



**Department of Racing, Gaming & Liquor**  
Government of Western Australia

Your Ref :

Our Ref : G02/09/04-07

Enquiries: Mark Beecroft  
9425 1881

Mr Elton Humphrey  
Committee Secretary  
Australian Senate Community Affairs Committee  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Humphrey

**POKER MACHINE HARM MINIMISATION BILL 2008**

Thank you for letter of 1 July 2008 inviting submissions on the *Poker Machine Harm Minimisation Bill 2008*.

Western Australia supports responsible gambling initiatives that minimise harm caused by problem gambling, and in this regard, continues to remain committed to prohibiting:

- the introduction of poker machines anywhere in the state; and
- electronic gaming machines (EGMs) outside the Burswood Entertainment Complex.

By restricting EGMs to a single location, fewer people in the population have access to this form of gambling which has contributed to Western Australia having the lowest prevalence of problem gambling compared to the other States and Territories. Furthermore, unlike other jurisdictions with poker machines and EGMs in the wider community, Western Australia is not reliant on revenue from gaming machines.

Western Australia supports national initiatives that reduces harm to people impacted by the effects of problem gambling, and was supportive of the national approach to developing a code of practice/industry standard relating to withdrawals from ATMs and EFTPOS facilities in and around gambling venues.

However, in attempting to establish such a code/standard the Ministerial Council on Gambling in 2006 noted that the financial transaction sector would not voluntarily introduce changes to systems to provide for the restriction of cash withdrawals from ATMs at gambling venues. Consequently, it was accepted that, in the absence of Commonwealth legislation, it was not possible to implement daily cash restrictions from ATMs.

Despite this impediment, the Gaming and Wagering Commission of Western Australia has recently implemented policy relating to the Burswood Entertainment Complex that prohibits ATMs:

- in the area to which the casino gaming licence relates; and
- within 40 metres of any entrance to the gaming floor of the casino unless the ATM restricts a person to a cash withdrawal of \$400 per day from any debit or credit card.

Furthermore, the following is a summary of harm minimisation strategies in place for EGMs operations at the Burswood Entertainment Complex:

Strategy	Western Australian Position
Self Exclusion	Self exclusion programme is maintained on a voluntary basis by the casino licensee.
Restricted Access to ATMs and EFTPOS	ATMS are required to be located outside the gaming footprint. EFTPOS facilities are permitted, however access excludes credit accounts.
Winnings paid by Cheque	Most winnings can be paid by cheque at the request of the patron.
Environmental	<p><u>Clocks</u> – voluntarily displayed by casino licensee</p> <p><u>Lighting</u> – various gaming areas of the casino have natural lighting</p> <p><u>Smoking</u> – smoking is prohibited on the main gaming floor.</p> <p><u>Staff Training</u> – the casino licensee makes training in responsible gambling a compulsory staff training requirement.</p>
Technical Specifications of EGMs	<p><u>Note acceptors</u> - limited to \$100</p> <p><u>Spin rates</u> – not applicable to WA as spinning reel machines are prohibited. However, the minimum game speed for EGMs is specified in WA Appendix to the EGM National Standards of 5 seconds.</p>
Player Information	<p>Casino has recently displayed help-line information on voluntary basis and have Gaming Information Terminals throughout the casino that displays:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ player information;</li> <li>▪ return to player ratios;</li> <li>▪ chances of winning casino games; and</li> <li>▪ other casino game related information.</li> </ul>

Should you require any further information please contact Mark Beecroft, Senior Policy Officer, on (08)9425 1881 or at [mark.beecroft@rql.wa.gov.au](mailto:mark.beecroft@rql.wa.gov.au)

Yours sincerely

  
 Barry A Sargeant  
**DIRECTOR GENERAL**

14 August 2008