



October 4, 2003

The Chairman
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of NSW
P. O. Box Q290
QVB Post Office NSW 1230

Dear Sir,

I am an ex-TAB employee (retired June 2002) and had about 35 years with them – five years as a salaried (permanent) office rising to the rank of Manager; two years as a casual and finally 28 years as a TAB Agent working in various TABs in Sydney and suburbs. I would like to think I am qualified to make submissions on this industry only, not pubs, clubs, bookmakers etc.

My suggestion is that TABs be banned from giving away TVs, DVDs, computers etc in competitions and that local agency advertising be restricted to service and location. This would embrace the details of each Agency's facilities, speedy service, opening hours etc. Prize giveaways should be banned otherwise TABs will become like clubs where when you enter the door the first thing you see is the big prizes on offer for playing the pokies. Since privatisation of the TAB, the management make the Agents give prizes otherwise they are on the outer.

It is a natural conflict. They want to expand the business to maximum profits each year by cutting costs (Agent's pay), and getting as many new gamblers as they can. To this end, they have installed EFTPOS in the TABs so customers can drain their bank accounts when they have lost all of the money in their pockets. I recommend that the EFTPOS be removed or customers limited to one transaction.

There would be no resistance by Agents to these proposals as giveaways and EFTPOS were forced upon them. Any protests would be by management or staged by them.

The marketing techniques could use a look too as Agents are instructed to urge punters to bet on all products – "like a scratchie with that" or "bet on the cricket, netball, football."

The TAB was originally set up to counter the S.P. Bookies and use gambling dollars for government good.

People will always bet on horses no matter what measures are introduced to curb them, but some of these competitions with letter box drops amount to entrapment.

These days it seems like everyone has to compete for the gambling dollar with the government getting 10% of all revenue from gambling. I think if you seriously want to minimise gambling harm you must minimise gamblers, and this will reduce government money. The TAB could certainly put a lot more money into helping addicts who have lost everything rather than have company-paid junkets to Hayman Island, Harbour cruises, Hotel stays etc. Rewarding the Agents who have made the most new and big gamblers.

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I am not sure of all the restrictions but know the ones enforced were: no alcohol prizes and the usual one line warning on the bottom of the brochure. Perhaps an officer from Gaming and Racing be permanently employed to vet ALL promotions with the TAB paying his salary – they certainly can afford it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ross Suter". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ross Suter