

Data breach at CGA: from investigation to action

Curaçao law requires personal and company information to be protected and stored properly. This also applies to the Curaçao Gaming Authority (CGA). CGA has a duty to protect clients who submit personal documents or confidential information when applying for a license. It makes every effort to do so. As with any organization, it is essential that clients can trust CGA to keep their information safe.

Even well-protected organizations can be affected by cyberattacks. Many well-known organizations have experienced this. CGA has now faced a similar situation. On 17 September, CGA discovered that a digital security researcher from Germany had gained access to its online gambling licensing portal without proper permission in December 2025. This person accessed and published data and confidential information belonging to online gambling license holders.

The data breach is a serious matter for CGA, the sector and the people involved. It resulted from criminal conduct by a person who accessed the portal without authorization and took information from it.

The sensitive nature of this case requires CGA to act quickly, carefully and effectively. Curaçao's position as an important international center for online gambling must be protected. At the same time, CGA must use all available means to protect the stolen data and limit its use, helping to protect its license holders.

CGA has therefore taken several measures to bring the situation under control and protect the sector. It has filed complaints and reported the incident to authorities in Curaçao, Germany and the Netherlands. It has also hired specialist companies to remove the information available on the internet. An independent technical investigation has been commissioned to establish the impact and consequences of the attack.

CGA is also considering civil legal action and remains in regular contact with the sector. These steps aim to support the continued operation of the sector and confidence in Curaçao as a country that licenses and supervises online gambling.

The reform and the choice of an external portal

According to the investigations carried out, unlawful access took place between December 2025 and September 2026. It affected the online gambling licensing portal and its database, which were managed by an external company.

In 2023, CGA, then known as the Gaming Control Board, began reforming the online gambling sector. It did so under instructions from the Minister of Finance and within the laws in force at the time.

One of the aims was to improve Curaçao's international reputation. Curaçao had faced considerable international criticism over the conduct of online gambling companies operating from the island. Until then, CGA's supervision had focused mainly on local gambling activities, including casinos, number games, Bingo and Bon Ku'né.

Several factors contributed to the reform. These included the agreements with the Netherlands under the Country Package, a growing number of player complaints and negative media



coverage. The upcoming CFATF assessment of Curaçao, which took place in June 2024, was another factor.

For these reasons, the Ministry of Finance decided in the second half of 2023 to begin the reform. It chose not to wait until the LOK, the new gambling law, came into force in December 2024.

The reform was a major undertaking that required specialist knowledge. CGA therefore initially brought in external parties with experience in technology, licensing and supervision in the online gambling sector.

An externally managed portal was selected for license applications and approvals, supported by dedicated CGA staff. The intention was to move to a portal managed internally at a later stage.

Since the start of the reform in 2024, CGA has hired 14 employees, mainly for licensing, supervision and enforcement. The aim is to build expertise in Curaçao and gradually reduce reliance on external advisers. Although external advisers supported the portal, CGA itself remained responsible for licensing and supervision.

CGA is moving to a different system

When the data breach was discovered in September, CGA first carried out an internal investigation and strengthened its security measures. The portal was then taken offline for an external investigation.

CGA subsequently decided not to reopen the portal and to replace it with a temporary solution. On 7 October, CGA announced that it would permanently stop using the existing licensing portal and end its use of the provider's regulatory services.

CGA is preparing to launch a temporary portal so that work can continue. At the same time, it is preparing to develop and manage a new portal.

The temporary portal must be carefully prepared before it can be used. This includes thorough security testing, checks for weaknesses that could allow unauthorized access, and checks that the portal works properly for both users in the sector and CGA staff.

Some areas for improvement have been identified. Work is currently focused on the following parts of the portal:

- **Internal system, digital seal and license register:** these are ready for security checks by independent specialists.
- **Client portal:** adjustments are being made. Security testing will follow once these are complete.

The temporary portal is scheduled to launch on Monday, 19 October 2026. It will support the continued handling of license applications and other supervision matters managed through the portal.

The license register and digital seal system are also scheduled to become available with the temporary portal. The digital seal is intended to show that a website holds a CGA license.



Closing the previous portal does not invalidate existing licenses. Companies with a CGA license must continue to meet their obligations. The portal is a tool that supports this work.

The future of the sector in Curaçao

With the LOK, Curaçao moved away from an outdated system of master licenses and sublicenses that brought no financial benefit to the country. Under the new system, CGA directly supervises online gambling operators.

This change aims to provide greater clarity, improve oversight and strengthen Curaçao's reputation as a country that regulates its gambling sector. This matters for player protection, public revenue, and the local businesses and professionals that provide services to the sector.

CGA, trust service providers, operators and government each have a role and a responsibility in making this work.

For Curaçao to continue benefiting financially from the sector, companies that are compliant must feel confident about continuing to operate from the island. That confidence depends on effective supervision, professional service, accurate information and clear decisions affecting the sector.

The way each party works, communicates, shares information and raises criticism shapes how operators and players view Curaçao as a base for online gambling.

As more information is handled digitally, organizations around the world face the risk of hacking and data breaches. This does not make what happened at CGA any less serious. It shows why digital security requires continuous attention.

CGA must limit the damage and use the investigation's findings to improve its security and working methods. To rebuild trust, the concerns of those affected must be heard and addressed.

All parties must share accurate information and base discussions on facts. They must listen to one another, correct what needs to be corrected, make clear agreements and keep them. This will help CGA move forward in Curaçao's interests. It will also help everyone understand what is happening, what to expect and how to proceed.

CGA is approaching only its second anniversary. As the LOK also approaches its second anniversary on 24 December, CGA invites the sector and everyone involved to continue the dialogue and contribute to a sector that benefits Curaçao.

By each taking responsibility, we can improve the system, strengthen trust and continue developing an online gambling sector that makes a substantial financial contribution to Curaçao.