

# Media Release

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**Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services  
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## **SENATOR STEPHEN CONROY**

**Minister for Broadband, Communications  
and the Digital Economy**

## **BILL SHORTEN MP**

**Assistant Treasurer  
Minister for Financial Services and Superannuation**

### **Tackling problem gambling in Australia**

The Australian Government today took another step forward in its efforts to address problem gambling in Australia.

The Government is concerned that the promotion of live odds during sports coverage can significantly influence vulnerable people, particularly young people, and normalise negative gambling behaviour.

That's why the Government will work with the sporting and betting industries to reduce and control the promotion of live odds during sports coverage through amendments to their existing industry codes.

If satisfactory amendments are not in place by the end of June 2012, the Australian Government will consider the need for legislation, noting that the measures would not apply to pre-existing contracts for the promotion of live odds during sports coverage as of 1am today.

The Government will also undertake a review of the operation of the *Interactive Gambling Act 2001*, including examining how harm minimisation measures can be improved for online gambling services.

The Australian Government will consult widely with key stakeholders, states and territories, and the broader community in undertaking the review. Terms of Reference for the review will be announced shortly.

These moves are in addition to the progress made at the Council of Australian Government's Select Council on Gambling Reform today on pre-commitment.

Ministers agreed to support the required infrastructure for pre-commitment technology in all jurisdictions, to be available to all players in all venues.

The Australian Government supports a full pre-commitment scheme starting in 2014, with small venues (gambling venues with 15 or less machines) to have an additional four years to implement the changes.

Our preference remains for the states and territories to deliver these changes and we will continue discussions with the states and territories, through the Select Council, over the next year.

The Government will also begin work on Commonwealth legislation, as agreed with the Independent Member for Denison, Andrew Wilkie.

We know that problem gambling destroys Australian families and ruins lives.

Bringing in these changes is no easy task but it is necessary if we are to provide the duty of care we owe thousands of individuals and families whose lives are being ruined by problem gambling.

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