



Speech by

**Shane Knuth**

**MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE**

Hansard Wednesday, 20 May 2009

---

### **CAIRNS GREYHOUND RACING CLUB**

**Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—LNP) (11.50 am): I wish to draw the attention of the House to a serious issue involving greyhound racing. The Cairns Greyhound Racing Club has been asked by Greyhounds Queensland to show cause as to why its operation should continue, despite being a good, financially viable club. The reason behind the show cause is that Townsville is considered the favourite centre for the north, consolidating clubs into one venue. That is yet more evidence of the lack of understanding of the value of such clubs to rural towns and the industry itself. It is not fair to evaluate the validity of a club by comparing it to big city clubs that might bring in more money through Sky Channel coverage and the TAB at the expense of Cairns and Mackay clubs.

Sport is not just about money and coverage. It is about lifestyle, enjoyment, pleasure, fulfilment and fairness. The Cairns Greyhound Racing Club is financially viable and enjoys strong support from the community, being involved in various catering and fundraising events as well as racing. It is also an important feeder club for Townsville. At this point, the Cairns Greyhound Racing Club has been offered 24 race meetings, which is down from 40 meetings, and \$130,000, which is down from \$210,000. That happened before it had an opportunity to put in a submission to show cause. The club has not been offered the standard \$10 per unplaced dog as other clubs have been. I understand that about two months ago, well before the meeting to decide the fate of the Cairns Greyhound Racing Club, Greyhounds Queensland offered the Cairns club's starting boxes and rails to the Bundaberg club.

You do not have to be Einstein to work out that city clubs need feeder clubs. The closure of smaller tracks removes this essential feature of greyhound racing. Once a track is closed it is too late to realise its worth and value to the entire industry. In the broader scheme of things smaller clubs are essential as feeder clubs and they engender interest in racing in smaller towns. Greyhound racing is not just for the city. It should be available to all who love the industry. I call on the minister, Peter Lawlor, to check the integrity of and override the decision that has been made to downsize the Cairns club and allow it to function fully.