



"PENINSULA ON POKIES"

**A survey of community views regarding
poker machine gambling on the Mornington Peninsula**

Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service

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Executive Summary

The Mornington Peninsula

The Mornington Peninsula Shire, formed after the amalgamation of several smaller shires in 1994, is located at the Southern end of Port Phillip Bay, with the western side bounded by Westernport Bay.

The Shire has a diverse range of communities in urban, semi-rural and rural settings. More than a third (**35,801**) of the total population (**110,409**) live in the designated areas of Hastings, Mornington, Rosebud and Rosebud West. The number of households earning less than \$400 per week ranges from 33% in Hastings and Mornington to 40% in Rosebud and 58% in Rosebud West. This is in stark contrast to the more affluent areas of the Shire including Mt Eliza and Flinders and to the holiday makers who frequent the marinas and resort beaches along the coast. (Ref Section 5-page 21)

The Mornington Peninsula rates in the top 10 for numbers of poker machines per municipality across the State.

Currently there are **859** poker machines in 20 venues (12 hotels / 8 clubs), with major concentrations in the areas of *Hastings (123)*, *Mornington (278)* and *Rosebud (190)*. (Ref Section 6-page 31)

The estimated yearly “take” from poker machines on the Peninsula during the last financial year is **\$60m** (based on Tabcorp and Tattersalls figures). This has been split three ways between venue operators, licensees and State Government taxes.

According to research conducted by the Interchurch Gambling Taskforce in 1998 (Ref 14-page 148), there has been a strong saturation of poker machines in areas with high concentrations of low income people. Despite growing calls from sections of the public for Local Councils to have greater control over the growth of poker machine gambling in their municipalities, they remain hamstrung by the State Government’s legislative control of the industry.

Strongly voiced concerns about the social and economic impacts of poker machine gambling on local communities have accompanied the rollout of poker machines in municipalities across Victoria in 1998.

In recent years, such concerns have been widespread across the Mornington Peninsula.

“Peninsula on Pokies” Project

In response to these concerns, Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service applied for funding from the Lance Reichstein Foundation to conduct a community survey regarding the impacts of poker machine gambling on the local community. This project became known as “*Peninsula on Pokies*”. (Ref Section 4-page 16)

The project set out to canvas a broad cross-section of views. The survey was concentrated in the areas of *Hastings*, *Mornington* and *Rosebud*. Responses were obtained from **184** community members, **47** retailers and **29** community workers. The response from venue operators was limited.

The views outlined in this report are not seen as either exhaustive or conclusive. Rather they provide a clear indication of the growing concern about the impacts of poker machine gambling on the Mornington Peninsula community.

The Key Themes Emerging from the Survey

The key themes emerging from the *Findings* are outlined in *Section 9* (page 83). They include:-

The identified positive benefits of poker machine gambling on the local community ranged from the increased provision of social outlets and entertainment options especially for women, the elderly and people on low incomes to improved facilities at clubs and hotels, increased employment in ‘pokie’ venues, a growth in benefits for local sporting clubs including affordable memberships for children and young people and increased expenditure on the Peninsula.

Notwithstanding the range of positive benefits, the overwhelming perception is that there are too many poker machines and their overall impact on the local community has been more negative than positive.

Specific negative impacts can be summarised into three groupings: **(a) social impacts** - increased financial hardship, increased poverty and increased family distress; **(b) economic impacts** - reduced expenditure on “non-essential” areas and economic downturn in local retail businesses other than ‘pokies’ and **(c) overall impacts** - an erosion in the general character and health of the community.

Six major strategies for addressing the negative impacts of poker machine gambling on the local community were identified. They include:-

- ⇒ Controlling the number of machines.
- ⇒ Restricting hours of opening for venues and placing stricter controls on location.
- ⇒ Increasing the availability of community education programs which reinforce the importance of responsible financial management.
- ⇒ Promoting responsible advertising which includes a greater regulation of glamour “ads” with the “true odds” of winning clearly stated.
- ⇒ Increasing counselling options for people experiencing gambling related difficulties.
- ⇒ Increasing the range of alternative, affordable community opportunities for entertainment and socialising, with particular reference to people with limited discretionary income.
- ⇒ Increasing government action which includes greater regulation of the ‘pokie’ industry to protect local communities, extending the regulatory role of the Local Councils and increasing the allocations of the Community Support Fund resources to local areas with high concentrations of machines.

A series of wider implications are outlined in *Section 10* (page 96) based on these findings. They are discussed under the headings of: the Local Community, the Local Council, Public Interest Concerns, Responsible Advertising and Tax Reform.

Section 11 (page 99) outlines a series of recommendations related to initiatives for the Shire, including a review of the recreation policy and the development of a responsible gaming strategy. The establishment of a broadly represented community consultative committee to provide input to the gaming strategy and to work on other issues raised in the report is also recommended. An independent impact study of the “true costs” of poker machine gambling was also seen as a priority.

SECTION 1:

The Starting Point for Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service

Good Shepherd Sisters

The Good Shepherd sisters belong to an international congregation of women working from a feminine perspective in the Catholic Church. This order was established in France in 1835 by St Mary Euphrasia Pelletier. A commitment to the needs of the marginalised and, in particular women and children has always characterised their work.

The founder of the Order of the Good Shepherd Sisters, St Mary Euphrasia, experienced discrimination, exile and deep personal loss as a young girl which influenced her understanding that “the ills she saw in the early 1800’s were not primarily the product of ‘individual pathology’ requiring symptom relief, but were the result of embedded structures of injustice, embedded values, that did not put the human first.”

The philosophy of the Good Shepherd Sisters calls for the promotion of social justice by caring for individual needs and generating structural changes. While being committed to bringing justice into heartfelt action, St Mary Euphrasia valued each person. To quote “one person is of more value than the whole world”.

The Good Shepherd Sisters work spread throughout the world with a group settling in Abbotsford, Melbourne, over 100 years ago.

Good Shepherd Youth And Family Service

Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service is a community services agency committed to working with low income and disadvantaged individuals and families which has come out of the work of the Good Shepherd Sisters in Victoria.

Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service’s philosophy endorses the commitment to promoting and building a just society. Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service now offers services to people living within the municipal areas of City of Yarra (*Collingwood office*); City of Brimbank (*St Albans office*); Mornington Peninsula Shire Council (*Hastings office*) and City of Port Phillip (*St Kilda office*).

A Just Society

A just society recognises that all citizens have a right to housing, clothing, food, rest, education, health care, employment, and security in old age.

A commitment to *social justice* promotes: -

- fairness in our dealings with other people
- fairness in the way responsibilities are shared
- fairness in the distribution of income, wealth, power in our society
- fairness in the social, economic and political structures we have created
- fairness in the operation of those structures so that they enable all citizens to be active and productive participants in the life of society.

Access to these things must be on the basis of *need* and not be limited to a person's status in society or ability to pay.

Common Good And Structural Change

In a just society, its members and its structures serve the promotion of the common good. The communitarian character of human existence means that the good of each person is bound up with the good of the community. The duty to promote the common good therefore entails the duty to protect the human rights of all.

This commitment to the common good - solidarity- rejects individualistic presuppositions involved in the notion of human autonomy, while it highly values the freedom and dignity of each person.

The good of persons is attained when they are able to participate in a rich diversity of communal relationships, ranging from those as small as the family to those as large as the national and global societies. Each sector of civil society has its own proper contribution to make to the common good. The principle of subsidiarity provides a guide for the inter-relationships within civil society. (Ref 13-page 148)

The whole of society is responsible for promoting the common good, while the state (read government) is charged with the responsibility of "public order". Public order is the basic degree of social union necessary for a genuinely civil society to exist. There are three prerequisites for such social union:

- justice: secure their human rights
- public peace
- public morality: Standards of public behaviour on which consensus exists in society.
(Ref 13-page 148)

This fundamental principle guides the Good Shepherd view of the roles and responsibilities of the Church, the Government, the family and communities.

The pursuit of a just society involves the striving for change at all levels: in the personal and family environs; the local community; schools; the workplace; the media; sports and recreation as well as government policies and legislation.

The interconnectedness between these arenas, in terms of both positive and negative influences should not be underestimated. Isolated initiatives may be helpful, but radical change requires a comprehensive approach across all areas. For example, within the gambling industry, disjointed policy making which fails to understand the interdependence between industry, employment and taxation policies and ignores the legislative power imbalance between different levels of government leaves local communities feeling powerless and disenfranchised.

The Role Of The Church

The people of God are called “to do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly with God” (Micah 6v8). The Church has a continuing responsibility to join with all people of goodwill in working for a society where structures serve truly just ends.

The principles underlying our concerns for social justice includes: -

- to respect human dignity with its rights and responsibilities
- to live in solidarity with others, aware of our interdependence
- to seek the well being of all
- to value work and creativity
- to give priority to the needs of the poor.

The Church is called to embrace faith, hope and love. This is *agape love* which inherently involves *charity and justice*. (1 Cor 13 v 13)

*‘Charitable works in the service of those in need must go hand in hand with the work to establish structures so that citizens do not have to depend upon acts of charity.’
(New Zealand Social Justice Statement 1993)*

The Church’s calling involves speaking out against injustices and publicly advocating for the disadvantaged as well as providing practical assistance.

The Role Of The State

Some people hold a minimalist view of government, where the role is to ensure the nation’s security and to foster law and order. Within this view, the government does not intervene in health, housing, education, welfare, but leaves this to private enterprise and market forces. An alternative view, supported by the Church, and which is inherent in the Good Shepherd philosophy, is that, good government is about protecting and promoting the public interest. Governments have an indispensable role in ensuring that no citizen is deprived of human rights.

Human persons are fulfilled within the community - a sense of community needs to be encouraged and facilitated by government.

In the public interest, governments need to be fully accountable for all financial arrangements involving public monies and their performance.

While the “state”, much less the market, cannot meet all human needs, *just* government policies will be consistent with a commitment to the dignity of human beings and will promote and preserve conditions within which people will flourish.

In summary, we are committed to a view of government which serves the common good and which secures and protects the dignity of every citizen. Governments need to provide conditions where each person is enabled to respect the rights of others and where each can enjoy freedom and fulfilment in the economic, political and cultural life of the nation.

The Vibrant Community

A vibrant community is founded on healthy relationships; this involves harmony in respect to the power balance between parents and children, marital partners, extended family members, friends, fellow citizens, governments and constituents, retailers, purchasers and such. Harmonious relationships are characterised by mutual caring, consideration and service.

Each sector of society makes an invaluable and inter-dependent contribution to the character of the community as a whole. *(Ref 13-page 131)*

Within this perspective, the fundamental building blocks of a vibrant community include:

Community empowerment which aims to encourage communities to be better able to cope with challenge, or change their situation. This promotes community development which builds:

- a learning community where people and groups gain knowledge and skills, and the confidence to use them, through their involvement in community activity;
- a fair and just community which is concerned about civic rights, equality of opportunity, and which recognises the differences between cultures;
- an active and organised community where people are fully involved in the community and one which has a good range of strong organisations;
- an influential community which is consulted and has a strong voice in the decisions which affects its interests.

Quality of community life which shows the sort of community which community development tries to achieve. Progress on these depends partly on what the community can do for itself and partly on how far the community can succeed in influencing the decisions of investors and policy-makers. This promotes community development which builds:

- a commonwealth which means a community has a strong economic base which creates opportunities and retains as much wealth as possible;
- a caring community that is aware of the needs of all its members, in which services and supports are of good quality and meet those needs;
- a green community which has a healthy and pleasant environment, conserves resources and encourages awareness of environmental responsibilities;
- a safe community where people do not fear crime, violence and other hazards;
- a good place to live which people feel good about and want to continue living in a lasting community which is well established and likely to survive. *(Ref 10-page 148)*

In recognising the interconnectedness of each of these aspects which contribute to the development of a dynamic and healthy community, the vital contribution played by integrated policy and program development reinforced by legislation should not be underestimated. Local government can provide a focus for community ownership, involvement and growth. The support and co-operation from other levels of government is essential. Enabling participation by all sections of the community while respecting democratic processes in all decisions are key factors in genuine community building.

In the current climate where the rush to economic globalisation and the vehement commitment to the “market” have taken hold, the personal, social and communal impacts are often either overlooked or justified in the name of economic growth and a belief in the “trickle down” effect. Such a narrow view fails to acknowledge the interconnectedness between all facets of community life.

In the name of economic progress, growing numbers of individuals, households, local communities and regions are experiencing entrenched poverty and increasing marginalisation. (Ref 2-page 148)

But, what use is the market if it causes such disadvantage? In the guise of “freeing up the market” governments are in danger of sidestepping their responsibility to parliament and the people. (Ref 13-page 148)

In recent times, there have been growing calls from many sections of the community for a firm rejection of “free-market” fundamentalism, which embodies the belief that markets can take care of everything. Even George Soros, one of the strongest proponents of the global money market has seen that blind belief in the market poses an even bigger threat than any totalitarian ideology. (Ref 21-page 149) At the recent Davos World Economic Forum, the president of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn, argued that the social, environmental and financial crises facing the world demand a more democratic and broader framework for global decision-making: “Too often we have focussed on the economics, without a sufficient understanding of the social, the political, the environmental and cultural aspects of society...”. (Ref 21-page 149)

Within the gambling industry in Victoria however, appeals to the “market”, as the prime determinant for both the locations and number of poker machines in local government across the state, continue.

It is imperative that the leaders within this industry, politicians and policy makers heed the cautions of those who have been the arch proponents of the “market”: an implicit respect for citizenship in the globalised world characterised by “winners” and “losers” and the importance of local communities are vital if democratic principles and practices are to be upheld. (Ref 21-page 149)

Rather than being driven by market forces, “an alternative principle of citizenship in a globalised world will celebrate what is fine about local communities while fostering understandings of diverse cultures and political alliances. At the local level we need to strengthen - not undermine - the schools, hospitals, banks and child care centres that make urban and rural communities good places to live and work”. (Ref 19-page 149)

SECTION 2:

Background to the Research

In December 1997, Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service applied for \$3,000 from the People Together Project's Grants for Rural Communities funded by the Lance Reichstein Foundation to conduct a gambling study within the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council (MPSC) (see Map 2, page 19). Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service was notified in January 1998 that this application had been successful.

This study was initiated by Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service in response to the growing concerns being expressed about the social and economic impacts of gambling on the local community. For some time there had been an increasing number of public statements detailing broad concerns people have about the apparent and potential economic and social impacts of electronic gaming across Victoria. *(Ref 27-page 149)*

It has been well documented that electronic gaming machines (known from now on in this report as 'poker machines' or the 'pokies') are predominantly located in areas across Victoria where there are significant concentrations of people on low incomes. *(Ref 14-page 148)*

This is certainly true of the Mornington Peninsula Shire (see Map 1, page 18). This municipal area is located between Port Phillip Bay and Westernport Bay. With a population of a little over 110,000 *(Ref 11-148)*, unemployment in the area is higher than both the State and Federal averages. A third of all households across the Shire have a weekly income of less than \$400. In November 1998, there were **831** poker machines located in 19 venues across the Mornington Peninsula Shire. This represented the ninth highest number of machines in the State at that time. (Those municipalities with more include: Greater Geelong - 1342; Greater Dandenong - 1154; Melbourne - 1111, Monash - 1097; Darebin - 1047; Kingston - 938; Knox - 911; Moonee Valley - 840, while Maribyrnong is the next highest after the MPSC with 804.) *(Ref 14-page 148)* By March 1999, along with a new venue, a further 28 machines had been located on the Peninsula, making a total of **859** machines in 20 venues. *(Ref 20-page 149)*

Prior to this study, considerable anecdotal evidence was available across the Shire which indicated that an increasing number of people were playing the 'pokies' as a major recreational activity. Regular media articles in local papers had outlined the growing hardship being experienced because of housekeeping money spent playing 'pokie' machines. *(Ref 27-page 149)* While the actual amount of money being channelled down these machines in the Shire in the 97/98 financial year was not known, a welfare organisation representative estimated it was between \$35 and \$40 million dollars. *(Ref 27-page 149)*

A billboard appealing to local residents to "SHOP LOCALLY" was erected in Hastings by the traders in the latter part of 1997. This provided a clear indication of the economic difficulties being experienced by traders, with poker machine gambling thought to be a major contributing factor. (See pictures, page 7)

In the context of a developing ground swell of concern about the negative impacts of poker machine gambling, Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service, in co-operation with community leaders, Council staff, community workers, residents and retailers, felt that a formal broad ranging community consultation was needed.

SECTION 3:

The Gambling Industry in Australia

The prolific character of gambling in Australia is undeniable. The 10 billion dollars lost by Australians in a range of gambling activities in the 1996/97 financial year, compared to the \$6 billion spent on essential services, is one clear indicator of the entrenched nature of this behaviour on the Australian psyche. (*Ref 22-page 149*). New South Wales recorded the greatest loss of nearly \$4b, with Victoria coming second recording a little more than \$2.75b. According to recently released figures, money being wagered by Australians continues to escalate. With \$94.5b wagered nationally in the 1997/98 financial year, representing an average of \$6,835 (per adult over 18), gambling losses soared to \$11.3b. (*Ref 22-page 149*)

While gambling is widespread, there is a diverse range of activities encompassed in this collective term. In more recent times, these activities have been delineated into two groups: gambling activities and gaming activities. The former includes the traditional racing and betting activities: bookmakers and totalisators. The latter includes expenditure on electronic gaming machines (EGMS), Tattslotto, Keno, Soccer pools and the like plus money spent on Casino betting.

A growing proportion of total gambling losses is coming from monies lost while playing on electronic gaming machines (poker machines or 'pokies') in most States across Australia.

The Victorian "Pokie" Industry

While the Western Australian Government continues to resist the widespread introduction of poker machines because of Premier Court's conviction that "the devastating social costs far outweigh any benefits" (*Ref 23-page 149*), the same cannot be said for the Victorian Government.

During 1991, the Kirner Government finally bowed to economic and industry pressures and tabled legislation to allow for the introduction of electronic gaming in Victoria. The Gaming Machine Control Act (1991) was subsequently passed. At this time, the Interchurch Gambling Taskforce, amongst other groups, were vehemently opposed to the introduction of these machines on public interest grounds. According to the Rev Ray Cleary, the current Chair of the Interchurch Gambling Taskforce, "this pragmatic decision" to allow the introduction of poker machines in Victoria provided the platform from which the poker machine industry has burgeoned following the election of the Kennett Government in 1992. A cap of 27,500 machines currently exists for poker machines in clubs and hotels with a further 2,500 located in the Casino.

Gambling As An Economic Development Strategy

In recent years governments around the world, faced with increasing unemployment and growing budget shortfalls have seen the enormous potential embodied in gambling as an economic development strategy (*Ref 9-page 148*). Within the American context, gambling has been transformed from an illegal, seedy criminal activity to a saviour of economic misfortune. "What had been feared for moral corruption, its corrosive impact on the work ethic, its potential devastation of family savings was suddenly transformed into a leading candidate to reverse the fortunes of communities across America". (*Ref 9-page 148*)

The coining of the term gaming has been seen by some as an attempt to sanitise the older connotations of gambling and this has been reinforced by promoting these activities as purely entertainment: “a true social expression ... (where) there are no gender based, race based or physical barriers to access”. (Ref 9-page 148)

Within this framework, as politicians have become more dependent on expanded menus of lotteries, casinos and electronic gambling to generate revenues in the name of creating jobs for their constituents, the role of government has been dramatically altered from regulator of a potentially harmful enterprise to promoter of that enterprise.

According to Dr Robert Goodman, an American academic who visited Victoria in 1998 at the invitation of the Interchurch Gambling Taskforce, there are considerable unintended social and economic consequences of such a strategy which generally receive little attention from governments. These costs, both of a direct and indirect nature, may in fact far outweigh any supposed benefits being generated by the industry. They include:

- Money flowing into poker machines is being diverted from goods and services in other local businesses.
- Money and time spent at casinos, pokies and such represents time “lost” to other activities including time with family, as well as other recreational and entertainment options.
- Missed opportunity costs: while the illusion that gambling creates new jobs for the unemployed and fresh revenues to replenish depleted public treasuries is being actively promoted, there is a lack of recognition of other costs to individuals, families, other businesses and local communities.
- Convenience gambling enterprises have the potential to “cannibalise” local communities: gambling in general and gaming in particular can be equated with a parasitic activity that cannibalises local communities in the name of increased government revenue.
- Gambling as an economic development strategy potentially undermines the government’s role as protector of the public interest.
- The impossibility of undoing the development of legalised gambling in the longer term.

The extent to which gambling has become a key economic development strategy in Victoria is clearly demonstrated by the growing proportion of state revenue that can be attributed to gambling and gaming activities.

Of the \$2,756.7m lost on gambling in Victoria in the 1996/97 financial year, losses from poker machine gambling totalled \$1,456m, which represented a 16% increase on the previous financial year. (Ref 4-page 148) Gambling losses in Victoria have increased to \$3,190m in the last financial year (1997/98). (Ref 6-page 148)

Taxes on gambling and gaming activities provide a significant revenue source for the State government. In Victoria, gambling revenue is the third highest revenue source after Payroll Tax and Stamp duty, equally liquor, tobacco and petrol taxes combined. Total revenue from all gambling and gaming activities increased from \$401.722m in 1992/93 to **\$1,036.122m** in 1996/97. Total revenue from poker machines, video gaming machines and Club Keno increased from \$10.918m in 1991/92 to **\$629.010m** in 1996/97. While revenue from poker machines continues to grow, revenue from racing, the more traditional form of gambling has decreased from \$174.160m in 1991/92 to **\$121.317m** in 1996/97. In

1996/97 gambling taxes represented 14% of state revenue. By 97/98 this had increased to 15% and it continues to grow. Clearly, a significant proportion of this revenue comes from poker machines.

The current reform of the tax system being executed by the Howard Government will do little to alleviate Victoria's reliance on gambling revenue. *(Ref 1-page 148)*

Where The Money Goes

For every dollar gambled in poker machines in Victorian hotels and clubs, a minimum of 87% is returned to the players (payback rate). The remaining 13% is classified as the "take" which is distributed three ways: 4.3% to the operator (Tattersalls and Tabcorp); 4.3% is tax revenue to the State government; where the machines are located in clubs, the remaining 4.3% is fully retained by the club and where the machines are in hotels, 3.25% is retained by the proprietor of the hotel while 1.15% is contributed to the Community Support Fund. Clubs do not contribute to the Community Support Fund, as they are required to reinvest their profits in the club itself or non-profit community initiatives. *(Ref 4-page 148)*

Community Support Fund (CSF)

This Fund was established under the Gaming Machine Control Act (1991) to primarily provide monies for research into the effects of gambling and to fund counselling and support services for people experiencing difficulties with gambling.

Legislative amendments made by the Kennett Government have extended the areas to which monies can be allocated from this Fund, including projects deemed to be of importance to the community such as the Melbourne Aquatic Centre. Legislation passed at the end of 1998 will allow money from the CSF to be transferred to the government's core budget for expenditure on education and health services.

With this Fund attracting more than \$1.5m per week, \$362m had been allocated to programs and facilities from the Fund by August 1998. This money has been fairly evenly divided between resources for support services such as gambling counselling and research, emergency relief, youth programs and Turning the Tide Drug Strategy and resources for the Arts, Sport and Recreation and Tourism ventures. *(Ref 6 & 16-pages 131 & 132)*

The "Take" From Machines

For poker machine gambling, the "payback" to "take" ratio was set at 87%:13%. It is generally understood that this ratio was established to ensure the viability of the poker machine gambling industry. The 87%:13% ratio represents minimum figures. At times, the "payback" figure can be a little higher. The variables determining actual payouts to particular players at varying rates are complex and determined by computer programs.

According to Tabcorp research, average daily revenue from poker machines ranges from \$40-\$400, with an average of \$160 in the 96/97 financial year. According to recently released annual reports from both Tabcorp and Tattersalls the average daily "take" had increased to between \$185 and \$190 per machine. *(Ref 25 & 26-page 149)* Based on the 96/97 average daily "take", the annual "take" for poker machines in Victorian clubs and hotels (excluding the Casino) was estimated to be \$1.6b annually. This means that significant and increasing amounts of money are being withdrawn from local communities by way of poker machine gambling. For example, in the City of Greater Dandenong, which has 1154 poker

machines located in 6 hotels and 9 clubs, the take for the 1996/97 financial year was estimated to be at least \$60m. (*Ref 16-page 149*)

Where Does The Money Come From?

Since 1992 there has been a significant increase in the expenditure on poker machine gambling in Victoria, from \$32.5m in 91/92 to \$1,456m in 96/97. This latter figure represents a per capita expenditure of \$621.21. Poker machine gambling was the major contributor to total gambling expenditure in Victorian households of \$748 in 1996/97. *(Ref 4-page 148)*

By 1997, weekly expenditure on poker machine gambling by Victorians had reached \$48.9m. Actual weekly expenditure (the average amount lost per adult Victorian) had increased from \$14.35 in 1996 to \$15.36 in 1997. When expenditure is expressed as a proportion of both individual and household income, there is a strong regressive pattern, with much higher proportional expenditure among low income respondents. *(Ref 4-page 148)* This was clearly displayed in a submission to the Productivity Commission by the Maribyrnong Council, a city with significant numbers of people on low incomes and high unemployment. Average weekly expenditure for active “pokie” players in Maribyrnong was \$45.14 compared to \$6.20 for residents in the City of Boroondara, an area with significant numbers of people on high incomes. *(Ref 25-page 149)*

According to research commissioned by the Victorian and Casino Gaming Authority (VCGA), expenditure on poker machines has been primarily financed by household savings. *(Ref 4 & 11-page 148)* However, this research also acknowledged that “much higher proportions of personal and household income are gambled and taxed by low income respondents than by higher income respondents”. Given that there is a high density of poker machines in low income areas where people have limited if any savings, general household expenditure patterns must have been affected by poker machine gambling. *(Ref 13-page 148)* Pawnbroking research conducted in 1997 also confirms a growing link between pawning goods and gambling, highlighting people’s need to explore other options for obtaining money to finance their poker machine gambling activities. *(Ref 5-page 148)*

According to a study commissioned by the VCGA into the social and economic effects of poker machine gambling in non-metropolitan communities in 1997, it was concluded that “there has been a significant redistribution of direction in household placement of income” following the sharp growth in gambling in general and usage of poker machines in particular. *(Ref 4-page 148)*

Research into the impacts of increased poker machine gambling on the retail industry acknowledges that some areas may have been particularly hard hit: “while there is little direct evidence of declines in retail spending from increased gambling activity, it may be that there are local effects in particular areas. *(Ref 11-page 148)*. This would most likely be in areas where there are significant numbers of people on low incomes, having limited disposable income after expenditure on essentials.

The research also predicts the potential for more severe effects on the retail industry: “while in the short run savings appear to have borne the brunt of consumers increased spending on gambling, “in the long run effects may allude to lower current savings translating into lower future consumption...” *(Ref 11-page 148)*

Who Gambles And Why

Each subsequent VCGA report since 1992 has reinforced the increasing trend to poker machine usage. According to the Fifth Survey of Community Gambling Patterns in 1997, the primary motivators for poker machine gambling were recorded as:

- Social Reasons (54%)
- Thrill (34%)
- Boredom (18%)
- Atmosphere/Buzz (13%)

Localities across Victoria with concentrations of low income people have significantly higher concentrations of poker machines. (*Ref 14- 148*) Mornington Peninsula Shire is one prime example of this.

Several factors would appear to make poker machine venues attractive to low income people include:

- Close to home (limited transport costs, ease of access).
- Welcoming, friendly, non-discriminatory.
- Small amounts of money can be used.
- A range of incentives - free food and drinks, specials, warm environment with no restrictions on length of stay.
- Limited range of alternative entertainment options (watching TV was recorded as one of the most common alternative entertainment option to playing the ‘pokies’.) (*Ref 4 and 12-page 148*)

Definition Of Problem Gambling

Upholding the individual’s right to personal choice is fundamental to democracy. However, balancing rights and responsibilities is an inherent aspect of fulfilling a diverse range of human roles: being a citizen, a parent, a friend, a student and such. Calls for protective mechanisms to assist people with “out-of-control” gambling emanate from a commitment to upholding the public interest.

The literature contains a varied array of definitions under the heading “problem gambler”. (*Ref 3-page 148*) Estimates of between 1% and 3% are regularly referred to by State government and industry representatives. (*Ref 12-page 148*) For the purposes of this survey, “people experiencing difficulties” because of poker machine gambling has been used in its widest sense. Rather than providing the community with a set definition of “problem gambler”, this survey asked the participants to identify what they ascribed as “gambling related difficulties”.

Legislation Controlling The Development Of The Poker Machine Industry In Victoria

State government legislation continues to control the poker machine industry in Victoria by way of the Gaming Machine Control Act (1991). The State Planning Scheme also contains a number of controlling factors in terms of the size, location and nature of gaming venues (especially Sections 69 and 70). (*Ref 14-page 148*)

While Australia operates within a three-tier government structure - Federal, State and Local - with the corresponding governance responsibilities, local government is not independently constituted.

Following the defeat of the 1988 referendum, Local government remains constituted under the State government, thereby allowing the State government the prerogative to appeal to the “arm of government” argument to reinforce a particular policy agenda. There have been several examples of this in recent times in Victoria, including the forced amalgamation of local councils. A direct consequence of this structural context has meant that individual councils and in turn local residents have had very limited say in the introduction and growth of the poker machine industry in their local area.

Despite this current state of affairs, Local government, according to its governance function, has an ongoing responsibility to raise issues of general concern to local residents even in situations where it has no direct policy, planning or regulatory responsibilities.

As privatised bodies who must give prime consideration to their shareholders, Tabcorp and Tattersalls, the two operators awarded a gaming licence for poker machines in hotels and clubs, continue to appeal to market forces and the rights of the individual to choose their entertainment options when quizzed about placement and concentrations of machines in particular local areas.

In reality however, democratic policies and processes endorse the partnership character of all levels of government with the community. This in turn reinforces the importance of allowing freedom of speech and the assurance that the ongoing concerns of local residents in maintaining the social fabric of their community will be heard.

Within the current context which has seen the poker machine industry flourish, a growing number of local communities are calling for a greater say. This is exemplified in calls for responsible local gaming policies, greater local controls over the allocation of these machines, and the implementation of regional caps, in recognition of the devastating effects of poker machine gambling on individuals, households, retailers and local communities. (*Refs 3, 7, 13, 14-page 148*)

Daily and local papers frequently contain stories about the devastating impacts of poker machine gambling. (*Refs 23, 27-page 149*)

Church groups, welfare organisations, local councils and concerned community members reject the criticism that they are being moralistic and dictatorial about poker machine gambling. While respecting individual choice when it comes to recreation and entertainment options, they claim that the mounting evidence of negative impacts of poker machine gambling attests to the necessity for significant changes to how the industry is regulated. The state’s role as both protector of the public interest and propagator of poker machine gambling because of monetary benefits is also being increasingly challenged.

(*Refs 3, 7, 13-page 148 / Refs 15, 22, 25, 26-page 149*)

SECTION 4:

The Project

Aim

The aim of this project is to contribute to the ongoing development of a vibrant, healthy and safe community for all Mornington Peninsula Shire residents as well as those working within the area.

Overall Objectives

1. To ascertain the views of a broad cross-section of the community living and working within the Mornington Peninsula Shire in regards to:-
 - The positive benefits of poker machine gambling on the local community.
 - The negative impacts of poker machine gambling on the local community.
 - The types of difficulties people are experiencing because of poker machine gambling.
 - Personal perceptions about the current number of machines located within the Mornington Peninsula Shire and whether the impacts of poker machine gambling on the local community have been more positive or more negative.
 - Knowledge of support services within the Mornington Peninsula Shire for people experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.
 - Ways of addressing the negative impacts of poker machine gambling on the local community.
 - Other issues arising from the project needing further exploration.

1. To document these findings in a report to be used as a community resource.

Methodology

This project is a qualitative study using an action research methodology. This project has emerged from the community and will involve residents and others working in the area at all stages. A decision was made to focus on the areas of *Hastings*, *Mornington* and *Rosebud* given the concentration of poker machines in these areas and their demographic profiles. Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service also offers services in each of these areas and it was felt that the existence of established networks would facilitate the research process.

Specific groups included:-

The Good Shepherd Consumer Reference Group and the Community Advisory Group which played vital roles in the formulation of the aims, objectives and design of this research.

A team of research assistants was also involved throughout the project in many facets of data collection and general administration.

- **Community Advisory Group.**

A community advisory group was established made up of representatives from the local Chamber of Commerce, a Local Council representative with planning and development responsibilities, a local councillor, two community workers and a representative from the Good Shepherd Consumer Reference Group.

It was anticipated that each of these people would provide ongoing support and assistance where necessary. From the inception of this project it was understood that the ongoing commitment of a wide range of community members was essential if this research was to promote community development.

- **Consumer Reference Group**

As the Consumer Advocate, Leanne Farnsworth convened a group of local community residents to work on consumer issues pertinent to the local community. Membership of this group during 1998 included: Wina Hilton, Dawn Ross, Leigh Nichols-Thompson and Heather Berriman. Promoting community awareness about education levies and bank charges were two of the projects this group had been involved with.

This group enthusiastically supported the development of the questionnaire used in the research. They were willing participants when the questionnaires were piloted. They also attended a training session held for people planning to be involved in the data-gathering phase.

(L to R: **Heather Berriman, Bill Toperzer, Leanne Farnsworth (standing), Dawn Ross, Sandra Wood**)

- **Team of Research Assistants**

Sandra Wood, a regular volunteer at Good Shepherd and Bill Toperzer, a regular volunteer and convenor of the Share Register at Good Shepherd, Sue Dressing a community development student and Wina Hilton, a member of the Consumer Reference Group, were active participants in the data collection phase. Each of these people spent many hours at shopping centres speaking with residents.

Sandra and Bill also walked the streets of the Hastings, Mornington and Rosebud retail areas speaking at length with retailers.

- **Retailers**

Co-operation and support from the Chambers of Commerce in each area were sought. This included the *Westernport Chamber of Commerce*, the *Mornington Chamber of Commerce* and the *Rosebud Regional Development Council*. Their involvement was important in validating the project and in encouraging retailers to participate in the survey.

- **Media**

Good Shepherd staff are in regular contact with media representatives.

The media's interest in the project, along with the regular updates, ensured that community awareness about the project was widespread. Community members often mentioned these articles when they approached the table to complete the survey.

- **Planned Data Collection Strategies included:**

(i) Invitations to **community members** to contribute their views on three specific occasions. A community survey was conducted in the shopping centres of **Hastings** (on Thursday 27th August 1998, in the Coles Carpark); **Mornington** (on Market Day - Wednesday 2nd September 1998, in the Mornington Shopping Centre) and **Rosebud** (on Thursday, 10th September 1998, in the Shopping complex near Coles).

People were able to complete a series of questions and offer a case study or participate in an interview with one of the researchers.

These opportunities were preceded by considerable media coverage, encouraging as many people as possible, whatever their views, to participate in the survey. This was seen as vital to ensure that the data is representative of a range of community views, with potential biases being kept to a minimum.

Secured containers were placed at each of the three Council locations in *Hastings*, *Mornington* and *Rosebud* for residents to return their completed questionnaires.

(ii) Interviews with a range of **community workers**, either by asking them to complete a set of questions or by participating in a structured face to face or telephone interview.

(iii) Interviews with **retailers** operating in *Hastings*, *Mornington* and *Rosebud*, either by asking them to complete a set of questions or by participating in a structured face to face interview or telephone interview.

(iv) Invitations were issued to **venue operators** to participate as the inclusion of their views was seen as important to fulfilling the overall objectives of the project.

(v) Observation at a number of venues.

(vi) Interviews with local residents who regularly visit “pokie” venues.

SECTION 5:

The Mornington Peninsula Shire

The Mornington Peninsula Shire is located at the South Eastern end of Port Phillip Bay, with the western side of the Shire bounded by Westernport Bay. (See Map 1-page 18)

Centres such as *Hastings*, *Mornington* and *Rosebud* are more than one hour from Melbourne by car.

This Shire was formed in 1994 after the forced amalgamation of a number of smaller Local Government Areas including the Shire of Hastings, Flinders, Rosebud and Mornington.

The Shire has a diverse range of communities in urban, semi-rural and rural settings. According to the 1996 Census data, 110,409 people were living in the Shire on census night. A Monash University report on poverty released in 1997 (*Ref 2-page 131*), found that nearly 40% of children in Mornington and Hastings live in families where the household income is less than \$25,000. This is in stark contrast to the affluent areas of the Shire, including Mt Eliza and Flinders, (*Ref Table 3-page 27*) and to the holiday makers who frequent the marinas and resort beaches along the coasts. The Monash University study also highlights such contrasts: while 17% of men living in Mornington Peninsula-West earn more than \$52,000 per year, 27% of men living in Mornington Peninsula -South earn less than \$15,600 per year.

Table 1 (page 24) outlines the demographic profile of the Shire. More than a third of the population (35,801) live within the areas designated as Hastings, Mornington, Rosebud and Rosebud West where there are a significant number of people living on low incomes. In each of these areas, the number of households earning less than \$400 per week range from 33% (Hastings and Mornington) to 46% for Rosebud and 58% for Rosebud West. A range of characteristics, including those which are clear indicators of poverty (income level, nature of the household, accommodation, employment status and access to a car) are outlined for the Shire overall and for Hastings, Mornington, Rosebud, Rosebud West and Rye, being the main areas on the Peninsula where poker machines are concentrated. (*Ref Map 3-page 27 & Table 6-9-pages 35, 36, 37, 38*)

Map 1

Map 2

Table 1

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF SHIRE OF MORNINGTON PENINSULA

<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>SHIRE OF MORNINGTON PENINSULA</i>	<i>HASTINGS</i>	<i>MORNINGTON</i>	<i>ROSEBUD</i>	<i>ROSEBUD WEST</i>	<i>RYE</i>
Population	110,409	6,080	15,362	11,094	3,265	9,284
No. of Families	30,181	1,624	4,263	3,158	812	2,576
% of Families with Dependent Children	48%	57%	47%	41%	32%	42%
% of Single Parent Families	14%	21%	18%	16%	17%	16%
No. of Households	42,107	2,140	6,282	4,730	1,502	3,949
% of People Living Alone	23%	22%	28%	30%	40%	27%
% of People Living Alone who are 65+	51%	40%	52%	59%	67%	50%
% of People Born Overseas	18%	16%	21%	16%	17%	16%
% of People from NESB	6%	4%	5.5%	5%	6%	7%
Most Common NESB Groups	Italian, German, Greek	German	Italian German	Italian, Greek Netherlandic	Italian German	Italian Greek
No. of Dwellings	64,686	2,381	7,120	6,814	2,552	9,604
% of Dwellings Occupied on Census Night	65%	61%	88%	69%	59%	41%
% of Dwellings Occupied that are Rented	18%	35%	27%	19%	24%	18%
% of Rental Properties Owned by Government Authorities	15%	35%	24%	12%	6%	3%
Average Mortgage	\$700	\$650	\$650	\$650	\$541	\$600

<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>SHIRE OF MORNINGTON PENINSULA</i>	<i>HASTINGS</i>	<i>MORNINGTON</i>	<i>ROSEBUD</i>	<i>ROSEBUD WEST</i>	<i>RYE</i>
Payment per Month						

Demographic profile of SMP (cont)

<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>SHIRE OF MORNINGTON PENINSULA</i>	<i>HASTINGS</i>	<i>MORNINGTON</i>	<i>ROSEBUD</i>	<i>ROSEBUD WEST</i>	<i>RYE</i>
Average Rental Payment per Week	\$100	\$100	\$120	\$100	\$100	\$110
Median Household Income per Week	\$544	\$531	\$520	\$388	\$314	\$409
No. of Households Earning Less Than \$400 per week	32%	33%	33%	46%	58%	43%
No. of Households without a Car		14%	11.4%	12.7%	17.9%	7.7%
No. of People Employed	43,035	2,050	5,967	3,329	681	2,732
Participation Rate (No. of people in labour force as a proportion of the population)	56%	54%	55%	44%	31%	44%
No. of People Unemployed	4,593	329	719	582	195	505
Overall Unemployment Rate	9.6%	13.8%	10.8%	14.9%	22.3%	15.6%
Youth Unemployment Rate	16%	28%	24%	23%	24%	17%

(Source: Mornington Peninsula Shire Council Demographic Profile 1996 Census Data)

Table 2

HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE SURVEY FOR THE SHIRE OF MORNINGTON PENINSULA		
Average weekly household expenditure	\$872	
Food	\$118	(14%)
Housing (including fuel and power)	\$117	(13.5%)
Transport (including car, bus, train etc)	\$101	(12%)
Recreation (TV, gambling, holiday & such)	\$ 84	(10%)
Furnishings and equipment	\$ 40	(5%)
Clothing / Footwear	\$ 35	(4%)
Alcohol and Tobacco	\$ 27	(3%)

(Source: Mornington Peninsula Shire Council Demographic Profile 1996 Census Data)

Table 3

COMPARISON OF SUBURBS ON THE MORNINGTON PENINSULA

SUBURBS WITH EGMS	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	MEDIAN INDIVIDUAL WEEKLY INCOME	HOUSEHOLD INCOME
SOMERVILLE	6.2%	\$439	\$757
BAXTER	8.8%	\$332	\$439
MORNINGTON	10.8%	\$269	\$520
DROMANA	14.2%	\$222	\$439
ROSEBUD	14.9%	\$198	\$388
ROSEBUD WEST	22.8%	\$188	\$314
SORRENTO	16.3%	\$249	\$454
RYE	15.6%	\$210	\$409
HASTINGS	13.8%	\$255	\$531

SUBURBS WITHOUT EGMS	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	MEDIAN INDIVIDUAL WEEKLY INCOME	HOUSEHOLD INCOME
RED HILL	4.2%	\$307	\$664
SOMERS	6.9%	\$301	\$601
PORTSEA	7.1%	\$330	\$508
MT ELIZA	5.5%	\$356	\$855
MT MARTHA	6.4%	\$325	\$707
MERRICKS	6.2%	\$344	\$714
FLINDERS	4.7%	\$319	\$580

Source: Mornington Peninsula Shire Council Economic and Demographic profile (using 1996 ABS Census Data)

Table 4

RECIPIENTS OF INCOME SUPPORT PAYMENTS				
LIVING IN IDENTIFIED AREAS OF THE MORNINGTON PENINSULA				
	SERVICE REASON			
HOME POSTOCDE	Newstart Allowance	Parenting Payment	Youth Allowance	TOTAL
3915 - HASTINGS	372	330	147	849
3931 - MORNINGTON	567	448	299	1,314
3939 - ROSEBUD	495	322	211	1,028
3940 - ROSEBUD WEST	114	104	42	250
3941 - RYE	512	315	180	1,007
TOTAL	2,060	1,519	879	4,458

(Figures as recorded in March 1999 by Centrelink.)

SECTION 6:

The “Pokie” Industry on the Mornington Peninsula

According to the current listing of venues made available by the VCGA (as at March 1999), there are **859** poker machines located across the *Mornington Peninsula Shire* in 20 venues - **12 hotels** and **8 clubs**.

These venues are indicated on Map 1 (page 18). Tables outline in detail the concentration of these machines in specific locations. Major concentrations are in the *Hastings, Mornington* and *Rosebud* areas.

Opening hours vary in these venues. Specific times (confirmed in the middle of March 1999) are outlined in Tables 6 - 9. (pages 35, 36, 37, 38)

There has been an increasing trend to longer opening times with a number of hotels now open 24 hours, 7 days a week. According to the latest Tabcorp Annual Report (1997/98), the average daily take from each poker machine rose from \$170 to \$190 which represents a 19% increase on the previous financial year. Gaming machine activities yielded Tabcorp a profit of \$86.2 million. Tabcorp's Managing Director, Mr Ross Wilson, attributed these higher gaming profits to "classier venue designs, better gaming products and improved electronic gaming machines." (Ref 26-page 149) Tattersalls profit for the same period was a record \$130 million for its 13,500 poker machines in hotels and clubs. This represents an average daily take of \$185. (Ref 25-page 149)

With an average daily take of \$190, this represents a total average daily take of \$163,210 for the **859** machines on the Peninsula. This translates into an average total “take” figure of **\$59,571,650** for the year.

THE "POKIE" MACHINE INDUSTRY (at March 1999)

Table 5

Mornington Peninsula Shire:

TOTAL	NUMBER OF MACHINES	859
		HOTEL: 471 CLUB: 388
	NUMBER OF VENUES	20
		HOTEL: 12 CLUB: 8
	NUMBER OF OPERATORS	11 Tabcorp
		HOTEL: 8 CLUB: 3
		9 TATTERSALLS
		HOTEL: 4 CLUB: 5

TOTALS FOR:

• Hastings area	NUMBER OF MACHINES	123
	NUMBER OF VENUES	3
		HOTEL: 2 CLUB: 1
	NUMBER OF OPERATORS	Tabcorp: 1 Tattersalls: 2
• Mornington area	NUMBER OF MACHINES	278
	NUMBER OF VENUES	7
		HOTEL: 4 CLUB: 3
	NUMBER OF OPERATORS	Tabcorp: 5 Tattersalls: 2
• Rosebud area	NUMBER OF MACHINES	190
	NUMBER OF VENUES	3
		HOTEL: 1 CLUB: 2
	NUMBER OF OPERATORS	Tabcorp: 1 Tattersalls: 2
• Other	NUMBER OF MACHINES	268
	NUMBER OF VENUES	7
		HOTEL: 5 CLUB: 2
	NUMBER OF OPERATORS	Tabcorp: 4 Tattersalls: 3

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Map 3

(Source: Victorian and Casino Gaming Authority)

THE “POKIE” MACHINE INDUSTRY
ON THE SHIRE
H A S T I N G S

Table 6

MAP REFERENCE	HASTINGS AREA	NUMBER OF MACHINES	VENUE	OPERATOR	OPENING HOURS
6	Hastings Cricket and Football Club	50	Club	Tattersalls	9.00am - 11.30pm <i>Sunday - Thursday</i> 9.00am - 1.30am <i>Friday and Saturday</i>
8	Kings Creek Hotel	33	Hotel	Tabcorp	24 hours - 7 days.
19	Westernport Hotel	40	Hotel	Tattersalls	7.00am - 3.00am <i>Monday - Saturday</i> 10.00am - 12.00pm <i>Sunday</i>
		123			

THE “POKIE” MACHINE INDUSTRY
ON THE SHIRE
MORNINGTON

Table 7

MAP REFERENCE	MORNINGTON AREA	NUMBER OF MACHINES	VENUE	OPERATOR	OPENING HOURS
2	Dava Hotel	40	Hotel	Tabcorp	8.30am - 1.00am <i>Sunday - Thursday</i> 8.30am - 3.00am <i>Friday and Saturday</i>
5	Grand Hotel Mornington	70	Hotel	Tabcorp	24 hours 7 days
9	Kirkpatricks Royal Beach Hotel	40	Hotel	Tattersalls	8.30am - 1.00am <i>Monday-Saturday</i> 8.30am - 11.00pm <i>Sunday</i>
10	Mornington Country Golf Club	23	Club	Tattersalls	10.00am - 11.00pm <i>Sun, Mon, Tues</i> 10.00am - 1.00am <i>Thurs, Fri, Saturday</i>
11	Mornington Tavern	25	Hotel	Tabcorp	7.00am - 3.00am 7 days
8	Steeples Mornington Racing Club	60	Club	Tabcorp	8.00am - 1.00am 7 days
20	Mornington Services Club	20	Club	Tabcorp	10.00am - 10.30pm <i>Monday-Thursday</i> 10.00am - 12.00pm <i>Fri, Sat, Sunday</i>
		278			

THE “POKIE” MACHINE INDUSTRY
ON THE SHIRE
R O S E B U D

Table 8

MAP REFERENCE	HASTINGS AREA	NUMBER OF MACHINES	VENUE	OPERATOR	OPENING HOURS
12	Rosebud Country Club	60	Club	Tabcorp	10.00am - 1.00am 7 days
13	Rosebud Hotel	70	Hotel	Tattersalls	7.00am - 3.00am 7 days
14	Rosebud RSL	60	Club	Tattersalls	10.00am - 2.00am 7 days
		190			

THE “POKIE” MACHINE INDUSTRY
ON THE SHIRE
Other Areas

Table 9

MAP REFERENCE	GENERAL AREA	NUMBER OF MACHINES	VENUE	OPERATOR	OPENING HOURS
1	Baxter Tavern Hotel Motel	30	Hotel	Tabcorp	8.00am - 1.00am 7 days
3	Dromana Hotel	41	Hotel	Tabcorp	24 hours / 7 days
4	Dromana Red Hill RSL	10	Club	Tattersalls	10.00am - 10.00pm <i>Sunday - Thursday</i> 10.00am - 12.00pm <i>Friday & Saturday</i>
7	Hotel Sorrento	20	Hotel	Tabcorp	9.00am - 1.00am <i>Monday - Saturday</i> 10.00am - 1.00am <i>Sunday</i>
15	Rye Hotel	30	Hotel	Tattersalls	8.00am - 3.00am 7 days
16	Rye RSL	105	Club	Tattersalls	10.00am - 12.00pm <i>Sunday - Wednesday</i> 10.00am - 12.30am <i>Thursday & Friday</i> 10.00am - 1.30am <i>Saturday</i>
17	Somerville Hotel	32	Hotel	Tabcorp	9.00am - 12.00pm <i>Sunday - Wednesday</i> 24 hours <i>Friday & Saturday</i>
		268			

Samples of Advertising and Photos

SECTION 7:

The Findings

The detailed data analysis outlines specific findings for each area including the cumulated responses for community members, retailers and community workers along with direct quotes and case studies to highlight specific issues.

One striking aspect of the findings is the similarities in responses across the three geographical areas as well as between the three different groups of respondents. There are also strong themes which have emerged from community members, retailers and community workers in terms of identified positive benefits, negative impacts and ways of addressing these negative impacts.

Outlining the perceptions, community concerns and suggested initiatives for change for each question across the three groups interviewed, the emerging trends and common themes will be drawn out and considered.

- **COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

A total of **184** responses were obtained from community members during the survey period. (*113-Hastings; 43-Mornington; 28-Rosebud*).

While the majority of responses were gathered during the street surveys, a smaller group of people chose to either drop their reply into the secure boxes at Council offices or post them directly to Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service, using the self-addressed reply paid envelopes obtained at the street stall.

A significantly higher number of responses were gathered in Hastings. While Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service offers services in all three areas, our main office is in Hastings and our presence is more established there.

- **RETAILERS**

A total of **47** responses were obtained from retailers during the survey period. (*15-Hastings; 23-Mornington; 9-Rosebud*).

The research assistants spent a considerable amount of time making direct contact with the retailers and either returning to collect the survey or supplying self-addressed reply paid envelopes. The active support and endorsement of the project by the Chambers of Commerce in Hastings and Mornington and the Rosebud Regional Development Council proved to be important in enlisting retailer participation.

- **COMMUNITY WORKERS**

A total of 29 workers contributed their views to this survey either by completing the questionnaire, participating in a structured telephone interview or via a group discussion.

- **VENUE OPERATORS**

The response from venue operators was limited. Although time constraints have not allowed any further extensive follow-up within the group to date, the importance of ongoing dialogue with these operators cannot be underestimated.

Data Analysis

This survey has endeavoured to include a broad range of community opinions. This is demonstrated by the profile data for community members and retailers. (*Ref to Summary Profile Data for Community Members-page 38 & Summary Profile Data for Retailers-page 46*) However, we are not claiming that the views outlined below are totally representative. It is interesting to note that many of the findings mirror those in reports commissioned by the VCGA where random sampling techniques were employed. (*Ref 4, 8, 12-page 148*)

In this section, cumulated data for each group is recorded along with selected quotes. Detailed information from community members and retailers in each locality is outlined in Appendices 1 to 6. Participants' direct quotes are also included in the Appendices.

SUMMARY OF PROFILE DATA

- COMMUNITY MEMBERS -

	HASTINGS	MORNINGTON	ROSEBUD	TOTAL
NUMBERS:	113	43	28	184

GENDER:				
• Male	25	8	10	43
• Female	69	28	16	113
• No Reply	19	7	2	28
				184

AGE RANGE:				
• <18 years		2		2
• 18-24 years	12	2	1	15
• 25-39 years	39	9	15	63
• 40-65 years	42	20	6	68
• 66+ years	14	10	6	30
• No Reply	6			6
• Other				
				184

HOUSEHOLD STATUS:				
• Single	25	10	5	40
• Single with children	11	1		12
• Couple	23	18	9	50
• Couple with children	37	11	10	58
• Widow/Widower	5	1	1	7
• No Reply	11	2	1	14
• Other	1		2	3
				184

EMPLOYMENT STATUS:				
• Full-time	11	8	10	29
• Part-time/Casual	30	12	5	47
• Looking for Work	4		1	5
• Home Duties/Mother	7			7
• Home Duties/Student	6			6
• Home Based Business	1			1
• Pensioner	7			7
• Retired	7	9	2	18
• School Student		1		1
• No Reply	24	6	2	32
• Other	16	7	8	31

HASTINGS	MORNINGTON	ROSEBUD	TOTAL
			184

HASTINGS - POSTCODE			MORNINGTON - POSTCODE			ROSEBUD - POSTCODE		
No Reply	9		No Reply	4				
			Empty	1				
3194	1	Out of Area	3170	1	Out of Area	3083	1	Out of Area
3198	2	"	3171	1	"	3095	1	"
3199	5	"	3196	1	"			
3200	1	"	3199	1	"			
3910	1		3910	1		3911	1	
3911	1		3912	1		3912	1	
3912	3		3913	1		3926	2	
3913	3		3915	1		3931	1	
3915	40		3930	1		3937	1	
3918	3		3931	20		3938	2	
3919	13		3934	6		3939	8	
3926	3		3938	1		3940	3	
3927	8		3939	1		3941	6	
3929	1		3977	1		3947	1	
3930	1							
3931	3							
3934	2							
3936	3							
3938	1							
3939	3							
3940	1							
3941	2							
3943	1							
3977	2							

OVERALL DATA ANALYSIS

- COMMUNITY MEMBERS -

Question 1: Identified positive benefits of poker machine gambling on local community.

RESPONSES	HASTINGS	MORNINGTON	ROSEBUD	TOTAL
Increased social outlets.	6	1		7
Increased entertainment options • Especially elderly and women	5	3	1	9
Improved facilities at clubs and hotels.	1	3	1	5
Increased employment opportunities in pokie venues.	4			4
Increased benefits for local sporting clubs.	1			1
Increased expenditure on Peninsula, especially from tourists.			2	2
				28

Question 2: Identified negative impacts of poker machine gambling on local community.

RESPONSES	HASTINGS	MORNINGTON	ROSEBUD	TOTAL
<u>Increased Financial Hardship</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient money to pay for food, clothing, rent other necessities and general household bills 	16	13	5	34
<u>Increased Poverty</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater reliance on emergency relief. 	10	2		12
<u>Increased Family Distress</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship difficulties Domestic violence Decreased time, attention and care paid to children 	18	9	4	31
<u>Reduced Expenditure in "Non-Essential" Areas</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hairdresser Clothing Gifts Education/training costs General recreation 	6		2	8
<u>Economic Downturn Local Retail business Other Than Pokies</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss revenue Closure of shops 	19	4	4	27
<u>Rise in Unemployment</u>	2	1		3
<u>Erosion in General Character/Health of Community</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased crime Increased vandalism Increased lies, deceit Increased aggressive behaviour Increased desperation for "big win" Reduction in pleasant social and entertainment options Negative media coverage 	12	8	5	25
				140

Question 3: Ways to address identified negative impacts of poker machine gambling on local community.

• OPTIONS	HASTINGS	MORNINGTON	ROSEBUD	Sub-Total	TOTAL
Venues:					
• Restrict hours	8	1	1	10	
• Limit number of venues	4	2		6	
• Maintain venues without machines		1		1	
• Prohibit venues in shopping centres		1		1	
• Centralise venues in city (Casino)	2			2	20
Machines:					
• Reduce machines	7	2	1	10	
• Limit number of machines	9		2	11	
• Freeze number of machines	1	2		3	
• Gradual reduction of machines		1		1	
• Remove machines	28	8	6	42	
• Remove machines from hotels	2		2	4	71
Community Education:	9	7	1	17	
• Responsible financial management					
• Increased knowledge about controlled gambling practices					
• Increased knowledge about identifying warning signs of problem gambling					
• Promoting different community attitudes, eg dangers of instant gratification, TAB ads, QUIT Campaign					
• Challenging the glamour of 'winning'					
•					
•					
•					
•					
•					

• OPTIONS	HASTINGS	MORNINGTON	ROSEBUD	Sub-Total	TOTAL
•					
•					17
Responsible Advertising:					
• Remove glamour advertising					
• Realistic ads - 'true odds of winning'	7	1	3	11	11

Question 4: Personal perceptions on whether the impacts of poker machine gambling on the local community have been more positive or more negative.

<i>RESPONSES</i>	<i>HASTINGS</i>	<i>MORNINGTON</i>	<i>ROSEBUD</i>	<i>SUB-TOTAL</i>	<i>%</i>
More Positive	21	3	1	25	13.5%
More Negative	86	32	23	141	76.5%
No Reply	6	2	2	10	5.5%
Other		6	2	8	4.5%
TOTAL	113	43	28	184	100%

Question 5: Knowledge of support services in the Mornington Peninsula Shire for people experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

<i>RESPONSES</i>	<i>HASTINGS</i>	<i>MORNINGTON</i>	<i>ROSEBUD</i>	<i>SUB-TOTAL</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	25	8	4	37	20%
No	77	33	23	133	72.5%
No Reply	10	2	1	13	7%
Other	1			1	0.5%
TOTAL	113	43	28	184	100%

Question 6: Impressions about the current number of poker machines located within the Mornington Peninsula Shire.

<i>RESPONSES</i>	<i>HASTINGS</i>	<i>MORNINGTON</i>	<i>ROSEBUD</i>	<i>SUB-TOTAL</i>	<i>%</i>
Too Many	98	36	19	153	83.5%
Enough	10	3	9	22	12%
Not Enough		1		1	0.5%
No Reply	3	1		4	2%
Other	2	2		4	2%
TOTAL	113	43	28	184	100%

Question 7: Personal knowledge of a person/persons experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

<i>RESPONSES</i>	<i>HASTINGS</i>	<i>MORNINGTON</i>	<i>ROSEBUD</i>	<i>SUB-TOTAL</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	74	22	17	113	62%
No	34	18	10	62	33%
No Reply	5	3	1	9	5%
Other					
TOTAL	113	43	28	184	100%

(A) Number of people known to respondent to have difficulties with poker machine gambling.
With the "YES" replies (113)

<i>RESPONSES</i>	<i>HASTINGS</i>	<i>MORNINGTON</i>	<i>ROSEBUD</i>	<i>SUB-TOTAL</i>	<i>%</i>
One Person	30	9	5	44	39%
More Than One	38	13	11	62	55%
No Reply	6		1	7	6%
Other					
TOTAL	74	22	17	113	100%

(A) How respondent knows this person/persons.
With the "YES" replies (113)

<i>RESPONSES</i>	<i>HASTINGS</i>	<i>MORNINGTON</i>	<i>ROSEBUD</i>	<i>SUB-TOTAL</i>	<i>%</i>
Through Work	6	3	1	10	9%
Through Personal Life	56	17	14	87	77%
Through work & Personal Life	8	2	2	12	11%
No Reply	4		1	4	3%
Other					
TOTAL	74	22	17	113	100%

SUMMARY OF PROFILE DATA **- RETAILERS -**

	HASTINGS	MORNINGTON	ROSEBUD	TOTAL
NUMBERS:	15	23	9	47

GENDER:				
• Male	3	10	6	19
• Female	10	8	2	20
• No Reply	2	5	1	8
				47

AGE RANGE:				
• 18-24 years	2	2	1	5
• 25-39 years	5	9	2	16
• 40-65 years	7	12	5	24
• 66+ years				
• No Reply	1		1	2
• Other				
				47

HOUSEHOLD STATUS:				
• Single	2	4	1	7
• Single with children		1		1
• Couple	5	8	2	15
• Couple with children	6	10	4	20
• Widow/Widower				
• No Reply	1		1	2
• Other	1		1	2
				47

EMPLOYMENT STATUS:				
• Full-time	11	21	8	40
• Part-time/Casual	2	1		3
• No Reply	2	1	1	4
				47

HASTINGS - POSTCODE		MORNINGTON - POSTCODE		ROSEBUD - POSTCODE	
No Reply	1	No Reply	1	No Reply	1
3197	1 (Outside area)	3198	1 (Outside area)	3199	1 (Outside area)
3199	1 "	3199	1 "	3931	1
3912	1	3913	1	3938	1
3915	7	3918	1	3939	5
3918	3	3926	1		
3934	1	3930	3		

	3931	13	
	3934	1	

OVERALL DATA ANALYSIS

- RETAILERS -

Question 1 - 2: Location, nature of retail outlet and length of time in business.

Overall survey responses were obtained from **47** retailers (*15 Hastings, 23 Mornington and 9 Rosebud*) working in a broad range of small businesses.

While a small number had only been in the retail industry for less than two years, more than two-thirds had been in their current business since the introduction of pokies into the area. Three-quarters of the respondents had been in business overall for more than five years.

Table 10

CURRENT BUSINESS	HASTINGS	MORNINGTON	ROSEBUD	TOTAL
<6 months	1			1
1-2 years	6	4	1	11
3 -5 years	2	6	2	10
5-10 years	3	9		12
10-15 years	1	1	2	4
15-20 years		1		1
20+ years	1	2	2	5
30-35 years	1		2	3
35+ years				
No reply				
Other				
TOTAL	15	23	9	47

OVERALL TIME IN BUSINESS	HASTINGS	MORNINGTON	ROSEBUD	TOTAL
<6 months	1			1
1-2 years	1	1	1	3
3 -5 years	2	1	2	5
5-10 years	2	10		12
10-15 years		2	1	3
15-20 years	4	2		6
20+ years	3	4	2	8
30-35 years	3	2	3	8
35+ years		1		1
No reply				
Other				
TOTAL	15	23	9	47

Question 4 and 7: Identified positive benefits of poker machine gambling on business and local community.

<i>RESPONSES</i>	<i>HASTINGS</i>		<i>MORNINGTON</i>		<i>ROSEBUD</i>		<i>TOTAL</i>		
	Business	Local Community	Business	Local Community	Business	Local Community	Business	Local Community	Grand Total
Increased social outlets						1		1	1
Increased entertainment options • Especially elderly and women									
Improved facilities at clubs and hotels						3		3	3
Increased employment opportunities in pokie venues		2				1		3	3
Increased benefits for local sporting clubs		1						1	1
Increased expenditure on Peninsula, especially from tourists									
Improved sales to wholesale outlets with pokie machines	1						1		1
									9

Question 5 and 8: Identified negative impacts of poker machine gambling on business and local community.

<i>RESPONSES</i>	<i>HASTINGS</i>		<i>MORNINGTON</i>		<i>ROSEBUD</i>		<i>TOTAL</i>		
	Business	Local Community	Business	Local Community	Business	Local Community	Business	Local Community	Grand Total
<u>Increased Financial Hardship</u> Insufficient money to pay for food, clothing, rent other necessities and general household bills		2	5		1		6	2	8
<u>Increased Poverty</u> Greater reliance on emergency relief.		1		2		1		4	4
<u>Increased Family Distress</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship difficulties • Domestic violence • Decreased time, attention and care paid to children • Increased arguing over money spent on gambling 		2		2		2		6	6
<u>Reduced Expenditure in General Shopping</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less in essentials • Less on small items • Less impulse buying • Less on 'luxuries' • Less on home improvements, repairs • Reduced shopping tours (via buses) • Reduced expenditure on courses, education programs, hobbies & such 	4	5	4		4	3	12	8	20

RESPONSES	HASTINGS		MORNINGTON		ROSEBUD		TOTAL		
	Business	Local Community	Business	Local Community	Business	Local Community	Business	Local Community	Grand Total
<u>Economic Downturn Local Retail Business Other Than Pokies</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss revenue • Increased number of lay-by defaults/cancelled • Increased number of goods returned for cash • Increased ability to pay off loans • Businesses without pokies losing money 	6	2	6	3	1	1	13	6	19
<u>Erosion in General Character/Health of Community</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased crime • Increased vandalism • Increased lies, deceit • Increased aggressive behaviour • Increased desperation for 'big win' • Reduction in pleasant social and entertainment options • Increased apathy about gambling losses • Voluntary tax on poor 		1	5	2	1	4	6	7	13

Question 6 and 9: Ways to address negative impacts of poker machine gambling on business and local community.

<i>RESPONSES</i>	<i>HASTINGS</i>		<i>MORNINGTON</i>		<i>ROSEBUD</i>		<i>TOTAL</i>		
	Business	Local Community	Business	Local Community	Business	Local Community	Business	Local Community	Grand Total
Venues:									
• Restrict hours	1	2	3	6	1	2	5	10	15
• Limit number of venues with pokies				1				1	1
• Maintain venues without machines									
• Prohibit venues in shopping centres									
• Centralise venues in city (Casino)	1		1				2		2
• Adopt Harm Minimisation approach in venues				1				1	1
• Ban people under 25 years				1				1	1
• Reintroduce music bands in venues				1				1	1
									21
Machines:									
• Reduce hours			2	5	1	2	3	7	10
• Freeze number of machines				2	1	1	1	3	4
• Gradual reduction of machines					1		1		1
• Remove machines	1	1	4	2	1		6	3	9
• Confine machines to sporting clubs				2		2		4	4
• Remove machines from hotels			2	1		1	2	2	4
									32
Community Education:									
• Responsible financial management		3		4				7	7
• Increased knowledge about controlled gambling activities									
• Increased knowledge about dangers of gambling and the 'real odds'	2		1				3		3
• Greater public concentration on healthy lifestyle, exercise, diet and life skills		1		1				2	2
									12

RESPONSES	HASTINGS		MORNINGTON		ROSEBUD		TOTAL		
	Business	Local Community	Business	Local Community	Business	Local Community	Business	Local Community	Grand Total
Responsible Advertising:									
• Actual case studies portraying the real issues and impacts involved with gambling		1		2				3	3
• Greater warnings about gambling on machines				1				1	1
• Stop glamour advertising and advertise the 'real odds'	3				1		4		4
									8
Counselling/Support:									
• Increased counselling services		2		1				3	3
• Gov acknowledge importance of charitable organisations & provide more support				1				1	1
									4
Other:									
• Increase service/security in retail businesses					1		1		1
• Nothing negative			1				1		1
• Pokies not such a big problem - poor business management is the real issue									
• Don't know	1			1			1	1	2
									4

Question 10: Personal perceptions about whether the impacts of poker machine gambling on local community has been more positive or more negative.

RESPONSES	HASTINGS	MORNINGTON	ROSEBUD	TOTAL	%
More Positive	1	1		2	4%
More Negative	11	17	7	35	75%
No Reply	1	3	1	5	10.5%
Other	2	2	1	5	10.5%
TOTAL	15	23	9	47	100%

Question 11: Knowledge of support services in Mornington Peninsula for people experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

RESPONSES	HASTINGS	MORNINGTON	ROSEBUD	TOTAL	%
Yes	1	5		6	12.6%
No	13	17	8	38	81%
No Reply	1	1	1	3	6.4%
Other					
TOTAL	15	23	9	47	100%

Question 12: Impressions of current numbers of poker machines located within the Shire.

RESPONSES	HASTINGS	MORNINGTON	ROSEBUD	TOTAL	%
Too Many	13	16	8	37	79%
Enough	1	6		7	15%
Not Enough					
No Reply	1		1	2	4%
Other		1		1	2%
TOTAL	15	23	9	47	100%

Question 13: Personal knowledge of a person/persons experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

<i>RESPONSES</i>	<i>HASTINGS</i>	<i>MORNINGTON</i>	<i>ROSEBUD</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	12	11	3	26	55.5%
No	3	12	4	19	40.5%
No Reply			2	2	4%
Other					
TOTAL	15	23	9	47	100%

(65) Number of people known to respondent to have difficulties with poker machine gambling.
With the "YES" replies (26)

<i>RESPONSES</i>	<i>HASTINGS</i>	<i>MORNINGTON</i>	<i>ROSEBUD</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>%</i>
One Person	4	4	1	9	34.5%
More Than One	8	7	2	17	65.5%
No Reply					
Other					
TOTAL	12	11	3	26	100%

(B) How respondent knows this person/persons.
With the "YES" replies (26)

<i>RESPONSES</i>	<i>HASTINGS</i>	<i>MORNINGTON</i>	<i>ROSEBUD</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>%</i>
Through Work	4	6	2	12	46%
Through Personal Life	5	2	1	8	31%
Through work & Personal Life	3	1		4	15.5%
No Reply		2		2	7.5%
Other					
TOTAL	12	11	3	26	100%

CASE STUDIES

Community Members and Retailers

- A woman aged 18-24 years, married with children explained that she found it difficult to answer the questions from a community point of view, as the impact on a personal level of her husband's poker machine gambling activities has been so devastating on her family. Her husband's gambling activities caused him to lose his employment after 10 years. He also received a criminal conviction. His activities caused great emotional and financial hardship on the family.
- A married woman with children aged 25-39 years, who worked part-time experienced a whole range of personal, emotional and social problems associated with gambling. Her marriage broke down and their business went bankrupt.
- A 25-39 year old man lost his job, his house and his wife because of gambling problems.
- A married woman aged 25-39 years, spent long periods of time away from home playing poker machines, causing considerable neglect of her children and her home. It also caused significant financial difficulties.
- A single woman (40-65 years) with a child, who works part-time/casual kept gambling because she thought she would win the "big one". After she lost all her money she felt sorry, but still felt the urge to go back. All her bills piled up and she felt suicidal.
- A married woman (40-65 years), with a business gambled her business, home and all her savings.
- A woman aged 40-65 years, who is a student with a partner suffered severe problems because of her addiction to gambling.
- A woman aged 40-65 years was unable to walk past a poker machine venue without entering it. She gambled large amounts of money regularly. As a result her relationship was "in tatters". She did seek local support when the difficulties reached crisis point.
- A single woman aged 40-65 years with a child who works part-time found herself having to borrow and beg for money for gambling. She also lied to family and friends. She only had money for the basics of life - this meant she and her child were denied treats. This led to low self-esteem, depression and near despair.

- A retired couple aged 40-65 years, spent all their savings on poker machine gambling. While experiencing marriage problems they also lost friends through lying and compounding excuses for non-payment of loans, unfulfilled promises and such. They have worked hard to sort themselves out, but the “costs” have been significant.
- A retired woman in the 40-65 age group who is a widow won \$10,000 on the ‘pokies’. She then put it all back into the machines in an attempt to win it back again. She became financially reckless and socially withdrawn. She experienced sleep pattern disturbances. Her employment status became unstable. She developed credit problems, mortgage problems and partnership problems.
- A married man with children aged 40-65 years, spent more money than he could afford on gambling. As a consequence, he had to sell his house to clear his debts. It is unclear if his marriage finished because of poker machines or if, in fact, the time he spent gambling reflected an unhappy marriage in the first place.
- A retired couple lost their house and now live in a caravan park. They still play poker machines.
- An older woman in the 66+ age group lost everything because of her gambling activities.

OVERALL DATA ANALYSIS

- COMMUNITY WORKERS -

Twenty-nine community workers involved in a range of counselling and support services across the Peninsula (in community organisations, education facilities and government departments) participated in this survey.

These workers also provided case studies of people known to them through their work who have experienced difficulties because of poker machine gambling.

Types of Services offered by workers who participated include:

Emergency relief, crisis work, information and support, community house programs, drug and alcohol counselling, gambling counselling, family counselling, financial counselling, student welfare services, social work counselling and support, youth support and counselling, consumer support services and community development programs.

Question 4:

Identified changes in demand for services since the introduction of poker machine gambling.

- Increase in referrals to social work service for clients experiencing financial hardship. (Centrelink Social Worker)
- Demand for services always heavy, but also increasing.
- Increase in presentations with people experiencing marital and financial difficulties related to gambling.
- Less people coming to community house and doing courses. Less money to attend programs. Drop in numbers of adult participants. Young people commenting to community house co-ordinators that their parents have gambling issues.
- Dramatic increase in need, but can't directly attribute this to gambling alone.
- Gambling services grown over past few years, with more than double the staff.
- Demand for services increasing - often the issues people are presenting with are strongly connected to gambling.
- Increased number of people presenting with emotional and financial crisis.
- Greater demand for childcare at concessional rate.
- Stretching limited resources along with increased stress for workers and clients.
- Increased requests for emergency relief assistance - some clients disclose difficulties with gambling.
- High unemployment/economic instability major cause of increased demand for services. Gambling often gets mixed up within broader concerns facing this group. Very limited employment options for young people and women returning to work force and 50+ group.
- Increased demand for "free meals", food vouchers and other material aid - especially sole parents with young children and young people (many less than 25 years).

Question 6:

Proportion of people seeking assistance from community services with poker machine gambling related issues.

General comments included:

- People often don't disclose gambling difficulties (3 replies) - stigma, embarrassment, denial.
- 5% of clients are in counselling services (2 replies).
- Still a low percentage of the overall client base.
- Hard to put figure on it - more people are disclosing they have gambling related issues.
- Not specifically aware - believe some parents use occasional care when they gamble.
- Only anecdotal evidence such as young people disclosing their parent has a gambling issue.
- 70-80% of people seeking assistance from Breakeven are electronic gambling machine users (follows Statewide trend).

Particular comments included:

- An increase in the number of people presenting with emotional trauma and family breakdown where gambling issues are involved, however staff and clients are still reluctant to "name" gambling - still a sensitive issue, which causes considerable embarrassment for clients and workers.
- An increased number of people have gambling related issues but this is not always initially apparent. It may take a considerable time for a person to be able to speak about their gambling related issues. Usually gambling is part of a range of inter-related concerns for families with a statutory involvement with Department of Human Services.
- Advertising presents playing the pokies as a possible way of changing people's lives. The advertising engenders the sense that there is a real chance to win.
- An increasing number of people on low incomes who have a very limited capacity to change their circumstances, play the pokies. It provides a sense of "hope" for a way out of these desperate circumstances.

Question 9:

The extent to which people who are experiencing difficulties related to poker machine gambling are seeking assistance from support services.

- The numbers of people seeking support from specialist gambling services on the Peninsula is increasing, although workers acknowledge, "it has taken time to establish regular clientele."
- Other community workers reported a continuing reluctance by people to disclose gambling difficulties on seeking support from community organisations, offering general support, counselling and material aid.
- Some workers reported that the advertising targeting people with gambling difficulties was having a positive impact on people feeling more comfortable about disclosing gambling issues.
- Denial of gambling issues is also common.
"Some people do not feel they have a problem. People justify their gambling as normal."
- There is also an increasing tendency to disclose gambling related issues as the person's financial situation becomes desperate.
"It may take several visits to a financial counsellor on separate occasions for the person to disclose gambling related issues."
"Gambling issues often emerge as the relationship with the counsellor develops."

Question 10:

Identify gaps in services for people experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

- A lack of services to support people experiencing dual difficulties such as substance abuse and gambling.
- A lack of immediate counselling support for those seeking help.
- Worker education - agencies can still be judgemental with gambling problems.
- Community education - a lack of programs which promote the symptoms of problem gambling, to encourage people to seek help.
- A lack of support services for young people (including information) whose parents have gambling issues.
- Insufficient community education/information/counselling across the Shire. Takes time for services to become established.
- A lack of recognition that it takes time for people to feel comfortable about seeking assistance.
- Clients have the perception that services offering support/counselling for people with gambling difficulties will force them to stop gambling rather than assisting them to limit/control their gambling activities.

- A lack of diversity in the support programs for people wanting to review practices.

Question 7 and 11:

Identified positive benefits from poker machine gambling on clients/families/local community.

Responses:	Clients and Families	YES	9	24%
		NO	20	69%
		NO REPLY	1	3.5%
		OTHER	1	3.5%
	Local Community	YES	7	24%
		NO	19	65.5%
		NO REPLY	2	7%
		OTHER	1	3.5%

WIDER RANGE OF SOCIAL OUTLETS:

- Increased opportunity for social contact for those who are able to maintain control.
- Generally safe place for women to go to.
- Opportunity for lonely people to socialise.
- Availability of a welcoming, comfortable venue, perceived as safe by women.
- Increased opportunity to socialise and to get out of the house, especially for young people.
- Increased socialisation opportunities for isolated people, especially women.

UPGRADED ENTERTAINMENT FACILITIES:

- Improvement in facilities (hotels/clubs).
 - Hotels were very run down prior to emergence of pokies.
 - Quality, cheap meals offered.
 - Whole range of incentives.
 - Target specific groups such as elderly.

CLUBS SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY:

- Financial benefits to clubs which in turn support other local ventures.
- Community development projects with ‘pokie’ money, affordable club membership for local children and young people.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS:

- Shops like Cash Converters, other secondhand shops doing well and others directly involved with industry.

INCREASED ENTERTAINMENT OPTIONS:

- Increased entertainment/socialising options for people on low incomes.
- An increase in the number of places people can go with small amounts of money.
- Enticements and welcoming atmosphere make the venues a pleasant place for people to go which is unusual occurrence for people with limited resources. Often they feel “unwanted”. In contrast, the venues welcome them with open arms.

Question 8 and 12:

Identified negative benefits from poker machine gambling on clients/families/local community.

The majority of workers recorded a range of negative impacts on both the people they work with and the wider community. Their comments could also be grouped in similar categories to those delineated from the community members and retailers surveys.

INCREASED FINANCIAL HARDSHIP:

- Financial issues - people find it hard to manage financially. They are unable to pay bills and provide food for the family.
- Increased financial problems, when substance abuse is being replaced by gambling.
- Low income people, especially the young, sole parents, elderly and unemployed are being enticed into the “local icon” (the RSL club) in the guise of entertainment, fun, family place and in the environs of a club that cares for the community. As a consequence people can't pay rent, the elderly don't buy their medicines and increased numbers of people seek material assistance.
- Increased poor financial management and poor home environment.

INCREASED POVERTY:

- Increased usage of secondhand and pawnshops to get money for gambling.
- Increased number of people seeking material assistance.
- Increased demand for free meals especially amongst young people and young single parents.
- Children going without because of parents' problems.
- Impact on children's education - parents unable to pay for books, uniforms, excursions. Parents may be uncontactable during the day.

INCREASED FAMILY DISTRESS:

- More clients (both male and female) with debt and relationship problems.
- More clients presenting with dual problems (substance abuse and gambling).
- Increases in number of people with multiple issues - snowball effect: financial strain, children suffering, relationship difficulties, domestic violence and homelessness.
- People seek social contact, entertainment option, but get into difficulties.
- Elevated personal and family distress:
 - elevated suicidal ideation/attempts
 - high levels depression, anxiety
 - high levels financial problems
 - conflict with families.
- Increasing family distress - people are depressed and experience anxious to angry behaviour. Often there are strong connections between people's gambling behaviour and other family issues.

- Small number of young people leaving home because of parents' gambling habit.

REDUCED EXPENDITURE IN PARTICULAR AREAS:

- Fewer people doing things (such as courses) to benefit themselves such as hobby classes, structured learning.
- Harder to get people to pay for classes. Always chasing people for money.
- Loss of fundraising opportunities for community groups, eg bingo events can't compete with 'pokies'.

ECONOMIC DOWNTURN FOR LOCAL RETAIL BUSINESSES OTHER THAN 'POKIES':

- Significant retail changes - shops closing locally, too many junk shops and lack of money to spend in shops.
- Increased number of businesses in trouble.

EROSION IN GENERAL CHARACTER AND HEALTH OF COMMUNITY:

- (Pokies are) changing the ambience of the community.
- Too many machines in the community; the most vulnerable are attracted to these machines.
- Gambling difficulties are becoming more apparent amongst young people. Gambling is still viewed as "unacceptable". There is a great reluctance to disclose, whereas people openly talk about heroin use and other drugs.
- People on low incomes often feel alienated and unaccepted in the community. 'Pokie' venues are welcoming and accepting and people only need small amounts of money to start playing.
- (Pokies have) devalued society.
- The government is morally wrong in what they're doing in the promotion of gambling.
- The introduction of poker machine gambling with so little regard to the consequences is deplorable.
- The impacts of other forms of gambling should be acknowledged, eg TAB.
- Surprised at willingness of people to travel regularly to the Casino in the light of the distance to Melbourne and transport difficulties.
- Advertising gives people a false sense of hope that they could win enough money to provide themselves and family with house/car/land/clothing/good education for children. The glamour of "the win" creates "false impressions" which leads people to risk their limited resources. People are usually left in a more distressed situation.
- Gambling is taking over people's lives.
- Pokies are undermining society.

Question 13:

Ways of addressing the negative impacts of poker machine gambling.

MACHINES:

- Reduce the number of machines with a view to getting rid of them.
- Remove poker machines.

EDUCATION:

- Introduce more programs regarding addictive behaviour, self-esteem and problem solving.
- Increase the range of education workshops highlighting the warning signs in regard to problem gambling and strategies to encourage responsible gambling.

ADVERTISING:

- Encourage people that it's all right to seek assistance from G-Line and other services if they are experiencing difficulties with gambling.
- Responsible advertising:
 - currently people facing constant hardship are drawn to flashy adverts with emphasis on winning.
 - currently advertising plays on people's weaknesses in same way as the fashion and make-up industries do.
- Ban seductive advertising.
- Advertise to heighten community awareness about the signs of problem gambling - hotels to provide Helpline cards.

PROGRAMS:

- Cognitive therapy in relation to depression and guilt associated with gambling difficulties.
- Greater access for young people whose parents are gambling.
- Continual promotion of the availability of gambling counselling.
- Worker training
 - awareness of gambling related issues;
 - Ways of working in a holistic way with people seeking assistance.

RESEARCH:

- More extensive research program - areas not being addressed such as venue and machine characteristics.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:

- Increased range of affordable entertainment/recreational options for people:
 - Need to generate community interest
 - Avoid “welfare” mentality
 - Reinforce importance of belonging to a community/participation/value of gardening/crafts/sewing etc.
- Greater emphasis on community development in the local area.
- Greater local control on pokie industry - legislation, placement, numbers etc.
- Greater involvement by Council in co-operation with community workers and members in addressing issues.

POKER MACHINE TAXES (COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUND):

- Community Support Fund (CSF) revenue should be distributed to community groups suffering loss of traditional fundraising sources.

REGULATION IN GAMING INDUSTRY:

- Encourage harm minimisation practices in regards to gambling generally (along similar lines to public campaigns warning against the dangers of smoking and of driving a vehicle after drinking alcohol.)

CASE STUDIES

Community Workers

- This woman started gambling because of tensions in her marriage including her husband's drinking. She has been playing poker machines for a couple of years, financed by her wages (full-time worker) and credit cards. Her gambling activities partly contributed to her marriage breakdown. She now lives alone with her children. She has attended Breakeven gambling counselling and after many ups and downs now feels she will get on top of the problem. A friend is currently helping her to manage her money.
- This case study provides the picture faced by many vulnerable families living on the pension who are hoping for a quick cash fix. Prior to playing the 'pokies', bingo was the main recreational activity for this woman who is married with children. She has been playing the 'pokies' for at least two years. Her main reason for starting to play was related to her belief that she would obtain extra money. However, over months she faced increasing debts, constantly being without money for food and bills causing considerable hardship for her children and other tensions within the home. Prior to seeking counselling she denied that she had any difficulties with her gambling activities.
- Before this man, who is married with children, started to play 'the pokies', as a fun thing, he participated in athletics and football as his main recreational activities. He used housekeeping money to finance his playing, which caused considerable arguments over money with his wife and strained family relationships over a two year period. He sought help from Gamblers Anonymous to deal with his gambling addiction.
- This woman seeking financial assistance is facing increasing poverty because of her gambling activities. While she has been spending increasing sums of money during the past year, she is not able to openly declare that she is experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling. Her defacto partner is very unhappy with her gambling behaviour and the relationship is under intense strain. Her financial resources are dwindling quickly because of her gambling activities.
- This man, who has experienced difficulties with controlling his alcohol consumption and other substance abuse, has replaced his drinking with poker machine gambling. The 'pokie' venue provides an opportunity for "time out" and social contact without using alcohol or other substances. Other family members also use the 'pokies'. His gambling activities are being financed through prostitution. He has been playing for the past year or so. He has not directly sought assistance for his gambling activities because he sees gambling as positive in comparison to other substance abuse. The 'pokies' are seen as a real alternative to other substance abuse.
- This woman, whose husband is an itinerant worker, started gambling several years ago as a recreational activity and because of a desire "to win". She is currently looking for work. She has financed her gambling activities through the housekeeping. She does not acknowledge that she has a problem with gambling. Her children have been left at home unsupervised while she is gambling. Considerable tensions exist between she and her husband because of her gambling activities. She has sought support for personal and relationship issues. While she has been able to not play 'the pokies' for short periods of time, she keeps returning to the venues.

The Venue Operators

The figures published by the two licensees, Tabcorp and Tattersalls, in regards to average turnover on machines and the payback/take ratio amounts along with specific comments from operators, reveal the extent to which the ‘pokie’ industry has bitten into the local community.

- **THE “TAKE”**

According to figures published by Tabcorp and Tattersalls, the average weekly turnover per machine in venues ranges from **\$10,000** for clubs to **\$15,000** for hotels.

This translates into an average weekly turnover of **\$200,000** for a club with 20 machines, rising to **\$500,000** for a club with 50 machines and **\$1,050,000** for a club with the maximum rate of 105 machines.

Average weekly turnover in a hotel for each respective number of machines translates into **\$300,000** (20 machines), **\$750,000** (50 machines) and **\$1,575,000** (105 machines).

While the minimum payout ratio has been set at **87%**, competitive pressures within the industry have meant that the average payout figure is around **91%**.

Within the last financial year, the “take” in one local area on the Peninsula was estimated at \$12 million: *\$4 million to government taxes, \$4 million to the licensees and \$4 million to the operators.*

- **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

While there has been an increase in local employment at many of the ‘pokie’ venues, it was acknowledged that a comparable decline in other employment opportunities in the local service/retail industry might have occurred.

It was also acknowledged that while some retail businesses have experienced an increase in revenue from the ‘pokie’ venues by way of bulk food orders they may have concurrently experienced a marked decline in their general business.

- **DIRECT BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

The money put back into the community by clubs has enabled community initiatives, previously unattended to by Council, despite ongoing requests, to be fulfilled. However there was the acknowledgment that the ability to fund such initiatives may be at the cost of individual/family hardship.

- **DISTRIBUTION OF MACHINES**

According to current Ministerial Directions under the Gaming Machine Control Act (1991), a 50:50 ratio must operate in regard to distribution of machines in hotels and clubs. As with the cap on machines, this ratio is subject to regular government reviews. Clubs appear anxious to maintain this ratio. Apart from shoring up a place for clubs in the ‘pokie’ industry, the 50:50 ratio acts as a protective mechanism against the unrelenting drive for profit by the hotels.

- **OPENING HOURS**

Opening hours vary across all the venues on the Peninsula. (*Ref Tables 6-9, pages 35, 36, 37, 38*) There is clearly an increasing trend to longer hours, with a growing number of hotel venues open 24 hours a day.

While many clubs appear to be resisting the pressure from within the industry to extend their opening hours, in reality they face the constant pressure to increase their hours to maintain their competitiveness.

SECTION 8:

Limitations of Research

'Pokie' venues across the Shire are well patronised. Upgraded facilities, cheap quality meals, increased opportunities for social contact in safe and friendly venues along with the community benefits flowing from money put back into the community by the clubs, have been highlighted as benefits even by those residents who would prefer to see all the machines removed.

This survey has endeavoured to canvas the views of a broad cross-section of the community (including community members, retailers, community workers and venue operators). However we are not claiming that the views expressed are *either exhaustive or conclusive*. In fact, many people whose views were sought during the street surveys and in the questionnaire mail-outs chose not to participate for a variety of reasons.

What this research shows, is that there is a growing number of residents and people working in the area who have been prepared to register their concerns on behalf of themselves and in the light of the impacts they perceive in their community.

In other words, the information gathered from the community provides a *clear indication* of the types of concerns that people have regarding the impacts of poker machines on individuals, families, the retail sector and the community sector along with a range of strategies for addressing these issues.

This research is seen as a first step in an ongoing process of raising community awareness, channelling community concerns, seeking support for the action plan emanating from the research and encouraging participation in building a stronger more vibrant community.

The nature of the concerns raised in this survey will demand the combined efforts of all sections of the community if they are to be satisfactorily addressed.

SECTION 9:

Key Emerging Themes

1. Identified positive benefits of poker machine gambling on the local community.

- **COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

From the **184** community member respondents, 28 responses detailed positive social and economic benefits from the introduction of poker machine gambling on the Peninsula.

These benefits ranged from the provision of increased social outlets and entertainment options, especially for women and the elderly through to improved facilities at clubs and hotels, increased employment, a growth in benefits for local sporting clubs and increased expenditure on the Peninsula, especially from tourists.

- **RETAILERS**

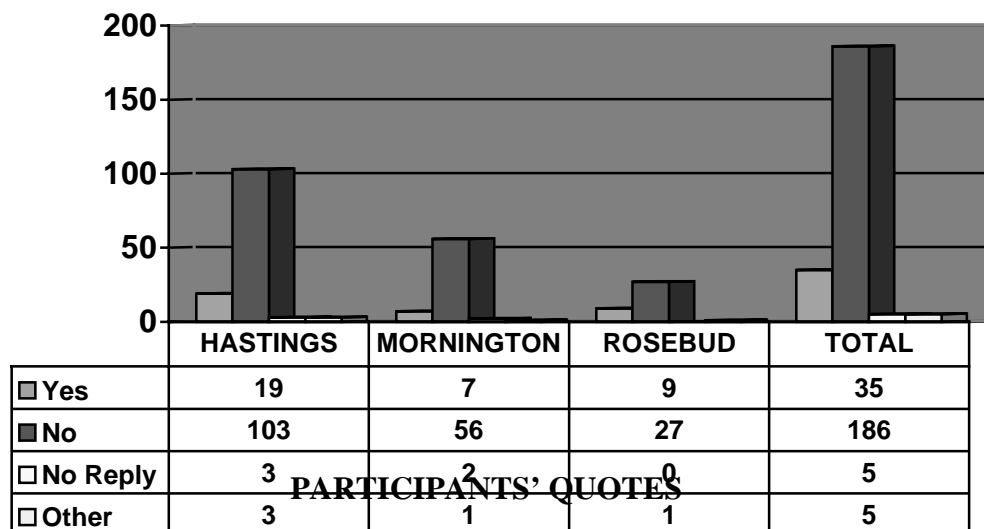
The only positive benefit from the introduction of poker machine gambling to local businesses recorded by retailers was the improved sales to wholesale outlets with poker machines. However, while the ‘pokies’ may have created a positive flow on effect to particular retailers, such benefits have in turn been countered by a simultaneous downturn in general business.

Positive benefits to the local community detailed by retailers paralleled those recorded by community members, although they emphasised the economic benefits of improved facilities at clubs and hotels, increased employment and benefits for sporting clubs. Venue operators also endorsed these points.

- **COMMUNITY WORKERS**

Community workers also highlighted a similar range of benefits with a particular emphasis on the social impacts. For people with limited resources, the ‘pokies’ present themselves as welcoming, comfortable and safe, especially for women and the elderly. Several workers also highlighted the community service aspect of local clubs offering affordable sporting memberships to local children and young people along with upgraded facilities.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS and RETAILERS - (Total 231)



- *Socially, pokie venues are generally non-threatening places where women feel comfortable on their own or not and also older people. My belief is (that) on a positive note, they fill an entertainment void for a particular group of people and certainly can be a cheap day out when properly used.*
- *(Pokies) are there, open to have coffee in long after other places/restaurants shut. (The) company of other people (along with) conveniences that are clean and available (make the pokie venues) very pleasant services, (and) comfortable to sit in.*
- *Enticements and (a) welcoming atmosphere make the venues a pleasant place for people to go, which is an unusual occurrence for people with limited resources, (who) often feel “unwanted”.*
- *In contrast, the (pokie) venues welcome them with open arms.*
- *Financial benefits to clubs, which in turn supports other ventures.*
- *Community development projects with ‘pokie’ money, (such as) affordable club membership for local children and young people.*

2. Identified negative impacts of poker machine gambling on the local community.

Despite the range of positive benefits detailed by each group of respondents, the social and economic impacts on individuals, families, businesses and the local community were overwhelmingly negative in character. These negative impacts can be summarised under six consistent themes. While these can be divided into separate social and economic impacts, they are inter-related and have compounding effects.

These impacts can be outlined as:

- Negative social impacts: increased financial hardship; increased poverty and increased family distress.
- Negative economic impacts: reduced expenditure on “non-essential” areas and economic downturn in local retail businesses other than the pokies.
- Overall negative impacts: erosion in the general character and health of the community.

QUOTES

Increased financial hardship:

- *People seek social contact (and) an entertainment option, but they get into financial difficulties.*
- *Those families who are struggling tend to look for a way to increase their chances of living better so will go to the pokies with a hope of increasing their income.*
- *Low income people, especially the young, sole parents, the elderly and the unemployed are being enticed into the “local icon” in the guise of entertainment, fun, a family place in the environs of a club that cares for the community. As a consequence, people can’t pay the rent, the elderly don’t buy their medicines and increased numbers of people seek material assistance.*
- *People spend money they don’t have in the hope of that big windfall.*

Increased poverty:

- *Many people living in poverty are using the last of their money on poker machines in the hope of a win. They are desperate and can least afford it.*
- *(Because of gambling losses) people are more reliant on churches (for) welfare help and more food is needed for distribution to families.*
- *Families, particularly children, are suffering for lack of food, clothes and quality time spent together in the family.*
- *I’ve seen so many people with no money till (their) next pay day, because as soon as they get paid they go to the pokies - children and families are missing out on any extras.*
- *Increased usage of secondhand and pawnshops to get money for gambling.*

Increased family distress:

- *People now spend their time with (poker) machines which they would have usually spent socially with family and friends.*
- *(Pokies) are open all hours. (They) draw people away from other responsibilities and work.*
- *(There is an) increase in the number of people with multiple issues - there is a snowball effect: financial strain, relationship difficulties, domestic violence, children suffering, homelessness.*
- *People experiencing difficulties with gambling often feel depressed and experience anxious to angry behaviour. There are strong connections between people's gambling behaviour and other family issues.*
- *Children suffer because parents are unable to pay for books, uniforms (and) excursions. Parents may be uncontactable during the day.*
- *More young children are roaming the streets without parents.*

Reduced expenditure on "non-essential" goods:

- *(Money spent on pokies) is affecting local businesses adversely because people have less disposable income to spend at hairdressers (and such).*
- *(There is) a transference of money away from productivities or enterprises.*
- *Fewer people (are) doing things, such as courses, to benefit themselves such as hobby classes, structured learning.*

Economic downturn in local businesses other than pokie venues:

- *(There have been) significant retail changes - shops closing locally, too many junk shops and there is a lack of money to spend in shops.*
- *I am a business owner and had to close down due to decreased spending in the township.*
- *There are too many empty shops and the employment created by the 'pokies' is only casual and not permanent.*
- *People waste their money on poker machines instead of looking after themselves and supporting local businesses.*

Erosion in the character and general health of the community:

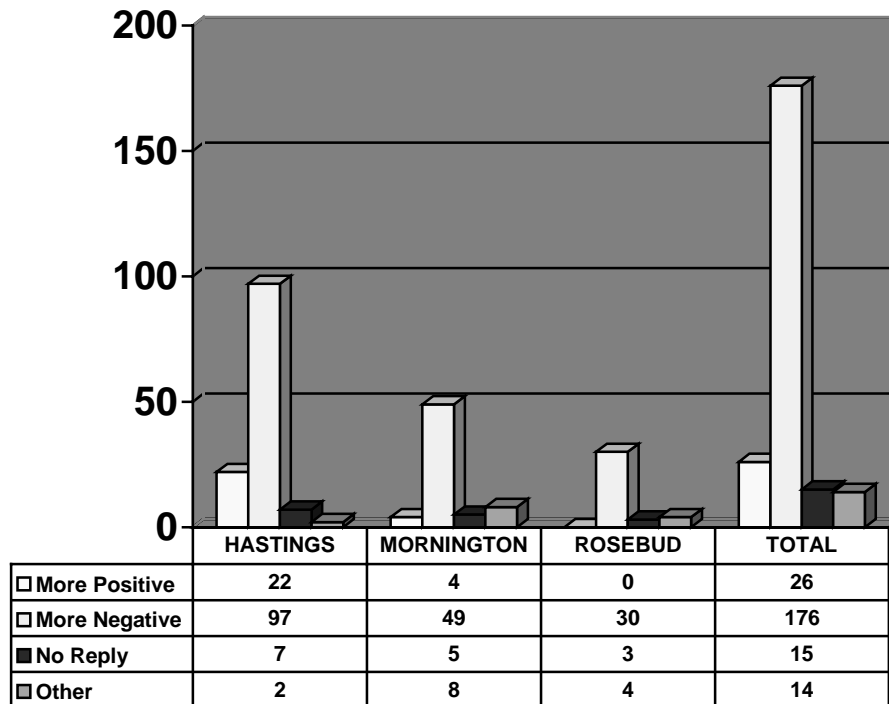
- *(Pokies) are a voluntary tax on the poor.*
- *The general character and health of the local community is being eroded.*
- *They say the money goes back to the community, but (I) haven't seen it.*
- *There doesn't seem to be any injection of funds into charities and health services.*
- *But without any doubt, (pokies) are (a) blight on society. Any economic benefit is reaped by the operators and manufactures of these infernal machines.*
- *Pokies are changing the ambience of the community. They are undermining society.*

3. Personal perceptions on whether the impacts of poker machine gambling on the local community have been more positive or more negative.

Notwithstanding the range of positive benefits detailed, the overwhelming perception is that the overall impact of poker machine gambling on the Peninsula has been more negative than positive.

It was significant to note that in a number of responses, while some people person recorded that the overall impact of ‘pokies’ was more negative than positive, they concurrently acknowledged the “positives” of playing the ‘pokies’ for their daily lives.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS & RETAILERS - (Total 231)



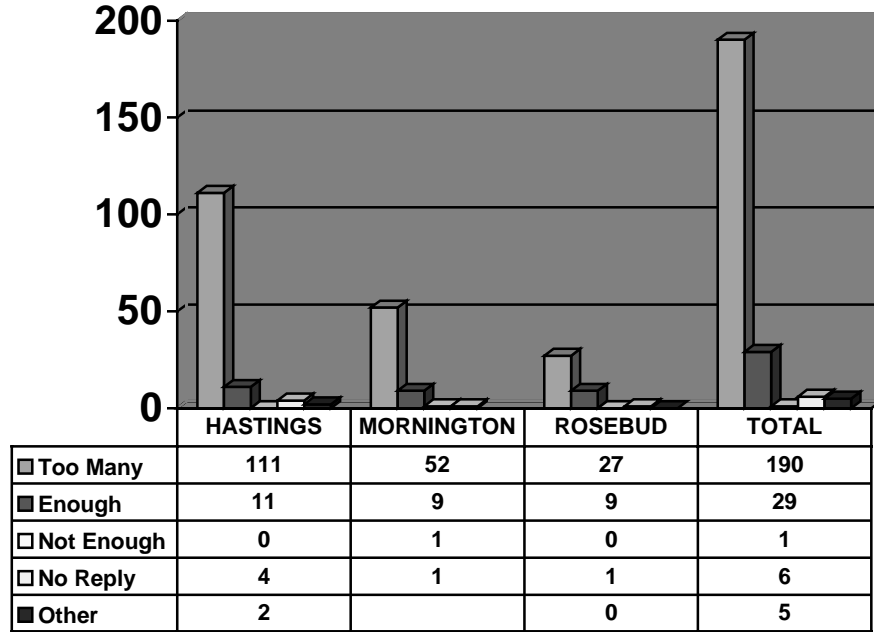
PARTICIPANTS' QUOTES

- *Sitting in a darkened room conversing with a machine couldn't be positive.*
- *Families, particularly children are suffering for lack of food, clothes and quality time spent together in the family.*
- *I don't like what it is doing to my husband; the hold gambling has on him and on other people in the community.*
- *The (greatest) losers are those who cannot afford losses. Whilst winners are fewer and big winners are even fewer, the real big winners are the owners of the venues, I suspect.*
- *We live in a capitalist society - money spent on pokies makes less money (being) spent on the family. This creates more need for welfare agencies.*
- *Local businesses are going broke because people don't have money to buy what they used to.*
- *Lots of money from the (Hastings) area is poured into these machines taking money away from the area and nothing is returned.*
- *Bankruptcy, divorces, suicide (are increasing); (a) sense of community is disappearing.*
- *(Playing the pokies) has become a way of life, not a healthy way (and is providing) more money for the government to waste.*
- *Outwardly, the financial benefits seem good, but the costs are huge and hidden. (Increased) families in financial crisis and (an) increase in domestic violence (are the) result of money spent on gambling.*
- *Pokies are money wasting, massively. But it can be said (they) give people somewhere warm, bright and safe to spend their time and money in and get free drinks and biscuits in. (This is) free to those who don't gamble, for the homeless or poor (people) like me (which) is important.*

4. Impressions about the current number of ‘pokie’ machines on the Peninsula.

The overwhelming impression from the range of respondents is that there are too many machines on the Peninsula.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS & RETAILERS - (Total 231)



PARTICIPANTS' QUOTES

- *Far too many. (The numbers) have to be monitored. (I) really think the government has a role in this.*
- *(A major concern is) the location of the machines in areas (where) the community is less able to absorb their draining effects.*
- *(They) should never have come to small towns, or near shopping centres*
- *“There’s a pub on every corner” - alcohol overuse/abuse (is a) huge socio-economic problem; now there’s “a poker machine on every corner”.*
- *I wish they had never been installed. All the things that were said about them seem to be coming true.*
- *Personally I can’t stand a pokie environment, it’s always too confined and noisy.*
- *I think there are enough pokie venues for those who choose to access them.*
- *(Poker machine gambling) is too accessible to those who have a problem, those not able to survive the pull of the big dollars.*
- *Everywhere you go there are machines. Doesn’t bother me though.*
- *They should not be in hotels. All (the) profits should return to the community.*

5. Ways to address the negative impacts of poker machine gambling on the local community.

Six major strategies have emerged from the data collected from respondents which reinforce the local community's concerns about the growing negative impacts of poker machine gambling.

Within each of these strategies a range of suggestions have emerged which have been given various weightings by the groups interviewed.

These include:

- ◆ *Numbers of machines*: while removing machines altogether was seen by many respondents as the most effective strategy, a similar number of people acknowledged the value of either reducing or at least placing a freeze on the number of machines in the local area.
 - *Get rid of them so people stop putting themselves into debt.*
 - *Pokies only in clubs would be ample. Remove from hotels. Too many venues- wherever you go there are pokies - should limit availability to small number of venues.*
 - *Remove 'most' of them. There is no need to have them on every corner.*
- ◆ *Venues*: restricting hours which the venues can open was the most common theme. The presence of "pokie" venues in the vicinity of local shopping centres was voiced as a major concern.
 - *There are too many venues. The availability of machines should be limited to smaller number of venues.*
 - *Restrict to certain venues and only parts of venues. They should not be freely available and especially not to younger people, and definitely not in shopping centres.*
 - *Not sure - unlike alcohol there is no legal limit to extents of abuse (ie you cannot serve in a hotel a patron over .05). I am opposed to venues offering free breakfast, tea/coffee for gaming card purchases and making themselves out to be community minded and generous because of this.*

Such locally voiced strategies offer considerable support to a number of initiatives being proposed by groups across the state. In particular, calls for a limit to the number of venues and placing restrictions on the numbers of machines reinforces the need for the maintenance of the existing cap on poker machines as well as support for a regional cap being proposed by groups such as the Interchurch Gambling Taskforce. (Ref 14-page 148) The importance of taking a more pro-active approach in regard to developing a responsible gaming strategy for the local community is also reinforced in line with a growing number of other Local Governments such as Moreland and Maribyrnong City Councils.

- ◆ Community education: increasing the availability of community education programs which reinforce the importance of responsible financial management was seen as crucial in a climate where people are being enticed by television ads and local advertising to “take the chance in the hope of a big win”.
 - *Encourage people to pay bills first before they spend money on the pokies. You say you’re only going to spend \$10 but once you start you can’t stop. You always think the next press will be the winner.*
 - *Advertise the fact that poker machines (are) greedy soul destroying machines intent on wrecking the social fabric.*

- ◆ Responsible advertising: the importance of greater regulation of glamour advertising which especially plays on the minds of people who struggle to make ends meet was stressed. In any advertising, the “true odds of winning” need to be highlighted.
 - *I think we need to address the type of advertising regarding poker machines. The advertising currently creates a "happy lucky" image - obviously not the case for the large percentage of players.*
 - *Publicity should not reflect that poker machines will solve community problems.*
 - *Strongly worded "shock" advertising showing that most people will lose in the long term and that addiction is commonplace.*

- ◆ Increased counselling and support groups: making a greater range of alternative affordable community opportunities for entertainment and socialising was seen as important. Local Government’s role in promoting services and activities which are responsive to the needs of local residents is imperative.
 - *Encourage people to use other options in the community for leisure and enjoyment.*

- ◆ Increased government action: greater regulation of the ‘pokie’ industry with a view to protecting vulnerable communities was seen as vital. The importance of extending the regulatory role of local councils was also seen as important. Respondents also stressed that the importance of developing distribution mechanisms for the Community Support Fund which ensure that a greater share of these funds are returned to local areas in recognition of the significant amounts of money flowing out of local communities in gambling taxes and profits to the licensees.
 - *Government to be more generous in helping local communities suffering from gambling influences.*

6. Personal knowledge of people experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

Of the **184** community members who participated in this survey, 62% (113/184) indicated a personal knowledge of people experiencing difficulties because of poker machine gambling. More than half of these respondents (55%, 62/113) stated that they knew more than one person with difficulties.

In fact, direct or indirect knowledge of a person or people experiencing difficulties because of poker machine gambling appears to have provided a strong impetus for people to participate in the survey.

For community members, the majority of these people were known to them through their personal lives (77%, 87/113) although a smaller number were known either through work or a combination of work and personal life.

For retailers, slightly more than half (55.5%, 26/47) indicated that they knew people having difficulties because of poker machine gambling. Nearly half of these retailers (46%, 12/26) reported that they come into contact with these people through their work.

The case studies outlined by community members, retailers and community workers highlight the reluctance of people to disclose their gambling difficulties. Difficulties with poker machine gambling rarely occur in isolation. These case studies outline the complex personal and structural issues faced daily by a growing number of local residents. (*Ref Case Studies-pages 55 and 66*)

COMMUNITY MEMBERS' QUOTES

- *They have no money for food, clothing. They spend all their money on gambling and they become distressed when they don't win.*
- *She kept going because she thought she would win the big one. After she lost all the money she felt sorry, but felt the urge to go back. All her bills piled up and she felt suicidal.*
- *They can't stay away from them. They tell you how much they win, but never how much they lose. They are always expecting the big win.*
- *She was going through difficulties in her marriage and turned to gambling to keep her mind off the difficulties.*
- *Me and friends have lost thousands and lie and make excuses as to where we've been and that.*
- *She is unable to even walk past a poker machine venue, without entering it. As a result of her gambling (large amounts) her relationship was in tatters.*
- *It is myself and our savings are gradually being dwindled away. I'm 75+ and my husband is 79.*
- *She is attending pokie venues despite her family's pleas not to, in the hope of recouping what has already been lost.*

RETAILERS' QUOTES

- *They experienced financial difficulty due to losing more than they could afford. They lie about where they are or what they are doing and how much they have lost.*
- *She continually wants to get money back on purchases to enable her to pay the rent. She has lost her job with her obsessive belief she will win one day. She has taken to stealing things she can sell to be able to replace the housekeeping.*
- *They are all broke but still continue to gamble.*
- *Their children are neglected and they run out of money for the necessities of life.*
- *They spend all their income, and then borrow money to play.*
- *They spend more than they could afford. They had to sell their house to clear debts. I don't know if their marriage finished because of poker machines, or if in fact, time spent gambling reflected on an unhappy marriage.*
- *We have had to evict tenants for rent arrears.*
- *One retired couple have lost their house and now live in a caravan park and still play the pokies.*

7. Knowledge of Support Services in the Mornington Peninsula Shire for people experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

Limited knowledge about the available support services across the Peninsula for people with gambling difficulties was the dominant impression from the data collected.

For people who have either had direct contact themselves or a person known to them, they were aware of the specific services that had been used. Others had a general understanding based on advertising on television or in local papers. Many respondents expressed that they had a vague idea about gambling services generally.

QUOTES

- *Gambling doesn't affect me, so haven't tried to find out.*
- *I think services are there for people who need them.*
- *I don't know of any, but would know to ask at my local community centre.*
- *I know there are gambling counselling services, but don't know if there is anything just purely for pokies.*
- *Have seen a pamphlet floating around.*

SECTION 10:

Wider Implications of the Findings

- **FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY**

While it appears that many people enjoy going to the ‘pokies’ as a social outing which also offers quality meals and a range of complementary products, it is also clear that a growing number of individuals and households are experiencing considerable hardship and anguish because of significant ‘pokie’ losses. People already struggling to manage on low incomes are particularly vulnerable to the “big win”.

The case studies provided in this survey highlight the consequences of “out-of-control” gambling activities: people’s inability to pay bills, the increasing need to seek assistance from emergency relief providers, the growing instability caused by evictions, growth in bankruptcy cases, child neglect and family breakdown. These appear to be signs of deeper issues in our community: increasing numbers of people trapped in poverty, feeling isolated and marginalised in what can be seen as a materialistic, consumerist society, are being enticed into poker machine venues because they are welcoming and provide them with the opportunity for the “longed for win”. Alongside this, many local retailers are being confronted with a significant downturn in business. While retailers acknowledge that gambling is only one of the factors affecting their businesses in an area like the Peninsula, it is clearly a major contributing factor. Given the significant concentrations of low income people with limited discretionary spending capacity in areas like *Hastings*, *Mornington* and *Rosebud*, millions of dollars are being removed from general household expenditure to fund people’s increased gambling activities.

The developing ‘pokie’ industry in Victoria claims the community has benefited from significant jobs growth, increased economic prosperity and services funded from the massive increase in government revenue from poker machine gambling. But, at what cost? The emerging social and economic “costs” outlined in this survey are alarming and demand urgent attention.

- **FOR THE LOCAL COUNCIL**

Despite community perceptions, Local Council has had little control over the development of the ‘pokie’ industry within their municipality. State legislation by way of the Gaming Machine Control Act (1991) and the Planning and Environment Act (1987) govern allocation, distribution, placement, movement, planning and policy issues related to poker machine gambling and the specific roles and responsibilities of Local Government.

Where the floor space available for gaming machines is less than a quarter of the total floor space in a venue, no planning permit has been required from Council. According to the Gaming Machine Control Act (1991), (*Ref 14-page 148*) and in accordance with Ministerial Directions, venues may hold up to 105 venues. The RSL in Rosebud is the only venue on the Peninsula to have this maximum capacity.

While new poker machine venues are currently not allowed in strip shopping centres, existing hotels such as the Westernport Hotel in Hastings, the Grand Hotel in Mornington and the Rosebud Hotel in Rosebud have been permitted to house ‘pokies’.

Many people in an area like the Peninsula reported feeling “*hopeless/powerless*” in terms of doing anything about “*the poker machine invasion*”. They report dramatic increases in people known to them experiencing difficulties, as well as changes to the general entertainment environment. Comments such as “*hotels have been transformed into dark, noisy, light filled dens*” were common. The only hotel in Mornington without poker machines was reported to be extremely noisy and crowded. Younger people stated that the “pub music scene” had suffered because of poker machines. While many people reported they wanted less machines or no machines at all, they felt that the wider forces at work in the situation were harder to counter. Greater local control was seen as imperative.

Notwithstanding the significant controls that State Government can exercise over Local Government, fundamental to the governance functions of Local Government is its commitment to raising issues of general concern for its local residents. The growth and impacts of the ‘pokie’ industry is one such issue that is demanding the ear of the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council.

- **PUBLIC INTEREST CONCERNS**

The State Government’s inherent role to protect the public interest of all its citizens is being potentially undermined by current gaming policies. In the name of increased government revenue, the shortsighted gaming policy is undermining local communities which are the “warp and woof” of a stable, healthy and participatory society. Greater protection for vulnerable individuals and communities must be legislatively established if the public interest is to be upheld. Balancing personal rights and responsibilities is clearly an issue in regard to “out-of-control” gambling patterns.

Greater attention must be given to regulations governing gaming licences and the placement and movement of machines. Calls for the maintenance of the cap on ‘pokie’ machines along with calls for a regional cap on machines must be considered in the light of the State Government’s public interest responsibilities. State Government support for responsible gaming strategies being initiated by a growing number of Local Councils is a natural corollary of these public interest responsibilities.

- **RESPONSIBLE ADVERTISING**

Maintaining the balance between personal rights and responsibilities has been fundamental to the development of public health campaigns in the areas of drink driving, smoking, traffic accidents and heart disease.

The parallels between these issues and “out-of-control” gambling are clear. The development of these public campaigns can provide significant insights when it comes to advertising campaigns which promote responsible gambling practices. Reinforcing the “real odds” against “the big win” is essential to ensuring a balanced approach.

- **TAX REFORM**

The current tax reform proposed by the Federal Government will do little, if anything, to reduce the State's reliance on gambling taxes. The increasing trend to user pays is also set to increase with the planned tax changes (*Ref 1-page 148*), thereby exacerbating the disadvantage already being experienced by people on low incomes.

The survey recently conducted in the Mornington Peninsula Shire on the effects of poker machine gambling concurs with the findings of the range of surveys conducted by the VCGA in terms of the profound social costs being reaped. (*Ref 12-page 148*)

In light of this, it is hard to see how the "no worse off" promise by the Federal Government in terms of the effects of tax reform for State and Local Governments along with individuals and households will be fulfilled.

Without inter-governmental and intra-departmental integrated policy formation and decision making processes, many people foresee that in the name of promoting the national interest, growing numbers of people will be disadvantaged and public interest eroded.

SECTION 11:

Emerging Recommendations

Findings from this research support calls for the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council to:

- Review its existing Recreation Policy. Specifically, Council needs to conduct a broad ranging consultation to canvas the views of the local community in terms of low cost entertainment options which are safe, welcoming and accessible with a view to increasing the range of available low cost recreational/pleasure outlets on the Peninsula.
- Give priority in its budget to supporting community projects which enhance community participation and reinforce tolerance, acceptance and citizenship.
- Develop a *Responsible Gaming Strategy* in line with the community and with reference to other Local Government initiatives in Victoria.
- Establish a community consultative committee including representation from poker machine venue operators, retailers, community members and community workers to consider issues raised in the report in greater detail and to provide direct input into the gaming strategy.
- Support calls for legislative amendments to the Gaming Machine Control Act (1991) and the Planning and Environment Act (1987) in co-operation with other local municipalities and interested parties to enable local communities to have greater regulatory and planning powers in terms of the development of the poker machine industry in their area.

This research also highlights the need for:

- An independent impact study of the “true costs” of poker machine gambling on the Victorian community and in specific local communities like the Mornington Peninsula Shire with high concentrations of poker machines. Such a project could be funded by the Community Support Fund.
- Local communities such as the Mornington Peninsula Shire to receive a greater share of monies from the Community Support Fund for specific local projects.

Appendix 1

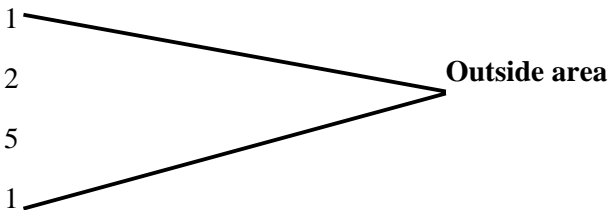
DATA ANALYSIS : **HASTINGS**

COMMUNITY MEMBERS HASTINGS

PROFILE

Total number of Respondents:	113
Gender:	Male: 25 Female: 69 No Reply: 19
Age Range:	18-24 years 12 25-39 years 39 40-65 years 42 66+ years 14 No Reply 6 Other
Household Type:	Single 25 Single with children 11 Couple 23 Couple with children 37 Widow/Widower 5 No Reply 11 Other 1
Employment Status:	Full-time 11 Part-time/Casual 30 Looking for work 4 Home Duties/Mother 7 Home Based Business 1 Home Duties/Student 6 Pensioner 7 Retired 7 No Reply 24 Other 16

HASTINGS - Postcode:

3194	1	
3198	2	
3199	5	
3200	1	
3910	1	
3911	1	
3912	3	
3913	3	
3915	40	
3918	3	
3919	13	
3926	3	
3927	8	
3929	1	
3930	1	
3931	3	
3934	2	
3936	3	
3938	1	
3939	3	
3940	1	
3941	2	
3943	1	
3977	2	
No Reply	9	

COMMUNITY MEMBERS HASTINGS

Question 1: Identified positive benefits of poker machine gambling on local community.

Responses:

113	YES	16	14%
	NO	91	81%
	NO REPLY	3	2.5%
	OTHER	3	2.5%

Comments:

"YES "	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It can be a lot of fun when with friends. • Local sporting bodies ie cricket, football, etc have benefited a great deal. • Socially pokie venues are generally non-threatening places where women feel comfortable on their own or not and also older people. My belief is on a positive note they fill an entertainment void for a particular group of people and certainly can be a cheap day out when used properly. • Meeting place and meeting new people. Created new jobs in the hospitality industry. • Business is booming. Some old people have social life. Groups go out together and have fun. • They are there open to have coffee in long after other places/restaurants shut. Company of other people - conveniences that are clean and available - very pleasant services, comfortable to sit in.
"NO"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They say the money goes back to the community, but haven't seen it. • Places such as pubs etc. have stopped previous activities to make room for machines not only in one venue but all venues in each town. • Only clubs and hotels benefit and government. • There are no positive benefits. Revenue goes to the State government who spends it on the Casino or politicians' privileges. • Because it causes anti-social behaviour and more times they lose than win, and it puts more strain on the economy. • I find that most people always think they are going to win and often become addicted. • People now spend their time with machines (pokies) which they would have usually spent this time socially with family and friends. • The pubs may be doing well financially and the gaming authorities, but poker machines impact negatively on the social climate. Instead of friends talking to each other, they are isolating themselves further and forgetting what is important in life. The enjoyment gained from poker machines far outweighs the enjoyment of simpler (less expensive) pleasures. • There does not seem to be any injection of funds into charities or health services. • Community people are suffering financial losses each week and a huge amount of people now have gambling addictions.
"NO REPLY"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't think poker machines serve any benefit to the community. More a negative. I

	don't play them myself and from what I have observed I believe they are a rip off.
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Question 2: Identified negative impacts of poker machine gambling on local community.

Responses:

113	YES	89	79%
	NO	18	16%
	NO REPLY	5	4%
	OTHER	1	1%

Comments:

"YES"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open all hours. Draws people away from other responsibilities and work. • People do not go out as much as one of the family is putting money in the pokies. • Too many empty shops and the employment created by the 'pokies' is only casual and not permanent. • I was a business owner and had to close down due to decreased spending in the township. • More petty crime. Lots of people at the pokies are not very affluent. • Affecting local businesses adversely because people have less disposable income to spend at hairdressers etc. • More domestic problems, alcohol consumption higher, children deprived, health problems. • Transference of money away from productive activities or enterprises. • People spending their wages. Prioritising gambling over every other aspect of their lives. • More young children roaming streets without parents. • Apparent or presumed desperation on the part of some players in the chase for the "Big win". Increased borrowing of money from friends solely to pay the machines. • Increased poverty, more reliant on churches welfare help, more food needed for distribution. • Mainly people living in poverty using last of their money on poker machines in the hope of a win. They're desperate and can least afford it. • Fewer people can now afford to live reasonably, because of the introduction of machines. • People waste their money on poker machines instead of looking after themselves and supporting local businesses. • Menace, humans are weak. Always say never again but keep going back.
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Question 3: Ways to address identified negative impacts of poker machine gambling on local community.

COMMENTS

1. VENUES

- Centralise them in the city.
- They need to be thinned out-perhaps one small venue rather than lots of large venues.

1. MACHINES

- There are too many machines. Venues which put their money back into the community through sport etc are OK but individuals should not become wealthy eg hotel owners.
- Get rid of poker machines. The Community Support Fund should be used for community groups to employ people to help those addicted to gambling and to give people an alternative to gambling.
- Disallow. There are enough forms of gambling without extra.
- Get rid of them so people stop putting themselves into debt.

1. COMMUNITY EDUCATION

- No idea really. Household has to look after itself. People need to be educated about taking responsibility for themselves.
- Have community awareness rights workshop on the problems of gambling.
- Publish in newspapers etc case histories of effected people using different names etc so others can understand they aren't the only ones and where they can get help. This may deter others from starting to play.
- Encourage people to boycott poker machines - education towards being non-dependent on the "Jackpot Lottery Utopia" to rise away from "jackpot money". Debunk the glamour of winning.
- Community education projects-awareness campaigns. Lobby government for increased funding to address negative impacts.
- Education - "you can't win" advertising emphasis.

1. RESPONSIBLE ADVERTISING

- I think we need to address the type of advertising regarding poker machines. The advertising currently creates a "happy lucky" image - obviously not the case for the large percentage of players.
- Strongly worded "shock" advertising showing that most people will lose in the long term and that addiction is commonplace.

1. COUNSELLING / SUPPORT

- Publicity should not reflect that poker machines will solve community problems- social activities should be directed to compassionate activities and lifestyle especially for the elderly and youth.
- The elderly need activities organised so they are not relying on poker machines for entertainment.
- Increased discussion and more support for those feeling vulnerable.

1. GOVERNMENT ACTION

- Let us know where the money is used from poker machines.
- Make revenue made from poker machines go back into the local communities it comes out of, ie Frankston revenue goes to Frankston local community services.
- Possibility of a levy collected on the amount of poker machines located in the community, to be used for community projects.
- Can we shut the gate after the horse has bolted - relieves boredom.

Question 4: Personal perceptions on whether the impacts of poker machine gambling on the local community have been more positive or more negative.

Responses:

113	MORE POSITIVE	21	19%
	MORE NEGATIVE	86	76%
	NO REPLY	6	5%
	OTHER	0	%

Comments:

<p>"MORE NEGATIVE"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families, particularly children, are suffering for lack of food, clothes and quality time spent together in the family. • Loss of friendship through friends going to the pokies instead of talking. • Gambling can be addictive and this can lead to community and social problems. • Due to local business going broke because people don't have money to buy what they used to. • Outwardly financial benefits seem good, but the costs are huge but hidden. Families in financial crisis, increase in domestic violence as a result of money spent on gambling. • It has become a way of life, not a healthy way, more money for the government to waste. • Peoples lives are being robbed and destroyed by not being able to resist gambling. • Family breakup, loss of house security. • Lots of money from this area is poured into these machines taking money from the Hastings area and nothing is returned. • Vacant shops give some indication as to health or otherwise of retail trade. • Bankruptcy, divorces, suicide, sense of community is disappearing. • We live in a capitalist society - money spent on pokies makes less money spent on the family. This creates more need for welfare agencies. • Sitting in a darkened room conversing with a machine couldn't be positive.
<p>"OTHER"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pokies are money wasting massively. But it can be said it gives people somewhere warm, bright and safe to spend their time and money in and get free drinks and biscuits in. (This is) free to those who don't gamble, for the homeless or poor (people) like me (which) is important.

Question 5: Knowledge of support services in the Mornington Peninsula Shire for people experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

Responses:

113	YES	25	22%
	NO	77	68%
	NO REPLY	10	9%
	OTHER	1	1%

Comments:

"YES"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article in paper - Gamblers Anonymous. • I think GA has a base or several on the Peninsula. • Not local as I have just moved here, but statewide I do. • Salvation Army and St Vincent de Paul. • Good Shepherd, other church groups. • Have seen a pamphlet floating around. • Gamblers Anonymous as advertised in local papers. • I would visit the Hastings Community Information and Support Centre for advice and referral.
"NO"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wouldn't have a clue. • Have not seen any advertised. • I had not heard of any. • No because I haven't looked for help. • I don't know of any, but would know to ask at my local community centre if I needed to know. • Community houses offer an alternative to gambling and won't be asking you to put more money in. • I'm sure there are places addressing this, but I don't know of them. I am elderly and not interested in gambling in any way. • But then I have never been in a situation where I have had to look.
"OTHER"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know there are gambling counselling services, but I don't know if there is any thing just purely for pokies.

Question 6: Impressions about the current number of poker machines located within the Mornington Peninsula Shire.

Responses:

113	TOO MANY	98	87%
	ENOUGH	10	9%
	NOT ENOUGH	0	%
	NO REPLY	3	2.4%
	OTHER	2	1.6%

Comments:

"TOO MANY"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Far too many. Have to be monitored. Really think the government has a role in this. • They are in every pub and other public venues in each town, you can walk from one venue to the next in each town. • Too many in some places for the size of the area and number of people. • Go to any hotel or club for a drink or Bingo you are surrounded by machines. • Way too many, money should be spent on other facilities, eg heated pool for Hastings, better sporting facilities, for a healthier family life style - poker machines can destroy this. • Everywhere accessible - that's not good. • They should not be in hotels. All profits should return to the community • "There's a pub on every corner" - alcohol overuse/abuse huge socio-economic problem, now there's "a poker machine on every corner". • Too much reliance on gambling - too many machines in the hotels and RSLs. • Well beyond entertainment factor. Overwhelming surplus. • The location of the machines in areas that the community is less able to absorb their draining affects on the local economy. • Should never have come to small country towns, or near shopping centres.
"ENOUGH"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I wish they had never been installed - all the things that were said about them seem to be coming true. • Personally I can't stand a pokie environment; it's always too confined and noisy. I think there are enough pokie venues for those who choose to access them.
"NO REPLY"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know how many there are. I've read that Dandenong has one of the highest and that concerns me with regard to high unemployment.

Question 7: Personal knowledge of a person/persons experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

Responses:

113	YES	74	65%
	NO	34	30%
	NO REPLY	5	5%
	OTHER	0	%

With the "YES" replies:-

(A)	<p>A number of people known to respondent to have difficulties because of poker machine gambling.</p> <p><u>Number of Responses: 74</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Person 30 • More Than One Person- 38 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (2-3) 4 (4-5) 2 (6-10) 4 (10+) 2 (Not Specified) 26 • No Reply 6
(B)	<p>How respondent knows this person/these people.</p> <p><u>Number of Responses: 74</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through work 6 • Through personal life 56 • Through work and personal life 8 • No Reply 4 • Other 0

(C) Descriptions of how people known to respondents have been affected by poker machine gambling.

- Gambled her business, home and all her savings.
- Poverty - lives by Bankcard.
- Person is depressed (clinically) and loses rent money sometimes trying to improve state of mind by getting adrenalin rush from pokies.
- Having to lie to families and friends. Having to borrow and beg money. Having money only for the basics in life - denying treats, leading to low self-esteem, leading to near despair/depression.
- Spending all their savings, lying, making excuses, marriage problems, losing friends. Some have sorted themselves out, others haven't.
- Finds excuses for being unable to pay regular bills, eg rent.
- No money for food, clothing, etc spend all their money on gambling and then become distressed when they don't win.
- Kept going because she thought she would win the big one, after she lost all the money felt sorry, but felt the urge to go back. All her bills piled up and she felt suicidal.
- More depressed, next to broke - has turned to crime.
- In hospital (intensive care) with malnutrition- may not survive. One lady goes every day- she does nothing else. One spent \$ 70,000 on gambling.
- They can't stay away from them. They tell you how much they win, but never how much they loose. Always expecting the big win.
- This person was a married woman who owned her own house, but lost it due to gambling and now lives in a caravan with 2 children.
- Spent all mortgage and food money on pokies while husband was working.
- Totally stressed due to financial hardship. Started lying to family members and friends. Received a letter of eviction - rent not paid.
- Sole father addicted to machines, gets oldest son to go and collect food and petrol vouchers and anything else he can do to feed his family.
- Becoming addicted to them trying to win to improve their living standard. One (woman) eventually committed suicide after owing in excess of \$53,000 leaving two young boys without their mother aged 35.
- Spends a lot of their time isolated fixed to a screen, neglecting the needs of family spending all of their wages - obsession.
- She was going through difficulties in her marriage and turned to gambling to keep her mind off the difficulties.
- Now exists on welfare (female). Had to sell family home. Charged with fraud - serving community based order.
- Me and friends have lost thousands and lie and make excuses as to where we've been and that.
- My experience with pokie venues is as an employee of a venue, so whilst I believe I have seen people I would deem to have a problem, this is my assumption. I have, however, known a person who as secretary of a group within a club who embezzled the money of other members to support their gambling habit, attempted suicide, lost their job, house, spouse and life.

Appendix 2

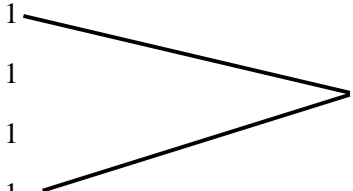
DATA ANALYSIS : **MORNINGTON**

COMMUNITY MEMBERS MORNINGTON

PROFILE

Total number of Respondents:	43
Gender:	Male: 8 Female: 28 No Reply: 7
Age Range:	<18 years 2 18-24 years 2 25-39 years 9 40-65 years 20 66+ years 10 No Reply Other
Household Type:	Single 10 Single with children 1 Couple 18 Couple with children 11 Widow/Widower 1 No Reply 2 Other
Employment Status:	Full-time 8 Part-time/Casual 12 Looking for work 0 School Student 1 Retired 9 No Reply 6 Other 7

MORNINGTON - Postcode:

3170	1		Outside area
3171	1		
3196	1		
3199	1		
3910	1		
3912	1		
3913	1		
3915	1		
3930	1		
3931	20		
3934	6		
3938	1		
3939	1		
3977	1		
Empty	1		
No Reply	4		

COMMUNITY MEMBERS MORNINGTON

Question 1: Identified positive benefits of poker machine gambling on local community.

Responses:

43	YES	6	14%
	NO	35	81%
	NO REPLY	1	2.5%
	OTHER	1	2.5%

Comments:

"YES"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keeps older generations occupied.• I suppose it gets people out of the house more.• Entertainment option improved facilities at some venues.
"NO"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lot more money problems.

Question 2: Identified negative impacts of poker machine gambling on local community.

Responses:

43	YES	31	72%
	NO	10	23%
	NO REPLY	1	2.5%
	OTHER	1	2.5%

Comments:

"YES"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People need help. They spend all their money as soon as they're paid. • Those families who are struggling tend to look for a reason to increase their chances of living better so will go to the pokies with the hope of increasing their income. • They downgrade community behaviour, children suffer. • Negative effect on low income people hoping in desperation for a win. Pleasant hotels become neon lighted 'dens'. • Anti-social, can be addictive, too many venues - cannot go to pub without pokies. People spend on machines, reduced sales in my business. • I am aware that many people spend too much time and money gambling using poker machines. Pokies tend to encourage anti-social if not destructive behaviour. • Less money spent on services - carpet cleaning, small business. Huge growth in need for assistance. Local - traumatic effect on families. • People spending money they don't have in the hope of that big windfall. • I'm a gambler, but not on the pokies - too much money goes on gambling - family money. Women fill the places - housekeeping money completely used or too much. No conversation really bad disease. Far too many outlets should only be one. Breaking down family life. Encourages younger ones who can't go into hotels to get idea of gambling. Drugs go with it. 90% (of people in venues) are women. • Places like hotels are now full of glare and action. Quiet rooms with a pleasant atmosphere are fast disappearing. Only the Royal and it's too busy. • More people looking for handouts. • Only broke people after playing. • I know of no-one employed by introduction or increase in poker machines. • But without any doubt they are blight on society. Any economic benefit is reaped by TAB, Tattslotto and manufacturers of these infernal machines. • Money and business flowing away from ordinary shops - retailing industry hit as funds go to gambling. Increase on crime, thieving, embezzlement, professional car theft especially noticeable in city with Casino, but also applies elsewhere. • Destroying families. Decline in communities.
"NO REPLY"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not personally - but heard of others where the money has gone before it hits the table. Real lack of community. People feel isolated and then when they go to the pokies they isolate themselves from others by continuing playing at the machines.
"OTHER"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obviously people are spending money on poker machines and not on the necessities of living.

Question 3: Ways to address identified negative impacts of poker machine gambling on local community.

COMMENTS

1. VENUES

- Restricted to certain venues and only parts of venues. Not be freely available and especially not to younger people. Definitely not in shopping centres. Especially vulnerable for women. Need to rediscover community opportunities. Cyberspace Salvation Army cafe doing a very good job. People need to discover the “simple things” again - too oriented to mechanical quick action etc.
- Not sure - unlike alcohol there is no legal limit to extents of abuse (ie you cannot serve in a hotel a patron over .05). I am opposed to venues offering free breakfast, tea/coffee for gaming card purchases and making themselves out to be community minded and generous because of this.

0 MACHINES

- Get rid of them (too accessible) - they're evil.
- Only one way - not protest march or campaigns, (but) must get rid of the machines. Enough people need to protest. Churches need to do more.

1 COMMUNITY EDUCATION

- Encourage people to pay bills first before they spend money on the pokies. You say you're only going to spend \$10 but once you start you can't stop. You always think the next press will be the winner.

2 GOVERNMENT ACTION

- Government to be more generous in helping local communities suffering from gambling influence.

Question 4: Personal perceptions on whether the impacts of poker machine gambling on the local community have been more positive or more negative.

Responses:

43	MORE POSITIVE	3	7%
	MORE NEGATIVE	32	75%
	NO REPLY	2	4%
	OTHER	6	14%

Comments:

"MORE NEGATIVE"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families seriously affected. • The most losers are those who cannot afford loses. Whilst winners are fewer and the big winners are even fewer, the real big winners are the owners of venues (I suspect). • I think it is anti-social and interferes with family. • Not only do people lose money and/or become addicted but they spend all day surrounded by cigarette smoke. • Tour operators and roadhouses loss of business from day trips to NSW and SA. • I've seen so many people with no money till next payday because as soon as they get paid they go to the pokies- children and family are missing out on any extras.
"OTHER"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social for some lonely people, but a lot of people don't know when to stop playing.

Question 5: Knowledge of support services in the Mornington Peninsula Shire for people experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

Responses:

43	YES	8	19%
	NO	33	77%
	NO REPLY	2	4%
	OTHER	0	%

Comments:

"YES"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Centre - I think. • Information at Centrelink I think. • Peaches, CAB can refer also Peninsula Community Health. • Counselling services such as family focus, the Good Shepherds may not have specific support for gamblers, but their general counsellors may help such people. • I am aware by hearsay, no experience of a number of them.
"NO"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why support people with gambling problems no-one forces people to indulge in gambling. They get hooked of their own free will. • But without doubt the need for support services will arise. • I think services are there for people that need them. • Gambling doesn't affect me, so haven't tried to find out.
"NO REPLY"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am aware of places but I would need to enquire as to their whereabouts

Question 6: Impressions about the current number of poker machines located within the Mornington Peninsula Shire.

Responses:

43	TOO MANY	36	84%
	ENOUGH	3	7%
	NOT ENOUGH	1	2%
	NO REPLY	1	2%
	OTHER	2	5%

Comments:

"TOO MANY"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't like what it is doing to my husband, the hold gambling has on him and on other people in the community. • Don't have a problem with Casino, but too accessible in every pub and club - too much advertising. • It is too accessible to those who have a problem; those not able to survive the pull of the big dollars. • Would be nice to go to a hotel for a meal without pokies. • People are using poker machines (gambling) as a form of entertainment ie. RSL having to re-install machines due to members complaints and loss of attendance at the RSL. • Every pub I know of. Should have been allowed in non-profit organisations RSL- football club, so they pass on the benefits better facilities, reduced price meals/drinks. Pubs making too much. • I don't think we need any more - They have taken the cheaper machines out (5 lines) and replaced them with dearer ones (9 lines). They could put back cheaper machines for people who can't really afford to pay 9 line machines. • Available to too many at just about any time. They go from one to the other trying to win. • Too many in small area.
"OTHER"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't approve, shouldn't be any, not good for families.

Question 7: Personal knowledge of a person/persons experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

Responses:

43	YES	22	51%
	NO	18	42%
	NO REPLY	3	7%
	OTHER	0	%

With the "YES" replies:-

(A)	<p>A number of people known to respondent to have difficulties because of poker machine gambling.</p> <p>Responses: 22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Person 9 • More Than One Person- 13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (2-3) 2 (4-5) 2 (6-10) 0 (10+) 3 (Not Specified) 6
(B)	<p>How respondent knows this person/these people.</p> <p>Number of Responses: 22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through work 3 • Through personal life 17 • Through work and personal life 2 • No Reply 0 • Other 0

(C)	<p>Descriptions of how people known to respondents have been affected by poker machine gambling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She has become addicted therefore her family is made to suffer in that the money is not there to provide proper meals. • She was unable to even walk past a poker machine venue, without entering it. As a result of her gambling (large amounts) her relationship was in tatters. • Can't stay away, takes money out of housekeeping. • It is myself and our savings are gradually being dwindled away. I am 75+ and my husband is 79. So once they are gone, that is it, the others have lost lots of money. • Financial difficulties. Time spent away from home causing neglect of children at home. • They have no money to pay their bills, food etc. They have sold jewellery or other things to play machines. They have gone through thousands of dollars in some cases. • Friend won \$10,000 on machine, but put it back into machines in an attempt to win again.
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Appendix 3

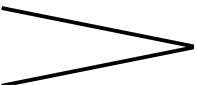
DATA ANALYSIS : **ROSEBUD**

COMMUNITY MEMBERS ROSEBUD

PROFILE

Total number of Respondents:	28
Gender:	Male: 10 Female: 16 No Reply: 2
Age Range:	18-24 years 1 25-39 years 15 40-65 years 6 66+ years 6 No Reply Other
Household Type:	Single 5 Couple 9 Couple with children 10 Widow/Widower 1 No Reply 2 Other
Employment Status:	Full-time 10 Part-time/Casual 5 Looking for work 1 Retired 2 No Reply 2 Other 8

ROSEBUD - Postcode:

3083	1		Outside area
3095	1		
3911	1		
3912	1		
3926	2		
3931	1		
3937	1		
3938	2		
3939	8		
3940	3		
3941	6		
3947	1		

COMMUNITY MEMBERS ROSEBUD

Question 1: Identified positive benefits of poker machine gambling on local community.

Responses:

28	YES	5	18%
	NO	22	79%
	NO REPLY	0	%
	OTHER	1	3%

Comments:

"YES" comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Often people are lonely and provides company, safe; not intimidating for women; older man didn't want to join senior citizens - exclusively catering for older people. Likes to be around all ages - (so 'pokies' are) enjoyable places to go.• The hotels and RSL clubs seem to be doing better economically.• More money spent on Peninsula.
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Question 2: Identified negative impacts of poker machine gambling on local community.

Responses:

28	YES	20	72%
	NO	8	28%
	NO REPLY	0	%
	OTHER	0	%

Comments:

"YES"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack conversation/isolating; people sit for hours and hours with smoke and drink; anti-social in many ways. Lots of glitz/lights-overpowering; particular groups going to pokies, especially those who can't afford it with the hope that they'll hit the jackpot. Growth of "Buy/Sell Cash" shops - very recent. • People do not have the same disposable income. People are also getting addicted. "People who have never gambled before in their life and are now totally addicted. Have devastating effect on people's lives." • Pokies are killing the retail chains. Figures have dropped as a direct result to the introduction of poker machines. • Playing pokies very solitary occupation therefore no community spirit. Money not spent in small shops. • A lot of people have less money - op shops doing better. • Theft. Criminal activities. • Ruined family relationships and ruined hotels (atmosphere) -lot of family breakdown, individuals being brainwashed by it. • People's lives being turned upside down, on the false promise of the big win. • People who have a limited income spending a high percentage at the pokies. • Its got quieter. With only so much to spend in one community, the money is going into other areas.
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Question 3: Ways to address identified negative impacts of poker machine gambling on local community.

COMMENTS

1. VENUE

- Remove “most” of them. There is no need to have them on every corner.

1. MACHINE

- Pokies only in clubs would be ample. Remove from hotels. -too many venues- wherever you go there are pokies -should limit availability to small number of venues.

1. RESPONSIBLE ADVERTISING

- Look upon poker machines as greedy soul destroying machines intent on wrecking the social fabric, ie by advertising the fact.

1. COUNSELLING / SUPPORT

- Often people who go to pokies feel “unhappy” about lots of things, eg going to sport clubs, courses etc. I feel there are lots of other options in the community for leisure and enjoyment - often people who use pokies maybe stayed home and watched TV first. I feel pokies are a “waste of time”.

Question 4: Personal perceptions on whether the impacts of poker machine gambling on the local community have been more positive or more negative.

Responses:

28	MORE POSITIVE	0	%
	MORE NEGATIVE	23	83%
	NO REPLY	2	7%
	OTHER	3	10%

Comments:

"MORE NEGATIVE"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poker machines are an unsocial way of "enjoying" oneself.• Families being pulled apart by the effects of gambling. People going there morning, noon and night.• Crime has increased. I now have pensioners shoplifting because they have no money.
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Question 5: Knowledge of support services in the Mornington Peninsula Shire for people experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

Responses:

28	YES	4	14%
	NO	23	83%
	NO REPLY	1	3%
	OTHER	0	%

Comments:

"YES"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice in Country Club (Rosebud) - gamblers association.
"NO"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TV advertises G-Line. • Nothing specific - but contacting a local community centre. • Most people don't believe they have a problem. • Gamblers Anonymous.

Question 6: Impressions about the current number of poker machines located within the Mornington Peninsula Shire.

Responses:

28	TOO MANY	19	68%
	ENOUGH	9	32%
	NOT ENOUGH	0	%
	NO REPLY	0	%
	OTHER	0	%

Comments:

"TOO MANY"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are too many particularly in “depressed” areas, ie Hastings, Rosebud, Dromana. • They're everywhere and too easy to get to. The elderly go together. • In every pub and club. • Cut out pokies in hotels.
"ENOUGH"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everywhere you go there are machines. Doesn't bother me though. • If they were cheaper customers would stay at the RSL longer and enjoy themselves.

Question 7: Personal knowledge of a person/persons experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

Responses:	28	YES	17	61%
		NO	10	36%
		NO REPLY	1	3%
		OTHER	0	%

With the "YES" replies:-

(A)	<p>A number of people known to respondent to have difficulties because of poker machine gambling.</p> <p>Responses: 17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Person 5 • More Than One Person- 11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (2-3) 1 (4-5) 0 (6-10) 0 (10+) 2 (Not Specified) 8 • No Reply 1
(B)	<p>How respondent knows this person/these people.</p> <p>Number of Responses: 17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through work 1 • Through personal life 14 • Through work and personal life 2 • No Reply 0 • Other 0
(C)	<p>Descriptions of how people known to respondents have been affected by poker machine gambling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mother not at home, leaving children at home, not enough money for groceries. Also stealing money to get it; not paying bills and using for gambling - split the marriage. • She was well off - lost inheritance to gambling activities. • Attending pokie venues despite family's pleas not to, hoping to recoup what has been already lost.

DATA ANALYSIS : **HASTINGS**

RETAILERS - HASTINGS

PROFILE

Total number of Respondents:	15
Gender:	Male: 3 Female: 10 No Reply: 2
Age Range:	18-24 years 2 25-39 years 5 40-65 years 7 66+ years No Reply 1 Other
Household Type:	Single 2 Couple 5 Couple with children 6 No Reply 1 Other 1
Employment Status:	Full-time 11 Part-time/Casual 2 No Reply 2
Postcode:	No Reply 1 3197 1 3199 1 3912 1 3915 7 3918 3 3934 1

Question 1: Type of business.

The fifteen (15) retailers who completed this survey operated a broad range of retail outlets in the Hastings area (3915).

Question 2: Length of time respondent has been a retailer.

Current Business		Overall Time in Business	
<6 months	1	<6 months	1
1-2 years	6	1-2 years	1
3 -5 years	2	3 -5 years	2
5-10 years	3	5-10 years	2
10-15 years	1	10-15 years	
15-20 years		15-20 years	4
20+ years	1	20+ years	2
30-35 years	1	30-35 years	3
No reply		No reply	
Other		Other	

Question 4: Identified positive benefits on business from introduction of poker machine gambling.

Responses:

15	YES	1	6.5%
	NO	13	87%
	NO REPLY	1	6.5%
	OTHER	0	%

Question 5: Identified negative impacts on business from introduction of poker machine gambling.

Responses:

15	YES	11	73%
	NO	3	20%
	NO REPLY	0	%
	OTHER	1	7%

Question 6: Ways to address the negative impacts of poker machine gambling on your business.

Responses:

15	REPLY	8	54%
	NO REPLY	7	46%

Question 7: Identified positive benefits of poker machine gambling on local community

Responses:

15	YES	3	20%
	NO	12	80%
	NO REPLY	0	%
	OTHER	0	%

Question 8: Identified negative impacts of poker machine gambling on local community.

Responses:

15	YES	13	87%
	NO	1	6.5%
	NO REPLY	0	%
	OTHER	1	6.5%

Question 9: Ways to address negative impacts of poker machine gambling on local community.

Responses:

15	REPLY	9	60%
	NO REPLY	6	40%

Question 10: Personal perceptions about whether the impacts of poker machine gambling on local community has been more positive or more negative.

Responses:

15	MORE POSITIVE	1	6.5%
	MORE NEGATIVE	11	74%
	NO REPLY	1	6.5%
	OTHER	2	13%

Question 11: Knowledge of support services in Mornington Peninsula Shire for people experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

Responses:

15	YES	1	6.6%
	NO	13	87%
	NO REPLY	1	6.5%
	OTHER	0	%

Question 12: Impression of current numbers of poker machines located in the Shire.

Responses:

15	TOO MANY	13	87%
	ENOUGH	1	6.5%
	NOT ENOUGH	0	%
	NO REPLY	1	6.5%
	OTHER	0	%

Question 13: Personal knowledge of a person/persons experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

Responses:

15	YES	12	80%
	NO	3	20%
	NO REPLY	0	%
	OTHER	0	%

With the "YES" replies:-

(A)	<p>A number of people known to respondent to have difficulties because of poker machine gambling.</p> <p>Responses: 12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Person 4 • More Than One Person- 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (2-3) 3 (4-5) 1 (6-10) 1 (10+) 0 • No Reply 3
(B)	<p>How respondent knows this person/these people.</p> <p>Number of Responses: 12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through work 4 • Through personal life 5 • Through work and personal life 3 • No Reply 0 • Other 0
(C)	<p>Descriptions of how people known to respondents have been affected by poker machine gambling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience financial difficulty due to losing more than they could afford. Lying about where they are or what they are doing and how much they lost. • Continually wants to get money back on purchases (to gamble) to enable her pay rent. Has lost her job with her obsessive belief she will win one day. Has taken to stealing things she can sell to be able to replace the housekeeping. • They nearly lost their business, house and family and a hell of a lot of money and time. • They are all broke but still continue to gamble. • Their children are neglected and they run out of money for the necessities of life.

Appendix 5

DATA ANALYSIS : **MORNINGTON**
RETAILERS - MORNINGTON

PROFILE

Total number of Respondents:	23
Gender:	Male: 10 Female: 8 No Reply: 5
Age Range:	18-24 years 2
	25-39 years 9
	40-65 years 12
	66+ years
	No Reply
	Other
Household Type:	Single 4
	Single with children 1
	Couple 8
	Couple with children 10
	No Reply
	Other
Employment Status:	Full-time 21
	Part-time/Casual 1
	No Reply 1
Postcode:	No Reply 1
	3198 1
	3199 1
	3913 1
	3918 1
	3926 1
	3930 3
	3931 13

Question 1: Type of business.

The twenty-three (23) retailers who completed this survey operated a broad range of retail outlets in the Mornington area (Postcode areas 3931 and 3934).

Question 2: Length of time respondent has been a retailer.

Current Business		Overall Time in Business	
<6 months		<6 months	
1-2 years	4	1-2 years	1
3 -5 years	6	3 -5 years	1
5-10 years	9	5-10 years	10
10-15 years	1	10-15 years	2
15-20 years	1	15-20 years	2
20+ years	2	20+ years	4
30-35 years		30-35 years	2
35+ years		35+ years	1
No reply		No reply	
Other		Other	

Question 4: Identified positive benefits on business from introduction of poker machine gambling.

Responses:	23	YES	0	%
		NO	23	100%
		NO REPLY	0	%
		OTHER	0	%

Question 5: Identified negative impacts on business from introduction of poker machine gambling.

Responses:	23	YES	14	61%
		NO	7	3.5%
		NO REPLY	0	%
		OTHER	2	8.5%

Question 6: Ways to address the negative impacts of poker machine gambling on your business.

Responses:

23	REPLY	13	56.5%
	NO REPLY	10	43.5%

Question 7: Identified positive benefits of poker machine gambling on local community

Responses:

23	YES	1	4.5%
	NO	21	91%
	NO REPLY	1	4.5%
	OTHER	0	%

Question 8: Identified negative impacts of poker machine gambling on local community.

Responses:

23	YES	15	65%
	NO	5	22%
	NO REPLY	3	13%
	OTHER	0	%

Question 9: Ways to address negative impacts of poker machine gambling on local community.

Responses:

23	REPLY	11	48%
	NO REPLY	12	52%

Question 10: Personal perceptions about whether the impacts of poker machine gambling on local community has been more positive or more negative.

Responses:

23	MORE POSITIVE	1	4.5%
	MORE NEGATIVE	17	74%
	NO REPLY	3	13%
	OTHER (UNSURE)	2	8.5%

Question 11: Knowledge of support services in Mornington Peninsula Shire for people experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

Responses:

23	YES	5	21.5%
	NO	17	74%
	NO REPLY	1	4.5%
	OTHER	0	%

Question 12: Impression of current numbers of poker machines located in the Shire.

Responses:

23	TOO MANY	16	69.5%
	ENOUGH	6	26%
	NOT ENOUGH	0	%
	NO REPLY	0	%
	OTHER	1	4.5%

Question 13: Personal knowledge of a person/persons experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

Responses:	23	YES	11	48%
		NO	12	52%
		NO REPLY	0	%
		OTHER	0	%

With the "YES" replies:-

(A)	<p>A number of people known to respondent to have difficulties because of poker machine gambling.</p> <p>Responses: 11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Person 4 • More Than One Person- 7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (2-3) 1 (4-5) 0 (6-10) 0 (10+) 0 (Not Specified) 6
(B)	<p>How respondent knows this person/these people.</p> <p>Number of Responses: 11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through work 6 • Through personal life 2 • Through work and personal life 1 • No Reply 2 • Other 0
(C)	<p>Descriptions of how people known to respondents have been affected by poker machine gambling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of esteem, pawns all assets, doesn't socialise. • Doesn't eat, saves food money for gambling. • Spend all their income, borrow money to play. • Addicted to the hope of winning. Thrown away \$1,000s which was badly needed for her children's upbringing. • Spent more than could afford. Had to sell house to clear debts. Don't know if marriage finished because of poker machines, or if in fact, time spent gambling reflected on an unhappy marriage. • Spends more than she has got - creates financial pressure. • Lack of food in house, unpaid utility bills, mortgages unpaid and loss of home through unpaid rent or mortgage. • We have had to evict tenants for rent arrears.

DATA ANALYSIS : **ROSEBUD****RETAILERS - ROSEBUD****PROFILE**

Total number of Respondents:	9
Gender:	Male: 6 Female: 2 No Reply: 1
Age Range:	18-24 years 1 25-39 years 2 40-65 years 5 66+ years No Reply 1 Other
Household Type:	Single 1 Couple 2 Couple with children 4 No Reply 1 Other 1
Employment Status:	Full-time 8 Part-time/Casual 0 No Reply 1
Postcode:	No Reply 1 3199 1 3931 1 3938 1 3939 5

Question 1: Type of business.

The nine retailers who completed this survey operated a broad range of retail outlets in the Rosebud area (Postcode areas 3939 and 3938). They include: clothing shop (2), footwear store, hairdresser (3), pharmacy (2) and a real estate agent.

Question 2: Length of time respondent has been a retailer.

Current Business		Overall Time in Business	
<6 months		<6 months	
1-2 years	1	1-2 years	1
3 -5 years	2	3 -5 years	2
5-10 years		5-10 years	
10-15 years	2	10-15 years	1
15-20 years		15-20 years	
20+ years	2	20+ years	2
30-35 years	2	30-35 years	3
No reply		No reply	
Other		Other	

Question 4: Identified positive benefits on business from introduction of poker machine gambling.

Responses:

9	YES	0	%
	NO	9	100%
	NO REPLY	0	%
	OTHER	0	%

Question 5: Identified negative impacts on business from introduction of poker machine gambling.

Responses:

9	YES	8	89%
	NO	1	11%
	NO REPLY	0	%
	OTHER	0	%

Question 6: Ways to address the negative impacts of poker machine gambling on your business.

Responses:

9	REPLY	6	67%
	NO REPLY	3	33%

Question 7: Identified positive benefits of poker machine gambling on local community

Responses:

9	YES	4	45%
	NO	5	55%
	NO REPLY	0	%
	OTHER	0	%

Question 8: Identified negative impacts of poker machine gambling on local community.

Responses:

9	YES	7	78%
	NO	2	22%
	NO REPLY	0	%
	OTHER	0	%

Question 9: Ways to address negative impacts of poker machine gambling on local community.

Responses:

9	REPLY	5	55%
	NO REPLY	4	45%

Question 10: Personal perceptions about whether the impacts of poker machine gambling on local community has been more positive or more negative.

Responses:

9	MORE POSITIVE	0	%
	MORE NEGATIVE	7	78%
	NO REPLY	1	11%
	OTHER	1	11%

Question 11: Knowledge of support services in Mornington Peninsula Shire for people experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

Responses:

9	YES	0	%
	NO	8	89%
	NO REPLY	1	11%
	OTHER	0	%

Question 12: Impression of current numbers of poker machines located in the Shire.

Responses:

9	TOO MANY	8	89%
	ENOUGH	0	%
	NOT ENOUGH	0	%
	NO REPLY	1	11%
	OTHER	0	%

Question 13: Personal knowledge of a person/persons experiencing difficulties with poker machine gambling.

Responses:	9	YES	3	33%
		NO	4	45%
		NO REPLY	2	22%
		OTHER	0	%

With the "YES" replies:-

(A)	<p>A number of people known to respondent to have difficulties because of poker machine gambling.</p> <p>Responses: 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Person 1 • More Than One Person 2
(B)	<p>How respondent knows this person/these people.</p> <p>Number of Responses: 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through work 2 • Through personal life 1 • Through work and personal life 0 • No Reply 0 • Other
(C)	<p>Descriptions of how people known to respondents have been affected by poker machine gambling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One retired couple have lost their house and now live in a caravan park and still play the pokies. • Spent \$180,000 Superannuation, later followed by forced sale of house.

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6. Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority, 1999 *Poker machine venue listing*, (VCGA Website) March.

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1. The Age, "*Godzilla Must Be Tamed*", 12th February, 1999
2. Weekend Australian, "*Pokies Don't Respect Age, Income or IQ*", 13^{th/14th} February, 1999
3. Weekend Australian, "*Social Ills Too Big a Gamble for West*", 13^{th/14th} February, 1999
4. The Age, "*Pokies didn't Pay so Tattersalls Took Them Away. These People Turned Green 3rd March, 1999*"
5. Herald Sun, "*Pokies Jackpot for Tattersalls*", 24th March, 1999
6. The Age, "*Victoria Leads Gambling Rush as Losses Soar*", Saturday, 24th April, 1999
7. The Age, "*Up to 3% have a gambling problem: report*", 30th August, 1997.
8. The Age, "*The Poverty Trap: why more of us live on the edge*", 5th November, 1998

List of Attachments

- Peninsula on Pokies - a community survey have your say on poker machine gambling (brochure).
- Peninsula on Pokies - a community survey have your say (flyer).
- Fact Sheet handed out to people participating in survey.
- Community Questionnaire (for community members).
- Retail Sector Questionnaire.
- Community Workers Questionnaire (including Case Study Sheet).

Fact Sheet
Poker Machine Gambling

Legislation passed by the Kirner Labor Government in Victoria in 1991 (the Gaming Machine Control Act 1991) paved the way for the introduction of Electronic Gaming in hotels and clubs in Victoria.

Known as poker machine gambling or 'pokies' these machines were first introduced in Victoria in July 1992.

The Victorian State Government is primarily responsible for policy, planning and regulation of the gambling industry in Victoria. The Kennett Government set the cap on poker machines at 27,500, with the plan for this to be reviewed in 1998. Earlier this year, a decision was made to maintain this cap for the time being.

Tattersalls and Tabcorp were awarded the licences to administer these machines in Victoria outside the Casino. Gaming regulation requires that the overall distribution of poker machines be 50:50 in clubs and hotels.

These machines have spread rapidly since then and by June 1997 there were 25,962 machines in hotels and clubs outside the Casino in Victoria. At this time, there were 784 machines in 19 venues across the Mornington Peninsula Shire.

The Victorian and Casino Gaming Authority (VCGA) was established to monitor the impacts of gambling in Victoria. They have commissioned a range of research projects exploring the social and economic effects of poker machines in metropolitan, non-metropolitan and small rural communities as well as employment impacts and problem gambling patterns.

When more than 25% of a particular venue is to be used for poker machine gambling, local government becomes responsible for planning issues in relation to the siting of the facility. Responding to a citizen's concerns about the broader effects of poker machine gambling on the local community also falls within Local Government responsibilities.

According to reports commissioned by the VCGA, expenditure on poker machine gambling statewide was 32.5 million in 1991-1992, which increased to 1,246.3m in 1995-96. By 1997, Victorians spent approximately \$48.9m on poker machine gambling per week. Currently gambling taxes make up approximately 15% of State Government Revenue.

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