

## Summary of submission to Inquiry into online gambling and its impacts on those experiencing gambling harm

My comments are made as a member of the public, not as any professional or legal expert. They go to the level of gambling ads in this country and especially to the results of gambling losses in Australia with homelessness clearly as one of the outcomes of gambling (also affecting homelessness internationally, in countries where there is less gambling loss), along with consequent inability to provide for children properly (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2021.107151>). This enquiry may achieve little if it concentrates on the wording of regulation when the results of gambling in the community are what actually speaks to the problem. I would question whether the enquiry should be about advertising and regulation or about actual access to gambling. I imagine that these observations have been made before. Online gambling has opened access to gambling for a family member, who never gambled previously, except perhaps with a work sweepstake.

- [the effectiveness of existing consumer protections aimed at reducing online problem gambling](#)

The current protections (whatever they are) do not seem to be doing anything to really limit or reduce online gambling. It looks to me like a complete free for all with over 700 free to air TV ads per DAY when other countries such as the UK have !0 per WEEK. These ads would not be aired unless they were effective.

- [how to better target programs to address online problem gambling to reduce the potential exploitation of at-risk people, and protect individuals, families and communities](#)

It seems like Australia wants to have its cake and eat it. We want to maintain current physical gambling levels with the resulting government revenue, and thus maintain a culture of “approved” gambling which has now spread into online gambling – which perhaps even escapes taxing if the regimes are overseas, and then deal with problems afterwards that are bound to arise with the level of gambling accessibility.

Why are we trying to design programs to reduce the exploitation of vulnerable people? Why do we allow this gambling to flourish and grow at break neck speed?

The 2017 Hilda Survey shows that 1.1% of Australian adults can be classified as problem gamblers and that 2.1% of typical monthly gamblers could be classified as problem gamblers.

At the very least we should disallow sponsorship of sport by these companies (and tax those offshore heavily as their profits are made in Australia

- [the effectiveness of current counselling and support services to address online problem gambling](#)

If we have the highest gambling losses per head in the world (2016 data), how can this current counselling be effective or sufficient?

- the quality of and access to protective online gambling education programs

If we have the highest gambling losses per head in the world, how can these education programs be accessible, effective or sufficient?

- the impact of current regulatory and licensing regimes for online gambling on the effectiveness of harm minimization and consumer protection efforts

We have the worst gambling losses per head in the world Australia (2016 data). Obviously the result shows there is little protection, education or hindrance to people online gambling to this point. If other countries make regulations to protect their citizens, why is Australia so lax?

- The appropriateness of the definition of 'gambling service' in the *Interactive Gambling Act 2001* (Cth), and whether it should be amended to capture additional gambling-like activities such as simulated gambling in video games (e.g. 'loot boxes' and social casino games)
- the appropriateness of current gambling regulations in light of emerging technologies, payment options and products

Whatever the regulations, they are obviously inadequate and inappropriate, if Australia has the highest per capital gambling losses in the world. There is no point making ineffective regulation or having no properly funded regulator.

- the effectiveness of protections against illegal online gambling services, including casino style gambling such as online blackjack and slot machines
- the effectiveness of current gambling advertising restrictions on limiting children's exposure to gambling products and services (e.g. promotion of betting odds during live sport broadcasts), including consideration of the impact of advertising through social media, sponsorship or branding from online licensed gambling operators, and

Over 700 gambling ads a day on free to air TV is plain offensive and absolute saturation. I have seen these ads on air, as early as 7pm, but they maybe shown during earlier children's hours as well, but as I don't watch TV at those times, I don't know. Plenty of children can see these ads on TV at hours when they are not likely to be in bed and it is ridiculous, if we want to limit the spread of this obscene idea into minds of the young. With many children already indulging in online betting on their phones while still at school, it has already become commonplace and "acceptable" for them. Is this what we want for our country? Focusing on advertising now is rather shutting the door after the horse has bolted. But better late than never.

- any other related matters.