



# Media release

## ANDREW BARR MLA CHIEF MINISTER

Treasurer

Minister for Economic Development

Minister for Tourism and Major Events

Member for Kurrajong

## GORDON RAMSAY MLA

Attorney-General

Minister for Regulatory Services

Minister for the Arts and Community Events

Minister for Veterans and Seniors

Member for Ginninderra

24 August 2017

## Ensuring casino's commitment to harm minimisation

**The ACT Government has today introduced legislation to ensure the Territory has nation-leading harm minimisation for electronic gaming machines in a casino.**

Attorney-General Gordon Ramsay said the *Casino (Electronic Gaming) Bill 2017* would allow the holder of the casino licence in Canberra to acquire gaming machine authorisations under strict conditions, including Australia's first use of mandatory pre-commitment, lower maximum bets than in clubs and more machines being taken out of circulation.

Under the bill

- **The casino cannot operate more than 200 poker machines**
- It must acquire authorisations through the existing trading scheme, but surrender one in three authorisations rather than the current one in four that applies to clubs
- At least half the authorisations must come from small or medium clubs
- It must adopt nation-leading harm minimisation measures including maximum bets and Australia's first use of mandatory pre-commitment
- The casino will also be allowed to apply to operate up to 60 fully automated table game terminals, with authorisations to come through the trading scheme

"This legislation sets robust conditions the casino has to meet before it can operate electronic gaming machines," Minister Ramsay said.

"As part of any application, the casino must provide a social impact assessment and this assessment must be made available for public comment for a minimum of eight weeks.

"In addition, the casino must complete a major redevelopment before it can begin operating these machines."

Minister Ramsay said the casino would also be required to ensure any machines it acquires comply with strong harm minimisation regulations before it can begin operating them.

"Casinos will be required to connect any gaming machines it acquires to an approved mandatory pre-commitment system," Minister Ramsay said.

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“Bet limits on any gaming machines acquired by casinos will also be capped. We suggest \$5 a spin, but we’ll consult the community and take advice from experts to finalise that figure.

“The ACT is the only Australian jurisdiction to require mandatory pre-commitment.”

The Casino licence holder will also be able to apply to operate up to 60 fully automated table game terminals. Licences for each terminal will also be acquired through the trading scheme.

“Both the gaming machines and the terminals must be able to be connected to a central monitoring system,” Minister Ramsay said.

A central monitoring system supports gaming integrity, data and tax collection, and the setting of harm minimisation measures.

The Casino will be required to ensure at least 50 per cent of the authorisations it acquires are from small or medium clubs, club groups and hotels.

“This is in line with the Government’s support of small and medium clubs and club groups and the assistance the ACT Government is providing to ensure these community clubs can continue to make a unique contribution to the economic and social fabric of our city,” Minister Ramsay said.

“No new authorisations will be issued – they will all come from within the existing Territory maximum number.

“The requirement for casinos to acquire gaming machine authorisations from existing gaming venues will contribute to reducing the overall number of gaming machines in the ACT, with the forfeiture requirement increasing from one-in-four to one-in-three for casinos.

“As is the case with clubs, if the casino operates electronic gaming machines, it will pay gaming tax to the Territory and will be required to make community contributions and payments to the Problem Gambling Assistance Fund.”

The ACT Government remains committed to reducing the number of poker machines to 4000 by 2020.

**Statement ends**

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