



Minister for Local Government,
Minister for Racing and
Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Our ref: MC18/6876

Your ref: A385050

23 NOV 2018

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Corner Alice and George Streets
BRISBANE QLD 4000

1 William Street
Brisbane Queensland 4000
PO Box 15009
City East Queensland 4002
Telephone +61 7 3719 7560
Email lgrma@ministerial.qld.gov.au
Website www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au

ABN 65 959 415 158

Dear Neil

Thank you for your letter of 31 October 2018 regarding petition No. 3032-18 received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly about greyhound racing in Queensland.

Animal cruelty will not be tolerated by the Palaszczuk Government. On coming to Government in 2015, we moved quickly to place animal welfare at the centre of Queensland's racing industry operations.

All 15 recommendations of Queensland Greyhound Racing Industry Commission of Inquiry (Commission of Inquiry) led by Mr Alan MacSporran QC were accepted. The nation's first integrity regime quickly followed.

The *Racing Integrity Act 2016* set a new standard for industry participants. It was this legislation that led to the establishment of the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (the Commission). Operational since 1 July 2016, the Commission is charged with keeping animals safe, both on and off the track, through its oversight of Queensland's new strict integrity regime.

The Commission's achievements to date demonstrate the value already being added by an independent welfare and integrity function. There are a number of initiatives evolving out of the Commission of Inquiry's recommendations that have been introduced, or are being considered, to minimise wastage and protect racing greyhounds. They are as follows:

- *The Commission's partnership with Crime Stoppers* allows members of the public to anonymously report animal abuse and racing industry misconduct on 1800 333 000.
- *Lifetime tracking for greyhounds*, the Commission is in the process of implementing initiatives that will give it the capacity to ensure animal welfare standards are maintained throughout a greyhound's racing life; from registration to retirement.
- *The Commission's pre-screening for potential Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP) participants*, provides the capacity for Greyhounds to enter the program. Socialisation and the care for greyhounds results in having the best possible chance of successful rehoming. All greyhounds potentially entering the program receive a complete veterinary examination to identify any physical or behavioural issues that may preclude greyhounds' admittance to the rehoming program.
- *Increased funding to the GAP* saw 223 greyhounds rehomed through the program in 2017-18, building on the 318 greyhounds adopted through the program in 2016-17.

Furthermore, the Commission has introduced specialist intelligence and investigative teams to prioritise and respond to any complaints received regarding the mistreatment and/or cruelty to racing animals as part of our commitment to animal welfare. For example, since commencement, the Commission has conducted 476 greyhound kennel inspections and issued 20 animal welfare directions in support of strengthened animal welfare and integrity standards. Additionally, the Commission's partnership with the Queensland Police Service Racing Crime Squad (QRCS) continues to deliver outstanding welfare and integrity outcomes for the racing industry. The QRCS investigates offences relating to licensed persons, including matters of serious animal cruelty, and has finalised 18 animal cruelty matters, with 4 more still before the courts.

With regards to racing infrastructure, Racing Queensland is currently investigating the development of two new replacement greyhound racing facilities in South East Queensland. The venues will be designed to world class standards to maximise positive animal welfare outcomes and optimal greyhound performance and safety. These venues will be funded from the \$120 million Racing Infrastructure Fund which is principally drawn from UBET's payments to the Queensland Government for its exclusive retail wagering licence in Queensland.

Much has been done and undoubtedly there is more to do. Reform will continue into the future because a safe and healthy industry with improved facilities and appropriate animal welfare measures in place remains a priority.

I would like to thank the petitioners for raising these matters with me and I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



STIRLING HINCHLIFFE MP
Minister for Local Government,
Minister for Racing and
Minister for Multicultural Affairs