



GREYHOUND WELFARE & INTEGRITY COMMISSION
DISCIPLINARY ACTION DECISION

Date of decision:	13 September 2022
Decision-makers:	Director of Race Day Operations and Integrity, Wade Birch, Steward, Paul Van Gestel
Name of relevant person:	Mr. Michael Hooper
Track:	N/A
Date:	31 January 2022
Rule no.:	86(o)
Charges:	Mr Hooper engaged in conduct that in the opinion of the Controlling Body was improper or constituted misconduct.
Disciplinary action taken:	To suspend Mr Hooper's registrations for a period of 6 months, 2 months of which is conditionally suspended for a period of 12 months subject to Mr. Hooper not breaching Rule 86(o) or any like Rule in that period.

BACKGROUND

1. Mr. Hooper was, at all relevant times, a registered Public Trainer and Breeder with the Commission.
2. On 31 January 2022, Mr. Hooper did a thing when attending the Richmond Club that in the opinion of the Controlling Body was improper or constituted misconduct by engaging in the following conduct:
 - Mr Hooper engaged in a verbal altercation with Ms Leanne Barnes, who was working as a club official;
 - Following the verbal altercation, Mr. Hooper remained in the vicinity of Ms Barnes for approximately one hour, despite Ms Barnes' request that all those present leave;
 - By remaining in the vicinity where Ms Barnes was working, Mr. Hooper acted in a way that was intimidatory towards Ms. Barnes;
 - Mr. Hooper further remained in the carpark of the Richmond Club for a period of approximately 15 minutes following a personal request from Ms Barnes to Mr. Hooper for him to leave; and
 - By remaining in the carpark, Mr. Hooper acted in a way that was intimidatory towards Ms Barnes.

DECISION:

3. On 24 May 2022 Mr. Hooper was issued with a notice of charge and proposed disciplinary action (“**Notice**”) in relation to the charge, setting out the proposed disciplinary action to be taken and the grounds in support of that proposed disciplinary action.
4. In the Notice, the decision makers charged Mr Hooper with a breach of Rule 86(o) of the Greyhound Racing Rules, which reads:

Rule 86(o), Rules

A person (including an official) shall be guilty of an offence if the person:

(o) has, in relation to a greyhound or greyhound racing, done a thing, or omitted to do a thing which, in the opinion of the Stewards or the Controlling Body, as the case may be, is negligent, dishonest, corrupt, fraudulent or improper, or constitutes misconduct.

5. The Notice invited Mr Hooper to attend a hearing to enter a plea and make submissions in relation to the charge.
6. On 6 September 2022 Mr. Hooper attended the scheduled hearing with the decision makers and entered a plea of not guilty and made verbal submissions in response to the charge
7. In considering the matter, the decision makers considered Mr. Hoopers plea and submissions, as well as all available evidence. The decision makers found the charge proven and took the following disciplinary action against Mr Hooper:

Charge (Rule 86(o)): To suspend Mr. Hooper’s registrations for a period of 6 months 2 months of which was conditionally suspended for a period of 12 months subject to Mr. Hooper not breaching Rule 86(o) or any like Rule in that period.

8. In taking this disciplinary action, the decision makers considered all evidence, including:
 - Greyhound racing penalty precedents in NSW;
 - The length of time Mr Hooper has held a registration in the greyhound racing industry, being since 1993 a period of approximately 30 years;
 - Mr. Hooper’s disciplinary history which illustrates previous breaches pursuant to the same or similar Rules; and
 - Mr Hooper’s plea of not guilty and the verbal submissions made in relation to the charge.
9. The decision makers had regard to Mr Hooper’s disciplinary history and noted that on 23 April 2021 he received partially suspended suspensions for previous disciplinary

matters. The decision makers declined to activate these suspended penalties on the basis that the present matters are distinguishable from April 2021 matters.

.....End.....