

# Barking Muzzles Guidance



## About

Greyhound Racing Victoria seeks to limit the use of Barking Muzzles\*\* on greyhounds and intends to phase them out as soon as possible.

### **The use of Barking Muzzles poses greyhound welfare risks that include:**

- the potential to limit panting and heat exchange;
- muzzled greyhounds not under close observation whilst kennelled;
- restricting the dog's opening of its mouth in relation to risking aspiration of vomit and/or suffocation; and
- not alleviating underlying reason(s) for barking, potentially increasing a dog's anxiety and frustration by restricting its ability to perform a behaviour that can be a coping mechanism.

\*\* Barking Muzzles include any gear, equipment, apparatus or device which, in the opinion of Stewards, is designed or intended to be used in a manner that prevents or limits the barking of a greyhound by restricting its ability to open its mouth.

## Your Responsibility

If you own or care for a greyhound, you are responsible for ensuring that any Barking Muzzle used is of a type approved as per the Barking Muzzle Policy and used appropriately. It is important for you to identify and address the trigger/s of excessive barking that lead to use of barking muzzles.

Ensuring greyhounds are provided with enrichment throughout their lives reduces the risks of developing barking behaviour and leads to improved racing success and general wellbeing.

## Using an approved Barking Muzzle

A registered person can use an approved Barking Muzzle on a specifically identified greyhound as part of a documented retraining or behavioural modification program (Documented Program).

The Documented Program must be directed, detailed and approved by a Veterinarian or qualified dog obedience trainer and included in the greyhound's greyhound record.

## Use of any other type of Barking Muzzle is not approved

**Under Greyhounds Australasia Rule 30, the use of Barking Muzzles is prohibited, except in circumstances:**

- approved by a Controlling Body, or
- when used by a Veterinarian for the sole purpose of examination or treatment of the greyhound.

If you have any questions about whether a type of Barking Muzzle meets the approved requirements for use, please contact the GRV Participant Support Line on 1300 144 360 or email: [participants@grv.org.au](mailto:participants@grv.org.au).

# Barking Muzzles Policy



This policy provides details of circumstances where use of a Barking Muzzle is approved by the Greyhound Racing Victoria Board.

## Approved Use of Barking Muzzle

A Barking Muzzle is only approved for use if it otherwise meets the requirements of the GRV rules of racing and the Victorian Government's Code of Practice for the Keeping of Racing Greyhounds and:

- does not completely close the greyhound's mouth;
- is appropriately sized and properly fitted so as not to cause pain, injury or distress; and
- is only used in limited circumstances and as part of an approved and documented retraining or behavioural modification program, as set out in this policy.

## Documented Program

**Any documented retraining or behavioural modification program must:**

1. Specify an individual greyhound.
2. Be for the purpose of managing excessive barking only.
3. Specify the period of time when the approved Barking Muzzle may be used which must not be longer than:  
(a) 30 minutes at a time, and (b) 60 minutes in any 24-hour period.
4. Identify the probable cause of excessive barking.
5. Identify behavioural modification techniques to address the probable cause of excessive barking without the use of a Barking Muzzle.
6. Not be in place for any longer than 6 months.
7. Be approved by a veterinarian or qualified dog obedience trainer.
8. Be included in the individual greyhound's greyhound record.

## When you cannot use an approved Barking Muzzle:

- During transport, at any time.
- At a race event,
- During trialling, at any location.