

Despite live baiting scandal, rules allow animal skins for greyhound training

Sean Nicholls

Published: April 22, 2015 - 2:31PM

Greyhound trainers in NSW have been given approval to use processed animal skins to "educate" their dogs only weeks after a scandal erupted over revelations of live baiting in the industry.

The latest Greyhound Racing NSW policy prohibits "the use of any animal carcass or part of an animal as a lure in greyhound training, education or racing completely".

But it says an exception to the prohibition is the use of "tanned and professionally processed animal skins for the purposes of trialling or educating greyhounds".

"In the instance where a tanned and professionally processed skin is used, evidence of where it was sourced must be produced to a person authorised by GRNSW for immediate inspection upon request," Greyhounds NSW said.

The announcement has outraged the NSW Greens, who claim it demonstrates the industry has learned nothing from the scandal over revelations some of Australia's leading trainers were using live animals to train their dogs.

In February an expose by Animals Australia and ABC's *Four Corners* program revealed trainers in three states were using live possums, rabbits and pigs tied to lures for dogs to chase around training tracks.

The revelations led to the board and the chief executive of Greyhound Racing NSW stepping down.

Paul Newson was appointed interim chief executive while a special commission of inquiry investigates the NSW industry.

But Greens MP John Kaye said the decision to allow animal skins shows Mr Newson "has failed to understand that permitting the use of animal skins feeds the demand for live baiting".

"Greyhound Racing NSW is sending a clear message to trainers that defenceless animals whether they are dead or alive are an effective and acceptable training tool for dogs," he said.

However, a Greyhound Racing NSW spokesman said the organisation believes it is "appropriate to use skins that are a by-product of legitimate processes which already occur regardless of the needs of greyhound racing".

He said the policy will be reviewed after receipt of the findings of an independent expert engaged to "recommend best practice greyhound rearing, socialisation, education and training methods that will move away from any reliance or association with animal products".

The report is due in July.

This story was found at: <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/despite-live-baiting-scandal-rules-allow-animal-skins-for-greyhound-training-20150422-1mpv7n.html>