

Greyhound life cycle report

1 October – 31 December 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.

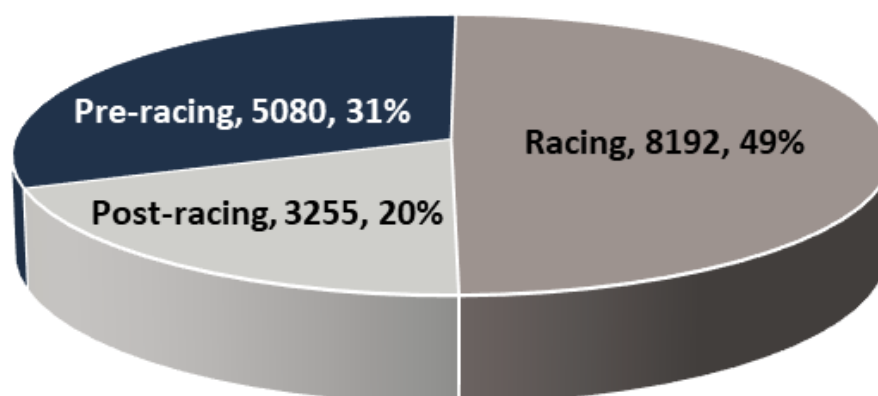
Participants are required to notify the Commission within 14 days from the date of servicing, whelping and retirement, and within two days from the date of euthanasia or death of a greyhound.

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 31 December 2024, the estimated industry greyhound population was 16,527 (Figure 1), a decrease of 297 (1.8%) from the previous quarter. The proportion of the population in each of the pre-racing, racing and retired categories has remained the same.

Figure 1: Registered greyhound population



Breeding

The Commission received notifications for 150 breeding services that occurred in October - December 2024, bringing the year-to-date total to 288 (Figure 2). Notifications were received for 958 pups whelped from 141 litters, bringing the year-to-date total to 1,547 (Figure 3).

Figure 2: Breeding services

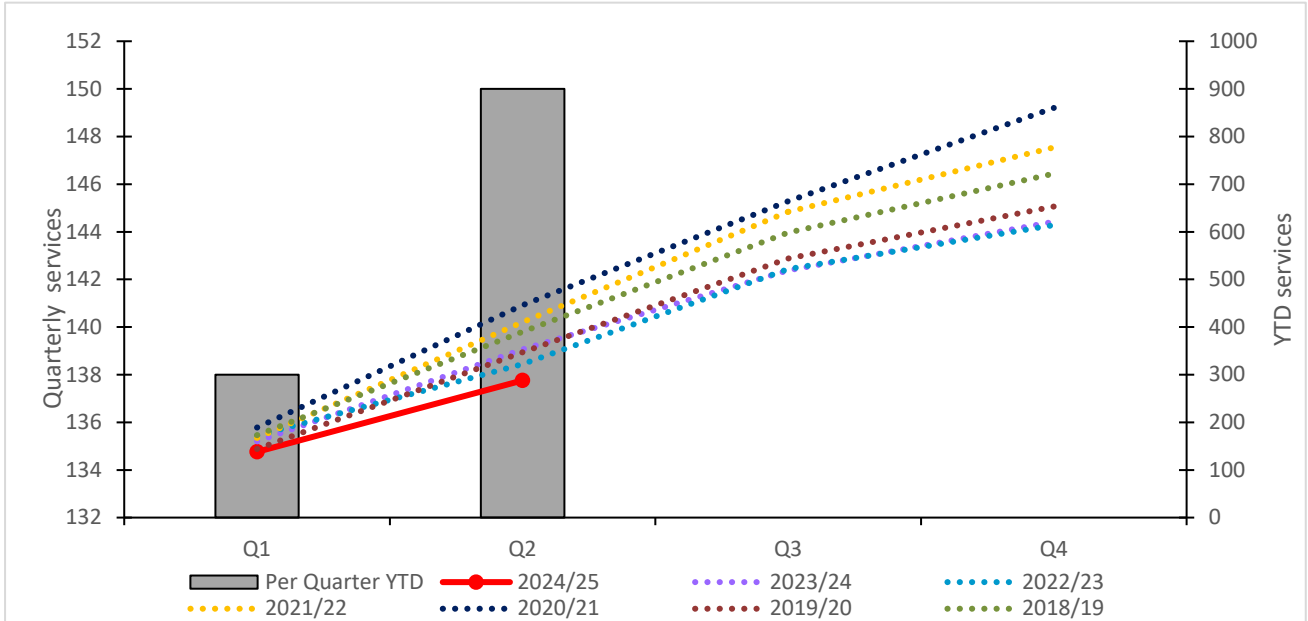
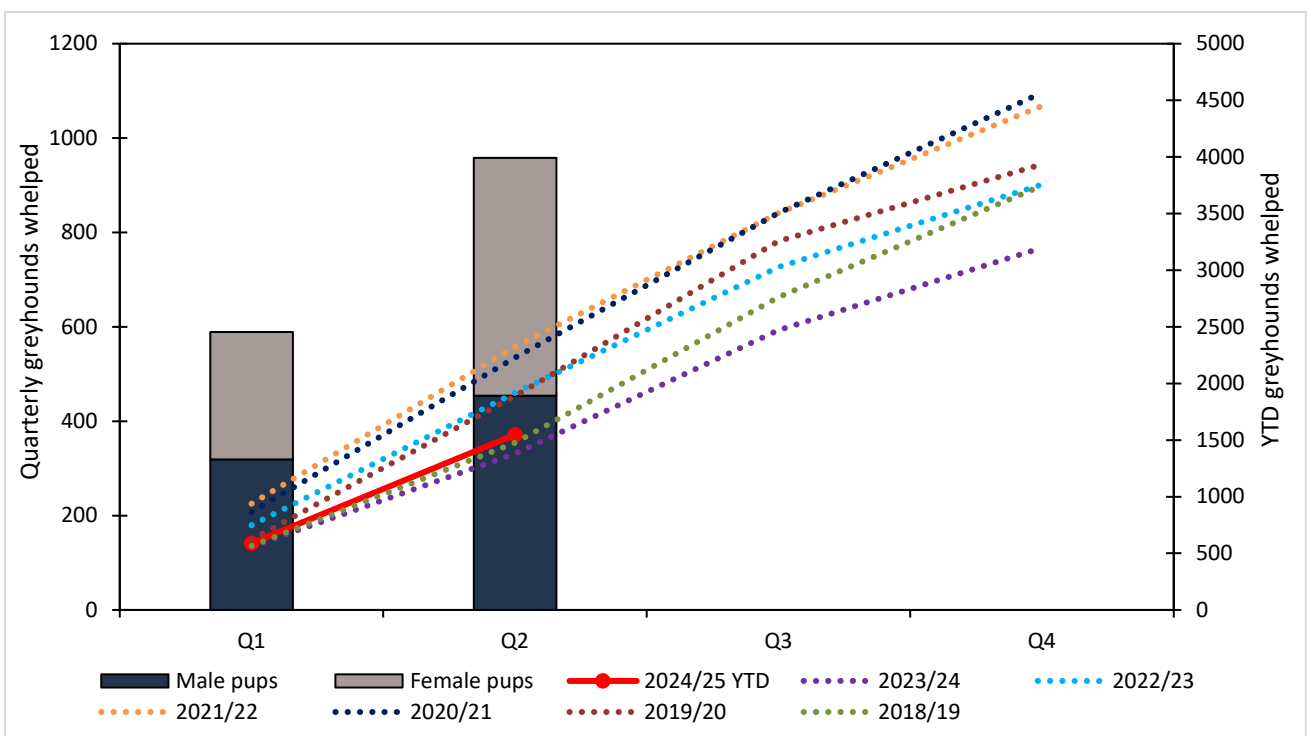


Figure 3: Pups whelped



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	257	35%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer to a non-participant	179	24%
Accepted by a Greyhounds as Pets (GAP) facility ¹	251	34%
Accepted by another animal adoption agency ²	51	7%
Other	5	1%
Total	743	

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.

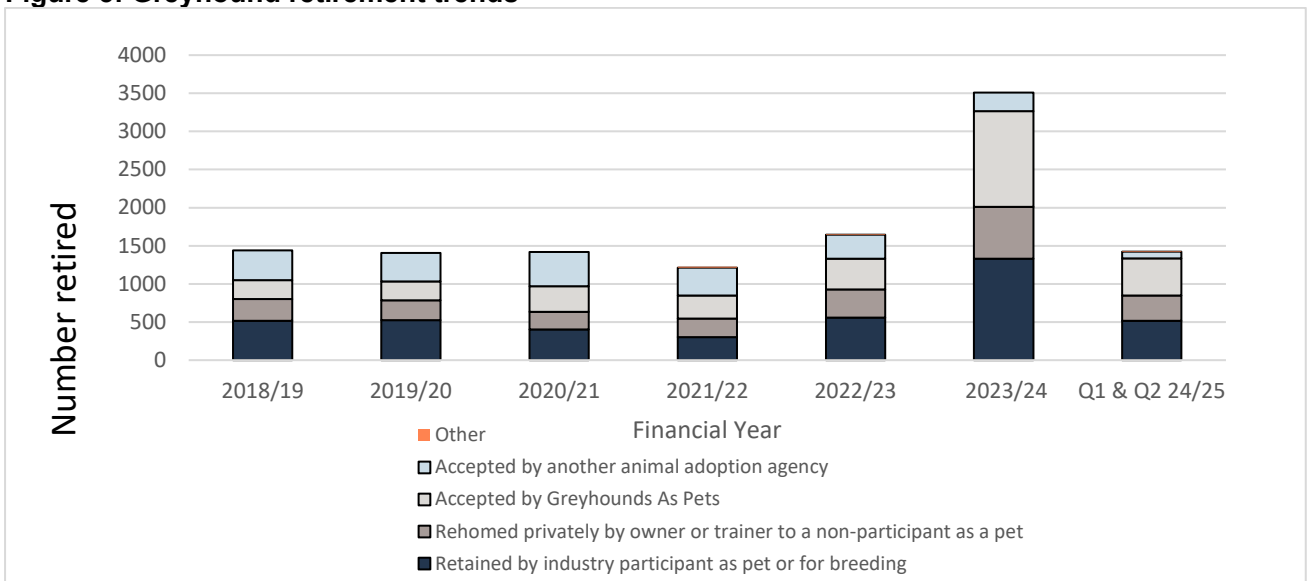
² Including the RSPCA, AWL, or council animal care facilities.

In the first quarter of 2024/25, 743 greyhound retirement notifications were received (Table 2, Figure 5).

Table 2: Greyhound retirement trends

Destination	FY 18/19		FY 19/20		FY 20/21		FY 21/22		FY 21/22		FY 23/24		Q1 & Q2 FY 24/25	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Retained by an industry participant	517	36%	524	37%	403	28%	302	25%	557	34%	1,332	38%	518	36%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer to a non-participant	285	20%	262	19%	229	16%	245	20%	371	22%	679	19%	332	23%
Accepted by a Greyhounds as Pets (GAP) centre	249	17%	246	17%	339	24%	301	25%	404	24%	1,253	36%	483	34%
Accepted by another animal adoption agency	390	27%	373	27%	447	32%	365	30%	314	19%	243	7%	91	6%
Other							14	1%	8	<1%	2	<1%	6	0%
Total	1,441		1,405		1,418		1,227		1,654		3,509		1,430	

Figure 5: Greyhound retirement trends



The high number of retirements in the first half of 2024/25 suggests that the number of retirements in the full financial year may be similar to the 2023/24 year, which saw a doubling in retirement numbers.

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.

Mortalities

Mortalities include both the euthanasia of greyhounds, and greyhound deaths not brought about by veterinary action.

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	47	31%
illness	96	64%
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	150	

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.

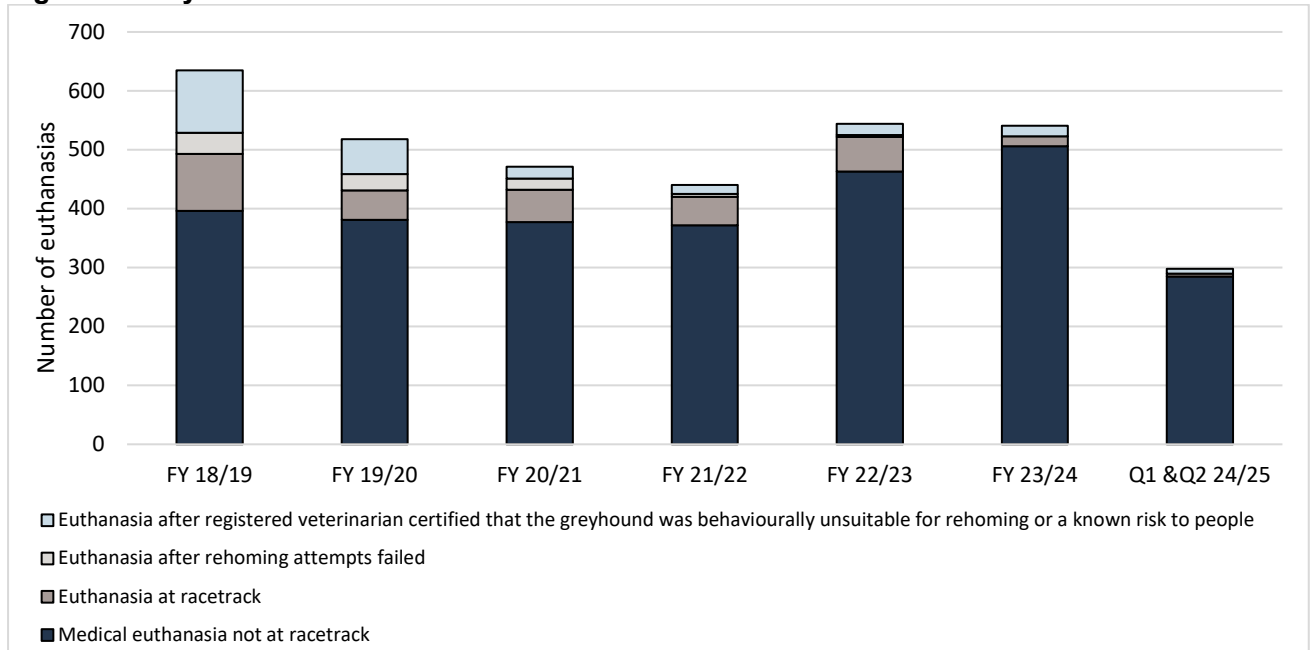
This quarter, the Commission received 150 euthanasia notifications, similar to the previous quarter (148). Illness and injury accounted for 97% of these euthanasias (Table 3).

Table 4: Greyhound euthanasia trends

Cause	FY 18/19		FY 19/20		FY 20/21		FY 21/22		FY 22/23		FY 23/24		Q1 & Q2 FY 2024/25	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Medical euthanasia not at racetrack	396	62%	381	74%	377	80%	372	85%	463	85%	506	94%	285	96%
Euthanasia at racetrack	97	15%	50	10%	55	12%	48	11%	59	11%	17	3%	5	2%
Rehoming attempts failed	36	6%	28	5%	19	4%	5	1%	3	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Behaviourally unsuitable ¹	106	17%	59	11%	20	4%	15	3%	19	3%	18	3%	8	3%
Total	635		518		471		440		544		541		298	

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 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 6). 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 number of euthanasias in the first half of 2024/25 suggests that the number of euthanasias may be slightly higher for the full financial year compared to the last five years. This may be a result of the greyhound breeding peaks seen in 2012/13 - 2014/15; greyhounds whelped in those years are reaching the end of their natural lifespan and are more prone to illnesses associated with old age.

The percentage of greyhounds euthanased due to behavioral issues remains small (2%), and significantly lower than the 17% in seen in FY2019 (Table 4).

Deaths

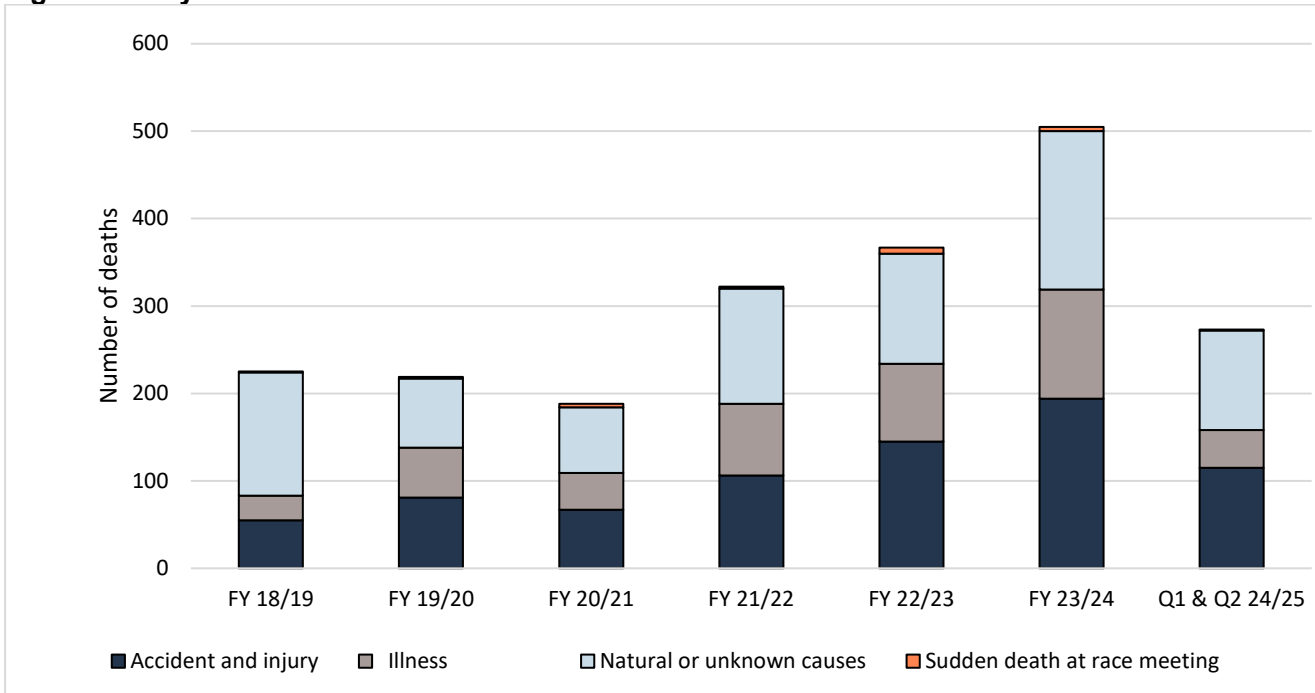
Table 5: Greyhound deaths reported by participants this quarter.

Cause	Number	%
Deceased due to accident and/or injury	73	48%
Deceased due to illness	16	10%
Deceased due to natural or unknown causes	64	42%
Sudden death at race meeting	0	0%
Total	153	

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		Q1 & Q2 FY 2024/25	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Accident and injury	55	24%	81	37%	67	36%	106	33%	145	40%	194	38%	115	42%
Illness	28	12%	57	26%	42	22%	82	25%	89	24%	125	25%	43	16%
Natural or unknown causes	141	63%	79	36%	75	40%	132	41%	126	34%	181	36%	114	42%
Sudden death at race meeting	1	<1%	2	<1%	4	2%	2	<1%	7	2%	5	<1%	1	<1%
Total	225		219		188		322		367		505		273	

Figure 7: Greyhound death notification trends



A total of 153 greyhounds died this quarter, 28% higher than the number of deaths in the previous quarter but consistent with the increasing number of deaths seen for the last three years (Table 6 and Figure 7).

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 or unknown causes.