24 February 2011

Committee Secretary
Joint Select Committee on Gambling Reform
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Dear Secretary

Please find attached information requested by the Select Committee at the hearing attended by eBet on 14 February, 2011.

The attached information has been extracted from evaluation reports supplied by Paul Symond Consultancy and BetSafe.

The extracts provide information on staff and management responses to questions relating to requests from problem gamblers and approaching/identifying problem gamblers.

It is trusted that this information will be of assistance and should you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Tony Toohey
Chief Executive Officer
eBet Gaming Systems

## Attachment

Since the commencement of the BetSafe program in 1998, BetSafe has set the standard for responsible service of gambling in the NSW club industry.
Paul Symond Consultancy is in a unique position to develop and implement these projects because of our experience and background. Our unparalleled expertise in responsible gambling patron care programs began in 1995 when gambling counsellor Paul Symond was retained by Sydney Harbour Casino (now Star City Casino) in to develop their first responsible conduct of gambling program. Paul went on to develop the BetSafe program in 1998 with the support of 11 leading NSW clubs.
BetSafe has been demonstrated to be effective by the independent SYNAVAL evaluation in Jan/Nov 2001.

**SYNAVAL EVALUATION January 2001**
"First, the BetSafe program has been very successful in its major objective of assisting self-excluded patrons to reduce their problems with gambling. Second, the services provided by BetSafe to people with gambling problems are also perceived to be very good among staff, members and self-excluded gamblers. Third, the BetSafe training program has been effective in increasing staff awareness of the correct procedures for managing problem gambling issues. "

"Of the self-excluded gamblers who have received counselling, 91% indicated that their problems with gambling have been reduced. The self-exclusion policy has also been successful in reducing gambling related problems, with 93% indicating that their problems with gambling have been reduced since they agreed to be self-excluded. These results are excellent and indicate that the BetSafe program is very effective in assisting people after they have developed a gambling problem."

**SYNAVAL EVALUATION November 2001**
"The BetSafe program is most effective when close contact is developed between the program and the individual, as is the case with self-excluding members and staff. This is indicated by:

The areas of "Assisting Problem Gamblers" and "Assisting Staff to Manage" continuing to be particular strengths for BetSafe among respondents generally;

The high ratings given to the BetSafe program by self-excluding members and staff across a range of measures of effectiveness."

## Extract from January 2001 SYNAVAL evaluation:

**5.5 Has BetSafe Assisted Staff in Managing Problem Gambling Issues?**

Although a work in progress, the Responsible Conduct of Gambling Policies and Procedures Manual for the BetSafe program clearly indicates the situations in which a staff member must offer patron assistance through their supervisor in relation to a gambling problem. As there will always be some degree of uncertainty regarding the boundaries of when it is and is not appropriate to assist a patron, the following situations have been identified as those requiring staff to respond:

- Where a patron discloses to a staff member that they have a gambling problem.
- Where a patron indirectly asks for assistance by, for example, expressing concern about their gambling being out of control, stating that they are experiencing financial difficulty due to excessive gambling, or are visibly distressed due to their gambling activities.
- Where a patron seeks to be excluded from the club in order to limit their gambling.

Staff must not approach a patron about their gambling practices under any circumstances, but have an obligation to respond to a patron who discloses that they may have a gambling problem.

The procedures manual also indicates that there will be other situations that may warrant interventions by staff that have not been covered by these scenarios. Where a staff member is concerned about a particular patron but does not feel that they are authorised or qualified to

approach them, or believe that to do so could cause offence, they are advised to discuss the matter with their supervisor or contact Paul Symond Consultancy directly for guidance.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the BetSafe program and training course in assisting staff to manage problem gambling issues and understand the various appropriate courses of action, it is necessary to measure the following five items:
1) What is BetSafe's perceived impact on assisting staff in identifying problem gambling behaviour?
2) The proportion of staff who have been trained by BetSafe.
3) Staff's level of confidence in their knowledge of gambling issues.
4) Unprompted and prompted awareness of how to manage problem gambling situations.
5) Staff's attitudes towards the BetSafe procedures for managing gambling problems.

**5.5.1 BetSafe's Impact on Assisting Staff in Identifying if Members or Guests Appear to have a Gambling Problem**

82% of staff indicated that the BetSafe program has been effective in helping them identify when someone might have a gambling problem. Interestingly, staff who have not completed the BetSafe training perceive the program to have been as effective in helping them identify when someone might have a gambling problem as it has been for staff who have completed the training (85% and 86% respectively).

This shows that the overall program has been as effective as the training itself, (it may be that staff who have not been trained directly have learnt from other colleagues).

**5.5.3 Level of Confidence in Knowledge of Gambling Issues**

Staff who have received BetSafe training are significantly more confident in their knowledge of a number of gambling issues than staff who have not received BetSafe training:
BetSafe trained staff are more confident in their understanding of :

1) Problem gambling and the concept of the responsible service of gambling (90% compared with 74% for non trained staff)
2) How the BetSafe program can help problem gamblers (93% compared with 75%)
3) The information presented in the signs and information brochures (88% versus 70% respectively)
4) Counselling services available (88% compared with 74%)
5) The procedures for assisting a patron to voluntarily self-exclude from the club (74% compared with 63%)
6) The procedures for assisting a patron to be involuntarily excluded from the club (58% compared with 48%).

This does suggest that the BetSafe training provides a greater depth of knowledge to staff than simply learning from others or reading brochures and manuals.
As shown in Table 47, BetSafe trained staff are less confident in their knowledge of exclusion procedures and identifying problem gambling behaviour, than they are with other issues. Only 58% of BetSafe trained staff are confident in the area of involuntary exclusion procedures.
74% of BetSafe trained staff are confident in their knowledge of voluntary self exclusion procedures and 76% are confident in their knowledge of how to identify someone who may have a gambling problem.

While this level of knowledge is quite good, it does indicate that BetSafe may want to consider a greater emphasis on these particular issues in the BetSafe training course, to achieve an even higher level of knowledge among staff.

**5.5.3 Attitudes towards BetSafe's Procedures for Managing Gambling Problems**

Among the 72% of staff who have completed the BetSafe training course, 93% indicated that their awareness of responsible gambling has improved as a result of the BetSafe training course. This is an excellent result for the BetSafe program. This finding is also supported by the higher level of

prompted awareness of the appropriate actions to take in problem gambling situations among staff who have completed the BetSafe training course than those who have not.

## Extract from November 2001 SYNAVAL evaluation:

**5.6.3 Impact of BetSafe on Identification of Gambling Problems**

As an important component of creating an environment that promotes responsible gambling, it is important that gaming staff and patrons learn to recognise gambling problem behaviours.

**5.7 Has BetSafe Assisted Staff in Managing Problem Gambling Issues?**
The Responsible Conduct of Gambling Policies and Procedures Manual for the BetSafe program is a continually updated document that clearly indicates the situations in which a staff member must offer patron assistance through their supervisor in relation to a gambling problem. However, there will always be some degree of uncertainty regarding the boundaries of when it is and is not appropriate to assist a patron.

Staff must not approach a patron about their gambling practices under any circumstances, but have an obligation to respond to a patron who discloses that they may have a gambling problem.

Where a staff member is concerned about a particular patron but does not feel that they are authorized or qualified to approach them, or believe that to do so could cause offence, they are advised to discuss the matter with their supervisor or contact Paul Symond Consultancy directly for guidance.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the BetSafe program and training course in assisting staff to manage problem gambling issues and understand the various appropriate courses of action, the following five items are again measured in the research. These results are also compared with the 2000 findings.

1) What is BetSafe's perceived impact on assisting staff in identifying problem gambling behaviour?
2) The proportion of staff who have been trained by BetSafe.
3) Staff's level of confidence in their knowledge of gambling issues.
4) Unprompted and prompted awareness of how to manage problem gambling situations.

**5) Staff's attitudes towards the BetSafe procedures for managing gambling problems.**

**5.5.1 BetSafe's Impact on Assisting Staff in Identifying if Members or Guests Appear to have a Gambling Problem**

77% of staff believe that the BetSafe program is effective in identifying when someone might have a gambling problem. This is a small decline from 82% recorded in 2000.