



Shoalhaven Greyhound Racing Club Ltd.

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M/s Joanna Gash
Mayor of Shoalhaven

July 18, 2016

Dear M/s Gash,

Re: Closure of Greyhound Racing

The Shoalhaven Greyhound Racing Club Ltd must express their devastation at the decision handed down by Premier Baird on Thursday July 7 2016.

The decision is extremely harsh with judgements made from the Special Commission of Inquiry report released at the same time. This report has flaws in its accuracy and substantiation of figures quoted in all areas. Figures used loosely had not and could not be substantiated especially figures with regards to re-homing and euthanasia and animal cruelty which are totally unsubstantiated and even random out dated quotes from other countries not NSW participants. Many many greyhounds have been homed privately at either the owners place and/or friends or associates of owners, these figures had not been collected or verified. Some of that falls with the "old" GRNSW for inadequate policing or tracking of all greyhounds post racing and even pre racing. The process for this tracking has already been put in place. An extract from the report is below and it states a "difficulty" for the Commission that GRNSW was immediately introducing policies and rules to amend/improve areas that were identified as part of the Special Commission process. This is what should be rewarded for being immediately proactive in turning the industry around from inadequate practices of the previous GRNSW Senior Management and Board none of which the actual participants had any say who was to actually be guiding and governing them. (NRMA, Horizon Credit Union etc all have voting information forwarded to all members to enable a vote to elect the people they feel are best to serve respective organisations, this opportunity has never been afforded to greyhound racing participants but now get banned for many inadequacies of GRNSW past Boards and management)

"One of the difficulties the Commission faced in conducting the Inquiry was the continual changing of the regulation of the industry after February, 2015. Under the leadership of the new interim Chief Executive, GRNSW abandoned many former practices and introduced new policies and rules that regulated the industry. Throughout the Inquiry, the Commission regularly found itself in the position that, after investigating an aspect of the industry, GRNSW introduced new policies and rules regulating that particular aspect of the industry. In some cases these changes – although intended for the betterment of the industry – required the Commission to re-evaluate matters that it had already evaluated to some extent".

The month of February 2015 was a dark one for the Australian Greyhound Racing Industry as the distressing coverage of live baiting was made public. This included not only a small



element from NSW but open and disgusting behavior from Queensland and Victorian participants. I had viewed the Four Corners program and as an administrator and active participant of the industry was appalled and physically distressed at that behavior which was only by a very small percentage of participants in NSW. I have been involved with the Shoalhaven Greyhound Racing Club for 25 years and can guarantee those practices were never part of the Shoalhaven track operations and from actual close contact with local participants was not part of the regions activities to the best of my extensive knowledge. The industry is moving from that very dark period and GRNSW should be encouraged to continue the work they have done in introducing many of the policies and rules that will lead the industry to major reforms and continue to improve all aspects of the NSW Greyhound Industry.

The Shoalhaven Greyhound Racing Club has 152 active Members and that does not include family members, friends and associates with regards to the attending patrons and people who attend and use the facility for many community uses.

History:

1. The Shoalhaven Greyhound Racing Club held its inaugural meeting on the 30th July 1971 in the School of Arts Building Nowra with approximately 60 people in attendance. The Club was formed and Brian Aulsebrook was elected President, Don Martin as Secretary and Mr Ron Trevillion as Treasurer.
2. The Shoalhaven Greyhound Racing Club commenced its commercial greyhound racing operations with the first meeting taking place on January 30th, 1976.

Club Membership and Attendance:

- a) FY 2013/14 Members 132 – FY 2014/15 Members 138 – FY 2015/16 152
- b) FY 2013/14 Race Meetings 53 – FY 2014/15 Race Meetings 54 –FY 2015/16 52
- c) FY 2013/14 Attendances 5,447 – FY 2014/15 Attendances 5,459 figures –FY 2015/16 Attendances 5,493 obtained from GRNSW Monthly Statistical Returns

Employment and Volunteering:

3. TWENTY TWO people volunteer. Most work between 5 to 10 hours per week (average 6)
4. a) Volunteer work consisted of trial days or nights, monthly market BBQ and Stall allocations, gardening, cleaning and working bees.
b) about an average of 6 hours per week per volunteer who worked for 3-9 hours each. If total volunteer hours is needed would be 5 x 6 hours avg = 30 hours weekly for volunteers.

Charity and Goodwill:

- 5 a) We have had sporting, social club and service Clubs use/attend Club race meetings. These include cake stalls and raffles which raise upwards of \$3-400 per meeting for the betterment of local sporting Clubs plus significant funds to local charities. They include a special Men Of League raceday dinner function and auctions that raise \$4,000 plus for that worthwhile charity.
b) Directly supported charities Careflight, Special Children's Xmas Party (*recently received 20 year support certificate*), Shoalhaven Marine Rescue, Flight for Cancer Research, Cystic Fibrosis, Order of the Amaranth (Ladies fundraising society who



have raised in excess \$8,000 for the past two years for local charities from raffles and cake stalls monthly) and Men Of League Foundation full raceday raising funds.

Track and Club Facilities:

6 a) Shoalhaven Junior Cricket Presentation day- undercover Club premises including BBQ facility and PA System. Annually no fee charged for Community use.

b) Memories 4 Munchkins Easter fun day – undercover Club Premises and grounds including BBQ and PA System – Easter Saturday – joint venture with Greyhound Club as Easter activity for kids- only \$5 per child charge to cover costs, face painting, jumping castle, colouring activities and prizes.

c) Shoalhaven Soccer Club Presentation Day - undercover Club premises including BBQ facility and PA System. Annually no fee charged for Community use.

d) Nowra Cricket Club Junior and Senior Presentation day- undercover Club premises including BBQ facility and PA System. Annually no fee charged for Community use.

e) Rotary Shoalhaven Sunshine Car Boot sale – grounds and car park plus undercover Club premises including BBQ facility. Annually no fee charged for Community use.

f) South Nowra Probus Club Committee meeting - undercover Club premises including PA System. Second Thursday each Month no fee charged for Community use.

g) South Nowra Probus Club General Members meeting - undercover Club premises including PA System plus morning tea, Tea Coffee, cakes and slices. Third Thursday each month - \$100 fee charged for Morning Tea for up to 50 people to cover costs, Community use.

h) with good under cover area and air conditioned Function room (despite no Kitchen, *have future plans*) the Club uses facility for Members and/or guests and over the past two years have had 8 adult birthday parties (21st to 60th) 4 children's parties, 3 wakes, 2 engagement parties, 1 wedding and 50th Anniversary. All these functions fitting in with monthly markets, weekly race meetings and other community use as above.

The Club determines charge, with **community use at no charge**, Adult parties (includes engagement and wedding) at night \$120 and childrens parties during the day \$80 allowing only for cleaning and large bin empties. A \$150 bond (refundable) applies to non-members. Member functions are no charge but cleaning to be completed by members or cleaning charge would apply.

This information is supplied for your information and does not include financial harm to businesses with whom the Club works with annually and that adds up to 88 suppliers of various products.

We do not nor ever have condoned some of the behaviour of a minority of participants throughout the state but would appreciate your understanding of the good people involved in the Shoalhaven and the good community work the Club undertakes for the whole of the Shoalhaven Community at its purpose built facility all paid for by greyhound racing.

I thank you for the opportunity to convey our message.

Yours sincerely,

Glenn Midson

Secretary/Manager.



Gareth Ward MP

Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra and South Coast
Member for Kiama

MEDIA RELEASE

14 July 2016

GUIDING THE GREYHOUND INDUSTRY TO CLOSURE

Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra and South Coast Gareth Ward has today welcomed the appointment of NSW Natural Resources Commissioner, Dr John Keniry AM, as Coordinator General of the Greyhounds Transition Taskforce that will guide the industry to a humane and orderly closure.

Mr Ward said that the New South Wales Government is acting to protect animal welfare and has begun planning for the transition of the industry.

“The New South Wales Government is determined to put a stop to the systemic mistreatment of greyhounds in New South Wales. But we are well aware this brings challenges for the industry and communities across our State,” he said.

“That is why the New South Wales Liberals & Nationals Government has committed to investing every cent it receives from greyhound betting between now and 1st July 2017 to funding the industry’s transition.

“The proceeds from betting through the NSW TAB on interstate greyhound races will also contribute to feeding and caring for ex-racing dogs.

“The New South Wales Government is committed to an orderly and humane closure of the industry and providing support for all greyhound owners who have done the right thing,” Mr Ward said.

“The Special Commission of Inquiry’s report revealed such dire animal cruelty that the New South Wales Government had no other option but to ban greyhound racing in NSW from 1st July 2017.

“I encourage local greyhound owners, breeders and trainers to keep their dogs and care for them, and assistance will be provided for them to do that. The Government will also be maximizing opportunities to rehome these fantastic animals,” Mr Ward concluded.

For further information on the closure of the greyhound industry participants are encouraged to visit the website at: <http://www.racing.justice.nsw.gov.au/> or call **1800 812 115**.

MEDIA: Gareth Ward 0401 499 933 or Ben Blackburn 0423 466 358

Greyhound industry closure in NSW

From the outset this matter has polarised sectors of the community and has received much publicity which is compelling not only in its content but in the seriousness of the content and matter.

In summary the NSW Premier has announced that the greyhound racing industry is to be prohibited in NSW from July 2017. In making this announcement he announced that an industry closure scheme will be implemented that will guide the industry to a humane and orderly closure and provide support for all greyhound owners.

Employment

So what does this mean for the Shoalhaven and the wider region. The Shoalhaven Greyhound Racing Club at Nowra is one of three facilities in the Illawarra/South Coast region, the others being at Bulli and Dapto. From a NSW Government (2014) report, *Size and Scope of the NSW Racing Industry*, based on 2012/13 data, in the Illawarra/South Coast region there was the equivalent of 131 full time equivalent employment positions.

Across the 3 tracks there were 172 race meetings with an average attendance of 366 per meeting. In all there were 1710 races conducted and \$3.01m paid in prize money.

There were 1032 participants in the industry across the I/SC region as track employees, trainees, breeders, owners, contractors and volunteers involved in varying levels from occasional to full time. A total of 429 greyhounds were in training to 250 trainers with 81 kennel hands. On the breeding side there were 42 registered breeders with 11 employees.

To operate the racing venues there were 13 club staff, 76 casual/contractor staff, 31 vets, 67 volunteers and 105 attendants (barrier & catch pens)

Economic Impact

Expenditure by greyhound racing customers in the I/SC was \$2.4m in 2012/13. This consists of:

- \$0.56M non-raceday revenue (dog trials and facility rental)
- \$0.67M in on-course raceday expenditure and
- \$1.18M in off-course raceday expenditure

The gross value add of the industry was reported as \$14.5m with subtotals of:

- Customer expenditure on non-related items:
 - Accommodation - \$130,000
 - Meals & Entertainment - \$340,000
 - Transport - \$520,000
 - Retail - \$200,000
- Cost of producing greyhounds - \$2.30m
 - Pups born in region – 407
 - No of registered sires – 4
 - No of broodbitches - 70
- Cost of preparing Greyhounds for racing – \$3.05m

An analysis of the Australian Business Register for Shoalhaven revealed that there were only 6 registrations for an ABN for horse & dog racing businesses. This indicates that the industry is substantially one of hobbyists which is consistent with the figures above (1.7 dogs/trainer average).

Issues relating to the greyhound racing industry

The issues relating to this industry are now quite public:

- Live baiting of animals
- Cruelty to animals including euthanizing of thousands of greyhounds each year
- Culture within the industry, albeit that it is not all inclusive
- Failure of the industry to address adequately, to the Government's satisfaction, the systemic concerns of many groups.

The exposure of the above and the pursuance of these matters is being agitated by groups such as the RSPCA and is being supported by the media especially following the expose by the 4 Corners program.

Observation

The attitude of the NSW Premier especially appears resolute.

The evidence is compelling as to the failures of the industry to address the issues.

The industry is characterised by small time hobbyists that buy/breed their dogs, train them and race them in pursuit of a financial gain. These people by and large look after their animals and there are many examples of this. BUT the competition to train a "champion" is causing owners/trainers to take certain courses of action.

Comparative industry closures and implications

In recent times, the fishing times has had quotas introduced and licences returned to Government under a buyout scheme. This action would have had similar emotional and economic impact, especially in those coastal fishing villages like Greenwell Point and Ulladulla. In the balance of these closure is the desire to sustain the fishery and compensate those fishers that absorb the change and have to restructure their lives.

The question that this decision raises is that should there be sufficient momentum by the animal lobby that:

- Horse racing be prohibited (already steeple events are)
- Showjumping and pony club events be banned
- Live-bait fishing be banned
- Kangaroo culling be questioned
- Medical trials using animals be stopped

With this greyhound closure the positives appear to be the reduction in animal cruelty and addressing the systemic cultural issues. The negatives are that it eliminates a "family" hobby enjoyed by a small number within our Shoalhaven and wider community.

Do the benefits to those involved in the industry outweigh the issues that are leading the Premier to have made his decision?