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# **Message from Peter Newell**

In 1956, the NSW Government gave clubs the lawful right to operate poker machines to boost their financial capacity and ensure the long-term sustainability of the industry.

Several decades later, poker machines account for approximately 60 per cent of total club revenue underpinning the 62,000 jobs the industry supports and its \$1.3 billion annual social contribution.

For most people poker machines are a source of entertainment – an opportunity for a harmless flutter. However, a small minority of people experience difficulties in keeping their gambling on poker machines in check. For these people, and their families, excessive gambling can result in serious harms.

Clubs have a responsibility to try to minimise the harm that excessive gambling causes. The NSW club industry takes that obligation seriously, The ClubsNSW Responsible Gambling Strategy 2019-21 outlines our plans for creating a safer and more responsible club gambling environment over the next three years.

I encourage all clubs to read and embrace this new strategy and join ClubsNSW on its journey to achieving world's best practice in the responsible service of gambling.

Peter Newell OAM ClubsNSW Chairman

Peter Neuell



# **About ClubsNSW**

ClubsNSW is the peak body representing licensed clubs in NSW.

Our purpose is to create opportunities for clubs to thrive.

# **NSW Club Industry Snapshot**

- 1348 registered clubs
- 6.7 million memberships
- 62,000 (FTE) direct and indirect jobs
- 50,000 volunteers
- 2487 sporting and fitness facilities
- \$1.8 billion in salaries and wages
- \$1.4 billion state taxes
- \$1.3 billion annual social contribution
- \$3.7 billion annual economic contribution.

Source: NSW Club Census 2015, KPMG

# **Executive Summary**

Gambling is a recreational pursuit enjoyed by millions of New South Wales residents. For the overwhelming majority, gambling is a source of entertainment and enjoyment.

Most clubs in NSW are reliant on the income from gaming machines and other forms of gambling. The NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) found that 'there is no other business line that can feasibly replace gaming in a club's business model.'

The club industry is aware that excessive gambling can cause significant problems for some individuals and society more broadly.

The NSW Government has adopted a comprehensive regulatory regime for gambling harm minimisation, and as a result, the rate of problem gambling in NSW is amongst the lowest in Australia.

In addition, the club industry has introduced its own strategies for minimising harm, including:

- The world's first online Multi-Venue Self-Exclusion (MVSE) system
- Salvation Army Club Chaplaincy program
- Access to 24/7 ClubSAFE Counselling Service
- ClubSAFE Ambassador NRL legend Nathan Hindmarsh
- ClubSAFE Premium Responsible Gambling program
- \$1 million in harm minimisation research funding.

The industry's approach to minimising harm is to create safe environments where people can make informed choices about their gambling. ClubsNSW has developed this responsible gambling strategy to help achieve this goal.

# **ClubsNSW Responsible Gambling Strategy 2019-21**

#### Mission

To achieve world's best practice in the responsible service of gambling.

#### Commitments



#### **Policies & Procedures**

Promote responsible gambling best practices by:

- promoting industry responsible gambling practices through ClubSAFE and ClubSAFE Premium
- developing best practice guidelines in key areas including loyalty programs
- promoting responsible gambling player behaviours through a digital advertising campaign
- working collaboratively with Liquor & Gaming NSW and the NSW Office of Responsible Gambling.



#### **Informed Choice**

Facilitate informed decision-making about gambling by:

- using digital technology to improve access to consumer information on gaming machines
- using ClubSAFE Ambassadors to continue to raise awareness about the risks of problem gambling
- supporting research into effective responsible gambling messaging strategies.



#### Tools

Provide access to a range of responsible gambling tools by:

- working to introduce responsible gambling features on gaming machines
- increasing the coverage of venue-based voluntary pre-commitment in clubs
- providing club patrons with access to a range of online responsible gambling tools and resources
- developing tools to assist staff in identifying and overseeing the responsible conduct of gambling.



#### **Customer Service**

Engage proactively with customers to identify problems by:

- growing the Salvation Army Club Chaplaincy program to provide pastoral care to club members
- providing advanced staff training programs that will improve interactions with at-risk patrons
- developing and launching a family intervention process with the support of Liquor & Gaming NSW.



#### **Help & Support**

Offer counselling, support, self-exclusion and chaplaincy services by:

- continuing to use the ClubSAFE Ambassador to encourage help seeking and reduce stigma associated with problem gambling
- improving self-exclusion access, breach detection and ongoing support mechanisms
- providing access to self-help tools to help people to identify and manage gambling problems
- fostering stronger links between clubs and local counselling services
- using technology to promote easier access to treatment services.



#### **Research & Education**

Provide funding and support for gambling research and education by:

- providing ongoing funding for independent research into gambling harm minimisation
- using evidence to test and introduce new responsible gambling measures
- working with problem gamblers to improve intervention and harm minimisation strategies
- further educating club directors and staff on the benefits of a Responsible Gambling approach.



#### Compliance

Ensure compliance with legislation and best practice guidelines by:

- providing high quality responsible conduct of gambling information and advice
- promoting compliance with responsible gambling legislation and best practice guidelines
- providing independent compliance audits of clubs through ClubSAFF Premium.

# Gambling in New South Wales RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING STRATEGY 2019-21 | 9

Around 1.4 million people in NSW play gaming machines each year, and the overwhelming majority (93 per cent) do not report experiencing any negative impacts on their quality of life from their gambling.<sup>1</sup>

However, for a small percentage of individuals, their families and the broader community, excessive gambling causes significant harm including financial difficulties, emotional stress and in extreme cases, self-harm.

The NSW Government has adopted a comprehensive regulatory regime for gambling harm minimisation. The rates of problem gambling in NSW amongst the lowest in Australia.<sup>2</sup>

The (adjusted) prevalence of problem gamblers (PGSI applied to regular gamblers only) identified in this NSW study (0.4%) is lower than the all of the other jurisdictions.

# **Gambling and the NSW Population**

# **NSW Population**



Problem Gamblers

A Other Gamblers

Non-gamblers

- 2 in 3 adults gamble at least once per year
- 1 in 4 adults play gaming machines at least once per year
- 1 in 10 adults play gaming machines regularly
- 1 in 125 adults are classified as problem gamblers (PGSI 8+).

Source: NSW Gambling Prevalence Study, NSW Government, 2012.

# **Existing Harm Minimisation Measures**

State and territory governments, in conjunction with industry, have adopted a wide range of harm minimisation and responsible gambling measures designed to reduce the harm caused by problem gambling. As a result, Australia is a global leader in gambling harm minimisation.3

For example, poker machines in NSW undergo an arduous approval process in which every aspect of their design is scrutinised for its potential to exacerbate problem gambling. Many poker machine products available in international markets, such as the United States, are not approved in NSW due to the precautionary approach taken by state and territory governments towards harm minimisation (see Table 1).

In addition, each jurisdiction also has a wide range of regulations governing the operation of poker machines to promote responsible conduct among gaming operators (See Table 2).

# Table 1 - Restrictions on Poker Machine Design Features

Gaming Machine National Standards requirements:

- minimum return to player percentage
- maximum bet, prize and cash input limits
- a ban on auto-play
- a ban on misleading display of results
- a ban on any illusion of control over the outcomes
- prize probability limits
- limits on payout volatility
- · display of clocks.

#### Additional NSW jurisdictional requirements:

- a ban on non-linear pay tables
- a limit on the maximum number of free spins
- a ban on depictions of real money (e.g. \$50 notes)
- restrictions on game names and themes
- a ban on player inducement messages
- restrictions on advertising the maximum prize
- a ban on requiring ante-bets to be eligible for jackpots
- restrictions on button panel layouts
- limits on ante-bets for feature games
- restrictions on minimum bet.

# Table 2 - Existing Harm Minimisation Regulations

The list below represents some of harm minimisations regulations in force within NSW:

- advertising restrictions or bans
- statewide cap on the number of poker machines

- local impact assessments prior to an increase in poker machine numbers
- restrictions on minors accessing gambling
- bans on inducements (e.g. free alcohol)
- bans on credit gambling
- payment of large prizes via cheque
- restrictions on the locations of ATMs
- mandatory shutdown periods
- restrictions on cash promotions
- self-exclusion schemes
- provision of gambling help services information
- compulsory responsible gambling training for staff
- clocks on gaming machines
- signage about the risks of excessive gambling.

# **NSW Gambling Expenditure Trends**

NSW total gambling expenditure was \$9.5 billion in 2016-17, this represents:

- 2.4 per cent of household disposable income (HDI)
- weekly per capita gambling expenditure of \$30.21.

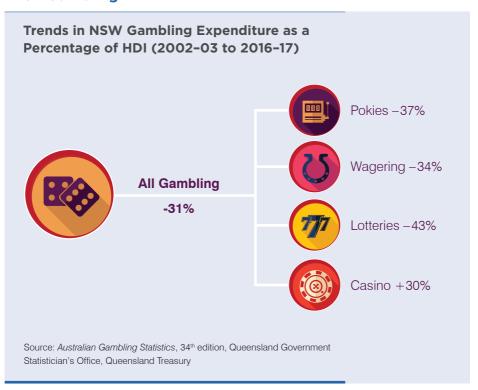
As percentage of HDI, total gambling expenditure in NSW has fallen by 31 per cent from its peak in 2002–03.4

NSW residents now spend less of their incomes on gambling than prior to the introduction of poker machines into hotels in 1997.

Since 2002-03, expenditure as a percentage of HDI has fallen for gaming machines, wagering and lotteries but risen for casinos.5

NSW Government tax revenue from gambling was \$2.23 billion for 2016-17.6

# **Less Disposable Income Spent** on Gambling





In 2012, Clubs Australia launched its responsible gambling policy Part of the Solution: Promoting a Culture of Responsible Gambling that provided a multi-faceted approach to tackling the issue of problem gambling in the community.

Most objectives detailed in the Clubs Australia strategy have been achieved resulting in a range of positive outcomes.

Goals	Outcomes
Bans on credit betting	$\checkmark$
Promote informed choice	<b>√</b>
School-based education & awareness	$\checkmark$
National campaign promoting responsible gambling	$\checkmark$
Screen kit for health professionals	$\checkmark$
Improved promotion of treatment options	$\checkmark$
Support gambling research	$\checkmark$
Voluntary pre-commitment	Ò
Staff early intervention programs	Ò
Family interventions	O

# **Key Positive Outcomes**

6000 patrons assisted through Multi-Venue Self-Exclusion (MVSE)

45% of self-exclusion through qualified counselling services

2900 venues participating in MVSE

5000 students visited by ClubSAFE Ambassador, Nathan Hindmarsh

274,000 club members with access to a Salvation Army Club Chaplain

\$1 million in grants for responsible gambling research

30,000 EGMs connected to voluntary pre-commitment systems

25% of club EGMs covered under ClubSAFE Premium

# **Highlights**

#### ClubSAFF Ambassador

ClubSAFE Ambassador Nathan Hindmarsh visited schools, prisons and indigenous communities to raise awareness about the risk of problem gambling and the support services available. Nathan's profile as former champion footballer allows him to resonate with several key high-risk groups including young males – particularly those that are incarcerated or from an Indigenous background.

The program provides important information about the signs of gambling problems and where to get help and support. Nathan's profile as an elite athlete and his narrative approach deliver the messages in an accessible and engaging manner that helps reduce stigma around gambling problems and help seeking.

Nathan has also worked closely with the Warruwi Gambling Help service to share his own battle with gambling with people in disadvantaged Indigenous communities in NSW.



# Club Chaplaincy

ClubsNSW and the Salvation Army have trialled and commenced a Club Chaplaincy program to provide pastoral care to club members.

The program was developed in response to research that identified that the presence of comorbidities such as mood, anxiety, substance abuse and alcohol disorders all contribute towards increased risk of developing a gambling problem.<sup>7</sup>

The research recommended that clubs should consider offering general mental health support services for patrons experiencing personal and emotional difficulties as a preventative approach to problem gambling.8

The Club Chaplaincy program now provides pastoral care and support that is accessible to over 270,000 club members in various parts of NSW.



#### **Multi-Venue Self-Exclusion**

ClubsNSW has taken many significant steps to improve the operation of self-exclusion in NSW, including the development of the world's first online multi-venue self-exclusion (MVSE) tool. MVSE allows a person to exclude from multiple venues through one simple process, whereas prior to its introduction a person would be required to visit each venue individually.

Following the roll-out of MVSE to all clubs in NSW, ClubsNSW successfully negotiated for MVSE to be rolled out to all hotels in NSW through the Australian Hotels Association (NSW). ClubsNSW also made MVSE available, free of charge, to all NSW Government funded gambling counselling services. Approximately 45 per cent of all self-exclusions now occur through counselling services, which acts as an excellent 'backdoor' into more formal treatment programs.

Since its inception MVSE has assisted over 6000 individuals, preventing people from breaching their self-exclusion on more than 1500 occasions.

ClubsNSW has also provided grant funding to the University of Sydney to conduct longitudinal research into the effectiveness of MVSE. This research has demonstrated that there are significant positive outcomes for people that participate in the MVSE program (see below).

# Multi-Venue Self-Exclusion Participant **Outcomes**

Reduced gambling	74%
Improved financial situation	74%
Greater control over gambling	72%
Reduced negative emotions	70%
Improved relationships	70%
Reduced gambling urges	63%

Source: Multi-Venue Self-Exclusion for Gambling Disorders: A Retrospective Process Investigation, Pickering et al, Journal of Gambling Issues Issue 38, May 2018.

#### Counsellor Testimonials - MVSF

#### **Effectiveness**

'For some clients it is extremely effective, especially when combined with gambling help counselling. The self-exclusion can be one piece of the recovery puzzle.'

'Looking at it through the eyes of a counsellor it is a very effective program, it helps so many people that are effected by problem aamblina.'

#### Ease of Use

'Very easy and MVSE Admin is always available, approachable, supportive and friendly. It is a privilege and inspiring to be able to work with such caring professionals, whom I feel I share a common goal with.'

'It makes my job so much easier, and cuts down on paper work.'

#### **Addition of Hotels**

'A godsend. A complete winning move / outcome. The addition of the Pubs/Hotels to MVSE makes it a lot easier and time efficient for both the facilitator and client.'

# **Gambling Research**

ClubsNSW has provided over \$1 million in philanthropic funding to the University of Sydney to conduct further research into gambling harm minimisation. The funding is provided to the Gambling Treatment and Research Clinic (GTRC), which is a world leader in gambling treatment and research.

The GTRC is part of the University of Sydney's renowned Brain and Mind Centre and led by eminent gambling researcher Professor Alex Blaszczynski.

The GTRC utilised the philanthropic funding from ClubsNSW to conduct high-quality independent research on gambling harm minimisation, with a focus on research that can help improve industry practices. The research projects conducted by the University include evaluations of the Multi-Venue Self-Exclusion (MVSE) program and Club Chaplaincy, as well a proactive research into enhanced staff training in responsible gambling, third party exclusion and problem gambling prevention.

'The funding has enabled the development of a critical mass of experts to come together to challenge the myths and misunderstandings, improve the knowledge of factors that contribute to excessive gambling, and support emerging scientists in their scholarly endeavours.'

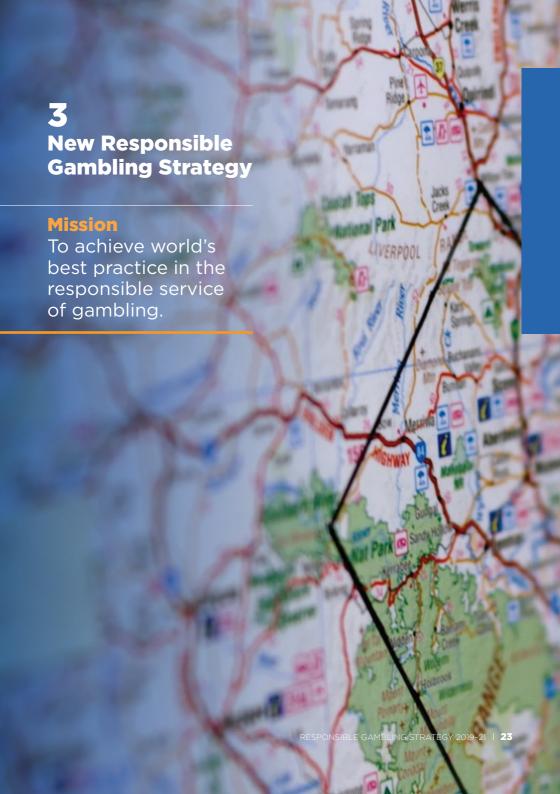
**Professor Alex Blaszczynski Director, GTRC** 

# **Family Interventions**

ClubsNSW through the ClubSAFE counselling provides important support for family and friends seeking an intervention in relation to third-party intervention requests. This includes referrals to face-to-face psychological and financial counselling. In addition, ClubSAFE counsellors coach staff on the appropriate way to approach the relevant customer to offer self-exclusion and counselling support.

Clubs actively advocated for the introduction of third-party exclusion process that would empower families to have the gambler excluded from gaming machine venues, upon providing sufficient evidence of gambling-related harm and subject to due process.

ClubsNSW recently received bipartisan support for the introduction of a third-party exclusion scheme in NSW.



# **Commitments**



#### **Policies & Procedures**

Promote responsible gambling best practices.



#### **Informed Choice**

Facilitate informed decision-making about gambling.



#### Tools

Provide access to a range of responsible gambling tools.



#### **Customer Service**

Engage proactively with customers to identify problems.



#### **Help & Support**

Offer counselling, support, self-exclusion and chaplaincy services.



#### **Research & Education**

Provide funding and support for gambling research and education.



#### Compliance

Ensure compliance with legislation and best practice guidelines.

# **New Responsible Gambling Strategy**



#### **Promote Responsible Gambling Practices**

Responsible gambling is the provision and use of gambling products in a manner that is safe and enjoyable. It requires more than simply asking a person to 'gamble responsibly' or telling a gambling operator to engage in the 'responsible conduct of gambling'. Such directives must be accompanied by clear strategies and practices that can be followed.

ClubsNSW plays an active role in promoting responsible gambling practices through its ClubSAFE and ClubSAFE Premium services. We will further develop our best practice guidelines to encompass key areas including loyalty programs.

ClubsNSW has commissioned the Responsible Gambling Council, Canada to conduct an independent review of the ClubSAFE program to benchmark it against international best practice. The review will be completed by 30 September 2019.

ClubsNSW will also provide additional opportunities to educate club directors and staff on the importance of responsible gambling.

In addition, we will develop a digital marketing campaign to promote tips about how to gamble responsibly among club patrons, rather than providing a simple 'gamble responsibly' slogan.

ClubsNSW will also work collaboratively with Liquor & Gaming NSW and the NSW Office of Responsible Gambling to promote responsible gambling.

# Responsible Gambling Behaviours



Source: Hing, N, Russell, A & Hronis, A 2016, Behavioural Indicators of Responsible Gambling Consumption, Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, Melbourne.

#### Measures of Success

- Maintain the NSW Problem Gambling Prevalence rate at less than 1% of the adult population
- Increase ClubSAFE Premium membership
- Issue clear guidance on responsible gambling best practices
- · Respond to the recommendations of the independent review of the ClubSAFE Program
- Increase club attendance at the National Association of Gambling Studies Conference
- Increase awareness of responsible gambling behaviours among club patrons, as assessed through the ClubsNSW triennial patron survey.



#### 2 Facilitate Informed Choice

ClubsNSW supports improvement to the information available to consumers to facilitate more informed decision-making regarding gambling purchases.

ClubsNSW is committed to improving access to information about gaming machines and the risk of problem gambling. Digital technologies and social media have the capability to dramatically increase accessibility to consumer information. which has typically been confined to physical brochures located in venues.

ClubsNSW will both work with researchers and suppliers to develop the appropriate digital content as well as encourage clubs to utilise their digital distribution channels to distribute that content to members.

ClubSAFE Ambassador Nathan Hindmarsh conducts regular outreach and problem gambling awareness sessions among groups that have been identified as high-risk for developing gambling problems including local high schools, prisons and indigenous communities.

These sessions are designed to raise awareness about the risks of problem gambling and support services that are available.

ClubsNSW commits to continuing to utilise ClubSAFE Ambassador Nathan Hindmarsh and if appropriate other suitably qualified individuals.



# Measures of Success

- Information on gaming machines and risk of problem gambling accessible digitally for club patrons
- High-risk communities including high schools, prisons and indigenous communities visited by ClubSAFE Ambassadors.



#### **3 Enhance Responsible Gambling Tools**

Tools that empower players and help them retain control over their gambling behaviours play an important role in shaping healthy relationships with gambling.9

The availability of responsible gambling tools has increased in recent times with the release of various gambling expenditure calculators and tracking tools. There is also ongoing research into incorporating responsible gambling tools into gaming machine designs.

ClubsNSW supports increasing the availability of cost-effective responsible gambling tools. This includes tools that can assist club staff in performing responsible conduct of gambling duties.

ClubsNSW is also committed to working with gaming machine suppliers and researchers to improve access to responsible gambling tools on gaming machines.

In addition, ClubsNSW will continue to support the roll-out of venue-based voluntary pre-commitment to the clubs industry.

#### Measures of Success

- All new gaming machines to have embedded Responsible Gambling tools by 2022
- Majority of club gaming machines to have venue-based voluntary pre-commitment by 2022
- Increase in the referral of online traffic by clubs and ClubSAFE to Gambling Help Online
- Availability of a mobile-friendly version of Multi-Venue Self-Exclusion.



# 4 Proactively Engage with Patrons

A key advantage of the club environment is the ability for staff to oversee patron behaviour and offer support to people showing sians of distress.

ClubsNSW is committed to providing staff with new advanced training developed by the University of Sydney. The training will provide staff with the skills and confidence to interact with patrons that are displaying signs indicative of a gambling problem.

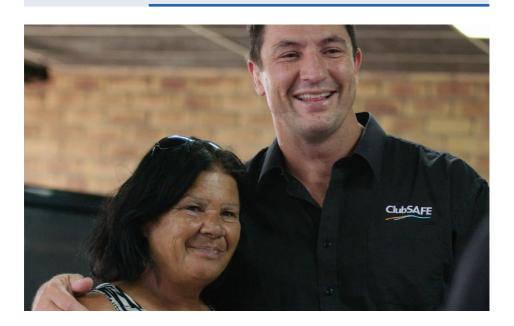
In addition, research has found strong associations between problem gambling and other mental health issues, such as loneliness, grief, anxiety and depression. These comorbid mental health conditions are often the precursors to gambling problems.10

The Club Chaplaincy program is a preventative initiative of ClubsNSW and the Salvation Army, which provides pastoral care and support to club members supporting their overall mental health and wellbeing. We will continue to grow the reach of the Club Chaplaincy program.



#### Measures of Success

- Increase the number of club patrons with access to Club Chaplaincy or in-venue counselling services.
- Roll-out of the University of Sydney Gambling Research and Treatment Clinic's Advanced Responsible Conduct of Gambling staff training programs.
- Work with Liquor & Gaming NSW on the introduction of a legislated family intervention scheme.





#### 5 Encourage Treatment Seeking

ClubsNSW commits to further encouraging treatment seeking for those people who could benefit.

ClubSAFE will continue to promote the message 'If gambling isn't fun anymore, it's ok to ask for help' – designed to reduce stigma and encourage early help seeking.

ClubsNSW will also work to foster greater collaboration between clubs and local counselling services, acknowledging that face-to-face counselling is highly effective in treating gambling problems.11

ClubSAFE Multi-Venue Self-Exclusion (MVSE) is a treatment tool that has assisted over 6000 individuals regain control over their gambling. ClubsNSW commits to improving MVSE access, breach detection and ongoing support mechanisms to provide an even greater level of support to existing and future MVSE participants.

Research has shown that consumers increasingly want the convenience of accessing help services online.12

Online self-help and brief intervention services typically have fewer barriers to access and can be provided at a relatively low-cost. Some of the potential tools include:

- online screening and automated feedback
- online gambling budgeting tools
- interactive self-directed CBT online programs
- SMS motivational messages
- access to counsellors via email, or online chat research evaluating the efficacy of these services is an emerging field, but early results show great promise.

ClubsNSW will work with clubs to improve patrons' access to the government funded Gambling Help Online service that provides a range of online counselling and self-help tools to assist people in identifying and managing gambling problems.



Measures of Success

- Increase in awareness of the 'If gambling isn't fun anymore, it's ok to ask for help' ClubSAFE campaign among club patrons
- Increase in breach detection rates for MVSF.
- Increase in the number of ClubSAFE Premium clubs that provide access to a Club Chaplain or in-venue support worker.
- Increase in the number of clubs that have a responsible gambling page on their website with direct links to Gambling Help Online.
- Improved collaboration between clubs and local counselling services.



#### 6 Improve the Knowledge Base

Improving the responsible gambling and harm minimisation knowledge base is critical to the development of cost-effective policy.

ClubsNSW will encourage and support high-quality independent research on gambling harm minimisation with a focus on research that can help improve industry practices.

ClubsNSW believes that industry can play a crucial role both in terms of providing philanthropic funding and providing access to real world gaming data and environments.

Through the ClubSAFE MVSE, ClubsNSW has access to a large database of current and former gamblers who have indicated a willingness to participate in future research.

ClubsNSW will use evidence to test and introduce innovation in responsible gambling best practice for venues. We will respond to on-going evaluations of the MVSE, Club Chaplaincy program and Advanced Staff Training.

We will also encourage research into new technologies such as data analytics, facial recognition and app-based pre-commitment.

ClubsNSW undertakes to further educate club directors and staff on the benefits of a Responsible Gambling approach by providing key learning opportunities.

### Measures of Success

- Research reports published with meaningful recommendations for the club industry.
- A more informed and evidence-based approach to gambling policy formulation.
- Well attended Responsible Gambling educational events for club directors and staff.





## 7 Achieve Excellence in Compliance

Compliance is a cornerstone of any successful responsible gambling and harm minimisation program.

ClubsNSW will promote compliance with responsible gambling legislation and the ClubSAFE best practice guidelines by providing high quality information and advice.

In addition, we will conduct independent compliance audits of clubs through the ClubSAFE Premium program, with outcomes and remedial action plans provided for report back to club boards.

ClubSAFE will continue to provide training on important compliance obligations such as anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing (AML/CTF).

ClubsNSW will also respond to the recommendations of the independent review of the ClubSAFE program to help improve its compliance and auditing function.

#### Measures of Success

 A reduction in the number and severity of gaming-related breaches reported by Liquor & Gaming NSW.

#### **Endnotes**

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