

# Media Release

**The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP**

Minister for Crime Prevention

Minister for Corrections

Minister for Youth Justice

Minister for Victim Support



Monday, 14 February 2022

## **PRISON PROGRAM GIVES 500<sup>TH</sup> GREYHOUND A NEW LEASH ON LIFE**

Tarrengower Prison is celebrating the rehabilitation of its 500<sup>th</sup> foster greyhound, 'Boston' – trained through a program giving four-legged companions and prisoners a new lease on life.

Minister for Corrections Natalie Hutchins visited the minimum-security women's prison today to mark the Greyhound Adoption Program's (GAP) major milestone.

For more than a decade, prisoners at Tarrengower have worked closely with retired racing dogs, taking them through a training regime to prepare them for adoption into new homes.

The four-week program is part of the Prison Pet Partnership between Corrections Victoria and Greyhound Racing Victoria (GRV) and teaches selected prisoners valuable new skills to assist with their transition back into the community upon release.

The women take responsibility for feeding and exercising the dogs, as well as teaching them basic obedience skills. They train them to become familiar with stairs, noisy household appliances and being walked on a lead.

The GAP at Tarrengower Prison has been operating since 2009, two years after the program began at Dhurringile Prison, near Murchison, in 2007.

GRV provides food and veterinary care for the greyhounds and delivers weekly training for the prisoners, which was moved online due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Training and work programs play a vital role in providing prisoners with new skills to assist with their rehabilitation and help reduce their risk of reoffending, while also boosting self-esteem - giving them the best chance of being productive members of the community when they're released.

Tarrengower Prison, located near Maldon, is a minimum-security facility for low-risk women prisoners who are nearing the end of their sentence and provides transition and reintegration support prior to release.

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Corrections Natalie Hutchins**

*"Rehabilitation and reintegration programs play a vital role in helping to break the cycle of re-offending, and programs like this provide prisoners with new skills and a sense of pride."*

*"It has been great to see the bond between the prisoners and the greyhounds today. The dogs will now prosper as pets thanks to the Greyhound Adoption Program and the women who have been so dedicated to training them."*

### **Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards**

*"Thank you to all of the staff who have worked tirelessly through the pandemic to bring the benefits of greyhound rehabilitation to Victoria through this program."*

### **Quotes attributable to prisoner \*Janet**

*"Working in the GAP team at Tarrengower has increased my communication skills and resilience. We all work together to achieve a common goal- retraining Greyhounds to be adopted in the wider community."*

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