

Greyhound life cycle report

1 July – 30 September 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.

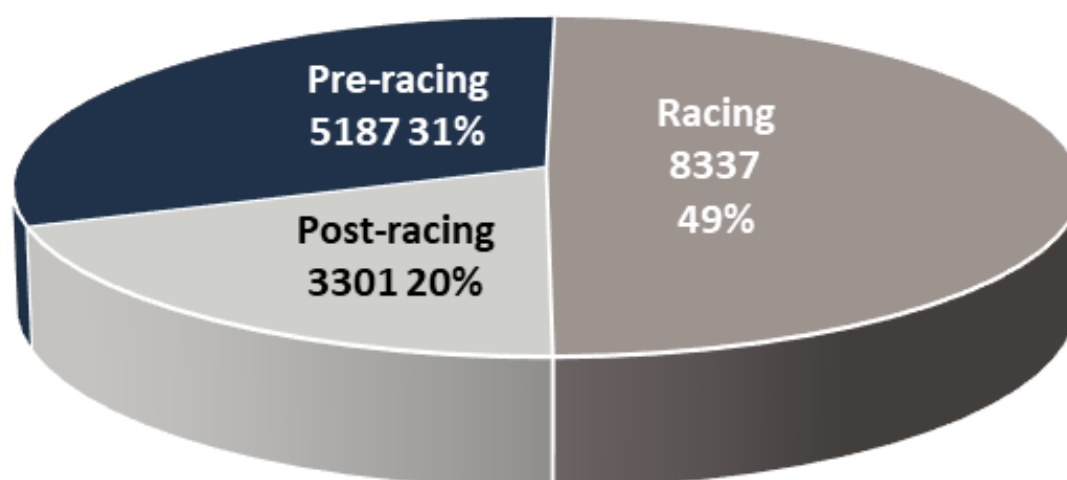
Participants are required to notify the Commission within 14 days from the date of servicing, whelping and retirement, and within two days from the date of euthanasia or death of a greyhound.

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 greater accuracy. Interstate transfer information is not included in this report pending an audit of transfer processes between data systems.

Greyhound numbers and status

As at 30 September 2024, the estimated industry greyhound population was 16,825 (Figure 1), a decrease of 584 from the previous quarter. The proportion of retired greyhounds has increased by 2%, while the proportion of racing and pre-racing greyhounds has each decreased by 1%.

Figure 1: Registered greyhound population



Breeding

The Commission received notifications for 137 breeding services that occurred in July-September 2024, (Figure 2) and 589 greyhounds whelped from 90 litters (Figure 3).

Figure 2: Breeding services

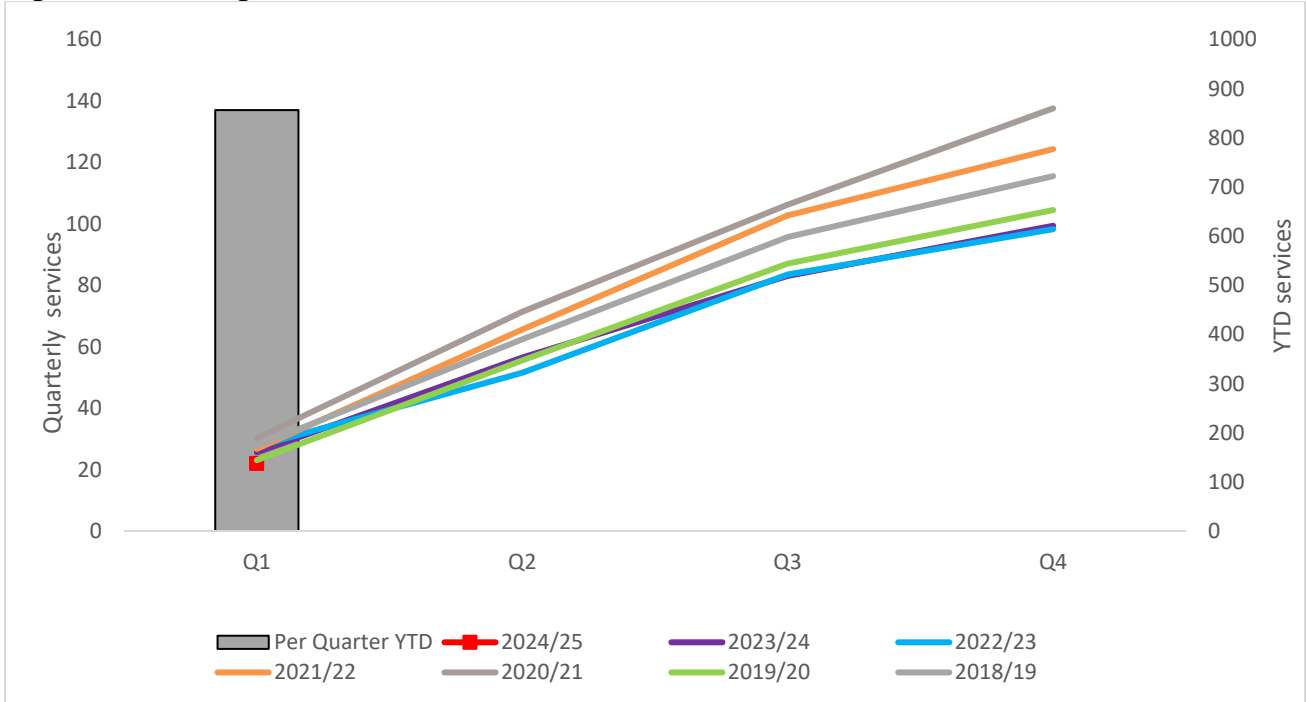
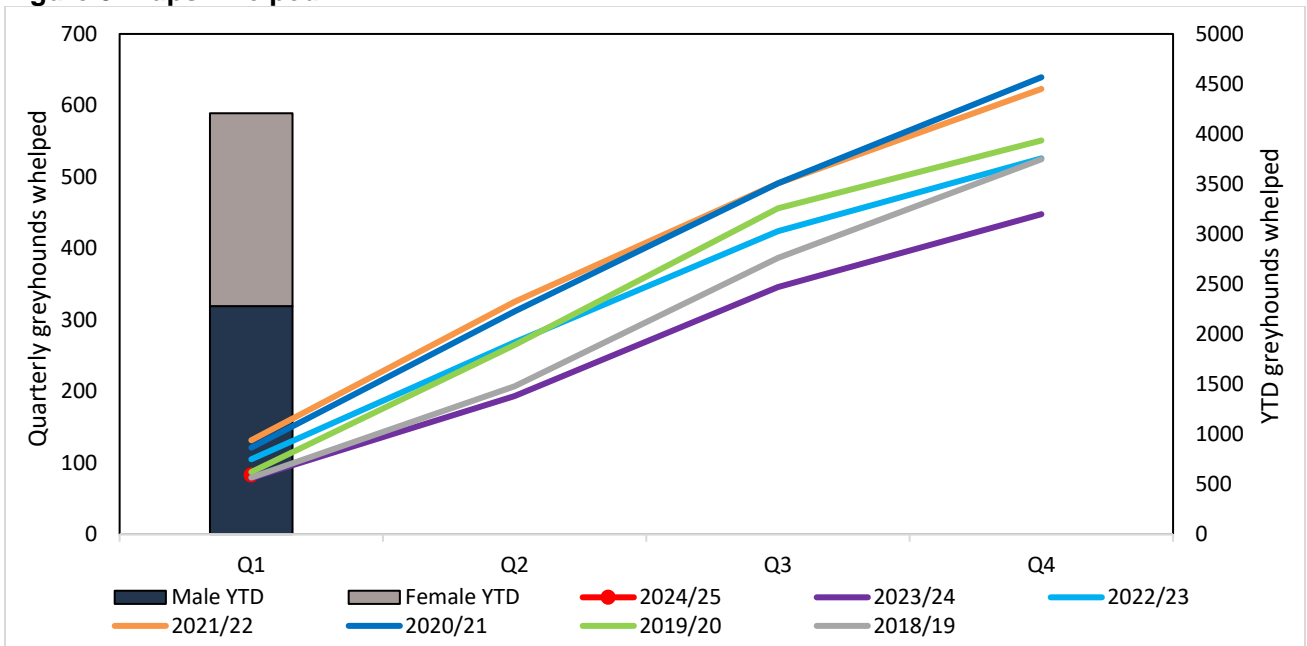


Figure 3: Pups whelped



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	363	48%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer to a non-participant	137	18%
Accepted by a Greyhounds as Pets (GAP) facility ¹	207	27%
Accepted by another animal adoption agency ²	47	6%
Other	1	<1%
Total	755	

¹ A not-for-profit initiative coordinated by Greyhound Racing NSW. Note that this figure does not include greyhounds assisted through other GAP rehoming schemes.

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

This quarter had 10% more retirements to industry participants than last year. Retirements to other animal adoption agencies (non-GAP) were low and similar to the 2023/24 FY, following a strong decline from 2018-22.

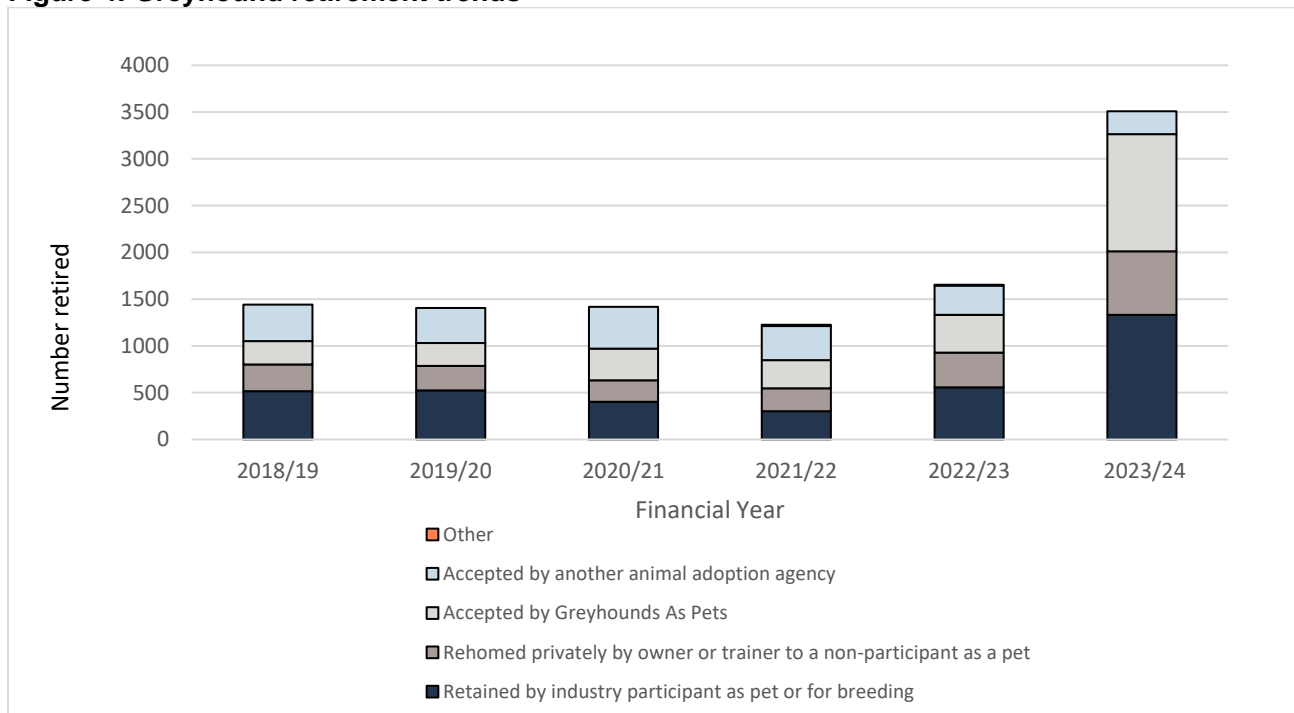
Table 2: Greyhound retirement trends

Destination	FY 18/19		FY 19/20		FY 20/21		FY 21/22		FY 21/22		FY 23/24	
Retained by an industry participant	517	36%	524	37%	403	28%	302	25%	557	34%	1,332	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%	1,253	36%
Accepted by another animal adoption agency	390	27%	373	27%	447	32%	365	30%	314	19%	243	7%
Other							14	1%	8	<1%	2	<1%
Total	1,441		1,405		1,418		1,227		1,654		3,509	

In the first quarter of 2024/25, the number of greyhound retirements was 45-60% of the total retirements in 2018-2023, and 21% of the total in the last financial year (Table 2, Figure 4), with retirements to an industry participant seeing the largest rise.

The increase 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 is no longer racing. (Retired greyhounds owned by an industry participant must be checked in every 12 months, whereas racing greyhounds must be checked in every 6 months.) Commission staff have also made extensive efforts to contact owners of older greyhounds unlikely to race again, encouraging them to submit retirement notifications.

Figure 4: Greyhound retirement trends



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 ¹ due to		
injury	58	39%
illness	84	56%
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 or a known risk to people ³	4	3%
Total	149	

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.

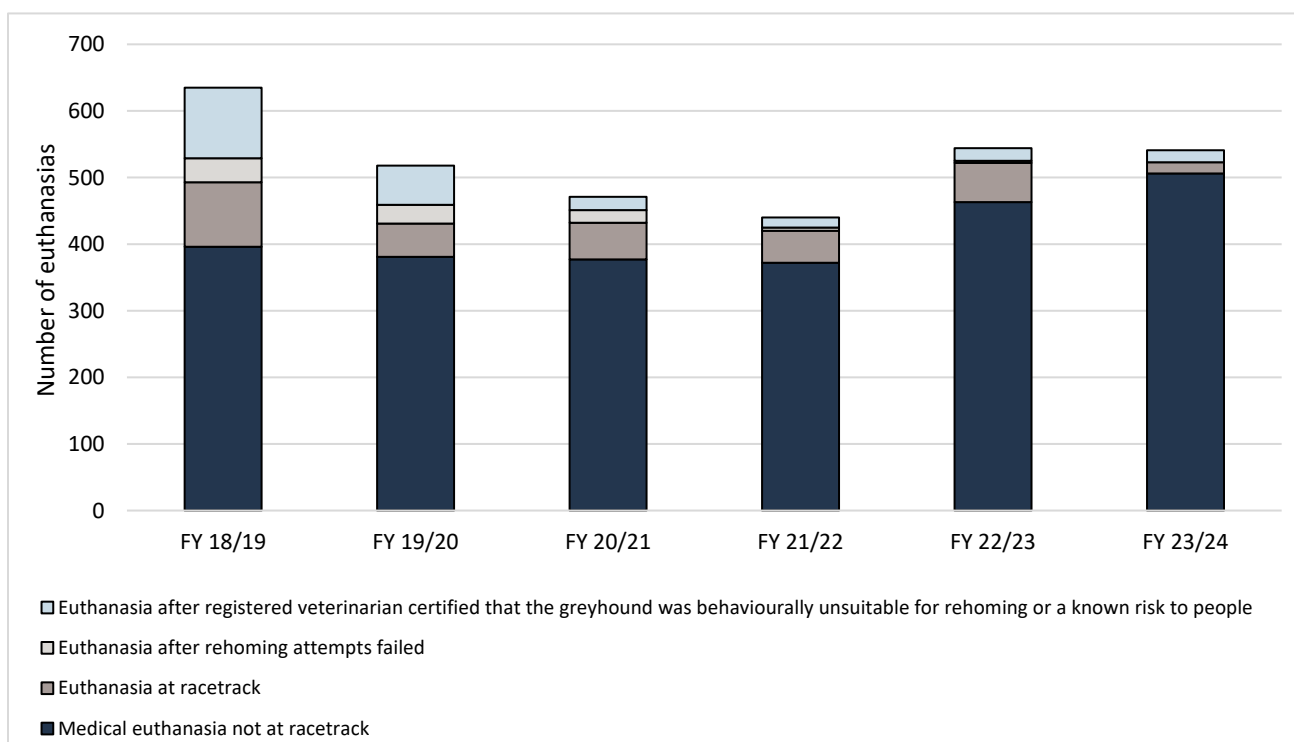
This quarter, the Commission received a similar number euthanasia notifications as the previous quarter (136). Illness and injury accounted for 95% of these euthanasias, with illness becoming increasingly prominent in an aging greyhound population (Table 3).

Table 4: Greyhound euthanasia trends

Cause	FY 18/19		FY 19/20		FY 20/21		FY 21/22		FY 22/23		FY 23/24	
Medical euthanasia not at racetrack	396	62%	381	74%	377	80%	372	85%	463	85%	506	94%
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		541	

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 5: Greyhound euthanasia trends



The number of euthanasias this quarter remained consistent with trends in the previous financial years. The increase in the proportion of medical euthanasias and decline in the proportion of on-track euthanasias this quarter (Table 3) reflects long-term declines since FY2019 (Table 4 and Figure 5). The decline in on-track euthanasia is likely to be due to improved track conditions, the Commission’s introduction of a serious injury treatment policy, and the GRNSW Greyhound Care Scheme.

The percentage of greyhounds euthanased due to behavioral issues has leveled at a low of 2-3% over the past two years, marking a significant decrease from 17% in FY2019 (Table 4).

Death

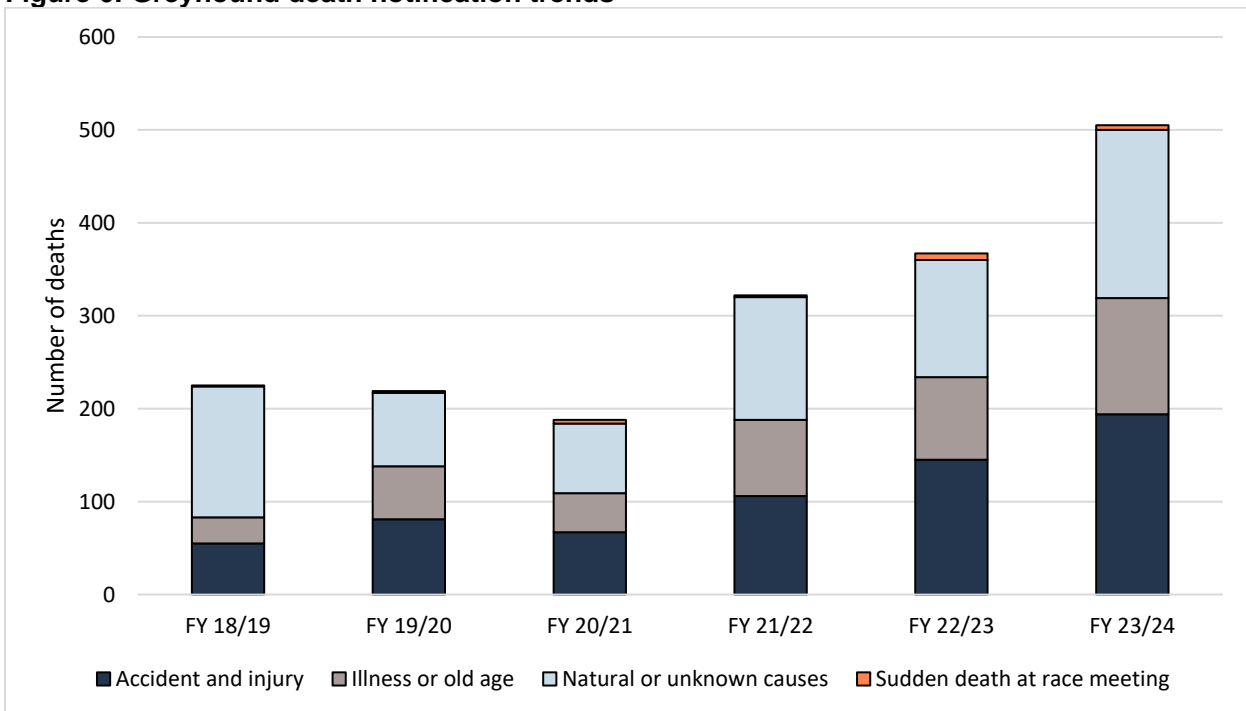
Table 5: Greyhound deaths reported by participants this quarter.

Cause	Number	%
Deceased due to accident and/or injury	45	38%
Deceased due to illness	34	29%
Deceased due to natural or unknown causes	38	32%
Sudden death at race meeting	1	1%
Total	117	

Table 6: Greyhound death notification trends

Cause	FY 18/19		FY 19/20		FY 20/21		FY 21/22		FY 22/23		FY 23/24	
Accident and injury	55	24%	81	37%	67	36%	106	33%	145	40%	194	38%
Illness or old age	28	12%	57	26%	42	22%	82	25%	89	24%	125	25%
Natural or unknown causes	141	63%	79	36%	75	40%	132	41%	126	34%	181	36%
Sudden death at race meeting	1	<1%	2	<1%	4	2%	2	<1%	7	2%	5	<1%
Total	225		219		188		322		367		505	

Figure 6: Greyhound death notification trends



A total of 117 greyhounds died this quarter, slightly higher than the 90 deaths in the previous quarter, but consistent with the increasing number of deaths seen for the last three years (Table 6 and Figure 6). This steady growth since FY2021 can be attributed to improved participant compliance with death notification requirements, and historically high whelping rates which have resulted in an older greyhound population, increasing the likelihood of deaths from illness and natural causes.