
F Survey of clients of counselling agencies 2009

As part the gambling inquiry, the Productivity Commission conducted a *Survey of Clients of Counselling Agencies* ('the survey'). This appendix outlines the purpose of the survey, the methodology adopted, the response rate obtained (F.1), and the results (F.2). Analysing the survey data, some data quality issues were identified (F.3). Characteristics of non-respondents are also presented (F.4). Attached also are copies of the questionnaire (F.5) and the non-response form (F.6).

F.1 Purpose, methodology, response rate

The objective of the survey was to help the Commission better understand the behaviour of people experiencing significant problems with gambling and thereby assess the potential effectiveness of various harm minimisation measures.

The initial version of the survey was aimed at gathering new information about the behaviour of people experiencing problems with gambling, as well as replicating some questions from other surveys. The Commission pilot tested the survey with clients of GamblingCare, ACT. The first round of pilot testing found the survey to be too lengthy (taking around 40 minutes to complete). The questionnaire was shortened and pilot-tested a second time (and was found to take around 20 minutes for clients to complete). The counsellors conducting the pilot testing also provided useful insights into how questions were interpreted, which resulted in improvements to the wording of some questions.

The state and territory governments provided the Commission with contact details for the agencies providing specialised gambling support services within their jurisdictions. Agencies were contacted by phone, and asked if they were willing and able to participate in the survey. Most agencies expressed their willingness to approach clients to participate in the survey and these agencies were mailed copies of the survey. The Commission offered a \$30 payment for each completed survey to compensate counselling services for their time.

The survey was distributed in August 2009, with the last surveys being received in late November 2009. The respondents invited to participate in the survey were selected by the counselling services. The Commission asked the counselling services to select people over 18 years of age who were personally experiencing problems with their gambling. They were requested to select respondents on as random a basis as possible.

Response rate

The Commission received 219 completed surveys out of the 245 people asked to participate, an 89 per cent response rate, which was much higher than expected.

Overall, the survey represents a large sample of *problem* gamblers. In comparison, the 2003-04 Queensland prevalence survey, though having a very large sample size — exceeding 30 000 people — is likely to have interviewed less than 170 problem gamblers (at an estimated prevalence of 0.55 per cent).¹

Nevertheless, as the data are based only on responses from people who have sought assistance for problems with their gambling, the results may not be representative of all problem gamblers.

F.2 Survey results

The following tables provide some results from the Commission's survey. The tables focus on five themes

1. demographic and background information on participants
2. severity of gambling problems
3. the nature of harms experienced and views on harm minimisation approaches
4. gambling behaviour when participants were experiencing problems
5. interactions with venue staff.

¹ The most recent Queensland prevalence survey (conducted in 2008–09) had a sample size of 15 000 people and had a lower estimated rate of problem gambling was 0.37 per cent. As such, it is likely that less than 60 problem gamblers were interviewed.

Information on the respondents

The gender split of respondents to the survey is consistent with statistics of clients of gambling help services, with a slightly higher proportion of males than females (table F.1).

Table F.1 Gender of respondents

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Respondent numbers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Male	125	59
Female	87	41
Total^a	212	100

^a Seven survey participants did not reply to the gender question.

The youngest survey participant was 20 and the oldest was 75 years old. Most survey participants were aged between 30 and 59 years, and the distribution of participants between those ages was relatively very even (table F.2). The average age of male respondents was substantially lower than the average for females both on average and by type of gambling venue (table F.3).

Table F.2 Age profile of respondents

<i>Age range</i>	<i>Respondent numbers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
20-29	27	12
30-39	50	23
40-49	51	24
50-59	54	25
60+	35	16
Total^a	217	100

^a Two survey participants did not provide their age.

Table F.3 Average age of respondents by main venue attended^a

<i>Venue</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
Casino	37	40
TAB	39	na ^b
Hotel	43	51
Club	45	54
Total	42	51

^a Respondents were asked to indicate at what type of venue they gambled the most. There were 211 survey respondents who replied to all three questions (Gender, Age and Venue). ^b There was only one female respondent who indicated that the main gambling venue she attended was a TAB. The observation was excluded as it may not be representative.

Responses were received from every jurisdiction except the Northern Territory (table F.4). However, there was a large variation in the number of responses received from each jurisdiction. Only a small number of responses were received from Queensland, Western Australia and the ACT.²

Table F.4 Jurisdiction of respondents

<i>State/territory</i>	<i>Respondent numbers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
NSW	99	45
Victoria	49	22
Queensland	8	4
South Australia	25	11
Western Australia	11	5
Tasmania	21	10
Northern Territory	..	..
ACT	6	3
Total	219	100

.. denotes no respondents.

The Commission asked respondents to indicate the age at which they first experienced problems with the form of gambling which has caused them the most problems (table F.5). Just over a quarter of respondents said they began experiencing problems when they were in the 20-29 year age range and around 20 per cent of respondents began experiencing problems in their 30s and 40s respectively.

Table F.5 Age when gambling problem began

For the most problematic form of gambling

<i>Age range in years</i>	<i>Respondent numbers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
12-19	39	18
20-29	57	26
30-39	42	19
40-49	48	22
50-59	24	11
60+	8	4
Total	218^a	100

^a One survey participant did not indicate at what age their gambling problem first developed.

² All the responses for the ACT are from the trial questionnaire. The trial questionnaire contained all the questions contained in the final survey as well as questions on severity of gambling problems and attempts by recipients to place limits on their gambling.

Just 33 per cent of respondents indicated that they would give accurate answers in a phone survey (table F.6). In addition, 8 per cent of males and 20 per cent of females said they would completely conceal any problems. These results obviously reinforce the need for caution when interpreting any survey results relating to gambling.

Table F.6 How would respondents have answered a phone survey?

Response type	<i>Males</i>		<i>Females</i>	
	Number	% of group	Number	% of group
Answered honestly	39	33	25	33
Completely concealed any problem	9	8	15	20
Somewhat concealed any problem	23	19	11	15
Told them I didn't know	3	3	..	..
Refused to answer the survey	19	16	12	16
Mostly concealed any problem	14	12	8	11
Exaggerated any problem	2	2	..	..
I don't know what I would have said	10	8	4	5

.. denotes no respondents.

Gambling harms

Participants were asked a series of questions about the harms they experienced with their gambling, as well as their views on the effectiveness of a range of harm minimisation measures.

Many gambling help services assess the severity of problems being experienced by their clients. Counsellors assisting with the survey were asked to indicate if a gambling screen had been used with the client and, if so, the results of the screen. If a gambling screen had not been applied, counsellors were asked to make a subjective assessment of the severity of their clients' gambling problems when presenting for help.

Eight different gambling screens had been used by counsellors (table F.7) with some clients being assessed using multiple screens. To provide an indication of the severity of gambling problems among participants, assessments based on the three most common screens are provided (tables F.8, F.9 and F.10). Counsellors also provided subjective assessments for many participants (table F.11). Nearly all of the participants who had the severity of their gambling assessed were assessed by at least one of these four measures (193 out of 209).

Table F.7 Use of different assessments of gambling severity^a

<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Participants</i>
Subjective	166
SOGS	34
DSM IV	26
CPGI	33
SCIP	23
Modified SOGS	7
PGSI	7
Kessler K10	1
Qld gambling intake	1
No assessment	10
Total participants	219

^a Some participants were assessed using multiple approaches.

Table F.8 Severity of gambling problems — South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS)

<i>SOGS rating</i>	<i>0-5</i>	<i>6-9</i>	<i>10-12</i>	<i>13+</i>
Participants (no.)	3	9	15	7

Table F.9 Severity of gambling problems — Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM IV)

<i>DSM IV rating</i>	<i>0-4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>
Participants (no.)	3	4	6	5	6	1

Table F.10 Severity of gambling problems — Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI)

<i>CPGI rating</i>	<i>0-6</i>	<i>7-12</i>	<i>13-18</i>	<i>19+</i>
Participants (no.)	3	4	6	5

Table F.11 Severity of gambling problems — Subjective assessment^a

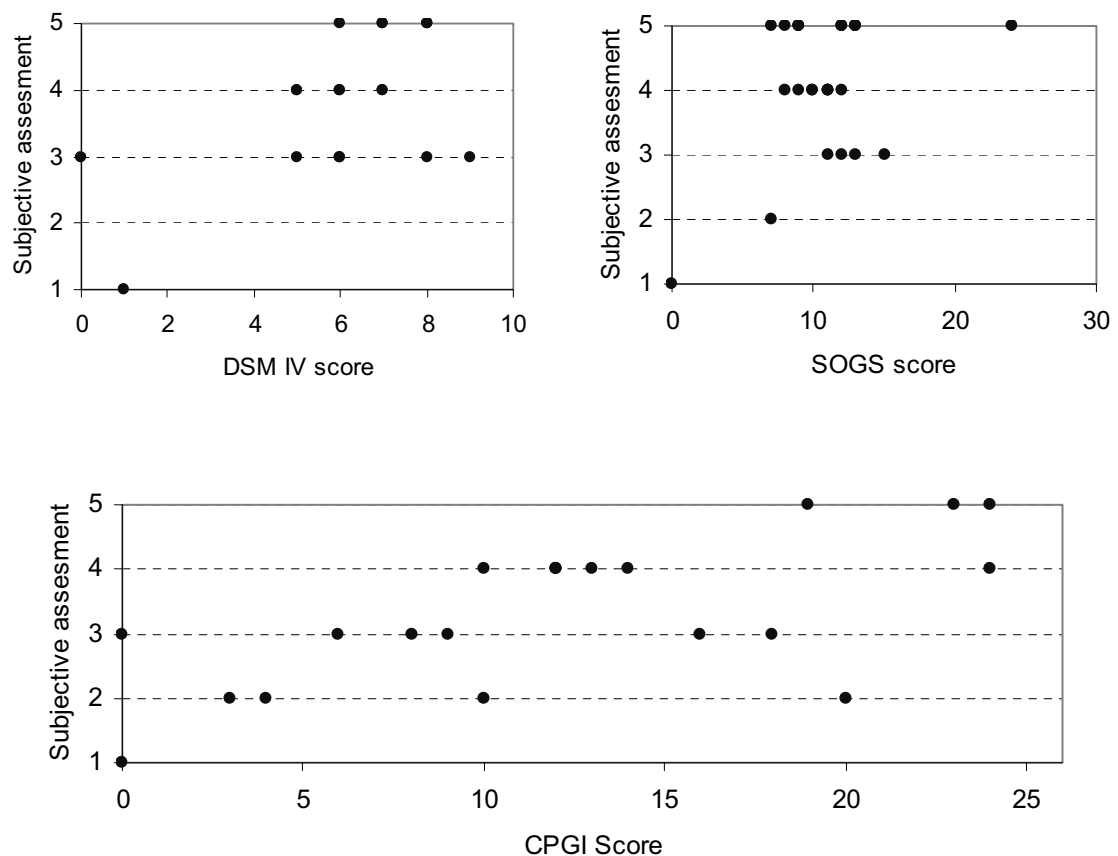
<i>Subjective assessment</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
Participants (no.)	6	14	39	58	49

^a Counsellors were requested to rate the severity of their clients gambling problem on a five point scale from 1 (not very serious) to 5 (extremely serious).

While counsellors were only asked to provide a subjective assessment of the severity of the client's gambling problems if they had not used an existing gambling screen, many counsellors included both a subjective assessment as well as the results of a gambling screen. This provides some indication of the consistency of the subjective assessment with the gambling screen results (figure F.1). Generally, subjective assessments of very problematic gambling coincide with assessments of more severe problems under each of the three gambling screens examined.

Figure F.1 Consistency of assessment of severity

Comparison of subjective assessment of severity of gambling problem with selected gambling screens^a



^a For participants who had been assessed for CPGI, SOGS or DSM IV and where the counsellor had provided a subjective assessment of the severity of the gambling problem. There were 19 participants with both DSM IV and subjective assessments, 26 participants with both a SOGS and subjective assessment and 21 participants with both a CPGI and subjective assessment.

Gambling form causing harm

Consistent with most preceding surveys, the gambling activity the overwhelming majority of people experienced harms with was EGMs (82 per cent), followed by ‘betting on horses and greyhounds’ (13 per cent) (table F.12).

Table F.12 Main gambling form causing problems^a

	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>QLD</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>TAS</i>	<i>VIC</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Australia</i>
<i>Number of problem gamblers</i>								
EGMs	5	81	7	22	15	38	4	172
Betting	1	14	1	..	3	5	3	27
Table games	..	1	..	3	2	3	2	11
Sports	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Internet poker	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Keno	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tattslotto	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Scatchies	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
All	6	97	8	25	20	46	9	213
<i>Share of problem gamblers by gambling form (%)</i>								
EGMs	83	85	88	88	71	81	44	82
Betting	17	14	13	..	14	11	33	13
Table games	..	1	0	12	10	6	22	5
Sports	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	<1
Internet poker	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Keno	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tattslotto	..	..	..	..	5	..	..	<1
Scatchies	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	<1
All	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

^a Respondents were able to nominate any form of gambling that caused them problems, and then were asked which single form of gambling caused them the most problem. ^b Three survey participants did not respond to this question and three responded incorrectly. ^c.. denotes no responses.

While the majority of participants experienced problems with just one form of gambling, around 20 per cent experienced problems with two forms of gambling and 5 per cent with three or more forms of gambling (table F.13).

Table F.13 Number of gambling forms causing any problems^a

	<i>One</i>	<i>Two</i>	<i>Three</i>	<i>Four</i>
	163	44	9	2

^a One respondent did not answer the question on problems with gambling form.

Combining all forms of gambling causing people problems, EGMs continue to be the most problematic form by far (85 per cent), followed by racing, casino table games and sports betting (table F.14).

Table F.14 Gambling form causing any problems

	ACT	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Australia
<i>Share of problem gamblers by gambling form (%)</i>								
EGMs	100	88	88	88	86	84	40	85
Betting	17	27	13	8	14	24	50	23
Table games	17	6	..	24	10	12	30	11
Sports	17	7	..	..	5	10	20	7
Other	17	4	..	..	5	6	10	5

.. denotes no observations.

Participants history with gambling problems

Most participants — 60 per cent — indicated that they had had recurring episodes of gambling problems after bringing their gambling under control (table F.15). While participants most commonly reported a few recurrences of having problems with gambling, some participants indicated a recurring pattern of gaining and then losing control of their gambling (table F.16).

Table F.15 Multiple episodes of problems with gambling

Have participants returned to having problems with gambling after a problem free or largely problem free period

	<i>Returned to problem gambling</i>		<i>Share of clients</i>
	Number	%	
No	86	40	
Yes	128	60	
Total	214	100	
No response	5	<1	

Table F.16 Frequency of return to having problems with gambling

Number of times people cycle in and out of having problems with gambling

	<i>Frequency of return to problem gambling</i>								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8+	Total
Respondents ^a	30	37	21	5	13	6	1	12	125
Share (%)	24	30	17	4	10	5	1	10	100

^a Ninety-four survey participants did not respond to this question.

Strategies to minimise gambling harm

Participants were asked to reflect on strategies they had used to minimise gambling harm (table F.17). They were then asked their opinion of the likely effectiveness of proposed harm minimisation measures (table F.18). It was hoped that asking participants to initially reflect on their own actions would encourage a more critical assessment of the proposed measures.

The most common strategies participants indicated using were: playing on low denomination machines; taking only the amount of money to a venue they planned on spending, or avoiding large bets. Some of the strategies seldom used include starting to play just before closing or having family or friends help them control their gambling.

Table F.17 Use of self-control strategies by problem gamblers

Use of control mechanisms in an attempt to keep gambling within (money and time) limits

<i>Technique</i>		<i>Nearly always</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Never</i>
Leaving your ATM or credit cards at home	N ^a	16	20	46	32	83
	%	8	10	23	16	42
Taking to the venue only what you planned to spend	N	23	25	49	36	65
	%	12	13	25	18	33
Contacting your bank or financial institution to lower your ATM withdrawal limit	N	3	8	10	6	169
	%	2	4	5	3	86
Using family or friend to help you control your gambling	N	6	16	41	25	109
	%	3	8	21	13	55
Taking a break after gambling for a particular time or when you felt your gambling was getting out of control	N	6	13	51	38	89
	%	3	7	26	19	45
Committing to an appointment/another activity so you were forced to stop gambling and leave	N	6	15	54	37	84
	%	3	8	28	19	43
Beginning to play just before closing time	N	3	7	16	17	152
	%	2	4	8	9	78
Avoiding high or large bets such as maximum or multiple bets	N	23	33	42	27	69
	%	12	17	22	14	36
Playing on low denomination machines	N	49	28	48	21	49
	%	25	14	25	11	25

^a N= number of respondents. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding. ^b There were between 213 and 219 respondents for each question.

When assessing the effectiveness of proposed harm minimisation measures, participants could indicate that a measure would in their view work well, work a bit or not work. Across all the measures (table F.18), the most common response was that a measure would work well (44 per cent), while 29 and 27 per cent of the responses were that a measure would work a bit or would not work respectively.

The measures that participants thought would be most likely to work include:

- removing ATMs from venues
- technologies that allowed gamblers to set limits
- technologies that allowed gamblers to self exclude

The measure that participants considered least likely to be effective was signage in venues stating that if you gamble repeatedly, you will lose money.

Thirty nine per cent of the survey group had self-excluded themselves (table F.19) The most common reasons for not self-excluding were that they could control their gambling by themselves, that they could visit other venues, that they were too embarrassed or that they did not want to stop gambling altogether.

The most common form of self-exclusion agreement was a multiple-venue exclusion. Jurisdiction-wide or region-wide agreements were the second-most common, while single-venue exclusions were the least common.

Table F.18 Perceived effectiveness of harm minimisation measures

<i>Measure</i>	<i>Would work well</i>	<i>Would work a bit</i>	<i>Would not work</i>
	Share of respondents (%)		
Removing ATMs from venues	74	15	11
Technologies that allow gamblers to set spend limits on their gambling	60	23	17
Technologies that allow gamblers to self exclude from gambling	60	27	13
The removal of high denomination note acceptors	52	28	21
Expenditure statements showing how much you have spent on gambling by day/week/month	52	27	21
A reduction in the number of credits that can be bet per line	48	30	22
Banning the promotion of gambling	46	25	28
Lower maximum bet sizes	46	33	21
Technologies that allow gamblers to set time limits on their gambling	46	29	25
Lowering the threshold for winnings to be paid by cheque	42	27	31
Being required to take a break in play on gambling machines after a certain time	40	30	30
Messages that pop up to tell gamblers how long they have been playing	34	37	29
Warnings that pop-up during play to tell gamblers to play responsibly	32	33	35
Using TV and radio advertising to make people aware of the risks of problem gambling	30	32	38
Knowing how much you would usually lose when gambling	25	38	37
Clearly displayed signs in venues stating that if you gambled regularly you would lose money	21	30	49

^a There were between 210 and 216 respondents for each question.

Table F.19 Self Exclusion

<i>Question</i>	%
<i>Percentage of respondents who self-excluded (197 respondents)</i>	38.6
<i>Why didn't you self-exclude? (120 respondents)^a</i>	
I was too embarrassed	29.2
I did not know I could self-exclude	7.5
I was worried my family/friends would find out about my gambling problem when I was refused entry to a venue	15.8
I knew I could still get into my usual venue (management didn't care, could get in when the venue was busy, could change my appearance)	4.2
I could go to another venue where I didn't usually gamble	28.3
I felt I could control my gambling by myself	36.7
I didn't want to stop gambling altogether	26.7
Other	6.8
<i>Aspects of self-exclusion^a</i>	
Did you turn to another form of gambling while self excluding? (75 respondents)	21.3
Did you breach self exclusion by going back to the venues you excluded yourself from? (75 respondents)	52.0
Did you get around the self exclusion by going to other venues altogether? (75 respondents)	49.3
Did venue staff intervene when you breached self exclusion? (58 respondents)	46.6
<i>Numbers of venues self-excluding from (71 respondents)</i>	
All venues in the region or jurisdiction	22.5
Multiple venue exclusions	59.2
Single venue exclusions	18.3
Total	100.0
Average number of venues self-excluded from for multiple-venue exclusions	18

^a Respondents could make multiple responses.

The percentage of self-excluded respondents who breached their agreements was high (over half returned to the venue they had excluded themselves from). In addition, nearly half circumvented their agreements by visiting venues they were not excluded from and around a fifth turned to another form of gambling when they were self-excluded.³ A high proportion of those who did breach were detected by staff.

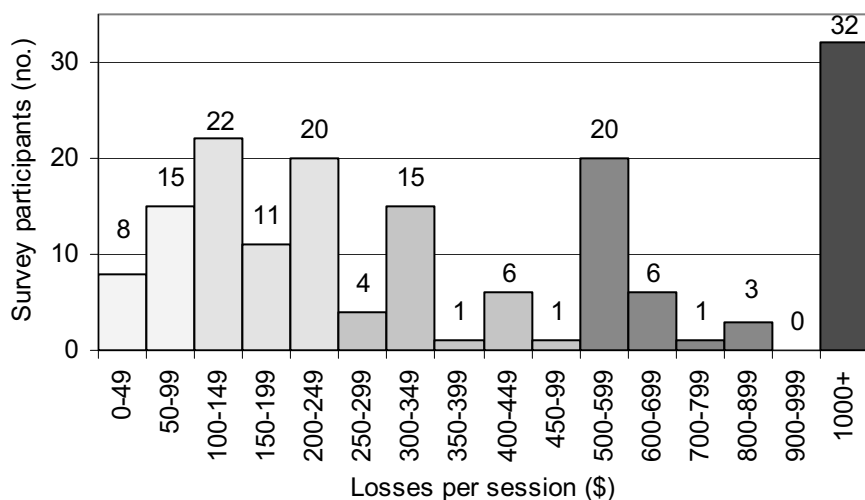
³ Many respondents both breached their self exclusion and went to other venues that they were not excluded from. Only 36 per cent of respondent who had formally self excluded indicated

Gambling behaviour

Participants were also asked about their gambling behaviour when they were experiencing harm. While the results are reported for these measures, there are grounds to suspect responses may not accurately reflect actual behaviour (section F.3).

All participants were asked about gambling losses (figure F.2) and the frequency of gambling (figure F.3) — but the remaining results in this section only relate to EGM play. The per session losses reported by participants varied widely, with many indicating small losses and many indicating large losses.

Figure F.2 **Reported losses by gambling session^a**



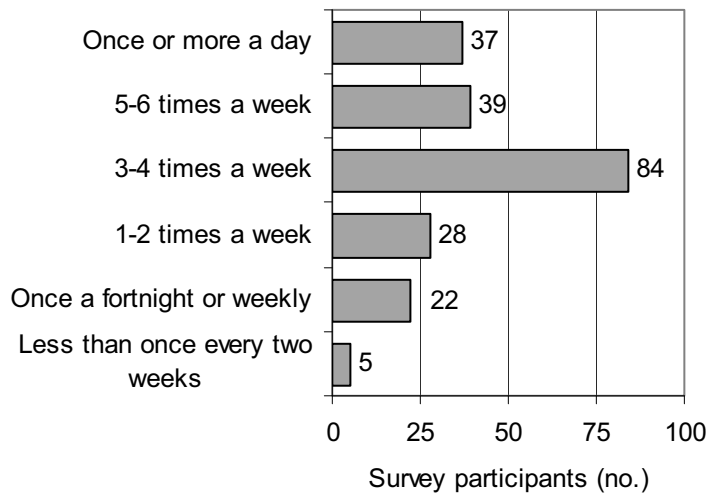
^a Only includes respondents who specified an exact session loss amount (165 out of 213 people who answered the question). Some respondents providing descriptive answers or ranges (see section F.3)

Three quarters of survey participants reported gambling more than twice a week when they were experiencing gambling related harms (figure F.3).

that they neither breached their agreement by visiting a venue they were excluded from nor got around the agreement by visiting a venue they had not excluded themselves from.

Figure F.3 Frequency of gambling

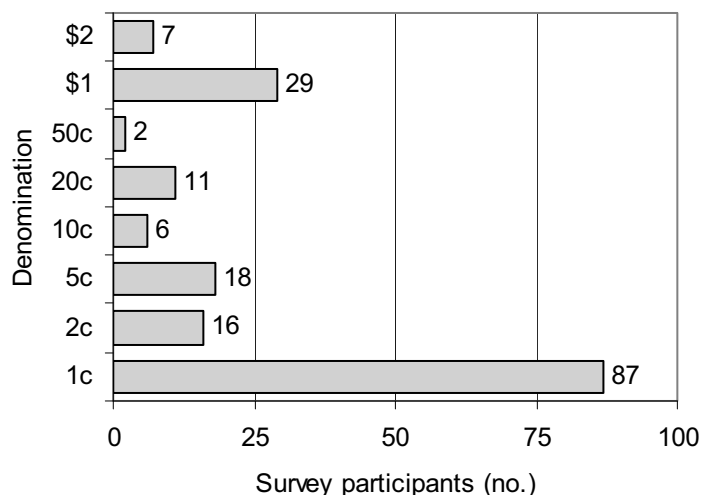
Playing the gambling form that caused the most problem^a



^a 217 survey responses.

For people experiencing problems with EGM gambling, the most frequently reported machine denominations played were 1 cent and \$1 machines (Figure F.4).

Figure F.4 Denomination of EGM usually played^a



^a 36 survey respondents did not answer this question (mainly people who did not gamble on EGMs). In addition, 7 respondents indicated usually playing on multiple machines with differing denominations.

While respondents indicated using a wide range of EGM playing styles, the most commonly reported playing style was playing a moderate to large number of lines and a small number of credits (table F.20). For example, 14 respondents reported

that their most common playing style was to play 20 lines with 1 credit per line. The second most common combination was playing 20 lines with 5 credits per line — played by 10 respondents.

Table F.20 Combinations of lines and credits played on EGMs

Number of respondents usually playing given combination ^a

		<i>Lines</i>											
		1	2	3	4	5	9	10	15	20	25	50	100
Credits	1	4	1	6	..	3	..	2	..	14	5	..	..
	2	..	1	..	..	1	..	1	1	6	6	..	..
	3	1	2	1	..	1	..	..	1	2	3	1	..
	4	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
	5	..	..	2	..	2	..	1	..	10	8	1	1
	7	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	10	..	..	..	..	3	1	1	..	1	3	..	..
	20	..	..	1	..	4	..	..	..	3	3	..	..
	25	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	2	..	..
	50	..	1	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
	75	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	90	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
	100	..	..	..	..	2	1	..	..	1	2	..	..

^a One hundred and thirty participants provided both a specific number of lines and number of credits. A further 54 participants provided a range or verbal description of the number of lines or credits usually played (ie max or all lines or credits).

.. denotes no observations.

Just over half of the survey participants indicated using note acceptors when playing EGMs (table F.21). Among those participants, the use of \$50 and \$20 notes were the most common.

Table F.21 Use of note acceptors with EGMs

Denomination of notes usually used in note acceptors

<i>Denominations used</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Share</i>
\$10	2	1.5
\$20	38	29.2
\$20 or larger	1	0.8
\$20 or \$50	8	6.2
\$50	76	58.5
\$50 or \$100	1	0.8
\$100	2	1.5
Various	2	1.5
Total	130	100

^a Eighty-nine survey participants did not respond to this question.

The majority of survey respondents indicated that they only occasionally or never had breaks in play when gambling on EGMs (table F.22). Among the remaining respondents the frequency of breaks varied.

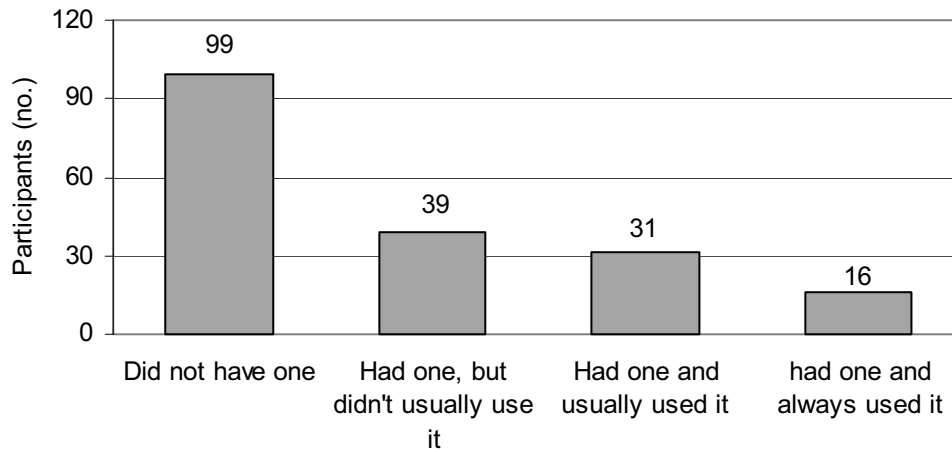
Table F.22 Frequency of breaks in playing EGMs^a

<i>Frequency of breaks in play</i>	<i>Participants (no.)</i>
Every 30 minutes or less	17
About every hour	17
About every 2 hours	10
More than every 2 hours	0
Only occasionally or never	127
Can't recall/not stated	14

^a Thirty-four participants did not respond to this question.

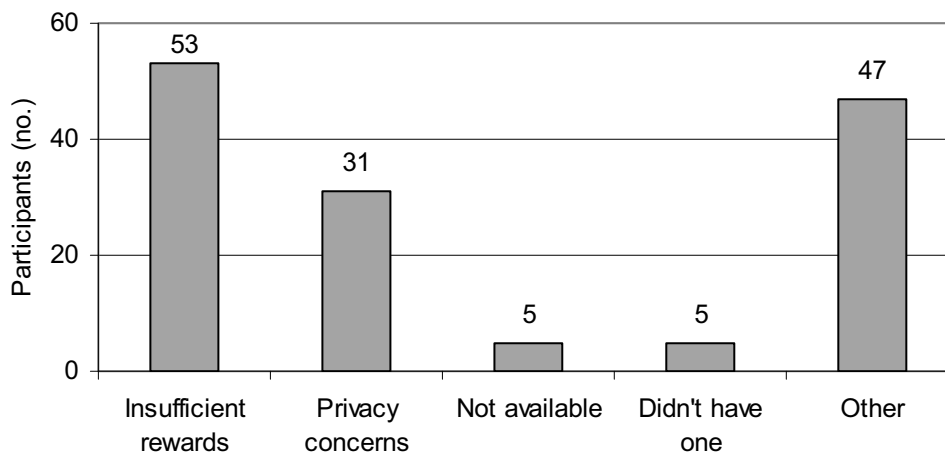
Loyalty card use is relevant to policy because it provides a natural vehicle for pre-commitment (chapter 10), and has been the basis for the Queensland and South Australian trials. Around 50 per cent of respondents were in a loyalty scheme, though many of these were infrequent users (figure F.5). A perception that the rewards were insufficient and that the cards posed privacy concerns were the dominant motivation for not using loyalty cards (figure F.6).

Figure F.5 Use of player loyalty cards with EGMs^a



^a Thirty-four participants did not respond to this question.

Figure F.6 Why EGM player loyalty cards were not used^a



^a Eighty-one participants did not respond to this question. Five participants indicated that they did not use the cards both because of privacy concerns and because the rewards were insufficient.

Participants were asked if they had seen material on the odds of winning, available help services and in-venue warning signs, and if that material had changed their behaviour (table F.23). The majority of respondents had seen help services material and warnings. The respondents were much more likely to have changed behaviour because of the help service materials — but given that all the respondents were clients of help services, a positive response would be expected.

Table F.23 Did participants see and respond to venue based information?

	Material on odds of winning	Warning signs in-venue	Material on help/counselling services
Yes	107	165	167
No	79	27	25
I don't remember	7	5	6
No response	26	22	21
<i>Of those who saw the information, warnings or help service material</i>			
Changed behaviour	9	26	87
No change in behaviour	97	137	80
No response	3	2	0

Approaching venue staff or being approached by venue staff about gambling problems

Respondents were also asked whether they had approached venue staff to talk about the problems they were experiencing or whether venue staff had approached them (table F.24). Around 16 per cent of the survey group reported approaching staff to report they had a gambling problem and around 6 per cent reported staff approaching them (nearly all of the survey group answered this question).

Of those approaching staff, the most common response was to inform them/refer them to counselling services or to inform them more generally about measures they could take to control their gambling.

Staff were most likely to approach problem gamblers in order to:

- express concern about their gambling
- inform them of help available thorough counselling services or
- inform them about measures they could take to control their gambling.

Table F.24 Interactions with venue staff

<i>Question</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Did venue staff approach you and discuss your gambling and/or talk to you about seeking help? (197 respondents)</i>	5.6
<i>What happened when venue staff approached you? (11 respondents)^a</i>	
I was asked if I was alright or wanted to speak to someone about my gambling	36.1
I was asked if I would like venue staff to contact either a family member or friend	..
I was provided with information about gambling help services	45.5
I was referred to gambling help services or counselling	36.4
I was told about measures to control gambling (taking breaks, self-exclusion, etc)	27.3
Other	27.3
<i>How did you respond to being approached by venue staff (10 respondents)</i>	
I did nothing	8.3
I sought help from my family or friends	8.3
I sought professional help	66.7
Other	16.7
Total	100.0
<i>Did you ever approach venue staff to talk about your gambling? (196 respondents)</i>	15.8
<i>How did venue staff respond when you approached them? (31 respondents)^a</i>	
I was provided with information about gambling help services	38.7
I was referred to gambling help services or counselling	19.4
I was told about measures I could use to control my gambling (taking breaks, self-exclusions, etc)	41.9
Venue staff contacted one of your family members or a friend	..
Other	41.9

^a Respondents could answer yes to more than one question. .. indicates no response.

Respondents' most common reaction to being approached by staff was to seek professional help. Of course, as the survey group comprises clients of gambling help services, this may not reflect the reaction of other gamblers.

F.3 Data quality issues

While most of the data appeared to be of high quality, some deficiencies were present:

-
- some participants did not answer one or more of the questions
 - some of the responses from participants were descriptive for questions requiring quantitative estimates, for example
 - when asked how many times they had returned to problem gambling, one respondent replied ‘too many’.
 - another respondent indicated that losses per session were ‘whatever I had’.
 - some quantitative answers were clearly inaccurate.
 - For example, one participant indicated having returned to problem gambling hundreds of times. And, while in all Australian jurisdictions, the maximum bet per button push on an EGM in a hotel or club is at most \$10, of the 122 respondents who provided sufficient data to derive an estimate, 22 of their estimated bets per button push were over \$10. Of those, 20 of the 22 indicated that their usual gambling venue was a hotel or club (not a casino where such bets would be possible).

F.4 Non-respondent characteristics

In order to gauge whether non-respondents might be qualitatively different from respondents the Commission asked counselling services to provide three pieces of information about non-respondents:

- the gender of the person
- the approximate age of the person
- the severity of their gambling problem

The proportion of male non-respondents was higher than the proportion of male respondents (table F.25). This suggests that males were more reluctant to participate in the survey than females. As such, the results of the survey may have been influenced by a higher participation rate among female problem gamblers. However, the overall high response rate suggests that there would be no substantial effect on the data.

Table F.25 Gender of non-respondents

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Male	22	84.6
Female	4	15.4
Total	26	100

The age distribution of non-respondents (table F.26) is similar to the distribution of respondents, suggesting that the results of the survey may not have been significantly influenced by the reluctance of people in any particular age group to participate in the survey.

Table F.26 Age of non respondents

<i>Age range in years</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
15–19	..	..
20–29	5	19.2
30–39	7	26.9
40–49	6	23.1
50–59	5	19.2
60+	3	11.5
Total	26	100

Counsellors provided information on the severity of the gambling problem for 26 of the 28 non respondents. Of those, 20 non respondents had at least a SOGS or subjective assessment rating.⁴ Non respondents were less likely to have been assessed as having a very serious gambling problem (table F.27).

Table F.27 Comparing severity of gambling problems

Share of respondents and non respondents who were assessed using SOGS or the subjective assessment scale

<i>SOGS</i>	<i>Non Respondent</i>		<i>Subjective</i>	<i>Non Respondent</i>	
	<i>respondent^a</i>			<i>respondent</i>	
<i>Rating</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
0-5	22	9	1	0	4
6-9	33	26	2	17	8
10-12	22	44	3	33	23
13+	22	21	4	25	35
			5	25	30

^a Column does not sum to 100 because of rounding.

⁴ Subjective rating on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 indicating the gambling problem was ‘not very serious’ and 5 indicating ‘extremely serious’.

F.5 Survey form

Survey of Clients of Counselling Agencies 2009



Australian Government
Productivity Commission

Confidentiality

The completed form will not have the client's name on it, so the client's identity is not known to the research team.

Return Address

Please send the completed survey form back in the enclosed pre-paid envelope, or to Rosalie McLachlan, Productivity Commission, GPO Box 1428, Canberra City, ACT, 2601.

Survey Instructions

Please read the consent form over the next page before you start the survey. We want to make sure you know why we are doing this survey and how we will protect your interests. You must be aged 18 and over to complete this form.

It is very important that you provide honest answers to the survey questions so that we can work out how best to assist gamblers in the future.

Where there are multiple choice boxes, please tick the appropriate box

Where we ask you for numbers, try to give us an accurate answer, but if you are a little unsure, estimates are acceptable. Please report all monetary amounts in dollars.

Consent for participation

What is the survey for?

The purpose of this survey is to help us understand more about the behaviour of people experiencing problems with gambling. The survey will be analysed as part of the

Productivity Commission's national inquiry into gambling and the information used for assessing the potential effectiveness of various harm minimisation measures.

Are the results confidential?

Yes. The completed form will not have your name on it, so your identity is not known to the research team.

What is the role of the counsellor in the survey?

A counsellor from this agency will help you fill out the survey. Because of this, they will see your answers, but they will not make any record of your answers for themselves or the agency (unless you specifically consent to this). The survey may raise issues that you wish to discuss with the counsellor and, of course, that is up to you and the counsellor concerned.

What happens to the survey form?

The survey form is sent back to the Productivity Commission where the data will be analysed.

Do I have to fill in this survey?

No. It is a voluntary survey, but, of course, we would really like you to take part. You should also know that at any time while you are filling it out you can decide to stop.

If I decide not to participate will it affect the help I get here?

Absolutely not. We would like to stress that whether you participate in this survey or not in no way affects the help you will get from this counselling agency.

Concerns about the survey or survey process

You can contact the Commission to discuss any concerns about the survey or survey process. Please speak to Rosalie McLachlan (02 6240 3327) or Troy Podbury (02 6240 3257).

Can I find out what the overall survey findings are?

Yes. The report will be published on www.pc.gov.au. The Productivity Commission's website also tells you how to make a submission to us if you would like to do so.

How long will it take to fill in the form?

That will vary a bit. But, it should take about 20 minutes.

1 Are you willing to participate in this survey?

Yes → Thank you. Go to question 2 No → Thank you for considering this survey.

2 Are you willing to have the anonymous data provided to researchers other than the Productivity Commission? (tick one box)

Yes No

B3 When did you first *experience problems* with the form of gambling that caused you the most problems? (enter age)

Age (years)

B4 How many times a week or month or year did you play the form of gambling that caused you the most problems? (fill in only one line)

..... times per week

..... times per month

..... times per year

B5 How much money did you typically lose on your main gambling activity in one gambling session?

\$.....

B6 At which venue did you gamble most? (tick only one box)

Hotel/pub

Club

Casino

TAB

On course (racing/sports)

No preference

Other (please specify)

B7 Have you returned to having problems with gambling following a problem-free or largely problem free gambling period?

no →Go to section C

yes →Go to B8

B8 How many times over your life have you returned to having problems with gambling following a problem-free or largely problem free gambling period?

..... Number of times

Section C: Revealing gambling problems

C1 Australian governments periodically conduct telephone surveys on gambling to find out how many people are experiencing problems. Thinking about the situation BEFORE you decided to seek help, to what extent would you have revealed you had any problems? (tick only one box)

Did not have a telephone so I could not be contacted

I would have....

answered honestly

refused to answer the survey

somewhat concealed any problem

mostly concealed any problem

completely concealed any problem

exaggerated any problem

told them I didn't know

I don't know what I would have said

Part D: Questions about gambling on gaming machines

(The following questions are only for those clients who indicated in question B2 that the form of gambling causing the *most* problems was gaming machines. For all other clients go to part F).

The following questions relate only to the time when you were experiencing problems with your gambling (this may be before you sought help).

D1 How much time did you typically spend playing the gaming machines during each visit to the venue? Record hours and minutes

..... hours minutes

D2 What type of machine did you usually play? (tick only one box)

1 cent

2 cent

5 cent

10 cent

20 cent

50 cent

\$1

\$2

Other (specify)

D3 For each push of the button:

a) how many lines did you usually play per button push?

b) how many credits per line did you usually play?

D4 Use of bill acceptors. When playing the machines did you usually....

- use coins (no bill acceptors, preference for, etc)
- use notes → Denomination usually used? \$.....

D5 How often did you take breaks in play? (tick only one box)

- Every 30 minutes or less
- About every 2 hours
- Only occasionally or never
- About every hour
- More than every 2 hours
- Can't recall / not stated

D6 Did you use a loyalty or rewards card to earn bonus points when you played the machines? (tick only one box)

- did not have one
- had one, but didn't usually use it
- had one and usually used it → go to E1
- had one and always used → go to E1

D7 If you didn't use a loyalty or rewards card, why didn't you? (tick as many boxes as appropriate)

- privacy concerns
- rewards weren't sufficient to motivate me to use one
- Other (please specify)

Section E: Questions about informed choice and control over gambling

The following questions relate to the time when you were experiencing problems with your gambling (this may be before you sought help).

E1 Can you recall seeing material at the venues telling you about the odds of winning on the machines? (tick only one box)

- Yes No →go to E3 I don't remember→go to E3

E2 Did the information prompt you to change your behaviour? (tick one box)

- Yes No. Why not?

.....
.....
.....
...

E3 Can you recall seeing warning signs about gambling at the venues? (tick one box)

- Yes No →go to E5 I don't remember→go to E5

E4 Did the information prompt you to change your behaviour? (tick one box)

- Yes No. Why not?

.....
.....
.....

E5 Can you recall seeing material at the venues about help/counselling services? (tick only one box)

- Yes No →go to E7 I don't remember→go to E7

E10 Did you ever approach venue staff to talk about your gambling? (tick only one box)

- Yes No → go to E12 I don't remember → go to E12

E11 If you did approach venue staff, how did they respond? (tick all appropriate boxes)

- I was provided with information about gambling help services
- I was referred to gambling help services/ counselling
- I was told about measures I could use to control my gambling (taking breaks, self-exclusion, etc)
- Venue staff contacted one of your family members or a friend
- Other (please specify)

E12 When you had a problem with gambling how often did you want to control your gambling? (tick only one box)

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Nearly always |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

E13 Did you formally self-exclude yourself from venues? (tick one box)

- No → go to E14 Yes → go to E15

E14 Why didn't you self-exclude?

- I was too embarrassed
- I did not know I could self exclude
- I was worried my family/friends would find out about my gambling problem when I was refused entry to a venue
- I knew I could still get into my usual venue (management didn't care, could get in when the venue was busy, could change my appearance)
- I could go to another venue where I didn't usually gamble
- I felt I could control my gambling by myself
- I didn't want to stop gambling altogether
- Other (please specify)
.....→go to E16

E15 Aspects of self-exclusion

- a) How many venues did you self-exclude from? Number
- b) Did you turn to another form of gambling while self excluding? Yes No
- c) Did you breach self exclusion by going back to the venues you excluded yourself from? Yes No
- d) Did you get around the self exclusion by going to other venues altogether? Yes No
- e) Did venue staff intervene when you breached self exclusion? Yes No

E16 How often did you use the following techniques to keep to your gambling (money and time) limits?

Tick appropriate box for each item

	Nearly always	Often	Some- times	Rarely	Never
a) Leaving your ATM or credit cards at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Taking to the venue only what you planned to spend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Contacting your bank or financial institution to lower your ATM withdrawal limit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Using family or friends to help you control your gambling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Taking a break after gambling for a particular time or when you felt your gambling was getting out of control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Committing to an appointment/another activity so you were forced to stop gambling and leave	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Beginning to play just before venue closing time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Avoiding high or large bets such as maximum or multiple bets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Playing on low denomination machines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

.....

Section F: Harm minimisation measures to help reduce problem gambling
--

F1 Based on your experience, how effective would the following measures have been for you in avoiding getting, or managing, your gambling problems?

Tick one box for each item

	Would not work	Would work a bit	Would work well
a) Knowing how much you would usually lose when gambling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Clearly displayed signs in venues stating that if you gambled regularly you would lose money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Using TV and radio advertising to make people aware of the risks of problem gambling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Banning the promotion of gambling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Removing ATM's from venues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Warnings that pop-up during play to tell gamblers to play responsibly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Messages that pop-up to tell players how long they have been playing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Being required to take a break in play on gaming machines after a certain time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Technologies that allow gamblers to self-exclude from gambling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Technologies that allow gamblers to set spend limits on their gambling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k) Technologies that allow gamblers to set time limits on their gambling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l) Expenditure statements showing how much you have spent on gambling by day/ week/month	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m) Lower maximum bet sizes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n) A reduction in the number of credits that can be bet per line	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o) The removal of high denomination note acceptors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
p) Lowering the threshold for winnings to be paid by cheque	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

F2 What do you think could be done to reduce problem gambling and why?

Section G: Scores – Questions for the counsellor/interviewer

G1 Do you use a gambling screen (such as the SOGS, DSMIV or CPGI) to assess the severity of problems faced by those presenting for help?

Yes → go to Question G2

No → go to Question G3

G2 If yes:

What is the name of the instrument that you use?

.....

What was the client's score → go to Question G4

G3 What is your subjective rating of the severity of the client's gambling problem on a scale of 1 (not very serious) to 5 (extremely serious)?

1

2

3

4

5

G4 How long did it take you to complete the survey form? minutes

G5 Date of completion of the survey form?/...../2009

**G6 Name of counselling
agency**

Address

.....

Phone

Email

F.6 Non-response form

Non-response form

**Survey of Clients of
Counselling Agencies
2009**



Australian Government
Productivity Commission

Non-respondents

We need to ask some general questions about clients who do not wish to participate in the survey. These questions will help us gauge whether non-respondents are qualitatively different from respondents.

1 **Gender** female male

2 **Approximate age**years

3 **Do you use a gambling screen (such as the SOGS, DSMIV or CPGI) to assess the severity of problems faced by those presenting for help?**

Yes→ go to Question 4 No→ go to Question 5

4 **If yes:**

What is the name of the instrument that you use?

.....

What was the client's score

5 **If no, what is your subjective rating of the severity of the non-respondents gambling problem on a scale of 1 (not very serious) to 5 (extremely serious)?**

1 2 3 4 5

Thank you for your valuable help.