26 February 2024

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**IBRAHIM KAMA**

**Date of hearing:** 13 February 2024

**Panel:** Judge John Bowman (Chairperson)

**Appearances:** Ms Amara Hughes, instructed by Mr Anthony Pearce, appeared on behalf of the Stewards.

Mr Ibrahim Kama represented herself.

**Rule:** Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 169(5)(c) states:

(5) Pending the decision or outcome of an inquiry or other disciplinary process, a Controlling Body or the Stewards may direct that:

(c) a registration, licence, or other type of authority or permission be suspended.

**Particulars:** On 9 February 2024, the Stewards of Greyhound Racing Victoria ("GRV") imposed an immediate suspension on the trainers licence of Mr Ibrahim Kama, pending further investigations into animal welfare matters.

**DECISION**

Mr Ibrahim Kama, you are appealing against a decision of the Stewards of 9 February 2024 – a decision made last week. That decision is to suspend your trainers licence pending the hearing of numerous charges against you arising out of incidents on 18 September 2023 and 3 February 2024. Put in basic terms, the charges essentially relate to animal welfare. The current laying of charges followed a meeting with the Stewards on 7 February 2024, a decision on that date and a detailed letter of 9 February 2024. To state the obvious, the decision to suspend you predates a full hearing on the merits, a course of action that is not frequently adopted. The fact that the case involves animal welfare issues may well have influenced the thinking of the Stewards and the adoption of the course of action, involving, as it does, a suspension pending a hearing on the merits.

You are appealing against the decision. You are a trainer of some five dogs and have been a licensed trainer for approximately nine and a half years. You have a very good record.

The training of five dogs for other persons is the principal source of income for you and your family.

We have had the opportunity to read the various documents and to view the brief videos taken of what occurred on 3 February 2024. We have noted both the Stewards remarks, presented by Ms Amara Hughes of counsel, and the matters raised by you.

In our opinion, the decision of the Stewards to suspend your licence prior to the hearing on the merits was justified and the appeal is dismissed accordingly. The case involves numerous charges of animal welfare occurring on two occasions. The case itself is of limited ambit, involving a factual dispute. The Stewards will be ready to have a full hearing on the merits in approximately 4 weeks. Presumably you would be anxious to obtain a hearing as soon as possible. The Tribunal will do everything it can to make that arrangement.

We repeat that on its face, this is a serious matter involving alleged animal welfare offences on two occasions. As stated, in those circumstances, and with a prompt hearing date of the case in full sought, and obtainable, we repeat that we are of the view that your application contesting the suspension is dismissed.

Mark Howard

Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal