



**GREYHOUND WELFARE & INTEGRITY COMMISSION**  
**DISCIPLINARY ACTION DECISION**

<b>Date of decision:</b>	Thursday 1 February 2024
<b>Decision-maker:</b>	Senior Steward Kevin Adams and Steward Peter Phillips
<b>Track:</b>	Muswellbrook
<b>Date:</b>	14 October 2023
<b>Rule no.:</b>	141(1)(a)
<b>Charge(s):</b>	Ms. Meredith Verhagen presented the greyhound 'Panama Lady' ("Greyhound") for the purposes of competing in race 11 at the Muswellbrook meeting on 14 October 2023 in circumstances where the Greyhound was not free of any prohibited substance.
<b>Prohibited Substance(s):</b>	Arsenic at or in excess of the threshold of 800 nanograms per millilitre.
<b>Plea:</b>	Guilty
<b>Disciplinary action taken:</b>	\$1000 fine and a 12-week suspension, wholly and conditionally suspended for a period of 12 months pending no further breaches under this or any like rule.

**INVESTIGATION**

Following receipt of a certificate of analysis from Racing Analytical Services Limited dated 24 November 2023, the Commission conducted an investigation into the results of a post event urine sample taken from the greyhound, 'Panama Lady' at the Muswellbrook meeting on 14 October 2023.

Further analysis of the sample was conducted by the Racing Chemistry Laboratory confirming the presence of Arsenic at or in excess of the threshold of 800 nanograms per millilitre.

**DECISION:**

1. Ms Verhagen is a registered Owner Trainer and the trainer of 'Panama Lady' ("Greyhound"). The Greyhound competed in race 11 of the Muswellbrook meeting on 14 October 2023. Prior to the Event, a urine sample was taken from the Greyhound.
2. The pre-event swab revealed the presence of Arsenic at or in excess of the threshold of 800 nanograms per millilitre.

3. Arsenic at or in excess of the threshold of 800 nanograms per millilitre is a prohibited substance under Rule 140(g) of the GWIC Greyhound Racing Rules.
4. On 18 December 2023 Ms Verhagen was issued with a notice of charge and proposed disciplinary action (“**Notice**”).
5. In the Notice issued on 18 December 2023 the decision makers charged Ms Verhagen with an offence under Rule 141(1)(a) of the Greyhound Racing Rules, which reads:

**Rule 141(1), Rules**

(1) The owner, trainer or other person in charge of a greyhound:

(a) nominated to compete in an Event;

...

must present the greyhound free of any prohibited substance.

...

(3) The owner, trainer or person in charge of a greyhound presented contrary to subrule (1) of this rule shall be guilty of an offence.

6. The Notice proposed a penalty of a four-month suspension and invited Ms Verhagen to attend a hearing to enter a plea and make submissions in relation to the charge.
7. At the hearing conducted at the Gardens Race Club on Thursday 1 February 2024, Ms. Verhaegen and her legal representative:
  - (a) entered a plea of guilty; and
  - (b) made verbal submissions
8. In considering the matter, the decision makers considered Ms Verhagen’s plea and submissions, as well as all available evidence. The decision makers found the charge proven and took the following disciplinary action against Ms Verhagen:
  - To issue a \$1000 fine and a 12-week suspension, wholly and conditionally suspended for a period of 12 months pending no further breaches under this or any like rule.
9. In taking this disciplinary action, the decision makers considered all evidence, including:
  - Ms Verhagen’s guilty plea (25% reduction);
  - Ms Verhagen’s three-year Trainer registration and ten-year Attendant license history with unblemished record
  - Ms Verhagen’s co-operation and forthright evidence;

- GWIC penalty guidelines.

10. In addition, the Greyhound was disqualified from race 11 at the Muswellbrook meeting on 14 October 2023 pursuant to Rule 141(4) of the Rules.

.....End.....