FACT SHEET 3

PREVALENCE OF PROBLEM GAMBLING

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There were a total of 15,000 participants for this study, and 73.07% (approximately 11,000 adults) reported having spent money on at least one gambling activity during the previous 12-month period. These individuals were administered the Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI), which is comprised of nine scored items that are a sub-set of the Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI).

Based on their PGSI scores, participants were categorised into the following risk segments: problem gamblers; moderate risk gamblers; low risk gamblers; or non-problem gamblers. The distinctions between these categories are:

Problem gamblers (score 8 or higher)

Problem gamblers are defined by the PGSI as those who have experienced adverse consequences and may have lost control of their behaviour. Involvement in gambling may be at any level but is likely to be heavy.

Moderate risk gamblers (score 3-7)

Moderate risk gamblers are those who will have responded 'never' to most of the indicators of behavioural problems in the PGSI but will have one or more 'most of the time' or 'always' responses. This group may or may not have experienced adverse consequences from gambling.

Low risk gamblers (score 1-2)

This group of gamblers is unlikely to have experienced any adverse consequences from gambling and will have answered 'never' to most of the indicators of behavioural problems in the PGSI.

Non-problem gamblers (0)

The PGSI considers respondents who have responded 'never' to all of the indicators of behavioural problems. This group may still be frequent gamblers with heavy involvement in terms of time and money, but will not have experienced any adverse consequences.

The following problem gambling prevalence estimates were calculated for the Victorian adult population:

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PGSI RISK CATEGORY	PREVALENCE ESTIMATE (%)
Problem gamblers	0.70
Moderate risk gamblers	2.36
Low risk gamblers	5.70
Non-problem gamblers	64.31
Non gamblers	26.93

The sampling for this study was stratified to reflect the adult population of each of the eight Government regions across Victoria (see report for details). Local government areas were classified into high, medium or low electronic gaming machine (EGM) expenditure bands.

The high EGM expenditure areas were over- sampled to ensure likely problem gamblers were captured, with 70 per cent of the sample coming from high expenditure areas, 20 per cent from medium expenditure areas and the remaining 10 per cent from low expenditure areas.

Consistent with the sampling design, findings revealed that the likelihood of problem gambling was significantly higher in medium EGM spend bands and high EGM spend bands, compared to lower EGM spend band regions. The chance of being a non-gambler was significantly less in a high EGM spend band, compared to a low spend band.