

## IOU Patrol

We recommend the IOU patrol as the fundamental patrol to be used by surveillance personnel. IOU is an acronym for identify, observe, understand. These three components of a patrol accomplish everything that is needed for detection, response, investigation, and the gathering of evidence for any situation. Each investigator should patrol a different area of the property. It is suggested that you break down your patrols as follows: one investigator assigned to the pit and another to slots. Additional investigators should be assigned to back of the house or parking lots and garages, and other out buildings. Another setup is to assign one person to gaming and another to nongaming, or front of house and back of house. Again, if you have more than two investigators you can break it down further. The point is to patrol all aspects of the property. Many properties have only one investigator on duty. The IOU patrol may and still should be carried out. The patrol is the most effective method to detect crime regardless of the number of investigators on duty. You will find that if the IOU patrol is done properly, it will consistently detect situations or individuals who should be followed through further observation and investigation.

An IOU patrol is conducted as follows: Begin the patrol at a standard reference point such as blackjack table number one or slot section number one. At the first table (or machine, or area):

**Identify:** Using your camera, identify each person at the table, including players and employees. Also include individuals standing next to the game or in the immediate area. It is necessary to identify the game number and the status of the game, such as the denominations and amounts of checks in the tray or the face of the slot machine (i.e., payout meters, etc.). When you have identified the game, company funds or property, employees and players, you can move on to the next step. If you are performing the IOU patrol in the back of the house area or at a point of sale, use the same method by observing and recording all the employees in the area and the condition of the area at the time, or in the case of a

point of sale located at a bar, you must record everything in and around the cash register and those seated at the bar, including the lounge area, bar backs, and waitresses in service areas. Again, everything should be recorded that may be important in the event you must review for a specific individual or incident that occurred or may occur in that area.

**Observe:** Observe the play or activity for indicators or tells of advantage play, cheating, or theft. These indicators include violation of internal controls, policies, or procedures. Remember, almost every case of cheating or internal theft (and frequently, advantage play, such as hole card play) is due directly or indirectly to a weak control or poorly trained employee, not to mention those employees deliberately ignoring or violating a control for their own purposes. In table games, also observe the play for size of wagers, players' knowledge of basic strategy and overall skill level, players' wins/losses, and so forth. This is the period of time you will use to establish your priorities. For example, while observing players at a particular game, you should be able to eliminate quickly those players who are known, who are losing, wagering small amounts, betting flat, or making consistent basic strategy mistakes. Doing so will help you quickly focus on higher action players moving their bets, playing strong basic strategy, or displaying tells of advantage play or cheating.

**Understand:** The final component of the IOU patrol is to "understand" the activity or action. What this means is that you must determine if it is legitimate play or if it is suspicious. If the play is legitimate (no violation of policy, procedure, controls by employees, no tells of advantage play, cheating or theft, etc.), the operator can move on to the next player, game, or area in the patrol. If the play or activity is suspicious for any reason, further observation and investigation are necessary and, in fact, required in order to protect the property properly. Think about it: you may have spent hours looking at normal activity and now you finally find something, no matter how small or insignificant, that is suspicious or outside normal parameters, you're in the right place at the right time! An IOU patrol on a specific game is not complete until the investigator "understands" the action on the table or in the area. This often will

mean that the investigator can confidently say that the activity is normal, the action is not unusual, and policy and procedures are being followed. I usually use the guideline in Blackjack of being able to predict the amount of a player's next wager. When you can correctly predict what a player will wager on an upcoming hand, you can safely say you understand his or her play and make the decision as to whether further observation is warranted. You can also apply this premise to any area—slots, point of sale (POS), warehouse—when you can “understand” that procedures are being followed and that the activity is normal, you can then move on. By the way, understanding the game is often where investigators, especially new ones, get tripped up. They don't know when to say they “understand” and often continue to look at a game far longer than they need to. The same can be said of those investigators who haven't taken the time to learn the skills they need or they just don't care. Either one requires a supervisor to step in to help or discipline the investigator as needed. Please note that an IOU patrol on a specific game, slot machine, or area may take anywhere from two minutes to eight hours. Of course, eight hours would be an extremely long period of time to evaluate a game or area; however, the point is that the operator, when he or she has determined the play is normal, should move on as quickly as possible. On the other hand, if the operator remains suspicious or uncomfortable with the play or the player(s), then this is the action to observe, and the place the operator should be and, in fact, is paid to be. The operator must stay with the action for as long as it takes until it is “understood” what the action is and what the proper response to it should be. We can't stress enough the importance of speed, knowledge, and skill for an operator. You must always keep in mind that someone is out there on your property cheating, stealing, or otherwise harming your fellow employees or the guests of your property. If it is not occurring on the table, machine, or area that you're looking at, its occurring somewhere else, and you must detect (find out) where that is.