

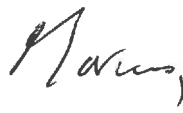
Treasurer
Minister for Macquarie Point Urban Renewal
Leader of the House

Level 10, Executive Building, 15 Murray Street, Hobart TAS 7000
GPO Box 123, Hobart TAS 7001
Phone: 03 6165 9405 | Email: minister.abetz@dpac.tas.gov.au



Mr Marcus Vermey MP
Liberal Member for Clark
Email: Marcus.Vermey@parliament.tas.gov.au

22 JUL 2026

Dear Mr Vermey 

Thank you for your question in Parliament on 16 June 2026 regarding the extension of the mandatory shutdown period for gaming machine areas in hotels and licensed clubs.

The Government is committed to reducing gambling harm and ensuring Tasmania maintains a strong and effective harm-minimisation framework for electronic gaming machines (EGMs). To support this commitment, I issued a Ministerial Direction to the Tasmanian Liquor and Gaming Commission requiring the implementation of a suite of EGM harm-minimisation measures.

One of these measures requires gaming areas in hotels and licensed clubs operating EGMs to extend their mandatory closure period from four continuous hours to seven continuous hours in every 24-hour period, effective from 1 August 2026. This represents a 75 per cent increase in the mandatory shutdown period and is an important component of the Government's broader gambling harm-minimisation reforms.

Research and experience in other jurisdictions indicate that mandatory shutdown periods and earlier gaming venue closing times can contribute to reducing gambling-related harm. Late-night gambling is more commonly associated with higher-risk gambling behaviours, and extending mandatory shutdown periods is expected to primarily affect higher-risk gamblers while having limited impact on recreational gamblers who generally gamble during daytime and evening trading hours.

I am advised that the Commission have implemented this measure, advising impacted venues as follows:

"Following consultation with affected industry stakeholders and consideration of submissions received, the Commission has determined that a standard closure period of 2:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. daily will apply to all gaming machine areas in hotels and licensed clubs from 1 August 2026.

In reaching this decision, the Commission considered several important factors, including:

- *Reducing the risk of patrons moving between venues to continue gambling during the early hours of the morning. This is an important harm minimisation measure, particularly for individuals experiencing gambling-related harm; and*
- *Improving administrative and operational efficiency through a consistent closure period across all venues, supporting effective compliance and regulatory oversight, and providing a clear and easily understood message to the public regarding gaming area operating hours.*

The Commission considers that the 2:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. closure period strikes an appropriate balance between existing operating arrangements for the majority of venues and the views expressed during the consultation process.

Please note that this seven-hour closure period does not apply to the game of keno, which continues to be restricted to a four-hour continuous closure."

While noting that compliance arrangements are the responsibility of the Commission, I am advised that arrangements are likely to remain largely unchanged. I understand under current arrangements the licensed monitoring operator, Maxgaming, is required to ensure gaming machines at each venue cannot operate during the nominated four-hour shutdown period. The Department of Treasury and Finance, on behalf of the Commission, then undertakes audits to verify compliance with this requirement.

The Government considers this a balanced and proportionate reform that strengthens harm minimisation while allowing hotels and clubs to continue providing gaming machine facilities during core operating hours.

Thank you for raising this important matter.

Yours sincerely



Hon Eric Abetz MP
Treasurer