

**GREYHOUND RACING INDUSTRY — LIVE BAITING**

*Motion*

Resumed from 11 March on the following motion moved by Mr M.P. Murray —

That this house calls on the Barnett government to undertake an investigation into greyhound racing to ensure that —

- (1) there is no live baiting in Western Australia;
- (2) all animal welfare within the greyhound racing industry is maintained; and
- (3) appropriate safeguards are put in place to eliminate any future live baiting in Western Australia.

**DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale)** [4.07 pm]: I wish to add some concluding comments to where I left off last week when we were discussing the issue of the greyhound industry. The motion stemmed from the *Four Corners* special on the live baiting practice. The footage broadcast on that show was from the eastern states, and although we have been told that the industry in Western Australia does not engage in such practices, I am not sure we can be confident that that is the case. We need to ensure proper regulation of the industry. Self-regulation of this type of industry is very problematic because of the money involved and people trying to gain advantage over the competition. Although we argue that there needs to be an independent investigation into the issue in Western Australia, in the long term we strongly believe that there needs to be an independent office of animal welfare. Only by having an independent office of animal welfare and taking self-regulation away from the industry can we have any confidence that the best interests of animals are the highest priority. Once other interests become paramount, one has to be concerned about the treatment of animals. Throughout history there has been a litany of mistreatment of animals in the pursuit of money and for other reasons.

To conclude, I will leave members with two quotes. Jeremy Bentham, a famous philosopher, said —

The question is not, can they reason? Nor, can they talk? But, can they suffer?

We all know that animals do suffer. Of course, greyhounds suffer immensely when they are engaged in that sort of pursuit, and what about the small piglets that were the live bait? Do members not think they were suffering? Surely we as a civilised society cannot continue to turn a blind eye to such practices. Hopefully, they are not occurring in WA. We do not have evidence that they are, but I do not think we can have confidence that it is not taking place or has not taken place. That is why we need an independent inquiry into the issue. I urge the Minister for Racing and Gaming in the other house to take up this matter and be more proactive. He may have spoken on this matter, but I have not heard him. I think he needs to be much more proactive and get on the front foot because we need to be confident in the industry. If the industry is to survive, it needs to be confident itself that its members are not engaging in such practices. I will leave the house with one quote from no less a person than Abraham Lincoln —

I care not much for a man's religion whose dog and cat are not the better for it.

I urge everyone to support this motion.

**MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Gosnells)** [4.09 pm]: I rise to support this motion put forward by the member for Collie–Preston, which reads —

That this house calls on the Barnett government to undertake an investigation into greyhound racing to ensure that —

- (1) there is no live baiting in Western Australia;
- (2) all animal welfare within the greyhound racing industry is maintained; and
- (3) appropriate safeguards are put in place to eliminate any future live baiting in Western Australia.

Greyhounds make tremendous pets. They are dogs of a sensitivity, of a kindness of disposition, and of a loyalty to their family and their owners that is second to none, as we find many dog owners and I as a greyhound owner claim. Dogs are wonderful creatures. However, like any good and trusting companion that looks to its master or its owner for some degree of guidance, it will take the lead and perhaps take the lead misguidedly. That is what has happened with greyhounds that have been caught up in this horrible business of live baiting. They have been manipulated and exposed to the use of live animals such as rabbits, piglets and possums that have been forced into a situation of real fear such that they squeal, cry out for help and are in a state of terror. That then taps into some vein in the dog that causes it to want to chase that screeching, squealing, terrorised small animal. That is

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a manipulation—it is a disgraceful manipulation. It is a betrayal of that wonderful trust that has built up over thousands of years between humans and their canine friends and canine family members. It is an absolute betrayal of that trust. I therefore wholeheartedly support this call for an investigation. This corrupting practice, if it exists in Western Australia, has to cease. We have to know whether it exists; therefore, an inquiry is absolutely essential.

We must also be mindful of some of the other statistics that surround the greyhound industry in Australia. Some 20 000 dogs are bred a year, and of those perhaps only 2 000 or so make it to the track. The attrition rate seems to be distributed between some 8 000 puppies that are not deemed worthy of getting to any stage of adult life, so they are eliminated, destroyed, put down or whatever term we want to use. Then a further 10 000 that look like making some prospect on the track but are found not to be successful are put down. I say 20 000 but I am not sure whether that figure is exactly right. Who really knows? However, the proportions are such that only a small percentage actually make it to the track and go on to a racing career. I know from owning my dog that he enjoyed his racing career. It sounds curious to talk about a dog in those terms. I ordered a video from Greyhounds WA of his races in which he was placed first, second and third. It actually makes quite entertaining viewing. I can see the tactics that he adopted on certain races depending on which box he came out of. Perhaps this is where the greyhound industry should be going, instead of just having this sort of simplistic idea of rewarding the dog that comes first every time. Perhaps we could have a bit more subtlety in greyhound racing and consider some sort of prize for dogs that employ tactics such as dogs do when they come in from the outside barrier.

Several members interjected.

**Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE:** It sounds comical and surprising, but I can assure members that I can see that these dogs love to win. To win a race, they have to adopt a tactic, and a dog at the outside barrier area that has to come in has to work out how it will do that. There is perhaps an opportunity for the greyhound industry to enrich its sport by not just being about the crude, simple notion of getting the dog across the line first, which then leads people to breed only dogs that can get across the line first. It would lead people to think about other things that could enrich the sport, just as we find in other areas. When we look at people who practise obedience training of dogs, they of course are schooled —

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** How do you get odds-on for obedience training, member?

**Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE:** They do not get odds-on for obedience training—that is precisely my point—but they can win an obedience competition through a point-score system. However, that can be analysed and broken down as well such that there are various grades of obedience for a dog that wins the obedience competition. I think the first level of qualification is the companion dog; the next level is companion dog excellent—CDX; and then utility dog. If the member is interested, I am sure that those at Dogs West would be very happy to explain to him how that very worthy, worthwhile hobby is practised and how it can benefit society by elevating the standard of obedience training of dogs in our community. I think that is a very worthwhile thing. I am glad the member for Churchlands is interested in it, because well-trained, obedient dogs make happy dogs and dogs that are good to be around. All that said, I would have to say that I do not know whether greyhounds are necessarily the most attuned to good obedience work and obedience training; nevertheless, they do make the most outstanding pets.

I want to say a little as well about the notion of an independent office of animal welfare. This is just the sort of body that we need to oversee the welfare of animals in a range of areas. The body would be able to give advice to government and would ensure that agencies were delivering on the objects of animal welfare legislation and acts, and that they were being held to account for the current laws. Therefore, some independent body such as an independent office of animal welfare makes perfect sense to me.

I want to come to a conclusion by reading a speech that I believe captures the essence of the relationship between man and dog. The speech comes from Senator George Vest of Missouri in 1869, who was acting as a lawyer for a person whose dog, Old Drum, had been shot by a neighbour. I will quote this speech as it is a wonderful piece of prose. It reads —

“Gentlemen of the jury: the best friend a man has in the world may turn against him and become his worst enemy. His son or daughter that he has reared with loving care may prove ungrateful. Those who are nearest and dearest to us, those whom we trust with our happiness and our good name, may become traitors to their faith. The money that man has, he may lose. It flies away from him, perhaps when he needs it the most. A man’s reputation may be sacrificed in a moment of ill-considered action. The people who are prone to fall on their knees to do us honor when success is with us may be the first to throw the stone of malice when failure settles its cloud upon our heads.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 18 March 2015]

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Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Paul Papalia; Mr Shane Love; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr Murray Cowper;  
Mr John McGrath; Mr Mark McGowan

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The one absolutely unselfish friend that a man can have in this selfish world, the one that never deserts him and the one that never proves ungrateful or treacherous ... is his dog.

Gentlemen of the Jury: a man's dog stands by him in prosperity and in poverty, in health and in sickness. He will sleep on the cold ground, where the wintry winds blow and the snow drives fiercely, if only he may be near his master's side. He will kiss the hand that has no food to offer, he will lick the wounds and sores that come in encounters with the roughness of the world. He guards the sleep of his pauper master as if he were a prince. When all other friends desert, he remains. When riches take wings and reputation falls to pieces, he is as constant in his love as the sun in its journey through the heavens.

If fortune drives the master forth an outcast in the world, friendless and homeless, the faithful dog asks no higher privilege than that of accompanying him to guard against danger, to fight against his enemies, and when the last scene of all comes, and death takes the master in its embrace and his body is laid away in the cold ground, no matter if all other friends pursue their way, there by his graveside will the noble dog be found, his head between his paws, his eyes sad but open in alert watchfulness, faithful and true even to death."

Interestingly, the plaintiff was asking for a sum of money from the person who shot the poor man's dog and the jury in Missouri decided that the amount should be trebled, so that speech had great impact. The speech was written in the language of 1869, but it captures and highlights just how special the relationship is between humans and dogs, as it is with other animals. That is why there is community expectation that we have a body such as an office of animal welfare and why we need to respond to things such as the terrible exposé provided by *Four Corners* into the cruel manipulation of noble beasts and the outrageous and offensive cruelty to the small animals involved. This is not something that our society can tolerate. We want the very best animal welfare standards in Western Australia.

**MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro)** [4.22 pm]: I must give notice in advance that I do not have a quote. The previous two speakers have exhausted all the best quotes and I would not want to offer something that is substandard. I am pleased, however, to join in supporting this motion —

That this house calls on the Barnett government to undertake an investigation into greyhound racing ...

And the subsequent parts to the motion, all of which make sense, that there is an inquiry to ensure that —

- (1) there is no live baiting ...
- (2) all animal welfare within the greyhound racing industry is maintained; and
- (3) appropriate safeguards are put in place to eliminate any future live baiting in Western Australia.

The *Four Corners* revelations were extraordinary and shocking and they represent two things: firstly, it should be a call to arms on behalf of jurisdictions around the country to ensure that their own greyhound racing industries are not engaging in this outrageous, cruel, inhumane and ultimately self-defeating behaviour. Secondly, it is a clear warning to the greyhound racing industry that it is vulnerable to public perception. Unfortunately, in Western Australia those two warnings have not been heeded. It appears as though, at the very best, the government has greeted the reports from the east coast with ambivalence. It appears as though the government is completely comfortable that there is no such behaviour in Western Australia and it does not perceive the extent and nature of the threat to this industry and to all those people who make their living from the industry, who engage with the industry, and who elicit some degree of enjoyment from the industry.

The government does not perceive the very real threat faced by the industry. This matter requires far more than an in-house inquiry by the industry itself; it requires an independent inquiry. At the very least, the government needs to act now to establish an independent inquiry into this industry in Western Australia for the industry's sake, if for nothing else. If the government does not care about animal welfare and this is neither front and centre of the government's mind nor the government's main motivator, the government should consider the welfare and wellbeing of anyone who perceives this industry as being valuable and worthy of retention, because it will not survive otherwise. This will not be the only time that an investigative reporter or an interest group will look into animal welfare within the greyhound industry anywhere in Australia.

These incidents did not occur in Western Australia this time, but that does not mean we are clear of any potential accusations. It does not mean that in this industry we are absolutely beyond reproach as a state; it just means that they did not look at Western Australia this time. I hope we are not engaged in this particular type of behaviour but I have talked to people who have suggested that it was not unheard of in Western Australia in the not-too-distant past, which would suggest that it is very likely, or at least very possible, that these practices may have been engaged in. I would not suggest that most people do it; the vast majority of people involved in racing

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greyhounds in Western Australia are responsible and respect their animals and take care of them. However, it is undeniable that there is the likelihood that someone might have recently engaged in this practice. We need an independent inquiry. No-one in the wider public, many of whom have not engaged in greyhound racing or do not see it as a particularly valuable asset or something that they are willing to defend, will view an internal inquiry as satisfying their demand for confirmation that our industry is clean.

In supporting this motion, the message I would like to convey to not only the government, but also the industry is that it is in the greyhound racing industry's interest to have an independent inquiry. It is in the interest of defending its corporate reputation, which cannot be done with an internal inquiry. The greyhound racing industry here is much smaller than that on the east coast, but nevertheless it is very valuable to a small group of people in this state and to the many people engaged in it. Anyone who heard the member for Cannington speak earlier in this debate would understand the extent to which it matters to a lot of people. If the government cares about this industry, it must act and initiate an independent inquiry to ensure that the high standards are not only being met, but also are seen to be met; that is the first fundamental thing that needs to be achieved.

I make that point on the greyhound racing industry, but I will follow the lead of our lead speaker on this debate. These appalling incidents that occurred over east and were reported on *Four Corners* represent more than just a warning to industry and government; they represent an opportunity that affects more than just the greyhound sector. Our lead speaker indicated that this might be an opportunity to look more widely at establishing an independent animal welfare authority to ensure that the expected standards for the greyhound industry are maintained and are seen to be maintained, as we would hope, and that those same standards protect the corporate reputations of the horse racing and trotting industries and any other activity involving animals around the state. We are talking about farmers who raise animals for their income generation and whose business revolves entirely around the welfare of their animals. We have seen the vulnerability of these types of industries. We have seen the vulnerability of the live export industry to the shock of a similar report in 2011 when an entire industry in Western Australia was brought to its knees in a very short space of time. It is no good adopting the muddle-headed approach of the federal National Party and, as was reflected by some members of the Liberal Party and National Party in Western Australia, to attack the messenger. That will not work and it is irresponsible. If the government cares about the live export industry or any sector in which raising animals is an essential component of that industry, then it must care about defending the corporate reputation of that sector.

That is not the way to convince the wider community, the people who will be critical—those hundreds and thousands, if not millions, of people who demanded the live export animal industry stop in 2011, and the many millions around the country who demanded a really serious look at, if not a halt to, greyhound racing. Other sectors are not immune from this view; one cannot hope that just because one sector was looked at on this television show that racing or pacing might not be looked at next time. In the same vein, we cannot expect that just because live sheep export was recently looked at or live cattle export was looked at in 2011 that any other sector will be immune from the same sort of scrutiny in future. The only way to inoculate industries against these sudden sharp shocks is to provide a guaranteed well-resourced independent authority that can ensure that all these industries meet the highest possible standards—and are seen to do so.

**Mr M.J. Cowper:** Can't the RSPCA do that?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No, I do not believe it can. This is an opportunity to look at whether we can establish—we need to—an absolutely independent authority in a department different from the Department of Agriculture and Food. The Barnett government shifted the animal welfare unit from the Department of Local Government and Communities into the Department of Agriculture and Food in 2011 or thereabouts.

Several members interjected.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** In 2009.

**Mr M.J. Cowper:** I've got a lot of faith in the RSPCA.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I accept the member's interjection. By responding to the member, I am not criticising the RSPCA. I will explain where I am going with this.

In 2009, the government shifted the Animal Welfare Unit inspectorate from the Department of Local Government and Communities to the Department of Agriculture and Food, which I think compromised the integrity of that unit. There may be people in DAFWA who disagree with me, but I find their arguments difficult to accept. That unit has become fragmented, it has had funding siphoned off to other activities and the intention of the individuals in the inspectorate diverted from what we saw as their primary responsibility prior to that time. It is no longer an independent authority safeguarding animal welfare in the sector across the state. It is now compromised by being in a department that rightly has an advocacy role on behalf of those engaged in that

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sector. We need an independent authority that cannot be compromised by its location or a lack of funding. It needs to be in a different portfolio. I think there is an opportunity here: the horseracing, trots, greyhounds industries and the agricultural sector industries engaged in raising animals would all benefit from an independent authority —

**Mr J.E. McGrath:** You might as well sack half the staff of RWWA if you bring in a body like that.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza):** Members.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I appreciate the Acting Speaker controlling the audience, but I will take that interjection. In what way, member?

**Mr J.E. McGrath:** You already have compliance people working for Racing and Wagering Western Australia who are ensuring that the industry is well run. You have no evidence that there is any malpractice —

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Thank you, member. I appreciate that input. As I understand it, two animal welfare inspectors are engaged by RWWA in the racing industry ensuring animal safety and welfare, and I commend RWWA for that initiative; it is a good thing to see. However, my point is that whether in reality or by perception, it is compromised by its location. It needs to be part of an independent unit. I am not referring to those particular individuals. I feel this is an opportunity to look at this to establish an independent animal welfare unit separate from all the different sectors located in an appropriate portfolio. The member for Maylands made a very reasonable submission that such a unit should be located within the Department of Commerce. One could say that all these sectors are engaged in appropriate activities to be governed by an authority within the Department of Commerce, separate from their advocacy roles, and appropriately funded.

There is an opportunity to tap into funding from an appropriate location that would easily accommodate the necessary costs of such a unit. I looked for a comparative unit of a similar size that might give us an indication of what the running costs might be. The Inspector of Custodial Services struck me as a reasonable example of a unit that operates around the state. It is an authority with an inspection role and a regular reporting role. It has an independent capacity to establish standards in Western Australia, so that the standards can be seen to be maintained by a unit outside the realm of those activities. It is very similar. About 20 individuals are employed in that unit. I looked at its annual budget and it occurred to me that it would be very possible to operate a similar unit, with somewhere in the order of 20 individuals, led by a key person such as Professor Morgan, the current Inspector of Custodial Services, who has the appropriate qualifications and experience to be in charge of the animal welfare organisation. Such a unit could be established to maintain the standards of all those industries so that this state could not be accused of not maintaining the highest possible standards. We have the highest possible standards of animal welfare. The animal welfare legislation introduced by the Gallop government in 2002 is the highest possible standard; it just needs to be seen to be enacted, enforced and maintained.

**Mr J.E. McGrath:** Do you know how widespread the racing industry is in the three codes?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Does the member know how many prisons there are around the state and where they are located?

**Mr J.E. McGrath:** If you are looking after prisoners, they are all in a designated prison. There are racehorses, greyhounds and harness horses trained all around this state in little stables.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I will accept that interjection, but no more. How does the member think that those two inspectors are going inspecting all those locations at the moment? How successful does the member think that is? The member is contradicting his own argument. We need a better resourced, fully qualified and independent authority. I think that can be achieved with about 20 staff and an independent office within the Department of Commerce. The cost of the Inspector of Custodial Services was around \$3.18 million in the 2013–14 fiscal year.

**Mr J.E. McGrath:** RWWA spends twice that amount on compliance anyway.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Excellent. Does the member know where I propose we get the money from? I propose that we draw the money from TAB disbursements. I will take the opportunity to talk about that, because in the course of questions in this place, we have heard over recent times the Premier denigrate the TAB so badly and fiercely that it absolutely destroyed the yearling sales in Western Australia this year. Everywhere else in Australia, yearling sales were through the roof and successful. What happened in WA, member for South Perth? It was a disgrace, and that was because the Premier has been talking down the TAB.

Several members interjected.

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**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Excuse me, members. I think the member for Warnbro is capable of answering the interjections but the member for South Perth will have his opportunity in a moment.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The Premier has talked down the TAB mostly through his threats to sell it. He has been talking down the TAB in an effort to undermine its asset status. He has said that it is poorly run and mismanaged. The disbursements in WA have grown over the last four years from \$106 million to \$140 million last year.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Give me the quote.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I will find it for the Premier later. I know in his own mind that he may not have said it, but he did say it.

Several members interjected.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Not guilty.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** In his own mind, he did not.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is too bad that the Premier got rid of the Premier's Book Awards because he would be able to go for the fiction award next year. The way he carries on from one moment to the next by saying one thing one day and completely contradicting it the next day is extraordinary. The rest of us over here were listening to him. He has attacked and denigrated the TAB in an effort to set it up as probably the only asset he will be able to sell. It will be a tragedy if the TAB is sold because there is at least \$140 million in disbursements annually. The member for South Perth knows that if the TAB is sold—if there is anywhere near \$1 billion in return—the disbursements will be diminished dramatically. As TABs have worked in the past in other states, if the government wants a bigger up-front payment for its asset, it has to reduce the demands on the asset of the new owners. The government cannot demand that the new owners maintain disbursements at the same level because they will not pay as much up-front. It is common sense. It was suggested to me by some people in the industry that the Premier massively underestimated the value of the TAB. It is my view that there is an opportunity for a tiny amount of the disbursements given to the industry to be assigned to an independent animal welfare unit in a different location from the Department of Agriculture and Food, which has no credibility, and possibly no capability; certainly, it is a much-reduced capability than it had in 2008. There is an opportunity to fund such a body through a tiny amount of the disbursements from the TAB, but to do that we have to retain the TAB. We have to have a TAB that is a profitable, revenue-raising asset for the state. The only argument I have heard frequently is that it is not appropriate for the government to own a gambling business. What about Burswood?

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** We don't own it.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The government gets heaps of revenue from Burswood. How much revenue does it receive? What about Lotterywest?

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** It goes into charity; it's a charitable organisation.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Disbursements from the TAB go to the racing industry. A small amount could be given to animal welfare in the state to guarantee all those industries.

**MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Parliamentary Secretary)** [4.43 pm]: I would like to add a bit to this debate.

**Mr A. Krsticevic** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members! Member for Carine, thank you.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Yes, only intelligent contributions!

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I want to hear the member for Moore.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Members on the other side made some very good points about the shocking nature of the vision that we saw on the *Four Corners* program, and some of the revelations that have come from the eastern states since, about the practices within the greyhound industry there. I do not think any member in this house would not share an abhorrence for that vision and for those practices. I do not think those standards are reflected within the norms of what we expect from the racing industry or any industry dealing with animals. Racing and Wagering Western Australia is the body in Western Australia that is charged with administering the regulation and supervision of all the codes of racing in Western Australia. Unlike the eastern states bodies, where the codes were run by the individual industries, that body is a whole-of-sector authority; it is in fact an independent body. It is independent from the greyhound industry as such, because all those sectors are represented within it. That is a very important point of difference between the situation in Western Australia and the situation on the east coast.

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I think the idea that there should be yet another independent body as suggested by members of the opposition would be a waste of resources given that we already have, in effect, an independent body in RWWA. Within RWWA is the Integrity Assurance Committee, which, as a subcommittee of RWWA, acts to ensure that compliance and the risks of these types of activities occurring are monitored and positive moves are made to ensure strong animal welfare outcomes in the Western Australian industry.

I would like to run through a couple of the comments made by some of the members on the other side. The first was, I think, from the member for Collie–Preston, who made some interesting points. Fundamental to his point was a misunderstanding about the integrity and independence of the existing arrangements in Western Australia. He was very much of the idea that the current furore in the eastern states will somehow contaminate the greyhound industry in Western Australia and would lead to its ultimate destruction. But, as I say, the overriding difference here is that a very much stronger and more independent body administers the racing industry in Western Australia. There is therefore far more distance, if you like, between the greyhound industry and the body controlling it than is the case in the eastern states. The member for Maylands raised a number of interesting points. I appreciate her support for animal welfare and understand how deeply she feels on these matters. Again, I would like to assure her that government members do not believe that any of the type of behaviour exhibited on *Four Corners* should be tolerated. Certainly, if there was any suspicion that that was happening and the controlling bodies in Western Australia were not adequate, I am sure members on all sides would seek to make a change.

**Ms L.L. Baker:** How do you know that? I gave an actual incident of live baiting.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Yes, one going back many years.

**Ms L.L. Baker:** It was dated, I agree.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** It is my understanding that RWWA has been formed since the incident the member spoke about. That was a response to incidents and concerns similar to that and I understand that it has been very effective.

**Ms L.L. Baker:** So it is not happening?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I could not say —

**Mr P.B. Watson** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Albany, the member is taking an interjection from the member for Maylands.

**Ms L.L. Baker:** If you can stand there and tell me it's not happening, I will agree with you 100 per cent.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I can stand here and say I think sufficient control has been put in place in Western Australia to ensure that we can be confident that these types of activities are not occurring. Are we 100 per cent certain? No, we cannot be 100 per cent certain of anything. Criminal activities occur in a wide range of areas and no-one in government can guarantee that someone will not engage in criminal activity, and that is what it is. It should never be condoned.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** No-one knew it was happening over east until the *Four Corners* program aired. Over east they were saying that it was not happening until *Four Corners* took photos. How can you possibly say that it is not happening here?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I said that the control measures in Western Australia are stronger than those that exist in the eastern states. There is much greater separation between the bodies involved in the industry and the body regulating the industry. That leads to greater confidence that the industry is better controlled here than it is in the eastern states.

The member for Armadale, and other members I think, went well beyond the purpose of the motion put forward last Wednesday. The establishment of an independent body does not seem to be reflected in the motion. Again, as I said before, the current arrangements in Western Australia are so much more distant from each of the individual industries as to give confidence that the arrangements in place are quite adequate.

I will come to the member for Warnbro's views in a while, but RSPCA Western Australia is actively involved in trying to ascertain whether live baiting has occurred, and has offered rewards to that effect. I understand that nothing has come from offering those rewards, and again I suspect that is further evidence that the industry is in fact clean. Also, if members are concerned about the current integrity provisions in the industry, I am sure the Minister for Racing and Gaming will be happy to brief members on the situation in Western Australia, because

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what happens in Western Australia is fundamentally different from the situation that existed in the eastern states and led to a breakdown in control and unacceptable practices.

**Mr P. Papalia:** There're no other animal welfare issues then?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** The other animal welfare issues are beyond the scope of this motion. The member for Warnbro launched into a discussion about the live export industry, and I fail to see how the situation in the greyhound industry can be tied to the live export industry.

**Mr P. Papalia:** You don't see the connection?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** No, I struggle to see a connection.

**Mr P. Papalia:** Why did live cattle exports get shut down?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Live cattle exports have nothing to do with the racing industry in Western Australia.

**Mr P. Papalia:** What was the catalyst?

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Is the member for Moore taking interjections?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I am happy to take that interjection because I want to counter the point that the member for Warnbro made.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** The member for Moore should respond only to the interjection of the member for Warnbro.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** The member for Warnbro launched into a convoluted argument that sought to bring into this debate the farming community, live exports and, indeed, any organisation that was involved with animal handling. This debate has been brought about because of some unacceptable practices that emerged in the eastern states.

**Mr P. Papalia:** It was a *Four Corners* show.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Yes, on greyhound racing.

**Mr P. Papalia:** Do you see the link?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** If the only link the member for Warnbro found is that they were both mentioned on *Four Corners*, I do not think that is a very strong case for launching an independent body in Western Australia.

**Mr P. Papalia:** We were making a correlation —

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Thank you, member for Warnbro. We had a reaction to the livestock industry. If the member for Warnbro wants to talk about that industry, I am happy to do that. I have been involved in livestock production for many years, and that industry, as the member for Warnbro would know, is largely governed by federal government protocols. The member for Warnbro would know about the exporter supply chain assurance scheme arrangements that have been put in place since that time. He would know that it is well beyond the scope of any commission in Western Australia to regulate that industry. He would know that the provisions that are being put in place now involve international agreements beyond the scope of the Western Australian government, and that those two industries cannot be brought together into one body.

**Mr P. Papalia** interjected.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Furthermore, I think the member for Warnbro intimated that bringing animal welfare under the control of the Department of Agriculture and Food would in some way diminish the ability of the state to ensure good-quality animal welfare outcomes. I would contend that there are two reasons that that argument could not be sustained. One is that a lot of the inspectorial powers undertaken in Western Australia are indeed undertaken by the RSPCA —

**Ms L.L. Baker:** I am sorry, member, but that is not the case.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** It is a fact that they are, member for Maylands.

**Ms L.L. Baker:** That is not the case.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Is that not correct?

**Ms L.L. Baker:** No; the RSPCA has carriage over companion animals and stock and livestock, and—you should know this—livestock are the remit of DAFWA. DAFWA's mission statement is to —

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** It does that in partnership with —

**Ms L.L. Baker:** And that is what they should be doing.

Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Paul Papalia; Mr Shane Love; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr Murray Cowper;  
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**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I do know that; the department does that in partnership with the RSPCA. The RSPCA, for instance, has inspectors at saleyards who are involved in animal —

**Ms L.L. Baker:** It does not.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** It is doing that under arrangements with the state government and in partnership with the state government.

**Ms L.L. Baker:** How many prosecutions, member, has DAFWA successfully had since they took over in 2009?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Does the member for Maylands want me to tell her that off the top of my head? I could not possibly tell her.

**Ms L.L. Baker:** They have had one.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** It has had one! Where was that one?

**Ms L.L. Baker:** The Westport case that was actually done under the animal welfare unit.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I have had firsthand knowledge of at least two that have occurred in my electorate, so I do not think that is true.

**Ms L.L. Baker:** It is the case.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I do not think the member for Maylands is quite right.

However, the member for Warnbro's second point—leaving aside the RSPCA's involvement, which is point one; its involvement has been largely unchanged as it has been involved in animal welfare for many years and continues to be involved in animal welfare—was that the Department of Commerce would be the more appropriate body to help administer animal welfare outcomes than the Department of Agriculture and Food. Given the nature of the Department of Agriculture and Food, its closer ties to rural Western Australia and its branch structures, I struggle to understand how the city-based Department of Commerce could have any better outcomes controlling animal welfare arrangements than the Department of Agriculture and Food. I am absolutely confident that the argument advanced by the member for Warnbro is without substance.

**Ms L.L. Baker:** Have you heard of consumer protection?

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Are you taking interjections?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I love interjections, but only when I can respond sensibly to them. I have taken a number of interjections up to now. However, as I say, the motion that has been put forward by the opposition in this instance is flawed insofar as it does not take into account the distance between the regulator and the industry itself. That is a different situation from that which occurs in the eastern states.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** It is different amongst three different branches.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** It is different from what occurs in the other states, member for Armadale.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** You're going to have egg on your face.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** No, I will not have egg on my face if someone undertakes a criminal activity in Western Australia and is found doing that criminal activity.

**Mr P. Papalia:** You will.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I will not have egg on my face, because I am not saying that such matters cannot happen; I am saying that we have stronger controls in Western Australia to ensure that they do not happen.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** Because you have controls, it's not happening?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** We will not get stronger controls by getting bodies that do not have knowledge of the industry and animal handling. In the member for Warnbro's case, the Department of Commerce would have no connection to the agriculture industry whatsoever. It is beyond me how he could possibly expect a better outcome by having inspectors and a government agency override the entire control of animal production in Western Australia and tying that to greyhound racing.

**Mr P. Papalia:** What is it that you want to hide?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I am not wishing to hide anything, other than to say that Western Australia has far, far better controls in place than those in the other states. That gives us confidence that Western Australia does not need an independent body because it already has an independent body in RWWA.

**Ms L.L. Baker:** I think we should not have an independent children's commissioner then!

Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Paul Papalia; Mr Shane Love; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr Murray Cowper;  
Mr John McGrath; Mr Mark McGowan

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**Mr R.S. LOVE:** That is very good, member for Maylands!

What happens currently? Currently, the Integrity Assurance Committee has stewards who conduct unannounced visits on greyhound establishments. They conduct inspections and surveillance. There is indeed an opportunity for the public to come forward.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members of the opposition, we have heard your arguments. I want to hear the arguments of the member for Moore, even if they oppose your arguments.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** The RSPCA is offering rewards of up to \$10 000 for information leading to the discovery of any live baiting that might be occurring in Western Australia. Thus far nobody has come forward. The Minister for Racing and Gaming is happy to brief opposition members on the current integrity functions of RWWA. Western Australia already has the harshest penalties of any state concerning animal welfare, the use of prohibitive substances or live baiting, and that effectively could lead to a lifetime ban from the industry and a heavy fine, and, of course, the Animal Welfare Act would lead to penalties of up to five years' imprisonment for cruelty to animals.

In my opinion, there has been no credible evidence to show that live baiting is occurring in Western Australia. Due to the ongoing integrity assurance of Racing and Wagering Western Australia and the animal welfare mechanisms we already have, the government and I do not believe that any additional investigations are warranted.

**MR T.K. WALDRON (Wagin)** [5.01 pm]: Thanks for the opportunity to speak on this motion. I agree with a lot of things that have been said tonight, but there are others that I do not agree with. I, too, saw the documentary on *Four Corners*. It was shocking and live baiting is unacceptable. As the member for Moore said, I do not think anyone in this chamber would condone what happened; we could not do it. I was watching it with my 25-year-old daughter who wanted me to turn it off because she could not stand it. I went to watch it in the other room because, for my interest, I wanted to see what was really going on.

In WA we have good practices, but we can never say that it is not happening because someone out there somewhere could be doing it. If they are, I hope they are caught and are hit with the harshest penalties in Australia. The minister has assurances from RWWA —

Several members interjected.

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** Let me talk about Racing and Wagering Western Australia because this is where members opposite have missed the point. RWWA is committed to ensuring that the likelihood of this happening is minimal. We can never say “never”, but I think RWWA’s record is pretty good.

**Dr A.D. Buti** interjected.

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** Let me read the motion —

That this house calls on the Barnett government to undertake an investigation into greyhound racing to ensure that —

- (1) there is no live baiting in Western Australia;
- (2) all animal welfare within the greyhound racing industry is maintained; and
- (3) appropriate safeguards are put in place to eliminate any future live baiting in Western Australia.

We are doing it; it is happening now. The body of RWWA was created by the Labor government in 2003, which I fully supported, for this reason—to have an independent body that was not racing, was not greyhounds and was not harness racing to oversee the whole thing. For the last 12 years, RWWA has been doing what the Labor Party is calling for. That is why we are not supporting the motion.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** Will you take one interjection?

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** The member can interject, but we let members opposite speak. I did not interject on anyone over there, so I will take one interjection and then I want to make my point. Can I ask members opposite to listen? Members opposite did not listen to anything the member for Moore said, and if they had listened, they might have learnt something.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** RWWA, you have great respect for —

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** I certainly do.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** — so, of course, you would respect their opposition to the selling of the TAB, would you?

Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Paul Papalia; Mr Shane Love; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr Murray Cowper;  
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**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** This has nothing to do with the TAB. I have made my statement.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** You are cherrypicking!

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** I will make a couple of points. Racing and Wagering Western Australia is a statutory body and was formed for the very reason that the opposition is calling for this investigation. It is charged with the function to control, regulate and supervise racing in Western Australia. It has statutory obligations and powers under the act. That is what it is doing and I think it has done it really, really well. From time to time, in an industry things can happen. RWWA's record shows that it has jumped on anything that has happened along the way. Having been involved closely over the last six and a half years in particular, there is no doubt in my mind that the regulation model in WA is operating. I went to racing minister conferences—the Leader of the Opposition probably did the same thing when he was racing minister—at which I would meet with all the other racing ministers, and I have no doubt that in this state, we are way out in front. That is because we have RWWA. I congratulated Nick Griffiths when he brought it in. It was a great move and it has worked well, and it is still working well.

The point has been made that there is no evidence of live baiting happening in WA. I will not say that there is no case because someone out there could be doing it, but there is a fair chance they will be caught. The point was made about the RSPCA putting up a \$10 000 reward. That has been out there for some time now and nothing has come forward. People have said things without any evidence, and RWWA has followed it up and investigated, and nothing is there at this stage. Should something come up, I am confident that RWWA will find out about it. The review that the opposition is calling for has been happening for 12 years.

RWWA has an Integrity Assurance Committee that comes under its board. It has an audit risk and compliance function. That is what it does. The member for Warnbro asked whether it is involved in the industry.

**Mr M. McGowan:** That is not about animal welfare.

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** Membership of the IAC is restricted to persons who do not have a conflict of interest. Owners and trainers of horses or greyhounds and other industry participants cannot be on that committee. It is a special body that looks at all this stuff. RWWA spends \$6.7 million on integrity. It does not take the issue lightly. The member for Warnbro said that we should use funds from the TAB. That is what happens now. All the things the opposition is arguing for happen now. I congratulate the member on his argument; he is right. But the body is there. That is the whole point of this motion.

It is good for the opposition to get a bit of coverage and everything, but it has messed it up because the body is in place and it is as simple as that. When the *Four Corners* program was shown and this matter blew up, it was good because it made everyone relook at what they do. RWWA has come straight out and completely strengthened its penalty for live baiting from a ban for 12 months—that was the highest one—to life. RWWA was responsible; it jumped on it straightaway. The opposition said that the minister has not spoken on it; the minister spoke on this really early and made the point that it was shocking that live baiting happened. Once again, we have the body to handle it and that body is handling it, and that is how it should be.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** Are they doing an inquiry?

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** RWWA does an inquiry on an ongoing basis. It has been doing it for 12 years. That is where members opposite have missed the point of the argument. What members opposite are calling for is already happening. There is no evidence of live baiting here. The evidence comes in on a regular basis and RWWA looks at that. If something comes up, RWWA will look at it. Yes, it has made RWWA take more notice. Last year, when I was still the Minister for Racing and Gaming, RWWA came to me about integrity matters generally and let me know that it was beefing up its integrity issues, particularly after what happened in some parts of the trotting industry over east. RWWA went back and reviewed its practices and looked at it, so I am very confident.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** Are they doing it now with regard to this?

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** It does not have a specific review of live baiting.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** They should.

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** It does it all the time. There is no need to.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** You just said that last year it beefed up its —

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** The member for Armadale does not understand.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member!

Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Paul Papalia; Mr Shane Love; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr Murray Cowper;  
Mr John McGrath; Mr Mark McGowan

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**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** The member for Armadale is an intelligent man; I thought he might understand.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, the member for Wagin said he would take one interjection, and I think he has well and truly had that. I would like to hear him speak.

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** I make the point that we are doing exactly what the motion calls on us to do, so the motion is void. It should also be recognised that Western Australia has a much smaller greyhound industry than other states. We have approximately 1 800 greyhounds and we breed about 500 in Western Australia, so the industry is not as big as it is elsewhere. The other area in which we differ is that the majority of the trialling takes place on our public tracks at Mandurah, Cannington and Northam under supervision, so live baiting will not happen there. I do not rule out the fact that it could happen somewhere else, but I am confident that if it is happening, it will be found out, and probably would have been found out by now. I do not think I can say a lot more, because it has all been covered.

I make the point that RWWA has a memorandum of understanding with the RSPCA. It works really closely with the RSPCA and it is right out there on the front foot. The opposition is trying to highlight the issue and make a political point about it, but if the opposition is really honest —

**Dr A.D. Buti:** It is not a political point. That is disgraceful, Tuck!

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Please use the member's electorate name when referring to him.

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** The member does not understand.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** It is not a political point; we actually have real concerns.

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** That is fine. I have assured the member tonight that those real concerns are already catered for, and I am strong on that.

I do not think there is much more I really need to say, other than I congratulate Racing and Wagering Western Australia for the way it has responded to this issue; I think it has been really responsible. I know in my own heart and mind that over the past six and a half years that I have worked really closely with it, it has been a very professional body and is on the front foot here. Yes, it could get caught for something at some time and there could be something in the future about a couple of cases having got through, but I reckon if that did happen, RWWA would be on it. I finish by saying that what the motion calls for—"the Barnett government to undertake an investigation into greyhound racing"—has been happening for 12 years.

**MR M.J. COWPER (Murray–Wellington)** [5.10 pm]: I want to say a few words before my good friend the member for South Perth stands. I think it is important that I speak on this issue, given that the industry of horseracing, pacing and chasing is very big in my electorate. People are familiar with the greyhound track that falls within the seat of Mandurah, but of course most people who operate within the greyhound industry operate from kennels along Lakes Road in Nambeelup, to the east of Mandurah heading out towards North Dandalup. The area out there has been specifically set aside by the Shire of Murray—a great bit of planning went into the housing of the greyhound owners out there—and if members ever care to have a look, we also have canine rescue and a whole bunch of other activities in and around kennels. The whole district is zoned, if you like, for kennels and dogs. Of course, a lot of people within the industry live very proximate to each other.

I understand, and everyone has mentioned, that no-one likes to see any animal mistreated, whether a domestic animal, an animal involved in the racing industry or, for that matter, a farm animal or even a wild animal. That being the case, if someone was mistreating an animal within the confines of the Murray–Wellington electorate, I am very confident that, firstly, they would be noticed, and, secondly, revealed. These days everyone seems to be on social media, and a number of various links that operate across the Murray–Wellington electorate, and of course people like to draw attention to any mistreatment of animals, and particular issues are dealt with in a timely manner.

The member for Maylands made a point in relation to prosecutions. There have been a number of prosecutions down my way, and although that is not something to be proud of, I am at least glad that they were discovered and dealt with in a timely manner. There were two recent cases. One revolved around a farmer who, through senility and advancing age, did not look after his cattle properly. It had been noticed over a fair bit of time by the Department of Agriculture and Food and it was dealing with him. One of the best things about being a member from the country region, as you would appreciate, Madam Deputy Speaker, is that folks get around each other and help each other in times of need. I am very pleased to report that the farmers near to this gentleman pitched in and took over the running of his farm. They have subleased the land off him; he still gets an income and he still gets to live on his farm, but he has been banned by the courts from ever operating with animals at all. That was one incident that was reported quite widely in the local newspapers down in that area.

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There was another one just last week on the front page of, I think, the *Mandurah Mail*. A woman with a greyhound licence was banned from ever owning another animal. The actual mistreatment of her dogs was not in relation to greyhounds per se; her two domestic animals had been mistreated by not being fed and the like. It was brought to notice through social media and reported to the RSPCA. The wheels of process turned, and this woman got a substantial fine. The court reflected the sentiment of the community and she got a substantial fine and was banned from ever owning another animal.

When we saw the incidents of greyhound mistreatment on the other side of this continent, it certainly caused us to consider whether it could be occurring within our midst. I think that is the essence of the motion before the house. But in the absence of evidence to suggest otherwise, I believe there is no need to overreact in response to what we saw.

Several members interjected.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** The fact remains that when there is evidence that someone has mistreated an animal, it is appropriately treated by the courts. The community rallies around those who for whatever reason are not able to look after their own animals. That demonstrates that the system is working, and the point the member for Wagin was making about the role of RWWA in response to this is appropriate.

I am a very strong supporter of the RSPCA. I donate \$500 a year to the RSPCA because I see it as a very worthy organisation. Of course, we are not only talking about the welfare of greyhounds; there are many animals out there that suffer from time to time. The member for South Perth might be familiar with the golf course at Preston Beach. It is renowned for its kangaroos. Unfortunately, they about Yalgorup National Park and the proliferation of kangaroos down there is a problem. They are wonderfully domesticated because they come up and sit on people's front lawns and the like, but they are suffering from malnutrition because of the way their number has been growing. There is an issue there as to how we are going to deal with them, and I am sure that is a problem for the Minister for Environment because from time to time he has to go and deal with these poorly animals. Not only that, we also have the conflict that exists right along Darling Scarp. In my electorate and in the electorates of the members for Collie–Preston and Darling Range, people go out into the community with their dogs—maybe down at Albany as well—and specifically train them up, put leather sleeves on their chests and let them chase wild animals.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** I don't think they do that in Albany; I think you should withdraw that.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** I am sure they do it right throughout the south west, member. If the member is saying something to the contrary, I will give him the opportunity to stand and say that.

I am saying that there is a complex issue here, and that is why I personally support the RSPCA to go out there and make sure that no animals are mistreated. If we really want to get serious about how we deal with animals, we need to have a discussion as a community. If we are saying that we are abhorred by the vision of greyhounds tracking down a baited animal such as a rabbit or a pig that we saw on *Four Corners*, what is the difference between a pit bull terrier in the forest chasing a feral animal?

**Ms L.L. Baker:** And a sow in sow stalls; what's the difference?

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** They are not being hunted.

**Ms L.L. Baker:** I am sorry?

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** I am saying that people are breeding dogs that are being let free in the forest to go and chase down feral animals. There has to be —

**Ms L.L. Baker:** So are you saying there is no cruelty? You don't recognise the cruelty?

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** We are talking about dogs and —

**Ms L.L. Baker:** No, you were drawing a parallel, and I am extending that parallel to include —

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** I do not see it as a parallel, but —

**Ms L.L. Baker:** So pigs don't count?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Maylands!

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** I am saying that if anyone mistreats an animal, whether it be a pig, a cow, a sheep, a dog, a bird—whatever—we have a situation. The thing is that here we are picking on the greyhound industry, yet we do not —

Several members interjected.

Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Paul Papalia; Mr Shane Love; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr Murray Cowper;  
Mr John McGrath; Mr Mark McGowan

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**Mr M.J. COWPER:** We are discussing the greyhound industry—I will rephrase that. Here is the situation: are we going to have a debate in and around the practice that is widely used by some people? I am sure if we ever had any vision of that and it was ever presented on *Four Corners*, people would be jumping up and down about that. The problem, as members would know, is that it is a fairly widespread practice. As good a job as the RSPCA does, it is limited in what it can do. This is no different from any other illegal offence that occurs from time to time, whether it be a traffic misdemeanour or whatever; the fact is that they happen all the time. Whether people are caught all the time is another matter.

Getting back to the greyhound industry in my electorate, I am sure that because greyhound owners train their animals in close proximity to each other, if one of them for whatever reason was to do something illegal, whether it be the live baiting of an animal or injecting them with some prohibited substance or any other technique that is not acceptable under the code set down by RWWA, I am sure the next-door neighbour would be very well aware of it. That practice would be uncovered, and without too much time having elapsed, they would be brought to bear for what they had done and would face the consequences of their actions.

The argument before the house is that we need to set up another body. I do not believe the case has been made for the need for it. I believe the current system is working; I am not here to say that it is foolproof, but then nothing is. I would be very happy to lead the charge and ensure that the person or persons who inflicted that sort of injury on a greyhound, a horse, a pig, a dog or whatever were prosecuted appropriately. However, there is an absence of any evidence whatsoever to suggest that it is happening here.

**MR J.E. McGRATH (South Perth — Parliamentary Secretary)** [5.21 pm]: I have no doubt that the greyhound industry is on notice because of the events that have happened in the eastern states. A lot of members have spoken about what we saw on television and what happened over there. I do not think I have had more emails on a subject, apart from maybe daylight saving, than on this subject.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** What about local government?

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** There have been more than on local government. As a person who had some background in the racing industry, people from my own electorate were calling on me and passionately saying that there is no place in the twenty-first century for a sport like greyhound racing. When a member of Parliament gets that type of call, it has to be taken seriously, and that is what I have done. I can understand the motivation behind the motion by the member for Collie–Preston. I would like to point out that when the mover of the motion gave his speech, very early on in the speech he said, “I have no evidence of live baiting in Western Australia.” I think that is the nub of the whole thing.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** But in Sydney they didn’t have any evidence the day before the *Four Corners* special. Everyone in the Sydney industry was saying it was okay!

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Yes, but in Western Australia now, no-one has come forward. I know that the member for Maylands cited a case from some years ago that indicated there was some live baiting happening. Not many years ago, a person was disqualified for live baiting, so these things can happen, but I think the members on our side have made the point today that the greyhound racing industry is closely scrutinised in Western Australia. When we look at what happened in the eastern states, we have seen that as a result of the coverage on *Four Corners*, no-one has come out publicly. No whistleblowers from the industry have come out and said that they have evidence that this is going on in Western Australia. They have not come forward, so I think we have to trust in the ability of the industry to self-regulate.

**Ms S.F. McGurk:** That is not what the public is saying, member.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Yes, I know the public is saying that, but we have always trusted self-regulation in the racing industry—the thoroughbred industry, the harness industry and the greyhound industry.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** Self-regulation is one point, but the actual motion refers to investigation; that is a different issue from self-regulation. What is the problem with having investigations so that the member can stand up with a greater degree of confidence and say, “Live baiting is not happening in the greyhound industry”?

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** They have called for an investigation in New South Wales because there have been some atrocious findings made about its industry. Racing and Wagering Western Australia has compliance officers, stewards and people who control the industry. As the member for Wagin said, the trialling in Western Australia is done mainly at three tracks: Cannington, Mandurah and Northam. In the eastern states there are little trial tracks all around the place and that is why these people were getting away with it. The people who were in charge of compliance—although one of the people on the compliance board in Victoria was actually doing some live baiting, which was a disgraceful act—could not cover all of those greater areas in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria. Western Australia has a much smaller, more confined industry, so we have to have

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faith in RWWA when it comes out and says, “We have no evidence.” One thing that stewards in the racing industry will tell members is that rival trainers are very quick to put someone in it if they believe someone is acting contrary to the rules. They will do that. If they think someone is treating their horses with illegal substances or they are doing live baiting and are winning races as a result of that, word would soon get around that that particular person was acting outside the laws of the sport. There has been no evidence of that.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** Can I just ask the member a question? We get a lot of the greyhounds from over east coming over here and people buy them. How do we know that some of those greyhounds that have come over here have not been brought up on live baiting?

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** That could have happened, but what can we do about that? It would be different if trainers in Western Australia were sending greyhounds to Victoria or to New South Wales to have them undergo live baiting and then bringing them back, but someone who buys a greyhound or a racehorse from another state has no idea what happened to that animal in the past.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** What happens if one of the trainers over there had been suspended—given a life suspension—and he sent greyhounds over here? Has the great RWWA looked into the fact that those greyhounds will have an advantage over the other ones that just follow a bit of fluff? A bit like yourself, member!

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** I see the point that the member is trying to make, and it is drawing a bit of a long bow, but it would be very difficult to track down all those things. However, if a trainer who had recently been disqualified in another state sent a number of greyhounds to Western Australia, I would think that the authorities would be looking at those greyhounds and the circumstances in which those greyhounds were purchased. Members have to understand that the racing industry is a huge industry in three codes and that the compliance and integrity requirements in the industry are enormous. One has only to look at what is happening on the east coast today with the cobalt inquiries. The regulators and the stewards of the racing industry have some of the biggest names in racing facing suspensions —

**Mr T.K. Waldron:** That was their fault for not letting these trainers know beforehand that some of the feed they were giving them contained that. This is what these trainers are saying. So, that is misrepresentation from the racing authority.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Member, I have to get to a function by seven o’clock.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** The trainers will have an opportunity to present their case when they go before the stewards on these swab results, but here tonight we are talking about greyhounds. I want to tell members about what has happened in Victoria. Victoria has a Racing Integrity Commissioner called Sal Perna. He was staggered, stunned, flabbergasted and dismayed when he saw what had been happening in the Victorian greyhound industry. A guy from the Victorian integrity board was actually on television putting a live bait on a lure for a greyhound that he either owned or trained. It was disgraceful! However, Sal Perna made six interim recommendations for the new board to look at. The recommendations include the increase of powers for animal welfare compliance, education and integrity staff at Greyhound Racing Victoria; that Greyhound Racing Victoria amend the rules of racing so that only lures made of synthetic or artificial materials can be used; and that Greyhound Racing Victoria initiate formalised agreements or memorandums of understanding with relevant animal welfare groups—that would be the RSPCA. The agreements are to include the exchange of information and immediate reporting of alleged and suspected animal cruelty issues in the greyhound industry.

I have to tell members that that is already happening in Western Australia now. The Victorians are behind the game in this regard. As the member for Wagin said, compliance in Western Australia has been very good, control has been strong and Racing and Wagering Western Australia has always had good integrity measures throughout the industry. However, as a result of what happened, RWWA was very quick off the mark. It increased the penalties for anyone caught live baiting.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** So why didn’t it do that before this incident then?

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** It already had strong penalties. I will give the member a little lesson on the rules of greyhound racing, because obviously he has not been to Cannington very often. The RWWA rules of greyhound racing include unique and specified local rules expressly prohibiting the use of any species of animal as a lure in the practice of training greyhounds, and they attract the harshest penalties in any state. Those specific local rules were already in place. However, as a result of what happened in Victoria —

**Mr P.B. Watson:** Yes, after the event!

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Paul Papalia; Mr Shane Love; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr Murray Cowper;  
Mr John McGrath; Mr Mark McGowan

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**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** No. RWWA said, “We’ve got very strong compliance and very strong rules but we want to make sure that this can’t happen in Western Australia; and if it does happen, we want to send a clear message to anyone who wants to do it.” I would think that anyone in Western Australia who might have been tampering at all in this practice would not be doing it now.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** So without *Four Corners*, they wouldn’t have done anything?

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** No, I am saying that sometimes we have to react to something that happens in another state or elsewhere, and if RWWA had not reacted, the member would have said that it was asleep at the wheel. It therefore amended the rules —

**Mr T.K. Waldron:** The member for Albany is calling for a review and what I am saying to him is that they have been reviewing, so they did react.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** Yes, but after the event!

**Mr T.K. Waldron:** No, the review you’re calling for, they’ve been doing that for 12 years. That was my point. That’s where you missed the point.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** They are the words of a very good former racing minister!

I say to the member for Albany that RWWA amended the rules to create a specific offence for the possession of any species of bird or animal that might reasonably be capable of being used as a lure or to excite a greyhound. If the integrity office or the stewards raid a stable and find a cage with a couple of bunnies, a little piglet or some other live animal, that trainer would be in a bit of trouble.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** He would’ve anyway.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** No. I am saying that previously they would have had to be found and caught in the act of engaging in the practice. Now it is like the locking devices that the Minister for Police talked about today: if they have one in their possession, they could be in trouble. RWWA has now brought in the harshest penalties. WA is a state that has not had an incident like this, but we have brought in the harshest penalties of any state in Australia. Any person found guilty of an offence relating to live baiting now faces a penalty of a minimum of \$50 000 and effectively a lifetime ban; if they do it, they will be thrown out of the industry.

**Dr A.D. Buti** interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Other members on this side spoke and I think the member for Wagin got a copy of my speaking notes!

**Mr T.K. Waldron:** No.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** I am only being flippant to the member for Wagin; he did not need notes.

The stewards and the investigators are constantly monitoring the industry—they have to do it; that is their job—just as they are always monitoring racehorses and harness horses, by paying regular visits to training tracks and stables, and all the winners and other competitors are swabbed. The leading trainer at the greyhounds was recently found guilty of injecting or feeding a greyhound with an anabolic and was disqualified for 18 months, so there are a lot of controls on the industry. We therefore do not believe there is enough evidence to support the motion calling for an inquiry by the member for Collie–Preston. The member himself said in his speech, “I have no evidence that this is happening in Western Australia.” No-one has come to me, and I have been a shadow minister. Normally, if something is going on that is a bit dodgy, someone will come to the minister and say, “Are you aware that this is happening?” The member himself, who is the shadow Minister for Racing and Gaming said, “I have no evidence that this is happening.” We all understand that we cannot say that it is not happening, but no-one has come forward with any evidence, apart from the member for Maylands who remembers something that happened a long time ago.

**Ms L.L. Baker:** No, it was recent information to me, but the incident was a long time ago.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Yes. We therefore believe that we as members of Parliament have to trust the structure that is in place. We believe in the integrity of the people controlling the greyhound industry, and that is the people at RWWA. The government therefore will not be supporting the motion, although we condemn anyone who thinks that they can get away with something like this; it is totally unacceptable behaviour. However, we must bear in mind that the greyhound industry brings enjoyment to a lot of people. The Leader of the Opposition is a former Minister for Racing and Gaming, so he would have attended the greyhound racing at Cannington. Thousands of people go there on big nights.

Several members interjected.

Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Paul Papalia; Mr Shane Love; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr Murray Cowper;  
Mr John McGrath; Mr Mark McGowan

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**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Another thing about the greyhound industry is that there are a lot of participants and it is not the sport of kings. The participants are just ordinary people. They can have a greyhound and train it themselves, put it in the car and take it to the track without a horse float. It is not an expensive sport for people to be involved in. Another thing it does is complement the racing and harness industries. People who visit PubTAB would know that greyhound races are constantly on TV all around Australia, and people bet on them because they are popular. The greyhound industry actually supports the turnover of racing and harness racing, because a lot of people bet on the greyhounds, although they might not necessarily be greyhound supporters, but there is something about the dogs that they like. We have to get behind the industry and trust the people who regulate and control the industry. They would have been living under a rock if they had not seen all the controversy at the moment. I am sure that members will find that a lot of work is ongoing by the investigators and the stewards, and that a lot of visits to training tracks and greyhound stables will be taking place now with these stronger penalties. I would be very disappointed if we were to see an outbreak such as those that have occurred in other states. I think we in Western Australia need to show confidence in the industry going forward. We understand why the opposition has brought this motion into Parliament. I do not think it is a particularly political motion. There has been so much outcry from the public that it has to be raised in this place. We have had a good debate on it, but the government will not be supporting it.

**MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Leader of the Opposition)** [5.40 pm]: I want to speak only briefly on this motion and I will stick to the issue of greyhounds. The member for Collie–Preston, the shadow Minister for Racing and Gaming, moved this motion that is about undertaking a specific investigation to ensure that there is no live baiting in Western Australia, that animal welfare within the industry is maintained and that appropriate safeguards are put in place for the future.

Perhaps it would have been easier for the shadow Minister for Racing and Gaming to not address this matter. However, his motivation is like mine, which is twofold: the first is a deep emotional and personal concern that animal welfare issues are appropriately addressed and that animals in Western Australia are not abused, tormented or injured if we can possibly avoid it. The second motivation is to ensure the protection of the greyhound industry. Some members have referred to the *Four Corners* program and I have been overwhelmed by the number of emails sent to me by members of the public who watched that program. Hundreds and hundreds of people have sent me emails, and they are not form emails; they are personally-drafted emails by people concerned about animal welfare issues. Hundreds of people have expressed their concerns. I have received more emails on this matter than I have on most issues across my political career. With that level of reaction from the public, my view is that it is in the interests of the greyhound industry to ensure that integrity of the industry is maintained and that any inquiry into it is independent, which is what this motion is about.

Racing and Wagering Western Australia was created in 2003 when the legislation introduced by the former Labor government brought together the three codes with an overarching management body so that the three codes were not competing, fighting or bickering and there was a joint voice and a joint approach to the racing industry's integrity. I have a copy of the Racing and Wagering Western Australia Act and it states that RWWA's role is exactly for the purposes to which I just referred. I read through the act and could not find a single mention of animal welfare or RWWA's role to enforce animal welfare. When people talk about integrity in racing, everyone knows that that means the prevention of corruption or impropriety; that is RWWA's role in overseeing integrity issues. Obviously, that is something to be very aware of, considering the history of the racing industry in this country and around the world. That is RWWA's role.

RWWA may well investigate animal welfare matters. Some people have said that that is what it does and that it works on that basis, but I am not so sure whether the hundreds of people who have emailed me or who watched the *Four Corners* program would regard a body that has a representative of the greyhound industry sitting on its board as being able to provide an independent assessment. I think that is where the issue lies. Can it be an independent investigation? In my heart of hearts, I do not think it can. I know that RWWA does a good job. I had a lot of faith in it when I was the racing minister, but I do not think that anyone can say to the public that a body that supervises racing, with members of the racing industry sitting on it and conducting an inquiry into itself, is an independent investigation. Therefore, all those people who have raised these issues will question its integrity.

Let us say that the *Four Corners* team comes to Western Australia and hides cameras and finds issues within the industry. That would severely hurt the greyhound industry. If this house passes up the opportunity to look at this matter independently, we will have failed in our duty to not only the innocent creatures hurt during the process, but also the industry, because the industry would be better off having an independent inquiry into it to uncover anything brought about by Parliament—with the industry's support, I hope—rather than an explosive and no doubt sensationist inquiry by a television program. The industry will be better off if an inquiry is held in the manner that we suggest than it would be if anything is found out by a television station. I would have thought that if the industry has nothing to hide, it would welcome an independent inquiry because if an inquiry clears the

**Extract from Hansard**  
[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 18 March 2015]  
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Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Paul Papalia; Mr Shane Love; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr Murray Cowper;  
Mr John McGrath; Mr Mark McGowan

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industry of any wrongdoing, the industry can go forward into the future and leave these issues behind. However, if anything happens in future and this house has passed up the opportunity to do this, the industry will be very badly damaged. I agree that the industry is largely made up of people who can afford to buy a greyhound as opposed to people who can afford to buy a racehorse; they are often two very different sections of society. However, the industry employs people and provides opportunities and enjoyment for many. I have attended a number of greyhound race meetings and I have seen what it does for many members of the community. An independent investigation could be undertaken by an independent person very quickly and cheaply, I suspect. If the industry has nothing to hide, we could give it a clean bill of health and move on, and that would be the best solution for the industry.

*Division*

Question put and a division taken with the following result —

Ayes (17)

Ms L.L. Baker  
Dr A.D. Buti  
Ms J. Farrer  
Mr D.J. Kelly  
Mr F.M. Logan

Mr M. McGowan  
Ms S.F. McGurk  
Mr P. Papalia  
Mr J.R. Quigley  
Ms M.M. Quirk

Mrs M.H. Roberts  
Ms R. Saffioti  
Mr C.J. Tallentire  
Mr P.C. Tinley  
Mr P.B. Watson

Mr B.S. Wyatt  
Mr D.A. Templeman (*Teller*)

Noes (33)

Mr P. Abetz  
Mr F.A. Alban  
Mr C.J. Barnett  
Mr I.C. Blayney  
Mr I.M. Britza  
Mr G.M. Castrilli  
Mr M.J. Cowper  
Ms M.J. Davies  
Mr J.H.D. Day

Ms W.M. Duncan  
Ms E. Evangel  
Mr J.M. Francis  
Mrs G.J. Godfrey  
Mr B.J. Grylls  
Dr K.D. Hames  
Mrs L.M. Harvey  
Mr C.D. Hatton  
Mr A.P. Jacob

Dr G.G. Jacobs  
Mr S.K. L'Estrange  
Mr R.S. Love  
Mr W.R. Marmion  
Mr J.E. McGrath  
Ms L. Mettam  
Mr P.T. Miles  
Ms A.R. Mitchell  
Mr N.W. Morton

Mr D.C. Nalder  
Mr J. Norberger  
Mr A.J. Simpson  
Mr M.H. Taylor  
Mr T.K. Waldron  
Mr A. Krsticevic (*Teller*)

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Pairs

Mr M.P. Murray  
Mr R.H. Cook  
Mr W.J. Johnston  
Ms J.M. Freeman

Dr M.D. Nahan  
Mr D.T. Redman  
Mr V.A. Catania  
Mr R.F. Johnson

Question thus negatived.