



How big is an issue that affects almost 900,000 Victorians?

During this month, gambling has been an issue that has received significant coverage in state and local media.

Reasons for the increased coverage include the commencement of the public consultations as part of the review into gaming licences post-2012 and new political party People Power having gambling as a major policy platform. Also in the past week, the Liberal Party released their gaming policy calling for a reduction in machine numbers of 5,500, banning 24-hour venues, ensuring all venues are closed for at least 4 hours per day, and pledging \$129 million for problem gambling services and prevention.

A statement that some make, and a position often put by the gaming industry is that problem gambling is not a significant issue for the community and that it impacts only 2% of the population.

The 2% figure comes from the 1999 Productivity Commission inquiry into "Australia's Gambling Industries" which estimated the percentage of Australian adults who had a moderate to severe gambling problem to be 2.1%. It also found that for each individual, 5 – 10 other people were affected.

The table below applies these figures to ABS population estimates for June 2005 to show the current scope of the problem.

The figures show that while 2% of the population may have a gambling problem, when we examine those who are impacted by their own problem gambling or the problem gambling of another person this figure blows out to 18% of the population.

The figures below correspond to all Victorians regardless of whether they play poker machines or not. Researchers such as Charles Livingstone, author of recently released research into poker machine technology in Victoria, suggests that the actual percentage of regular poker machine players that may be problem gamblers or at risk may be 50% or even higher.

The statistics are significant enough to demonstrate that debate about gambling is valuable if it generates awareness of gambling as a significant community issue.

It is yet to be seen if gambling will play a role in determining the outcome of this year's State election, but it is certain that the community's perception of gambling is changing with more people being concerned about the issue.

Area	Total Population	18+ Population	Problem Gamblers	Affected Others	Total Impacted	% Population Impacted
Bayside	90,207	70,004	1,470	14,700	16,170	18%
Cardinia	58,061	42,149	885	8,850	9,735	17%
Casey	211,451	151,284	3,177	31,770	34,947	17%
Frankston	118,604	89,881	1,888	18,880	20,768	18%
Glen Eira	125,029	99,822	2,096	20,960	23,056	18%
Greater Dandenong	126,327	98,949	2,078	20,780	22,858	18%
Kingston	138,415	109,396	2,297	22,970	25,267	18%
Mornington Peninsula	141,026	108,952	2,288	22,880	25,168	18%
Port Phillip	84,495	74,428	1,563	15,630	17,193	20%
Stonnington	91,679	76,923	1,615	16,150	17,765	19%
Southern Region	1,185,294	921,788	19,358	193,580	212,938	18%
Victoria	5,024,440	3,870,537	81,281	812,810	894,091	18%
Australia	20,328,609	15,520,622	325,933	3,259,330	3,585,263	18%

GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK ON GAMBLING MATTERS
Go to www.ghsouthern.org.au and follow the **FEEDBACK** link.

GAMBLER'S HELP™ 1800 156 789
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Did You Know? RAFFLES



Victorian Commission
for Gambling Regulation

UPDATE

This month the hearings into applications for new venues at Lynbrook and Cranbourne East continued. These applications are being carefully examined by the Commission, with further sessions planned in August.

Also this month, Gambler's Help staff attended a VCGR information session held at Noble Park. The sessions, over two days, covered the wide range of gaming legislation and regulations in force in Victoria and covered all types of gambling including minor gaming such as raffles and lucky envelopes. See this page for some facts about raffles.

	Total Prize Pool – Retail Value		
	\$500 or less	\$5,000 or less	Over \$5,000
Is a Permit required?	No	No	Yes
Is the number of tickets available for sale limited?	No	Yes, must be not less than twice & not more than six times the total value of the prizes	Yes, must not exceed the number authorised by the permit
Are printed tickets req'd?	No	Yes, see table on page 6	Yes, see table on page 6
Do ticket purchaser's details need to be collected?	No	Yes, ticket sellers should obtain enough information to be able to identify the winners	Yes, ticket sellers should obtain enough information to be able to identify the winners
For how long can tickets be sold?	One day	No longer than 3 months	For the period authorised on the permit. Permits will not be issued for periods over 12 mths
When does the draw have to occur?	On the same day as the ticket sales, or within an 8 hour period	On the date printed on the tickets, which must not be more than 14 days after the last date of the proposed ticket sales	On the day authorised by the permit
What method is used to draw the raffle?	The method of draw must allow each ticket a random & equal chance of winning	The method of draw must allow each ticket a random and equal chance of winning	The method of draw must allow each ticket a random and equal chance of winning
What should be done if the winner can't be located?	If a winner doesn't come forward within a reasonable amount of time following the announcement of the winning number a redraw must occur	Contact the Minor Gaming Unit	Contact the Minor Gaming Unit

From VCGR News - April 2006

Gaming Venue Applications

July 2006

Lynbrook Tavern
New Venue - 80 machines
Hearing Adjourned

August 2006

Springvale Football Club - Casey Fields Cranbourne East
New Venue - 95 Machines
Hearing Resumes - 9 & 10 August

Pakenham Lakeside Tavern
New Venue - 60 machines
Hearing to be scheduled

internet gambling: Is the bubble about to burst?

Internet gambling has increased at a phenomenal rate over the last few years but some recent actions in the US may halt future growth.

Despite the fact that internet gambling is illegal in the US, most internet gamblers are American. Most internet gambling sites are located in countries in the Caribbean or small European countries such as Gibraltar and Alderney.

This has led to a situation where most internet gaming operators believed they were not subject to US law. This belief may be invalid given the recent actions of prosecutors in the US.

David Carruthers, the British CEO of internet gaming site BetonSports was arrested in Texas whilst changing planes. He was charged with a range of criminal charges including racketeering, in addition to the US government taking civil action

requiring BetonSports to stop taking bets from US customers and to make refunds.

In light of the action, a major online gaming conference to be held in Las Vegas was also cancelled as attendees feared arrest if they landed in the US.

Another threat to the industry is legislation currently in the US Senate which would practically ban internet gambling.

As the US is the biggest market for internet gambling, any ban would significantly affect the industry making it unprofitable in many cases.

It is yet to be seen what effect this will have, but it can be expected that this will be a significant battle due to the money involved.

Talking to and Caring for Children when a Parent has a gambling problem

Part One: The Impact of Gambling on Children

The following are excerpts from a brochure being prepared by Gambler's Help Southern which aims to help reduce the impact of problem gambling on children while the family is addressing this issue. It covers the most common issues and questions that parents and children have when a parent has a gambling problem, providing practical tips to assist families obtain the best outcomes for children and the whole family. The completed brochure will be available soon.

When thinking about gambling it is important to recognise that uncontrolled gambling causes more than just financial harm. Problem gambling may also adversely affect other aspects of life including family relationships. Some of the negative consequences for children and family life in general may be:

- Not having time for the children or partner as the person who is gambling may spend increasing amounts of time at gambling venues.
- The person who is gambling may arrive late or miss family events such as birthdays, school activities and other family gatherings.
- Being moody and impatient with the children because of a preoccupation with gambling and dealing with pressure arising from gambling, rising debt or fear of being found out.
- Children miss out on items such as school books or excursions because of financial difficulties.
- The person gambling may insist that evenings out or even family vacations be at places where gambling is available.
- A hostile and tense family environment when parents may argue over the gambling.

- Inappropriate parental boundary or rule setting (rules become too relaxed or too rigid) for children when the parent/s try too hard to compensate for the lack of attention given to children as a result of their preoccupation with gambling.
- The secrecy of gambling can give rise to stilted communications between family members, and a sense of the unknown creates a climate of tension and anxiety in the family.
- Often children's behaviour is affected, showing observable signs of the stress and anxiety that they and others are feeling in the household. They may become withdrawn or act out, to avoid or seek reassurance and attention.

Once the gambling is disclosed children may be concerned about losses to them including:

- Having to move house,
- Having to move school,
- Parental withdrawal due to gambling, depression, separation or divorce,
- In some cases a parent may face legal action.

Next issue: Part Two: How Children can be Supported

FOR YOUR READING LIST

"Jurisdictional public research update – Feb 2006"

This table from the Gambling Research Australia (GRA) Website and Clearinghouse provides a list of gambling research studies, completed or commissioned, from around Australia. Where possible, it includes links to an electronic copy of reports. Go to Jurisdictional Research at www.gamblingresearch.org.au The GRA program is an initiative of the Ministerial Council on Gambling.

"Analysis of Gambler Pre-commitment Behaviour"

This study falls within the second of six national research priorities for gambling research. The report includes findings and interpretation of the following topics:

1. How budgets are set for gambling
2. Basis and nature of pre-commitment in gambling
3. Gambler experience with pre-commitment
4. Triggers for exceeding limits
5. Control strategies used to keep to limits
6. Views about future options for setting limits
7. Views about card based gambling

Follow the links from www.gamblingresearch.org.au to The Research Library, then GRA Reports.

"The Changing Electronic Gaming Machine Industry and Technology"

This project aimed to "analyse the composition and transformation over time of the technical basis of the EGM industry in Victoria." It placed particular emphasis on "the relationships between technology and the behaviour of gamblers, especially 'problem gamblers'." The report includes the following sections:

1. EGM technology
2. Consumption of EGM gambling
3. Researching EGM technology with problem gamblers
4. Discussion

Follow the links from www.justice.vic.gov.au to Gaming and Racing, then Research.



Did you ever wonder why its called a Piggy Bank?

Dogs bury bones. Squirrels gather nuts to last through the winter. Camels store food and water so they can travel many days across deserts. But do pigs save anything? No! Pigs save nothing. They bury nothing. They store nothing.

So why do we save our coins in a piggy bank? Because someone made a mistake. During The Middle Ages, in about the fifteenth century, metal was expensive and seldom used for household wares. Instead, dishes and pots were made of an economical clay called pygg. Whenever housewives could save an extra coin, they dropped it into one of their clay jars. They called this their pygg bank or their piggy bank.

Over the next two hundred to three hundred years, people forgot that "pygg" referred to the earthenware material. In the nineteenth century when English potters received requests for piggy banks, they produced banks shaped like a pig. Of course, the pigs appealed to the customers and delighted the children. Source: www.ideafinder.com



Financial Times:

Youth Debt out of control

Recently, a youth worker from the City of Stonnington region referred new cases to a Gambler's Help financial counsellor.

The first referral concerned an 18 year old unemployed male who was able to get a personal loan for \$18,000 from one of the major banks. His personal income is only \$183.00 a fortnight. This is extremely irresponsible lending as he will not be able to make his repayments.

The other case involved a young person who had accrued large debts in relation to mobile phone use. This issue is alarming as it is ongoing & neverending for many!

For more on youth debt visit <http://www.moneystuff.net.au> or download the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria's Debt Sux! fact sheets from their website at http://www.yacvic.org.au/pages/resources/debt_sux.htm



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 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 between 9.30 and 4.30 on 9575 5353 or the Gambler's Helpline which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on 1800 156 789.

GAMBLER'S HELP™ 1800 156 789

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