

PRESS RELEASE

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National Casino Forum launches Self-Exclusion Enrolment System across UK casinos

London, 03 August 2015 – The UK land-based casino industry is at the forefront of raising public awareness around responsible gambling in the UK. The majority of people gamble responsibly but the casino industry recognises its responsibility to help minimise harm from problem gambling and is constantly looking for ways to help those that are most vulnerable.

As part of this strategy, a key Playing Safe initiative, **SENSE** – the **Self-Enrolment National Self-Exclusion** tool – is today being launched by the National Casino Forum (NCF) and will be introduced in land-based casinos across the UK.

This national programme is being introduced by casinos in advance of the Gambling Commission's licensing condition which is due to come into force on 6 April 2016. This condition will require operators to participate in multi-operator self-exclusion schemes so that customers are able to self-exclude from gambling facilities.

The SENSE scheme enables customers to voluntarily self-exclude from all participating land-based casino premises and is mandatory for all NCF member operators. Enrolling in SENSE means that customers will, for the first time, be sharing their request to self-exclude from all participating land-based casinos for a minimum period of six months.

The system is designed to be simple and straightforward to use; a casino operator will read out the terms and conditions of SENSE and then ask the customer to electronically sign the enrolment form. The casino operator will also take a photograph of the customer and upload this along with their enrolment form onto the secure SENSE system. Customers can also download the SENSE information and self-exclusion form at www.playingsafe.org.uk.

Once a customer has enrolled in SENSE, operators at participating casinos will be alerted and any marketing material for that customer and memberships will be switched off. If a customer tries to access a casino when they are self-excluded, an operator will note this on the system and it will alert surrounding casinos that they are trying to gain access. Customers will only be eligible to be removed from SENSE after the six month period and only upon request.

The Gambling Commission commented: "We see the development of sector specific self-exclusion schemes as an important step in providing greater protection to players who require help managing their gambling.

"The casino sector was well placed to lead the way in this but implementing SENSE now, well ahead of the deadline we set, is a significant achievement. We recognise that it required the considerable efforts and full commitment of all NCF's members."

Tracy Damestani, CEO of the National Casino Forum said: “The NCF and its members took the decision to pioneer the first national self-exclusion programme. Self-exclusion is an important step for people who have recognised that they have a problem with gambling and have made a commitment to deal with it. We applaud the Gambling Commission’s decision to introduce a new provision which mandates that all gambling operators will need to implement more effective self-exclusion systems. NCF members recognised the need to have an easy to use system in place that can be used nationally across UK casino venues and we have been working on this initiative for the last two years. SENSE was created with the intention of encouraging responsible gambling throughout the industry and to help those people who may be at risk.”

“NCF represents over 98% of the UK’s land-based casinos. The members’ commitment to implementing the SENSE system has been admirable; they have taken all the steps necessary to ensure their casino staff support customers who wish to self-exclude. While SENSE was developed as a casino initiative to be flexible and progressive, we hope to see other gambling sectors also take similar steps for their customer base.”

The SENSE web-based application system was developed with SDA (Software for Data Analysis).

Michael Hart, Managing Director of Software for Data Analysis Limited (SDA) added: “Developing and delivering SENSE has been an exhilarating time for SDA. Investing our substantial expertise with data processing and systems development into such a cutting-edge and socially responsible project has been both demanding and rewarding. I’m delighted with the result, and that we’ve been able to contribute to this groundbreaking product.”

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