

Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading

The Honourable Peter Lawlor

Thursday, May 28, 2009

Bligh Government moves to reduce problem gambling with new technology

The Queensland Government is leading the way in the prevention of problem gambling in Queensland by completing further trials of 'cashless gaming' technology in two Brisbane venues.

Minister responsible for gaming, Peter Lawlor said the new card-based gaming technology allowed patrons to set limits on the money or time they spend on the pokies.

"This harm minimisation concept offers gaming patrons more control over their spending and could potentially be rolled out throughout the state".

"While less than half a percent of the Queensland population can be identified as a problem gambler, one problem gambler is a one problem gambler too many for the Bligh Government.

"The impact problem gambling has on families and communities makes it an important area for the Government to address," Minister Lawlor said.

The trials provided the Queensland Government with the opportunity to investigate pre-commitment card-based machine gaming using two different systems.

In March 2008 the Sandgate RSL Memorial Club became the hub for one of two trials into this important harm minimisation measure. A second trial was conducted at Redcliffe RSL Club.

"The trials showed promising results, with some patrons reporting a spend reduction of up to \$25 per day," said Minister Lawlor.

The wider investigation into card-based gaming is one of a many harm minimisation initiatives announced by Premier Anna Bligh last year, which forms a part of the Queensland Government's Responsible Gambling Strategy.

Member for Sandgate Vicky Darling said The Queensland Government recognises raising awareness of gambling harm is a collaborative effort involving community, industry and government.

"I am happy to report the evaluation of the card-based gaming trials demonstrated on overall support from both players and industry alike," said Ms Darling.

"The Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing has approved both systems for implementation in gaming venues on a voluntary basis."

The Queensland Government intends to continue to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the card-based gaming systems as a larger number of venues take up the technology.

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