

**THE POKIES
PLAY YOU**



**ALLIANCE FOR
GAMBLING REFORM**

2017

**ANNUAL REPORT
TO PARTNER COUNCILS**



THE POKIES

PLAY YOU

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2017 has been a year of extraordinary growth and achievement for the Alliance for Gambling Reform, generously supported by Victorian councils.

In just under three years, the Alliance has grown from one staff member - Executive Director Tony Mohr - to six, with Kelvin Thompson, Stephen Mayne, Hillary Montague, Diana O'Neil and Kate da Costa all coming on board in the past 18 months.

The much valued and appreciated investment by councils has enabled:

1. The employment of Hon Kelvin Thompson as Victorian Campaign Manager to work directly with councils.
2. The development of the Champions for Change program which has now held its first Victorian information session and will be delivering training to future champions early in 2018. Diana O'Neil has carriage of this project.
3. The engagement of Stephen Mayne to deliver on the media and communications strategy for the Alliance.

There have been some highs and lows in 2017 in terms of gambling reform but some major achievements include:

1. Fantastic media surrounding the court case against Crown Casino and Aristocrat - we are still waiting for a verdict.
2. A shift in the approval of EGM premises at the VCGLR who have rejected 3 of 8 applications in the past year (previous years had 90-95% approval rates)

3. A reframing of the debate in the media and in some cases by politicians with more and more people talking about reducing harm from gambling, rather than "problem" and "responsible" gambling.
4. A huge landmark win for the City of Whittlesea against pokies giant Woolworths which will see the heritage Commercial Hotel in South Morang remain pokies free.
5. A very well attended Women Against Pokies event on the steps of parliament house.
6. Significant progress in the battle against sports betting advertising.

Whilst there is no doubt that the state government's new pokies legislation is disappointing, the introduction of a \$500 limit on cash is a beginning on which we can build and further investment in bringing this amount down will be important. Reducing the opening hours of pokies venues is another reform for which there may be some sympathy and, alongside \$1 maximum bets, will be a campaign focus in the lead up to the 2018 state election.

The government's announcement on regional caps and municipal limits saw some winners and losers in the local government space. Darebin,

Hume, Greater Dandenong and Brimbank are all capped at existing levels of machines - too high it is true but this may offer some protection against having to deal with future pokies applications. Growth areas fared poorly with parts of Wyndham and Whittlesea looking, at first glance, like open slather for new machines. However, Whittlesea's recent victory tells us that councils that fight pokies alongside their communities have a greater chance of success than ever before in protecting their communities from pokies expansion.

This report contains a more comprehensive account of many of our activities and strategies. I trust you will find it an interesting read and look forward to any questions or feedback.

The Alliance very much looks forward to our future partnership work with leadership councils in 2018 and I hope to have the opportunity to meet with many of you during the year.



TIM COSTELLO
Director and Alliance Spokesperson

THE ALLIANCE VERY MUCH LOOKS FORWARD

TO OUR FUTURE PARTNERSHIP WORK

WITH LEADERSHIP COUNCILS IN 2018.

INTRODUCTION

It is hard to believe that the Alliance for Gambling Reform is not yet three years old. However, in our two-and-a-bit years, the Alliance has grown from a small fledgling organisation to an increasingly strategic national movement pushing and organising effectively for real policy change.

As the Alliance continues to develop and evolve, so does our relationship with Victorian councils – so critical to our success. The level of involvement of many Victorian councils in gambling reform is without peer in other states. Indeed, it offers a model which we are keen to foster and develop elsewhere as the Alliance strives to build a national approach aimed at real and lasting gambling reform.

The generous support of 12 Victorian councils has allowed us to build our engagement with local government significantly this year. We have increased our staffing footprint beyond an Executive Director and Communications Adviser to also include a Campaign Manager with a focus on Victorian Councils, a Campaign Assistant who focuses on community engagement and social media, and an Organiser developing our exciting ‘Champions for Change’ program to empower people with a lived experience to lead change. Kelvin Thomson, Hillary Montague, Diana O’Neil and Stephen Mayne joined the Alliance as employees during the year and have each added significant firepower to the Alliance and the way we work with Victorian councils. They have joined our Executive Director, Tony Mohr, who continues to build a high-quality team to help change the public debate on gambling and to focus on addressing its harms across the country.

The Alliance aims to be your council’s trusted ‘go to’ resource on all gambling related matters. We continue to be highly visible in the media – leading and shaping community and political debates. We have assisted a number of councils on local projects and campaigns to bring awareness to particular local issues and impacts. And we continue on the ground to push politicians and the industry to address the significant harm that pokies create in local communities.

I particularly want to thank you, our Partner Councils, for your financial, organisational, and moral support. Your leadership on the issue of gambling reform has been outstanding, and everything we have achieved so far has been possible only as a result of your strong support.

WHAT FOLLOWS IS A REPORT ON OUR 2017

ACTIVITIES WHICH WE HOPE YOU FIND VALUABLE.

Our financial report is available at

➔ www.pokiesplayyour.org.au/finance_1617

We go into 2018 with a solid base to build upon, a great team now in place and much, much more to do. We look forward to working with you in the interests of all communities across Victoria.

GEOFF LAKE

Chairperson

December 2017



THE POKIES

PLAY YOU

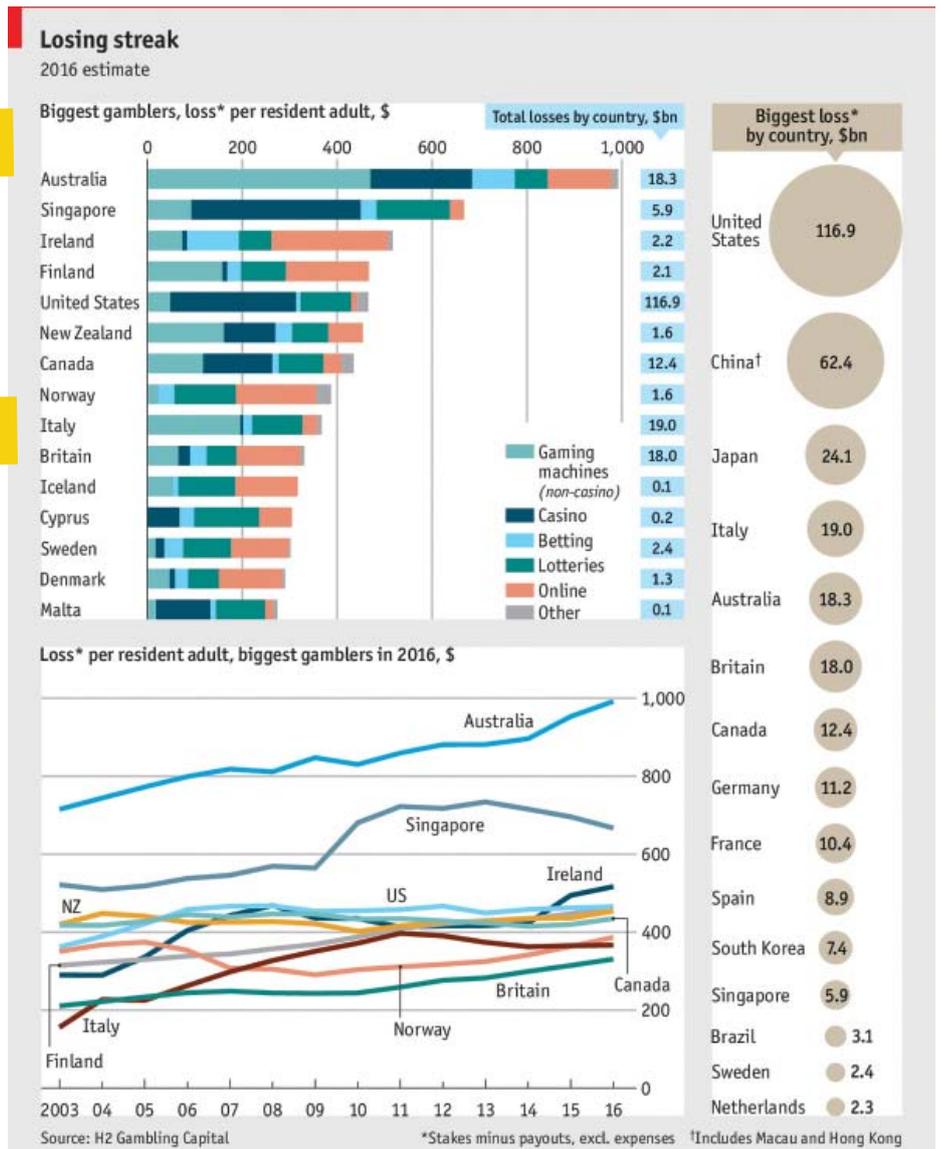
HIGHLIGHTING AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL GAMBLING SHAME

Australians lose more on gambling per capita than in any other nation in the world.

The Alliance has been active in generating media concerning this regrettable position. We have made good use of gambling data both nationally and particularly in Victoria to draw public attention to this. For example in December we got a front page story in The Age using the latest national gambling loss data, which is produced by the Queensland Treasury. Our spokesman and director Tim Costello told Fairfax, "When you are the world's biggest gamblers and 40% clear of the next country, Singapore, in per capita terms, it is nothing to celebrate that only an extra \$900 million was lost in 2015-16". We also pointed out that the data, from 2015-16, was 17 months out of date, highlighting Australia's woeful transparency compared with the likes of Macau and Nevada, which release monthly data.

Sports betting remains top of mind in Australia courtesy of the unseemly advertising deluge and it was again the fastest growing segment, as losses rose by 15% to \$920 million in 2015-16. However, the latest national figures once again confirm that poker machines are the biggest contributor to Australia's tragic status as the world's biggest gamblers.

**AUSTRALIANS
LOSE MORE ON
GAMBLING
PER CAPITA
THAN IN ANY
OTHER NATION
IN THE WORLD.**



Economist.com

<https://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2017/02/daily-chart-4>

REFRAMING THE DEBATE

Historically gambling issues have been considered an individual issue by governments and many in the community.

We are working hard, with some success, at reframing the gambling debate in order to reflect more modern knowledge and understanding of gambling harm. Rather than seeing poker machines as a “legitimate recreational activity” that has negative impacts on only a small number of “problem gamblers”, the gambling industry is increasingly understood as an industry that deliberately misleads users and creates an unacceptable risk of harm to the whole community. We believe that a public health approach, aimed at reducing harm, is the right approach.

A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH REQUIRES US TO INTERVENE

AT MANY LEVELS. IT HAS INVOLVED WORK IN THE LEGAL,

BUSINESS, GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY SPHERES.

1.

POKIES ON TRIAL

Federal Court Justice Debra Mortimer is considering her verdict in the poker machine trial of 2017, where Shonica Guy took on Crown and Aristocrat alleging the Dolphin Treasure poker machine was misleading and deceptive, in breach of Australian consumer law. For the Alliance this has been an important case in getting the public to understand the issue of machine design, which makes the machine, rather than the gambler, the problem. The Alliance had great support from partner councils in this case, including the attendance of Brimbank Mayor John Hedditch, Moreland Mayor Helen Davidson, Wyndham Mayor Henry Barlow, and Greater Dandenong Councillor Matthew Kirwan at our press conference on the opening day of the trial.

2.

CROWN AND WOOLWORTHS AGMS

The Alliance made its presence felt at both the Crown and Woolworths AGMs, to bring home the message about the damage their poker machines are doing to ordinary Victorians.

The Alliance sent a team to ask questions of James Packer at the Crown Resorts AGM in October and ended up engaging in detail with the Board, with widespread media coverage of the meeting between James Packer and Anna Bardsley. Crown Melbourne is one of the biggest casinos in the world, with over \$1.5 billion in player losses in 2016-17. Indeed Crown Melbourne generates more than twice as much gambling revenue as the biggest casino in Las Vegas. Crown Melbourne is also Australia’s biggest poker machine venue. They have \$10 maximum bets – unlike \$5 in Victorian pubs and clubs – and Australia’s most sophisticated loyalty scheme. So it’s high time we were told how much is lost each year on Crown’s 2600 poker machines. When we all say that Victorians are losing \$2.6 billion each year on poker machines, that only counts pubs and clubs, and leaves Crown out of it. The VCGLR does five yearly reviews of Crown’s licence, and is currently doing one. The Alliance is pushing for action coming out of this review to reduce gambling harm from Crown.

Woolworths is Australia’s largest poker machine operator, and Alliance Director and Darebin Councillor Susan Rennie had quite an impact as a candidate for the Board. The Alliance also launched a petition for Woolies to get out of the pokies business. Far from being a responsible poker machine operator, as it claims, Woolworths (unlike Coles) opposes maximum \$1 bets, and 51 of its pub venues in Victoria open 20 hours a day, 7 days a week! Following the Alliance’s campaign, Chairman Gordon Cairns has promised to publicly declare whether Woolworths is prepared to move on the question of its opening hours, and on limits on daily cash withdrawals.

3.

VICTORIAN RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING FOUNDATION

The Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation has done, and continues to do, a lot of good work, but its name is a triumph of industry spin, and detracts from its good work. The Alliance has been campaigning for a change of name to put the focus on gambling harm. We are also campaigning for Responsible Gambling Awareness Week to be renamed “Gambling Harm Awareness Week”, for the same reasons.

We highlight that new knowledge about how poker machines are designed demonstrates that industry-based self-exclusion measures to enable “responsible gambling” are only window-dressing solutions to a wider problem. The industry itself is creating the problem. The culture of gambling has become so normalised in Australia that Australians spend more on gambling than other activities which are recognised as addictive, such as alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs.

The VRGF has funded some excellent research which has reinforced that gambling-related harm is spread across the whole community and not just those who could be seen as “problem gamblers”. Research on the gambling burden of harm suggests that “problem” gamblers account for 15% of the burden of harm. Low and moderate risk gamblers between them account for 85% of adverse health impacts. It has been estimated that for every person who has a serious gambling problem, there may be five to ten people who face significant emotional or financial consequences.

4.

FAMILY VIOLENCE

There is an established link between harm from gambling and family violence. Recent Australian research indicates that family violence is three times more likely to occur in families in which there is significant harm from gambling than in families in which there is no gambling-related harm. The Alliance has been involved in supporting public forums drawing attention to this issue. After the Victorian Commission for Liquor and Gaming Regulation (VCGLR) gave short shrift to family violence in its decision regarding the Highlands Hotel application for more machines in Craigieburn, the Alliance arranged negative media coverage of the decision, focussing on the family violence issue. The VCGLR subsequently rejected the application by Club Noble in the City of Greater Dandenong and the reasons for this decision referred to family violence. We will continue to advocate for the Commission and the Government to pay more attention to this issue when making decisions about poker machine numbers and location.

THERE IS AN ESTABLISHED LINK BETWEEN HARM FROM GAMBLING AND FAMILY VIOLENCE.

5.

MAKING VENUES ACCOUNTABLE

As part of reframing the debate and reducing gambling harm, the Alliance is pushing for action to create a duty on venue operators and hold them accountable for their conduct. We are encouraged by the Canberra Raiders Group facing a fine of \$120,000 for failing to intervene in the case of Canberra University academic Laurie Brown.

Holding venues more responsible for the well-being of patrons suffering harm has long been a poorly regulated aspect of Australia’s state-based pokies regulatory regime, so this action against the Raiders is a welcome if long overdue development.

The Laurie Brown story is quite extraordinary. As The Canberra Times reported:

Prof Brown says she gambled on 160 nights from about 10pm to closing 4am, making 242 cash withdrawals from ATMs and 353 from the club’s EFTPOS. On some nights she went back six or more times to withdraw more money, losing thousands of dollars on some nights.

Susan Rennie outlined a similar story at the Woolworths AGM about “Sarah” (not her real name) who is estimated to have lost more than \$1 million at the Woolworths-owned Blackburn Hotel in Melbourne up until her death in 2014. A relative of Sarah has provided The Alliance with bank statements showing literally hundreds of withdrawals made at the Blackburn Hotel over many years.

EMPOWERING THOSE WITH A LIVED EXPERIENCE OF GAMBLING HARM – CHAMPIONS FOR CHANGE

We know that confronting politicians with the personal stories of people impacted by gambling harm will be more powerful than visits by lobbyists. This is why we have developed the Champions for Change program.

Alliance deputy chairman Allison Keogh, who grew up in a family impacted by poker machine harm, recently presented a keynote speech at the 2017 Progress Australia FWD+organise conference, under the banner of successful 2017 campaigns in Australia. Allison outlined our work to give power back to those harmed by gambling, and reduce the power of the gambling industry.

She showcased our work in *Kaching* community screenings, her journey supporting Shonica Guy in her trail-blazing Federal Court case against Crown and Aristocrat, the recent Women Against Pokies rally in Victoria, our “Love footy, hate pokies”

rallies outside AFL games, plus our more recent presence at corporate AGMs and in the Northcote by-election.

The Alliance’s new Champions for Change program will strongly elevate the voices of people with a lived experience of gambling harm. We saw how confronting this was for the boards of Crown and Woolworths and we will power ahead with this in 2018.

The Alliance is also working closely with ReSPIN, the Gambling Speakers Awareness Bureau, and meeting regularly with representatives of Gamblers Help, to make sure that our policies and actions are grounded in lived experience and evidence, and empower rather than stigmatise people impacted by gambling harm.

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS

Council resistance to poker machine expansion is strengthening across Victoria. After an 11 day hearing at VCAT, the City of Whittlesea and other parties, including Alliance director Cr Susan Rennie, completed a titanic battle against Woolworths and pokies billionaire Bruce Mathieson, who wanted to introduce pokies into the heritage Commercial Hotel in South Morang. This was the longest VCAT battle over pokies in Victorian history, partly because a wide cross-section of community groups lined up to oppose the application. The VCAT decision was received on the last working day of 2017 – victory for Council and the Whittlesea community with vindication of the position established by the VCGLR that the development would have adverse impacts on the community.

The VCGLR also rejected an application by Bendigo Stadium Ltd to install 44 new machines at the Wellington Hotel in Bendigo, directly opposite a Catholic Primary School. The Alliance and local community groups opposed this application through the local media and working with local community groups.

The decision is encouraging, as are the comments of the disappointed applicant, who made the following comment to *The Bendigo Advertiser*: “They (the VCGLR) have made decisions which they weren’t making 12 months ago. I think they (the VCGLR) have come under a serious amount of criticism for previous decisions made, for not weighing up the benefits or harm to the community”. Let’s hope so!

We have spoken to community groups in numerous municipalities about gambling harm and gambling reform. We have worked with culturally and linguistically diverse communities, including Vietnamese Buddhist, Lebanese Maronite, Arabic and African communities, to advocate for gambling reform. We have worked with the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria and are delighted that they adopted key Alliance policies in their recent policy document.

COUNCIL RESISTANCE TO POKER MACHINE

EXPANSION IS STRENGTHENING ACROSS VICTORIA.

LOBBYING MPs AND POLICY MAKERS

The Alliance undertook a strong lobbying campaign of Victorian MPs to seek to improve the Victorian Government's Gambling Regulation Amendment (Gaming Machine Arrangements) Bill 2017.

Notwithstanding the lobbying campaign, the Bill went through without amendment, supported by both Government and Opposition. We were keen to have the Bill referred to a Committee, which would have provided an opportunity for the voices of those affected by gambling to be heard. Encouragingly, all of the non-major party MLCs supported a motion by Fiona Patten (Reason Party) to this effect.

A number of Councils went to the trouble of lobbying their MPs about the Bill and the Alliance greatly appreciates their efforts. These efforts did not go unnoticed with a number of MLCs expressly referring to the lobbying efforts of Alliance members, and to poker machine losses in their municipality.

The Alliance for Gambling Reform was disappointed by the outcome, but has found this a useful experience, both in identifying potential supporters and clarifying the issues that we should be putting our campaign efforts into. We look forward to working with councils to get as much support as we can from MPs and state election candidates for our policies, such as machine re-design, maximum \$1 bets, reduced venue operating hours, and more say for councils in the number and

location of machines.

One thing we noticed in our lobbying efforts was the number of MPs who indicated their personal support for our policies, but that they were bound by party discipline concerning the Bill. This suggests to us that gambling is an area where MPs should be given a conscience vote. It raises strong moral and ethical issues, and sadly is, from time to time, a matter of life and death.

One of our lobbying efforts was a "Women Against Pokies" Rally on the steps of Parliament on October 31. Speakers included Whittlesea Councillor and MAV President Mary Lalios. Mary was joined by Mayors and councillors from around Victoria.

The Alliance was also involved in the Northcote By-Election, not with a view to influencing the result, but with a view to having gambling reform treated as a relevant political issue. We achieved some success in this regard, with a significant number of candidates indicating their support for our policies.

The Alliance opposes cashless gambling, and encouraged submissions from partner councils and other supporters to the VCGLR review process at the end of August. The Productivity Commission has identified the

risks - that cashless gambling can disguise the fact that people are losing real money, and cashless systems may reinforce anonymous, intense and uninterrupted gambling, which increases the likelihood of the person gambling being harmed. Research indicates that people with gambling problems are far more likely to lose track of money while gambling on poker machines than people engaged in low risk or moderate risk gambling behaviour. It is also the Alliance view that the Victorian Government should deliver on the intended effect when it removed ATMs from venues, and limit EFTPOS cash withdrawals at venues to a maximum of \$200 per day.

The Alliance has also worked with partner councils and supporters to advocate for a maximum \$1 bet per spin. At the end of 2016, Coles, a significant owner of poker machines, came out in support of a \$1 bet limit. The 1999 Productivity Commission report pointed to bet limits on Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) as a possible measure to reduce problem gambling. At that time, the Productivity Commission found that, on average, people with gambling problems staked \$1.62 per button push compared to 57c for non-problem gamblers.

A NUMBER OF COUNCILS WENT TO THE TROUBLE OF LOBBYING THEIR MPS ABOUT THE BILL AND THE ALLIANCE GREATLY APPRECIATES THEIR EFFORTS.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO
WORKING WITH COUNCILS
TO GET AS MUCH SUPPORT
AS WE CAN FROM MPS AND
STATE ELECTION CANDIDATES
FOR OUR POLICIES**

Research commissioned by the gambling industry in 2001 found that only 3.5% of EGM gamblers bet above \$1 per button push. Of people without gambling problems only 2.3% bet over \$1 per button push, while 7.5% of people with gambling problems bet over \$1 per button push. The report concluded that a bet limit per button push of \$1 would be a “potentially effective harm minimisation strategy”.

The Productivity Commission correctly dismissed the speculative argument made in EGM industry submissions that a reduction in bet size would result in people with gambling problems losing the same amount of money by increasing the length of their gambling. The Commission took the view that “while it is likely some gamblers would play for longer, it is improbable that this effect would be so great as to nullify the impact of the reduced bet limit”.

Industry claims that reconfiguring the machines to limit bets to \$1 would be difficult and expensive are without foundation. Electronic machines are easily reconfigured to make all sorts of changes to their design, including bet limits. In 2018, the Alliance will be asking sporting and other clubs to commit to supporting maximum \$1 bets.



THE POKIES

PLAY YOU

PUSHING BACK ON THE NORMALISATION OF GAMBLING

The Alliance shares the widespread public concern about the normalisation of gambling in recent years as a consequence of (a) a flood of TV and radio advertising and (b) its increasing association with sport.

We are also concerned about the risks in the digital age coming from online gambling. We have pushed for action on this at a national level, and welcome the passage through the Federal Parliament of Government legislation which includes a ban on “in-play” betting, a ban on credit by wagering firms, and harsher penalties for illegal offshore gambling firms.

The Alliance also welcomes the introduction into the Senate in December of legislation which will ban gambling ads from five minutes before the start of play until five minutes after the conclusion of play or 8.30pm, whichever is sooner. The Government intends that these restrictions will come into place from March 30 next year.

In addition, we welcome the initiative by the Victorian Government to ban betting advertising on roads, public transport and within 150 metres of all Victorian schools. The ban will apply to all static betting advertising, such as outdoor billboards.

After sustained engagement Geelong Football Club came out publicly supporting \$1 maximum bets and developed a business plan to phase out their reliance on poker machines entirely. In doing so they will match North Melbourne Football Club, which to its credit has no poker machines.

Importantly, this year the AFL established a high level working party to examine the reliance of the AFL and its clubs on poker machine revenue. The Alliance for Gambling Reform has been constantly drawing attention to this problem – losses on poker machines owned by AFL clubs are close to \$100 million annually – and we welcome this review, which goes by the unlikely name of Project Fruit. We hope it will lead to other clubs following the lead of North Melbourne and Geelong. The Alliance published a league ladder on AFL pokies losses when the annual Victorian data was released, which made it onto the front page of The Age, with Hawthorn once again winning the pokies premiership.

WE ARE ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT THE RISKS IN THE

DIGITAL AGE COMING FROM ONLINE GAMBLING.

WE HAVE PUSHED FOR ACTION ON THIS AT A NATIONAL LEVEL...

BACKING INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

The Alliance continued to work with independent academics to get quality research driving evidence-based policy. In particular we have worked with Assoc. Professor Samantha Thomas at Deakin University on a range of research projects. She and her team are now working directly with a number of Alliance partner councils on research into gambling harm which will certainly prove useful in future.



WORKING DIRECTLY WITH PARTNERSHIP COUNCILS

The Alliance has held planning meetings with partner councils both individually and collectively and has maintained regular contact with interested councillors and officers. The Alliance has been working with partner councils such as Whittlesea and Hume to hold screenings of “Ka Ching! Pokie Nation” to churches and community groups. We have attended festivals in Hume, Moreland and Whittlesea to spread the message, giving out information and residents kits and collecting petition signatures.

We have developed **resident action kits** with Moreland and Whittlesea, and worked with Monash and Greater Dandenong to display **billboards** and council noticeboards drawing attention to gambling harm in their municipalities.

SOME OF THE ISSUES WE HAVE WORKED ON IN A MORE TAILORED, ONE-ON-ONE WAY INCLUDE:

- (a) Tackling the dependence of local sporting clubs on poker machine revenue. The Alliance has made approaches to the Responsible Gambling Foundation about support for work on this issue. Kelvin Thomson and Susan Rennie are also working with staff at Brimbank and other interested parties to establish a working group on this issue in 2018.
- (b) Regional poker machine caps: some councils fared well under the new **regional caps** which were gazetted in September, getting a drop in their number of allocated machines, but others were left exposed to increases. The caps are a matter of regulation and can be altered without the need for new legislation. The Alliance is ready to work with any council which wants a change to their regional cap arrangements. The Alliance likes the New Zealand model, where councils have the power to completely retire poker machine entitlements that are handed back by a particular venue. This would be valuable in councils like Brimbank. Brimbank’s 2017 Mayor, John Hedditch, says “There are already way too many poker machines in Brimbank. We must reduce the current number of machines to turn back the tide of social and economic havoc that this number of pokies creates...”
- (c) Council **gambling policies**: we have provided information and input for councils developing or reviewing their gambling policies. This year Alliance partner council the City of Melbourne released a strong new policy, which stated that “Substantial evidence suggests that gaming venues can have detrimental impacts on the individuals who gamble, their families, and the broader community, resulting in financial stress, relationship breakdown, family violence, health and wellbeing impacts, reduced work and study performance, and criminal activity. Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) are particularly associated with gambling-related harms.”
- (d) Local government **advocacy**: the Alliance participates in gambling forums convened by both the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and the Victorian Local Governance Association. We worked with Hume Councillor Joseph Haweil and other interested Councillors to support a strong gambling reform motion which was passed at the MAV State Council in October, and with Moreland Council on a motion for the ALGA Conference earlier this year.

POKER MACHINE REFORM GOALS

1. Ban the most addictive machine features (prevention)
2. Reduce the maximum bet to \$1 (minimisation)
3. Give back power to communities and councils to reduce the number of pokies in their community

SPORTS GAMBLING GOALS

1. Ban all ads during all live sport broadcasts and during kids viewing times
2. Reduce harm by banning credit for betting, require limit setting and one-stop self exclusion
3. Strong federal regulation of the industry, taxes collected by the states

The Alliance looks forward to working with our partner councils to take advantage of opportunities in 2018 to secure gambling reform and reduce gambling harm. Areas we see real potential for change include:

1.

VICTORIAN STATE ELECTION CAMPAIGN.

We will use 2018 to campaign for a suite of measures intended to reduce gambling harm, including machine re-design, maximum \$1 bets, reduced venue opening hours, and more say for Councils in the number and location of machines. This will include using our volunteers and Champions for Change to visit local MPs and candidates to talk about gambling harm at a local and personal level.

2.

MONITORING THE VICTORIAN GAMBLING REGULATION AMENDMENTS.

We will be monitoring the impact of the recently passed legislation, particularly in relation to \$500 daily EFTPOS cash out withdrawal limits, and the opening of the door to cashless gambling.

3.

REFRAMING THE DEBATE.

Working with the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation and others to reframe the debate, with possible assistance from the decision in the Pokies on Trial case.

4.

PUSHING BACK ON THE NORMALISATION OF GAMBLING VIA ADVERTISING AND THE LINK WITH SPORT.

Federal Government legislation with advertising restrictions has been introduced, and we will be involved in this debate.

5.

WORKING WITH CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES.

We will be building on the work we have commenced in CALD communities, many of whom report being seriously impacted by gambling harm, and interested in supporting measures to reduce it.

6.

WORKING WITH LOCAL SPORTING CLUBS TO REDUCE THEIR GAMBLING DEPENDENCE.

We will be working with Partner Councils and sporting clubs to take advantage of opportunities to reduce their dependence on poker machine revenue or other gambling sponsorship. This will include asking sporting clubs to support harm reduction measures such as maximum \$1 bets per spin.



ALLIANCE FOR GAMBLING REFORM

GENERAL INQUIRIES

(03) 9999 7372
info@agr.org.au
G.06, 60 Leicester St, Carlton VIC 3053

COUNCIL CAMPAIGN ORGANISER

The Hon. Kelvin Thomson
0458 750 700
kelvin@agr.org.au

www.pokiesplayyou.org.au