CHAPTER 8
COMPARISON OF GAMBLING AND PROBLEM GAMBLING BETWEEN GAMING VENUE STAFF AND THE VICTORIAN POPULATION

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses Research Objective Five, which is to compare the gambling behaviour and prevalence of non-gambling, non-problem gambling, low risk, moderate risk and problem gambling between gaming venue staff and the general population of Victoria (as identified by prior research).

The most recent population survey of gambling and problem gambling conducted in Victoria is the *2003 Victorian Longitudinal Community Attitudes Survey* (Centre for Gambling Research, 2004a). Using an effective random sample of 8479 Victorian residents, the survey was conducted in April and May of 2003 by ACNielsen, with the data then analysed by the Centre for Gambling Research at the Australian National University. The survey identified three groups – non-gamblers, non-regular gamblers and regular gamblers – and interviewed them about their gambling behaviour, and their attitudes to gambling and its impact on the community. It used three different screens to measure problem gambling – the South Oaks Gambling Screen, the Canadian Problem Gambling Index and the Victorian Gambling Screen, with each screen administered to approximately equal numbers of regular gamblers. All data were weighted to increase their representativeness of the target population of all adults living in Victoria. Readers are referred to that research report for more details of its methodology.

The Victorian population survey was conducted more than four years earlier than the current survey of gaming venue staff. Clearly, the current study of staff who work in Victorian hotels and clubs has a much smaller sample (n = 533) than did the Victorian population survey (n = 8479). Additionally, the staff survey cannot claim to have obtained a random sample, although every hotel and club in Victoria was given the opportunity for their staff to be included. Where the methodologies between the two studies differ substantially, this is noted in the relevant sections of this chapter.

The survey of the 533 staff who work in Victorian hotels and clubs is referred to in this chapter as the staff survey, while the *2003 Victorian Longitudinal Community Attitudes Survey* (Centre for Gambling Research, 2004a) is referred to as the Victorian survey. Comparisons between the two samples are drawn for gambling participation, frequency and problem gambling.

8.2 GAMBLING PARTICIPATION

Differences between the results of the two surveys are considered below in terms of overall gambling participation, number of gambling activities, and participation in different types of gambling activities.

8.2.1 Overall Gambling Participation

Overall, 95.9 per cent per cent of respondents in the staff survey reported participating in at least one of the gambling activities surveyed during the preceding 12 months. This is substantially

higher than the overall participation rate of 77.4 per cent found in the Victorian survey of 2003, and also higher than the participation rate found in any of the Victorian population surveys, since the first was conducted in 1992. The highest participation rate identified amongst the Victorian population to date has been 87 per cent in 1996 (Centre for Gambling Research, 2004a:48). The participation rate found in the staff survey is also higher than that for any of the socio-demographic groups for which participation rates are reported from the 2003 Victorian survey. In that survey, the highest participation rates were found amongst single parents (86.0 per cent), separated or divorced people (84.3 per cent), people on medium incomes (83.4 per cent) and full-time workers (80.1 per cent).

8.2.2 Number of Gambling Activities

Amongst the respondents in the staff survey who gambled on any activity during the previous 12 months (n = 511), the average number of different gambling activities undertaken in the preceding 12 months was 4.4 (std dev. = 2.130, std error = 0.088), which is substantially higher than the 2003 Victorian population figure of 2.3 activities. The average number of gambling activities found in the staff survey is also higher than that for any of the groups participating in the highest number of different activities in the 2003 Victorian survey – regular gamblers (3.4 activities), people aged 18-24 years (2.6 activities), those in group households (2.5 activities) and students (2.8 activities). However, it should be noted that the staff survey asked about 11 different gambling activities, whereas the 2003 Victorian survey asked about participation in ten gambling activities. That survey combined participation rates for betting on horse or greyhound races at a TAB and at a racetrack, recorded separate participation rates for Club Keno at the Crown Casino and for Club Keno in hotels and clubs, and included an 'other' category, rather than asking specifically about bingo and private gambling, as the staff survey did. Thus, this comparison of the number of gambling activities between the surveys should be viewed with caution.

8.2.3 Participation in Different Gambling Activities

Table 8.1 shows the frequency distributions for participation in the various forms of gambling during the previous 12 months, as reported by respondents to the staff survey and to the Victorian survey. Of note is that:

- gambling participation rates amongst the surveyed hotel and club staff are higher than for the general population of Victoria for all types of gambling for which comparisons can be made;

- gambling participation rates in the staff survey were substantially higher than in the Victorian survey for playing EGMs (43.8 per cent higher), betting on horse or greyhound races at a TAB (36.8 per cent), betting on horse or greyhound races at a racetrack (32.7 per cent) and playing Club Keno (30.4 per cent);

- gambling participation rates in the staff survey were somewhat higher than in the Victorian survey for buying instant scratch tickets for themselves (17.7 per cent higher), playing lottery-type games (17.4 per cent higher), playing casino table games (14.8 per cent higher) and betting on a sporting event at a TAB (14.5 per cent higher);

- gambling participation rates in the staff survey were only marginally higher than in the Victorian survey for playing internet casino games (2.1 per cent higher).

Table 8-1: Participation in different gambling activities (staff and Victorian surveys)

Type of gambling	Staff 2007[a] %	VIC 2003 [b] %	Difference
Bought instant scratch tickets for yourself	51.6	33.9	+17.7
Played lotto or any other lottery game	77.9	60.5	+17.4
Bet on horse or greyhound races at a racetrack	46.3	13.6	+32.7
Played table games at a casino	22.1	7.3	+14.8
Played casino games on the internet for money	2.3	0.2	+2.1
Gambled privately with friends for money	13.5	n/a[c]	n/a[c]
Played bingo	12.2	n/a[c]	n/a[c]
Played Club Keno	35.5	5.1	+30.4
Bet on horse or greyhound races at a TAB	59.1	22.3	+36.8
Bet on a sporting event at a TAB	20.1	5.6	+14.5
Played EGMs	77.3	33.5	+43.8

[a] based on a per centage of n = 533.
[b] based on a per centage of weighted n =8479.
[c] no comparison possible as these forms of gambling were not included in the Victorian survey.

8.3 GAMBLING FREQUENCY

Table 8.2 compares the frequency distributions for gambling on each activity amongst the staff survey respondents who engaged in that type of gambling in the previous 12 months and compares them to the frequency distributions from the 2003 Victorian survey, also based on respondents who engaged in that type of gambling in the previous 12 months.

When gambling at least **monthly** during the 12 months prior to each survey is considered:

- higher proportions of respondents in the staff survey than in the Victorian survey had gambled at least monthly on EGMs (staff = 58.0 per cent, Vic = 30.6 per cent), Club Keno (staff = 36.7 per cent, Vic = 16.8 per cent), instant scratch tickets (staff = 37.8 per cent, Vic = 34.4 per cent), internet casino games for money (staff = 43.5 per cent, Vic = 35.5 per cent), betting on horse or greyhound races (staff = 43.9 per cent, Vic = 22.1 per cent), and sportsbetting (staff = 37.3 per cent, Vic = 32.3 per cent);

- the largest differences in gambling at least monthly on these activities between the staff survey and the Victorian survey were for EGMs (+27.4 per cent), betting on horse or greyhound races (+21.8 per cent) and Club Keno (+19.9 per cent). Lesser differences were apparent for gambling on internet casino games (+8.0 per cent), sportsbetting (+5.0 per cent) and instant scratch tickets (+3.4 per cent);

- about the same proportion of respondents in the staff survey and the Victorian survey had gambled at least monthly on lottery-type games (staff = 64.3 per cent, Vic = 65.0 per cent);

- a lower proportion of respondents in the staff survey than in the Victorian survey had gambled at least monthly on casino table games (staff = 10.4 per cent, Vic = 14.4 per cent).

When gambling at least **weekly** during the 12 months prior to each survey is considered:

- higher proportions of respondents in the staff survey than in the Victorian survey had gambled at least weekly on EGMs (staff = 23.3 per cent, Vic = 8.5 per cent), Club Keno (staff = 13.0 per cent, Vic = 4.0 per cent), instant scratch tickets for themselves (staff = 14.2 per cent, Vic = 11.5 per cent), betting on horse or greyhound races (staff = 26.3 per cent, Vic = 10.3 per cent), and sportsbetting (staff = 13.9 per cent, Vic = 11.8 per cent);

- the largest differences in at least weekly gambling between respondents in the staff survey and in the Victorian survey were for betting on horse or greyhound races (+16.0 per cent), EGMs (+14.8 per cent) and Club Keno (+9.0 per cent). Lesser differences were apparent for gambling on instant scratch tickets (+2.7 per cent) and sportsbetting (+2.1 per cent);

- the same proportion of respondents in the staff survey and in the Victorian survey had gambled at least weekly on casino table games (1.8 per cent);

- lower proportions of respondents in the staff survey than in the Victorian survey had gambled at least weekly on internet casino games (staff = 8.7 per cent, Vic = 12.8 per cent) and lottery-type games (staff = 42.9 per cent, Vic = 45.2 per cent).

Table 8-2: Frequency of gambling on different activities (staff and Victorian surveys)

Type of gambling	Total participation[a] %		Less than once/ month[b] %		1-3 times/ month[b] %		1-3 times/ week[b] %		More than 3 times/ week[b] %	
	Staff 2007	Vic 2003	Staff 2007	Vic 2003	Staff 2007	Vic 2003	Staff 2007	Vic 2003	Staff 2007	Vic 2003
Bought instant scratch tickets for yourself	51.6	33.9	62.2	65.6	23.6	22.9	13.4	11.3	0.8	0.2
Played lotto or any other lottery game	77.9	60.5	35.7	35.0	21.4	19.8	41.2	43.5	1.7	1.7
Bet on horse or greyhound races	67.2	28.2	56.1	77.9	17.6	11.8	16.5	8.3	9.8	2.0
Bet on horse/greyhound races at racetrack	46.3	13.6	67.6	n/a	17.1	n/a	11.4	n/a	4.1	n/a
Played table games at a casino[c]	22.1	7.3	90.0	85.6	8.6	12.6	1.8	1.5	0.0	0.3
Played internet casino games for money	2.3	0.2	56.5	64.4	34.8	22.7	8.7	6.0	0.0	6.8
Gambled privately with friends for money	13.5	n/a	60.0	n/a	34.8	n/a	5.9	n/a	0.0	n/a
Played bingo	12.2	n/a	56.6	n/a	29.5	n/a	13.9	n/a	0.0	n/a
Played Club Keno	35.5	5.1	63.4	83.1	23.7	12.8	10.7	4.0	2.3	0.0
Bet on horse or greyhound races at a TAB	59.1	22.3	56.5	n/a	19.3	n/a	16.2	n/a	8.0	n/a
Bet on a sporting event at a TAB	20.1	5.6	62.7	67.7	23.4	20.5	11.9	11.4	2.0	0.4
Played EGMs	77.3	33.5	42.0	69.5	34.7	22.1	19.9	7.6	3.4	0.9

[a] based on the whole population (staff n = 533, Vic weighted n = 8479).
[b] Represents the proportion of gamblers who engaged in that form of gambling (n = various).
[c] The Victorian survey asked only about playing table games at the Crown Casino, whereas the staff survey asked about playing table games at 'a casino'.

8.4 GAMBLING EXPENDITURE

Unfortunately, gambling expenditure by the respondents to the staff survey could not be compared to the Victorian population survey of 2003, as expenditure figures were not collected by that survey, due to concerns about the consistent unreliability of self-reported expenditure figures in previous research when compared to expenditure figures from official sources (Centre for Gambling Research, 2004a). As noted earlier, given this consistent unreliability, expenditure figures for the current survey should also be viewed with caution.

8.5 GAMBLING DURATION

Unfortunately, gambling duration by the respondents to the staff survey could not be compared to the Victorian population survey of 2003. The Victorian data on duration of each activity were collected only from respondents who nominated that activity as the one they had spent the most money on overall during the last 12 months, whereas the staff survey collected these data from all respondents. Additionally, the way the questions on duration were asked varied between surveys. The staff survey asked 'How many hours and minutes do you normally spend each time you

gamble on the following activities', with each activity then listed with a space next to each for the respondents to record their answers. The Victorian survey asked:

- 'how many hours and minutes do you normally spend each time you play poker machines or gaming machines?'
- 'how many hours and minutes do you normally spend each time you gamble on horse or greyhound racing, including preparation and time spent at the venue?'
- 'how many hours and minutes do you normally spend each time you play Club Keno at a club, hotel, casino or other place?'
- 'how many hours or minutes do you normally spend gambling at table games at a casino such as blackjack or roulette, including preparation and time spent at the venue?'
- 'how many hours and minutes do you normally spend each time you gamble on a sporting event like football, cricket or tennis, including preparation and time spent at the venue or on the net?'

Given these differences, it was decided that any comparisons would be too compromised by these differences in sampling and questioning about gambling duration in the two surveys.

8.6 DISTANCE TRAVELLED FOR EGM GAMBLING

A further comparison which is possible between the two surveys and which is relevant to accessibility to gambling is the distance people usually travel to gamble. In the Victorian survey, this was addressed only in relation to EGMs, where respondents were asked ''Think about the last time you played poker machines at a club or pub (not including Crown Casino). How far did you travel to get there?'. In the staff survey, respondents were asked 'If you gamble on the following activities, how far do you usually travel to bet on each one?', with the various activities listed. Table 8.3 shows the results from each survey for EGMs. Notwithstanding the differences in the way the questions were framed, it appears that the staff respondents generally travelled less distance to play EGMs. Compared to the Victorian survey respondents, about double the proportion of staff survey respondents travelled less than 2.5 kilometres to play EGMs, with the proportion of staff travelling more than 20 kilometres being about one-quarter of the Victorian survey figure.

Table 8-3: Distance travelled to gamble on EGMs (staff and Victorian surveys)

Distance	Staff 2007[a] %	Vic 2003[b] %
< 2.5 kms	64.3	32.3
2.5–5 kms	19.6	25.0
5–10 kms	7.7	20.8
10-20 kms	6.1	9.8
>20 kms	2.3	10.1

[a] based on the per centage of respondents who gambled on EGMs in the previous 12 months n = 412.
[b] Weighted n = 177

8.7 PROBLEM GAMBLING

As noted earlier, the staff survey used the *Canadian Problem Gambling Index* to obtain a measure of problem gambling amongst all 533 respondents. In contrast, the Victorian survey used three different screens with each screen administered to approximately equal numbers of regular gamblers - the South Oaks Gambling Screen (n = 150), the Canadian Problem Gambling Index (n = 141) and the Victorian Gambling Screen (n = 155). Some important assumptions were made in the Victorian survey which may affect the prevalence rates found and their comparability with the results from the staff survey. These assumptions were that:

- high-risk problem gamblers are only found amongst regular gamblers, but not amongst non-regular gamblers;
- moderate risk gamblers are also only found amongst regular gamblers;
- the number of problem gamblers and moderate risk gamblers identified in the sub-sample of regular gamblers is equal to the numbers that would have been found in an unrestricted total sample.

Table 8.4 shows the prevalence rates for the four CPGI categories for the staff survey and the Victorian survey, where substantial differences are apparent, even bearing in mind the assumptions made in the Victorian survey. The problem gambling prevalence rate of 5.6 per cent amongst respondents to the staff survey is nearly six times higher than that identified for the Victorian population. The moderate risk gambling rate of 13.7 per cent amongst respondents to the staff survey is around 15 times higher than that identified for the Victorian population. No separate comparisons for low risk gamblers and non-problem gamblers can be made, as the Victorian survey did not report these data.

Table 8-4: Distribution of CPGI categories (staff and Victorian surveys)

CPGI category	Staff 2007[a] %	Vic 2003[b] %
Non-Gambler	4.1	n/a
Non-Problem Gambler	54.1	
Low Risk Gambler	22.4	} 98.13
Moderate Risk Gambler	13.7	0.91
Problem Gambler	5.6	0.97
Total	100.0	

[a] n = 533.
[b] Weighted n = 141, being those who were administered the CPGI.

8.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

When compared to results from the *2003 Victorian Longitudinal Community Attitudes Survey* (Centre for Gambling Research, 2004a), the survey of 533 staff who work in Victorian hotels and clubs reveals a group who appear to be more actively engaged with gambling than the general Victorian population.

Overall, 95.9 per cent per cent of respondents in the staff survey reported participating in at least one of the gambling activities surveyed during the preceding 12 months, compared to 77.4 per cent in the Victorian survey. For the staff respondents, the average number of different gambling activities undertaken by those who gambled in the preceding 12 months was 4.4, compared to the Victorian survey figure of 2.3 activities. The gambling participation rates amongst the surveyed staff were higher than for the general population of Victoria for all types of gambling for which comparisons could be made. They were substantially higher for playing EGMs, betting on horse or greyhound races at a TAB, betting on horse or greyhound races at a racetrack and playing Club Keno. The gambling participation rates amongst the surveyed staff were somewhat higher for buying instant scratch tickets for themselves, playing lottery-type games, playing casino table games and betting on a sporting event at a TAB. The gambling participation rates amongst the surveyed staff were only marginally higher for playing internet casino games.

When gambling at least monthly during the 12 months prior to each survey was considered, higher proportions of respondents in the staff survey than in the Victorian survey had gambled at least monthly on EGMs, Club Keno, instant scratch tickets, internet casino games for money, horse or greyhound races, and sportsbetting. When gambling at least weekly during the 12 months prior to each survey was considered, higher proportions of respondents in the staff survey than in the Victorian survey had gambled at least weekly on EGMs, Club Keno, instant scratch tickets for themselves, horse or greyhound races and sportsbetting.

A further finding was that the staff respondents generally travelled less distance to play EGMs. Compared to the Victorian survey respondents, about double the proportion of staff survey respondents travelled less than 2.5 kilometres to play EGMs, with the proportion of staff travelling more than 20 kilometres being about one-quarter of the Victorian survey figure.

When measured on the CPGI, the problem gambling prevalence rate of 5.6 per cent amongst respondents to the staff survey is nearly six times higher than that identified for the Victorian population, using the same instrument. The moderate risk gambling rate of 13.7 per cent amongst respondents to the staff survey is around 15 times higher than that identified for the Victorian population. No separate comparisons for low risk gamblers and non-problem gamblers can be made, as the Victorian survey did not report these data.

8.9 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter has addressed Research Objective Five, which was to compare the gambling behaviour and prevalence of non-gambling, non-problem gambling, low-risk, moderate-risk and problem gambling between gaming venue staff and the general population of Victoria (as identified by prior research). These comparisons have been presented for gambling participation, frequency and problem gambling prevalence. Given the heightened gambling activity and prevalence of problem and moderate risk gambling amongst the staff respondents, when compared to the general population, the next chapter focuses on the links between accessibility to gambling and gambling behaviour and problem gambling.