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### Proposed Amendments to the Rules of Casino Table Games

The Secretary for Internal Affairs (the Secretary), subject to appropriate consultation, is able to make, amend or revoke rules under section 367 of the Gambling Act 2003 (the Act). The Department has received a request for amendments to the Rules of Casino Table Games, and has taken this opportunity to propose some additional minor amendments. Explanations of the amendments are provided within this document, and full versions of the proposed amended rules are available on the Department's website.

#### *Amendment to Division 1 – General Rules: Rule 9.4*

The proposed amendment to the General Rules (Rule 9.4) is to permit a player to wager less than the minimum table wager limit. Currently the operator may only allow a player to wager in excess of the maximum table wager limit.

The proposed amendment is to insert the phrase "or less than the minimum table wager limit" so that full amended rule would read:

*9.4 The Casino operator may allow a player to wager in excess of the maximum table wager limit, or less than the minimum table wager limit, provided that a sign denoting the minimum and maximum wager limits for that player is placed on an appropriate area of the table "*

The applicant states that this amendment would accommodate for low-limit demand, and offer inexperienced players an introductory personal limit without having to open a further table

#### *Amendment to Division 2 – Blackjack Rules: Rule 7.1*

The proposed amendment to Rule 7.1 of the Blackjack rules is to allow casino supervisors greater discretion as to when cards may be shuffled. The applicant states that this amendment would enable the casino to consider patron requests to shuffle cards.

Rule 7.1(d) of the Blackjack rules currently reads:

*"7.1 the cards shall be shuffled so that they are randomly intermixed"*

[ . ]

*(d) at the discretion of the casino supervisor following any period during which the table has been vacant*

[ ]

The proposed, amended rule 7 1(d) would read:

*"7.1 the cards shall be shuffled so that they are randomly intermixed.*

[ ]

*(d) at the direction of the casino supervisor, at his/her discretion*

[ ]

***Amendment to Division 5 – Baccarat Rules: Rule 7.1***

The applicant proposes a similar amendment to the rules for Baccarat to provide the casino with greater discretion as to when cards are shuffled

***Amendment to Division 2 – Blackjack Rules: Rule 15B.7***

The proposed amendment to Rule 15B.7 is to allow winning Perfect Pairs wagers to be paid in accordance with a third pay scale. The effect of this amendment would be to increase the house advantage. The full amended rule would read (underlined phrases inserted):

*"15B.7 Winning Perfect Pairs wagers shall be paid in accordance with either Pay Scale One, Pay Scale Two or Pay Scale Three as follows*

*Pay Scale One*

*For a mixed pair 5 to 1*  
*For a coloured pair 10 to 1*  
*For a perfect pair 20 to 1*

*Pay Scale Two*

*For a mixed pair 6 to 1*  
*For a coloured pair 12 to 1*  
*For a perfect pair 25 to 1*

*Pay Scale Three*

*For a mixed pair 5 to 1*  
*For a coloured pair 12 to 1*  
*For a perfect pair 25 to 1*"

***Amendment to Division 5 – Baccarat Rules: Rule 11A.7***

The applicant proposes a similar amendment to the Baccarat rules, whereby a third payable for Perfect Pairs wagers is inserted at the end of Rule 11A.7.

***Amendment to Division 5 – Baccarat Rules: Card Handling and Wagers***

***Card Handling***

The proposed amendment to Rule 1.0, and the addition of Rule 2.3 to the Baccarat rules, is to change the definition of the terms 'Banker' and 'Player' and to recognise that both the banker and player may nominate another seated person at the game to receive and handle the cards, when the game is conducted in dealing style B. This amendment will allow the casino operator to accommodate requests from players to nominate another person to handle the cards. The applicant states this is to accommodate players who have had this experience in international jurisdictions. Consequential amendments to other game rules are proposed to effect this change.

The definitions of "Banker" and "Player" from Rule 1.0 would be amended as follows (underlined phrases inserted):

*"Banker" means the seated player (or his/her nominee who must also be seated at the game) who, when the game is conducted in accordance with Dealing Style B receives and handles the Banker's Hand,"*

*"Player", for the purposes of rules 3.4(e), 5.6, 8.8, 8.10, 8.11 and 8.13 to 8.15 inclusive, when the word begins with a capital letter, means the seated player (or his/her nominee who must also be seated at the game) who, when the game is conducted in accordance with dealing style B, receives and handles the Player's Hand,"*

Rule 2.3 would also be added:

*"2.3 Notwithstanding any other rule in this division*

*(a) a player may only appoint a nominee with the prior approval of the games supervisor or casino supervisor*

*(b) the game supervisor or casino supervisor may at any time withdraw his/her approval and direct some or all players at the game to place their own wagers, in which case the players may not instruct other persons to place wagers on their behalf; and*

*(c) the game supervisor or casino supervisor may at any time withdraw his/her approval and direct some or all players at the game to turn or handle their own cards in which case the players may not instruct other persons to turn or handle on their behalf."*

### Wagers

The proposed amendment to section 5.0 of the Baccarat Rules is to recognise that a player may nominate another person to place his/her wagers at the game subject to the casino operator's approval. Consequential amendments to other game rules would also be necessary to effect this change.

Rule 5.0 would be amended by inserting the phrases 'or his/her nominee' or 'including their nominees' or 'including his/her nominees' where appropriate, after each time the words 'player' or 'players' appears. For instance, the amended rule 5.8 would read (underlined phrases inserted):

*"5.8 When mini baccarat or midi baccarat is played, the casino operator may*

*(a) permit up to three players (including their nominees) to wager on any one wagering area, and*

*(b) direct that the total of all players' (including their nominees') wagers on any one wagering area shall not exceed the table maximum, or that the total of the wagers of any particular player (including his/her nominee) or players (including their nominees) on any one wagering area shall not exceed the table maximum "*

The Department has identified some concerns with this proposed amendment. First, we consider that allowing a patron to nominate another person to place wagers at a table could potentially lead to confusion (especially on behalf of the casino operator and gambling

inspectors) regarding ownership and placement of bets. Similarly, there may be increased potential for disputes between patrons and/or nominees relating to ownership of bets.

We welcome any comments you have relating to this proposed amendment, and particularly in relation to the identified concerns.

#### ***Amendment to Division 8A– Electronic: Rule 3.1***

The proposed amendment to Rule 3.1 of the rules for Electronic Roulette is to allow up to 30 roulette terminals to be associated with this game. Currently up to 21 terminals may be used.

The application to increase the number of terminals associated per game of roulette is similar to a previous application which sought to remove the restriction on the number of terminals altogether. The Secretary had declined that application, due to concerns that significant harm could occur. The Department now seeks your comment on whether those same concerns should apply to the current application.

The concern the Department had identified was that there could be potential for increased harm, as a result of greater anonymity of play and reduced levels of supervision. This is because the application to increase the 21 terminal limitation on Electronic Roulette would result in a greater number of terminals per physical wheel and dealer. With an expansion of the number of terminals that can run off a single wheel interaction with the dealer would be reduced as would the dealer's ability to monitor individual players.

The current applicant has stated it has factored in those concerns in "seeking this more modest amendment", and that it is satisfied that it will be able to meet legislative requirements relating to harm minimisation and prevention.

#### ***Amendments to Remove Redundant References***

The Secretary proposes amendments to the rules for all casino table games (and minimum equipment standards as appropriate) to remove and replace, as appropriate, in the interests of clarity, all references to the Casino Control Authority and the Casino Control Act. Also for the interests of clarity, the Secretary proposes to replace the term "Government Inspectorate" with "Gambling Inspectorate" throughout these rules. Finally the Secretary proposes to replace the term 'gaming' with 'gambling', where appropriate in the rules.

#### ***Amendment to Division 1 – General Rules: Rule 2.1***

The Secretary also proposes to amend rule 2.1 of the general rules to include the games 'Three Card Poker', 'Ultimate Texas Hold'em' and 'Casino War'. The proposed, amended rule would read (amendments underlined):

*"2.1 This division of the Rules of Casino Table Games shall apply to the following games*

- (a) blackjack;*  
*[subparagraphs (b) and (c) deleted]*
- (d) baccarat,*
- (e) Caribbean stud poker,*
- (f) tournament play,*
- (g) roulette,*
- (ga) electronic roulette,*
- (h) tai-sai;*
- (i) money wheel,*
- (j) craps;*
- (k) pai gow,*

- (l) *poker,*
- (m) *tournament poker;*
- (n) *pontoon*
- (o) *three card poker*
- (p) *ultimate texas hold'em*
- (q) *casino war"*

### ***Your Submissions***

These amendments will need to be assessed to ensure they do not derogate from any purposes of the Gambling Act. The purposes of the Gambling Act include:

- ensuring the integrity and fairness of games
- preventing and minimising the harm caused by gambling, including problem gambling

You are invited to make submissions by 24 March 2011

If the amendments are made, they will also be published in the *New Zealand Gazette*

Please address your submissions to:

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Alternatively, please send your submissions or queries to:  
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Thank you for your attention to this matter

Yours sincerely

  
Heather McShane  
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