RACING
QUEENSLAND

Greyhound Training Track Operating Guidelines

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Greyhound Training Track Operating Guidelines

Contents

1. **Introduction** 3
2. **Objectives** 3
3. **Track type** 4
   - **3.1 Grass Track** 4
   - **3.2 Sand Track** 6
4. **Irrigation System** 8
5. **Lure System** 8
6. **Outside Fence** 10
7. **Catching Pen Area** 10
8. **Starting Boxes** 11
9. **Machinery and Equipment** 12

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Greyhound Training Track Operating Guidelines

1. Introduction

Racing Queensland (**RQ**) has developed operating guidelines to assist Greyhound Training Track Operators and owners.

These guidelines apply to Greyhound Training Tracks where trials of no more than three (3) Licensed Greyhounds are conducted. Where a Training Track conducts trials of four (4) Licensed Greyhounds or more, these guidelines do not apply and RQ's Minimum Venue and Equipment Standards, Greyhound - Country applies to that Training Track.

A Greyhound Training Track (**Training Track**) is any track where any activity of breaking in, pre-training, training or trialling of Licensed Greyhounds is conducted and:

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

A Licensed Greyhound is a greyhound:

- that is licensed by the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission for the greyhound code of racing; or
- that a person presents at a venue licensed by RQ to hold race meetings under the RQ Licensing Scheme Policy or a Training Track, as if the greyhound were a licensed greyhound.

These guidelines apply to all Training Tracks in Queensland.

2. Objectives

These guidelines have been developed to ensure the suitability of Training Tracks to conduct any activity of breaking in, pre-training, training and trialling of Licensed Greyhounds.

These guidelines only provide for the track surface and immediate track infrastructure of Training Tracks.

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3. Track type

3.1 Grass Track

3.1.1 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.
3.1.2 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.

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3.1.3 Surface preparation	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. 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.

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3.1.4 Turf Management / Renovation	A total 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.

3.2 Sand Track

3.2.1 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 and should be submitted for analysis to ensure suitability. The base course is to be a uniform compacted base without soft spots, loose material or pavement failure. The base course should be at least 150mm to ensure a suitable track profile to be achieved above. The surface course should be 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 (site and location may vary).

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3.2.2 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. 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. Ideally the lure should be located in the center of the track or as near to the center as possible.
3.2.3 Surface Preparation	The track surface should be groomed as required to present a safe and consistent surface prior to each use of the track (especially trials) 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 fifteen (15) trials irrespective of the number of Licensed Greyhounds trialed. 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. Power harrowing (suggested scheduling every 3-4 weeks), mixing and grading of the surface is to be undertaken to ensure a consistent surface depth and track mixture. 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).

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3.2.4 Track Management / Renovation	A total renovation of the track surface and profile should be undertaken annually as a minimum. This renovation would 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). The cultivation should be carried out by using power harrows or a rotary hoe. Harrows are not a satisfactory blend.

4. Irrigation System

4.1 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 (minimum 2500 litres) 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.

5. Lure System

5.1 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.**

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5.2 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 • 400-500mm is the guide for rail height with the optimum being 450mm. It is recommended that a safety rail is installed. 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 height of the top of the lure rail relative to the track surface should be between 420mm and 450mm to meet industry specification. 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.
5.3 Cable & Rollers	All rollers or approved alternative cable alignment mechanism must be operational 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 lure cable should be lubricated weekly. 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.
5.4 Maintenance	All components should be checked regularly and any replacements completed as necessary: • Carriages to be checked prior to each trial; • 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.

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6. Outside Fence

6.1 Specifications	An outside fence that provides satisfactory visibility is essential. Fence height guidelines are between 600mm and 800mm. The outside fence should be constructed from colourbond, corrugated tin or similar. Chainwire fencing is not ideal. Padding is required to be installed on bends. Guidelines for the padding – 600mm(h) x a minimum of 3000mm(l). In areas where wildlife are prevalent, a risk assessment should be undertaken to ascertain a suitable type of fencing that will restrict access for wildlife. 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 of rails are to be level vertically and horizontally and follow the ground lines of the track, free of any depressions and gaps. Rails are to be completely straight where appropriate with smooth sweeping radii on the bends with no exposed pins or joint protrusions.

7. Catching Pen Area

7.1 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 1500mm 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.

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8. Starting Boxes

8.1 Overview	All starting boxes, irrespective of the actual number of stalls per structure 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. N.B. Ensure front starting gate and starting mechanism are fully operational.
8.2 Synthetic Grass Mats	Synthetic grass mats 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. Buildup of loam, soil, sand and debris should be removed from the grass mats at least every six months and redressed with suitable material.
8.3 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.

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9. Machinery and Equipment

9.1 Specifications	To assist the 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 (minimum 56 horsepower); • Watercart (2500 litres or larger); and • 3PL Grader Blade or similar.
9.2 Maintenance	Machinery and equipment to be maintained as per manufacturer specifications or other applicable guidelines to provide effective and safe operation as intended.

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