



## Responsible Gambling Strategy Board – quarterly update

For Board approval	
For Board briefing	
For Board steer	
For Board information	

**Prepared by:**

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## **Executive summary**

1. This quarterly update on the progress of the Research, Education and Treatment (RET) arrangements provides an update under these headings:
  - Governance arrangements
  - Development of RGSB advice
  - Progress against the Strategy.
2. Recruitment of new RGSB Board members is progressing well. A process of consulting on the RGSB Strategy has begun. Discussions are taking place to shape further use of the datasets created through the Trust's machines research programme. A letter to the ABB has been drafted with the aim of setting out RGSB's wish to see some order and standards applied as the industry embarks on a programme of testing and evaluating new social responsibility measures following on from the machines research and publication of the revised LCCP.
3. Board is invited to note the update.

## **Issues**

### **Governance arrangements**

4. The RGSB Board met on 18 March and the Trust met on 3 March 2015. The RET Chairs (Philip Graf, Chris Kelly, and Neil Goulden) met on 15 April 2015.
5. The Trust's Research Committee ran its meeting on 17 March as a research planning workshop which was attended by a range of officials from the Commission and RGSB. The result is a commitment by the Trust to articulate its own 'Research Strategy'. It has agreed to do that in consultation with RGSB as we develop a revised Strategy for 2016-17 to 2018-19.
6. The shared Project Forum, consisting of officials between the Commission, RGSB and the Trust continues to meet. We met on 30 April at which we agreed to collaborate on measuring harm, a joint seminar on gambling-related debt, and a potential collaborative use of the Millennium Cohort Study.
7. The external RGSB Advisory Group met on 15 April at which Chris Kelly announced that RGSB would be consulting on its Strategy. A short consultation paper was issued and written submissions requested by Friday 22 May. Follow-up meetings will be held with stakeholders with issues to discuss. A series of meetings is also planned with the Commission – to ensure that policy issues and forthcoming Commission priorities shape the document. In addition, we will be engaging with the Trust over the coming months to ensure that the Strategy aligns with current and planned Trust work programmes.
8. Gerda Reith has now ended her term with the Board and Chris Bell will do so in July. We have announced that Rachel Lampard will join the RGSB Board in July when her term as a Commissioner ends. David Miers has had a contract extension for two years, Henrietta Bowden-Jones and Richard Ives, both for one year. Interviews for additional new Board members took place on 7 May.

### **Development of RGSB advice**

#### ***Strategy update***

9. The Strategy update letter and Commission's response shared previously with Commissioners have now been published. The Strategy is being reviewed and revised

as set out in paragraph 7 above with a view to publishing a new document in December 2015.

### ***Machines research***

10. The Commission and RGSB have been discussing with the Trust how additional value can be gained from the machines research programme completed in 2014. This includes a programme of secondary analysis of gathered data to ensure that outstanding policy questions are addressed. The Trust is meeting with NatCen and Featurespace to scope out a piece of work based on the questions set out by the Commission and RGSB.
11. In addition, we have collectively been discussing what needs to be done to bring structure and a suitable set of standards around the work by the industry to develop tailored harm detection algorithms and to trial and evaluate the range of social responsibility measures required in the new Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice (LCCP). The attached letter (Annex A) has been sent from RGSB to the ABB setting out a number of these issues.
12. RGSB Board has also been considering the following issues:
  - Harm prevention projects – the Trust is developing an Invitation to Tender for £500k for both 2015-16 and 2016-17 to deliver innovative harm prevention projects including young people. It is hoped that this will attract attention from a wide range of organisations who might be able to deliver projects which can be evaluated with a view to rolling out the most effective practice. Richard Ives from RGSB has been asked by the Trust to sit on the panel evaluating bids so that the Board's views (as set out in last year's) position paper on young people and harm prevention can be reflected at the Commissioning stage.
  - Gambling-related debt – RGSB's information is to be published shortly. We are discussing with the Trust plans to run a joint seminar to raise the profile of gambling-related debt amongst a wide constituency of organisations able to have an impact in identifying and addressing gambling-related harm.
  - RGSB is working on a position paper on the issues surrounding both the importance of and practical implications of measuring gambling-related harm. This position paper will be a useful input into ongoing plans to engage with those with responsibility for public health commissioning.
  - How to address the concerns about research governance particularly research based on data provided by the industry. The Board is committed to exploring whether a 'research protocol' can be developed which will help allay concerns about the independence and quality of research undertaken by or in collaboration with the industry.

### **Progress against the Strategy**

13. The latest update from the Trust on progress is attached at Annex B.

### **Recommendation**

14. Board is asked to note the content of this update paper.

13 May 2015

Dear Paul

Thank you for your letter of 17 April 2015. It arrived as I was about to write to you with the Responsible Gambling Strategy Board's views about what we would like to see happen now following the machines research commissioned by the Responsible Gambling Trust and the changes to the LCCP.

Our objective, which I am sure you share, is an approach which reassures stakeholders that:

- There is an industry-wide approach, shared by all parts of the industry, to developing better tools for identifying and intervening with those who are at risk of being harmed by their gambling.
- Effective evaluation is in place to determine whether these tools and approaches have the desired impact.
- This piloting and evaluation takes place transparently and in a way which allows others to use the results for further analysis and policy development.

#### Sharing data

The Trust's research has demonstrated that there are some variables included in existing machines data which improve the ability to detect those categorised as problem gamblers. This is an encouraging finding. But we all recognise that a lot needs to be done to refine and operationalise it. The Board therefore welcomes the fact that machine operators are beginning to develop algorithms tailored to their own circumstances.

We believe that it is essential that the learning from this work is shared openly and systematically. The Board would welcome further discussion with you and the Trust about how this can be achieved, including the role of the working group you are setting up to share information. As part of this, we have asked the Trust to consider whether it could fund a centralised piece of work to help instil greater confidence in the independence of the work and its effectiveness in progressing the objectives we share.

#### Trialling and evaluation

In the Board's view effective trialling and evaluation of different approaches to the identification and reduction of harm will require, among other things:

- The collective development and publication of the underpinning **logic model** – ie an articulation of the hypotheses about how particular interventions are believed to have their effect.

- A common understanding of **what is being rolled-out and tested, when and by whom**, to ensure that the overall programme is coherent and well-directed. Your letter suggests that this will be achieved to some extent through the Senet Group. We would be interested in discussing further with Wanda Goldwag, the Trust and the Commission how this will work, given Senet Group's as yet limited membership and expertise.
- The development of a '**research protocol**' – that is the establishment of the principles and standards for undertaking evaluation by individual operators so that the integrity of the results can be trusted and made available to others. The Board is about to begin some work on this with the Trust. The Board welcomes the fact that the ABB is thinking about how to set its own standards. It would be helpful to discuss how to ensure that we keep in step in this important area.
- Building **research and evaluation capacity**. This might include, for example:
  - Identifying other bodies capable of holding and analysing the very large data sets necessary for this research.
  - Collaborating with centres of excellence in evaluation (for example, ESRC 'what works' centres for social research evaluation) and big data research to draw on their expertise.
  - Providing a series of events at which learning can be publicly shared.

#### Other issues related to the machines research

We have agreed with the Trust that they will commission further work to explore the data set generated by the machines research in the light of a number of questions that it raises. I understand that the Trust would be happy to consider any issues which the industry would like this work to address.

In addition, there are a number of issues relating to the research recommendations and the amendments to LCCP which the Board is discussing with the Commission and the Trust. In particular:

- How can future research best be designed to explore the significance of other behavioural triggers.
- How best to evaluate the introduction of multi-operator self-exclusion arrangements and where this exercise sits in terms of priorities within the wider programme of evaluation.
- How to achieve a better understanding of what 'gambling-related harm' looks like. Identifying problem gamblers as determined by a problem gambling screen is not the same as identifying all those who might be experiencing harm, or at risk of harm, as a result of their gambling. The industry's co-operation in undertaking further research in this area will be essential.

#### Advertising

The Board is conscious of the Senet Group's advertising campaign. We will be interested in learning more from the Group about how the impact of this campaign is being evaluated and what plans the Group may have for further research into what responsible gambling messages, placement and patterns of frequency have most effect, for the purposes of future

campaigns. We also need to work together to determine what research might fill the knowledge gaps remaining when the wider advertising review concludes.

Return to Player messaging

The Board and, I understand, the Commission are keen to pick up with you your proposals for developing work around Return to Player information and alternatives to RTP messaging.

Developing the Responsible Gambling Strategy

I announced at the RGSB Advisory Group meeting on 15 April that the Board has just begun the process of reviewing the 3 year Responsible Gambling Strategy developed under my predecessor. As part of that I should welcome any views about what parts of that strategy have worked well and what worked less well, and about what the priority areas should be for the next three years.

I am copying this letter to Philip Graf, Neil Goulden and Wanda Goldwag and I will also be putting it on the Board's website.



Christopher Kelly  
Chair, Responsible Gambling Strategy Board