28 July 2025

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**PAUL GALEA**

**Date of hearing:** 21 July 2025

**Date of decision:** 21 July 2025

**Panel:** Judge Marilyn Harbison (Deputy Chairperson)

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

Mr Paul Galea represented himself.

**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 14 July 2025, the Stewards of Greyhound Racing Victoria (”GRV”) imposed a temporary immediate suspension on Mr Paul Galea, pursuant to Local Racing Rule ("LR") 66.1.

On 16 July 2025, the decision was made by GRV Stewards to keep the suspension in effect pursuant to Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 169(5)(c) until the alleged charges have been heard and determined by the Victorian Racing Tribunal (“VRT”).

**DECISION**

1. Mr Paul Galea was suspended by Greyhound Racing Victoria (“GRV”) on 14 July 2025. This suspension was imposed following an investigation into the presence of permanently banned prohibited substances found at his kennels. In brief, an unscheduled kennel inspection took place on 24 February 2025. On that occasion, the permanently banned prohibited substance gonadorelin was found in a syringe in a rubbish bin on his premises. DNA evidence of canine blood in that syringe has traced the blood to a bitch owned by Mr Galea called “Wise Abalone”.
2. Mr Galea accepts that he assisted a friend to inject Fertagyl into this bitch, believing the advice of his friend that it would assist her to come into season. Fertagyl contains gonadorelin. Mr Galea did not obtain any veterinary advice before doing so. He now very much regrets taking the advice of his friend.
3. The Stewards also found up to 21 other syringes at his property. Each of those syringes have been tested and many, if not all, were found to contain testosterone propionate, which is also a permanently banned prohibited substance.
4. Mr Galea told the Stewards that he previously used this substance to stop his dogs coming into heat. He used it only on a veterinary prescription and at a time when it was permitted under the Rules to do so. He said that he has not used it for 10 years and that the syringes were discarded syringes which were used over 10 years ago, when this substance was not permanently banned.
5. Mr Galea also refused to hand his phone to Stewards, saying that he needed access to his phone at all times for medical reasons.
6. A Brief of Evidence is being prepared by the Stewards and will be sent to Mr Galea by Friday, 25 July 2025. It is anticipated that he will face six charges. It is not possible to ascertain at this stage what he will be pleading to these charges. However, he has accepted his involvement in the administration of Fertagyl. The Tribunal currently has hearing dates available in September 2025 for the final hearing of this matter.
7. The matter comes before me today on an appeal lodged by Mr Galea that the interim suspension imposed by the Stewards be lifted. In support of this application, he has told me that he has been involved in greyhound racing for approximately 50 years and is now in his seventies. Mr Galea said that he did not know of the existence of gonadorelin and if he knew that it was a permanently banned substance, he would never have agreed to allow his friend to inject it into his dog. He was full of regret for what had happened. He told me that he loved his dogs and always kept them in top condition. He is a pensioner but relies upon some income from his dogs.
8. Mr Galea was adamant that he had not used testosterone propionate since it was declared prohibited. He described his greyhounds as being his life and did not know what he could do if he was not allowed to have them.
9. The difficulty for Mr Galea is that the possession of a permanently banned prohibited substance is a very serious matter indeed. It is vital that all such charges are treated very seriously. Mr Galea has, in his interview with the Stewards, admitted that he participated in the administration of gonadorelin to his dog, even though he did not know that the substance that was being injected was a permanently banned prohibited substance.
10. It is likely that, if found guilty of this offence, he will lose his licence for a significant period of time. Given this inevitability, it is my view that no purpose will be served by lifting the interim suspension at this time. There is no significant prejudice to Mr Galea other than the loss of his licence which appears to be the inevitable result on the evidence before me today. The community has a significant interest in preventing the administration of substances, such as these, to greyhounds. It is in the interests of the greyhounds themselves that participants do not inject them with suspect substances.
11. In all the circumstances, the appeal is dismissed, and Mr Galea will remain suspended pending the hearing and determination of the alleged charges before this Tribunal.
12. The serious offence matter is listed for a directions hearing on 12 August 2025 at 9.30 am. It is expected that a September 2025 hearing date will be allocated to the matter at that time.

Kathleen Scully

Assistant Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal