

## CCO Ian Hughes

# GLI: “HELPING REGULATORS WITH NEW AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES IS AN INSPIRING AND EXCITING JOURNEY”

Explore GLI’s journey in strengthening the global gaming industry, from navigating diverse jurisdictions to embracing AI and cybersecurity. GLI’s executive shares insights on maintaining quality, innovation, and readiness in an ever-evolving sector.



Ian Hughes, Chief Commercial Officer.

Ian Hughes, the seasoned Chief Commercial Officer of Gaming Laboratories International (GLI), brings 30 years of industry expertise to the forefront, offering invaluable insights into the current state and future trajectory of global gaming. In this interview, he takes stock of GLI’s performance in 2023, emphasizing its client-centric approach and global adaptability. Operating in 707 jurisdictions, GLI stands as a crucial partner for gaming entities, navigating the complex interplay of technology, regulation, and innovation.

The interview delves into GLI’s pivotal role in shaping the regulatory landscape, with Hughes highlighting the company’s expansion and the unique challenges posed by diverse jurisdictions. Embracing challenges as opportunities, GLI places a strategic focus on fortifying cybersecurity defenses and aligning with emerging trends. The CCO also unveils GLI’s embrace of artificial intelligence (AI), showcasing its application in areas like responsible gaming and anti-money laundering.

Guided by Hughes’s optimistic outlook, the interview paints a dynamic future for the gaming industry, one where GLI’s commitment to excellence and foresight positions it as a vital catalyst for innovation and security in an ever-evolving global gaming arena.



**With just a few days left until the end of this year and with the pandemic already behind us, what assessment would you make of GLI—both at a corporate and operational level—in 2023?**

As we talk about making an assessment of GLI over the past year, it's important to say it's never been about GLI – it's about our clients and the industry. We have done everything we can to strengthen our resources, abilities, and offerings to ensure we are absolutely prepared to help our clients with anything and everything they need to keep the global gaming industry competitive with other parts of the entertainment industry, and to keep it operating as safely and compliantly as possible.

As we look back over the past year and over the last 35 years, where we have excelled is in meeting our customers wherever they are on their product journey. Our end-to-end integrated compliance and testing solutions are constructed so that the results from each stage of evaluation flow into the next and build from there. That allows us to help ensure the strength and compliance of the entire industry.

How we do that is from early regulatory advisory, QA, pre-compliance, and compliance testing, to load, performance, and interoperability testing, we work hard to provide every client, no matter their size or scope, with the information and services they need to get to market quickly. Whether projects are simple or complex, suppliers, regulators, and operators know they can count on GLI, because when it comes to delivering quality and accuracy – every part of the process matters.

**What are the main jurisdictions in which GLI has a presence and what new markets have they recently entered?**

As we started 2023, we were operating in 567 jurisdictions, and now we are in 707. We are continuously humbled by the trust regulators put in our global teams, and that's a responsibility we take incredibly seriously. Of course, what that means for suppliers



Ian Hughes visited GLI's specialists and engineers in Japan.

is we can help them get anywhere in the world they want to go –in 707 jurisdictions– quickly and compliantly.

**Regarding the latter, how has this experience turned out? What common difficulties (regulatory, economic, legal, or other) do you typically encounter in certifying equipment or games in some jurisdictions?**

One of the things that makes our job really fun is that each jurisdiction is different. Yes, there are broad similarities, and our GLI Standards Series helps regulators with rule-writing and policy; however, each jurisdiction has its own intricacies and nuances that work to meet its specific policy objectives.

Helping regulators balance those policy objectives with new and emerging technologies is an inspiring and exciting journey. Parallel to that is our work with suppliers who need to understand those jurisdictional nuances so they can be compliant. It makes each day different, and it makes each day fun.

**Convening regulatory entities is another key to the development of the industry. What assessment can you make of the Regulatory**

**Roundtables that GLI periodically organizes? What new features will the 2024 edition bring?**

For decades, we have staged our Roundtables so that regulators can get up-close and personal with the very latest technologies and hear about trends that are on the horizon. It's incredibly gratifying to me and to our team when regulators give us testimonials about why they think the Roundtable is important and how much the learning they get impacts their business.

This year will be no different. Our Roundtable takes place April 24 and 25 at the Palms Las Vegas, and we have an exciting agenda that covers the very latest trends and technologies, not the least of which are cybersecurity and AI. Cybersecurity continues to prove to be an absolutely imperative mission for the industry, and AI comes with a fantastic mix of potential benefits and possible threats.

**What processes does GLI have or apply to maintain its standards of quality and technological innovation in an increasingly competitive and regulated gaming sector?**

GLI works closely with tech innovators to understand the new technology







that is intended to be applied to the gaming industry, from which we ensure that our skilled engineering team is well-trained in the latest technology.

We work closely with regulators, operators, and suppliers within the gaming industry, and we also look beyond adjacent sectors such as banking as to how new technology is being applied. We see significant growth in cloud-based services, such as Azure and AWS.

We ensure that our engineering and compliance teams assess such changes on a global basis. We see certain jurisdictions having a higher emphasis on certain areas, which we see those jurisdictions leading in those areas, such as open banking and affordability in the UK or more robust AML systems being introduced in Australia.

We have high degrees of specialization within our engineering and compliance teams. For example, our compliance team focuses on global regions where we have regular in-person meetings with regulators to ensure we fully understand upcoming changes to technical standards. Our engineering teams are specialized in various areas such as mathematics, software, communications, and systems, which is

crucial to maintaining technical competence. Our training and test management systems are specifically designed for the gaming industry.

In summary, there are many elements of people, processes, and culture that combine to ensure GLI remains competitive with the highest quality of testing in a rapidly changing industry.

»»»» **“Our Roundtable covers the latest trends, including AI and cybersecurity, imperative for the industry.”**

**On this path, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is an essential element. Currently, have you incorporated, or do you plan to incorporate AI tools into your processes or designs?**

AI is a wide area, and it has a large role to play in the gaming industry. GLI has developed methods and a framework for the evaluation of AI in various applications. One of the greatest advan-

tages of AI is to process and leverage huge amounts of data for classification and prediction. Ours is a data-rich industry, with the amount of data being collected, increasing with the use of smart tables and enhanced KYC.

Applications for AI in areas such as responsible gaming, player churn, and anti-money laundering are just some of the examples that GLI is currently involved in. Developers who produce algorithms for categorization and prediction value GLI and the way we provide independent evaluation for the accuracy and precision of AI solutions.

Operators have increased confidence in the outcomes once they are independently verified and validated by GLI. AI also covers the area of generative AI, which is an interesting concept for the gaming industry in the evaluation of artificially generated images and math models.

From our perspective, using AI in our testing methods, we have been using automation in our testing, including the use of image recognition for the past few years and continue to investigate ways in which AI can improve the quality of testing and access to information and management of projects.

**Finally, what new challenges does GLI foresee for next 2024?**

Instead of challenges, we see things as opportunities. For example, the industry at large has an opportunity to shore up their cybersecurity defenses, and our Bulletproof division is an industry-leading force. In the U.S. there is a large opportunity with historical horse racing, and our teams are prepared to help regulators and operators embrace suppliers' HHR offerings.

The bottom line is, none of us knows what the future will bring, and because of that, the best strategy is to be prepared. Our clients in 707 jurisdictions rely on us to be ready for anything that comes next, and our mission is to help them be ready. I'm more excited than ever about gaming's future, and we are here to help our clients navigate whatever comes.