

**Submissions**  
**made by**  
**The NSW Greyhound Breeders, Owners & Trainers' Association**  
**on Industry Issues**

**Submission to**  
**NSW Members of Parliament**

***Issue:***

Continued Hardship being Experienced by the NSW Greyhound Racing Participants.

***Submitted by:***

The NSW Greyhound Breeders, Owners & Trainers' Association Limited.

***Submission Date:***

November 9, 2007.

**Background**

- The NSW Greyhound Breeders, Owners & Trainers' Association represents Greyhound Racing participants throughout NSW. The NSW GBOTA comprises in its membership 1200 members and a network of 30 branches which meet monthly with the intention of discussing business which may progress the Industry and issues of concern. In turn, their concerns and proposed actions are forwarded to the Sydney based Board of Directors.
- In recent weeks, the central theme behind feedback from the branches has been agitation and expressions of hardship regarding the impact of Equine Influenza on the NSW Greyhound Industry.

**Issue**

- The NSW Racing Industry (Thoroughbred, Harness and Greyhounds) receives the vast proportion of its income via Wagering Earnings from the totalisator licensee, TABCorp. The Wagering Earnings are distributed to the three codes on a fixed percentage basis as follows:
  - 70% Thoroughbred Racing
  - 17% Harness Racing
  - 13% Greyhound Racing.
- An outbreak of Equine Influenza took hold in NSW in August 2007. For a period, all Thoroughbred and Harness racing activity ceased and currently a substantially

reduced number of race meetings are being staged by both codes, as compared to their normal contribution.

- Greyhound racing has continued to stage its normal level of racing and has continued to provide 87% of the profits, in effect, to the Thoroughbred and Harness racing codes. However, due to the reduced Thoroughbred and Harness racing activity, it is not receiving the level of funding from profits in those codes that it would in normal circumstances.
- As a consequence of the above, the NSW Greyhound Industry currently estimates that it will, by January 2008 end, be deprived of \$2.25m in normal earnings.
- This reality has placed enormous pressure on prizemoney levels, the lifeline to viability for Greyhound racing participants. In reaction, the NSW Greyhound Industry has committed \$1m of reserves funds toward maintaining prizemoney. In addition, the NSW Government has provided \$500,000 to the code as part of a three code relief package. Unfortunately, prizemoney reductions have still been required. Stakes have been slashed by a total of 15% until the end of January. In dollar terms, this has seen:
  - Monday night Wentworth Park race winning prizemoney reduced from \$3,000 to \$1,540.
  - TAB winners have been reduced from \$750 to \$640.
  - Non-TAB or Country clubs are paid a prizemoney allowance by GRNSW of \$347 per race; this has been reduced to \$300 per race.
- Average Greyhound racing participants are having their financial viability and lifestyles severely effected by the prizemoney reductions and struggle to understand why it is happening.
- A number of leading participants have announced their intention to depart the Industry and a significant number of greyhounds have been transferred to Interstate kennels.
- Further erosion of Greyhound racing participants and greyhound numbers in NSW will have ongoing negative effects for the Greyhound Industry and the State.

### **State Government Relationship with Greyhound Racing**

The NSW Greyhound Industry makes a significant contribution to the economy of NSW.

The IER NSW Racing Industry size and scope report (2004) stated that the NSW Greyhound Industry provided (a) the equivalent of 6,600 full time employment positions and (b) \$570m of economic benefit to the State.

During the past three years, the State Government has received an average of \$10.5m in taxation earnings per annum from wagering on greyhound racing.

### **Conclusions**

- The Greyhound Racing Industry has been impacted upon by the Equine Influenza outbreak through no fault of its own.
- The NSW Greyhound Racing Industry makes a substantial economic and taxation contribution of the State.
- The NSW State Government has recognised the hardship being experienced by Greyhound Industry participants and has provided some relief but this relief has not been sufficient.
- Unfortunately, the \$500,000 granted has not been sufficient to avoid a substantial and demoralizing prizemoney reduction.

### **Recommendations**

- That the NSW Government again consider the impact of Equine Influenza as it has impacted on Greyhound racing.
- That the NSW Government again consider the importance of the NSW Greyhound Industry remaining viable and the overall contribution it makes to the State each year.
- That the NSW State Government consider providing the NSW Greyhound Industry (via the NSW peak commercial body, GRNSW) a further \$500,000 so as to allow for the immediate cessation of prizemoney reductions.

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