

# THE POKIES PLAY YOU

## Woolworths special dividend propped up by pokies

Monday, August 20, 2018

The Alliance for Gambling Reform today expressed dismay that Woolworths is becoming increasingly dependent on its 13,000 addictive poker machines to prop up annual profits.

For the second straight year, the Woolworths pokies pubs division has contributed more than 10% of the overall annual profit in 2017-18, as measured by Earnings Before Interest and Tax (EBIT). See p9 of [earnings presentation](#).

Alliance director and spokesman Tim Costello called on the Woolworths directors to stop preying on vulnerable people to deliver unsustainable pokies profits.

“Woolworths has made a record \$259 million out of its pokies business in 2017-18, lifting the total operating profits over the past 13 years to more than \$2.6 billion or an average of more than \$200 million a year,” Mr Costello said.

“As The Alliance [said last week](#), it is time for Woolworths to clean up the way ALH is operated and then divest from the predatory poker machine industry altogether.”

Woolworths also released their sustainability report, which lacks support for evidence based harm reduction policies.

“Unlike Coles, Woolworths has failed to support \$1 bets, or reduce the operating hours of their pokie-den pubs” Mr Costello said.

“Woolworths should be ashamed that their pokies pubs took 11% more than they did last year, increasing the harm done to Australians that includes relationship breakdown, mental health issues and suicide.”

For a full list of the 330 Woolworths venues across Australia, go [here](#).

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WOOLWORTHS HOTELS DIVISION EBIT AS A PROPORTION OF TOTAL EBIT FROM CONTINUING OPERATIONS

**2004-05: \$53m of \$1302m (4.07%)**

**2005-06: \$151m of \$1722m (8.77%)**

**2006-07: \$184m of \$2111 (8.72%)**

**2007-08: \$215m of \$2529m (8.5%)**

**2008-09: \$218m of \$2815m (7.74%)**  
**2009-10: \$177m of \$3082m (5.74%)**  
**2010-11: \$184m of \$3276m (5.61%)**  
**2011-12: \$196m of \$3352m (5.85%)**  
**2012-13: \$264m of \$3653 (7.23%)**  
**2013-14: \$275m of \$3775m (7.28%)**  
**2014-15: \$234m of \$3748m (6.24%)**  
**2015-16 \$209m of \$2446m (8.5%)**  
**2016-17: \$233m of \$2326m (10.017%)**  
**2017-18: \$259m of \$2548m (10.16%)**