

# Gambling Awareness Nova Scotia: FAQs

## What is Gambling Awareness Nova Scotia?

Gambling Awareness Nova Scotia, previously known as Gambling Awareness Nova Scotia (GANS) is a not-for-profit, arms-length government organization that encourages and supports an independent response to problem gambling in Nova Scotia. This is accomplished, in part, through funding to community groups and researchers to help address problem gambling.

## What type of organization is Gambling Awareness Nova Scotia, and how did it develop?

Gambling Awareness Nova Scotia (GANS) was established in March 1998, pursuant to the Gaming Control Act and the Provincial Finance Act. The purpose of GANS is to receive, maintain, and disburse monies in support of research or education related to gambling or treatment as well as the remediation of the effects of gambling.

In 1999, responsibility for GANS was moved from the Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation to the Minister of Health. In 2001, the first community-based Board of Directors was appointed, and in 2004, GANS became arms-length from Government.

## What is a Government agency?

Government agencies are separate corporate entities that operate outside the Government's traditional departmental structure. They provide various services to the public of Nova Scotia and are most commonly created through legislation, regulation, or incorporation under the Nova Scotia *Companies Act*.

Government interacts with the agencies in relation to board composition (Board members are appointed by the Government), mandate (setting the overall mandate of the agency, although Board members are responsible for setting priorities and direction), policy-setting, and resources.

## How is GANS funded? Where does our money come from?

The distribution of funds that Gambling Awareness Nova Scotia receives is outlined in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between GANS and the Department of Health Promotion and Protection: under the terms of their retailer agreements, VLT retailers contribute 1% of their annual VLT commissions (not 1% of their annual revenues). The Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation matches this amount and the total is given to the Foundation.

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In addition to the annual monies it receives, GANS has an account known as the Community Development Account (CDA). The interest on this account is distributed to Community Health Boards, as per the terms of the MOA.

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### **How much money does GANS receive annually?**

The funds received through the VLT formula have experienced a steady decline in the last number of years as a direct result of recent actions taken to reduce the number of VLT machines in Nova Scotia. Since 2004, GANS has received the following amounts through the VLT formula:

2004-2005 - \$953,060  
2005-2006 - \$842,198  
2006-2007 - \$709,455  
2007-2008 - \$662,592  
2008-2009 - \$655,218  
2009-2010 - \$630,876

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### **Where does the money go?**

GANS allocates all received funds to the following areas:

- Research or Research Fellowship grants
- Community grants
- Student Scholarship Awards
- Commissioned independent research
- Necessary operational expenses of GANS
- Other initiatives that support the objectives of GANS and its strategic priorities