

# Starworld gaming operations staff to earn, work less from next month

Gaming operations staff of Starworld Casino will from February 2, work four days less a month until the end of this year, which equals to a pay cut of 13.3 percent.

Affected positions are pit supervisors, dealer supervisors, dealers and gaming chips cashiers, and only those held by local Macau residents will be covered by the non-paid leave scheme.

Amid the global credit crunch, Starworld emphasised that they had first implemented a string of cost control measures and even sacked expatriate workers including those from the management level.

Lui Chi Woo, the chairman of Galaxy Entertainment Group, said in a public event yesterday that their performance in 2008 had dropped about 10 percent, which was „not bad when compared with a 30 to 40 percent decrease of most of the other casino operators“, TDM news reported.

In order to ensure employment of local residents, Starworld launched the voluntary non-paid leave program to „replace lay-offs“.

Between February 2 and December 31, 2009, monthly normal working days of the above mentioned employees will be deducted by four days and their salaries will also be decreased pro rata.

Each working day is still translated into eight hours and affected staff will still be able to enjoy a 24-hour day off every week.

Meanwhile, their salaries, which are the sum of basic salaries and tips guaranteed by the company, will see a reduction of 13.3 percent following the adoption of the scheme.

With regards to over-time work provided beyond the adjusted working hours, employees will be compensated according to the over-time work regulation in the labour law.

According to the statement from the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) yesterday, the Macau Federation of Trade Unions and the Macau Gaming Enterprises Personnel Association suggested to Starworld a number of changes for the scheme which were all accepted by the company.

Apart from other justified lay-offs, Starworld has promised not to fire any of the employees from the scheme in the future by citing the same reason of „having been affected by the global financial crisis“.

The company will also ensure that all over-time work will be equally carried out among those affected staff, and no new employees will be hired to hold the same or relevant positions before the original salary levels were restored.

At the same time, staff will be able to keep their four recesses in each working day and the total resting time will not be reduced. Of which, one break will last for no less than 30 minutes for meals.

Starworld has also committed to lift the non-paid leave scheme as soon as possible once „obvious improvements“ in Macau's overall gaming industry and business conditions are observed, even before the deadline of the scheme.

If agreed, the company would try to transfer the affected employees to hold better positions in any of their new business venues opening in the future.

As the staff will have more spare time after work, Starworld

has promised to collaborate with the government to design and organise tailor-made promotion training programs for them so that qualified employees will be able to take up mid and senior level job vacancies released amid the deportation of non-local staff.

Moreover, the federation and the association requested the government to cancel the related imported workers quotas of Starworld after the employees passed the training courses, so that more skilled local workers could take over the posts.