

THE POKIES PLAY YOU

Another \$2.61 billion down the drain at 502 Victorian pokies venues

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The Victorian Government today released individual pokies venue loss data for the 2016-17 financial year, which once again confirmed the enormous damage being done to Victoria's most vulnerable communities.

The Alliance for Gambling Reform spokesman and director Tim Costello said the overall losses may have stabilised at \$2.61 billion but they need to substantially fall seeing as Australians lose the most per capita gambling of any people in the world.

"This time last year we surged through \$50 billion in total Victorian losses and in this 25th year of dangerous pokies, another \$2.61 billion of harm has been inflicted," Mr Costello said. "Measured in 2016 dollars, we are now up to \$67 billion in losses and if we keep this up for the next 25 years, these addictive devices will drain another \$70 billion from victims."

"Rather than business as usual, Victorian politicians need to come together and manage the annual loss figure down to below \$2 billion. The upcoming review of entitlements presents a once in a generation opportunity to make substantial reforms."

Lowlights from the 2016-17 data include:

Woolworths remains the most damaging operator through its ALH business which took again more than \$650 million from its 81 Victorian pokies venues. (Woolworths is currently facing a 9 day VCAT battle against City of Whittlesea and the local community as its attempts to introduce pokies to the heritage Commercial Hotel in South Morang.)

Hotels, particularly those operated by the Woolworths ALH division, extract almost double the losses of clubs with only one club (Highways Sandown) appearing in the top 25 venues. Given this data, why would the Victorian Government contemplate allowing hotels to move above 50% of entitlements under the new regime?

Victorian-based AFL Clubs remain disturbingly large operators in the Victorian gambling industry, draining \$94 million from visitors to their 17 pokies venues in 2016-17 with Hawthorn once again winning the pokies premiership, lifting annual losses from \$22.58m to \$23.29 million.

Vulnerable communities continue to be targeted with local government areas such as City of Greater Dandenong, Brimbank, Casey, Whittlesea and Geelong each incurring annual losses above \$100 million, although councils such as Brimbank, Darebin and Monash which have helped manage down their losses should be congratulated for intervening to protect their communities.

Media contact:

Stephen Mayne: stephen@agr.org.au 0412 106 241

Summary of AFL Club pokies dependency in 2016-17

Club	Amount people lost on Victorian-based AFL club pokies in 2015-16 and 2016-17	Machines owned	Gaming venues owned
Hawthorn	Up from \$22.6m to \$23.29m	155	2
Carlton	Up from \$17.03m to \$17.6m	290	4
Essendon	Down from \$12.12m to \$11.85m	190	2
Collingwood	Up from \$11.53m to \$12.24m	146	2
Melbourne	Up from \$9.87m to \$10.3m	172	2
Geelong	Down from \$6.5m to \$5.24m	180	2
Richmond	Down from \$5.77m to \$5.4m	87	1
Western Bulldogs	Up from \$5.28m to \$5.92m	60	2
St Kilda	Down from \$2.25m to \$2.11m	83	1

Victoria's 25 biggest pokies venue for losses in 2015-16 and 2016-17

Epping Plaza Hotel	Metro	Whittlesea	Hotel	\$21.1m to \$20.96m	100
Gladstone Park Hotel	Metro	Hume	Hotel	\$19m to \$18.34m	86
Keysborough Hotel	Metro	Greater Dandenong	Hotel	\$18.3m to \$18.9m	89
Plough Hotel	Metro	Whittlesea	Hotel	\$18.2m to \$19.37m	100
Kealba Hotel	Metro	Brimbank	Hotel	\$18.1m to \$15.95m	86
Skyways Taverner	Metro	Moonee Valley	Hotel	\$17.26m to \$17.2m	96
Bundoora Taverner	Metro	Whittlesea	Hotel	\$17.16m to \$17.13m	96
Highways Sandown	Metro	Greater Dandenong	Club	\$16.06m	90
Dorset Gardens Hotel	Metro	Maroondah	Hotel	\$16.7m to \$16.3m	97
Rosstown Hotel	Metro	Glen Eira	Hotel	\$16.66m to \$16.03m	103
Berwick Springs Hotel	Metro	Casey	Hotel	\$16.54m to \$17.83m	94
Roxburgh Park Hotel	Metro	Hume	Hotel	\$15.95m to \$15.87m	80
Watergardens Hotel	Metro	Brimbank	Hotel	\$15.7m to \$14.86m	76
Seaford Taverner	Metro	Frankston	Hotel	\$15.7m to \$14.6m	94
Taylors Lakes Family Hotel	Metro	Brimbank	Hotel	\$15.6m to \$15.12m	105
Excelsior Hotel	Metro	Whittlesea	Hotel	\$15.6m to \$16.25m	89
Dingley International Hotel	Metro	Kingston	Hotel	\$15.25m to \$14.83m	90
Chase Hotel	Metro	Whitehorse	Hotel	\$15.12m to \$15.98m	90
Deer Park Hotel	Metro	Brimbank	Hotel	\$15.1m to \$14.65m	74
Bourke Hill'S Welcome Stranger	Metro	Melbourne	Hotel	\$14.8m to \$14.37m	100

10 biggest Local Government Areas for losses in 2016-17

1. **City of Brimbank:** down from \$143.05 million to \$134.14 million
2. **City of Casey:** up from \$124.82 million to \$127.1 million
3. **City of Greater Dandenong:** down from \$118.84 million to \$118.19 million
4. **City of Greater Geelong:** up from \$111.85 million to \$114.14 million
5. **City of Monash:** down from \$111.4 million to \$109.2 million
6. **City of Whittlesea:** up from \$104.4 million to \$107 million
7. **City of Hume:** down from \$106.05 million to \$105.77 million
8. **City of Wyndham:** up from \$97.39 million to \$97.76 million
9. **City of Kingston:** down from \$83.47 million to \$83.02 million
10. **City of Darebin:** down from \$84.32 million to \$81.11 million