

# Stewards' Report

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| <b>Date:</b>    | Wednesday, 10 January 2024  |
| <b>Panel:</b>   | Mr N Thorneycroft (Chairperson), Ms A Turner, Mr P McLean, Mr R Jackson   |
| <b>Person:</b>  | Mrs Janene Armstrong  |
| <b>Rule:</b>    | GAR 21(1)(a) and GAR 165(a)   |
| <b>Charges:</b> | That Mrs Janene Armstrong, a licensed greyhound trainer, breeder and owner:<br><ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Failed to provide proper and sufficient food at all times to a greyhound in her care and custody, being Vernan Park, between 7 September 2023 and 4 October 2023 at her registered kennel address</li><li>2. Presented the greyhound Vernan Park to race at the Brisbane Greyhound Racing Club on 4 October 2023 in the presence of licensed participants, racing officials and members of the public, in a condition that was detrimental and prejudicial to the interest, welfare, image, control and promotion of greyhound racing</li></ol> |
| <b>Penalty:</b> | Charge 1: Twelve (12) month licence suspension partially and conditionally suspended.<br>Charge 2: Three (3) month licence suspension served concurrently with Charge 1   |

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On 10 January 2024, Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Stewards concluded an inquiry into the care and welfare of the greyhounds Red Burner and Vernan Park following the presentation, and subsequent scratching, of those greyhounds from Race 6 and Race 9 respectively at the Brisbane Greyhound Racing Club on 4 October 2023 due to significant weight variations in breach of Greyhounds Australasia Rule 101(1).

A stewards' inquiry was subsequently convened on 4 October 2023, with Stewards hearing evidence from Mrs Janene Armstrong, as the licensed trainer of the greyhounds Red Burner and Vernan Park, together with evidence from the on-track veterinarian Dr Robert Geisel, following the provision of Dr Geisel's veterinary report noting that the greyhound Vernan Park was grossly underweight with a body condition score of 2 out of 9.

Two (2) stewards' directions were subsequently issued to Mrs Armstrong on 4 October 2023 and 6 October 2023 entailing the care and welfare requirements of the greyhounds in her care, including the provision of further veterinary examination reports, blood analysis and regular weight updates, with Stewards placing an interim suspension on Mrs Armstrong's licences pending the outcome of the stewards' inquiry.

After considering all of the evidence, including all veterinary reports, clinical history, and oral submissions from Mrs Armstrong, Stewards issued two (2) charges pursuant to the Greyhounds Australasia Rules as follows:

**Charge 1:** Issued pursuant to Greyhounds Australasia Rule 21(1)(a), which provides:

*A person must ensure that any greyhound in the person's care or custody is at all times provided with proper and sufficient food, drink and protective apparel.*

The specifics of Charge 1 were as follows:

That Mrs Janene Armstrong failed to provide proper and sufficient food at all times to a greyhound in her care and custody, being Vernan Park, between 7 September 2023 and 4 October 2023 at her registered kennel address.

**Charge 2:** Issued pursuant to Greyhounds Australasia Rule 165(a), which provides:

*An offence is committed if a person (including an official), commits or omits to do any act or engages in conduct which is in any way detrimental or prejudicial to the interest, welfare, image, control or promotion of greyhound racing.*

The specifics of Charge 2 were as follows:

That Mrs Janene Armstrong presented the greyhound Vernan Park to race at the Brisbane Greyhound Racing Club on 4 October 2023 in the presence of licensed participants, racing officials and members of the public, in a condition that was detrimental and prejudicial to the interest, welfare, image, control and promotion of greyhound racing.

Mrs Armstrong entered a plea of guilty to both Charge 1 and Charge 2 and made brief submissions to the Stewards regarding penalty.

In determining the matter of penalty, Stewards considered the following:

- Mrs Armstrong's plea of guilty to both charges at the earliest available opportunity.
- Mrs Armstrong's time in the greyhound racing industry as a trainer, noting Mrs Armstrong had only recently returned to the greyhound industry in 2022 after a significant absence.
- Mrs Armstrong's cooperation throughout the inquiry and compliance with all stewards' directions.
- Mrs Armstrong's disciplinary history, noting no prior breaches.
- Mrs Armstrong's immediate review of, and amendment to, her feeding regime, together with Mrs Armstrong's submissions regarding the circumstances of the offending.
- The remorse expressed by Mrs Armstrong, together with her commitment to further training and to immediately seek professional advice should a similar situation occur.
- The need for both specific deterrence to Mrs Armstrong and general deterrence to the wider industry.
- The need to maintain the integrity of greyhound racing by imposing a penalty that sends a clear and unequivocal message to ensure that Mrs Armstrong, and all other participants, understand that the welfare of the animals is of the highest priority.
- The Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Greyhound Racing Penalty Guidelines.
- Relevant penalty precedents, and
- the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

Accordingly, the Stewards imposed the following penalties:

**Charge 1:** A twelve (12) month licence suspension backdated to 6 October 2023 with Stewards acknowledging time served and Stewards electing to wholly suspend the balance of the suspension for a period of two (2) years acting under Greyhounds Australasia Rule 174(3) conditional upon no similar breach of the Greyhounds Australasia Rules.

**Charge 2:** A three (3) month licence suspension backdated to 6 October 2023 to be served concurrently with Charge 1, with Stewards acknowledging time served.

Stewards further ordered that Mrs Armstrong must again complete the Racing Queensland Greyhound Trainers Workshop and provide a statement of attendance to the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission by 29 February 2024.

Additionally, Stewards ordered that the greyhounds Vernan Park and Red Burner must complete a satisfactory steward's trial, together with a veterinary certificate to be provided for both greyhounds, prior to racing again.

Mrs Armstrong was advised of her right to appeal.