



## **Media Release**

**26 August 2011**

### **Cheating at gambling**

The Attorney General today tabled the Law Reform Commission's report on Cheating at Gambling. The report is currently under consideration by the Government.

Sports betting has become a major industry in Australia. Cheating at sports betting, including by match-fixing, undermines the integrity and reputation of the sports in question, can involve significant fraud, and has the potential to cause disruption to a significant economic activity.

The criminal law has not kept up to date and the Commission proposes two new sets of sports specific offences.

The first set of offences cover conduct by anybody (including players, match officials and team support people) that "corrupts the betting outcome of an event" with the intention of obtaining a financial advantage from betting.

The conduct of a person "corrupts a betting outcome" if it affects or would be likely to affect the outcome of a bet, and is contrary to the standards of integrity expected by reasonable people.

This covers for example spot and match fixing, deliberate underperformance, tanking, disrupting or interfering with the course of the event, and deliberately officiating in a dishonest way. It extends to anybody who fixes the event, or agrees to do so, or persuades another to do so, and also to conduct designed to conceal the existence of any such arrangement.

The second set of offences cover using inside information in connection with a sporting event to bet on that event, as well as providing inside information to someone else to enable them to bet on the event.

In both cases, the Commission proposes a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment, the same penalty as for fraud, recognising the seriousness of activity that can involve the corruption of sporting activities in aid of betting.

The Commission notes that national work is underway in this area following the adoption by the Australian Sports Ministers of the *National Policy on Match-Fixing in Sport*, and the agreement of the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General to develop a nationally consistent approach to criminal offences relating to match-fixing.

The Commission reviewed the role of sports controlling bodies and wagering agencies in ensuring the integrity of sporting events and gave support to the initiatives underway in Australia and internationally in this respect.

The Commission also examined cheating at gaming in connection with gaming machines and Casino type games, and proposes a review to rationalise the range of existing offences including the creation of a new general cheating at gaming offence in the Crimes Act.

Finally, the Commission recommends a review to improve NSW's complex regulatory and enforcement arrangements to consider the creation of a single authority to replace the current division of authority between the Office of Liquor Gaming and Racing and the Casino Liquor and Gaming Authority, and to rationalise the powers of inspectors.

The NSW Law Reform Commission has been proposing changes to the State's laws since 1966 as the first permanent law reform agency established in Australia. The Chairperson is James Wood AO QC, who is also the lead Commissioner for this reference.

**The report is published on the Law Reform Commission's website  
[www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lrc](http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lrc).**

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