



NEWS RELEASE

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## **MANITOBA PARTNERS WITH BRITISH COLUMBIA TO OFFER ONLINE GAMBLING**

### **New Funding for Addictions, Aboriginal Sports and Recreation; Safe, Secure Site Allows Responsible Play**

**April 5, 2012, Winnipeg, Manitoba** – Manitoba Lotteries will partner with British Columbia Lottery Corporation (BCLC) to deliver online gambling for Manitobans on a Manitoba site, based on BCLC’s online platform.

Both partners will benefit from economies of scale and a larger player base for games such as poker. This collaboration will increase both provinces’ ability to combat thousands of illegal, off-shore websites. In Manitoba alone, \$37 million is leaving the province annually as a result of unsafe, unregulated online gambling sites.

“The existing online gambling market is mostly unregulated, with over 2,000 grey market operators who offer few or no responsible gambling features and millions of dollars leaving the province every year,” said Infrastructure and Transportation Minister Steve Ashton, minister responsible for Manitoba Lotteries. “Manitobans will now be able to play on a site where they can have confidence in game integrity, personal information security and that offers a comprehensive set of responsible play tools, information and support.”

Since 2004, BCLC has operated regulated online gambling on behalf of the Province of British Columbia. In 2010, BCLC began offering online casino games to players and in February 2011, together with Loto-Quebec, began offering peer-to-peer poker on a shared network.

“We launched online gambling in British Columbia to provide a secure and legal option for people who play online and to keep revenues in the province that otherwise would be going to illegal gambling sites,” said the Honourable Rich Coleman, Minister Responsible for BCLC. “We are pleased to share our expertise with Manitoba to strengthen regulated online gambling in Canada.”

Manitoba Lotteries expects online gambling to be operational in the first quarter of 2013 and to bring in \$1.5 million net income in its first year, increasing to about \$17 million by 2018. Ashton noted that revenue from this initiative will be reinvested into Manitoba communities.

“Manitoba will work to provide a safe, reputable, secure alternative to grey market sites while ensuring revenue stays in Manitoba to support priorities like health and education,” Ashton said. “In addition, we have ensured that a portion of revenues are allocated to fight addictions and support Aboriginal sports and recreation.”

5% of online gambling net income will be committed to responsible gambling initiatives. This includes two per cent toward Manitoba Lotteries’ responsible gambling programs, and three percent toward the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba.

A further 15% will be dedicated to support expanded provincial programming for Aboriginal sport and recreational activities.

Manitoba Lotteries’ site will be among several regulated sites offered now or in the near future in Canada, including those in British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec and the Atlantic Provinces. Manitoba Lotteries’ site will be regulated by the Manitoba Gaming Control Commission.

*Manitoba Lotteries is a Crown corporation of the Province of Manitoba that owns and operates Club Regent Casino and McPhillips Station Casino, and Manitoba’s video lottery terminal network. It supplies breakopen tickets and bingo paper in Manitoba, and distributes and sells tickets for lotteries operated by the Western Canada Lottery Corporation and the Interprovincial Lottery Corporation. Manitoba Lotteries revenue supports priority government programming in health care, education, community and social services and economic development.*

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**Backgrounder attached. For a related news release from BCLC, please visit:**  
<https://www.bclc.com/app/AboutBCLC/NewsReleases.asp>

**Manitoba Lotteries**

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## BACKGROUND: ONLINE GAMBLING

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- Manitoba Lotteries is entering into a partnership with BCLC to deliver regulated online gambling for Manitobans on a Manitoba site, based on BCLC's successful online platform, PlayNow.com for launch in the first quarter of 2013.
- Since 2004, PlayNow.com has offered players who choose to gamble online a safe, secure, regulated website. In 2010, BCLC began offering online casino games to players and in February 2011, together with Loto-Quebec, began offering peer-to-peer poker.
- Players will register to play using an account-based system. This provides an excellent environment to encourage responsible play with customized responsible gambling tools and information.
- Only Manitoba residents will be able to play on Manitoba Lotteries' site.
- The site is projected to earn \$1.5 million net income in its first year of operation, increasing to about \$17 million in 2018, for approximately \$46 million total earnings in the first five years of operation.
- Manitoba Lotteries will launch with casino games and a peer-to-peer poker network connecting Manitoba players with those in British Columbia and Quebec. Sports betting and peer-to-peer bingo may also be offered.
- As with all Manitoba Lotteries' gambling products, the online site will adhere to the regulatory requirements of the Manitoba Gaming Control Commission and operate with fairness, honesty and integrity. Manitoba Lotteries will also meet federal financial transaction reporting requirements and protection of privacy laws.



### **Responsible Gambling**

- Because players must register to play, Manitoba Lotteries' site will provide a very controlled gambling environment with greater potential to offer player protection such as customized limit setting and gambling activity reports.
- Using BCLC's platform for responsible gambling, Manitoba Lotteries' site will include:
  - Mandatory player registration
  - Provisions to prevent access by underage players
  - Limit-setting, time reminders and ability to self-exclude to take breaks from play
  - 24-hour cooling off period to increase deposit limits
  - Information and tips on responsible play
  - Information and links to problem gambling support
  - Play history reports available to the player to monitor spending
  - Self-monitoring tools including player-initiated voluntary self-exclusion
- Manitoba Lotteries' financial commitment for programs, services and research related to responsible gambling and problem gambling is 2% of its net income, including income from online gambling.
- An additional 3% of online gambling net income will be directed towards the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba.

### **Online gambling in Canada**

- Under section 207.1(a) of the *Criminal Code of Canada*, only a provincial government or its designated agency may legally conduct any gambling activities that involve electronic devices.
- BCLC and Loto-Quebec offer regulated online gambling in their respective provinces that includes sports wagering and casino games. They also share a peer-to-peer poker network.
- Atlantic Lottery Corporation (ALC) offers online gambling that includes lottery products, interactive games and peer-to-peer bingo.

Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG) expects to launch online gaming in the near future.