, certainly for their CEO positions, and commence strategic planning for the industry.

Mr. Scott concluded by stating that the NSW GBOTA directorate was fully supportive of the separation of commercial and regulatory functions. The challenge was to ensure that the improved governance did not come at excessive cost or became too distant from participant needs. In addition, the increased regulation needed to be offset by a fairer funding model. These issues would remain key advocacy objectives for the NSW GBOTA.

## External Governance Reviews

Two external governance reviews were undertaken in 2015/16 and the majority of those considerations had been supported. The one issue yet to be fully resolved is the future composition of the Board of Directors. The reason for that is that it is not yet known what expectations from a governance point of view GRNSW is going to put on the club structure going forward. Given this, it did not seem meaningful to go through a process where change is undertaken which may not totally align with the future expectations of GRNSW. What the Board is doing in the meantime is ensuring that whatever expertise it lacks is being supported externally, that is to say, where the expertise does not exist at Director level it is obtained externally. The benefit of that approach is that the expertise that is obtained externally has no conflict, it is advice which is provided independently, professionally and it is able to be adopted with less risk.

This issue aside, the Board of Directors will now set about implementing all recommendations in order to ensure that the NSW GBOTA is well positioned to consider and contribute to wider industry strategic considerations in 2017/18. A progress report will be presented to the AGM.

## The Constitution

Directors have agreed that there will be a formal review of the Constitution and how the Constitution works for the benefit of members will be a key component of that review. The aim of the review will be to ensure that the constitution is modernised and allows the NSW GBOTA to function as effectively as possible as a commercial racing provider and an advocacy body. Another expectation is that tiers of membership entry will be considered so as to make membership of the GBOTA a little more accessible. The review will be handled by a committee of Directors and management but with a form of external assistance. Final details on the review and the timelines will be provided to the AGM.

### Questions from the floor:

**Barry Foley (Maitland) asked how long greyhound racing would last and is everyone going to end up with a yard full of old dogs that they can't place?**

Mr Scott replied that the future challenges are very real and there was a lack of confidence in the industry that GRNSW and the Commission will need to get out and deal with from day one. The industry needs to be re-incentivised. Getting on top of total lifecycle management was very important: the industry needed to understand its supply requirements in terms of breeding, it needed to apply standards that ensured the highest bred to race ratio applied and racing opportunity needed to be provided for as many greyhounds as possible. *Can chase, can race* has got to be the go forward motto. The viability of every greyhound bred has got to be improved and as that viability improves the industry is better able to deal with its post racing responsibilities. There was no quick fix in the journey to an ethical and sustainable future but we are on the right track.

Mr. Scott added that while the industry had been successful in reversing the ban and putting in place a better peak body structure, the commercial viability of the sport remained an issue that required ongoing attention. On the positive is that there is now considerable awareness in the parliamentary system regarding the unfairness of the current funding arrangements and hopefully this will lead to a funding model in the future, more closely aligned to market performance.

**Len Morgan (Newcastle) asked if the Association is going to invest the money from the sale of Lidcombe in a new building?**

The Chairman said that at the moment the funds would simply be invested. The strategic planning process of GRNSW was likely to have a big impact and it was important that Association was able to potentially be a financial player in the opportunities that may arise as a result of that planning process.

**Grant Dunphy (Maitland) asked if Luke Foley had given a commitment re greyhound racing and funding and the actual TAB dividends, and what is being done about recruiting younger members.**

With regard to younger members, the Chairman said the Board was looking at membership and such things as having social members and whether they should have voting rights but the Constitution has to be changed to accommodate that. It was his view that the Constitution Review would present the GBOTA with an opportunity to include younger members. As to recruiting younger members into the industry, that was connected to provided industry confidence, certainty and incentives for NSW bred and owned greyhounds. This would be a position promoted by the NSW GBOTA.

Mr. Scott added that in the period current to the lead up to the 2019 election, every effort would be made to get a commitment from Labor and the Government to improve greyhound racing's funding model. No specific commitment had been given by Labor at this point but it was worth noting that Labor and the Christian Democrats did support an unsuccessful Shooters, Farmers and Fishers amendment to the Greyhound Racing Act 2017 which would have involved a considerable increase in greyhound racing funding over a five year period. This, in itself, was a positive sign for the future.

**Warren Absalom (Auburn/Lidcombe) asked will revenue from a rumoured consumption tax go straight to GRNSW.**

Mr Scott said that a consumption tax, if introduced would go to the Government in the first instance. It would be up to the industry to lobby for it to then be used by Government to possibly offset the unfair funding model that currently applies.

**Barry Foley (Maitland) asked if the Labor party increased the betting tax levels before or after the intercode agreement?**

Mr Scott said he would have to take some of that question on notice, but the take-out rate was changed so that the total take-out rate to be shared between the government and the industry. This from memory saw the take out rate increase in various TAB bet types but he was not aware of the timelines. Mr. Scott encouraged Mr. Foley to follow up on the matter off meeting with him.

## **Directors' Reports**

**Bill Schwencke (Riverina District)** said the Temora track was only racing 15 times a year and he remained disappointed with such a small allocation of racing from GRNSW. Although there are currently 1500 dogs in the Riverina area, there was only one race meeting a week which was insufficient to cater for demand. Although they had applied for more race meetings, GRNSW had indicated that there was insufficient funding to cater for that. At the present time, Temora are getting 140 nominations per meeting and they are putting on 12 races per meeting to try and help out. The Temora track is probably one of the best in NSW and while the club received a TAB meeting for its Temora Cup, he continued to propose that 26 Temora TAB meetings, back to back with Wagga was the best ultimate outcome for the area.

**Norm Curby (Metropolitan District)** advised of some improvements being made at Wentworth Park. This included work in the bistro and in the new financial year new furniture. LED lighting is being installed on the track and the grandstand air conditioning is being replaced. This will ensure comfort in the summer for patrons and protect income received from exams etc. Mr. Curby also raised the issue of Appin and the role of straight track racing. He said the GBOTA would be advocating for a return of racing to the venue with funding provided by GRNSW. For history buffs, he said today, the 28<sup>th</sup> May, is the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of greyhound racing behind the mechanical lure.

**Sue Absalom (Metropolitan District)** said with regard to the Wentworth Park staffing they had employed a manager but it was only a few weeks before the ban was announced so when he found a new job they allowed him to leave. When the ban was overturned they employed Peter Cole as the new Wentworth Park manager. With regard to the Easter carnival, the crowd this year was around 2,000 and it was good to see the politicians from various parties there and they seemed to enjoy themselves. As always the carnival is reviewed and the intention is to have more promotions in future and less advertising as there is a limited budget. This year the Ladies Bracelet was a better night than it has been for some years and the promotions in the Ted's Lounge area were well received. Mrs Absalom mentioned the upcoming Ladbrokes Peter Mosman feature race and the Ladbrokes Sprint and Distance Challenges and concluded by referring to the need to encourage young people to have an interest in the racing and to buy greyhounds.

**Brad Sabotic (Newcastle and Hunter River District)** reiterated Mr Scott's comments about reinforcing relationships with political connections. He emphasised the need for strong commitment to staff and continued professional development and training. He took the opportunity to thank and congratulate the retiring sponsorship manager at Maitland, Fred Robertson for everything he has done for the industry. Ladbrokes had been approached with regard to possible sponsorship at Maitland. The Thursday twilight time slot is a very difficult time slot and Fred and Tony and the team have worked hard to keep community engagement. The Maitland Gold Cup was very successful this year through the local sponsor PPK Mining with good feedback from owners and trainers. Lighting and power efficiency is an important area to look at both Gosford and Maitland, also at Maitland important little things around trial facilities, for example, the ticket machines have been upgraded there. Gosford is a great track for secondary income. As a campsite, it is another

opportunity to create secondary income. Community engagement was a current point of focus. The catering at Gosford is successful and the local management do a great job promoting that. For the Gosford Gold Cup, there was very good promotion on local buses and radio advertisements and as a consequence there was a good roll-up and good wagering turnover. Some visiting interstate trainers gave good feedback on the way they were treated and the services they were provided with during the carnival. Although there had been difficulties throughout the year, the opportunities going forward in 2017-18 need to be seized upon and that comes through good business planning and good business management. He concluded by saying that the Directors had this year been promoting the regional tracks to work into the main feeder tracks and hopefully through Taree, Muswellbrook and so forth, opening those opportunities encourages those participants to come through to the Hunter and Central Coast regions to support racing there as well.

#### **Questions from the floor:**

##### **Gerry Lee (Gosford) asked if the old building that burnt down was going to be replaced?**

Mr Sabotic said that is currently being looked at through insurance and assessors and the DA and different plans are being looked at.

##### **Shane Bennison (Cessnock) asked if the Rugby Union Club is providing the showering facilities and the cleaning of the toilets for the campers on site?**

Mr Sabotic said there was to be a Trust meeting next week and he would follow it up and let Shane know.

**Geoff Rose Chairman (North West District)** said he would also speak about Lismore. He said he knows that a lot of people have different attitudes to Lismore, given its exposure to floods, but for the current time it continued to provide a vital service for owners and trainers who had invested in greyhound racing in the region. He explained that the Board of Directors yesterday decided to accept an option from GRNSW of a \$90,000 loan which is repayable over three years in order to recommence racing at the venue following the most recent flood, the worst in the region since 1974. In the longer term, Directors would continue other options for the provision of greyhound racing in Lismore. This could include a new location at a venture which involved joint venturing with other clubs. It was important to maintain an open mind so as to get the best outcome for participants in the area. With regard to Gunnedah he said the track had been allocated 13 TAB C days for 2017-18. It has been a long haul for the people up there, they have worked very hard and most of it has been voluntary work and it was good to see that they have got something out of it. It is a massive thing for the industry up there because they have only had non-TAB meetings and prizemoney. The closest TAB was previously two and half hours away. The Chairman concluded by inviting members to attend the Gold Cup next week.

#### **Questions from the floor:**

##### **Gayle Masterson (Maitland) asked could LED lighting be provided at tracks and getting the Government to give a rebate?**

Mr Scott supported the suggestion and advised that LED assessments were already underway at a number of tracks. He advised the member that he would remain in contact as matters progressed.

Mr Scott informed the Chairman that **Pat Groizard** (Direct) had left two questions. The first one being: *"Why has our premier track Wentworth Park not got the hoop arm as yet? It is in place at most tracks in New South Wales and I was under the impression GRNSW made this compulsory for all tracks."* In response Mr Scott said that the catching pen alterations are in the process of being undertaken so as to allow for the arm to be installed and GRNSW determined to roll the hoop arm out at other clubs before introducing it to Wentworth Park for its own reasons. Wentworth Park's arm was, however, expected to be installed within the next month based on the information to hand at the moment. Mr. Scott added that NSW GBOTA drove the concept of a common lure at all tracks and has promoted as a matter of principle that hoop arm racing should apply, that there should be a consistent lure at all tracks where possible and that reward based lure systems had to be considered tested in some shape or form.

Mr Scott said the second question that **Pat Groizard** raised was: *"Why does the Bi-annual meeting always fall when the Muswellbrook greyhound track has their meeting? Surely it could be arranged not to coincide with the Muswellbrook meeting. The dates for the past few meetings they have is known earlier in the year. We should avoid a clash."* Mr Scott said that the biannual meeting is held on this weekend every year but alternatives could be considered in 2018.

**Anne Foley** (Maitland) said that as a member of the GBOTA for 34 years and a family involvement of sixty years and a staunch and proud member at that, she would just like to thank Brenton, staff and Directors at the GBOTA for what they have done in the fight for our industry. And she would also like to congratulate Geoff on his long battle to get TAB at Gunnedah, and although he said everybody up there worked, he was the one that drove it and has to be congratulated.

*Members present acknowledged Anne's speech by way of applause.*

**The Chairman** asked Fred Robertson to come forward and accept a small gift. He said he remembered Fred coming up to Gunnedah 20 years ago knocking the bookies about and he has been a great supporter of the GBOTA and greyhound racing generally and he could not think of anyone who deserved thanks more than Fred. He thanked Fred on behalf of the Board, he thanked him on behalf of the participants, not only of the GBOTA, but everyone. He told Fred that he had a couple of presents for him and presented him with a bottle of whiskey and some ties. He thanked Fred again and told him that he would be welcome at any GBOTA track and any greyhound track in New South Wales at any time.

*The members present acknowledged the Chairman's speech by way of applause.*

**Fred Robertson** thanked everyone, and in particular Geoff and Brenton and local management at Maitland, and also thanked the former Directors of the northern executive for what they had done for him over the 50 years that he has been in the GBOTA as of last September. He said they had travelled some pretty hard roads in that time but no harder a battle than the current executive had been through. He said it was through the help of organisations like this, and the branches, where people come up with ideas to keep your foot in the door, sort of thing. He said it was only because of medical reasons that he had to give Maitland away and Maitland was his baby and he really put his best efforts into Maitland and he was sure all the sponsors had a great time and he was sure that Tony, the current manager, would do a good job. Once again, he thanked Geoff and one and all.

*The members present acknowledged Fred's speech by way of applause.*

The meeting closed at 1.00pm.

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