

Media Release

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AGC Releases Report on “Zoning Out”

The AGC today released the latest report in its Current Issues series. The discussion paper focuses on dissociation or “zoning out” and its relationship to gambling, its clinical significance and measurement. The report is a selection of views by psychiatrists, psychologists, counsellors and researchers in the subject with an overview by Dr Clive Allcock.

Contributions were received from the following people:

- Dr Clive Allcock
- Dr Paul Delfabbro
- Alicia Garcia and Professor Alex Blaszczynski
- Professor Mark Griffiths, Dr Richard Wood, Jonathan Parke & Adrian Parke
- Dr Durand Jacobs
- Tim McCorriston
- Rev Chester Carter
- Dr Brigitte Wanner, Professor Robert Ladouceur & Dr Frank Vitaro

Chief Executive Officer Cheryl Vardon said: “Dr Allcock highlights that the jury is out on the scientific relevance of dissociation to problem gambling and gambling.

“While the authors generally supported that some problem gamblers experience some type of ‘altered awareness’ to a greater extent than others it remains unclear how or if this contributes to problems”.

The report identifies the following aspects upon which uncertainty exists and which may warrant more in depth investigation:

- Defining dissociation or “zoning out”;
- Type of altered awareness;
- Direction of causality; and
- Why some people continue to gamble - are they “mindlessly” throwing money away or purposefully chasing losses.

Ms Vardon said: “The paper has been a significant undertaking and is a valuable addition to the literature collection on this complex area.

“We hope the report will provide some guidance to counsellors, regulators, government and industry in their efforts to address problem gambling and consumer education strategies”.