

## **GAMBLERS REHABILITATION FUND**

**11 November 2008**

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD:** Family First has obtained the 2006-07 information about the spending of the Gamblers Rehabilitation Fund and notes the following: first, uncommitted one-off funds, as at 30 June 2007, totalled some \$2.08 million; secondly, amongst other interesting findings in the documents, funding in the amount of some \$10,000 was given, via the AIDS Council of South Australia, to the Sex Industry Network Multicultural Gambling Project.

Information obtained from the NGO sector in gambling rehabilitation also reveals that, despite the NGOs submitting tenders for the next three-year funding arrangement (as they were asked to do, and, indeed, were submitted by 30 June 2008 in compliance with the request), some four months later they are still waiting for approval for the funding. To be fair, they have been given two extensions of funding to carry through service provisions, in the short term, to January 2009. However, the future of their funding status remains uncertain whilst this matter is undetermined. My questions are:

1. Has the minister mislaid the NGO three-year funding approvals and, if not, why have they been delayed for such a long period of time?
2. Can the minister explain the merits of a \$10,000 grant being given for the purpose of funding a project for multicultural prostitute problem gamblers, and why could not this very small group of people access rehabilitation services in the same way as anyone else would?

**The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO (Minister for Correctional Services, Minister for Road Safety, Minister for Gambling, Minister Assisting the Minister for Multicultural Affairs):** As the honourable member is probably aware, the Gamblers Rehabilitation Fund is the responsibility of the Minister for Families and Communities.

The Gamblers Rehabilitation Program funds programs and initiatives to provide services for problem gamblers. The service providers are the NGOs, and government and private suppliers are used for information, products and advertising. I am fairly certain that I responded to this question the other day, but services include: intensive therapy, financial and general counselling, community education, cultural-specific services, and a 24-hour gambling helpline.

The honourable member would also be aware that the government has undertaken a competitive process to determine future funding for service providers of these programs. I understand that the Minister for Families and Communities has also asked her department to conduct a review of the process to award the service agreements, and I am advised that this review is about to be finalised.

In the interim, as the honourable member has mentioned, all current service providers have been advised that they will continue to receive funding until 30 January next year to ensure the continuation of services. I understand that, as soon as the review has been completed, the providers will be notified of the outcome.

If I have not provided all the information requested by the honourable member in his question, I will refer it to the Minister for Families and Communities in another place, who is responsible for the fund, and ensure that the honourable member has a response.