STATES OF JERSEY

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MODERNISATION OF JERSEY'S GAMBLING LEGISLATION (P.62/2004): ADDENDUM

Presented to the States on 22nd February 2005
by the Economic Development Committee

STATES GREFFE

ADDENDUM TO P.62/2004

This short précis provides additional information that was not available last year when the Committee lodged its Proposition. First presented by Rachel A. Volberg[1] in her article of 17th September 2004 entitled *Changes in Gambling Availability, Participation and Problem Gambling Prevalence in Four States*, it is based on reliable, field tested data[2]. It is not a sole study. The results have been replicated in New Zealand and in South Africa. It shows that it is possible to reduce the incidence of problem gambling even when new opportunities to gamble are introduced. There is every reason to suppose that the same trend would be evident in Jersey.

Like Jersey, the U.S. States of Montana, Oregon, North Dakota and Washington already had substantial legal opportunities to gamble before allowing casinos to begin operating. What the study found was that after casinos had been introduced, the incidence of problem gambling only increased where the State did not offer a social responsibility programme, whereas there was a reduction in problem gambling where the State did offer a social responsibility programme.

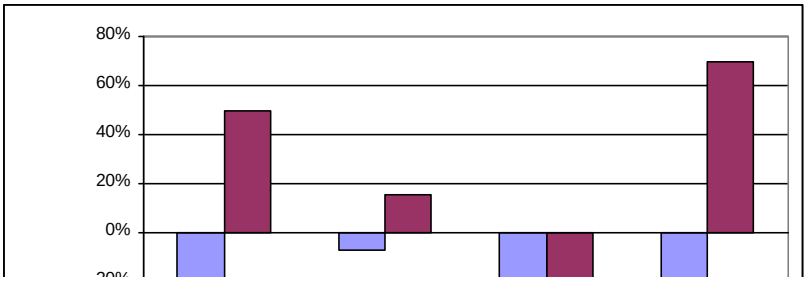
The first table below shows the level of total gambling (including lotteries or raffles) amongst the total population as a percentage. This is indicated by the baseline figure (first sample) and the replication figure (a second comparative sample designed to validate the first sample), followed in the next table by the percentage of pathological gamblers as a percentage of the total gambling population.

	State	*Baseline*	*Replication*
Past Year Gambling			
	Oregon	69.8	60.6
	Washington	80.0	74.4
	Montana	75.0	77.5
	North Dakota	72.1	69.8

Pathological Gambling			
	Oregon	1.4	0.9
	Washington	0.9	0.5
	Montana	0.7	1.6
	North Dakota	0.7	1.4

The bar chart overleaf illustrates the swing in percentage terms of problem gambling before and after the introduction of a casino. The main contrast is between those States where problem gambling services were offered as part of the opening of the new markets, and those where no such service was offered. What is very interesting is that neither scenario actually saw problem gambling increasing in the casino environment, regardless of whether services were offered or not.

The largest swing is very clearly in the machine environment. It is important to differentiate between machine gambling in a casino and what is termed as 'ambient machine gambling' in a bookmaker, arcade or other venue. Casino machine gambling is controlled by the same issues as other casino games, insofar as players will have normally made a conscious decision to go to a casino and gamble. The same is not true of gambling machines that people come across in the high street when they are less likely to have made a conscious decision to gamble.



The graph shows an across-the-board increase amongst problem gamblers of 50% compared to a decrease in problem gambling of 25.8% in those States that offered a problem gambling service. The fact that both types of jurisdiction saw a reduction in incidences of problem gambling in casinos is particularly important to note.

This evidence supports the Committee's policy of not allowing the development of dedicated machine gambling establishments (as found in Australia, for example) and wishing to limit new gambling opportunities to the safer and well-regulated environment of a casino. It also clearly endorses the Committee's view that any increase in gambling business should be hand in hand with a properly funded and resourced social responsibility programme paid for by the industry and strictly regulated by a Gambling Commission.

For a copy of the Full Volberg article please contact the Economic Development Department, Tel. 705551, Fax 705570, or email j.lane@gov.je

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[1] *Dr. Volberg has been involved in research on problem gambling since 1985 and is the leading authority on the subject. Her résumé can be found at www.geminiresearch.com*

[2] *This analysis emerges from consideration of prevalence surveys carried out in several States between 1992 and 2000, including Montana, North Dakota, Oregon and Washington State. Full methodological details for all of these surveys have been published elsewhere (Polzin et al., 1998; Volberg, 1992, 1993, 1997, 2001c, 2001d; Volberg & Moore, 1999; Volberg & Silver, 1993). To summarise, all of the surveys were directed by the author, the period between baseline and replication ranged from three to eight years, the primary problem gambling screen used in all the surveys was the revised South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS-R, Abbott & Volberg, 1996; Lesieur & Blume, 1987) and all of the surveys obtained information from representative samples of residents of the states aged 18 and over living in telephone-owning households.*