

Treasurer

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11 NOV 2015

Hon Barry O'Farrell
Illegal Offshore Wagering Review
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Dear Mr O'Farrell

IMPACT OF ILLEGAL OFFSHORE WAGERING REVIEW

The Tasmanian Government welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Department of Social Services, Impact of Illegal Offshore Wagering Review.

Online wagering in Australia, facilitated by the development of new technologies such as smart phones and tablets, has become more and more widespread and reflects a shift from the more traditional terrestrial based TAB wagering. Greater accessibility to online wagering has led to increased competitiveness in this market which in turn has led to a significant increase in marketing, promotions and inducements by wagering operators seeking to maintain and grow their customer base.

The growth of online wagering in Australia has introduced new risks in relation to problem gambling, access to wagering by minors, the integrity of racing and sport, and taxation and product fee revenue. The Tasmanian Government has long recognised that a strong regulatory framework is essential to addressing these risks.

The Tasmanian Government has regulated online wagering since 2000 and during this time mandated various harm minimisation measures including: the ability for players to impose limits on the amount they can gamble and exclude themselves from participating in gambling activities; a prohibition on the provision of credit by a licensed provider; restrictions around advertising, inducements and player loyalty programs; and a clear complaints mechanism.

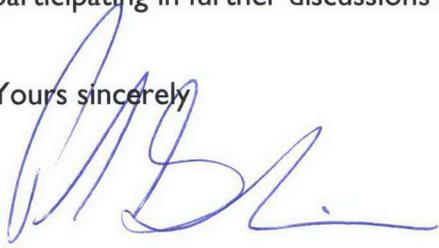
Additionally, the Tasmanian Government has introduced provisions to deal with fraudulent betting and protect the integrity of racing and sport and has established strong probity requirements.

It is clear that while Tasmania and other Australian jurisdictions have introduced measures to ensure the integrity of wagering in Australia and minimise harm the emergence of illegal offshore gambling operators has undermined this effort.

Illegal offshore gambling operators are able to target Australian customers while avoiding the very measures that Australian regulators have introduced to protect the industry, the customer, and the integrity of the racing and sports industries. In addition, the illegal offshore operators are able to avoid relevant industry fees, charges and taxes, which creates an un-level playing field for legally operating businesses.

Accordingly, the Tasmanian Government supports the Commonwealth Government's review into the impact of illegal offshore wagering and an investigation of enforcement options. Furthermore, the Tasmanian Government considers that a national approach that aims to protect Australians from illegal offshore wagering operators is appropriate. The Tasmanian Government, noting the short time frame for the Review to report, also looks forward to participating in further discussions on this important issue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Gutwein', written over the 'Yours sincerely' text.

Hon Peter Gutwein MP
Treasurer