

16 January 2024

## **DECISION**

### **GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

### **TREVOR STEEL**

- Date of hearing:** 9 January 2024
- Panel:** Judge Kathryn Kings (Deputy Chairperson) and Ms Amanda Dickens.
- Appearances:** Ms Yana Podolskaya appeared on behalf of the Stewards.  
Mr Trevor Steel represented himself.
- Charge:** Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 141(1) states:  
(1) The owner, trainer or other person in charge of a greyhound:  
(a) nominated to compete in an Event;  
(b) presented for a satisfactory trial or such other trial as provided for by the Rules; or  
(c) presented for any test or examination for the purpose of a stand-down period being varied or revoked,  
must present the greyhound free of any prohibited substance.
- Particulars:**
1. You are, and were at all relevant times, a trainer licensed by Greyhound Racing Victoria and a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules.
  2. You were, at all relevant times, the trainer of the greyhound “Vans Turbo”.
  3. Vans Turbo was nominated to compete in Race 3, SHIMA SHINE AT STUD, Tier 3 – Grade 7, conducted by the Ballarat Greyhound Racing Club at Ballarat on 31 October 2022 (the Event).
  4. On 31 October 2022, you presented Vans Turbo at the Event not free of any prohibited substance, given that:

(a) A post-race sample of blood was taken from Vans Turbo at the Event (the Sample);

(b) Meloxicam was detected in the Sample.

**Plea:** Guilty

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## **DECISION**

Mr Trevor Steel is a trainer licensed by Greyhound Racing Victoria (“GRV”) and bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules (“GARs”). He has been licensed since 2017, but has bred dogs for many years. He currently has seven dogs in work. He is the trainer of the greyhound, “Vans Turbo”.

Vans Turbo was nominated to compete in Race 3 at Ballarat Greyhound Racing Club on 31 October 2022. A post-race blood sample detected Meloxicam. Mr Steel was charged by GRV Stewards with a presentation offence under GAR 141(1) on account of presenting Vans Turbo for an event while not free of a prohibited substance.

The GRV veterinarian, Dr Steven Karamatic, in a report dated 1 March 2023, said meloxicam is a prohibited substance under the GARs. Meloxicam meets the criteria for a prohibited substance. There were no products listed in the Swab Irregularity Inspection Report found during the kennel inspection that would contain meloxicam. Dr Karamatic stated in the report that unfit for human consumption meat is a potential source of meloxicam detection in a sample. It seems a likely explanation for its detection in this sample, given that the product was fed every evening to the greyhound. Dr Karamatic also stated that meloxicam can affect the condition or performance of a greyhound, and any effect on performance is more likely to be positive, such as producing an artificially pain free state.

Dr Karamatic said that notice to the industry was provided in August 2016, alerting participants to the potential risks of inadvertent positive swabs from the feeding of knacker meat. In July 2020, Greyhounds Monthly Victoria had emailed to participants and published online warnings.

Mr Steel advised that feeding knacker meat was the most likely source of the substance being in the system of Vans Turbo. Since 2021, he has suffered ill health requiring hospitalisation. He and his wife fed the dogs horsemeat, which was in 20kg bags. These were too heavy for them to lift and so they changed to knacker meat. As a result of the positive finding, they now feed the dogs horsemeat and kangaroo meat.

Mr Steel pleaded guilty to the offence. He has cooperated throughout the investigation with the Stewards. This is his first offence in 16 years.

In imposing a penalty, we have taken into account his guilty plea, his cooperation with the Stewards and the importance of specific and general deterrence. We also acknowledge the importance of maintaining a level playing field by having a drug free industry. We take into account recent penalties in like matters.

We accept Mr Steel's evidence that this was inadvertent. As a result, he no longer feeds the greyhounds knackery meat. Now he feeds the greyhounds horse and kangaroo meat.

In all the circumstances, we impose a fine of \$1,500, of which \$1,000 is suspended for 24 months, pending no further breach of the Rules of greyhound racing relative to prohibited substances.

In addition, Vans Turbo is disqualified from Race 3 at Ballarat on 31 October 2022 and any prizemoney is forfeited to GRV.

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Kathleen Scully  
Acting Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal