



MEDIA RELEASE

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Greyhound trainer immediately disqualified following discovery of prohibited live animals on property

The Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission (the Commission) has disqualified a New South Wales greyhound trainer following the discovery of live animals capable of being used as a lure, being kept in cages at a property on the Central Coast.

Today the Commission conducted a targeted inspection of a property located on the NSW Central Coast where a number of rabbits and possums were seized along with other evidence.

The Commission's Chief Executive Officer, Mr Steve Griffin, said, "Commission Inspectors observed the participant, Mr Sam Masri, return to his property in possession of the animals."

"After being interviewed by Inspectors and admitting to obtaining the animals, Mr Masri was immediately issued with a disqualification while the Commission continues with its investigation into these serious welfare breaches," Mr Griffin said.

"It is fortunate that the Commission has the appropriate regulations and capabilities in place to take action in situations like this, rare as they may be."

"The industry has a zero tolerance for any conduct relating to live baiting, which is not only a serious breach of animal welfare but also attempts to undermine the integrity of the sport and damage the industry."

Under the Greyhound Racing Rules, individuals found in breach of baiting offences can face a lifetime ban from the sport as well as terms of imprisonment under the *Protection of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979*.

"NSW has some of the strongest welfare standards in the industry, and we will utilise all our legislative powers to ensure appropriate action is taken against anyone who thinks they can get away with this type of conduct."

"The Commission won't stand for it, and we know we have the industry's full support to eliminate people from the industry who want to engage in these barbaric practices."

"The industry is a close-knit community who have worked hard to rebuild their reputation over the past seven years, so news that someone may be engaged in this abhorrent practice is an affront to those who have a proven commitment to welfare and consistently do the right thing."

The Chief Executive Officer of Greyhound Racing NSW, Mr Robert Macaulay, said, "There is an industry-wide zero tolerance to any incidents of this nature, which is fully supported by Greyhound Racing NSW. We expect the appropriate actions to be taken by GWIC as the regulator of the sport in NSW and will not make any further comment while their investigation is ongoing."

The Commission confirms that the animals seized are now being cared for by the relevant authorities.

No further comments will be made while the Commission's investigation is continuing.