

Unofficial translation



Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

Ministry of Information and Culture

No.: 664/MIC
Vientiane Capital, 22 October 2003

Regulation

of

The Minister of Information and Culture

on

Management, Inspection, and Permission for Games in the Lao PDR

- Pursuant to the Constitution and the Law of the Lao PDR;
- Pursuant to the Decree of the Prime Minister on the Position, Role, and Operation of the Ministry of Information and Culture No. 25/PM, dated 24/03/1999.

The Minister of Information and Culture hereby issues a Regulation:

CHAPTER 1
General Provisions

Article 1 Objectives

- 1.1 To be a reference for provincial, capital, and special administrative zone Divisions of Information and Culture countrywide to set out its regulations to manage, inspect, and permit the playing of games at gaming clubs and gaming arcades, in order to ensure social order nationwide;
- 1.2 To manage, inspect, and permit the importation of all types of games, parts of gaming devices, programs, cassettes, and CDs;
- 1.3 To eliminate illegal gaming businesses, the importation and use of gaming programs, cassettes, and CDs which cause violence, addiction, gambling, or revulsion, are obscene, and other programs which are inappropriate;
- 1.4 To contribute to extraordinary activities, to train players' brains and intelligence, and to create wisdom, resourcefulness, and good decision making for human resources by selecting positive technology which is useful to Lao youths in tandem with a modern technological trend;

- 1.5 To set out regulations, principles, coordination, and delegation of management levels between authorities at central and local level to have scientific and clear characteristics for nationwide uniformity in management in accordance with a vertical chain of command for the authorities.

Article 2 Definitions of Terms Used Specifically in this Regulations

- 2.1. **Gaming machine or device** refers to all kinds of gaming devices using electricity and displaying contents through a screen, such as online games, coin-operated games, “game & watch,” and CD games;
- 2.2. **Online game** refers to a game played based upon a program stipulated in a machine;
- 2.3. **“Game & watch”** refers to a game which requires the use of the hands to press on control buttons and having a gaming cassette as a program to play;
- 2.4. **CD game** refers to a game which requires a CD, with or without a memory card, but requires the use of the hands to operate a game controller or joystick;
- 2.5. **Coin-operated game** refers to a gambling game that requires cash in the form of coins or chips to be inserted into gaming devices, for a roulette wheel, or into a slot machine.

This is a gambling game or can be referred to as a casino game;

- 2.5.1. Games for training the brain, intelligence, knowledge, creating wisdom and resourcefulness, and carefulness in proper decision making such as games with pictures of dolls, robots, humans, animals, vehicles, airplanes, ships, satellites, nature, figures, or construction moving across the screen, painting, and other games which require human control, shall be referred to as games for knowledge and entertainment.

In those games, some coin-operated games are also for education (if they are not directly related to gambling).

CHAPTER II Rights and Duties

Article 3 Rights of Approval and Inspection:

- 3.1 The Ministry of Information and Culture has a right to approve the importation of online games, “game & watch” games, and coin-operated games and has the right to permit and manage the opening of gaming clubs with a large investment combining domestic and foreign investors or 100% foreign investment through the consideration and approval of the government.
- 3.2 The provincial, capital, and special administrative zone Divisions of Information and Culture have the right to approve the importation of CD games and games for mental and intelligence training and has the right, within its area of responsibility, to permit and manage the opening of gaming clubs of local and foreign investors that invest in such businesses on a medium or small scale;

- 3.3 The district and municipal Offices of Information and Culture have the right and duty to manage, inspect, and monitor the operation of each gaming club and gaming arcade to be in accordance with the requirements and regulations of the district;
- 3.4 All kinds of game businesses must have a gaming club or gaming arcade which is sufficiently large, clean, and ventilated, with appropriate illumination and lighting systems (not too bright), and an appropriate audio system which is not too loud and does not affect others and with the sound restricted to the inside of the gaming room;
- 3.5 Gaming rooms situated at each gaming club must have a nominated organization in charge, articles of association, an accounting system, enterprise registration certificate, and licenses and must fully comply with state customs and tax obligations;
- 3.6 Gaming clubs, gaming arcades, and casinos must ensure the safety of health, lives, and assets, and must be run in an orderly and systematic manner.

CHAPTER III

Measures and Prohibitions

Article 4 Prohibitions

- 4.1 The provincial, capital, and special administrative zone Divisions of Information and Culture are prohibited from approving the importation of online games, “game & watch” games, or coin-operated games.
- The district Offices of Information and Culture and village administrative authorities are prohibited from permitting the importation of any kinds of games but have a duty to manage those games;
 - To comply with the requirements of the Ministry and local regulations;
- 4.2 Organizations, dealers, public and private companies, legal entities, and other import-export businesses are prohibited from importing gaming devices, machines, components, and parts of any kinds of gaming devices without the permission of a management authority at the central level of the Ministry of Information and Culture;
- 4.3 All parties are prohibited from allowing public and private organizations to install or build gaming clubs and gaming arcades near schools, hospitals, state bureaus, military installations, police offices, post offices, telecommunications offices, science research institutes, satellite stations, radio-television stations, or temples;
- 4.4 All parties are prohibited from opening a service for CD games, “game & watch” games, online games, computer games, or coin-operated games in households, in villages, houses, or small beverage shops other than gaming clubs, gaming arcades, and casinos duly permitted in accordance with Article 3, Chapter II of this Regulations;
- 4.5 Gaming clubs and gaming arcades are prohibited from programs involving gambling, obscenity, horror, thrilling, delinquency, or violence, or games which have a negative effect on mental processes;

- 4.6 Bringing weapons or objects that can be used as weapon, all kinds of drugs, addictive substances, explosives, chemicals, or poisonous food into gaming arcades or casinos is prohibited, as is using those places for violating laws and regulations.

CHAPTER IV

Validity of License

Article 5 Validity of License

- 5.1 A license for the importation of gaming devices, machines, components, and parts of all kinds of gaming devices and casino equipment is valid for 15 days from the date of issuance based upon the number of games permitted to be imported;
- 5.2 A license for opening all kinds of gaming services by gaming clubs, gaming arcades, and casinos of local and foreign investors is valid for 12 months from the date of issuance provided that the investors renew the license with the relevant authorities as specified in Article 3, Chapter II of this Regulations;
- 5.3 The setting of opening and closing times of all kinds of gaming services are the responsibility of the provincial, capital, and special administrative zone Divisions of Information and Culture and the district Offices of Information and Culture countrywide; in coordination with local administrative authorities and other relevant organizations, they will review and set out regulations regarding the opening and closing times of games services for training brains and intelligence based upon the circumstances of the particular locality, the season, school summer breaks, weekly holidays, and festivals in order to ensure that those games shall not negatively affect the study time, working time, and relaxation time of others.

CHAPTER V

Awards and Measures against Violators

Article 6 Awards:

- 6.1 Gaming clubs: all kinds of gaming arcades and casinos that duly and properly comply with this Regulation shall be promoted, complimented, and protected in terms of benefits in accordance with laws and regulations.

Article 7 Measures against Violators

- 7.1 Gaming clubs: all kinds of gaming arcades, casinos, and business units that violate this Regulations shall be subject to disciplinary measures, warnings, and fines based upon the following:
- First offense: violators shall be subject to education measures, warnings, instructions for change, remedies; and execute a minute of offense;
 - Second offense: violators shall be subject to education measures, warnings, execute a minute of offense and a fine of LAK 5,000,000 (five million Kip);
 - Third offense: violators shall be subject to education measures, warnings, execute a minute of offense and a fine of LAK 10,000,000 (ten million Kip);

- Fourth offense: gaming devices and machines shall be seized, a license shall be withdrawn with an order to cease the business, and the offense shall be referred to the courts for prosecution in accordance with laws and regulations.

CHAPTER VI

Final Provisions

Article 8 Rights of Management and Inspection

- 8.1 An authority at any level which issues a license shall be in charge of management, monitoring, and imposing fines on violators. Its superior authority has the right to inspect the performance of duties and regulations of its subordinate. If the subordinate neglects its duties, the superior will appoint an ad hoc committee to inspect and resolve the matter directly.

Article 9 Delegation of Tasks

- 9.1 At central level, the Ministry of Information and Culture delegates tasks to the Mass Culture Department; at local level, the Ministry delegates tasks to the provincial, capital, and special administrative zone Divisions of Information and Culture and the District Offices of Information and Culture countrywide to be centers of coordination with relevant administrative authorities and organizations for implementation of this Regulations.

Article 10 Effectiveness

- 10.1 This Regulation is effective from the date of signature and any provisions and regulations that conflict with this Regulation shall be canceled.

Minister of Information and Culture

[Seal and signature]

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