

DATE OF ISSUE: 30 September 2008

NCPG GETS READY TO IMPLEMENT CASINO EXCLUSIONS

-- NCPG Issues Annual Report for 2007/2008 and
Maps Out New Workplans Ahead --

The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) concluded the first year of its second term recently on 31 August 2008, and signals its preparation for the implementation of the NCPG casino exclusion orders in the coming year.

Said Mr Lim Hock San, Chairman of the NCPG: "The first casino is expected to open in the third quarter of 2009. We would start receiving applications for casino exclusion measures by January next year. We hope to minimise the number of Singaporeans who suffer from problem gambling."

Under the Casino Control Act, the NCPG has the authority to issue casino exclusion orders. The NCPG expects to start issuing some 29,000 exclusion orders next year. Excluded persons will include all undischarged bankrupts and those on public assistance. Families may also apply for their members to be excluded if they have a gambling problem. Individuals may voluntarily apply for exclusion. The NCPG hopes to be able to start receiving applications for casino exclusions from January 2009.

The Casino Control Act requires the NCPG to appoint a Panel of Assessors (POA) to decide on applications for the family exclusions. Two members from this panel and one NCPG council member will then form the Committee of Assessors (COA) to decide on and issue the casino exclusion orders.

The NCPG has shortlisted some 60 grassroots leaders and social service professionals to join the POA. Several have confirmed their participation. The NCPG is looking to appoint at least 40 of them at the onset, as the caseload of applications for family exclusions are not known. These candidates are selected based on their age and maturity, years of experience in the social or community service, the ability to make proper and fair judgement, and minimum academic qualifications of O-levels and above.

In the year that passed (September 2007 to August 2008), the NCPG focused on ramping up its public education efforts, particularly through mass media initiatives. It appointed a professional communications agency for the first time since its establishment in August 2005. The advertisement, which has featured a little girl protecting her piggy bank from her problem gambler father, has been well received. The campaign was executed in several bursts throughout the year, via an integrated media platform especially through TV and radio. The creative

campaign has also won a bronze award under the 'Best Cause or Charity Marketing Campaign' at the prestigious Promotion Marketing Awards of Asia (PMAA) 2008.

The same concept has been replicated in the NCPG's public education collateral disseminated through gambling outlets and community partners. Some 70,000 pieces of collateral in the form of posters, brochures, pens, stickers and decals were distributed to the 16 gambling operators who have signed onto the NCPG's voluntary Responsible Gambling Code of Practice.

The Council also rolled out two pilot runs of a training programme for 60 frontline staff of these gambling operators so far, and is expected to help train another 1000 of these personnel over the next two years. In the coming year, the Council hopes to encourage at least 80% of the 106 gambling operators here to sign on. This list includes predominantly private clubs with jackpot machines.

The NCPG will be sharing more details of its casino exclusions and responsible gambling work in the next few months. More information of the NCPG's year in review and workplans ahead are available through its Annual Report 2007/2008 at www.ncpg.org.sg. Hard copies of the report will also be distributed to public libraries and other relevant community touchpoints. For request of its annual reports and other public education collateral, please contact admin@ncpg.org.sg.

For media queries, please contact:

NCPG Secretariat

Ms Cynthia Lee

Tel: 6354-8605/Mobile: 9768-1870

lee_poh_lian@mcys.gov.sg

Mr Renson Seow

Tel: 6354-8591/Mobile: 9751-0203

renson_seow@mcys.gov.sg

About the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG):

The NCPG was appointed in August 2005 as part of Singapore's national framework to address problem gambling. It is an independent council comprising 19 members with expertise in public communications, psychiatry and psychology, social work, counselling and rehabilitative services. The Council's role is to provide advice and feedback to the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) on public education programmes on problem gambling and on the effectiveness of treatment, counseling and rehabilitative programmes; to decide on funding for these programmes; preventive and rehabilitative programmes; and on the applications for exclusion of persons from casinos. Stop Problem Gambling. Call 1800-666-8668. For more information, please see www.ncpg.org.sg.

APPENDIX A: QUOTES FROM PANEL OF ASSESSORS REPRESENTATIVES

嗜赌问题无法完全杜绝，但却可以有效管理，避免延伸成为社会问题。因此“赌场禁止令”可说是预防嗜赌问题的防火线，但它也需要社会及家庭的积极配合才能见效。希望这项“积极防御”的措施能起着防微杜渐的效果。

We can't curb problem gambling completely but we can manage and prevent it from becoming a social issue. Hence the casino exclusion measures may be regarded as a firewall. The importance of the family and the social support network are extremely crucial, to ensure the effectiveness of this firewall.

**-- 黄明德，执行顾问，马林百列家庭服务中心
Samuel Ng, Executive Director, Marine Parade Family Service Centre**

I believe that exclusion orders are extremely useful in helping problem gamblers to remove themselves from high risk environments. Therefore, I consider it a great privilege to be given the opportunity to serve on the Panel of Assessors. As a professional who has worked in the field of problem gambling for several years, I fully support any initiative that helps the problem gambler to regain control over his life, and reduces further harm to himself and his family.

– Suresh Anantha, Training Manager, Community Addictions Management Programme, Institute of Mental Health

Addiction to pathological gambling has caused many families to break up. The introduction of the Casino Exclusion Orders is clearly a step forward in preserving families from the jaws of such an addiction. As a social service professional in the pioneering preventive efforts of the Panel, I am much humbled by the opportunity given, to serve our community.

- Dick Lum, Centre Director, Christian Care Services

APPENDIX B: ENGLISH-CHINESE GLOSSARY

| | |
|---|-----------|
| National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) | 全国预防嗜赌理事会 |
| Lim Hock San | 林福山 |
| Casino Control Act | 赌场管制法 |
| Casino Exclusion Orders | 赌场禁门令 |
| Committee of Assessors | 评估委员会 |
| Panel of Assessors | 评估团 |
| Responsible Gambling Code of Practice | 负责任赌博运作准则 |
| Problem Gambling | 嗜赌 |
| Gamblers | 赌徒 |
| Pathological/ Problem Gambler (PPG) | 病态赌徒 |
| Gambling Addiction | 赌瘾 |
| Addiction | 癖瘾症 |