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GAMING BOARD FOR THE BAHAMAS

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MEDIA RELEASE

REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF DOMESTIC GAMING PREMISES

The Gaming Act, 2014 (Act 40 of 2014) at Section 45(4)(a), provides that the Minister may prescribe criteria to be considered when assessing applications for Gaming House Premises Licenses. Among the criteria specified are ones related to the proximity of Licensed Gaming House Premises to educational institutions, places of religious worship and residential areas. Another criterion, also related to zoning, requires an assessment of the proximity of one Licensed Gaming House Premises to another Licensed Gaming House Premises. All of the criteria are designed to require that in the context of a decision to grant a Gaming House Premises License that the granting authority evaluate the impact of the license award on the community as a whole and, in addition, assess whether there are undue concentrations of Gaming House Premises in particular neighbourhoods and whether the existence of a Gaming House Premises in a specific location reasonably offends the convictions, principles or objects of such institutions, the persons served by such facilities or in any way undermines the policies and objectives of the Gaming Act.

As an element of its qualification process, the Gaming Act expressly provides that proposed Premises and Agents be identified and noticed with specificity in the Gazette and provides the public with a 21-day comment period in which to advance objections and/or comments.

Although the Responsible Minister is still in the process of promulgating zoning related Regulations under the Gaming Act, it is important that the public understand that the Request for Proposal process recently concluded by the Gaming Board, which resulted in the award by the Minister in October 2015 of eight (8) Gaming House Operator Licenses, required the application of criteria substantially similar to that under consideration by the Minister at this time and that this assessment contributed significantly to a decline in the number of domestic gaming Premises. At the onset of the regularization of the domestic gaming industry there were approximately 635 declared Premises. Certain operators chose not to partake in the licensing process and, following an exhaustive investigation, one applicant for an Operator License was unable to meet its burden of proving its suitability to hold such a License. In addition, certain Premises

and Agent License applications were unsuccessful. Now, post licensing, with the closure of unlicensed Premises, there are today only 375 licensed Premises spread throughout New Providence and the Family Islands. This constitutes a 44% reduction in the number of domestic gaming Premises.

The Gaming House Operator Licences mentioned were issued to the following eight Bahamian companies only, subject to certain conditions:

Bahama Dreams Web Café Limited (t/a Bahama Dreams)
FML Group of Companies Ltd. (t/a Nassau Games)
GLK Limited (t/a A Sure Win)
Jarol Investments Limited (t/a Chances Internet Services)
Paradise Games Bahamas Limited (t/a Paradise Games)
Playtech Systems Limited (t/a Island Luck)
T.I.G. Investments Limited (t/a Percy's at The Island Game)
The Four Point Group Limited (t/a Asue Draw + Spin)

The public must note that pursuant to Section 69(4) of the Act, no domestic player shall take part in any gaming or betting other than with one of the above listed eight Gaming House Operators and only from Gaming House Premises and Gaming House Agencies in respect of which licences have been issued under the Act. Further, the public is advised that as **BVC Holdings Limited (t/a Bet Vegas Casino)** is not licensed to conduct gaming transactions they should not engage in any gaming activities at any Bet Vegas locations and should seek to retrieve any and all funds held on account with the company. The Commissioner of The Royal Bahamas Police Force has been formally advised by the Gaming Board to affect the overdue closure of the Bet Vegas Casino premises which remain open in defiance of Orders from the Supreme Court dated 1st December 2015 and 21st December 2015.

The public is further requested to, in the event of any unresolved dispute or complaint with any of the above Gaming House Operators, report in writing the dispute or complaint to the Board. Objections or comments can be submitted as follows:-

- (i) mailed to: **The Secretary, Gaming Board for The Bahamas, P.O. Box N4565, Nassau, Bahamas**
- (ii) faxed to: **+1 (242) 327-8864**
- (iii) e-mailed to: info@bahamasgamingboard.com
- (iv) hand delivered to: **The Secretary, Gaming Board for The Bahamas, 4th Floor, Centreville House, 2nd Terrace West & Collins Ave, Nassau, Bahamas**