Responsible Gaming Certification & Recertification - Insights from the WLA Independent Assessment Panel

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A Framework Designed for Ongoing Progress

- Built as a **maturity mod**el rather than a "pass/fail" system
- Encourages **steady refinement** of player protection practices
- Helps lotteries improve governance, accountability, and transparency
- Promotes **global consistency** in responsible gaming standards

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What Continuous Improvement Really Means

- Not about major changes every cycle
- Emphasis on **meaningful, purposeful evolution**
- Even Level 3–4 lotteries must continue deepening practices
- Progress may be incremental but must be **visible and intentional**

Should You Move Up a Level?

- **No obligation** to advance every three years
- Level increases should reflect **operational readiness**, not pressure
- Consider governance maturity, system stability, and organizational capacity
- **Maturity evolves differently** based on jurisdiction, size, and resources

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Why Maintaining a Level Can Be the Right Choice

- **Allows time** to embed and reinforce RG measures
- **Supports long-term integ**ration across departments
- Prevents rushing into higher-level expectations prematurely
- Panel values **thoroughness over speed**

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Maintaining a Level Still Requires Movement

- Must show **progress** since the last certification
  - E.g. updates to policies, programs, training, or data use
  - E.g. strengthened monitoring, evaluation, or reporting processes
- Submission must reflect **evolution**—not copied content

How to Show Meaningful Advancement

Examples:
- **Enhancements** to player protection initiatives
- **Expansion** of staff or retailer training
- **Improved** communication strategies and outreach
- **Stronger** internal controls or risk detection tools
- **Evidence** of deeper cross-departmental collaboration

Clarity and Evidence Are Essential

- Provide **examples** showing before vs. after improvement
- **Explain the driver** behind each change
- **Use data, KPIs**, or evaluation results where available
- Highlight **lessons learned** and how they shaped decisions

Being Honest About Challenges Builds Credibility

- The IAP does **not** expect perfection
- Identify obstacles and capacity limitations
- Outline how issues are being addressed
- **Transparent action plans** show maturity, not weakness

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Deciding Whether to Stay or Move Up

- Review the **previous IAP assessment** thoroughly
- Identify **gaps, risks, and areas of strong progress**
- Consider strategic priorities, resources, and timing
- Both maintaining and advancing levels can be **appropriate**

Lessons from Other Lotteries

- Same-level recertifiers succeed through **strong documentation**
- Advancing lotteries show **deeper integration & measurable impact**
- **Clarity and evidence** matter more than level achieved
- **Peer examples** illustrate different pathways toward maturity

Lessons from Other Lotteries

- **Opportunity to refresh priorities** across the organization
- **Reassess emerging risks** (digital, AI, online play, youth exposure)
- **Strengthen governance structures** and internal accountability
- **Renew staff engagement** and cross-functional collaboration

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Key Criteria the Panel Uses to Assess Recertification

- Evidence of **continuous improvement**
- **No repetition** of previous submissions
- Organization-wide RG embedding and leadership support
- **Monitoring, evaluation, and learning processes**
- Clear links between policies, practices, and outcomes

What Differentiates Strong Submissions from Weak Ones

- Updated standards and player-protection measures
- Protection of vulnerable groups and risk-mitigation tools
- Stakeholder engagement (regulators, NGOs, researchers, retailers)
- Data-driven decision-making and research-based improvements
- Clean, structured, and concise documentation

Final Takeaways for WLA members

- Progress, learning, and transparency matter more than perfection
- Staying at your current level is valid
- Movement (even subtle) is essential
- The goal is to strengthen responsible gaming sustainably, cycle after cycle

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Thank you!