

Analysis of greyhound racing injuries

1 October – 31 December 2024



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

The Commission adopted a nationally agreed convention for classifying injuries in 2022 which can be viewed [here](#).

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.

In keeping with this, in February 2023, the Commission convened a Summit comprising all key greyhound racing industry stakeholders to develop strategies for reducing serious racing injuries.

As a result of the Summit, the NSW Greyhound racing industry has committed itself to piloting a range of race injury reduction strategies. Those strategies and the timeframes for implementation are set out within the industry's Race Injury Reduction Action Plan. A copy of the Plan can be found at:

<https://www.gwic.nsw.gov.au/welfare/race-injury-reduction-action-plan>

The Commission will publish the statistical results of the pilots conducted.

** This report may be republished with slight adjustments to figures after further auditing of data.*

Key comments

- The rate of Category E injuries (those that result in death or euthanasia at the track) is the lowest on record and represents a 90% decrease since 2018/19 (from 1.2 per 1000 starts to 0.11 per 1000 starts).
- However, 15 greyhounds that suffered serious Category D injuries in racing subsequently died or were euthanased by private veterinarians. In each case, evidence from treating veterinarians and euthanasia notifications submitted by participants has been reviewed, and the classification of these mortalities confirmed, by the Commission's Chief Veterinary Officer. This is the highest number on record, and the first quarter where low on-track mortality has been counteracted by high off-track mortality from race injury.
- This off-track mortality may be a temporary spike, as the policies and procedures to reduce track mortality put in place from mid-2023 have had a demonstratively positive impact on greyhound welfare outcomes; the Commission will continue to closely monitor race injury related mortalities.
- In general, injury rates for categories other than D have declined slightly both in seasonal and long-term comparison.

Key data

Injuries sustained at race meetings.

Table 1: Injuries at race meetings this quarter					
REPORTING PERIOD		1 October – 31 December 2024			
Race meetings		324			
Races		3,684			
Starts (times a greyhound has started a race)		26,850			
Individual greyhounds raced		4,712			
Average starts per greyhound		5.7			
Injury category	Incapacitation period (days)	Number of injuries	% injured per injury category	Cumulative total of injury category	Injuries per 1,000 starts
Category A	none	125	11%	11%	4.66
Category B	1-10	406	35%	46%	15.12
Category C	11 - 27	350	30%	77%	13.04
Category D	28 - 90	265	23%	100%	9.87
Category E	Euthanased/died	3	0%	100%	0.11
Total		1149			42.79
Category F	*	111	10%		4.13
Category G	+	1038	90%		38.66

* Category F includes all Category E incidents as well as those within Category D that are deemed to be of a particularly serious nature. Please refer to [Standards for reporting greyhound racing injuries](#) further information.

+ Category G Includes any injury in Categories A to C and those in Category D that do not fit the definition of a serious injury (i.e. Category F).

Track-related mortality not at race meeting

The Commission's veterinarians follow up with trainers about the outcomes for greyhounds which have suffered a serious Category D race injury.

Instances of euthanasia by a private veterinarian or sudden death away from the racetrack, after sustaining injury at a race meeting, are counted as Category D injuries in the table above and included in Table 2 below.

More information on greyhounds medically euthanased away from the racetrack can be found in the Commission's quarterly Greyhound Life Cycle Report, which is available on the Commission's website.

Table 2: Track related mortality not as part of race meeting	
Reporting Period	1 October – 31 December 2024
Reported euthanased by private veterinarian or died off-track as a result of injury at race meeting*	15
Reported euthanased or sudden death after sustaining injury in unofficial trial at racetrack	0
Reported euthanased or sudden death after sustaining injury in official trial at racetrack	0

*Evidence from treating veterinarians and euthanasia notifications submitted by participants is reviewed, and the classification of these mortalities confirmed, by the Commission's Chief Veterinary Officer.

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.

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

Figure 1: Injury trends for same seasonal quarter - Categories A to E and total

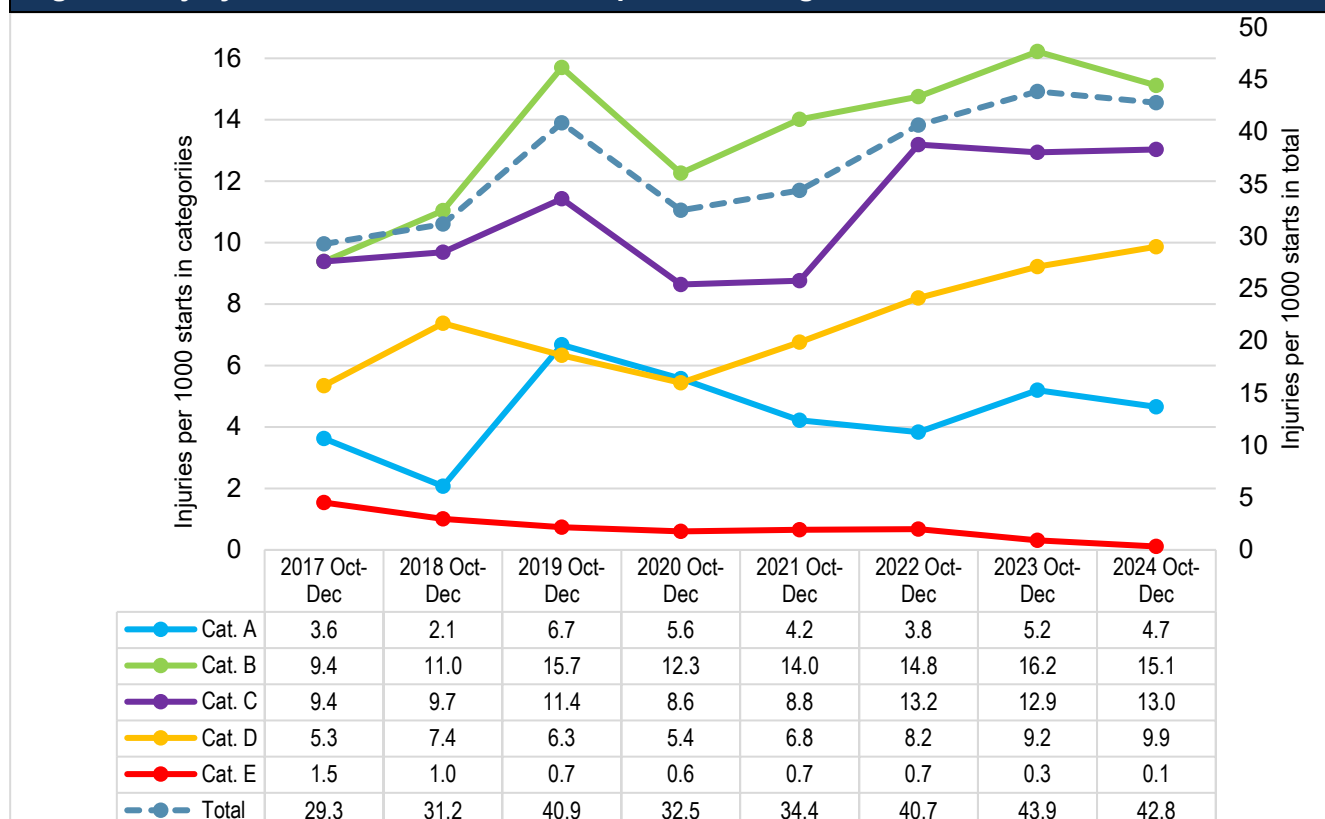


Figure 2: Injury trends for same seasonal quarter – Categories F and G

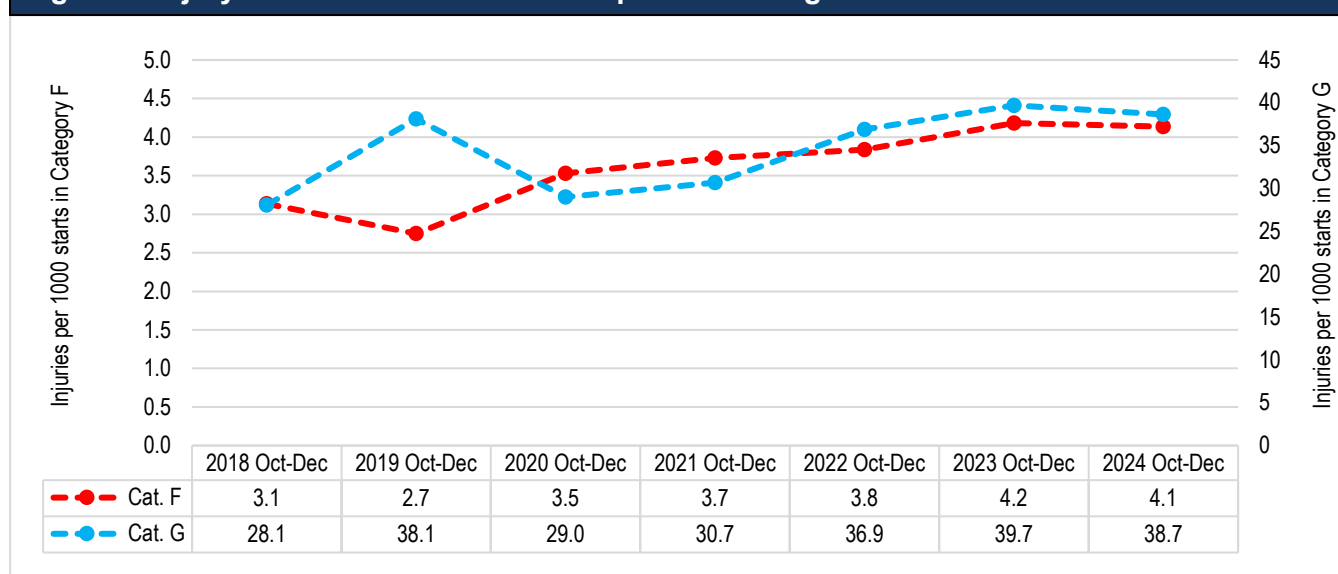


Table 3: This quarter compared to the same quarter in previous years

Injury type	This quarter compared to same quarter in previous years
Category A	Lower than previous seasonal quarter, equal to 5-year average
Category B	Lower than previous seasonal quarter, higher than 5-year average of 14.5
Category C	Similar to the previous seasonal quarter, higher than 5-year average of 11.3
Category D	Higher than the previous seasonal quarter, higher than 5-year average of 7.9
Category E	Much lower than the previous seasonal quarter and the 5-year average of 0.5
Total	Lower than the previous seasonal quarter, higher than the 5-year average of 38.5
Category F	Similar to the previous seasonal quarter and higher than 5-year average of 3.9
Category G	Higher than the previous seasonal quarter, higher than 5-year average of 35.0

Comment
Many more greyhounds died or were euthanased off track this quarter than has been the case in previous quarters. Added to the number of mortalities at the track (Category E), the mortality rate is 0.67, a rate last seen in 2023.

Long-term trends

Long-term injury trends are presented as 12-month running averages (Figures 3 and 4).

Figure 3: Injuries in Categories A to E with trendlines (12 month running average)

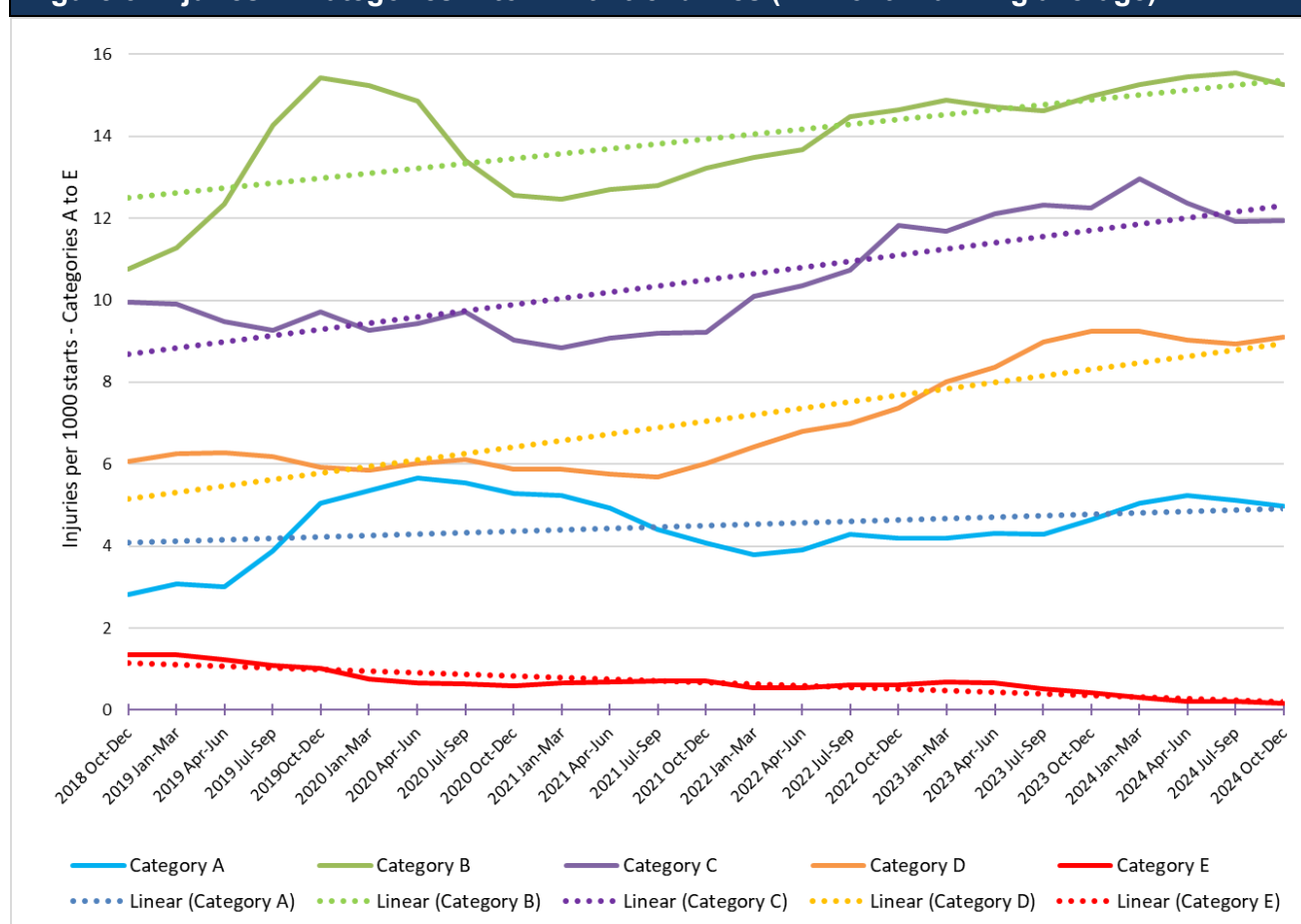


Figure 4: Injuries in Categories F, G and total with trendlines (12 month running average)

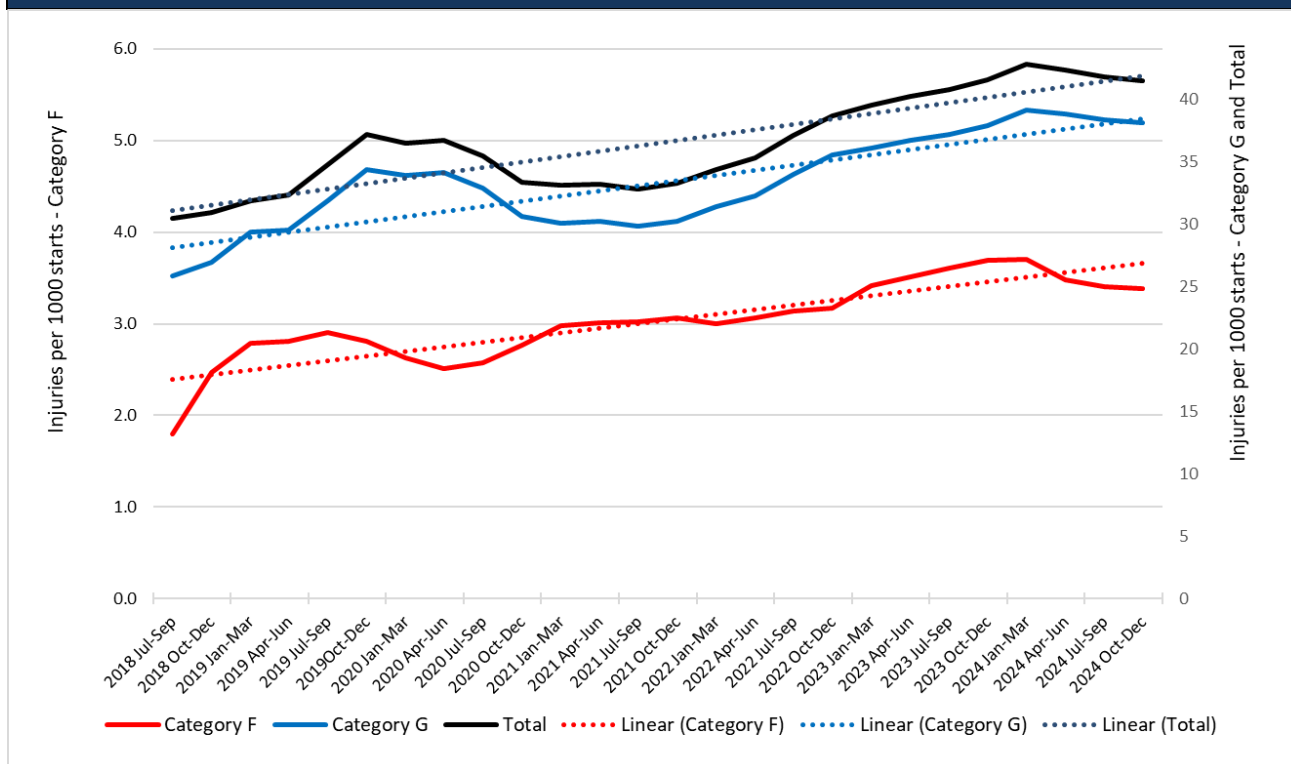


Table 4: This quarter relative to long term trends (12 months running average)

Category A	Slight decline this quarter as for previous two quarters, contrasting with slight upward long term trend. Similar to 5 year average of 4.6.
Category B	Slight decline this quarter but long term trend is upward trend and higher than 5 year average of 14.1.
Category C	Stable this quarter, slightly below long term upward trend, higher than 5 year average of 10.9
Category D	Slight rise this quarter, consistent with upward long term trend, higher than 5 year average of 7.5
Category E	This quarter consistent with long term decline, lower than 5 year average of 0.5
Total	This quarter has continued the decline seen throughout 2024, countering the trend of long-term increase. Higher than 5 year average of 37.7
Category F	This quarter has continued the decline seen throughout 2024, countering the long-term increase. Higher than 5 year average of 3.2
Category G	This quarter has continued the decline seen throughout 2024, countering the long-term increase. Higher than 5 year average of 34.4
Comment Several categories have shown decline in this and previous quarters of 2024, in contrast with their long-term increase. Category D is the only category to show an increase over the previous, but the decline in Category F suggests that the the slight increase in Category D may be due to less serious injuries (those with 28 and 42 day stand downs which are not major bone fractures).	

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.

Category E and F 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 data for this quarter. Of the 111 Category F injuries this quarter, 108 were considered in full or part by the RIRP. In some instances, more than one factor may contribute to an injury, such as track and race factors. 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 Category E and F injuries this quarter			
	Category E	Category F minus Category E	Category F
Race Injury Review Panel assessment of contributing factors to injuries			
Greyhound factors	-	-	60
Race factors	-	-	48
Track factors	-	-	-
Factors not assessed	-	-	-
Gender of injured greyhound			
Female	1	49	50
Male	2	59	61
Age of injured greyhound to nearest 6 months			
1.5 years		2	2
2 years	2	18	20
2.5 years		23	23
3 years		33	33
3.5 years		17	17
4 years	1	7	8
4.5 years		3	3
> 5 years		4	4
Distance of race in which greyhound was injured			
Under 300m		4	4
300-399m	2	52	54
400-499m		24	24
500-600m	1	25	26
Over 600m		2	2
Location on track at which injury appears to have occurred			
Soon after start		3	3
Straight		15	15
Turn	3	61	3
After finish but before catching pen		1	1
Catching pen		5	5
Other			
Race history of injured greyhounds			
Average and range of starts in last 30 days			
Average and range of starts in last 60 days			
Average and range of career starts			