



RESPONSIBLE  
GAMBLING  
COUNCIL



**Sharing Knowledge.**  
**Delivering Impact.**

Annual Report  
2018-19

A woman with dark hair in a bun, wearing a brown textured top, is speaking to a man with glasses and a brown shirt. They are sitting at a table with papers and pens, looking at each other in a professional setting with large windows in the background.

**Sharing  
Knowledge.**

**Delivering  
Impact.**

## OUR VISION

A world free of problem gambling

## OUR MISSION

Prevent problem gambling and reduce its impacts



## OUR CORE VALUES

Updated in 2019, our core values guide the organization's decisions and work each and every day. Collectively, these values are RGC's 'north star', keeping us focused on how we conduct ourselves and what we do to accomplish our purpose.

### **Humanity**

We believe in human dignity and respect. We're driven to build a positive future for everyone and we work to transform our knowledge into conditions that create positive behavioural change.

### **Integrity**

We strive to meet the highest standards of professionalism and impartiality. We hold ourselves responsible for all that we do.

### **Courage**

We believe it takes courage to make real change in the world. We appreciate confidence in others and we are never afraid to offer honest, evidence-informed perspectives, even if they conflict with conventional wisdom.

### **Ingenuity**

We are inventive and resourceful, curious and inquisitive by nature. As the world keeps changing, we are always on the look-out for new ways to turn our knowledge into action.

# Who we **Are.**

The Responsible Gambling Council (RGC) is a respected, independent non-profit organization and has been a leader in the prevention of problem gambling in Canada, and around the world, for more than 35 years.

RGC works with operators and regulators to promote the adoption of improved play safeguards through best practices research, standards development and the RG Check accreditation program. We are also committed to the reduction of gambling risks by creating, and delivering, innovative awareness and information programs for the public.



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# A Message from the CEO

'Sharing knowledge - delivering impact' is the cornerstone of RGC's mission to prevent problem gambling. Creating a responsible gambling culture mean continuously seeking new ways that identify and share prevention strategies and improve regulations and standards that ensure safe, sustainable gambling environments.

In 2018/2019 we made great strides in delivering our impact. Our programs have reached millions of people across Ontario; we've increased our outreach to the Asian, South East Asian and Indigenous communities and some of our programs have expanded globally. This past year has also seen some significant disruption in the industry due to technological, social and political shifts. To address these changes, RGC developed its Five-Year Strategic Plan, *The Game Changer*, which outlines how we will meet the challenges this disruption presents.



The rapid growth and diversification of digital gambling is having the most profound impact on our work. Going forward, RGC is focused on developing and promoting responsible gambling regulations and standards for digital gambling channels, including online table games, daily fantasy sports, e-sports, bingo, lottery, sports wagering and video game loot boxes.

With the blurring of lines between gaming and gambling, we have begun to enhance our education and information programs for youth, young adults, adults and ethno-cultural audiences to emphasize prevention strategies for online gambling and gaming.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Terry Finn, who, after 12 years as Board Chair, is stepping down. We are all deeply indebted to Terry for his tremendous commitment to RGC and our work. He has done a wonderful job representing RGC across Canada and internationally, dedicating thousands of hours to the organization. He is compassionate and cares deeply about people, driven by a passion to prevent others from experiencing the despair and agony of a gambling problem. Terry has made an indelible mark on RGC, solidifying relationships and putting forward a vision that has helped shape our future direction. Thank you, Terry.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shelley White'.

Shelley White, MA  
CEO

# A Message from the Board Chair

As I step down as Board Chair, I find myself reflecting on the changes that have taken place since I joined the board in 2004.

Over the past 15 years, the gaming industry has undergone a major shift in its acceptance of responsible gambling. RG has gone from something to be tolerated in the name of public image to becoming fully embedded in the business model of successful gaming providers. The gaming industry has embraced RG and recognizes the value in working to minimize problem gambling.

I have also seen the vision of an accreditation program for gaming providers evolve into the creation of RG Check, which has become the standard upon which gaming providers, worldwide, are measured.

RGC's work over the years makes me proud to have had the opportunity to serve this organization as a director and board chair. I have been fortunate to meet so many people from around the world who are committed to RG and I value the friendships that have grown from this.

Thank you, everyone, for the opportunity to have served. It has been a part of my recovery, and, along with the support of my family, has allowed me to grow into who I am today.

I'm not ashamed of who I was – I'm proud of who I've become.



Terry Finn  
Board Chair  
2007-2019



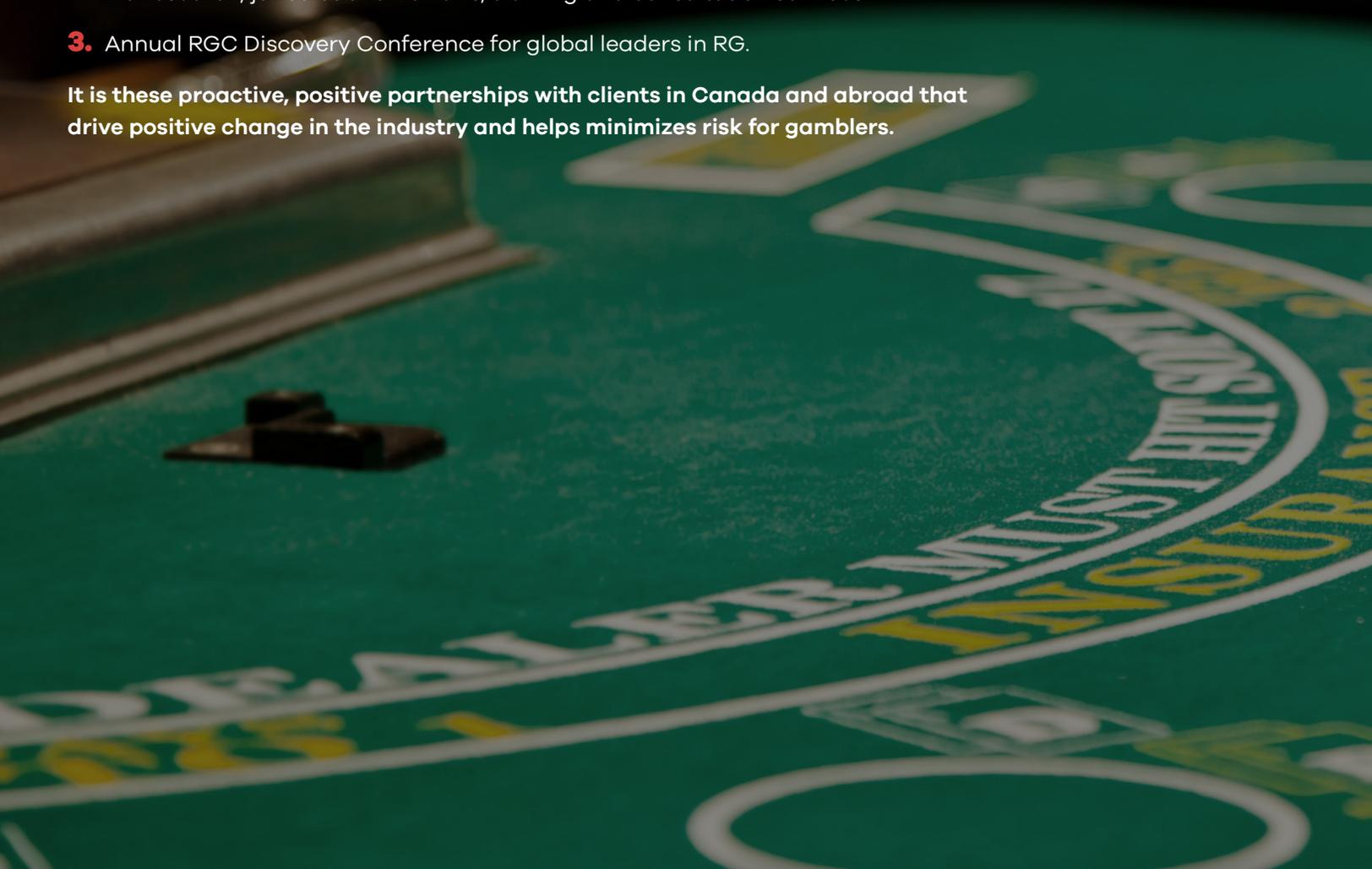
# RGC in Partnership with the **Industry**

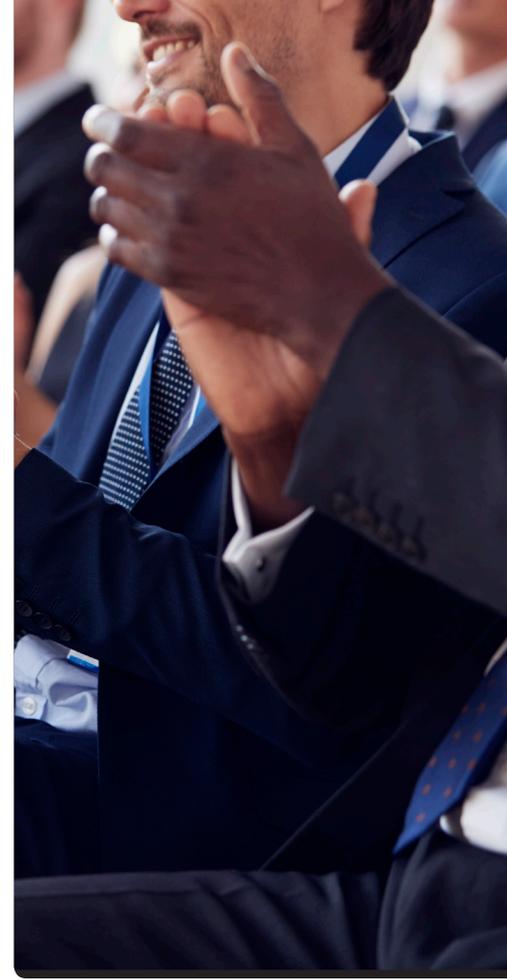
The gambling industry is constantly evolving – gaming manufacturers and operators strive to develop products and offerings that are relevant, and appealing. With this intense forward momentum, the knowledge and expertise RGC provides is essential, as we support the industry and players with knowledge and tools that allow gambling to exist in a manner that is safe and enjoyable for everyone.

## **We do this in three ways:**

- 1.** Developing standards and the world-class accreditation program RG Check for online and land-based gambling venues.
- 2.** Thought leadership from our Centre for Advancement of Best Practice and RG Plus via research, jurisdictional reviews, training and consultation services.
- 3.** Annual RGC Discovery Conference for global leaders in RG.

**It is these proactive, positive partnerships with clients in Canada and abroad that drive positive change in the industry and helps minimize risk for gamblers.**





# RG Check

Developed over a 10-year period and launched in 2011, RG Check is the most comprehensive and rigorous responsible gambling accreditation program in the world, with 135 land-based and digital accreditations completed to date. RG Check is based on eight standards, 47 criteria and hundreds of metrics that help measure the scope and effectiveness of RG programs in venues. Following the success of the venue accreditation program, RG Check iGaming accreditation launched in 2014. Plans for new accreditation programs are currently in development.

## Highlights from 2018/2019 include:

- 28 accreditations and reaccreditations, three of which were iGaming reaccreditations. An additional nine were underway as of March 31, 2019
- Completed accreditations in British Columbia, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island and Singapore
- Presence at the National Association of Gaming Studies (NAGS) conference in Brisbane, Australia in November 2018
- Immediately following NAGS, Sue Birge, Director of RG Check, facilitated a half-day RG workshop with Janine Robinson, Managing Director of RG Plus, for 28 stakeholder organizations from across Australia. The workshop included executives from large clubs that offer casino gaming, and with the goal of educating them on effective RG Strategies and the benefit of evaluating their existing programs.



# DISCOVERY19

RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING COUNCIL

RGC's annual conference returned for its 17th year, bringing together more than 200 RG experts from around the world to discuss the future of responsible gambling. The sessions prepared delegates with the latest research and trends needed to drive positive behaviour change in their jurisdictions. Our theme "What's Next? The Future of RG" built upon the notion that, with the constant introduction of new products, technology, markets and players, the industry is changing rapidly and we must stay ahead of these changes in order to be impactful. This year's keynote address by AI expert Andrew Au, 'Navigating Digital Transformation', defined the technological landscape today and what we need to know moving forward.

100%

OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS SAID THAT WHAT THEY LEARNED AT DISCOVERY 2019 WAS USEFUL TO THEIR ROLE.





## CENTRE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF BEST PRACTICES

The RGC Centre for the Advancement of Best Practices (CABP) exists to reduce the incidences of problem gambling and to promote the identification and adoption of best practices across the industry.

CABP has been working with various stakeholders to strengthen problem gambling prevention and RG education in Ontario, including the completion of a comprehensive evaluation of Ontario's PlaySmart Centres. CABP and RGC's Marketing team also collaborated to develop a novel, research-informed communications approach for the next phase of the Northwestern Ontario Wellness (NOW) PG prevention project - a community-based gambling response program designed to mitigate the risks of the planned casino in the Kenora region.



# RGC's Commitment to Communities

Each year, RGC works to reduce gambling risks by creating and delivering innovative awareness and information programs for vulnerable populations across Ontario, including: adults, parents, youth and young adults, older adults, new Canadians and Indigenous communities. We are proud of the work we do to educate and support communities and the collaboration with our partners at Ontario Lottery and Gaming (OLG) and Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Each program is informed by evidence and best practice and continually enhanced based on feedback from players, their families and industry stakeholders.



# PlaySmart Centres

Our in-venue PlaySmart Centres (PSC), funded by and in collaboration with OLG, are where players go to take a break and learn more about how the games work. Players chat with professionally-trained PlaySmart Centre staff, learn answers to gambling questions and get connected with counselling and support professionals if they are experiencing problems from gambling.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2018/2019 INCLUDE:

- **Continued to upgrade and open 5 next generation PlaySmart Centres** offering players the perfect spot to take a break and learn something new
- In collaboration with OLG and RGC, rolled out a **new series of player information brochures** at both casinos and Charitable Bingo and Gaming Centres and **launched a new interactive touchscreen game** at casinos called 'Guess or Know'
- **Transitioned from a self-serve model to a staffed on-site model**, with Hanover and Mohawk making the switch in 2018-19

## TRAINING

Preparing PlaySmart Centre staff for the transition to being on the gaming floor was our main focus. All PlaySmart Centre staff participated in a robust Gaming Floor Orientation. Our team learned the dos and don'ts of being on the casino floor and participated in shadowing colleagues from locations that were already integrated on the floor. Venue staff also provided floor and back-of-house tours to PlaySmart Centre staff, introducing them to gaming staff who they, until recently, would not typically interact with (e.g. table game dealers). This new collaboration allows our staff to meet more players and engage in more interactions.

# 327,776

visitors accessed one of our 57 PlaySmart Centres for facts, tools and advice

# 5,111

visitors got immediate support and referral information from one of our PlaySmart Centre staff

  
**Play.Smart**  
CENTRE



# 13

# Programs

With thanks to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, RGC was once again able to deliver prevention messages, conversation and information in gaming venues, high schools, colleges, universities and communities in 2018/2019.

## PGPW - COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Problem Gambling Prevention Week (PGPW) is an outreach program that educates Ontarians about responsible gambling and increases awareness of local support and services. PGPW uses experiential programming to engage gamblers and families in conversation and works closely with local resources.

**In its second year of a two-year cycle, the Know the Signs theme generated 76.3 million impressions**

The entire two-year Know the Signs PGPW cycle exceeded its goal of generating 80 million impressions, with a combined reach of **140.2 million impressions – a 20% increase over previous iterations**, reaching over 90% of Ontario households. PGPW garnered coverage in traditional and digital media, with a total of 206 news stories and 46 broadcast interviews.



## KNOW THE SCORE 2

The kts2/mj2 program is a university and college-level problem gambling awareness program. It's interactive, fun, and informative and reaches students using channels that allow for higher levels of engagement: social media and on-campus intercepts. Across both channels, students are engaged with giveaways and a self-assessment knowledge quiz that is carefully designed using insights from RGC research.

The kts2/mj2 program was delivered on 29 campuses in Ontario and three campuses across Atlantic Canada in the fall and winter semesters of 2018-19. **Since its pilot delivery in 2002, the program has been delivered 668 times to 444,389 students enrolled** at campuses in Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, British Columbia, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Saskatchewan and New York State.

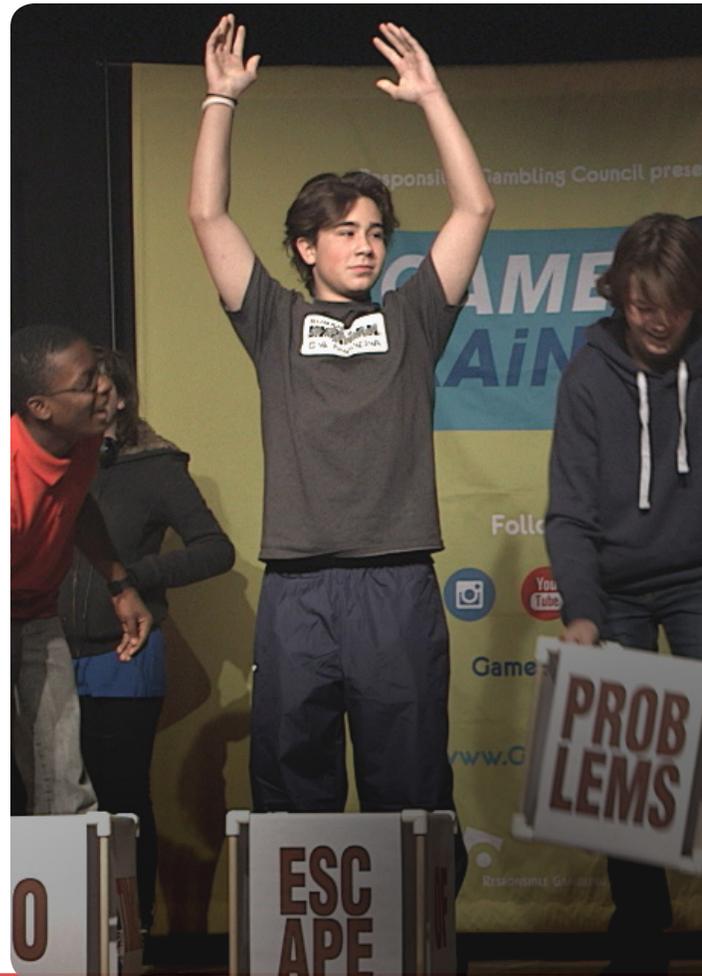
**88%** of participants agreed that it is important to increase students' awareness of how to keep gambling safe



## GAME BRAIN

GAME BRAiN is a live, interactive game show designed to educate and engage secondary school students on the risks of youth gambling. The program looks at the realities of gambling, signs of a gambling problem, avoiding the risks and where to get help if needed. In 2018-19, Game Brain was presented at 25 schools which included 3 First Nations communities in Ontario. Since the program launch in 2014, GAME BRAiN has reached over 40,000 Ontario students.

**93%** of students agreed that GAME BRAiN was informative and entertaining



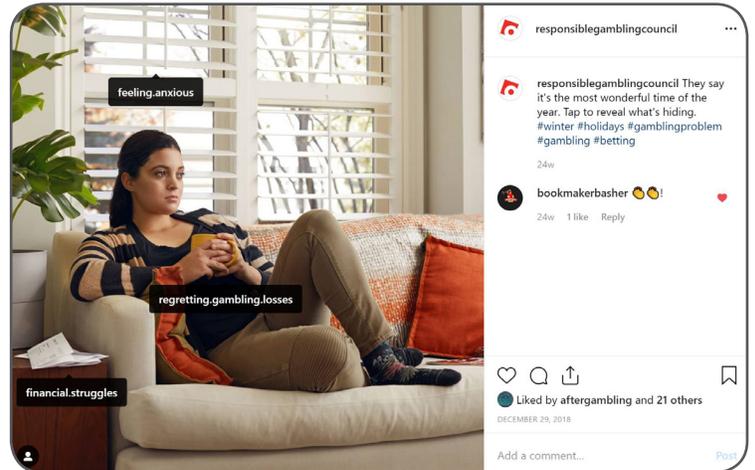
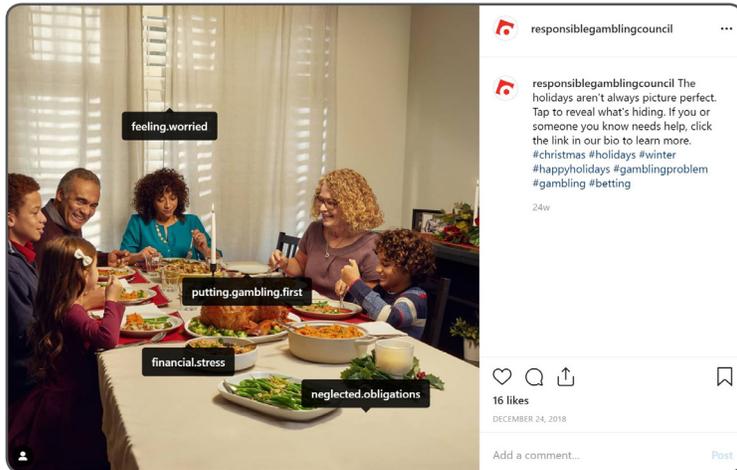
# Social Marketing

Isolation Phase 2 launched in December and January and included a social media campaign on Facebook, Instagram and Youtube, as well as digital banners, print and radio. The purpose of the campaign was to connect with people who may be experiencing heightened feelings of isolation from their own or a loved one's problem with gambling.

## Our campaign targeted two audiences

1. Gamblers and affected others experiencing increased isolation and stress around the traditional holiday season
2. Ethno-cultural populations who were not being reached through English and French advertising channels

The campaign used images and videos that, at first glance, reflect the essence of the traditional holiday season. We showed families gathered for dinner, friends celebrating, or a woman reflecting on the season but as the user engaged with the ads, the feeling of isolation was revealed and the ad linked to the [dontsufferalone.com](http://dontsufferalone.com) website for more information on how to get help. As with Phase One, the ads connected with our target audience and we saw tremendous engagement across all digital platforms. **53% of video ads were watched in completion, compared to an industry standard of 20%.**



Additionally in 2018, the Phase One Isolation campaign was adapted for Chinese, Vietnamese and South East Asian audiences to be more reflective of cultural insights and support resources.

Overall, we saw tremendous engagement, with 14.5 million online impressions and over 70,000 digital interactions with content.



## Partnership with **All-In Diversity Project**



Our commitment to diversity inspired RGC to form a strategic partnership with the All-In Diversity Project (AIDP). This project, in support of diversity and inclusion in the gambling industry, aims to move the gambling industry forward – globally – when it comes to ‘Diversity, Inclusion and Workplace Equality’. Data Collection, measurement and benchmarking is at the heart of what the All-In Diversity Project does and progress is captured in the All-Index Annual Report. In March 2019, RGC CEO Shelley White joined the AIDP Advisory Board.

## GOVERNANCE

The Responsible Gambling Council (RGC) independently operates under the legal authority of three corporations, all of which are non-profit organizations with their own board of directors. Board members include individuals who have experienced gambling problems, treatment providers, gaming operator executives and/ or professionals in non-gaming industries from across Canada.

In practice, the name Responsible Gambling Council is used as an umbrella term for all Council activities.

The Responsible Gambling Council of Canada (RGCC) is the legal entity for research and evaluation activities in all jurisdictions, as well as for the delivery of programs and services outside of Ontario. It is incorporated under the Canada Corporations Act and has charitable status from the Canada Revenue Agency.

The Responsible Gambling Council (Ontario) is the legal entity that delivers programs and services in Ontario funded through the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and that operates the annual Discovery conference. RGC(O) also independently operates the PlaySmart Centres in Ontario, with funding from the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG). It is incorporated under the Ontario Corporations Act and has charitable status from the Canada Revenue Agency.

The Responsible Gambling Council-Prevention (RGC-P) is the legal entity that delivers the RG Check accreditation program. It is incorporated under the Canada Corporations Act.

Each organization is accountable to a separate Board of Directors. The Boards are made up of individuals from across Canada and include individuals who have experienced gaming problems, treatment providers, gaming operator executives, gaming regulators and professionals in non-gaming industries.

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

### RGCO

Funding Before Expenses

Ontario – Prevention Programs  
(This now includes PGPW and Social  
Marketing) \$5,276,500

Discovery 2018 Conference  
on Gambling  
\$206,178

PlaySmart Centre  
\$5,163,772

**Total**  
**\$10,646,450**

### RGCC

Revenue Before Expenses 2018-2019  
\$1,492,499

### RGCP

Revenue Before Expenses 2018-2019  
\$733,483

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **Responsible Gambling Council (Ontario)**

### **Responsible Gambling Council of Canada**

KEVIN CONLON  
Audit Committee Chair  
Secretary, RGCC  
Mental Health Advocate

PATRICIA COOK\*  
Vice President of Corporate Affairs  
Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority

PETER DARKE  
Secretary, RGC(O)  
Professor of Marketing  
Schulich School of Business, York University

JIM ENGEL\*  
Vice President, Corporate Services  
and Gaming Operations  
Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority

TERRY FINN  
Chair

HAMLIN GRANGE  
President and Co-Founder  
DiversiPro Inc.

SHAILA MEHTA  
Partner  
Grant Thornton

YVON LEMIRE  
Executive Director  
Maison Fraternité

FRANK O'DEA\*  
Strategic Directions Committee Chair  
President O'DEA Family Enterprises Inc.

CAROLYN MARCOTTE  
Vice President, Legal and Compliance  
Caesars Windsor

JOSEPH COLTSON\*  
Partner - National Forensics Markets Lead  
PwC

ELENA MANTAGARIS\*\*  
Vice President, Communications & Public Affairs  
Maritime Iron Inc.

## **Responsible Gambling Council**

### **– Prevention**

TIM HURSON  
Chair  
President  
Tim Hurson Enterprises

TERRY FINN  
Audit Committee Chair

PAULA FESTAS  
President  
Dandelion Inc.

SUSAN OLYNIK  
Governance and Nominating Committee Chair  
Former Gambling/Liquor Industry Executive, Manitoba

## **SENIOR MANAGEMENT**

SHELLEY WHITE  
CEO

PAULA ANTONIAZZI  
Director, PlaySmart Centres

SUE BIRGE  
Director, Standards and Accreditation

TREVOR ELLIS  
Director, Corporate Services

ELAINE MCDOUGALL  
Director, Marketing and Communications

LORELLE MULLER LUMSDEN  
Acting Director, PlaySmart Centres

JANINE ROBINSON  
Director, Centre for the Advancement  
of Best Practices

\*indicates a member of the RGCC Board only. \*\*indicates a member of the RGCO Board only.

**For more information  
about any of our programs  
or services please visit  
[responsiblegambling.org](https://responsiblegambling.org)**

411 Richmond Street East, Suite 205, Toronto, Ontario, M5A 3S5

Tel: 416-499-9800 | Fax: 416-499-8260 | Toll free: 1-888-391-1111



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