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Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality and Racing
Minister for the Arts

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Wednesday, 8 June, 2011

The NSW Government is taking steps to ensure lotteries customers can request an independent review if there is a dispute over a non payment of a valid prize.

Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality, Racing and the Arts, George Souris, said the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing (OLGR) has powers to investigate disputes between NSW Lotteries and customers over the non payment of valid prizes.

Mr Souris said OLGR has requested that NSW Lotteries promote the independent investigative process to its customers following a review of the information it provides on complaints handling.

“To ensure the public is being adequately informed of their rights, I requested my department undertake a review of the Complaint Handling Charter used by NSW Lotteries,” he said.

“The review identified that neither brochures available at lotteries retail outlets nor the Complaint Handling Charter on the NSW Lotteries website contains any information about the role of OLGR as an independent investigative body.

“While NSW Lotteries has a complaints handling process including a mechanism to review decisions, OLGR’s role is to independently examine any dispute over the non payment of a valid prize where the complainant is not satisfied with the response by NSW Lotteries.

“To assist the public to determine their options in these cases, OLGR has requested that the following information be included on the NSW Lotteries website including in its Complaint Handling Charter as soon as possible:

“If your prize claim has been rejected and you would like an independent review of the decision, please contact the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing, Level 6, 323 Castlereagh Street, Haymarket NSW 2001. Email: lottery.complaints@communities.nsw.gov.au or telephone (02) 9995 0837.”

“While this is not in response to a rise in complaints or any particular case, it is imperative that lotteries customers are aware of this independent review process and that it is promoted at the point of sale and on the NSW Lotteries website,” he said.

“The non payment of a valid prize is a breach of NSW Lotteries licences and OLGR has the power to order that it be rectified or disciplinary action could be taken. It is also an offence for a person to lodge a claim for a prize they know is false or misleading.

“OLGR has also placed information about its role in reviewing disputes about the non payment of valid lottery prizes in a prominent position on its website.”