



RACING AND WAGERING
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REVIEW OF WA GREYHOUND RACETRACKS





Racing and Wagering Western Australia (RWWA) is committed to continuous improvement and ensuring rigorous welfare standards. In line with this, RWWA has commissioned the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) to assess the State's three greyhound racing tracks against the latest design and maintenance standards to ensure they deliver the best levels of care for racing greyhounds.

The tracks at Northam, Mandurah, and Cannington were built in line with design and animal welfare standards of the time, but advancements in technology and new research allow for improvements to be made. The UTS recommendations provide clear advice on improving the State's three greyhound tracks to bring them in line with up-to-date design elements.

UTS has been engaged by greyhound racing regulatory bodies in other states to conduct similar reviews. These reviews have been undertaken by Professor David Eager, who is an internationally recognised expert in sports and recreation surface safety, and greyhound track design and maintenance, particularly in relation to track composition and race dynamics.

UTS was commissioned in 2019 and began in March 2020, but its work was disrupted by COVID-19 travel restrictions. Its review was delivered in three sections to enable RWWA to receive its recommendations and take action accordingly.

The review is the first in a series of assessments of the Northam, Mandurah, and Cannington tracks and focusses on the biomechanics of the tracks including, track design, cross-falls, race dynamics and injury rates, starting boxes and catching pens and track surface maintenance.

Planned works and timeline

Preliminary advice regarding the Northam track was received in June 2020. At the time racing was already consolidated to Cannington and Mandurah, due to COVID-19. This enabled the deferral of the Northam season and required works to commence. Works at Northam are expected to be completed by the end of September, with UTS to conduct a review of the track prior to racing recommencing.

Major upgrade works are subject to conceptual design work, contracts being issued, and relevant approvals being obtained. At this stage, it is anticipated that these upgrades at Mandurah and Cannington are expected to start in mid-2022.

The Western Australian Greyhound Racing Association (WAGRA) is responsible for track maintenance at all three greyhound tracks. RWWA has invested in new equipment to support WAGRA with track maintenance improvements and ensure accurate moisture readings in line with the review recommendations.

HIGHLIGHTS



The State's three greyhound racing tracks will be upgraded to elevate existing standards and incorporate the latest standards in design and maintenance.



The UTS review looks at the biomechanics of the racetracks and the opportunities for reducing risk factors that can be controlled and ensuring the best possible care of racing animals. This included a review of track design, cross-falls, race dynamics and injury rates, starting boxes and catching pens as well as track surface maintenance.



RWWA has considered all findings within the review, resulting in a series of current and planned works.



Preliminary works, including Northam upgrades, equipment purchases and track surveying at Cannington and Mandurah, is budgeted at \$366,000. As design work is still being developed and contracts have not been awarded, costs are yet to be determined for major works.

RECOMMENDATIONS	RWVA CURRENT AND PLANNED WORKS	STATUS
Track shapes, cross-falls, race dynamics and injury rates		
<p>Regrade Cannington and Mandurah tracks to smooth the surface.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannington and Mandurah have had survey points installed. A review found the track was within 5mm of the design tolerance. Minor remedial work was undertaken to rectify the variance. Mandurah has been surveyed and is in the process of grading in accordance with design levels. 	In progress
<p>Upgrade the Northam track.</p> <p>Once upgraded, Northam track to be used while Mandurah track is upgraded.</p> <p>In the longer-term, transition from Northam track to a purpose-built greenfield track in a region that is climatically better suited to racing greyhounds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remedial upgrades have been determined for Northam to allow better track preparation and ensure safer racing. It is anticipated works will be completed by late September. UTS will conduct a review of the works before racing resumes. Subject to a business case, the RWVA Board supports the UTS recommendation to transition out of Northam into a new facility at a greenfields location. RWVA will work with specialist civil engineers to develop concept designs for a multi-purpose venue. The centre will aim for a holistic approach by providing spaces to support early education services and training resources as well as racing premises with optimal track composition for greyhound safety and welfare. Business case is expected to be completed by December 2021. 	In progress
<p>Install three/four transitional (clothoidal) bends at Mandurah</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A specialist civil engineering firm has been engaged to assist in the design of the Mandurah track with the installation of three additional 50m transitional bends and enhancement of the existing transitional bend UTS will review the design concepts. Design work is expected to be completed by October 2021. 	In progress
Starting boxes and catch pens		
<p>Increase the width of the Cannington track catching pen when the track is renovated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A specialist civil engineering firm has been engaged to work in conjunction with the UTS to develop concept designs for revised work on Cannington's catching pen. Design work is expected to be completed by December 2021. 	In progress
<p>Widen the entrances to all track catching pens. Design the shape and alignment of the catching pens at Mandurah and Cannington for better entry, a safe stopping distance and to reduce the likelihood of interference between greyhounds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concept designs are being developed for Mandurah and Cannington. RWVA in consultation with UTS has determined the appropriate immediate remedial work for Northam. 	In progress

RECOMMENDATIONS	RWWA CURRENT AND PLANNED WORKS	STATUS
Starting boxes and catch pens		
<p>RWWA to consider relocating the Mandurah catching pen to increase the distance between the finish post and the catching pen and increasing the length of the catching pen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept designs are being developed. UTS will review the design concepts. • Design work expected to be completed by October 2021 	In progress
Track surface maintenance – WAGRA responsible for implementation		
<p>Use of profiling tool for each track to identify and record fractures and/or layers within the track sand prior to racing and trialling.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RWWA has purchased moisture probes and sand profilers, which have been provided to WAGRA for use at all greyhound tracks 	Completed
<p>Use of Clegg Hammer for each track to measure and record the impact attenuation the track sand prior to racing and trialling.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RWWA has bought Clegg Hammers and provided them to WAGRA for use at all greyhound tracks. 	Completed
<p>RWWA to improve data collection and investigate the cause of data errors relating to moisture content and track firmness at Cannington.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RWWA in conjunction with WAGRA conducted a thorough investigation to understand the cause of the data errors. • It was found that soil salinity was leading to inconsistencies in the readings. 	Completed
<p>RWWA initiate the collection and recording of relevant track maintenance data at Northam.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RWWA in conjunction with WAGRA conducted a thorough investigation to understand the cause of the data errors. • It was found that soil salinity was leading to inconsistencies in the readings. 	Completed
<p>Harrow (deep rake) the Mandurah track being every 2 to 3 weeks regardless of the season.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RWWA has consulted with WAGRA to ensure harrowing is conducted every 2 to 3 weeks. 	Completed
<p>Adjust irrigation at Mandurah to provide additional time for the surface to absorb the water and to establish consistent water absorption for the entire track.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RWWA has consulted with WAGRA to ensure the irrigation program is adjusted. • WAGRA has purchased a new dribble bar for the water truck to improve water application. 	Completed

