



# **Analysis of greyhound racing injuries**

## **1 October 2021 - 31 December 2021**

## Foreword

The NSW Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission has published data since 2018 about injuries sustained by greyhounds while racing in NSW.

Reports are published:

- Quarterly, providing timely updates
- Annually, providing analysis of long-term trends

Together, these reports contribute to a growing body of evidence which can assist the industry in making evidence-based decisions with the aim of reducing the incidence and severity of greyhound racing injuries.

Standards for documenting greyhound racing injuries in reports produced by the Commission can be found at: [https://www.gwic.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/983897/Standards-for-reporting-greyhound-racing-injuries-.pdf](https://www.gwic.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/983897/Standards-for-reporting-greyhound-racing-injuries-.pdf)

## Key comments

- This quarter had the highest Major II injury rate on record, at 3.1 injuries per 1000 starts.
- The Catastrophic injury rate this quarter (0.7 per 1000 starts), was consistent with the low rate observed since Q2 2019, and was lower than the 3-year average for Q4 (0.8 per 1000 starts).
- Consistent with seasonal trends, the total injury rate this quarter (30.3 per 1000 starts) was higher than the previous (cooler) quarter, but similar to the 3-year average for Q4 (30.1 per 1000 starts).
- The majority of injuries recorded (75.4%) were Minor or Medium in nature - wounds and muscle injuries requiring 21 days or less stand down time from racing.

## Key data this quarter

### Injuries sustained at race meetings:

Table 1: Races and Injuries this quarter						
REPORTING PERIOD				4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter 2021		
1 October – 31 December 2021						
Race meetings				315		
Races				3348		
Starts (times a greyhound has started a race)				24411		
Individual greyhounds raced				4380		
Average starts per greyhound				5.6		
Post-race veterinary examinations				1654		
Injury category	Incapacitation period (days)	Number of greyhounds injured	% injured per injury category	Cumulative total per injury category	Injuries per 100 greyhounds raced	Injuries per 1,000 starts
Minor*	1-10	342	46.4%	46.4%	7.8	14.0
Medium	14-21	214	29.0%	75.4%	4.9	8.8
Major I	28-42	90	12.2%	87.7%	2.1	3.7
Major II	43-90	75	10.2%	97.8%	1.7	3.1
Catastrophic	Euthanased/died	16	2.2%	100.0%	0.4	0.7
<b>Total</b>		<b>737</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>30.3</b>

### Track-related mortality not as part of race meeting

Note that this data depends on OTVs following up on a Major II injury suffered at the track and reports made by participants to the Commission, and therefore may not be complete at the time of reporting. Due to this, and for comparability with previous years of data:

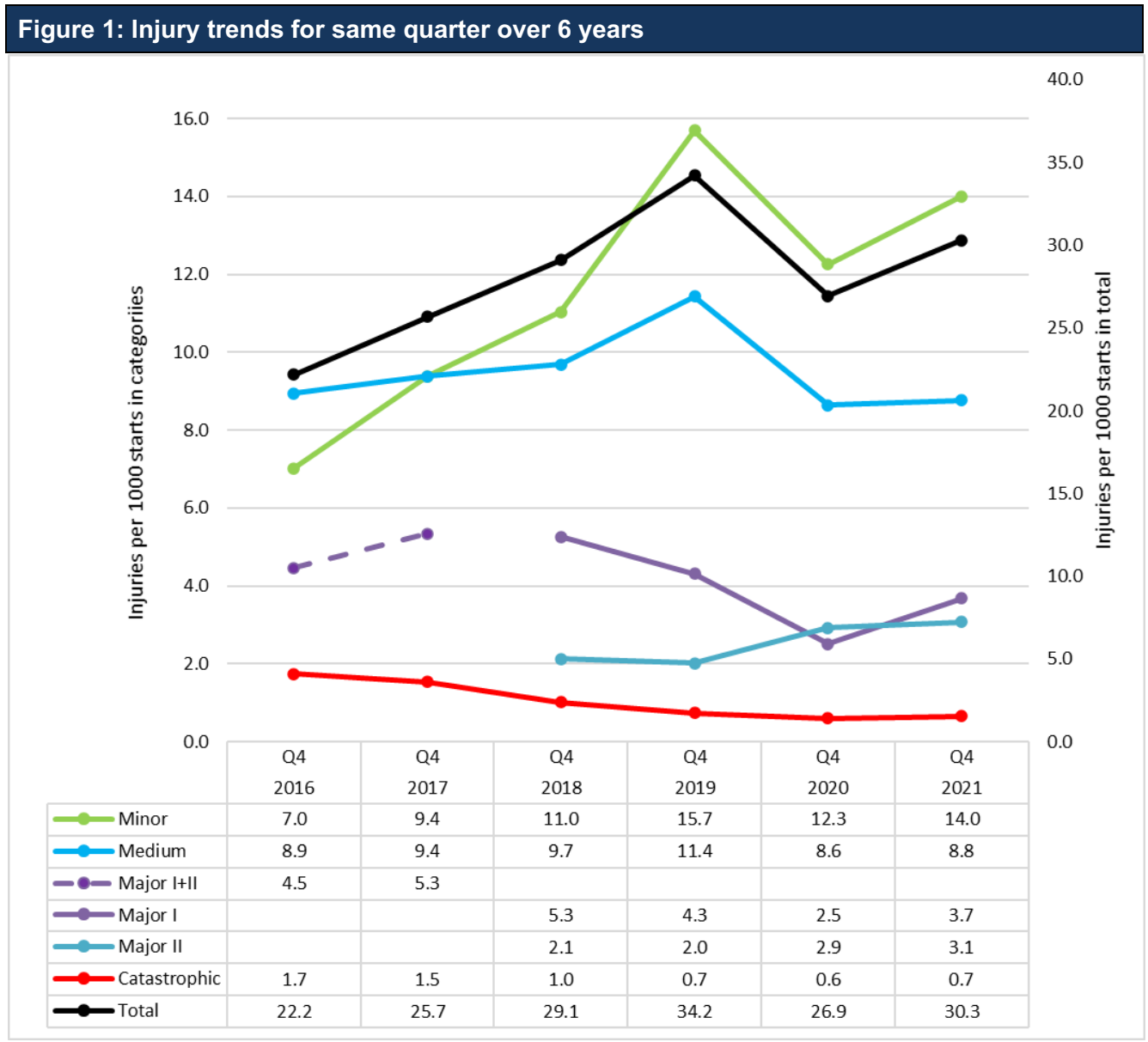
- Instances of euthanasia by a private veterinarian, away from the racetrack, after sustaining an injury at a race meeting are counted as Major II injuries in the table above as the greyhound was not euthanased on track.
- Instances of euthanasia or sudden death after sustaining an injury in a trial at a racetrack are not included in the table above but included in Table 2 below.
- More information on greyhounds medically euthanased away from the racetrack can be found in the Commission's quarterly 'Greyhound Retirement and End of Life Report', which is available on the Commission's [website](#).

Table 2: Track related mortality not as part of race meeting	
Reporting Period	Q4 2021 / 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter
1 October – 31 December 2021	
Reported euthanased by private veterinarian after sustaining injury at race meeting	7
Reported euthanased or sudden death after sustaining injury in unofficial trial at racetrack	0
Reported euthanased or sudden death after sustaining injury in official trial at racetrack	0

# Trends

## Controlled for seasonal variation

Injury rates are correlated with season, with hotter quarters 1 and 4 in each year usually having higher injury rates than cooler quarters 2 and 3. Comparing this quarter's data with the same quarter in previous years reduces the influence of season and provides a more accurate picture of long-term trends in injury rates.



\*Note: reporting prior to Q3 2018 was by GRNSW and is not directly comparable due to differences in data definitions and recording.

**Table 3: This quarter compared to the same quarter in previous years**

Injury type	This quarter compared to same quarter in previous years
Minor	The Minor injury rate has increased (14.0 per 1000 starts) compared to the same quarter last year (12.3 per 1000 starts) and is slightly higher than the 3-year average (13.0 per 1000 starts).
Medium	Consistent with same quarter last year and lower than the 3-year average for Q4 (9.9 per 1000 starts).
Major I	Increase on Q4 2020 but lower than the 3-year average for Q4 (4.0 per 1000 starts).
Major II	Highest Q4 on record.
Catastrophic	Lower than the 3-year average for Q4 (0.8 per 1000 starts)
Total	Consistent with the 3-year average for Q4 (30.1 per 1000 starts)

**Comment**

- The Medium, Major I and Catastrophic injury rates this quarter were lower than the 3-year averages for these categories.
- The Minor and Major II injury rates were higher than in previous years.
- The total injury rate was consistent with Q4 injury rates in previous years.

**All quarters**

**Figure 2: Injuries since 2016**

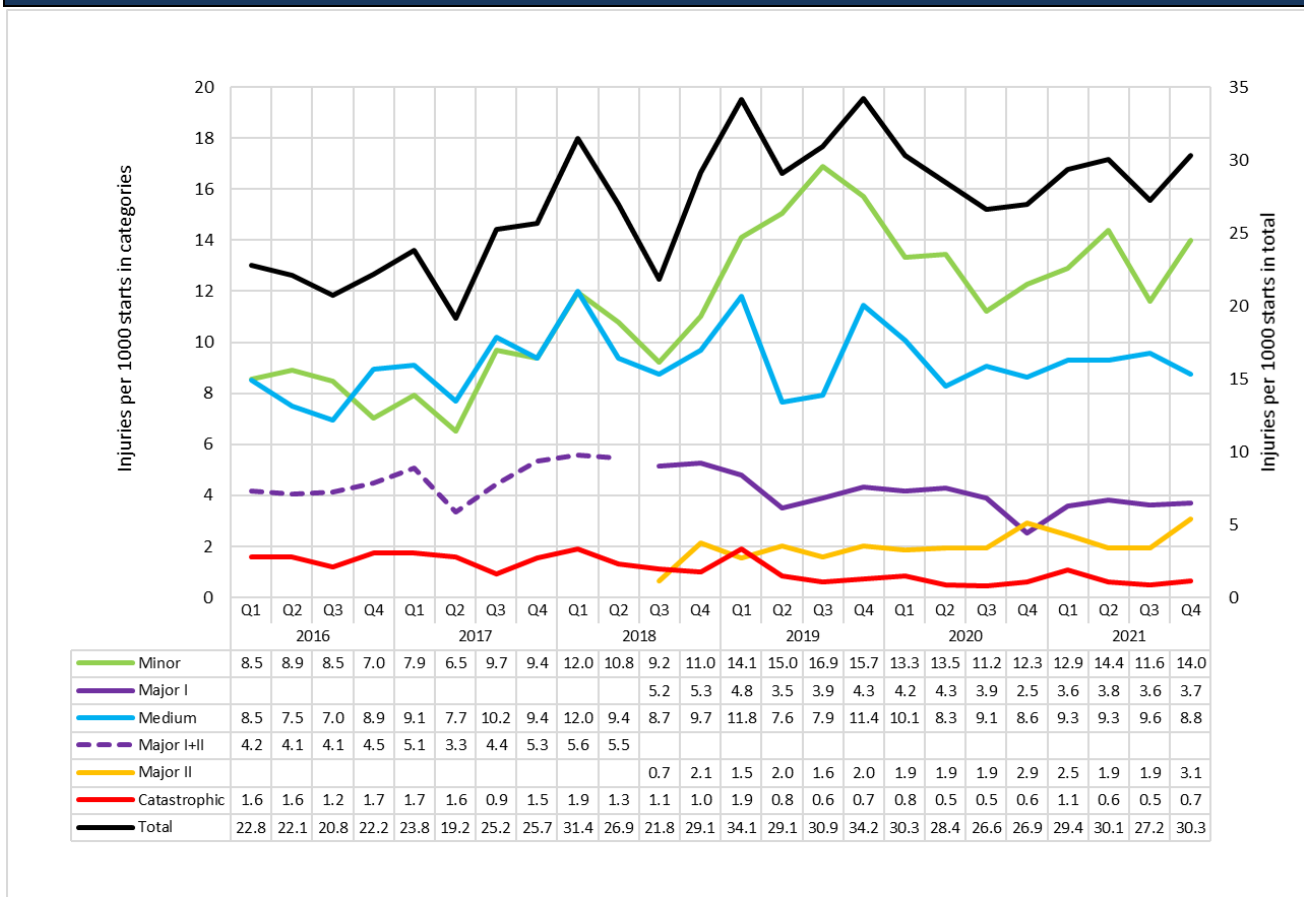


Table 4: This quarter compared to all previous records since 1 <sup>st</sup> July 2018	
Minor	Increased compared to previous quarters of 2021 and higher than the 3-year average since July 2018 (13.2 per 1000 starts)
Medium	Decreased compared to previous quarters of 2021 and lower than the 3-year average (9.4 per 1000 starts).
Major I	Consistent with previous quarters of 2021 and lower than the 3-year average (4.1 per 1000 starts).
Major II	Increased, highest on record.
Catastrophic	Consistent with previous quarters of 2021 and slightly lower than the 3-year average (0.8 per 1000 starts)
Total	Higher than the 3-year average (29.1 per 1000 starts)
<p><b>Comment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 75.4% of all injuries reported were Minor or Medium in nature (requiring no more than 21 days stand down from racing).</li> <li>• Injury data from this quarter presented a mixed picture, with Medium, Major I and Catastrophic injury rates this quarter being lower or consistent with previous injury data recorded since 1<sup>st</sup> July 2018. However Minor and Major II injuries were higher this quarter than previous average data calculated.</li> <li>• Thus, the overall total injury rate was slightly higher than the 3-year average since 1<sup>st</sup> July 2018.</li> </ul>	

## Race Injury Review Panel Analysis

There are many causes of injuries in racing greyhounds and the relative importance and interactions of causative factors vary. Causative factors can be divided into:

1. **Greyhound factors:** genetics, nutrition, physical growth and development, fitness, race preparation, racing form and previous injury history.
2. **Track factors:** design and surface characteristics; environmental influences.
3. **Race factors:** race distance, racing incidents (collisions) and number of greyhounds in a race.

Major II and Catastrophic injuries which occurred during this quarter were reviewed by the Race Injury Review Panel, continuing work begun in February 2019. The Panel assesses factors that may have contributed to each injury and where possible attributes it to greyhound, track or race factors. Over time, the data collected will assist in informing prevention strategies and regulatory steps aimed at minimising the incidence of racing injuries.

Table 5 summarises the results of Panel deliberations and data for this quarter. In some instances, more than one factor contributed to an injury, usually where track factors and racing incidents both contributed to an incident. Where insufficient evidence is available (such as in trials or races where no video footage is available) the possible contributions to the injury are not considered by the Panel, but those greyhounds may be included in counts of the gender, age, distance, location and race history of injured greyhounds.

**Table 5: Review of Major II and Catastrophic injuries this quarter**

	Catastrophic/ sudden death	Major II	Total
<b>Race Injury Review Panel assessment of contributing factors to injuries</b>			
Greyhound factors	0	1	1
Race factors	12	44	56
Track factors	0	0	0
More than one factor	0	0	0
Unable to attribute factors	2	25	27
<b>Total assessed</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Gender of injured greyhound</b>			
Female	4	36	40
Male	11	37	48
<b>Age of injured greyhound to nearest six months</b>			
1.5 years	1	0	1
2 years	3	15	18
2.5 years	4	18	22
3 years	6	16	22
3.5 years	1	15	16
4 years	0	4	4
4.5 years	0	2	2
> 5 years	0	3	3
<b>Distance of race in which greyhound was injured in meters</b>			
Under 300	2	5	7
300-399	0	3	3
400-499	5	26	31
500-600	7	28	36
Over 600	1	10	11
<b>Location on track at which injury appears to have occurred</b>			
Soon after start	0	0	0
Straight	3	7	10
Turn	9	58	67
Catching pen	1	4	5
Unknown	2	4	6
<b>Racing history of injured greyhound</b>			
Average and range of starts in last 30 days	2.4 (0 – 6)	2.6 (0 – 6)	2.5 (0 – 6)
Average and range of starts in last 60 days	4.3 (0 – 10)	5.3 (0 – 13)	5.1 (0 – 13)
Average and range of career starts	21.7 (2 – 45)	37.5 (0 – 192)	34.8 (0 – 192)