

The pros and cons of online monitoring systems.

This paper was drafted in September 2007 as a discussion paper for the GREF Working Group on Technical Issues, and explains the author's perspective on questions to consider with regard to the pros and cons of online monitoring systems. An update on the developments on online monitoring systems in the several jurisdictions represented in the Working Group, has become a regular item on the agenda of meetings of the Working Group. The paper has not been updated to reflect any changes since the first discussion in the Working Group.

The paper has been discussed and accepted in the 7th meeting of the GREF Working Group on Technical Issues on 14 September 2007, Oslo, Norway, and has been endorsed at the annual meeting of GREF on 12 June 2009 in Tallinn, Estonia.

In the break-out session with regard to the Working Group on Technical Issues during the GREF meeting in Dubrovnik June last, there has been a discussion on monitoring systems and we briefly were informed on some examples of such systems, under which the ones used in Slovenia, Italy and Norway. Roughly you could say that there are four areas where monitoring systems are in use: with slot machine operations, be it on individual sites or in arcades or casinos, with table games, with lottery terminal operations and with online internet or other remote systems. What most of these systems have in common, is that they generate information about the actual play and collect data of gaming results and transactions made, but also on logging in and out of the system, opening of the terminals, changes of prizes and minimum/maximum stakes, changes in the software, etc. These monitoring systems are in most cases developed for benefit of control by the operators. One of the main purposes of this discussion could be how we as regulators can make these kinds of systems to be for the benefit of us as well. Therefore, the purpose of this discussion would be to have some thought on what we as a regulator could achieve with these kinds of systems.

Questions to address could be:

- Do we want monitoring systems to be obligatory for our operators?
- Who will be the one who is paying for the system?
- Do we as a regulator want to be connected with the system or would we settle for the possibility to either have the data sent to us or to have a – regular – look into the system on site?
- If connected, would we like to have the power to interfere?
- Do we want to have a look at all the data, or would we be satisfied with condensed data in a format to our liking, sent by the operator?
- Do we want to (re)view all the data, or do we only want to get notice in case of irregularities?
- On what kind of data should we focus?
- Who would be responsible for the integrity of the data involved?
- Would a system dedicated to only financial control be enough, or would it also have to be giving information on software changes, and alike?
- Would upcoming new systems, like server based games, make it unavoidable to have monitoring systems, to have an eye on what the operator is doing?

The participants of this meeting are asked, while taking these questions in to mind, to think of two pros and two cons from the regulators point of view with regard to online monitoring systems, to discuss in the meeting.

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