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ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS...19.2

Clubs Australia is calling on the Prime Minister to deliver the one Christmas present club members want; a trial of mandatory pre-commitment on all club poker machines in the ACT.

At least sixteen Government MPs have publicly indicated their support for a trial of mandatory pre-commitment. A trial was a key recommendation of the Productivity Commission's report into gambling released almost 18 months ago.

Recommendation 19.2 of the Productivity Commission states:

The Australian Government should enter into negotiations with a state or territory government to sponsor a full-scale regional trial or trials of a full pre-commitment regime (recommendation 10.4), with trialling to commence by 2013.

Trialling should:

- *test the design features of full pre-commitment for possible modification*
- *substantiate that full pre-commitment has sufficient advantages over partial pre-commitment to justify proceeding with its implementation in all jurisdictions.*

Clubs Australia Executive Director Anthony Ball said a trial would allow the Government to better understand the impact of mandatory pre-commitment on problem and recreational gamblers as well as the club and hotel industry.

"It is almost beyond comprehension that the Federal Government would consider something so experimental and invasive to social punters without first conducting a trial to establish its effect on problem gambling.

"Gambling experts are lining up across the country to express their concern that the Government is forcing a \$3 billion experiment on clubs without the faintest piece of evidence suggesting it will help problem gamblers.

"The Prime Minister could deliver her caucus members a much needed Christmas present in the form of a meaningful trial of mandatory pre-commitment. Industry, local clubs and the ACT Government are all supportive of a trial.

"Why is the Prime Minister stalling on delivering what her own MPs are demanding and the Productivity Commission itself recommended?"

"I can only guess the stumbling block is Andrew Wilkie. The Member for Denison has made it clear he only supports a "technical trial" of mandatory pre-commitment, which is the equivalent of building a car and then refusing to test its brakes.

"If the Prime Minister won't play Santa Clause to her MPs then perhaps she will use the new year as an opportunity to stand up to Andrew Wilkie and insist his licence to punt is subjected to a trial to prove its effectiveness," Anthony Ball said.

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