



Australian Government
Department of Defence

Gambling

Defence Mental Health & Wellbeing





*'Mental health and wellbeing is the state in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with normal stress of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community'**

Defence's vision is that our people – military and public servants – experience positive mental health and wellbeing. *They are Fit to Fight – Fit to Work – Fit for Life.*

*World Health Organization

What is gambling?

Gambling is broadly defined as *"the placing of a wager or bet in the form of money (or something of value) on the outcome of an uncertain event that may involve elements of skill or chance"*.¹

'Problem Gambling' is the term commonly used to signify the impact gambling has on a person's life. It is characterised by difficulty in limiting money and /or time spent on gambling which leads to adverse consequences for the gambler, others and for the community.

Who and why do people gamble?

People generally gamble as a form of entertainment or to add excitement to their social outing. However, a percentage of the community is at risk of developing problems with their gambling. These people usually begin as recreational gamblers but their gambling can become increasingly problematic for a variety of reasons.

1. Problem Gambling and Treatment Centre, Monash University (2011) Guideline for screening, assessment and treatment in problem gambling.

Types of gambling

There are various types of gambling. Different types of gambling have differing prevalence rates and are associated with different levels of harms. Some of the different types of gambling and associated risk of developing harm are outlined here:

Type	Example	Risk of developing problems
Electronic gaming machines	Poker machines	High
Online games	Online poker, online slots	High
Racing	Horses	High
Casino table games	Black Jack, poker, roulette	Moderate
Dice	Craps	Moderate
Betting	Sports Bet	Moderate
Professional games	Poker Tournament	Low
Lotteries	Tattslotto, Powerball, Keno, scratch cards	Low
Cultural	Two up (Anzac Day), mah-jong	Low
Stockmarket	Share trading, currency trading	Low

Source: Rowe, C., White, M., Long, C., Roche, A, Orr, K., (2015). Slots and Shots: A Gambling Resource for AOD Workers, Odyssey House Victoria, Melbourne, Victoria.

Signs of a gambling problem

Signs of a gambling problem may include one or more of the following in a 12 month period:

- a need to gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve the desired excitement
- becoming restless or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop gambling
- repeated unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop gambling
- a preoccupation with gambling
- gambling when feeling distressed
- returning to gambling after a loss ('chasing' a loss)
- lying to conceal the extent of involvement with gambling
- jeopardized or loss of a significant relationship, job, educational or career opportunity due to gambling
- relying on others to provide money to relieve desperate financial situations caused by gambling.

Ways to address problem gambling

There are many practical ways that people can reduce their problem gambling behaviour:

- understand and address the underlying issues that led to the problem
- alter beliefs about the likelihood of winning
- take only a fixed amount of money to gamble
- leave ATM and credit cards at home
- identify alternate activities to engage in
- talk to a friend, family member or counsellor about the problem
- enter into a venue self-exclusion program
- gain a better understanding of the rates of return for different types of gambling
- talk with a health care professional
- access community support programs (Gamblers Anonymous).

Where to seek help

If you or someone in your workplace is in crisis and you think immediate action is needed, call **Emergency Services 000**, contact your doctor or local mental health crisis service, or go to your local hospital emergency department.

Emergency contact information – 24 hours

If you or someone you know needs help, call:

- Emergency on **000**
- Lifeline on **13 11 14**
- Suicide Call Back Service on **1300 659 467**.

ADF

Contact your local on base Health Centre, Mental Health Professional or the Duty Officer/Officer of the Day for immediate assistance and referrals.

The ADF Health and Wellbeing Portal is an online health information resource tool for ADF members and their families www.defence.gov.au/health/healthportal/

Your chain of command is a primary resource that can provide advice, referral and support.

Military Chaplains are connected to all ships/units/bases around Australia and on Operations. They can provide all-hours support and appropriate referral. To access Defence Chaplaincy support, call **1300 333 362** and ask to speak to the Duty Chaplain from your area and service.

The ADF Mental Health All-hours Support Line (ASL) is a confidential telephone service for ADF members and their families available 24/7 on **1800 628 036** or if calling from overseas **+61 2 9425 3878**.

If you are away from base, or for out-of-hours assistance, you can call **1800 IMSICK (1800 467 425)** to locate the nearest support.

Defence Family Helpline (1800 624 608) The Defence Family Helpline is available 24/7 for ADF Members and their families, and is staffed by qualified human services professionals including social workers and psychologists. Defence Community Organisation website is: www.defence.gov.au/dco

The National Welfare Coordination Centre (NWCC)

Serving Families of Deployed Australian Defence Personnel.

As part of the Headquarters Joint Operations Command, the National Welfare Coordination Centre (NWCC) provides a 24 hour support, referral and information service for families of Defence personnel deployed on operations and exercises.

1800 801 026 or **+ 61 2 6127 1812**.

Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office (SeMPRO)

SeMPRO offers advice, guidance and support to current and former Defence personnel who have been affected by sexual misconduct, whether the incident is current or historical.

This includes support to ADF cadets, officers and instructors of cadets, APS personnel, commanders, managers, supervisors, support people and families affected by sexual misconduct. **1800 736 776 (1800SeMPRO)**.

Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling (formerly WCS): is a national mental health service that provides 24-hour free and confidential counselling, group programs and suicide prevention training for current and ex-serving ADF members, and their family. To get support or to find out more, call **1800 011 046** or visit **www.OpenArms.gov.au**

APS (and Reservists)

Defence Employee Assistance Program (EAP) (including the Reserve Assistance Program – RAP). The EAP provides short term confidential counselling and support for employees and immediate family members (if eligible). It is easily accessible, voluntary and can provide support on a range of personal and work related issues. The Defence EAP can be accessed by calling **1300 687 327**.