

GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA

Attending and Training Greyhounds

Booklet 2 – Greyhound Basics



Greyhound Racing Victoria
Attendant and Trainer Education Pack

All rights reserved
This work is copyright of Greyhound Racing Victoria

Date Published 2019

This is the second in a series of booklets that support you in attending and training racing greyhounds.

Booklet 1: Introduction

Booklet 2: Greyhound Basics

Booklet 3: At the Race Track - Kennelling, Preparing for Racing, Boxing and Catching

Booklet 4: At the Race Track – After the Race

Booklet 5: Occupational Health and Safety

Booklet 6: Completing the Assessment

Booklet 7: Setting Up an Optimal Training Environment

Booklet 8: Greyhound Health

Booklet 9: Education and Training

Booklet 10: Nominating

Booklet 11: Preparing a Greyhound for Re-Homing

Booklet 12: The Public Trainer

Booklet 13: Advanced Knowledge

Identifying, handling and preparing your greyhound

2.1 Identifying a greyhound

It is vital to the integrity of the racing industry that each greyhound can be identified to ensure that the right dog is presented for a race, and that races are legitimate and fair. There are a number of ways of identifying a greyhound, with different methods being used for different situations.

A greyhound's registration card lists the sex, colour, microchip and ear brands of the greyhound, along with its racing name, registration number, sire, dam and date of birth.



At the track, a greyhound will be identified by the Stewards by its sex, colour, microchip and ear brand. At home in a small kennel, you may simply use the dog's pet/kennel name which is usually different to the race name. In larger kennels, where there are a lot of greyhounds that may be similar colours

and sizes, any distinctive markings might be used; you may have to check the microchip or ear brands to make sure you have the correct dog; or place distinctive collars on individual dogs to help tell them apart.

When disputes occur about parentage, greyhounds can also be identified by their DNA profile or 'fingerprint'. DNA stays constant throughout life and is as individual as a fingerprint in humans. It is a requirement that all breeding greyhounds in Australia have a DNA sample taken and a profile recorded prior to the mating of any male and female. This means that there is now a vast Australian database of DNA profiles from many greyhounds.

All greyhounds are identified by a microchip. Microchips are a small silicone implant containing a computer chip that is placed under the skin between the shoulder blades of the greyhound. The microchip holds a unique 15-digit number that is linked to the greyhound's identity on GRV's database FastTrack. The chip can be 'scanned' using a microchip reader or scanner. When the scanner is passed over the top of the chip, it will register the number and display it on the screen.

For more information on microchipping refer to

<https://greyhoundcare.grv.org.au/grv-microchip-registry/>.

2.2 Handling a greyhound

Appropriate equipment

Greyhounds are quite unique in their physical shape. They generally have quite

strong, thick necks and small heads. This means that it is easy for a greyhound to slip out of a collar if it is not fitted correctly. Greyhounds are also big strong dogs (with males often weighing more than 35kg), and when they get excited and want to chase, they can be quite hard to control.



There is a host of equipment designed specifically for greyhounds. But whatever equipment you use, you need to be familiar in fitting it and maintaining it in good condition.

Leashes and collars

Greyhound collars are usually made of leather or synthetic webbing, are quite thick and are designed to fit high up on the neck of the greyhound. The most common design is one that buckles up around the dog's neck, and the leash is attached to a D-ring embedded in the collar.

There are other styles of collar, such as a martingale collar which slips over the greyhound's head and has a loop of chain or fabric that allows the collar to tighten if the leash goes tight. This style of collar is more commonly used on pet greyhounds or as a catching leash.

If made of leather, the leash and collar

must be checked regularly for cracking, and to ensure any rivets or stitching are secure. Care must be taken if the leather gets wet, as this can weaken the leather, or cause it to become brittle. Leather care includes regularly oiling or treating the leather with a suitable leather product.

You also need to store your leashes and collars safely away from your greyhounds. If left lying around, they may get damaged or exposed to weather, or might be chewed and ruined by the greyhounds – an expensive result either way.



Fitting a greyhound collar

When fitting a greyhound collar, it is vital that you tighten the collar directly below the greyhound's head – NOT further down its neck. If you fit the collar down the dog's neck, it will be too loose and may simply slip off.

Collars should fit firmly, with just room for a finger or two to be placed underneath. The collar should sit at the very top of the greyhound's neck and should look like it would not slip over the dog's head.

Some greyhounds are very good at slipping out of collars, so make sure the collar is fitted correctly, but also be aware that when a greyhound backs up, it has the highest chance of slipping the collar. If the greyhound is also wearing a muzzle, this will be removed as the collar comes over the head. If the greyhound gets to

run around and have a good time after slipping its collar, it will try this strategy again in the future.

If you get into a situation where the greyhound is trying to slip its collar, by backing up and shaking its head from side to side, lower your end of the leash as close as possible to the ground. This shifts the buckle to below the dog's chin and makes it much harder for the greyhound to get free by slipping the collar.

Muzzles

Racing greyhounds: It is, and always has been, a requirement under the law that all racing greyhounds are muzzled and leashed in public.

Retired greyhounds: Like racing greyhounds, it is a requirement under the law that retired/pet greyhounds also be leashed in public, but the requirement for muzzling is different. From 1 January 2019, retired/pet greyhounds are exempt from having to be muzzled in public.

The most common type of muzzle used is the wire 'racing' muzzle that slips over the greyhound's face and is held in place by a loop of wire behind the dog's ears. Wire greyhound muzzles come in different sizes and are usually colour coded to indicate the size. The number of wires also varies. It is important that any muzzle fits correctly so that it is neither too small, nor too loose. There should be approximately 2-2.5 cm clear of the nose. Because they are made of wire, the muzzle can then be shaped to fit the greyhound by bending the nose and neck wires, or sides of the muzzle to fit.

All muzzles must be fitted in such a way that the greyhound is still able to open its mouth to pant and drink at all times.

Muzzling during toileting, socialisation and group exercise is acceptable as a means of acclimatising greyhounds to muzzles for racing. Greyhounds must not be muzzled for more than 30 minutes at a time unless:

- being walked in public places;
- travelling;
- under strict, documented, direction by a veterinary practitioner;
- under GRV Steward direction;
- part of a housing acclimatisation program as detailed in the establishment's EHMP.

Barking muzzles should not be used except under the strict, documented direction of a veterinary practitioner. This should not be used for a period of more than five minutes at a time and no more than twice per day.

Barking muzzles **must not** be used on greyhounds at any time during transportation where the **journey is hot weather affected or at race meetings or trials that have been declared hot weather affected**. For further information, refer to the GRV *Hot Weather Policy and Transportation of Greyhounds Policy*.

Examples of Barking Muzzles





Examples of Acceptable Muzzles



Other equipment

Nose straps / head checks

These are items that are often used to help walk strong or excitable greyhounds. Acting like a halter on a horse, they give better head control, and can reduce the amount of pulling a greyhound can generate. Often called 'head collars' by the public, there are many brands and designs on the market.

If a greyhound is particularly difficult to handle at the track, you can ask permission of the Stewards to parade the dog in either a nose strap or head check, but they must first approve the piece of equipment you plan to use and endorse it. This endorsement will go in the greyhound's weight card, ('dog to be paraded in nose strap') and you must apply again to have the endorsement removed if you chose not to use the piece of equipment at a later stage.

Blinkers

Occasionally a trainer will apply to the Stewards to have a greyhound race in blinkers. The aim is to try to help prevent a dog turning its head (marring) during a race, but experience shows that they rarely achieve this. Again, the use of blinkers will need to be recorded as an endorsement on the greyhound's weight card. You must first apply to the Stewards

to use blinkers and the weight card will only be endorsed after a satisfactory 'blinker trial'. If you chose to remove the blinkers later, you will have to apply to have the endorsement removed.

Getting a greyhound out of the kennel, car or trailer

Most greyhounds are quite responsive to people and will come to the front of the kennel when called. If you are not familiar with the greyhound you must collect, always make sure that you watch its body language carefully. Some greyhounds get very excited to be going out and will jump up on people and can potentially scratch or knock you off balance. More timid greyhounds may not want to approach and may retreat to the back of the kennel. Care is, therefore, required when removing an unfamiliar greyhound from a kennel to ensure that neither you or the greyhound are hurt in the process.

When approaching an unknown greyhound or a greyhound with whom you have had little or infrequent contact, place one hand in a fist and present it to the greyhound to sniff. Do not look the greyhound in the eye, but look slightly down and talk in a soft, calm voice. This will encourage the greyhound to move towards you and sniff your hand, helping the greyhound learn who you are. This can be done through the wire of the kennel.

If the greyhound is reluctant to approach the front of the kennel, you can enter, crouch down a few steps away from the greyhound, again place your fist outstretched and wait for the greyhound to approach you.



Once the greyhound has sniffed your hand and had a chance to get your scent, you can pat them gently on the neck before attempting to lead them out of the kennel.

Before you open any kennel door, it is a good idea to make sure that other doors and gates behind you are closed. This way if a greyhound does escape, at least they cannot get too far, and are less likely to hurt themselves or get in trouble. Remember timid greyhounds will try to run, so be prepared for quick movements and try to anticipate what the greyhound will do so you can prevent it from hurting itself or you. If you must go into a kennel to catch a greyhound, make sure you shut the gate behind you and latch it, so the greyhound can't simply run past you and out the door.

Before you allow the greyhound out of its kennel or the car or trailer, you must first ensure that its collar and leash are securely fastened. If you are out in public, the greyhound's muzzle will also need to be securely fitted. When you are happy the dog is under control, the next step is to check behind yourself and make sure there are no other dogs, vehicles or obstacles in the way, before stepping back and letting the greyhound out.

When getting greyhounds out of a vehicle, you need to be especially careful that there are no dangers. If a greyhound was to escape onto a road the result could be tragic. You can usually use your body to

block the exit until you have the dog under control and safely leashed, whether you are getting it out from a berth of the trailer, or out of the backseat of the car. Be especially careful with station-wagons that have the lift up hatch. By the time you can reach the dogs, they may have had ample opportunity to escape by shooting out through the gap.

Walking a greyhound safely

Most greyhounds are taught to walk nicely on the leash and welcome their daily walks. Problems generally occur when the greyhound gets excited and wants to jump around or chase. You need to be constantly aware of what is going on around you as you walk a greyhound. Other dogs, animals and even traffic movement can excite some greyhounds, so if you are watching what is happening around you or what is up ahead, you will be better prepared, and take action to change direction and walk away BEFORE the greyhound reacts.

ALL greyhounds, by law, regardless of whether they are a racing dog or a retired dog, must be walked on a leash at all times in public. This is because a greyhound is very fast. Greyhounds can go from standing still to 70km/hr in as few as 5-6 strides. For everyone's safety, they must be kept on a leash at all times, even in public off-leash areas.

In addition, greyhounds are not always easy to recall. If they become focussed on something it is difficult to break their focus and get them to come back to you.

When out in public it is also law that you must not be in control of more than four greyhounds. However, in reality very few people could control four greyhounds at once if they decided to chase something.

It is much safer to limit yourself to two greyhounds at a time, as long as they are compatible and are well trained to walk on leash. If you have a particularly excitable greyhound, or one just learning its leash manners, it is probably safer to walk it on its own.

Remember that the shorter the leash, the better the control you will have. Sometimes you may need to hold onto the dog's collar directly to maintain control. If they have a lot of leash, greyhounds can accelerate to quite a speed before hitting the end of the leash and this can lead to neck damage or other injuries.



Some trainers will try to get a little more control by looping the leash around the dog's chest or belly (behind the front legs) and holding the leash short. This added 'body support' may help to increase control, especially if the dog is likely to jump forward suddenly.

Rules and laws associated with the control of greyhounds

GAR 108 Prevention of greyhound straying

A registered person must ensure that any greyhound pursuant to the person's care or custody does not stray onto any private property without the permission of the owner

or occupier of that property or stray onto any public place.

GAR 109 Control of greyhound in public place

- (1) *A registered person must not permit a greyhound, which is pursuant to the person's care or custody to be in or on a public place unless the greyhound-*
 - (a) *has a securely fixed muzzle; and*
 - (b) *is pursuant to the effective control of some competent person by means of a leash of leather, or other durable material of a type capable and in a condition of effectively restraining a greyhound, and which is securely fastened to the collar worn by the greyhound.*

- (2) *Unless determined otherwise by the Controlling Body, a registered person who has the care, custody or training of greyhounds shall not-*
 - (a) *lead more than 4 greyhounds in a public place at the 1 time;*
 - (b) *permit any person acting for the registered person to lead more than 4 greyhounds in a public place at the 1 time; or*
 - (c) *permit any person less than the age of 16 years, to lead a greyhound in a public place unless a registered person or some other person above the age of 18 years accompanies that person.*

Domestic Animals Act 1994

The following sections relate to the requirement to confine greyhounds to an owner's property at all times unless under effective control on a leash. Under these requirements, dogs must not be taken or allowed to wander onto other people's property or specific areas in a municipal district without express permission of owner of property or council:

23 Dogs and cats on private property without permission

24 Dogs found at large

26 Dogs and cats found in places specified by the Council

2.3 Preparing for race day

Before you leave for the track

Before you leave home, it is essential that you check that you have everything that you need and that you are correctly dressed. Given the short time frame for presenting your greyhound for kennelling, there is unlikely to be time to go home and get things you have forgotten.

You need to make sure that you have:

- the correct greyhound(s);
- the registration card for each greyhound that is racing;
- the weight card for each greyhound that is racing;
- a suitable leash and collar for each greyhound;
- a well-fitting race muzzle for each greyhound;
- bedding for the race kennels for each greyhound;
- any written documents required (i.e. an Authority to Handle (GAR 29), or bandaging or other gear request (GAR 35));
- your trainer's/attendant's license card;
- water and water bowls; and
- any other equipment you require (i.e. food, rugs, towels, catching leashes, etc).

Remember: There are certain things you cannot possess on a racecourse (GAR

84B) including prohibited substances, needles, syringes etc unless permission is given by Stewards.

Transporting your greyhound

Greyhound racing clubs and tracks are located all over Victoria, so it is inevitable that you will have to travel some distance to participate in the sport. If you have a particularly successful racer you may consider travelling the dog to interstate venues to contest the bigger 'Group' races. These days many greyhounds are shipped interstate via air transport rather than spending several days in transit on the roads.

Even without entering your greyhounds in races at distant tracks, there is still going to be regular travel to the trial track, veterinary clinic or the slipping track. It is essential that your greyhounds arrive in the same condition that they left home in. You do not want your dog to arrive exhausted, dehydrated, stressed or injured.

It is important to remember that your greyhounds must be transported under the care and management of a registered participant or a person engaged in writing by a registered participant. The onus is on the participant to ensure that any person they engage complies with the transport policy and has the capacity to be responsible for the safety and wellbeing of the greyhound during transport.

It is important that you are fully aware of GRV's *Transportation of Greyhounds Policy*. This policy contains very specific requirements for the transport of greyhounds, particularly during hot weather (including a requirement for air conditioning in hot weather).



For a full description of the **GRV *Transportation of Greyhounds Policy*** please refer to the following link: <https://greyhoundcare.grv.org.au/policies-and-guidance/>.

Types of transport

Given the 'hobby' nature of many trainers in Victoria, the family car or a van is often the transport of choice. This is suitable for a small number of greyhounds but makes travelling with larger numbers of dogs almost impossible. Family cars rarely have facilities to keep dogs separated, either from each other or from other passengers, unless they have had a crate or cage installed in the car. Under the **GRV *Transportation of Greyhounds Policy***, greyhounds must NOT be transported in the boot of a sedan or on the open tray of a vehicle or trailer.

For transporting larger numbers of greyhounds, most trainers choose to use a dog trailer. These attach to the tow-bar of the car like any other trailer and vary in size from small 2 or 3 berth trailers through to much larger sizes that have 10 berths. The size of the berths, width of the trailer and features may vary. However, they provide a safe way to travel large numbers of greyhounds. Each berth is separated from the others with wire mesh, and usually has two doors – an outside, lockable door, and an inside wire

door.

Trailers typically have plenty of ventilation, including 'spinners' on the top which encourage airflow through the berths. It is important that the ventilation can be controlled, and that rain does not enter the berths in wet weather. Given the trailer is towed immediately behind the car, it is also important that the ventilation is designed not to draw exhaust fumes into the trailer.

The internal temperature of the vehicle or trailer must be maintained at 32 degrees Celsius (°C) or lower.

Transport for your greyhounds must:

- be clean, weatherproof and have adequate and functioning ventilation or air-conditioning;
- have barriers, compartments or cages securely fitted in vehicles or trailers and checked for any defects that may cause harm or discomfort to the greyhound prior to transportation;
- have surfaces that are non-slip, weight bearing and able to be cleaned and disinfected;
- have doors, latches and hinges that are working and fixed to the frame;
- have doors with mechanism to prevent possibility of being opened from the inside or inadvertently; and
- have secure means of being attached to vehicle to prevent separation while travelling.

Greyhounds must be transported in air-conditioned vehicles and/or trailers if at any point along the intended route - including the location the transport begins, the location of the scheduled rest stops and the final destination at the end of the journey - the official Bureau of Meteorology forecasted maximum temperature is 32°C or higher.



Barking muzzles must not be used on greyhounds at any time during transportation if the journey is hot weather affected.

Things to consider in planning and managing travel

When planning journeys, the person in control of the greyhound must ensure that they have given adequate consideration to a range of matters:

- the number of greyhounds being transported;
- the physical condition of each greyhound including any health issues or injuries;
- the weather and road conditions anticipated during the journey;
- the length of the journey; and
- emergency management including access to a veterinarian should a greyhound become seriously ill or injured during transportation.

Air quality

The quality of the air we breathe does have an effect on us, and it certainly can affect the performance of a racing greyhound, both short-term and long-term. Under no circumstances should a racing greyhound be forced to breathe cigarette smoke. The chemicals in the

second-hand smoke are much more toxic than the toxins inhaled by the smoker. If you do need to have a cigarette, and the greyhound is travelling in the car with you, pull over and get out while you do it.

Exhaust fumes are also very toxic, both to humans and dogs, and can be fatal. In particular carbon monoxide poses a problem as it binds to the red blood cells in the blood and prevents them from carrying much needed oxygen to the body. At the very least, this can affect the performance of a racing animal by lowering the supply of oxygen to the muscles. You must take care not to draw exhaust fumes either into your car or into the dog trailer. This may mean not using the re-circulation function of your vehicles air-conditioner where there is a risk of trapping exhaust in the system or making sure the flaps that face forward on your dog trailer are securely closed whilst you travel.

Comfort and safety

Ideally, the trip from your kennels to the track should be a restful one. Greyhounds are quite thin-skinned, and at racing weight, do not have much excess body fat as 'padding'. For this reason, it is important that they are provided with enough bedding and/or a coat to keep them warm, comfortable and to protect them from the jolts and bumps associated with travel. Importantly, the bedding also provides an insulation against heat from the road (especially in trailers with metal flooring), or from the cold.

Bedding should be clean and dry, and of a reasonable thickness to protect the body from jarring. Sometimes layers of towels or blankets may be safer than foam style bedding. Typically, the bedding in a float or trailer will need to be thicker than

bedding used inside a car due to the increase 'bounce' of the ride.

The space provided during transport must allow for each greyhound to sit, lie down, turn around and stand in a natural position without making contact with overhead structures. Adult greyhounds must be physically separated, restrained and/or individually enclosed by a compartment or cage and must be safety restrained to avoid distracting the driver or sustaining injury to themselves or occupants in event of an accident. Collars and leads must not cause any discomfort or injury.

Vehicles and trailers must not be used as overnight housing for greyhounds except in exceptional circumstances as notified to and approved by GRV Stewards.

Temperature

Greyhounds require roughly the same temperature range as people. They can tolerate short periods where the temperature moves outside their comfort range, but exposure to long periods of excessively hot or cold weather is very stressful. Greyhounds have an optimal internal temperature of 38 - 39°C.

According to scientific literature, the normal air temperature of a greyhound's environment should be between 23 - 30° C to maintain this range without the greyhound having to use excess energy. This air temperature range is known as the "**thermoneutral zone**". Air temperatures outside this zone require dogs to use more energy to maintain their internal body temperature. **The critical temperature zone** for greyhounds is the range in which greyhounds can still maintain their internal body temperature

and is estimated at between 10°C and 35°C (National Research Council, 2006).



Greyhounds cool themselves mainly by panting – moving air quickly over the air passages, tongue and mouth to promote evaporative cooling. They cannot sweat like humans, although a small amount of sweating occurs on their foot pads and nose.

Because they rely on evaporative cooling, they need a good flow of air to keep moving the moisture away. Any increase in humidity can adversely affect their cooling ability. Having a greyhound panting in the enclosed space of a car for any length of time will increase the humidity due to the evaporated water being trapped in the cabin of the car. Once the humidity rises, the greyhound has a reduced ability to effectively cool itself, and its body temperature will start to rise. This is why good airflow, even if it is warm air, is vital during transport.

The use of evaporative cooling also means that in hot weather greyhounds can lose quite a bit of fluid simply through maintaining body temperature. If the weather is very hot and you have to travel for a number of hours, it is quite possible for the greyhound to suffer some degree of dehydration unless you pay careful attention to providing water during the trip.

As discussed earlier, if the air temperature at any point along your journey is

predicted to or reaches 32°C or higher, you must have power assisted air conditioning to cool the transport vehicle.

On hot weather affected journeys as defined in the **GRV Transportation of Greyhounds Policy**, stops should be made at least every two hours during the journey or at the most appropriate rest stop that most closely aligns to this timeframe to allow for greyhound inspections, exercise, toileting and water / fluid consumptions needs. On all other days, the person in control of the greyhound must give adequate consideration to rest stops when planning the journey. A copy of this policy can be found at

<https://greyhoundcare.grv.org.au/policies-and-guidance/>.

Potential indicators of heat stress are dehydration, panting, skin feeling warm, fast heart rate and pulse, drooling, red gums, muscle tremors and seizures. If there is any doubt as to whether or not your greyhound is suffering from heat stress, you must seek appropriate veterinary attention at the nearest possible location.

A cold weather affected journey means a journey where, at any point along the intended route, the official Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) forecasted minimum temperature is 10°C or lower at any time on the day of the journey.

During cold weather affected journeys, greyhounds must be provided with warm bedding and participants should carry sufficient dog coats to enable rugging of greyhounds should they show signs of cold stress, such as shivering. Greyhounds should be rugged if they are showing signs of cold stress.

Signs of hypothermia (extreme cold stress) include shivering, skin feeling cold, slow heart rate and pulse, pale gums and non-responsiveness (coma). You must seek appropriate veterinary attention at the nearest possible location if you suspect your greyhound is suffering from cold stress.

Rest stops

When travelling with greyhounds it is important to allow adequate time for rest stops. All greyhounds should be emptied out prior to being placed in the car or trailer, then at least every two hours should be given a chance to stretch their legs and go to the toilet. These stops also give the driver a chance to relax and freshen up, and the greyhounds can be offered a drink.

In warm weather, every attempt should be made to pull up in a shaded area so that the vehicle does not get hot. In colder weather, care must be taken to keep the greyhound warm and dry wherever possible.

At no time before, during and after arrival at the destination should greyhounds be left unattended in a stationary vehicle or trailer for any period exceeding 20 minutes except on a hot water affected day where greyhounds must not be left unattended for more than 5 minutes.

If you are travelling with young greyhounds, then rest stops need to be more frequent. Younger dogs are usually not quite as reliable toilet-wise, and it is much better to have a couple of extra stops than to have to clean up a wet or dirtied bed. Most dogs do not choose to mess their own bed, but there is little they can do to avoid it if they have been confined for far too long and need to go.

Every council in Victoria has local by-laws about removal of dog waste, so it is important that you carry a supply of plastic 'poo-bags' and pick up after your dogs.

Food and water / electrolytes

It is important that your greyhounds do not dehydrate during travel and that you plan rest stops in advance to take into account their food and water requirements. Offering frequent small drinks of water will go some way to preventing this. Be careful with the use of electrolytes as too much may actually dehydrate the dog due to increasing salt levels. When travelling it is often a good idea to take your own water, as this means you will always have a supply of clean, fresh water, and minimises the risks of tummy upsets due to changes in water.

If your trip is a long one, you might also need to take food for your greyhound. This might be a small 'snack' after racing to help replace the energy they have lost or may be full meals if you plan to be away for a number of days. Beware that some dogs will vomit if they are fed too close to travel time, so try to feed the dog well before you leave. Dogs that are prone to vomiting in transport *must not* wear a barking muzzle; and care should be taken in the use of any type of muzzle for these dogs during transport.

Poor travellers

Many greyhounds take a while to get used to travelling. The more anxious a greyhound is, the more likely they are going to find travel stressful. The best thing to do is to gradually introduce the greyhound to travel at a young age. Short pleasant trips, with careful, considerate

driving can help habituate young dogs to the movement of the car, van or trailer. If the trip has a pleasant outcome – such as a walk, or a gallop at the slipping track – this will also help. Conversely, if every time the greyhound travels there is an unpleasant consequence (i.e. trips to the veterinarian or rough rides that lead to vomiting), they soon anticipate bad things and will start to show signs of stress even before they get into the vehicle.

Some greyhounds are not good travellers no matter what you try, while some dogs truly get motion sickness. For these dogs the problems associated with the loss of fluids from drooling and panting (even in colder weather), loss of electrolytes and energy from barking and restlessness, and the nausea from vomiting mean they may be unable to race. Dogs that are dehydrated, stressed or nauseous are unlikely to be able to perform to the best of their ability, and may be predisposed to bigger problems if raced in this condition.

These dogs often need medical intervention** to help them relax during travel. After a number of relaxed trips they will often become better travellers. You will need to ask your greyhound veterinarian about the various options for poor travellers.

**** Note: Many of the medications used to assist with travel sickness will return a positive swab if used, so you will need to resolve the travelling issues well before the dog is ready to race.**

Air travel

If you have to travel your dog interstate, you may choose to send it with a road transport company, or you might prefer to ship it by air.

Air travel has its own set of issues but is by far the quickest way to get a dog interstate. Dogs are travelled in crates as freight in the cargo area of the plane. There are usually a restricted number of places for dogs, and some airlines do not carry animals at all.

When travelling a dog by air there is the option to use your own crate or to hire one from a shipping company. Air travel crates must meet strict IATA Guidelines (a copy can be obtained from the airlines). The cost of travelling a dog by air is usually calculated on the weight of the dog (along with the crate and bedding) or the volume of the crate, or a combination of both.

Animals who are flying need to be lodged with the airline freight department about an hour and a half before the flight. This can pose a problem if the flight is then delayed, as the dog will be locked into its crate for the entire time. Animals are generally loaded last, and taken off the plane first, but then have to be shipped to the freight area for pick-up.

Travel by air is generally not recommended during the hotter parts of the day in summer as the dog and crate may sit on the hot tarmac waiting to be loaded. Early morning or night flights are often preferred. If travelling for a particular event, it might also be advisable to travel a day or two in advance to allow the greyhound time to settle and recover from the flight. Some dogs are not bothered by air travel, but some dogs will stress a little, and you do not want this to affect your dog's performance in a big race.

Air travel can be arranged by special animal transport companies who will book the flights, provide a hire crate, as well as

drop-off and pick-up the dog. This is often easier than trying to organise the flights yourself.

GRV Hot Weather Policy

GRV's **Hot Weather Policy** describes the management of race meetings and official trials on days when the forecasted or actual temperature reaches 32° C or higher.

This policy is not to be confused with the management of hot weather affected journeys as outlined in the GRV **Transportation of Greyhounds Policy**.

The GRV **Hot Weather Policy** allows you to scratch your greyhound(s) without penalty under certain conditions.

You can find a copy of the GRV **Hot Weather Policy** at:
<https://greyhoundcare.grv.org.au/policies-and-guidance/>.

The policy details the options for GRV to declare the day a hot weather affected day at different temperature ranges.

Kennelling opens 30 minutes earlier on all declared hot weather affected meetings.

On all hot weather affected days there are certain specific requirements including (please read the policy for the full requirements):

- only transport greyhounds according to the GRV *Transportation of Greyhounds Policy*;
- not use barking muzzles on greyhounds at any time;
- offer water to your greyhounds upon arrival at the race track and then proceed to kennel the greyhounds as soon as possible;
- immediately refer any greyhound to

the on-track veterinarian to be examined if they suspect heat stress or observe that greyhound to be passing dark or red coloured urine;

- offer drinking water to a greyhound, without forcing it to drink, upon retrieval from its kennel before its race or trial under the supervision of a Steward nominated club official;
- proceed to the boxes without being paraded;
- offer drinking water to greyhounds immediately after racing or trialling without forcing them to drink;
- hose down the greyhound immediately to thoroughly wet the feet, chest, head, neck, back and groin areas with excess water being removed from the greyhound afterwards;
- re-kennel your greyhounds for a minimum of 15 minutes after their race or trial before preparing to leave the racetrack; and
- seek veterinary advice if your greyhound is showing signs of heat stress or other abnormalities.

Participants are permitted to use cooling vests on their greyhounds at any time prior to racing or trialling.

On days of extreme heat, extra precaution should be taken with your greyhounds when travelling to and from the track.

Greyhound Racing Victoria

46-50 Chetwynd Street,
West Melbourne VIC 3003
Ph: 03 8329 1100
Fax: 03 8329 1000
Email: admin@grv.org.au
Web: www.grv.org.au