



Tasmanian Liquor and Gaming Commission

Venue Operator Procedures - Electronic Gaming Machines

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An electronic copy of these Venue Operator Procedures is available at

<https://www.treasury.tas.gov.au/liquor-and-gaming/gambling/regulatory-requirements>

For further information please contact:

Liquor and Gaming Branch

Department of Treasury and Finance

GPO Box 147

HOBART TAS 7001

(03) 6166 4040 or gaming@treasury.tas.gov.au

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Preliminary

The Venue Operator Procedures - Electronic Gaming Machines are made in accordance with section 137A of the *Gaming Control Act 1993* (the Act) and apply to the conduct of gaming.

A term used in these Procedures has the same meaning as the same term used in the Act. For the avoidance of doubt, a reference to an 'employee of the licence holder' includes the licence holder's agent or, where the licence holder is a natural person, itself.

Venue Operator Procedures - Electronic Gaming Machines

I. Introduction

I.1 Tasmanian Liquor and Gaming Commission

The Tasmanian Liquor and Gaming Commission is an independent body responsible for the regulation of gaming and wagering in Tasmania, established under the *Gaming Control Act 1993*.

I.2 Liquor and Gaming Branch

The Liquor and Gaming Branch is part of the Department of Treasury and Finance. The Branch supports the Commission by undertaking administrative and regulatory functions on its behalf. The Liquor and Gaming Branch of the Department of Treasury and Finance can be contacted by:

- phone: (03) 6166 4040
- email: gaming@treasury.tas.gov.au

I.3 Licensed Monitoring Operator

The Commission has issued a Monitoring Operators licence to Maxgaming Tas Pty Ltd (MAX) to monitor electronic gaming machines in hotels and licensed clubs throughout Tasmania. The role of the Licensed Monitoring Operator is to undertake “core” and “regulated” monitoring functions, which include the following:

Core monitoring functions:

- operate and maintain the approved electronic monitoring system and connect each of the gaming machines in licensed premises to the approved electronic monitoring system;
- monitor the operation of gaming machines in licensed premises;
- collect and provide data to approved persons for each gaming machine in licensed premises for the purposes of enabling the calculation of fees, taxes and levies payable;
- provide tools and facilities to enable the Commission to perform data analysis of gaming machines, perform audits on the operation of gaming machines and administer reassessments and adjustments;
- maintain a central electronic monitoring system host and provide the Commission with access to the central electronic monitoring system host;
- provide a help desk service for venue operators in relation to the approved electronic monitoring system;
- provide a system through which venue operators may apply for authorisation from the Commission to install, dispose of or change the configuration of a gaming machine, or attach or detach a gaming machine to or from a linked jackpot; and
- provide facilities and assistance to manufacturers and suppliers of gaming machines to enable them to determine whether gaming machines will operate correctly with the approved electronic monitoring system.

Regulated monitoring functions:

- install and commission or decommission and remove gaming machines in a hotel or licensed club on request;
- make configuration changes to gaming machines and gaming machine games on request;
- connect gaming machines to linked jackpot arrangements, remove gaming machines from linked jackpot arrangements and decommission linked jackpot arrangements in hotels and licensed clubs on request;
- maintain and repair gaming machines;
- relocate gaming machines within hotels and licensed clubs on request;
- destroy gaming machines on request; and
- prepare hotels and licensed clubs to allow the operation of gaming machines and the approved electronic monitoring system in those licensed premises.

MAX will operate a help desk which will be contactable during all hours that gaming operates in Tasmania. MAX should be the first point of contact for EGM enquiries relating to matters such as gaming machine faults, gaming machine and gaming machine game installations and jackpot arrangements. The MAX help desk can be contacted by telephone on 1800 288 707 or by email helpdesktasmania@max.com.au.

2. Regulatory Instruments

A venue operator must have processes and procedures in place to ensure compliance with the regulatory instruments. The Code, Rules and Standards below apply to the conduct of gaming at an approved venue. The venue operator and its employees must adhere to and enforce these. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action against a venue operator. The framework includes, but is not limited to:

- *Gaming Control Act 1993*
- Responsible Gambling Code of Practice
- Rules
- Recorded CCTV Surveillance Rules
- General Control System Standards
- Gaming Equipment Transport, Storage, Installation and Disposal Standards
- Gaming Equipment Security, Verification, Seal and Passcode Control Standards
- Venue Operator Procedures

It is the responsibility of a venue operator to ensure that they comply with all regulatory requirements contained within these documents.

2.1 Responsible Gambling Code of Practice

The focus of the Responsible Gambling Code of Practice is minimising harm from gambling. The following is a non-exhaustive list of the kinds of matters that are covered in the Code:

- Advertising and promotional practices
- Access to cash
- Provision of food and alcohol

- Restrictions on inducements and rewards
- Minimum lighting standards
- Display of warning and help signs
- Provision of information to players
- Staff training in recognising people with gambling problems

2.2 Rules

The Rules focus on requirements around the patrons of venues. The following is a non-exhaustive list of the kinds of matters that are covered in the Rules:

- Restricted gaming areas
- Hours of gaming
- Sobriety in gaming areas
- Gaming staff identification
- Dispute resolution
- Exclusions
- Access to cash

2.3 Recorded CCTV Surveillance Rules

The following is a non-exhaustive list of the kinds of matters that are covered in the Recorded CCTV Surveillance Rules:

- Application of the Rules
- System compliance
- System coverage
- System malfunction

2.4 General Control System Standards

The focus of the General Control System Standards is on operational requirements in venues. The following is a non-exhaustive list of the kinds of matters that are covered in these Standards:

- Staffing
- Staff records (RCG)
- EGM payouts
- EGM hoppers
- Funds for EGM jackpot payments

2.5 Gaming Equipment Transport, Storage, Installation and Disposal Standards

These Standards cover the transport, storage, installation and disposal of gaming equipment.

2.6 Gaming Equipment Security, Verification, Seal and Passcode Control Standards

These Standards cover the use of locks and keys for electronic gaming machines.

3. Venue Licensing

3.1 Venue licensing

Venue licence and plan - to operate EGMs in an approved venue, a venue operator must hold a venue licence. The venue operator must comply with any conditions placed on the licence by the Commission.

When a venue licence is issued, the licence will specify the number of approved electronic gaming machines. The plan which accompanies the licence will show:

- the approved gaming area of the venue;
- the approved boundary of the restricted gaming area, where EGMs can operate; and
- the approved location of any coin change machines.

A venue operator must not make any changes to the approved area for gaming, the approved boundary of a restricted gaming area or the approved location of a coin change machine without Commission approval.

Any enquiries in relation to venue licensing, should be directed to the Branch on (03) 6166 4040 or gaming@treasury.tas.gov.au.

3.2 Venue trading hours

A venue operator can only operate EGMs within its authorised liquor licensing hours. The Liquor and Gaming Branch provides MAX with authorised hours (including hours authorised under an out of hours permit) and these hours are set in MAX's EMS.

4. General Gaming Operation

4.1 Staffing

Requirements relating to staff identification and responsibilities in a venue are contained within the Rules, the Responsible Gambling Code of Practice and the General Control System Standards.

All gaming staff must be appropriately trained to interact with gaming equipment and perform gaming duties. Gaming duties include, but are not limited to:

- interacting with EGMs, including accessing keys and correcting minor faults;
- interacting with the venue EMS which communicates with all installed EGMs;
- verifying details on paperwork against the EMS;
- implementing TGES requirements;
- performing hopper fills on EGMs;
- ensuring all required details are accurately recorded on handpay forms;
- performing payouts to patrons.

4.2 Responsible conduct of gambling

The Responsible Gambling Code of Practice sets out the responsibilities of the venue operator and staff relevant to the responsible conduct of gambling training requirements. A list of Commission approved registered training organisations delivering RCG courses can be found on the Liquor and Gaming Branch website.

4.3 Tasmanian Gambling Exclusions Scheme (TGES)

The TGES provides a means for people to be excluded from participating in gambling activities, or from entering premises where gambling activities are offered. The Act and the Rules set out the requirements of a venue operator relevant to the TGES.

A person can be excluded from gambling in venues in the following ways:

Self-exclusion - if a patron wishes to exclude themselves from gambling, unless the matter is urgent, they should be referred to the Gamblers Helpline (1800 858 858), where they can make an appointment with a local service provider who can assist them to put a self-exclusion in place.

Venue operator exclusion - a venue operator can exclude a patron from gambling at their venue or from entering their venue for any gaming related reason. A venue operator exclusion only applies to the venue where it is issued. The patron should be made aware of this and encouraged to follow up with a self-exclusion through a service provider should they wish to exclude from other venues.

Third party exclusion - a person with a close personal interest in the welfare of another individual may apply to the Commission for a third-party exclusion. Venue operators are not involved in this process other than to enforce an exclusion order if made by the Commission.

Police exclusion - the Commissioner of Police may direct a venue operator to invoke a venue operator exclusion on a person.

Contact the Branch on (03) 6166 4040 if any difficulties are encountered using the TGES database. To add or remove a TGES user, contact tges@treasury.tas.gov.au.

4.4 CCTV recorded surveillance

A venue operator should undertake regular checks of the CCTV surveillance system to ensure it is operating in accordance with regulatory requirements.

From time to time, the Commission may make a written request to a venue operator for recorded CCTV surveillance footage. This may be as part of a routine compliance check or part of an investigation.

4.5 Gaming related signs and brochures

Information that must be made available to a patron is contained within the Responsible Gambling Code of Practice. A venue operator may choose to display other signs and brochures in their venue, subject to the restrictions placed on this material by the Gambling Product Advertising Standards contained within the Code.

4.6 Dealing with patron complaints

If a patron believes that gaming equipment, or the conduct of gaming is not operating or being undertaken correctly, section 97A of the Act sets out the manner in which a venue operator must investigate the complaint. Complaints that are not related to gaming matters are the responsibility of the venue operator.

5. EGM Operation

5.1 Power failure procedure

EGMs are designed to recover from power failures and restore current credit balances without manual intervention at the EGM.

When a power failure occurs, a venue operator must complete a shutdown on the EMS within 10 minutes.

Once power is restored, the EMS must be powered on and an "enable gaming floor" must be performed to run integrity checks prior to trade recommencing. If EGMs do not enable for trade, the venue operator will need to contact MAX for assistance.

5.2 EGM faults and repairs

An EGM is designed to monitor its internal components and if a fault is detected, it will alert the venue operator via the EMS with visual indicators. In some cases, the EGM will disable itself from play until the fault is cleared.

Many EGM faults can be diagnosed and rectified by a venue operator and its staff without the assistance of MAX or a licensed technician.

Faults with EGMs which a venue operator and its staff are authorised to rectify include:

- movement and placement of a disconnected EGM to a floor position in a restricted gaming area, for a scheduled connection to the EMS;
- power cycling of an EGM, linked jackpot equipment, networking equipment and EMS equipment;
- connecting and reconnecting of power and data cables that are external to the sealed processor door of an EGM, linked jackpot equipment, networking equipment and EMS equipment, where these functions are being undertaken in accordance with instructions provided by the applicable prescribed licence holder (e.g. MAX, manufacturer, or supplier of faulty gaming equipment);
- replacing and installing light globes in an EGM;
- performing a hopper fill on an EGM;
- performing a hopper count for an EGM; and
- clearing coin jams on an EGM.

If the venue operator is unable to rectify one of these faults, or for any other faults, MAX must be contacted for assistance.

5.3 EGM keys and locks

A venue operator is responsible for managing all keys and locks for EGMs at a venue. The Gaming Equipment Security, Verification, Seal and Passcode Control Standards set out the responsibilities of a venue operator as they relate to keys and locks for EGMS at a venue.

5.4 EGM payout and hopper fills

The General Control System Standards sets out the procedures that must be adhered to when an employee of the licence holder undertakes a cancel credit, shortpay or jackpot payment.

Payments to patrons must be made in line with requirements of the Responsible Gambling Code of Practice.

If during a coin payout, the hopper empties, the employee is to confirm that the hopper is empty and there is not another fault with the EGM. If empty, the employee should perform a hopper fill on the EGM and record the details. Hopper fills are set by MAX at \$300.

5.5 EGM jackpots

There are two different types of jackpots that operate in an approved venue:

- **standalone progressive jackpots (SAP)** - specific to an EGM and cannot be linked across multiple machines. A small percentage of turnover from game play on the EGM contributes to the progressive jackpot and increases the jackpot pool; and
- **linked progressive jackpots (LP)** - where two or more EGMs are linked to share the jackpot prize pool in a venue. A small percentage of the turnover from game play on all participating EGMs contributes to the progressive jackpot and increases the jackpot pool.

Payment of EGM jackpots operate differently, depending on the value of the win. These amounts are set in the EGM and are based on a dollar figure (over or under \$300). For further information on the payment of winnings refer to the Code.

Linked jackpot signage is approved gaming equipment. The Gaming Equipment Transport, Storage, Installation and Disposal Standards must be complied with, with respect to this signage and the installation must be performed by a MAX licensed technician.

5.6 Ordering stationery items

Some regularly used stationery items such as coin cups, calico coin bags, handpay books and EGM reserved signs can be purchased from the Tasmanian Hospitality Association (THA).

The THA can also supply a venue operator with replacement stock of regulated EGM signage, stickers, and brochures.

6. EGM Movements

A venue operator is responsible for arranging the transport, storage, installation, and disposal of EGMs, in accordance with the Gaming Equipment Transport, Storage, Installation and Disposal Standards.

Licensed technicians - only a MAX licensed technician is authorised to install or decommission an EGM, or to conduct configuration changes such as game conversions and a change of denomination. Any person working on an EGM should be able to produce identification to confirm their identity as a licensed technician.

Commission approval - Commission approval is not required to move existing EGMs within an approved restricted gaming area.

The Commission will undertake an inspection prior to EGMs being enabled in a venue that hasn't previously operated EGMs or, if considered necessary, for a request to alter a restricted gaming area on a licence.

Prior to EGM works - the venue operator will need to discuss any proposed EGM installations, decommissions or changes to installed EGMs with MAX, who will arrange for a licensed technician to undertake the work. These arrangements are between the venue operator and MAX. To assist with financial reconciliation prior to any works being undertaken, the EGM hoppers and cash boxes of affected EGMs should be emptied, counted and recorded.

6.1 Purchasing EGMs

A venue operator is responsible for purchasing its own EGMs and EGM games. Purchases can be made from entities on the Roll, which can be found on the Branch website. MAX also has a list of all approved equipment and games.

Second hand EGMs and EGM games can be purchased, provided the seller is listed on the Roll or made from a venue operator or casino operator in Tasmania (who do not have to be listed on the Roll).

Refer to the Gaming Equipment Transport, Storage, Installation and Disposal Standards for further information.

7. Financial and Balancing

7.1 Bank accounts

Section 139 of the Act requires a venue operator to maintain a separate bank account for gaming transactions. Additional requirements are in place for venues operating linked progressive jackpots. These can be found in the General Control System Standards.

7.2 Unclaimed winnings

In accordance with section 149 of the Act, where credits have been left uncollected or unattended on an EGM, the venue operator must collect any unclaimed winnings from the EGM and advise the Branch at gaming.tax@treasury.tas.gov.au of the details and amount collected.

Where a handpay remains uncollected at the end of a calendar month, the venue operator must advise the Branch at gaming.tax@treasury.tas.gov.au of the details and amount. If a patron returns to the venue to collect their winnings after the handpay has been reported as uncollected, the venue operator must advise the Branch to arrange a reversal of the transaction.

At the end of the month, the amount of unclaimed winnings will be added to the venue operator's gaming tax and CSL assessment notice.

7.3 Coin clearances and hopper count

When a patron inserts a coin into an EGM, it is diverted to either the hopper or the cash box of the EGM. When a patron collects their winnings, coins are paid out of the hopper. Variances may be an indication that an EGM is over or underpaying a patron, or that there is a problem with the coin diverter mechanism inside the EGM.

If variances continue, the venue operator should contact MAX for assistance. For further information relevant to coin clearances and hopper counts, refer to the General Control System Standards.

7.4 Removal of jackpot prize pool

Any value incremented to a jackpot prize pool must be returned to players. For further information relevant to jackpot prize pools refer to section 85 of the Act and the Gaming Equipment Transport, Storage, Installation and Disposal Standards.

8. Fees and Taxes

8.1 Gaming tax and Community Support Levy payments

A venue operator is responsible for the payment of gaming tax and the Community Support Levy (CSL), in accordance with the Act.

The Branch will commence the registration process for a venue operator in the Tasmanian Revenue Online portal. The venue operator will be required to register the bank account that tax and levy payments will be deducted from.

Tax and CSL assessments will be generated on the seventh day of each month and are based on gross profit figures provided by MAX. The venue operator will receive an assessment notice by email, to be reviewed. If a venue operator believes it has been incorrectly assessed, this must be raised immediately by contacting MAX in the first instance.

8.2 Payment of tax and levy payments

On the 14th day of each month, an electronic payment transaction will be made from the bank account that the venue operator has authorised for this purpose. It is the venue operator's responsibility to ensure sufficient funds are held in that account for full tax and CSL payments to be processed. Part payments are not permitted, and the amount must be paid in full by the 14th day of each month.

8.3 Non-payment of tax and levy payments

If a venue operator has insufficient funds in the nominated bank account, the automatic payment will reject. Non-payment will attract interest and penalty tax. A default notice detailing the outstanding amount will be emailed to the venue operator. This notice will provide payment options and must be actioned immediately.

Disciplinary action can be taken against a venue operator by the Commission for failing to pay gaming tax or CSL. Disciplinary action may include a monetary fine or the suspension or cancellation of a venue licence. Other action may also be separately considered by the Commissioner of State Revenue.

8.4 Annual licence fees

Annual licence fees vary depending on how many gaming authorities are endorsed on a venue licence. Fees are payable in advance on the first day of each quarter (July, October, January and April).

8.5 Monitoring fees

Core monitoring - MAX will charge a venue operator a core monitoring fee for EGM monitoring and functions such as help desk services, basic reporting, gross profit verification, complaints investigation and significant event monitoring. This fee is based on the number of EGMs operating at the venue per day.

Regulated functions - MAX will charge a venue operator set fees per EGM per action for a variety of functions requiring a licensed technician to attend a venue.

9. Glossary

Branch	Liquor and Gaming Branch
CCTV	Closed circuit television
CSL	Community Support Levy
Code	Commission's Responsible Gambling Code of Practice
Commission	Tasmanian Liquor and Gaming Commission
Employee	Employee of the venue operator
EMS	Electronic monitoring system (Site controller)
Gaming staff	Employee of the venue operator
Licensed technician	The holder of a technician's licence issued under the <i>Gaming Control Act 1993</i>
MAX	Maxgaming Tas Pty Ltd, the Licensed Monitoring Operator
Processor door key	The key that accesses the cabinet area that houses electronic components that have the potential to influence the operation of the EGM
RCG	Responsible conduct of gambling
Roll	Roll of Recognized Manufacturers, Suppliers and Testers of Gaming Equipment
Rules	Commission's Rules
TGES	Tasmanian Gambling Exclusions Scheme

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