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**Submission to the Independent Pricing and
Regulatory Tribunal of NSW**

Review of Gambling Harm Minimisation Measures

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Introduction

This submission comments on the apparent effectiveness of existing harm minimisation measures in gambling, specifically those relating to machine gambling in registered clubs in NSW. In doing so, and in recognition that the Review wishes to take account of relevant studies, this submission draws primarily on a research project conducted in 2003 by the Centre for Gambling Education and Research (Hing, 2003). This study, titled ‘An Assessment of Member Awareness, Perceived Adequacy and Perceived Effectiveness of Responsible Gambling Strategies in Sydney Clubs’, received financial assistance from the NSW Government from the Casino Community Benefit Fund. However, the views expressed in this submission are solely those of the author. The full report on this study accompanies this submission and has been approved for release by the Casino Community Benefit Fund Trustees. While the data presented in this submission are summarised from that study, the discussion and conclusions are also informed by the academic and research experience of the author relating to responsible conduct of gambling.

This submission first provides a brief overview of the NSW registered clubs industry, its role in machine gambling provision, and its responsible gambling program (ClubSafe). Details of the primary research which informs this submission are then provided, including the research aims, methodology and key results. The submission concludes with several points aimed at informing IPART’s *Review into Gambling Harm Minimisation Measures*.

As such, the contents of this submission are most relevant to the first three Terms of Reference, to examine and report on:

1. The impact of each existing harm minimisation measure on gamblers, problem gamblers and the broader community;
2. Potential further measures that may foster a responsible gambling environment; and
3. The impact of those potential further measures on gamblers, problem gamblers and the broader community.

Background on the NSW Registered Clubs Industry

Registered clubs are major providers of machine gambling in Australia, most particularly in the state of NSW which has around 1,400 registered clubs. NSW registered clubs have been legally allowed to operate gaming machines since 1956. Since then, there has been phenomenal growth in both the number of machines and clubs licensed to operate them. NSW clubs now collectively operate around 75,000 gaming machines, which represent about 8% of all 'high intensity' gaming machines worldwide, about 40 percent of all gaming machines in Australia and 74 percent of gaming machines in NSW, and which attract some 92 percent of NSW gaming machine turnover and gross profit outside the state's one casino (Productivity Commission, 1999). Most NSW clubs also operate keno, bingo and TAB facilities, but machine gaming is both the major type of gambling offered and their major revenue earner. About 60 percent of collective NSW club income is derived from gaming machines (Productivity Commission, 1999).

The Development of Responsible Gambling Measures in NSW Clubs

Clearly, as major providers of machine gambling, NSW clubs have been faced with pressure to introduce and implement a variety of responsible gambling measures. Prior to 1998, there was but a handful of clubs which had introduced such measures (Hing, 2000). However, a number of events converged which culminated in legislation requiring the implementation of responsible gambling measures in NSW. These events included the following:

- The industry association for NSW registered clubs, Clubs NSW, had commenced the development of a self-regulated responsible gambling policy and program for the industry. However, a trial of this voluntary program (Australian Institute for Gambling Research, 1998) resulted in very low implementation rates and exposed the inherent weaknesses of self-regulation.
- The first NSW Inquiry into gambling in 1998 (IPART, 1998) elevated issues such as public interest, harm minimisation, consumer protection, fair trading and community benefits in gambling to unprecedented heights, and advocated for the NSW Government to legislate for core minimum standards in responsible gambling.

- The Productivity Commission inquiry (1999), Australia's first and only national inquiry into gambling, also added fuel to calls for more proactive responsible gambling measures, shifting the onus of responsibility onto gambling operators to improve harm minimisation and consumer protection measures at the venue level, and onto governments to regulate for these measures.

These developments culminated in the passage of the *Gambling Legislation Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Act 1999 NSW*. The Act's express purpose was 'to amend certain Acts to minimise the harm associated with the misuse and abuse of gambling activities (and) to promote the responsible conduct of gambling activities'. It established in a legislative framework certain obligations of gambling operators in responsible management of gambling. This development represented the first whole of industry and most comprehensive legislated approach to responsible conduct of gambling of any jurisdiction in Australia. Specific requirements for registered clubs were detailed in the *Registered Clubs Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Act 2000 NSW* and associated Regulations. In summary the regulations required NSW clubs to:

- provide information to patrons on counselling services, the use and operation of gaming machines, the chances of winning and the problems caused from excessive gambling;
- limit the cashing of cheques;
- place limitations on the payment of prizes by cash;
- locate cash dispensing facilities away from poker machine areas;
- place limitations on gambling-related advertising;
- prohibit the offering of inducements to gamble;
- require the secretary and certain employees to undertake an approved training course in the responsible conduct of gambling;
- advise the minimum requirement for self-exclusion schemes;
- make other miscellaneous controls.

The ClubSafe Program

These regulated requirements of NSW clubs have been operationalised principally through the ClubSafe program developed by Clubs NSW. The ClubSafe program includes both mandatory and voluntary measures in responsible gambling. It was launched on 1 May 2000, and states a commitment to:

- Providing gambling services and practices that conform to all applicable Acts and Regulations;
- Promoting responsible gambling practices that conform to local community standards and expectations;
- Establishing a patron complaint resolution process;
- Implementing policies to encourage responsible practices in advertising and promotions relating to gambling and ensure compliance with relevant legislation;
- Developing a policy that ensures all legislative requirement relating to cheque cashing, payment of winnings and financial transactions are implemented and encourages patrons to develop responsible practices in the use of finances for gambling purposes;
- Introducing procedures for handling personal information relating to gambling patrons in a club to protect their rights of privacy;
- Establishing a pleasant and safe gambling environment;
- Informing and training staff on legislative requirements, harm minimisation issues, the risks of not complying with legislative requirements or not adopting and practicing harm minimisation strategies and taking appropriate steps to promote patron and employee care;
- Encouraging patrons to take responsibility for their gambling activity through an effective self-exclusion or other mechanisms;

- Informing patrons and staff of the club's responsible gambling policy and program, the nature of gambling products and the availability of support services for problem gamblers; and
- Developing links between the club and relevant community organisations that will provide support and advice for problem gamblers and their families.

To meet these guidelines and the legislated requirements, registered clubs in NSW have introduced a range of measures, such as displaying signage about problem gambling and responsible gambling, providing player information about gambling products and how they work, removing ATMs and EFTPOS facilities from gambling areas, offering self-exclusion programs, restricting the advertising of gambling, cheque payment of large prizes and restrictions on cashing cheques for gambling purposes. In all, the ClubSafe training manual outlines 33 responsible gambling measures.

Evaluation of Responsible Gambling Measures

Apart from the study that this submission reports on, there appears no evidence that the responsible gambling measures in the ClubSafe program, or indeed those in similar responsible gambling programs, are effective in minimising harm and protecting consumers in gambling. For example, an audit of mandatory and voluntary responsible gambling programs across the various gambling sectors in all Australian jurisdictions (Hing, Dickerson and Mackellar, 2001) found no evidence to support the efficacy of responsible gambling measures then in place. Similarly, the Productivity Commission (1999:23.5) identified 'the effectiveness of harm minimisation programs' in gambling as a specific information gap. It recommended that 'regulations intending to lower the harms from gambling should be trialed, take a risk management approach and collect evidence of their effectiveness' (1999:16.1). It advocated an 'evidence-based approach' as the basis for retaining or discarding such measures (1999:16.3). Given the difficulty in gathering evidence on the likely effectiveness of responsible gambling strategies prior to their introduction, the Commission contended that the effectiveness of any introduced measures should be subject to detailed evaluation (1999:16.87).

However, to the author's knowledge, no evaluation of the effectiveness of existing responsible gambling measures in NSW has previously been conducted. Further, basically no evaluation has been conducted of the effectiveness of similar responsible gambling strategies in other jurisdictions. In fact, in summarising key issues arising from research into harm minimisation strategies in gambling in Europe, Canada and the United States, Blaszczynski (2001) noted that 'there is a significant absence of credible research data on the effectiveness of specific interventions to guide and inform policy decision-making' and that 'there is virtually no evidence to ... confirm their effectiveness'.

Given this absence of an evidence-based approach to responsible management of gambling, the responsible gambling measures in NSW clubs were necessarily developed using a 'top down' approach, that is, initiated by governments and key stakeholders in the industry, rather than via a 'bottom up' process starting from the gambler base most at risk of harmful impacts (Hing, Dickerson and Mackellar, 2001). Thus, an evaluation is needed if the efficacy, or otherwise, of these measures is to be demonstrated.

Designing such an evaluation requires consideration of which aspects of the responsible gambling program are to be evaluated. Three types of evaluation are typically used for health programs – evaluation of how effectively the program has been implemented (process evaluation), evaluation of the effectiveness of the program in changing the target group's behaviour in the desired way (impact evaluation), and evaluation of the effectiveness of the program in reducing the problem it aims to address (outcome evaluation) (Hawe, Degeling and Hall, 1990:103). The study summarised in this submission and detailed in the accompanying report focused on only one of these types of evaluation – impact evaluation – that is, the effectiveness of the program in changing the target group's behaviour in the desired way.

A second consideration in this type of research is to decide whose views will be sought as the basis for evaluating the program. In this study, it was decided that, because the target group for responsible gambling measures are the gamblers themselves, the views of club patrons would provide one appropriate set of data by which the program could be evaluated. Therefore, this

study aimed to assess the efficacy of the clubs' responsible gambling strategies from a patron perspective.

Thus, while this study suffers from certain limitations, it helps to address a gap in research and inform a more grounded approach to responsible conduct of gambling, one that is informed by the target group for responsible gambling measures.

Research Aims and Objectives

The specific aim of the study was to assess club members' awareness, perceived adequacy and perceived effectiveness of responsible gambling strategies in Sydney clubs, following the enactment of the responsible gambling legislation. Two research objectives were addressed:

- to assess the perceived efficacy of current responsible gambling strategies in Sydney clubs by measuring the level of awareness of club patrons of their club's responsible gambling strategies (awareness), whether club members think their club's responsible gambling strategies are adequate in minimising harm and protecting consumers in gambling (perceived adequacy), and whether club members consider that their club's responsible gambling strategies have changed their gambling behaviour and in what ways (perceived effectiveness); and
- to assess the perceived efficacy of current responsible gambling strategies in Sydney clubs for different subsets of gamblers, including 'at-risk' and 'recreational' gamblers, men compared to women, different age groups and those who participate in different forms of club gambling (gaming machines, TAB, keno). (However, for this submission, only the comparisons for 'at-risk' and 'recreational' gamblers are included).

Methodology

The research focused on ten clubs located in Sydney. All participating clubs had gaming machines (totalling 3,828 machines), TAB and keno facilities. The sample included clubs of different types (RSL, workers, leagues, community), with differing membership bases and located in areas of Sydney with varying socio-economic profiles. While this sample was not representative of the population of NSW registered clubs, it was anticipated that, by choosing a

sample of clubs that varied by type, size, location and membership profile, the results would not be overly biased towards clubs with particular characteristics. In reality, the selection of the club sample was also determined by the willingness of the clubs to participate in the research.

A survey questionnaire was deemed the most appropriate instrument to collect the necessary data from sufficient club members to allow rigorous analysis. Two surveys were conducted:

- Mail survey. The survey questionnaire was mailed to 6,000 members from four Sydney clubs, yielding 706 usable responses. A purposeful stratified sampling technique was used to gather data from club members with differing levels of gambling involvement. Because the proportions of ‘at-risk’ and ‘problem ‘ gamblers amongst the population of club members were likely to be small (based on previous prevalence studies of various populations), the sampling technique aimed to capture higher numbers of these gamblers than would likely have resulted from a random sampling technique. Thus, the sample comprised the top 500, middle 500 and bottom 500 people on the player tracking system of each participating club according to gambling expenditure in the previous 12 months.
- On-site survey. A second survey, conducted on-site in six Sydney clubs, yielded 248 responses, using convenience sampling. These surveys were conducted over two days in each of the six clubs, and were completed by patrons in the club foyer as they entered or left the club.

The survey instrument contained six main sections:

- Characteristics of the respondents relating to their frequency of gambling on poker machines, TAB and keno, their most preferred type of club gambling, their age and sex.
- Respondents’ awareness of their club’s responsible gambling practices. These comprised the 33 responsible gambling measures identified in the *ClubSafe Responsible Conduct of Gambling Participants Manual* (Casino Community Benefit Fund, 2000).
- Respondents’ opinions on the adequacy of their club’s responsible gambling practices. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement that responsible gambling is

more likely to occur when a club implements responsible gambling measures relating to 13 broad areas into which the 33 ClubSafe measures can be grouped - signage, player information, counselling services, reality checks, opening hours, cheque cashing, credit and cash advances, location of ATM and EFTPOS, payment of winning, minors and intoxicated persons, self-exclusion, staff training, and gambling advertising and promotions.

- Respondents' opinions on the effectiveness of their club's responsible gambling practices, in terms of whether they have affected the respondent's own gambling behaviour. Respondents were asked the extent to which responsible gambling practices in their club have affected the way they think about their gambling, the way they feel about their gambling, how often they gamble, how long they usually gamble for and how much they usually spend on gambling.
- The Harm to Self Scale of the Victorian Gambling Screen (VGS) (Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority, 2001) to identify 'problem', 'borderline problem' and 'non-problem' gamblers amongst the respondents..
- Additional comments about responsible gambling, invited on the back page of the survey instrument.

The quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics and chi-square analysis to identify any significant differences amongst problem, borderline problem and non-problem gamblers, males and females, different age groups and those who participate in poker machine, TAB, and keno gambling. Qualitative data comprised the additional comments provided by about 40 percent of respondents and which totalled over 25,000 words. These were analysed by coding the comments into themes and sub-themes.

Results: Key Characteristics of Respondents

The key characteristics of respondents can be summarised as follows:

- A little over half (53%) were found to gamble weekly or more often on at least one of the three types of gambling (poker machines, TAB, keno), over one-third were found to be irregular gamblers (37%), while around 10% hardly or never gamble on them.

- Poker machine playing is by far the most frequent type of gambling amongst the respondents. Almost half (46%) reported they gamble at least weekly on poker machines, compared to 15% who engage in TAB gambling at least weekly, and 8% who play keno at least weekly.
- About three-quarters of respondents (73%) nominated poker machines as their most preferred type of gambling. About 20% of regular poker machine players are also regular TAB gamblers and about 13% are also regular keno players.
- Nearly half (45.7%) the respondents reported some level of problem gambling, as measured by the Harm to Self Scale of the Victorian Gambling Screen 19.5% of respondents were classified as problem gamblers. For both the mail and on-site surveys, these people were more likely to be regular poker machine players. A further 26.2% were classified as borderline problem gamblers. For both the mail and on-site surveys, these people were more likely to be regular poker machine players. 54.3% of respondents were classified as non-problem gamblers.

Results: Awareness and Perceived Adequacy of Responsible Gambling Measures

Key results relating to awareness and perceived adequacy of the responsible gambling measures are now presented in six sections, relating to signage and information, the gambling environment, financial transactions, restrictions on who can gamble, self-exclusion, and advertising and promotions.

Responsible Gambling Signage and Information

The quantitative results revealed a high level of recognition amongst respondents of the clubs' responsible gambling signage and information. Signs advising patrons of the risks of gambling had been noticed by 86% of respondents, with over 70% also noticing signage about the club's responsible gambling house policy, G-Line counselling services, and problem gambling. Over 67% of respondents had noticed signs about the chances of winning a major poker machine

prize. However, half or less of the respondents had seen player information brochures or signs about local counselling services.

However, while awareness of responsible gambling signage and information was reasonably high, respondents were less convinced that its provision encourages responsible gambling. When rated on its adequacy, the mean scores for questions relating to signage and information were around 3.5 (where 5 = strongly agree and 1 = strongly disagree), the lowest adequacy scores for any of the 13 practice areas. That is, of all the areas where clubs have introduced responsible gambling measures, signage and information were perceived to be the least likely to encourage responsible gambling.

This view was also borne out in many additional comments. While some respondents (9) generally praised the responsible gambling signage in venues, seeing it as a positive move, others (30) felt it was ineffective, largely because people ignore signs, especially those who may be in denial about their gambling problems. Others criticised the signs for being non-confrontational, too familiar and easily ignored. Others saw problem gambling as an addiction, such that no amount of signage would make a difference. Some respondents (13) offered specific ways in which signs and information could be improved – placing large warning signs on each machine, responsible gambling information to accompany membership renewals, free responsible gambling seminars in clubs, case studies of problem gambling displayed in venues and their newsletters, multi-lingual signs, more prominent and attention-grabbing signs, and having brochures on display instead of patrons having to ask for them. Some advocated more signage, while others advocated fewer but more effective signs. Others were critical that any impact of signs was overshadowed by the large and enticing jackpot signs, illuminated machines and flashing lights that characterise gaming rooms.

The Gambling Environment

In terms of responsible gambling measures relating to the gambling environment, few respondents were able to recognise any measures their club had implemented to help people keep track of the time when playing poker machines, either through being able to see a clock (37%) or being able to see out of a window (13%). Further, 38% of respondents considered the lighting

dim in poker machine areas, while up to one-third agreed they could play poker machines all day and all night at their club if they wanted to (that is, there are no mechanisms to enforce breaks in play). These responses suggest that the clubs are not perceived as being particularly proactive in providing a gambling environment that encourages responsible gambling.

However, when the adequacy scores were computed, it is clear that, with mean scores of 3.7, the respondents on average agreed that responsible gambling is more likely to occur when a club's gambling areas have clocks and natural lighting to make people aware of the passage of time, and when a club shuts down gambling facilities for at least a few hours each day.

These results were supported by the qualitative data. Numerous comments (42) were made about features of the gambling environment that respondents suggested could be improved to better facilitate responsible gambling. Some wanted more visible clocks (6), while others suggested brighter lighting (7) and windows so people are more aware of the passage of time while gambling (2). Some respondents wanted better segregation of gambling areas in venues (8), putting gaming machines 'out of sight, so out of mind' so they are not as visible and enticing. Others seemed to want better segregation so they could escape the sights and sounds of poker machines while visiting the club. Some respondents (12) advocated for clubs to offer a broader range of facilities and services as alternatives to gambling, with many criticising clubs for being little more than gambling dens. Suggestions included more entertainment, lounge facilities, recreational facilities, and family activities. Further, some respondents (18) advocated shorter opening hours for gambling venues. Some advocated shutting down the venues or their gambling facilities at certain intervals during the day, to force gamblers to take a break and think about their actions. Others saw shorter opening hours as a way to reduce gambling expenditure and therefore the financial problems experienced by some gamblers. They suggested this would also encourage gamblers to spend more time on family, work and other responsibilities.

Financial Transactions

The quantitative data revealed low awareness about financial transactions policies implemented in clubs to encourage responsible gambling. Over one-half of respondents were unsure about whether their club would cash personal cheques, cheques for over \$200 or multiple cheques for

one person. Nearly one-half of respondents were also unsure whether the club would extend them credit to gamble with and about two-fifths were unsure whether they could be paid totally in cash for large gambling prizes. Naturally, these results would be expected if these respondents had never tried to access cash in these ways at their club. Nevertheless, the clubs do not appear to be communicating these policies to patrons particularly well. Further, up to half the respondents noted that their club has an ATM in its gambling areas, and about one-fifth noted the presence of EFTPOS facilities there. Further, two-thirds of respondents felt that the placement of these facilities does not encourage responsible gambling. This indicates little confidence in their placement outside of poker machine rooms as an effective responsible gambling measure.

Nevertheless, the responsible gambling measures relating to access to cash were strongly supported by the survey respondents. Mean adequacy scores were around 4.2 for not extending credit or cash advances for gambling, 3.9 for paying big wins by cheque, 3.8 for not cashing cheques for more than \$200, and 3.7 for placing ATMs and EFTPOS facilities away from gambling areas.

In the qualitative data, there were several aspects of financial transactions that drew criticisms from respondents and/or suggestions for improvements. Some comments (7) were critical of current cheque-cashing policies in clubs, with most of these advocating an outright ban. Others (28) were critical of their club's procedures for issuing payouts, prizes and change. Some (5) noted that the long queues and understaffing at change counters encouraged people to put larger notes into poker machines instead of waiting. Others noted their club seems to have a policy of providing many \$1 coins in the change given for other purchases, presumably to encourage poker machine play. Other respondents (19) were critical of delays in getting machine payouts from venue attendants (up to half an hour) to redeem credits and for jackpots. This, they said, encouraged people to play off remaining credits or to play the machine next to them while waiting. This problem has been largely exacerbated by the removal of coin dispensing facilities on many machines, which many respondents claimed the clubs now seem to favour. A few respondents (4) advocated lower thresholds for cheque payment of winnings. Additionally, many comments (38) were made about the placement of ATMs and EFTPOS facilities in clubs. Many (22) advocated removing ATM and EFTPOS facilities from gambling venues, considering them

obvious facilitators of over-spending on gambling. Some (5) felt they were too close to gambling areas, while others (11) suggested limiting their use in various ways. These included limiting the amount of cash that could be withdrawn, lowering the minimum withdrawal amount, limiting the number of withdrawals per day, and better controls by banks so daily withdrawal limits could not be exceeded.

Restrictions on Who Can Gamble

According to the quantitative results, there has not been full compliance by the clubs with legislation restricting minors from entering gambling areas, with 10% of respondents noting they had seen minors in the gambling areas of their club. Further, 14% of respondents noted that, even if someone has been refused alcohol service due to intoxication, this does not always preclude them from gambling in the club. This flexibility in allowing intoxicated people to gamble was also noted by a few respondents (5) in their additional comments on the survey. Overall, the quantitative results show there is high awareness of restrictions on minors, but very low awareness of restrictions on intoxicated people gambling as responsible gambling measures.

However, preventing minors and intoxicated persons from gambling was rated the highest in the adequacy measure, with a mean score of 4.3. That is, the respondents agreed quite strongly that this measure is one that encourages responsible gambling.

Self-Exclusion

Awareness of self-exclusion programs in the clubs was low, with only about one-quarter of respondents having seen related signs in their club and around one-third reporting to know what self-exclusion is. However, self-exclusion was ranked seventh out of 13 in the adequacy measure, with a mean score of 3.8. That is, the respondents generally agreed that responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club provides a self-exclusion program.

This low awareness of self-exclusion programs was reflected in the additional comments, where only four people provided related comments. Of these, one wanted people to be able to have a family member excluded for gambling problems, one wanted the self-exclusion noted on the

person's driver's license so they could not cash cheques or pawn goods, while another noted that self-exclusion 'only works if you put your card in the machine'.

Responsible Advertising and Promotions

According to the quantitative results, just over three-quarters of respondents had not seen any advertising by their club which they considered irresponsible. The majority were also satisfied that their club's advertising and promotions did not focus solely on gambling, and around one-half that reward points could be earned by using a range of the club's facilities and services, not just by gambling. However, only about one-third of respondents could nominate unaided how their club's advertising encouraged responsible gambling or discouraged problem gambling, while this figure was around 17% for their club's promotions. These results suggest that, while most respondents consider their club's advertising to be responsible, they do not see this advertising, nor club promotions, as particularly proactive in encouraging responsible gambling.

Nevertheless, the respondents do consider that responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club conducts its gambling advertising and promotions in a responsible manner. The mean score on the adequacy measure was 3.8 and ranked fifth of all 13 practice areas.

The perceived importance of responsible advertising and promotions in encouraging responsible gambling was reflected in the qualitative data, where numerous respondents (18) were critical of club promotions in particular. Half of these noted that winning promotions required people to be on the premises when the prize was announced, thus encouraging people to stay for longer and gamble more. The other half was critical that the style of promotions used offered significant inducements to gamble. Many saw such promotions as very much against the spirit of responsible gambling, even though their club had implemented other responsible gambling practices.

Ranking of Perceived Adequacy of Responsible Gambling Measures

There was strong agreement that the clubs could contribute to responsible gambling by implementing their current responsible gambling measures. In descending order of agreement, the respondents indicated that responsible gambling is more likely to occur when a club prevents

minors and intoxicated persons from gambling, does not extend credit or cash advances for gambling, pays all big wins by cheque instead of cash, has staff trained in responsible gambling practices, conducts its gambling advertising and promotions in a responsible manner, does not cash cheques for more than \$200, provides a self-exclusion program, shuts down gambling facilities for at least a few hours each day, ensures its gambling areas have clocks and natural lighting to make people aware of the passage of time, and places its ATMs and EFTPOS facilities away from gambling areas. However, there was lower level of agreement that responsible gambling is more likely to occur when a club provides information about odds of winning and game rules, displays signs and notices about problem gambling and responsible gambling, and displays contact details of gambling counselling services.

Results: Perceived Effectiveness of Responsible Gambling Measures

The survey also aimed to measure the perceived effectiveness of the clubs' responsible gambling measures, by asking the respondents whether these measures have changed certain aspects of their gambling. The quantitative results indicate that the clubs' responsible gambling practices have had little effect on the way the vast majority of respondents think about their gambling, feel about their gambling, how often they gamble, how long they gamble for and how much they spend:

- 44% of respondents reported that the responsible gambling measures in the clubs have been effective in changing how they think about their gambling;
- 12% of respondents reported that the responsible gambling measures in the clubs have been effective in changing how they feel about their gambling, by making it less enjoyable;
- 18% of respondents reported that the responsible gambling measures in the clubs have been effective in reducing how often they usually gamble;
- 17% of respondents reported that the responsible gambling measures in the clubs have been effective in reducing the length of time they usually gamble for; and
- 19% of respondents reported that the responsible gambling measures in the clubs have been effective in reducing how much they usually spend when gambling.

However, while the above results indicate that the clubs' responsible gambling measures have had some impacts, the percentages of respondents who have changed the way they feel about their gambling and who have changed their frequency, session length and expenditure on gambling are much lower than the 45.7% of respondents classified as borderline problem or problem gamblers on the VGS Harm to Self Scale. Thus, the clubs' responsible gambling practices cannot be considered as being very effective for most problem gamblers or for most of those who are at risk.

This perceived lack of effectiveness of the clubs' responsible gambling measures was also borne out in the qualitative data. While numerous suggestions were made to improve practices and procedures within the current scope of measures, as discussed previously, the additional comments also advocated numerous measures which fell outside this scope. As such, they represent ways in which respondents considered that additional measures could enhance current efforts. Two areas were prominent here that have not been previously discussed – poker machine design and numbers of poker machines.

Certain aspects of poker machine design attracted numerous criticisms and suggestions (74), including:

- Criticisms of the fast rate of play (5).
- Better information needed on the odds of winning (11).
- Change the odds of winning (3).
- Criticism of note acceptors (6).
- Reduce the maximum bet (9).
- Reduce the number of betting lines (4).
- Advocate time limits on machines (7).
- Criticisms of large (linked) jackpots (6).
- Criticisms of the win rate on machines (13).
- Advocacy of cashless gaming (1).

- Need for warnings and more information displayed on machines (7).
- Reduce music and noise of machines (2).

Some respondents (15) criticised the large number of poker machines in operation. Of these, some (10) advocated a large reduction in machine numbers as a responsible gambling measure, while others (5) wanted them banned altogether.

Results: Differences Amongst Problem, Borderline Problem and Non-Problem Gamblers

In terms of awareness and perceived adequacy of responsible gambling practices:

- problem and borderline problem gamblers were more aware of some responsible gambling measures than non-problem gamblers, specifically the club's policies prohibiting the provision of credit for gambling, that personal cheques cannot be cashed at the club, and that large poker machine winnings cannot be paid all in cash.
- However, they were also more likely to have seen advertising or promotions by their club that they considered irresponsible.
- No differences were found in the perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures when compared by problem gambling category.

The following significant differences (where significance levels were set at $p \leq 0.001$) amongst problem, borderline problem and non-problem gamblers in the mail survey were evident in their responses to the five questions about the effectiveness of their club's responsible gambling measures. However, no significant differences were found amongst participants in the on-site survey, although, for each of the five variables below, higher proportions of problem and borderline problem gamblers were 'positively' affected by the responsible gambling measures than were non-problem gamblers:

- They way people think about their gambling. The responsible gambling practices were reported to have changed the way 53.7% of problem gamblers and 52.1% of borderline problem gamblers think about their gambling, compared to 33.7% of non-problem gamblers.
- Feelings about gambling. The responsible gambling practices were reported to have changed the way 23.2% of problem gamblers feel about their gambling by making it less enjoyable to some extent. This has also been the case for 15.9% of borderline problem gamblers and 5.3% of non-problem gamblers.
- Frequency of gambling. The responsible gambling practices were reported to have influenced 26.2% of problem gamblers and 26.3% of borderline problem gamblers to gamble less often. This has also been the case for 8.6% of non-problem gamblers.
- Length of gambling session. The responsible gambling practices were reported to have influenced 23.1% of problem gamblers and 26.8% of borderline problem gamblers to gamble for a shorter time. This has also occurred for 9.9% of non-problem gamblers.
- Gambling expenditure. The responsible gambling practices were reported to have influenced 24.2% of problem gamblers and 28.4% of borderline problem gamblers to spend less when they gamble. This has also been the case for 12.1% of non-problem gamblers.

From these results, it is apparent that the existing responsible gambling measures in the clubs have had some impact on problem and borderline problem gamblers, and to a much lesser extent on non-problem gamblers. Thus, the measures appear to target the appropriate population, while having a minor impact on the non-target population. However, the extent of this impact is limited. While effective in encouraging over half of the target group to think about their gambling, these thoughts have not prompted a change in gambling frequency, session length and usual expenditure for more than about a quarter of those experiencing gambling problems.

Concluding Comments

Based on the results of this study and the research experience of the author in the field, the following concluding observations are offered to inform this Review.

- One of the clearest indicators of the limited effectiveness of current responsible gambling measures in NSW clubs is the high incidence of gambling problems amongst the respondents in this study. While non-random sampling methods were used and so the problem gambling rates found in this study may not be representative of the population, it is still of great concern that 40.7% of patrons who happened to be on club premises and agreed to participate in the on-site survey when conducted had experienced problems with their gambling in the previous 12 months, as had 47.4% of the mail survey respondents.
- The self-reported data on changes in gambling behaviour prompted by existing responsible gambling measures are a further indicator of their limited effectiveness. While reasonably successful in targeting the appropriate population (of problem and at-risk gamblers), the measures have not been effective in changing key aspects of gambling behaviour (frequency, session length and expenditure) for most of the target group in the study.
- The data also indicate a lack of community confidence in these current measures. The qualitative data in particular reflect that there remains quite some scepticism about whether the clubs are truly embracing responsible gambling and practising effective patron care. While many responsible gambling measures have been implemented, other venue practices are perceived as very much against the spirit of responsible gambling (e.g. promotions, ATMs very close to gaming machine areas, gambling room features that discourage responsible gambling), and are therefore seen as detracting from the positive efforts made.
- Clearly, there is widespread concern amongst club patrons about problem gambling. As such, they are generally supportive of any responsible gambling efforts implemented so far. However, they also feel that much more could be done by both gambling venues and government.
- Further, the study uncovered specific industry practices that respondents considered questionable and therefore in need of improvement. Poker machine design is certainly an area where many people feel that changes are warranted. Current signage was also considered largely ineffective. Aspects of gaming room design (e.g. dim lighting, no windows) and the dominance of gaming machines within the overall club environment were also highly criticised as contributing to irresponsible gambling behaviour. The placement of

ATMs very close to gaming machine rooms, delays in obtaining change and manual payouts, and club promotions that encourage people to remain in the venue for long periods of time were also seen as contributing to gambling problems.

- While the incidence of problem gambling remains high and community concerns remain, there is a need for further evidence of the effectiveness of existing and proposed responsible gambling measures. Because this study focused on the package of measures contained in the ClubSafe program, it does not address the deficiency of research into the effectiveness of individual measures and ways they might be improved. This type of research could focus on assessing and improving individual measures, such as developing the most effective responsible gambling signage, determining the influence of different types of gambling promotions on gambling behaviour, and examining the longer-term outcomes of self-exclusions, as but a few examples.
- However, while continued research is critical to improving existing practices, developments in government policy and industry practice cannot be put on hold while such research is completed. It may be many years before research can provide definitive answers, given the inherent difficulties of data collection, the need for longitudinal studies and the desirability of experimental approaches. The advocated approach therefore is to continue attempts to improve on current practices based on the face validity of various responsible gambling measures and expert opinions of their likely effectiveness, while commissioning the necessary research.
- A regulated approach is essential if responsible gambling measures are to be adequately implemented. The results from this and other studies (e.g. Australian Institute for Gambling Research, 1998; Breen, Buultjens and Hing, 2003) indicate a tendency amongst some venues to adhere to only mandatory responsible gambling requirements. Voluntary practices that transcend the law appear less widely practised, while some venues do not comply even with their legal requirements. In this study, many of the measures advocated by the ClubSafe program, but not required in regulations and not as widely practised, related to the environment in gambling areas, including having windows, adequate lighting, and encouraging breaks in play. Others related to promotions that provide strong inducements to

gamble. Another was signage on self-exclusion and local counselling services. Clearly, without the incentive of legislation, some responsible gambling practices will be ignored by some gambling venues. If government and industry are serious about introducing certain measures, then they must be legislated.

- While this submission has been based on research into responsible gambling measures in clubs, it is likely that the same type of research in hotels and other gambling venues would reveal similar criticisms and concerns to those raised in this study.

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centre for gambling education and research

**An Assessment of Member Awareness, Perceived Adequacy and
Perceived Effectiveness of Responsible Gambling Strategies in
Sydney Clubs**

by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Gambling Legislation Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Act 1999 NSW* established in a legislative framework certain obligations of gambling operators in New South Wales Australia in responsible management of gambling. This development represented the first whole of industry and most comprehensive legislated approach to responsible conduct of gambling of any jurisdiction in Australia. Specific requirements for registered clubs were detailed in the *Registered Clubs Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Act 2000 NSW* and associated Regulations and operationalised principally through the ClubSafe program developed by the NSW club industry association, Clubs NSW.

This report details a research project funded by the Casino Community Benefit Fund for the New South Wales Government. The specific aim was to assess club members' awareness, perceived adequacy and perceived effectiveness of responsible gambling strategies in Sydney clubs, following the enactment of the responsible gambling legislation. Two research objectives were addressed:

- to assess the perceived efficacy of current responsible gambling strategies in Sydney clubs by measuring the level of awareness of club patrons of their club's responsible gambling strategies (awareness), whether club members think their club's responsible gambling strategies are adequate in minimising harm and protecting consumers in gambling (perceived adequacy), and whether club members consider that their club's responsible gambling strategies have changed their gambling behaviour and in what ways (perceived effectiveness); and
- to assess the perceived efficacy of current responsible gambling strategies in Sydney clubs for different subsets of gamblers, including 'at-risk' and 'recreational' gamblers, men compared to women, different age groups and those who participate in different forms of club gambling (gaming machines, TAB, keno).

To address the research objectives, two surveys were conducted. The first, a mail survey, gained responses from 706 members of four Sydney clubs, using a purposeful stratified sampling technique. The second, conducted on-site in six Sydney clubs, yielded 248 responses, using convenience sampling. The survey instrument contained six main sections:

- Characteristics of the respondents relating to their frequency of gambling on poker machines, TAB and keno, their most preferred type of club gambling, their age and sex.
- Respondents' awareness of their club's responsible gambling practices. These comprised the 33 responsible gambling measures identified in the *ClubSafe Responsible Conduct of Gambling Participants Manual* (Casino Community Benefit Fund, 2000).
- Respondents' opinions on the adequacy of their club's responsible gambling practices. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement that responsible gambling is more likely to occur when a club implements responsible gambling measures relating to signage, player information, counselling services, reality checks, opening hours, cheque cashing, credit and cash advances, location of ATM and EFTPOS facilities, payment of winning, minors and intoxicated persons, self-exclusion, staff training, and gambling advertising and promotions.
- Respondents' opinions on the effectiveness of their club's responsible gambling practices, in

terms of whether they have affected the respondent's own gambling behaviour. Respondents were asked the extent to which responsible gambling practices in their club have affected the way they think about their gambling, the way they feel about their gambling, how often they gamble, how long they usually gamble for and how much they usually spend on gambling.

- The Harm to Self Scale of the Victorian Gambling Screen (VGS) (Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority, 2001) to identify 'problem', 'borderline problem' and 'non-problem' gamblers amongst the respondents.
- Additional comments about responsible gambling, invited on the back page of the survey instrument.

Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and chi-square analysis to identify any significant differences amongst problem, borderline problem and non-problem gamblers, males and females, different age groups and those who participate in poker machine, TAB, and keno gambling.

The key characteristics of respondents can be summarised as follows:

- A little over half (53%) were found to gamble weekly or more often on at least one of the three types of gambling (poker machines, TAB, keno), over one-third were found to be irregular gamblers (37%), while around 10% hardly or never gamble on them.
- Poker machine playing is by far the most frequent type of gambling amongst the respondents. Almost half (46%) reported they gamble at least weekly on poker machines, compared to 15% who engage in TAB gambling at least weekly, and 8% who play keno at least weekly. About three-quarters of respondents (73%) nominated poker machines as their most preferred type of gambling. About 20% of regular poker machine players are also regular TAB gamblers and about 13% are also regular keno players.
- Amongst the respondents, 19.5% were classified as problem gamblers. For the mail survey, these people were more likely to be regular poker machine players and regular TAB gamblers. For the on-site survey, problem gamblers were more likely to be regular poker machine players. A further 26.2% were classified as borderline problem gamblers. For the mail survey, these people were more likely to be male, regular poker machine players and regular TAB players. For the on-site survey, these people were more likely to be regular poker machine players. 54.3% of respondents were classified as non-problem gamblers.

For the first research objective, the results indicate the following levels of awareness of the clubs' responsible gambling measures:

- There is a high level of awareness of the clubs' signage and information measures, particularly relating to signs advising patrons of the risks of gambling, the club's responsible gambling house policy, G-Line counselling services, problem gambling, and the chances of winning a major poker machine prize, but less awareness of player information brochures or signs about local counselling services. However, while awareness of responsible gambling signage and information was reasonably high, respondents were less convinced that its provision encourages responsible gambling. Many qualitative comments were sceptical about the potential effectiveness of signs and numerous suggestions for improvement were made.
- Few respondents were able to recognise any measures their club had implemented in the gambling environment to help people keep track of the time when playing poker machines,

either through visible clocks or windows. Many considered the lighting dim in poker machine areas, while up to one-third agreed that they could play the poker machines continuously at their club if they wanted to. These responses suggest that the clubs are not being particularly proactive in providing a gambling environment that encourages responsible gambling. Numerous qualitative comments were made to improve the gambling environment to better encourage responsible gambling.

- There was a low level of awareness about financial transactions policies implemented in clubs to encourage responsible gambling, including the clubs' cheque cashing policies, credit policies and limits on paying large wins all in cash. Further, many respondents were critical of the placement of ATM and EFTPOS facilities in clubs, indicating little confidence in their placement outside of poker machine rooms (as required by law) as an effective responsible gambling measure.
- The results indicate there is not 100% compliance by the clubs with restrictions on minors entering gambling areas and preventing intoxicated persons from gambling. While there is high awareness of restrictions on minors, there is very low awareness of restrictions on intoxicated people gambling as responsible gambling measures.
- Awareness of self-exclusion programs in the clubs is low, with only about one-quarter of respondents having seen related signs in their club and around one-third claiming to know what they are.
- While most respondents consider their club's advertising and promotions to be responsible, they do not see them as particularly proactive in encouraging responsible gambling. Numerous criticisms of the role of club promotions in discouraging responsible gambling were relayed in the additional comments provided. These focused on the role of these promotions in encouraging people to stay on club premises for long periods of time and the strong inducements to gamble that they offer.

For the first research objective, the results revealed the following about the perceived adequacy of the clubs' responsible gambling measures:

- There was strong agreement that the clubs could contribute to responsible gambling by implementing their current responsible gambling measures. In descending order of agreement, the respondents indicated that responsible gambling is more likely to occur when a club prevents minors and intoxicated persons from gambling, does not extend credit or cash advances for gambling, pays all big wins by cheque instead of cash, has staff trained in responsible gambling practices, conducts its gambling advertising and promotions in a responsible manner, does not cash cheques for more than \$200, provides a self-exclusion program, shuts down gambling facilities for at least a few hours each day, ensures its gambling areas have clocks and natural lighting to make people aware of the passage of time, and places its ATMs and EFTPOS facilities away from gambling areas. However, there was lower level of agreement that responsible gambling is more likely to occur when a club provides information about odds of winning and game rules, displays signs and notices about problem gambling and responsible gambling, and displays contact details of gambling counselling services.

For the first research objective, the results yielded the following insights into the perceived effectiveness of the club's responsible gambling strategies:

- The responsible gambling measures in the clubs have been effective in changing the way 44% of respondents think about their gambling; changing the way 12% of respondents feel about their gambling, by making it less enjoyable; reducing the frequency that 18% of respondents gamble; reducing the length of time that 17% of respondents usually gamble for; and reducing the usual gambling expenditure of 19% of respondents.
- However, while the above results indicate that the clubs' responsible gambling measures have been somewhat effective, the percentages of respondents who have changed the way they feel about their gambling and who have changed the frequency, session length and expenditure on gambling are much lower than the 45.7% of respondents classified as borderline problem or problem gamblers on the VGS Harm to Self Scale. Thus, the clubs' responsible gambling practices cannot be considered as being very effective for most problem gamblers or for most of those who are at risk. Further, the many suggestions in the qualitative data for improvements to responsible gambling efforts reflect that the respondents consider that much more could be done to encourage responsible gambling.

In addressing the second research objective, it was found that:

- In terms of awareness of responsible gambling practices, problem and borderline problem gamblers were more aware of some responsible gambling measures than non-problem gamblers, specifically the club's policies prohibiting the provision of credit for gambling, that personal cheques cannot be cashed at the club, and that large poker machine winnings cannot be paid all in cash. However, they were also more likely to have seen advertising or promotions by their club that they consider irresponsible. No differences were found in the perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures when compared by problem gambling category. In terms of perceived effectiveness, the responsible gambling practices in the clubs appear to have changed the way about half of problem and borderline problem gamblers think about their gambling. They have also changed the way about one-quarter of problem gamblers and one-sixth of borderline problem gamblers feel about their gambling by making it less enjoyable to some extent. The practices were also reported to influence about one-quarter of problem and borderline problem gamblers to gamble less often, to usually gamble for a shorter time and to spend less when they gamble.
- When males were compared to females, few significant differences were apparent relating to awareness of their club's responsible gambling practices. Males were more aware of their club's cheque cashing policies than females, while females were more aware of clocks in the gambling areas of their club. No significant differences by sex were evident in perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures, or in the perceived effectiveness of these measures.
- No differences were apparent in awareness, perceived adequacy and perceived effectiveness when different age groups were compared, except that younger and middle aged people were significantly more likely than older people to have noticed signs about G-Line counselling services in their club.
- When the data were compared for frequency of playing poker machines, more regular playing was associated with higher levels of awareness of some responsible gambling measures, particularly relating to signage and information (house policy, signs about the risks of gambling, signs about problem gambling, signs about winning the maximum prize on a gaming machine, player information brochures, signs about limited cash payments of large

wins), the gambling environment (clocks, windows, lighting, ability to play poker machines continuously), placement of ATMs, partial cheque payment of large winnings and inability to obtain credit from the club for gambling. No differences were evident in the perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures, or in the perceived effectiveness of these measures by poker machine playing frequency.

- Frequency of gambling on the TAB was not associated with higher levels of awareness of any responsible gambling measures or any differences in the perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures. However, the responsible gambling practices appear to have influenced about one-fifth of regular and about one-quarter of irregular TAB gamblers to gamble less often, and about one-quarter of irregular and one-seventh of regular TAB gamblers to gamble for a shorter time. No other significant differences were found for frequency of TAB gambling.
- Frequency of gambling on keno was associated with higher levels of awareness of some responsible gambling measures, particularly relating to their club's cheque and credit policies. However, no significant differences by keno gambling frequency were evident in the perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures. For perceived effectiveness, the responsible gambling practices appear to have changed the way about one-fifth of regular keno players feel about their gambling by making it less enjoyable to some degree. This has also occurred with one-sixth of irregular keno gamblers. No other significant differences were found for frequency of keno gambling.

It was not the intention of this report to make recommendations. However, the following observations are offered to help guide policy and to improve current responsible gambling efforts.

- Clearly, gambling problems are prevalent amongst club patrons. While the prevalence rates found in this study are not representative of the population, it is of great concern that two-fifths of patrons who happened to be on club premises and agreed to participate in the on-site survey when it was conducted have experienced problems with their gambling in the previous 12 months.
- There is a tendency amongst some clubs to adhere to only the minimum responsible gambling requirements. Voluntary practices that transcend the law appear to be less widely practised. Many of these relate to the environment in gambling areas, including having windows, adequate lighting, and encouraging breaks in play. Others relate to promotions that provide strong inducements to gamble. Another is signage on self-exclusion and local counselling services. Clearly, without the incentive of legislation, some responsible gambling practices will be ignored by some gambling venues.
- Further, some clubs appear not to be compliant even with some legal obligations in responsible gambling, specifically relating to allowing minors and intoxicated people in gambling areas. Yet, these are measures that people consider as very important in encouraging responsible gambling.
- Given the above points, there remains quite some scepticism about whether the clubs are truly embracing responsible gambling and practising effective patron care. While many responsible gambling measures have been implemented, other venue practices are perceived as very much against the spirit of responsible gambling (e.g. promotions, ATMs very close to

gaming areas, gambling room features that discourage responsible gambling), and are therefore detracting from the positive efforts made.

- There is widespread concern amongst club patrons about problem gambling and they generally support the responsible gambling efforts so far. However, they also feel that much more could be done by both gambling venues and government. Poker machine design is certainly an area where people feel improvements could be made.
- While this community concern remains, there is a need for further evidence of the effectiveness of current responsible gambling measures and research into ways that these measures might be improved.



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1. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The *Gambling Legislation Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Act 1999 NSW* established in a legislative framework certain obligations of gambling operators in New South Wales (NSW) in responsible management of gambling. This development represented the first whole of industry and most comprehensive legislated approach to responsible conduct of gambling of any jurisdiction in Australia. Specific requirements for registered clubs were detailed in the *Registered Clubs Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Act 2000 NSW* and associated Regulations and operationalised principally through the ClubSafe program developed by the NSW club industry association, Clubs NSW.

The ClubSafe program includes both mandatory and voluntary measures in responsible gambling. It ‘represents an approach where the environment in which gambling is conducted minimises harm and meets community expectations’ (Clubs NSW, 2000). The *Registered Clubs Responsible Conduct of Gambling Code of Practice: Best Practice Guidelines* (Clubs NSW, 2000), approved by the Minister on 1 May 2000, state a commitment to:

- Providing gambling services and practices that conform to all applicable Acts and Regulations.
- Promoting responsible gambling practices that conform to local community standards and expectations.
- Establishing a patron complaint resolution process.
- Implementing policies to encourage responsible practices in advertising and promotions relating to gambling and ensure compliance with relevant legislation.
- Developing a policy that ensures all legislative requirement relating to cheque cashing, payment of winnings and financial transactions are implemented and encourages patrons to develop responsible practices in the use of finances for gambling purposes.
- Introducing procedures for handling personal information relating to gambling patrons in a club to protect their rights of privacy.

- Establishing a pleasant and safe gambling environment.
- Informing and training staff on legislative requirements, harm minimisation issues, the risks of not complying with legislative requirements or not adopting and practicing harm minimisation strategies and taking appropriate steps to promote patron and employee care.
- Encouraging patrons to take responsibility for their gambling activity through an effective self-exclusion or other mechanisms.
- Informing patrons and staff of the club's responsible gambling policy and program, the nature of gambling products and the availability of support services for problem gamblers.
- Developing links between the club and relevant community organisations that will provide support and advice for problem gamblers and their families.

To meet these guidelines and the legislated requirements, registered clubs in NSW have introduced measures such as displaying signage about problem gambling and responsible gambling, providing player information about gambling products and how they work, removing ATMs and EFTPOS facilities from gambling areas, offering self-exclusion programs, restricting the advertising of gambling, cheque payment of large prizes and restrictions on cashing cheques for gambling purposes.

However, no evidence exists that measures such as these are effective in minimising harm and protecting consumers in gambling. For example, an audit of mandatory and voluntary responsible gambling programs across the various gambling sectors in all Australian jurisdictions (Hing, Dickerson and Mackellar, 2001) found no evidence to support the efficacy of responsible gambling measures then in place. Similarly, the Productivity Commission (1999b:23.5) identified 'the effectiveness of harm minimisation programs' in gambling as a specific information gap. It recommended that 'regulations intending to lower the harms from gambling should be trialed, take a risk management approach and collect evidence of their effectiveness' (1999b:16.1). It advocated an 'evidence-based approach' as the basis for retaining or discarding such measures (1999b:16.3). Given the difficulty in gathering evidence on the likely effectiveness of responsible gambling strategies prior to their introduction, the Commission contended that the effectiveness of any introduced measures should be subject to detailed evaluation (1999b:16.87).

However, to the authors' knowledge, no evaluation of the effectiveness of existing responsible gambling measures in NSW has previously been conducted. Further, basically no evaluation has been conducted of the effectiveness of similar responsible gambling strategies in other jurisdictions. In fact, in summarising key issues arising from research into harm minimisation strategies in gambling in Europe, Canada and the United States, Blaszczynski (2001) noted that 'there is a significant absence of credible research data on the effectiveness of specific interventions to guide and inform policy decision-making' and that 'there is virtually no evidence to ... confirm their effectiveness'.

Given this absence of an evidence-based approach to responsible management of gambling, the responsible gambling measures in NSW clubs were necessarily developed using a 'top down' approach, that is, initiated by governments and key stakeholders in the industry, rather than via a 'bottom up' process starting from the gambler base most at risk of harmful impacts (Hing, Dickerson and Mackellar, 2001). Thus, an evaluation is needed if the efficacy, or otherwise, of these measures is to be demonstrated.

In designing such an evaluation, the researcher needs first to consider which aspects of the responsible gambling program are to be evaluated. As will be discussed in Section Two of this report, three types of evaluation are typically used for health programs— evaluation of how effectively the program has been implemented (process evaluation), evaluation of the effectiveness of the program in changing the target group's behaviour in the desired way (impact evaluation), and evaluation of the effectiveness of the program in reducing the problem it aims to address (outcome evaluation) (Hawe, Degeling and Hall, 1990:103). The current research focuses on only one of these types of evaluation – impact evaluation. Through assessing club members' opinions on the responsible gambling measures in NSW clubs, the research provides a patron perspective on the short-term effects of the program in terms of whether it has brought about a desired change in knowledge (awareness), attitudes (perceptions of adequacy) and behaviour (perceptions of effectiveness) of the target group for the ClubSafe program.

A second consideration for the researcher is to decide whose views will be sought as the basis for evaluating the program. In this study, it was decided that, because the target group for responsible gambling measures are the gamblers themselves, the views of club patrons would provide one appropriate set of data by which the program could be evaluated. Therefore, this

study aimed to assess the efficacy of the clubs' responsible gambling strategies from a patron perspective. The patron sample selected comprised members of 10 registered in clubs in Sydney, the capital city of the state of NSW Australia.

Thus, while this study suffers from limitations explained later in this report, it helps to address a gap in research and inform a more grounded approach to responsible conduct of gambling, one that is informed by the target group for responsible gambling measures.

1.2 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The specific aim of this study was to assess club members' awareness, perceived adequacy and perceived effectiveness of responsible gambling strategies in Sydney clubs. This aim can be expressed as the following two research objectives:

- to assess the perceived efficacy of current responsible gambling strategies in Sydney clubs by measuring the level of awareness of club patrons of their club's responsible gambling strategies (awareness), whether club members think their club's responsible gambling strategies are adequate in minimising harm and protecting consumers in gambling (perceived adequacy), and whether club members consider that their club's responsible gambling strategies have changed their gambling behaviour and in what ways (perceived effectiveness); and
- to assess the perceived efficacy of current responsible gambling strategies in Sydney clubs for different subsets of gamblers, including 'at-risk' and 'recreational' gamblers, men compared to women, different age groups and those who participate in different forms of club gambling (gaming machines, TAB, keno).

1.3 Significance of the Study

It is believed that the results of this study provide some of the first empirical evidence of the efficacy of some existing responsible gambling measures in minimising harm and protecting consumers in gambling, from the gamblers' perspective. Further, by comparing the viewpoints of 'non-problem', 'borderline problem' and 'problem' gamblers, the study will also provide the first empirical evidence of which responsible gambling measures are perceived to best target at-risk

gamblers and so inform a more grounded approach to responsible provision of gambling. Additionally, by identifying subsets of gamblers for whom current responsible gambling measures are perceived to be effective and those for whom these strategies appear ineffective, the study provides evidence of which responsible gambling measures appear most appropriate for males and females, for different age groups, and for people who engage in different types of gambling. In total, these findings can inform the development of improved strategies in harm minimisation and consumer protection in gambling, particularly those which target the most at-risk groups of gamblers.

1.4 Conclusion

This first section of this report has introduced the research study by providing some pertinent details about the policy context in which this research was conducted. It noted that, while responsible gambling measures have been legislated for and implemented in NSW registered clubs since 2000, there is little empirical evidence to support their effectiveness in minimising harm in gambling, a stated objective of Clubs NSW's ClubSafe program. This lack of evidence has prompted this study, which aims to evaluate the efficacy of these measures. However, this evaluation is limited in two main ways. First, it attempts to evaluate the clubs' program of responsible gambling measures only in terms of the effectiveness of its implementation in ways that club members are aware of and in terms of how it has changed these members' gambling behaviours. It does not attempt to evaluate the program in terms of the extent to which it has reduced problem gambling. Second, this evaluation draws only on the views of the target group for responsible gambling measures, in this case, members of registered clubs in Sydney. These limitations were encapsulated in the study's specific aims and objectives. The section concluded by identifying ways in which the findings of this study should add to knowledge and inform policy decisions. The next section of this report, Section Two, provides some further background on the research topic.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

2.1 Introduction

This section of the report provides some contextual background to the research topic. Because responsible gambling measures generally aim to address problem gambling through attempts to minimise harm in gambling, this concept is firstly discussed, along with some estimates of its prevalence in Australia. The concepts of responsible gambling and responsible conduct of gambling are illuminated, along with some challenges for effective implementation of responsible gambling programs. Later discussion focuses on the development and implementation of responsible gambling measures in NSW clubs. The section concludes by presenting theoretical and practical frameworks which have guided this investigation into the efficacy of these measures from a patron perspective

2.2 Problem Gambling

The provision of commercial gambling in Australia has developed into a major industry, providing certain benefits for individuals, organisations, communities and governments. However, gambling also creates social, health and welfare costs (Korn and Shaffer, 1999) due mainly to problem gambling. There have been difficulties with defining problem gambling and these differences in definition are important because they impact on measures that are implemented to address the problem. The Productivity Commission (1999b) included a range of definitions of problem gambling that variously emphasised either symptoms (e.g. loss of control, chasing debts) or effects (e.g. disruption and damage to personal, family or work life). One widely accepted definition is that adopted by the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority (VCGA). It states that problem gambling occurs ‘where a person’s gambling activity gives rise to harm to the individual player, and/or to his or her family, and may extend into the community’ (Australian Institute for Gambling Research, 1997).

As might be expected where definitional issues have existed, there are differing estimates of the extent of gambling problems within the Australian community. The most widely used estimates are those derived by the Productivity Commission (1999b). The Commission estimated that approximately 1 per cent of the adult Australian population (around 130,000 people) had ‘severe

problems' with gambling, while an additional 1.1 per cent (160,000) had 'moderate problems', making a pool of approximately 290,000 'problem gamblers' or 2.1 per cent of adult Australians (Productivity Commission, 1999b). The Commission also found that problem gamblers comprised 15 per cent of regular, non-lottery gamblers but accounted for approximately 30 per cent of gambling industry revenue, losing on average around \$12,000 per head, per year (Productivity Commission, 1999b). The Commission applied the Australian interpretation of the SOGS screening instrument and acknowledged that the resulting figures probably underestimate the extent of the problem (Productivity Commission, 1999b).

While the number of problem gamblers represents a very small minority of the population, problem gambling is considered by many to be a serious public health issue, a view supported by the Productivity Commission (1999b: 6.1, 16.1) in its findings that:

- problem gambling is generally not regarded as a mental illness for the bulk of the people who are affected by it, but some will need clinical assistance to resolve their problems;
- problem gambling is not only about people with severe problems or those needing counselling help. It is very important to see problem gambling as a continuum – with some people having moderate problems and others more severe ones;
- public policy is appropriately directed at those who need help to resolve their problems, those whose lives are adversely affected without needing clinical or counselling intervention, and those who are at risk of developing problems;
- problem gambling should be seen as a public health issue. The goal is not to eliminate all gambling problems, but to reduce risks in a cost effective manner.

Thus, problem gambling is now generally defined in terms of its social impacts. These impacts have been categorised as follows (Productivity Commission, 1999:7.3), reflecting their extension beyond the gambler to significant others and the wider community:

- Personal, including stress, depression and anxiety, suicide, poor health;
- Interpersonal, including neglect of family, relationship breakdown, domestic or other violence, impacts on others;
- Work and study, including job loss, absenteeism, poor performance;

- Financial, including financial hardship, debts, asset losses, bankruptcy, dealing with loan sharks;
- Legal, relating to domestic or other violence, theft, bankruptcy, dealing with loan sharks, imprisonment;
- Community services, including loads on charities and on the public purse.

Clearly, the consequences of problem gambling can be disastrous for the individual affected, as has been well documented elsewhere (e.g. Walker, 1992; Dickerson, 1993; Lesieur, 1996; Australian Institute for Gambling Research, 1997), but they also impact on family and friends and may also require certain public and other services to deal with their problems. For example, the Productivity Commission (1999b) found that, for each person experiencing gambling problems, at least five others in the community (family, friends and work colleagues) were likely to be affected, making the number of people affected by problem gambling at least 1,450,000 nationally. From a public health perspective, the costs associated with gambling problems include the more obvious, such as treatment programs, impaired work performance, family breakdown and gambling related crime. They also include the opportunity costs of the time and money spent gambling, by both 'problem' and 'non-problem' gamblers. These opportunity costs may include time not spent in family interaction or at social events or other leisure pursuits (Walker, 1998), and money not directed to household items, family needs or household savings (Livingstone, 1999).

It is the nature and extent to which a person's gambling activities give rise to harm in any or all of the above domains that define problem gambling. Clearly, this is contextually specific and essentially a value judgement (AIGR, 1997:107). Thus, in Australia, there is recognition that gambling activities may have negative social consequences even amongst people not diagnosed as 'pathological' or 'problem' gamblers. In fact, harmful impacts can arise from a single gambling session (AIGR, 1997:104).

In acknowledging the existence, extent and consequences of problem gambling, many Australian governments and gambling providers have implemented various measures to promote responsible gambling, a concept discussed below.

2.3 Responsible Gambling

Despite being widely used, the terms ‘responsible gambling’ and ‘responsible conduct of gambling’ are still poorly defined. Dickerson (1998) noted that they are generally used to refer to a collection of operator practices that aim to reduce harm. Such practices include those identified by the Productivity Commission (1999b), including information about the price and nature of gambling products, information about the risks of problem gambling, controls on advertising, controls on the availability of ATMs and credit, and self-exclusion options. The introduction of such practices in responsible gambling programs in Australia recognises that, as gambling is a legalised activity, with known risks, a duty of care accrues to legislators and providers to minimise harm to the public (Michaleas, 2000). Moreover, most experts in Australia have now rejected medical and addiction interpretations of problem gambling to redefine it as a social and public health issue. This has shifted responsibility for addressing problem gambling from individual gamblers, to gambling providers and regulators to enact structural changes for improved harm minimisation in gambling (Hing, 2000).

Harm minimisation aims to reduce the risk and severity of adverse consequences associated with using a product, without necessarily reducing that use *per se* (Plant, Single and Stockwell, 1997:3-4). The aim is not to achieve some ideal usage level, but to implement preventative measures that reduce the chances of adverse outcomes (Plant, Single and Stockwell, 1997:7). Further, *The National Drug Strategy* in Australia (Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy, 1998) popularised a public health vocabulary that is now being applied to other areas, including problem gambling. Three key approaches were emphasised - demand reduction, supply control, and harm minimisation. While aspects of each of these approaches can be seen in various mandatory and voluntary responses to problem gambling, most responsible gambling programs and codes of practice in Australia focus on harm minimisation.

In addition to harm minimisation, responsible gambling also has been interpreted to include informed consent, a key principle underpinning consumer protection. For example, Dickerson (1998) suggests that, by applying the principle of informed consent, responsible gambling needs to ensure that consumers are at least:

- informed about all the relevant processes involved in the form of gambling;

- making a genuine choice, with other options available to them; and
- not making the decision to gamble under conditions of strong emotion or personal crisis.

Responsible conduct of gambling also implies that gambling is provided in a socially responsible way, one which is responsive to community concerns and expectations. For example, Hing (2003) has noted that responsible provision of gambling may be interpreted as involving the provision of gambling in a manner that meets a community's economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic expectations at any given point in time. This interpretation draws on a seminal model of corporate social responsibility (Carroll, 1979; 1991) and helps to align responsible provision of gambling with more generic concepts in the corporate social responsibility literature.

These three principles – harm minimisation, informed consent and social responsibility – are commonly associated with responsible gambling and responsible provision of gambling, and generally underpin the responsible gambling codes of practice and programs developed in Australia.

2.4 Responsible Gambling Codes of Practice and Programs

Many jurisdictions, gambling industry sectors and gambling providers have introduced responsible gambling codes of conduct in recent years, typically operationalised through responsible gambling programs. A comprehensive audit of responsible gambling codes of practice and programs in Australia was conducted in early 2001 (Hing, Dickerson and Mackellar, 2001) for the Australian Gaming Council to inform the Council's development of a national framework for the responsible delivery and service of gaming. As well as identifying a range of mandatory measures in responsible gambling, the audit also identified and examined 30 voluntary responsible gambling codes operating in Australia at that time. The researchers found that a wide range of responsible gambling practices are promoted by these voluntary measures to extend upon the legislated measures in responsible gambling. However, given the diverse frameworks underpinning these voluntary initiatives, the practices they include and the ways they have been implemented vary significantly, with a wide variety of processes in place to facilitate their implementation. Further, the researchers found that no programs had mechanisms for independent monitoring of program implementation or for assessing compliance levels, while

only a small minority had processes for periodic review. Further, no programs had been evaluated in terms of their effectiveness in addressing problem gambling or in promoting responsible gambling. Despite the diversity of strategies found by the researchers, there were sufficient common themes amongst the codes examined to highlight the following deficiencies:

- definitions of key elements, such as responsible gaming, problem gambling or informed consent were rarely given or integrated into strategies;
- the codes failed to draw upon existing literature on harm minimisation as it relates to other leisure/pleasure products that impinge on public health, such as alcohol and cigarettes;
- the codes failed to develop strategies based on established principles or causal themes in the research literature such as the links between continuous forms of gambling, regularity of gambling and those players ‘at risk’;
- although almost all jurisdictions in Australia are attempting to develop harm minimisation strategies, there has been no research collaboration even though the very different prevalence levels of problem gambling across states provide a natural ‘experiment’;
- with very few exceptions, there has been no independent evaluation of strategies;
- the existing range of strategies, perhaps with the exception of some self-exclusion procedures, avoid targeting those most at risk and avoid the use of advertising of a similar power and sophistication to that employed in marketing the gambling products themselves.

In addition to the extremely difficult challenges of identifying measures that are effective in addressing problem gambling and in promoting responsible gambling, responsible gambling codes of practice also face the challenge of being embraced and effectively implemented, particularly where such codes are voluntary and self-governing. In comparing existing responsible gambling codes with codes developed for other industries, Doherty (1999) suggested that, to be effective, responsible gambling codes require the following types of support to optimise their implementation and compliance rates:

- Explicit industry commitment - with clear objectives, expectations and ground rules;
- Involvement of front-line staff - with appropriate, regular training given to the gambling sector’s highly casualised workforce;

- A sound institutional base for developing and implementing the code - including enforcement and compliance;
- Clear and relevant incentives for voluntary compliance - and clear negative consequences for failure to comply;
- Community confidence - gained through open processes in development and implementation, and transparency in operation;
- Regular flow of information - about how the code is working and the response to it;
- Extensive publicity - both for the code and for its complaints measures; and
- Regular reviews - to ensure the code is meeting community expectations.

A lack of mechanisms for reporting, evaluation and compliance was noted in the responsible gambling codes in existence at the time of Doherty's research (1999). This view was supported by the findings of the Productivity Commission (1999b) and of Hing, Dickerson and Mackellar (2001) in the aforementioned audit. Given this deficiency, it is instructive to assess the efficacy of responsible gambling measures in NSW clubs. To contextualise this assessment, some background on the development and implementation of these measures is provided below.

2.5 Development of Responsible Gambling Measures in NSW Clubs

The genesis of the now mandatory responsible gambling measures in NSW clubs lies in the passage of the *Liquor and Registered Clubs Amendment (Community Partnership) Act 1998 NSW*. This obligated the Registered Clubs Association of NSW (RCA), now renamed as Clubs NSW, to develop and publish by 31 May 1998 'an appropriately funded policy that is capable of enforcement for minimising harm caused to the public interest and to individuals and families by gambling in registered clubs'. This obligation arose as part of negotiations between the RCA and the NSW Government to reduce taxation rates on club gaming machines, to formalise community and charitable contributions made by clubs, to provide mechanisms for expanded machine gaming in NSW hotels, and to allow the NSW TAB Ltd to operate statewide linked machines in NSW clubs and hotels. This section documents the evolution of the role of the RCA/Clubs NSW in developing and implementing responsible gambling measures in NSW clubs.

2.5.1 The RCA's Trial Responsible Gambling Program

While the *Liquor and Registered Clubs Amendment (Community Partnership) Act 1998 NSW* shifted the clubs' social responsibilities in gambling into the legal arena for the first time, it stopped short of specifying the exact nature of that response, relying on the RCA's preferred approach of industry self-regulation. Thus, the RCA had considerable latitude at that time to determine the nature of its responsible gambling strategies and how they were to be implemented, monitored and enforced. The RCA commissioned the Australian Institute for Gambling Research (AIGR) to assist in meeting the requirements of the Act. Subject to the approval of the RCA, the AIGR subsequently developed, monitored and evaluated a responsible gambling policy (RCA, 1998) and trial program in accordance with the requirements and limitations of the self-regulated approach advocated by the RCA.

The RCA's trial responsible gambling program incorporated an independent, published evaluation by the AIGR (1998a). Its purpose was to evaluate the program's implementation by measuring the extent to which the participating clubs had implemented the program strategies. It did not attempt to measure the effectiveness of the strategies adopted (AIGR 1998a:30-31). However, results of the trial program in the nineteen participating NSW clubs revealed that a fundamental weakness was program compliance (AIGR, 1998a). That is, the trial clubs demonstrated varying levels of commitment, even though they participated in the program voluntarily. It revealed a tendency to select the most minimal options and the inherent weaknesses of a self-regulatory approach (AIGR, 1998a). Nevertheless, in many respects, the trial program did surpass other responsible gambling programs previously developed for clubs in Australia. It also provided a comprehensive platform for proceeding to an improved statewide responsible gambling program for NSW clubs in 1999.

Following its evaluation of the trial program results, the AIGR (1998a) made numerous recommendations to the RCA on the future direction for responsible gambling in NSW clubs. It applied considerable pressure on the RCA to significantly refine its trial responsible gambling program before statewide implementation, to ensure it was publicly accountable for the program's success, and to secure adequate compliance from member clubs. Further, in promoting a more independently enforceable approach to responsible management of gambling, the AIGR publicly challenged the RCA to overcome the limitations of the self-regulatory

approach the latter had requested (AIGR, 1988b). In the AIGR's view, this approach was clearly inadequate to achieve consistent and acceptable levels of program compliance.

2.5.2 The NSW Gaming Inquiry

By the end of 1998, another the key influence on the future direction of responsible gambling in NSW had emerged as the recommendations of the *NSW Gaming Inquiry* (IPART, 1998). These recommendations added further pressure on the RCA to expedite and strengthen its statewide responsible gambling program for NSW clubs beyond its initiatives in the trial program.

IPART's report on the *NSW Gaming Inquiry* (1998) was instrumental in consolidating and articulating increased pressure for gambling policy reform in NSW, at both government and industry levels. Importantly, it provided an official forum for community views on gambling policy and management. The IPART report (1998) accorded considerable weight to a community perspective on gambling, in contrast to those of government and industry whose influence had historically dominated gambling policy debates and decisions. In this way, the IPART report (1998) reduced the power of government and industry to set gambling policy in isolation, and elevated issues such as public interest, harm minimisation, consumer protection, fair trading and community benefits in gambling to unprecedented heights. Thus, the inquiry articulated pressure on the NSW Government and gambling operators to temper the priority given to financial considerations in gambling policy, to embrace additional public interest and social benefit principles.

The inclusive and consultative approach adopted by IPART (1998) meant that the latitude of gambling industries and operators to decide the mechanisms for addressing problem gambling was considerably diminished. While acknowledging that some sectors and operators had implemented some responsible gambling strategies, IPART was sceptical of the self-regulatory approaches then adopted. Although noting that industry codes of practice 'provide a good starting point for more responsible gaming' (1998:44), IPART considered that core minimum standards should be legislated, 'as voluntary codes have no enforcement or sanction mechanisms' (1998:45). It contended that codes can encourage standards that exceed legislative requirements and can help communicate the concept of responsible gambling to staff and customers, but they are not an adequate replacement for legislation (1998:44). It recommended

developing an industry-wide code of conduct to establish legislated minimum standards to foster responsible gambling, with each sector also required to incorporate measures specific to its gambling activities (1998:44). It called upon the NSW Government to evaluate ‘which minimum components of a responsible gaming strategy should be mandatory and legislated and which components are best left to industry wide codes of conduct’ (1998:45).

2.5.3 Development of the RCA’s Statewide Responsible Gambling Program by Mid-1999

By March 1999, the RCA had committed up to \$500,000 to develop a statewide program and accompanying support material (*Club Life*, March 1999, p. 6). To attain the statewide program objectives of ‘achievement of awareness of issues, an understanding of specific program strategies and access to resources and support’ (*Club Life*, March 1999, p. 6), the RCA announced at its program launch in March 1999 the following elements to be implemented over the forthcoming 18 months:

- A responsible gambling code of practice;
- An advertising code of practice;
- A responsible gaming management manual for clubs;
- A training course and training manual;
- An application of compliance, accountability and effectiveness measures.

Club Life, March 1999, p. 6; RCA, 1999a; RCA, 1999b).

Thus, it appears that both the AIGR’s evaluation report on the RCA’s trial program (1998a) and the IPART report (1998) had placed considerable pressure on the RCA to expedite its implementation of a statewide program, to extend the incorporated strategies beyond those in the trial, and to consider the limitations of a self-regulatory approach and ways to enhance program compliance. By early 1999, the RCA was facing unprecedented pressure to demonstrate proactive leadership to NSW clubs in responsible gambling. However, contrary to the recommendations of IPART (1998) for mandatory legislated minimum standards in responsible gambling, and ignoring the compliance weaknesses exposed by the AIGR (1998a) in the trial, the RCA was still pursuing a self-regulatory model. However, significant policy developments later

in 1999 subsequently diminished the self-regulatory capacity of the RCA. The first of these was the Productivity Commission inquiry, completed in 1999.

2.5.4 The Productivity Commission Inquiry

The first independent national inquiry into Australia's gambling industries was conducted by the Productivity Commission in 1998-99 and investigated their economic and social impacts and the effects of different regulatory structures surrounding these industries (Productivity Commission, 1999b). The inquiry was significant, being the first national and independently conducted inquiry into gambling in Australia. Its inclusive and consultative approach further gave the community a voice on gambling matters, allowing the Commission to articulate broad-ranging and inclusive views on problem gambling and its social costs, social responsibility in gambling and other policy areas. Further, the Commission conducted its own survey research into gambling in Australia, presenting the first national data on gambling preferences, spending, attitudes and impacts, and the prevalence, nature and treatment of problem gambling.

Key findings of the Productivity Commission (1999b:2-4) with particular implications for the direction taken by NSW registered clubs in responsible gambling included the following:

- The principal rationales for regulating gambling industries any differently to other industries relate to promoting consumer protection, minimising the potential for criminal and unethical activity, and reducing the risks and costs of problem gambling;
- around 290,000 Australians (2.1 percent of the adult population) are estimated to have significant gambling problems, with 130,000 experiencing severe problems;
- problem gamblers comprise 15 percent of regular non-lottery gamblers, lose on average around \$12,000 per year compared to just under \$650 for other gamblers, and account for about \$3.5 billion in expenditure annually, representing about one-third of the gambling industries' market;
- the prevalence of problem gambling is related to the degree of accessibility of gambling, particularly gaming machines;
- the costs of problem gambling include financial and emotional impacts on gamblers and on

others, with at least five people affected for every problem gambler;

- 70 percent of Australians surveyed believe that gambling does more harm than good;
- 92 percent of Australians surveyed did not want further expansion of gaming machines;
- policy approaches for the gambling industries need to be directed at reducing the costs of problem gambling through harm minimisation and prevention measures, while retaining as much of the benefit to recreational gamblers as possible;
- venue caps on gaming machine numbers can help moderate accessibility and therefore problem gambling. However, more targeted consumer protection measures, if implemented, have the potential to be more effective, with less inconvenience to recreational gamblers;
- existing arrangements are inadequate to ensure the informed consent of consumers, or to ameliorate the risks of problem gambling. There are particular deficiencies in:
 - information about the price and nature of gambling products, especially gaming machines;
 - information about the risks of problem gambling;
 - controls on advertising (which can be inherently misleading);
 - availability of ATMs and credit; and
 - pre-commitment options, including self-exclusion arrangements.
- in such areas, self-regulatory approaches are unlikely to be as effective as explicit regulatory requirements.

Thus, while the Productivity Commission acknowledged that gambling is an entertaining and popular pastime in Australia (1999b:2), it drew attention to the social costs associated with the rapid expansion of gambling in recent years (McMillen, 1999). Further, it emphasised three issues of particular relevance to the RCA at that time:

- problem gambling is disproportionately associated with gaming machines, thereby focusing attention on NSW clubs as their major providers;
- problem gambling is a public health issue relevant to the whole community, such that a dual approach to social policy on problem gambling was needed focusing on treatment and prevention through harm minimisation and consumer protection measures;

- regulatory measures were likely to be far superior to self-regulatory measures in responsible provision of gambling.

Thus, the Productivity Commission's findings (1999b) were politically damaging for NSW clubs. While the report can be considered an objective rational analysis of Australian gambling industries, associated media reports seized upon selected findings to portray gambling operators as unscrupulously preying on gambling addicts, while returning little to the community by way of tangible benefits. This criticism was particularly acute for NSW clubs in their position as the major providers of machine gambling in Australia. They were generally depicted as abusing their social benefit role by spending much of their tax-subsidised profits from problem gamblers on lavish club facilities. This placed further pressure on the RCA to hasten its development and implementation of a statewide responsible gambling program. It also expedited a response from the NSW Government to the recommendations of the *NSW Gaming Inquiry* (IPART, 1998) for a legislated framework for responsible gambling.

Further, a significant stance taken by the Productivity Commission was its unqualified rejection of a medical or psychological interpretation of problem gambling for one that clarified its status as a public health issue (1999b:6.1, 16.1). The Commission devoted considerable attention to the need for harm minimisation and consumer protection measures by industry and government. Numerous possible harm minimisation and consumer protection measures were presented (Productivity Commission, 1999b: Chapter Sixteen) to consolidate the diverse viewpoints expressed in submissions to the inquiry. In summary, the Commission contended that there were grounds for the following measures:

- Better disclosure of the price of playing gaming machines and the likelihood of receiving high paying winning combinations;
- Providing relevant consumer information about the nature of games, such as the fact that machine wins and losses are independent of past results;
- Providing consumers with records of their spending where technology allows;
- A legislatively-based code of conduct that ensures appropriate standards of advertising, promotion and marketing of gambling;
- Restrictions on multiple withdrawals and withdrawal amounts from ATMs in gambling

venues, and potentially an outright ban;

- Mandatory rather than voluntary codes of conduct for responsible provision of gambling;
- A simple, well-publicised self-exclusion procedure in all gambling venues;
- Investigating possible changes to the design of gaming machines to reduce their hazards for problem gambling, without overtly affecting recreational gamblers;
- Regulations intending to reduce the harm from gambling should be trialled, take a risk management approach, and collect evidence on their effectiveness. The goal is not eliminate all gambling problems, but to reduce risks in a cost effective manner.

(Productivity Commission, 1999b:16.1).

Thus, the Productivity Commission's findings (1999b) added fuel to calls for more proactive responsible gambling measures at the venue level, shifting the onus of responsibility onto gambling operators, and onto governments to regulate for these measures. Given their dominant role in machine gambling operations, the Commission's findings (1999b) placed NSW clubs in an untenable position, prompting member clubs to rely even further on the RCA for direction in responsible management of gambling.

However, by mid-1999, the self-regulatory and comparatively passive approach incorporated in the RCA's trial responsible gambling program appeared increasingly inadequate for an effective statewide program. Further, while the RCA had acknowledged that a more proactive set of strategies was needed than those in the trial program and while it appeared to be developing a more comprehensive statewide program by mid-1999, it continued to pursue a self-regulatory response. This was despite the high degree of convergence amongst the AIGR recommendations (1998a), the IPART report (1998) and the Productivity Commission's findings (1999b) which had seriously eroded confidence in potential compliance with responsible gambling measures in the absence of effective sanctions. It was in this context that the NSW Government initiated responsible gambling legislation in mid-1999.

2.5.5 The Gambling Legislation Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Act 1999 NSW

A significant development in 1999 for the direction taken by the RCA for responsible conduct of gambling in NSW clubs was the lead up to and passage of the *Gambling Legislation Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Act 1999 NSW*. The Act and its accompanying regulations established in a legislative framework specific obligations of gambling operators in responsible management of gambling.

The Act was the culmination of numerous pressures on the NSW Government. The stated catalyst was the need to respond to the IPART recommendations (1998), along with recognition of ‘the community’s concern to foster responsible gaming’ and a public commitment made before the March 1999 state election (NSW Minister for Gaming and Racing, 1999). The Productivity Commission’s draft report on Australia’s gambling industries (1999a) also was instrumental in expediting the move towards a legislative framework, with the Exposure Draft of the *Gambling Legislation Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Bill 1999 NSW* released immediately before the Productivity Commission’s draft report (1999a). This allowed the NSW Government to deflect some of the public outcry that accompanied the latter by arguing that the Commission’s calls for harm minimisation measures and enhanced regulatory arrangements in gambling ‘confirmed’ the approach proposed in the Bill (*NSW Legislative Assembly Parliamentary Debates*, 15 September 1999, p. 4-5). In addition, the Exposure Draft was informed by results of the RCA’s trial responsible gambling program in NSW clubs and recommendations made by the AIGR (1998a) for a refined statewide program. It aimed to remedy the shortcomings of a self-regulatory and fragmented approach to responsible gambling demonstrated by the trial program.

While gambling by minors and the provision of credit for gambling had been prohibited by earlier legislation, the *Gambling Legislation Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Act 1999 NSW* enabled additional responsible gambling reforms. The Act’s express purpose was ‘to amend certain Acts to minimise the harm associated with the misuse and abuse of gambling activities (and) to promote the responsible conduct of gambling activities’. The Act amended the legislation governing the provision of all forms of gambling in NSW. These comprised the *Casino Control Act 1992 NSW*, the *Liquor Act 1982 NSW*, the *Lotteries and Art Unions Act 1901*

NSW, the *Public Lotteries Act 1996 NSW*, the *Racing Administration Act 1998 NSW*, the *Registered Clubs Act 1976 NSW* and the *Totalizator Act 1997 NSW*.

The Gambling Legislation Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Act 1999 NSW authorised Regulations to be made to:

- make irresponsible conduct of gambling a specific ground of complaint against a gambling provider;
- control gambling-related advertising;
- order an offending gambling operator to include ‘corrective’ or other responsible gambling-related statements in advertisements and/or undertake appropriate responsible service of gambling training;
- control the offering of inducements that may encourage irresponsible gambling;
- require placement in venues of signage displaying the telephone number and availability of a counselling service for problem gambling;
- make provision for appropriate personnel to undertake responsible service of gambling training;
- require gambling providers to make available or display player information in relation to gambling activities conducted;
- provide for gambling activities to be conducted in accordance with any relevant prescribed, industry code of practice;
- remove EFTPOS and ATM facilities from gambling areas, subject to reasonable exceptions;
- direct particular providers to put in place policies and procedures, or take other such actions, which may be expected to minimise the adverse effects of problem gambling;
- remove legal impediments to the development and implementation of patron self-exclusion measures.

The legislation and ensuing regulations (see Section 2.5.7) considerably reduced the RCA’s capacity to self-regulate the club industry in responsible gambling. They introduced a co-regulatory approach consisting of a legislated framework for minimum requirements, while

allowing a certain degree of industry flexibility, as recommended by both IPART (1998) and the Productivity Commission (1999b). The *Gambling Legislation Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Act 1999 NSW* substantially increased obligations on the RCA (and other gambling operators) to adhere to a code of practice that met ministerial approval and which has been subjected to public scrutiny. Thus, the code of practice and responsible gambling program developed by the RCA for statewide implementation were required to meet regulated minimum standards, with self-regulation only applying to measures transcending these.

Following enactment of the *Gambling Legislation Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Act 1999 NSW*, the RCA signalled its willingness to take a leadership role in implementing the impending regulations in NSW clubs (*Club Life*, October 1999, p. 5). Instead of viewing the legislation as a replacement for its prior efforts, the RCA appeared to pragmatically acknowledge them as a platform for a more comprehensive program than would likely have been adopted under self-regulation. Further, the legislation helped to overcome the compliance difficulties encountered during the RCA's trial program. By the end of 1999, the RCA was continuing to review and refine its code of practice, advertising code, training program and resource manual to ensure they complied with the legislation.

In summary, the *Gambling Legislation Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Act 1999 NSW* had considerable implications for the RCA in developing its statewide responsible gambling program. Most significantly, it removed the RCA's former freedom to self-regulate the NSW club industry in responsible gambling, instead imposing minimum standards to be adhered to. However, the RCA acknowledged that it could still play a substantial role in implementing these standards through providing guidance, support and resources to clubs. Further, the legislation provided the opportunity for the RCA to develop a code of practice and statewide program that transcended the requirements of the ensuing regulations.

2.5.6 The Registered Clubs Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Regulation 2000 NSW

On 14 April 2000, the *Registered Clubs Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Regulation 2000 NSW* took effect, making explicit regulations for NSW clubs in responsible conduct of gambling. While details of these regulations are presented in Table 2.1, in summary the regulations require NSW clubs to:

- provide information to patrons on counselling services, the use and operation of gaming machines, the chances of winning and the problems caused from excessive gambling;
- limit the cashing of cheques;
- place limitations on the payment of prizes by cash;
- locate cash dispensing facilities away from poker machine areas;
- place limitations on gambling-related advertising;
- prohibit the offering of inducements to gamble;
- require the secretary and certain employees to undertake an approved training course in the responsible conduct of gambling;
- advise the minimum requirement for self-exclusion schemes;
- make other miscellaneous controls.

Table 2.1 Key Provisions of the Registered Clubs Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Regulation 2000 NSW

Consumer Information

- Mandatory notices and player information brochures to warn people of the dangers of gambling and where help may be obtained comprise:
- a counselling notice displayed at the main entrance to the club,
- a chance of winning notice on the front of each gaming machine,
- a dangers of gambling notice on each gaming machine,
- a problem gambling notice on each gaming machine,
- approved player information brochures displayed in the gaming areas
- approved player information brochures in community languages available on request,
- a problem gambling notice on each ATM.

Gambling Advertising

(these regulations have now been superceded, with external advertising of gaming machines prohibited.)

All written gambling advertising must contain a problem gambling notice and a club must not publish any gambling advertising that:

- encourages a breach of the law,
- depicts children,
- is false, misleading or deceptive,
- suggests that winning a prize is a likely outcome of participating in gambling activities,
- suggests that participation in gambling activities is likely to improve a person's social standing or financial prospects,
- suggests that a player's skill can influence the outcome of a game that is purely a game of chance,
- depicts or promotes the consumption of alcohol while engaging in gambling activities,
- is not conducted in accordance with decency, dignity and good taste and in accordance with the Commercial Television Code of Practice as in force at the time the advertisement is published.

Inducements and Promotions

A club must not:

- offer or supply any free or discounted liquor as an inducement to participate, or participate frequently, in any gambling activity.
- offer free credits by means of letterbox flyers, shopper docketts or any other means to players, or as an inducement to become players, of gaming machines.

Cashing of Cheques

A club with gaming machines must not:

- exchange a cheque payable to any person other than the club for cash (i.e. a third party cheque),
- exchange a cheque for more than \$200 for cash,
- exchange more than one cheque for the same person on a single day for cash,
- exchange a cheque for cash if a cheque previously tendered by the person has been dishonoured, unless the person has since paid the outstanding amount.
- A club must also bank a cheque exchanged for cash within 2 working days after the cheque is accepted.

Extension of Credit for Gambling

- A responsible person for the club must not extend, or offer to extend, a cash advance or any other form of credit to another person for the purpose of enabling the other person to gamble at the club.
- A responsible person for a club must not describe or misrepresent any cash advance extended to another person by means of a credit facility, who intends to gamble, to be a payment for goods or services lawfully provided on the premises.

Payment of Prizes

- A club must pay by crossed cheque any prize money over \$1,000 won on a gaming machine. The cheque must be made payable to the person who has won the prize.

Publicity for Prize Winners

- A club or employee of a club must not publish anything which identifies any person who wins a prize of more than \$1,000 from playing a gaming machine, if the player requests in writing that his or her identity not be published.

Location of Cash Dispensing Facilities

- A club must not allow an automatic teller machine (ATM) or EFTPOS terminal to be installed or located where gaming machines are located.

Self-Exclusion Schemes

A self-exclusion scheme is not compulsory for venues with gaming machines. However, the Acts provide statutory indemnity against liability if venues implement a scheme in accordance with the regulations. Minimum requirements for the conduct of a scheme by a club are that the scheme must make provision for:

- preventing the club from refusing a participant's request,
- the participant be required to give a written and signed undertaking that he or she will not gamble at the club for the period specified in the undertaking,
- the participant to be given an opportunity to seek independent legal or other professional advice at his or her own expense as to the meaning and effect of the undertaking before it is given,
- a participant who enters an undertaking is to be provided by the club with information about the availability of gambling-related counselling and treatment services,
- the club to ensure that responsible persons for the club can readily identify the participant, whether by means of access to a recent photograph of the participant or otherwise,
- the club to publicise the availability of the scheme and information as to how it operates to patrons of licensed premises,
- preventing a participant from withdrawing from the scheme within 3 months after requesting participation in the scheme.

Minors

Legislation prohibits persons under the age of 18 years from being involved in gambling activities. Minors are permitted to enter clubs only in certain circumstances. A club is guilty of an offence if:

- a minor enters a bar or poker machine area,
- the minor is not forthwith removed from the bar or poker machine area.
- Training in Responsible Gambling

The regulations require that all secretaries of clubs with gaming machines and employees of clubs whose duties are concerned with the conduct of gaming machine activities to complete the approved responsible conduct of gambling course.

2.6 Implementation of Responsible Gambling Measures in NSW Clubs

Although compliance with certain responsible gambling measures became mandatory under the Gambling Legislation Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Act 1999 NSW and the Registered Clubs Amendment (Responsible Gambling) Regulation 2000 NSW, the RCA (now Clubs NSW) has still assumed a significant role in maximising legal compliance by developing a cultural acceptance of the importance of responsible conduct of gambling, by educating its members about the legislative requirements, and by providing appropriate resource materials, training and support.

Clubs NSW has developed its *Responsible Conduct of Gambling Code of Conduct Best Practice Guidelines* (Casino Community Benefit Fund, 2000) covering the areas of legal compliance, meeting community expectations, complaint resolution processes, responsible advertising, financial transactions, player privacy, the gambling environment, staff training, self-exclusion, patron information, and community liaison. A responsible conduct of gambling course (ClubSafe) has been developed in conjunction with the AHA (NSW), the NSW Department of Gaming and Racing, TAFE, Club Management Development Association, and the Wesley Gambling Counselling Service to assist club management and staff meet the requirements of the regulations. The *ClubSafe Responsible Conduct of Gambling Participants Manual* (Casino Community Benefit Fund, 2000) includes certain documentation to support responsible gambling practices. These include the Request for Self-Exclusion Form, Self-Exclusion Procedure, Self-Exclusion Scheme Checklist, Gambler Assistance Request Form, Third Party Assistance Request Form and the Best Practice Guidelines.

A separate program involving some NSW clubs is BetSafe, a voluntary coalition initially formed by 11 NSW clubs in consultation with Paul Symond Consultancy, and currently with 41 member clubs which each pay a membership fee. Key program elements include staff training, a 24-hour counselling service, crisis intervention, staff counselling, assistance in developing club responsible gambling policies, self-exclusion programs, resources including a policy manual, newsletter, signs and brochures, and other related information and support for member clubs. BetSafe reports that membership is conditional on complying with the agreed policies and that clubs are monitored for performance to standards. It also notes that Synaval, a Victorian market

research company, has undertaken two independent evaluations of the program (<http://www.betsafe.com.au>).

2.7 Evaluating Responsible Gambling Measures in NSW Clubs: A Theoretical Framework

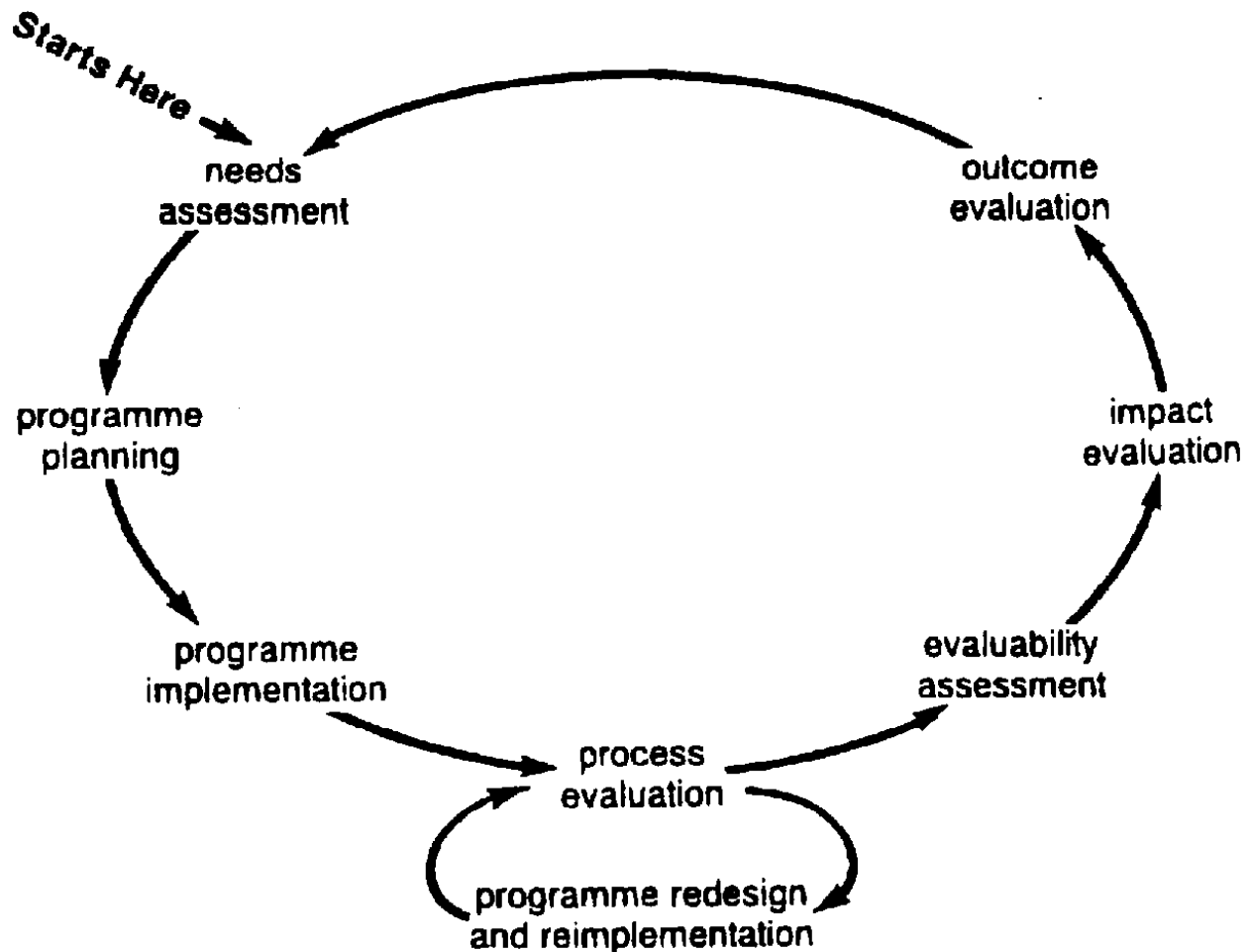
To guide this investigation into the perceived efficacy of responsible gambling strategies in NSW clubs, the public health literature on program evaluation was reviewed to locate an appropriate theoretical framework. Many such frameworks view the planning and evaluation of public health programs as a cyclic activity with ongoing reviews enabling continuous improvement of that program.

The framework used to guide this investigation is shown in Figure 2.1. It identifies eight stages in planning and evaluating a health program, from needs assessment through to outcome evaluation, with that last stage then providing a feedback loop into the first.

Each of the stages depicted in Figure 2.1 is explained briefly below to illuminate where the current research project fits into this planning and evaluation cycle.

- **Needs assessment.** Needs assessments are conducted to gain a comprehensive picture of the health problems, or a particular health problem, in a community. As such, they should guide choices and decisions about the types of health interventions to be planned and implemented. Ideally, these choices and decisions are guided by extensive consultation with relevant stakeholders and wide canvassing of data sources and opinions. The aim is to specify the magnitude of the problem and details of the target group(s) experiencing the problem, and to collect additional data about factors that contribute to the health problem that may become the focus of subsequent intervention.

Figure 2.1: A Planning and Evaluation Cycle for Public Health Programs



Source: Hawe, Degeling and Hall, (1990:78).

- Program planning.** Program planning aims to devise a health program, within the resources available, that is appropriate to the health problem and the identified target group(s) and which will have the best chance of bringing about the desired change. Ideally, it involves specifying the program goals (desired change in the health problem, e.g. a reduction in problem gambling in the community), the program objectives (desired change in the target group or groups, e.g. for more individuals to gamble more responsibly), the program's sub-objectives (desired change in factors that are contributing to risk factors associated with the health problem, e.g. to minimise the likelihood of people losing track of time while gambling), and the program's strategy objectives (what the program will provide and deliver,

e.g. provision of training and support materials for all gambling venues and managers). These goals, objectives, sub-objectives and strategy objectives should be the standards against which the program is later evaluated.

- **Program implementation.** This step involves implementing all the activities of the program. Typical activities comprise advertising the program, distributing program materials, training program participants, and providing administrative support to optimise the likelihood that the activities of the program are implemented.
- **Process evaluation.** Process evaluation aims to measure the activities of the program, the program quality and who it is reaching. It should logically precede impact and outcome evaluation because, unless a program is getting to the right people, is being implemented in the right way and participants are satisfied with it, then the program is unlikely to have the desired impacts and outcomes. Process evaluation measures the success of the program in achieving its strategy objectives, that is, its success in providing and delivering what was planned. The main questions to be addressed in process evaluation are: 1) is the program and all its components reaching the target group(s)?; 2) are participants satisfied with the program?; 3) are all activities of the program being implemented?; and 4) are all the materials and components of the program of good quality?
- **Program redesign and reimplementation.** Information gathered from the process evaluation is used in this stage to redesign the program to address any identified deficiencies, with the adjusted program then implemented. These adjustments are then evaluated in a continuation of process evaluation until the program reaches an optimum and stable form.
- **Evaluability assessment.** This is the process of ensuring that the program is in such a state that its impacts and outcomes can be evaluated meaningfully and usefully. Otherwise, there is a risk of designing an impact or outcome evaluation that collects inappropriate information or that is conducted prematurely, before the program is likely to work. For a program to be able to be adequately evaluated, there must be 1) a clearly defined fit between program activities and program goals; 2) proper implementation of the program; 3) agreement on what evaluation questions should be addressed; and 4) agreement on how the evaluation should be conducted and what should be measured.

- **Impact evaluation.** Impact evaluation focuses on assessing the immediate effects of the program and usually corresponds with measuring whether the program is meeting its objectives. Thus, it assesses whether the program has brought about the desired change in the behaviour of the target group or groups and whether it has achieved the desired reduction of contributing risk factors associated with the health problem.
- **Outcome evaluation.** Outcome evaluation focuses on measuring the longer-term effects of the program and usually corresponds with evaluating the success of the program in meeting its goals relating to a desired change in the health problem (e.g. a reduction in problem gambling in the community).

(Hawe, Degeling and Hall, 1990).

In summary, the planning and evaluation cycle involves three types of evaluation – process, impact and outcome – that, in sequence, test the causal chain of events postulated by the health program under examination (Hawe, Degeling and Hall, 1990:103). This sequence of events is that implementing the program (achieving its strategy objectives) will reduce the risk factors associated with the health problem to achieve the desired behavioural change in the target group (achieving its program objectives), which will ultimately bring about a reduction in the health problem (achieving its program goal).

The current research focuses on only one of these types of evaluation – impact evaluation. By assessing club members' opinions on the responsible gambling measures in NSW clubs, the research provides a patron perspective on the impacts of the program in changing in their knowledge (awareness), attitudes (perceptions of adequacy) and behaviour (perceptions of effectiveness) so as to achieve the desired reduction of contributing risk factors and the desired behavioural change.

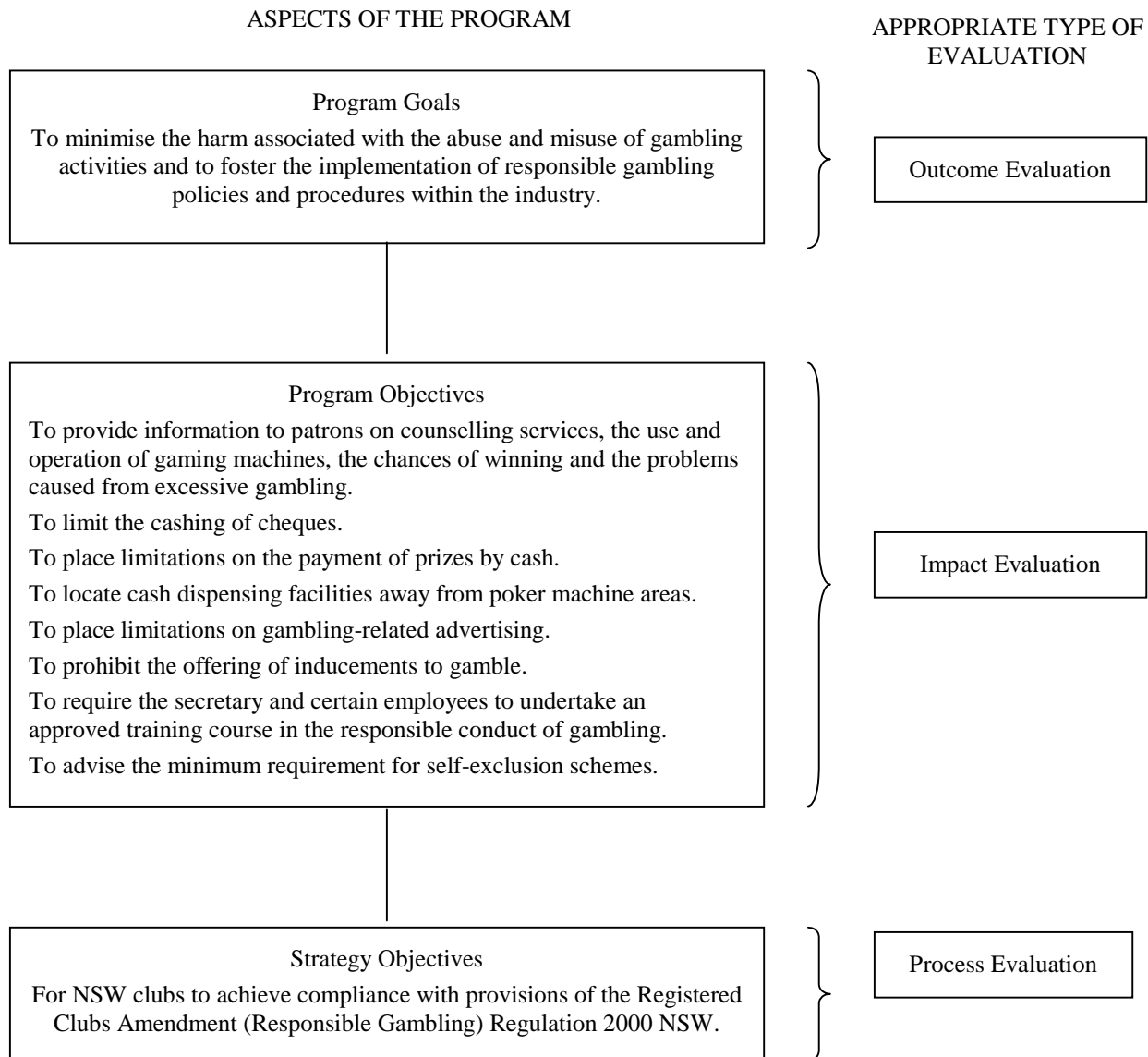
Having shown where the current study fits into a theoretical framework of public health program planning and evaluation, the framework's practical application to the mandated responsible gambling measures in NSW clubs is considered next.

2.8 Evaluating Responsible Gambling Measures in NSW Clubs: A Practical Framework

At the time of this research, the program under investigation - the package of responsible gambling measures that NSW clubs have been required to implement - had proceeded through the first three stages of the cycle shown in Figure 2.1 – needs assessment, program planning and program implementation. As such, evaluation of the program is a next logical step. Thus, it is instructive to consider the types of evaluation to which the program may be subjected in order to delineate more clearly the type of evaluation undertaken in this study.

Figure 2.2 depicts the three types of evaluation which may be conducted for the program and how they relate to its goals, objectives and strategy objectives. However, it should be noted that the program does not make all of these explicit, and so the researchers have drawn on various statements and desired outcomes identified in the relevant legislation and the *ClubSafe Responsible Conduct of Gambling Participants Manual* (Casino Community Benefit Fund, 2000) to compile Figure 2.2. As noted earlier, this current research project focuses only on Stage Seven of the Planning and Evaluation Cycle (Figure 2.1) - impact evaluation - to evaluate the Code's success in achieving its program objectives from the perspective of club patrons (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2 A Framework for Evaluating Responsible Gambling Measures in NSW Clubs



Source: adapted from Hawe, Degeling and Hall, (1990: 56-57).

2.9 Conclusion

This section has contextualised this study by providing some background on key concepts underpinning responsible gambling measures in NSW clubs and by documenting the development and implementation of these measures. Drawing on a model of health program planning and evaluation, this section also presented theoretical and practical frameworks used to guide this research. The next section, Section Three, explains the methodology used to conduct the empirical research for this study.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Having provided some contextual background on the research topic, this section of the report narrows the focus of discussion to the methodology used for this study. It details, in turn, the data collection methods used, the sample of clubs and club patrons involved, the survey instrument utilised, protocols adopted for administering the survey, response rates attained, and the analytical techniques used.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

To collect the necessary data from sufficient numbers of club members to allow rigorous data analysis, a survey questionnaire was deemed the most appropriate instrument. When the study was originally designed in mid-2001 and funding granted from the Casino Community Benefit Fund, the proposed data collection method was via a telephone survey to be conducted by a market research company. However, privacy legislation introduced in late 2001 meant that a telephone survey could no longer be used, as it required that the club members' contact details be given by the clubs to a third party.

Thus, in consultation with the Casino Community Benefit Fund Trustees, the researchers decided to conduct the survey by mail, with the clubs affixing the mailing labels to the survey questionnaire packages provided by the researchers, in order to adhere to privacy requirements. The researchers gained the cooperation of ten clubs to participate in the mail questionnaire survey. Their role was to forward the survey questionnaire packages provided to 1,500 of their members. The researchers then packaged up the 15,000 survey questionnaires (10 clubs x 1,500 members), cover letters and reply-paid envelopes and sent them to these ten clubs for them to affix mailing labels and mail them out, as they had agreed to do. Four clubs proceeded with the mail-out in November 2002. However, the other six clubs subsequently decided not to proceed with the mailout. Reasons given were that some of these clubs had had a change of general manager or gaming manager, some were too busy, or because more pressing matters had arisen (e.g. one club had a major computer systems failure). However, these clubs agreed that the researchers could survey patrons on-site at their clubs instead.

The researchers then proceeded to use on-site surveying methods to collect the remaining data, because it would have been very time-consuming to gain the cooperation of another six clubs to participate in a mailout, and expensive as the surveys would have had to be repackaged with new cover letters, as these were specific to each club involved. The researchers gained permission from the Casino Community Benefit Fund Trustees and the Southern Cross University Human Research Ethics Committee for this change in protocol.

3.3 The Club Sample

As noted above, the research focused on ten clubs located in Sydney. All participating clubs had gaming machines, TAB and keno facilities. The sample included clubs of different types (RSL, workers, leagues, community), with differing membership bases and located in areas of Sydney with varying socio-economic profiles. While this sample was not representative of the population of NSW registered clubs, it was anticipated that, by choosing a sample of clubs that varied by type, size, location and membership profile, the results would not be overly biased towards clubs with particular characteristics. In reality, the selection of the club sample was also determined by the willingness of the clubs to participate in the research. The researchers commenced negotiations in August/September 2002, by contacting clubs that they had previously engaged in research and those whose managers or gaming managers were personally known to the researchers. By October 2002, the management and boards of ten clubs had agreed to participate in the research. However, as noted above, a change in the data collection protocol became necessary when six of these clubs subsequently declined to participate in the mailout, but allowed on-site surveying in their club instead. These on-site surveys were then completed by mid-2003. Table 3.1 shows some key characteristics of the participating clubs.

Table 3.1 Characteristics of Clubs Participating in the Study

Club No.	Club Type	Location in Sydney	No. of Members	No. of Gaming Machines	Survey Method
1	Leagues	North West Metropolitan	25,000	274	Mail
2	Leagues	Western Metropolitan	11,500	284	Mail
3	Leagues	Northern Metropolitan	15,000	242	Mail
4	Workers	North West Metropolitan	50,000	589	Mail
5	Community	Western Metropolitan	50,000	543	On-site
6	RSL	North West Metropolitan	27,000	758	On-site
7	Leagues	North West Metropolitan	30,000	482	On-site
8	Leagues	Northern Metropolitan	49,000	308	On-site
9	RSL	Northern Metropolitan	13,000	134	On-site
10	Community	Northern Metropolitan	17,000	214	On-site

3.4 The Patron Sample

To address the objectives of the study, it was necessary to gather data from club members with differing levels of gambling involvement to allow comparisons between the responses of ‘non-problem’, ‘borderline problem’ and ‘problem’ gamblers. Because the proportions of ‘borderline’ and ‘problem’ gamblers amongst the population of club members were likely to be small (based on previous prevalence studies of various populations), a purposeful sampling technique was used in an attempt to capture higher numbers of ‘borderline’ and ‘problem’ gamblers than would likely have resulted from a random sampling technique. Thus, the sample comprised the top 500, middle 500 and bottom 500 people on the player tracking system of each participating club according to gambling expenditure in the previous 12 months. While expenditure on gambling is not directly correlated with a continuum of gambling problems, it was anticipated that this sampling method would artificially ‘boost’ the number of ‘borderline’ and ‘problem’ gamblers in the sample, thus yielding adequate responses for rigorous analysis. It should be emphasised then that the prevalence of gambling problems amongst the survey respondents is not indicative or representative of the prevalence of gambling problems amongst the population of club members, either for the participating clubs or for clubs overall.

As noted above, members of the remaining six clubs were surveyed on-site. Naturally, this meant that the above sampling technique could not be used. Instead, this method of data collection allowed for only convenience sampling.

3.5 The Survey Instrument

Two different survey instruments (Type 1 and Type 2) were used in this study, each containing the six main sections described below. Differences between the Type 1 and Type 2 instruments were confined to the second section, with the other sections identical for both survey instruments. These instruments are contained in Appendix A (Type 1) and Appendix B (Type 2).

- **Characteristics of the respondents.** Specifically, this section asked about their frequency of gambling on poker machines, TAB and keno, their most preferred type of club gambling, their age and sex.
- **Respondents' awareness of their club's responsible gambling practices.** The Type 1 instrument listed 33 responsible gambling practices extracted from the *ClubSafe Responsible Conduct of Gambling Participants Manual* (Casino Community Benefit Fund, 2000). Respondents were asked to indicate 'yes', 'no' or 'not sure' to indicate their awareness of these practices in their club. The Type 2 instrument sought to gauge the respondents' awareness of responsible gambling practices by asking them to list, unaided, the responsible gambling practices their club had implemented. It then asked respondents to write down what they could recall about their club's responsible gambling practices in 12 areas (signage, player information, counselling services, gaming rooms, restrictions on who can gamble, gambling advertising, gambling promotions, cheque cashing, credit and cash advances, payment of winnings, location of ATMs and EFTPOS, and self-exclusion). Thus, this section of the Type 2 instrument focused on the respondents' ability to recall the practices unaided, while the Type 1 instrument focused on the respondents' ability to recognise the practices when prompted.
- **Respondents' opinions on the adequacy of their club's responsible gambling practices.** Thirteen practice areas were identified by grouping the 33 practices into related areas (signage, player information, counselling services, reality checks, opening hours, cheque cashing, credit and cash advances, location of ATM and EFTPOS, payment of winning, minors and intoxicated persons, self-exclusion, staff training, and gambling advertising and promotions). Respondents

were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert scale their level of agreement (from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’) that responsible gambling is more likely to occur when a club implements measures in each of the 13 practice areas.

- Respondents’ opinions on the effectiveness of their club’s responsible gambling practices, in terms of whether they have affected the respondent’s own gambling behaviour. Respondents were asked the extent to which responsible gambling practices in their club have affected the way they think about their gambling, the way they feel about their gambling, how often they gamble, how long they usually gamble for and how much they usually spend on gambling. An open-ended question then invited respondents to identify any particular practices that they felt have been most important in bringing about any changes in their gambling behaviour.
- **The Harm to Self Scale of the Victorian Gambling Screen (VGS) (Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority, 2001).** The VGS is an Australian measure of harm in gambling that is consistent with definitions of problem gambling that are couched in terms of harmful consequences, rather than models of pathological gambling which equate this with a gambling addiction and dependence syndrome (Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority, 2001:1). It was developed as part of the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority research program to address concern that existing diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling, and the most commonly used self-report measure of its prevalence, the South Oaks Gambling Screen (Lesieur and Blume, 1987), are not well suited to the Australian context, where gambling is a widespread and sanctioned recreational activity (Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority, 2001:1). The VGS was developed for use both in general population surveys to assess the extent of problem gambling and for people presenting for problem gambling treatment or support in a clinical setting (Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority, 2001:1). The VGS contains three scales – Enjoyment of Gambling, Harm to Partner and Harm to Self. Only the Harm to Self Scale can be used to identify problem gamblers (Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority, 2001:3). It consists of 15 questions with response categories on a 5-point Likert scale from ‘never’ to ‘always’. The Harm to Self Scale is then created by summing scores on the 15 items to create a total score from 0 (no harm to self) to 60 (high harm to self). Respondents scoring 21 or over are then categorised as ‘problem gamblers’, those scoring 9-20 are classified as ‘borderline problem gamblers’, while those scoring less than 9 are classified as ‘non-problem gamblers’. Rigorous development, testing and validation of the VGS ensures that the Harm to Self Scale has excellent psychometric

qualities (Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority, 2001:3).

- **Additional comments.** Instructions on the back page of the survey instrument invited the respondent to make any additional comments about responsible gambling. Over half a page of lined space was available for this purpose.

3.6 Survey Administration

As noted above, four clubs participated in the mail survey. Each of these clubs sent 1,200 Type 1 surveys and 300 Type 2 surveys to the sample of members selected from their player tracking systems. The survey package also contained a cover letter and a reply-paid envelope.

The remaining six clubs allowed the researchers to survey patrons on-site. A research assistant for the research team set up a table and chairs in the foyer of each club and invited people entering or leaving the club to complete the questionnaire. It was important to conduct these on-site surveys away from the gambling areas of each club so that respondents could not observe the club's responsible gambling practices while they were completing the questionnaire. Signs were posted above the table to draw attention to the survey and to briefly explain its purpose. Participants were given a cover letter (they could keep in case they wanted to contact the researchers at a later date). Only the Type 1 survey was used on-site. This was because the Type 2 survey was more time-consuming to complete than the Type 1 survey, and therefore it was considered too great an imposition for patrons entering or leaving the club. The research assistant spent two days and nights (from approximately 10 am to 10 pm) in each of the six clubs to conduct these on-site surveys.

3.7 Response Rates

Table 3.2 summarises the number of responses and the response rates, where they can be calculated, for the various modes of the survey which generated 954 responses in total.

Table 3.2 Survey Responses and Response Rates

Club No.	Survey Method	Type 1 Survey			Type 2 Survey		
		No. Sent	No. Responses	Response Rate	No. Sent	No. Responses	Response Rate
1	Mail	1,200	192	16.0%	300	23	7.7%
2	Mail	1,200	111	9.3%	300	17	5.7%
3	Mail	1,200	136	11.3%	300	25	8.3%
4	Mail	1,200	177	14.8%	300	25	8.3%
Total Mail		4,800	616	12.8%	1,200	90	7.5%
5	On-site		41				n.a.
6	On-site		23				n.a.
7	On-site		59				n.a.
8	On-site		35				n.a.
9	On-site		65				n.a.
10	On-site		25				n.a.
Total On-site			248				
Total Surveys			864			90	

Note: The response rates in the table do not take into account the 61 surveys that were returned unopened and marked 'not at this address'.

3.8 Data Analysis

A specialist statistician from Southern Cross University was engaged to advise and assist in analysing the data, using appropriate multivariate techniques. These analytical methods are identified below for each research objective (Section 1.2). It should also be noted that the mail and on-site survey data were analysed separately.

3.8.1 Data Analysis Methods to Address Objective 1

Objective One aimed to assess the perceived efficacy of current responsible gambling strategies in Sydney clubs by measuring the level of awareness of club patrons of their club's responsible gambling strategies (awareness), whether club members think their club's responsible gambling strategies are adequate in minimising harm and protecting consumers in gambling (perceived

adequacy), and whether club members consider that their club's responsible gambling strategies have changed their gambling behaviour and in what ways (perceived effectiveness).

Level of awareness of responsible gambling practices. To analyse the data from the Type 1 surveys pertaining to the level of awareness of club patrons of their club's responsible gambling measures, frequency distributions were computed for the 33 responsible gambling practices extracted from the ClubSafe program. This provided an indication of how effectively these practices have been implemented in ways that patrons have noticed. For the Type 2 surveys, the practices that the respondents could recall were coded as 'yes' or 'no' for each of the 12 areas about which the respondents were later asked to recall details (signage, player information, counselling services, gaming rooms, restrictions on who can gamble, gambling advertising, gambling promotions, cheque cashing, credit and cash advances, payment of winnings, location of ATMs and EFTPOS, and self-exclusion). Data from respondents on what they could recall about their club's responsible gambling practices in these same 12 areas were coded as either 'yes' or 'no' according to whether the respondent had accurately recalled these details within reasonable bounds. These analyses, of both the practices respondents could recall unaided and the practices about which respondents could recall the details, provided an indication of how effectively these practices have been implemented in ways that patrons have noticed.

Perceived adequacy of responsible gambling practices. To analyse the data pertaining to respondents' opinions on the adequacy of their club's responsible gambling measures, frequency distributions were computed for each of the 13 practice areas nominated. The measures were then ranked according to the extent to which respondents considered that each practice encouraged responsible gambling. This was done by assigning the following scores to each category of response – 'strongly agree' = 5, 'agree' = 4, 'neither agree nor disagree' = 3, 'disagree' = 2, 'strongly disagree' = 1. Thus, the higher the score, the more the respondents felt that the practice contributed to responsible gambling. The resulting ranking therefore provided an indication of which measures the club members perceived to be most effective. However, it must be acknowledged that this method of assigning weightings is somewhat crude, although it is commonly adopted in empirical research using Likert scales.

Perceived effectiveness of responsible gambling practices. To analyse the data pertaining to respondents' opinions on the effectiveness of their club's responsible gambling measures in changing their own gambling behaviour, frequency distributions were computed for each of the relevant questions. This provided an indication of whether the responsible gambling measures implemented by the clubs have been effective in changing the way respondents think about their gambling, the way they feel about their gambling, how often they gamble, how long they usually gamble for and how much they usually spend on gambling. Responses to the open-ended question that invited respondents to identify any particular practices they felt have been most important in bringing about any changes in their gambling behaviour were coded as 'yes' or 'no' according to each of the practices identified by the respondents.

3.8.2 Data Analysis Methods to Address Objective 2

Objective Two aimed to assess the perceived efficacy of current responsible gambling strategies in Sydney clubs for different subsets of gamblers, including 'at-risk' and 'recreational' gamblers, men compared to women, different age groups and those who participate in different forms of club gambling (gaming machines, TAB, keno).

As noted earlier, the survey instrument contained a measure of problem gambling, the Harm to Self scale of the Victorian Gambling Screen (VGS) (Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority, 2001). The researchers adhered to the established VGS protocol to categorise respondents into three categories – non-problem gamblers, borderline problem gamblers and problem gamblers. The survey instrument also gathered data on the respondents' age (gathered in 5 year increments but collapsed to 10 year increments for data analysis), the respondents' sex, and their participation in and frequency of poker machine, TAB and keno gambling. Using chi square analysis to identify significant differences, the frequency distributions for the each of the awareness, adequacy and effectiveness items were compared according to the VGS categories, the age categories, the sex categories and the gambling participation categories of the respondents. Significance levels were set at $p \leq 0.001$. This allowed identification of those measures which appear most appropriate in targeting borderline problem and problem gamblers, people in different age groups, males compared to females, and people who participate in different types of club gambling.

3.9 Conclusion

This section, Section Three, has focused on key aspects of the methodology used in this study. Aspects explained have comprised the data collection techniques, the sampling frames, the survey instrument, survey procedures, response rates achieved, and data analysis techniques used. The next section of this report presents the survey results.

4. QUANTITATIVE SURVEY RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This section of the report presents and analyses the findings from the 706 respondents to the mail survey and the 248 participants in the on-site survey. Four main sub-sections focus in turn on the characteristics of the respondents, their awareness of responsible gambling measures in their club, how they perceive the adequacy of these measures, and their effectiveness in changing certain aspects of the respondents' gambling.

4.2 Characteristics of the Respondents

As noted in Section 3.7, the survey administered by mail to members of four clubs in Sydney generated 616 responses for the Type 1 Survey and 90 responses for the Type 2 Survey, totalling 706 mailed responses. There were no significant differences between respondents to the Type 1 and Type 2 Surveys for sex, age distribution, frequency of gambling on poker machines, the TAB or keno, preferred type of gambling or the three problem gambling categories as measured by the VGS Harm to Self Scale. Thus, the combined characteristics of the 706 mail survey respondents are presented below according to these characteristics.

As also noted in Section 3.7, the surveys administered on-site at six Sydney clubs generated 248 responses. Only the Type 1 Survey was used. Because the sampling methods used were very different for the mail survey (stratified purposeful sampling) and the on-site surveys (convenience sampling), results for each are reported separately in this section of the report.

4.2.1 Sex

Of the 706 respondents to the mail survey, 47.1% were male and 52.8% were female. This gender breakdown approximates that in the general Australian population, where 49.3% are male and 50.7% are female (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001). However, responses to the on-site surveys were skewed towards males, where 65.4% were male and 34.6% were female.

4.2.2 Age

Table 4.1 shows the age distribution of the respondents. Compared to the Australian population (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001), responses to the mail survey are under-representative of 18-44 year olds and those 65 years and over, but over-representative of 45-64 year olds. Responses to the on-site surveys are reasonably representative for 18-24 year olds and those 65 years and over, but over-representative of 25-44 year olds and under-representative of 45-64 year olds. Thus, the typical respondent to the mail survey was older than for the on-site survey. This may reflect the different sampling methods or the propensity of people of different age groups to participate in surveys administered in different ways.

Table 4.1: Age Distribution of Respondents

Category	Mail Survey N = 701*			On-Site Survey N = 248*		
	No.	Valid %	Cum. %	No.	Valid %	Cum. %
18-24	29	4.1	4.1	51	20.6	20.6
25-34	54	7.7	11.8	36	14.5	35.1
35-44	115	16.4	28.2	38	15.3	50.4
45-54	177	25.2	53.5	47	19.0	69.4
55-64	166	23.7	77.2	39	15.7	85.1
65-74	104	14.8	92.0	21	8.5	93.5
75+	56	8.0	100.0	16	6.5	100.0

* In all tables, the number of respondents is shown as N =. Where there were missing data for that variable, N is less than the total number of survey respondents .

4.2.3 Gambling Frequency and Preferences

Tables 4.2 to 4.4 show how often the respondents stated they gamble on poker machines, the TAB and keno, respectively. Figures 4.1 to 4.3 show these distributions graphically for easy comparison, both between respondents to the mail (left columns) and on-site (right columns) surveys, and amongst the different forms of gambling.

Table 4.2: Poker Machine Gambling Frequency of Respondents

Category	Mail Survey N = 706			On-Site Survey N = 248		
	No.	Valid %	Cum. %	No.	Valid %	Cum. %
Every day	20	2.8	2.8	10	4.0	4.0
Couple of times a week	157	22.2	25.1	45	18.1	22.2
Weekly	163	23.1	48.2	45	18.1	40.3
Fortnightly	104	14.7	62.9	24	9.7	50.0
Monthly	89	12.6	75.5	25	10.1	60.1
Once every few months	99	14.0	89.5	36	14.5	74.6
Hardly at all/never	74	10.5	100.0	63	25.4	100.0

Table 4.3: TAB Gambling Frequency of Respondents

Category	Mail Survey N = 706			On-Site Survey N = 248		
	No.	Valid %	Cum. %	No.	Valid %	Cum. %
Every day	8	1.1	1.1	7	2.8	2.8
Couple of times a week	41	5.8	6.9	9	3.6	6.5
Weekly	50	7.1	14.0	24	9.7	16.1
Fortnightly	22	3.1	17.1	5	2.0	18.1
Monthly	29	4.1	21.2	8	3.2	21.4
Once every few months	71	10.1	31.3	24	9.7	31.0
Hardly at all/never	485	68.7	100.0	171	69.0	100.0

Table 4.4: Keno Gambling Frequency of Respondents

Category	Mail Survey N = 706			On-Site Survey N = 248		
	No.	Valid %	Cum. %	No.	Valid %	Cum. %
Every day	3	0.4	0.4	4	1.6	1.6
Couple of times a week	25	3.5	4.0	10	4.0	5.6
Weekly	25	3.5	7.5	11	4.4	10.1
Fortnightly	27	3.8	11.3	6	2.4	12.5
Monthly	52	7.4	18.7	11	4.4	16.9
Once every few months	123	17.4	36.1	35	14.1	31.0
Hardly at all/never	451	63.9	100.0	171	69.0	100.0

Poker machine playing is by far the most frequent type of gambling amongst the respondents. Table 4.5 compares the number of regular (at least weekly), irregular (less than weekly) and non-gamblers (hardly or never gamble) for each of the three forms of gambling. Almost half the respondents to the mail survey and one-third of respondents to the on-site survey reported they gamble at least weekly on poker machines. Further, amongst the mail survey respondents, 19.4% of regular poker machine players are also regular TAB gamblers and 12.6% are also regular keno players. Amongst the on-site survey participants, 22% of regular poker machine players are also regular TAB gamblers, while 13% are also regular keno players.

Table 4.5: Regular, Irregular and Non-Gamblers on Poker Machines, TAB and Keno

Category	Mail Survey N = 706			On-Site Survey N = 248		
	Regular %	Irregular %	Non %	Regular %	Irregular %	Non %
Poker machines	48.2	41.4	10.5	40.3	34.3	25.4
TAB	14.0	17.3	68.7	16.1	14.9	69.0
Keno	7.5	28.6	63.8	10.1	21.0	69.0

Figure 4.1: Bar Chart of Poker Machine Gambling Frequency of Respondents (%)

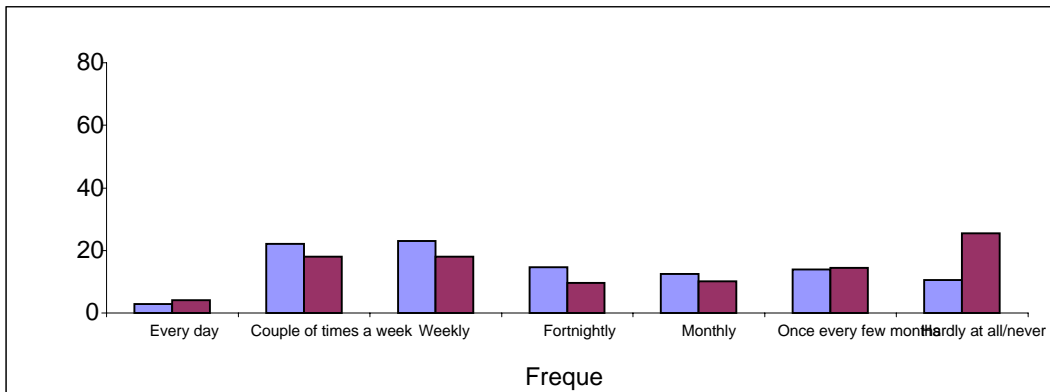


Figure 4.2: Bar Chart of TAB Gambling Frequency of Respondents (%)

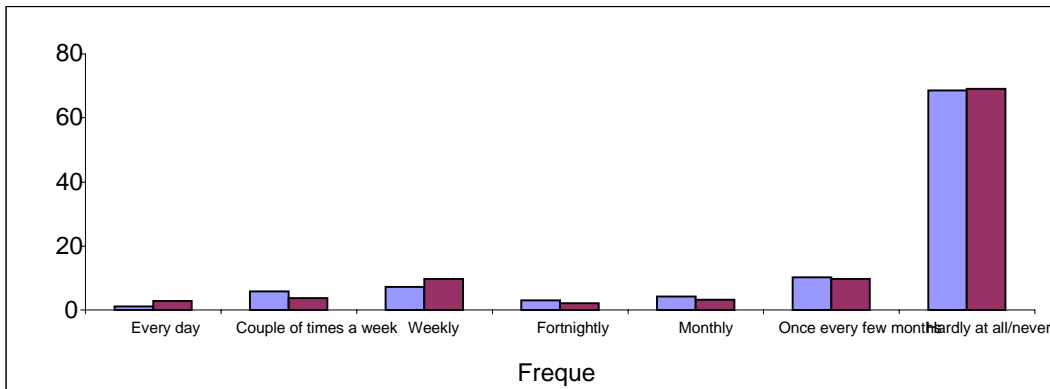
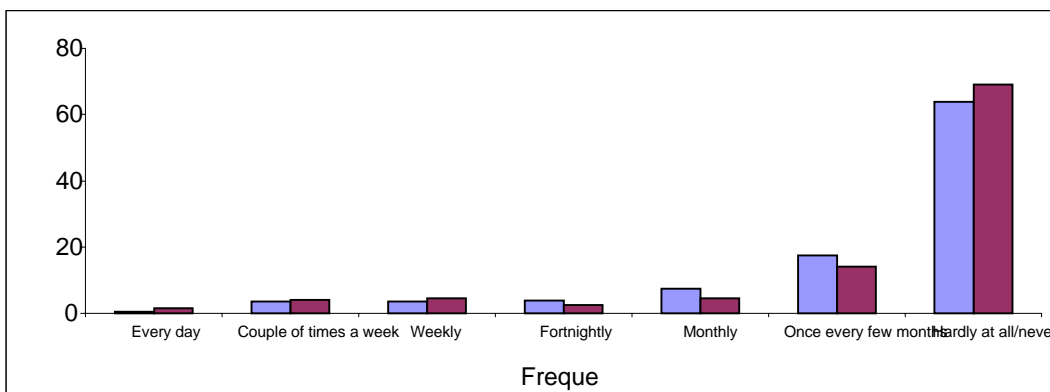


Figure 4.3: Bar Chart of Keno Gambling Frequency of Respondents (%)



The popularity of poker machines amongst respondents is also reflected in Table 4.6, which shows that over three-quarters of mail survey respondents and two-thirds of on-site survey participants nominated poker machines as their most preferred type of gambling.

Table 4.6: Most Preferred Type of Gambling of Respondents

Category	Mail Survey N = 689			On-Site Survey N = 239		
	No.	Valid %	Cum. %	No.	Valid %	Cum. %
Poker Machines	536	77.8	77.8	146	61.1	61.1
TAB	76	11.0	88.8	36	15.1	76.2
Keno	44	6.4	95.2	26	10.9	87.0
Do not gamble	33	4.8	100.0	31	13.0	100.0

Table 4.7 shows the frequency of gambling on any of the three types of gambling – poker machines, TAB and keno. It shows that, for both the mail and on-site surveys, over half the respondents are regular gamblers on at least one of these types of gambling, a third or more are irregular gamblers on any of these forms, while smaller proportions hardly or never gamble on any of these (termed non-gamblers).

Table 4.7: Regular, Irregular and Non-Gamblers Amongst Respondents

Category	Mail Survey N = 706			On-Site Survey N = 248		
	No.	Valid %	Cum. %	No.	Valid %	Cum. %
Regular	381	54.0	54.0	127	51.2	51.2
Irregular	273	38.7	92.6	80	32.3	83.5
Non-gamblers	52	7.4	100.0	41	16.5	100.0

4.2.4 Problem Gambling

The extent of problem gambling amongst the respondents was measured using the Harm to Self Scale of the Victorian Gambling Screen (VGS), and their responses scored as explained in Section

3.5. Table 4.8 shows the distribution of the three VGS categories amongst the 855 respondents who completed the VGS. It shows that a little over half the mail survey respondents can be categorised as non-problem gamblers (that is, no harm to self), a little more than one-quarter as borderline problem gamblers, and 18.5% as problem gamblers. Nearly three-fifths of the on-site survey respondents can be classified as non-problem gamblers, about one-sixth as borderline problem gamblers, and nearly one-quarter as problem gamblers. However, as noted and explained in Section 3.4, it must be emphasised that these prevalence rates are not indicative or representative of the prevalence of gambling problems amongst the population of club members, either for the participating clubs or for clubs overall. This is because the sample of club patrons for the mail survey was deliberately designed to capture higher numbers of ‘borderline’ and ‘problem’ gamblers than would likely have resulted from a random sampling technique. Additionally, the higher proportion of problem gamblers amongst the on-site survey respondents than for the mail survey may reflect their more regular patronage of their clubs and so their greater likelihood of being on-site when the survey was conducted and convenience sampling used.

Table 4.8: Victorian Gambling Screen Categories of Respondents

Category	Mail Survey N = 661			On-Site Survey N = 194		
	No.	Valid %	Cum. %	No.	Valid %	Cum. %
Non-problem gamblers	349	52.8	52.8	115	59.3	59.3
Borderline problem gamblers	190	28.7	81.5	34	17.5	76.8
Problem gamblers	122	18.5	100	45	23.2	100.0

Cross-tabulation with chi-square values was conducted to test for any association between the respondents’ VGS category and their sex, age, poker machine playing frequency, TAB gambling frequency, keno playing frequency, and preferred type of gambling. This found the following:

- For the mail survey, while the percentages of problem gamblers were similar for males (18.8%) and females (18.4%), significantly more males than females were borderline problem gamblers (35.5% of males and 23.1% of females; $\chi^2 = 13.772$; $df = 2$; $p \leq 0.001$). This, meant that the proportion of males classified as non-problem gamblers (45.7%) was significantly lower than females classified as non-problem gamblers (58.5%). For the on-site survey, no significant

differences were found amongst the VGS categories for males and females, although there was some variation. 27.5% of males and 13.1% of females were classified as problem gamblers; 16.0% of males and 21.3% of females were classified as borderline problem gamblers; and 56.5% of males and 65.6% of females were classified as non-problem gamblers. Thus, while the distribution of borderline problem gamblers amongst the females was similar for respondents to the mail and on-site surveys, higher proportions of male problem gamblers were captured in the on-site survey and of borderline problem gamblers in the mail survey. These variations are shown in Table 4.9.

- No significant differences were found amongst the VGS categories for respondents of different age groups. However, as shown in Table 4.10, 18-24 year olds dominated the borderline problem gambling group, while 25-34 year olds dominated the problem gambling group. A similar pattern emerged in the on-site survey, in that 25-34 year olds dominated the problem gambling group, followed by the 18-24 year olds. However, 45-54 year olds dominated the borderline problem gambling group, as shown in Table 4.10.
- Significant differences were found amongst the VGS categories for different frequencies of poker machine playing for respondents for both the mail and on-site surveys (mail: $\chi^2 = 50.941$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.000$; on-site: $\chi^2 = 19.886$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.001$). Not surprisingly, regular poker machine players were more likely to be problem gamblers (mail: 27.5%; on-site: 31.4%) than were irregular players (mail: 8.4%; on-site 21.1%), and more likely to be borderline problem gamblers (mail: 31.7%; on-site 25.6%) than were irregular players (mail: 26.2%; on-site 10.5%).
- For the mail survey, significant differences were found amongst the VGS categories for different frequencies of TAB gambling ($\chi^2 = 40.195$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.000$). Regular TAB gamblers were more likely to be problem gamblers (22.6%) than were irregular TAB gamblers (18.9%), and more likely to be borderline problem gamblers (49.5%) than were irregular players (36.1%). However these differences were not significant for responses to the on-site survey, although a similar pattern was observable. That is, regular TAB gamblers were more likely to be problem gamblers (35.1%), than were irregular gamblers (21.9%) or respondents who hardly or never gamble on the TAB (20%).
- No significant differences were found amongst the VGS categories for different frequencies of keno gambling for either the mail or on-site survey.

- No significant differences were found amongst the VGS categories for different gambling preferences. However, as shown In Table 4.11, respondents who nominated poker machine playing as their preferred type of gambling dominated the problem gambler group, while those who prefer TAB gambling dominated the borderline problem gambling group. In the on-site survey, those who prefer the TAB dominated the problem gambler group, while those preferring keno dominated the borderline problem gambling group.

Table 4.9: Victorian Gambling Screen Categories by Sex

Category	Mail Survey N = 661		On-Site Survey N = 194	
	Male %	Female %	Male %	Female %
Non-problem gamblers	45.7	58.5	56.5	65.6
Borderline problem gamblers	35.5	23.1	16.0	21.3
Problem gamblers	18.8	18.4	27.5	13.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.10: Victorian Gambling Screen Categories by Age

Mail Survey N = 661							
Category	18-24 %	25-34 %	35-44 %	45-54 %	55-64 %	65-74 %	75+ %
Non-problem gamblers	59.3	40.8	46.7	46.0	58.7	57.4	66.7
Borderline problem gamblers	37.0	24.5	31.8	32.5	23.2	28.7	27.8
Problem gamblers	3.7	34.7	21.5	21.5	18.1	13.9	5.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
On-Site Survey N = 194							
Category	18-24 %	25-34 %	35-44 %	45-54 %	55-64 %	65-74 %	75+ %
Non-problem gamblers	48.8	42.9	66.7	61.5	66.7	66.7	81.8
Borderline problem gamblers	14.6	10.7	18.5	23.1	18.2	26.7	9.1
Problem gamblers	36.6	46.4	14.8	15.4	15.2	6.7	9.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.11: Victorian Gambling Screen Categories by Gambling Preference

Category	Mail Survey N = 661			On-Site Survey N = 194		
	PM	TAB	Keno	PM	TAB	Keno
Non-problem gamblers	54.2	35.2	60.5	55.6	57.6	66.7
Borderline problem gamblers	26.4	49.3	27.9	19.0	12.1	20.8
Problem gamblers	19.3	15.5	11.6	25.4	30.3	12.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

To summarise the problem gambling status of respondents to the mail survey, 18.5% of respondents were classified as problem gamblers on the VGS. These people were more likely to be regular poker machine players and regular TAB gamblers. A further 28.7% of respondents were classified as borderline problem gamblers on the VGS. These people were more likely to be male, regular poker machine players and regular TAB players.

To summarise the problem gambling status of participants in the on-site survey, 23.2% of respondents were classified as problem gamblers on the VGS. These people were more likely to be regular poker machine players. A further 17.5% of respondents were classified as borderline problem gamblers on the VGS. These people were also more likely to regular poker machine players.

4.2.5 Summary of Respondent Characteristics

Key characteristics of the survey respondents are as follows:

- Poker machine playing is by far the most frequent type of gambling amongst the respondents. Almost half the mail survey and two-thirds of the on-site survey respondents gamble at least weekly on poker machines, compared to 14% (mail) and 16% (on-site) who engage in TAB gambling at least weekly, and 7.5% (mail) and 10% (on-site) who play keno at least weekly. Over three-quarters of mail survey and two-thirds of on-site survey respondents nominated poker machines as their most preferred type of gambling.
- Further, about 20% of regular poker machine players are also regular TAB gamblers and about 13% are also regular keno players.
- When responses for both the mail and on-site surveys were analysed for frequency of gambling on any of the three types of gambling – poker machines, TAB and keno - over half the respondents were found to be regular gamblers on at least one of these types of gambling, a third or more are irregular gamblers on any of these forms, while smaller proportions hardly or never gamble on any of these.
- 18.7% of mail survey and 23.2% of on-site survey participants were classified as problem gamblers on the VGS. For the mail survey, these people were more likely to be regular poker machine players and regular TAB gamblers. For the on-site survey, problem gamblers were more likely to be regular poker machine players.
- A further 28.7% of mail survey and 17.5% of on-site survey respondents were classified as borderline problem gamblers on the VGS. For the mail survey, these people were more likely to be male, regular poker machine players and regular TAB players. For the on-site survey, these people were more likely to be regular poker machine players.
- 52.8% of the mail survey and 59.3% of the on-site survey respondents were classified as non-

problem gamblers. This means that over 40% of participants for both the mail and on-site surveys were experiencing some harm from their gambling.

4.3 Awareness of Responsible Gambling Measures

The 616 respondents to the Type 1 Survey administered by mail and the 248 respondents to the Type 1 survey administered on-site in the clubs were asked to indicate their awareness of 33 responsible gambling measures in their clubs. These 33 measures can be grouped into six broad areas – signage and information, the gambling environment, access to cash, restrictions on who can gamble, self-exclusion, and gambling advertising and promotions. The 90 respondents to the Type 2 Survey were asked to recall their club’s measures relating to these areas. This section presents these results, grouped according to these six areas.

4.3.1 Awareness of Signage and Information

Table 4.12 shows the level of awareness of the Type 1 Survey respondents of the various responsible gambling measures in their club relating to signage.

Table 4.12: Awareness of Signage and Information of Respondents to the Type 1 Survey

Question	Mail Survey N = 616			On-Site Survey N = 248		
	Yes %	No %	Not Sure %	Yes %	No %	Not Sure %
Have you seen a responsible gambling house policy displayed in your club?	77.1	8.7	14.2	78.5	10.9	10.5
Have you seen signs in your club that advise patrons of the risks of gambling?	86.3	5.7	8.0	86.1	9.0	4.9
Have you seen signs about problem gambling in your club?	73.3	8.9	17.8	72.5	15.6	11.9
Are there signs in your club's poker machine areas about the chances of winning the maximum prize on a poker machine?	72.5	5.9	21.6	67.1	9.8	23.2
Are there player information brochures available in gambling areas in your club?	41.8	8.9	49.3	50.6	10.6	38.8
Have you seen signs about G-Line counselling services in your club?	74.2	10.2	15.6	70.3	14.2	15.4
Have you seen signs about local gambling counselling services in your club?	37.5	29.9	32.5	41.2	29.8	29.0

When asked to list unaided the responsible gambling measures they have noticed in their club, the vast majority of the 90 respondents to the Type 2 survey noted responsible gambling and problem gambling signage (78.9%) and player information (85.6%).

Table 4.13 shows the ability of the 90 Type 2 respondents to recall the types of signage and information in their club to a reasonable degree of accuracy.

Table 4.13: Recall of Signage and Information of Respondents to the Type 2 Survey (N = 90)

Question	Yes %	No %
What signs about problem gambling and responsible gambling have you seen at your club? Please list here all the signs you can recall.	75.6	24.4
Do you know of any gambling counselling services which you could seek help from if you wanted to? Please list here all the counselling services you can recall.	71.1	28.9
What player information is provided by your club about how different types of gambling work? Please list here all the types of player information you can recall.	28.9	71.1

Tables 4.12 and 4.13 indicate that there is a high level of recognition amongst the respondents to the clubs' signage and information measures. Signs advising patrons of the risks of gambling have been noticed by 86% of respondents, with over 70% also noticing signage about the club's responsible gambling house policy, G-Line counselling services, and problem gambling. Over 67% of respondents have noticed signs about the chances of winning a major poker machine prize. However, half or less of the respondents had seen player information brochures or signs about local counselling services. The level of recall about the responsible gambling and problem gambling signage was also high (over 75%), as was the level of recall about problem gambling counselling services (71%). However, only a little over one-quarter of respondents were able to recall information that clubs provide about how different types of gambling work.

4.3.2 Awareness of Measures Relating to the Gambling Environment

Table 4.14 shows the level of awareness of the Type 1 Survey respondents of the various responsible gambling measures in their club relating to the gambling environment.

Table 4.14: Awareness of Measures Relating to the Gambling Environment of Respondents to the Type 1 Survey

Question	Mail Survey N = 616			On-Site Survey N = 248		
	Yes %	No %	Not Sure %	Yes %	No %	Not Sure %
When you are playing the pokies in your club, can you see the time on a clock without getting up?	36.9	41.7	21.5	38.0	32.2	29.8
When you are playing the pokies in your club, can you see out of a window without getting up?	14.7	78.7	6.6	9.9	73.3	16.9
Is the lighting around the pokies dim (not very bright) in your club?	34.6	57.5	7.8	46.5	38.0	15.5
If you want to, can you play the pokies all day and all night at your club?	32.7	44.9	22.4	26.3	49.0	24.7

When asked to list unaided the responsible gambling measures they have noticed in their club, very few of the 90 respondents to the Type 2 survey (6.7%) noted any measures relating to the gambling environment which helped people to gamble responsibly.

Table 4.15 shows the ability of the 90 Type 2 respondents to recall whether and how the gambling environment at their club changed at all to help encourage responsible gambling.

Table 4.15: Recall of Measures Relating to the Gambling Environment of Respondents to the Type 2 Survey (N = 90)

Question	Yes %	No %
Have the gambling areas or rooms at your club changed at all to help encourage responsible gambling? Please describe here any changes you have noticed.	13.3	86.7

From Tables 4.14 and 4.15, it is apparent that few respondents were able to recognise any measures their club had implemented to help people keep track of the time when playing poker machines, either through being able to see a clock (mail: 37%; on-site: 38%) or being able to see out of a window (mail: 15%; on-site: 10%). Further, up to one-third of respondents (mail: 33%; on-site: 26%) agreed that they could play the poker machines all day and all night at their club if they wanted to.

These responses suggest that the clubs are not being particularly proactive in providing a gambling environment that encourages responsible gambling.

4.3.3 Awareness of Measures Relating to Access to Cash

Table 4.16 shows the level of awareness of the Type 1 Survey respondents of the various responsible gambling measures in their club relating to access to cash.

Table 4.16: Awareness of Measures Relating to Access to Cash of Respondents to the Type 1 Survey

Question	Mail Survey N = 616			On-Site Survey N = 248		
	Yes %	No %	Not Sure %	Yes %	No %	Not Sure %
If someone has paid you by cheque for some work you did for them, can you cash it at your club?	2.8	24.8	72.5	5.3	39.6	55.1
If you wrote out a cheque for \$300, could you cash it at your club?	6.7	18.6	74.7	8.1	31.7	60.2
Can you cash more than one cheque per day at your club?	1.5	18.5	80.0	5.3	29.4	65.3
Have you seen signs in your club about any limits on cashing cheques?	11.0	44.1	44.9	22.1	34.4	43.4
Can you borrow money or get a cash advance for gambling from your club?	2.8	47.6	49.6	5.3	51.0	43.7
Have you seen signs in your club about any limits on borrowing money or getting a cash advance from the club for gambling?	3.9	67.7	28.4	11.4	57.7	30.9
Does your club have ATMs in any of its gambling areas?	51.1	37.8	11.1	40.7	42.3	17.1
Does your club have EFTPOS facilities in any of its gambling areas?	20.3	34.8	44.9	22.7	42.6	34.7
If you won \$3,000 on the pokies, would your club pay it all to you in cash?	3.6	54.3	42.1	6.6	54.3	39.1
Have you seen signs at your club about any limits on paying poker machine winnings in cash?	37.6	39.9	22.5	47.3	26.5	26.1

When asked to list unaided the responsible gambling measures they have noticed in their club, very few of the 90 respondents to the Type 2 survey noted any restrictions on cheque cashing (5.6%), on

extending credit for gambling (3.3%), on cash payment of gambling prizes (8.9%) or on the location of ATMs and EFTPOS facilities (5.6%) as responsible gambling measures they had noticed in their clubs.

Table 4.17 shows the ability of the 90 Type 2 respondents to recall with reasonable accuracy various types of restrictions on access to cash at their club.

Table 4.17: Recall of Measures Relating to Access to Cash of Respondents to the Type 2 Survey (N = 90)

Question	Yes %	No %
Does your club have any restrictions on cheque cashing? If so, please describe these restrictions here.	23.3	76.7
Does your club have any restrictions on extending credit or providing cash advances to patrons? If so, please describe these restrictions here.	28.9	71.1
Does your club have any restrictions on paying gambling prizes in cash? If so, please describe these restrictions here.	51.1	48.9
Does the placement of ATMs and EFTPOS facilities in your club encourage responsible gambling? If so, please explain how their placement does this.	34.4	65.6

The data in Tables 4.16 and 4.17 generally indicate a low level of respondent awareness about the clubs' financial transactions policies in responsible conduct of gambling. Over one-half of respondents were unsure about whether their club would cash personal cheques, cheques for over \$200 or multiple cheques for one person. Nearly one-half of respondents were also unsure whether the club would extend them credit to gamble with and about two-fifths whether they could be paid in cash for large gambling prizes. Of course, this would be expected if these respondents had never tried to access cash in these ways at their club. Unlike signage, for example, restrictions on cashing cheques, on gaining credit for gambling, and on cash payment of winnings are not visible to patrons unless they have tried to cash certain types of cheques, to borrow money from the club for gambling, or tried to gain cash payment for a gambling prize over \$1,000. Nevertheless, it appears that the clubs are not communicating these policies to their patrons particularly well through their signage. Only about one-quarter of respondents could recall with reasonable accuracy aspects of their club's

cheque cashing and credit policies, and about one-half their club’s restrictions on payment of large gambling prizes in cash.

Up to half the respondents noted that their club has an ATM in its gambling areas, and about one-fifth noted the presence of EFTPOS facilities there. While this does not necessarily indicate a breach of the law, which only restricts their placement in poker machine areas, the fact that two-thirds of respondents felt that the placement of these facilities does not encourage responsible gambling indicates little confidence in their placement outside of poker machine rooms as an effective responsible gambling measure.

4.3.4 Awareness of Restrictions on Who Can Gamble

Table 4.18 shows the level of awareness of the Type 1 Survey respondents of restrictions on gambling by minors and intoxicated people.

Table 4.18: Awareness of Restrictions on Who Can Gamble of Respondents to the Type 1 Survey

Question	Mail Survey N = 616			On-Site Survey N = 248		
	Yes %	No %	Not Sure %	Yes %	No %	Not Sure %
Have you seen anyone under 18 years of age in the gambling areas at your club?	8.7	77.3	14.1	13.9	70.2	15.9
If someone is refused a drink by staff at your club because they are intoxicated (drunk), can they still go and play the pokies?	12.9	22.3	64.8	16.4	32.0	51.6

When asked to list unaided the responsible gambling measures they have noticed in their club, only 2% of the 90 respondents to the Type 2 survey noted restrictions on who is allowed to gamble, with most of these noting the restrictions on minors.

Table 4.19 shows the ability of the 90 Type 2 respondents to recall with reasonable accuracy various types of restrictions on who can gamble in their club. These responses almost entirely focused on minors, with only a few people mentioning self-excluded people. No one noted restrictions on gambling by intoxicated persons.

Table 4.19: Recall of Restrictions on Who Can Gamble of Respondents to the Type 2 Survey (N = 90)

Question	Yes %	No %
Does your club have any restrictions on who can gamble at the club? If so, please list here the types of people who are restricted.	58.9	41.1

According to the respondents, there is not 100% compliance by the clubs with the legislation on restricting minors from entering gambling areas, and it appears that, even if someone has been refused alcohol service due to intoxication, this does not always preclude them from gambling in the club. Clearly, there is high awareness of restrictions on minors, but very low awareness of restrictions on intoxicated people gambling as responsible gambling measures.

4.3.5 Awareness of Self-Exclusion

Table 4.20 shows the level of awareness of the Type 1 Survey respondents of self-exclusion schemes in the clubs.

Table 4.20: Awareness of Self-Exclusion of Respondents to the Type 1 Survey

Question	Mail Survey N = 616			On-Site Survey N = 248		
	Yes %	No %	Not Sure %	Yes %	No %	Not Sure %
Have you seen signs at your club about a self-exclusion program?	22.1	44.8	33.1	32.1	38.3	29.6
Do you know what a self-exclusion program is?	36.5	49.1	14.4	38.0	47.5	14.5

When asked to list unaided the responsible gambling measures they have noticed in their club, only 4.4% of the 90 respondents to the Type 2 survey noted self-exclusion.

Table 4.21 shows the ability of the 90 Type 2 respondents to recall with reasonable accuracy what a self-exclusion program is.

Table 4.21: Recall of Restrictions on Who Can Gamble of Respondents to the Type 2 Survey (N = 90)

Question	Yes %	No %
Does your club have signs about a self-exclusion program? If so, please describe how you think this self-exclusion program works.	28.9	71.1

Clearly, awareness of self-exclusion programs in the clubs amongst the respondents is low, with around a third or less of respondents in both the Type 1 and Type 2 surveys claiming to know what they are.

4.3.6 Awareness of Responsible Advertising and Promotions

Table 4.22 shows the level of awareness of the Type 1 Survey respondents of responsible gambling measures relating to advertising and promotions.

Table 4.22: Awareness of Responsible Advertising and Promotions of Respondents to the Type 1 Survey

Question	Mail Survey N = 616			On-Site Survey N = 248		
	Yes %	No %	Not Sure %	Yes %	No %	Not Sure %
Does your club advertise its gambling facilities outside the club (eg: through newspapers, radio, TV, the internet, cinema, brochures or outdoor signs)?	33.7	25.1	41.2	25.4	27.5	47.1
If yes, have you seen notices about problem gambling on your club's written advertising?	24.8	34.6	40.6	21.4	37.5	41.1
Have you seen any advertising by your club that mentions <i>only</i> gambling?	2.5	79.1	18.5	8.3	64.5	27.3
Inside the club, have you seen any advertising or promotions that mention <i>only</i> gambling?	13.3	64.2	22.5	12.3	56.0	31.7
Have you seen any gambling-related advertising or promotion by your club that you consider irresponsible?	4.9	82.3	12.8	9.5	65.6	24.9
Does your club ever give you free or cheap drinks when you are gambling?	24.0	62.6	13.4	29.3	49.2	21.5
Does your club ever give you free credits on the pokies?	10.8	70.8	18.4	14.0	59.1	26.9
Can you earn bonus reward points at your club by purchasing a range of goods and services (not just gambling)?	40.7	18.9	40.4	48.1	13.2	38.7

When asked to list unaided the responsible gambling measures they have noticed in their club, 2.2% of the 90 respondents to the Type 2 survey noted advertising and 6.7% mentioned promotions.

Table 4.23 shows the ability of the 90 Type 2 respondents to recall with reasonable accuracy how their club's advertising and promotions encourage responsible gambling or discourage problem gambling.

Table 4.23: Recall of Responsible Advertising and Promotions of Respondents to the Type 2 Survey (N = 90)

Question	Yes %	No %
Do any aspects of your club’s advertising encourage responsible gambling or discourage problem gambling? If so, please describe these here.	32.2	67.8
Do any aspects of your club’s internal promotions encourage responsible gambling or discourage problem gambling? If so, please describe these here.	16.7	83.3

While up to one-third of respondents noted that their club advertises its gambling facilities externally, and up to one-quarter had noticed any signs on that advertising about problem gambling, the majority of respondents (mail: 82%; on-site: 66%) had not seen any advertising by their club which they considered irresponsible. The majority were also satisfied that their club’s advertising and promotions did not focus solely on gambling, and around one-half that reward points could be earned by using a range of the club’s facilities and services, not just by gambling. However, only about one-third of respondents to the Type 2 survey could nominate how their club’s advertising encouraged responsible gambling or discouraged problem gambling, while this figure was around 17% for their club’s promotions. These results suggest that, while most respondents consider their club’s advertising and promotions to be responsible, they do not see them as particularly proactive in encouraging responsible gambling. Additionally, sizeable minorities of respondents claimed that their club gave them cheap drinks when gambling and free credits on poker machines. It is illegal for clubs to offer these inducements to gamble, so these responses could indicate that some clubs are in breach of the law. Alternatively, some respondents may have misinterpreted the questions. For example, some may consider that drinks are generally cheap in their club and so responded ‘yes’ to this question, while others may consider some poker machine features as representing ‘free credits’.

4.3.7 Differences in Awareness of Responsible Gambling Measures by Sex

Due to the open-ended nature of the questions on awareness of responsible gambling measures in their club in the Type 2 Survey, differences in awareness by sex were only computed for respondents to the Type 1 Survey. Amongst the 864 respondents to the Type 1 survey (mail: 706; on-site 248),

the following differences between males and females were evident in their awareness of their club's responsible gambling measures:

- In the on-site survey, males were significantly more likely than females to know that they could not cash a personal cheque at their club (48.4% of males and 22.0% of females; $\chi^2 = 21.015$; $df = 2$; $p \leq 0.000$). This difference was also apparent in the mail survey, but was not significant.
- In the mail survey, males were significantly more likely than females to know that they could not cash a cheque for \$300 at their club (24.4% of males and 13.0% of females; $\chi^2 = 15.460$; $df = 2$; $p \leq 0.000$). This difference was also apparent in the on-site survey, but was not significant.
- In the on-site survey, males were significantly more likely than females to know that they could not cash more than one cheque per day at their club (36.6% of males and 15.9% of females; $\chi^2 = 15.187$; $df = 2$; $p \leq 0.001$). This difference was also apparent in the mail survey, but was not significant.
- In the mail survey, males were significantly more likely than females to agree that an intoxicated person can play poker machines at their club, even if refused a drink (18.1% of males and 8.2% of females; $\chi^2 = 13.549$; $df = 2$; $p \leq 0.001$). This difference was also apparent in the on-site survey, but was not significant.

However:

- In the mail survey, females were significantly more likely than males to have said 'yes' to being able to see a clock when playing poker machines (44.5% of females and 28.1% of males; $\chi^2 = 19.081$; $df = 2$; $p \leq 0.000$). This difference was also apparent in the on-site survey, but was not significant.

4.3.8 Differences in Awareness of Responsible Gambling Measures by Age

Amongst the 864 respondents to the Type 1 survey, the following significant difference amongst the various age groups was evident in their awareness of their club's responsible gambling measures:

Younger and middle aged people were significantly more likely than older people to have noticed signs about G-Line counselling services in their club (over 80% of 18-44 year olds, around 75% of people aged 45-64 years, and 67% or less of those aged 65 years and over; $\chi^2 = 35.262$; $df = 12$; $p \leq 0.000$). This difference was also apparent in the on-site survey, but was not significant.

4.3.9 Differences in Awareness of Responsible Gambling Measures by Poker Machine Playing Frequency

Amongst the 864 respondents to the Type 1 survey, the following differences were evident in awareness of their club's responsible gambling measures amongst regular, irregular and non-players of poker machines. Of these three categories of poker machine playing frequency, regular poker machine players were significantly the most likely:

- In the mail survey, to have seen their club's responsible gambling policy displayed (84.6% of regular players, 72.8% of irregular players, and 54.9% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 30.712$; $df = 6$; $p \leq 0.000$). The same pattern of responses was apparent in the on-site survey, but differences were not significant.
- In the mail survey, to have seen signs that advise patrons about the risks of gambling displayed in their club (90.5% of regular players, 86.4% of irregular players, and 62.7% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 38.214$; $df = 6$; $p \leq 0.000$). The same pattern of responses was apparent in the on-site survey, but differences were not significant.
- In the mail survey, to have seen signs about problem gambling displayed in their club (80.2% of regular players, 70.2% of irregular players, and 48.1% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 31.409$; $df = 6$; $p \leq 0.000$). The same pattern of responses was apparent in the on-site survey, but differences were not significant.
- In both the mail and on-site surveys, to have seen signs in poker machine areas about the chance of winning the maximum prize (mail: 81.8% of regular players, 68.8% of irregular players, and 38.5% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 60.274$; $df = 6$; $p \leq 0.000$; on-site: 81.8% of regular players, 68.2% of irregular players, and 41.9% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 34.072$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.000$).
- In the mail survey, to have noticed the availability of player information brochures (52.1% of regular players, 34.6% of irregular players, and 19.2% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 60.274$; $df = 6$; $p \leq 0.000$). The same pattern of responses was apparent in the on-site survey, but differences were not significant.
- In both the mail and on-site surveys, to say 'yes' to being able to see a clock when playing poker machines (mail: 41.7% of regular players, 35.5% of irregular players, and 13.7% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 64.780$; $df = 6$; $p \leq 0.000$; on-site: 51.0% of regular players, 36.5% of irregular players, and

18.3% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 37.419$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.000$).

- In both the mail and on-site surveys, to say 'yes' to being able to see out of a window when playing poker machines (mail: 15.1% of regular players, 14.2% of irregular players, and 12.2% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 99.660$; $df = 6$; $p \leq 0.000$; on-site: 13.4% of regular players, 9.4% of irregular players, and 4.9% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 28.265$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.000$).
- In both the mail and on-site surveys, to disagree that the lighting is dim in poker machine areas (mail: 61.7% of regular players, 56.1% of irregular players, and 40.6% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 43.624$; $df = 6$; $p \leq 0.000$; on-site: 43.4% of regular players, 39.3% of irregular players, and 27.4% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 18.473$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.001$).
- In the mail survey, to agree that they could play poker machines all day and all night in the club if they wanted to (37.8% of regular players, 27.7% of irregular players, and 29.4% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 35.411$; $df = 6$; $p \leq 0.000$). The same pattern of responses was apparent in the on-site survey, but differences were not significant.
- In the mail survey, to have noticed ATMs in the club's gambling areas (54.4% of regular players, 47.6% of irregular players, and 48.1% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 43.236$; $df = 6$; $p \leq 0.000$). The same pattern of responses was apparent in the on-site survey, but differences were not significant.
- In both the mail and on-site surveys, to be aware that the club does not pay a \$3,000 win on the poker machines all in cash (mail: 64.6% of regular players, 46.9% of irregular players, and 30.8% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 40.082$; $df = 6$; $p \leq 0.000$; on-site: 72.4% of regular players, 54.8% of irregular players, and 24.6% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 38.526$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.000$).
- In both the mail and on-site surveys, to have seen signs in the club about any limits on paying poker machine winnings in cash (mail: 43.7% of regular players, 33.2% of irregular players, and 23.1% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 41.236$; $df = 6$; $p \leq 0.000$; on-site: 61.6% of regular players, 46.4% of irregular players, and 25.8% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 24.688$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.000$).
- In the on-site survey, to know that they cannot get credit from the club to gamble with (59.6% of regular players, 56.0% of irregular players, and 30.6% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 18.854$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.001$). These differences were apparent in the mail survey, but were not significant.
- In the on-site survey, to agree that the club sometimes gives them cheap or free drinks when gambling (32.3% of regular players, 31.0% of irregular players, and 22.6% of non-players; $\chi^2 =$

25.667; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.000$). These differences were apparent in the mail survey, but were not significant.

4.3.10 Differences in Awareness of Responsible Gambling Measures by TAB Playing Frequency

Amongst the 864 respondents to the Type 1 survey, no differences were evident in awareness of their club's responsible gambling measures amongst regular, irregular and non-gamblers at the TAB.

4.3.11 Differences in Awareness of Responsible Gambling Measures by Keno Playing Frequency

Amongst the 616 respondents to the Type 1 mail survey, the following differences were evident in awareness of their club's responsible gambling measures amongst regular, irregular and non-players of keno. However, no significant differences were observable for the on-site survey, although the patterns of responses largely supported those reported below for the mail survey. In the mail survey, of the three categories of keno gambling frequency, regular keno gamblers were significantly the most likely to:

- Be aware that their club does not cash cheques for \$300 (42.2% of regular players, 20.5% of irregular players, and 15.1% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 29.625$; $df = 6$; $p \leq 0.000$).
- Be aware that their club will not cash more than one cheque per day per patron (37.8% of regular players, 21.0% of irregular players, and 15.1% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 26.005$; $df = 6$; $p \leq 0.000$).
- Have seen signs that advise patrons about limits on cashing cheques in their club (26.7% of regular players, 11.9% of irregular players, and 8.8% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 20.470$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.000$).

Be aware that their club does not extend credit or cash advances for gambling (68.2% of regular players, 59.7% of irregular players, and 39.9% of non-players; $\chi^2 = 28.801$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.000$).

4.3.12 Differences in Awareness of Responsible Gambling Measures by Problem Gambling Category

Amongst the 864 respondents to the Type 1 survey, the following differences were evident in awareness of their club's responsible gambling measures amongst the non-problem, borderline problem and problem gambling categories. Those classified as problem gamblers or borderline problem gamblers were more likely than non-problem gamblers to be aware of the following responsible gambling measures in their club:

- In the mail survey, that their club will not extend credit or cash advances for gambling (48.0% of problem gamblers, 59.8% of borderline problem gamblers, and 41.7% of non-problem gamblers; $\chi^2 = 26.871$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.000$). While differences were not significant in the on-site survey, the pattern of responses was the same.
- In the mail survey, that their club does not pay large poker machine winnings all in cash (74.8% of problem gamblers, 59.1% of borderline problem gamblers, and 46.8% of non-problem gamblers; $\chi^2 = 29.304$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.000$). While differences were not significant in the on-site survey, the pattern of responses was the same.
- In the on-site survey, that they cannot cash personal cheques at the club (64.4% of problem gamblers, 41.2% of borderline problem gamblers, and 32.7% of non-problem gamblers; $\chi^2 = 18.272$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.001$). While differences were not significant in the mail survey, the pattern of responses was the same.

However, those classified as problem gamblers or borderline problem gamblers were more likely than non-problem gamblers:

- In the on-site survey, to have seen minors in gambling areas (28.9% of problem gamblers, 12.1% of borderline problem gamblers, and 7.0% of non-problem gamblers; $\chi^2 = 20.694$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.001$). While differences were not significant in the mail survey, the pattern of responses was the same.
- In both the mail and onsite surveys, to have seen advertising or promotions by their club that they consider irresponsible (mail: 9.6% of problem gamblers, 4.9% of borderline problem gamblers, and 3.2% of non-problem gamblers; $\chi^2 = 18.487$; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.001$; on-site: 24.4% of problem gamblers, 8.8% of borderline problem gamblers, and 6.3% of non-problem gamblers; $\chi^2 =$

18.487; $df = 4$; $p \leq 0.001$).

4.3.13 Summary of Respondents' Awareness of Responsible Gambling Measures

This section aimed to measure the level of awareness of club patrons of their club's responsible gambling measures. Results from the 864 respondents to the Type 1 Survey and the 90 respondents to the Type 2 Survey are summarised below for the six broad areas into which the 33 responsible gambling measures in the clubs were grouped – signage and information, the gambling environment, access to cash, restrictions on who can gamble, self-exclusion, and gambling advertising and promotions.

- There is a high level of recognition amongst the respondents to the clubs' signage and information measures. Signs advising patrons of the risks of gambling have been noticed by 86% of respondents, with over 70% also noticing signage about the club's responsible gambling house policy, G-Line counselling services, and problem gambling. Over 67% of respondents have noticed signs about the chances of winning a major poker machine prize. However, half or less of the respondents had seen player information brochures or signs about local counselling services. The level of recall about the responsible gambling and problem gambling signage was also high (over 75%), as was the level of recall about problem gambling counselling services (71%), although only about one-quarter of respondents were able to recall information that clubs provide about how different types of gambling work.
- Few respondents were able to recognise any measures their club had implemented to help people keep track of the time when playing poker machines, either through being able to see a clock (mail: 37%; on-site: 38%) or being able to see out of a window (mail: 15%; on-site: 10%). Further, up to one-third of respondents (mail: 33%; on-site: 26%) agreed that they could play the poker machines all day and all night at their club if they wanted to. These responses suggest that the clubs are not being particularly proactive in providing a gambling environment that encourages responsible gambling.

There was a low level of respondent awareness about the clubs' financial transactions policies in responsible conduct of gambling. Over one-half of respondents were unsure about whether their club would cash personal cheques, cheques for over \$200 or multiple cheques for one person. Nearly one-half of respondents were also unsure whether the club would extend them credit to gamble with and

about two-fifths were unsure whether they could be paid all in cash for large gambling prizes. Of course, this would be expected if these respondents had never tried to access cash in these ways at their club. Unlike signage, for example, restrictions on cashing cheques, on gaining credit for gambling, and on cash payment of winnings are not visible to patrons unless they have tried to cash certain types of cheques, to borrow money from the club for gambling, or tried to gain cash payment for a gambling prize over \$1,000. Nevertheless, the clubs are not communicating these policies to their patrons particularly well through their signage, and only about one-quarter of respondents could recall with reasonable accuracy aspects of their club's cheque cashing and credit policies, and about one-half their club's restrictions on payment of large gambling prizes in cash.

Up to half the respondents noted that their club has an ATM in its gambling areas, and about one-fifth noted the presence of EFTPOS facilities there. Further, two-thirds of respondents felt that the placement of these facilities does not encourage responsible gambling. This indicates little confidence in their placement outside of poker machine rooms as an effective responsible gambling measure.

- According to the respondents, there is not 100% compliance by the clubs with the legislation on restricting minors from entering gambling areas, and it appears that, even if someone has been refused alcohol service due to intoxication, this does not always preclude them from gambling in the club. Clearly, there is high awareness of restrictions on minors, but very low awareness of restrictions on intoxicated people gambling as responsible gambling measures.
- Awareness of self-exclusion programs in the clubs is low, with only about one-quarter of respondents having seen signs in their club about a self-exclusion program, and around one-third or less of respondents claiming to know what they are.
- The majority of respondents (mail: 82%; on-site: 66%) had not seen any advertising by their club which they considered irresponsible. The majority were also satisfied that their club's advertising and promotions did not focus solely on gambling, and around one-half that reward points could be earned by using a range of the club's facilities and services, not just by gambling. However, only about one-third of respondents could nominate unaided how their club's advertising encouraged responsible gambling or discouraged problem gambling, while this figure was around 17% for their club's promotions. These results suggest that, while most respondents consider their club's advertising and promotions to be responsible, they do not see them as particularly

proactive in encouraging responsible gambling.

In general, few differences in awareness of responsible gambling practices were apparent between males and females (although males were more aware of their club's cheque cashing policies) and amongst different age groups.

Regularity of gambling on poker machines was associated with higher levels of awareness of some responsible gambling measures, particularly relating to signage and information, the gambling environment, placement of ATMs, partial cheque payment of large winnings and inability to obtain credit from the club for gambling. Regularity of gambling on the TAB was not associated with higher levels of awareness of any responsible gambling measures. Regularity of gambling on keno was associated with higher levels of awareness of some responsible gambling measures, particularly relating to their club's cheque and credit policies.

Problem and borderline problem gamblers were more aware of some responsible gambling measures than non-problem gamblers. These comprised the club's policies on credit, cheque cashing and paying large winnings all in cash.

However, problem gamblers and borderline problem gamblers were more likely than non-problem gamblers to have seen minors in gambling areas, and to have seen advertising or promotions by their club that they consider irresponsible.

4.4 Perceived Adequacy of Responsible Gambling Measures

This section presents the results for the 706 respondents to the mail survey and the 248 participants in the on-site survey to questions relating to their perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures in their club. As noted in Section 3.5, respondents were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert scale their level of agreement (from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree') that responsible gambling is more likely to occur when a club implements responsible gambling measures in each of 13 practice areas. These areas were signage, player information, counselling services, reality checks, opening hours, cheque cashing, credit and cash advances, location of ATM and EFTPOS, payment of winning, minors and intoxicated persons, self-exclusion, staff training, and gambling advertising and promotions.

While the questions relating to these 13 practice areas were the key measures of perceived adequacy used, four introductory questions were asked in this section to gain an indication of the respondents' opinions about some aspects of problem gambling. The results for these are presented first.

4.4.1 Opinions About Problem Gambling

Table 4.24 shows responses to four questions about the seriousness of problem gambling, its impacts on individuals, family and friends, the role of government in providing services for problem gamblers and their families, and the role of clubs in preventing problem gambling. It indicates that around 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that gambling causes harm of as serious a nature as that caused by alcohol, while around 97% agreed or strongly agreed that problem gambling causes serious harm to some gamblers and significant others. Therefore, it was not surprising that over 70% agreed or strongly agreed on the government's role in providing support services for problem gambling. However, respondents were less committed to an opinion on the overall adequacy of their club's actions in preventing problem gambling. Nearly half neither agreed nor disagreed, with the remainder nearly equally divided in their agreement or disagreement with this statement.

Table 4.24: Opinions of Respondents about Problem Gambling

Question	Mail Survey N = 699 (min.)					On-Site Survey N = 239 (min.)				
	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %
The harm that gambling can cause is as serious as the problems caused by alcohol	54.3	36.9	4.6	4.0	0.3	44.6	41.6	8.9	5.0	0.0
Gambling can cause serious harm to some players and to their families and friends	66.7	31.6	1.1	0.3	0.3	56.9	39.1	3.0	1.0	0.0
The government is doing the right thing by providing services for problem gamblers and their families	35.9	48.4	8.6	4.4	2.7	26.7	46.0	14.4	8.4	4.5
My club is not doing enough to stop problem gambling	5.7	17.7	49.5	21.5	5.6	10.1	25.8	41.9	17.7	4.5

SA – strongly agree, A – agree, N – neutral, D – disagree, SD – strongly disagree

4.4.2 Perceived Adequacy of the 13 Responsible Gambling Practice Areas

Table 4.25 shows responses to the 13 questions relating to the 13 responsible gambling practice areas. Clearly, there is widespread support for all of these areas, with at least half the respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that these facilitate responsible gambling.

Table 4.25: Opinions of Respondents about the Adequacy of Responsible Gambling Measures

Question	Mail Survey N = 681 (min.)					On-Site Survey N = 236 (min.)				
	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club displays signs and notices about problem gambling and responsible gambling	13.5	38.7	23.9	20.9	3.0	14.1	39.2	28.1	16.6	2.0
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club provides information about odds of winning and game rules	15.5	45.2	18.4	18.7	2.3	15.5	41.5	23.0	18.5	1.5
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club displays contact details of gambling counselling services	12.3	39.2	26.5	19.4	2.6	17.0	36.5	24.5	20.0	2.0
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club's gambling areas have clocks and natural lighting to make people aware of the passage of time	21.0	46.1	16.7	14.6	1.6	23.1	43.7	15.6	15.1	2.5
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club shuts down gambling facilities for at least a few hours each day	25.6	40.6	17.9	13.5	2.3	24.5	36.5	17.5	17.5	4.0
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club does not cash cheques for more than \$200	24.7	47.5	14.7	11.0	2.0	21.3	38.6	22.3	15.2	2.5
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club does not extend credit or cash advances for gambling	44.8	42.6	6.4	5.3	0.9	34.7	42.2	12.1	9.0	2.0
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club places its ATMs and EFTPOS facilities away from gambling areas	28.3	35.7	15.9	17.4	2.7	26.3	40.4	10.6	19.2	3.5
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club pays all big wins by cheque instead of cash	31.0	46.3	9.9	11.7	1.1	29.5	43.0	15.0	10.5	2.0
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club prevents minors and intoxicated persons from gambling	50.2	39.2	5.4	4.3	0.9	37.7	44.7	9.5	6.0	2.0
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club provides a self-exclusion program	22.6	41.4	30.4	5.0	0.6	20.0	46.7	22.6	8.2	2.6
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when club staff are trained in responsible gambling practices	24.5	50.3	15.2	8.7	1.3	24.9	48.2	16.2	8.6	2.0
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club conducts its gambling advertising and promotions in a responsible manner	23.3	51.8	15.7	8.2	1.0	21.1	52.3	17.1	8.5	1.0

SA – strongly agree, A – agree, N – neutral, D – disagree, SD – strongly disagree

Table 4.26 shows the mean scores for the 13 responsible gambling practice areas. These were computed by assigning the following values to each category of the Likert scale – strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, neither agree nor disagree = 3, disagree = 2 and strongly disagree = 1. These scores were then summed and divided by the number of respondents. Table 4.26 presents these mean scores in descending order (according to the mail survey responses); thus, the practices at the top of the table have higher levels of agreement than those at the bottom of the table. It shows that the respondents generally supported all 13 practice areas as contributing to responsible gambling, although there was most support for prohibiting minors and intoxicated persons from gambling, prohibiting the provision of credit for gambling, paying large wins by cheque, and having staff trained in responsible gambling. There was less agreement that the provision of signage and information encourages responsible gambling.

4.4.3 Differences in Perceived Adequacy of Responsible Gambling Measures by Sex

No significant differences were found for the perceived adequacy of any of the 13 responsible gambling practices by sex.

4.4.4 Differences in Perceived Adequacy of Responsible Gambling Measures by Age

No significant differences were found for the perceived adequacy of any of the 13 responsible gambling practices by age group.

4.4.5 Differences in Perceived Adequacy of Responsible Gambling Measures by Poker Machine Playing Frequency

No significant differences were found for the perceived adequacy of the 13 responsible gambling practices by poker machine playing frequency.

4.4.6 Differences in Perceived Adequacy of Responsible Gambling Measures by TAB Gambling Frequency

No significant differences were found for the perceived adequacy of any of the 13 responsible gambling practices by TAB gambling frequency.

Table 4.26: Opinions About the Adequacy of Responsible Gambling Measures of Respondents to the Mail Survey

	Mail N = 681 (min.)	On-Site N = 236 (min.)
Question	Mean Score	Mean Score
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club prevents minors and intoxicated persons from gambling	4.34	4.10
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club does not extend credit or cash advances for gambling	4.25	3.99
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club pays all big wins by cheque instead of cash	3.94	3.88
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when club staff are trained in responsible gambling practices	3.88	3.85
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club conducts its gambling advertising and promotions in a responsible manner	3.88	3.84
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club does not cash cheques for more than \$200	3.82	3.61
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club provides a self-exclusion program	3.80	3.74
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club shuts down gambling facilities for at least a few hours each day	3.73	3.60
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club's gambling areas have clocks and natural lighting to make people aware of the passage of time	3.70	3.70
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club places its ATMs and EFTPOS facilities away from gambling areas	3.70	3.67
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club provides information about odds of winning and game rules	3.53	3.51
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club displays signs and notices about problem gambling and responsible gambling	3.39	3.47
Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club displays contact details of gambling counselling services	3.39	3.47

4.4.7 Differences in Perceived Adequacy of Responsible Gambling Measures by Problem Gambling Category

No significant differences were found for the perceived adequacy of any of the 13 responsible gambling practices by VGS category. However:

- In the mail survey, problem and borderline problem gamblers were much more likely to agree or strongly agree that ‘my club is not doing enough to stop problem gambling’ (45.1% of problem gamblers, 30.0% of borderline problem gamblers, and 13.9% of non-problem gamblers; $\chi^2 = 74.513$; $df = 8$; $p \leq 0.000$). This pattern of responses was the same for the on-site survey participants, but differences were not significant.

4.4.8 Summary of Respondents’ Perceived Adequacy of Responsible Gambling Measures

This section on perceived adequacy aimed to measure whether club members think their club’s responsible gambling measures encourage responsible gambling. Data in this section were from the 954 respondents to the Type 1 and Type 2 surveys.

To place the respondents’ opinions about the adequacy of their club’s responsible gambling practices in perspective, four fairly general questions were asked about problem gambling. Responses showed there was widespread concern that problem gambling is a serious issue for some people and their significant others and that its harmful consequences are on par with those caused by alcohol problems. There was strong agreement that the government was doing the right thing in providing support services for problem gambling. However, there was a more ambivalence attitude about whether the respondents’ clubs were doing enough in this regard.

Nevertheless, there was strong agreement that the clubs could contribute to responsible gambling by implementing responsible gambling measures relating to signage, player information, counselling services, reality checks, opening hours, cheque cashing, credit and cash advances, location of ATM and EFTPOS, payment of winning, minors and intoxicated persons, self-exclusion, staff training, and gambling advertising and promotions. However, while respondents generally supported all 13 practice areas as contributing to responsible gambling, there was most support for prohibiting minors and intoxicated persons from gambling, prohibiting the provision of credit for gambling, paying

large wins by cheque, and having staff trained in responsible gambling. There was less agreement that the provision of signage and information encourages responsible gambling.

No differences were found in the respondents' opinions about the adequacy of these measures when compared by sex, age, frequency of gambling on poker machines, TAB and keno, and problem gambling category.

However, problem and borderline problem gamblers were much more likely to agree or strongly agree that 'my club is not doing enough to stop problem gambling'.

4.5 Perceived Effectiveness of Responsible Gambling Measures

This section presents results relating to the perceived effectiveness of responsible gambling measures for the 954 survey respondents. As explained in Section 3.5, respondents were asked the extent to which responsible gambling practices in their club have affected the way they think about their gambling, the way they feel about their gambling, how often they gamble, how long they usually gamble for and how much they usually spend on gambling. An open-ended question then invited respondents to identify any particular practices that they felt have been most important in bringing about any changes in their gambling behaviour.

4.6 Changes in Gambling Due to Responsible Gambling Measures

Tables 4.27 to 4.31 show the frequency distribution of responses to the five questions about whether the responsible gambling measures in the respondents' clubs have changed certain aspects of their gambling.

Table 4.27: Changes to Respondent's Thinking About Their Gambling

Category	Mail Survey N = 695			On-Site Survey N = 228		
	No.	Valid %	Cum. %	No.	Valid %	Cum. %
Yes, a lot	30	4.3	4.3	21	9.2	9.2
Yes, quite a lot	37	5.3	9.6	11	4.8	14.0
Yes, somewhat	116	16.7	26.3	41	18.0	32.0
Yes, but only a little	109	15.7	42.0	42	18.4	50.4
No, not at all	403	58.0	100.0	113	49.6	100.0

Table 4.28: Changes to Respondent's Feeling About Their Gambling

Category	Mail Survey N = 690			On-Site Survey N = 227		
	No.	Valid %	Cum. %	No.	Valid %	Cum. %
Much less enjoyable	13	1.9	1.9	6	2.6	2.6
Somewhat less enjoyable	71	10.3	12.2	22	9.7	12.3
No change	569	82.5	94.6	179	78.9	91.2
Somewhat more enjoyable	28	4.1	98.7	15	6.6	97.8
Much more enjoyable	9	1.3	100.0	5	2.2	100.0

Table 4.29: Changes to Respondent's Frequency of Gambling

Category	Mail Survey N = 695			On-Site Survey N = 226		
	No.	Valid %	Cum. %	No.	Valid %	Cum. %
Now gamble much less often	34	4.9	4.9	19	8.4	8.4
Now gamble a little less often	86	12.4	17.3	22	9.7	18.1
No change	562	80.9	98.1	181	80.1	98.2
Now gamble a little more often	9	1.3	99.4	3	1.3	99.6
Now gamble much more often	4	0.6	100.0	1	0.4	100.0

Table 4.30: Changes to Respondent's Length of Gambling Sessions

Category	Mail Survey N = 693			On-Site Survey N = 226		
	No.	Valid %	Cum. %	No.	Valid %	Cum. %
Now gamble for a much shorter time	42	6.1	6.1	17	7.5	7.5
Now gamble for a somewhat shorter time	78	11.3	17.3	23	10.2	17.7
No change	559	80.7	98.0	177	78.3	96.0
Now gamble for a somewhat longer time	12	1.7	99.7	8	3.5	99.6
Now gamble for a much longer time	2	0.3	100.0	1	0.4	100.0

Table 4.31: Changes to Respondent’s Gambling Expenditure

Category	Mail Survey N = 695			On-Site Survey N = 226		
	No.	Valid %	Cum. %	No.	Valid %	Cum. %
Now spend much less	34	4.9	4.9	17	7.5	7.5
Now spend somewhat less	96	13.8	18.7	28	12.4	19.9
No change	550	79.1	97.8	177	78.3	98.2
Now spend somewhat more	11	1.6	99.4	3	1.3	99.6
Now spend much more	4	0.6	100.0	1	0.4	100.0

Tables 4.27 to 4.31 indicate that, for the vast majority of respondents, the responsible gambling practices in their clubs have had little effect on the way they think about their gambling, feel about their gambling, how often they gamble, how long they gamble for and how much they spend. However, this would be expected given that the majority of respondents can be classified as experiencing no harm from their gambling (non-problem gamblers), as identified in Table 4.8. Thus, it is important is to compare the percentages of respondents for whom the clubs’ practices have changed these aspects of their gambling in a ‘positive’ way, to the percentages of respondents who are borderline and problem gamblers, and at whom these practices are primarily aimed. As identified in Table 4.8, of the 706 respondents to the mail survey, 28.7% were classified as borderline problem gamblers and 18.5% as problem gamblers. Of the 248 respondents to the on-site survey, 17.5% were classified as borderline problem gamblers and 23.2% as problem gamblers. This totals 47.2% of the mail survey respondents and 40.7% of the on-site survey participants at whom these responsible gambling practices are particularly aimed.

Comparing the 47.2% and 40.7% of respondents experiencing some harm from their gambling:

- When asked ‘have the responsible gambling practices in your club changed the way you think about your gambling?’, 42% of mail survey respondents and 53.3% of on-site survey respondents indicated the practices had brought about some change, to varying degrees.
- When asked ‘have the responsible gambling practices in your club changed the way you feel about your gambling?’, 12.2% of mail survey respondents and 13.1% of on-site survey respondents indicated that these practices had made their gambling less enjoyable to some extent, while 5.4% of mail survey respondents and 9.6% of on-site survey respondents indicated they had made their gambling more enjoyable to some extent.

- When asked ‘have the responsible gambling practices in your club changed how often you gamble?, 17.3% of mail survey respondents and 19.9% of on-site survey respondents indicated they now gamble less often (while 1.9% of mail survey respondents and 2.0% of on-site survey respondents indicated they now gamble more often).
- When asked ‘have the responsible gambling practices in your club changed how long you usually gamble for?’, 17.3% of mail survey respondents and 19.9% of on-site survey respondents indicated they now gamble for a shorter period of time (while 2.0% of mail survey respondents and 4.1% of on-site survey respondents indicated they now gamble for a longer time).
- When asked ‘have the responsible gambling practices in your club changed how much you usually spend on gambling?’, 18.7% of mail survey respondents and 22.4% of on-site survey respondents indicated they now spend less (while 2.2% of mail survey respondents and 2.0% of on-site survey respondents indicated they now spend more).

Clearly, while the responsible gambling practices in the clubs have been quite effective in encouraging people to think about their gambling, they have been very much less effective in changing the way people feel about their gambling. They have also been very much less effective in changing gambling behaviour in terms of frequency, session length and expenditure. Therefore, even if it can be demonstrated that borderline problem and problem gamblers in the sample account for all the observed changes in the way people feel about their gambling and their gambling behaviours (as will be addressed below), the clubs’ responsible gambling practices cannot be considered as being effective for the majority of problem gamblers or for those who are at risk.

4.6.1 Particular Responsible Gambling Practices That Have Changed Gambling Behaviour

When the respondents were asked if there were any particular responsible gambling measures that were important in changing how often they gamble, how long they gamble for or how much they spend on gambling, very few provided a response. Table 4.32 shows the frequency distribution of responses.

Table 4.32: Responsible Gambling Practices that Changed Respondent’s Gambling Behaviour

Category	Mail Survey N = 706			On-Site Survey N = 248		
	No.	Valid %	Cum. %	No.	Valid %	Cum. %
None	668	94.6	94.6	240	96.8	96.8
Odds of winning major prize displayed	15	2.1	96.7	3	1.2	98.0
Signage	14	2.0	98.7	4	1.6	99.6
Counselling contacts displayed	3	0.5	99.2	0	0.0	99.6
Bright lighting in gaming areas	2	0.3	99.5	0	0.0	99.6
Limited access to cash for gambling	2	0.3	99.8	0	0.0	99.6
Clocks displayed in gaming areas	1	0.1	99.9	1	0.4	100.0
Shorter opening hours	1	0.1	100.0	0	0.0	100.0

As indicated in Section 4.5.1, 17%-18% of respondents indicated that their gambling behaviour had changed in terms of frequency, session length and expenditure, yet only 5.4% of mail survey respondents and 3.2% of on-site survey participants could nominate any of their club’s responsible gambling practices that had prompted this change. This may reflect that the remaining respondents consider their club’s responsible gambling practices are ineffective in bringing about behavioural change, or it may reflect the difficulty of identifying a particular catalyst for any such change. Of those that could, displaying the odds of winning a major prize on gaming machines and signage were the two most nominated practices.

4.6.2 Differences in Perceived Effectiveness of Responsible Gambling Measures by Sex

No differences between males and females were evident in their responses to the five questions about the effectiveness of their club’s responsible gambling measures.

4.6.3 Differences in Perceived Effectiveness of Responsible Gambling Measures by Age

No differences amongst different age groups were evident in their responses to the five questions about the effectiveness of their club's responsible gambling measures.

4.6.4 Differences in Perceived Effectiveness of Responsible Gambling Measures by Poker Machine Playing Frequency

No differences amongst regular, irregular and non-players of poker machine were evident in their responses to the five questions about the effectiveness of their club's responsible gambling measures.

4.6.5 Differences in Perceived Effectiveness of Responsible Gambling Measures by TAB Gambling Frequency

The following differences amongst regular, irregular and non-gamblers on the TAB in the mail survey were evident in their responses to the five questions about the effectiveness of their club's responsible gambling measures. No significant differences were found in the on-site survey.

Frequency of gambling ($\chi^2 = 26.186$; $df = 8$; $p \leq 0.001$). The responsible gambling practices appear to have influenced 26.2% of irregular TAB gamblers to gamble less often to some extent, but fewer regular TAB gamblers (21.9%) and those who hardly or never gamble (14.0%).

Length of gambling session ($\chi^2 = 28.865$; $df = 8$; $p \leq 0.000$). The responsible gambling practices appear to have influenced 27.9% of irregular TAB gamblers to gamble for a shorter time to some extent, but fewer regular TAB gamblers (14.3%) and those who hardly or never gamble (18.9%).

4.6.6 Differences in Perceived Effectiveness of Responsible Gambling Measures by Keno Playing Frequency

The following significant difference amongst regular, irregular and non-gamblers on keno in the mail survey was evident in their responses to the five questions about the effectiveness of their club's responsible gambling measures. No significant differences were found in the on-site survey.

- Feelings about gambling ($\chi^2 = 33.180$; $df = 8$; $p \leq 0.000$). The responsible gambling practices appear to have changed the way 22.7% of regular keno players feel about their gambling by making it less enjoyable to some degree. This has also occurred with 16.0% of irregular keno

gamblers and 9.2% of those who hardly or never gamble on keno.

4.6.7 Differences in Perceived Effectiveness of Responsible Gambling Measures by Problem Gambling Category

The following differences amongst problem, borderline problem and non-problem gamblers in the mail survey were evident in their responses to the five questions about the effectiveness of their club's responsible gambling measures. However, no significant differences were found amongst participants in the on-site survey, although, for each of the five variables below, higher proportions of problem and borderline problem gamblers were 'positively' affected by the responsible gambling measures than were non-problem gamblers.

- They way people think about their gambling ($\chi^2 = 36.054$; $df = 8$; $p \leq 0.000$). The responsible gambling practices appear to have changed the way 53.7% of problem gamblers and 52.1% of borderline problem gamblers think about their gambling, compared to 33.7% of non-problem gamblers.
- Feelings about gambling ($\chi^2 = 45.452$; $df = 8$; $p \leq 0.000$). The responsible gambling practices appear to have changed the way 23.2% of problem gamblers feel about their gambling by making it less enjoyable to some extent. This has also been the case for 15.9% of borderline problem gamblers and 5.3% of non-problem gamblers.
- Frequency of gambling ($\chi^2 = 72.083$; $df = 8$; $p \leq 0.000$). The responsible gambling practices appear to influenced 26.2% of problem gamblers and 26.3% of borderline problem gamblers to gamble less often. This has also been the case for 8.6% of non-problem gamblers.
- Length of gambling session ($\chi^2 = 52.426$; $df = 8$; $p \leq 0.000$). The responsible gambling practices appear to have influenced 23.1% of problem gamblers and 26.8% of borderline problem gamblers to gamble for a shorter time. This has also occurred for 9.9% of non-problem gamblers.
- Gambling expenditure ($\chi^2 = 55.950$; $df = 8$; $p \leq 0.000$). The responsible gambling practices appear to have influenced 24.2% of problem gamblers and 28.4% of borderline problem gamblers to spend less when they gamble. This has also been the case for 12.1% of non-problem gamblers.

4.6.8 Summary of Perceived Effectiveness of Responsible Gambling Measures

This section on perceived effectiveness aimed to measure whether club members consider that their club's responsible gambling strategies have changed their gambling behaviour and in what ways.

- For the vast majority of survey respondents, their clubs' responsible gambling practices have had little effect on the way they think about their gambling, feel about their gambling, how often they gamble, how long they gamble for and how much they spend. However, given that the majority of respondents can be classified as experiencing no harm from their gambling (non-problem gamblers), the percentages of respondents for whom the clubs' practices have changed these aspects of their gambling in a 'positive' way were compared to the percentages of respondents who are borderline and problem gamblers, and at whom these practices are primarily aimed. This comparison indicated that, while the responsible gambling practices in the clubs have been somewhat effective in changing the way people think about their gambling, they have been very much less effective in changing the way people feel about their gambling. They have also been very much less effective in changing gambling behaviour in terms of frequency, session length and expenditure. Therefore, even if it can be demonstrated that borderline problem and problem gamblers in the sample account for all the observed changes in the way people feel about their gambling and their gambling behaviours, the clubs' responsible gambling practices cannot be considered as being very effective for most problem gamblers or for most of those who are at risk.
- Further, 17%-18% of respondents indicated that their gambling behaviour had changed in terms of frequency, session length and expenditure, yet only 5.4% of mail survey respondents and 3.2% of on-site survey participants could nominate any of their club's responsible gambling practices that had prompted this change. This may reflect that the remaining respondents consider their club's responsible gambling practices are ineffective in bringing about behavioural change, or it may reflect the difficulty of identifying a particular catalyst for any such change. Of those that could, displaying the odds of winning a major prize on gaming machines and signage were the two most nominated practices.
- No significant differences between males and females or amongst different age groups were evident in their responses to the five questions about the effectiveness of their club's responsible gambling measures.

When analysed for frequency of poker machine playing, no significant differences were apparent amongst regular, irregular and non-players of poker machines in their responses to the five questions about the effectiveness of their club's responsible gambling measures.

When analysed for frequency of TAB gambling, the responsible gambling practices appear to have influenced 21.9% of regular TAB gamblers in the mail survey to gamble less often. The responsible gambling practices appear to have influenced 27.9% of irregular TAB gamblers to gamble for a shorter time to some extent, but 14.3% of regular TAB gamblers to usually gamble for a shorter time. These differences were significant for the mail survey data, but not the on-site survey data.

- When analysed for frequency of keno gambling, the responsible gambling practices were reported to have changed the way 22.7% of regular keno players feel about their gambling by making it less enjoyable to some degree. These differences were significant for the mail survey data, but not the on-site survey data.
- When analysed according to the VGS categories, the responsible gambling practices in the clubs appear to have changed the way 53.7% of problem gamblers and 52.1% of borderline problem gamblers think about their gambling. They have also changed the way 23.2% of problem gamblers and 15.9% of borderline problem gamblers feel about their gambling by making it less enjoyable to some extent. The practices were also reported to influence 26.2% of problem gamblers and 26.3% of borderline problem gamblers to gamble less often, and 23.1% of problem gamblers and 26.8% of borderline problem gamblers to usually gamble for a shorter time. Additionally, the responsible gambling practices have influenced 24.2% of problem gamblers and 28.4% of borderline problem gamblers to spend less when they gamble. These differences were significant for the mail survey data, but not the on-site survey data. However, the pattern of responses in the on-site survey supported these results.

4.7 Conclusion

This section, Section Four, has focused on the quantitative results for the 706 mail survey respondents and the 248 on-site survey respondents. These results were presented, analysed and summarised in four main sub-sections – characteristics of the respondents, their awareness of responsible gambling measures in their club, how they perceive the adequacy of these measures, and

their effectiveness in changing certain aspects of the respondents' gambling. The next section, Section Five, presents and analyses the qualitative data obtained from these surveys.

5. QUALITATIVE SURVEY RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This study was designed primarily as a quantitative survey, albeit with some open-ended questions that were later coded into categories for statistical analysis. These quantitative results have been presented in Section Four of this report. This section, Section Five, summarises the qualitative responses to a final section on all surveys administered, inviting respondents to ‘please use this space if you wish to make any additional comments about responsible gambling.’ A little over half a page of lined space was left on the questionnaires for this purpose. Of the 706 respondents to the mail survey, 292 people, or 41.4% of respondents, provided some comments. Of the 248 respondents to the on-site surveys, 47 people or 19.0% provided comments. This totalled 339 respondents or 35.5% of the whole sample who provided additional comments. These are presented in Appendix C and summarised and analysed below.

To analyse these data, the researchers firstly entered all comments into a word processing program, resulting in over 25,000 words of comments. The principal researcher then read through all these comments and identified various themes within which they could be coded. The data were then coded into these themes by grouping the relevant comments under the appropriate headings. Sub-themes within these categories were then identified. Separating the comments of respondents that covered multiple themes and sub-themes resulted in 548 comments in total, covering 20 themes and 59 sub-themes.

5.2 Themes and Sub-Themes in the Qualitative Data

Tables 5.1 to 5.20 identify the themes and sub-themes that emerged from analysing the survey comments. It also shows the number of comments on each sub-theme and some indicative comments. Each of these themes and sub-themes are discussed below.

5.2.1 Theme 1: Government Priorities in Gambling

Table 5.1 focuses on Theme 1: Government Priorities in Gambling. From Table 5.1, it is evident that 22 respondents were highly critical of various aspects of government policy on gambling, particularly its reliance on gambling taxes, which they perceived to result in a prioritisation of

revenue-raising over social concerns. Respondents considered that this emphasis on revenue-raising has facilitated the expansion and accessibility of gambling, with some respondents critical of the high exposure to gambling in the community. Others considered the government as largely responsible for exacerbating problem gambling in the community and for doing too little to address it by way of counselling services and community education.

Table 5.1: Theme 1: Government Priorities in Gambling

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Criticism of revenue raising priority	Only a government can stop this. Ours has vested interest in allowing the problem to continue and indeed grow. I sincerely feel that the government is doing absolutely nothing about the problem. They rely heavily on the taxes derived (pokie taxes).	12
Criticism of the accessibility of gambling	There is no way to control gambling except to take it away all together. If you take away the temptation there is no risk of gambling. Believe that the government(s) should take more responsibility in the issue (limited) of poker machine licenses - such things as banning the transfer of licenses from one gambling venue to another, stricter limits on the number of licenses issued, etc.	4
General irresponsibility	There is no such thing as responsible gambling. There should be a responsible government. I wish to see country without poker machines. The government is the one responsible for gambling problems because it allows gambling everywhere to collect money.	6

5.2.2 Theme 2: Gaming Venue Priorities in Gambling

Table 5.2 focuses on Theme 2: Gaming Venue Priorities in Gambling. Four sub-themes emerged. Fourteen respondents were critical of poker machines in hotels. These criticisms included that hotel machine gaming had increased problem gambling, that, unlike clubs, hotel poker machine profits only benefited publicans and not the community, a general lack of control mechanisms in gambling offered by hotels, the significant inducements to gamble in hotels, and that poker machines had reduced the amenity and social interaction in pubs. Eight respondents criticised clubs for their general approach to gambling operations. These criticisms included that clubs are only interested in profits, that these profits are spent largely on expansion of gaming machine installations, that they unduly encourage gambling, especially through their promotions, have little concern for their

patrons' well-being, and that they have only introduced responsible gambling measures because of legislation. A further four respondents had similar criticisms for both clubs and hotels. However, 13 positive comments were made about clubs, generally that the respondent was pleased to see them implement responsible gambling practices.

Table 5.2: Theme 2: Gaming Venue Priorities in Gambling

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Criticisms of hotels	<p>Poker machines should never have been allowed into pubs. At least the clubs have some redeeming features by way of donations to various good causes, together with subsidised facilities.</p> <p>The hotel areas are the ones that need to be looked at as you will receive free drinks and credits and they are open 24 hours.</p> <p>I used to enjoy a drink and a game of pool at my local hotel but I resent being confronted with poker machines whenever I now go to the pub</p>	14
Criticisms of clubs	<p>I don't think any club cares - they are only interested in making money.</p> <p>One would be very naive to think that a club has a personal interest in limiting one's losses when, in effect, the money reaped by machines makes a club financially sound in providing entertainment, employment, sporting facilities and a place to relax.</p>	8
Criticisms of hotels and clubs	<p>I do not think pubs and clubs are really concerned about gamblers because they are their main source of revenue, and you only have to look at how many of them have been renovated and spruced up recently to know how they are going.</p> <p>I think clubs and pubs are only interested in receiving profit for expansion than worry about the gambling members. When I say expansion, I mean it as a cover for non-profit making clubs.</p>	4
Support for responsible gambling initiatives	<p>I think the clubs are implementing appropriate and up to date practices.</p> <p>I have been pleased to note the changes regarding responsible gambling that have taken place in the club over the last 12 months or so.</p>	13

5.2.3 Theme 3: Number of Poker Machines

Table 5.3 presents data on Theme 3: Number of Poker Machines, where 15 comments were made. Of these, ten people advocated a large reduction in machine numbers, while five wanted them banned altogether.

Table 5.3: Theme 3: Number of Poker Machines

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Reduce poker machine numbers	All clubs should be made to downsize the number of poker machines. Reduce dramatically number of poker machines in clubs and pubs.	15

5.2.4 Theme 4: Venue Opening Hours

A fourth theme is Venue Opening Hours, where 18 respondents advocated shorter opening hours for gambling venues. Some advocated shutting down the venues or their gambling facilities at certain intervals during the day, to force gamblers to take a break and think about their actions. Others saw shorter opening hours as a way to reduce gambling expenditure and therefore the financial problems experienced by some gamblers. It would also encourage gamblers to spend more time on family, work and other responsibilities.

Table 5.4: Theme 4: Venue Opening Hours

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Shorter opening hours	I think pokies are the death of society. I think gambling should have restricted hours - a lot of people with gambling problems don't go to work so they can gamble - they end up losing their jobs. Clubs should close down poker machines and Keno for at least 2 hours morning and afternoon. Clubs are open too many hours. People I have spoken to say they spent a lot less when the club closed at or before midnight.	18

5.2.5 Theme 5: Responsible Gambling Signage and Information

Data on Theme 5: Responsible Gambling Signage and Information is presented in Table 5.5, where three sub-themes are apparent. Nine respondents generally praised the responsible gambling signage in gaming venues, seeing it as a positive move. However, 30 respondents felt that the signage and information were ineffective, largely because people do not read signs, especially people with gambling problems who may be in denial about their problems. Others criticised the signs for being non-confrontational, too familiar and easily ignored. Others saw problem gambling as an addiction, such that no amount of signage would change a person's mind about gambling. Thirteen respondents offered specific ways in which signs and information could be improved – placing large warning signs on each machine, responsible gambling information to accompany membership renewals, free responsible gambling seminars in clubs, case studies of problem gambling displayed in venues and their newsletters, multi-lingual signs, more prominent and attention-grabbing signs, and having brochures on display instead of patrons having to ask for them. Some advocated more signage, while others advocated fewer but more effective signs. Others were critical that any impact of the signs was overshadowed by the large and enticing jackpot signs, illuminated machines and flashing lights.

Table 5.5: Theme 5: Responsible Gambling Signage and Information

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Consider signage effective	I do think the signs make a significant impact on the way people perceive gambling in all aspects. Recently, I read a pamphlet at my club which explained how poker machines worked - it was the most effective literature I have read in terms of promoting responsible gambling.	9
Consider signage ineffective	All of the signage can advise, the same as 'smoking causes cancer,' but it is non-confrontational and easily ignored. I think the notices mentioned are minimal and become so familiar they have no effect. You can convince yourself they don't apply to you. My personal view is that people take absolutely no notice of responsible gambling notices.	30
Suggested improvements to signage	Every time membership is renewed, a notice/letter on responsible gambling must be handed out. Free responsible gambling seminars to be run on club premises. Club newsletter to have stories on irresponsible gamblers. Signs are only in English; what language is used in ethnic clubs? The 'odds' signs and warning signs are far too small in most of the clubs I attend – they contrast poorly against poker machines that are illuminated by bright flashing lights! The jackpot signs on poker machines are large and enticing.	13

5.2.6 Theme 6: The Gambling Environment

Table 5.6 focuses on Theme 6: The Gambling Environment, where 42 comments were made in total. Six respondents wanted clocks to be more visible, with most advocating putting one on every poker machine, or having the machine screen display the time at regular intervals. Seven respondents wanted brighter lighting in gambling areas. While some may have advocated this for comfort and aesthetic reasons, two specifically noted the need for windows so people are more aware of the passage of time while gambling. Eight respondents wanted better segregation of gambling areas in venues, putting gaming machines 'out of sight, so out of mind' so they are not as visible and enticing. Others seemed to want better segregation so they could escape the sight and sounds of poker machines while visiting the club. Twelve respondents advocated for clubs to offer a broader range of facilities and services as alternatives to gambling, with many criticising clubs for being little

Table 5.6: Theme 6: The Gambling Environment

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Improve visibility of clocks	<p>There should be a clock on the machines and person who is playing should get a sign on the screen about time, losing, winning and other problems that cause difficulty in their life.</p> <p>The X Club seems to hide its clocks. There are probably three or four clocks in the gambling area. They are hidden on pillars where no one playing can see them.</p>	6
Improve lighting, particularly natural lighting	<p>A lot of clubs I go to don't have windows, so you don't know if it's dark or light outside so you don't know how long you've been playing for.</p> <p>The other thing I have noticed is that large clubs have become windowless, timeless gambling dens where you are practically surrounded by poker machines.</p>	7
Put gambling areas out of view	<p>I think children shouldn't be behind glass and see their family gambling. If I have children I would never let them see me gambling.</p> <p>I would prefer that all poker machine areas are closed in and out of sight. When you walk into a hotel or club for a drink you do not want to be looking at people playing machines. Out of sight, out of mind is my idea. This is not a problem to be quite honest, but in my observation over the years I know it is for a lot of people.</p>	8
Provide alternatives to gambling	<p>I believe clubs should offer better facilities e.g. lounge areas to sit and watch sport, socialising without the constant presence of gambling machines or facilities. ...some clubs hardly have any facilities that are not anything but small seated corridors between poker machine areas/ TAB facilities.</p> <p>While gambling, there should be distractions nearby to draw your attention away from the machines.</p>	12
Support for non-gambling facilities provided by clubs	<p>Clubs are not just gambling places. They provide lots of other facilities for their members. Anyone can enjoy their club and never gamble.</p> <p>I feel the club is being fair in your choice; they have areas aside if you don't want to gamble.</p>	4
Seating design	<p>The chairs shouldn't be like armchairs, just stools so you can't get too comfortable.</p>	1
Ban smoking as a responsible gambling measure	<p>Smoking should be banned as it goes hand in hand with irresponsible gambling - the club would not lose out as they would attract more people from the non-smoking category (this has been proven to be the case in overseas cases.)</p> <p>To ban smoking in the gambling areas may also be a further deterrent.</p>	4

more than gambling dens. Suggestions included more entertainment, more lounge facilities, more recreational facilities (like a pool and gym), and more family activities. In contrast, four people praised the clubs for providing a range of facilities and services other than gambling. One respondent thought that the armchair-style chairs at poker machines encouraged people to stay, while four

respondents advocated banning smoking as a responsible gambling measure, having observed that many gamblers are smokers.

5.2.7 Theme 7: ATM and EFTPOS Facilities

The next theme, Theme 7: ATM and EFTPOS Facilities, drew 38 comments, as shown in Table 5.7. Twenty-two of these advocated removing ATM and EFTPOS facilities from gambling venues, considering them obvious facilitators of over-spending on gambling. Five others felt they were too close to gambling areas, while 11 respondents suggested limiting their use in various ways. These included limiting the amount of cash that could be withdrawn, lowering the minimum withdrawal amount, limiting the number of withdrawals in one day, and better controls by banks so that daily withdrawal limits could not be exceeded.

Table 5.7: Theme 7: ATM and EFTPOS Facilities

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Remove ATMs and EFTPOS facilities from gambling venues	<p>No ATMs in clubs, pubs, casinos or race courses at all.</p> <p>There should not be any ATM or other banking facilities in clubs so that what money you take with you is all you can lose while in a club. This way you must leave the club to obtain money which may deter some gamblers. This would be a more responsible club!</p> <p>I suggest ATMs and EFTPOS be removed from club premises, as problem gamblers still access savings money from these machines even though they are not in gambling areas.</p>	22
ATMs and EFTPOS too close to gambling areas	<p>ATMs are not in gambling area but I can reserve a machine for 3 minutes and go to the ATMs, withdraw cash and be back in 2 minutes.</p> <p>The ATM is in the foyer just 10 metres from the gambling area. I see many people using the machine and going back into the gambling area.</p>	5
Limit ATM withdrawals	<p>A family member (sister's son) was able to draw from the ATM seven times in one gambling session. I would like to see a limit on how frequently an ATM can be used and a maximum amount that can be drawn any given day.</p> <p>I have seen one or two gamblers betting \$10 and upwards a go and staff looking on in fascination as the same gamblers go to an ATM and get another \$200 to bet.</p> <p>May help problem gamblers if ATM minimum draw in many clubs was \$10-\$20 Not \$40-\$50, i.e. they are forced to draw too much.</p>	11

5.2.8 Theme 8: Cheque Cashing Policies

Theme 8: Cheque Cashing Policies is shown in Table 5.8. Seven comments were critical of current cheque-cashing policies in clubs, with most wanting an outright ban. One respondent also pointed out that, while banks usually require two signatures to cash cheques from joint accounts, this was not the case at her club.

Table 5.8: Theme 8: Cheque Cashing Policies

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Criticisms of current policies	Cashing of cheques should be banned from all areas of the clubs. My husband’s story is somewhat different. We argue only over money, usually when he sneaks to the club and cashes cheques deliberately to hurt me. I don’t think clubs should cash cheques, period. They are not banks. Banks need two signatures sometimes and, in this case with clubs, I would want my signature also on our cheques.	7

5.2.9 Theme 9: Payouts, Prizes and Change Procedures

Table 5.9 focuses on Theme 9: Payouts, Prizes and Change Procedures, where 28 comments were provided, grouped into three sub-themes. Five comments criticised procedures for getting change in their club, with some noting that long queues and understaffing encouraged people to put larger notes into poker machines instead of waiting. Others noted their club seems to have a policy of providing many \$1 coins in the change given for other purchases, to encourage poker machine play. Nineteen respondents were critical of delays in getting machine payouts from venue attendants (up to half an hour) to redeem credits and for jackpots. This, they said, encouraged people to play off remaining credits or to play the machine next to them while waiting for a jackpot to be paid. This problem has been largely exacerbated by the removal of coin dispensing facilities on many machines, which many respondents claimed the clubs now seem to favour. Four additional comments advocated cheque payment of winnings, from \$50 and over.

Table 5.9: Theme 9: Payouts, Prizes and Change Procedures

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Delays in getting change	<p>Some clubs have machines that won't release any coins. The queues at the cashier is always long to force you into putting \$50 notes into the machines but you can't get \$50 out without calling an attendant.</p> <p>The club I attend seems to have an unspoken policy of never giving \$2 coins in loose change at the bar or TAB. In my experience I have frequently received up to 4 single dollar coins in change. Poker machine which accept coins take only \$1 coins.</p>	5
Delays in getting machine payouts	<p>Sometimes you can't get your credit out of the machine - you have to call an attendant - who can wait half an hour for them to turn up! It is psychologically programmed to spend what credit is left rather than wait for coupon then cash desk, etc- very, very bad.</p> <p>At the X Club, they take so long to pay jackpots I put more money into other machines while I am waiting. I am sure they do this so you gamble more.</p> <p>One of the 'tricks' clubs use is to limit the number of machines which accept coins, and to block machines from dropping coins as payouts.</p> <p>A major negative change is that the machines no longer pay out. This forces me to either continue playing until (a) all the money is gone (b) there is enough money in the machine to warrant waiting for an attendant to issue a pay docket. Invariably this results in my walking away having lost.</p>	19
Advocate cash payouts be reduced	<p>All pays over \$50 paid by cheque.</p> <p>All payouts over \$500 should be by cheque or collected the next day.</p>	4

5.2.10 Theme 10: Gambling by Intoxicated People

Five people offered comments on Theme 10: Gambling by Intoxicated People, as shown in Table 5.10. One noted s/he had never been refused alcohol while gambling, no matter how intoxicated, while four others noted that intoxication can lead to excessive gambling.

Table 5.10: Theme 10: Gambling by Intoxicated People

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Contribution of alcohol to excessive gambling	No matter how intoxicated, I have never been refused alcohol while playing poker machines, nor been advised to stop gambling. Anywhere! I'm not proud of my gambling habit. I haven't sought help for the reason that I keep telling myself that I can control the habit. However, with the help of a few beers all that goes clean out the door.	5

5.2.11 Theme 11: Self-Exclusion

Table 5.11 focuses on Theme 11: Self-Exclusion, where four comments were received. One wanted the procedure simplified, one wanted people to be able to have a family member excluded for gambling problems, one wanted the self-exclusion noted on the person's driver's license so they could not cash cheques or pawn goods, while the other noted that self-exclusion 'only works if you put your card in the machine'.

Table 5.11: Theme 11: Self-Exclusion

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Criticism of current self-exclusion procedures	Self-exclusion should be as simple as obtaining a form - freely available and in view of front counter - filling it in and signing it, enclosing your badge and depositing it in a box - this would spare people the embarrassment of having to confront management. Apart from self-exclusion, maybe a person's family should be able to exclude them as they are the innocent sufferers if a person has a gambling problem.	4

5.2.12 Theme 12: Gaming Venue Promotions

Theme 12: Gaming Venue Promotions received 18 criticisms. Half of these noted that winning promotions in the club required people to be on the premises when the prize was announced, thus encouraging people to stay for longer and to gamble more while they were waiting. The other half were critical that the style of promotions used offered significant inducements to gamble. Many saw such promotions as very much against the spirit of responsible gambling, even though their club has implemented other responsible gambling practices.

Table 5.12: Theme 12: Gaming Venue Promotions

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Promotions lead to longer gambling sessions	<p>The club has various ‘promotions’ going at all times - badge draws, etc. Most times the results of these are not drawn until late in the evening and this often keeps the compulsive gambler longer in the club regardless of any signs, clocks, counselling, whatever.</p> <p>I find the poker machines promotions at some clubs I go to are a very big incentive to stay longer; some go for up to 2 hours and you have to stay at the pokies to win. I do not think this is responsible.</p> <p>If the clubs didn’t advertise about winning a car on \$20 in their promotions I would not be there - to win a prize you must be present so you go there and spend time waiting, just in case your number will be called - so you are there playing the machines and gambling.</p>	9
Criticism of promotions as inducements to gamble	<p>They have many promotions on in the pokie area - where members are encouraged to put their club card in a machine to be able to win. Free drinks are given to pokie players and I was there once when the club was having trouble with its air conditioning - the other areas of the club such as the bistro had to swelter while all the cool air was pumped into the pokie area.</p> <p>Poker machines - everything they do today to get us to play. I believe it is a form of compulsive gambling. The way of the promise of a big win. The way of a prize win. The hype the club promotes - you play using your card and you get bonus points, then you buy tickets and you go into a cash draw! And some prizes - boat, car, etc. Keno - as above the allure of a big win. NSW Lottery, Lotto Pools, TAB- Horses, Footy, etc The clubs win, the government wins, patrons small dividends. We are all suckers- but we all go back for more.</p>	9

5.2.13 Theme 13: Gambling Venue Staff

Table 5.13 focuses on Theme 13: Gambling Venue Staff, where 13 comments were made. Eleven of these advocated more interventionist strategies by gambling venue staff, such as reminding people who have been playing a long time of the time or of how long they have been playing for; suggesting to gamblers that ‘they’ve had enough’ after a certain time; inviting such people in ‘for a friendly chat’ about the extent of their gambling; identifying problem gamblers and reporting them to supervisors; and banning problem gamblers who staff have identified. Two respondents emphasised the need for staff training in responsible gambling.

Table 5.13: Theme 13: Gambling Venue Staff

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Advocate increased intervention by gambling venue staff	<p>Why couldn't someone suggest to the gambler that perhaps they've had enough after a certain time.</p> <p>Supervisors and staff in all clubs know who the big gamblers are, but honestly does management ever care to invite these poor souls in for a friendly chat and tell them to cut back on their habit,? Not likely.</p> <p>I feel that there should be laws allowing supervision and action taken by the club to remove and ban patrons who exhibit signs of addiction to gambling.</p>	11
Importance of staff training in responsible gambling	<p>All clubs must create a safer gambling environment- education and training of staff is vital.</p> <p>Make sure all employees (regardless of whether floor or bar) are fully trained.</p>	2

5.2.14 Theme 14: Poker Machine Design

Theme 14: Poker Machine Design attracted 74 comments, grouped into 12 sub-themes, as shown in Table 5.14. Five people criticised the rapid rate of play on poker machines, either for not giving enough entertainment time for the money spent, or for not giving people 'time to think'. Eleven respondents advocated better and more prominent information on the odds of winning on poker machines. Three people thought the odds of winning should be changed, to make machines either less attractive to clubs or less attractive to players. Six people criticised the 'disappearance' of machines that take coins, seeing note acceptors as encouraging higher expenditure and making it difficult for the 'casual gambler' to spend just a few dollars. Some advocated for machines to take lower denomination notes (\$5), and for them not to accept higher denomination notes (\$50, \$100). Nine comments advocated reducing the maximum bet on machines. Four respondents considered multiple betting lines on machines as encouraging high expenditure, with increased spending since these machines were introduced. One also mentioned the psychological lure of seeing winning combinations come up on adjacent lines, encouraging them to bet on multiple lines each time. Seven people wanted machines to impose some time limit on playing, through automatic shutdown of the machine once a certain amount of losses has been incurred or after a certain time period. Losses and time spent playing could be monitored through membership cards inserted into machines. Six people criticised the large linked jackpots as encouraging irresponsible gambling, calling for smaller, but

perhaps more frequent jackpots. Thirteen respondents made comments relating to the frequency and ‘legitimacy’ of wins on machines. Two of these reflected ignorance of the way machines work, with these respondents thinking that the machines are ‘rigged’ or that wins or losses are controlled by a central switch. Four people considered that, if the win rate was more generous, then people would consider gambling as more entertaining, and that this would discourage people from betting large amounts to chase an elusive big win. That is, people need to spend large amounts to get the pleasure of a win. Two respondents felt that wins needed to be displayed minus the amount bet. Others just felt that the machines were too ‘tight’. One respondent saw cashless gaming as a way to limit losses on poker machines, while seven advocated more warnings on machines and better displays of information. These included regular warning messages on machine screens, displays in dollar amounts instead of credits, and displays showing how much has been won and lost and the percentage going to the government and the club. Two comments were made that the music, noise and flashing lights on machines were too enticing.

Table 5.14: Theme 14: Poker Machine Design

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Criticisms on the fast rate of play	<p>The play rate should be at a lower speed, to give people time to think.</p> <p>The machines sometimes are so tight that \$50 will only last about 10 minutes. I think this practice is wrong.</p>	5
Better information on the odds of winning	<p>If each machine had the odds of winning each prize maybe some machines may be avoided by those who need to be more careful with their money.</p> <p>I feel that if the odds of winning and also the totals of money contributed compared to what has been paid out would allow people to make a better educated decision on whether to gamble - this comment relates to poker machines, keno and lotto.</p> <p>Clubs, all of them, and pubs should have large signs at their front doors about the odds people can win against machines and other betting practices. More signs about chances of winning etc should be visible.</p>	11
Change the odds of winning	<p>It should be required by law that poker machines have a 60/40 or less split for payouts. That is it should pay out 40% of what is put in. The increased odds should make pokies less attractive to clubs.</p>	3
Criticism of note acceptors	<p>One thing that I think has increased the amount of money going into poker machines is the 'disappearance' of machines that take coins - most machines require a minimum of \$5 (note) to be inserted. Therefore immediately a casual gambler who may want to invest \$1 has to up the minimum by 500% in order to play.</p> <p>They should take away note only machines- sometimes there isn't even a machine that will take coins. It appears some pokies are programmed to reject \$5 notes which encourages gamblers to use higher denominations.</p>	6
Reduce the maximum bet	<p>I think there should be a \$1 limit to a bet. I've seen people betting \$5 or \$10 push and I strongly believe this encourages people (especially addicts) to keep chasing the big win which consequently means that for them it is no longer a 'bit of fun' but a 'real problem'.</p> <p>Betting credits are often 1, 5, 10, 20. Too big a gap. They should be in multiples of 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 20 so that smaller bets are possible. \$1 machines should be banned.</p>	9
Reduce the number of betting lines	<p>Years ago pokies only paid on the centre line; there were 5, 10 and 20 cent machines and one container lasted a long time. Then they changed to 3 then 5 lines and we started losing more money. The real problems started when they started the 1 cent machines with 20 play lines multiplied by 2, 5, 10, 20 etc. I find it impossible to play only 5, 10 or 15 lines because you always see the wins appear on the lines you are not playing. If you wish to change machines it's hard because there are always a few cents - you must play them one at a time. Every time I do that it seems as if that is when you get the 15 free games. I sometimes spend many more dollars just to get an even 5, 10, 15 or 20 cents to finish on. Some machines now play 25 lines. Where will it stop!</p>	4
Advocate time limits on machines	<p>If a club adopts a fair dinkum approach to the problems of gambling being poker machines or betting then adopt ideas such as restricting the amount patrons can invest by having a cut off point when losses hit a certain point - it is ridiculous to see fifty-dollar notes being inserted into cavernous hungry machines.</p> <p>Monitor members cards (that have to be put into machine) and after 3-4 hours (or less) tell them to get off machine, like on internet.</p>	7

<p>Criticisms of large (linked) jackpots</p>	<p>I feel that the linked jackpots add to problem gambling. People see this as another way to win lots of money - they also think that if they are betting more on their machine, it will increase the chance of winning the linked prize. Signs should tell people how the linked prizes work and what the chances of winning are.</p> <p>No machines with the growing jackpot figure above which goes up. I know people who play thinking they will win.</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>Criticisms of the win rate on machines</p>	<p>The changes to pokies that I have noticed is the government made the payouts smaller in an effort to reduce people playing but you still spend the same. Those who play thinking they will win money now seem to bet higher amounts to compensate for the smaller wins.</p> <p>Given the fact that clubs provide gambling facilities and also control gambling ideology, perhaps if the machines gave more wins (not very big ones) and people thought they were having more enjoyable little wins they would not spend as much trying to obtain the elusive decent win</p>	<p>13</p>
<p>Advocacy of cashless gaming</p>	<p>Clubs should introduce mandatory cards that patrons can charge/recharge with credits that have daily limits - say \$100 (daily limit should be 24 hrs.) All poker machines should work with these cards - not cash.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Need for warnings and more information displayed on machines</p>	<p>Every machine should be programmed as such that it should come up with warning signs as to how much you spend and how much you win. Also warnings should come up at intervals to warn of excessive gambling.</p> <p>Machines that show a dollars total, not credits would be better. Perhaps a progressive total bet per session could be displayed (most club members put their membership cards in).</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>Reduce music and noise of machines</p>	<p>I used to gamble in my younger years, - it got me in trouble. My view on it now is, people get sucked in by the bright flashing lights and the 'WIN' signs. There should be a limit on how much you can lose. Sometimes people think the next big win is around the corner, when in fact the odds are always against them.</p> <p>Music and noise made by the machines should be diminished. It hypes people up.</p>	<p>2</p>

5.2.15 Theme 15: Concern for Problem Gamblers and Those Affected

Table 5.15 focuses on Theme 15: Concern for Problem Gamblers and Those Affected, where 35 comments were made. Ten reflected general concerns about problem gambling in the community and amongst club patrons, with some noting it is more widespread and serious than usually realised. Fourteen people saw problem gambling as addiction, such that responsible gambling measures would have marginal effect in curbing the problem. Five people expressed their sympathy for problem gamblers, while six were concerned about its impacts on others, particularly children and families.

Table 5.15: Theme 15: Concern for Problem Gamblers and Those Affected

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
General concerns about problem gambling	<p>The incidence of dangerously irresponsible gambling is to my mind far greater than the general population realise and the real costs far higher.</p> <p>My wife and I are infrequent visitors to our club. Its main use for us is a dinner after both working and a \$5-\$10 flutter on the pokies. It is however easy to see the 'problem' gambler and there are many of them. All and every method used to help these people overcome their problem is applauded most heartily.</p>	10
Problem gambling as an addiction	<p>It is a terrible addiction. It's everywhere. There is NO responsible gambling for an addict.</p> <p>I believe that gamblers...only look for help when they themselves realise they have a problem, usually after they have gambled away every penny they had or they are unable to pay their debts. I really don't see how you can educate impulsive, addicted gamblers to practice responsible gambling.</p> <p>I come from a gambling background. It is addictive so choice has to come from the gambler.</p>	14
Sympathy for problem gamblers	<p>I feel sorry for anybody who does have a gambling problem. I go to the club fortnightly and see some people continuously putting money into the pokies - surely they need help. Surely the club is watching through their little black spy cameras.</p> <p>I have seen people who have trouble with gambling and it's a very sad thing.</p>	5
Concern for the impact of problem gambling on others	<p>It is family members of the gambler who suffer the most and this needs to be addressed. Children don't deserve this!</p> <p>Governments recognise that gambling can cause very serious problems for a small number of individuals and their families, and for that small number of individuals and their families, the problems are very significant. Problems extend from relationship breakdowns to crime, personal bankruptcies and in serious cases to suicide.</p> <p>The poker machines in clubs are making many, many people unhappy. A lot of pensioners are putting all their money in them. The poker machines are making many people sick, for guilt of throwing away their money. To stop playing the poker machines is harder than to give up cigarettes.</p>	6

5.2.16 Theme 16: Personal Experiences of Gambling Problems

Theme 16: Personal Experiences of Gambling Problems attracted 24 comments, grouped into two sub-themes - the respondent's own experiences and those of others close to them, as shown in Table 5.16. Thirteen people related their own experience of gambling problems, citing impacts such as stealing money, gambling away their 'nest egg', incurring debt, guilt and disappointment in themselves, low self-esteem, depression, illness, shortage of money for food, lying to family and friends, disruption to family life, disruption to employment, and threats to family relationships. Others mentioned some triggers for their excessive gambling. These included loss of a loved one, loneliness, drinking alcohol and meeting up with friends who gamble. While some respondents blamed their own lack of self-control, others blamed poker machine promotions, the random nature of the machines, major jackpots, and easy access to savings in bank accounts for their gambling problems. Three people asked for help to cure their gambling problems. An additional 11 people related experiences of others with gambling problems. These included family members, friends, acquaintances at the club, a police officer who deals with many incidences of domestic violence due to gambling, and a Lifeline counsellor who has witnessed a large increase in calls relating to gambling problems.

Table 5.16: Theme 16: Personal Experiences of Gambling Problems

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Own experiences with problem gambling	<p>The random nature of poker machines has been one of the major problems for me believing that the next spin of the reels will be a major win. I'm easily swayed to by the major jackpot falsely believing that I will be the next winner. I've put back rather than winning and consequently have lost an amount in excess of \$350,000 over five years. Most of my pension 'nest egg' - in fact I'm now in debt. If I don't stop I could lose family home. I'm a depressed and disappointed person. I've let myself down; worse I've let my wife and children down and robbed them of their rightful inheritance. I've conditioned myself to always believe that I will win, although each time I lose. Please do something- please, please, please. At the moment I believe gambling stakeholders - government, clubs, casino - only pay lip-service. They earn profit from our addiction.</p> <p>After completing this survey I (again) realise I do have a problem. I started going to clubs for socialisation. Divorced female, grown up children- can't really hang around pubs and discos. Clubs are relatively safe, easy place to have a meal and a drink even if I am alone. Too young for bingo or bowls, work full time and pokies seem to be my only relaxation. No longer able to play sport ie. netball. Tell me a better way to stay in touch with people. Better still help me to stop gambling.</p> <p>I like for someone to help me not gamble?</p>	13
Others' experiences with problem gambling	<p>For some people gambling is a real problem and as a police officer I have seen and been to a great deal of domestics where the problem is gambling-related. Any program to help these addicted people is a good initiative.</p> <p>Once I saw a man playing the pokies and his five children and his wife were behind a glass wall and looking at their father crying, because he lost all his money and he was using his club card and that upset me a lot because I wonder if that children and wife had any money after he left.</p> <p>When I began as Lifeline counsellor in 1981, I received hardly any calls about gambling problems. By the year 2000, such calls represented 80%.</p>	11

5.2.17 Theme 17: Problem Gambling as a Personal Responsibility

Forty-two comments make up Theme 17: Problem Gambling as a Personal Responsibility, presented in Table 5.17. These respondents generally felt that responsible gambling stemmed from the individual, their own attitude, decisions and self-control. Twelve people explicitly stated that it should not be a responsibility of gambling venues or government, while one was resentful of the time and money spent in assisting problem gamblers.

Table 5.17: Theme 17: Problem Gambling as a Personal Responsibility

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Controlling gambling is the individual's responsibility	<p>I think the responsibility is on the individual. You do know what you are doing and should accept your own problem if there should be one.</p> <p>I am sick and tired of having people who are irresponsible and do stupid acts (in this case gambling their money away) placing the blame on others or expecting others to babysit or control them. It is about time people took responsibility for their own actions and stopped blaming others for their own stupidity and lack of restraint or personal control. We waste too much time and money on these fools.</p>	42

5.2.18 Theme 18: Strategies to Control Gambling

Table 5.18 focuses on Theme 18: Strategies to Control Gambling, as commented on by 27 respondents. Strategies suggested, usually drawn from the respondent's own experiences, included only betting what you can afford to lose; taking a limited amount of money to the venue; quitting when a certain amount of winnings is gained; setting a time limit; setting a loss limit; playing only low denomination machines; leaving bank cards at home; instructing the doorman not to let them in the club again that day; setting a limit on bets per spin; going to the venue infrequently or only at set intervals (e.g. once a fortnight); only going to the venue when they have spare money; only playing with winnings; and buying the week's groceries and paying all bills before gambling. As well as these 'practical' strategies, others noted the use of self-control; thinking of what else the money could buy; thinking of gambling as entertainment rather than a means to make money; and expecting to lose and seeing winning as a bonus.

Table 5.18: Theme 18: Strategies to Control Gambling

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Suggestion to stay in control of gambling	<p>I play poker machines from time to time. I set myself a limit. If I lose I get up and leave. If I make a profit of only a few dollars I leave. I don't play more than 10 coins and only 1 cent machines.</p> <p>Each individual has to take some stops in their own aid such as only taking as much money as they can afford to lose, paying weekly bills and paying rent and stocking house with food and essentials before going gambling. Also if they leave their bank card at home they won't be able to get money out of EFTPOS. These are the measures I use and I find them very helpful.</p> <p>Please note in the last 10 years or so I have only taken \$10 to use on poker machines in any one time. If I ever won more than \$10, I replaced the \$10 I started with and continued on playing with whatever was over. If at any time I ever won more than \$100 I stopped playing.</p> <p>Responsible gambling by adults should be their responsibility. Their choice. No one holds a gun to their head and says play these pokies.</p>	27

5.2.19 Theme 19: Motivations for Gambling

Table 5.19 focuses on Theme 19: Motivations for Gambling. Of the 33 respondents who made comments on this, 17 noted the fun and entertainment aspects of gambling, eight gambled for relaxation, five noted many people gamble to relieve loneliness or boredom, while three said they enjoyed the social interaction.

Table 5.19: Theme 19: Motivations for Gambling

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Fun and entertainment	<p>My own personal view on gambling is that you never play to win, only to have fun, and that you only play with money you can afford to lose. It is hard to change the attitude of people who must win when they gamble, and will not stop until they do.</p> <p>People should understand that the playing poker machines should only be considered entertainment as the players of pinball and the game machines and not for the purpose of winning money.</p>	17
Relaxation	<p>A lot of people I know gamble to escape from the real world. They enjoy it - it relaxes them.</p> <p>I'm tired after work - I sometimes know I want a mindless activity that 'entertains' me for a while. I do have to work at home after my day actually at work. Some days I am so tired I know I will not work so I go to the club - have coffee, a few cigarettes and play the poker machines. I do not gamble heavily, will after I win a few dollars - sometimes I lose but I understand that before I go into the club. Overall it tends to even itself out financially, so it is not a problem. But I do see many people around who are 'serious' about their gambling, just as I see people like myself - having a relaxed time - not expecting to become rich - whiling away a few hours.</p>	8
Relieves loneliness or boredom	<p>A lot of gambling comes from boredom in my observation.</p> <p>Playing the pokies enables people who are lonely to go somewhere social - without necessarily being social. For females in particular, it is a place they can go where they are not approached by undesirable people. It is also an opportunity to have some time out from their daily responsibilities.</p>	5
Social interaction	<p>I go to the club for company. There is always someone to talk to. The gambling is secondary. A bit of fun.</p>	3

5.2.20 Theme 20: Other Suggestions

Some other suggestions were made to help in responsible gambling, as presented in Table 5.20. Four respondents mentioned the role of other types of gambling in problem gambling, three of these relating to bingo (or housie) and one to lotto and lotteries. Five respondents mentioned the potential of education and inculcating values of personal responsibility, living within your means, thrift, hard work, moderation in all things, and the like. Five comments were made about counselling for gambling problems, with all of these supportive of its potential effectiveness.

Table 5.20: Theme 20: Other Suggestions

Sub-Theme	Indicative Comments	No. of Comments
Suggestions for other types of gambling	Bingo does not help in the players going overboard in poker machine gambling. What about HOUSIE? Some clubs have large addicted groups. I feel lotto as such is more addictive and cannot understand why they do not have the same responsibilities as clubs. Why cannot we be told the true odds on lotto and lotteries?	4
The role of education in responsible gambling	Education at an early age will at least provide the knowledge necessary to refrain from joining the ranks of addictive gamblers. Present methods merely circle the problem and produce bandaid solutions. Persons must be taught to accept responsibility for their actions. If you want to have responsible gamblers...we should start early. Ages 15 and 16 year old and show them what is right and what is wrong.	5
The role of counselling in helping gambling problems	More and more compulsory counselling is needed. Counselling is definitely worthwhile. I feel depression and maybe counselling/ management training might also be very valuable to some people.	5

5.3 Conclusion

This section has presented and analysed the additional comments provided by the survey respondents. Three hundred and thirty-nine respondents provided 548 additional comments, which were grouped into 20 themes and 59 sub-themes. The comments related mainly to the priorities of governments and gambling venues, numbers of poker machines, venue opening hours, signage and information, the gambling environment, access to cash, payouts, prizes and change procedures, gambling by intoxicated people, self-exclusion, gambling promotions, staff training and intervention, poker machine design, problem gambling, controlled gambling, responsibility for gambling problems, and motivations for gambling. Of these comments, most were critical of governments and gambling venues in their focus on gambling, of some responsible gambling measures that are considered ineffective, of certain venue practices that entice people to gamble, and of many aspects of poker machine design. While there was a good deal of concern and sympathy about problem gambling, a sizeable minority of comments noted that responsible gambling starts with the individual. However, the vast majority of respondents appeared to consider that much more could be

done by gambling venues and the government to encourage responsible gambling and to minimise gambling problems.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Introduction

This final section of the report summarises the study's findings in five broad areas pertinent to the research aims and objectives – gambling amongst respondents, problem gambling amongst respondents, their awareness of responsible gambling measures, the perceived adequacy of these measures, and their perceived effectiveness. It also specifically addresses the two research objectives for this study. In doing so, the discussion draws on the quantitative and qualitative data provided by 954 members of ten clubs in the Sydney metropolitan area.

6.2 Gambling Amongst Respondents: Frequency, Preferences and Motivations

In considering the frequency of gambling, the survey respondents were active in utilising the poker machine, TAB and keno gambling facilities in their clubs. A little over half (53%) were found to gamble weekly or more often on at least one of these types of gambling, over one-third were found to be irregular gamblers (37%), while around 10% hardly or never participate in any of these three types of gambling.

Poker machine playing is by far the most frequent type of gambling amongst the respondents. Almost half (46%) reported they gamble at least weekly on poker machines, compared to 15% who engage in TAB gambling at least weekly, and 8% who play keno at least weekly. About three-quarters of respondents (73%) nominated poker machines as their most preferred type of gambling. Further, about 20% of regular poker machine players are also regular TAB gamblers and about 13% are also regular keno players.

Some insights into the popularity of gambling amongst the respondents emerged from analysing the qualitative data (additional comments) where numerous motivations for gambling were identified. These related to gambling for fun and entertainment, for relaxation, for social interaction, and to relieve loneliness and boredom.

6.3 Problem Gambling Among Respondents: Prevalence, Concerns and Attitudes

The sample captured many respondents (45.7%) who are experiencing some harm from their gambling, according to their scores on the Harm to Self Scale of the Victorian Gambling Screen

(VGS). However, for sampling reasons, these figures are not representative of the club population, either for the participating clubs or for clubs in general. Amongst the respondents:

- 19.5% were classified as problem gamblers. For the mail survey, these people were more likely to be regular poker machine players and regular TAB gamblers. For the on-site survey, problem gamblers were more likely to be regular poker machine players.
- A further 26.2% were classified as borderline problem gamblers. For the mail survey, these people were more likely to be male, regular poker machine players and regular TAB players. For the on-site survey, these people were more likely to be regular poker machine players.

54.3% were classified as non-problem gamblers.

Given the widespread experience of gambling problems amongst the respondents, it was not surprising that some of them (35) expressed concern in their additional comments about problem gambling in the community and amongst club patrons. Some noted it is more widespread and serious than is generally realised, some expressed sympathy for problem gamblers and their plight, while others were concerned about the impacts on children and families. This level of concern was also reflected in the quantitative results, where around 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the harm caused by gambling is as serious as the harm caused by alcohol, while around 97% agreed or strongly agreed that problem gambling causes serious harm to some gamblers and significant others. Therefore, it was consistent that over 70% agreed or strongly agreed on the government's role in providing support services for problem gambling. However, respondents were less committed to an opinion on the overall adequacy of their club's actions in preventing problem gambling. Nearly half neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement 'my club is not doing enough to stop problem gambling', with the remainder nearly equally divided in their agreement or disagreement with this statement.

Some respondents (13) related their own experience of gambling problems in their additional comments, citing impacts such as stealing money, gambling away their 'nest egg', incurring debt, guilt and disappointment in themselves, low self-esteem, depression, illness, shortage of money for food, lying to family and friends, disruption to family life, disruption to employment, and threats to family relationships. Others mentioned some triggers for their excessive gambling, including loss of a loved one, loneliness, drinking alcohol and meeting up with friends who gamble. While some respondents blamed their own lack of self-control, others blamed poker machine promotions, the

random nature of the machines, major jackpots, and easy access to savings in bank accounts for their gambling problems. Three people asked for help to address their gambling problems. Some people (11) related experiences of others with gambling problems. These included family members, friends, acquaintances at the club, a police officer who deals with many incidences of domestic violence due to gambling, and a Lifeline counsellor who has witnessed a large increase in calls relating to gambling problems.

Despite these concerns, some respondents (42) considered that responsible gambling stems from the individual, with some (14) considering problem gambling an addiction, such that responsible gambling measures would have marginal effect in curbing the problem. Some respondents (12) explicitly stated that responsible gambling should not be a responsibility of gambling venues or government, while one was resentful of time and money spent assisting problem gamblers. Reflecting this view of responsible gambling as a personal responsibility, many people offered a range of personal strategies to control gambling. These included only betting what you can afford; taking a limited amount of money to the venue; quitting when a certain amount of winnings is gained; setting a time limit; setting a loss limit; playing low denomination machines; leaving bank cards at home; instructing the doorman not to let them in the club again that day; setting a limit on bets per spin; going to the venue infrequently, at set intervals or only when they have spare money; only playing with winnings; buying groceries and paying all bills before gambling; thinking of what else the money could buy; thinking of gambling as entertainment rather than a means to make money; and expecting to lose and seeing winning as a bonus.

Nevertheless, while some respondents placed the onus for responsible gambling mostly on the individual gambler, the quantitative results suggest there is widespread support for the responsible gambling measures that the clubs have introduced (Section 4.4.2), while some additional comments relayed the view that the government (22) and gambling venues (26) prioritise revenue-raising and that they could do much more to encourage responsible gambling.

6.4 Awareness and Perceived Adequacy of Responsible Gambling Measures

This section summarises and integrates the quantitative and qualitative results relating to the awareness and adequacy of the clubs' responsible gambling measures, as perceived by the survey respondents. These results are presented according to the major practice areas on which this research has focused - responsible gambling signage and information, the gambling environment, access to

cash, restrictions on who can gamble, self-exclusion, responsible advertising and promotions, and gambling venue staff.

6.4.1 Responsible Gambling Signage and Information

The quantitative results revealed that there is a high level of recognition amongst the respondents of the clubs' signage and information. Signs advising patrons of the risks of gambling have been noticed by 86% of respondents, with over 70% also noticing signage about the club's responsible gambling house policy, G-Line counselling services, and problem gambling. Over 67% of respondents have noticed signs about the chances of winning a major poker machine prize. However, half or less of the respondents had seen player information brochures or signs about local counselling services. The level of recall about responsible gambling and problem gambling signage was also high (over 75%), as was the level of recall about problem gambling counselling services (71%), although only about one-quarter of respondents were able to recall information that clubs provide about how different types of gambling work.

However, while awareness of responsible gambling signage and information was reasonably high, respondents were less convinced that its provision encourages responsible gambling. When rated on its adequacy, the mean scores for questions relating to signage and information were around 3.5 (where 5 = strongly agree and 1 = strongly disagree), the lowest adequacy scores for any of the 13 practice areas. That is, of all the areas where clubs have introduced responsible gambling measures, signage and information were perceived to be the least likely to encourage responsible gambling.

This view was also borne out in many additional comments. While some respondents (9) generally praised the responsible gambling signage in gaming venues, seeing it as a positive move, others (30) felt it was ineffective, largely because people ignore signs, especially those who may be in denial about their gambling problems. Others criticised the signs for being non-confrontational, too familiar and easily ignored. Others saw problem gambling as an addiction, such that no amount of signage would make a difference. Some respondents (13) offered specific ways in which signs and information could be improved – placing large warning signs on each machine, responsible gambling information to accompany membership renewals, free responsible gambling seminars in clubs, case studies of problem gambling displayed in venues and their newsletters, multi-lingual signs, more prominent and attention-grabbing signs, and having brochures on display instead of patrons having to

ask for them. Some advocated more signage, while others advocated fewer but more effective signs. Others were critical that any impact of signs was overshadowed by large and enticing jackpot signs, illuminated machines and flashing lights.

6.4.2 The Gambling Environment

In terms of responsible gambling measures relating to the gambling environment, few respondents were able to recognise any measures their club had implemented to help people keep track of the time when playing poker machines, either through being able to see a clock (37%) or being able to see out of a window (13%). Further, 38% of respondents considered the lighting dim in poker machine areas, while up to one-third agreed they could play poker machines all day and all night at their club if they wanted to. These responses suggest that the clubs are not being particularly proactive in providing a gambling environment that encourages responsible gambling.

However, when the adequacy scores were computed, it is clear that, with mean scores of 3.7, the respondents on average agreed that responsible gambling is more likely to occur when a club's gambling areas have clocks and natural lighting to make people aware of the passage of time, and when a club shuts down gambling facilities for at least a few hours each day.

Again, these results were supported by the qualitative data. Numerous comments (42) were made about features of the gambling environment that respondents suggested could be improved to better facilitate responsible gambling. Some wanted more visible clocks (6), while others suggested brighter lighting (7) and windows so people are more aware of the passage of time while gambling (2). Some respondents wanted better segregation of gambling areas in venues (8), putting gaming machines 'out of sight, so out of mind' so they are not as visible and enticing. Others seemed to want better segregation so they could escape the sights and sounds of poker machines while visiting the club. Some respondents (12) advocated for clubs to offer a broader range of facilities and services as alternatives to gambling, with many criticising clubs for being little more than gambling dens. Suggestions included more entertainment, lounge facilities, recreational facilities, and family activities. Further, some respondents (18) advocated shorter opening hours for gambling venues. Some advocated shutting down the venues or their gambling facilities at certain intervals during the day, to force gamblers to take a break and think about their actions. Others saw shorter opening hours as a way to reduce gambling expenditure and therefore the financial problems experienced by

some gamblers. They suggested this would also encourage gamblers to spend more time on family, work and other responsibilities.

6.4.3 Access to Cash

The quantitative data revealed a low level of awareness about financial transactions policies that have been implemented in clubs to encourage responsible gambling. Over one-half of respondents were unsure about whether their club would cash personal cheques, cheques for over \$200 or multiple cheques for one person. Nearly one-half of respondents were also unsure whether the club would extend them credit to gamble with and about two-fifths were unsure whether they could be paid totally in cash for large gambling prizes. Naturally, these results would be expected if these respondents had never tried to access cash in these ways at their club. Nevertheless, the clubs do not appear to be communicating these policies to patrons particularly well through their signage. Further, up to half the respondents noted that their club has an ATM in its gambling areas, and about one-fifth noted the presence of EFTPOS facilities there. Further, two-thirds of respondents felt that the placement of these facilities does not encourage responsible gambling. This indicates little confidence in their placement outside of poker machine rooms as an effective responsible gambling measure.

Nevertheless, the responsible gambling measures relating to access to cash were strongly supported by the survey respondents. Mean adequacy scores were around 4.2 for not extending credit or cash advances for gambling, 3.9 for paying big wins by cheque, 3.8 for not cashing cheques for more than \$200, and 3.7 for placing ATMs and EFTPOS facilities away from gambling areas.

In the qualitative data, there were several aspects of financial transactions that drew criticisms from respondents and/or suggestions for improvements to better encourage responsible gambling. Some comments (7) were critical of current cheque-cashing policies in clubs, with most of these advocating an outright ban. Others (28) were critical of their club's procedures for issuing payouts, prizes and change. Some (5) noted that the long queues and understaffing at change counters encouraged people to put larger notes into poker machines instead of waiting. Others noted their club seems to have a policy of providing many \$1 coins in the change given for other purchases, to encourage poker machine play. Other respondents (19) were critical of delays in getting machine payouts from venue attendants (up to half an hour) to redeem credits and for jackpots. This, they

said, encouraged people to play off remaining credits or to play the machine next to them while waiting. This problem has been largely exacerbated by the removal of coin dispensing facilities on many machines, which many respondents claimed the clubs now seem to favour. A few respondents (4) advocated lower thresholds for cheque payment of winnings. Additionally, many comments (38) were made about the placement of ATMs and EFTPOS facilities in clubs. Many (22) advocated removing ATM and EFTPOS facilities from gambling venues, considering them obvious facilitators of over-spending on gambling. Some (5) felt they were too close to gambling areas, while others (11) suggested limiting their use in various ways. These included limiting the amount of cash that could be withdrawn, lowering the minimum withdrawal amount, limiting the number of withdrawals per day, and better controls by banks so daily withdrawal limits could not be exceeded.

6.4.4 Restrictions on Who Can Gamble

According to the quantitative results, there is not 100% compliance by the clubs with legislation restricting minors from entering gambling areas, with 10% of respondents noting they had seen minors in the gambling areas of their club. Further, 14% of respondents noted that, even if someone has been refused alcohol service due to intoxication, this does not always preclude them from gambling in the club. This flexibility in allowing intoxicated people to gamble was also noted by a few respondents (5) in their additional comments on the survey. Overall, the quantitative results show there is high awareness of restrictions on minors, but very low awareness of restrictions on intoxicated people gambling as responsible gambling measures.

However, preventing minors and intoxicated persons from gambling was rated the highest in the adequacy measure, with a mean score of 4.3. That is, the respondents agreed quite strongly that this measure is one that encourages responsible gambling.

6.4.5 Self-Exclusion

Awareness of self-exclusion programs in the clubs is low, with only about one-quarter of respondents having seen related signs in their club and around one-third claiming to know what they are. However, self-exclusion was ranked seventh out of 13 in the adequacy measure, with a mean score of 3.8. That is, the respondents generally agree that responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club provides a self-exclusion program.

This low awareness of self-exclusion programs was reflected in the additional comments, where only four people provided related comments. Of these, one wanted people to be able to have a family member excluded for gambling problems, one wanted the self-exclusion noted on the person's driver's license so they could not cash cheques or pawn goods, while another noted that self-exclusion 'only works if you put your card in the machine'.

6.4.6 Responsible Advertising and Promotions

According to the quantitative results, just over three-quarters of respondents had not seen any advertising by their club which they considered irresponsible. The majority were also satisfied that their club's advertising and promotions did not focus solely on gambling, and around one-half that reward points could be earned by using a range of the club's facilities and services, not just by gambling. However, only about one-third of respondents could nominate unaided how their club's advertising encouraged responsible gambling or discouraged problem gambling, while this figure was around 17% for their club's promotions. These results suggest that, while most respondents consider their club's advertising and promotions to be responsible, they do not see them as particularly proactive in encouraging responsible gambling.

Nevertheless, the respondents do consider that responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club conducts its gambling advertising and promotions in a responsible manner. The mean score on the adequacy measure was 3.8 and ranked fifth of all 13 practice areas.

The perceived importance of responsible advertising and promotions in encouraging responsible gambling was reflected in the qualitative data, where numerous respondents (18) were critical of club promotions in particular. Half of these noted that winning promotions required people to be on the premises when the prize was announced, thus encouraging people to stay for longer and gamble more. The other half were critical that the style of promotions used offered significant inducements to gamble. Many saw such promotions as very much against the spirit of responsible gambling, even though their club had implemented other responsible gambling practices.

6.4.7 Gambling Venue Staff

No questions were asked about awareness of the role of venue staff in responsible conduct of gambling, as it was felt that staff training, knowledge and skills in this area could not be readily

observed by patrons. However, the quantitative data revealed that respondents considered this the fourth most likely practice area to help encourage responsible gambling in clubs, with a mean score on the adequacy measure of 3.9. Further, the qualitative data somewhat reflected this perceived importance, where 13 comments were made. Eleven of these advocated more interventionist strategies by gambling venue staff, such as reminding people who have been playing a long time of the time or of how long they have been playing for; suggesting to gamblers that ‘they’ve had enough’ after a certain time; inviting such people in ‘for a friendly chat’ about their gambling; identifying problem gamblers and reporting them to supervisors; and banning problem gamblers who staff have identified. Two respondents emphasised the need for staff training in responsible gambling.

6.5 Perceived Effectiveness of Responsible Gambling Measures

The survey also aimed to measure the perceived effectiveness of the clubs’ responsible gambling measures, by asking the respondents whether these measures have changed certain aspects of their gambling. The quantitative results indicate that the clubs’ responsible gambling practices have had little effect on the way the vast majority of respondents think about their gambling, feel about their gambling, how often they gamble, how long they gamble for and how much they spend. However, this may not be a shortcoming of the responsible gambling measures, as most respondents were classified as non-problem gamblers. Thus, the percentages of respondents for whom the clubs’ practices have changed these aspects of their gambling in a ‘positive’ way were compared to the percentages of respondents who were classified as borderline and problem gamblers, and at whom these practices are primarily aimed. This comparison indicated that the proportion of people who reported that the measures had changed the way they feel about their gambling was similar to the proportion identified as borderline and problem gamblers. However, these proportions were much lower for respondents who reported that the measures had changed the others four aspects of their gambling. Thus, even if the borderline problem and problem gamblers in the sample accounted for all the observed changes in the way people feel about their gambling and their gambling behaviours (frequency, session length and expenditure), the clubs’ responsible gambling practices cannot be considered as being very effective for most problem gamblers or for most of those who are at risk.

Further, while about 18% of respondents indicated that their gambling behaviour had changed in terms of frequency, session length and expenditure, only 4.8% of respondents could nominate any of

their club's responsible gambling practices that had prompted this change. This may reflect that the remaining respondents consider their club's responsible gambling practices are ineffective in bringing about behavioural change, or it may reflect the difficulty of identifying a particular catalyst for any such change. Of those that could nominate measures they found to be effective in changing their gambling behaviour, the two most nominated were displaying the odds of winning a major prize on gaming machines and signage.

This perceived lack of effectiveness of the clubs' responsible gambling measures was also borne out in the qualitative data. While numerous suggestions were made to improve practices and procedures within the current scope of measures, as discussed in Section 6.4, the additional comments also advocated numerous measures which fell outside this scope. As such, they represent ways in which the respondents perceive that responsible gambling efforts could be made more effective. Two areas were prominent here that have not been previously discussed in this section – poker machine design and numbers of poker machines. Additionally, a small number of comments were made on the potential role of education in encouraging responsible gambling.

Certain aspects of poker machine design attracted numerous criticisms and suggestions (74), including:

- Criticisms on the fast rate of play (5).
- Better information on the odds of winning (11).
- Change the odds of winning (3).
- Criticism of note acceptors (6).
- Reduce the maximum bet (9).
- Reduce the number of betting lines (4).
- Advocate time limits on machines (7).
- Criticisms of large (linked) jackpots (6).
- Criticisms of the win rate on machines (13).
- Advocacy of cashless gaming (1).
- Need for warnings and more information displayed on machines (7).

Reduce music and noise of machines (2).

Some respondents (15) criticised the large number of poker machines in operation. Of these, some (10) advocated a large reduction in machine numbers as a responsible gambling measure, while others (5) wanted them banned altogether.

6.6 Differences in Awareness, Perceived Adequacy and Perceived Effectiveness of Responsible Gambling Measures Amongst Sub-Groups of Gamblers

This sub-section summarises the quantitative results of respondents, analysed for differences by sex, age groups, frequency of gambling on poker machines, the TAB and keno, and problem gambling category.

6.6.1 Differences by Sex

In terms of awareness of responsible gambling measures, few significant differences were apparent between the male and female respondents. Males were more aware of their club's cheque cashing policies than females, while females were more aware of clocks in the gambling areas of their club. No significant differences by sex were evident in perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures, or in the perceived effectiveness of these measures.

6.6.2 Differences by Age

In terms of awareness of responsible gambling measures, only one significant difference was apparent amongst different age groups of respondents. In the mail survey, younger and middle aged people were significantly more likely than older people to have noticed signs about G-Line counselling services in their club. This difference was also apparent in the on-site survey, but was not significant. No significant differences by age group were evident in perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures, or in the perceived effectiveness of these measures.

6.6.3 Differences by Poker Machine Playing Frequency

Regularity of gambling on poker machines was associated with higher levels of awareness of some responsible gambling measures, particularly relating to signage and information (house policy, signs

about the risks of gambling, signs about problem gambling, signs about winning the maximum prize on a gaming machine, player information brochures, signs about limited cash payments of large wins), the gambling environment (clocks, windows, lighting, ability to play poker machines continuously), placement of ATMs, partial cheque payment of large winnings and inability to obtain credit from the club for gambling. No significant differences by poker machine playing frequency were evident in perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures, or in the perceived effectiveness of these measures.

6.6.4 Differences by TAB Gambling Frequency

Regularity of gambling on the TAB was not associated with higher levels of awareness of any responsible gambling measures and no significant differences by TAB gambling frequency were evident in the perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures. In relation to the perceived effectiveness of these measures, the responsible gambling practices appear to have influenced regular (21.9%) and irregular (26.2%) TAB gamblers to gamble less often to some extent, compared to those who hardly or never gamble (14.0%). These practices also appear to have influenced 27.9% of irregular TAB gamblers to gamble for a shorter time to some extent, but fewer regular TAB gamblers (14.3%) and those who hardly or never gamble (18.9%). These differences were significant for the mail survey data, but not the on-site survey data.

6.6.5 Differences by Keno Playing Frequency

Regularity of gambling on keno was associated with higher levels of awareness of some responsible gambling measures, particularly relating to the club's cheque and credit policies. However, no significant differences by keno gambling frequency were evident in the perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures. For perceived effectiveness, the responsible gambling practices appear to have changed the way 22.7% of regular keno players feel about their gambling by making it less enjoyable to some degree. This has also occurred with 16.0% of irregular keno gamblers and 9.2% of those who hardly or never gamble on keno. These differences were significant for the mail survey data, but not the on-site survey data.

6.6.6 Differences by Problem Gambling Category (VGS Category)

Problem and borderline problem gamblers were more aware of some responsible gambling measures than non-problem gamblers. These comprised the club's policies prohibiting the provision of credit for gambling, that personal cheques cannot be cashed at the club, and that large poker machine winnings cannot be paid all by cash. However, problem gamblers and borderline problem gamblers were more likely than non-problem gamblers to have seen minors in gambling areas, and to have seen advertising or promotions by their club that they consider irresponsible. No differences were found in the respondents' opinions about the adequacy of these responsible gambling measures when compared by problem gambling category. However, problem and borderline problem gamblers were much more likely to agree or strongly agree that 'my club is not doing enough to stop problem gambling'.

In terms of perceived effectiveness, the mail survey data revealed that the responsible gambling practices in the clubs appear to have changed the way 53.7% of problem gamblers and 52.1% of borderline problem gamblers think about their gambling. They have also changed the way 23.2% of problem gamblers and 15.9% of borderline problem gamblers feel about their gambling by making it less enjoyable to some extent. The practices were also reported to influence 26.2% of problem gamblers and 26.3% of borderline problem gamblers to gamble less often, and 23.1% of problem gamblers and 26.8% of borderline problem gamblers to usually gamble for a shorter time. Additionally, the responsible gambling practices have influenced 24.2% of problem gamblers and 28.4% of borderline problem gamblers to spend less when they gamble. However, while these differences were significant for the mail survey data, no significant differences were found amongst participants in the on-site survey. However, for each of the five variables relating to perceived effectiveness (changes in the way the respondent thinks about their gambling, feels about their gambling, and changes in gambling frequency, session length and expenditure), higher proportions of problem and borderline problem gamblers were 'positively' affected by the responsible gambling measures than were non-problem gamblers.

6.7 Summary of Results for the Research Objectives

This sub-section summarises results for the two research objectives for this study, as articulated in Section 1.2 of this report.

6.7.1 Research Objective 1

The first research objective was to assess the perceived efficacy of current responsible gambling strategies in Sydney clubs by measuring the level of awareness of club patrons of their club's responsible gambling strategies (awareness), whether club members think their club's responsible gambling strategies are adequate in minimising harm and protecting consumers in gambling (perceived adequacy), and whether club members consider that their club's responsible gambling strategies have changed their gambling behaviour and in what ways (perceived effectiveness).

In terms of awareness of the club patrons surveyed of their club's responsible gambling strategies, the results indicate:

- There is a high level of awareness of the clubs' signage and information measures, particularly relating to signs advising patrons of the risks of gambling, the club's responsible gambling house policy, G-Line counselling services, problem gambling, and the chances of winning a major poker machine prize, but less awareness of player information brochures or signs about local counselling services. However, while awareness of responsible gambling signage and information was reasonably high, respondents were less convinced that its provision encourages responsible gambling. Many qualitative comments were sceptical about the potential effectiveness of signs and numerous suggestions for improvement were made.
- Few respondents were able to recognise any measures their club had implemented in the gambling environment to help people keep track of the time when playing poker machines, either through visible clocks or windows. Many considered the lighting dim in poker machine areas, while up to one-third agreed that they could play the poker machines continuously at their club if they wanted to. These responses suggest that the clubs are not being particularly proactive in providing a gambling environment that encourages responsible gambling. Numerous qualitative comments were made to improve the gambling environment to better encourage responsible gambling.
- There was a low level of awareness about financial transactions policies implemented in clubs to encourage responsible gambling, including the clubs' cheque cashing policies, credit policies and limits on paying large wins all in cash. Further, many respondents were critical of the placement of ATM and EFTPOS facilities in clubs, indicating little confidence in their placement outside of poker machine rooms (as required by law) as an effective responsible gambling measure.

- The results indicate there is not 100% compliance by the clubs with restrictions on minors entering gambling areas and preventing intoxicated persons from gambling. While there is high awareness of restrictions on minors, there is very low awareness of restrictions on intoxicated people gambling as responsible gambling measures.
- Awareness of self-exclusion programs in the clubs is low, with only about one-quarter of respondents having seen related signs in their club and around one-third claiming to know what they are.
- While most respondents consider their club's advertising and promotions to be responsible, they do not see them as particularly proactive in encouraging responsible gambling. Numerous criticisms of the role of club promotions in discouraging responsible gambling were relayed in additional comments provided by respondents. These focused on the role of these promotions in encouraging people to stay on club premises for long periods of time and the strong inducements to gamble that they offer.

In terms of the patrons' perceived adequacy of the club's responsible gambling strategies, the results indicate:

There was strong agreement that the clubs could contribute to responsible gambling by implementing their current responsible gambling measures. In descending order of agreement, the respondents indicated that responsible gambling is more likely to occur when a club prevents minors and intoxicated persons from gambling, does not extend credit or cash advances for gambling, pays all big wins by cheque instead of cash, has staff trained in responsible gambling practices, conducts its gambling advertising and promotions in a responsible manner, does not cash cheques for more than \$200, provides a self-exclusion program, shuts down gambling facilities for at least a few hours each day, ensures its gambling areas have clocks and natural lighting to make people aware of the passage of time, and places its ATMs and EFTPOS facilities away from gambling areas. However, there was lower level of agreement that responsible gambling is more likely to occur when a club provides information about odds of winning and game rules, displays signs and notices about problem gambling and responsible gambling, and displays contact details of gambling counselling services.

In relation to the club patrons' perceived effectiveness of the club's responsible gambling strategies, the results indicate the responsible gambling measures in the clubs have been effective in:

- changing the way 44% of respondents think about their gambling;

- changing the way 12% of respondents feel about their gambling, by making it less enjoyable;
- reducing the frequency that 18% of respondents gamble;
- reducing the length of time that 17% of respondents usually gamble for;
- reducing the usual gambling expenditure of 19% of respondents.

However, while the above results indicate that the clubs' responsible gambling measures have been somewhat effective, the percentages of respondents who have changed the way they feel about their gambling and who have changed the frequency, session length and expenditure on gambling are much lower than the 45.7% of respondents classified as borderline problem or problem gamblers on the VGS Harm to Self Scale. Thus, the clubs' responsible gambling practices cannot be considered as being very effective for most problem gamblers or for most of those who are at risk. Further, the many suggestions in the qualitative data for improvements to responsible gambling efforts reflect that the respondents consider that much more could be done to encourage responsible gambling.

6.7.2 Research Objective 2

The second research objective was to assess the perceived efficacy of current responsible gambling strategies in Sydney clubs for different subsets of gamblers, including 'at-risk' and 'recreational' gamblers, men compared to women, different age groups and those who participate in different forms of club gambling (gaming machines, TAB, keno).

To compare 'at-risk' and 'recreational' gamblers, the VGS Harm to Self Scale was used to categorise respondents into problem, borderline problem and non-problem gamblers. In terms of awareness of responsible gambling practices, problem and borderline problem gamblers were more aware of some responsible gambling measures than non-problem gamblers, specifically the club's policies prohibiting the provision of credit for gambling, that personal cheques cannot be cashed at the club, and that large poker machine winnings cannot be paid all in cash. However, they were also more likely to have seen advertising or promotions by their club that they consider irresponsible. No differences were found in the perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures when compared by problem gambling category. In terms of perceived effectiveness, the responsible gambling practices in the clubs appear to have changed the way about half of problem and borderline problem gamblers think about their gambling. They have also changed the way about one-quarter of problem

gamblers and one-sixth of borderline problem gamblers feel about their gambling by making it less enjoyable to some extent. The practices were also reported to influence about one-quarter of problem and borderline problem gamblers to gamble less often, to usually gamble for a shorter time and to spend less when they gamble.

When males were compared to females, few significant differences were apparent relating to awareness of their club's responsible gambling practices. Males were more aware of their club's cheque cashing policies than females, while females were more aware of clocks in the gambling areas of their club. No significant differences by sex were evident in perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures, or in the perceived effectiveness of these measures.

No differences were apparent in awareness, perceived adequacy and perceived effectiveness when different age groups were compared, except that younger and middle aged people were significantly more likely than older people to have noticed signs about G-Line counselling services in their club.

When the data were compared for frequency of playing poker machines, more regular playing was associated with higher levels of awareness of some responsible gambling measures, particularly relating to signage and information (house policy, signs about the risks of gambling, signs about problem gambling, signs about winning the maximum prize on a gaming machine, player information brochures, signs about limited cash payments of large wins), the gambling environment (clocks, windows, lighting, ability to play poker machines continuously), placement of ATMs, partial cheque payment of large winnings and inability to obtain credit from the club for gambling. No differences were evident in the perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures, or in the perceived effectiveness of these measures by poker machine playing frequency.

Frequency of gambling on the TAB was not associated with higher levels of awareness of any responsible gambling measures or any differences in the perceived adequacy of responsible gambling measures. However, the responsible gambling practices appear to have influenced about one-fifth of regular and about one-quarter of irregular TAB gamblers to gamble less often, and about one-quarter of irregular and one-seventh of regular TAB gamblers to gamble for a shorter time. No other significant differences were found for frequency of TAB gambling.

Frequency of gambling on keno was associated with higher levels of awareness of some responsible gambling measures, particularly relating to their club's cheque and credit policies. However, no significant differences by keno gambling frequency were evident in the perceived adequacy of

responsible gambling measures. For perceived effectiveness, the responsible gambling practices appear to have changed the way about one-fifth of regular keno players feel about their gambling by making it less enjoyable to some degree. This has also occurred with one-sixth of irregular keno gamblers. No other significant differences were found for frequency of keno gambling.

6.8 Concluding Comments

It is not the intention of this report to make recommendations. However, the following observations are offered to help guide policy and to improve current responsible gambling efforts.

- Clearly, gambling problems are prevalent amongst club patrons. While the prevalence rates found in this study are not representative of the population, it is alarming that one-third of patrons who happened to be on club premises and agreed to participate in the on-site survey when it was conducted have experienced problems with their gambling in the previous 12 months.
- There is a tendency amongst some clubs to adhere to only the minimum responsible gambling requirements. Voluntary practices that transcend the law appear to be less widely practised. Many of these relate to the environment in gambling areas, including having windows, adequate lighting, and encouraging breaks in play. Others relate to promotions that provide strong inducements to gamble. Another is signage on self-exclusion and local counselling services. Clearly, without the incentive of legislation, some responsible gambling practices will be ignored by some gambling venues.
- Further, some clubs appear not to be compliant even with some legal obligations in responsible gambling, specifically relating to allowing minors and intoxicated people in gambling areas. Yet, these are measures that people consider as very important in encouraging responsible gambling.
- Given the above points, there remains a good deal of scepticism about whether the clubs are truly embracing responsible gambling and practising effective patron care. While many responsible gambling measures have been implemented, other venue practices are perceived as very much against the spirit of responsible gambling (e.g. promotions, ATMs very close to gaming areas, gambling room features that discourage responsible gambling), and are therefore detracting from the positive efforts made.
- There is widespread concern amongst club patrons about problem gambling and they generally

support the responsible gambling efforts so far. However, they also feel that much more could be done by both gambling venues and government. Poker machine design is certainly an area where people feel improvements could be made.

- While this community concern remains, there is a need for further evidence of the effectiveness of current responsible gambling measures and research into ways that these measures might be improved.

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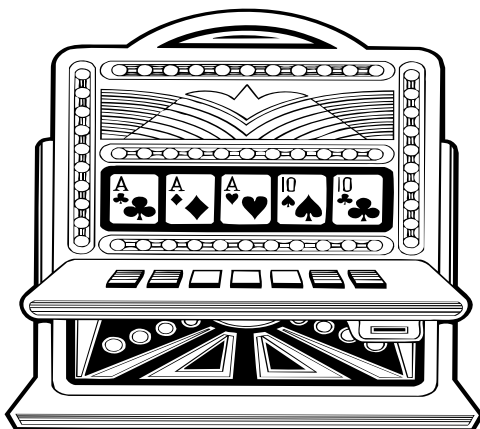
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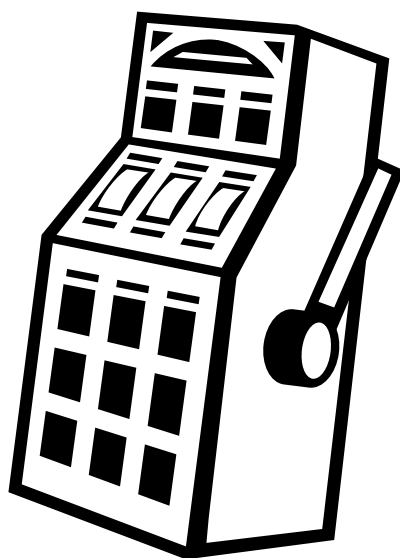
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8. APPENDICIES

APPENDIX A: TYPE 1 SURVEY INSTRUMENT
Responsible Gambling Practices in Clubs
A study of opinions of Sydney club members



*This study
is the first of its kind
conducted to better understand
how Sydney club members feel about
responsible gambling practices in their clubs.
The results will enable your clubs to improve their
responsible gambling practices if necessary. Please
answer all of the questions. If you wish to make
any additional comments, please use the space
provided on the back page or attach
additional pages. Your comments
will be read and taken
into account.*



Please address all correspondence to:

Southern Cross University • Responsible Gambling Survey • Attention: Dr
Nerilee Hing • Reply Paid 157 • LISMORE NSW 2480

SECTION 1: FIRSTLY, WE WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOURSELF. THIS WILL HELP US TO ANALYSE THE SURVEY RESULTS.

1 About how often do you gamble on each of the following activities? (*tick one box on each line*)

	Nearly every day	Couple of times a week	Once a week	Once a fortnight	Once a month	Once every few months	Hardly at all/ Never
Poker machines <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
TAB betting <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Keno <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

2 Which one of the following 3 types of club gambling do you most prefer? (*tick one box only*)

-Poker machines
TAB betting
Keno
Don't gamble on any of them

3 What is your age? (*tick one box only*)

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 19 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 40 - 44 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 65 - 69 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20 - 24 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 45 - 49 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 70 -74 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 29 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 50 - 54 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 - 79 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30 - 34 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 - 59 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 80 - 84 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 39 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 - 64 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 85 years or over |

4 What is your sex? (*tick one box only*)

- Male
 Female

OUR NEXT FEW SECTIONS ARE ABOUT RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING.
RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING MEANS TO GAMBLE WITHOUT CAUSING HARM TO YOURSELF, OR TO OTHERS AROUND YOU SUCH AS FAMILY AND FRIENDS.
WE ARE INTERESTED TO KNOW WHETHER YOU HAVE NOTICED WHAT YOUR CLUB HAS BEEN DOING TO ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING AND WHAT YOU THINK OF IT.

SECTION 2: THIS SECTION ASKS ABOUT YOUR AWARENESS OF YOUR CLUB'S RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING PRACTICES.

5 For the questions below, please circle 'YES', 'NO' or 'NOT SURE' to indicate whether you have seen each of the following responsible gambling practices in your club.

- Have you seen a responsible gambling house policy displayed in your club? Yes No Not sure
- Have you seen signs in your club that advise patrons of the risks of gambling? Yes No Not sure
- If you can remember one of the signs about the risks of gambling, what does it say?

- Have you seen signs about problem gambling in your club? Yes No Not sure
- If you can remember one of the signs about problem gambling, what does it say?

- Are there signs in your club's poker machine areas about the chances of winning the maximum prize on a poker machine? Yes No Not sure
- Are there player information brochures available in gambling areas in your club? Yes No Not sure
- Have you seen signs about G-Line counselling services in your club? Yes No Not sure
- Have you seen signs about local gambling counselling services in your club? Yes No Not sure
- When you are playing the pokies in your club, can you see the time on a clock without getting up? Yes No Not sure
- When you are playing the pokies in your club, can you see out of a window without getting up? Yes No Not sure
- Is the lighting around the pokies dim (not very bright) in your club? Yes No Not sure
- If you want to, can you play the pokies all day and all night at your club? Yes No Not sure
- If someone has paid you by cheque for some work you did for them, can you cash it at your club? Yes No Not sure
- If you wrote out a cheque for \$300, could you cash it at your club? Yes No Not sure
- Can you cash more than one cheque per day at your club? Yes No Not sure
- Have you seen signs in your club about any limits on cashing cheques? Yes No Not sure
- Can you borrow money or get a cash advance for gambling from your club? Yes No Not sure
- Have you seen signs in your club about any limits on borrowing money or getting a cash advance from the club for gambling? Yes No Not sure
- Does your club have ATMs in any of its gambling areas? Yes No Not sure
- Does your club have EFTPOS facilities in any of its gambling areas? Yes No Not sure
- If you won \$3,000 on the pokies, would your club pay it all to you in cash? Yes No Not sure
- Have you seen signs at your club about any limits on paying poker machine winnings in cash? Yes No Not sure
- Have you seen anyone under 18 years of age in the gambling areas at your club? Yes No Not sure
- If someone is refused a drink by staff at your club because they are intoxicated (drunk), can

- | | | | |
|--|-----|----|----------|
| they still go and play the pokies? | Yes | No | Not sure |
| • Have you seen signs at your club about a self-exclusion program? | Yes | No | Not sure |
| • Do you know what a self-exclusion program is? | Yes | No | Not sure |
| • If yes, please briefly describe how you think your club's self-exclusion program works | | | |
| _____ | | | |
| _____ | | | |
| • Does your club advertise its gambling facilities outside the club (eg: through newspapers, radio, TV, the internet, cinema, brochures or outdoor signs)? | Yes | No | Not sure |
| • If yes, have you seen notices about problem gambling on your club's written advertising? ... | Yes | No | Not sure |
| • If you can remember one of these problem gambling notices, what does it say? | | | |
| _____ | | | |
| • Have you seen any advertising by your club that mentions <i>only</i> gambling? | Yes | No | Not sure |
| • Inside the club, have you seen any advertising or promotions that mention <i>only</i> gambling? | Yes | No | Not sure |
| • Have you seen any gambling-related advertising or promotion by your club that you consider irresponsible? | Yes | No | Not sure |
| • Does your club ever give you free or cheap drinks when you are gambling? | Yes | No | Not sure |
| • Does your club ever give you free credits on the pokies? | Yes | No | Not sure |
| • Can you earn bonus reward points at your club by purchasing a range of goods and services (not just gambling)? | Yes | No | Not sure |

SECTION 3: THIS SECTION ASKS FOR YOUR OPINIONS ON THE ADEQUACY OF RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING PRACTICES.

6 Please indicate, by circling one response to each question, the extent to which you agree with the following statements about gambling.

• The harm that gambling can cause is as serious as the problems caused by alcohol	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Gambling can cause serious harm to some players and to their families and friends	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• The government is doing the right thing by providing services for problem gamblers and their families	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• My club is not doing enough to stop problem gambling	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

7 Please indicate, by circling one response to each question, the extent to which you agree with the following statements about responsible gambling practices in clubs.

• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club displays signs and notices about problem gambling and responsible gambling	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club provides information about odds of winning and game rules	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club displays contact details of gambling counselling services ...	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club's gambling areas have clocks and natural lighting to make people aware of the passage of time	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club shuts down gambling facilities for at least a few hours each day	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club does not cash cheques for more than \$200	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club does not extend credit or cash advances for gambling	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club places its ATMs and EFTPOS facilities away from gambling areas	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club pays all big wins by cheque instead of cash	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club prevents minors and intoxicated persons from gambling	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club provides a self-exclusion program	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when club staff are trained in responsible gambling practices	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club conducts its gambling advertising and promotions in a responsible manner	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

SECTION 4: THIS SECTION ASKS FOR YOUR OPINIONS ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING PRACTICES.

Please answer the following questions about the responsible gambling practices in your club by circling one response to each question. Responsible gambling practices include all those we have asked you about so far in this survey. These include signs and notices about problem gambling and responsible gambling, limits on accessing cash for gambling, having clocks and windows in gambling areas, preventing minors and intoxicated people from gambling, self-exclusion programs, and restrictions on advertising and promoting gambling.

We want to know whether this has affected YOU in any way.

8 Have the responsible gambling practices in your club changed the way you think about your own gambling?

Yes, a lot Yes, quite a lot Yes, somewhat Yes, but only a little No, not at all

9 Have the responsible gambling practices in your club changed the way you feel about your own gambling, in terms of how much you enjoy gambling?

Much less enjoyable Somewhat less enjoyable No change Somewhat more enjoyable Much more enjoyable

10 Have the responsible gambling practices in your club changed how often you gamble?

Now gamble much less often Now gamble a little less often No change Now gamble a little more often Now gamble much more often

11 Have the responsible gambling practices in your club changed how long you usually gamble for when you visit your club?

Now gamble for a much shorter time Now gamble for a somewhat shorter time No change Now gamble for a somewhat longer time Now gamble for a much longer time

12 Have the responsible gambling practices in your club changed how much you usually spend on gambling when you visit your club?

Now spend much less Now spend somewhat less No change Now spend somewhat more Now spend much more

13 Unless you answered ‘NO CHANGE’ to any of the last 3 questions, were there any particular notices or signs or any other responsible gambling practices that you think were most important in changing how often you gamble, how long you gamble for, or how much you spend on gambling? Please write those practices here.

SECTION 5: THIS SECTION ASKS ABOUT YOUR OWN PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF GAMBLING.

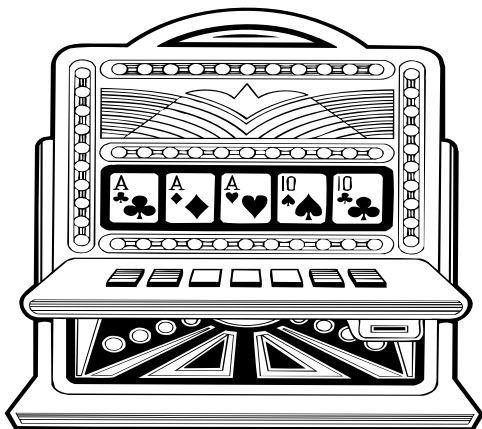
14 If you have not gambled at all in the last 12 months, **DO NOT ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS** and please proceed to the back page if you wish to make any additional comments.

If you have gambled in the last 12 months, **PLEASE ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS.** Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. We wish to know what you have experienced.

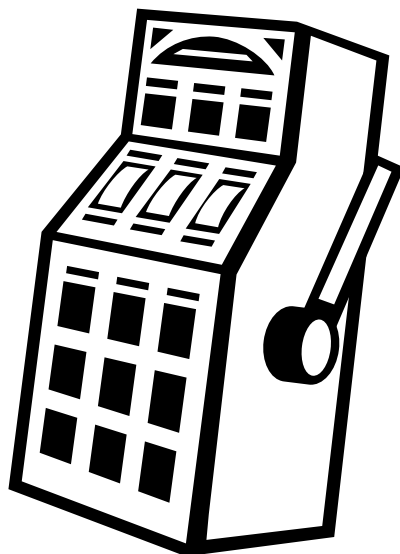
Please answer the following questions in relation to the last 12 months, by circling one response for each question.

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------|--------|-----------|-------|--------|
| • Nowadays, when you gamble, do you feel as if you are on a slippery slope and can't get back up again? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Has your need to gamble been too strong to control? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Has gambling been more important than anything else you might do? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Have you felt that after losing you must return as soon as possible to win back any losses? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Has the thought of gambling been constantly in your mind?... | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Have you lied to yourself about your gambling? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Have you gambled in order to escape from worry or trouble?.. | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Have you felt bad or guilty about your gambling? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Have you thought you shouldn't gamble or should gamble less? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • How often has anyone close to you complained about your gambling? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • How often have you lied to others to conceal the extent of your involvement in gambling? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • How often have you hidden betting slips, Lotto tickets, gambling money or other signs of gambling from your spouse, partner, children or other important people in your life? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • How often have you spent more money on gambling than you can afford? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • How often has your gambling made it harder to make money last from one payday to the next? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • How often have you had to borrow money to gamble with? ... | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |

APPENDIX B: TYPE 2 SURVEY INSTRUMENT
Responsible Gambling Practices in Clubs
A study of opinions of Sydney club members



*This study
is the first of its kind
conducted to better understand
how Sydney club members feel about
responsible gambling practices in their clubs.
The results will enable your clubs to improve their
responsible gambling practices if necessary. Please
answer all of the questions. If you wish to make
any additional comments, please use the space
provided on the back page or attach
additional pages. Your comments
will be read and taken
into account.*



Please address all correspondence to:

Southern Cross University • Responsible Gambling Survey • Attention: Dr
Nerilee Hing • Reply Paid 157 • LISMORE NSW 2480

SECTION 1: FIRSTLY, WE WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOURSELF. THIS WILL HELP US TO ANALYSE THE SURVEY RESULTS.

1 About how often do you gamble on each of the following activities? (*tick one box on each line*)

	Nearly every day	Couple of times a week	Once a week	Once a fortnight	Once a month	Once every few months	Hardly at all/ Never
Poker machines <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
TAB betting <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Keno <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

2 Which one of the following 3 types of club gambling do you most prefer? (*tick one box only*)

-Poker machines
TAB betting
Keno
Don't gamble on any of them

3 What is your age? (*tick one box only*)

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 19 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 40 - 44 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 65 - 69 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20 - 24 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 45 - 49 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 70 - 74 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 29 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 50 - 54 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 - 79 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30 - 34 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 - 59 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 80 - 84 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 39 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 - 64 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 85 years or over |

4 What is your sex? (*tick one box only*)

- Male
 Female

OUR NEXT FEW SECTIONS ARE ABOUT RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING.
RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING MEANS TO GAMBLE WITHOUT CAUSING HARM TO YOURSELF, OR TO OTHERS AROUND YOU SUCH AS FAMILY AND FRIENDS.
WE ARE INTERESTED TO KNOW WHETHER YOU HAVE NOTICED WHAT YOUR CLUB HAS BEEN DOING TO ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING AND WHAT YOU THINK OF IT.

6 What signs about problem gambling and responsible gambling have you seen at your club? Please list here all the signs you can recall.

7 What player information is provided by your club about how different types of gambling work? Please list here all the types of player information you can recall.

8 Do you know of any gambling counselling services which you could seek help from if you wanted to? Please list here all the counselling services you can recall.

9 Have the gambling areas or rooms at your club changed at all to help encourage responsible gambling? Please describe here any changes you have noticed.

10 Does your club have any restrictions on who can gamble at the club? If so, please list here the types of people who are restricted.

11 Do any aspects of your club's advertising encourage responsible gambling or discourage problem gambling? If so, please describe these here.

12 Do any aspects of your club's internal promotions encourage responsible gambling or discourage problem gambling? If so, please describe these here.

13 Does your club have any restrictions on cheque cashing? If so, please describe these restrictions here.

14 Does your club have any restrictions on extending credit or providing cash advances to patrons? If so, please describe these restrictions here.

15 Does your club have any restrictions on paying gambling prizes in cash? If so, please describe these restrictions here.

16 Does the placement of ATMs and EFTPOS facilities in your club encourage responsible gambling? If so, please explain how their placement does this.

17 Does your club have signs about a self-exclusion program? If so, please describe how you think this self-exclusion program works.

SECTION 3: THIS SECTION ASKS FOR YOUR OPINIONS ON THE ADEQUACY OF RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING PRACTICES.

18 Please indicate, by circling one response to each question, the extent to which you agree with the following statements about gambling.

- | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| • The harm that gambling can cause is as serious as the problems caused by alcohol | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| • Gambling can cause serious harm to some players and to their families and friends | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| • The government is doing the right thing by providing services for problem gamblers and their families | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| • My club is not doing enough to stop problem gambling | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |

19 Please indicate, by circling one response to each question, the extent to which you agree with the following statements about responsible gambling practices in clubs.

- | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| • Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club displays signs and notices about problem gambling and responsible gambling | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| • Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club provides information about odds of winning and game rules | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| • Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club displays contact details of gambling counselling services ... | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| • Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club's gambling areas have clocks and natural lighting to make people aware of the passage of time | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| • Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club shuts down gambling facilities for at least a few hours each day | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| • Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club does not cash cheques for more than \$200 | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| • Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club does not extend credit or cash advances for gambling | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |

• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club places its ATMs and EFTPOS facilities away from gambling areas	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club pays all big wins by cheque instead of cash	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club prevents minors and intoxicated persons from gambling	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club provides a self-exclusion program	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when club staff are trained in responsible gambling practices	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
• Responsible gambling is more likely to happen when a club conducts its gambling advertising and promotions in a responsible manner	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

SECTION 4: THIS SECTION ASKS FOR YOUR OPINIONS ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING PRACTICES.

Please answer the following questions about the responsible gambling practices in your club by circling one response to each question. Responsible gambling practices include all those we have asked you about so far in this survey. These include signs and notices about problem gambling and responsible gambling, limits on accessing cash for gambling, having clocks and windows in gambling areas, preventing minors and intoxicated people from gambling, self-exclusion programs, and restrictions on advertising and promoting gambling.

We want to know whether this has affected YOU in any way.

20 Have the responsible gambling practices in your club changed the way you think about your own gambling?

Yes, a lot Yes, quite a lot Yes, somewhat Yes, but only a little No, not at all

21 Have the responsible gambling practices in your club changed the way you feel about your own gambling, in terms of how much you enjoy gambling?

Much less enjoyable Somewhat less enjoyable No change Somewhat more enjoyable Much more enjoyable

22 Have the responsible gambling practices in your club changed how often you gamble?

Now gamble much less often Now gamble a little less often No change Now gamble a little more often Now gamble much more often

23 Have the responsible gambling practices in your club changed how long you usually gamble for when you visit your club?

Now gamble for a much shorter time Now gamble for a somewhat shorter time No change Now gamble for a somewhat longer time Now gamble for a much longer time

24 Have the responsible gambling practices in your club changed how much you usually spend on gambling when you visit your club?

Now spend much less Now spend somewhat less No change Now spend somewhat more Now spend much more

25 Unless you answered 'NO CHANGE' to any of the last 3 questions, were there any particular notices or signs or any other responsible gambling practices that you think were most important in changing how often you gamble, how long you gamble for, or how much you spend on gambling? Please write those practices here.

SECTION 5: THIS SECTION ASKS ABOUT YOUR OWN PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF GAMBLING.

26 If you have not gambled at all in the last 12 months, **DO NOT ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS** and please proceed to the back page if you wish to make any additional comments.

If you have gambled in the last 12 months, **PLEASE ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS.** Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. We wish to know what you have experienced.

Please answer the following questions in relation to the last 12 months, by circling one response for each question.

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------|--------|-----------|-------|--------|
| • Nowadays, when you gamble, do you feel as if you are on a slippery slope and can't get back up again? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Has your need to gamble been too strong to control? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Has gambling been more important than anything else you might do? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Have you felt that after losing you must return as soon as possible to win back any losses? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Has the thought of gambling been constantly in your mind?... | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Have you lied to yourself about your gambling? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Have you gambled in order to escape from worry or trouble?.. | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Have you felt bad or guilty about your gambling? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • Have you thought you shouldn't gamble or should gamble less? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • How often has anyone close to you complained about your gambling? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • How often have you lied to others to conceal the extent of your involvement in gambling? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • How often have you hidden betting slips, Lotto tickets, gambling money or other signs of gambling from your spouse, partner, children or other important people in your life? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • How often have you spent more money on gambling than you can afford? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • How often has your gambling made it harder to make money last from one payday to the next? | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| • How often have you had to borrow money to gamble with? ... | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |

- How often have you had to borrow money to gamble with? ...

APPENDIX C: ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY SURVEY RESPONDENTS

C.1 Government Priorities in Gambling

Twelve comments were critical that the government's gambling policy prioritises revenue-raising:

- Gambling in most states in Australia is more accessible than ever before. Clubs, pubs, casinos, TABs, etc., federal and state governments willingly pursue the revenue that gambling creates. They then put back a tiny percentage in counselling and advertising.
- I still hear people talking in clubs that a good pokie win will change their lives. They still seem unaware they are a government revenue making machine and are designed to take more money than they give out.
- The Government sux. It only wants taxes.
- My concern is that state governments are hooked on gambling for revenue. Perhaps their need for gambling income is a greater problem than many other gambling related problems i.e. if they can break their reliance and decrease the huge exposure to gambling in our community.
- Only a government can stop this. Ours has vested interest in allowing the problem to continue and indeed grow.
- Government could ban pokies - doubtful as they generate too much revenue.
- Responsible gambling is more of a problem now than when I first started. It is harder to get those lucky jackpots. This has been brought about by the government, who I find at fault with this social problem. Increasing taxes within NSW has forced clubs to reduce by way of programming pokies for less win %. The rising costs of employment, insurances and work cover insurances have brought this on.
- My main problem with gambling in NSW (Aust.) is the contradictions in government control; i.e. the revenue gained from gambling by state governments is not in total (or close to) spent on responsible gambling programs. As with smoking our government would 'hurt' if they did not receive this revenue and therefore are hypocritical.
- Damn the greedy Carr government.
- I know it is impossible to win if one regularly gambles. Just see how much of the State Government budget is now dependent on gambling taxes.
- The government got greedy and takes more and we give more to try to get a return.
- I sincerely feel that the government is doing absolutely nothing about the problem. They rely heavily on the taxes derived (pokie taxes).

Four respondents advocated tighter controls on the accessibility of gambling:

- There is no way to control gambling except to take it away all together. If you take away the temptation there is no risk of gambling.
- I believe that the government(s) should take more responsibility in the issue (limited) of poker machine licences - such things as banning the transfer of licences from one gambling venue to another, stricter limits on the number of licences issued, etc.
- The social problems that gambling creates should not have to be addressed after the damage has been done. It should be done before it happens. This can only happen if governments limit the access to gambling, but they won't do this because it will cost huge amounts of money. In my opinion Victoria and Queensland survived for a long time without poker machine revenue with much less social problems. Do we really need to keep going down this path? I recently went to a large western suburbs club. I think it's obscene how many poker machines they are allowed to operate.
- The bureaucrats have created 'jobs' for themselves - Minister for Pokies will be next I'm sure. Remember illegal SP bookies in the early days? The government banned them then set up the TAB as a

business for themselves. Same thing! Ban gambling maybe or ask the government to get out of the profits! Perhaps this would be better spent on global issues, starvation, juxtaposition of rich and poor, unfair taxes, nuclear annihilation, etc!

Six comments were critical of the general irresponsibility of the government in its gambling policy and of the social problems this creates:

- Now the government has given pubs poker machine licenses which only adds to the problem. But the government, like it always does with mismanagement, just doesn't seem to know it is the baseline cause.
- There is no such thing as responsible gambling. There should be a responsible government.
- I wish to see country without poker machines. The government is the one responsible for gambling problems because it allows gambling everywhere to collect money. The government is the top terrorist in the world. The government is the top thief because it takes the money from people by gambling.
- Say no to pokies. Too many ruining the lives of people especially in lower socio-economic groups - deceitful, giving the illusion of quick fix/ get rich quick. Please refer to 'Blow up the pokies' by the Whitlams. Great song and message makes a lot of sense.
- I don't consider that present laws prevent problem gambling. Gamblers will find a way to gamble irrespective of laws. Why does the Government attempt to solve problem gambling by restricting gambling opportunities (e.g. reducing quantity of machines) but attempt to reduce drug addiction by providing more opportunities for people to use drugs?
- All the government has done is try to please an outspoken minority who 'don't gamble' to gain votes. Those that gamble will adjust to whatever facilities and rules are available. If not, then just go to the Internet and bet overseas. So have they really helped- No. Just changed the gamblers means of gambling and taken the monies offshore! Well done 'Minority.'

C.2 Gaming Venue Priorities in Gambling

Fourteen comments were made that were critical of the hotels for their generally irresponsible approach to gambling operations:

- Excessive gambling can be a big problem in a small community. It would be proved that the problems have escalated immensely once poker machines have been introduced into hotels. Greed on both sides is usually to blame, with clubs the money (profit) from poker machines is used for the community and to get better facilities for the members. With hotels, it lines the publican's pocket!
- The real problem with gambling is the bloody hotels where there are no controls at all. At least at my club I can ask the staff to restrict my gambling or even instruct the doorman not to let me back in if I leave, as I leave most of my money at home so I can't gamble it all. I can't do that with the hotels. If I'm gambling in a hotel you can't send me a survey to fill out. Get the poker machines out of hotels. Problem gambling was never a problem when only clubs had them.
- Poker machines should never have been allowed into pubs. At least the clubs have some redeeming features by way of donations to various good causes, together with subsidised facilities.
- Poker machines should not be in pubs. As a gambler it is very difficult to go and have a drink without seeing a poker machine.
- In my experience licensed clubs are very responsible regarding their members gambling and are good to their communities financially. More than can be said for hotels who are not by law controlled and do not have to give a large percentage of their profit back to the local community – hence, multimillionaire owners who own a string of hotels - where there are many poker machines. Our licensed clubs are always donating to someone -our local newspaper reports so. Never have I seen our local hotel doing something the same. Plenty of gambling takes place in hotels too.
- I feel strongly that governments, pubs and clubs are not doing nearly enough to reduce irresponsible

gambling, pubs being the worst offenders. Inducements remain very strong.

- Hotels need to go back to what they were before the pokie was allowed in. People now go to the pub to play the pokies more than to have drink and chat with your mates.
- The hotel areas are the ones that need to be looked at as you will receive free drinks and credits and they are open 24 hours.
- I also think that poker machines should never have been allowed into hotels. They should have only been allowed in clubs. That would have controlled gambling a lot more.
- It is in my opinion the escalation of problem gambling is directly linked to the introduction of machines in pubs. Not to say this is the only factor, but one of many.
- Poker machines should be in clubs only, not pubs. Clubs appear to at least provide services such as cheap food, entertainment while the profits in pubs go back to the owners with usually little contribution to local sporting, community, etc. Pubs are more accessible to the average wage earner so poker machines in pubs often result in low-income earners gambling away money they cannot afford.
- Although this survey has been done with the clubs, I would like to think there are pubs also involved, given their location, family friendly and not everyone belongs to a club. The amount of times I have gone into country pubs and seen underage gamblers as well as getting credit to gamble begs the question, 'why is the government forcing clubs to practice responsible gambling and nothing seems to be done with the pubs?'
- Doesn't matter how responsible the club is if the hotel up the road is not (and opens for gambling when the club does not!). Ditto Star City Casino.
- I used to enjoy a drink and a game of pool at my local hotel but I resent being confronted with poker machines whenever I now go to the pub, which, these days, is rare and I put this down to the poker machines.
- I preferred it when poker machines were only available in clubs.

Eight respondents were critical of the clubs for their generally irresponsible approach to gambling operations:

- As far as I know, the X Club paid \$25 million for the sports centre and motel. The debt was paid off in 18 months thanks to pokies. I was told this by an employee of the club. This person also informed of a lady patron who lost \$14,000 in one afternoon at the sports club. Where was the responsible manager to stop this? I was also informed that at the main club there were four jackpots of \$1,000 paid out in one month. Not much if you look at income derived by the X Club. New buildings built, little for the club member (sucker). They were fined for trading out of hours, etc.
- I don't think any club cares - they are only interested in making money.
- Clubs are like tobacco manufacturers in that the warnings associated with smoking and gambling are generally in small print. One would be very naive to think that a club has a personal interest in limiting one's losses when, in effect, the money reaped by machines makes a club financially sound in providing entertainment, employment, sporting facilities and a place to relax.
- If clubs were more client oriented than they are, the problem wouldn't be as bad.
- The X Club, in my view, is not a responsible gambling club. Its ethics are sub standard and even though they may try to look like a responsible gambling venue, the X Club in the last three years has become too big and lost a personal touch it used to have.
- If the responsible gambling policy would work people would not gamble as much. If the clubs were fair dinkum about gambling they would not increase the size of the gambling machines, would not encourage to increase bonus promotions, i.e. car draws based on points accumulated on machines, would provide other type of entertainment facilities i.e. chess tables, dominos etc., would not use machines as revenue raising tool – i.e. bottom line, would be fair dinkum about problem gambling to its members.

- Just because a club puts up a few responsible gambling signs, it doesn't exclude them from blame by the problem gamblers. These people should be actively sought out by clubs employees and told they can no longer gamble at this club until they seek counselling about their gambling problem.
- There is no doubt there are signs in clubs - warning of the odds when playing poker machines - also signs behind toilet doors and at the change counters warning of the pitfalls of gambling. However, I truly believe these signs and the rest of the measures taken like clocks, lighting, etc. are done only because it has been made compulsory to do so

Four respondents were critical of both hotels and clubs in their gambling policy:

- I do not think pubs and clubs are really concerned about gamblers because they are their main source of revenue, and you only have to look at how many of them have been renovated and spruced up recently to know how they are going.
- I think clubs and pubs are only interested in receiving profit for expansion than worry about the gambling members. When I say expansion, I mean it as a cover for non-profit making clubs (RSL and other clubs).
- The poker machines, as in other forms of gambling, are designed to make money - lots of money and I would lay odds (excuse the pun) that all this responsible gambling business has not lowered the profits one cent. The only way to stop the misery caused by gambling is to take away the source and that will never happen - the government, clubs and hotels are making too much money to stop it. I believe the government has made certain laws regarding responsible gambling through pressure from minority groups
- I believe the profits and tax made from gambling should be used for the benefit of the community and not just to make bigger clubs and pubs with more poker machines, etc. The question is what is responsible gambling? The old age pensioner who gambles forty dollars a week would hardly be seen as being irresponsible, yet she is depriving herself of ten weeks pension a year. The club cannot monitor the amount of money anyone spends on gambling, nor does it have the right to say to an O.A.P that he or she shouldn't spend forty dollars a week. Indeed the club has a vested interest in promoting gambling- the strident triumphant music when someone wins a jackpot. The facility available on p/machines to change up to \$500 notes without leaving the machine. While this club maybe quite happy to bar the man who has lost his house through playing the pokies, its sole income is derived from people who probably cannot afford to lose forty dollars a week. Are people being responsible if they deny themselves luxuries simply to spend money at the club?

Thirteen respondents were generally supportive of their clubs' efforts in responsible gambling and their general approach to business:

- I feel my club has a very safe feeling to it and they care about us.
- I think the clubs are implementing appropriate and up to date practices.
- It's great that clubs are taking steps to promote responsible gambling.
- I enjoy all the facilities that the X Club provides and am pleased that they are taking part in this kind of study.
- I feel the club takes good responsibility to problem gambling.
- I have been pleased to note the changes regarding responsible gambling that have taken place in the club over the last 12 months or so.
- It is wonderful to see something being done to curb problem gambling within the community.
- Do hope my answers will help you with this study and good luck with it if it will improve the clubs. The X Club is a very good club but we do not participate in any of its activities, which there are many to go to and we don't go out at night now.
- The thing is, you are aware once you walk into any club, pub, any gambling places. Poker machines -

you are responsible for what you do., but if people do have a problem, then they can get help.

- Both clubs (we are members of) are very strong on promoting the BetSafe program and from what we see so does the X Club.
- My club does its best to deter compulsive gambling, but in the end it will always be the individual's decision.
- Harm minimisation objectives aim to minimise the harm associated with the abuse and misuse of gambling activities and to foster the implementation of responsible gambling policies and procedures within the industry. This extends to fostering responsible gambling practices by gambling providers, and providing assistance to patrons experiencing problems controlling their gambling. Unlike alcohol-related problems, gambling abuses are more difficult to detect.
- The percentage from poker machines that is given to community projects is a positive outcome of gambling.

C.3 Number of Poker Machines

Fifteen comments advocated reducing poker machine numbers:

- Reduce the number of machines in the club.
- Clubs should have less machines.
- Poker machines should be banned altogether. If not, reduce the cost and prizes. I've seen too many poor people gamble and lose everything.
- (As a non gambler (I don't include Lotto etc as gambling) the clubs can do their outmost to show they are aware of gambling problems. But really, there should be no pokies, (especially) in clubs, to entice people to get to the difficult positions they find themselves. Yeah, I know government regulations and money funds to the clubs - but there should be another way - so don't increase the pokies etc - decrease. If that can't be looked into then maybe only a maximum \$200 in a machine a day per person at any club because once a club refuses someone they just move on so the responsibility of club has gone to somewhere else. Hope this is clear! I hate gambling. Yuk! Get rid of it all.
- Reduce the number of poker machines.
- Activities I believe would help to reduce problem gambling...reduce dramatically number of poker machines in clubs and pubs.
- A limit on the number of poker machines would be good.
- I think pokies shouldn't be in clubs as they weren't there 40 years ago. Pokies are big trouble to everyone.
- Less poker machines.
- Remove or seriously reduce the amount of poker machines in clubs.
- Have no more pokies like they do in Perth (W.A).
- Are they adding more poker machines? The club I am a member of is at the moment having extensions done in a large capacity. I have seen that most of the existing area is taken up by poker machines with very little area for members who wish to have a drink and sit and talk to friends.
- All clubs should be made to downsize the number of poker machines.
- The opportunity to gamble needs to be reduced. Less machines, shorter opening times.
- I think that there are far too many machines and of course we should know that we can never be winners. Clubs are there to prosper from their members/ visitors.

C.4 Venue Opening Hours

Eighteen comments advocated shorter opening hours for venues:

- The only way is to close the clubs, pubs and anywhere else gambling is provided for longer hours.
- In my opinion it would be a great idea to close the clubs for a few hours each day. This in turn will give a chance to the average gambler to gather their thoughts and bearings and perhaps think twice about becoming problem gamblers. Let's face it, the more hours the clubs are open, the more chances there are of gambling.
- Clubs should close down poker machines and keno for at least 2 hours morning and afternoon.
- I do spend long hours at the machines. If a reasonable time for closing of clubs was enforced this would be a good thing.
- I firmly believe that clubs should not open as long as they do. They could reduce patrons from spending as much on gambling and spend less time in clubs.
- I feel that going back to the days when clubs close at 11pm weekdays and 12 or 1 am on weekends would alleviate many problems and save many families from the heartache gambling can cause. Nobody can afford to gamble, especially when the opportunity is given 24 hours a day.
- My opinion on club and hotel gambling, they should have limited times, not 24 hrs open. Open later in morning, closing earlier hours. Also during daytime, for example, 2 hrs lunch time, breakfast time, tea time hours. This gives patrons time to rest, shop, deal with home matters and family, see to children at home and time to rest and sort out and think about what they are doing and how much they spend and time to reflect on matters. Father figures, husbands, also would reflect on time, hours to return home, tea, breakfast hours and take time out on home and family matters. Alcohol would also be taken into account due to time breaks and less intoxication. Problems associated with alcohol and gambling and less violence and also less domestic violence and problems in homes and family values.
- Closing clubs - ha ha , what a joke. Those that want to gamble will go elsewhere. All this is doing is cutting back on employment. Anyway the hours they close is so stupid - all it effects is the shift workers and the serious gamblers. Those that wish to gamble will go to the Casino - 24 hours anyway
- I think pokies are the death of society. I think gambling should have restricted hours - a lot of people with gambling problems don't go to work so they can gamble - they end up losing their jobs.
- I think a curtailment of poker machine hours of play could be a successful way of helping problem gamblers, even people like myself who like to gamble.
- I feel that clubs are open too many hours. People I have spoken to say they spent a lot less when the club closed at or before midnight.
- I would suggest that clubs be forced to close their gambling areas for some hours each week as a way of limiting access to addicted gamblers.
- I go to a few clubs so 24 hour access is available, even though the club that sent this questionnaire doesn't.
- Reduction of gambling times in clubs and pubs.
- Clubs should be more responsible by shutting down gambling facilities 30 minutes every two hours or something along those lines.
- Don't have 24 hour clubs; clubs should be clubs. Casinos should also not be 24 hours.
- Poker machine services should cease at a reasonable hour: 1-2 am.
- The government should legislate to make clubs open late and close early only in their gambling areas. That will surely slow down problem gamblers.

C.5 Responsible Gambling Signage and Information

Nine respondents were supportive of the responsible gambling signage and information in their clubs:

- I am only an occasional gambler but some friends gamble and I think the signs and warnings are very beneficial.
- At the end of the day though people who have gambling problems will find money and the means to gamble. Having the information and signage available might just help some of them.
- If you do have a problem I feel they do display enough info to get help or simply have yourself banned if it becomes a problem.
- The signs and pamphlets and staff and entertainment and placement of EFTPOS machines are of some help.
- I'm speaking on my own behalf. I think that the signs for problem gambling are adequately displayed.
- I think the signs on the pokies are good.
- Personally I gamble very rarely but I think the more signs and the time indicators applied to all people to be aware of the time being spent there. I do think the signs make a significant impact on the way people perceive gambling in all aspects.
- Recently, I read a pamphlet at my club which explained how poker machines worked - it was the most effective literature I have read in terms of promoting responsible gambling.
- I have found that most large clubs have information on change counters or posters on the wall near machines. However most pubs have very little to nil.

However, 30 respondents felt that the signage was largely ineffective, as people, especially those with gambling problems, do not read signs or ignore their message:

- All of the signage can advise, the same as 'smoking causes cancer,' but it is non-confrontational and easily ignored.
- If you have a serious problem with gambling, I don't think having the signs there will help. I have put more than I would like to have put (money) in poker machines. Last year, having the signs there did not stop me nor was leaving money in the car that I did not want to spend. I just went out to the car to get it when I lost the money I had. Now I don't take extra cash with me. I take what I need.
- I think the notices mentioned are minimal and become so familiar they have no effect. You can convince yourself they don't apply to you. I have seen some people on the machines betting huge amounts and they seem to be there whatever time I go. I don't know if they are ever questioned.
- My personal view is that people take absolutely no notice of responsible gambling notices.
- Signs and notices will do nothing to stop people; they will stop only when they have to.
- A gambler does not read signs or care about the myth of 'responsible gambling' or its consequences.
- My own personal belief is that no amount of warnings will deter anyone if they want to gamble or drink excessively.
- I believe that gamblers take no notice of advertisements or anything else.
- No amount of signage and scare tactics is going to change a person's mind.
- Also a compulsive gambler will not take any notice of any signs no many how many are put up.
- No amount of advertising will stop some habitual gamblers. Advertising is like car alarms - no one takes any notice after a while.
- Signs on machines - probably has a 1 % effect. If people wish to gamble they will. No sticker or sign will change their mind.

- If you are a gambler it doesn't matter how many signs were around a club. It would not make any difference to their habit.
- I believe that public notices have little effect on deterring gambling. If someone is addicted to it, notices will have little or no effect.
- Problem gamblers aren't interested in signs, brochures, etc; they already know it's a problem. If you don't have a problem you ignore the signs anyway. Just the gambling industry and government pretending to do something.
- Signage will only be read if you want to read it anyway.
- .Signs in club areas and journals in my opinion have little effect on people's motivation to gamble.
- It would not matter how many signs they put up or how much they advertise problem gambling, it would never deter me from playing. Also I feel they must pay a certain amount, but this does not happen; its just pure luck.
- I enjoy playing pokies when I have extra money. I don't think any signs on clubs will change that.
- I don't believe warning signs etc will prevent an addict; however they may help a few people before its too late.
- From what I have observed, those who have gambling problems appear to ignore warning signs around clubs.
- I think that this has been a very important survey and I'm sorry that I haven't been able to answer the questions about gambling signs but next time I am at the club I will take more notice of them. I am only too happy to sign my name to this.
- I cannot imagine any written warnings which would change a person's mind about gambling.
- Signs are good but too easily ignored.
- Gambling is as addictive as drugs if you have money I will play a machine no matter how many signs.
- Once you have started gambling, signs, etc. don't make much difference especially if you have been lucky and win big you want that again.
- The X Club is currently undergoing renovations. The sign on responsible gambling was placed next to the entry door so that it could not be seen by people coming into the club.
- Signs in clubs with the help line phone numbers? But some people with a real gambling problem I think walk past the signs. I think they don't want to recognise they have a problem until they probably get that bad even their family can't help them.
- I don't believe signs will ever help people accept how much they part with each session.
- People who need to gamble or are compulsive about their habit don't take notice of signs.

Thirteen respondents had specific suggestions to improve signage:

- I feel 'dangers of gambling' signs should be displayed in black letters above each machine - just like 'smoking kills' on cigarette packs, and also 1800 help line numbers.
- Every time membership is renewed, a notice/letter on responsible gambling must be handed out. Free responsible gambling seminars to be run on club premises. Club newsletter to have stories on irresponsible gamblers.
- Signs are only in English; what language is used in ethnic clubs?
- More signs to be displayed in clubs about problem gambling.
- Brochures should be sent to members at least twice a year for reminder. Advertising on how it can ruin a person and also how fun and responsible it can be.

- To the subject of signs - there are far too many and people reject having to read them. One good sign will do the same as many.
- The 'odds' signs and warning signs are far too small in most of the clubs I attend – they contrast poorly against poker machines that are illuminated by bright flashing lights! The jackpot signs on poker machines are large and enticing.
- As I'm not a gambler, I noticed when I was in the club all the signage etc. I think more clubs should promote the effects, odds, services, etc available for problem gamblers.
- Brochures may be available but members have to ask for them - put them on display - people who have a problem with gambling won't ask but some will take a brochure anonymously.
- Right at point of entry, display BetSafe initiatives as well as in gambling areas.
- More signs, bigger, more help from all clubs, pubs, any gambling places. More awareness to the public, about gambling to single or married people, all aware of the effects it has on a lot of families.
- All individuals need to be aware that time spent gambling, say 10 minutes on a pokie machine could equal 8 hour working day. This type of equation would be a great advertising display and put people in a mindset, calculating potential sacrifices they may suffer.
- I think if case studies of gambling gone wrong were displayed in pubs/ clubs (without names of course) more responsible gambling practices might take place. It worked for me (seeing the effects of problem gambling).
- I think there should be more decorative signs displayed to discourage players.

C.6 The Gambling Environment

Six comments were critical of the visibility of clocks in gaming rooms:

- There should be more clocks stationed around machines
- Put clocks on machines to ensure patrons know the exact time.
- There should be a clock on the machines and person who is playing should get a sign on the screen about time, losing, winning and other problems that cause difficulty in their life.
- The X Club seems to hide its clocks. There are probably three or four clocks in the gambling area. They are hidden on pillars where no one playing can see them.
- It is good to have time indicated on the poker machines. It does help remind one how late it is.
- Also like PA systems, there should be a recorded message at intervals to alarm players of the time.

Seven comments were critical of the lack of lighting, and particularly natural lighting, in gambling areas:

- The gambling area is darkly lit and somewhat crowded. Lots of machines placed together. The area set aside for bands is also cluttered with machines.
- Most clubs are too dark; one cannot even see into the trays to get all the money out of machine.
- Definitely more natural light would be beneficial in all clubs.
- Poker machine areas are usually so poorly lit and/ or flashing with lights and noise, so smoke- filled and smelly, filled with haunted looking people that one rarely feels like spending a lot of time or money there.
- Please show a window to poker machine members (everything is dark).
- The other thing I have noticed is that large clubs have become windowless, timeless gambling dens where you are practically surrounded by poker machines.
- A lot of clubs I go to don't have windows, so you don't know if it's dark or light outside so you don't

know how long you've been playing for.

Eight respondents wanted gambling rooms to be hidden from view within clubs:

- I think children shouldn't be behind glass and see their family gambling. If I have children I would never let them see me gambling.
- Machines not to be seen or heard from other locations in the club.
- Remove poker machines from view, e.g. have them behind doors so as you can enjoy a bit of peace and quiet without listening to them. Musicals and loony tunes all the time.
- In my opinion I would prefer that all poker machine areas are closed in and out of sight. When you walk into a hotel or club for a drink you do not want to be looking at people playing machines. I know plenty of them have separate areas but most have not. Out of sight, out of mind is my idea. This is not a problem to be quite honest, but in my observation over the years I know it is for a lot of people.
- The problem with clubs is their open style, which immediately puts people at ease and in the mood to gamble.
- They should have an area set aside and sound proofed well away from gambling areas so customers could have a quiet drink without having to listen to the sounds of the poker machines.
- I think it sucks that there's not any place in the club where you can sit and relax and have a beer without pokies in your face. There are only a few tables available; all other seats are in front of poker machines.
- Please have separation of seating facilities (lounges) from poker machines. Please have a cappuccino area downstairs (there's only alcohol.). Please play more music through club. Gambling - medium, eating area - soft, seating area - old time music, sports area - sports theme music.

Twelve respondents wanted improved facilities to provide alternatives and distractions to gambling:

- While gambling, there should be distractions nearby to draw your attention away from the machines.
- I think it's a pity that gambling is the main emphasis in many clubs.
- My idea would be to do away completely with machines and put on more entertainment, etc at the clubs to keep patrons interested in clubs and just go out for a pleasant evening. The old saying 'Out of sight, out of mind.'
- I believe clubs should provide more lounge facilities and recreation such as pool, gym, etc.
- Maybe the answer could be to provide some free worthwhile entertainment some of the time... incentives now and then could be two course meal for \$10 and a show once a month. It's a start - anything is worth a try if it keeps people in a group entertained - their gambling time would be less. They would still purchase drinks - think of (illegible) on a Thursday night in my club. There's a big following with cash incentives and people do genuinely enjoy it.
- I believe clubs should offer better facilities e.g. lounge areas to sit and watch sport, socialising without the constant presence of gambling machines or facilities. I understand that this supplies a large amount of revenue but some clubs hardly have any facilities that are not anything but small seated corridors between poker machine areas/ TAB facilities.
- Although gambling areas are not for kids, the club does not cater for young families at all.
- Responsible gambling should see clubs incorporating more family orientated practices that encourage families to participate in other activities so that gambling is not the only entertainment offered, i.e. games room for parents and children, bistros separate from gambling rooms. (Another club) has facilities like this that give people space and family areas (if not seen - check out, as it is well thought out).
- I also think that water and hot beverages are needed close to the machines to encourage gamblers to get up and leave the machine.
- Also I feel there should be free soft drinks and free coffee and biscuits supplied, as the amount of money

taken in should be given back to players.

- My opinion is clubs today encourage people to gamble. They are open too long and provide very little entertainment. Clubs today in my opinion are glorified casinos and the very fact that poker machines are the only entertainment people play them after dinner etc, and I think this is why in a lot of cases there are such a lot of people gambling; they are sucked in. Gambling is encouraged in all walks of life- hence the problem.
- In my club there is nothing else to do here when I'm by myself.

Four respondents commented positively on the range of non-gambling facilities provided by clubs:

- I feel the club is being fair in your choice; they have areas aside if you don't want to gamble.
- My gambling at X Club is minimal. My husband and I go for entertainment - meals, club badge draws, raffles, bingo, free movies and drinks which as part pensioners we appreciate how cheap all this entertainment is as compared to paying to go to restaurants, live shows, etc, which is out of our reach at our age. The X Club caters for all activities e.g. lawn Bowls, bowling club, darts club, seniors club and travel club, not to mention a fitness club which my husband is about to join for swimming and generally to increase his fitness. Also the swimming pool is a boon to members and their children. My TAB betting takes place at the local TAB, not at the club.
- Clubs are not just gambling places. They provide lots of other facilities for their members. Anyone can enjoy their club and never gamble.
- I think the fact that there are such good dining facilities is an attraction and at the same time a temptation. Maybe to have such good facilities quite separate would provide more difficulty to those who are addicted.

One respondent had a comment about seating design:

- The chairs shouldn't be like armchairs, just stools so you can't get too comfortable.

Four respondents asked for smoking to be banned in gambling areas as a responsible gambling measure:

- Smoking should be banned as it goes hand in hand with irresponsible gambling - the club would not lose out as they would attract more people from the non-smoking category (this has been proven to be the case in overseas cases.)
- I am an ex smoker and have always noticed that a very large percentage of gamblers are smokers. Not that I advocate the banning of smoking in clubs but it would probably go a long way in deterring people from just staying on and losing everything.
- To ban smoking in the gambling areas may also be a further deterrent. I suppose to add alcohol to such a ban would be going too far.
- Cigarette smoke – I have to leave club late afternoon as more smokers arrive, which is not too bad as it limits time to gamble.

C.7 ATMs and EFTPOS Facilities

- Twenty-two respondents advocated removing ATMs and/or EFTPOS facilities from clubs:
- As for ATMs, the only difference this would make would be for responsible clubs not to have them on premises.
- The EFTPOS machine should not be at the club at all.
- Perhaps cash machines should not be installed on the club premises, thus alleviating constant withdrawals when money is gone.
- They should get rid of the EFTPOS machine out of clubs.

- NO ATMs in clubs, pubs, casinos or race courses at all.
- ATM's/ EFTPOS should not be available in clubs/ hotels.
- ATMs should not be available in club.sssssssssss
- Having ATM and EFTPOS machines so handy and available to members could lead to over gambling. To make members to leave the club and go to the nearest bank ATMs might help to change members' minds.
- Teller machines and cashing of cheques should be banned from all areas of the clubs. Especially credit cards should not be allowed to be used to withdraw cash. This will, to a great extent, reduce the losses (on credit) of players.
- I believe there should be no ATMs on club premises. This would certainly restrict patrons from obtaining extra cash to spend on gambling.
- Remove ATMs.
- There should not be any ATM or other banking facilities in clubs so that what money you take with you is all you can lose while in a club. This way you must leave the club to obtain money which may deter some gamblers. This would be a more responsible club!
- ATM machines/ EFTPOS facilities in my opinion should be removed from club premises.
- If all ATM and EFTPOS machines were removed from clubs it may make it harder to get money. Having ATMs in clubs is a big mistake (although I have not used them). It is too easy for a compulsive gambler to get money.
- I think EFTPOS etc machines should not be in clubs as it gives access too easily to over extend when gambling.
- ATMs, even though they aren't in the gambling area, access to them is easy enough. Responsible gambling in my opinion would be to not cash cheques, remove ATMs so that gamblers would go to these venues with specific cash to spend.
- Activities I believe would help to reduce problem gambling:....take ATMs and EFTPOS out of clubs and pubs.
- No ATM in clubs.
- I suggest ATMs and EFTPOS be removed from club premises, as problem gamblers still access savings money from these machines even though they are not in gambling area.
- Stop ATM's in clubs
- Clubs generally provide to easy access to money via ATMs - there should be no ATMs within the precinct of a club whether or not it is near the gambling area - these machines should be located well away from clubs/hotel premises in order to prevent temptation.
- No ATM's in clubs.

Five respondents were critical of the location of ATMs and EFTPOS facilities close to gambling areas:

- ATMs are not in gambling areas but I can reserve a machine for 3 minutes and go to the ATMs, withdraw cash and be back in 2 minutes. They can also be in walking distance of clubs.
- The ATM is in the foyer just 10 metres from the gambling area. I see many people using the machine and going back into the gambling area.
- Q5 and Q7. Are they meant to be a joke regarding ATM and EFTPOS locations? To walk 15 metres from poker machine area (from my bed to the dining table at home) is now placing the machines in the gambling area - but. (I personally think they are a safe place to obtain ATM access at night.)
- If the clubs really want to seem as having responsible gambling practices within the clubs then

they...have to have all access to money (ATM and EFTPOS) out of sight.

- Keep most sources of cash away (long way) away from poker machines.

Eleven responses suggested limits or restrictions on ATM usage:

- Limit amount of cash to be taken out of ATMs.
- May help problem gamblers if ATM minimum draw in many clubs was \$10-\$20 Not \$40-\$50, i.e. they are forced to draw too much.
- Suggest set withdrawal limits on ATMs e.g. \$200/ day/ account.
- Put a limit on what can be taken out of ATMs at the club.
- Keep ATMs to a minimum at all gambling venues.
- I'm not a big time pokie player, but sometimes I see people down the club putting their whole pay packets through the pokies. I feel the clubs should have a limit on what people are allowed to access from ATMs.
- A family member (sister's son) was able to draw from the ATM seven times in one gambling session. I would like to see a limit on how frequently an ATM can be used and a maximum amount that can be drawn any given day.
- Responsibility must also be placed on banking institutions to control electronic banking in regards to when, for example, the bank asks the customer for a limit to be placed on a withdrawal daily but allows the customer to go over that limit with the use of other institutions' ATMs.
- All other institutions' ATMs can give you an account balance after a withdrawal, but still provide over the set limit.
- I have seen one or two gamblers betting \$10 and upwards a go and staff looking on in fascination as the same gamblers go to an ATM and get another \$200 to bet.
- The question regarding ATMs brings to mind a Queensland trip. No doubt you are aware of Queensland law which limits the denomination of notes input into poker machines to \$20. Attending a club in Bundaberg, I utilised a club ATM to acquire a large sum of money for a variety of purposes. Of course, the machine disgorged an amount of twenty-dollar notes which sum was impossible to place in a wallet. This Queensland law becomes a band-aid solution while ATMs in clubs dispense piles of twenty-dollar notes. Clubs must become proactive in the fight against compulsive gambling.

C.8 Cheque-Cashing Policies

Seven respondents were critical of their clubs' cheque cashing policies:

- Clubs shouldn't cash cheques or give cash advances to punters.
- No cash advances, no cashing cheques.
- Clubs not to cash any cheques.
- I wish I kept the other survey you sent me because my husband's story is somewhat different. We argue only over money, usually when he sneaks to the club and cashes cheques deliberately to hurt me. I don't think clubs should cash cheques, period. They are not banks. Banks need two signatures sometimes and, in this case with clubs, I would want my signature also on our cheques.
- Cashing of cheques should be banned from all areas of the clubs.
- Club policy on cashing cheques...could lead to over gambling.
- Clubs should be able to monitor their patrons especially when they constantly cash cheques. At this point it is obvious there is a problem. Counselling is definitely needed.

But one respondent noted that:

- Not cashing cheques, etc. can mean they will have more cash money on arriving at the club.

C.9 Payouts, Prizes and Change Procedures

Five comments were critical of the availability of change for machines and/or the lack of staff:

- Some clubs have machines that won't release any coins. The queues at the cashier is always long to force you into putting \$50 notes into the machines but you can't get \$50 out without calling an attendant.
- The club I attend seems to have an unspoken policy of never giving \$2 coins in loose change at the bar or TAB. In my experience I have frequently received up to 4 single dollar coins in change. Poker machine which accept coins take only \$1 coins.
- Some clubs use change of services provided by using \$1 coins. I think this is another way it saves money by using less of the other denominations in which customers are lured into playing poker machines with large amounts of \$1 coins into their possession.
- The change counters are the same as the queues are long, so instead of putting \$4 in the pokies I put \$20 in, as I can't be bothered waiting in line for change.
- I wouldn't gamble on Keno as much if they put more staff on as I see my numbers come out and I'm still waiting to get my Keno on.

Nineteen comments were critical of payout mechanisms in the clubs, with many particularly noting the effect of delays in getting attendants to organise machine payouts both for jackpots and for extracting credits from machines that do not issue coins:

- I also feel that all machines should pay out automatically if you wish to move to another machine or go home. Having to call for staff to come and write out a chit may take them awhile so you end up putting the money through.
- Long waits for inadequate numbers of staff for payouts discourages withdrawing money
- If you win a jackpot it takes an attendant a long time to pay you out. I think this is done deliberately so you will either play on or put some money in the next machine while you are waiting.
- When I am forced to wait up to 10 minutes for attendant to come and fill out a pay out slip I am inclined to keep playing.
- At the X Club, they take so long to pay jackpots I put more money into other machines while I am waiting. I am sure they do this so you gamble more.
- Sometimes you can't get your credit out of the machine - you have to call an attendant - who can wait half an hour for them to turn up! It is psychologically programmed to spend what credit is left rather than wait for coupon then cash desk, etc- very, very bad.
- I think all machines should pay you in dollar coins, because if you only have ten or twenty dollars you will keep playing until you've lost instead of waiting for the attendant; otherwise you would stop playing the machine.
- The installation of machines in clubs that require an attendant to be called for any collection of money would cause patrons to remain at the machine until all the money has been used up. The X Club has too many of that type of machine and it is difficult to find a suitable 1 cent machine that uses coins.
- It is good if the poker machines can drop the coins when the player decides to quit - even if it is only a few dollars left. Most clubs adopt the new system, i.e. when the player decides to quit he/she must call the attendant to cancel their credit. Normally it will take some time for the attendant to come. If the player is not patient, normally he/she will continue to play until all credits finish. Sometimes the player might win quite a big sum of money. Just because he/she might have to wait for a long time for the attendant to come he/she might continue to play until the money is lost.

- Payouts- staff take too long to attend, i.e. short staffed.
- The limit of money that you can collect from a machine manually should also be increased.
- Ensure that patrons can access their credits without a club staff member having to write a credit note for (say) \$5-\$10.
- Have all machines pay out either in coins or vouchers (eg like at [another club]) This means you are less likely to 'play off' your money or keep betting whilst waiting to be served (on busy nights this could be up to 10 minutes) or bet on another machine whilst waiting.
- I fail to see how the link machines, e.g. maxi-millions, assist in promoting responsible gambling by paying the jackpots directly onto the machine - there used to be a stop and wait to be paid out by the attendant and then the player had to go to the cashier to redeem the jackpot payout. I think that machines should be set up so that a player is prevented from operating the next spin until any payout is completed and credited - in these days of computerised machines it is possible to play very fast and override long pays being paid out (in Las Vegas, you can't play again until a pay is finished.)
- I think that payout by printed ticket (as in one club I belong to) can slow down the rate of gambling (even if only marginally).
- The inability with 'notes only' machines for payouts to be made other than by calling an attendant - many people continue to play rather than wait for their payout. Some clubs (not necessarily the X Club) seem to have a 'go slow' policy where patrons wait 15 minutes plus for an attendant - often they continue playing rather than wait - this encourages 'going beyond your limit' or gambling for 'longer than you want' because it is easier than waiting. I feel all machines should include coin provision and payouts, unless over a reasonable limit, should be available from the machine.
- One of the 'tricks' clubs use is to limit the number of machines which accept coins, and to block machines from dropping coins as payouts.
- A major negative change is that the machines no longer pay out. This forces me to either continue playing until (a) all the money is gone (b) there is enough money in the machine to warrant waiting for an attendant to issue a pay docket. Invariably this results in my walking away having lost.
- Some pokies are programmed not to pay automatically by ejecting coins. Players have to call attendants to collect credits if deciding to leave. This inconvenience encourages players to play out credits before leaving or to try and increase winnings.

Four respondents suggested winnings over a threshold be payable by cheque only:

- All pays over \$50 paid by cheque.
- No cash payouts if over \$200.
- Payouts of over \$500 should be paid in cheque form.
- All payouts over \$500 should be by cheque or collected the next day.

One respondent had a novel suggestion for limiting access to cash:

- I know this is impossible but I think there should be small safes. When you win you should be allowed to put that money into the safe until you go home and you are not allowed to return to the gambling lounge. You should be given a ticket for your personal safe, when collecting hand in your ticket. What I now do is, I take a moneybox which cannot open until you go home. Say I take \$100 with me to the club and I win \$300, I put my \$100 in my moneybox plus \$200 of my winnings. That is one way of keeping my money.

C.10 Gambling by Intoxicated People

Five respondents had comments about gambling while intoxicated:

- No matter how intoxicated, I have never been refused alcohol while playing poker machines, nor been advised to stop gambling. Anywhere!
- I also believe the taking of alcohol leads to excessive playing of machines.
- Alcohol can certainly affect some people's gambling needs.
- ...the more you drink the more you put in..
- I'm not proud of my gambling habit. I haven't sought help for the reason that I keep telling myself that I can control the habit. However, with the help of a few beers all that goes clean out the door.

C.11 Self-Exclusion

Four respondents were either critical of the way self-exclusion works or had suggestions for improvement:

- Self-exclusion should be as simple as obtaining a form - freely available and in view of front counter - filling it in and signing it, enclosing your badge and depositing it in a box - this would spare people the embarrassment of having to confront management.
- Apart from self-exclusion, maybe a person's family should be able to exclude them as they are the innocent sufferers if a person has a gambling problem.
- If they want to, the self-exclusion program should have something put on their drivers licence so they can't cash cheques or pawn goods for extra money. They can play pokies anywhere at anytime.
- Self-exclusion only works if you put your card in the machine.

C.12 Club Promotions

Nine respondents were critical that many club promotions require people to remain in the club for long periods of time, or require that they are present to win a badge number draw:

- Another thing that does not affect me and some other similar people is the club has various 'promotions' going at all times - badge draws, etc. Most times the results of these are not drawn until late in the evening and this often keeps the compulsive gambler longer in the club regardless of any signs, clocks, counselling, whatever.
- I also find the poker machines promotions at some clubs I go to are a very big incentive to stay longer; some go for up to 2 hours and you have to stay at the pokies to win. I do not think this is responsible.
- I think much over gambling is encouraged by the 'must be here' for the draw promotions by the fact that the club can be full before a special draw event and near empty after the poker machine draw/promotion finishes. Obviously this cannot be all promotions but balance could be a good compromise. There is never even a Christmas raffle to enter into these days, without one having to be there for its draw.
- I don't know why, when they sell tickets for raffles or promotions, they sell them in the afternoon but are not drawn until 7.30 or 8.00 at night so people play the pokies or drink for longer.
- If the clubs didn't advertise about winning a car on \$20 in their promotions I would not be there - to win a prize you must be present so you go there and spend time waiting, just in case your number will be called - so you are there playing the machines and gambling.
- Don't offer weekly draws, which keeps you there gambling - waiting for the draws, points on your cards which you can spend in the bottle shop, etc.
- I feel that when a competition or raffle is being held in a club you should be entitled to the prize if you are a club member whether you are at the club or not, as the prize is often a large one. It encourages people to return to the club to see if their name is called out.
- Some times we go for a meal or a show and there are promotions, but the club should also let people win

if they are not present and if their badge number was drawn they should pay the prize if they were not at the club at the time the badge number was picked by the computer.

- Poker machine promotion, prizes are always – ‘Be here when ‘X’ is drawn. I would like to see more member promotions (or visitor) that permits one to play the machines at their timing and still be eligible to be in the prize draw.

An additional nine comments criticised the inducements to gambler offered by club promotions:

- Poker machine promotions - not good as it encourages one to play the machines. The chance of winning at their promotions is very, very remote.
- I have visited a few clubs lately and I feel one club that encourages gambling is (another club). They have many promotions on in the pokie area - where members are encouraged to put their club card in a machine to be able to win. Free drinks are given to pokie players and I was there once when the club was having trouble with its air conditioning - the other areas of the club such as the bistro had to swelter while all the cool air was pumped into the pokie area.
- It should be noted that poker machine activity is rewarded by various promotions. The more you play the poker machines the more raffle tickets you receive.
- My club encourages poker machines by linking playing the machines to market days and fake money won on machines to purchase prizes.
- While many clubs comply with the law and wish to be seen as being responsible they still offer a lot of incentives for people to play poker machines, Tickets to win a lot of prizes, spin wheels for prizes. They also have a lot of promotions based on people being in the club in an atmosphere that encourages gambling.
- Ask the X Club- how responsible gambling relates to ‘Lets go shopping.’ This promotes irresponsible gambling that only finished at the end of November.
- From my experiences, gambling is promoted in clubs and pubs that I have visited. Yes they have information about gambling, but you just ignore it. They have promotions that require you to play the pokies to gain tickets in them. So as I see it, no place is promoting responsible gambling as the pokies is the way they make money.
- Elimination of promotions tied to playing poker machines.
- Poker machines - everything they do today to get us to play. I believe it is a form of compulsive gambling. The way of the promise of a big win. The way of a prize win. The hype the club promotes - you play using your card and you get bonus points, then you buy tickets and you go into a cash draw! And some prizes - boat, car, etc. Keno - as above the allure of a big win. NSW Lottery, Lotto Pools, TAB- Horses, Footy, etc The clubs win, the government wins, patrons small dividends. We are all suckers- but we all go back for more.

However, one respondent was largely in favour of promotions:

- I am responsible for my own actions, I know my own limitations. I think that promotions other than badge number night are okay.

C.13 Venue Staff

Eleven respondents advocated increased intervention by gambling staff:

- Maybe if a staff member notices that a person is on a machine for a long period of time, to discourage them or make them aware of the time they have spent.
- Why couldn't someone suggest to the gambler that perhaps they've had enough after a certain time.
- I think club staff should be made to be aware of people who spend many hours in the club gambling often.

- Club staff could identify problem gamblers.
- People talking to you is a better way of making gamblers move around. Announcements, etc could be an effective way of getting the message across.
- Staff should be put through a program that makes them aware of sighting a problem gambler and reporting it to a supervisor so they can be helped.
- The notices are clearly displayed but I've no idea whether there is anything proactive – maybe it's not legal? I.e. talking to a person along the lines of 'you spend a lot of time here, etc. can you really afford it?'. Realise this may be intrusive and alienate members.
- The effective monitoring of the gambling area, patrons and their behaviour can provide helpful information for the minimisation of harm associated with gambling activities to patrons, their families and the business.
- Supervisors and staff in all clubs know who the big gamblers are, but honestly does management ever care to invite these poor souls in for a friendly chat and tell them to cut back on their habit,? Not likely.
- I feel that there should be laws allowing supervision and action taken by the club to remove and ban patrons who exhibit signs of addiction to gambling. This should not however be their sole responsibility. I have noticed over recent years a greater influx of people of Asian appearance in the gambling areas of my club.
- I do believe the employees of any club needs to be very aware and consistently on the lookout for problem gamblers, particularly concerning poker machines; the cashiers in particular, if they notice people coming to the counter to break down big notes into smaller notes. Also it dismays me to see most poker machines providing it easy to play by the patron being able to feed bank notes directly into the machine. In the old days it was better when you cashed in your notes and fed coins into the machine. This one change alone I'm sure as caused much heartache and misery to problem gamblers as it is harder to monitor a person's losses.

Two respondents noted the importance of staff training in responsible gambling:

- All clubs must create a safer gambling environment- education and training of staff is vital.
- Make sure all employees (regardless of whether floor or bar) are fully trained.

C.14 Poker Machine Design

Five comments criticised the fast rate of play, and therefore losses, on poker machines:

- Reels on new machines spin so fast - all over and done in a few seconds.
- The machines sometimes are so tight that \$50 will only last about 10 minutes. I think this practice is wrong.
- The play rate should be at a lower speed, to give people time to think.
- They should provide a longer play time for money
- The majority of the elderly like to go to clubs but when machines are so tight it keeps them at home. That is a sad thing for the elderly as they go down to lose their small amount anyway but would give them time out for the afternoon. But to lose in 10 minutes is a joke.

Eleven respondents advocated greater transparency regarding the odds of winning on poker machines:

- Somehow it should be conveyed that you will sometimes win but never always win.
- The odds on any preselected result coming up on any pull of a fire reel poker machine given that there is 30 symbols per reel is 24,300,000 to 1. In my estimation that is a far cry from any signs I have seen attesting to the relative chances of getting a major jackpot.

- More info on the chance of winning a jackpot.
- If each machine had the odds of winning each prize maybe some machines may be avoided by those who need to be more careful with their money.
- Have the club advertise its expected returns for poker machine payouts (eg 80%, 85%, etc).
- Clubs, all of them, and pubs should have large signs at their front doors about the odds people can win against machines and other betting practices. More signs about chances of winning etc should be visible.
- I feel that if the odds of winning and also the totals of money contributed compared to what has been paid out would allow people to make a better educated decision on whether to gamble - this comment relates to poker machines, keno and lotto.
- Odds of winning on each machine must be displayed.
- The newer machines pay less. Gamblers must know this.
- Personally I prefer TAB betting as I feel I am making a more informed gamble by using detailed form and statistics. Pokies are more of an element of luck and realistically maximum wins on e.g. 1 cent machines equal about \$50 without accumulators so its not a great win for e.g. a \$10 bet.
- Responsible gambling should mean that you have at least some chance of winning back at least a small percentage of your money. You should be able to see what the odds are and pay back level on any machine. Clubs should advise you how much your winnings and losses are monthly.

Three comments related to changing the odds of winning on machines:

- It should be required by law that poker machines have a 60/40 or less split for payouts. That is it should pay out 40% of what is put in. The increased odds should make pokies less attractive to clubs.
- If the government taxed clubs less and restricted or put percentages on win up on pokies, then you may have less gaming issues.
- Reduce payouts on machines, increase percentage payout to government and club - that will stop people from gambling.

Six comments related to the role of note acceptors on poker machines:

- They should take away note only machines- sometimes there isn't even a machine that will take coins. It appears some pokies are programmed to reject \$5 notes which encourages gamblers to use higher denominations.
- \$50 notes and \$100 notes should not be accepted by gambling machines as in other Australian states.
- Have a minimum note acceptance of \$20 or coin only machines (slow down rate of betting!).
- New machines that take notes instead of coins - they sure can gobble up the notes (they should be banned).
- Poker machines should not accept notes greater than \$10.
- One thing that I think has increased the amount of money going into poker machines is the 'disappearance' of machines that take coins - most machines require a minimum of \$5 (note) to be inserted. Therefore immediately a casual gambler who may want to invest \$1 has to up the minimum by 500% in order to play.

Nine respondents suggested reducing the maximum bet on poker machines:

- The machines take too much on one spin so you lose or win quicker. Too many games x 5, x 10, x 20. It would be better if they were restricted to less e.g. one game = one dollar. Personally the old 20 cent machines were more fun and I play less now because I don't like all the bells and whistles. You should not be able to spend \$50 or more on one spin.
- I think there should be a change in the pokie machines themselves. I think there should be a \$1 limit to a

bet. I've seen people betting \$5 or \$10 push and I strongly believe this encourages people (especially addicts) to keep chasing the big win which consequently means that for them it is no longer a 'bit of fun' but a 'real problem'.

- Reduce limit of bets on poker machines.
- Have machines reduce maximum bet to \$5.
- I have concern for some people the amount they gamble each press of the button, perhaps this should be limited.
- Betting credits are often 1, 5, 10, 20. Too big a gap. They should be in multiples of 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 20 so that smaller bets are possible. \$1 machines should be banned.
- Place a limit of maximum bets on any machine (say \$3).
- Reduce the maximum bet to 50 cents.
- Poker machines should have a lesser amount that you can bet for maximum bet. That way if you bet maximum, you're not betting \$5 a hit or more.

Four respondents advocated reducing the number of betting lines on gaming machines:

- The type of gambling machine tempts people into spending much more money to win e.g. the number of lines you can play. 1 cent machines are not 1 cent machines - we don't even have 1 cent coins.
- Years ago pokies only payed on the centre line there were 5, 10 and 20 cent machines and one container lasted a long time. Then they changed to three then five lines and we started losing more money. The real problems started when they started the 1 cent machines with 20 play lines multiplied by 2, 5, 10, 20 etc. I find it impossible to play only 5, 10 or 15 lines because you always see the wins appear on the lines you are not playing. If you wish to change machines it's hard because there are always a few cents - you must play them one at a time. Every time I do that it seems as if that is when you get the 15 free games. I sometimes spend many more dollars just to get an even 5, 10, 15 or 20 cents to finish on. P.S. some machines now play 25 lines. Where will it stop!
- Multiple line machines should be reduced.
- I believe the club encourages money going through the machines at a faster rate by introducing machines with more lines at a time, e.g.. 25 lines vs 20 or 10 previously. Also with some machines when you can't take your money out unless calling for service so you think its not worth it.

Seven respondents supported time limits on playing poker machines:

- Each patron should have limits how long you can be inside when gambling.
- If a club adopts a fair dinkum approach to the problems of gambling being poker machines or betting then adopt ideas such as restricting the amount patrons can invest by having a cut off point when losses hit a certain point - it is ridiculous to see fifty-dollar notes being inserted into cavernous hungry machines.
- Machines should have 5 minutes reserve instead of 3 minutes. There is not enough time to go to the toilet, get change or a drink or cash in a jackpot. This puts you under pressure and encourages you to use larger denomination notes in the machine.
- Limit the amount of time people are allowed to play the machines - can only play if you put in a card - at the end of the time period the machine becomes dead.
- I believe there will never be responsible gamblers but I do believe that their should be an automatic shutdown on machines if you go over your time limit and whatever money is in the machine you lose because you weren't responsible enough to take it out before your time limit was up.
- Monitor members cards (that have to be put into machine) and after 3-4 hours (or less) tell them to get off machine, like on internet.

- I feel that the cards we use to gain credits should have a time limit built in to not allow you to gamble after a period of time.

Six respondents suggested smaller or no jackpots on poker machines:

- I feel that the linked jackpots add to problem gambling. People see this as another way to win lots of money - they also think that if they are betting more on their machine, it will increase the chance of winning the linked prize. Signs should tell people how the linked prizes work and what the chances of winning are.
- No machines with the growing jackpot figure above which goes up. I know people who play thinking they will win.
- Huge jackpots (linking more than one club) should be banned.
- People will gamble if they are that way inclined. To stop it jackpots need to be lowered and machines limited to the amount you can put in.
- Rather than huge link jackpots that are always paid out to those who bet large amounts there should be smaller payouts available to all players regardless of the amount gambled.
- I think that the initiatives undertaken by clubs are of some value but poker machine prizes are too high. Smaller jackpot winnings would be more effective.

Thirteen comments related to the frequency and legitimacy of wins on machines:

- Because of the machines being 'controlled', rigged, I am sure that at times the player's not getting a square deal. I should imagine this happens in other clubs too.
- I am an old man (87). I play poker machines every night for a short time before leaving the club after having a few drinks. Sometimes I win, but most times you lose. The reason for this is because all the machines are computerised and it only needs a button to be pressed in the control room to govern any payouts (small or large).
- All 'wins' should exceed amount of credit staked on each play that pays a return e.g. \$1 staked on a play and 'win' window displays 20 cent is an 80 cent loss not a win. Following on from above, this means in my logic that in this example the club has returned 20 cents to the player in the calculation of the mandatory % of turnover returns to players which in my opinion is misleading and deceives the gambler into thinking he is not losing.
- The percentage of winnings allowed per machine must be very low - because you hardly see any person ever winning a fair amount.
- They say machines pay 92% (never).
- The changes to pokies that I have noticed is the government made the payouts smaller in an effort to reduce people playing but you still spend the same. Those who play thinking they will win money now seem to bet higher amounts to compensate for the smaller wins.
- People gamble more because the return is less than say five years ago. Roughly five years ago I could go to the club on \$50 to \$100 and have a good time and a good run that would last a few hours. Now you can lose \$500 in less than a couple of hours. You could once have a good time playing but now the machines take, take, take. Can't they see this is where the problem has become worse? Instead of having a good time out, it has made it into gambling for something in return, not for a bit of fun. People don't mind losing a little if they can have fun for their night out.
- Have equitable paying combinations. Quite often what seems to be a good pay say three or four of a kind pay less than what is gambled e.g. bet 40 - pay 32. You actually lose 8. You can play to get a feature, which pays bugger all and is not worth playing after all.
- If clubs were a little more generous in their payouts, I think problems could be reduced. It is the continual effort to win and have some pleasure - not putting considerable amounts of money through machines before there is even one drop. Also, on the free games spin - say you are entitled to 10 free

spins, you are lucky if you get two drops and many times none. I doubt very much if they (the clubs) are really truthful about what percentages they pay.

- I feel that never to win makes me angry as if I have a decent win I will bring some home.
- Given the fact that clubs provide gambling facilities and also control gambling ideology, perhaps if the machines gave more wins (not very big ones) and people thought they were having more enjoyable little wins they would not spend as much trying to obtain the elusive decent win, if that makes sense!
- The majority of the elderly like to go to club but when machines are so tight it keeps them at home.
- I feel that players are the losers in most gambling establishments because people rarely win money or are given other incentives or bonuses.

One respondent advocated cashless gaming:

- Clubs should introduce mandatory cards that patrons can charge/recharge with credits that have daily limits - say \$100 (daily limit should be 24 hrs.) All poker machines should work with these cards - not cash.

Seven respondents suggested that machines give warnings or more information to players:

- I think that when you put your leagues club card in the machine, instead of it beeping to tell you have won an extra bonus point, it should beep and give you a warning message. This way you know people are going to read them and hopefully take the message in.
- Every machine should be programmed as such that it should come up with warning signs as to how much you spend and how much you win. Also warnings should come up at intervals to warn of excessive gambling.
- Have machines provide a history of recent payouts/actual returns (patrons should be able to access what clubs see).
- Pokies should display percentage of turnover that goes to the club and the percentage that goes to state government.
- Perhaps a system whereby the player can see how much money has been gambled may curb some irresponsible gambling.
- Machines that show a dollars total, not credits would be better. Perhaps a progressive total bet per session could be displayed (most club members put their membership cards in).
- I believe that with the technology we have, a digital window could advise the gambler of how much they have put into a poker machine. I am sure many people would not believe how quickly they pay out of their wallet at each gambling session.

Music and noise were noted as an encouragement to gambling in 2 instances:

- I used to gamble in my younger years, - it got me in trouble. My view on it now is, people get sucked in by the bright flashing lights and the 'WIN' signs. There should be a limit on how much you can lose. Sometimes people think the next big win is around the corner, when in fact the odds are always against them.
- Music and noise made by the machines should be diminished. It hypes people up.

C.15 Concern for Problem Gamblers and Those Affected

Ten comments were made indicating general concern about problem gambling:

- Gambling is a very serious problem today and when times are hard as they now are, people will gamble. On the other hand, clubs provide work, entertainment, cheap drinks etc, etc, but poker machines are a disease worse than smoking or drinking.
- I am able to control my gambling but I worry about when I see many older members playing really high amounts of money, thinking that they will get back what they have lost.
- Responsible gambling is easy to say and do, as much as you can make people notice it but it always comes down to each person on why they gamble, need the money or have won once and they go back for more, to win again but ends up back in the machine or whatever they gamble on. 'Once you bet, you never rest.'
- The psychological effects of gambling machines are substantial and very much need to be looked at. The incidence of dangerously irresponsible gambling is to my mind far greater than the general population realise and the real costs far higher.
- They earn time out, they spend a fortune - what you can do about that kind of gambling; I don't know.
- It's difficult to know the right direction regarding gambling of any description. It seems that the ones who cannot afford to gamble to excess are the ones who need the most help. The mentality of people is 'this time might be the big win' so they keep on losing money for the majority of the time.
- I think if one enjoys playing the poker machines and knows how much you can afford to lose there is no problem at all. It's when you go above your means that is what is a problem.
- As with alcohol problems it is only a very few who have a problem. Wouldn't it be great if some intelligent person worked out a way to restrict only those people rather than affect the entire population?
- I have observed others who do have gambling problems. The remote possibility to win big is often the driving force for a gambler to continue to bet excessive amounts. A big win every so often is enough to entice a gambler to continue to spend or regularly gamble whether this involves gambling machines, TAB betting, lotto, Keno, etc. I believe the gambling problem is much more widespread than just in clubs and pubs but these are venues where people socialise and instant results can be achieved. There are many people investing large amounts in lotteries, lotto, Powerball, etc. each week with the same desire to win big. It often just takes a few days longer to lose your money.
- My wife and I are infrequent visitors to our club. Its main use for us is a dinner after both working and a \$5-\$10 flutter on the pokies. It is however easy to see the 'problem' gambler and there are many of them. All and every method used to help these people overcome their problem is applauded most heartily.

Fourteen respondents consider problem gambling to be an addiction:

- For compulsive gamblers it is necessary to help them. We cannot have a society wrecked financially and morally by gambling.
- If people want to gamble they will whether they can afford it or not - whether it affects their family or not whether its daylight or midnight or how convenient the money machine is.
- Very sad for those addicted. Lives ruined. However I don't feel government should police same. Not sure of solution either.
- I believe gambling is a biological addiction whether there are responsible gambling practices taking place in clubs; customers who are addicted will play (gamble) regardless. It is an escapism tool.
- An addicted gambler will keep going until he/she has no means to obtain any more funds for that particular day.
- I believe that if a person is addicted to gambling or has a problem with gambling it does not matter what practices a club puts into being to be responsible, this person will find a way to gamble.

- I come from a gambling background. It is addictive so choice has to come from the gambler.
- Gambling is an illness/addiction. Like with all addictions, the only person who can either control or stop the addiction is the person themselves.
- Some people cannot control if they are addicted, it wouldn't matter what the club did.
- It is a terrible addiction. It's everywhere. There is NO responsible gambling for an addict.
- I think how people become addicted to poker machines is if they have a win which involves a reasonable amount of money they then think each time they play the machines that it will happen again. People should only gamble what they can afford to lose.
- I believe that gamblers...only look for help when they themselves realise they have a problem, usually after they have gambled away every penny they had or they are unable to pay their debts. I really don't see how you can educate impulsive, addicted gamblers to practice responsible gambling.
- Lets look at what might reduce the number of new addicts - gambling addictions, like alcohol or drugs addictions are 'personal' i.e. If a alcoholic wants a drink he will get one, if a gambler wants to gamble he/she will. Club restrictions/info, etc won't really make a difference to addicts.

Five comments were made which sympathised with the plight of problem gamblers:

- I feel sorry for anybody who does have a gambling problem. I go to the club fortnightly and see some people continuously putting money into the pokies - surely they need help. Surely the club is watching through their little black spy cameras.
- I have seen people who have trouble with gambling and it's a very sad thing.
- Unfortunately there are people who should never gamble.
- I am sympathetic to those who do have a problem and I am pleased to partake in a study such as this.
- I can go to the club, have dinner, few drinks, a few dollars in the pokies and leave no problem. But for others unfortunately they need outside/extra help - again I think accessibility to all things are contributing factors i.e. hours of operation, ATM's credit cards, etc.

Six respondents expressed concern about the impact of problem gambling on others:

- Gambling is a huge problem and I find it is an unsociable activity that leads to people lying about their problems. Please try and improve the (illegible) of responsible gambling because it is tearing some families apart.
- It is family members of the gambler who suffer the most and this needs to be addressed. Children don't deserve this!
- Governments recognise that gambling can cause very serious problems for a small number of individuals and their families, and for that small number of individuals and their families, the problems are very significant. Problems extend from relationship breakdowns to crime, personal bankruptcies and in serious cases to suicide.
- Gambling addiction is worse than the others (addictions) because it destroys families, not just one person. It makes a liar out of people.
- Addicted to gambling has huge social impacts - particularly on families of those addicted. Local/grassroots organisations could/should provide remediation strategies and responsible gambling strategies.
- The poker machines in clubs are making many, many people unhappy. A lot of pensioners are putting all their money in them. The poker machines are making many people sick, for guilt of throwing away their money. To stop playing the poker machines is harder than to give up cigarettes.
- I don't think I'm much of a gambler but over the years I have seen what a misery a compulsive gambler can make of their own and their family's lives.

C.16 Personal Experience of Gambling Problems

Thirteen people related their own experiences of problem gambling:

- Twice in the last two years I have stolen money to gamble with – I nearly lost my job and my family because of it. I believe that all the signs and notices don't make a difference. It's the attitude of the person involved that counts – they have to want to change. As I have been in counselling with the Wesley Mission for one year I have learned a lot about myself, my past and present.
- The clubs are doing all sorts of gimmicks to keep people on the pokies, giving them prizes, raffles, etc, etc. The poker machines are the distraction of their creation; eventually the government will pay for all those sick and broke people. I am hooked but I am going less to the club as I feel stupid. I am a responsible, sensible person that lost their mind on the poker machines. One day I will wake up to myself.
- The random nature of poker machines has been one of the major problems for me believing that the next spin of the reels will be a major win. I'm easily swayed to by the major jackpot falsely believing that I will be the next winner. I've put back rather than winning and consequently have lost an amount in excess of \$350,000 over five years. Most of my pension 'nest egg' - in fact I'm now in debt. If I don't stop I could lose family home. I'm a depressed and disappointed person. I've let myself down; worse I've let my wife and children down and robbed them of their rightful inheritance. I've conditioned myself to always believe that I will win, although each time I lose. Please do something- please, please, please. At the moment I believe gambling stakeholders - government, clubs, casino - only pay lip-service. They earn profit from our addiction.
- To be honest I just love playing them, but when you don't get a run for your money it makes you mad, especially if you have put at least \$200 in one machine and you don't get the feature. You keep thinking this is a joke and the more you drink the more you put in, I don't drink all the time but there is this impulse that drives you to play. It would not matter how many signs they put up or how much they advertise problem gambling, it would never deter me from playing. Also I feel they must pay a certain amount, but this does not happen, it's just pure luck.
- I'm not proud of my gambling habit. I haven't sought help for the reason that I keep telling myself that I can control the habit. However, with the help of a few beers all that goes clean out the door, when I gamble I lose all sense of money value and will keep playing until I can't afford to play any more.
- I have really only just started in the last 6 months. I don't know what has triggered it. I love it and I hate it.
- Responsible gambling is when you always think of the priority of your family, but in my case I think for the past five weeks I've been out of control but I never forget to do my responsibilities as head of the family and work, e.g. asking my family if everything is okay and do some household chores before going to club.
- I like for someone to help me not gamble?
- Since my retirement in 1991, my wife and I played poker machines for enjoyment up to 1997 when she became ill (dialysis). All my spare time was spent supporting a sick lady. 2001 July she passed away. Now I had spare time on my hands. I am a member of several clubs in the North Ryde area. I kept thinking I was going to win big and I did. One day over at the X Club, I won \$800 and \$400 and \$3,000 at the Y Club, but in two weeks lost the lot. But I kept playing, winning and losing sometimes. I got so ill one night I thought my heart was going to stop. I have a lady friend now and stop playing the pokies, now 5 months on and I haven't played them. I would say I have gambled around \$15,000.
- My gambling habits have sometimes left me short of money for food, etc - (in earlier days) not any more.
- Once a gambler always a gambler and from horse – to pokies – casinos I've done the lot, and still gambling. Full circle simple because I am an addict and they're always not far away.
- I really think the only way you can stop gambling is to have a ban on your bank account, which is impossible. I have lost up to \$1,000 a day, because you can access your account. The only way to make

myself stop is by avoiding the clubs. I find that staying away is the only way. You can go to a club and have no intentions of playing pokies, but after a while the sound of the machines or a friend saying lets put \$15 in a pokie is too much. Years ago I gave up heroin and now I have gambling - in one year I lost \$8,000. My children don't know about it; if they ask I will have to say I have invested. I don't go to clubs any more. I wish I stopped one year ago.

- After completing this survey I (again) realise I do have a problem. I started going to clubs for socialisation. Divorced female, grown up children- can't really hang around pubs and discos. Clubs are relatively safe, easy place to have a meal and a drink even if I am alone. Too young for bingo or bowls, work full time and pokies seem to be my only relaxation. No longer able to play sport ie. netball. Tell me a better way to stay in touch with people. Better still help me to stop gambling.

Eleven respondents related their experience of others with gambling problems:

- My son has washed lots of money on gambling on a few occasions, as much as being an alcoholic. I do not believe they will give it up unless they want to but I do think that the clubs are doing a lot to help these people who have a problem.
- For some people gambling is a real problem and as a police officer I have seen and been to a great deal of domestics where the problem is gambling-related. Any program to help these addicted people is a good initiative.
- I have a friend who gambles away her pay, is always borrowing money from family and friends, makes all the excuses under the sun! Except that she gambles and no ads on responsible gambling have made any difference to her.
- Once I saw a man playing the pokies and his five children and his wife were behind a glass wall and looking at their father crying, because he lost all his money and he was using his club card and that upset me a lot because I wonder if that children and wife had any money after he left.
- As I only gamble spasmodically it is not a problem for me. Both of my parents gambled heavily. One of them cut it right back to only occasionally now. The other parent would gamble all and cash cheques with the mistaken idea of getting his money back. This has now stopped as he needs my help to go to the club and I don't let him gamble any more. The gambling caused years of friction and problems for our family but back then there was no thought given to responsible gambling.
- I would call myself a responsible gambler. This would be because I have seen the effects of problem gambling in my family. My uncle used a double mortgage on his house, lost his marriage by stealing and gambling away my aunt's money, became desperate and manipulative and lost the support of all the family.
- My responses are due to my experiences with my ex-husband who still is a gambler. I tried for many years to get this sort of info, only recently is it available - but he still goes to the pokies even though he is bankrupt and not allowed. All the questions on the previous page (VGS Harm to Self Scale) are for him 'always'. It caused the marriage break up, it cost me \$30,000 to pay my friends back as well as others. I do not blame the clubs for all but it did not help. He is just incurable. The X Club is a club that has made the effort.
- I know someone who attends Gamblers Anonymous and then goes to the club straight after it's finished. Family and friends are trying to help this person but high income, accessibility (i.e. 24 hours a day) and also ATMs are a very real danger to this person - also being able to take cash advances from credit cards - this is only one person in who knows how many.
- When I began as Lifeline counsellor in 1981, I received hardly any calls about gambling problems. By the year 2000, such calls represented 80%.
- Having lived in the environment I have no desire to gamble or drink to excess. Most gamblers live with the illusion that they will win, it will be soon and big - unfortunately they throw good money after bad to achieve little if anything but it affects all those around them, particularly friends and family. Telling lies becomes the norm, often violence follows due to over consumption of alcohol and a shortfall (often) in

finances - to the extreme limit where you lose everything - your home, your family, self respect and that of others And for what - an illusion! Having lived this I feel I can speak with some authority - it's definitely not for me.

- I used to work behind the bar in a gambling lounge and I'd watch people put thousands of dollars through pokies every night - now that's something to turn you off gambling.

C.17 Problem Gambling as a Personal Responsibility

Forty-two people were generally critical of irresponsible gambling, considering that controlling one's gambling is ultimately an individual responsibility:

- I think the responsibility is on the individual. You do know what you are doing and should accept your own problem if there should be one.
- I really feel that if someone wants to gamble nothing is going to stop them. It is the same as smoking and drinking, people make their own decisions and are responsible for what they choose. I really enjoy my time at the club as one of the few places I really relax. I know I am repeating myself but people are responsible for their own actions. I would love to be able to play the pokies more often but I know my limits and anyone with any sense should realise that your chances of losing is much higher than winning. If people are silly enough to over extend their gambling the club should not be responsible. We are adults after all.
- I feel each individual should be responsible for their gambling. Problem gamblers have to admit they have a problem.
- Basically the onus is on oneself to control their gambling and if they wish to self-destruct then all good intentions by clubs initiatives would seem puny. Hopefully this study will bear fruitful suggestions.
- In my opinion responsible gambling is the responsibility of the patron NOT the club. I think there is too much emphasis on the club's responsibility. We all need to be more aware of OUR responsibilities in life and stop blaming others for our problems.
- I am sick and tired of having people who are irresponsible and do stupid acts (in this case gambling their money away) placing the blame on others or expecting others to babysit or control them. It is about time people took responsibility for their own actions and stopped blaming others for their own stupidity and lack of restraint or personal control. We waste too much time and money on these fools.
- The Scout Founder Baden Powell said 'Everything in moderation is alright.' So maybe we need to be responsible for ourselves and club management stop wanting bigger and better salaries and placing...carrots in front of members.
- Not being a big and constant gambler myself, I personally believe it is really up to the individual but I do know that individuals gamble and chase money...do not know what anyone can do if someone really is a gambler without infringing their rights to do what they want. Both gambling and drinking is a big problem but how can anyone but the individual control their spending?
- It is ultimately up to the person to control their gambling, not the club.
- I feel at the end of the day gambling is no one else's concern but the gambler's.
- Gambling is the responsibility of each person. The clubs provide a service to those who want to use the facilities. It cannot tell people what to do with their money
- Whilst I agree that some people have problems, I disagree with any interference with the individuals unless their problems create an issue to people around them. When this happens you bar them from the club and when they have been barred from enough clubs they will have no further problems. No club = no friends = no problem. Mind you - some people can never stop any of their obsessions.
- Gambling is an individual concern; everyone should take responsibility for their own actions. Governments should not have to legislate laws for each and every individual.

- You gamble at your own risk so if you loose all your money you should learn from your mistakes.
- (It is)... your choice and we all need the freedom of choice but if you do have a problem I feel they do display enough info to get help or simply have yourself banned if it becomes a problem.
- A question that should have been included may well have read 'do you agree that persons should be responsible for their own actions?' The answer of course is yes - in gambling and all other aspects.
- The only thing I can really say about responsible gambling is it has to come from you.
- Basically if someone wants to gamble they will gamble, regardless of any changes made to club. I find a gambler is a gambler and they don't necessarily just go to club to gamble, i.e. pubs/taverns etc.
- I think people are responsible for their own choices. I do believe in organisations like Gamblers Anonymous and helplines, for the small percentage of people that have a problem, but most people don't, and taking away or restricting their freedom of choice because of a minority I think is wrong.
- Gambling is like alcohol addiction- it is up to the individual to admit they have a problem and seek help.
- I understand where the 'responsible gambling' rules are leading. But I feel that it is still the individual's responsibility in the end.
- I believe people should take responsibility for themselves and their own actions. Clubs, pubs and other establishments should not be expected to babysit for adults. I believe that it doesn't matter how much clubs do in relation to responsible gambling, individual people will always find a means of gambling if they really want to. Any one club's policy won't stop them.
- It's great that clubs are taking steps to promote responsible gambling, however, it is up to the individual - they will gamble no matter what - and if the club restricts their gambling to the extent that it inhibits the individual's ability to how he/she gambles they will go to another venue that suits them better.
- Responsible gambling begins with the person who chooses to put the money in the slot, not with the club, but by the same token small local clubs who often know regular gamblers have a responsibility to make sure that no family is being put through hardship as the result of one family member obviously gambling away their pay packet.
- Clubs can do so much but in the long run it comes down to the person.
- I believe you can only help yourself.
- Solving problem gambling comes only from the willpower of the individual to stop.
- We can't really blame the clubs as we are all responsible for our actions and should be held accountable for them.
- People will always find some way to gamble. Clubs are not responsible for people's spending.
- Responsible gambling by adults should be their responsibility. Their choice. No one holds a gun to their head and says play these pokies.
- Gambling is for the enjoyment and responsibility of all individuals - I see the interference of government as the further breakdown of an individual's options and rights.
- In my case, and personal opinion, I feel that each individual has his/her own lifestyle to live. It's their own willpower/determination that decides their outcomes.
- The fact (is) the club NEVER forces anybody to gamble and does have signs warning people about odds and the chances of winning are remote; it is up to the individual not to get in over their head.
- If you have a problem you have to admit to it first before anything will be seen or done about it.
- I believe that gambling is something that only the person who does it is responsible for - they must want to stop.
- Whilst I am aware that gambling 'may' be considered an illness, I believe the onus is ultimately on the

gambler. As soon as a gambler takes responsibility for their own actions the less of a problem there is. End of story.

- Responsible gambling is up to the individual person, nobody will change that.
- You make out that all the responsibility for gambling belongs to the clubs. I don't think that's right, the responsibility is the person themselves. I think my club does everything it can to help people know that gambling can be a problem. Now it is up to the people themselves.
- No one will stop gambling unless they want to no matter how many signs they see and how many people they hurt.
- I believe that gambling problems, like drinking problems, need to be identified by the person and then help sought. Unfortunately the people with the problem are the last to recognise it.
- I feel gambling problems are a disease- only when the person decides to do something about it (help) can they achieve success.
- It is ultimately up to the person to control their gambling, not the club. However the club should not encourage people to gamble, nor allow it to become easier for patrons to do so.
- I work in the club industry and feel that no amount of restrictions will prevent people from choosing to gamble. I do believe however all establishments should apply all the guidelines outlined by Gaming and Racing, so those people who feel the need to stop have an avenue to escape.
- Responsible gambling is the responsibility of the patron NOT the club.
- Fancy trying to involve club staff to do courses to handle drinking and gambling (problems) created by people by themselves. Are they professional counsellors? Social engineering at its worst! Seriously. Realistically gambling is for the suckers. As I stated before, no staff should ever be involved in another persons gambling habits. We are responsible for our own actions, deeds, etc. Don't blame others.

C.18 Strategies to Control Gambling

Twenty-seven people suggested some strategies to maintain control over gambling:

- Only bet with as much as you think you are able to lose as this is my motto; any big win that comes your way from a small outlay is very much appreciated. That is my reason for responsible gambling.
- Please note in the last 10 years or so I have only taken \$10 to use on poker machines in any one time. If I ever won more than \$10, I replaced the \$10 I started with and continued on playing with whatever was over. If at any time I ever won more than \$100 I stopped playing.
- Luckily I can control my gambling and only use money which is not required for essentials.
- I consider myself a responsible gambler. I gamble usually after a meal in the club for a limited time usually and with limited money. Very rarely does this change - when I've overstepped the mark I usually lose the money. Enough said!
- When I play the poker machines I will only play what I can afford to lose. If I win it's a bonus but I like to play for the enjoyment of playing. I only ever play a 1 cent machine to get the maximum amount of playing for my money.
- I enjoy playing the pokies but I limit myself to \$10.
- I enjoy betting on the horses because I find the races exciting, but I have a limit and stick to it. But I do see people sitting in front of machines all day long with no conscience or care of how much they lose because they think a big pay is just around the corner.
- I never take more money than I can afford to lose therefore I enjoy it.
- I play poker machines from time to time. I set myself a limit. If I lose I get up and leave. If I make a profit of only a few dollars I leave. I don't play more than 10 coins and only 1 cent machines.

- Personally, a friend and myself play the pokies for a bit of fun, although I suppose everyone says that! We give ourselves a certain time limit and take only a certain amount of money. The club would never get rich on us - we would spend only about \$20 between us! The time limit, by the way, is never more than an hour.
- Going to the club on a weekly basis to have lunch or dinner and a moderate fling on the poker machines. As I do not have EFTPOS or ATM cards and only take a moderate amount of money with me it never gets out of hand but I see others putting large amounts in the machines.
- I rarely play the pokies as I know I am unable to play them all the time. If I do play them I only put in a max of \$5 at a time.
- I go to my local club about every 2 or 3 weeks for lunch with sister or friends and only take enough cash with me so I can play the pokies 'for fun'. If I lose I've only lost what I was prepared to lose and if I win when the time comes that we've agreed to leave, then I can play with that the next time.
- I understand through gambling on poker machines that I'm sitting in front of a losing machine.
- People should understand that the playing of poker machines should only be considered entertainment as the players of pinball and the game machines and not for the purpose of winning money.
- Principally regulations should be made to help people to spend time and money as a game not a gamble. That would make a club and the members enjoy their benefit and pleasure. Gambling is no good. Game is good.
- I have a strong will and only go once a fortnight and enjoy my visit. I never play over twenty cents a game.
- I gamble when we go to the club for a meal. My time is limited. My gambling money is also limited, that is, once my 'pokie money' is gone or low it is time for home. Every one knows how much and whether they can afford to gamble hence my comments at the bottom of page 5. I also agree that friendly help should be available should anyone decide they cannot control their gambling. I do feel sorry for families that I have read about where they lose everything.
- We go when we wish and restrict our input as we feel we can afford.
- I can restraint myself to never gamble more than \$10 as I am practical by nature and it is more a release of any stress I might be feeling at the time. I know when to stop because I always ask myself what could you buy with this money? I never gamble for the sake of gambling.
- I may be fortunate that gambling is not a problem for me and no matter if my club has signs, notices, policies, etc. or not, this would not change my gambling habits. I never spend more than I plan or can afford.
- I only go to the club when I have some spare money that I don't mind to lose as long as I have a good run on the machines - for me it's entertainment, as I am a teetotaller and I no longer smoke.
- I go to club bingo so in the half hour break; its something to do; like a lot of the other people I do enjoy pokies. They are a challenge and take me away from all the news in life, because a lot of what is going on all around isn't good. I like it if I win, but I don't like it if I lose. However, they (pokies) do take me away from things, but I have to know what I can afford. I only receive a pension, have a car and smoke so now before I go to bingo I can only take the money for book and pokies. If I don't have money for them I cannot afford to use ATM. So the good news is when I have won I don't put money back in.
- Self discipline is the only answer. If you can't afford to lose you shouldn't gamble.
- Know when to stop, or if you win, play with the winnings. That's the greatest satisfaction playing with money you have just won. Try to stretch it over the week.
- Each individual has to take some stops in their own aid such as only taking as much money as they can afford to lose, paying weekly bills and paying rent and stocking house with food and essentials before going gambling. Also if they leave their bank card at home they won't be able to get money out of

EFTPOS. These are the measures I use and I find them very helpful.

- When I go to the club and intend to play the pokies I allow myself a set amount to spend. If this is gone in 15 minutes, bad luck. If it lasts an hour or so I have had fun. I only spend what I can afford to lose. Winning in any form of gambling is a bonus. I enjoy playing poker machines for a short time but get very bored after a couple of hours.

C.19 Motivations for Gambling

Seventeen respondents noted the fun and entertainment aspects of gambling:

- I don't regard playing poker machines as gambling as I enjoy the company and entertainment.
- I do feel people with gambling problems are often in denial. I find poker machines very enjoyable, as do most people I find playing them. Even though I sometimes feel I have a problem it is not a pastime that I would like to give up as it is fun, therefore I would never call the counselling service.
- I think X is a great club. You don't have to gamble as they have a lounge area. However if you do wish to gamble they do have ample 1 cent machines (my budget), which you can still play, have fun and not break the bank.
- I go to several clubs and play the pokies for fun. I also attend raffles and enjoy the friends I've met at the club. I do not call myself a gambler and there a lot of people like me who enjoy a flutter.
- Gambling can be fun, if you are lonely.
- I play the pokies for fun well within the limits of what I can afford to lose.
- I gamble for fun and never outside my means. I enjoy it and have fun playing the machines.
- When I play poker machine I play for fun. I am not a heavy poker machine gambler. The worst when you make it a habit which you cannot stay without it and control it.
- My own personal view on gambling is that you never play to win, only to have fun, and that you only play with money you can afford to lose. It is hard to change the attitude of people who must win when they gamble, and will not stop until they do.
- I consider myself to be the type of gambler who will spend \$50-\$100 once in a while for the fun of either losing some or sometimes winning some, without suffering or being too upset by the former, nor being overcome with joy by the latter.
- The gambling is the entertainment for me.
- Being retired for many years, gambling for me is a recreation like golf, bowls, etc. when I can afford the losses I then indulge. When I can't have the cash available I refrain from visiting the club and so (illegible) my losses. Over the years I have had a couple of nice wins at my club through gambling. Won a new car from a lucky gambling ticket draw and won \$10,000 from a similar project.
- I believe responsible gambling mostly comes from being entertained with respect to losing money. Trying to over win or break even presents problems. Health and age has a lot to do with controlled gambling.
- Speaking for myself I believe I am not a compulsive gambler - I play the pokies as a form of entertainment, this being brought about by the new machines that make gambling entertaining, but I have always known when to leave them especially in my later years.
- People should understand that the playing poker machines should only be considered entertainment as the players of pinball and the game machines and not for the purpose of winning money.
- My family are grown, I work, I have no one else to support - I only go to the club about once a month and usually lose heaps - but it is not often enough to do any real damage. I love playing pokies - it's the most enjoyable thing I do.

- In my opinion people are only trying to have fun, however, some seem to think they can get rich off gambling (pokies). Maybe I was educated a little better in odds and the facts of gambling, but the first thing I was ever taught is the odds are always in the house's favour. And only bet what you can afford to lose. If you win good luck, if not don't cry over spilt milk. There really is no way to stop it completely. People will go elsewhere to gamble.

Eight respondents said they gamble for relaxation:

- Responsible gambling is an oxymoron. Most people use gambling as either a release or an interest. Most people don't gamble for a huge win. To break even after an hour or two of pleasure is a most satisfying experience.
- I love playing the poker machines. I work full time - have a husband and grown up children - and now 1 grandchild. I have a very stressful job and sometimes can not unwind. I work and spend my money on poker machines.
- I play sometimes for relaxation but often see poorly dressed players who obviously cannot afford the large amounts being lost.
- I go to the club as I am retired and quite advanced in years. And I find it rather relaxing to spend few hours at the club.
- A lot of people I know gamble to escape from the real world. They enjoy it - it relaxes them.
- I am a pensioner and live by myself. I go to the club once every few months to have a change from everyday living. I do it for relaxation, which I enjoy from time to time.
- I do not smoke any more, rarely drink alcohol, do not have a motor vehicle licence, read sparingly due to a sight problem. I enjoy television if it is intelligent and I use poker machine playing for enjoyment and relaxation. Gambling, like smoking, drinking, sunbaking, can be dangerous if not moderated.
- I only spend what I can afford or be prepared to lose. I use this form of gambling as relaxation.
- I'm tired after work - I sometimes know I want a mindless activity that 'entertains' me for a while. I do have to work at home after my day actually at work. Some days I am so tired I know I will not work so I go to the club - have coffee, a few cigarettes and play the poker machines. I do not gamble heavily, will after I win a few dollars -sometimes I lose but I understand that before I go into the club. Overall it tends to even itself out financially, so it is not a problem. But I do see many people around who are 'serious' about their gambling, just as I see people like myself-having a relaxed time - not expecting to become rich - whiling away a few hours.

Five respondents noted that gambling can relieve loneliness or boredom:

- My opinion on gambling in general is that people in my age group have the time and money in most cases (superannuation, etc.) to go to the club to consume time and boredom. Summer months are long and hot and most clubs offer air conditioning and comfortable surroundings to spend the time. My club offers cheap midday meals for senior citizens which is another way of spending time. It's after that I go into the gambling den because they are there to sometimes win more than I lose.
- Boredom is not nice, and there are few other outlets for me to pass the time. I have property at (Sydney suburb) and used to work there so I have a liking for the club.
- Many people seem to come to gamble out of loneliness. The community must plan more outdoor activities for people of different ages, or even indoor, but not gambling, activities, especially for the more senior members of our community. The churches should try to do something like this too. Perhaps this may even help bring back more people, especially the youth, back to church.
- Playing the pokies enables people who are lonely to go somewhere social - without necessarily being social. For females in particular, it is a place they can go where they are not approached by undesirable people. It is also an opportunity to have some time out from their daily responsibilities.
- A lot of gambling comes from boredom in my observation.

Three people noted they gamble for social interaction:

- I go to the club for company. There is always someone to talk to. The gambling is secondary. A bit of fun.
- I go out to the club for social interaction, a meal or show and very occasionally put \$10 in a poker machine not expecting to win.
- Gambling can be a way of getting people to become friends. And then they won't play the machines. People need things to enjoy and meet others, this is why people play poker machines. Start dances, picnics and other social things to occupy their lives.

C.20 Other Suggestions

Four suggestions were made about other types of gambling:

- Remove bingo from clubs please.
- Bingo does not help in the players going overboard in poker machine gambling.
- I feel lotto as such is more addictive and cannot understand why they do not have the same responsibilities as clubs. Why cannot we be told the true odds on lotto and lotteries?
- What about HOUSIE? Some clubs have large addicted groups.

Five people felt education and inculcation of certain values had a key role to play in responsible gambling:

- Nothing annoys me more than seeing someone put their whole weeks wage into a machine. These people should be educated in the fact that there are no real winners. In the long run they will probably break even at the very most.
- I feel our society is encouraged to spend what we do not have- cannot afford and the result often leads to families in huge debt living on credit, spending far more a year than they earn and gambling is one more form of this which can also lead to a dangerous addiction. Now that we have legal casinos and gambling practices readily available our government are trying to 'fix' what they helped create by bringing in responsible gambling (and alcohol) awareness- forcing staff to do RCG (and RSA) courses and taking responsibility away from the individual and onto an innocent party. Education is the only real key at a young age.
- Education at an early age will at least provide the knowledge necessary to refrain from joining the ranks of addictive gamblers. Present methods merely circle the problem and produce bandaid solutions. Persons must be taught to accept responsibility for their actions.
- The right environment in ones formative years is paramount- what the parents and peer group do influences the young. Back to basics: hard work and thrift. Money doesn't grow on trees. All things in moderation; set a limit (very small) and walk away with wins and enjoy the small losses. Remember the club gets to keep 60% plus of turnover.
- If you want to have responsible gamblers...we should start early. Ages 15 and 16 year old and show them what is right and what is wrong.

Five respondents made specific comments about counselling services for gambling problems:

- Not into the gambling at all but agree all assistance should be made available for those in need.
- Talk to the counsellors and people who run the William and Catherine Booth Institutes – Surrey Hills – for info about and to talk to people in an intensive rehabilitation program for addicts including gambling.
- More and more compulsory counselling is needed and discouragement e.g. transport should never be provided.
- Counselling is definitely worthwhile.

- I feel depression and maybe counselling/ management training might also be very valuable to some people.