



News Release

For Immediate Release

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CASINO PATRONS CAN RELY ON PROVINCIAL OVERSIGHT: AUDITOR GENERAL

(TORONTO) The Alcohol and Gaming Commission, which regulates Ontario's casinos and slot facilities, has done a good job of ensuring they are run fairly and honestly, Auditor General Jim McCarter says in his *2010 Annual Report*, released today.

"Ontario's framework for regulating and overseeing casino operations is one of the stronger ones in North America," McCarter said today after the Report was tabled. "The system ensures that patrons get a fair shake at the gaming tables and the slot machines."

The Commission regulates, licenses, and inspects the province's gaming facilities, which are operated by the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG) either directly or through contracting with private-sector operators. The 27 gaming facilities in the province last year generated profits for Ontario of \$900 million on gross revenues of more than \$3.4 billion.

Notwithstanding the Auditor's overall positive conclusion, he did highlight a number of areas that the Commission needs to consider:

- Unlike Nevada and New Jersey, Ontario does not provide slot-machine patrons with minimum overall payout ratios. It also doesn't tell them how much these ratios vary depending on how much it costs to play the machine.
- Casino patrons would have difficulty finding out about the maximum prize payout on slot machines. This is useful information and an important disclosure should the machine malfunction and incorrectly award a multi-million dollar jackpot, something that has happened twice in the last two years.
- In the 2008/09 fiscal year, commission inspectors at three of the four gaming facilities tested by the Auditor were unable to inspect all slot machines, although this was a stated goal. Gaming compliance inspectors were also behind schedule, pointing to a need for the Commission to do a better job of focusing staff on higher-risk facilities.
- The Commission has no mandate to regulate foreign-based Internet gaming websites, which take in an estimated \$400 million a year from Ontario residents without providing the province with a share of those revenues.

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