

Hot Weather Policy

Purpose	Greyhounds prefer to operate within their Thermo-Neutral Zone (TNZ) of between 10 and 26°C, with a small margin for individual animals. Above 26°C, greyhounds need to expend energy to thermoregulate (cool themselves) and when the ambient temperature is high, the risk of heat stress is increased. With the growing likelihood of summertime temperatures exceeding 28°C, this has placed a greater emphasis on safeguarding greyhounds from the effects of heat and humidity. The Greyhound Board of Great Britain (GBGB) recognises that thermoregulation and the factors that affect it are multifactorial and complex. This policy has been designed to provide a structured approach to help mitigate the effects of hot weather on normal, healthy racing greyhounds and to provide clear guidelines on what actions should be taken on race days when ambient temperatures reach a point where this policy should be applied. The comfort of each individual greyhound is the best measure of its welfare, and this consideration alone will supersede all factors in deciding whether a greyhound shall race or not. This advice is based on current understanding of the thermoregulation of the racing greyhound; however, GBGB will review and update this policy annually based on current and future research. Further information on managing temperature extremes is available in the GBGB Code of Practice for Greyhound Residential Kennels which can be found on the GBGB website: www.gbgb.org.uk.
Scope	The Hot Weather Policy applies to all GBGB licence holders caring for greyhounds during their visits to the racecourse and during transportation to and from the track. Racecourses and trainers must ensure they are aware of any forecast hot weather and have the necessary measures in place to ensure compliance with this Policy.
Temperature ranges	The following temperature ranges are in place to identify when mitigating measures should be applied to minimise the risk of heat stress in greyhounds: - Above 33°C – Postpone racing 28 - 33°C – Special Measures apply 26 – 28°C – Hot weather advice followed 10 - 26°C – TNZ ‘comfort’ zone
Racecourse requirements during periods of hot weather	• For temperatures of 28°C and above, tracks should employ Special Measures (as set out below) to maintain the temperature in the greyhounds’ environment within the thermo-neutral zone (TNZ). • No racing or trialling is permitted to take place when temperatures at the racecourse exceed 33°C. When ambient racecourse temperatures are greater than 33°C, racing should be suspended until temperatures drop to 33°C or below; after which racing may continue with Special Measures in place.

	• Ambient temperature readings at the racecourse should be measured and recorded at four different locations relevant to the greyhounds at the track using a Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) thermometer. This may include, but should not be limited to, the track area, shaded paddock area, behind the starting traps, the back straight and other shaded areas. The mean temperature should then be calculated. • Kennel area temperatures shall be measured and recorded at regular intervals, with individual kennels monitored independently if circumstances dictate. • Where dogs are briefly exposed to higher temperatures through racing, they shall return to a managed environment within the limits of the TNZ until their comfort is restored. • Hydration is important at all times. All greyhounds must have access to fresh cool water. Water should be made available as soon as a greyhound arrives at the track, during kennelling and immediately after racing or trialling. If there is a considerable distance between the pickup and paddock areas at the track, water should be offered to the greyhound prior to it heading back to the paddock.
Special Measures at racecourses – temperatures of 28°C and above	• When the ambient temperature is between 28°C and 33°C, racecourses shall only race if they are able to maintain a constant kennel temperature of between 10 and 26°C. • Parades shall be shortened or avoided to minimise the time spent in an environment with a higher ambient temperature. • The racecourse shall have in place a means of rapidly cooling a greyhound, such as air-conditioned cooling rooms or cooling baths. • Greyhounds shall be allowed to cool fully and be restored to a state of thermal comfort before being placed back in the kennel or loaded for transport. • The trainer is responsible for having enough staff in attendance to provide each greyhound enough time to cool off after it has raced and before returning to its kennel. • Drying dogs after cooling, and prior to placing in the kennel or van, is essential as water evaporating from dogs will add to the humidity in the kennel which can render the dog's natural cooling processes ineffective. • A veterinary surgeon is on-hand whenever greyhounds race or trial and special consideration should be given to monitoring the temperature and maintaining the comfort and safety of any greyhounds showing even mild symptoms which may indicate the onset of heat stress during these warmer periods. • Racecourse officials and paddock staff should be suitably trained to identify the common signs of heat stress in greyhounds and must make the veterinary surgeon on duty immediately aware if they have any concerns about individual greyhounds.

	The racecourse should also make provisions for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all human participants, including limiting time spent in direct sun and providing additional drinking water.
Temperatures of 33°C or above	- When ambient racecourse temperatures are expected to be greater than 33°C, the racecourse executive will give consideration to cancel or postpone racing as soon as it is reasonable to do so that greyhounds are not transported during periods of hot weather. - Each racecourse should have a process in place for making the decision to cancel or postpone racing during periods of hot weather. - If the local temperature is likely to exceed 33°C, Rule 107 allows the Local Stewards to make and, if necessary, to vary, all such arrangements for the conduct of a Trials Meeting or a Race Meeting as they deem fit provided that such variation does not conflict with the requirements of the Rules. This extends to abandoning a meeting, to abandon any Trial(s) or Race(s), or alter the order of running Trial(s) or races, or the time of kennelling. Any such variation for a Race Meeting shall be notified to the GBGB or the Area Stipendiary Steward concerned.
Transporting greyhounds in hot weather	- Factors contributing to heat stress may begin at the residential kennels if conditions there are not maintained within the TNZ. There is an increased risk that the health of a greyhound will be seriously affected if it is already hot and is then loaded for transport. This 'preload' is a major contributory factor to the development of heat stress later in the greyhound's journey. - To ensure the safety and welfare of racing greyhounds, and to mitigate the effects of heat stress, transportation shall be undertaken in accordance with Appendix II of the GBGB Rules of Racing (Guidelines for Transportation of Greyhounds). - Trainers shall ensure their vehicle is sufficiently cool before greyhounds are loaded for transportation. - Fluids shall be freely available to all greyhounds before the journey, and it is essential to carry an adequate supply of water and drinking containers, in case of delay or breakdown. - All vehicles must have a thermometer in the part of the vehicle where the greyhounds are located with a display in the cab clearly visible to the driver. - All vehicles used in the transportation of racing greyhounds are required to be suitably air-conditioned to ensure greyhounds' comfort and safety. The vehicle temperature must be maintained between 10°C and 26°C during transport, and the trainer will be responsible for ensuring the vehicle is within that temperature range before loading greyhounds for transport and commencing a journey. GBGB stewards monitor vehicles regularly for compliance with this policy. - Greyhounds shall not be left unattended in a parked vehicle at any time.

	- Trainers shall plan their journey and adequate consideration shall be given to rest stops to inspect the greyhounds and provide the opportunity for water consumption. - Consideration should be given to aborting the journey and seeking safe refuge for the greyhounds in the event of major delays during transit. - Greyhounds shall be offered water upon arrival at a racecourse, be checked by the attending vet and kennelled without delay. If a trainer or kennelhand is concerned about a greyhound on arrival at the track, they shall seek advice from the attending vet immediately. Special measures for temperatures above 28°C – transport - Consideration should be given to having an air gap under the transport cages to reduce contact with the van floor. - Trainers shall place the welfare of each greyhound above all else. Each journey shall be planned, and consideration should be given to the following: - The number of greyhounds being transported - The road and traffic conditions - The length of the journey - Experience of handler - Emergency management in case of an accident, breakdown or high traffic congestion. - Temperament of individual greyhounds, i.e. consideration should be given to the safety of transporting greyhounds which may be poor travelers or hyperactive and therefore potentially at greater risk of developing heat stress during transportation.
Relevant Rules of Racing	- Rule 102A – General Arrangements for Meetings - Rule 107 – Variation of arrangements for Meetings - Rule 109 – Racing Paddock and Kennels – Definition - Appendix II (Guidelines for Transportation of Greyhounds)
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