

December 14, 1998

Attention: Geraldine Martisius
The Gambling Inquiry - Productivity Commission
PO Box 80
BELCONNEN ACT 2616

Reference: BA 1944/98

Objection to 150 room motel extension to Mingara Gambling Club

Dear Ms. Matisius,

Ten years ago Mingara was a small community social club. Now it is one of the largest gambling venues in NSW, with 3 million dollars annual profit. Gambling generates these huge profits. This money is skilfully extracted from our unprotected community using expert consultants, new high-tech gambling devices and a 24 hour gambling licence. Three million dollars cleverly extracted every year from families that already have to struggle to make ends meet. Children suffer distress and hardship to enable Mingara to get bigger, so it can cause more hardship to more people. In ten years people like John Osbourne have changed a social club into a social cancer. Thanks to their introduction of gambling devices that take \$50 notes at a time, instead of children getting new school shoes, they now cop a beating. Crime, suicide and unemployment is out of control. Why? Take a good long look at Mingaras' family destroying gaming machines still at work at 3am - hundreds of them! America has Las Vegas out in the desert. We have set Las Vegas free within the community. Council must stop the growth of this cancer.

It is clear that there is little concern for the community. An environmental impact study was compulsory to protect the environment. But what about a study to protect the people? Or are people no longer important?

If you approve this 150 room motel extension it will be financed by the suffering and misery of many helpless people in our community. Mr. Osbourne watches people lose their entire pay packets every week. He seems to have no trouble living with this. If you approve further extensions to Mingara, then make no mistake about it - you are approving more suffering, more dysfunctional families, more child abuse, more violence, more crime and more suicides.

Forrester's Conference & Function Centre • Starlite Ballroom • Bentleys Restaurant

If the Holiday Inn in Terrigal only makes 4 million profit a year, Mingaras' motel will be running at a loss. Once again the poker machines will subsidise the expansion. The community will be further robbed of their savings with Mingaras' well paid advisers coming up with every trick they can to extract peoples hard earned salaries. A lot of people will be losing all their money to pay for this. Please order an inquiry into the human impact before you approve this "family-gambling-club-motel"! If just one child's life can be saved this would be warranted. Council is responsible for the welfare of **all** in the community. Especially those that need help most. Someone has to care about them.

Mr. Osbourne certainly doesn't care about destroying the livelihood of all existing motels that have served the community over many years prior to his arrival. That, however, is our problem.

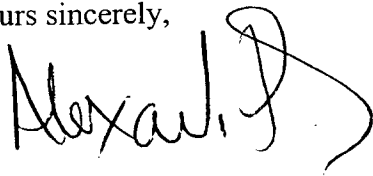
Of far greater concern - he doesn't even care about the welfare of his own club members. People gambling at 3am, 4am, 5am, hundreds of poker machines, electronic roulette tables. Why don't they be honest about it - Mingara is now a **gambling** club, NOT a social club!

Allow the motel under the condition that the poker machines are removed - see what Mr. Osbourne says to that. If he doesn't agree to that, at least reserve your decision untill after the Productivity Commission inquiry into gambling is released. Order a police investigation into why Mingara is holding weddings and christmas parties when clubs do not have a licence for these functions if alcohol is served.

It is very sad that the Central Coasts' future is being completely tied to the gaming industry. Do we as a community really want progress at any cost? Are you going to believe people like John Osbourne and Peter Hale telling us clubs are good for our future, or do you believe Marea Donnelly whose family was destroyed by "the monster out there"?

But you can't stop it can you? The club bosses and their mates own NSW now.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alexander Finch". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large flourish at the end.

Alexander Finch
General Manager.

cc. Cliff Russell, John Axford, Fay Brennan, Doug Eaton, Greg Best, B. Ward, Susan Earle, Brenton Pavier, John Millard, Tony Sheridan, Robyn Stewart, John Dawson - Wyong Council; and Geraldine Martisius - The Gaming Inquiry, Productivity Commission.

\$400,000 losses on pokies 'destroyed my family'

By JON MARSH

A woman has told a public hearing how a relative destroyed her family by blowing \$400,000 on poker machines in NSW.

When the family tried to restrict the problem gambler's access to funds, the relative left home and filed a property settlement claim, the Productivity Commission inquiry into gambling was told in Sydney yesterday.

"A member of my family has spent around \$400,000 on poker machines, spending up to \$40,000 a year," Ms Marea Donnelly wrote.

"Any suggestion that NSW offers a strategy to deal with problem gamblers is misleading to the point of blatant dishonesty. The reality is that anyone with a problem gambler in their family can do nothing, absolutely nothing, except get a sympathetic ear for their problems.

"I also fear the gambling counselling service in NSW is on the verge of becoming an industry in its own right, with all the inherent conflicts of interest which can hinder any other business.

"Have we reached a situation where our gambling coun-



"There's a monster out there"
... Marea Donnelly.

selling services are co-dependent of the gambling industry?"

She said present laws did little to protect families who should be able to take action through the courts to control problem gamblers.

"Is it socially acceptable to set up poker machines and TABs on virtually every block, then argue it is simply the gambler's problem if they go through all their assets?" she asked. "How many unmanaged problem gamblers can the State afford? How many families must face financial and emotional ruin because it is impossible to limit the gambling

expenditure of one person?"

After the hearing, Ms Donnelly, a mother of three, said: "The State has unleashed this monster and is only now beginning to realise what's out there."

The Australian Hotels Association (NSW) complained to the inquiry that clubs enjoyed advantages in revenues and tax rates.

"Competition is still very unequal and unfair. Clubs have unlimited gaming with the total number of poker machines exceeding 66,000, while hotels face onerous restrictions under existing hotel gaming legislation," its submission said.

"If registered clubs in NSW were taxed in exactly the same manner as NSW hotels the State Government would collect \$309 million more revenue."

Mr Jack Ball, president of the Community Clubs Council of Australia and New Zealand, said the AHA submission was "a classic case of misrepresentation . . . It's greed. They want more of the gaming dollar."

The Productivity Commission is seeking views on the country's \$10 billion-a-year gambling industry and will release its report next year.

Club functions

Registered clubs are reminded that where a function authority is held under section 23 of the Registered Clubs Act 1976, only the particular types of functions allowed under the Act may be held for non members and minors, and these functions are subject to certain conditions.

Section 23 (1)(b) enables functions to be held for non members and minors that are of a cultural, educational, religious, patriotic, professional, charitable, political, literary, sporting, athletic, industrial or community nature.

Functions associated with the celebration of Christmas can also be held under section 23(1)(a) in a registered club. However, where functions are held under section 23(1)(a), liquor cannot be sold or supplied at the function. The intent of section 23 (1)(a) is to enable functions to be held for minors at events such as children's Christmas parties, pantomimes and the like.

This means that a club cannot hold a Christmas function under its function authority for events such as end of year Christmas functions for corporations where liquor is intended to be sold or supplied.

A range of other conditions apply to functions (including minors' functions) which are set out in section 23AA of the

Act. Club managers, staff and directors should be aware of, and understand, the intent of the sections relating to functions on the club premises.

The table below sets out the requirements of each section.

Where any function is held in a club, and it does not fall within the scope of sections 23(1)(a) or 23(1)(b), then all people attending the function can only be admitted under the normal membership requirements imposed by the Act and the club's rules (ie. member, provisional member, honorary member, temporary member or guest of a member). Examples of some of the types of functions that fall outside sections 23(1)(a) and (1)(b) include weddings, birthday parties, end of year Christmas parties, and reunions. This list is not meant to be exhaustive.

Function Bookings

When accepting a booking for a function, the club should determine whether the function can be held under section 23 or whether it will be a function which only members and their guests are entitled to attend.

Note: A current function authority must be held before any function under section 23 can be held.

Section	Function Type	Liquor Sale/Supply	Gaming Machines	Tobacco Vending Machines	Membership Requirements
Section 23(1)(a)	celebration of Christmas for minors or adults	prohibited also in access area	prohibited (also in access area)	prohibited (also in access area)	nil
Section 23(1)(b)	functions permitted by the section (see above)	liquor permitted, other than at minors' functions	prohibited (also in access area)	prohibited (also in access area)	nil

Drink drive community education programs

The Christmas and New Year holiday season is traditionally a dangerous time on our roads. One of the main contributors to the death and trauma on our roads is drink driving.

The NSW Police Service, the Roads and Traffic Authority and other State and Federal agencies have developed a number of programs to reduce the drink driving carnage.

The campaigns are to educate drivers and the wider community on the safe, legal levels of alcohol that can be consumed when driving, and the dangers of combining drinking and driving.

Two campaigns launched recently have featured high profile sporting personalities to raise community awareness about the campaigns.

Operation Drink Drive II

Operation Drink Drive II was launched recently by the Police Minister, the Hon Paul Whelan MP, featuring the slogan "Drink and drive - a full tank is 0.5". Racing driver personality and

former world motorcycle champion Wayne Gardner lent his support to the State wide drink driving campaign.

As part of the campaign, police handed out wallet cards to motorists tested at random breath testing sites. The card contains the campaign's slogan and standard drink information.

"Choose or lose at Christmas time"

At a local level, a drink driving campaign was launched at Balmain Leagues Club Ltd by Balmain's rugby league club coach Wayne Pearce. The campaign is operating in the local government areas in the inner west of Sydney. It is a joint venture between the Roads and Traffic Authority, the NSW Police Service, the Health Department, and a number of inner west councils, licensed premises and registered clubs.

The campaign features the slogan "Choose or lose at Christmas time".

More than 30 licensed venues have united to support the campaign. Support material for the campaign includes coasters, wallet cards, napkins, posters and taxi vouchers for patrons of the participating venues.