

## Racing WA condemns live baiting

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The governing body for greyhound racing in WA has condemned the use of live baiting in training uncovered by an ABC investigation.

The greyhound racing industry is in shock after the revelations aired last night.



Industry bodies in NSW and Victoria have announced investigations into the practice, in which live pigs, rabbits and possums have been tied to mechanical lures and used as bait to train some of Australia's most successful greyhounds.

Two-time Australian Greyhound Trainer of the Year Darren McDonald was filmed tying a piglet to a mechanical lure to be savaged by dogs.

Another long-time successful trainer, Tom Noble, was filmed taking a baby possum from its mother so the mother could be used for live baiting.

Animal rights activist Hayley Cotton said what they discovered on the secret footage was brutal.

Racing and Wagering WA today said the practices and images raised in the Four Corners report were "deeply disturbing and completely unacceptable."

In a statement the authority said: "RWWA unconditionally rejects the practice of livebaiting and notes it is an illegal and reprehensible practice which does not reflect the standards that are expected within our industry and the broader community.

"The RWWA Rules of Greyhound Racing include unique and specific local rules that expressly prohibit the use of any species of animal as a lure in the practice of training greyhounds."

General Manager Racing Integrity, Denis Borovica said stewards in WA would continue to maintain the highest of standards in relation to the welfare and training practices of greyhounds in the State.

"The full brunt of penalty will be extended in the event that any licensed individual in WA is found to be participating in such illegal practices. RWWA is confident its integrity and welfare resources are

being deployed effectively in all manner of rearing, racing and preparation of greyhounds and supervision of good practice is upheld as a priority," Mr Borovica said.

"Should any member of the public have evidence to the contrary we would welcome them coming forward."

WA Greens spokesman for racing and gaming Robin Chapple said an urgent inquiry into the state's greyhound industry was needed.

Mr Chapple said RWWA must ensure that none of the 70 individuals named in the investigation had any operations in WA.

"The government needs to issue a clear statement that the funding supplied by Royalties for Regions is not tainted by the barbaric behaviour; it is not good enough to simply state it is not condoned".

The Victorian Government has announced an investigation into animal welfare and allegations of animal cruelty in the greyhound racing industry.

Racing Integrity Commissioner Sal Perna and Greyhound Racing Victoria will also investigate.

Six NSW greyhound trainers, 10 in Victoria and several in Queensland, have stood down after property inspections by the RSPCA.

One of the men stood down - Paul Anderton - was a former steward for Greyhound Racing Victoria.

On Tuesday, Greyhound Racing NSW chief executive Brent Hogan said NSW trainer John Thompson had also been suspended in the wake of the report.