25 Arundel St., Benalla 3672.

Phone 5762 2094
Fax 5762 5913
E-mail:admin@benallabowlsclub.com
Website: www.benalla.vic.bowls.net.au
Inc.No : A2449
ABN. No: 99 576 284 236

20th January 2011

Committee Secretary
Joint Select Committee on Gambling Reform
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Dear Sir/Madam

PRE-COMMITMENT OF ELECTRONIC GAMING MACHINES

The Benalla Bowls Club is very concerned with the government's initiative to make venues provide mandatory pre-commitment in order for patrons to play EGMS.

We as a Club certainly share the government's concern on problem gamblers and will work with the government to meet expectations in pre-commitment but whilst mandatory pre-commitment technology is applied to machines, we strongly recommend mandatory pre-commitment compliance is not extended to our patrons.

Our Club installed gaming machines to provide a recreation to our members and guests, revenue from which provides assistance to the community. Just to mention a few we have made large donations to the Benalla Indoor Aquatic Centre, Cooinda Elderly Aged Care Village, Benalla Performing Arts Centre as well as numerous donations to sporting clubs and charitable organizations and schools.

This Club has committed itself to a huge debt (approximately $1.5 million) in 2012 by purchasing the entitlements from the Victorian government to own and operate gaming machines. These figures were calculated on revenue earned from these machines for the period 2008/09. Now with mandatory pre-commitment – removal of ATMs – and whatever other regulations are brought in by governments, this will dramatically reduce the base revenue. Will the Victorian government then reduce the price they have asked for, for the entitlements?

No other form of gambling or recreation in Australia requires the punter to electronically pre-select the amount of time or money they wish to play. Gaming machines seems to be the only sporting and recreational activity that attracts these draconian proposed legislation requirements.

This pre-commitment system will certainly deter a lot of casual and recreational punters, whilst at the same time those with serious gambling problems will find ways around the proposed system.

The Benalla Bowls Club takes problem gambling vey seriously, we have already agreed to conduct Self Exclusion interviews by myself and Office Manager, Philippa. All staff are trained with dealing with patrons who are experiencing difficulties with gambling.

As a community club we need you to seriously reconsider the introduction of mandatory pre-commitment of electronic gaming machines and consider the dramatic effects this will have on community clubs such as ours.

Kind Regards

Julie Dosser
SECRETARY/MANAGER

cc. Bill Sykes
cc. Sophie Mirrabella