

# RG COMMUNITY

## CO-CHAIR'S ADDRESS

MR. SEAH CHIN SIONG



Welcome to the 3rd issue of “RG Community” and to a new year of championing Responsible Gambling (RG) measures. Over the years, our industry has been implementing RG initiatives to safeguard vulnerable members of our community. However, implementation has been uneven across the sector.

In the previous editions, we explored some basic facets of responsible gambling such as common gambling beliefs and behaviours, observable signs of potential problem gamblers and tips on how to engage them.

In this issue, Marina Bay Sands shares about the implementation of RG measures in its casino. Lakeside Family Services and Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities share their views on RG from the problem gamblers’ perspectives. I hope this issue will give industry operators some food for thought and facilitate the adoption and enhancement of Responsible Gambling initiatives at your venues. I am confident that their sharing will provide insights for all of you.

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# HOW TO ADOPT RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING PRACTICES

## RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING MEASURES ADOPTED BY MARINA BAY SANDS

Marina Bay Sands (MBS) Responsible Gambling (RG) programme is an evidence-based initiative, derived from our parent company, Las Vegas Sands Corp (LVS). A robust RG programme is one of many factors that make the casino business sustainable. It also supports multiple stakeholders including regulators, investors and patrons, ensuring that the business operates in a responsible manner.

The integrated resort's RG programme focuses on the science of addictions such as problem gambling, resources available locally and best practices when assisting guests with problematic gambling behaviours in a nuanced and delicate manner.

Working with renowned institutions such as the International Gaming Institute at University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) as well as localizing RG initiatives to the Singapore market, MBS' RG programme has been recognised as an industry leader by the Responsible Gambling Council and RG+. RG+ is based on a comprehensive set of responsible gambling standards and is considered the most rigorous RG accreditation programme in the world, designed to meet or exceed all existing responsible gambling regulatory requirements.

With LVS laying a strong foundation in MBS' RG programme, we have further entrenched our programme in a service culture that has been uniquely curated for our property. Since service is key to differentiating ourselves from the competition, MBS' approach to a successful RG Programme is therefore rooted in providing our guests consistent guest experience underpinned by our service values.

# MARINA BAY SANDS' RG PROGRAMME

## CONTINUOUS TRAINING RG AMBASSADORS AND ALL TEAM MEMBERS

The RG Ambassador Programme was developed in conjunction with LVS and Dr Bo Bernhard from UNLV. These Ambassadors are available 24/7 on the casino floor, and are trained to respond to observable signs a patron may display if they are having difficulty with their gambling. Ambassadors will also provide information to patrons on Government funded support services. To date, we have trained over 500 ambassadors, all of whom are team members working on the casino floors and have the opportunity to interact with patrons. On an annual basis, all team members, regardless of their job role, also go through a mandatory RG training.



## PATRON INFORMATION PROGRAMME

The Patron Information Programme was initiated to provide patrons with simple tips and information on how to manage their gambling. MBS has developed four stand-alone brochures, a conveniently sized RG information card and a unique QR code that is displayed on all MBS RG collateral to take patrons directly to the integrated resort's RG Webpage for further information.



Email: [responsiblegambling@marinabaysands.com](mailto:responsiblegambling@marinabaysands.com)  
NCPG -National Problem Gambling Helpline: 1800 6 668 668  
Information on Self-Exclusion/Casino Visit Limit: +65 6354 8154  
Website: [www.ncpg.org.sg](http://www.ncpg.org.sg)

Printed on recycled paper. ♻️

## COLLABORATING CLOSELY WITH REGULATORS AND CIVIC GROUPS

The Singapore government has put in place broad social safeguards to encourage an environment of responsible gambling. As a casino operator, it is important for us to continue conversations with the relevant regulators, as well as work with civic organisations to provide support to our patrons when needed.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

The environment created by the Social Safeguards and the programmes developed internally by MBS are best practice around the world and have shown to be effective harm minimisation measures. New jurisdictions are looking to the Singapore model, particularly the Social Safeguards as the best way to balance the commercial expectations of operators and the social well-being of the community to build a sustainable business model that benefits all.

# FROM OUR COMMUNITY

*MR LIM GEOK HUAT, DIRECTOR (SPECIALISED SERVICES),  
LAKESIDE FAMILY SERVICES*

has seen and heard many stories in his 7 years of working with gamblers and their families. The agency was started in 1993 and currently manages 2 Family Service Centres and 2 Student Care Centres, providing casework and counselling, financial assistance and information and referral services targeting family needs.



*MS CHIEN SY YN, PSYCHOLOGIST,  
THYE HUA KWAN MORAL CHARITIES*

has 3 years under her belt working with gamblers and their families. Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities (THKMC) which provides assistance to the community through more than 60 programmes and services.

The RGF secretariat caught up with both of them to find out more about their experiences and views on Responsible Gambling (RG) measures provided by gambling operators.

## SERVICES PROVIDED FOR GAMBLING-RELATED ISSUES

**Mr Lim:** We used to conduct debrief sessions and offer counselling services for the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) clients and/or their families. We also helped in the administration for the application and revocation of the Casino Family Exclusion Order (FEO). Currently, we provide counselling and group work for gamblers and their families.

**Ms Chien:** THKMC is one of the NCPG's appointed agencies to assist clients in the application of the FEO and conduct interviews for the assessment of Third Party Visit Limit (TPVL). Counselling services are also provided to individuals and families affected by problem gambling.

## CHALLENGES FACED

**Mr Lim:** Proactive, help-seeking behaviour remains a barrier and gamblers usually turn up at the point of a crisis – for example when their marriage is on the verge of breakdown or they have severe financial problems due to problem gambling.

**Ms Chien:** A majority of clients who come for counselling seek help in respect of finding resolution to their debt issue instead of addressing their gambling behaviour. Some of them stopped attending counselling once their debt issue was resolved. Family members often grapple between settling/not settling the gambling debts for them.

## HOW GAMBLING OPERATORS' RG MEASURES HELPED (POTENTIAL) PROBLEM GAMBLERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

**Mr Lim:** The recent progress made especially in the jackpot machine venues is commendable. Not having ATMs/electronic fund transfer point of sales (EFTPOS) terminals within the jackpot machine rooms encourages break from play as patrons have to leave the room and travel a distance should they wish to withdraw more money to gamble.

In the past, self-exclusion from jackpot machine rooms were only available at selected venues as a voluntary scheme. Now, the implementation of a centralised self-exclusion scheme and mandatory screening with the NCPG across all jackpot machine rooms enables a coordinated approach by operators to assist patrons who have opted for self-exclusion. This is a significant RG measure to help patrons keep to their self-exclusion.

**Ms Chien:** Some of the gambler's family members approached the casinos directly to apply for casino exclusion and the staff were able to refer them to us. It showed that the casino staff had been trained on RG. We also received good feedback from the gamblers and their family members who had applied for self-exclusion or successfully received the exclusion order for the gamblers. Some of them shared that the "gambler had stopped gambling", "things are getting better with my family".

# ADDRESSING GAPS

*Ms Chien:* Even though the operators may have implemented some RG measures at their venues, most of the clients we meet with did not seem aware of them. Clients also commented that the RG display messages in gambling premises are not impactful for them to exercise vigilance. RG messages should be displayed at more prominent points within the gambling venue.

Operators could reinforce training at gambling facilities so that the employees would be capable to identify the gamblers who need help and quickly refer them to agencies that provide counselling or refer them to the NCPG helpline.

*Mr Lim:* The casinos have trained RG Ambassadors to respond to patrons who may display observable problem gambling signs and also refer them to support services. A possible follow-up would be to study the effectiveness of this programme and employee training efforts by tracking the number of interactions with the patrons and their receptiveness towards the Ambassadors.

Operators could also help their patrons to be responsible gamblers by facilitating time limits for gambling, via a tool to track how long they have been gambling.

*Thank you very much to Mr Lim and Ms Chien for their sharing.*

## EVENTS COVERAGE

13 November 2018  
Responsible Gambling Forum Training on Engagement Practices:

40 staff from the 2 casinos, 32 fruit machine rooms of private clubs, Singapore Turf Club and Singapore Pools attended the half-day day sessions conducted by S.B Viknesan from National Addictions Management Service.



The training covered engagement tips, safety guidelines, motivational interviewing style of engaging patrons and pointers for certain in-venue scenarios. The feedback was positive with participants rating the course 3.49/4 (87%).

# RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING FORUM MEMBERS

## INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES

## DESIGNATION/ORGANISATION

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MR. SEAH CHIN SIONG (CO-CHAIR)	CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, SINGAPORE POOLS
MR. CHARLIE NG	CHIEF EXECUTIVE, CIVIL SERVICE CLUB
MS. AGNES EU	CHIEF EXECUTIVE, HOMETEAMNS
MR. GEORGE TANASIJEVICH	PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, MARINA BAY SANDS PTE LTD
MR. LIM ENG LEE	CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, NTUC CLUB
MR. TAN HEE TECK	PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, RESORTS WORLD AT SENTOSA PTE LTD
MR. DONALD TAN	DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (BUSINESS STRATEGIES), SAFRA
MR. CHONG BOO CHING	PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SINGAPORE TURF CLUB

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## COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

## DESIGNATION/ORGANISATION

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DR. PATRICK LIEW (CO-CHAIR)	DISTRICT COUNCILLOR, CENTRAL SINGAPORE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
MR. ANDREW TAY	CHAIRMAN, LAKESIDE FAMILY SERVICES
BISHOP TERRY KEE	VICE PRESIDENT, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF SINGAPORE
MR. STEVEN LAM	CHAIRMAN, PUNGGOL CENTRAL CITIZENS' CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
MR. SHEKARAN KRISHNAN	VICE PRESIDENT, SINDA
DR. LEE KAE MENG THOMAS	MEDICAL DIRECTOR AND CONSULTANT PSYCHIATRIST, THE RESILIENZ CLINIC
MR. LEE KIM SIANG	CHAIRMAN, THYE HUA KWAN MORAL SOCIETY
MS. THAM YUEN HAN	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WE CARE COMMUNITY SERVICES LTD

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## NCPG REPRESENTATIVE

## DESIGNATION/ORGANISATION

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DR. CECILIA CHU	CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST, RAFFLES COUNSELLING CENTRE
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