



## Press Release

**The Skill Gaming Summit** - The Rummy Federation organized Skill Gaming Summit that focused on prospects and regulatory outlook of the online skill gaming industry. The event took place on 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2018 at Hotel Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai.

The Rummy Federation (TRF) was launched in December 2017 with a mandate to bring together all online Rummy operators in India and have them adopt a self-regulatory platform. With the online rummy industry growing rapidly, it was imperative to inculcate a culture of responsibly and integrity in the industry. TRF has come a long way and in just 8 months has prepared a first-of-a-kind Code of Conduct for online rummy operators. The online rummy operators in India have shown remarkable foresight and have come together of their own accord to bind themselves by this common Code of Conduct.

Mr. Mario Galea is the President of the Federation. He comes with more than 20 years of extensive experience in gaming regulations across the world and was former CEO of the Malta Gaming Authority.

TRF has, in a short span since launch, onboarded six of the largest online rummy operators as its members and these operators represent more than 90% of the online rummy industry in India.

We expect that other online rummy operators will also soon join TRF which will definitely help in serving the interests of its stakeholders while remaining fully aligned with the interests of rummy enthusiasts.

**Knowledge Partner for the Skill Gaming Summit-** In the capacity of knowledge partner to the Summit, Deloitte, jointly with TRF, released a knowledge paper on “Online Skill Gaming in India: The Changing Landscape”. The knowledge paper covers emerging trends, the current market size, growth potential, potential gamers’ characteristics and the regulatory landscape in India. As per the report, the online rummy industry grew at a CAGR of 67% in the last 3 years and is expected to continue growing rapidly to Rs. 3,500 crores in revenue by the end of this decade. The report reveals that a typical online rummy player is at least a graduate, married, living with family, and plays for social interaction/stress relief.

**Code of Conduct for Online Rummy Operators** - TRF has formulated a Code of Conduct for online rummy operators covering key aspects relevant for protection of players’ interests. These standards, amongst other things, would cover KYC verification process which will mandate all operators to do verification of user accounts within a stipulated threshold of time or spend. The standards will require operators to empower players with the ability to restrict their spending limits as well as choose to exclude themselves from the website for long periods of time. These standards will enforce responsible advertising guidelines modelled on The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA), UK’s independent advertising regulator and the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) which formulates the Advertising Codes. The objective of putting in place a self-regulating system for approving and displaying ads is to make sure consumers are not misled,

harmed or offended by ads, together with ensuring credibility of content in the ads. In addition, these standards would mandate software testing requirements and certifications for determining the reliability and integrity of the game software used by online rummy operators.

## **Speakers and panelists-**

Many eminent speakers attended the summit including international regulators and experts from US, Malta and New Jersey, Indian skill gaming operators, investors and service providers.

### **Panel 1**

George Rover (Former Deputy Director of the New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement) mentioned self-regulation is an essential part of even regulated jurisdictions because the regulator cannot look at everything and an industry wide intent to follow the rules is most important.

Jason Rosenberg (Director of Online Gaming Consulting, WhiteSand Gaming, LLC.) shared his experiences about the success of implementing regulated gaming in Bahamas and how when gaming is properly regulated, it helps in changing social perception because regulations bring responsibility and integrity to the industry. Jason further pointed out that this self-regulatory initiative by the Indian rummy operators is unprecedented with no parallel anywhere in the world.

Aditya Rao, Partner, PLR Chambers, mentioned that online skill gaming is essentially the same as offline skill gaming though considerations as regards player protection and money laundering may vary solely due to the nature of the medium.

Sriram Reddy of Classic Rummy emphasized that core principles of gaming regulations will always be making gaming safe, protection of users and prevention of money laundering.

### **Panel 2**

Shawn Ogren from Facebook said that online gaming operators are the most sophisticated advertisers because they are most sensitive to developments in new ways of user segmentation and targeting

Harsh – there are 65 operators in fantasy sports space as of now in India with over 40 million users. They intend to follow a similar self-regulatory approach in the fantasy sports industry to make sure all operators are following a common set of practices.

Milind from Tech Process mentioned that skill gaming industry has a very good process of managing charge backs which is a very good indicator of responsible business practices.



Ankush, when addressing the concerns around investor interest and valuations said that genuine efforts to self-regulate help build valuations over time and the efforts of TRF will surely show a positive impact.

### Panel 3

Jason said that in the US and across the world the next generation of players is increasing looking for skill gaming content that is inherently more social and interactive than games of chance. Players playing games of skill in gen-next will look for instagammable moments and that explains the rising popularity of skill games amongst young gamers.

Trivikraman Thampy CEO, RummyCircle, said that they are using big data models to predict problem behaviors well in advance. This should be the way forward to prevent potential problem behavior in the absence of any personal information about users in the online medium

Ishita Pateria – it is not possible to get all information about problem players in online space. Scientifically designed questionnaires can help in getting information than can be useful in understanding and identifying problem behavior.

Anil Talreja, said that the government should have a clear foreign investment policy. There is no basis to change a legal position once investment comes in or a transaction has happened. Regulatory certainly is necessary under the investment protection conditions in the Bilateral Investment treaties where they exist, and in any case as a part of foreign policy.

Mr. Vidushpat Singhania, Managing Partner, Krida Legal, Mr. Jaishil Shah, Partner, Deloitte India and Mr. Vaibhav Kakkar, Partner, Luthra and Luthra law offices moderated the three sessions.

The event witnessed the presence of a large set of audience from online rummy, fantasy sports and e-sports industry and covered various topics related to future and way forward for online gaming industry.

More information about the event can be found on [www.trf.org.in](http://www.trf.org.in)