

Greyhound life cycle report

1 April – 30 June 2024



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.

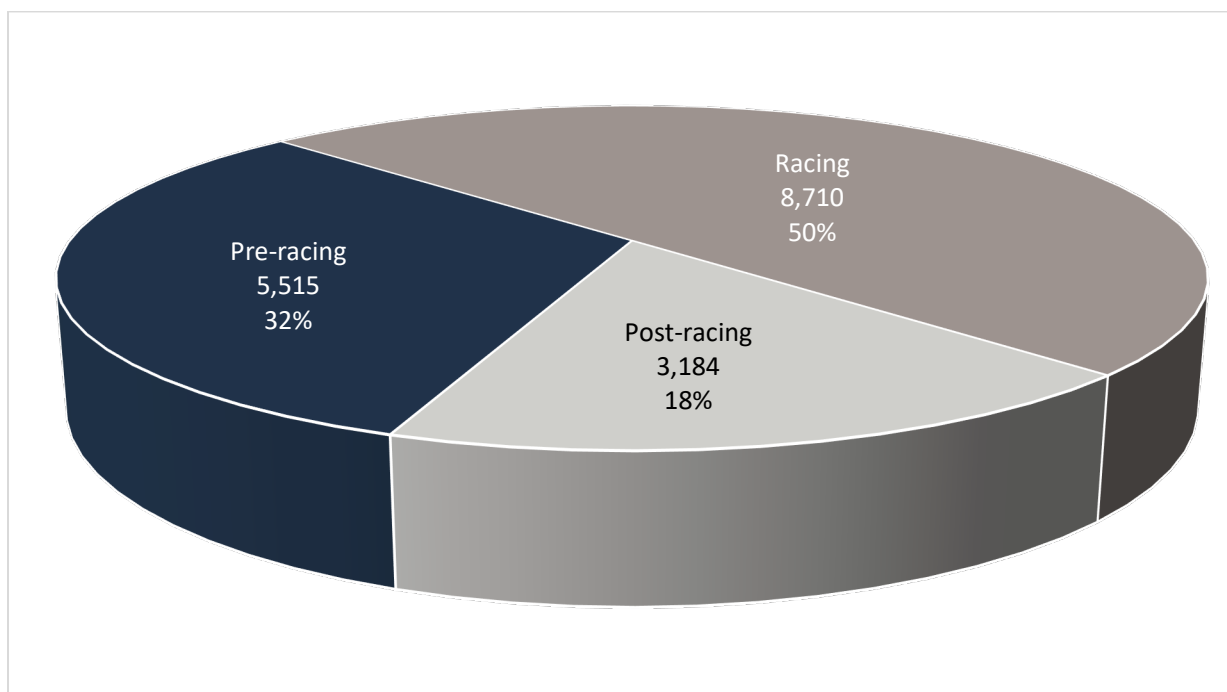
Participants are required to notify the Commission within 14 days from the date of servicing, whelping and retirement, and within two days from the date of euthanasia or death of a greyhound.

Note that figures for this quarter may be lower than in future reports due to late notifications from participants. Values for previous financial years have been reconciled with annual reports for consistency.

Greyhound numbers and status

As at 30 June 2024, the estimated industry greyhound population is 17,409 (Figure 1), a decrease of 85 from the previous quarter. In the same time frame, the proportion of retired greyhounds has increased by 1%, while that of racing greyhounds has decreased by 1%, leaving the proportion of pre-racing greyhounds to remain unchanged.

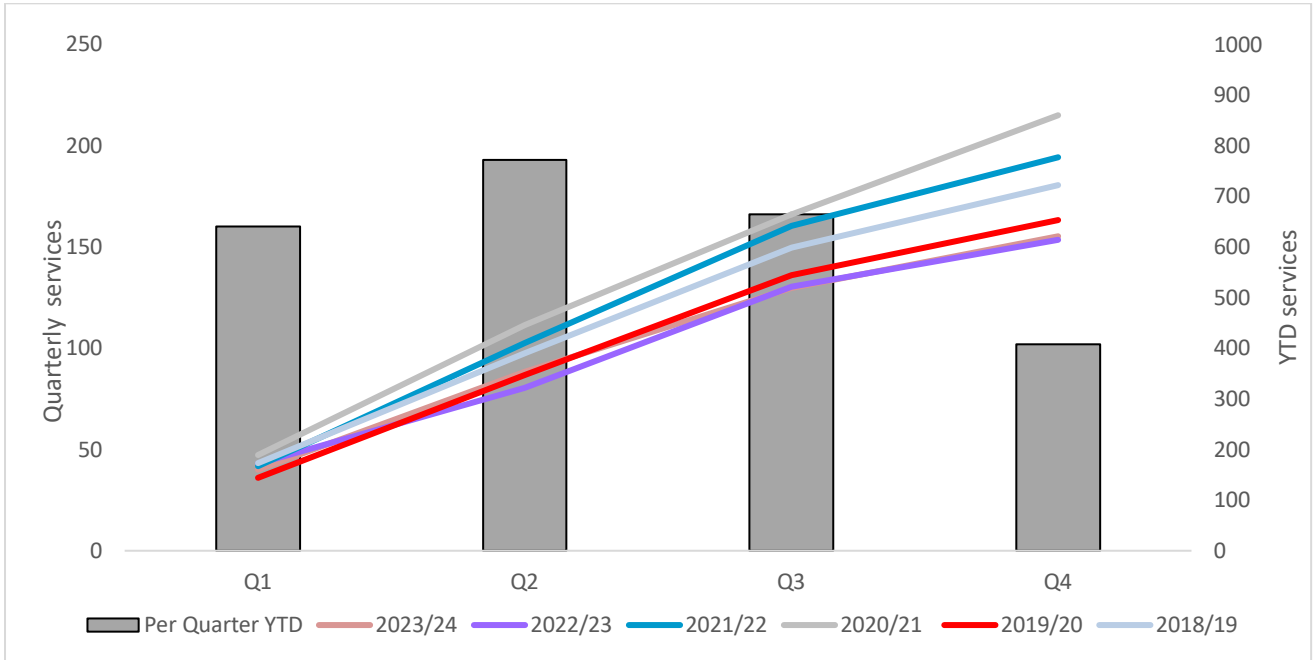
Figure 1: Registered greyhound population



Breeding

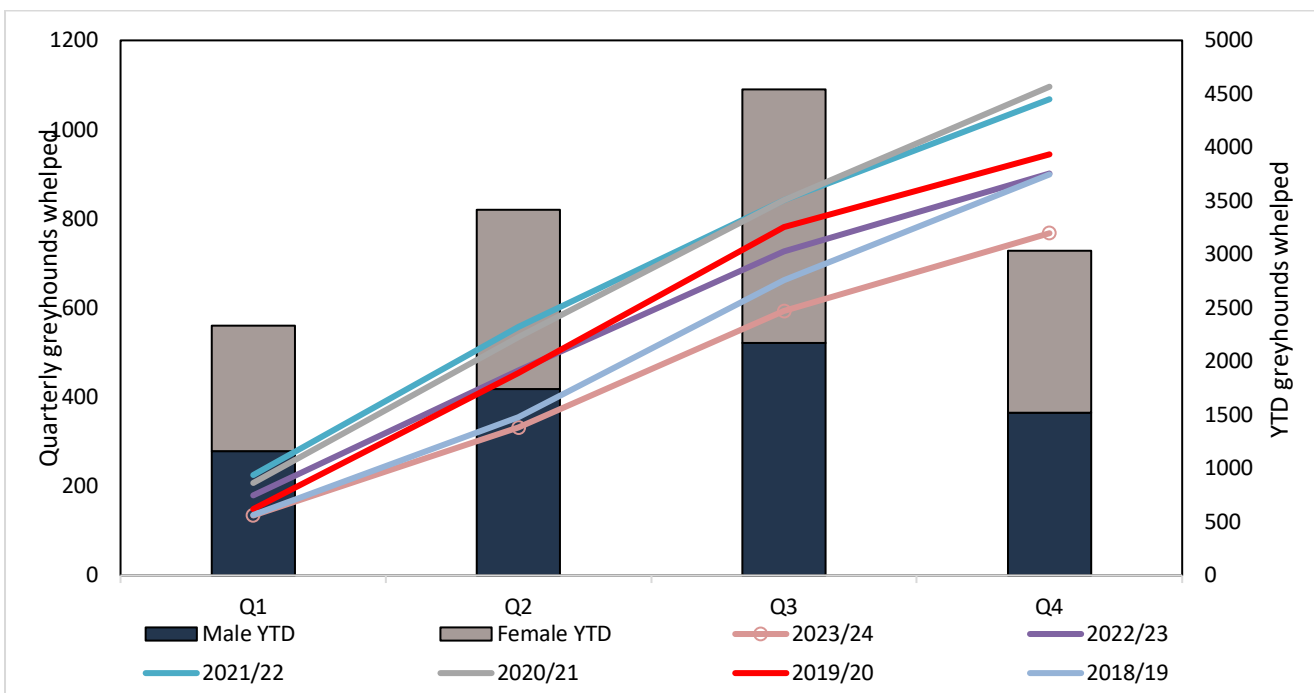
The Commission received notifications for 102 breeding services that occurred in April-June 2024. This brings the financial year's total to 621, which marks a 1% increase from FY2023 (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Breeding services



In this quarter, 728 greyhounds were whelped from 113 litters and notified to the Commission (Figure 3). This brings the total number of pups whelped in FY2024 to 3,198, the lowest figure of the last six years.

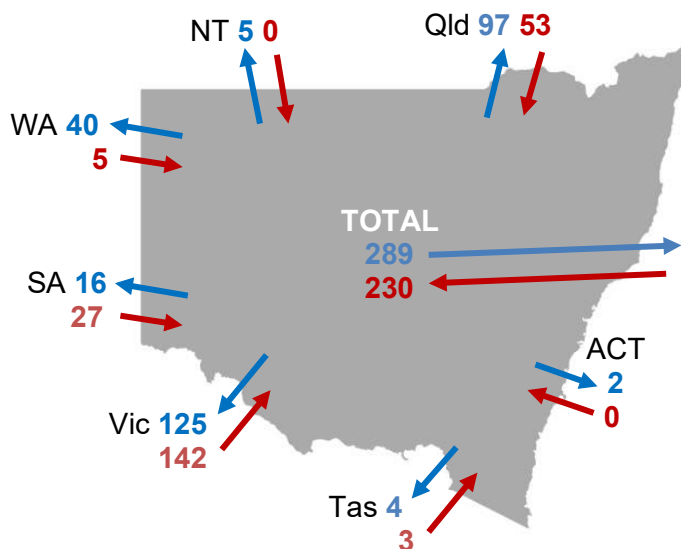
Figure 3: Pups whelped



Interstate transfers

During this quarter, a total of 289 greyhounds were transferred out of NSW¹ to trainers in other jurisdictions, while 230 greyhounds came into NSW from other areas. The most significant exchanges occurred with Victoria and Queensland, reflecting their robust greyhound racing industries, a trend consistent with previous quarters.

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	318	39%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer to a non-participant	161	20%
Accepted by Greyhounds as Pets ¹ (GAP)	279	35%
Accepted by another animal adoption agency ²	48	6%
Other	0	0%
Total	806	

¹ A not-for-profit initiative coordinated by Greyhound Racing NSW.

² Including the RSPCA, AWL, or council animal care facilities.

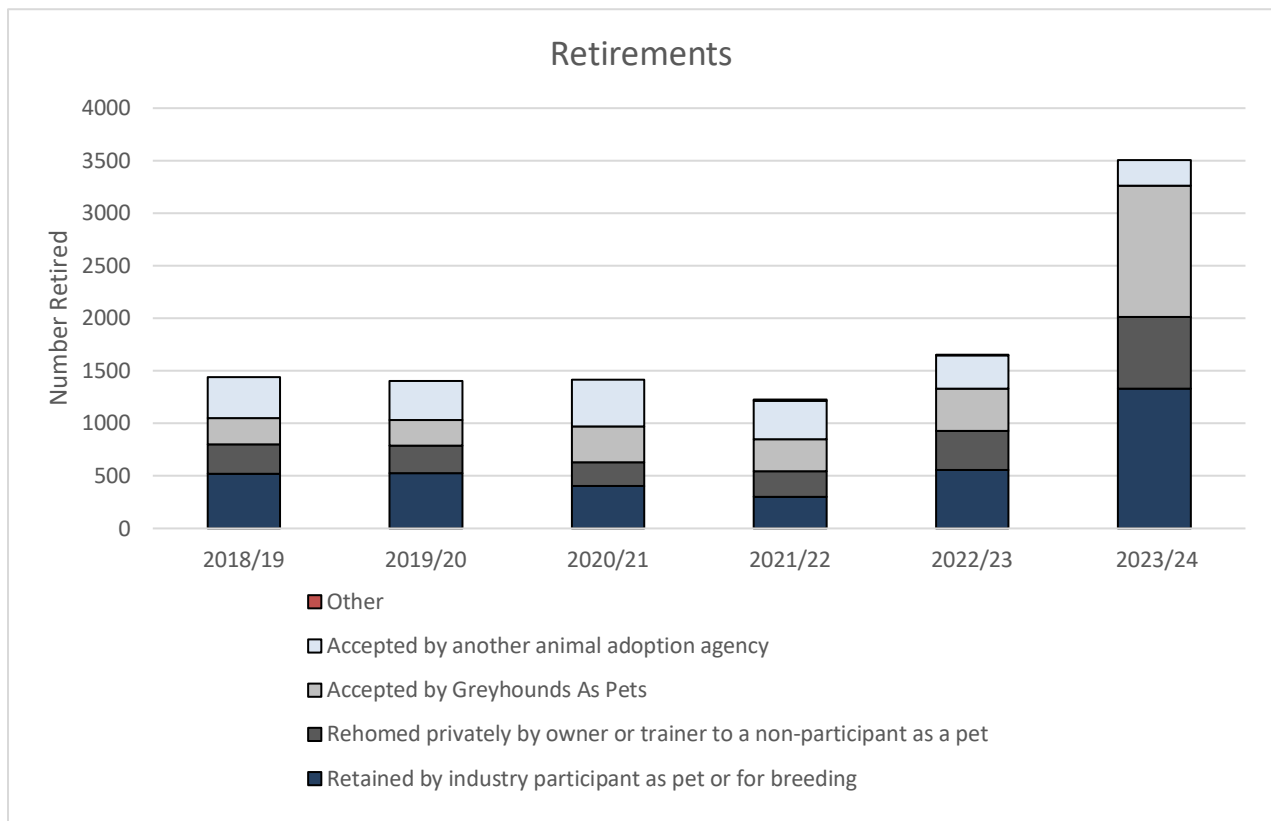
This quarter had 80% more retirements than the same period last year (Table 1), despite a decline in retirements to third-party adoption agencies since FY2023.

¹This figure includes greyhounds registered in any jurisdiction, to count greyhound movements more accurately; 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 2021/22	%	FY 2023/24	%
Retained by an industry participant	517	36%	524	37%	403	28%	302	25%	557	34%	1,332	38%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer to a non-participant	285	20%	262	19%	229	16%	245	20%	371	22%	679	19%
Accepted by a Greyhounds as Pets (GAP) centre	249	17%	246	17%	339	24%	301	25%	404	24%	1,253	36%
Accepted by another animal adoption agency	390	27%	373	27%	447	32%	365	30%	314	19%	243	7%
Other							14	1%	8	<1%	2	<1%
Total	1,441		1,405		1,418		1,227		1,654		3,509	

Figure 5: Greyhound retirement trends



In FY2024, the number of greyhound retirements increased by 112% compared to FY2023's total of 1,654 (Table 2, Figure 5), with GAP retirements seeing the largest rise.

The significant increase in retirements can be attributed to the requirement for eTrac check-ins, which incentivises owners to notify the Commission when a greyhound is no longer racing. In addition, Commission staff have made extensive efforts to contact owners of older greyhounds unlikely to race again, encouraging them to submit retirement notifications.

While GAP centers have accepted more greyhounds, an increasing number of retirees are being retained by industry participants as pets after receiving support 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 ¹	44	32%
illness ¹	86	63%
Medical euthanasia due to emergency ²	0	0%
Euthanasia at race meeting due to injury	3	2%
Euthanasia after registered veterinarian certified that the greyhound was behaviourally unsuitable for rehoming ³	3	2%
Total	136	

¹The 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.

²The 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*.

³Euthanasia 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.

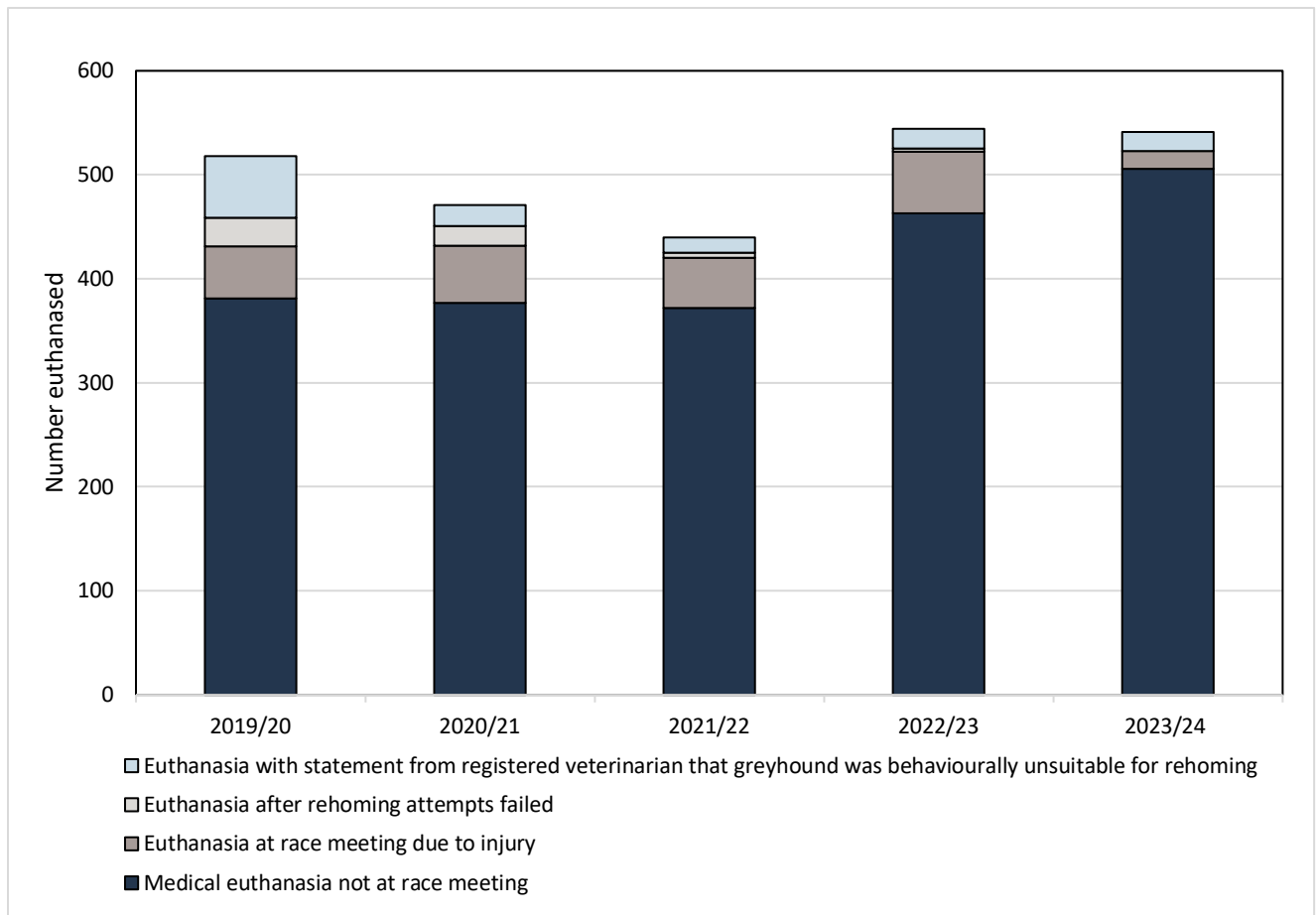
Between April and June 2024, the Commission received 5% more euthanasia notifications than in the previous quarter. Illness and injury accounted for 95% of these euthanasias, with illness becoming increasingly prominent in an aging greyhound population (Table 3).

Table 4: Greyhound euthanasia trends

Cause	FY 2018/19	%	FY 2019/20	%	FY 2020/21	%	FY 2021/22	%	FY 2022/23	%	FY 2023/24	%
Medical euthanasia not at racetrack	396	62%	381	74%	377	80%	372	85%	463	85%	506	94%
Euthanasia at racetrack	97	15%	50	10%	55	12%	48	11%	59	11%	17	3%
Rehoming attempts failed	36	6%	28	5%	19	4%	5	1%	3	1%	0	0%
Behaviourally unsuitable ¹	106	17%	59	11%	20	4%	15	3%	19	3%	18	3%
Total	635		518		471		440		544		541	

¹Euthanasia 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



In FY2024, the total number of euthanasias remained consistent with the previous financial year, showing a difference of less than 1% despite an increase in illness-induced euthanasias (Table 4). The 3% contribution from on-track euthanasias (Table 3) reflects a long-term decline since FY2019, when the figure was 15% (Table 4). This improvement can be explained by improved track conditions, the Commission’s introduction of a serious injury treatment policy for veterinarians, and the GRNSW Greyhound Care Scheme.

The percentage of greyhounds euthanased due to behavioral issues has leveled at a low of 3% over the past two years, marking a significant decrease from 17% in FY2019 (Table 4).

Death

Table 5: Greyhound deaths reported by participants this quarter.

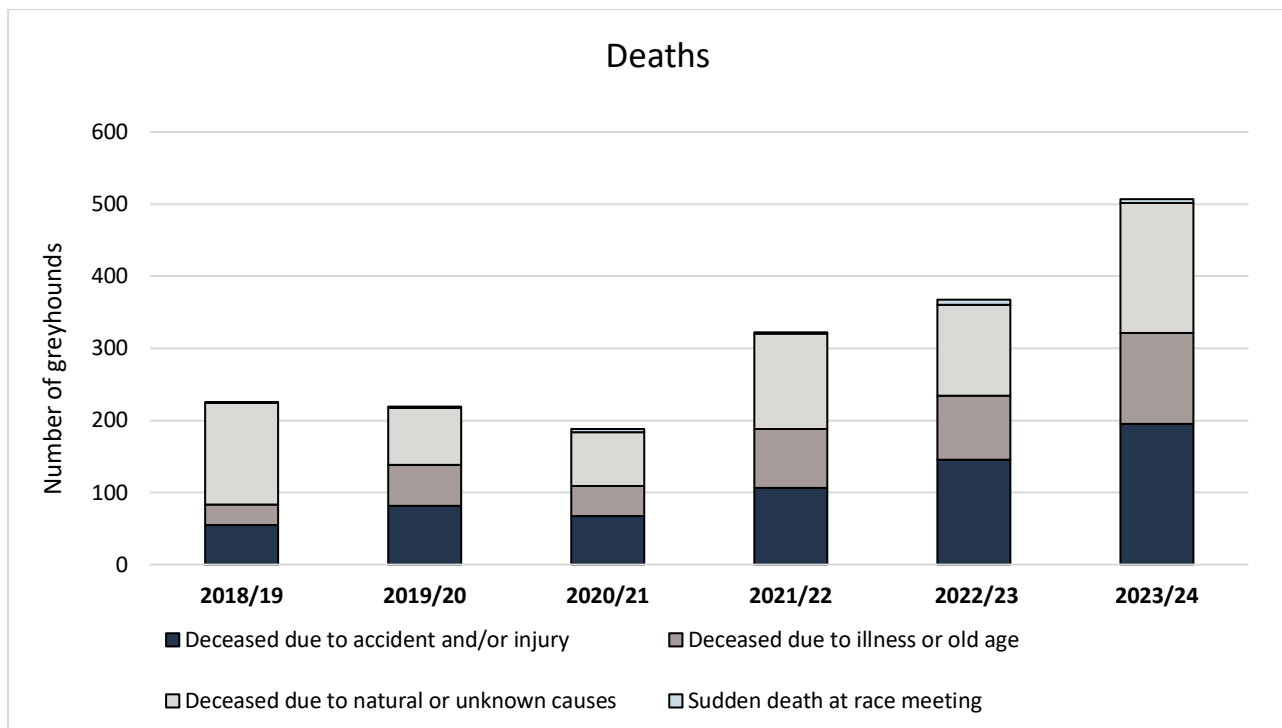
Cause	Number	%
Deceased due to accident and/or injury	23	26%
Deceased due to illness or old age	36	40%
Deceased due to natural or unknown causes	29	32%
Sudden death at race meeting	2	2%
Total	90	

A total of 90 greyhounds died in this quarter, which is 8% less than April-June 2023. Of these deaths, 72% were due to illness, old age, or unknown causes (Table 5), slightly higher than the figures recorded over the past four years (Table 6).

Table 6: Greyhound death notification trends

Cause	FY		FY		FY		FY		FY		FY	
	2018/19	%	2019/20	%	2020/21	%	2021/22	%	2022/23	%	2023/24	%
Accident and injury	55	24%	81	37%	67	36%	106	33%	145	40%	194	38%
Illness or old age	28	12%	57	26%	42	22%	82	25%	89	24%	125	25%
Natural or unknown causes	141	63%	79	36%	75	40%	132	41%	126	34%	181	36%
Sudden death at race meeting	1	<1%	2	<1%	4	2%	2	<1%	7	2%	5	<1%
Total	225		219		188		322		367		505	

Figure 7: Greyhound death notification trends



In FY2024, the total number of recorded greyhound deaths increased by 38% compared to FY2023, continuing a three-year upward trend that follows several years of gradual decline.

This steady growth since FY2021 can be attributed to improved participant compliance with death notification requirements. Additionally, historically high whelping rates have resulted in an older greyhound population, increasing the likelihood of deaths from illness and natural causes.