

## Some myths about poker machine gambling

Myth:

Problem gambling is on the rise and out of control

Fact:

Problem gambling rates have been falling right across Australia for the last 10 years. In NSW, a State Government commissioned report last year found that 0.8% of adults are problem gamblers. There has been a 50% fall in the rate of problem gambling since 1999 when it was first measured at 2.55% by the Productivity Commission.

The NSW Government funds G-Line, a toll free 24 hour a day problem gambling service. The total number of calls received has been falling for 7 years in a row. Based on calls received so far in 2008, this year will see the lowest number of calls ever made to G-line in a single year.

Myth:

Australia has 20% of the world's poker machines and NSW half of these

Fact:

Australian Gaming Machine Manufacturer's Association (AGMMA) states that independent research shows that just 2.35% of the world's gaming machines are located in Australia, and NSW accounts for 1.25%. Countries with significantly more machines than Australia include America, Italy, the United Kingdom, Russia, Spain and Germany.

Myth:

Removing ATMS from clubs will help problem gamblers

Fact:

Two major independent studies conducted by the ACT Government and the Commonwealth Government showed that removing ATMs from gaming venues would not provide tangible help for problem gamblers but would severely inconvenience the majority of people that use club ATMs because they are convenient and safe. In many parts of NSW clubs are the only places that provide convenient and secure access to cash.

Myth:

Poker machines do more harm than good

Fact:

The revenue derived from gaming underpins the substantial economic and social contributions clubs make. The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of NSW (IPART) recently found that the social contribution of clubs is valued at \$811 million per annum and that even allowing for the negative impacts of problem gambling, clubs make an overwhelmingly positive contribution to the NSW community.

Myth:

The more poker machines there are, the more problem gamblers there are

Fact:

IPART found that the provision of poker machines in clubs has not led to a higher overall level of gambling or incidence of problem gambling in NSW. Further, the rates of problem gambling and per capita expenditure on gambling in NSW are comparable with other states where there are significantly less poker machines (even Western Australia where there are no poker machines at all).

**Information prepared by ClubsNSW, July 2008**