

**IN THE MATTER** of the Gambling Act 2003

**AND** on an application by **SKYCITY CASINO MANAGEMENT LIMITED** for approval of new game mixes for the Hamilton casino

**BEFORE THE GAMBLING COMMISSION**

Members: G L Reeves (Chief Gambling Commissioner)  
P J Stanley  
L M Hansen  
R D Bell

Date of Application: 16 July 2013

Date of Decision: 13 September 2013

Date of Notification  
of Decision:  September 2013

**DECISION ON AN APPLICATION BY SKYCITY CASINO MANAGEMENT LIMITED FOR APPROVAL OF NEW GAME MIXES FOR THE HAMILTON CASINO**

**Introduction**

1. SKYCITY Casino Management Limited (“**SCML**”) applied to the Commission, under condition 9 of SCML’s operator’s licence, for approval of new game mixes for the Hamilton casino.
2. The relevant licence condition is as follows:

**SCML’s operator’s licence (Hamilton)**

9. The Licence Holder may operate on casino gaming tables the game types and game mixes specified in Annex A attached to this Licence. The Licence Holder shall obtain the prior approval of the Commission for any change to the game types and/or game mixes specified.

**Submissions by SCML**

3. SCML submitted, in summary, that:
  - (a) It currently has 14 approved game mixes for the Hamilton casino and seeks approval for three additional game mixes. Proposed game mixes 15, 16 and 17 would introduce 3 Card Poker and Texas Hold'em in place of two Poker tables that most of the existing game mixes specify. The three new game mixes would

also provide for the operation of an Electronic Roulette game using up to 12, 23 or 30 terminals respectively.

- (b) It also wants to introduce a restriction in relation to the operation of its Midi Baccarat tables so that at least 50% of those tables will be conducted in accordance with dealing style B. An identical restriction has been in place at Auckland casino for some time without incident. In reality, all Midi Baccarat games at the Hamilton casino are dealt using style B, so no difficulty is anticipated with the application of the proposed restriction.
- (c) Formalising the restriction in the manner proposed reduces the gambling opportunities associated with these games because this particular dealing style is far slower than dealing styles A or C. Limiting the restriction to 50% of Midi Baccarat games will also allow some flexibility to adjust the dealing style on some games if desired.
- (d) The impact of the proposed new game mixes on player spaces and opportunities is set out in the table below. The proposed game mixes have fewer player spaces and opportunities than the regulatory benchmark, game mix 1.

Game Mix	Player Spaces	Overall gambling opportunities
1	464	14,165
15	454	12,184
16	458	12,144
17	458	12,079

### **The Secretary's submissions**

4. The Secretary submitted, in summary, as follows:
- (a) SCML proposes to introduce a restriction on Mini Baccarat in which at least 50% of the tables will deploy dealing style B. He has no issues with this, and notes that the Gambling Commission approved a similar arrangement for the Auckland casino in decision GC17/10.
- (b) SCML's arithmetic calculations appear to be accurate, with the theoretical gambling opportunities associated with the new game mixes being less than the current benchmark. He does not have any regulatory concerns in relation to the proposed game mixes.

### **Analysis**

5. The Commission is not authorised to approve changes that would have the effect of increasing opportunities for casino gambling. When considering a proposed game mix,

the Commission often looks at what would change compared to already approved game mixes by making an initial assessment of the nature of the changes relative to the game mix which is the closest match as that can provide an initial indication of whether it is a likely increase or decrease compared to its closest match.

6. Ultimately, however, the critical comparison is between what is proposed and the approved game mix that provides the most opportunities for casino gambling. Game mix 1 is the approved game mix that provides the most opportunities for casino gambling at the Hamilton casino.
7. The Commission is satisfied that, in the round, proposed game mixes 15, 16 and 17 offer fewer, opportunities for casino gambling than game mix 1.
8. On the Commission's assessment, all of the new proposed game mixes have fewer total player spaces than game mix 1. Although all relevant mixes include an estimate for spaces at games which have player numbers which are uncontrolled by the game rules, the number of those games is fewer in the proposed games mixes than in game mix 1. Differences in the relative playing speeds of the substituted and replacement games indicated that no overall increase in opportunities would arise for reasons of speed as, in general, the new mixes contained slower games than game mix 1, with a notable reduction in the number of Blackjack games compared to game mix 1 and the addition, in the proposed games mixes, of 3 Card Poker and Ultimate Texas Hold'em Poker, which are relatively slow games.

#### Decision of the Commission

9. The Commission approved, the new game mixes under condition 9 of SCML's operator's licence for the Hamilton casino. A new Annex A is **attached**.



Graeme Reeves  
Chief Gambling Commissioner

for and on behalf of the  
Gambling Commission

19<sup>th</sup> September 2013



## ANNEX A

Pursuant to condition 9 the following game mixes may be operated by the Licence Holder on casino gaming tables in accordance with approved floor plans subject to the following conditions and requirements:

1. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 11 games  
Roulette – up to 5 games  
Midi Baccarat – up to 3 games  
Mini Baccarat – up to 1 game  
Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 2 games  
Tai Sai (single sided) – up to 1 game
2. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 10 games  
Roulette – up to 4 games  
Midi Baccarat – up to 3 games  
Mini Baccarat – up to 1 game  
Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 1 game  
Money Wheel (single sided) – up to 1 game  
Poker – up to 2 games  
Electronic Roulette (12 players) – up to 1 game
3. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 12 games  
Roulette – up to 4 games  
Midi Baccarat – up to 2 games  
Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 1 game  
Money Wheel (single sided) – up to 1 game  
Poker – up to 2 games  
Electronic Roulette (12 players) – up to 1 game
4. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 10 games  
Roulette – up to 4 games  
Midi Baccarat – up to 4 games  
Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 1 game  
Money Wheel (single sided) – up to 1 game  
Poker – up to 2 games  
Electronic Roulette (12 players) – up to 1 game
5. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 10 games  
Roulette – up to 4 games  
Midi Baccarat – up to 4 games  
Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 1 game  
Money Wheel (single sided) – up to 1 game  
Poker – up to 2 games  
Electronic Roulette (up to 23 players) – up to 1 game
6. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 12 games  
Roulette – up to 4 games  
Midi Baccarat – up to 2 games  
Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 1 game  
Money Wheel (single sided) – up to 1 game  
Poker – up to 2 games  
Electronic Roulette (23 players) – up to 1 game



7. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 10 games  
Roulette – up to 4 games  
Midi Baccarat – up to 3 games  
Mini Baccarat – up to 1 game  
Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 1 game  
Money Wheel (single sided) – up to 1 game  
Poker – up to 2 games  
Electronic Roulette (23 players) – up to 1 game
8. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 8 games  
Black Jack/Pontoon (restricted options) – up to 2 games  
Roulette – up to 4 games  
Midi Baccarat – up to 4 games  
Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 1 game  
Money Wheel (single sided) – up to 1 game  
Poker – up to 2 games  
Electronic Roulette (up to 30 players) – up to 1 game
9. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 10 games  
Black Jack/Pontoon (restricted options) – up to 2 games  
Roulette – up to 4 games  
Midi Baccarat – up to 2 games  
Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 1 game  
Money Wheel (single sided) – up to 1 game  
Poker – up to 2 games  
Electronic Roulette (30 players) – up to 1 game
10. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 8 games  
Black Jack/Pontoon (restricted options) – up to 2 games  
Roulette – up to 4 games  
Midi Baccarat – up to 3 games  
Mini Baccarat – up to 1 game  
Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 1 game  
Money Wheel (single sided) – up to 1 game  
Poker – up to 2 games  
Electronic Roulette (30 players) – up to 1 game
11. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 6 games  
Black Jack/Pontoon (restricted options) – up to 2 games  
Roulette – up to 5 games  
Midi Baccarat – up to 5 games  
Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 1 game  
Money Wheel (single sided) – up to 1 game  
Poker – up to 2 games  
Electronic Roulette (up to 23 players) – up to 1 game
12. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 5 games  
Black Jack/Pontoon (restricted options) – up to 2 games  
Roulette – up to 5 games  
Midi Baccarat – up to 5 games  
Mini Baccarat – up to 1 game  
Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 1 game  
Money Wheel (single sided) – up to 1 game  
Poker – up to 2 games  
Electronic Roulette (up to 23 players) – up to 1 game



13. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 6 games  
 Black Jack/Pontoon (restricted options) – up to 2 games  
 Roulette – up to 5 games  
 Midi Baccarat – up to 5 games  
 Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 1 game  
 Money Wheel (single sided) – up to 1 game  
 Poker – up to 2 games  
 Electronic Roulette (up to 30 players) – up to 1 game
  
14. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 5 games  
 Black Jack/Pontoon (restricted options) – up to 2 games  
 Roulette – up to 5 games  
 Midi Baccarat – up to 5 games  
 Mini Baccarat – up to 1 game  
 Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 1 game  
 Money Wheel (single sided) – up to 1 game  
 Poker – up to 2 games  
 Electronic Roulette (up to 30 players) – up to 1 game
  
15. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 8 games  
 Roulette – up to 4 games  
 Midi Baccarat – up to 6 games  
 Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 2 games  
 3 Card Poker – up to 1 game  
 Ultimate Texas Hold'em Poker – up to 1 game  
 Rapid Roulette (up to 12 players) – up to 1 game
  
16. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 7 games  
 Black Jack/Pontoon (restricted options) – up to 1 game  
 Roulette – up to 4 games  
 Midi Baccarat – up to 6 games  
 Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 2 games  
 3 Card Poker – up to 1 game  
 Ultimate Texas Hold'em Poker – up to 1 game  
 Rapid Roulette (up to 23 players) – up to 1 game
  
17. Black Jack/Pontoon – up to 6 games  
 Black Jack/Pontoon (restricted options) – up to 2 games  
 Roulette – up to 4 games  
 Midi Baccarat – up to 6 games  
 Caribbean Stud Poker – up to 2 games  
 3 Card Poker – up to 1 game  
 Ultimate Texas Hold'em Poker – up to 1 game  
 Rapid Roulette (up to 30 players) – up to 1 game

**Notes**

1. The Licence Holder is permitted to change between game mixes 11 and 12, and 13 and 14 subject only to any requirements specified by way of Minimum Operating Standards. The Licence Holder is permitted to change between other approved table game mixes subject to providing the Inspectorate with prior notice.
  
2. The Licence Holder is permitted to operate automatic shufflers on the Caribbean Stud Poker and Poker tables specified and on no more than 50% of Black Jack games specified.
  
3. The Licence Holder is permitted to conduct two alternative Poker games – Hold-em and Omaha.



4. Where Black Jack/Pontoon are subject to restricted wagering options, the Licence Holder shall permit up to 2 players only to wager on any 1 box and the layout shall be inscribed to this effect.
5. The Electronic Roulette table in game mixes 2-14 comprises up to the number of terminals specified in each game mix and no manual table.
6. At least 50% of the total number of Midi Baccarat games shall be conducted in accordance with dealing style B, as set out in the rules of Baccarat.

