



**Submission to:**

**Commissioner of Liquor and Gambling**

**Regarding:**

**South Australian Jockey Club**

**Cheltenham Venue**

**Social Effect Certificate application**

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**Submission prepared by: Uniting Communities**

**10 Pitt Street, Adelaide, South Australia. September 2015**

# Submission to the Commissioner of Liquor and Gambling

Regarding Application by the South Australian Jockey Club (SAJC) for a Social Effect Certificate

(as pre-condition for application for EGM licence to operate in Cheltenham)

## Submission Summary

Uniting Communities is aware that the specific legislation applying to the issuing of a Social Effect Certificate is Section 17B from the.

Paragraph 3, Section 17B of the Gaming Machine Act 1992<sup>1</sup> states:

“A Social Effect Certificate will only be granted if the applicant satisfies the Commissioner, by such evidence as the Commissioner may require, that the grant of a gaming machine licence in respect of the premises on the site would not be contrary to the public interest on the ground of likely social effect on the local community and in particular, the likely effect on problem gambling within the local community.”

We submit that the SAJC proposed venue will lead to increased gambling in communities containing and adjacent to the venue. This increased gambling would occur in communities that already have higher than state average poker machine gambling activity and:

- would lead to detrimental impacts on local people who have and develop addictive gambling behaviour
- would have adverse flow on impacts to family members, friends and work colleagues of people with gambling problems
- Would lead to higher levels of crime in local communities.
- would have negative economic impact as money spent on poker machine play would reduce spending on other businesses in the local community and would lead to profits derived by the SAJC being taken out of the local district, reducing local economic and employment multipliers

These substantial, deleterious consequences of the proposed venue are explicitly contrary to the requirements specified in the Act, and so a Social Effect Certificate should not be granted.

We further submit that the application for a Social Effect Certificate fails to give adequate cognisance of problem gambling associated with poker machine gambling. Fails to adequately identify groups within local communities with increased risk for gambling harm and fails to adequately consider solutions, or at least harm mitigating actions, that would be applied.

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<sup>1</sup> South Australia **Gaming Machines Act 1992**, An Act to provide for and regulate the supply and operation of gaming machines; and for other purposes. <http://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/A/GAMING%20MACHINES%20ACT%201992.aspx>

## About Uniting Communities

Uniting Communities works with South Australian citizens across metropolitan, regional and remote South Australia through more than 90 community service programs.

Our vision is: A compassionate, respectful and just community in which all people participate and flourish.

We are made up of a team of more than 1500 staff and volunteers who support and engage with more than 20,000 South Australians each year.

Recognising that people of all ages and backgrounds will come across challenges in their life, we offer professional and non-judgemental support for individuals and families.

Uniting Communities offers programs for:

- Older People
- Younger People
- Families & Children
- Housing & Crisis Support
- Mental Health & Well-being
- People with Disabilities
- Carers
- Financial & Legal Services.

Many of our services are available on a state-wide basis, most respond to clients from the greater Adelaide area, so our clients include people from the Cheltenham and surrounding areas

### **Our Involvement in Gambling Policy.**

Uniting Communities, as Adelaide Central Mission, was the first organisation to provide gambling specific counselling services in South Australia. We are an organisation that sees the impacts of gambling on individuals, families and communities, through many of the services that we provide across South Australia, though we are no longer funded through the Office for Problem Gambling to provide gambling specific services. We have also been at the forefront of gambling policy development and debate in South Australia for about 25 years. This involvement has included membership of the Gaming Machine Review Group, chaired by Hon Graham Ingerson and more recently the SA Government's Responsible Gambling Working Party. We were also members of the Commonwealth Government's gambling reference group, 2011/12 and have been active members of the SA and Australian Churches Gambling Taskforces.

Uniting Communities has an extensive involvement in service provision in gambling health services, more recently in service provision dealing with people with financial and other related issues often impacted by gambling and also we have extensive history in policy development for gambling in this state and nationally.

## **Our engagement with this process**

Uniting Communities, as a major community service organisation in South Australia and one with a long history in developing services to support people at risk of gambling harm, has been actively involved with this process from early on. We have made a submission to MasterPlan who were operating on behalf of the SAJC regarding this Social Effect Certificate application. We raised a number of issues with them which we believed the SAJC needed to consider before lodging an application for a Social Effect Certificate.

Uniting Communities also spoke with MasterPlan employees in their development of material for the SAJC. In these conversations we offered suggestions and provided a range of background information and identified references which we believed would be of value in considering social impacts of the proposed venue.

Uniting Communities was also represented at the public meeting held by MasterPlan, on behalf of the SAJC, to consult with the local community. As such we believe we have a good understanding of the application that SAJC is making and the community consultation and engagement that has occurred in the lead up to making this application, and that we have endeavoured to work constructively with the SAJC and its agents throughout the 'Social Effect' process.

## **Legislation**

Uniting Communities is aware that the specific legislation applying to the issuing of a Social Effect Certificate is Section 17B from the Gaming Machine Act 1992.

Paragraph 3 from Section 17B states:

“A Social Effect Certificate will only be granted if the applicant satisfies the Commissioner, by such evidence as the Commissioner may require, that the grant of a gaming machine licence in respect of the premises on the site would not be contrary to the public interest on the ground of likely social effect on the local community and in particular, the likely effect on problem gambling within the local community.”

We submit that the application for a Social Effect Certificate from the South Australian Jockey Club with regard to the location in Cheltenham, is explicitly contrary to the requirements specified in the Act, and so a Social Effect Certificate should not be granted.

The following information is provided as evidence to support this strongly held perspective.

## **Likely effect on problem gambling within the local community**

The proposal from the SAJC, as we understand it, is to increase the gambling turnover through electronic gambling machines from the community in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Cheltenham venue.

Any increase in gambling activity above existing levels will increase levels of problem gambling. The Productivity Commission in 2010 reported on gambling in Australia and stated that 40% of gambling revenue from electronic gaming machines comes from people with gambling problems.

We recognise that the Productivity Commission's report is regarded as one of the best gambling reports undertaken anywhere in the world and is in line with other research which identifies a clear causal link between increasing EGM turnover and increasing levels of problem gambling.

The experience of Uniting Communities as a long standing provider of community services is very much in line with this evidence. We experienced a significant increase in requests for assistance due to gambling problems from the introduction of poker machines in South Australia in 1994.

The following summarises some of the key findings from the Productivity Commission's 2010 report:

#### **Facts about Poker machine gambling**

- *600,000 Australians (4% of the adult population) play poker machines at least weekly (page 5.1)*
- *Around 95,000 people in this group of weekly players are 'problem gamblers' and a further 95,000 are at risk (page 5.1)*
- *There could be up to 160,000 Australian adults suffering significant problems from their gambling and up to a further 350,000 who are vulnerable (page 5.1)*
- *Problem gamblers account for around 40% of total poker machine spending (page 5.36)*
- *Weekly players spend on average around \$8,000 a year, a sizeable share of household incomes, and this is a primary source of harm (page 13)*
- *Poker machine players routinely underestimate their spending (page 14)*
- *For each problem gambler, several others are affected – family members, friends, employers and colleagues (page 16)*
- *The social costs of problem gambling are serious and include suicide, depression, relationship breakdown, lower work productivity, job losses, bankruptcy and crime (page 16)*
- *The social cost of problem gambling is around \$4.7 billion a year (page 16 and page 6.36)*

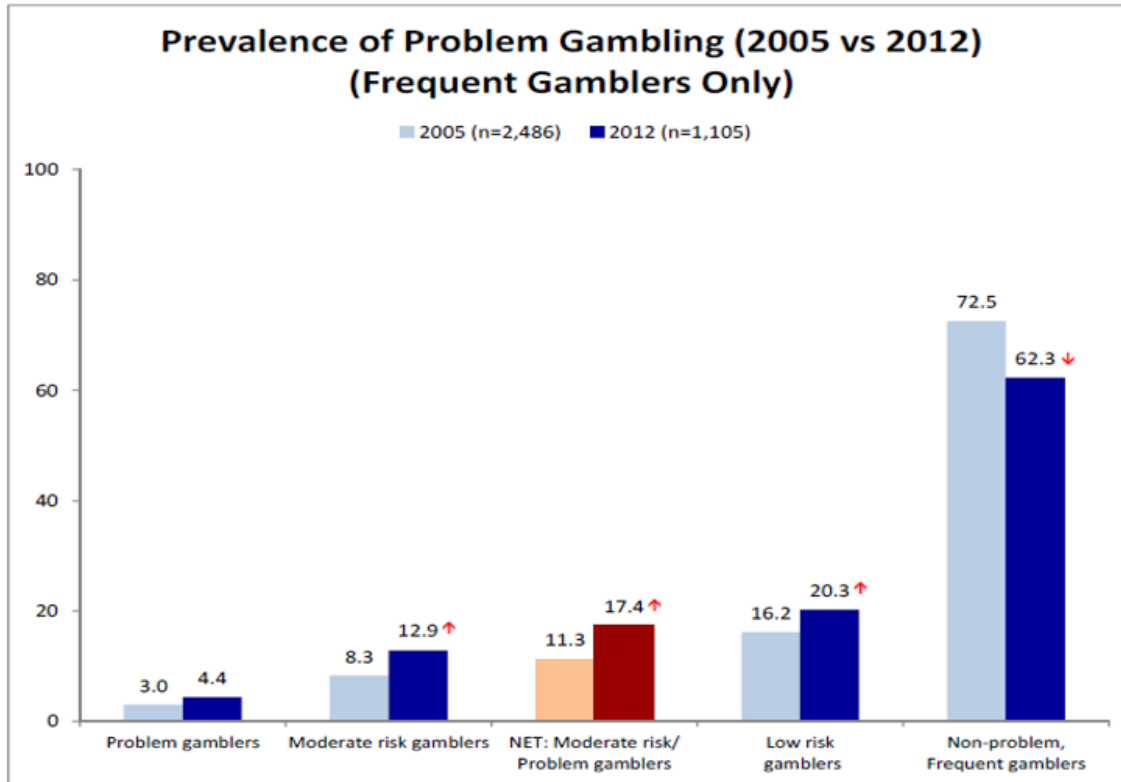
#### **Poker machines and problem gambling**

- *Players can lose up to \$1,200 an hour on high intensity machines (page 25)*
- *Poker machines account for around 75–80% of 'problem gamblers' (page 13)*
- *In some venues it is possible to feed \$10,000 into machines at a time (page 11.31)*
- *Random and intermittent payouts and the rapid repetition of games encourage sustained gambling (page 14)*
- *There are almost 200,000 poker machines in Australia – around half in NSW (page 6)*
- *Average revenue per machine is around \$60,000 a year and average revenue per venue around \$2.1 million a year (page 6)*

We also highlight that the most recent gambling prevalence study in South Australia showed that gambling risk is growing, shown in figure 1.

While there are many measures for people with gambling problems, this data shows an increase in all risk levels of gambling for frequent gamblers between 2005 and 2012 with 3.1% of the population identified as pathological / problem gamblers or moderate risk gamblers in 2012.

Figure 1: Prevalence of Problem Gambling in South Australia



Source: GAMBLING PREVALENCE IN SA (2012), prepared for Office of Problem Gambling

We also direct the Commissioner to the expert witness statement provided by Rosemary Hambledon from Relationships Australia in South Australia. This witness statement is attached to this submission.

The information presented in this section has highlighted that there is substantial harm associated with gambling, a reality that we submit the SAJC has considerably understated in its application for a Social Effect Certificate.

### Social Effect on the community

The negative impacts from problem and at risk gambling on individuals are clear, well researched and comprehensively documented. The following summary of adverse consequences of gambling is taken from a recently released report funded by the Australian research Council for a Coalition of Organisations, based at the City of Whittlesea and written by a Research team comprising Professor John McDonald, Dr Angela Murphy, Dr Rob Watson, Dr Helen Aucote, Diana Bell, Deborah Greenslade and Nicole Wiseman. (We have adjusted the formatting but not the wording).

This report is a helpful summary of research covering a wide range of impacts of poker machine gambling on individuals as well as communities. Each of the reports listed in the following quote can be referred to by the Commissioner if further evidence is needed regarding the adverse impacts of gambling and in particular poker machine gambling.

### **Category A: Empirical studies<sup>2</sup>**

*Empirical research findings on the effects of harmful gambling on communities indicate a wide range of correlated negative impacts (McDonald & Greenslade, 2010), many of which are represented in the Productivity Commission's (1999) diagram (see Figure 2). These impacts include:*

- *economic hardship (Law, 2005; PC, 1999, 2010, p. 16); bankruptcy (McMillen et al., 2004, p. 26; Scull & Woolcock, 2005);*
- *homelessness (Antonetti & Horn, 2001; Holdsworth, Tiyce & Hing, 2012);*
- *indebtedness (Law, 2005; SACES, 2008); and*
- *loss of assets including the family home, retirement savings and so forth (Law, 2005).*

*Individuals and groups who are socio-economically disadvantaged are more likely to suffer adverse economic impacts of increased gambling due to their limited financial means (Australian Institute for Gambling Research, 1999) and even losses of as little as \$15 per fortnight can have significant consequences for individuals on a low income (Law, 2005, p. 40).*

*Other adverse impacts include:*

- *increased crime rates – possibly to provide money for gambling or make up the shortfall in living expenses (Crofts, 2003; Wheeler, Round & Wilson, 2010);*
- *drug and alcohol issues (de Castella, Bolding, Lee, Cosic, Kulkarni, 2011; PC, 1999); anxiety (de Castella et al., 2011);*
- *stress, guilt and distress and general poor health (PC, 1999);*
- *depression, suicide ideation, attempted suicide and suicide (see for example Chow-Fairhall et al., 2006; de Castella et al., 2011; Victorian Coroners Prevention Unit, 2013);*
- *family breakdown and relationship stress (Dickson-Swift, James & Kippen, 2005; Kalischuk, Nowatzki, Cardwell, Klein, & Solowoniuk, 2006; Krishnan & Orford, 2002);*
- *family violence (Borderlands Cooperative, 2007; Suomi et al., 2013); and*
- *loss of friendships. (New Focus Research, 2003, p. 53).*

*Impacts documented by other studies have found:*

- *child neglect (Tu'itahi, Guttenbeil-Po'uhila, Hand & Htay, 2004);*
- *poorer household nutrition and variety (Schluter, Bellringer & Abbott, 2007);*
- *insufficient food (Law, 2005);*
- *increased demands on the health and welfare sector (Graffam & Southgate, 2005; Victorian Competition & Efficiency Commission, 2012);*
- *disruption to study and work (Abbott, 2001; McMillen et al., 2004; Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney-General, 2012, p. 75);*
- *reductions in charitable donations and fundraising (Marshall, 1998; SACES, 2005a); and a*
- *reduction in the level of social capital – measured in terms of trust volunteerism, group participation, charitable giving and fundraising, and meeting obligations to family and friends (Griswold and Nichols, 2006).*
- *Leakages from the regional economy and reduced levels of regional income and employment have also been documented (Deakin Human Services & Melb Inst of App Eco & Soc Services, 1997; New Focus Research, 2003, p. 50).*

This report also states that the adverse impacts of gambling, at a community level, are greater than the direct impacts of problem gambling.

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<sup>2</sup> ARC Linkage Grant Final Report, The impact of the introduction of poker machines on communities: Health and wellbeing consequences, [http://www.vlga.org.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/ARCLinkageGrantReport14LowRes\\_FinalPrintVersion\\_21November2014.pdf](http://www.vlga.org.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/ARCLinkageGrantReport14LowRes_FinalPrintVersion_21November2014.pdf)

*“Much of what is currently surmised to be the community effects of poker machine gambling is deduced from epidemiological studies measuring the prevalence of ‘problem gambling’ and research into the individual effects of harmful gambling.*

*These assessments often attempt to extrapolate community consequence by multiplying findings from prevalence studies across the population of a given area. While this approach may provide a gauge of the prevalence of what is classified as ‘problem gambling’ at the community level, and a level of insight into the associated effects on the gambler and their networks, it fails to come to grips with the more complex and nuanced effects of community based poker machines.*

The “expert statement” from Financial Counsellor Ian small that accompanies this submission reinforces the observations that many people with gambling problems are reticent to seek help, particularly from gambling help services because this required accepting their problem.

It is evident that increasing gambling turnover increases the adverse impacts on the local community: which is at clear odds with the legislation which states that the issuing of a Social Effects Certificate “would not be contrary to the public interest on the ground of the likely social effect on the local community”.

### **Gambling and Crime**

Uniting Communities has provided evidence regarding the direct relationship between increasing gambling activity and increased crime to MasterPlan in their development of the application for the Social Effects Certificate on behalf of the South Australian Jockey Club. Evidence that remains relevant and is included in this submission that we presented to MasterPlan states:

“We summarise below some research related to the correlation of gambling with criminal activity, including two pieces of research from South Australia which highlight the high correlation between increased levels of gambling activity in a local community and increased levels of crime, largely crimes like theft and larceny where the intent is to grab cash to maintain gambling. We are certain that the people of Cheltenham and surrounding areas do not want to increase the amount of crime in their community.

The following very briefly summarises a set of studies dealing with the relationship between gambling and criminal activity.

1. The relationship between crime and gaming expenditure in Victoria June 2010; Authors: Sarah Wheeler, David Round, John Wilson, from the Centre for Regulation and Market Analysis, School of Commerce. The report stated

*“The underlying hypothesis examined in this study is that higher expenditure on gaming machines in a local area leads to an increase in crime in that area.*

*Gaming expenditure per capita is **significantly positively associated** with nearly every type of crime in all years of the analysis. The strongest relationships (in terms of the size of significant coefficients) were found respectively with total crimes, followed by income-generating crimes (mainly property income-generating crimes), and then non-income-generating crimes (mainly property and other non-income-generating crimes).”*

2. An analysis of local and district court files by Penny Crofts B.Ec, LL.M, M.Phil (Cantab) Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Law, UTS, concluded:



*“The findings in this chapter indicate that for the subjects in the study, gambling, rather than an anti-social personality, was a motivation for the commission of crime. “*

3. Gambling and crime in SA, 2003, by Jayne and Amy Marshall for the SA Independent Gambling Authority concluded:

*“In contrast, anecdotal reports suggest that between 10% and 70% of problem gamblers who access gambling help services in South Australia are involved in gambling related crime. The wide divergence of estimations is possibly due to the nature of the particular client group accessing some agencies.”*

4. Problem gambling and the criminal justice system January 2013, produced by the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, January 201. This report stated:

*“Gambling-related offenders appearing before the Victorian Supreme Court of Appeal, Supreme or County courts for the calendar years 2007 and 2008 most commonly committed crimes to fund their gambling (74%) and/or to repay gambling-related debt (38%).*

*Over a third of prisoners surveyed (37%) reported having committed a gambling-related offence at some point in their lifetime. Of these, 54 per cent were under sentence for a gambling-related offence at the time of this research. The probability of committing a problem gambling-related crime appeared to be positively associated with an offender’s PGSI score, with 88 per cent of problem gamblers having committed a gambling-related offence (Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI),)”*

The overwhelming evidence is that increased gambling activity will inevitably lead to increased criminal activity, mainly theft related. This is another consequence of increased gambling for the local community near the proposed venue. The Social Effect Certificate application from SAJC has failed to recognise this significant issue, despite Uniting Communities being very clear about the risk, during the consultation process early this year. The application has completely failed to recognise the risk of increased crime and certainly has failed to provide any proposed responses.

We also draw the Commissioner’s attention to the expert witness statement from Michael O’Connell, Director of Victims of Crime in South Australia, which is also attached.

The increase in criminal activity, mainly crimes against property and specifically theft, which is a direct consequence of increased gambling activity, is another example of a consequence of the proposed SAJC venue that is “contrary to the public interest on the ground of the likely social effect on the local community”.

### **Location of the venue**

Uniting Communities recognises that this venue that is proposed is a shift of a previous licenced venue from a gambling specific venue, namely the Cheltenham Racecourse to a new location at the centre of a residential and commercial district. Specifically the new venue is proposed to be adjacent to a shopping centre and consequently in very close proximity to all members of local communities. This means that the venue is going to be readily visible to children and young people who we are concerned about having a venue in the centre of a community normalising gambling without recognition of the risks.

The gaming Machine Act states;

**15A—Gaming venues not to be located under same roof as shops or within shopping complexes**

- (1) Despite any other provision of this Act, the Commissioner cannot after the commencement of this section grant an application for a gaming machine licence in respect of licensed premises, or grant any other application under this Act in respect of licensed premises that are subject to a gaming machine licence, if to do so would result in the licensed premises, or the whole or part of a gaming area of the licensed premises, being located—
  - (a) under the same roof as a shop, whether or not on the same level or floor as the shop; or
  - (b) anywhere within the boundaries of a shopping complex.
- (4) For the purposes of subsection (1), licensed premises will be regarded as falling within the boundaries of a shopping complex if the land on which the premises are situated—
  - (a) formed part of the complex immediately prior to the granting of the development authorisation (or the first such authorisation if more than one) for the establishment of the licensed premises on the land; or
  - (b) shares a common boundary with the complex and the licensed premises are, in the opinion of the Commissioner, so linked to or integrated with the complex that they may properly be regarded as forming part of the complex.

The location of the venue adjacent to a shopping area is at variance with the intent of the Act and so “contrary to the public interest.”

The venue is within a residential community which means that people who are at risk of gambling, a larger group than ‘problem gamblers’ are unable to lead normal lives because they are confronted by a gambling venue when shopping and walking around their local community, again “contrary to the public interest.”

**Gaming Machine concentration**

Data taken from the Consumer and Business Services (CBS) website shows that net gambling revenue (NGR) per Local Government Area and NGR per venue are high by state comparisons.

There are 44 LGA’s listed in the CBS data set. Net gambling revenue per LGA shows that the highest level in the state is for the City of Port Adelaide and Enfield, with the City of Charles strut being the third highest, the City of Salisbury is second. The two LGA’s most affected by the proposed venue are already ranked highest and third highest in the State for NGR per LGA.

In considering NGR per venue for the two LGA’s most impacted by the proposed SAJC venue, both LGA’s are well above the State average, and are in the top 10 LGA’s for NGR per venue.

This data shows that existing levels of gambling activity are well above state averages for the two LGA’s most impacted by the proposed venue. An additional venue will only exacerbate the levels of gambling spending the City of Charles Sturt and the City of part Adelaide and Enfield. Spending levels which are already too high. This is further evidence of the proposed venue being “contrary to the public interest on the ground of the likely social effect on the local community”.

Table 1. Selected EGM Gambling Statistics

EGM Statistics 2013-14	Net gaming revenue (per LGA)	NGR per venue	No. machines	No venues
Port Enfield	\$75,771,869.74	\$1,848,094.38	1153	41
Charles Sturt	\$61,633,173.33	\$2,370,506.67	785	26
State	725,908,097.90	*\$1,329,520.00	12,377	546

Source: Office of Consumer and Business Services: (\* is Uniting Communities calculation)

<http://www.cbs.sa.gov.au/assets/files/LGAcouncilstatistics1415.pdf>

## Economic Impacts

We are well aware that “In assessing the social effect of the grant of a gaming machine licence, the Commissioner—

- (b) must not have regard to the economic effect that the granting of a gaming machine licence might have on the business of other licensed premises in the relevant locality (except insofar as that economic effect may be relevant to an assessment of the likely social effect of the grant of the licence on the local community)” – Gaming Machine Act 17B (4)

However, we submit that there are other economic impacts that the proposed venue would have that are deleterious to the local community, through reduced business activity. The following extract from a report by the SA centre for Economic Studies<sup>3</sup> shows that the ‘employment multiplier’ from gaming is much lower than other economic activities, so increased gaming machine spending associated with the proposed venue will reduce jobs in the community, weakening economic activity.

This extract is from “The South Australian Gambling Industry” prepared for the Independent Gambling Authority in 2006”

*“Table 5.4 shows employment by occupation and income by source for all Australian hotels, taverns, bars and clubs in 2000-01 (data are not available on a State basis). By attributing certain occupations to income earned from particular sources, one can derive estimates of the job intensity of particular activities. In this case, earnings from the sale of liquor and other beverages have been attributed to bar managers and bar staff, earnings from gambling income to gaming staff and cashiers, and takings from meals and food sales to catering staff. While the estimates are not precise due to the nature of the data and simplified methodology used (e.g., staff may perform more than one activity), they should nevertheless provide a useful indication of the relative job intensity of particular venue activities.*

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.adelaide.edu.au/saces/gambling/publications/The\\_South\\_Australian\\_Gambling\\_Industry.pdf](https://www.adelaide.edu.au/saces/gambling/publications/The_South_Australian_Gambling_Industry.pdf)

**Table 5.4**  
**Australia – Hotels, Taverns, Bars and Clubs – Jobs per Smillion of Income – 2000-01**

	Venues with gambling facilities	Venues without gambling facilities
<b>Occupation of persons employed:</b>		
Managers and admin staff	13,922	2,650
Bar managers and staff	49,064	11,865
Gaming staff and cashiers	18,866	-
Catering staff	23,125	4,486
Other	21,356	3,815
Total	126,332	22,816
<b>Sources of total income (\$ million):</b>		
Sale of liquor and other beverages	5,855	1,203
Gambling income	5,957	-
Takings from meals and food sales	1,145	227
Other	689	198
Total	13,676	1,628
<b>Persons employed per Smillion of income:</b>		
Sale of liquor and other beverages	8.3	9.9
Gambling income	3.2	-
Takings from meals and food sales	20.2	19.7

*Source:* ABS, *Clubs, Hotels, Taverns and Bars, Australia* (Cat. No. 8687.0).

*Source: ABS, Clubs, Hotels, Taverns and Bars, Australia (Cat. No. 8687.0).*

*Table 5.4 suggests that gambling activities in the hospitality industry are not as job intensive as other activities. For venues with gambling facilities, there were 3.2 jobs per \$million of gambling income, compared with 8.3 jobs per \$million income from sales of liquor and other beverages, and 20.2 jobs per \$million income from meals and food sales.*

*This potentially understates the contribution of gambling to employment in hotels and clubs since revenue from EGMs has enabled many venues to improve their facilities and services, which may in turn have increased their patronage and boosted employment related to food and beverages. Nonetheless, that job intensity associated with EGM expenditure is low remains a significant finding. This is because, as noted above, analysis of the benefits of gambling should take into account the jobs lost due to expenditure diverted from other activities. If expenditure is diverted from high job-intensity activities to low job-intensity activities, ultimately the net impact on employment of EGM expenditure may be negative.*

*The Australian Bureau of Statistics survey of retail industries shows that the Australian retail industry employed 6.5 persons per \$1 million of income in 1998-99, which is considerably higher than the job intensity associated with gambling in hotels, taverns, bars and clubs.”*

We also suggest that the net effect of the proposed club will be to take money out of the community since the profits from gambling in the new venue are unlikely to be spent in the local community, so the venue removes money from local circulation.

We submit that the net economic impacts of the proposed venue would be to take jobs from other businesses in the district, with higher employment multipliers and to reduce the money circulating in the local community, impacts that are “contrary to the public interest”

## **Social Effects Certificate application**

We wish to conclude with some brief comments regarding the Social Effects Certificate application as we understand it.

In addition to the concerns we have raised above, we believe that the Social Effects Certificate fails to meet both the detail of the Social Effects Certificate requirements as well as the spirit of the legislation in that the application:

- fails to identify and understand risks of gambling arising from the venue;
- fails to identify adequate responses to the risks of gambling harm and
- fails to identify and understand specific communities within the local population.

### Failure to understand gambling harm

Despite the community consolation activities undertaken, the application gives scant regard to naming and identifying the reality of problem gambling and fails to give any basic analysis of potential adverse impacts, despite this being the primary purpose of the requirement for a social effect Certificate to be granted.

### Failure to respond to gambling harm

Despite our raising specific questions about how the SAJC would respond to gambling harm during the consultation phase, we believe that the only response from the SAJC has been to state that staff in the proposed venue would receive advanced training from Club safe. While necessary, we contend that this response is grossly inadequate. The SAJC is an existing gambling provider in other venues, yet the SAJC has failed to provide any reasonable data or evidence about its effectiveness in mitigating gambling harm in their other locations and the track record of the strategies it, we assume, would be seeking to apply at the Cheltenham venue. For example they do not indicate how problematic gambling behaviours would be identified, name the strategies that would be implemented to reduce the risk of gambling harm or any evaluation of effectiveness of harm minimisation of strategies.

Regarding their track record as a gambling provider, we have not seen any data that indicated the number of referrals made to gambling help services for example, the number of approaches made to patrons or any other measure that could suggest effectiveness in responding to gambling harm.

We are also surprised that despite our clear presentations to the SAJC about gambling and crime issues, in particular, there has been no response to this significant issue that we are aware of.

### Failure to identify specific communities

The application for a Social effect certificate has failed to adequately understand the range of communities within the LGAs, particularly any cultural specific aspects that might give rise to problem gambling risk. The application has failed, as we understand it to specifically consult with the known non-English speaking cultural communities in the district.

We are also bemused by the omission of any reference to community service providers as part of the baseline document. For example, in identifying employers in the area, one of the largest employers in the area, with about 800 staff, UnitingCare Wesley Port Adelaide, is not mentioned as an employer, nor are the Aged care providers nor any other community service employer. We suggest that this oversight could indicate a failure of the proponent to fully understand the community that is the location for the proposed venue.

### **Summary**

Uniting Communities is strongly of the view that the application for a Social Effects Certificate from the SAJC must be rejected because it fails the fundamental test prescribed by the Act in that approving a venue would lead to increased risk of problem gambling and increased detriment to the local community that is, the venue is not in the public interest of the local community and would inevitably lead to greater levels of harm.

We thank the Commissioner for the opportunity to present and will happily provide any further detail that may be useful in assisting the Commissioner to determine the appropriateness of issuing a Social Effects Certificate for the SAJC.

### **Contact Person**

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