

## **CLUBSNSW STATEMENT FOR FOUR CORNERS**

Registered clubs make an important contribution to local communities. They provide jobs for more than 53,000 people, support local sporting and community groups, act as evacuation centres during natural disasters, and stepped up as COVID-19 testing sites and vaccination hubs during the pandemic. Clubs are the central hub of most communities, particularly in regional areas, helping to combat social isolation by providing a safe and comfortable environment for locals to connect and enjoy an affordable meal or recreational activity together.

ClubGRANTS is one of Australia's largest grant programs. It has delivered more than \$1 billion in community support since its inception in 1998. Charities, sporting organisations and not-for-profit community groups are among thousands of worthy causes funded through the program. ClubsNSW recently introduced the ClubGRANTS Online system to improve transparency and accountability.

As a not-for-profit industry association, ClubsNSW works hard to promote the industry and represent the interests of NSW clubs and the communities they serve. Our expectation is that these activities are undertaken in an appropriate manner, and where they are not appropriate action is taken.

The MOUs signed between ClubsNSW and the NSW Coalition provided public transparency prior to elections, as well as regulatory certainty for an industry that employs more than 53,000 people and provides services for millions of members and the communities in which they operate. It is the same approach to government engagement that is taken by hundreds of peak bodies and businesses on a daily basis.

In relation to questions about recent political campaigns arranged by ClubsNSW, there is no active or planned campaign against any sitting MP or candidate in the upcoming NSW election. ClubsNSW looks forward to working constructively with whomever forms government after the election on sensible, evidence-based reform measures.

The brief campaign in the Murray region late last year was sparked by the frustration felt by the 49 local clubs in the Murray electorate about Ms Dalton's refusal to meaningfully engage with them.

In relation to cashless gaming, ClubsNSW and its member clubs support cashless gaming technology and have advocated for its introduction for more than five years. The 2018 MoU between ClubsNSW and the NSW Government included a commitment to a digital wallet trial with appropriate responsible gaming features. That trial is currently underway.

ClubsNSW and its member clubs take their anti-money laundering responsibilities extremely seriously. We look forward to working collaboratively with the NSW Government, law enforcement and AUSTRAC to address the findings of the NSW Crime Commission Inquiry. NSW clubs do not want criminals or criminal activity inside their venues.

ClubsNSW's new mandatory Club Gaming Code of Practice will see lifetime bans for suspected money launderers from clubs in NSW. Facial recognition technology will be used to make it near impossible for a criminal to enter a club undetected.

Clubs have always sought to offer gaming in a responsible manner. The new Club Gaming Code of Practice goes above and beyond existing legislative requirements, including the requirement to undertake regular welfare checks on gaming players and provide help and support where necessary.

ClubsNSW is pleased that a mutually agreeable settlement has been reached in the matters with Mr Troy Stolz, with both parties agreeing to terminate legal proceedings. Due to the confidential nature of the settlement, we are unable to provide further details or commentary.

ClubsNSW executives have previously attended two-week public policy advocacy courses run by the American University's public affairs and advocacy institute that have included a range of speakers such as the American Cancer Society's Cancer Action Network, the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Association of Retired Persons, and the National Coalition on Health Care Action Fund. The National Rifle Association was also present at the course.

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