

Senate Select Committee on COVID-19
ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications

Division: Content

Inquiry: Inquiry into the Australian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Topic: Gambling advertisements

Question Type: Written (15 May 2020)

Senator Rachel Siewert asked:

1. Is the government considering banning gambling advertisements during the coronavirus crisis to reduce gambling related harms to children? If not, why not?
2. What is the government doing to reduce harm related to gambling advertisements during the coronavirus crisis?
3. Has the department had any discussions with the Department of Social Services about reducing gambling related harm and on-line gambling?

Answer:

1. The Department is unaware of any plans to ban gambling advertisements during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Government is conscious of community concern about gambling advertising and is committed to reducing gambling-related harms for all Australians. While providers of lawful services such as online gambling have a legitimate interest in advertising their services, the Australian Government believes that this must be subject to controls which appropriately reflect community standards, and this principle is reflected in the regulatory safeguards which apply to the advertising of gambling.

2. The Government has taken action to keep Australians safe from gambling-related harms. In addition to placing restrictions on live sport gambling advertising in 2018, on 11 November 2019, the Government announced new measures that ACMA can use to block illegal offshore gambling websites.

In light of reports of an increase in online gambling during COVID-19, ACMA is conducting a consumer awareness campaign on the risks of using illegal gambling. The campaign will take place from 20 May to 30 June 2020. The awareness campaign complements ACMA's enforcement actions to reduce the provision of illegal online gambling services to Australians.

3. Yes. The Department has discussed the impacts of COVID-19 and online gambling with the Department of Social Services, the Australian Communication and Media Authority (ACMA) and states and territories