REPORT

Inquiry into matters at the Keinbah Trial Track under
Rule 92 of the GRNSW Greyhound Racing Rules

Panel members:

Mr William Fanning, General Manager, Integrity, Greyhound Racing New South Wales (Chairman)
Mr Clint Bentley, Chairman of Stewards, Greyhound Racing New South Wales

2 July 2015

1. There have been rumours circulating throughout the greyhound racing industry in New South Wales alleging the inappropriate treatment of animals at a registered trial track located near Cessnock, New South Wales, known as the Keinbah Trial Track (KTT). Most recently, those rumours have escalated and the current owners and operators of the KTT, Mrs Natina and Mr Robert Howard, have called on Greyhound Racing New South Wales (GRNSW) to excavate the KTT.

2. A number of investigations and inquiries have already been conducted in relation to allegations about matters that the KTT. These have included a formal investigation conducted by Mr William Beekman, an investigator engaged by GRNSW, in February and March 2014, inquiries made by representatives of GRNSW’s welfare unit together with the RSPCA in February and March 2014, and some preliminary inquiries in March and April 2015 by David Madden, an investigator engaged by GRNSW and a person who assisted the Panel in this inquiry.

3. Despite the prior investigations and inquiries that had been conducted, including by GRNSW and by the RSPCA, industry participants have continued to speculate about alleged improper behaviours at the KTT. Given the ongoing disquiet in the greyhound racing industry and subsequent broader community attention, GRNSW determined it was appropriate to hold one final inquiry into matters related to the KTT (Inquiry).

4. The Inquiry was initially scheduled to be held on 4 and 5 May 2015 however, due to a family emergency affecting individuals who were required to be in attendance at the Inquiry, it was adjourned. The Inquiry ultimately proceeded on 25 and 26 May 2015 in the Stewards room at the Cessnock Racecourse.

Role and functions of GRNSW

5. Before turning to the evidence that was provided to the Panel by greyhound racing industry participants who were directed to attend the Inquiry, it is useful to briefly detail the role and functions of GRNSW.

6. GRNSW is a body established by the Greyhound Racing Act 2009 (NSW) (GR Act). The GR Act details the functions of GRNSW as follows:\[a\]:

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(a) & \quad \text{to control, supervise and regulate greyhound racing in the State}
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\[a\] s 9(2) of the GR Act
(b) to register greyhound racing clubs, greyhound trial tracks, greyhounds, owners and trainers of greyhounds, bookmakers for greyhound racing and other persons associated with greyhound racing

(c) to initiate, develop and implement policies considered conducive to the promotion, strategic development and welfare of the greyhound racing industry in the State

(d) to distribute money received as a result of commercial arrangements required by the Totalizator Act 1997

(e) to allocate to greyhound racing clubs the dates on which they may conduct greyhound racing meetings.

7. The GR Act confers on GRNSW the power ‘to do all things necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with the exercise of its functions’. Specific powers which GRNSW has include:

(a) to supervise the activities of greyhound racing clubs, persons registered by GRNSW and all other persons engaged in or associated with greyhound racing;

(b) to inquire into and deal with any matter relating to greyhound racing and to refer any such matter to stewards or others for investigation and report;

(c) to impose a penalty on a person registered by it or on an owner of a greyhound for a contravention of the GRNSW Greyhound Racing Rules (Rules); and

(d) to consult, join, affiliate and maintain liaison with other associations or bodies, whether in the State or elsewhere, concerned with the breeding or racing of greyhounds.

8. In addition, the GR Act authorises GRNSW to make rules which are consistent with the GR Act and its regulations, for or with respect to the control and regulation of greyhound racing.

9. It is apparent that the powers and functions of GRNSW are not all-encompassing. Relevantly, while GRNSW has the power to investigate into any matter and to refer those matters to other bodies, GRNSW only has the power to take action as a result of a breach of the Rules.

Access to the Inquiry

10. At the opening of the Inquiry, an application was made by media outlet Maitland Mercury to be present for the duration of the Inquiry, or for parts of the Inquiry.

11. Rule 90 of the Rules is in a similar form to equivalent rules adopted by other sporting codes. It provides:

   An inquiry shall not be open to the public unless determined otherwise by the GR Act or GRNSW.

12. Given the terms of Rule 90 of the Rules, and the fact that the Panel had already determined to provide a detailed and comprehensive report summarising the relevant evidence led during

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2 s 10(1) of the GR Act  
3 s 10(2)(b) of the GR Act  
4 s 10(2)(c) of the GR Act  
5 s 10(2)(i) of the GR Act  
6 s 10(2)(j) of the GR Act  
7 s 23 of the GR Act
the Inquiry, the Panel determined not to grant permission for persons who did not have a
direct interest in the subject of the Inquiry to be present.

**Evidence led before the Inquiry**

13. In total, 14 witnesses gave evidence before the Inquiry. These included witness called by the
Panel both of its own initiative, and on the request of greyhound racing industry participants
involved in the Inquiry.

14. While GRNSW does not have the power to take evidence from a witness under oath, under
the Rules, it is an offence if a person:

(a) being an owner, trainer, attendant or person having official duties in relation to
greyhound racing, makes a false or misleading statement in relation to an
investigation, examination, test or inquiry, or makes or causes to be made a
falsification in a document in connection with greyhound racing or the registration of a
greyhound;

(b) refuses or fails to attend or to give evidence at an inquiry, or produce a document or
other thing in relation to an investigation, examination, test or inquiry pursuant to the
Rules when directed by GRNSW or a Steward;

(c) wilfully assaults, obstructs, impedes, abuses, interferes, threatens or insults GRNSW,
any member of GRNSW or any Steward or other official of GRNSW in or at any place
including in or in the vicinity of the place where an inquiry is to take place, is taking
place or has taken place;

(d) makes any statement which to his or her knowledge is false either oral by (sic), by
print, in writing, by electronic means or by any combination thereof to a member of
GRNSW, an officer or employee of GRNSW, a veterinary surgeon or an official in the
execution of his or her duty;

(e) wilfully influences or attempts to influence any member of GRNSW or a Steward,
officer of employee of GRNSW or any party, witness or person concerned in any way
with an inquiry to be or being conducted;

(f) wilfully interrupts an inquiry; or

(g) misbehaves in any manner before GRNSW or the Steward at an inquiry.

15. Given the potentially significant consequences for a greyhound racing industry participant
breaching the Rules, including the scope for the imposition of a fine or a period of
disqualification, the Panel is satisfied that the witnesses that attended to give evidence
before the Inquiry were aware of their obligation to be truthful and honest.

**History of the KTT**

16. The KTT has operated as a trial track for approximately 40 years.

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8 Rule 86(d) of the Rules
9 Rule 86(e) of the Rules as amended with effect from 1 January 2014
10 Rule 86(g) of the Rules
11 Rule 86(x) of the Rules
12 Rule 91(a) of the Rules
13 Rule 91(b) of the Rules
14 Rule 91(c) of the Rules
15 Rule 95(1) of the Rules
17. From around 2008, the KTT was owned by Mr Wayne Brown. Mr Brown is the brother of Mrs Pullman. During the period that the KTT was owned by Mr Brown, the KTT was managed by Mr Pullman and Mrs Pullman.

18. In or around September 2010, the KTT was sold to Mr Cory Spliet and Mrs Kayla Spliet. During the period the KTT was owned by Mr Spliet and Mrs Spliet, Mr Spliet acted as the manager and was assisted in the day to day running of the track by Mr Pullman.

19. On or around December 2013, the KTT was sold to its current owners, Mr Howard and Mrs Howard.

Mr Robert Howard

20. Mr Howard was called as a witness by the Panel. Mrs Natina Howard, Mr Thomas Pullman, Mrs Helen Pullman, Mr Spliet and Mrs Spliet, along with the members of the Panel, were afforded the opportunity to question Mr Howard.

21. Mr Howard was previously interviewed on 13 February 2014 by Mr Beekman and a transcript of that interview was made available to the Panel. The summary of Mr Beekman’s interview with Mr Howard, as detailed in his report dated 7 March 2014, is as follows:

In the interview Mr Howard indicated that he has knowledge in relation to allegations that the previous owners had disposed of poor performing dogs on the property. However when pressed regarding his actual knowledge of this complaint his actual knowledge was hearsay. (6.40). Mr Howard also indicated that it would not be uncommon to bury a deceased dog on a property owned by greyhound trainers and he too has done so in the past. (11.30). Mr Howard indicated that he has attended the track for over fifteen years and in that time has never heard any rumours relating to the mistreatment of greyhounds by any of the previous owners. (13.40) He did state a neighbour had informed him that he had come across dead possums thrown over his fence. (14.45). This claim had been investigated by Mr Tony O’Mara when he was present on the inspection and the information relating to this occurrence is years old and not relevant to the current investigation.

Mr Howard’s information is hearsay and offered no solid evidence in relation to any allegations regarding the previous owners disposing of or euthanizing any greyhounds upon the property during their tenure. There is no doubt that there are some deceased animals buried within the property as it has been a trial track for a period in excess of sixty years.

The second complaint raised by Mr Howard was that of an act of cruelty committed by Mr Pullman to a dog under his control on the 1st of February 2014. It is alleged by Mr Howard that Mr Pullman brought three dogs to the trial track that morning and during the trial of the third dog that the dog injured itself by running into a gate after the catcher failed to stop the dog in time. (8.40. 9.5) Mr Howard alleges that Mr Pullman was bitten by his dog and as a result of the bite has punched the dog to the head and then dragged the dog forcefully to his trailer and with the use of his knee forced the dog into the trailer. When pressed as to how this punch occurred Mr Howard at first stated it was a punch but he was unsure which hand was used (10.5). He further claimed that the punch was as a result of the dog biting Mr Pullman however he later recants this statement as he was unsure if the dog actually bit him. (10.5). Mr Howard has indicated that his wife Natina saw the physical abuse and his eleven year old daughter was also a witness to the abuse. Mrs Howard was spoken to later and her evidence will be addressed. I do not intend to interview an eleven year old child due to her tender age and the fact she is not a true independent person. Mr Howard further claimed that prior to Mr Pullman leaving the track he has made a comment ‘I’m going home to put a bullet in it” (10.15).

Whilst interviewing Mr Howard he stated that he received a telephone call from a Sydney based trainer named Tony Gannon. In this telephone conversation it is
alleged that Gannon informed Mr Howard that he was aware that an inspection was to be conducted on those premises as he had been informed by Mr Brent Hogan the C.E.O. of greyhound racing NSW. (35.20). Mr Howard could offer no reason as to why Mr Gannon, a person whom Mr Howard has no contact with, would contact him from out of the blue and pass on this information. The C.E.O. Mr Brett Hogan has been spoken to and refuted this allegation. Mr Hogan admits receiving a telephone call from Mr Gannon. Gannon was discussing the possibility of deceased dogs on the property and Mr Hogan confirmed that the matter would be investigated. There was no mention of when this would occur, rather an acknowledgement of the information and that action would be taken.

Mr Howard further alleged that the previous owners Mrs Kayla Spliet had received information from a GRNSW steward to inform her that a kennel inspection was to be conducted in late 2013. Mr Howard could offer no evidence in relation to this allegation other than it was rumours. He could not identify where this rumour had originated. The actual kennel inspection was conducted by me and during that inspection it was apparent that my attendance was not expected. The only persons aware of this inspection were Mr Fanning and I.

22. Mr Howard is registered as a Public-Trainer and is the current Owner-Manager of the KTT\textsuperscript{16}.

23. Mr Howard gave evidence that on 1 February 2014, trials were being conducted at the KTT\textsuperscript{17}. Mr Howard was operating as the driver\textsuperscript{18}. Mr Pullman had three greyhounds to trial that day\textsuperscript{19}. The greyhound concerned came into the bull pen and ran past the catcher, Mr Jy Scully. The greyhound concerned ran away from Mr Scully and ran into the middle panel on the gate of the bull pen\textsuperscript{20}. The greyhound did not hit the gate that hard but the greyhound yelped when it hit the gate\textsuperscript{21}. Despite this, the greyhound left a dent in the gate which remains in the gate today\textsuperscript{22}.

24. The gate of the bull pen has been modified since the KTT was acquired by Mr Howard and Mrs Howard. In particular, the shade cloth that was on the gate has been removed, and the gate is now made of chicken mesh with 20 mm tubing on it\textsuperscript{23}.

25. Mr Howard stated that he had a clear view of the greyhound running past Mr Scully and into the gate of the bull pen as he was up in the drive tower and could look straight down into the bull pen\textsuperscript{24}. On seeing the greyhound run into the gate, Mr Howard climbed down from the drive tower and went to Mr Scully and the greyhound\textsuperscript{25}. Mr Howard, with Mr Scully, assessed the greyhound, calmed it down, and Mr Howard formed the view that it was ‘sort of ok’ but was ‘very nervous and, you know, just frightened’\textsuperscript{26}. Mr Howard was asked if the greyhound appeared injured and responded that the greyhound ‘was tensed up and was cowered down; he was frightened\textsuperscript{27}.

26. Mr Howard and Mr Scully then walked\textsuperscript{28} the greyhound up to the door at the bottom of the drive tower which led to the wash bay and exit to the KTT. They handed the greyhound to

\textsuperscript{16} Inquiry Transcript page 4
\textsuperscript{17} Inquiry Transcript page 10
\textsuperscript{18} Inquiry Transcript page 11
\textsuperscript{19} Inquiry Transcript page 11
\textsuperscript{20} Inquiry Transcript page 11
\textsuperscript{21} Inquiry Transcript page 11
\textsuperscript{22} Inquiry Transcript page 12
\textsuperscript{23} Inquiry Transcript page 15
\textsuperscript{24} Inquiry Transcript page 11
\textsuperscript{25} Inquiry Transcript page 11
\textsuperscript{26} Inquiry Transcript page 11
\textsuperscript{27} Inquiry Transcript page 16 and 17
\textsuperscript{28} Inquiry Transcript page 17
Mr Pullman and informed Mr Pullman of what happened. Mr Howard recalled saying words to the following effect to Mr Pullman:

The dog sort of ran around from Jy [Scully] and it has struck the gate, but it seemed okay.

27. Mr Howard gave evidence that Mr Pullman responded with the words ‘Yep, Okay’, grabbed the greyhound and took it to the wash bay. Mr Howard then climbed back up into the drive tower and as he was doing so, he observed Mr Pullman hosing down the dog. Mr Howard’s observation was that the greyhound ‘was fine’ and that the dog was ‘definitely not’ in a condition where it had to be, or should have been, carried to the trailer.

28. When Mr Howard was back in the drive tower for the following trial, he heard the greyhound that had run into the gate of the bull pen yelp. Mr Howard turned around and saw that Mr Pullman was walking the greyhound to his car. The greyhound was digging its toes in and didn’t want to walk. Mr Pullman pulled the dog across to the trailer and attempted to put the greyhound into the trailer. When he could not do so, Mr Pullman ‘assisted it with his knee to put it in’. On further questioning, Mr Howard confirmed that Mr Pullman did not use his knee forcefully and instead was assisting the greyhound and that Mr Howard’s actions were more of a push than a strike. Mr Howard confirmed that he had seen other trainers use the same technique as Mr Pullman to assist a greyhound into a trailer. Mr Howard’s evidence was:

As I said, we’ve all assisted; anyone’s that’s got a dog trailer and has dogs, you know, can assist. It’s just a natural instinct to --. I’ve seen people put dogs in boxes at racedays, to put dogs in, you know.

29. As Mr Pullman was walking back to collect his other two greyhounds after he had put the greyhound into the trailer, Mr Howard recalls him stating:

Oh, that’ll be the last time that dog bites me. I’m taking it home to get a bullet in his head.

30. When asked whether Mr Pullman had lifted the dog by its collar, Mr Howard stated that he did not see Mr Pullman do so.

31. Mr Pullman’s vehicle was approximately 20 metres from the door near the wash bay and the drive tower in which Mr Howard was located. Mr Howard’s evidence was that given that he was in an elevated position, he had a clear view of Mr Pullman’s movements.

32. Mr Howard did not see the greyhound bite Mr Pullman. Despite this, Mr Howard did see Mr Pullman strike the greyhound with what he thought was a closed fist.

33. Mr Howard reported the incident that occurred on 1 February 2014 to GRNSW verbally on 2 February and by email on 9 February 2014.

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29 Inquiry Transcript page 11
30 Inquiry Transcript page 11
31 Inquiry Transcript page 17
32 Inquiry Transcript page 11
33 Inquiry Transcript page 25
34 Inquiry Transcript page 28
35 Inquiry Transcript page 28
36 Inquiry Transcript page 28
37 Inquiry Transcript page 11
38 Inquiry Transcript page 25
39 Inquiry Transcript page 13
40 Inquiry Transcript page 11 and 20
41 Inquiry Transcript page 31
42 Inquiry Transcript page 10
34. Mr Howard made a number of allegations about GRNSW staff while giving evidence including allegations that GRNSW had sought to cover-up a number of matters. Mr Howard was informed that those matters fell outside the scope of the Inquiry and, if he had a complaint about any member of GRNSW’s staff, that those matters were dealt with by the Integrity Auditor appointed under the Act.

35. Mr Howard was also critical of the manner in which GRNSW had dealt with matters at the KTT. Mr Howard stated ‘we can’t do anything with our place until youse come and do something, which youse are not doing’ on the basis that he ‘had legal advice not to touch it until youse have had time and see what comes up’. Despite this, Mr Howard acknowledged that he had not been issued any notice or other direction from GRNSW to not use or disturb the KTT.

Mrs Natina Howard

36. Mrs Howard was called as a witness by the Panel. Mr Howard, Mr Pullman, Mrs Pullman, Mr Spliet and Mrs Spliet, along with the members of the Panel, were afforded the opportunity to question Mrs Howard.

37. Mrs Howard was previously interviewed on 13 February 2014 by Mr Beekman and a transcript of that interview was made available to the Panel. The summary of Mr Beekman’s interview with Mrs Howard, as detailed in his report dated 7 March 2014, is as follows:

During this interview Mrs Howard claimed that she first became aware that there were deceased dogs upon their property was several weeks prior to the interview. She claims that she was informed by Mr Chad Garrard who is an ex employee of the previous owners. It is alleged that Mr Garrard contacted Mrs Howard by telephone and stated that she had purchased a property with a graveyard on it. (5.5) Mrs Howard states that she did not enquire as to how many dogs were buried or how Mr Garrard came to have this knowledge. (6.40). Mrs Howard further claimed that two former employees of the previous owner also had information regarding the disposal of deceased dogs upon the property. One of the employees Mr Ji Scully is alleged to have knowledge where the dogs are buried. (8.20). It is further claimed by Mrs Howard that Mr Garrard had intimate knowledge of who dug the holes on behalf of the previous owner. (10.5) Mr Garrard was interviewed later and his evidence contradicts this allegation. Mr Garrard claims that he does not know who dug the holes and he himself had never even been to the area known as the hole. Mrs Howard’s evidence in relation to the deceased dogs upon the property is hearsay and she has no direct evidence about the alleged activities.

Mrs Howard claimed that she had received two telephone calls from a trainer known as Tony Gannon. In these telephone calls she states that Gannon informed her that her property was a graveyard for dogs (20.30) Mrs Howard further alleges that Gannon made a further telephone call to her and informed her that GRNSW staff were to attend her property later that date to conduct an inspection. (19.35). Mrs Howard later contradicts herself when she intimates that she had a telephone conversation with Gannon and relates the conversation in first person. However when questioned indicated that her husband had the conversation with Gannon and she only overheard her husband speaking to Gannon. (28.30. 28.40).

During the inspection of the property by Mr O’Mara and Mr Frost it is alleged that Mrs Howard said ‘Chad Garrard was directed to bury dogs by Kayla Spliet’ (18.10) and ‘its common knowledge If you want dogs buried and killed you go to the Pullmans’ (18.30). Mrs Howard denied this conversation had occurred. She denied making these statements to Mr O’Mara and Mr Frost. (18.35)
In relation to the allegation of cruelty to a greyhound by Mr Pullman it is alleged by Mrs Howard that she was present when she heard Mr Pullman state that he would put a bullet in the dogs head. (31.35) It is further claimed that at that time she also saw Mr Pullman strike the dog. (31.35) Mrs Howard's description of the alleged abuse varies from an open handed slap, a backhanded slap, and a closed fist back handed punch. (31.45). The description of the abuse is in direct contrast to that of her husband who alleged that the dog was struck with a forceful punch and Mrs Howard stated that it was not a forceful punch. (32.20)

Mrs Howard goes on to state that she received a telephone call from Kayla Spliet the former owner of Keinbah Trial Track and a current employee from GRNSW. (35.40) During this telephone call it is alleged that Mrs Spliet has heard that her father Tom Pullman has been accused of kicking the dog to death at the track. Mrs Howard stated that she corrected Mrs Spliet as to what she had actually seen. It is claimed that Mrs Spliet has informed Mrs Howard that she should seek legal advice. (36.10). In addressing this issue it should be noted that at no time did Mrs Spliet hold herself out to be acting on behalf of GRNSW. (36.20).

The evidence given by Mrs Howard is based on hearsay and void of independent witnesses. She admits that the industry is rife with innuendo and that people constantly approach her and ask her questions. (37.40) Mrs Howard states that she often hears rumours but she ignores most of it. (38.10). It was put to Mrs Howard that as she has been attending the property and utilising the trial track for the past fifteen years that if the track had been used as a disposal area for greyhounds then that would be information she would have been aware of prior to purchasing the property. (38.20) (38.45). Mrs Howard claimed that she purchased the property for the trial track and that was all she was interested in.

38. Mrs Howard is registered as an Owner-Trainer.44
39. Mrs Howard gave evidence that on 1 February 2014, she heard Mr Pullman’s greyhound yelp when it hit the gate to the bull pen. Mrs Howard walked into the bull pen, had a discussion with Mr Scully and then said to Mr Pullman:

Tommy, the dog’s hit the fence; like, he seems to be okay, he’s walked up here okay.45

Mrs Howard stated that Mr Pullman responded with the exact words:

Oh, it’s only Helen’s dog; it’s no fucking good anyway.46

40. During questioning from Mr Pullman, Mrs Howard claimed that she said to Mr Pullman ‘The dog’s hit the bull pen. You might need to ice it’.47

41. Mr Pullman then went and hosed the greyhound. Mrs Howard left the bull pen area and went to some tables set up outside where her daughter was at the time. After the greyhound had had a drink, Mr Pullman grabbed the greyhound’s collar and the greyhound yelped and then bit him.48 When the greyhound bit Mr Pullman, Mr Pullman hit the greyhound in the side of the head with his right fist.49 When asked if there had been any witnesses to the greyhound being hit, Mrs Howard indicated that her 11-year old daughter had witnessed the incident along with two other trainers although she did not know the identity of the other trainers as she had only just taken over the KTT.50

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44 Inquiry Transcript page 3
45 Inquiry Transcript page 18
46 Inquiry Transcript page 19
47 Inquiry Transcript page 25
48 Inquiry Transcript page 20
49 Inquiry Transcript page 17, 29 and 31
50 Inquiry Transcript page 28 and 29
42. After being hit, the dog was ‘screaming’ and Mrs Howard’s evidence was that as the greyhound would not walk, Mr Pullman partially picked the greyhound up and dragged the greyhound on its back two feet to the trailer on his vehicle. At the time, the greyhound was being held by the collar and was gasping. Mr Pullman tried to get the greyhound into the passenger’s side back section of the trailer first (which was the side of the vehicle closest to the track and where Mrs Howard was standing) however Mr Pullman could not open the door so he dragged the greyhound around to the rear door on the other side of the trailer. Mrs Howard’s evidence was that she had repositioned herself to continue to watch Mr Pullman.

43. Mrs Howard’s evidence was that she was horrified, and she then saw Mr Pullman then used his knee to get the greyhound into the trailer, giving the greyhound a jolt. On being pressed, Mrs Howard confirmed that she did not know how hard the ‘knee’ was however the dog was still screaming. After further questioning, Mrs Howard indicated that when Mr Pullman’s knee went up, the greyhound ‘just automatically jumped in’.

44. Mrs Howard confirmed that there is a sign at the KTT which states words to the effect ‘If any dog is injured in any way ... we encourage you to take your dog to a veterinary clinic’ and that there were multiple contact numbers for veterinarians posted on the sign. Mrs Howard did not draw this to the attention of Mr Pullman.

45. Mrs Howard gave evidence about Tony O’Mara and Brad Frost from GRNSW attending the KTT. Mrs Howard stated that before Mr O’Mara and Mr Frost attended the KTT, she received a telephone call from Mr Whitelaw. Mrs Howard claimed that Mr Whitelaw informed her that representatives of GRNSW were coming and to ‘expect them shortly’. Mrs Howard responded ‘Oh, okay, whatever, bring it on’.

46. At the time Mr O’Mara and Mr Frost attended the KTT, Mr O’Mara was the General Manager of Education and Welfare, and Mr Frost was Manager, Welfare and Compliance, for GRNSW. Mrs Howard recounted having the following conversation with Mr O’Mara:

Mrs Howard:  I’m quite willing for youse to use the excavator if you want to use the excavator. We have an excavator on site.

Mr O’Mara:  Oh, that would be good.

Mrs Howard:  But under one condition: I want tarps laid and I want the dirt put on the tarps, and then I want the tarps microchipped, for microchips.

Mr O’Mara:  You’re too clever for me.

47. Mrs Howard stated that she first became aware of allegations of greyhounds being buried at the KTT when Mr O’Mara and Mr Frost attended the KTT. It is noted that this is inconsistent with the summary of her evidence to Mr Beekman detailed above in which Mrs Howard stated that she was first informed of the allegations of greyhounds being buried at the KTT by Mr Chad Garrard. Later during her evidence, Mrs Howard acknowledged that she had started...
looking into the allegations about the KTT because of statements that had been made to her by Mr Garrard and Mr Scully.\[64\]

48. Mrs Howard’s evidence about the information provided to her by Mr Garrard regarding greyhounds being buried at the KTT was as follows:\[65\]:

Mr Fanning: What I'm saying is that Mr Garrard—as I understand it, Mr Garrard and Mr Scully and Mr Weiss have worked here.

Mrs Howard: Yeah.

Mr Fanning: Okay.

Mrs Howard: All they've said—

Mr Fanning: They haven't taken you down there and said, if I can indicate that pole there, right—just for the want of a site on the property—nobody's been down there and said, "That's where I've seen dogs buried"?

Mrs Howard: No. All they've said was that they were down the back with a … [inaudible] …

Mr Fanning: No. You've just answered the question.

Mrs Howard: Yeah.

Mr Fanning: That's okay. Alright.

Mr Madden: Can I just clarify? Mrs Howard, in your evidence to Mr Beekman back in February 2014, in a discussion about Chad telling you certain things—

Mrs Howard: Yeah.

Mr Madden: —you say, "And he confirmed, yes"—and I'm reading the quote.

Mrs Howard: Yeah.

Mr Madden: "And he confirmed yes, there was, and he didn’t know where the hole was. And he was worried about Tommy going to jail. That's all he said."

Mrs Howard: Well, he just said he doesn't want to see anyone get thrown into jail, basically, yeah.

Mr Madden: And it went further. You said, during the discussion, Chad was saying "there's a graveyard there." And the investigator said, "How did he know – how does he know that?" And you said, "Well, he actually knows the gentleman that dug the holes there apparently."

Mrs Howard: Yes, that's true. Well, I'm only assuming, because that's what he told me, yep. I don't know for sure whether he does or not, but that's what he told me.

49. Mrs Howard’s position in relation to the allegations of greyhounds being buried at the property was succinctly stated by her in her evidence as follows:\[66\]:

And, at the end of the day, like, you know, you can't bring dogs back and I don't really care about—not that I don't care about dead dogs; so, please, don't get me wrong

\[64\] Inquiry Transcript page 127
\[65\] Inquiry Transcript page 99 and 100
\[66\] Inquiry Transcript page 93
that way. I do care. If something cruel or inhumane has been done, yes, it does worry me. But, at the end of the day, you can't bring them back. But, at the end of the day, I don't want a field of dead dogs on my property.

50. Mrs Howard made a number of allegations about GRNSW staff while giving evidence including allegations that GRNSW had sought to cover-up a number of matters. Mrs Howard was informed that those matters fell outside the scope of the Inquiry and, if she had a complaint about any member of GRNSW’s staff, that those matters were dealt with by the Integrity Auditor appointed under the Act.

51. Finally, Mrs Howard confirmed that she had made a public offer of a reward for anyone who could come forward with information which was reported in the Daily Telegraph and on NBN News. No persons have come forward in response to the offer of a reward.

Mrs Hellen Pullman

52. Mrs Pullman was called as a witness by the Panel. Mr Howard, Mrs Howard, Mr Pullman, Mr Spliet and Mrs Spliet, along with the members of the Panel, were afforded the opportunity to question Mrs Pullman.

53. Mrs Pullman was previously interviewed on 14 February 2014 by Mr Beekman and a transcript of that interview was made available to the Panel. The summary of Mr Beekman’s interview with Mrs Pullman, as detailed in his report dated 7 March 2014, is as follows:

Mrs Pullman was interviewed at length in relation to her knowledge regarding her tenure at the Keinbah Trial Track. Mrs Pullman’s evidence claimed to have no knowledge of where a pit for deceased dogs could be upon the property. She stated that if anything like that needed to be done her husband Tom Pullman would tend to that. Mrs Pullman stated that to her knowledge, there were only three of four dogs that she has personal knowledge of that are buried on the property. No further evidence was forthcoming that took the matter any further.

54. Mrs Pullman is registered as an Owner-Trainer.

55. Mrs Pullman’s evidence was that on 1 February 2014, when Mr Pullman returned from the KTT, the greyhound was screaming however, it only screamed when Mr Pullman was moving it. Mr Pullman carried the greyhound in and put him in a kennel. As the greyhound was screaming, the other greyhounds at the property started barking so Mr Pullman moved the greyhound to the lawn and laid the greyhound down on a bed.

56. Mrs Pullman stated that Mr Pullman asked her to get a pain killer for the greyhound. Mrs Pullman also stated that she ‘had the phone and I was looking to try and get [a vet], because I didn’t know, we’ve never used any other vet other than I’ll use Peter Yore, and I used to use John Newell, but we don’t use any other vet other than Singleton’. The greyhound died within eight to ten minutes of arriving at the Pullman’s residence.

Mr Thomas Pullman

57. Mr Pullman was called as a witness by the Panel. Mr Howard, Mrs Howard, Mrs Pullman, Mr Spliet and Mrs Spliet, along with the members of the Panel, were afforded the opportunity to question Mr Pullman.
Mr Pullman was previously interviewed on 14 February 2014 by Mr Beekman and a transcript of that interview was made available to the Panel. The summary of Mr Beekman’s interview with Mr Pullman, as detailed in his report dated 7 March 2014, is as follows:

Mr Pullman was a resident of the property known as Keinbah Trial Track for a period of some four years. He resided there with his wife Helen. The period that he resided there the property was owned by two separate persons. The first being Mr Tom Brown the brother of Mrs Pullman. The second owner was his daughter Kayla SPLIET. Whilst he resided on the property in the first instance he was the manager of the trial track. During the entire period the only dogs that resided on the property were the dogs owned and trained by both him and his wife.

Mr Pullman was interviewed at length in relation to his knowledge regarding the disposal of greyhounds on the property during that period. At best Mr Pullman was vague in his responses and had to be prompted and reminded of his previous answers. Mr Pullman’s record keeping in relation to kennel notifications is wanting. Through his own admission the paper trail for a large amount of gods has not been followed correctly thus making it difficult to ascertain the whereabouts of dogs under his control. (1.15). When asked why he has not comply with the regulations regarding the disposal notifications his response was trite by his response “Just didn’t that’s why” (15.10)

During the interview Mr Pullman made certain admissions to the killing of dogs due to their being injured whilst at the track by the use of a firearm. (8.5. Mr Pullman further admitted that he disposed of the remains of the dogs in an area known as a contour on the property by burying them. (9.15). Mr Pullman claimed that all dogs that he buried on the property were located within a twenty metre radius. (13.10) Mr Pullman indicated that he had to put a dog down through injury at the trial track that belonged to a Mr Wayne Atwell. He claims the dog injured itself badly and as a result had to use his firearm to euthanize the dog. (11.35). Through further prompting Mr Pullman revealed that he had to euthanize another trainer’s dog that injured itself on the property. This dog was owned by Mr Wayne Weiss. (12.5) He claimed that during the entire period he was there the maximum dogs belonging to other trainers and owners that he euthanized was six. (20.15)

Mr Pullman was asked about two dogs in particular that were nominated by Mr Chad GARRARD as being disposed of by Mr Pullman. These dogs being Wolfman Williams and Pure Power Play. Mr Pullman stated that he had never heard of these dogs. (18.45). A check of GRNSW records indicate that the dog named Wolfman Williams was bred by Mrs Kayla Spliet and owned by Mrs Helen Pullman. The records indicate that the dog was euthanized on the 13th June 2013. The dog Pure Power Play is recorded as being deceased on the 21st May 2013 through natural causes.

Mr Pullman was asked about his knowledge about there being numerous dogs buried on the property. He denied any knowledge of this matter. He was then asked if he had ever come across canine bones on the property. He stated that when he was preparing the contour areas for the disposal of the dogs he did notice some canine bones buried in the same area. (12.40). The property consists of some sixty seven acres it is rather coincidental that previous owners would dispose of deceased dogs in the exact same location as chosen by Mr Pullman. When pressed regarding this Mr Pullman stated that the canine bones may have been placed there by him sometime prior. (22.35).

In recapping the interview Mr Pullman claimed that there were no more than sixteen dogs that had been buried on the property by him. (25.40) He further claimed that there were approximately six dogs that had been taken to his veterinarian Dr Fergus Hay which had been euthanized, however these dogs were disposed of by the veterinarian and were not located on the property. (25.45)
Mr PULLMAN was questioned further in relation to an allegation that he physically abused a dog under his control whilst at the Keinbah Trial Track on the 1st of February 2014. (28.15) Mr Pullman confirmed that he attended the track on that date. He states that he took three dogs to the track on the 1st of February and it was during the run of the third dog that an incident occurred. He claimed that as he was walking back the bullpen area he was greeted by Mrs Howard. He claimed that Mrs Howard asked him if he trialled the dog with a lame leg to which he denied. (29.5) Mr Pullman claimed that a young fellow (Jai Scully) brought the dog to him and he saw that the dog was unsteady on his feet. (29.35) Mr Pullman further claims that the young fellow (Jai Scully) later told him that the dog was injured by running into the gate. (30.45).

Mr Pullman denied physically abusing the dog at any time whilst at the track or having ever abused any dog under his care and control. (32.5) He further denied ever having used the phrase claimed by Mr Howard that he called the dog a wuss. Mr Pullman actually enquired what a wuss was as it appeared not to be a word used in his vocabulary. (32.40). Mr Pullman denied that the dog hit him as alleged by Mrs Howard. (24.20).

Mr Pullman claimed that he had to physically place the dog into the trailer as the dog was in obvious pain. Once he arrived home at his premise he removed the dog and administered pain relief however the dog died after a short period of time. (30.10) As a result of the dog dying at his home premises Mr Pullman states that he buried the dog in his rear yard area. (27.30).

59. Mr Pullman is registered as a Public-Trainer75.

60. Mr Pullman confirmed that the greyhound that was injured on 1 February 2014 was about 17 months old76 and was not named77.

61. Mr Pullman gave evidence about the events following the incident of 1 February 2014 in which the greyhound owned by his wife ran into the gate to the bullpen as follows78:

   When I trialled, I drove up the top; I was the last trial, and the hare hadn't gone back down. I went over and got one bitch out of the kennel and put it in the trailer. Then I've come back and she's said to me, "Did you trial your dog with a sore leg?" I said, "I wouldn't think so." And that's when they walked the dog out through the door. She said, "Would you like, need some ice for his shoulder?" And I said, "I don't think so. I think he needs more than ice." And I gave him a quick drink just so I could get him home. He couldn't walk properly. I've walked him—. I didn't drag him. He walked to the trailer, first trailer. I went to pick him up and put him down; I had double beds in there, it was in the second bay, because the back one's only a luggage one, a thin one. I went to lift him up, and he went to bite him, and I just grabbed his head and I walked him round the other side; and I didn't lift him with my knee at all, because I picked him up gently and I put him the trailer, shut the door. As I walked away the dog went completely berserk in the trailer—screamed and bellowed, screamed and bellowed, you know. So I went straight up and got the other bitch and put it in the trailer and headed straight home.

62. On being questioned, Mr Pullman denied that Mrs Howard had informed him that the greyhound had been injured as she had stated in her evidence. Mr Pullman maintained that he had a conversation with Mrs Howard to the following effect:

   Mrs Howard: Did you trial your dog with a sore leg?

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75 Inquiry Transcript page 2
76 Inquiry Transcript page 12
77 Inquiry Transcript page 13
78 Inquiry Transcript page 36
Mr Pullman: I wouldn’t think so.

Mrs Howard: You might need some ice for it.

63. Mr Pullman stated that once he was handed the greyhound on the collar, he gave it a drink and then walked the greyhound to the trailer\textsuperscript{79}. Mr Pullman stated that when he was handed the greyhound, he observed that it had a cut on its front shoulder and back leg. Mr Pullman clarified that the injuries were grazes rather than bleeding\textsuperscript{80}.

64. Mr Pullman maintained that he did not drag the greyhound and it walked freely. Mr Pullman maintained that the greyhound attempted to bite him when he was on the side of the trailer closest to the track\textsuperscript{81}. Mr Pullman’s evidence about his reaction was as follows\textsuperscript{82}:

\begin{quote}
Mr Pullman: So I walked him round the other side and put him in the other side of the trailer.

Mr Bentley: So that was on the first side where you say the dog attempted to bite you?

Mr Pullman: Yeah.

Mr Bentley: Okay. You said you grabbed him by the head. What did you mean by you grabbed him by the head?

Mr Pullman: Just grabbed him by the neck, so he won’t bite me, that’s all.

Mr Bentley: So what did you do—just grab him by the snout, or did you—

Mr Pullman: Oh, just grabbed him, you know.

Mr Bentley: Just sort of grabbed hold of the dog?

Mr Pullman: Yeah, yeah.

Mr Bentley: Okay.

Mr Pullman: It’s just a reflex thing, you know.

Mr Bentley: Yeah, okay. And then you walked him around to the other side of the trailer?
\end{quote}

65. Mr Pullman’s evidence was that the greyhound was not put in the back compartment of the trailer, but that he put the greyhound in the second-back compartment of the trailer which was an eight dog trailer\textsuperscript{83}.

66. Mr Pullman’s evidence was that when the greyhound was first put in the trailer it ‘went off its head and screamed, and screamed and screamed’\textsuperscript{84}. On being asked why he did not seek veterinary attention, in circumstances where there was a veterinarian in Kurri which was about five minutes away, Mr Pullman stated:

\begin{quote}
I’ve never been to the vet there; you have to go and ring one up and see if you can get in, you know.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{79} Inquiry Transcript page 39

\textsuperscript{80} Inquiry Transcript page 41

\textsuperscript{81} Inquiry Transcript page 39

\textsuperscript{82} Inquiry Transcript page 40

\textsuperscript{83} Inquiry Transcript page 21

\textsuperscript{84} Inquiry Transcript page 35
Despite Mr Howard’s evidence that the greyhound was stunned and frightened rather than injured\textsuperscript{85}, the following exchange occurred between Mr Howard, Mrs Howard and Mr Pullman during Mr Pullman’s evidence\textsuperscript{86}.

\textit{Mr Howard:} That’s right. But your dog is the only one— I could ask everyone that trials there and see how many dogs have hit the gate. But, Tom, can I ask you a question? So, how did you deem that dog was before you took it home, before you put it in the trailer? What was your—

\textit{Mr Pullman:} I thought it was stunned.

\textit{Mr Howard:} It was stunned?

\textit{Mr Pullman:} Yeah.

\textit{Mr Howard:} Okay. But you said the dog couldn’t walk.

\textit{Mr Pullman:} Couldn’t walk properly.

\textit{Mr Howard:} Couldn’t walk properly. But you said you walked it to the trailer.

\textit{Mr Pullman:} Yeah, walked it.

\textit{Mr Howard:} If the dog couldn’t walk properly, or wasn’t too good, wouldn’t you carry the dog?

\textit{Mr Pullman:} No. It could walk, but it was stunned. It couldn’t walk properly.

\textit{Mr Howard:} But it wasn’t yelping when you put it in the trailer; but after you put it in the trailer and shut the door you said it started yelping.

\textit{Mr Pullman:} It went off its head, yeah.

\textit{Mr Howard:} So why wouldn’t you go back and check on that dog to see what was wrong?

\textit{Mr Pullman:} I could see what was wrong; it was scratching and digging.

\textit{Mr Howard:} No, it was in the trailer. You couldn’t see—

\textit{Mr Pullman:} The door was open. I wasn’t six foot away on the other side of the trailer and looking through aluminium.

\textit{Mr Howard:} Hang on, whoa, whoa, whoa.

\textit{Mr Pullman:} I was standing on the other side of the trailer, you know.

\textit{Mr Howard:} You said you had put the dog in the trailer, shut the door and went to get the other dog.

\textit{Mr Pullman:} Yes, but it was before I shut the door. I knew it was crook. I wasn’t going to open the door and get it out again.

\textit{Mr Howard:} Did you check the dog before it went home?

\textit{Mr Pullman:} Yeah.

\textsuperscript{85} Inquiry Transcript page 16, 17 and 46

\textsuperscript{86} Inquiry Transcript page 37 and 38
Mrs Howard: So you knew the dog was crook. Why didn’t you take it to a vet?

Mr Howard: You said the dog wasn’t screaming until you put it into the trailer; but you never got the dog back out.

Mr Pullman: No. I knew the dog was crook. It was hurt bad.

Mrs Howard: You should have gone straight to a vet.

Mr Pullman: It hit the gate real hard.

Mrs Howard: You should have went straight to a vet.

68. On further questioning about whether he actually intended to seek veterinary attention for the injured greyhound, Mr Pullman asserted\(^{87}\):

   I was going home first. I didn't think it was that serious, you know, like, he was scratching and ripping at the thing there, and I took him home and just got him out, and could see how he was...

69. Mr Pullman’s evidence was that he went home with the greyhound and that he was going to ring up the vet but it would be hard to get in contact with them. While the greyhound was lying on the lawn at the Pullman’s residence, a neighbour came across and observed that the greyhound had skin off its front shoulder and the skin off its back leg\(^ {88}\). Mr Pullman stated that he asked his wife to try and find some pain killers for the greyhound however they could not locate any before the greyhound passed away\(^ {89}\). The greyhound then passed a bowel motion and died shortly afterwards. The greyhound died within about 15 minutes of Mr Pullman arriving home from the KTT\(^ {90}\).

70. Mr Pullman disposed of the greyhound by burying it at his property\(^ {91}\).

71. Mr Pullman acknowledged that while he usually uses the Singleton vet, the nearest vet would have probably been in Kurri which was about 10 minutes away or so. Mr Pullman’s evidence was that he never attempted to contact the vet as he didn’t have time before the greyhound died\(^ {92}\).

72. Mr Pullman acknowledged that he had buried greyhounds at the KTT during the time he was working at it. Mr Pullman stated that there could be '10, 15 or something' dogs that he buried at the KTT\(^ {93}\). Those dogs included greyhounds and other dogs. On further questioning, it was clarified that approximately 17 or 18 greyhounds had been buried by Mr Pullman at the KTT\(^ {94}\).

73. Mr Pullman confirmed that he had buried some greyhounds at the KTT which had died at the Maitland races. He also confirmed that a he had put down a pup which had ‘smashed’ it’s head after hitting a steel item in the chute, and that there were other dogs who had been ‘ripped open and had to be put down, in the yard there...’\(^ {95}\). Mr Pullman acknowledged that ‘a lot of them died. I've shot a lot of them because they were badly injured’\(^ {96}\). Mr Pullman also acknowledged that if a greyhound was catastrophically injured at the KTT and the owner of the greyhound asked him to put it down, if he was of the opinion that the greyhound couldn’t...
have been repaired by a veterinarian, he would agree to put the greyhound down by shooting
it.  

74. Mr Pullman stated that there was only one area at the KTT where he had buried dead dogs. Mr Pullman also confirmed that he had not had any excavation work carried out at the KTT, other than repairing the road or the slip track when it had been washed out. Evidence was provided by signed statement by a Ben Parsons who confirmed he had performed this work for Mr Pullman at the request of Mr Pullman’s brother, Wayne.

75. Mr Pullman confirmed that he had euthanized a greyhound owned by Mr Weiss named Zamar Flyer by use of a firearm. Mr Pullman confirmed that he buried the greyhound at the KTT.

Mr Cory Spliet

76. Mr Spliet was called as a witness by the Panel. Mr Howard, Mrs Howard, Mr Pullman, Mrs Pullman and Mr Spliet, along with the members of the Panel, were afforded the opportunity to question Mr Spliet.

77. Mr Spliet was previously interviewed on 14 February 2014 by Mr Beekman and a transcript of that interview was made available to the Panel. The summary of Mr Beekman’s interview with Mr Spliet, as detailed in his report dated 7 March 2014, is as follows:

Mr Corey Spliet was the manager of the trial track and leased the track from his wife Karla Spliet who owned the property. Although he was the manager on the lease, his attendance at the track was rare as he also held down external employment.

During the interview Mr Spliet at first denied any knowledge of any deceased dogs upon the property however when pressed admitted to knowing of at least six dogs that were buried there. One of these dogs being a pet dog. The remainder of the dogs being greyhounds that he had discovered deceased in their kennels whether by snake bite or other natural causes. He claimed that he removed these dogs from their kennels and informed Mr Tom Pullman who then disposed of the remains. (8.5) (8.25)

78. Mr Spliet is registered as a Public-Trainer.

79. Mr Spliet did not provide any evidence of material relevance to the Inquiry.

Mrs Kayla Spliet

80. Mrs Spliet was called as a witness by the Panel. Mr Howard, Mrs Howard, Mr Pullman, Mrs Pullman and Mr Spliet, along with the members of the Panel, were afforded the opportunity to question Mrs Spliet.

81. Mrs Spliet was previously interviewed on 14 February 2014 by Mr Beekman and a transcript of that interview was made available to the Panel. The summary of Mr Beekman’s interview with Mrs Spliet, as detailed in his report dated 7 March 2014, is as follows:

Mrs Kayla Spliet was the owner of the property known as Keinbah Trial Track situated at Majors Lane Keinbah and leased the actual track to her husband Corey. Mrs Spliet claimed that she had little to do with the track as she was employed by GBOTA and was operating two race tracks whilst residing at that address. Mrs Spliet was

97 Inquiry Transcript page 104
98 Inquiry Transcript page 103 and 105
99 Inquiry Transcript page 112
100 Inquiry Transcript page 117
101 Inquiry Transcript page 147
102 Inquiry Transcript page 3
interviewed at length in relation to her knowledge of deceased dogs upon her property and in relation to a code of conduct matter.

In relation to Mrs Spliet’s knowledge regarding any deceased dogs upon the premises her account is barely credible. She claims that she was hardly there due to work commitments she had no knowledge of any dogs dying upon the property apart from her own pet dog. Mrs Spliet states that as the property was a greyhound establishment and the bush area had snakes then the dogs would be susceptible to snake bite which would result in the dogs having the be buried somewhere. (7.45).

All persons within the family unit have admitted to knowledge of greyhounds being disposed of on the property. I do not find it plausible that Mrs Spliet could reside there and have no knowledge of any greyhounds being found deceased by her husband or other greyhounds being euthanized by her father. Nor do I find it plausible that she has never had a conversation within the family unit about any dogs being found deceased or having to be euthanized.

Mrs Spliet was further spoken to regarding a telephone call she has made to Mrs Natina Howard. The call revolved around information that had been received by Mrs Spliet that her father Tom Pullman had been observed at Keinbah Trial Track to abuse a greyhound. Mrs Spliet made full admissions regarding the making of this telephone call. In the call it is alleged by Mrs Howard that Mrs Spliet said words to the effect of “You better get legal advice”. Mrs Spliet refutes this accusation and claims that she told Mrs Howard that she was actually seeking legal advice (21.25). There are no independent witnesses to this conversation. Mrs Spliet agreed that in retrospect she should not have made this telephone call herself now that she is an employee of GRNSW. There were never any accusations made by Mrs Howard that she felt threatened or felt induced to answer Mrs Spliet’s questions during this telephone call. As Mrs Spliet had only recently became an employee of GRNSW perhaps she may have been naive as to the code of conduct expected of her and was acting merely as a protector for her father.

82. Mrs Spliet is registered as an Owner-Trainer.

83. Mrs Spliet recalled a time when a greyhound was injured at the Maitland track. Mrs Spliet recalled that the greyhound was an unnamed greyhound that was a sister to Fast Rate. Mrs Spliet stated that the greyhound broke its hock, and it had cut its chest, was bleeding badly and ‘was splitting out’. Despite Mr Scully claiming that the greyhound was taken back to the KTT to be euthanized by a bullet, Mrs Spliet maintained that the greyhound had been taken to a veterinarian ‘around the corner’ and that she had a receipt for it.

84. While Mr Garrard was giving his evidence, Mrs Spliet acknowledged that there had been another incident at the Maitland track which had resulted in a greyhound having to be put down. This was a greyhound owned by Mr Pullman. Mrs Spliet confirmed that the greyhound had been taken to Mr Neilson’s to be put down and that Mr Neilson was going to shoot the greyhound.

85. Towards the conclusion of the Inquiry, concerns were raised with Mrs Spliet about the condition of some kennels at the KTT around the time the KTT was sold to Mr and Mrs Howard. Mrs Spliet indicated that some of the kennels had not been used for a period of

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103 Inquiry Transcript page 3
104 Inquiry Transcript page 195
105 Inquiry Transcript page 196
106 Inquiry Transcript page 190
107 Inquiry Transcript page 195
108 Inquiry Transcript page 248 to 250
109 Inquiry Transcript page 250
approximately six months and, otherwise, that the kennels had been inspected by officers of GRNSW who found that they met the relevant code of practice.110

Mr Luke Kilby

86. Mr Luke Kilby was called as a witness by Mrs Howard. Mr Howard, Mrs Howard, Mr Pullman, Mrs Pullman, Mr Spliet and Mrs Spliet, along with the members of the Panel, were afforded the opportunity to question Mr Kilby.

87. Mr Kilby was employed to perform work at the KTT during the period when it was managed by Mr Pullman. Mr Kilby was employed for a period of approximately 12-18 months however has not worked at the KTT for around two years. Mr Kilby was employed as a catcher and would do some mowing around the KTT.111 Mr Kilby worked at the KTT on two or three days each week.112

88. Mr Kilby’s evidence was that during the time he worked at the KTT, other than dogs ‘breaking down’, he had not seen any greyhounds injured at the KTT.113 Mr Kilby’s evidence was that when a greyhound ‘broke down’ or was injured, the practice in place was to stop the trials and tell the owners that something had happened to their greyhound. According to Mr Kilby, most of the time, the owners would come to assist the dog and taken them straight off to a vet, or whatever they wish to do with them.114

89. Mr Kilby was asked directly whether there was ever a case that a greyhound was euthanized at the KTT. Mr Kilby’s evidence was that he had not ever seen that occur.115

90. Mr Kilby was also asked directly if he had ever witnessed an act of cruelty towards a greyhound, whether he had ever witnessed an injured greyhound denied veterinary care, or whether he had any direct any knowledge of dogs being put down at the property or buried at the property. Mr Kilby unequivocally denied ever witnessing, or having knowledge of, each of these matters.116

Mr Chad Garrard

91. Mr Chad Garrard was called as a witness by the panel. Mr Howard, Mrs Howard, Mr Pullman, Mrs Pullman, Mr Spliet and Mrs Spliet, along with the members of the Panel, were afforded the opportunity to question Mr Garrard.

92. Mr Garrard was previously interviewed on 13 February 2014 by Mr Beekman and a transcript of that interview was made available to the Panel. The summary of Mr Beekman’s interview with Mr Garrard, as detailed in his report dated 7 March 2014, is as follows:

Mr Garrard is a former employee of the previous owners of the Keinbah trial track, Kayla and Corey Spliet. He worked there for a period of some eighteen months. His duties included driving the lure. Mr Garrard was asked if he had ever seen any dogs disposed of upon the property whilst he was employed there. He stated that he has never seen anything personally. (6.25). However when pressed he claimed that on one occasion he witnessed a dog fall and injure itself and as a result of this injury the dog was put down by Mr Pullman by the use of a firearm. (6.30). He could not recall the owner of the greyhound. In relation to the disposal of the carcass he claimed that he did not witness this and only assumes it was placed down the back. (7.5) Mr Garrard claims that the Pullmans never sell their dogs (9.35) and therefore he believes that the Pullmans have disposed of greyhounds known as Wolfman

110 Inquiry Transcript page 299
111 Inquiry Transcript page 5
112 Inquiry Transcript page 7
113 Inquiry Transcript page 5 and 6
114 Inquiry Transcript page 6
115 Inquiry Transcript page 6
116 Inquiry Transcript page 9 and 10
Williams, Pure Power Play, Pirate Tokaam and Patch Tokaam. (9.20). Mr Garrard claimed that he spoke to Mrs Spliet and asked her where these dogs were and she has replied, ‘We had to get rid of them we didn’t want them to bite a kid’ (12.25). It is alleged the same conversation was had with Mr Pullman (12.40). An independent person has not been present during any of these conversations. Mr Garrard indicated that he does not believe that the Pullmans disposed of other peoples dogs on the property and that it would only be his own dogs that have been disposed of in the hole. (14.25). He further claimed that a number of litters went missing from the property. These litters were from Droopy Marcos, Saint Dora, A Bit Chilly (14.30). He claimed that the dogs would have been trialled and that Mr Pullman wouldn’t go around just shooting the dogs. (15.5) Mr Garrard stated that whilst he was employed there it was common knowledge amongst the participants who attended the trial track that there were deceased dogs upon the property. He further stated the he would be surprised if the current owners had not been aware of this information. (16.15).

Mr Garrard raised further matters relating to the actions of Kayla Spliet whilst she was the manager of Tamworth and Maitland racetrack. He claimed that both he and his brother were dismissed after making a complaint against Mrs Spliet. (18.10) As this matter does not directly impact this investigation Mr Garrard was advised to pursue these allegations through other channels. He claimed to have done this to a person known as Gerry Lee but there was no result. (18.30)

Mr Garrard stated that the whole family being the Pullmans are disliked within the greyhound industry and they are always the topic of conversation at the racetrack. He further claimed that the topic is not about deceased dogs but rather that they are getting away with rorting the system. (17.15) This comment would infer that Mr Garrard has a perceived bias against the family thus his information should be treated with such respect. However the fact that both he and his brother were dismissed from their employment due to actions involving Mrs Spliet cannot be ignored.

93. Mr Garrard is registered as a Public Trainer. Mr Garrard was employed at the KTT during the period it was managed by Mr Spliet and Mrs Spliet for a period of 12 to 18 months however, when he was working, he was only there for a few hours a day. Mr Garrard still trials greyhounds at the KTT.

94. Mr Garrard stated that he had never seen greyhounds unjustly treated at the KTT. Mr Garrard stated that he’d only ever seen one greyhound snap its front leg while trialling at the KTT and that it had to be put down because it was severely injured. While Mr Garrard did not see how the greyhound was put down, he did hear a shot. It was Mr Garrard’s opinion that ‘I’m assuming that it would be safe to say you would have to put it down, yeah’. Mr Garrard stated he had never seen Mr Pullman shoot a greyhound and that he had not seen a greyhound disposed of at the KTT.

95. Mr Garrard acknowledged that he had seen other greyhounds injured at the KTT and at other trial tracks. Other than the incident referred to in the previous paragraph, Mr Garrard maintained that people would usually take their injured greyhound home. Mr Garrard was asked whether he had direct knowledge of a greyhound being killed in an inhumane way and he confirmed he did not.

96. Mr Garrard was questioned about his statement to Mr Beekman on 13 February 2014 and, specifically, about statements he had made in that interview about greyhounds being taken
down to the ‘hole’. Despite the statements he had made to Mr Beekman, Mr Garrard confirmed that he had no knowledge of where the ‘hole’ was located at the KTT. When asked how he had knowledge of the ‘hole’, Mr Garrard responded ‘Well, sometimes you’d go there and there’s dogs all of a sudden gone, and, yeah. People talk about it all the time, like, just one of the things’\(^\text{125}\). After further questioning, Mr Garrard stated that he had ‘no idea’ who had informed him of the ‘hole’\(^\text{126}\).

97. Mr Garrard confirmed that he had never seen a dog being buried at the KTT and that he had never seen a dog grave on the property\(^\text{127}\). Mr Garrard confirmed that he had heard rumours that there was an excavation company at the KTT, he had not seen any excavation conducted at the property and, other than a ‘little blue tractor’, he had not seen any other machinery at the KTT\(^\text{128}\).

98. Mr Garrard confirmed that he had heard Mrs Spliet state ‘The dog is not going to make it, it is not going properly. We’ll do it the bushman’s way and get rid of it’ in relation to a greyhound while she was on the telephone. Mr Garrard was not aware who Mrs Spliet was speaking with. Mr Garrard confirmed that he assumed that the bushman’s way would be to shoot the greyhound however, he never saw it happen\(^\text{129}\).

99. Mr Garrard confirmed that he had informed Mrs Howard that she had purchased a property with graves on it for dogs. Mr Garrard stated that there’s ‘a fair few dogs down the back’. When asked how he had this knowledge, the following exchange occurred\(^\text{130}\):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Mr Madden:} & \quad \text{Okay. But—. Alright. But … [inaudible] … you don't deny telling Mrs Howard that she had purchased a property with dogs down the back in holes, is that correct?} \\
\text{Mr Garrard:} & \quad \text{That's correct.} \\
\text{Mr Madden:} & \quad \text{Okay. So at that point Mrs Howard became aware of these so-called dogs down the back?} \\
\text{Mr Garrard:} & \quad \text{I'm assuming so, yeah.} \\
\text{Mr Madden:} & \quad \text{But at that point you had no direct knowledge there were dogs down the back.} \\
\text{Mr Garrard:} & \quad \text{True.} \\
\text{Mr Madden:} & \quad \text{Have you ever seen a dog denied veterinary care at Keinbah?} \\
\text{Mr Garrard:} & \quad \text{Um, actually at the track do you mean? I don't know what they do with their dogs when they take them.} \\
\text{Mr Madden:} & \quad \text{Have you ever observed a dog denied veterinary care whilst at Keinbah when it needed veterinary care?} \\
\text{Mr Garrard:} & \quad \text{No. There was that one with a snapped leg, but it had to be put down.} \\
\text{Mr Madden:} & \quad \text{Have you ever seen a dog in the custody of the Pullmans denied veterinary care when it required veterinary care, at any location?}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{125}\) Inquiry Transcript page 236  
\(^{126}\) Inquiry Transcript page 238  
\(^{127}\) Inquiry Transcript page 239 and 248  
\(^{128}\) Inquiry Transcript page 239  
\(^{129}\) Inquiry Transcript page 240  
\(^{130}\) Inquiry Transcript page 243 and 244
Mr Garrard: Um, no. Like I said, I was in the tower; I never seen what happened. If they washed them down or whatever, that was none of my business. I just drove the lure.

Mr Madden: But at other locations, apart from Keinbah now, the question is more general. Have you ever seen a dog in the custody of the Pullmans not provided veterinary care when it needed it?

Mr Garrard: No.

100. Mr Garrard was also questioned about an incident which had occurred at Maitland where a greyhound was injured and taken away by Mrs Spliet. Mr Garrard confirmed that he had held the greyhound’s chest as the greyhound was ‘bleeding out’. Mr Garrard and Mrs Spliet had driven to the house of a Peter Neilson, which was straight behind the showground, to have the greyhound put down however it was Mrs Spliet’s decision to go to Mr Neilson’s property.

Mr Wayne Weiss

101. Mr Wayne Weiss was called as a witness by Mrs Howard. Mr Howard, Mrs Howard, Mr Pullman, Mrs Pullman, Mr Spliet and Mrs Spliet, along with the members of the Panel, were afforded the opportunity to question Mr Weiss.

102. Mr Weiss was previously interviewed on 4 March 2014 by Mr Beekman and a transcript of that interview was made available to the Panel. The summary of Mr Beekman’s interview with Mr Weiss, as detailed in his report dated 7 March 2014, is as follows:

Mr Wayne Weiss is a volunteer at the Keinbah Trial Track. He has been there for a period of some six years. As such, he has been there whilst Tom Pullman, Corey Spliet and Robert Howard have been the proprietors. He generally has the duties of starter. [Some evidence of a medical nature irrelevant to the Inquiry was addressed which has not been reproduced in this report]

At first Mr Weiss denied any knowledge of any dogs being buried on the premises however when pressed he admitted that a domestic dog belonging to him had been buried there. (6.45) He further admitted that a racing greyhound belonging to him was injured on the track and as a result of the injury he gave the dog to Mr Pullman. (9.10) He was unable to say what happened to the dog but admits that the dog was more than likely euthanized by Mr Pullman. (9.40)

It was claimed by Mrs Natina Howard that Mr Weiss knew more than he would be prepared to say. She further stated that Mr Weiss had told her that he was worried that Mr Pullman would go to gaol. Mr Weiss denied these allegations. (14.15)(16.20)

In relation to the incident that occurred on the 1st of February he recalls that he was the starter on the day. He states Mr Pullman had arrived with three dogs and the last dog that trialled injured itself. He recalls that he was standing some 360 metres from the catching pen when he could hear the dog screaming. He claims that it was not until the conclusion of his duties that he became aware of the circumstances relating to the incident. He stated that when told that Mr Pullman allegedly physically abused the dog at the completion of the trial he could not believe Mr Pullman was capable of doing that and as a result told the Howards that. (18.45)
With the distance where Mr Weiss was situated when the injury was sustained it would appear that the injury to the dog was substantial and quite possibly a fatal injury or such an extreme injury that would require drastic action to relieve the pain.

103. Mr Weiss is registered as a Public-Trainer. Mr Weiss is an employee at the KTT and has been employed for around six or seven years. Mr Weiss worked for Mr Pullman and Mr and Mrs Spliet and is now working for Mr and Mrs Howard135. Mr Weiss also performed volunteer work at the KTT for previous owners who operated the KTT until 2008136.

104. Mr Weiss was working at the KTT on 1 February 2014. Mr Weiss was releasing dogs on the day. Mr Weiss had released Mr Pullman’s final greyhound, and was talking to Mr Pullman when he heard a dog ‘yell out, screaming’. Mr Weiss then stated to Mr Pullman:

_Tommy, you better go up the top; there’s something wrong._137

105. Mr Pullman then went up towards the Bull Pen and Mr Weiss remained near the starting boxes. While there were other people with Mr Pullman and Mr Weiss, Mr Weiss could not recall who they were138. Mr Weiss did not hear a greyhound scream at any time thereafter139.

106. Mr Weiss confirmed that the greyhound had left an imprint in the gate to the bull pen at the KTT140.

107. Mr Weiss acknowledged that while he had heard rumours that there was a 15-metre grave site on the property, he had no knowledge of this himself. Mr Weiss stated that he had heard the rumours while the Inquiry was being conducted. Mr Weiss stated that Mr Pullman had buried two dogs at the KTT, one of which, named Zamar Flyer, he had asked Mr Pullman to put down for him as the greyhound was injured while trialling at the KTT141. The greyhound Zamar Flyer apparently had a broken hock, and was in a lot of pain and was screaming142.

108. Mr Weiss has never seen a hole in at the KTT where dogs were placed143.

109. Mr Weiss gave evidence that he has not seen Mr Pullman, Mrs Pullman, Mr Spliet or Mrs Spliet be cruel to a greyhound144.

110. Mr Weiss also stated that on one occasion, Mrs Howard had informed him that Bobby Whitelaw had photos of Mrs Spliet handling a possum145.

111. Mr Weiss stated that at no time when he worked at the KTT did he ever see a greyhound denied veterinary care. He also confirmed that he used to take some of Mrs Spliet’s greyhounds to the vets for her146.

112. Mr Weiss stated that no-one had ever said to him that there was a ‘hole’ at the KTT. He also stated that he had not seen the area alleged to be a grave site dug up during the time he worked at the KTT147. He also confirmed that he had never seen an excavator in the area alleged to be a grave site, and that he would have known if any machinery was moved about...
the KTT. He also confirmed that no-one had ever said to him that there were greyhounds buried at the KTT.

113. Mr Weiss confirmed that he had not told Mrs Howard, or any other person, that there were holes at the KTT containing greyhounds.

114. Mr Weiss confirmed that he was very familiar with the KTT and he had never seen any ‘fresh’ bones at the KTT. He also confirmed that he had never been informed that Mr Pullman could be paid to put down a greyhound.

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**Mr Jy Scully**

115. Mr Jy Scully was called as a witness by the Panel. Mr Howard, Mrs Howard, Mr Pullman, Mrs Pullman, Mr Spliet and Mrs Spliet, along with the members of the Panel, were afforded the opportunity to question Mr Scully.

116. Mr Scully was previously interviewed on 4 March 2014 by Mr Beekman and a transcript of that interview was made available to the Panel. The summary of Mr Beekman’s interview with Mr Scully, as detailed in his report dated 7 March 2014, is as follows:

> Mr Scully was interviewed at length and would be described as a witness who could have been seen to have a vendetta against the Spliets however his evidence appeared to be frank and non judgmental. I accept his evidence as being a person with a thorough knowledge of any incidents that have occurred at the trial track over a fifteen year period.

> Mr Scully states that he has been attending the trial track for the last fifteen years. He has been present at the track during the last four ownerships and been involved in one way or another with the proceedings. At the present time he is the catcher in the bull pen.

> Several allegations were raised by Mrs Howard relating to what Mr Ji Scully had supposedly said or saw. One in particular is that Mrs Howard stated that she was informed by Ji Scully that there were plenty of holes down the back, and following this statement Mr Scully began to laugh. Mr Scully denied ever saying this statement. (8.20) A further allegation by Mrs Howard is that Mr Scully told her that there were holes at the back of the property with dogs in it. Again Mr Scully denied having said this. (8.10) Mr Scully denied these allegations and claimed that he has never seen Mr Pullman be abusive to any greyhound nor has he seen any greyhound put down on the track.

> Mr Scully stated that in the entire time he has been involved at the Keinbah Trial Track the first time he became aware of the possibility of any deceased dogs being buried on the property is lately when the rumours began. (7.20)

> In relation to the incident that occurred on the 1st of February Mr Scully stated that the dog injured itself by running back into the gate. When questioned regarding the allegation that Mr Pullman punched the injured dog, Mr Scully denied this. He stated that he seen the dog attempt to bite Mr Pullman and Mr Pullman swiped the dog away in a reactionary fashion. (11.20) He denied there was any force or punch as alleged by Mr & Mrs Howard. (11.20) Mr Scully however claimed that he did hear Mr Pullman state that he was going to take the dog home and shoot it.

117. Mr Scully is not currently registered under the Rules. Mr Scully has been working at the KTT ‘on and off’ for around 17 years.
118. Mr Scully was working at the KTT on 1 February 2014. Mr Scully was working as the catcher. A greyhound owned by Mr Pullman was running a trial and, after the trial, it ran back towards the gate of the bull pen at ‘probably about at least 60 per cent of its speed’ and it hit the gate to the bull pen, hurt its head and started yelping and continued to scream. The greyhound hit the gate with its head first, and then the force of the greyhound spun it around. The greyhound left a dent in the gate.

119. Mr Scully ran to the greyhound and it bit Mr Scully twice. Mr Howard then came down from the drive tower. Mr Howard then carried the greyhound out because it was in a lot of stress. Mr Howard carried the greyhound through the door and Mr Scully remained in the bull pen.

120. Mr Scully subsequently heard the greyhound yelp and walked to the fence. It had been about a minute since Mr Scully had left Mr Pullman and Mr Howard and, during that time, Mr Scully heard the greyhound yelp about twice however he did not observe what caused the greyhound to yelp. Mr Scully recalled seeing Mrs Howard’s daughter when he looked over the fence but not Mrs Howard. Mr Scully observed Mr Pullman lifting the greyhound up with his hands and his knee into the trailer. Mr Scully said the practice used by Mr Pullman was consistent with that used by 95 per cent of trainers and that he did not consider what Mr Pullman was doing to be cruel or inappropriate. Mr Scully stated that Mr Pullman had left within about five, and not even 20 seconds, of him placing the greyhound into the trailer.

121. Mr Scully was subsequently informed by Mrs Howard and her daughter that Mr Pullman had struck the greyhound however, Mr Scully did not observe this himself.

122. When questioned by Mrs Pullman, Mr Scully recalled a conversation he had had with her at Maitland Greyhound Track.

123. Mr Scully stated that he had heard Mrs Howard’s daughter say words to the effect ‘Oh Mum, that man must have hurt the dog; it was squealing’.

124. During the time Mr Scully worked at the KTT, no one had ever pointed out an area at the KTT where it was alleged that greyhounds were buried.

125. Mr Scully acknowledged that he had heard rumours of greyhounds being buried at the KTT and that he related those rumours to Mrs Howard. Mr Scully also acknowledged that he had heard rumours that Mr Pullman had ‘belted a dog’ and that Mr Pullman ‘used to take them out there and just they knock them off’ but he had not witnessed this himself. When asked who had told him the rumours, Mr Scully responded that a lot of trainers had, the only person he could remember however was Bobby Whitelaw but there had been at least another
five trainers who had done so. The effect of those rumours was if a person’s greyhound was injured, Mr Pullman would look after it.  

126. During the time Mr Scully worked at the KTT, while he had heard a bang at the property on one occasion, he had never seen or heard a greyhound being euthanized. Further, Mr Scully had not observed any excavation work being carried out at the KTT.

127. Mr Scully recalled having a discussion with Mrs Howard about an incident that had been reported to her by Mr Garrard. Mr Scully stated that he had been informed by Mr Garrard that when a greyhound was injured at the Maitland track one day that it was taken ‘out to the farm and got euthanized by a bullet – but it split its chest open and everything; like, it had blood running everywhere’. Mr Scully saw the greyhound get injured and confirmed that there was blood all around the Maitland track. Mr Scully confirmed that he had no personal knowledge of what happened to the greyhound and that his knowledge was limited to what Mr Garrard had told him.

128. Mr Scully also recounted informing Mrs Howard that there were ‘holes’ down the back of the KTT and that there were dogs in the ‘holes’. Mr Scully confirmed that he had never seen it himself however, he had been informed of the ‘holes’ with the dogs in them by Mr Garrard. Mr Scully stated that he had been told this by other people however, he could not recall who they were. Mr Scully also stated that he had been informed by Mrs Howard that a person had been excavating at the KTT although Mr Scully had never seen anyone, and had no knowledge of anyone, digging holes or excavating at the property although he only worked at the property on weekends.

129. Mr Scully had never seen a greyhound denied veterinary care at the KTT by any person.

130. It was raised with Mr Scully during his evidence that there were a number of significant inconsistencies between the statements he had provided to Mr Beekman and the evidence being presented to the Panel. Mr Scully stated during the Inquiry that the transcript of his interview with Mr Beekman was incorrect. Mr Scully maintained that what he had reported to Mr Beekman was what he had been informed rather than what he had personally observed.

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Mr Anthony Gannon

131. Anthony Gannon was called as a witness by the Panel. Mr Howard, Mrs Howard, Mr Pullman, Mrs Pullman, Mr Spliet and Mrs Spliet, along with the members of the Panel, were afforded the opportunity to question Mr Gannon.

132. Mr Gannon is registered as a Public-Trainer.

133. Mr Gannon confirmed during his evidence that while he had seen photos of the KTT, and that he did not believe that the KTT was in a suitable condition to be housing greyhounds, including during the period it was operated by Mrs Spliet, he had no evidence of greyhounds being treated cruelly at the KTT, and that he had no knowledge of animals being abused.
When asked directly whether Mr Gannon had direct observations or knowledge about greyhounds being buried at the KTT, Mr Gannon responded ‘no’. When asked directly whether he had any knowledge of either Mr Pullman, Mrs Pullman, Mr Spliet or Mrs Spliet used any inhumane or cruel actions against any dog at the KTT, Mr Gannon responded ‘no’. When asked directly if he had any direct evidence that there’s actually any dogs buried at the KTT, Mr Gannon responded ‘no’.

134. Mr Gannon gave evidence that he had spoken with the former Chief Executive Officer of GRNSW, Brent Hogan, on the day that Mr O’Mara and Mr Frost attended the KTT. Mr Gannon stated that he and Mr Hogan had a conversation that included the following exchange:

Mr Gannon: What’s going on. Get your blokes up there and sort it out.

Mr Hogan: Oh, thanks. They’ll be on their way.

135. Mr Gannon also gave evidence that after he spoke with Mr Hogan, he telephoned Mr Whitelaw to inform him of his call with Mr Hogan. Shortly after his call with Mr Hogan, Mr Gannon stated that he received a telephone call from ’Dr Kaye from The Greens’. Mr Gannon asserted that Dr Kaye stated:

Dr Kaye: We’re going to hire a backhoe. The producers are going to get a backhoe, an excavator ... they want a driver.

Mr Gannon: I know nothing about it.

136. Mr Gannon made a number of allegations about GRNSW staff while giving evidence including allegations that GRNSW had sought to cover-up a number of matters. A number of those allegations fell outside the scope of the Inquiry and Mr Gannon was informed that if he had a complaint about any member of GRNSW’s staff, that those matters were dealt with by the Integrity Auditor appointed under the Act. There are two exchanges between Mr Gannon and the Panel relevant to the Inquiry.

137. Firstly, when Mr Gannon was being questions about the alleged incident at the KTT on 1 February 2014, the following exchange occurred:

Mr Fanning: Yeah, alright. So, Mr Gannon, then, in respect of any incidents that have occurred, we can’t say that we can speak to you in respect of any incident that we’ve spoken of on the 1st of February?

Mr Gannon: No. I’m just here for the corruption: that the board and you guys smoothed it under the carpet when I asked --. I went to Brent Hogan.

Mr Fanning: What are you saying it’s been smoothed under the carpet?

Mr Gannon: Of course it was, Bill. Come on, mate! What happened?

Mr Fanning: What do you say –

Mr Gannon: Did you get an excavator, and go and check that our welfare officer at the time might have been involved?

Mr Fanning: No. But what responsibility would that be of GRNSW’s?
Mr Gannon: Dead dogs, for a start. I thought maybe we might have held a bit of honesty here and say, ‘Well, we better check it out’.

Mr Fanning: No, no. If it’s a matter --. It’s really a matter of cruelty to animals.

Mr Gannon: Yeah.

Mr Fanning: And there’s some substantive evidence that that’s occurred – not that I can say anything further just yet.

Mr Gannon: I can understand shooting them, too. But in your own rules, we’re not allowed to shoot them. But still –

Mr Fanning: No. You can.

Mr Gannon: In your rules, you’re not.

Mr Fanning: If it’s humanely euthanized, yeah.

138. In addition, the following exchange occurred during Mr Gannon’s evidence about alleged cover-ups at the KTT:

Mr Gannon: Bill, this is, mate, as usual, a GRNSW cover-up – simple. It always has been. It’s the way you operate Bill.

Mr Fanning: What are you alleging we cover up, Tony?

Mr Gannon: Everything mate. You do everything, Bill.

Mr Fanning: No, go on, tell me.

Mr Gannon: Who did the inquiry. Let’s bring in who did so.

Mr Fanning: If you’re talking in relation to this incident, what’s been covered up?

Mr Gannon: Oh, come on, Bill. You sign it, you write it, Bill, and I’ll sign it. I’ve been in a few of your inquiries.

Mr Cooper: To introduce myself, because I don’t think I was introduced to you, I’m the General Counsel, so I’m the head lawyer for GRNSW at the moment.

Mr Gannon: Mmm.

Mr Cooper: You’re making some very, very serious allegations.

Mr Gannon: Sue me.

Mrs Howard: No, pass it on.

Mr Gannon: Bring it on.

Mr Cooper: I’m not going to sue you.

... 

Mr Gannon: You don’t know what they operate like, mate. You might be their legal and their mouthpiece, and I understand that.
Mr Cooper: No, no, no. Let me finish my statement please. You’re making very serious allegations that there’s been a cover-up. You’re being invited to tell us what it is we’ve covered up.

Mr Gannon: Okay.

Mr Cooper: You haven’t given us specifics. So if –

Mr Gannon: You’re telling me 15 –

Mr Cooper: Please let me finish my sentence, sir.

Mr Gannon: Yes.

Mr Cooper: If you’re going to make those allegations in an inquiry forum, and you’re asked for the details of it, you have an obligation to answer that question and give the details. So, if you’re alleging there’s been a cover-up, the question from Mr Fanning was: What has been covered up?

139. Mr Gannon could not provide any specifics about any matters which were alleged to have been covered up.

140. Mr Gannon was also critical about the conduct of the Inquiry. During his evidence, the following exchange occurred:190:

Mr Gannon: What was the big drama about then? Because the media blew a little bit of a stink, this mob went into damage control, stood over this woman – as they’ve done many a time, mate, and I’ll bring it on any time you want to bring it on – and they stand over people.

Mr Fanning: Mr Gannon, you’re making those –

Mr Gannon: -- we’ve been stood over –

Mr Fanning: you’re making those claims –

Mr Gannon: -- time and time again. You know, Bill.

Mr Fanning: Mr Gannon, you’re making those claims.

Mr Gannon: Yeah, I am.

Mr Fanning: And we haven’t heard –

Mr Gannon: ... [inaudible] ...

Mr Fanning: -- we haven’t heard anything –

Mr Gannon: Rap out our--. Rap my inquiry, all my inquiries, Glenn Starr’s and all them ones, rap them out.

Mr Fanning: So are you saying your weren’t given a fair hearing?

Mr Gannon: No

Mr Fanning: You weren’t?

190 Inquiry Transcript page 228 and 229
Mr Gannon: Well, I was getting a hearing until one of your witnesses got up and said, "You write it, Bill, and I'll sign it." You nearly dropped dead. I just said to myself, "Sit back or they'll delete that." And then, all of a sudden, it gets dropped. Come on, mate! You charged Sue Absalom because—you charged Sue Absalom with the wrong charge, to get her out of your ear. Please!

Mr Fanning: Well, that matter was dealt with at appeal.

Mr Gannon: That's right, you got beat, and the first time they've ever had to pay out money.

Mr Fanning: You're bringing up matters that both went to appeal, as far as I can recall. But, look, they're—. I don't know where you can get the idea that there's cover-ups.

Mr Gannon: Well, it's all on the floor. We will see it come out in July, in September.

Mr Fanning: You seem to think that every inquiry that we have involves some sort of cover-up or something.

Mr Gannon: Well, we've got one there for three years, Bill. Get onto the Dubbo one; bring that up.

Mr Fanning: But you've got no evidence there.

Mr Gannon: You haven't much either, but you've got three years of sitting on cases.

141. Mr Gannon provided no response to the questions about the matters which he alleged had been covered up, other than to allege that GRNSW had covered up matters relating to the KTT.

Mr Robert Whitelaw

142. Robert (Bob) Whitelaw was called as a witness by the Panel. Mr Howard, Mrs Howard, Mr Pullman, Mrs Pullman, Mr Spliet and Mrs Spliet, along with the members of the Panel, were afforded the opportunity to question Mr Whitelaw.

143. Mr Whitelaw is registered as a Public-Trainer\(^{191}\).

144. Mr Whitelaw gave his account of a conversation he had participated in with Mrs Howard on 27 January 2014\(^{192}\) or 12 February 2014\(^{193}\). Mr Whitelaw conducted a business servicing septic tanks. He went to the KTT in connection with his business activities. While at the KTT, Mr Whitelaw stated that he had a conversation with Mrs Howard about ‘allegations made about dogs being buried, shot, whatever the case may be’\(^{194}\). Mr Whitelaw stated that Mrs Howard informed him that there were dogs buried on the property\(^{195}\).

145. Mr Whitelaw also gave evidence of a telephone call he made to Mrs Howard on the day that representatives of GRNSW attended the KTT in early 2014 as part of the first GRNSW investigation into the KTT. Mr Whitelaw’s evidence in respect of that call was as follows\(^{196}\):

Mr Madden: … Did you actually contact Ms Howard on the morning that the inspectors came to visit and indicate the inspectors were coming?

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\(^{191}\) Inquiry Transcript page 257
\(^{192}\) Inquiry Transcript page 259
\(^{193}\) Inquiry Transcript page 257
\(^{194}\) Inquiry Transcript page 257
\(^{195}\) Inquiry Transcript page 270
\(^{196}\) Inquiry Transcript page 282 and 283
Mr Whitelaw: No.

Mr Madden: Ms Howard, did Mr Whitelaw contact you and indicate the inspectors were coming that morning?

Mrs Howard: Yep.

Mr Whitelaw: Coming in respect of –

Mrs Howard: No. You rang me to tell me that Greyhound Racing NSW were on their way to my place. And then, that’s when Tony Gannon rang me.

Mr Whitelaw: That’s, yeah, Well, that come about from the phone call from Lauren Walden from Dr Green’s office – Dr Green – The Greens office, Dr Kayes office, that they were going up there in respect to that.

Mr Madden: So they told you the GRNSW inspectors were going to visit the Howards’ property?

Mr Whitelaw: Mmm.

Mr Madden: And then you told the Howards in a phone call, pre-empting the arrival of the inspectors, that they were coming?

Mr Whitelaw: They were coming, yeah.

Mr Whitelaw stated from that time, ‘it was rumour and innuendo from there on, wasn’t it, really…’ Mr Whitelaw’s evidence continued as follows:

Mr Fanning: … Right. But what did you hear?

Mr Whitelaw: I hear there were dogs buried all over the place.

Mr Fanning: Who did you hear that from?

Mr Whitelaw: Oh, many participants that visit my track.

Mr Fanning: Can you give us some names?

Mr Whitelaw: Huh. Not really.

Mr Fanning: Why not?

Mr Whitelaw: Well, I can’t remember exactly who it was; but it was just in general conversation. I could name 200 people that come to my track –

Mr Fanning: Yeah

Mr Whitelaw: -- that passed comment on.

Mr Fanning: Right. Was there anything substantive from any of those people?

Mr Whitelaw: No; it was general conversation; you know, that Greyhound Racing NSW had been to Keinbah trial track looking for deceased greyhounds or dogs that were buried on the property.

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197 Inquiry Transcript page 268
198 Inquiry Transcript page 268 and 269
Mr Fanning: Okay. But, in that respect, did anyone say to you: Yes, I know of a dog being put down on the property?

Mr Whitelaw: No.

Mr Fanning: They didn’t say that to you?

Mr Whitelaw: No.

Mr Fanning: Was there any statement made that: If you want to get rid of a dog, take it to Keinbah?

Mr Whitelaw: No.

Mr Fanning: Is there any factual basis, that you have personal knowledge of, in respect of greyhounds being buried there?

Mr Whitelaw: No…

147. Mr Whitelaw raised as a concern in the inquiry that he may have been implicated in matters relating to the KTT because of an email sent by a representative of GRNSW to a reporter. The email sent by the representative of GRNSW was open to misinterpretation, and GRNSW apologises to Mr Whitelaw for any offence caused.

148. Mrs Spliet questioned Mr Whitelaw about a quote attributed to him in a newspaper article published on the Herald on 15 April 2015. The article read that Mr Whitelaw “said he understood that there was ‘damning’ evidence to suggest the existence of the practice of paying to have a dog shot, but wouldn’t speculate further”. Mr Whitelaw confirmed that he made the comments attributed to him. When asked by Mr Cooper “so you made a statement that there was damning evidence, but you weren’t aware of any evidence demonstrating it?” Mr Whitelaw responded “Yeah, exactly”.

149. After the Panel had completed its questioning of Mr Whitelaw, Mr Whitelaw demanded to raise a number of additional matters with the Panel.

150. Firstly, Mr Whitelaw alleged that a veterinarian engaged by GRNSW had failed in his duty of care to administer first aid to a greyhound. It was noted by the Panel that the veterinarian had examined the greyhound and determined that it was suffering from dehydration, inflamed kidneys and poor oxygenation. As the veterinarian could not treat the illness at the track, the veterinarian instructed that the greyhound be taken for veterinary care at a surgery however, the direction was not complied with and the greyhound died. A penalty was imposed in the industry participant in respect of the incident. Mr Whitelaw had a dispute with the Chairperson in the following terms:

Mr Fanning: Are you saying that on the race day –

Mr Whitelaw: -- It’s an animal welfare issue –

Mr Fanning: No, no, no. Hang on.

Mr Whitelaw: -- that your body failed.

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199 Inquiry Transcript page 261 to 266
200 Inquiry Transcript page 279
201 Inquiry Transcript page 279
202 Inquiry Transcript page 280
203 Inquiry Transcript page 286
204 Inquiry Transcript page 288
Mr Fanning: Are you saying that a race track veterinary room should be used and staffed like a veterinary hospital?

Mr Whitelaw: Bill, they should have –

Mr Fanning: No, no, no. Answer that question.

Mr Whitelaw: They should be, they should be. If it’s an animal welfare issue, it should be set up. You want us to take our dogs to the vet to be put down, but youse can’t administer proper first-aid attention to a dog that’s in distress.

Mr Fanning: Can you indicate –

Mr Whitelaw: Bill, you’ve failed in your duty there.

Mr Fanning: Can you indicate how, or any other industry in respect of racing animals or show animals, or anything else, that has a veterinary hospital follow it round to every race meeting?

Mr Whitelaw: Bill, that’s immaterial, that’s immaterial.

Mr Greg Wiseman

151. Mr Wiseman was called as a witness by the Panel. Mr Howard, Mrs Howard, Mr Pullman, Mrs Pullman, Mr Spliet and Mrs Spliet, along with the members of the Panel, were afforded the opportunity to question Mr Wiseman.

152. Mr Wiseman is not registered and occasionally assists at the KTT.

153. Mr Wiseman was in attendance at the KTT on 1 February 2014. Mr Wiseman was working in the engine room at the KTT which is located at the back of the drive tower. Mr Wiseman was in the engine room and he heard a dog yelp. He walked out and observed Mr Pullman ‘skull-drag’ the greyhound from the wash area to the trailer on Mr Pullman’s vehicle. Mr Wiseman clarified that by ‘skull-dragging’ the greyhound, Mr Pullman had ‘got it by the collar and just lifted it up’.

154. Mr Wiseman was asked ‘Did you see Mr Pullman strike the dog?’ to which he responded ‘No, I didn’t, no’. On further questioning, Mr Wiseman stated that he did not observe Mr Pullman striking the greyhound in the wash bay as had been claimed by Mrs Howard.

155. Mr Wiseman stated that:

(a) he has not seen people use a knee to assist a dog into a vehicle;

(b) he did not hear Mr Pullman make any mention of putting the greyhound down; and

(c) he did not see the greyhound bite Mr Pullman.

205 Inquiry Transcript page 66
206 Inquiry Transcript page 67
207 Inquiry Transcript page 69
208 Inquiry Transcript page 71
209 Inquiry Transcript page 723
210 Inquiry Transcript page 73
211 Inquiry Transcript page 73
212 Inquiry Transcript page 74
Mrs Kayleen Wiseman

156. Mrs Wiseman was called as a witness by the Panel. Mr Howard, Mrs Howard, Mr Pullman, Mrs Pullman, Mr Spliet and Mrs Spliet, along with the members of the Panel, were afforded the opportunity to question Mr Wiseman.

157. Mrs Wiseman is not registered and, as with her husband, occasionally assists at the KTT.

158. Mrs Wiseman was in attendance at the KTT on 1 February 2014. Mrs Wiseman was at the gate to the bullpen when the greyhound ran into the gate. Mrs Wiseman stated that after the greyhound hit the fence that the greyhound wasn’t ‘screaming pain; I think it was just shock, just run into, just ran into the gate’. After a short period, the greyhound was led up to the kennels by Mr Howard however, the greyhound appeared steady on its feet.

159. Mrs Wiseman remained near the gate to the bullpen however, she could see the car parking area over the fence. Mrs Wiseman did not observe what took place in the wash area, and did not hear the greyhound yelp in the wash area however, she observed Mr Pullman ‘dragging’ the greyhound to the trailer. Mrs Wiseman acknowledged that the greyhound was refusing to move at the time.

160. Mrs Wiseman stated that when Mr Pullman got to the trailer he ‘went around to the other side and he just kneed [the greyhound] in the guts as he tried to put it in’ to the trailer. Despite this, Mrs Wiseman conceded that the greyhound’s paws were already in the trailer and, when Mr Pullman ‘kneed’ the greyhound, it went into the trailer.

161. Once the greyhound was in the trailer, Mrs Wiseman did not hear the greyhound making any noise.

Findings from Mr Beekman’s investigation

162. Mr Beekman made the following findings at the conclusion of his investigation:

As a result of a comprehensive investigation which involved the interviewing of nine participants, I did not find any proof of a mass grave of greyhounds. At the most there appears to be approximately sixteen as indicated by Mr Tom Pullman. This amount of deceased dogs which includes several domestic dogs over a period of time does not appear excessive. It should be noted that the nominated number of sixteen dogs is only from the period of tenure of the Pullmans and Spliets. The actions of disposing of deceased dogs on a rural property into a pit is not uncommon, indeed the same action has been conducted by Mr. R Howard.

There are conflicting statements from all parties nominated as being witnesses. I accept the evidence of Mr Ji Scully as being truthful and unbiased. He has been at the track for a period of over fifteen years under the control of several owners. In that time he has not seen any dog being euthanized nor has he seen any act of cruelty committed by Mr. Pullman.

Allegations made by Mrs Howard in relation to what any witnesses have seen or heard have mostly been denied by those persons nominated. The allegations made by Mr. and Mrs. Howard relating to the abuse of a greyhound on the 1st of February

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213 Inquiry Transcript page 78
214 Inquiry Transcript page 79
215 Inquiry Transcript page 80
216 Inquiry Transcript page 82
217 Inquiry Transcript page 80
218 Inquiry Transcript page 84
219 Inquiry Transcript page 81
220 Inquiry Transcript page 82
221 Inquiry Transcript page 84
2014 have not been substantiated. There is no doubt that the dog received serious injuries during the trial. Whether Mr. Pullman euthanized the animal or it died of natural causes is not of concern. Mr Pullman may have a hidden reason to acknowledge that he euthanized the dog as he would be susceptible to criminal charges of being an unlicensed firearm holder and having possession of an unregistered firearm.

The action of Mrs Kayla Spliet in making a telephone call to Mrs Howard is believed to be an error of judgement and not one of abuse of power. As Mrs Spliet has only recently become an employee of GRNSW it is believed that she acted on impulse upon receiving information regarding allegations about her father. During interview Mrs Spliet was remorseful and acknowledged her error.

Findings on allegations of improper conduct and a mass grave at the KTT

163. The Panel acknowledges that there has been significant rumour and speculation about matters relating to the KTT. This was acknowledged by a number of the witnesses who appeared as part of the Inquiry. For instance:

(a) Mr Scully confirmed he had heard rumours of greyhounds being buried at the KTT222;
(b) Mr Weiss acknowledged he had heard rumours of a 15 metre grave223; and
(c) Mr Whitelaw confirmed that there was ‘rumour and innuendo’ about the KTT from the time it was visited by Mr O’Mara and Mr Frost224.

164. It was for these reasons that the Panel directed a number of greyhound racing industry participants to attend the Inquiry. In addition, the Panel invited relevant greyhound racing industry participants, including Mr Pullman, Mrs Pullman, Mr Spliet, Mrs Spliet, Mr Howard and Mrs Howard, to request that additional witnesses be called to attend the Inquiry. On this basis, the Panel is satisfied that all relevant evidence has been provided to it for its consideration.

165. Despite the rumour and speculation about matters relating to the KTT, no evidence was presented to the Inquiry which would indicate any improper conduct in connection with the KTT. For instance:

(a) Mr Gannon confirmed he had no knowledge of any improper conduct at the KTT225;
(b) Mr Garrard had no knowledge of a greyhound being killed in an inhumane way226, that he had no knowledge of any ‘hole’ at the KTT227 and that he had no knowledge of dogs being buried at the KTT228;
(c) Mr Kilby unequivocally denied ever witnessing, or having knowledge of, greyhounds being buried at the KTT229;
(d) Mr Scully stated his only knowledge of relevant matters was what he was told by Mr Garrard230;
(e) Mr Weiss had no knowledge of a grave yard at the KTT231; and

222 Inquiry Transcript page 183
223 Inquiry Transcript page 137
224 Inquiry Transcript page 268
225 Inquiry Transcript page 227 and 231
226 Inquiry Transcript page 248
227 Inquiry Transcript page 236
228 Inquiry Transcript page 243 and 244
229 Inquiry Transcript page 9 and 10
230 Inquiry Transcript page 191
Mr Whitelaw stated no-one had ever told him of dogs being buried at the KTT and acknowledged that when he informed a reporter that he understood there was ‘damning evidence to suggest the existence of the practice of paying to have a dog shot’ he was not aware of any evidence to demonstrate this was correct.

The Panel notes that the individuals who have principally agitated for GRNSW to conduct further inquiries into allegations of mass graves and the killing of greyhounds at the KTT are Mrs Howard, Mr Whitelaw and Mr Gannon. An examination of the source of each of those individuals alleged knowledge of improper practices at the KTT demonstrates that there was no factual basis whatsoever for the individuals to have had held their concerns. Further, an examination of the source of each of those individuals alleged knowledge of improper practices at the KTT demonstrates that the alleged knowledge solely comes from rumour and innuendo, or assumptions without a reasonable factual basis.

In relation to Mrs Howard, it was her evidence that her knowledge of the alleged improper practices at the KTT were as a result of communications from Mr Garrard and Mr Scully. The evidence of Mr Scully was that he had no personal knowledge of greyhounds being mistreated or buried at the KTT, and the limited knowledge he had was from Mr Garrard or other individuals who he was unable to identify.

The evidence of Mr Garrard was that he had no personal knowledge of greyhounds being mistreated or buried at the KTT, and that he had assumed that there were greyhounds buried at the KTT as on occasion, greyhounds who had been residing at the KTT were no longer residing at the KTT. The Panel notes that at the time the greyhounds Mr Garrard referred ceased to reside at the KTT, the then owners were preparing the KTT for sale. The Panel also notes that it is very common for greyhounds to be transferred from location to location. The Panel cannot accept that greyhounds no longer residing at the KTT demonstrates that they had been subjected to inappropriate treatment or disposed of at the KTT, particularly in circumstances where it was Mr Garrard’s evidence that he had never seen a greyhound unjustly treated at the KTT.

On this basis, the Panel is satisfied that Mrs Howard’s concerns about the KTT are based solely on rumour and that those concerns have no factual basis.

In relation to Mr Whitelaw, it was his evidence that he had been informed of greyhounds being buried at the KTT by Mrs Howard. The Panel has already expressed its views about Mrs Howard’s concerns having no factual basis. Mr Whitelaw also stated that after his discussion with Mrs Howard, the concerns about the KTT were ‘rumour and innuendo’. Again, Mr Whitelaw had no personal knowledge of greyhounds being mistreated or buried at the KTT.

On this basis, the Panel is satisfied that Mr Whitelaw’s concerns about the KTT are based solely on rumour and that those concerns have no factual basis.

In relation to Mr Gannon, his evidence was clear in that he had no personal knowledge of greyhounds being mistreated or buried at the KTT.

On this basis, the Panel is satisfied that Mr Gannon’s concerns about the KTT are based solely on rumour and that those concerns have no factual basis.

The Panel also notes that Mrs Howard made an offer of a reward for any person coming forward with relevant information which was published in the press. No persons came forward in response to Mrs Howard’s offer.
175. Given the above, the Panel is satisfied that the allegations about matters relating to the KTT, including those dealing with allegations of a mass grave at the KTT, are without substance. Instead, they amount merely to rampant rumour and innuendo with no factual basis.

Findings on allegations about an act of cruelty to a greyhound on 1 February 2014 at the KTT

176. It has been alleged that Mr Pullman engaged in two acts of cruelty to a greyhound at the KTT on 1 February 2014. Specifically, it has been alleged by Mrs Howard that Mr Pullman:

(a) punched the greyhound in the head; and

(b) kneed the greyhound in the stomach.

177. In relation to the allegation that Mr Pullman kneed the greyhound in the stomach, the Panel is satisfied that this did not constitute an act of cruelty towards the greyhound. It was the evidence of a number of the witnesses before the Panel (other than Mrs Howard) that the actions of Mr Pullman were consistent with standard practice in that Mr Pullman was assisting the greyhound into the trailer using his knee to assist to lift the greyhound. The Panel notes that:

(a) Mr Howard stated that Mr Pullman was assisting the greyhound and that Mr Pullman’s actions were the same as those used by other trainers;

(b) Mrs Howard stated that she did not know how hard the knee was however, the greyhound jumped into the trailer; and

(c) Mr Scully stated that the practice used by Mr Pullman was consistent with that used by 95% of trainers.

178. On this basis, and noting that Mrs Howard was the only individual who alleged that Mr Pullman’s actions were improper, the Panel is satisfied that the actions of Mr Pullman in ‘assisting’ the greyhound into the trailer did not constitute a breach of the Rules.

179. The position in respect of Mr Pullman allegedly punching the greyhound in the head is less clear.

180. It is noted that only three individuals could give direct evidence about the circumstances in which Mr Pullman is alleged to have punched the greyhound in the head. Specifically:

(a) Mrs Howard stated that Mr Pullman hit the greyhound to the side of the head with a closed fist in the wash bay area;

(b) Mr Howard stated that he thought Mr Pullman hit the greyhound with a closed fist in the wash bay area; and

(c) Mr Pullman has admitted reflexively grabbing the greyhound’s head to prevent the greyhound biting him again while they were near the trailer.

181. Given the significant departure between the evidence of Mrs Howard and the other witnesses about Mr Pullman allegedly kneed the greyhound in the stomach as detailed above, the Panel considers that Mrs Howard’s evidence about what occurred should be treated with caution.

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235 Inquiry Transcript page 51
236 Inquiry Transcript page 25
237 Inquiry Transcript page 28
238 Inquiry Transcript page 21
239 Inquiry Transcript page 168
240 Inquiry Transcript page 17, 29 and 31
241 Inquiry Transcript page 31
242 Inquiry Transcript page 40
182. The movements of Mr Howard subsequent to handing the greyhound over to Mr Pullman cast some doubt as to his evidential observation. The Panel considers some caution also should be exercised when assessing Mr Howard’s evidence.

183. The Panel notes that Mr Pullman has admitted grabbing the greyhound and making contact with its head. This is an unusual concession in circumstances where allegations are being made that Mr Pullman had inappropriately struck the greyhound with a closed fist.

184. On this basis, the Panel is unable to find, on the balance of probabilities, that Mr Pullman punched the greyhound’s head.

185. The Panel notes that these findings are consistent with those of Mr Beekman following his investigation, as detailed in his report dated March 2014 (the contents of which are set out above).

Further inquiries

186. There are some additional matters which were raised in evidence during the Inquiry but which fell outside the scope of the Inquiry which the Panel considers warrant further investigation. While the Panel has not formed a view about whether these matters constitute a breach of the Rules, the Panel considers it appropriate that GRNSW make further inquiries in relation to these additional matters to ascertain whether the Rules have been breached.

187. There are three additional matters that the Panel considers warrant further investigation. A brief summary of each is outlined below.

Mr Thomas Pullman – Failure to seek veterinary attention

188. Given the evidence led during the Inquiry, it appears that Mr Thomas Pullman may have committed a breach of Rule 106(1)(d) of the Rules. Rule 106(1)(d) of the Rules relevantly provides:

A registered person must ensure that greyhounds, which are in the person’s care or custody, are provided at all times with veterinary attention when necessary.

189. This apparent breach of the Rules arises as a result of Mr Pullman allegedly failing to obtain veterinary attention on 1 February 2014 after a greyhound was injured running into the gate to the bullpen at the KTT. The evidence of Mr Pullman was that at the time he left the KTT, the greyhound was ‘hurt bad’. Further, the evidence of Mr Pullman was that at the time he left the KTT, the greyhound ‘screamed and screamed’ yet he also states that he didn’t think the greyhound’s injuries were serious. In these circumstances, it appears that Mr Pullman should have gone directly from the KTT to a veterinarian for the purposes of obtaining veterinary attention for the greyhound. Mr Pullman did not do so.

190. The Panel stresses that, at this time, Mr Pullman has not been afforded an opportunity to respond to the apparent breach of Rule 106(1)(d) of the Rules. Accordingly, the Panel notes that Mr Pullman may have an adequate explanation to demonstrate why his conduct did not constitute a breach of Rule 106(1)(d) of the Rules. For instance, it may be that Mr Pullman’s actions were undertaken to prevent the greyhound from being subjected to unnecessary pain or suffering. Despite this, the Panel considers it appropriate to refer this matter to the Stewards, along with the relevant evidence taken during the Inquiry, for further investigation to determine whether Mr Pullman committed a breach of Rule 106(1)(d) of the Rules.

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243 Inquiry Transcript page 37 and 38
244 Inquiry Transcript page 35
245 Inquiry Transcript page 37
Mr Thomas Pullman – Failure to notify GRNSW of the death of a greyhound

191. Given the evidence led during the Inquiry, it appears that Mr Pullman may have committed breaches of Rule 106(3)(a) of the Rules. Rule 106(3)(a) of the Rules relevantly provides:

   At any time after the registration of a litter, the last registered owner or person responsible for the greyhound at the relevant time, shall, notify [GRNSW] by lodging the prescribed form within two working days if that greyhound has been humanely euthanized by a veterinary surgeon or deceased.

192. These apparent breaches of the Rules arise as a result of Mr Pullman’s admitted failure to notify GRNSW of the death of a number of greyhounds at the time during which he was the registered owner of the greyhounds that had died.

193. These matters have been referred to the Stewards, along with the relevant evidence taken during the Inquiry, for possible charges to be laid against Mr Pullman. The Panel notes that while charges have not yet been laid, Mr Pullman may have an adequate explanation for his conduct such that he has not breached the Rules.

Ms Kayla Spliet – Possibility of a failure to seek veterinary attention

194. Given the evidence led during the Inquiry, it appears that there is the possibility that Ms Kayla Spliet may have committed a breach of Rule 106(1)(d) of the Rules. Rule 106(1)(d) of the Rules relevantly provides:

   A registered person must ensure that greyhounds, which are in the person’s care or custody, are provided at all times with veterinary attention when necessary.

195. This apparent breach of the Rules arises as a result of Mrs Spliet allegedly failing to obtain veterinary attention on an unspecified date after a greyhound was injured at the Maitland race track.

196. The Panel stresses that the apparent possibility that Mrs Spliet may have committed a breach of Rule 106(1)(d) of the Rules is based on a single incident that was referred to during the Inquiry but which did not occur at the KTT and which was in no way related to the KTT. Given the breadth of the evidence that was led during the Inquiry, the Panel did not make further inquiries about the circumstances which may constitute a breach of Rule 106(1)(d). Further, at this time, Mrs Spliet has not been afforded any opportunity to respond to the possible apparent breach of Rule 106(1)(d) of the Rules. Accordingly, the Panel notes that Mrs Spliet may have an adequate explanation to demonstrate why her conduct did not constitute a breach of Rule 106(1)(d) of the Rules.

197. In these circumstances, the Panel considers in appropriate to refer this matter to the Stewards, along with the relevant evidence taken during the Inquiry, for further investigation to determine whether charges should be laid against Mrs Spliet for a breach of Rule 106(1)(d) of the Rules.

Additional comments

198. The Panel notes that the conduct of a number of the individuals who were required to attend the Inquiry fell well short of the standard expected of a greyhound racing industry participant. The Panel would like to stress that these comments do not apply to all of the individuals who attended to give evidence at the Inquiry and that, in respect of some of the individuals who attended, their conduct is not subject to any criticism.
199. While the Panel does not propose to take any further action against the industry participants whose conduct during the Inquiry fell short of the standard expected, the Panel draws the attention of the industry participants to Rule 91 of the Rules which provides:

R91 Conduct of a person at inquiry

A person shall be guilty of an offence if the person-

(a) wilfully influences or attempts to influence any member of the Controlling Body or the Steward, officer or employee of the Controlling Body or any party, witness or person concerned in any way with an inquiry to be or being conducted;

(b) wilfully interrupts an inquiry; or

(c) misbehaves in any manner before the Controlling Body or the Steward at an inquiry.

200. The Panel also draws the attention of the industry participants to Rule 86 of the Rules which relevantly provides:

R91 Conduct of a person at inquiry

A person (including an official) shall be guilty of an offence if the person-

... 

(f) engages in, publishes or causes to be published, broadcasts or causes to be broadcast, the use of any contemptuous, unseemly, improper, insulting, or offensive language, conduct or behaviour in any manner or form towards, or in relation to-

(i) a Steward;

(ii) the committee, or a member of the committee, of a club;

(iii) the Controlling Body, or a member of the Controlling Body; or

(iv) any other person having official duties in relation to greyhound racing;

(g) wilfully assaults, obstructs, impedes, abuses, interferes, threatens or insults the Controlling Body, any member of the Controlling Body, a club, any member of the committee of a club, any Steward or other official of the Controlling Body or a club in or at any place including in or in the vicinity of the place where an inquiry is to take place, is taking place or has taken place;

...

201. While the Panel acknowledges that some of the industry participants that appeared before the Inquiry believe that they have a genuine grievance against GRNSW, or officials of GRNSW (including the Stewards forming this Panel), this does not excuse the manner in which they conducted themselves during the Inquiry. Conduct of the nature displayed before this Inquiry will not be tolerated and, should it occur again in the future, industry participants should consider themselves on notice that the Stewards may commence an inquiry in relation to such conduct under the Rules.

202. If an industry participant (or any member of the general public) has a genuine grievance about the conduct of a Steward or other official, the appropriate manner to address that grievance is
to make a complaint to the Integrity Auditor appointed under the GR Act. It is noted that the functions of the Integrity Auditor, as set out in section 26(1) of the GR Act, include ‘receiving and investigating complaints against racing officials in respect of the exercise of functions relating to greyhound racing’. It is also noted that under section 26(2) of the GR Act, that the ‘functions of the Integrity Auditor are to be exercised independently of GRNSW’. Given the availability of an independent function to consider grievances against the conduct of a Steward, the conduct demonstrated before the Inquiry was inexcusable.

Summary of findings

203. While as a result of the Inquiry, the Panel has identified circumstances not directly related to the KTT which appear to constitute a breach of the Rules, no evidence was led during the Inquiry which would indicate a breach of the Rules relating to the operation and management of the KTT. In particular, there was no evidence led during the Inquiry which would indicate in any way that:

(a) the deaths of any of the greyhounds which are claimed to be buried at the KTT arose in suspicious circumstances or in circumstances which may contravene the Rules or animal welfare laws; or
(b) any animals being mistreated or subject to any inappropriate conduct or behaviour (including conduct or behaviour in breach of the Rules) at the KTT.

204. In these circumstances, it is the Panel’s view that there is no basis for GRNSW to:

(a) excavate the KTT (as various industry participants have suggested); or
(b) conduct any further inquiries under the Rules into matters related to the KTT.

Mr William Fanning
General Manager, Integrity
Greyhound Racing New South Wales

Mr Clint Bentley
Chairman of Stewards
Greyhound Racing New South Wales
Summary of witnesses and individuals present

Panel members:
Mr William Fanning, General Manager, Integrity, Greyhound Racing New South Wales (Chairman)
Mr Clint Bentley, Chairman of Stewards, Greyhound Racing New South Wales

Also in attendance from Greyhound Racing New South Wales:
Mr Michael Cooper, General Counsel, Greyhound Racing New South Wales
Mr David Madden, Independent Investigator engaged by Greyhound Racing New South Wales

Industry participants present, or invited to be present, for the duration of the Inquiry:
Mrs Natina Howard, Owner-Trainer and current owner of the Keinbah Trial Track
Mr Robert Howard, Public-Trainer and current owner and manager of the Keinbah Trial Track
Mrs Hellen Pullman, Owner-Trainer and former assistant manager of the Keinbah Trial Track
Mr Thomas Pullman, Owner-Trainer and former manager of the Keinbah Trial Track
Mr Cory Spliet, Public-Trainer and former owner of the Keinbah Trial Track
Mrs Kayla Spliet, Owner-Trainer and former manager of the Keinbah Trial Track

Industry participants present to give evidence during the Inquiry:
Mr Anthony Gannon, Public-Trainer
Mr Chad Garrard, Public-Trainer and former employee of the Keinbah Trial Track
Mr Luke Kilby, Public-Trainer and former employee of the Keinbah Trial Track
Mr Jy Scully, employee of the Keinbah Trial Track
Mr Wayne Weiss, Public-Trainer and employee of the Keinbah Trial Track
Mr Robert Whitelaw, Public-Trainer
Mr Greg Wiseman, not registered and occasional assistant at Keinbah Trial Track
Mrs Kayleen Wiseman, not registered and occasional assistant at Keinbah Trial Track