GAMBLING COMMISSION

This standard will be in force from 30 March 2027 to 29 June 2027. This is a new standard. There is no equivalent standard in force prior to 30 March 2027.

Machine Standards – a gaming machine 'session'

Published on 30 September 2026

Introduction

This standard will be in force between 30 March 2027 and 29 June 2027.

The purpose of this standard is to support the Gambling Commission in evaluating the impact of changes to the Gaming Machine Technical Standards (GMTS) that were announced, on 30 September 2026, in the gaming machine consultation response. The 3-month window following the implementation of this new sessional definition will offer an opportunity to establish a baseline for sessional data using a common definition at machine-level, before further updates to the GMTS are brought into force on 30 June 2027.

The standard is applicable to the licence types and fee categories listed below:

- non-remote gaming machine technical – full licence – fee categories A3, B1, B2 and B3
- remote gaming machine technical – full licence – fee categories F3, G1, G2 and H1.

The standard is applicable to category A, B1, B2, B3, B3A and B4 machines and/or games that are reasonably capable, from a technical perspective, of being able to deliver the session definition documented in this standard. Whilst not an exhaustive list, we would expect the standard should be reasonably deliverable on machines that, for example:

- are networked, in line with GMTS titled 'Machine Standards Server Networked and Downloadable'; and/or
- offer limit setting functionality in accordance with the respective industry trade association voluntary codes; and/or
- were included in previous gaming machine sessional data collection exercises, such as the one conducted as part of the gaming machine consultation that was published in January 2025.

We consider the approach outlined to be pragmatic and proportionate. It appropriately takes account of potential benefits of being able to collect baseline sessional data for evaluation purposes alongside regulatory burden. It also supports the collection of datasets across all licensed sectors and with a reasonable degree of market coverage.

To support licensees in their understanding of the scope of potential future data collection exercises using the session definition documented in this standard, we would envisage those exercises including, for example, metrics such as:

- session duration
- net expenditure
- net expenditure by duration
- limit setting functionality
    i. type of limit utilised
    ii. instances whereby limits were reached
    iii. instances whereby sessions ended on reaching a limit.

Licensees should have appropriate systems in place to ensure that for data collection exercises machines can be correctly allocated to sector datasets based upon the licensed activity. This will prevent a re-occurrence of a limitation found in previous data collection exercises whereby gaming machines from 'High Street' bingo premises were incorrectly allocated to the adult gaming centre dataset.

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 machines (Category B3, B4, C and D machines)
- Technical Standard for Server Networked and Downloadable Games (All categories of machine)
- Technical Standard for Cashless Payment (All categories of machine)
- Technical Standard for Linked Progressives (All categories of machine)
- Technical Standard for Wireless Network (All categories of machine)

Defining a gaming machine 'session'

A 'session' means the period of gaming activity on a gaming machine that begins and ends in accordance with the following provisions:

a) if a session is not already in progress, a session begins when a game is played
b) if the machine credit is below the value of the lowest single available stake for 60 seconds from the end of the last game cycle, then the session ends
c) irrespective of the machine credit, if there is no customer input for 240 seconds from the end of the last game cycle, then the session ends
d) if a customer presses 'Collect' at any time during a session, and all possible uncommitted credit is cashed out, the session ends
e) any interruption to normal machine operation, for example a power cut, power off, malfunction or door open, will end the session
f) where a gaming machine provides access to more than one game, sessional data should be collected at the machine level (also sometimes known as the system or platform level) on the main menu. This means that sessional data could cover participation across multiple games subject to the conditions previously listed.

There is no tracking required of gaming activity while the machine is in demonstration or tournament mode.

Relevant notifications were made on consultation (opens in a new tab) and publication of our responses with regards to our obligations to the World Trade Organisation Agreements in relation to 'Technical Barriers to Trade'.

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Gambling Commission
Victoria Square House
Victoria Square
Birmingham B2 4BP

T +44 121 230 6666