Appendix A: Skill-Based Amusement Machine Technical Standards

Definitions

Advertised Prize

A prize, with a known value or quantity, that can be awarded by a skill-based amusement machine and that is explicitly advertised to the player prior to the commencement of each game.

Award

A thing of value that is transferred to a player, either immediately or by any method of representation, as a result of a game or play, regardless of when it is obtained by the player.

Bonus pool

An award where the value increases when one or more specific conditions occur (which can include a function of credits played), as defined by the rules of the game, and which is granted to the player when they achieve the advertised outcome or triggering event.

Credit Meter

A meter which maintains the credits or value available to the player for initiating game play.

Currency

A physical item such as a token, coin or paper bill, or virtual representation of such which is used as a medium of exchange of funds.

Field of Play

Area utilized to complete the objective of a game or play by a player.

Free Game or Free Play

A mode achieved by a player where participation in the game occurs at no additional cost to the player.

Game Accounting

Total Played

The cumulative total of the value, in currency, committed for game play or the count of number of games played.

Total Won

The cumulative total of the value, in currency or number of redeemable vouchers, of the award(s) and/or prize(s) achieved.

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Game and Play

Has the same meaning as in R.C. 2915.01(UU)(3)(a).

Game Design

All features and functions, including player skill requirements, of a skill-based amusement machine.

Game Outcome

Defined as whether or not the merchandise prize (as defined in 3772-50-01(H)) is awarded, or as the final result of the game.

Game-Related Parameters

Conditions or bounds related to game operation. Examples include prizes available, game difficulty, cost per play, etc.

Measure

An assessment of the extent, quality, value, or effect of something as a standard unit used to express the size, amount, or degree of something.

Merchandise Prize

Has the same meaning as in paragraph 3772-50-01(H) of the administrative code.

Paid Bonus Games

A mode achieved by a player during the initial purchased game in which an additional cost is required from the player prior to participation.

Player Interaction Device, Electronic

An internal or external electronic device that connects to a machine and that registers various types of player inputs allowing the player to interact with the machine. Several examples include touch screens, button panels, joysticks, handheld controllers, camera systems, etc. The player interaction device may be hard-wired or wireless.

Player Interaction Device, Non-Electronic

An internal or external non-electronic device required for the player to complete the objective of the game. Examples include balls, hoops, darts, mechanical guns, etc.

Random Number Generator, RNG

A computational or physical device, algorithm, or system designed to produce numbers, outcomes, or circumstances in a manner indistinguishable from random selection.

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Redeemable Voucher

Has the same meaning as in paragraph 3772-50-01(M) of the administrative code.

Virtual Opponent

Term used to describe a computer-based player that participates in a game with skill and effectively mimics the actions of a live player.

Skill-Based Amusement Machines Technical Requirements

Common Requirements (Type B and Type C)

Software Verification

1. If the skill-based amusement machine contains a video monitor or similar display mechanism, the software version information shall be accessible to be displayed.
2. The electronic game shall have the ability to allow for an independent integrity check of its software/program storage media from an outside source.

Game Rules

1. Game rules included as part of game design must be prominently displayed and/or readily available and shall clearly and accurately state the rules of the game, fees charged for play, and the advertised prize(s).
2. If a player is limited by time, the time allowed by the skill-based amusement machine for a player to play shall be clearly displayed.
3. In the event game configurations or rules of play change between games, notice of the change shall be prominently displayed to the player.
4. Subsequent levels or rounds within the same game may have varying levels of difficulty, as long as the change in difficulty is consistent for all players.
5. Game-related parameters can be configurable by an operator, as long as after the configuration the game remains consistent for all subsequent players.
6. Configurations performed between games that do not change the rules of the game are not required to be disclosed to the player as long as after the configuration the game remains consistent for all subsequent players.

Game Outcome

1. Each game or play shall not award, including bonus pools, a merchandise prize, or redeemable voucher for a merchandise prize, with a wholesale value in excess of $10.00.
2. At no point can a player be awarded (even if that award is not obtained until subsequent games or plays have occurred) an amount over $10.00 as a result of a single game or single play, including a bonus pool.

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3. Game outcome shall be solely dependent upon a player's ability to successfully apply the requisite skill as part of game design.
4. Game design, including the use of an RNG, or alteration of game-related parameters, whether prior to or during play, shall not prevent a player from obtaining any game outcome through the successful application of the requisite skill. An RNG, whether used prior to or during play, shall not impose any limitations associated with the player's application of skill.
5. The player shall have the ability to achieve the advertised prize(s) on each paid game.
6. Once a game is initiated, how a player utilizes skill to achieve a game outcome shall not be altered by the game during play based on the demonstrated skill of the player.
7. The skill-based amusement machine must accurately measure the task completed, per the game's design, consistently from one player to the next.
8. For skill-based amusement machines where more than one player competes against each other the game shall function consistently from player position to player position; however, features allowing a player or players to gain an advantage over other players may be used, provided the skill-based amusement machine:
    a. Clearly describes to all players that the feature is available and the advantage it offers;
    b. Discloses the method for obtaining the feature; and
    c. Provides players with sufficient information to make an informed decision, prior to play, as to whether or not to compete against another player(s) who may possess such a feature.
9. A skill-based amusement machine may offer a player the opportunity to compete against a virtual opponent provided that the skill-based amusement machine:
    a. Clearly discloses when a virtual opponent is participating; and
    b. Prevents the virtual opponent from utilizing privileged information of the live player, unless otherwise disclosed to the live player.

Bonus Games

1. Paid bonus games shall not be considered as part of the initial game in which they were awarded or triggered.
2. Free games or other additional playing time which does not require additional consideration (pay) shall be considered part of the initial game in which the free game was awarded or triggered.
3. The machine or device may award free games or free plays only if a method is in place to ensure an award of a merchandise prize, or redeemable voucher for a merchandise prize, with a wholesale value in excess of $10.00 cannot occur.

Credit Acceptance

1. All valid currency inserted shall be accurately registered by the skill-based amusement machine.
2. All currency rejected by the skill-based amusement machine shall be returned to the player.

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3. A skill-based amusement machine shall only accept currency when the skill-based amusement machine is enabled for play.

Game Accounting

1. A credit meter may be increased by additional currency inserted into a skill-based amusement machine or prize value, in the form of a redeemable voucher or electronic representation.
2. If prize value is used to increase a credit meter, the skill-based amusement machine must ensure that:
    a. Players have the ability to not use prize value to increase the credit meter (this ability must be exercised before a credit meter is increased);
    b. Players must have the ability to receive a merchandise prize or a redeemable voucher for a merchandise prize on every play (i.e. increasing the credit meter may not be the only prize redemption available to a player);
    c. A credit meter may only be increased by using prize value won on the same skill-based amusement machine;
    d. A player may not receive a refund of prize value used to increase a credit meter; and
    e. A record is created and maintained that details the value of prizes used to increase the credit meter.
3. For games that support bonus pool awards, a bonus pool meter shall be visible to all players who are playing a device that may potentially trigger the award.
4. The bonus pool meter shall display the current total of the bonus pool award.

Player Interaction Devices

1. Electronic Player Interaction Devices that impact game outcome shall:
    a. Be capable of calibration, replacement, or repair to effect and maintain appropriate function and accuracy;
    b. Be secured such that the function of the player interaction device is not influenced by any persons or devices, other than the player using the device;
    c. Be clearly labeled according to their function and shall operate in accordance with applicable game rules; and
    d. Not contain functionality that affect game play and/or that impact the integrity or outcome of the game, except as provided for by the game rules.
2. Non-electronic player interaction devices that impact game outcome shall:
    a. Conform to the manufacturer's specifications;
    b. Be capable of being maneuvered, as allowed by the rules of the game; and
    c. Fit on, through, on top of, in, or around the target as allowed by the rules of the game.

Player Safety

1. Electrical and mechanical parts and design principals of the skill-based amusement machine must not subject a player to any physical hazards.

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Additional Requirements for Type-B Skill-Based Amusement Machines

1. The skill-based amusement machine shall secure the fully-enclosed merchandise field of play behind a locked mechanism to prevent unauthorized access.
2. Free games or free plays may only be allowed if a merchandise prize was not awarded in the initial game played.
3. The skill-based amusement machine must not be capable of displaying symbols or characters as winning or losing combination(s).
4. Rolling or spinning reels or wheels shall not be simulated, displayed, or utilized in any facet of the game.