

Standards for Reporting Greyhound Racing Injuries



Revised September 2025

1. About injury reports

The NSW Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission is committed to transparency and accountability. The Commission has reported quarterly and annually on greyhound injuries and mortalities (deaths and euthanasias) that occur at race meetings since 2018, continuing a practice established in 2016 by Greyhound Racing NSW. Injuries and on-track mortalities are also published in stewards reports within 24 hours of a race meeting's conclusion.

These reports contribute to a growing body of evidence to progress the industry's priority of reducing the incidence and severity of greyhound racing injuries.

About this revision

This revision includes the criteria used by the Commission for identifying mortalities that occur off-track and which are causally linked to injuries sustained in races and trials. These criteria will be implemented in quarterly injury reports from 1 July – 30 September 2025 onwards.

The criteria, in conjunction with the eTrac database and improved processes, enable these mortalities to be identified with strong consistency and rigour. Cases are initially identified from post-injury veterinary follow-ups, from notifications submitted by participants, and from compliance activities. Each case is reviewed by the Commission's chief veterinary officer to confirm that, based on the evidence and criteria, the mortality is causally related to a race or trial injury.

The revised standards set a limit of 90 days between off-track mortality and track injury, and mortalities beyond 90 days of an injury are not considered. The Commission's data at September 2025 indicates that a limit of 90 days will capture 93% of all cases of mortality that might be able to be causally related to an injury sustained in a race or official trial.

Numbers of off-track mortalities linked to race and trial injuries which were reported prior to 1 July – 30 September 2025 were not based on this consistent process and are not comparable those reported using these revised standards.

2. About these standards

These revised standards for documenting greyhound racing injuries apply to all injury reports published by the Commission from July 2025 onwards. Their purpose is to ensure consistent recording and classification of greyhound injuries and mortalities occurring at race meetings.

These standards encompass:

- Injuries and mortalities (both euthanasias and deaths) that occur at race meetings in NSW;
- Mortalities that occur away from a race track which can be causally linked to an injury sustained at a NSW race track within 90 days of the injury.

The Commission does not collect data on injuries that occur:

- At club trials, except in rare circumstances where a Commission veterinarian may be present;
- Away from a race track, except where such an injury is detected by a Commission veterinarian when the greyhound is presented at a race meeting.

3. Data sources

Greyhound Health Checks

All racing injuries identified by the Commission's On-Track Veterinarians (OTVs) are recorded in the eTrac database as Greyhound Health Checks. This includes injuries that are identified when a greyhound is presented for examination at a race meeting prior to racing, although public reporting only includes injuries from post-race examinations.

The data recorded by OTVs includes:

- the anatomical location and nature of the injury
- any incapacitation time recommended
- the apparent location on the track where the injury was sustained, if known
- treatment information
- advice given to the trainer about ongoing treatment

This data is linked in eTrac to the individual greyhound's racing history.

Where a greyhound sustains a serious injury which requires a 60 or 90 day stand down, an OTV will follow up with the trainer and/or the treating private veterinarian in the days following the injury.

Greyhound Health Checks may be augmented with information about the subsequent diagnosis and treatment of the greyhound's injuries by private veterinarians, and with any postmortem findings where a greyhound subsequently dies.

Data for public reporting of race-related injuries is drawn from eTrac.

Greyhound Health Checks are audited against steward's reports and euthanasia and death notifications to ensure accuracy and completeness.

Additional sources

Where a mortality occurs at a race meeting, the OTV will notify the Commission's Chief Veterinary Officer immediately.

The steward in charge of the race meeting ensures injuries are recorded as penalties in eTrac. Any euthanasia, sudden death or injury requiring a 60 or 90-day stand down triggers eTrac to send an automatic email notification about the event to key Commission members, including the Chief Commissioner, Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Veterinary Officer and Chief Steward.

Owners are required to submit a notification when a greyhound dies or is euthanased, including when the mortality has happened at a race meeting.

4. Track procedures

Kennelling and pre-race veterinary examinations

All greyhounds presented for racing at a race meeting are subject to a pre-race veterinary examination by the OTV. Any injury or condition that would prevent a greyhound from racing is recorded in a Greyhound Health Check and published in the stewards report.

All greyhounds injured in a race meeting receive immediate veterinary treatment from an OTV. Trainers may be directed by the OTV to seek follow-up treatment for a greyhound from a veterinarian in private practice.

Post-race veterinary examinations

An OTV may examine a greyhound after a race for reasons including:

- signs of injury or distress
- at the request of a steward (due to suboptimal or inexplicable performance)
- involvement in a racing incident (for example, a race collision or fall or a marring incident)
- where a greyhound fails to finish a race, or
- at the request of a trainer.

All greyhound examinations after a race are recorded in a Greyhound Health Check within 48 hours of a race meeting, whether an injury is detected or not.

5. Injury classification and reporting

At the race track

Injuries are classified at the race track according to the categories and descriptions in Table 1. Where an individual greyhound sustains injuries in more than one category, only the highest category (noting that Category A is the lowest) is counted in reporting.

A stand down period and associated injury category may be changed by a steward on the advice of an OTV or where diagnostic information from a private veterinarian indicates the injury is more serious or less serious than initially assessed at the track examination.

An OTV will follow up with trainers and any treating veterinarian of greyhounds that have sustained an injury with a 90 day stand down, or a 60 day stand down if the injury may meet the criteria for serious (described in Category F of Table 1).

Mortalities

All greyhound mortalities that are causally linked (either directly or as an antecedent cause) to a serious injury or condition sustained in a race or trial are classified into one of three categories based on location of mortality (at a race track or off-track) and the time that has elapsed since the injury or condition was sustained.

1. Immediate track mortality

Where the greyhound dies or is euthanased by the On Track Veterinarian at a race track as the result of an injury or condition sustained in a race or trial at that track.

[Note: If the injury leading to the mortality was sustained during a race (but not a trial), these mortalities are counted as Category E injuries. Trial injuries are reported separately.]

2. Off-track mortality within 7 days
Where the greyhound dies or is euthanased by a private veterinarian off-track within 7 days of a serious track injury or condition and the mortality meets causal link criteria (see below).
3. Off-track mortality beyond 7 days and within 90 days
Where the greyhound dies or is euthanased by a private veterinarian off-track more than 7 days and up to 90 days after a serious track injury or condition and the mortality meets the causal link criteria (see below).

The Commission reports immediate track mortality and off-track mortality within 7 days to harmonize with Greyhounds Australasia standards, while off-track mortality beyond 7 days and within 90 days is reported to maintain our ethical commitment to transparency, as an independent regulator of the greyhound racing industry.

Off-track mortalities causally linked with track injury

In assessing whether an injury or condition sustained in a race or trial is causally linked to the mortality of a greyhound, the Commission is guided by the approach used by all Australian states and territories for identifying cause of death in humans¹. This considers:

- The condition which has directly led to the mortality.
- The antecedent causes which have given rise to the direct cause².

A track injury or condition will be the direct cause where the mortality takes place at a track, and off track where veterinary first-aid (including pain relief and treatment to stabilize the greyhound prior to transportation to a veterinary clinic) has been administered, but no clinical veterinary treatment to repair the injury has been undertaken. This includes scenarios such as, but not limited to:

- Where clinical examination indicates the injury or condition is inoperable or treatment will not be effective.
- Death during transportation from the track to a veterinary surgery.

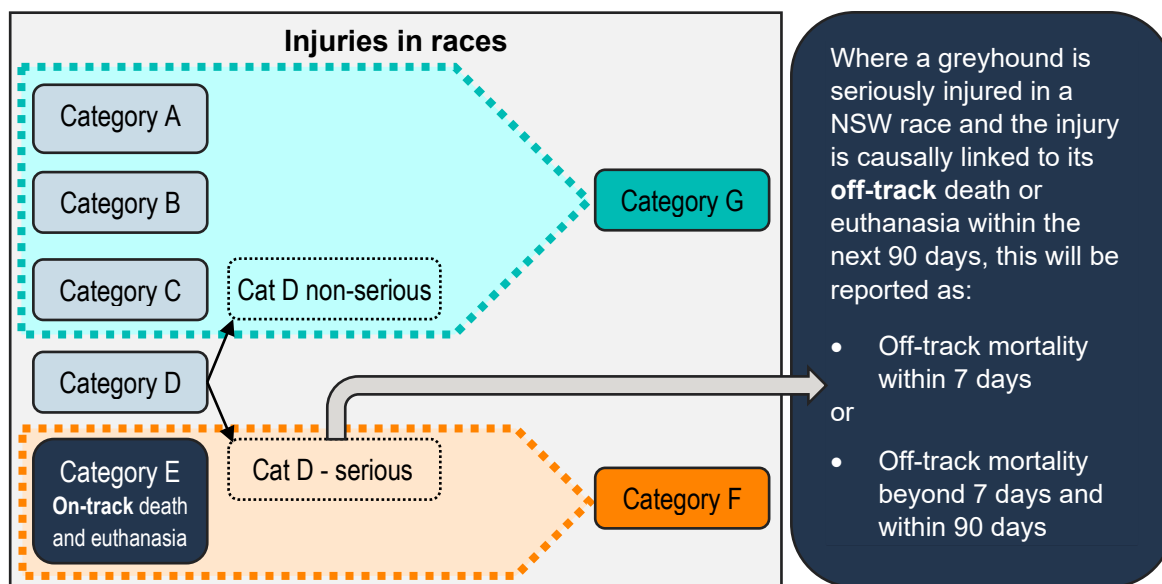
A track injury may also be an antecedent cause of mortality off the track. In these cases, there must be a causal link between the injury and the direct cause of death or reason for euthanasia. This includes scenarios such as, but not limited to:

- Complications of surgery intended to address the injury or condition, including associated anaesthetic complications, uncontrollable bleeding, heart failure and blood clots.
- Post-operative complications of the injury or condition such as treatment-resistant infection, analgesic-resistant pain or wound necrosis.
- Where the injury or condition shows insufficient signs of healing within a reasonable time or the health of the greyhound significantly deteriorates following treatment of the injury or condition.
- Where veterinary treatment to address the injury or condition has not been successful in restoring a reasonable quality of pain-free life.

¹ Cause of death certification guide. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2024. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/detailed-methodology-information/cause-death-certification-guide/australia>

² "A condition should be regarded as being antecedent not only in an aetiological or pathological sense, but also where it is believed that this condition prepared the way for the direct cause by damage of tissues or impairment of function, even after a long interval." Ibid.

Figure 1: Summary of racing injury and mortality categories



Causal link criteria

In determining that a greyhound's mortality is causally linked to an injury or condition sustained in a race or trial, the following three conditions must be met:

1. Causal Connection
The injury or condition must be either the direct cause of the mortality, or have given rise to other conditions, complications or consequences which link it clearly and continuously to the mortality.
2. Substantial Contribution
The injury or condition or the conditions, complications or consequences it gave rise to must make a substantial contribution to the death or decision to euthanase the greyhound relative to any other unrelated causes.
3. Evidence
The decision to count a mortality must be supported by information supplied by private veterinarians, OTVs and/or participants, and may include medical records and expert veterinary opinion.

Authority

The Commission's Chief Veterinary Officer serves as the sole and final decision maker for categorising mortalities.

Table 1: Classification of injuries

Classification name and definition ³	Equivalent in pre-2022 classification
Category A Race injuries, where the injury occurred on track in a race and identified post-race by the On-Track Veterinarian after a post-race veterinary examination, given no stand down period by the officiating veterinarian, which are typically incidental findings such as skin abrasions and are expected to not need any additional time off prior to racing. It excludes greyhounds examined and found not to be injured (No apparent injury / No anomaly detected).	Minor 1 (Injury so minor that no stand down period required)
Category B Race injuries, where the injury occurred on track in a race and identified post-race by the On-Track Veterinarian after a post-race veterinary examination, given a stand down period of 3-10 days by the officiating veterinarian, which are typically mild muscle soreness, or other minor injuries that are generally expected to recover within a short time period prior to being able to race again.	Minor also called Minor 2 prior to 2020 (1-10 day stand down)
Category C Race injuries, where the injury occurred on track in a race and identified post-race by the On-Track Veterinarian after a post-race veterinary examination, given a stand down period of 11-27 days by the officiating veterinarian, which are typically lacerations, joint sprains, or muscle injuries (Grade 2), or other forms of soreness and are generally expected to recover within that time period prior to being able to race again.	Medium (14-21 day stand down)
Category D Race injuries, where the injury occurred on track in a race and identified post-race by the On-Track Veterinarian after a post-race veterinary examination, given a stand down period 28-90 days by the officiating veterinarian, which are typically more significant muscle tears, bone fractures or other injuries that require a greater amount of treatment and recovery. Greyhounds with these injuries may or may not race again depending on severity, prognosis and treatment.	Major 1 (28-42 day stand down) and Major 2 (43-90 day stand down)
Category E Any greyhound that died during a race or was euthanased by the officiating veterinarian due to the catastrophic nature of the injury sustained. Note: this will include a small number of medical conditions.	Catastrophic (euthanasia and sudden death)
Category F (serious injury) Includes all Category E incidents as well as those within Category D that are deemed to be of a particular serious nature. The following are included: • death or euthanasia on-track • any skull or spine fracture or paralysis (partial or complete) • any long bone fracture (i.e. humerus, radius/ulna, femur or tibia) • a hock fracture/dislocation where the stand down period is 60 or 90 days • any other fracture where the stand down period is 60 or 90 days • any other joint injury where the stand down period is 60 or 90 days • a skin injury where the stand down period is 60 or 90 days • a soft tissue injury (including muscle injury) where the stand down period is 90 days.	Catastrophic and Major 2 (43 - 90 day stand down including long bone fractures; severe spinal, pelvic or skull injuries; major fracture dislocations, Achilles tendon ruptures)
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)	Minor 1, Minor (Minor 2), Medium and Major 1
No apparent injury (NAI) An examination performed by the officiating veterinarian that does not detect an injury.	NAI

³ In February 2022 the Commission and Greyhound Racing NSW adopted this convention for classifying injuries which has been agreed to by the greyhound racing controlling bodies in Australian states and territories and New Zealand via Greyhounds Australia. This common convention will assist the development of national benchmarks for welfare in greyhound racing.