

**Joint Select Parliamentary Committee on Gambling
Public Hearing 15 February 2011**

Possible Questions for the Problem Gambling Taskforce (PGT)

Pre-commitment

What is pre-commitment?

What pre-commitment models is the PGT looking into?

What bio-metrics models is the PGT looking into?

(T) Does the PGT have a view on the additional benefit which a mandatory pre-commitment system would bring over a voluntary one?

Why can't the system be voluntary?

Will pre-commitment be introduced to all forms of gambling?

What are the unforeseen consequences of introducing a pre-commitment scheme?

Should pre-commitment apply to other addictive substances such as alcohol and tobacco? Why are you only focusing on gambling?

What is the PGT doing to ensure a robust pre-commitment scheme is introduced?

Tourists

What is the PGT's view on how tourists may be affected by pre-commitment?

What model would most effectively deal with the needs of tourists?

Efficacy of pre-commitment

Other witnesses have testified that pre-commitment will have little impact on people 'in the zone or cave'. Is a maximum limit needed to protect these people?

Is there a correlation between other health issues and problem gambling?

How does the PGT propose to implement pre-commitment?

Pre-commitment Limits

(T) Does the PGT support the Productivity Commission's recommendation of allowing gamblers to set no limits if they wish?

Does the PGT support a model of mandatory pre-commitment limits?

(T) Questions provided by Treasury.

What is your view on mandatory pre-commitment limits being set according to income and assets or the use of a person's credit ratings?

Consultation

Who has the department consulted in its policy development so far?

Communication

Is FaHCSIA aware of the attitudes of the public and gamblers to pre-commitment?

What does the Department know about attitudes to problem gambling in the community?

What is the Department doing to communicate these changes to those who may be affected by them?

Revenues

(T) Has the department done any work to estimate the impact on industry as a result of these reforms? What are the preliminary results?

Do you have any estimates on how pre-commitment may impact small clubs and hotels?

What options are there to minimise the implementation costs of these reforms?

What information does the PGT have on the loss of revenue on venues?

Will local community clubs and sports clubs be negatively impacted by loss of revenue to venues?

(T) What is the department's view about Clubs Australia's claim that the Productivity Commission estimate that 40 per cent of gambling revenue comes from problem gamblers is wrong?

Community and Sporting Groups

Do you accept the view of Clubs Australia and others that clubs will not be able to give support to community and sporting groups in the same ways that they did previously because of a loss of revenue?

Do you believe that community and sporting groups will be disadvantaged by these reforms because of reduced donations from clubs?

Privacy

Isn't this Scheme going to interfere with people's privacy?

If a national scheme is implemented, will the Commonwealth Government need to maintain a database of all player information in Australia?

(T) Questions provided by Treasury.

Online

Won't problem gamblers just migrate to online or other forms of gambling?

Timeframes

Can a pre-commitment scheme be implemented within the timeframe committed to by the Australian Government (given the Productivity Commission recommended a lengthier timeframe)?

How long do you estimate it will take to roll out this scheme and at what cost to the industry?

Harm Minimisation/ Gambling Help Online

What do we mean by harm-minimisation?

Are machines potentially dangerous?

Why is the government focussing on Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs)?

Will pre-commitment actually reduce the number of problem gamblers?

If not, What is the Government doing in the area of harm reduction?

What is the argument for Government invention in this area? Whatever happened to individual responsibility?

Research

What is the PGT's evidence base for implementing pre-commitment?

What research is the PGT doing to inform the implementation of pre-commitment?

Will FaHCSIA conduct any trials into pre-commitment?

Technical Issues

How is PGT engaging with the technical issues of pre-commitment?

What does PGT's technical expert (The Toneguzzo Group) say are the barriers to implementing pre-commitment?

Is there any potential for a venue based system to be effective?

Does the PGT support a:

- smart card (eg: like a credit card) OR*
- identity card based scheme (like a licence) OR*
- a USB based scheme?*

Will a pre-commitment scheme be nationally networked?

Will self exclusion be networked nationally?

Stakeholders

Is the Ministerial Expert Advisory Group (MEAG) on Gambling Reform a genuine consultative mechanism?

Already some of the MEAG papers have been released publicly under Freedom of Information provisions. Can the Committee now have all of the MEAG papers please?

All members of MEAG signed confidentially agreements when the group was established. Members agreed that, "other than where they have obtained the prior written approval of the Chair of the Group, to maintain confidentially concerning all information (including but not limited to all briefing papers, meeting discussions, all written and oral material) made available for the purposes of assisting with the business of the Group". This was to ensure that members could have open discussions, engaging in the policy issues, with confidence that their privacy would be upheld. MEAG papers cannot be publicly released to ensure the integrity and confidentiality of the group.

In the case where a Freedom of Information request is made, the Department is obliged to respond to this request appropriately and in accordance with the law.

Could the PGT please make available to the Committee all of the papers provided to the Council of Australian Governments Select Council on Gambling?

The COAG Select Council is a Ministerial Inter-governmental Council. As a Commonwealth bureaucracy the PGT does not have the authority to approve the release of COAG Select Council Papers. Such a request should be directed towards the Council.

Governance

Will you need to create a national central monitory scheme for pre-commitment?

Will the PGT regulate the pre-commitment scheme? / Will another Commonwealth body be set up to regulate pre-commitment?

How will you prevent use of false identities in obtaining a pre-commitment card?

How would you prevent card swapping?

Legal

What does the legal advice provided by the Australian Government Solicitor (AGS) mean?

(T) Does the PGT have a preferred approach to legislating in this area? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the different approaches?

(T) If the Commonwealth did legislate, will it take over all of gambling regulation from the States?

(T) Has the PGT or will the PGT commission further advice from the AGS? What are the remaining legal questions which require clarification?

States

How many states support pre-commitment at the moment?

What are the major concerns of states in implementing a pre-commitment scheme?

Will a state based scheme really work?