10 November 2022

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**MICHAEL KATSIRIS**

**Date of hearing:** 3 November 2022

**Panel:** Judge Graeme Hicks (Deputy Chairperson) and Ms Amanda Dickens.

**Appearances:** Mr Anthony Pearce appeared on behalf of the Stewards.

Mr Michael Katsiris represented himself.

**Charge:** Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 83(2) states:

 (2) The owner, trainer or person in charge of a greyhound-

 (a) nominated to compete in an Event;

 (b) presented for a satisfactory, weight or whelping trial or such other trial as provided for pursuant to these Rules; or

 (c) presented for any test or examination for the purpose of a period of incapacitation or prohibition being varied or revoked

 shall present the greyhound free of any prohibited substance.

**Particulars of charge:** 1. You are, and were at all relevant times, a trainer licensed by Greyhound Racing Victoria and a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules.

 2. You were, at all relevant times, the trainer of the greyhound “Replicant”.

 3. Replicant was nominated to compete in Race 7, healesville.grv.org.au, Tier 3 – Grade 6, conducted by the Healesville Greyhound Racing Association at Healesville on 18 March 2022 (the Event).

 4. On 18 March 2022, you presented Replicant at the Event not free of any prohibited substance, given that:

 (a) A sample of urine was taken from “Replicant” at the Event upon arrival at the course (the Sample);

 (b) Caffeine, Theophylline, Paraxanthine and Theobromine were detected in the Sample.

**Plea:** Guilty

**DECISION**

Mr Michael Katsiris, you have pleaded guilty to breaching Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 83(2).

On 18 March 2022, you presented your greyhound, “Replicant”, in Race 7 at the Healesville Greyhound Club Meeting when it was not free of a prohibited substance, namely caffeine, including its metabolites. Caffeine is a stimulant that can affect the performance of a greyhound.

Dr Steven Karamatic, Chief Veterinarian at Greyhound Racing Victoria (“GRV”), stated in his report of 6 June 2022 that common products such as tea, soft drinks, energy drinks and chocolate can contain caffeine.

In this case, you put forward as a possible explanation for the presence of caffeine in your greyhound that there was spillage of coffee from coffee cups on to the floor of the car that transported Replicant and that it may have licked the coffee that was on the floor.

You are 62 years of age. You have held a training license for only 12 months. You did have a licence some 25 years ago. We note that you have taken steps to ensure that your car is clean at all times.

The principle of general deterrence has a part to play in arriving at an appropriate penalty. It is vital that greyhounds race on a level playing field without prohibited substances in their systems.

We have taken into account your personal circumstances and your history within the greyhound racing industry, together with your plea of guilty and your cooperation with the Stewards.

There have been several warnings published as to the dangers of greyhounds coming into contact with substances that contain caffeine.

In all the circumstances, we impose a penalty of four months suspension to be wholly suspended for a period of 12 months and a fine of $500.

We order that Replicant be disqualified from Race 7 at the Healesville Greyhound Race Club Meeting held on 18 March 2022 and that placings be amended accordingly.

Kathleen Scully
Assistant Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal