





**Greyhound Training Track Operating Guideline**

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# **Introduction**

Racing Queensland (**RQ**) has developed this Greyhound Training Track Operating Guideline (**Guideline**) to assist Training Track Operators to ensure the suitability of their Public Training Tracks.

This Guideline should be read in conjunction with the Greyhound Public Training Track Registration Policy (**Policy**). Capitalised terms not defined in this Guideline have the meaning given to them in the Policy.

A Training Track is any premises where any activity of breaking in, pre-training, training or trialling of Licensed Greyhounds is conducted (and Training Facility has the same meaning).

This Guideline applies to Public Training Tracks. This Guideline does not apply to Private Training Facilities or to Licensed Race Venues.

Public Training Tracks are divided into two categories:

* Category 1 Training Facility, which is any Training Track other than a Category 2 Training Facility, a Private Training Facility or a Licensed Race Venue; and
* Category 2 Training Facility, which is a Training Track:
  + which is used by no more than three (3) non-resident Licenced Trainers; and
  + at which no more than four (4) Licensed Greyhounds participate in any trial.

Where any breaking in, pre-training, training or trialling of Licensed Greyhounds is undertaken at:

* a Category 1 Training Facility, the activity must be conducted in the presence of a Licensed Greyhound Training Track Operator; and
* a Category 2 Training Facility, the activity must be conducted in the presence of a Licensed Trainer.

A Public Training Track may:

* consist of any approved shape or layout (e.g. straight, oval, etc); and
* be grass, sand or loam. Other surfaces may also be utilised if they meet the requirements in these Guidelines.

Where a Public Training Track does not have all of the facilities set out in this Guideline (e.g a Bullring) then the relevant section of this Guideline will not apply to that Public Training Track.

# **Objectives**

This Guideline has been developed to ensure the suitability of Public Training Tracks and to detail the applicable requirements around a range of matters including the following:

* the track surface; and
* the immediate track infrastructure,

of Public Training Tracks (including any holding kennels and washdown areas).

# **Application to Category 1 Training Facilities and Category 2 Training Facilities**

The requirements set out in:

* paragraphs 4 to 12 apply to Category 1 Training Facilities; and
* paragraph 13 apply to Category 2 Training Facilities.

# **Category 1 Training Facility - Track type**

## **4.1 Grass Track**

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| ***4.1.1***  ***Grass Type*** | Warm or cool season varieties are acceptable with consideration given to the geographic location and climatic conditions experienced.  Kikuyu, Couch or Tall Fescue are preferred varieties. Buffalo is acceptable but not preferred due to its low wear characteristic. |
| ***4.1.2***  ***Track Surface*** | The selected turf variety should provide uniform coverage across the entire track to present a safe and consistent surface at all times. Track surface to be free from clumps/tufts of vegetation and weeds such as paspalum.  The track surface must be free of objects and encroachments. For example, irrigation sprinkler heads, pop-up sprinklers and drainage swales, etc. Such items should be located outside the fenced course surface.  Cambers and track surface grades should aim to meet the following optimum requirements benchmarked as industry standards:  Industry standards:  *Straights 4%*  *Turns 6%*  *Apex of Turns 8%*  The track surface should be 420mm - 450mm below the top of the lure rail and the lure carriage should never come into contact with the track surface. The lure should be located in the center of the track, or as near to the center of the track as possible. |
| ***4.1.3***  ***Surface preparation/ Maintenance recommendations*** | A mowing program should be developed with consideration to the climate and location, however the grass should be trimmed at a frequency to present a suitable surface and prevent unruly growth that will create significant grass clippings and contribute to increased levels of thatch.  High levels of thatch are not ideal as the excess vegetation can encumber or injure the Licensed Greyhounds. Thatch is the buildup of old grass and presents that spongy feel. Some thatch should be maintained to provide a necessary cushion but the levels should not be excessive, as accumulation of this material also decreases the health of the overall profile and thus the surface.  An integrated nutritional management program should be considered to maximize turf/grass health. Programs implemented should ensure compliance with the legal requirements of the site and relevant legislation, etc. All products used should be selected for the least residual effects on the colour, root depth and plant health of the turf cultivar, whilst considering any delays in use after application for animal and personnel welfare. Avoid scalping, ensure that the correct equipment is used and environmental conditions are ideal to ensure clean cutting of the grass.  Adequate water is to be applied consistently to the track to ensure adequate penetration through the surface and profile to encourage root development and stability. This will be dependent on the geographic location and seasonal conditions.  Light consolidation to be utilised in order to maintain the track surface in a consistent and safe condition where required, however, the track is not to be rolled to the point of producing a hard surface due to compaction. Divots should be monitored and filled as required, however, no less than after every trial session. Patching material should be of a mix compatible with the existing soil profile to facilitate recovery of the turf/grass.  A regular slicing/slitting aeration process will ensure the track retains a consistent surface by facilitating water and nutrient movement deeper into the track profile to develop and maintain a strong root system and healthy soil profile. |
| ***4.1.4***  ***Turf Management / Renovation*** | A renovation of the track surface and profile should be undertaken annually as a minimum.  Track renovation should include but not limited to deep aeration, dethatching or scarification and topdressing. These procedures and the timing will be subject to each track’s location, trialling frequency and environmental conditions.  The use of hollow tines or a vertidrain are ideal equipment items to complete a thorough track renovation. These tools can achieve maximum depth to promote a healthy profile; cores can be brushed back into surface. Any aeration should be completed at varying depths to provide an ideal surface reducing concussion or compacted profiles.  Topsoil or sand mix selected for topdressing should be screened and must be free of weeds and stones, etc. 10mm of top dressing at least biannually will assist with maintain an ideal surface.  Soils with a high clay content are not ideal for construction of a training track as they do not allow for optimum track conditions to be achieved. |

## **4.2 Sand Track**

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| ***4.2.1***  ***Sand Type*** | The track sand must meet specification when assessing particle size, bulk density, total porosity and infiltration rates. Sand selected should be screened and meet necessary requirements, supplier should provide specifications.  The base course is to be a uniform compacted base without soft spots, loose material or pavement failure. The base course should be around the industry benchmark of 150mm to ensure a suitable track profile to be achieved above.  The surface course (profile) should aim to be comparative to industry benchmarks at a depth of not less than 70mm with material properties that restrict access to the base course and present a smooth and uniform surface.  The surface course is to be free of debris with grading sizes as follows:   * Nominal particle sizes 0.3 – 2.0mm, with 0.5mm meeting best standards. |

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| ***4.2.2***  ***Track Surface*** | The track surface should be presented in a consistent and safe condition, free of any depressions or major undulations. Cambers and track surface grades should aim to meet with the optimum requirement benchmarked as industry standards:  Industry standards:  *Straights 4%*  *Turns 6%*  *Apex of Turns 8%*  The track surface is to free of any debris, stones or rocks.  There should be no build-up of sand against the lure rail from dragging. |
| ***4.2.3***  ***Surface Preparation / maintenance recommendations*** | The track surface should be groomed to present a safe and consistent surface prior to each trial session and as required throughout.  Adequate water is to be applied consistently and evenly to the track surface prior to and during trials (if required).  The track surface is to be dragged or brushed every twelve (12) trials as a benchmark with consideration provided to the number of Licensed Greyhounds that have been over the surface to determine a suitable schedule. Machinery or persons should not enter the track until all Licensed Greyhounds and their handlers have exited. The track depth is to be measured regularly and when necessary, harrowed. Mixing and grading of the surface is to be undertaken to ensure a consistent surface depth and track mixture – frequency will depend on usage, weather and surface type, recommendation is every 3-4 weeks.  When taking a sample of the track profile, the plug should be taken to the maximum depth of the sand. Any visible layers or fractures must be immediately rectified (i.e. track grooming and preparation techniques, such as deeper harrowing or increased water application). |
| ***4.2.4***  ***Track Management / Renovation*** | A renovation of the track surface and profile should be undertaken annually as a minimum.  This renovation should include cultivation, topdressing and regrading of the surface. These procedures will be subject to each track’s location, trialling frequency and environmental conditions.  Sand selected for this renovation must be identical or at least compatible with the existing track sand (same for loam tracks). |

# **Category 1 Training Facility - Irrigation System**

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| ***5.1***  ***System Operation*** | Whilst having a fixed irrigation system is not mandatory, the ability to apply adequate volumes of water at a consistent application rate onto the track leading into trials is vital.  If no fixed irrigation system is installed, a satisfactory watercart can be used but should be configured to be capable to apply water in a diffused spray as opposed to a gravity feed application.  All water application must be even and consistent and must ensure the track surface and profile contains satisfactory water content.  The ability to connect and utilise a hand-held hose or fixed sprinklers close to the catching pen area is required. |

# **Category 1 Training Facility - Lure System**

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| ***6.1***  ***Lure Type*** | The lure arm is to be either, an approved straight or hoop arm (in the case that a cable or bramich system is used). A hoop arm is preferred. The lure or other apparatus (including any attachment to the lure or apparatus) must only be made of, and consist only of, artificial material. **Lure to have an approved operational squeaker that provides for adequate noise if used.**  The lure type is to be either:   * **Cable Lure;** * **Bramich Lure; or** * **Drag Lure.**   The track surface should be at a consistent and uniform height below the top of the lure rail and the lure carriage should never come into contact with the track surface (in the case a hoop or straight arm lure is used). The lure should be positioned so as to ensure Licensed Greyhounds will not be up against the rail and encouraged closer to the middle of the section utilised, in the range of 400mm-1m. |
| ***6.2***  ***Lure Rail*** | All components (posts, rails and fittings) must be kept in sound condition to ensure structural integrity.  The track must have a complete inside running rail that conforms to the following specifications:   * Steel or aluminium rail which provides satisfactory visibility; * Steel or aluminium upright posts; and * 300-500mm is the guide for rail height with the optimum being 450mm.   It is recommended that a safety rail is installed. If no safety rail is installed, the infield/centre of the track must be free from objects, hazards and the surface must be level and consistent. If a safety rail is installed this should be set higher than the running rail, approximately 250mm, and slightly offset. This rail can double as the irrigation pipe or can be a purpose installed rail. The rail can be either tubular or rectangular and must be constructed from approved material.  All mounting plates and other fittings between posts and lure rail must be free of any rust, corrosion or damage caused by the cable or carriage - the integrity of this structure must not be compromised.  The rail should be free of gaps and damage which impacts on the smoothness and continuity of the movement of the carriage particularly relative to turns. |
| ***6.3***  ***Cable & Rollers*** | All rollers or approved alternative cable alignment mechanism must be operational and in a safe condition at all times to ensure no fouling of the cable.  Any damaged cable rollers should be replaced immediately, and bearings must be checked regularly.  The cable must be maintained in a safe condition with no obvious fraying or damage which may cause a malfunction during use. Once evidence of wear is visible on the cable it must be replaced prior to further usage. |
| ***6.4***  ***Maintenance*** | All components should be checked regularly, and any replacements completed as necessary:   * Carriages to be checked prior to each session; * Motor to be regularly maintained; * Roller bearings to be in good condition; * Drive wheels to be routinely monitored; and * Lubrication of the cable should be completed as required relative to the trialling schedule.   Ideally a spare cable would be maintained on site. |

# **Category 1 Training Facility - Outside Fence**

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| ***7.1 Specifications*** | An outside fence that provides satisfactory visibility and prevents Licensed Greyhounds from escaping is essential. The fence should be a minimum height of 1200mm, either directly around the trial track, or around the property boundary. The outside fence should be constructed from colourbond, corrugated tin or similar. Chainwire fencing is not recommended  Installation of padding is recommended where profile/contour changes occur or solid objects such as boxes/gates are located. Guidelines for the padding – 600mm(h) x a minimum of 3000mm(l).  In areas where wildlife is prevalent, or other animals reside on the property, a risk assessment should be undertaken to ascertain a suitable type of fencing that will restrict access.  All components (posts, rails and fittings) must be kept in sound condition to ensure structural integrity. All components should be fitted to ensure that no objects likely to cause damage are located on the course (i.e. no fixing fence panels with fittings that protrude through the trackside of the fencing).  The top lines are to be level vertically and horizontally and follow the ground lines of the track, free of any depressions and gaps.  Rails/fences are to be completely straight where appropriate with smooth sweeping radii on the bends with no exposed pins or joint protrusions. |

# **Category 1 Training Facility - Catching Pen Area**

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| ***8.1***  ***Catching Pen*** | Whilst having a fixed irrigation system is not mandatory, the ability to apply adequate volumes of water directly onto the catching pen area is important. The ability to use a hand-held hose is this area is also important.  All water application must be even and consistent and must ensure the track surface and profile contains satisfactory water content.  The track surface in the catching pen must be free of stones and other debris. The surface should be similar in properties and presentation to the rest of the track. Material/surface height levels must be maintained so that the transition from the track proper is consistent.  The pen should be fenced adequately and completely, following guidelines for the outside fence, material should be selected for both safety and to restrict visibility.  The gate to the pen is ideally a non-return gate, around 1200mm in height and constructed with material to restrict visibility and provide a safe area.  The ideal length of the pen should be around 9m and of a similar width to the track. |

# **Category 1 Training Facility - Starting Boxes**

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| ***9.1***  ***Overview*** | All starting boxes must:   * be structurally sound with no obvious sharp edges or surfaces; and * Ensure rear doors, be it roller or latch type are lubricated and fully operational and don’t catch or stick.   The front starting gate and starting mechanism must be fully operational. |
| ***9.2***  ***Synthetic Grass Mats*** | Synthetic grass mats if used should be installed on a level concrete or crusher dust base, and 20mm high absorption rubber should be installed beneath the synthetic grass mat.  The synthetic grass mat should be back filled using either a suitable fine sand with the option of a rubber inclusion. Loam or soil is not recommended.  If synthetic grass is not installed – the ability to water and hand roll the track area immediately forward of the boxes to a suitable consistency is required.  Buildup of loam, soil, sand and debris should be removed from the grass mats at least every six months and redressed with suitable material. |
| ***9.3***  ***Rubber*** | The internal rubber must be maintained in a condition which provides a consistent and safe surface.  Worn and thinning rubber mats must be replaced when required. |

# **Category 1 Training Facility - Bullring**

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| ***10.1***  ***Overview*** | Surface can be constructed of any approved material provided it meets the same requirements as a grass or sandtrack as outlined in 4.1 and 4.2.  Rail and lure system must meet the same requirements as outlined in Section 6.  Outside fencing must meet requirements outlined in Section 7.1. |

# **Category 1 Training Facility - Kennels, Wash bay and Veterinary.**

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| ***11.1***  ***Overview*** | Trial kennels are to be provided for temporary use prior to, or following, trials. The period of time for which Licensed Greyhounds are secured in these kennels should be managed and minimised where the kennels are in sight or earshot of the trial track.  Provide a space of around 1m2, the dimensions should provide at least 1200mm in height. The space should be designed so as to allow sufficient room for a Licensed Greyhound to lie down and turn around but not large enough to allow excess movement during periods of excitability.  Material used for construction of kennels should consider ease of cleaning, safety/comfort and security of the animals. Kennels should be well ventilated and provide suitable protection from the elements.  Access to clean fresh/potable water for hosing of animals and/or drinking water. |
| ***11.2 General*** | Emergency management equipment ready for use at each session – i.e. stretcher and basic first aid treatment kit, access to Air conditioning/iced water etc in the event of heat stress or similar.  Vet contact and location information displayed in kennels and protocol/procedure drafted for emergency management of Licensed Greyhound casualty and/or illness. |

# **Category 1 Training Facility - Machinery and Equipment**

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| ***12.1 Specifications*** | To assist the Licensed Greyhound Training Track Operator to present a suitable track surface, the following equipment should be considered:  **Grass:**   * Appropriate mower (rotary or cylinder); * Tow behind spike roller or similar; * Fertilizer spreader (tow behind or walk behind broadcast); * Water Cart (if no fixed irrigation system); and * Tow behind tank or knapsack for chemical application.   **Sand or Loam:**   * Tyre roller with harrows and brushes; * Appropriate tractor; * Watercart and * 3PL Grader Blade or similar. |
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| ***12.2***  ***Maintenance*** | Machinery and equipment to be maintained as per manufacturer specifications or other applicable guideline to provide effective and safe operation as intended. |

# **Category 2 Training Facility – Guidelines**

The requirements set out in this paragraph 13 apply to Category 2 Training Facilities.

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| ***13.1***  ***Venue*** | The facility must be clean and tidy.  The entirety of the facility must be maintained so as to be free from objects or other items that may pose hazards to Licensed Greyhounds using the facility. |
| ***13.2***  ***Track and Infrastructure*** | A track must:   * provide a uniform surface prior to each use and throughout; * be prepared prior to each training session being conducted and be presented in consistent and safe condition; * be free of objects and hazards (including debris, stones or rocks); and * be regularly maintained and irrigated.   The associated track infrastructure (such as the lure and carriage, catching pen, fencing, boxes, bull ring etc.) must be in sound condition for operation and the components of this infrastructure must be regularly checked and repaired/replaced as necessary. |
| ***13.3***  ***Exercise Method*** | The exercise method utilised must be safe for both people and Licensed Greyhounds.  At all times, the exercise of Licensed Greyhounds must be supervised by the Licensed Trainer.  The exercise of Licensed Greyhounds must be safely managed at all times with the Licensed Trainer ensuring that there are adequate personnel to handle and catch Licensed Greyhounds. |
| ***13.4***  ***Fencing*** | An outside fence that provides satisfactory visibility and prevents Licensed Greyhounds from escaping is essential.  In areas where wildlife is prevalent, or other animals reside on the property, a risk assessment should be undertaken to ascertain a suitable type of fencing that will restrict access.  All components (posts, rails and fittings) must be kept in sound condition to ensure structural integrity. All components should be fitted to ensure that no objects likely to cause damage are located on the course (i.e. no fixing fence panels with fittings that protrude through the trackside of the fencing). |
| ***13.5***  ***Kennels*** | Trial kennels are to be provided for temporary use prior to, or following, trials. The period of time for which Licensed Greyhounds are secured in these kennels should be managed and minimised where the kennels are in sight or earshot of the trial track.  Provide a space of around 1m², the dimensions should provide at least 1200mm in height. The space should be designed so as to allow sufficient room for a Licensed Greyhound to lie down and turn around but not large enough to allow excess movement during periods of excitability.  Material used for construction of kennels should consider ease of cleaning, safety/comfort and security of the animals. Kennels should be well ventilated and provide suitable protection from the elements.  Access to clean fresh/potable water for hosing of animals and/or drinking water. |
| ***13.6***  ***General*** | Emergency management equipment ready for use at each session – i.e. stretcher and basic first aid treatment kit, access to Air conditioning/iced water etc in the event of heat stress or similar.  Vet contact and location information displayed in kennels and protocol/procedure drafted for emergency management of Licensed Greyhound casualty and/or illness. |