



Enhanced Restrictions on Treatment prior to racing to be introduced into the Greyhounds Australasia Rules

Notice to trainers – GAR 83A Raceday Treatment rule extended to prohibit the administration of an injectable substance for a further one clear day prior to racing.

An essential principle of greyhound racing is that greyhounds are to compete free of prohibited substances to ensure a level playing field for all participants and protect animal welfare.

To assist this, on 1 March 2018, Greyhounds Australasia will introduce further restrictions regarding treatment of greyhounds in the period prior to racing within GAR 83A as follows:

“(1) No person without the permission of the Stewards may administer or cause to be administered any treatment to a greyhound at any time on the day of the meeting until that greyhound is no longer presented for an Event.

(2) The Stewards may order that any greyhound that has been administered a treatment in contravention of sub-rule (1) of this Rule be withdrawn from an Event.

(3) In addition to sub-rule (1) of this Rule, no person without the permission of Stewards may administer or cause to be administered any injectable substance to a greyhound at any time on the day prior to the day of an Event that it is nominated to compete in.

For the purposes of this Rule, “treatment” includes:

- a) All Controlled Drugs (Schedule 8) administered by a veterinarian;*
- b) All Prescription Animal Remedies and Prescription Only Medicines (Schedule 4);*
- c) Any injectable substance not already specified in this Rule;*
- d) All Pharmacist Only (Schedule 3) and Pharmacy Only (Schedule 2) medicines;*
- e) All veterinary and other substances containing other scheduled and unscheduled prohibited substances.”*

For the purposes of this Rule, “day” means the 24 hour period from 12:01am to 12 midnight on any calendar day.

Therefore, the change now means that no injectable substance can be administered to a greyhound on the day prior to an Event it is nominated to compete in. As is currently the case, an injectable substance is any substance that is designed to be, or capable of being, administered by injection regardless of whether it is given by injection.

The remainder of the rule remains the same and no “treatment” can be given to a greyhound on the day the greyhound is nominated to compete in an Event i.e. no ‘treatment’ on the calendar day from 12:01am until it is removed from the racecourse after the completion of that Event with the permission of the Stewards pursuant to Rule 42(2) or is scratched with the permission of the Stewards.

Importantly no injectables, controlled drugs (S8), prescription medicines (S4), pharmacist only (S3) or pharmacy only (S2) medicines, or other prohibited substances should be given to greyhounds on race day under any circumstances.

This rule change brings regulations on the treatment of greyhounds close to racing more in line with those in the thoroughbred and harness racing codes and further ensures a level playing field for all participants. It aims to reduce the use of injections in the greyhound racing industry, thereby enhancing animal welfare and reducing the proportion of positive swabs.

There is no peer-reviewed scientific evidence published that proves the use of supplement injections in the pre-race period leads to improved performance or recovery in greyhounds. However, there are concerns that the trauma caused by injections can have negative welfare implications and may reduce performance, while significantly enhancing the risk of returning a positive swab.

By heightening restrictions on treatments close to racing it is hoped that those participants who still consider injections and other treatments are necessary for success can move forward and help advance a sustainable industry that puts the greyhound’s welfare first and above all other considerations.

Where a “treatment” is required to be given daily e.g. oestrous suppression, this can be given after the greyhound has completed its engagement in an Event and left the racecourse (i.e. given on the nightly feed at home).

The officiating Veterinary Surgeon has the permission of Stewards to treat greyhounds on the racecourse as required in conducting their official duties.

Only normal feeding and supplementation that can be achieved by the greyhound voluntarily eating or drinking can be considered acceptable on the day of racing. For the avoidance of doubt, in order to comply with this rule no tablets, capsules, caplets, pills, etc or any liquid, paste, etc that requires syringing into the oral cavity to encourage administration should be administered on the day of racing. Standard administration of an oral electrolyte supplement is acceptable if voluntarily drunk or eaten by the greyhound.

For further information please contact your state controlling body.