



WEEK 27

FRIDAY 4 JUL 2014

THIS WEEK

- **Caesars to close Showboat in AC**
- **Column: Gareth Bracken on industry PR**
- **17 firms apply for New York licences**
- **Tweets of the week**



TOP STORY

PoC TO BEGIN IN OCTOBER

Current operators in line for continuation licence



The Gambling Commission's main office in Birmingham

The UK's new place-of-consumption licensing regime will come into force on 1 October. The Gambling (Licensing and Advertising) Act, which requires gaming operators that provide facilities for remote gambling in Britain or advertise to consumers in Britain to obtain a UK Gambling Commission licence, was granted Royal Assent in mid-May, the final stage of its parliamentary journey.

Transitional arrangements announced by the Gambling Commission enable operators who are currently able to provide facilities for gambling in Great Britain (because they hold a licence in an EEA or white-listed jurisdiction) to submit an advance application for a new licence by midnight on 16 September and therefore be eligible for a continuation licence if the outcome of their application has not been determined by 1 October. A continuation licence will allow them to continue to provide facilities until the completion of the application process.

The Gambling Commission says the average application time is six weeks, although this may be longer if

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the operator's business is complex or enquiries from overseas take time to resolve. Overseas operators currently providing gambling facilities legally to consumers in Britain will be required to pay a fee in the transitional period.

The Gambling (Licensing and Advertising) Bill alters the licensing landscape previously outlined by the Gambling Act 2005, introduced in 2007, which allowed remote gambling operators serving UK consumers to base and license themselves offshore without the need for a UK licence.

The new legislation is being introduced separately but also in parallel with a 15% place-of-consumption tax on gross gaming revenue, which is set to come into force in December.

The Gambling Commission is pushing ahead with the licensing process despite the threat of a legal challenge from the Gibraltar Betting and Gaming Association (GBGA), which represents Gibraltar-based online gambling operators. The Association has placed the government and Gambling Commission on notice of a claim for judicial review – to which they have until 16 July to respond – relating to the place-of-consumption legislation, which GBGA describes as “unworkable”, “unlawful” and a threat to the safety of consumers.

KEY POINTS

- UK place-of-consumption licensing to begin on 1 October
- Existing operators applying by 16 September can receive continuation licence if application not processed in time
- 15% place-of-consumption tax on gross gaming revenue to come into force in December

ATLANTIC CITY

CAESARS ANNOUNCES SHOWBOAT CLOSURE

Falling Atlantic City revenues force company's hand



Caesars Entertainment Corp has announced it will shut down the ailing Showboat property in Atlantic City in a move designed to reduce capacity in the city amid declining revenues.

Caesars, which owns four properties in Atlantic City, has been making efforts to service its debt in recent times. The company has sold assets and equity, transferred properties and refinanced certain borrowings in its efforts to repay loans taken on a \$30.7bn leveraged buyout in 2008.

CEO Gary Loveman, in announcing the venue's closure effective of 31 August, said: “This is a necessary step to help stabilise our business in Atlantic City and support the viability of our remaining operations in the vicinity.”

The company will evaluate other uses for the Showboat property [pictured] and could steer customers towards Harrah's, its largest resort in the city. Fitch Ratings analyst Alex

Bumazhny told Bloomberg this could be “potentially a negative” for some company bondholders, since Harrah's is owned by a subsidiary company, while most of Caesars' debt is owed by separate entity Caesars Entertainment Operating Co.

KEY POINTS

- Caesars will close the Showboat in Atlantic City and consider alternative uses for the property

NEW YORK

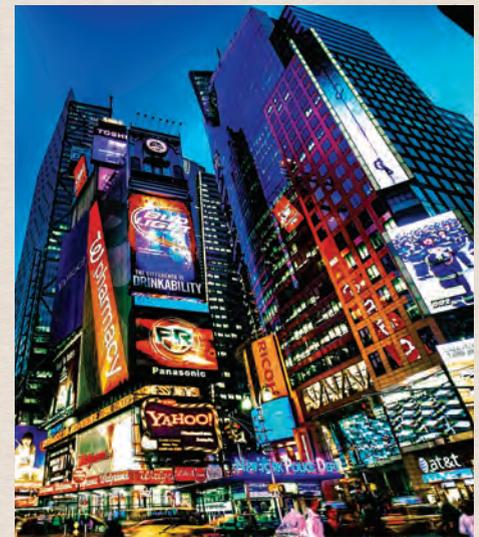
DEADLINE FOR NY CASINO PROPOSALS PASSES

17 applicants grappling for a licence

The high-stakes battle to operate a casino in upstate New York grows ever fiercer as heavyweight operators compete for one of four casino licences.

Caesars, Genting and Penn National Gaming were among the 17 firms to submit applications to the New York Gaming Commission as the deadline passed on 1 July.

Of the three regions approved for casino development those with the



Tweets of the week

“The irony of Lewis Hamilton and Chris Froome being favourites to win Sports Personality of the Year #dullandduller.”

*Betting writer
@Matthew_Glazier*

“Macau has the fourth-highest gross domestic product per head of population in the world, the World Bank says.”

Macau gaming lawyer Luis Mesquita deMelo [@LuisMdeMelo]

“Chad Brown was a role model not only in the poker world, but in the world. A genuinely nice guy that will be missed by all. RIP Chad.”

*Poker pro Daniel Negreanu
[@RealKidPoker]*

closest proximity to the biggest city in the US, such as Catskill Mountains-Orange County, are the most hotly contested.

This autumn, once the lengthy and lavish proposals have been reviewed, the final stages of the application process completed and the prospects for economic growth considered, the Commission will announce the winners.

KEY POINTS

- Leading operators contend for a casino licence to gain prime access to New York's eight-million-strong population

GUEST COLUMNIST

"BREAK THE CYCLE OF INSIPID PR"



by Gareth Bracken
gambling industry
journalist

"There's a scene in the classic First World War sitcom *Blackadder Goes Forth* where the barmy General Melchett informs the title character of his army's "brilliant plan" to climb out of the trenches and walk slowly towards the enemy. He reasons that because it's the same tactic they've employed the previous eighteen times it is "exactly the last thing" their adversaries will be expecting on this occasion.

This sometimes feels reminiscent of the gambling industry's approach to generating publicity. Not to suggest for one second that gambling companies and the gaming media are enemies in any way; that clearly isn't true. The point

is that firms are on a mission to garner as much coverage and publicity for their people and products as possible but often don't seem to go about that task very creatively.

The formula is a well-trodden one. Email out a press release containing a glowing report of a new website or game, maybe including an attempt at personalisation by addressing it to a particular editor or journalist. Perhaps even add "I hope you're well?" with an unnecessary question mark. If a PR company is involved, the release will often be followed up with a phone call. Another exhausted tactic is the all-encompassing 'is there anything we can get involved with?' call or email, which offers an undetermined contribution to an unspecified piece of upcoming editorial.

The problem with these approaches is that they leave so much to luck. If a press release reveals a huge story then it will almost certainly get utilised in some way. However most releases aren't that important or exciting, meaning their usage will depend on factors of fortune, most likely how busy a publication's writing team is at that particular moment.

The vague offer of an editorial contribution also presents a similar scenario. It's simply trusting to luck that not only will a suitable feature article exist but that it will contain a space for the company in question. And even if there is a gap, can they turn their comments around in time if a deadline is approaching?

So how to remove the luck factor? Well at *Gambling Insider* we're very keen on insight and analysis. So rather than sending a press release outlining a wonderful new online bingo game,

why not send a press release containing some research on how the online bingo demographic is changing, or how players are switching to mobile and tablet. By all means still mention the great new product, but package it as part of a less promotional release. We'll be much more likely to use it as an online news item or maybe even in the magazine itself.

It's a difficult thing to do, to let go of those self-promoting instincts in favour of broader analysis, but it's actually a better move in the long run. If a mobile bingo firm pitches a feature article to us that talks solely about their latest brilliant game, we're never going to run it. However if they suggest a piece about an interesting trend in the sector, either to be written by themselves or to include them as one of numerous relevant contributors, there's a greater chance we'll be interested.

If we did print the fluffy promotional feature, not many people worth their salt would a) read it or b) take it seriously. However contributing to a more analytical feature is a great way of not only gaining exposure but also presenting your firm as knowledgeable and insightful.

So don't be a General Melchett and keep trying the same thing over and over – try and formulate more of a cunning plan."

Gareth Bracken is senior staff writer for Gambling Insider and Gambling Insider Friday

Want to be a guest columnist in GI Friday?
Write to: editor@gamblinginsider.com

OUT NOW: Look out for the May/June issue of *Gambling Insider's* print magazine, featuring an in-depth and insightful World Cup Special as we assess the industry's preparations for Brazil 2014, as well as the first in our new 'Bright Sparks' profile series



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And much more...

WHAT'S NEW FOR 2014?

MORE NETWORKING:

With the inclusion of the official "GRWA Speed Networking" session, evening "Networking Drinks" + more!

HALF-DAY WORKSHOPS:

Covering Mobile and Tablet Sports Betting, and Casino Marketing Strategy.

INTERACTIVE ROUNDTABLES:

All new presentation and Q&A format where members choose the sessions that most appeals.

**DISCOVER WHAT ELSE IS
IN STORE FOR YOU AT THIS
YEAR'S GRWA2014!**

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