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The Massachusetts Gaming Commission Receives Six Month Public Safety Impact Report for Encore Boston Harbor *Analysis concludes casino influence on region's overall crime numbers is 'modest'*

During a remote public meeting on May 7, the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) was presented with a **Public Safety Impact Report**, analyzing changes in police data after six months of operations at Encore Boston Harbor (EBH). The study concluded that the facility's overall effect on the region's crime numbers is proportionate with a facility of similar size and guest capacity. EBH hosted nearly **three million** visitors in the first six months.

A legislative mandate requires the MGC to carry out an expansive and groundbreaking research agenda to understand the social and economic impacts of gambling in the Commonwealth, including the relationship between gambling and levels of crime.

MGC consultant and crime analyst Christopher Bruce conducted public safety research and analysis, building upon analysis from a November 2019 [baseline report](#). Mr. Bruce collected data from police records management systems in Everett, Boston, Chelsea, Lynn, Malden, Melrose, Revere, Somerville, and the Massachusetts State Police.

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

According to Mr. Bruce, "There was a modest increase in violent, property, and total crime as well as total calls for the Everett Police Department which may be linked to the casino." However, Mr. Bruce further noted, "Given that nothing existed at 1 Broadway before Encore, except a construction site, anything that happens at the casino specifically can be said to have directly contributed to an increase in crime in Everett, regardless if the casino influenced increases in crime in the area or not."

A summary of findings from the Six Month Public Safety Impact Report for Encore Boston Harbor:

- Hosting more than **3 million** visitors in its first six months of operation, Encore was the site of **124 arrests** and **506 ejections** during its first six months.



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- The facility itself (just considering incidents at the casino) led to a **9.5%** increase in violent crime, a **5.1%** increase in property crime, a **6%** increase in total crime, and a **4.1%** increase in calls for service for the city of Everett. These figures are not notably high, given the sheer number of people that Encore hosts.
- Overall violent, property, and total crime were within expected ranges for the region and most cities individually.
- Everett implemented a system to track incidents with a known Encore connection (primarily that either the victim or the offender was in the area to use the casino) but identified only three incidents that did not occur at the casino itself. Everett saw higher-than expected totals for murder, sexual assault, aggravated assault, thefts from buildings, fraud, and disorderly conduct, but in ways that were not spatially or logically influenced by Encore.
- An increase in Everett drunk driving crashes initially seemed to offer an Encore connection, with most of the incidents along Broadway Street near the casino, but a review of individual cases shows that the drivers were mostly coming from locations in a surrounding community.
- Among increases seen in other communities, patterns worth tracking and investigating fully include:
 - A pattern of residential thefts from vehicles in the Charlestown neighborhood of Boston.
 - Increases in crashes on many state roadways in the area.
 - Increases in thefts from residences and “con-game” style frauds in Everett
- The immediate areas around the casino showed few increases in crime or calls for service. The major exception is an increase in traffic complaints in neighborhoods to the north and east of Encore, perhaps reflecting patrons parking on local streets when the garage is full.

MGC Commissioner Eileen O’Brien said, “The MGC commends the continued cooperative spirit consistently demonstrated by our partners in state and local law enforcement, including casino civilian security personnel. Our shared objective is to ensure a safe and secure casino environment, collaboratively identifying and implementing effective, data-driven strategies to identify and mitigate public safety concerns inside the casino and surrounding community.”

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



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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 serves as an assistant professor of criminal justice at Husson University in Bangor, Maine.



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