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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Study Affirms Majority Still Feel that Gambling is Potentially Harmful and are  
Aware of Signs of Problem Gambling**

**- NCPG's 2007 Survey on Perceptions and Attitudes towards Gambling in Singapore –**

1. This survey is a follow-up on the baseline study undertaken in 2006 for the NCPG's public education efforts. The 2007 survey showed an increase in the awareness of signs of problem gambling and help services. Many might also consider applying for casino exclusion orders. These and other findings will guide the Council's initiatives on public education and public awareness.

***Increase in Public Awareness on Signs of Problem Gambling and Avenues of Help***

2. There has been an increase in awareness on the signs of problem gambling and help services:

2.1 Public awareness of signs of problem gambling has increased by 29 percentage points (2006:32%; 2007: 61%).

2.2 With prompting<sup>1</sup>, 20% and 13% of the respondents could indicate the telephone helpline numbers 1800-X-GAMBLE and 1800-6-668-668 respectively. 78% of respondents had heard of the helplines from the TV, and 51% from the media.

2.3 Help-seeking behaviours continue to indicate that the majority of Singaporeans would turn to their family for help on gambling-related problems (2006: 78%; 2007: 73%). The proportion who indicated that they would seek professional help if their family members have gambling related problems has increased by 19 percentage points (2006:37%; 2007: 56%).

***Almost Half of the Respondents Welcomed Casino Exclusion Orders***

3. The 2007 survey has a new question on family exclusion orders for the casinos, and 47% of the respondents indicated that they would apply for casino exclusion orders to ban family members with gambling problems. Although this proportion is high, the NCPG is cognizant through its public consultation on the casino exclusion orders in the earlier part of this year that families would consider such a step very carefully and as a last resort. Many of those consulted had also suggested that social workers be hired to counsel the problem gambler.

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<sup>1</sup> Respondents were shown the two numbers and asked if they were aware that the helplines provided help services for problem gamblers and their families.

***Majority of Respondents Recognised Harm of Problem Gambling but Showed Change in Perceptions towards Gambling***

4. The 2007 survey continued to reflect that a majority (95%) felt that gambling was potentially harmful. The proportions remained stable from 2006 to 2007 for the majority of respondents who did not view gambling as an appropriate means of financial betterment. The proportions also remained stable for the respondents who felt that gambling once in a while and not excessively was acceptable (2006: 74%; 2007: 70%). However, the findings also showed some changes in perceptions towards gambling. Compared to 2006, results from 2007 showed that:

4.1 The proportion of respondents who considered Singapore Sweep, 4D and Toto as leisure activities rather than gambling activities has increased by 10 percentage points (2006: about 50%; 2007: about 60%).

4.2 The proportion of respondents who felt that gambling was very likely to lead to an unhappy family life has decreased by 16 percentage points (2006:81%; 2007:65%).

4.3 The proportion of respondents who felt that it was possible to win lots of money by having the right gambling skills has increased by 18 percentage points (2006: 14%; 2007: 32%).

4.4 The proportion of respondents who felt that it made sense to continue gambling to recover losses has increased by 8 percentage points (2006:11%; 2007: 19%).

5. The 2007 survey showed that TV, radio and print media continued to be the main medium of raising awareness of gambling issues among the general public. For 2007/08, NCPG will step up its public education and public awareness efforts, including:

5.1 Developing key messages for public education, targeting youth, problem gamblers and families.

5.2 Focusing on problem gamblers and their families as the main target groups for public education on the casino exclusion measures. The Council and MCYS are working together on regulations for administration of the casino exclusion measures and the proceedings for family exclusion cases.

6. Mrs Mildred Tan, Chair of the Public Communications Sub-Committee, said “NCPG believes it is important to track its efforts in public education and awareness. This year’s survey has provided us with useful and insightful information on the need to increase public awareness and to continue to monitor changes in perceptions towards gambling.”



7. The survey report can be found at **Appendix A**. **Appendix B** provides an English-Chinese glossary of problem gambling terms used in this media release.

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***About the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG):***

*The NCPG was appointed in August 2005 as part of Singapore's national framework to address problem gambling. It is a council comprising 19 members with expertise in public communications, psychiatry and psychology, social work, counselling and rehabilitative services. The Council's role is to provide advice and feedback to the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) on public education programmes on problem gambling and on the effectiveness of treatment, counseling and rehabilitative programmes ; to decide on funding for these programmes; preventive and rehabilitative programmes; and on the applications for exclusion of persons from casinos. For more information, please see [www.ncpg.org.sg](http://www.ncpg.org.sg).*

APPENDIX A

**SURVEY  
ON THE  
PERCEPTIONS & ATTITUDES  
TOWARDS GAMBLING ISSUES  
IN  
SINGAPORE**

Report by the National Council on Problem Gambling  
October 2007

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1 The National Council of Problem Gambling (NCPG) commissioned its second survey on the Perceptions and Attitudes towards Gambling Issues in Singapore. The first survey was conducted in 2006 to serve as a baseline study for the NCPG to conduct subsequent surveys to track changes in perceptions and attitudes on gambling issues in Singapore; assess the level of awareness of problem gambling and help services; and guide the NCPG's public education and public awareness initiatives on problem gambling.
- 2 The methodology used in the second survey was identical to that of the first. A structured questionnaire was designed and administered through face-to-face interviews between April to May 2007 to a stratified random and representative sample of 2013 Singapore residents (citizens and Permanent Residents) aged 15 – 75 years at their homes. The minority ethnic groups were purposely oversampled to obtain sufficient sample sizes necessary for meaningful sub-group analysis. Annex A provides the breakdown of the sample based on age, ethnic group and gender. Prior to conducting any data analyses, all data were appropriately weighted using national demographic statistics to ensure that the findings are representative of the Singapore population.

### **Awareness of Problem Gambling and Help Seeking Behaviours**

- 3 In 2006, when respondents were asked if they could explain what “problem gambling” means, 32% were able to explain problem gambling by describing one or more of the signs of problem gambling (i.e., negative behaviours or consequences that might be associated with problem gambling). In 2007, this proportion increased significantly by a substantial 29 percentage points to 61%.
- 4 In September 2006, the NCPG commissioned two social service agencies, Care Corner Counselling Centre and Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society, to pilot community-based problem gambling services. The 2007 survey found that 8% and 9% of the respondents were aware that Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society and Care Corner Counselling Centre provide help services for problem gamblers and their families.
- 5 The 2007 survey found that when prompted, 20% of the respondents could recall the 1800-X-GAMBLE and 13% for 1800-6-668-668, which are the two helpline numbers run by Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society and Care Corner Counselling Centre respectively. Respondents who recognised the telephone helplines had mostly heard or read about them from the TV and print media, suggesting that TV and print media should continue to be the main medium for conveying messages on help available for problem gamblers and their families.

6 Respondents were asked what they would do if they had gambling-related problems. In both surveys (2006 and 2007) the action most reported by respondents was approaching family for help (2006: 78%, 2007: 73%), followed by approaching friends (2006: 60%, 2007: 57%), with no significant change in the proportions from 2006 to 2007. The proportion who indicated that they would approach religious leaders increased significantly by 8 percentage points from 30% in 2006 to 38% in 2007. In the 2007 survey, respondents were also asked if they would approach various professional and counselling centres for help. The proportion indicating that they would approach the Institute of Mental Health (Community Addictions Management Programme) and the two commissioned counselling centres (Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society or Care Corner Counselling Centre) were 33% and 32%. 41% of respondents indicated that they would approach community resources such as Family Service Centres for help. The proportion of respondents who indicated that they would do nothing decreased significantly from 18% in 2006 to 9% in 2007.

7 Respondents were asked how likely they would approach help organisations or people if their family members had gambling-related problems. Results showed that the majority of respondents would approach their family and the proportion increased significantly by 13 percentage points from 74% in 2006 to 87% in 2007. The proportion of respondents who would advise their family members to seek professional help in specialised institutions increased significantly from 37% in 2006 to 56% in 2007. The proportion of respondents who would approach community resources decreased significantly from 69% in 2006 to 53% in 2007. The proportion of respondents who would seek religious help/support increased significantly by 10 percentage points from 38% in 2006 to 48% in 2007. In 2007, almost half of the respondents (47%) indicated that they would apply for casino exclusion orders to ban the person from visiting casinos.

### **Awareness of NCPG**

8 There were significant increases in the level of awareness of NCPG in 2007. A total of 35% of respondents in 2007 were aware of the NCPG, a significant increase from 21% in 2006.

9 The 2007 survey also included items asking respondents who had heard of the NCPG on their perceptions of NCPG. The majority had generally favourable perceptions of the NCPG. A large majority felt that the NCPG was serious in helping problem gamblers and their families (92%), proactive (83%) and credible (83%). Only a small minority felt that the NCPG was inexperienced (16%). The majority also thought that the NCPG was against gambling (70%). 46% felt that the NCPG was independent of the Government, while 63% felt that the NCPG was pro-Government.

### **Efforts towards Addressing Problem Gambling**

10 In both 2006 and 2007, the large majority of respondents felt that more should be done to address problem gambling in Singapore in terms of helping those with gambling problems (2006: 97%, 2007: 95%) and educating the public on problem gambling (2006: 97%, 2007: 96%) and that gambling will increase the social problems in Singapore if we do nothing now (2006: 93%, 2007: 92%), with no statistically significant changes in the proportion. These findings indicate general public acknowledgement that gambling could cause undesirable social impact and that therefore there is a need for active efforts to address gambling related problems.

### **Participation in Gambling Activity in the Past 12 Months**

11 Similar to the 2006 baseline survey, respondents in the 2007 survey who had participated in at least one form of gambling activity in the past 12 months were classified as gamblers for the purpose of interpreting some of the results of the survey. For both surveys, those who have not participated in any form of gambling activity in the past 12 months were classified as non-gamblers. The proportions of gamblers and non-gamblers remained stable over time with no statistically significant change from 2006 to 2007 (2006 gamblers: 59%, 2007 gamblers: 56%; 2006 non-gamblers: 41%, 2007 non-gamblers: 44%).

12 In both surveys, the majority of gamblers indicated that they would set a gambling limit or budget on how much they gamble and the proportion was identical for the two surveys (76%). These findings suggest that most gamblers are generally aware of the risks of problem gambling. Both surveys also found that only a minority of gamblers indicated that they had ever faced difficulties in some aspects of their lives (e.g., health, finance, job/school, relationship, mental/emotions) because of gambling activities. This suggests that the majority is not adversely affected by their gambling behaviour.

### **Perception of Various Gambling Forms among Singaporeans**

13 Respondents were given a list of 12 games and asked whether they viewed each game as 'leisure' or 'gambling' activity. The pattern of findings in 2007 is similar to the pattern observed in 2006. The large majority of respondents viewed table games, horse racing, online gambling, sports betting and jackpot/fruit machines as gambling rather than leisure activities. Around 60% of respondents considered the "softer" forms of gambling activities (i.e., Sweep, 4D, Toto and social gambling) as leisure activities rather than gambling activities. With the exception of social gambling, the proportion who considered these softer forms of gambling activities as leisure activities rather than gambling activities increased significantly from 2006 to 2007.

### **General Perceptions towards Gambling**

- 14 The majority of respondents felt that gambling once in a while and not excessively was acceptable, and this proportion remained stable from 2006 (74%) to 2007 (70%) with no significant change.
- 15 The majority of respondents did not view gambling as an appropriate means of financial betterment or a way to take one's mind off problems. The proportions remained stable from 2006 to 2007 with no significant change.
- 16 As in 2006, the 2007 survey found that the majority of respondents agreed that gambling was very likely to lead to an unhappy family life and that gambling frequently would lead the gambler to be poorer in the end. However, the proportion who felt that gambling was very likely to lead to an unhappy family life decreased significantly by 16 percentage points from 81% in 2006 to 65% in 2007. The proportion who felt that gambling frequently would lead the gambler to be poorer in the end decreased significantly by 10 percentage points from 76% in 2006 to 66% in 2007.
- 17 The 2006 survey found that a significant minority (36%) were of the view that gambling was a good way of social bonding among friends. The proportion holding this view increased significantly by 16 percentage points in 2007 to half of all respondents (52%). The proportion who considered gambling to be a fun and entertaining form of recreation increased significantly from 52% in 2006 to 58% in 2007. The proportion who considered there was nothing wrong with gambling increased significantly by 9 percentage points from 48% in 2006 to 57% in 2007.

### **Specific Beliefs about Gambling**

- 18 Only a minority of respondents felt that it made sense to continue gambling to chase wins (2006: 20%, 2007: 23%) or losses (2006: 11%, 2007: 19%).
- 19 A significant minority (32%) felt that that one must not be afraid to take risks when gambling and this proportion increased significantly by 12 percentage points from 32% in 2006 to 44% in 2007.
- 20 In 2006, only a small minority of respondents (14%) felt that it was possible to win lots of money by having the right gambling skills, but the proportion increased significantly by 18 percentage points to 32% in 2007.
- 21 In 2006, only a small minority of respondents (20%) indicated that they would participate in a particular gambling activity following a friend's windfall, but the proportion increased significantly by 8 percentage points to 28% in 2007.

22 These shifts suggest that a decrease in rational beliefs in recognising that gambling is essentially a game of chance.

**Differences by Age, Gender, and Ethnic Group**

23 The 2006 survey found that the proportion of gamblers was higher among the older respondents (age 30 years and above, 64%) than younger respondents (age below 30 years, 48%). In 2007, older respondents continued to have a higher proportion of gamblers than younger respondents. However, from 2006 to 2007, while there was no significant change in the proportion of gamblers among older respondents (62%), there was a significant and large decrease in the proportion of gamblers among younger respondents by 10 percentage points (38%).

24 The 2006 survey found that the proportion of gamblers was higher among males (63%) than females (57%). In 2007, males continued to have a higher proportion of gamblers than females. However, from 2006 to 2007, while there was no significant change in the proportion of gamblers among males (61%), there was a significant decrease in the proportion of gamblers among females by 6 percentage points (51%).

25 Similar to the 2006 survey, the 2007 survey found that, in comparison to Malays, Chinese and Indians were much more likely to consider various gambling forms (especially the “softer” forms i.e., Sweep, 4D, Toto, and social gambling) as leisure activities rather than gambling activities.

26 Ethnic group differences existed in the extent to which gambling activity is culturally accepted as a form of recreation. In 2006 as well as in 2007, Chinese and Indians were more likely than Malays to agree that gambling was a good way of social bonding among friends, that there was nothing wrong with gambling, that gambling was a fun and entertaining form of recreation and that it was alright to gamble once in a while as long as it was not done in an excessive manner.

\* \* \* \* \*

## SECTION I: PARTICIPATION IN GAMBLING ACTIVITIES

1.1 Similar to the 2006 baseline survey, respondents in the 2007 survey who had participated in at least one form of gambling activity in the past 12 months were classified as gamblers for the purpose of interpreting some of the results of the survey. For both surveys, those who have not participated in any form of gambling activity in the past 12 months were classified as non-gamblers. Table 1 shows the proportions of respondents who were classified as gamblers or non-gamblers for the respective surveys. As shown in the table, the proportion of gamblers (and conversely, the proportion of non-gamblers) remained stable over time with no statistically significant change from 2006 to 2007.

Table 1: % of Participation in Gambling Activities

	2006	2007	Change in % pts
Participated in Gambling Activities in the past 12 months (Classified as Gamblers)	59%	56%	<i>n.s.</i>
Did Not Participate in Gambling Activities in the past 12 months (Classified as Non-Gamblers)	41%	44%	<i>n.s.</i>

*n.s.* indicates that the change in % from 2006 to 2007 is not statistically significant.

1.2 In both surveys, the majority of gamblers indicated that they would set a gambling limit or budget on how much they gamble and the proportion was identical for the two surveys (2006: 76%, 2007: 76%). In addition, both surveys found that only a minority of gamblers indicated that they had ever faced difficulties in some aspects of their lives (e.g., health, finance, job/school, relationship, mental/emotions) because of gambling activities (2006: 10%, 2007: 14%). These findings suggest that the large majority of gamblers are generally aware of the risks of problem gambling and the majority of them are not adversely affected by their gambling behaviour. However, the proportion who indicated that they had ever faced difficulties in some aspects of their lives because of gambling activities increased significantly by 4 percentage points from 10% in 2006 to 14% in 2007. As shown in Table 2, detailed analyses showed that while the proportion who indicated finance (8%), health (1%), or job/school (1%) difficulties remained unchanged from 2006 to 2007, the proportion who indicated mental/emotion difficulties doubled from 3% in 2006 to 6% in 2007 and the proportion who indicated relationship difficulties increased from 2% in 2006 to 5% in 2007.

Table 2: % Indicating Difficulties because of Gambling Activities

Difficulties because of Gambling Activities	2006	2007	Change in % pts
Finance	8%	8%	<i>n.s.</i>
Mental/Emotions	3%	6%	+ 3%
Relationship	2%	5%	+ 3%
Health	1%	1%	<i>n.s.</i>
Job/School	1%	1%	<i>n.s.</i>

*n.s.* indicates that the change in % from 2006 to 2007 is not statistically significant.

### **Age Differences**

1.3 The 2006 survey found that the proportion of gamblers was higher among the older respondents (age 30 years and above, 64%) than younger respondents (age below 30 years, 48%). In 2007, older respondents continued to have a higher proportion of gamblers than younger respondents. However, from 2006 to 2007, while there was no significant change in the proportion of gamblers among older respondents (62%), there was a significant and large decrease in the proportion of gamblers among younger respondents by 10 percentage points (38%).

### **Gender Differences**

1.4 The 2006 survey found that the proportion of gamblers was higher among males (63%) than females (57%). In 2007, males continued to have a higher proportion of gamblers than females. However, from 2006 to 2007, while there was no significant change in the proportion of gamblers among males (61%), there was a significant decrease in the proportion of gamblers among females by 6 percentage points (51%).

### **Ethnic Group Differences**

1.5 For both surveys, the pattern of ethnic group differences in the proportion of gamblers was similar, with Chinese having the highest proportion, Malays having the lowest proportion, and Indians in between. However, from 2006 to 2007, while there was no significant change in the proportion among Chinese (69% to 65%, *n.s.*), there was a significant decrease in the proportion by 12 percentage points among Indians (51% to 39%) but a significant increase in the proportion by 6 percentage points among Malays (9% to 15%).

## SECTION II: PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS GAMBLING ISSUES

### Perception towards Various Gambling Forms

2.1 Respondents were given a list of 12 games and asked whether they viewed each game as 'leisure' or 'gambling' activities. The pattern of findings in 2007 is similar to the pattern observed in 2006.

2.2 As shown in Table 3, the large majority of respondents viewed table games, horse racing, online gambling, sports betting and jackpot/fruit machines as gambling rather than leisure activities. For four of these seven forms of gambling (i.e., table games by local private gambling operators, horse racing, table games in casinos in cruises/other countries, online gambling), the proportion who considered the activity as gambling increased significantly from 2006 to 2007, while there was no significant change in the proportion for the remaining three forms of gambling (i.e., jackpot machines in casinos in cruises/other countries, jackpot/fruit machines in clubs, sports betting).

Table 3: Perceptions of Games as "Gambling" Activities

Consider the following to be gambling activities	2006	2007	Change in % pts
Table games by local private gambling operators	82%	93%	+ 11
Horse Racing	76%	88%	+ 12
Table games in casinos in Cruises/Other countries	81%	87%	+ 6
Online gambling	75%	80%	+ 5
Jackpot Machines in casinos in Cruises/Other countries	76%	79%	<i>n.s.</i>
Jackpot, Fruit machines in clubs	67%	70%	<i>n.s.</i>
Sports Betting	65%	69%	<i>n.s.</i>

*n.s.* indicates that the change in % from 2006 to 2007 is not statistically significant.

2.3 As shown in Table 4, more than 50% of respondents considered the "softer" forms of gambling activities (i.e., Sweep, 4D, Toto and social gambling) as leisure activities rather than gambling activities. For three of these four "softer" forms of gambling (i.e., Sweep, 4D, Toto), the proportion who considered the activity as leisure activities rather than gambling activities increased significantly from 2006 to 2007, while there was no significant change in the proportion for social gambling.

Table 4: Perceptions of Games as "Leisure" Activities

Consider the following to be leisure activities	2006	2007	Change in % pts
Singapore Sweep	55%	62%	+ 7
4D	53%	61%	+ 8
Toto	53%	61%	+ 8
Social gambling	52%	56%	<i>n.s.</i>

*n.s.* indicates that the change in % from 2006 to 2007 is not statistically significant.

- 2.4 Similar to the 2006 survey, the 2007 survey found that, in comparison to Malays, Chinese and Indians were much more likely to consider various gambling forms (especially the "softer" forms i.e., Sweep, 4D, Toto, and social gambling) as leisure activities rather than gambling activities (Tables 5 and 6)
- 2.5 On each of the seven games listed in Table 5, the proportion of Malays who considered the game as gambling activity remained stable from 2006 to 2007. The proportion of Indians also remained stable except that there were significant increases for table games by local private gambling operators (+7 percentage points) and horse racing (+15 percentage points). On each of the games listed in the table, the proportion of Chinese who considered the game as a gambling activity increased from 2006 to 2007.

**Table 5: Perceptions of Games as “Gambling” Activities, By Ethnic Group**

Consider the following to be gambling activities	Chinese 2006 2007 (change in % pts)	Malay 2006 2007 (change in % pts)	Indian 2006 2007 (change in % pts)
Table games by local private gambling operators	80% 93% (+13)	93% 95% (n.s.)	86% 93% (+7)
Horse Racing	73% 88% (+15)	94% 94% (n.s.)	75% 90% (+15)
Table games in casinos in Cruises/Other countries	78% 86% (+8)	94% 92% (n.s.)	86% 89% (n.s.)
Online gambling	71% 79% (+8)	87% 89% (n.s.)	83% 78% (n.s.)
Jackpot Machines in casinos in Cruises/Other countries	73% 76% (n.s.)	93% 90% (n.s.)	82% 85% (n.s.)
Jackpot, Fruit machines in clubs	63% 67% (n.s.)	90% 89% (n.s.)	69% 72% (n.s.)
Sports Betting	62% 69% (+7)	87% 85% (n.s.)	65% 69% (n.s.)

n.s. indicates that the change in % from 2006 to 2007 is not statistically significant.

2.6 On each of the four “softer” games listed in Table 6, the proportion of Malays who considered the game as leisure activity increased significantly, by 16 or 17 percentage points, from 2006 to 2007. In contrast, the proportion of Indians who considered the games as leisure activities remained stable from 2006 to 2007. For Chinese, the proportion increased for Singapore Sweep, 4D and Toto but remained stable for social gambling.

Table 6: Perceptions of Games as “Leisure” Activities, By Ethnic Group

Consider the following to be gambling activities	Chinese 2006 2007 (change in % pts)	Malay 2006 2007 (change in % pts)	Indian 2006 2007 (change in % pts)
Singapore Sweep	62% 68% (+6)	17% 33% (+16)	50% 53% (n.s.)
4D	60% 67% (+7)	16% 31% (+15)	49% 51% (n.s.)
Toto	60% 67% (+7)	15% 32% (+17)	49% 51% (n.s.)
Social gambling	58% 61% (n.s.)	16% 32% (+16)	47% 48% (n.s.)

*n.s.* indicates that the change in % from 2006 to 2007 is not statistically significant.

### **General Perceptions Towards Gambling**

2.7 Respondents were given a list of statements on gambling to gauge their general perceptions towards various gambling issues. As shown in Table 7, the 2006 survey found that the majority of respondents felt that gambling was potentially harmful, with a large majority agreeing that gambling was very likely to lead to an unhappy family life and that gambling frequently would lead a gambler to be poorer in the end. Although the 2007 survey continued to find that the above beliefs were views of the majority, the proportion who felt that gambling was very likely to lead to an unhappy family life decreased significantly by 16 percentage points from 81% in 2006 to 65% in 2007. The proportion who felt that gambling frequently would lead a gambler to be poorer in the end decreased significantly by 10 percentage points from 76% in 2006 to 66% in 2007.

2.8 Table 7 also shows that the majority of respondents felt that gambling once in a while and not excessively was acceptable, and this proportion remained stable from 2006 (74%) to 2007 (70%) with no significant change.

Table 7: % of Respondents who agree with General Statements of Gambling

Statement	2006	2007	Change in % pts
Gambling is very likely to lead to an unhappy life.	81	65	-16
If you keep gambling frequently, you will be poorer in the end.	76	66	-10
It is OK to gamble once in a while, as long as it is not done excessively.	74	70	<i>n.s.</i>

*n.s.* indicates that the change in % from 2006 to 2007 is not statistically significant.

2.9 As shown in Table 8, the majority of respondents did not view gambling as an appropriate means of financial betterment or a way to take one's mind off problems. The proportions remained stable from 2006 to 2007 with no significant change.

Table 8: % of Respondents who agree with General Statements of Gambling

Statement	2006	2007	Change in % pts
Gambling is a good way to take your mind off other problems.	22	27	<i>n.s.</i>
Gambling is a good way to get rich.	13	16	<i>n.s.</i>
If you keep gambling frequently, you will win lots of money one day.	11	14	<i>n.s.</i>
Gambling is a good way to get money to pay debts or solve financial difficulties.	10	6	<i>n.s.</i>

*n.s.* indicates that the change in % from 2006 to 2007 is not statistically significant.

2.10 As shown in Table 9, 2006 found that a significant minority (36%) were of the view that gambling was a good way of social bonding among friends. The proportion holding this view increased significantly by 16 percentage points in 2007 to half of all respondents (52%).

Table 9: % of Respondents who agree with General Statements of Gambling

Statement	2006	2007	Change in % pts
Gambling is a good way for social bonding among friends.	36%	52%	+16

2.11 As shown in Table 10, the 2006 survey found that respondents were split on whether or not they considered gambling to be a fun and entertaining form of

recreation (52% agree) and whether or not there was nothing wrong with gambling (48% agree). Table 10 shows that there were some shifts in these attitudes as the proportion who considered gambling to be a fun and entertaining form of recreation has increased significantly by 6 percentage points to 58% in 2007 and the proportion who considered there was nothing wrong with gambling increased significantly by 9 percentage points to 57% in 2007.

Table 10: % of Respondents who agree with General Statements of Gambling

Statement	2006	2007	Change in % pts
Gambling is a fun and entertaining form of recreation.	52%	58%	+6
There is nothing wrong with gambling.	48%	57%	+9

- 2.12 Detailed analyses by ethnic group showed that ethnic group differences existed in the extent to which gambling activity was culturally accepted as a form of recreation. As shown in Table 11, in 2006 as well as in 2007, Chinese and Indians were more likely than Malays to agree that gambling was a good way of social bonding among friends, that there was nothing wrong with gambling, that gambling was a fun and entertaining form of recreation and that it was OK to gamble once in a while as long as it was not done in an excessive manner.
- 2.13 Table 11 also showed that from 2006 to 2007, there were increases for all three ethnic groups in the proportion agreeing that gambling was a good way for social bonding among friends. For Chinese, the proportion who considered gambling to be a fun and entertaining form of recreation and the proportion who considered there was nothing wrong with gambling increased significantly from 2006 to 2007, but there were no significant changes in these proportion for Malays and for Indians. For all three ethnic groups, there were no significant changes in the proportion agreeing that it was OK to gamble once in a while as long as it was not done excessively.

Table 11: Respondents who agree with General Statements of Gambling, by Ethnic Group

Statement	Chinese 2006 2007 (change in % pts)	Malay 2006 2007 (change in % pts)	Indian 2006 2007 (change in % pts)
Gambling is a good way for social bonding among friends.	41% 58% (+17)	9% 25% (+16)	35% 44% (+9)
Gambling is a fun and entertaining form of recreation.	57% 64% (+7)	24% 25% (n.s.)	43% 45% (n.s.)
There is nothing wrong with gambling.	52% 59% (+7)	20% 20% (n.s.)	48% 46% (n.s.)
It is OK to gamble once in a while, as long as it is not done excessively.	81% 76% (n.s.)	34% 37% (n.s.)	65% 60% (n.s.)

*n.s.* indicates that the change in % from 2006 to 2007 is not statistically significant.

### **Specific Beliefs About Gambling**

2.14 Respondents were also given a list of statements to gauge their specific beliefs about gambling. As shown in Table 12, only a minority of respondents felt that it made sense to continue gambling to chase wins (2006: 20%, 2007: 23%) or recover losses (2006: 11%, 2007: 19%). The proportion on chasing wins remained stable with no significant change whereas the proportion on recovering losses increased significantly by 8 percentage points from 2006 to 2007. A significant minority (32%) felt that that one must not be afraid to take risks when gambling and this proportion increased significantly by 12 percentage points from 32% in 2006 to 44% in 2007.

Table 12: % of Respondents who agree with Specific Statements of Gambling

Statement	2006	2007	Change in % pts
After winning money in gambling, it makes sense to continue gambling to win more.	20%	23%	<i>n.s.</i>
After losing money in gambling, it makes sense to continue gambling to win back the losses.	11%	19%	+8
When gambling, we must not be afraid to take risks.	32%	44%	+12

*n.s.* indicates that the change in % from 2006 to 2007 is not statistically significant.

2.15 In 2006, only a small minority of respondents (14%) felt that it was possible to win lots of money by having the right gambling skills, but the proportion increased significantly by 18 percentage points to 32% in 2007 (see Table 13). This increase suggests that there is an increase in the likelihood of Singaporeans to perceive gambling as skill-based rather than a game of chance.

Table 13: % of Respondents who agree with Specific Statements of Gambling

Statement	2006	2007	Change in % pts
It is possible to win lots of money if you have the right gambling skills.	14%	32%	+18

2.16 In 2006, only a small minority of respondents (20%) indicated that they would participate in a particular gambling activity following a friend's windfall, but the proportion increased significantly by 8 percentage points to 28% in 2007 (see Table 14). With regard to informing others about one's gambling activities, there was only about 20% of respondents in 2006 who felt that it was better not to tell family and friends of their gambling but the proportion increased significantly by 10 percentage points to 31% in 2007. Similarly, 2006 found that only 17% felt that it was better to tell family and friends only if they won at gambling and not if they lost but the proportion increased significantly by 9 percentage points to 26% in 2007.

Table 14: % of Respondents who agree with Specific Statements of Gambling

Statement	2006	2007	Change in % pts
If my friend has just won lots of money from one type of gambling, I will be more likely to play in the same type of gambling.	20%	28%	+8
It is better not to tell one's family and friends that one gambles.	21%	31%	+10
It is better for one to tell one's family and friends ONLY if he won at gambling and NOT if he lost.	17%	26%	+9

### **Perceptions About Problem Gambling**

2.17 As shown in Table 15, in 2006, a large majority of respondents agreed that gambling could be very addictive (93%) but most also agreed that gambling addiction could be effectively treated (80%). However, the proportion agreeing that gambling could be very addictive decreased significantly by 12 percentage points to 81% in 2007 and the proportion agreeing that gambling addiction

could be effectively treated decreased significantly by 18 percentage points to 62% in 2007. Moreover, the proportion indicating that it was better not to tell others about it if a person had a gambling problem increased significantly by 13 percentage points from a small minority of 19% to a substantial minority of 32%. The large majority of respondents agreed that people with gambling problems needed support from family members or close friends to overcome addiction and the proportion increased significantly by 6 percentage points from 84% in 2006 to 90% in 2007.

Table 15: % of Respondents who agree with Specific Statements of Gambling

Statement	2006	2007	Change in % pts
Gambling can be very addictive.	93%	81%	-12
Gambling addiction can be effectively treated.	80%	62%	-18
If a person has a gambling problem, it is better not to tell others about it.	19%	32%	+13
People with gambling problems need support from family members or close friends to overcome addiction.	84%	90%	+6

2.18 For both surveys in 2006 and 2007, the large majority of respondents felt that more should be done to address problem gambling in Singapore in terms of helping those with gambling problems (2006: 97%, 2007: 95%) and educating the public on problem gambling (2006: 97%, 2007: 96%) and that gambling will increase the social problems in Singapore if we do nothing now (2006: 93%, 2007: 92%), with no significant changes in the proportion from 2006 to 2007 (see Table 16).

Table 16: % of Respondents who agree with Specific Statements of Gambling

Statement	2006	2007	Change in % pts
More should be done to educate the public on problem gambling.	97%	95%	<i>n.s.</i>
More should be done to help those with gambling problems.	97%	96%	<i>n.s.</i>
If we do nothing now, gambling will increase the social problems in Singapore.	93%	92%	<i>n.s.</i>

*n.s.* indicates that the change in % from 2006 to 2007 is not statistically significant.

## SECTION III: AWARENESS OF PROBLEM GAMBLING

3.1 One of the primary objectives of the survey is to gauge the current level of public awareness of problem gambling and identify the sources from which awareness was derived. In 2006, when respondents were asked if they could explain what “problem gambling” means, 32% were able to explain problem gambling by describing one or more of the signs of problem gambling (i.e., negative behaviours or consequences that might be associated with problem gambling). In 2007, this proportion increased significantly by a substantial 29 percentage points to 61% (see Table 17).

Table 17: % of Respondents who were able to explain what “problem gambling” means by describing one or more of the signs of problem gambling

	2006	2007	Change in % pts
Able to explain “problem gambling” by describing one or more of the signs of problem gambling.	32%	61%	+29

3.2 In both surveys, after respondents were able or unable to explain what “problem gambling” means, they were shown a list of statements describing the signs of problem gambling and were asked if each statement applied to the concept of problem gambling. Results showed that the majority of respondents were able to accurately identify the signs of problem gambling. Statements picked by at least 90% of the respondents are summarised below in Table 18 which shows that the proportions able to accurately identify the signs of problem gambling had generally increased significantly from 2006 to 2007.

Table 18: Awareness of the Signs of Problem Gambling

Possible Signs of Problem Gambling	% agree		Change in % pts
	2006	2007	
Facing financial difficulty, or needing financial support due to gambling	92	98	+6
Using income or savings to gamble instead of paying bills	92	98	+6
Obtaining money from illegal means (e.g. loan sharks) to gamble	93	98	+5
Borrowing money to finance gambling	91	97	+6
Gambling until your last dollar is spent	92	97	+5
Thinking about gambling activities all day long	90	95	+5
Needing to gamble with more and more money	91	95	<i>n.s.</i>

*n.s.* indicates that the change in % from 2006 to 2007 is not statistically significant.

## SECTION IV: AWARENESS OF THE NCPG

4.1 In the 2006 survey, without prompting, only 5% of the respondents were able to name the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) as the organisation responsible for tackling problem gambling in Singapore, and only another 16% who were initially unable to name the NCPG indicated that they had heard of the NCPG when shown the NCPG logo. That is, the total percentage of respondents in 2006 who were aware of the NCPG was only 21%. There were significant increases in the level of awareness of the NCPG in 2007. Specifically, the 2007 survey found that without prompting, 12% of the respondents were able to name the NCPG and another 23% of the respondents were initially not able to name the NCPG but indicated that they have heard of the NCPG when shown the NCPG logo. That is, a total of 35% of the respondents in 2007 were aware of the NCPG, which is a significant increase by 14 percentage points from 2006 (see Table 19).

Table 19: % of Respondent who were aware of the NCPG

	% Yes		Change in % pts
	2006	2007	
(1) Able to name NCPG as the organisation responsible for tackling problem gambling in Singapore.	5	12	+7
(2) Indicate that they have heard of the NCPG when shown the NCPG logo.	16	23	+7
Aware of NCPG: (1) + (2)	21	35	+14

4.2 The 2007 survey also included items asking respondents who had heard of the NCPG for their perceptions of the NCPG. As shown in Table 20, the majority of respondents had generally favourable perceptions of the NCPG. The large majority felt that the NCPG was serious in helping problem gamblers and their families (92%), proactive (83%) and credible (83%) and only a small minority felt that the NCPG was inexperienced (16%). The majority also thought that the NCPG was against gambling (70%). About half of the respondents felt that the NCPG was independent of the Government (46%) and a higher proportion felt that the NCPG was pro-Government (63%).

Table 20: Perceptions of the NCPG

Statement	% Agree
NCPG is serious in helping problem gamblers and their families	92
NCPG is proactive (i.e., it anticipates problems and comes up with a solution before the problem happens)	83
NCPG is credible (i.e. we can believe in what NCPG says)	83
NCPG is inexperienced (i.e., it does not have much experience dealing with problem gambling)	16
NCPG is against gambling (i.e., it advises people not to gamble)	70
NCPG is independent of the Government (i.e., it makes its own decisions without having to consult the Government)	46
NCPG is pro-Government (i.e., it supports Government policies and will not go against the policies)	63

4.3 Throughout its second year of work, NCPG had mounted several publicity initiatives to promote greater public awareness and understanding on gambling issues. Awareness level of these various publicity activities ranged from 6% for radio talkshows on FM1003 to 49% for advertisements (on TV, radio and TV Mobile) featuring Mediacorp artiste Li Nanxing giving advice on problem gambling. Generally, television ranked the highest in raising awareness (see Table 21).

Table 21: Source of Awareness of NCPG and Its Work

Advertisement featuring Li Nanxing giving word of advice about problem gambling on TV/Radio/TV Mobile	49%
'A Million Treasures' Channel TV8 drama (Or Bai Wan Bao in Chinese, starring Li Nanxing, Zoe Tay and Felicia Chin)	29%
Soccer gambling tips in the form of 'red card' advertisements in The New Paper/Shin Min Daily	16%
'Bet Your Life' (Shen Ming Du Zhu) TV series based on case studies/advice from counsellors, on MediaCorp TV/TV Mobile	16%
Featured case studies/advice from counsellors in Shin Min Daily/Lianhe Wanbao	11%
Talkshows on FM1003 on problem gambling case studies/advice from counsellors	6%

## SECTION V: HELP SEEKING BEHAVIOUR

- 5.1 In September 2006, the NCPG commissioned two social service agencies, Care Corner Counselling Centre and Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society, to pilot community-based problem gambling services. The 2007 survey found that 8% and 9% of the respondents were aware that Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society and Care Corner Counselling Centre, respectively, provide help services for problem gamblers and their families.
- 5.2 The 2007 survey found that a small minority of the respondents were able to indicate, without prompting, the telephone helplines for problem gamblers and their families to call for advice (1800-X-GAMBLE: 5%, 1800-6-668-668: 2%). When prompted, the proportion increased to 20% for 1800-X-GAMBLE and 13% for 1800-6-668-668. Respondents who recognised the telephone helplines had mostly heard or read about the telephone helplines from the TV and print media (see Table 22).

Table 22: Source of Awareness of Telephone Helplines

TV e.g. drama, advertisement, news etc	78%
Print media e.g. newspaper advertisement or articles	51%
Outdoor media e.g. bus-stop shelter ad, billboard	22%
Radio e.g. advertisement, news etc	21%
Family / friends	19%
Betting outlets e.g. posters, brochures	14%
Internet e.g. website, news etc	10%
Others	1%

- 5.3 Respondents were asked what they would do if they had gambling-related problems. As shown in Table 23, in both surveys (2006 and 2007) the action most reported by respondents was approaching family for help (2006: 78%, 2007: 73%), followed by approaching friends (2006: 60%, 2007: 57%), with no significant change in the proportions from 2006 to 2007. The proportion who indicated that they would approach religious leaders increased significantly by 8 percentage points from 30% in 2006 to 38% in 2007. In the 2007 survey, respondents were also asked if they would approach various professional and counselling centres for help and the proportion indicating that they would approach the Institute of Mental Health (Community Addictions Management Programme) and the two commissioned counselling centres (Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society or Care Corner Counselling Centre) were 33% and 32%. The

2007 survey also found that 41% of respondents indicated that they would approach community resources such as Family Service Centres. In 2006, a small minority (18%) of respondents indicated that they would do nothing and the proportion decreased significantly by 9 percentage points to 9% in 2007.

Table 23: % of Respondents who would approach people/organisations for help on gambling problems

<b>Likely to approach for gambling related problems</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
Approach my family for help	78%	73%
Approach my friends for help	60%	57%
Approach religious leaders for help	30%	38%
Approach Institute of Mental Health [Community Addictions Management Programme or CAMP] for help	NA	33%
Approach Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society or Care Corner Counselling Centre for help	NA	32%
Approach community resources such as Family Service Centres or other counselling centres for help	NA	41%
Nothing/No-one	18%	9%
Others	NA	1%

5.4 Respondents were presented with a list of various forms of help for gambling problems and asked how likely they would approach these help organisations/people if their family members had gambling-related problems. Results showed that the majority of respondents would approach their family and the proportion increased significantly by 13 percentage points from 74% in 2006 to 87% in 2007. In 2006, 37% of respondents would advise their family members to seek professional help in specialised institutions and the proportion increased significantly by 19 percentage points to 56% in 2007. The proportion of respondents who would approach community resources decreased significantly by 16 percentage points from 69% in 2006 to 53% in 2007. The proportion of respondents who would seek religious help/support increased significantly by 10 percentage points from 38% in 2006 to 48% in 2007. In 2007, almost half of the respondents indicated that they would apply for casino exclusion orders to ban the person from visiting casinos.

Table 24: % of Respondents who would approach people/organizations for help if family members have gambling-related problems

<b>Likely to do/approach for gambling related problems</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
Approach family (e.g., encourage them to stop gambling)	74%	87%
Advise them to seek professional help (e.g. psychiatrists, doctors) in specialised institutions (e.g. Institute of Mental Health)	37%	56%
Approach community resources, e.g. Family Service Centres for help	69%	53%
Seek religious help/support	38%	48%
Apply for casino exclusion orders, that is to ban the person from visiting casino	NA	47%
Nothing/ No-one	5%	5%

## **SECTION VI: CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The 2007 survey findings on attitudes towards gambling and awareness of signs/symptoms of problem gambling continue to be generally positive. For example, the large majority of respondents were aware of the harms of gambling and agreed that was not a means for financial betterment.
- 6.2 However, the 2007 survey shows several significant changes from the findings in the 2006 survey that raised some potential concerns. For example, there were increases in the proportion of Singaporeans who viewed the softer forms of gambling (Singapore Sweep, 4D, Toto, social gambling) as leisure activities rather than gambling activities, viewed gambling as a good way of social bonding among friends, felt that there was nothing wrong with gambling and thought that gambling was a fun and entertaining form of recreation. There were also increases in the proportion of Singaporeans who felt that it was possible to win lots of money if one had the right gambling skills, that one must not be afraid to take risks when gambling and that it made sense to continue gambling to win back the losses after losing money in gambling. There were also decreases in the proportion of Singaporeans who agreed that gambling addiction could be very addictive and that gambling addiction could be effectively treated. The proportion of Singaporeans who thought that gambling had a negative impact on family life had also decreased.
- 6.3 The survey showed that there was some awareness of the problem gambling services available including the helplines of the two pilot social service centres commissioned by NCPG. Those who were aware had heard mostly from the television and print media campaigns. Both surveys continued to find that the majority of Singaporeans would turn to their families for help on gambling-related problems. The 2007 survey also found that almost half of the respondents would apply for casino exclusion orders to ban the person from visiting the casino.
- 6.4 The 2007 findings indicate that awareness of the NCPG has significantly increased from 2006. Both surveys found that the large majority of Singaporeans felt that more should be done to address problem gambling in Singapore in terms of helping those with gambling problems and educating the public on problem gambling and that gambling will increase the social problems in Singapore if we do nothing now. The 2007 survey also asked about perceptions of the NCPG and found that Singaporeans had an overall favourable impression of the NCPG in terms of its dedication, credibility and pro-activeness.

## Profile of Respondents by Age, Ethnic Group and Gender

Age Group (years)	Percentage of Respondents
15-19	10
20-24	10
25-29	7
30-34	8
35-39	9
40-44	10
45-49	9
50-54	8
55-59	6
60-75	23
	100

Ethnic Group	Percentage of Respondents
Chinese	44
Malay	26
Indian	26
Others	4
	100

Gender	Percentage of Respondents
Male	50
Female	50
	100



## **APPENDIX B: ENGLISH-CHINESE GLOSSARY**

National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG)

全国预防嗜赌理事会

Problem Gambling

嗜赌

Gamblers

赌徒

Pathological/ Problem Gambler (PPG)

病态赌徒

Gambling Addiction

赌瘾

Addiction

癖瘾症