



BILLE TIONSCAL NA gCON (LEASÚ), 1993
GREYHOUND INDUSTRY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1993

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. The Greyhound Industry Act, 1958, established Bord na gCon and defined its functions, principally to act as the controlling authority for greyhound racing. The Act recognises the Irish Coursing Club (I.C.C.), subject to the general control and direction of Bord na gCon, as the controlling authority for the breeding and coursing of greyhounds. The Act also provides that the board of Bord na gCon shall consist of a Chairman and six ordinary members, of whom three but not more than three, shall be members of the Standing Committee of the I.C.C., and that the Minister shall appoint the six ordinary members "in each fifth successive year". Under this provision a new board must be appointed by the Minister during the current calendar year.

2. In view of the passage of time since the 1958 Act was enacted, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Forestry, Mr. Joe Walsh, T.D., decided that a comprehensive review of the legislation should be undertaken with particular reference to the need to provide the legislative framework

- (i) to enable the greyhound industry to overcome its present difficulties and to fulfil its growth potential and
- (ii) for the proper control of hare coursing.

3. Subsequently comprehensive proposals for the amendment of the Greyhound Industry Act, 1958 were submitted to Government by the Minister and approved by the Government. The Government recognised that the comprehensive amendment of the 1958 Act would be a complex and time consuming task and accordingly approved the preparation of two Bills, the first Bill — the Greyhound Industry (Amendment) Bill, 1993 — to deal with three matters of an urgent nature.

4. The Bill proposes to amend section 9 of the 1958 Act so as to give the Minister power to appoint the ordinary members of Bord na gCon without reference to vocational background. This provision should enable the Minister to appoint a Board more representative of all the interests in the industry. It is also being provided that the term of office of Directors shall be 3 years, terminating on a rotational basis.

5. The Bill proposes to amend section 36 of the 1958 Act to empower the Minister to make regulations providing for the muzzling of greyhounds at coursing meetings and for veterinary supervision of hares before, during and after such meetings. Penalties are provided for breaches of regulations under this section.

6. The Bill also proposes to amend section 23 of the 1958 Act so as to remove the ban on greyhound racing on Sundays, Good Friday and Christmas Day. No similar ban applies to other forms of entertainment with which greyhound racing must compete and the removal of the ban is considered desirable in the interests of equal treatment.

7. The enactment of this Bill will have no financial or staffing implications for Government Departments or Local Authorities.

*An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Foraoiseachta,
Samhain, 1993.*