

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2012-13 Supplementary Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 3

Question No: 483

Topic: 50 new financial counsellors

Hansard Page: Written

Senator McKenzie asked:

Where will the 50 new counsellors for problem gamblers be located? What research does the department undertake on identifying the geographic locations of problem gamblers? What are the problem gambling factors impacting regional Victoria?

Answer:

The locations of the 50 new financial counsellors for problem gamblers is part of the program design currently being finalised. An application process to identify financial counsellors to support people affected by problem gambling is currently underway. Information regarding the process, including service coverage areas for each financial counsellor, can be found on the department's website at <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/communities-and-vulnerable-people/grants-funding/commonwealth-financial-counselling-cfc>.

The Department uses a variety of data resources to identify the geographic locations of at risk gambling population. The data includes jurisdictional prevalence reports, locational data, density of Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) data, venue location, revenue data, and the level of disadvantage based on the Socio Economic Index For Areas (SEIFA).

Recent findings from the Victorian Gambling Study provide insight into the extent of problem gambling from a longitudinal perspective across eight government regions in Victoria. Overall, regional Victoria has a higher proportion of gamblers than metro Victoria, but lower 'at-risk' gamblers relative to metro areas.

Further information on the impact of problem gambling in Victoria can be found in the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission's recently released draft report, *Counting the Cost: Inquiry into the Costs of Problem Gambling* (the report can be found at <http://www.vcec.vic.gov.au/CA256EAF001C7B21/pages/vcec-inquiries-current-inquiry-into-social-and-economic-costs-of-problem-gambling>)