

# RACING QUEENSLAND GREYHOUND GRADING PROCEDURES REVIEW



FEBRUARY 4, 2022

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Racing Queensland Grading Procedures Review is to consider the current grading procedures against a case for change with the intention of determining a new set of grading procedures which support the provision of fair and competitive racing at Queensland greyhound race meetings.

The [current grading procedures](#) were last subjected to a major review in 2013.

All aspects of the current grading procedures are open to consideration and possible change. The review will include a thorough assessment of grading procedures in place interstate and be underpinned by strong consultation with stakeholders, including industry participants, the Greyhound Advisory Panel and the Queensland greyhound racing clubs.

Industry stakeholders are encouraged to consider making a submission to the grading review with first phase submissions being accepted until close of business on Friday, March 11, 2022.

Feedback is to be provided via the Industry Stakeholder Feedback Form with input sought on the following key matters:

- Order of Entry
- Field selection methodology
- Guarding
- Mixed grade racing
- Race Classes and the Grading Ladder
- Pathways and Masters racing
- Other/General feedback

## MAKING A SUBMISSION

YOU CAN SUBMIT YOUR FORM IN A NUMBER OF WAYS:

- **Via the online form** - visit <https://bit.ly/3HqKl6f>
- **Via email** - [gradingreview@racingqueensland.com.au](mailto:gradingreview@racingqueensland.com.au)
- **Via Post** - PO Box 63 Sandgate QLD 4017



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## INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK FORM

### RESPONDENT DETAILS

#### 1. NAME

#### 2. ADDRESS

#### 3. PHONE NUMBER

#### 4. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR PRIMARY INVOLVEMENT IN GREYHOUND RACING:

- a. Trainer
- b. Owner
- c. Breeder
- d. Official
- e. Wagering Customer
- f. Greyhound Racing Club
- g. Industry body or representative body
- h. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

#### 5. ARE YOU INVOLVED WITH A GREYHOUND THAT HAS RECENTLY (LAST 12 MONTHS) COMPETED IN QLD?

### SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

The following information is provided in general guidance to industry stakeholders wishing to make a submission to the grading review. It outlines what are considered key issues and proposes questions to these issues. However, it has been prepared as guide only and respondents are not limited to addressing any or all of the issues outlined. Accordingly, submissions may include comment to any aspect of the grading procedures deemed relevant by the respondent.



## ORDER OF ENTRY

The order of entry is the method by which greyhounds are selected for race fields. The order of entry ranks greyhounds from highest to lowest, based on how they have performed at their past three race starts and determines which greyhounds are runners, reserves, and not required. Greyhounds with stronger form should be higher up in the order of entry. However, greyhounds having not started for a period need to be considered for a race start and the order of entry is also required to fairly consider variations such as this.

**DO YOU THINK THE CURRENT ORDER OF ENTRY IS ADEQUATE? IF NOT, WHAT IMPROVEMENTS COULD BE MADE?**


**IS THREE PERFORMANCES SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO DETERMINE THE RANK ORDER OR SHOULD MORE PERFORMANCES BE CONSIDERED?**


## COMPOSITION OF FIELDS

After being determined as a runner following the order of entry assessment, the composition of fields determines which race field a greyhound will be drawn into. The composition of fields applies where mixed grade races are drawn, and where multiple divisions of the same grade are drawn. The Racing Queensland graders currently determine the composition of race fields, applying their professional judgment. Data supplied by TAB in 2019 indicated that Queensland greyhound racing was presenting very competitive race fields with both the average starting price of favourites and the average starting price of winners in Queensland being above the national average.

**SHOULD THE GRADERS CONTINUE TO DETERMINE THE COMPOSITION OF RACE FIELDS ON A DISCRETIONARY PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT BASIS? IF YES, WHAT IMPROVEMENTS COULD BE MADE?**


**IF NOT, A POINTS SYSTEM OR RATINGS SYSTEM COULD BE ADOPTED WHICH WOULD DETERMINE THE RACE FIELDS. WHAT WOULD YOU CONSIDER TO BE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF A POINTS SYSTEM OR RATINGS SYSTEM FOR DETERMINING WHICH RACES GREYHOUNDS ARE DRAWN IN?**




**GUARDING**

Guarding is the principle by which greyhounds owned or trained by the same person are split into separate race events. This has the positive effects of allowing owners and trainers the opportunity to win more prizemoney by not competing against themselves and making the logistics of handling and catching at a race meeting more manageable. Nevertheless, guarding can have negative outcomes for competitive racing if it causes for greyhounds with weaker form to be drawn against greyhounds with stronger form.

**SOME TRAINERS ALWAYS WANT THEIR DOGS SPLIT UP. WHAT IS YOUR VIEW?**


**SHOULD COMPETITIVE RACING AND THE CONCEPT OF GRADING GREYHOUNDS ON FORM ONLY - AS OPPOSED THE CONNECTIONS OF THE GREYHOUND - OVERRIDE GUARDING? IF YES, WHICH EVENTS SHOULD NOT HAVE GUARDING?**


**SHOULD THERE BE A MAXIMUM NUMBER OF GREYHOUNDS PER TRAINER IN EACH RACE?**


**MIXED GRADES**

In 2021, there were 702 mixed 4th and 5th grade races, making these races the fourth most common race type after grade 5, maiden, and novice. Grade 5 greyhounds won over half (52%) of the mixed 4th and 5th grade races. Every race meeting will produce a unique number of greyhounds nominated for each grade. Whilst it is understood that trainers would prefer not to have their greyhound graded into a field partially comprised with higher graded greyhounds, allowing the grades to be mixed is an essential function of drawing race meetings and ensures greyhounds in the higher grades have a higher probability of being drawn in a race field. Some trainers have attempted to avoid being drawn in mixed grade races by making comments on their nominations such as "5th Grade Only" or "No Best 8" which are not compliant with the grading procedures.

**SHOULD THERE BE MINIMUM PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS TO BE ELEVATED INTO A MIXED GRADE RACE?**




**IF A POINTS SYSTEM OR RATINGS SYSTEM WAS INTRODUCED, AND RACES ONLY CONTAINED GREYHOUNDS WITHIN A CERTAIN COMPETITIVE RANGE (OF POINTS OR RATINGS), WOULD THIS PROVIDE PRE-NOMINATION ASSURANCE THAT THE GREYHOUND WOULD NOT BE OUT GRADED?**


**WHAT IMPACT WOULD IT HAVE ON YOU IF RACING QUEENSLAND WAS TO REMOVE THE COMMENTS SECTION?**


**RACE MEETING CLASSES & GRADING LADDER**

There are currently six race meeting classes and four distance categories meaning that, hypothetically, each greyhound has 24 different grades, although most greyhounds specialise at a limited number of classes and distances and not all classes are provided in the same geographic region. In addition, there are six grades (including maiden) within each class and distance category. Greyhounds go up in grade if they win a race or if they are upgraded. Greyhounds go down in grade by finishing unplaced, or in the case of masters age greyhounds, if they haven't won a race for a long period of time. Greyhounds that race interstate are penalised grades according to the interstate track classifications as if it was a race in Queensland.

**ALL THINGS CONSIDERED INCLUDING THE NUMBER OF CLASSES, DISTANCE CATEGORIES, INTERSTATE GRADE TRANSLATIONS, NUMBER OF WINS IN EACH GRADE, UPGRADING RULES, AND DOWNGRADING RULES, ETC. DOES THE GRADE OF A GREYHOUND ADEQUATELY APPROXIMATE THE ABILITY OF EACH GREYHOUND AND PRODUCE COMPETITIVE RACE FIELDS? IF NOT, WHAT TYPES OF GREYHOUNDS ARE ADVANTAGED AND DISADVANTAGED?**




**WHAT IMPROVEMENTS COULD BE MADE TO THE RACE CLASS STRUCTURE AND GRADE LADDER?**


**ONE-TURN RACING WILL BE RE-INTRODUCED TO QUEENSLAND WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GREATER BRISBANE GREYHOUND CENTRE. WHAT FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS NEED TO BE MADE AROUND GRADING AT THE GBGC?**


**PATHWAY RACING**

Pathway racing was introduced in 2015 to provide a lower class of racing for out of form greyhounds by reversing the order of entry. In 2021, pathway races produced slower average winning times than non-pathway events of the same grade across all tracks and distances. In 2019, RQ made changes to the order of entry of Pathway Maidens to look at the overall career of each greyhound prior to its past three starts. However, despite the weakest form greyhounds being selected first, pathway fields have not always comprised the slowest greyhounds nominated at a particular race meeting and, as such, eligibility and field selection principles for these events could be reviewed so as to better achieve the intent of this form of racing.

**WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON PROVIDING A LOWER CLASS OF RACING FOR SLOWER GREYHOUNDS?**


**IN TERMS OF FIELD SELECTION, WHAT IMPROVEMENTS COULD BE MADE TO PATHWAY RACING? SHOULD MORE PERFORMANCES BE CONSIDERED? ALTERNATIVELY, SHOULD IT BE BASED ON TIMES (OR SOMETHING ELSE) RATHER THAN FORM?**




**MASTERS RACING**

Masters racing was introduced in 2015. Over time the programming and grading of masters racing has evolved into its existing format where it primarily caters for grade 5 greyhounds that are 42 months and older. These settings generate a large enough pool of greyhounds for a regular flow of nominations and extend the racing career of older greyhounds which are slightly past their peak. Drop back rules have also been introduced for masters age greyhounds which have not won in a long period of time to help them to continue to race competitively as they age.

Since the introduction of masters racing, the average career length of Queensland trained greyhounds has increased from 12 months (2014 whelps) to 13.3 months (2016 whelps). The average number of career starts of Queensland trained greyhounds has also increased from 27.5 (2014 whelpings) to 32 (2016 whelpings). In 2021, Masters grade 5 events were the fifth most common race type and are programmed regularly at all venues. Since 2015 Masters open events have been trialed on occasion with limited success.

**IS THE CURRENT PROVISION OF MASTERS RACING ADEQUATE FOR THE OLDER RACING POPULATION?**


**WHAT IMPROVEMENTS COULD BE MADE?**


**GENERAL**

**WHAT OTHER IMPROVEMENTS COULD BE MADE TO THE GRADING PROCEDURES BESIDES THOSE LISTED ABOVE?**


**WHAT ARE THE POSITIVES OF THE GRADING PROCEDURES?**


**WHAT ARE THE NEGATIVES OF THE GRADING PROCEDURES?**




