

## Owners angry as Macau Canidrome fails to stop euthanising retired dogs

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*Macau greyhound officials encourage putting dogs down despite global criticism, group says*

Greyhound owners are rebelling over the mass killing of retired racing dogs at the Macau Canidrome, where animals are euthanised at the rate of more than 30 a month despite an outcry from welfare groups worldwide.

One woman who owns more than 10 retired greyhounds is refusing to have them put down, and is insisting on continuing to pay for their food and board at the track even though they are no longer racing, according to Macau's Society for the Protection of Animals (Anima).

Other owners say their requests to have their dogs adopted rather than destroyed have been refused by Canidrome owners, said Anima chairman Albano Martins.

Thousands of animal-lovers worldwide have signed petitions, calling for the greyhounds imported from Australia to Macau to be adopted when their short racing careers are over.

The campaign was triggered by a *Sunday Morning Post* investigation last year that found 383 greyhounds imported from Australia were destroyed over a year. Nearly all were healthy.

They are usually put down if they fail to finish in the top three for five consecutive races.

After the outcry over the killings, Canidrome officials met Anima and the Macau government to arrange for selected dogs to be adopted after retirement.

But Martins said the talks came to nothing. "Those people at the Canidrome are just joking with the Macau government," he said. "We have four or five adopters ready to take the dogs but nothing is happening.

"Anima is now receiving calls from the owners of greyhounds telling us that the Canidrome suggested to them to kill the animals, and not put them in an adoption programme.

"One of the owners called us and said she is refusing to kill the animals even though they are not active anymore. This woman has more than 10 dogs there and she is continuing to pay the accommodation fee."

A letter signed by Anima along with Animals Asia, Grey2K USA and Animals Australia was circulated to animal welfare groups worldwide, calling for pressure to be put on the Macau and Australian governments to halt the import of dogs to Macau.

Chan Lin-heung, a senior manager at the Canidrome who wrote a letter to Anima in May promising to adopt at least one retired greyhound, declined to answer questions.

Later, a woman claiming to speak for the Canidrome phoned back and said: "We are considering adopting retired dogs. We are doing something, but I can't tell you what it is."

Canidrome officials have yet to respond to repeated e-mails asking for its response to the complaints.

**Topics:** Animal Rights

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