



## **HERBERT RIVER SUB-BRANCH RSL SERVICES**

### **MEMORIAL CLUB Inc**

**PO BOX 337 – HAWKINS ST**

**INGHAM QLD 4850**

**Phone 07 4776 5157**

**Fax 07 4776 5454**

**Email: hrrsl@bigpond.com**

**PRESIDENT: P. G. BUTLER  
SECRETARY: P. J. MC GRATH  
TREASURER: J. W. PEARSON**

18 November 2009

Gambling Inquiry – Draft Report  
Productivity Commission  
Locked Bag 2, Collins St East  
MELBOURNE VIC 8003 Fax 02 6240 3377

Dear Sir,

### **Response to the Draft Report on Gambling**

This Club is situated in Ingham, North Queensland. Our objects are to provide and maintain a Club House for persons who have served the Commonwealth in time of War; to preserve the memory of those who served with the Armed Forces of Australia; to establish and maintain libraries, reading rooms, educational facilities and other amenities for the benefit, social comfort and advancement of it's members and guests.

We employ 1 full-time, 1 part-time and 10 casual employees.

Our 1650 members visit the club for a range of services and facilities. Apart from gaming, these include socialisation, dining and entertainment. We have 26 poker machines and a Keno outlet.

In the last financial year, we donated more than \$20,000 in cash and in-kind support. This went towards a range of projects, including charities, service clubs, schools and veterans welfare. Without community gaming this would not have been possible.

It is in our best interests to ensure that our gaming services are conducted in a responsible manner. We subscribe to the Queensland Responsible Gambling Code of Practice and are very much aware of our obligations and responsibilities to people who may have a gambling problem.

While we welcome the gambling inquiry, we are very concerned about the negative impact that the draft findings and recommendations would have on the financial viability of our club. This would most likely include loss of jobs, curtailment of services we currently provide to our members and, most importantly, a reduction in our community contributions.

Gaming serves different purposes in different venues. For clubs which are not-for-profit entities, gaming is a community initiative, which supports a range of community services and facilities. It is critical that there is a strong demarcation between community gaming and for-profit or entrepreneurial gaming.

The productivity Commission should acknowledge the extensive responsible gaming measures that are already in place – many of which have produced positive outcomes. Some attention should also be given to the concept of personal responsibility as there is a limit to which controls can be placed on gambling venues.

Should the draft recommendations remain unchanged, the Productivity Commission may like to consider how sport, welfare, charities and the like will be funded, as it is highly likely that community clubs will not be in a position to provide their current level of support. In fact, we would expect the demise of a significant number of community clubs should all the recommendations be taken up by respective Governments throughout Australia.

We hope the above is of some assistance in understanding the nature and importance of gaming in community clubs and the impact the draft recommendations may have on community gaming.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pat McGrath', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Pat McGrath  
Secretary/Manager