

Greyhound life cycle report



1 January – 31 March 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.

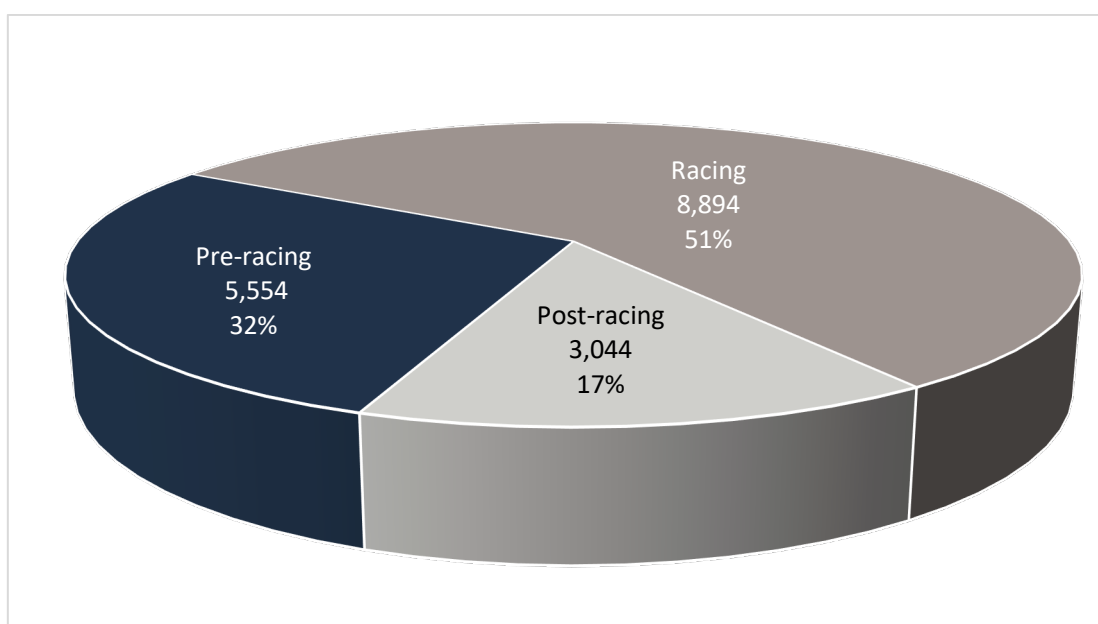
Participants are required to notify the Commission within 14 days from the date of servicing, whelping and retirement, and within two days from the date of euthanasia or death of a greyhound.

Note that figures for this quarter may be lower than in future reports due to late submissions of notifications. However, values for previous financial years have been reconciled with annual reports for consistency.

Greyhound numbers and status

As at 31 March 2024, the estimated industry greyhound population was 17,494, with 51% registered for racing (Figure 1). This represents a decrease of 454 compared to the previous quarter, reflecting the Commission's ongoing efforts to trace the status and whereabouts of every greyhound on the Greyhound Register. The decline primarily consists of greyhounds retired prior to the 2022/23 year and rehomed outside the industry. Notably, the proportion of post-racing greyhounds has increased by 2% since 31 December 2023.

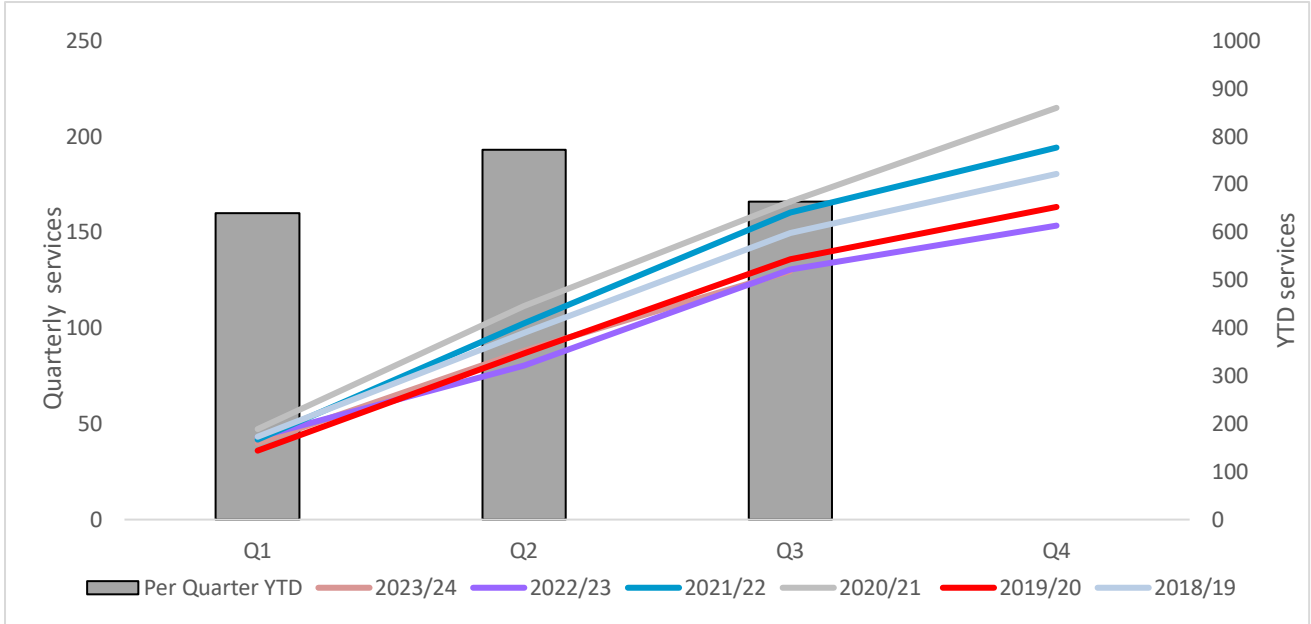
Figure 1: Registered greyhound population



Breeding

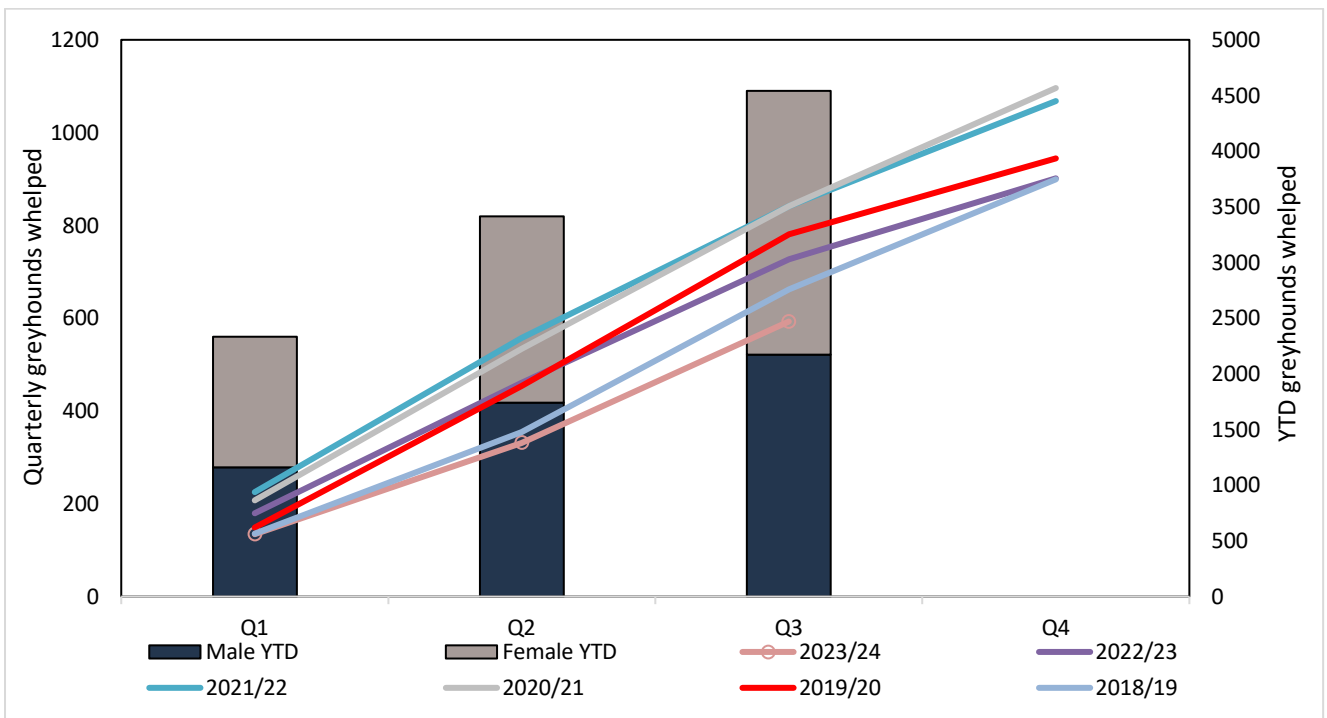
The Commission received notifications for 14% fewer breeding services in this quarter compared to the previous one, with a total of 166 that projects a decline in whelping numbers (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Breeding services



This quarter, 1,090 pups were whelped from 156 litters and notified to the Commission, which is 33% more pups than October-December 2023 (Figure 3) due to seasonal variation and notifications of December whelpings that were necessarily delayed until after the Christmas shut-down period.

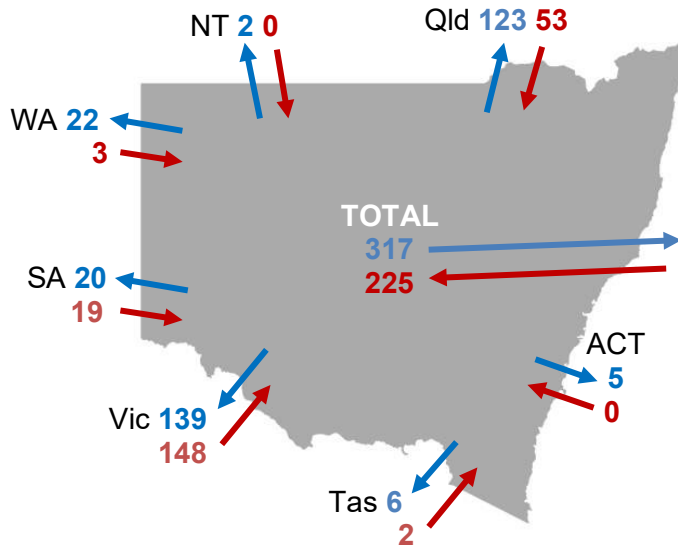
Figure 3: Pups whelped



Interstate transfers

This quarter, 317 greyhounds were transferred out of NSW¹ to trainers in other jurisdictions, while 225 greyhounds were transferred into NSW. The most significant exchanges occurred with Victoria and Queensland, consistent with previous quarters due to their large greyhound racing industries.

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	433	44%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer to a non-participant	164	17%
Accepted by Greyhounds as Pets ¹ (GAP)	318	33%
Accepted by another animal adoption agency ²	63	6%
Other	0	0%
Total	978	

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

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

Numbers are affected by late submissions of notifications.

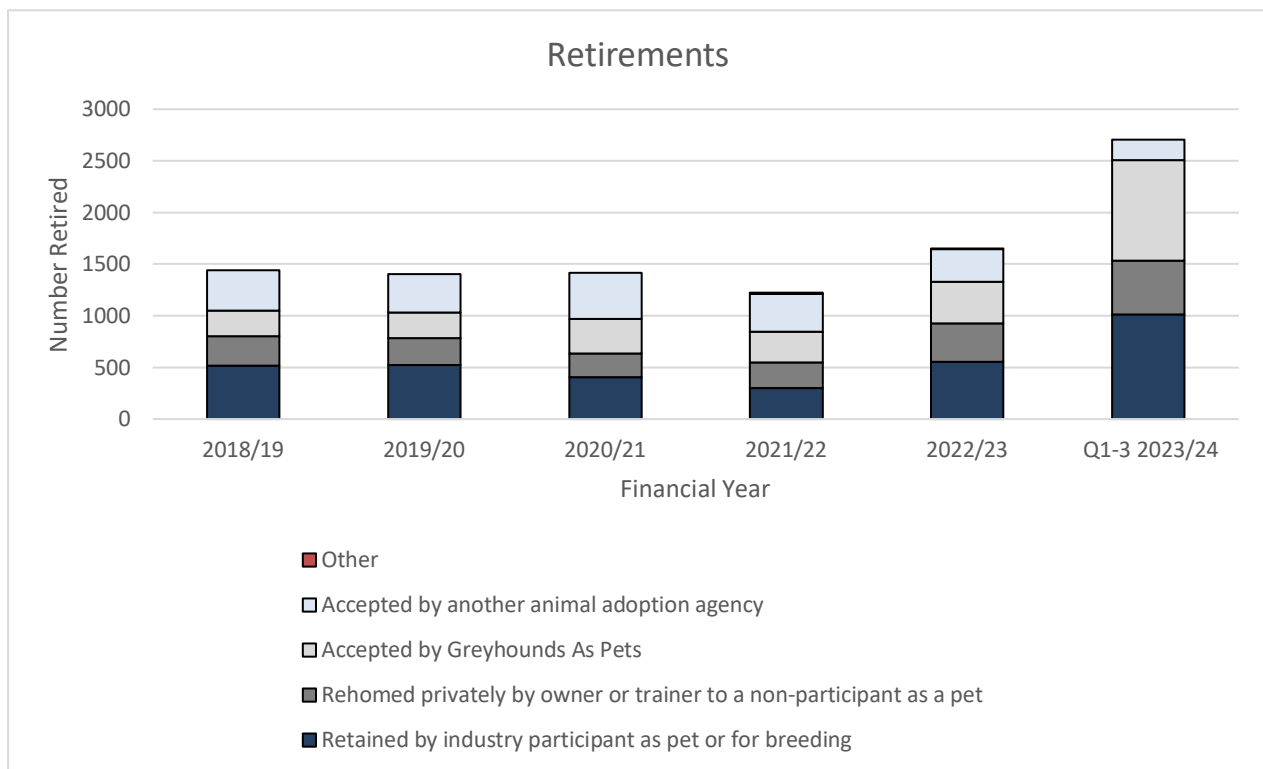
Compared to October-December 2023's total of 877, this quarter saw 11% more greyhound retirements (Table 1). The number of greyhounds that were 'Retained by an industry participant' notably grew by 54% over the same timeframe.

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 2022/23	%	Q1-3 2023/24	%
Retained by an industry participant	517	36%	524	37%	403	28%	302	25%	557	34%	1,014	38%
Rehomed privately by owner or trainer to a non-participant	285	20%	262	19%	229	16%	245	20%	371	22%	518	19%
Accepted by a Greyhounds as Pets (GAP) centre	249	17%	246	17%	339	24%	301	25%	404	24%	974	36%
Accepted by another animal adoption agency	390	27%	373	27%	447	32%	365	30%	314	19%	195	7%
Other							14	1%	8	<1%	2	<1%
Total	1,441		1,405		1,418		1,227		1,654		2,703	

Figure 5: Greyhound retirement trends



The number of greyhounds retired in Q3 FY2024 is 133% higher than in Q3 FY2023 (Table 2, Figure 5). In just three quarters, reported greyhound retirements for this financial year are 63% greater than the total for FY2023.

This increase can be attributed to the eTrac check-in requirement, which incentivises owners to notify the Commission when a greyhound is no longer racing, as well as the efforts of inspectors and the Traceability Team to follow up on unchecked-in greyhounds. Additionally, GAP centres are accepting more greyhounds, and an increasing number of retirees are being retained by industry participants as pets, thanks to 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	40	31%
illness ¹	79	61%
Medical euthanasia due to emergency ²	0	0%
Euthanasia at race meeting due to injury	5	4%
Euthanasia after registered veterinarian certified that the greyhound was behaviourally unsuitable for rehoming ³	6	5%
Total	130	

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.

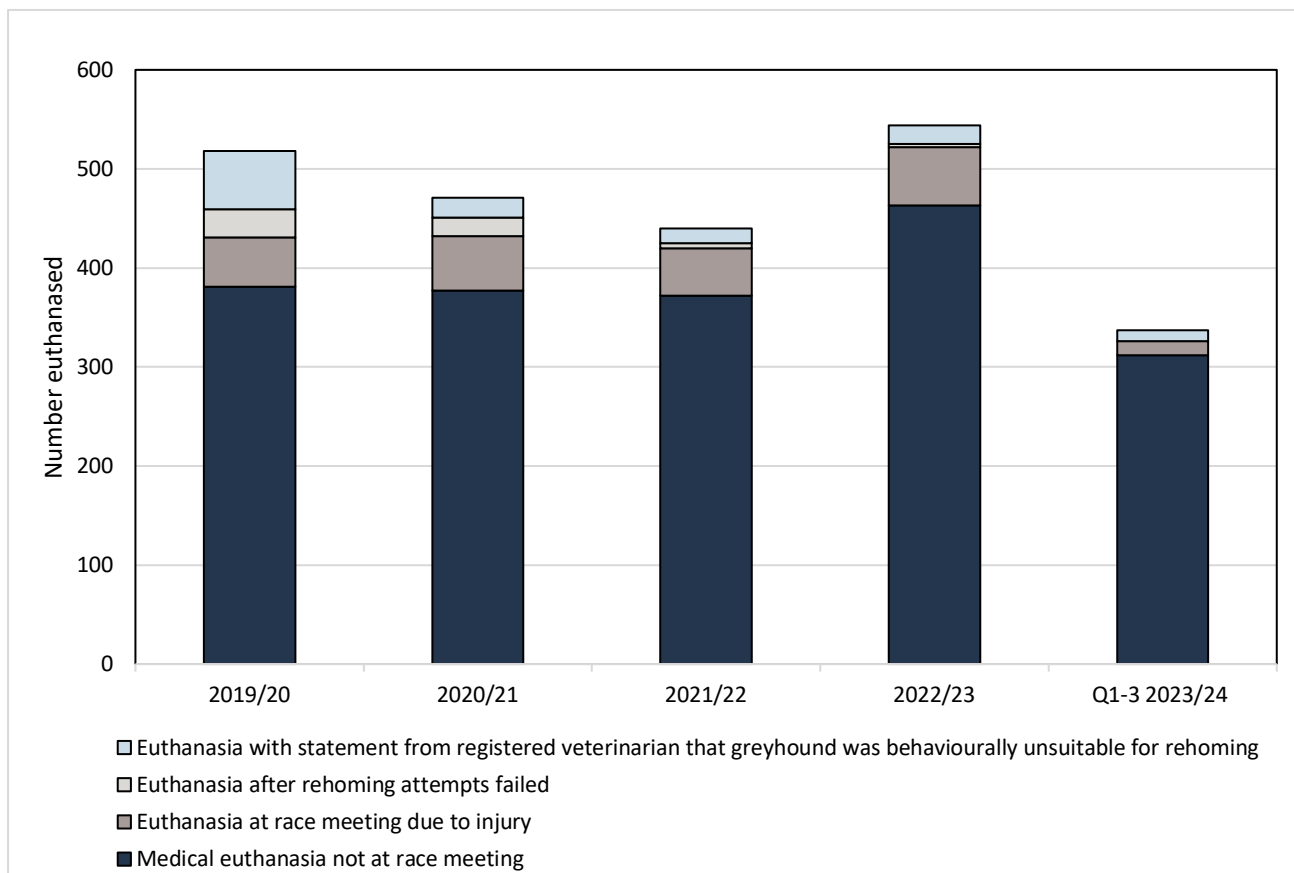
12% more euthanasias were notified to the commission in this quarter than in the last. 92% of the 130 were related to illness (61%) or injury (31%) not at the racetrack (Table 3).

Table 4: Greyhound euthanasia trends

Cause	FY 2018/19	%	FY 2019/20	%	FY 2020/21	%	FY 2021/22	%	FY 2022/23	%	Q1-3 2023/24	%
Medical euthanasia not at racetrack	396	62%	381	74%	377	80%	372	85%	463	85%	312	93%
Euthanasia at racetrack	97	15%	50	10%	55	12%	48	11%	59	11%	14	4%
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%	11	2%
Total	635		518		471		440		544		337	

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



The number of greyhounds that were euthanased in January-March 2024 is 8% higher than 2023's corresponding quarter (Table 4).

The mere 4% contribution from on-track euthanasia (Table 3) maintains the long-term decline from the category's FY2019 contribution of 15% (Table 4). Additionally, the percentage of greyhounds euthanased due to behavioural concerns has further decreased from FY2019's 17%, currently sitting at 2% so far for FY2024 (Table 4).

Death

Table 5: Greyhound deaths reported by participants this quarter.

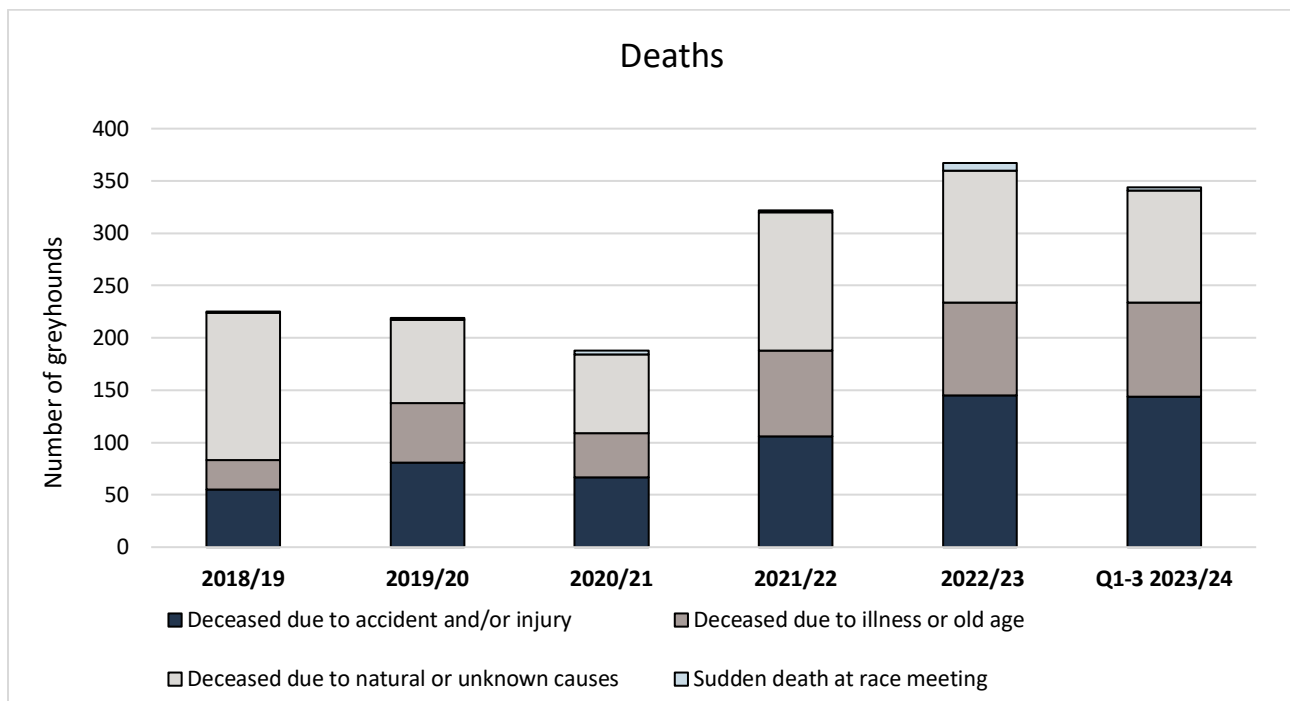
Cause	Number	%
Deceased due to accident and/or injury	54	40%
Deceased due to illness or old age	37	28%
Deceased due to natural or unknown causes	43	31%
Sudden death at race meeting	0	0%
Total	134	

A total of 134 greyhounds died in this quarter, which is 8% more than Q2 FY2024's total of 124. 59% of resulted from illness, old age, or unknown causes (Table 5).

Table 6: Greyhound death notification trends

Cause	FY		FY		FY		FY		FY		Q1-3	
	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%	144	42%
Illness or old age	28	12%	57	26%	42	22%	82	25%	89	24%	90	26%
Natural or unknown causes	141	63%	79	36%	75	40%	132	41%	126	34%	107	31%
Sudden death at race meeting	1	<1%	2	<1%	4	2%	2	<1%	7	2%	3	<1%
Total	225		219		188		322		367		344	

Figure 7: Greyhound death notification trends



Following the average of 115 deaths per quarter in Q1-3 FY2024, the number of recorded greyhound deaths over this financial year is projected to surpass FY2023’s total by 25% (Figure 7).

Improved participant compliance with the requirement to submit death notifications has contributed to the yearly incline since FY2021. Furthermore, historical years with exceptionally high whelping rates has led to a generally older greyhound population, where death from natural causes and illness is more likely.