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Gaming Technologies Association Statement

The Gaming Technologies Association (GTA) today said the Tasmanian Labor Party's attack on poker machines in hotels and clubs was an act of economic vandalism that will cost jobs and strip millions from the Government's capacity to fund essential services for the community.

"This policy is a disaster for the 3,000ⁱ Tasmanians who rely on jobs in the hospitality sector," GTA Chief Executive Ross Ferrar said today.

"The facts speak for themselves. Expenditure on poker machines in Tasmania has declined significantly in both real and per-capita terms since 2003 but still contributes \$31 million to Tasmanian Government revenue.

"Labor's policy creates a \$31 million black hole in the Tasmanian budget, that can only mean cuts to essential services.

"Our Association is calling on the Tasmanian ALP to be honest and open with the Tasmanian people; which services does it propose to cut to pay for its promise?"

"Electronic Gaming Machines in pubs and hotels are a legitimate and legal activity. The overwhelming majority of Tasmanian poker machine users are responsible gamblers."

"Removing poker machines from all hotels and clubs rides roughshod over their legitimate choices and those who enjoy poker machines responsibly.

"Tasmania has one of the strictest regulatory environments for poker machines in the world. Regulators impose comprehensive conditions at every stage and on every aspect of poker machine design and operation," Mr Ferrar said.

"All poker machines operating in Tasmania are subject to stringent legislation, regulation and national standards which ensure that machines available for play in Tasmania are safe and enjoyable for consumers."

"The GTA strongly supports harm minimisation efforts, however, we do not believe banning our products is any more likely to assist problem gamblers, then alcohol prohibition would help problem drinkers."

Key Figures

- The Opposition has proposed to remove 2,400 poker machines from 98 venues across Tasmania.ⁱⁱ
- The Tasmanian Opposition claims this will create 183 jobs at a cost of \$50 million in government grants to venues.
- Gaming in clubs and hotels supports approximately 3,000 jobs in the Tasmanian hospitality sector.¹
- In 2015-16, poker machines, along with Keno, in hotels and clubs provided \$31,514,000 in revenue for the Tasmanian Government, as part of \$81,846,000 in total revenue produced by the Tasmanian gaming sector.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Expenditure on gaming machines in Tasmania has been in decline for more than ten years on both an overall and per capita basis.
 - o In 2003-2004, Tasmanians spent \$461.78 per capita on gaming machines. In 2015-16 it was \$282.86.^{iv}
 - o In 2003-2004, Tasmanians spent \$167.6 million on gaming machines. In 2015-16 it was \$114.2 million.^v

ⁱ Employment figures for gaming machines are taken from page 122, Volume 1 of the [Third Social and Impact Study of Gambling in Tasmania](#) produced by Liquor and Gaming in the Tasmanian Department of Treasury and Finance. The total figure provided in the study was 4,061, however two sub-categories "Licensed Premises Gaming Operatives" and "Technicians" are relevant here.

ⁱⁱ See Gambling Industry Data on [Tasmanian Liquor and Gaming website](#).

ⁱⁱⁱ See *Australian Gambling Statistics 1990-91 to 2015-16, 33rd edition*, page 340, available [here](#).

^{iv} See *Australian Gambling Statistics 1990-91 to 2015-16, 33rd edition*, page 336, available [here](#).

^v See *Australian Gambling Statistics 1990-91 to 2015-16, 33rd edition*, page 334, available [here](#).