



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**7 July 2021**

### **Important announcement in relation to the Melbourne 2021 Nationals.**

Greyhound Clubs Australia (GCA), in conjunction with the Melbourne Greyhound Racing Association (MGRA), has made the decision to defer the support activities of this year's Nationals.

Continued health concerns surrounding COVID-19 and the uncertainty of travel arrangements has led to the discontinuance of plans to host the various social and business events, including the Greyhound Industry National Symposium.

Pleasingly, the Group 1 National Sprint and Distance Championship Finals will be conducted by the Melbourne Greyhound Racing Association on Saturday 28 August as scheduled.

"The health and safety of our industry participants and wider community is paramount so removing the need for delegates and guests to travel from all parts of Australia and New Zealand is the responsible thing to do," said GCA Chairman Les Bein. "States and NZ will host their qualifying series with respective Finals on Thursday 12 August to enable the best greyhounds from Australasia to still be on show at The Meadows."

The postponement of the ancillary events follows GCA's on-going consultation and the unanimous agreement of host club MGRA, Greyhound Racing Victoria and Greyhounds Australasia.

"The MGRA had planned an exciting program but nothing is more important than looking after our people," said MGRA Chairman Eddie Caruana. "It's been very unfortunate that the industry has lost the last two Nationals to the pandemic but at least this year the racing will still go on."

The GCA 2020/21 Australian Greyhound of the Year, which was to be announced at the Gala Awards night in Melbourne on Friday 27 August, will be broadcast in a virtual setting in mid-September.

"Whilst not ideal, the awards acknowledging the industry's highest achievers will be presented in a similar fashion to what was done so professionally last year," said Eddie.

GCA will now work with member clubs and racing code representatives to determine hosting rights to the 2022 Nationals with Victoria and New South Wales among the most likely candidates.

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