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**PRESS STATEMENT**

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**Responsible Gambling Trust highlights the need for gambling operators to engage players with responsible gambling**

The Responsible Gambling Trust has today published a review which highlights the need for gambling operators to engage players with responsible and problem gambling guidance, offer self-exclusion mechanisms which are quick and simple to implement, and to ensure that staff are properly trained.

'Operator-Based Approaches to Harm Minimisation in Gambling' forms part of the Responsible Gambling Trust's rolling Machines Research Programme and was written by Professor Alex Blaszczynski of the University of Sydney with Dr. Adrian Parke (University of Lincoln) and Dr. Jonathan Parke and Dr. Jane Rigbye (Responsible Gambling Trust). The publication reviews the nature and effectiveness of harm minimisation in gambling and proposes areas where further understanding should be developed to enable effective harm minimisation measures to be introduced.

In particular the review recommends the following priorities for attention:

- investigating the impact of various forms of in-game dynamic messaging on the key indicators of harm;
- exploring employee awareness and understanding of their responsibilities with regards to interacting with players who may be experiencing harm;
- exploring strategies to increase player awareness of responsible gambling measures available within the venue;
- a detailed consideration of the technical, operational and legal issues that will facilitate or constrain the range of solutions to the enforcement of self-exclusion;
- investigating industry and player perspectives on more innovative approaches to self-exclusion
- identification and trial of technology to facilitate the enforcement of self-exclusion; and
- exploring the impact of various types of advertising content and form (including social media) on intentions and attitudes toward gambling and responsible gambling.

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

"In order to design and implement measures which minimise harm to problem gamblers we first need to understand what form that harm takes and how it can be feasibly tackled. The Responsible Gambling Trust's programme of research is on course to report to Government in the

autumn of 2014 but this report highlights the significant work that needs to be undertaken by operators and policy makers to prepare the ground so that gamblers get more effective support from staff, through machines and elsewhere to minimise gambling harm.”

Professor Alex Blaszczynski said:

“A particular harm minimisation approach may be theoretically appealing, however if it is unworkable from a legal, operational or regulatory perspective, it becomes less relevant. Despite the numerous drivers for more prescriptive, up-to-date guidelines for minimising gambling-related harm, there exists a dearth of reliable evidence. The basic position must be one of careful and strategic consideration of effective options.”

**-ENDS-**

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**NOTES TO EDITORS**

- ‘Operator-Based Approaches to Harm Minimisation in Gambling’ has been published on the Responsible Gambling Trust website at: <http://www.responsiblegamblingtrust.org.uk/>
- 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 £5million 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.
- The RGT has commissioned a two-stage independent research programme into Category B gaming machines. The first stage in the research sought to understand data the industry currently holds on such machines and was completed in December 2013.
- ‘Operator-Based Approaches to Harm Minimisation in Gambling’ forms a part of the second stage of the research programme. Further harm minimisation research recently commissioned by RGT will examine the possibility of identifying gambling-related harm using industry data and evaluate the impact of harm minimisation features (such as responsible gambling messaging, and voluntary and mandatory limits on expenditure of time and money) in gaming machines.
- The RGT will publish research that will provide substantive knowledge to better describe, understand, identify and mitigate gambling-related harm in relation to gaming machines by autumn 2014.