

PUBLIC VIEWS AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

The Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission is committed to open, clear and effective communications with all Albertans. Besides the public-at-large (including players and non-players), stakeholders of the gaming industry include charitable organizations, private retailers and gaming facility operators, municipalities, First Nations, major exhibitions, government, police services and advocacy groups.

During the Licensing Policy Review, the Commission obtained the views and perspectives of the public and stakeholder groups.

Public at Large

Albertans who participate in gaming activities are drawn from a population of approximately two million adults (those 18 years of age or older) from all walks of life. In 1998, about 1.78 million gambled over the previous 12 months. The main motivating reasons to gamble were to win money, for fun/entertainment and to support worthy causes (Wynne Resources and AADAC, 1998).

Charitable Organizations

There are approximately 8,000 gaming licences issued each year to charitable organizations that meet the Commission's eligibility requirements. They are located in urban and rural communities throughout Alberta. To be eligible for gaming licences, charitable organizations must be democratic and have a broad-based voluntary membership that establishes, maintains and delivers the group's programs. They range from small, stand-alone groups to large multi-level ones with provincial, regional, district and local bodies.

The Commission has established 15 categories of charitable organizations for purposes of licensing. They are as follows: agriculture, arts, community, education, foundations, medicine/health, multiculturalism, recreation, religion, service, sports, social action, senior citizen, youth and other (those that fall outside the other 14 specific categories). Each group delivers a specific charitable or religious program or service to the community.

Many obtain gaming licences as a way to raise funds, to support the delivery of charitable programs or services to the community. For some, charitable gaming is one of a number of fundraising methods, for others it is the primary method of raising funds.

Gaming Industry

Alberta Bingo Hall Managers Association (ABHMA)

The ABHMA consists of 43 managers of association bingo halls across Alberta. The managers are paid staff of bingo halls with hands-on management experience of bingo activities in their halls and knowledge of the local bingo market. The association was formed in 1999, to share information and protect the interests of the bingo industry, including its continued viability.

Alberta Gaming Industry Association (AGIA)

The AGIA is a provincial association of the gaming industry of Alberta. It comprises members from across gaming activities, including members from the casino and bingo industries, and lottery ticket and VLT retailers. The AGIA serves as an advisory body to government on gaming policy matters that affect the industry as a whole or its members.

Alberta Hotel and Lodging Association (AHLA)

The AHLA is an association of approximately 410 members, primarily member hotels and motels throughout Alberta. It was formed as a non-profit group in 1919. Its mission is: “To provide an effective voice to both government and the public so as to enhance the image, quality, and the efficiency of the hotel industry in Alberta.” The AHLA advocates government policies that maintain, strengthen and help grow the hotel industry in Alberta.

Alberta Restaurant & Foodservices Association (ARFA)

ARFA is an association of approximately 1,050 members including restaurants and foodservices suppliers throughout the province. Its mission is: “To maintain and enhance a positive business environment for the restaurant and foodservices industry in the province.” The association represents the interest of members to government, news media and the public.

Casino Operators

Casino operators, or casino facility licensees, are private-sector business people who operate casino facilities in the province (there are 12 such operators in Alberta). Operators request consideration for changes to existing terms or conditions, or to government policy, that will allow for growth or improve the profit potential of the casinos.

Community Bingo Licensees

There are about 540 licensed charitable organizations throughout the province that operate bingo up to three days per week, typically from their own facility, such as community hall or rented facility.

Federation of Alberta Bingo Associations (FABA)

FABA is a registered, non-profit society made up of member bingo associations in Alberta. Its purpose is to act as a liaison between its member associations and Alberta Gaming. FABA was incorporated in 1993 and works to protect the interests of association bingo, including the rejuvenation of the bingo gaming market. Its head office is in Edmonton and approximately 50 of 59 bingo associations across the province are members of FABA. Each member bingo association operates from its own bingo hall facility.

Retailers of Ticket Lotteries

There are approximately 2,000 private retail operations across Alberta that sell lottery tickets under an agreement with the Commission and Western Canada Lottery Corporation (WCLC). Among others, retailers include information kiosks in shopping malls, convenience stores, drugstores, gas bars and large format grocers. Lottery ticket centre retailers, as they operate today, were established in 1982.

Retailers of Video Lottery Terminals (VLTs)

There are approximately 1,250 VLT retailers across Alberta (280 in the Edmonton area, 260 in the Calgary area, 150 in rural cities and 560 in other rural communities). Retailers of VLTs have entered into individual agreements with the Commission to provide services regarding VLTs in their bars and lounges (Class A Minors Prohibited liquor licensed premises). VLT retailers expect continued revenue from VLTs to contribute to their business success, a level playing field among VLT retailers, consistency in application of VLT policies, integrity of the VLT program and many are receptive to adopting problem gambling programs. Many VLT retailers are also members of representative associations, including AGIA, AHA, and ARFA.

Workers in the Gaming Industry

There are approximately 5,200 registered gaming workers in Alberta. They include: casino dealers, pit bosses, pit supervisors and games managers; security staff; monitor room staff; slot attendants, supervisors and managers; bingo callers, cashiers, advisors and hall managers; raffle (charitable lottery) managers; and pull ticket managers. Most registered workers are employees of a casino facility licensee (casino operator) or bingo facility licensee (bingo association).

First Nations

First Nations are Indian bands as defined under the *Indian Act*. There are 45 First Nations in Alberta. The Alberta First Nations Gaming Association (AFNGA) was formed in July 2000 to work with the government to develop a First Nations gaming policy. First Nations seek to participate in gaming as an economic development opportunity for the people of First Nations.

Agricultural Associations

The Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies is an umbrella group with more than 200 individual societies as members, located throughout Alberta. They conduct annual fairs and exhibitions. The earliest associations were formed in the early 1900s. The major exhibitions include: Edmonton Northlands, Calgary Stampede and Exhibition Association, Camrose Regional Exhibition and Agricultural Society, Grande Prairie Agricultural Exhibition Society, Lloydminster Agricultural Exhibition Association, Westerner Exposition Association (Red Deer), Olds Agricultural Society, Lethbridge and District Exhibition and Medicine Hat Exhibition and Stampede.

Government or Public Services

Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC)

AADAC is an agent funded by the Alberta Lottery Fund to help Albertans achieve lives free from the abuse of alcohol, other drugs and gambling. Its role is: “To promote people’s independence and well being through increasing use of social, emotional, spiritual and physical resources, and to provide cost-effective, holistic alternatives to hospital-based and medical services.” AADAC was founded in 1951 and has been involved with gaming since 1993. Its problem gambling programs are funded through the Alberta Lottery Fund (\$3.7 million in 2001-02).

Municipal Government

Municipalities are located throughout Alberta and include cities, towns, villages, hamlets, summer villages, counties, municipal districts, improvement districts and special areas. They provide local municipal services to residents within the respective municipal jurisdictions, as set forth in the municipal legislation of the province. Municipal representative organizations include the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) and the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC).

Police Services

Police services include the RCMP and municipal police services. Police services are essential to the full and effective enforcement of gaming laws and regulations in Alberta. The Commission works closely with police services throughout Alberta to coordinate enforcement activities related to gaming and liquor matters.

Alberta Justice

This department of the provincial government provides legal counsel to provincial government agencies and departments. Legal counsel are consulted on legal, regulatory and policy matters.

Advocacy Groups

The following three advocacy groups were consulted for their perspectives: the Canada West Foundation, a public policy advocacy group; the Canadian Foundation for Compulsive Gambling, a non-profit organization addressing problem gambling and the Salvation Army, which provides social services.

Manner of Gathering Views and Perspectives

An independent research company conducted a representative telephone survey with a random sample of adult Albertans in June 2000. Key objectives were to measure the awareness, knowledge, perception, attitudes and behaviours of players and non-players regarding gambling. The sample was weighted by region to match the Alberta demographic and is accurate to within +/- 2.5% at the 95% confidence level province-wide and within +/- 5% at the regional level. The average interview length was 45 minutes.

In September 2000, an independent research company conducted a telephone survey with a random sample of key representatives (presidents, chairpersons, directors, etc.) of charitable organizations drawn from the entire cross-section of charities in Alberta. Industry workers were also surveyed. Key objectives were to measure the awareness, knowledge, perception and attitudes of charitable groups and industry workers towards gambling. The average interview length was 15 minutes.

During September and October 2000, a series of facilitated discussions and executive interviews were conducted with gaming industry stakeholder groups throughout Alberta. Key objectives were to obtain stakeholder views and perspectives on gaming in general as well as specific matters pertaining to gaming activities in which they are directly involved. The consultations were intended to foster strong relationships with stakeholders, to obtain their input on an ongoing basis and promote dialogue. The average interview length was 1½ hours.

The following table summarizes the stakeholder groups consulted and manner of consultation.

Table 5-1: Summary of Stakeholder Groups Consulted, Methodology and Date Completed

STAKEHOLDER	WHO WE CONSULTED	HOW WE CONSULTED THEM	COMPLETED
Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1530 adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Telephone Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ June 2000
Charitable Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 452 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Telephone Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ September 2000
Industry Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 300 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Telephone Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ September 2000
Community Bingo Licensees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 150 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Telephone Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ September 2000
Gaming Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alberta Bingo Hall Managers Association ▪ Registered Casino Advisors Association ▪ Federation of Alberta Bingo Association ▪ Alberta Gaming Industry Association ▪ Alberta Hotel and Lodging Association ▪ Alberta Restaurant & Food Services Association ▪ Alberta Racing Corporation ▪ Ticket Retailers (4 groups) ▪ VLT Retailers (4 groups) ▪ Casino Operators (2 groups) ▪ Casino Applicants (2 groups) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Facilitated Group Discussion ▪ Facilitated Group Discussion ▪ Executive Interview ▪ Executive Interview ▪ Executive Interview ▪ Executive Interview with AGIA ▪ Executive Interview ▪ Facilitated Group Discussion ▪ Facilitated Group Discussion ▪ Facilitated Group Discussion ▪ Executive Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ October 2000
Agricultural Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Calgary Stampede and Exhibition Association ▪ Edmonton Northlands ▪ Camrose ▪ Grande Prairie ▪ Stony Plain ▪ Lethbridge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Executive Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ October 2000

STAKEHOLDER	WHO WE CONSULTED	HOW WE CONSULTED THEM	COMPLETED
Government or Public Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties ▪ Municipalities: Calgary, Edmonton, Grand Prairie & Red Deer ▪ Police Services: Edmonton, RCMP, Calgary, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat ▪ AADAC ▪ Alberta Justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Executive Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ October 2000
Advocacy or Service Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Salvation Army ▪ Canada West Foundation ▪ Canadian Compulsive Gamblers Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Executive Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ October 2000
First Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alberta First Nations Gaming Association (45 Nations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Government Main Table 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ December 2000