1 September 2023

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**ANGELA GALEA**

**Date of hearing:** 30 August 2023

**Panel:** Judge Kathryn Kings (Deputy Chairperson) and Judge Marilyn Harbison.

**Appearances:** Ms Yana Podolskaya appeared on behalf of the Stewards.

Ms Angela Galea represented herself.

**Charge:** Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 141(1) states:

(1) The owner, trainer or other person in charge of a greyhound:

(a) nominated to compete in an Event;

(b) presented for a satisfactory trial or such other trial as provided for by the Rules; or

(c) presented for any test or examination for the purpose of a stand-down period being varied or revoked,

must 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 “Smart Talk”.

3. “Smart Talk” was nominated to compete in Race 4, GRV VICBRED SERIES FINAL (VICGREYS), Mixed 6/7 Final, conducted by the Geelong Greyhound Racing Club at Geelong on 6 October 2022 (the Event).

4. On 6 October 2022, you presented “Smart Talk” at the Event not free of any prohibited substance, given that:

(a) A post-race sample of urine was taken from “Smart Talk” at the Event (the Sample);

(b) Metformin was detected in the Sample.

**Plea:** Guilty

**DECISION**

Ms Angela Galea, you are a registered trainer licensed by Greyhound Racing Victoria and were the registered trainer of the greyhound Smart Talk at all material times. Smart Talk was nominated to compete in Race 4 at Geelong on 6 October 2022. A post-race swab revealed the presence of Metformin in the urine sample of the greyhound. Metformin is a prohibited substance.

Ms Galea, you have pleaded guilty to breaching Greyhounds Australasia Rule 141 (1) on account of you presenting Smart Talk for an event while not free of a prohibited substance. Dr Steven Karamatic, Chief Veterinarian at Greyhound Racing Victoria, provided a report dated 14 December 2022, and confirmed that Metformin is a prohibited substance as defined by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules. He reported that Metformin is capable of affecting the condition or performance of a greyhound, with any effect more likely to be negative.

Dr Karamatic was aware that a product produced during the kennel inspection, being the personal medication of Mr Martin Galea – Diaformin 1000 – contains metformin as the active ingredient. Mr Galea’s doctor had prescribed the medication to help manage his diabetes.

In August 2016, GRV’s Feeding, Medication & Supplement Guidelines were published, alerting participants to the potential risk of inadvertent positive swabs from the use of personal medications and gave some guidance to minimise those risks such as using gloves to mix the greyhounds’ meal, don’t allow your greyhound to lick your skin, don’t urinate around the kennels and don’t store your medication within your kennelling areas. In July 2020, Greyhound Monthly Victoria (GMV) emailed to participants and published online, the article “What’s in your greyhound’s food bowl?”

We accept the opinion of Dr Karamatic and the evidence generally that the most likely source of the prohibited substance was from the personal medication prescribed to Mr Galea.

Ms Galea, you have held a trainer’s licence since 1992. You have informed us that in recent times your sole source of income is derived from greyhound racing. You take all necessary precautions in feeding your dogs. You are aware of the importance of washing your hands, ensuring the dogs do not lick your skin and wearing gloves. You have instructed your father to wear gloves and to be careful in the feeding of the dogs.

In imposing a penalty, we take into account your guilty plea, your co-operation with this investigation and the importance of general deterrence. We also take into account the importance of keeping a level playing field by having a drug free industry. We further take into consideration recent penalties in like matters and your relatively good record, having one prior conviction in 2015.

In all the circumstances, we impose a fine of $1,500 with $750 suspended for a period of 24 months.

Additionally, Smart Talk is disqualified from Race 4 at Geelong on 6 October 2022 and the finishing order is amended accordingly. The relevant prize money of $8,500 is forfeited to GRV.

Mark Howard

Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal