

Internal Affairs

HIGHLIGHTS

Labour will:

- Protect the independence of Archives New Zealand and the National Library
- Conduct a thorough review of gambling law, regulation, policy and provision to reduce harm
- Maintain the role of licensing trusts.

Introduction

Labour's policies in Internal Affairs will seek to enhance knowledge, appreciation and pride in New Zealand's identity, history, bi-culturalism, multi-culturalism and other diversity, community resilience, distinctiveness, accomplishments and sense of nationhood. We will seek these, including through its ceremonial, honours, archives, National Library, Archives, community advisory and funding, translation services, gambling regulation, passports and citizenship roles.

Archives New Zealand and the National Library

The decision to merge Archives New Zealand and National Library into the Department of Internal Affairs has undermined the independence and influence of these institutions that are crucial parts of our constitutional and democratic infrastructure. The Chief Archivist and the National Librarian are currently third tier managers who are not part of the leadership team at DIA, with no guaranteed access to Ministers.

Archives NZ play the ultimate accountability role for government. It is their job to make sure records are kept and retained. They play a key part in our constitutional infrastructure. The National Library is a key force in our historical and democratic processes. Both need independence and influence to do their job properly, and that is currently being compromised.

Labour will

- Commit to Archives New Zealand and the National Library being re-established as independent and separate entities outside of the Department of Internal Affairs
- Investigate the National Archivist being an Officer of Parliament.

Gambling

Through the review Labour will examine mechanisms to strengthen the powers of communities and local authorities to determine the extent, location and nature of gambling outlets in their communities.

The review will take into account the common desire for alternative mechanisms to pokie machine funding for those organisations that decline to accept funding from this source or those organisations facing a reduction in the availability of such funding.

Through the gambling review Labour will seek to introduce effective gambling harm prevention and minimisation measures. The review will examine, in particular:

- investigating local councils having the power to phase out poker machine gambling venues in suburbs or towns where they are causing considerable harm and ensuring that the bulk of gambling venue proceeds are returned to services in the communities from which the money was lost;
- requiring all gambling machine venues and casinos to implement comprehensive, compulsory player tracking and pre-commitment card requirements;
- effective host responsibility staff training to ensure all patrons developing gambling problems leave the premises and are offered help from gambling services;
- closing all casinos and gambling machine venues no later than liquor sales closing hours in that area;
- effective enforcement of player exclusion of identified problem gamblers from all venues;
- requiring an independent auditing of the casinos' financial and host responsibility data.

Labour will

- Conduct a thorough review of gambling law, regulation, policy and provision to reduce harm.

The review will also examine appropriate restrictions on New Zealand residents accessing overseas internet and mobile gambling sites to minimise harm from them.

Labour will:

- Enforce gambling regulation more rigorously and vigorously prosecute where there is real evidence of rorts occurring.
- Ensure that the forthcoming casino licence reviews achieve reductions in gambling related harm.

The Department of Internal Affairs' gambling inspectors will work closely with local authority alcohol inspectors and with community groups and gambling service providers in ensuring that the gambling industry meets all its host responsibility and other obligations.

Labour will:

- Continue the levy on the gambling industry to support comprehensive counselling, intervention and public health gambling services by skilled voluntary agencies
- Support the right of those agencies, and other addiction and health services, to advocate for their clients for better regulation and public health policies.

Licensing Trusts

Labour recognises the unique and valuable role Licensing Trusts hold in New Zealand and the vital support they provide to the communities they are present in.

