

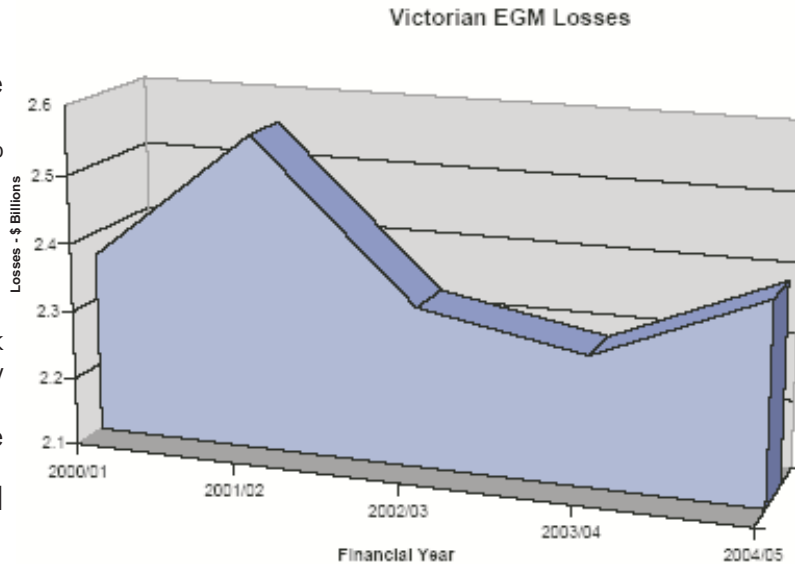
# Pokies Losses On The Rise

The amount of money lost on gaming machines increased last financial year, according to figures just released by the Victorian Commission for Gambling Regulation.

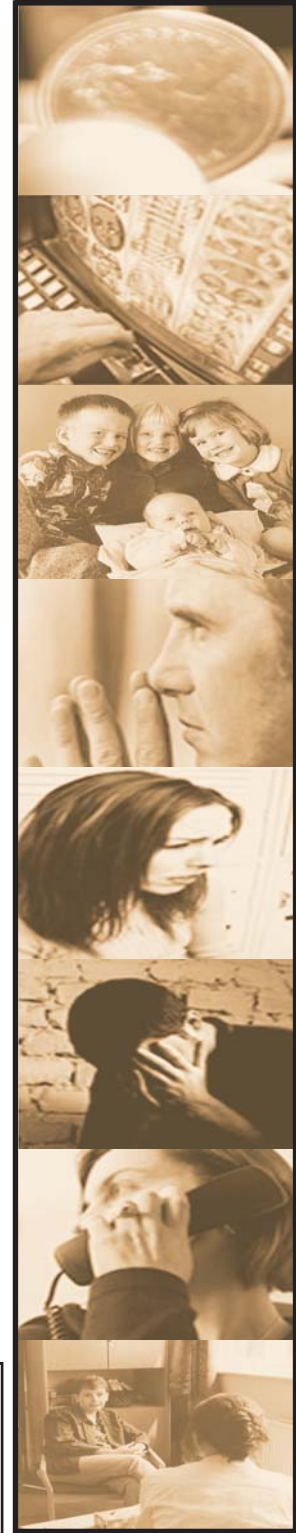
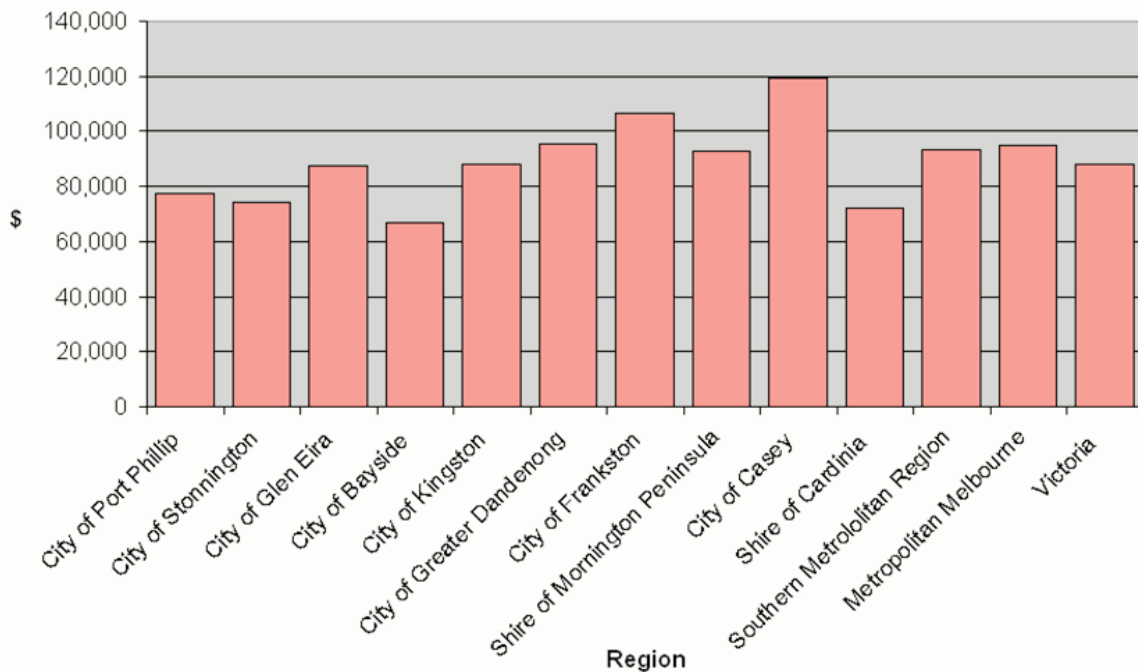
After a two-year drop in revenue attributed to gaming room smoking bans introduced in 2002, Victorian losses in 2004/05 grew by 4.5% to \$2.39 billion. Almost one quarter of this was lost in the Southern Metropolitan Region, which is made up of ten local government areas.

The biggest increase in the SMR was recorded in the Shire of Cardinia, where expenditure rose by nearly 10%. Greater Dandenong showed close to a 7% increase and the cities of Casey, Stonnington and Kingston all recorded growth above 4%.

Both Casey and Greater Dandenong gaming machines took totals of over \$103 million. Casey also featured in the statistics for "per pokie losses", with an average loss per machine of \$119,257. Frankston City was ranked second on this scale, with a figure of \$106,628.



**2004/05 Average Loss per EGM**



**Money Matters: Dealing with Credit Problems**  
**The Warning Signs**

Debt problems usually don't just happen without warning. People usually receive some early signals eg:

- You don't open your mail especially when the envelopes have windows
- You are still paying off your credit card from previous spending
- You only pay off your minimum monthly credit card balance
- All your credit cards are at the maximum limit & you have applied for another

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# Ask the Gambling Guru

Gambler's Help Southern's Gambling Guru answers your questions on gambling. In this issue of GM, the Guru answers Lindsay's question on return to player and expenditure which relates to the published expenditure figures on page 1.

Lindsay asked what the published expenditure figures really mean, and if it is a percentage of the actual money played by the community?

For Lindsay's full question, and the Guru's complete answer to this and other questions check out the Gambling Guru section of the website at [www.ghsouthern.org.au](http://www.ghsouthern.org.au)

## The Guru Says -

The published expenditure figures are the profit made by the machines - the money put in minus the money paid out in prizes. Therefore the operator can count on at least 13% of the credits played, but usually more because players often play their winnings.

If we looked at the money put into machines (called Cash In) it would be higher than the published expenditure figures, and if we looked at the value of credits played (called Turnover) it would be significantly higher than the expenditure figures.

Here is an example of the accounting data from a non-jackpot machine for one day.

Cash In	Cash Out	Net Revenue	Credits Played	Credits Won	Credits Net Revenue	Games Played	Games Won	Cr Win%	Games Win%	Cash Out %
\$1,111.00	\$682.90	\$428.10	\$2,675.05	\$2,246.95	\$ 428.10	2900	1032	84%	35.6%	61%

Here is the meaning of this table:

Cash In = What players put into the machine (via the coin slot or note acceptor)

Cash Out = What players cashed out via the coin tray, book pay or ticket.

Net Revenue = Cash In - Cash Out

Credits Played = The value of credits played on the machine (notice it is more than twice what was put into the machine.)

Credits Won = The value of credits won on the machine.

Credits Net Revenue = Credits Played - Credits Won (this figure should equal Net Revenue.)

Games Played = The number of Games Played (Spins)

Games Won = Number of Games Won

Cr Win % = Percentage of credits played that were returned to players that day.

(Note it is close to 87% - some days it will be higher than 87% some days lower)  
Games Win % = Number of games on which there was some win (at least one credit regardless of size of bet. (This may include real losses where the win was less than the total bet.)

Cash Out % = Cash out as a percentage of cash in.

The three percentages at the end are interesting. From these we can say that at least 3 in every 10 games paid some sort of win, and if we added all these wins together it would be 84% of the total credits played. However because a lot of the winnings were put back into the machine the amount cashed out was only 61% rather than 84%.

Expenditure figures are the net revenues for all machines in the year added together. The amount gambled would be the credits played for all machines added together which would be much much higher.

The Cash In figure by conservative rough estimates would be about 2-3 times the published expenditure figures. The Turnover or total amount gambled would be about 8 times the expenditure figures.

As an example, in the year 2003/04 Victorian expenditure or losses on poker machines was about \$2.3 Billion. Estimated Turnover would have been at least \$18.3 Billion.

So the Guru says, You make a decision every time you press the button on a poker machine - you can cash out or give the machine another chance to take more of your money. Its your choice.

# VCGR UPDATE

Three long awaited decisions on gaming venue applications were released this month for increases in machine numbers on the Mornington Peninsula. All three achieved increases but only with conditions such as the removal of machines from other venues.

## Gaming Venue Applications

### May 2005

#### Rosebud RSL, Rosebud

To allow increase in number of machines from 65 to 83

**Approval for increase of 10 machines (max. 75) on the condition that**

**10 machines are removed from Mornington Country Golf Club**

#### Steeple Tabaret, Mornington

To allow increase in number of machines from 65 to 85

**Approval for increase of 10 machines (max. 75) on the condition that**

**10 machines are removed from Mornington RSL**

#### Dromana Red Hill RSL, Dromana

To allow increase in number of machines from 10 to 20

**Approval for increase of 10 machines (max. 20) on the condition that**

**10 machines are removed from Mornington RSL**

### July 2005

#### Nepean Hotel, Moorabbin

For approval of premises (New Venue) with 41 machines

**Decision Pending**

### October 2005

#### Beretta's Langwarrin Hotel, Langwarrin

To allow increase in number of machines from 34 to 44

**Hearing Scheduled 10th & 11th October**

**For the latest venue applications in your area go to the VCGR website at [www.vcgr.vic.gov.au](http://www.vcgr.vic.gov.au) and select the Commission Business link and then Forthcoming Hearings**

## **Gambler's Help Southern Counsellor Robin Bart examines why people keep their gambling secret**

When people come to me to talk about the impacts of gambling on themselves and their family, one of the issues that arises is secret keeping, lies and cover-up. The person who is problem gambling and those in the family who are excluded from the secret, are both affected.

The person gambling may be unwilling to reveal the secret of his or her gambling to their partner. As Helen said "It's the one thing I haven't told him about" and "It would be the end of the marriage". She loves her husband and does not want to break up the family. She has never told an out right lie but has omitted a lot about where she's been, what's made bills hard to pay and the turmoil within.

She is completely stumped as to how gambling became a problem and why she can't stop. She is known by friends and family as 'a tight fist' with money and has prided herself as a good money manager and a straight down the line, honest person who cares for her family, deals with problems and is basically a good person. She is shamed and struggling to live with this 'other' self, which she hates. She has finally, in desperation come for some assistance.

One client told me they had never deliberately lied or intentionally kept a secret but had gone to great lengths to cover up to ensure that they (themselves) didn't know what they'd spent gambling and that their partner would not find out.

For partners, when the gambling is disclosed they will present to counselling expressing anger, hurt and bewilderment. They often feel tricked and betrayed and wonder what else they haven't been told. Jill said to me, "We had talked about it and I thought we'd agreed to work towards the house and having a family". Or George, who asked, "Is there any more that I haven't found out?"

### **Secrets affect the person and relationships**

Within families many subjects can become secrets including illness, adoption, paternity, pregnancy prior to marriage, abuse, gender orientation, promiscuity, affairs, alcohol and drug use, scrapes with the law or the way you spent your youth. People decide to 'not tell', or to 'tell something else' for lots of reasons, often with good intentions.

However, secrets affect the person keeping the secret and the person from which the secret is hidden. The 'secret keeper' worries that if the secret gets known they will not be accepted or loved (and in the case of gambling, there may be other consequences of legal action, debt recovery etc). The 'outsider' may feel worried that there is something wrong but is confused and mystified when their theories are denied. Both become anxious and their competence is impeded as they are cut off from their resources to problem solve effectively, by the secret [Imber-Black, 1994].

Secrets impact on family relationships. Secrets create distance and cut offs in family relationships, dividing people between those who know the secret and those who don't. Conversations tend to become rigid, narrow and repetitive so the secret can be avoided or maintained. Those kept

out of the secret, experience heightened tension in the relationship. People withdraw their full emotional presence from others and communication may be marked by defensiveness, mystification and reactivity. [Imber-Black 1994]

### **Opening up secrets**

Crago [1997] raises a number of considerations about opening secrets. At what point do secrets become a problem? Should the secrets be busted open? For many people they cling vehemently to their secret. They react with fear and revulsion to the possibility of the secret becoming known.

People need to know that there are risks and benefits to revealing the secret. They are considering 'the devil you know' versus the unknown future in which things will not be the same. "...they need to know that if they choose to reveal secrets, they are losing one kind of power, and embracing another." [Crago, 1997, p107]

Opening up the gambling secret can be difficult, plagued with anxiety and angst. Sometimes people reveal the secret at the last minute, knowing they are about to be caught out. Sometimes the gambling is found out by the partner by accident or when they have collected some undeniable proof. Sometimes people decide they do not want to keep the secret any longer and work out how and what they are going to say. How and when the gambling secret is disclosed appears to have some impact on the process of sorting out the problems created by the gambling, dealing with the problem gambling and the relationship changes that come with the opening of the secret.

When the gambling secret is initially disclosed, the person keeping the gambling secret often reports some relief and also fear as to the impact and consequences for others and themselves. For those to whom the gambling secret is revealed, it is often a shock. Sometimes people feel relief as the belief that something was not OK is confirmed.

They often need time and information to catch-up with what's been going on and all that it means for them and they experience a multitude of thoughts, feelings, and reactions. They may need to ask questions and go over the details of what's gone on to catch-up with what the secret keeper has known for some time. Also they are frequently faced with problems they had not anticipated, did not create and may not want to know about but which have significant impact on their day-to-day life.

With the opening up of the gambling secret, people have the opportunity to deal with the realities of their problems and bring all their resources and competency to the situation. People may seek more open communication to make decisions and address the gambling problem, the impact of gambling on the person and the relationship.

After considering the risks and benefits, a person may choose to keep the secret.

**References - See Page 4**

# What's New on [www.ghsouthern.org.au](http://www.ghsouthern.org.au)

## Gambling Guru answers your questions

Gambler's Help Southern's Gambling Guru answers questions from the public on various gambling matters. This month the Guru explains return to player on a poker machine and why even though return to player is required to be 87%, players usually lose all of their money.

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## Media Watch

Latest news items on gambling from around the world including our regular media feed.

## In the InfoBase (Free Registration Required)

A range of quotable gambling quotes.

# Best Friend?



[www.ItsYourChoice.org.au](http://www.ItsYourChoice.org.au)

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**Its Your Choice** is a new social marketing campaign currently being developed by the Gambler's Help Southern community education team. It aims to get people thinking about their choices when it comes to gambling. Every day we decide how we spend our time and money and how much value we put upon different things in life. Its Your Choice doesn't give you the answers or tell you what's right or wrong, it simply presents two options and lets you decide what value you place on gambling compared to other things in life.

Its Your Choice is in the very early stages of development however we are looking for participants to give us online feedback on various concepts. If you would like to participate please email [iycc@ghsouthern.org.au](mailto:iycc@ghsouthern.org.au). You do not have to gamble to participate as we value all feedback.

## Secrets (from Page 3) - References

Bradshaw, J., 1995 Family Secrets: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You, New York, Bantam Books

Crago, Hugh "The 'Not to be Opened' Letter: Family Secrets, Hidden Knowledge and Violated Prohibitions" A.N.Z.J. Family Therapy, 1997, Vol.18, No. 2, pp99-108

Evan Imber Black and Steven Lerner, 1994 video 'Family Secrets and Implications for Family Therapy

Gambler's Help Southern provides free, confidential, professional support for gamblers, their families and others affected by gambling.

Services available include:

- Counselling for gambling related issues
- Financial Counselling
- Multicultural Services
- Community Education
- Professional Development

We can also provide a wide range of resources and information such as:

- Self-help guides
- Information Sessions
- Training Sessions
- Brochures and Cards
- Posters
- Advice on gambling and gaming issues

All our staff are qualified professionals in their area of expertise and have experience dealing with gambling issues.

If you have concerns about your gambling, or the gambling of a family member or friend, call Gambler's Help Southern Intake during business hours on 9575 5353 or the Gambler's Help Telephone Counselling Service which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on 1800 156 789.

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