



UNITED STATES POLICE AND AUSTRALIAN GREYHOUND INDUSTRY FORM HISTORIC ALLIED PARTNERSHIP TO REHOME DOGS ACROSS AMERICA

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RETIRED Australian greyhounds are bound for American service under a historic allied partnership with a United States law enforcement body, signed in Washington DC overnight.

The US Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) welcomed Australian greyhound industry bosses to sign a Pacific Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at a ceremony during National Police Week.

Under the Pacific pet partnership, Greyhounds Australasia and Greyhound Racing NSW will immediately begin a supply channel for greyhounds to be accessed by the FOP's members, which total more than 367,000 across 3000 local lodges nationwide.

Australian greyhounds will be specially prepared to serve as US companion animals – as PTSD dogs and pets – similar to the hugely successful programs in Australia that are underway with the Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA) and Police Association of NSW (PANSW).

Last night's announcement was made in Washington DC by Fraternal Order of Police National President, Mr Patrick Yoes, Greyhounds Australasia Chairman, Mr Rob Vellar, and GRNSW CEO, Mr Rob Macaulay, who were signatories to the MoU on behalf of their respective organisations.

“This is an historic announcement of a partnership between Australia and the United States of America which we know will have an immediate, beneficial impact on the America's frontline law enforcement officers,” Greyhounds Australasia Chairman, and former police officer, Mr Robert Vellar said.

“This partnership between two great allies is the marriage of human welfare and animal welfare, and like their Australian counterparts, I know the members of the Fraternal Order of Police will also see the huge benefits of greyhounds as companion animals.

“As a former police officer in Australia, I understand that the type of work done by our first responders can be highly stressful and exposes them to traumatic events. In many cases, these first responders can suffer a lifetime of ill effects. I also have come to understand how affectionate and loyal greyhounds are and the comfort they can bring those suffering anxiety disorders.

“When I first took the idea to the Police Association of NSW and the Australian Federal Police Association, they could not have been more enthusiastic to roll the program out





to all of their current and former members, and I am delighted that we will be able to play a similar with police officers in the United States.”

Fraternal Order of Police National President, Mr Patrick Yoes said his organisation had no hesitation entering into a partnership with Australian greyhound industry leaders after speaking with the GA and GRNSW and understanding the benefits this partnership would have for FOP members.

“The men and women of our law enforcement agencies here in the United States are regularly exposed to some harrowing and traumatic incidents and scenes in their course of performing their duty,” Mr Yoes said.

“This naturally has a significant impact on their mental health, and sadly we see a large number of our members suffering from mental health conditions such as PTSD and acute stress disorder. Supporting the mental health of our men and women for their life while in the job and beyond the force, is a huge priority for the FOP.

“Therapy animals have been proven to have a dramatic, positive effect on people in these situations, and the case studies from the Australian programs show the impact they have had on police who have suffered from PTSD and similar disorders.

“We are delighted to partner with Greyhounds Australasia and Greyhound Racing NSW for this initiative, which will not only see our members benefit, but also these wonderful animals will enter loving homes.”

Mr Macaulay explained that the partnership with the Fraternal Order of Police sees the marriage of two GRNSW initiatives after his organisation earlier this year began working with Greyhound Pets of America to help with a critical shortage of the dogs in the US.

“Late last year with GA we began the program with the Police Association of NSW, and only a matter of months later the Australian Federal Police Association and their members came on board,” Mr Macaulay said.

“Around the same time, we were invited to tour the US by Greyhound Pets of America to explore another partnership, as they had a huge waiting list for greyhounds. A contingent made the trip, saw the quality of care and the professionalism of these US agencies, and entered into a partnership, extending another adoption network, and helping to meet the demand of Americans looking for a loving greyhound as a pet.

“Now thanks to Patrick and his organisation, we are essentially joining the best parts of two programs, which will see US policemen and women benefit from our greyhounds in the same way our frontline responders are seeing at home in Australia.





"Just as the case is at home, American police officers not only deserve our utmost respect for what they do, but anything we can do in return to assist with any issues they may have as a result of their work, we must move heaven and earth to look after them."

The new initiative has attracted universal support throughout the industry in Australia.

"Greyhound Clubs Australia (GCA) recognises and supports the incredible initiative between Greyhounds Australasia and the Fraternal Order of Police in the United States. The significance of this initiative not only provides more forever homes for our amazing, retired greyhounds, but creates further awareness of the incredible pets that greyhounds make," Les Bein, President GCA.

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