



Greyhound Retirement and End of Life Report

1 January – 31 March 2020



GREYHOUND RETIREMENT AND END OF LIFE REPORT JANUARY – MARCH 2020

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GREYHOUND RETIREMENT AND END OF LIFE REPORT JANUARY – MARCH 2020

Foreword

Each quarter the Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission (the Commission) publishes a report providing data in relation to retirements, euthanasia and deaths of greyhounds registered with the Commission in NSW. The publication of such data is designed to provide transparent, accurate and timely reporting of these events.

This report contains data relating to the third quarter of 2019/20, being the period 1 January to 31 March 2020. As this is the third edition of this report trend line analysis is limited.

The Commission will continue to evolve the structure and content of the report to enhance its utility.

Data Sources

The statistics contained in this report for greyhound retirements and deaths relate to notifications received by the Commission from registered participants in the relevant reporting period, in accordance with relevant Commission policies, including the Commission's Rehoming Policy.

Statistics relating to euthanasia that occurs at racetracks are based on data recorded by the Commission's On-Track Veterinarians. All other euthanasia statistics relate to notifications received from participants, including where applicable, certifications from the veterinarian who performed the euthanasia.

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Retirements reported during the quarter

Retired greyhounds no longer race and usually become pets or are retained in the greyhound racing industry for breeding. The Commission was notified of 299 greyhound retirements that occurred between 1 January – 31 March 2020 (see Table 1).

Of the notifications received, 43.1% 129 of retired greyhounds were retained by their registered owner or trainer as a pet, and these dogs stay registered with the Commission. A further 14.4% (43) of retired greyhounds were notified as being rehomed privately by their owner or trainer to someone outside the greyhound racing industry.

The remaining greyhounds were rehomed to pet rescue or rehoming organisations. The largest single rehoming program is the Greyhounds As Pets (GAP) program managed by GRNSW, and the Commission was notified of 51 (17.1%) retirements to GAP. Notifications showed that other animal rescue and adoption agencies accepted 76 (25.4%) greyhounds into their facilities.

There were no greyhounds retired for export during this quarter.

Table 1: Greyhound retirements reported to the Commission 1 January – 31 March 2020

Destination	Number	%
Retained by owner or trainer	129	43.1%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer ¹	43	14.4%
Accepted by Greyhounds As Pets (GAP)	51	17.1%
Accepted by another animal rescue or adoption agency ²	76	25.4%
Retired for export	0	0%
Total	299	

¹ Rehomed to a member of the public as a pet.

² Accepted by another animal rescue or adoption agency including pet rescue organisations, RSPCA, AWL or Council animal care facilities.

Euthanasia reported during the quarter

On 1 December 2019 the Commission updated its Rehoming Policy³ to require greyhounds, that could previously be euthanased following certification by a veterinarian as being unsuitable for rehoming, to be subject to rehoming requirements. This quarter two greyhounds were reported as having been euthanased due to the veterinarian certifying that the greyhound was behaviourally unsuitable for re-homing. These matters are currently under investigation.

The Commission expects that greyhounds with behavioural problems undergo a behavioural assessment via GAP or other suitable canine behavioural expert and attempts are made to rehabilitate and re-home these greyhounds. Where a greyhound is to be considered for euthanasia, other than for medical reasons, a Notice of Intent to Euthanase form must be submitted to the Commission at least 14 days prior to the date of euthanasia.

A total of 96 greyhounds were reported as euthanased 1 January – 31 March 2020. Seventy-two (75%) of these were performed by private veterinarians for medical reasons such as injury or illness. There were no reported cases of emergency euthanasia by a person other than a veterinarian. The injuries most commonly reported by veterinarians were severe bone fractures.

A wide variety of illnesses precipitated euthanasia of greyhounds, including cancers, gastric dilation and volvulus (GDV), arthritis and various co-morbidities associated with age.

Fifteen greyhounds (15.6%) were euthanased by Commission veterinarians due to a catastrophic injury that occurred as a result of racing.

Table 2: Greyhound euthanasia reported to the Commission 1 January – 31 March 2020

Cause	Number	%
Medical euthanasia (not at racetrack) due to injury, illness, or an emergency ⁴	72	75%
Euthanasia after registered veterinarian certified that the greyhound was behaviourally unsuitable for rehoming ⁵	2	2.1%
Euthanasia at racetrack due to injury	15	15.6%
Euthanasia after rehoming attempts failed	7	7.3%
Total	96	

³ The Rehoming Policy can be found at <https://www.gwic.nsw.gov.au/integrity/rulesandpolicies/re-homing-policy>.

⁴ 'Emergency' refers to euthanasia performed by a non-veterinarian in the case of an emergency. The circumstances surrounding any emergency euthanasia are examined by the Commission to ensure they were in accordance with the Commission's policies and the *Prevention Of Cruelty To Animals Act 1979*.

⁵ From 1 December 2019 any greyhound that has not otherwise been rehomed privately must be subject to multiple attempts to rehome the greyhound.

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Deaths reported during the quarter⁶

A total of 65 greyhound deaths were reported between 1 January – 31 March 2020 of which 32 (49.2%) were reported as being due to accidental causes. Of the remaining greyhound deaths, 19 (29.2%) were from natural or unknown causes, 14 (21.5%) were reported as being due to illness and old age, with no deaths reported due to sudden death at the track.

Table 3: Greyhound deaths reported to the Commission 1 January – 31 March 2020

Cause	Number	%
Deceased due to accidental causes ⁷	32	49.2%
Deceased due to illness and old age ⁸	14	21.5%
Deceased due to natural or unknown causes	19	29.2%
Sudden death at track	0	0%
Total	65	

⁶ The data in this section is categorised based on the information provided to the Commission by participants.

⁷ Examples of accidental causes include paddock injuries, snake bites and fights.

⁸ Common illnesses associated with greyhounds include stomach torsions, twisted bowels and cardiac failure due to old age.

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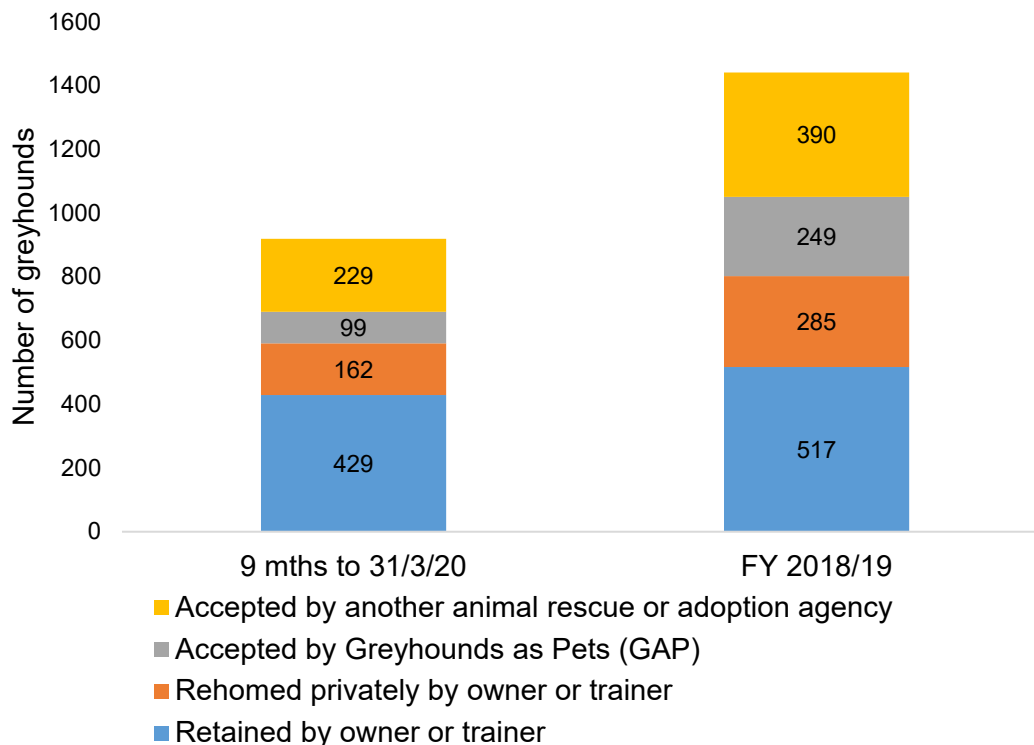
Trend line analysis

Preamble

As this is only the third edition of this particular report, trend line analysis is limited to comparing the current 'year to date' statistics, reflecting the period 1 July 2019 – 31 March 2020, with the full prior year (being 1 July 2018 - 30 June 2019).

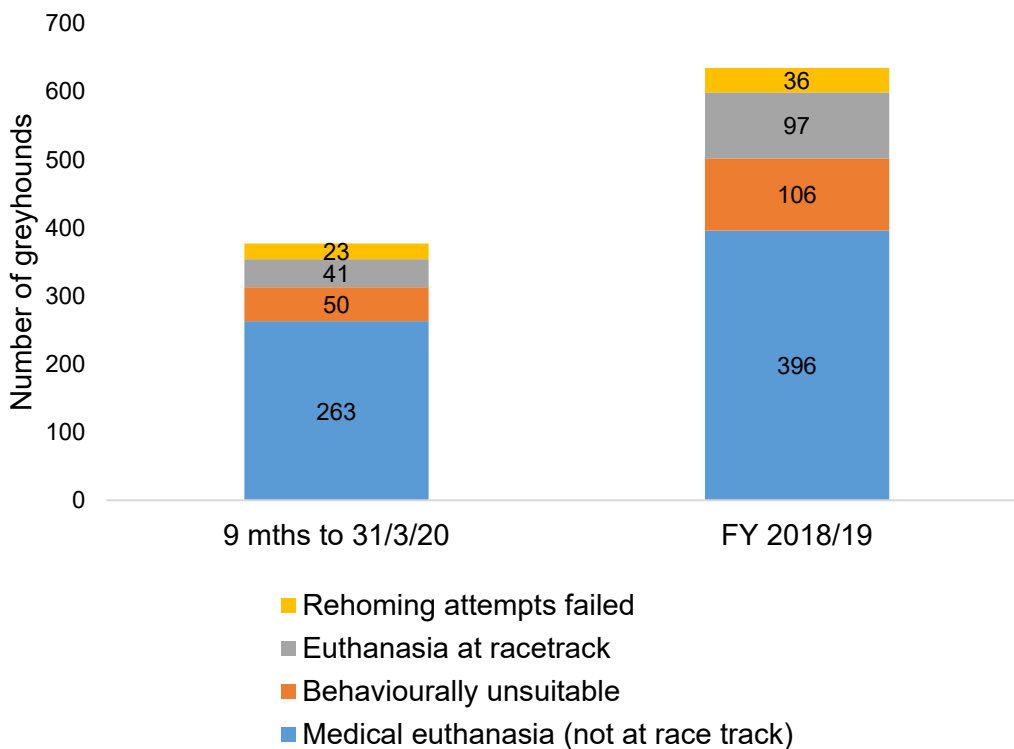
Graph 1. Greyhound Retirement Trends

Destination	Q1	Q2	Q3	9 mths to 31/3/20	FY 2018/19
Retained by owner or trainer	178	122	129	429	517
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer	63	56	43	162	285
Accepted by Greyhounds as Pets (GAP)	30	18	51	99	249
Accepted by another animal rescue or adoption agency	77	76	76	229	390
Total	348	272	299	919	1441



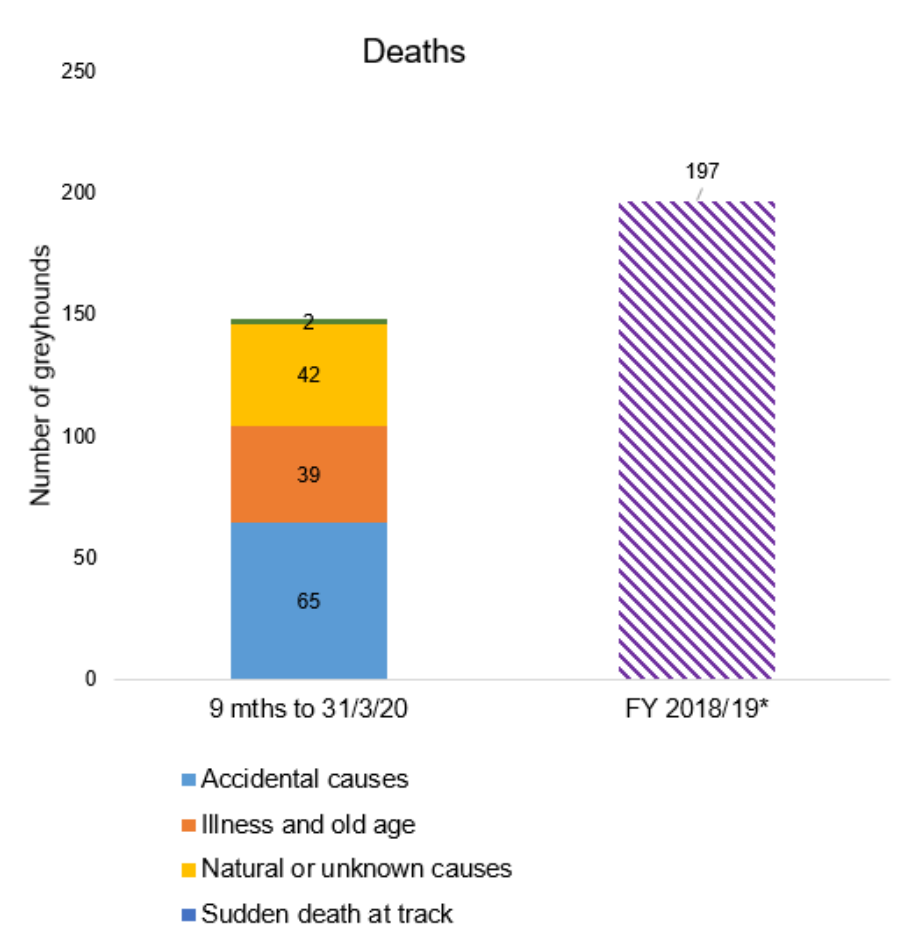
Graph 2. Greyhound Euthanasia Trends

Cause	Q1	Q2	Q3	9 mths to 31/3/20	FY 2018/19
Medical euthanasia (not at race track)	90	101	72	263	396
Euthanasia at racetrack	10	16	15	41	97
Behaviourally unsuitable	20	28	2	50	106
Rehoming attempts failed	11	5	7	23	36
Total	131	150	96	377	635



Graph 3. Greyhound Death Trends

Cause	Q1	Q2	Q3	9 mths to 31/3/20	FY 2018/19*
Accidental causes	9	24	32	65	
Illness and old age	11	14	14	39	
Natural or unknown causes	14	9	19	42	
Sudden death at track	2	0	0	2	
Total	36	47	65	148	197



* Full year 2018/19 categorisation of data by type is unavailable