

2011 Responsible Gaming Strategy

In regard to the Video Lottery Program, Government will:

- Continue a moratorium on the number of VLTs.
- Reduce VLTs through natural attrition.
- Conduct research aimed at harm reduction and mitigation measures.
- Implement changes to VLT host venues to reduce the potential for excessive play.
- Adopt a VLT policy process that is guided by:
 - ▶ A goal to reduce Nova Scotia’s reliance on VLT revenue;
 - ▶ A consideration that many retailers are reliant on VLT revenue to sustain their operations; and,
 - ▶ An effort to reduce the stigmatization of VLTs and players.
- Introduce tougher penalties for vendors convicted of using grey machines including forfeiture of tobacco and liquor licenses.
- Adopt a mandatory enrolment model for the My-Play System, effective April 1, 2012, on all VLTs in the Province. On August 20, 2014, Government announced its decision to remove the My-Play System from all VLTs in Nova Scotia as it was not meeting objectives.

In regard to Internet Gambling, Government will:

- Refrain from establishing or participating in expanded Internet gambling.
- Consider existing and emerging research to better understand the trend and determine best practices and policies with respect to regulation and key population health, economic and social measures.

In regard to Governance, Government will:

- Continue its focus on cross-departmental collaboration.

- Continue the Deputy Minister’s Advisory Committee on Gaming to:
 - ▶ Manage gambling related issues across departments;
 - ▶ Engage broad stakeholder interests under the social responsibility mandates;
 - ▶ Address complex public policy issues; and,
 - ▶ Proactively address emerging issues in gambling.

In regard to Treatment and Prevention, Government will:

- Work through the Department of Health and Wellness and in partnership with the District Health Authorities to:
 - ▶ Improve the quality, accessibility and range of options to address risk and problem gambling;
 - ▶ Establish stronger linkages between gambling treatment services and other health and community services; and,
 - ▶ Place greater emphasis on social marketing to dispel gambling myths, counter the stigma of problem gambling, highlight consequences and encourage individuals to seek help earlier.

In regard to Gambling and Nova Scotia’s Youth, Government will:

- Through the Department of Health and Wellness, build on strategies and approaches aimed at increasing awareness of youth gambling and youth problem gambling and mitigating their impacts on this group.

In regard to its relationship with Mi’kmaw communities in respect to gambling, Government will:

- Initiate a broad-based dialogue with Mi’kmaw communities to address their concerns over VLT revenues, impacts of the My-Play System and a more balanced public discourse about gambling in the province.
- Proceed with re-negotiating First Nation Gaming Agreements as they are due to expire.

In regard to Harness Racing, Government will:

- Not endorse the development of a Racino.
- Continue to work with the Nova Scotia Harness Racing Industry Association to support this rural industry.

In regard to Charitable Gaming, Government will:

- Work with charitable bingo operators to assess regulatory issues, new technologies and business models as a means to enhance this sector's long-term viability.
- Develop a web-based resource that provides easily accessible information and assistance for individuals or organizations in staging charitable gambling operations.

In regard to gambling and marketing advertising, Government will:

- Continue periodic reviews of its Advertising Standards by independent responsible gambling experts to ensure it remains current with best practices.