

GAMBLING COMMISSION

Machine Standards Wireless Network

June 2007

Introduction

This standard is applicable to all categories of gaming machine as defined under section 235 of the Gambling Act 2005 (the Act). It is a requirement that where any gaming machine (including a portable machine) sited within Great Britain on or after 1 September 2007, employs a wireless connection to communicate with any other device used in the provision of facilities for gambling it must comply with this standard in full.

The purpose of the standard is to set out in detail the Commission's requirements with respect to game features, display notices and general machine operation including metering. These have been developed to help ensure the Commission's three licensing objectives are met. Those objectives are to:

- prevent gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime;
- ensure that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way; and
- protect children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

Operators or end users should not rely upon these standards as a measure of reliability, quality or minimal security requirements.

These standards permit equivalence between different types of technology and do not specify proprietary products or technologies. Testing regimes for these standards will permit equivalent international standards (ISO). It is not intended to limit game content and the use of new technological developments provided that the objectives of the standard are met.

Other Relevant Gaming Machine Technical Standards

- Technical Standards for Category A, B1, B2, B3 & B4, C & Complex Category D Machines
- Technical standards for Non-Complex Category D machines
- Technical standards for Legacy machines¹ (Category B3, B4, C and D machines)
- Technical Standard for Downloadable Gaming Machines (All categories of machine)
- Technical Standard for Cashless Systems (All categories of machine)
- Technical Standard for Linked Progressives (All categories of machine)

¹ Essentially 'legacy machines' are Category B3, B4, C or D machines which were lawfully in use on premises in Great Britain on 31 August 2007 which comply with the regulations made under s240 of the Act and certain details of which have been notified to the Commission.

1.0 Network coverage

If a gaming machine is designed to allow players to participate in gambling using a wireless network the following must be complied with:

- a. unless denoted by clear signage there must be no areas where players may participate in any gambling using such a device where the communication signal is:
 - i) not available;
 - ii) of poor quality such that interruptions in play would be likely; and
- b. there must be adequate wireless coverage so that the failure of a single transmitter does not significantly reduce the players' ability to participate in gambling.

The term wireless network as used in this standard does not include any wireless communication link with an external device located off the licensed premises where the player is using a gaming machine.

1.1 Network failure

Where a network failure occurs:

- a. the device must alert the player within 10 seconds of it occurring. It is permissible for the device to continue with any gambling if the network connection is restored provided that the player is not disadvantaged in any way; and
- b. a manual alternative method of play (e.g. keying in game outcome or other element as opposed to an automatic download via wireless network) is permissible where there is no disadvantage to the player and that there is adequate time to do so. Catch up facilities (e.g. button pressed to bring device up to current position within game) may only be used where the game in which the credit was taken has not been completed.

The Commission does not intend to set any rules pertaining to voided games as a result of communication loss or other device malfunctions as it is expected that the operator will do so in their terms and conditions. Any such conditions must, however, be clearly expressed and made available to players prior to their use of a relevant gaming machine.

1.2 Communication requirements

All protocols must use communication techniques that have proper error detection and/or recovery mechanisms which are designed to prevent unauthorized access or tampering, employing at a minimum Data Encryption Standards (DES) or equivalent encryption with secure seeds or algorithms.

1.3 Power level display requirements

Portable devices must ensure that players have adequate information as to the likely battery life (preferably in hours/minutes) and give additional warnings when this reaches a low level (e.g. 10 minutes charge remaining).

1.4 Audit requirements

An audit log of sufficient time stamping of significant events so as to be able to resolve any player disputes arising as a result of timing issues must be retained for a minimum of one month. It must be possible to display the audit log on the site operator's premises.

The Commission does not intend to set out exact requirements for time stamping of significant events as it is considered better that the manufacturers do so on the basis of the overall system design.

These requirements were notified in draft to the European Commission in accordance with Directive 98/34/EC, as amended by Directive 98/48/EC

Gambling Commission June 2007

The Gambling Commission regulates gambling in the public interest. It does so by keeping crime out of gambling, by ensuring that gambling is conducted fairly and openly, and by protecting children and vulnerable people from being harmed or exploited by gambling. The Commission also provides independent advice to government on gambling in Britain.

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