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Australian & NZ news

NSW Lotteries buy will boost Tatts: CEO [important article]

New South Wales - Gaming firm Tatts Group says its \$850 million acquisition of NSW Lotteries is a natural extension of its Australian lotteries businesses and will drive significant operating efficiencies. "The company's acquisition of NSW Lotteries is a logical and natural expansion of its lottery businesses in Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania, Northern Territory and the ACT," Tatts chief Executive Dick McIlwain said.

<http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-business/nsw-lotteries-buy-will-boost-tatts-ceo-20100302-pfo7.html>

Tatts' pricey jackpot [noteworthy article]

New South Wales - The one thing that everyone who was involved or interested in the process for the sale of NSW Lotteries agrees is that Dick McIlwain has paid a very big price. The \$850 million price-tag – at least \$150 million more than the market had anticipated – will delight the cash-strapped NSW government, which will also pulled out \$160 million in cash and other assets ahead of the sale. Depending on who one talks to, Tatts Group has paid a multiple of a bit over seven times NSW Lotteries' earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) and 17 times!

<http://www.businessspectator.com.au/bs.nsf/Article/Tatts-Group-Tabcorp-NSW-Lotteries-pd20100302-3685D?OpenDocument&src=sph>

Tatts to Buy New South Wales Lottery for \$766 Million

New South Wales - ... Tatts, already the nation's largest lottery operator, has licenses in three Australian states and two territories. The latest acquisition will help add about A\$120 million to annual earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization by 2014, the company said. ... Tatts fell 3.4 percent to close at A\$2.30 in Sydney, its largest decline since Sept. 2. The stock rose 3.3 percent yesterday. ... Lotteries were the fastest-growing unit in Tatts' first-half earnings announced last week as a run of record jackpots fueled sales. The New South Wales purchase is the company's biggest since paying A\$2 billion for Unitab Ltd. in 2006.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=aGB2Ok.Kzwil>

Welfare sector demands gambling action

Tasmania - State welfare providers want Tasmania's political parties to tackle problem gambling. The welfare sector and Independent South Australian Senator Nick Xenophon have launched a policy wish list in the lead up to the State election. They want reduced opening hours of gaming venues, bet limits of \$1 and fewer gaming machines. Senator Xenophon was elected on a 'no pokies' platform and says it is not enough for the next Government to promise a review into the Productivity Commission's report into problem gambling.

<http://au.news.yahoo.com/a/-/australian-news/6873894/welfare-sector-demands-gambling-action/>

Consultation on Terms of Reference for Second Gambling Impact Study

Tasmania - The Minister for Human Services, Lin Thorp, announced the Department of Treasury and Finance would consult with key stakeholders on the draft terms of reference for the second social and economic impact study of gambling in Tasmania. Ms Thorp said the draft terms of reference had been prepared as the basis for consultation with key stakeholders. The second study is required to be tabled in Parliament by November 2011.

<http://www.media.tas.gov.au/release.php?id=29333> –

Majority wants more pokie control: survey

Tasmania - Eight out of 10 Tasmanians want poker machine bets limited to \$1 a slot, and shorter gambling hours, a new poll has found. The results of the November poll of 1000 voters by Enterprise Market and Research Services will be released in Hobart this morning by South Australia's anti-gambling Senator Nick Xenophon.

<http://www.examiner.com.au/news/local/news/human-interest/majority-wants-more-pokie-control-survey/1764389.aspx>

Gambling report concerns clubs

Queensland - Brothers Leagues Club general manager Mark Hennelly says community clubs have been unfairly targeted in the Productivity Commission's report into gambling. The final report was handed to the Federal Government late last week and it is expected to consider the report before publicly releasing it. Mr Hennelly said the report focused on gaming machines in clubs and hotels with little attention paid to other forms of gambling.

<http://www.qt.com.au/story/2010/03/02/report-panned-by-concerned-clubs/>

Brimbank pokies reel in \$71m

Victoria - Gamblers have lost almost \$71 million on Brimbank poker machines in the first six months of the financial year, despite a State Government cap on the number of machines. No other Victorian municipality saw higher losses in that period. Between July and December last year, \$70.98 million was lost on pokies at Brimbank's 15 gaming venues. That figure is more than \$600,000 higher than the \$70.38 million lost in the first six months of the 2008-09 financial year - a year where the total losses in the municipality topped the table for the state at \$136 million.

<http://brimbank-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/brimbank-pokies-reel-in-71m/>

Decision nears for 30 pokies

Victoria - City of Greater Bendigo councillors will decide tomorrow night if they support the Foundry Hotel's bid for 30 gaming machines. City officers will recommend to councillors that the overall economic and social impact of the hotel's gaming proposal is detrimental to Bendigo. The Foundry Hotel Complex is hoping to share in the pool of 547 gaming machines in Bendigo.

<http://www.bendigoadvertiser.com.au/news/local/news/general/decision-nears-for-30-pokies/1764212.aspx>

Council fights Whittlesea pokies proposal

Victoria – Whittlesea Council will fight the city's latest gaming application by the Royal Mail Hotel with a submission to the Victorian Commission for Gambling Regulation. The Whittlesea township hotel proposes to include 30 machines in its new gaming room as part of planned renovations. It proposes to use machines coming from other Whittlesea venues.

<http://whittlesea-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/council-fights-whittlesea-pokies-proposal/>