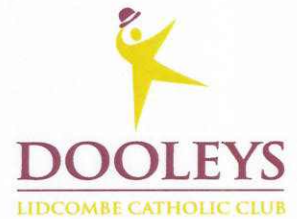


21st January 2011



Committee Secretary
Joint Select Committee on Gambling Reform
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Submission by DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club Group to the Joint Select Committee on Gambling Reform

On behalf of DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club, I wish to outline our views and concerns on some of the recommendation and issues raised by the Productivity Commissions Inquiry into the Gambling Industry.

Background:

DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club is a Club Group in Sydney's Central West consisting of three Clubs, DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club the main Club at Lidcombe, DOOLEYS Waterview Club at Silverwater and DOOLEYS Regents Park Sports Club at Regents Park.

DOOLEYS was formed in 1946, originally as the Lidcombe Catholic Workmen's Club for the purposes of:

- Promoting the moral, intellectual, social and material welfare of the members.
- Creating and foster a spirit of co-operation among Catholic men and women, being strictly non-political.
- Provide for members and for member's guests a social club with all the usual facilities of a club and such other social or sporting facilities as may be decided from time to time.
- Subscribe to, become a member of and co-operate with any other club, association or organisation, whether incorporated or not, whose objects are altogether or in part similar to those of the Club.
- Establish and support or aid in the establishment and support of associations, institutions, funds, trusts and conveniences calculated to benefit the members of the Club or the dependants or connections of such members, and to make payments towards insurance for any such purpose.
- Subscribe or guarantee money for charitable or benevolent objects, or for any public, general or useful object.
- Print and publish any newspapers, periodicals, books or leaflets that the Club may think desirable for the promotion of its objects.
- Make donations for religious, charitable, sporting or educational purposes.

DOOLEYS has grown into an extremely diverse Club Group in terms of its business and the ethnic diversity of its 46,000 members. The Auburn LGA in which Lidcombe is situated has over 100 nationalities and is the most ethnically diverse in Australia with many of these are represented in the Clubs membership.

Club Facilities – The statistics and facilities of the Group includes:

- 7 dining outlets
- 8 bars
- 7 function rooms
- 2 bowling greens
- 4 gaming rooms
- 17 internal sporting & social clubs
- 24 sporting, social, community & charitable groups use the clubs rooms
- 220 staff directly employed
- 285 staff including contracted labour
- 57 Community & charitable & sporting groups supported financially by the Club
- \$819,497 spend on community support, sponsorship to sporting and community groups, donations to local charities, hospitals and community organisations in the 09/10 financial year
- \$1,220,363 spent on members facilities, services, support and benefits in the 09/10 financial year
- Provides accommodation and administrative support for Lidcombe RSL Sub Branch

Pre-Commitment – DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club is supportive of venue based pre-commitment on an opt in basis.

DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club is not supportive of a national compulsory pre-commitment system for the following reasons:

1. Pre-Commitment is unproven as a measure to reduce problem gambling
2. The Club has existing infrastructure that will permit pre-commitment
3. Additional cost to retrofit or upgrade to a new system is estimated at \$1.790M, money that the Club has already invested in systems
4. The playing field must be level for all gambling operators
5. It is anticipated DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club's revenue will reduce by at least 30%, equating to lost revenue in excess of \$12.965M
6. This \$12.965M in lost revenue will migrate to the casino, on line betting, TAB, lotteries, illegal gambling rooms.
7. State & Federal governments will lose taxable revenue from multiple sources
8. A reduction in revenue of \$12.965M will most likely close all the DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club properties

\$1 Maximum bet

DOOLEYS does not support reducing the maximum bet limits for the following reasons:

1. It is unproven as a measure to reduce problem gambling
2. People will alter their play habits
3. It is anticipated revenue will decrease by over 30% or \$12.965M which will jeopardise the viability of all DOOLEYS Clubs
4. This \$12.965M will migrate to other less heavily regulated forms of gambling

ATM Withdrawal limits

DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club does not support the restriction on ATM withdrawals for the following reasons:

1. There is no proven link between ATM restrictions and a reduction in problem gambling
2. Members should have the right to access and spend their own money as and when they see fit
3. Members security will be in jeopardy if they need to leave the Club premises to access more money via financial institutions or if they are forced to carry additional money in transit to the premises
4. ATM restrictions will not limit access and will be by passed by those with multiple accounts
5. Restrictions will provide opportunities for money lending and loan sharking

Responsible Gambling Venue

DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club is a responsible gambling provider and aim to identify and minimise and negative effects of gaming.

DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club is a member of Betsafe – an elite problem gambling management, advisory and counselling group. Betsafe present regularly at the Clubs bi-monthly staff meetings.

DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club's staff are all Responsible Conduct of Gambling accredited and aside from this, participate in regular briefings and exclusion updates. Specific training is also provided for managers and supervisors around Responsible Conduct of Gambling and administering of exclusions.

Over 20% of exclusions at DOOLEYS are involuntary, meaning the Club excludes and refers members to counselling who display signs of problem gambling.

Diversification of Revenues

DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club is undertaking a masterplanning process that will diversify its revenue base lessening its reliance on gaming and providing more amenities for members and the community. This could include a hotel, function centre, gymnasium, day spa, retail and commercial facilities.

DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club has delayed the planning process due to the uncertainty of this inquiry. As DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club will debt fund any such form of development, this development will cease to proceed if any of these "initiatives" are implemented.

In summary the DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club Group opposes these "initiatives" on the following grounds:

- They are unproven to reduce problem gambling
- The vast majority of social players (99%+) will be inconvenienced and have their security placed at risk
- The financial implications will likely close DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club three Clubs
- Employment will be lost
- Community amenities and infrastructure will be lost
- Community funding will be lost
- Government revenues will be lost
- Problem gambling will continue in unregulated or much less regulated environments

In our view the Productivity Commissions views are flawed as they do not take an equitable and holistic view of gambling and problem gambling.

Poker machines have been singled out while all other more high profile forms of gambling have had a blind eye turned to them. If the Commission was serious all forms of gambling should have been scrutinised as rigorously as poker machines.

DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club totally supports initiatives that are phased in with industry consultation and are proven to reduce problem gaming.

We urge the Committee to work with ClubsNSW and the other gambling industries for genuine solutions and solutions that will maintain a viable Club industry.

Yours sincerely,

David Mantle
Chief Executive Officer
DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club