



Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
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Ms Fran Thorn
Chair
Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission
GPO Box 1988
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By email: Fran.Thorn@vgccc.vic.gov.au

Dear Ms Thorn

2022 PRIORITIES FOR THE VICTORIAN GAMBLING AND CASINO CONTROL COMMISSION – SUPPLEMENTARY STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS

I am pleased to provide you this supplementary statement of expectations for the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission (VGCCC) and applies from the date of this letter to 31 December 2022, or until otherwise amended.

This statement of expectations should be read in conjunction with the existing Statement of Expectations, which came into effect on 1 July 2019, and was extended on 30 June 2021 until 30 June 2023.

Legislative framework

As Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation, I am responsible for administering the *Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission Act 2011*, the *Gambling Regulation Act 2003*, the *Casino Control Act 1991* and the *Liquor Control Reform Act 1998*. This statement of expectations should be read within the context of the objectives, obligations and functions outlined in these Acts.

This supplementary Statement of Expectations should also be read in the context of any other legislative or non-legislative obligations on the VGCCC.

Expectations and priorities

The Victorian Government is committed to best practice regulation of our casino and gambling industries. The VGCCC has been established to provide a dedicated focus on casino regulation to hold the casino operator to account, and to have a greater role in monitoring and addressing gambling harm.

While the program of reform will be a long-term process, 2022 is an important year to deliver on the organisational, regulatory and legislative changes necessary to fully establish the VGCCC and to ensure it is a world-leading casino and gambling regulator.

Within this context, I have set out below my expectations and priorities for the VGCCC for the remainder of 2022. These priorities and expectations are not exhaustive and do not cover the wide range of important regulatory activities undertaken by the VGCCC. Instead, these priorities focus on strategic matters I consider necessary to deliver the government's intent for the newly established VGCCC.

Holding the casino operator to account

The government has acted swiftly to implement the most critical recommendations of the Royal Commission into the Casino Operator and Licence, passing legislation last year to establish the Special Manager to oversee Crown and to confer significant new powers on the VGCCC.

It is my expectation that the VGCCC builds on these important reforms and prioritises holding the casino operator to account through robust scrutiny of its reform program and regulation of its activities. As part of this, the VGCCC should engage closely with the Special Manager during the term of his appointment to ensure comprehensive oversight of the casino operator and coordination of regulatory activity as appropriate and necessary.

Organisational change

With the establishment of the VGCCC, I announced that it would have a dedicated casino regulation division focused solely on holding Melbourne's casino operator to account, with the liquor regulation function transferring to DJCS. It is my expectation that the VGCCC prioritise organisational changes this year to implement these changes and to provide ongoing support to the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) with respect to the transferred liquor regulation function.

It is my expectation that the VGCCC works closely with DJCS to support the transfer of the liquor regulation function in a way that maintains continuity of regulatory activities and sets up both regulatory functions for long-term success.

The most important asset of the VGCCC – across both its gambling and liquor functions – is its people. Therefore, in undertaking the necessary organisational changes, it is my expectation that staff are engaged, consulted and supported throughout the process.

Embedding a focus on harm minimisation

The Royal Commission found serious, systemic breaches of responsible gaming obligations, which impacted some of the most vulnerable people in our State. I therefore consider that monitoring and addressing gambling harm should be a key focus of the VGCCC to ensure our gambling industry is safe.

It is my expectation that the VGCCC embed a focus on minimising harm from gambling in all its regulatory activities, including in its industry engagement and compliance activities, and in its enforcement approach.

Reporting and reviewing

I request that the VGCCC incorporate these expectations into its business plan and include milestones for meeting these expectations, noting that some priorities are longer-term and may extend into 2023 and beyond. I would also appreciate periodic updates on the progress of these matters at our regular meetings.

Please note that following establishment of the new liquor regulatory arrangements, I will be shortly issuing a separate statement of expectations to the new liquor regulator. I have also asked DJCS to undertake a comprehensive review of your current Statement of Expectations to update it to reflect the VGCCC's new remit.

Finally, I would like to wish you all the best as the inaugural Chair of the VGCCC and I look forward to working with you to deliver best practice regulatory oversight of our casino and gambling sectors.

Should you wish to discuss any aspect of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact my office or John Batho, Deputy Secretary, Consumer Affairs, Liquor, Gaming and Dispute Services, DJCS, at John.Batho@justice.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Batho', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Hon Melissa Horne MP

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30/6/2022