



Analysis of greyhound racing injuries

1 July 2021 - 30 September 2021

Foreword

The NSW Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission has published data since 2018 about injuries sustained by greyhounds while racing in NSW.

Reports are published:

- Quarterly, providing timely updates
- Annually, providing analysis of long-term trends

Together, these reports contribute to a growing body of evidence which can assist the industry in making evidence-based decisions with the aim of reducing the incidence and severity of greyhound racing injuries.

Standards for documenting greyhound racing injuries in reports produced by the Commission can be found at: https://www.gwic.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/983897/Standards-for-reporting-greyhound-racing-injuries-.pdf

Key comments

- The Catastrophic injury rate has returned to the lowest levels observed (0.5 per 1000 starts) after a spike in Q1 2021.
- The lower Catastrophic injury rate is consistent with observed seasonal trends for the cooler July – September quarter in most years.
- The total injury rate reported this quarter is slightly lower than last quarter, at 27.2 per 1000 starts, and the largest decrease was in the Minor (1-10 days standdown) category.
- The majority of injuries recorded (78%) were Minor or Medium in nature - wounds and muscle injuries requiring 21 days or less stand down time from racing.
- The average number of starts per greyhound raced this quarter has increased for the second quarter in a row, from 5.4 races in Q2 to 5.7 races in Q3.

Key data this quarter

Injuries sustained at race meetings:

Table 1: Races and Injuries this quarter						
REPORTING PERIOD		1 July - 30 September 2021			3 rd Quarter 2021	
Race meetings		307				
Races		3292				
Starts (times a greyhound has started a race)		23859				
Individual greyhounds raced		4196				
Average starts per greyhound		5.7				
Post-race veterinary examinations		1434				
Injury category	Incapacitation period (days)	Number of greyhounds injured	% injured per injury category	Cumulative total per injury category	Injuries per 100 greyhounds raced	Injuries per 1,000 starts
Minor*	1-10	277	42.7%	42.7%	6.6	11.6
Medium	14-21	228	35.1%	77.8%	5.4	9.6
Major I	28-42	86	13.3%	91.1%	2.0	3.6
Major II	43-90	46	7.1%	98.2%	1.1	1.9
Catastrophic	Euthanased/died	12	1.8%	100.0%	0.3	0.5
Total		649	100.0%	100.0%	15.5	27.2

Track-related mortality not as part of race meeting

Note that this data depends on OTVs following up on a Major II injury suffered at the track and reports made by participants to the Commission, and therefore may not be complete at the time of reporting. Due to this, and for comparability with previous years of data:

- Instances of euthanasia by a private veterinarian, away from the racetrack, after sustaining injury at a race meeting are counted as Major II injuries in the table above as the greyhound was not euthanased on track.
- Instances of euthanasia or sudden death after sustaining an injury in a trial at a racetrack are not included in the table above but included in Table 2 below.
- More information on greyhounds medically euthanased away from the racetrack can be found in the Commission's quarterly 'Greyhound Retirement and End of Life Report', which is available on the Commission's [website](#).

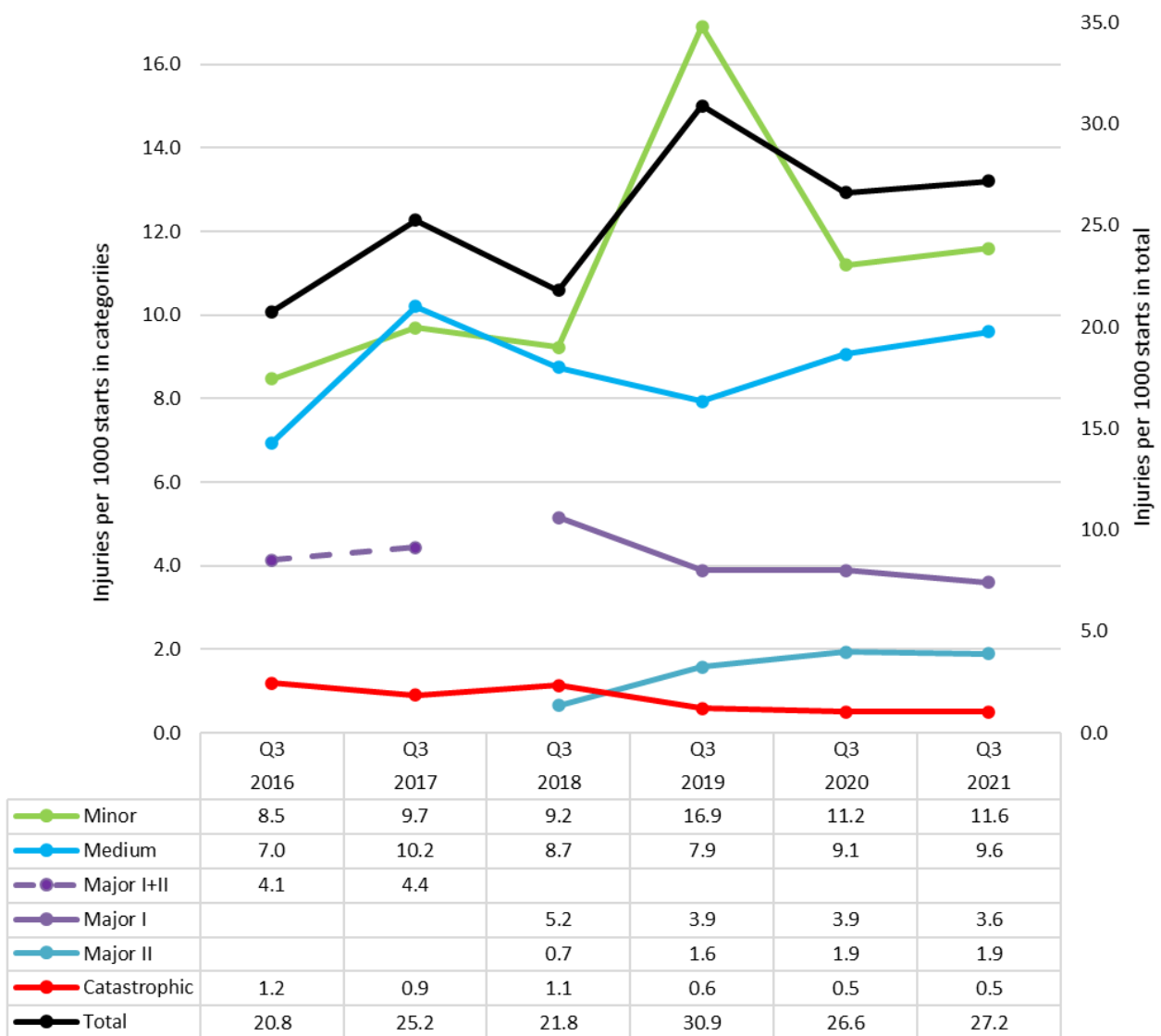
Table 2: Track related mortality not as part of race meeting	
Reporting Period	Q3 2021 / 3rd Quarter
Reported euthanased by private veterinarian after sustaining injury at race meeting	6
Reported euthanased or sudden death after sustaining injury in unofficial trial at racetrack	2
Reported euthanased or sudden death after sustaining injury in official trial at racetrack	0

Trends

Controlled for seasonal variation

Injury rates are correlated with season, with hotter quarters 1 and 4 in each year usually having higher injury rates than cooler quarters 2 and 3. Comparing this quarter's data with the same quarter in previous years reduces the influence of season and provides a more accurate picture of long-term trends in injury rates.

Figure 1: Injury trends for same quarter over 6 years



*Note: reporting prior to Q3 2018 was by GRNSW and is not directly comparable due to differences in data definitions and recording.

Table 3: This quarter compared to the same quarter in previous years

Injury type	This quarter compared to same quarter in previous years
Minor	Similar to Q3 2020 and lower than the 3-year average for Q3 (12.4 per 1000 starts).
Medium	Increased slightly compared to Q3 2020 and the 3-year average for Q3 (8.6 per 1000 starts).
Major I	Lowest on record for Q3 and lower than the 3-year average for Q3 (4.3 per 1000 starts).
Major II	Same as Q3 2020 but higher than Q3 2019 and Q3 2018.
Catastrophic	Lowest Q3 on record along with Q3 2020.
Total	Slight increase since Q3 2020 and slightly higher than the 3-year average for Q3 (26.4 per 1000 starts)

Comment

- The injury rates are generally consistent with Q3 in previous years and trends over 3 years.

All quarters

Figure 2: Injuries since 2016

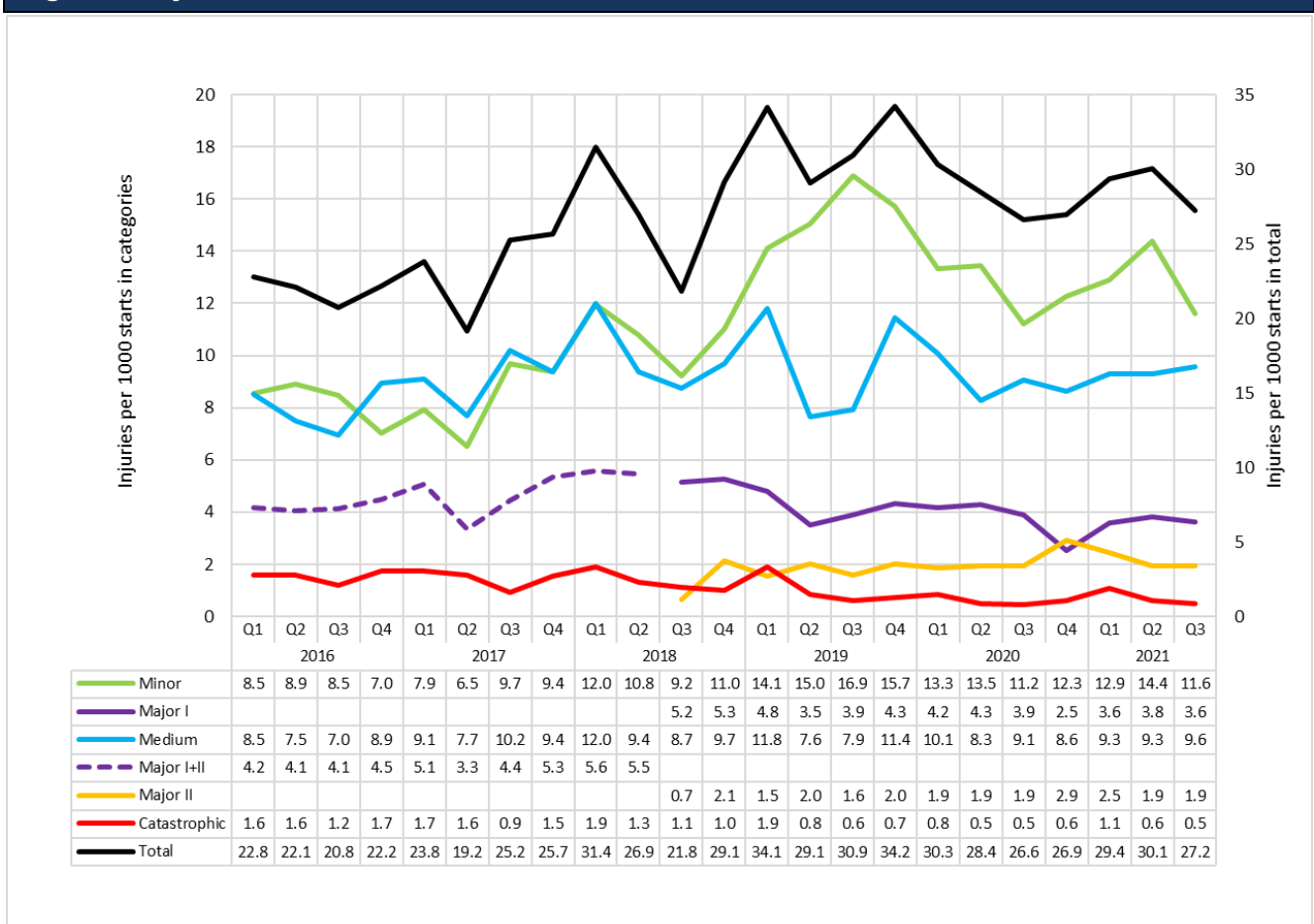


Table 4: This quarter compared to all previous quarters since June 2018	
Minor	Declined compared to Q2 2021 and lower than the 3-year average for all quarters (13.3 per 1000 starts).
Medium	Consistent with previous 12 months and similar to average over 3 years (9.3 per 1000 starts).
Major I	Consistent with previous 12 months and lower than the average over 3 years (4.1 per 1000 starts).
Major II	Same as average over last 3 years (1.9 per 1000 starts).
Catastrophic	Consistent with lower rates generally seen over last two years, and lower than average over 3 years (0.9 per 1000 starts).
Total	Lower than the average of last 3 years (29.3 per 1000 starts).
Comment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injury rates this quarter are consistent with what has previously been reported, and with an overall trend towards fewer serious injuries. • 78% of all injuries reported were Minor or Medium in nature (requiring no more than 21 days stand down from racing). 	

Race Injury Review Panel Analysis

There are many causes of injuries in racing greyhounds and the relative importance and interactions of causative factors vary. Causative factors can be divided into:

1. **Greyhound factors:** genetics, nutrition, physical growth and development, fitness, race preparation, racing form and previous injury history.
2. **Track factors:** design and surface characteristics; environmental influences.
3. **Race factors:** race distance, racing incidents (collisions) and number of greyhounds in a race.

Major II and Catastrophic injuries which occurred during this quarter were reviewed by the Race Injury Review Panel, continuing work begun in February 2019. The Panel assesses factors that may have contributed to each injury and where possible attributes it to greyhound, track or race factors. Over time, the data collected will assist in informing prevention strategies and regulatory steps aimed at minimising the incidence of racing injuries.

Table 5 summarises the results of Panel deliberations and data for this quarter. In some instances, more than one factor contributed to an injury, usually where track factors and racing incidents both contributed to an incident. Where insufficient evidence is available (such as in trials or races where no video footage is available) the possible contributions to the injury are not considered by the Panel, but those greyhounds may be included in counts of the gender, age, distance, location and race history of injured greyhounds.

Table 5: Review of Major II and Catastrophic injuries considered by the Panel this quarter

	Catastrophic/ sudden death	Major II	Total
Race Injury Review Panel assessment of contributing factors to injuries			
Greyhound factors	1	2	3
Race factors	10	33	43
Track factors	1	0	1
More than one factor	0	0	0
Unable to attribute factors	0	5	5
Total assessed	12	40	52
Gender of injured greyhound			
Female	7	18	25
Male	5	22	27
Age of injured greyhound to nearest six months			
1.5 years	1	1	2
2 years	4	5	9
2.5 years	5	14	19
3 years	0	10	10
3.5 years	1	7	8
4 years	1	1	2
4.5 years	0	1	1
> 5 years	0	1	1
Distance of race in which greyhound was injured in meters			
Under 300	1	1	2
300-399	5	13	18
400-499	3	11	14
500-600	3	10	13
Over 600	0	5	5
Location on track at which injury appears to have occurred			
Soon after start	1	4	5
Straight	2	7	9
Turn	9	26	35
Catching pen	0	0	0
Unknown	0	3	3
Racing history of injured greyhound			
Average and range of starts in last 30 days	2.7 (0 – 5)	2.7 (0 – 5)	2.7 (0 – 5)
Average and range of starts in last 60 days	4.4 (1 – 8)	5.6 (2 – 10)	5.3 (1 – 10)
Average and range of career starts	19.3 (2 – 75)	34 (0 – 86)	30.5 (0 – 86)