

David Harris

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing,
Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, Minister for the Central Coast



Media Release

Independent Panel gets to work on NSW Government's landmark gaming reforms

Tuesday, 15 August 2023

Editors' Note: Images available at <https://bit.ly/3KDJ9QT>

The NSW Government has welcomed the first meeting of the Independent Panel on Gaming Reform. The Independent Panel has considered elements of the upcoming cashless gaming trial, as well as matters which will inform its recommendations to the NSW Government on a gaming reform implementation roadmap.

Minister for Gaming and Racing David Harris addressed the Independent Panel at their first meeting in Sydney on Monday, 14 August 2023.

Mr Harris said he was pleased the Independent Panel was considering the design and framework for the upcoming cashless gaming trial carefully and as a matter of priority, including the minimum requirements for venues and technology providers to take part.

"The Panel's first priority is to confirm the design and regulatory settings for the expanded cashless gaming trial, to ensure it can start as soon as possible," Mr Harris said.

"This includes deciding which venues will take part, ensuring there is an appropriate mix of hotels and clubs across metropolitan and regional areas.

"By imposing certain mandatory requirements, the Panel can ensure that the trial will have strong data security and privacy protections in place."

The Independent Panel will also provide advice to the NSW Government on a gaming reform implementation roadmap by November 2024.

This will include making recommendations to the NSW Government on the use of the \$100 million harm minimisation fund, expanding the self-exclusion register and providing for third-party exclusions, and the use of facial recognition technology to support the enhanced exclusions schemes.

The panel will also be consulted on a review of the ClubGRANTS Scheme, which is being undertaken by Liquor & Gaming NSW in consultation with The Cabinet Office and NSW Treasury. This review will be undertaken separately, but concurrent with the Panel's work on gaming reforms.

The inaugural meeting was chaired by former NSW Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing Commissioner Michael Foggo with Dr Ursula Stephens (former Senator for NSW, Australian Labor Party) and The Hon Niall Blair (former Deputy Leader of the NSW Nationals) comprising the Executive Committee.

Chair Michael Foggo said the NSW Government had carefully considered the composition of the Independent Panel to ensure it is well placed to provide balanced and expert advice about gaming reform.

Mr Foggo said it was clear from the outset that all panel members are passionate about gaming reform and committed to making a difference in NSW.

“The panel is set up so that a range key stakeholders and experts are represented including industry, gambling harm minimisation experts, academic experts, law enforcement and cyber security,” Mr Foggo said.

“It also has the ability to seek input from other external experts in the field and government bodies such as the NSW Crime Commission, the NSW Information and Privacy Commission and AUSTRAC.”

The progress of the Independent Panel builds on a number of reforms the NSW Government has already introduced to curb gambling harm and tackle criminal activity in clubs and pubs relating to gaming machines including:

- a ban on external signage for gaming rooms across NSW beginning 1 September 2023
- lowering the cap for poker machine entitlements by over 3,000 from 1 July 2023
- reducing the cash input limit from \$5000 to \$500 on all new machines from 1 July 2023
- new legislation to ban political donations from clubs with pokies across the state from 1 July 2023.

The Independent Panel will meet monthly with additional meetings as required.

Panel members include:

- Chair Mr Michael Foggo
- Executive member Dr Ursula Stephens - former Senator for NSW, Australian Labor Party
- Executive member The Hon Niall Blair - former Minister and Deputy Leader of the NSW Nationals
- Mr David Hudson - Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police
- Mr Tony Chapman - NSW Chief Cyber Security Officer, Cyber Security NSW
- Ms Rebecca Riant - Chief Executive Officer, ClubsNSW
- Mr John Whelan - Chief Executive Officer, Australian Hotels Association NSW (AHA NSW)
- Mr Jinesh Patel - Chief Executive Officer, Gaming Technologies Association
- Mr Don Hammond - Chief Executive Officer, Leagues Clubs Australia
- Professor Joel Negin - Trustee, Responsible Gambling Fund Trust
- Ms Joanna Quilty - Chief Executive Officer, NSW Council of Social Services
- Rev Stu Cameron - Chief Executive Officer and Superintendent Wesley Mission
- Professor Melanie Randle - Dean of Research, Development and Integrity, University of Wollongong
- Professor Sally Gainsbury - Director, Gambling Treatment & Research Centre, Brain and Mind Centre, University of Sydney
- Ms Imogen Beynon - Deputy Director, Casinos, Clubs & Gaming, United Workers Union
- Mr Nick McGhie, lived experience Panel member

More details on the panel can be found on the [Liquor and Gaming website](#).

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