

17th December 2009

Gambling Inquiry – Draft Report
Productivity Commission
Locked Bag 2, Collins St East
Melbourne, VIC 8003

Dear Commissioners,

Re: Response to the Draft Report on Gambling

On behalf of seven of the leading clubs in the Moreton Bay Region; Bribie Island Bowls Club Inc, Bribie Island RSL Citizens & Memorial Club, Caboolture Sports Club Inc, Norths Leagues & Services Club, Pine Rivers Memorial Bowls Club, Redcliffe Leagues Club Inc and Redcliffe RSL Club we would like to submit this response to convey the concerns of our clubs and members on your Draft Report into Gambling.

As a combined group of clubs we feel that the Draft Report has failed to address the important contribution of Community Clubs and that the Commission has fallen short in addressing two of the key terms of reference of the public inquiry (3) “the economic impacts of the gambling industries, including industry size, growth, employment, organisation and interrelationships with other industries such as tourism, leisure, other entertainment and retailing”; and (5) “the contribution of gambling revenue on community development activity and employment”.

The purpose of this submission is to provide information for the commission on these topics from a perspective of the Moreton Bay Region, information that is an example of what can be applied to hundreds of other local council regions across Queensland and other states. We fear that without a balanced perspective on the positive benefits of gaming in Community Clubs that is lacking in the Draft Report, the recommendations put forth in the report would cause significant harm to the financial viability and even the future existence of our clubs.

The submission will provide a brief overview of the Moreton Bay Region and the role and importance of our Community Clubs, followed by an assessment of the economic and community contribution provided by our seven clubs alone.

Overview of the Moreton Bay Region Clubs

The Moreton Bay Region is a Local Government Area (LGA) situated directly north of the Brisbane and is Australia’s third largest LGA with over 350,000 residents based on estimates in June 2008. The region is home to a number Community Clubs including RSL’s, Sporting and Football Clubs, Bowls Clubs, Golf Clubs and numerous other community clubs.

The seven clubs that have combined to submit this report represent seven of the largest clubs based on membership across the region. The combined membership of our clubs totals 136,185 members as at December 2009. This equates to approximately 53% of the total adult population of 258,000 in the Moreton Bay Region (based on ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2006, with MBRC average annual growth rate of 3.2% applied).

These figures demonstrate the importance of Community Clubs in the everyday life of Moreton Bay Region residents, with almost half the adult population a member of one of our clubs. For members, our club's are an important part of their community. They provide safe, friendly and reasonable priced facilities where members can socialise and enjoy a range of activities.

Clubs provide much more than just gaming to our members. We provide a multitude of entertainment options including dining, cafes, beverages, sports facilities, fitness/aquatic centres and free live entertainment, just to name a few. It is this range of services that are offered to our members, along with the provision of significant amounts of cash and in-kind support to our communities that are at risk if some of the recommendations from the Draft Report are implemented without major modification.

Moreton Bay Clubs Economic & Community Contributions

The following figures demonstrate the importance of clubs to our community and have been gathered from the seven participating clubs in this submission. It is important to note that within our region there is numerous other clubs which contribute further to the local communities and add even greater weight to these figures.

Table 1 – Moreton Bay Club's Community & Economic Contributions 2008/9 Financial Year

| Total Membership | Total Staff Employed | Annual Payroll | Economic Contribution- Trade Creditors | Community Cash & In-kind Donations |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---|---|
| 136,185 | 856 | \$26,779,512 | \$57,124,157 | \$3,805,545 |

These figures demonstrate the importance of Community Clubs in the Moreton Bay Region and the massive contribution that they make to our local communities. A total of over \$3.8 million in direct cash and in-kind support is provided to local sport, community groups, return servicemen and women, local schools, charities and community groups every year.

The provision of community gaming in clubs is an essential part of ensuring this community benefit and the livelihood of over 850 staff and \$26.7 million in wages remains. The implementation of even just one of the Draft Recommendations such as reduction in ATM/EFTPOS limits, reduction of maximum bet, reduction in cash payout limits and reduction of credit input levels to \$20 could have devastating effect on the revenue generated from recreational gamblers and spell the end to the level of community support, employment and services that we provide, even the complete existence of our clubs.

We urge the commission to consider the impact that their recommendations will have upon our Clubs and if they remain unchanged, we ask who will fill the void of the services and community support that our Clubs currently provide.

On behalf of,

Bribie Island Bowls Club Inc

Bribie Island RSL Citizens & Memorial Club

Caboolture Sports Club Inc

Norths Leagues & Services Club

Pine Rivers Memorial Bowls Club

Redcliffe Leagues Club Inc

Redcliffe RSL Club