

Stewards' Report

Date: Tuesday, 4 March 2025
Panel: A Spence (Chair), P Mclean, M Fernholz, J Philp
Person: Darren Russell
Rule: GAR 165(b)(iii)
Charge: 1 – Mr Darren Russell was at all relevant times, a licensed trainer, breeder and owner with the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission.
2 – Mr Russell, on or about Friday, 28 February 2025, used language on a Facebook social media post that was contemptuous, improper, insulting, and offensive.
3 – The language in the Facebook post was directed towards a member of a club.
Plea: Guilty
Penalty: \$1000 with \$500 suspended for a period 12 months

On Tuesday, 4 March 2025, Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) Stewards conducted an inquiry into the content of a social media Facebook post made by licensed greyhound trainer Darren Russell on or about Friday, 28 February 2025.

After considering all the available evidence, Stewards issued a charge under the provisions of Greyhounds Australasia Rule (GAR) 165(b)(iii), which reads:

An offence is committed if a person (including an official):

(b) publishes or causes to be published, or broadcasts or causes to be broadcast, the use of any contemptuous, unseemly, improper, insulting, or offensive language in any manner or form towards, or in relation to:

....

(iii) a Club, or an officer, employee or member of a Club;

The specifics of the charge are:

1. Mr Darren Russell was at all relevant times, a licensed trainer, breeder and owner with the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission.
2. Mr Russell, on or about Friday, 28 February 2025, used language on a Facebook social media post that was contemptuous, improper, insulting, and offensive.
3. The language in the Facebook post was directed towards a member of a club.

Mr Russell pleaded guilty to the charge and made submissions to Stewards regarding penalty.

In determining penalty, Stewards considered the following:

- Mr Russell's guilty plea
- Mr Russell's 40 years in the industry
- Mr Russell's disciplinary history, noting no breaches of a similar rule
- Mr Russell's personal circumstances particularly that greyhound racing is his main source of income
- The nature of the offence
- The need to maintain the integrity of greyhound racing
- The need for both specific and general deterrence to the wider industry
- Relevant penalty precedents
- The Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Greyhound Racing Penalty Guidelines
- The Queensland Human Rights Act 2019.
- That Mr Russell has removed the Facebook post but did not demonstrate remorse throughout the inquiry.

Accordingly, the Stewards imposed a monetary fine of \$1000, and acting under the provisions of GAR 174(3), ordered that \$500 of that fine be suspended for a period of 12 months pending no further breach of a similar rule.

Mr Russell was advised of his appeal rights.