

Friday 9 April 2020

Commission defends draft Code of Practice

The Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission have refuted claims by Mark Latham that they develop “rules and regulations just for the sake of having rules and regulations.”

Chief Commissioner, Alan Brown AM, said that comments such as these were disappointing and misinformed.

“It should be remembered that the need for a new Code of Practice was one of the principal recommendations of the Lemma Reform Panel accepted by the NSW Government, and is set out in the *Greyhound Racing Act 2017*, passed by Parliament,” Commissioner Brown said.

“The Commission is simply facilitating the development of the new code, which it is legally required to do.”

“It is therefore a total red herring to assert, as some are doing, that the Commission is seeking to use the code to somehow force its will on the industry.”

In 2017, the NSW Government accepted 121 recommendations presented by the Greyhound Industry Reform Panel. One of the fundamental recommendations included the development of a new Code of Practice. The *GRA* outlines the requirement for the Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission to develop and implement the new Code of Practice.

“There are already two existing Codes of Practice in NSW, this new Code refines and replaces the existing Codes and includes content recommended by the Greyhound Industry Reform Panel,” Commissioner Brown said.

“Once implemented, it will replace the two existing Codes and complement the Racing Rules.”

“This is not a new concept, with similar Codes existing in Western Australia, Australian Capital Territory and Victoria, all of which were reviewed and considered in the development of the new Code.”

The Greyhound Industry Animal Welfare Committee were tasked with drafting the NSW Greyhound Welfare Code of Practice. This Committee was established in 2018 and is made up of five members including:

- Industry representative
- GRNSW representative
- Animal ethics and behavioural expert
- NSW Department of Primary Industries representative
- RSPCA representative



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“The Commission has facilitated a lengthy and thorough public consultation period for the draft Code which began on 16 January 2020 and has been extended to end on 14 April 2020,” Commissioner Brown said.

“The key reason for a public consultation process is to allow interested parties to provide sensible recommendations and changes on how the draft can be improved.”

During the consultation period Commission staff visited 10 tracks across the state to provide industry participants with copies of the draft Code and other relevant material. The Commission has also facilitated six public briefing sessions at clubs to discuss the draft Code in more detail and note any verbal feedback.

On 26 February 2020, the Commission’s CEO along with the Minister for Better Regulation, Kevin Anderson, briefed MP’s at Parliament House and answered questions about the draft Code and other industry matters.

“At the conclusion of the consultation process, the NSW Government will consider the submissions received and make any further changes that arose from the process before signing off on the final Code,” Mr Brown said.

“The Government will also decide on when the Code will be implemented, allowing the Commission time to support the industry before and after the new Code is introduced.”

Media contact: Katie 0448 193 270