

Analysis of greyhound racing injuries

1 April – 30 June 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

- Injury rates for Category B, C and D decreased, contributing to a slight decrease in the total rate of injury (40.2 per 1000 starts) compared with the previous quarter (January – March 2023 at 41.7 per 1000 starts).
- The rate of Category E injuries (0.6 per 1000 starts) remains the same as in the previous quarter.
- Category A (minor injuries such as skin abrasions) are the only injury category to have increased this quarter (4.8 per 1000 starts compared to 3.4 in January – March 2023).
- Of 75 Category F injuries where the location on the track that the injury occurred could be determined, 55% occurred on turns.

Key data this quarter

Injuries sustained at race meetings

Table 1: Races and injuries this quarter					
Reporting Period		1 April – 30 June 2023			
Race meetings		324			
Races		3575			
Starts (times a greyhound has started a race)		26092			
Individual greyhounds raced		4655			
Average starts per greyhound		5.6			
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	126	12.0%	12.0%	4.8
Category B	3-10	373	35.6%	47.6%	14.3
Category C	11 - 27	309	29.5%	77.0%	11.8
Category D	28 - 90	226	21.5%	98.6%	8.7
Category E	Euthanased/died	15	1.4%	100.0%	0.6
Total		1048			40.2
Category F	*	84			3.2
Category G	+	965			36.9

* 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 April – 30 June 2023	
Euthanased or sudden death at track after sustaining injury in official trial*	0
Euthanased or sudden death at track after sustaining injury in club trial	1
Reported euthanased by private veterinarian after sustaining injury at race meeting	4
Reported euthanased by private veterinarian after sustaining injury in club trial	4

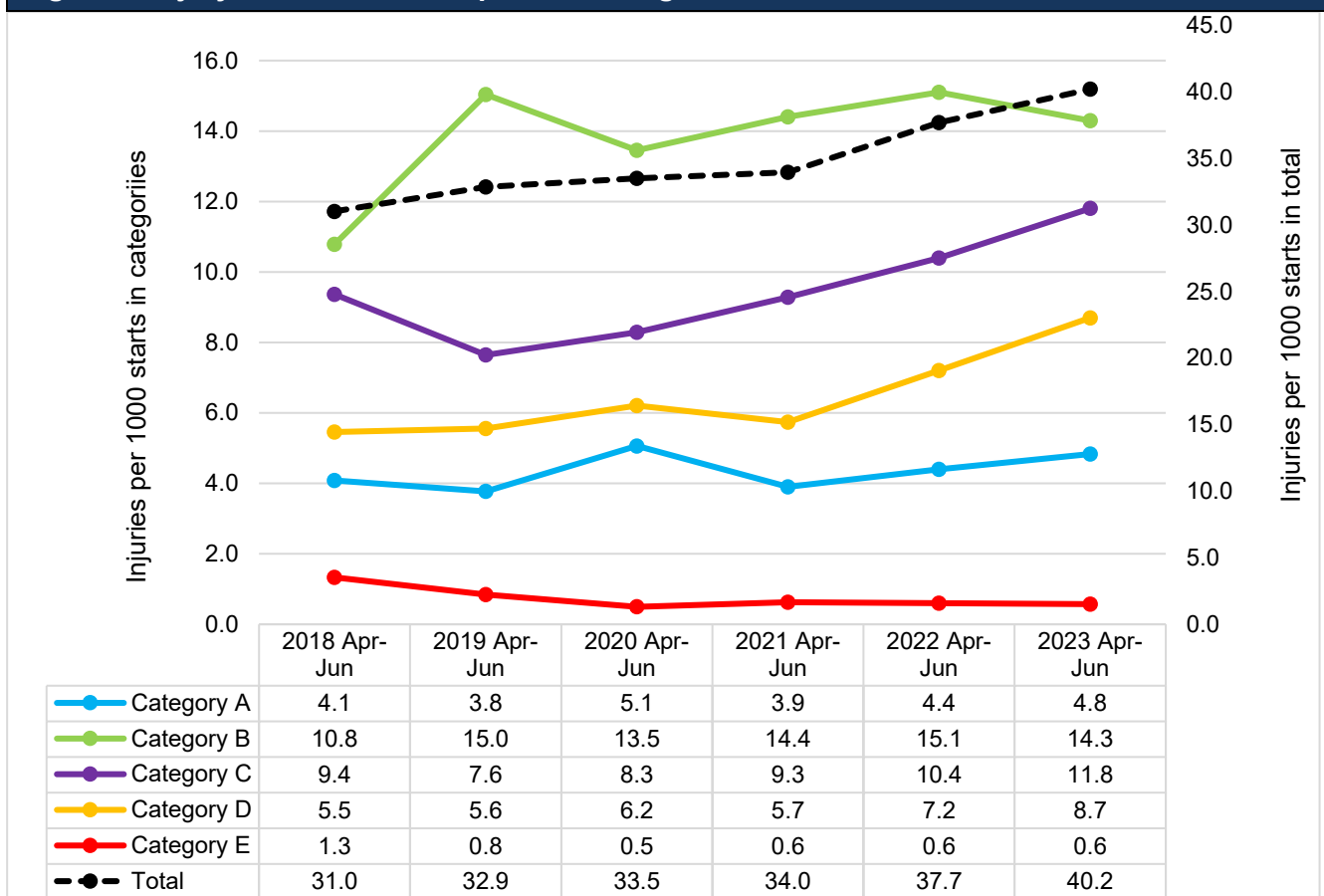
*Official trials are held as part of race meetings and injuries are published as part of Stewards reports

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

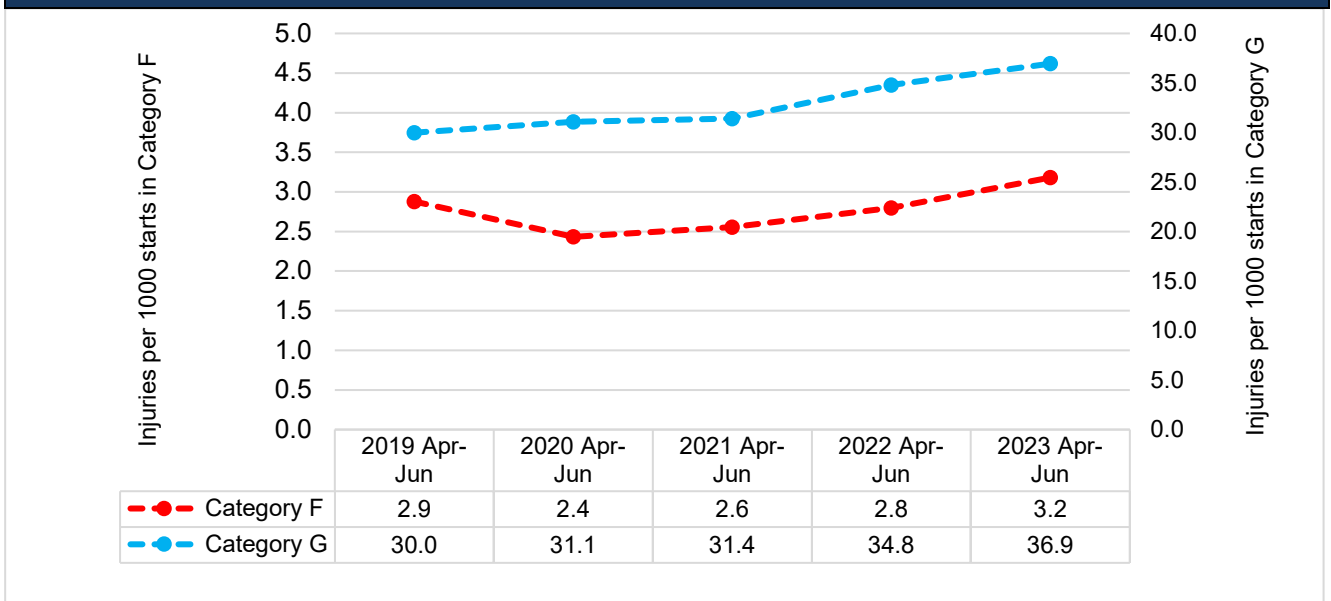


Table 3: This quarter compared to the same quarter in previous years

Injury type	This quarter compared to same quarter in previous years
Category A	Slight increase since 2021.
Category B	Declined since 2022.
Category C	Steady increase since 2019.
Category D	Increased and currently highest since comparable records have been available.
Category E	Stable and low for last three years.
Total	Slight decrease.
Category F	Increased and currently highest since comparable records have been available.
Category G	Increased and currently highest since comparable records have been available.
Comment	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.

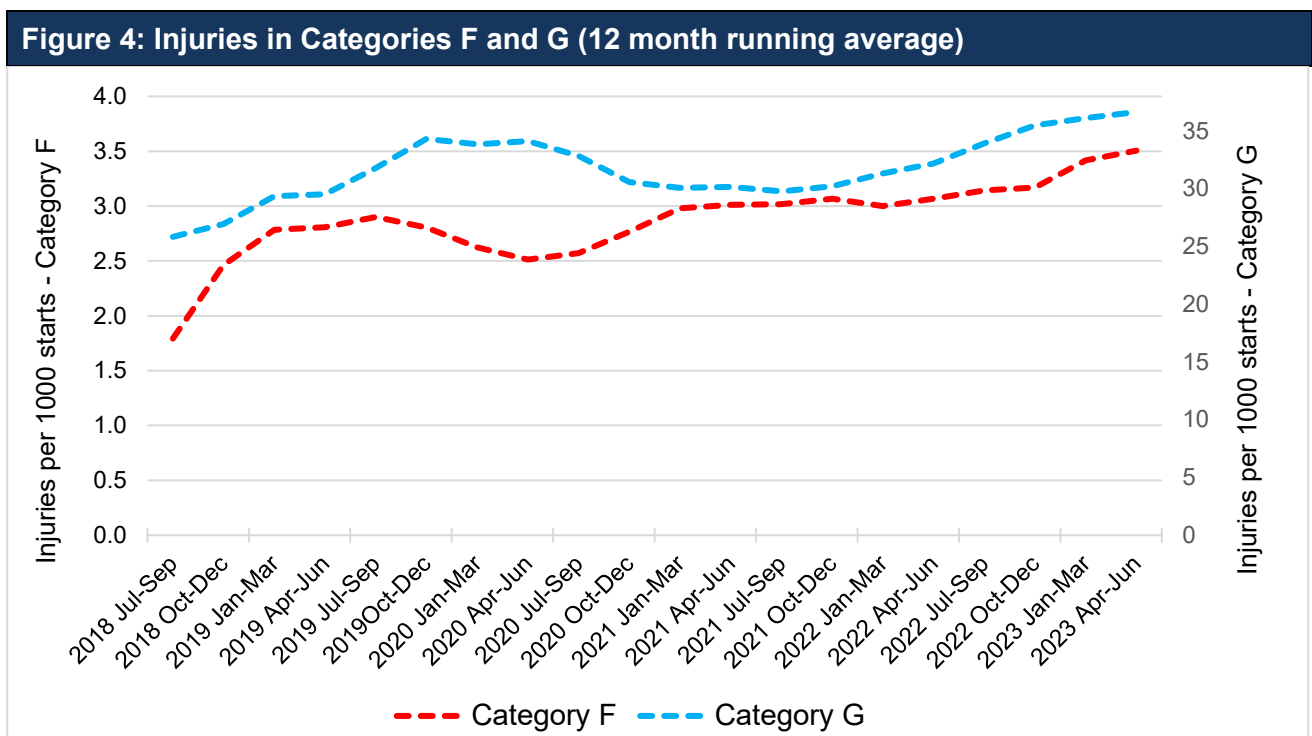
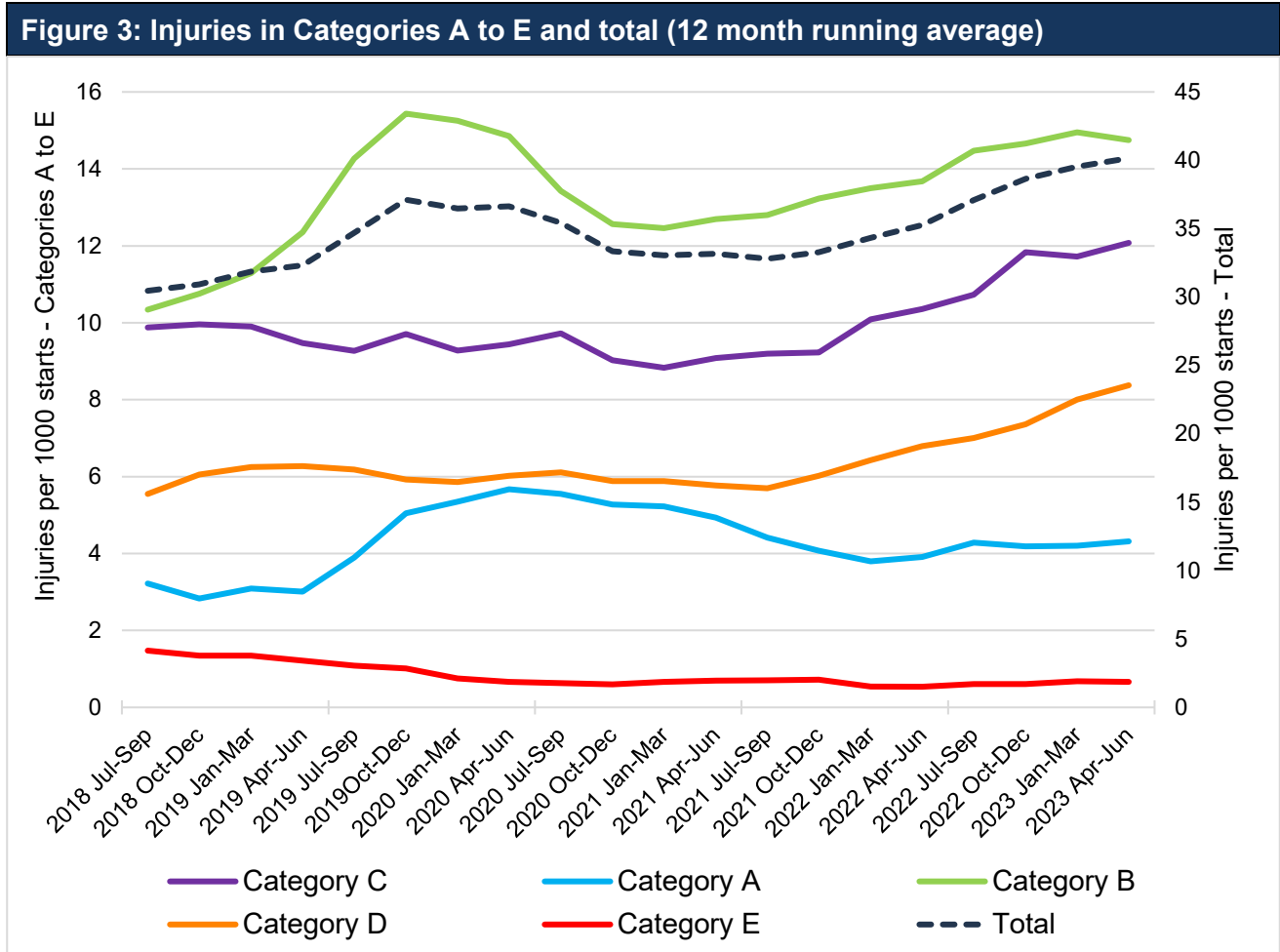


Table 4: Long term trends (based on 12-month running average)	
Category A	Stable in last 12 months after a decline.
Category B	Slight decrease since last quarter.
Category C	Stable but currently highest on record.
Category D	Continuing increase since mid-2021 after several years of stability.
Category E	Stable after steady decline since 2017.
Total	Continued increase since late 2021.
Category F	Continued increase since late 2021.
Category G	Continued increase since late 2021.
Comment GWIC is exploring potential reasons for the observed increases in injury rates.	

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, racepreparation, 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.

Table 5: Review of Category E and F injuries			
	Category E	Cat. F minus Cat. E	Category F
Race Injury Review Panel assessment of contributing factors to injuries			
Greyhound factors	2	26	28
Race factors	10	29	39
Track factors	0	0	0
Factors not assessed	3	5	8
Gender of injured greyhound			
Female	8	25	33
Male	7	35	42
Age of injured greyhound to nearest 6 months			
1.5 years	1	0	1
2 years	5	13	18
2.5 years	2	21	23
3 years	1	10	11
3.5 years	2	8	10
4 years	1	6	7
4.5 years	2	2	4
> 5 years	1	0	1
Distance of race in which greyhound was injured			
Under 300m	1	4	5
300-399m	11	20	31
400-499m	2	17	19
500-600m	1	19	20
Over 600m	0	0	0
Location on track at which injury appears to have occurred			
Soon after start	0	0	0
Straight	0	26	26
Turn	11	30	41
After finish but before catching pen	0	0	0
Catching pen	2	2	4
Other	2	2	4
Race history of injured greyhounds			
Average and range of starts in last 30 days	1.4, 0-4	2.5, 0-7	2.0, 0-7
Average and range of starts in last 60 days	2.5, 0-5	4.9, 1-14	3.7, 0-14
Average and range of career starts	21.5, 1-73	32.3, 2-102	26.9, 1-102