
PRESS STATEMENT

Reference	0176
Release date	11 December 2015 - for immediate release
Images available	Responsible Gambling Trust logo

Responsible Gambling Trust commission Sophro Ltd to investigate causes of harm in online gambling

The Responsible Gambling Trust (RGT) has announced that Sophro Ltd has been commissioned to complete a study of online gambling behaviour which will investigate the causes of harm in online gambling. The research is the third strand to be announced from the independent gambling charity's £750,000 eighteen-month programme of research into remote gambling.

In contrast to "big data" research projects which have recently been commissioned by RGT, Dr Jonathan Parke from Sophro Ltd, along with Dr Adrian Parke and Dr Heather Wardle will adopt a qualitative approach using a combination of behavioural and interview data. This project will look at a smaller number of participants in greater depth. Researchers expect to be able to identify behavioural processes relevant to understanding problem gambling behaviour and recommend appropriate responsible gambling interactions to promote improved commercial, regulatory or clinical responses to problem gambling.

The Responsible Gambling Trust has reached agreement with online gambling operator Unibet that they will collaborate with Sophro Ltd to provide access to industry data. Researchers will study customer data from Unibet's online bingo, casino, sports betting and poker products. A final report is expected in autumn 2016.

Marc Etches, Chief Executive of the Responsible Gambling Trust, said:

"RGT is committed to minimising gambling-related harm and research projects like the one we have commissioned Sophro Ltd to undertake is innovative and will contribute to our knowledge of player behaviour and of effective responsible gambling interventions. We are delighted that Unibet has agreed to provide access to the player data necessary to make this research possible."

Dr Jonathan Parke, Sophro said:

"We are pleased to be working with RGT and Unibet on this exciting project designed to enhance understanding of how to minimise risk in remote gambling. In an innovative approach to researching player data we will be using qualitative techniques to analyse real gambling behaviour; moving beyond description and towards explanatory understandings of remote gambling processes associated with harm. This project will contribute to the groundwork for more effective harm minimisation in remote gambling."

-ENDS-

Contact:

Paul Scaping

Bell Pottinger

Direct line: +44 (0)20 3772 2626

Mobile: +44 (0)7795 971022

pscaping@bellpottinger.com

NOTES TO EDITORS

- The Responsible Gambling Trust is the leading charity in the UK committed to minimising gambling-related harm. As an independent national charity funded by donations from the gambling industry, the Responsible Gambling Trust funds education, prevention and treatment services and commissions research to broaden public understanding of gambling-related harm. The aim is to stop people getting into problems with their gambling, and ensure that those that do develop problems receive fast and effective treatment and support.
- The Responsible Gambling Trust raises a minimum of £5 million each year from the gambling industry operating in Britain within a voluntary (donation based) system and funds research, education, prevention and treatment services. Funding priorities are guided by the national strategy advised by the Responsible Gambling Strategy Board (RGSB) and endorsed by the Gambling Commission. The latest strategy was published in December 2012.
- RGT launched its programme of research into remote gambling in March 2015 when it issued an open tender to participate in a programme of research into remote gambling behaviour. The charity has also commissioned PwC and the think-tank Demos to produce studies as part of the programme. Demos will publish research into gambling and social media in December 2015 while PwC is undertaking an 18 month programme of research to explore the potential of behavioural analytics to indicate and mitigate gambling-related harm.
- Sophro's mission is to provide research, insight and analysis, the goal of which is to minimize risk of harm and to enhance the consumer experience in areas of consumption where such risk is heightened. In collaboration with policymakers, regulators, academics, clinicians and businesses, Sophro works hard to develop a better understanding of how to minimize harm and maximize benefit for those who choose to participate in gambling by providing research, advice and learning opportunities for those employed in the field of gambling. For more information see www.sophro.uk.com