

Analysis of greyhound racing injuries

1 April – 30 June 2024



Foreword

The NSW Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission has published data since 2018 about injuries sustained by greyhounds while racing in NSW.

Reports are published:

- Quarterly, providing timely updates
- Annually, providing analysis of long-term trends

The Commission adopted a nationally agreed convention for classifying injuries in 2022 which can be viewed [here](#).

Together, these reports contribute to a growing body of evidence which can assist the industry in making evidence-based decisions with the aim of reducing the incidence and severity of greyhound racing injuries.

In keeping with this, in February 2023, the Commission convened a Summit comprising all key greyhound racing industry stakeholders to develop strategies for reducing serious racing injuries.

As a result of the Summit, the NSW Greyhound racing industry has committed itself to piloting a range of race injury reduction strategies. Those strategies and the timeframes for implementation are set out within the industry's Race Injury Reduction Action Plan. A copy of the Plan can be found at: <https://www.gwic.nsw.gov.au/welfare/race-injury-reduction-action-plan>

The Commission will publish the statistical results of the pilots conducted.

** This report may be republished with slight adjustments to figures after further auditing of data.*

Key comments

- Compared to Jan-Mar 2024's total of 1154, this quarter saw 14% less injuries with 992. Due to strong declines in categories A, B, C and D, this quarter's overall injury rate has lowered from 46.5 per 1000 starts to 38.5.
- April-June 2024's five Category E injuries bring the financial year's total to 22 at an overall rate to 0.21 per 1000 starts, which represents a 68% decrease on FY2023.
- The Race Injury Review Panel identified that 57% of this quarter's 60 Category F injuries occurred on turns, and that 55% resulted from race factors.
- While this quarter marks a short-term decline in injury, GWIC will continue to explore potential reasons for the long-term increase in rates.

Key data this quarter

Injuries sustained at race meetings.

Table 1: Races and injuries this quarter					
REPORTING PERIOD		1 April – 30 June 2024			
Race meetings		304			
Races		3483			
Starts (times a greyhound has started a race)		25868			
Individual greyhounds raced		4561			
Average starts per greyhound		5.7			
Injury category	Incapacitation period (days)	Number of injuries	% injured per injury category	Cumulative total of injury category	Injuries per 1,000 starts
Category A	none	145	14.6%	14.6%	5.6
Category B	3-10	390	39.3%	53.9%	15.1
Category C	11 - 27	250	25.2%	79.1%	9.7
Category D	28 - 90	202	20.3%	99.5%	7.8
Category E	Euthanased/died	5	0.5%	100.0%	0.2
Total		992			38.3
Category F	*	60	6.0%		2.3
Category G	+	932	94.0%		36.0

* Category F includes all Category E incidents as well as those within Category D that are deemed to be of a particularly serious nature. These rarely involve muscle injuries, and always exclude physical complications that result from factors other than racing, such as tick paralysis. Please refer to [this link](#) for further information.

+ Category G Includes any injury in Categories A to C and those in Category D that do not fit the definition of a Serious injury (i.e. Category F).

Track-related mortality not as part of race meeting

GWIC veterinarians follow up with trainers about the outcomes for greyhounds which have suffered a serious Category D race injury.

Instances of euthanasia by a private veterinarian or sudden death away from the racetrack, after sustaining injury at a race meeting, are counted as Category D injuries in the table above and included in Table 2 below.

More information on greyhounds medically euthanased away from the racetrack can be found in the Commission's quarterly Greyhound Life Cycle Report, which is available on the Commission's website.

Table 2: Track related mortality not as part of race meeting

Reporting Period	1 April – 30 June 2024
Reported euthanased by private veterinarian after sustaining injury at race meeting	3
Reported euthanased or sudden death after sustaining injury in unofficial trial at racetrack	0
Reported euthanased or sudden death after sustaining injury in official trial at racetrack	0

Trends

Controlled for seasonal variation.

Injury rates are correlated with season, with hotter quarters 1 and 4 in each year usually having higher injury rates than cooler quarters 2 and 3. Comparing this quarter's data with the same quarter in previous years reduces the influence of season and provides a more accurate picture of long-term trends in injury rates.

Note: reporting prior to Q3 2018 was by GRNSW and is not directly comparable due to differences in data definitions and recording.

Figure 1: Injury trends for same quarter - Categories A to E and total

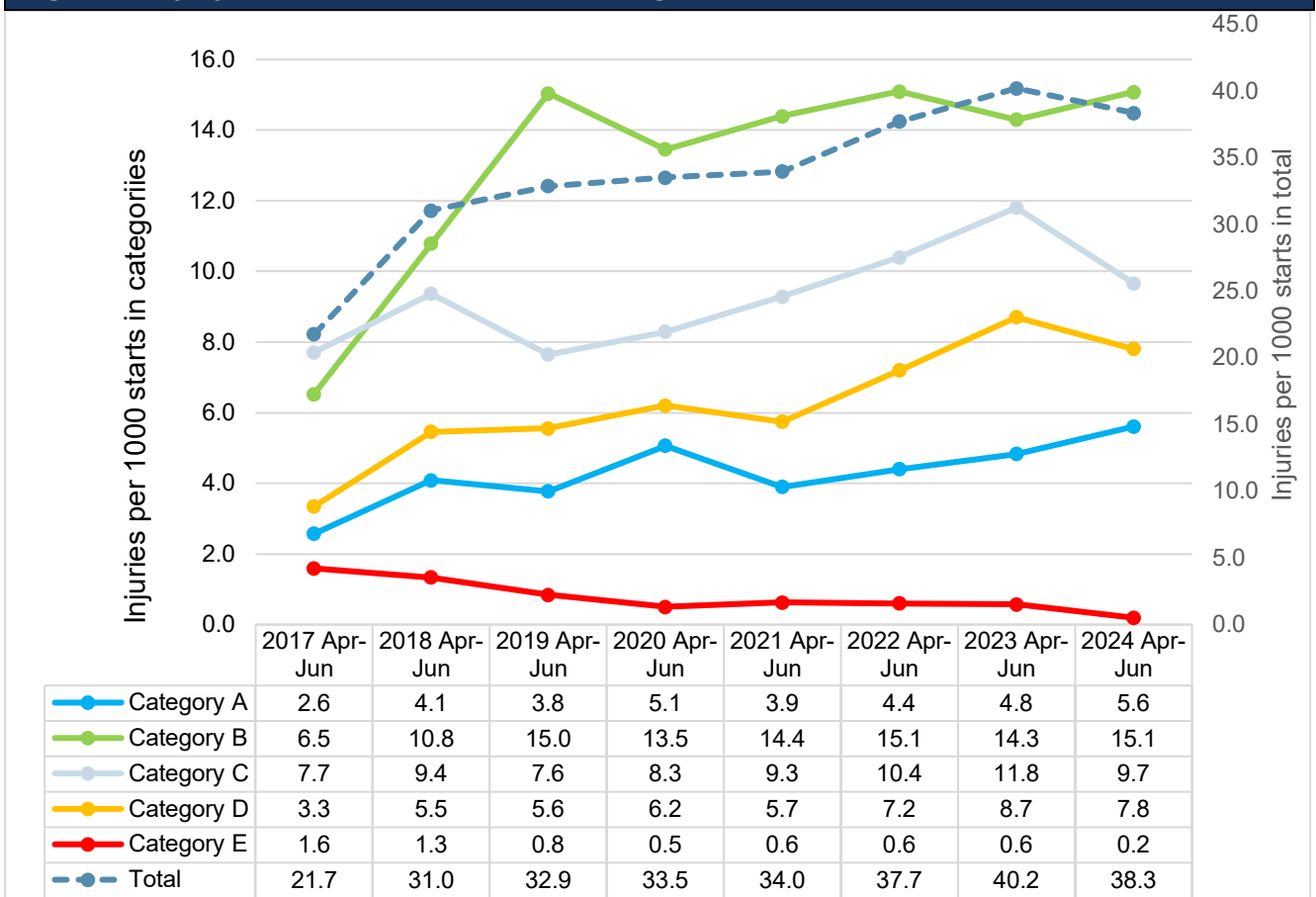


Figure 2: Injury trends for same quarter – Categories F and G

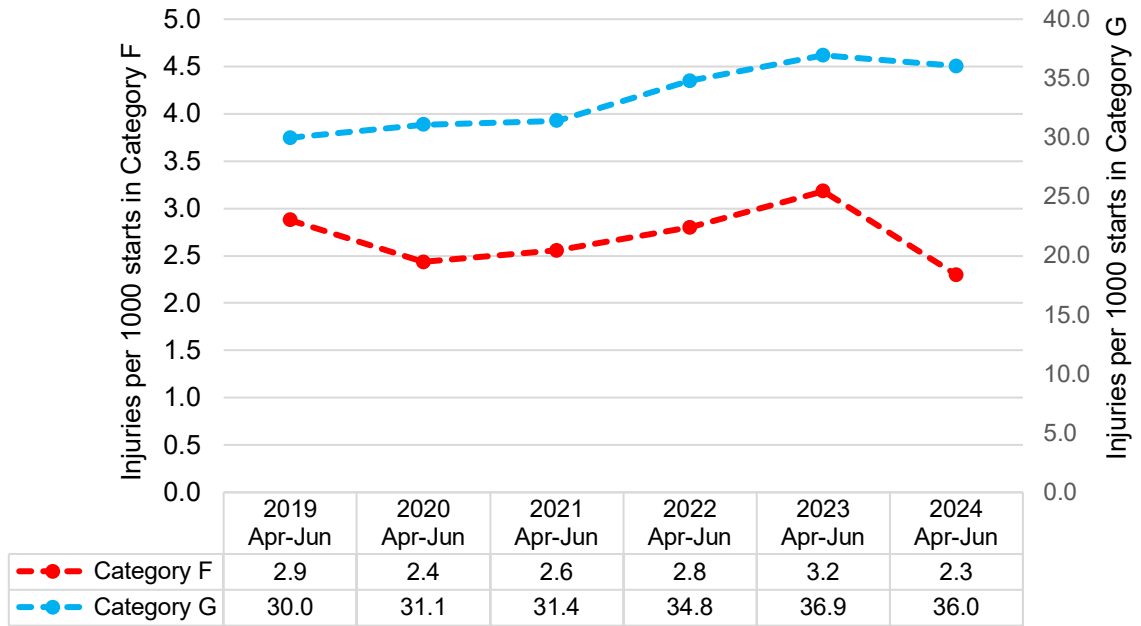


Table 3: This quarter compared to the same quarter in previous years

Injury type	This quarter compared to same quarter in previous years
Category A	Further increased to extend a three-year trend
Category B	Returned to 2022's higher rate after the decline in 2023
Category C	Steeply decreased after a four-year rise
Category D	Tapered off to end the consistent growth that began in 2021
Category E	Heavily dropped consistent with FY2024's exceptionally low rates
Total	Decreased for the first time in 7 years
Category F	Significantly dropped for the lowest rate since 2019
Category G	Tapered off after 2023 to end five years of gradual growth
Comment	
GWIC is exploring potential reasons for the observed increases in injury rates.	

Long-term trends

To control seasonal variation in injury data, long-term injury trends are presented as 12-month running averages.

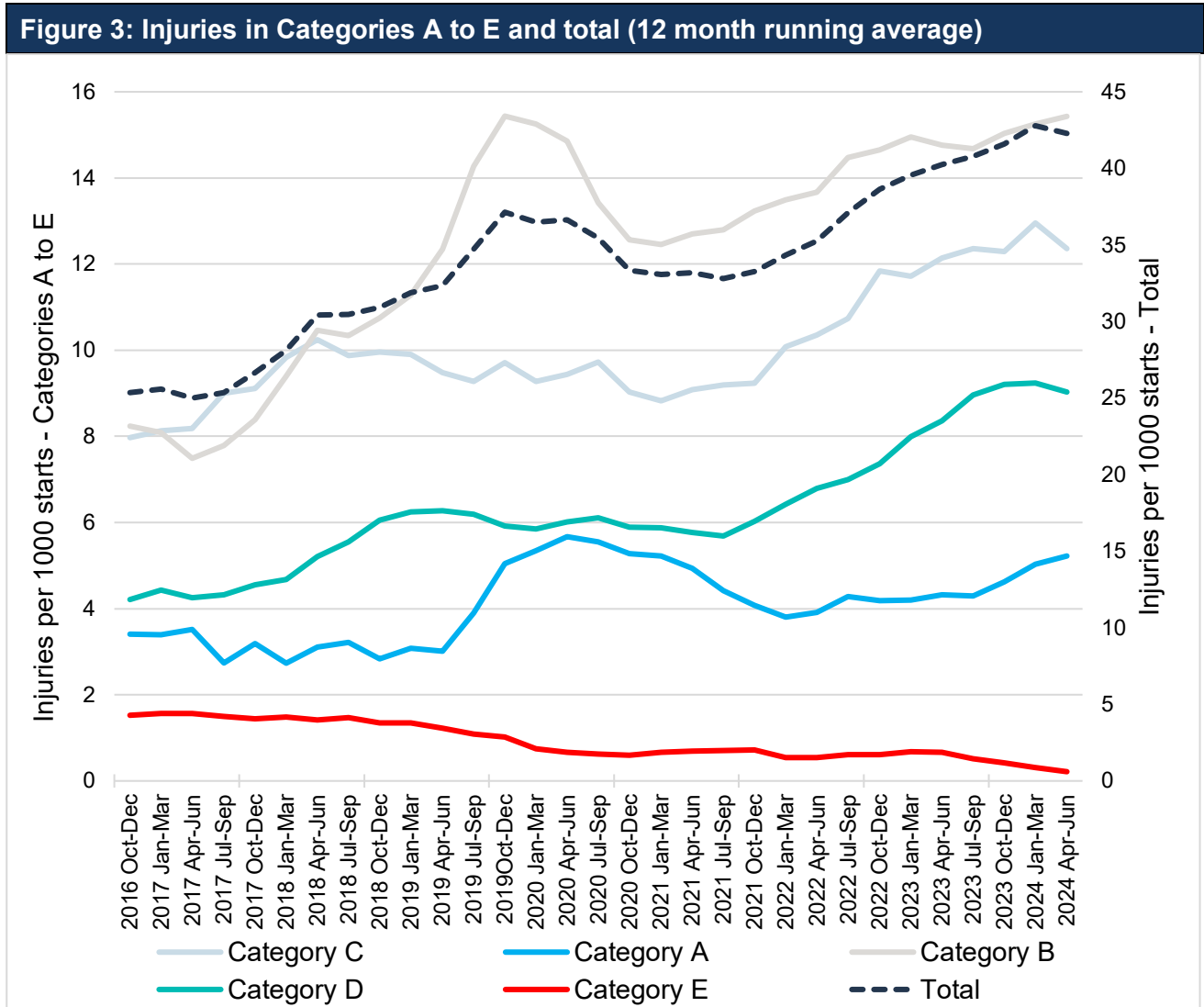


Figure 4: Injuries in Categories F and G (12 month running average)

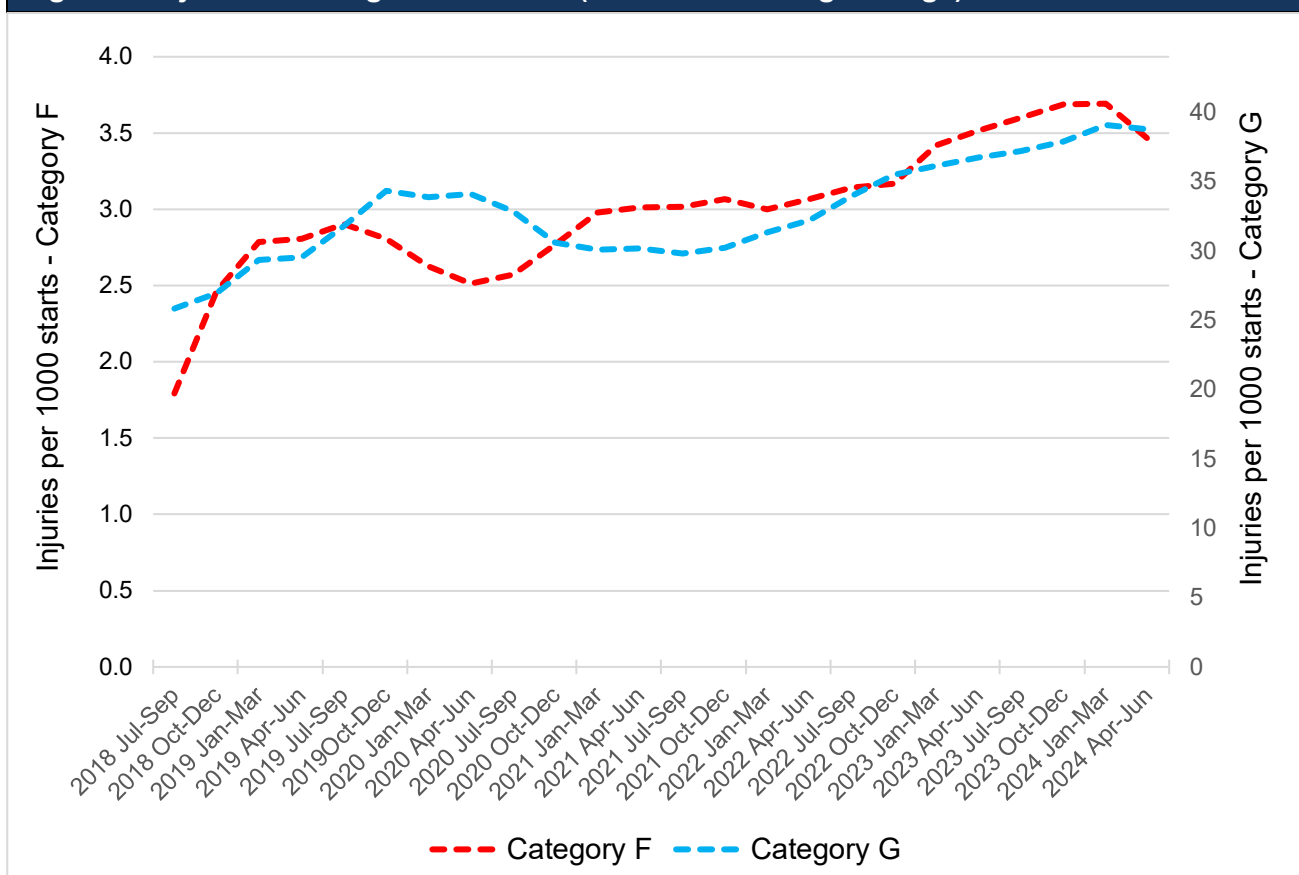


Table 4: Long term trends (based on 12 months running average)

Category A	Saw decelerated growth in 2024 to retain lower rates than 2020
Category B	Closely follows the overall injury-rate increase since early 2021
Category C	Maintains long-term growth at erratic rates
Category D	Began to descend from the early-2024 peak
Category E	Reached much lower rates in FY2024 than ever before
Total	Decreased after three years of growth
Category F	Experienced its steepest decline since 2019
Category G	Formed a plateau after steady ascension since late 2021
Comment	
GWIC is exploring potential reasons for the observed increase in injury in the last 18 months.	

Race Injury Review Panel Analysis

There are many causes of injuries in racing greyhounds and the relative importance and interactions of causative factors vary. Causative factors can be divided into:

1. **Greyhound factors:** genetics, nutrition, physical growth and development, fitness, race preparation, racing form and previous injury history.
2. **Track factors:** design and surface characteristics; environmental influences.
3. **Race factors:** race distance, racing incidents (collisions) and number of greyhounds in a race.

Category E and F injuries which occurred during this quarter were reviewed by the Race Injury Review Panel, continuing work begun in February 2019. The Panel assesses factors that may have contributed to each injury and where possible attributes it to greyhound, track, or race factors. Over time, the data collected will assist in informing prevention strategies and regulatory steps aimed at minimising the incidence of racing injuries.

Table 5 summarises the results of Panel deliberations and data for this quarter. In some instances, more than one factor may contribute to an injury, such as track and race factors. Where insufficient evidence is available (such as in trials or races where no video footage is available), the possible contributions to the injury are not considered by the Panel, but those greyhounds may be included in counts of the gender, age, distance, location, and race history of injured greyhounds.

Table 5: Review of Category E and F injuries this quarter			
	Category E	Category F minus Category E	Category F
Race Injury Review Panel assessment of contributing factors to injuries*			
Greyhound factors	4	23	27
Race factors	1	32	33
Track factors	0	0	0
Factors not assessed	0	0	0
Gender of injured greyhound			
Female	3	23	26
Male	2	32	34
Age of injured greyhound to nearest 6 months			
1.5 years	0	2	2
2 years	1	8	9
2.5 years	2	17	19
3 years	0	10	10
3.5 years	0	11	11
4 years	1	5	6
4.5 years	1	1	2
> 5 years	0	1	1
Distance of race in which greyhound was injured			
Under 300m	1	3	4
300-399m	2	19	21
400-499m	2	17	19
500-600m	0	14	14
Over 600m	0	2	2
Location on track at which injury appears to have occurred			
Soon after start	0	5	5
Straight	2	14	16
Turn	2	32	34
After finish but before catching pen	0	1	1
Catching pen	1	1	2
Other	0	2	2
Race history of injured greyhounds			
Average and range of starts in last 30 days	2.0, 0-4	2.5, 0-7	2.5, 0-7
Average and range of starts in last 60 days	3.5, 0-9	5.0, 0-14	4.5, 0-14
Average and range of career starts	22.0, 2-51	31.5, 1-115	27.0, 1-115