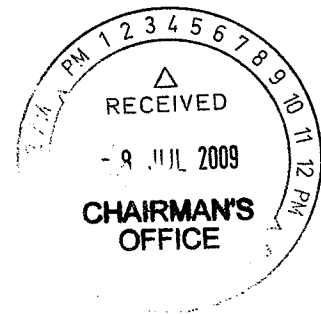




Minister for Gaming



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CB. 8/7.
Mr Gary Banks - Chairman
Gambling Inquiry
Productivity Commission
GPO Box 1428
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

06 JUL 2009

Dear Mr Banks

SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION TO THE PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION INQUIRY INTO GAMBLING IN AUSTRALIA

Since finalising its submission to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Gambling in Australia in March 2009, the Victorian government has taken significant steps towards implementation of its policy on pre-commitment for gaming machines.

The submission of March 2009 outlined the Victorian government's intention to require, from 2010, all next generation gaming machines to have a pre-commitment mechanism that would enable a player to pre-set time and loss limits.

On 31 March 2009, the Victorian government announced two further components to its pre-commitment strategy as follows:

- by the end of 2013, pre-commitment will apply to all gaming machines, with individual machines ceasing to operate once a limit set has been reached; and
- a more stringent pre-commitment regime will be implemented in 2015-2016.

In addition, in June 2009, legislation was passed by the Victorian Parliament that provides a legislative framework for pre-commitment.

The *Gambling Regulation Amendment (Licensing) Act 2009* amends the *Gambling Regulation Act 2003* to implement the Victorian government's model for gaming machine arrangements by laying the foundations for clubs and hotels to own and operate gaming machines from 2012. The amending Act also includes amendments to the *Gambling Regulation Act 2003* to give effect to the Victorian government's pre-commitment policy.

The amending Act provides for new offences for gaming operators or venue operators if they allow a game to be played on a prescribed gaming machine (from 1 December 2010) or a gaming machine (from 1 December 2015) that does not have a pre-commitment mechanism that applies to that machine.

The Victorian government proposes to implement pre-commitment in accordance with the following guiding principles:

- the Victorian pre-commitment regime will be mandatory for all gaming machines in the state by 2015-16 and voluntary for players to use (i.e. players will be able to choose whether they set a time or loss limit);
- the regime will allow players to access a historical record of their spending and choose the consequences of reaching their pre-set limit, such as a tailored break-in-play period;
- finalisation of certain features of the pre-commitment regime will be subject to advice from the Responsible Gambling Ministerial Advisory Council (RGMAC);
- the Victorian government intends the regime to link all gaming machines in the state so that once a limit has been reached the player will be barred from all Victorian gaming machines for a break in play period. However, given that this will require one method of accessing gaming machines to apply at all venues, this feature is conditional on advice that the cost of implementation will not be prohibitive to venues; and
- the Victorian government intends that the interim regime (which will apply from 2013) will link all gaming machines in a venue, subject to advice that the cost will not be prohibitive for venues.

The RGMAC will be asked for its input in relation to the features proposed for pre-commitment, including advice on preferred options for those features, having regard to technical feasibility and cost. Features to be reviewed will include:

- the length of any minimum break-in-play;
- any restrictions on players' ability to change their pre-set limit;
- how a player will be able to monitor his or her play;
- the means used to access a gaming machine;
- other consequences of reaching a limit that should be available; and
- how interaction of the pre-commitment regime with Responsible Gambling Codes of Conduct and self-exclusion programs should occur.

The Victorian government is committed to implementing an effective pre-commitment system that does not impose a prohibitive cost on venues and will consult with stakeholders, particularly via the RGMAC, to ensure that this objective is achieved.

I would be happy to provide you with a further update on our progress in due course.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping strokes that form a stylized, somewhat abstract representation of the name 'Tony Robinson'. The signature is positioned above the printed name.

HON TONY ROBINSON MP
MINISTER FOR GAMING