



September 6th 2016

GOTBA Vic responds to outgoing GRNSW CEO Mr Paul Newson's comments published September 2 in his personal blog on The Huffington Post Australia.

The Greyhound Owners Breeders and Trainers Association of Victoria (GOTBA Vic) feels the need to respond to the comments made by outgoing GRNSW CEO Mr Paul Newson last week in which it was inferred that the greyhound racing industry was incapable of reform.

This is clearly not true, as evidenced by the ongoing successful reform agenda put in place by Greyhound Racing Victoria (GRV) and the overwhelming support for change from participants under the guidance of GRV CEO Alan Clayton.

We at GOTBA Vic, would like to point out that cultural change is not just a possibility; it is happening right here in Victoria as we speak. The Victorian State Government has provided vital support to GRV, who in turn are implementing significant integrity and welfare reforms. GRV are committed to working with participants to preserve the future of Victorian greyhound racing and participants themselves believe that the reforms are the key to ongoing success.

NSW participants also believe that reforms are the key and there is no doubt that, with similar support from GRNSW and the NSW State Government, the same change could have happened in the NSW greyhound racing industry.

Participants attending the recently held workshops in Victoria were forced to confront the harsh realities our sport faces in relation to euthanasia rates and injuries, among many things. It was a wake-up call to many that there is plenty to be done to secure our future. These same participants were then tasked with developing workable solutions and presenting them to GRV.

The intelligent, positive responses delivered by participants is absolute proof that we not only can and do have an INDUSTRY first, SELF second approach to reform, but we also are able to offer real answers in relation to the major issues facing the sport, including "wastage", injury rates, improved training techniques and new initiatives for re homing of greyhounds just to name a few.

In addition, it was clear throughout the workshops that owners, trainers and breeders have a deep respect, understanding and admiration for their dogs and it is the dogs themselves that give them a reason to get up in the morning, rather than because of any perceived commercial gain they may bring.

Former GRNSW CEO Paul Newson can throw mud at the industry on his way out, and unfortunately much of it will stick, but there is nothing getting away from the fact that while the reform agenda has worked here and in other States, it failed dismally in NSW under his leadership.

We believe that Mr. Newson's comments are nothing more than an attempt to divest himself of any responsibility, whilst at the same time protect his own legacy, for his failures while CEO of GRNSW during a time that we accept, was extremely difficult.



Participants can rightly be suspicious of both Mr Newson and the NSW Government as to whether they had a pre-determined agenda to abolish greyhound racing in NSW, based on the media commentary over the last month or so.

The truth may never be known, however the Commission Report has proved to be full of inaccurate assumptions, misinformation, exaggerations and cherry picked witnesses with animal rights associations. Supportive submissions did not see the light of day, much of the Inquiry was held in secret and there was a distinct lack of defence at the Inquiry from GRNSW.

One only has to look at the media discussion surrounding the racing ban in NSW both before and since the passing of the legislation to realise that many people not involved in greyhound racing are of the opinion that participants, most of whom are country people living in rural communities, and their dogs, have been treated very unfairly. The decision by the NSW State Government to ban rather than reform has provoked a passionate response from the wider community across Australia that was clearly unexpected but should have been recognized as probable given the Australian notion of a "fair go".

What a contrast to the approach taken in Victoria.

Yours Sincerely,

The Executive Committee

The Greyhound Owners Breeders and Trainers Association of Victoria, Inc

www.gotbav.org.au