

Western & SW Sydney poker machine losses continue to rise

Losses in clubs and pubs in the West and SW of Sydney continue to soar, now reaching daily losses of \$4.64million, every day of the year, for a total of \$1.60billion in FY2019.

Campbelltown, Canterbury Bankstown, Blacktown, Fairfield and Liverpool contain 15,105 poker machines. Although machine numbers have fallen slightly over the state, this area of Sydney has increased its numbers by 104 from FY2018. Each machine is now earning more than in FY2018, with all machines in all of these council areas taking far more than the state average.

The average club machine in W&SW Sydney takes \$82,833 compared to the state average of \$57,677. The average pub machine in this area takes the enormous losses of \$234,506 compared to the average pub pokie taking \$113,561 per year. Clearly there is an increasing concentration of more profitable machines in this part of Sydney which can least afford it.

Alliance for Gambling Reform spokesman, Reverend Tim Costello, said poker machines lead to the loss of much more than money in the NSW community.

“Those who gamble are not the only ones harmed. Research shows that impacts include financial and relationship stress, distraction from work and study, physical and mental ill-health, and sadly, sometimes family violence. In extreme cases, poker machines contribute to the loss of lives due to suicide,” Rev Costello said.

Poker machine losses have risen to more than \$6.5 billion in NSW despite a reduction in total poker machine numbers in the state, equal to \$17.9 million lost every day.

“Pokies venues are designed to fleece people regardless of socio-economic background or geography, and especially target people who may be feeling isolated or lonely. That’s predatory behaviour.”

Rev Costello said it was time the NSW Government responded to gambling harm as a public health issue akin to smoking.

“Smoking in bars was once pervasive in NSW, not unlike the scourge that is poker machines,” he said. “You couldn’t go out without coming home stinking of cigarette smoke. Now we can go out and enjoy ourselves without the effects of passive smoking.

“We call on the NSW Government to step up and ban gambling-related loyalty programs in clubs and pubs across NSW because they encourage harmful behaviour. There’s no first mover advantage when there’s a pokie den on every corner. It’s time to change the model in NSW from propping up the industry to treating gambling as the public health issue it is.”

Contact:

Dr Kate da Costa, NSW Campaigner for the Alliance on 0491 481 328 or kate@agr.org.au

Background data tables:

See attached spreadsheets for LGA by LGA data.

State wide data

Since the first half of 2017, total EGM numbers have fallen by 1.5%, while total profits have risen 5.46% - each poker machine in NSW is now earning more than 2 years ago, totally wiping out any benefit that might have been achieved by a drop in numbers.

In FY2018 total losses were \$6.373billion.

In FY2019 total losses were \$6.536billion, an increase of \$163million, or 2.56%

The weekly losses are now \$125,799,876

Daily losses are \$17,908,070

Based on the NSW state government's 2018/2019 budget documents:

Program	2018/2019 spending	Days of poker machine losses to pay for program
Mental health Infrastructure Program	average yearly spending of \$175m	10 days
Capital expenditure on TAFE	\$179.5m	10 days
Plan to install air conditioning in schools	\$100m per year	5.6 days
New spending on increased admitted and community based mental health services	\$82.5m	4.6 days
New spending to extend the Start Strong program for three-year olds	average yearly cost of \$49.45m	2.8 days
Fee-free apprentice program	yearly cost of \$47.5m	2.6 days
Additional 200 paramedics and 13 call centre staff	\$23.7m	1.5 days
New cardiovascular disease research	\$15m	<1 day
100 new midwives across the state	\$9.3m	0.5 days

THE POKIES PLAY YOU



LGA	Rank by club profit ½ 2019	LGA	Rank by pub profit ½ 2019	LGA	Rank by club profit ½ 2018	LGA	Rank by pub profit ½ 2018
Fairfield	1	Sydney	1	Fairfield	1	Sydney	1
Canterbury-Bankstown	2	Canterbury-Bankstown	2	Canterbury-Bankstown	2	Canterbury-Bankstown	2
Cumberland	3	Cumberland	3	Cumberland	3	Fairfield	3
Central Coast	4	Fairfield	4	Central Coast	4	Cumberland	4
Blacktown	5	Blacktown	5	Blacktown	5	Blacktown	5
Penrith	6	Parramatta	6	Penrith	6	Parramatta	6
Wollongong	7	Georges River	7	Wollongong	7	Inner West	7
Georges River	8	Inner West	8	Georges River	8	Georges River	8
Campbelltown	9	Bayside	9	Campbelltown	9	Bayside	9
Newcastle	10	Burwood/Strathfield	10	Northern Beaches	10	Liverpool	10

THE POKIES PLAY YOU



LGA	Rank by Club EGMs mid 2019	LGA	Rank by Pub EGMs mid 2019	LGA	Rank by Club EGMs mid 2018	LGA	Rank by Pub EGMs mid 2018
Canterbury-Bankstown	1	Sydney	1	Canterbury-Bankstown	1	Sydney	1
Central Coast	2	Inner West	2	Central Coast	2	Inner West	2
Fairfield	3	Newcastle	3	Fairfield	3	Newcastle	3
Wollongong	4	Canterbury-Bankstown	4	Wollongong	4	Canterbury-Bankstown	4
Cumberland	5	Blacktown	5	Cumberland	5	Blacktown	5
Penrith	6	Central Coast	6	Newcastle	6	Central Coast	6
Blacktown	7	Parramatta	7	Blacktown	7	Wollongong	7
Newcastle	8	Wollongong	8	Penrith	8	Parramatta	8
Lake Macquarie	9	Cumberland	9	Lake Macquarie	9	Cumberland	9
Sutherland	10	Fairfield	10	Sutherland	10	Fairfield	10