

Greyhound life cycle report

1 April – 30 June 2024



The Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission publishes a quarterly report of the status of the registered greyhound population and life cycle events such as breeding, naming, retirement, euthanasia, and death for greyhounds registered with the Commission.

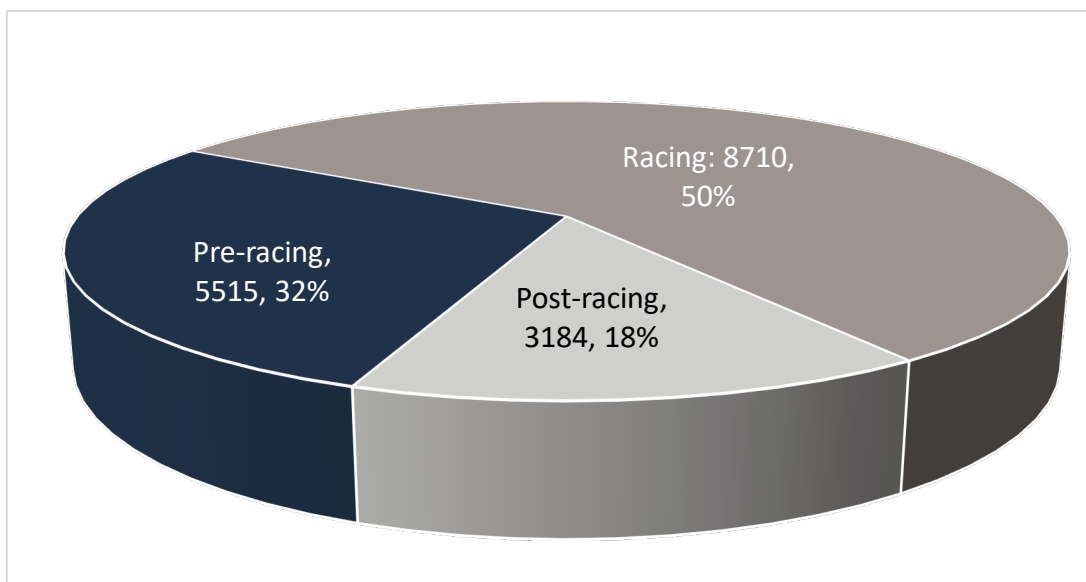
Participants are required to notify the Commission within 14 days from the date of servicing, whelping and retirement, and within two days from the date of euthanasia or death of a greyhound.

Note that figures for this quarter may be lower than in future reports due to late notifications from participants. Values for previous financial years have been reconciled with annual reports for consistency.

Greyhound numbers and status

The industry greyhound population was estimated to be 17,409 as at 30 June 2024 (Figure 1), 85 fewer than the previous quarter. Since the last quarter, the proportion of retired greyhounds has increased by 1% and the proportion of racing greyhounds decreased by 1%. The proportion of pre-racing greyhounds remains the same.

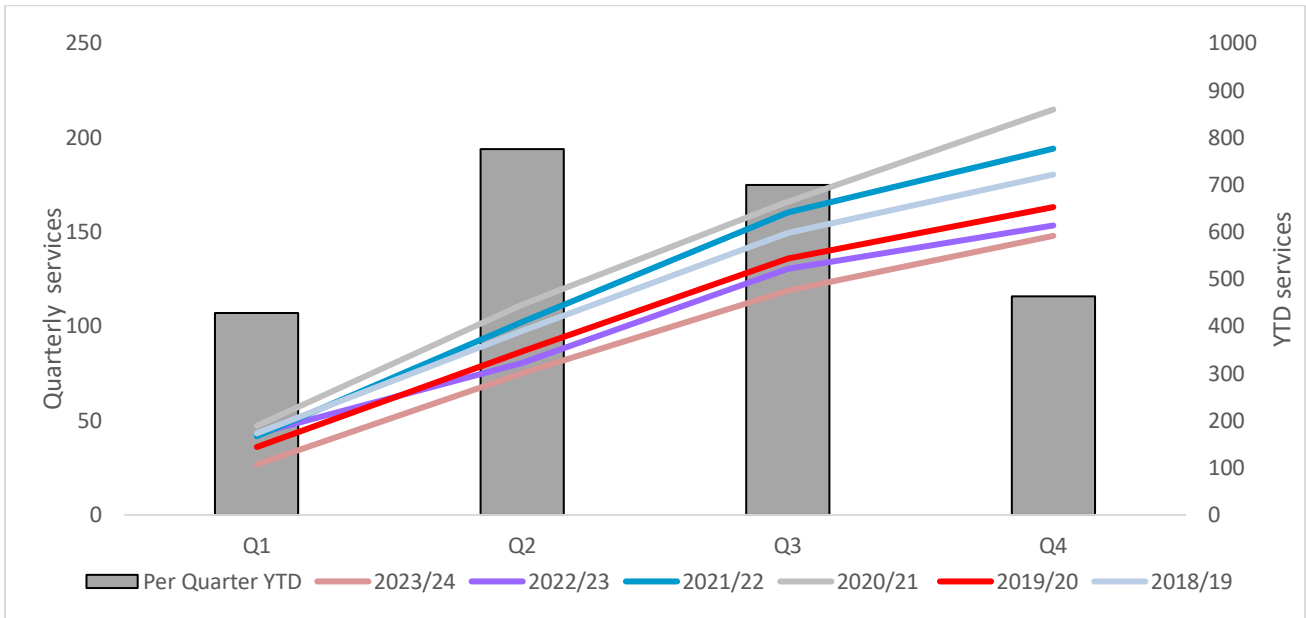
Figure 1: Registered greyhound population



Breeding

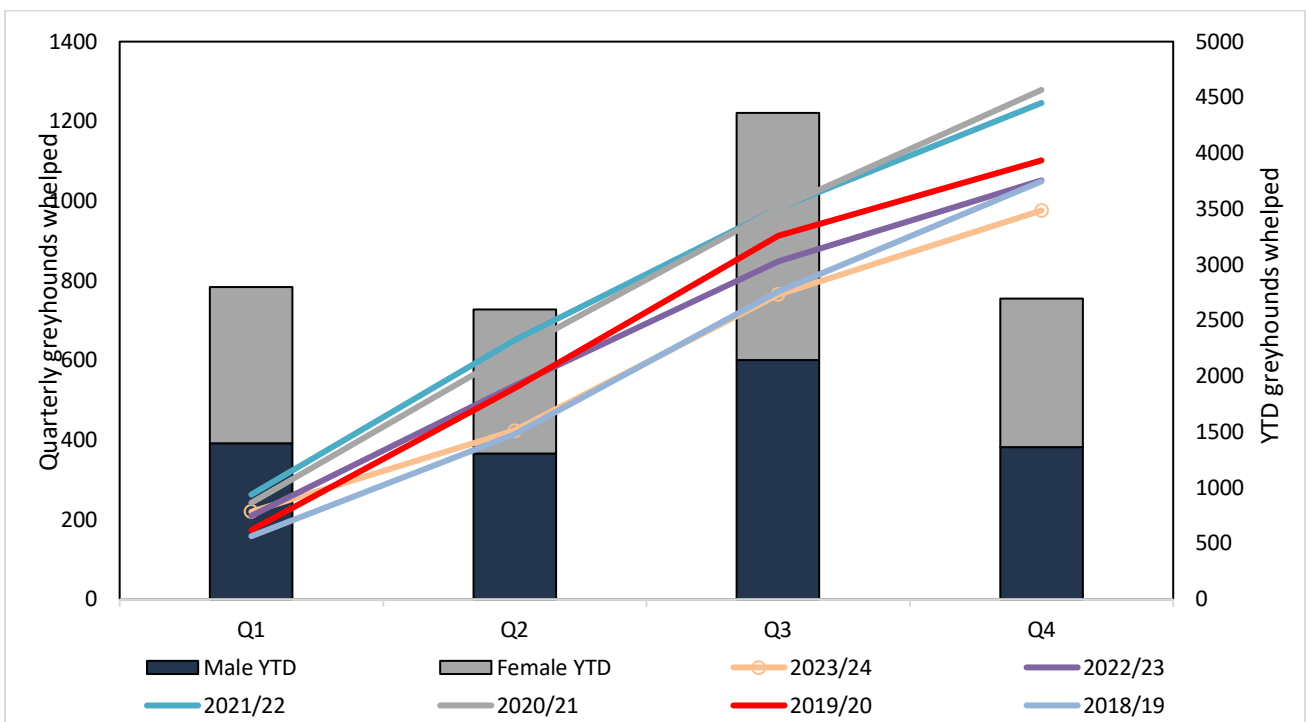
The Commission received 116 breeding service notifications in April-June 2024. This brings the financial year's total to 592, which marks a 4% decline from FY2023 (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Breeding services



From 113 litters, 754 greyhounds were whelped and notified to the Commission in this quarter (Figure 3). To date, the Commission has had received whelping notifications for 3,486 pups in the financial year (Figure 4). Late notifications are expected to push the FY2024 total to a figure like the FY2023 total, which is the lowest of the last four years.

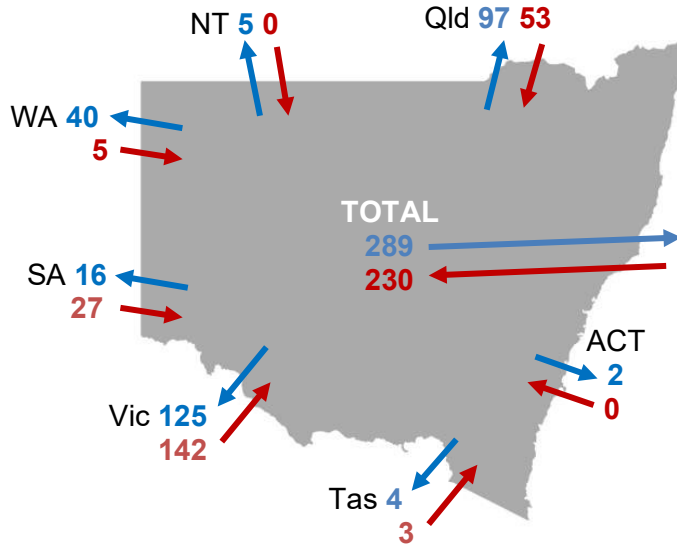
Figure 3: Pups whelped



Interstate transfers

289 greyhounds were transferred out of NSW¹ to trainers in other jurisdictions throughout this quarter, while 230 greyhounds were transferred from other jurisdictions into NSW (Figure 4). The greatest exchanges in and out of NSW were with Victoria and Queensland, which have large greyhound racing industries, and which is consistent with previous quarters.

Figure 4: Greyhounds transferred into and out of NSW.



Retirement

Retired greyhounds owned by an industry participant remain registered with the Commission. Those that transfer to the ownership of a non-industry participant are registered as pets on the NSW Pet Registry and are no longer registered with the Commission.

Table 1: Greyhound retirements reported by participants this quarter.

Destination	Number	%
Retained by an industry participant	318	39%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer to a non-participant	161	20%
Accepted by Greyhounds as Pets ¹ (GAP)	279	35%
Accepted by another animal rescue or adoption agency ²	48	6%
Other	0	0%
Total	806	

¹ A not-for-profit initiative coordinated by Greyhound Racing NSW.

² Including the RSPCA, AWL, or council animal care facilities.

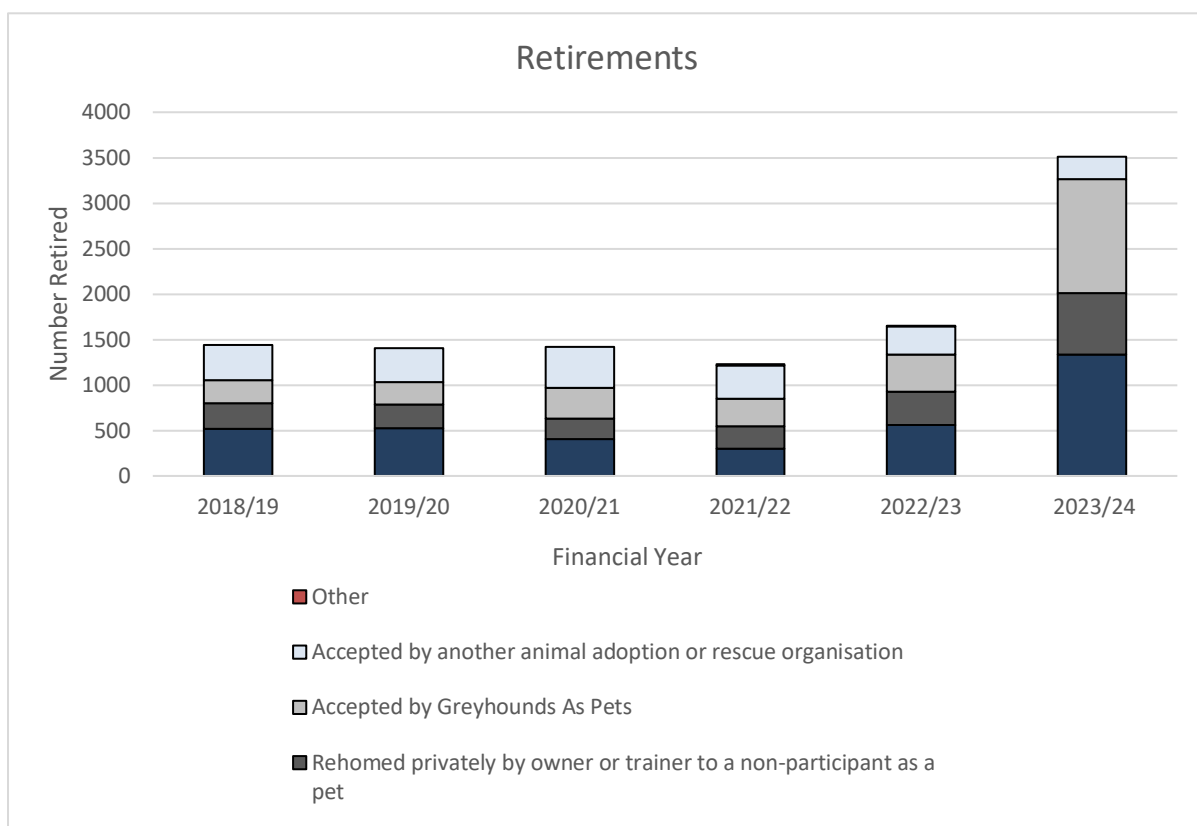
This quarter had 80% more retirements than the same period last year (Table 1), despite a decline in retirements to third-party adoption agencies since FY2023.

¹ This figure includes greyhounds registered in any jurisdiction, to count greyhound movements more accurately; previous reports have counted only greyhounds registered in NSW.

Table 2: Greyhound retirement trends

Destination	FY 2018/19	%	FY 2019/20	%	FY 2020/21	%	FY 2021/22	%	FY 2021/22	%	FY 2023/24	%
Retained by an industry participant	517	36%	524	37%	403	28%	302	25%	557	34%	1332	38%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer to a non-participant	285	20%	262	19%	229	16%	245	20%	371	22%	679	19%
Accepted by a Greyhounds as Pets (GAP) centre	249	17%	246	17%	339	24%	301	25%	404	24%	1253	36%
Accepted by another animal adoption agency	390	27%	373	27%	447	32%	365	30%	314	19%	245	7%
Other							14	1%	8	<1%	0	%
Total	1441		1405		1418		1227		1654		3509	

Figure 5: Greyhound retirement trends



The number of greyhound retirements in FY2024 is 112% greater than FY2023's total of 1654 (Table 2, Figure 5), with GAP retirements seeing the largest increase.

This large rise in retirements can be attributed to the requirement for eTrac check-ins, which provides an incentive for owners to notify the Commission when a greyhound will no longer race; and the extensive efforts made by Commission staff to contact owners of older greyhounds that are unlikely to race again and encourage them to submit retirement notifications.

While GAP centres have accepted more greyhounds, more retirees are also being retained by industry participants as pets after receiving assistance from GRNSW in the form of desexing and other veterinary treatments.

Euthanasia

Euthanasia of greyhounds registered with the Commission must conform with the Greyhound Rehoming Policy (<https://www.gwic.nsw.gov.au/integrity/rulesandpolicies>). Euthanasia categories used in this report are described in the policy.

Table 3: Greyhound euthanasia reported by participants this quarter.

Cause	Number	%
Medical euthanasia not at racetrack certified by a registered veterinarian due to		
injury ¹	44	32%
illness ¹	86	63%
Medical euthanasia due to emergency ²	0	0%
Euthanasia at race meeting due to injury	3	2%
Euthanasia after registered veterinarian certified that the greyhound was behaviourally unsuitable for rehoming ³	3	2%
Total	136	

¹The veterinarian must certify that the greyhound was suffering from an intractable injury or illness that causes significant pain or discomfort, or a marked reduction in quality of life, such that is inhumane or would otherwise compromise the welfare of the greyhound to delay euthanasia.

²The circumstances surrounding any emergency euthanasia are examined by the Commission to ensure they are in accordance with the Commission's policies and the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979*.

³Euthanasia for behavioural reasons is not currently permitted under the Greyhound Rehoming Policy. These cases are investigated to determine if a breach of the Policy has occurred.

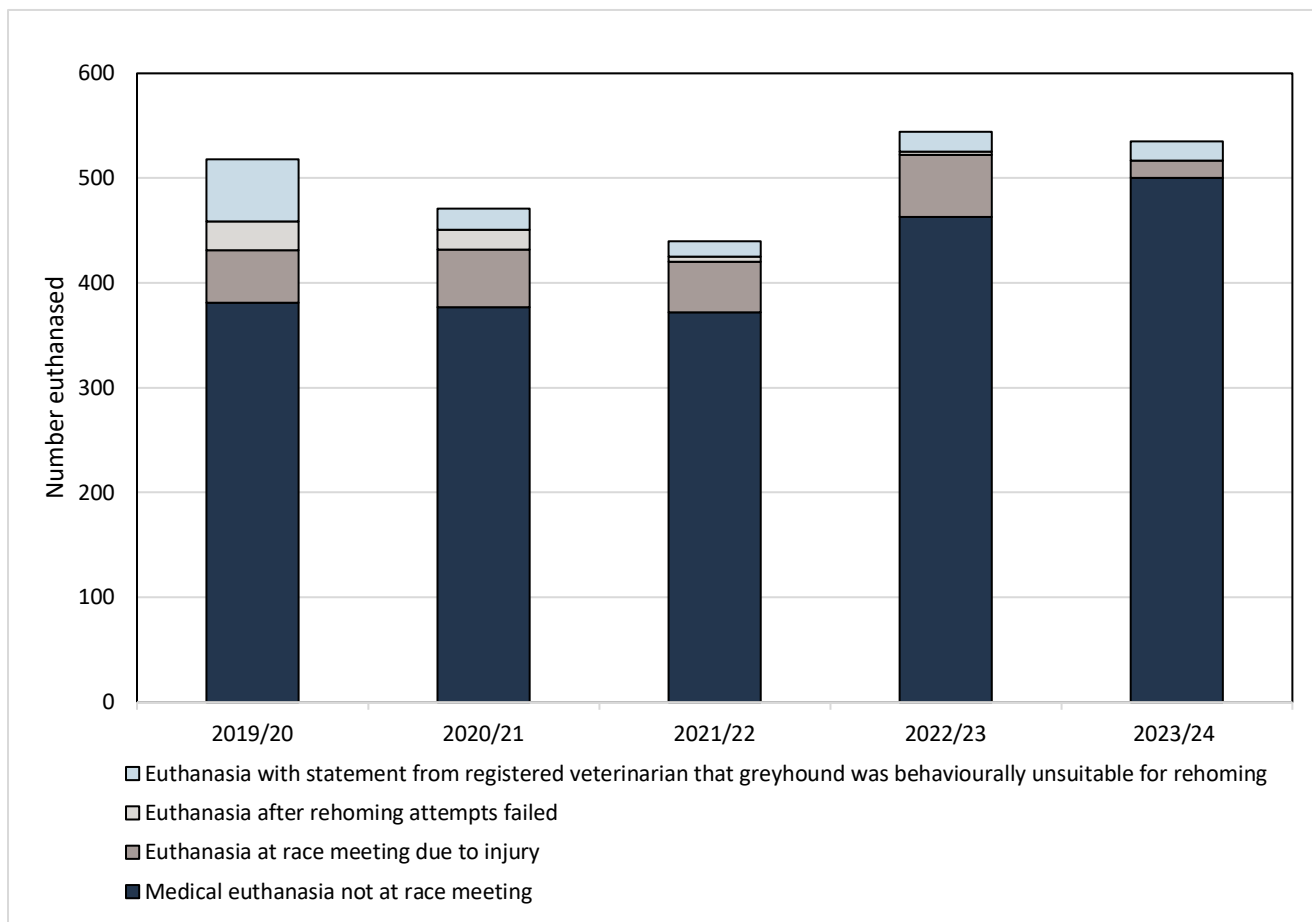
Between April and June 2024, there were 5% more euthanasias notified to the Commission than in the previous quarter. Illness and injury were responsible for 95% of the euthanasias, with illness inevitably becoming more prominent in an ageing greyhound population (Table 3).

Table 4: Greyhound euthanasia trends

Cause	FY 2018/19	%	FY 2019/20	%	FY 2020/21	%	FY 2021/22	%	FY 2022/23	%	FY 2023/24	%
Medical euthanasia not at racetrack	396	62%	381	74%	377	80%	372	85%	463	85%	500	93%
Euthanasia at racetrack	97	15%	50	10%	55	12%	48	11%	59	11%	17	3%
Rehoming attempts failed	36	6%	28	5%	19	4%	5	1%	3	1%	0	0%
Behaviourally unsuitable ¹	106	17%	59	11%	20	4%	15	3%	19	3%	18	3%
Total	635		518		471		440		544		535	

¹Euthanasia for behavioural reasons was not permitted under the Greyhound Rehoming Policy from 1 December 2019 onwards. Current GWIC policy requires this notification to be certified as necessary by a veterinary practitioner.

Figure 6: Greyhound euthanasia trends



The FY2024 total number of euthanasias was 2% lower than the previous financial year, despite an increase in illness-induced euthanasia (Table 4). The 3% contribution from on-track euthanasia (Table 3) maintains the long-term decline since FY2019 where the figure was 15% (Table 4). This can be ascribed to improvements in track conditions, the Commission’s introduction of a serious injury treatment policy for its veterinarians and the GRNSW Greyhound Care Scheme.

The percentage of greyhounds euthanased due to behavioural matters has further decreased from FY2019’s 17%, now representing only 3% of all euthanasias in FY2024 (Table 4).

Death

Table 5: Greyhound deaths reported by participants this quarter.

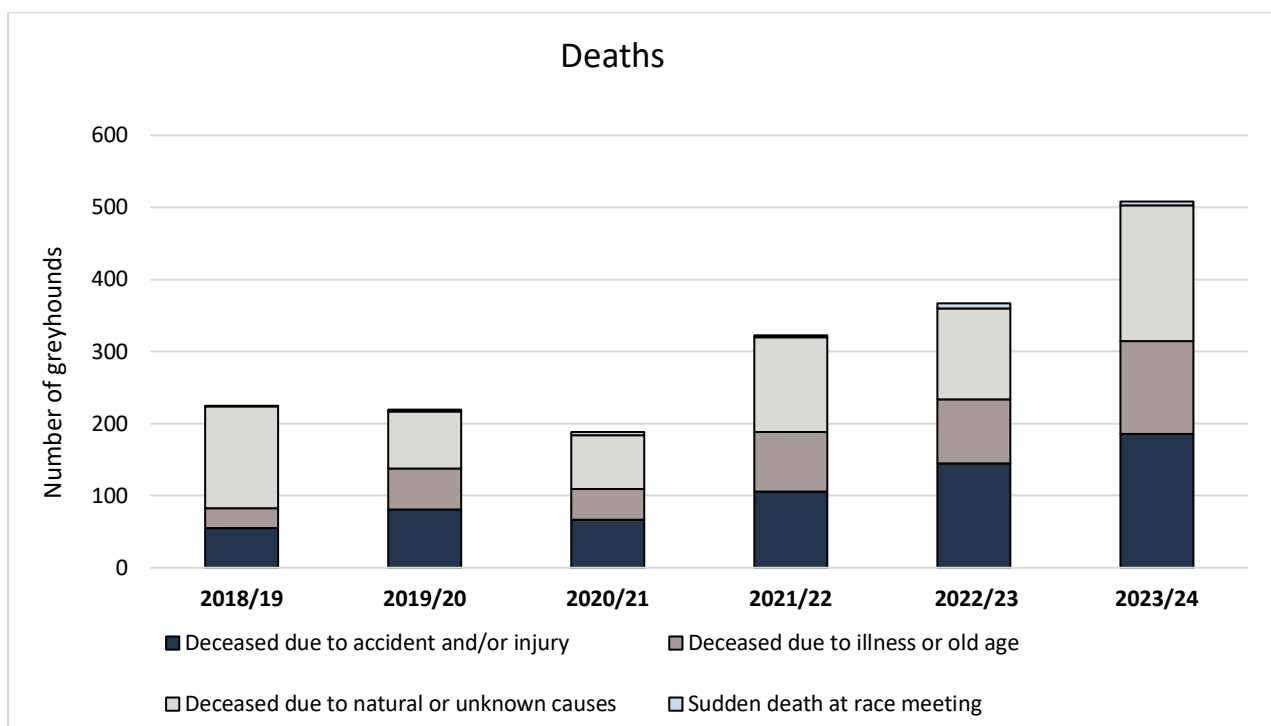
Cause	Number	%
Deceased due to accident and/or injury	23	26%
Deceased due to illness or old age	36	40%
Deceased due to natural or unknown causes	29	32%
Sudden death at race meeting	2	2%
Total	90	

A total of 90 greyhounds died in this quarter, which is 8% less than April-June 2023. Of the 90 deaths, 72% resulted from illness, old age, or unknown causes (Table 5), somewhat more than in the last 4 years (Table 6).

Table 6: Greyhound death notification trends

Cause	FY		FY		FY		FY		FY		FY	
	2018/19	%	2019/20	%	2020/21	%	2021/22	%	2022/23	%	2023/24	%
Accident and injury	55	24%	81	37%	67	36%	106	33%	145	40%	186	37%
Illness or old age	28	12%	57	26%	42	22%	82	25%	89	24%	128	25%
Natural or unknown causes	141	63%	79	36%	75	40%	132	41%	126	34%	189	37%
Sudden death at race meeting	1	<1%	2	<1%	4	2%	2	<1%	7	2%	5	1%
Total	225		219		188		322		367		508	

Figure 7: Greyhound death notification trends



FY2024's total of recorded greyhound deaths exceeds FY2023's number by 38%, which extends a three-year increase that began after several years of gradual decline.

Improved participant compliance with the requirement to submit death notifications has contributed to this steady growth since FY2021. Furthermore, historical years with exceptionally high whelping rates has led to a generally older greyhound population, where death from natural causes and illness is more likely.