



INFORMATION STATEMENT FOR ANIMAL RESEARCH PROPOSALS
Chase Motivation in the Racing Greyhound

(1) What is the study about?

The study will investigate why racing greyhounds chase lures and how early training and socialisation may impact their willingness to chase and subsequent race performance.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Dr Melissa Starling, Postdoctoral Fellow, within the Animal Behaviour and Welfare Research Group in the Faculty of Veterinary Science. The study is funded by Greyhound Racing NSW and is being conducted with their full knowledge and approval.

(3) What does the study involve?

There are three ways dogs can be involved in this study.

Group 1 will include puppies that have yet to be trained. These puppies will be observed periodically when they are introduced to lures and to the starting box and at set times after those introductions. Data such as body language and time to make contact with lure will be collected, but there will be no interference in the training process. Of these puppies, the individuals that do not chase using that trainer's approach will have the opportunity to participate in a study that trials different lure types that focus on different stimuli (e.g. sound, mouth feel) to identify which stimuli are most likely to appeal to non-chasers. If these dogs end up racing by the end of the 2-year study, their racing success will be recorded and correlations sought between racing success and training method.

Group 2 will include adult dogs that already have an established racing career. These dogs will participate in a study on motivation to chase, examining how access to the lure only, access to a chase only, and access to a chase with a lure at the end affect motivation. Dogs will be taught to touch a target in order to gain access to the lure, a chase followed by access to the lure, and a chase with no access to the lure. The number of times they will touch the target will indicate their motivation for the different outcomes. The dogs will then have either the length of their chase or the length of time they have access to the lure manipulated to see if the number of times they will touch the target to gain these outcomes changes.

Group 3 will include adult dogs with an established racing career at race tracks on racing days. Some or all of the dogs from Group 2 may be included at the owner's discretion and if they are at race days where data is being collected, but it is anticipated there will likely be additional dogs that have not participated in other

parts of the study. Data will be collected on performance of these dogs, a record of dogs that are penalised for non-chasing or marring, and may include results from Greyhound Adoption Program behaviour tests if the dogs exit the industry during the course of the study.

All dogs from all groups will have cheek swabs taken, which will be stored in freezers at the University of Sydney for future studies. This is so that genetic material can be made available for other studies in the future. You may opt out of this if you wish.

(4) How much time will the study take?

Data collection for Group 1 will take approximately 30 minutes per session, and it is anticipated there will be 3 sessions in early training for each chasing and the box, and 3 sessions for each after early training.

It is anticipated that Group 2 will involve 2-4 weeks of daily or near-daily training or test sessions that will last no longer than 30 minutes. There will be no more than 2 of these sessions in a day and they will be confined to early morning or late afternoon when the day is cool.

Data collection from dogs in Group 3 will again be observational, so no time dedicated specifically to collecting data will be necessary. A thermal camera and video cameras will be used to film the dogs in the kennels and loading yards prior to races in segments of no longer than 10 minutes at a time. These videos along with footage of the races themselves and information on penalties and race outcomes will be used in data analysis.

(5) Can I withdraw my pet from the study?

Being in this study is completely voluntary - you are not under any obligation to consent and - if you do consent - you can withdraw, your dog(s) at any time without affecting your relationship with the University of Sydney or Greyhound Racing NSW.

(6) Will anyone else know the results?

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on your pet. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report. Any personal information collected during the project will be kept confidential.

(7) Will the study benefit my dogs?

The study will identify training and management practices that maximise greyhound racing performance. It will therefore benefit racing greyhounds on the whole. Benefits for your individual dog(s) include enrichment and the possibility of increasing chase reliability.

(8) Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you may tell anyone about the study.

(9) What if I require further information?

When you have read this information, Melissa Starling will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Melissa Starling on 0431255918.

(10) What if I have a complaint or concerns?

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Animal Welfare Veterinarian, University of Sydney on (02) 8627 8132 (Telephone).

This information sheet is for you to keep