

GAMBLING COMMISSION

SUMMARY

Of the 29 federally recognized Tribes in Washington State, 28 have Compacts for Class III gaming and 22 of the Tribes operate 28 casinos for most of the year. In 2011, the Tribes had over \$1.9 billion in net receipts or the amount wagered less prizes paid.

This report highlights some of the activities and changes that the Gambling Commission has implemented to better enhance the co-regulatory relationship between the State and Tribal Gaming Agencies and to support our agency's mission to protect the public by ensuring gambling is legal and honest

HIGHLIGHTS

Improving Communication and Relationships

During the past year, Director Day sent surveys to Tribal leadership which he followed up with personal visits. On behalf of the State Gambling Commission he was asking about Commission government-to-government processes and communication.

A survey of the tribal gaming regulatory agencies was sent out in April and a summary of the results will be available in July. Questions were about communications, information sharing, and training.

The Commissioners voted in unanimous support of SB 6175/HB 2232, which would establish a government-to-government relationship between state government and the federally recognized Indian Tribes. This is the third year the Commission supported this bill. Commission Chair John Ellis sent letters to the respective legislative committees encouraging favorable action on the bills.

Cooperative Roles

The agency's Tribal Gaming Unit continued working with each Tribe's Tribal Gaming Agency staff to set casino review parameters based on an assessment of risk individual to each Tribe. In addition, the Tribal Gaming Agency had the option to have their staff work with our staff to improve the reviews through better communication and increased efficiency.

As provided for in Tribal-State Compact Appendix X2, at the request of a Tribe, through good faith negotiations, regulatory fees may be set by agreement between the Tribe and the state. In 2011, we reached new agreements with four tribes to set regulatory fees.

Tribal Gaming Unit staff met with Commissioner Michael Reichert, who has years of experience working with Tribes, in June 2011 to learn about Tribal history and to receive ideas on how to improve Tribal-State relationships. During the year, we also recorded the "History of the Kalispel Tribe" presented by Catherine Grainger in October 2011 as part of

new agent training. We have added the presentation as an e-learning class accessible to all agency staff.

Tribal Certification/Eligibility

Since 2007, we have progressed from one certification process and fee for the Tribes operating casinos under Compact to having a different certification process and fee for each Tribe. These different processes and fees are based on the amount of information provided by the Tribe during the application process.

We have worked proactively with the Tribes as new equipment and vendors come into the industry, as well as communicating about those vendors no longer actively licensed in the state. We communicate vendor information directly to the Tribes to ensure timely and consistent communication. We also share new equipment approval information to ensure Tribes are aware of any security and player protection concerns associated with equipment.

The specific improvements made in consultation with the Tribes in 2011 include: implemented online add/transfers for Tribal gaming employees; organized, led, and provided updates and training for two Tribal Gaming Agency and State Gaming Agency Licensing meetings for 62 attendees representing 13 Tribes; added Tribal identification cards to the list of items that can be used as proof of identification for certification/eligibility determination; made it easier to search for Class III gaming employees on our website; and posted information on our website regarding nonprofit activities at Tribal facilities.

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