

GPE Comments on BCLC's Seventh Status Report on Implementation of Recommendations from B.C.'s Ombudsman (May 2009)

Introduction

In April, 2009, the BC Lottery Corporation (BCLC) issued its seventh quarterly report outlining the status of its response to recommendations made by B.C.'s Ombudsman and Gaming Policy and Enforcement (GPE) concerning B.C.'s lottery systems. This document provides GPE's comments on that report.

Observations

Since BCLC's last report in January 2009, it has continued to make progress on implementing recommendations made by the Ombudsman. In particular, since January 2009, BCLC has completed installing self-service lottery terminals in hospitality network locations so that players can purchase and validate Keno, Pacific Hold'em Poker and SportsFunder 50/50 tickets.

BCLC has also completed its work modifying its watchdog fraud detection system to ensure suspicious activity related to lottery gaming is identified and acted on. GPE has implemented a comprehensive audit program to monitor the effectiveness of these modifications and to ensure that wrongdoing related to lottery gaming is immediately reported to GPE's Investigation Division.

GPE will continue to monitor BCLC's work regarding all of the recommendations made by the Ombudsman and, where necessary and appropriate, will make recommendations to enhance the integrity of lottery gaming in the province.

GPE will continue to monitor and report on BCLC's outstanding obligations related to recommendations made by B.C.'s Ombudsman. This includes completing its work to ensure that all tickets, including Scratch & Win tickets, are readable by Check-A-Ticket machines.

In its October 2007 report on B.C.'s lottery retailer network, Deloitte & Touche cautioned against the implementation of the Ombudsman's recommendations to: scan all scratch and win tickets at the time of sale; and, implement mandatory retailer swipe cards. BCLC has conducted a thorough investigation into both matters and intends to develop an action plan for dealing with both issues in the coming months. GPE will monitor BCLC's action plan and its related work.

GPE indicated in the January 2009 report on BCLC's response to lottery recommendations that the Ombudsman had identified concerns with Pull Tab game design. Retailers are not obligated to make public when, or if, a major prize has been won from a Pull Tab box. While the Ombudsman did not make a recommendation on the matter, she did suggest that BCLC consider ensuring that all players have access to the same information that the retailer has concerning when major prizes have been paid out. GPE will continue to monitor BCLC's response to this suggestion.