

# Race Day Hydration and Hot Weather Policy



## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect the health, comfort, safety and welfare of greyhounds with respect to their race day hydration and muzzling, and during hot weather, while ensuring the integrity of greyhound racing.

## Scope

This policy applies to all greyhound racing clubs and greyhound racing industry participants in NSW.

## Related Policies

[Code of Practice for the Keeping of Greyhounds in Training](#)

[Code of Practice for Breeding, Rearing and Education of Greyhounds](#)

## Breach

A failure to comply with the terms of this Policy may result in disciplinary action under the *Greyhound Racing Act 2017*.

## Policy

### 1. Race day hydration

Subject to any direction from an Authorised person, water must be provided in race day kennels to all greyhounds kennelled for the race meeting. An exemption from this requirement may only be granted in accordance with clause 5 of this policy.

The procedure for providing water during race day kennelling is as follows (subject to any direction from an Authorised person):

- A greyhound handler is to present a clean bowl at weigh-in to the relevant official (usually an attendant or Steward). The official must visually inspect the bowl to ensure it is clean and capable of holding a minimum of 250ml of water.
- Club officials are responsible for providing a sealed bottle of water to be used by a greyhound during kennelling. The quantity of water provided by the club must be at least 250ml and no more than 500 ml.
- The OTV must conduct a pre-kennelling examination of the greyhound.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The handler must kennel the greyhound under supervision of the relevant official. The handler must empty the bottle of water provided by the club into the water bowl and place the water bowl inside the kennel. On leaving the kennel, the handler is to remove the empty water bottle.</li> <li>• When the greyhound is collected from the kennel to race, the bowl must be left locked in the kennel for the return of the greyhound after the race.</li> <li>• After racing, handlers may offer greyhounds water at the wash bay from a hose.</li> <li>• Any greyhound not undergoing swabbing must be returned to its kennel after racing. The water bowl that remains in the kennel from before the race may be refilled by the handler using a bottle of water.</li> </ul> <p>Any greyhound undergoing swabbing must be placed in the swab kennel (the handler of the greyhound must retrieve the water bowl from the original racing kennel, and must move the water bowl to the swab kennel).</p>
<p><b>2. Greyhounds participating in trials</b></p>	<p>Where a greyhound participates in a performance trial at a race meeting (but does not race at the same meeting) and is subsequently confined to the kennels, the greyhound must be provided with water.</p>
<p><b>3. Exemption from requirement to provide water in race day kennels</b></p>	<p>The Chief Steward may direct that water not be provided to a greyhound kennelled for racing if satisfied, following an application for exemption from the trainer or person in charge of the greyhound of a greyhound, that providing water presents a risk to the welfare of the greyhound that outweighs the risk of dehydration.</p>
<p><b>4. Applying for an exemption from requirement to provide water</b></p>	<p>A trainer or person in charge of the greyhound of a greyhound may apply for exemption from the mandatory requirement to provide water to a greyhound confined in race day kennels. Any request for exemption must be made in writing on the prescribed form to the Chief Steward, and must relate to a specific greyhound. The trainer or person in charge of the greyhound must provide evidence supporting the application. Relevant evidence for the purpose of an application includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evidence of any occasion where the presence of a water bowl or bucket has caused injury or distress to the greyhound and this was brought to the attention of Stewards;</li> <li>• evidence of attempts to remedy the problem e.g. fixing bowl in position;</li> <li>• evidence of attempts to modify the behaviour of the greyhound; and</li> <li>• evidence of any injury to the greyhound caused by chewing/biting on a water bowl or bucket e.g. photos.</li> </ul>

<p><b>5. Criteria for exemption from requirement to provide water</b></p>	<p>In determining an application for an exemption, the Chief Steward will have regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the purpose of the Race Day Hydration and Hot Weather Policy, being to protect the health, comfort, safety and welfare of greyhounds with respect to their race day hydration and muzzling, and during hot weather, while ensuring the integrity of greyhound racing;</li> <li>• the evidence provided by the trainer or person in charge of the greyhound to support the request for exemption;</li> <li>• evidence of attending Stewards relating to the race day behaviour of the greyhound;</li> <li>• evidence of attempts by the trainer or person in charge of the greyhound to secure the water bowl and/or to modify the behaviour of the greyhound;</li> <li>• advice from the Chief Veterinary Officer; and</li> <li>• any other relevant information.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Steward's discretion to direct that water be provided or removed</b></p>	<p>Notwithstanding any application for exemption, a Steward may direct that water be removed from the kennel of a greyhound if satisfied on reasonable grounds that providing water presents an immediate risk to the welfare of the greyhound that outweighs the risk of dehydration. A steward may also direct that water be provided to a greyhound if there is evidence that the greyhound is dehydrated or at risk of dehydration. The Steward must have regard to the advice of the attending OTV in making this determination. Any decision to remove water from a greyhound's kennel must be recorded in the Stewards' report.</p> <p>Greyhounds will not be permitted to race in hot weather unless water is provided in race day kennels. Any greyhound which is subject to an exemption from the requirement to provide water in race day kennels will be scratched without penalty from any race scheduled to occur when the temperature is forecast to exceed 32°C, unless the following conditions have been met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the greyhound is transported on the day on the race in air-conditioned transport; and</li> <li>• the trainer, or person in charge of the greyhound, provides water to the greyhound at least every two hours; and</li> <li>• the trainer, or person in charge of the greyhound, must provide water to the greyhound upon arriving at the track and before kennelling.</li> </ul> <p>If a trainer, or person in charge of the greyhound, is found to be in breach of the conditions referred to above, the greyhound will be withdrawn from the</p>

	event.
<b>7. Weighing greyhounds</b>	<p>In accordance with GAR38, all greyhounds are weighed at the entry into the kennels and the weight recorded by the controlling body.</p> <p>Where a handler, trainer, steward, or OTV suspects that a greyhound may be suffering from dehydration on retrieval from the kennel by the handler prior to that greyhound's race, the greyhound must be re-weighed. A record of the weight is to be made by the controlling body.</p> <p>The greyhound must be weighed without its lead or collar but with its racing muzzle.</p> <p>Any greyhound with a weight variation of greater than 1.5% (0.45kg in a 30kg greyhound) should be directed to the OTV to establish whether it is appropriate for the greyhound to race.</p>
<b>8. Provision for scratching in hot weather</b>	<p>Stewards may allow a greyhound to be withdrawn from an event without penalty where the Bureau of Meteorology official forecast temperature is 32°C or higher at the track.</p> <p>Any application for withdrawal without penalty must be made prior to the official scratching time of the race meeting. The Stewards may consider late requests.</p> <p>In the exercise of discretion by the Stewards, the welfare of the greyhound must be the paramount consideration.</p>
<b>9. Cancellation of meetings in hot weather</b>	<p>Stewards must abandon any meeting or race where the temperature rises above 38°C, or the temperature is forecast to rise above 38°C during the period in which the meeting is scheduled to occur. Cancelled meetings or races may be re-scheduled to take place at another time on the same day provided that the temperature does not exceed 38°C.</p> <p>A club must abandon any trialling where the temperature rises above 38°C or the club is of the opinion that the temperature is likely to rise above 38°C.</p>
<b>10. Club responsibilities in hot weather</b>	<p>A club must ensure that kennel cooling systems are activated no less than three hours prior to the first race. Club officials must also ensure that kennels are adequately equipped with cooling or air-conditioning systems and that a responsible equipment maintenance strategy is adopted and observed. A service check of the air-conditioning system should be undertaken no later than October each year.</p> <p>On days where the temperature may rise above 32°C, clubs must have ice, water and extra water hoses or several dual outlet hoses available and connected that allow all greyhounds quick access to water following a race.</p>

	<p>Club officials must also closely monitor all greyhounds in the kennels.</p> <p>Thermometers must be available and visible in a public place to monitor the ambient temperature on the track. Thermometers must also be available outside each kennel bay to monitor temperature within the kennel block.</p> <p>During warmer months (November, December, January, February, March) regular recordings must be noted in a register with the date, time and location (track/kennel). Placement of the thermometer should be chosen to reflect ambient temperature rather than placed in direct sunlight.</p> <p>Should a handler or club official have concerns for the welfare of a kennelled greyhound, the OTV or Steward must be informed immediately. The Stewards and/or OTV may remove any muzzle on a greyhound at their discretion.</p> <p>To prevent unnecessary exposure to the heat, club officials should ensure that greyhounds are only removed from the race kennels when it is time to parade the greyhounds directly to the starting boxes. At the conclusion of the race, the greyhounds should be directed immediately to the hosing down/wash bay area. Greyhounds must not be unnecessarily subjected to heat to take part in a 'Race Presentation' before the greyhounds are given the opportunity for a drink and to be cooled down.</p> <p>Club officials and attendants must monitor greyhounds' urine. If a greyhound's urine is very dark or appears to contain blood, the greyhound should be subject to an immediate veterinary examination and may be scratched without penalty, although the Stewards reserve the right to impose a penalty in some circumstances. Thermometers must also be available to race club officials and OTVs to enable monitoring of the temperature of any greyhound suspected of displaying signs of heat stress.</p>
<p><b>11. Kennel temperatures</b></p>	<p>The ideal temperature in racing kennels is between 19°C and 22°C. If the temperature in the race kennels reaches 24°C, the OTV is to inspect each greyhound after it has been removed from the race kennel and prior to competing in an event.</p> <p>To maintain the kennels at the ideal temperature, the air-conditioning must be activated several hours in advance of the use of the kennels prior to trialling or a race meeting.</p> <p>If the temperature in the race kennels reaches 26°C, the Stewards and OTV are to consult with club officials and if the temperature cannot be reduced promptly then the upcoming events for that meeting may be abandoned or postponed at the direction of the Steward in charge of the meeting.</p> <p>Clubs must provide access to air-conditioned kennels for greyhounds on any occasion that trialling occurs at the race track, unless the greyhounds are housed in an air-conditioned trailer or an air-conditioned vehicle.</p> <p>Any greyhound found to be suffering from any signs of heat stress may be scratched without penalty.</p>

	<p>Between the first day of November and the last day of March each year, or on days outside this period where the weather is forecast to reach 32°C or rise above 32°C, no reserve trials are to be conducted.</p>
<p><b>12. Participant responsibilities – travelling with greyhounds in hot weather</b></p>	<p>Participants must ensure that their car or trailer is sufficiently cool before greyhounds are loaded for transportation. A car should be started and air-conditioned prior to the time of departure. Greyhounds can be hosed or towelled down with water prior to being placed in the car or trailer. When planning transport to the track, participants should avoid travelling in the heat of the day or to arrive as close as possible to the opening time of kennelling.</p> <p>Participants must provide their greyhounds with adequate water and, if appropriate, ice. Fluids must be given to a greyhound before the journey, and it is essential to carry adequate water and drinking containers in case of delay or breakdown during the journey and for arrival on course.</p> <p>Electrolytes may be given to a greyhound prior to kennelling. However, this is not recommended as dogs maintain core body temperature by panting rather than sweating and have less exercise-induced electrolyte loss. If electrolyte products are used, they should be specifically formulated for greyhounds as electrolyte products for other animals contain higher concentrations of salt which may exacerbate dehydration and be detrimental to the greyhound.</p> <p>When on the race track, and after a greyhound has been given fluids, the greyhound must be kennelled as quickly as possible. The kennels are the coolest place on course and are usually air-conditioned or cooled through other means.</p> <p>Greyhounds must not be left unattended in vehicles or trailers during race meetings or trialling. The temperature inside a vehicle or trailer in which a greyhound is kept while at a race track must not exceed 22°C at any time. Car parks will be monitored by inspectors or other compliance officers for any breach of this policy.</p>
<p><b>13. Participant responsibilities – post-race</b></p>	<p>After a race, the handler must offer the greyhound water but not attempt to force water intake. The handler should also hose the greyhound down immediately, but should not use very cold or icy water as this leads to a reflex constriction of the blood vessels and delayed evaporative cooling. The greyhound should be hosed until it shows signs of a decrease in its panting. It is important to pay attention to hosing the greyhound's feet, chest, back and groin.</p> <p>Handlers are urged to take time in this process as it is vital that the greyhound cools down. Handlers may take the greyhound for a short walk before re-hosing it with water, giving the greyhound a drink and returning the greyhound</p>

	to the kennels.
<b>14. Participant responsibilities – returning from races or trials</b>	<p>Participants must ensure that the steps taken to cool their vehicle and trailer for the journey to the track are also taken prior to leaving the course.</p> <p>Handlers should give greyhounds water and make sure the greyhounds have ample fluids for the trip home. A greyhound may be hosed or towelled down prior to being placed in its trailer.</p> <p>When at home, participants must ensure greyhounds have sufficient clean water and are again hosed to cool them down. Greyhounds may still be affected by heat once at home, so constant monitoring is advisable.</p>
<b>15. Barking muzzles not to be used</b>	<p>The use of barking muzzles in race day kennels or at race tracks is strictly prohibited. A barking muzzle is defined as any muzzle which restricts a greyhound's normal behaviour such as panting or drinking.</p> <p>In addition, on leaving a race track, barking muzzles must never be used on greyhounds immediately after a race, as they can prevent the greyhound from panting and cooling down. Barking muzzles must not be used when transporting greyhounds to or from race meetings or trials.</p> <p>Appropriate socialisation and habituation in the early period of a greyhound's life is crucial to habituating the greyhound to the race track so that a greyhound is not stressed by the experience and will, therefore, be less likely to bark.</p>
<b>16. Definitions</b>	<p>In this policy:</p> <p><b>Authorised person</b> means a person authorised or approved by the Controlling Body or the Stewards from time to time to do certain things, to exercise certain powers, or to deal with certain situations.</p> <p><b>Chief Steward</b> means a member of staff of the Commission who has been appointed by the Commission as the Chief Steward for the purpose of administering the <i>Greyhound Racing Act 2017</i>.</p> <p><b>Greyhound Racing Rules</b> means the Greyhound Racing Rules as continued by clause 10 of Schedule 4 to the <i>Greyhound Racing Act 2017</i>.</p> <p><b>On-Track Veterinarian (OTV)</b> means a registered veterinarian appointed by the Commission for the purpose of providing veterinary advice and/or treatment at greyhound race meetings.</p> <p><b>Steward</b> means a member of staff of the Commission who is appointed by the Commission as a steward for the purpose of administering the <i>Greyhound Racing Act 2017</i>.</p> <p><b>The Commission</b> means the Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission.</p>
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