

# Hon Grant Robertson

MP for Wellington Central

Deputy Prime Minister

Minister of Finance

Minister for Infrastructure

Minister for Sport and Recreation

Minister for Racing



Sean Hannan  
Chairman  
Board of Greyhound Racing New Zealand

CC: Glenda Hughes, James Dunne

Dear Sean,

Attached you will find an embargoed copy of Sir Bruce Robertson's Review into Greyhound Racing in New Zealand. This embargo will remain in place until the report is publicly released. This is scheduled for 3pm Thursday 2 September 2021. This document is being shared on a confidential basis, so please do not discuss its contents with any individuals other than your management team and members of the Board of GRNZ.

Cabinet has decided that we will accept the recommendations made by Sir Bruce in his review. As Sir Bruce has indicated, the social license of the greyhound racing industry is being challenged. To use his words, *"if GRNZ wishes to secure a future for the industry it governs, then it must set out to demonstrate the decency of the greyhound racing industry at every possible opportunity."*

You will notice Sir Bruce's comments, conclusions, and recommendations are strikingly similar to those made by Sir Rodney Hansen in his 2017 review. I accept that not all the issues raised in the report are the direct responsibility of GRNZ. The new Racing Integrity Board will also have to step up to the mark and I will be asking Sir Bruce as Chair to raise the profile of animal welfare within the Racing Integrity Board.

Looking at the report, Sir Bruce notes that *"it is evident GRNZ has made its job harder by unnecessarily obfuscating information and pushing back against those with an interest"*. Arguably GRNZ has data to support its stances on the issues raised in Sir Bruce's report but it is seen as unwilling to share it. It will take a clear effort on the part of GRNZ to not only ensure that change is made across the entire industry, but that these changes are communicated to the public. All information should be recorded, and it should be available.

This review shows the 2013 WHK report directed GRNZ to improve on a number of areas relating to animal welfare, data recording and transparency of all activities and that these continue to be of concern nearly ten years later. Sir Bruce's report notes that an *"unrelenting focus on data recording, transparency of all activities, and animal welfare generally could see this industry continue despite vocal pressure."*

If these issues cannot be remedied, then the industry will cease to have a social license. I am therefore asking that the Racing Integrity Board identify a specific set of indicators, covering each of the three areas identified by Sir Bruce as being critical for the industry to continue, that will be used to assess the industry's progress.

Sir Bruce has recommended that the Racing Integrity Board assess whether the industry has materially improved on the areas identified in his report as being of concern. I agree with his recommendation; however, I am asking the Racing Integrity Board to undertake the work over the next 12-15 months with a final report presented before the end of 2022. This is shorter than the period that Sir Bruce has recommended but I believe the urgency of the matters raised in the report justify that.

The issues raised in the report are not insurmountable, but time is of the essence to ensure reforms are made and that there continues to be a place for greyhound racing in New Zealand.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Grant Robertson', written in a cursive style.

Hon Grant Robertson  
**Minister for Racing**