

AUSTRALIAN ONLINE POKER ENQUIRY SUBMISSION

To whom it may concern,

My name is and I'm a 25 year old music producer from . I'm writing this submission as poker is a game I love and I want to be able to continue to play the game I love. I first discovered online poker in 2016 after a friend showed me how to play. I deposited \$20 on Christmas day as a present to myself and began playing \$0.25c tournaments. I quickly began to love the strategy behind the game; always hungry to learn more and to continue to improve my game through study and practice. It is my number one hobby bar none, and whenever I'm not working I'm either playing poker, studying poker, discussing poker with friends or watching poker videos.

Poker has affected my life in a very positive way. I enjoy that my hobby allows me to earn money, as most hobbies involve spending money. It is a game which has increased my concentration, focus and study habits, as I now participate in numerous poker forums and communities, connecting with people from all over the world. These poker communities I participate in involve both professional players and recreational players. I study poker strategy with these players daily, and we each strive to improve our own and each others game every single day. With the poker communities focus entirely on improving our game, I am never surrounded with any social or personal negatives. It is a study group, not a gambling group. Often one particular hand or situation will be discussed over 30 minutes and over hundreds of messages, to determine the optimal play.

This is the cheapest hobby I have ever taken up. I started with a \$20 deposit, and increased my bank roll to \$4000 through playing online tournaments, continuously investing my poker winnings in poker training to become better and an even more profitable player. If online poker became illegal in Australia, I'd feel lost, as relocating elsewhere is not an option at this moment. I don't understand why the game is shrouded with negativity, as it is a highly skilful, enjoyable game. Comparatively, chess was solved by computers over 20 years ago, whereas poker to this day still hasn't been solved by computer science; that's how complex the game is.

I can't comment on what the poker landscape was like in 2001 when the act was introduced, as I was only introduced to online poker within the last year and a half, but I feel the current legislation is an inaccurate representation of what online poker truly is and the effects it has.

I hope writing this the government understands that my enjoyment of participating in online poker does not effect anyone or anyone around me negatively. I chose to play poker in my spare time and I don't think the government should have the ability to take that away from me, as well as the thousands and thousands of other Australian online poker players.

If the government were to make online poker illegal, I would have no intention to play illegally as it is a risk I wouldn't want to take. However, I would continue to study the game

until it was once again legal to play in Australia. I hope the government can understand that banning online poker would encourage other players to play on unregulated sites, which is a much higher risk than a legal online poker environment.

I appreciate the opportunity to be able to make a submission and for the time taken to read it. I hope the government makes the correct decision in safeguarding Australian poker players through online regulation and also allows tax paying Australians the freedom to spend their money on their preferred choice of entertainment.