

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMICS

REVIEW OF THE FOUR MAJOR BANKS (SECOND REPORT)

Westpac

Westpac26QW: Could Westpac please advise:

- (a) If they are considering banning use of credit cards for online gambling and betting?
- (b) If their respective boards have discussed the use of credit cards to facilitate online gambling and betting
- (c) What, if any, their timeline is for ensuring their credit card products cannot be used to enable online gambling and betting.

Answer:

In line with our Sustainability Risk Management Framework and consideration of our positions on sensitive sectors, Westpac is reviewing its approach to the use of credit cards for online gambling and betting. We recognise that this is a complex matter to address.

Westpac recognises that problem gambling is a serious community issue. To assist our customers who may be experiencing difficulties in managing their finances we can, at their request, place certain restrictions on their accounts such as reducing credit card limits or daily withdrawal amounts,

As the Committee would be aware, banks are not allowed under competition law to collectively agree to restrict payments to gambling service providers. Accordingly, legislation would be required to restrict credit cards from being used for gambling purposes. This restriction would have to be done using technology through the card schemes system so the restrictions apply to all credit card providers, not just banks.

In response to the specific questions raised:

- a) Please see response to 12QON.
- b) Given both internal and external stakeholder engagement on this topic over the past year, the matter has been discussed with directors.
- c) Westpac anticipates developing our position (including any potential timeline for implementation) by the end of 2017.