GAMBLING RESEARCH TO GET UNDERWAY

A research team from Charles Darwin University has won a Territory Government grant worth $375,000 to undertake research into gambling in the Territory.

It’s the first grant to be awarded under a new gambling research program established by the Territory Government as part of the Community Benefit Fund.

Racing, Gaming and Licensing Minister Syd Stirling said the CDU team, from the School for Social and Policy Research, beat out a number of high-calibre applicants from around Australia to be chosen by the Community Benefit Fund Committee to conduct the much-needed research.

The CDU team will be headed up by geographer Dr Martin Young and will include demographer Tony Barnes, economist Ibtisam Abu-Duhou and psychologist Dr Mary Morris. They have joined forces with ACIL Tasman, one of Australia’s largest economic consulting practices, to undertake the research, with economists Jeffrey Rae and Dr Peter Johnson on board.

“Gambling plays an important social and economic role in the Territory. For the vast majority of people, it’s an enjoyable pastime and a part of the great Territory lifestyle. But we need to ensure that we are minimising harm to the community from gambling,” Mr Stirling said.

“At the moment, we have no Territory specific research available to us to be able to get a true picture of Territorians and gambling, which is why we have established this research program.

“Any statistics we do have about gambling in the Territory are skewed by tourists’ gambling and online betting facilities based here but used by interstate and overseas punters.

“What we need is a clear idea of gambling by Territorians – who gambles, how much they gamble and on what, and who is at risk of problem gambling. This information will form the basis for developing and implementing targeted strategies to minimise harm caused by gambling in the Territory.

Over the next 12 months, the CDU team and ACIL Tasman will conduct research on:

- **The prevalence of gambling in the Territory** – identifying gambling activities in the community and who is gambling by categories such as age, socio-economic status, cultural background, place of residence, etc.
- **The impact of gaming machines in the community** – looking at the impact of both casino-based and community-based gaming machines and their positive and negative effects on the community.

“A major advantage of having CDU conduct this research is that it lays the foundation for developing local gambling research expertise. This will be crucial to our efforts now and into the future to maximise the social and economic benefits of gambling while minimising the harm that it can cause.”

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