

# Analysis of greyhound racing injuries

1 January – 31 March 2023



## 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.

The Commission adopted a nationally agreed convention for classifying injuries in 2022 which can be viewed [here](#).

## Key comments

- An increase in Categories B and D injuries contributed to an increase in the total rate of injury (41.7 per 1000 starts) compared with the previous quarter (October – December 2022 at 40.7 per 1000 starts).
- The rate of Category E injuries (0.6 per 1000 starts) has declined from the previous quarter rate of 0.7 per 1000 starts.
- GWIC will explore potential reasons for the observed increase in injury over the last 6 months, including the high rainfall across much of the state.
- Of 100 Category F injuries, 74% occurred on turns and the majority which were reviewed by the Race Injury Review Panel were attributed to race events such as collisions.

# Key data this quarter

## Injuries sustained at race meetings

Table 1: Races and injuries this quarter					
REPORTING PERIOD		1 January – 31 March 2023			
Race meetings		302			
Races		3278			
Starts (times a greyhound has started a race)		23590			
Individual greyhounds raced		4344			
Average starts per greyhound		5.4			
Injury category	Incapacitation period (days)	Number of injuries	% injured per injury category	Cumulative total of injury category	Injuries per 1,000 starts
Category A	none	81	8.2%	8.2%	3.4
Category B	3-10	357	36.3%	44.6%	15.1
Category C	11 - 27	289	29.4%	74.0%	12.3
Category D	28 - 90	241	24.5%	98.5%	10.2
Category E	Euthanased/died	15	1.5%	100.0%	0.6
<b>Total</b>		983			41.7
Category F	*	101			4.3
Category G	+	882			37.4

\* Category F Includes all Category E incidents as well as those within Category D that are deemed to be of a particularly serious nature. Please refer to [this link](#) for further information.

+ Category G Includes any injury in Categories A to C and those in Category D that do not fit the definition of a Serious injury (i.e. Category F)

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

GWIC veterinarians follow up with trainers about the outcomes for greyhounds which have suffered a Category D injury in a race.

Instances of euthanasia by a private veterinarian, away from the racetrack, after sustaining injury at a race meeting are counted as Category D injuries in the table above as the greyhound was not euthanased on track.

Instances of euthanasia or sudden death after sustaining 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 Life Cycle Report', which is available on the Commission's website.

**Table 2: Track related mortality not as part of race meeting**

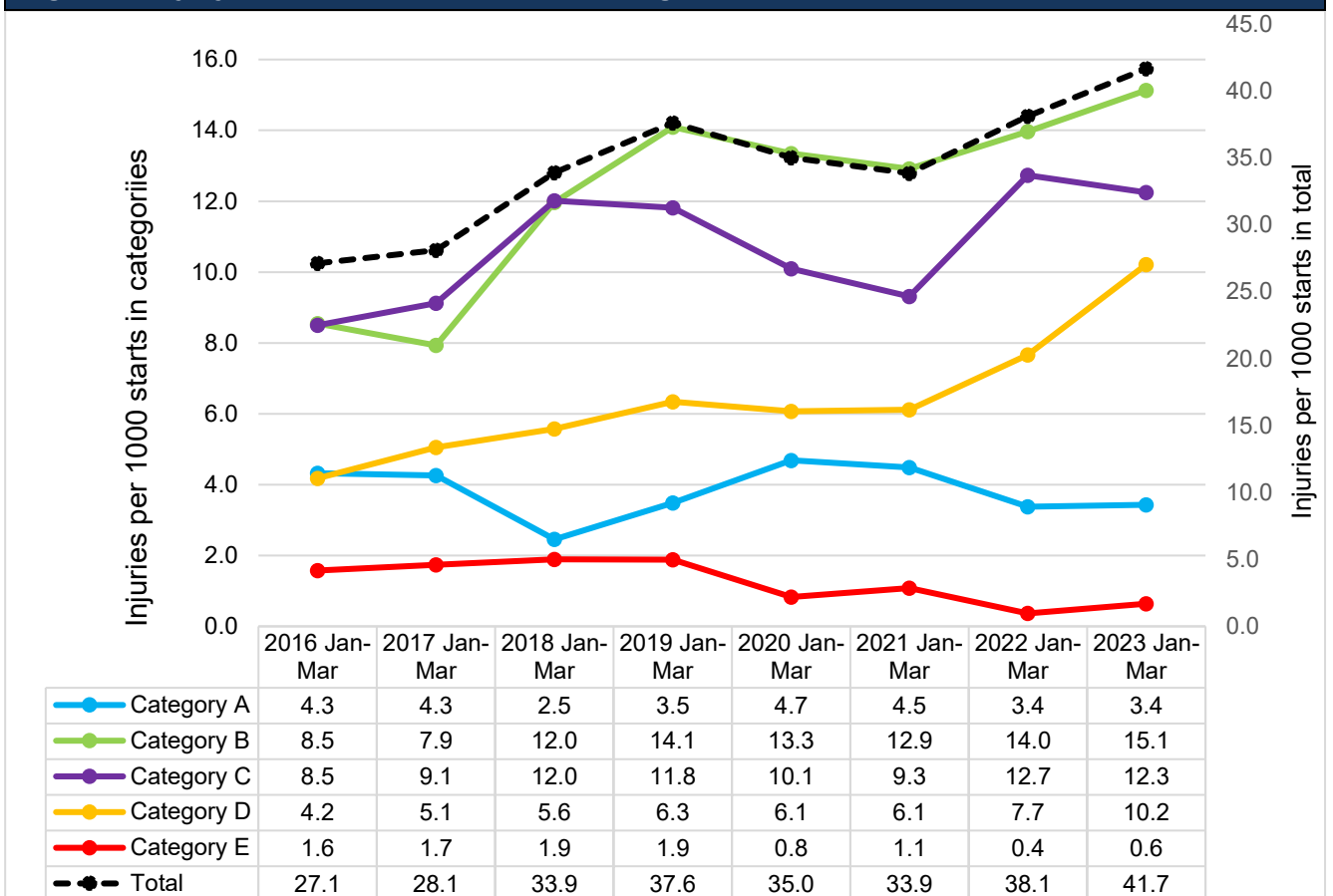
Reporting Period		1 January – 31 March 2023
Reported euthanased by private veterinarian after sustaining injury at race meeting		5
Reported euthanased or sudden death after sustaining injury in unofficial trial at racetrack		0
Reported euthanased or sudden death after sustaining injury in official trial at racetrack		0

## Trends

### Controlled for seasonal variation

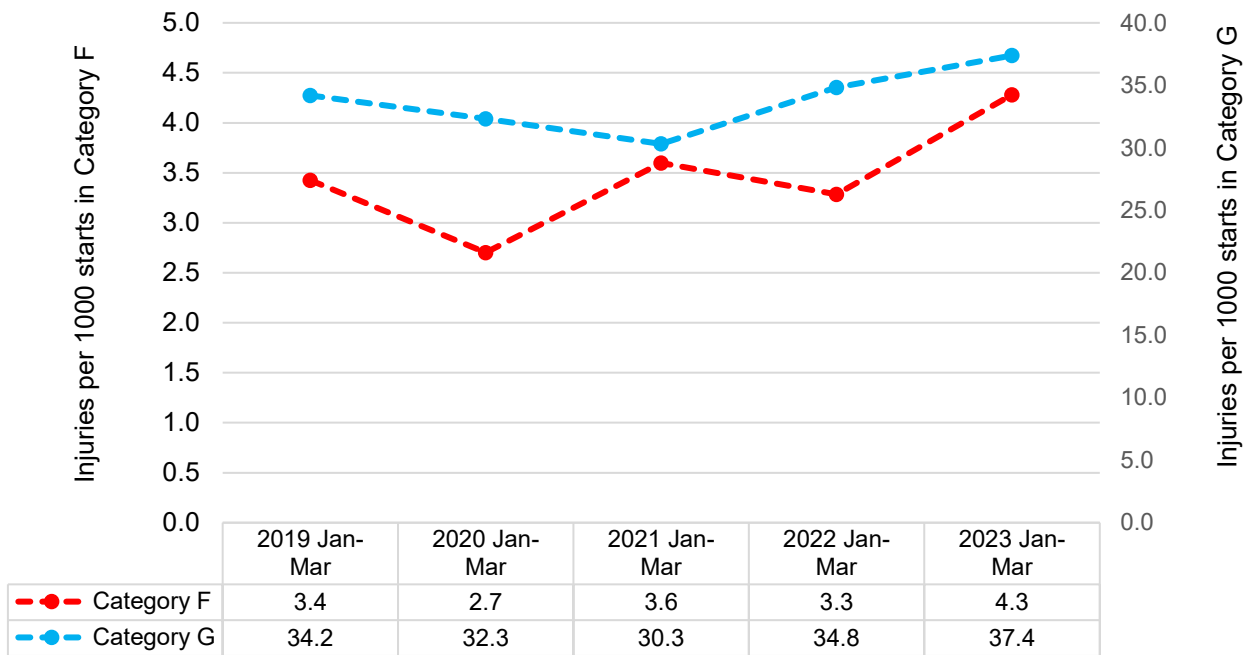
Injury rates are correlated with season, with hotter quarters 1 and 4 in each year usually having higher injury rates than cooler quarters 2 and 3. Comparing this quarter's data with the same quarter in previous years reduces the influence of season and provides a more accurate picture of long-term trends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

**Figure 1: Injury trends for same quarter - Categories A to E and total**



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

**Figure 2: Injury trends for same quarter – Categories F and G**



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

Injury type	This quarter compared to same quarter in previous years
Category A	Similar to 2022.
Category B	Continued increase since 2021.
Category C	Decrease to 2018 and 2019 rates.
Category D	Increased and highest since comparable records have been available.
Category E	Slight increase on 2015 but remains low.
Total	Increased highest on record.
Category F	Increased and highest since comparable records have been available.
Category G	Increased and highest since comparable records have been available.
<b>Comment</b>	GWIC is exploring potential reasons for the observed increases in injury rates.

### Long-term trends

To control for seasonal variation in injury data, long-term injury trends are presented as 12-month running averages.

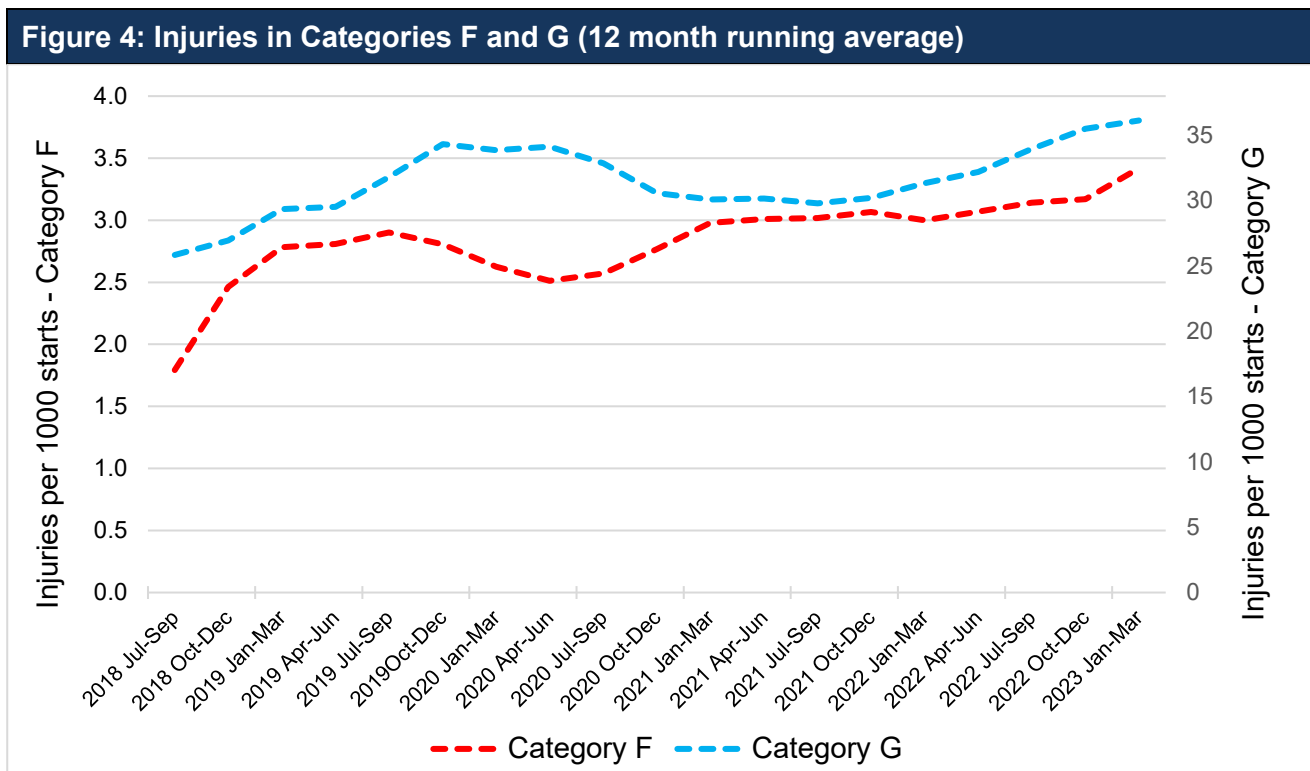
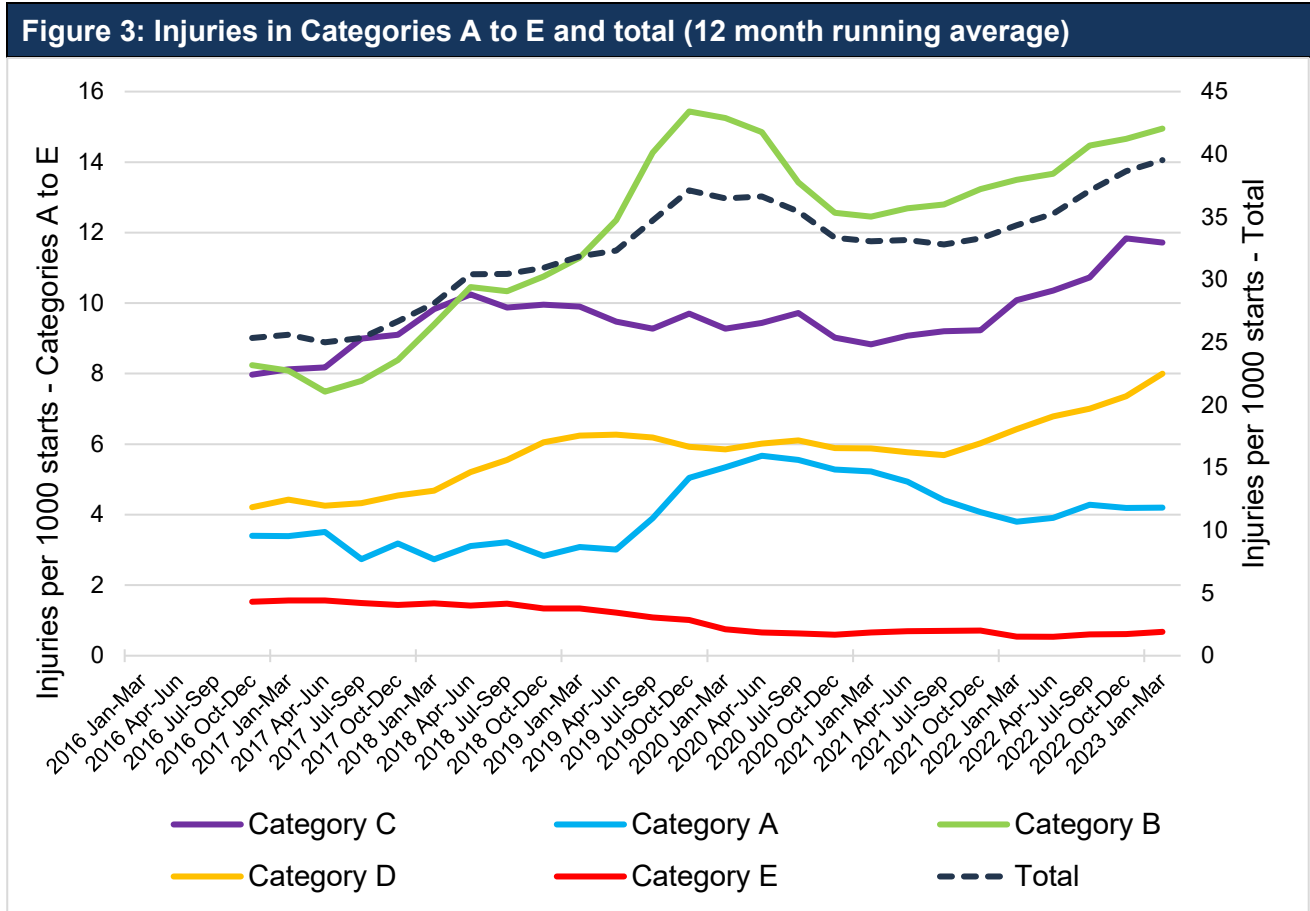


Table 4: Long term trends (based on 12 month running average)	
Category A	Stable in last 12 months after a decline.
Category B	Increased in last 2 years after a steep decline.
Category C	Stable but high.
Category D	Increased in last 18 months after several years of stability.
Category E	Stable after steady decline since 2017.
Total	Increase in last 18 months.
Category F	Increase after a relatively stable period since late 2020.
Category G	Increase in last 18 months.
<b>Comment</b>	
GWIC is exploring potential reasons for the observed increase in injury in the last 18 months.	

## 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.

Category E and F 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.

<b>Table 5: Review of Category E and F injuries this quarter</b>			
	<b>Category E</b>	<b>Category F minus Category E</b>	<b>Category F</b>
<b>Race Injury Review Panel assessment of contributing factors to injuries*</b>			
Greyhound factors	1	22	23
Race factors	8	36	44
Track factors	0	0	0
Factors not assessed	0	1	1
<b>Gender of injured greyhound</b>			
Female	7	43	50
Male	8	42	50
<b>Age of injured greyhound to nearest 6 months</b>			
1.5 years	1	0	1
2 years	4	12	16
2.5 years	5	20	25
3 years	3	24	27
3.5 years	1	12	13
4 years	1	10	11
4.5 years	0	3	3
> 5 years	0	4	4
<b>Distance of race in which greyhound was injured</b>			
Under 300m	1	3	4
300-399m	8	35	43
400-499m	5	25	30
500-600m	1	19	20
Over 600m	0	3	3
<b>Location on track at which injury appears to have occurred</b>			
Soon after start	0	6	6
Straight	2	12	14
Turn	11	63	74
After finish but before catching pen	0	0	0
Catching pen	2	4	6
Other	0	0	0
<b>Race history of injured greyhounds</b>			
Average and range of starts in last 30 days	2.5, (1-6)	2.7, (0-6)	2.6, (0-6)
Average and range of starts in last 60 days	4.4, (1-10)	5.2, (0-14)	4.8, (0-14)
Average and range of career starts	22.3, (4-53)	36.5, (0-135)	29.4, (0-135)

\* Only available for January and February 2023.