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Mr Rowan Harris
Principal Major Licence Officer, Licence Management & Audit
Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation
Level 3, 12 Shelley Street
RICHMOND VIC 3121

By Email

Dear Mr Harris

Sixth Review of the Casino Operator and Licence (Sixth Review) - Recommendation 10 Follow-up Queries

I refer to your email of 25 September 2020, requesting further information in relation to Recommendation 10 of the Sixth Review. Following and appended, please find Crown Melbourne Limited's (**Crown's**) responses to those further queries, requesting information for 2017 and 2018 (the Reporting Period is 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2018 (**Reporting Period**)).

During the Reporting Period, Crown has issued 70 Time Out Program Agreements (**TOPAs**). All TOPAs issued in the Reporting Period were for a three month duration.

Following, we reply to your queries in turn:

1. Number of self-exclusion conversations in the first instance, including details of the outcomes of the conversations (self-exclusion, TOPA or no action).

The following table (Table 1) reflects the number of persons who discussed Self Exclusion with Crown during the Reporting Period and the outcome of that discussion.

Table 1

	Self Exclusion	TOPA	No Action¹	Total²
01/01/2017 – 31/12/2017	379 (61.8%)	33 (5.4%)	201 (32.8%)	613
01/01/2018 – 31/12/2018	396 (50.9%)	37 (4.7%)	345 (44.3%)	778

2. Number of active TOPAs and self-exclusions at start and end of the Reporting Period.

Table 2

	Active Self Exclusions	Active TOPAs	Total
At 01/01/2017	4,422	0	4,422
At 31/12/2017	4,755 (99.92%)	4 (0.08%)	4,759
At 01/01/2018	4,759	4	4,763
At 31/12/2018	5,112 (99.80%)	10 (0.20%)	5,122

3. Number of three-month TOPAs extended for a further three months.

No customers have extended their TOPA within the Reporting Period.

4. Number of TOPAs which extended to self exclusion.

As at 31 December 2018, no customer had extended their TOPA to self exclusion within the Reporting Period. There were however, eight customers that returned to proceed with self exclusion after their TOPA expired.

¹ Despite discussing self exclusion, these people took no further steps.

² The total number of persons who discussed self exclusion.

5. Number of players detected and interviewed by Crown after returning to gambling post the conclusion of the TOPA, including the outcome of the interview (permitted to return to gambling or a further TOPA/self-exclusion imposed).

Within the Reporting Period, 41 customers who were issued a TOPA, returned and were interviewed³ by Crown post the conclusion of their TOPA. The interview outcomes from 10 randomly selected participants, covering a spread of the Reporting Period, are recorded in Table 3 below as an example. The remaining 31 interviews can be provided if required. The following table sets out their responses:

Table 3

TOPA Date	GRIP Date	Interview outcomes		
		How was the program helpful?	Would you consider Self Exclusion?	Why do you want to come back?
31/01/2017	5/06/2017	The program was good. Now I am applying for Self Exclusion to total stop gambling.	Yes. I am doing it now.	I don't want to come back.
3/03/2017	19/08/2017	Proceed with Self Exclusion. GRIP not completed.	N/A.	N/A.
9/03/2017	9/06/2017	Program ok, but a bit boring at home.	No.	Friends call me and socialise. I feel "shame" not able to meet them.
18/03/2017	2/09/2017	Yes I stay away.	No.	I want to play occasionally with friends.
26/03/2017	24/06/2017	Yes.	No need.	For work.
8/01/2018	9/08/2018	No, not really.	No.	Fun.
20/03/2018	2/07/2018	Yes.	Not right now.	To enjoy the bars and restaurants with my wife.
9/04/2018	12/07/2018	It has been very helpful. It helps me to achieve my goals and balance.	At the moment no. I don't think I need self exclusion in the future I have learnt my lesson.	Because I really like poker.

³ Crown asks at the initiation of the TOPA that if the customer returns to Crown, that they attend the Responsible Gaming Centre to participate in a Gambling Resumption Information Program (GRIP), however each person is tagged on the Responsible Gaming Advisor pager, so that we are informed when they return. Customers are permitted to return to gaming when their TOPA expires; there is no requirement to seek permission.

12/04/2018	14/07/2018	Very helpful to take break and clear my mind.	I've already done it in the past but not at the moment.	I still like gambling.
19/04/2018	12/12/2018	Yes it was helpful and it kept me away and realised I need to save money.	No. I don't gamble much.	I can handle it.

6. Number of resumptions of TOPAs (i.e. patrons whose TOPA has expired, resumed gambling, and then requested a further TOPA).

Within the Reporting Period, five customers returned to proceed with another TOPA.

7. Number of TOPA breaches detected.

Table 4

TOPA Breaches	17
Unique Persons	8

8. Any other data that Crown captures that would assist the Commission.

Please refer to the dashboard attached at Appendix A.

I also provide the following in relation to the Commission's qualitative data requirements in relation to the TOPA trial:

- a) An indication of the gambling profile of patrons agreeing to TOPAs, if available.

Attached at Appendix A, please find a dashboard illustrating the gambling profile of the participants, inclusive of the following information:

- a) Gender;
- b) Average age;
- c) Years of Membership;
- d) Win vs loss (yearly break down over the past 4 years⁴, 2015-2018); and
- e) Whether they had previously self excluded.

⁴ Four years was thought to provide a sufficient prior period overview of the applicant's gambling behaviour, prior to entering into their TOPA.

- b) Any useful information gathered during the initial interview with patrons where the TOPA was offered and accepted, in particular the reasons for patrons agreeing to TOPAs, instead of self-exclusion.

Participants in the Time Out Program are asked how they became aware of the Time Out Program and why they declined Self Exclusion (and chose Time Out). Respondents learned about the Time Out Program primarily via a Responsible Gaming Advisor or a friend.

During the Reporting Period, responses fell into broad categories for the first half of the evaluation, being:

Why they agreed to enter a TOPA

- a) To take a break, spending too much time at the casino;
- b) Wanted to regain control on gambling;
- c) To stop spending money; and
- d) To improve relationships.

Why they chose TOPA over Self Exclusion

- a) Did not want an indefinite break;
- b) Wanted to try a short break first; and
- c) The legality and formality of Self Exclusion is daunting.

- c) Available feedback from patrons in relation to TOPA service delivery and outcomes.

Please refer to question 5 above, where qualitative information is provided about the TOPAs.

I hope the provided information is useful, but please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely



Michelle Fielding
Group General Manager – Regulatory and Compliance

Encl.