

*This article will be published on the LGB's website.*

## **Limpopo Gambling Board sets out plan for responsible growth**

The next phase of work for the Limpopo Gambling Board will focus on modernising regulation, tightening compliance and ensuring that gambling growth translates into jobs, local ownership and community benefit.

In a recent interview, Chief Executive Mokgase Gregory Makoko set out the Board's priorities as South Africa's gambling market shifts further towards betting, digital channels and more complex enforcement risks.

"Over the next 2–3 years, the priority is to consolidate a regulated industry that grows responsibly, creates jobs, and delivers visible community benefit, while remaining resilient against illegal and digitally enabled risks," [Makoko told SiGMA News](#).

For the Board, that means growth cannot be measured only by revenue. The regulated gambling sector in Limpopo has become a significant contributor to the provincial fiscus, while licensed venues continue to support employment and local procurement. But the same period has also brought pressure from illegal operators, online betting and changing consumer behaviour.

In our latest annual report, the Board said levy collections rose in FY2024/25, helped largely by bookmakers. It also reported that the province's gambling industry employed more than 3,000 people.

Makoko said the task now was to protect those gains while updating the way the sector is supervised.

### **Modernising regulation**

The Board's priorities include stronger anti-money laundering oversight, closer monitoring of beneficial ownership and better use of data in supervision.

Makoko said the plan rests on several connected areas: "(1) deepening compliance and integrity (including anti-money laundering alignment and beneficial ownership transparency), (2) modernising regulation and operations to keep pace with digital gambling trends, (3) embracing and licensing online gambling platforms and (4) strengthening the social mandate through responsible gambling and structured community investment."

The shift is also being felt nationally. South Africa's National Gambling Board has said the rapid expansion of betting and online gambling is changing the market and creating new regulatory challenges.

In Limpopo, illegal gambling remains one of the main risks to the licensed sector. Enforcement work is expected to remain a priority, with cooperation between the Board, police and other agencies central to that approach.

“Combating illegal gambling—especially where it shifts into online/interactive formats—remains a top priority, supported by stronger investigative capability, digital evidence skills, and continued multi-agency operations with SAPS and the NPA,” Makoko explained.

The Board's annual report said illegal operators reduce public revenue, weaken consumer protection and put licensed businesses at a disadvantage. It also pointed to the need for more resources, including personnel and technology, as gambling activity expands across the province.

### **Transformation and local ownership**

Makoko also said transformation would remain central to licensing and compliance decisions.

“The LGB integrates transformation requirements into licence conditions and then enforces those conditions through compliance monitoring,” he said.

That approach includes Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment requirements, employment equity, local procurement and participation by historically disadvantaged individuals. Transformation should not be treated only as a matter of shareholding, but also as participation through jobs, supplier opportunities, training and community development.

“The role of the LGB is to set clear, measurable conditions; monitor performance through inspections and audits; and apply proportionate consequences where commitments are not honoured, so that genuine local ownership and SME participation become the norm rather than the exception,” Makoko said.

This strategy is linked to corporate social responsibility. Licensees are expected to support projects in areas such as education, social protection, rural development and local economic participation.

Makoko said this work needed to become more structured. “Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) impact is expanded when it is treated as a strategic programme rather than a set of once-off donations.”

The Board will push for clearer reporting, better project selection and stronger monitoring of outcomes. Social investment must support responsible gambling, including public education, counselling access and youth prevention.

As Makoko put it, the next phase is about building “a regulated industry that grows responsibly”.