

Heather Worner, Director
Gaming Laboratory Operations
Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board
June 23, 2021

Good morning, Chairpersons Yudichak and Cappelletti. I am Heather Worner and I serve as the Director of the Gaming Lab for the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board.

My purpose today is to provide an overview of the gaming lab's role in the regulatory framework established under Title 4. As you remember, the primary objective of Title 4 "to which all other objectives and purposes are secondary is to protect the public through the regulation and policing of all activities involving gaming and practices that continue to be unlawful."

A key part of fulfilling this requirement is the assurance that gaming is fundamentally fair for patrons. Without this, given the number of gaming options available, Pennsylvania's gaming success would not be what it is today.

The gaming lab assists in fulfilling this objective by overseeing the testing of every slot machine that is placed upon a gaming floor as well as every video gaming terminal that is offered for play at a truck stop establishment. The lab also provides testing for interactive gaming as well as sports wagering but I will focus on slot machines and video gaming terminals.

Currently, there are over 22,000 slot machines in casinos and 250 video gaming terminals at truck stops. Each of these games were evaluated by the statisticians and engineers of the gaming lab. This review includes:

1. Verifying that the theoretical payout percentage is at least 85% as mandated by the Gaming Act. Manufacturers of slot machines and video gaming terminals submit a variety of pay tables from which a licensee can choose. Most licensees choose a pay table between 88 and 92 percent.
2. The awards offered on a slot machine or video gaming terminal are verified to assure that the game plays and pays out as expected.
3. An analysis of the random number generator is conducted to assure the slot machine or video gaming terminal exhibits suitable random behavior. The random numbers produced by a random number generator directly map to the symbols that are displayed. For example, these symbols can be 7's on a spinning reel or an Ace of hearts in a deck of cards. The resulting combination of these symbols then corresponds to a table of payouts.
4. Verification of the connectivity to the Central Control Computer System is also tested. This testing includes proper accounting of wagers and winnings, along with software verification. The Central Control Computer System contains a software verification methodology to ensure the slot machine and video gaming terminal software approved by the lab is the same software running at the licensed facilities.

Before I close, I want to touch upon an equally important role of the gaming lab. We regularly assist in conducting investigations of regulatory violations, patron complaints, software and hardware deficiencies and alleged cheating incidents.

I have enjoyed my eighteen plus years of work in the regulation of gaming. It has been a wonderful experience and the gaming industry is comprised of many great people. However, one principle can never be compromised – integrity and trust in the gaming product and persons providing the equipment for the public’s use – this is the role that Pennsylvania’s gaming lab and the Board play in the regulatory framework.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I would like to offer, when you have some free time, to tour our gaming lab for you or your staff. If you have any questions, I as well as Doug Sherman, Chief Counsel, would be happy to address them.