



For Immediate Release
February 27, 2020

Media Contact:
Elaine Driscoll (MGC) 617-571-2964
Press release: 20-011

The Massachusetts Gaming Commission Receives One-Year Public Safety Impact Report for MGM Springfield

Analysis concludes the casino's overall effect on the region's crime numbers is 'mild'

During a public meeting in Springfield, the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) released a **Public Safety Impact Report**, analyzing changes in police data after one year of operations at MGM Springfield. The study concluded that the facility's overall effect on the region's crime numbers is mild.

As mandated by the Legislature, MGC is carrying out an expansive and groundbreaking research agenda to understand the social and economic impacts of gambling in the Commonwealth. A pillar of this research agenda is the study of the relationship between gambling and levels of crime.

MGC consultant and crime analyst Christopher Bruce conducted public safety research and analysis that builds on a [baseline report](#) that was released in October 2018. Mr. Bruce collected data from police records management systems in Springfield, Agawam, Chicopee, East Longmeadow, Hampden, Holyoke, Longmeadow, Ludlow, Northampton, West Springfield, and Wilbraham, along with Massachusetts State Police.

Data about crime, calls for service and collisions from September 2018 to August in 2019 was compared to the same months over the previous 5 to 7 years, with any significant increases analyzed in more detail.

The analysis indicated that the resort-casino had been the site of several hundred public safety-related incidents. As a result, the facility has become a top regional location for crimes and calls for service, and commensurate with the amount of activity at a large shopping mall.

According to Mr. Bruce, "to the extent that the casino has 'caused' crime, however, it seems largely confined to the casino itself." Mr. Bruce added, "Both the immediate block around the casino, the Metro Center of Springfield, and the surrounding residential and business community all have normal-to-low volumes, suggesting that attractors of more crime (i.e., extra people in the area) and suppressors (i.e., extra natural guardianship, extra police presence) are canceling each other out."



Massachusetts Gaming Commission

A summary of findings from the One-Year Public Safety Impact Report for MGM Springfield:

- The casino contributed to 1.4% to the city's violent crime total, 1.2% to its property crime total, 1.5% to its overall crime total and 1.0% to its calls for service.
- There were 208 total arrests at the casino during its first year of operations.
- The surrounding communities saw some increases and decreases, but very few consistent trends to which MGM Springfield serves as a clear source.
- Issues most likely influenced by the casino include:
 - An increase in traffic collisions and traffic-related calls for service
 - An increase in activity at Union Station in Springfield specifically
 - An increase in minor disorder and suspicious activity just across the two bridges in West Springfield
 - An increase in late-night activity at the Pride gas station across the street from MGM Springfield.
- Despite hypotheses from before the casino opened, there is, so far, no sign that the presence of the casino has increased crime or calls for service at hotels, restaurants, bars, and gas stations, except the Pride gas station across the street from the casino.
- No increased activity specifically within the radiuses of highway exits to and from the facility.
- There is evidence of increased drunk driving in the region caused by the casino. However, drunk driving arrests in the region are down slightly from their average.

Commissioner Gayle Cameron said, "The MGC greatly appreciates the highly coordinated and cooperative partnership among state and local law enforcement, as well as civilian security personnel. We have a shared goal of ensuring a safe and secure casino environment and minimizing any potential public safety impact to the surrounding areas." Commissioner Cameron added, "This ongoing analysis fosters continued collaboration and informs the implementation of data-driven policing strategies."

To view a copy of the full report and all of its findings, click [here](#).

About MGC Crime Analyst Christopher W. Bruce

Christopher W. Bruce is an internationally-recognized expert in police data systems and police data analysis. He is a career crime analyst with previous service at the Cambridge Police Department and the Danvers Police Department. He was president of the Massachusetts Association of Crime Analysts from 2000 to 2004 and has served in several roles in the International Association of Crime Analysts. He currently consults with the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance; the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs; the U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; and the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training.



Massachusetts Gaming Commission