

# Greyhound life cycle report

1 April – 30 June 2023



The Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission publishes a quarterly report of the status of the registered greyhound population and life cycle events such as breeding, naming, retirement, euthanasia and death for greyhounds registered with the Commission.

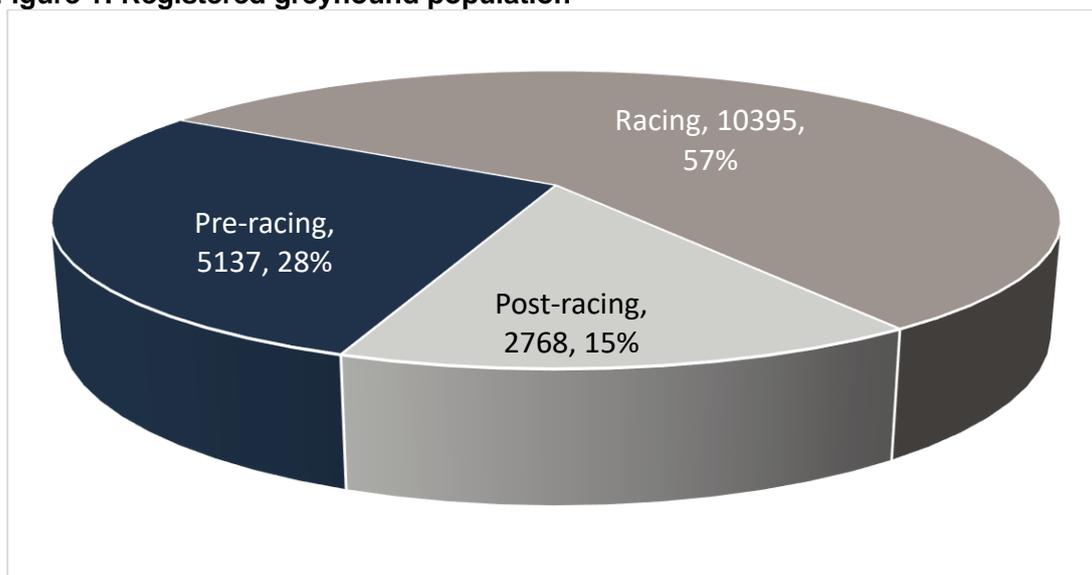
Participants are required to notify the Commission within 14 days from the date of servicing, whelping and retirement, and within two days from the date of euthanasia or death of a greyhound.

*Quarterly totals (particularly for retirement, euthanasia and deaths) may appear slightly lower than the true value due to late notifications; however, values for financial years have received retrospective amendment for utmost accuracy.*

## Greyhound numbers and status

The industry greyhound population as at 30 June 2023 was estimated to be 18,300 of which 57% are registered for racing (Figure 1). This is 6000 fewer than reported in the January- March 2023 quarter due to the Commission's ongoing efforts to trace the status and whereabouts of every greyhound on the Greyhound Register. The difference is largely made up of greyhounds which have been retired prior to the 2022/23 year and rehomed out of the industry.

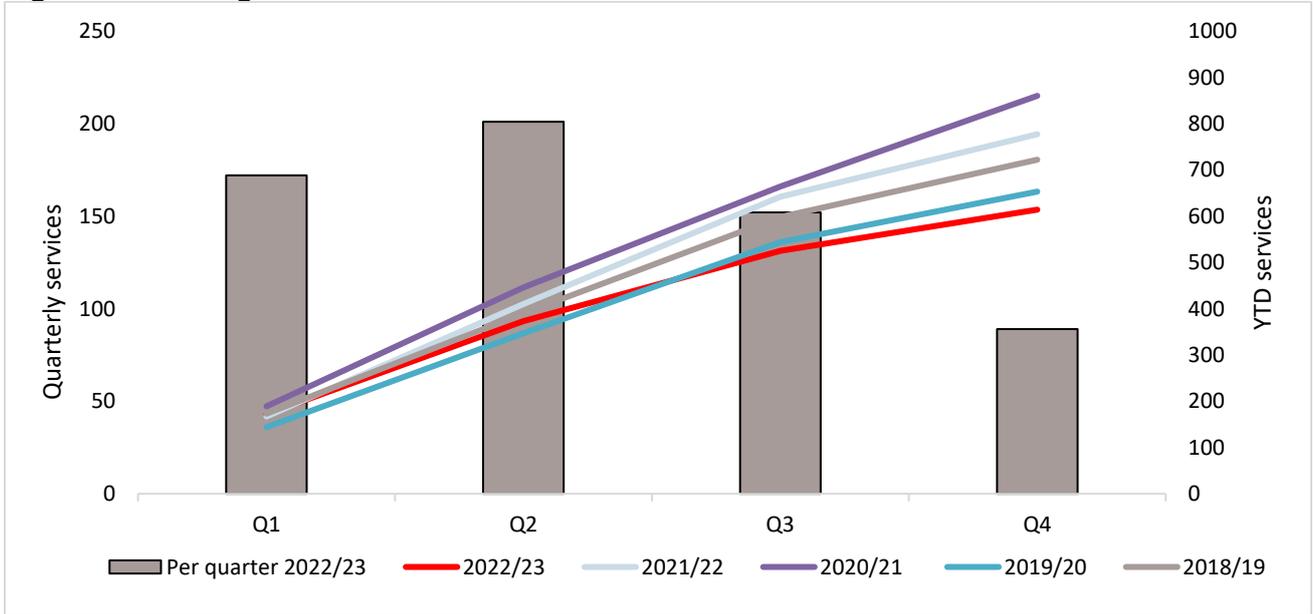
**Figure 1: Registered greyhound population**



## Breeding

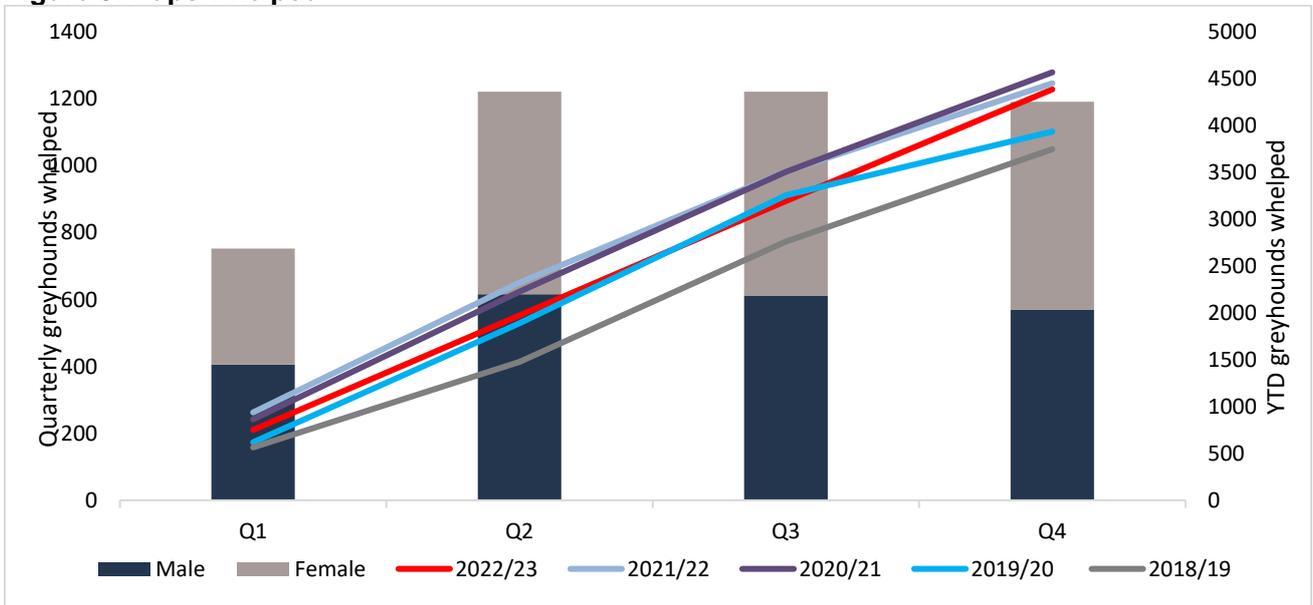
This quarter saw only 89 breeding services, contributing to the lowest annual total of services in the last 5 years (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Breeding services**



This quarter, 1191 pups were whelped from 179 litters.

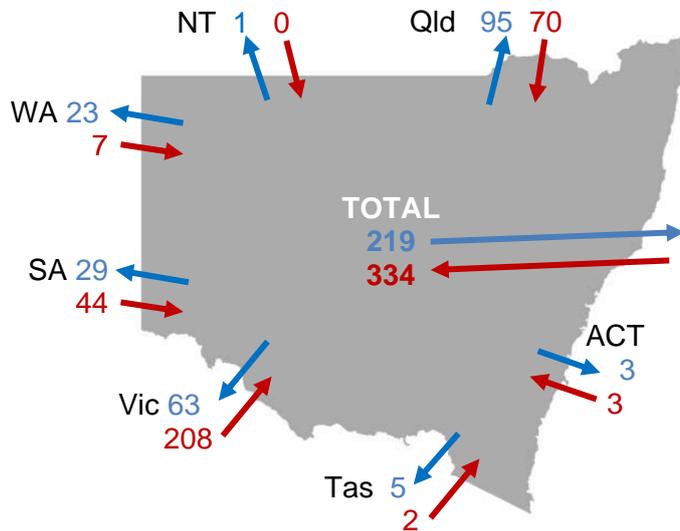
**Figure 3: Pups whelped**



## Interstate transfers

This quarter, 219 greyhounds were transferred out of NSW\* to trainers in other jurisdictions and 334 greyhounds were transferred from other jurisdictions into NSW (Figure 4). The largest exchanges both in and out of NSW were with Victoria and Queensland, reflecting the relatively large size of the greyhound racing industries in those states.

**Figure 4: Greyhounds transferred into and out of NSW**



## Retirement

Retired greyhounds owned by an industry participant remain registered with the Commission. Those that transfer to the ownership of a non-industry participant are registered as pets on the NSW Pet Registry and are no longer registered with the Commission.

**Table 1: Greyhound retirements reported by participants this quarter.**

Destination	Number	%
Retained by an industry participant	221	49%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer to a non-participant	30	7%
Accepted by Greyhounds as Pets <sup>1</sup> (GAP)	148	33%
Accepted by another animal rescue or adoption agency <sup>2</sup>	49	11%
Other	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>448</b>	

<sup>1</sup> A not-for-profit initiative coordinated by Greyhound Racing NSW.

<sup>2</sup> Including the RSPCA, AWL or council animal care facilities.

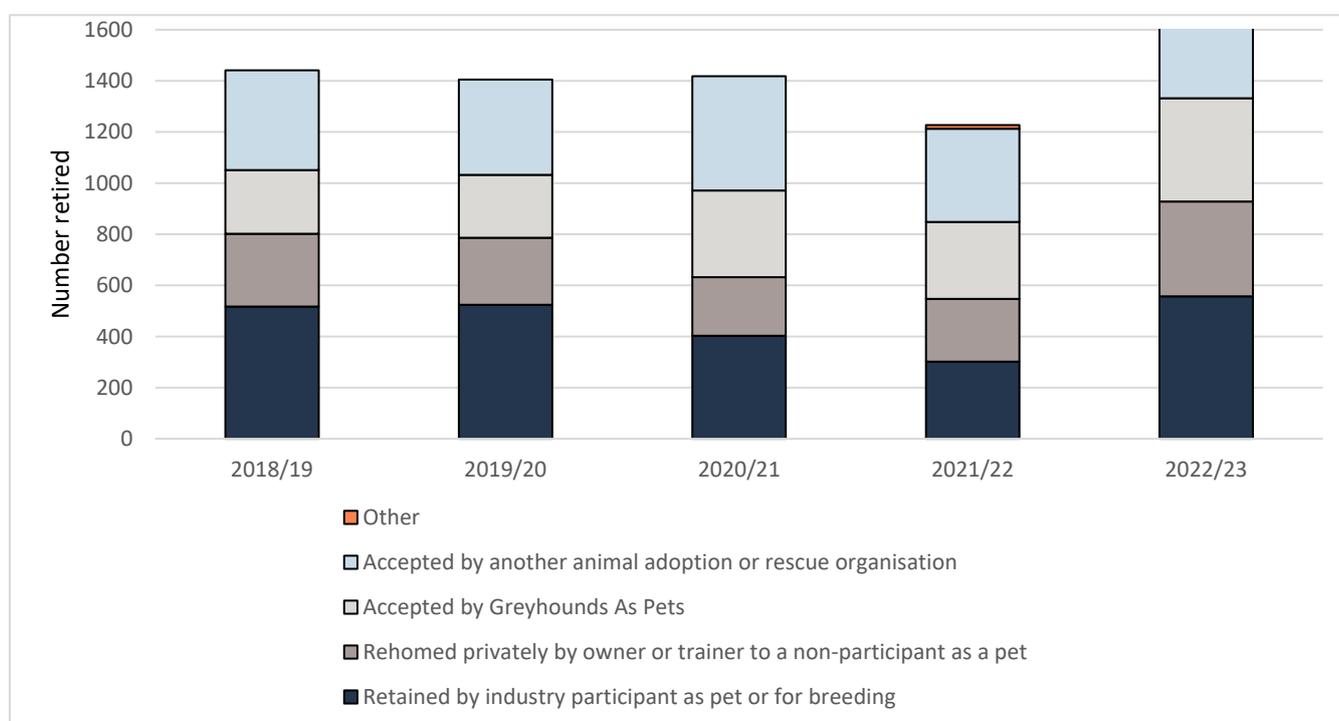
A total of 448 greyhounds were retired this quarter (Table 1).

\* This figure includes greyhounds registered in any jurisdiction, to more accurately count greyhound movements; previous reports have counted only greyhounds registered in NSW.

**Table 2: Greyhound retirement trends**

Destination	FY 2018/19	%	FY 2019/20	%	FY 2020/21	%	FY 2021/22	%	FY 2022/23	%
Retained by an industry participant	517	36%	524	37%	403	28%	302	25%	557	34%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer to a non-participant	285	20%	262	19%	229	16%	245	20%	371	22%
Accepted by a Greyhounds as Pets (GAP) centre	249	17%	246	17%	339	24%	301	25%	404	24%
Accepted by another animal rescue or adoption agency	390	27%	373	27%	447	32%	365	30%	314	19%
Other							14	1%	8	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1441</b>		<b>1405</b>		<b>1418</b>		<b>1227</b>		<b>1654</b>	

**Figure 5: Greyhound retirement trends**



The percentage of greyhounds retired has increased by 34% compared to 2021/22 (Table 2)

More greyhounds were accepted at Greyhounds as Pets (GAP) centres, and more were retained by industry participants as pets after receiving assistance from GRNSW in the form of desexing and other veterinary treatments.

## Euthanasia

Euthanasia of greyhounds registered with the Commission must conform with the Greyhound Rehoming Policy (<https://www.gwic.nsw.gov.au/integrity/rulesandpolicies>). Euthanasia categories used in this report are described in the policy.

**Table 3: Greyhound euthanasia reported by participants this quarter.**

Cause	Number	%
Medical euthanasia not at racetrack certified by a registered veterinarian due to		
injury <sup>1</sup>	41	34%
illness <sup>1</sup>	61	51%
Medical euthanasia due to emergency <sup>2</sup>	0	0%
Euthanasia at race meeting due to injury	11	9%
Euthanasia after registered veterinarian certified that the greyhound was behaviourally unsuitable for rehoming <sup>3</sup>	7	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	

<sup>1</sup>The veterinarian must certify that the greyhound was suffering from an intractable injury or 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.

<sup>2</sup>The circumstances surrounding any emergency euthanasia are examined by the Commission to ensure they are in accordance with the Commission's policies and the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979*.

<sup>3</sup>Euthanasia for behavioural reasons is not currently permitted under the Greyhound Rehoming Policy. These cases are investigated to determine if a breach of the Policy has occurred.

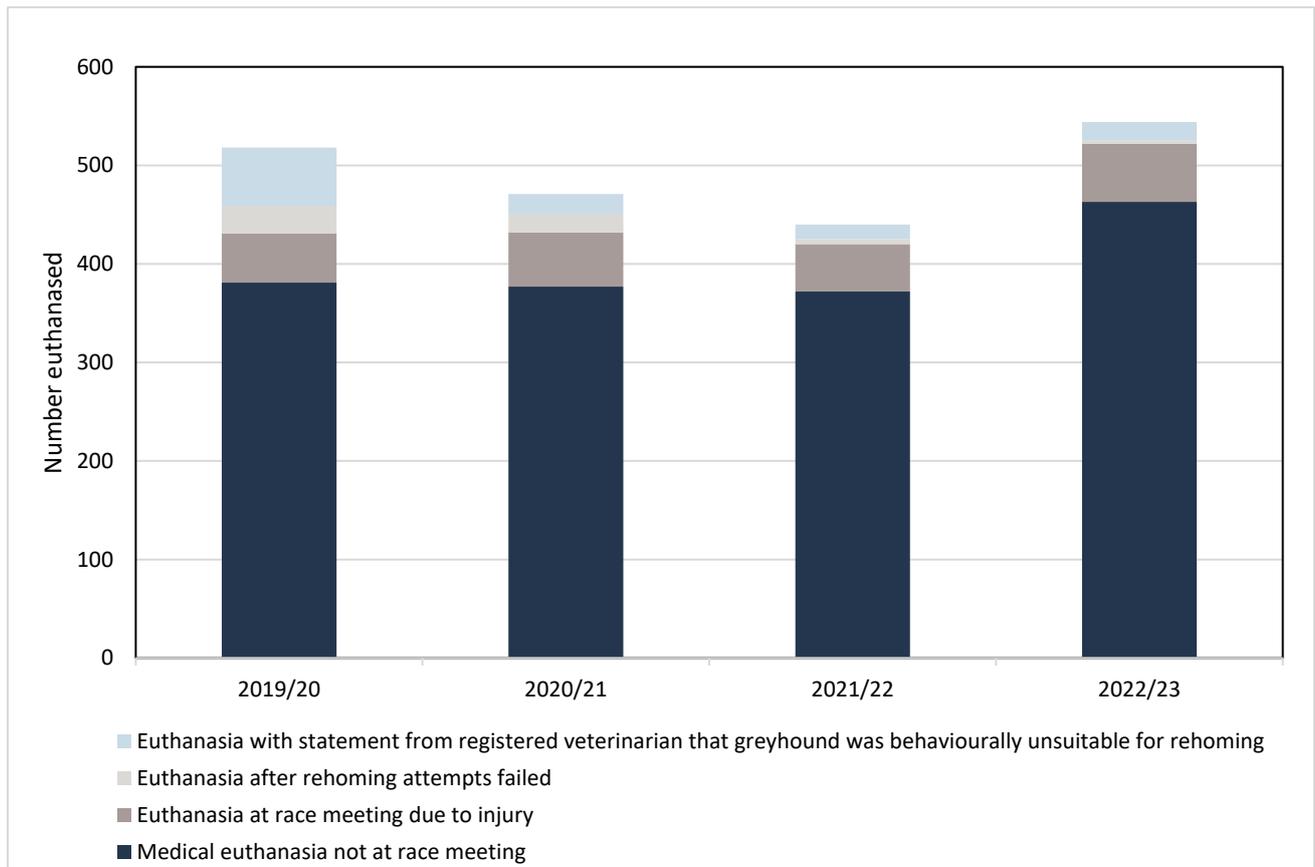
A total of 120 greyhounds were euthanased this quarter, 85% for illness or injury not at the racetrack (Table 3).

**Table 4: Greyhound euthanasia trends**

Cause	FY 2018/19	%	FY 2019/20	%	FY 2020/21	%	FY 2021/22	%	FY 2022/23	%
Medical euthanasia not at racetrack	396	62%	381	74%	377	80%	372	85%	463	85%
Euthanasia at racetrack	97	15%	50	10%	55	12%	48	11%	59	11%
Rehoming attempts failed	36	6%	28	5%	19	4%	5	1%	3	1%
Behaviourally unsuitable <sup>1</sup>	106	17%	59	11%	20	4%	15	3%	19	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>635</b>		<b>518</b>		<b>471</b>		<b>440</b>		<b>544</b>	

<sup>1</sup>Euthanasia for behavioural reasons was not permitted under the Greyhound Rehoming Policy from 1 December 2019 onwards. Current GWIC policy requires this notification to be certified as necessary by a veterinary practitioner.

**Figure 6: Greyhound euthanasia trends**



The number of greyhounds euthanased in this financial year is 24% higher than in 2021/22 (Table 4), primarily due to an ageing and thus more injury and illness-prone population after years with higher whelping rates.

The proportion of greyhounds euthanased for medical reasons (not at race meetings) has remained relatively steady within a 5% range over the last three years as the leading category. In addition, the proportion euthanased after the failure of rehoming attempts and for behavioural reasons continues to decline, with an inevitably slower rate of decline apparent over the past 2 years (Figure 6).

## Death

**Table 5: Greyhound deaths reported by participants this quarter.**

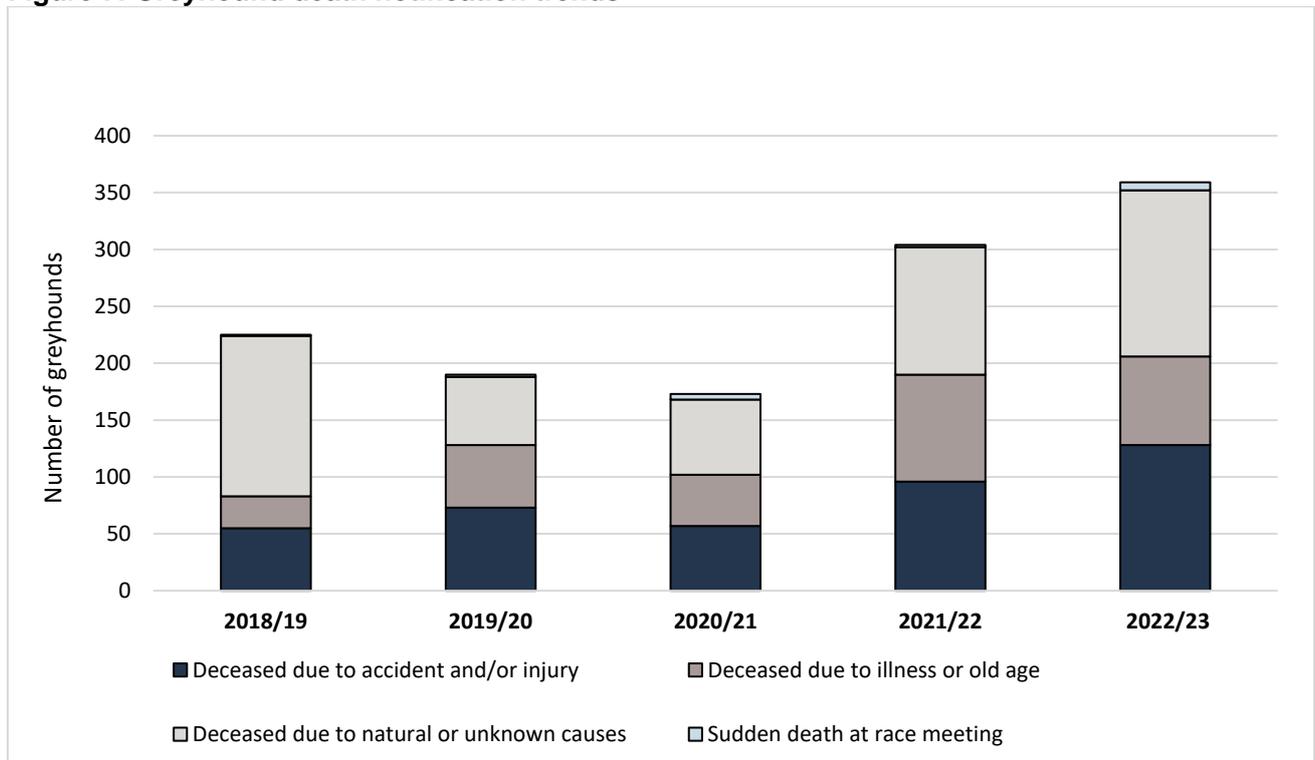
Cause	Number	%
Deceased due to accident and/or injury	32	33%
Deceased due to illness or old age	23	24%
Deceased due to natural or unknown causes	39	40%
Sudden death at race meeting	4	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	

A total of 98 greyhounds died this quarter, 44% of them from illness, old age or unknown causes (Table 5).

**Table 6: Greyhound death notification trends**

Cause	FY									
	2018/19	%	2019/20	%	2020/21	%	2021/22	%	2022/23	%
Accident and injury	55	24%	81	37%	67	36%	106	33%	145	40%
Illness or old age	28	12%	57	26%	42	22%	82	25%	89	24%
Natural or unknown causes	141	63%	79	36%	75	40%	132	41%	126	34%
Sudden death at race meeting	1	<1%	2	<1%	4	2%	2	<1%	7	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>		<b>219</b>		<b>188</b>		<b>322</b>		<b>367</b>	

**Figure 7: Greyhound death notification trends**



The number of greyhounds that died in the 2022/23 financial year is 14% greater than the 2021/22 year (Figure 7). This extends an upwards trend from 2020/21.

Such an increase may attribute to two factors: improved participant compliance with the requirement to submit death notices; and historic whelping patterns, where greyhounds whelped in years with high breeding rates are now reaching a point in their life where they are more likely to die from illness and old age.