

RSPCA SA calls for GRSA to be replaced as greyhound racing regulator *Transparency in the greyhound racing industry should not be optional*

Ahead of Wednesday's vote in the SA Legislative Council on the establishment of a Parliamentary Inquiry into the SA Greyhound Racing Industry, RSPCA South Australia is calling on Racing Minister Leon Bignell to remove Greyhound Racing SA as industry regulator unless they publicly release verifiable and audited statistics relating to the number of dogs bred, raced, injured, retired, rehomed and killed for the past 5 years.

Greyhound Racing SA - the controlling body for the industry in South Australia - has repeatedly refused to release data on the outcomes for the thousands of dogs bred by the industry each year. RSPCA CEO Tim Vasudeva says the time has come for the State government to step in and force their hand.

"RSPCA South Australia does not agree with Minister Bignell's assertions that the greyhound racing industry in South Australia is 'good, clean and safe' Mr Vasudeva said.

"The SA Greyhound Racing Industry is shrouded in secrecy, accountable to no-one but themselves, and with a culture that even its leaders describe as 'defined by animal deaths being acceptable and necessary and where profits come before welfare.'

"Greyhound Racing SA CEO Matt Corby himself admits, in a leaked internal memo, that the industry is responsible nationally for the unnecessary deaths of anywhere between 13,000 and 17,000 healthy greyhounds each year.

"How many of those deaths are occurring in South Australia is a question that cannot continue to go unanswered.

"If Greyhound Racing SA continues to refuse to release verifiable and audited data relating to the true number of greyhounds bred, raced, retired, re-homed and killed as wastage in South Australia over the past 5 years, then the Racing Minister should immediately remove them as the controlling body for this industry.

"The blatant conflict of interest that exists in allowing the same governing body responsible for the commercial side of greyhound racing to also be the one policing it can no longer be ignored.

“In terms of animal welfare outcomes, that set-up has failed miserably interstate.

“The SA greyhound racing industry’s total lack of transparency is a strong warning that it’s also failing here - which is why self-regulation must end, and why this Parliamentary Inquiry is so important.

“Greyhound Racing SA are behaving as if they are an organisation with a financial deficit who are just asking for a few more years to get themselves back into financial surplus. The problem is their deficit is not money, their deficit is dead dogs and industry participants cannot be allowed to kill more healthy dogs over the next few years while the industry tries to address a problem they themselves have created.

“To be clear - RSPCA South Australia does not want to expand its role beyond the current responsibilities of its Inspectors in relation to enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act, and if Greyhound Racing SA were to be replaced as regulator this should be by an arms-length State Government body. The State Government cannot continue to allow Greyhound Racing SA to be accountable to no-one and hide the outcomes for racing dogs, to whom they owe a duty of care.”

A Greens motion to establish a Parliamentary Inquiry into the South Australian Greyhound Racing Industry is due to be voted on in the SA Legislative Council on Wednesday the 21st of September.

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