

## APPENDIX 15 - INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS - BIOSECURITY

Having a protocol for the response to an outbreak of an infectious disease is important to minimise further spread of disease, and in some states is a requirement under the Code of Practice. The information below can be used to help guide participants in the implementation of biosecurity measures.

### **What is biosecurity?**

Biosecurity is a set of preventive measures designed to reduce the spread of infectious diseases. This includes procedures such as surveillance, isolation and quarantine, movement restrictions, avoidance of potentially contaminated areas, reduction of animal contact, cleaning and disinfection, and improving greyhound health through treatment and vaccination.

### **Why is biosecurity important?**

An outbreak of an infectious disease in the greyhound community has the potential for serious consequences. It may have implications for the health and welfare of the greyhounds as well as repercussions for the trainers, owners, punters, and regulatory bodies. In greyhound kennels, the most common infectious outbreaks are Kennel Cough (CIRDC - Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex) and gastroenteritis. While fatalities are generally rare, outbreaks can result in illness in a large number of greyhounds, leading to significant reductions in the available racing population or potentially the temporary closure of racing.

### **What is the participant's role in biosecurity?**

Greyhound trainers and owners have a role in almost every aspect of biosecurity including:

1. Surveillance
2. Isolation and Quarantine
3. Cleaning and disinfection
4. Protection of at-risk animals

### **What is surveillance?**

Managing biosecurity risks involves recognising signs of infectious disease present in the population. This is called disease surveillance. On a state or national level, surveillance is the process where we monitor for possible disease outbreaks. Prompt identification and response to cases of disease can help minimise transmission to other greyhounds in your kennels and others.

The following symptoms and conditions should alert trainers, breeders or owners to the possibility of an infectious disease occurring:

1. Multiple dogs are affected at the same time
2. All dogs have similar symptoms
3. Dogs have high fevers and/or are off their food
4. Vomiting and/or diarrhoea that starts suddenly
5. Coughing
6. Mucoïd nasal or eye discharge
7. Symptoms get worse quickly

All infectious diseases must be reported to the relevant Controlling Body (GAR 40) to help monitor any potential outbreak and to reduce the risk and minimise impact of any outbreak. Controlling bodies can then assess the number of greyhounds affected and conduct a risk-assessment and inform strategies to limit the spread of the disease in the population. This ensures the best health and welfare outcome for the dogs as well as ensuring minimal disruption to the racing program.

As a participant, you should ensure you have a good understanding of different infectious diseases and when to seek veterinary attention. If you are aware of an outbreak in your area, all staff must remain vigilant and consider increasing the number of times per day you or the kennel staff check the greyhounds.

**What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?**

Separating contagious and healthy animals is a critical step in maintaining good biosecurity. Isolation involves the physical separation of the infected greyhounds from the rest of your healthy greyhounds. Quarantine involves the physical separation of the greyhounds that have been exposed to a contagious disease and may become infectious themselves. Greyhounds in quarantine that start showing symptoms must be isolated. Greyhounds must not be removed from quarantine until the maximum incubation period (the time between being infected and showing symptoms) for the infection has passed with no symptoms. Your veterinarian can help to provide further advice, but 7-14 days is a typical incubation period.

Because of the incubation period, you cannot always tell just by looking at an animal whether it has been infected and is incubating the disease. Sometimes it can be useful to employ a “traffic light system” to identify which greyhounds pose a risk of infection and which are at risk of becoming infected. Good biosecurity will mean adapting your management according to the traffic light system below. Greyhounds in each of the groups (red, amber, green) must each have their own dedicated bowls, leads, muzzles etc that are also colour coded, with no equipment transferred between groups. Feeding, exercising or toileting greyhounds should occur from green first and finish with the red group. Handling of green animals should not occur after amber or red animals without a thorough disinfection process.

Traffic Light Colour	Red	Amber	Green
Identification	All greyhounds showing clinical signs and those that have had the diagnosis confirmed by your veterinarian.	Greyhounds that have had contact with the Red group but are not showing any symptoms.	Greyhounds that have <u>not</u> had contact with either the Red or Amber group and are not showing any symptoms.
Recommended Action	Isolate these animals. Barrier nurse (i.e. tend to sick animals in isolation). Seek advice/treatment from veterinarian.	Quarantine – keep separate from greyhounds in the Red and Green groups. Monitor closely for signs of disease.	Keep separate from greyhounds in the Red and Amber groups to minimise risk of infection. Monitor for signs of disease.

**Where can I find information on cleaning and disinfection?**

Thorough cleaning of organic debris before disinfecting the entire facility and all equipment is essential – further details can be through a veterinarian or the relevant *Controlling Body*.

**How else can I help protect at risk animals?**

To minimise risk within your property:

- o Consider avoiding potentially contaminated areas or putting healthy greyhounds in kennels where you know unwell greyhounds have been recently. These areas need to be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected prior to re-use.
- o Wear protective clothing when working with affected greyhounds and prevent unnecessary contact between greyhounds and staff.
- o You can use disinfectant sprays on clothing or shoes (or footbaths with disinfectant) as a precaution.
- o Staff attending affected greyhounds should minimise contact with unaffected greyhounds. If staff are handling both healthy affected greyhounds, handle the unwell animals last.

To minimise the risk of infection onto or off your property:

- o Limit and quarantine new arrivals.
- o Avoid unnecessary movement of unwell greyhounds off the property (e.g. races, trials, training, GAP).
- o Scratch affected greyhounds, and greyhounds that have been in close contact with affected greyhounds, from races to minimise the risk of them spreading infection at racing Clubs.
- o Transport vehicles and shoes can be a common means of transmission of infectious disease. Ensure you remove visible organic material before disinfecting shoes and tyres with disinfectant agents e.g. F10.