



In 2012-13 over \$1 billion was wagered on greyhound racing in New South Wales. Source: Wikicommons

## Greyhound racing in the firing line

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by LEXY AKILLAS

A petition opposing the greyhound racing industry has gained significant momentum across Sydney.

Ultimo resident Eva Deli, who started the petition, has gathered almost 1500 signatures and the attention of a number of different animal rights groups.

“I started this petition because I thought that if Australians knew about what was going on with these dogs and that this type of cruelty was being funded by the government, they would be against it,” Ms Deli told *City Hub*.

Ms Deli took action after discovering that The Select Committee on Greyhound Racing in NSW released a report in October 2014, outlining that the government would contribute approximately \$154 million to the greyhound racing industry through differential tax rates.

Emma Hurst, Campaign director for Animal Liberation NSW, said that abuse within the greyhound racing industry was often hidden from the public.

“It is really quite terrible and confronting to see money going into an industry that has had allegations of doping, money laundering, corruption and animal cruelty,” Ms Hurst said.

However, Minister for Racing Troy Grant said that the NSW Government was committed to “cleaning up the industry”. *City Hub* understands that a differential tax rate to support the industry was one option tabled in a 2014 parliamentary select committee report before the live baiting scandal earlier this year.

“The NSW Government acted swiftly to protect the welfare of animals by establishing the Special Commission of Inquiry, with the powers of a Royal Commission, and took immediate steps to remove the board and CEO,” Mr Grant said.

Ms Deli said she was concerned about the impact the Wentworth Park track in Glebe has on her local community.

“The Glebe community is especially good with taking care of human and animal issues, so it would be contradictory for us to have this industry right in front of our faces,” she said.

Greyhound racing at Wentworth Park occurs every Friday and Saturday night, with ten races being held per day.

Ms Hurst said the dogs were treated inhumanly, and as “disposable”.

“There is no benefit to grey hound racing and any abuse of animals for the purpose of entertainment should be ceased,” Ms Hurst said.

Caroline Hoetzer, committee member for Greyhound Rescue NSW who have been rescuing greyhounds since 2001, said that she hoped the industry would be shut down like in the US.

Animal Liberation NSW, Greyhound Rescue NSW and a number of other national and international greyhound groups are joining together to hold a candlelight vigil. The groups will protest the alleged cruelty inflicted upon Australian greyhounds that are exported to the Canidrome dog track in Macau, China.

Approximately 30 dogs are euthanized each month at the Canidrome, whilst the others are forced to live in brutal conditions while racing five days a week.

The service will begin at 6pm on September 30, at Victoria Park, Broadway in Sydney.

Greyhound Racing NSW has not yet responded to *City Hub*'s enquiries.