



The Minutes of Meeting

Gambling Products Working Group

TRIM ID:

Meeting details			
Meeting title:	Gambling Products Working Group	Meeting #:	1-2021
Date:	Thursday 7 January 2021	Time:	10:30 am – 12 Noon
Location:	By Skype		
Attendees	Title / organisation		
Jason Cremona	Manager, Licence Management & Audit (VCGLR) (Chair)		
Kalai Murugiah	Principal Technical Officer, LMA (VCGLR)		
Steve Thurston	Licence Manager, LMA (VCGLR)		
Tim O'Farrell	Manager, Regulatory Strategy & Research (VCGLR)		
Craig Jenkins	Policy Officer, Legal Services (VCGLR)		
Lindsay Shaw	Policy and Knowledge Officer (VRGF)		
Tony Phillips	Head of Knowledge and Information (VRGF)		
Brett Hetherington	Senior Industry Engagement Officer (VRGF)		
Steven Lang	Manager, Gambling Policy (DJCS)		
Helen Miller	Principal Policy Officer, Liquor and Gambling Policy (DJCS)		
Apologies	Title/Organisation		
Brendan Atkinson	Principal Regulatory Strategy Officer (VCGLR)		
Claire Edwards	Principal Policy Officer, Liquor and Gambling Policy (DJCS)		
Susan Graham	Principal Policy Officer, Liquor and Gambling Policy (DJCS)		

Item	Subject
1.	<p>Opening</p> <p>JC opened the meeting at 10:30 am, and noted apologies. Minutes from last meeting of 30 September 2020 were accepted, subject to redistribution with amendments.</p> <p>Action Items from the previous meeting were reviewed, and found to be closed.</p>
2.	<p>Updates from last meeting</p> <p>Tabcorp Wagering digital only venues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first pilot venue commenced operation on 18 December 2020 at the All Nations Hotel in Richmond

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pictures were promised but did not reveal much • General consensus is that these venues are not wagering outlets under the GRA, but are betting facilities under the LCRA but still no legal certainty. <p>Attendees were interested in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Period of the pilot? • What performance measures were introduced? • Is there a rollout schedule available? • Could this possibly spread to newsagents? <p>New Action Item: VCGLR to provide a further update on digital only wagering venues at the next GPWG.</p>
3.	<p>Responsible Gambling</p> <p>TP gave an update on responsible gambling studies that have been released or undertaken since the last meeting:</p> <p>Jonsson, J., Hodgins, D.C., Munck, I. et al. (2020) <i>Reaching Out to Big Losers: How Different Types of Gamblers are Affected by a Brief Motivational Contact Initiated by the Gambling Provider</i>. Journal of Gambling Studies online September.</p> <p>Norway study – a survey of heavy gamblers who responded to contacts by their provider to take up the use responsible gambling tools. They did this by training provider staff who would contact them in motivational techniques. They did get positive effects from subsequent contacts in terms of reduced spend. Phone calls worked better than emails but both worked.</p> <p>Sally M. Gainsbury, Kahlil S. Philander & Georgia Grattan (2020) <i>Skill gambling machines and electronic gaming machines: participation, erroneous beliefs, and understanding of outcomes</i>, International Gambling Studies, 20:3, 500-514</p> <p>The study surveyed 184 people who had access to skill-based pokies, which they found particularly appealing to younger cohorts who frequently played mobile games and had higher levels of problem gambling severity. It found that those with prior skill-based gaming experience did not have a greater understanding of skill-based games, had less understanding of how pokies work, and yet reported higher levels of understanding.</p> <p>Hing, N., O'Mullan, C., Nuske, E., Breen, H., Mainey, L., Taylor, A., ... Rawat, V. (2020). <i>The relationship between gambling and intimate partner violence against women</i> (Research report, 21/2020). Sydney: ANROWS. (Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety)</p> <p>Specifically looked at male violence against women</p> <p>Three important findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • while gambling does not directly cause intimate partner violence, it reinforces the gendered drivers of violence to intensify the frequency and severity of intimate partner violence against women

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gambling-related harm (including economic abuse) is enabled by current protocols of gambling operators and financial institutions. • identified that gambling venues are safe places for women, that are even more appealing because of few alternatives in many locations. <p>Biddle – Gambling during the COVID 19 Pandemic ANU Centre for Social Research and Methods and Centre for Gambling Research Dec 2020</p> <p>The paper is primarily based on the May and November 2020 ANU polls (the 38th and 44th waves of data collection on the Life in Australia™ panel) which collected information from 3,219 and 3,029 respondents aged 18 years and over, across all eight States/Territories in Australia. Both surveys are weighted to have a similar distribution to the Australian population across key demographic and geographic variables. The Life in Australia panel are tracked through time, with 94.7 per cent of those who completed the November survey also having completed the May survey.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Around 52.9 per cent of Australians were estimated to have gambled when asked at the start of the pandemic, compared to the pre-pandemic rate of 65.9 per cent. (means about 2.6 million fewer Australians gambling, 1.6 million few for pokies). 2. By November, gambling rates had increased slightly to 58.7 per cent, still significantly lower than the 12 months leading up to April 2019. 3. The decline in gambling rates was relatively consistent for males and females. 4. By November male rates of participation in gambling were back to April 2019 levels, but women stayed at lockdown levels. 5. There was a much larger decline in those aged 35-45 when compared to other age groups. 6. By November 2020, gambling rates were still lower in New South Wales, Victoria, the ACT and the Northern Territory than they were in 2019 (though the standard errors are quite large for the last two jurisdictions). Rates were much closer to pre-COVID levels in Queensland, South Australia, and Western Australia, with rates higher in Tasmania than they were pre-COVID. 7. Largest declines in participation were in most disadvantaged areas 8. Decline in total on PGSI 13.6% April 2019 to 10.3% Nov 2020 9. Attitudes to gambling tend to be negative, too many opportunities, bad for family life, should be discouraged. 35% want total ban, 58% agree people have right to gamble if they want, only 19% agreed on balance gambling is good for society 10. Overall life satisfaction for November was better than January but not quite at April 2019 levels <p>Caveats: It is not clear how this study accounted for the very different conditions in Victoria, which had gaming venues locked down for much longer than the rest of the country. This may have had major distorting effects on findings 2, 4-6 and 10.</p>

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4.	<p>New Products/Innovations</p> <p><i>Keno and Wagering Tap and Go</i></p> <p>As noted at the previous meeting, Tabcorp has expressed an interest in offering tap and go on its wagering terminals and on its Keno terminals (both operator terminals and self-service terminals). Tabcorp has made it clear that it is contemplating tap and go for debit cards, not for credit cards.</p> <p>JC updated the meeting as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formal application for approval of tap and go for wagering has now been received • Discussions have taken place with DJCS • Proposed rule changes under consideration <p>TP reiterated some concerns from a responsible gambling perspective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cashless transactions are a “big change” • tap and go may open the door for more cashless transactions • transactions are faster than using cash • use of cash provides a tangible way to notice the amount spent and time to think about amount spent <p><i>New Action Item: VCGLR to provide responses to DJCS and VRGF concerns regarding the approval of Tap and Go for wagering and Keno.</i></p> <p><i>Wymac’s “Jelly Kingdom” EGM game submission</i></p> <p>JC announced that the above mentioned submission has now been received and noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • similar to Pop Shots (noting that Pop Shots was not approved to operate at the casino) • Basic (non-skilled) game provides the required RTP • Customer choice of skill-based or random feature • Wymac advised that assessment would be the same as for Pop Shots and a similar conditional approval is likely – i.e. that Wymac to gather intelligence from users to be assessed. • The VCGLR’s business plan initiative to develop a Live Trial Framework will be applied to this product. • JC noted that draft documents associated with Jelly Kingdom and the Live Trial Framework have previously been circulated to members of the GPWG. <p>TP noted that he had looked at the submission but needed more time to consider.</p> <p>JC stated that input is required by the end of the month.</p> <p>HM noted that DJCS has provided feedback.</p>

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	<p>TP raised the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about how Jelly Kingdom players will be encouraged to fill out the survey • What happens if insufficient data is received during the trial period? • Need to clarify the objectives of conducting the trial. <p>JC noted that the details for the trial and survey could be worked through after the Commission issues the conditional approval, but JC is hoping to get the proposal for the trial to Wymac before the Commission meeting.</p> <p><i>New Action Item: VRGF to provide feedback on Jelly Kingdom and Live Trial Framework by the end of the month.</i></p>
5.	<p>Regulatory considerations/concerns</p> <p>Covid-19 update</p> <p>Since the last GPWG meeting, gaming venues had reopened during November 2019. It was noted that there had been some media coverage of the November expenditure figures.</p> <p>Analysis showed that casino/club/pub turnover was impacted by the Restricted Activity Directions.</p> <p>DJCS noted that the December 2020 turnover was about 98% of the same time in 2019, with only half the gaming machines operating. Expenditure per machine therefore appeared to be higher.</p> <p>It was also noted that Wagering turnover had risen significantly since May 2020. Discussion continued around the meaning of the gaming venue turnover data.</p>
6.	<p>Commission Standards (New/existing)</p> <p>Gaming Machine National Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Standards Working Party has agreed in principle to proposed changes to the national standard • Changes are mainly technical rather than policy considerations <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with industry via the GTA • Brief for the Minister - aiming to despatch this from the VCGLR to the Minister at the end of the week • Then presented to the Australasian Gaming Regulators CEOs' Forum for in-principle approval
7.	<p>Other Business</p> <p>Premature change to RTP/RTPs on PIDs</p> <p>LS and BH noted that some EGM PIDs were already displaying the expression "Return to Players" and asked if standards had been changed to allow for a new/alternative PID.</p>

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	<p>JC noted that the proposed variation to the Victorian appendix to change “Return to Player” to “Return to Players” was still with the Minister, but if manufacturers submit a PID with the better wording it will be approved.</p> <p>VRGF pointed out that “house edge” provides better guidance to players than “RTPs”.</p> <p><i>New Action Item: VRGF (BH) to send screen shots to VCGLR showing the new PID text for Return to Players</i></p>
8.	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>To be advised.</p>

No.	Action to be taken	Assigned to	Due date	Status
1.	VCGLR to provide a further update on digital only wagering venues at the next GPWG.	JC	Next meeting	Open
2.	VCGLR to provide responses to DJCS and VRGF concerns regarding the approval of Tap and Go for wagering and Keno.	JC	Next meeting	Open
3.	VRGF to provide feedback on Jelly Kingdom and Live Trial Framework by the end of the month.	TP	End January	Closed
4.	VRGF (BH) to send screen shots to VCGLR showing the new PID text for Return to Players	BH	Next meeting	Closed