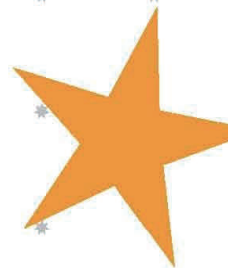
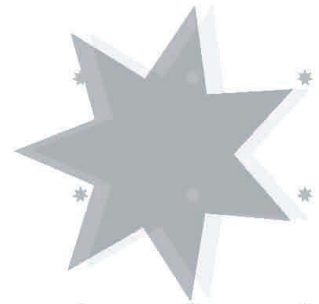
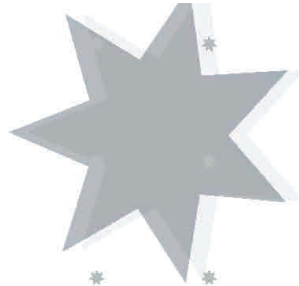


AUSTRALASIAN  
Gaming Council

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**A Database**  
on Australia's Gambling Industry

**Chapter 14**

**2009/10**

# A Database

## On Australia's Gambling Industry

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The Australasian Gaming Council welcomes comments and suggestions on this publication.

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## Chapter 14

# A Brief History of Gambling in Australia

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This chapter outlines a brief history of the development of gambling in Australia. This is based mainly on *Gambling and Problem Gambling in the Community: An International Overview and Critique-Report Number One of the New Zealand Gaming Survey* by Max Abbott and Rachel Volberg<sup>1</sup> and Queensland School Stuff Fact Sheet - More Info<sup>2</sup>.

The European settlers who arrived with and after the First Fleet brought gambling to Australia. Soldiers played card games such as cribbage and an early form of two-up called pitch and toss. Early administrators tried to stamp out these games, but they were unsuccessful.

Gambling was permitted at racing clubs with gambling by the elite and army officers tolerated. The first official horse race was held in 1810. By the mid 1800s betting on horse racing was a popular recreational activity with turf clubs established in many areas of Australia. Racing became the most popular form of leisure activity for working class men. The first Melbourne Cup was run in 1891.

Asian gaming and public gaming such as two-up were regarded by many as immoral and were illegal.

The first Tattersall's lottery was conducted in 1881.

In the 1910's and 1920's Art Union lotteries and state government controlled lotteries began to flourish in Australia. The Golden Casket Art Union began in Queensland in 1916 to raise money for a fund for soldiers during the First World War and during the 1920's the Queensland Government took control of the Golden Casket Art Union to raise revenue.

The 1930's and 40's saw minor gaming activities such as bingo, raffles and art unions became popular and legitimate. It also saw an increase in illegal gambling activity such as SP Bookies and private gaming clubs.

In 1956, the New South Wales Government passed the Gaming and Betting (Poker Machines) Act, which gave the exclusive right to operate poker machines to registered clubs. The funds from the machines were to be used to benefit the community. There was a rapid increase in the number of clubs, and club members. Gaming machines also spread quickly throughout New South Wales. By 1959 there were about 1100 clubs and over 7000 poker machines in New South Wales.

During the 1970s, further liberalisation occurred with Tasmania and the Northern Territory legalising privately operated casinos. Additional casinos were established in Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia during the 1980s.

The 1990's saw increased liberalisation of the gambling market in Australia with legal casinos being introduced in New South Wales and Victoria and gaming machines spreading to all states in Australia, except Western Australia.

In 1997-98 the Productivity Commission undertook a major review of the gambling environment in Australia. This report was released in 1999 and has heavily influenced the regulation of gambling in Australia since. A second Productivity Commission inquiry has been conducted in 2009 with the Final Inquiry Report released in June 2010.

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<sup>1</sup> Abbott & Volberg (1999), *Gambling and Problem Gambling in the Community: an International Overview and Critique: Report Number One of the New Zealand Gaming Survey*, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.olgr.qld.gov.au/responsibleGambling/educationInfo/schoolStuff/gambol/moreinfo.pdf>

## A Timeline

1809-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First organised race meeting in Australia (New South Wales)</li> </ul>
1861	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Melbourne Cup run in Victoria</li> </ul>
1879-80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tote first introduced in Australia (South Australia)</li> </ul>
1915-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First automatic totalisator machine installed in Australia (Western Australia)</li> </ul>
1920-21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Golden Casket lotteries established in Queensland as the first government-run lottery in Australia</li> </ul>
1930-40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'SP' bookies flourish in most Australian states</li> </ul>
1942-45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Race meetings and lotteries restricted due to the Second World War</li> </ul>
1955-56	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poker machines legalised in licensed clubs in New South Wales</li> </ul>
1960-61	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victoria the first state to legalise TAB off-course betting</li> </ul>
1965-66	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Australia the last state to introduce state-run lotteries following a referendum</li> </ul>
1972-73	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First casino in Australia opened, in Tasmania</li> <li>• Minor gaming introduced in South Australia</li> </ul>
1973-74	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lotto introduced in South Australia</li> <li>• Minor gaming introduced in Tasmania</li> </ul>
1974-75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pools introduced in Victoria</li> <li>• TAB introduced in Tasmania</li> </ul>
1975-76	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pools introduced in New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania</li> </ul>
1976-77	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lotteries, lotto and gaming machines introduced in the Australian Capital Territory</li> </ul>
1977-78	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor gaming introduced in Victoria</li> <li>• Off-course bookmakers phased out in Tasmania</li> </ul>
1978-79	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instant lotteries introduced in South Australia</li> <li>• Lotto introduced in Western Australia and the Northern Territory</li> <li>• On-course/off-course bookmakers, lotteries, pools and minor gaming introduced in the Northern Territory</li> </ul>
1979-80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lotto introduced in New South Wales</li> <li>• Pools introduced in the Australian Capital Territory</li> <li>• On-course totalisator and instant lotteries introduced in the Northern Territory</li> <li>• First casino opened in the Northern Territory</li> </ul>
1980-81	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pools introduced in South Australia</li> <li>• Lotteries re-introduced in Tasmania</li> </ul>
1981-82	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lotto introduced in Queensland</li> <li>• Instant lotteries introduced in Victoria, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory</li> </ul>
1982-83	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instant lotteries introduced in New South Wales and Western Australia</li> </ul>
1984-85	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instant lotteries introduced in Queensland</li> <li>• Pools introduced in Western Australia</li> </ul>
1985-86	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First casino opened in Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia</li> <li>• TAB introduced in the Northern Territory</li> </ul>
1988-89	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor gaming introduced in Western Australia</li> </ul>

1989-90	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lotteries phased out in South Australia</li> </ul>
1990-91	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaming machines introduced in Victoria and the Northern Territory</li> <li>• Off-course bookmakers phased out in the Northern Territory</li> <li>• Minor gaming introduced in Queensland</li> <li>• Minor gaming phased out in the Northern Territory</li> </ul>
1991-92	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaming machines introduced in Queensland</li> <li>• Keno introduced in New South Wales and South Australia</li> </ul>
1992-93	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lotteries phased out in Western Australia</li> <li>• Casino opened in the Australian Capital Territory</li> </ul>
1993-94	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keno introduced in Victoria</li> </ul>
1994-95	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Casino opened in Victoria</li> <li>• Gaming machines introduced in South Australia</li> <li>• Keno introduced in Tasmania</li> <li>• Sports betting introduced in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory</li> </ul>
1995-96	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Casino opened in New South Wales</li> <li>• Minor gaming phased out in Victoria</li> <li>• Sports betting introduced in Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory</li> </ul>
1996-97	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaming machines introduced in Tasmania</li> </ul>
1997-98	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keno introduced in Queensland</li> </ul>
1998-99	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactive gambling introduced in the Northern Territory</li> <li>• Productivity Commission releases landmark study of gambling in Australia</li> </ul>
1999-00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactive gambling introduced in Queensland and Tasmania</li> <li>• Australian Gaming Council formed</li> </ul>
2005-06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Betting exchange licensed and begins operation in Tasmania<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>
2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian Gaming Council changes its name to the Australasian Gaming Council, to encompass New Zealand membership</li> </ul>
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Productivity Commission scheduled to releases second major study into gambling in Australia</li> </ul>

Source: Winter, G. (2002), *Gambling: An Australian Tradition on the Up!* Department of the Parliamentary Library, Research Paper no.14 2001-2002, Statistics Group, 14 May 2002. *Australian Gambling Comparative History and Analysis*, Australian Institute for Gambling Research, Project Report, October 1999.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.media.tas.gov.au/release.php?id=19197>