

Greyhound life cycle report



1 October – 31 December 2023

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.

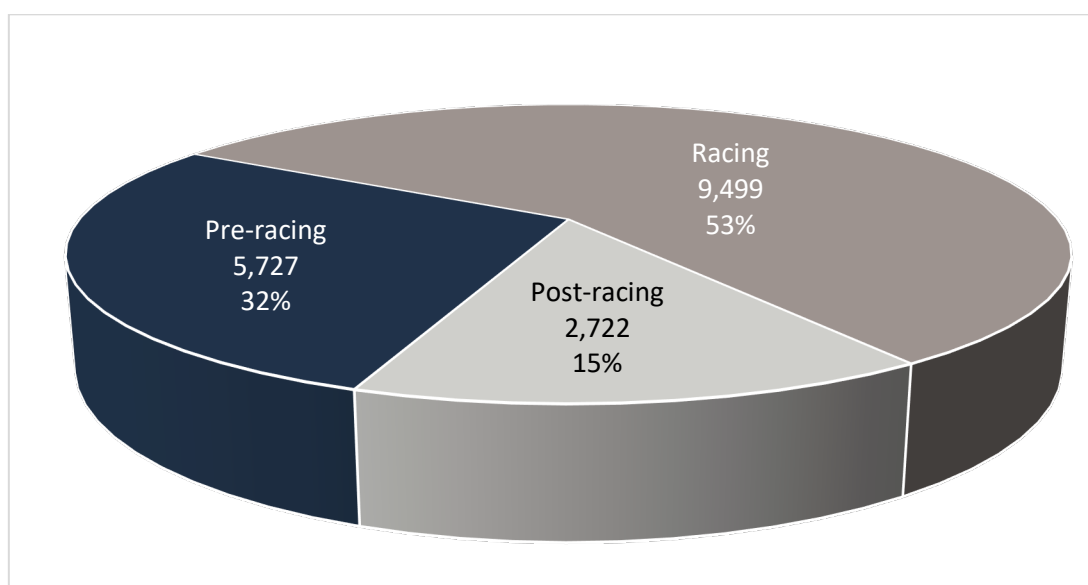
Participants are required to notify the Commission within 14 days from the date of servicing, whelping and retirement, and within two days from the date of euthanasia or death of a greyhound.

Note that quarterly figures may vary with future reports due to late submissions of notifications. However, values for previous financial years have been reconciled with annual reports for consistency.

Greyhound numbers and status

The industry greyhound population, as at 31 December 2023, was estimated to be 17,948, of which 53% are registered for racing (Figure 1). Overall, this is 239 fewer than reported for the previous quarter due to the Commission’s ongoing efforts to trace the status and whereabouts of every greyhound on the Greyhound Register. The difference largely comprises greyhounds which have been retired prior to the 2022/23 year and rehomed out of the industry. The proportion of pre-racing greyhounds has increased by 4% since 30 September 2023.

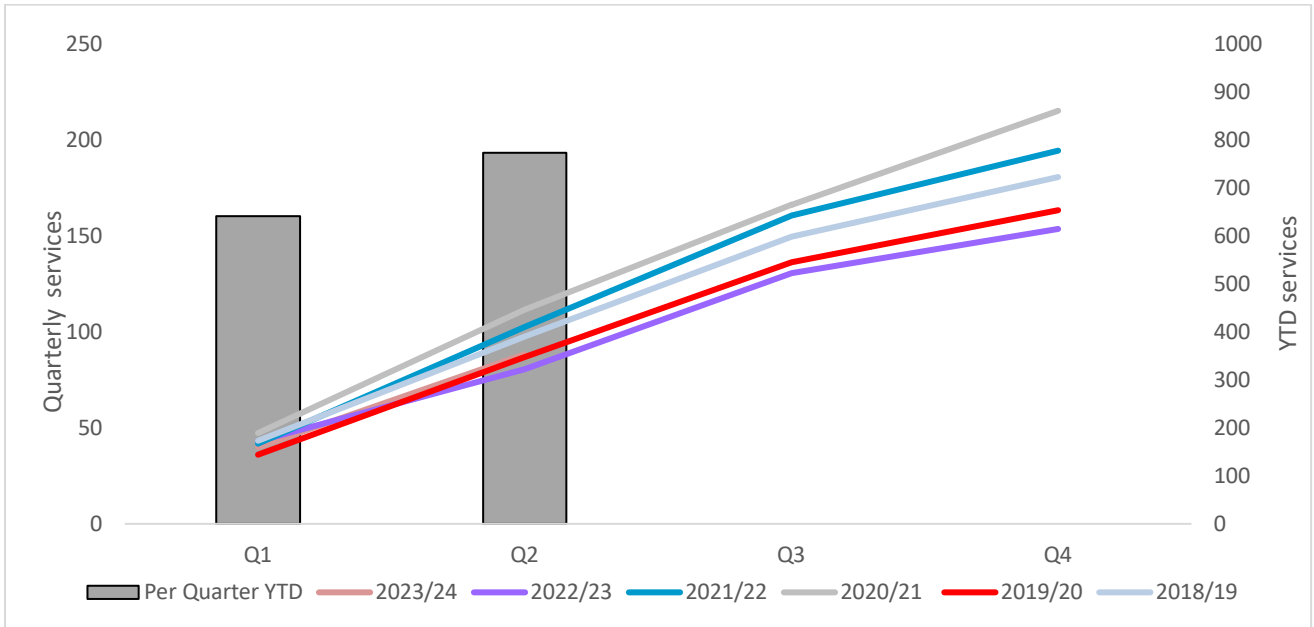
Figure 1: Registered greyhound population



Breeding

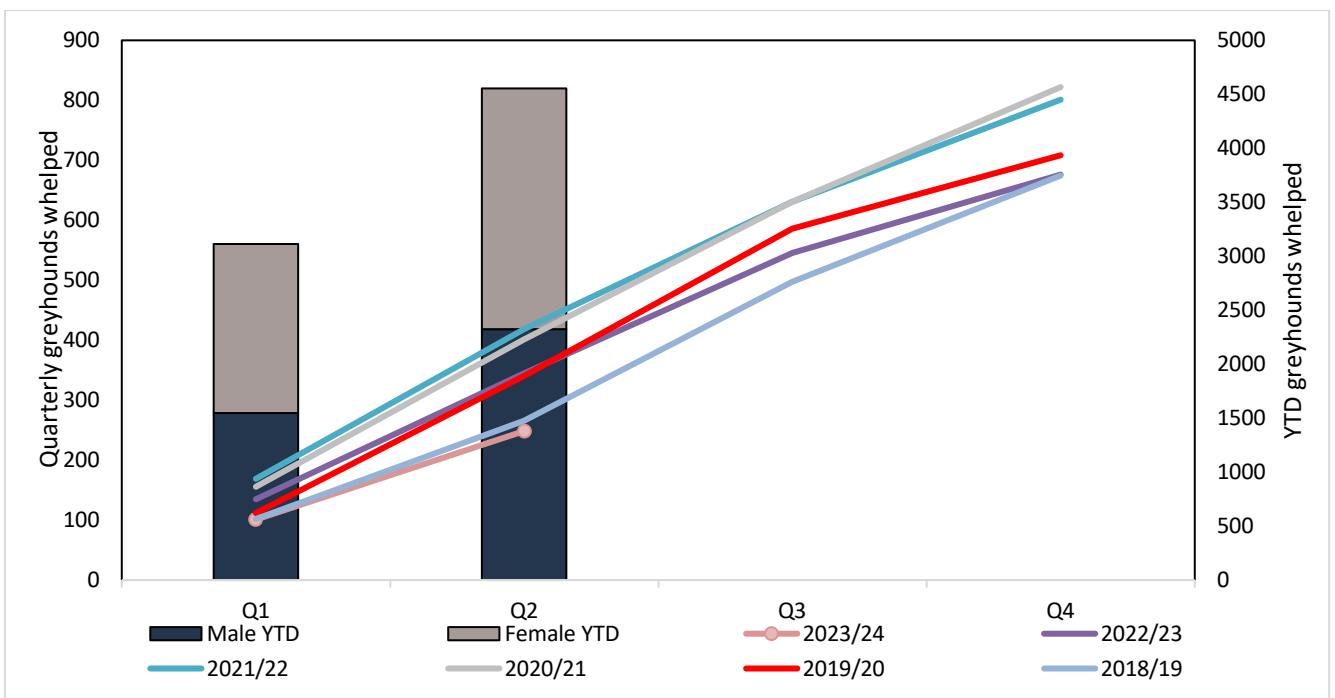
This quarter, 21% more breeding services were notified to the Commission than the last, with a total of 193 that foreshadows a growth in whelping numbers (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Breeding services



From 129 litters, 820 pups were whelped and notified to the Commission this quarter, which is 46% higher than the previous quarter (Figure 3).

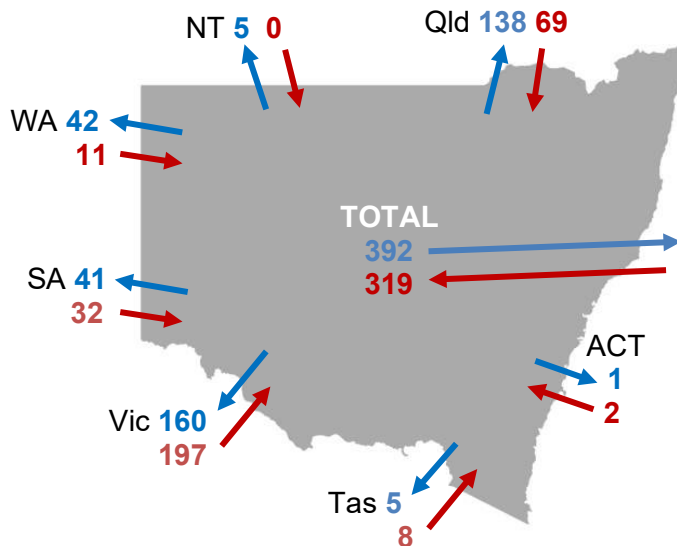
Figure 3: Pups whelped



Interstate transfers

During this quarter, 392 greyhounds were transferred out of NSW¹ to trainers in other jurisdictions, while 319 greyhounds were brought into NSW (Figure 4). The largest exchanges occurred with Victoria and Queensland, both of which have substantial greyhound racing industries.

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	282	32%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer to a non-participant	208	24%
Accepted by Greyhounds as Pets ¹ (GAP)	308	35%
Accepted by another animal adoption agency ²	77	9%
Other	2	<1%
Total	877	

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

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

Numbers are affected by late submissions of notifications.

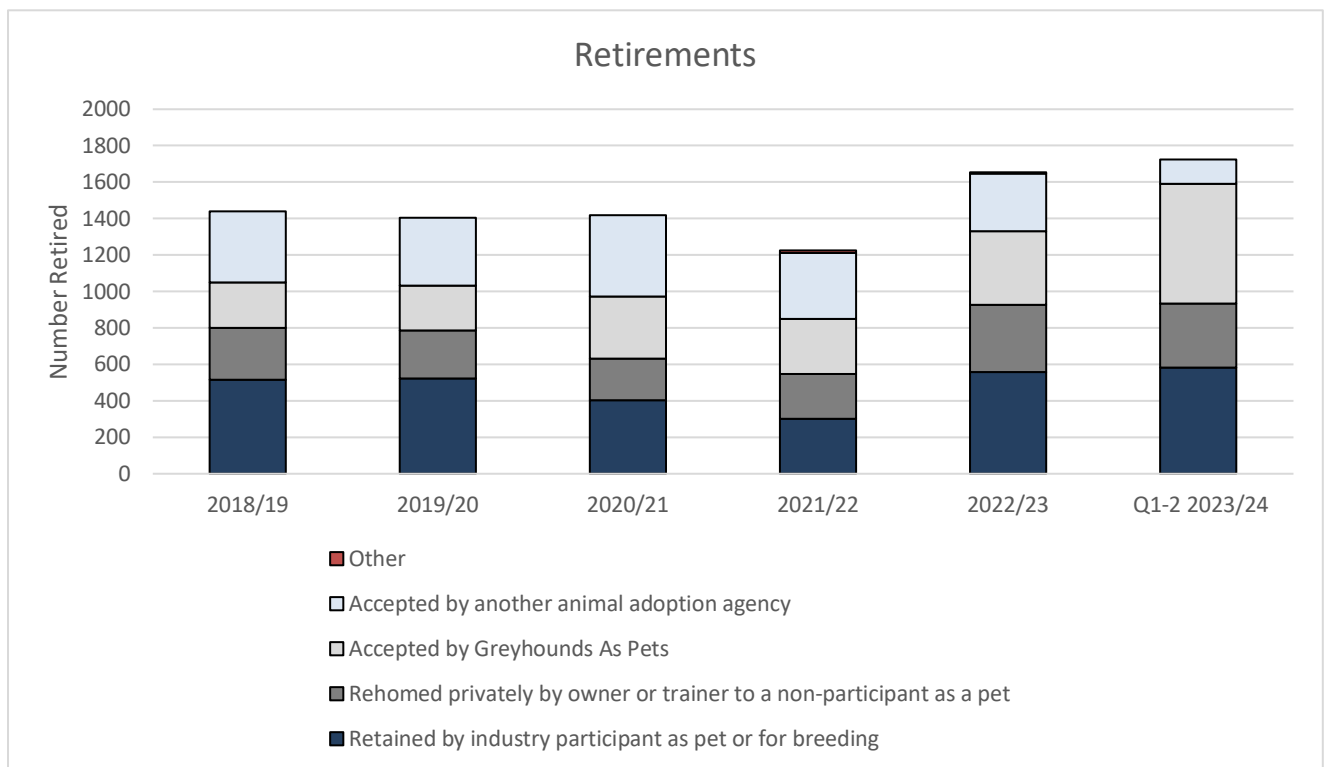
The Commission received notifications for 877 greyhounds that were retired in this quarter (Table 1). This total exceeds the July-September 2023 period's comparably substantial total of 848 by 3%.

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 2022/23	%	Q1-2 2023/24	%
Retained by an industry participant	517	36%	524	37%	403	28%	302	25%	557	34%	581	34%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer to a non-participant	285	20%	262	19%	229	16%	245	20%	371	22%	354	21%
Accepted by a Greyhounds as Pets (GAP) centre	249	17%	246	17%	339	24%	301	25%	404	24%	656	38%
Accepted by another animal adoption agency	390	27%	373	27%	447	32%	365	30%	314	19%	132	8%
Other							14	1%	8	<1%	2	<1%
Total	1,441		1,405		1,418		1,227		1,654		1,725	

Figure 5: Greyhound retirement trends



The percentage of greyhounds retired during the October-December 2023 period is 126% higher than in 2022 (Table 2, Figure 5), which has allowed FY2024's total retirements to surpass those of FY2023 after just two quarters.

This substantial increase is primarily due to significantly higher rates of eTrac check-ins and the efforts of inspectors and the Traceability Team to follow up on outstanding alerts. Additionally, GAP centers are accepting more greyhounds, and more are 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	32	28%
illness ¹	73	63%
Medical euthanasia due to emergency ²	0	0%
Euthanasia at race meeting due to injury	8	7%
Euthanasia after registered veterinarian certified that the greyhound was behaviourally unsuitable for rehoming ³	3	3%
Total	116	

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.

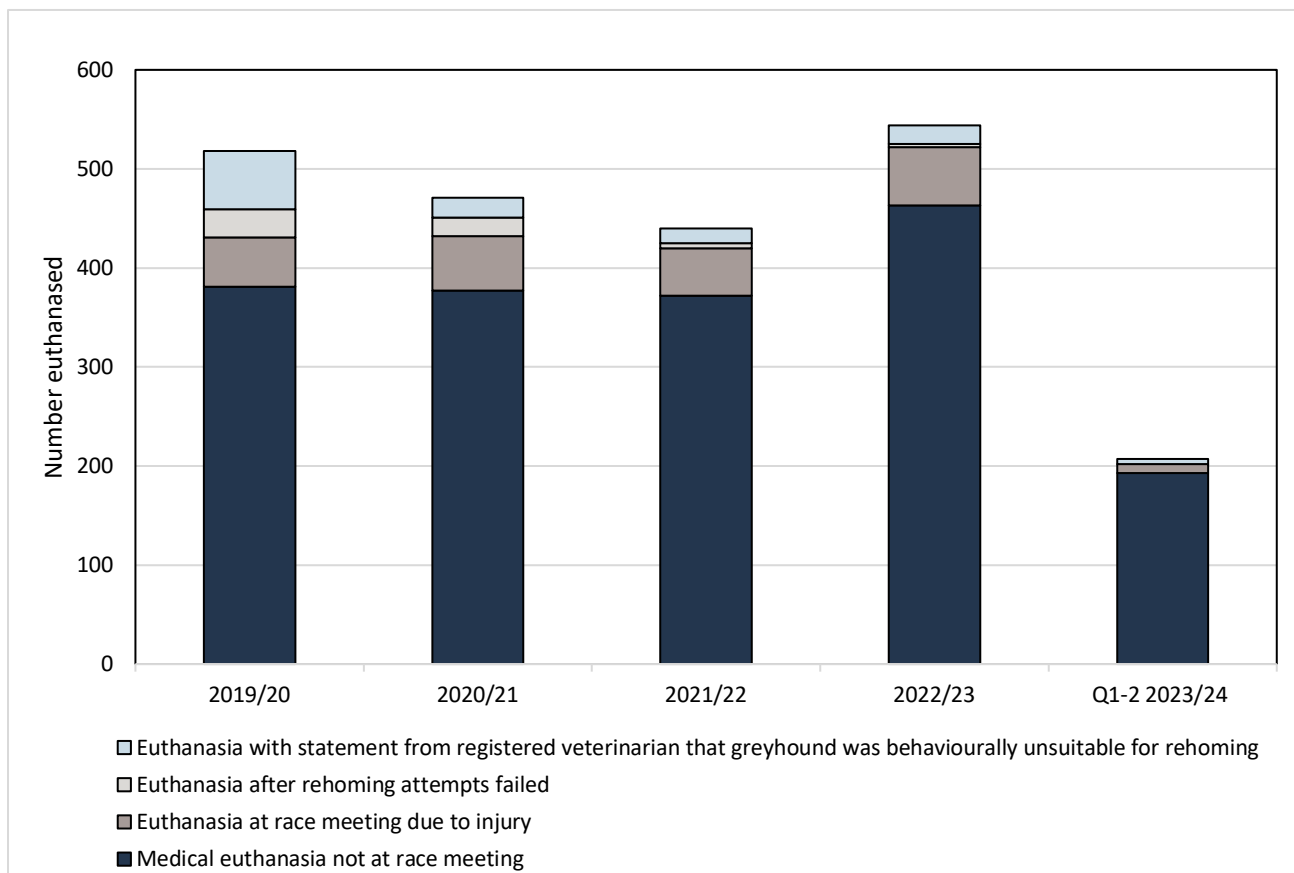
16% more euthanasias were notified to the commission in this quarter than the last. 91% of the 116 are related to illness or injury not at the racetrack (Table 3).

Table 4: Greyhound euthanasia trends

Cause	FY 2018/19	%	FY 2019/20	%	FY 2020/21	%	FY 2021/22	%	FY 2022/23	%	Q1-2 2023/24	%
Medical euthanasia not at racetrack	396	62%	381	74%	377	80%	372	85%	463	85%	193	93%
Euthanasia at racetrack	97	15%	50	10%	55	12%	48	11%	59	11%	9	4%
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%	5	2%
Total	635		518		471		440		544		207	

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 number of greyhounds euthanased in October-December 2023 is 36% higher than 2022’s same quarter (Table 4), as affected by more frequent eTrac check-ins.

This quarter’s low 7% contribution from on-track euthanasia extends the long-term decline from the category’s FY2019 contribution of 15% (Table 4). Likewise, the percentage of greyhounds euthanased due to behavioural concerns has further decreased from FY2019’s 17%, currently sitting at 2% so far for FY2024 (Table 4).

Death

Table 5: Greyhound deaths reported by participants this quarter.

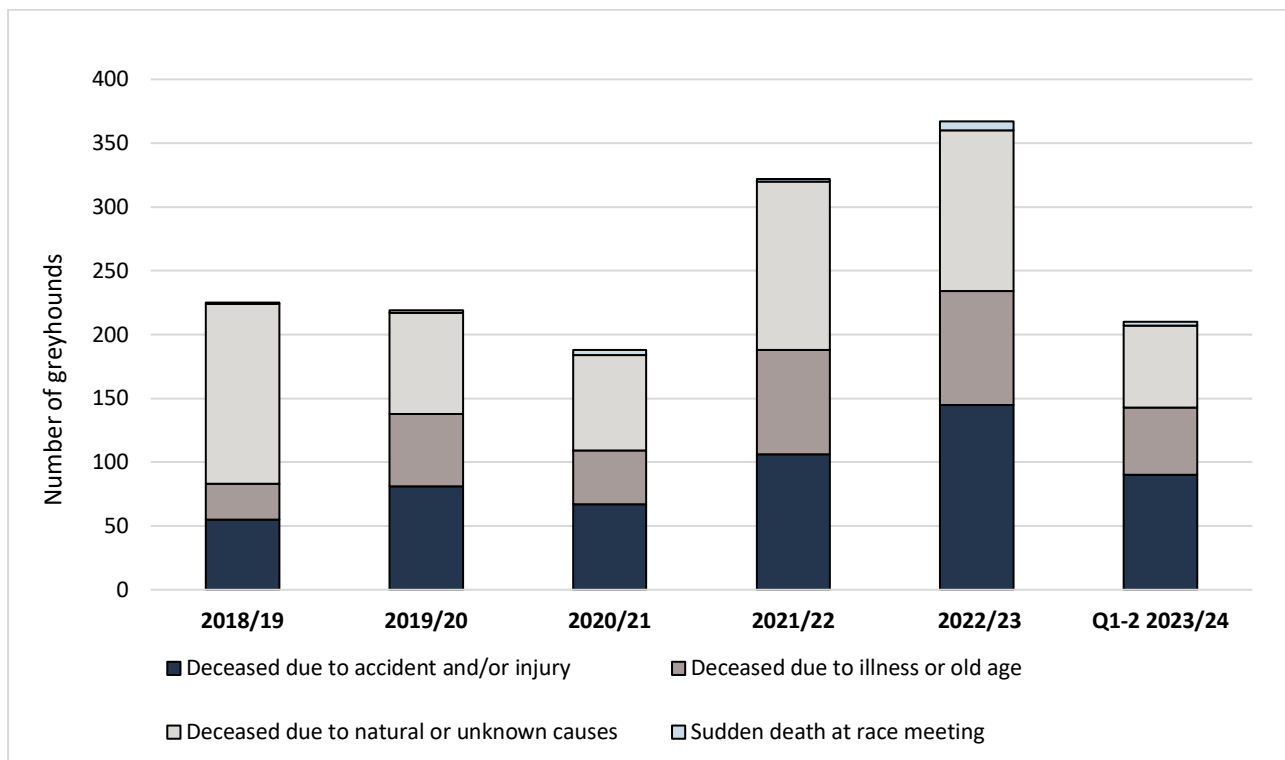
Cause	Number	%
Deceased due to accident and/or injury	58	47%
Deceased due to illness or old age	32	26%
Deceased due to natural or unknown causes	34	27%
Sudden death at race meeting	0	0%
Total	124	

A total of 124 greyhounds died this in quarter, with 31% of them resulting from illness, old age, or unknown causes (Table 5). 44% more death notifications were submitted to the Commission than in July-September 2023’s total of 86.

Table 6: Greyhound death notification trends

Cause	FY		FY		FY		FY		FY		Q1-2	
	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%	90	43%
Illness or old age	28	12%	57	26%	42	22%	82	25%	89	24%	53	25%
Natural or unknown causes	141	63%	79	36%	75	40%	132	41%	126	34%	64	30%
Sudden death at race meeting	1	<1%	2	<1%	4	2%	2	<1%	7	2%	3	1%
Total	225		219		188		322		367		210	

Figure 7: Greyhound death notification trends



Following an average of 105 greyhound deaths per quarter in the first half of FY2024, the total number of recorded deaths for this financial year is projected to increase by 14% compared to FY2023.

This rise can be attributed in part to improved compliance among participants in submitting death notifications, contributing to a steady increase since FY2021. Additionally, historically high whelping rates have resulted in an older greyhound population, making deaths from natural causes and illness more likely.