

GREYHOUND WELFARE & INTEGRITY COMMISSION
DISCIPLINARY ACTION DECISION

Date of decision:	16 April 2024
Decision-makers:	Chief Steward Troy Vassallo and Senior Steward Dean Degan
Name of relevant person:	Troy Vella
Rule no(s):	R156(x), R156(f)(i)
Charge(s):	Charge 1 – R156(x) Mr. Vella did a thing which, in the opinion of the Controlling Body, constitutes an offence, by associating with a disqualified person for the purpose of greyhound racing. Charge 2 – R148(2) Mr. Vella did a thing which, in the opinion of the Controlling Body, is corrupt, fraudulent or dishonest, by booking trials on behalf of a disqualified person.
Plea:	Not Guilty to both charges
Disciplinary action taken:	Charge 1 - To issue a fine of \$4000 and an 18-month suspension, wholly and conditionally suspended for a period of 12 months subject to Mr Vella not breaching this, or any like rule, in the 12-month period Charge 2 - To issue a fine of \$2000 and an 18-month suspension, wholly and conditionally suspended for a period of 12 months subject to Mr Vella not breaching this, or any like rule, in the 12-month period

DECISION:

1. Mr Vella was, at all relevant times, a registered Public Trainer and Breeder with the Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission.
2. From or around 16th May 2021 until or around 13th February 2023 Mr Vella conducted activities on behalf of a disqualified person, including accepting payment to book trials on behalf of the disqualified person.
3. On Tuesday 2 April 2024 Mr Vella was issued with a notice of charge and proposed disciplinary action (“**Notice**”). The Notice issued two charges against him for breaches of the following Greyhound Racing Rules:

R156(x), Greyhound Racing Rules

An offence is committed if a person (including an official):

...

- (x) being a registered person or person associated with greyhound racing, associates with a disqualified or warned off person for the purposes of greyhound racing;

Rule 156(f)(i), Greyhound Racing Rules

An offence is committed if a person (including an official):

...

- (f) has, in relation to a greyhound or greyhound racing, done something, or omitted to do something, which, in the opinion of a Controlling Body or the Stewards:

- (i) is corrupt, fraudulent, or dishonest;

4. The Notice invited Mr Vella to attend a hearing on Wednesday 16 April 2024, and to enter a plea and make submissions in relation to the charges and proposed penalties. The penalties decision makers proposed were:

Charge 1 Rule 156(x) – \$5000 fine and a 2-year suspension, wholly and conditionally suspended for a period of 12 months subject to Mr Vella not breaching this, or any like rule, in the 12-month period

Charge 2 Rule 156(f)(i) – \$3000 fine and an 18-month suspension, wholly and conditionally suspended for a period of 12 months subject to Mr Vella not breaching this, or any like rule, in the 12-month period

5. At the hearing held via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 16 April 2024 Mr Vella entered a plea of not guilty to each charge and made verbal submissions. Following consideration of Mr Vella's pleas and submissions, the decision-makers found the charges proven and determined to impose the following disciplinary action upon him:

Charge 1 - To issue a fine of \$4000 and an 18-month suspension, wholly and conditionally suspended for a period of 12 months subject to Mr Vella not breaching this, or any like rule, in the 12-month period

Charge 2 - To issue a fine of \$2000 and an 18-month suspension, wholly and conditionally suspended for a period of 12 months subject to Mr Vella not breaching this, or any like rule, in the 12-month period

6. In taking this disciplinary action, the decision-makers considered all evidence, including:
- Mr. Vella's not guilty plea to both charges;
 - Mr. Vella's registration history within the industry with no like prior offences;
 - Decision makers determined that Mr. Vella ought to have known the person was Disqualified, as opposed to determining that he did know; and
 - Personal and professional circumstances and the length of time between the commencement of the investigation and the date of the hearing.

.....End.....