

Taking action on problem gambling

Action area 3: Promoting healthy communities



Office of Gaming and Racing

***Taking action on problem gambling* is the Government's five year strategy to combat problem gambling in Victoria. The strategy includes initiatives totalling \$132 million and is an integrated approach to consumer protection and the prevention, early intervention and treatment of problem gambling. The strategy identifies seven priority action areas that the Government will act on to reduce problem gambling and its effects on Victoria.**

This statement builds on the Government's record of achievement in addressing problem gambling, including the introduction of regional caps and the removal of gaming machines from vulnerable areas, eliminating all 24-hour gaming venues outside the casino, banning smoking in gaming machine areas, restricting gaming venue signage and banning gaming machine advertising.

Action area 3: Promoting healthy communities

Encouraging more responsible gambling behaviour across the community is an important complement to providing effective gambler's help services. To promote healthy communities, we first need to enable communities to identify the risks of problem gambling and equip them to take action to mitigate problem gambling behaviour in its early stages.

\$37.5 million will be provided to further develop the *Problem Gambling Community Awareness and Education Strategy*, (an increase of \$17.5 million over 5 years).

Key initiatives in this action area are:

- \$24 million in a statewide community education and awareness campaign to raise community awareness of the importance of responsible gambling at the personal, community and venue levels and the risks associated with new forms of emerging gambling technology.
- \$580,000 in 2006-07 to improve community access to information, including funding for a centrally located community education liaison officer and the production and distribution of the *Self Assessment Problem Gambling Screen*.
- \$5 million to deliver community education activities in local communities across Victoria.
- \$1.4 million for the development of school-based learning programs that build on the work already undertaken over the past two years.
- \$4.6 million to build on the community partnerships strategy which aims to bring together people and organisations to improve understanding of problem gambling issues and risks and to assist them in helping individuals and their families affected by problem gambling.
- \$2 million for community advocacy for responsible gambling to ensure that there is a strong and viable community voice on gambling issues.

Further information on *Taking action on problem gambling* can be obtained from the Department of Justice website www.justice.vic.gov.au.