



# Greyhound Retirement and End of Life Report

1 October – 31 December 2020



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## October - December 2020

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# GREYHOUND RETIREMENT AND END OF LIFE REPORT

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### Foreword

Each quarter the Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission (the Commission) publishes a report providing data in relation to reported retirements, euthanasia and deaths of greyhounds registered with the Commission in NSW. The publication of this data is designed to provide transparent, accurate and timely reporting of these events.

This report contains data relating to the first quarter of 2020/21, being the period 1 October to 31 December 2020. As this is only the sixth edition of this report, trend analysis is limited.

The Commission will continue to evolve the structure and content of the report to enhance its utility.

### Data Sources

The statistics contained in this report for greyhound retirements and deaths relate to notifications received by the Commission from registered participants in the relevant reporting period, in accordance with relevant Commission policies, including the Commission's Rehoming Policy.

Statistics relating to euthanasia that occurs at racetracks are based on data recorded by the Commission's On-Track Veterinarians. All other euthanasia statistics relate to notifications received from participants, including where applicable, certifications from the veterinarian who performed the euthanasia.

#### Retirements reported during the quarter

Retired greyhounds who no longer race, usually become pets either in or outside the industry or are retained in the greyhound racing industry for breeding. The Commission was notified of 388 greyhound retirements that occurred between 1 October to 31 December 2020 (see Table 1).

Of the notifications received, 98 greyhounds (or 25.3% of the total) were retired to a registered owner or trainer as a pet and these dogs remain registered with the Commission. A further 57 (14.7%) retired greyhounds were notified as being rehomed privately, by their owner or trainer, to someone outside the greyhound racing industry. These greyhounds have been registered on the Companion Animals Register.

The remaining 233 greyhounds (60%) were notified to the Commission as being rehomed to pet rescue or rehoming organisations. The largest single greyhound rehoming program in NSW is the Greyhounds As Pets (GAP) program managed by GRNSW, and during this quarter the Commission was notified of 103 (26.5%) retirements to GAP. A further 130 greyhounds (33.5%) were accepted for adoption by other animal rescue and adoption agencies.

The Commission was not notified of any greyhounds being exported from Australia during this quarter.

**Table 1: Greyhound retirements reported to the Commission 1 October to 31 December 2020**

Destination	Number	%
Retained by owner or trainer	98	25.3%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer <sup>1</sup>	57	14.7%
Accepted by Greyhounds As Pets (GAP)	103	26.5%
Accepted by another animal rescue or adoption agency <sup>2</sup>	130	33.5%
Retired for export	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>388</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Rehomed to a member of the public as a pet.

<sup>2</sup> Accepted by another animal rescue or adoption agency including pet rescue organisations, RSPCA, AWL or council animal care facilities.

#### Euthanasia reported during the quarter

On 1 December 2019 the Commission updated its Rehoming Policy<sup>3</sup> to require greyhounds that could previously be euthanased following certification by a veterinarian as being behaviourally unsuitable for rehoming to be subject to rehoming requirements.

Standard 7.3 and 9.1 of the NSW Greyhound Welfare Code of Practice requires that greyhounds with behavioural problems undergo a behavioural assessment via GAP or other suitable canine behavioural expert and attempts are made to rehabilitate and re-home these greyhounds. At least two attempts must be made to re-home any greyhound retiring from the industry before euthanasia can be considered, in accordance with the Greyhound Rehoming Policy

This quarter five greyhounds were reported as having been euthanased due to a veterinarian certifying that the greyhound was behaviourally unsuitable for re-homing. In every case where a behavioural euthanasia is reported to the Commission, enquiries are conducted to determine if a breach of the Rehoming Policy has occurred.

A total of 118 greyhounds were reported as euthanased between 1 October to 31 December 2020. Ninety-six (81.4% of the total) were performed by private veterinarians when the greyhound was suffering from an intractable 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.

There was one reported case of emergency euthanasia by a person other than a veterinarian. The injuries most commonly reported by veterinarians as resulting in medical euthanasia were severe bone fractures.

Twelve greyhounds were euthanised by Commission veterinarians due to a catastrophic injury that occurred as a result of racing.

A further five were reported as euthanised after rehoming attempts failed.

**Table 2: Greyhound euthanasia reported to the Commission 1 October to 31 December 2020**

Cause	Number	%
Medical euthanasia (not at racetrack) due to injury, illness, or an emergency <sup>4</sup>	96	81.4%
Euthanasia after registered veterinarian certified that the greyhound was behaviourally unsuitable for rehoming <sup>5</sup>	5	4.2%
Euthanasia at racetrack due to injury	12	10.2%
Euthanasia after rehoming attempts failed	5	4.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	

<sup>3</sup> The Rehoming Policy can be found at <https://www.gwic.nsw.gov.au/integrity/rulesandpolicies/re-homing-policy>.

<sup>4</sup> 'Emergency' refers to euthanasia performed by a non-veterinarian in the case of an emergency. The circumstances surrounding any emergency euthanasia are examined by the Commission to ensure they were in accordance with the Commission's policies and the *Prevention Of Cruelty To Animals Act 1979*.

<sup>5</sup> From 1 December 2019 any greyhound that has not otherwise been rehomed privately must be subject to multiple attempts to rehome the greyhound.

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### Deaths reported during the quarter<sup>6</sup>

A total of 36 greyhound deaths were reported between 1 October to 31 December 2020 of which 19 (52.8% of the total) were from natural or unknown causes, 8 (22.2%) due to illness and 8 (22.2%) due to accidental causes. There was one (3%) sudden death at the racetrack.

**Table 3: Greyhound deaths reported to the Commission 1 October to 31 December 2020**

Cause	Number	%
Deceased due to accidental causes <sup>7</sup>	19	52.8%
Deceased due to illness <sup>8</sup>	8	22.2%
Deceased due to natural or unknown causes	8	22.2%
Sudden death at track	1	2.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	

<sup>6</sup> The data in this section is categorised based on the information provided to the Commission by participants.

<sup>7</sup> Examples of accidental causes include paddock injuries, snake bites and fights.

<sup>8</sup> Common illnesses associated with greyhounds include stomach torsions, twisted bowels and cardiac failure due to old age.

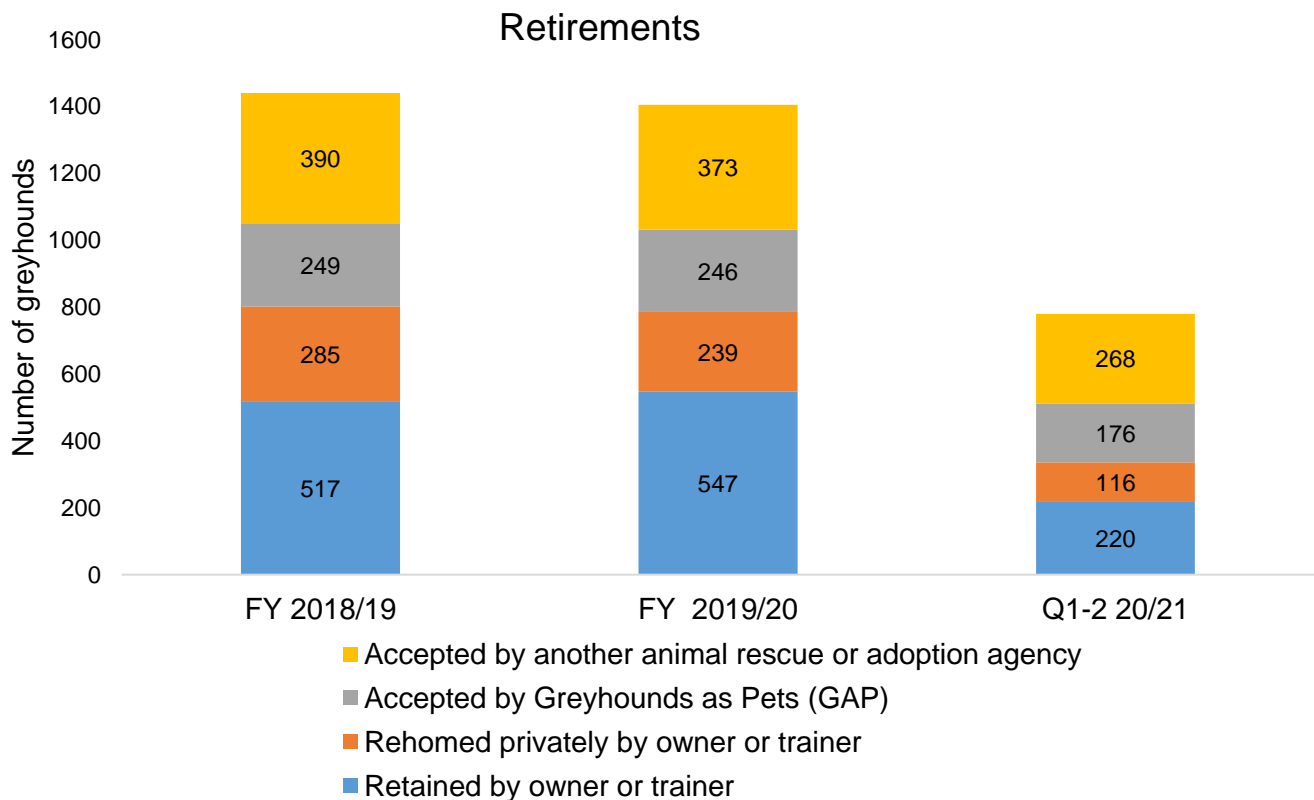
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### Trend analysis

*Note that financial year figures have been reconciled for the full year and may not match the sum of figures in previous quarterly reports.*

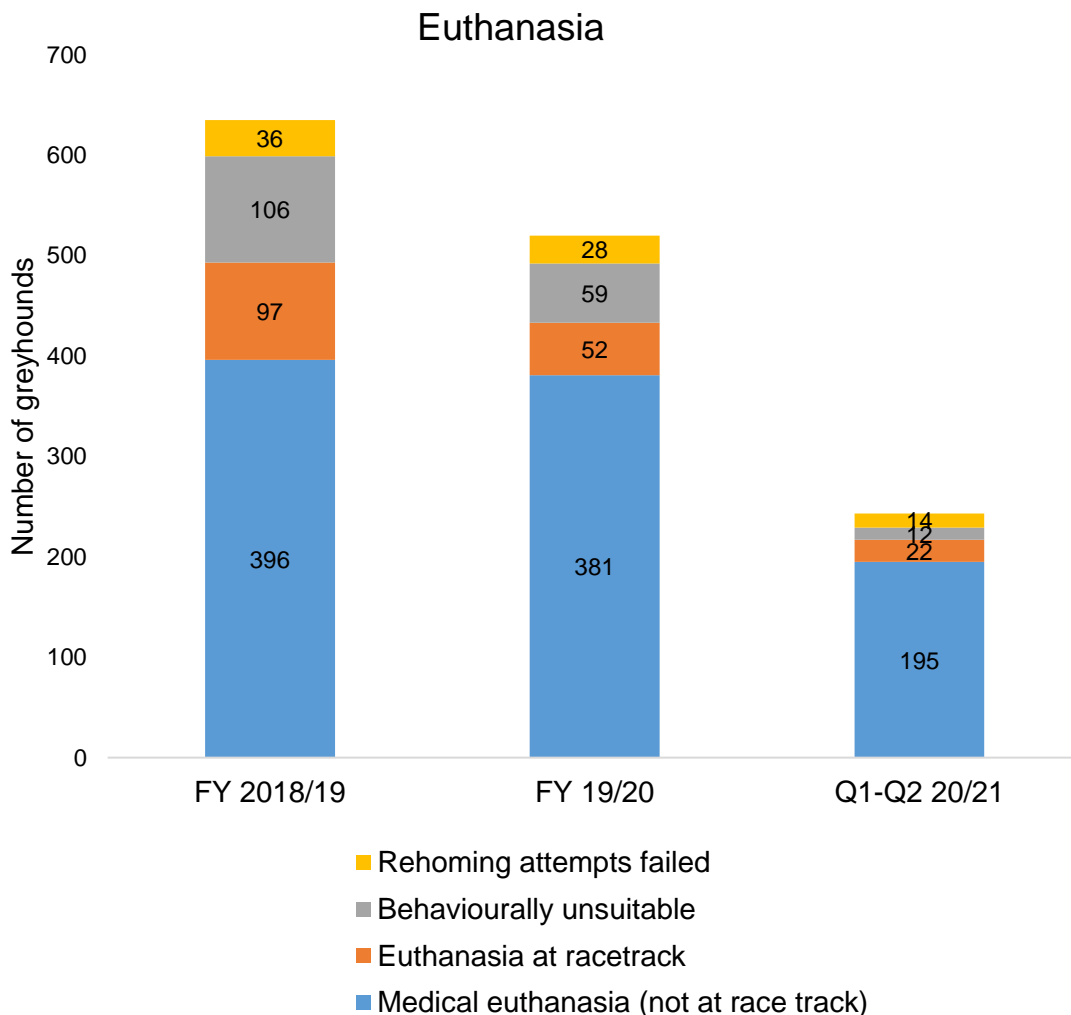
**Table 4: Greyhound retirement trends**

Destination	FY 2018/19	%	FY 2019/20	%	Q1-2 2020/21	%
Retained by owner or trainer	517	35.9%	524	37.3%	220	28.1%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer	285	19.8%	262	18.6%	116	14.9%
Accepted by Greyhounds as Pets (GAP)	249	17.3%	246	17.5%	176	22.6%
Accepted by another animal rescue or adoption agency	390	27.1%	373	26.5%	268	34.4 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>1441</b>		<b>1405</b>		<b>780</b>	



**Table 5: Greyhound euthanasia trends**

Cause	FY 2018/19	%	FY 2019/20	%	Q1+2 (2020/21)	%
Medical euthanasia (not at racetrack)	396	62.4%	381	73.3%	195	80.2%
Euthanasia at racetrack	97	15.3%	52	10.0%	22	9.1%
Behaviourally unsuitable	106	16.6%	59	11.3%	12	4.9%
Rehoming attempts failed	36	5.7%	28	5.4%	14	5.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>635</b>		<b>520</b>		<b>243</b>	





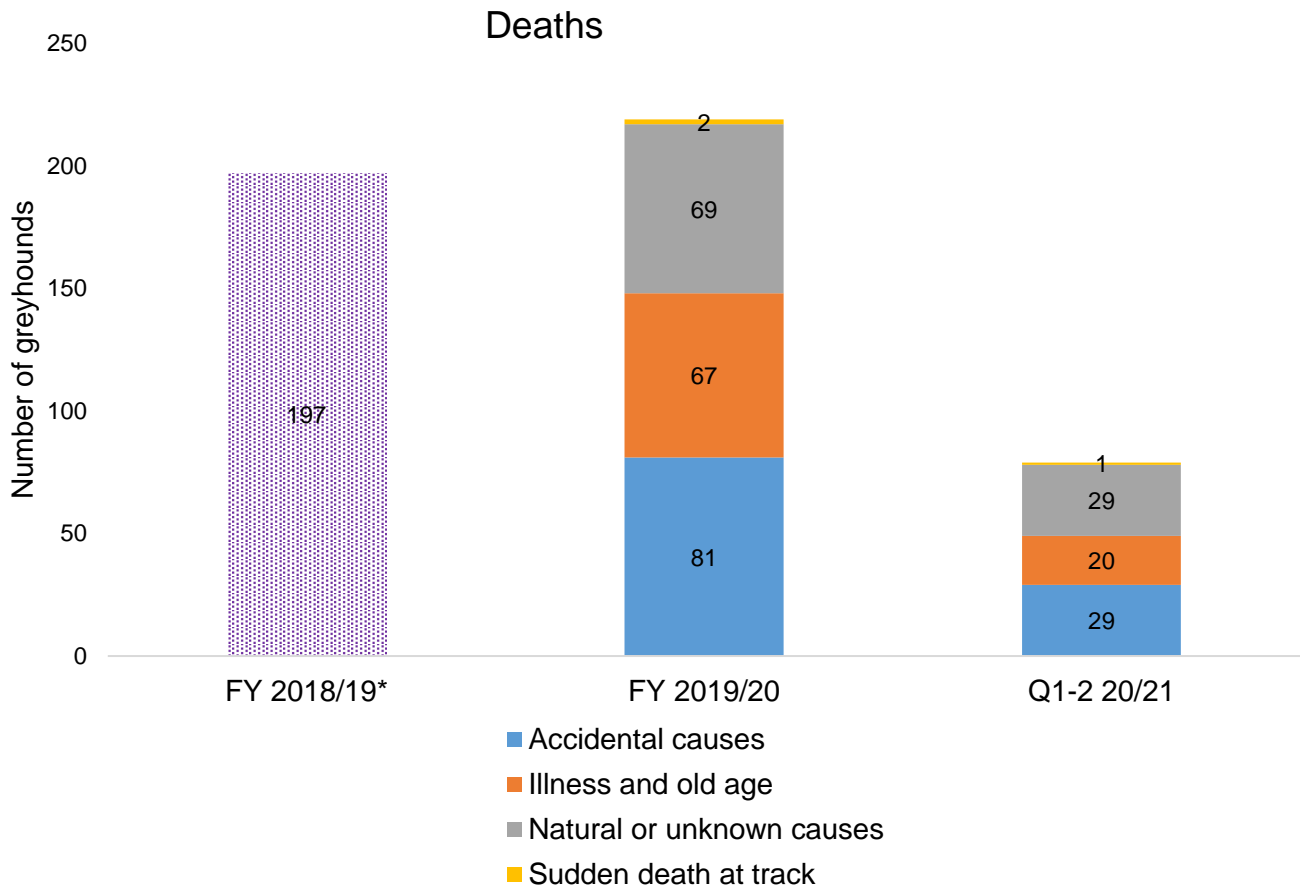
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**Table 6: Greyhound death trends**

Cause	FY 2018/19 <sup>1</sup>	%	FY 2019/20 <sup>2</sup>	%	Q1-2 (2020/21)	%
Accidental causes	55	24.4%	73	37.0%	29	36.7%
Illness and old age	28	12.4%	55	30.6%	20	25.3%
Natural or unknown causes	141	62.7%	60	31.5%	29	36.7%
Sudden death at track	1	0.4%	2	0.9%	1	1.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>		<b>190</b>		<b>79</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Numbers are deaths full financial year as reported to the Commission at 11/12/ 2020

<sup>2</sup> Numbers are deaths full financial year as reported to the Commission at 4/8/2020



\* Full year 2018/19 split of data by type is unavailable