

Albury poker machine losses continue to rise

Losses in clubs and pubs in the Albury council area continue to rise, now reaching weekly losses of \$1.338million, for a total of \$69.5million for the last financial year.

While numbers in both types of venues have fallen, profits have risen. This shows that venues are encouraging people to gamble more on fewer machines. Unusually in NSW, poker machines in pubs in Albury, while taking more in losses than club machines, are only slightly more “profitable” for their owners - average club poker machines take \$56,254 in losses every year, compared with \$56,992 for a pub pokie.

Poker machine losses have risen to more than \$6.5 billion in NSW despite a tiny reduction in total poker machine numbers in the state, equal to \$17.9 million lost every day during FY2019.

Alliance for Gambling Reform Chief Advocate, 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.

“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:

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Background data tables:

Figures provided by the Dept. of Liquor and Gaming are for Dec-May/June-November for clubs, and Jan-June/July-Dec for hotels. For convenience, both sets of 6-month figures have been combined by the Alliance as if they cover the financial year or calendar year, as appropriate.

Albury – Dept of Liquor and Gaming figures								
FY2018	Net Profit	Tax	daily losses	weekly losses	EGMs @ EOFY	Annual losses per EGM	state rank by profit	state rank EGM nr
Clubs	\$54m	\$12m	\$148,427	\$1.04m	1,039	\$52,142	23	22
Pubs	\$12.8m	\$3.6m	\$35,160	\$246,793	245	\$52,381	37	28
Total	\$67m	\$15.7	\$183,587	\$1.3m	1284			
FY2019	Net Profit	Tax	daily losses	weekly losses	EGMs @ EOFY	Annual losses per EGM	state rank by profit	state rank EGM nr
Clubs	\$55.9m	\$12.5m	\$153,350	\$1.08m	995	\$56,254	21	23
Pubs	\$13.6m	\$3.9m	\$37,318	\$261,944	239	\$56,992	38	28
Total	\$69.6m	\$16.4m	\$190,668	\$1.34m	1234			

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 \$17,908,07

THE POKIES PLAY YOU



The average poker machine “earnt” (=took losses of)

Half year	Club poker machine	Hotel poker machine
first 6 months of 2017	\$27,672.22	\$47,471.13
first 6 months of 2018	\$28,063.04	\$51,578.01
first 6 months of 2019	\$28,261.44	\$54,911.26

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