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Media Releases

Offer to Clubs ACT for trial of mandatory pre-commitment

Date:
22/01/2012

The Federal Government made an offer to Clubs ACT on Friday for a trial of mandatory pre-commitment in the ACT.

This offer has now gone to Clubs ACT's members for their consideration and is being released publicly by the Government and Clubs ACT.

The Government and Clubs ACT agree this is a genuine offer.

Australian Government proposal to venues for a trial of mandatory pre-commitment in the Australian Capital Territory

Coverage	All Clubs in the ACT to participate in a trial of mandatory pre-commitment. This would include small clubs and those not currently members of ClubsACT where possible. The Commonwealth and ClubsACT to work together to secure maximum venue coverage.
Surrounding areas	The Commonwealth has sought data from clubs and hotels in the Queanbeyan area for the evaluation framework. This will enable evaluation of any migration to cross-border towns. ClubsACT to assist in securing agreement to access data.
Terms of the trial	A trial of mandatory pre-commitment consistent with the Productivity Commission's recommendations, to: • test the design features of mandatory pre-commitment for possible modification; and • substantiate that mandatory pre-commitment has sufficient advantages over partial pre-commitment to justify proceeding with its implementation in all jurisdictions. Commonwealth open to testing low intensity machines in the trial environment if the industry would like to do so. This could be done in some of the trial venues (for all or some of their machines).
Timing	A 12-month trial of mandatory pre-commitment to start 1 Feb 2013 and run until 1 Feb 2014, with an additional 6 months for evaluation and independent review. Implementation of the trial infrastructure would begin immediately and players would be able to register from 1 November 2012.

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Evaluation	The trial will be evaluated by an independent research institution. This institution will recommend an evaluation methodology that will be considered by the Oversight Committee. The evaluator will be supported by an independent financial auditor who will provide specialist advice on financial issues.
Governance	A high level Committee, chaired by the Commonwealth, will oversee the implementation and conduct of the trial with representation from ClubsACT, other non-affiliated clubs, researchers, the not for profit sector and the ACT Government. Other industry bodies may wish to be represented on the Committee. The organisations engaged to conduct the research and evaluation component of the trial will also participate in the Oversight Committee. There may be other working groups if required reporting to the Oversight Committee and an independent financial auditor will be appointed to help determine financial matters (see further below). The Commonwealth will provide secretariat support for the Oversight Committee. The Commonwealth and/or ACT Governments will make decision in relation to funding and contract arrangements.
Dynamic Warnings and ATM withdrawal limits	While the primary purpose of the trial is to test a mandatory pre-commitment system, the system will ensure that gaming machine players are provided with messages alerting them to their cost of play and providing them with access to activity statements. The trial will not test the ATM withdrawal limit reform.

Financial Assistance for Venues	The Commonwealth will fund 100% of all necessary infrastructure (central monitoring and pre-commitment infrastructure) to conduct the trial – the costs of this component will depend on market testing.
	
	The Commonwealth will also provide a financial assistance package:
	• A participation fee to venues set at 20% of each venue's 2010/11 gross gaming machine revenue ($36.0m across the ACT) paid monthly.
	• There will be two review points for the fee - at the 4 and 8 month marks- to assess whether there is any requirement for a revised structure.
	• The reviews to be conducted by the Oversight Committee and the independent financial auditor and provide recommendations to the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth as funder to make any decisions on whether additional assistance is provided.
	• At any time, individual venues can make a claim to the Oversight Committee for extra assistance in exceptional circumstances due to implementation of mandatory pre-commitment – with a final decision by the Commonwealth after advice from the independent financial auditor.
	• A venue readiness and capacity package as follows:
	    ◦ venue staff training in pre-commitment ($625 per staff member, $100,000 for the development of the training program - $0.7 million across ACT);
	    ◦ additional funding for specialist mandatory pre-commitment workers – $0.2 million;
	    ◦ business planning to all venues after the trial period – $0.2 million.
	
	The Commonwealth will also fund the following trial facilitation costs:

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	• The independent evaluation of the trial; • Independent financial auditors to advise the evaluators, and the Oversight Committee; • Communication and education material to support the trial; • Secretariat support for the Oversight Committee.
Political donations	All venues will need to enter into an agreement that no Commonwealth funding will be used to support political donations.
Additional Counselling	The Commonwealth will provide additional funding to ACT Government counselling services.
Community Contributions	Venues would need to continue to meet requirements for community contributions.

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