



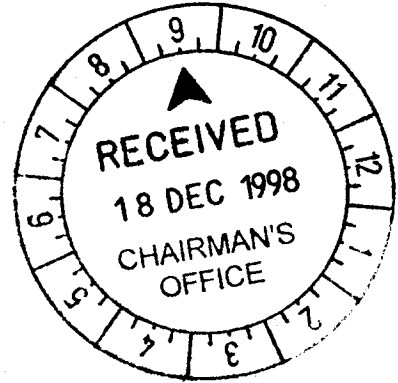
Local Government Association of Tasmania

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Our Ref: SW:MM
File No.: 0254
Your Ref:

15 December 1998

Mr. Gary Banks
Commissioner
Productivity Commission
PO BOX 80
BELCONNEN ACT 2616



Dear Mr. Banks

RE : AUSTRALIA'S GAMBLING INDUSTRIES - PUBLIC HEARING HOBART.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission at the above public hearing.

In response to your request for the actual motions adopted at our 1997 and 1998 Annual Conferences, I provide the following from the minutes of each conference.

1997 Annual Conference Motion 8

Sorell Council/Brighton Council

"That this Conference express concern to the State Government in relation to the lack of public consultation with Local Government concerning the introduction of Gaming Machines to licensed establishments throughout Tasmania as provided in the Gaming Control Act 1993."

Carried

Comment:

The Gaming Control Act 1993 provided under Part 3 for the conduct of gaming to be lawful provided an appropriate licence was held under the Act.

The public concerns that have become apparent since the introduction of the first gaming machines in January 1997 have tended to be somewhat focused on the lack of public consultation that occurred prior to the introduction and passage of this particular piece of legislation.

Whilst Sorell Council wished to stop short of expressing a view on the moral issues associated with the use of gaming machines, it nevertheless believed a greater degree

of consultation, particularly with Local Government, should have occurred as part of the formulation of the draft bill prior to its introduction to Parliament.

Whilst this may not have changed the views of a number of those current opponents to the industry it nevertheless would have provided a far greater opportunity for the broader issues involved with the legislation to be more fully debated.

Motion 9

Brighton Council/Circular Head Council

"That the Local Government Association of Tasmania request the State Government to immediately conduct an on-going social and economic impact study into the effects of the introduction of electronic gaming machines to hotels and clubs."

Carried

Comment:

This matter raised its head during January in the Brighton Municipality, and the Council was concerned about the detrimental effects that poker machines may have on a community, such as Brighton, and therefore requested the support of the Association in requesting the State Government to conduct such a study.

The inquiry should identify social and economic problems within the communities and their relationship to the introduction of electronic gaming machines. It should also identify the effects of electronic gaming machines on businesses, particularly retailers, and even more particularly in rural and regional areas.

1998 Annual Conference Motion 8

Brighton/Flinders

1. *That the Local Government Association of Tasmania, again request the State Government to immediately conduct an on-going social and economic impact study into the effects of the introduction of electronic gaming machines to hotels and clubs.*
2. *That the Local Government Association of Tasmania, write to the Prime Minister, supporting the introduction of a national inquiry into the on-going social and economic effects on the introduction of electronic gaming machines to hotels and clubs within Australia.*

Carried

Comment

Although this matter was raised as a conference item in 1997, and it was supported by Conference, the study has not been undertaken, and there is continuing evidence of the detrimental effects that poker machines are having on the community, especially a community such as Brighton, and the council therefore requests the continued support of the Association in requesting the State Government and the Prime Minister to conduct such inquiry.

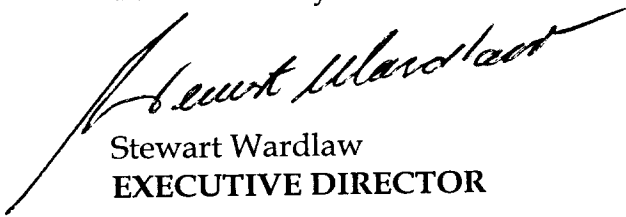
LGAT Comment

The benefits State Governments receive from gambling is not inconsiderable. In Tasmania alone the Government benefits by \$60 million each year and this is on the increase.

Recently, the President of the National Competition Council commented that there should be a review of the social and economic impact of gambling across Australia. The President's view is that research into the social and economic impact of gambling is inadequate and that competition policy should not be the excuse for further deregulation and expansion of gambling. Australians lose approximate \$5 billion each year on all forms of gambling.

I hope the above is of assistance to the inquiry.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stewart Wardlaw". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Stewart Wardlaw
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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