

**28 August 2020**

## **Chief Commissioner responds to claims by Robert Borsak**

NSW Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission Chief Commissioner Alan Brown AM has issued the following statement.

“Yesterday the Hon Robert Borsak MLC made a call to sack the Commission’s CEO following several disciplinary decisions made by her in relation to positive swabs for prohibited substances, some permanently banned, where participants who were penalised have claimed contaminated meat was the source of the positive swabs. Mr Borsak claimed ‘these rulings are out of line and something needs to be done’,” Chief Commissioner Brown said.

“The Commission has an obligation to enforce NSW legislation and the Rules of Racing when breaches occur. Those rules include absolute liability provisions when greyhounds are found not to be free of prohibited substances.”

“The integrity of the sport and the welfare of greyhounds are paramount. These drugs have the capacity to affect a dog’s performance and health. That is why these drugs are banned. In addition, those industry participants that present their dogs drug free on race day and the punters who bet on greyhound racing are entitled to a level playing field – and the Commission will use its resources to ensure that occurs.”

Mr Borsak claimed that five participants had been suspended from the industry ranging from 20-26 weeks.

“What Mr Borsak did not point out was that all five were provided with ‘wholly suspended’ penalties, meaning they continue to be able to participate in the industry. The Commission had regard for each participant’s circumstances, including claims that they sourced meat from knackereries that may have used contaminated livestock from Victoria.”

The penalties imposed in these five disciplinary decisions are relatively lenient when compared to penalties imposed in other jurisdictions, including those of the Racing Appeals Board in Victoria, where disqualifications of several months have been imposed for similar offences. Where circumstances justify, the Commission will impose comparable penalties.

“The Commission recognises the need for industry participants to access affordable feed supplies for their greyhounds and has previously issued advice to the industry about the risk from possible contaminated meat from knackereries who cannot or do not guarantee their meat is drug free when purchased for use in the greyhound racing industry.”

The Commission issued a further advice [yesterday](#) and again [today](#) dealing with this issue.

“The attack by Mr Borsak is disappointing in light of the excellent working relationship Ms Lind and the Commission have developed with greyhound industry participants since it commenced its role in July 2018,” Chief Commissioner Brown said.

“The Commissioners have full confidence in Ms Lind and we will continue working tirelessly to protect the welfare of greyhounds and the integrity of the industry so that both can prosper.”