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Portfolio: FHC51A

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## Council of Australian Governments Select Council on Gambling Reform

### Communiqué

#### Canberra

27 May 2011 The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Select Council on Gambling Reform held its third meeting in Canberra today.

Ministers noted the progress made by all states and territories on a range of harm minimisation measures and committed to continuing to work closely together on reforms aimed at making poker machines safer for all players.

Select Council members have requested that the Council of Australian Governments agree to extend the time period of the Select Council to allow discussions to continue.

### Changes in venues with poker machines

#### Pre-commitment

Ministers agreed that pre-commitment is a useful tool to help people set limits on how much they want to spend on poker machines and stick to them, and discussed the pre-commitment arrangements already being put in place in a number of states and territories.

Ministers agreed to support the required infrastructure for pre-commitment technology in all jurisdictions, to be available to all players in all venues.

Ministers also agreed that small venues may need special consideration.

Ministers also agreed that all new gaming machines will be required to have the pre-commitment functionality from a date to be agreed.

Ministers asked senior officials to do further work on developing the required functionality for pre-commitment and a timetable for implementation and report back to Ministers at their next meeting.

Ministers noted that members do not agree on whether such technology should be used on a voluntary or mandatory basis.

These are practical first steps in making pre-commitment technology available to all poker machine players.

#### Dynamic warning displays and cost of play displays

Ministers agreed to further consider the implementation of dynamic warning and cost of play displays for poker machines, once results from the trial being led by the

Commonwealth Government and facilitated by the Queensland Government, become available in early 2012.

### **ATM withdrawal limits**

Ministers noted the existing arrangements in place for restricting ATMs and cash withdrawals in gaming venues across a number of states and territories.

Ministers agreed to continue to work together on the issue of ATM withdrawals.

## **Online gambling and advertising of gambling**

### **Live odds promotion**

Ministers have agreed to take action to reduce and control the promotion of live odds during sports coverage.

Governments are concerned that promotion, including commentary by sporting role models, is becoming insidious in live sports coverage. We are concerned that this can significantly influence vulnerable and young people and normalise gambling behaviour.

Ministers agreed consultation will be undertaken with industry as to the scope of the measures designed to reduce and control the promotion of live odds during sports coverage.

Ministers acknowledge that racing will be exempt due to its long standing integral connection with wagering.

In the first instance, industry will be provided with the opportunity to address this issue through amendments to their existing industry codes.

However, if satisfactory amendments are not in place by the end of June 2012, the Australian Government will consider the need for legislation, noting that the measures would not apply to pre-existing contracts for the promotion of live odds during sports coverage as of 1am today.

### **Review of Interactive Gambling Act**

The Australian Government, after consultation with the states and territories, has decided that the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy will undertake a review of the operation of the *Interactive Gambling Act 2001*.

The review will include examination of the operation of the IGA and the effectiveness of the current provisions. It will also include further consideration of international regulatory approaches to online gambling and their potential applicability to the Australian context. It will also examine the ability to improve harm minimisation measures for online gambling services.

The review will also look at the enforcement of existing prohibitions on certain types of online gambling, the way the Act applies to different technological platforms, and the growing number of Australian consumers gambling online in an unregulated environment.

The Australian Government will consult widely with key stakeholders, states and territories, and the broader community in undertaking the review. Terms of Reference of the review will be announced shortly.