

# Games People Play -

## Problem gambling among offenders in Queensland Community Corrections



**Queensland Government**  
Queensland **Corrective Services**



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# Executive summary

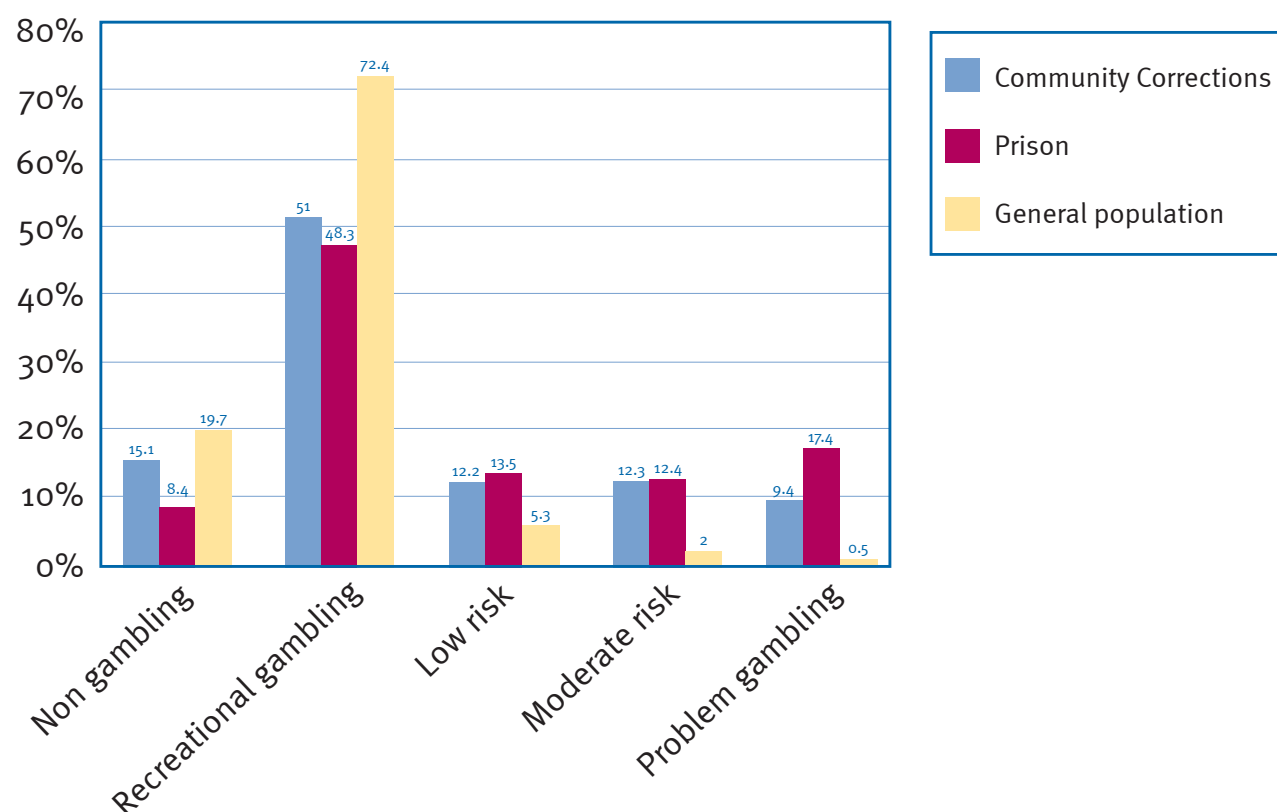
## Prevalence

The 2004 problem gambling survey conducted among offenders on Community Corrections orders in Queensland found that:

- 9.4 per cent of the sample, which represents 1123 people within the Community Corrections population, experience problem gambling. This figure is approximately 17 times that of the general population.
- A further 12.3 per cent of the sample, representing 1475 people within the Community Corrections population, experience moderate risk gambling behaviour. These people experience some negative impacts of gambling and may be at risk of becoming problem gamblers.

The combined problem gambling and moderate risk groups comprise 21.7 per cent of the sample and represent 2598 people currently within the Community Corrections system who potentially have serious gambling problems and who may benefit from therapeutic intervention.

Figure 1 Gambling prevalence across Community Corrections, prison and general Queensland populations



## Gambling activity

Nearly all problem gamblers play electronic gaming machines (94%) and significant numbers also play Scratch-Its (63%), Keno (56%), Gold Lotto (53%) and on/off course betting (40%). Problem gamblers gamble two to five times a week and are likely to spend upwards of four hours and over \$60 per session.

## Links to criminal behaviour

Forty-one per cent of problem gamblers have committed gambling-related offences as have 17 per cent of moderate risk gamblers and 11 per cent of low risk gamblers. Interestingly, over 8 per cent or 150 offenders in the non-gambling group also have a gambling-related criminal history.

### **Help seeking**

The vast majority (86%) of problem gamblers have not sought any help with their gambling problems. This is consistent with external research showing that gamblers prefer to deal with the problem on their own. Significantly, the Gambling Help Services are the most likely external service to be accessed by problem gamblers. Community Corrections Officers are another group likely to be accessed for help with gambling problems.

### **Associated issues**

Nearly 40 per cent of the problem gambling group began to gamble between the ages of 10 and 17. Eighty per cent of this group have experienced depression in the past year and 83 per cent have used alcohol or drugs while gambling in the past year. This is the highest per centage of any group for both depression and substance use and indicates that gambling-related interventions will also need to address broader comorbidity issues.

### **Indigenous issues**

The prevalence of problem gambling among Indigenous respondents is 13.7 per cent compared to 8.4 per cent for non-Indigenous respondents and 0.5 per cent for the general Queensland population. Indigenous moderate risk prevalence is 17 per cent compared to 11.3 per cent for the non-Indigenous cohort and 2 per cent for the general population.

The impact of “card schools” in remote Indigenous communities appears to be resulting in a low prevalence of recreational gambling (25%) and a very high prevalence of moderate risk gambling (33.3%) in those communities.

# Introduction – Problem gambling, crime and the Queensland Department of Corrective Services

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While the vast majority of Queenslanders enjoy gambling as a harmless social or recreational activity there remains a small but significant number of people who experience serious difficulties in managing their gambling behaviour<sup>1</sup>. These people usually bet more than they can afford, lose heavily, chase their losses, and often admit a need to bet increasing amounts of money in order to maintain the same feeling of excitement. Most importantly, they are likely to have lost control of their gambling behaviour<sup>2</sup>. Importantly for the Department of Corrective Services, problem gambling is increasingly being revealed as a contributing factor in criminal behaviour.

## 1.1 The Government response

In response to growing public concern regarding the negative impacts of gambling, the Queensland Government released the Queensland Responsible Gambling Strategy outlining its approach to minimising the harm caused by the adverse effects of gambling while still allowing access to what is a legitimate recreational activity for most Queenslanders<sup>3</sup>. The Strategy outlines prevention, protection and rehabilitation initiatives to minimise the prevalence and impact of problem gambling and to provide pathways of assistance for those affected by the negative impacts of gaming. The Strategy's six priority action areas aim to:

1. Enhance responsible gambling policies and programs through research
2. Increase community knowledge and awareness of the impacts of gambling
3. Reduce the risk factors for problem gambling through early intervention
4. Develop a statewide system of problem gambling treatment and support services
5. Ensure gambling environments are safer and more supportive for consumers
6. Promote partnerships to address statewide and local gambling issues and concerns

In line with Priority Action Area 4 the Queensland Government created a statewide system of problem gambling treatment support services by developing and expanding the existing Government funded Gambling Help services.

Gambling Help began operating under the banner of Break Even in 1993 providing support for people adversely affected by gambling. By 2001 there were six services within the Queensland Break Even network located in:

- Brisbane
- Gold Coast
- Toowoomba
- Rockhampton
- Townsville, and
- Cairns

In 2002, as a key thrust of the Queensland Responsible Gambling Strategy the Queensland Government committed an additional \$11 million over the ensuing three years. Utilising this funding, Break Even (renamed Gambling Help) was expanded from the original six services to include:

- Caboolture and Redcliffe
- Ipswich
- Mackay and Whitsunday
- Mt Isa
- Sunshine Coast, and
- Wide Bay and Burnett

<sup>1</sup> *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2001 (QHGS)*, (2002) Queensland Treasury, 2

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 12

<sup>3</sup> *Queensland Responsible Gambling Strategy*, (2002) Queensland Treasury.

Now with 12 regional services, Gambling Help is a truly statewide network delivered in a partnership between the Queensland Government and a range of respected community organisations including Relationships Australia, Centacare, Lifeline and Interlock (a division of the Alcohol and Drug Foundation Queensland).

The addition of the telephone counselling service, Gambling Help Line, created a 24-hour point-of-entry for those seeking help with gambling problems. Funding was also made available to the Salvation Army's Moonyah Rehabilitation Service for the provision of a counsellor to work within both the inpatient and outpatient programmes at their Red Hill service in Brisbane.

These initiatives ensured that counselling and support services are placed within easy reach of the majority of people in Queensland with need of them.

## 1.2 Problem gambling and Queensland Corrections

In 2002 the Queensland Department of Corrective Services conducted a problem gambling prevalence survey among the State's prison population. One hundred and seventy-eight interviews were conducted out of a total prison population of 3760. The research found that the incidence of problem gambling among the prison population was up to 20 times higher than for the general population<sup>4</sup>. Some 17.4 per cent of those tested using the Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI) were identified as problem gamblers, with a further 12.4 per cent classified as moderate risk, or effectively 'at risk' of developing problem gambling behaviours<sup>5</sup>. This compared with 0.83 per cent for the general Queensland population according to the most recent household gambling survey at that time<sup>6</sup>. Whether those serving custodial sentences were problem gamblers upon conviction or became so while in prison is not clear. Neither is it clear how many of those designated as problem gamblers were convicted of gambling-related crimes. What is known is that:

- 6.7 per cent of those surveyed admitted their current offending related to a need to finance their gambling problem
- 7.3 per cent of the sample admitted to having been convicted in the past of an offence that was related to their gambling problem
- 12.4 per cent admitted to having committed an offence/offences in the past without detection in order to finance their gambling problem<sup>7</sup>

In spite of the fact that it is a breach of the *Corrective Services Act 2000*, 46.1 per cent of those surveyed admitted to gambling while in custody<sup>8</sup>.

The most prevalent crimes committed among this group were:

- assault – 38.2 per cent
- drug and alcohol related – 28.7 per cent
- break and enter – 24.2 per cent
- robbery – 21.9 per cent
- breach bail – 20.2 per cent
- fraud – 18 per cent

Reportedly, the primary motivation for a problem gambler to commit crime is to fund their gambling activities<sup>9</sup>. Most gambling-related offences are of the nature of financial or property crime such as fraud. However, as the Corrective Services research noted above, other crimes may have their genesis in the gambling habits of the perpetrator. The Productivity Commission's 1999 report noted that 30 to 70 per cent of problem gamblers committed offences.

<sup>4</sup> *Problem Gambling Prevalence Survey 2002*, Department of Corrective Services

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 12-13

<sup>6</sup> QHGS, above n1. The current research among Community Corrections offenders utilises more up-to-date general population estimates from 2005.

<sup>7</sup> Above, n4, 3-4

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> R. Doley, *Want to make a Bet? Gambling and Crime in Australia*, (2000) Australian Centre for Policing Research, 11



The Report went on to add,

Some of the problem gamblers surveyed were responsible for up to 1000 acts of larceny, 600 acts of embezzlement, 250 acts of break and enter and 17 acts of armed robbery<sup>10</sup>.

Table 1 below shows the types of crime committed by 306 New South Wales problem gamblers as submitted to the Productivity Commission<sup>11</sup>.

*Table 1 Types of gambling-related crime*

Offence	Number committing offence	Total number of offences committed
Larceny	96	5388
Embezzlement	66	3045
Misappropriation	20	1698
Break and enter	16	760
Shop-lifting	13	592
Armed robbery	8	42
Drug dealing	5	315
Other	5	19

The above figures support the view that the most common offences involve theft of money by acts of:

- larceny or theft (committed by 31% of problem gamblers surveyed)
- embezzlement (committed by 22%)
- misappropriation (committed by 7%)

Other more violent crimes such as break and enter, and armed robbery were committed much less frequently (by 5% and 3% of problem gamblers respectively<sup>12</sup>).

The above research was limited to those problem gamblers who had sought counselling for their gambling problems. More recent research has focussed on people found guilty of criminal offences by examining District and Local court files in NSW for the period 1995 to 1999<sup>13</sup>. This study also concluded that the most common gambling-related crimes were fraud committed by an employee against their employer (19.7%) and passing false cheques (19.4%)<sup>14</sup>. In all, 76 per cent of those cases identified as being gambling-related, involved fraud<sup>15</sup>. Of those frauds perpetrated by an employee the total amount stolen was \$2,494,309 with an average amount of \$95,935 per offender<sup>16</sup>. The study admits however that most fraud by employees goes unreported and therefore the full extent of this crime, and its link with gambling, is unknown<sup>17</sup>. Pricewaterhouse Coopers estimates that 23 per cent of all serious fraud<sup>18</sup> in Australia is motivated by gambling, making it the second most common motivator for fraud behind greed<sup>19</sup>. Of these gambling-related offences 28 per cent were in a professional relationship with the victim (eg. solicitor, tax agent) and 46 per cent had an employment relationship<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Productivity Commission, 1999, *Australia's Gambling Industries*, Report No. 10, Ausinfo, Canberra Appendix H18

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. H17

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

<sup>13</sup> P. Crofts, *Gambling and Criminal Behaviour. An Analysis of Local and District Court Files*, (2002); P. Crofts, *Researching the Link Between Gambling and Crime* (2003) Paper presented to 'Evaluation in Crime and Justice: Trends and Methods' conference, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra 24-25 March 2003.

<sup>14</sup> P. Crofts, *Researching the Link Between Gambling and Crime*, ibid, 04

<sup>15</sup> P. Crofts, *Gambling and Criminal Behaviour*, above n13

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> P. Crofts, *Researching the Link Between Gambling and Crime*, above n13, 08

<sup>18</sup> Serious fraud is generally defined as involving amounts of over \$100,000 unless other factors made the case unusually serious or complex.

<sup>19</sup> Pricewaterhouse Coopers *Serious Fraud in Australia and New Zealand*, (2003) Australian Institute of Criminology, 44

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 40

Both the Crofts and Pricewaterhouse Coopers research were consistent in showing the emerging link between gambling and crime, and in particular the relationship between gambling and fraud<sup>21</sup>.

### **1.3 The Community Corrections Problem Gambling Prevalence Survey 2004**

Following the 2002 survey among Queensland custodial offenders, Queensland Treasury agreed to fund a further survey among those offenders on community corrections orders. Community orders include those who are on community service orders and those on post-prison community based release (parole). Offenders on these orders live in the general community and report regularly to their local Community Corrections office. There were 11,998 such offenders in the Community Correction system at the time of the survey.

<sup>21</sup>. Y. Sakurai and R. Smith, *Gambling as a Motivation for the Commission of Financial Crime*, (2003) Australian Institute of Criminology, 4

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Introduction

The 2004 Community Corrections Gambling Prevalence Survey was conducted by the Department of Corrective Services utilising funding provided by the Queensland Office of Gaming Regulation. Data processing was carried out by the Office of Economical and Statistical Research (OESR).

### 2.2 The Canadian Problem Gambling Index

Since the *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2001*<sup>22</sup> the Queensland Government has utilised the Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI) to provide consistency across its research efforts. The CPGI is favoured over other screening instruments such as the South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS) and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV) because it includes cultural and environmental factors as well as the psychological frameworks utilised in the above tools.

The survey instrument (see 2.3) included a series of nine CPGI questions which are scored to group respondents into one of five gambling categories (see Table 2).<sup>23</sup>

**Table 2 CPGI gambling groups**

<b>Non-gambling:</b> No score on the CPGI. This group has not gambled in the 12 months prior to the survey.
<b>Recreational (non problem) gambling:</b> CPGI score of zero. Most have responded “never” to the majority of the problem gambling behavioural indicators. It is possible that a respondent could be a frequent player who gambles heavily but has not experienced any adverse consequences of gambling.
<b>Low risk gambling:</b> CPGI score of 1 – 2. These respondents will have one or more responses of “sometimes” or “more often” to indicators of problem gambling behaviour problems but are not likely to have experienced any adverse consequences of gambling. They may be at risk if they are heavily involved in gambling and respond to at least two correlates of problem gambling.
<b>Moderate risk gambling:</b> CPGI score of 3 – 7. These respondents will have one or more “most of the time” or “always” responses to indicators of behaviour problems and may or may not have experienced adverse consequences of gambling. They may be at risk if they are heavily involved in gambling and respond to at least three or four correlates of problem gambling.
<b>Problem gambling:</b> CPGI score of 8 or more. This group will have experienced adverse consequences of gambling and may have lost control of their behaviour. Their involvement in gambling activity can be at any level but is likely to be heavy.

### 2.3 Survey instrument

A 30 question survey questionnaire (Appendix B) was developed to determine the level of gambling activity among offenders on community corrections orders. The survey asked a range of questions in relation to:

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| • general demographics                      | Questions 1–7       |
| • income and education                      | Questions 20–22     |
| • gambling activity                         | Questions 8–9       |
| • CPGI questions                            | Question 10         |
| • gambling perceptions                      | Questions 11, 17    |
| • household/environmental factors           | Questions 12, 18–19 |
| • age of onset                              | Question 13         |
| • help-seeking behaviour                    | Questions 14–16, 30 |
| • comorbidities (depression, substance use) | Questions 23–25     |
| • criminogenic links                        | Questions 26–29     |

<sup>22</sup> Above, n1

<sup>23</sup> Jackie Ferris and Harold Wynne, *The Canadian Problem Gambling Index Draft User Manual* (2001), Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, 2:3

Apart from the CPGI component, questions were chosen to enable a broad profile of those in each gambling group to be developed. Issues such as family environment, age of onset, gambling behaviour, mental health, substance use and help-seeking activity all contribute to an understanding of each gambling type and provide clues to predicting susceptibility to developing problem gambling behaviours. Questions in relation to criminal behaviour were used to analyse any links between problem gambling and crime.

A draft questionnaire was submitted to the Department of Corrective Services Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Unit, the Women's Unit and to the Director of Community Corrections to ensure the questions were appropriate, non offensive and understandable to all participants. A copy was also provided to the Queensland Office of Economic and Statistical Research (OESR) for feedback from that office. Advice was also sought from OESR as to an appropriate sample size to ensure the sample adequately represented each strata (see 3.1).

## 2.4 Participants and participation rates

Four researchers were recruited from within the Department of Corrective Services. One was appointed to each region. The survey was conducted throughout October/November 2004 with each researcher spending up to 5 days in each designated office. Following the departure of the researchers the offices continued to offer questionnaires to offenders for the remainder of the month of November.

Most offenders attending the offices during the survey period were offered a questionnaire to complete. Very few refused to participate and therefore the response rate was high. Total refusals according to region were:

• Metropolitan:	0
• Southern:	0
• Central:	6
• Northern:	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

The majority of respondents self-completed the form though some were assisted by the researcher in an interview setting.

In all, 580 questionnaires were returned. Ten of these were discarded as incomplete or otherwise unusable, leaving 570 questionnaires for data analysis.

The total Community Corrections population, from which this sample was drawn was 11,998 at the time of the survey. This figure excluded those on fine options.

In determining which offices to include in the survey, care was taken to ensure the survey captured a representative sample across all four Community Corrections regions and that the sample adequately accounted for the mixture of male/female and Indigenous/non-Indigenous representatives in the Community Corrections system.

Table 3 shows the offices surveyed according to region. The number of offices surveyed in each region was determined on number of offenders managed by each office.

*Table 3 Community Corrections offices surveyed*

Region	Area Offices surveyed	Offices not surveyed
<b>Northern</b> (Regional Office: Townsville)	Cairns Mareeba Townsville Thuringowa	Innisfail Palm Island Mt Isa
<b>Central</b> (Regional Office: Rockhampton)	Mackay Rockhampton Bundaberg Maroochydore	Gladstone Emerald Noosa Gympie Hervey Bay
<b>Metropolitan</b> (Regional Office: Brisbane City)	Caboolture Brisbane South (Buranda)	Redcliffe Pine Rivers Wynnum Cleveland Inala Brisbane North (Chermside) Brisbane West (Toowong)
<b>Southern</b> (Regional Office: Mt Gravatt)	Southport Ipswich	Burleigh Heads Roma Logan Beenleigh Kingaroy

As well as visiting the above area offices, several district offices within the area office jurisdiction were visited. In particular, this included Aurukun, Pormpuraaw and Yarrabah Indigenous communities, as well as Mossman and Atherton.

## **2.5 Statistical significance**

Unless otherwise indicated all references to statistical significance are  $p < .05$ .

## **2.6 Creation of variables**

Variables were created based on responses to other questions. These were:

- CPGI: The Canadian Problem Gambling Index results were based on the responses to Questions 10 of the survey (see Appendix B).
- Gambler type. See Table 2.
- Criminogenic flag: A flag to indicate whether the respondent has ever committed a gambling-related crime, based on a combination of questions 26 to 29 (see Appendix B).

## **2.7 Region coding**

Region code is used in weighting, and was based on postcode. The available data to assign region were the area office jurisdictions list (which listed the suburb locations of all DCS offices located within a region), and a list of postcodes with locality names from Australia Post. The steps taken to assign survey records to regions were:

- the sample postcode was merged with the Australia Post list to find the locality names for each postcode in the sample
- the sample was merged with the jurisdictions list by suburb name to look up the office name and region for all the locality names in the sample
- records which did not match with an office and region in this way were manually checked and assigned to an office (a total of four postcodes were assigned in this way)
- for those people with no postcode, the S1 region code was used to assign a region
- any unknown regions were assigned to Metropolitan region (the most common)

## **2.8 Weighting**

Use of weighting variables is a standard statistical technique which allows population estimates to be drawn from a sample.

The sample data was weighted as follows:

The sample of 570 respondents was weighted to population counts of DCS clients. At the time of the survey the number of Community Corrections offenders eligible to participate was 11,998 people.

Population counts of eligible offenders were provided by Region, Indigenous Status and gender. The populations provided included a small number whose Indigenous status was unknown. These counts were assigned an Indigenous status based on the proportion of people in the same gender and region with known Indigenous status.

Records are weighted according to the Region/Indigenous/Gender stratum which they fall into. Weighting is a simple number-raised method, in which the sample in a given weighting stratum is weighted to the population count for that stratum, with all sample units in the stratum receiving the same weight.

One stratum had a sample count of one – Indigenous females in Metropolitan region. For the purposes of weighting, Metropolitan females were collapsed with females in Southern Region.

Tables were produced for each question in the survey separately. Some survey respondents did not answer all the questions. Weights were calculated question by question – that is, only those respondents who give an answer to a particular question were included in the table for that question.

## **2.9 General information on output tables**

Tables containing population estimates of number and per centage accompanied by 95 per cent confidence intervals have been supplied.

### *Level of disaggregation*

Each question in the survey was cross tabulated against the following marginal variables:

- gender
- 10 year age group (under 25, 25–34, 35–44, 45–54, 55+)
- Indigenous status
- gambling type
- criminogenic flag
- reporting region

### 3. Queensland Community Corrections problem gambling prevalence survey 2004 – results

#### 3.1 Representative validity of the sample

Other than regional considerations, the four strata measured were:

- male
- female
- Indigenous
- non-Indigenous

In each strata the sample provided an adequate representation of the total Community Corrections population as seen in Table 4

Table 4 Sample representation

Strata	Survey sample	Total Community Corrections population
Male	78.88%	78.63%
Female	21.12%	21.37%
Total Indigenous	17.78%	16.91%
Total non-Indigenous	82.22%	83.09%
Indigenous male	14.4%	12.97%
Indigenous female	4.8%	3.94%

#### 3.2 Prevalence and the gambling types

Table 5 below outlines the prevalence of the CPGI gambling types based on the 570 interviews in the sample. Comparisons are then made with the prison population and the general population.

Table 5 CPGI gambling types: community, prison and general population comparisons

CPGI Category	Community Corrections prevalence (%)	Number in category	Estimated number of offenders in Community Corrections	Prison population comparisons* (%)	General Queensland population (%)**
Non-gambling	15.1	86	1816	8.4	19.7
Recreational (non-problem)	51.0	291	6126	48.3	72.4
Low risk	12.2	69	1458	13.5	5.3
Moderate risk	12.3	70	1475	12.4	2.0
Problem gambling	9.4	54	1123	17.4	0.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>11998</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* Figures taken from the *Department of Corrective Services Prison Survey 2002* which measured the prevalence of problem gambling among the prison population.

\*\* Figures based on 2004 Queensland general population prevalence survey provided by the Queensland Office of Gaming Regulation.

**Non gambler group:** 15.1 per cent of those surveyed did not gamble at all. This compares to 8.4 per cent of the prison population and 19.7 per cent of the general population who are non gamblers.

**Recreational gambler group:** Recreational gamblers comprise the largest group in this survey at 51.0 per cent of respondents. This is a similar result to the prison population at 48.3 per cent but is less than the general population at 72.4 per cent. Gamblers in this group do not generally play heavily and are not likely to experience any adverse effects of their gambling. Based on these figures, it appears that custodial and community corrections offenders are much less likely to be recreational gamblers than the general population.

**Low risk gambler group:** Low risk gamblers make up 12.2 per cent of the sample group which represents approximately 1,460 people currently on community correction orders. This percentage is similar to the prison population estimate at 13.5 per cent and over twice that of the general population at 5.3 per cent.

Like recreational gamblers, the low-risk group do not appear to gamble heavily and rarely experience any adverse effects from gambling. The CPGI identifies those in the low risk group as being at risk if they respond positively to two or more of the correlates of problem gambling and are heavily involved in gambling.

**Moderate risk gambler group:** Moderate risk gamblers make up 12.3 per cent of respondents which translates to approximately 1,475 people currently on community correction orders. This percentage is almost identical to that of the prison population (12.4%) and over six times that of the general population at two per cent.

Moderate risk gamblers are more likely to have experienced some problems with gambling behaviour than low risk or recreational gamblers. They are also likely to gamble more frequently and utilise more gambling products than the two previous groups. In this sense moderate risk gamblers are effectively 'at risk' of becoming problem gamblers and are potentially in need of intervention to prevent this happening and to address any adverse behaviours they may already be experiencing.

**Problem gambler group:** Problem gamblers make up 9.4 per cent of respondents which represents over 1,120 people currently on community correction orders. While in percentage terms this figure is approximately half that of the prevalence in the prison population (17.4%), it nonetheless translates to around 17 times that of the general population at 0.55 per cent.

Problem gamblers are those who have experienced adverse consequences from their gambling and are likely to have lost control of their behaviour in this regard. This group participates in a greater number of gambling activities than any other group, tends to play more frequently and with greater amounts of money and, importantly for Corrective Services, are by far the most likely group to have committed a gambling-related offence (41%)<sup>24</sup>.

Taken together, the problem gambling and moderate risk groups represent 21.6 per cent or nearly 2600 people in the current community corrections population. A further 150 offenders scored as non gamblers on the CPGI yet still have committed a gambling-related offence. Like the problem gambler and moderate risk groups, many in this group may be in need of intervention or assistance to deal with gambling-related problems. This will particularly be the case if gambling abstinence has been less than voluntary such as due to imprisonment.

### 3.3 Socio-demographic comparisons

#### Age

According to the *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2001* 55 per cent of the problem gambling group are aged between 18 and 34 years. This is significantly higher than the estimated number in the general population (36%)<sup>25</sup>. In a study of offenders in the Australian Capital Territory 85.7 per cent of the problem gambling group were also in this age group<sup>26</sup>.

In the present study, while 72.5 per cent of the problem gambling group are aged 18 to 34, this age group comprises 76.5 per cent of the total Community Corrections population. In contrast, the 35 to 44 year old group, who comprise 15.8 per cent of the community corrections population, are over-represented in the problem gambling and moderate risk gambling groups, at 24.5 per cent and 20 per cent respectively.

#### Gender

Overall, the sample group comprised 78.9 per cent male and 21.1 per cent female. This compares to 78.6 per cent and 21.4 per cent respectively for the total Community Corrections offender population. The sample therefore adequately reflected the general Community Corrections population.

There are no statistically significant gender differences across the CPGI categories or in gambling patterns of behaviour. There were also no measurable differences in gambling-related criminal activity between the genders.

<sup>24</sup> This figure is based on responses to survey questions 26 to 29 which related to all gambling-related offences and could include offences for which no charges were laid.

<sup>25</sup> Above, n1, 13

<sup>26</sup> J. Lahn and P. Grabosky, *Gambling and Clients of ACT Corrections Final Report* (2003) Centre for Gambling Research, Regulatory Institutions Network, Australian National University, 51



In terms of comorbidities slightly more women (63%) than men (52%) stated that they have experienced depression in the last 12 months. Significantly more males (50%) than females (34%) have used alcohol or drugs while gambling but less women (28%) than men (36%) felt they gambled more under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

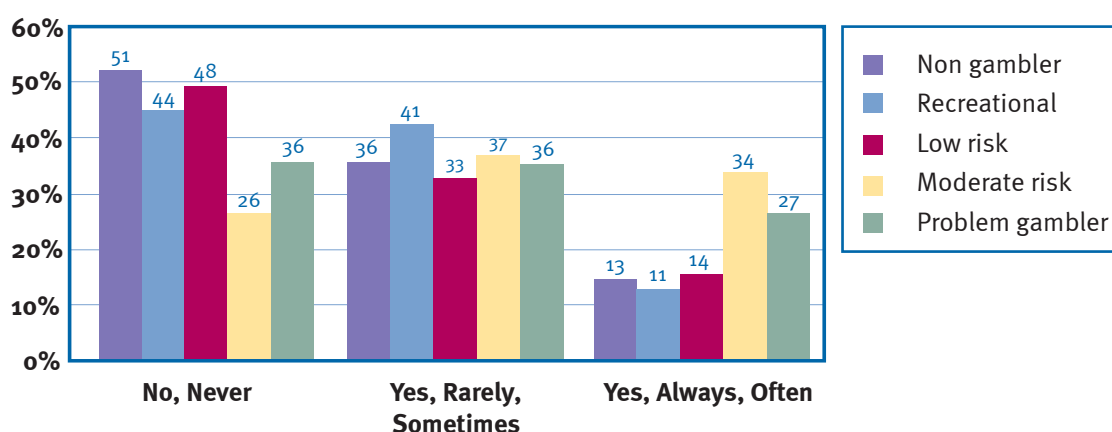
Slightly more males (39%) than females (33%) would be willing to attend a free gambling help program but less women (23%) than men (33%) stated they would not be interested in attending such a program.

### Family/upbringing influences

#### a) Adults in family gambled

Respondents in the moderate risk and problem gambler groups were more likely to indicate that they grew up in households where adults either always or often gambled. This may indicate that the normalisation of gambling during their upbringing has an influence in the development of gambling problems as adults.

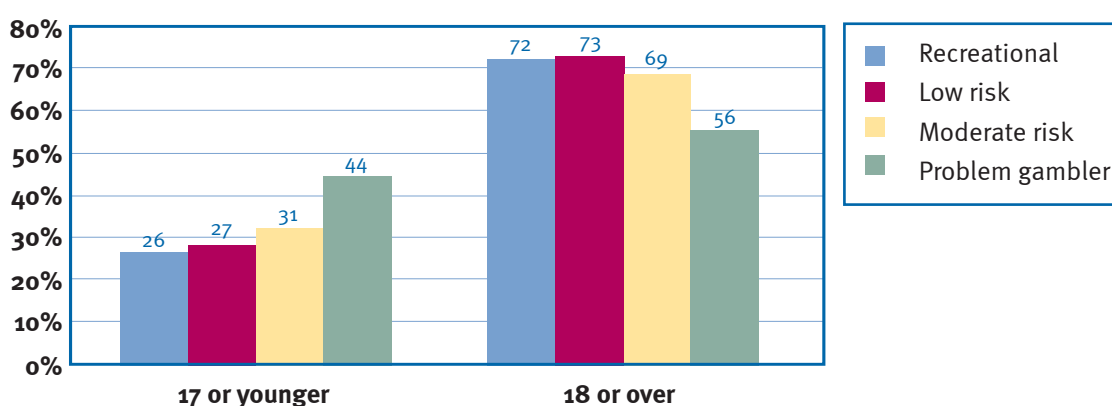
Figure 2 Did adults in family gamble by gambling group



#### b) Age first gambled

Respondents in the problem gambler group are most likely to indicate that their first gambling experience occurred prior to 18 years of age (44%).

Figure 3 Age of first gambling experience by gambling group



### Marital/partner status

Forty-three per cent of the problem gambler group have no partner. As the lowest per centage of any of the groups, this continues a downward trend as seen in Table 6. This contrasts with the findings of the *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2001* (QHGS) in which the problem gambling group were the least likely to be partnered (42%) and the recreational group the most likely (68%)<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> Above, n1, 13. No figures were given on non gamblers.

Table 6 Unpartnered by gambling group

Gambler group	% with no partner
Non gambler	59
Recreational gambler	54
Low risk	57
Moderate risk	45
Problem gambler	43
Sample average	53

The QHGS proposes that this may be due to the relatively young age of the problem gambling group<sup>28</sup>. While this may be so in the general population it does not explain the opposite phenomena in the Community Corrections population where the under 34 age group is under-represented in the problem gambler group and the 35-44 age group overrepresented.<sup>29</sup>

### Household issues

The involvement of an offender's partner in gambling activity does not seem to have any bearing on the offender's gambling type (Table 7). While the partners of non gamblers are less likely to gamble than the partners of gamblers, there is no significant difference in the gambling activity of partners in the four gambling groups.

Table 7 Gambling of partner by gambling group

Gambler group	Partner has gambled (%)
Non gambler	9
Recreational gambler	28
Low risk	20
Moderate risk	39
Problem gambler	32

Differences are seen however in the stress that gambling places on the relationship between the gambler and their partner. Table 8 outlines the per centage of respondents where gambling has NOT caused arguments between the offender and their partner/spouse.

Table 8 Gambling and household arguments by gambling group

Gambler group	Gambling has NOT caused arguments (%)
Non gambler	90
Recreational gambler	94
Low risk	79
Moderate risk	61
Problem gambler	28

### Employment

Over 30 per cent of the total cohort are unemployed compared to 4.6 per cent in the general Queensland population<sup>30</sup>. This reflects the Community Corrections population as a whole. Fifty-one per cent of the sample group are employed either full-time, part-time or casually.

Problem gamblers are the most likely group to be unemployed or on a pension. A similar study among offenders in ACT corrections also found problem gamblers are slightly more likely to be unemployed<sup>31</sup>. This contrasts with the findings of the *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2001* which found that:

Most people in the low risk, moderate risk and problem gambling groups are employed full-time, part-time, casually or self-employed. Although people who are retired, who are students or who have full-time home duties might be regarded as having more available time to gamble, they present as having fewer problems with gambling than those in the workforce.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> See above, n1, 15

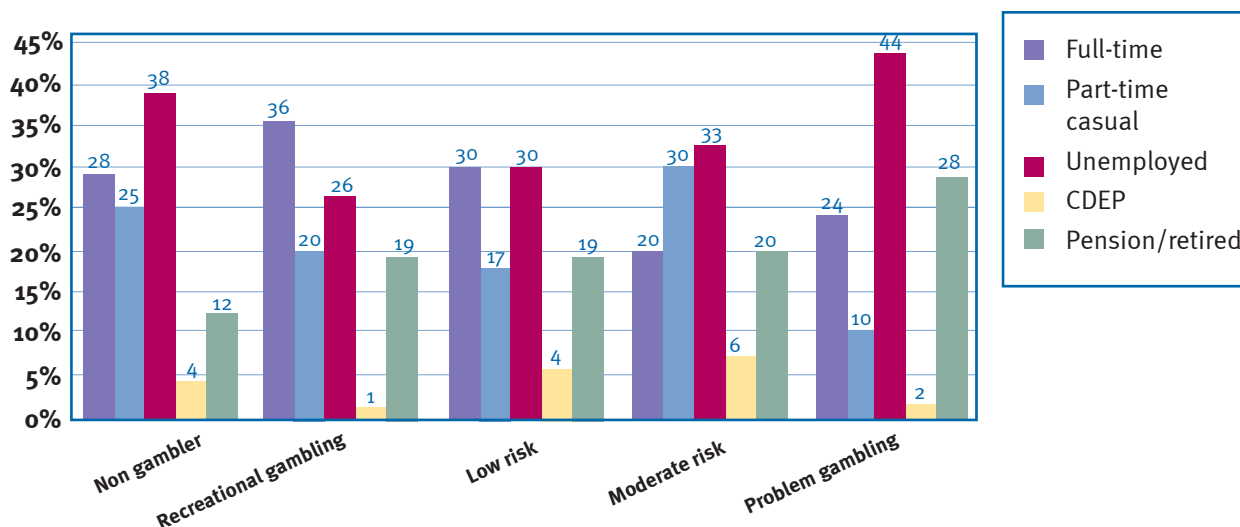
<sup>30</sup> As at February 2005. Queensland Office of Economic and Statistical Research website <http://www.oesr.qld.gov.au>

<sup>31</sup> Above, n 26, 53

<sup>32</sup> Above, n1, 14

Problem gamblers are the least likely to be employed either full-time, part-time or casually (34.5%) while recreational gamblers are the most likely to be employed (55.7%) followed by non gamblers (50.7%) and moderate risk gamblers (50.4%).

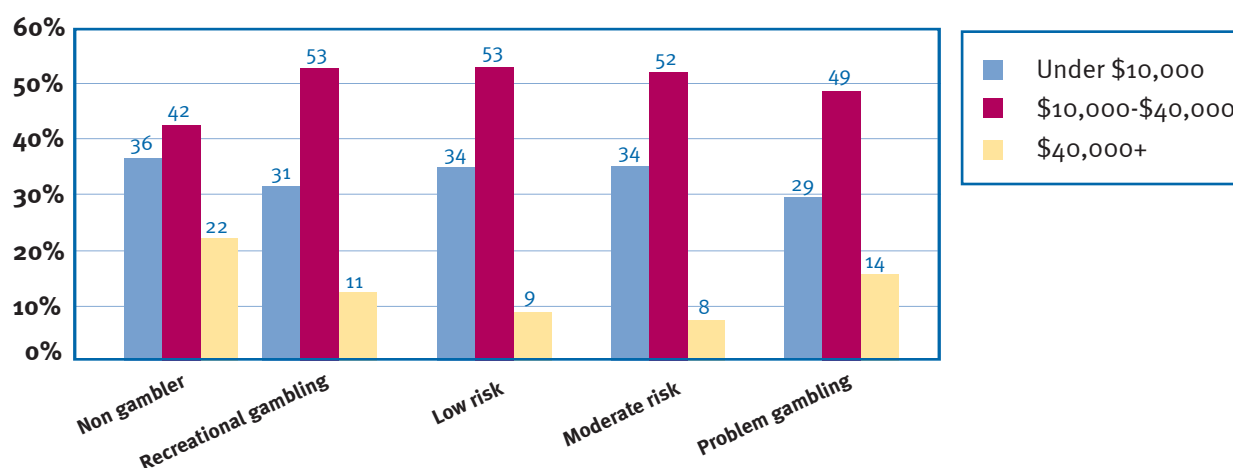
Figure 4 Employment by gambling group



## Income

Income levels were generally reflective of the Community Corrections population. Interestingly in view of the employment figures above, the problem gambler group has a slightly lower per centage of respondents earning under \$10,000. Problem gamblers also have the highest per centage of those earning above \$40,000 of any of the gambling groups.

Figure 5 Income by gambling group

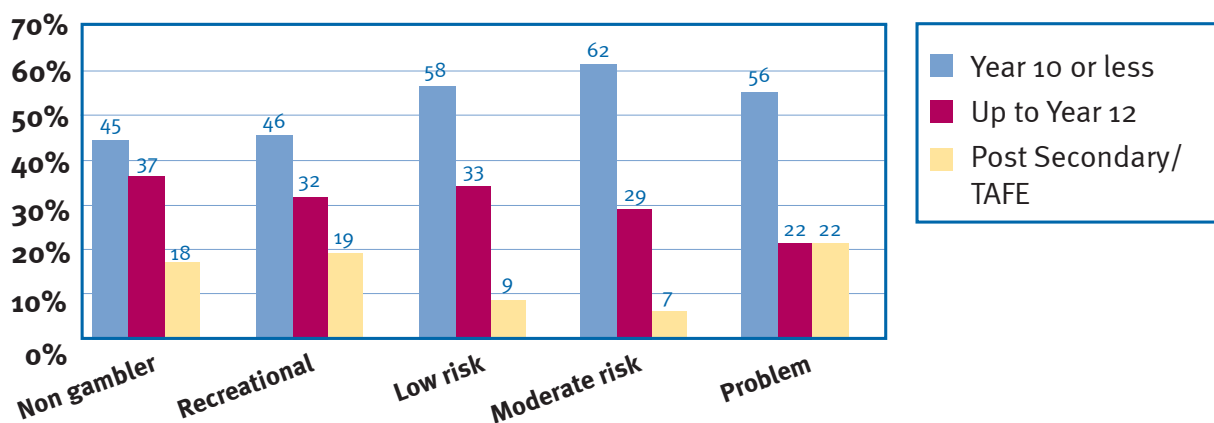


## Education

Just under half (47.2%) of the total respondents have completed year 10 as their highest educational level. This is reflective of the Community Corrections population. While the differences across gambling types were not substantial, there were some apparent trends that are worthy of comment. For example, moderate and problem gambler groups reported a higher than average per centage of respondents completing year 10. The data suggested that the more severe the problem with gambling, the less likely the respondent is to have completed year 12. Interestingly however, problem gamblers were the most likely group to report completing a post-secondary education (22%). This is most commonly a TAFE, rather than a university, qualification. By way of comparison, the proportion of all Australians with a diploma, advanced certificate or less (post secondary school) is 30.2 per cent while the proportion with a Bachelor degree or higher is 18.1 per cent.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, "Proportion of all persons aged 15-64 with a non-school qualification" (2003), <http://www.abs.gov.au>

Figure 6 Education level by gambling group

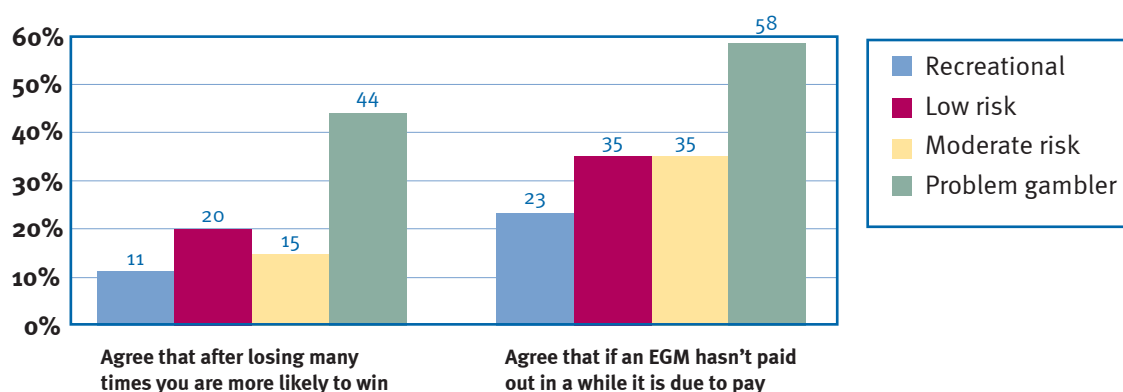


### 3.4 Gambling and behavioural issues

#### Gambling perceptions

It appears that the more severe the gambling problem, the greater the tendency towards faulty cognitions regarding the likelihood of gambling wins. This may support the view that cognitive deficiencies play a role in the development of some gambling problems<sup>34</sup>. In both examples shown in Figure 7, problem gamblers are, statistically speaking, significantly more likely to agree than the sample average.

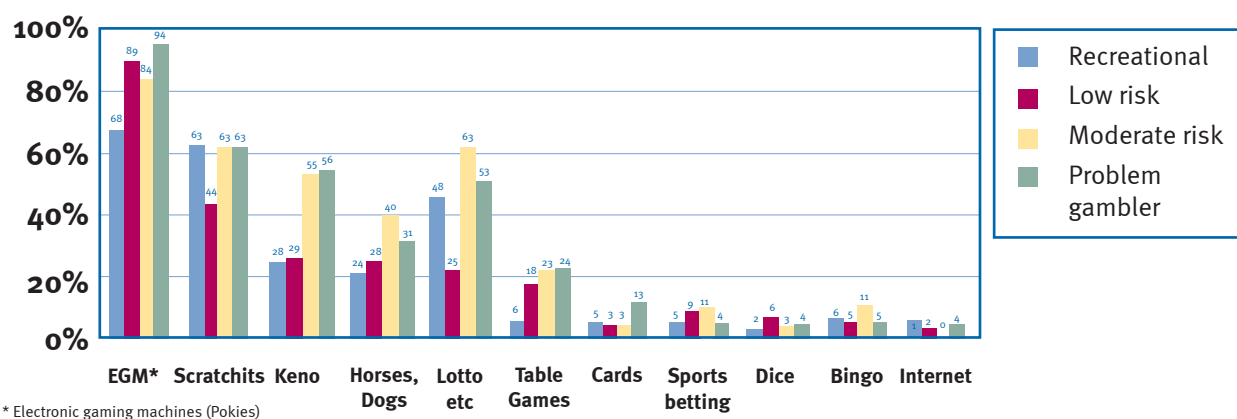
Figure 7 Perceptions of increased likelihood of gambling winnings



#### Games played

Electronic gaming machines (EGMs) are by far the most popular gambling activity across all groups. Instant Scratch-Its and Lotto products are similarly popular across most gambling groups. Keno is most popular among the moderate and problem gambling groups and card playing is significantly more popular among problem gamblers and especially Indigenous players. Figure 8 shows all gambling activities played by respondents in the 12 months prior to the survey. Figure 9 then compares this with the game nominated by respondents as the one played most often in the last 12 months.

Figure 8 All gambling activities by gambling group

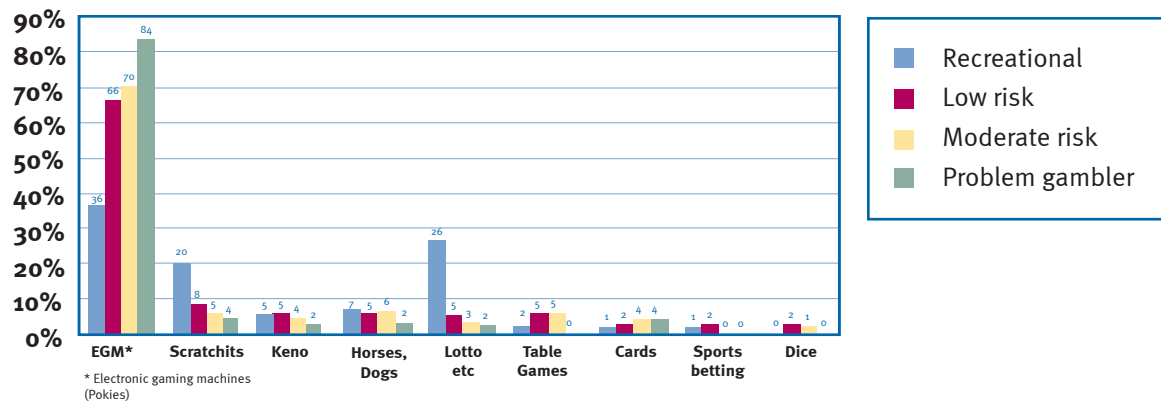


\* Electronic gaming machines (Pokies)

<sup>34</sup> Above n1, 20

Figure 9 clearly shows the dominant position of EGMs on the gambling activity of the respondent group. This is particularly so among moderate and problem gamblers where 70 per cent and 84 per cent respectively nominated the pokies as their most played gambling activity.

Figure 9 Game played most often by gambling group



### Frequency and duration

Figures 10 and 11 show the frequency and duration of play respectively. Recreational and low risk gamblers are prominent among those who gamble once a week or less and who spend less than one hour on each gambling session. Moderate risk and problem gamblers predominate among those who gamble twice or more each week and who spend anything over one hour in each gambling session. A significantly greater proportion of moderate risk gamblers play for 1-2 hours per session (45.4% compared to the average for the sample of 18.3%) while the proportion of problem gamblers was significantly higher than any other group among those who played for anything over 3 hours per session.

Figure 10 Frequency of play by gambling group

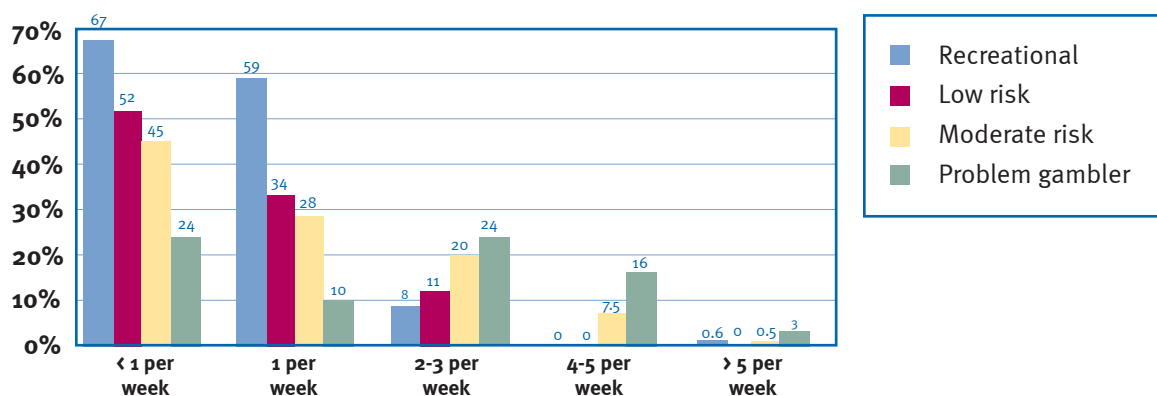
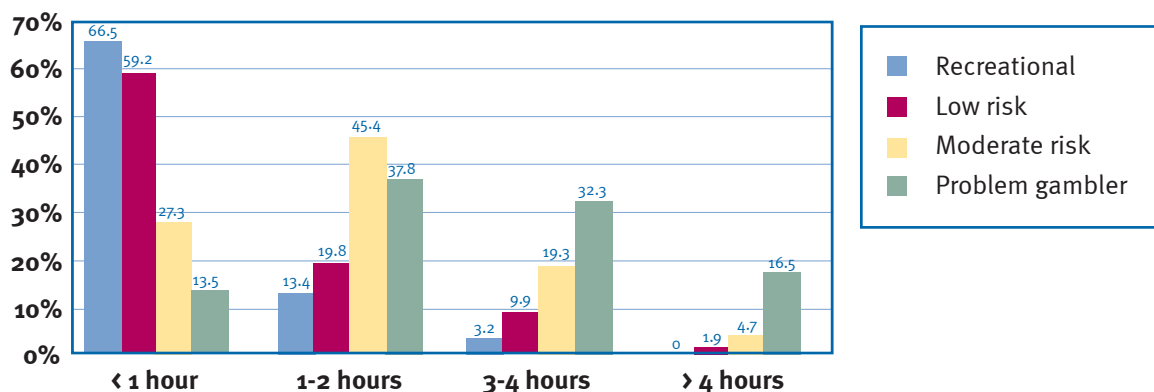


Figure 11 Hours per gambling session by gambling group

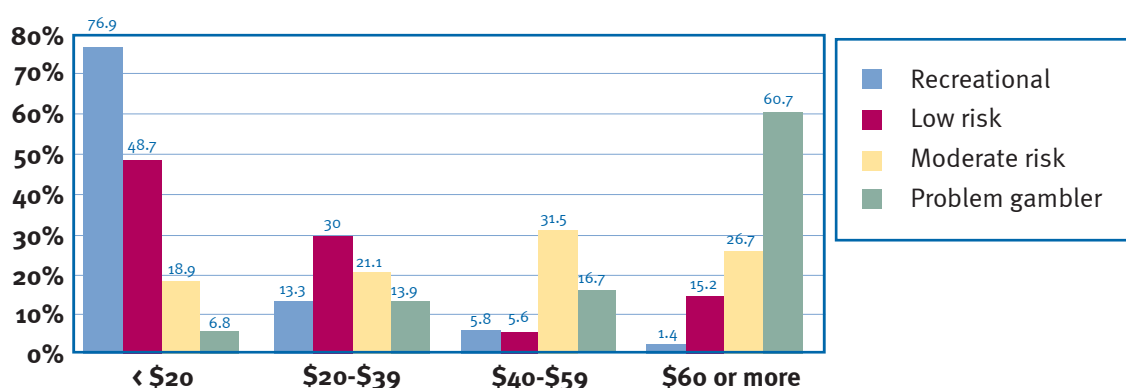


## Gambling expenditure

Only 19 per cent of the moderate gambler group spend less than \$20 per gambling session. This is significantly less than the average for the total sample (48%). Unsurprisingly therefore, 58 per cent of this group spend \$40 or more per gambling session with 27 per cent spending upwards of \$60 per session.

Seventy-eight per cent of the problem gambling group spend more than \$40 per gambling session with 61 per cent spending \$60 or more per session. When we consider that 41 per cent of problem gamblers play two to five times per week, the accumulative impact of their gambling expenditure becomes clear.

Figure 12 Expenditure per session by gambling group



The survey obtained information on whether respondents gambled for anything other than money. Table 9 details the responses to this question:

Table 9 Non cash gambling stakes

Item	No of respondents
Cigarettes	10
Alcohol	7
Favours (unspecified)	5
Drugs	2
Artwork	1
Lollies/Chocolate	2
Other	3

While “favours” remained unspecified anecdotal evidence provided to the researchers suggested that some favours may be sexual.

## Help-seeking behaviour

**a) Self exclusions:** The *Gambling Legislation Amendment Act 2004* introduced a range of amendments across the gaming statutes of Queensland. While self-exclusion provisions have been a part of the voluntary *Problem Gambling Code of Practice* since its inception in 2002<sup>35</sup>, the Act represented the first time that self-exclusion was specifically dealt with in legislation.

In introducing the Bill to Parliament the Treasurer noted in his second reading speech:

The bill’s implementation of a legislative model for a new exclusions regime for people experiencing problems controlling their gambling behaviour is of particular significance... It includes enhancements to the current procedures for self-exclusions to standardise the self exclusion provisions and create a duty for gambling providers to exclude the customer at the customer’s request<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> Queensland Responsible Gambling Code of Practice: Trial and Review (2002) Queensland Treasury, section 3

<sup>36</sup> Gambling Legislation Amendment Bill 2004, second reading speech, 18 May 2004.

The survey sought to determine what percentage of respondents had accessed the self exclusion processes. Such small numbers of respondents have self excluded that these figures were statistically unreliable. Table 10 therefore details the percentage of respondents who have *not* self excluded from gambling venues. While in real terms the number of respondents who self exclude is low, the trend is predictable with problem gamblers being the least likely to have *never* excluded (74.3%) or the most likely to have self excluded. The reasons for the low take up rate may include a lack of understanding of the system and the fact that currently exclusions operate on a venue by venue basis. This means that even if a gambler excludes him/herself from one venue they can still access gambling at another. Numbers accessing the self-exclusion process has been disappointing (see Table 11). In recognition of this, the Government has introduced a new self-exclusion process to begin on May 1, 2005<sup>37</sup>.

Table 10 Self exclusion from gaming venue by gambling type

Gambling type	Never self-excluded from gaming venue (%)
Non gambler	94
Recreational gambler	94
Low risk	94
Moderate risk	90
Problem gambler	74

## b) Help-seeking

As with self exclusion above, the numbers who have sought gambling-related help are generally so low as to be statistically unreliable. Table 11 therefore shows the numbers who have *not* accessed help with gambling problems in the last 12 months.

Table 11 Per centage who have not sought help with gambling in past 12 months

Gambling type	Never sought help with gambling (%)
Non gambler	94
Recreational gambler	98
Low risk	99
Moderate risk	93
Problem gambler	86

Of respondents in the problem gambler group, 11.6 per cent have sought and received gambling-related help in the past 12 months. The remainder (2.4%) either did not respond to the question or sought help and did not receive it. This figure is consistent with the findings of the QHGS which indicated that 57 per cent of problem gamblers do not want help and that 19 per cent of this group actually seek help (however defined) with their gambling problems<sup>38</sup>.

While the QHGS quotes a figure of 57 per cent who do not want help, other studies have placed this figure as high as 82 per cent<sup>39</sup>. This phenomenon is not exclusive to Queensland. A recent Canadian study revealed that 5 out of 6 adults with gambling problems were likely to recover without treatment<sup>40</sup> while Boston researchers Albanese and Shaffer acknowledge that recovery from addictions generally is more common without treatment than previously thought<sup>41</sup>. Another study pessimistically reported that only 3 per cent of American problem gamblers seek professional help in any given year<sup>42</sup>.

<sup>37</sup> See the *Gambling Legislation Amendment Act 2004*

<sup>38</sup> Above, n1, 23

<sup>39</sup> M. Rockloff, and G. Schofield, "Factor Analysis of Barriers to Treatment for Problem Gambling" *Journal of Gambling Studies* (2004) 20 (2), 122

<sup>40</sup> D. Hodgins, et al, "Pathways to Recovery from Gambling Problems: Follow-Up from a General Population Survey" *Journal of Gambling Studies* (1999) 15 (2), 93

<sup>41</sup> M. Albanese and H. Shaffer, "Treatment Considerations in Patients with Addictions" *Primary Psychiatry* 2003, 10 (9), 55

<sup>42</sup> Reported in G Cooper, "Exploring and Understanding Online Assistance for Problem Gamblers: The Pathways Model" *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, (2003) 1 (2) <http://www.pasinfo.net/journal/v1i2/v1i2ao4article.html>

Based on these findings a result of over 11 per cent of problem gamblers seeking help is an encouraging one and may indicate a willingness on the part of many Community Corrections offenders to respond positively to any assistance provided by Corrective Services to overcome their gambling problems.

### c) Help source

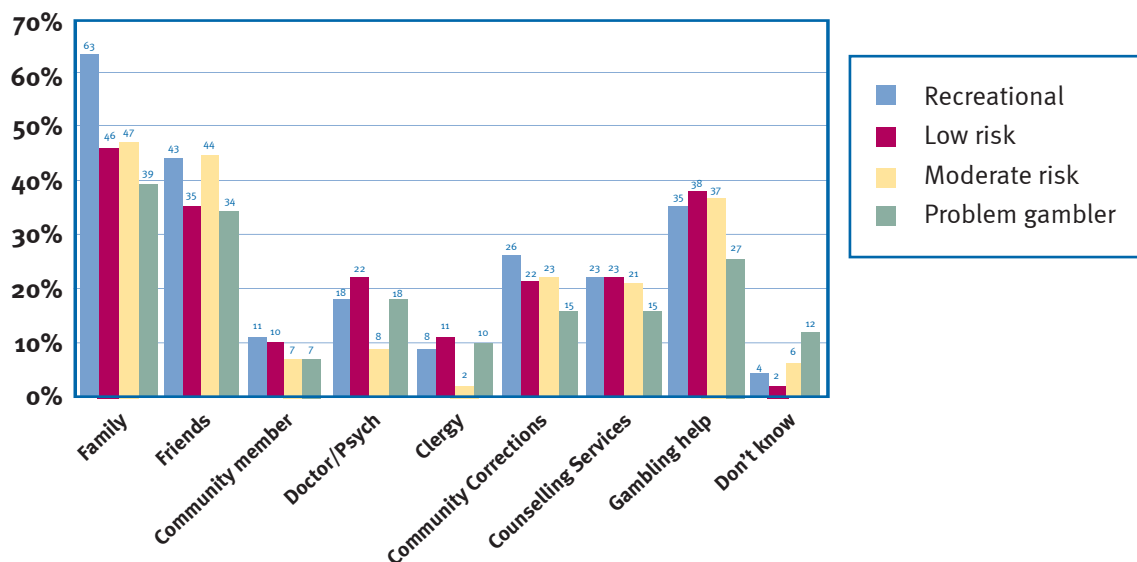
The survey asked a theoretical question regarding where respondents felt they might seek gambling-related assistance if ever they needed it (Figure 13). Family and friends were unsurprisingly the most favoured sources of help followed by the Government funded Gambling Help services (including the Gambling Help Line and face-to-face Gambling Help counselling services). The relatively high recognition of Gambling Help and the fact that they are fully funded by the Queensland Government makes them the obvious choice to provide gambling assistance to offenders within the Custodial and Community Correction systems.

Of particular encouragement is the fact that so many respondents nominated their Community Correction case manager as the one they would most likely go to for help. Case managers came in behind the Gambling Help services and just ahead of other local counselling services in the choice of respondents. This being so, there is a need for some level of training/orientation to be provided to case managers on the issues involved in assessing and providing assistance to those experiencing gambling problems. This is particularly the case when the problem gambling is linked to criminal behaviour or is potentially so.

In line with the findings of research outlined above, the problem gambling group are the least likely to seek help from the majority of sources and the most likely group to state they “don’t know” where to seek help. Part of the reason for the reluctance of problem gamblers to seek help is the increasingly well documented preference of this group to handle the problem “on their own.” Research found that 82 per cent of both resolved and active problem gamblers had a desire to “handle the problem on their own.”<sup>43</sup> According to the work of Nathan this tendency to self-recovery is something problem gamblers share in common with alcoholics.<sup>44</sup>

In view of these findings, the provision of self-help materials as well as resources for family members may be of assistance.

Figure 13 Help sources by gambling group



### d) Free gambling help program

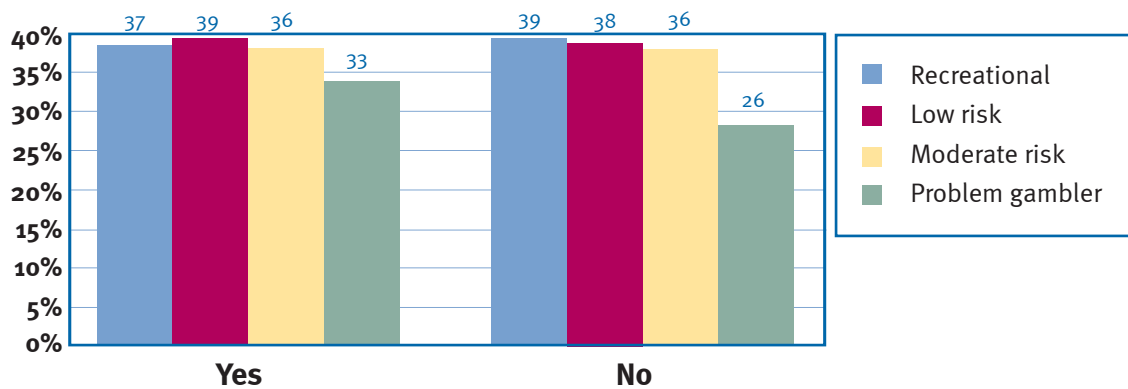
When asked if they would access a free gambling help program should they ever require it, the results are evenly spread between yes and no responses across all four groups. While problem gamblers are marginally the least likely to access such a service, they are also the least likely to refuse (Figure 14). Based on these results, one third of problem gamblers (33%) and slightly more than this number of moderate risk gamblers (36%) would be interested in participating in a free gambling help programme. Twenty-six percent of problem gamblers and 36 percent of moderate risk gamblers are not interested in participating in such a program. Interestingly, 41.5 percent of problem gamblers either did not know or did not specify whether they would be interested in such a program.

<sup>43</sup> See Rockloff and Schofield, above n39, 122

<sup>44</sup> P. Nathan, “The Role of Natural Recovery in Alcoholism and Pathological Gambling”, (2003) *Journal of Gambling Studies* 19 (3), 284



Figure 14 Willingness to access free gambling help program by gambling type



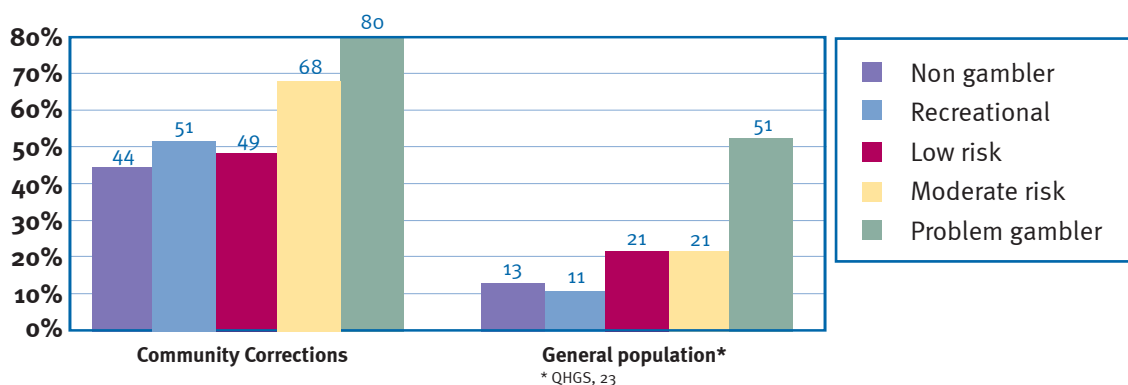
## Depression, alcohol and drug use

### a) Gambling and depression

The self perception of depression is much more prevalent in the Community Corrections sample population than that reported in the general population by the *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2001* (Figure 15).

Among the Community Corrections respondents, more of the problem gambling group (80%) reported feeling depressed in the past 12 months than any other group. Sixty-eight per cent of moderate risk gamblers reported similarly. In the general population the self perception of depression among problem gamblers (51%) was significantly higher than in moderate risk gamblers (21%).

Figure 15 Self perception of depression in Community Corrections and the general population by gambling type

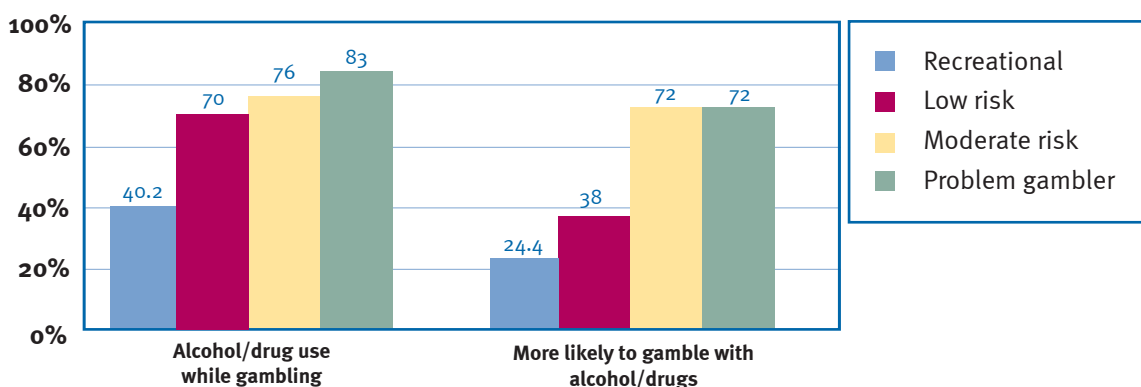


### b) Gambling, alcohol and other drug use

Male respondents are significantly more likely to have used alcohol and/or other drugs while gambling than females (50.5% to 33.7% respectively).

Problem and moderate risk gamblers are significantly more likely than the sample average to have used alcohol or drugs while gambling (83% and 76% compared to 47% respectively). Similarly, problem and moderate risk gamblers are significantly more likely to report increased gambling activity than the sample average, while under the influence of alcohol or drugs (72% and 72% compared to 34% respectively).

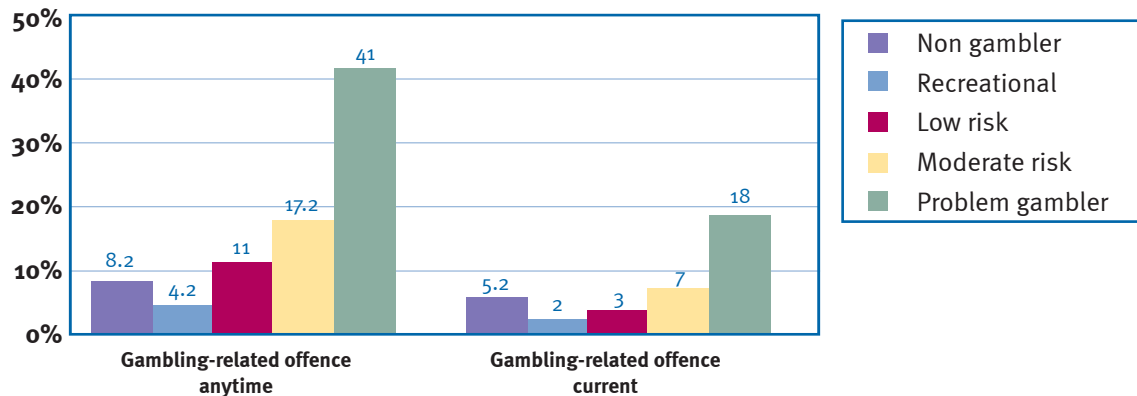
Figure 16 Alcohol and drug use and influence on gambling activity by gambling type



## Gambling and crime

The survey asked a suite of questions to determine whether respondents had committed gambling-related offences. Overall, problem gamblers are significantly more likely to have committed a gambling-related crime at some time in the past (40.7% compared to the sample average of 10.6%) while recreational gamblers are significantly less likely to have committed such an offence (4%). Generally speaking, the further along the continuum towards problem gambling the greater the likelihood of a gambling-related criminal history (see Figure 17). The one exception to this trend concerns the non gambler.

Figure 17 Gambling-related offences 'anytime' and 'current' by gambling type.



While respondents in the non-gambler group have not gambled in the 12 months prior to the survey, a small but notable number of these offenders have committed a gambling-related offence.

Around 8.2 per cent of those surveyed, representing nearly 150 offenders currently in the Community Corrections system appear to be non gamblers and yet have committed a gambling-related offence in the past.

There is therefore some potential for those in this category to have experienced gambling problems in the past, but for a variety of reasons, including imprisonment, self-correction or professional assistance, have ceased to gamble in the past year.

A similar gambling prevalence/gambling-related crime continuum described above is also apparent when we examine those offenders whose current offence is gambling-related. Once again, problem gamblers are significantly more likely to have committed a current gambling-related offence than the sample average (18.2% compared to 4.7% respectively).

While the trends in relation to gambling prevalence and crime are consistent in both analyses, it is important to note that the incidence of gambling-related crime is less when we look at only current offences. This means that an offender's problems with gambling may be overlooked if assessment tools focus only on current offences or on recent history.

## 4. Indigenous and regional issues

### 4.1 Indigenous variants

#### Overall

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders comprised 19.2 per cent of those surveyed compared to 16.1 per cent of the total Community Corrections population.

#### Prevalence

Slightly more Indigenous than non-Indigenous respondents are non gamblers (18% and 14% respectively) but a higher per centage of Indigenous respondents are moderate risk (17%) and problem gamblers (14%) than non-Indigenous respondents (11% and 8% respectively). Interestingly, Indigenous respondents are less likely to be recreational gamblers (39%) than non-Indigenous respondents (54%). See Table 12.

Table 12 Indigenous, non-Indigenous gambling prevalence comparison by gambling type

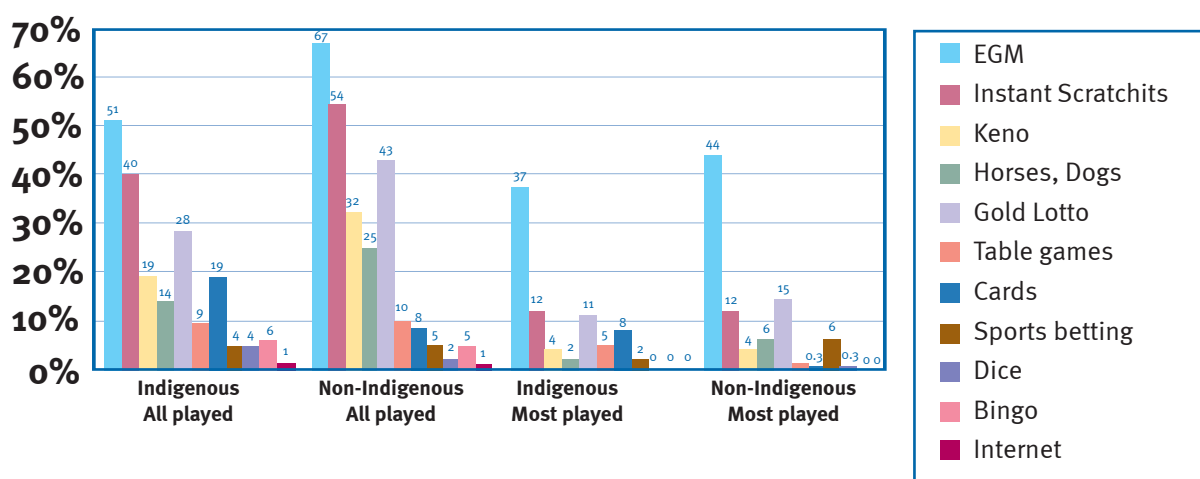
Gambling type	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
Non gambler	18.4	14.4
Recreational gambler	38.7	53.7
Low risk	12.2	12.2
Moderate risk	17.0	11.3
Problem gambler	13.7	8.4

#### Gambling behaviour

Indigenous respondents are less likely to have played electronic gaming machines (51%), Gold Lotto (28%) or Keno (19%) in the last 12 months than non-Indigenous respondents (67%, 43% and 32% respectively) but significantly more likely (19%) to have played cards for money than non-Indigenous respondents (8%). They are also significantly more likely to play cards as their most dominant gambling activity (8%) than their non-Indigenous counterparts (less than 1%). Similarly, Indigenous respondents are significantly more likely to have played cards as their first ever gambling activity (14%) compared to non-Indigenous respondents (5%). These figures may reflect the influence of so-called “card schools” or “card pits” in Indigenous communities.<sup>45</sup>

Figure 18 compares “all games played” by Indigenous and non-Indigenous respondents in the last 12 months with which game respondents nominated as the one they played most. In both cases card playing is the only statistically significant difference in gambling activity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous gamblers.

Figure 18 Gambling activity by Indigenous status



<sup>45</sup> See below under Remote Indigenous Communities

Thirty-one per cent of Indigenous respondents reported that they commenced gambling between the ages of 10 and 17 compared to 23 per cent of non-Indigenous respondents who commenced gambling at this age. This places the Indigenous sample in a similar category to the moderate risk group, 30 per cent of whom began gambling between the ages of 10 to 17.

### Help seeking

Twelve per cent of Indigenous respondents indicated they had sought to exclude themselves from gambling venues compared to 3 per cent of non-Indigenous respondents. This reflects both the higher prevalence rates of moderate risk and problem gambling among the Indigenous population and may also indicate a greater willingness to take action to remedy the problem. However, Indigenous respondents are no more likely to seek help from family, friends or professional services than their non-Indigenous counterparts. Interestingly, a much higher per centage of Indigenous respondents stated they would access a free gambling help program if it were available (50%) than non-Indigenous respondents (37%).

### Attitudes to gambling

Indigenous respondents are significantly more likely to agree that “gambling winnings are used to support families” (21%) than non-Indigenous respondents (8%).

### Household issues

Indigenous respondents are significantly more likely to be living with a partner (37%) than non-Indigenous respondents (20%) and are slightly less likely (45%) to have never married than their non-Indigenous counterparts (52%).

In spite of the higher rate of moderate risk and problem gambling prevalence among Indigenous respondents, gambling is significantly less likely to have caused arguments in Indigenous households (59%) than in non-Indigenous households (78%).

### Remote Indigenous communities

Research was conducted among remote Indigenous communities at Aurukun, Pormpuraaw and Yarrabah in the Queensland Gulf country. While the combined responses for these communities was small<sup>46</sup>, the research nonetheless highlights some issues for future investigation.

The general gambling prevalence rates for these communities are seen in Table 13.

*Table 13 Community Corrections gambling prevalence in remote Indigenous communities*

Gambling type	Aurukun, Pormpuraaw, Yarrabah (%)	Total Indigenous	Non Indigenous	General Queensland population
Non gambler	16.7	18.4	14.4	19.7
Recreational gambler	25.0	38.7	53.7	72.4
Low risk	16.7	12.2	12.2	5.3
Moderate risk	33.3	17.0	11.3	1.9
Problem gambler	8.3	13.7	8.4	0.5

At first glance the problem gambler prevalence rate appears encouraging, being less than the overall Indigenous rate of 13.7 per cent and more in line with the non-Indigenous cohort (8.4%). It must be remembered, however, that these communities do not have ready access to gambling venues with the range of products available to those in less remote communities. In spite of this lack of access to commercial gambling products, the problem gambler prevalence rate remains nearly 17 times that of the general Queensland population.

Another issue of interest is the elevated prevalence of moderate risk gamblers. At 33 per cent the moderate risk group is nearly twice that of the total Indigenous sample and again over 17 times that of the general Queensland population. As many moderate risk gamblers experience adverse impacts of gambling, are at increased risk of gambling-related criminal activity and are effectively ‘at risk’ of developing problem gambling behaviours, this figure may indicate some cause for concern.

<sup>46</sup> A total of 24 responses were received from the Indigenous population in these communities out of a total Community Corrections population of 383.

A further issue worth considering is that the sample population from these remote communities appears to be less recreational in their gambling behaviour than the rest of the sample group. While recreational gamblers comprise the largest group in the general community (72.4%), the non-Indigenous community corrections sample (53.7%) and the Indigenous sample (38.7%), this is not the case with the remote Indigenous sample. At 25 per cent, the prevalence of recreational gambling in these communities runs second to moderate risk gambling.

One reason for these figures may be found in the important place of “card schools” in the social fabric of remote Indigenous communities. Certainly the current survey highlights that card playing is significantly more popular among Indigenous respondents than non-Indigenous. Card schools or card pits are regular community events based around card playing for money.

Commenting generally on the place of card schools in the remote communities the Corrective Services researcher noted:

The card school is very important to community members as it is the only time the community meets socially. It is considered a very important interactive meeting with the goings on between people discussed. Politics of the community are also brought up and discussed. Some of the most popular and frequently played games are “3 card”, “25”, “Cut em” and “Kooacan”.

Reporting specifically about the card schools at Aurukun, the researcher commented:

There are regular days for card schools in Aurukun that coincide with the receipt of “sit down money” (Government benefits).

The Aurukun Community Justice Group coordinator advised that gambling winnings circulate around the community and therefore stay in the community. There is not a voluntary sharing of winnings but it is taken to settle kinship or past claims. Because of the money spent on gambling, the community members cannot learn to plan or budget their money. Gambling is therefore an enormous problem in Aurukun.

At a recent meeting of the Aurukun Justice Group it was requested that a justice group policy be put in place to ban a person from the canteen for interrupting the card school. This highlights the importance that community members place on the card school

As well as the financial impacts of gambling there were also reports of gambling’s influence on domestic violence in the remote communities.

It appears that in these communities gambling may not simply be a recreational activity but an important facet of social interaction. Failure to take part may risk social exclusion. As the Queensland Government strategy in relation to problem gambling is largely premised on the fact that gambling is a recreational activity delivered commercially, a different approach may be required to deal with the problems associated with gambling in these remote communities.

At the very least, there is a need for further research into the place of card schools and the social impact of these events in remote Indigenous communities.

## **4.2 Regional variants**

### **Prevalence**

There were no statistically significant regional variants in regard to the CPGI gambling groups. A higher per centage of Metropolitan respondents reported as non gambler (23.6%) compared to the average (15.1%). The highest per centage of problem gamblers was found in the Central Region (13.2% compared to the average of 9.4%).

### **Indigenous origin**

While Indigenous respondents comprised 19 per cent of the total sample, the per centage of Indigenous respondents from the Northern Region was significantly higher at 55 per cent

### **Gambling activity**

Perhaps reflecting the higher Indigenous cohort, the Northern region showed a much greater incidence of card playing in the last 12 months at 16.2 per cent compared to the sample average of 9.8 per cent. In answer to the question, “What have you gambled most on?” the Northern respondents again showed significantly higher commitment to card playing at 7.2 per cent compared to the average of 1.6 per cent.

Southern respondents are statistically more likely to have commenced gambling at 18 years or over (78%) than the average (64%). Similarly, Southern respondents are significantly more likely to have first gambled on poker machines (46%) than Northern respondents (27%). As noted above Northern respondents are significantly more likely to have first gambled with cards (15%) than any other group (at 5%).

### **Beliefs and attitudes to gambling**

In response to the statement, “If a poker machine hasn’t paid out in a while then it must be due to pay out”, Metropolitan respondents are significantly less likely to agree (19%) than their Southern (37%) or Northern (33%) counterparts.

### **Help seeking**

Southern Region respondents are significantly more likely to seek gambling-related help from either their Community Corrections Case Manager (41%) or the government funded Gambling Help services (53%) than any other group (24% and 37% respectively). Southern respondents are also the most likely to seek help from each of the other stated help sources. Similarly, Southern respondents are significantly more likely to attend a free gambling help program (55%) than any other group (37%). Metropolitan respondents are statistically the least likely to access such a program (17%).

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## Appendix A

### Community Corrections/Custodial Corrections gambling type comparisons

The tables below provide comparisons between the problem gambling prevalence survey samples of the present Community Corrections study and the 2002 Custodial Corrections survey. The information reflects the demographic profiles of the relevant population groups. Some characteristics are not directly comparable across the two samples due to differences in the survey instruments used to collect the data.

Table 14 Non-gambling group Community Corrections/Prison population comparisons

Non-gambling group	Community Corrections	Prison population
<b>Prevalence</b>	15.1%	8.4%
<b>Gender</b>	82% male 18% female	60% male 40% female
<b>Indigenous status</b>	22% Indigenous 78% non-Indigenous	67% Indigenous 33% non-Indigenous
<b>Age range</b>	71% up to 35 28.7% 35-54 0% 55 and over	53% 18-34 40% 35-54 7% 55 and over
<b>Marital status</b>	47% never married 19% defacto 7% married 27% divorced/separated/widowed	53% never married 27% defacto 13% married
<b>Country of birth</b>	75.9% Australia	80% Australia
<b>Highest education level</b>	45% year 10 or less 37% up to Year 12 18% post secondary	87% completed Year 10 or less
<b>Work status</b>	28% full-time work 38% unemployed 12% pension 4% Community Development Employment Project (CDEP) 25% part-time or casual	20% full-time work 20% unemployed 20% pension 20% CDEP
<b>Income*</b>	36% <\$10,000 per annum 43% \$10,000-\$40,000 22% \$40,000+	73% <\$10,000 per annum

\* Some attributed more than one income source

Table 15 Recreational gambling group Community Corrections/Prison population comparisons

Recreational gambler group	Community Corrections	Prison population
<b>Prevalence</b>	51.1%	48.3%
<b>Gender</b>	77% male 23% female	56% male 44% female
<b>Indigenous status</b>	13% Indigenous 87% non-Indigenous	39% Indigenous 61% non-Indigenous
<b>Age range</b>	78% up to 35 19% 35-54 3% 55 and over	60.5% up to 35 36% 35-54 3.5% 55 and over
<b>Marital status</b>	55% never married 22% defacto 8% married 12% divorced/separated/widowed 3% unspecified	50% never married 20% defacto 19% divorced/separated/widowed



<b>Country of birth</b>	75.9% Australia	80% Australia
<b>Highest education level</b>	45% year 10 or less 37% up to Year 12 18% post secondary	87% completed Year 10 or less
<b>Work status</b>	28% full-time work 38% unemployed 12% pension 4% CDEP 25% part-time or casual	20% full-time work 20% unemployed 20% pension 20% CDEP
<b>Income*</b>	36% <\$10,000 per annum 43% \$10,000-\$40,000 22% \$40,000+	73% <\$10,000 per annum

\* Some attributed more than one income source

Table 16 Low risk gambling group Community Corrections/Prison population comparisons

Low risk gambler group	Community Corrections	Prison population
<b>Prevalence</b>	12.2%	13.5%
<b>Gender</b>	83% male 17% female	54% male 46% female
<b>Indigenous status</b>	18% Indigenous 82% non-Indigenous	33% Indigenous 67% non-Indigenous
<b>Age range</b>	84% up to 35 15% 35-54 1% 55 and over	70% up to 35 30% 35-54 0% 55 and over
<b>Marital status</b>	53% never married 25% defacto 2% married 17% divorced/separated/widowed 3% unspecified	54% never married 33% defacto
<b>Country of birth</b>	91% Australia	92% Australia
<b>Highest education level</b>	58% year 10 or less 33% up to Year 12 6% post secondary	42% completed Year 10 or less 33% Vocational Education and Training (VET) 12.5% post secondary
<b>Work status</b>	30% full-time work 30% unemployed 14% pension 4% CDEP 17% part-time or casual 7% retired/other	21% full-time work 47% unemployed
<b>Income*</b>	34% <\$10,000 per annum 53% \$10,000-\$40,000 9% \$40,000+ 4% unspecified	55% <\$20,000 per annum 30% \$80,000+ (obtained illegally)

\* Some attributed more than one income source

Table 17 Moderate risk gambling group Community Corrections/Prison population comparisons

Moderate risk gambler group	Community Corrections	Prison population
<b>Prevalence</b>	12.3%	12.4%
<b>Gender</b>	77% male 23% female	73% male 27% female
<b>Indigenous status</b>	25% Indigenous 75% non-Indigenous	45% Indigenous 55% non-Indigenous
<b>Age range</b>	74% up to 35 26% 35-54 0% 55 and over	77% up to 35 23% 35-54 0% 55 and over
<b>Marital status</b>	46% never married 25% defacto 2% married 25% divorced/separated/widowed 2% unspecified	45% never married 41% defacto
<b>Country of birth</b>	91% Australia	95% Australia
<b>Highest education level</b>	62% year 10 or less 29% up to Year 12 7% post secondary	45% completed Year 10 or less 27% VET 14% post secondary
<b>Work status</b>	20% full-time work 33% unemployed 14% pension 6% CDEP 30% part-time or casual 6% retired/other	21% full-time work 27.5% unemployed 27.5% pension
<b>Income*</b>	34% <\$10,000 per annum 52% \$10,000-\$40,000 8% \$40,000+ 6% unspecified	51% <\$30,000 per annum 41% \$80,000+ (obtained illegally)

\* Some attributed more than one income source

Table 18 Problem gambling group Community Corrections/Prison population comparisons

Problem gambler group	Community Corrections	Prison population
<b>Prevalence</b>	9.4%	17.4%
<b>Gender</b>	82% male 18% female	61% male 39% female
<b>Indigenous status</b>	25% Indigenous 75% non-Indigenous	35% Indigenous 65% non-Indigenous
<b>Age range</b>	73% up to 35 24% 35-54 3% 55 and over	58% up to 35 39% 35-54 3% 55 and over
<b>Marital status</b>	38% never married 30% defacto 7% married 22% divorced/separated/widowed 3% unspecified	39% never married 32% defacto 16% separated/divorced
<b>Country of birth</b>	90% Australia	84% Australia
<b>Highest education level</b>	56% year 10 or less 22% up to Year 12 22% post secondary	52% completed Year 10 or less 26% completed senior 16% VET 6.5% tertiary

<b>Work status</b>	24% full-time work 44% unemployed 19% pension 2% CDEP 10% part-time or casual 9% retired/other	26% full-time work 42% unemployed 25% pension
<b>Income*</b>	29% <\$10,000 per annum 49% \$10,000-\$40,000 14% \$40,000+ 8% unspecified	49% <\$30,000 per annum 42% over \$80,000+ (obtained illegally)

\* Some attributed more than one income source

## Appendix B

### Survey instrument

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**Q.1 How old are you?** (Age last birthday) ☐ years

**Q.2 Are you male or female?** ☐ Male ☐ Female

**Q.3 What is your postcode?**      - - - -  
☐ Don't know/can't remember ☐ Refuse

**Q.4 Where were you born?**

- ☐ Australia
- ☐ UK/Ireland
- ☐ New Zealand
- ☐ Vietnam
- ☐ Other (specify) .....

**Q.5 Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?**

- ☐ Yes, Aboriginal origin
- ☐ Yes, Torres Strait origin
- ☐ No

For persons of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, tick both "Yes" boxes

**Q.6 What is the main language spoken at home? (Please tick ✓ one box)**

- ☐ English
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Greek
- ☐ Vietnamese
- ☐ Italian
- ☐ Other (specify) .....

**Q.7 What is your marital status? (Please tick ✓ one box)**

- ☐ Married
- ☐ Living with partner
- ☐ Separated/divorced
- ☐ Never married
- ☐ Widowed

**Q.8 In the past 12 months have you played any of these?** (Please tick ✓ **everything** you have played)

- Pokies (poker machines).....☐
- Bet on horses, dogs or other animals .....☐
- Sports betting (other than animals) .....☐
- Bingo.....☐
- Internet gambling .....☐
- Card games (for money other than casino) .....☐
- Dice games (for money other than casino).....☐
- Instant Scratch-Its.....☐
- Gold Lotto, Powerball, Oz Lotto, Golden Casket.....☐
- Keno at a club or hotel.....☐
- Blackjack, Roulette, or any other Casino game .....☐
- Other game – please write down its name.....☐

☐ I have not played any of these in the last 12 months - **Go to Q11**

**Q.9 In the past 12 months what have you gambled the most on?** (Please tick ✓ **only one** box)

- Pokies (poker machines).....☐
- Bet on horses, dogs or other animals .....☐
- Sports betting (other than animals) .....☐
- Bingo.....☐
- Internet gambling .....☐
- Card games (for money other than casino) .....☐
- Dice games (for money other than casino).....☐
- Instant Scratch-Its.....☐
- Gold Lotto, Powerball, Oz Lotto, Golden Casket.....☐
- Keno at a club or hotel.....☐
- Blackjack, Roulette, or any other Casino game .....☐
- Other game – please write down its name.....☐

**How many times per week do you usually play on the activity you've chosen?** (Please tick ✓ **only one** box)

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than once per week | <input type="checkbox"/> Once a week        | <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 times per week |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4-5 times per week      | <input type="checkbox"/> 6-7 times per week | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 7 times  |

**About how long do you play each time you gamble on that activity?** (Please tick ✓ **only one** box)

- |   |                                    |                                    |                                       |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than one hour | <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 hours | <input type="checkbox"/> 3-4 hours | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 4 hours |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|

...and, about **how much money** do you spend each time you gamble on that activity? (Please tick ✓ **only one** box)

☐ Less than \$20      ☐ \$20-\$39      ☐ \$40-\$59      ☐ \$60 or more

Do you gamble with things **other than money**? (eg. cigarettes, alcohol, artwork, favours)

☐ Yes      ☐ No

If yes, what do you gamble with? .....

**Q.10 How much do you think the following statements apply to you?** (please tick ✓ one box for each statement)

In the last 12 months, **I have bet more than I could afford to lose.**

☐ No, never      ☐ Yes, rarely      ☐ Yes, sometimes      ☐ Yes, often      ☐ Yes, always

In the last 12 months, **I have needed to gamble with larger amounts of money to get the same feeling of excitement.**

☐ No, never      ☐ Yes, rarely      ☐ Yes, sometimes      ☐ Yes, often      ☐ Yes, always

In the last 12 months, **I have gone back another day to try to win back the money I lost.**

☐ No, never      ☐ Yes, rarely      ☐ Yes, sometimes      ☐ Yes, often      ☐ Yes, always

In the last 12 months, **I have borrowed money or sold something to get money to gamble.**

☐ No, never      ☐ Yes, rarely      ☐ Yes, sometimes      ☐ Yes, often      ☐ Yes, always

In the last 12 months, **I have felt I might have a problem with gambling.**

☐ No, never      ☐ Yes, rarely      ☐ Yes, sometimes      ☐ Yes, often      ☐ Yes, always

In the last 12 months, **gambling has caused me health problems (including stress, anxiety).**

☐ No, never      ☐ Yes, rarely      ☐ Yes, sometimes      ☐ Yes, often      ☐ Yes, always

In the last 12 months, **other people have criticised my betting or told me they think I have a gambling problem.**

☐ No, never      ☐ Yes, rarely      ☐ Yes, sometimes      ☐ Yes, often      ☐ Yes, always

In the last 12 months, **my gambling has caused financial problems for me or my household (eg. I have been unable to pay bills).**

☐ No, never      ☐ Yes, rarely      ☐ Yes, sometimes      ☐ Yes, often      ☐ Yes, always

In the last 12 months, **I have felt guilty about the way I gamble or what happens when I gamble.**

☐ No, never      ☐ Yes, rarely      ☐ Yes, sometimes      ☐ Yes, often      ☐ Yes, always

**Q.11 Do you agree or disagree with the following statements.** (Please tick ✓ one box for each statement)

**While gambling, after losing many times in a row, you are more likely to win.**

☐ Agree      ☐ Disagree      ☐ Don't know

**If a poker machine hasn't paid out in a while then it must be due to pay out.**

☐ Agree      ☐ Disagree      ☐ Don't know

**While gambling, you can win more if you use a system or strategy.**

☐ Agree      ☐ Disagree      ☐ Don't know

**If you continue gambling in the end, you will lose.**

☐ Agree      ☐ Disagree      ☐ Don't know

**Q.12 When you were a child growing up:**

**Did any of the adults in your household gamble?**

☐ No, never      ☐ Yes, rarely      ☐ Yes, sometimes      ☐ Yes, often      ☐ Yes, always

**How did people in your household feel about gambling**

☐ There was no gambling      ☐ They thought it was bad      ☐ They thought it was normal  
☐ They thought it was a good thing

**Q.13 If you have gambled, at what age did you start gambling?**

☐ Less than 5 years old      ☐ 5-9 years old      ☐ 10-14 years old      ☐ 15-17 years old      ☐ 18 years or older

**On what type of activity did you first bet or gamble?** (Please tick only the one you first played)

**Pokies** (poker machines) ..... ☐

**Bet on horses, dogs or other animals** ..... ☐

**Sports betting** (other than animals) ..... ☐

**Bingo** ..... ☐

**Internet gambling** ..... ☐

**Card games** (for money other than casino) ..... ☐

**Dice games** (for money other than casino) ..... ☐

**Instant Scratch-Its** ..... ☐

**Gold Lotto, Powerball, Oz Lotto, Golden Casket** ..... ☐

**Keno** at a club or hotel ..... ☐

**Blackjack, Roulette, or any other Casino game** ..... ☐

**Other game** – please write down its name ..... ☐

**I have never gambled on anything** ..... ☐

**Q.14 In the last 12 months have you tried to exclude yourself from a gambling venue (asked the venue not to let you back in)?**

- ☐ No, never      ☐ Yes, and venue kept me out      ☐ Yes, but venue let me back in

**Q.15 In the last 12 months have you ever sought help with problems related to gambling?**

- ☐ No, never      ☐ Yes, I sought help and received help      ☐ Yes, I sought help but received no help

**Q.16 If you needed help for problems related to gambling, where would you go? (you may tick ✓ more than one box)**

- To my family ..... ☐
- To friends ..... ☐
- To respected members of the community..... ☐
- To a doctor or psychologist..... ☐
- To a church minister/priest..... ☐
- To my Community Corrections case manager ..... ☐
- To local counselling & support services ..... ☐
- To Gambling Help Services/Gambling Help Line ..... ☐
- I don't know where to get help ..... ☐
- Other (please specify)..... ☐

**Q.17 The following statements are about gambling generally. How much do you agree or disagree with each one? (please tick ✓ the answer that best describes what you think)**

**Gambling provides harmless amusement for people.**

- ☐ I strongly disagree      ☐ I disagree      ☐ I have no opinion      ☐ I agree      ☐ I strongly agree

**People who gamble regularly win money.**

- ☐ I strongly disagree      ☐ I disagree      ☐ I have no opinion      ☐ I agree      ☐ I strongly agree

**Gambling winnings are used to support families.**

- ☐ I strongly disagree      ☐ I disagree      ☐ I have no opinion      ☐ I agree      ☐ I strongly agree

**Gambling takes too much money out of the community.**

- ☐ I strongly disagree      ☐ I disagree      ☐ I have no opinion      ☐ I agree      ☐ I strongly agree

**Overall, gambling causes more harm than good.**

- ☐ I strongly disagree      ☐ I disagree      ☐ I have no opinion      ☐ I agree      ☐ I strongly agree

**Q.18 In the last 12 months, has your partner gambled?**

- ☐ I have no partner..... **Go to Q.19**
- ☐ My partner has not gambled in the last 12 months..... **Go to Q.19**
- ☐ Yes, my partner has gambled in the last 12 months



**(Please tick ✓ everything you think your partner has played)**

- Pokies** (poker machines) ..... ☐
- Bet on horses, dogs or other animals** ..... ☐
- Sports betting** (other than animals) ..... ☐
- Bingo** ..... ☐
- Internet gambling**..... ☐
- Card games** (for money other than casino) ..... ☐
- Dice games** (for money other than casino)..... ☐
- Instant Scratch-Its** ..... ☐
- Gold Lotto, Powerball, Oz Lotto, Golden Casket**..... ☐
- Keno** at a club or hotel..... ☐
- Blackjack, Roulette, or any other Casino game** ..... ☐
- Other game** – please write down its name..... ☐

**Q.19 In the last 12 months, has gambling caused arguments within your household?** (please tick ✓ one box only)

- ☐ No, never      ☐ Yes, rarely      ☐ Yes, sometimes      ☐ Yes, often      ☐ Yes, always

**Q.20 Which of the following best describes how you currently get your income?** (please tick ✓ one box only)

- ☐ work full-time
- ☐ CDEP
- ☐ part-time/casual work
- ☐ sick or disability pension
- ☐ child support
- ☐ retired
- ☐ unemployment benefits
- ☐ other, please describe .....

**Q.21 What is your approximate annual income?** (please tick ✓ one box only)

- ☐ Less than \$10,000
- ☐ \$10,000 - \$19,999
- ☐ \$20,000 - \$29,999
- ☐ \$30,000 - \$39,999
- ☐ \$40,000 - \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 - \$59,999
- ☐ \$60,000 - \$69,999
- ☐ \$70,000 - \$79,999
- ☐ \$80,000 +

**Q.22 What is the highest level of education you have completed?** (please tick ✓ one box only)

- ☐ No formal schooling (Year 7 or less)
- ☐ Year 10 or less
- ☐ Year 11
- ☐ Year 12
- ☐ VET/TAFE
- ☐ Degree
- ☐ Post-graduate qualification

**Q.23 In the last 12 months, have you ever felt seriously depressed?**

- ☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Don't know/can't remember    ☐ Refuse

**Q.24 In the last 12 months, have you used alcohol or drugs while gambling?**

- ☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Don't know/can't remember    ☐ Refuse

**Q.25 Do you find that you gamble more while under the influence of alcohol or drugs?**

- ☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Don't know/can't remember    ☐ Refuse

**Q.26 Were any of your current offences committed to get money to gamble or pay gambling debts?**

- ☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Don't know/can't remember    ☐ Refuse

**Q.27 Have you ever committed a crime to obtain money to gamble or pay gambling debts?**

- ☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Don't know/can't remember    ☐ Refuse

**Q.28 Have you ever committed a crime to obtain money to pay someone else's gambling debts?**

- ☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Don't know/can't remember    ☐ Refuse

**Q.29 Has gambling ever caused you to do something that was wrong or illegal?**

- ☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Don't know/can't remember    ☐ Refuse

**If yes, what have you done that was wrong or illegal?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Q.30 If a free program was available to assist you with gambling problems would you be interested in participating?**

- ☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Don't know    ☐ Refuse

**That is the end of the survey. Thank you very much for completing it. If you have any comments you would like to make about this survey or about gambling please do so on the next page.**

COMMENTS.....

Office use only				
S1	SE	RG	IC	ST
S2	IM	NM	IF	NF





**Queensland Government**  
Queensland **Corrective Services**