

Fact Sheet: Combating Compulsive Gambling

Compulsive Gambling is a serious concern that needs to be addressed. While the majority of people enjoy gambling on the Internet as a form of entertainment, there are some who face problems. Regulation, combined with proper licensing, enforcement and proven safety controls, as required under the Internet Gambling Regulation and Enforcement Act of 2007, provide an excellent means to protect consumers and block compulsive gamblers from gambling online.

Leading Organizations Comment on Responsible Gaming

- **The National Council on Problem Gambling**, a leading U.S. advocate for programs and services to assist problem gamblers and their families, believes the structure of the Internet allows for operators to deliver responsible gaming programs that meet or exceed current standards in the bricks-and-mortar casinos.
- Increased access to Internet gambling does not lead to significant increases in problematic gambling in counties that regulate Internet gambling, according to **GamCare**, a U.K. based charitable organization committed to addressing the social impact of gambling.
- Congressional testimony by representatives of the **Isle of Man** and the **Alderney Gambling Control Commission**, who have been at the forefront of introducing legislation to regulate Internet gambling, states that a stringent regulatory environment ensures safeguards are in place to protect consumers against compulsive gambling.

Safeguards

Regulated Internet gambling operators would offer the following safeguards to minimize compulsive gambling, currently being implemented by many Internet gambling industry-leaders:

- Track players gambling patterns and enforce controls to limit the amount of money wagered over a given time period
- Identify and stop players whose gambling patterns seem out of the ordinary
- Provide players with the option to set limits on the amount they deposit to their account
- Provide players with the ability to request self-exclusion for a specific amount of time
- Cross-check databases that may be created of individuals who choose to exclude themselves from online gambling to block access to the broader industry
- Provide players information to encourage responsible behavior

Research Responds to the Critics

- Credible research shows that access to Internet gambling does not lead to an increase in problematic gambling.
- The Harvard Medical School Division on Addictions, in a 2007 study "Assessing the Playing Field: A Prospective Longitudinal Study of Internet Sports Gambling Behavior," tracked the behavior and pattern of over 40,000 people who gambled on sports online and found that only one percent exhibited excessive gambling patterns.
- A 2004 report, "Internet Gambling & Addiction" also by the Harvard Medical School, found that Internet gambling could provide increased protections against problematic

gambling and that access to Internet gambling does not lead to a greater rate of gambling addiction.