

Government takes first steps to tighten greyhound controls



Agriculture Minister Michael Creed. Photo: Tom Burke



[John Downing Twitter](#)

March 7 2017 2:30 AM

• [Email](#)

Agriculture Minister, Michael Creed, will today table an outline law aimed at tackling controversies in the greyhound sector including dog doping and race-fixing.

Mr Creed will bring legislation to the weekly meeting of Cabinet aimed at improving governance and tightening regulation in the greyhound racing sector which gets taxpayer grants worth almost €15m each year. It comes as RTÉ is set to broadcast a television programme on the issue.

The new law follows recurring controversies about the sector which centre around 17 greyhound racing tracks, eight of which are directly owned by the greyhound authority Bord na gCon. An official Oireachtas report in January 2016 said the sector accounted for more than 10,000 jobs and generated €500m per year for the national coffers.

But this report by TDs and Senators, and other studies undertaken by outside consultants, have pointed up the need for greater greyhound sector controls. Junior Agriculture Minister Andrew Doyle of Wicklow, who chaired the Oireachtas committee and is now responsible for the greyhound sector, said current law was not sufficient to address the problems.

"It is important that the deficiencies in the current legislation, as identified in a number of reports on the sector, be dealt with," a spokesman for Mr Doyle said. "Assuming the Government clears this outline of the new legislation, there will be a period of consultation for everyone involved to give their views."

The new Greyhound Industry Bill will cover governance and regulation in the greyhound racing sector. It will draw on recommendations for change made in the Oireachtas committee report, a study by consultants, Indecon, and a review of anti-doping and medication in 2014 conducted by Professor Tim Morris at the instigation of Bord na gCon.

The Morris report delivered a scathing assessment of anti-doping controls and called for serious and immediate action. It warned that the lucrative greyhound sector was called into disrepute internationally.

Officials said the outline bill will address governance issues in Bord na gCon and strengthen regulatory controls in the industry. It also aims to toughen sanctions, improve integrity, and include greyhound welfare as one of the statutory functions of Bord na gCon.

It will empower BNG to regulate what substances may be given to a greyhound, banning some substances and setting thresholds for others.


Minister Doyle said the Irish greyhound sector needed strong controls to defend its international reputation.

Irish Independent

Follow @IndoSport

Related Content

- [Greyhound board in talks with bank on stadium loan](#)
- [Eamonn Sweeney: Dogs in distress as Limerick white elephant casts long shadow over the post-Tiger era](#)

 Earlier Rockybay Rover got through in third place in the first semi, where the Johnny O'Sullivan-trained Native Chimes was an impressive winner in 28.14.' Stock photo