

GambleAware

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ANNOUNCEMENT

Publication of analysis of play among British online gamblers on slots and other casino-style games

London, 26 March: New research, funded by GambleAware, analysed play among British online gamblers on slots and other casino-style games. The report, by Professor David Forrest and Professor Ian McHale at the University of Liverpool, looks at what can be learned from one month of data (January, 2017) provided to the Gambling Commission by thirteen operators. The data relate to slots play on more than 1¼ million accounts and non-slots games played by up to 785,000 people.

The majority of players appear to play safely. For most, their expenditure was modest and comparable with what might be spent on many other leisure activities. 73% of slots and 85% of non-slots customers spent less than £50 during the month. Stakes sizes showed patterns similar to those in the offline environment, with the large majority less than £1 for a spin, although there are no regulatory limits to stakes online. A clear majority played on only 1-2 days a month.

However, a small proportion of customers, but still up to 32,000 individuals, lost in excess of £1,000. Given typical income levels and spending commitments in Great Britain, it is plausible that many of these will have experienced harm. Those who played daily or near-daily still represented more than 27,000 slots players and more than 11,000 users of non-slots games.

For the very heaviest losers over the month (loss > £5,000) more individuals in this group had played on 5-10 days in the month than had played daily or near-daily. Operators should be alert to the risk of potentially severe harm being incurred as a result of play over only a few days. In fact, very harmful play might frequently be intermittent or of short duration because losses are so high as to be unsustainable.

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A limitation of the data set is that it is aggregated to the level of individual account statistics for the month and it is not possible to identify whether the customers of different games and of different operators are in fact sometimes the same individuals. The researchers recommend that the Gambling Commission seek richer data from operators in the future.

Professor Ian McHale, University of Liverpool, said:

“It is pleasing that these data have been made available by the operators. They provide a first insight into what online gambling behaviour in Britain looks like.”

Professor David Forrest, University of Liverpool, said:

“As with offline play, most gambling is at a modest level but there is nevertheless a significant number of customers who are heavy spenders and whose behaviour may be particularly worthy of further analysis as more detailed account-based data become available.”

Clare Wyllie, Director of Research & Evaluation at GambleAware said:

“This is a first small-scale analysis of remote industry data. Working with Responsible Gambling Strategy Board and Gambling Commission we will be commissioning further analysis of real play data across products and gambling environments, to more precisely identify where risk lies. This will enable policy-makers, practitioners and operators to make gambling safer and protect the vulnerable.”

-ENDS-

Contact:

For media enquiries please contact the Gambling Commission press office on 0121 230 6700 or email communications@gamblingcommission.gov.uk

About GambleAware:

- The report can be viewed [here](#) and report summary [here](#).
- Guided by the [National Responsible Gambling Strategy](#), GambleAware is an independent charity tasked to fund research, education and treatment services to help minimise gambling-related harm in Great Britain.
- GambleAware is a commissioning and grant-making body, not a provider of services. The charity’s strategic aim is to broaden public understanding of gambling-related harm as a public health issue and to help those that do develop

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problems get the support and help that they need quickly and effectively. For more information, please go to: <http://about.gambleaware.org/>

- GambleAware's programme of treatment, education, harm prevention and research is guided by the National Responsible Gambling Strategy, which is defined by the independent Responsible Gambling Strategy Board (RGSB) and endorsed by the Gambling Commission. The RGSB, the Gambling Commission and GambleAware work together under the terms of an agreement in place since 2012: <http://about.gambleaware.org/media/1216/statementofintent.pdf>. Research is conducted under the terms of a 'Research Commissioning and Governance Procedure' agreed in 2016 by the RGSB, the Gambling Commission and GambleAware: <http://about.gambleaware.org/media/1270/research-commissioning-and-governance-procedure-may-2016-final.pdf>.
- GambleAware requires a minimum of £10 million annually to deliver its current responsibilities, and looks to all those that profit from commercial gambling to support the charity. This donation-based system was proposed under the Gambling Act 2005 and is prescribed by the Gambling Commission in its Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice. The RGSB endorsed GambleAware's £10m funding goal in January 2017: <http://www.rgsb.org.uk/press-releases/responsible-gambling-strategy-board-publishes-assessment-of-the-quantum-of-funding-required-to-deliver-the-national-responsible-gambling-strategy.html>
- GambleAware funds the *Gordon Moody Association*, the *NHS National Problem Gambling Clinic*, *GamCare* and a network of charities across Great Britain to provide a full range of free treatment for problem gamblers and support for those affected by them. GambleAware also runs the website **BeGambleAware.org** which helps 2.7 million visitors a year, and supports the **National Gambling Helpline – 0808 8020 133**.