

## Greyhound racing ban: Animal rights groups call on all states and territories to follow NSW lead

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**The RSPCA has called for a national ban on greyhound racing after the NSW Government announced a statewide ban from July next year.**

But animal rights groups also voiced concerns that the banning could result in thousands of dogs being euthanased or sold overseas and potentially abused.

The NSW Government said the ban is based on evidence of animal cruelty including live baiting, over-exertion, injuries and mass killings within the greyhound racing industry.

The RSPCA said greyhounds had been regarded as disposable objects for too long, and all states and territories should read the report and follow suit.

"All of the problems that have been identified in New South Wales are also based on the evidence occurring nationally and so this is why we need a national ban in place," RSPCA's Dr Jade Norris said.

The RSPCA and the Animal Welfare League said they would work with the Government to provide support for the re-homing of the dogs.

Animal Welfare League CEO Andrew Maso said it was important the Government provided assistance to the industry to avoid the dogs being sold overseas.

He said Greyhound Racing NSW would have to approve euthanasia, but there may not be any constraints on it.

But he said he had "no doubt" other states would also ban greyhound racing.

"What we've seen in the United States is that states, one by one, have been banning greyhound racing over there and there's now only a handful of states that have greyhound racing," he said.

"I've got no doubt that's exactly what's going to happen in Australia."

With more than 6,000 dogs that will need to be re-homed after the ban comes into effect, greyhound adoption agencies are demanding more funding.

Angela Russell from Every Greyhound, an online adoption directory, said the NSW Government would need to increase funding if all dogs were to be re-homed as family pets.



**PHOTO:** Animal welfare groups are concerned about the fate of the dogs following the bans. (Supplied: Greyhound Racing Victoria)

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### Key points:

- Concerns dogs could now be euthanased, sold overseas, abused
- 6,000 dogs will need to be re-homed as domestic pets
- Welfare groups calling for Government support to re-home dogs effectively

### What now for the dogs?



New homes can be found for former racing greyhounds following a ban on the sport in New South Wales, dog welfare advocates say.

"All of the independent groups are already at capacity and there is going to be another influx of dogs needing homes," she said.

The Greens Animal Welfare spokeswoman Mehreen Faruqi said the Government must now safely rehome the thousands of registered greyhounds.

"I am absolutely concerned about the fate of the dogs after the industry is shut down next year," Dr Faruqi said.

"That's why we will be pushing to make sure that the Government finds the budget and the funding to rehome these dogs."

## Ban disappointing for regional communities: Nationals MP

But a Nationals MP has slammed the decision to ban racing in NSW, saying it will have a huge impact on regional areas and she will do everything she can to have it reversed.

Member for Cootamundra, Katrina Hodgkinson, said she had voiced her disapproval at the ban to the highest levels of Government.

"When things such as animal cruelty first came to light they should've clamped down on that straight away, but we've seen now this very heavy-handed action being taken place," she said.

"It's disappointing for regional communities but I think Greyhound Racing New South Wales has certainly got a lot to answer for."

She said the National Party was not consulted about the decision.

Her National Party colleague, Clarence MP Chris Gulaptis, has spoken out in support of her.

"I think that most in the party will empathise, if not all, with Katrina's sentiments because we are regional MPs and greyhound racing is a typical cultural part of regional NSW," Mr Gulaptis said.

"We all know people in the industry and it's really up to us to represent them as best we can."

NSW Racing Minister Troy Grant has disputed Ms Hodgkinson's claims, urging all parliamentarians to read the report in full before voting on legislation.

"These comments made by Katrina and many others are made without reading the report, they've simply looked at a summary and drawn their conclusions from their own knowledge of the industry and a lot of that is good knowledge and good history."

He said there was no turning back from the decision, saying he doesn't believe people in the industry who say there is only a small number of trainers doing the wrong thing, saying it was "much more than a handful".

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### Four Corners: Making A Killing



Four Corners exposes the use of piglets, possums and rabbits as live bait in secret greyhound training sessions.

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  - More greyhounds being adopted amid calls for end to racing
  - Former greyhound racing chief 'had no evidence of widespread live baiting'
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