



## GRA Chair

**Phil Bennett**

# *Greyhound racing is its own industry*

The board of the GRA, on behalf of the Queensland greyhound racing industry, made a detailed submission to the inquiry into the Integrity Management Structures within the three Codes of Racing established by the Queensland government. On 15 June, I was called upon by the inquiry to speak on the submission.

The following is the summary that was attached to the submission and sets out the position that was put forward and the recommendations made to the inquiry. *It is hoped that from this submission it is clear the Greyhound racing industry has not been beset by some of the problems that may have impacted upon other codes of racing in Queensland, or indeed other areas of racing in other states.*

*We consider this is principally due to the unique position greyhound racing has within the Queensland racing industry, given:*

- a) A Board structure which reflects the need for a combination of independence and industry knowledge.*
- b) Strong financial and regulatory controls provided by State legislation.*
- c) The natural composition of the greyhound racing fraternity which does not of itself involve strong tensions or competing interests in relation to matters of integrity services and other regulatory functions.*

*In summary, the GRA submit the following:*

- (1) There is no justification for a complete separation of commercial and regulatory functions within greyhound racing. The only State to have adopted such a structure (NSW) has reported significant concerns over viability of this separation, and it is submitted that it is not necessary in Queensland.*
- (2) There is no justification for a merger of the regulatory or other functions across the three Codes*

*of Racing into one body.*

*Indeed, any such merger would be positively detrimental to the regulation and integrity services delivered to greyhound racing.*

*(3) The current Board structure of the GRA presents as a good model for the minimization of potential conflicts of interests to arise. Further, the proposed model for restructure under the Racing Act 2002, as presented to the Minister for Racing in October 2003, represents an efficient, workable, and safe solution to ensure that the greyhound racing industry can continue to be regulated efficiently, but free from conflicts of interest.*

*In light of these findings the GRA makes the following recommendations to ensure confidence in integrity services within the industry:*

- \* Board selection should be maintained consistent with the present mix of skills without an over-emphasis on commercial skills, but with members with commercial experience.*
- \* There should be periodic audits of the box draws and the computer program.*
- \* All stewards officiating at race meetings should be employed by the GRA.*
- \* There should be benchmarking of the conditions of steward's employment conditions with those in other codes and jurisdictions*
- \* The integration of steward's training with the other codes, on common areas.*
- \* Maintenance of consistency in integrity budget allocations consistent with the proportion of races conducted.*
- \* Development of industry measures and benchmarking on steward numbers and testing across comparable venues and numbers of race*

*meetings/races.*

*\* Continuing education for industry participants and GRA employees (particularly those involved in stewarding and other integrity services) on the availability of grievance and complaint procedures and the mandatory reporting of potential corruption or official misconduct.*

*\* That all appointments of senior staff to the control body be made in consultation with the Racing Animal Welfare and Integrity Board.*

The merger of the regulatory functions with harness racing was addressed in the body of the submission

and it too, was dismissed as not being an appropriate model for the future.

The Authority will immediately implement the employment of all of the stewards who work at non-TAB race meetings and will have an audit of the box draw program undertaken.

The budget for integrity services will accordingly increase in the next financial year.

The Authority will absorb the costs of employing the stewards resulting in further funds being available to the six non-TAB clubs.