



centre for gambling education & research

Gambling by Employees of Queensland Gaming Venues: Workplace Influences on Responsible Gambling and Problem Gambling

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Final Report

**For the Research and Community Engagement Division
of Queensland Treasury**

November 2006



**Queensland
Government**
Treasury

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance for this research project provided by the Queensland Office of Gaming Regulation, Treasury Department. The researchers would like to also acknowledge the support and advice of the Research and Community Engagement Division of the Queensland Office of Gaming Regulation, the Queensland Responsible Gambling Advisory Committee, Clubs Queensland, the Queensland Hotels Association, Queensland Gambling Help, Queensland Gambling Helpline, the Liquor Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers' Union, and Queensland Legal Aid (Brisbane). We are especially thankful to the gambling counsellors, problem gamblers, and the managers and staff of the clubs, hotels and casinos who gave up their valuable time to be interviewed for this project. Thank you also to Dr Peter Slade and Dr Chris McConville of the University of the Sunshine Coast for their contribution, and to Sharen Nisbet of the Centre for Gambling Education and Research for her expert administrative assistance for this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
LIST OF TABLES	viii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	xii
CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	1
1.1 BACKGROUND	1
1.2 RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....	1
1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT	2
CHAPTER TWO – REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	3
2.1 INTRODUCTION	3
2.2 EMPLOYMENT IN GAMBLING INDUSTRIES.....	3
2.3 PRIOR RESEARCH INTO GAMBLING BY GAMING VENUE EMPLOYEES	4
2.4 CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES ON GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR.....	6
2.5 PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS IN GAMBLING.....	8
2.6 ASPECTS OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT THAT MAY INFLUENCE THE GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR OF GAMING VENUE STAFF	9
2.6.1 Preliminary Investigation	9
2.6.2 Other Relevant Literature	10
2.6.3 Summary.....	14
2.7 CONCLUSION.....	15
CHAPTER THREE – METHODOLOGY	17
3.1 INTRODUCTION	17
3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN.....	17
3.3 STAGE ONE: PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION	17
3.4 STAGE TWO: INTERVIEWS WITH GAMBLING COUNSELLORS.....	18
3.4.1 Sampling.....	18
3.4.2 Interview Procedures	18
3.4.3 Data Analysis.....	19
3.5 STAGE THREE: INTERVIEWS WITH GAMING VENUE MANAGERS	19
3.5.1 Sampling.....	19
3.5.2 Interview Procedures	21
3.5.3 Data Analysis.....	22
3.6 STAGE FOUR: INTERVIEWS WITH GAMING VENUE EMPLOYEES	22
3.6.1 Sampling.....	22
3.6.2 Interview Procedures	23
3.6.3 Survey Procedures	24
3.6.4 Data Analysis.....	24
3.7 STAGE FIVE: INTERVIEWS WITH PROBLEM GAMBLERS	25
3.7.1 Recruitment	25
3.7.2 Interview Procedures	26
3.8 SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED.....	26
3.9 METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS	27

3.10	CONCLUSION	28
CHAPTER FOUR – THE GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR OF QUEENSLAND		
	GAMING VENUE EMPLOYEES	29
4.1	INTRODUCTION	29
4.2	THE QUESTIONNAIRE	29
4.3	CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS.....	29
	4.3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.....	29
	4.3.2 Work Characteristics of Respondents	30
4.4	GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR OF RESPONDENTS	32
	4.4.1 Gambling Participation	32
	4.4.2 Gambling Frequency	33
	4.4.3 Gambling Session Length	36
	4.4.4 Gambling Expenditure	37
4.5	PROBLEM GAMBLING.....	38
4.6	RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PROBLEM GAMBLING AND RESPONDENTS’ CHARACTERISTICS AND GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR.....	40
	4.6.1 Gambling Problems and Demographic Characteristics.....	40
	4.6.2 Gambling Problems and Work Characteristics	41
	4.6.3 Gambling Problems and Participation in Gambling.....	43
	4.6.4 Gambling Problems and Frequency of Gambling.....	43
	4.6.5 Gambling Problems and Session Length	44
	4.6.6 Gambling Problems and Expenditure	45
4.7	SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS	47
4.9	CONCLUSION	50
CHAPTER FIVE – EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVES ON HOW WORKING IN A		
	GAMING VENUE INFLUENCES EMPLOYEE GAMBLING	
	BEHAVIOUR.....	53
5.1	INTRODUCTION	53
5.2	CLUB EMPLOYEES	53
	5.2.1 Work Background of Interviewees	53
	5.2.2 Close Interaction with Gamblers.....	53
	5.2.3 Frequent Exposure to Gambling	54
	5.2.4 Influence of Fellow Employees.....	56
	5.2.5 Influence of Gaming Venue Managers	57
	5.2.6 Influence of Workplace Stressors	58
	5.2.7 Influence of Shift Work	59
	5.2.8 Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions.....	60
	5.2.9 Influence of Responsible Gambling Training	62
	5.2.10 Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures	63
	5.2.11 Influence of Other Aspects of the Work Environment	64
	5.2.12 At Risk Status of Hospitality Staff	64
5.3	HOTEL EMPLOYEES	64
	5.3.1 Work Background of Interviewees	65
	5.3.2 Close Interaction with Gamblers.....	65
	5.3.3 Frequent Exposure to Gambling	66
	5.3.4 Influence of Fellow Employees.....	67
	5.3.5 Influence of Gaming Venue Managers	68
	5.3.6 Influence of Workplace Stressors	69
	5.3.7 Influence of Shift Work	70
	5.3.8 Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions.....	71

5.3.9	Influence of Responsible Gambling Training.....	71
5.3.10	Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures	72
5.3.11	Influence of Other Aspects of the Work Environment	73
5.3.12	At Risk Status of Hospitality Staff.....	73
5.4	CASINO EMPLOYEES	74
5.4.1	Work Background of Interviewees.....	74
5.4.2	Close interaction with Gamblers	74
5.4.3	Frequent Exposure to Gambling.....	76
5.4.4	Influence of Fellow Employees	78
5.4.5	Influence of Gambling Venue Managers.....	80
5.4.6	Influence of Workplace Stressors.....	81
5.4.7	Influence of Shift Work.....	82
5.4.8	Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions	84
5.4.9	Influence of Responsible Gambling Training.....	85
5.4.10	Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures	86
5.4.11	Influence of Other Aspects of the Work Environment	87
5.4.12	At Risk Status of Hospitality Staff.....	88
5.5	SUMMARY OF EMPLOYEE RESPONSES	88
5.5.1	Summary of Club, Hotel and Casino Employee Responses.....	88
5.5.2	Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Encourage Staff Gambling.....	90
5.5.3	Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Discourage Staff Gambling.....	93
5.5.4	Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Have No Influence on Staff Gambling.....	95
5.5.5	Comparisons Amongst Club, Hotel and Casino Employees’ Responses.....	96

**CHAPTER SIX – A PROBLEM GAMBLER PERSPECTIVE ON HOW
WORKING IN A GAMING VENUE INFLUENCES
EMPLOYEE GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR.....101**

6.1	INTRODUCTION	101
6.2	INTERVIEWS WITH PROBLEM GAMBLERS IN COUNSELLING	101
6.2.1	Client One.....	101
6.2.2	Client Two	104
6.3	INTERVIEWS WITH FOUR PROBLEM GAMBLERS NOT IN COUNSELLING.....	106
6.3.1	Problem Gambler One	107
6.3.2	Problem Gambler Two	108
6.3.3	Problem Gambler Three	111
6.3.4	Problem Gambler Four	114
6.4	EXPERIENCES OF PROBLEM GAMBLER CLIENTS AND PROFESSIONAL OPINIONS OF THEIR COUNSELLORS	116
6.4.1	Client Characteristics.....	116
6.4.2	Close interaction with Gamblers	116
6.4.3	Frequent Exposure to Gambling.....	118
6.4.4	Influence of Fellow Employees	120
6.4.5	Influence of Gambling Venue Managers.....	121
6.4.6	Influence of Workplace Stressors.....	122
6.4.7	Influence of Shiftwork.....	124
6.4.8	Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions	125
6.4.9	Influence of Responsible Gambling Training.....	126
6.4.10	Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures	128
6.4.11	Reluctance to Expose Own Gambling Problems and Seek Help	129

	6.4.12	Influence of Other Aspects of the Work Environment	130
6.5		SUMMARY OF PROBLEM GAMBLER-RELATED RESPONSES	131
	6.5.1	Summary of Responses from Employees in Counselling, Problem Gamblers Interviewed and Counsellors.....	131
	6.5.2	Workplace Factors Perceived to Encourage Staff Gambling from a Problem Gambler Perspective	134
	6.5.3	Workplace Factors Perceived to Discourage Staff Gambling from a Problem Gambler Perspective	136
	6.5.4	Workplace Factors Perceived to Not Influence Staff Gambling from a Problem Gambler Perspective	137
	6.5.5	Comparisons Amongst Responses from Problem Gamblers and Counsellors	139

CHAPTER SEVEN – MANAGER PERSPECTIVES ON HOW WORKING IN A GAMING VENUE INFLUENCES EMPLOYEE GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR..... 143

7.1		INTRODUCTION	143
7.2		CLUB MANAGERS	143
	7.2.1	Gaming Facilities and Their Contribution to Business	143
	7.2.2	Number of Staff, Number of Gaming Staff and Staff Turnover	143
	7.2.3	Extent of Staff Gambling	144
	7.2.4	Management Approaches to Gambling Problems Amongst Staff	145
	7.2.5	Close Interaction with Gamblers.....	145
	7.2.6	Frequent Exposure to Gambling.....	146
	7.2.7	Influence of Fellow Employees	148
	7.2.8	Influence of Gambling Venue Managers	150
	7.2.9	Influence of Workplace Stressors	152
	7.2.10	Influence of Shift work.....	153
	7.2.11	Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions	154
	7.2.12	Influence of Responsible Gambling Training.....	156
	7.2.13	Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures	157
	7.2.14	Influence of Other Aspects of the Work Environment	158
	7.2.15	At Risk Status of Hospitality Staff	159
7.3		HOTEL MANAGERS.....	159
	7.3.1	Gaming Facilities and Their contribution to Business	159
	7.3.2	Number of Staff, Number of Gaming Staff and Staff Turnover	159
	7.3.3	Extent of Staff Gambling	160
	7.3.4	Management Approaches to Gambling Problems Amongst Staff	161
	7.3.5	Close Interaction with Gamblers.....	161
	7.3.6	Frequent Exposure to Gambling	162
	7.3.7	Influence of Fellow Employees.....	163
	7.3.8	Influence of Gambling Venue Managers	165
	7.3.9	Influence of Workplace Stressors	166
	7.3.10	Influence of Shift work.....	167
	7.3.11	Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions	168
	7.3.12	Influence of Responsible Gambling Training.....	169
	7.3.13	Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures	170
	7.3.14	Influence of Other Aspects of the Work Environment	171
	7.3.15	At Risk Status of Hospitality Staff	172
7.4		CASINO MANAGERS	172
	7.4.1	Gaming Facilities and Gaming Contribution to Business	172
	7.4.2	Number of Staff, Gaming Staff and Turnover of Staff	173
	7.4.3	Extent of Staff Gambling	173
	7.4.4	Management Approaches to Gambling Problems Amongst Staff	173

7.4.5	Close Interaction with Gamblers	173
7.4.6	Frequent Exposure to Gambling.....	174
7.4.7	Influence of Fellow Employees	174
7.4.8	Influence of Gambling Venue Managers.....	174
7.4.9	Influence of Workplace Stressors.....	175
7.4.10	Influence of Shift work	175
7.4.11	Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions.....	175
7.4.12	Influence of Responsible Gambling Training	176
7.4.13	Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures	176
7.4.14	Influence of Other Aspects of the Work Environment	176
7.4.15	At Risk Status of Hospitality Staff.....	176
7.5	SUMMARY OF MANAGERS' RESPONSES.....	177
7.5.1	Summary of Club, Hotel and Casino Manager Responses.....	177
7.5.2	Workplace Factors Perceived by Managers to Encourage Staff Gambling.....	179
7.5.3	Workplace Factors Perceived by Managers to Discourage Staff Gambling.....	181
7.5.4	Workplace Factors Perceived by Managers to Have No Influence on Staff Gambling.....	182
7.5.5	Comparisons Amongst Club, Hotel and Casino Managers' Responses.....	185

CHAPTER EIGHT – GAMING VENUE STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING AMONGST EMPLOYEES189

8.1	INTRODUCTION	189
8.2	CLUB EMPLOYEES	189
8.3	HOTEL EMPLOYEES.....	190
8.4	CASINO EMPLOYEES	191
8.5	PROBLEM GAMBLERS.....	194
8.6	GAMBLING COUNSELLORS	195
8.7	CLUB MANAGERS	197
8.8	HOTEL MANAGERS	200
8.9	CASINO MANAGERS	202
8.10	SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING STRATEGIES FOR STAFF	203
8.10.1	Summary of Responses.....	203
8.10.2	Venue Strategies Perceived by Respondents to Encourage Responsible Gambling and Discourage Problem Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff.....	204
8.10.3	Comparisons Amongst Responses	206

CHAPTER NINE – SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS209

9.1	INTRODUCTION	209
9.2	SUMMARY OF FINDINGS TO ADDRESS EACH RESEARCH OBJECTIVE	209
9.2.1	The Gambling Behaviour of Queensland Gaming Venue Employees.....	209
9.2.2	Aspects of the Work Environment Perceived as Influencing Gambling by Gaming Venue Employees.....	211
9.2.3	Venue Strategies for Encouraging Responsible Gambling by Gaming Venue Employees.....	222

9.3	A CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF INFLUENCES ON GAMBLING BEHAVIOURS AND OUTCOMES FOR GAMING VENUE STAFF	225
9.4	RISK, MODERATING AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND INTERVENTIONS RELATING TO THE PROPENSITY TO GAMBLE OF GAMING VENUE EMPLOYEES.....	226
9.4.1	Risk Factors Relating to the Propensity to Gamble	227
9.4.2	Protective Factors Relating to the Propensity to Gamble.....	231
9.4.3	Interventions Relating to the Propensity to Gamble	233
9.5	RISK, MODERATING AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND INTERVENTIONS RELATING TO GAMBLING PRODUCTS AND SERVICES	234
9.5.1	Risk Factors Relating to Gambling Products and Services.....	234
9.5.2	Protective Factors Relating to Gambling Products and Services	236
9.5.3	Interventions Relating to Gambling Products and Services	236
9.6	RISK, MODERATING AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND INTERVENTIONS RELATING TO THE OUTCOMES AND CONSEQUENCES OF GAMBLING	237
9.6.1	Risk Factors Relating to Outcomes and Consequences of Gambling .	237
9.6.2	Protective Factors Relating to Outcomes and Consequences of Gambling	239
9.6.3	Interventions Relating to Outcomes and Consequences of Gambling	240
9.7	CONCLUSION	242
	REFERENCES.....	243
	APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR GAMBLING COUNSELLORS	248
	APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR VENUE MANAGERS.....	250
	APPENDIX C: EMPLOYEE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	252
	APPENDIX D: EMPLOYEE GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR QUESTIONNAIRE...	254
	APPENDIX E: AGENCY NOTICE TO RECRUIT PROBLEM GAMBLERS.....	257
	APPENDIX F: PROBLEM GAMBLING CLIENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE ..	258

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure A: A Conceptual Model of Influences on Gambling Behaviours and Outcomes for Gaming Venue Staff	xx
Figure 2.1: Thomas and Jackson's Model of Influences on Gambling Behaviours and Outcomes (2004)	7
Figure 9.1: A Conceptual Model of Influences on Gambling Behaviours and Outcomes for Gaming Venue Staff	226

LIST OF TABLES

Table A: Reasons Why Working in a Gaming Venue Can Encourage Staff Gambling....	xv
Table B: Reasons Why Working in a Gaming Venue Can Discourage Staff Gambling..	xvi
Table C: Reasons Why Working in a Gaming Venue Can Have No Influence on Staff Gambling	xviii
Table D: Venue Strategies Perceived to Encourage Responsible Gambling and Discourage Problem Gambling Amongst Staff	xix
Table E: Risk Factors, Protective Factors and Interventions for Gaming Venue Staff..	xxvi
Table 2.1: Employment in Australian Gambling Industries	3
Table 3.1: Key Characteristics of Participating Venues	21
Table 3.2: Key Characteristics of Employees Interviewed.....	23
Table 3.3: Summary of Interviews Conducted	27
Table 4.1: Age of Respondents.....	30
Table 4.2: Sex of Respondents.....	30
Table 4.3: Current Main Position of Respondents.....	30
Table 4.4: Current Main Job Level of Respondents	31
Table 4.5: Current Gaming and Non-Gaming Related Positions of Respondents	31
Table 4.6: Types of Gaming Venue Where Respondents are Currently Employed	31
Table 4.7: Types of Gaming Venue Where Respondents Have Ever Worked	31
Table 4.8: Length of Time Respondents Have Worked in Gaming Venues.....	32
Table 4.9: Gambling Participation on Different Types of Gambling in the Last 12 Months	33
Table 4.10: Frequency of Playing Gaming Machines.....	33
Table 4.11: Frequency of TAB Betting	34
Table 4.12: Frequency of Keno Betting.....	34
Table 4.13: Frequency of Playing Lottery-Type Games.....	34
Table 4.14: Frequency of Playing Casino Table Games.....	34
Table 4.15: Frequency of Racetrack Betting	35

Table 4.16: Frequency of Sportsbetting	35
Table 4.17: Frequency of Playing Bingo.....	35
Table 4.18: Frequency of Internet Gambling	35
Table 4.19: Frequency of Private Gambling.....	36
Table 4.20: No. of Respondents Who Are Regular (At Least Weekly) Gamblers on Different Types of Gambling.....	36
Table 4.21: No. of Minutes Normally Spent on Different Types of Gambling.....	37
Table 4.22: Mean Dollars Typically Spent on Different Types of Gambling Per Month	37
Table 4.23: Total Dollars Typically Spent on Different Types of Gambling Per Month.....	38
Table 4.24: Per Capita Gambling Expenditure by Respondents Compared to Queensland Adults	38
Table 4.25: ‘Yes’ Responses to CPGI Items	39
Table 4.26: Distribution of CPGI Scores.....	39
Table 4.27: Distribution of Gambler Sub-Types.....	40
Table 4.28: Distribution of Gambler Sub-Types Amongst Respondents Compared to Queensland Adults	40
Table 4.29: Gambler Sub-Types by Age	40
Table 4.30: Gambler Sub-Types by Age Category	41
Table 4.31: Gambler Sub-Types by Sex.....	41
Table 4.32: Gambler Sub-Types by Current Job Title	41
Table 4.33: Gambler Sub-Types by Current Main Job Level	42
Table 4.34: Gambler Sub-Types by Current Gambling and Non-Gambling Related Positions	42
Table 4.35: Gambler Sub-Types by Type of Gaming Venue Where Currently Employed...	42
Table 4.36: Gambler Sub-Types by Types of Gaming Venue Where Respondents Have Ever Worked	42
Table 4.37: Gambler Sub-Types by Years Working in Gaming Venues	43
Table 4.38: Gambler Sub-Types by Length of Time Working in Gaming Venues.....	43
Table 4.39: Gambler Sub-Types by Participation in Each Type of Gambling.....	43
Table 4.40: Gambler Sub-Types by Regular (At Least Weekly) Gambling	44
Table 4.41: Gambler Sub-Types by Minutes Playing Gaming Machines	44
Table 4.42: Gambler Sub-Types by Minutes on TAB Betting.....	45
Table 4.43: Gambler Sub-Types by Minutes on Keno Gambling	45
Table 4.44: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on Gaming Machines	45
Table 4.45: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on TAB.....	46

Table 4.46: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on Keno	46
Table 4.47: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on Lottery-Type Games.....	46
Table 4.48: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on Casino Table Games.....	46
Table 4.49: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on Racetrack Betting	47
Table 4.50: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on Sportsbetting.....	47
Table 4.51: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on Private Gambling.....	47
Table 5.1: Summary of Club Employee Opinions on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling	89
Table 5.2: Summary of Hotel Employee Opinions on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling	89
Table 5.3: Summary of Casino Employee Opinions on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling	90
Table 5.4: Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Encourage Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff.....	91
Table 5.5: Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Discourage Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff.....	94
Table 5.6: Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Not Influence Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff.....	95
Table 6.1: Summary of Opinions of Two Problem Gamblers in Counselling on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling.....	132
Table 6.2: Summary of Opinions of Four Problem Gamblers Not in Counselling on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling.....	132
Table 6.3: Summary of Client Experiences on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling	133
Table 6.4: Summary of Counsellor Opinions on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling	134
Table 6.5: Workplace Factors Perceived to Encourage Staff Gambling from a Problem Gambler Perspective.....	135
Table 6.6: Workplace Factors Perceived to Discourage Staff Gambling from a Problem Gambler Perspective.....	137
Table 6.7: Workplace Factors Perceived to Not Influence Staff Gambling from a Problem Gambler Perspective.....	138
Table 7.1: Summary of Club Managers Opinions on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling	178
Table 7.2: Summary of Hotel Managers Opinions on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling	178
Table 7.3: Summary of Casino Managers Opinions on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling	179
Table 7.4: Workplace Factors Perceived by Managers to Encourage Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff.....	180

Table 7.5: Workplace Factors Perceived by Managers to Discourage Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff	181
Table 7.6: Workplace Factors Perceived by Managers to Not Influence Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff.....	182
Table 8.1: Summary of Respondents' Opinions on Venue-Based Responsible Gambling Strategies for Staff	204
Table 8.2: Venue Strategies Perceived by Respondents to Encourage Responsible Gambling and Discourage Problem Gambling Amongst Staff	205
Table 9.1: Summary of Reasons Why Working in a Gaming Venue Can Encourage Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff.....	212
Table 9.2: Summary of Reasons Why Working in a Gaming Venue Can Discourage Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff.....	216
Table 9.3: Summary of Reasons Why Working in a Gaming Venue Can Have No Influence on Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff.....	219
Table 9.4: Venue Strategies Perceived by Respondents to Encourage Responsible Gambling and Discourage Problem Gambling Amongst Staff	223
Table 9.5: Risk Factors, Protective Factors and Interventions for Gaming Venue Staff...	241

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This study, funded by the Responsible Gambling Grants Program of the Queensland Government, focuses on gambling by employees of Queensland gaming venues. Of central concern is how aspects of their workplace might influence the gambling behaviour of these staff, in order to identify how gaming venues can provide a work environment that encourages responsible gambling and discourages problem gambling amongst their employees. It focuses specifically on employees of Queensland clubs, hotels and casinos and encompasses staff employed in gaming and non-gaming related positions, in front-of-house and back-of-house areas, and at operational, supervisory and management levels.

More specifically, the project addresses the following research objectives:

1. To investigate the gambling behaviour of Queensland gaming venue employees, particularly in terms of responsible gambling and problem gambling.
2. To examine how Queensland gaming venue employees perceive that aspects of their work environment influence their gambling behaviour in terms of responsible gambling and problem gambling.
3. To examine how Queensland gaming venue managers perceive that aspects of their venue's work environment influence their employees' gambling behaviour in terms of responsible gambling and problem gambling.
4. To identify how gaming venues can provide a work environment that encourages responsible gambling and discourages problem gambling by gaming venue employees.

Little prior research has been conducted into gambling by gaming venue staff. In fact, only four prior studies have focused on this, all conducted amongst casino employees in the United States. As such, this is the first known research project in Australia to examine the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees. It is also the first to examine how working in a gaming venue might influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees and to identify potential venue interventions. Given the paucity of research specific to this area, the study is informed by a general public health perspective of gambling that recognises that contextual factors can influence gambling behaviour and that interventions can often be developed to reduce risk factors and enhance protective factors.

METHODOLOGY

The research design was primarily qualitative, drawing on interviews with a range of stakeholders. To gain an employee perspective, in-depth interviews were conducted with 34 club, 14 hotel and 38 casino staff. To gain a management perspective, interviews were held with 44 club, 27 hotel, and two casino managers (representing three casinos). A problem gambler perspective was obtained by interviews with six people who developed gambling problems while working in gaming venues, along with interviews with 32 gambling counsellors, 23 of whom had treated gaming venue staff with gambling problems. The interview schedules were based on themes that emerged during some preliminary interviews, a focus group and from a review of relevant literature. All interviews were conducted on-site in the gaming venues, except for those with gambling counsellors and with one problem gambler. These were conducted by telephone. Interviews generally lasted between 20-60 minutes and were tape-recorded with permission. Consultations were also held with the Queensland Responsible Gambling Advisory Committee, Clubs Queensland, the Queensland

Hotels Association, Executive Officers of the Queensland Gambling Help network, the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers' Union (Gold Coast Branch), and Queensland Legal Aid (Brisbane Office). To supplement the qualitative data, most employees we interviewed completed a short survey questionnaire to gather quantitative data on their gambling behaviour.

RESULTS FOR OBJECTIVE ONE

Responses to the quantitative survey were analysed to profile the gambling behaviour of respondents. Because of the small, non-representative sample and the refusal of two casinos to allow us to survey their staff, the results provide an overview of the gambling behaviour of only the 56 respondents, not of all gaming venue employees in the state. However, given that our sampling process involved hotel and club employees from five geographic regions in Queensland, and from clubs and hotels of different types, sizes and ownership structures, as well as staff from one casino, the results *may* be somewhat indicative of the larger population of Queensland gaming venue employees. (A larger scale survey of Queensland gaming venue employees is currently underway to provide more representative results.)

The results depict a group who actively engage in gambling. During the previous 12 months, about three-quarters had played gaming machines, about one-half had participated in TAB betting, keno and lottery-type games, and about one-quarter had participated in casino table games, racetrack betting, sportsbetting and private gambling. Nearly one-quarter were regular (at least weekly) gaming machine players, about one-sixth were regular TAB and lottery-type game players, and around one-tenth were regular sportsbetting and keno gamblers. When compared to the *National Gambling Survey* (Productivity Commission, 1999), higher proportions of the respondents were regular gamblers on nearly all forms of gambling, and these proportions were markedly higher for gaming machines, TAB betting and keno.

This profile of active gambling involvement was also supported by the respondents' reported gambling expenditures. During the previous 12 months, they spent ten times more than the average Queensland adult on keno, over five times more on TAB betting, over three times more on lottery-type games, double the average on gaming machines, and about 1.7 times more on casino table games (Office of Economic and Statistical Research, 2005). The computed average gambling expenditure for the previous 12 months (\$3,097) was over 3.2 times more than the average yearly per capita gambling expenditure by Queensland adults (\$968) in 2003-04 (Office of Economic and Statistical Research, 2005).

The respondents also displayed relatively high rates of problem, moderate risk and low risk gambling, as measured by the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index* (Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, 2001). Compared to results from the *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2003-04* (Queensland Government, 2005a), the prevalence of problem gambling amongst our respondents (8.9 per cent) was 16 times higher than the Queensland adult population, moderate risk gambling (19.6 per cent) was ten times higher, and low risk gambling (16.1 per cent) was triple the state average. Half the respondents were categorised as no-risk gamblers, and 5.4 per cent as non-gamblers. In general, as the level of risk amongst respondents rose from no-risk to problem gambler, so did reported expenditures and session lengths on gaming machines, TAB betting, keno, and private gambling. The problem gambler group also had the lowest average age (27 years) and had been working in gaming venues for a shorter average time (4.5 years) than the other gambler sub-types. Notably, the spread of gambler sub-types and the distributions for gambling frequency, expenditure and session length were more polarised amongst the employee respondents than amongst the general Queensland population. It seems that staff can be very much 'turned on' or 'turned off' gambling by virtue of working in a gaming venue, a conclusion also supported by the

qualitative data. This suggests that contextual factors associated with employment in gaming venues influence the gambling behaviour of staff.

RESULTS FOR OBJECTIVES TWO AND THREE

The interview data from 86 venue employees, 73 venue managers, six problem gamblers and 32 gambling counsellors were analysed to examine how Queensland gaming venue employees and managers perceive that aspects of their venue's work environment influence employee gambling behaviour.

On balance, gaming venue staff were considered more at-risk for gambling problems than general population by 57% of hotel employees; 56% of club employees; 24% of casino employees; 100% of problem gamblers; 79% of counsellors; 39% of club managers; 52% of hotel managers; and no casino managers.

Nevertheless, all groups of interviewees perceived numerous aspects of working in a gaming venue as potentially encouraging staff to gamble, except for the casino managers who did not perceive any aspect as being influential, even though the casino employees themselves identified over 40 contributing factors. In contrast, responses of the managers and employees of clubs and hotels were more closely aligned. Overall, as shown in Table A, 81 reasons why working in a gaming venue may have an encouraging influence on staff gambling were identified, and these spanned eight categories of workplace factors.

When comparisons are drawn amongst the groups interviewed, it is apparent that:

- the largest proportion of the employees perceive that the factors that mainly encourage staff gambling are shift work, fellow employees and frequent exposure to gambling, while close interaction with gamblers can either encourage or discourage staff gambling;
- the largest proportion of the problem gamblers and gambling counsellors perceive that the factors that mainly encourage staff gambling are shift work, workplace stressors, frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions, frequent exposure to gambling, close interaction with gamblers and fellow employees, while venue managers and their policies and practices can either encourage or discourage staff gambling;
- the largest proportion of the managers perceive that close interaction with gamblers mainly encourages staff gambling, while shift work can either encourage or discourage staff gambling.

However, it should be noted that sizeable minorities of the interviewees had different views, and these should not be discounted in identifying potential risk and protective factors for gaming venue staff.

Table B summarises the reasons given by the interviewees for why working in a gaming venue potentially discourages gambling by gaming venue staff. All groups perceived some aspects of working in a gaming venue as potentially discouraging staff from gambling, although the casino managers were more limited in their endorsement than the other groups. In total, 37 reasons were suggested which spanned nine categories of workplace factors.

Table A: Reasons Why Working in a Gaming Venue Can Encourage Staff Gambling

<p>Close Interaction with Gamblers Staff hear about wins more than losses Seeing people win creates hope of winning Staff get caught up in the excitement of patrons' wins Staff constantly hear about gambling and given 'hot tips' Patrons can encourage staff to gamble Staff who gamble build relationships with other gamblers Staff want a piece of the action</p>	<p>Influence of Workplace Stressors Staff need to unwind after work Staff can experience stress about problem gamblers Staff can experience stress about difficult customers Staff can experience stress from heavy workloads Job dissatisfaction/boredom Staff need to escape from work stresses Staff want to be left alone Staff have to leave workplace soon after end of a shift</p>
<p>Frequent Exposure to Gambling Increases staff familiarity with gambling Increases staff interest in gambling Normalises gambling for staff Staff may have ready access to gambling Staff are surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere Infrequent staff can gain distorted views about winning New or younger staff can be vulnerable Staff can lose sight of the value and ownership of money Increases perceived insider knowledge about gambling Staff become attracted to the gambling environment Normalises heavy gambling for staff Triggers the temptation to gamble</p>	<p>Influence of Shift Work Staff can suffer social isolation Lack of alternative social opportunities for staff Lack of alternative recreational opportunities for staff Only gambling venues are open late at night Staff need to find solitary leisure activities Staff tend to socialise with other hospitality workers Staff gamble to fill in time between shifts Staff social life can revolve around the workplace Staff gamble while waiting for others to finish work Shift work makes it easier to hide heavy gambling Shift work leads to stress</p>
<p>Influence of Fellow Employees Staff gamble together in their workplace Staff gamble together after work Staff gamble together on days off Staff directly encourage other staff to gamble Staff introduce other staff to gambling Staff share gambling tips Staff gamble on hospitality industry nights Staff travel away together to gamble Staff social club activities can encourage gambling Staff gamble before work Staff gamble to gain acceptance into the workgroup General acceptance of gambling amongst staff Gambling problems not taken seriously by staff</p>	<p>Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions Promotions can act as a trigger Reinforces gambling as a way to win money Raises awareness of jackpot levels Increases knowledge about other promotions Staff get caught up in the excitement of promotions Worsens existing gambling problems</p>
<p>Influence of Venue Managers, Policies and Practices Managers are sometimes gamblers and set an example Managers gamble with staff Managers allow staff to gamble in the workplace Gambling can be a job requirement Workplace has a gambling culture Managers sometimes talk about big wins Managers might talk about gambling in a positive way Managers do not take gambling problems seriously</p>	<p>Other Aspects of the Workplace Some staff drink large quantities of alcohol Reluctance to expose problems due to fear of job loss Some staff have the opportunity to bet on credit Irregular wages of casual staff Low wages of some staff Young age group of staff Self-exclusion difficult due to embarrassment/ job loss Staff are overlooked in problem gambling Staff cannot gamble at workplace so problem undetected Access to cash and pay in their workplace Lack of alternative employment opportunities Staff may not have time to access help services The industry attracts gamblers and problem gamblers The industry attract outgoing people Staff receive gratuities drawing attention to wins Staff boredom</p>

When comparisons are drawn amongst the groups interviewed, it is apparent that:

- the largest proportion of the employees perceive that the factors that mainly discourage staff gambling are responsible gambling training, venue managers and their policies and practices, and responsible gambling measures in the venue;
- the largest proportion of the problem gamblers and gambling counsellors perceive that none of the factors mainly discourage staff gambling;
- the largest proportion of the managers perceive that the factors that mainly discourage staff gambling are venue managers and their policies and practices, responsible gambling training, other responsible gambling measures, frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions, and frequent exposure to gambling.

However, again it should be noted that sizeable minorities of the interviewees had different views, and these should not be discounted in identifying potential risk and protective factors for gaming venue staff.

Table B: Reasons Why Working in a Gaming Venue Can Discourage Staff Gambling

Close Interaction with Gamblers Staff see problem or heavy gamblers and don't want to be like them Staff see negative responses to gambling losses Staff see the effects of problem gambling Staff see or hear about the losses Staff see the amount of money patrons spend on gambling Staff see the amount of time patrons spend gambling Staff see gambling as boring Can trigger problem recognition	Influence of Workplace Stressors Staff avoid gambling for stress relief Staff can be deterred by stress about problem gamblers Staff can be deterred by stress about difficult customers Influence of Shift Work Staff might go out less No gambling venues open after some shifts
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Staff can become sick of being around gambling and environment Staff see venue takings from gambling Staff have better knowledge of the odds of losing	Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions Staff are aware of the low chance of winning promotions Promotions turn staff off
Influence of Fellow Employees Staff provide support or advice to stop gambling Staff hear about staff losses on gambling Friends from work want to avoid gambling venues Staff can trigger help-seeking	Influence of Responsible Gambling Training Raises awareness for staff of problem gambling and its signs Raises awareness for staff of the effects of problem gambling Raises awareness for staff of the poor odds in gambling Raises awareness for staff of ways to seek help Destigmatises problem gambling Can trigger help-seeking
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies and Practices Managers can provide support or advice to stop gambling A policy of no staff gambling in the workplace A proactive culture of responsible gambling Training and education courses Strict management policies	Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures Measures raise awareness of gambling problems Signage raises awareness of where to get help Can trigger problem recognition Staff involvement in self-exclusion of patrons deters staff from gambling

Table C summarises the reasons given by the interviewees for why working in a gaming venue potentially has no influence on gambling by gaming venue staff. In total, 65 reasons, spanning nine categories of workplace factors, were endorsed. The casino managers and the problem gamblers were more limited in their endorsement of these reasons compared to the other groups.

When comparisons are drawn amongst the groups interviewed, it is apparent that:

- the largest proportion of the employees perceive that the factors that mainly have no influence on staff gambling are workplace stressors, and frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions;
- the largest proportion of the problem gamblers and gambling counsellors perceive that the factors that mainly have no influence on staff gambling are responsible gambling training, other responsible gambling measures in the venue, and venue managers and their policies and practices;
- the largest proportion of the managers perceive that the factors that have no influence on staff gambling are fellow employees, workplace stressors, and shift work.

Table C: Reasons Why Working in a Gaming Venue Can Have No Influence on Staff Gambling

Close interaction with Gamblers Staff not allowed to discuss wins and losses with patrons Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway Some staff have little interaction with gamblers	Influence of Shift Work Staff have other hospitality friends to socialise with Staff find other activities in their time off Staff just want to go home after a shift Some staff have permanent shifts or do not do shift work Management strategies to minimise effects of shift work Management strategies to assist staff home Older staff have family commitments
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway Staff become immune to any influence Staff inductions point out the realities of gambling Staff are rotated between jobs or departments	Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions Promotions are not attractive to the age group Staff are often not allowed to enter workplace promotions Staff who are not gamblers would not be influenced Venue does very little gambling marketing and promotions Heavy staff gamblers not attracted to promotions Staff are desensitised to marketing and promotions Management policies separate staff from these activities Small prizes are not attractive Venue has no linked jackpots
Influence of Fellow Employees Staff prefer not to socialise together Staff socialise by going out to drink instead Staff do not socialise due to family responsibilities Older staff are not interested in socialising Staff work with different people all the time Heavy gamblers prefer to gamble on their own No peer pressure to gamble or this pressure is resisted Being the only employee gambling in the workplace Staff may hide their gambling from fellow employees Staff have shared sports interests instead Some staff finish work alone Staff lose interest in socialising with other staff	Influence of Responsible Gambling Training Training is not readily available in all areas Training may not be done due to expense Training may not be done because it is voluntary May not encourage staff to reflect on their own gambling Training was not engaging People may be in denial about their own gambling Training can provide a false sense of security Staff sceptical about venue's commitment to RG Not all staff are trained Not all venues welcome training by counsellors Trainers not given enough time Training may not be done due to other difficulties
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies and Practices Staff do not mix with management Management restrict staff gambling only in workplace Mgt have no interest/knowledge of staff in their own time Management do not try to influence staff	Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures Staff don't look at signage/are sceptical about them Signs become too familiar Signs are aimed at patrons not staff Signage is too discreet Signage is misleading People may be in denial about their own gambling Signage can trigger gambling Staff are sceptical about responsible gambling measures Staff may not know about self-exclusion
Influence of Workplace Stressors Some staff are trained to better cope with stress The work is not stressful Staff de-stress in other ways Stress would not influence non-gamblers to gamble Supportive work environment	

RESULTS FOR OBJECTIVE FOUR

The interview data were also analysed to identify how gaming venues might provide a work environment that encourages responsible gambling and discourages problem gambling by gaming venue employees. Table D summarises the 34 venue strategies identified by the interviewees, grouped into seven major categories.

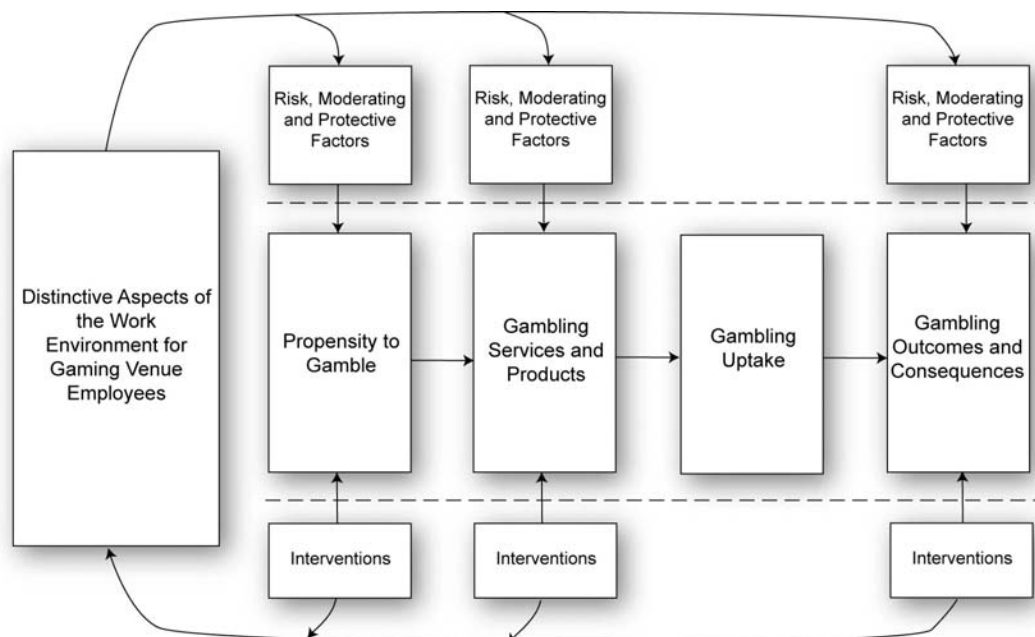
Table D: Venue Strategies Perceived to Encourage Responsible Gambling and Discourage Problem Gambling Amongst Staff

No Gambling in Workplace Policy to apply to all staff Lessens easy access Reduces temptation Protects staff and venue Prevents spending wages at venue	Promote a Stronger Culture of Responsible Gambling Change in workplace culture Managers to set good example More proactive management Generate responsible gambling culture amongst staff Widespread implementation of the QLD code of practice Involvement in Responsible Gambling Awareness Week
More Responsible Gambling Staff Training All staff should be trained Refresher courses needed Emphasise odds in gambling Emphasise effects of problem gambling Information about staff gambling Staff member dedicated to responsible gambling	Limit Access to Cash in Workplace Remove ATMs from close to gaming machines No advances on pay No staff wages in cash Minimise temptation of cash
Assist Staff with Gambling Problems Open communication Provide non-gambling related jobs Active management support Information/referrals for counselling Promote in-house counselling Remove fear of job loss Liaison with local services Help with exclusion Industry support for staff with gambling problems	Promote Staff Wellbeing Training in stress and conflict management Provide alternative social activities
	Other Measures Staff to witness gaming machine clearances Shield staff from sights and sounds

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND INTERVENTIONS FOR GAMING VENUE STAFF

The study's results were synthesised into a theoretical framework of influences on gambling behaviours and outcomes for gaming venue staff. Drawing on a model by Thomas and Jackson (2004), propensity to gambling and gambling products and services are depicted as influencing gambling uptake by gaming venue staff, which in turn influences the outcomes and consequences of their gambling. Also consistent with the Thomas and Jackson model (2004), risk and protective factors and interventions relating to propensity to gamble, gambling products and services, and gambling outcomes and consequences for gaming venue staff have been identified. Figure A shows our adapted model.

Figure A: A Conceptual Model of Influences on Gambling Behaviours and Outcomes for Gaming Venue Staff



Source: adapted from Thomas & Jackson (2004:44)

Risk Factors Relating to the Propensity to Gamble

Ten risk factors relating to the propensity of gaming venue employees to gamble were identified.

- **Erroneous beliefs about winning at gambling.** Close interaction with gamblers can lead to distorted views, where staff hear about wins more than losses and witness the accompanying excitement. This fuels the hope of winning and a view of gambling as exciting and a way to make money, a view reinforced by venue marketing and the generally positive ‘spin’ put on gambling. Gratuities received when patrons win further draw attention to gambling wins.
- **Increased interest, familiarity and knowledge about gambling.** Staff interest in gambling may be heightened if they need to be familiar with gambling to perform their job. Some constantly hear about gambling as patrons share ‘hot tips’, lucky numbers and playing strategies, and there may be advertent or inadvertent encouragement to gamble from patrons, other employees and managers. Staff may feel well equipped to gamble, having the foundation knowledge of how to place bets, play games, participate in gambling promotions, and the like.
- **Erroneous beliefs about their own skill at gambling.** Increased staff familiarity with and knowledge about gambling may lead some to think they have insider knowledge which enhances their chances of winning. While this may be true for games involving skill, it is not for games of pure chance. Nevertheless, some staff reported that they watch machines in their venue, or receive advice on which ones to play from staff in other venues, in the false belief that certain machines are ‘due’ to pay out and therefore the ‘best’ to play.

- **Gambling and heavy gambling are normalised.** Frequent exposure to gambling and a workplace culture of gambling seem to normalise gambling and heavy gambling. Extended gambling sessions and large bets may be considered typical and accepted styles of play. Seeing other people gamble heavily may lead some employees to view their own gambling as minimal, even if it is not. Staff can also lose sight of the value and ownership of money when gambling, being accustomed to seeing or handling large amounts of cash at work.
- **Socio-demographic characteristics of staff in gaming venues.** The relatively young age of most gaming venue staff is a risk factor, as they are less likely to have family and financial obligations to otherwise limit their gambling. Some interviewees suggested the industry attracts outgoing people who are less risk-averse, and gamblers and problem gamblers. Another risk-associated characteristic is the low and irregular wages many operational staff earn due to the casual status of their employment. Gambling may seem an attractive means to supplement their income.
- **Novelty factor amongst new, infrequent or young staff.** The survey results suggest younger and newer staff are more vulnerable to gambling problems. Several interviewees also noted that these staff are more likely to gain distorted views about winning, to be caught up in the fun and excitement of gambling, and to be less aware of associated risks, especially if they have not yet been trained in responsible gambling or witnessed machine clearances, coin counts and change booth operations, where the volume of gambling losses becomes apparent.
- **High alcohol consumption.** Alcohol consumption appears high and was a constant observation when we asked how staff typically deal with stress or unwind after work. The lowering of inhibitions accompanying alcohol consumption can prompt the start of a gambling session and lead to riskier styles of play. It also brings the person into a gambling environment if drinks after work, or on days off, take place in a hotel, club or casino.
- **Workplace stress can create the urge to gamble.** Gaming venue staff face numerous workplace stressors, including emotional labour when faced with difficult or intoxicated customers, ethical dilemmas about patrons with gambling problems, heavy, unpredictable workloads, shift work, boredom, job dissatisfaction, and the need to be constantly ‘upbeat’ and communicative. Staff may need to relax after work, to escape from workplace worries, and to have ‘time out’ from others. For some, gambling – particularly ‘zoning out’ on gaming machines – becomes appealing.
- **Limits on social life.** A legacy of shift work is that some staff can suffer social isolation as friends and family are generally working when they have time off. With limited recreational opportunities during the day and mid-week, gambling can become an attractive pastime for staff wanting solo entertainment. Split shifts exacerbate this where the work break is insufficient to go home. For staff who work late shifts, gaming venues are the only places open after work. Some staff tend to socialise with other hospitality workers who may also be active gamblers. Some return to their workplace during time off, and gamble, if allowed, in what is a familiar, comforting environment, while some frequent other venues where they know the staff, and/or gamble in their workplace while waiting for work colleagues to finish their shift.
- **Peer pressure to gamble.** Given the close social bonds that can develop amongst gaming venue staff due to other limitations on their social life, employees sometimes gamble due to peer pressure. Gambling amongst staff occurs in the workplace via tipping competitions, punters’ clubs and syndicates, and with work colleagues before and after work, on days off, during staff social club activities, during trips away, and on hospitality nights. Staff can introduce other staff to gambling, and participation can enhance

acceptance into the work group. A desire to gain favour or build bonds with management, where managers are keen gamblers themselves, may encourage some employees to gamble.

Protective Factors Relating to the Propensity to Gamble

Five protective factors relating to the propensity of gaming venue employees to gamble were identified.

- **Exposure to problem and heavy gamblers is a deterrent.** Many interviewees had an aversion to heavy gamblers and did not want to be like them. Some were turned off by the distress, rudeness, anger and mood volatility that accompanied gambling losses. Some had witnessed the effects of gambling problems amongst patrons, such as relationship breakdowns, child neglect, personal neglect and poverty.
- **Gambling becomes unexciting or even stressful.** For some staff, any glamour, excitement and appeal of gambling had long been dispelled by virtue of their work experiences. These staff referred to gambling as boring, they were sick of being around gambling, found the accompanying lights and sounds annoying, were turned off by gambling promotions, and were deterred by the darkness and smokiness of the gambling environment. During their time off, the last environment they wanted to be in was a gaming room.
- **Increased awareness of gambling losses.** Staff sometimes hear about losses from patrons, see how much people spend, and see the venue's takings during machine clearances, when change booth tills are cleared, in count rooms and during banking. Staff can therefore have better knowledge of the poor odds of gambling than the general public, knowledge that is often reinforced during responsible gambling training.
- **Heightened knowledge of responsible gambling.** Training and venue-based responsible gambling measures can raise staff awareness of problem gambling and its signs, typical consequences of problem gambling, the poor odds in gambling, and ways to seek help for gambling problems. Involvement in self-exclusion can also deter staff from gambling, as can a proactive culture of responsible gambling in the venue.
- **Peer pressure and support to not gamble.** In some workplaces, it seems that a prevailing attitude of gambling as 'a mug's game' or that the staff member 'should know better' deterred staff from gambling.

Interventions Relating to the Propensity to Gamble

Three types of interventions targeting the propensity to gamble by gaming venue staff were identified.

- **Improved responsible gambling staff training.** Numerous improvements were suggested to heighten the effectiveness of training as an intervention. These were to train all staff, to conduct regular refresher courses, to better emphasise the odds in gambling, the negative effects of problem gambling, and risks for staff in their own gambling, for all staff to witness machine clearances, and to have a dedicated staff member to ensure training was regular and of high quality. More training, especially for newer and younger employees, might dispel erroneous beliefs and decrease the normalisation of gambling and heavy gambling.
- **Promote a stronger culture of responsible gambling.** A stronger culture of responsible gambling in the workplace could be promoted through proactive managers who lead by example, more widespread implementation of the *Queensland Responsible Gambling Code of Practice* and involvement in initiatives such as Responsible Gambling Awareness

Week. This cultural change could promote healthier staff attitudes to gambling and lead to behavioural change.

- **Promote staff wellbeing.** The propensity of some staff to gamble and to develop gambling problems may be reduced by promoting staff wellbeing, by training staff in stress management and conflict resolution, and by providing and promoting alternative leisure activities. These may help staff deal with workplace and other stressors in alternative ways other than gambling and drinking, and provide alternative social and recreational opportunities.

Risk Factors Relating to Gambling Products and Services

Two major risk factors for gaming venue staff associated with gambling products and services were identified.

- **Increased access to gambling.** While no casinos allow staff to gamble in the workplace, about one-half of the clubs and hotels in the study allowed staff, other than those with gaming licences, to do so outside working hours. Staff allowed to gamble in their workplace have very high accessibility to gambling due to: the proximity and convenience of gambling in their workplace; their increased ease of use of gambling products given their knowledge and familiarity; its social accessibility in a familiar, inclusive environment; the opportunity to gamble in the workplace to unwind after work; and ready access to their bank accounts and wages through venue ATMs close to gambling opportunities. Even staff who are not allowed to gamble in their workplace have increased access to gambling compared to the general population due to: their increased ease of use of gambling products; its social accessibility where other venues are often familiar, non-threatening environments; because other venues may be the only places open when they finish a late shift; and a temptation for TAB and keno operators to gamble (illegally) on credit.
- **Exposure to gambling products and their marketing can trigger the urge to gamble.** Seeing other people win, hearing ‘hot tips’, seeing linked jackpot levels rise, witnessing the excitement of gambling promotions, frequent exposure to gambling marketing, being surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere, and just being in the gambling environment for long time periods can trigger gambling by gaming venue staff. Most problem gamblers interviewed noted that working in a gambling environment triggered their urge to gamble and so contributed to the maintenance of their gambling problems.

Protective Factors Relating to Gambling Products and Services

Two protective factors relating to gambling products and services were identified for gaming venue staff.

- **Limits on access to gambling.** Strict management policies of no gambling in the workplace provide some protection for staff, although even staff who are not allowed to gamble in their workplace have heightened access to gambling. Exceptions are where casino staff are interested only in table games and so have to travel considerable distances to access these, and where staff finish work when all venues in the area are closed, removing the opportunity to gamble after work.
- **Exposure to gambling products and their marketing can raise awareness of poor odds.** Some staff become sceptical of gambling marketing and are more aware of the low chances of winning gambling promotions and jackpots, making them less receptive to marketing and promotional appeals.

Interventions Relating to Gambling Products and Services

Three interventions for gaming venue staff relating to gambling products and services were identified.

- **No gambling in the workplace.** A strict management policy of no gambling in the workplace may reduce, although not eliminate, heightened access to gambling by venue staff, as it lessens easy and convenient access, reduces temptation, and prevents staff from spending their wages at the venue. Several respondents advocated that this policy should apply to all staff, not just those with gaming licences, in recognition that non-gaming staff may also be at risk.
- **Limit access to cash in the workplace.** Ready availability of cash in the workplace was identified as a potential risk factor. Suggested interventions comprised no advances on staff wages, not paying staff in cash, and minimising the temptation of stealing cash and credit betting through strict surveillance and control procedures.
- **Limit exposure to gambling in the workplace.** Given that heightened exposure to gambling products and their marketing appears a risk factor, some managers rotate their frontline staff so they get a break from this exposure. One employee suggested staff should be shielded by containing gambling activities in separate gaming rooms.

Risk Factors Relating to the Outcomes and Consequences of Gambling

Six risk factors relating to the outcomes and consequences of gambling for gaming venue staff were identified.

- **Unhelpful attitudes to gambling problems.** Gaming venue staff should have greater awareness of problem gambling than the general population, but an unintended consequence is that some staff may have a false sense of security against developing gambling problems, and problems may not be taken seriously due to an attitude that staff should know better. Close friendships can also deter management or other staff from intervening.
- **Reluctance to expose a gambling problem.** Staff may be too embarrassed to admit a gambling problem and go to additional lengths to conceal it where they fear job loss. While most managers reported they would assist employees with gambling problems and try to find them non-gaming related positions, any threats (real or perceived) to the financial resources of staff are additional deterrents to admitting a problem and seeking help, thus exacerbating or prolonging negative impacts.
- **Lack of detection of gambling problems.** It may be very difficult for other people to detect a gambling problem, where staff are not allowed to gamble in their workplace, and where shift work makes it easy to gamble when family and friends are at work. The ability to conceal a gambling problem can make it easier to maintain self-denial.
- **Lack of social and family support.** Given the social isolation experienced by some venue staff, key support mechanisms that can encourage a person to admit, address and resolve a gambling problem may be absent. This may be exacerbated where staff move to an area for seasonal work.
- **Limited financial resources.** The low and irregular wages often earned by gaming venue staff may exacerbate the negative consequences of gambling as there are insufficient financial resources to fall back on as gambling losses mount.
- **Difficulties in addressing gambling problems.** Strategies to assist recovery from gambling problems may be limited for venue staff. They find it difficult to avoid triggers to gamble in their workplace, may lack alternative employment opportunities, face

embarrassment self-excluding from their workplace or other gaming venues, particularly in small towns, and find it difficult to enter a program of regular counselling when working varying and unpredictable shifts.

Protective Factors Relating to the Outcomes and Consequences of Gambling

Two protective factors against the negative outcomes and consequences of gambling for venue staff were identified.

- **Responsible gambling initiatives can assist help-seeking.** Training, signage and involvement in self-exclusion might trigger problem recognition for some staff, raise awareness of how to get help, destigmatise problem gambling and encourage them to approach a counselling service.
- **Support from management and staff to address gambling problems.** Some interviewees noted that fellow employees and/or management were proactive in providing advice or support for staff to stop or cut down on their gambling, to seek help to control their gambling, or to suggest alternative leisure activities.

Interventions Relating to the Outcomes and Consequences of Gambling

Three interventions relating to outcomes and consequences of gambling for gaming venue staff were identified.

- **Supportive management attitudes.** Open communication with management was considered a precursor to appropriate interventions. Supportive attitudes and assurances that a gambling problem would be kept confidential and not threaten their job were important issues raised for staff.
- **Provide alternative jobs in the venue.** Management can intervene by removing a staff member with gambling problems from the gambling environment by finding them an alternative position, by organising self-exclusion from workplace gaming areas, and by helping with self-exclusion from other venues.
- **Provide assistance with help-seeking.** Managers can intervene by providing information about and referrals to counselling, and by helping to liaise with local counselling services on a staff member's behalf. In larger organisations, in-house counselling services may be appropriate if staff feel that confidentiality will be maintained.

Table E summarises the risk factors, protective factors and interventions relating to the propensity to gamble, gambling products and services, and gambling outcomes and consequences for gaming venue employees.

Table E: Risk Factors, Protective Factors and Interventions for Gaming Venue Staff

	Risk Factors	Protective Factors	Interventions
Propensity to gamble	Erroneous beliefs about winning at gambling Increased interest, familiarity and knowledge about gambling Erroneous beliefs about their own skill at gambling Gambling and heavy gambling are normalised Socio-demographic characteristics (young age, low socio-economic status) Novelty factor amongst new, infrequent or young staff High alcohol consumption Workplace stress can create the urge to gamble Limits on social life Peer pressure to gamble	Exposure to heavy gamblers is a deterrent Gambling becomes unexciting or even stressful Increased awareness of gambling losses Heightened knowledge of responsible gambling Peer pressure and support to not gamble	More responsible gambling training Promote a stronger culture of responsible gambling Promote staff wellbeing
Gambling products and services	Increased access to gambling Exposure to gambling products and marketing can trigger gambling	Limits on access to gambling Exposure to gambling products and marketing can raise awareness of poor odds	No gambling in the workplace Limit access to cash in the workplace Limit exposure to gambling in the workplace
Gambling outcomes and consequences	Unhelpful attitudes to gambling problems Reluctance to expose a problem Lack of detection of gambling problems Lack of social and family support Limited financial resources Difficulties in addressing gambling problems	Responsible gambling initiatives can assist help-seeking Support from management and staff to address gambling problems	Supportive management attitudes Provide alternative jobs in the venue Provide assistance with help-seeking.

CONCLUSION

While exploratory in nature, the research presented in this report is able to reach a number of conclusions. First, staff who work in gaming venues appear an at-risk group for developing gambling problems. Second, this risk for some staff stems from a variety of factors relating to working in a gambling environment that heighten their propensity to gamble, their accessibility to gambling and their receptivity to gambling marketing and promotions, and that compound the negative outcomes and consequences of their gambling. Third, numerous workplace factors also protect some staff by deterring them from gambling, by lowering their propensity to gamble, by building immunity to the appeal of gambling products and services, and by minimising harmful outcomes from gambling. Finally, there are strategies that venues can implement to better encourage responsible gambling and discourage the development and maintenance of gambling problems amongst their staff. While it is beyond the scope of this study to make specific recommendations, this research has drawn attention to the numerous risk factors faced by gaming venue staff in their employment and the range of interventions that can be implemented in gaming venues to enhance staff wellbeing in relation to gambling.

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 BACKGROUND

The *Queensland Responsible Gambling Strategy* (Queensland Treasury, 2002a) was released in February 2002 and encompassed a range of initiatives for achieving its ‘overarching objective...to minimise the harmful impacts of problem gambling’. Priority Action Area 1 of the strategy is to enhance responsible gambling policies and programs through research, so that responsible gambling decision-making can be informed by sound theory and empirical evidence. To enhance the quality and quantity of gambling-related research and contribute to the development of gambling policy in Queensland, the Research and Community Engagement Division of the Queensland Office of Gaming Regulation (QOGR) administers the Responsible Gambling Grants Program on behalf of the Queensland Government. This study was funded by this program in its 2004-05 round of grants.

The study focuses on gambling by employees of Queensland gaming venues and their distinctive work environment, where ongoing exposure to gambling, close interaction with gamblers, frequent exposure to gambling-related marketing and other workplace factors may elevate the risk factors associated with gambling problems for gaming venue staff. Equally, other workplace factors, such as responsible gambling training, may mitigate these influences and provide some protection for staff against gambling problems. However, unlike other ‘special populations’, such as women, youth and various ethnic groups, the gambling behaviour of gaming venue staff has attracted minimal research. Only four studies have examined this, all with US casino employees, where results indicated that problem gambling is relatively high amongst this group. As such, the current study provides new information, being the first Australian study to examine the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees, the first known research project worldwide to examine how working in a gaming venue might influence staff gambling, and the first worldwide to identify venue strategies that can encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling amongst gaming venue staff. Thus, the results of this study should assist the Queensland Government in evaluating existing policies and programs and in developing evidence-based policy to advance responsible gambling initiatives, particularly in relation to gaming venue employees. The study also provides the basis for a quantitative survey of workplace influences on responsible gambling and problem gambling amongst Queensland gaming venue employees, funded by the Responsible Gambling Grants Program in its 2005-06 round of grants.

1.2 RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This study examines the gambling behaviour of employees of Queensland gaming venues and how aspects of their workplace might influence that behaviour, in order to identify how gaming venues can provide a work environment that encourages responsible gambling and discourages problem gambling amongst their employees. It focuses specifically on employees of Queensland clubs, hotels and casinos and encompasses staff employed in gaming and non-gaming related positions, in front-of-house and back-of-house areas, and at operational, supervisory and management levels.

More specifically, the project addresses the following research objectives:

- To investigate the gambling behaviour of Queensland gaming venue employees, particularly in terms of responsible gambling and problem gambling.

- To examine how Queensland gaming venue employees perceive that aspects of their work environment influence their gambling behaviour in terms of responsible gambling and problem gambling.
- To examine how Queensland gaming venue employers/managers perceive that aspects of their venue's work environment influence their employees' gambling behaviour in terms of responsible gambling and problem gambling.
- To identify how gaming venues can provide a work environment that encourages responsible gambling and discourages problem gambling by gaming venue employees.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This report documents the conduct and findings of this research project. Chapter Two reviews literature relevant to the topic, focusing on the limited prior research on gaming venue employees, public health models of influences on gambling behaviour, interventions appropriate to different stages of a continuum of gambling problems, and literature to inform how working in a gaming venue may influence staff gambling. Chapter Three explains the research methodology, which used mainly qualitative interview techniques to collect data from a range of relevant stakeholders. Chapter Four reports the findings of a small survey of 56 gaming venue employees which profiles their gambling behaviour, while Chapter Five analyses interviews with 86 venue staff about how working in a gaming venue influences their own gambling. Chapter Six provides a problem gambler perspective on the issue, drawing on interviews with 32 gambling counsellors and six problem gamblers, while a management perspective from 73 club, hotel and casino managers is contained in Chapter Seven. Chapter Eight analyses stakeholder opinions on how gaming venues can provide a work environment that encourages responsible gambling and discourages problem gambling by gaming venue employees. Chapter Nine concludes the report by synthesising the results into risk and protective factors for gaming venue staff in relation to gambling problems, and by outlining venue interventions that could better encourage responsible gambling amongst gaming venue employees.

CHAPTER TWO – REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews some pertinent literature to provide an appropriate background to the topic under investigation and to locate the study in a broader theoretical context. It commences by presenting some statistics on employment in gambling industries at the national and state levels, and then reviews the scant research previously conducted into gambling amongst gaming venue employees. Building on a public health perspective of gambling that recognises that contextual factors can influence gambling behaviour, the chapter reviews some models and theories of gambling involvement and of interventions appropriate to different stages of a continuum of gambling problems. The chapter concludes by reviewing literature relevant to aspects of the work environment that may influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venues employees, although our observations are speculative, given the paucity of research in this area.

2.2 EMPLOYMENT IN GAMBLING INDUSTRIES

In Australia, employment generated by gambling industries is significant. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006a) estimates there were 76,848 persons employed in the provision of gambling services at the end of June 2005. These comprised 18,347 persons employed in casinos, along with 23,813 licensed gaming staff in clubs and 21,924 licensed gaming staff in hotels. However, when hotel and club staff without gaming licences are also included, total employment in businesses supplying gambling activities exceeds 156,000 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006a; 2006b), with the breakdown shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Employment in Australian Gambling Industries

	Males	Females	Persons
Pubs, taverns & bars with gambling facilities	30,443	34,462	64,905
Hospitality clubs with gambling facilities	27,172	33,028	60,200
Casinos	10,188	8,159	18,347
Sporting clubs & venues	Na	Na	1,017
Lotteries	864	1,380	2,244
Gambling services not elsewhere classified	3,783	5,721	9,504
Total	72,450	82,750	156,216

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006a, 2006b)

The main occupations in hotels and clubs in Australia are bar managers and bar staff (about 39 per cent), followed by catering staff (18 per cent), gaming staff and cashiers (15 per cent), and managers and administrative staff (11 per cent) (Australian Gaming Council, 2005). In contrast, the majority of staff employed by Australian casinos are involved in gaming operations (37 per cent), with 29 per cent involved in food and beverage, 19 per cent employed as managers and in administration, 8 per cent in cleaning and housekeeping, 5 per cent as security officers and 2 per cent in maintenance (Australian Casino Association, 2005). The casino industry employs relatively young people. Employees aged 25 to 34 years represent 36 per cent of the labour force, followed by the 18 to 24 years age group representing 23 per cent. The 34 to 45 years age group comprises 25 per cent of the workforce, while those 45 years plus represent 16 per cent. This results in 84 per cent of casino employees being under the age of 45 years (Australian Casino Association, 2005). The majority of employees are full time (57 per cent), followed by casual employees (24 per cent), while 19 per cent work on part time basis (Australian Casino Association, 2005). The

age breakdown of employees in hotels and clubs is not available, but it is a reasonable assumption that they too tend to be younger workers.

In Queensland at the end of June 2005, 581 licensed clubs operated 21,102 gaming machines and 771 hotels operated 18,382 gaming machines (Queensland Government, 2005b). At the same time, the state's four casinos operated a total of 284 table games and 3,593 gaming machines (Australian Gaming Council, 2005). The casinos, along with many hotels and clubs in Queensland, also operate keno and TAB outlets. At 30 June 2004, there were an estimated 28,000 positions in hotels and clubs with gaming machines, with about one-half of these positions being casual, one-quarter being full-time and one-tenth being part-time, with contractors, volunteers and apprentices/trainees making up the remainder (Queensland Government, 2005b). Employment in the state's casinos is not exactly known, but is estimated to be around 3,000, depending on the season.

In Queensland, a key condition of employment that is relevant to this study is that gaming employees in hotels and clubs must be licensed and, as a condition of that licence, are not allowed to play gaming machines installed in their workplace during the period of their employment and for 30 days after they cease that employment (*Machine Gaming Act 1991 QLD*, S.338.2). Additionally, all hotel and club employees are restricted from betting on keno in their workplace. However, the Act does not restrict those with a gaming employee's licence from betting at the TAB in their workplace. As a house policy, some hotels and clubs do not allow any employees to gamble on any activity in the workplace, others restrict staff gambling to times when they are not in uniform, while others place no restrictions on staff gambling apart from those required by law. For non-gaming staff, this means they are free to gamble in their workplace on gaming machines and the TAB when not on duty. In contrast, employees in the four casinos in Queensland are restricted from gambling in their workplace at any time (*Casino Control Act 1982 QLD*). Further, staff employed at any of the three TABCorp-owned casinos (Gold Coast, Brisbane and Townsville) are not allowed to gamble on any activities at any of those three properties.

Thus, staff of gaming venues in Queensland have varying access to gambling activities. Nevertheless, even with the strictest of legislation and house policies, these staff still have ready access to gambling activities outside their workplace and employing organisations, while others have full access to most gambling activities within their place of employment. However, access to gambling is just one factor that may influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue staff. As will be discussed later in this chapter, other aspects of their employment may influence their propensity to gamble and their attraction to gambling. First however, prior research on gambling by gaming venue staff is reviewed.

2.3 PRIOR RESEARCH INTO GAMBLING BY GAMING VENUE EMPLOYEES

Despite the substantial number of staff working in gaming venues and the likelihood of continued growth, at least internationally if not locally, there has been minimal research into the impacts of gambling on gaming venue staff. This contrasts markedly with substantial Australian investigations in recent years into the impacts of gambling at a national level (Productivity Commission, 1999), at state levels (e.g. Australian Institute for Gambling Research, 1995, 1996, 1998; IPART, 1998, 2004) and in various regions (e.g. VCGA, 2000a). The dearth of research into gambling amongst gaming venue employees also contrasts with the growing body of research into the impacts of gambling on other specific groups, such as women (Brown and Coventry, 1997; Hraba and Lee, 1996; Johnson and McLure, 1997; Ohtsuka, Bruton, Borg, DeLuca and Imms, 1997; Quirk, 1996; Thomas, 1995), youth (ACOSS, 1997; Maddern, 1999a, 1999b; Derevensky and Gupta, 2004) and various ethnic groups (VCGA, 2000b, Victorian Government Department of Justice, 2005). The results of such studies reveal that the impacts of gambling can vary markedly amongst

different sub-populations. Given the high exposure of gaming venue employees to gambling and gamblers, it might also be expected that gambling impacts on gaming venue staff in distinctive ways.

One way that working in a gaming venue may impact on employees is on their own gambling behaviour. While little is known about the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees, models of gambling involvement (e.g. Productivity Commission, 1999; Abbott, Volberg, Bellringer and Reith, 2004; Thomas and Jackson, 2004) identify environmental factors as influencing that involvement. Thus, the work environment in gaming venues is also likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees. However, very little research has been conducted into whether gaming venue employees are more or less likely to gamble, or to be low, medium or high risk gamblers, or to engage in gambling that creates negative or positive consequences for themselves, others in their social network, for their workplaces or for the community. In fact, to our knowledge only four related empirical studies have been conducted:

- Collachi and Taber (1987) asked 34 employees from three large casinos in Reno about their frequency of gambling, gambling habits, opinions of others who gamble, and gambling itself. Although many of their findings were consistent with problem gambling (e.g. borrowing money between paydays), no consistent, quantifiable instrument was used to measure no-risk, low-risk, medium-risk or problem gambling.
- Shaffer, Vander Bilt and Hall (1999) examined the prevalence of pathological gambling, drinking, smoking and other health risk behaviours amongst casino employees. A sample of 3,841 full-time casino employees from four sites of one US casino were surveyed. The study found that the casino employees had a higher prevalence of past-year Level 3 (pathological) gambling (2.1 per cent), but a lower prevalence of Level 2 (problem) gambling (1.4 per cent), than the general adult population, when measured on the South Oaks Gambling Screen. In addition, employees had a higher prevalence of smoking, alcohol problems and depression than the general adult population.
- Duquette (2000) surveyed 271 employees of one hotel/casino in Las Vegas, also using the South Oaks Gambling Screen. The rate of pathological gambling amongst these employees was found to be 20.3 per cent, compared to 1.14 per cent for the general adult population. However, it should be noted that this research was presented as an unpublished Masters thesis, so has not been exposed to extensive peer review.
- Shaffer and Hall (2002) conducted a prospective study into gambling, drinking and other health factors amongst full-time employees at six sites of one US casino at three observation points approximately 12 months apart. Of the 9,943 eligible employees, 1,176 provided data at these three points. Using the South Oaks Gambling Screen, prevalence rates of past-year Level 3 gambling (pathological gambling) were 4.3 per cent at Time 1, 2.1 per cent at Time 2, and 1.8 per cent at Time 3. For Level 2 gambling (problem gambling) rates were 21.2 per cent at Time 1, 15.1 per cent at Time 2, and 13.0 per cent at Time 3. The researchers concluded that the casino employees evidenced considerable plasticity in their capacity to change their gambling behaviour within the context of regular exposure to gambling. Amongst those with complete prospective SOGS data, 22.6 per cent improved their gambling (lowered their SOGS score) during the research period, while 11.6 per cent became more disordered. However, the majority of Level 3 employees tended to become Level 2 gamblers, suggesting they tended to ‘languish in a subclinical state even after they experienced a period of relief from more serious gambling problems’ (2002:419). Nevertheless, the results question the conventional wisdom that gambling problems are always progressive and suggest that some employees may adapt to their exposure to gambling after an initial novelty effect.

The four studies cited above were all conducted in the US, with no comparable research completed in Australia. Further, none of these studies examined how particular aspects of the work environment in gambling venues might influence the gambling behaviour of staff, although they assumed that heightened exposure to gambling was the key distinguishing characteristic of these people's employment that would influence their gambling. A deeper understanding of those aspects of the work environment that influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees can assist in developing interventions and providing a work environment that is conducive to responsible gambling amongst employees in gaming venues. In saying this, it is assumed that gambling behaviour can be influenced by contextual factors, a view that is consistent with a public health perspective on gambling, as discussed next.

2.4 CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES ON GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR

A public health perspective on gambling recognises the potential influence of contextual factors on gambling behaviour. Involvement in gambling is seen as the product of a variety of factors, some relating to the personal characteristics of the gambler, some relating to the gambling activities themselves, and some relating to the broader context in which gambling occurs. Some prominent public health models of influential factors on gambling are reviewed in this section.

Amidst increasing acceptance of problem gambling as a public health issue, an agent-host-environment model of gambling has been advanced. Initially utilised for infectious and physical health problems, but now encompassing non-infectious diseases and mental disorders, including substance abuse and problem gambling (Abbott, Volberg, Bellringer and Reith, 2004), this model reflects a contemporary view that public health involves promoting health through public policy, creating a supportive environment, developing personal skills, strengthening community action and reorienting health services (World Health Organisation, 1986). This framework supports a balance of governments, communities, organisations and individuals being involved with and responsible for the health of a population. In relation to the agent-host-environment model of gambling, Perese, Bellringer and Abbott (2005:36) explain that 'within a public health framework, distinctions are made between the agent (gambling exposure), the host (individual factors) and the environment (physical, social and cultural setting) as a means of identifying and influencing the differential aspects of each that are involved in the onset and development of problem gambling'.

In an extensive review of the literature, Perese, Bellringer and Abbott (2005) identified the following risk factors associated with the agent, the host and the environment for gambling, some of which may be modified through legislation, industry practices and increased public knowledge and awareness about gambling:

- Risk factors relating to the agent comprise exposure to continuous forms of gambling, exposure through occupation, exposure through distance to the venue and familial exposure.
- Risk factors relating to the environment comprise increased accessibility and availability to gambling, gambling technologies, attitudinal change, cultural factors/acculturative stress, familial factors, male gender, youthfulness, single marital status, low educational status, ethnicity, migrant status, and low socio-economic status.
- Risk factors relating to the host comprise physical health problems, cognitive distortions, substance misuse comorbid with gambling, biological factors, and temperament and personality.

Alternative frameworks have been developed to identify influences on gambling behaviour, to assist in identifying associated risk and protective factors. In Australia, the Productivity

Commission (1999) identified eight types of influences on problem gambling, in recognition that problem gamblers are a heterogeneous group and that their problems can emanate from a multiplicity of environmental, social and psychological factors. These influences are industry behaviour, venue features, accessibility, game features, government behaviour, information, gambler characteristics and behaviour, and help services. The Productivity Commission explains that ‘in some cases, the problems may stem from behaviours conditioned by the nature of the rewards offered by gambling. In others, problems may stem from a false understanding of gambling (the cognitive model). In others, the problems occur because of boredom, social isolation, depression or cultural factors. ...Given that problem gambling is multi-dimensional in this sense, it would seem appropriate to consider some problems as inherently medical (requiring treatment by associated experts). Equally, however, other problems may require different models of help and resolution’ (1999:6.9).

A later model of influences on gambling behaviours and outcomes has been developed by Thomas and Jackson (2004). It is particularly pertinent to this research, as it makes explicit the importance of understanding how risk and protective factors can be associated with the propensity to gamble, with gambling products and services themselves, and with the outcomes and consequences of gambling. This then draws attention to interventions that can be introduced to: influence an individual’s propensity to gamble, either in terms of initiating gambling or progressing from recreational to problematic levels of gambling; restrict or modify the supply of gambling products, including modification of product features; and ameliorate the negative outcomes and consequences of problematic gambling, at the level of the individual, family or community. As such, this framework also adheres to a public health perspective, as it recognises the role of multiple factors beyond the individual in influencing gambling involvement. This study’s findings are later analysed according to an adapted version of this model (Chapter Nine), thus demonstrating its utility when contextual influences on a population’s gambling behaviour and the identification of appropriate interventions are of central interest. Figure 2.1 depicts the Thomas and Jackson model.

Figure 2.1: Thomas and Jackson’s Model of Influences on Gambling Behaviours and Outcomes (2004)



Source: Thomas and Jackson, (2004:44)

2.5 PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS IN GAMBLING

As well as examining aspects of the work environment that influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees, this study also aims to identify appropriate interventions to better encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling amongst this group of people. Again, this aim assumes that gambling behaviour can be influenced by contextual factors and that some or more of these can be modified to reduce any risk factors and enhance any protective factors associated with gambling by venue staff. This is consistent with a public health perspective on gambling. Importantly, this perspective recognises that it is not just people with severe gambling problems who can be assisted, but that interventions can also prevent gambling problems or minimise their harm for those at varying levels of risk. A number of public health models of gambling recognise a continuum of gambling involvement, with the aim of identifying appropriate interventions at different points on this continuum.

A widely known model of this type was developed by Korn and Shaffer (1999), who proposed three public health goals to focus attention on prevention, health promotion and community protection in regard to gambling. The goals were:

- Prevention of unacceptable risk to prevent the risk of people developing gambling related problems, through public awareness, early identification and provision of treatment services;
- Health promotion strategies to promote informed and balanced decision-making by gamblers, through increased knowledge, responsible choices and community participation; and
- Community protective factors to protect vulnerable groups from gambling-related harms, through responsible gambling policy, community support programs and public safety.

These three goals are supported by the concept of gambling harm minimisation. Blaszczynski, Sharpe and Walker (2001) argue that gambling harm minimisation has many goals, including: to prevent the development of gambling problems; to reduce the prevalence of problem gamblers in the community; to reduce negative health and social consequences for problem gamblers, their families and communities; to maintain the enjoyment of gambling by recreational gamblers; and to ensure that the livelihood of people working in the gaming industry is not compromised unnecessarily. The value of a public health approach to gambling is that it examines broad population interventions as well as those for individual gamblers. Public health management of gambling in a population can include: minimising or preventing harm from gambling through policy development, regulation and advocacy; protection through providing counselling and treatment services for those in danger of gambling-related harm; and, promoting community education and consumer awareness of gambling (Korn, 2001). Management of individual gambling impacts includes reducing any actual harm caused by problem gambling; protecting the people for whom abstinence or treatment is necessary to assist them to recover from their problematic gambling; and providing adequate information for a gambler to make informed choices in their gambling decisions.

Additionally, a public health approach to gambling devotes as much attention to at-risk gamblers as to pathological gamblers, in recognition that at-risk gamblers constitute a greater proportion of the population than do pathological gamblers (Perese, Bellringer and Abbott, 2005). Notwithstanding the importance of interventions for those most severely affected by gambling problems, interventions targeting at-risk gamblers are important to prevent progression to more serious gambling problems and because at-risk gamblers may be more amenable to interventions aimed at encouraging behavioural change (Perese, Bellringer and Abbott, 2005). This was recognised by the Productivity Commission (1999) which

developed a continuum of gambling involvement, with gambling problems depicted according to levels of severity, from no problems (Level 1 gambling) to severe problems (Level 3 gambling). While gamblers with severe problems (Level 3) may require interventions by help services, Level 2 gamblers may experience harms from gambling, but not at levels which justify specific individual interventions. However, notes the Productivity Commission (1999:6.21) ‘such groups may have large policy significance — being the target for public health campaigns, information provision and preventative strategies (either intended to cut the number of people in this at-risk group or to prevent the likelihood of people moving to the group which do need individual interventions)’.

The concepts of primary, secondary and tertiary interventions have been borrowed from the drug and alcohol fields to identify interventions appropriate to different stages on a gambling continuum. Primary prevention measures in gambling aim to protect people from developing gambling problems (e.g. public and player education, responsible gambling signage, warning signs, restrictions on advertising); secondary interventions aim to limit the potential for problems to arise and contain its harmful impacts (e.g. self-exclusion, player activity statements, advertising treatment services, removing ATMs from gaming rooms); and tertiary intervention targets those with gambling problems (e.g. counselling services, referrals for treatment) (Blaszczynski, 2001; Hing and Dickerson, 2001).

However, there is a paucity of research into the effectiveness of interventions in gambling (Blaszczynski, 2001; Hing and Dickerson, 2001; Perese, Bellringer and Abbott, 2005). Under these circumstances, where there is a lack of knowledge and a weak evidence base, Thomas and Jackson (2004) argue that a logic model, such as theirs presented in Figure 2.1, can enable greater specification of intervention targets. As noted earlier, this model proves useful in a later analysis of this study’s findings to identify appropriate interventions to target gaming venue employees at various stages along the continuum of gambling involvement.

2.6 ASPECTS OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT THAT MAY INFLUENCE THE GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR OF GAMING VENUE STAFF

Underpinned by a public health perspective that recognises a multiplicity of potential influences on gambling behaviour, several aspects of the work environment in gaming venues have potential to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees. However, given the absence of research in this area, the following discussion is largely speculative. Indeed, this study takes an exploratory approach to identify pertinent influences on staff gambling behaviour, in the absence of a solid underlying theory. Given the absence of research in this area, the researchers conducted some preliminary investigation to assist in isolating potential influences on the gambling behaviour of the population under study. This is reported first, before other relevant literature is reviewed.

2.6.1 Preliminary Investigation

Four preliminary research activities were undertaken by the research team to inform the study.

Interview with a Local Problem Gambling Counselling Service

This was conducted in May 2004 by three members of the research team. The manager and staff at this service reported that about 25 per cent of the 80 clients they had treated in the previous six months work in gaming venues and/or developed gambling problems while working in gaming venues. They also reported that these clients identified some management practices that exacerbated their gambling problems, notably extending advances on their pay, expecting that they would spend this on the gaming machines in their workplace.

Interview with a Casino Dealer

This person had worked in a Queensland casino for 19 years. The interview was conducted in August 2004 by two members of the research team. The dealer estimated that 20-30 per cent of that casino's gaming staff 'would have gambling problems they can't control'.

Interview with Problem Gambling Client Working in Gaming Venues

This interview was conducted in August 2004 by two members of the research team. The client, a female in her late 20s, had worked in four hotels and one club, had been gambling on gaming machines for four years, and had been in treatment for her gambling problems for six months. She had worked as a bar attendant, in the TAB facility, as a workplace trainer and as a maitre d' in a club restaurant. Over nearly two hours, she related how numerous aspects of her employment in these venues had influenced her gambling and the development and maintenance of her gambling problems. (Data from this interview are reported in detail in Chapter Six.)

A Focus Group with Gaming Venue Employees

This two hour focus group was conducted by three members of the research team in August 2004 with a convenience sample of gaming venue employees and previous employees drawn from university students at Southern Cross University. There were seven participants (three males, four females), aged 18-46 years, all of whom had or were working in gaming venues, including a casino, hotels, clubs and a TAB. While the limitations of this sample are acknowledged, it was nevertheless a valuable exercise in identifying the range of ways and aspects of the work environment in gaming venues that can influence the gambling behaviour of employees. Generally, these employees had been deterred from gambling by virtue of their employment in gaming venues. However, they cited numerous examples of staff with whom they had worked who were heavy gamblers. All agreed that 'the work environment rubs off on you' when working in a gaming venue.

Data from these preliminary investigations are incorporated into the discussion below. Although they amount to little more than anecdotal evidence, they added weight to the need for this study and highlighted the potential contribution that can be gained from gathering data from a range of stakeholders. They also helped to shape our interview questions for the study. The ensuing discussion now reviews some pertinent literature relating to the research topic, while incorporating these data from our preliminary work.

2.6.2 Other Relevant Literature

From our preliminary investigations and a review of the literature, several aspects of the work environment in gaming venues appear to potentially impact, either positively or negatively, on employee gambling behaviour.

Frequent Exposure to Gambling

Clearly, gaming venue employees are exposed to, become familiar with, and have greater knowledge about gambling than the general population. However, whether this increases or decreases their risk of developing gambling problems is not known. Nevertheless, the established link between problem gambling and proximity, availability and accessibility of gambling (e.g. Volberg, 1994; Cosby, 1995; Emerson and Laundergan, 1996; Wildman, 1998; Abbott and Volberg, 1999; National Opinion Research Center, 1999; Productivity Commission, 1999; VCGA, 2000a; Griffiths and Delfabbro, 2001; Gambling Review Body, 2001) suggests that gaming venue employees may be a high risk group. Certainly, the problem gambling client we interviewed (Section 2.6.1) felt very strongly that easy accessibility to gambling in the workplace was the primary risk factor for employees, while our focus group participants (Section 2.6.1) mentioned many fellow employees who start playing gaming machines 'as soon as they finish a shift'.

Further, research has linked gambling and problem gambling with exposure to gambling. In a review of the literature into exposure theory, Abbott (2006) notes that hundreds of publications in the gambling literature, including major reviews and national review reports, assert the link between gambling exposure and gambling harm. Abbott (2006) observes that these are variously based on findings of: prevalence studies where people with high involvement with gambling, notably continuous forms, have a high probability of experiencing gambling problems; studies that have found that gambling problems have increased when new forms of gambling are introduced into a community; experiences where containment of gambling has resulted in reduced help-seeking for gambling problems; and studies that have found a linear relationship between increased gaming machine numbers and gambling expenditure. While the relationship between exposure and gambling harm is difficult to prove beyond doubt (Productivity Commission, 1999) and there have been suggestions that individuals and populations can adapt to gambling exposure (Abbott, 2006), the influence of frequent exposure to gambling on the gambling behaviour of gaming venue staff is worth considering in this study. Indeed, Shaffer *et al.* (1999) found that employees who had worked in a casino for 3.5 to 4 years, and thus had longer exposure to gambling, had a significantly higher prevalence of pathological and problem gambling than employees who had worked in a casino for one year or less. The problem gambling client interviewed also noted that constant exposure to gambling in her workplace aroused strong temptations to gamble, both for herself and her fellow employees ('when it's in your face all the time its going to be an issue'). Frequent exposure to gambling might also lead to a mindset for some people that 'normalises' heavy gambling and risky behaviour, a point that the problem gambling client strongly agreed with.

Conversely, heavy exposure to gambling may have the opposite effect for some workers. Some people immersed in an environment of addictive behaviours may adapt to that environment and develop some immunity towards it (Zinberg, 1984 in Shaffer *et al.*, 1999), a view supported by adaptation theory (Abbott, 2006). A general aversion to gambling was certainly apparent in our focus group discussion. Nevertheless, with the higher rates of pathological gambling found amongst gaming venue employees in three studies of gaming venue employees (Shaffer *et al.*, 1999; Duquette, 2000; Shaffer and Hall, 2002), it seems that this social learning does not adequately protect all employees.

Along with exposure, familiarity with and knowledge about how various forms of gambling work may mean that some gaming venue employees are more likely to gamble. Even if not allowed to gamble at their workplace, their experience and knowledge may lead them to consider they have superior gambling skills that may increase their chances of winning at another venue. A former croupier in our focus group noted that this was the reason that 'on every weekend, at least two or three dealers fly to another city' to gamble at a casino. For other employees, the heightened exposure to gambling that their workplace affords might make them feel more comfortable playing these games, particularly at their workplace, as the problem gambling client interviewed noted. However, for some employees, familiarity with and knowledge about gambling may reinforce the unfavourable odds of gambling and a knowledge that they are likely to lose over time, as was raised in the focus group. Thus, familiarity with and knowledge about gambling may act to promote gambling amongst some employees, yet deter others.

In summary, little is known about how the frequent exposure to gambling experienced by gaming venue employees affects their gambling behaviour and their risks of developing gambling problems. This study seeks to address this by illuminating the nature of this relationship.

Close Interaction with Gamblers

The provision of gambling services requires that customers are involved in the service delivery system, where that service is produced by the venue and consumed by the gambler simultaneously. This means that many employees in these venues, particularly frontline operational staff, have close interactions with gamblers and engage in 'real' social exchanges, particularly with regular patrons (Korczynski, 2002). This close interaction with gamblers in the workplace may influence employee gambling behaviour in various and perhaps conflicting ways.

It is widely accepted that erroneous beliefs about gambling are a risk factor for the development and maintenance of gambling problems (Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, 2001; Perese, Bellringer and Abbott, 2005). As such, seeing gamblers winning might fuel erroneous thinking, with some employees more likely to consider gambling as a logical strategy for financial betterment. Compared to the relatively low wages typically earned by many gaming venue employees, the winnings of gamblers in the venue may seem like 'easy money'. Further, the wins are typically more noticeable than the losses. As noted by the problem gambling client we interviewed, staff gambling problems can be a result of working there 'because you see people win, and some people won't tell you how much they've lost...so I think that was what encouraged me'. Thus, employees may get favourably distorted views from patrons about the odds of winning, thus making gambling seem more attractive.

In contrast, and as raised in the focus group, employees in gaming venues sometimes hear gamblers' complaints about losing, may be subject to gamblers' or other patrons' criticisms of gambling or their opposition to it, sometimes see gamblers in distress after losing, and sometimes hear about how a person's gambling is having adverse consequences. In fact, with about one-third of gambling revenue and about 40 per cent of gaming machine revenue in Australia derived from problem gamblers (Productivity Commission, 1999), these 'tales of woe' are probably not uncommon. For some employees, this may well provide a deterrent to gambling due to their heightened awareness of the associated risks and potential adverse consequences. This was the case for most of our focus group participants, but not for the problem gambling client we interviewed.

From the above discussion, it is apparent that many gaming venue employees have close interactions with gamblers in the venue, but that the influence of that interaction on employee gambling behaviour is not known. With no relevant studies conducted and published, this study will provide data to illuminate this relationship.

Interaction with Other Employees and Management

Employees who choose to work in gaming venues are typically not opposed to gambling *per se*, and indeed some may have sought to work there because of a pre-existing interest in or attraction to gambling (Shaffer *et al.*, 1999). For example, Wexler and Wexler (2004) contend that some employees are 'attracted to the action, because they already have a gambling problem', while Shaffer *et al.* (1999) speculate that 'workers with gambling problems may be more likely to choose to remain employed in a setting that offers ready access to gambling'.

Thus, many employees in gaming venues may be favourably disposed towards gambling and wittingly or unwittingly encourage other workers to gamble. This encouragement may be overt, such as inviting fellow workers to gamble with them outside of working hours, perhaps after work to unwind, or to participate in workplace gambling syndicates. For example, the problem gambling client we interviewed noted that 'in all of the venues, if you finish work with someone at the same time, you'd grab a beer and put \$10 in the pokies'. Alternatively, working with people favourably disposed to gambling may encourage other employees to gamble to gain greater social acceptance into the work group. Working with

people who gamble may also increase the interest in and knowledge about gambling for other employees, by virtue of casual conversations amongst employees of their gambling activities. This increased interest and knowledge may well be a catalyst for an employee to start gambling or to increase his or her gambling activity. In some workplaces, condonement of gambling and subtle encouragement to gamble may emanate from management's own gambling activities, which the focus group and interview with the problem gambling client suggested is not uncommon. Especially in small owner-operated venues, where the owner-manager may well have been attracted into the business because of an interest in or affinity with gambling, employees may engage in gambling to build rapport, affinity and favour with the boss.

In summary, much of the above discussion is speculative, with no previous research conducted to support the propositions made, although prior research has found that problem gamblers commonly report that their spouse or partner and work colleagues have gambling problems (Abbott, 2001). If staff and management in gaming venues are more favourably disposed towards gambling than the general population, then the contention that this disposition may encourage gambling by fellow workers has good face validity.

The Nature of the Employees' Work in the Venue

Employment in operational positions in gambling venues is characterised by casual, shift, weekend and night work which, while not distinctive to gambling venues, is nevertheless considered as potentially impacting on staff gambling behaviour. This is because working at 'odd' hours can interfere with a worker's family, social and community life, with their leisure activities and with other obligations (Keith, Cann, Brophy, Hellyer, Day, Egan, Mayville and Watterson, 2001). For example, the problem gambling client we interviewed noted that a major contributor to her gambling problems was having weekdays off, when there were few other social activities and few friends available to go out with. Further, finishing work late at night and perhaps wanting to relax and unwind over a drink, gaming venue employees typically find that the only venues open are hotels, clubs and casinos. Thus, if they want to go out after work, they have little choice but to patronise gaming venues. For some of these workers, playing gaming machines may be a particularly attractive activity, as it allows them to be around people without having to interact with people, something they have just spent many hours doing during their shift. For example, the focus group participants noted that they often go to licensed venues after work to relax, and that fellow employees 'go and gamble 'cause they're around other people, and they also like to be focused on the machine...and they wouldn't get off them for 2 or 3 hours.' The problem gambling client also agreed, noting 'I would go to another venue that's open, just to be by myself for a while...not to speak to those people at that venue...and my wind down was sitting at the pokies'. Gaming machines may therefore offer welcome 'time-out' that gaming venue employees desire after a shift. This may be particularly pertinent given that frontline workers in general are subject to considerable stress arising from the emotional labour required in their jobs (Korczynski, 2002), and that gaming venue employees have reported high levels of stress, irritability, moodiness and exhaustion after work, along with sleep and appetite problems (Keith *et al.*, 2001).

Thus, a combination of working odd hours, workplace stress, a desire to go out but not to socialise after work, and limited after-work leisure and entertainment options, means that some gaming venue employees may be particularly attracted to gambling, especially on gaming machines. While there is no empirical research to underpin this proposition, it again has good face validity and so will be investigated in this study.

Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions

Many gambling venues engage in frequent and aggressive marketing activities to encourage patrons to gamble. For example, most casinos, clubs and hotels engage in competitive

loyalty programs, player rewards systems and promotional activities designed to encourage higher gambling frequency, session length and expenditure amongst players. Promotional prizes are often of considerable value, such as cars, boats and whitegoods. While these marketing and promotional activities are targeted at patrons, gaming venue employees are also constantly exposed to these stimuli to gamble. They are also more likely than patrons to be at the venue when the fortunate winners are announced. Thus, employees in gaming venues receive heavier exposure to gambling promotions, and their winners, than the general population. Again, this may feed erroneous beliefs about gambling.

However, there has been minimal research into the advertising and promotion of gambling products and services, either in Australia or overseas (Griffiths, 2003). Nevertheless, the Productivity Commission (1999) concluded that certain marketing activities promoting gambling have the potential to undermine responsible gambling and informed decision-making by reinforcing inherently false beliefs, even if the advertisements or promotions themselves are not deceptive. However, the influence of advertising and promotions on the gambling behaviour of venue patrons has not been tested by empirical research; and its influence on the gambling behaviour of venue employees has been overlooked to date. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to conclude that gaming venues consider their gambling promotions as worthwhile activities in encouraging patrons to gamble, and so it is plausible to expect that these promotions might also encourage gambling amongst employees frequently exposed to these marketing activities.

Responsible Gambling Measures at the Venue

Since the launch of the *Queensland Responsible Gambling Code of Practice* in May 2002, many staff working in gaming-related positions have received some training in responsible gambling. Under the *Responsible Gambling Training Framework for Industry* (Queensland Treasury, 2003), these employees are expected to understand the nature of gambling activities in Queensland, the potential harmful effects of gambling, and responsible approaches to gambling, including the six practice areas in the Code of Practice (Queensland Treasury, 2002b, 2004). Further, many employees have witnessed the operationalisation of the Code in their workplace, such as the placement of signage, movement of ATMs outside of gaming rooms, restrictions on cheque-cashing and payment of large prizes in cash, and the operation of self-exclusion programs. Thus, it would be expected that these employees are now more aware of the potential risks of gambling, its potential adverse consequences, some indicators of problem gambling, and where to seek assistance for gambling problems. However, to the researchers' knowledge, no independent evaluation of these responsible gambling training programs has been published to demonstrate their effectiveness in raising employee awareness, knowledge and skills. Further, whether any increased awareness, knowledge and skills has influenced employees' own gambling behaviour is not known (although the problem gambling client we interviewed noted that the training had no influence on her gambling). This study will therefore examine this relationship.

2.6.3 Summary

The preceding discussion alludes to various aspects of the work environment in gaming venues that may influence the gambling behaviour of employees, particularly in terms of responsible gambling and problem gambling.

In terms of responsible gambling, various workplace factors may deter employees from gambling and/or encourage a responsible approach to gambling. Through social learning, some employees may develop some protection from gambling problems as they learn about the downside of gambling through their frequent exposure to it. Similarly, frequent interactions with gamblers may deter some employees from gambling, or from gambling heavily, due to their heightened awareness of the associated risks and potential adverse consequences. For some employees, their heightened knowledge about the odds of winning

at gambling may be a deterrent, and where this attitude to gambling is widely held, an organisational culture may develop that ‘frowns upon’ gambling or that encourages responsible gambling. Finally, the responsible gambling training and responsible gambling measures implemented in gaming venues in recent years may have influenced employees to gamble more responsibly themselves.

However, while the above factors may encourage responsible gambling amongst gaming venue staff, other workplace factors may promote gambling and, potentially, risky or problem gambling. While limited, previous studies (Shaffer *et al.*, 1999; Duquette, 2000; Shaffer and Hall, 2002) suggest that working in a gaming venue may facilitate gambling problems among employees. This may be because frequent exposure to gambling ‘normalises’ heavy gambling and risky behaviour, and/or because employees develop erroneous beliefs about the odds of winning from their close interaction with gamblers. Further, gambling amongst fellow employees may be more common than in other workplaces, where people are drawn to work in a gaming venue because of a pre-existing interest in, or attraction to, gambling. Thus, fellow employees may encourage an employee to gamble, either overtly through invitations to participate, or unwittingly where gambling may be considered a pathway to greater social acceptance by the work group or by management. Further, a combination of working odd hours, workplace stress, a desire to go out but not to socialise after work, and limited after-work leisure and entertainment options, means that some gaming venue employees may be particularly attracted to gambling. Finally, frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions may also attract employees to gambling.

2.7 CONCLUSION

Little is known about the gambling behaviour of gaming venue staff and the influence that their work environment might have on that behaviour. While anecdotal evidence suggests that gaming venue staff may be an at-risk group of gamblers, no research in Australia has been conducted to test this proposition. Yet, there are some compelling reasons that support this proposition, as well as an equally varied set of factors that would seem to refute it. Nevertheless, the few overseas studies conducted have found higher rates of problem gambling amongst gaming venue employees than in the general population, and the focus group and client interview data appear to support this result. Thus, this study is important because it is the first to examine the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees in Australia, the first to examine the influence of the work environment on that behaviour, and the first to identify aspects of that work environment that can encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling amongst gaming venue staff.

CHAPTER THREE – METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the research methods used for this study. The research design, explained in Section 3.2, was primarily qualitative in nature, drawing on interviews with a range of stakeholders, supplemented with a small quantitative survey of employee gambling. Section 3.3 explains the preliminary consultation conducted for the study, while Sections 3.4 to 3.7 explain the sampling methods, interview procedures and analysis techniques used for the data collected from gambling counsellors, venue managers, venue employees and problem gamblers, respectively. Section 3.8 summarises the interviews conducted, while Section 3.9 identifies certain limitations of the methodology.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A qualitative research design was used for the majority of this investigation. A qualitative approach focuses on uncovering people's attitudes and the meaning they attribute to other people, programs, ideas and events (Patton, 1990). This approach involves gathering large amounts of in-depth information about a small number of subjects, rather than a limited amount of information about a large number of subjects (Ticehurst and Veal, 1999; Zikmund, 2000). To obtain rich information for this project, qualitative methodologies, comprising in-depth, semi-structured face-to-face and telephone interviews, were used to capture information from multiple data sources. After preliminary consultative meetings were held with key industry, welfare, union and legal aid representatives, in-depth interviews were held with gaming venue managers and employees, with counsellors from Queensland Gambling Help agencies, and with six problem gamblers.

There was one quantitative measure used, an employee questionnaire, which contained questions on, and provided statistical measures of, individual gambling behaviour including typical gambling frequency, session length and expenditure. The questionnaire also contained the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index* (CPGI) (Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, 2001) and some questions on the socio-demographic and work characteristics of respondents. This quantitative technique supported the qualitative methods used by providing some statistical measures to help explain the dependent variable, employee gambling behaviour (Zikmund, 2000).

This was a multi-stage study that was conducted over 18 months during 2005-06. Information was obtained from numerous stakeholder groups, and the sampling, data collection techniques and analytical methods are now described for each of these.

3.3 STAGE ONE: PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION

In preparation for the project, the researchers met with the following organisations during March and April 2005:

- the Queensland Responsible Gambling Advisory Committee to advise them of the project and to seek their support and advice. All relevant members of this committee indicated their support for the project.
- Clubs Queensland to explain the project, enlist their support and seek advice on expediting data collection. Clubs Queensland then provided the researchers with a list of clubs in selected geographic areas of Queensland and, after the sample of clubs was selected by the researchers, they then provided a letter of support to each selected club encouraging them

to participate in the research project. They also advised on the interview schedules to be used for managers and employees of gaming venues.

- the Queensland Hotels Association to explain the project, enlist their support and seek advice on expediting data collection. The QHA then provided the researchers with a list of hotels in selected geographic areas of Queensland and, after the sample of hotels was selected by the researchers, they then provided a letter of support to each selected hotel encouraging them to participate in the research project. They also advised on the interview schedules to be used for managers and employees of gaming venues.
- Relationships Australia Queensland, to explain the project, enlist their support and seek advice on expediting data collection. In their role as coordinator of the Gambling Help network of agencies, Relationships Australia provided a list of all gambling counsellors in Queensland and emailed a letter of support to all Queensland Gambling Help Agencies encouraging their participation in the project. They also supported a request to display a notice in each agency calling for problem gambling clients who work in gaming venues, or who had developed gambling problems while working in venues, to participate in a telephone interview with the researchers.
- the Liquor Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union (Gold Coast Branch) to explain the project, enlist their support and seek advice on expediting data collection. The researchers also discussed the project with the state branch of the union by telephone. The union expressed full support for the project and indicated their willingness to assist in whatever way was practicable.
- Legal Aid (Brisbane Office) to advise them of the research project and seek any information on gambling problems by gaming venue staff which have resulted in legal advice or representation by Legal Aid. However, while estimated that one in three of their client files 'have a gambling factor', no statistics are kept on a client's employment.

3.4 STAGE TWO: INTERVIEWS WITH GAMBLING COUNSELLORS

The first main stage of data collection involved telephone interviews with most gambling counsellors in Queensland to obtain information about their experience in treating problem gamblers who were working or who had developed gambling problems while working in gaming venues, and to seek their professional opinions on the issue.

3.4.1 Sampling

With the support of the Queensland Gambling Help network, a total of 40 Queensland gambling counsellors were identified and approached to request a telephone interview. Of these, 32 agreed. These comprised gambling counsellors, addictions counsellors, relationship or family therapy counsellors, and gambling community education or liaison officers. The agencies they represented had been operating for between 2-12 years, each employed 1-4 counsellors, and each agency saw 100-580 clients per year. Of the eight counsellors who declined to participate, most said they had never had a client who had worked in a gaming venue and felt that they could not contribute to the research. In a few cases, the person was on leave or otherwise unable to participate.

3.4.2 Interview Procedures

In April-May 2005, the 32 counsellor interviews were conducted. Each telephone interview lasted 30-60 minutes and with permission, they were either taped or extensive notes were taken. From preliminary work (earlier interviews, focus group and a literature review as documented in Chapter Two), an interview schedule was developed that asked about four main areas:

- Numbers and characteristics of clients they had seen who work or have worked in gaming venues, including their age, sex, venue type, position held and preferred type of gambling;
- Clients' experiences, based on various aspects of the work environment they had mentioned as having influenced their gambling behaviour;
- Counsellors' opinions on whether and how various aspects of working in gaming venues are likely to influence employee gambling behaviour; and
- Counsellors' opinions on venue strategies that could encourage responsible gambling and discourage gambling problems amongst gaming venue employees.

A semi-structured approach was taken when interviewing. Based on themes that emerged from preliminary work, the counsellors were questioned about the following aspects of the work environment, but they were also free to raise additional themes they considered pertinent (see Appendix A for counsellors' interview schedule):

- Close interaction with gamblers
- Frequent exposure to gambling
- Influence of fellow employees
- Influence of management
- Nature of employee work
- Hours of work
- Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions
- Responsible gambling training of staff
- Responsible gambling strategies in the venue.

3.4.3 Data Analysis

The counsellor interviews were transcribed and responses grouped under each question in the interview schedule. Because this was exploratory research, given the dearth of previous work in this area, the analysis focused on identifying pertinent issues. Both content analysis and inductive analysis were used to analyse the data. First, open coding was used to break down, examine and compare data to find major elements in the content of the interviews (Berg, 1995). From this, inductive analysis was used to find emerging themes (Patton, 1990). The analysis then synthesised these emerging themes into meaningful core categories of results, around which sub-categories were integrated (Strauss and Corbin, 1999). The process of comparison and synthesis means that the results generated are developed through interplay with the data collected during the project. The results of these interviews were also used to refine the interview schedule used for later stages of the research. Chapter Six contains the results from analysing the counsellors' interviews.

3.5 STAGE THREE: INTERVIEWS WITH GAMING VENUE MANAGERS

The next main stage of data collection involved interviews with managers of selected clubs, hotels and casinos in Queensland.

3.5.1 Sampling

Gambling venues included in the study were restricted to clubs, hotel and casinos in Queensland, as these are the major providers of gambling activities in that state and the activities most frequently associated with gambling problems. The researchers considered also including stand-alone TAB outlets, but decided against this, given budgetary constraints

and the fact that most Queensland TAB outlets are operated within clubs, hotels and casinos. Thus, the research captured opinions of managers and staff who work in venues that provide gaming machines, table games, keno, TAB and bingo.

A judgment sampling strategy was used to select venues to approach to request participation in the study, based on the researchers' judgements about the overall population and the feasibility of including some of them in the research (Shaffer, Hall and Bilt 1997; Atkinson and Flint 2001). The underlying assumption is that the investigators select units that are characteristic of the population (Legge 2003). The critical selection issue is objectivity, where objective criteria were set for choosing venues. Three main criteria were set. First, it was important to include adequate numbers of the three types of venues – clubs, hotels and casinos. Second, it was considered desirable to include a range of small through to large venues, based on the number of gaming machines. Third, the researchers thought it important to include venues in different geographic locations, including metropolitan, regional and remote settings. Five geographic areas were selected - Brisbane, the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast, Cairns and Mt Isa/Longreach – to provide data from a metropolitan centre, a heavily populated tourist area, a coastal regional area, far north Queensland, and the outback, respectively.

The sampling approach for each type of venue was as follows:

- Clubs. Our aim was to interview at least 20 club managers in Queensland. Based on the list of clubs provided by Clubs Queensland, we oversampled to allow for non-participation and selected at least ten clubs from each of the five geographic regions, and attempted to achieve an appropriate representation of large and small clubs, clubs of different types and clubs in different suburbs/areas within each region. In total, we approached 69 clubs to request their participation. This involved an initial letter from the researchers, outlining the purpose and procedure for the research, accompanied by the supporting letter from Clubs Queensland. These managers were then telephoned to request participation. If they agreed, a copy of the interview schedule was either emailed or faxed to them. A follow up phone call was made to ensure the interview schedule had arrived, to answer any questions about these or the research in general, and to make a time for a site visit and the interview. In all, 44 agreed to an interview.
- Hotels. Our aim was to interview at least 20 hotel managers in Queensland. Based on the list of hotels provided by the Queensland Hotels Association, we oversampled to allow for non-participation and selected at least ten hotels from each of the five geographic regions, and attempted to achieve an appropriate representation of large and small hotels, independent and chain hotels, and hotels in different suburbs/areas within each region. In total, we approached 50 hotels to request their participation. This involved an initial letter from the researchers, outlining the purpose and procedure for the research, accompanied by the supporting letter from the QHA. These managers were then telephoned to request participation. If they agreed, a copy of the interview schedule was either emailed or faxed to them. A follow up phone call was made to ensure the interview schedule had arrived, to answer any questions about these or the research in general, and to make a time for a site visit and the interview. In all, 27 agreed to an interview.
- Casinos. Our aim was to gain the participation of at least three of the four casinos in Queensland, with representation of larger and smaller venues in different geographic locations in the state. After preliminary meetings with a representative from three of the four casinos, we forwarded a proposal to their head office seeking the participation of two of their casinos in the research project. This was achieved in September 2005 after further meetings and documentation. The fourth casino in Queensland agreed to participate after a preliminary meeting in July 2005, on the provision that the majority of other Queensland casinos also participated. In all, three of the four casinos in Queensland were requested to

participate in the research and all subsequently agreed. Two casino managers representing these three Queensland casinos were later interviewed for the research.

Table 3.1 shows some key characteristics of the participating clubs, hotels and casinos and demonstrates that the sample captured venues which varied in terms of the numbers of gaming machines, other gambling facilities offered, contribution of gambling revenues, numbers of staff and gaming staff, and extent of staff turnover.

Table 3.1: Key Characteristics of Participating Venues

	Clubs N = 44	Hotels N = 27	Casinos N = 3
Operated gaming machines	44	27	3
Operated TAB	22	15	3
Operated keno	29	16	3
Operated table games	0	0	3
Number of gaming machines	Av. 88	Av. 28	Av. 1,000
No. venues with 20 GMs or less	14	11	0
Number of staff	Range 3–300 Av. 17 full-time Av. 30 part-time or casual	Range 6–146 Av. 5 full time Av. 24 part-time or casual	Range 345–2,500 full-time, part-time or casual, depending on season
Number of gaming staff	13 full-time, part-time or casual	8 full-time, part-time or casual	150 – 700 full-time, part-time or casual, depending on season
Staff Turnover	Low – 24 venues High – 20 venues	Low – 14 venues High- 13 venues	Range 3–12% Av. 7.5% (casino function only)

3.5.2 Interview Procedures

The interviews with venue managers were conducted in person and on-site in their venues between May 2005 and April 2006. They lasted between 30–60 minutes, and with the permission of the interviewees, all were taped. The interview schedule (Appendix B) asked about four main areas:

- Gambling and staffing facilities in the venue;
- Extent of staff gambling, within and outside workplace;
- Managers’ opinions on whether and how various aspects of working in gaming venues are likely to influence employee gambling behaviour; and
- Managers’ opinions on venue strategies that could encourage responsible gambling and discourage gambling problems amongst gaming venue employees.

A semi-structured approach was taken when interviewing. Based on themes that emerged from preliminary work, the managers were questioned about the following aspects of the work environment, but they were also free to raise additional themes they considered pertinent:

- Close interaction with gamblers
- Frequent exposure to gambling
- Influence of fellow employees
- Influence of management
- Nature of employee work

- Hours of work
- Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions
- Responsible gambling training of staff
- Responsible gambling strategies in the venue.

3.5.3 Data Analysis

The manager interviews were transcribed and responses grouped under each question in the interview schedule, and the data then analysed using the same procedure as for the counsellor interviews. Results from analysing the managers' interviews are presented in Chapter Seven.

3.6 STAGE FOUR: INTERVIEWS WITH GAMING VENUE EMPLOYEES

The next stage of data collection involved interviews with a sample of employees who were working in Queensland clubs, hotels and casinos at that time.

3.6.1 Sampling

Employees of clubs, hotels and casinos were recruited for interviews via the venue managers interviewed in Stage Three of the research. Our request to interview one or more of their employees was made in the original letter sent to the managers, and reiterated either during the initial and follow-up telephone calls or when the interviews were conducted, depending on the perceived receptivity of the managers. The employee interview schedule was also emailed, faxed or given to these managers at this point.

As a consequence of this approach, while the sample of club and hotel employees we interviewed participated voluntarily, they were either selected by the managers or more commonly were on duty at the time of our visit and able to be freed from duties for the interview. However, a different approach was taken to recruit a sample of casino employees. To encourage employee participation, the casinos advertised the research project on-site during September 2005 by placing posters and information sheets in employee dining rooms, training rooms and on laundry notice boards. These were provided by the project team and contained a synopsis of the research, a call for volunteers, phone and email contact details, and the employee interview schedule. The casino managers also sent emails to employees on their staff intranet, and some promoted the research project at their responsible gambling refresher courses held in early September 2005. In all, about one quarter of casino employees pre-arranged their interviews by contacting the researchers directly, while the remainder were recruited for interviews during the two days that the researchers spent in each casino's employee dining room. The casinos had agreed to allow up to 15 employees at each of the two large casinos and up to ten at the smaller casino to participate in a 30 minute interview during paid time. The Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers' Union (Gold Coast Branch) also telephoned some of its members to encourage them to participate. Thus, the casino interviewees participated voluntarily and the sample was essentially self-selecting.

While we had aimed to interview around 50 gaming venue employees in Queensland, we ended up interviewing a total of 90 gaming venue staff - 35 club employees, 17 hotel employees and 38 casino employees. However, four of these employees (one club employee and three hotel employees) were later found to score in the problem gambler category on the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index*, and so their results were separated and combined with those for the other problem gamblers interviewed (see below).

Table 3.2 identifies the positions held by the interviewees and demonstrates that the sampling approach was successful in capturing views from employees in a wide range of

gambling-related and non-gambling related positions, who worked in front-of-house and back-of-house positions, and at operational and supervisory levels.

Table 3.2: Key Characteristics of Employees Interviewed

	Club Employees N = 34	Hotel Employees N = 14	Casino Employees N = 38
Assistant manager	2	-	-
Departmental manager	1	-	3
Duty manager/floor supervisor	2	1	3
Gaming supervisor/manager	4	5	-
Table games dealer	-	-	11
Gaming machine attendant	7	3	1
Cashier/change booth operator	1	-	3
TAB operator/supervisor	-	-	2
Gaming promotions/guest services	1	-	4
Events/entertainment services	-	-	3
Bar supervisor	2	2	-
Bar & gaming attendant	8	1	-
Bar attendant	2	1	-
Food & beverage attendant	-	-	3
Kitchen staff	1	-	2
Security staff	-	-	1
Cleaner	-	1	1
Not specified	3	-	1
Total	34	14	38

3.6.2 Interview Procedures

The interviews with employees were conducted in person and on-site in their workplaces between May 2005 and April 2006. Interviews with club and hotel employees were conducted either when the researchers interviewed the venue managers or at a later mutually convenient time. The casino employee interviews were conducted over six days in total, with the researchers spending two days in each of the three casinos' employee dining rooms to coordinate the interviews, which were then conducted in a private room. At two of the casinos, the casino representative arranged for the interviews to be conducted during Responsible Gambling Awareness Week. During this time, several information booths were set up in staff dining rooms by the responsible gambling department of the Queensland Office of Gaming Regulation, the local gambling help agency was present with several counsellors, the casinos conducted staff quizzes on responsible gambling, and the responsible gambling arm of the corporate owner of the casinos had a booth. Additionally, these casinos had recently completed responsible gambling refresher courses for their staff. This meant that there was a focus on responsible gambling awareness in these two casinos at the time of the interviews. However, the interviews at the third casino were not conducted during Responsible Gambling Awareness Week.

The employee interviews lasted between 20-40 minutes, and with the permission of the interviewees, all were taped. The interviews were semi-structured and the interview schedule (Appendix C) asked about three main areas:

- the employees' work experience in gaming venues;
- their opinions and experiences about whether and how various aspects of working in gaming venues may influence employee gambling behaviour; and
- venue strategies that could encourage responsible gambling and discourage gambling problems amongst gaming venue employees.

A semi-structured approach was taken when interviewing. Based on themes that emerged from preliminary work, the employees were questioned about the following aspects of the work environment, but they were also free to raise additional themes they considered pertinent:

- Close interaction with gamblers
- Frequent exposure to gambling
- Influence of fellow employees
- Influence of management
- Nature of employee work
- Hours of work
- Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions
- Responsible gambling training of staff
- Responsible gambling strategies in the venue.

3.6.3 Survey Procedures

At the conclusion of the interview, employees were asked if they would like to take part in a gambling behaviour survey, a two-page questionnaire with four main sections, asking about the respondents' demographics (age and sex), some work characteristics (current job title, type of gaming venue currently employed in, other gambling venues worked in, and total length of time working in gaming venues), their gambling behaviour (frequency, session length and expenditure), and the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index*. A copy of the questionnaire is in Appendix D. Those who agreed either completed the survey on the spot or were given the survey to take away to complete and post back in a reply-paid envelope. However, two of the three casinos did not allow us to administer this survey to their employees. In total, 56 usable survey responses were completed and collected from employees in hotels, clubs and one casino.

3.6.4 Data Analysis

The employee interviews were transcribed and responses grouped under each question in the interview schedule, and the data then analysed using the same procedure as for the counsellor and manager interviews. The completed gambling behaviour surveys were entered into SPSS and appropriate statistical techniques used to analyse the data. Frequency distributions were first used to analyse the nominal and ordinal variables relating to demographics, work characteristics and the gambling behaviour of the respondents, while mean scores were calculated for metric variables. Data from the nine-point scale making up the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index* were analysed to categorise respondents into the Classification of Gambler Sub-Types, as recommended by the developers of the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index* (Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, 2001). Cut-off scores were also applied as recommended, where non-problem gamblers score 0, low risk gamblers score between 1 and 2.5, moderate risk gamblers score between 3 and 7.5, while problem gamblers score between 8 and 27, on a 9 item, 4 point Likert scale. Cross-tabulations were then used to identify any relationships between gambler sub-types and demographic characteristics, work characteristics and the gambling behaviour of the respondents, while correlations were used for metric variables. Results of the survey analysis are presented in Chapter Four, while the employee interview data are analysed in Chapter Five.

3.7 STAGE FIVE: INTERVIEWS WITH PROBLEM GAMBLERS

A further stage of data collection involved interviews with a sample of gaming venue employees who developed gambling problems while working in gaming venues.

3.7.1 Recruitment

As noted earlier, meetings were held with representatives from Queensland Gambling Help to discuss ways to invite problem gamblers in counselling to participate in a telephone interview. Following advice from these meetings, each counsellor was asked when interviewed whether their agency would be willing to display a notice calling for volunteers (Appendix E). These notices were then emailed to these agencies in May 2005 and some counsellors also offered to inform their clients, who met the sampling criteria, of the research project. The researchers aimed to interview up to ten problem gamblers who are gaming venue employees, but after notices had been displayed in the agencies for five months, only one problem gambling client had volunteered and this person was subsequently interviewed by telephone.

In reconsidering how else to recruit this sample, the project team liaised with the Research and Community Engagement Division of Queensland Treasury. Following their advice, we contacted consultants who were then conducting another research project for the Queensland Government which also involved recruiting problem gamblers. Based on their recent experience, the consultants advised that newspaper, television and radio advertising were expensive strategies that would be unlikely to yield recruits, especially given the need to recruit people who were both in counselling for gambling problems and who were employees in gaming venues. Thus, the researchers decided against advertising to seek participants for the current project.

Also on advice from the Research and Community Engagement Division, the researchers then approached the Queensland Gambling Helpline (based in Victoria) to seek their assistance. They agreed to inform their telephone counsellors of the project and to enlist their assistance in recruiting appropriate participants. The researchers provided the Gambling Helpline with a notice summarising the project and detailing a recruitment strategy, which was then reportedly distributed to all the Helpline's counsellors via their staff intranet in April 2006. However, no callers to the Helpline volunteered to participate.

Given the disappointing results from the above recruitment strategies, the researchers decided upon three ways in which to isolate more data from problem gamblers from the data already obtained:

- The first of these was to include an interview conducted by the researchers with a problem gambler in counselling working in gaming venues in northern NSW who we interviewed in person in late 2004. This interview had been conducted as preliminary exploratory research during the planning stages of this project. Despite being conducted with a NSW employee, the issues raised were consistent with those raised in interviews with Queensland employees, particularly those who had gambling problems (see below). Additionally, most aspects of the workplace discussed in the interviews are no different in NSW, such as staff having close interaction with gamblers, frequent exposure to gambling, and frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions, staff working shift work and being exposed to workplace stressors, and staff being subject to influences from other employees and management. There are, however, some differences in the responsible gambling training and other responsible gambling measures used in NSW and Queensland gaming venues.
- The second strategy was to isolate the respondents who scored as problem gamblers on the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index* in our gambling behaviour survey and to include their interviews in the analysis of data from problem gamblers. Four employee

interviews have therefore been included as such. As noted earlier, these interviews were conducted on-site in the employees' workplaces, but the researchers did not know at the time of the interviews that these four people were problem gamblers.

- The third strategy was to draw on interviews with 23 of the 32 gambling counsellors we interviewed who had treated staff who developed gambling problems while working in gaming venues. The counsellors were asked to provide both client experiences and their own professional opinions on how various aspects of the gaming venue workplace influence staff gambling behaviour. Thus, the experiences of clients they had seen who developed gambling problems while working in gaming venues (although reported second-hand), and the counsellors' professional interpretation of these experiences, also contribute to a problem gambler perspective on the issue.

In total, six interviews with problem gamblers were achieved – two with clients receiving counselling for their gambling problems, and four who were categorised as problem gamblers on the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index*. Additionally, 23 gambling counsellors shared with us the experiences of clients who developed gambling problems while working in gaming venues and their own professional interpretations of these experiences. This problem gambler perspective is reported in Chapter Six.

3.7.2 Interview Procedures

The interview schedule we had designed for problem gamblers in counselling contained three main sections (Appendix F)

- The client's background, including some personal details (e.g. age group, marital status, family), experience of working in gaming venues, and involvement with gambling (e.g. type, frequency, development of problems);
- Their opinions about aspects of the work environment that may have contributed to their development of gambling problems; and
- Their opinions about venue strategies that they, as problem gamblers, consider could encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling amongst gaming venue employees.

This interview schedule was used for the two problem gamblers in counselling we interviewed, although these interviews were less structured than those with the counsellors, managers and employees as it was recognised that this approach would better enable the interviewees to tell their own stories. The interview with the NSW client was conducted in person in the presence of her counsellor and lasted about 90 minutes. The telephone interview with the Queensland client lasted about 40 minutes. Both interviews were taped with the permission of the interviewees.

The interviews with the four problem gamblers identified as such through their scores on the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index* were conducted in person and on-site, using the procedures outlined in Section 3.6. The interviews with the counsellors who had treated gaming venue clients were conducted using the procedures described in Section 3.4.

3.8 SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

In total, 201 interviews were conducted for this research project, with the breakdown shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Summary of Interviews Conducted

	Brisbane	Gold Coast	Sunshine Coast	Cairns	Mt Isa & Longreach	Non-Area Specific	Total
Club managers	12	9	7	10	6	-	44
Hotel managers	7	5	3	9	3	-	27
Casino managers	-	1	-	1	-	-	2
Club employees	14	4	11	2	3	-	34
Hotel employees	4	2	2	5	1	-	14
Casino employees	15	16	-	7	-	-	38
Gambling counsellors	-	-	-	-	-	32	32
Problem gamblers	-	-	-	-	-	6	6
Clubs QLD	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
QHA	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
LHMU	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
QLD Legal Aid	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total	52	37	23	34	13	42	201

3.9 METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

This research is subject to numerous limitations:

- First, it relied on the truthful responses of gaming venue managers and employees, problem gamblers and gambling counsellors. There is no way of ensuring that the responses obtained are indeed an accurate account of each interviewee's true opinions and experiences. As with any gambling research, the accuracy of the data can be compromised by social desirability of responses, which may be due to awkwardness, embarrassment or a desire to reflect the 'company line'.
- Second, it relied on voluntary participation and so it was not possible to evaluate the experiences and opinions of people in non-participating venues on the gambling behaviour of their employees in Queensland gaming venues, how aspects of their workplace might influence that behaviour and how gaming venues can provide a work environment that encourages responsible gambling and discourages problem gambling amongst their employees. It would be assumed that this research in less cooperative venues may reveal additional and different issues not uncovered in this particular project.
- Third, non-random samples were used and selected based on convenience and the willingness of venues, managers, employees, counsellors and problem gamblers to participate. As such, the results cannot and should not be generalised to all employees working in gaming venues.
- Fourth, the sample of casino employees contained a higher proportion of staff in administrative and middle management positions than the samples of club and hotel employees and the interviews with staff of two of the three casinos were conducted during Responsible Gambling Awareness Week. Different results may have otherwise been obtained.
- Fifth, the interviews and surveys provide only a snapshot of respondents' opinions at the time of data collection, and it is recognised that these may be influenced by such factors as mood, recent experiences, and events occurring in their workplace, personal life and other domains.
- Sixth, interpretation of the interview data necessarily contains some subjectivity. While the researchers have endeavoured to interpret the data as accurately as possible, it must be recognised that some respondents did not always hold firm views on the issues investigated, sometimes changed their views and/or contradicted themselves during

interviews, and in some cases, may not have articulated their views adequately for the researchers to be sure of their meaning.

- Seventh, the quantitative survey was completed by only 56 employees, limiting the statistical analysis that could reasonably be conducted. Additionally, two of the three casinos did not allow us to administer the survey to their employees so the survey results do not capture an adequate representation of casino staff. Thus, the survey results may be indicative of the gambling behaviour of some gaming venue employees, but certainly cannot be considered as representative of this population.

In recognition of the many limitations of this exploratory research, a follow-up quantitative survey is planned for 2006-07 and has again been funded by the Queensland Office of Gaming Regulation, Treasury Department.

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter has explained the methodology for this research project and each stage of data collection and analysis. Several methodological limitations have been identified, with a caution that this is exploratory research with results that cannot be generalised to the whole population of employees working in Queensland gaming venues. However, the purpose of the research is to uncover a range of ways that working in a gaming venue may influence venue staff in their own gambling, in order to highlight pertinent risk and protective factors, and identify ways that gaming venues might further encourage their staff towards responsible gambling conduct if and when they participate in gambling. Thus, the research approach is considered appropriate to exploratory research techniques and the use of a grounded theory approach in the absence of a strong theory base on gambling by gaming venue employees.

CHAPTER FOUR – THE GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR OF QUEENSLAND GAMING VENUE EMPLOYEES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses Research Objective One, which was to investigate the gambling behaviour of Queensland gaming venue employees, particularly in terms of responsible gambling and problem gambling. To this end, the employees we interviewed from the clubs, hotels and one casino were asked to complete a two page questionnaire. Unfortunately, the other two casinos did not allow us to administer this questionnaire to their employees. In all, 56 questionnaires were completed by 34 club employees, 16 hotel employees and 6 casino employees. Because the sample was essentially a convenience sample, the results provide an overview of the gambling behaviour of only these 56 employees, not of all gaming venue employees in the state. However, given that our sampling process involved hotel and club employees from five geographic regions in Queensland, and from clubs and hotels of different types, sizes and ownership structures, as well as staff from one casino, the results may be somewhat indicative of the larger population of Queensland gaming venue employees. A larger scale, quantitative study is planned for 2006-07 to provide more representative results on the gambling behaviour of Queensland gaming venue employees.

This chapter commences by identifying key areas in the survey questionnaire (Section 4.2), then presents survey results pertaining to the demographic and work-related characteristics of respondents (Section 4.3). Section 4.4 focuses on the gambling behaviour of the respondents, while Section 4.5 presents the sample's results on the *Problem Gambling Severity Index* of the *Canadian Problem Gambling Index* (CPGI). Relationships between the gambler sub-types as measured by the *Problem Gambling Severity Index* (non-problem, low risk gambler, moderate risk gambler and problem gambler) and demographic and work-related characteristics of respondents and their gambling behaviour are presented in Section 4.6. Where possible, comparisons are drawn between the results of the present study and those of the *National Gambling Survey* (Productivity Commission, 1999) and the *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2003-04* (Queensland Government, 2005a). However, because the *National Gambling Survey* used a different measure of problem gambling than the CPGI, comparisons are limited in this area. The survey findings are then summarised (Section 4.7).

4.2 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire contained four main sections, asking about the respondents' demographics (age and sex), some work characteristics (current job title, type of gaming venue currently employed in, other gambling venues worked in, and total length of time working in gaming venues), their gambling behaviour (frequency, session length and expenditure), and the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index*.

4.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

This section presents the survey results for the respondents' demographic and work-related characteristics.

4.3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Respondents ranged in age from 20 to 58 years, with a mean age of 31 years and a median of 29 years, reflecting the generally young profile of gaming venue workers discussed in Chapter Two. Table 4.1 shows the age distribution of respondents.

Table 4.1: Age of Respondents

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
20-24 years	19	33.9	33.9
25-34 years	22	39.3	73.2
35-44 years	9	16.1	89.3
45-54 years	3	5.4	94.6
55-64 years	3	5.4	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

The respondent sample is slightly weighted towards females, as shown in Table 4.2, and is consistent with the proportion of females employed in Australian gambling industries (53 per cent) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006a; 2006b).

Table 4.2: Sex of Respondents

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Male	26	46.4	46.4
Female	30	53.6	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

4.3.2 Work Characteristics of Respondents

Respondents worked in a range of positions within their venues, as Table 4.3 indicates. Table 4.4 then groups these positions into operational, supervisory and management levels, while Table 4.5 categorises them as gaming-related or non-gaming related. For this, positions of cashier, croupier, bar attendant, bar manager, duty manager/supervisor, gaming attendant, gaming manager and promotions were deemed to be gaming-related positions, while positions of administration, chef, human resources and security manager were categorised as non-gaming related. The results show that most respondents worked as gaming attendants, duty managers/supervisors or bar attendants, most were at operational level, and the majority held gaming-related positions within their current workplace.

Table 4.3: Current Main Position of Respondents

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Administration	2	3.6	3.6
Bar attendant	7	12.5	16.1
Bar manager	2	3.6	19.7
Cashier	2	3.6	23.3
Chef	1	1.8	25.1
Croupier	3	5.4	30.5
Duty manager/supervisor	13	23.2	53.7
Gaming attendant	14	25.0	78.7
Gaming manager	5	8.9	87.6
Human resources	2	3.6	91.2
Promotions	2	3.6	94.8
Security manager	1	1.8	96.6
Missing	2	3.6	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

Table 4.4: Current Main Job Level of Respondents

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Operational	28	50.0	50.0
Supervisory	22	39.3	89.3
Management/administration	4	7.1	96.4
Missing	2	3.6	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

Table 4.5: Current Gaming and Non-Gaming Related Positions of Respondents

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Gaming-related position	48	85.7	85.7
Non gaming-related position	6	10.7	96.4
Missing	2	3.6	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

As shown in Table 4.6, most respondents worked in a club, followed by hotels and then casinos. However, respondents had sometimes worked or were working in other gambling venues. In all, the 56 respondents had held a total of 93 positions in gaming venues. Table 4.7 shows the numbers and percentages of respondents who had ever worked in the various types of gambling venues (including the type they were currently employed in). This shows that nearly three-quarters of all respondents had worked in clubs, nearly half in hotels and about one-sixth in casinos. A few had worked in a TAB and at a racetrack and some in other venues offering gambling activities, including a sports stadium, a resort, a strip club and night club.

Table 4.6: Types of Gaming Venue Where Respondents are Currently Employed

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Club	34	60.7	60.7
Hotel	16	28.6	89.3
Casino	6	10.7	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

Table 4.7: Types of Gaming Venue Where Respondents Have Ever Worked

Category	No.	%
Club	41	73.2
Hotel	27	48.2
Casino	10	17.9
TAB	6	10.7
Other	5	8.9
Racetrack	4	7.1

The total length of time that respondents had been working in gaming venues ranged from 6 months to 26 years, with a mean length of 7.7 years and median length of 6.5 years. Table 4.8 shows the distribution of length of service by yearly increments.

Table 4.8: Length of Time Respondents Have Worked in Gaming Venues

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Up to 1 year	2	3.6	3.6
Up to 2 years	5	8.9	12.5
Up to 3 years	6	10.7	23.2
Up to 4 years	8	14.3	37.5
Up to 5 years	4	7.1	44.6
Up to 6 years	3	5.4	50.0
Up to 7 years	2	3.6	53.6
Up to 8 years	5	8.9	62.5
Up to 9 years	0	0.0	62.5
Up to 10 years	9	16.1	78.6
More than 10 years	12	21.4	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

4.4 GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR OF RESPONDENTS

This section presents the survey results relating to the respondents' gambling participation, frequency, session length and expenditure.

4.4.1 Gambling Participation

As Table 4.9 indicates, participation rates amongst respondents for the different types of gambling are highest for gaming machines, with over three-quarters playing them during the last 12 months. At least half the respondents also participated in TAB betting, lottery-type games (comprising lotto, instant lotto, lottery and soccer pools) and keno during this time. Casino table games, sportsbetting, private gambling and racetrack betting attracted around one-quarter of respondents each, while bingo and internet gambling attracted few participants. The 56 respondents each had gambled on an average of 3.5 different types of gambling in the previous 12 months. Only seven respondents had 'hardly at all/never' gambled on any type of gambling during this time.

Table 4.9 also compares these participation rates to those found in the *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2003-04* (Queensland Government, 2005). Our employee participation rates are higher for all types of gambling except playing lottery-type games, and particularly higher for gambling on gaming machines, the TAB and keno. These differences are amplified even more when differences in how participation rates were calculated in each survey are considered. In our employee survey, those who 'hardly at all/never' gambled on each form of gambling in the previous 12 months were classified as non-participants, whereas the *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2003-04* only included as non-participants those who had never gambled on each form of gambling in the previous 12 months.

Table 4.9: Gambling Participation on Different Types of Gambling in the Last 12 Months

Category	No.	%	QLD HGS % ^a	% Difference
Gaming machines	44	78.6	32.17	+46.43
TAB betting	34	60.7	16.42 ^b	+44.28
Keno	28	50.0	16.47	+33.53
Lottery-type games	29	51.8	67.32	-15.52
Casino games	16	28.6	5.62	+22.98
Racetrack betting	12	21.4	.. ^b	-
Sportsbetting	13	23.2	4.36	+18.84
Bingo	3	5.4	3.48	+1.92
Internet gambling	2	3.6	0.27	+3.33
Private gambling	13	23.2	1.84	+21.36

^a Sourced from Queensland Government, (2005). *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2003-04*, Queensland Government, Brisbane.

^b The Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2003-04 does not include TAB betting and racetrack betting as discrete categories, instead having one category of 'horse/dog races'.

4.4.2 Gambling Frequency

Respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they had participated in various types of gambling in the previous 12 months. The results are presented in Tables 4.10 to 4.19. They indicate that the 'typical' employee in our survey gambled on gaming machines about once a month, on the TAB between once a month and once every few months, on keno and lottery-type games once every few months, and 'hardly at all/never' on the remaining types of gambling. However, identifying the gambling behaviour of the 'typical' employee clouds the high degree of polarisation apparent amongst the sample, between those who gamble frequently and those who hardly or never gamble. For example, while nearly one-quarter of respondents played gaming machines at least weekly, nearly one-half played them only once every few months or less. While about one-sixth bet on the TAB and played lottery-type games at least weekly, about two-thirds did so only once every few months or less. Similarly, one in ten played keno at least weekly, while three-quarters played very infrequently or not at all. For most other types of gambling, a small percentage of respondents participated very frequently, whilst the vast majority hardly or never participated.

Table 4.10: Frequency of Playing Gaming Machines

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Daily	1	1.8	1.8
2-6 times per week	4	7.1	8.9
About once a week	8	14.3	23.2
About once a fortnight	8	14.3	37.5
About once a month	8	14.3	51.8
Once every few months	15	26.8	78.6
Hardly at all/never	12	21.4	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

Table 4.11: Frequency of TAB Betting

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Daily	2	3.6	3.6
2-6 times per week	2	3.6	7.1
About once a week	6	10.7	17.9
About once a fortnight	3	5.4	23.2
About once a month	7	12.5	35.7
Once every few months	14	25.0	60.7
Hardly at all/never	22	39.3	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

Table 4.12: Frequency of Keno Betting

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Daily	1	1.8	1.8
2-6 times per week	4	7.1	8.9
About once a week	1	1.8	10.7
About once a fortnight	2	3.6	14.3
About once a month	7	12.5	26.8
Once every few months	13	23.2	50.0
Hardly at all/never	28	50.0	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

Table 4.13: Frequency of Playing Lottery-Type Games

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Daily	1	1.8	1.8
2-6 times per week	1	1.8	3.6
About once a week	8	14.3	17.9
About once a fortnight	4	7.1	25.0
About once a month	3	5.4	30.4
Once every few months	12	21.4	51.8
Hardly at all/never	27	48.2	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

Table 4.14: Frequency of Playing Casino Table Games

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Daily	1	1.8	1.8
2-6 times per week	1	1.8	3.6
About once a week	0	0.0	3.6
About once a fortnight	0	0.0	3.6
About once a month	3	5.4	8.9
Once every few months	11	19.6	28.6
Hardly at all/never	40	71.4	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

Table 4.15: Frequency of Racetrack Betting

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Daily	1	1.8	1.8
2-6 times per week	1	1.8	3.6
About once a week	0	0.0	3.6
About once a fortnight	1	1.8	5.4
About once a month	0	0.0	5.4
Once every few months	9	16.1	21.4
Hardly at all/never	44	78.6	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

Table 4.16: Frequency of Sportsbetting

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Daily	1	1.8	1.8
2-6 times per week	1	1.8	3.6
About once a week	3	5.4	8.9
About once a fortnight	1	1.8	10.7
About once a month	2	3.6	14.3
Once every few months	5	8.9	23.2
Hardly at all/never	43	76.8	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

Table 4.17: Frequency of Playing Bingo

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Daily	1	1.8	1.8
2-6 times per week	0	0.0	1.8
About once a week	0	0.0	1.8
About once a fortnight	0	0.0	1.8
About once a month	0	0.0	1.8
Once every few months	2	3.6	5.4
Hardly at all/never	53	94.6	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

Table 4.18: Frequency of Internet Gambling

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Daily	1	1.8	1.8
2-6 times per week	1	1.8	3.6
About once a week	0	0.0	3.6
About once a fortnight	0	0.0	3.6
About once a month	0	0.0	3.6
Once every few months	0	0.0	3.6
Hardly at all/never	54	96.4	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

Table 4.19: Frequency of Private Gambling

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Daily	0	0.0	0.0
2-6 times per week	1	1.8	1.8
About once a week	1	1.8	3.6
About once a fortnight	0	0.0	3.6
About once a month	5	8.9	12.5
Once every few months	6	10.7	23.2
Hardly at all/never	43	76.8	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

Table 4.20 indicates that the most common regular (at least weekly) gambling activity amongst the respondents was playing gaming machines, followed by TAB betting and playing lottery-type games. Nearly one-quarter of respondents were regular gaming machine players, about one-sixth were regular TAB and lottery-type game players, while around one in ten respondents were regular sportsbetting and keno gamblers. Very few respondents gambled regularly on the other forms of gambling.

It is difficult to compare these results with those from the *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2003-04* (Queensland Government, 2005) because their frequency categories did not align (their closest category was ‘more than weekly’, which is clearly different from ‘at least weekly’). However, when compared to results from the *National Gambling Survey* (Productivity Commission, 1999), higher proportions of our employee respondents were regular (at least weekly) gamblers on all forms of gambling except lottery-type games and internet gambling, and these proportions were markedly higher for gaming machines, TAB betting and keno (Table 4.20).

Table 4.20: No. of Respondents Who Are Regular (At Least Weekly) Gamblers on Different Types of Gambling

Category	No. of Respondents	%	NGS %	% Difference
Gaming machines	13	23.2	5.2	+18.0
TAB betting	10	17.9	2.9	+15.0
Keno	6	10.7	1.3	+9.4
Lottery-type games	10	17.9	30.4	-12.5
Casino games	2	3.6	0.1	+3.5
Racetrack betting	2	3.6	0.3	+3.3
Sportsbetting	5	8.9	2.4	+6.5
Bingo	1	1.8	0.1	+1.7
Internet gambling	2	3.6	4.7	-1.1
Private gambling	2	3.6	0.4	+3.2

4.4.3 Gambling Session Length

Respondents were asked to indicate how much time they normally spent each time they gambled on the various types of gambling activities in the previous 12 months. Table 4.21 shows the mean times spent on each activity by those who participated in them. Average session length was longest for racetrack betting (4.7 hours), followed by private gambling (2.6 hours), bingo (2.5 hours), casino table games (2.5 hours), gaming machines (2.3 hours), TAB betting (2 hours), sportsbetting (1.7 hours) and keno (1 hour). Time spent playing lottery-type games was the shortest (0.26 hours)

Table 4.21: No. of Minutes Normally Spent on Different Types of Gambling

Category	No. of Respondents	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Gaming machines	43	5	720	137	157.978
TAB betting	33	2	620	117	146.989
Keno	25	2	240	59	53.684
Lottery-type games	27	1	60	16	21.107
Casino games	20	2	600	151	141.126
Racetrack betting	11	5	600	283	214.386
Sportsbetting	10	5	600	99	183.678
Bingo	2	120	180	150	42.426
Internet gambling	1	120	120	120	-
Private gambling	10	5	300	156	112.508

4.4.4 Gambling Expenditure

The respondents were asked to indicate how much money they spent in a typical month during the last 12 months on various gambling activities. Table 4.22 shows the number of participants, and the minimum, maximum and mean expenditure on each activity by those who participated in each gambling activity. The mean scores indicate that the gambling activities attracting most expenditure per participant were sportsbetting, followed by gaming machines, casino table games, internet gambling, private gambling, TAB betting, racetrack betting, lottery-type games, keno and bingo, respectively.

Table 4.22: Mean Dollars Typically Spent on Different Types of Gambling Per Month

Category	No. of Respondents	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Gaming machines	41	2	1000	120.71	188.855
TAB betting	31	2	600	78.03	118.85
Keno	26	1	400	49.92	83.16
Lottery-type games	32	2	600	59.16	111.87
Casino games	16	10	400	101.25	103.47
Racetrack betting	9	10	200	75.22	62.01
Sportsbetting	8	5	800	126.50	273.86
Bingo	1	30	30	30	0.00
Internet gambling	1	83	83	83.00	0.00
Private gambling	6	5	300	79.17	114.12

Table 4.23 shows the total amount spent per month by the respondents for each type of gambling activity and in total. Clearly, gaming machines attract the highest total expenditure, followed by TAB betting, lottery-type products, casino table games, keno, sportsbetting, racetrack betting, private gambling, internet gambling and bingo, respectively. The average per capita monthly expenditure on gambling amongst the 56 respondents is \$258.14 (\$14456.08/56), equating to \$3,097 per year, an amount that is about 2.9 times more than the average yearly per capita gambling expenditure of \$1,066.95 per year for Australian adults during 2003-04 (Office of Economic and Statistical Research, 2005) and about 3.2 times more than the average yearly per capita gambling expenditure by Queensland adults of \$967.96 in 2003-04 (Office of Economic and Statistical Research, 2005).

Table 4.23: Total Dollars Typically Spent on Different Types of Gambling Per Month

Category	No. of Respondents	Total
Gaming machines	41	4949.11
TAB betting	31	2418.93
Keno	26	1297.92
Lottery-type games	32	1893.12
Casino games	16	1620.00
Racetrack betting	9	676.98
Sportsbetting	8	1012.00
Bingo	1	30.00
Internet gambling	1	83.00
Private gambling	6	475.02
Total		14456.08

When average employee expenditure on each form of gambling is compared to the per capita expenditure for Queensland adults as reported by the Office of Economic and Statistical Research (2005) (Table 4.24), it is apparent that the employees surveyed spend about twice as much on gaming machines, over five times as much on TAB betting, over ten times as much on keno, over three times as much on lottery-type games, and 1.7 times more at casinos. Average employee expenditure on sportsbetting is nearly 100 times the per capita expenditure for Queensland adults, but represents few respondents.

Table 4.24: Per Capita Gambling Expenditure by Respondents Compared to Queensland Adults

Category	Total Monthly	Per Capita Monthly	Per Capita Yearly	Per Capita QLD ^a
Gaming machines	4949.11	88.38	1060.52	519.44 ^b
TAB betting	2418.93	43.20	518.34	99.46 ^c
Keno	1297.92	23.18	278.13	23.73 ^d
Lottery-type games	1893.12	33.81	405.67	117.90
Casino games	1620.00	28.93	347.14	205.19 ^e
Racetrack betting	676.98	12.09	145.07	- ^f
Sportsbetting	1012.00	18.07	216.86	2.25
Bingo	30.00	0.54	6.43	- ^f
Internet gambling	83.00	1.48	17.79	- ^f
Private gambling	475.02	8.48	101.79	- ^f
Total	14456.08	258.14	3097.74	967.97

^a Sourced from Office of Economic and Statistical Research, (2005). *Australian Gambling Statistics 1978-79 to 2003-04*, Queensland Government, Brisbane.

^b Excludes expenditure on gaming machines at casinos.

^c Includes expenditure at both on and off-course TABs.

^d Excludes expenditure on keno at casinos.

^e Includes expenditure on tables, gaming machines and keno at casinos.

^f Data unavailable

4.5 PROBLEM GAMBLING

All 56 respondents completed the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index*. Table 4.25 shows the number and percentages of 'yes' responses to each of the nine CPGI questions. Table 4.26 shows the distribution of total CPGI scores, Table 4.27 shows the distribution of scores according to the Classification of Gambler Sub-Types recommended by the developers of the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index* (2001), while Table 4.28 compares these to results from the *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2003-04* (Queensland Government, 2005a) which also used the *Canadian Problem Gambling Index*. From these tables, it is clear that the prevalence of moderate risk and problem gambling is

far higher amongst our respondents than for the general Queensland adult population. In fact, 28.5 per cent of our respondents appear to have moderate to severe gambling problems, compared to 2.5 per cent of the Queensland population. That is, the prevalence of moderate and severe gambling problems amongst our employees is around eleven times higher than the state figure. More specifically, the prevalence of problem gambling, at 8.9 per cent, is 16 times higher amongst the gaming venue employees we surveyed than amongst the general population in the state, while the rate of moderate risk gambling, at 19.6 per cent, is ten times higher. The rate of low risk gambling, at 16.1 per cent, is triple the state figure.

Table 4.25: 'Yes' Responses to CPGI Items

Category	Never	Sometimes	Most of the Time	Always
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often have you bet more than you could really afford to lose?	35	20	1	0
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often have you needed to gamble with larger amounts of money to get the same feeling of excitement?	46	6	4	0
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often have you gone back another day to try to win back some of the money you lost?	46	8	2	0
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often have you borrowed money or sold anything to get money to gamble?	51	5	0	0
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often have you felt that you might have a problem with gambling?	46	9	1	0
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often have people criticised your betting or told you that you had a gambling problem, regardless of whether or not you thought it was true?	46	9	1	0
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often have you felt guilty about the way you gamble, or what happens when you gamble?	40	12	4	0
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often has your gambling caused you any health problems, including stress or anxiety?	50	5	1	0
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often has your gambling caused any financial problems for you or your household?	50	5	1	0

Table 4.26: Distribution of CPGI Scores

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
0	31	55.4	55.4
1	7	12.5	67.9
2	2	3.6	71.4
3	5	8.9	80.4
4	2	3.6	83.9
5	2	3.6	87.5
6	1	1.8	89.3
7	1	1.8	91.1
8	1	1.8	92.9
9	0	0.0	92.9
10	2	3.6	96.4
11	1	1.8	98.2
12	0	0.0	98.2
13	1	1.8	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

Table 4.27: Distribution of Gambler Sub-Types

Category	No.	%	Cum. %
Non-problem gambler	31	55.4	55.5
Low risk gambler	9	16.1	71.4
Moderate risk gambler	11	19.6	91.1
Problem gambler	5	8.9	100.0
Total	56	100.0	

Table 4.28: Distribution of Gambler Sub-Types Amongst Respondents Compared to Queensland Adults

Category	% Current Survey	% QLD Gambling Survey	% Difference
Non-gambler	5.4	19.73	-14.33
Non-problem gambler	50.0	72.40	-22.40
Low risk gambler	16.1	5.34	+10.76
Moderate risk gambler	19.6	1.97	+17.63
Problem gambler	8.9	0.55	+8.35
Total	100.0	100.00	

4.6 RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PROBLEM GAMBLING AND RESPONDENTS' CHARACTERISTICS AND GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR

This section presents a series of tables which compare means (for metric variables) or cross-tabulate (for non-metric variables) the four gambler sub-types with the demographic characteristics, work characteristics and gambling behaviour of the respondents. Some observations are made about these results, but few statistical tests have been applied due to low numbers in many cells.

4.6.1 Gambling Problems and Demographic Characteristics

Table 4.29 indicates that the mean age of the problem gambler group is the lowest, followed by the moderate risk group and the low risk group. Non-problem gamblers have the highest mean age.

Table 4.29: Gambler Sub-Types by Age

Category	No.	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Non-problem gambler	31	21	58	32.6	10.404
Low risk gambler	9	20	58	31.9	14.111
Moderate risk gambler	11	21	37	28.0	5.441
Problem gambler	5	24	29	27.0	2.739

When the gambler sub-types are cross-tabulated with the age category of respondents (Table 4.30), it is apparent that 15 of the 16 problem and moderate risk gamblers are aged from 20-34 years. Examination of the five cases of problem gambler revealed that two are aged 24 years and three are aged 29 years.

Table 4.30: Gambler Sub-Types by Age Category

Category	Non Problem	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	Problem Gambler	Total
20-24 years	10	4	3	2	19
25-34 years	9	3	7	3	22
35-44 years	8	0	1	0	9
45-54 years	2	1	0	0	3
55-64 years	2	1	0	0	3
Total	31	9	11	5	56

When the gambler sub-types are cross-tabulated with the sex of respondents (Table 4.31), it is evident that 3 of the 5 cases of problem gambler are female, and that about 33 per cent of females and 23 per cent of males in the sample are moderate risk or problem gamblers. This result contrasts markedly with those for the *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2003-04* (Queensland Government, 2005a) which found that 64 per cent of the problem gambler group and 62 per cent of the moderate risk gambler group in their survey were male.

Table 4.31: Gambler Sub-Types by Sex

Category	Non Problem	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	Problem Gambler	Total
Male	17	3	4	2	26
Female	14	6	7	3	30
Total	31	9	11	5	56

4.6.2 Gambling Problems and Work Characteristics

Table 4.32 shows a cross-tabulation between the job title of respondents and gambler sub-types. It reveals that three of the five problem gamblers were employed as duty managers and the other two as bar attendants. These positions are also represented amongst the moderate risk gamblers, as are croupier, gaming attendant, gaming manager and promotions positions. All positions of the problem and moderate risk gambler groups were front-of-house positions, at both operational and supervisory levels (Table 4.33) and entailed gambling-related duties (Table 4.34).

Table 4.32: Gambler Sub-Types by Current Job Title

Category	Non Problem	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	Problem Gambler	Total
Administration	2				2
Bar Attendant	2	1	2	2	7
Bar Manager	2				2
Cashier	2				2
Chef	1				1
Croupier	2		1		3
Duty Manager/Supervisor	6	2	2	3	13
Gaming Attendant	6	4	4		14
Gaming Manager	2	2	1		5
Human Resources	2				2
Promotions	1		1		2
Security Manager	1				1
Missing	2				2
Total	31	9	11	5	56

Table 4.33: Gambler Sub-Types by Current Main Job Level

Category	Non Problem	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	Problem Gambler	Total
Operational	13	5	8	2	28
Supervisory	12	4	3	3	22
Management/administration	4	0	0	0	4
Missing	2	0	0	0	2
Total	31	9	11	5	56

Table 4.34: Gambler Sub-Types by Current Gambling and Non-Gambling Related Positions

Category	Non Problem	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	Problem Gambler	Total
Gaming-related position	23	9	11	5	48
Non gaming-related position	6	0	0	0	6
Missing	2	0	0	0	2
Total	31	9	11	5	56

Table 4.35 indicates that two of the five problem gamblers currently work in a club and three in a hotel, while the moderate risk group has staff from clubs, hotels and a casino. Given the smaller number of hotels in the sample (16), hotel employees are over-represented amongst both the moderate risk and problem gambler groups.

Table 4.35: Gambler Sub-Types by Type of Gaming Venue Where Currently Employed

Category	Non Problem	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	Problem Gambler	Total
Club	22	5	5	2	34
Hotel	5	3	5	3	16
Casino	4	1	1	0	6
Total	31	9	11	5	56

Table 4.36 shows gambler sub-types by types of gambling venues the respondents had ever worked in. Again, those who have ever worked in a hotel are over-represented in the two highest risk categories, while those who have ever worked in a casino are over-represented amongst moderate risk gamblers.

Table 4.36: Gambler Sub-Types by Types of Gaming Venue Where Respondents Have Ever Worked

Category	Non Problem	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	Problem Gambler	Total
Club	25	7	7	2	41
Hotel	13	4	7	3	27
Casino	7	1	2	0	10
TAB	2	1	2	1	6
Racetrack	1	2	1	0	4
Other	3	0	1	1	5

When the mean number of years of working in gambling venues is compared amongst the four gambler sub-types, it is apparent that the problem gambler group has worked in gambling venues for the shortest time, while the non-problem group has worked in gambling venues for the longest time (Table 4.37).

Table 4.37: Gambler Sub-Types by Years Working in Gaming Venues

Category	No.	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Non-problem gambler	31	1.7	26.0	9.2	5.8504
Low risk gambler	9	0.5	15.0	5.3	4.1608
Moderate risk gambler	11	0.7	13.0	6.5	4.2622
Problem gambler	5	1.5	10.0	4.5	3.2404

Table 4.38 cross-tabulates gambler sub-types with whether the respondents had worked in a gaming venue for more or less than 5 years. Of the five problem gamblers, four had worked in gaming venues for 4 years or less, while one had done so for ten years. Staff who had worked in gaming venues for 5 years or less are also over-represented amongst the moderate risk group.

Table 4.38: Gambler Sub-Types by Length of Time Working in Gaming Venues

Category	Non Problem	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	Problem Gambler	Total
5 years or less	9	6	6	4	25
More than 5 years	22	3	5	1	31
Total	31	9	11	5	56

4.6.3 Gambling Problems and Participation in Gambling

When gambler sub-types are cross-tabulated with participation in the various forms of gambling (Table 4.39), it is apparent that, during the previous 12 months, all five problem gamblers had participated in gaming machine play and keno betting, four of them had gambled privately, and three of them had gambled on lottery-type games, TAB betting, and casino table games. Two gambled on sportsbetting and at the racetrack. None of the problem gambling group participated in bingo or internet gambling during the previous 12 months.

The problem gamblers had participated in an average of 5.5 different gambling activities in the previous 12 months, a greater number than the other groups, whose average number of gambling activities were 5.2 for moderate risk gamblers, 4.0 for low risk gamblers and 2.5 for non-problem gamblers.

Table 4.39: Gambler Sub-Types by Participation in Each Type of Gambling

Category	Non Problem	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	Problem Gambler	Total
Gaming machines	19	9	11	5	44
TAB betting	14	6	11	3	34
Keno	8	5	10	5	28
Lottery-type games	14	5	7	3	29
Casino games	6	3	4	3	16
Racetrack betting	4	2	4	2	12
Sportsbetting	6	0	5	2	13
Bingo	2	0	1	0	3
Internet gambling	1	0	1	0	2
Private gambling	4	1	4	4	13

4.6.4 Gambling Problems and Frequency of Gambling

Cross-tabulations were not performed for gambler sub-types and frequency of gambling, due to the small number of respondents in many cells. Instead, more meaningful data are provided in Table 4.40 which shows the number of regular (at least weekly) gamblers for each type of gambling and their distribution amongst the four gambler sub-types. It indicates

that regular gaming machine play, followed by regular TAB betting and regular keno play, feature highly amongst problem and moderate risk gamblers when compared to regular participation in the other forms of gambling. A higher proportion of the problem gambler group were regular gaming machine players (60 per cent) compared to the proportions of moderate risk gamblers (38 per cent), low risk gamblers (22 per cent) and non-problem gamblers (6 per cent) who are regular gaming machine players, a result consistent with the findings of the *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2003-04* (Queensland Government, 2005a). A higher proportion of the problem gambler group (40 per cent) were also regular keno players and regular private gamblers (20 per cent) compared to the other groups, although the small numbers make comparisons tenuous.

Table 4.40: Gambler Sub-Types by Regular (At Least Weekly) Gambling

Category	Non Problem	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	Problem Gambler	Total
Gaming machines	2	2	6	3	13
TAB betting	3	2	4	1	10
Keno	2	0	2	2	6
Lottery-type games	5	2	2	1	10
Casino games	1	0	0	1	2
Racetrack betting	1	0	1	0	2
Sportsbetting	3	0	2	0	5
Bingo	1	0	0	0	1
Internet gambling	1	0	1	0	2
Private gambling	0	0	1	1	2

4.6.5 Gambling Problems and Session Length

Tables 4.41 to 4.43 present cross-tabulations for gambler sub-types and gambling session length for gaming machines, TAB betting and keno. Normally, chi square would be used to test for significant relationships between gambler sub-type category and session length for the various forms of gambling. However, the small sample size and therefore the small number of cases in many cells preclude this approach. Instead, session length for each form of gambling was correlated with total scores on the CPGI. The results identify a significant positive relationship between CPGI score and session length for gaming machines ($r = 0.556$, $p \leq 0.001$), but not for other forms of gambling. That is, higher scores on the CPGI are associated with longer session length on gaming machines.

Table 4.41 indicates that the problem gamblers in the sample have an average session length of 5.5 hours when playing gaming machines, while moderate risk gamblers spend about 3 hours and the other two categories a little over 1 hour. Clearly, there is the trend of longer session lengths on gaming machines as the extent of gambling problems increases, a result consistent with the *Queensland Household Gambling Survey 2003-04* (Queensland Government, 2005a).

Table 4.41: Gambler Sub-Types by Minutes Playing Gaming Machines

Category	No. of Respondents	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Non-problem gambler	19	5	240	67.63	75.283
Low risk gambler	9	10	300	68.89	92.796
Moderate risk gambler	11	30	360	181.82	108.887
Problem gambler	4	60	480	330.00	192.997

Table 4.42 shows that the two problem gamblers have the highest mean session length for TAB betting (5.2 hours) of all the gambling sub-types, but there is no discernable pattern for the other gambler sub-types.

Table 4.42: Gambler Sub-Types by Minutes on TAB Betting

Category	No. of Respondents	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Non-problem gambler	14	2	240	44.43	47.583
Low risk gambler	6	30	600	114.17	113.948
Moderate risk gambler	9	5	620	54.67	55.586
Problem gambler	2	120	240	310.00	410.122

As shown in Table 4.43, the problem gambler group spends the longest average session time on keno (2 hours), followed by the moderate risk group and low risk group, respectively. The non-problem group spends the least time (1/2 hour). Clearly, there is the trend of longer session lengths playing keno as the extent of gambling problems increases.

Table 4.43: Gambler Sub-Types by Minutes on Keno Gambling

Category	No. of Respondents	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Non-problem gambler	8	2	60	35.25	27.809
Low risk gambler	6	5	120	53.33	40.947
Moderate risk gambler	9	10	120	69.44	42.606
Problem gambler	2	10	240	125.00	162.635

No discernable patterns were evident when the four gambler sub-types were cross-tabulated with session length on the remaining types of gambling.

4.6.6 Gambling Problems and Expenditure

Tables 4.44 to 4.51 present cross-tabulations for gambler sub-types and gambling expenditure. Normally, chi square would be used to test for significant relationships between gambler sub-type category and expenditure on various forms of gambling. However, the small sample size and therefore the small number of cases in many cells preclude this approach. Instead, expenditure on each form of gambling was correlated with total scores on the CPGI. The results identify significant positive relationships between CPGI score and expenditure on gaming machines ($r = 0.647$, $p \leq 0.001$), on the TAB ($r = 0.446$, $p \leq 0.012$), and on keno ($r = 0.587$, $p \leq 0.002$). In other words, higher scores on the CPGI are associated with higher expenditure on gaming machines, TAB and keno, but not with expenditure on the other types of gambling.

As indicated by Table 4.44, four of the five problem gamblers and ten of the 11 moderate risk gamblers spend money on gaming machines each month. Clearly, the mean monthly expenditure on gaming machines increases markedly with the extent of gambling problems.

Table 4.44: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on Gaming Machines

Category	No. of Respondents	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Non-problem gambler	19	2	150	39.16	37.174
Low risk gambler	8	20	200	62.50	58.737
Moderate risk gambler	10	5	150	180.50	140.958
Problem gambler	4	100	1000	475.00	411.299

As shown in Table 4.45, two of the five problem gamblers and nine of the 11 moderate risk gamblers spend money on TAB betting each month, with the mean expenditure of the two problem gamblers very much higher than for the three other groups.

Table 4.45: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on TAB

Category	No. of Respondents	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Non-problem gambler	14	2	150	44.43	47.853
Low risk gambler	6	15	300	114.17	113.948
Moderate risk gambler	9	5	150	54.67	55.586
Problem gambler	2	20	600	310.00	410.122

Table 4.46 indicates that four of the five problem gamblers and nine of the 11 moderate risk gamblers spend money on keno each month, with the mean expenditure of the four problem gamblers much higher than for the other three groups.

Table 4.46: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on Keno

Category	No. of Respondents	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Non-problem gambler	8	1	50	19.75	20.034
Low risk gambler	5	10	50	23.00	15.652
Moderate risk gambler	9	10	90	33.89	30.391
Problem gambler	4	20	400	180.00	164.114

Table 4.47 indicates that two of the five problem gamblers and six of the 11 moderate risk gamblers spend money on lottery-type games each month, with their mean expenditures higher than for the other two groups.

Table 4.47: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on Lottery-Type Games

Category	No. of Respondents	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Non-problem gambler	18	2	200	40.61	52.613
Low risk gambler	6	5	121	32.00	44.627
Moderate risk gambler	6	10	600	126.67	232.694
Problem gambler	2	10	200	105.00	134.350

As shown in Table 4.48, three of the five problem gamblers and four of the 11 moderate risk gamblers spend money on casino table games each month, although their mean expenditure is less than that for the low risk gambler group, but higher than that for the non-problem gambler group.

Table 4.48: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on Casino Table Games

Category	No. of Respondents	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Non-problem gambler	6	10	100	35.00	35.071
Low risk gambler	3	50	400	170.00	199.249
Moderate risk gambler	4	50	200	137.50	75.000
Problem gambler	3	50	200	116.67	76.376

Table 4.49 shows that no problem gamblers spend money on a monthly basis on racetrack betting, while four of the 11 moderate risk gamblers do. However, their mean expenditure on this form of gambling is less than for the other two groups.

Table 4.49: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on Racetrack Betting

Category	No. of Respondents	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Non-problem gambler	2	100	100	100.00	.000
Low risk gambler	3	20	200	83.33	101.160
Moderate risk gambler	4	10	100	56.75	50.022
Problem gambler	0	-	-	-	-

Table 4.50 indicates that one problem gambler and three moderate risk gamblers spend money on sportsbetting each month, but that their mean expenditure is less than for non-problem gamblers and slightly higher than for low risk gamblers.

Table 4.50: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on Sportsbetting

Category	No. of Respondents	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Non-problem gambler	3	5	800	301.67	434.175
Low risk gambler	1	20	20	20.00	-
Moderate risk gambler	3	20	42	27.33	12.702
Problem gambler	1	5	5	5.00	-

Two of the five problem gamblers and two of the 11 moderate risk gamblers spend money on private gambling each month (Table 4.51), with the mean expenditure of the two problem gamblers much higher than for the two moderate risk gamblers, whose expenditure in turn is higher than that of the non-problem gamblers.

Table 4.51: Gambler Sub-Types by Monthly Expenditure on Private Gambling

Category	No. of Respondents	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Non-problem gambler	2	10	50	30.00	28.284
Low risk gambler	0	-	-	-	-
Moderate risk gambler	2	5	100	52.50	67.175
Problem gambler	2	10	300	155.00	205.061

Gambler sub-types by the other types of gambling per month are not reported as there were fewer than two groups for expenditure on bingo and internet gambling.

4.7 SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

The survey results presented in this chapter cannot and should not be interpreted to apply to all Queensland gaming venue employees. This is because of the small sample size, the refusal of two casinos to allow their employees to complete the survey, and our convenience sampling approach. Instead, the results apply only to the 56 survey respondents. However, the results from these 56 respondents present a distinctive picture of the gambling behaviour of these employees which contrasts markedly with state and national figures (where comparable). Key results from our survey are summarised below.

- **Respondent characteristics.** The 56 respondents to the survey had a mean age of 31 years, with 54 per cent being female. Most respondents worked as gaming attendants, duty managers/supervisors or bar attendants, most were at operational level, and the majority held gaming-related positions within their current workplace. About 60 per cent currently worked in clubs, about 29 per cent in hotels and about 11 per cent in casinos. However, throughout their working career, nearly three-quarters had worked in clubs, nearly half in

hotels, about one-sixth in casinos and about one-tenth in TABs. The mean length of time they had worked in gaming venues was 7.7 years.

- **Participation in gambling.** Gaming machines attracted the highest participation rate, being played by over three-quarters of respondents during the last 12 months. During this time, over half of respondents also participated in TAB betting, keno and lottery-type games. In that period, around one-quarter of respondents participated in casino table games, racetrack betting, sportsbetting and private gambling, while bingo and internet gambling attracted few participants.
- **Frequency of gambling.** Examining the frequency with which the respondents participated in various forms of gambling in the previous 12 months revealed a high degree of polarisation between those who gamble frequently and those who hardly or never gamble. For example, while nearly one-quarter of respondents played gaming machines at least weekly, nearly one-half played them only once every few months or less. While about one-sixth bet on the TAB and played lottery-type games at least weekly, about two-thirds did so only once every few months or less. Similarly, one in ten played keno at least weekly, while three-quarters played very infrequently or not at all. For most other types of gambling, a small percentage of respondents participated very frequently, while the vast majority hardly or never participated.
- **Regular gambling.** The most common regular (at least weekly) gambling activity was playing gaming machines, followed by TAB betting and playing lottery-type games. Nearly one-quarter of respondents were regular gaming machine players, about one-sixth were regular TAB and lottery-type game players, while around one in ten respondents were regular sportsbetting and keno gamblers. Very few respondents gambled regularly on the other forms of gambling. When compared to results from the *National Gambling Survey* (Productivity Commission, 1999), higher proportions of the employee respondents were regular gamblers on all forms of gambling except lottery-type games and internet gambling, and their participation proportions were markedly higher for gaming machines, TAB betting and keno.
- **Session length.** Amongst respondents, average session length was longest for racetrack betting (4.7 hours), followed by private gambling (2.6 hours), bingo (2.5 hours), casino table games (2.5 hours), gaming machines (2.3 hours), TAB betting (2 hours), sportsbetting (1.7 hours) and keno (1 hour).
- **Expenditure.** The gambling activities attracting the highest mean expenditure per participant per month were sportsbetting (\$127), followed by gaming machines (\$121), casino table games (\$102), internet gambling (\$83), private gambling (\$79), TAB betting (\$78), racetrack betting (\$75), lottery-type games (\$59), keno (\$50) and bingo (\$30) respectively. The average per capita monthly expenditure on gambling amongst the 56 respondents was \$258, equating to \$3,097 per year, an amount that is about 2.9 times more than the average yearly per capita gambling expenditure of \$1,066.95 per year for Australian adults during 2003-04 (Office of Economic and Statistical Research, 2005) and about 3.2 times more than the average yearly per capita gambling expenditure by Queensland adults of \$967.96 in 2003-04 (Office of Economic and Statistical Research, 2005). When compared to the per capita expenditure for Queensland adults (Office of Economic and Statistical Research, 2005), it is apparent that the employees surveyed spent about twice as much on gaming machines (employees = \$1,060, Queensland adults = \$519), over five times as much on TAB betting (employees = \$518, Queensland adults = \$99), over three times as much on lottery-type games (employees = \$406, Queensland adults = \$118), over ten times as much on keno (employees = \$278, Queensland adults = \$24), and substantially more at casinos (employees = \$347, Queensland adults = \$205).

- **Problem gambling.** The prevalence of problem gambling and moderate risk gambling is extremely high amongst respondents when compared to the Queensland population. The prevalence of problem gambling is 16 times higher amongst the gaming venue employees we surveyed than amongst the general population in the state, being 8.9 per cent for the former and 0.55 per cent for the latter. Similarly, the rate of moderate risk gambling is ten times higher amongst the gaming venue employees we surveyed than amongst the general population in the state, being 19.6 per cent for the former and 1.97% per cent for the latter. Collectively, the prevalence of moderate and severe gambling problems amongst the surveyed employees is around 11 times higher than the state average. The rate of low risk gambling at 16.1 per cent is triple the Queensland figure of 5.34 per cent.
- **Problem gambler group.** According to the CPGI, this group consists of those who have experienced adverse consequences from their gambling and may have lost control of their gambling. Five respondents or 8.9 per cent of the sample were classified as problem gamblers using the CPGI. This group had a mean age of 27 years (two aged 24 years and three aged 29 years). Ten per cent of females in the sample ($n = 3$) were problem gamblers, as were around 8 per cent of the males ($n = 2$). and were employed as either duty managers or bar attendants. Two currently worked in clubs and three in hotels. Their mean length of time of working in gambling venues was 4.5 years. All five problem gamblers participated in gaming machine play and keno betting in the previous 12 months, four gambled privately, and three gambled on lottery-type games, TAB betting, and casino table games. Two gambled on sportsbetting and at the racetrack. None participated in bingo or internet gambling during the previous 12 months. On average, they participated in 5.5 different gambling activities during this time. Three of the five were regular gaming machine players, two were regular keno players, and one was a regular TAB better. One gambled at least weekly on casino table games, one on private gambling and one on lottery-type games. The problem gamblers had a longer average session length than the other three gambler sub-types for playing gaming machines (5.5 hours), for TAB betting (5.2 hours) and for keno (2 hours), but not for the remaining types of gambling. They also had a higher average monthly expenditure than the other groups on gaming machines (\$475), TAB betting (\$310), keno (\$180) and private gambling (\$155), but not for the remaining types of gambling.
- **Moderate risk gambler group.** The CPGI describes this group as those who may or may not have experienced adverse consequences from their gambling but who may be at risk if they are heavily involved with gambling. Eleven respondents or 19.6 per cent of the sample were classified as moderate risk gamblers using the CPGI. This group had a mean age of 28 years, with ten of the 11 aged from 20-34 years. About 23 per cent of females in the sample ($n = 7$) were moderate risk gamblers, as were 15 per cent of the males ($n = 4$). This group worked in operational or supervisory level front-of-house positions that were gambling-related. These included croupier, gaming attendant, gaming manager and promotions positions. The moderate risk group comprised staff who currently worked in clubs ($n = 5$), hotels ($n = 5$) and a casino ($n = 1$), with those who had ever worked in a hotel or casino over-represented amongst this group. Their mean length of time of working in gambling venues was 6.5 years. All moderate risk gamblers had gambled on gaming machines and the TAB in the previous 12 months, ten had gambled on keno, and seven on lottery-type games. Fewer than half had gambled on the other types of gambling. On average, they participated in 5.2 different gambling activities during the previous year. Six of the 11 were regular gaming machine players and four were regular TAB gamblers. Two gambled at least weekly on lottery-type games, two on keno and two on sportsbetting. One gambled regularly at the racetrack, one regularly on the internet, and one regularly at private gambling. The moderate risk gamblers had a longer average session length than the low risk and non-problem gambler groups for playing gaming machines (3 hours), keno (1.2 hours), casino table games (3.8 hours), and sportsbetting (4.7 hours), but not for the

remaining types of gambling. They also had a higher average monthly expenditure than these two groups on gaming machines (\$180), lottery-type games (\$127), keno (\$34) and private gambling (\$53), but not for the remaining types of gambling.

- **Low risk gambler group.** These are described by the CPGI as those who may be at risk if they are heavily involved with gambling and experience certain correlates of problem gambling. Nine respondents, or 16 per cent of the sample, were classified as low risk gamblers on the CPGI. This group had a mean age of 32 years and six of the nine were female. They worked in positions of bar attendant, duty manager, gaming attendant and gaming manager, all of which are gaming-related positions. Percentage-wise, they were fairly evenly distributed as working in clubs, hotels and casinos, while a few had also worked at a racetrack or independent TAB outlet. Their mean length of time of working in gambling venues was 5.3 years. Most low risk gamblers had gambled on gaming machines and the TAB during the previous 12 months, while less than half had gambled on other types of gambling. Two were regular gamblers on gaming machines, two on TAB betting, and two on lottery-type games. None were weekly gamblers on other forms of gambling. The low risk gambler group had a longer average session length than the non-problem gambler group for gambling on gaming machines (1.1 hours), TAB (1.9 hours), keno (0.9 hours), casino table games (2.5 hours), sportsbetting (.75 hours) and private gambling (5 hours but only 1 respondent). They also had a higher average monthly expenditure than the non-problem gambler group on gaming machines (\$63), TAB (\$114), keno (\$23) and casino table games (\$170), but not for the remaining types of gambling.
- **Non-problem gambler group.** According to the CPGI, this group will not have experienced any adverse consequences of gambling. Non-problem gamblers comprised 31 respondents or 55.4 per cent of the sample. This group had a mean age of 33 years and comprised 65 per cent of males and 47 per cent of females in the sample. The positions they worked in covered all those captured in the sample, and were at operational, supervisory and management levels, and were both gaming and non-gaming related. Current club and casino employees dominated this group in terms of relative percentages in the sample. Their mean length of time of working in gambling venues was 9.2 years, the longest of any of the gambler sub-types. During the previous 12 months, 19 had played gaming machines, while fewer than half had participated in the other forms of gambling. While five were regular lottery-type game players, very few were regular gamblers on any other type of gambling. Their average session lengths were the lowest of any gambler sub-types for playing gaming machines (1.1 hours), TAB (0.75 hours), keno (0.6 hours), casino table games (2 hours), and sportsbetting (0.2 hours). They also had the lowest average monthly expenditure of all gambler sub-types for playing gaming machines (\$39), TAB betting (\$44), keno (\$20), casino table games (\$35), and private gambling (\$30). Average monthly expenditure on other types of gambling is not reliable due to small numbers.

4.9 CONCLUSION

While the results above are not representative of the population of Queensland gaming venue employees, they indicate that the 56 respondents collectively have a high participation rate in many gambling activities, gamble very frequently on some activities, and have a high expenditure on gambling. Given this, it is not surprising that the prevalence of severe and moderate gambling problems is much higher amongst this group than the state average. As such, these results provide justification for a larger scale quantitative survey planned for 2006-07 which will provide more representative results. They also provide a meaningful context for the investigation that follows into risk and protective factors for employees in gaming venue workplaces and possible measures that gaming venues could implement to encourage responsible gambling amongst their employees. However, it should also be noted that the gambling behaviour of the employees we surveyed was quite polarised between

those who gamble intensively and those who hardly or never gamble. This polarisation is evident in the generally abnormal distributions of gambling frequency, gambling expenditure, session length and gambler sub-types. One explanation for this polarisation is that staff are either very much ‘turned on’ or ‘turned off’ gambling by virtue of working in a gaming venue. The next chapter presents qualitative data from club, hotel and casino employees which support this explanation and which shed light on risk and protective factors in the workplace facing staff in their own gambling.

CHAPTER FIVE – EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVES ON HOW WORKING IN A GAMING VENUE INFLUENCES EMPLOYEE GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the first of two that provide data to address Research Objective Two – to examine how Queensland gaming venue employees perceive that aspects of their work environment influence their gambling behaviour in terms of responsible gambling and problem gambling. It reports on interviews conducted with a convenience sample of 86 gaming venue employees in their workplace. Four main sections are presented below. Sections 5.2 to 5.4 analyse interviews with 34 club employees, 14 hotel employees and 38 casino employees, respectively. Section 5.5 then completes the chapter by summarising the findings.

5.2 CLUB EMPLOYEES

This section summarises responses given by the club employees interviewed. While we interviewed 35 club employees, one of these scored in the problem gambler category on the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index*, so that person's responses are instead included in Chapter Six of this report (which provides a problem gambler perspective on the research topic). Thus, responses from 34 club employees are included here.

After describing the work background of the interviewees, this section summarises their responses to questions about the influence of various workplace factors on staff gambling. For each of these factors, the number of respondents who felt that each factor encourages gambling, discourages gambling, either or both (depending on the circumstances), or has no influence are presented. A few respondents did not directly answer all questions or were non-committal, so these responses are categorised as 'don't know/no response'. Reasons each factor was perceived to encourage, discourage or have no influence on staff gambling are then summarised in point form, along with some indicative quotations from the interviews.

5.2.1 Work Background of Interviewees

While the survey data (Chapter Four) identified the current positions of the employees we interviewed in Queensland clubs and the types of gambling venues they had worked in, the interview data revealed a breadth of experience amongst them not captured in the survey data. When asked about their work background, the interviewees nominated a range of activities they had been involved in when working in gambling venues. These included gaming machine clearances, payouts and hopper fills, cashiering and change booth operations, gaming promotions, operating a venue's TAB and keno facilities, providing drink service in gaming rooms, general supervision of gaming rooms, and running bingo. Other activities not directly related to gambling included bar work, reception, foodservice, office work, cooking, marketing, functions coordination and accounting.

5.2.2 Close Interaction with Gamblers

When asked whether they thought that close interaction with gamblers is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees, the club staff gave varied responses. While eleven considered that close interaction with gamblers had no influence on staff gambling, three thought that this interaction encouraged staff to gamble, while seven thought it mainly deterred them from gambling. However, the largest group (13) felt that close interaction with gamblers could have either a positive or negative influence, depending on the employee and his or her circumstances.

Reasons given by club employees why close interaction with gamblers can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff hear about wins more than losses**, as ‘you always hear about the wins’, ‘they see people win more than they lose’, ‘but they don’t talk (about the losses)’.
- **Seeing people win creates hope of winning**, because ‘there is that temptation of wanting to have the same sort of thing happen to you’. Further, ‘if you hear someone winning on a particular machine, or backing a particular horse, then you might think, I’ll back that horse or go to another club and play that machine and see if I win on it’. Another commented that when some staff ‘give out a \$20,000 payout, or even a \$500 one, they think why couldn’t it be me? It could be me next. That attitude’.
- **Staff get caught up in the excitement of patrons’ wins**, where ‘you have got some promo staff who are just in for a couple of hours, and they are more inclined to get excited about people winning...Probably staff that aren’t around the pokies as often are more inclined to get taken in by them’.
- **Staff constantly hear about gambling and are given ‘hot tips’**, because ‘people tell us what they’ve won, if they’re up or down, which is their favourite machine’, and ‘in the TAB...everyone says this horse will win’.

Reasons given by club employees why frequent interaction with gamblers can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff see problem or heavy gamblers and don’t want to be like them**, because ‘if you see someone who is dependent on gambling, you say I’m not going to be like that’.
- **Staff see negative responses to gambling losses**, as they ‘can see how upset the patrons can get sometimes. They can be depressed, and they are spending all their money trying to get it back’ and that can ‘make you a little bit sad and disappointed’.
- **Staff see the effects of problem gambling**. As one explained, ‘I don’t gamble because I’ve seen what damage it does’.
- **Staff see or hear about the losses**, so ‘you see people go home with nothing, and that has turned me completely off it’.
- **Staff see the amount of money patrons spend on gambling**, and to ‘see how much money they are pumping in, it puts you off’.
- **Staff see the amount of time patrons spend gambling**, and ‘it deters them if they see people spending hours there’.

Reasons given by club employees why close interaction with gamblers may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff not allowed to discuss wins and losses with patrons**, where ‘the policy is if a person is playing a machine, you are not allowed to ask how much they have put in the machine...Keno...same thing, you are not allowed to discuss that’.
- **Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway**, so ‘it would depend on the person I guess, if they are weak or they are strong. If they are a bit of a gambler in the first place maybe. If not, well I don’t think it will make any difference one way or the other’.

5.2.3 Frequent Exposure to Gambling

Responses were also very mixed when the interviewees were asked whether they thought that frequent exposure to gambling in the workplace is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees. Nine employees thought that frequent exposure to

gambling encouraged staff to gamble, six thought it deterred them from gambling, and eight felt it could influence them in either of these ways. Of the remainder, eight thought it had no influence at all, while three were undecided.

Reasons given by club employees why frequent exposure to gambling can encourage staff gambling:

- **Increases staff familiarity with gambling**, because ‘if you have never been around them (gaming machines) you have a barrier between them, but if you have been working around them you feel a lot more comfortable around them’. As one explained, ‘if I hadn’t worked in this industry, I probably wouldn’t have gone to things like the races because I wouldn’t have understood them’.
- **Increases staff interest in gambling**, especially ‘if that is the career they want to have, and they want to develop a passion around that career’. As one observed, ‘I certainly wouldn’t play them (gaming machines) as much if I didn’t work with them. ...it is something you obviously have an interest in; I mean it is your job’. Another explained his gambling by noting that ‘it’s a good thing to go to other places and get a vibe for their gaming room.’
- **Normalises gambling for staff**, as ‘a lot of them are around it all the time, and they think it is just the norm’ and ‘it probably is more of a lifestyle for a lot of them. They go to work, they’re around poker machines. When they’re not at work, they want to go and play the poker machines. They do that quite a bit, whether it is here or another club’.
- **Staff may have ready access to gambling**, where ‘the staff without gaming licences play the pokies here a lot’ and ‘you see the kitchen staff and the restaurant staff go in there after they finish work and have a few bets...The main thing is the convenience; you finish work, you don’t have to go anywhere’.
- **Staff are surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere**, which ‘can influence staff gambling. They (gaming machines) are designed to attract you’.
- **Infrequent workers can gain distorted views about winning**. For example, ‘for staff who work one three hour shift a week and see someone winning a \$5,000 jackpot, it might look like easy money’ and they ‘are more inclined to get excited about people winning’, as are ‘staff that aren’t around the pokies as often (who) are more inclined to get taken in by them’.
- **New or younger staff can be vulnerable**. One explained that ‘when I started I thought it was great! You took it as a sort of fun environment’, and ‘especially the younger ones, they see it as wow, the wow factor, look what she has won’.
- **Staff can lose sight of the value and ownership of money**, as ‘they’re dealing with large amounts of money...and if you are doing a clearance once a week and you are counting \$80,000, you lose your perception of what money is. \$20 is like 20 cents to someone working here’.

Reasons given by club employees why frequent exposure to gambling can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff can become sick of being around gambling and the environment**, as ‘it turns you off playing the machines...because you are around it constantly’ and ‘looking at the machines all day, it is like the last thing that you want to do, walk out the door and go and play them’.
- **Staff see venue takings from gambling**. One interviewee commented that ‘if you take out a couple of thousand dollars out of a machine, you know that that is someone’s

money', and another that 'you're not silly; these places are doing million dollar renovations and you know where the money is coming from'.

- **Staff have better knowledge of the odds of losing**, as 'they know that you don't win', that if they do see someone winning, 'that person is just lucky' and that generally 'it's a mug's game'. As one explained, 'when I do go to another club, I do know I will be paying someone else's wage, and I do know that I won't be walking out with money because my chances aren't high of winning'. Another commented that 'I only ever spend \$4-\$5, because I know that no one wins. You know the odds'.

Reasons given by club employees why frequent exposure to gambling may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway**, for example 'I'm not really a gambler, so I wouldn't risk losing 20c. It doesn't influence me one way or the other'.
- **Staff become immune to any influence**, where 'you just zone out...it is just second nature' and 'it is not an influence. It is part of work for me'.

5.2.4 Influence of Fellow Employees

Interviewees were asked whether they thought that fellow employees are likely to influence the gambling activities of gaming venue employees. Fifteen thought that this can and does occur, three thought that other staff can either encourage or discourage staff to gamble, while none thought fellow employees are more likely to deter other staff from gambling. Fourteen respondents thought fellow employees had no influence on staff gambling. Two did not know or gave no response.

Reasons given by club employees why fellow employees can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff gamble together in their workplace**. One employee related how 'we have a few different little punters' clubs...and we put in to most of them. That probably encourages you to gamble. On Friday afternoons we normally sit down in the TAB...'. Another informed us that 'we've got a syndicate here, so there is a group of five or six people that bet every week. Usually if you've knocked off, that (the TAB) is where we sort of mingle'. Another related how she 'organised our Christmas party last year, and I made it a monopoly money casino night'.
- **Staff gamble together after work**. For example, 'they go to the casino, have a few drinks, and all of a sudden those drinks turn into let's go and play the tables' and 'the younger staff...usually meet here and then head off into the city or the Valley...We have ended up at the casino a couple of times, which means you sort of feel obliged to put a couple of dollars though. You can't go to the casino and not!'
- **Staff gamble together on days off**. One related that 'if we've got a day off we will go gambling together', and another that 'there is a group of ladies here that I know go and play the pokies quite often, down at (a Brisbane suburb). And they use that as a place to meet up, when they go shopping or whatever...It sounds pretty regular'.
- **Staff directly encourage other staff to gamble**. Some examples included where 'I have seen people who like to have a bet on footy tab...and I've seen guys coercing other people to go in with them, and placing reasonable size bets on those', and 'if you finish work and you all went to the TAB...I see other people saying come on, let's have a bet'.
- **Staff introduce other staff to gambling**. As one explained, 'I've seen it. They hook up together and then say let's go and play the pokies, and then a few weeks later the other (new) one will be playing too'.

Reasons given by club employees why fellow employees can discourage staff gambling:

- **Friends from work want to avoid gambling venues.** One interviewee noted that ‘the people you probably hang out with are your friends from work, and the last thing you want to do is go back into a pub or club. You want to do something different on your days off’.

Reasons given by club employees why fellow employees may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff prefer not to socialise together,** where ‘I don’t hang out with people I work with’ and ‘I really like the people that I work with, but I don’t go out with them’.
- **Staff socialise by going out to drink instead,** where ‘when we do go out we go nightclubbing, to drink’.
- **Staff do not socialise together because of family responsibilities,** where ‘I’ve got a family, and I want to go home to them after work. And the other people that work here have a family as well. That’s not to say we don’t go out; we do go out for dinner once every few months’.
- **Older staff are not interested in socialising,** where ‘we don’t tend to go out much together here. To my mind mainly because of the age of people working here. When I was younger, sure, we used to go to the nightclub’.

5.2.5 Influence of Gaming Venue Managers

Staff were asked whether managers and their policies and practices are likely to influence staff gambling. The majority (19) commented on the role of a ‘no gambling in the workplace policy’ as being an important discouragement for staff, although four respondents cited examples of ways in which management inadvertently encouraged staff to gamble. Eleven respondents felt that management had no influence over staff gambling.

Reasons given by club employees why management can encourage staff gambling:

- **Managers are sometimes gamblers and so set an example.** For example, ‘I know our management is involved in some sort of syndicate, and will have a bit of a punt on the horses, if one of their favourites is on’.
- **Managers gamble with staff.** One staff member related how ‘I’ve been at a couple of hotels where the manager will get on the machines with the staff after work...on site’.
- **Managers allow staff to gamble in the workplace.** As one explained, ‘most of the clubs allow their staff to win in-house promotions, so they are encouraging staff to gamble, or become involved in those sorts of things...Some venues see it as an opportunity’.
- **Gambling can be a job requirement.** One interviewee related how ‘I’ve been approached to go and pop down to the bowls club and see what sort of pokies they’ve got down there. So they (management) can sort of influence their gambling habits in that way I think. They give you the money to put through’.
- **Workplace has a gambling culture,** where ‘the guys managing here, they punt on the horses. I play in a lot of corporate days, and you meet the managers from the clubs, and they punt. This is their work I suppose...it is the whole culture’.

Reasons given by club employees why management can discourage staff gambling:

- **Managers can provide support or advice to stop gambling,** where ‘I think the backing that the staff get from the management is good...It makes a big difference, because I don’t think that any staff member that had a problem couldn’t find help in the club’.

- **A policy of no staff gambling in the workplace**, such as ‘we are not allowed to play the machines here. I think that is a good policy and sets a good example’ and ‘here staff are banned from gambling; it’s a brilliant policy’. Another related how ‘management can definitely have an influence; there is a ban on gambling here. One old chef said he would be gambling every night if there was gambling allowed here’.
- **A proactive culture of responsible gambling**. One respondent gave the example of some previous workplaces where a management mentality of ‘let’s make people gamble more money’ was predominant, where in the current workplace ‘there is more that mentality...of we should be keeping an eye on this person. I think that does rub off on staff’.

Reasons given by club employees why management may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff do not mix with management**, where ‘usually I’ve had a fair bit of a buffer between hanging out with management. They don’t usually have any influence on me whatsoever’.
- **Management policies restrict staff gambling only in the workplace**, ‘because it is only on site that people can’t gamble’, and ‘everyone knows the rules, that you can’t gamble here, and the staff stick to that. What they do outside is another thing. Management doesn’t influence my own behaviour’.
- **Management have no interest in or knowledge of what staff do in their own time**, such that ‘there is a general disinterest – there is no apparent interest’ and ‘it is never really discussed’.

5.2.6 Influence of Workplace Stressors

When asked if workplace stressors are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees, the interviewees were nearly equally divided, with 15 agreeing, 17 disagreeing and two being non-committal. However, of those who thought that workplace stress is a risk factor for gaming venue staff, most emphasised that this could be the case for some staff, but certainly not for all. No one considered that workplace stress directly discouraged staff from gambling, although the two who were non-committal suggested they themselves avoid gambling venues for stress relief.

Reasons given by club employees why workplace stressors can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff need to unwind after work**, where ‘if they’re having a bad week, they will say okay, Friday night, I’m going to have a play and just zone out’ or ‘it’s a way of relaxing after work for a lot of people. You have a knock off drink and put your money through the pokies’. Another commented that ‘people finish work and have a beer and some play the pokies...People need to forget about these stresses – take their mind off it...Gambling problems could arise from this’.
- **Staff can experience stress about problem gamblers**, where ‘constantly dealing with people and their problems, and gambling accentuates that, leads to stress’. Another related how ‘a few months ago I had a serious...breakdown. A big part of it was to do with here, working with these people. The patrons just really got to me, they become really nasty, and sometimes there is a line where you need to decide whether to stand up for yourself or not’.
- **Staff can experience stress about difficult customers**, especially ‘when you get an abusive customer, or one who thinks the machine hasn’t paid him right’ or when ‘there are some people that like a bit more attention than others...Everyone loves a drink after work to unwind. I suppose gambling could be used by certain people’.

- **Staff can experience stress from heavy workloads**, which ‘could be a trigger. Some people gamble to release the stress. Yes, I have seen it. Because it is very easy to get stressed in the workplace. You just need to have a couple of machines go down, and be serving behind the bar by yourself; that is really stressful because you can’t be in two places at once. Everyone is under stress when you work in a venue; that’s just the nature of the thing’.

Reasons given by club employees why workplace stressors can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff avoid gambling for stress relief.** For many, the best stress relief is to ‘go home and relax on my own; I want peace and quiet’ and ‘to stay as far away from it as possible’. Another noted how ‘if I have a crappy day, I don’t want to be near anyone. A lot of days I do get sick of people, and just want to go home’.

Reasons given by club employees why workplace stressors may not influence staff gambling:

- **Some staff are trained to better cope with stress**, such as ‘if you are trained in conflict procedures, and knowing how to read people’s body language, it makes the job much easier. It very important to know when to talk to someone and when to let then talk...There is a lot of training around’.
- **The work is not stressful**, where ‘this place isn’t very stressful, it is the best place I have worked’.
- **Staff de-stress in other ways**, such as ‘if you get stressed, do what I do and have a cigarette’ and ‘you are more likely to go to the drink’. Another commented that ‘there are also people out there who will eat more food if they are stressed, or drink more alcohol, or go on a shopping spree’.

5.2.7 Influence of Shift Work

When staff were asked about the influence of working the odd hours typical in hospitality, the interviewees related very strongly to the potential influence of shift work on staff gambling behaviour, with 24 acknowledging its importance. Eight disagreed that shift work is likely to influence staff gambling, one thought it discouraged staff gambling, while one was non-committal.

Reasons given by club employees why shift work can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff can suffer social isolation.** One gave the example that ‘if people lose their relationship, as a result of being in the industry, it could lead to gambling. The hospitality industry doesn’t have a very good record of preserving relationships, due to the fact that your job comes first and family second...And also if the person is lonely...’.
- **Lack of alternative social opportunities for staff**, where ‘if I was single, and finished work at midnight, I wouldn’t want to go home to an empty house’ and so gambling ‘beats sitting at home alone’.
- **Lack of alternative recreational opportunities for staff.** As one explained, ‘if you have a gambling problem, the worst thing you want to be doing is working shift work...you can’t play team sports, so that is one of the other problems...’, while another commented that ‘night can be day for hospitality workers. There are few leisure opportunities when you are on your own’.
- **Only gambling venues are open late at night.** A respondent said that ‘by the time they get out, everything is sort of finished, but the pokies are still going, and they’ll be like, let’s go and have a few drinks and play’. Another noted that ‘city workers might go to the

casino. When you are doing the closes and it is 5am in the morning, it is the one place to go where you can get a drink, and throw some money on the table'. Another related how 'as a hospitality worker, if you want to go out on a Monday or Tuesday, what are you going to do? There's no live music any more, and you are surrounded by poker machines...The way the hospitality industry works is on a Monday or Tuesday a lot of those places in the city give you a free drink and a free poker machine voucher worth \$2 to \$4'.

- **Staff need to find solitary leisure activities.** One noted that 'my weekends are Wednesday-Thursday, and my mate's weekends are Saturday-Sunday. So it does make a difference; you are more likely to gamble when you are by yourself'. Another commented that 'I see some staff from other venues who come in on their own to play' as 'all their friends were at work, and they'd look for some way to fill their time in, and often it was spent in the TAB or whatever'.
- **Staff tend to socialise with other hospitality workers,** such that 'when everyone else is off we are working. Hospitality workers stay in their own little group' and 'late nights, weekends, shifts, it's the worst part of being in this industry, and that is probably why people in this industry socialise within it, is because it is so demanding on people's social life'.

Reasons given by club employees why shift work can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff might go out less.** As one commented, 'I think it goes the other way, because your friends are not there, so you don't go out at all'.
- **Most gambling venues are closed after a shift,** where 'if I worked in the city it would be an issue. Here, everywhere else is closed when we close, so you would have to drive into the city, and you're not going to bother unless you feel like it'.

Reasons given by club employees why shift work may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff have other hospitality friends to socialise with,** such that 'most hospitality people have hospitality friends, and when we have days off we do normal things, go to the beach or go down to Brisbane to go to a show together'.
- **Staff find other activities in their time off,** where 'I don't think the hours would have anything to do with it. I know people would go shopping or to the beach or fishing, more than that (gambling)'.
- **Staff just want to go home after a shift,** so that 'after work most people here would just go home'.
- **Some staff have permanent shifts or do not do shift work,** where 'I get my set roster, so I can sort of work what I do around myself. So I find it a lot easier since I've gone permanent to have a bit of a life...I can plan things around my shifts'.

5.2.8 Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions

Twenty staff agreed that frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees, 13 disagreed, while one was non-committal. While no one considered that frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions discouraged staff from gambling in general, some did comment on how they were deterred specifically from entering gambling promotions.

Reasons given by club employees why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions can encourage staff gambling:

- **Promotions can act as a trigger.** As one employee explained, linked jackpots ‘could be a trigger, because...we see a fair few of the big jackpots, like the Money Train especially. And for a while, every time it got to \$29,000-\$30,000, it would go off. So...I’ve thought it’s going to go off soon; I’ve thought of going down (to another venue to play it)’. Another noted that ‘if you do pokie promos, there might be some people in here who might say oh, that’s got better odds, so I’ll come in here on my day off and have a go’.
- **Reinforces gambling as a way to win money.** One commented that ‘these promotions I think should not happen...that’s just reinforcing the gambling. It is a real con job... It does affect staff, because they go to the other pubs where they have promotions’. Another noted that ‘it does entice people to go to another club, because they also see members win here’.
- **Raises awareness of jackpot levels,** as ‘some of the staff are always aware of what the jackpots are at, and that definitely entices them to go to other venues’. Another was more direct in that ‘the jackpots will definitely influence you. If I see a big jackpot when I walk in, I’ll put a few dollars into it’. Another explained that ‘the staff see that more than anyone, and know when it might go off, even though it is random. So they might see it go up to \$5,000, and go and have a gamble. And I think you’ll find it’s an industry where some people cheat the system, thinking something might be due to go off soon, so they give a friend \$20 to play a particular machine’.
- **Increases knowledge about other promotions,** ‘because you have the knowledge that other clubs have the same sort of things happening’ and ‘if I didn’t work in the industry I wouldn’t understand that those sorts of things go on. It is easy to understand, it is not a hassle. So definitely, that is a big influence’. Another raised the point that ‘the new pokies are, I guess, a promotion in themselves. It’s new; you want to have a go to see how it works’.

Reasons given by club employees why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff are aware of the low chance of winning promotions.** One commented ‘no, we’re too smart for that. We see how much other people lose, wasting their own money’, another that ‘most of the staff I talk to see the reality of it’ and a third that ‘I couldn’t think of anything worse than trying to win a competition where I knew I had a very slim chance’.
- **Promotions turn staff off.** As one noted, ‘honestly, it turns me off gambling (when) I watch what people try to do to win the car’, and another that ‘to me it is pretty annoying. I’ve been to a couple of places where there have been promos and I just want to get away from it’.

Reasons given by club employees why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions may not influence staff gambling:

- **Promotions are not attractive to the age group,** as ‘I don’t think they’re catering to our age group...It is just for the older people...’
- Staff are often not allowed to enter workplace promotions, ‘so they do not take much notice of them’.
- **Staff who are not gamblers would not be influenced,** so that ‘if you are a gambler it would have an influence, if you are not a gambler it doesn’t matter’.
- **Venue does very little gambling marketing and promotions,** where ‘there isn’t that much advertising about gambling, with poker machines’ and ‘I don’t really see how the promotions here, that aren’t very big, would influence the staff’.

5.2.9 Influence of Responsible Gambling Training

The employees were asked whether responsible gambling training is likely to influence staff in their own gambling. The majority of interviewees (16) thought it would discourage gambling, or at least heavy gambling, by staff, 11 thought it would have no influence and seven stated they did not know, some because they had not completed the training. No one thought that responsible gambling training encouraged staff gambling.

Reasons given by club employees why responsible gambling training can discourage staff gambling:

- **Raises awareness for staff of problem gambling and its signs.** For example, one respondent explained that ‘we can also see the different signs of what to look for in problem gamblers. With the training we’ve had...you sort of notice if someone is getting down or really stropky at you, they’ll spend too much money and, yeah I think it would influence staff in their own gambling’. Similarly, another said that ‘the training made me more aware, say if you spend too much, well just stop and recount everything to make sure you don’t have a problem. I think the staff probably put themselves in their shoes. It would be a positive influence’.
- **Raises awareness for staff of the effects of problem gambling.** Two respondents noted that ‘the positive influence is that you never want to be that person...When you are sitting in a room and they are telling you the things that can happen to problem gamblers, how much money they have won and lost over a year...that certainly influenced me’ and ‘they get counsellors to come and talk to you and...they tell you what people lose and the results of it. And after seeing that, personally again I don’t think I would gamble’.
- **Raises awareness for staff of the poor odds in gambling.** As one commented, ‘the RSG course would help staff, give them a bit more awareness of what the odds are’. Another agreed that ‘responsible gaming is all about the losses, so it might make them have a bit of a look’.
- **Raises awareness for staff of ways to seek help,** or as one explained, ‘the RSG course would help staff...realise that if they do have a problem then there are ways of going about it’.

Reasons given by club employees why responsible gambling training may not influence staff gambling:

- **Training is not readily available in all areas.** For example, one respondent based in Cairns said that ‘they don’t seem to do it so much up here; it seems to be concentrated down south...we don’t seem to get it here’.
- **Training may not be done due to expense,** with one interviewee complaining that ‘the government makes them too expensive for little and big clubs with lots of staff...’.
- **Training may not be done because it is voluntary.** This is because ‘people don’t have to spend money on staff training any more...it is not compulsory any more. If you’re not encouraged to do it, you won’t’.
- **May not encourage staff to reflect on their own gambling,** as ‘it definitely won’t influence the staff’s gambling. They don’t look at themselves’. One noted that ‘it is a piece of paper to me...It is more a few policies that you learn’.
- **Training was not engaging.** As one recalled, ‘I think there was a lot more potential there to influence them. The trainers...seemed to be approaching it from the point of view that we are just here to do a job for the club, to appease legal requirements. It didn’t make me more aware of the odds or the human side of gambling problems’.

- **People may be in denial about their own gambling**, such that ‘whether you have training or not...people can...lie to themselves’ and ‘most of them still want to go and play and have a bit of fun. Nobody thinks they have a problem’.
- **Training can provide a false sense of security**. One provided the example of ‘a girl that works in another club that has RSG but gambles every day. So definitely it sort of gives you the mindset that you are immune to it. (You think) I couldn’t possibly have a gambling addiction, because I know what constitutes a person with a gambling addiction, and I am not that person’.

5.2.10 Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures

Respondents were evenly divided on the question of whether other responsible gambling measures implemented in the workplace are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees, with 14 considering that the responsible gambling measures discourage staff gambling, at least heavily, and 14 considering it had no influence. Six were non-committal.

Reasons given by club employees why responsible gambling measures can discourage staff gambling:

- **Measures raise awareness of gambling problems**, especially ‘if they thought they had a problem’ and for ‘someone who was new’. With ‘signs all over the place, it sort of rubs it in a bit more, what gambling can do, as far as the down side of it. And the gambling cards, that sort of backs that up’.
- **Signage raises awareness of where to get help**, as ‘the signs etc. make staff aware that if they do have a problem there are ways of dealing with it’.
- **Can trigger problem recognition**, because ‘if they have a gambling problem...people themselves have to make the decision to stop. The signs are a reminder’, and ‘if one of the employees was having a problem with gambling, then maybe yes, because you might see what can happen’.
- **Staff involvement in self-exclusion of patrons deters staff from gambling**. One explained he/she was deterred by ‘the people who exclude themselves, being involved in exclusions’ as ‘it is pretty scary to go through the self exclusion. I did it about six months ago with a customer’.

Reasons given by club employees why responsible gambling measures may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff don’t look at signage and/or are sceptical about them**. As one noted, ‘I don’t think they take any notice to be honest. I honestly don’t, because we’ve got signs there, and they don’t even look at them, and if they look at them, they say that is rubbish’.
- **Signs become too familiar**, because ‘you walk past them every day and don’t look. It is something that just blends in’ and they ‘become part of the furniture’.
- **Signs are aimed at patrons not staff**, so they are considered ‘something that is there for other people’. As one commented, ‘you also think that that material is not directed at me...As far as staff goes, it is promotions material for the patrons’.
- **Signage is too discreet**. As one commented, ‘the signs aren’t very well positioned so you don’t really see them very much. They’re very small and discreet. A lot of the time you’ll be standing next to one talking to someone and not even realise that one is there’.

5.2.11 Influence of Other Aspects of the Work Environment

Seven additional points were raised in response to the question of whether other aspects of the work environment (not already discussed) are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees. All points raised related to additional workplace factors that can encourage staff to gamble.

Reasons given by club employees why other aspects of the work environment can encourage staff gambling:

- **Some staff drink large quantities of alcohol**, which ‘may be an influence’, especially ‘if you get on the drink too much and you see other people winning’. As one commented, ‘alcohol is certainly a big one, and it is a socially combining thing. Most of us probably have our days off, and if someone else is off, we go to the pub for the day’.
- **Reluctance to expose problems due to fear of job loss**, as ‘losing your job is a circumstance. If you have the assets to gamble, you wouldn’t tell them (management) that you have a problem’.
- **Employees cannot gamble at the workplace so a problem might go undetected**. As one explained, ‘we get a lot of staff from the other clubs around, and they’re pretty big gamblers. So we may not see where some of our staff go and what they do’.
- **Some staff have the opportunity to bet on credit**. One noted, ‘obviously, there are cases, like the credit betting...but I think that is fairly rare. We’d pick it up pretty quick if that was happening. In a smaller pub you might get away with it...Because of our cash control policies that is too much of a risk here’.
- **Irregular wages of casual staff**, ‘who are on big money from week to week...and all of a sudden they’ve got extra money that they want to throw in the machines to double it’.
- **Low wages of some staff**, where ‘we as hospitality workers are in a key demographic to be a gambler just because of our wage bracket’.
- **Young age group of staff**, where ‘age might have something to do with it. Maybe the younger ones, when they first come into this environment, when they don’t have any responsibility of family. When they first start a job they don’t realise...’.

5.2.12 At Risk Status of Hospitality Staff

Interviewees were asked whether they thought that hospitality staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems. Nineteen employees answered ‘yes’, although with different degrees of certainty. For example, some qualified their response by noting this might be the case: ‘if they have a problem in the first place, then it will fester’, ‘I guess they are, (but) it again depends on the person themselves; I don’t think that everyone is going to fall victim to it’, and ‘probably more so than average, but not totally. I think anyone is at risk as much as anyone else, but I think when you are working around that environment you can’t help but being influenced by it’. Eleven interviewees thought that staff are no more at-risk than the general population. Four stated they did not know.

5.3 HOTEL EMPLOYEES

This section summarises the responses given by the hotel employees we interviewed to questions about their work background and about whether various aspects of their work environment are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees. While we interviewed 17 hotel staff, three of them scored in the problem gambler category on the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index*, so these responses are contained in Chapter Six of this report. This section therefore reports on the responses from the other 14 hotel staff.

5.3.1 Work Background of Interviewees

Similar to the club employees, the hotel staff we interviewed revealed a breadth of experience of working in gaming venues. Collectively, they had worked as general manager, assistant manager, duty manager, gaming manager, gaming attendant, bar supervisor, bar attendant, TAB supervisor, TAB operator, keno operator, night audit operator, cleaner and general help.

5.3.2 Close Interaction with Gamblers

When asked whether they thought that close interaction with gamblers is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees, the interviewees gave varied responses. While two considered that close interaction with gamblers had no influence on staff gambling, seven thought this interaction encouraged staff to gamble, while one thought it mainly deterred them from gambling. However, three respondents felt that close interaction with gamblers could have either a positive or negative influence, depending on the employee and his or her circumstances, while one did not know.

Reasons given by hotel employees why close interaction with gamblers can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff hear about wins more than losses**, where either ‘you never hear about the losses’ or patrons ‘talk about the ten times they did win rather than the 20 times they didn’t win’.
- **Seeing people win creates hope of winning**, such as ‘times they’re giving people large payouts, and think to themselves, I can do that as well’ because ‘they’re looking at it all day, and they’re looking for cash and seeing people winning heaps of cash’. One interviewee related how ‘I’ve worked where someone comes up to the bar and has won \$1,500...and the staff will go out that night and put some money through just because someone else has had a win’. Another simply stated that ‘I think seeing a lot of other people win makes you think you could do that too’ and another that ‘if someone wins a jackpot they say, oh wow! That could happen to me’.
- **Staff get caught up in the excitement of patrons’ wins**. A respondent explained how ‘the jackpot here goes off fairly often, and people get very excited about that’ and another that ‘when free games come up, you go ooh, who’s winning, and get excited about it’.
- **Staff constantly hear about gambling and are given ‘hot tips’**, as ‘people give you keno numbers’, and ‘there is lots of interaction of staff with gaming machine gamblers’ which ‘makes it tempting to me to gamble’.
- **Patrons can encourage staff to gamble**. For example, one explained that ‘if it is quiet and you have a few people in here, they say, I want a trifecta - do you want to go halves with me? And I’ll say okay, I’ll go halves’.
- **Reasons given by hotel employees why close interaction with gamblers can discourage staff gambling:**
- **Staff see negative responses to gambling losses**, such as when ‘we used to have big gamblers come in here and bet \$1,000 or a minimum of \$200 and they were always really dirty if they made a mistake on the ticket’.
- **Staff see the effects of problem gambling**, such as one interviewee who explained how ‘when I was in (another venue), a lady, a customer...cleaned her husband out. And they didn’t used to win money, it was vouchers. I just couldn’t understand it’.
- **Staff see or hear about the losses**, where ‘if they come up to you and say they’ve just blown \$500, then you feel for them too. So you are less inclined to go down the road (and gamble)’.

- **Staff see the amount of money patrons spend on gambling**, so that ‘when someone hands me \$200 to change over, to put through the machine, I think, what a waste’. For one interviewee, ‘it just makes me feel sick. It is money that it takes me three weeks to earn, so I don’t play them. I just see how much money people put in and how much they get back, and it influences me in a way that I don’t want to play them’.

Reasons given by hotel employees why close interaction with gamblers may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway**. For example, ‘I was a punter before I worked in hotels. I played the pokies beforehand. In my personal case, knowing the background and knowing the odds didn’t affect my gambling, I still enjoy them...It didn’t really change me because I was always a gambler’.
- **Some staff have little interaction with gamblers**, because ‘gambling seems to be such a personal thing, especially because of the machines, there is no real interaction there with other people. And machine gaming and keno people tend to keep to themselves’.

5.3.3 Frequent Exposure to Gambling

When the interviewees were asked whether they thought that frequent exposure to gambling in the workplace is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees, most thought it did. Nine employees thought that frequent exposure to gambling encouraged staff to gamble, one thought it deterred them from gambling, three felt it could influence them in either of these ways, while one was undecided.

Reasons given by hotel employees why frequent exposure to gambling can encourage staff gambling:

- **Increases staff familiarity with gambling**. As one explained, ‘before I worked in the TAB, I had no idea how to bet on the horses, so that taught me how...so now whenever I go to the pub and I see a TAB I might put a few dollars on’. Similarly, another stated that ‘once I got into the industry, I started to gamble a lot more because I know it and understand it’.
- **Increases staff interest in gambling**, such as one respondent who said that ‘I was always a gambler; but certainly being around them reminds me that I like them’.
- **Normalises gambling for staff**, whereby ‘it’s proximity for one; it’s a culture of regularly being in areas that provide gaming facilities; it becomes part of people’s lives’.
- **Staff are surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere**, so ‘you are hearing the machines, you are doing the payouts, you know they pay out’. One even suggested ‘a sealed room so staff only go in there when there is a payout so they can’t be influenced by the noise of the machines. It is subliminal and the opportunity to make money is hard to resist’.
- **New or younger staff can be vulnerable**, as ‘it is probably a novelty for new staff’. As one interviewee explained, ‘when I first started I was a lot different, I was raw...I had no idea of the volume of cash. I’ve got a much bigger appreciation these days, working in the back of house, of where the money goes...my attitude to gambling has absolutely changed over the years. I’m not such a fan of gaming any more, and that is part of the reason I am leaving here’.

Reasons given by hotel employees why frequent exposure to gambling can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff can become sick of being around gambling and the environment**, such as one who stated ‘I’ve been around it for a while, and I’m sick of it’.

- **Staff see venue takings from gambling**, where ‘being aware of what goes through turns to you off big time. It is a big deterrent’. As one respondent recalled, ‘doing clearances turned me off – there is a feed for a family for five years’.
- **Staff have better knowledge of the odds of losing**, ‘because we know what we pay out and what we get in; we see how much money you give out a day in change’.

Reasons given by hotel employees why frequent exposure to gambling may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff become immune to any influence**, where ‘I tune out now - it took me a while. In the beginning I used to go home and I’d have the tunes in my head. It took me six months to get over that, it drove me mad! Now I only listen for if there is a payout or an error on the machine’.

5.3.4 Influence of Fellow Employees

Interviewees were asked whether they thought that fellow employees are likely to influence the gambling activities of gaming venue employees. Eight thought that fellow employees can encourage other staff to gamble, one felt they can encourage or discourage this, three thought work colleagues had no influence, while two did not know or gave no response. No interviewees felt that fellow employees mainly discouraged colleagues from gambling.

Reasons given by hotel employees why fellow employees can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff gamble together in their workplace**, such as in ‘a punters club’ operated amongst employees.
- **Staff gamble together after work**, where ‘if you knock off at the same time as anyone else you might go and search for beer and pokies’. One respondent explained how ‘we used to go to the casino after work and have a couple of drinks and everyone would put some money through or play the tables’.
- **Staff gamble before work**. One revealed that ‘we get a fair few staff here from the casino. A lot. We’d have five regulars, who come at the same time every day, before they start their shift. They usually come in on their own, but sometimes they meet other staff down here’.
- **Staff gamble together on days off**, as ‘we socialise together and...we usually go to a hotel or a club or casino’. Another told of how ‘once a week, we’ll bet on the sports bet, on the tennis or the golf’. Another noted that ‘it depends on who you go out with. There’s a few staff here that play the pokies. We might bet on the horses or on the Melbourne Cup. I might go out for a drink with the girls, and there are three of us, and we’ll put \$20 in each’.
- **Staff directly encourage other staff to gamble**, such as when ‘someone goes, let’s go to the casino, and everyone goes, oh, yeah, okay’ or ‘they say come and put \$20 in here with me. We all put in to have a play on the machines together when we are out’. Another agreed that ‘yes, we can encourage each other, especially gaming staff. On occasions we’ve actually had gaming staff parties, where we’ve all gone out to other venues and...put in a little bit together, and had a play around, so yes we can influence each other’.
- **Staff share gambling tips**, where ‘some people are luckier than others, and they’ll tell you that they won this and that, and you’ll say, let’s get together and go together so I can have some of your luck. And that is the mentality’.

- **Staff gamble on hospitality industry nights**, typically held on a Monday evening, where ‘we used to have a lot of casino staff come in at (another hotel), because we used to have an industry night, where you could get cheap drinks and a pokie voucher. We used to have that every Monday night, and it used to be a really busy night’.

Reasons given by hotel employees why fellow employees can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff provide support or advice to stop gambling**, such as ‘when someone would come in and say they went and played the pokies last night and lost this much money, another gaming staff member would turn around and say you know you’re not going to win on them, you know, discouraging them’.

Reasons given by hotel employees why fellow employees may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff prefer not to socialise together**, where ‘I try not to go out with other employees’ and ‘after work, they don’t go out. We tried to set up a social club, but they do their own thing’.
- **Staff socialise by going out to drink instead**, where ‘the fellow employees usually avoid the gaming room, we usually go and have a drink – alcohol is a big one’.
- **Older staff are less interested in socialising**, such that ‘generally, when I’ve finished work, I like to go home, have a shower and go to bed. When I was younger I liked to stay out...At (the other hotel) we were a bunch of young people, and we did go out quite a lot after work...The group would be half playing pokies, half not’.
- **Staff work with different people all the time**, where ‘I never really associated with the other employees much. Because you worked with a different team of people all the time, it was changing...’.

5.3.5 Influence of Gaming Venue Managers

Staff gave very mixed responses when asked whether managers and their policies and practices are likely to influence staff gambling. Three felt that their managers explicitly discouraged staff gambling, although five cited examples of ways in which management can either encourage or discourage staff from gambling, depending on venue policies and the example set by management. Five respondents felt that management had no influence over or interest in staff gambling, while one was non-committal.

Reasons given by hotel employees why management can encourage staff gambling:

- **Managers are sometimes gamblers and so set an example**. As one respondent explained, ‘you don’t see the managers (here) gambling at all, whereas at some venues you do. They’re at the TAB a lot. I think that does influence staff. When you see someone you know doing it, someone that you look up to...’.
- **Managers gamble with staff**, such that ‘they can be a bad influence themselves. Some managers are avid gamblers. They say let’s go down and put some money through’. Another related how ‘I’ve heard the supervisor here say, let’s go to (another hotel) and play the Money Train’.
- **Managers allow staff to gamble in the workplace**, such as the instance where ‘at other places I have heard of where managers encourage employees to play at the venues illegally. It does affect the employees if they are going to be doing it at work, and that will create more problems’.

Reasons given by hotel employees why management can discourage staff gambling:

- **A policy of no staff gambling in the workplace.** As one explained, ‘you sit on your break, you don’t have much to do, and if you could play them, you would’.

Reasons given by hotel employees why management may not influence staff gambling:

- Staff do not mix with management, so that ‘I don’t think management, or our management here, has anything to say to staff about gambling. I don’t really think that the management would have that relationship with staff here. I don’t think management would have that much of an influence’.
- Management have no interest in or knowledge of what staff do in their own time, where ‘we don’t counsel staff that have gambling problems, but we don’t tend to know. But I can think of one girl who works for me right now, who is working right now, who does have a gambling problem. But I don’t really comment much on it, it isn’t really my business, until it becomes a work problem’.

5.3.6 Influence of Workplace Stressors

When asked if workplace stressors are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees, the interviewees were nearly equally divided, with four agreeing that workplace stress prompts staff to gamble, and five considering that it has no influence. One interviewee felt that workplace stress deters staff from gambling, one felt it could do either and three were non-committal. Several respondents commented that staff tend to use alcohol rather than gambling to de-stress after work.

Reasons given by hotel employees why workplace stressors can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff need to unwind after work.** One interviewee noted ‘I often will jump in a cab and go up to (a large club) if I’ve had a shit day, and play their machines’. Others prefer to ‘play keno at other venues...by myself and watch the numbers over a quiet beer’ to unwind.
- **Staff can experience stress about problem gamblers.** As one explained, ‘that’s one of the stress factors for me. I would hate to meet someone who has a problem and I haven’t picked it up, or I worry that I’ve encouraged them to keep going. It’s a really catch 22 situation, that situation. If I was to approach them and ask them a question they would be very insulted’.

Reasons given by hotel employees why workplace stressors can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff avoid gambling for stress relief.** For example, one interviewee noted that ‘after a long stressful day at work, I definitely want to go home and relax. And everyone else feels pretty much the same as me; all you want to do after a long day or a bad day, is get out of the gaming room – away from it’.

Reasons given by hotel employees why workplace stressors may not influence staff gambling:

- **The work is not stressful,** ‘because I don’t think there’s stress in hospitality’.
- **Staff de-stress in other ways,** where ‘staff might use alcohol to de-stress, not gambling’.
- **Stress would not influence non-gamblers to gamble,** such that ‘it depends if you are a gambler or not. I’d say if you are not a gambler and you’ve had a bad day, probably not. But if you are a gambler and you have not had a good day and you don’t want to go home or socialise, then it is a good way to vent’.

5.3.7 Influence of Shift Work

When staff were asked about the influence of working the odd hours typical in hospitality, the interviewees related very strongly to the potential influence of shift work on staff gambling behaviour, with 11 acknowledging its importance. Three disagreed that shift work is likely to influence staff gambling. No interviewees thought that shift work actually discouraged staff gambling.

Reasons given by hotel employees why shift work can encourage staff gambling:

- **Lack of alternative social opportunities for staff.** For example, one employee explained that ‘(as a shift worker) you don’t really have a nightlife any more, so you have to do something with your days...if I am home alone, and I don’t like being home alone, that’s (gambling) what I go do’.
- **Lack of alternative recreational opportunities for staff.** As one noted, ‘when you work shift work there is not too much to do, no entertainment when you finish and need to unwind’. Another lamented ‘there’s no gym open 24 hours around here, and I think that is terrible, because a lot of the Gold Coast is hospitality, and they don’t provide enough for us to do...’.
- **Only gambling venues are open late at night.** ‘Some nights we don’t finish up until 5am, and the casino is the only thing open, so you think, why not, we’ll all go there to wind down before we go home. Sometimes you finish at 3.30am, and you might go somewhere else to play the pokies. But if you end up at the casino; you might not go to play, but you will get there, you’ll see them, and you’ll end up playing’, explained one respondent. Some interviewees working in Brisbane also noted that the ‘lockdown’ that prevents people from entering venues after 3am means the only place they can go after work is the casino ‘because when we close we can’t get in anywhere else’.
- **Staff gamble to fill in time between shifts,** as was the case with ‘my chef, she goes to the casino sometimes in between her split shift’. Another employee also commented on ‘a lot of chefs who come in and put money through the pokies’.
- **Staff social life can revolve around the workplace,** ‘because your time off is usually odd times; you’d love to go out to the beach but everyone else is working. So you go down to the pub, where everyone is, where the people you usually associate with are. So I think the odd hours do influence it a lot’. Another noted that ‘the staff are attracted back to the hotel. The young girls come back to a place where they feel comfortable’.
- **Staff gamble while waiting for others to finish work,** where they ‘could gamble if they were hanging around waiting for the others to finish their shift’.

Reasons given by hotel employees why shift work may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff find other activities in their time off.** For example, ‘when I did have a day off, it was generally to sleep in and shop and pay bills, stuff that you have to do because you can’t do it other times. So I can’t say that I played the pokies on my day off’.
- **Staff just want to go home after a shift,** where ‘Mostly we finish work and sit here and have a beer and chat for an hour before we go home’.

5.3.8 Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions

Four staff agreed that frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees by encouraging it, two felt they deter staff from gambling, five felt they had no influence, while three were non-committal.

Reasons given by hotel employees why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions can encourage staff gambling:

- **Promotions can act as a trigger**, such as ‘when you are actually seeing people win things like that (promotions), it probably does influence some of them to pop down and see if they can win them too’.
- **Reinforces gambling as way to win money**. As one interviewee noted, ‘I think if you are a gambler, any time you have a chance to win a bit of extra cash, it would be tempting...you see other hospitality staff coming in from other venues when there is a promotion on’.
- **Raises awareness of jackpot levels**, as ‘staff certainly do keep an eye on the jackpot. Yes, staff definitely think they have insider knowledge, to give them more chance. So, definitely your links would be a trap’.
- **Increases knowledge about other promotions**, where ‘staff do come and tell me about promotions they’ve seen at other venues, and say that we should try those’.

Reasons given by hotel employees why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff are aware of the low chance of winning promotions**, or as one respondent said, ‘we see the other side of it. We see what goes on behind the scenes’, and another that ‘we’ve got jackpots, including Jetsetter. I think it would deter you...because you see how often it goes off for that one person who has just walked in off the street, who you will never see again. And you see everyday people there trying and trying to win it. You just have to be really, really lucky’.

Reasons given by hotel employees why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff are often not allowed to enter workplace promotions**, so ‘I don’t think that is an influence on staff gambling, especially in our venue, because we’re not allowed to promote staff gambling’.
- **Venue does very little gambling marketing and promotions**, where ‘we don’t have anything [here] really...We don’t give anything away in the pokie room at all’.
- **Heavy gamblers amongst staff are not attracted to promotions**. As one explained, ‘your heavier bettors don’t get involved in the promotions; they won’t interact’.

5.3.9 Influence of Responsible Gambling Training

The employees were asked whether responsible gambling training is likely to influence staff in their own gambling. Over half the interviewees (8) thought it would discourage gambling, or at least heavy gambling, by staff, two felt it had no influence, one thought it could help or hinder and three stated they did not know (one of these had not completed the training). No one thought that responsible gambling training would encourage staff to gamble.

Reasons given by hotel employees why responsible gambling training can discourage staff gambling:

- **Raises awareness for staff of problem gambling and its signs**, as ‘I think it definitely highlights, if you were a gambler, it may make you realise that you have a problem and this is what you can do’.
- **Raises awareness for staff of the poor odds in gambling**. One respondent who had sought advice for her gambling problems noted, ‘I think seeing a lot of other people win made you think you could do that too, until I went to venue support...and found out that it is all random and set wins, about the percentages that they paid out’. Another speculated that ‘by doing your RSG you learn the odds and all, and that could influence you in a negative way, like make you not want to play them’.
- **Raises awareness for staff of ways to seek help**. For example, one explained that ‘I think it would encourage staff to reflect on their own behaviour. It stresses heavily personal responsibility with the exclusion program. When you emphasise that, I think it makes people look inward’.

Reasons given by hotel employees why responsible gambling training may not influence staff gambling:

- **May not encourage staff to reflect on their own gambling**, as ‘it aims more at problem gamblers, spotting issues with problem gamblers, ways of approaching them and helping them’ and ‘it probably doesn’t relate to staff’s own gambling. They think of it as relevant to their jobs; they don’t think of it in relation to themselves’.

5.3.10 Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures

When questioned whether other responsible gambling measures implemented in the workplace are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees, seven considered that the responsible gambling measures discouraged staff gambling while four considered they had no influence. Three were non-committal. No one considered these measures as encouraging staff to gamble.

Reasons given by hotel employees why responsible gambling measures discourage staff gambling:

- **Measures raise awareness of gambling problems**. For example, ‘the signage there, they are going to read it. I mean, I always read it. So yeah, it might have a positive effect on them. They might go down and put \$5 through, but they won’t go and put their whole pay through’.
- **Signage raises awareness of where to get help**, as ‘it is accessible – in that way it helps you if you are that far gone...you could find it easier to ask for help’.
- **Can trigger problem recognition**, such that ‘I think the signs would make you think about it. If I had a problem, I’d definitely think about it’.
- **Raises awareness of the poor odds of winning**, in that ‘the odds do have an effect. It makes me more aware. When I go and play the pokies, I know that there is a huge chance that I am going to lose this money that I am about to put in. It makes you aware of the problems’.
- **Staff involvement in self-exclusion deters staff from gambling**. For example, one interviewee related how ‘there was one staff member here who self banned from the TAB...(but) he’d get carried away when he was drinking...he would try and bet...so we’d have to turn the machine off...We’d be bad guys when he was drunk, but when he was sober it was thanks guys. I think it probably highlights the problem, you saying don’t do it,

and you see how desperate he is to put a bet on, you think, whoa, I shouldn't be doing this either. I think it was a positive thing for all of us, to see him take control and help himself'.

Reasons given by hotel employees why responsible gambling measures may not influence staff gambling:

- **Signs become too familiar**, such that 'it probably would have an impact if they'd change the signs every six months – they have been red all the time. You notice – it stays boring and the same – if you change them they'll read them again'.
- **Signage is misleading**, in that 'it says: "are you looking for a hot tip?" Everyone picks it up and puts it back down when they realise what it is about. Everyone thinks they're going to get a tip and then they don't'.

5.3.11 Influence of Other Aspects of the Work Environment

Four additional themes were raised in response to the question of whether other aspects of the work environment (not already discussed) are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees. These were all related to additional workplace factors that can encourage staff gambling.

Reasons given by hotel employees why other aspects of the work environment can encourage staff gambling:

- **Some staff drink large quantities of alcohol**. One explained that 'alcohol has a major part to play in how much a person spends. It makes it easier with the money. I know that after a couple of drinks I'm more inclined to put more money through than when I am in a straight frame of mind'.
- **Some staff have the opportunity to bet on credit**. As one noted, 'I have seen credit betting on keno at \$200 a time' by staff.
- **Self-exclusion is too difficult due to embarrassment and fear of job loss**, because 'as far as self exclusion and all that sort of thing, it can go either way. You can...be uncomfortable and don't want to seek help in a venue because that is your job' and because 'staff would be more inclined to hide that there is a problem with themselves. The minimum time for exclusions is 12 months. And they know this, so if they go to another venue and play there, they wouldn't want them to know that they bet this much, for the simple fact that they could be disallowed from playing there for another 12 months. I really don't think staff would disclose that they had a problem'.
- **Staff are overlooked in problem gambling**, such that 'the industry is usually forgotten in talk around problem gambling. Because we're all the same, our gambling is overlooked'.

5.3.12 At Risk Status of Hospitality Staff

The hotel interviewees were asked whether they think that hospitality staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems. Eight employees answered 'yes', although with different degrees of certainty, from 'definitely, definitely' to 'probably'. Of those who agreed, some related how they had not gambled before working in gaming venues as the main reason for their view – 'I didn't know much about it (before working in the industry) and now, I think, oh yeah, I'll have a play'; '...when I was first back here, and I hadn't worked in gaming for some time, I couldn't believe it, but I wanted to put \$20 into the machine. But I never used to gamble a lot, I don't consider myself a gambler but I do gamble, but I stopped doing it with machines when I stopped working with them'; and 'definitely, for me, because I used to hate poker machines, and now I play them'. Four

employees thought that gaming venue staff are no more at risk than the general population, and two were undecided.

5.4 CASINO EMPLOYEES

This section summarises the responses given by the 38 casino employees we interviewed in three Queensland casinos to questions about their work background and about whether various aspects of their work environment are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees. Two of the three casinos which participated in the study did not allow us to administer the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index* to their employees. Of the six casino employees from the other casino who completed the survey questionnaire (Chapter Four), none scored in the problem gambling category on the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index*.

5.4.1 Work Background of Interviewees

The employees we interviewed were from a wide range of positions that included front-of-house, back-of-house, operational, supervisory and departmental management positions. The biggest group were table games dealers (11 interviewees), followed by guest services (4). Three employees were interviewed from each of the following departments/positions – departmental management, floor supervisors, food and beverage, and cashier/cage operations. One or two employees were also interviewed from keno and TAB operations, gaming machines, kitchen, events, cleaning, security and entertainment.

5.4.2 Close interaction with Gamblers

When asked whether they thought that close interaction with gamblers is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees, the interviewees gave varied responses. Only three employees thought that this close interaction with gamblers encouraged staff to gamble, 12 thought it mainly discouraged staff gambling, while 13 considered it could have either influence. Five respondents felt this interaction had no influence on staff gambling, while five did not know or were non-committal in their response.

Reasons given by casino employees why close interaction with gamblers can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff hear about wins more than losses**, such as an employee working in cage operations who ‘mainly sees the bigger winners. I don’t often see the losers. This can make you think, if they can win why can’t I?’. Another interviewee commented that it ‘depends on what areas you are employed in. For example a cleaner working on the main gaming floor can see people winning and see how many credits they have on their machines...In the cleaner’s position it may tempt you to gamble’.
- **Seeing people win creates hope of winning**, or as one explained, ‘when they hear about big jackpots, some staff will say I wish I could win that or why not me?’. Another recalled how some staff ‘will see a jackpot go off or getting higher and they will comment that they can’t wait to have a day off so they can go to another gambling venue to have a go at trying to win the jackpot’. Another noted that ‘the interaction does influence staff; everyone wants to win’.
- **Staff get caught up in the excitement of patrons’ wins**. For example, one interviewee recalled how she was working when a jackpot of \$1.76 million went off. Because of this, ‘I felt very excited and hyped up. I left work at 10pm and all I wanted to do was play the poker machines. I think everyone who was involved in this win would have felt the same’ she said.
- **Staff constantly hear about gambling and are given ‘hot tips’**. One respondent noted that ‘I have an interest in horse racing because I operate the TAB...I am more likely to

strike up a conversation about horse racing with a punter than I would with a pokie player. If I have a punt, I would go to a TAB. I do get an influence because I talk to horse punters'. He continued that 'some other staff that are working in poker machines areas will strike up a conversation with a pokie player and I know some of these staff will then go and play the pokies'.

Reasons given by casino employees why close interaction with gamblers can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff see problem or heavy gamblers and don't want to be like them.** One commented that 'I don't mind chatting to some of the regulars but I wouldn't want to be one of them...because they have no life; they come in day after day in the same clothes'.
- **Staff see negative responses to gambling losses,** for example when 'a lady came in the other day quite emotional (because) she had lost a lot of money...A lot of staff hear stories like this and it is a big turn off'. Another commented how he 'sees the patrons' personalities change from happy go lucky to cynical and angry and I don't want to turn into that type of person'. Another simply commented that 'you see more sad faces than happy faces' and another how she gambles less now than she used to because of 'the amount of patrons that have cried on my shoulder'.
- **Staff see the effects of problem gambling,** where 'some comments that customers make, such as what are my kids going to eat tonight, turn me off gambling'. Another 'has seen the ups and downs of gambling and I don't want to turn out like some of the gamblers that are in the casino everyday. It can ruin lives and make people desperate'. Another commented on 'the traumas they are putting their families through' and another that staff 'have seen people lose their houses at the casino, lose cars, and gambling has cost some of the patrons their marriage'.
- **Staff see or hear about the losses.** One worker explained how she 'hears a lot about the losses not the wins, so I think because of this the odds of winning can't be too good. Maybe this is because I see the balances on the reward cards'. Another commented how staff 'have heard a lot of gripes from patrons about losing lots of money that they don't actually have'.
- **Staff see the amount of money patrons spend on gambling.** For example, one related how a 'customer won \$10,000, cashed his chips in and was back straight away putting the money back on the table...This can make me feel frustrated'. Another commented how she has 'heard other staff say that they think people are silly for wasting their money on gambling and are shocked at the amounts people will waste'. For others, 'it can be depressing knowing how much money they waste on the machines and tables'.
- **Staff see the amount of time patrons spend gambling,** where 'the staff on the floor, often see the same people all day and every day and it turns them off'. Another related how 'while on day shift I have around 100 to 200 regulars each day. Normally they can sit there up to eight hours. I can't imagine gambling for that amount of time'.

Reasons given by casino employees why close interaction with gamblers may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway,** so that 'staff interaction with gambling doesn't lead them to an addiction. You're either predisposed to it or not'.
- **Some staff have little interaction with gamblers,** where 'I don't have any interaction with gamblers' and where 'I am professional in my job. I will listen to the patrons for a while but if they are interacting too much I will put a stop to it'. Another commented that 'when you interact with the patrons you try not to talk about the wins or the losses to

them. I avoid this because people don't like to be reminded of their gambling problems or losses'.

5.4.3 Frequent Exposure to Gambling

Of the 38 casino interviewees, the majority thought that frequent exposure to gambling encouraged staff gambling (13 respondents) or could either encourage or discourage them (14 respondents) depending on the person and their job. Only five employees thought that this exposure to gambling had no influence on staff gambling, while two felt this discouraged staff from gambling. Four interviewees did not give a firm answer.

Reasons given by casino employees why frequent exposure to gambling can encourage staff gambling:

- **Increases staff familiarity with gambling.** One interviewee noted that 'when you start dealing, it is a cheap way of learning how to play blackjack; when you get the opportunity you are going to try and play blackjack'. Another commented how 'some staff...like to go out together after work. Because they work at the casino, it makes them more familiar with gaming in general so they would go to a gaming venue'. Similarly, another said that 'for me and a lot of other staff, before I started working at the casino I would never had gambled at a casino, but because I have worked at the casino and am familiar with the game, I would walk into a casino and try my luck on the tables. The knowledge of the game has come because of the frequency I have had with the game'. Another noted that some staff are an at-risk group for gambling problems because 'for the dealers, you are taught how to play the game. You have the skills'.
- **Increases perceived insider knowledge about gambling,** where 'because they see the games played, they think they know this game and could win. Some employees think that the pokies require skill, when really, how do you outwit a microchip?' Another explained how he 'knows how to play the game to a proper system which would give me an elevated chance...This could also attract other dealers or any other table employees to play the game they are trained in'. Another commented that 'a lot of staff think because they have worked at the casino that they have a better knowledge about gambling, therefore have a better chance of winning'.
- **Increases staff interest in gambling.** One employee explained that 'there is the inquisitiveness as to see how it works on a poker machine; for example, how do you get the feature?'. He continued, 'you will be asked how to fill in a keno ticket or TAB ticket. I don't know how to answer that, unless I have a go myself. Sometimes a lot of the conversation with staff is questions that customers ask, so that may cause the inquisitiveness to find out'. Another employee explained that 'I had never played the poker machines before starting work for the casino. I think I started because I am constantly around the machines'.
- **Staff are surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere.** This could be an influence on some staff as 'it is designed to give that air of excitement'. Another recalled how she 'trained up a new host and I remember seeing the look of excitement on her face from the lights, bells and whistles'. Another noted that 'wherever you are in the casino, you can see or hear the pokies, patrons yelling or cheering; there is a talking roulette wheel you can hear. I think this exposure would affect staff, that some staff might think greedy thoughts like why can't that be me?'.
- **Infrequent workers can gain distorted views about winning.** As one noted, frequent exposure to gambling 'has influenced me not to gamble...but it might be different for part-timers'.

- **New or younger staff can be vulnerable**, where for example, ‘if you start as a dealer and you watch how it all pans out, initially you are more likely to gamble’. Another noted how ‘I gamble for pleasure...I gamble because I enjoy it, but I think it might be different for newer and younger dealers’. Another commented that ‘when I first started, I was more likely to put some money in the pokies’, and another stated that frequent exposure to gambling ‘definitely’ influences staff gambling, ‘especially for the younger staff members who gamble mainly on the pokies’.
- **Staff can lose sight of the value and ownership of money**. One respondent commented that ‘it’s play money; it changes a dealer’s attitude toward their wages/income. Big sums don’t seem so big to a dealer’. Another commented on the role of gaming chips, where ‘the influence of large jackpots, large denomination chips could be an influence because they lose the sight of the value of money. They see so much. If you saw the cash it would give you a totally different perspective, where chips are bits of plastic; its value loses itself’.
- **Staff become attracted to the gambling environment**. As one recalled, ‘since working at the casino for six years, I am now more inclined to go for a drink and have a go on the pokies after work, where before working at the casino I couldn’t justify even putting \$1 in a machine...I play them now because I am around them all day and helping people all day with the machines, and I want to fit in that same environment and turn off completely, have someone wait on you for a change... I kind of feel inclined to go into that environment but in a different context; not being there at work but sitting there as a patron’.

Reasons given by casino employees why frequent exposure to gambling can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff can become sick of being around gambling and the environment**, where, for one employee ‘the machine noises remind me of work and I don’t like being reminded of work when I’m not working’. Another commented that ‘it has influenced me not to gamble. On my days off, I don’t want to go anywhere near a poker machine’.
- **Staff see venue takings from gambling**, because they ‘see how much money goes through the machines’ and even if ‘they may win \$30,000...over the next 12 months they would put that money back into the poker machines’. Others see the ‘balances on rewards cards’ and realise how much the venue has taken in losses from these players.
- **Staff have better knowledge of the odds of losing**, so ‘as time goes on and you watch how people become desperate and you realise what the odds are, you will stop gambling’. Another noted that ‘being aware of the losses and the odds and the chances of winning have given me some insight on the small probability that you will win’. Similarly, another commented that he ‘is aware of the odds and wouldn’t bother putting my money in the poker machines’.

Reasons given by casino employees why frequent exposure to gambling may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway**, so it would be an influence ‘only if the person has the addictive nature’ and ‘people are either gamblers or they’re not. There are two groups of people; many staff don’t gamble’.
- **Staff become immune to any influence**, for example where ‘after a while you become immune to these noises and flashing lights’ and ‘at first it was exciting but I got used to working in this environment. When I first started, I was more likely to put some money in the pokies but not really anymore’. Another explained that ‘most of the staff treat the exposure as their work environment. They come into work and know that its going to be

busy, noisy, lots of glitz and glamour is presented but they accept it as their work environment. It doesn't have a negative or a positive impact on them. It is the norm for this type of work'.

5.4.4 Influence of Fellow Employees

Interviewees were asked whether they thought that fellow employees are likely to influence the gambling activities of gaming venue employees. Twenty-five agreed that staff gamble together and so could influence each other in this way. Two felt other staff discouraged gambling by their colleagues, one felt fellow employees could have either influence, while seven felt there was no influence from other staff. Three staff were non-committal.

Reasons given by casino employees why fellow employees can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff gamble together in their workplace.** As one respondent noted, 'the casino has footy tipping comps, soccer tipping comps, etc. There is a percentage of the staff from the casino that are gamblers and create something to gamble with. This can be from management right through'.
- **Staff gamble together after work,** where you might 'go to pub with workmates, have a go on the pokies and others might follow' and 'we all knock off at the same time and will go the RSL, pub or club and might put a couple of dollars in the pokies'. Another commented that 'there is a pub across the road, which always seems to be full of casino employees who mainly go over there after work. It's an easy place to meet and is open extended hours. In this bar there are two pool tables, two tables and the rest is full of poker machines'. Another made the interesting comment that 'new staff seem to want to gamble after a shift and will ask another staff member to go along. After working at the casino for a while I have noticed that the novelty wears off'.
- **Staff gamble together on days off.** Some casino staff gamble privately together, with one commenting that he 'is going to more card nights than before; it is becoming more frequent'. Another explained that these card nights are often serious business, that 'poker night isn't just a friendly game. I have heard of people losing their pay packet in the private residence of people's home. All the props, chips, felt cloth, proper cards, the serious environment...A lot of the staff take part in these events, normally younger guys as they don't have a lot of monetary commitments'. Another observed that 'they all have their little groups at work. Some of them might have a punt on the horses once a week, they'll have a drink and a few bets'. Another gave the example of how staff can influence fellow employees, 'especially with the horses; this is talked about a lot, especially on a Sunday. You could nearly call it a social activity...It's always a bit of a get together for staff and they may have a small punt'. Other interviewees mentioned race days organised by staff where there is 'a type of admiration for a winner'. Another explained 'if I am invited to lunch with fellow staff they will always pick a place with nice meal, view and keno...I find it hard to have a decent conversation as their eyes are glued to the screen. The conversation then turns to what numbers they are getting'.
- **Staff travel away together to gamble.** For example, one interviewee noted that 'as a group, some would jump on a plane to Sydney to gamble'. Another example was given of 'odd groups, they do a once a year trip, for example to the poker tournaments at Canberra...or they go to Crown (Casino)'.
- **Staff directly encourage other staff to gamble,** where 'there is always someone asking you to contribute to whatever it is they are running - football, poker nights, AFL, tips on horses. Another commented that 'footy tipping and sports gambling are popular in the

staff groups...It creates camaraderie and friendships at work. People may frown on those who do not join in'.

- **Staff share gambling tips**, such as when employees 'might hear from other staff that they won on a pokie or horses and that may influence the others to have a go themselves'. Another gave the example of a recent Amateur Race Day, which he worked at. He noted that 'there was a colleague from work there and he said to me that he has a couple of tips, which influenced me to put a couple of bets on following his tips'. He continued that 'people that have knowledge of slot machines and that have gone to another gambling venue with other staff would make comments about how to play the machine. For example this machine has this feature and that feature; you get free spins here, etc. I think this would influence the staff member to play that machine. It's industry knowledge'.
- **Staff gamble together at hospitality nights**, such as 'on Monday nights for hospitality nights you go to a pub, have drinks, some gamble but not everyone. With the hospitality card at the pub you get two free drinks and a free gaming voucher for two \$1 coins for the machines'.
- **Staff social club activities can encourage gambling**. One respondent advocated that 'they should get rid of the social clubs because this usually means they will go to a pub. Change this to a picnic or family days, Wet 'n' Wild...I think these social club days can influence staff to gamble if they are going to a pub'.

Reasons given by casino employees why fellow employees can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff provide support or advice to stop gambling**, One employee related how if she has gone out with other staff and is 'playing the pokies most of the time, they will drag me away from the pokies.' Another noted that if 'one of the guards came in and commented about losing money gambling or had a problem, the other staff would have no objection but to discourage it, commenting it's a mug's game, you never win anything. They would be quite open about saying this to them'. Another commented how, if 'a fellow staff member...told me that they just lost \$200 in the pokies, I would call them an idiot. What are you doing? You should know better!'
- **Staff hear about staff losses on gambling**, so 'their influence on fellow staff members would be a negative one, because they are aware of the losses that have occurred'.

Reasons given by casino employees why fellow employees may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff prefer not to socialise together**, where 'I have never really had a strong bond with fellow workmates...I don't really socialise a lot with any of them'.
- **Older staff are not interested in going out**, where 'it seems to be the younger ones gamble more than the older ones. They will be with mates and will gamble together'.
- **Heavy gamblers prefer to gamble on their own**, such that 'when gambling becomes a problem, it soon becomes a private thing. I don't know if people will try and talk other people to come with them (be)cause when it gets hold of them they would rather be on their own'.
- **No peer pressure to gamble or this is resisted**, as 'peer pressure shouldn't happen as we are adults and most employees wouldn't be influenced by it if they were pressured' and 'in my section I don't find others encourage gambling' and 'I have never come into contact with any other fellow employees influencing other staff members to gamble'.

5.4.5 Influence of Gambling Venue Managers

Staff were asked whether managers and their policies and practices are likely to influence staff gambling. The overwhelming majority (27) commented on the role of a ‘no gambling in the workplace policy’ as being an important discouragement for staff, although one thought managers could encourage staff gambling and another felt either could occur. Seven respondents felt that management had no influence over staff gambling, while two did not provide a firm view.

Reasons given by casino employees why management can encourage staff gambling:

- **Managers sometimes talk about big wins**, where ‘when a particular person wins a big jackpot, they talk about it quite a lot and it may influence somebody’.
- **Managers might talk about gambling in a positive way**, as ‘obviously they have to be positive towards gambling and the industry in their position. I have never heard management say anything negative about gambling, so in a way it is a type of influence’.

Reasons given by casino employees why management can discourage staff gambling:

- **Managers can provide support or advice to stop gambling**, such as one manager who ‘has socially spoken to staff about gambling, the effects it can have on people’. Another interviewee speculated that ‘if you heard on the grapevine that somebody had a problem, they (management) would quietly have a chat to them and try to encourage them not to gamble or to see somebody’. Another related how ‘when new people start, they ask me what the signs, etc. are about and I will...advise them to read the signage...(and) if they have a problem that they should take the advice from the cards and call someone. I will tell new staff stories about people with gambling problems and their reaction is usually shock and they can’t believe it could get that bad’.
- **A policy of no staff gambling in the workplace**, as staff ‘can’t finish work and spend their money at the casino’; ‘there would be too much temptation for the dealers working on the table games. They know the game inside out and I think they would like to play the game to see how they go’; and ‘if the employees there could gamble, a lot would be there as there is not a(nother) casino close by’. Another noted that the policy is a ‘strongly emphasised point to newcomers. They can’t play at Brisbane, Townsville, Gold Coast or Sydney. Restricts them completely and they think, what’s the point? This general attitude doesn’t steer them to gamble’. Another noted there are ‘a lot of people that come to work at the casino so that they can’t gamble. They have had a previous gambling problem and they start work there because they know they aren’t allowed to gamble’. This was mentioned by several casino interviewees.
- **A proactive culture of responsible gambling**, as ‘they are so intense about responsible gambling’. Many comments were made about the responsible gambling training and other responsible gambling measures that help to build this culture (as discussed below).

Reasons given by casino employees why management may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff do not mix with management**, so ‘I haven’t had any influence, positive or negative from any management at all’.
- **Management have no interest in or knowledge of what staff do in their own time**, where ‘outside of work they are not going to know if the person working beside them has a gambling problem. They don’t know everyone that works for the company...I am sure there would be people working at the casino that would have gambling problems but it’s all going to be covered up by them’. Another commented that ‘what the upper management enforce is you come to work to do your job and that’s it. What you do

outside work is your business, as long as you don't do anything illegal because it would effect your employment'.

5.4.6 Influence of Workplace Stressors

When asked if workplace stressors are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees, seven thought this would encourage staff to gamble, two felt it would discourage staff from gambling, nine felt it could do either, while 16 thought workplace stressors had no influence on staff gambling. Four interviewees were non-committal in their response.

Reasons given by casino employees why workplace stressors can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff need to unwind after work**, where 'there would definitely be people in the workplace that would get stressed and use gambling as a way to unwind' and 'yes some staff may go and play the pokies if they have had a stressful day. Playing the pokies could be a numbing experience where you don't have to use your brain; you can zone out'. Another related how 'if I have had a stressful day at work, I will go to a pub for a glass of wine and find it easier to sit on my own and put \$10 through the pokies because you don't have to talk to anyone, you are not bothered by anyone and can wind down. Being a single female, it is socially acceptable to sit on your own and play the pokies'.
- **Staff can experience stress about difficult customers**. As one explained, 'the stressors I face are patrons blaming me for losing; difficult customers...I think the younger staff find the stressors very difficult. I think the stress can influence people to gamble, mostly on the pokies because they can go to pubs (and) clubs to gamble. They do this to relieve the stress'. Another recalled how 'a drunk customer upset me so much that I was sick physically and went to hospital with shooting pains in my arm. I thought I was having a heart attack. Headaches from stress and smoke, which is now banned, caused poor health. Stress levels are high for some. I had to learn to deal with the stress'.
- **Staff can experience stress from heavy workloads**. As one explained, 'it gets very busy...I think the stressors of the job can influence staff to gamble. Gambling can be relaxing and take your mind off things'.

Reasons given by casino employees why workplace stressors can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff avoid gambling for stress relief**, where 'if I wanted to go and relax, the last thing I want to hear is the bells and sirens of the machines'.
- **Staff can be deterred by stress about problem gamblers**, such as 'a lady that drops her children off at school, gambles all day then picks them up. Stories like this turn a lot of the staff off. Seeing this can also be stressful for the workers...and can definitely discourage the employees from gambling'. Similarly, another commented that 'they see a problem gambler, they are there 18 hours a day, they look like shit, they have no life, spend lots of money; this would be a deterrent to influence them to gamble when feeling stressed from work'.
- **Staff can be deterred by stress about difficult customers**, where 'the stresses of the people show us the negative effects of gambling. They can be abusive, happy. Some don't smile, even after a win. These stresses can turn you off'. Similarly, another said that 'they see the people lose their money and it turns them off gambling. They see people arrive with a smile on their face; they see them again in three hours and they are nasty and unhappy because they have lost a lot of money'.

Reasons given by casino employees why workplace stressors may not influence staff gambling:

- **The work is not stressful.** One said ‘I don’t stress from the job I am in...there isn’t much stress to take home’.
- **Staff de-stress in other ways,** where ‘those that get stressed would be more inclined to have a cigarette or go and have a drink after work’ and ‘different people have different ways of de-stressing’ and ‘my team would choose perhaps a sporting event, for example golf, to relax after work’.

5.4.7 Influence of Shift Work

When staff were asked about the influence of working the odd hours typical in hospitality, the interviewees related very strongly to the potential influence of shift work on staff gambling behaviour, with 21 acknowledging its importance. Ten disagreed that shift work is likely influence staff gambling, two thought it could either encourage or discourage staff gambling, while five were non-committal.

Reasons given by casino employees why shift work can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff can suffer social isolation.** One explained that ‘you have time off when everyone else is at work and it’s easy to go to the pub and put some money in the pokies’. Another commented that ‘shift workers don’t have a social network so would tend to go and play the pokies’ and another that ‘working shift work can become a trap and can cause staff to turn to gambling...Shift work can be socially isolating’. One employee who previously had a gambling problem related how ‘working shift work, I would find myself going to a local club and...I would sit at a pokie...then it went from putting \$1 in to \$100 then \$100 to \$500...I would tell myself on my days off you are staying at home today, but my palms would get sweaty and I would become anxious’.
- **Lack of alternative social opportunities for staff.** As one observed, ‘working shift work could influence your gambling behaviour. Having for example Monday and Tuesday off could push you towards going to gambling venues...on my mid-week days off I will pop into the local tavern. The availability of seeing friends and family Monday to Friday is gone’. Another noted that ‘shift work can be very antisocial. I think it could possibly drive people to go to pubs on their day off to play the pokies’.
- **Lack of alternative recreational opportunities for staff,** where ‘for younger people, working shift work can influence them to gamble...It’s the government’s fault why they are gambling. They aren’t providing entertainment for them to go to. There is nothing else for them to do’. Another noted that on ‘a rotating shift, I have had to stop playing sport and am not able to commit to anything’. Another noted that she ‘gets Sunday off; you work to 2.30am, won’t go to sleep until 4am and by the time you get up you have lost half your Sunday or it’s gone. I can’t participate in normal activities – sport, family barbeques, etc.’.
- **Only gambling venues are open late at night.** That is, ‘gambling could become a shift workers’ pastime because it is the only place open when you finish’. Some respondents also commented that the casino attracts many shift workers, with one observing that ‘we get a lot of staff from other hospitality industries coming to the casino when they finish work to have a punt’. Another commented that ‘when you knock off work you are wound up and the only places open are gaming venues’, and another that ‘what do you do when you finish work? What’s open? Usually it will be a pub or a club with gaming machines’.
- **Staff need to find solitary leisure activities.** One explained that ‘most of my friends are at work when I have days off and I will tend to go to the club to play the pokies. When I want to do something, there is no one around to do anything so you will do something by

yourself. You can go and play the pokies and get away with doing it on your own. You don't look stupid sitting at a pokie but I think I'd look stupid going into a bar on my own for a drink. I don't want guys to think I'm going in there to pick up. The gaming room is a safe environment for loners'. Another made the interesting observation that 'I enjoy playing the pokies and go there so I don't have to talk to people. I'm around a lot of people during the week so on my day off I would rather be left alone. I will have a coffee, sit and play and not have to talk to anyone. I don't have to interact with people. I have spoken to other people in hospitality that feel the same as me'.

- **Staff tend to socialise with other hospitality workers**, as 'your social calendar is different to other people. You seem to start to socialise more often with people that you work with or others that work shift work'. Another recalled how 'when I first started at the casino there was a very social group that finished at ten in the morning; on occasion they used to go gambling. They would go to a pub or club. I would think the hours of work could be a contributing factor for staff to gamble'.
- **Staff gamble to fill in time between shifts**. As one commented, 'it would be harder to resist the temptation to gamble when you have to fill in two hours in between shifts. I deal with a lot of chefs who work split shifts and the ones I do know like to play the pokies in between shifts'.
- **Shift work makes it easier to hide heavy gambling**. As one explained, 'if you are a gambler, then working shift work wouldn't help towards your gambling behaviour...If you have a gambling problem it would be easier to hide this because you are going late into the night or on days off when your friends and family are at work. It is easier to avoid it being seen as a problem'.

Reasons given by casino employees why shift work can discourage staff gambling:

- **No gambling venues open after some shifts**, as 'it could also work in an opposite way for some shift workers. You will finish at 4am and there aren't any pubs open to go and gamble at. I think there is a lack of opportunity to gamble when you're working shift work'. Similarly, another commented that on 'night shift, you have time for nothing other than work and sleep. There is also less opportunity to gamble when working the night shift'.

Reasons given by casino employees why shift work may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff have other hospitality friends to socialise with**, where 'a lot of staff within the casino become closer friends, and tend to hang out with the staff that are doing the same shifts as them...I don't think the shift work influences them to gamble; it would more so develop a close bond with the other staff'.
- **Staff find other activities in their time off**, as 'many have children and have other activities to do after work'.
- **Staff just want to go home after a shift**, where 'when I finish work I will go home to relax, watch TV, do some work in the garden. Most of the other staff that work my shift or the other shifts will also go home and have a sleep or do similar things'.
- **Some staff have permanent shifts or do not do shift work**, as 'with this job you get the option to do day shift or night shift' and 'it is people who work the nights who are more likely to go out after they finish their shift and might play the poker machines and have a drink, but the daytime staff are more likely to finish work and go straight home'. Another commented that 'a lot of shift workers like to stay on the same shift for a while so they can have some normality in their life'.

5.4.8 Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions

Eight staff agreed that frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions is likely to encourage gambling by venue employees, while two felt it discouraged staff gambling, at least on promotions, and seven felt it could have either effect. However, the largest group (17) felt that the casino marketing and promotions had no influence on staff gambling. Four were non-committal

Reasons given by casino employees why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions can encourage staff gambling:

- **Promotions can act as a trigger.** As one interviewee observed, ‘some staff working on the machines will see a big win and will go to a club playing the same machine because they have seen big wins on it’. Another noted that ‘when I saw the keno go off it did make me think I should go to the club and have a go on the keno’.
- **Reinforces gambling as way to win money.** One respondent commented, ‘yes, I think they could be influenced because they see a lot of something for nothing, whether it be winning on a poker machine or some of the lotteries they have here. I think it could promote the attitude that the world owes me something’. Another observed that ‘the casino always has a promotion on and the staff always see the people winning. This could make you think that someone always wins so there could be a chance you could win’.
- **Raises awareness of jackpot levels,** where ‘seeing the jackpot going up, knowing what the level is that it jackpots at, could be a big influence’. Another commented that ‘people working near the poker machines could be influenced by the linked jackpots. Seeing the jackpot going up, it’s easy for them to go to a club or pub after work and try and win’. Similarly, another noted that ‘jackpots would draw you in. There are mini, maxis and mega jackpots. You think to yourself that would be good to win that’.
- **Increases knowledge about other promotions.** For example, one staff member who is ‘very involved in marketing and promotions’ noted that while ‘I have never thought about why I enter promotions...my work environment...could be a big influence. I question myself: Is it because I have been around gambling for so long now?...Because I have a closer knowledge of it, it could influence me’. Another related how ‘when I go to another property, I pick up all of the promotions that are happening at that venue so I can bring them back to show the team I work with’. Another commented that staff could ‘be influenced to join somewhere else which offers similar rewards (to the casino). If they didn’t work in a gaming venue they wouldn’t know about these reward systems’.
- **Staff get caught up in the excitement of promotions,** where during promotions ‘standing on the floor you can hear the wins, everyone having fun. This can be an influence on the staff’.

Reasons given by casino employees why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff are aware of the low chance of winning promotions,** or as one expressed it, ‘I see the odds and have a good understanding that it is at huge odds to win’. Another gave the example where ‘most of the staff are aware of the odds of winning the big promotions. For example in the last promotion there were two and a half million tickets. They are in big glass barrels so they can physically see the amount in the draw’. Another noted that he ‘knows the odds of the promotions are higher than anything in the casino’, and another that ‘working in the casino, you get more of a sense of how much money somebody would have to gamble to actually have a chance of winning the promotion; you see how many points they need to actually get a ticket in the draw’. Further, one commented that ‘if I

didn't work in the casino and saw these promotions, they may influence me to gamble more' and another that staff 'would actually be more immune than the general population'.

Reasons given by casino employees why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff are not allowed to enter workplace promotions**, so 'most of the staff would ignore the promotions because they know they can't win'. Similarly, another commented that staff 'are not allowed into the casino or to go in any of the promotions so it isn't any real concern to the employees as to what is being given away'.
- **Staff who are not gamblers would not be influenced**, where 'if someone wants to gamble they will...I don't think that seeing a car or other promotions will trigger the urge to gamble' and 'if you are going to gamble it's in your system. I don't think anything on the floor is going to make any one person in particular want to gamble'.

5.4.9 Influence of Responsible Gambling Training

The employees were asked whether responsible gambling training is likely to influence staff in their own gambling. The majority of interviewees (26) thought it would discourage gambling, at least heavy gambling, by staff, eight thought that it would have no influence and four provided no response or were non-committal. No one thought that responsible gambling training encouraged staff to gamble.

Reasons given by casino employees why responsible gambling training can discourage staff gambling:

- **Raises awareness for staff of problem gambling and its signs.** One noted, 'if a staff member was in a position where they had an excessive gambling problem, they would probably relate it to themselves, make them think about their gambling and ask themselves: Do I have a problem?'. Another related how 'the training is good; I think it has made a couple of staff members reflect on their own gambling, made them wake up to themselves' and another that 'if you have a gambling problem, it may trigger some sort of reality check for you'.
- **Raises awareness for staff of the effects of problem gambling.** As one commented, 'assuming that they hear the message that is coming through, then yes it can make people aware of the dangers of letting gambling go beyond entertainment'. Another noted that 'the issues raised, for example how it can destroy lives and families, would have to make them think twice about excessive gambling. I'm not sure if it would have a direct effect on them changing their gambling patterns, but I think it would definitely make them think about it'.
- **Raises awareness for staff of the poor odds in gambling**, that is 'knowing the odds, yes it can influence them'. Another explained that 'it is possible that staff would reflect on their own gambling because of the training...because you know the odds, knowing the RSG policy, being there 40 to 50 hours a week, it's enough to say you don't want to do it for the rest of your week'.
- **Raises awareness for staff of ways to seek help**, that 'they know that there is help out there if they need it', they know they can 'get a card or call Gamblers' Anonymous', and 'staff are aware of the support network that is available in the community'. Another agreed that 'if you knew you had a problem and you were happy to face up to the problem, you would have the knowledge learned from the training about getting help'.

Reasons given by casino employees why responsible gambling training may not influence staff gambling:

- **May not encourage staff to reflect on their own gambling**, as ‘training should be improved or modified. It always seems to be about the customer and it should be about staff also’. Another agreed that ‘they are not talking about (the) staff’s gambling, only the patrons’ and another that ‘because the staff are seen doing it for the patron, they don’t look at it as their own issue’.
- **People may be in denial about their own gambling**, or as one interview stated, ‘if someone is a hard core gambler they will usually think they don’t have a problem. They probably wouldn’t relate it (the training) to themselves’.
- **Staff can be sceptical about the venue’s commitment to responsible gambling**, such that ‘everyone sees the training as a bit of a joke’ and ‘if anyone that attends the training had a problem they wouldn’t take the course seriously’. Some staff were sceptical of the casino’s intent because ‘they see the same gamblers there everyday and nobody does anything about it’, because ‘when it comes to practice on the floor, most of the rules go out the window. Most of the staff get annoyed by this’, and because ‘the company doesn’t care about responsible gambling, they just want the money. They don’t care if the patron is down to their last dollar, they just want the money’. Another commented that when he did the training, he ‘read between the lines and thought that the casino was trying to not let the staff feel responsible for people’s gambling problems and addictions...some of the staff would have some moral dilemmas about this’. Another related how ‘I have seen people that are too drunk...but if they are gambling they are allowed to stay at the venue. These orders have been from management...I have to deal with a lot of drunks in my shifts’.

5.4.10 Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures

When asked whether other responsible gambling measures implemented in the workplace are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees, 18 considered that the responsible gambling measures discouraged staff gambling, at least heavy gambling, 14 thought they would have no influence, and six were undecided.

Reasons given by casino employees why responsible gambling measures discourage staff gambling:

- **Measures raise awareness of gambling problems**. As one interviewee observed, ‘these strategies would make them aware that gambling can be a problem. As with the responsible serving of gambling, they would know when their behaviour would be bordering on a problem; it gives them a little signpost’. Another commented that ‘it reinforces the possibility that gambling can affect you in an adverse way...it’s not all fun’.
- **Signage raises awareness of where to get help**, because ‘staff are aware of the signs, etc. as they need to instruct the patrons to these if they are after any information or direction. Because of this, the staff would be aware of where to go if they need help’. Another stated that ‘there is signage everywhere and staff should be aware where to go and what to do if they had a problem’.
- **Responsible gambling measures can trigger problem recognition**. One commented that ‘if I did have a problem and it was on my mind, it (signage) would then be the thing you would see and say, okay I need help. I think a staff member would think the signage, etc. would relate to them if they actually had a problem’. Another noted that ‘if there was a staff member with a problem, they know the procedures to follow for self exclusion’.
- **Staff involvement in self-exclusion of patrons deters staff from gambling**. As one interviewee recalled, ‘I have had to deal with customers with problems asking if they can

get themselves self-excluded from the casino. Being involved with this does make me reflect on my own gambling habits’.

Reasons given by casino employees why responsible gambling measures may not influence staff gambling:

- **Signs become too familiar**, as staff see ‘the same signs every single day so they become the background, part of the furniture’, or as one person explained, ‘signage is good for people who look at it, but I think the staff that are here everyday get to a stage where they don’t see it’.
- **Signage is too discreet**. One respondent noted that the cards have not been replaced ‘for a long time so no one is looking at them. I think it should be more of an impact for them to take notice of the signs’.
- **Signs are aimed at patrons not staff**, or as one observed, ‘they would look at the signs, etc. and think that it doesn’t apply to them; they are there for the patrons’. Another explained that ‘the staff think the signs are just for the patrons. The signs aren’t in the staff toilets, so to me, I think it is directed just for the patrons’.
- **People may be in denial about their own gambling**, so that ‘if someone is going to gamble they will gamble’, ‘if there are staff with a gambling problem that they wouldn’t admit to it, like any addiction’, and ‘if you’re a gambler you’re a gambler; you wouldn’t take notice of the signage’.
- **Signage can trigger gambling**. Interestingly, one employee who previously had a gambling problem for which she sought help thought that the signage encouraged her to gamble. As she explained, ‘I don’t think reading a coaster with a warning on it will stop me playing the pokies. If anything, if I am in a club and see this, I am is more likely to play the pokies than not. If I don’t see this, it doesn’t trigger me to want to go and play’.

5.4.11 Influence of Other Aspects of the Work Environment

Four additional themes were raised in response to questioning about whether other aspects of the work environment (not already discussed) are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees. All points raised related to additional workplace factors that can encourage staff gambling.

Reasons given by casino employees why other aspects of the work environment can encourage staff gambling:

- **Low wages of some staff**. As one interviewee explained, ‘if I was paid better and thought that the company was going to look after me in the future, give me a career path, I would be a lot less likely to gamble. One of the reasons that makes me want to gamble is the feeling of hopelessness; for example property prices, I would never be able to buy my own home. Not that I think that I’ll win the money to buy a house, but there is a slim chance’.
- **Reluctance to expose problems due to fear of job loss**, where ‘if someone has a gambling problem, I probably think that they wouldn’t talk about it or would try to hide it’. Another thought that ‘they may be a little embarrassed to go down that path (seek help) because they might know that person who they have to see. Or they may be embarrassed because they have let themselves get into this position, especially after doing the training, seeing what it can do to people. They would think to themselves I should know better. I think it’s a good idea for management to encourage staff that, if they do have a problem, it’s okay to talk to someone, don’t be embarrassed, you won’t lose your job, we will help you through this’.

- **Employees cannot gamble at the workplace so a problem might go undetected.** As one employee explained, ‘you don’t know if someone is gambling. If you are working in a venue and you see them gambling you could register that they might have a problem, where they would now be going elsewhere’. Another thought that ‘I don’t know if the staff member (with a problem) would make it public knowledge; they would more so try to hide it so it may not be picked up by management or fellow work mates’.
- **Young age group of staff,** where ‘a lot of the dealers are gamblers. I think the rest of the staff are pretty aware of the dangers of gambling, but it’s different for the dealers because it’s in their face and most of them are younger. They have also been told by the company that they are the best, the most needed in the company, which can make the dealers think that they are better than anyone else’. Another commented that the younger staff ‘have no fear, no mortgages. The older staff are more keen to work and make money, where the younger ones like to go out, drink, and gamble’.

5.4.12 At Risk Status of Hospitality Staff

Interviewees were asked whether they think that hospitality staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems. Nine employees answered ‘yes’, although with different degrees of certainty, from ‘yes definitely’, to ‘a percentage of them would be’, to ‘there is a subculture inside the gaming venue staff that would be susceptible to becoming problem gamblers’. However, the risk might depend on ‘if you have an addictive personality’, ‘not seeing both sides of gambling’ and ‘doing shift work, doing the graveyard shift or perhaps frequently changing hours of work’. Eighteen employees thought that gaming venue staff are no more at risk than the general population, six were undecided and five gave no committed response.

5.5 SUMMARY OF EMPLOYEE RESPONSES

This section firstly tabulates the responses given by the club, hotel and casino respondents about their understanding or perceptions of the influence upon staff gambling of each workplace factor we asked them about. It then summarises the major themes and sub-themes that have emerged from the data relating to workplace factors that are considered to encourage staff gambling, discourage staff gambling, and have no influence. Finally, comparisons are drawn between the responses given by the three groups of employees we interviewed.

5.5.1 Summary of Club, Hotel and Casino Employee Responses

Tables 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 summarise the opinions of the employees we interviewed from the clubs, hotels and casinos (respectively) about each of the nine workplace factors we questioned them about. Their responses are categorised as ‘encourages gambling’, ‘discourages gambling’, ‘either/both’, ‘no influence’ and ‘don’t know/no response’.

From Table 5.1, it is evident that club interviewees considered the aspect of working in a gaming venue that most encouraged gambling by staff was working shift work, followed by frequent exposure to gambling-related marketing and promotions. These two factors were endorsed by the majority of club employees interviewed. However, the influence of fellow employees and workplace stressors on staff gambling gained more polarised responses. These were perceived by many to be important factors encouraging some employees to gamble, and by nearly equal numbers of respondents as having no influence on employee gambling. The influence of close interaction with gamblers and frequent exposure to gambling attracted more mixed responses, with many interviewees considering that these two factors could both encourage staff to gamble, or deter them from gambling, depending on the employee, his or her circumstances, experiences and position. Venue managers and their policies and practices were perceived by most interviewees as having a discouraging

influence on staff gambling, as were responsible gambling training of staff and other responsible gambling measures in the venue, although to a lesser extent.

Table 5.1: Summary of Club Employee Opinions on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling

Influence of...	Encourages Gambling	Discourages Gambling	Either/Both	No Influence	Don't Know/No Response	Total
Close interaction with gamblers	3	7	13	11	0	34
Frequent exposure to gambling	9	6	8	8	3	34
Fellow employees	15	0	3	14	2	34
Venue managers	4	19	0	11	0	34
Workplace stressors	15	0	0	17	2	34
Shiftwork	24	1	0	8	1	34
Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions	20	0	0	13	1	34
Responsible gambling training	0	16	0	11	7	34
Responsible gambling measures	0	14	0	14	6	34

From Table 5.2, it is again apparent that shift work was perceived by the majority of hotel respondents as an aspect of working in gaming venues that encourages staff gambling. At least half the hotel interviewees also endorsed frequent exposure to gambling, the influence of fellow employees, and close interaction with gamblers as factors that encourage gambling by venue staff. The impact of workplace stressors and frequent exposure to gambling-related marketing and promotions gained more varied responses. Responsible gambling training of staff and the implementation of other responsible gambling measures in the venue were perceived by at least half the respondents as discouraging gambling by staff, although few respondents considered that venue management mainly discouraged staff gambling.

Table 5.2: Summary of Hotel Employee Opinions on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling

Influence of...	Encourages Gambling	Discourages Gambling	Either/Both	No Influence	Don't Know/No Response	Total
Close interaction with gamblers	7	1	3	2	1	14
Frequent exposure to gambling	9	1	3	0	1	14
Fellow employees	8	0	1	3	2	14
Venue managers	0	3	5	5	1	14
Workplace stressors	4	1	1	5	3	14
Shiftwork	11	0	0	3	0	14
Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions	4	2	0	5	3	14
Responsible gambling training	0	8	1	2	3	14
Responsible gambling measures	0	7	0	4	3	14

A different pattern is evident in Table 5.3. While shift work is again endorsed by the majority of casino interviewees as encouraging staff gambling, a more critical factor was perceived to be the influence of fellow employees. These were the only two workplace factors that the majority of respondents felt predominantly encouraged employee gambling. Frequent exposure to gambling was considered by about one-third of respondents to encourage employee gambling, although a near equal proportion felt that this exposure could either encourage or discourage staff gambling. In contrast to the hotel respondents, the casino staff felt that close interaction with gamblers either mainly discouraged staff from

gambling or could act as either an encouragement or a deterrence. The influences of frequent exposure to gambling-related marketing and promotions and workplace stressors attracted mixed responses, but were perceived by the largest group as having no influence on staff gambling. Over two-thirds of respondents considered that casino managers and their policies and practices, including responsible gambling training of staff, acted mainly to discourage gambling by staff, as did their venue's other responsible gambling measures, although to a lesser extent.

Table 5.3: Summary of Casino Employee Opinions on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling

Influence of...	Encourages Gambling	Discourages Gambling	Either/Both	No Influence	Don't Know/No Response	Total
Close interaction with gamblers	3	12	13	5	5	38
Frequent exposure to gambling	13	2	14	5	4	38
Fellow employees	25	2	1	7	3	38
Venue managers	1	27	1	7	2	38
Workplace stressors	7	2	9	16	4	38
Shiftwork	21	0	2	10	5	38
Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions	8	2	7	17	4	38
Responsible gambling training	0	26	0	8	4	38
Responsible gambling measures	0	18	0	14	6	38

5.5.2 Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Encourage Staff Gambling

Table 5.4 shows the themes and major sub-themes which emerged from the data relating to workplace factors that can encourage gambling amongst gaming venue staff and whether each was identified by the club, hotel and/or casino employees.

Table 5.4: Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Encourage Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff

	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff
Close interaction with Gamblers:			
Staff hear about wins more than losses	√	√	√
Seeing people win creates hope of winning	√	√	√
Staff get caught up in the excitement of patrons' wins	√	√	√
Staff constantly hear about gambling & are given 'hot tips'	√	√	√
Patrons can encourage staff to gamble		√	
Frequent Exposure to Gambling:			
Increases staff familiarity with gambling	√	√	√
Increases staff interest in gambling	√	√	√
Normalises gambling for staff	√	√	
Staff may have ready access to gambling	√		
Staff are surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere	√	√	√
Infrequent workers can gain distorted views about winning	√		√
New or younger staff can be vulnerable	√	√	√
Staff can lose sight of the value and ownership of money	√		√
Increases perceived insider knowledge about gambling			√
Staff become attracted to the gambling environment			√
Influence of Fellow Employees:			
Staff gamble together in their workplace	√	√	√
Staff gamble together after work	√	√	√
Staff gamble together on days off	√	√	√
Staff directly encourage other staff to gamble	√	√	√
Staff introduce other staff to gambling	√		
Staff share gambling tips		√	√
Staff gamble on hospitality industry nights		√	√
Staff travel away together to gamble			√
Staff social club activities can encourage gambling			√
Staff gamble before work		√	
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies & Practices:			
Managers are sometimes gamblers and so set an example	√	√	
Managers gamble with staff	√	√	
Managers allow staff to gamble in the workplace	√	√	
Gambling can be a job requirement	√		
Workplace has a gambling culture	√		
Managers sometimes talk about big wins			√
Managers might talk about gambling in a positive way			√
Influence of Workplace Stressors:			
Staff need to unwind after work	√	√	√
Staff can experience stress about problem gamblers	√	√	
Staff can experience stress about difficult customers	√		√
Staff can experience stress from heavy workloads	√		√

	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff
Influence of Shift Work:			
Staff can suffer social isolation	√		√
Lack of alternative social opportunities for staff	√	√	√
Lack of alternative recreational opportunities for staff	√	√	√
Only gambling venues are open late at night	√	√	√
Staff need to find solitary leisure activities	√		√
Staff tend to socialise with other hospitality workers	√		√
Staff gamble to fill in time between shifts		√	√
Staff social life can revolve around the workplace		√	
Staff gamble while waiting for others to finish work		√	
Shift work makes it easier to hide heavy gambling			√
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing & Promotions:			
Promotions can act as a trigger	√	√	√
Reinforces gambling as way to win money	√	√	√
Raises awareness of jackpot levels	√	√	√
Increases knowledge about other promotions	√	√	√
Staff get caught up in the excitement of promotions			√
Other Aspects of the Workplace:			
Some staff drink large quantities of alcohol	√	√	
Reluctance to expose problems due to fear of job loss	√		√
Self-exclusion is too difficult due to embarrassment and fear of job loss		√	
Some staff have the opportunity to bet on credit	√	√	
Irregular wages of casual staff	√		
Low wages of some staff	√		√
Young age group of staff	√		√
Staff are overlooked in problem gambling		√	
Employees cannot gamble at workplace so problem might go undetected	√		√

5.5.3 Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Discourage Staff Gambling

Table 5.5 indicates those themes and sub-themes relating to factors that are perceived to discourage staff from gambling, or at least discourage them from gambling heavily, and whether each was identified by the club, hotel and casino employees.

Table 5.5: Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Discourage Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff

	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff
Close interaction with Gamblers:			
Staff see problem or heavy gamblers and don't want to be like them	√		√
Staff see negative responses to gambling losses	√	√	√
Staff see the effects of problem gambling	√	√	√
Staff see or hear about the losses	√	√	√
Staff see the amount of money patrons spend on gambling	√	√	√
Staff see the amount of time patrons spend gambling	√		√
Frequent Exposure to Gambling:			
Staff can become sick of being around gambling & environment	√	√	√
Staff see venue takings from gambling	√	√	√
Staff have better knowledge of the odds of losing	√	√	√
Influence of Fellow Employees:			
Staff provide support or advice to stop gambling		√	√
Staff hear about staff losses on gambling			√
Friends from work want to avoid gambling venues	√		
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies & Practices:			
Managers can provide support or advice to stop gambling	√		√
A policy of no staff gambling in the workplace	√	√	√
A proactive culture of responsible gambling	√		√
Influence of Workplace Stressors:			
Staff avoid gambling for stress relief	√	√	√
Staff can be deterred by stress about problem gamblers			√
Staff can be deterred by stress about difficult customers			√
Influence of Shift Work:			
Staff might go out less	√		√
No gambling venues open after some shifts	√		√
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing & Promotions:			
Staff are aware of the low chance of winning promotions	√	√	√
Promotions turn staff off	√		
Influence of Responsible Gambling Training:			
Raises awareness for staff of problem gambling and its signs	√	√	√
Raises awareness for staff of the effects of problem gambling	√		√
Raises awareness for staff of the poor odds in gambling	√	√	√
Raises awareness for staff of ways to seek help	√	√	√
Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures:			
Measures raise awareness of gambling problems	√	√	√
Signage raises awareness of where to get help	√	√	√
Can trigger problem recognition	√	√	√
Staff involvement in self-exclusion of patrons deters staff from gambling	√	√	√

 Raises awareness of the poor odds of winning

√

5.5.4 Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Have No Influence on Staff Gambling

Table 5.6 indicates those themes and sub-themes relating to factors that are perceived to have no influence on staff gambling, and whether each was identified by the club, hotel and casino employees.

Table 5.6: Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Not Influence Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff

	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff
Close interaction with Gamblers:			
Staff not allowed to discuss wins and losses with patrons	√		
Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway	√	√	√
Some staff have little interaction with gamblers		√	√
Frequent Exposure to Gambling:			
Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway	√		√
Staff become immune to any influence	√	√	√
Influence of Fellow Employees:			
Staff prefer not to socialise together	√	√	√
Staff socialise by going out to drink instead	√	√	
Staff do not socialise together because of family responsibilities	√		
Older staff are not interested in socialising	√	√	√
Staff work with different people all the time		√	
Heavy gamblers prefer to gamble on their own			√
No peer pressure to gamble or this is resisted			√
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies & Practices:			
Staff do not mix with management	√	√	√
Management policies restrict staff gambling only in workplace	√		
Management have no interest/knowledge of what staff do in own time	√	√	√
Influence of Workplace Stressors:			
Some staff are trained to better cope with stress	√		
The work is not stressful	√	√	√
Staff de-stress in other ways	√	√	√
Stress would not influence non-gamblers to gamble		√	
Influence of Shift Work:			
Staff have other hospitality friends to socialise with	√		√
Staff find other activities in their time off	√	√	√
Staff just want to go home after a shift	√	√	√
Some staff have permanent shifts or do not do shift work	√		√
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing & Promotions:			
Promotions are not attractive to the age group	√		

	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff
Staff are often not allowed to enter workplace promotions	√	√	√
Staff who are not gamblers would not be influenced	√		√
Venue does very little gambling marketing and promotions	√	√	
Heavy gamblers amongst staff are not attracted to promotions		√	
Influence of Responsible Gambling Training:			
Training is not readily available in all areas	√		
Training may not be done due to expense	√		
Training may not be done because it is voluntary	√		
May not encourage staff to reflect on their own gambling	√	√	√
Training was not engaging	√		
People may be in denial about their own gambling	√		√
Training can provide a false sense of security	√		
Staff sceptical about venue's commitment to responsible gambling			√
Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures:			
Staff don't look at signage and/or are sceptical about them	√		
Signs become too familiar	√	√	√
Signs are aimed at patrons not staff	√		√
Signage is too discreet	√		√
Signage is misleading		√	
People may be in denial about their own gambling			√
Signage can trigger gambling			√

5.5.5 Comparisons Amongst Club, Hotel and Casino Employees' Responses.

This section provides some comparisons amongst the responses given by the club, hotel and casino employees to each of the workplace factors, and speculates on some reasons for any major differences that are apparent.

- Close interaction with gamblers was perceived as predominantly encouraging gambling amongst staff only by the hotel respondents, with the club and casino interviewees more inclined to the view that this interaction could either encourage or discourage staff gambling, depending on the circumstances. Indeed, the casino interviewees were far more likely than the other two groups to report that this interaction mainly deterred staff from gambling. The sheer numbers of gamblers and heavy gamblers at the casinos, the typically larger bets and losses, and the opportunity for 24 hour gambling by patrons may underpin this finding.
- Frequent exposure to gambling, while endorsed as an influence on staff gambling by all three groups, gained more mixed responses. Again the hotel staff were more likely to consider this an encouraging influence on staff gambling, while the club and casino staff tended to consider that this exposure can either encourage or discourage staff from gambling. Again, the larger scale of gambling operations in the casinos and many clubs might explain this result, with these employees more likely to be surrounded by extensive gambling facilities and to recognise the extent to which gambling losses contribute to the venues' revenues.
- Fellow employees were seen as a major encouraging influence on staff gambling, particularly amongst casino employees (two-thirds) and hotel staff (over half), while

nearly equal proportions of the club respondents (about two-fifths) considered fellow employees either as being an encouraging factor or as having no influence on staff gambling. Certainly amongst casino employees, there appear to be a range of organised group activities that involve gambling, such as private card nights, trips to other casinos, race days and other social club activities that can involve gambling. This seems to occur particularly amongst the table dealers. Additionally, many comments were made about how younger staff tend to socialise and gamble together more than do older workers. Perhaps the casinos and hotels tend to employ younger workers with fewer financial and family responsibilities than older workers tend to have.

- Venue managers and their policies and practices were considered to discourage staff gambling by over two-thirds of casino interviewees and over one half of club respondents. While only one-fifth of hotel employees endorsed this view, all three groups acknowledged that policies of no gambling in the workplace, where implemented, deterred staff from gambling. From Table 5.5, it seems that the clubs and casinos may have a more overt culture of responsible gambling and perhaps they also have stricter policies and procedures around staff gambling in the workplace. Certainly the casinos have a zero tolerance approach to this.
- Workplace stressors were a workplace factor that attracted quite polarised opinions. Amongst the club employees, nearly equal proportions (around half) felt that such stresses either encouraged staff to gamble or had no influence at all. The views of hotel staff were equally polarised, with about one-third of each being divided in this way. However, workplace stress was considered by the largest group of casino employees (about two-fifths) as having no influence on staff gambling. Perhaps the casino is a less stressful place to work, with peaks and troughs in customer demand more easily covered by a larger workforce. It may also be that casino staff can remain more detached from their customers by virtue of stricter policies on staff interaction with gamblers, larger numbers of non-regular patrons and a hierarchical structure that allows staff to refer difficult or emotional customers up the chain of command. Certainly there was the sense amongst some casino employees that they had learned to cope with or had become more immune to stressful patrons.
- Shift work was considered by all three groups as a major influence encouraging venue staff to gamble. Over one half of casino interviewees endorsed this view, and over 70 per cent of the hotel and club employees. As evident from Table 5.4, there are a range of issues associated with shift work that make it difficult for staff to have a normal social life, as the odd hours and weekends they worked place limits on recreational, family and group activities, leaving gambling as an accessible and socially acceptable solo activity. However, some casino employees commented that shift work might make some employees less inclined to go out, as there are no gambling venues open after work for staff who finish early in the morning. This may help to explain why shift work was perceived by casino staff as slightly less of an influence on staff gambling than for the hotel and club employees.
- Frequent exposure to gambling-related marketing and promotions were perceived by over half the club interviewees to encourage staff to gamble, although only about one-quarter of hotel and casino employees endorsed this view. An explanation for this finding may be that the casino staff are not allowed to enter workplace promotions and so take less notice of them, while hotels tend to run less promotions and usually offer smaller prizes than do the clubs.
- Responsible gambling training was seen to mainly discourage staff gambling, or at least to encourage responsible gambling amongst staff, by over two-thirds of casino interviewees, over one-half of hotel employees and by a little under one-half of the club staff we

interviewed. The casinos operate quite extensive responsible gambling training, including regular refresher courses, and these are delivered to all employees. In contrast, responsible gambling training for club and hotel staff can be more ad hoc, subject to availability, affordability and the commitment of individual venue managers. Not all hotel and club staff are trained in responsible gambling, with some venues opting to provide training only for gaming licensees.

- Other responsible gambling measures were seen to be less of an influence on staff gambling by all three groups. Between 40 per cent and 50 per cent of club, hotel and casino staff considered these measures as discouraging gambling or promoting responsible gambling amongst employees. Most comments on these measures focused on signage, which was considered too familiar, ‘part of the furniture’ and directed only at patrons by many staff in all three types of venues.
- Other workplace factors were identified as encouraging gambling amongst venue employees. Frequent and heavy drinking of alcohol by some staff, combined with a tendency to gamble more when they drink, was identified by hotel and club staff as a risk factor. It may well be that casino staff also have similar drinking patterns, but because drinking is discouraged in their workplace and gambling is prohibited, this combination may go unnoticed. Further encouragement to gamble was ascribed to the low wages of some staff, where gambling may therefore seem an attractive way to ‘get ahead’, and to irregular wages where extra cash in the pay packet may tempt some to gamble. The generally young age group of venue staff was also seen as a factor which makes them more likely to gamble. Club and hotel staff also mentioned that some staff have the opportunity to gamble illegally on credit on the TAB or keno. While acknowledged as a rare occurrence, there is no doubt that this occurs. The tight security at the casinos would likely deter this situation. Finally, some factors were identified relating to staff being reluctant to expose a gambling problem, finding it difficult to self-exclude, being able to hide a gambling problem from their employer or being overlooked in responsible gambling efforts. It seems there is some concern amongst staff that revealing a gambling problem would lead at least to embarrassment, if not job loss.
- Opinions about the at-risk status of hospitality staff also varied amongst the three groups of employees. While a little over half of both club and hotel employees considered hospitality staff to be an at-risk group for developing gambling problems compared to the general population, a little under one-quarter of casino interviewees endorsed this view. Additionally, about double the proportion of casino interviewees answered that they did not know or were undecided about this question compared to the hotel and club staff. This finding can be interpreted in numerous ways. It may be that casino staff are in fact less at risk for developing gambling problems, due to restrictions on them gambling in the workplace, more intensive and regular responsible gambling training and a stronger culture of responsible gambling at work. However, it may also be that, because casino staff are not allowed to gamble in their workplace, then other staff are not aware of their gambling activities (if any). A third explanation may be that we interviewed a larger proportion of middle and departmental managers in the casinos than in the hotels and clubs, due to the more hierarchical structure in the casinos, and so these staff may be less cognisant of the gambling activities of other casino staff. Unfortunately, because two of the three casinos did not allow us to administer the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index* to their staff, the extent of any problematic or at-risk gambling amongst casino staff remains unknown.

In summary, the largest proportions of the 86 club, hotel and casino employees we interviewed perceived that:

- the factors that mainly encourage staff gambling are shift work (56 respondents), fellow employees (48 respondents), and frequent exposure to gambling (31 respondents);
- the factors that mainly discourage staff gambling are responsible gambling training (50 respondents), venue managers and their policies and practices (49 respondents), and responsible gambling measures in the venue (39 respondents);
- close interaction with gamblers can have either influence (29 respondents); and
- the factors that mainly have no influence on staff gambling are workplace stressors (38 respondents), and frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions (35 respondents).

However, it should be noted that sizeable minorities of the employees had different views, and these should not be discounted in identifying potential risk and protective factors for gaming venue staff.

CHAPTER SIX – A PROBLEM GAMBLER PERSPECTIVE ON HOW WORKING IN A GAMING VENUE INFLUENCES EMPLOYEE GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In tandem with Chapter Five, this chapter also provides data to address Research Objective Two, which was to examine how Queensland gaming venue employees perceive that aspects of their work environment influence their gambling behaviour in terms of responsible gambling and problem gambling. However, where Chapter Five presented opinions from hotel, club and casino employees with varying levels of gambling involvement, this chapter focuses on employees who have experienced problems with their gambling. This chapter provides a problem gambler perspective on how working in a gaming venue influences employee gambling behaviour, by reporting on interviews with three groups of people:

- Two problem gamblers working in gaming venues who were also in counselling. One was interviewed by telephone when she volunteered to participate in the study after notices were placed in counselling agencies in Queensland. Unfortunately, no other clients from these agencies volunteered to participate. Given this deficiency, this chapter also contains data from an interview with a problem gambler in counselling working in gaming venues in northern NSW who we interviewed in person in the presence of her counsellor.
- Four problem gamblers who work in gaming venues but were not in counselling. They were interviewed on-site in their workplaces during the course of the interviews described in Chapter Five of this report. These people represent four of the five cases of problem gambling contained in the survey data in Chapter Four. The fifth case in the survey data was not interviewed, but completed the survey questionnaire and sent it to the researchers when he was given a copy by a colleague we interviewed.
- Thirty-two gambling counsellors in Queensland who were interviewed by telephone. The counsellors were asked to provide both client experiences and their own professional opinions on how various aspects of the gaming venue workplace influence staff gambling behaviour. The experiences of clients they had seen who developed gambling problems while working in gaming venues and the counsellors' professional interpretation of these experiences thus contribute to a problem gambler perspective on the issue. From with the 32 gambling counsellors, an additional set of 23 responses was generated from those gambling counsellors who had experience with clients that were gaming venue staff. These responses were specific to that experience and are treated as a discreet set of responses within the analysis section of this chapter, particularly within sections 6.4 and 6.5.

6.2 INTERVIEWS WITH PROBLEM GAMBLERS IN COUNSELLING

As noted earlier, the researchers interviewed two gaming venue employees who were in counselling for gambling problems at the time. These interviews were less structured than those conducted with other employees, counsellors and gaming venue managers, as the researchers wanted the clients to be able to tell their own stories in their own way. Nevertheless, the workplace factors we asked about in the other interviews were used as prompts if the clients did not raise them.

6.2.1 Client One

The interview with the first client in counselling was conducted by telephone in mid-2005 by two of the researchers. The client, a female in her mid-40s, was married with two adult children and grandchildren. At the time of the interview, she had been employed as a chef for

seven years in a small club with seven gaming machines in a regional centre in Queensland. She generally worked only three days/nights a week, unless the club held functions during the week. She had worked in kitchens 'most of my life', but most of these had been in airports and independent restaurants. She had been in counselling for her gambling problems for 18 months, except for three months when she was away from her home town. She explained that she started counselling when 'I got out of control. And I was actually going to clubs on my own, which I'd never done before, and...I suppose I felt ashamed, I'd let my husband down, and thought: I have to do something'.

She had been playing poker machines for about three years, and 'used to be able to go out and put \$5 or \$10 in and take the losses and the wins'. But she explained that 'I've had quite a bit of drama in my life in the last few years. I kind of went to (another) club one day and had a few good wins, and then, when things got too heavy, it was, well, go and play the pokies...I am still gambling now, but trying to keep it in control a bit, not get out of control like I did before. But I have my moments'. She also explained that 'it was mainly through big wins at another club that got me hooked I think', but she does not 'back the horses or go to the casino'.

While she disagreed that close interaction with gamblers at work encourages her to gamble, she did note that you tend to 'see the same faces at the poker machines, and think, every time we come here they're there'. Or if you're sitting next to somebody, and they are pumping \$20 after \$20. I used to think: well they have a major problem. And I had a lot going on'. That is, seeing other problem gamblers did not deter her from gambling. However, it seems that frequent exposure to gambling in her workplace poses a real temptation. She explained that 'I actually stay back and have a coffee with my boss, and I find that there are a couple of people there who are high bettors on the pokies and win quite substantial amounts. And the only way I can describe it is, it is a bit like an alcoholic, wanting a drink when you are sitting there, and I know these people by name, and I think, well, they're winning again, they're winning again, so I try to restrain myself and just put \$2 through'.

While only the managers and staff with gaming licences are prohibited from gambling at the club, she thinks she is 'probably the only one who plays. I have a kitchen hand and she sits with me but doesn't actually play. And my bosses don't, when I have been out with them. So I don't think they really do'. Therefore, she did not think there was any influence from fellow employees to gamble, although she said that 'if I had somebody to sit there with me and actually play with me, I'd probably find it hard if I was trying to restrain myself'.

The client was adamant that she would not now go and play the gaming machines elsewhere if she couldn't gamble at her club, although 'I had been going to other venues, prior to seeing (my counsellor). She helped me come up with a few strategies, such as planning my day, or putting my mind somewhere else, to avoid that'. But, 'it is only when I get to work, I don't know why that is, but I don't go out of my way to go gambling. It tends to be on the weekend when I am working that I do it. I walk in the door and they're there. I have fifteen minutes (before I start work), and you can go through a lot in fifteen minutes!'. She now tends 'to have to limit what time she goes into work, 'so I don't go in too early'. However, if she does a split shift (lunch and dinner) 'because I live 20 kms from home, I will stay at the club and play the pokies in between those times. But that is the only circumstance that I would stay at the club and play. I might have about two hours in between'.

She agreed that controlling her gambling would be much easier if she wasn't allowed to gamble in her workplace. As she explained, 'I feel that if I was not allowed to play them...it would help. I would probably have the feeling that I would want to, but knowing that I couldn't would probably help a lot'. She also noted that her boss is 'a good friend of mine and we have spoken about this. She feels that she should say something to me when she sees me playing them, but then as my friend she doesn't feel it is her business. I have told her I

have a problem with it. And I have asked her to tell me to get off the machines if she sees me playing them'. She has thought about self-exclusion from the gaming area, 'but I don't know whether it would be enforced or not'. While she felt her work colleagues are supportive 'to a degree...the friendship kind of gets in the way'.

She noted that workplace stress was also an influence, where 'if I've had a bad night, or are under a lot of pressure, then I will finish work and go and play the pokies, to unwind, lose myself I suppose. I try to run a pretty stress-free kitchen, but sometimes it does get stressful... there is only myself and my kitchen hand doing 100 meals some nights...so after a night like that I tend to go and have a flutter and unwind'.

In relation to gambling related marketing and promotions at her club, she noted that 'they don't have that sort of stuff', although she does get somewhat tempted by 'the promotions that you see on TV, and you think, I wouldn't mind going and trying that'. However, having ATMs in the club was a problem for her, 'another bad thing'. She felt that 'they shouldn't have them in clubs where there are poker machines, because I know if I go to the pokies and play \$20 and if I lost it I'd go. But now if I go and lose it, I can just go to the ATM. They should be banned. It's too accessible...And on pay day I can just pull it all out and play the pokies'.

When asked about responsible gambling measures in the club, the client said she had 'never heard of' responsible gambling training for staff, although she had noticed the problem gambling signs, which 'I read every time I play them. And I know in myself that I had a problem'.

She had tried to gain employment elsewhere, but noted that 'in this town, the only place that doesn't have pokies is the restaurants, and I've tried getting work there and been told that I am too old. A lot of the places with jobs are the clubs anyway, so I'd be defeating the purpose'.

Finally, when asked if she thought that venue staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems, she replied 'yes, I do. I just think that if they've only played them on a casual basis, and something has happened and they want to lose themselves, and they've only had one good win, I just feel that staff think, well I've had that good win, maybe next week I'll put a few more bucks through. And if staff have any worries...I tend to go to work to lose myself and get away from the day-to-day stuff anyway'.

From the above interview summary, it is apparent that working in a gaming venue had influenced this client's gambling behaviour. While she attributed her progression to heavy gambling to a big win at another venue, accompanied by a difficult time in her life, various workplace factors appeared to maintain and worsen her gambling problems. Consistent with the reasons reported in Chapter Five, the client's experiences suggest that many aspects of the work environment raised in the other interviews were important influences on her gambling behaviour. These comprise:

- **Frequent exposure to gambling**, which triggered the temptation to gamble. She also had ready access to gambling in her workplace, and seemed tempted to play the gaming machines before and after work and between split shifts.
- **Venue managers**, where the manager did not seem willing to intervene to assist the client in dealing with her gambling problems.
- **Workplace stress**, particularly from a demanding workload, so she then needed to unwind after work.
- **Shift work**, specifically split shifts when the client has gambled for the two hour break as it is too far to go home.

- **Access to cash**, particularly the ATMs for more money after she has lost, or to access her pay.
- **Lack of alternative employment opportunities**, where she was perceived as too old to gain kitchen employment in non-gaming venues.
- **Self-exclusion is too difficult**, due to embarrassment and concern that it may not be enforced anyway.

However, this client reported no influence on her gambling behaviour from the following workplace factors:

- **Close interaction with gamblers**, as she worked in a back-of-house position in the club's kitchen. Further, seeing problem gamblers amongst the club's patrons did not deter her from gambling.
- **Fellow employees**, as she was the only staff member in her club who gambled in the workplace. However, she did speculate that, had there been others, this may have made it more difficult for her to restrain her gambling.
- Frequent exposure to gambling related marketing and promotions, as the club did not engage in these activities.
- **Responsible gambling training**, as she had not received the training nor heard of it.
- **Other responsible gambling measures**, as, while she had read the signage, it had not changed her gambling behaviour, at least until recently, suggesting some denial of her gambling problems.

6.2.2 Client Two

Two members of the research team conducted the interview with the second client (in the presence of her counsellor) in August 2004 as preliminary exploratory research during the planning stages of this project. The client, a female in her late 20s, had worked in four hotels and one club in northern NSW, and had been gambling on gaming machines for four years. She had been in treatment for her gambling problems for six months when interviewed. She had worked as a bar attendant, in the TAB facility, as a workplace trainer and as a maitre d' in a club restaurant. All venues where she had worked allowed staff to gamble, but only outside of working hours and not while in their work uniform.

She noted that, before she worked in gaming venues, 'I was never a gambler, not even a scratchie'. But she started gambling when she worked in a club, tempted by hearing about patrons' wins – 'because you see people win, and some people won't tell you how much they've lost...so I think that was what encouraged me. I know when I started at the RSL (club), I put \$2 in a pokie one day, and I won \$600 or something like that, and it was, you know, like wow!...Yeah, that's exactly how it started'. She started gambling more when promoted to a higher position that she felt she was under-trained for, to deal with the added stress. As she explained, her new position as training coordinator meant 'dealing with staff and management, copping it from both sides. They expected 100 per cent and I had no support; I had been given a three day training program at TAFE. I was expected to do everything. I asked if I could have more training, but they said no. It was pretty intense'.

It was common for her to gamble with other employees at her workplace when they finished work at the same time; that 'in all of the venues, if you finish work with someone at the same time, you'd grab a beer and put \$10 in the pokies. I think that my excuse is that it was a wind down, before you went home'. Alternatively, 'I would go to another venue that's open, just be by myself for a while. Not speak to those people at that venue...so you just want to go where there's no one that you really know. And my wind down was sitting at the pokies'.

She enjoyed playing gaming machines because she could unwind and relax around people, but not have to interact with them. She also gambled on her days off. Her leisure opportunities were limited by her night and weekend shifts, so she would go to gaming venues (usually her workplace) after work and on her days off, usually on her own because her friends were unavailable then. Speaking about the limits that shift work places on staff leisure time and referring to some of her friends who work in hospitality, she noted that ‘two of them work in Brisbane. One works at a big club, the other works at a nightclub. But they’re the same, as me, they have their days off on Tuesday and Wednesday, and in the city there’s a lot more things to do, but the pub is still down the road, and it’s just so handy and, you know, there’s nothing else really to do on a Tuesday and Wednesday’.

She felt that constant exposure to gambling in her workplace (especially because the music from gaming machines, and the keno and TAB screens are ‘constantly in your face’ and ‘the whole illusion of the music and the free spins’) was a strong reinforcer of her and other employees’ gambling habits; and she was much less tempted to gamble when she worked in the club restaurant away from the machines. She explained that her position as maitre ‘d ‘was good. I liked being away from the pokies. I wasn’t tempted. But when I went downstairs after work, they’d be there...’. She felt that working around gamblers creates an organisational or departmental culture where gambling is accepted. Additionally, playing gaming machines in her workplace with other heavy gamblers was a comforting setting, and made her feel her gambling problems were ‘normal’, as ‘most of the patrons had a gambling problem too, they were just as bad as me...I felt like I wasn’t a massive problem gambler, but I knew they were’. Even though she was familiar with the potential adverse consequences of gambling (e.g. a patron committing suicide and another who was stabbed nine times by her husband in front of her young daughter because of gambling, with the husband then driving his car into the front of the club where she worked), this did not deter her from gambling. As she said, ‘I can’t believe that I still gambled after I’d seen what families go through, what he went through’. Her responsible gambling training had also not led her to change her own gambling behaviour, as ‘it just makes you more aware of how to maybe approach people when they’ve lost money’.

When asked about the gambling behaviour of staff she has worked with, she estimated that ‘most of the people that work there, maybe 80 per cent of the people, play the pokies or bet on the TAB. And, also down at the RSL club, the keno is really big, really big...but then again, the other 20 per cent who don’t, absolutely hate it’. She estimated that about one-half of the 80 per cent of her work colleagues who gamble would have gambling problems, mainly with poker machines, but ‘one of the people I worked with, she’d watch the keno all day, and a few of the others would watch the TAB...When it’s in your face all the time, and you have the punters telling you...it’s going to be an issue’. Further, she noted that staff working in gaming areas are ‘definitely’ more likely to be gamblers and problem gamblers than staff working in non-gaming areas. Many managers she has worked for are also heavy gamblers. She noted ‘there’s a few managers that go on a Saturday and sit there and they punt with a lot of rich people...For me that’s not a really good example’. Many of her friends who work in hospitality are also heavy gamblers, with some of them regularly given pay advances, which they spend on gambling. As she related, ‘I actually know a girl that works in (another NSW town) that get subs; they will get their pay, will put all their money through the pokies and then get a \$100 sub’.

The client also related how staff in her current workplace (a large club) keep a close watch on jackpot levels on machines, and when high, will gamble on them after work. For example, she recalled how ‘we had a 5c machine, and the jackpot was up to \$30,000 so all the staff when they finished work would go and have a go and see if they could jag it’. She noted that ‘there was a few that had never played the pokies, and they’d put \$5 in there, you know, and they’d be like, \$35,000 is a lot of money, and I’d be thinking, this might be the start of

something...’. She also noted that ‘a lot of other staff would go in for the promotions’ at their workplace, although this was not a temptation for her – ‘it never really interested me’.

Finally, she noted that problem gambling amongst gaming venue staff is ‘one of the biggest issues in the state that needs to be dealt with, that hardly anyone knows about’.

Clearly, this client’s gambling had been influenced by numerous aspects of her working environment. While she attributed her onset of gambling to an early big win, various workplace factors appeared to facilitate the development of her gambling problems and then exacerbate them. Consistent with the reasons reported in Chapter Five, the client’s experiences suggest that many aspects of the work environment raised in the other interviews were important influences on her gambling behaviour. These comprise:

- **Close interaction with gamblers**, including hearing about wins more than losses and constantly hearing about gambling from patrons.
- **Frequent exposure to gambling**, which normalised gambling and heavy gambling. She also had ready access to gambling in her workplace, it was a familiar comforting environment on her days off, and at work she was constantly surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere associated with gambling.
- **Fellow employees**, where the staff gambled together in her workplace after work.
- **Venue managers**, where some of her managers were keen gamblers and so set a bad example, contributed to a gambling culture in the workplace and allowed staff to gamble in the workplace.
- **Workplace stress**, particularly from a demanding workload, so she then needed to unwind after work.
- **Shift work**, which meant she suffered social isolation, lacked alternative social opportunities, needed to find solitary leisure activities, and then based her social life around her workplace.
- Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions, which raised her awareness of jackpot levels.

However, this client reported no influence on her gambling behaviour from the following workplace factors:

- **Responsible gambling training**, in that it did not prompt her to reflect on her own gambling behaviour.
- **Other responsible gambling measures**, which clearly did not influence her to change her gambling activities.

6.3 INTERVIEWS WITH FOUR PROBLEM GAMBLERS NOT IN COUNSELLING

Of the 56 employee surveys analysed in Chapter Four, five respondents scored in the problem gambler category of the *Canadian Problem Gambling Severity Index*. Four of these five were interviewed on-site in their workplace using the methodology described in Chapter Three. However, it should be noted that, because the surveys were analysed after the interviews were conducted, the interviewers were not aware of the problem gambler status of these employees at the time of the interview. As noted above, the fifth problem gambler was not interviewed, but returned a completed survey to us after he was given a copy by an employee we had interviewed.

6.3.1 Problem Gambler One

Two members of the research team interviewed this employee in mid-2005, while she was working in a large hotel in north Queensland. She was in her mid-20s, and employed on a full-time salary, working from 9.30am to 7pm five days a week as the TAB and bar supervisor, having been in the industry for about four years. She noted that she ‘was putting bets on Melbourne Cup for mum from age 12, and my brother was watching Sky racing from 14. And my grandfather was a big gambler’. Her boyfriend also worked at the hotel, doing only night shifts. She noted that he ‘used to not play the pokies but when he started working here he did start’ and then ‘was spending way too much money, starting to enjoy them’. However, at the time of the interview, the interviewee and her boyfriend had just made a decision to stop gambling, or at least ‘not to gamble at work when I’ve finished work’ and she reported she had abstained from this for two weeks.

Until her recent decision to stop gambling, the interviewee noted that ‘not a day goes past without me having a few bets’ and that she would ‘gamble all day – 3 or 4 hours on days off’. She gambled on the TAB on a daily basis, played gaming machines about once a fortnight, and keno, casino table games and sportsbetting about once a month. Every few months, she would bet at the racetrack, engage in private gambling with friends and enter a lottery-type game. Her typical session lengths for these types of gambling were five hours for betting at the racetrack, four hours for TAB betting, two hours at casino table games, one hour on gaming machines, ten minutes on keno, and five minutes on sportsbetting. She reported her typical monthly expenditure to be \$600 on the TAB, \$100 on gaming machines, \$50 on casino table games, \$20 on keno, \$10 on lottery-type games and \$5 on sportsbetting. Her score on the CPGI was 13, placing her in the problem gambler category.

She had very close interaction with gamblers in her role as TAB supervisor and commented how ‘when you see people winning, it affects you. It’s amazing that the losing doesn’t’. She also noted that many people come in and say ‘yes, I’ve got a hot tip’, which she described as ‘100 per cent tempting’ for her. But, she noted that ‘it is my job to know what is going on. My gambling helps me in my job’. She also noted that ‘my staff are so much better if they know how to punt. I suggest to my staff that they sit down and learn – spend a day (learning). You need to know your product’.

While staff were no longer allowed to gamble at the hotel, she worked there when this was allowed. ‘I used to play (the gaming machines) after work every day’, so being allowed to gamble in the workplace ‘definitely influenced me’. She also recalled how ‘when we were allowed to, most staff would, in their time out, put \$10-\$12 through’. However, since gambling by staff had been banned, the staff ‘just drink at the hotel’ after work, and sometimes ‘I go out to the casino and pub with other staff. We go and play the pokies, maybe for an hour. I also go out with my partner’ to gamble at other venues. The interviewee noted that ‘all our managers like to gamble as well. So there is 100 per cent influence there’.

She described her gambling as having been ‘my way of dealing with stress’ and she seemed to enjoy the ‘adrenaline rush putting a bet on’. She also noted that ‘when you work shift work there is not too much to do, no entertainment when you finish and need to unwind’. The fact that her boyfriend worked nights in the venue after she finished work at 7pm may have also encouraged her to stay. When asked about the influence of gambling-related marketing and promotions, she commented that the linked jackpots, in particular, are ‘a draw card – we’d stay a bit longer. Yesterday I put \$10 in the pokies and sat on the machines with the links. It does encourage you to have a go’. She noted that she had done responsible gambling training in NSW, and was aware that ‘there is some in the back of the TAB manual’. However, while ‘the training made me aware, made me self-identify as a problem gambler...it didn’t make me change, although I am now’.

When asked if she thought hospitality staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems, she answered ‘definitely, definitely...I agree that many staff have problems’, and elaborated that ‘I don’t think people realise that we have opportunity and exposure’. Encouraging more responsible gambling amongst staff was, she thought, ‘hard...it’s the age old thing, if you’re going to be addicted to it...’. She concluded by noting that ‘I thought the only way for me to give up gambling was to leave the industry. I am so proud of myself, and know I am okay if I stick to my limits’.

The interview summary above indicates that working in a gaming venue had facilitated the interviewee’s heavy gambling. Aspects of her work environment that seem to have encouraged her gambling were:

- **Close interaction with gamblers**, where she would hear and see people winning and be tempted by the hot tips she was regularly given by punters.
- **Frequent exposure to gambling**, where working in the TAB had increased her familiarity with gambling, had nurtured her interest in punting, and had helped her to legitimise her gambling by helping her in her job. She also had ready access to TAB and poker machine gambling in her workplace, prior to a ban on staff gambling in the workplace.
- **Fellow employees**, where staff gambled together after work and on days off. She had also introduced her boyfriend, a fellow employee, to playing poker machines.
- **Venue managers**, where all the managers at the hotel liked to gamble and had allowed staff to gamble in the workplace until recently. As a supervisor herself, she had encouraged other staff to learn how to place TAB bets.
- **Workplace stress**, where she gambled to unwind after work.
- **Shift work**, where she felt there was little other entertainment available when she finished work. The fact that her boyfriend worked different shifts at the hotel also seemed to encourage her to stay on the premises after work when he was still working.
- Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions, where she was tempted by the linked jackpots.

However, this interviewee reported no influence on her gambling behaviour from the following workplace factors:

- **Responsible gambling training**, which, although it had raised some awareness of her gambling problems, had not prompted her to take action.
- **Other responsible gambling measures**, which clearly did not influence her to change her gambling activities.

6.3.2 Problem Gambler Two

Our second interviewee who scored in the problem gambler category (score = 10) on the CPGI was a lady in her late-20s who was a bar attendant in a large north Queensland hotel. At the time of the interview, she had also been running the hotel’s TAB after another employee had left. She had held a gaming licence in the Northern Territory as well and had been working in gaming venues, all hotels, for around three years. She gambled on gaming machines, keno, casino table games and lottery-type games 2-6 times each per week, and a typical session for her was 4-5 hours on gaming machines and 3-4 hours at the casino tables. She reported her typical monthly expenditure to be about \$200 on lottery-type games, \$200 on keno, \$600 on gaming machines and \$200 on casino table games.

She felt that ‘a few years ago I may have had a little bit of a problem with it (gambling), when I was going to the casino and I got into management...But I was up \$400 every time I

went there, so that was why I kept going back I think. And I started betting a dollar instead of 40c bets. That was where it all sort of started for me. I had inside knowledge'. However, she did not seem to think that her gambling was problematic now, as when she is working in the TAB 'I don't have that urge to gamble, so I don't think I have a problem. If I felt an urge to getting on a race, I would think that I had a problem'. She tries to limit her poker machine gambling to \$20 a session, although 'sometimes I find myself putting an extra \$10 in'. She noted that 'some people say that is a problem and some say that it isn't. When I did my RSG, she (the trainer) was talking about that being a problem...saying that just because there is food in the fridge and the rent is paid doesn't mean it isn't a problem'.

When asked about the influence of close interaction with gamblers on her gambling, the interviewee noted that 'I like the TAB, because I know the TAB, and because you are with your customers and they are putting bets on, and they are always giving you tips. And you don't mean to, you are not following it for your own betting, but you do. You can see what is going on and you follow it'. She was not allowed to gamble while working, 'but I watch them, I watch them get up and say "Ooh! I picked that one!"'. She also noted that 'on my days off, I find myself at the TAB. I think, my old mate told me about that horse to watch, I'd better put a bet on it'. She commented that 'I think that is why I'm a gung ho tab operator, because I do take an interest in it'. She also noted that 'you never hear about the losses' from patrons and that this is a 'temptation' to gamble.

The interviewee also agreed that frequent exposure to gambling was a temptation, that 'you find yourself betting because everyone else around you is doing it'. In fact, she said 'I did a gaming shift a few weeks ago, and after my shift I found myself at the casino, so that should answer your question!'. She said 'you are hearing the machine, you are doing the payouts, and you know they pay out'. However, she also commented that 'you also know there is a lot more money that goes in than what goes out'. Nevertheless, she commented that 'I guess that when you are paying out and paying out, at the end of it you want to sit down and have a go'.

She disagreed that workplace stress encourages her to gamble, explaining that 'I don't think those stresses influence gambling, that influences drinking. Because when you walk out of there, it is like, give me a drink'. However, she noted that 'for the majority of us, it is with the hours, with us having a Monday-Tuesday off, and everyone else having a Saturday-Sunday'. She continued, 'because we are in the hospitality trade, all our friends are working when we have days off, so you find yourself at a pub or a club. And everywhere you go is gaming'. She also explained that, when staff were allowed to gamble in the workplace, 'you find yourself off duty, and you go down and have a bet. Because you know the regulars, and you don't get a chance to have a decent chat, to finish a conversation'. She noted that she also plays gaming machines and that when she was 'working until 2 in the morning, and going home and everyone was asleep, I found myself at the casino to wind down, because you're still wired, and not in the mood for conversation and it is the only place open. You just want to wind down and relax'.

She related how staff from her hotel sometimes go out together and 'it just so happens last night me and one of the girls found ourselves at (another hotel). We went there for a drink, but we did find ourselves in the pokie room, probably because they've got new machines, and we were checking them out'. She said that her colleague had then 'ended up finding herself at the casino. And I've done that, gone on my own. Because the pokie machines are unsociable, full stop. So if you want time out by yourself, it's better sitting at a poker machine rather than at the bar'.

The interviewee felt that management had a strong influence on their employees' gambling, firstly through their policies on staff gambling. As she explained, 'in one hotel we worked we were allowed to gamble, and I gambled. And here we are not allowed to gamble...and I don't find myself gambling as much as I did when I worked at this other hotel'. At her

previous hotel, in the Northern Territory, ‘there were a lot of girls that sat on a machine after their shift. And the boss allowed subs; it was taken out of our pay packet the next pay, and he trusted us with that. But the sad thing was the girls were getting a sub and gambling, so they were gambling on credit’. At her current workplace, she welcomed management’s ruling that staff could not gamble on the premises during time off, saying ‘that suits me, saves me some money’. In fact, she had left a hotel in the Northern Territory to work in a Cooktown hotel with no gaming, explaining that ‘I’ve seen a lot...When I got the job, it was like: I’m there, just to get away from the gaming side of it. I just needed a change from what goes on. You see a lot of people spend a lot of money and it does get a bit depressing at times. And with my experience, I’ve been known to have a gamble, so it was nice to not have it in my face. But I must admit, I found myself down at the RSL’. She also felt management can nurture a gambling culture in the workplace ‘if the publican is into it’. She recalled how a former publican she had worked for had ‘involved us, which shouldn’t have been allowed, because sometimes we were working at the time...but he still encouraged it’. She also noted that ‘we had our own punters’ club at this hotel, and so every Saturday, if you had a Saturday off, you’d go down the pub because you’re in the punters’ club’.

While the interviewee was rather non-committal when asked if frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions had influenced her own gambling, she did feel that ‘they contradict themselves with the RSG, and here we are gaming attendants promoting it. It’s not responsible’. She also noted how ‘when I do play the pokies I do play the jackpots’, although, because she had done limited gaming shifts in her present workplace, she was unsure of whether the one linked jackpot machine there had influenced this.

The interviewee felt strongly that ‘alcohol and gambling don’t go together’, as ‘you seem to up the ante after you’ve been drinking. And you don’t realise until the next day just what you have done, whereas if you haven’t been excessively drinking you have more control’.

She felt that the responsible gambling training she had completed ‘actually helped me. I learnt a lot about my own issues. I found after doing that, it helped me to control it a little, like saying that \$20 is my limit’. She felt that the instructor was very good, and that ‘she kept it interesting’ and ‘made me wake up to it because she spoke of the problem issues and the percentages, and it is just phenomenal what is going on in Australia as a whole; it is really sad’. However, she felt that the responsible gambling signs are ineffective as ‘you don’t look at it; it is part of the furniture’.

Finally, she agreed that hospitality staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems, ‘because they are around it a lot more...we’re watching it for seven hours’ during each shift.

Many workplace influences on staff gambling as identified in Chapter Five are apparent in the above interview summary:

- **Close interaction with gamblers**, where she heard about wins more than losses, was tempted by seeing patrons winning, got caught up in the excitement of gambling, constantly heard hot tips, and had built friendships with the regulars.
- **Frequent exposure to gambling**, where gambling was normalised, and she was very familiar with and interested in punting and in trying new gaming machines.
- **Fellow employees**, where staff gambled together during time off, and, at a previous workplace, together at work via a punters’ club.
- **Venue managers and policies**, where she gambled more when allowed to do so in her workplace and where managers had themselves been gamblers, but had cut down where staff were not allowed to gamble at work.

- **Shift work**, so that lack of social and recreational opportunities after work were scarce, and the only venues open were gaming venues. She also went to the casino as a solitary leisure activity and tended to socialise with other staff who were gamblers.
- **Responsible gambling training**, where this had raised her awareness of problem gambling and its signs, encouraging her to set limits on her gambling.
- **Drinking alcohol**, when she would drink to unwind after work and gamble more money after a few drinks.

However, this interviewee reported no influence on her gambling behaviour from the following workplace factors:

- **Workplace stress**, which was more likely to encourage her to drink to unwind after work.
- **Other responsible gambling measures**, where the signage had not had any influence on her gambling as it was so familiar.

6.3.3 Problem Gambler Three

Our third interviewee was a 29 year old female and assistant manager of a large Brisbane hotel. She had been working there for five months, and for total of ten years in gaming-related positions in hotels in Sydney, Brisbane and the Gold Coast. Her score was 11 on the CPGI. When she first started in the industry, the interviewee hardly gambled – ‘I probably only put \$5 in every year’ – and when she started doing management shifts ‘counting all the money, I’d think to myself, you’re idiots. And I’d say to my mum, don’t gamble, don’t gamble’. However, at the time of the interview, her gambling involved playing gaming machines and keno 2-6 times per week, private gambling amongst friends on about a weekly basis, betting on the TAB about once a month, and going to the racetrack and casino once every few months. A typical gambling session would be eight hours playing keno, eight hours playing gaming machines, and two hours each on TAB betting, and gambling at the racetrack and on casino table games. On a monthly basis, she would typically spend \$1,000 on gaming machines, \$400 on keno, \$100 on casino table games, \$20 at the TAB, and \$10 on private gambling.

She commented that having close interaction with gamblers ‘absolutely can influence staff’, although ‘it can go two ways’. While ‘some staff don’t gamble at all, because they hear a lot of negative feedback from customers saying I’ve lost this amount or that amount, or can’t feed my kids this week’, there are ‘also the times they’re giving people large payouts, and think to themselves, I can do that as well’. She explained that ‘I think it is very tempting when people do get large payouts, for them (staff) to try to get a large amount of money as well. It is such a big deal, such a big job to write out a cheque, the time concentrating on that amount, writing it out, concentrating. And it is there in black and white, and they think, “lucky bastard”. And I do think that influences it. I mean, it is a good law, because you are not encouraging them (patrons) to put it back in, but for us, it has the opposite effect’.

Frequent exposure to gambling also ‘definitely influences, because you actually watch the game. So you quickly learn what pays...you are continuously watching, if someone gets a free game, all the staff look, see how much they win. So definitely, just by looking’. This exposure to gambling also increases staff knowledge about gambling, ‘so it’s insider knowledge’ that ‘they know that higher turnover machines have a higher rate of pay. You have better odds, better chance of winning something. They know that’. She continued, ‘if you were to sit in a room all day and watch someone pump a machine for two hours with \$5, you’d be mad not to get on it and have a go. So they’ll watch, watch, watch, and then jump on something that has been played’.

When discussing any influence of fellow employees on her gambling, the interviewee noted that, while she does not go out much after work anymore and tries 'not to go out with other employees', 'there are the two groups here, those girls that go to gamble and drink and the others that go to dance and drink'. However, the interviewee has 'taken staff out before, and there'll be a gambling staff member, and...often they'll sit in gaming rooms, and gamble and talk at the same time. Often we don't even have to look at the machine, we know what it is doing by the sounds. So we just sit there and our money drips away'. She also noted that 'staff from the pub across the road come here, and we go there. So we all know each other, and the managers will buy each other drinks'. She explained that staff go to each others' venues because they know they will get good service from each other, it is somewhere they feel comfortable going on their own, and because 'we understand each other to the extent that I'll talk to them and chat to them when I'm at the bar, and then when I'm sitting at a pokie they don't talk to you, and they sort of do the same'. Sometimes, staff give advice on which machines to play and which to avoid.

She felt that managers do not influence staff gambling, apart from having a no gambling policy. As she explained, 'I can think of one girl who works for me right now, who is working right now, who does have a gambling problem. But I don't really comment much on it; it isn't really my business until it becomes a work problem. I mean, she obviously knows about Gamblers' Anonymous because she has to give those cards out. So she knows all the right avenues'.

When asked if workplace stressors prompt her to go gambling, she replied that 'those pressures do influence me. If I've had a hard day, I'll go to...a pub up the road, and I'll have a few beers and play the pokies...it is an elation feeling, a good feeling...to forget about work for however long the money lasts for and to escape. I suppose...when you are sitting at a pokie, it is just zoning out'. But, she also gambles in the hope of winning, thinking 'I can put this 100 bucks in and make it a bit more, and life might be a bit easier'. She has also known staff who gamble because they are bored at work. She explained that 'in my last venue I've had staff giving their money to a customer to put bets on for them. It gives them something to do in their opinion. I've even had staff go across the road to the TAB, put the bet on for keno, and watch it all day, for something to do. If they know it is a Monday, it is going to be quiet, they'll go and put 100 games on and then watch it all day. You hear them go "woo hoo!" There is nothing you can do about it. There is a lady here who often goes and checks her keno off in her break, plays it and comes back and watches it'.

The interviewee agreed that shift work can also influence staff in their gambling, because 'if staff want to...go out after work, a lot of the time the gaming venues are the only ones open. Sometimes early in the morning, you can't go dancing, so you end up at the casino. We used to go to the casino on the Gold Coast, and play the tables, because it was the only place open'. She continued, 'most hospitality workers do have Monday-Tuesday off, and there isn't much happening; there's no football matches, shows, nightclubs, nothing. You can't do anything...Your body clock is all messed up, you can't go to the gym all night or go see your mum everyday'.

When asked about gambling-related marketing and promotions, the interviewee contended that 'we do an excessive amount of marketing and promotions here', but that 'promotions are more for elderly people; they're not for people who are there to win any significant amount of money'. She further explained that 'I don't know anyone that works for me, or me, or any of my friends, who all work in hospitality...who bets under 25c, and they're all big bettors. You'd rather the quietness' without promotions. She continued, 'I know, if I walk into a room and they're having a promotion, I walk straight out. The noise, the winning of \$3 is not that exciting'. However, she felt that linked jackpots 'suck you in. You do watch it, because ours is really loud up here; it is the car, that goes vroom, vroom...' When the jackpot goes off, 'you think she got it all, or she's only betting 50c and she got it, and I was betting \$5 up

there and I got nothing. I believe...that if you are a big bettor, you have a better opportunity to win the big jackpot. People are more inclined to spend a bit more money to play them, staff included'. She agreed that watching the jackpots in her workplace was a temptation for her to play linked machines at other venues.

The interviewee had completed her responsible gambling training and felt that it probably had some influence 'in the beginning; when you get your job...I probably thought what idiots'. However, she said that 'it is five years since I've done that course, and I don't think about that now', explaining that 'I don't think any gambler thinks that they have a problem'. However, she felt it was important for staff to 'know what it (gambling) does to society as a whole, and it is good that they teach them that. But whether they think of including themselves in that is another question'. When asked whether other responsible gambling measures in the workplace had discouraged her from gambling, she related how 'I excluded a lady a few days ago, and it hasn't changed my behaviour. There's a perfect example. I felt sorry for her, but it didn't influence my behaviour'. She also felt that 'signage is just like a picture on the wall. Maybe if they put a new poster up. Staff thought the new chillies campaign is stupid – what do chillies have to do with gaming? ...It is just like everything else with gaming regulations; it is just something we have to do...They know the laws, but the reasons why? It is just a job, it is not important to them...I don't even know what that sign says over there, and I work here every day'. She also noted that, in contrast, 'NSW probably helps their staff because you have to have those three mandatory stickers on the machine, and you are forever checking the machines; it gets it in your noggin' a bit more'.

The interviewee also discussed two other aspects of working in a gaming venue that influence staff gambling. The first of these was drinking alcohol, where 'the thing to remember with hospitality staff is that they drink a lot and smoke a lot and gamble a lot. And they do all three together, and when they're doing too much drinking, that's when too much gambling comes in. And when they're doing that, they start borrowing money off each other, and it goes full circle. I guarantee you three of them will owe each other money at the hotel...I hear it all the time, I went out and got pissed and now I've got no money'. The second issue was access to cash which 'is tempting'. In fact, over her ten years in the industry, the interviewee has 'caught lots of girls. A lot of the time they've gambled all their money and are trying to get their rent. Keno and TAB are what I call the quiet achievers, for that reason. A lot of staff do credit bet on them; I've caught staff doing it. It's easy'.

When asked if she thought hospitality staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems, she replied 'definitely. I think it is older staff that gamble. Most back of house people don't gamble, because they deal with the issues, the complaints, the money, the profit. I think that that deters people. But front of house...are continually talking to people who win, and they say, look at this, I only put \$20 in, and half the time that is bullshit'. She continued, 'I find that staff that work in gaming rooms, if they are the gambling sort, not the non-gambling sort, they will spend a lot of money gambling at the gaming machines'. In fact, she contended that 'most of my friends in hospitality gamble', that 'half of the staff here gamble... mainly pokies and keno', and that 'I know girls up there who have paid their rent, and then gamble the rest'. She admitted that 'I'm a good subject too' for developing gambling problems.

Consistent with the issues raised in Chapter Five, this interviewee identified numerous aspects of the workplace that encouraged or facilitated her gambling:

- **Close interaction with gamblers**, where she hears more about wins than losses and this creates the hope of winning.
- **Frequent exposure to gambling**, where she is very familiar with the way gaming machines work and so believes she has some insider knowledge.

- **Fellow employees**, where she has gambled with staff during time off, and gambles at other venues where she knows the staff.
- **Venue managers**, in that her workplace has a no staff gambling policy. However, management at her venue also seem to take a passive, non-interventionist stance around staff gambling problems.
- **Workplace stress**, where she gambles to unwind after work, and has worked with staff who gamble at work to cope with the boredom.
- **Shift work**, where she seems to experience a lack of alternative recreational and social activities, plays gaming machines because it can be a solitary activity, socialises with other hospitality staff who are also gamblers, and goes to gaming venues because they are the only places open at night after work.
- **Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions**, where she finds the linked jackpots tempting after seeing people win on them in her workplace.
- **Drinking alcohol**, where staff drink a lot and then gamble more when drinking.
- **Access to cash and ability to bet on credit**, where this is a temptation for some staff.

However, this interviewee reported no influence on her gambling behaviour from the following workplace factors:

- **Responsible gambling training**, which did not have a lasting influence on her gambling.
- **Other responsible gambling measures**, in that the signage and performing a self-exclusion had not deterred her from gambling.

6.3.4 Problem Gambler Four

The fourth venue employee we interviewed on-site was a 24 year old male who worked in a coastal Queensland club as a duty supervisor, although for most of his four years in that club he had been employed as a gaming attendant, working 35 hours a week over five shifts. He had not worked in any other gaming venues. He reported that he played gaming machines about once a week, and gambled on the TAB about once a fortnight. He also gambled monthly on lottery-type games, keno and sportsbetting, and gambled privately with friends once every few months. While he completed the CPGI, scoring 10, he did not provide any information on the amount of time or money he usually spends gambling. He also provided somewhat minimal responses during the interview.

When asked about close interaction with gamblers, he noted that ‘if you see someone else winning the big one, you always think your time might come’. He continued that ‘it probably influences me in some way, either positive or negative. If you have an experience with someone that you know has probably spent too much, you don’t want to go down that track, so you change your behaviour accordingly’. However, he agreed that frequent exposure to gambling ‘is bound to increase your willingness to try it’, because ‘you are exposed to those environments for so long’. He explained that ‘I have the occasional poke...you see machines, and chuck a few bucks through’. Further, he implied that frequent exposure to gambling raises staff knowledge about particular machines, so if a staff member ‘sees a machine that they like and they can’t play them here, they’ll go and play it somewhere else’.

However, he felt that any influence from fellow employees tended to discourage other staff from gambling, explaining that ‘I’ve witnessed more of employees discouraging other employees because they know of the harmful effects. I’ve seen more of that recently’ and that ‘other employees remind you of how bad the effects can be, of what the odds are’. Nevertheless, he thought that ‘some people might encourage other employees to chuck a

couple of bucks through (a gaming machine). People that are allowed to play, they might point them in the direction of a particular machine'. However, he thought that management has no influence on gambling by staff, and that 'it doesn't affect my behaviour'. He also considered that workplace stress 'doesn't influence my own gambling behaviour' and that staff who gamble after work to unwind 'are inclined to play poker machines anyway' and 'they probably would have gone and played pokies some time that week anyhow'. However, he noted that shift work does influence his own gambling, in that 'I'll chuck a couple of bucks in on a night when I've got the night off, and some of my friends don't have the night off. It is something you can do by yourself'.

When asked whether frequent exposure to gambling-related marketing and promotions encourages staff gambling, he replied 'absolutely, especially for promotions. Keno promotions are a real good one, because they do extensive in-house advertising. A good one is Keno Four out of Four, so people knock off and put a bet on that game, because they think it is good odds'. He considered that 'in a way it affects me, but not so much as what I've seen in other people'.

He agreed that responsible gambling training was important for staff, that it 'influenced my gambling for a short period after'. But, 'hearing the odds would be a short term discouragement, for a few weeks. Then you'd start chucking a few bucks through'. Further, he considered that the responsible gambling signage 'wouldn't do much, because you see them every day. They'd become part of the furniture. They haven't changed my own gambling behaviour'.

Finally, when asked if he thought that hospitality staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems, he replied 'yes...if you see people winning, you think your chance is equal to theirs, especially when you don't see how much they put in, and it is a relative (low) wage as well'.

While the above interview was brief, some workplace influences on staff gambling were raised that were consistent with those in Chapter Five:

- **Close interaction with gamblers**, where he hears about the wins more than losses, which creates the hope of winning, although sometimes seeing people spend too much can deter him from gambling.
- **Frequent exposure to gambling**, which increases staff familiarity with and interest in gambling.
- **Fellow employees**, where some might encourage others to play particular machines, although others might also discourage their work colleagues from gambling.
- **Shift work**, where he sometimes gambles as a solitary activity when his friends are working.
- Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions, particularly for some keno promotions.
- **Low wages of some staff**, which can make gambling a tempting way to make money.

However, this interviewee reported no influence on his gambling behaviour from the following workplace factors:

- **Venue managers**, which he saw as having no influence on his gambling.
- **Workplace stressors**, which he also saw as having no influence on his gambling.
- **Responsible gambling training**, which had discouraged him from gambling only for a short time afterwards.

- Other responsible gambling measures, as the signage is too familiar.

6.4 EXPERIENCES OF PROBLEM GAMBLER CLIENTS AND PROFESSIONAL OPINIONS OF THEIR COUNSELLORS

Thirty-two gambling counsellors in Queensland were interviewed by telephone, using the methodology described in Chapter Three. The counsellors were asked to relate both the experiences of any clients they had treated who work/have worked in gaming venues and their own professional opinions on how various aspects of the gaming venue workplace influence staff gambling behaviour. Thus, the client experience data are subject to the limitations of second-hand reporting, while the professional opinions given by counsellors may in some instances be based on speculation rather than on actual client case histories. This is particularly the case where the counsellors gave opinions on how certain workplace factors might discourage staff from gambling, as the counsellors mainly see people with gambling problems, although some do interact with venue staff when conducting venue training sessions. Further, only 23 of the 32 counsellors had treated staff who developed gambling problems while working in gaming venues. Nevertheless, these data are a valuable contribution to understanding how working in a gaming venue influenced the gambling behaviour of clients in counselling, while also drawing on the expert opinions of professionals helping to alleviate their gambling problems.

6.4.1 Client Characteristics

The counsellors were asked for the proportion of clients they had ever seen who work or have worked in gaming venues. The most common response was 5-10 per cent (with the range from 0 per cent to 20 per cent). Nine counsellors had seen no gaming venue employees, while others had seen up to 12 employees during their professional careers. However, in the absence of official statistics, these figures are an estimation based on the counsellors' best recall and so should be viewed with caution.

The gaming venue clients whom 23 of the 32 counsellors had treated included both males and females and all age groups, although most were 18-50 years, the most common ages for gaming venue employment. They represented a wide range of positions including: senior positions such as pub owner-manager, TAB agency manager and club manager; supervisory positions including hotel gaming manager, duty manager and floor manager; front-of-house staff including gaming attendant, gaming room floor staff, bar attendant, croupier, glass collector, waitress, customer service agent and cashier; and back-of-house positions including chef, cleaner, stage props worker, kitchenhand and apprentice. Thus, staff who do and do not work in positions directly related to gambling were represented amongst the counsellors' clients. These clients had worked at hotels, clubs, casinos and in TAB outlets. Most had problems with gaming machines, with a sizeable minority experiencing problems relating to TAB betting and casino table games. A few had problems with keno and one with bingo.

6.4.2 Close interaction with Gamblers

When asked whether any of their clients who work/have worked in gambling venues ever mentioned whether close interaction with gamblers influenced their own gambling behaviour, nine of the 23 who had seen venue clients said it had encouraged one or more of their clients to gamble, one said it discouraged the client(s), two related how this factor had had varying influences, while 11 noted that close interaction with gamblers had either had no influence on their clients or had not been specifically discussed. When asked for their own professional opinion on this workplace factor, 15 of the 32 counsellors considered that close interaction with gamblers encourages staff gambling, two felt it discouraged staff gambling, three felt it could have either influence, three felt it had no influence, while nine were non-committal.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why close interaction with gamblers can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff hear about wins more than losses.** For example, one client ‘made a comment...that all she has seen is the winners. This client worked at the window in a poker machine venue (in the cashier booth). And what she saw was people getting cheques and having wins, because she said the losers sneak out.’ Similarly, another counsellor told of a ‘lady who was a cashier, the one paying out the prize money, so she was in a position where she thought everyone was winning’. Another interviewee noted that ‘they would talk about seeing people win, so were exposed to frequent winners’.
- **Staff get caught up in the excitement of patrons’ wins.** As one counsellor recalled, one TAB manager ‘used to make her bets prior to opening...(and) watch on the monitors what was happening, and people placing bets, and the excitement when someone won...It was kind of getting caught up in the excitement for her’. Another observed that ‘emotionally they felt compelled to go (gambling). They would talk about seeing people win, so were exposed to frequent winners’.
- **Staff constantly hear about gambling and are given ‘hot tips’.** Some examples reflect this conversational interaction. One, commenting on a casino employee, noted that ‘the croupier...was really into listening to gamblers and their thinking around systems, the tall stories, their bragging about how much they had won’. Another, commenting on a TAB operator, observed that ‘at the TAB there is a lot of exchange of information. What gets up and what doesn’t. It is a culture that impacts staff around betting’. Another, referring to gaming machine players, said that ‘I have heard from...staff, gamblers do actually talk about some of their styles, favorite machines, etc.’.
- **Staff who gamble identify with or build relationships with other gamblers.** One counsellor commented ‘they don’t mind if there is a fellow gambler there. It gives them that sense of - you’re okay, but people who frown on my behaviour I don’t like’. Another noted that ‘often the pub is the only place to go and that is where you meet friends. So if you work there...if you have susceptibility in that area...then being around gamblers and the whole milieu definitely stimulates gamblers’. Another considered ‘there is a particular culture that builds around gambling. Around the TAB it is bizarre; they develop a relationship with the regulars’. Another recalled how ‘they make comments...about how it is interesting how you can become more obsessive about your behaviour sometimes by looking at other people, and can identify some of the things that are going on, that are happening to you’.
- **Wanting a piece of the action.** Some staff, it seems, are just tempted because gambling looks like fun - ‘it gets their adrenaline flowing and they can become emotionally charged.’ Another explained that ‘what they talk about is that they see people having fun, and they want a piece of that. And that is an influence on them doing the same behaviour’.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why close interaction with gamblers can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff see problem or heavy gamblers and don’t want to be like them,** ‘having seen so many sad cases and tragic faces’. One interviewee contended that ‘the largest effects are those people that work behind the bar and see the people with problems...and they say I’ve seen what it does to people, I’m not going there, I’m not going to be sucked in’.
- **Staff see negative responses to gambling losses,** such as ‘seeing patrons get aggressive with the machines’. As one counsellor explained, ‘we do a fair bit of work with the industry here...and for a lot of them, it is the last thing they would do. They see the process and the ups and downs that people go through, and they feel that, they’re not separate to that; I think they are exposed to that’.

- **Staff see the effects of problem gambling.** As one counsellor speculated, ‘I would think that seeing a person gambling everyday would have the same effect as someone working behind a bar, seeing people get sick and get into fights and whatever; it might adversely condition them towards it’.
- **Staff see the losses from gambling,** where ‘I’ve heard a few people say that they see people losing all the time, so they should know better (themselves)’.
- **Gambling is seen as boring.** Some counsellors speculated that staff would see gambling as boring. For example, one explained that ‘in gaming venues the most obvious thing is that most people seem unhappy or bored. And it doesn’t present as this exciting, enticing thing to be playing...I imagine that it would turn them off. I can’t imagine them walking into a venue and thinking this is a great place to be’.
- **Can trigger problem recognition.** For some staff, seeing customers with gambling problems can trigger recognition of their own problems. For example, one counsellor said ‘what I have heard quite regularly is that I see these people, and they’re unhappy, and I know now I’m one of them’. Another recalled a client where ‘her motivation to stop was by seeing some of her customers with problems. So it had a positive impact on her’.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why close interaction with gamblers may not influence staff gambling:

- **Some staff have little interaction with gamblers.** As one counsellor explained, ‘my experience is that most gamblers stick to themselves. They don’t like interaction, are rude to venue staff’ and ‘I’m not sure how much they mix with the patrons. Gambling is a very solitary thing to do...there is not a lot of things going on. A lot of the time, even if they are sociable with the patrons, there’s not a lot of discussion going on about the gambling’.

6.4.3 Frequent Exposure to Gambling

When asked whether their gaming venue clients ever mentioned whether frequent exposure to gambling in the workplace influenced their gambling behaviour, ten of the 23 who had seen venue clients said it had encouraged one or more of their clients to gamble, one said it discouraged the client(s), five noted that close interaction with gamblers had either had no influence on their clients or that it had not been specifically discussed, and seven said they did not know or could not recall. When asked for their own professional opinion on this workplace factor, 20 of the 32 counsellors considered that frequent exposure to gambling encourages staff gambling, one felt it discouraged staff gambling, three felt it could have either influence, while eight were non-committal.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why frequent exposure to gambling can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff may have ready access to gambling,** so it is ‘the temptation that is always there.’ Some counsellors reported that some of their clients who worked in TAB operations gambled in their workplace, as did some managers. One explained that ‘their role in the place...gave them easier access to ready cash and to gambling activities’. Another noted that ‘just looking at the people that we have had through our service, and it has just struck me now, is that all of our clients, and I mean all of them, have been in positions of power and management. They have access to places within the venue, and the opening and closing, that sort of thing’.
- **Staff are surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere,** and ‘all the Pavlovian conditioning type things’ associated with gaming machines. As one counsellor explained, ‘subtle psychological techniques...used in the gaming room...very powerful intermittent reward, machines that make the jackpot sound even when no one is sitting at the machine,

which is the reward sound. Gaming machines are hypnotic...and the gaming room is set up as a different world, with no natural light, no clocks...Does all of that influence croupiers and other staff? Very probably'. Another offered the view that 'auditory stimuli - jingling bells that go off continually...condition people into thinking that gambling is a good way to make a living'. Another noted that some gaming venue clients had mentioned 'exposure to the lights and the machines, stimulation from the gaming room...' as contributing to their problems.

- **Increases staff interest in gambling**, which seems to cause or exacerbate problems. For example, one counsellor commented 'I think that is exactly what it was for her. It was constant; there was no actual break from that', another that 'one of my clients did say that just hanging around it made it seem like it was a good idea', and another that 'it's an in your face entertainment option for people working in venues'.
- **Familiar, comforting environment**. When staff want to relax, 'they feel familiar with the venue. Other venues become family'. Another explained that 'one of the things that influences their gambling behaviour is...their familiarity in the environment. They feel really comfortable in it, so when they want to unwind or relax they want to be in a similar environment'.
- **Normalises gambling for staff**. A major concern for counsellors was that this frequent exposure can 'normalise gambling for staff'. One commented that 'because they are in that environment all the time and are selling a product, they have to adjust, and that does have an effect on their thinking around gambling. It encourages them to see it as a good form of recreation'. Another was of the view that 'it desensitises them, particularly to the wins and losses'. Another explained that 'being flooded by gambling information may also play an important role in determining a person's rate of involvement. It is so much a part of their daily routine, their daily life'.
- **Normalises heavy gambling for staff**. For some clients, heavy gambling had become the norm where 'if there are regular patrons in there on a daily basis that do gamble excessively, and they are constantly seeing that, then it normalises that more for them'. 'It does normalise a style of play because they are exposed to people who play machines for a long period of time and with a lot of money', explained another counsellor.
- **Staff can lose sight of the value and ownership of money**, as 'seeing people betting more than they (the clients) could afford certainly makes it more acceptable. They lose sight of the value of money in this environment'.
- **Perceived insider knowledge**. Working around gambling may lead some employees to 'think they have insider knowledge' about gambling' and develop 'all sorts of odd theories about the winning'. One counsellor shared her experience with a 'fairly senior manager at (X) Casino' who 'talks about how he knows how to beat the system, in certain games'. That counsellor thought 'maybe there is a culture of that, particularly among males'. Another noted that 'people are prone to magical thinking when gambling. The culture supports the ideas. It is almost that group think'. Another noted how one of her clients, 'studies the form at the TAB and believes he is better than most others in his racing gambling'.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why frequent exposure to gambling can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff have better knowledge of the odds of losing**. One said 'I would have thought it could have a reverse effect. If anything, they're more familiar with the returns that the machines give, and people sit there for hours, chasing that elusive win', and another that

‘it tends to go more the other way, where they see people losing, and are actually seeing the reality of it’.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why frequent exposure to gambling may not influence staff gambling:

While some counsellors reported that close interaction with gamblers had either had no apparent influence on their clients or that it had not been specifically discussed, they offered no specific reasons for this.

6.4.4 Influence of Fellow Employees

The counsellors were asked whether their clients ever reported any influence from fellow employees on their gambling. Six of the 23 who had seen venue clients said it had encouraged one or more of their clients to gamble, five said fellow employees had discouraged their clients from gambling, ten noted that fellow employees had either exercised no influence on their clients’ gambling or that it had not been specifically discussed, and two said they did not know or could not recall. When asked for their own professional opinion on this workplace factor, ten of the 32 counsellors considered that fellow employees predominantly encourage staff gambling, three felt they discouraged staff gambling, two felt they could influence other staff either way, four felt it could have either influence, while 13 were non-committal.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why fellow employees can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff gamble together after work**, to ‘unwind’. For example, one counsellor noted that ‘several of them have said that what they do as a group is go to another venue and gamble...after work’, and another that ‘I have had people talk about how when they socialise with other people from the venue they end up drinking and gambling with them, because that is what they do when they get off work’.
- **Staff gamble together in their workplace**. It appears that some of this after-work gambling occurs in the workplace in circumstances where ‘the staff seemed to be okay with gambling in their own venue. The staff would gamble together’.
- **Staff gamble to gain acceptance into the workgroup**, due to ‘peer group pressure’, as ‘you want to be seen as belonging to the people that are in your life, and if it is a culture where we finish work and we all go over to the pokies or whatever, then you want to be seen as part of it’.
- **General acceptance of gambling**. As one interviewee explained, ‘there is more of an acceptance of gambling of course, with staff in venues. That it is perhaps more acceptable to them than it is to the general population, to spend time gambling, and so to spend time gambling excessively is the next step’.
- **Staff introduce other staff to gambling**. ‘It can be an introductory thing, but it is where they take it from there...’ pondered one interviewee. Another commented how ‘I have had clients who had not gambled prior to working in the industry, had lost their other job, gone to work in venues and then through a workmate, been introduced to gambling and taken up gambling that way’.
- **Gambling problems are not taken seriously**, such as for the client who ‘still wanted to go in there and have his beer, but he didn’t want to gamble anymore. The bar staff offered him \$5 to put into the pokies. It is quite a strong message, that there really is no problem...it is always a bit of a joke...They have trouble taking the addiction seriously’.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why fellow employees can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff provide support or advice to stop gambling.** One counsellor related how ‘I had one client who hung himself, but he called his father just before he did it, and his father called the police and the police cut him down. And he said that he had a work colleague who had tried to support him to not gamble’. Another counsellor gave a departmental example where ‘a chef (and) his realisation of what was going on, sharing that with his kitchenhands, and making a pact in the end to support each other...the realisation that they were handing back their pay packets to the same organisation’. A further comment was made that ‘one or two of them talked about their fellow workmates, who were probably the first to say hey, this is not right so they knew that, and on top of that they felt that their fellow workers may judge them badly’.
- **Staff can trigger help-seeking.** One counsellor related how a client had been approached by a fellow staff member who said ‘we think you’re having a few issues with this, and we’re concerned. He felt quite guilty about it, because he didn’t realise that he was stressing people out with his behaviour...and I suppose that’s part of his recovery; he had victims of his behaviour as well’.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why fellow employees may not influence staff gambling:

- **Heavy gamblers prefer to gamble on their own,** as ‘there is not a lot of talk about gambling in the social sense, with other co-workers, who might also gamble. Most gamblers do go alone anyway...so they are not gambling socially, as such’ and ‘people who have problems with gambling tend not to do their gambling socially’.
- **Staff may hide their gambling from fellow employees,** as ‘gamblers by nature are very secretive’ and ‘for many employees it is also risky business to be seen gambling by other employees’ as ‘often there is an increased sense of shame around gambling. So, if anything I would say they would tend not to gamble with their fellow employees’. Another commented that ‘one of the things I see with most gamblers, no matter where they come from, is that they don’t share that information with people. And if they work within the industry that is especially true’.

6.4.5 Influence of Gambling Venue Managers

When asked whether clients have ever reported any influence of their manager and their policies and practices on their gambling behaviour, four of the 23 who had seen venue clients said this had encouraged one or more of their clients to gamble, five said this discouraged the client(s), ten noted that close interaction with gamblers had either had no influence on their clients or that it had not been specifically discussed, and four said they did not know or could not recall. When asked for their own professional opinion on this workplace factor, four of the 32 counsellors considered that venue managers and their policies and practices mainly encourage staff gambling, eight felt that this discouraged staff gambling, six felt it could have either influence, four felt it would have no influence, while ten were non-committal.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why venue managers can encourage staff gambling:

- **Managers are sometimes gamblers and so set a bad example,** where ‘I have certainly heard of managers who are big punters’ and ‘I know a few pub owners, they’ve grown up in that whole pub industry, it’s normal to put bets on’.

- **Managers gamble with staff.** One counsellor related ‘I have been to venues where the staff play and the managers play and they play together, and we all have a go, and it can start out as that social thing and develop from there’.
- **Managers allow staff to gamble in the workplace,** such as ‘one client I remember used to bet on the TAB that was in a pub. And his manager was aware that he had a gambling problem and he was also aware that he had the odd bet at work’. Another commented that ‘I know that if people are allowed to gamble in venues that they work in, then management would be aware of that; and I have heard instances of that’.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why venue managers can discourage staff gambling:

- **Managers can provide support or advice to stop gambling.** For example, one counsellor related a situation where ‘one person, who was working in the industry, his manager also had a problem, and they both talked to each other and supported each other’.
- **A policy of no staff gambling in the workplace.** As one noted, ‘a key issue is that employees can’t gamble at their own venue’, and another that ‘I know one of the policies venues have to employ is to prohibit employees from gambling in their premises, so it depends on how much that is actually implemented and enforced’.
- **A culture of responsible gambling.** Another related the situation in one venue where a manager ‘felt really protective of his juniors; in the sense that he recognised that it is a really unnatural environment. They work long hours, are exposed to not only the gambling but also the drinking...and I guess he wanted to shield people from that, especially the younger employees. He did that by telling them about what he thinks can happen if you do’.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why venue managers may not influence staff gambling:

- **Management have no interest in or knowledge of what staff do in their own time,** where ‘they didn’t report their managers intervening or doing anything proactive’ and there was ‘no discouragement from managers’.
- **Management policies restrict staff gambling only in the workplace.** For example, ‘At the casino, certainly, some of our clients will say you are very much discouraged from playing any of the games on the premises. It is instant termination (if caught). So you are really going to have to go elsewhere. How effective that is I am not certain, so again, players can just go elsewhere’. Another observed that ‘my thinking would be that staff of establishment X would probably go to establishment Y to gamble - their own manager’s behaviour wouldn’t affect them’.

6.4.6 Influence of Workplace Stressors

When the interviewees were asked about their clients’ experiences about workplace stress influencing employee gambling behaviour, 17 of the 23 who had seen venue clients said it had encouraged one or more of their clients to gamble, and six said it had either had no influence on their clients or that it had not been specifically discussed. When asked for their professional opinion on this workplace factor, 23 of the 32 counsellors considered that workplace stressors encourage staff gambling, two felt it had no influence, while seven were non-committal.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why workplace stressors can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff can experience stress about problem gamblers.** For example, one noted that ‘people talk about knowing people who have problems. That stresses people out, what can they do about it? They’re often told not to approach people’. In a similar vein, another considered that ‘staff build relationships with people in venues and it can be pretty hard when they see someone who they perceive to be in trouble, and they get frustrated not being able to do something about it’. Another commented that ‘another workplace stress in the actual gaming room is patrons who are upset, and the guilt that staff can carry with that’. Another commented that ‘this has been relayed to me...(the) guilt of staff who are expected to encourage patrons to keep playing, by going and getting drinks...they are told to keep patrons at a machine whenever they can, and it is stressful when they can see that a patron is stressed’.
- **Staff can experience stress about difficult customers,** especially because ‘there is an expectation that they’re constantly pleasant, and meet the needs of the patron. They are focused on other people. Gambling becomes something they can do themselves’. Other interviewees noted the challenges associated with dealing with difficult customers, where ‘there is a lot of stress in the industry when people are being asked to be polite, to be nice to clients, and it is not a reciprocal thing.’ Another explained that ‘they would have to be working with some highly demanding people or difficult situations, and usually there is alcohol involved, and certainly if it is a gambling related issue – it may be because they’ve lost their rent money or their whole pay – there are a lot of high emotions involved in that work’. Another related how, with a client, ‘we’ve talked a lot about that...at the end of the shift, and it is usually early morning, he needs to spend a few hours coming down from the stress’.
- **Staff can experience stress from heavy workloads,** where ‘the context of the environment generates lots of pressure. Staff do not have a lot of control over their work, and a lack of control generates stress’. Another noted that ‘the folks I’ve seen do really long hours. Partly because if they’re on casual, they take the work that is available’. Another mentioned that ‘those stresses can be a...heavy workload, to an influx of customers, one person on, seven people waiting, having to manage your time, the situation, their emotions, they can’t relax. So certainly I do think stress does play a part’.
- **Stress from management demands,** such as ‘the chef (who) was expected to produce or budget meals on a ridiculous amount of money, and was very understaffed, and management clearly stated that their aim was to have those cheap meals to get customers in who would then go into the pokie room. I guess his problem highlighted the hypocrisy of that’. Another counsellor noted that ‘I have had mention of stress because of...slightly unrealistic expectations like I can’t really get glasses off tables and keep serving – that stresses me out’.
- **Job dissatisfaction/boredom.** One counsellor explained, ‘I have seen a number of clients...in the gaming industry who are dissatisfied with their work but are stuck...and that growing dissatisfaction has a huge impact on their gambling behaviour. It is that depression that set in’. Another, commenting on a client who gambled at the TAB outlet which she managed, explained that ‘it was fairly routine, fairly mundane sort of stuff. So what are you going to do when you are bored? You’re going to participate’. Another noted that ‘my two clients felt especially stressed due to the long hours, also due to transient staff and managers. There are lots of rules’.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why workplace stress may not influence staff gambling:

- **The work is not stressful**, as ‘for most people they don’t want to leave; they enjoy the work’.

6.4.7 Influence of Shiftwork

The counsellors were questioned on their opinions about the influence of working the odd hours typical in hospitality, and whether their clients had mentioned this as influencing their gambling. Nineteen of the 23 who had seen venue clients said it had encouraged one or more of their clients to gamble, one said it had either had no influence on their clients or that it had not been specifically discussed, and three said they did not know or could not recall. When asked for their professional opinion on this workplace factor, 20 of the 32 counsellors considered that shift work encourages staff gambling, two felt it could either encourage or discourage staff gambling, while ten were non-committal. Their responses indicate that this was the major risk factor identified by the counsellors, who noted that shift workers in general are over-represented amongst their clients.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why shift work can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff can suffer social isolation.** Shift work can interfere with staff leisure time as they are ‘not in the normal stream of society’ as ‘the hours are different as they are working when others are playing and vice versa...There is not much other social interaction available. They tend to cocoon themselves’. Some ‘tend to go gambling during times when everyone else is at work, as there is no one else to hang out with’. Shift work can also interfere with the pursuit of other recreational activities and social networks. As one counsellor explained, ‘a lot of people I see don’t have social support, don’t have good social life, they’re not getting what they need. And also with shift work they’re working Saturday or Friday night, a lot of times when other people would socialise’. One client who attempted suicide ‘was living on the premises and eating on the premises and finding it difficult to distance himself from his work and he didn’t have a social outlet, apart from work’.
- **Staff need to find solitary leisure activities.** One counsellor explained, ‘pokies are one of the few activities that are socially acceptable on your own, and it gives you that false sense of feeling social’. Another concurred that shift work ‘limits their leisure activities...and the one activity when you can still have people around you so you don’t feel so socially isolated is gambling’.
- **Lack of alternative recreational opportunities for staff.** Some interviewees noted that shift work also makes it difficult for staff to take up ‘sporting activities; if they wanted to take in any hobbies or have an interest, it is hard to get any time off’.
- **Only gambling venues are open late at night**, so ‘they will go to the casino or to the club to play the pokies as a way of winding down after work’. One counsellor related an example of a croupier who would ‘finish work late at night, all hyped up...and where can you go to wind down and relax, and avoid all your problems?’ As another explained, ‘my client will go elsewhere and gamble after a shift. He works into the morning, quite late, and goes to the casino...They are keyed up when they finish their shift, and they need somewhere to go, and what else is open? A lot of the time it is venues’.
- **Shift work leads to stress.** One interviewee explained, ‘shift work relates to people’s body clock, how this enhances their vulnerability to stress. They are able to become unwell, become fatigued. This leaves them vulnerable to stress, and gambling is a way to respond to that. The only thing demanded of you is your money. It is easy to turn off’. Another commented that ‘winding down after work and getting enough sleep and having a

social life can be difficult. They can be at higher risk because of the hours that they work. When they knock off where do they go to wind down or socialise? If they go home, all the good TV is finished. And then, getting enough sleep...’.

- **Filling in time between shifts.** Some counsellors also raised ‘the issue of split shifts - they have maybe three hours off each day, and travel is a factor’. Kitchen staff in particular often have a few hours off between meal periods.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why shift work may not influence staff gambling:

- **Some staff have permanent shifts or do not do shift work.** For example, one client ‘had a very structured day, and she had control over that; she could call on other people to relieve her’.

6.4.8 Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions

The next area the counsellors were questioned about was frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions. Twelve of the 23 who had seen venue clients said it had encouraged one or more of their clients to gamble, one said it had had varying influences, nine noted that frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions had either had no influence on their clients or that it had not been specifically discussed, and one said they did not know or could not recall. When asked for their professional opinion on this workplace factor, 20 of the 32 counsellors considered that frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions encourages staff gambling, one felt it discouraged staff gambling, two felt it could have either influence, one considered it to have no influence, while eight were non-committal.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions can encourage staff gambling:

- **Promotions can act as a trigger.** One interviewee explained, ‘they work in a trigger saturated gambling environment...those messages about winning and inducements to play, real strong reinforcements that you can win, that it is social and fun...so really, there are an enormous amount of messages that say this is great’. Another noted that ‘the sounds and lights’ and ‘hearing it on the TV, the advertising’ can ‘send them off’, that ‘feedback from clients indicates that this has an ongoing, strong effect on people’. Another commented ‘absolutely. They’ll tell me that you can’t drive around (the city) without going past poker machine signs. It cues them’. Similarly, another agreed ‘absolutely. They report driving past the signs and being influenced. They say “I was exposed and I had this urge”’.
- **Reinforces gambling as a way to make money.** Other counsellors noted that gambling marketing and promotions can feed erroneous beliefs around gambling, for staff as well as patrons. For example, one considered that ‘employees constantly flooded by predominantly positive messages about gambling may be subject to fluctuations in their perceptions and thoughts about gambling, probably in a positive direction’. Another noted that ‘the way gambling is promoted as gaming, a game, generally feeds into the fuzzy logic that people have around gambling. People apply a set of rules that don’t fit to a game of chance. Usually with a game, you get better with more practice. This feeds the magical thinking. They perceive competition where there isn’t any; perceived events that aren’t independent. It has a subtle but general notion that gambling is a game people feel they can impact’.
- **Worsens existing gambling problems.** Others thought that gambling marketing and promotions would exacerbate any existing gambling problems as ‘some promotions are fairly elaborate...so if gambling staff had a problem it would definitely influence their

behaviour, make it worse'. One counsellor recalled a client who 'said he wanted to stop gambling, but not until July 30. He said he had accumulated lots of points and I think I can win the prize'.

- **Caught up in excitement of promotions.** Some staff may get caught up in the anticipation accompanying a gambling promotion, might even be 'designing the marketing strategy' where 'there would be a lot of excitement around it, just waiting to see who is going to win'.
- **Raises awareness of jackpot levels.** As one counsellor explained, 'what I have heard is the kind of marketing that is linked up to the free jackpots; the Money Train...seems to have a big plug, because you'll have them going to places with those Train machines, and they're watching the jackpot go up, and they go back because it has gone up the day before...So that could be an influence on them from their workplace that they take somewhere else'.
- **Increases knowledge about other promotions.** For example, one counsellor recalled that 'one of the things that has been mentioned is the free spins. If there is a particular machine on the market...they seem to know where they are...the spins...lengthen their period, and their chance of winning something, so I find most of them will talk about the free spins, and most of them will go for those features'.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions can discourage staff gambling:

- **More desensitised to and/or realistic about advertising and promotions,** where some interviewees said of staff that 'hopefully they would know when it was misleading, because they're actually working there', that 'it goes back to that desensitisation as well, where they don't notice the advertising the way patrons do', and that 'they have a bit of distance between them, because that marketing is not aimed at them in any way, shape or form'.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions may not influence staff gambling:

While some counsellors reported that frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions had either had no apparent influence on their clients or that it had not been specifically discussed, they offered no specific reasons for this.

6.4.9 Influence of Responsible Gambling Training

When questioned about the influence of responsible gambling training on their clients' own gambling, three of the 23 who had seen venue clients said it had discouraged one or more of their clients from gambling, 17 noted that this training had either had no influence on their clients or that it had not been specifically discussed, and three said they did not know or could not recall. When asked for their professional opinion, ten of the 32 counsellors considered that training mainly discourages staff gambling, five felt it could have varying influences, seven felt it would have no influence, while ten were non-committal.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why responsible gambling training can discourage staff gambling:

- **Raises awareness of problem gambling and its signs,** as 'when you are able to expose people to information, it helps them reflect on their behaviour and makes them aware of problem gambling'. However, while some counsellors believed the training 'influences them in a positive way, and keeps them away from it (gambling)', others were more circumspect. As one commented 'yes, but not a significant impact. They will acknowledge

it at some level, but they are desensitised. They are more likely to be influenced after coming to a crisis in their lives’.

- **Raises awareness of the effects of problem gambling.** As one community education officer explained, ‘when I present at venues, I relate to venue employees the long ranging negative consequences of excessive gambling. Many of the staff are quite shocked about some of the information I provide and possibly this influences how they view gambling and in turn their own gambling behaviour’.
- **Destigmatises problem gambling.** One liaison officer noted, ‘it creates a liaison between the venues and myself and my staff, and it would become a bit more obvious about what was happening amongst staff, and then the staff were a bit more willing to talk about the difficulties, and they were aware of their roles and responsibilities and needing to stay away from it’.
- **Raises awareness of the poor odds in gambling.** For example, one counsellor commented that ‘I suppose if, for example, they had some cognitive distortions around the way gaming machines work, if they were like the average Joe out there and believed that it’s due for a pay out, then any training that covered such areas would tend to help them’.
- **Can raise awareness of or trigger help-seeking.** One employee had approached a counsellor after that counsellor had provided venue-based training at his workplace. The counsellor commented that ‘the fact that he’d attended the training may have made it a little bit easier for him to come in. He may not have come in at all, if he hadn’t been at that training. He said to me, “I’m on the wrong side of the table. I just thought I shouldn’t be receiving this training. I’m actually the person with the problem”’. Another interviewee commented more generally that ‘it has had an influence on their help seeking behaviour by raising their awareness of what problem gambling looks like...what does a problem gambler present with?’.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why responsible gambling training may have no influence on staff gambling:

- **Not all staff are trained.** One commented, ‘not all venue staff complete responsible gambling training. It is completed by managers – not all staff’ and another that ‘there’s been odd bits of training, but from what I can see, it’s more the managers, the gaming managers’.
- **Not all venues welcome training by counsellors.** For example, when asked the proportion of venues in the area that had taken up staff training by counsellors, one replied ‘I would say it is the minority, about a quarter of them who have invited me in, but I do liaise with the managers and some of the supervisors, and I’ll keep going back!’
- **Training not taken seriously because the Code of Practice is voluntary.** One counsellor recalled ‘it is not mandatory; it’s voluntary. If there’s things like you’re not allowed to play keno or credit bet, that comes in strongly. But the other stuff, it doesn’t’. Another noted that ‘they see us as the enemy. The Code of Practice is voluntary, and lots of people have more important things to do. It will impact on revenue if we do it effectively’.
- **Trainers are not given enough time,** such as one who noted ‘they do try to give us a minimum amount of time to speak’. Another noted that ‘we get five minutes and offer to do responsible gambling training within the venues, free of charge, out of hours. But the venues are reluctant to use our training service’.
- **May not encourage staff to reflect on their own gambling,** as ‘it is too generic, they can think it is the other people’. Another noted that the training only ‘focused on the code, and

having the right signage up, and how to exclude someone, etc.’, and another that ‘training is aimed at signage around places – it’s not personal. So this is what the obligations are, this is what you’ve got to do’.

- **People may be in denial about their own gambling**, and not ready to change. As one counsellor explained, ‘it depends, if you’ve got someone who really wants to change, that could potentially have an influence on someone. If you get someone who is in a different stage of change, it just goes over their head; the knowledge doesn’t influence them at all’. Another put it differently, that ‘people need to be in a place where they are ready to receive that information’.

6.4.10 Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures

The counsellors were also asked about the influence of other responsible gambling measures in gaming venues. Four of the 23 who had seen venue clients said it had discouraged one or more of their clients from gambling, one felt it had had varying influences, eight noted that the responsible gambling measures had either had no influence on their clients or that it had not been specifically discussed, and ten said they did not know or could not recall. When asked for their professional opinion, seven of the 32 counsellors considered that responsible gambling measures tend to discourage staff gambling, three felt it could have either influence, nine considered it to have no influence, while 13 were non-committal.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why responsible gambling measures discourage staff gambling:

- **Measures raise awareness of gambling problems.** Some interviewees felt that responsible gambling signage ‘is a suggestive thing that goes in at some other level, like a subliminal message’, and is perhaps particularly noticeable to staff when signage changes. As one explained, ‘signage...has just recently changed, and a change like that will make it prominent to an employee, because they’ll say to each other, have you seen the new code? And what do you think about this? So anything that actually flags it again - brings it to prominence - will have an impact’.
- **Signage can trigger problem recognition and help-seeking**, as ‘when people get the problems, they do either ring the 1800 number or pick up the brochure. So it can be a trigger’. Other counsellors contended that signage is not a protective factor, but may be useful after someone develops a gambling problem. For example, one explained that ‘most certainly they have got help numbers from that signage, so it is useful to finding out where to get help, but it is not necessarily preventative. It tends to be after somebody has developed a problem rather than supporting people not to develop one in the first place’. Another noted that ‘one of the things that would stick in their minds is that there is a help service available, so putting yourself in their shoes, if I work in a venue, and I think that the time is right for me to do something about my gambling problem, and I had seen the signs, then I would get a reference to a gambling help service’.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why responsible gambling measures may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff may be in denial about their gambling.** One interviewee explained, ‘I think it depends what state they are in. If they are in the denial state, they might say that, gambling is not a problem for me, I’m a responsible gambler’.
- **Staff don’t look at signage**, as ‘we know when people go into venues, they’re escaping reality, they don’t pay a lot of attention to signs, and I think that would be the same for someone working in the industry, the impact would be pretty minimal’.

- **Signs become too familiar**, or as one commented, ‘I think it is a bit like habituation. The signs disappear in the background’, and another that ‘you’re already desensitised to it because it has been there all along’. Another noted that clients ‘just ignored it (signage), because they saw it everyday’.
- **Signage is too discreet**, or as one respondent commented, ‘some of the venues are less enthusiastic about where they display the material. For example, you might go into a gaming venue and find it behind a door and behind a plant’. Another contended that ‘signs are not attention grabbing where there is lots of light. They are hidden in the corner, and not promoted by management. There is generally no impact’. A further comment was that ‘there is lots of colour and noise. So static displays tend to be overlooked. A4 displays don’t cut it, it doesn’t register, doesn’t capture attention. So while staff are there, they are exposed to the same amount of light, noise, etc.’.
- **Staff are sceptical about responsible gambling measures**. One commented, ‘the other thing they don’t see is engagement by upper management or boards in responsible gambling stuff...It seems to be left often to the floor manager of the day to deal with the responsible gambling stuff’. Another noted that ‘we talked about...the fact that they (venues) make it so easy to gamble, we talk about the environment itself. People feel safe there, there are not a lot of windows, you don’t know what is going on outside, whether it is dark...people do talk about those kinds of things. People get cynical about being offered things, staff being nice to them, but believe that the staff don’t care’.
- **Some staff do not know about self-exclusion measures**, such as one ‘client (who) never had heard of self-exclusion policies’.
- **Signage is misleading**. One counsellor, commenting on the recently introduced ‘chillies campaign in Queensland, contended that ‘their whole approach seems to be how to gamble responsibly, to keep going, and do it the right way. It assumes they have the capacity to do it the right way, meaning they can control it...Some people don’t have the capacity to be strong, and to play in a safe way’.

6.4.11 Reluctance to Expose Own Gambling Problems and Seek Help

A major unanticipated theme that emerged from the counsellor interviews was that gaming venue staff may be particularly reluctant to acknowledge a gambling problem and seek assistance to deal with it.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why gaming venue staff may be reluctant to acknowledge a gambling problem and seek help:

- **Fear of job loss**. Where staff have gambling problems, they may, rightly or wrongly, fear losing their job if they acknowledge their problems by seeking help. Alternatively, some may be reticent to seek help if they fear their gambling problems will thereby be discovered. As two quotes verify, ‘there is some reluctance to divulge that you have a gambling problem because you might think that you may not have your job for very long’, and ‘in that culture they...are reluctant to approach a manager as there are real concerns that exist for the individual’s employment’.
- **Intolerance in the industry**. Related to the previous point is that some counsellors considered that gambling problems amongst staff would be seen very negatively by employers, especially given the large amounts of cash typically held in gaming venues. As one noted, ‘that is what I am concerned about. Industry takes such a hard line and people won’t come forward and get help.’ To alleviate this, another suggested that ‘ultimately industry and the peak body need to come up with policies that reflect a bit more of a human (aspect)...to understand that we are all at risk’.

- **Difficulties of self-excluding.** Some interviewees felt that employees would be unlikely to self-exclude from the gambling areas of their own or other venues, as this could not be kept confidential from management and staff. To remedy this, one counsellor suggested that ‘the message needs to come from the venues to their staff that excluding yourself is actually seen as a positive step on your employment record, not a negative step’.
- **Limits work opportunities.** Employees may be deterred from addressing their gambling problems because of limited alternative employment opportunities if they want to avoid the gambling environment. Two specific examples of this were given. One interviewee explained about a client who managed a TAB outlet that ‘her options were very few...she would have to quit and find another job...after years and years and years of doing that’. Another noted that ‘I had a chef...and I suggested he exclude himself from the casino, and he said...he can’t exclude himself because he just applied for a job there’.
- **Time to access help services.** Employees who work irregular shifts or who are on a casual or on-call basis may find it very difficult to enter into a treatment program for gambling problems. As one counsellor explained, ‘they may feel more restrained from accessing help – number one, due to the practicability of work life, that is, time to access services’.

6.4.12 Influence of Other Aspects of the Work Environment

The counsellors were asked if there were any other aspects of the work environment mentioned by clients as influencing their gambling behaviour, or any they could identify from their professional stance. Five such factors were raised that were perceived as encouraging staff gambling.

Reasons given by gambling counsellors why other aspects of the work environment can encourage staff gambling:

- **Access to cash.** Some counsellors considered that access to cash in gaming venues presented a temptation for staff to gamble – ‘there was just having access to the cash. That was the big issue’. Another considered ‘the availability of accessing their pay at the ATM in the workplace – that was the main thing’. Some counsellors referred to staff who had been caught credit betting or stealing from their workplace to gamble – ‘it was easy access to the cash...and then they started chasing, so they had to take more money to get back what they were after’ and ‘what I do see are reports from the courts about venue staff who have gambled on their work premises and are being charged for stealing or other crimes committed in the employer’s venue, to finance their gambling’.
- **Low pay.** Some interviewees thought that the modest pay received by many workers in gaming venues presented a temptation to gamble, ‘because of the stuff around not being well paid – being delusional – needing to create extra income’. Another noted how ‘both clients – they are now unemployed – gambled to feel important and to get money. The casino employee was well paid, but later gambled to get a similar lifestyle’.
- **A drinking culture.** One noted that ‘they probably drink more and drink more often. In itself that would contribute’, while another speculated that ‘if they were to have a...drink after work, that could increase the likelihood that they could gamble’. Another interviewee told of a client who ‘would associate relaxing with drinking, and drinking with gambling; relaxing would mean drinking and gambling’.
- **Industry attracts gamblers.** A few interviewees commented that perhaps the industry attracts gamblers. As one noted, ‘it is a chicken or egg scenario...Some people have gambling problems before they work in the industry’.
- **Industry attracts outgoing people.** Others noted that the industry attracts fun loving people where ‘people in that industry have a very partying kind of attitude...they are very

into live for the moment, have a good time, so I could see how people could get hooked into it’, and ‘they were fun, outgoing people...So I guess, they strike me as being the kind of people who might get into that kind of thing more than the average people’. Another counsellor related how ‘my croupier (client) comes to mind...amongst the younger gamblers they can often be flying high on ecstasy at the same time’.

At-Risk Status

When counsellors were asked whether they thought that hospitality staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems, 79 per cent considered that venue staff are a more at-risk group for developing gambling problems than the general population, while 21 per cent said they did not know. Reasons for being non-committal included that ‘it is a chicken or egg scenario’, ‘it could work lots of different ways for lots of different people’, and because venue staff may be reluctant to seek help so the counsellors did not know about them.

6.5 SUMMARY OF PROBLEM GAMBLER-RELATED RESPONSES

This chapter has provided a problem gambler perspective on how working in a gaming venue can influence employee gambling behaviour, by reporting on interviews with three groups of people – two employees in counselling for gambling problems, four employees who scored in the problem gambling category on the CPGI, and 32 gambling counsellors. Twenty-three of these counsellors related the experiences of venue staff they had treated for gambling problems, while all 32 counsellors gave their professional opinions on the issue. This section firstly tabulates the responses given by each group of interviewees about their perceived influence on staff gambling of each workplace factor. It then summarises the major themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data relating to workplace factors that are considered to encourage staff gambling, discourage staff gambling, and have no influence. Finally, comparisons are drawn between the responses given by the problem gamblers we interviewed, the client experiences of the 23 counsellors who had treated venue staff for gambling problems, and the professional opinions of the 32 gambling counsellors.

6.5.1 Summary of Responses from Employees in Counselling, Problem Gamblers Interviewed and Counsellors

Tables 6.1-6.4 summarise the opinions of the people we interviewed who contributed to a problem gambler perspective about each of the nine workplace factors we questioned them about. Their responses are categorised as ‘encourages gambling’, ‘discourages gambling’, ‘either/both’, ‘no influence’ and ‘don’t know/no response’.

Table 6.1 summarises the responses of the two gaming venue employees we interviewed who were in counselling for their gambling problems. Because these clients were encouraged to talk about their own experiences, their responses reflect aspects of the workplace they felt had had an impact on their own gambling problems. Both clients considered that frequent exposure to gambling, workplace stressors and shift work had contributed to their gambling problems, while venue managers and their policies and practices had facilitated their gambling by allowing staff to gamble in the workplace. One of these two clients, a front-of-house employee, also felt her gambling had been influenced by her close interaction with gamblers, by fellow employees and by frequent exposure to gambling-related marketing and promotions, while the other, a back-of-house employee had experienced no influence on her gambling from these factors. The gambling behaviour of one had not been influenced by the responsible gambling training she had received, while the other had received no training. One felt that other responsible gambling measures in her venue had also not influenced her gambling, while the other made no comment on this.

Table 6.1: Summary of Opinions of Two Problem Gamblers in Counselling on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling

Influence of...	Encourages Gambling	Discourages Gambling	Either/Both	No Influence	Don't Know/No Response	Total
Close interaction with gamblers	1	0	0	1	0	2
Frequent exposure to gambling	2	0	0	0	0	2
Fellow employees	1	0	0	1	0	2
Venue managers	2	0	0	0	0	2
Workplace stressors	2	0	0	0	0	2
Shiftwork	2	0	0	0	0	2
Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions	1	0	0	1	0	2
Responsible gambling training	0	0	0	2	0	2
Responsible gambling measures	0	0	0	2	0	2

Table 6.2 summarises the responses of the four gaming venue employees we interviewed who were not in counselling, but who scored in the problem gambler category on the CPGI. During these interviews, these employees were asked for their opinions on how the various workplace factors influence staff gambling behaviour, rather than their own personal experience, although some certainly drew on this. All felt that employee gambling is encouraged by frequent exposure to gambling, shift work, and frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions. Three also felt that close interactions with gamblers and fellow employees encourage venue staff to gamble, while the fourth felt that these factors could either encourage or discourage staff in their gambling. Three felt that their managers' policies and practices facilitated staff gambling, while a fourth considered this had no influence. Two thought that workplace stress encouraged staff to gamble, while two felt this had no influence. Three considered that both responsible gambling training and in-house responsible gambling measures had no influence on staff gambling, while one felt that the training helps to discourage staff gambling, and one had no opinion about the influence of responsible gambling measures.

Table 6.2: Summary of Opinions of Four Problem Gamblers Not in Counselling on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling

Influence of...	Encourages Gambling	Discourages Gambling	Either/Both	No Influence	Don't Know/No Response	Total
Close interaction with gamblers	3	0	1	0	0	4
Frequent exposure to gambling	4	0	0	0	0	4
Fellow employees	3	0	1	0	0	4
Venue managers	3	0	0	1	0	4
Workplace stressors	2	0	0	2	0	4
Shiftwork	4	0	0	0	0	4
Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions	4	0	0	0	0	4
Responsible gambling training	0	1	0	3	0	4
Responsible gambling measures	0	0	0	3	1	4

Twenty-three counsellors we interviewed had treated clients who developed problems while working in gaming venues, and their responses about these clients are summarised in Table 6.3. Clearly, the counsellors' responses were based on their best recall rather than actual records. Additionally, the 'no influence' category includes responses that indicated that the clients did not specifically raise this factor as an influence on their gambling or an area that the counsellor did not discuss with the client. Based on the workplace factors that these clients felt had encouraged or facilitated their gambling, it is apparent that working shift work and workplace stressors were the major influences, followed by exposure to marketing and promotions for gambling, frequent exposure to gambling, and close interaction with gamblers. Fellow employees and managers were less of an influence, mainly because the clients' gambling appeared to have progressed to a level where they tended to gamble alone or hide their gambling from work colleagues. Very few counsellors reported that their clients' gambling had been discouraged by responsible gambling training, signage and other measures. Where these had been an influence, they seemed mainly a trigger for seeking help, rather than a preventative measure.

Table 6.3: Summary of Client Experiences on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling

Influence of...	Encourages Gambling	Discourages Gambling	Either/Both	No Influence	Don't Know/No Response	Total
Close interaction with gamblers	9	1	2	11	0	23
Frequent exposure to gambling	10	1	0	5	7	23
Fellow employees	6	5	0	10	2	23
Venue managers	4	5	0	10	4	23
Workplace stressors	17	0	0	6	0	23
Shiftwork	19	0	0	1	3	23
Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions	12	0	1	9	1	23
Responsible gambling training	0	3	0	17	3	23
Responsible gambling measures	0	4	1	8	10	23

Table 6.4 summarises the professional opinions of the 32 counsellors on how workplace factors influence staff gambling. Again, workplace stressors, shift work and frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions rated highly, as did frequent exposure to gambling while at work. Nearly half the counsellors thought that close interaction with gamblers encourages staff to gamble, although two thought this would mainly discourage staff gambling and three felt this could influence them either way. Similarly, fellow employees were considered an influence by some, but ten thought they mainly encourage other staff to gamble, three thought they had a discouraging influence, and two felt this could influence them either way. Opinions about the influence of management was mixed, where eight thought that management policies that do not allow staff to gamble in the workplace discouraged staff gambling, as did general advice and support to stop gambling. However, six thought that managers could have either a positive or negative influence on staff gambling. Opinions were also mixed about the influence of responsible gambling training and other strategies, with some feeling that these can discourage staff gambling, nearly equal numbers thinking they have no influence, and others thinking that their effectiveness depends on the type of training, the prominence of signage and the personal circumstances of the employee.

Table 6.4: Summary of Counsellor Opinions on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling

Influence of...	Encourages Gambling	Discourages Gambling	Either/Both	No Influence	Don't Know/No Response	Total
Close interaction with gamblers	15	2	3	3	9	32
Frequent exposure to gambling	20	1	3	0	8	32
Fellow employees	10	3	2	4	13	32
Venue managers	4	8	6	4	10	32
Workplace stressors	23	0	0	2	7	32
Shiftwork	20	0	2	0	10	32
Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions	20	1	2	1	8	32
Responsible gambling training	0	10	5	7	10	32
Responsible gambling measures	0	7	3	9	13	32

6.5.2 Workplace Factors Perceived to Encourage Staff Gambling from a Problem Gambler Perspective

Table 6.5 shows the themes and major sub-themes which emerged from the data relating to workplace factors that can encourage gambling amongst gaming venue staff and whether each was identified by the three groups of interviewees

Table 6.5: Workplace Factors Perceived to Encourage Staff Gambling from a Problem Gambler Perspective

	Problem Gamblers in Counselling	Problem Gamblers not in Counselling	Client Experience & Counsellor Opinions
Close interaction with Gamblers:			
Staff hear about wins more than losses	√	√	√
Seeing people win creates hope of winning	√	√	
Staff get caught up in the excitement of patrons' wins		√	√
Staff constantly hear about gambling & are given 'hot tips'	√	√	√
Staff who gamble identify with/build relationships with other gamblers	√	√	√
Staff want a piece of the action			√
Frequent Exposure to Gambling:			
Increases staff familiarity with gambling		√	
Increases staff interest in gambling		√	√
Normalises gambling for staff	√	√	√
Normalises heavy gambling for staff	√		√
Staff may have ready access to gambling	√	√	√
Staff are surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere	√		√
Staff can lose sight of the value and ownership of money			√
Increases perceived insider knowledge about gambling		√	√
Staff become attracted to the gambling environment	√		
Triggers to temptation to gamble	√		
Influence of Fellow Employees:			
Staff gamble together in their workplace	√	√	√
Staff gamble together after work		√	√
Staff gamble together on days off		√	
Staff directly encourage other staff to gamble		√	
Staff introduce other staff to gambling		√	√
Staff gamble to gain acceptance into the workgroup			√
General acceptance of gambling amongst staff			√
Gambling problems not taken seriously by staff			√
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies & Practices:			
Managers are sometimes gamblers and so set an example	√	√	√
Managers gamble with staff			√
Managers allow staff to gamble in the workplace	√		√
Gambling can be a job requirement		√	
Workplace has a gambling culture	√		
Managers do not take gambling problems seriously	√		
Influence of Workplace Stressors:			
Staff need to unwind after work	√	√	√
Staff can experience stress about problem gamblers			√
Staff can experience stress about difficult customers			√

	Problem Gamblers in Counselling	Problem Gamblers not in Counselling	Client Experience & Counsellor Opinions
Staff can experience stress from heavy workloads	√		√
Job dissatisfaction/boredom		√	√
Influence of Shift Work:			
Staff can suffer social isolation	√	√	√
Lack of alternative social opportunities for staff	√	√	
Lack of alternative recreational opportunities for staff		√	√
Only gambling venues are open late at night		√	√
Staff need to find solitary leisure activities	√	√	√
Staff tend to socialise with other hospitality workers		√	
Staff gamble to fill in time between shifts	√		√
Staff social life can revolve around the workplace	√		
Staff gamble while waiting for others to finish work		√	
Shiftwork leads to stress			√
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing & Promotions:			
Promotions can act as a trigger		√	√
Reinforces gambling as way to win money			√
Raises awareness of jackpot levels	√	√	√
Increases knowledge about other promotions			√
Staff get caught up in the excitement of promotions			√
Worsens existing gambling problems			√
Other Aspects of the Workplace:			
Some staff drink a lot of alcohol		√	√
Reluctance to expose problems due to fear of job loss			√
Some staff have the opportunity to bet on credit		√	
Low wages of some staff		√	√
Self-exclusion is too difficult due to embarrassment	√		√
Access to cash & pay in their workplace	√	√	√
Lack of alternative employment opportunities	√		√
Staff may not have time to access help services			√
The industry attracts gamblers			√
The industry attracts outgoing people			√

6.5.3 Workplace Factors Perceived to Discourage Staff Gambling from a Problem Gambler Perspective

Table 6.6 indicates those themes and sub-themes relating to factors that are perceived to discourage staff from gambling, as identified by the gambling counsellors. Little comment was made about factors which deter staff from gambling by the six problem gamblers interviewed.

Table 6.6: Workplace Factors Perceived to Discourage Staff Gambling from a Problem Gambler Perspective

	Client Experience & Counsellor Opinions
Close interaction with Gamblers:	
Staff see problem or heavy gamblers and don't want to be like them	√
Staff see negative responses to gambling losses	√
Staff see the effects of problem gambling	√
Staff see or hear about the losses	√
Staff see gambling as boring	√
Can trigger problem recognition	√
Frequent Exposure to Gambling:	
Staff have better knowledge of the odds of losing	√
Influence of Fellow Employees:	
Staff provide support or advice to stop gambling	√
Staff can trigger help-seeking	√
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies & Practices:	
Managers can provide support or advice to stop gambling	√
A policy of no staff gambling in the workplace	√
A culture of responsible gambling	√
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing & Promotions:	
Staff are aware of the low chance of winning promotions	√
Staff are desensitised to marketing and promotions	√
Influence of Responsible Gambling Training:	
Raises awareness for staff of problem gambling and its signs	√
Raises awareness for staff of the effects of problem gambling	√
Raises awareness for staff of the poor odds in gambling	√
Raises awareness for staff of ways to seek help	√
Destigmatises problem gambling	√
Can trigger help-seeking	√
Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures:	
Measures raise awareness of gambling problems	√
Signage raises awareness of where to get help	√
Can trigger problem recognition and help-seeking	√

6.5.4 Workplace Factors Perceived to Not Influence Staff Gambling from a Problem Gambler Perspective

Table 6.7 shows the themes and major sub-themes which emerged from the data relating to workplace factors that may have no influence on gambling amongst gaming venue staff and whether each was identified by the three groups of interviewees.

Table 6.7: Workplace Factors Perceived to Not Influence Staff Gambling from a Problem Gambler Perspective

	Problem Gamblers in Counselling	Problem Gamblers not in Counselling	Client Experience & Counsellor Opinions
Close interaction with Gamblers:			
Some staff have little interaction with gamblers	√		√
Frequent Exposure to Gambling:			
(No specific reasons given)			
Influence of Fellow Employees:			
Only employee gambling in the workplace	√		
Heavy gamblers prefer to gamble on their own			√
Staff may hide their gambling from fellow employees			√
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies & Practices:			
Management have no interest/knowledge of what staff do in own time		√	√
Management policies restrict staff gambling only in workplace			√
Influence of Workplace Stressors:			
Staff de-stress in other ways		√	
The work is not stressful			√
Influence of Shift Work:			
Some staff have permanent shifts or do not do shift work			√
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing & Promotions:			
Venue does very little gambling marketing and promotions	√		
Influence of Responsible Gambling Training:			
Training may not be done or taken seriously because it is voluntary			√
May not encourage staff to reflect on their own gambling	√	√	√
People may be in denial about their own gambling		√	√
Staff sceptical about venue's commitment to responsible gambling			√
Not all staff are trained	√		√
Not all venues welcome training by counsellors			√
Trainers not given enough time			√
Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures:			
Staff don't look at signage and/or are sceptical about them		√	√
Signs become too familiar		√	√
Signs are aimed at patrons not staff		√	
Signage is too discreet			√
Signage is misleading		√	√
People may be in denial about their own gambling	√		√
Staff are sceptical about responsible gambling measures			√
Staff may not know about self-exclusion			√

6.5.5 Comparisons Amongst Responses from Problem Gamblers and Counsellors

This section provides some comparisons amongst the responses given by problem gamblers and counsellors interviewed to each of the workplace factors discussed above, and speculates on some reasons for any major differences that are apparent.

- Close interaction with gamblers was perceived as encouraging four of the six problem gamblers to gamble, while nearly two-fifths of the 23 counsellors who had treated venue staff with gambling problems considered that these clients had been encouraged to gamble by this factor. Around half of all counsellors considered in their professional opinion that this close interaction is a likely encouragement for staff gambling. Of the 61 'responses' reported on in this chapter, (two employees in counselling, four problem gamblers not in counselling, 23 counsellors who related the experiences of venue staff with gambling problems, and 32 gambling counsellors who gave their professional opinion), 28 indicated that close interaction with gamblers in the workplace was likely to encourage staff to gamble. Reasons given to support this view generally reflected the wins, excitement and talk around gambling that staff are exposed to.
- Frequent exposure to gambling was endorsed as an encouraging influence on staff gambling by 36 of the 61 responses gathered from problem gamblers and counsellors. All six problem gamblers reported that this factor encouraged them to gamble, while nearly half of the 23 counsellors who had treated venue staff with gambling problems considered that these clients had been encouraged to gamble by this factor. About two-thirds of the counsellors considered in their professional opinion that this frequent exposure to gambling is likely to encourage staff gambling. Frequent exposure to gambling was seen to increase the interest, familiarity, acceptance and perceived insider knowledge of gambling by staff, to normalise gambling and heavy gambling, to increase access to gambling and to enhance the attraction of the gambling environment to staff.
- Fellow employees were reflected as an encouraging influence on staff gambling in 20 of the 61 responses, as staff gamble together and encourage other staff to gamble. Four of the six problem gamblers felt that fellow employees encouraged them to gamble, either directly or indirectly, although this view was endorsed by only six of the counsellors who had treated venue clients and about one-third of all gambling counsellors. However, the counsellors only see people who have acknowledged their gambling as being a problem, so these clients have likely reached a stage where they are ashamed or embarrassed about their gambling and would therefore tend to gamble on their own and to hide it from others such as work colleagues. The counsellors also recognised that fellow staff can deter other staff from gambling by providing advice or support to stop gambling and by triggering help-seeking.
- Venue managers and their policies and practices were a workplace factor that gained very mixed responses. Five of the six problem gamblers felt that management had encouraged staff gambling – by gambling themselves, by allowing staff gambling in the workplace, by contributing to a gambling culture at work, and by not taking gambling problems seriously. Most gambling counsellors also acknowledged these potential ways in which management can encourage staff gambling, but also recognised that management can deter staff from gambling by providing support or advice to stop gambling, by nurturing a culture of responsible gambling and by not allowing staff to gamble at work. Overall, equal numbers of the 61 responses (13 each) felt that managers and their policies and practices can encourage and discourage staff gambling, with an additional six respondents explicitly stating that this management influence could be either positive or negative. The remainder felt management had no influence, or they did not provide an explicit response.

- Workplace stressors were a factor that attracted wide endorsement as an encouragement for venue staff to gamble, with 44 of the 61 responses supporting this view. Four of the six problem gamblers reported that workplace stress encouraged them to gamble, while 17 of the 23 counsellors felt that workplace stress was a contributing factor to their venue clients' gambling. Over two-thirds of all the counsellors also thought that workplace stress was likely to encourage employee gambling, and articulated a wide range of potential workplace stressors for gaming venue staff which generally lead to the desire to unwind after work and on days off.
- Shift work was considered by all groups as a major influence encouraging venue staff to gamble. All six problem gamblers, 19 of the 23 counsellors who had treated venue staff, and 20 of the 32 counsellors endorsed this view, totalling 45 of the 61 responses. The reasons why shift work encourages employee gambling were reasonably consistent amongst the responses from these different groups and related mainly to the limits on social and recreational activities experienced by these staff, such that gambling can be seen as an attractive option for going out or to pass the time alone.
- Frequent exposure to gambling-related marketing and promotions was perceived by five of the six problem gamblers as encouraging them to gamble, while about half of the counsellors who had treated venue clients thought that this factor had also encouraged these clients to gamble. About two-thirds of all counsellors supported this view. In all, 37 of the 61 responses considered that gambling-related marketing and promotions in the workplace encouraged venue staff to gamble. The problem gamblers attributed this mainly to a raised awareness of jackpot levels and that promotions can trigger gambling, while the counsellors also thought that these activities reinforce gambling as a way to win money, increase knowledge about other promotions, can attract staff to the excitement surrounding promotions, and generally worsen any existing gambling problems.
- Responsible gambling training was seen to mainly have no influence on staff gambling, a position endorsed by five of the six problem gamblers. Seventeen of the 23 counsellors who had treated venue clients also considered that this training, where provided, had not deterred these clients from gambling or had encouraged them to gamble responsibly. Various perceived deficiencies in the training were identified to support this view. However, about one-third of all counsellors felt that this training predominantly encourages responsible gambling amongst staff, by raising awareness of problem gambling, its symptoms and effects, of how gambling works and the poor odds of winning, and of ways to seek help. It may also break down barriers to help-seeking by destigmatising problem gambling and triggering action. Overall, 29 of the 61 responses indicated no influence from responsible gambling training on employee gambling, while 14 responses indicated that the training discouraged staff gambling.
- Other responsible gambling measures were generally seen to have no influence on staff gambling by all groups, with 22 of the 61 responses reflecting this view. More specifically, five of the six problem gamblers reported no influence on their gambling by these measures, while the other was non-committal in their response. About one-third of the 23 counsellors reported that these measures had had no influence over the gambling of their venue clients they had seen, while about 30 per cent of all counsellors considered these measures were most likely to have no influence. Overall, 11 of the 61 responses indicated that these measures discourage staff gambling or encourage more responsible gambling amongst venue staff, at least by raising awareness of gambling problems and where to seek assistance and by triggering problem recognition and help-seeking.
- Other workplace factors were identified as encouraging gambling amongst venue employees. The problem gamblers nominated high alcohol consumption, low wages, access to cash and their pay in the venue, the opportunity to bet on credit, lack of

alternative job opportunities and aversion to self-exclusion as factors that encouraged or facilitated staff gambling. Many of these factors were also endorsed by the counsellors, although they raised additional themes. A major one was the reluctance of venue staff to expose a gambling problem and seek help, due to fear of job loss, intolerance in the industry, difficulties of self-excluding, limited other employment opportunities and lack of time to access help services. The counsellors also felt that the type of employees attracted to the industry may contribute to their likelihood of being gamblers and of developing gambling problems.

- The at-risk status of hospitality staff for developing gambling problems compared to the rest of the population was overwhelmingly endorsed by all groups of respondents. All six problem gamblers felt that such staff were definitely more at risk, while nearly 80 per cent of all counsellors agreed, with the remainder stating that they did not know.

In summary, the largest proportions of the 61 ‘responses’ gained from interviews providing a problem gambler perspective perceived that:

- the factors that mainly encourage staff gambling are shift work (45 respondents), workplace stressors (44 respondents), frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions (37 respondents), frequent exposure to gambling (36 respondents), close interaction with gamblers (28 respondents), and fellow employees (20 respondents);
- none of the factors mainly discourage staff gambling;
- the factors that mainly have no influence on staff gambling are responsible gambling training (29 respondents), other responsible gambling measures in the venue (22 respondents), and venue managers and their policies and practices (15 respondents).

However, it should be noted that sizeable minorities of the problem gamblers and gambling counsellors had different views, and these should not be discounted in identifying potential risk and protective factors for gaming venue staff.

CHAPTER SEVEN – MANAGER PERSPECTIVES ON HOW WORKING IN A GAMING VENUE INFLUENCES EMPLOYEE GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This section provides data to address Research Objective Three, which was to examine how Queensland gaming venue employers/managers perceive that aspects of their venue's work environment influence their employees' gambling behaviour in terms of responsible gambling and problem gambling. This section reports on interviews with 44 club managers (Section 7.2), 27 hotel managers (Section 7.3) and 2 casino managers representing three Queensland casinos (Section 7.4), from five geographic regions of Queensland. Section 7.5 summarises the findings.

7.2 CLUB MANAGERS

This section summarises the responses given by the 44 club managers we interviewed to questions about their workplace, their staff and staff gambling and about whether various aspects of their work environment are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees. For each question we asked about the influence of workplace factors on staff gambling, the number of respondents who felt that each factor encourages gambling, discourages gambling, either or both (depending on the circumstances), or has no influence are presented. A few respondents did not directly answer all questions or were non-committal, so these responses are categorised as 'don't know/no response'. Reasons each factor was perceived to encourage, discourage and have no influence on staff gambling are then summarised in point form, along with some indicative quotations from the interviews.

7.2.1 Gaming Facilities and Their Contribution to Business

The club managers who were interviewed managed a broad range of gaming facilities, from some clubs with just four gaming machines to others with the maximum of 280 gaming machines, with multiple TAB and keno outlets, and with bingo games, raffles and trade promotions. All clubs had gaming machines, with the average being 88 machines. Twenty-two clubs had TAB agencies and 29 clubs had keno outlets. Most clubs held bingo and raffles for their members at least once a week. The larger clubs offered all gaming facilities and activities permitted under legislation, while small venues had just a few gaming machines. The reported contribution from gaming to organisational profit ranged from very limited (10 per cent) to very high (100 per cent). Several respondents simply said 'the majority' or 'gaming contributes more than 50 per cent'.

7.2.2 Number of Staff, Number of Gaming Staff and Staff Turnover

Club managers employed widely varying staff numbers, from two or three part-timers to about 300 staff spread over four locations. They often supervised contractors working in the club as well. On average, these managers employed 17 full time and 30 part-time and/or casual staff.

In small venues, staff were multi-functional and engaged in looking after gaming operations as well as other areas. However, in large venues dedicated gaming staff managed and operated the gaming function. The average number of staff conducting some gaming duties was 13 people who were employed on a full-time, part-time or casual basis. However this figure is difficult to estimate with any accuracy. For example one manager noted that 'the only people who haven't worked in gaming are the bus drivers'. Another manager said that 'in gaming we'd have about ten in the gaming area at any point in time on a busy night,

including cleaners'. Cleaners can often be part of the gaming security network so should not be discounted as contributing to the gaming function.

Staff turnover ranged from high to low, with more than two-thirds of the managers reporting low staff turnover. Low staff turnover, reported by the majority (24) of club managers, was found where staff were mostly local, from a stable community or had family ties to the region. Where high turnover was experienced, managers of 14 clubs said that they often depended on backpackers and tertiary students to backfill staff vacancies. Six managers were non-committal about their staff turnover.

7.2.3 Extent of Staff Gambling

When asked if staff could gamble on site on the club premises, during a work break or on their days off, there were two main responses. The majority, 23 managers, said that no staff could gamble on the premises at any time. The other 21 managers said that staff with gaming licenses were banned from gambling under legislation, but that other club staff could gamble providing it was out of work hours and, in most cases, out of uniform. This out of hours gambling was mostly TAB betting, but some mentioned keno and gaming machine use as well.

There were a few exceptions. One manager said 'the only time we allow them to play on the TAB is on Melbourne Cup Day, and their manager stands there with them while they are placing their bets'. Another manager observed 'they are not allowed to gamble in the club while on duty but if they are off duty, and a member, they can; but we don't encourage it. I'd say maybe ten to 15 of them would, a very small percentage. In some instances this is their life, a little like some of our members'.

Managers were also asked whether they knew if staff gambled at other venues, who they gambled with, how often and what forms of gambling were preferred. The majority, 23 managers, thought that some of their staff would gamble at other venues. The two most popular gambling activities mentioned were betting on horse racing at the TAB and playing gaming machines, although casino games, keno and punters' clubs were also mentioned. One manager noted 'they do gamble at other venues. I know of probably four or five staff that gamble at other venues, on poker machines, TAB and keno'. Another manager commented, 'I'm sure they probably do gamble at other venues. I think most people go somewhere close to home, to the bigger venues, or to the local tavern nearby'. Another commented that 'they do play elsewhere, and I do believe they are affected, they do play the gaming machines, and I do see staff from clubs who come in here and end up playing the machines. Because staff are stuck in the industry, it becomes part of the routine'.

Of interest were some managers' comments about staff with gambling problems. One manager said 'we had a couple of problem gamblers on staff, but they are no longer here because they moved on'. Another recalled that 'there has been occasions in this club where other staff members from other departments have come to me and said, I'm putting in too much money, I'm spending my money, I need help. And I say, well help is here, come with me. There have probably been three or four people that have asked me for help there. I've had my attendants say to me they've been here since they finished work, past midnight, so I go up to them and say, how are you going, are you in trouble?'

The balance, 21 managers, said that they did not know if staff gambled at other venues. One manager said, 'I wouldn't have a clue. I don't follow them around' and another, 'no, they're not gambling people, I wouldn't think'. Some felt that their young staff members would prefer to go to nightclubs and drink alcohol rather than gamble. One manager noted, 'I know the younger staff don't go to clubs and gamble. I know they go to nightclubs and drink'.

7.2.4 Management Approaches to Gambling Problems Amongst Staff

When asked if the venue had any mechanisms to alert staff to risks of problem gambling amongst themselves or other staff, the managers gave very mixed responses. Only one had formally raised the issue, in staff meetings, while another three had talked to staff on a more ad hoc and informal basis. A further six managers felt that the responsible gambling training and measures were sufficient mechanisms to alert staff to potential risks, while the remainder had not talked to staff at all about the issue.

The managers were also asked what they would do if a staff member revealed that they had a gambling problem. Nearly all said that they would suggest counselling, six noted they would also suggest self-exclusion, one would impose a venue initiated exclusion, and ten said they would consider moving the person to a non-gaming position in the venue. Six noted they would be concerned about the person handling cash and so would increase their security mechanisms around that person, perhaps by having ‘someone else rostered on with them’, ‘monitoring their activities closely’ and making ‘them work their shifts with me (as I) couldn’t leave them on their own’. A few managers said they would suggest a change of career for the person, with two specifically stating they would want to terminate the person’s employment. One commented that ‘I wouldn’t like them on my premises because I think if you’ve got a gambling problem then you’re in trouble, because they’re going to try to steal from you’. However, the difficulties of terminating employment with unfair dismissal laws were raised by numerous interviewees.

7.2.5 Close Interaction with Gamblers

When asked whether they thought that close interaction with gamblers is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees, the managers gave varied responses. While eight managers thought that this interaction encouraged staff to gamble, seven thought that it would have no influence. A larger group of 13 managers considered that close interaction with gamblers deterred staff from gambling and ten felt that close interactions with gamblers could have either a positive or negative influence, depending on the employee and his or her circumstances. Six interviewees stated they did not know or were otherwise non-committal in their response.

Reasons given by club managers why close interaction with gamblers can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff hear about wins more than losses**, as ‘you never hear about the losses’ and ‘if someone is winning everyone knows about it’. Another noted that ‘the casino staff (who come to this club) are absolutely gambling crazy, including the housemaids and the croupiers. They drink premium drinks and bet high stakes – not cents, but dollars. They are not able to gamble at work at the casino. They work with big winners and see the wins’. Another raised the point that staff sometimes become aware of big wins when patrons offer them tips. For example, ‘customers come for personal service – big punters have a win and like to give tips – \$100 tips...We had one last Christmas where they wanted to give the staff member \$350...that person was an employee (of another gaming venue) who had self excluded themselves for a while and had a few jobs’.
- **Seeing people win creates hope of winning**, where ‘of course, they do interact with gamblers quite a bit. And if some of them are easily influenced, they might come in and see someone win \$1,000, and think oh, isn’t that great, I’d like some of that’.
- **Staff constantly hear about gambling and are given ‘hot tips’**, as ‘staff working there (in the TAB) get tips everyday. The guys get a couple of dollars and say, let’s go halves’ and ‘there is lots of chat at the TAB, they get into the buzz of it and people give you the knowledge of it’. Another noted ‘that is something that you may get in your TAB, in horseracing, when people talk about tips. It becomes a much more personalised area and

that lends itself to them having knowledge of the punter, who might have a background in racing or a connection to racing, so they're more likely to take notice of somebody who gives them a tip. So that personalisation lends itself to background knowledge, and that may have an influence'.

- **Patrons can encourage staff to gamble.** One interviewee recalled that 'I had to sack someone for credit betting on keno. It was the influence of the customers'. A further comment was that 'if you had a TAB and you saw someone doing well by running a system or something, then I would be more worried that the staff would latch on'.

Reasons given by club managers why close interaction with gamblers can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff see problem or heavy gamblers and don't want to be like them,** where 'we have one fellow here that says he won \$1,500 at the casino last night and two days later he's bumming money off the patrons' and 'I think that it can have an adverse effect on staff, because you can see what goes through the machines, and you think, why do they do it?'.
- **Staff see negative responses to gambling losses,** such that 'if they win they're happy about that, and if they lose I've seen the sadness that goes with that' and 'if you see people wheeling away their money and they get a bit narky about it, you definitely can be influenced (to not gamble)'.
- **Staff see the amount of money patrons spend on gambling,** where 'being in this industry, you can see a lot of regular people coming in, you can see a lot of their wages going in, see how much money they are pumping in; it puts you off'. Another commented 'the staff see some of the high rollers winning big, and on the other hand they also know from the clearances that where those high rollers are, (that's) where we're taking the most money out. So they're seeing them winning big and losing big. On the other end of the scale we see people losing money and wonder where they are getting their money from, how they pay their bills. The staff talk among themselves'.
- **Staff see or hear about the losses,** as 'there are a lot more losses than wins and if staff are involved in clearing the money out of the machines and doing payouts, then surely they must realize, that yesterday we took \$20,000 out of the machines and paid out \$3,000'. Another noted that 'for most staff, gambling is a turnoff' and another that 'my experience is that it puts you off gambling. More so in a small place because it is personal. If they are getting change to play the machines, you are monitoring what they are doing. Anytime someone walks away I have a reasonable idea what they (have) lost or won'.

Reasons given by club managers why close interaction with gamblers may have no influence on staff gambling:

- **Staff do not discuss wins and losses with patrons,** as 'the nature of the interaction there is not really of any frequency. Most people who do gamble on the machines are looking for privacy. From a keno perspective, it would be fairly impartial'.
- **Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway,** where 'I don't know that it would encourage anyone to start gambling if they didn't have the initial want to gamble', 'our staff that are here are not people that are mainly interested in gambling', and 'I doubt it. I think you are either a gambler or not'.

7.2.6 Frequent Exposure to Gambling

Responses were also mixed when club managers were asked whether they thought that frequent exposure to gambling in the workplace is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees. Five managers thought that frequent exposure to gambling encouraged staff to gamble, six thought it deterred them from gambling, and 11 felt it could

influence them in either of these ways. Of the remainder, 14 thought it had no influence at all, while eight were undecided.

Reasons given by club managers why frequent exposure to gambling can encourage staff gambling:

- **Increases staff interest in gambling**, where ‘bar staff get cued to following the races’, and ‘if you are in that environment day after day, such as the TAB, then you will probably enjoy having a bet on the horses’. Further, ‘maybe the TAB does, more so than the pokies, because a lot of the staff like the races... We notice that if there is a race day on, the staff are more inclined to do that, than go to another gambling place’.
- **Normalises gambling for staff**, as ‘it desensitises the staff’, ‘would normalise gambling’ and ‘it is the same with the alcohol side, you see people drinking every day and it does normalise it’. Another gave the example where ‘my family has been associated with pubs and clubs since I was three. So it probably makes you a lot more comfortable with it, whereas I know with some people it is a taboo thing’.
- **Staff may have ready access to gambling**. For example, ‘keno seems to be...the most problem for gambling while people are on duty, just because I guess they can bet on it by themselves or with another person, and the keno terminal is right there, and no one is going to know if they put a ticket on for themselves’. Another observed that ‘keno and TAB (gambling) are bigger than gaming machines. They are easier to play and spend more freely on. At one of the RSL clubs, staff come out with t-shirts over their uniform, and play keno and the TAB, but mainly keno. One person on night shift goes in the afternoon before his shift to play keno’.
- **Staff are surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere**, by which ‘I can see why that is a glamour. Those areas are designed specifically to attract people, with the bells and whistles’ and ‘...the glitz and glamour, yes’.
- **New or younger staff can be vulnerable**. As one explained, ‘it could have an influence on the younger staff, in that they do see it as exciting’, and ‘it is management’s responsibility not to put a young girl or a young guy in a gaming environment and then just walk away and leave them...the staff that become immune to it are at management level, and you’d expect that from management...the new young staff who you are trying to bring through and are going out enjoying themselves, they are living on \$100 a week’.
- **Staff can lose sight of the value and ownership of money**, as ‘it’s like when we are doing the ATM machine at the end of the day, and there is \$15,000 in notes. For the girls it is just money, but for some people, they might think you won’t miss two \$20 notes’. Further, ‘I’ve worked in a place that used to clear ½ million a week, in the days when they were just coins. It has a different effect on different people’. Another commented that ‘when you are tubing up the coins...you lose some sort of reality about what money is worth’.
- **Staff become attracted to the gambling environment**, in that ‘a lot of employees who work around poker machines actually play them themselves. And I put that down to actually working in that environment. It’s your environment...with the environment around you encouraging you to gamble’. Another commented that ‘I think the exposure does have an influence, it sets something in their mind, and they’ll go and have a gamble. I’m a great one for that. I use gambling as an escape. I call into this rough pub at the other end of town. Staff are definitely influenced by the gambling here’.

Reasons given by club managers why frequent exposure to gambling can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff can become sick of being around gambling and the environment.** One recalled how ‘working in an environment with the TAB drove me nuts, due to race after race all day’. Similarly, another commented that ‘the noises of the machines annoy me. I think it would turn them off. Comments from my staff, one of my supervisors, is that “the Super Cash drives me crazy”. I’ve never heard someone who is mesmerised by the music. Never’. Another noted that ‘you’ve had this all day, do you really want to go and listen to them banging in your ear again? Some of the machines are very annoying’.
- **Staff see venue takings from gambling.** One interviewee commented, ‘the way they see the customers put money through these machines, it probably turns them off’ and ‘I think any of the people working in that area know the odds of winning. Here we encourage the fact that you don’t build establishments like this because you win on the poker machines...if you are working in the gaming environment, they know that you can’t win, because they actually see (the results)’.
- **Staff have better knowledge of the odds of losing,** such that ‘they see both sides. With my staff, I think it puts them off more than anything else, they know the odds’. Another commented that ‘they understand more; they don’t get caught up in the hype of a big payout, because they understand the frequency that that happens; they understand the reality of it and the marketing side, the slant. It doesn’t encourage them to gamble any more.

Reasons given by club managers why frequent exposure to gambling may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway,** such that ‘if they are big punters, there is something in them that makes them gamble...It is the same with staff, if there is a bit of that urge in them...’ and ‘someone either has an addictive personality or they don’t. I don’t think working around gaming machines or keno will make someone start gambling in the first place’.
- **Staff inductions point out the realities of gambling,** where ‘we give new staff an induction and a four hour orientation. We tell them what is the go and is not, and we do point out the danger areas, what to look for with problem gamblers, to bring it to the attention of managers. I can see that being a problem for someone who is not strong willed, who sees someone win \$1,000 or \$2,000 who has just put \$20 in the machine. The people who tell you they have just won \$1,000 will not tell you how much they have invested to get to that stage. So new staff, we give them that kind (of information) in the induction’.
- **Staff are rotated between jobs or departments,** where ‘I don’t think it impacts on the staff too much, and that is why we try to move them, so they are multi-skilled’, and ‘I do rotate staff. People who work in that area also work in the bar. I don’t put everybody in there; I only put staff I have known for a long time in that area’. Another noted that ‘multi skilling breaks the cycle of just looking at people spending money in gaming, they need a break out of those areas’.

7.2.7 Influence of Fellow Employees

Club managers were asked whether they thought that fellow employees are likely to influence the gambling activities of gaming venue employees. Nine club managers thought that fellow employees can encourage staff gambling, one thought they mainly discourage staff gambling, while six considered this influence could have either effect. The majority

(22) of club managers thought fellow employees had no influence on staff gambling, while six were non-committal.

Reasons given by club managers why fellow employees can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff gamble together in their workplace**, such as where ‘staff are more likely to be in a staff syndicate for big lotto jackpots’.
- **Staff gamble together after work**, for example, ‘we would occasionally go out for dinner and end up at the casino. Even after work actually, there were a couple of guys that would go straight to the casino if they were on and finishing together, at 1am in the morning’, and further, ‘if they’ve worked all night and knocked off at 1 o’clock, they might go somewhere and have one or two drinks and put a few bob through the pokies’.
- **Staff gamble together on days off**. One related, ‘I think we go out (and gamble) on an impromptu basis. From what I see of my staff, they can’t afford to gamble, most people can’t. They’ll go to have a drink and play pool, but on the odd occasion someone will go and play the machines and somebody will accompany them.’
- **Staff introduce other staff to gambling**. One explained, ‘yes, in this industry (socialising together) is renowned as a problem. It would be quite easy (to be introduced by other staff)’, while another manager said ‘other staff could influence them. I’ve seen it happen to members. Someone will say, go on, put \$5 in, and they do and then they’re gone.’

Reasons given by club managers why fellow employees can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff provide support or advice to stop gambling**, that is ‘probably more so not to gamble. I’m speaking from a personal experience. If we ever go out, I’ll have a bet on the horses, maybe \$3, but I know he doesn’t really like to gamble, so I won’t really go with it’. Another noted that staff ‘talk to each other (and) say, why are you putting all that money through the machines?’.
- **Friends from work want to avoid gambling venues**, where ‘they go across the road and drink, then party in town. They don’t gamble’ and another said ‘the only thing I’ve heard them say is let’s go to the disco not the poker machines. I think they need some time out from all that ting, ting, ting and bling, bling, bling. It drives them nuts. They’re not really interested in playing the poker machines I think’.

Reasons given by club managers why fellow employees may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff prefer not to socialise together**, as ‘we don’t go out much together. We all live in different parts of Cairns and have different lifestyles’.
- **Staff socialise by going out to drink instead**, where ‘it is more nightclubs, for an alcoholic bender, drinking too much, even though they serve it’ and ‘from my experience, they socialise to drink rather than play the poker machines’.
- **Staff do not socialise together because of family responsibilities**, where ‘the older staff don’t socialise together a lot...because they have families’.
- **Older staff are not interested in socialising**, where ‘they don’t socialise much, only on birthdays or for other celebrations. The young ones might, but the older ones don’t’ and ‘the younger casuals are more likely to go to a venue that has gaming machines, whereas the older staff are more likely to socialise at home’.
- **Staff have shared sports interests instead**. As one person explained, ‘they don’t socialise in gambling...We do socialise a bit outside of work, that’s how I keep them together. Every two months we have a major type of staff event. We all go sailing or we

all play golf, and they see a lot of each other outside of that'. Another commented that 'they do socialise together. Most of them come here for drinks, or play golf or go fishing together' and another that 'some of them socialise with sport, they might go play golf on their days off'.

- **Some staff finish work alone**, where 'we only have one person on behind the bar at any time, so they knock off as an individual' and 'our girls are mainly all on singly, not on together' and 'the finish times here are staggered, so there is no opportunity to go and socialise together'.
- **No peer pressure to gamble or this is resisted**, as 'I certainly haven't seen any peer pressure or anything along those lines where any of them start punting together' and 'there is no real peer pressure from what I see among my guys to play the machines'.

7.2.8 Influence of Gambling Venue Managers

Club managers were asked whether their policies and practices are likely to influence staff gambling. The majority (24) thought that management discouraged staff gambling, principally through a 'no gambling in the workplace policy'. Four managers felt that management has no influence over staff gambling, ten felt that managers' policies and practices can either encourage or discourage staff to gamble, while six did not know or had no response.

Reasons given by club managers why management can encourage staff gambling:

- **Managers allow staff to gamble in the workplace**, so 'if they're allowing them to gamble on the premises for a start, to allow them to finish work and then go and play the pokies and put a bet on, then it is most likely that that will influence them. If they can't gamble on site, then they have to go home first and maybe by that stage they don't want to go out so much'. Another agreed 'that is an influence where, if they are allowed to gamble here, they may...use the opportunity'. Another commented 'I know a few that might have a propensity to gamble between shifts or whatever, because they need to sit and wait and can't go home. So if that rule were not there, there might be a lot more gambling'. Another observed 'in the bigger places staff were allowed to gamble...if they didn't have their gaming permit. They'd finish their shift and play, or come in before their shift and play. Some people may have had problems in those areas...you knew when people had no money because they'd be asking for more shifts'.
- **Managers are sometimes gamblers and so set a bad example**, where 'if the manager encourages them or does it themselves it will encourage them'. Another comment was 'I think venue managers through their own actions can influence staff; if they set an example that is below standards then that is what is going to happen to staff. They think, well he is over at the TAB or the keno having a bet, so I can too'. Another confessed that 'staff are not allowed to play here at all, in or out of uniform...The only one that really plays them is myself, if I've had too much syrup, and one of the managers will come and pull me off'.
- **Workplace has a gambling culture**, where 'of course that has an effect. Everything starts from the top and works its way through. It depends on the venue, and how it pushes gaming. Like here, it's not in anyone's face; there's no bleeping lights, coffee, etc. to tempt you to the gaming room. But if you walk into some of those themed, dark gaming rooms, lights, coffee, girls doing promos, etc., that's where the predominance is on gaming, and that comes through from management'.
- **Managers might talk about gambling in a positive way**, such as one who confessed 'we've talked about gambling and the evils of it and not to encourage it. But I catch myself encouraging it...I've got a bloke here in the kitchen...who will bet \$1,000 at a football game, and I encourage him, rib him about it'.

Reasons given by club managers why management can discourage staff gambling:

- **Managers can provide support or advice to stop gambling**, like ‘I’d talk to a staff member if I thought they were gambling, as I did with one of my younger fellows the other day driving around without a licence’. Another commented ‘that should reflect back on management, who should know the staff. If they are aware that that is going on, they should take that person to one side and say, this is not on. If you want to end up like those guys, then keep going down this path, because that is where your money is going to go...and it obviously reflects back on management’.
- **A policy of no staff gambling in the workplace**, such as ‘the principle of having no gambling on site is a good one. Because if you did have a problem gambler you would need to deal with exclusion and problems between them and their family. So no gambling on site is always a good one’. Another noted that ‘I’m fully aware that there are staff with problems. We have in-house counselling here, and we are very conscious of it. That’s why we have the no staff gambling policy’.
- **A proactive culture of responsible gambling**, where ‘the way things are now, there’s a lot more policy in place, so management should be more influential in that area anyway. You need to be more responsible as a manager; the practices have opened up the thinking of management’. Another observed ‘all of the information, through Clubs QLD and the government...we fully endorse. We put all the notices up and keep all the cards in the right areas. I think it is important to keep that in people’s minds’. Another noted that ‘I think it has a positive impact on the staff, because we do take it so seriously, and I speak openly about the problem in forums. It can happen to you and to your family. A lot of people don’t take notice of that. Once again I think it is a matter of education’.
- **Training and education courses**. One explained, ‘I think with any management you have to educate the age bracket of your staff. Most of ours are under 30, in gaming, bars and on the floor. So a lot of responsibility falls back on to management to educate on the realities of it all. About 30 per cent are going through their Certificate III and Certificate IV. So we’ve taken a very conscious decision to making it a career based club. We hold a lot more staff that way and it gives them a career path. We’re very active in that all our staff have RSA and RCG and we put new staff back through it if it has lapsed. And they all do first aid as well. All of that has an influence’.
- **Strict management policies**, which ‘do influence staff. And I am pretty strict about staff rules and regulations. You get staff that don’t want to comply, and eventually they leave. That’s where my biggest turnover comes from, telling them they can’t (do this and that), such as coming to work looking scruffy...I think therefore it could influence (their gambling)’.

Reasons given by club managers why management may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff do not mix with management**, as ‘they don’t tend to get involved’.
- **Management policies restrict staff gambling only in workplace**, such that ‘managers can influence them in their own venue, but not others’. Another commented that ‘you can’t gamble there; that’s probably not a bad thing in that it is getting people out of their venue. But...if people are going to gamble they are just going to go to the pub 500 metres up the road’.
- **Management have no interest in or knowledge of what staff do in their own time**, where ‘these days people have to look after their own actions’ and ‘I don’t think it is my job to tell staff what to do in their private lives. It is my job to tell them what to do here’.

7.2.9 Influence of Workplace Stressors

When asked if workplace stressors are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees, the majority (23) of club managers disagreed. Five felt that workplace stressors encourage staff gambling, two felt it discouraged staff from gambling, five thought it could have either influence and nine were non-committal. However, of those 23 who thought that workplace stress was not a risk factor for gaming venue staff, 15 managers thought that an important workplace stress release would be drinking alcohol and in a few cases, smoking cigarettes.

Reasons given by club managers why workplace stressors can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff need to unwind after work**, where ‘yes, possibly they do (gamble to relieve stress). Like these guys that would leave work and go straight to the casino to play the pokies for an hour. That’s maybe why they do it’. Another interviewee noted ‘on occasions, those staff that finish up late might end up in the pokie lounge. I know one of my older staff lives near (another club) and she spends a lot of her time there, possibly gambling’.
- **Staff need to escape from work stresses**. One commented, ‘those sorts of stresses always encourage someone to have a flutter, a bet at the races or go out and have a drink; some sort of escapism. I know I’ll do that once a month’. One other manager noted ‘doing a bit of light gambling, going out and having a few drinks, may be a way of relaxing. Hospitality is synonymous with being big drinkers. I have worked with a number of staff that can’t wait to get on the juice and have a bit of a gamble, or whatever’.
- **Staff want to be left alone**, where ‘if I don’t want to talk to anyone I’ll go and sit down at the pokies. It is probably just an entertainment factor and a “leave me alone”’.
- **Staff can experience stress about difficult customers**, where ‘workplace stresses would probably send them off to play in other venues...such as normal interpersonal stresses. One sees themselves as working harder than the other, in addition to those from the customers’. Another observed that ‘hospitality is a horrible industry in so far as that cliché that the customer is always right, that’s a load of shit as far as I’m concerned...I play the pokies to de-stress, probably because I’m at the forefront of the people who know everything, the ones who want to criticise, chastise, condemn, complain, scrutinise, it all comes to me...I go into the rough pub (in the next suburb) and go straight to the gaming room for time out...as long as there’s a Queen of the Nile I’m laughing’.

Reasons given by club managers why workplace stressors can discourage staff gambling

- **Staff avoid gambling for stress relief**, where ‘I wouldn’t say that playing the pokies was a stress release. You get more stressed; especially if losing’.

Reasons given by club managers why workplace stressors may not influence staff gambling

- **Some staff are trained to better cope with stress**, where ‘with responsible gambling...I think they are more aware of the risks associated with gaming. So I wouldn’t think that the nature of the industry that we work in is that stressful’. Another commented that ‘it again comes back to how you train your staff...If they’ve got issues, and we all do at some point in time, I don’t care if they go out the back and throw chairs around, as long as it is not done in front of house. And I think they all understand that now, more so, they need to learn to separate one from the other’.
- **The work is not stressful**, for example, ‘we may be a little bit unique here, in as much as the comments we’ve had quite often from the staff is that it is a pleasure to come to work

in a place where there isn't a lot of friction'. Another commented that 'to be honest, we don't have a very stressful job...That is why a lot of people do this job, because there is not a lot of stress involved'.

- **Staff de-stress in other ways**, where 'if they have a bad night they'll go out on the drink' and 'stress affects their alcohol intake, not their gambling', and some staff 'de-stress by drinking, or even by going out for karaoke'. Another manager observed 'it is hard to be nice all the time at a bowling club. Older people are more demanding and want service immediately. Drinking is more of a problem than gambling. More people who get stressed turn to alcohol rather than gambling'.
- **Supportive work environment**, where 'it comes back to management, what environment they want their staff to work in. You can see from all the signs around my bar, and what I've bred into my staff is that you're not here to take any abuse from anyone. I will support them 100 per cent. If they decide someone is rude or aggressive or their behaviour is not suitable for here, they go. So the working environment I try to make here is as pleasant and harmonious as we possibly can'.

7.2.10 Influence of Shift work

When club managers were asked about the influence of working the odd hours typical in hospitality, sixteen considered shift work as having no influence upon staff gambling, five felt it encouraged staff gambling, and 14 felt it could either encourage or discourage this, depending on a person's personality, their recreational interests, family ties, age and access to late night venues. Nine interviewees were non-committal on this question.

Reasons given by club managers why shift work can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff can suffer social isolation**, as 'shift workers become quite lonely', so 'when you have Monday–Tuesday off, when a lot of your friends are working Monday to Friday, and you're sitting there by yourself, you might think, well, I'll just go and have a few bets and play the pokies'. Another commented that 'when you are going out by yourself, it is a bit more of a dangerous situation. There is no one there with them; they can say they'll put this bill off until the next week. I've worked with a couple of people at (another club) and they would go out on their day off by themselves, and they'd come back and say, oh God, I blew \$200 yesterday, and I'm short on the rent'.
- **Lack of alternative social opportunities for staff**. One manager said 'I've asked some of my staff, and some of them are affected if it is a Wednesday off. They go down to another club by themselves and gamble. But if they have someone else to do something with, they may do something other than gamble. I suppose it is just a lack of interaction on their days off'.
- **Staff gamble to fill in time between shifts**. For example, 'I think split shifts and finishing late sometimes, when people are wound up and they don't really want to go home, it is something people can do without having any company, it is something they can do on their own', and, 'I could see that split shifts could have an influence'.
- **Staff need to find solitary leisure activities**, like 'I can see now that they're deprived of that normal routine. I'm a good example, I've never played a team sport, because my whole life I have been a shift worker. All mine is individual recreation'. Another related how 'we do get staff from other clubs here. They come individually. Some of them are keen players, at least two from a club nearby'.
- **Staff tend to socialise and gamble with other hospitality workers**. One interviewee gave the example where 'I have a group of friends who work at the casino as dealers, and another group who work at the surf club...waitresses who come here. On their day off

they always go to a venue like this. I'll see 40-50 per cent of them, and at the end of the day, after a bottle of wine, when the conversation has expired, they'll go play the machines'. Another recalled how 'as shift workers we always used to have the same days off, Monday and Tuesday, and come to the pub and drink and maybe gamble'.

Reasons given by club managers why shift work can discourage staff gambling:

- **No gambling venues open after some shifts**, as 'we were a bit out of town, so would have to drive into town (to access a venue)' and 'the lockout is affecting some people. I think that means that when it is over it is over for them'. Another commented that 'the situation we have here is that there is not much else open when we close. And most of the employees do live in the district'.

Reasons given by club managers why shift work may not influence staff gambling:

- **Management strategies to minimise effects of shift work**, such as 'I ensure my staff have one in three weekends off and get day shifts as well as night shifts', and another responded 'we have a four to six week rotating roster to try to give a bit of normality to an extent, with a four day break in there. We are flexible on that too, allowing them to work within school hours, kids and each other, etc. We try to give them ownership back. I think that is why we retain a lot more staff than we used to'.
- **Management strategies to assist staff home**, where 'the rule here is that anyone who finishes after midnight gets a cab home and the club pays'.
- **Older staff have family commitments**, where 'odd hours are different when you have family to go home to, but when you are a single person, and you know another venue is open to 3am, you'd probably go there to unwind'. Further, 'mature staff have families that take them out of that hospitality mindset, that is, married women who get out to playgroups and meet other people. But the shift work and uncertainty can have horrible effects on relationships'.
- **Staff have other hospitality friends to socialise with**, as 'hospitality staff stick together because they have the same days off'.
- **Staff find other activities in their time off**, such as 'the ones that finish during the day, we have a lot of footballers here, and they go off to training' and 'I have a day off during the week, and my friends are all working, what do you do? I get in the garden or go fishing, but it can be a lonely industry'.
- **Staff just want to go home after a shift**, where 'I tend to go home, have a few beers, watch TV and then go to bed' and 'shiftwork doesn't really come into it here – mine are all in bed once it is dark'.

7.2.11 Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions

When club managers were asked about frequent exposure of staff to gambling marketing and promotions being likely to influence their gambling behaviour, nine thought that these encouraged staff gambling, eight felt they were a deterrent, six considered that the influence could go either way, while 15 felt these had no influence at all. Six did not know or did not respond. Seven managers did no marketing or promotions at their club.

Reasons given by club managers why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions can encourage staff gambling:

- **Promotions can act as a trigger**, so 'it could influence staff gambling. It is certainly attractive to see a car, I understand that'. Another interviewee commented, 'I'm sure it probably would. Depends what they're after, a new car, everyone would be after one of

those. Marketing does have that sort of effect’. Another simply commented ‘it probably does. The big promotional things influence gamblers’.

- **Reinforces gambling as way to win money.** One observed ‘it is highly likely it will have an influence (on them going somewhere else to participate in a promotion). I would put that in the same category of Lotto when they have a 30 million dollar jackpot’, and ‘people would certainly be attracted to the big prizes. Promotion certainly increases the gambling attitude’.
- **Raises awareness of jackpot levels,** like ‘I do keep track of the Money Train myself, only because it is in my interest. And when it gets up high, you can see members playing that particular link more. So again, if there is the possibility that staff are gambling, and they are around it more often, then they may be tempted’. Another observed that ‘you do have big jackpots going off in your venue. Even I have watched the jackpots and gone elsewhere to play them...if you go out for dinner somewhere and you see one of those machines, then you will go and have a go on that one. I’m sure the other staff would do the same’. Another commented that ‘we have just put in Money Train. It could encourage them (staff) to go to another venue’ with another specifying that ‘the staff that play here will play linked machines’.

Reasons given by club managers why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff are aware of the low chance of winning promotions.** One commented ‘the staff know what the promotions are all about, what it is and what’s involved, what they are and are not getting, so it doesn’t influence them to gamble’; and ‘it gives them a greater awareness of the odds of winning’. Another gave the example where ‘staff who work in gaming know how many tickets are in the barrel...(it) makes them more aware of how hard it is to win those promotions’.
- **Promotions turn staff off.** One noted ‘when you look at our punters who come in, I think that probably discourages more than encourages’ and ‘no, because we’re around it (promotions) all the time; the last thing you want to do on time off is go anywhere near it’.

Reasons given by club managers why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff are often not allowed to enter workplace promotions,** where ‘any memberships or promotions, the staff aren’t allowed to go into’.
- **Venue does very little gambling marketing and promotions,** where ‘we don’t do any gambling marketing and promotions’, ‘we don’t do any poker machine promotions at the moment’ and ‘we don’t have any linked machines here; it’s too expensive’.
- **Management policies separate staff from marketing and promotions,** where ‘we use independent contractors to do all our promotions. It keeps the staff out of the gaming lounge; they are just doing the basic payouts and hopper fills’. Another observed that ‘up until 18 months ago the staff used to run the promotions and that may have had an impact. Now it all happens through the player rewards system – by points’.
- **Small prizes are not attractive,** such that ‘I don’t think the promotions have influenced the staff since I’ve been here, but my promotions are not that great; they’re pretty low key. The biggest I’ve given away is \$2,000 over a 3-month period’, and, ‘generally the promotions that are run do not have a lot of money on offer or a lot of prizes. Promotions generally have a lot of small giveaways, \$5 or \$10’.

- **Staff don't take much notice of promotions**, as staff 'become blasé to those things. I think if you asked the gaming staff what the keno jackpot was at, they couldn't tell you' and 'gaming staff do become desensitised; it is just their job'.

7.2.12 Influence of Responsible Gambling Training

The club managers were asked whether responsible gambling training is likely to influence staff in their own gambling. The majority of managers (22) thought it would discourage gambling by staff, or at least discourage heavy gambling. Eleven disagreed, saying they felt it would have no effect on staff gambling. Eleven did not give a definite response, some because they and their staff had not completed the training. No one thought that responsible gambling training would encourage staff gambling.

Reasons given by club managers why responsible gambling training can discourage staff gambling:

- **Raises awareness for staff of problem gambling and its signs**, as 'knowledge will always help, give them a realistic grounding of what will go on' and it 'helps them to identify and to understand a little more about it. So yes, it would probably be beneficial'. Another observed 'it is good for helping them recognise signs of problems. The staff have started feeding information on player behaviour back to me since the legislation came in' and another that 'training probably influences their behaviour; they're probably much more aware of what to look for'.
- **Raises awareness for staff of the effects of problem gambling**, where 'I'm sure it highlights some of the sad stories out there...I had a lady from RA (Relationships Australia) come in here and, while we love our jobs and we love our customers, we all walked out of here and felt really low, really sad, with our heads hung low. Some of the horrific stories that were told were quite sad'. Another commented that 'the training the staff do get is adequate enough just to make them think about gambling. If you do it, then this is what going to happen to you, if you don't do it, then you have more money in the bank'.
- **Raises awareness for staff of the poor odds in gambling**. One commented 'most of the staff have done RCG and we do a lot of in-house stuff ourselves. We take new staff down and pull a machine apart, and show them the forms and tell them the return to player is 85 per cent but that doesn't always happen. It has a positive influence on their own gambling, and we do it for that simple reason, so that it is not a grey area for them, so they are wide awake to what is going on. But we make them aware (of the odds). I think it is so important to do that with the young and people that are easily influenced', and 'it makes them stop and think'.

Reasons given by club managers why responsible gambling training may not influence staff gambling:

- **Training may not be done because it is voluntary**, for example, 'I have done my RSG. The other employees have not done it as yet. The other full timer is about to, and the other casuals only work here four or five hours a week, so they probably won't'. Another noted that 'the staff haven't done it (training), that I know of' and another that 'we haven't done any, but will organise it soon'.
- **Training may not be done due to other difficulties**, or 'just through the difficulty of getting it done. I would like to get all the permanents done, and all the key staff trained up. The difficulty relates to timing and getting all the staff here when they're not at uni'.
- **May not encourage staff to reflect on their own gambling**, as 'those who gamble still gamble. Those who don't gamble, don't gamble. I don't think it has affected it one way or

the other’. Another provided the example, ‘I have done my RCG. The other employees have not done it as yet...I don’t think it really affected my gambling. With our group, about 20 of us, all we wanted to do was go and play the pokies after it. I don’t know why! There were 20 of us, and I reckon there were 15 of us playing the pokies after’.

- **Training was not engaging.** One observed ‘I don’t think so; I think they think half of these things are a bloody joke’ and another that ‘in my opinion, I’ve been to many many courses over the years, but not many of them have impacted on the direction of my life. It all comes down to staff that go through those courses recognise it as an expectation of their employer. Whether they align that to their own personal life, I would doubt that very much’. Further, it is ‘a load of rubbish. I’m taking my staff to another course next week, the ones that haven’t done it. I went to a seminar up here, at the (named) hotel, and it was the greatest load of hogwash’. Another commented that the training ‘is not talking about gambling amounts of money, it’s talking about how much you get fined’.
- **People may be in denial about their own gambling,** where staff think problem gambling ‘is about other people’, and ‘there are some people who are at risk, and it doesn’t matter what is placed in front of them, or what we do, some people just won’t be reached...There is so much talked about gambling and gaming, that if they are going to do it, they tend to hide it, they don’t want to do it in front of the boss – that’s what I’ve seen’. Another noted ‘it probably does open their eyes to the probability of not winning, but whether it stops people or not, that is a different story. You can give people all the information under the sun, but it is their choice’.

7.2.13 Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures

When asked about the influence of other responsible gambling measures, 16 club managers considered that the responsible gambling measures discouraged staff gambling, or at least heavy gambling. Eleven considered the measures to have no influence, while a large group (17) did not know or were non-committal. No one thought these measures encourage staff gambling.

Reasons given by club managers why responsible gambling measures can discourage staff gambling:

- **Measures raise awareness of gambling problems,** where ‘the signs, etc. make them more aware. They’re putting it (responsible gambling literature) out as well, a lot of our staff, so they take notice quite consistently’ and ‘it drives home some of the problems out there. All the figures on the probability of winning really hit home. Signage, posters, beer coasters etc.; it sinks into staff, it is drummed into them’.
- **Measures can trigger problem recognition,** where ‘staff who will be influenced by it would be the people who had an existing problem’.
- **Staff involvement in self-exclusion of patrons deters staff from gambling,** ‘because they see at close hand what heavy gambling does. We’ve had several people self exclude themselves, and that really does affect you’.

Reasons given by club managers why responsible gambling measures may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff don’t look at signage and/or are sceptical about them,** as ‘people don’t read the signs’ and ‘basically, we have on the back of the toilet doors: “Are you gambling with more than your money?” I think staff do see it, but they probably don’t take a great deal of notice’. Another commented that ‘I don’t think it matters to the staff. I’ve never seen any staff member read one. When the new ones come in I have a read through it, but have

never seen one of my staff read it' and 'we have all the signage up, but if I was to ask a staff member when they last read it, I'd probably get a blank look'.

- **Signs are aimed at patrons not staff**, so 'I don't think the other RG strategies help staff think about their own gambling. I think it is just background noise. They have to make sure the brochures are there and propped up, but whether it is a responsible gambling brochure or a come to bowls next Saturday, I don't think it matters to the staff'.

7.2.14 Influence of Other Aspects of the Work Environment

Several additional points were raised in response to the question of whether other aspects of the work environment (not already discussed) are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees.

Reasons given by club managers why other aspects of the work environment can encourage staff gambling:

- **Some staff drink large quantities of alcohol**, where 'it's a real drinking culture, it catches them all. It is so easy to get on the slops. Once you've had too much to drink you lose control of yourself and go to the gambling room. I know if I have a skin full, I will go to the pokies and empty my wallet' and 'it probably comes back to the alcohol side of things'.
- **Some staff have the opportunity to bet on credit**. For example 'a nearby hotel had a staff member bet \$3,000 on the TAB, and when they called to check he answered the phone and said it was okay. Eventually, he scampered with \$23,000'. Another observed that 'keno is the worst for credit betting (and) I had a young fellow credit betting on the TAB'. Another said 'TAB gambling is different, I've seen staff, a young fellow with potential, working alone and isolated, gamble on credit. I had to call the police (at another venue)'.
- **Staff have access to cash**, and 'it's a known fact that if you are a problem gambler that is the worst thing in the world: access to cash'. Additionally, five of the club managers paid their staff in cash and 13 would allow their staff to have a cash advance on their pay, given a legitimate reason or an emergency. Most managers paid their staff by direct deposit into their bank accounts, although these are easy to access via the ATMs in venues.
- **Low wages of some staff**, so 'a lot of hospitality workers are in the lower income. If you don't have money, you want to try and get money. So your gamblers are either: a) you've got so much money you don't care, or, b) you've got no money and you need to get more as quick as you can. So being on a lower type salary or wage, you are at more risk'.
- **Some problem gamblers are attracted to the industry**. One interviewee gave the following example: 'two people with (gambling) problems brought them with them, but they'd been in hospitality a few times...In one case it started to affect their work here, they were calling in sick and we found out they were somewhere else. It becomes a problem to an extent where they are calling in sick or trying to borrow money, and it was only for gambling. Luckily they were able to get help and got out of the industry, which helped them immensely'.
- **Staff receive gratuities from patrons which draws attention to gambling wins**, where 'big punters have a win and like to give tips - \$100 tips' and 'we had to speak to a staff member recently about gratuities, mainly (from) the high rollers'.
- **Reluctance to expose problems due to embarrassment and/or fear of job loss**, where 'they could be embarrassed that they've got a problem, so it would be a little bit difficult. I'd be more comfortable speaking to a friend than to a boss' and 'I really think that people

are really secretive about it too. I don't think any of our employees would ever be upfront; they'd be very fragile to do that'.

- **Employees cannot gamble at the workplace so a problem might go undetected**, and if staff were allowed 'to gamble here, I might be able to pick up on their gambling habits and address them'.

7.2.15 At Risk Status of Hospitality Staff

Club managers were asked whether they think that hospitality staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems. Twenty-three managers answered 'no', saying that hospitality staff are no more at-risk than the general population. They supported their opinions with comments like 'it is more of a deterrent I think, because you see it head on', and 'no, because they're probably more educated than most of them as to what people actually win or lose'. Seventeen managers answered 'yes', commenting that 'yes, I think they are, because we've got the biggest exposure to it' and 'yes, they'd have to be, because of the time they spend on the gaming floor'. Four managers couldn't decide either way, noting things like 'well yes and no, there is no real black and white answer, because I don't understand what triggers it'.

7.3 HOTEL MANAGERS

This section summarises the responses given by the 27 hotel managers we interviewed to questions about their workplace, their staff and staff gambling, and about whether various aspects of their work environment are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees. For each question we asked about the influence of workplace factors on staff gambling, the number of respondents who felt that each factor encourages gambling, discourages gambling, either or both (depending on the circumstances), or has no influence, are presented. A few respondents did not directly answer all questions or were non-committal, so these responses are categorised as 'don't know/no response'. Reasons each factor was perceived to encourage and discourage staff gambling are then summarised in point form, along with some indicative quotations from the interviews.

7.3.1 Gaming Facilities and Their contribution to Business

The hotel managers administered a broad range of gaming facilities, from some with just five gaming machines to those with the maximum of 40 gaming machines plus multiple TAB outlets, keno outlets, raffles and trade promotions. All hotels had gaming machines and, on average, these managers were in charge of 28 gaming machines. Managers of 15 hotels had TAB agencies and those managing 16 hotels had keno outlets. Most hotels held raffles for charity or sports clubs at least once a week. The larger hotels offered all gaming facilities and opportunities permitted under legislation, while small venues just had a few gaming machines. The contribution from gaming to organisational profit ranged from very low (1 per cent) to high (75 per cent). However, not every person answered this question with a figure. Some described their gaming contribution as being 'very important' to being 'a good part of the business...but I wouldn't like to say' and 'somewhere in between a little and a lot'. These descriptive terms were not able to be quantified.

7.3.2 Number of Staff, Number of Gaming Staff and Staff Turnover

Hotel managers employed a wide range of staff numbers, from six to about 146 staff. On average, these managers employed five full time and 24 part-time and/or casual staff. They worked in functional areas of gaming, bars, nightclubs, kitchens, restaurants, catering, functions, bottle shop, retail, housekeeping, grounds, cleaning and security.

Similar to the clubs, in small venues the staff were multi-functional; most were engaged in looking after gaming operations plus other areas. In large venues, dedicated gaming staff

managed and operated the gaming function. The average number of staff carrying out some gaming duties was eight people, employed on full-time, part-time or casual bases.

Staff turnover ranged from high to low and was almost equally divided. Slightly more than half (14) the hotel managers reported low turnover while the balance (13) reported high turnover. Staff turnover was low where staff were mostly local and high where the population was very transient. Staff turnover was mixed where backpackers or tertiary students were employed as casuals. One person said 'we don't have a big staff turnover, except for our backpackers that work three month intervals', while another noted 'staff turnover is very low. We maybe go through 15 a year, mainly because they finish their degree or move on. A lot of our staff we've had for a very long time'.

7.3.3 Extent of Staff Gambling

When asked if staff could gamble on site, during a work break or on their days off, there were two almost equally divided responses. First, 14 managers said that no staff could gamble on the premises at any time. Second, 13 managers said that staff with gaming licenses were banned from gambling under legislation, but that other hotel staff could gamble providing it was out of work hours and in most cases, out of uniform. Most out of hours gambling was TAB betting, but some mentioned keno and gaming machine use as well.

There were a few interesting comments about contractors and punters' clubs. One manager noted 'the chef does have a few bets every now and then. But then again, he's not one of my staff – he's leased out the kitchen and he runs it separately', and 'as far as TAB goes, there is no set rule, but the house rule is they need to be off duty. About half the staff we have would put a bet on over a 4 week period. The two girls that work in the TAB are involved in the punters' club, but on rotation everyone gets a turn. We're not doing too well at the moment. But I rang some of the punters from my last pub, and asked them to call on Saturday and give us some tips, and we did okay'.

Managers were also asked whether they knew if staff gambled at other venues, who they gambled with, how often and what forms of gambling were preferred. The majority, 17 managers, thought that some of their staff would gamble at other venues, one disagreed and nine didn't know. The most popular gambling activities mentioned were betting on horse racing at the TAB, casino games, gaming machines, keno and punters' clubs. One manager said 'some would and some wouldn't. It would just depend on where you are going and if you are going out as a group. I've got a couple of girls who like to play the pokies and they talk about it. You might find 20-25 per cent of the staff go out to other venues and gamble on their days off. It seems to be an industry thing that you go and see what other venues are like, go and check out the machines. Quite often I'll hear the guys talking about the RSL, what new machines they have. They might go once a week or once a month'. Another reported 'anecdotally, maybe 20 per cent of staff gamble at other venues – quite a few staff go to the casino in their leisure time after their work. They finish about midnight and go there. The pokies are popular and the younger ones might go to city hotels which cater for them and close about 3 or 4am'. Another commented that 'I know a few people that play keno. There would probably be two or three that will play the pokies on their days off. A bit like myself, I come in here on a Saturday with the boys and have a few bets. A few blokes live down near (one of the large hotels), so they bet there. If I go out for dinner or something, I might have a bet. There's a few of us that go to the casino, about ½ a dozen of us, that play roulette and blackjack. A few of the boys play Reef Routine, like poker'.

The nine managers who said that they did not know if staff gambled at other venues, made comments like 'I couldn't tell you if they gamble at other venues' and, 'I doubt it but don't really know'. One said 'I honestly don't know. I'd presume they probably do. That's only a presumption, I don't ask them, and they don't tell me. One of the girls has a little interest in a

greyhound, so I dare say she has a little bet on her greyhound. But that is only a presumption, I don't know. One of the guys who started a few weeks ago, he owns a couple of racehorses that are quite successful. So I'd presume they bet on their own horses, but regarding keno or the pokies, I wouldn't know'.

Of interest was one manager's comment about staff gambling on a lottery. This manager said 'all the staff here are sportsmen and fairly young, they don't fit the profile (of gamblers). The staff put money into a US New York lottery, \$40 every 6 months'.

7.3.4 Management Approaches to Gambling Problems Amongst Staff

When asked if the venue had any mechanisms to alert staff to risks of problem gambling amongst themselves or other staff, the hotel managers gave very mixed responses. Only one had formally raised the issue, in staff meetings, while a further four managers felt that the responsible gambling training and measures were sufficient mechanisms to alert staff to potential risks. The remainder had not talked to staff at all about the issue.

The managers were also asked what they would do if a staff member revealed that they had a gambling problem. Nearly all said that they would suggest counselling, six noted they would also suggest self-exclusion, and eight said they would consider moving the person to a non-gaming position in the venue. Six noted they would be concerned about the person handling cash and so would increase their security mechanisms around that person. The difficulties of terminating employment with unfair dismissal laws were also raised by numerous interviewees.

7.3.5 Close Interaction with Gamblers

When asked whether they thought that close interaction with gamblers is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees, the hotel managers gave varied responses. While 14 managers thought that this interaction encouraged staff to gamble, seven of these 14 thought it would influence all types of gambling and the other seven (of the 14) felt that it would only influence TAB betting. Six hotel managers thought that close interaction with gamblers deterred staff from gambling, two considered that it would have no influence and five felt that close interactions with gamblers could have either a positive or negative influence, depending on the person and their circumstances.

Reasons given by hotel managers why close interaction with gamblers can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff hear about wins more than losses**, as 'you do hear about the wins more than the losses. If you are in that sort of environment where there is gambling everyday, you are going to witness and be involved in them winning and losing. I can see the reactions'. Another observed that staff 'are creatures of habit. They do what they see. Between staff and patrons and their wins and losses, there are frequent conversations. You have a different type of punter down at the TAB. The only time you will hear about losses from the TAB punter is when it is substantial'.
- **Seeing people win creates hope of winning**. As one explained, 'I think if people see others have a big win on the pokies, they think it could be them, and would be more likely to do it...With the students, who are casual, if there is a chance for easy money, they will have a go. With hospitality staff, they may not get the shifts that they want, and gambling is probably a little more prevalent because they see it as maybe getting a little bit of extra money'. Another noted that 'if you are surrounded with people who are happy and winning, then that does create a little bit more of an environment where people are thinking, well it could be me'.

- **Staff constantly hear about gambling and are given ‘hot tips’**, for example, ‘when you’ve got the TAB, you’ve got more interaction, whereas the pokie punter is focused on the screen in front of them. In that regard they’d probably be more inclined to have a go on the TAB than gaming’. Another noted, ‘someone says I’ve got a tip for you...It’s probably the horses or the keno more, I would think’. Another observed that ‘there are blokes that come in, have had a call from down south, this horse in this race, so you put \$10 on it in the off chance that it will get off. A lot of the boys in the bottle shop get tips from the taxi drivers that come through. I don’t think pokies or keno (work the same). On a poker machine, you can’t really tell how the form is’. Another observed, ‘TAB would be easier to get caught up in than gaming machines. The machines only pay out in cycles...I’ve worked in the TAB and somebody has always said “I’ve got a hot tip”’.

Reasons given by hotel managers why close interaction with gamblers can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff see heavy gamblers and don’t want to be like them**, as ‘it stops them. Most gamblers are very impatient people. They can be very abrupt’, and ‘for me it is a turn off’. Another commented ‘a lot of them are a lot more responsible, because you’re dealing with the public, with the gamblers, and you don’t want to go down that track’, and ‘they see it, the young ones are turned off. I can’t understand why it doesn’t turn them off drinking’.
- **Staff see or hear about the losses**, such as, ‘seeing big losses – that would be just as likely to deter. I think. With the people we’ve got here, it is more of a deterrent. A lot of them are battlers, making ends meet’, and ‘no, if anything it is a discouragement, seeing people there losing their money’.
- **Staff see the amount of money patrons spend on gambling**, where ‘they see the money they put through them’, and further, ‘staff are well aware of what is being spent. In fact it would discourage them from gambling’, and ‘staff can guess how much they spend by the change they give out’.

Reasons given by hotel managers why close interaction with gamblers may have no influence on staff gambling:

- **Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway**, so ‘I wouldn’t think so – if you have an addictive personality, perhaps’, ‘people only see what they want to see’ and ‘I think if you have the make up to gamble you will’.
- **Some staff have little interaction with gamblers**, where ‘the bar staff have no interaction, the gaming staff get all of it’.

7.3.6 Frequent Exposure to Gambling

Responses were mixed when hotel managers were asked whether they thought that frequent exposure to gambling in the workplace is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees. Six managers thought that frequent exposure to gambling encouraged staff to gamble, 12 thought it deterred them from gambling, seven felt it could influence them in either of these ways, one thought that it would have no influence and one was undecided.

Reasons given by hotel managers why frequent exposure to gambling can encourage staff gambling:

- **Increases staff familiarity with gambling**, such as ‘I didn’t start playing the pokies until I started working with them. So I think you are familiar with it’, and ‘we have a few experienced gaming machine people here, and they know how they work, and they might put \$20 through a week’.

- **Increases staff interest in gambling.** One commented that ‘staff...can use the TAB. It is mainly the people that actually work there that have an interest. Other staff don’t understand how to take a bet or put one on’. Another noted that ‘I never played a gaming machine until 3 months ago, and now do because of my position as manager here’. Similarly, another manager recalled that ‘I started punting because I managed a hotel with a TAB’ and another that ‘working in this environment could have an influence. I didn’t get into horse racing until I joined (a chain hotel) group. The place before that didn’t have a TAB’.
- **Normalises gambling for staff,** where ‘being exposed to it can definitely have that effect’, as ‘it definitely normalises gambling’, and further, ‘Sure, for some people it would be having the effect of normalising gambling for staff’. Another commented that ‘it does normalise it. You are expected to sit there and watch people gambling and interact with them, and treat them in such a manner that, it is a service you are providing. When you are around it all day, you think it is nothing’.
- **Staff may have ready access to gambling,** such as one manager who was ‘working with the TAB, something I’d never been exposed to before, and we were allowed to bet outside work hours, and I found myself putting on bets just for fun...So I think when you have access to that sort of thing, after work or whatever, having a little bit of a punt...’.
- **Staff are surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere,** by which ‘all that hype gets people excited, that feeling of a win’, and, ‘of course the bells and whistles when they go off are designed to get your attention. And you go, old Mary over there has just picked up \$500. And we know, because we go and pay her’.
- **New or younger staff can be vulnerable.** One observed that ‘I think it totally depends on the person, whether they have strong family and friends around them. Someone who has moved interstate might be more tempted to go with a group of people to a hotel or club’.

Reasons given by hotel managers why frequent exposure to gambling can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff can become sick of being around gambling and the gambling environment,** where ‘for some of them it has lowered their interest. And some of the staff that I want to train in the gambling area, who open the bar, they want nothing to do with it, they don’t like it’. Another noted ‘I want to get away from it, the bings and bangs, and the smoking environment’, and further, ‘I think it turns them off more than on, especially gaming staff. When you finish the last thing you want to do is go and sit in another small smoky room’, and further, ‘I think staff see (the gaming room) as a boring little room. They don’t want to sit in there’.
- **Staff have better knowledge of the odds of losing,** such as, ‘it can go the other way, where you see people coming in wasting their money on the machine. I find that is more of an influence on my staff’, and it influences them in a negative way, makes them think twice about how they spend their own money’.

Reasons given by hotel managers why frequent exposure to gambling may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff become immune to any influence,** where gambling is ‘just a commodity’.

7.3.7 Influence of Fellow Employees

Hotel managers were asked whether they thought that fellow employees are likely to influence the gambling activities of gaming venue employees. Three hotel managers thought that this can and does occur, two felt that other staff can either encourage or discourage staff to gamble, while two thought fellow employees are more likely to deter other staff from

gambling. The majority (20) felt that fellow employees influence staff in their socialising and drinking, but not very much in their gambling.

Reasons given by hotel managers why fellow employees can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff gamble together after work**, where ‘you might get together for a drink after work and have a flutter together on the races’, and ‘if the vast majority of the group wants to go to the casino, then we’d probably go with them. It does happen here occasionally, but we’re probably more drinkers’.
- **Staff directly encourage other staff to gamble**. For example, ‘people will always influence other people. If you have someone who really does enjoy it, and say they are going to go down and play (they) ask who is going to come with me?... People are easily influenced. If you finish at 5am and everyone else is going to do it, then you might think, fair enough’.
- **Staff introduce other staff to gambling**. One explained, ‘I’ve been to places, TABs, that you can have a gamble as a staff member. And I think if you weren’t a gambler before you worked there, you would be after, whether you had a problem or not. So I believe that the actions of others can have an effect’.
- **Staff gamble together on days off**, where ‘some of them are quite close, have been here for nearly six or seven years. There is probably a group of five who at some stage over the month will go out for a night... They go nightclubbing or a little bit of pokies’.

Reasons given by hotel managers why fellow employees can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff provide support or advice to stop gambling**. For example, ‘there is one guy here who gambles – if he puts \$20 through the other staff bag him out, and tell him it is a losing proposition’, and ‘if you have someone who is really against it, there is a good chance that they are going to turn others off it too’.
- **Friends from work want to avoid gambling venues**, where ‘they do socialise a lot together; it’s a very tight crew. They come here because it is a nice pub to come to, and it is busy. But they also go to restaurants for dinner. When they finish work they’ll all go to the (nearby) bar, which is open to 2am. On Monday nights they go to the hospitality nights. When we have new staff come in, there’s always someone who will take them for a drive and show them different parts, up north and south, which is great’. Another noted that ‘we get together quite regularly, because we don’t open on Sundays, but there is not much gambling going on’.

Reasons given by hotel managers why fellow employees may not influence staff gambling:

- **Staff prefer not to socialise together**, where ‘they don’t socialise much together. I’ve got big age differences here’, and, ‘I don’t think they socialise much... because of the different people... three of them live on the south side, three on the north side’.
- **Staff socialise by going out to drink instead**, as ‘I think we’re probably more drinkers than gamblers’ and ‘the staff go to the casino after work for a drink, that is all’. Another explained that ‘they go out together, but they might go out to drink and dance, to the nightclubs. A few of them go down to the casino, but they go with each other to see a band, at the pub’.
- Staff do not socialise together because of family responsibilities, where ‘the older ones will go home to their husband and kids’.

- **Some staff finish work alone**, where ‘the sorts of places where everyone knocks off after work on a Friday night and then goes out at the same time don’t exist any more. Now you get one or two knocking off at once, not a whole bunch’.
- **No peer pressure to gamble or this is resisted**, as ‘I haven’t seen them influencing each other’. Another commented that ‘most people in hospitality you could split into two groups: the leaders and the followers. The leaders are smart enough to know it’s not a good thing and the followers are influenced not so much by other staff members, but by other social groups’.

7.3.8 Influence of Gambling Venue Managers

Hotel managers were asked whether their policies and practices are likely to influence staff gambling. The majority (21) commented on the role of a ‘no gambling in the workplace policy’ as being an important discouragement for staff, one manager felt that management had no influence over staff gambling, three thought that it could go either way depending on the manager and two didn’t know.

Reasons given by hotel managers why management can encourage staff gambling:

- **Managers allow staff to gamble in the workplace.** One explained, ‘I think you can absolutely influence staff. My simple house policy (no staff gambling in the workplace)...would decrease gambling. Staff were having a bet before work, and there was a bit of moodiness happening. Whether it was related to that or not, but I thought, this (policy) will eliminate something, one of the possibilities. By putting that in you’re going to decrease the gambling. There’s very little gambling after work (now)’.
- **Managers are sometimes gamblers and set a bad example.** One noted that ‘I personally refuse to gamble if I am with the staff, just to set an example...You have to restrain yourself’, and ‘when the managers run amok then staff run amok. The policy here helps the staff out’. Another noted that ‘for workplace health and safety, company policy is that when they finish work they can only have one drink and they must pay for it. They must be out of uniform or have a jacket over their work shirt. You’ll find a lot of the private owner operators don’t do it like that. They are big drinkers and big punters’.
- **Workplace has a gambling culture**, as ‘venue managers do vary. Some like to have a bet, probably the horses. The TAB is the most popular for a hotel manager. That is the only form of gambling I partake in. That’s the thing, to be a manager you are almost forced into these kinds of things – having a drink with the patrons when you knock off, being in the punters club, the football tipping club. Our policy is the staff aren’t allowed but the managers are, as a PR exercise. Otherwise the customers think we are rude. That is probably where a lot of the managers start to gamble’, and ‘if everything is geared towards gaming, then I think they can (be influenced to gamble)’.
- **Gambling can be a job requirement.** As one explained, ‘you need some sort of interest in it, otherwise you don’t know how to explain very simple rules of how to put a bet on keno or in the poker machine area, so you do need to know a lot about gambling. You need to be a gambler yourself’. Similarly, another recalled that ‘The other part of the training is keno, and you must know how to use a keno machine... They teach you how to use a gaming machine, and if you didn’t know about them in the first place, you wouldn’t be exposed to that. So when it comes down to actually going out to a venue, you’ve actually been introduced to it in training. Same as with TAB’.

Reasons given by hotel managers why management can discourage staff gambling:

- **A policy of no staff gambling in the workplace**, so ‘the no gambling rule removes the temptation and protects the staff’. Another speculated that ‘if we did allow them to

gamble, then they would', and 'obviously the fact that they're not allowed to play the machines or keno here; it is a specific thing though, because it doesn't mean that they are not going to go somewhere else. But they have to make the effort to get there. Because, we allow our staff to drink here, so the majority of them do. If they had to go and drink somewhere else to drink then they would probably play the pokies there'.

- **A proactive culture of responsible gambling**, where 'I don't have a gambling culture here at all amongst the staff. I could, but I don't think they've got too much spare money...if I wanted to start a punters club, I don't think I'd get too much response'.

Reasons given by hotel managers why management may have no influence on staff gambling:

- **Management do not try to influence staff**, where 'I don't say you can't gamble in the hotel, but I also don't say that everyone should go and put \$20 in the machine. You don't influence them in any way'.
- **Management policies restrict staff gambling only in workplace**, so 'I've seen managers step outside their own venues, and be massive gamblers' and 'it doesn't stop them walking across the street or going down the road; they just can't play where they work'.
- Management have no interest in or knowledge of what staff do in their own time, where 'what they do outside of work, that is entirely up to them'.

7.3.9 Influence of Workplace Stressors

When asked if workplace stressors are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees, four managers considered stress would encourage staff gambling, two felt it would discourage this, and two felt it could do either. The largest group (16) felt that workplace stress would have no influence on staff gambling, while three didn't know. However, of those 16 who thought that workplace stress was not a risk factor for gaming venue staff, seven thought that an important workplace stress release would be drinking alcohol and in a few cases, going to a nightclub.

Reasons given by hotel managers why workplace stressors can encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff need to unwind after work**, where, 'I guess if you've had a bad day you could get carried away and yes, this could happen, you could gamble too much. I've heard of this', and 'the stress could affect them. I don't socialise too much with them, but they will probably get on the booze, maybe go and have a punt', and further, 'when they've finished work, they have a drink, have a gamble, it is their time. I do see a lot of hospitality workers do that'. Another commented that 'a lot of staff might go out after work to unwind, and this possibly drives them to a gaming venue'.
- **Staff can experience stress about difficult customers**, as in 'yes, there are workplace stressors that can influence people's gambling, just general run of the mill stuff. If the customer is having a good day or a bad day, that can come cross the bar. The only thing that can keep things up is the style of management. If you've got a mongrel manager and a mongrel customer, you've pretty much going to have a mongrel day', and 'from personal experience it does get to you a bit, trying to be polite 24/7 wears thin after a while. In my experience it is pretty hard to have a big smile on your face...'
- **Staff want to be left alone**, where 'they don't want to interact with people, because they do it every day. They would rather just sit in the corner and have a beer, a cigarette and a punt on a machine where they don't have to talk to anybody. That is where the problem starts. It is entertainment on your own', and 'some people find more solitude in a room full of people'.

- **Staff have to leave their workplace soon after the end of a shift.** For example, ‘there are other venues around here where the staff have to be off premise within 15 minutes after they finish their shift. A few of those employees come here and play the gaming machines (to relax)’, and ‘it is difficult to knock off work at 12.30 and find somewhere to have a different conversation...When you’re pumped up and you’ve had a big night, you need somewhere to go. I guess casinos are not just a gambling Mecca, but there are some nice trendy bars in there. But you only have to walk out of the room and there are 50 roulette tables there’.

Reasons given by hotel managers why workplace stressors can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff can be deterred by stress about difficult customers,** where ‘I think it is the opposite. If they are losing money, people get rude and narky. It deters the staff. Gaming customers are older here – it is seen by staff as being an older person’s pursuit, from boredom from retirement. Again, this deters the staff’ and ‘it gets to the point for some staff over a period of time, saying, ‘if I was out, I wouldn’t act like that lady’.

Reasons given by hotel managers why workplace stressors may have no influence on staff gambling:

- **The work is not stressful,** such that it is ‘one of the easiest jobs in the world – if someone annoys you, you throw them out’ and ‘those stress factors are not high here’ and ‘I don’t think the stress of working at the bar is too great, I think it is more enjoyable. I say to the staff that you are at work to have fun’.
- **Staff de-stress in other ways,** where ‘I think stress is more of an influence on staff drinking, rather than gambling; they’ll have a few drinks here to unwind’ and ‘I think hospitality people just go and get drunk’.
- **Stress would not influence non-gamblers to gamble,** where ‘I don’t think those stresses influence staff in their gambling. I’ve been through all that, and I don’t turn around and gamble’.

7.3.10 Influence of Shift work

When hotel managers were asked about the influence of working the odd hours typical in hospitality, 12 disagreed that shift work is likely to influence staff gambling, six agreed that shift work is likely to influence staff gambling, three thought that shift work has no influence, one didn’t know and five felt it could go either way, depending on a person’s personality, their recreation interests, family ties, age and access to late night venues.

Reasons given by hotel managers why shift work is likely to encourage staff gambling:

- **Staff can suffer social isolation,** as implied by the hotel manager who noted that ‘out of my problem gamblers, three of those would be casino staff. They finish their shift, and they come straight over...You can bet your bottom dollar that when I open at 11am, most of my patrons will be casino staff. They will gamble right up to five minutes before the start of their shift. There are dealers, supervisors, some are cleaning and hotel staff. It’s very broad. I think that they have got a lot of issues’.
- **Lack of alternative social opportunities for staff,** where ‘it’s not like you can finish work, go to a café and have a coffee. I think people doing night work are more inclined to go out, especially when you have other staff working with you. I couldn’t tell you how many people go out deliberately to the casino to play, but if you are going to the casino you all have a drink and you might wander into the pokie room. So you are either going there to gamble, or you will do it while you are out’.

- **Lack of alternative recreational opportunities for staff.** For example, one commented 'I work weekends at the moment, so to have days off during the week it is a lot quieter...and there is limited recreational things to do during the day'.
- **Only gambling venues are open late at night**, where 'we close at 2am and staff are out at 4am. The casino is the only place you can get into after 3am in the morning. The only place where people can go all over Brisbane. This also happened at the Gold Coast'. Another commented that 'I would say hours of work definitely influence them. I think the later employees work, the more chance they are going to gamble. Just for the sheer fact that most of the places that are open have gaming in them. They are all gambling and alcohol related'.
- **Staff tend to socialise with other hospitality workers**, where 'on days off they go off and let their hair down, have a few drinks and gamble. The young ones go to the nightclub to drink. The older ones go to the club to gamble and drink'.

Reasons given by hotel managers why shift work is likely to discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff might go out less**, as 'we trade until midnight during the week and until 2 am on weekends, and there is nowhere else open when they finish'. Another commented that 'they are limited to when they can do it. They will sleep most of the day, and then get up to come to work. Weekends they are working when their friends are out. I think it would be worse if you worked 9-5, having the weekend to play'.

Reasons given by hotel managers why shift work may have no influence on staff gambling:

- **Staff find other activities in their time off**, where 'I don't think the hours affect people; they are the hours of hospitality. If you don't like them, I don't think it is going to turn you to gambling. We are doing what everyone else does on their weekends; they go and have a drink. Just because our weekend is a Tuesday and Wednesday, I don't think it makes you go and gamble'. Similarly, another said 'just because I work nights or weekends, I don't think that has any effect. Because usually your days off...if it's a beautiful day, I think I should get out on the golf course'.
- **Management strategies to minimise effects of shift work**, where 'staff here are generally happy with their hours as they mostly choose to work the hours they do. Here we can swap hours and days if something comes up that they need to do'. Another noted that 'I've got it so my fulltime staff work one Sunday then get one Sunday off. I want people to have a life outside of work. They do a day shift then a night shift...I've designed it so that people can't get burnt out here'.
- **Older staff have family commitments**, so 'I wouldn't say so. Because late at night if they have got family to go home to, they'll pack up and go home'.

7.3.11 Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions

When hotel managers were asked about frequent exposure of staff to gambling marketing and promotions being likely to influence their gambling behaviour, 19 felt that this frequent exposure discourages staff gambling, three felt it was an encouraging influence, three felt that it could go either way and two thought that it would have no influence. Most staff were not allowed to participate in gaming promotions.

Reasons given by hotel managers why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions can encourage staff gambling:

- **Promotions act as a trigger**, as 'I feel that gaming venues shouldn't be allowed to have incentives – to give away cars, etc. that lure people...I am anti-promotions; it plays on the

gullible members of the community’, and ‘we don’t do any at all...employees are exposed to it a lot more in (larger venues), and I think that has an influence’.

- **Reinforces gambling as a way to win money**, where ‘it definitely does affect people, because it’s something for nothing’, and ‘casino staff (amongst our patrons) have a high participation rate when the jackpot is high for linked systems. It is a logical investment (for them)’, and further, ‘for some people who want to win the car or the big jackpot, the big prize, it could be a factor’.
- **Raises awareness of jackpot levels**, so ‘maybe for the state wide link, that would have an impact, but they would still need to go somewhere else (to play)’.

Reasons given by hotel managers why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff are aware of the low chance of winning promotions**. For example, ‘they know what this is all about. Because we know how the machines work and how promotions work, they know how it works and what the hotel makes out of this’, and ‘it wouldn’t affect staff, because most of the time they know how it works, they know the mechanics’.
- **Promotions turn staff off**, as ‘you get sick of them more than anything else’, and ‘we have promotions every other day. Personally, I don’t think it influences their own gambling. If hospitality staff do that for their work, the last thing they want to do is do that while they are out’.

Reasons given by hotel managers why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions may have no influence on staff gambling:

- **Promotions are not attractive to the age group**, because for ‘a 25 year old girl, if it is a free toaster on offer at the end of it, she is not going to go for it’.
- **Staff are often not allowed to enter workplace promotions**, as in ‘staff can’t go in any competitions or promotions here’ and ‘so they’d have to go somewhere else if that appealed to them’.
- Staff who are not gamblers would not be influenced, as ‘they are not a gambling mob’.
- **Venue does very little gambling marketing and promotions**, such as ‘we don’t do any’ and ‘we have not done a lot but will start doing some now because everyone does’.
- **Staff don’t take much notice of promotions**, as ‘it is just a job. It goes straight through to the keeper’.

7.3.12 Influence of Responsible Gambling Training

The hotel managers were asked whether responsible gambling training is likely to influence staff in their own gambling. The majority of managers (21) thought it would discourage gambling by staff, three disagreed saying they felt it would have no influence on staff gambling while three thought that it could influence people either way.

Reasons given by hotel managers why responsible gambling training can discourage staff gambling:

- **Raises awareness for staff of problem gambling and its signs**, for example, ‘we encourage training, which is run by the QHA and liquor licensing. The staff definitely get a lot out of this. They are very alert for problems after doing the training. They learn about their own gambling at the same time’, and ‘we need to make sure that staff are pretty aware. We’ve got actual itemised risks for gambling, so that we can recognise them;

they're not dead set but there are risk indicators that staff can look at'. Another noted that the training 'makes them aware how addictive it is'.

- **Raises awareness for staff of the effects of problem gambling**, where 'the majority who work in gaming have done responsible gambling...It is an influence on their mindset about gambling – opened their eyes to what could be going on in their gambling room and the after effects of too much gambling. I was a little naïve before I did this, it opened my eyes. You assume people are like you', and it 'makes them think a bit more. They see the ramifications, the knock on effects'. Similarly, another said that the training shows 'what can happen in a worse case scenario, and you just don't want to go down that line'.
- **Raises awareness for staff of the poor odds in gambling**. Some commented, 'it does influence staff. You know that keno's odds are what they are, that the pokies have odds between 89 and 91, so you know you are going to lose', and 'a lack of training influences staff in a negative way. Staff that don't have RCG would or might be under the illusion that gambling is a way to get ahead. They don't know the odds or understand the probability of winning'. Another commented that 'I think it does create a huge awareness. The trainer started off with the odds of winning, and that gets you in straight away. That's why I think it is very important for them to do the RSG course before they get involved in a gaming facility'.
- **Raises awareness for staff of ways to seek help**, as 'what you go through when you train is that you have to explain everything, including the Gamblers Helpline and the brochures...so they know (where to get help)'.

Reasons given by hotel managers why responsible gambling training may not influence staff gambling:

- **May not encourage staff to reflect on their own gambling**, as 'if they are going to do it they will do it', and 'a lot don't (take it on board)'.
- **Training was not engaging**. As one explained, 'the RCG course...I don't think it is that encouraging to staff. It just sounds like rhetoric. People don't really know how to handle situations, I mean even the trainers, who are trying to explain to you the course. You say "how do you approach people?" and they say "well, you don't approach them, only if they approach you, and only approach if there is a third party"'. Another simply said 'some of the government run courses are crappy'.
- **Training may not be done because it is voluntary**, where 'my staff haven't done their RSG. We only just received all that self exclusion stuff' and 'none of the staff are trained in responsible gambling, but the managers are. I haven't done it. This is the first venue that I've worked at with pokies'.
- **People may be in denial about their own gambling**, where 'if you are a gambler, you look at it and put it in perspective for yourself, say "I'm not that bad"'.

7.3.13 Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures

When asked about the influence of other responsible gambling measures, 12 hotel managers considered that the responsible gambling measures discouraged staff gambling, five thought that they had no influence, five felt that it could go either way and five didn't know or were non-committal.

Reasons given by hotel managers why responsible gambling measures can discourage staff gambling:

- **Measures raise awareness of gambling problems**, where 'I think it is there as a reminder'. Another commented that 'we have a booklet downstairs with all the new forms,

self-exclusion, venue initiated exclusion, you have to have a policy where you have a gambling liaison officer...the training does send a positive message. If the staff just go in there and they're oblivious to the fact that there are problems, then they won't see them...But to see these forms, to say there must be a reason these forms are coming out, there must be a problem. So I think having those does help'. Another simply noted that 'we have influenced them. Put the fear of God into them'.

- **Measures can trigger problem recognition**, where 'if (staff) were seriously considering it (having a gambling problem) themselves...I guess that is where it might work'.
- **Staff involvement in self-exclusion of patrons deters staff from gambling**, where 'self exclusion is a great eye opener for the staff. I had one lady come through that was banned in all city venues'.

Reasons given by hotel managers why responsible gambling measures may not influence responsible staff gambling:

- **Signs become too familiar**, because 'it doesn't influence staff, not at all, because it is just part of the furniture, part of work', and 'a week after it comes out, no one notices it'.
- **People may be in denial about their own gambling**, for example, 'if they are going to do it they will do it', and 'I think it is just in the make up for people, the urge to gamble. Some people can't walk past the machine'.
- **Staff don't look at signage and/or are sceptical about them**, 'where they just think it is a bit of paper on the wall'. Conversely, another said 'I think in pubs now, it is just another notice on the wall for the customer...I think the staff notice the signs at my place, because I do unbelievably weird things to make them notice it. If you put a painting on the wall square, no one notices it; if you put it at an angle, someone will notice it. It comes back to how you promote your place'

7.3.14 Influence of Other Aspects of the Work Environment

Several additional points were raised in response to the question of whether other aspects of the work environment (not already discussed) were likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees.

Reasons given by hotel managers why other aspects of the work environment can encourage staff gambling:

- **Some staff drink large quantities of alcohol**, where 'it is only when they have a few drinks. At a different site they might go and have a few drinks and put some money in the poker machine then'.
- **Staff have access to cash**, when 'I've seen staff getting pretty deep into gambling. I've never really seen someone go to the point of no return. One person got out of his job and is now doing really well for himself. He admitted he'd done the wrong thing, using the banking for the TAB. There is always a percentage of staff who specifically get into a job that involves a lot of cash gambling, so they can get in touch with the money and maybe pocket some'. Additionally, four hotel managers paid their staff in cash, and nine allow their staff to get advances on their pay under extenuating circumstances. The remainder paid the staff by direct deposit, although this is easily accessible through the ATMs in the venues.
- **Some staff have the opportunity to bet on credit**. One noted that 'over five to seven years, I've dismissed three people for credit betting. With the keno you can bet any amount of money, and I think they see with keno you can do it without anyone knowing...They steer clear a bit of TAB because with horse betting there is an element of

education; it's not like a quick pick or heads or tails'. Another commented 'when I worked up in (another location) there were a few issues with credit betting on the keno, three staff caught doing that', and another that 'there is a possibility of betting on credit, (keno and TAB)...It can influence hospitality workers, knowing you don't need the cash until the shift ends'.

- **Staff boredom**, where 'if people get bored and are alone, then they tend to gamble, or where there is no supervision or systems', and 'people with more time on their hands are more susceptible'. Another commented on a previous workplace on a Queensland island 'where there was not a lot else to do, especially if you haven't got a boat to go fishing. Any form of entertainment becomes interesting, and therefore, any form of gambling'.
- **Low wages of some staff**, where 'the stress of bills and money would influence them more than the stress of work. I'm sure if they are tight for the week and their rent was due, they could rationalise that they could get out of this sometimes'.
- **Reluctance to expose problems due to embarrassment and/or fear of job loss**, where 'I can see how admitting a problem could be an issue in a town like this, where everyone knows everyone. If you did have a problem gambler in gaming, not just in this venue but in any venue, I think they'd be less inclined to do something about it, from working in the industry. And it could affect them in work, could have repercussions on their work' and 'there is such a stigma around problem gamblers, I don't know if anyone would be comfortable admitting it (a gambling problem)'.
- **Employees cannot gamble at the workplace so a problem might go undetected**, where 'if it was serious we wouldn't know, because you don't know what that person is doing in their own time'. Similarly, another said 'they don't gamble here, so I wouldn't know if they had a problem'.

7.3.15 At Risk Status of Hospitality Staff

Hotel managers were asked whether they thought that hospitality staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems. Ten managers answered 'no', saying that hospitality staff are no more at-risk than the general population, with comments like 'no, quite the reverse', and 'no, I see how much people spend gambling – it has a negative effect'. Fourteen managers answered 'yes', commenting 'definitely. The fact that a lot of times when they finish work at night the only places that are open are places that have gambling' and 'I think so, because it is in their face'. Three managers couldn't decide either way, with comments like 'that is a hard question. You could be in either group, dead against it or (for it)'.

7.4 CASINO MANAGERS

This section summarises the responses given by the two casino managers we interviewed to questions about their workplace, their staff, staff gambling and about whether various aspects of their work environment are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees. Both casino managers disagreed that any aspect of working in a casino might encourage staff gambling, but offered reasons for how it either discourages staff gambling or has no influence on staff gambling. Thus, the analysis below includes only points and quotations supporting these views.

7.4.1 Gaming Facilities and Gaming Contribution to Business

The two casino managers, representing three Queensland casinos, worked at venues with large gaming facilities, operating from 500 to 1,500 gaming machines, from 40 to 85 gaming tables, with TAB agencies, keno outlets and trade promotions. The contribution from gaming to organisational profits was described as 'large' to about 75 per cent.

7.4.2 Number of Staff, Gaming Staff and Turnover of Staff

The three casinos employed a large number of staff, ranging from about 345 to 2,500 people in high time, including full-time, part-time and casual staff. The number of dedicated gaming staff varied from 150 to 700 including full-time, part-time and casual staff. Staff turnover was estimated at anywhere between 3 per cent to 12 per cent. One person said one ‘you become a table games dealer, it is not easy to walk down the street and acquire another job. You also have to travel some distance to secure another job...if we were to talk on the hotel side of things, it would be a totally different number, larger’.

7.4.3 Extent of Staff Gambling

No staff, regardless of department or function, can gamble on their casino’s premises or other company venues at any time. Managers were asked whether they knew if staff gambled at other venues, who they gambled with, how often and what forms of gambling were preferred. Given their large staff numbers, the casino managers could not be certain about this. One person said ‘it’s likely to be the same as that of the general population’ while another said ‘staff may socially go and play a machine when they go out for dinner or what have you. Some...like to play the horses...When I hear that they’re \$10 punters or something like that and they’re not betting mid-week and it appears to be controlled. It doesn’t appear to be creating any real problems for them’.

7.4.4 Management Approaches to Gambling Problems Amongst Staff

When asked if the casinos had any mechanisms to alert staff to risks of problem gambling amongst themselves or other staff, one manager identified ‘training and education, constant refresher courses’ in responsible gambling, while the other noted that staff gambling is mentioned in the casino’s responsible gambling training and that ‘if any of the staff – anyone – has any problems this is where you can go and what you can do’.

The casino managers were also asked what they would do if a staff member revealed that they had a gambling problem. One noted they would ‘talk to them in confidence; provide them with contact for further counselling’. The other manager recalled this happening previously. He spoke to them, reassured them that their job was safe, and directed them to counselling. This manager also noted that he spoke to a local gambling counsellor about this ‘quite some time ago, and told her that should she have any staff from here that she comes across, she can let them know that their positions here aren’t in jeopardy, that it is not an issue’. This manager was also agreeable to moving a person into a position away from gambling, noting that ‘if there was a position that was suitable, and they had put their hand up as having problems, then we would do the best we could’.

7.4.5 Close Interaction with Gamblers

When asked whether they thought that close interaction with gamblers is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees, both casino managers thought that close interaction with gamblers deterred staff from gambling.

Reasons given by casino managers why close interaction with gamblers can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff see negative responses to gambling losses**, such as ‘most staff indicate that close interaction with gamblers turns them off gambling. It is discouraging’.
- **Staff see or hear about the losses**, where ‘my experience is that many people continually make the comment that they work too hard for their money, that they know the odds, and they’re not going to go losing their pay packet on the machines...they do have a good grounding, they do understand that casinos and slot operations aren’t charity operations, that they are going to lose their money, the same as they see customers lose their money’.

7.4.6 Frequent Exposure to Gambling

Responses were also similar when casino managers were asked whether they thought that frequent exposure to gambling in the workplace is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees. They felt that it deterred staff from gambling.

Reasons given by casino managers why frequent exposure to gambling can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff have better knowledge of the odds of losing**, and ‘it discourages them’. Another commented that ‘we do train our people to understand how the casino works, and what the odds are, and what you will lose if you sit and play longer, so they do have an understanding of how our casino works’.

Reasons given by casino managers why frequent exposure to gambling may have no influence on staff gambling:

- **Staff become immune to any influence**, where ‘my experience would suggest that working in the casino environment, people would say that after working in there for a little while, it is not a top of the mind awareness. It is just, we’re at work again, and this is what we do. It becomes very repetitive, and I don’t think what happens around you becomes that sort of conscious thing about “he’s just won so much”. It just becomes part of work...it just becomes a day to day job’.

7.4.7 Influence of Fellow Employees

Casino managers were asked whether they thought that fellow employees are likely to influence the gambling activities of gaming venue employees. They thought that, while staff felt concern for colleagues, rather than gambling with colleagues outside work, they had other interests such as their families.

Reasons given by casino managers why fellow employees can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff provide support or advice to stop gambling**, where ‘the occasional staff member has come to me and said they were worried about a fellow staff member. They wondered if they had a gambling problem. There is general concern for fellow employees’.

Reasons given by casino managers why fellow employees may have no influence on staff gambling:

- **Staff lose interest in socialising with other staff**, such as, ‘you will find that people will get in their groups and go out together and do their thing. But as time goes on they will find their spot in life, whether you have a family or whatever’.

7.4.8 Influence of Gambling Venue Managers

Casino managers were asked whether their policies and practices are likely to influence staff gambling. The managers commented on the role of a ‘no gambling in the workplace policy’ as being an important discouragement for staff.

Reasons given by casino managers why management can discourage staff gambling:

- **A policy of no staff gambling in the workplace**. One commented ‘yes, strongly. No staff gambling and responsible gambling training for all staff brings about an attitude of responsiveness by staff, and ‘with the exclusive monopoly arrangements for casinos, the casino is the only game in town for table games. Staff might want to play, but have to travel long distances to do this’.

- **A proactive culture of responsible gambling**, where ‘all our employees go through responsible gambling training, which is a fairly extensive training program, and they do get access to the brochures and to the cards and they are – for most of the staff they have a strong awareness of responsible gaming and the way we promote it within this complex – they are aware that should they have a problem they can get help. And back of house, there are brochures that they can access themselves. I think our policy is definitely a protective factor’.

7.4.9 Influence of Workplace Stressors

When asked if workplace stressors are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees, both managers disagreed and felt it would have no influence.

Reasons given by casino managers why workplace stressors can have no influence on staff gambling:

- **Staff de-stress in other ways**, when ‘I wouldn’t think that an individual player giving them a hard time would influence them to go and gamble – maybe to go and have a drink. I don’t think that would be a trigger to go and say, I’m going to go and start playing a slot machine’.
- **Stress would not influence non-gamblers to gamble**, as in ‘not any more than normal. If a person is gambling in an uncontrolled way, then there are usually other underlying problems, like with any problem gambler, causing the risky gambling behaviour. Gambling is a symptom of deeper problems’.

7.4.10 Influence of Shift work

When the casino managers were asked about the influence of working the odd hours typical in hospitality, they considered the impact of shift work on staff gambling behaviour as potentially discouraging or of no influence.

Reasons given by casino managers why shift work can discourage staff gambling:

- **No gambling venues open after some shifts**, in that ‘for our people, they wouldn’t be able to go anywhere. Most of our people finish at 1am or 2am and later, and there are no other gaming venues open for the majority of our staff’.

Reasons given by casino managers why shift work may have no influence on staff gambling:

- **Management strategies to minimise the effects of shift work**, such as ‘no, our staff have permanent shifts. It is not an ever-changing pattern’.

7.4.11 Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions

When the casino managers were asked about frequent exposure of staff to gambling marketing and promotions being likely to influence their gambling behaviour, they disagreed. Casino staff are not allowed to participate in gaming promotions in their workplace or any other company venue.

Reasons given by casino managers why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions can discourage staff gambling:

- **Staff are aware of the low chance of winning promotions**, where ‘people that are in the industry, some would argue...become more aware about how little chance you have of winning a prize’.

Reasons given by casino managers why frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions may have no influence on staff gambling:

- **Staff are not allowed to enter workplace promotions**, as in ‘staff and their families are not allowed to enter any promotions. It is a sacking offence’.
- **Venue has no linked jackpots**, so ‘we’re not state linked. The jackpots here are stand alone. They can’t play them; if they’re at work, they can’t see what the jackpots are anywhere else’.

7.4.12 Influence of Responsible Gambling Training

The casino managers were asked whether responsible gambling training is likely to influence staff in their own gambling. They thought it would encourage responsible gambling by staff.

Reasons given by casino managers why responsible gambling training can discourage staff gambling:

- **Raises awareness for staff of problem gambling and its signs, of the effects of problem gambling, and where to get help**, where ‘I am not sure about behaviour, but certainly it has changed their attitudes. They have all completed their responsible gambling training, including our contractors, who are not technically employed by the casino. Their attitude has changed around understanding the risks of problem gambling; that they can recommend people to get help for their problems; and that a supervisor will act if they ask them for help with a problem gambler’. A similar comment was ‘well I would hope in a positive way...I think the information they get is fairly good, and if they had a disposition themselves to gambling...I think they would be conscious of what was being said, and it can certainly only be proactive. Our training I think is fairly positive; the feedback we get is fairly positive’.

7.4.13 Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures

When asked about the influence of other responsible gambling measures, the casino managers considered that the responsible gambling measures encouraged responsible staff gambling.

Reasons given by casino managers why responsible gambling measures can discourage staff gambling:

- **Measures raise awareness of gambling problems**, where ‘it encourages employees to reflect on their own behaviour’ and ‘we are trying to break the nexus between alcohol and gambling. If they are in the high rollers room or the ordinary floor, a dealer can call in a supervisor and have that person removed from the casino. This actually happens and staff see it and believe it’.

7.4.14 Influence of Other Aspects of the Work Environment

No additional points were raised in response to the question of whether other aspects of the work environment (not already discussed) are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees.

7.4.15 At Risk Status of Hospitality Staff

The two casino managers were asked whether they thought that hospitality staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems. They both answered no, saying that hospitality staff are no more at-risk than the general population, with comments ‘I don’t believe that staff are more at risk than someone who comes into the casino as a player. Most of the staff understand that people aren’t going to win’ and ‘no, not more than the general population’.

7.5 SUMMARY OF MANAGERS' RESPONSES

This section firstly tabulates the responses given by the club, hotel and casino managers about their perceived influence on staff gambling of each workplace factor we asked them about. It then summarises the major themes and sub-themes that have emerged from the data relating to workplace factors that are considered to encourage staff gambling, discourage staff gambling, or have no influence. Finally, comparisons are drawn between the responses given by the three groups of managers we interviewed.

7.5.1 Summary of Club, Hotel and Casino Manager Responses

Tables 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 summarise the opinions of the managers we interviewed from the clubs, hotels and casinos (respectively) about each of the nine workplace factors we questioned them about. Their responses are categorised as 'encourages gambling', 'discourages gambling', 'either/both', 'no influence' and 'don't know/no response'.

From Table 7.1 it is apparent that club managers considered some aspects of working in a gaming venue primarily discouraged, rather than encouraged, staff gambling. In particular, venue managers and their policies and practices (especially house policies of allowing no staff to gamble in their workplace at any time) were considered a major deterrent to staff gambling, as were the raised awareness of problem gambling and responsible gambling achieved through responsible gambling training and, to a lesser extent, other venue-based responsible gambling measures. Having close interaction with gamblers was also weakly perceived as mainly having a discouraging influence on staff gambling. However, a sizeable minority of interviewees felt that this close interaction could both encourage staff to gamble, or deter them from gambling, depending on the employee, his or her circumstances, experiences and position.

The club managers also considered that many workplace factors discussed in the interviews primarily had no influence on staff gambling. These were workplace stressors, fellow employees, shiftwork, frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions and frequent exposure to gambling.

Overall, no aspect of working in a gaming venue was perceived by the managers as mainly encouraging employees to gamble, although sizeable minorities of the interviewees noted that close interaction with gamblers, frequent exposure to gambling, fellow employees, workplace stressors, shiftwork and frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions *can* encourage gambling amongst gaming venue staff.

Table 7.1: Summary of Club Managers Opinions on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling

Influence of...	Encourages Gambling	Discourages Gambling	Either/Both	No Influence	Don't Know/No Response	Total
Close interaction with gamblers	8	13	10	7	6	44
Frequent exposure to gambling	5	6	11	14	8	44
Fellow employees	9	1	6	22	6	44
Venue managers, policies and practices	0	24	10	4	6	44
Workplace stressors	5	2	5	23	9	44
Shift work	5	0	14	16	9	44
Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions	9	8	6	15	6	44
Responsible gambling training	0	22	0	11	11	44
Other responsible gambling measures	0	16	0	11	17	44

From Table 7.2 it is apparent that hotel managers considered some aspects of working in a gaming venue primarily discouraged, rather than encouraged, staff gambling. In particular, venue managers and their policies and practices, responsible gambling training, frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions, frequent exposure to gambling, shiftwork, and other responsible gambling measures. Fellow employees and workplace stressors were largely perceived as having no influence on staff gambling. In contrast to the club managers, the hotel managers perceived that close interaction with gamblers mainly encouraged staff gambling

Table 7.2: Summary of Hotel Managers Opinions on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling

Influence of...	Encourages Gambling	Discourages Gambling	Either/Both	No Influence	Don't Know/No Response	Total
Close interaction with gamblers	14	6	5	2	0	27
Frequent exposure to gambling	6	12	7	1	1	27
Fellow employees	3	2	2	20	0	27
Venue managers, policies and practices	0	21	3	1	2	27
Workplace stressors	4	2	2	16	3	27
Shift work	6	12	5	3	1	27
Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions	3	19	3	2	0	27
Responsible gambling training	0	21	3	3	0	27
Other responsible gambling measures	0	12	5	5	5	27

From Table 7.3 it is apparent that casino managers considered that most aspects of working in a gaming venue discouraged staff from gambling. Seven factors – close interaction with gamblers, frequent exposure to gambling, the influence of venue managers' policies and practices, shift work, frequent exposure to gambling-related marketing and promotions, responsible gambling training and other responsible gambling measures in the venue – were felt to have strong discouraging effects on staff gambling. Fellow employees and workplace stressors were considered to have no influence on staff gambling. No aspects of working in a gaming venue were perceived by the casino managers as encouraging staff to gamble.

Table 7.3: Summary of Casino Managers Opinions on the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling

Influence of...	Encourages Gambling	Discourages Gambling	Either /Both	No Influence	Don't Know/No Response	Total
Close interaction with gamblers	0	2	0	0	0	2
Frequent exposure to gambling	0	2	0	0	0	2
Fellow employees	0	0	0	2	0	2
Venue managers, policies and practices	0	2	0	0	0	2
Workplace stressors	0	0	0	2	0	2
Shift work	0	2	0	0	0	2
Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions	0	2	0	0	0	2
Responsible gambling training	0	2	0	0	0	2
Other responsible gambling measures	0	2	0	0	0	2

7.5.2 Workplace Factors Perceived by Managers to Encourage Staff Gambling

Table 7.4 shows the themes and major sub-themes which emerged from the data relating to workplace factors that can encourage gambling amongst gaming venue staff and whether each was identified by the club, hotel and casino managers.

Table 7.4: Workplace Factors Perceived by Managers to Encourage Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff

	Club Managers	Hotel Managers	Casino Managers
Close Interaction with Gamblers:			
Staff hear about wins more than losses	√	√	
Seeing people win creates hope of winning	√	√	
Staff constantly hear about gambling and are given 'hot tips'	√	√	
Patrons can encourage staff to gamble	√		
Frequent Exposure to Gambling:			
Increases staff familiarity with gambling		√	
Increases staff interest in gambling	√	√	
Normalises gambling for staff	√	√	
Staff may have ready access to gambling	√	√	
Staff are surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere	√	√	
New or younger staff can be vulnerable	√	√	
Staff can lose sight of the value and ownership of money	√		
Staff become attracted to the gambling environment	√		
Influence of Fellow Employees:			
Staff gamble together in their workplace	√		
Staff gamble together after work	√	√	
Staff gamble together on days off	√	√	
Staff introduce other staff to gambling	√	√	
Staff directly encourage other staff to gamble		√	
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies & Practices:			
Managers allow staff to gamble in the workplace	√	√	
Managers are sometimes gamblers and so set a bad example	√	√	
Workplace has a gambling culture	√	√	
Managers might talk about gambling in a positive way	√		
Gambling can be a job requirement		√	
Influence of Workplace Stressors			
Staff need to unwind after work	√	√	
Staff need to escape from work stresses	√		
Staff can experience stress about difficult customers	√	√	
Staff want to be left alone	√	√	
Staff have to leave their workplace soon after end of a shift		√	
Influence of Shift Work:			
Staff can suffer social isolation	√	√	
Lack of alternative social opportunities for staff	√	√	
Staff gamble to fill in time between shifts	√		
Staff need to find solitary leisure activities.	√		
Staff tend to socialise and gamble with other hospitality workers	√	√	

	Club Managers	Hotel Managers	Casino Managers
Lack of alternative recreational opportunities for staff		√	
Only gambling venues are open late at night		√	
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing & Promotions:			
Promotions can act as a trigger	√	√	
Reinforces gambling as way to win money	√	√	
Raises awareness of jackpot levels	√	√	
Other Aspects of the Workplace:			
Some staff drink large quantities of alcohol	√	√	
Some staff have the opportunity to bet on credit	√	√	
Staff have access to cash	√	√	
Low wages of some staff	√	√	
Some problem gamblers are attracted to the industry	√		
Staff receive gratuities from patrons drawing attention to wins	√		
Reluctance to expose problems due to embarrassment or job loss	√	√	
Employees cannot gamble at workplace so problem undetected	√	√	
Staff boredom		√	

7.5.3 Workplace Factors Perceived by Managers to Discourage Staff Gambling

Table 7.5 indicates those themes and sub-themes relating to factors that are perceived to discourage staff from gambling, or at least from gambling heavily and whether each was identified by the club, hotel and casino managers.

Table 7.5: Workplace Factors Perceived by Managers to Discourage Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff

	Club Managers	Hotel Managers	Casino Managers
Close Interaction with Gamblers:			
Staff see problem or heavy gamblers and don't want to be like them	√	√	
Staff see negative responses to gambling losses	√		√
Staff see the amount of money patrons spend on gambling	√	√	
Staff see or hear about the losses	√	√	√
Frequent Exposure to Gambling:			
Staff can become sick of being around gambling and the environment	√	√	
Staff see venue takings from gambling	√		
Staff have better knowledge of the odds of losing	√	√	√
Influence of Fellow Employees:			
Staff provide support or advice to stop gambling	√	√	√
Friends from work want to avoid gambling venues	√	√	
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies & Practices:			
Managers can provide support or advice to stop gambling	√		

	Club Managers	Hotel Managers	Casino Managers
A policy of no staff gambling in the workplace	√	√	√
A proactive culture of responsible gambling	√	√	√
Training and education courses	√		
Strict management policies	√		
Influence of Workplace Stressors			
Staff avoid gambling for stress relief	√		
Staff can be deterred by stress about difficult customers		√	
Influence of Shift Work:			
No gambling venues open after some shifts	√		√
Staff might go out less		√	
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing & Promotions:			
Staff are aware of the low chance of winning promotions	√	√	√
Promotions turn staff off	√	√	
Influence of Responsible Gambling Training			
Raises awareness for staff of problem gambling and its signs	√	√	√
Raises awareness for staff of the effects of problem gambling	√	√	√
Raises awareness for staff of the poor odds in gambling	√	√	
Raises awareness for staff of ways to seek help		√	√
Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures:			
Measures raise awareness of gambling problems	√	√	√
Responsible gambling measures can trigger problem recognition	√	√	
Staff involvement in self-exclusion of patrons deters staff from gambling	√	√	

7.5.4 Workplace Factors Perceived by Managers to Have No Influence on Staff Gambling

Table 7.6 indicates those themes and sub-themes relating to factors that are perceived to have no influence on gambling and whether each was identified by the club, hotel and casino managers.

Table 7.6: Workplace Factors Perceived by Managers to Not Influence Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff

	Club Managers	Hotel Managers	Casino Managers
Close Interaction with Gamblers:			
Staff do not discuss wins and losses with patrons	√		
Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway	√	√	
Some staff have little interaction with gamblers		√	
Frequent Exposure to Gambling:			
Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway	√		
Staff inductions point out the realities of gambling	√		

	Club Managers	Hotel Managers	Casino Managers
Staff are rotated between jobs or departments	√		
Staff become immune to any influence		√	√

Influence of Fellow Employees:			
Staff prefer not to socialise together	√	√	
Staff socialise by going out to drink instead	√	√	
Staff do not socialise together because of family responsibilities	√	√	
Older staff are not interested in socialising	√		
Staff have shared sports interests instead	√		
Some staff finish work alone	√	√	
No peer pressure to gamble or this is resisted	√	√	
Staff lose interest in socialising with other staff			√
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies & Practices:			
Staff do not mix with management	√		
Management policies restrict staff gambling only in workplace	√	√	
Management have no interest in or knowledge of what staff do in their own time	√	√	
Management do not try to influence staff		√	
Influence of Workplace Stressors			
Some staff are trained to better cope with stress	√		
The work is not stressful	√	√	
Staff de-stress in other ways	√	√	√
Supportive work environment	√		
Stress would not influence non-gamblers to gamble		√	√
Influence of Shift Work:			
Management strategies to minimise effects of shiftwork	√	√	√
Management strategies to assist staff home	√		
Older staff have family commitments	√	√	
Staff have other hospitality friends to socialise with	√		
Staff find other activities in their time off	√	√	
Staff just want to go home after a shift	√		
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing & Promotions:			
Staff are often not allowed to enter workplace promotions	√	√	√
Venue does very little gambling marketing and promotions	√	√	
Management policies separate staff from these activities	√		
Small prizes are not attractive	√		
Staff don't take much notice of promotions	√	√	
Promotions are not attractive to the age group		√	
Staff who are not gamblers would not be influenced		√	
Venue has no linked jackpots			√
Influence of Responsible Gambling Training			
Training may not be done because it is voluntary	√	√	
Training may not be done due to other difficulties	√		
May not encourage staff to reflect on their own gambling	√	√	
Training was not engaging	√	√	
People may be in denial about their own gambling	√	√	
Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures:			
Staff don't look at signage and/or are sceptical about them	√	√	
Signs are aimed at patrons not staff	√		
Signs become too familiar		√	

 People may be in denial about their own gambling

√

7.5.5 Comparisons Amongst Club, Hotel and Casino Managers' Responses

This section provides some comparisons amongst the responses given by the club, hotel and casino managers to each of the workplace factors discussed, and speculates on some reasons for any major differences that are apparent.

- Close interaction with gamblers was perceived by most hotel managers as having the potential to encourage staff from gambling. The club managers' opinions were more varied, with less acknowledgement that close interaction with gamblers may encourage staff gambling, but greater acknowledgment that this interaction may discourage staff gambling, have either effect or have no influence at all. In contrast, both casino managers felt that this interaction discourages staff gambling. These results suggest that the influence of close interaction with gamblers on staff gambling is related to the scale of gambling operations at the venue. For example, the hotels are characterised by smaller scale gambling operations, fewer customers and the likelihood of more personal interaction of staff with their often regular customers. In contrast, the larger numbers of gamblers and heavy gamblers at the casinos, the typically larger bets and losses, the opportunity for 24 hour gambling by patrons and less personal interaction of staff with customers may help to explain why the casino managers thought that their staff would be deterred from gambling by their interactions with patrons. The data in Table 7.5 also indicate that club and casino staff are more exposed to the negative emotional responses of patrons to gambling losses, which in turn may be a deterrent.
- Frequent exposure to gambling was perceived by the hotel managers as having the potential to discourage staff from gambling. The club managers' opinions were more varied as they tended to consider that this exposure can either encourage or discourage staff from gambling or have no influence. Both the casino managers felt that this exposure discourages staff from gambling. Again, the larger scale of gambling operations in the casinos and many clubs might explain this result, with these employees more likely to be surrounded by extensive gambling facilities and to recognise the extent to which gambling losses contribute to the venues' revenues. The data in Table 7.6 also indicate that club employees may have greater opportunity for job rotation, which gives them breaks from the gambling environment. The age profile of employees may also be an influence, where clubs typically employ older workers than hotels do. Some managers noted that older, mature staff have a better understanding of the odds of losing, that they are deterred from the gambling environment in their leisure time due to family and other responsibilities and treated gambling as just a part of their normal hospitality workload. Newer younger staff were seen to be more vulnerable or susceptible to having distorted views about winning from gambling and being influenced by gambling in their workplace. Perhaps newer younger staff begin working in the gambling venue as casuals or part-timers and do not receive as much or even any responsible gambling training and education compared to long-term, older staff.
- Fellow employees were considered as predominantly having no influence on staff gambling by the majority of the hotel managers, about half the club managers and by both casino managers. Where fellow employees are influential, club managers tended to consider them as more likely to encourage rather than discourage gambling by fellow staff. Table 7.6 indicates that the older staff at the clubs are often not interested in socialising with other staff and/or tend to socialise around sports such as golf. Staff with families and/or their own social interests seem more likely to go home or pursue their favourite recreational activities rather than gamble with other staff. While a few managers felt that some staff gamble together after work to unwind, for the majority of staff a balanced lifestyle was seen as a powerful antidote to the influence of fellow workers encouraging gambling.

- Venue managers, their policies and practices were perceived as being a very strong influence in discouraging staff gambling by both casino managers, the majority of the hotel managers and about half of the club managers. No one thought that venue management mainly encouraged staff to gamble. However, around one-quarter of the club managers acknowledged that venue management has the potential to both encourage and discourage staff gambling, depending on the example set by managers, whether staff are allowed to gamble in the workplace, and whether the workplace has a gambling culture. Overall, the policy of no staff gambling in the workplace and a proactive culture of responsible gambling, including training, were especially supported by the managers as an important deterrent for staff gambling. While there were suggestions that managers in rival venues were not as strict or as vigilant as themselves, the majority of these managers saw their policies and practices as being very important in discouraging staff gambling. There was, however, acknowledgement that the influence of management on staff gambling only extended to the workplace, and that staff could readily gamble elsewhere if they wished.
- Workplace stressors were perceived mainly as having no influence on staff gambling by over half of the hotel and club managers and by both casino managers. Many noted that this was because staff de-stress in other ways. While it was acknowledged that there is a need to unwind after work, especially after dealing with difficult customers, managers thought that alcohol use rather than gambling may be the more usual relief from workplace stress. Managers also observed that their support, open communications and sometimes training helped staff deal with workplace stressors. Some managers considered the work as not particularly stressful and, even where it was, that stress would not encourage non-gamblers to take up gambling. Others considered that staff avoided gambling and frequenting gambling venues as a relief from workplace stress.
- The influence of shift work was perceived somewhat differently by the three groups of managers. The casino managers felt that shift work discouraged gambling by staff as there are no gambling venues open after many casino shifts and because staff have regular, established shifts and settle into a routine. In contrast, about one-third of club managers felt that shift work would have no influence on staff gambling and another third that it could either encourage or discourage staff gambling. About one-tenth of club managers felt that shift work was mainly an encouraging influence. While less than half of the hotel managers thought that shift work would discourage staff gambling, a minority thought it would encourage gambling and, equally, a minority thought it could do either. While some managers recognised that social isolation and a lack of alternative social opportunities may encourage staff to gamble, standard rosters for shift work take much uncertainty out of their working life. Further, fulfilling the family commitments which many older staff have appears a stabilising influence, discouraging staff gambling at the end of a shift.
- The influence of frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions was also perceived somewhat differently by the three groups of managers. Again, the casino managers felt that this discouraged their staff from gambling, as staff are aware of the low odds of winning and do not take much notice of the promotions because they are not allowed to enter them. The club managers had more mixed responses. About one-third felt that this frequent exposure would have no influence on staff gambling, and about one-fifth each felt that they would encourage staff to gamble, discourage them, or have either influence. In contrast, the predominant view of most hotel managers was that these activities discourage staff in their own gambling. This seems due to the smaller scale, smaller prizes and/or lack of promotional activities operated by the hotels. Overall, many managers do not allow their staff to enter workplace promotions, many maintain that staff are very aware of the low chance of winning promotions, and some clubs protect staff by separating them from working with gambling marketing and promotions. They have

contracted independent organisations to develop and operate these activities. Large prizes were thought by some to be attractive and raise awareness of gambling as a way to win money, but most managers thought that staff were turned off by promotions and did not take much notice of small but frequent prizes.

- Responsible gambling training was the most strongly supported workplace factor discouraging staff gambling, as perceived by both casino managers, about three-quarters of the hotel managers and one-half of the club managers. About two-thirds of all managers interviewed said that they felt the influence of responsible gambling education and training raises staff awareness of problem gambling. While some staff may not always reflect on their own gambling as a consequence of completing this training, managers said that they actively reinforce responsible gambling ideas in the workplace. The casinos have active policies for training staff from all functional areas, whether full time, part time or casual, in responsible gambling education. Being large organisations in just a few locations, they have a strategically organised approach to train all their staff and contractors. Clubs and hotels, with more variety in size and location, have a much more varied approach, although the club and hotel state associations have an active and planned campaign to train staff in the venues. It is the responsibility of owners and managers of hotels and clubs to take up the offer by their state associations to educate and train their staff in responsible gambling. Where responsible gambling training was considered as having no influence on staff gambling, this was often because staff had not completed the training or had not found it engaging.
- Other responsible gambling measures were mainly thought to discourage staff gambling. Both casino managers considered these measures a discouraging influence, as did over half the club managers and nearly half the hotel managers who provided a response. Reasons given were that these measures, such as signage and self-exclusion, raise staff awareness of problem gambling, its signs and effects, and about the poor odds in gambling and sources of help for gambling problems. However, club and hotel managers, while agreeing that these measures discourage gambling by staff, were equally likely to say that it had no influence or they did not know or they provided no response. They commented that signage can become very familiar if not regularly refreshed, some were sceptical about their usefulness, and some thought that staff perceived them as aimed only at patrons.
- Other workplace factors were identified as encouraging staff gambling. A propensity to drink alcohol which may then lead to riskier gambling behaviour was identified by both club and hotel managers, as were low wages, access to cash and the opportunity to bet on credit at TAB and keno terminals, which in combination may provide temptations for staff, particularly if bored at work. However, if kept busy at work with observant managers and good security, there is apparently less opportunity for staff to gamble at work. The club and hotel managers also noted that staff may be reluctant to expose a gambling problem due to embarrassment and/or fear of job loss, and that a gambling problem may well go unheeded if employees cannot gamble in their workplace. The club managers also noted that gratuities offered to staff draw attention to gambling wins, while some also speculated whether problem gamblers are drawn to work in the industry.
- Opinions about the at-risk status of hospitality staff varied amongst managers. Over half the club managers and both casino managers considered that hospitality staff were no more at-risk of developing gambling problems than the general population. Hotel managers were much more evenly divided on this question, with a slight majority saying that yes, hospitality staff were more at-risk of developing gambling problems compared to the general population. Some managers simply said they did not know; that it could go either way. Of the 73 managers interviewed in all three sectors, 35 said 'no', 31 said 'yes' and 7 were 'undecided' or 'didn't know'. Thus, a slight majority of managers felt that hospitality

staff were not at-risk of developing gambling problems compared to the general population.

In summary, the largest proportions of the 73 club, hotel and casino managers we interviewed perceived that:

- close interaction with gamblers mainly encourages staff gambling (22 respondents);
- the factors that mainly discourage staff gambling are venue managers and their policies and practices (47 respondents), responsible gambling training (45 respondents), other responsible gambling measures (30 respondents), frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions (29 respondents), and frequent exposure to gambling (20 respondents);
- the factors that have either type of influence on staff gambling are shift work (19 respondents);
- the factors that have no influence on staff gambling are fellow employees (44 respondents), workplace stress (41 respondents) and shift work (19 respondents).

However, it should be noted that sizeable minorities of the managers had different views, and these should not be discounted in identifying potential risk and protective factors for gaming venue staff.

CHAPTER EIGHT – GAMING VENUE STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING AMONGST EMPLOYEES

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides data to address Research Objective Four, which was to identify how gaming venues can provide a work environment that encourages responsible gambling and discourages problem gambling by gaming venue employees. Interviewees were posed the question: ‘in your opinion, what are the most effective ways that gambling venues can help encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling for their staff?’. The responses are analysed below according to those received from each group of interviewees – club employees, hotel employees, casino employees, problem gamblers, counsellors, club managers, hotel managers and casino managers.

8.2 CLUB EMPLOYEES

The responses from the 34 club employees about responsible gambling measures that venues could put in place for staff can be categorised into four main areas, as summarised below.

1. No Gambling in the Workplace

Eleven respondents identified this as an important responsible gambling measure. Responses that elaborated on their reasons for advocating this can be grouped into three categories:

- **Policy should apply to all staff.** As one respondent commented, ‘I think no staff members should be able to bet at their own club. I think that would solve lots of problems’.
- **Lessens easy access**, whereby ‘they may just go around the corner, but the convenience of being at work doing it might just cut it down’ as ‘you’re not likely to go to another venue after work just to drop \$5 in’. As another noted, ‘not gambling at your venue is a great idea. I don’t think anyone should have easy access, whether they’ve got a gaming licence or not’.
- **Reduces temptation**, where for example, ‘if you like the machines, and someone has put in \$800, you’re going to be there like a rat up a drainpipe straight after work to put \$20 in, because you’re going to get something back’.

2. More Staff Training and Education about Responsible Gambling

Twelve comments, grouped into the four themes below, were made specifically about the need for more education and training for staff in responsible gambling:

- **All staff should be trained in responsible gambling**, where ‘even the kitchen staff need to know that’.
- **Refresher courses in responsible gambling**, where one interviewee advocated ‘definitely more training, updating and refresher courses’. As another noted, ‘if the venue was going to be serious, they’d do more than a half a day course’.
- **Training that emphasises the odds in gambling**, as ‘unless you are trained to be aware of the odds, it is going to be glorified, going to look appealing. It is very basic interaction, and it doesn’t have to be a hard or sensitive thing to deal with’. This might particularly be useful for ‘the ones that have never played the machines (as) they might just think you win all the time, if they see jackpots going off all the time’.

- Training that emphasises effects of problem gambling, or ‘continuous awareness of the harmful effects’.

3. Assistance for Any Staff with Gambling Problems

Five respondents noted that it would assist if employees felt they could approach management about gambling issues. Specifically, three main areas were noted:

- **Open communication**, that is ‘if people always have the door open so they can go and have a chat with them, good relations, would help’, which encourages ‘more staff contact and encouragement for staff to actually talk about their feelings’.
- **Provide non-gambling related jobs in the venue**, if a staff member acknowledges a gambling problem. That is, ‘take them straight away off the pokies. Because watching people win I think won’t help them at all; it will only make them think they can do it. Remove them from the problem’, suggested one respondent.
- **Information and referrals for counselling services**, where one respondent advocated ‘more visuals around the Gambling Helpline’.

4. Promote Staff Wellbeing

One interviewee noted that additional training for staff would help them cope with work demands and enhance their wellbeing:

- **Training in stress management and conflict procedures**, because ‘if you are trained in conflict procedures, and knowing how to read people’s body language, it makes the job much easier. It very important to know when to talk to someone and when to let them talk’.

8.3 HOTEL EMPLOYEES

Responses from the 14 hotel employees about responsible gambling measures that venues could put in place for employees are categorised into six areas below.

1. No Gambling in the Workplace

Eleven respondents identified an important responsible gambling measure as ‘no gambling allowed at all in the workplace’. Responses that elaborated on their reasons for advocating this can be grouped into two categories:

- Policy should apply to all staff, ‘not just gaming licensees’.
- **Reduces temptation**, because ‘most people in hospitality like to go to the place where they work to have a drink...on their days off, and if they can gamble, they would’.

2. More Staff Training and Education about Responsible Gambling

Seven comments were made specifically about the need for more education and training for staff in responsible gambling around three main areas:

- **All staff should be trained in responsible gambling**, to ‘put all their staff through the RSG, so they all actually hear that side of it’.
- **Refresher courses in responsible gambling**, to ‘just to sort of push the subject I guess and make the staff aware; and training such as RSG, an awareness course’.
- **Training that emphasises the odds in gambling**, as ‘I think 90 per cent of staff wouldn’t know what the payout rate is, that you have no more chance from putting \$5 in than \$500 in. I think that if they understood the risk or the percentage, they wouldn’t bother as much’.

3. Assistance for Any Staff with Gambling Problems

One respondent noted that it would assist if employees felt that they could approach management about gambling issues. One area was specifically noted:

- **Open communication**, where ‘maybe the venue manager should be able to sit down once a month and talk to all the employees or the duty managers and say that it is acceptable to approach him or myself about it’.

4. Promote a Stronger Culture of Responsible Gambling

Two suggestions were made to further promote a culture of responsible gambling in the workplace:

- **Change in workplace culture**, where ‘we need a change in our whole culture. I’d love to see venues not have 40 machines...I mean our whole culture is geared towards it’.
- **Managers to set a good example**, ‘by not gambling themselves’.

5. Promote Staff Wellbeing

One respondent offered a suggestion to promote staff wellbeing:

- **Provide alternative social/leisure activities for staff**, such as ‘more functions for the staff, maybe have a staff dinner on a Monday night...things like that might help. Or put on a staff trivia night. Something to get the staff into something different’.

6. Other Responsible Gambling Measures

Four hotel employees noted two other responsible gambling measures venues could implement specifically for their staff:

- **All staff to witness machine clearances**, whereby ‘every staff member should be there when they take the money out of the machine, at least just the once, to see what actually comes out of the machine’.
- **Shield staff from the sights and sounds of gambling**, by providing ‘a separate (gaming) room, where you can’t hear the noise and it is dingy, not in the face of staff’.

8.4 CASINO EMPLOYEES

The responses of the 38 casino employees about responsible gambling measures that venues could put in place for staff can be categorised into five main areas, as summarised below.

1. No Gambling in the Workplace

Twenty-seven respondents identified this as an important responsible gambling measure, although there were some complaints about not being allowed to gamble at other company casinos and some comments that this policy is in place primarily because ‘it wouldn’t look good for the casino if a staff member is gambling and winning at the casino’ and so that ‘the staff don’t rip the casino off’. Responses that elaborated on their reasons for advocating a no gambling policy can be grouped into three categories:

- **Policy should apply to all staff**. For example, one interviewee commented that ‘I think pubs should go the way the casinos are going. No gambling allowed for staff on the premises...I think the pubs and clubs need to pick their game up’.
- **Lessens easy access**. For one respondent, if the policy ‘wasn’t there, I would definitely go after my shift and gamble’. Another noted that ‘if the employees there could gamble, I would think that a lot would be there. There is not a casino close by so they would be more inclined to go there’.

- **Reduces temptation**, as ‘there would be too much temptation for the dealers working on the table games. They know the game inside out and I think they would like to play the game to see how they go’.

2. More Staff Training and Education about Responsible Gambling

Ten respondents commented on specific improvements they felt were needed in responsible gambling training and education for venue staff (not just casino staff), and these can be categorised into six main areas:

- **All staff should be trained in responsible gambling**. As one interviewee commented, ‘I think the across the board training is a good thing. All staff are trained in responsible gambling and it isn’t just for the staff that are most exposed to it’.
- **Refresher courses in responsible gambling**, especially ‘more one on one training with the training and refresher courses. It’s now on the computer and I think it should go back to the one on one training’. Another commented ‘it is good that we are required to do the refresher courses and I think other staff members benefit from it too. For example, I was worried about a friend (employee at the casino) that would put a lot of money in the pokies and I think the courses did help him with his problems’. Another noted that ‘the signage could become part of the furniture, but doing the refresher courses would remind you of them and you become aware of them’. However, one interviewee was of the view that ‘the yearly refresher course could be a little more thorough. It’s like a quiz. I see the refresher training to keep up appearances, compared to the initial four hour course (which) was more involved’.
- **Training that emphasises the odds in gambling**, ‘so they can make an informed decision about gambling’. Another interviewee supported how ‘the casino has also published how much money has been won and lost in the casino, the statistics, the odds of winning. All of these are available for staff and the public to see’. Another felt that ‘staff should be aware of how much money you need to spend to become a gold card member’.
- **Training that emphasises effects of problem gambling**. For example, one respondent advocated for the training to ‘show the staff the negative side of gambling more, not just have a sign with the warnings but show some real life examples. For example show a customer that they have had to stop coming to the casino because they have just lost their house or their marriage has split up’. Another commented ‘maybe they should do like the cigarette commercials do, show the worst case scenario; it’s not only the patron but the children, the mother or father. If everyone could experience and see the things that I experience in my job, they wouldn’t have a gambling problem’.
- **More information about staff gambling**, as ‘the current education is targeted more towards the customers; its more an external thing, not internal’. As another commented, ‘with the training they should refer to the employees as well, not just focus the training on the patrons’. Another agreed that ‘the training should also bring up how to recognise problem gambling within yourself, the staff member’.
- **Have a staff member dedicated to responsible gambling in the venue**. As one employee commented, ‘one of the best things they have got, apart from the fact that they have a responsible gambling program, is they have active employees specifically there to look at responsible gambling’.

3. Assistance for Any Staff with Gambling Problems

Eight respondents noted it assists if employees feel comfortable approaching management about gambling issues. Specifically, three main areas were noted.

- **Open communication**, where ‘there is a strong emphasis that (a manager) is always available if someone needs to talk’. Another agreed that ‘let the staff know in the training that they can approach management and they would help you. I think if someone did approach management with a problem, they would have to be supportive; if they were going to offer help in the training, they would have to back themselves up’.
- **Active support from management**. As one employee recalled, ‘a positive response I remember from management was they became aware of a staff member with a gambling problem and they had an active role in directing him towards going to a counsellor. In some instances, the staff member would have been asked to leave but they influenced him in helping him with his problem...management gave him the active support to help them. This person did get his act together’.
- **Promote the free in-house counselling for staff and families**, where ‘management should put it on their briefings or once a month mention it to staff that this service is available; more posters’.
- **Information and referrals for counselling services**, where ‘there is a number they can call if they do have a problem’ and ‘if there was a staff member with a problem, that they could approach the responsible gambling people to get a contact for someone to talk to’.
- **Remove fear of job loss**. For example, one interview commented that ‘if management saw a staff member had a problem with gambling, they would go out of their way to help. They would not sack the person for this. The reasons for this is...because they are so intense about responsible gambling’.

4. Promote a Stronger Culture of Responsible Gambling

Two suggestions were made to further promote a culture of responsible gambling in the workplace:

- **Change in workplace culture**, as ‘responsible service of gambling...can be improved...management need to be more serious. They can’t say they believe in it and then lie about it. An example is I will have a patron that can barely stand up because he is too drunk, I will make a comment to management that they shouldn’t be there and they will respond that he is okay...it is very irresponsible and I feel that the casino is just chasing the dollar’. Similarly, another said ‘I have just completed the responsible gambling refresher course and found it a waste of time. Management have all of these wonderful policies and procedures and codes and practices but when it comes down to the grassroots level of trying to evict a drunken person who is gambling too much or reading a person and looking at the way they are betting, bottom line is it is not being done’.
- **Venue to be involved in Responsible Gambling Awareness Week**, where ‘the people that organise it put their best efforts into it and try to round up some enthusiasm’.

5. Promote Staff Wellbeing

Two respondents offered suggestions to promote staff wellbeing:

- **Provide alternative social/leisure activities for staff**, or as one suggested, ‘more social activities amongst staff. I would like to get to know other staff on a different level, then you might respect them more. I don’t know if it would help them with gambling but it would build a healthier environment. It might reduce stress in the workplace and gambling’. Another commented that the casino ‘should encourage other social activities that don’t involve going to the pub, like ten pin bowling’.

8.5 PROBLEM GAMBLERS

When the six problem gamblers were asked about responsible gambling measures that venues could put in place for employees, five main themes emerged.

1. No Gambling in the Workplace

All six problem gamblers endorsed a no gambling in the workplace policy, for five main reasons:

- **Policy should apply to all staff.** For example, the main suggestion of one problem gambler was ‘just with what we’re doing here, there is no gambling allowed at all – off duty, on your day off...this is the only hotel I have worked at where the policy is no gambling and at the end of the day, I think that is all that they can do. The whole, thing is to encourage the public to come in, that is where the biggest revenue is, they don’t want to jeopardise it’.
- **Lessens easy access.** One problem gambling client thought that 80 per cent of staff who gamble would not if they could not gamble in their workplace as ‘it’s an effort to go somewhere else’ and ‘if they didn’t have it there they probably wouldn’t gamble, ‘cause a lot of those people aren’t really pub people. They just go there because that’s their job’. Similarly, another problem gambler felt that, while she was originally annoyed about not being able to gamble on site, ‘now I think it is a good idea’, as ‘if they told me not to gamble, I wouldn’t’.
- **Reduces temptation,** because, as one employee in counselling put it, ‘if you know you’re not allowed, you just don’t’. Another employee in counselling explained, ‘I wish that before I’d started, staff had not been able to gamble. At all. Not even when off duty. Because that’s encouraging them. There are 204 poker machines there. That’s more staff than they’ve got!’.
- **Protects staff and venue,** or as one problem gambler noted, ‘if you let them gamble here, you’ll find that your (the venue’s) money will go’.
- **Prevents staff from spending their wages at the venue,** because ‘venues that let their staff gamble are really bad...(as they are) probably thinking about the money that they’re making out of their own staff, and it is a pretty feral way to make money’.

2. More Staff Training and Education about Responsible Gambling

Five comments were made specifically about the need for more education and training for staff in responsible gambling around four main areas:

- **All staff should be trained in responsible gambling.** As one problem gambling client and employee who had not been trained noted, ‘as part of the employment policy’, she would like to see staff made more aware of the risks of developing gambling problems, ‘because I used to think to myself, I couldn’t put that much money through one on those things, I don’t know how people do that. So I think seeing that it can happen to anyone, and can be so easy...’. Another endorsed the training, explaining that it ‘actually helped me. I learnt a lot about my own issues. I found after doing that, it helped me to control it a little’.
- **Refresher courses in responsible gambling,** because, as one problem gambler noted, ‘programs to that effect have to be ongoing more than anything. I think that is the key to effectiveness’.
- **Training that emphasises effects of problem gambling,** or ‘just continuous awareness of the harmful effects’.

- **More information about staff gambling.** One problem gambler suggested a pamphlet for staff to raise their awareness of problem gambling, preferring ‘something in writing, because discussing it in a meeting wouldn’t work; they’d all just laugh’.

3. Promote a Stronger Culture of Responsible Gambling

One suggestion was made to further promote a culture of responsible gambling in the workplace:

- **Managers to set a good example.** One problem gambling client felt that management should also be prohibited from gambling in the workplace because it sets a bad example for staff and contributes to a gambling culture.

4. Promote Staff Wellbeing

One respondent offered a suggestion to promote staff wellbeing:

- **Provide alternative social/leisure activities for staff,** such as ‘area industry nights...that didn’t involve gambling...if the five surrounding suburbs got together and had something in the function room on a Monday. It doesn’t have to be free, just somewhere you can get together and have a chat, with some background music’.

5. Limit Access to Cash in the Workplace

Two problem gamblers noted two other responsible gambling measures that venues could implement to limit access to cash for gambling by their staff:

- **Remove ATMs from close to gaming machines,** as ‘it is too convenient. And no matter how much you tell yourself you are walking out the door, you just go and get another \$20. And then you lose it all...I know certainly I would not make the trip to the bank – once you leave you leave’.
- **No advances on pay.** One problem gambler had seen the situation where ‘a couple of my workmates in the NT were living in credit...My workmates had a big problem. I went to the manager and said are you aware of it?...he was a bit shocked, he knew it was happening...but he didn’t realise the extent. He didn’t change anything, and then I left after that. The girls would still be living in credit’.

8.6 GAMBLING COUNSELLORS

Numerous strategies were suggested by the 32 counsellors we interviewed whereby venues could better encourage responsible gambling and discourage gambling problems amongst their staff. These were grouped into five main themes.

1. No Gambling in the Workplace

Nine counsellors specifically nominated prohibiting staff from gambling in their workplace as an important measure venues should take, although many others seemed to assume that this was a mandatory restriction for all venue staff. Three related points were raised.

- **Policy should apply to all staff.** Given that the counsellors’ clients included gaming venue staff in a range of non-gambling related positions, it was not surprising that many interviewees advocated that all staff should be prohibited, that is ‘not allowing any staff – cleaning staff or kitchen staff or any staff – to gamble in the workplace.’
- **Lessens access and temptation,** as ‘it has been said to me by a couple of clients that it would have been better if they hadn’t been able to gamble in their own venues’ and ‘I have had clients who have worked in venues where they can’t gamble in the venue that they work in, telling me that that is a good thing.’

- **Prevents staff from spending their wages at the venue**, as the employers' 'responsibility is to ensure that their employees don't spend their pay packet at the venue.'

2. More Staff Training and Education about Gambling

Sixteen interviewees highlighted the potential value of improved staff education and training about gambling. Three areas were identified that such education and training could further address.

- **All staff trained in responsible gambling**, whereby 'all staff could be sent to training. Management need to be more active. Particularly with policy and practice, staff could become more aware of and implement it. There could be general information sessions as to the signs and symptoms. This could help them make more informed decisions.'
- **Training that emphasises effects of problem gambling**, and which includes 'how it can affect a lot of people who work in this area as well – normalising it to an extent', telling 'people about the end result - especially effects on families and others - of problem gambling behaviour', and conveying an understanding of 'the difference between responsible gambling and problem gambling, and understanding the indicators'.
- **More information about staff gambling**. As some counsellors commented, 'the education around the risks for them as staff is an area that needs to be encouraged more', because 'general education and awareness is critical if you are going to be working in that environment, so you need to give your staff some strategies and some awareness, and currently none of that is given'. Other interviewees suggested that venues could do 'some of the things they do for clients - keeping brochures in their staff room', 'inform them about the odds', 'get people who have had problems who have worked in the industry to talk about it' and have 'a mentoring process'.

3. Assistance for Any Staff with Gambling Problems

As noted earlier, an unanticipated risk factor the counsellors identified was reluctance of staff to expose a gambling problem and to seek help. Fifteen respondents were then able to identify six strategies to help overcome this reluctance.

- **Remove fear of job loss**. The interviewees thought 'there needs to be a resolution found' whereby venues 'don't create fear of losing their job' if staff disclose a gambling problem. There was concern that instead 'what is given to them is threats that if you do develop a gambling problem, then you can kiss your job goodbye. There is very low tolerance for that sort of thing.' This then 'puts a distance between getting any information or help if they thought they were starting to have a problem.'
- **Active support from management**. As one explained, 'it is really important for the managers to express to their staff that there will be support available to anyone who may develop problem gambling behaviour. This could be seen as an early intervention strategy and venue staff may feel confident to disclose this information to one of the managers and expect to be understood and supported in providing some possible solutions in their work environment'. Even if staff cannot gamble on the work premises, venues should send 'some sort of strong message that, if you develop a problem off our premises, we'll still see that as something that we have a commitment to. What you do there is force some off the premises and the problem elsewhere.'
- **Provide alternative jobs in the venue**. To help employees deal with gambling problems, some counsellors suggested that venues 'could do shift rotation, so that people had different jobs to do'. Another counsellor noted that 'some clients have said that if they could move around into other positions within the industry, such as the food service area, but they were too scared to say that'. Another contended that 'I would like to see a policy

where this automatic dismissal stuff should not be part of it. I have heard of somewhere where they moved people out of that area, just moved them into another section. I guess I would just like to see things dealt with at a more human level’.

- **Information and referrals for counselling services**, or as one noted, ‘I would hope that venues would have access to their nearest counselling organisation, so that staff would know where they could go to get help and be treated confidentially, and that that was normalised and they would feel okay’.
- **Liaison with local counselling services**. As one explained, ‘when they do have staff meetings, if they were to invite someone like us along to put a face to the service...so having more visits to where staff gather would be beneficial’.
- **Promote in-house counselling**. Other interviewees felt that venues could facilitate counselling for staff, for example, ‘something within their employee assistance program, where people could nominate to go and see a counsellor’ or ‘having someone that they can possibly talk to at the venue’.

4. Promote a Stronger Culture of Responsible Gambling

Two interviewees felt that venue strategies to protect staff should be underpinned by a stronger culture of responsible gambling, which was seen as needing to emanate from both management and staff.

- **More proactive management**, with ‘management to take responsible gambling more seriously – top down engagement’. Another asserted that ‘the code of practice should be mandatory’.
- **Generate a culture of responsible gambling amongst staff**. One interviewee advocated generating ‘a culture in hospitality to make sure staff had training. We could put together a module to make sure staff have information around problem gambling, that fuzzy logic, etc. People would get a piece of paper, could put it in their CV, put it on the wall, it would be mobile, staff could move venue to venue with it...so my idea is that over time we build on that culture in this population of people so they understand what problem gambling means to their patrons and to us’.

5. Promote Staff Wellbeing

Two respondents made suggestions to promote staff wellbeing:

- **Provide alternative social/leisure activities for staff**. These could include ‘sporting teams away from clubs’ or ‘promotion of non-venue based social activities’ such as ‘a community place where they could meet...or gym membership as part of their remuneration, so that they had something that was acceptable to them to do when they’ve finished their shift, so that they’re not just out the door in the middle of the night when they’ve finished their shift’.

8.7 CLUB MANAGERS

The 44 club managers raised five main themes relating to venue strategies that could be implemented or enhanced to better protect venue staff from gambling problems.

1. No Staff Gambling in the Workplace

Twenty respondents identified this as an important responsible gambling measure. Responses that elaborated on their reasons for advocating this can be grouped into four categories:

- **Policy should apply to all staff.** Some respondents implied that this should be compulsory, saying ‘I would love it if the industry would legislate that you could not gamble in your own venue’ and ‘the policy of not gambling in your workplace is good too; it shouldn’t be a grey area’.
- **Lessens easy access,** because ‘it is important that, no matter where it is, that they’re not allowed to gamble on the premises. If that makes it less accessible to them, it’s not so easy’.
- **Reduces temptation,** because ‘the policy of not gambling on site would be the biggest deterrent’.
- **Prevents staff from spending their wages at the venue.** As one commented, ‘restricting it in your workplace is a good way...big clubs would probably want them to reinvest in their own club. So, making the restriction there is probably a good thing’.

2. More Staff Training and Education about Responsible Gambling

Eighteen managers specifically referred to the role of education and training for staff in responsible gambling, with suggestions for improvements made in four main areas:

- **Training that emphasises the odds in gambling,** that discusses ‘the win/loss percentage to raise awareness’.
- **Training that emphasises effects of problem gambling,** for example ‘some dark, grim statistics’, ‘where people are...telling them about what can happen’, through ‘becoming aware of problem gambling in the community’, and through ‘life examples’, ‘where ‘it would be better to have problem gamblers talking to staff, not counsellors’, so that ‘the pitfalls are pointed out to them, really lay it in initially what the consequences are, that would be a good first step’.
- **More information about staff gambling.** This is sometimes raised by managers, where ‘we talk about gambling by staff quite often. We talk about the concerns with staff taking a risk with credit betting. We’re conscious of needing to protect themselves from themselves. We do this at staff meetings’. However others said ‘we have regular staff meetings, but we’d need to have a reason to talk about staff gambling, for example, if one of our staff showed a sudden interest in the poker machines, or wanted to stay back drinking after hours’. Another manager noted that ‘now that you’ve brought it to my attention, I might put it in a memo and chat to staff about it’.
- **Refresher courses in responsible gambling,** because ‘some of the older staff might forget, and we just assume they know things’.

3. Assistance for Any Staff with Gambling Problems

The thirty-four club manager respondents raised issues relating to venue support for any staff with gambling problems. Specifically, seven main areas were noted:

- **Open communication,** where ‘managers should talk to their staff’, for example at staff meetings where ‘I talk to my staff about any problems they have during the week. The more they know, the more information they get, the better their choices’, and ‘raise it at staff meetings; have an agenda item’. Another commented that ‘we don’t have a formal procedure in place to raise issues of a general nature. We have a very open door policy as far as that thing goes, so it is not formalised, but I suppose there are different avenues to get something done’.

- **Provide non-gambling related jobs in the venue**, such as one manager who has found that ‘by rotating staff so that they are not face to face with gambling all the time...that’s the major way we can help’.
- **Active support from management**. If staff revealed they had problems with their gambling, managers generally said that they would offer counselling help, but that they would be careful to monitor the situation, taking further action if necessary. For example, one said ‘we would talk to them as to their options for banning themselves from the venue and offer them counselling. We’d also need to talk to them if they were in control of cash and consider taking them out of that area, so they could not be tempted...we could move them from the gambling area if they wanted. And we have had staff ban themselves from playing the gaming machines, two or three, when I was at (another club)’. An alternative approach was to ‘treat them as a venue initiated exclusion. I wouldn’t allow them to game here and there are other ways we could probably help them in terms of getting them in contact with help services. So we would wrap them up in the new legislation. They could keep their employment unless there were other areas where their performance (was unsatisfactory). Another said ‘I’d counsel them first and if it did then become a problem, it becomes a risk factor for me. So if I couldn’t counsel them and couldn’t get a result, then they’d go’.
- **Information and referrals for counselling services**, for any staff who approached them about a gambling problem.
- **Remove fear of job loss**, as ‘it wouldn’t be a problem for them to continue to work here if they were big enough to front up to the problem’ and ‘as long as we could sort it out’ and ‘if this business was not at risk because of it’.
- **Help with exclusion from venues or gambling activities**, either as a self-exclusion or venue-initiated exclusion as ‘exclusions are not that hard to deal with, once someone has taken ownership of the problem and recognised it’.
- **Industry support for staff with gambling problems**. One respondent commented that ‘as an industry, I’d like to see each staff member contribute \$1 per week to a fund that could be administered by a committee made up of representatives of the industry for co-workers who get into trouble. I think from an industry point of view we don’t support our own industry. We tend to fractionalise it, there is too much competition between hotels and clubs. The people that work in the one industry are the one people...the government could set up a gambling fund, a pool of money to assist the people within the industry that do have a problem. Sometimes they need to reinvest back in the industry and look at the good side of it, because it really does put a lot of money in the government’s pockets. We contribute \$32 million a year to the CBF; it wouldn’t cost anything near that to set up an industry fund’.

4. Promote a Stronger Culture of Responsible Gambling

One suggestion was made to further promote a culture of responsible gambling in the workplace:

- **More proactive management**. One interviewee commented that ‘if anyone ever says to you that there aren’t any problems in the industry out there, then I think they’ve got their head in the sand. We need to identify that there is a problem out there, and as an industry be proactive’.

5. Limit Access to Cash

Two suggestions were made around limiting access to cash in the venue:

- **No staff wages in cash.** As noted in Chapter Seven, five of the 44 club managers paid their staff in cash, while the remainder paid by direct deposit into staff bank accounts. One respondent stated ‘you would want to make sure their wages are not paid in cash’.
- **Minimise the temptation of cash,** where ‘staff are not allowed to do hopper refills or payouts by themselves, and that helps to minimise temptation and risk’.

8.8 HOTEL MANAGERS

The hotel managers were asked about the most effective ways to encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling amongst their staff. Five main areas were noted.

1. No Gambling in the Workplace

Fifteen respondents identified no gambling in the workplace as an important responsible gambling measure. Responses that elaborated on their reasons for advocating this can be grouped into four categories:

- **Lessens easy access.** As one interviewee explained, ‘I think the best thing that you can do is not let your employees gamble in the venue...I’ve worked in venues where chefs and bar people can gamble all they want...and they were in there all the time. They knocked off work and went straight there, had a drink and started gambling. And they know the people, and it is convenient, you don’t have to go across the road. If you say you’re actually not allowed, you might say, well, I’m actually not going to bother going across the road, I’ll just go home’.
- **Reduces temptation.** One commented, ‘banning all staff from gambling at the venue they are working at is a very big discouragement. I could see larger places where staff were allowed to gamble grabbing a beer and sitting down at a machine’. Another responded ‘no gambling at our venue – at all. People then have to make a decision to gamble, like any ordinary member of the public’.
- **Protect staff and the venue.** As noted by one respondent, ‘the policy not to gamble on site is good. Any hotel that was silly enough to, you would definitely nurture problem gamblers to want to work there’.
- **Prevents staff from spending their wages at the venue,** as ‘I’d imagine most places (where staff are allowed to gamble) would be smaller places where the dollar counts’.

2. More Staff Training and Education about Responsible Gambling

Nine respondents commented on the role of staff training and education, and some on specific improvements they felt were needed. Their responses can be categorised into three main areas:

- **All staff should be trained in responsible gambling.** One noted, ‘RCG training could be useful for all staff’ and another that ‘the RCG course is a great deterrent, because it is laid out in black and white. Everyone should do this that is associated with gambling’.
- **Refresher courses in responsible gambling,** or ‘ongoing education’, where ‘every now and then you could have some sort of course’.
- **More information about staff gambling.** One manager noted ‘I will bring (staff gambling) up at the next staff meeting, ask people about problems’.

3. Assistance for Any Staff with Gambling Problems

Twenty-two respondents noted it would assist if employees felt that they could comfortably approach management about gambling issues. Specifically, six main areas were noted.

- **Open communication**, as ‘open communication and talking to staff allows you to notice the changes in people when they have a problem’. Another noted ‘let them know you are there’ and another that ‘I let them know the door is open and help is ready’.
- **Provide non-gambling related jobs in the venue**, where ‘we move everyone around’ and ‘we could move them from the gambling area to another (although) it could be discrimination to move them too much, particularly if it had an effect on their job or their pay’. Similarly, another said ‘I am open to rotating staff, especially if they were a good employee’.
- **Active support from management**. If a staff member was to reveal they had a gambling problem, managers generally said that they would offer counselling or support in some form, but that they would be careful and monitor the situation. For example, one said ‘you certainly wouldn’t chuck them out on their arse. You’d get some background, how much they’re spending, how long it has been going on and then get them some counselling help. It would not be an issue for them to continue working here. We can do transfers to other (sister) companies’. Another said ‘treat them like a customer; refer them to a counselling service and other help. I’d also look at the work situation, what comes first? Seeing a counsellor or telling the boss? If they are worried about their job, they’d probably tell the boss last. It would be better if we were aware’. Another would treat them ‘much the same as patrons. Point them to available help. Be alarmed if they were involved in our gaming area; it would ring alarm bells for me, as I need to protect the business. I would take no action beyond allowing them to stay in their job and keep a close eye on them’.
- **Information and referrals for counselling services**, for any staff who approached them about a gambling problem.
- **Remove fear of job loss**, as ‘I wouldn’t have a problem with them working here. If they’ve got the front and the confidence in themselves to come to you with it, then I don’t think losing their job is going to help’. Similarly, another said ‘they could still work here because they need help’.
- **Help with exclusion from venues or gambling activities**, where ‘I can’t tell them what to do, but I can offer them, if there is a venue where they are going, to get them barred from there with self-exclusion’.

4. Promote a Stronger Culture of Responsible Gambling

One suggestion was made to further promote a culture of responsible gambling in the workplace:

- **More widespread implementation of the code of practice**. As one manager advocated, ‘implement responsible gambling guidelines. If everyone abided by the code of practice it would be good for business. 95 per cent play the machines well. Utilise the code of practice to look after the 5 per cent’.

5. Promote Staff Wellbeing

One respondent offered a suggestion to promote staff wellbeing:

- **Provide alternative social/leisure activities for staff**. One manager gave the example where ‘they mix with the other staff and they say let’s play the pokies, and we say no, lets go to the beach or go and have a drink at this other pub’.

8.9 CASINO MANAGERS

The two casino managers were asked about the most effective ways to encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling amongst their staff. Suggestions included no staff gambling at their workplace and undertaking responsible gambling training and education, while the importance of assistance to any staff with gambling problems was also raised.

1. No Gambling in the Workplace

Both respondents identified this as an important responsible gambling measure and highlighted two related issues:

- **Policy should apply to all staff**, that is, ‘no gambling by any staff’. A related comment was ‘don’t let small, remote venues say they are the only place in town so they have to let staff gamble. Our staff have to go to Melbourne or Cairns if they want to play table games’.
- **Lessens easy access**. As one commented, ‘I think that not letting them gamble is number one. If they can’t gamble in their own property, it makes it more difficult...if you go across to the pubs and clubs and they’re closed, there is nowhere really to go after work if they’re on night shift’.

2. More Staff Training and Education about Responsible Gambling

Both casino managers were highly supportive of responsible gambling training, with two related points raised:

- **All staff should be trained in responsible gambling**, or ‘training in responsible gambling for all staff’ as ‘the training that we do is good, it does give them awareness, it also makes them aware that we’re aware, and that we monitor not only our customers, but we have got eyes and ears for our staff as well’.
- **Refresher courses in responsible gambling**, where there are ‘constant refresher courses’.

3. Assistance for Any Staff with Gambling Problems

Both respondents felt that employees benefited from being able to comfortably approach management about gambling issues. Specifically, five main areas were noted.

- **Open communication**, where ‘we have an open door policy, and if anyone does have a problem we are here to help them’. A further comment was ‘I guess our operation is a little bit easier in that the walls have ears...we do hear what is going on...there are some things that you hear that make your ears prick up, and make you think, maybe we should have a little bit more of a look into this, as opposed to maybe some of the bigger operations, where their staff are maybe just a number’.
- **Provide non-gambling related jobs in the venue**. When asked if this would be possible for a staff member with a gambling problem, one manager replied ‘we would look at that 100 per cent. If there was a position that was suitable, and they had put their hand up as having problems, then we would do the best we could’.
- **Active support from management**. When asked what they would do if a staff member revealed a gambling problem, that manager replied ‘that has happened. And what I did do was speak to them and tell them that the door is always open, and you can come and speak to us about it, tell them that I know a number of professionals in the field, and suggest that they go and speak to them...my assurance to them was that...you are not going to jeopardise your position or anything like that, we’re here to work together on it, and that’s the way we’re going to do it’.

- **Information and referrals for counselling services**, which they would provide if an employee approached them about a gambling problem.
- **Remove fear of job loss**. One manager recalled how ‘I spoke to (a local counselling agency) about that quite some time ago, and told her that should she have any staff from here that she comes across, she can let them know that their positions here aren’t in jeopardy, that it is not an issue’.

8.10 SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING STRATEGIES FOR STAFF

This section firstly tabulates the responses given by the interviewees when posed the question: ‘in your opinion, what are the most effective ways that gambling venues can help encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling for their staff?’. It then summarises the major themes and sub-themes that have emerged from the data relating to the suggested venue strategies. Finally, some comparisons are drawn between the responses given by the different groups of employees we interviewed.

8.10.1 Summary of Responses

Table 8.1 summarises the opinions of the club, hotel and casino staff, problem gamblers, gambling counsellors, and club, hotel and casino managers we interviewed about strategies that gaming venues could implement to encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling amongst venue staff. Clearly, the most frequently identified strategy, particularly by the staff, is a policy of no gambling in the workplace for any venue staff, as this lessens convenient access to gambling and reduces temptation. Venue assistance for any staff with gambling problems was also considered critical, particularly by management, where employees feel comfortable approaching management about gambling issues and where management offers support to address any gambling problems without fear of job loss and the opportunity to move into a non-gambling related job in the venue. More staff training and education about responsible gambling was also a highly nominated strategy, with calls for all venue staff to be trained, to receive regular refresher courses, to be informed about the harms that arise from gambling problems, the poor odds in gambling, and potential risks for staff. Other strategies that were identified by only a minority of interviewees comprised promoting a stronger culture of responsible gambling amongst the industry, management and staff, promoting staff wellbeing to build a healthier workplace, and limiting access to cash for staff in the venue.

Table 8.1: Summary of Respondents' Opinions on Venue-Based Responsible Gambling Strategies for Staff

Influence of...	Club Staff N = 34	Hotel Staff N = 14	Casino Staff N = 38	Problem Gamblers N = 6	Gambling Counsellors N = 32	Club Managers N = 44	Hotel Managers N = 27	Casino Managers N = 2	Total N = 197
No gambling in workplace	11	11	27	6	9	20	15	2	101
More RG staff training	12	7	10	5	16	18	9	2	79
Assist staff with gambling problems	5	1	8	0	15	34	22	2	87
Promote stronger culture of RG	0	2	2	1	2	1	1	0	9
Promote staff wellbeing	1	1	2	1	2		1	0	8
Limit access to cash in workplace	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	4
Other measures	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4

8.10.2 Venue Strategies Perceived by Respondents to Encourage Responsible Gambling and Discourage Problem Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff

Table 8.2 shows the themes and major sub-themes which emerged from the data relating to strategies that gaming venues could implement to better encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling amongst their employees and whether each was identified by the club, hotel and casino employees, the problem gamblers, gambling counsellors, and club, hotel and casino managers.

Table 8.2: Venue Strategies Perceived by Respondents to Encourage Responsible Gambling and Discourage Problem Gambling Amongst Staff

	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff	Problem Gamblers	Gambling Counsellors	Club Mgrs	Hotel Mgrs	Casino Mgrs
No gambling in workplace:								
Policy to apply to all staff	√	√	√	√	√	√		√
Lessens easy access	√		√	√	√	√	√	√
Reduces temptation	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Protects staff and venue				√			√	
Prevents spending wages at venue				√	√	√	√	
More RG staff training:								
All staff should be trained	√	√	√	√	√		√	√
Refresher courses needed	√	√	√	√		√	√	√
Emphasise odds in gambling	√	√	√			√		
Emphasise effects of PG	√		√	√	√	√		
Information about staff gambling			√	√	√	√	√	
Staff member dedicated to RG			√					
Assist staff with gambling problems:								
Open communication	√	√	√			√	√	√
Provide non-gambling related jobs	√				√	√	√	√
Active management support			√		√	√	√	√
Information/referrals for counselling	√		√		√	√	√	√
Promote in-house counselling			√		√			
Remove fear of job loss			√		√	√	√	√
Liaison with local services					√			
Help with exclusion						√	√	
Industry support for PG staff						√		
Promote a stronger culture of RG:								
Change in workplace culture		√	√					
Managers to set good example		√		√				
More proactive management					√	√		
Generate RG culture amongst staff					√			
Widespread implementation of code							√	
Involved in RG Awareness Week			√					
Promote staff wellbeing:								
Training in stress & conflict mgt	√							
Provide alternative social activities		√		√	√		√	
Limit access to cash in workplace:								
Remove ATMs from close to GMs				√				
No advances on pay				√				
No staff wages in cash						√		
Minimise temptation of cash						√		
Other measures:								
Staff to witness GM clearances		√						

	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff	Problem Gamblers	Gambling Counsellors	Club Mgrs	Hotel Mgrs	Casino Mgrs
Shield staff from sights & sounds		√						

8.10.3 Comparisons Amongst Responses

This section provides some comparisons amongst the responses given by the various groups interviewed, and speculates on some reasons for any major differences that are apparent.

- No gambling in the workplace was the most supported venue strategy, being identified by all six problem gamblers, both casino managers and over half the hotel employees, casino employees and hotel managers. However, less than half the club managers and employees and the gambling counsellors identified this as a strategy. It is difficult to speculate on reasons for this. As previously noted, many gambling counsellors seemed to assume that no venue staff were allowed to gamble in their workplace, so may have not seen the relevance of identifying this strategy. However, it is difficult to explain why fewer club managers and employees articulated their support for this policy.
- More staff training and education in responsible gambling was also a highly supported initiative that venues could pursue, endorsed by both casino managers, five of the six problem gamblers and half the gambling counsellors and hotel staff. However, fewer than half of the other groups raised this as a strategy. The casino managers and the gambling counsellors are directly involved in the delivery of responsible gambling training for venue staff and so may be better placed to recognise its importance. In contrast, the hotel and club managers typically rely on training provided by external or industry organisations. Nearly all groups advocated for training, including regular refresher courses, to be provided to all venue staff, while many saw value in a more hard-hitting exposure to the harmful and human effects of problem gambling and for the training to also alert staff to potential risks in their own gambling. Interestingly, all groups of employees, including the problem gamblers, advocated for training to emphasise the poor odds in gambling more. Additionally, given that the casinos have dedicated staff to provide responsible gambling, it was not surprising that the casino staff could see the benefit of this.
- Assistance for any staff with gambling problems was also seen as critical and something that was more readily identified by the managers than the staff. While most groups articulated the benefits of having open lines of communication between management and staff, the managers were better able to expand on how they would actively support any staff with gambling problems, probably because of their responsibilities and experience in dealing with problem gamblers amongst their patrons. Mechanisms included referrals to counselling, assistance with venue exclusion, removing the fear of job loss and providing alternative jobs in the venue or company. However, this would typically be accompanied by careful monitoring of the employee at work and, in some cases, removal from a job involving cash-handling. Nevertheless, managers clearly valued their staff and did not want to lose them unless there was such a build up of doubt and loss of trust, that it was impossible to retain them.
- A less mentioned potential strategy involved promoting a stronger culture of responsible gambling in gaming venues. Some hotel and casino staff were critical of the existing culture where gambling activities and profits seem to take precedence, while others saw opportunities for managers to set a better example themselves, for management to be more proactive in responsible gambling, and for more widespread take-up of the code of practice.

- Also less mentioned was a strategy of promoting staff wellbeing, by encouraging alternative social and leisure activities for staff and by providing training in stress and conflict management.
- Limiting access to cash by employees was seen as an important strategy by two of the six problem gamblers, who felt that being able to access cash from advances on pay and from ATMs in the venue where they worked and gambled compounded gambling problems. Some club managers also mentioned the benefits of not paying staff in cash and of limiting the temptation to steal by good security mechanisms.
- Two other measures were suggested by interviewees, both hotel staff. These were for all staff to witness machine clearances so that the poor odds of gambling were more apparent, and for venues to provide better separation of gaming areas to shield staff from constant exposure.

CHAPTER NINE – SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

9.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter concludes this research report on the gambling behaviour of gaming venue staff, aspects of their work environment that influence that behaviour, and venue strategies that can encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling. It summarises the study's results according to each of the four research objectives and then adapts a conceptual model to identify and highlight the relationships between risk factors, protective factors and interventions relating to the propensity to gamble, gambling products and services, and outcomes and consequences of gambling by staff who work in gaming venues.

9.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS TO ADDRESS EACH RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

This section summarises the study's findings for each of the four research objectives, as identified in Chapter One.

9.2.1 The Gambling Behaviour of Queensland Gaming Venue Employees

Objective One of this study was to investigate the gambling behaviour of Queensland gaming venue employees, particularly in terms of responsible gambling and problem gambling. The survey (Chapter Four) conducted with a sample of employees working in clubs, hotels and one casino in Queensland addresses this objective, although the generalisability of the survey results are limited by the small, non-representative sample and the refusal of two other casinos to allow the survey to be administered to their employees. Nonetheless, the survey managed to capture responses from 56 staff with a varied and reasonably lengthy experience of working in gaming venues. Throughout their working careers, nearly three-quarters had worked in clubs, nearly one-half in hotels, about one-sixth in casinos and about one-tenth in TABs, with the average length of employment in gaming venues being nearly eight years.

The survey results profile a group who actively engage in many forms of gambling, where during the previous 12 months, about three-quarters had played gaming machines, about one-half had participated in TAB betting, keno and lottery-type games, and about one-quarter had participated in casino table games, racetrack betting, sportsbetting and private gambling. Amongst this group was a sizeable contingent of regular (at least weekly) gamblers, with nearly one-quarter being regular gaming machine players, about one-sixth being regular TAB and lottery-type game players, and around one-tenth being regular sportsbetting and keno gamblers. When compared to the *National Gambling Survey* (Productivity Commission, 1999), higher proportions of the employee respondents were regular gamblers on all forms of gambling except lottery-type games and internet gambling, and these proportions were markedly higher for gaming machines, TAB betting and keno.

This profile of active engagement in gambling is also supported by the reported gambling expenditure figures for this group, with average expenditures on sportsbetting, gaming machines and casino table games exceeding \$100 each per month, those for internet gambling, private gambling, TAB betting and racetrack betting exceeding \$75 each per month, and average expenditure on lottery-type games and keno exceeding \$50 each per month. The computed average yearly gambling expenditures of this group (\$3,097) is over 3.2 times more than the average yearly per capita gambling expenditure by Queensland adults (\$968) in 2003-04 (Office of Economic and Statistical Research, 2005). They reportedly spend ten times as much as the average Queensland adult on keno, over five times

as much on TAB betting, over three times as much on lottery-type games, double the average on gaming machines, and about 1.7 times as much on casino table games (Office of Economic and Statistical Research, 2005).

Of particular concern amongst this group are the relatively high rates of problem, moderate risk and low risk gambling. The prevalence of problem gambling (8.9 per cent) is 16 times higher than amongst the general Queensland population (0.55 per cent), while the rate of moderate risk gambling (19.6 per cent) is ten times higher than the state figure (1.97 per cent). Sixteen per cent of the sample were classified as low risk gamblers, which is triple the state figure, while 50 per cent were categorised as no-risk gamblers, and 5.4 per cent as non-gamblers.

Distinctive features of the problem gambler group compared to the other gambler sub-types were higher reported average monthly expenditure on gaming machines (\$475), TAB betting (\$310), keno (\$180) and private gambling (\$155), and longer session lengths on gaming machines (5.5 hours), TAB betting (5.2 hours) and keno (2 hours). They also had the lowest average age (27 years) and had been working in gaming venues for a shorter average time (4.5 years) than the other gambler sub-types. For the moderate risk gamblers, monthly expenditures were a little over one-third of that for the problem gambler group for gaming machines (\$180) and private gambling (\$53), and about one-sixth of that for TAB betting (\$55) and keno (\$34). Similarly, average session lengths for the moderate risk gamblers were a little over half of those for the problem gambler group for gaming machines (3 hours) and keno (1.1 hours), and about one-sixth of that for TAB betting (55 minutes). The low risk gambler group had a lower average monthly expenditure than the moderate risk gambler group, particularly on gaming machines (\$63) and keno (\$23), and shorter session lengths on gaming machines (1.1 hours) and keno (55 minutes). However compared to the no risk gambler group, they had higher average monthly expenditures on gaming machines, TAB, keno and casino table games and longer session lengths on most types of gambling. Amongst the no risk gambler group, while 16 per cent were regular players of lottery-type games, very few were regular gamblers on any other type of gambling. They also had the lowest average monthly expenditure of all gambler sub-types for playing gaming machines (\$39), TAB betting (\$44), keno (\$20), casino table games (\$35), and private gambling (\$30), and the shortest session lengths for most types of gambling. Together, the no risk and non-gambler groups had the highest mean age (33 years) and had worked for the longest average time in gaming venues (9.2 years) compared to the other groups.

In summary, gambling is a very popular activity amongst the gaming venue staff we surveyed, and the group is distinctive for its high expenditure on gambling, particularly on keno, TAB betting, lottery-type games, gaming machines and casino table games. This group is also distinctive for its regular (at least weekly) participation in gambling, particularly on gaming machines, TAB betting and keno. Not surprisingly then, the rates of problem and moderate risk gambling were extremely high amongst this group, when compared to the general population. Indeed, only a little over one-half (55.4 per cent) of the sample were in the no-risk/non-gambler group. Further, the spread of gambler sub-types is more polarised amongst the employee respondents than amongst the general population of Queensland, reflected in a problem gambling rate that is 16 times higher, a moderate risk gambler rate that is ten times higher and a low risk gambler rate that is three times higher than the state figures. This abnormal distribution of gambler sub-types is also reflected in the abnormal distributions for gambling frequency, gambling expenditure and session length, which again indicate a polarisation of gambling involvement. Thus, it seems that staff can be very much 'turned on' or 'turned off' gambling. These results indicate that working in a gaming venue may be associated with certain risk factors for gaming venue employees in their own gambling, with nearly half of those surveyed at some level of risk. The results also suggest that it may be newer and younger employees who are most at-risk of problem gambling. Equally however, with a little over half of the surveyed employees in the no-risk/non-

gambling category, there appear to also be certain moderating and protective factors for staff who work in gaming venues. Later sections summarise these risk, moderating and protective factors, drawing on the qualitative data presented in previous chapters and a theoretical framework of influences on gambling behaviour and outcomes (Thomas and Jackson, 2004).

9.2.2 Aspects of the Work Environment Perceived as Influencing Gambling by Gaming Venue Employees

Objectives Two and Three of this study were to examine how Queensland gaming venue employees and employers/managers perceive that aspects of their venue's work environment influence employee gambling behaviour in terms of responsible gambling and problem gambling. Chapters Five, Six and Seven presented an employee, problem gambler and manager perspective, respectively, on reasons why certain workplace factors can encourage employee gambling, why certain workplace factors can discourage employee gambling, and why some workplace factors may have no influence on employee gambling.

Table 9.1 tabulates the reasons given for why working in a gaming venue potentially encourages gambling by gaming venue staff, according to whether each reason was endorsed by each group of interviewees. It is clear that all groups perceive numerous aspects of working in a gaming venue as potentially encouraging staff to gamble, except for the casino managers who did not perceive any aspect as being influential. The explanation for this is unclear, especially considering that the casino employees themselves identified over 40 reasons why working in a casino potentially encourages staff to gamble. In contrast, the responses of the managers and employees of the clubs and hotels were more closely aligned. Overall, more than half the groups interviewed endorsed 34 reasons why working in a gaming venue has an encouraging influence on staff gambling, and these reasons spanned all eight major categories of workplace factors in Table 9.1. The most highly endorsed reasons (by eight of the nine groups) why working in a gaming venue can encourage gambling by gaming venue staff were:

- staff hear about wins more than losses;
- seeing people win creates hope of winning;
- staff constantly hear about gambling and are given 'hot tips';
- staff need to unwind after work;
- staff have raised awareness of jackpot levels.

When comparisons are drawn amongst the groups, it is apparent that:

- the largest proportion of the employees perceive that the factors that mainly encourage staff gambling are shift work, fellow employees and frequent exposure to gambling, while close interaction with gamblers can either encourage or discourage staff gambling;
- the largest proportion of the problem gamblers and gambling counsellors perceive that the factors that mainly encourage staff gambling are shift work, workplace stressors, frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions, frequent exposure to gambling, close interaction with gamblers and fellow employees, while venue managers and their policies and practices can either encourage or discourage staff gambling;
- the largest proportion of the managers perceive that close interaction with gamblers mainly encourages staff gambling.

However, it should be noted that sizeable minorities of the interviewees had different views, and these should not be discounted in identifying potential risk and protective factors for gaming venue staff.

Table 9.1: Summary of Reasons Why Working in a Gaming Venue Can Encourage Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff

	Problem			Client		Groups		
	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff	Problem Gamblers in Counselling	Gamblers not in Counselling	Opinions	Club Managers	Casino Managers
Endorsing Each Reason N = 9								
Close interaction with Gamblers:								
Staff hear about wins more than losses	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Seeing people win creates hope of winning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff get caught up in the excitement of patrons' wins	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff constantly hear about gambling & given 'hot tips'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Patrons can encourage staff to gamble	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff who gamble build relationships with other gamblers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff want a piece of the action	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Frequent Exposure to Gambling:								
Increases staff familiarity with gambling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Increases staff interest in gambling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Normalises gambling for staff	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff may have ready access to gambling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff are surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Infrequent staff can gain distorted views about winning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New or younger staff can be vulnerable	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff can lose sight of the value and ownership of money	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Increases perceived insider knowledge about gambling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff become attracted to the gambling environment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Normalises heavy gambling for staff	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Triggers the temptation to gamble	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Influence of Fellow Employees:								
Staff gamble together in their workplace	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff gamble together after work	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff gamble together on days off	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff directly encourage other staff to gamble	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff introduce other staff to gambling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff share gambling tips	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff gamble on hospitality industry nights	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff travel away together to gamble	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff social club activities can encourage gambling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff gamble before work	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff	Problem Gamblers in Counselling	Problem Gamblers not in Counselling	Client Experience & Counsellor Opinions	Club Managers	Hotel Managers	Casino Managers	Groups Endorsing Each Reason N = 9
Staff gamble to gain acceptance into the workgroup						✓				1
General acceptance of gambling amongst staff						✓				1
Gambling problems not taken seriously by staff						✓				1
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies & Practices:										
Managers are sometimes gamblers and set an example	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		7
Managers gamble with staff	✓	✓				✓				3
Managers allow staff to gamble in the workplace	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		6
Gambling can be a job requirement	✓				✓			✓		3
Workplace has a gambling culture	✓			✓			✓	✓		4
Managers sometimes talk about big wins			✓							1
Managers might talk about gambling in a positive way			✓				✓			2
Managers do not take gambling problems seriously				✓						1
Influence of Workplace Stressors										
Staff need to unwind after work	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		8
Staff can experience stress about problem gamblers	✓	✓				✓				3
Staff can experience stress about difficult customers	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		5
Staff can experience stress from heavy workloads	✓		✓	✓		✓				4
Job dissatisfaction/boredom					✓	✓				2
Staff need to escape from work stresses							✓			1
Staff want to be left alone							✓	✓		2
Staff have to leave workplace soon after end of a shift								✓		1
Influence of Shift Work:										
Staff can suffer social isolation	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		7
Lack of alternative social opportunities for staff	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		7
Lack of alternative recreational opportunities for staff	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		6
Only gambling venues are open late at night	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		6
Staff need to find solitary leisure activities	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			6
Staff tend to socialise with other hospitality workers	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		5
Staff gamble to fill in time between shifts		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			5
Staff social life can revolve around the workplace		✓		✓						2
Staff gamble while waiting for others to finish work		✓			✓					2
Shift work makes it easier to hide heavy gambling			✓							1
Shift work leads to stress						✓				1

	Problem			Client		Groups		
	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff	Problem Gamblers in Counselling	Problem Gamblers not in Counselling	Experience & Counsellor Opinions	Club Managers	Hotel Managers
							Casino Managers	Each Reason N = 9
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing & Promotions:								
Promotions can act as a trigger	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Reinforces gambling as way to win money	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	6
Raises awareness of jackpot levels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Increases knowledge about other promotions	✓	✓	✓			✓		4
Staff get caught up in the excitement of promotions			✓			✓		2
Worsens existing gambling problems						✓		1
Other Aspects of the Workplace:								
Some staff drink large quantities of alcohol	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	6
Reluctance to expose problems due to fear of job loss	✓		✓			✓	✓	5
Some staff have the opportunity to bet on credit	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	5
Irregular wages of casual staff	✓							1
Low wages of some staff	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
Young age group of staff	✓		✓					2
Self-exclusion difficult due to embarrassment/ job loss		✓		✓		✓		3
Staff are overlooked in problem gambling		✓						1
Staff cannot gamble at workplace so problem undetected	✓		✓				✓	4
Access to cash & pay in their workplace				✓	✓	✓	✓	5
Lack of alternative employment opportunities				✓		✓		2
Staff may not have time to access help services						✓		1
The industry attracts gamblers & problem gamblers						✓	✓	2
The industry attracts outgoing people						✓		1
Staff receive gratuities drawing attention to wins							✓	1
Staff boredom							✓	1
No. of Factors Perceived as Encouraging Staff Gambling	43	35	43	26	32	48	39	36
							0	302

Table 9.2 summarises the reasons given for why working in a gaming venue potentially discourages gambling by gaming venue staff, according to whether each reason was endorsed by each group of interviewees. All groups perceive some aspects of working in a gaming venue as potentially discouraging staff from gambling, with over half the groups endorsing 24 of these reasons which spanned all nine of the major categories of workplace factors in Table 9.2. Again, the casino managers were more limited in their endorsement than the other groups. The most highly endorsed reasons (by all of the groups) why working in a gaming venue can discourage gambling by gaming venue staff were:

- staff see or hear about the losses;
- staff have better knowledge of the odds of losing;
- a policy of no staff gambling in the workplace;
- staff are aware of the low chance of winning promotions;
- responsible gambling training raises awareness for staff of problem gambling and its signs;
- responsible gambling measures raise awareness of gambling problems.

When comparisons are drawn amongst the groups, it is apparent that:

- the largest proportion of the employees perceive that the factors that mainly discourage staff gambling are responsible gambling training, venue managers and their policies and practices, and responsible gambling measures in the venue;
- the largest proportion of the problem gamblers and gambling counsellors perceive that none of the factors mainly discourage staff gambling;
- the largest proportion of the managers perceive that the factors that mainly discourage staff gambling are venue managers and their policies and practices, responsible gambling training, other responsible gambling measures, frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions, and frequent exposure to gambling.

However, it should be noted that sizeable minorities of the interviewees had different views, and these should not be discounted in identifying potential risk and protective factors for gaming venue staff.

Table 9.2: Summary of Reasons Why Working in a Gaming Venue Can Discourage Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff

	Client Experience & Counselor Opinions				Groups Endorsing Each Reason N = 7		
	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff	Managers	Club Managers	Hotel Managers	Casino Managers
Close interaction with Gamblers:							
Staff see problem or heavy gamblers and don't want to be like them	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Staff see negative responses to gambling losses	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Staff see the effects of problem gambling	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Staff see or hear about the losses	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff see the amount of money patrons spend on gambling	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Staff see the amount of time patrons spend gambling	✓		✓				
Staff see gambling as boring				✓			
Can trigger problem recognition				✓			
Frequent Exposure to Gambling:							
Staff can become sick of being around gambling & environment	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Staff see venue takings from gambling	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Staff have better knowledge of the odds of losing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Influence of Fellow Employees:							
Staff provide support or advice to stop gambling		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff hear about staff losses on gambling			✓				
Friends from work want to avoid gambling venues	✓			✓	✓	✓	
Staff can trigger help-seeking				✓			
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies & Practices:							
Managers can provide support or advice to stop gambling	✓		✓	✓	✓		
A policy of no staff gambling in the workplace	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A proactive culture of responsible gambling	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Training and education courses					✓		
Strict management policies					✓		
Influence of Workplace Stressors							
Staff avoid gambling for stress relief	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Staff can be deterred by stress about problem gamblers			✓				

	Client Experience & Counselor Opinions				Hotel Managers	Casino Managers	Groups Endorsing Each Reason N = 7
	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff				
Staff can be deterred by stress about difficult customers			✓		✓		2
Influence of Shift Work:							
Staff might go out less	✓		✓		✓		3
No gambling venues open after some shifts	✓		✓			✓	4
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing & Promotions:							
Staff are aware of the low chance of winning promotions	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	7
Promotions turn staff off	✓				✓		3
Influence of Responsible Gambling Training							
Raises awareness for staff of problem gambling and its signs	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	7
Raises awareness for staff of the effects of problem gambling	✓		✓		✓	✓	6
Raises awareness for staff of the poor odds in gambling	✓	✓	✓		✓		6
Raises awareness for staff of ways to seek help	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	6
Destigmatises problem gambling					✓		1
Can trigger help-seeking					✓		1
Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures:							
Measures raise awareness of gambling problems	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	7
Signage raises awareness of where to get help	✓	✓	✓				4
Can trigger problem recognition	✓	✓	✓		✓		6
Staff involvement in self-exclusion of patrons deters staff from gambling	✓	✓	✓		✓		5
No. of Factors Perceived as Discouraging Staff Gambling	26	18	28	22	24	20	150

Reasons given for why working in a gaming venue potentially has no influence on gambling by gaming venue staff are presented in Table 9.3. Fourteen reasons, spanning all nine major categories of workplace factors in Table 9.3, were endorsed by over half the groups interviewed as potentially moderating the influence of working in a gaming venue on the gambling behaviour of staff. Again, the casino managers, and also the problem gamblers we interviewed, were most limited in their endorsement of these reasons compared to the other groups. The most highly endorsed reasons (by seven of the nine groups) why working in a gaming venue can have no influence on gambling by gaming venue staff were:

- management have no interest or knowledge of what staff do in their own time;
- staff de-stress in other ways than gambling;
- responsible gambling training may not encourage staff to reflect on their own gambling;
- people may be in denial about their own gambling.

When comparisons are drawn amongst the groups, it is apparent that:

- the largest proportion of the employees perceive that the factors that mainly have no influence on staff gambling are workplace stressors, and frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions;
- the largest proportion of the problem gamblers and gambling counsellors perceive that the factors that mainly have no influence on staff gambling are responsible gambling training and other responsible gambling measures in the venue;
- the largest proportion of the managers perceive that the factors that have no influence on staff gambling are workplace stressors, fellow employees, frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions and shift work.

However, it should be noted that sizeable minorities of the interviewees had different views, and these should not be discounted in identifying potential risk and protective factors for gaming venue staff.

Table 9.3: Summary of Reasons Why Working in a Gaming Venue Can Have No Influence on Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff

	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff	Problem Gamblers in Counselling	Problem Gamblers not in Counselling	Client Experience & Counsellor Opinions	Club Managers	Hotel Managers	Casino Managers	Groups Endorsing Each Reason N = 9
Close interaction with Gamblers:										
Staff not allowed to discuss wins & losses with patrons	✓						✓			2
Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		5
Some staff have little interaction with gamblers		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		5
Frequent Exposure to Gambling:										
Staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers anyway	✓		✓				✓			3
Staff become immune to any influence	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	5
Staff inductions point out the realities of gambling							✓			1
Staff are rotated between jobs or departments							✓			1
Influence of Fellow Employees:										
Staff prefer not to socialise together	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		5
Staff socialise by going out to drink instead	✓	✓					✓	✓		4
Staff do not socialise due to family responsibilities	✓						✓	✓		3
Older staff are not interested in socialising	✓	✓	✓				✓			4
Staff work with different people all the time		✓								1
Heavy gamblers prefer to gamble on their own			✓			✓				2
No peer pressure to gamble or this is resisted			✓				✓	✓		3
Only employee gambling in the workplace				✓						1
Staff may hide their gambling from fellow employees						✓				1
Staff have shared sports interests instead							✓			1
Some staff finish work alone							✓	✓		2
Staff lose interest in socialising with other staff									✓	1
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies & Practices:										
Staff do not mix with management	✓	✓	✓				✓			4
Management restrict staff gambling only in workplace	✓					✓	✓	✓		4
Mgt have no interest/knowledge of staff in their own time	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		7
Management do not try to influence staff							✓	✓		1
Influence of Workplace Stressors										
Some staff are trained to better cope with stress	✓						✓			2
The work is not stressful	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		6

	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff	Problem Gamblers in Counselling	Problem Gamblers not in Counselling	Client Experience & Counsellor Opinions	Club Managers	Hotel Managers	Casino Managers	Groups Endorsing Each Reason N = 9
Staff de-stress in other ways	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	7
Stress would not influence non-gamblers to gamble		✓						✓	✓	3
Supportive work environment							✓			1
Influence of Shift Work:										
Staff have other hospitality friends to socialise with	✓		✓				✓			3
Staff find other activities in their time off	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		5
Staff just want to go home after a shift	✓	✓	✓				✓			4
Some staff have permanent shifts or do not do shift work	✓		✓			✓				3
Management strategies to minimise effects of shift work							✓	✓	✓	3
Management strategies to assist staff home							✓			1
Older staff have family commitments							✓	✓		2
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing & Promotions:										
Promotions are not attractive to the age group	✓							✓		2
Staff are often not allowed to enter workplace promotions	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	6
Staff who are not gamblers would not be influenced	✓		✓					✓		3
Venue does very little gambling marketing & promotions	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓		5
Heavy staff gamblers not attracted to promotions		✓								1
Staff are desensitised to marketing and promotions							✓	✓		2
Management policies separate staff from these activities							✓			1
Small prizes are not attractive							✓			1
Venue has no linked jackpots									✓	1
Influence of Responsible Gambling Training										
Training is not readily available in all areas	✓									1
Training may not be done due to expense	✓									1
Training may not be done because it is voluntary	✓					✓	✓	✓		4
May not encourage staff to reflect on their own gambling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Training was not engaging	✓						✓	✓		3
People may be in denial about their own gambling	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Training can provide a false sense of security	✓									1
Staff sceptical about venue's commitment to RG			✓			✓				2
Not all staff are trained				✓		✓				2
Not all venues welcome training by counsellors						✓				1

	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff	Problem Gamblers in Counselling	Problem Gamblers not in Counselling	Client Experience & Counsellor Opinions	Club Managers	Hotel Managers	Casino Managers	Groups Endorsing Each Reason N = 9
Trainers not given enough time						✓				1
Training may not be done due to other difficulties							✓			1
Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures:										
Staff don't look at signage/are sceptical about them	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		5
Signs become too familiar	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		6
Signs are aimed at patrons not staff	✓		✓		✓		✓			4
Signage is too discreet	✓		✓			✓				3
Signage is misleading		✓			✓	✓				3
People may be in denial about their own gambling			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		5
Signage can trigger gambling			✓							1
Staff are sceptical about responsible gambling measures						✓				1
Staff may not know about self-exclusion						✓				1
No. of Factors Perceived as Not Influencing Staff Gambling	33	20	26	7	10	22	37	29	7	191

9.2.3 Venue Strategies for Encouraging Responsible Gambling by Gaming Venue Employees

Objective Four of this study was to identify how gaming venues can provide a work environment that encourages responsible gambling and discourages problem gambling by gaming venue employees. Table 9.4 shows the venue strategies identified, grouped into seven major categories. It shows that at least half the groups endorsed 14 of these strategies, which mainly involved a policy of no gambling in the workplace, more staff training in responsible gambling, and venue assistance for staff with gambling problems. The most highly endorsed venue strategies (by seven of the eight groups) were:

- a no gambling in the workplace policy to apply to all staff, as it lessens easy access to gambling and reduces the temptation to gamble;
- training for all staff in responsible gambling;
- provision of staff refresher courses in responsible gambling.

There was consistent support for these measures amongst most of the groups interviewed. Suggestions were also made to promote a stronger culture of responsible gambling, promote staff wellbeing, and limit access to cash for employees in gaming venues.

Table 9.4: Venue Strategies Perceived by Respondents to Encourage Responsible Gambling and Discourage Problem Gambling Amongst Staff

	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff	Problem Gamblers	Gambling Counsellors	Club Managers	Hotel Managers	Casino Managers	Groups Endorsing Each Strategy N = 8
No gambling in workplace:									
Policy to apply to all staff	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	7
Lessens easy access	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Reduces temptation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		7
Protects staff and venue				✓			✓		2
Prevents spending wages at venue				✓	✓	✓	✓		4
More responsible gambling staff training:									
All staff should be trained	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	7
Refresher courses needed	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	7
Emphasise odds in gambling	✓	✓	✓			✓			4
Emphasise effects of problem gambling	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			5
Information about staff gambling			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		5
Staff member dedicated to responsible gambling			✓						1
Assist staff with gambling problems:									
Open communication	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	6
Provide non-gambling related jobs	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	5
Active management support			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	5
Information/referrals for counselling	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	6
Promote in-house counselling			✓		✓				2
Remove fear of job loss			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	5
Liaison with local services					✓				1
Help with exclusion						✓	✓		2
Industry support for staff with gambling problems						✓			1
Promote a stronger culture of responsible gambling:									
Change in workplace culture		✓	✓						2
Managers to set good example		✓		✓					2
More proactive management					✓	✓			2
Generate responsible gambling culture amongst staff					✓				1
Widespread implementation of the QLD code of practice							✓		1
Involved in Responsible Gambling Awareness Week			✓						1

	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff	Problem Gamblers	Gambling Counsellors	Club Managers	Hotel Managers	Casino Managers	Groups Endorsing Each Strategy N = 8
Promote staff wellbeing:									
Training in stress & conflict mgt	✓								1
Provide alternative social activities		✓		✓	✓		✓		4
Limit access to cash in workplace:									
Remove ATMs from close to gaming machines				✓					1
No advances on pay				✓					1
No staff wages in cash						✓			1
Minimise temptation of cash						✓			1
Other measures:									
Staff to witness gaming machine clearances		✓							1
Shield staff from sights & sounds		✓							1
No. of Venue Strategies to Encourage Responsible Gambling	11	11	16	13	16	18	15	9	109

9.3 A CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF INFLUENCES ON GAMBLING BEHAVIOURS AND OUTCOMES FOR GAMING VENUE STAFF

The key issues examined in this study have been the gambling behaviour of gaming venue employees, workplace influences that are perceived to encourage, discourage and have no influence on employee gambling, and venue strategies that can encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling amongst gaming venue staff. This chapter now synthesises the study's results by drawing them together into a theoretical framework of influences on gambling behaviours and outcomes.

Thomas and Jackson (2004) have developed a public health model of personal and environmental influences on gambling behaviours and outcomes, as presented earlier in Figure 2.1. While other public health models of gambling have been developed, the Thomas and Jackson model is particularly instructive as it recognises that different risk, moderating and protective factors are associated with personal and environmental influences on gambling, and with the outcomes and consequences of gambling. Identification of these factors is critical to designing appropriate interventions to modify those factors that are amenable to change.

In explaining the various elements of the model, Thomas and Jackson (2004) note that:

- gambling uptake is influenced by both the propensity to gamble and contextual factors such as the availability of gambling products and services for people to exercise these propensities;
- propensity to gamble is influenced by a variety of factors, including psychological traits relating to the personal characteristics of the gambler, sociological factors relating to social and contextual influences on a person's gambling, and cultural factors which may influence a person's propensity to gamble and gambling preferences;
- gambling products and services also influence gambling uptake, particularly their availability, marketing and how well they meet the needs or expectations of their consumers. Factors such as the geographical distribution of gambling products, their accessibility, the nature of the products themselves, and the context in which they are offered, are proposed as potentially influencing gambling uptake;
- gambling outcomes and consequences include those that may occur at the level of the individual, family and community. Of major concern is the development of gambling problems and its associated negative consequences;
- risk, moderating and protective factors are associated with the propensity to gamble, gambling products and services, and gambling outcomes and consequences;
- interventions can be designed to reduce the risk factors and/or enhance the protective factors for each of three elements in the model.

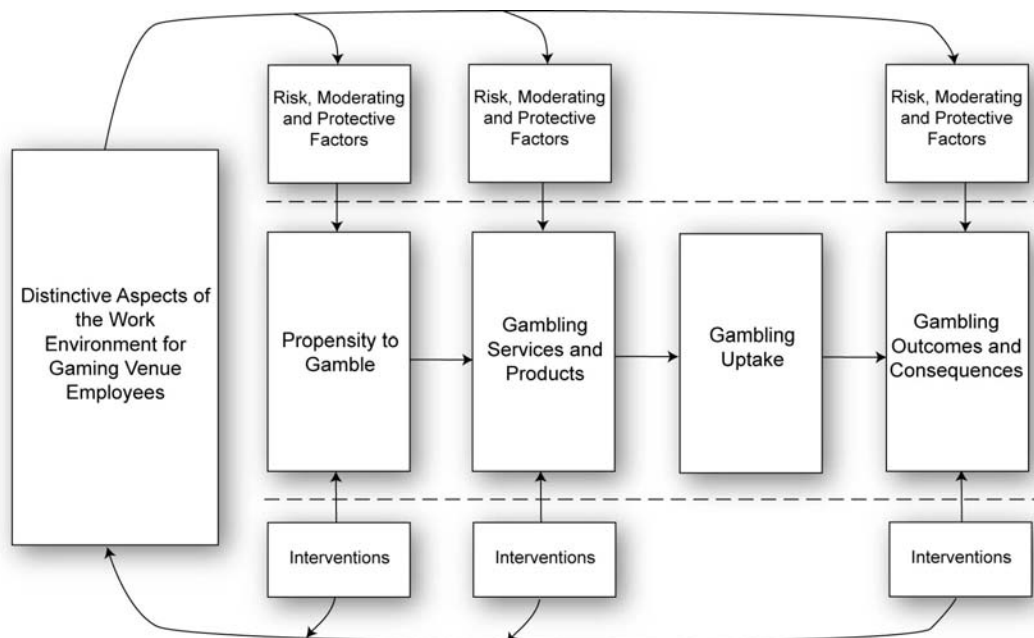
In utilising the Thomas and Jackson model (2004) for the current study, we have made some changes to better depict the key issues examined in this study and their inter-relationships, as shown in Figure 9.1:

- We have added an additional element – distinctive aspects of the work environment for gaming venue employees – as being an influencing factor on the risk, moderating and protective factors associated with their propensity to gamble, the availability to them of gambling products and services, and the outcomes and consequences of their gambling.
- We have added interventions to the model to make their potential role in modifying gambling behaviours and outcomes for gaming venue staff more explicit.

- We have added a feedback loop, in recognition that interventions can potentially modify certain aspects of the work environment for gaming venue staff.
- We have changed the layout of the model, so that the top third focuses on risk, moderating and protective factors for gaming venue staff, the middle third focuses on influencing factors on their gambling behaviours and outcomes, and the bottom third focuses on interventions to encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling amongst gaming venue staff.

The primary purpose of our model is to identify risk, moderating and protective factors which influence gambling behaviours and outcomes for gaming venue employees, so as to enable greater specificity of intervention targets which may reduce these risk factors and/or enhance the protective factors. The study's findings are now synthesised into this model.

Figure 9.1: A Conceptual Model of Influences on Gambling Behaviours and Outcomes for Gaming Venue Staff



Source: adapted from Thomas & Jackson (2004:44)

9.4 RISK, MODERATING AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND INTERVENTIONS RELATING TO THE PROPENSITY TO GAMBLE OF GAMING VENUE EMPLOYEES

This section focuses on the first type of influence on gambling uptake – propensity to gamble – as shown in Figure 9.1. As explained by Thomas and Jackson (2004), the propensity to gamble varies amongst individuals and is potentially influenced by a variety of personal, sociological and cultural factors. In the current study, numerous reasons given by the interviewees for why working in a gaming venue may encourage employee gambling, discourage employee gambling, or not influence employee gambling can be interpreted as reflecting risk, protective and moderating factors, respectively, relating to the propensity of gaming venue employees to gamble. This section first analyses the data summarised in Table 9.1 to categorise them into propensity-related risk factors for staff in their gambling that result from working in a gaming venue. It then analyses the data summarised in Table 9.2 to categorise them into related protective factors for staff in their gambling that result from

working in a gaming venue. Moderating factors, drawn from Table 9.3, are incorporated into both analyses.

9.4.1 Risk Factors Relating to the Propensity to Gamble

Ten risk factors relating to the propensity of gaming venue employees to gamble are discussed below, along with factors identified by the interviewees that may moderate these risks.

Erroneous Beliefs About Winning at Gambling

Amongst the reasons summarised in Table 9.1, several suggest that working in a gaming venue can lead some employees to hold erroneous beliefs about gambling. Close interaction with gamblers can lead to distorted views about winning by some staff, particularly those whose job position means they tend to hear about gambling wins more than losses. If staff are exposed to wins more than losses, and the accompanying excitement, this may create the hope of winning and a view of gambling as a logical way to make money. They may also view gambling as a predominantly exciting pastime and therefore want a 'piece of the action' that their patrons enjoy. This favourable view of gambling may then be reinforced by venue marketing and the generally positive 'spin' that some venue managers put on gambling. Gratuities sometimes received by staff when patrons win further draw attention to gambling wins. In Australia, the Productivity Commission (1999) concluded that certain marketing activities promoting gambling have the potential to undermine responsible gambling and informed decision-making by reinforcing inherently false beliefs, even if the advertisements or promotions themselves are not deceptive. Further, faulty cognitions about gambling are widely considered as a correlate of problem gambling (Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, 2001) and so these erroneous beliefs about the chances of winning at gambling represent a risk factor for gaming venue staff. However, some interviewees suggested ways in which this risk factor may be moderated for staff, including where some staff have little interaction with gamblers and exposure to gambling, where staff are sometimes not allowed to discuss wins and losses with patrons, and where staff inductions point out the realities of gambling. If a venue engages in limited gambling marketing, then the influence of this on the beliefs of venue employees about winning at gambling may also be moderated.

Increased Interest, Familiarity and Knowledge About Gambling

For some staff, it seems that working in a gaming venue increases interest in gambling, as they are required to familiarise themselves with how the various types of gambling work so they can provide appropriate service to venue patrons. For example, they may need to know how to place different types of bets at the TAB and keno terminals, how gaming machines operate, how gambling promotions are run, features of new machines, and how casino table games work. In some positions, detailed and current knowledge of gambling is a job requirement. Further, some front-line staff may constantly hear about gambling and patrons and staff may share 'hot tips', lucky numbers or playing strategies. Combined with advertent or inadvertent encouragement to gamble from patrons, other employees and perhaps even managers, it is not surprising that some staff in gaming venues have a heightened interest in gambling. Further, they may feel well equipped to gamble, having the foundation knowledge of how to place bets, play games, participate in gambling promotions, and the like. Increased knowledge about gambling enhances ease of use of gambling products and services and so increases accessibility to gambling, a factor also associated with problem gambling (Productivity Commission, 1999). However, several interviewees considered that staff are either gamblers or non-gamblers, such that close interaction with gamblers and frequent exposure to gambling would not raise interest levels to the point where non-gamblers would be encouraged to gamble. Thus, inherent lack of interest in gambling may moderate this risk factor.

Erroneous Beliefs About Their Own Skill at Gambling

Related to the above point, increased staff interest in, familiarity with and knowledge about gambling may translate into a view by some staff that they have special or insider knowledge about gambling which enhances their chances of winning. This may be true for games involving skill such as some casino table games. Indeed, the interviewees reported that some former croupiers had left their employment at a casino to become professional gamblers on their preferred table game. However, this view does not hold true for games of pure chance. Nevertheless, some staff reported that they watch machines in their venue, or receive advice on which ones to play from staff in other venues, in the false belief that certain machines are 'due' to pay out and therefore the 'best' to play. Griffiths (1995) suggests that irrational thinking about control and outcomes is common amongst gaming machine players, and it is highly probable that such cognitive distortions influence the development and maintenance of gambling problems (Perese, Bellringer and Abbott, 2005), because they commonly lead gamblers to believe they can predict or influence the outcome of chance events (Toneatto, 1999).

Gambling and Heavy Gambling are Normalised

It appears that frequent exposure to gambling can normalise gambling for gaming venue staff, where it is seen as a typical component of people's lifestyles. The culture of gambling in gaming venues, arising from patron activities, and employees' and sometimes managers' interest in gambling, can reinforce this. Further, frequent exposure to gambling can also normalise heavy gambling, especially where staff are exposed to big bettors. As such, extended gambling sessions and large bets may be considered typical and accepted styles of play. Further, seeing other people gamble heavily may lead some employees to consider their own gambling as minimal, even if it is not. Related to this is that some interviewees reported that staff can lose sight of the value and ownership of money when gambling, as they are accustomed to seeing or handling large amounts of cash at work. As Perese, Bellringer and Abbott (2005) note, attitudes to gambling are important because they directly influence a person's behaviour, so it is likely that employees' attitudes to gambling of acceptance and normalisation also influence their own gambling.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Staff in Gaming Venues

The survey results from Chapter Four indicate a mean age of the surveyed employees of 31 years, with a median age of 29 years. This relatively young age of most gaming venue staff may be a risk factor in itself, as people in this age group are less likely to have family and financial obligations that might otherwise limit their gambling. There is also a tendency amongst some younger people to be less risk-averse and to be 'fun-seekers', with some interviewees suggesting that the industry attracts outgoing people. Some interviewees also suggested the industry may attract gamblers and problem gamblers. Presumably, staff in gaming venues are not anti-gambling *per se*, or they would be unlikely to seek employment in the industry. Whether the industry attracts problem gamblers is not known, but interestingly, some casino employees we interviewed had deliberately sought employment there so they would stop gambling at the casino. Another characteristic of this group of workers which may increase their gambling risks is their generally low socio-economic status, with many operational staff receiving low and irregular wages by virtue of the casual status of their employment. As such, gambling may seem an attractive means to supplement their income. These socio-demographic characteristics of youthful age and low socio-economic status of gaming venue staff generally align with the characteristics of those at high risk of gambling problems, as found in many national prevalence studies (Productivity Commission, 1999; Perese, Bellringer and Abbott, 2005). Further, other studies on youth gambling have found an association between youthful age and elevated sensation seeking rates (Gupta and Derevensky, 1998; Powell, Hardoon, Derevensky and Gupta, 1999), with

sensation seeking being associated with loss of control in gambling (Perese, Bellringer and Abbott, 2005).

Novelty Factor Amongst New, Infrequent or Young Staff

The survey results from Chapter Four suggest that younger staff and those with shorter work careers in gaming venues may be more vulnerable to the development of gambling problems than older more experienced staff. This finding is supported by the interview data, where several respondents contended that younger, newer and infrequent employees may be more likely to gain distorted views about winning at gambling, to be caught up in the fun and excitement of gambling, and to be less aware of the risks associated with gambling, especially if they have not yet received any effective responsible gambling training. They may also not have had the opportunity to witness machine clearances, coin counts and change booth operations, where the volume of gambling losses become more apparent. Combined with the risk factors cited above for young people in general, this novelty factor may increase the attraction of gambling for newer, younger staff and their vulnerability to gambling problems. It seems that this risk is then moderated with time, where some staff become immune to any influence from the work environment on their gambling. This contention is supported by Shaffer and Hall (2002) in their prospective study of gambling problems amongst US casino employees, where problem gambling rates amongst longer-term casino employees decreased over time. More generally, Abbott (2006) has recently proposed that during new exposure to gambling, previously unexposed individuals, population sectors and societies are at high risk of the development of gambling problems, but that over time adaptation typically occurs and problem levels reduce, even in the face of increasing exposure. This 'honeymoon period' seems apparent amongst gaming venue employees.

High Alcohol Consumption

It is apparent that alcohol consumption is relatively high amongst gaming venue employees. This was a constant theme that emerged when we asked the interviewees how staff typically deal with stress or unwind after work. Alcohol consumption can pose a risk factor for gambling problems in several ways. The lowering of inhibitions accompanying alcohol consumption can be a factor in a person deciding to start a gambling session and also in gambling more than intended. It also brings the person into a gambling environment where drinks after work or on days off take place in a hotel, club or casino. The link between alcohol consumption and gambling problems is well documented, and is associated with increased risk-taking during play (Perese, Bellringer and Abbott, 2005), while chronic effects of alcohol such as reduced income and higher expenditure on alcohol may increase the severity of gambling problems (Welte, Wieczorek, Barnes, Tidwell and Parker, 2004).

Workplace Stress Can Create the Urge to Gamble

Gaming venue staff can face a variety of stressors in their work. These include the emotional labour required, especially in front-line positions, when faced with difficult, demanding or intoxicated customers, ethical dilemmas about patrons with gambling problems, heavy and sometimes unpredictable workloads, the challenges of shift work, boredom and job dissatisfaction that arise from mundane and routine work, and the need to be constantly 'upbeat' and communicative. These stresses therefore contribute to a desire by staff to relax and unwind after work, to escape from workplace worries, and to have 'time out' from other people. For some staff, gambling – particularly 'zoning out' on gaming machines – is an appealing way to do this. Gaming venue employees elsewhere have reported high levels of stress, irritability, moodiness and exhaustion after work, along with sleep and appetite problems (Keith *et al.*, 2001). Further, as noted by Perese, Bellringer and Abbott (2005), many studies around the world have found that gambling induces positive emotional states,

such as relaxation, fun and excitement, but that gambling to relieve negative emotional states, such as depression, anxiety, boredom and loneliness, may be a significant risk factor for problem gambling. As such, gambling to reduce work-induced stress is a likely risk factor for gaming venue staff. However, some interviewees suggested that this risk may be modified where staff are trained to better cope with workplace stress, where their jobs are not particularly stressful, where there is a supportive work environment, and where staff engage in other activities to reduce their stress.

Limits on Social Life

Arising from working shift work, some gaming venue staff can suffer social isolation, where they need to find solitary leisure activities as friends, family and sometimes work colleagues are generally working when these staff have time off. Combined with limited social and recreational opportunities for these staff during the day and mid-week, gambling can become an attractive pastime for staff wanting to be around other people or wanting solo entertainment. The appeal of gambling for staff who work split shifts may be further heightened where the break between shifts is not long enough for the person to go home or engage in some other activity. Another limitation on the social lives of gaming venue staff who work late shifts is that gaming venues are generally the only places open when they finish work. In fact, for staff who finish in the early hours of the morning, the casinos are the only places they can gain entry to in areas with a 3am lock-out. These limitations on their social networks and activities can mean that some staff tend to socialise with other hospitality workers who may also be active gamblers. They may return to their workplace during time off and gamble, if allowed, in what is a familiar and comforting environment where they know the staff and regular patrons. Alternatively, some employees frequent other gambling venues where they know the staff, and/or gamble in their workplace while waiting for work colleagues to finish their shift so they can go out together. As noted above, gambling to relieve negative emotional states, such as the loneliness and boredom sometimes experienced by shift workers, is associated with gambling problems. In fact, many counsellors we interviewed noted the high proportions of shift workers amongst their clients. Shift work can interfere with a worker's family, social and community life, with their leisure activities and with other obligations (Keith *et al.*, 2001). Further, Perese, Bellringer and Abbott (2005) note it is probable that a lack of social interaction influences the development and maintenance of gambling problems. However, some of our interviewees identified reasons why the limited social opportunities that accompany shift work might have no influence on staff gambling. These were that some staff engage in other activities or attend to family commitments during their time off, some have other shift workers in hospitality to socialise with, and some just want to go home when they finish work. Other staff reported that they do not do shift work or have permanent shifts around which they can plan their social lives, and some venue managers deliberately try to minimise shift work in the interests of staff wellbeing. All of these factors may moderate the risks of the limited social interaction often experienced by shift workers.

Peer Pressure to Gamble

Given the close social bonds that sometimes develop amongst gaming venue staff due to other limitations on their social life as, employees sometimes participate in gambling due to peer pressure. Our interviewees revealed that this can occur in numerous ways. Gambling amongst staff occurs in the workplace via tipping competitions, punters' clubs and syndicates, and with work colleagues before and after work, on days off, during staff social club activities, during trips away, and on hospitality nights where free drinks and gaming vouchers are sometimes given. Staff can introduce other staff to gambling, and participation may be encouraged by a desire for acceptance into the work group. This peer pressure may also flow from management. It is apparent that some managers are keen gamblers themselves and so set a poor example and sometimes gamble with their staff. Again, a desire to gain

favour or build bonds with management may encourage some employees to gamble. While there is a paucity of research into how social interaction influences gambling (Abbott and Volberg, 1999), associations between problem gambling and parental gambling problems suggest that significant others can be a key influence on a person's gambling, through increasing exposure to gambling and social learning (Perese, Bellringer and Abbott, 2005). One study (Abbott 2001) noted that problem gamblers commonly report that their spouse or partner and work colleagues have gambling problems. While conventional wisdom is that problem gamblers tend to gamble alone, they apparently do not differ from non-problem gamblers in their frequency of participating in gambling with friends and work colleagues (Perese, Bellringer and Abbott, 2005). However, several factors were mentioned by our interviewees that may moderate the influence of peer pressure on staff gambling. These were that some staff do not socialise with other staff due to family responsibilities, because they finish work at different times, and because interest in socialising declines over time, particularly amongst older staff. Peer pressure may also be limited where staff work with different people all the time, or where the venue employs very few staff. Some social activities amongst staff focus on non-gambling activities, such as sport and drinking. Some interviewees reported no peer pressure to gamble, particularly from management, who may not mix socially with their staff, may not try to influence them, and may have no interest in what staff do in their own time.

9.4.2 Protective Factors Relating to the Propensity to Gamble

Table 9.2 identified several distinctive aspects of the work environment in gambling venues that appear to be protective factors, that lower the risks of gambling problems amongst gaming venue staff by lessening their propensity to gamble. These are discussed below, along with any factors identified by the interviewees that may moderate these protective factors.

Exposure to Problem and Heavy Gamblers is a Deterrent

The data summarised in Table 9.2 suggest there are several reasons why relatively close interaction with and frequent exposure to heavy and problem gamblers deter some staff from participating in gambling, or from gambling heavily themselves. A common theme raised by many interviewees was that they had a general aversion to the heavy gamblers in their venues and did not want to be like them. Some were also turned off by the negative emotional responses to gambling losses, such as distress, rudeness, anger and mood volatility, that they witnessed amongst patrons. Some had also witnessed the effects of gambling problems amongst patrons, such as relationship breakdowns, child neglect, personal neglect and poverty. These aspects of working in a gaming venue combined to reportedly deter these staff from gambling. There appears no research that has examined how an individual's gambling is influenced by exposure to problem gamblers, apart from those that have found a positive connection between problem gambling and parental and spousal gambling. However, responsible gambling training and community education programs that discuss the effects of problem gambling and provide case histories of problem gamblers assume such knowledge can be a protective factor. That some of our interviewees viewed this knowledge and exposure as a protective factor for gaming venue staff supports this assumption.

Gambling Becomes Unexciting or Even Stressful

For some staff, any glamour, excitement and appeal of gambling had long been dispelled by virtue of their working experiences in gambling venues. These staff referred to gambling as boring, accompanied by puzzlement as to why some patrons would choose to spend such lengths of time engaged in gambling activities. For some, they were just sick of being around gambling, found the accompanying lights and sounds annoying, were turned off by gambling

promotions, and were deterred by the general darkness and smokiness of the gambling environment. During their time off, the last environment they wanted to be in was a gaming room. For some, being around gambling and gamblers during their working week was stressful, and so they tended to avoid gambling venues in their leisure time. While there appears no research that directly supports this as a protective factor, some people immersed in an environment of addictive behaviours may adapt to that environment and develop some immunity towards it (Zinberg, 1984 in Shaffer *et al.*, 1999). Whether that immunity becomes an aversion to the activity, however, is not known.

Increased Awareness of Gambling Losses

Another protective factor for gaming venue staff is their increased awareness of the poor odds in gambling and the subsequent gambling losses. Staff sometimes hear about losses from patrons, see how much people spend on gambling, and see the venue's takings from gambling during machine clearances, when change booth tills are cleared, in the count rooms and during banking procedures. Combined, these factors mean that staff can sometimes have a better knowledge of the poor odds of winning at gambling than the general public, knowledge that is often reinforced during their responsible gambling training. However, there is no previous research that supports this as a protective factor, reflective of a general paucity of research into the effectiveness of responsible gambling measures (Jackson, Thomas and Ho, 2000). Nevertheless, responsible gambling training and community education that highlight the odds in gambling assume that this knowledge provides some protection against the development of gambling problems.

Heightened Knowledge of Responsible Gambling

Many interviewees, particularly managers, referred to responsible gambling training and venue-based responsible gambling measures as protective factors for their staff. The training was seen to raise staff awareness of problem gambling and its signs, of the typical consequences of problem gambling, of the poor odds in gambling, and of ways to seek help for gambling problems. Also mentioned was that the training can destigmatise problem gambling to encourage help-seeking, and that the training might actually trigger help-seeking by some staff. Similarly, venue-based responsible gambling measures were seen by many as a positive influence on staff, as signage might also trigger help-seeking by raising awareness of gambling problems and where to obtain help, and because involvement in self-exclusion of patrons can deter staff from gambling. The protective effect of these responsible gambling initiatives was considered stronger if supported by a proactive culture of responsible gambling by management. As noted above, few studies have evaluated the effectiveness of responsible gambling initiatives, especially of individual measures. However, in one study of the perceived efficacy of responsible gambling measures in a sample of clubs in Sydney, Australia (Hing, 2003), 18 per cent of patrons who responded reported they had reduced the frequency of their gambling, 17 per cent reported they had reduced their typical session length, and 19 per cent reported they had reduced their usual gambling expenditure because of these measures. However, whether these measures have the same influence on staff is not known. Further, our interviewees cited numerous factors that might moderate any protective effect of responsible gambling training and other measures for staff. These were that not all gaming venue staff are trained because the training is voluntary, it might not be readily available in all areas, or it may not be conducted due to expense or other difficulties. Where training was provided, some interviewees commented that it was not engaging, did not encourage staff to reflect on their own gambling behaviour, was not lengthy enough, and did not involve counsellors or convey the 'human' aspect of gambling problems. Similarly, the potential protection provided by responsible measures in venues was seen as compromised for staff, because signage becomes so familiar that staff do not notice it, it is too discreet, potentially misleading (particularly the hot chillies campaign) and aimed at patrons not staff. Some interviewees commented that responsible gambling training and venue measures

would not assist staff who are in denial about their gambling problems. One even suggested that the training provided a false sense of security to staff against developing gambling problems, while another, a former problem gambler, felt the signage could trigger gambling. Given these perceived shortcomings, many staff were sceptical about their venue's true commitment to responsible conduct of gambling.

Peer Pressure and Support to Not Gamble

A final protective factor relating to the propensity of gaming venue staff to gamble is peer pressure and support. In some workplaces, it seems that a prevailing attitude of gambling as 'a mug's game' or that the staff member 'should know better' deterred staff from gambling. As noted above, prior research suggests that significant others and social learning can influence gambling behaviour, presumably in a positive as well as negative way.

9.4.3 Interventions Relating to the Propensity to Gamble

Thomas and Jackson (2004) contend that interventions can target the propensity to gamble and the propensity to develop gambling problems by targeting at-risk groups with appropriate communications in the mass media and in community settings. Three particular types of interventions suggested by our interviewees and summarised in Table 9.4 have potential here.

More Responsible Gambling Staff Training

In light of the perceived shortcomings of some of the current training that gaming venue staff receive, the interviewees identified numerous ways in which responsible gambling training could be a more effective intervention to reduce the risk factors and enhance protection for staff working in gaming venues. These were for all staff to be trained, including those not working in gaming areas, and for regular refresher courses to be conducted. The content of the training could also be improved, it was suggested, by emphasising the odds in gambling, the negative effects of problem gambling, and risks for staff in their own gambling. A suggestion was made that all staff should witness machine clearances to emphasise the poor odds in gambling, knowledge that appears to act as a protective factor for some staff. Others felt that having a staff member in all venues who is dedicated to responsible gambling would also be of benefit to ensure that training was done regularly and was of high quality. More responsible staff training, especially targeted at newer and younger employees, might help to prevent or dispel any erroneous beliefs about the chances of winning at gambling and about an individual's ability to predict or influence the outcomes of games of chance. Such training might also prevent or decrease the normalisation of gambling and heavy gambling for staff if it can successfully change attitudes to gambling amongst those staff who perceive it as typically a normal part of people's lifestyles.

Promote a Stronger Culture of Responsible Gambling

Given the scepticism that some interviewees felt about their venue's commitment to responsible gambling, it was not surprising that several suggestions were made to promote a stronger culture of responsible gambling in the workplace. To support this change in workplace culture and to generate this culture more widely amongst staff, proactive managers who lead by example, more widespread implementation of the *Queensland Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct* and involvement in initiatives such as Responsible Gambling Awareness Week were suggested. A stronger workplace culture of responsible gambling may be an important step in changing staff attitudes to gambling, a precursor to behavioural change, and in promoting peer pressure in the workplace to control one's gambling.

Promote Staff Wellbeing

The propensity to gamble and to develop gambling problems may also be reduced by promoting staff wellbeing, with suggestions made to train staff in stress management and conflict resolution, and to provide and promote alternative leisure activities for staff. These initiatives may help to reduce the risk factors for staff by helping them to deal with workplace stressors and other stress in alternative ways than gambling and drinking, and by providing more opportunities for social and recreational activities away from gambling.

9.5 RISK, MODERATING AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND INTERVENTIONS RELATING TO GAMBLING PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

This section focuses on the second type of influence on gambling behaviour shown in Figure 9.1 – gambling products and services – including their availability, their marketing, and how well they meet the individual's needs or expectations (Thomas and Jackson, 2004). In the current study, some reasons given by the interviewees for why working in a gaming venue may encourage employee gambling, discourage employee gambling, or not influence employee gambling can be interpreted as reflecting risk, protective and moderating factors, respectively, relating to gambling products and services. This section analyses the data summarised in Table 9.1 to categorise them into risk factors for staff in their gambling that result from increased availability and appeal of gambling products and services. It then analyses the data summarised in Table 9.2 to categorise them into related protective factors for staff in their gambling. Moderating factors, drawn from Table 9.3, are incorporated into both analyses.

9.5.1 Risk Factors Relating to Gambling Products and Services

Two major risk factors for gaming venue staff associated with gambling products and services are discussed below, along with factors identified by the interviewees that may moderate these risks.

Increased Access to Gambling

Amongst the reasons that working in a gaming venue can encourage staff gambling, several relate to heightened accessibility to gambling by gaming venue staff. From our interview findings, it is apparent that many staff are allowed to gamble in their workplace. While none of the casinos allowed staff to gamble in the workplace, about one-half of the clubs and hotels in our study allowed staff other than those with gaming licences to do so outside of working hours. While little research has been conducted into access to gambling and its impacts on gambling behaviour and gambling problems, the Productivity Commission concluded that there was 'sufficient evidence from many different sources to suggest a significant connection between greater accessibility to gambling – particularly to gaming machines – and the greater prevalence of problem gambling' (1999:8.31). This conclusion was based on a recognition that accessibility to gambling is a multi-dimensional construct which goes beyond just proximity to gambling activities. It also comprises the number of opportunities to gamble, the spatial distribution of venues, the number of venues, gambling opportunities per venue, opening hours of venues, conditions of entry to venues, ease of use of different gambling products, financial accessibility of gambling, and social accessibility of gambling venues and products (Productivity Commission, 1999). Drawing on these multiple dimensions of access and our interview findings, gaming venue staff who are allowed to gamble in their workplace have very high accessibility to gambling because:

- they have the highest number of opportunities to gamble, given the proximity and convenience of gambling in their workplace;

- their ease of use of gambling products in the workplace, such as particular machines or gambling promotions, is heightened due to their knowledge and familiarity with how they work;
- their social accessibility to gambling is very high as the workplace is typically a familiar, non-threatening and attractive environment for them, which provides safety, a sense of inclusion, an opportunity for social interaction with known patrons and fellow staff, and social acceptance in the venue;
- the venue at which they work may be open when they finish a shift, allowing them the opportunity to gamble to unwind after work;
- financial accessibility to gambling is heightened, where staff can withdraw cash from their bank account and access their wages through ATMs in their workplace which are also in close proximity to gambling opportunities in the venue;
- unlike the general population and staff who cannot gamble in their workplace, their accessibility to gambling in the workplace is not limited by any conditions of entry to gaming, the spatial distribution of gaming venues, the number of accessible gaming venues, and the number of opportunities to gamble, except as these relate to opportunities in their workplace.

Additionally, even those staff who are not allowed to gamble in their workplace have increased access to gambling compared to the general population because:

- their ease of use of gambling products is heightened due to their knowledge and familiarity with how they work;
- their social accessibility to gambling is high as other gambling venues are often a familiar, non-threatening environment for them, they often know staff at other venues which heightens their social acceptance in those venues, and they are sometimes encouraged to gamble with work colleagues after work and on days off;
- other venues may be the only places open when they finish a late shift, allowing them the opportunity to gamble to unwind after work;
- the opportunity to gamble on credit is available to some staff, particularly those who operate TAB and keno terminals. While this practice is, of course, illegal and prosecutions have occurred, some interviewees raised this opportunity as a temptation for some staff.

Thus, while strict management policies of no gambling in the workplace may moderate the risks for some staff by reducing access to gambling, they do not appear to ameliorate these risks completely.

Exposure to Gambling Products and Their Marketing Can Trigger the Urge to Gamble

A second risk factor associated with gambling products and services relates to the exposure of venue staff to these products and to their marketing. It appears that several aspects of working in a gaming venue can trigger gambling by gaming venue staff. Seeing other people win, hearing ‘hot tips’, seeing jackpot levels rise, being caught up in the excitement of gambling promotions, having frequent exposure to gambling marketing, being surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere, and just being in the gambling environment for extended periods of time appear to potentially have this effect. Some who are allowed to gamble in their workplace reported finding it difficult or impossible to walk past the venue’s gaming machines without having a bet. It is widely recognised that the gambling environment, including lighting, colour, sound effects and the size of jackpots, may influence gambling behaviour (Griffiths, 1995; Griffiths and Parke, 2003), although the nature of any link

between situational factors and problem gambling remains unclear (Perese, Bellringer and Abbott, 2005). Nevertheless, most problem gamblers we interviewed suggested that working in a gambling environment triggered their urge to gamble, suggesting that this may have contributed to the maintenance, if not the onset, of their gambling problems. If this is the case, then rotating staff between jobs and departments to give them a break from the gambling environment may moderate the maintenance of gambling problems for some staff. This risk for staff may also be moderated, it was suggested, where gambling is prohibited in the workplace, where the venue operates no gambling promotions or linked jackpots, and where staff are not allowed to enter workplace promotions. Others suggested that staff are often desensitised to promotions or are not attracted by the small prizes typically on offer. Others considered promotions as unattractive to the relatively young age group of staff and to heavy gamblers.

9.5.2 Protective Factors Relating to Gambling Products and Services

Table 9.2 has summarised numerous reasons given by the interviewees for why working in a gaming venue can discourage gambling by the staff who work there. However, only a few reasons appear to be protective factors against the heightened accessibility and exposure to gambling that these staff experience.

Limits on Access to Gambling

Strict management policies of no gambling in the workplace appear to provide some protection for staff by reducing access to gambling products and services. However, as discussed above, even staff who are not allowed to gamble in their workplace have greater access to gambling than the general population. There are, however, some exceptions. One applies to those casino staff who are interested only in gambling on table games, as these staff cannot gamble on these in their workplace and so have to travel considerable distances to access these. Indeed, some interviewees reported that some casino staff had deliberately sought employment at the casino to prevent them from gambling on table games. Another exception is where staff finish work when all other venues in the area are closed. This removes the opportunity to gamble after work. Even those staff who are allowed to gamble in the workplace cannot do so if they work the closing shift and if there are no other accessible venues open after that time.

Exposure to Gambling Products and Their Marketing Can Raise Awareness of Poor Odds

While exposure to gambling products and their marketing can trigger the urge to gamble for some employees, others appear to become sceptical of the gambling marketing conducted by venues, and more aware of the low chances of winning gambling promotions and jackpots. That is, increased awareness of gambling losses, as discussed above, may also make some staff less receptive to marketing and promotional appeals.

9.5.3 Interventions Relating to Gambling Products and Services

Thomas and Jackson (2004) contend that interventions relating to gambling products and services that have been trialled include reduced accessibility to gambling, venue caps or limits, no smoking policies, play breaks, low denomination note acceptors and modified machine design. While these types of interventions are aimed at the general population, our purpose here is to identify interventions that could potentially reduce the risk factors specifically for gaming venue staff. Three particular types of interventions suggested by our interviewees and summarised in Table 9.4 have potential here.

No Gambling in the Workplace

A strict management policy of no gambling in the workplace may reduce, although not eliminate, the heightened access to gambling experienced by staff who work in gaming venues. This is because it lessens easy and convenient access, reduces temptation, and prevents staff from spending their wages at the venue. Several respondents advocated that this policy should apply to all staff, not just those with gaming licences, in recognition that non-gaming staff may also be at risk.

Limit Access to Cash in the Workplace

Ready availability of cash in the workplace has been identified as a potential risk factor for some staff in the development and/or maintenance of gambling problems. Suggested interventions to reduce this availability comprised no advances on staff wages, not paying staff in cash, and minimising the temptation of stealing cash and credit betting through having strict surveillance and control procedures in the venue.

Limit Exposure to Gambling in the Workplace

Given that heightened exposure to gambling products and their marketing appears a risk factor for some staff, interventions to limit this exposure may provide some protection. Some managers noted that they rotate their frontline staff so they get a break from this exposure. Another suggestion was made by one employee, who advocated that staff should be shielded from the sights and sounds of gambling, by containing gambling activities in separate gaming rooms.

9.6 RISK, MODERATING AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND INTERVENTIONS RELATING TO THE OUTCOMES AND CONSEQUENCES OF GAMBLING

Outcomes and consequences of gambling uptake can include negative impacts on individuals, families and the community through the development and maintenance of problematic gambling (Thomas and Jackson, 2004). In the current study, some reasons given by the interviewees for why working in a gaming venue may encourage employee gambling, discourage employee gambling, or not influence employee gambling can be interpreted as reflecting risk, protective and moderating factors, respectively, relating to the outcomes and consequences of gambling. This section analyses the data summarised in Table 9.1 to categorise them into risk factors for staff in their gambling that influence the nature and extent of these outcomes and consequences. It then analyses the data summarised in Table 9.2 to categorise them into related protective factors for staff in their gambling. Moderating factors, drawn from Table 9.3, are incorporated into both analyses.

9.6.1 Risk Factors Relating to Outcomes and Consequences of Gambling

Six risk factors relating to the outcomes and consequences of gambling by gaming venue staff are discussed below, along with factors identified by the interviewees that may moderate these risks.

Unhelpful Attitudes to Gambling Problems

Compared to the general population, gaming venue staff should have greater awareness of problem gambling, due to responsible gambling training, other responsible gambling measures in their workplace and perhaps by witnessing gambling problems amongst their patrons. An unintended consequence of this is that some staff may have a false sense of security that they are immune to the development of gambling problems or are better equipped to avoid them. An attitude that staff should know better and realise that gambling is 'a mug's game' may mean that gambling problems amongst staff are not taken seriously by

other staff or management. Close friendships amongst staff may also deter management or other staff from intervening. This was the case for one problem gambler in counselling, who reported that her close friendship with her boss and other staff deterred them from assisting her through support, advice and self-exclusion.

Reluctance to Expose a Gambling Problem

Given that risks to venue staff are apparently not discussed in most workplaces and that there is a general disdain amongst many staff for people who cannot control their gambling, it is not surprising that many interviewees reported that staff would be too embarrassed to admit a gambling problem and might go to additional lengths to conceal it. This reluctance is also exacerbated where employees fear that exposing a problem would result in job loss. While most managers we interviewed reported that they would assist an employee with gambling problems and try to find alternative employment in the venue, many employees and counsellors felt that staff would be very unlikely to expose a problem. Further, Legal Aid (Brisbane) noted that it would advise any employees to not reveal a gambling problem to an employer, as the employee would be a first suspect in the event of any cash discrepancies and employment could be easily terminated under the recent Work Choices legislation. Given that the major identifiable problems and consequences of excessive gambling become most apparent when financial resources are insufficient to meet the requirements of gambling activities (Thomas and Jackson, 2004), any threats (real or perceived) to the financial resources of staff with problems would be an additional deterrent to admitting a problem. As such, this reluctance may deter staff from seeking help, and thus exacerbate or prolong the negative outcomes and consequences of problem gambling.

Lack of Detection of Gambling Problems

While staff with gambling problems may be more reluctant than other individuals to expose a gambling problem and seek help, other aspects associated with working in gaming venues may also make it very difficult for other people to detect a gambling problem in a staff member. For example, some managers commented that, because they do not allow staff to gamble in their workplace, a problem can go undetected. As one noted, if staff were allowed 'to gamble here, I might be able to pick up on their gambling habits and address them'. A further issue raised was that shift work can make it easier to hide a gambling problem, as staff members can gamble when their family and friends are at work. The ability to conceal a gambling problem can make it easier for gamblers to maintain their self-denial.

Lack of Social and Family Support

It is well known that familial and community social supports are a key protective factor for adversity in general and for the negative consequences of gambling activity in particular (Thomas and Jackson, 2004). Given the social isolation experienced by some venue staff as a result of shift work, and their relatively young age group and fewer family responsibilities, key support mechanisms that can encourage a person to admit, address and resolve a gambling problem may be absent. This may be exacerbated in some locations where staff move to the area because of hospitality jobs generated by tourism, and are then removed from their usual family and social support structures.

Limited Financial Resources

Low socio-economic status in general has been identified as a risk factor for problem gambling development (Perese, Bellringer and Abbott, 2005). It is also a risk factor for the negative consequences of gambling, as low financial resources amplify the consequences of heavy gambling by limiting the ability of a person to finance their gambling, pay debts and fund everyday activities (Thomas and Jackson, 2004). As noted earlier, the low and irregular wages often earned by gaming venue staff may make gambling appealing as a way to supplement this income. It may also exacerbate the negative consequences of gambling

activities as these people do not have the financial resources to fall back on as gambling losses mount.

Difficulties in Addressing Gambling Problems

Even where a staff member admits a gambling problem and seeks help, their strategies to assist recovery may be more limited than those available to other people. First, by virtue of their employment, they may find it difficult or impossible to avoid gambling activities. Reluctance to expose a gambling problem to their boss or workmates may mean that they continue to work in a gambling environment and to be exposed to triggers to gamble. There may also be a lack of alternative employment opportunities in the area. For example, one problem gambler in counselling noted that the only alternative jobs in her area for which she was qualified were also in gambling venues. Some other interviewees referred to the ‘golden handcuff’ experienced by casino croupiers, who are faced with limited alternative employment at comparable levels of pay. The difficulty of self-excluding from the workplace or other gaming venues was also identified as a hurdle, as this would lead to exposure of a gambling problem and embarrassment, particularly in small towns where it is hard to maintain privacy. Self-exclusion may also limit employment opportunities, with one counsellor noting a client who did not want to self-exclude from the nearby casino as he had applied for a job there as a chef. One further potential hurdle for staff in addressing a gambling problem was difficulty in accessing help services. Where a staff member works varying casual shifts, it may be difficult to enter a program of regular counselling.

9.6.2 Protective Factors Relating to Outcomes and Consequences of Gambling

Table 9.2 has summarised numerous reasons given by the interviewees for why working in a gaming venue can discourage gambling by the staff who work there. However, only a few reasons appear to be protective factors against the negative outcomes and consequences of gambling by venue staff.

Responsible Gambling Initiatives Can Assist Help-Seeking

Responsible gambling training for staff and the implementation of other venue-based responsible gambling measures have been discussed previously in their capacity to protect staff from developing gambling problems. These measures may also play a role in protecting staff from the maintenance of gambling problems, and so reduce the negative outcomes and consequences of gambling problems. Training, signage and involvement in self-exclusion might trigger problem recognition for some employees and raise awareness of how to get help for gambling problems. These measures might also help to destigmatise problem gambling and encourage a staff member to approach a counselling service. For example, one counsellor recalled a client who had approached the service after that counsellor had conducted a training session at the client’s workplace, noting that ‘the fact that he’d attended the training may have made it a little bit easier for him to come in. He may not have come in at all, if he hadn’t been at that training’.

Support from Management and Staff to Address Gambling Problems

A further protective factor that can reduce the negative outcomes and consequences of heavy gambling is support from management and staff in the workplace. Some interviewees gave examples of how fellow employees and/or management were proactive in providing advice or support for staff to stop or cut down on their gambling, to seek help to control their gambling, or to suggest alternative leisure activities.

9.6.3 Interventions Relating to Outcomes and Consequences of Gambling

Thomas and Jackson (2004) contend that interventions relating to outcomes and consequences of gambling can include early intervention, problem recognition intervention, and treatment for gambling problems. Numerous suggestions were made relating to how gaming venues could assist staff with gambling problems so as to reduce their associated negative impacts. These are grouped into the three categories below.

Supportive Management Attitudes

Open communication with management, where staff can feel comfortable approaching managers about personal and work-related concerns, was seen as a precursor to appropriate interventions that could reduce the negative outcomes and consequences of gambling problems. Supportive attitudes and an assurance that having a gambling problem would not threaten their job, and would be kept confidential, were important issues raised.

Provide Alternative Jobs in the Venue

A further intervention if a staff member was concerned about his or her own gambling is to remove that person from the gambling environment. This could involve finding the person a position not directly involved with gambling and gamblers, and where there is no exposure to gambling. Managers can also assist to reduce exposure to gambling by organising self-exclusion for the staff member from the gaming areas in the workplace and by helping with self-exclusion from other venues.

Provide Assistance with Help-Seeking

Managers can also intervene by providing the staff member with information about and referrals to counselling and by helping to liaise with local counselling services on the staff member's behalf. In larger organisations with appropriate resources, in-house counselling services may also be appropriate as long as staff feel that confidentiality will be maintained.

Table 9.4 summarises the risk factors, protective factors and interventions relating to the propensity to gamble, gambling products and services, and gambling outcomes and consequences for gaming venue employees.

Table 9.5: Risk Factors, Protective Factors and Interventions for Gaming Venue Staff

	Risk Factors	Protective Factors	Interventions
Propensity to gamble	Erroneous beliefs about winning at gambling Increased interest, familiarity and knowledge about gambling Erroneous beliefs about their own skill at gambling Gambling and heavy gambling are normalised Socio-demographic characteristics (young age, low socio-economic status) Novelty factor amongst new, infrequent or young staff High alcohol consumption Workplace stress can create the urge to gamble Limits on social life Peer pressure to gamble	Exposure to heavy gamblers is a deterrent Gambling becomes unexciting or even stressful Increased awareness of gambling losses Heightened knowledge of responsible gambling Peer pressure and support to not gamble	More responsible gambling training Promote a stronger culture of responsible gambling Promote staff wellbeing
Gambling products and services	Increased access to gambling Exposure to gambling products and marketing can trigger gambling	Limits on access to gambling Exposure to gambling products and marketing can raise awareness of poor odds	No gambling in the workplace Limit access to cash in the workplace Limit exposure to gambling in the workplace
Gambling outcomes and consequences	Unhelpful attitudes to gambling problems Reluctance to expose a problem Lack of detection of gambling problems Lack of social and family support Limited financial resources Difficulties in addressing gambling problems	Responsible gambling initiatives can assist help-seeking Support from management and staff to address gambling problems	Supportive management attitudes Provide alternative jobs in the venue Provide assistance with help-seeking.

9.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has concluded this study into the gambling behaviour of gaming venue staff, aspects of their work environment that influence that behaviour, and venue strategies that can encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling. After summarising the results for each of the four research objectives, the chapter developed a conceptual model to synthesise the study's findings into risk and protective factors and interventions relating to the propensity to gamble, gambling products and services, and outcomes and consequences of gambling by staff who work in gaming venues.

While exploratory in nature, the research presented in this report is able to reach a number of conclusions. First, staff who work in gaming venues appear an at-risk group for developing gambling problems. Second, this risk for some staff stems from a variety of factors relating to working in a gambling environment that heighten their propensity to gamble, their accessibility to gambling and their receptivity to gambling marketing and promotions, and that compound the negative outcomes and consequences of their gambling. Third, numerous workplace factors also protect some staff by deterring them from gambling, by improving informed choice and by minimising harmful behaviours. Finally, there are strategies venues can implement to better encourage responsible gambling and discourage the development of gambling problems amongst their staff. These include staff training and education aimed at reducing their propensity to gamble, reducing staff accessibility and exposure to gambling products and services, and strategies to assist staff with gambling problems to reduce the associated potential negative outcomes and consequences.

While it is beyond the scope of this study to make specific recommendations, it is hoped that this research has drawn attention to the numerous risk factors faced by gaming venue staff in their employment and the range of interventions that can be implemented in gaming venues to enhance the wellbeing of gaming venue staff in relation to gambling.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR GAMBLING COUNSELLORS

1. Overview of your counselling agency and your work

- a.** How long has your agency been offering gambling counselling? How many gambling counsellors does it have? About how many gambling clients has it had per year? Currently?
- b.** How long have you been a gambling counsellor? How long have you worked at this agency?

2. Clients who work/have worked in gambling venues

- a.** What proportion of your problem gambling clients work/have worked in gambling venues? About how many would this be over recent years?
- b.** Describe some typical problem gamblers amongst your past or present clients who are working, or have worked, in a gambling venue? E.g. male/female, age range, type of venue, their position, length of employment, preferred type of gambling.

3. Close interaction with gamblers

- a.** Client experience: Have these clients who work/have worked in gambling venues ever mentioned whether frequent interaction with gamblers influences their own gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?
- b.** Counsellor opinion: Do you think that frequent interaction with gamblers is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why?

4. Frequent exposure to gambling

- a.** Client experience: Have these clients ever mentioned whether frequent exposure to gambling in the workplace influences their gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples? E.g. does it 'normalise' risky gambling behaviour or make it more acceptable? E.g. do they think they have better knowledge about the odds of winning and higher chances of winning because of this knowledge?
- b.** Counsellor opinion: Do you think that frequent exposure to gambling in the workplace is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why?

5. Influence of fellow employees

- a.** Client experience: Have these clients ever reported any influence from fellow employees on their gambling? E.g. have fellow employees encouraged or discouraged them from gambling? How? Why? Examples?
- b.** Counsellor opinion: Do you think that fellow employees are likely to influence the gambling activities of gambling venue employees? How? Why?

6. Influence of management

- a.** Client experience: Have these clients ever reported any influence of their manager(s) and their policies and practices on their gambling behaviour? E.g. have these encouraged or discouraged them from gambling? How? Why? Examples?
- b.** Counsellor opinion: Do you think that gambling venue managers and their policies and practices are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why?

7. Nature of their work

- a. Client experience: Have these clients ever mentioned workplace stress as influencing their gambling? How? Why? Examples? What types of stressors have they mentioned?
- b. Counsellor opinion: Do you think that workplace stressors are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why?

8. Hours of work

- a. Client experience: Have these clients ever mentioned that working the odd hours typical of hospitality work (nights, weekends, shiftwork) influences their gambling behaviour, perhaps through its impact on their leisure opportunities? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Counsellor opinion: Do you think that working the odd hours typical of hospitality work (nights, weekends, shiftwork) influences the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees through its impact on their leisure opportunities? How? Why?

9. Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions

- a. Client experience: Have these clients ever mentioned whether frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions influences their gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Counsellor opinion: Do you think that frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why?

10. Responsible gambling training of staff

- a. Client experience: Have any of these clients completed their responsible gaming training? Have they ever reported that it has influenced their own gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Counsellor opinion: Do you think that the responsible gambling training completed by gambling venue staff is likely to influence their gambling behaviour? How? Why?

11. Responsible gambling strategies in the venue

- a. Client experience: Many gambling venues have implemented responsible gambling measures (e.g. signage, self-exclusion). Have these clients ever mentioned whether these measures have influenced their gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Counsellor opinion: Do you think that responsible gambling measures are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why?

12. Other aspects of the work environment

- a. Client experience: Have these clients ever mentioned any other aspects of their work environment we haven't discussed that they think influence their gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Counsellor opinion: Do you think there any other aspects of the work environment we haven't discussed that are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why?

13. Venue strategies to encourage responsible gambling

- a. Client experience: Have these clients ever mentioned any ways that gambling venues can help encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling for their staff?
- b. Counsellor opinion: In your opinion, what are the most effective ways that gambling venues can help encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling for their staff?

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR VENUE MANAGERS

1. Gaming Facilities

- a. What type of gaming facilities does your venue have? (gaming machines, TAB, table games, keno, lottery type games, bingo). How many of each type?
- b. What contribution do your gaming operations make to your business's profits? (whole, three quarters, half, one quarter).

2. Staffing

- a. How many staff do you have (full time, part time, casual)?
- b. How many work in the gaming sections?
- c. Approximately, what is staff turnover per year?

3. Extent of staff gambling

- a. Are staff allowed to gamble on the premises? In their uniform? Out of uniform? During a work break? On their days off work?
- b. If yes, do your staff gamble much on the premises? Could you estimate how many and how frequently they might do this? What do they gamble on? Do they gamble with other members of your staff?
- c. Do you know if any of your staff gamble at other venues? Could you estimate how many and how frequently they might do this? What do they gamble on? Do they gamble with other members of your staff?

4. Close interaction with gamblers

- a. From your experience, does frequent interaction with gamblers influence the gambling behaviour of your employees? How? Why? Examples?

5. Frequent exposure to gambling

- a. From your experience, does frequent exposure to gambling in the workplace influence the gambling behaviour of your employees? How? Why? Examples?

6. Influence of fellow employees

- a. From your experience, do fellow employees influence the gambling behaviour of your employees? How? Why? Examples?

7. Influence of management

- a. From your experience, do gambling venue managers and their policies and practices influence the gambling behaviour of your employees? How? Why? Examples?

8. Nature of employee work

- a. From your experience, do any workplace stressors influence the gambling behaviour of your employees? How? Why? Examples?

9. Hours of work

- a. From your experience, does working the odd hours typical of hospitality work (nights, weekends, shiftwork) influence the gambling behaviour of your employees? How? Why? Examples?

10. Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions

- a. From your experience, does frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions influence the gambling behaviour of your employees? How? Why? Examples?

11. Responsible gambling training of staff

- a. From your experience, has the responsible gambling training your employees have completed influenced their gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?

12. Responsible gambling strategies in the venue

- a. From your experience, have the responsible gambling measures implemented in your workplace influenced the gambling behaviour of your employees? How? Why? Examples?

13. Other aspects of the work environment

- a. From your experience, are there any other aspects of the work environment we haven't discussed that influence the gambling behaviour of your employees? How? Why? Examples?

14. Staff welfare

- a. Do you think that hospitality staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Do you have any mechanisms to alert your staff to risks of problem gambling amongst themselves or other staff?
- c. What would you do if a staff member revealed that they had a gambling problem?
- d. What would you do if a staff member revealed that they suspected another staff member had a gambling problem?
- e. Do you have regular staff meetings for staff to discuss workplace concerns?
- f. Are staff paid in cash, cheque or by electronic means? Can staff get an advance on their wages?

15. Venue strategies to encourage responsible gambling

- a. In your opinion, what are the most effective ways that gambling venues can help encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling for their staff?

APPENDIX C: EMPLOYEE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Your work background

Can you please briefly tell us what experience you have had working in gambling venues – type of venue, your position, and how long you have been/were employed there?

2. Close interaction with gamblers

From your experience, do you think that frequent interaction with gamblers is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

3. Frequent exposure to gambling

From your experience, do you think that frequent exposure to gambling in the workplace is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

4. Influence of fellow employees

From your experience, do you think that fellow employees are likely to influence the gambling activities of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

5. Influence of management

From your experience, do you think that gambling venue managers and their policies and practices are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

6. Nature of your work

From your experience, do you think that workplace stressors are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

7. Hours of work

From your experience, do you think that working the odd hours typical of hospitality work (nights, weekends, shiftwork) influences the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees through its impact on their leisure opportunities? How? Why? Examples?

8. Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions

From your experience, do you think that frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

9. Responsible gambling training of staff

From your experience, do you think that the responsible gambling training completed by gambling venue staff is likely to influence their gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?

10. Responsible gambling strategies in the venue

From your experience, do you think that the responsible gambling measures implemented in your workplace (e.g. signage, self-exclusion, etc) are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

11. Other aspects of the work environment

From your experience, do you think there any other aspects of the work environment we haven't discussed that are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

12. Venue strategies to encourage responsible gambling

- a. From your experience, do you think that hospitality staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems? How? Why? Examples?
- b. In your opinion, what are the most effective ways that gambling venues can help encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling for their staff?

13. Your own gambling activities

We'd like finally to ask you about your own gambling activities. Can you please complete the following questionnaire and return it to us either now or in the re

APPENDIX D: EMPLOYEE GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions as honestly as possible. Your answers are completely confidential and anonymous. You do not need to put your name on the questionnaire. Please return your completed questionnaire in the reply-paid envelope.

1. What is your age? _____ years old
 2. What is your sex? ☐ Male ☐ Female
 3. What is your current job title? _____
 4. What type of gambling venue do you currently work in?
☐ Hotel/pub ☐ Club ☐ Casino
 5. What other types of gambling venues have you ever worked in? (tick as many boxes as appropriate)
☐ Hotel/pub ☐ Casino ☐ TAB
☐ Club ☐ Racetrack ☐ Other (please specify) _____
 6. In total, for about how long have you worked in gambling venues? _____ yrs _____ mths
 7. In the last 12 months, how often did you bet or spend money on these types of gambling? (please tick one box per line)
- | | Daily | 2-6 times a week | About once a week | About once a fortnight | About once a month | Once every few months | Hardly at all/ Never |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Lotto/Instant lotto/ Lottery/Soccer Pools | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Bingo | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Keno | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Gaming machines | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| TAB betting | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Racetrack betting | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Casino games | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sports betting | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Gambling on the internet | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Private gambling (e.g. cards with friends) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
8. During the last 12 months, how much time have you normally spent each time you have gambled on each of the following activities? (please write down hours and minutes for each)
- | | | |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| Lotto/Instant lotto/ Lottery/Soccer Pools | _____ hours | _____ minutes |
| Bingo | _____ hours | _____ minutes |
| Keno | _____ hours | _____ minutes |
| Gaming machines | _____ hours | _____ minutes |
| TAB betting | _____ hours | _____ minutes |
| Racetrack betting | _____ hours | _____ minutes |
| Casino games | _____ hours | _____ minutes |
| Sports betting | _____ hours | _____ minutes |
| Gambling on the internet | _____ hours | _____ minutes |
| Private gambling (e.g. cards with friends) | _____ hours | _____ minutes |

9. During the last 12 months, how much money, not including winnings, did you spend on each of the following types of gambling in a typical month? (please write down the amount)

Lotto/Instant lotto/ Lottery/Soccer Pools \$ _____

Bingo \$ _____

Keno \$ _____

Gaming machines \$ _____

TAB betting \$ _____

Racetrack betting \$ _____

Casino games \$ _____

Sports betting \$ _____

Gambling on the internet \$ _____

Private gambling \$ _____

10. Finally, we'd like to ask you the following questions (please tick one box on each line):

	Never	Sometimes	Most of the time	Almost always
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often have you bet more than you could really afford to lose?..... <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often have you needed to gamble with larger amounts of money to get the same feeling of excitement? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often have you gone back another day to try to win back some of the money you lost? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often have you borrowed money or sold anything to get money to gamble? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often have you felt that you might have a problem with gambling? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often have people criticised your betting or told you that you had a gambling problem, regardless of whether or not you thought it was true? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often have you felt guilty about the way you gamble, or what happens when you gamble? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often has your gambling caused you any health problems, including stress or anxiety? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Thinking about the past 12 months, how often has your gambling caused any financial problems for you or your household? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Is gambling a problem for you? CALL the Gambling Helpline.
A confidential & free counselling service.
FREE CALL 1800 222 050.

Please return in the reply-paid envelope to: Dr Nerilee Hing, School of Tourism & Hospitality Management, Southern Cross University, PO Box 157 Lismore NSW 2480

APPENDIX E: AGENCY NOTICE TO RECRUIT PROBLEM GAMBLERS

Do you, or have you ever worked in a pub, club or casino?

Do you have a problem with gambling?

Are you interested in being part of a statewide research project on gambling by gaming venue staff and ways to better protect them from gambling problems?

If you answered yes to these questions, we would LOVE to hear your stories and opinions.

This would involve a telephone or personal interview of about 30 minutes. We will bear any costs associated with this. Your participation will greatly help us in a research project funded by the QLD Government and conducted by the Centre for Gambling Education and Research at Southern Cross University.

For more information on how to be part of this research, please contact one of the following people from the Centre for Gambling Education and Research by 30 August 2005. They will arrange a mutually convenient time to chat with you:

Nerilee Hing - phone 02 6620 3928 or email nhing@scu.edu.au
 Helen Breen - phone 02 6620 3152 or email hbreen@scu.edu.au
 Sharen Nisbet - phone 02 6620 3930 or email snisbet@scu.edu.au



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APPENDIX F: PROBLEM GAMBLING CLIENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Your background

- a. Can you please briefly tell us what experience you have had working in gambling venues – type of venue, your position, and how long you have been/were employed there?
- b. Could you please tell us a little about yourself, your age, marital status, housing situation, education qualifications.
- c. Could you please describe your involvement with gambling. For example: when you first started gambling, who or what influenced you at the beginning, what you mainly gamble on, how frequently you gamble now, how much you spend, who you gamble with and why you gamble.

2. Close interaction with gamblers

- a. Your experience: Has frequent interaction with gamblers influenced your own gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Your opinion: Do you think that frequent interaction with gamblers is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

3. Frequent exposure to gambling

- a. Your experience: Has frequent exposure to gambling in the workplace influenced your own gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Your opinion: Do you think that frequent exposure to gambling in the workplace is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

4. Influence of fellow employees

- a. Your experience: Have fellow employees influenced your own gambling behaviour? E.g. do fellow employees encourage or discourage you from gambling? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Your opinion: Do you think that fellow employees are likely to influence the gambling activities of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

5. Influence of management

- a. Your experience: Have gambling venue managers and their policies and practices influenced your own gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Your opinion: Do you think that gambling venue managers and their policies and practices are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

6. Nature of your work

- a. Your experience: Have any workplace stressors influenced your own gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Your opinion: Do you think that workplace stressors are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

7. Hours of work

- a. Your experience: Has working the odd hours typical of hospitality work (nights, weekends, shiftwork) influenced your own gambling behaviour, perhaps through its impact on your leisure opportunities? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Your opinion: Do you think that working the odd hours typical of hospitality work (nights, weekends, shiftwork) influences the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees through its impact on their leisure opportunities? How? Why? Examples?

8. Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions

- a. Your experience: Has frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions influenced your own gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Your opinion: Do you think that frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

9. Responsible gambling training of staff

- a. Your experience: Has the responsible gambling training you may have completed influenced your own gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Your opinion: Do you think that the responsible gambling training completed by gambling venue staff is likely to influence their gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?

10. Responsible gambling strategies in the venue

- a. Your experience: Have the responsible gambling measures that may have been implemented in your workplace influenced your own gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Your opinion: Do you think that the responsible gambling measures implemented in your workplace (e.g. signage, self-exclusion, etc) are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

11. Other aspects of the work environment

- a. Your experience: Are there any other aspects of the work environment we haven't discussed that have influenced your own gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?
- b. Your opinion: Do you think there any other aspects of the work environment we haven't discussed that are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?

12. Venue strategies to encourage responsible gambling

- a. Your experience: What was it that influenced you to stop gambling/seek counselling?
- b. Your opinion: In your opinion, what are the most effective ways that gambling venues can help encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling for their staff?
- c. Do you think that hospitality staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems? How? Why? Examples?