

Minutes of GRICG Meeting held Wednesday March 9th 2016 at GRNSW

Meeting commenced at 2.00 pm

Attendance:

Ron Arnold (c), Richard Bligh, Craig Jackson, Michael Player, Glen Midson

Apologies: Shayne Stiff

Ron Arnold welcomed Glenn Midson to the GRICG panel as the new TAB Clubs representative.

Minutes of the previous meeting on Tuesday November 17th 2015 were accepted.

Business arising from previous minutes: IER Report. Dissatisfaction with distribution. Moved Richard.
KPMG Report. When can this be distributed further? Moved Craig.

Correspondence:

Inward

1. Correspondence from Paul Newson, Greyhound Racing NSW – response to GRICG Meeting email.
2. Draft Terms of Reference – GRNSW Greyhound Welfare Code of Practice Revision Reference Group.

Outward

1. Letter to Adam Rutter re TAB racing dates 2016/17 – dissatisfaction with race days for various clubs.
2. Letter to Paul Newson re SKY Channel re greyhound racing on SKY 2, also Swabbing Policy.

Business arising from Correspondence:

Inward:

1. There is going to be a Greyhound Racing NSW Greyhound Welfare Code of Practice Reference Group, to be made up of a Ms. Jane Brockington, who is a consultant (of what is not specific); a member of the NSW RSPCA; a member of the Australian Veterinary Association; a member of the Animal Welfare Scientists. They have asked for the Chair of GRICG or a member, similarly for the GBOTA and a greyhound industry participant. Basically, the reference group is required to consult, advise and contribute to an updated greyhound welfare code of practice, providing feedback on first and second drafts prepared by the writing group and in consideration of the original review. The scope of this project is to create a new code of practice that protects the welfare of greyhounds at all life stages etc. Again, just another group is born. On 31st March they may say it's a good idea or they are really not needed. We don't know.

If Clubs can combine and agree that one could be the Centre of Excellence, Government will assist. Advertising for a Board will be a long process – advertising for a CEO. Centralise tracks. If the Greyhound industry doesn't do anything, Government won't help. Nobody knows what 31st March is going to recommend, who or how many are going to be on the Board.

2. GRICG discussed the possibility of Club restructuring, and is fully aware that certain regions are more accessible to be called a Centre of Excellence, as this working party have promoted it. We encourage all Clubs to look at it with a vision of the sport, and ask GRNSW to allow GRICG to be a part of the consultation process.

Metropolitan racing is the biggest issue – a massive issue. GBOTA runs metropolitan racing until 2018. That's when the contract comes up. It may go to provincial racing. There is a lease until 2027. The last meeting before Christmas we all left convinced that the February meeting would be signed off. In that time everything crashed. The whole boundaries changed.

3. In the purpose of Club restructures, GRICG does support Clubs doing that, if any of the Clubs have got ideas as to who they would like to merge or amalgamate with. There is a certain amount of rationalisation that may need to happen, but there still needs to be a certain amount of participation, because shrinking an industry does not make it grow. The first thing we need to know is how many dogs we are talking about. In 2 years' time, how many greyhounds are we actually going to be trying to service? The rank and file person has walked. 47% of breeding numbers reduced from October to December, because of so many new rules.

GRICG would like to be involved in rationalisation. Until the Board is formed, and hopefully we will have participants on the Board – the selection process then becomes the catalyst. Who is on that selection process, how is that selection done? The final result will be made by the Government. We will likely have good representation on the Board.

4. GRICG wants to be involved in any consultation process with GRNSW in the form of rationalisation of any tracks or closures. Greyhound Welfare Code of Practice follows on from the Working Dog Alliance. People are burnt out over submissions.

GRICG should promote the 13% that we earn, so we put the race meetings on that earn us 13%. We are over-producing and our first port of call for GRNSW and GRICG is that we need to get down to a level that is acceptable and satisfactory. There should be unplaced prizemoney to compensate for travel. How could prizemoney be better distributed, considering rationalisation?

5. KPMG report to be gone through, and may be looked at, at a later date.

Other Business:

1. Staff Postings on website to be updated. GRICG has a new letterhead. Patrick has been advised of changes.

2. GRICG would like to know what the cost of the Pitt Street building is.

3. Swab Policy. GRICG is very unhappy with current swab policy, and the stewards involved. Nobody seems to have any answers, and we would like an investigation, or at least get an answer on how the swabbing policy works. There seem to be conflicts of interest with staff. Some winning dogs have not been swabbed on last or second-last race. Surely you can't win three races in a row and have the same steward all the same, and not get swabbed. Michael is to follow this up.

GRICG would like to get clarity on swabbing procedures. Is there a policy or is it all random? GRICG recommends that GRNSW has guidelines in place so that dogs do not miss getting swabbed because of stewards' discretion. We believe a system must be in place so the greyhound industry knows the protocols on swabbing, so no one gets passed over. This system must work for all greyhounds..... winners, unplaced favourites, dogs with betting anomalies etc. yet still allow stewards discretion to have swabs taken if they think it is necessary. Stewards must only have swabs not taken for a proper reason and this should be published with the reason.

4. Proposed race dates. GRICG would question the reasons for changes to Club dates? Nowra and Goulburn dates have been reduced. The two clubs with the least extensions of nominations have been cut back.

5. Insurance. GRICG would like to be advised in regard to what levels and coverage of insurance we hold at race meetings, trial tracks, any registered facility for the purpose of participant, animal, spectator, employees, and volunteers. What is the level of responsibility?

Meeting closed at 4.00pm. We await the report to come out at the end of the month, and as soon as that comes out, we will have a meeting to discuss it.