NORTHERN TERRITORY RACING AND WAGERING COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

ORIGINAL PAPER

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Enquiries should be made to:

Northern Territory Racing and Wagering Commission GPO Box 1154 DARWIN NT 0801

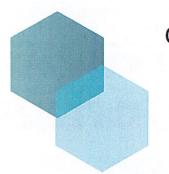
Telephone: (08) 8999 1826

Email: racingwagering.commission@nt.gov.au

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Letter to Minister



NORTHERN TERRITORY RACING AND WAGERING COMMISSION

Level 3, NAB House 71 Smith Street, Darwin NT 0800

> Postal address GPO Box 1154 Darwin NT 0800

E racingwagering.commission@nt.gov.au

T088999 1800

File Location LNT2025/0034-0001

30 September 2025

The Hon Marie-Claire Boothby MLA Minister for Racing Parliament House Darwin NT 0800

Email: Minister.Boothby@nt.gov.au

Dear Minister

Re: Northern Territory Racing and Wagering Commission Annual Report

I am pleased to present the inaugural annual report for the Northern Territory Racing and Wagering Commission (Commission) for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

In accordance with section 27 of the *Racing and Wagering Act 2024*, this report includes a summary of the work of the Commission, a report on its operations as a race control body, and information concerning the Racing and Wagering Fund.

Yours sincerely

Musta Stields

Alastair Shields

Chair

Northern Territory Racing and Wagering Commission



Welcome to the Northern Territory Racing and Wagering Commission's Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2025.

This year has been one of establishment and transition, as the *Racing and Wagering Act 2024* came into force and the newly formed Commission commenced its work. I am pleased that there is an equal mix of continuing members from the former Northern Territory Racing Commission who bring corporate knowledge and experience, and new members who bring fresh ideas and perspectives.

The Act provides the Commission with a strong mandate, including expanded enforcement powers, higher maximum monetary penalties, enforceable undertakings, an independent review mechanism for certain decisions, and the establishment of a Racing and Wagering Fund to support effective regulation. Together, these reforms strengthen accountability, transparency and resilience across the Territory's racing industry and wagering operators licensed by the Commission.

Our focus has been on building strong governance foundations, resolving carryover complaints, and embedding new practices and procedures. Supporting Licensees to meet their compliance obligations under the new framework has also been a key priority.

Looking ahead, the Commission is committed to strengthening industry standards, reducing wagering-related harm, protecting client funds, and safeguarding the welfare of racing greyhounds.

A key focus in harm prevention for online wagering is regulating affiliates who deal directly with customers and whose remuneration arrangements can conflict with obligations to identify risk of wagering-related harm and intervene appropriately.

I extend my thanks to Deputy Chair Cindy Bravos, my fellow Commissioners, the Director of Racing and Wagering Melissa Garde, and her team, for their dedication and professionalism throughout this foundational year. Their commitment strengthens the Commission's ability to act independently, uphold rigorous and fair standards, and hold the Territory's racing industry and wagering operators licensed under its framework, to account.

Alastair Shields Chair

NTRW COMMISSION

Role and Purpose



Northern Territory Racing and Wagering Commission

The Northern Territory Racing and Wagering Commission is an independent statutory body established under the *Racing and Wagering Act 2024*. Its Commissioners, appointed by the Territory's Minister for Racing, are experienced, highly skilled professionals who collectively ensure the Territory's racing industry and licensed wagering operators act with integrity, transparency and fairness.

Our Role

We ensure racing and wagering in the Territory is fair, transparent and accountable. We licence operators, set and enforce rules, resolve complaints, and safeguard the welfare of racing greyhounds. We engage with industry, providing guidance to reinforce best practice and promote ongoing compliance. We act independently and without compromise, holding industry fully accountable.

• Online Wagering and On-Course Bookmaking

We regulate on-course bookmaking in the Territory and online wagering operators licensed here, ensuring all wagering is conducted responsibly and fairly. Online operators provide services to Territorians alongside national and international markets, and through proactive oversight we safeguard consumers and promote harm reduction.

Greyhound Racing

We are the the race control body of greyhound racing in the Territory, safeguarding animal welfare and ensuring the greyhound racing industry operates fairly and in the public interest.

Thoroughbred Racing

We monitor the control body for thoroughbred racing in the Territory, using reporting and oversight to maintain integrity, transparency and public trust.

Our Purpose

To **promote integrity, protect safety and strengthen trust** in the Territory's racing industry and licensed wagering operators.

NTRW COMMISSION Who We Are







ALASTAIR SHIELDS CHAIR

Alastair is a qualified legal practitioner and accountant with more than 35 years public sector experience including as a regulator, commercial lawyer and Chief Executive Officer. He is an experienced chair, holds a Master of Public Administration and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

SUSAN KIRKMAN COMMISSIONER

Susan has extensive executive leadership experience in strategic policy and financial management in the public and private sectors in the Territory and United Kingdom. She holds qualifications in accounting and risk management, and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Fellow of Certified Practising Accountants.

SCOTT PERRIN COMMISSIONER

Scott is a lawyer with a background in securities and finance, and has held senior executive roles in global businesses. He was the inaugral Chief Executive of Racing.com and has long been involved in the thoroughbred racing industry as both a breeder and owner. Scott brings extensive knowledge of and experience in the wagering industry.







CINDY BRAVOS DEPUTY CHAIR

Cindy is an experienced executive leader and qualified legal practitioner, specialising in compliance, regulation and public administration. With experience on international and national committees, she brings extensive expertise in governance, investigations, and the oversight of complex enforcement and compliance programs.

IAN CURNOW COMMISSIONER

lan has extensive public sector executive leadership and has served on national and jurisdictional boards and committees. He brings strong expertise in governance, strategic policy, plannning, risk management and statutory decisionmaking, with a solid background in regulatory and licensing frameworks.

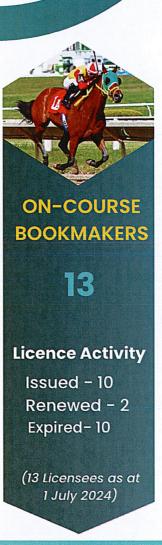
RACHAEL SHANAHAN COMMISSIONER

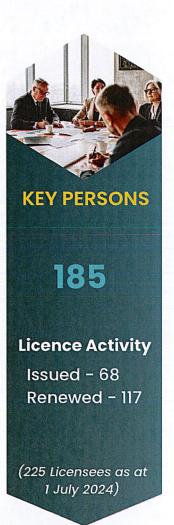
Rachael's 35 year career with the Territory Government focused on policy development and implementation. She currently serves on boards across Territory and local Government, university and the community. She holds a Master of Business Administration and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Overview Wagering Industry









Active Customers
Wagers Accepted
Wagering Turnover
Tax Revenue
Territory Jobs

(2 Licensees as at

1 July 2024)

10.1 million
1.8 billion
\$42.4 billion
\$18.8 million
749

WAGERING INDUSTRY

Regulation



Overview

In our inaugural year, the Commission assumed regulatory oversight of online sports wagering, betting exchanges, and on-course wagering, taking over from the former Northern Territory Racing Commission. Our approach combines proactive monitoring with responsive enforcement, reflecting a commitment to both compliance and industry development, while maintaining integrity, fairness and consumer protection across the sector.

Licensing

The Commission assessed and determined new licence applications, renewals and licence surrenders, ensuring operators met standards for financial stability, operational capability, responsible gambling and probity. Licence conditions were monitored and updated to address emerging risks.

Compliance and Enforcement

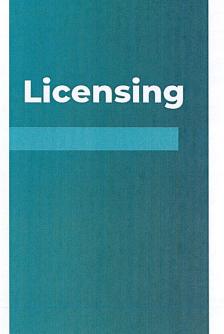
Licensees were subject to audits, inspections and targeted reviews. Breaches were addressed through remedial measures including warnings, directions or imposing monetary penalties, ensuring a fair and secure wagering environment.

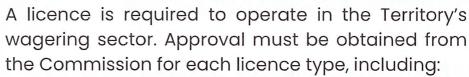
Complaints

The Commission received and assessed complaints from wagering customers and members of the public, ensuring procedural fairness for all parties. Each matter was carefully reviewed with findings communicated to the parties involved and follow-up actions taken where appropriate.

Stakeholder Engagement

The Commission provided guidance, education and consultation to and with industry and government agencies, supporting compliance, responsible gambling and a transparent wagering sector.



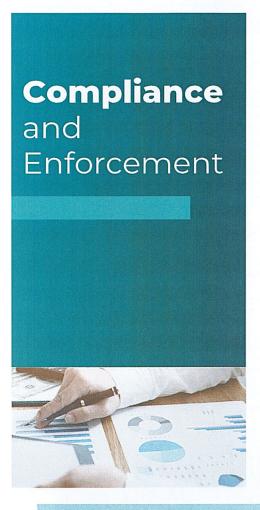


- Sports Bookmaker Licence required to conduct wagering with members of the public online or over the telephone.
- **Betting Exchange Licence** required to operate a platform allowing participants to place wagers against each other.
- On-Course Bookmaker Licence required to conduct wagering with members of the public at a racecourse.
- Key Person Licence required for directors, executive officers, or other managers with significant influence over the operations of a wagering licence holder.

The Commission granted licences only to applicants who satisfied stringent criteria for financial stability, operational capability, responsible gambling practices, and probity - including fit and proper assessments of key personnel.



Licence Application Revenue \$0.9 million



During the reporting period, a comprehensive program of monitoring and auditing was undertaken to ensure Licensees met their regulatory obligations.

This work included:



Inspections of online wagering operators' premises and on-course bookmakers' stands.



Audits of wagering platforms, banking arrangements, monthly returns, shareholder and associated persons, and financial statements.



Examination of sports bookmaker and betting exchange operators' terms and conditions, customer communications, and notifications of regulatory or legal proceedings.

As a result of compliance and enforcement activities, **five breaches were detected** that led to disciplinary action being taken against Licensees.

Commission Enforces \$92,500 penalty

In October 2024, SMS marketing was mistakenly sent by a Licensee to **154 restricted customers**, including 30 who had self-excluded themselves from wagering.

This resulted in **338 breaches** of the NT Code of Practice for Responsible Service of Online Gambling 2019, and contraventions of the *Racing and Wagering Act 2024* and licence conditions.

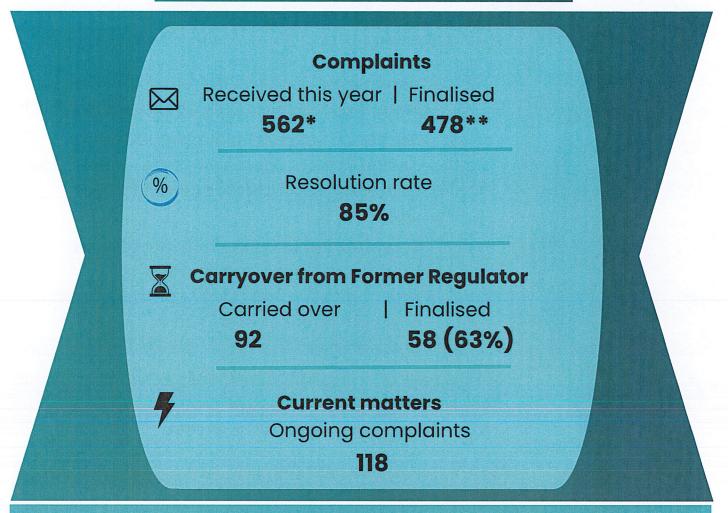
The Licensee self-reported, acted immediately to fix the issue and strengthened its systems.

The Commission imposed a \$92,500 penalty.

Key Takeaways

- Marketing must never reach self-excluded or at-risk customers.
- Strong system safeguards are critical.
- Self-reporting and quick action reduce penalties but do not remove accountability.

Complaints



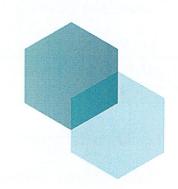
*Complaints must be lodged within 14 days of the conduct, or up to two years with Commission approval. In 2024–25, **14 late complaints** were received of which **nine were accepted**.

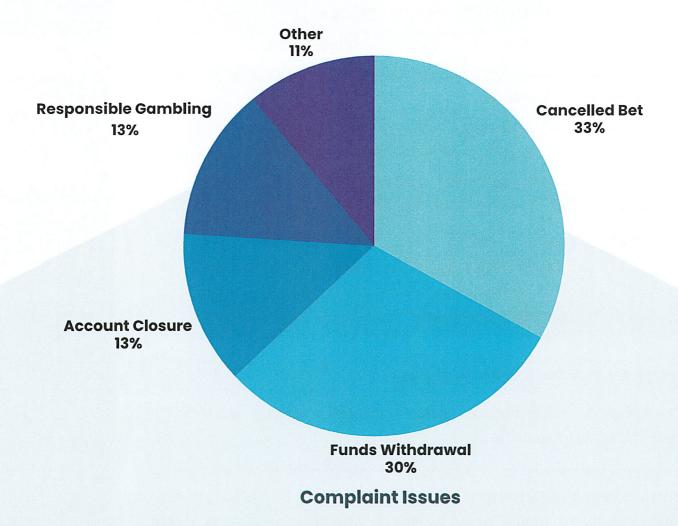
**Finalised complaints include matters resolved following consideration by the Commission, and complaints the Director of Racing and Wagering declined to investigate. Complaints may be refused if they are trivial or vexatious; not first raised with the Licensee; or outside the Commission's remit. In 2024-25, 129 complaints were declined on these grounds and 48 complaints were withdrawn.

We are committed to the fair and transparent resolution of complaints. Inspectors **investigate matters on the Commission's behalf**, after which the Commission reviews the findings, seeks further information if required, and makes determinations. Outcomes ranging from resolution to disciplinary action are formally recorded in decision notices.

In 2024-25 **85%** of new complaints to the Commission were resolved and **63%** of carryover complaints, balancing careful management of **complex legacy matters** with attention to new complaints.

Type of **Complaints**





Most complaints lodged related to cancelled bets and difficulties withdrawing funds. Behaviours indicating potential harm from wagering that were missed or overlooked by wagering operators, as well as concerns about account closures, each accounted for 13% of issues raised. Fewer complaints involved misleading marketing, bonuses, third-party matters, or obvious errors.

ComplaintCase Studies

CASE STUDY 1 - Winnings Withheld

Commission determines winnings should be paid after insufficient evidence of account misuse

A customer lodged a complaint against a sports bookmaker claiming the operator had refused to pay winnings of \$35,846.33.

The Licensee argued that the account was not genuinely owned by the customer and that the customer had been party to a manipulated betting market, relying on similarities with another individual's betting activities.

The Commission found that the Licensee had not provided sufficient proof to justify withholding funds under its terms and conditions and that the Licensee should pay the winnings to the customer.

CASE STUDY 2 - Multi-Bet Error

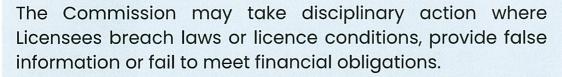
Complaint dismissed after wager error correctly identified and rectified

A customer lodged a complaint claiming that a sports bookmaker had incorrectly voided the first leg of a \$15,661 multi bet and should have either refunded his stake or paid out the second leg as a win.

The Commission found that the error, caused by a thirdparty feed provider, was identified and manually corrected by the Licensee before the second leg commenced. The wager was subsequently recorded correctly as a losing bet.

After reviewing the evidence and the Licensee's processes, the Commission determined that the Licensee acted in accordance with its regulatory obligations and the complaint was dismissed.

Disciplinary **Action**



Actions may include suspending or cancelling licences, amending licence conditions, issuing of warnings, requiring change to business practices or imposing financial penalties.

During the year, the Commission undertook 19 disciplinary actions to maintain standards and compliance in the wagering sector. All actions related to contraventions of the Act, Codes of Practice, licence conditions or other racing and wagering laws. They arose from compliance monitoring (5), complaints (6), self-reporting (5) and investigations by other jurisdictions (3).

Of the 19 disciplinary actions taken during 2024–25, 7 involved warnings, reprimands or cautions, and 12 involved **monetary penalties totalling \$0.3 million.**

Grounds For Disciplinary Action



Account Prohibition and Closure



The Commission can **prohibit a person from opening a wagering account** with a Licensee if they engage in unsafe wagering or show little understanding of wagering. Before acting, factors such as past complaints, multiple accounts and signs of problem gambling are considered. Commission directions must specify the person, reason, Licensee(s) and required action, and Licensees must comply. This power is important as it prevents at-risk individuals from starting or continuing harmful online wagering and ensures consistent protections across online wagering operators regulated by the Commission.

We can also **direct the closure of an existing** wagering account, permanently or temporarily. Directions are sent to the person and relevant Licensees, who must suspend and close the account within seven days. This enables immediate intervention, reducing harm and promoting responsible gambling.

In the reporting year, **two prohibition directions** and **two account closure directions** were issued, demonstrating our active role in protecting vulnerable individuals and maintaining industry integrity.

Stakeholder Engagement

- In March 2025, the Commission reinforced the Territory's commitment to consumer protection through a submission to the Commonwealth Government's BetStop Review

 advocating for a nationally consistent selfexclusion scheme while highlighting issues with its current design and committing to work collaboratively with the Commonwealth to resolve those issues.
- In April 2025, we hosted a Wagering Operators Forum in Darwin, the Territory's capital, bringing together around 100 participants from industry, government and academia. The forum aimed to inform and assist Licensees on compliance and current industry issues, and also generated ideas to better protect online consumers from harm, some of which are now being actively assessed for practicability and potential implementation.
- In June 2025, feedback was submitted to the Commonwealth Government's consultation on the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Rules, highlighting that freezing of online wagering prolonged combined limited funds, with customer and resolution mechanisms, transparency uncertainty and increase create may supporting While robust complaints. safeguards, we emphasised the need for balanced measures that protect both consumers and operators.

Guidelines **Issued**

The Commission may issue and publish practical guidelines to inform and assist Licensees and applicants on actions under the Act. Guidelines provide recommended standards or procedures, but are not mandatory and carry no offence provisions.

During the year, two Guidelines were issued:

 Guideline for Approval of Arrangements and Agreements

(9 September 2024)

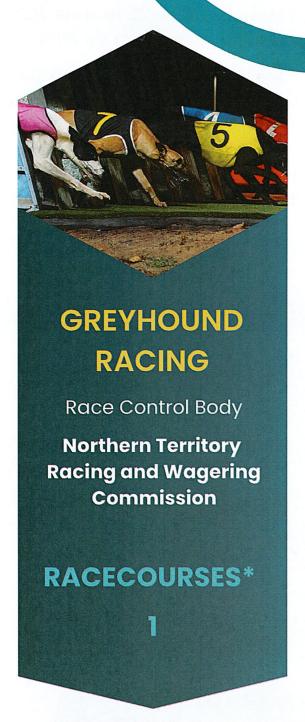
The Guideline informed Licensees that they must seek approval from the Commission to enter into agreements where third parties earn compensation from customer wagering, and allowed six months for Licensees to comply.

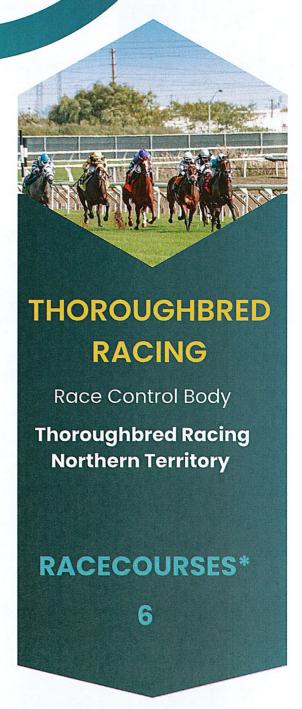
Guideline on Terms and Conditions of Wagering

(17 December 2024)

The Guideline informed Licensees that their terms and conditions must be clear, fair and accessible, covering account management, wagering rules, payments, responsible gambling, and complaints, with substantive changes needing to be reported within 14 days and terms submitted quarterly and for each wagering brand operated.

Overview Racing Industry





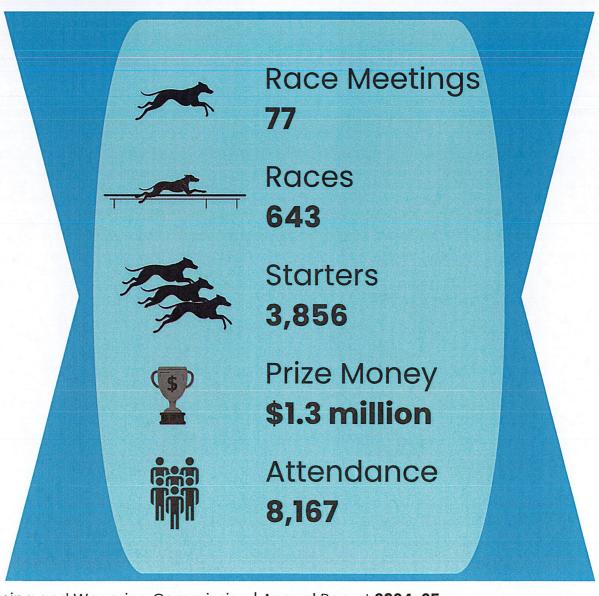
*The Commission licensed each racecourse, having assessed each as financially sustainable and appropriately insured.

Greyhound Racing Race Club and Race Days



During the year, the Commission registered the **Darwin Greyhound Association (DGA)** as a race club for greyhound racing in the Territory and approved its race days for 2024–25. In June 2025, we approved the DGA race day calendar for 2025–26.

The conduct of race meetings is reviewed through Steward's Reports, which are tabled and examined at each Commission meeting. In addition, the DGA's annual report on its operations, including audited financial statements, is tabled before the Commission each year for review.



Greyhound Racing

Key
Appointments
and
Licensing

After approving the adoption of the **Greyhound Australasian Rules** and **Rules of Greyhound Racing**, the Commission:

- appointed:
 - the Chief Steward;
 - o six Stewards; and
 - o five Graders.
- issued:
 - 18 Attendant Licences;
 - o 37 Owner Licences;
 - 11 Owner-Trainer Licences' and
 - o 13 Public-Trainer Licences.

Beyond overseeing races, Stewards play an active role in educating owners and trainers about their responsibilities, conduct kennel inspections and test greyhounds for prohibited substances, maintaining high standards across the industry in the Territory.

We would like to thank our dedicated **Chief Steward and Stewards**, who together ensured that greyhound races in the Territory during 2024-25 were conducted fairly, safely, and in accordance with the Rules of Greyhound Racing.



Greyhound Racing Compliance and Enforcement



Testing

Urine samples are routinely collected from a representative sample of greyhounds both before and after races, as well as out of competition.

In 2024-25, a total of 288 swabs were taken, representing **7.5% of total** starters.



Negative Samples	286	99.3%	
Positive Samples	2*	0.7%	

*12 June 2025 **'Chief Costa' -** Caffeine
Trainer was issued **three month suspension** (suspended) and **fined \$500**

*19 June 2025 **'Whiskey Diva' -** Amphetamine, Methamphetamine and Metabolites

Trainer was issued 16 month disqualification

Kennel Inspections



Kennel Inspections are conducted for compliance with the Rules of Greyhound Racing and to ensure the **welfare of racing greyhounds**.

In 2024-25, **32 kennel inspections** were conducted with no instances of non-compliance detected.

Offences and Penalties



Licensed or registered persons may be sanctioned for breaching the Rules of Greyhound Racing or the Greyhound Australasian Rules; or posing a risk to the integrity, welfare or reputation of greyhound racing. Pending a hearing, Stewards, or the Commission, may suspend licences, restrict greyhound participation, or impose other directions deemed necessary. Penalties for offences include fines, licence suspension or cancellation, and disqualification of greyhounds, with maximum fines set at 100 penalty units.

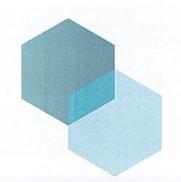
Greyhounds - Breach of Racing Rules

Description	No. of Breaches	Breaches Total Fines		
Greyhound to be Free of Prohibited Substances	2	\$500*		
Scratchings after Box Draw	11	\$550		
Preparation for Racing (Late to Kennels)	3	\$150		
General Offences (No Catcher)	2	\$100		
Weight Variation	6	\$300		
Conduct Detrimental to the Interests of Greyhound Racing	1	\$1000**		
Total	25	\$2,600		

^{*}Additional penalties of three month suspension(suspended) and 16 month disqualification imposed

^{**}Fine suspended on proviso no re-offending for next 12 months

Greyhound Racing Welfare of Racing Greyhounds



The Commission is committed to the welfare of racing greyhounds.

We have a **Greyhound Racing and Welfare Sub-Committee** which systematically reviews serious and catastrophic injuries, identifies underlying causes, recommends measures to reduce injury rates and severity, promotes best management practices and consults closely with stakeholders.



Retired Racing Greyhounds

The Territory's greyhound industry maintains strong and effective partnerships with a network of third-party rehoming agencies, as well as with owners and trainers who are committed to securing loving, permanent homes for retired racing greyhounds. These partnerships are central to the Territory's animal welfare strategy and reflect the industry's commitment to whole-of-life care.

This year saw 77 retired racing greyhounds rehomed through agency placements, owner-led efforts, and a series of successful community adoption days. We extend our sincere thanks to all rehoming organisations, many of them volunteer-led, for their dedication to helping racing greyhounds transition to life beyond racing.

Looking ahead, the DGA is exploring the feasibility of establishing a dedicated rehoming program to complement existing efforts and expand the pathways available for retired racing greyhounds to find their forever homes.

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Thoroughbred Racing

The Minister for Racing appointed Thoroughbred Racing Northern Territory (TRNT) as the race control body for thoroughbred racing in the Territory.

Races are held at Fannie Bay racecourse in Darwin, Pioneer Park racecourse in Alice Springs and country tracks at Adelaide River, Katherine and Tennant Creek.

About 70 meetings are held in Darwin and Alice Springs each year. There is usually one meeting a year at the country tracks.

TRNT has adopted the **Australian Rules of Racing**, published by Racing Australia.

TRNT provides the Commission with an Annual Report each calendar year that outlines how it exercised its powers as a race control body. The Annual Report also includes TRNT's audited financial statements.

The Commission did not issue any directions or request any other reports from TRNT during the reporting period.



Racing and Wagering Fund

The commencement of the Act saw the establishment of the **Racing and Wagering Fund**. The Act prescribes the funding that must be paid into the Fund and how it is to be used.

From 2024-25, Licensees holding a sports bookmaker or betting exchange licence in the Territory are subject to an annual levy, which was the sole source of income during the reporting period.

The Fund was used to cover the expenses of the Commission, including remuneration for the Director of Racing and Wagering, Inspectors and support staff performing functions under the Act.

The Department of Tourism and Hospitality is responsible for the management and administration of the Fund.

Racing and Wagering Fund 2024-25

\$1.7 million



Racing and Wagering Fund Statement of Receipts and Payments

Racing and Wagering Fund

Statement of Receipts and Payments Year Ended 30 June 2025

	Notes	\$'000	\$'000
RECEIPTS INTO THE FUND			
RWF Levy		1,673	
Total Receipts	2		1,673
PAYMENTS OUT OF THE FUND			
Commission remuneration		376	
Employee remuneration		1,002	
IT & telecommunications		76	
Laboratory fees		66	
Legal and statutory fees		2	
Meeting expenses		1	
Memberships and subscriptions		4	
Motor vehicle expenses		5	
Other expenses		5	
Professional fees		91	
Training and development		9	
Travel expenses		25	
Wagering forum expenses		11	
Total Payments	3		1,673
NET RECEIPTS/(PAYMENTS) FOR THE Y	EAR		O
Opening cash balance			(
Net receipts / (payments) for the year			(
Closing cash balance			0

Racing and Wagering Fund Statement of Receipts and Payments

Notes to the Statement of Receipts and Payments Year Ended 30 June 2025

NOTE 1 - BASIS OF PREPARATION

The Statement of Receipts and Payments is a special purpose financial statement prepared under section 150(1) of the Racing and Wagering Act 2024 (the Act). The Racing and Wagering Fund (RWF) was established on 1 July 2024 and therefore no comparative information is presented.

The Department of Tourism and Hospitality holds responsibility for the management and administration of the RWF. The Department has prepared the Statement of Receipts and Payments on the basis that the Racing and Wagering Fund is not a reporting entity and, as an Agency Operating Account for the Department of Tourism and Hospitality, forms part of the accounts of the Department of Tourism and Hospitality under the Financial Management Act 1995.

The Statement has been prepared on an cash basis of accounting and recognises revenue when cash is received and expenses when cash is paid.

NOTE 2 - RECEIPTS INTO THE FUND

The Act determines that Racing and Wagering Fund receipts must comprise of any charges or costs paid to the Commission under the Act; the RWF levy applied to Territory operators licensed under the Act; monies appropriated to the RWF; and any monies paid into the RWF under any other Act.

In 2024-25, all receipts into the RWF related to the RWF levy.

The levy for sports bookmakers is calculated at 0.05% of the total amount of wagers made during the preceding month and for betting exchange operators, the levy is calculated at 0.05% of the total amount of commission retained or received during the preceding month.

The Director may approve a deduction equal to the amount of any donation or sponsorship given to a community organisation in the Territory up to a maximum of \$250,000. In 2024-25 the Director approved deductions of \$790,172.

The amount of outstanding RWF levy receipts was \$108,875 at 30 June 2025.

NOTE 3 - PAYMENTS OUT OF THE FUND

The Racing and Wagering Act 2024 determines how the Racing and Wagering Fund may be utilised.

In 2024-25, the RWF was utilised for the remuneration of the Director and members of the Commission; costs and expenses of the Director and the Commission exercising their powers or performing their functions under the Act, including the Commission's powers and functions as a race control body; the costs and expenses of inspectors and persons appointed by the Director or the Commission to exercise powers or perform functions under the Act; costs and expenses of training, professional development and education for inspectors, the Director and members and staff of the Commission.

In addition to RWF funding, the Northern Territory Government, through an output appropriation to the Department of Tourism and Hospitality, also contributed towards employee costs of the Director and staff.

The amount of outstanding payments from the RWF was \$108,875 at 30 June 2025.

Racing and Wagering Fund Statement of Receipts and Payments

The enclosed Statement of Receipts and Payments presents fairly the receipts and payments of the Racing and Wagering Fund for the year ended 30 June 2025, in accordance with the *Racing and Wagering Act 2024*.

In my opinion, the enclosed Statement of Receipts and Payments is based on properly maintained fiancial records and the receipts into the RWF were in accordance with section 151(1) of the Act and the payments out of the RWF were only for the purposes authorised unders section 151(2) of the Act.

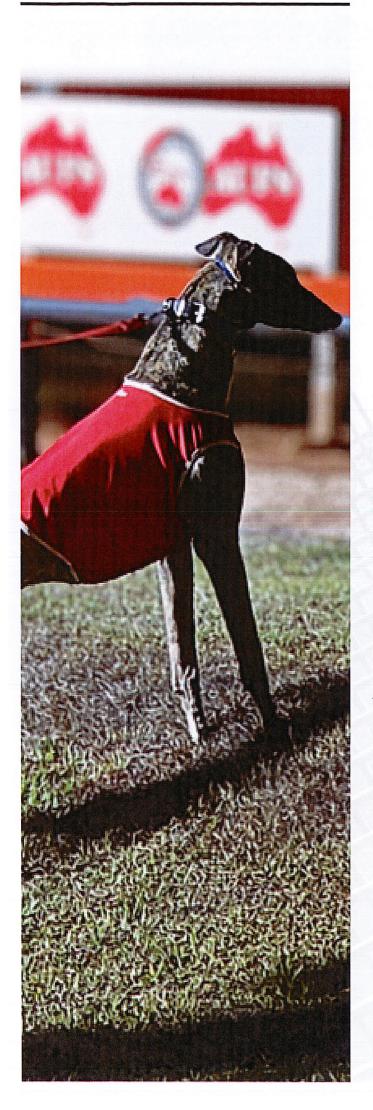
Furthermore, I certify that the closing cash balance is included in the cash balance of the operating account of the Department of Tourism and Hospitality.

ACTING CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Suzana Bishop

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER





Contact

www.dth.nt.gov.au/boardsand-committees/racingcommission

+61 8 8999 1826

racingwagering.commission @nt.gov.com

