

# Licensee Guidelines on the Commissioning, Decommissioning and related processes of EGMs

Malta Gaming Authority

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## 1 Introduction

The Gaming Premises Regulations (S.L. 583.07) ('Premises Regulations') and the Gaming Premises Directive ('Premises Directive') lay out how Gaming Premises and Controlled Gaming Premises, as defined in the Gaming Definitions Regulations (S.L. 583.04), are allowed to operate.

In 2019, the Authority issued the Enhanced Automated Reporting Platform (Land-Based) Directive ('EARP Directive'). It delineates the applicability of the Enhanced Automated Reporting Platform ('EARP') to a certain category of licensees, and the requirements thereof. The EARP Directive also specifies that qualifying licensees shall integrate the Authority's EARP as per the Gaming Authorisations and Compliance Directive, according to the specifications set out in the EARP Directive, and any other instructions provided by the Authority.

In line with the requirements emanating from the Authorisations Regulations, the Premises Regulations, the Premises Directive, and the EARP Directive, which amongst other requirements, necessitate the approval of each gaming device, the EARP Directive stipulates for the installation and testing of regulatory data collection devices ('Internet of Things Devices', 'IoT Devices' or 'IoTs') onto categories of gaming devices of an electronic, electrical or mechanical nature.

These Licensee Guidelines aim to provide Licensees operating Controlled Gaming Premises and/or Gaming Premises, with a clear outline of the expected requirements, procedures and applicable timelines with respect to the approval of EGMs and the installation of the aforementioned IoT Devices (otherwise referred to as 'Commissioning'), amongst other processes that will be explained hereunder.

It is pertinent to note that no EGM shall be made available to players unless it is approved by the Authority.

This document outlines the processes required in the following instances:

- Commissioning of EGMs,
- Decommissioning of EGMs to store,
- Movement of EGMs,
- Scrapping of EGMs from the approved premises floor, and
- Scrapping of EGMs from the store.

Adherence to the below mentioned processes, inputs and time frames will enable a smoother and more efficient authorisations' process between the Authority and the Licensee. This is required in view of the fact that an EGMs' authorisation requires the input of an independent third-party Service Provider (the 'Service Provider') to complete the IoTs' programming. For the sake of clarity, the responsibility for liaising with the Service Provider lies solely with the MGA.

## 1.1 Definitions

Below are the terminologies that are being used throughout the document to ensure consistency when communicating between all relevant stakeholders;

Term	Description
<b>Authority</b>	The term "Authority" shall have the same definition assigned to it in the Gaming Definitions Regulations (S.L. 583.04).
<b>Commissioning</b>	"Commissioning" refers to the authorisation process of an EGM by the MGA in a Controlled/Gaming premises consisting of reviewing an application (including necessary documentation), affixing a tag, installing an IoT, checking pay-out percentage and updating necessary systems.
<b>Decommissioning (Store)</b>	"Decommissioning" refers to when a machine is removed from the gaming floor.
<b>Gaming Authorisations Regulations</b>	The term "Gaming Authorisations Regulations" shall mean the Gaming Authorisations Regulations (S.L. 583.05).
<b>Gaming Device</b>	The term "Gaming Device" shall have the same definition assigned to it in the Gaming Act, Chapter 583 of the Laws of Malta. The term 'Electronic Gaming Machine ('EGM') and the term 'Gaming Device' are used interchangeably.
<b>Gaming Floor</b>	The "gaming floor" means the area of gaming premises which is accessible to patrons for participation in gaming.
<b>Gaming Premises Regulations</b>	The term "Gaming Premises Regulations" shall mean the Gaming Premises Regulations (S.L. 583.07).
<b>IoT Device</b>	A device owned and controlled by the Authority, which is compatible with SAS version 6.02 communication protocol or higher, and which allows for the collection, encryption, and transmission of regulatory data.
<b>Licence &amp; Licensee</b>	"Licence" means a gaming service licence or a critical gaming supply licence in terms of the Gaming Authorisations Regulations, and "Licensee" and "licence holder" shall be construed accordingly as per the Gaming Definitions Regulations (S.L. 583.04).
<b>Moving</b>	"Moving" refers to the act of moving an EGM from its designated area in a controlled gaming premises or from one Gaming Premises to another.
<b>Repair</b>	"Repair" refers to the process that is carried out when an EGM needs repairing.
<b>Scrap</b>	"Scrap" refers to when a gaming device is designated to be completely demolished.

## 2 Commissioning of a new EGM

An Electronic Gaming Machine is defined as any device authorised by the MGA, whether electronic, electromechanical, video, or computerized. This machine allows the player to play, operate, or simulate MGA-approved games upon the insertion of cash, tokens, electronic cards, or any form of consideration. It operates as a game of chance and can potentially reward the player with cash, tokens, merchandise, or credits that can be exchanged for cash.

Note; The EGM can only be offered to the public once this process is completed.

### 2.1 Submission of application for Approval of the relevant Gaming Devices

This section is applicable to Licensees wishing to request the Authority's approval for the addition of a new Gaming Device (EGM) within an approved premises. The below is the process that would need to be followed in such instances.

1. *The Application For Approval and Registration of Relevant Gaming Device and/or Associated Equipment* form (MGA/F/O24), which can be downloaded directly from the MGA website by following the path [Licensee Hub > Applications > B2C Licences > Controlled Gaming Premises](#) or Casino (depending on which is relevant), needs to be downloaded and fully filled in, and submitted via e-mail on [landbased.mga@mga.org.mt](mailto:landbased.mga@mga.org.mt) together with the below documentation to initiate the application review by the MGA;
  - Technical Passport corresponding to the serial number of the EGM which should:
    - a. correspond to the Lab certificates provided;
    - b. apply to the 'Maltese Street Market', or equivalent (*does not apply to Gaming Premises*);
    - c. have the Return-To-Player ratio (RTP) for all game packages specified, which RTP ratio must exceed 85%;
    - d. be certified by a qualified engineer or a professional working within the industry.
  - Lab Certificate/s by an independent testing lab accredited within a member state of the EU/EEA or any other jurisdiction or territory approved by the Authority and recognised by the Authority as having the required accreditation to issue such certificate, certifying compliance of the relevant EGM and the compliance of statistical randomness of the random number or symbol generator related to the Game.
  - EGM Hardware Manual issued by the manufacturer which includes software and hardware documents where the Licensee should include a clear specification of all the gaming device ports especially when new Brands are ordered and that more than 1 comport is available of the relevant gaming machine. Also, in the case of new manufacturers that were not known to

the MGA beforehand, they may send the EGM Hardware Manual and ports information before sending an application to prevent any further delays at the application stage.

- Eur100 application fee per device which is to be paid via bank transfer, and submitting a copy of the proof of remittance with the application form. (*This fee applies to Controlled Gaming Premises (CGPs) and National Lottery Outlets (NLOs) that have Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs).*)
- The procedures for printing, validation & authentication of tickets issued by the relevant EGM (if necessary\*).
- The procedures for the exchange or redemption of tickets issued by a relevant EGM for prizes (if necessary\*).
- Ticket in and Ticket Out (TiTo) samples (if necessary\*).
- In the case of a Controlled Gaming Premise (CGP), the number of EGMs cannot exceed 10.

\* "If necessary" refers to the type of EGM being commissioned. If the same type of EGM has already been approved for the same Licensee, the documentation marked in (\*) is not necessary to be submitted. However, in the case that the MGA deems that not all information had been submitted previously, the MGA would communicate with the respective Licensee to send the remaining information.

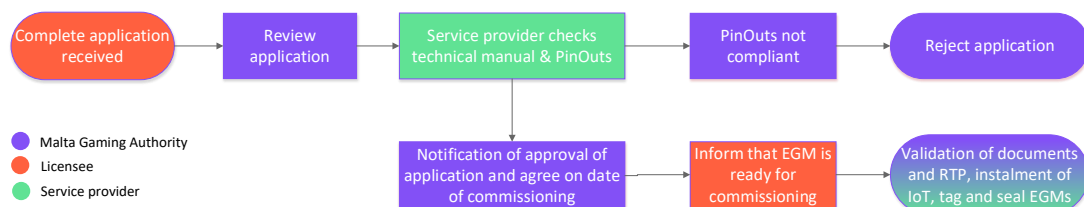
## 2.2 Reviewing the application

1. Once submitted in full, the application form (MGA/F/O24) will be reviewed by the Authority's Authorisations team. If the application is not complete, or any of the relevant documentation and, or the application fee are not submitted and paid, the applicant will be contacted to resubmit the application or the missing items, as the application will be deemed incomplete.
2. Once the application is reviewed and is found to be complete, the Authority liaises with the Service Provider to review the technical documentation to determine compatibility with the Authority's requirements.
3. The Licensee will be notified where the Service Provider identifies the IoT to be incompatible with the EGM or the latter does not have two or more communication ports.

### 2.3 Commissioning of EGMs

1. Upon a successful review of the application, the Authority shall inform the Licensee of the approval of the application and shall liaise with the relevant key person or contact person submitting the application on behalf of the Licensee to agree on a date for the commissioning of the EGMs.
2. Once the go-ahead is given by the Authority, the Licensee must inform the MGA by email at [landbased.mga@mga.org.mt](mailto:landbased.mga@mga.org.mt) that the respective EGMs are ready for commissioning, prior to the commissioning date to confirm the commissioning appointment.
3. On the commissioning appointment date, an MGA Inspector and the Service Provider will go on-site to validate that the documentation is in line with the EGMs, install the IoT, check the RTP, tag and seal the EGM. The EGM can only be offered to the public once this process is completed.

The above process is estimated to be completed within **12 working days** from the submission of a complete application.



## 3 Moving an EGM

Moving of EGMs takes place whenever a machine shall be moved from one area to another within the same premises or from one premises to another. It is essential to inform the MGA about the intended relocation ensuring compliance with the regulations and directives.

### 3.1 Submission of application

1. *The Decommissioning, Scrapping and/or Moving of a Relevant Electronic Gaming Machine (EGM) form (MGA/F/O23)* can be downloaded directly from the MGA website by following the path [Licensee Hub > Applications > B2C Licences > Controlled Gaming Premises](#) or Casino (depending on which is relevant) needs to be downloaded and fully filled in, and submitted via e-mail on [landbased.mga@mga.org.mt](mailto:landbased.mga@mga.org.mt) together with any required enclosures and floor plans to the Authority to initiate the application review by the MGA.

### 3.2 Reviewing the application

1. Once the application is submitted, the Authorisations team shall be reviewing the application form (MGA/F/O24) including all relevant documentation, for compliance and completeness. If the application has any missing information, the applicant will be contacted to resubmit the application or the missing items, as the application will be deemed incomplete.
2. When the application is endorsed, the Authority shall inform the Licensee accordingly, and shall also liaise with the Licensee to agree on a date for the movement of the EGMs.

### 3.3 Moving of EGMs

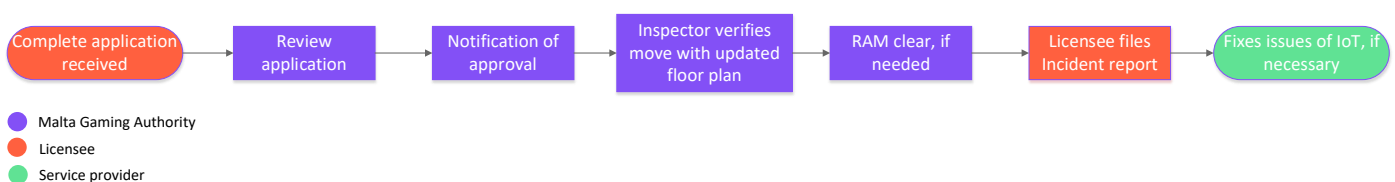
On the date of the inspection, the following processes shall take place:

1. Onsite, the Inspector shall verify that the place indicated for the placement of the EGM is in line with the location marked on updated floor plan that was submitted.
2. In case a RAM Clear is needed (the process of clearing or resetting the Random Access Memory (RAM) of the EGM) the Licensee must file an Incident Report form indicating the reason for the RAM clear.
3. If re-sealing is needed, the EGM shall not be made available for play until the machine is sealed.
  - a. In case of a CGP, the Licensee needs to fill in the 'Gaming Parlour Inventory form' and the Inspector collects the old seal and form.
  - b. In case of a Casino, the Licensee needs to compile an incident report form/Inventory equipment form and the Inspector collects the old seal and form.

In both cases, the Licensee needs to take a photo of the seal before removing it and send it to [inspectorate.mga@mga.org.mt](mailto:inspectorate.mga@mga.org.mt).

4. Should there be any technical issues with the IoT device following the move, then the Service Provider shall be contacted to fix the issue accordingly.

The above process is estimated to be completed within **6 working days** from the submission of a complete application.





## 4 Decommissioning (Store), Scrap from Floor & Scrap from Store

**Decommissioning (Store):** This usually entails turning off the EGM, physically removing it from the power source, and putting it into safe storage. Decommissioning is the process of retiring the EGM from the gaming floor so it is no longer available to the public.

**Scrapping of an Electronic Gaming Machine (EGM) from floor or from storage:** This involves the process of permanently removing the EGM from floor or its stored location. This is typically done when the EGM is no longer needed or has become outdated, damaged, or non-functional. The process shall include documenting and properly handling the machine's disposal, ensuring that it is no longer considered part of the active inventory.

### 4.1 Submission of application

1. *The Decommissioning, Scrapping and/or Moving of a Relevant Electronic Gaming Machine (EGM) form (MGA/F/O23)* can be downloaded directly from the MGA website by following the path [Licensee Hub > Applications > B2C Licences > Controlled Gaming Premises](#) or Casino (depending on which is relevant), and needs to be submitted to the Authority with the updated floor plan to be able to initiate the application review by the MGA;

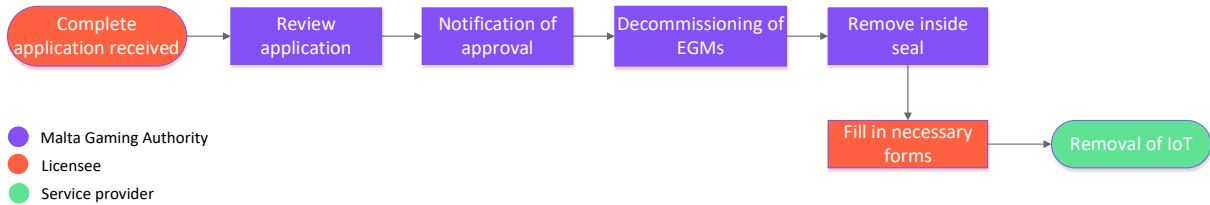
### 4.2 Reviewing the application

1. Upon submission of a complete (form including all relevant documentation) application form (MGA/F/O24), the Authority shall review the application and documentation for compliance and completeness. If the application has any missing information, the applicant will be contacted to resubmit the application or the missing items, as the application will be deemed incomplete.
2. When the application is endorsed, the Authority shall inform the Licensee accordingly, and shall also liaise with the Licensee to agree on a date for the decommissioning of the EGMs.

### 4.3 Decommissioning of EGMs

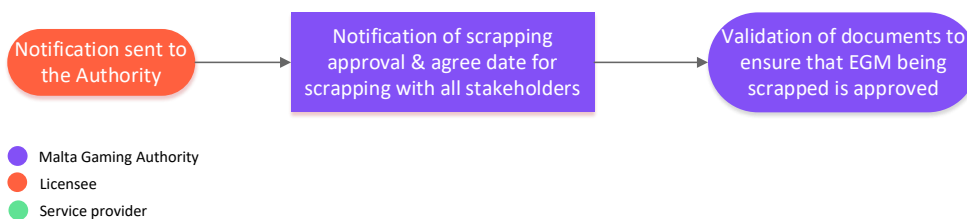
1. During the decommissioning process, in the case of Gaming Premises operated under the National Lottery Licence, the MGA Inspector shall remove only the inside seal and outside tag, whereas, for other Gaming Premises, only the inside seal shall be removed.
2. A 'Gaming Devices Inventory' form and 'Gaming Devices Incident' report will be filled while the EGM that has been decommissioned must be left on the floor which cannot be used by a player and must be switched off until the IoT device has been removed by the Service Provider.

The above process is estimated to be completed within **6 working days** from the submission of a complete application.



#### 4.4 Scrapping from Store

1. If the EGM is going to be scrapped from the store, the Licensee shall send an email to the land-based team at [landbased.mga@mga.org.mt](mailto:landbased.mga@mga.org.mt) and a date is agreed upon amongst the relevant parties for an MGA Inspector to be present at the scrap yard during the scrapping process.
2. The Inspector shall validate that the documentation is in line with the EGMs present at the scrap yard. If the EGM does not correspond with the documentation, the Inspector shall inform the Licensee and the scrapping process is halted.
3. In the case that the Licensee would like to keep the serial number plate, the Licensee needs to inform the Inspector directly.



#### 4.5 Scrapping from Floor

1. If the EGM is going to be scrapped from floor, then the steps in Sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 (except the email sent in Step 1 of Section 4.4) need to be followed.

The above process is estimated to be completed within **5 working days** from the submission of a complete application.

## 5 Repair of an EGM

1. In case the Licensee of a CGP needs to repair an EGM and therefore break the seal, the Licensee:
  - a. Shall inform the Inspectorate department by email at [inspectorate.mga@mga.org.mt](mailto:inspectorate.mga@mga.org.mt) to agree on a date for the re-sealing of the EGM. The EGM shall not be made available for play until it is sealed.
  - b. needs to fill in the 'Gaming Parlour Inventory form' and the Inspector collects the old seal and form.
  
2. In case the Licensee of a Gaming Premises needs to repair an EGM and therefore break the seal, the Licensee:
  - a. shall inform the inspector on duty for the re-sealing of the EGM. The EGM shall not be made available for play until it is sealed.
  - b. needs to fill in an Incident Report form/Inventory equipment form and the Inspector collects the old seal and form.
  
3. In both cases, the Licensee needs to take a photo of the seal before removing it and send it to [inspectorate.mga@mga.org.mt](mailto:inspectorate.mga@mga.org.mt).
  
4. If during the repair, the disconnection of the IoT device encounters any issues, the Licensee shall inform the inspector and then the Service Provider shall be contacted to fix the issue accordingly.
  
5. In the case of any repairs or maintenance, the IoT shall not be tampered with by the Licensee in any case.

The above process is estimated to be completed within **4 working days** from when the notification is sent/communicated by the Licensee.

