



**Trade &
Investment**

Office of Liquor, Gaming & Racing

Ref: A435090

Mr Stewart Smith
Director, Committees
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Smith

I refer to your letter of 17 April 2014 regarding questions on notice, and supplementary questions, from the Legislative Council's Select Committee on Gambling, and the transcript of the committee's hearings on 10 April 2014.

Please find attached OLGR's responses to the questions taken on notice during the hearings, OLGR's responses to the supplementary questions from the committee and a corrected transcript of the hearings.

I trust that this response is of assistance to the committee. Should you require further information on this matter, Mr Brendan Stone, Assistant Director Policy and Strategy, Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing, can be contacted on (02) 9995 0494 or at brendan.stone@olgr.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Paul Newson
Executive Director

5.5.14

Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing responses to questions taken on notice — Committee hearing 10 April 2014

Question:

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: You say there is currently no research. Are you engaging anyone to undertake some research into third-party exclusions? You can take the question on notice if you want to go away and check.

Answer:

OLGR is only in the preliminary stages of considering third-party initiated exclusions from gaming venues. As outlined in the NSW Government submission to the Inquiry, “[a] range of matters will need to be examined in giving consideration to this matter”. OLGR is not currently commissioning research into the issue.

It should be noted that the Productivity Commission found sufficient evidence to recommend that “subject to evidence [of a gambling problem] and due process, there should be a capacity for family members to make applications for third party exclusions and for nominated venue staff to initiate involuntary exclusions of gamblers on welfare grounds.” (Productivity Commission 2010, Recommendation 10.2)

South Australia and Tasmania both have long-standing schemes whereby people with gambling problems can be barred from hotels and clubs with gaming machines, at the request of family members. The South Australian Government recently legislated changes, which come into effect on 1 July 2014, to strengthen and continue its scheme, following an extensive review by its Independent Gambling Authority.

Question:

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: At some stage in the future is it planned to engage some research into that?

Answer:

There are a range of policy, compliance and administrative matters which first need to be considered, in conjunction with affected stakeholders. The determination of a future research need in this area will depend on the outcome of the above considerations.

Question:

The Hon. ERNEST WONG: Your submission states that Gambling Research Australia is currently researching how people access and use interactive gambling technology on behalf of the State and Commonwealth governments. When will that research be completed and made public? Will the research include statistics to establish whether under-age or young people have access to it?

Answer:

In March 2014 Gambling Research Australia published a research report on *Interactive Gambling*, prepared by Professor N. Hing, Dr S. Gainsbury, Professor A. Blaszczynski et al.

The brief for the research was to determine: the motivations, characteristics and behaviours of interactive gamblers; game play and medium preferences of interactive gamblers; the current prevalence of interactive gambling in Australia; the current prevalence of problem gamblers among interactive gamblers; and the contribution of computer/internet gambling in interactive gamblers.

The research did not investigate under-age interactive gambling. It did consider the impact of interactive gambling on the 18-19 years and 20-24 years age groups.

Question:

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: On page 8 of your submission you talk about voluntary self-exclusion. How many people in New South Wales currently are on voluntary self-exclusion programs?

Answer:

Hotels and clubs are not required to provide returns on the number of people who have self-excluded from their venue.

It should be noted that because one person can simultaneously self-exclude from multiple venues any such returns from venues may not provide an accurate indication of the number of individuals who have self-excluded. In other words, if one person had self-exclusion agreements with three venues would be counted multiple times.

Furthermore, the number of people who have self-excluded, on its own, is not considered to be a useful indication of the effectiveness of self-exclusion and requiring returns may impose an administrative burden on venues.

An estimated range of the number of individuals in NSW who have self-excluded at any given time can be calculated. The Productivity Commission estimated that 10 – 20 percent of problem gamblers self-exclude (Productivity Commission,

Gambling, February 2010. p10.7). Based on the 2011/12 estimate of problem gambling prevalence in NSW (0.8 percent of the adult population), and assuming that between 62 percent and 85 percent of problem gamblers have gaming machines as their primary source of gambling (Productivity Commission, *Gambling*, February 2010. p5.26), there may be between 2,470 and 6,772 self-excluded hotel and club patrons in NSW at any given time – noting that agreements lapse after a minimum of three months and new ones are made.

Section 79 of the *Casino Control Act 1992* allows the casino operator, on its own volition, to issue an exclusion order to a person (i.e. bar them from the casino) and, on request, issue an exclusion order to a person (i.e. a 'self-exclusion'). The Star is required to report all exclusion orders issued – involuntary exclusion orders generally result from illegal activity – under this section of the Act, to the Authority. This means any requested exclusion orders are also reported. In 2012-13, 230 patrons entered into self-exclusion agreements at the casino. The five year average is 203 per year. As with hotels and clubs, the number of self-exclusions from the casino, on its own, is not considered to be indicative of the effectiveness of the scheme.

Question:

Dr JOHN KAYE: From recollection the electronic gaming machine cap in New South Wales was first imposed in 2001 and it has been reduced on at least one occasion, if not more often. Has there been any time in the history of New South Wales when that cap has been binding, that is, the number of electronic gaming machine entitlements has been equal to or greater than the capped amount?

Answer:

At no time since the commencement of the *Gaming Machines Act 2001* has the number of gaming entitlements exceeded the effective state-wide cap.

When the Act commenced in 2002 the state-wide cap was 104,000 gaming machines.

The state-wide cap was changed to 99,000 gaming machine entitlements on 31 January 2009.

Question:

Dr JOHN KAYE: Will you provide on notice a plot of the number of electronic gaming machine entitlements and the cap from 2001 to 2014? It will be instructive for me, and I suspect it also will be instructive for you, to see how close the number of entitlements came to the cap. You spoke earlier about the transfer scheme. If I am a club operating in Sydney's east where my poker machines are not making a lot of money for me and I buy a club in Sydney's south-west and amalgamate them as one club and I then transfer the poker machines from my club in the east into my club in Sydney's south-

west is it true that I do not have to surrender any poker machines? Is that correct?

Answer:

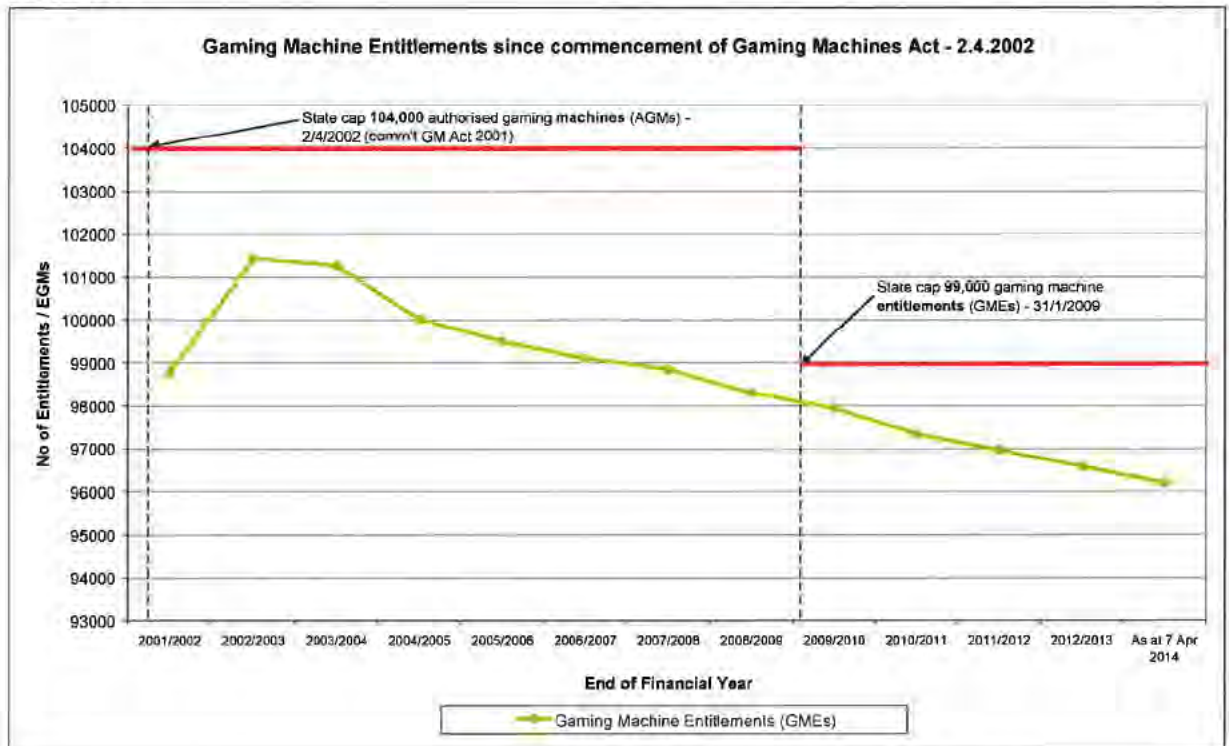


Figure 1

The *Gaming Machines Act 2001* commenced on 2 April 2002. Figure 1 above shows the movement in the number of gaming machine entitlements between 30 June 2002 and 7 April 2014.

With respect to the second part of the question, it is correct, as was stated in response during the hearings, that no forfeiture of entitlements would occur in this situation. However, the transfer of entitlements cannot occur if the venue to which the entitlements are being transferred does not have capacity under its gaming machine threshold to accept them. In the example given, if the club in Sydney's South West already had 200 gaming machine entitlements and its gaming machine threshold was 200 it could not accept any more entitlements without an increase in its gaming machine threshold, regardless of the clubs being amalgamated.

To increase its gaming machine threshold a club or hotel has to apply to the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority for an increase. If the venue is in a Band 3 local government area, and the entitlements it is seeking come from a venue outside the local government area, a rigorous Class 2 local impact assessment would be required.

More detail on this process is provided in response to the follow-up question from Dr Kaye regarding the aggregation of gaming machine entitlements in lower socio-economic areas.

Question:

Dr JOHN KAYE: Do you know how many clubs have amalgamated in that fashion? Can you provide the Committee with figures for the number of clubs that have amalgamated since that provision was included in the Act?

Answer:

The change in legislation that means that amalgamated clubs are no longer required to forfeit entitlements on transfers between those clubs commenced 30 March 2012. Since that time, 26 clubs have amalgamated.

Question:

Dr JOHN KAYE: Have any concerns been raised with respect to clubs being able to aggregate poker machines into lower socio-economic areas with a higher prevalence of problem gambling?

Answer:

Concerns have been raised regarding future increases in gaming machine density in lower socio-economic areas.

In response, the five-year statutory review of the Gaming Machines Act, completed in 2007, completely restructured the arrangements for increasing venue thresholds. The result is the gaming machine threshold and local impact assessment schemes, and the associated 'bands' for local government areas.

Typically local government areas with high gaming machine expenditure and gaming machine density and low Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) scores are now designated as 'Band 3' local government areas.

In a Band 3 local government area, a venue seeking to increase its gaming machine threshold – the maximum number of authorised gaming machines the venue can operate – must submit a Class 2 local impact assessment with its application to the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority.

A Class 2 local impact assessment must provide: general information (e.g. venue proximity to schools); information on the venue (e.g. current patron profile); gaming-related information including the number of machines in the LGA per adult for the previous five years; social profile data including actual census data on the adult population of the LGA and gaming machine household expenditure; and other information including the applicants view on the positive impact (both social and economic) of the proposed gaming machine threshold increase.

The applicant must also consult directly with the local council and police, the Council of Social Service of New South Wales, the local health network, and local

gambling counselling service providers.

Preparing a Class 2 LIA is a thorough and detailed process.

Finally, in order for the Authority to approve a gaming machine threshold increase where a Class 2 local impact assessment is required it must be satisfied that the increase will have an “overall positive impact on the local community where the venue is situated”. In the last three years two venues in the Fairfield local government area submitted Class 2 LIAs for threshold increases of 60 and seven respectively. Both applications were rejected by the Authority because they had failed to meet this statutory test.

In addition if a venue sells gaming machine entitlements its gaming machine threshold is automatically reduced by the number of entitlements sold. Using Fairfield local government area as example again, since 2012 the local impact assessment and gaming machine entitlement trading scheme have combined to reduce the overall gaming machine threshold for venues in the area by eight.

Question:

Dr JOHN KAYE: Am I correct in saying that there was a period within which no venue could have more than 500 gaming machine entitlements?

Answer:

Until the *Gaming Machines (Amendment) Act 2008* commenced on 31 January 2009, the number of gaming machines at a club was capped at 450 machines – not gaming machine entitlements. Clubs could hold more than 450 gaming machine entitlements but not operate more than 450 machines. The number of entitlements that could be held by a club was limited to its Social Impact Assessment (SIA) limit, set by the former Liquor Administration Board.

The gaming machine threshold for a hotel has always been capped at 30.

Dr JOHN KAYE: Could you also take on notice when that 500 cap was lifted and why it was lifted?

Answer:

The cap on gaming machines at clubs (450 machines) was removed when the *Gaming Machines (Amendment) Act 2008* commenced on 31 January 2009.

The government removed the limit so larger clubs could utilise the entitlement limit approved by the former Liquor Administration Board – now known as the gaming machine threshold.

However, if a venue sells entitlements its threshold is automatically reduced by

the number of entitlements sold. Any subsequent increase in that venue's threshold must be approved by the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority.

Question:

Dr JOHN KAYE: Is there anything in the Gaming Machines Prohibited Features Register, maintained by the authority—and I understand you are the office, not the authority but you would be aware of the list maintained by the authority—which would mitigate against losses disguised as wins, speed of gambling, multiple lines of gambling, free spins, linked jackpots and the algorithms which underpin these features?

Answer:

The gaming machine Prohibited Features Register currently lists 14 prohibited features, including a limit on the number of free spins permitted on a gaming machine. It does not currently list a prohibition on alerting players to returns that are less than the amount bet on a particular play (e.g. a 50 cent return on a one dollar bet), or set a minimum time between spins (bets).

The full Prohibited Features Register can be found on OLGR's website at <http://www.olgr.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/Gaming/GM%20Prohibited%20Features%20Reg%20F.pdf>

The requirements for the operation of linked jackpots are set by the linked jackpot licence agreements – there is one for hotels and one for clubs – and the Minister-approved operating manuals for each links agreement.

The algorithms that govern the operation gaming machines are assessed and approved in accordance with the Australian/New Zealand Gaming Machine National Standard.

Question:

The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX: Is any research being contemplated in this area in relation to socialising children to gambling when watching television advertising, going to venues, all those things? Is that a continuing research brief for the industry? You can take that on notice if you like.

Answer:

The New South Wales Government is monitoring the broad range of ground advertising at venues to ensure it remains appropriate and is in accordance with community expectations.

The Government is committed to responding appropriately to this issue and doing

everything possible to protect the integrity of sport and those who are most vulnerable.

To that end, New South Wales is contributing to national research (due May 2015) to better understand the effects of gambling advertising including during sporting events.

It is noted that the regulation of television broadcasting is a Commonwealth Government responsibility.

Question:

The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX: Can you give me an idea in billions of dollars of what the total gambling market is in New South Wales?

Answer:

For the 2012/2013 financial year the total gambling expenditure in NSW was \$7.919 billion. NSW does not collect data on online gaming expenditure (i.e. online casinos, poker, gaming machines etc). The regulation of online gaming is a matter for the Commonwealth and therefore, it is not included in this amount.

Question:

The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX: Could you break it down for us by type in respect of horseracing, gambling machines, casino, online, offline, venue-based, that would be useful. I am sure you collect statistics on these things. You can also take that on notice.

Answer:

Table 1 below provides a break-down of gambling expenditure in NSW between the 2008/2009 and 2012/2013 financial years. The source of the data is the Australian Gambling Statistics published by the Queensland Government.

NSW does not collect data on online gambling expenditure.

	2008/09 (\$ mil)	2009/10 (\$ mil)	2010/11 (\$ mil)	2011/12 (\$ mil)	2012/13 (\$ mil)
Gaming machines (Hotels & Clubs)	5153.4	5019.6	5114.4	5179.4	5250.4
Casino	807.5	775.1	902.0	953.7	1057.5
Totalizator	829.6	869.5	838.3	862.0	819.1
Lotteries	668.8	526.0 [#]	455.4	500.9	536.3
Keno	113.8	118.8	126.5	134.0	134.7
Bookmakers	32.0	33.5	28.7	31.9	15.5
Fixed odds racing	—	—	99.6	103.8	106.0
TOTAL Expenditure	7605.1	7342.5	7564.9	7765.7	7919.5

Table 1

- Extrapolation of only available data — 3 months April to June 2010

Question:

The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX: It will be fine to take it on notice. I would also like to know whether you have statistics on online gambling nationally and State-based versus international casinos, things of that nature. Do you collect that information?

In respect of the information that you have, can you provide the past five years so we can understand the growth profile of each type of gambling and its pathway?

Answer:

NSW does not collect data in relation to online gambling or gambling expenditure at international casinos.

Question:

ACTING-CHAIR: In the minute or two that remains for this segment, I want to touch on the issue of the problem gambling help services that are offered in New South Wales, to which you refer on page 13 of your submission. Some of the examples you mention are face-to-face counselling and telephone services. Do you have data that you can provide to the Committee—and I am happy for the question to be taken on notice—in terms of the numbers of people in New South Wales who are accessing your gambling help services?

ACTING-CHAIR: If in doing so you could provide it over the five-year period, similar to the question asked by the Hon. Matthew Mason-Cox, so that we can compare the trends in terms of where gambling use is occurring and what help services are being asked for by the community, that would be good. With that you also mention that the Responsible Gambling Fund undertakes client satisfaction surveys and follows up with clients. Are you able to provide some information in terms of the satisfaction rates of people who are accessing those services? I know that obviously some of the information will be confidential, but even an overview of generally whether people are happy with the services provided would be good.

Answer:

Number of clients who received counselling at Gambling Help face-to-face services for each of the last five financial years:

2012/13	4,522
2011/12	4,414
2010/11	4,237
2009/10	4,495
2008/09	4,382

Number of target callers to the Gambling Helpline for each of the last five financial years:

2012/13	7,724
2011/12	7,425
2010/11	6,700
2009/10	6,226
2008/09	6,374

Number of NSW live counselling clients for the Gambling Help Online service for each of the last five financial years:

2012/13	567
2011/12	482
2010/11	586
2009/10	204
2008/09	N/A (Note: the Gambling Help Online service did not commence until 31 August 2009.)

Client follow-up data:

A 2008 report by the University of Sydney, on a sample of 120 clients across five RGF-funded gambling counselling services, found significant improvement on all measures of involvement with gambling and problems caused by gambling when the measures were administered 6 months following completion of counselling.

(Source: Walker, M & Shannon, K. (2008). *Assessment of treatment effectiveness in a sample of Responsible Gambling Fund (RGF) treatment services: A client follow-up pilot*. Unpublished report by the University of Sydney.)

A 2010 report by the provider of the NSW Gambling Helpline found that over 85% of helpline callers who were followed up 1, 3 and 6 months following counselling at an RGF-funded gambling counselling service reported being better able to manage their gambling.

Source: Medibank Health Solutions (2010). *Gambling Help: Follow-up service report (October-December 2010)*. Unpublished report.

Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing responses to supplementary questions

Question 1.

Please provide a breakdown list of the services of helping problem gamblers and the funding by NSW government, and if there are any funding particularly catered for ethnic communities

Answer:

Table 1 below lists the problem gambling services funded by the NSW Government and the amount of funding provided to each for the 2013/14 financial year.

PROBLEM GAMBLING COUNSELLING SERVICES BY REGION		
Central Coast Region	Service Location	2013-14
Peninsula Community Centre Inc.	Wyong, Gosford	\$189,188
UnitingCare Unifam Counselling and Mediation	Wyong, Gosford	\$138,339
UnitingCare Mental Health	West Gosford	\$93,632
Wesley Mission – Central Coast	Wyong	\$138,912
Coastal Sydney		
Arab Council Australia	Canterbury	\$60,880
CatholicCare	Lewisham	\$110,683
Co-As-It ¹	Leichhardt	\$95,716
Hopestreet	East Sydney, Wollomooloo	\$270,000
Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury	Gordon	\$78,165
Mission Australia	Campsie Sydney CBD	\$240,060
Northern Sydney Local Health District	Hornsby, Ryde, St Leonards	\$268,000
Northern Sydney Local Health District - Chinese	Hornsby, St Leonards	\$83,011
St Vincent's Hospital	Darlinghurst	\$524,992
Sydney Women's Centre	Campsie	\$91,954
UnitingCare Mental Health	Warringah	\$97,124
University of Sydney	Darlington	\$437,253
Wesley Mission	Sydney CBD, Hurstville, Kogarah, Sutherland	\$613,770
Hunter		
Mission Australia	Newcastle, Singleton	\$133,414
Mission Australia Aboriginal Specific Service	Newcastle	\$100,000
Samaritans Foundation	Cessnock	\$100,000
Wesley Mission	Newcastle	\$220,000

¹ Provides in-language gambling help counselling services – Italian community

Woodrising Neighbourhood Centre	Woodrising	\$96,478
Illawarra		
Mission Australia	Wollongong	\$349,992
UnitingCare Unifam Counselling and Mediation	Nowra	\$95,995
Wesley Mission	Wollongong	\$135,949
New England/North West		
Anglicare Northern Inland	Tamworth, Armidale	\$140,078
North Coast	Service Location	2013-14
Lifeline North Coast	Coffs Harbour, Grafton, Nambucca Heads	\$172,677
Mission Australia – Aboriginal Specific Service	Kempsey	\$73,800
Northern Rivers Gambling Counselling Service	Bangalow, Lismore, Byron Bay, Ballina, Tweed Heads	\$290,000
Samaritans Foundation	Port Macquarie, Taree	\$114,030
Riverina/Murray		
Mission Australia	Wagga Wagga	\$158,889
Mission Australia Aboriginal Specific Service	Wagga Wagga	\$120,837
UnitingCare Goulburn North East – St David's Care	Albury	\$179,177
Wagga Wagga Family Support	Wagga Wagga	\$175,000
South East		
Anglicare Canberra & Goulburn	Goulburn	\$223,633
South West Sydney		
Arab Council Australia	Bankstown	\$143,859
Mission Australia	Campbelltown	\$132,735
UnitingCare Unifam Counselling & Meditation	Campbelltown	\$136,670
South West Sydney Local Health District	Liverpool	\$125,249
UnitingCare Mental Health	Fairfield, Bankstown	\$156,267
University of Sydney	Campbelltown	\$204,903
Vietnamese Community in Australia	Cabramatta, Bankstown	\$150,252
Wesley Mission	Fairfield	\$45,540
Western Sydney		
Arab Council Australia	Granville	\$60,605
Western Sydney Local Health District – Transcultural Mental Health Centre – Chinese project	Sydney, Parramatta, Fairfield	\$200,000
CatholicCare	Blacktown, Emerton	\$295,365
Mission Australia Aboriginal Specific	Parramatta	\$119,742

Service		
St Vincent de Paul	Baulkham Hills, Windsor	\$140,050
University of Sydney	Lidcombe, Parramatta	\$357,851
Unitingcare Mental Health	Parramatta, Castle Hill	\$191,792
Wesley Mission	Kingswood	\$297,829
Western NSW		
Lifeline Broken Hill	Broken Hill	\$100,000
Lifeline Central West	Bathurst Dubbo	\$340,600
Statewide Multicultural Service	Western Sydney Local Health District – Transcultural Mental Health Centre	\$518,394
Statewide Training Service	Association of Children's Welfare Agencies - Centre for Community Welfare Training	\$446,031
Statewide Legal Service	Wesley Mission – Legal Service	\$259,838

Table 1

The following services provide for in language gambling help counselling services for the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community.

- Co-As-It – Italian speaking service
- Vietnamese Community in Australia – Vietnamese speaking service
- Arab Council Australia – Arabic speaking service
- Northern Sydney Local Health District - Chinese speaking service
- Western Sydney Local Health District – Transcultural Mental Health Centre – Chinese project – Chinese speaking service
- Western Sydney Local Health District – Transcultural Mental Health Centre – State wide CALD service catering for over 20 community languages

Mission Australia also operates four Aboriginal specific Gambling Help counselling services based in Western Sydney, Wagga Wagga, Kempsey and Newcastle.

Question 2.

Has NSW government any advertising campaign on preventing gambling problems and how much?

Answer:

The NSW Government has a broad-ranging promotional program for safe gambling messages and Gambling Help services. These include:

- A \$2 million advertising campaign due for rollout toward the end of 2014.
- A major three-year \$4 million Aboriginal promotional program that will reach 60 communities with engagement activities, workshops and a grants program.
- Ongoing local promotional activities such as Responsible Gambling Awareness Week, leaflet drops, posters etc.

- Online advertising at key times such as New Year and the Melbourne Cup. These account for about \$40,000 per year.

Question 3.

Could the Office please provide the following self-exclusion figures:

- How many people have self-excluded? How many each year for the past five years?
- Does the OLGR monitor self-exclusion schemes? If so, how?
- What is the average length of self-exclusion?
- How many venues have been found not to have self-exclusion schemes in place?
- What is the OLGR budget for monitoring self-exclusion programmes in:
 - The Casino
 - Hotels
 - Clubs

Answer:

- OLGR does not keep records of how many people exclude themselves from hotels and clubs. An estimate of the number of self-exclusions is provided in an earlier response to a question on notice from the Hon. Mick Veitch.

The Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority has data on how many people self-excluded from the casino over the last five years – Table 2 below

Self-exclusions from The Star casino				
2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
173	202	198	211	230

Table 2

- OLGR monitors compliance with the requirements for self-exclusion schemes when conducting general corporate governance audits of clubs and audits of hotels.

OLGR also investigates complaints raised with respect to self-exclusion schemes, and in doing so reviews the venue's systems and procedures e.g. whether relevant staff have access to photos of patrons who have self-excluded.

OLGR considers the findings of reviews such as that conducted by the Productivity Commission. In 2010, the Commission found evidence that, for problem gamblers, self-exclusion reduced spending considerably, improved family relationships, reduce the urge to gamble, and led to large increases in perceived increases in control over gambling.

OLGR commissioned a 'secret shopper' survey of self-exclusion

arrangements in hotels and clubs to assess the experience of someone seeking exclusion. As a result of this survey OLGR developed a checklist for venue staff to use when approached with a request for self-exclusion. The survey led to OLGR arranging focus groups to assess the various self-exclusion scheme agreements. This process resulted in OLGR amending its model self-exclusion scheme agreement (available on OLGR's website), multi-lingual versions of this model agreement (Traditional and Simplified Chinese, Turkish, Vietnamese, Arabic and Korean) on OLGR's website, and advice to GameCare, ClubSAFE, Betsafe on how their self-exclusion agreement forms could be improved.

Monitoring the casino's self-exclusion scheme is a matter for the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority.

- c) OLGR does not collect data on the average length of a self-exclusion agreement. The minimum term for an agreement is three months.
- d) Between 23 April 2011 and 23 April 2014, ten venues were issued penalty notices (\$1,100 fine), under the Gaming Machines Act, for failing to ensure that patrons had access to a self-exclusion scheme. Five venues were issued penalty notices (\$1,100 fine) for failing to publicise the availability of self-exclusion schemes and information about how they operate to the patrons of the venue.
- e) OLGR does not have a specific budget allocation in relation to monitoring self-exclusion schemes in hotels and clubs.

Monitoring the casino's self-exclusion scheme is a matter for the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority.

Question 4.

[Page 7. Last line.] What are the other factors at play that you referred to?

Answer:

In response to a question about venue size and problem gambling, the answer suggested that there are other factors relevant to problem gambling such as the socio-economic profile of the area in which the venue is situated, as well as the gaming machine density within that area.

Question 5.

[Page 8] What are their priorities for its (Gambling Research Australia (GRA)) five year project?

Answer:

Gambling Research Australia is the national gambling research program funded by all the State, Territory and Australian Governments. It was created by the former Ministerial Council on Gambling with funding of \$1 million per year for five years from 2004 to 2009. The Australian Government contributed \$300,000 per year with the rest of the funding distributed amongst jurisdictions according to their percentage share of national gambling expenditure. The NSW contribution was \$290,000 per year and drawn from the Government's Responsible Gambling Fund. In 2009 all jurisdictions agreed to extend the program for another five years with the same funding. The last funding year is 2013/14.

The current five-year program is shown in table 3 below.

Gambling Research Australia Research Program 2009-2014

Prevalence standards	Unpublished
The impact of gaming machine jackpots on gambling behaviour	Published January 2014
Interactive gambling	Published March 2014
Validation study of in-venue problem gambler indicators	Published March 2014
Electronic gaming machine structural characteristics	Research underway.
Gambler self-help strategies	Research underway.
The use of social media in gambling	Research underway.
Marketing of sports betting and racing	Research underway.
Loyalty programs	Research underway.
Casinos and responsible gambling	Research underway.
Innovations in traditional gambling products	Research underway.

Table 3

Question 6.

If you made a list of prohibited features what would they be?

Answer:

All those with functions under the Act, including the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority, must have due regard to gambling harm minimisation in exercising regulatory functions, including what is or is not in the public interest.

OLGR understands that Authority decisions regarding the Prohibited Features Register are based on the available evidence. That is they are informed by relevant research, available data, consultation with relevant stakeholders, and other information.

OLGR recognises that, as the Productivity Commission observed, public policy makers may need to adopt a precautionary approach, as required, in regarding matters such place a gaming machine feature on the register.

OLGR notes that Gambling Research Australia has commissioned research into the structural characteristics of gaming machines. Its aim is to determine the impact of gaming machine characteristics on gambling behaviours, and whether such characteristics have a differential impact on problem gamblers and/or exacerbate problem gambling behaviour.

We understand that this research will be completed by late 2014.

OLGR will consider this report and the extent to which it informs the current position on prohibited gaming machine features.

Ultimately, however, which of those features appear on the Prohibited Features Register is a matter for the Authority, but OLGR expects to be consulted on future amendments to the register.

Question 7.

Does voluntary self-exclusion apply to one or more venues? Should it be all gambling venues?

Answer:

A person can choose to have themselves excluded from part of, or a whole, venue. They can also arrange a multi-venue exclusion. Multi-venue exclusions are arranged through the self-exclusion scheme providers – such as GameCare (hotels), and ClubSafe, Betsafe, Wesley Mission (for clubs) – servicing particular hotels and clubs. When arranging a multi-venue exclusion the person nominates the other venues from which they want to be excluded.

A self-exclusion agreement between a patron and The Star casino is specific to the casino and does not apply to other venues.

Tabcorp has established its own self-exclusion scheme whereby people can arrange to have themselves excluded from all TAB outlets.

Question 8.

What is the balanced development of the gambling industry?

Answer:

A balanced approach to developing the gambling industry involves pursuing regulatory measures that address problem gambling without causing an undue impact on the majority of NSW citizens who enjoy gambling and for whom it does not pose any associated problems.

Responsible gambling policies and practices must be appropriately targeted, evidence-based and cost effective.