

**SIT07 Tourism, Hospitality and Events  
Training Package V2.3**

**SITHGAM006A**  
**Provide responsible  
gambling services**

**Learner guide**

**Version 2**



**Product Code: 5540**

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## **Topic 1 – Responsible Conduct of Gambling (RCG) in NSW**

### **What is RCG?**

The NSW gaming machine laws require hoteliers, secretary managers and gambling providers generally to consider the broader implications of their gambling businesses, and the possible effects on the surrounding community.

Social responsibility is essential to minimise the harm associated with problem gambling and to foster venues where responsible gambling is not only promoted but also accepted as best practice.

Unacceptable advertising and promotional activities that encourage irresponsible gambling do little to project a positive image of one of our most significant service industries. On the other hand, the benefits of adopting a responsible attitude to the conduct of gambling are numerous, and include:

- an ethical environment in which to socialise and work
- a change in focus from the promotion of gambling to the promotion of quality service facilities
- a reduction in the social problems associated with gambling abuse, including crime, relationship breakdowns and suicide.

This program aims to provide easy access to information on the responsible conduct of gambling, including:

- the law in New South Wales
- a range of strategies designed to ensure that gambling is conducted responsibly and that prevention strategies are in place to inform and educate at risk gambling patrons.

### **Government, industry and community concerns about gambling**

Governments recognise that gambling can cause very serious problems for a small number of individuals and their families, and for that small number of individuals and their families, the problems are very significant. Problems extend from relationship breakdowns to crime, personal bankruptcies, and in serious cases to suicide.

Church and community welfare leaders have been outspoken about the rapid growth of gambling in most Australian States and Territories.

While gambling is simply a recreational pursuit for some, for others it gives rise to problems. Those people:

- spend increasing amounts of time and money on gambling
- may lie about their gambling
- find it difficult to control the impulse to gamble
- engage in socially destructive behaviour to continue to gamble, from relationship breakdown to crime.

Harm minimisation objectives aim to minimise the harm associated with the abuse and misuse of gambling activities, and to foster the implementation of responsible gambling policies and procedures within the industry. This extends to fostering responsible gambling practices by gambling providers, and providing assistance to patrons experiencing problems controlling their gambling.

Unlike alcohol-related problems, gambling abuse problems are more difficult to detect. Staff working in gaming areas of hotels and clubs play a primary role in observing, monitoring and communicating with patrons and management.

Gaming staff know their venue, the popular machines, regular patrons and their usual behaviour. The effective monitoring of the gaming area, patrons and their behaviour can provide helpful information for the minimisation of harm associated with gambling activities to patrons, their families and the business. As outlined later in this course, venue staff can also offer those patrons in need access to prescribed counselling and self-exclusion programs.

## **Gambling Facts**

The large amounts of tax revenue received by Governments from gambling, and general community concerns about gambling and problem gambling, have been the catalysts for several Government inquiries.

### **The Productivity Commission Reports into "Australia's Gambling Industries" provided the following key findings over recent years.**

- Australian's gamble about \$15 billion annually.
- 40% of adult Australians gamble regularly.
- The gambling industry represents 1.5% of Gross Domestic Product.
- The principal rationales for regulating industries are to promote consumer protection, minimise the potential for criminal and unethical activity, and reduce the risks and costs of problem gambling.
- Around 130,000 Australians or 1% of the adult population are estimated to have severe gambling problems, a further 160,000 adults are estimated to have moderate gambling problems.
- Problem gamblers comprise 15% of regular gamblers and account for about \$3.5 billion in expenditure annually, about 33% of the gambling industries market.
- The prevalence of problem gambling is related to the degree of accessibility of gambling, particularly gaming machines.
- Venue caps on gaming machines are preferable to state-wide caps in moderating the accessibility drivers of problem gambling.
- Existing arrangements are inadequate to ensure the informed consent of consumers or to lessen the risk of problem gambling.
- Deficiencies relating to the information about the risks of problem gambling, controls on advertising which can be inherently misleading, availability of Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) and credit.

In 2004, the Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) finalised a review, on behalf of the NSW Government, of the effectiveness of regulated gambling harm minimisation measures. That report, "Gambling: Promoting a Culture of Responsibility", produced more than 100 recommendations to improve the regulatory framework that have since been adopted by the Government.

The measures relate to improvements in machine design, better signage in venues and strengthening the self-exclusion program. The report also called for more research to be undertaken in relation to the extent of problem gambling in the community.

In 2007, research commissioned by the NSW Government examined the prevalence of problem gambling in the community. The Prevalence of Gambling and Problem Gambling study, which followed a survey of more than 5,000 people, revealed that single men aged between 18 and 24 who have not finished high school past year 10 were over-represented among problem gamblers.

The study found that lottery products were the most popular form of gambling, followed by gaming machines and then racing products. The research is available from the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing at:  
[http://www.olgr.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/rr\\_prevalence\\_gambling.pdf](http://www.olgr.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/rr_prevalence_gambling.pdf).

Also in 2007, Gambling Research Australia published a research report – Identifying Problem Gamblers in Gambling Venues. The report is available at [www.gamblingresearch.org.au](http://www.gamblingresearch.org.au)

It found almost 60% of venue staff indicated it was moderate or easy to identify problem gamblers in the venue. Forty two per cent said they saw problem gamblers all the time. Eighty per cent said they saw them at least weekly. Lack of training, lack of time and lack of visibility of the gaming floor were challenges to identifying problem gamblers. Most indicated that it was difficult to approach problem gamblers.

Best predictors of problem gambling were:

- gambling continuously,
- playing very fast,
- leaving venue to find money,
- crying after losing
- being nervous or edgy.

Only two of these indicators need be displayed for 80% confidence of problem gambling. Indicators only have to occur once.



Problem gamblers can be identified with two or three of the following cues:

- gambling for 3+ hours without a break
- sweating a lot
- difficulty in stopping at closing time
- displaying anger.
- kicking machines
- being nervous or edgy
- gambling so intensely so as not to be aware of surroundings
- multiple ATM withdrawals
- being angry if machine or spot is taken.

## **NSW gaming machine industry**

The gaming machine industry has been regulated since 1956 when poker machines were legalised for NSW clubs. In 1984, hotels were permitted to operate approved amusement devices (card machines). Changes to the law in 1996 allowed hotels to also operate poker machines the following year.

Gambling i.e. gaming, machine gaming and wagering and Keno is available from over 5,000 outlets (clubs, hotels, casino, TAB outlets and NSW Lotteries agencies) in NSW. Many other thousands of minor gaming activities take place, from raffles through to fundraising bingo in church halls. Lotteries products have been legal since 1932.

The gambling industry employs more than 26,000 people, and provides direct and indirect benefits to the community.

Gambling is recognised as a national pastime. Most of Australia stops for a 3½ minute horse race in November each year. Millions chase the lure of easy dollars from multi-million dollar lottery draws.

It is this availability of gambling, the growth of gambling in the 1990s, increased expenditure on gambling, the reliance by Governments on gambling revenue, and the cost of problem gambling to the community that have raised concerns not only in New South Wales, but Australia-wide. The community felt that measures had to be brought into place to ensure that gambling providers conducted gambling responsibly, and that safeguards were in place for people with gambling problems.

## **Extent and scope of gambling in NSW at June 2007**

### **Club gaming**

- 1,336 registered clubs earned profits from gaming machines (June 06 – May 07).
- 73,421 authorised gaming machines (at 31 May 2007).
- \$3,507 million in gaming machine assessed profit before tax (June 06 – May 07).
- \$660.9 million assessed in tax (June 06 – May 07).
- Bulldogs League Club Ltd - top registered club for assessed gaming machine profit.

### **Hotel gaming**

- 1,746 hotels earned profits from gaming machines during year.
- 23,943 authorised gaming machines.
- \$1,699 million in gaming machine profit before tax assessed during year.
- \$454.1 million assessed in tax during year.

### **Casino gaming**

- 210 gaming tables.
- 1,500 gaming machines.
- \$73.83 million payable in casino duty.
- \$11.61 million payable in responsible gambling levy.
- \$610 million gross gaming revenue.

### **Keno gaming**

- 1,033 registered clubs and the casino connected to Keno.
- \$347.8 million in net subscriptions.
- \$38 million in profit to registered clubs.
- \$7.7 million payable in tax (exc. GST).

### **Public lotteries**

- Seven lotteries games – Lotto, Lotto Strike , Oz Lotto, Powerball, Soccer Football Pools, Draw Lotteries and Instant Lotteries.
- 1,524 on-line agents, 83 instant lottery only agents.

- \$1,124.4 million in sales.
- \$50.28 million in profit.
- \$334.37 million in duty/dividends.

## **Role of NSW regulatory agencies in the gaming industry**

Historically, governments and regulators in all Australian gaming jurisdictions have implemented a high degree of control over the gaming industries in the public interest. This is not only to protect the continued flow of substantial revenues to governments but also to exclude undesirable and criminal elements, and to ensure public confidence in gaming products.

In New South Wales, the principal regulatory authorities are the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing, the Director-General, the Casino, Liquor & Gaming Control Authority and the NSW Police Force.

### **Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing (OLGR)**

OLGR is the principal regulatory agency for the gaming, racing, liquor and charities industries.

One of its key functions is to initiate, develop and review gaming legislation. OLGR also targets industry integrity through an effective integrated compliance and probity regime to ensure a responsible, responsive and accountable gambling industry.

The outcomes sought by the Office are a gambling industry free from criminal and corrupt activity, which is accountable and complies with the law; and people who work in the industry are fit and proper not only to enter the industry, but remain in it.

The Office's compliance officers (inspectors) investigate registered clubs and hotels to ensure the machine gaming operations of these venues is compliant with the NSW gaming laws. They also investigate complaints involving community gaming, and monitor wagering and betting operations conducted on-track or through the TAB. (Totalisator Agency Board).

### **The Casino, Liquor & Gaming Control Authority (The Authority)**

The Authority has wide-ranging functions and responsibilities under the liquor, gaming machine, casino and club management laws.

Liquor and gaming licence applications and disciplinary matters are considered by the Casino, Liquor & Gaming Control Authority. Anyone can make a submission to the Authority, and those submissions must be taken into account by the Authority when making a licensing decision.