

Submission to the Productivity Commission into Gambling from the Broken Hill Legion Club

I wish to outline the significant contribution that the Broken Hill Legion Club makes to the community in the far west of New South Wales and to state unequivocally that this community contribution could not be made without the revenue that we make from our 50 gaming machines.

I will start by outlining some detail about our club. We have operated as a not-for-profit registered club in Broken Hill since 1946. We currently have 3500 members and offer a range of sporting and social activities for the community including indoor bowls, quoits, darts, euchre, poker tournaments, line dancing and weekend bands and entertainment. Our membership has grown by 300 people in the last two months signalling the increasing relevance our club has for this community.

Some of the things we do could not be offered to our community were it not for the club. Our Board of Directors, members and many staff at the club visit the Broken Hill Base Hospital every week to brighten the lives of the sick who are there. The club is the key coordinator of the visits and all sick patients receive packets of biscuits when they are visited.

We recently had 250 seniors partake in the many activities that we offer through the NSW State Government Seniors Week initiative in March each year. We are able to offer a free 3 course meal and an old time band to all those involved and pick up and transport the sick and elderly from the nursing home and the 3 hostels in Broken Hill not just for this event but at other times throughout the year.

For many years we have also owned and operated a tour company called 'Outback Tours' which is vital to supporting tourism in this city. It is heavily subsidised by the club and provides an opportunity to showcase Broken Hill to the many visitors we have here throughout the year.

This year marks 44 years of significant financial contribution that we and the other clubs have given to the St Pat's Race Day which has been going since 1965. This race day attracts 10,000 people and is run completely on a volunteer basis and is vital for the wellbeing of our local economy.

One of the most exciting community projects we have been able to support is the Max Potential Youth Leadership Program. The Legion Club, Barrier Social Democratic Club, Broken Hill Sturt Club, Musicians Club (and possibly to join us the Broken Hill Golf and Country Club) have joined forces to establish a program that offers mentoring, coaching and training to the youth in Broken Hill via a program fully funded by the clubs in this town.

We have called for community people, club directors, staff and club members to be trained as coaches for some 15 school children from Broken Hill High School, Willyama High School, Broken Hill TAFE and Menindee Central Public School (that only has 30 children in the whole school from Kindergarten to Year 12). The clubs will fund the training of the coaches so they are equipped to mentor these children

over many months to enhance their leadership and character through problem solving, communication and presentation. In a time when the youth of Broken Hill tend to pack up and leave the community after finishing school, we see this as a vital project for connecting youth with their community in a way that has not been seen before. It is also a way for Broken Hill to showcase the youth of our region and the social impact of this is immeasurable and will far outweigh the \$31,000 that the clubs will collectively spend not to mention the coordination and volunteering that goes into the program and is not quantifiable. There is no way known we could offer a program such as this without the revenue earned through our gaming machines.

I would also like to say in closing that the Legion Club has always been an active member of our peak industry association, ClubsNSW and the ClubsSafe Responsible Gambling Program offered by ClubsNSW. We provide the opportunity for patrons to play gaming machines, and Keno in a safe environment and offer counselling services should patrons need this. We discreetly advertise the counselling service in house and the staff is also equipped to deal with situations if and when they should arise.

I am certainly available and willing to provide any further information to the Productivity Commission in support of this submission should the need arise.

Yours sincerely

Ann Rogers
General Manager
Broken Hill Legion Club