

Two charged over Qld mass dog grave

By AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Two people have been charged as investigations deepen into the discovery of a mass dog grave in Queensland containing the

carcasses of more than 50 greyhounds.

A man and a woman have both been charged with unlawfully possessing a firearm after a police search found a rifle and ammunition in a home in Bundaberg on Thursday.

The 71-year-old man and 64-year-old woman, both from Bundaberg, will appear in the Bundaberg Magistrates Court on Friday.

A Queensland Police and RSPCA taskforce, set up after the greyhound racing industry was rocked by the live baiting scandal in February, found ammunition shells from a .22 calibre gun at the bush site in nearby Coonarr.

Local speculation suggests the site is a common dumping ground for 'wasted' dogs used by people in the industry.

Police haven't been able to confirm reports that microchips were also discovered.

The shocking scene was, in the words of Detective Superintendent Mark Ainsworth, "nothing short of abhorrent".

And it's unlikely to be the last horrific sight he and his colleagues are met with.

"We've not even tipped the iceberg yet," he said on Thursday morning.

With the help of Racing Queensland, he said a number of trainers and owners in the area had been identified.

It's also believed the animals were killed prior to the ABC's live baiting expose, judging by the level of decomposition.

Racing Queensland's own probe into the use of live piglets, possums, rabbits and other small animals to train race dogs has resulted in more than 30 trainers being banned or stood down pending an internal review.

It's not yet known if any of those banned or suspended are those operating around Bundaberg that have been identified by police.

But Queensland Greyhound Breeders, Owners and Trainers Association president Tony Zammit maintains the wider industry has been tarnished by the action of a few "villains and rogues".

While horrified to learn of the mass killing, he said comments it foreshadowed even more revelations of animal mistreatment were premature.

"To me, it's an exaggerated statement," he said.

"We haven't heard the full story yet."