

SIXTH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL
**2026 CASINO SURVEILLANCE
SURVEY REPORT**



IACSP
International Association of Certified Surveillance Professionals

eConnect

Raving

TG&H
TRIBAL GAMING AND HOSPITALITY

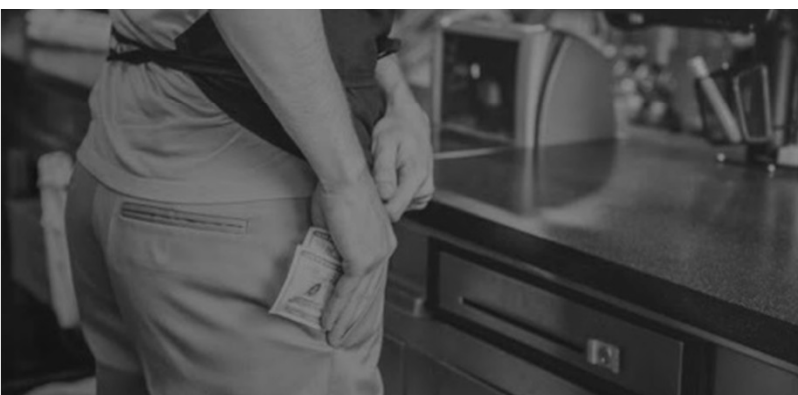


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Questions with an “other” answer option, and open-ended text questions, are listed in a separate addendum to this report.

INTRODUCTION

The 2026 International Casino Surveillance Survey shows that surveillance departments are expanding beyond traditional observation roles. Technology, data, and intelligence are helping surveillance play a larger role in protecting assets, supporting investigations, and managing operational risk.

The 2026 International Casino Surveillance Survey is the gaming industry's only comprehensive benchmarking study dedicated exclusively to casino surveillance operations and marks its sixth consecutive year of publication.

Over six years, the survey has become the industry's leading source for measuring trends in surveillance operations, staffing, budgets, technology adoption, training, and emerging operational challenges.

The study provides year-over-year benchmarking across commercial, Tribal, cruise ship, and participating international gaming operations, enabling surveillance leaders to compare their organizations with industry peers and make more informed strategic and operational decisions.

This report includes:

- **Six years of trend data (2021–2026)** covering staffing, compensation, budgets, operations, technology, training, and emerging threats
- **Benchmark comparisons** by casino type and property size that provide context for year-over-year analysis
- **Research-based analysis** highlighting significant industry trends, operational changes, and evolving surveillance practices.
- **Executive insights and practical recommendations** that translate survey findings into operational strategies for surveillance leaders.

INTRODUCTION TO THE 2026 STUDY

The **2026 International Casino Surveillance Survey** was developed with extensive input from casino surveillance professionals to examine current operational practices, emerging challenges, and industry trends.

All survey responses are anonymous. No information is reported that could identify an individual respondent or participating casino. Protecting respondent confidentiality encourages candid participation and strengthens the survey's value as a trusted industry benchmarking resource.

The survey was conducted online **from June 23 through July 24, 2026**, using email invitations, a survey link, and QR codes distributed to members of the **International Association of Certified Surveillance Professionals (IACSP)** and clients of **eConnect** and **Raving Consulting Company**. The survey was designed and administered by **Debra Hilgeman, Ph.D., Senior Research Partner, Raving Consulting Company**.

The survey is co-sponsored by the **International Association of Certified Surveillance Professionals (IACSP)**, **eConnect**, and **Tribal Gaming & Hospitality Magazine**, a division of Raving Consulting Company. We thank every casino and surveillance professional who participated. Their continued support has helped establish this survey as the gaming industry's leading benchmarking study dedicated exclusively to casino surveillance operations.

Interested in participating in the 2027 International Casino Surveillance Survey?
Contact **Derk Boss, President, IACSP** at djboss49@gmail.com.

Industry Trends Shaping Casino Surveillance in 2026

The **2026 International Casino Surveillance Survey** reveals an industry that continues to expand its operational influence while adapting to increasingly sophisticated risks and rapidly evolving technology. Although surveillance departments remain focused on traditional priorities such as internal theft, advantage play, and cheating, the survey demonstrates a growing emphasis on intelligence-led investigations, advanced technology, information sharing, and enterprise-wide risk management.

Key Industry Trends

- **Casino surveillance continues to strengthen its strategic role**, with many departments reporting strong access to executive leadership and increased involvement in operational decision-making.
- **Internal theft and fraud remain the industry's highest operational concern**, identified by **92%** of survey respondents, reinforcing the continued importance of proactive investigations and internal controls.
- **Advantage play, cheating, and cyber threats now represent the next tier of operational priorities**, demonstrating the expanding scope of surveillance responsibilities.
- **Technology adoption continues to accelerate**. Facial recognition usage has increased from **25% of responding properties in 2021 to 59% in 2026**, while ID scanning solutions have grown to **67%** of participating casinos.
- **Technology is delivering measurable operational value**. More than **80% of properties using facial recognition** reported a fairly large or huge positive impact on identifying criminal activity and undesirable individuals.

KEY INDUSTRY TRENDS (continued)

- **Information sharing and intelligence platforms have become standard investigative resources**, improving collaboration and investigative effectiveness across jurisdictions.
- **Operational reporting systems are widely available**, yet survey results indicate that information analysis remains an area with significant opportunity for continued growth.
- **Surveillance departments continue investing in both personnel and technology**, reflecting the profession's evolution from traditional observation toward intelligence-driven operations.

Executive Perspective:

The survey findings indicate that casino surveillance is increasingly functioning as an enterprise risk management partner—combining experienced personnel, advanced technology, operational intelligence, and cross-functional collaboration to protect gaming operations, assets, employees, and guests.

2026 SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

Each section summarizes the survey's key findings, the data supporting those findings, and their implications for surveillance operations and executive decision-making.

Section 1 — Respondent Profile & Department Characteristics

- The 2026 respondent profile remained consistent with previous surveys, supporting reliable year-over-year benchmarking.
- Responses represented **92 casino properties** across **26 U.S. states and international markets**, providing broad industry representation.
- The consistency of the respondent base strengthens confidence that observed trends reflect meaningful industry changes rather than shifts in survey participation.

Section 2 — Department Structure

- Surveillance departments continue reporting strong executive access, reinforcing their strategic role within casino operations.
- **Half of all respondents (51%)** rated executive access as excellent.
- Staffing remains relatively stable, but technical expertise continues to be one of the industry's most valuable and difficult-to-replace resources.

Section 3 — Wages & Budgets

- Compensation results were mixed in 2026.
- **43%** reported agent/observer wages above \$20 per hour, down from 50% in 2025, while **59%** reported supervisor salaries above \$50,000, up from 51%.
- Department and training-budget trends are less conclusive because a large percentage of respondents were unsure of their budgets.

Section 4 — Cheating Overview

- Traditional cheating remains a core operational responsibility despite advances in surveillance technology.
- Survey results indicate that experienced surveillance personnel remain the primary defense against evolving cheating techniques.
- Technology enhances investigations, but successful detection continues to depend on operator experience and strong investigative practices.

Section 5 — Advantage Play

- Advantage play remains one of Surveillance's most persistent operational challenges.
- Respondents continue reporting increasing sophistication in player techniques that require specialized knowledge and investigative resources.
- Successful programs increasingly combine experienced personnel with intelligence sharing and advanced Surveillance technology.

Section 6 — Internal Theft/Fraud

- Internal theft continues to represent one of the industry's most significant financial risks.
- Employee theft remains a major investigative priority across both commercial and tribal gaming operations.
- Strong internal controls, proactive auditing, and cross-department cooperation remain essential for reducing organizational risk.

Section 7 — Operations Trends

- Live observation and video review continue consuming the largest share of surveillance resources.
- Most departments spend **30% or less** of their time conducting information analysis, highlighting an opportunity to better leverage surveillance intelligence.
- As surveillance technology generates more operational data, departments are expected to devote increasing resources to intelligence analysis and proactive investigations.

Section 8 — Technology

- Technology adoption continues accelerating across casino surveillance operations.
- **Facial recognition is now used by 59% of surveyed casinos**, while **67%** report using ID scanning technology.
- Modern surveillance increasingly combines advanced technology with experienced personnel to improve investigations, intelligence sharing, and enterprise security.

Section 9 — Top Threats

- Internal theft/fraud remains the industry's highest-ranked operational threat.
- **92% of respondents** identified internal theft as a top concern, followed by advantage play (**53%**), cheating (**50%**), and cyber threats (**49%**).
- The convergence of physical and cyber risks continues expanding surveillance's role beyond traditional observation into enterprise-wide risk management.

SECTION ONE

RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

RESEARCH INSIGHT

"Six years of participation have established this survey as the casino Surveillance profession's leading benchmarking resource. Its value comes not only from the number of participants, but from the diversity of commercial, Tribal, cruise ship, online, and international gaming operations represented. This breadth allows Surveillance leaders to benchmark with confidence and better understand the trends shaping the profession."

Debra Hilgeman, Ph.D.
Senior Research Partner, Raving Consulting Company

SECTION ONE: RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS



60% of participating casinos are commercial
40% are Tribal casinos

A total of 92 completed surveys were received. Each participating property submitted one completed survey.

Participating properties represented 26 U.S. states. The five states with the greatest participation were:

- **Nevada**
- **California**
- **Washington**
- **Oklahoma**
- **Michigan**

16% of participating properties were located outside the United States, representing operations in: *Australia, Canada, China (Macau), Cypress, Guyana, Manila, Mexico, New Zealand, Philippines, St. Maarten, Suriname, Uganda and Viet Nam.*

SECTION 1 OVERVIEW: RESPONDENT PROFILE

Analysis

The respondent profile remained highly consistent with previous survey years, providing a stable foundation for meaningful six-year trend analysis. The diversity of participating properties by casino type and property size allows the findings throughout this report to serve as reliable industry benchmarks for staffing, operations, budgets, technology adoption, and emerging surveillance practices.

Key Findings

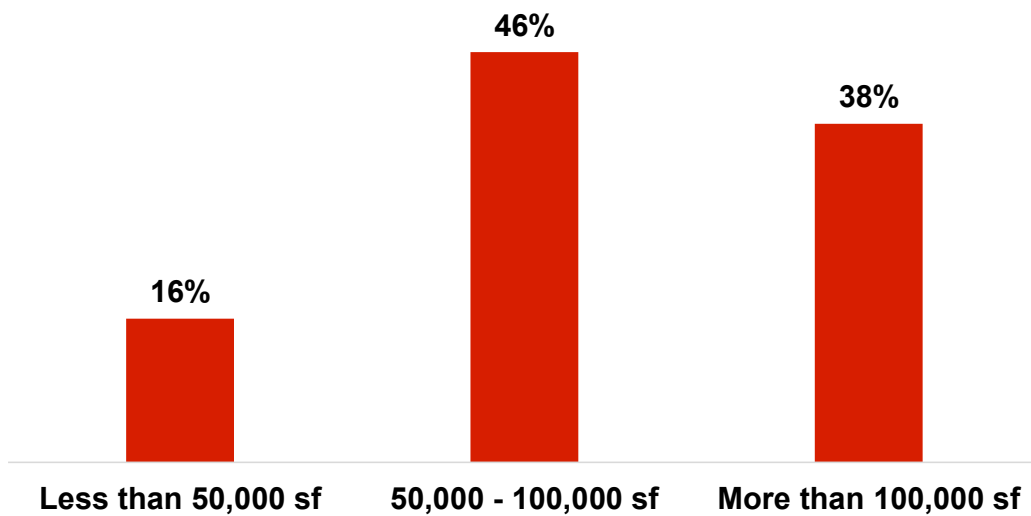
- The 2026 respondent profile closely mirrors previous survey years, supporting reliable year-over-year comparisons.
- Commercial, tribal, cruise ship, and international gaming operations are all represented, providing broad industry perspective.
- Properties of all gaming floor sizes participated, allowing comparisons by casino size throughout the report.
- The consistency of the respondent base strengthens confidence that observed changes represent industry trends rather than shifts in survey participation.

Why This Matters

- Six years of consistent data provide one of the industry's strongest surveillance benchmarks.
- Property-size and casino-type comparisons make the findings more actionable.
- The consistency of respondents increases confidence that trends reflect real operational changes.

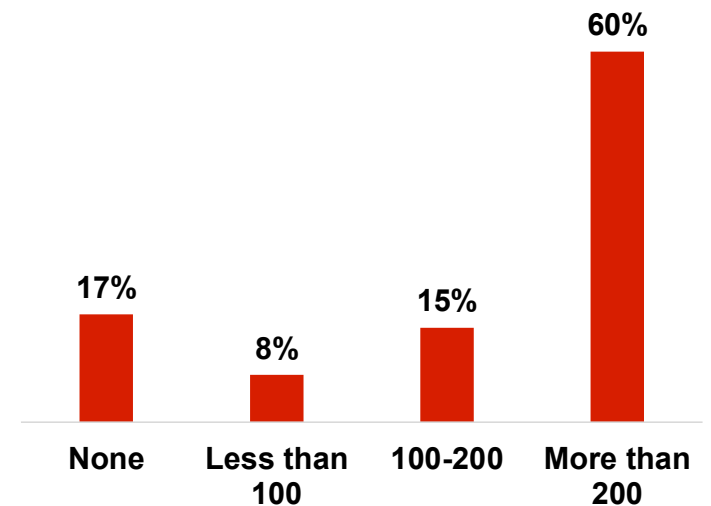
SECTION ONE: RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Gaming space size



Property size categories provide the basis for comparative analyses presented throughout this report.

Hotel rooms



SECTION TWO

DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

EXPERT OPINION

"An effective surveillance department is built on more than technology—it depends on organizational structure, leadership, and the people who operate it. As surveillance responsibilities continue to expand, understanding how departments are organized, staffed, and supported provides valuable insight into the evolving role of surveillance within today's gaming industry. The findings in this section offer an important benchmark for surveillance leaders evaluating their own organizational structure and preparing for future operational demands."

Derk J. Boss, CFE, CPP, CSP
President, International Association of Certified Surveillance Professionals (IACSP)



SECTION TWO

BEST PRACTICES



Recommended best practices for strengthening surveillance operations, based on 2026 survey findings:

1. Position surveillance as a strategic business function.

Establish regular communication between surveillance leadership and executive management to ensure surveillance insights contribute to operational decision-making, risk management, and regulatory compliance.

2. Align staffing with operational demands.

Regularly evaluate staffing levels, organizational structure, and workload to ensure surveillance departments have the resources necessary to support expanding responsibilities, including investigations, technology management, compliance, and guest safety.

3. Invest in leadership and technical expertise.

As surveillance systems become more sophisticated, organizations should continue developing supervisory, investigative, and technical skills through professional training, succession planning, and cross-functional collaboration.

SECTION 2 OVERVIEW: DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

Analysis

Casino surveillance departments remained organizationally stable in 2026, with strong executive access reported across most properties. However, staffing depth and technical resources continue to vary significantly by property size, suggesting that smaller operations face greater challenges in maintaining specialized surveillance capabilities. Overall, the data indicate that surveillance is increasingly recognized as a strategic business function, but workforce capacity remains uneven across the industry.

Key Findings

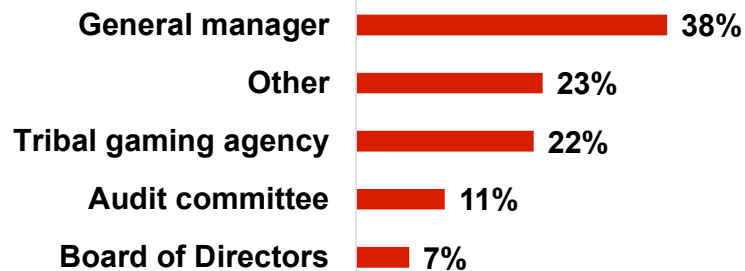
- **51%** of surveillance departments reported **excellent access to executive management**, while only **9%** reported limited or no access.
- **55%** of properties employ **more than 15 surveillance agents/observers**, reflecting stable staffing levels at larger operations.
- **53%** of departments have **more than three supervisors**, indicating continued investment in frontline leadership.
- **48%** of properties employ **more than two technical support personnel**, although **11% of casinos under 50,000 square feet have no dedicated technical staff**.

Why This Matters

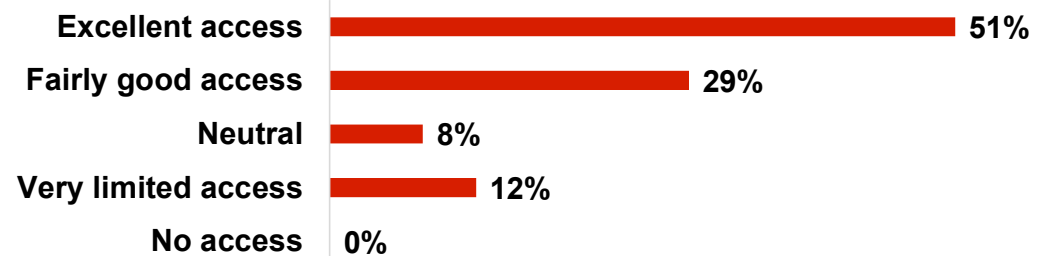
- Strong executive access supports surveillance's role as an enterprise risk management function.
- Smaller properties remain at a disadvantage in technical staffing, creating potential gaps in system maintenance, analytics, and technology deployment.
- As surveillance technology becomes more sophisticated, technical expertise is becoming as important as traditional observation skills.

SECTION TWO: DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

Surveillance reporting structure



Level of access to top management



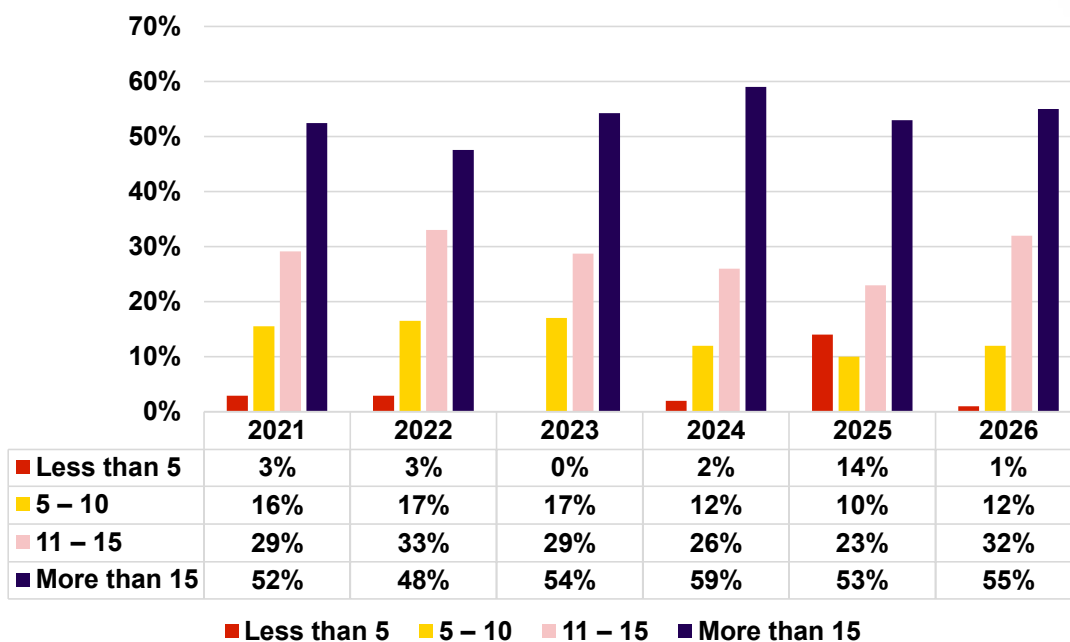
Management Access: Commercial & Tribal

2026: 46% of commercial casinos have “excellent access” to top management compared to 45% of tribal casinos

Six-year trend:

Executive access has remained consistently strong throughout the six-year survey period. Although commercial casinos have historically reported higher levels of direct access to top management, the difference between commercial and tribal operations has steadily narrowed. In 2026, both groups reported nearly identical levels of excellent executive access (46% commercial; 45% tribal), suggesting that surveillance leadership has become increasingly integrated into executive decision-making across the industry.

2021-2026: Agents/observers per property



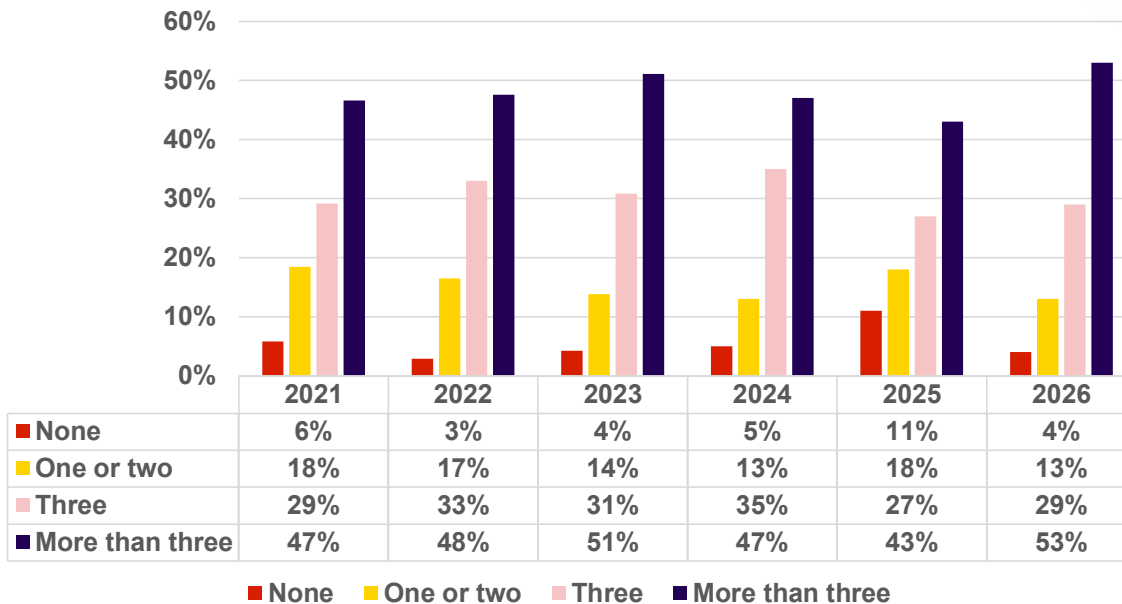
SECTION TWO: DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

2026: Agents/observers by gaming floor size

Number of Agents/ Observers	Less than 50,000 sf	50,000 – 100,000 sf	More than 100,000 sf
Less than 5	5%	0%	0%
5 – 10	26%	9%	3%
11 – 15	26%	43%	23%
More than 15	42%	49%	74%

SECTION TWO: DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

2021-2026: Supervisors per property



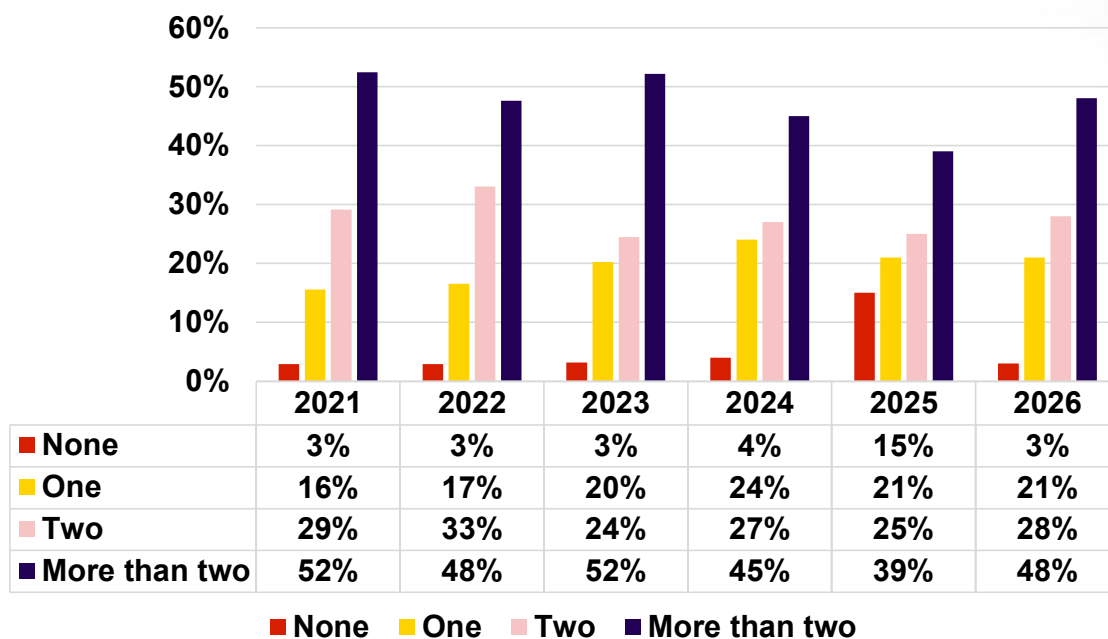
(Supervisors excludes directors/managers)

2026: Supervisors by gaming floor size

Number of supervisors	Less than 50,000 sf	50,000 – 100,000 sf	More than 100,000 sf
None	11%	0%	3%
One or two	26%	11%	10%
Three	11%	43%	23%
More than three	53%	47%	64%

SECTION TWO: DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

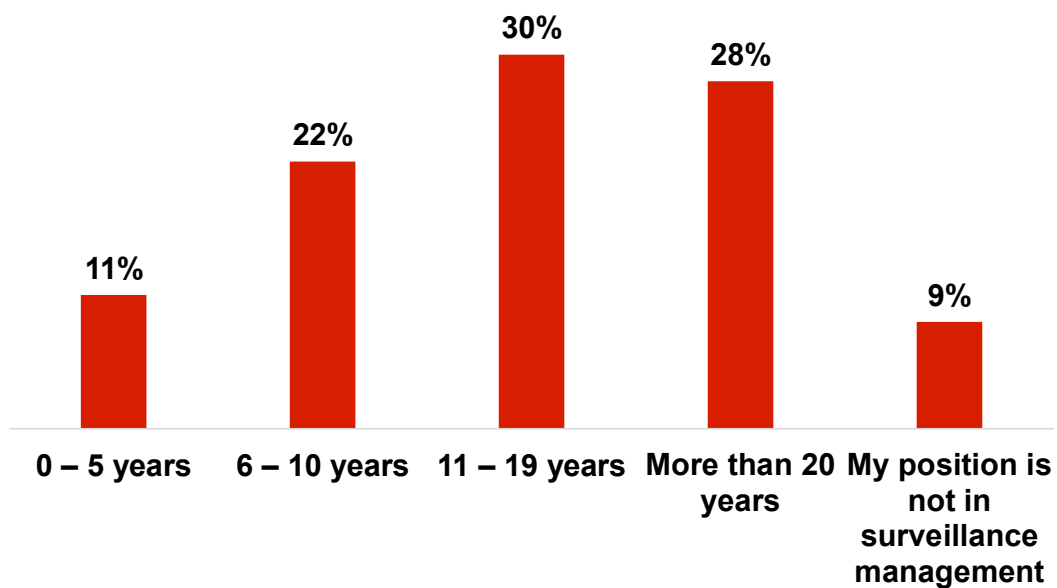
2021-2026: Technical personnel per property



2026: Technical personnel by gaming floor size

Number of technical personnel	Less than 50,000 sf	50,000 – 100,000 sf	More than 100,000 sf
None	11%	2%	0%
One	47%	21%	8%
Two	21%	36%	21%
More than two	21%	40%	72%

Years of surveillance management experience



SECTION TWO: DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE



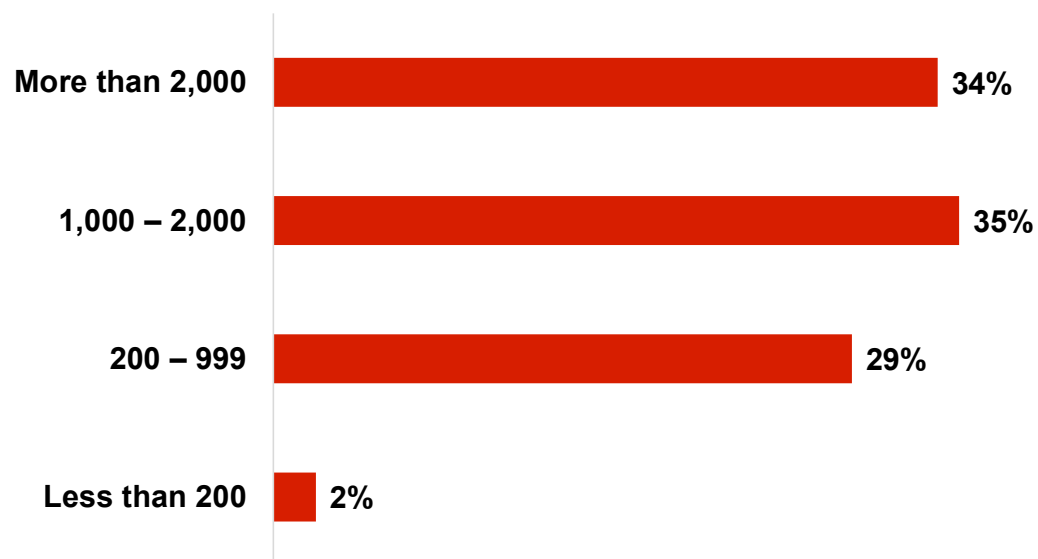
RESPONDENT COMMENTS

“One thing I would add is the importance of maintaining the human element in surveillance operations. While data analytics and intelligence tools are increasingly valuable, we should be careful not to become overly reliant on them at the expense of human judgment, experience, and interaction.”

** Respondent comments are not edited

SECTION TWO: DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

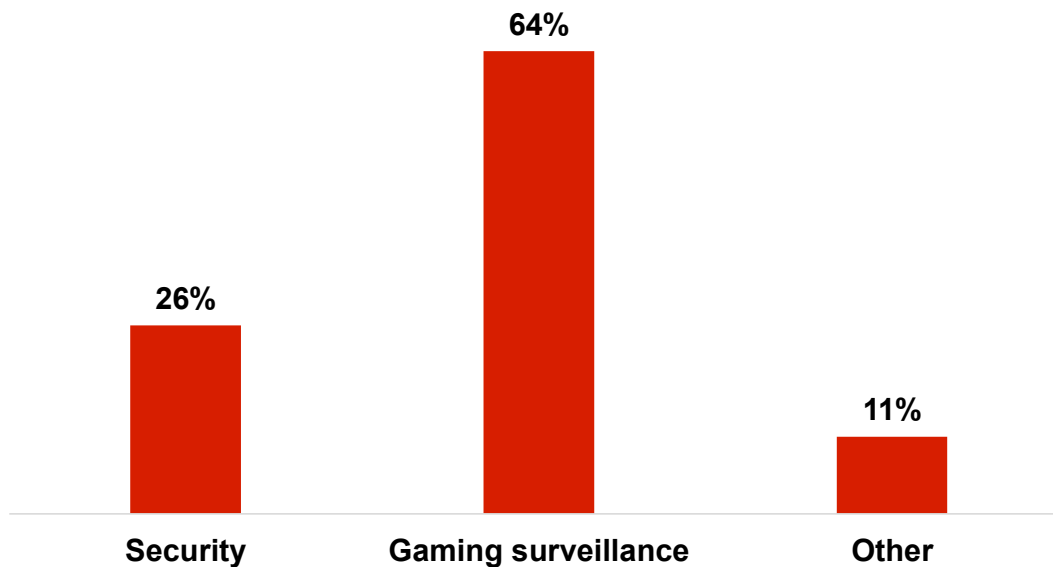
Surveillance cameras per property



2026: Cameras by gaming floor size

Number of Cameras	Less than 50,000 sf	50,000 – 100,000 sf	More than 100,000 sf
Less than 200	16%	0%	0%
200 – 999	53%	36%	8%
1,000 – 2,000	26%	47%	23%
More than 2,000	5%	17%	69%

Responsibility for hotel and parking cameras



SECTION TWO: DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE



RESPONDENT COMMENTS

"IACSP/this survey/all of the webinars are invaluable. I appreciate all of the work behind the scenes by the unnamed people.!"

**** Respondent comments are not edited**

SECTION THREE

WAGES AND BUDGETS

EXPERT OPINION:

"Compensation remains one of the biggest challenges facing casino surveillance. While supervisor salaries continue to improve, agent and observer wages slipped slightly from last year's peak, reminding us that recruiting and retaining experienced personnel remains highly competitive. Larger properties continue to have an advantage in both compensation and available resources, while smaller operations must often accomplish the same mission with fewer people and tighter budgets. The survey also shows that many surveillance leaders have limited visibility into department and training budgets, reinforcing the importance of stronger communication between surveillance and executive management as departments continue to expand their operational role."

Derk J. Boss, CFE, CPP, CSP
President, IACSP



SECTION THREE

BEST PRACTICES



Recommended best practices to increase wages, staff retention, and training budget:

1. Link wage progression directly to measurable training and certification achievements to reinforce skill development.
2. Create and maintain a property-specific surveillance knowledge base, supported by dedicated reading materials, peer discussions, and vendor-led workshops.
3. Develop a cross-departmental training model that incorporates gaming operations, internal audit, compliance, and AML, framing surveillance as a property-wide asset.
4. Partner with professional associations like IACSP and ASIS International to elevate industry credentials and establish benchmarking against peers.
5. Explore co-funding opportunities with surveillance, security, gaming, and marketing departments for specialized training or technology acquisition.

SECTION 3 OVERVIEW: WAGES & BUDGETS

Analysis

Compensation results were mixed in 2026. The percentage of properties reporting agent/observer wages above \$20 per hour declined from 50% to 43%, although it remains substantially higher than in 2021. Supervisor compensation continued to improve, with 59% reporting salaries above \$50,000. Department and training-budget results were less conclusive because a large share of respondents selected “not sure.”

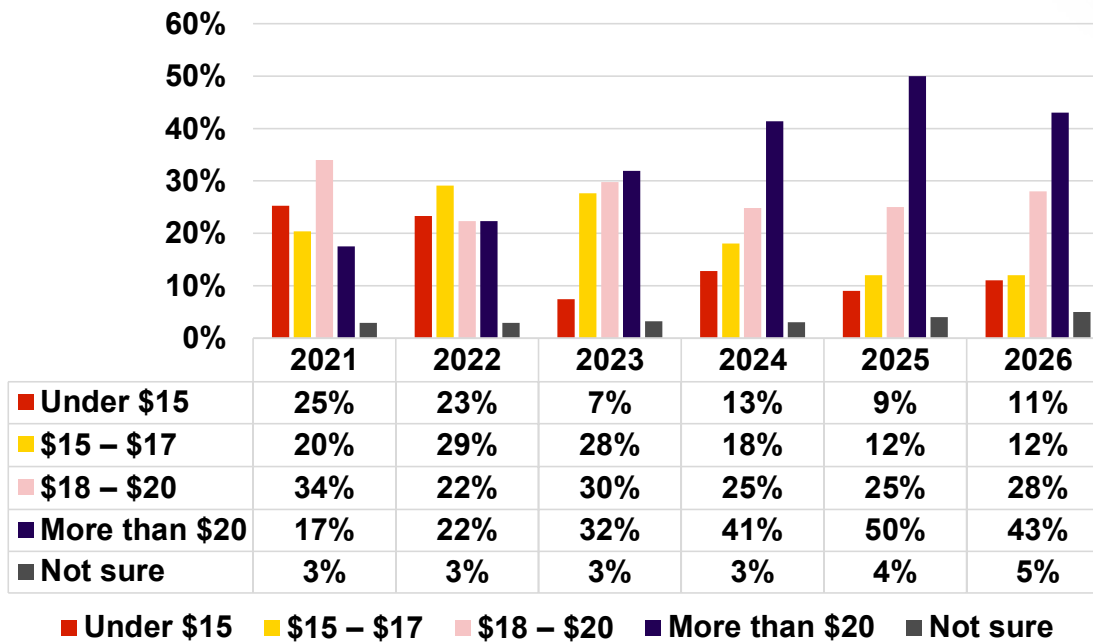
Key Findings

- **43%** reported agent/observer wages above **\$20 per hour**, down from **50% in 2025**.
- **59%** reported supervisor salaries above **\$50,000**, up from **51% in 2025**.
- The share of departments with budgets of **\$500,000 or less remained at 12%**.
- Budget comparisons should be interpreted cautiously because **40% were unsure of their department budget** and **34% were unsure of their training budget**.
- Larger properties generally reported higher compensation and greater budget capacity than smaller operations

Why This Matters

- Competitive compensation remains important for recruiting and retaining qualified surveillance personnel.
- Limited visibility into department and training budgets makes year-over-year investment trends difficult to assess.
- Smaller properties continue to face greater resource constraints than larger operations.

2021-2026: Average hourly rate for agent/observer



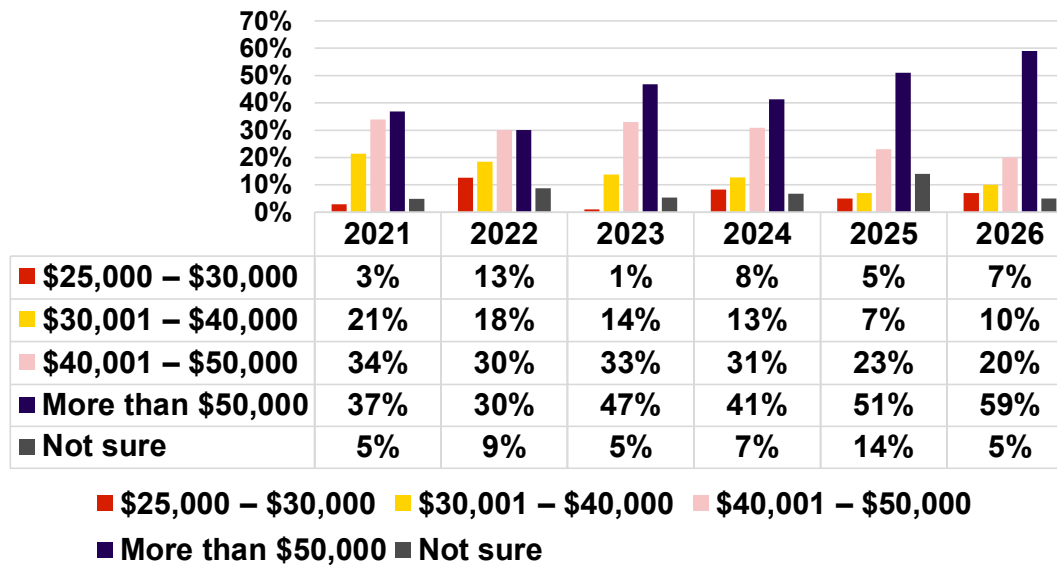
SECTION THREE: WAGES AND BUDGETS

2026: Average hourly rate by gaming floor size

Hourly Rate for agent/observer	Less than 50,000 sf	50,000 – 100,000 sf	More than 100,000 sf
Under \$15	21%	11%	10%
\$15 – \$17	11%	15%	0%
\$18 – \$20	11%	34%	31%
More than \$20	42%	36%	51%
Not sure	16%	4%	8%

SECTION THREE: WAGES AND BUDGETS

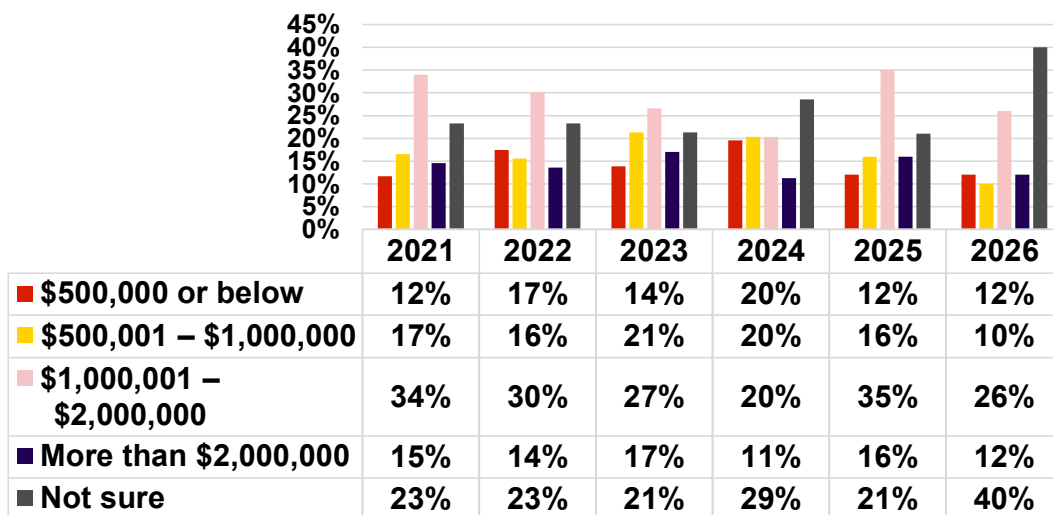
2021-2026: Average annual salary for surveillance supervisors



2026: Supervisor salary by gaming floor size

Wage	Less than 50,000 sf	50,000 – 100,000 sf	More than 100,000 sf
\$25,000 – \$30,000	5%	6%	8%
\$30,001 – \$40,000	26%	6%	5%
\$40,001 – \$50,000	16%	28%	5%
More than \$50,000	42%	55%	74%
Not sure	11%	4%	8%

2021-2026: Annual surveillance department budget



■ \$500,000 or below ■ \$500,001 – \$1,000,000
 ■ \$1,000,001 – \$2,000,000 ■ More than \$2,000,000
 ■ Not sure

SECTION THREE: WAGES AND BUDGETS

2026: Annual surveillance department budget by gaming floor size

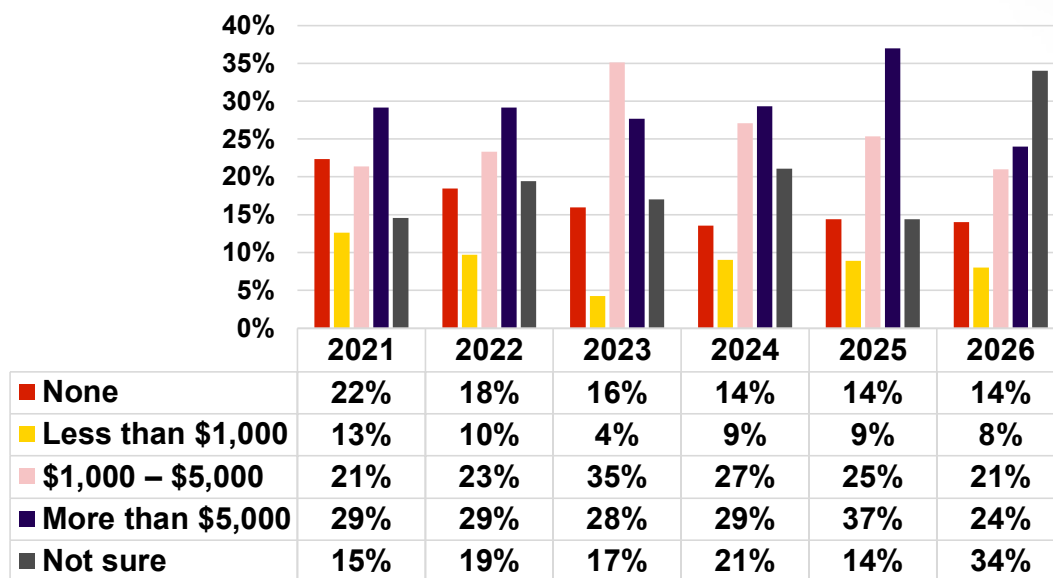
Department budget	Less than 50,000 sf	50,000 – 100,000 sf	More than 100,000 sf
\$500,000 or below	17%	11%	10%
\$500,001 – \$1,000,000	22%	11%	0%
\$1,000,001 – \$2,000,000	11%	30%	26%
More than \$2,000,000	0%	9%	23%
Not sure	50%	40%	41%

RESPONDENT COMMENTS

“Surveillance is often overlooked/under valued by upper management because we are non-revenue generating. Being unable to get information/tools to help/improve our job is difficult. We are unable to get some programs with our budget, and even if other departments wanted to share the cost of such tools, budget restraints do not allow it. It is frustrating.”

** Respondent comments are not edited

2021-2026: Annual surveillance training budget



■ None ■ Less than \$1,000 ■ \$1,000 – \$5,000
 ■ More than \$5,000 ■ Not sure

SECTION THREE: WAGES AND BUDGETS

2026: Annual surveillance training budget by gaming floor size

Annual budget	Less than 50,000 sf	50,000 – 100,000 sf	More than 100,000 sf
None	12%	19%	8%
Less than \$1,000	6%	4%	13%
\$1,000 – \$5,000	6%	28%	18%
More than \$5,000	29%	19%	28%
Not sure	47%	30%	33%

RESPONDENT COMMENTS

“Training is key with technology and scams getting so advanced. With an extremely busy property training time is hard to come by. Employee retention has also been very challenging in recent years due to other opportunities where more money can be made. Raise the pay for the qualifications and workload to retain the good employees.”

** Respondent comments are not edited

SECTION FOUR

CHEATING OVERVIEW

DEFINITION OF CHEATING IN THIS SURVEY:

“For consistency across all annual casino surveillance surveys, ‘cheating’ refers to actions by an individual or group—acting independently or in collusion with casino employees—to obtain an unearned advantage over the casino through deception, manipulation, or unauthorized information.

Examples include:

Wagering after the outcome is known (past posting, top-hatting)

Obtaining protected information through deceptive or unauthorized means (such as card marking, hidden recording devices, or electronic assistance)

Receiving unearned benefits through collusion or manipulation of casino procedures (such as paid losing bets, false player ratings, or social engineering)

Additional examples include color-up scams, edge sorting, front-money scams, and other schemes intended to obtain an unfair advantage.

**Derk J. Boss, CFE, CPP, CSP
President, IACSP**



SECTION 4: CHEATING OVERVIEW

Analysis

Cheating remains a core responsibility of casino surveillance, although the nature of incidents continues to evolve. Traditional game protection remains important, while surveillance departments increasingly rely on technology, training, and intelligence sharing to identify sophisticated cheating methods and organized activity.

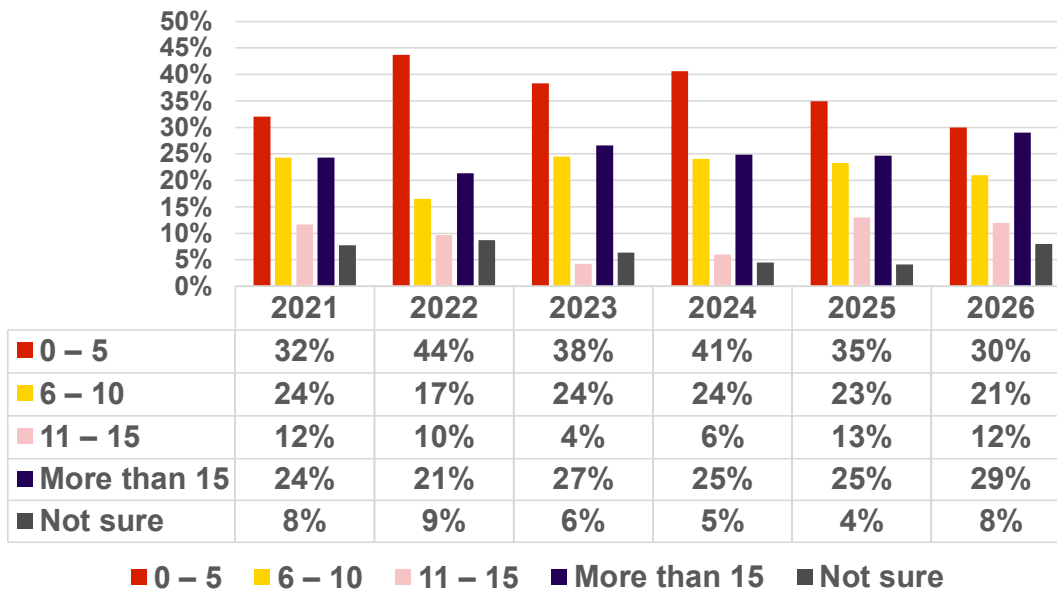
Key Findings

- Cheating remains one of the industry's **top operational concerns**, ranking among the highest surveillance priorities.
- Survey responses indicate that **technology-assisted investigations** are becoming increasingly common.
- Departments continue investing in **training and operational procedures** to address evolving cheating methods.
- In 2026, **29% reported more than 15 cheating events**, up from about 25% in 2025; live surveillance detection was **68%**, surveillance investigation/audit **66%**, and reporting by the involved department **61%**.

Why This Matters

- Cheating methods continue to evolve alongside advances in gaming technology.
- Success increasingly depends on combining experienced investigators with modern surveillance technology.
- Continuous training and information sharing remain essential to protecting game integrity.

2021-2026: Cheating events per property during previous calendar year

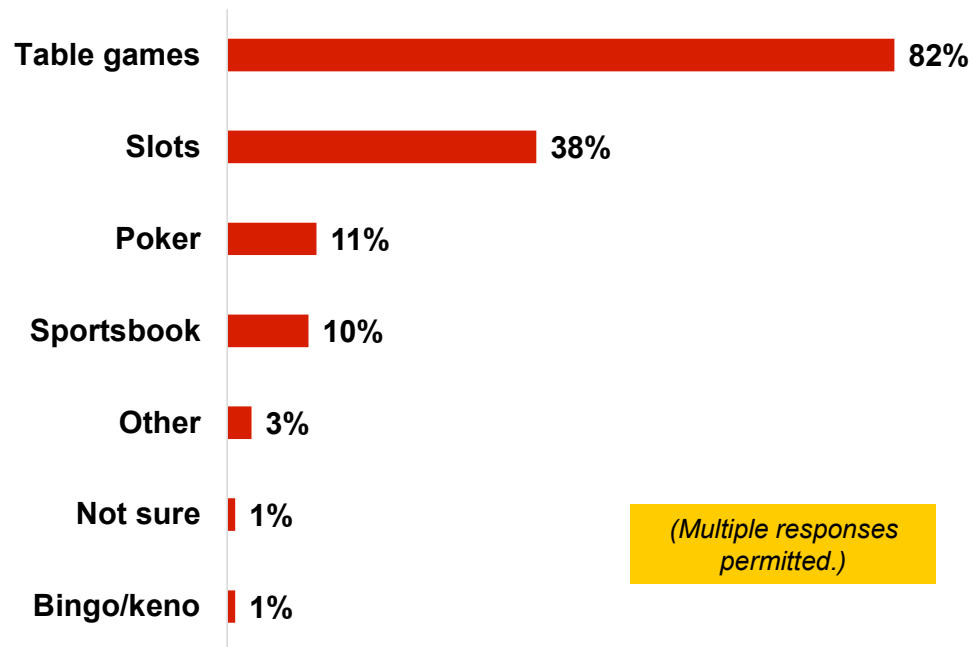


SECTION FOUR: CHEATING OVERVIEW

2026: Total cheating events in 2025 by gaming floor size

Number of events	Less than 50,000 sf	50,000 – 100,000 sf	More than 100,000sf
0 – 5	47%	34%	23%
6 – 10	18%	13%	21%
11 – 15	2%	11%	13%
More than 15	12%	32%	36%
Not sure	12%	11%	8%

Where cheating occurred



(Multiple responses permitted.)

SECTION FOUR: CHEATING OVERVIEW



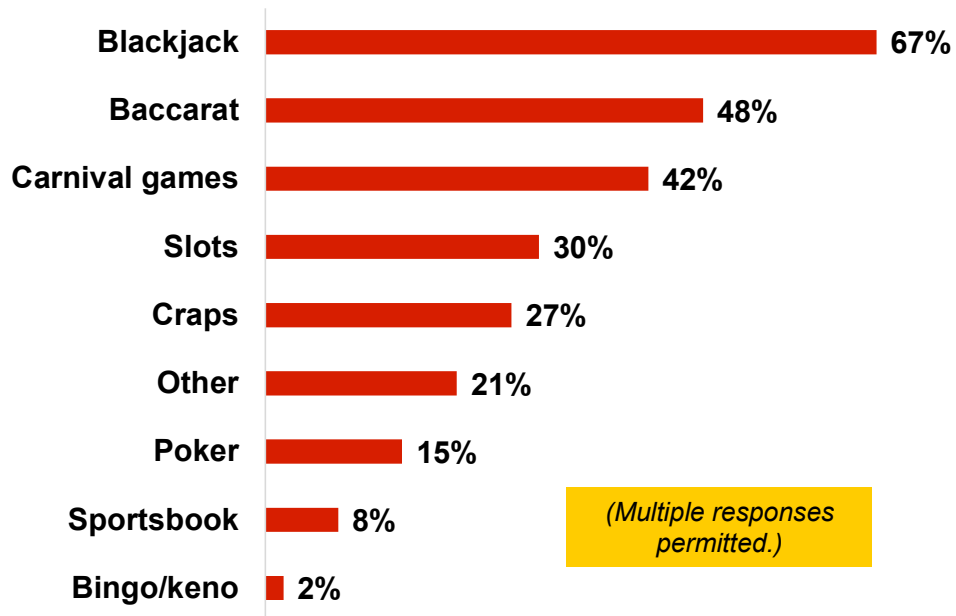
RESPONDENT COMMENTS

"It is common knowledge most cheating schemes originate outside of the USA, the greatest losses to casinos in the USA to my knowledge and what's reported by the media, have come via foreign visitors."

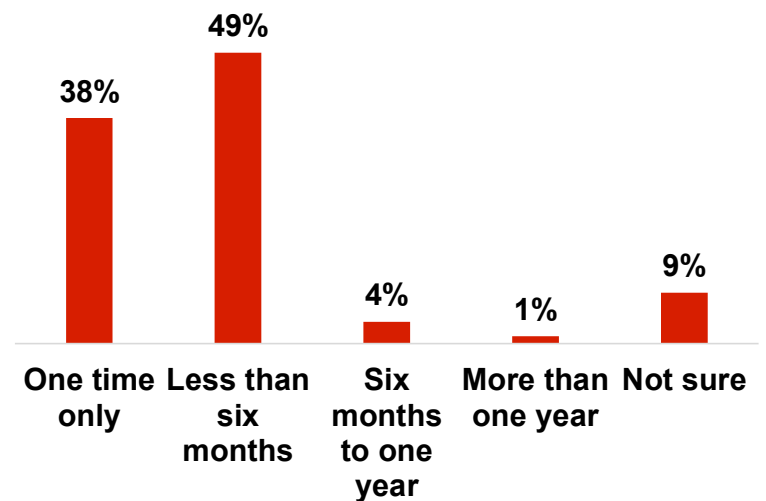
** Respondent comments are not edited

SECTION FOUR: CHEATING OVERVIEW

Games where cheating occurred

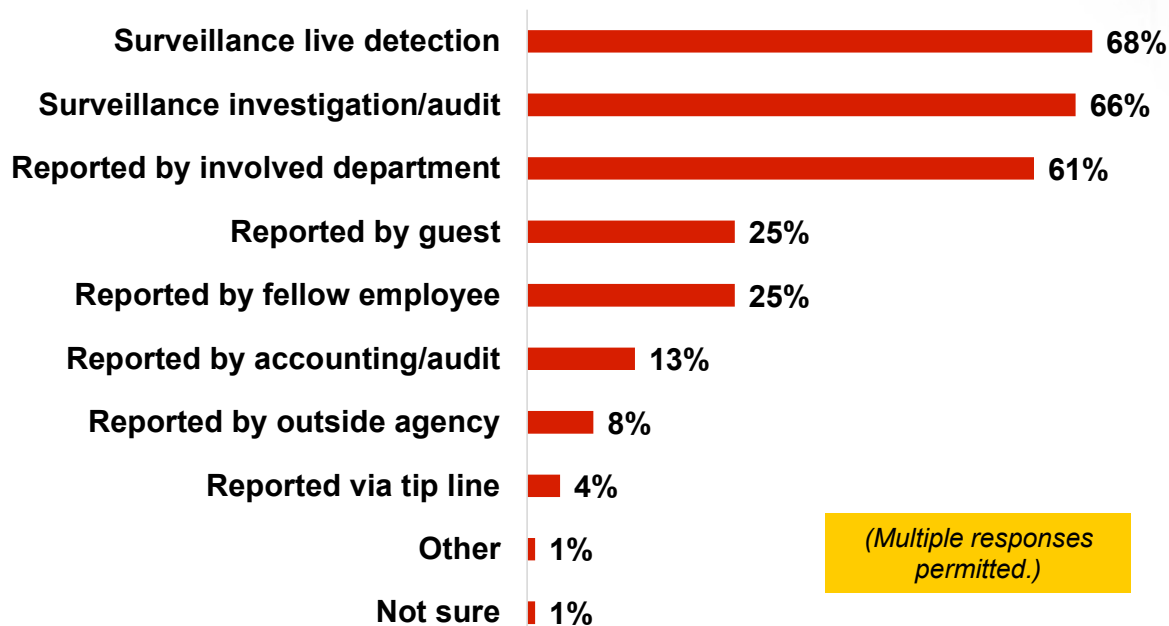


Average duration of cheating incidents

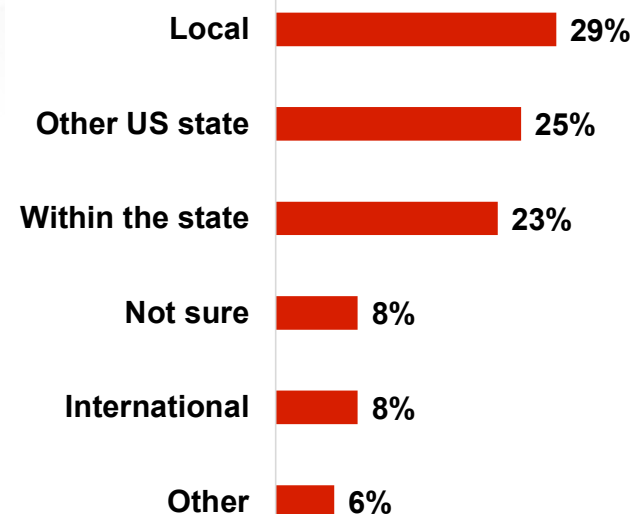


SECTION FOUR: CHEATING OVERVIEW

How cheating was detected

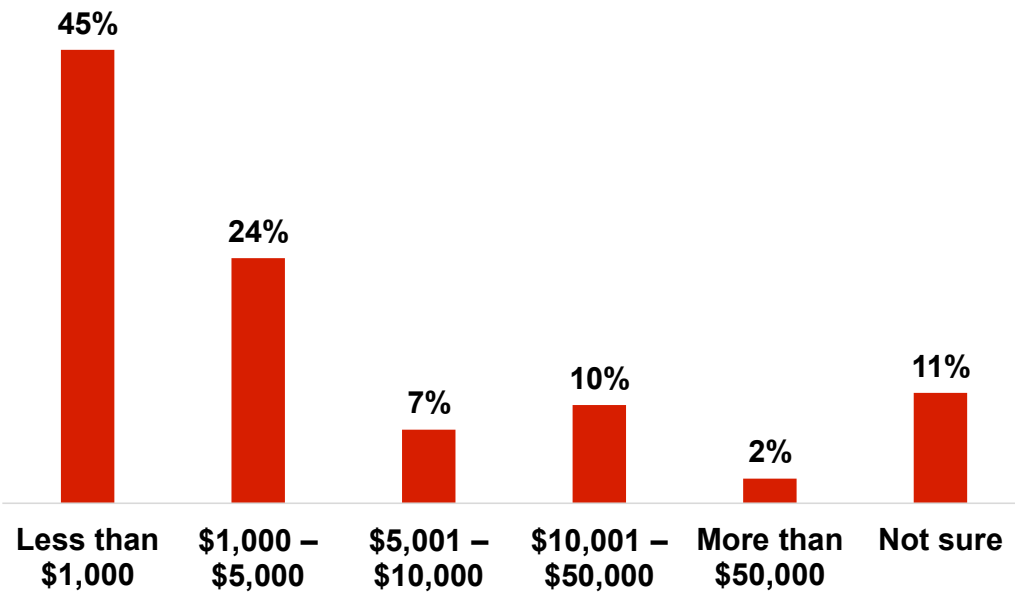


Where cheaters were primarily from



SECTION FOUR: CHEATING OVERVIEW

Loss amount per cheating incident

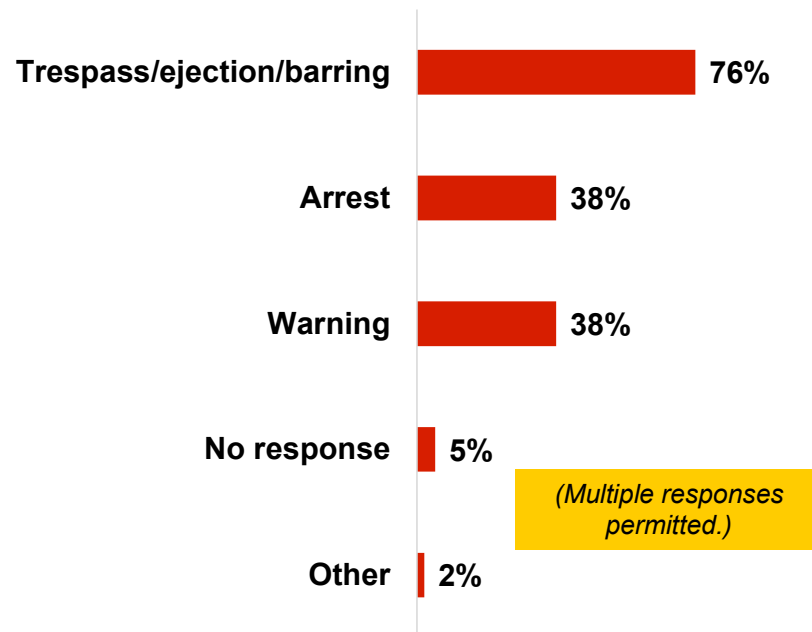


Average amount of loss per cheating incident in 2025 by gaming floor size

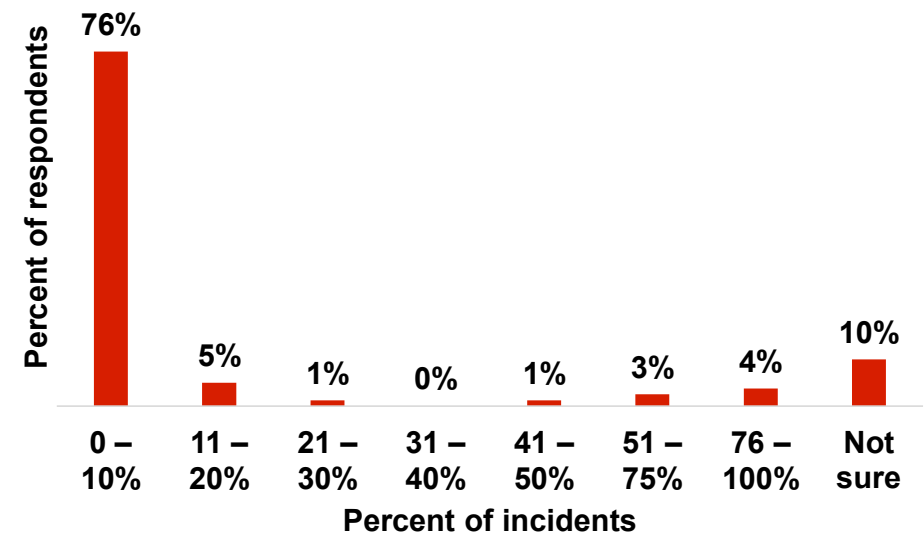
Amount	Less than 50,000 sf	50,000 – 100,000 sf	More than 100,000 sf
Less than \$1,000	62%	41%	33%
\$1,000 – \$5,000	15%	18%	33%
\$5,001 – \$10,000	8%	10%	6%
\$10,001 – \$50,000	8%	8%	12%
More than \$50,000	0%	3%	3%
Not sure	8%	21%	12%

SECTION FOUR: CHEATING OVERVIEW

Results of cheating detection



Percent of incidents in which employees colluded with cheaters



SECTION FIVE

ADVANTAGE PLAY

DEFINITION OF ADVANTAGE PLAY IN THIS SURVEY:

“By advantage play, we mean an individual or group of individuals who gain an advantage over casino games without actively violating laws or casino policies and procedures. Examples include card counting without the use of a device, baccarat side-bet counting, placing roulette bets late in the spin, and exploiting visible bonus features on slot machines when doing so becomes profitable.”

Derk J. Boss, CFE, CPP, CSP
President, IACSP



SECTION 5 OVERVIEW: ADVANTAGE PLAY

Analysis

Advantage play continues to be one of the most significant challenges facing casino surveillance departments. Survey results indicate that organized teams, evolving techniques, and increased operational sophistication require surveillance professionals to combine traditional observation skills with intelligence sharing, technology, and specialized investigative training.

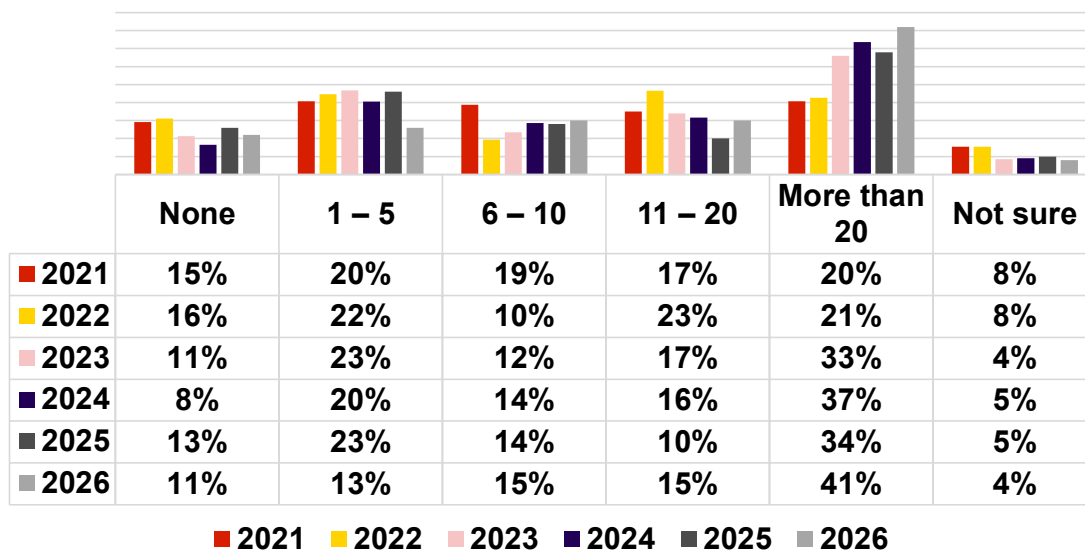
Key Findings

- Advantage play remains among the **highest-ranked surveillance concerns**, cited by **53% of respondents** in the Top Threats section.
- **41% of respondents reported more than 20 advantage-play incidents** in the previous calendar year, up from **34% in 2025** and **20% in 2021**.
- **Blackjack was the most frequently reported area of advantage play (80%)**, followed by **slots (42%)**.
- Advantage play was most commonly **detected through surveillance live detection (76%)**, followed by **surveillance investigation/audit (64%)** and **reporting by the involved department (55%)**.

Why This Matters

- Advantage play continues to evolve, requiring surveillance teams to adapt their investigative strategies.
- Intelligence sharing and timely information exchange improve the ability to identify repeat offenders and organized groups.
- Ongoing training and operational consistency are critical to protecting gaming assets and maintaining game integrity.

2021-2026: Advantage play incidents per property during previous calendar year



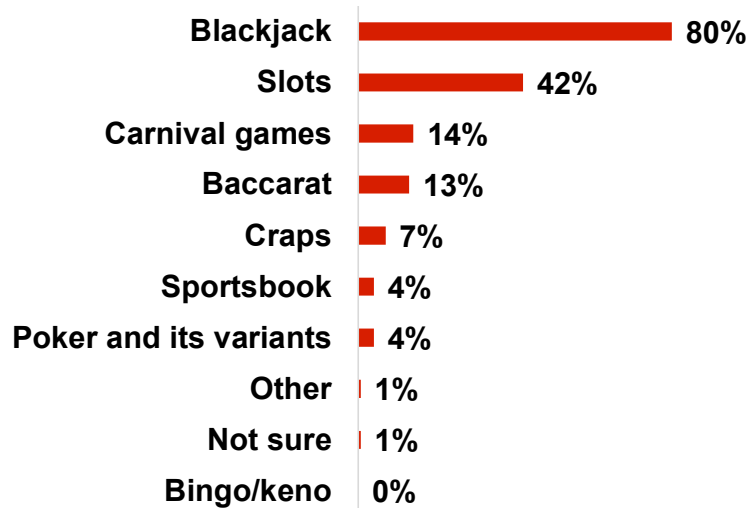
SECTION FIVE: ADVANTAGE PLAY

2026: Advantage play incidents per property in 2025 by gaming floor size

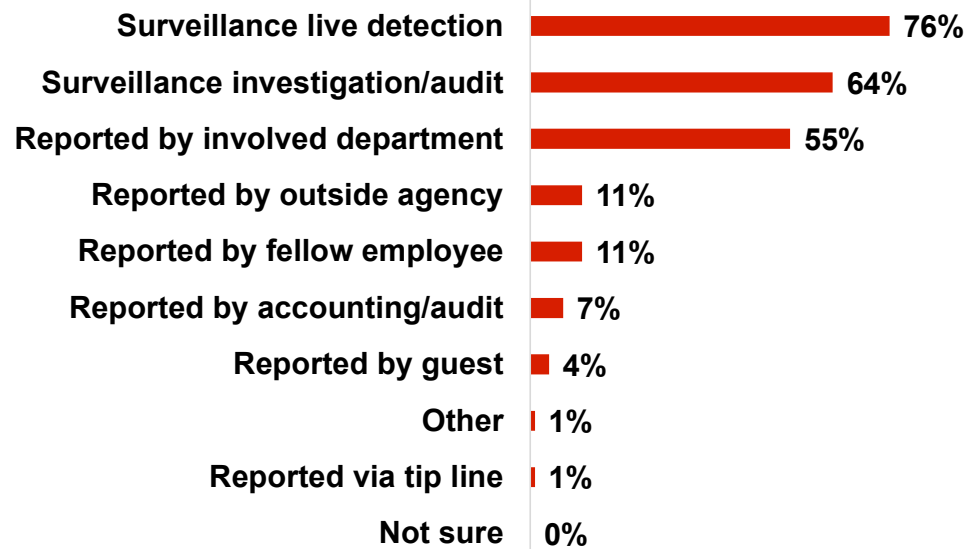
Number of Incidents	Less than 50,000 sf	50,000 – 100,000 sf	More than 100,000 sf
None	19%	11%	3%
1 – 5	25%	18%	9%
6 – 10	13%	18%	9%
11 – 20	0%	16%	17%
More than 20	31%	32%	60%
Not sure	13%	5%	3%

SECTION FIVE: ADVANTAGE PLAY

Areas where advantage play occurred



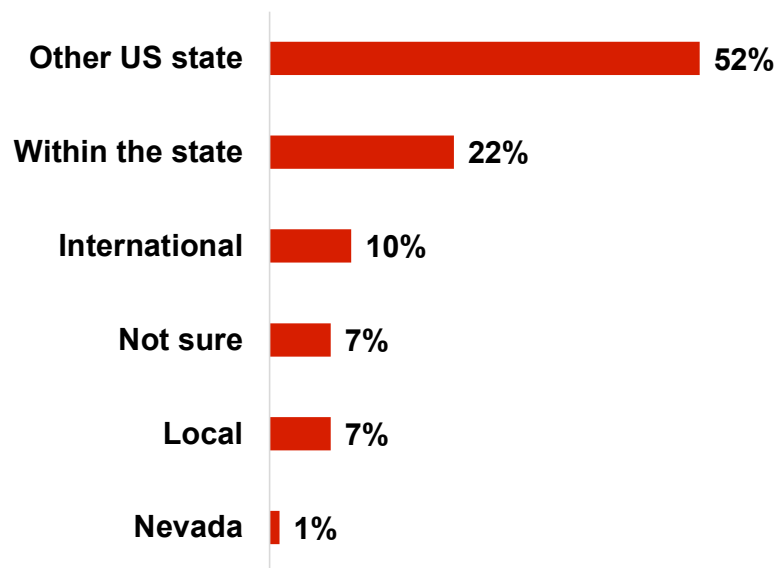
How advantage play was detected



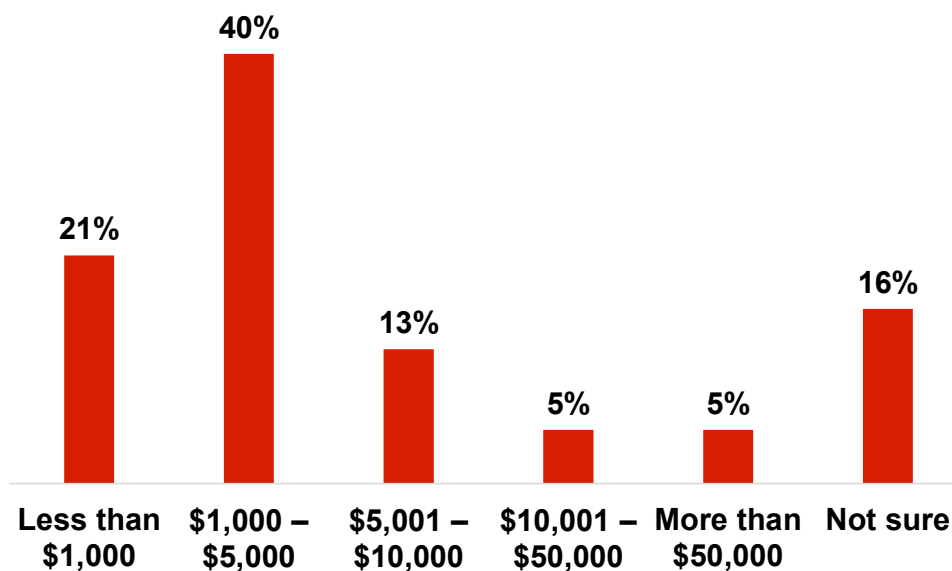
(Multiple responses permitted.)

SECTION FIVE: ADVANTAGE PLAY

Where advantage players were primarily from



Average amount of loss to advantage play per incident



SECTION SIX

INTERNAL THEFT/FRAUD

DEFINITION OF INTERNAL THEFT/FRAUD IN THIS SURVEY:

"By internal theft and fraud, we mean instances in which employees or staff members directly steal money, assets, or other items of value from the casino operation through any method."

Examples include slot employees producing and cashing fraudulent 'test' TITO vouchers for personal gain, employees exploiting marketing promotions to benefit themselves, friends, or family members, dealing staff stealing chips, and hospitality employees stealing cash payments for food or beverages."

Derk J. Boss, CFE, CPP, CSP
President, IACSP



SECTION 6 OVERVIEW: INTERNAL THEFT/FRAUD

Analysis

Internal theft and fraud remain among the most significant risks facing casino surveillance departments. Survey results indicate that employee theft continues to require substantial investigative resources, with surveillance teams relying on proactive monitoring, video review, and interdepartmental cooperation to identify and investigate incidents.

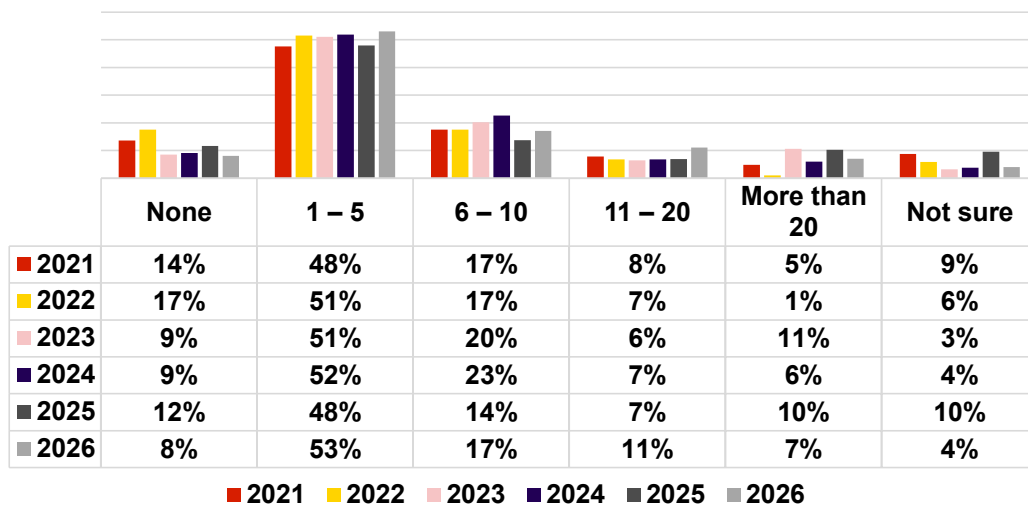
Key Findings

- Internal theft/fraud remains a **top investigative priority** for surveillance departments.
- Surveillance continues to play a critical role in **detecting, documenting, and investigating** employee theft.
- Video review, operational reporting, and cooperation with other departments remain the primary investigative tools.
- Survey findings demonstrate the continued importance of strong internal controls and consistent investigative procedures.

Why This Matters

- Employee theft represents an ongoing financial and operational risk for every casino.
- Effective investigations depend on close coordination between surveillance, compliance, human resources, and operational management.
- Proactive monitoring and consistent investigative practices help reduce losses while supporting organizational integrity.

2021-2026: Cases of employee theft/fraud during previous calendar year



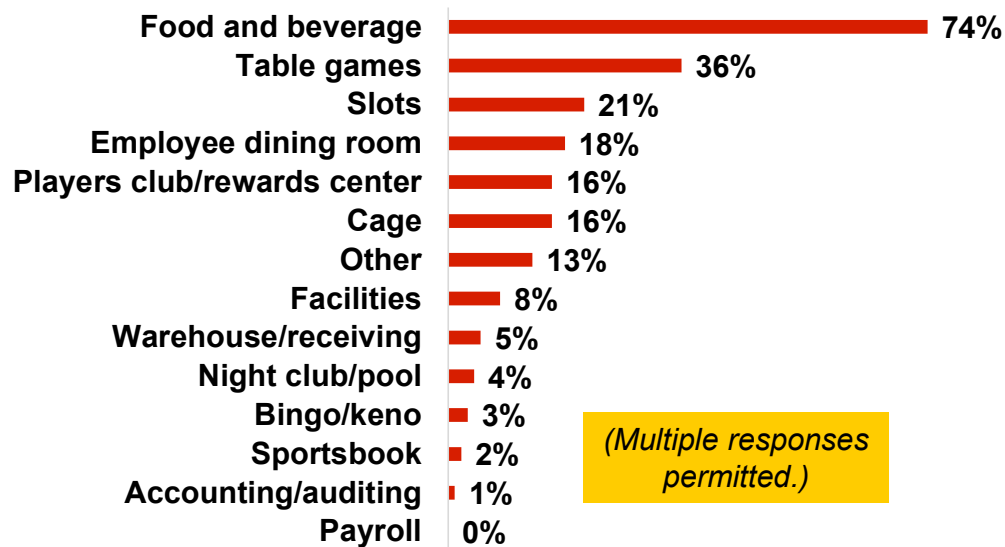
SECTION SIX: INTERNAL THEFT/FRAUD

2026: Cases of internal theft/fraud in 2025 by gaming floor size

Cases	Less than 50,000 sf	50,000 – 100,000 sf	More than 100,000 sf
None	6%	12%	3%
1 – 5	63%	51%	47%
6 – 10	19%	21%	18%
11 – 20	6%	7%	18%
More than 20	0%	5%	12%
Not sure	6%	5%	3%

SECTION SIX: INTERNAL THEFT/FRAUD

Departments/areas where employee theft/fraud occurred



(Multiple responses permitted.)



Primary means of detecting employee theft/fraud



(Respondents were asked to choose the top three means of detecting employee theft/fraud at their property in 2025.)

SECTION SIX: INTERNAL THEFT/FRAUD

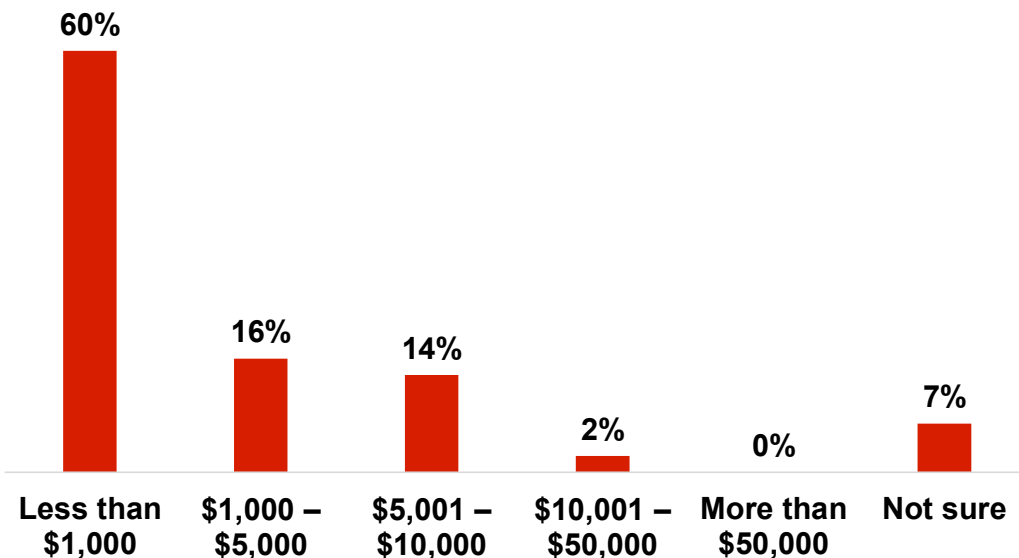


RESPONDENT COMMENT

"Employee with customers, most dangerous collusion."

** Respondent comments are not edited

Average loss per incident of employee theft/fraud

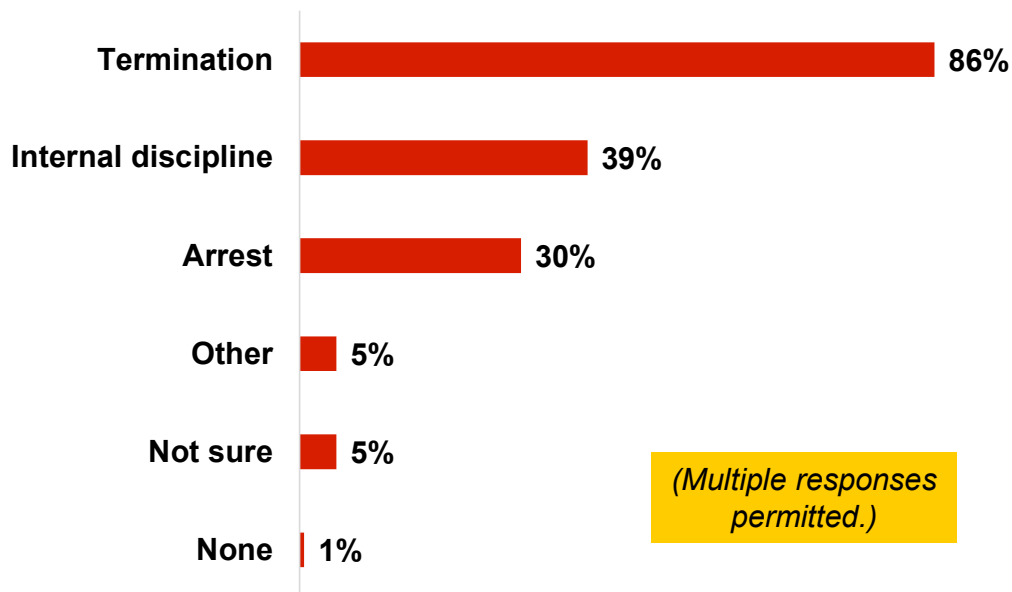


SECTION SIX: INTERNAL THEFT/FRAUD

2026: Average loss per incident to employee theft/fraud in 2025 by gaming floor size

Loss Amount	Less than 50,000 sf	50,000 – 100,000 sf	More than 100,000 sf
Less than \$1,000	73%	62%	48%
\$1,000 – \$5,000	7%	13%	24%
\$5,001 – \$10,000	7%	15%	15%
\$10,001 – \$50,000	0%	3%	3%
More than \$50,000	7%	0%	0%
Not sure	7%	8%	9%

Results of detecting employee theft/fraud



SECTION SIX: INTERNAL THEFT/FRAUD



RESPONDENT COMMENTS

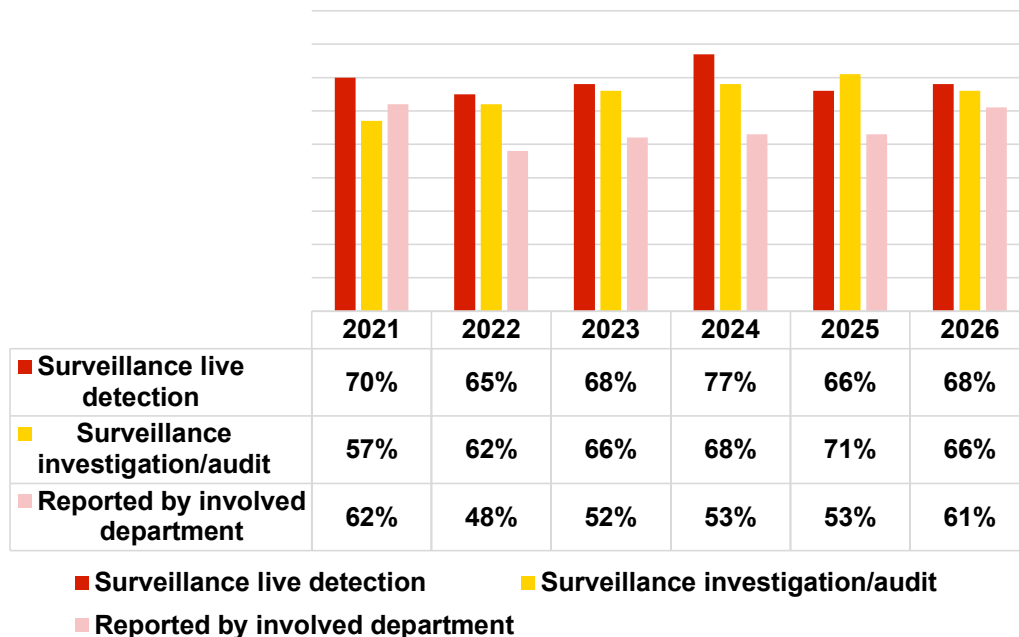
“As a Tribal enterprise, we frequently assist Tribal Police in investigations (whether it be for an on-property investigation or with investigations un-related to the Casino). Our property also has control over the Surveillance cameras at other Tribal enterprises and buildings, such as the Government Complex, Community Center, Camp, Gas Station, Storage Barns, Roads, etc. We are currently working on having access and licenses to pilot drones to be able to assist Tribal Police when necessary and access to LEIN (law enforcement investigation network) to be able to provide additional investigative assistance to Tribal Police. “

** Respondent comments are not edited

SECTION SIX: DETECTION COMPARISONS

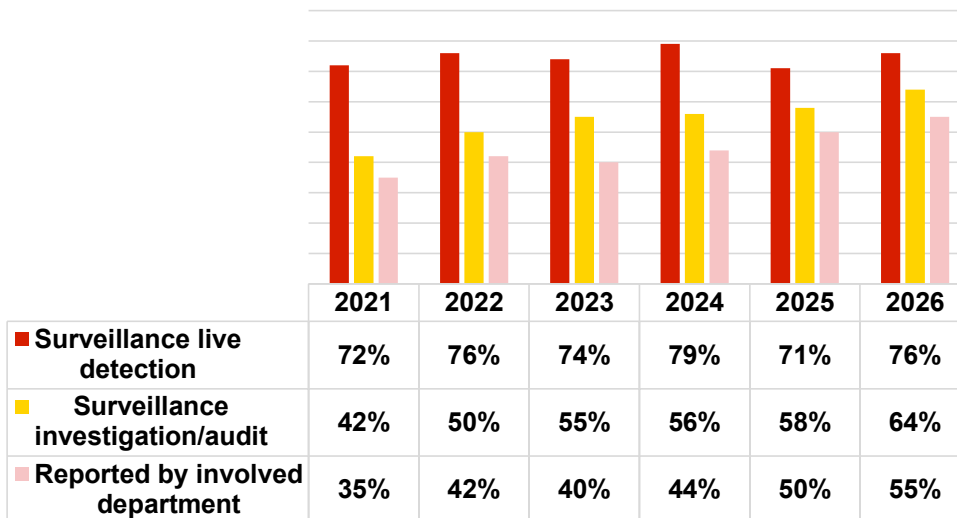
This chart and the two charts on the next page show how the top three methods of detection for cheating incidents, advantage play incidents, and employee theft/fraud incidents have shifted from 2021 to 2026.

Top Three: Cheating detections



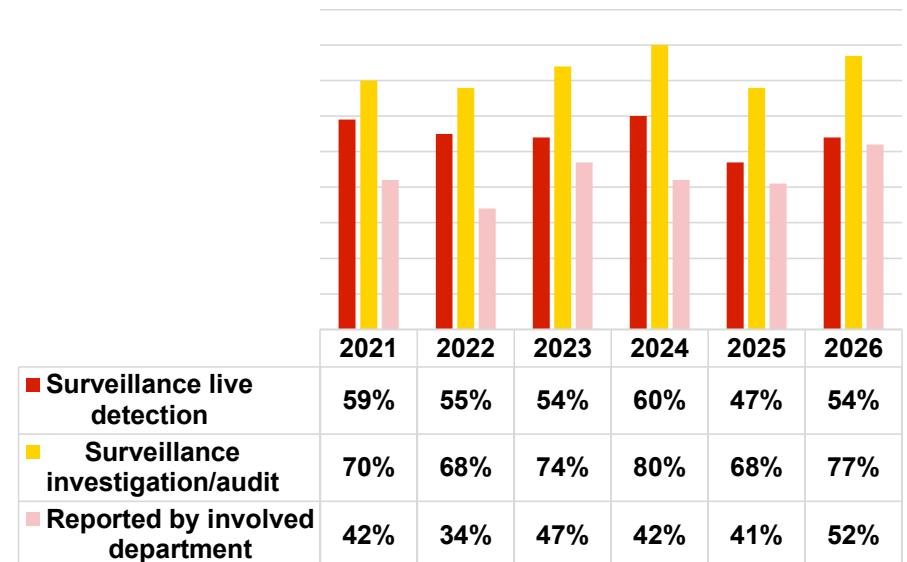
SECTION SIX: DETECTION COMPARISONS

Top Three: Advantage play detections



- Surveillance live detection
- Surveillance investigation/audit
- Reported by involved department

Top Three: Employee theft/fraud detections



- Surveillance live detection
- Surveillance investigation/audit
- Reported by involved department

SECTION SEVEN

OPERATIONS TRENDS

EXPERT OPINION:

“Table games remain the primary focus of casino surveillance because of their volatility and revenue sensitivity. At the same time, other risk domains—including guest-related incidents, AML compliance, employee theft and fraud, and human trafficking—continue to grow in importance.

The expansion of electronic table games is expected to require additional surveillance resources and greater slot surveillance expertise. While live observation and video review continue to account for much of a surveillance department's operational workload, the gradual adoption of information analysis and data analytics reflects a shift toward more proactive threat detection. Forward-thinking surveillance departments are increasingly leveraging data to identify risks earlier and improve operational efficiency.

Persistent state slot machines (PSMs) and electronic table games (ETGs) continue to emerge as operational trends deserving increased surveillance attention.”

Derk J. Boss, CFE, CPP, CSP
President, IACSP



SECTION SEVEN

OPERATIONS TRENDS

DEFINITION OF PERSISTENT STATE SLOT MACHINES IN THIS SURVEY:

Persistent state slot machines (PSMs) are gaming machines in which certain game features, progress, or "states" persist between plays or player sessions. Unlike traditional slot machines, which reset completely after every spin, persistent state slot machines retain information such as:

- Accumulated bonus progress (e.g., partially filled bonus meters).
- Unlocked special features or multipliers.
- Progress toward "must-hit-by" jackpots.

DEFINITION OF ELECTRONIC TABLE GAMES (ETGs) IN THIS SURVEY:

Electronic table games (ETGs) are digital or hybrid versions of traditional table games such as blackjack, roulette, baccarat, and craps. ETGs may:

- Use a virtual display with RNG-based outcomes (fully electronic).
- Combine a physical dealer or mechanical components with electronic betting stations (hybrid ETGs).
- They aim to replicate the table game experience while allowing multiple players to participate simultaneously, often at lower bet minimums.

SECTION SEVEN

OPERATIONS TRENDS

VULNERABILITIES TO SLOT ADVANTAGE PLAYERS AND CHEATS

Persistent State Slot Machines

1. Advantage play vulnerability
 - Advantage players can “machine scout” for games left in a favorable state (e.g., nearly full bonus meter) and only play when the expected value is positive.
 - This can result in casinos losing theoretical hold over time.
2. Predictable progression exploits
 - If the game’s bonus trigger is deterministic or predictable after a set number of spins, experienced players can time entry and avoid low-value states.
3. Cheating Risks
 - Tampering with software or hardware to falsely display a high-progress state.
 - Collusion with insiders to identify machines in profitable conditions.

Electronic Table Games

1. Software vulnerabilities
 - RNG exploitation if algorithms are predictable or improperly seeded.
 - Display manipulation to alter results or payouts.
2. Betting pattern exploits
 - If system timing allows delayed wagers after outcome determination due to latency issues.
3. Physical manipulation (hybrid ETGs)
 - If mechanical elements like roulette wheels are predictable or manipulated, advantage players can exploit bias detection.

SECTION SEVEN

BEST PRACTICES



Recommended best practices to improve overall operations:

1. Conduct a comprehensive risk assessment using a probability-impact model to identify and prioritize critical operational threats.
2. Develop and maintain a property-wide surveillance audit schedule to ensure complete coverage across all gaming and non-gaming operations.
3. Incorporate data analytics roles into the department structure to detect emerging fraud patterns and compliance gaps before they escalate.
4. Use a balanced mix of live observation, retrospective review, and analytical reporting for balanced coverage.

SECTION SEVEN

BEST PRACTICES



Recommended best practices for persistent state slot machines:

1. Monitor and identify consistent winners.
2. Monitor player time on device as extended play on a single machine may indicate persistent-state advantage play.
3. Observe players for behavioral indicators of slot advantage play.
4. Track and analyze player patterns for “cherry-picking” behaviors.
5. Data monitoring: Use analytics to flag abnormal win rates or unusual betting patterns.

SECTION SEVEN

BEST PRACTICES



Recommended best practices for electronic table games (ETGs):

1. Monitor and identify consistent winners.
2. Observe players for behavioral indicators of advantage play on electronic table games.
3. Ensure certified, regularly audited RNGs with cryptographically secure seeding.
4. Latency management: Close betting before outcome determination.
5. Hardware integrity checks: Regularly inspect and calibrate physical components to prevent bias exploitation.
6. Data monitoring: Use analytics to flag abnormal win rates or unusual betting patterns

SECTION 7 OVERVIEW: OPERATIONS TRENDS

Analysis

Survey results show that surveillance departments continue to devote most operational resources to live observation and video review. While reporting systems and operational databases are widely available, information analysis represents a smaller portion of daily activities, indicating an opportunity to further leverage surveillance intelligence.

Key Findings

- **Reviews (38%)** remain the primary method of detecting incidents, followed by **live patrol (22%)**.
- **93%** of departments use **daily reporting systems**, while **83%** utilize **slot data systems**.
- **37%** of respondents spend only **0–10%** of their time conducting information analysis.
- Operational reporting tools are widely available across surveillance departments.

Why This Matters

- Traditional surveillance activities continue to dominate daily operations.
- Existing reporting systems provide opportunities to expand intelligence-led investigations.
- Increasing analytical capabilities may improve operational efficiency and investigative effectiveness.

Respondents ranked the following areas in order of importance for priority of security and surveillance resources.

The list is in descending order of importance:

Guests
Table games
Food and beverage
Slots
Other

SECTION SEVEN: OPERATIONS TRENDS

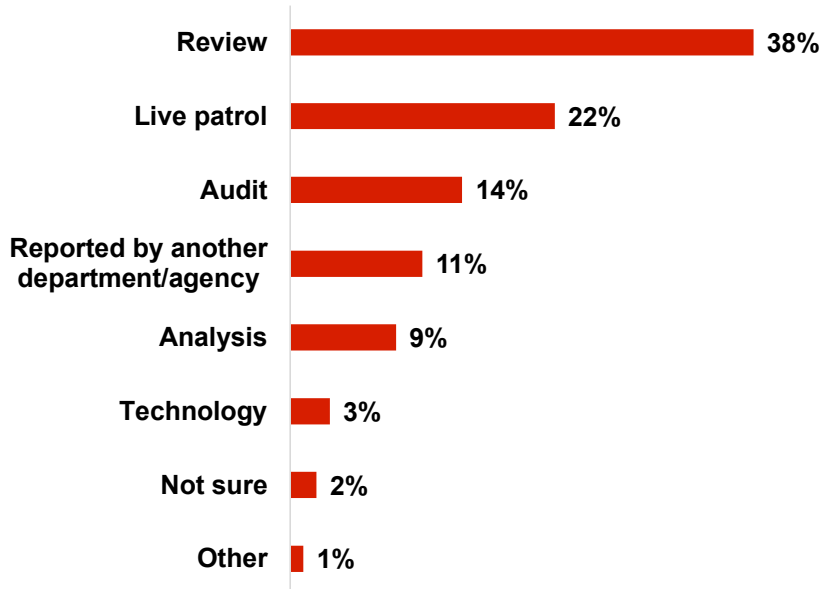
Survey respondents ranked the list below in order of which type of operation creates the most impactful decision.

The list is in descending order of importance:

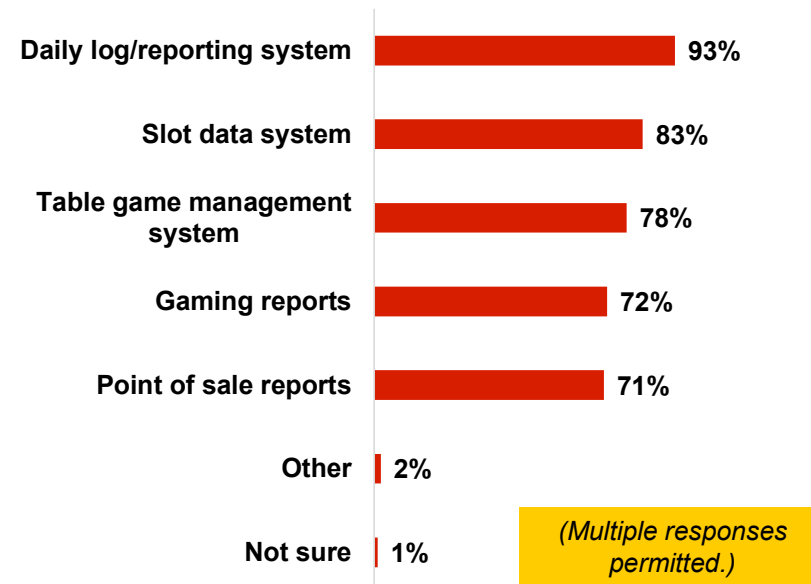
Reviews
Live patrol
Video audit
Information analysis
Other

SECTION SEVEN: OPERATIONS TRENDS

Top method for surveillance detections

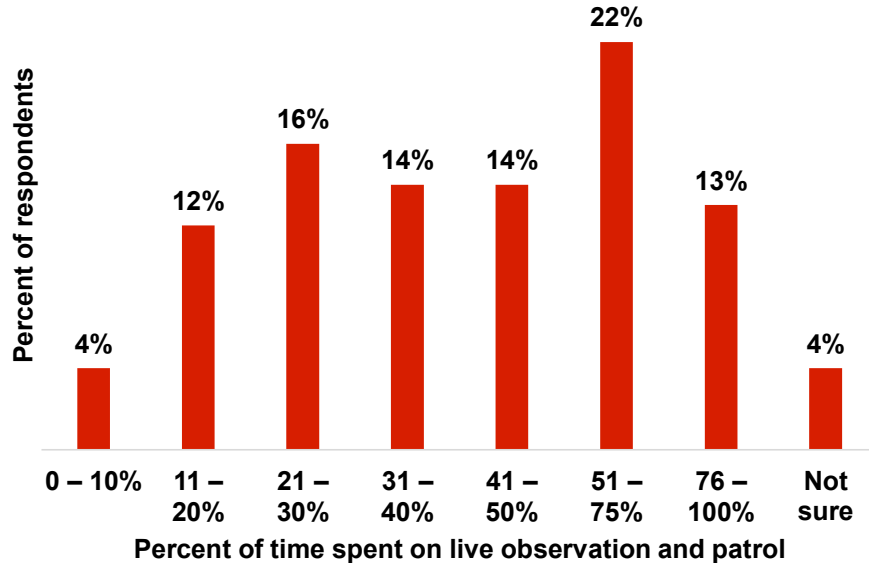


Reporting and information tools available to surveillance team

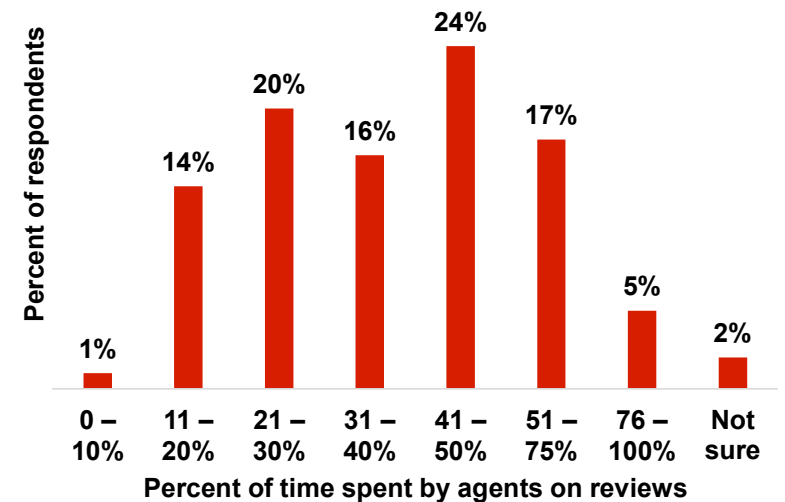


SECTION SEVEN: OPERATIONS TRENDS

Percent of time spent by agents on live observation and patrol

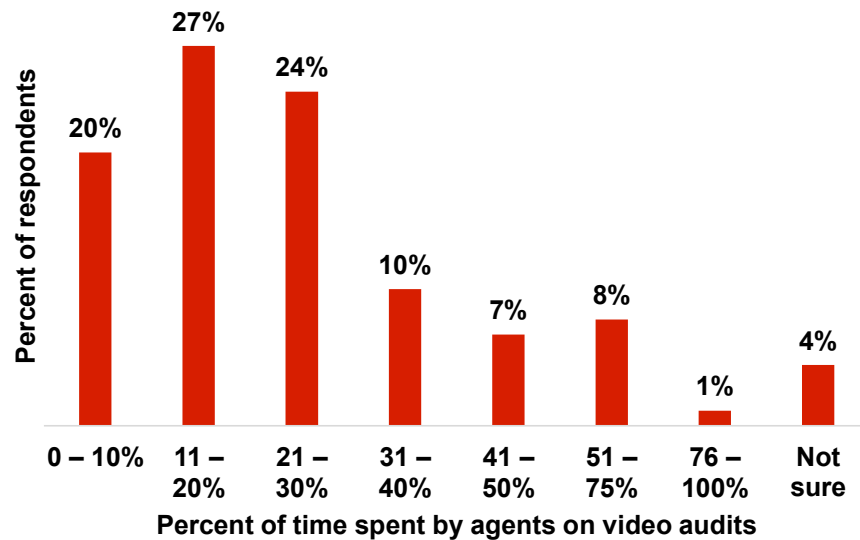


Percent of time spent by agents on reviews

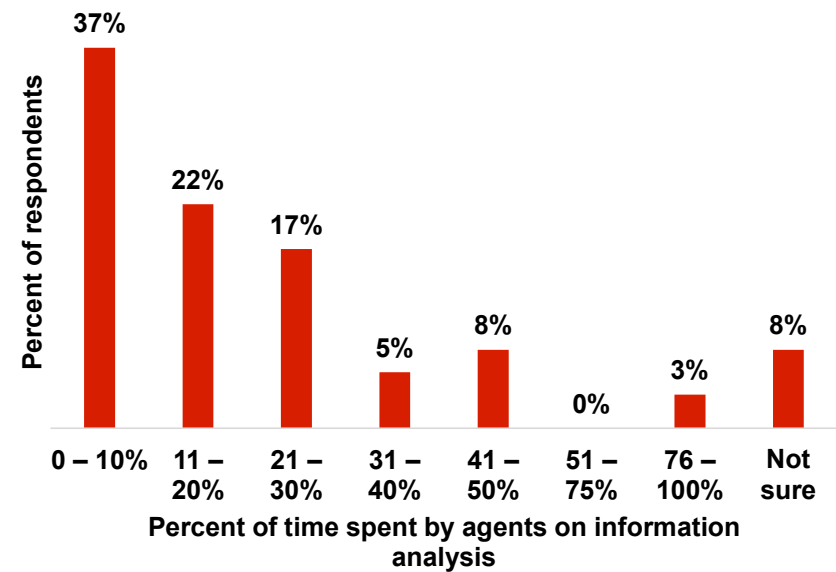


SECTION SEVEN: OPERATIONS TRENDS

Percent of time spent by agents on video audits



Percent of time spent on information analysis



SECTION EIGHT

TECHNOLOGY

EXPERT OPINION:

“Facial recognition technology has moved beyond early adoption to become a proven operational tool within casino surveillance. Survey results show implementation increasing from 25% in 2021 to 59% in 2026, while a majority of remaining non-users plan future investment.

More importantly, more than eight in ten respondents report that facial recognition has had a fairly large or huge impact on detecting criminal and undesirable activity, reinforcing its value as a proactive security capability.

As surveillance departments continue integrating facial recognition with intelligence databases and analytics platforms, success will increasingly depend on effective data management, sound operational policies, and trained personnel who can transform alerts into timely investigative action.”

**Derk J. Boss, CFE, CPP, CSP
President, IACSP**



SECTION EIGHT

BEST PRACTICES



Recommended Best Practices to approach technology:

1. Deploy FR and license plate recognition (LPR) as part of a structured threat identification program, ensuring that reference databases are accurate, up-to-date, and legally compliant.
2. Build operational playbooks for each technology—detailing alert response procedures, evidence collection standards, and integration with security and law enforcement protocols.
3. Maintain ongoing technical and operational training for staff to optimize technology use and ensure compliance with privacy laws.

SECTION 8 OVERVIEW: TECHNOLOGY

Analysis

Survey results indicate continued growth in the adoption of surveillance technologies, particularly facial recognition, ID scanning, and intelligence-sharing platforms. Respondents also reported that these technologies are improving investigative effectiveness while supporting more proactive surveillance operations.

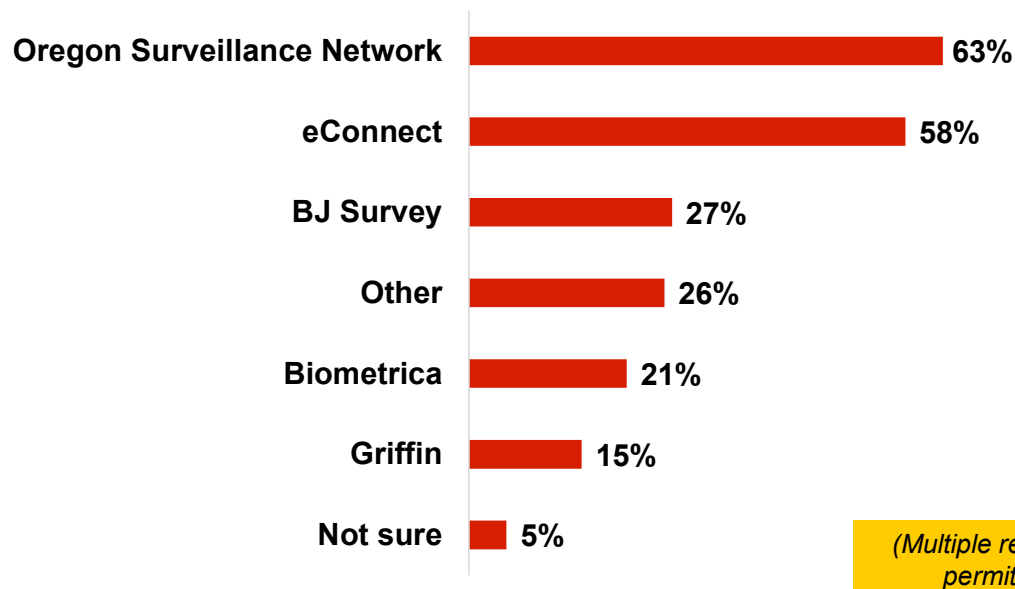
Key Findings

- **59%** of responding casinos now utilize **facial recognition technology**, up from **25% in 2021**.
- **67%** of properties report using **ID scanning solutions**.
- **82%** of facial recognition users reported a **fairly large or huge impact** on detecting criminal activity and undesirable individuals.
- Intelligence-sharing platforms such as the **Oregon Surveillance Network (63%)** and **eConnect (58%)** continue to support investigations.

Why This Matters

- Technology has become an integral component of modern surveillance operations.
- Advanced investigative tools are improving detection capabilities while supporting more efficient investigations.
- Continued investment in technology requires corresponding investments in training, data management, and operational integration.

Databases and intelligence systems used by surveillance



SECTION EIGHT: TECHNOLOGY

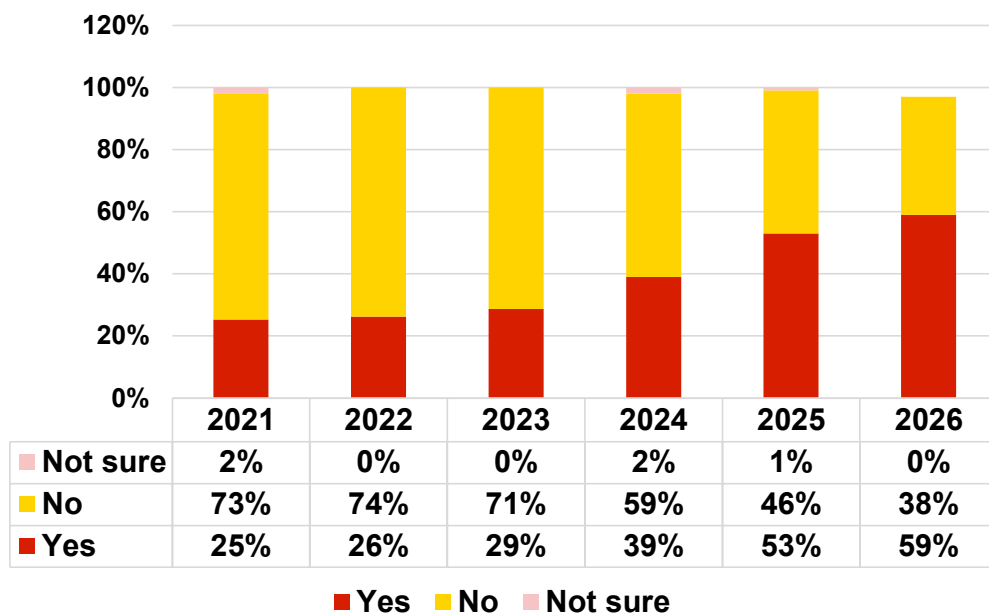


RESPONDENT COMMENTS

"Technology brings more trust in agents."

** Respondent comments are not edited

2021-2026: Percent of casinos using a facial recognition system



SECTION EIGHT: TECHNOLOGY

2026: Percent of casinos using facial recognition technology by gaming floor size

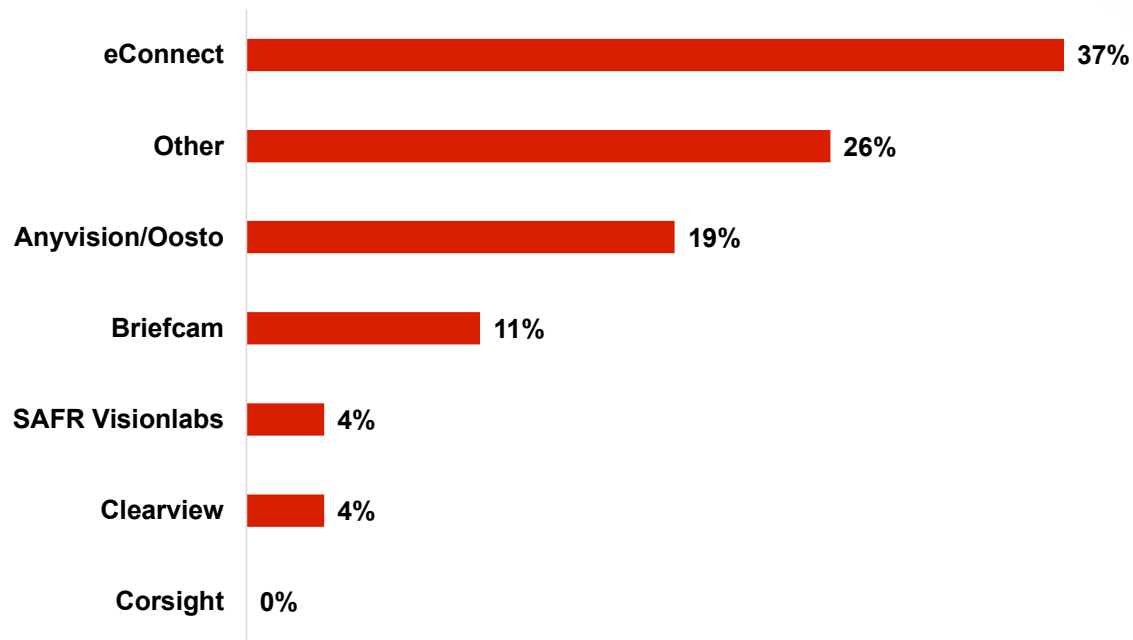
Facial technology usage	Less than 50,000 sf	50,000 – 100,000 sf	More than 100,000 sf
Yes	53%	56%	80%
No	42%	44%	10%
Not sure	0%	0%	2%

2026: Percent of casinos using facial recognition technology by type of casino

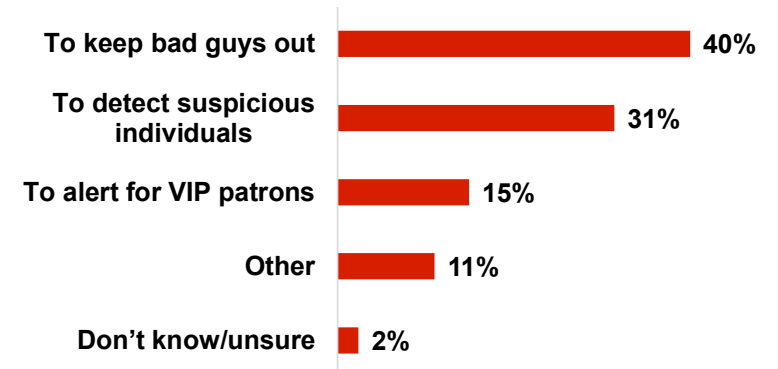
Facial technology usage	Commercial	Tribal
Yes	62%	63%
No	38%	28%
Not sure	0%	2%

SECTION EIGHT: TECHNOLOGY

Facial technology systems used

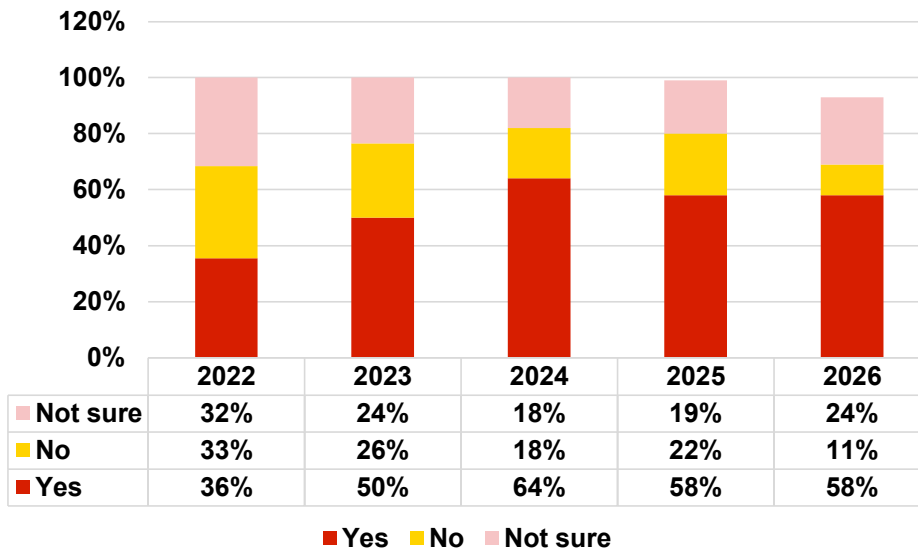


How facial technology is used



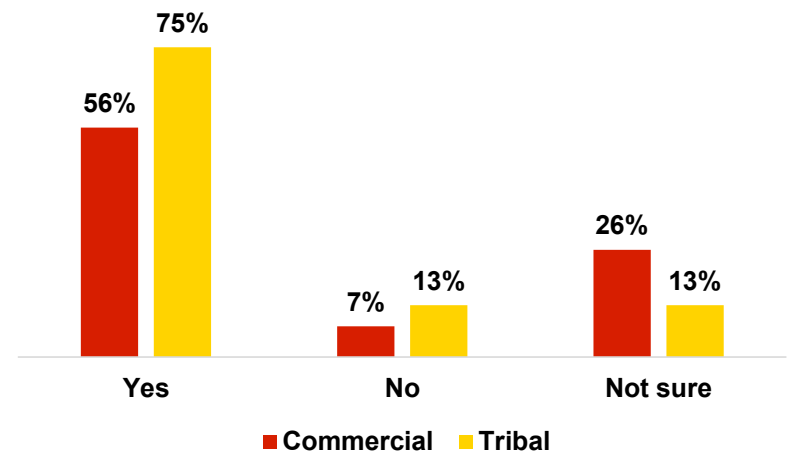
SECTION EIGHT: TECHNOLOGY

2022-2026: Plans to invest in facial recognition technology by casinos that currently do not have it



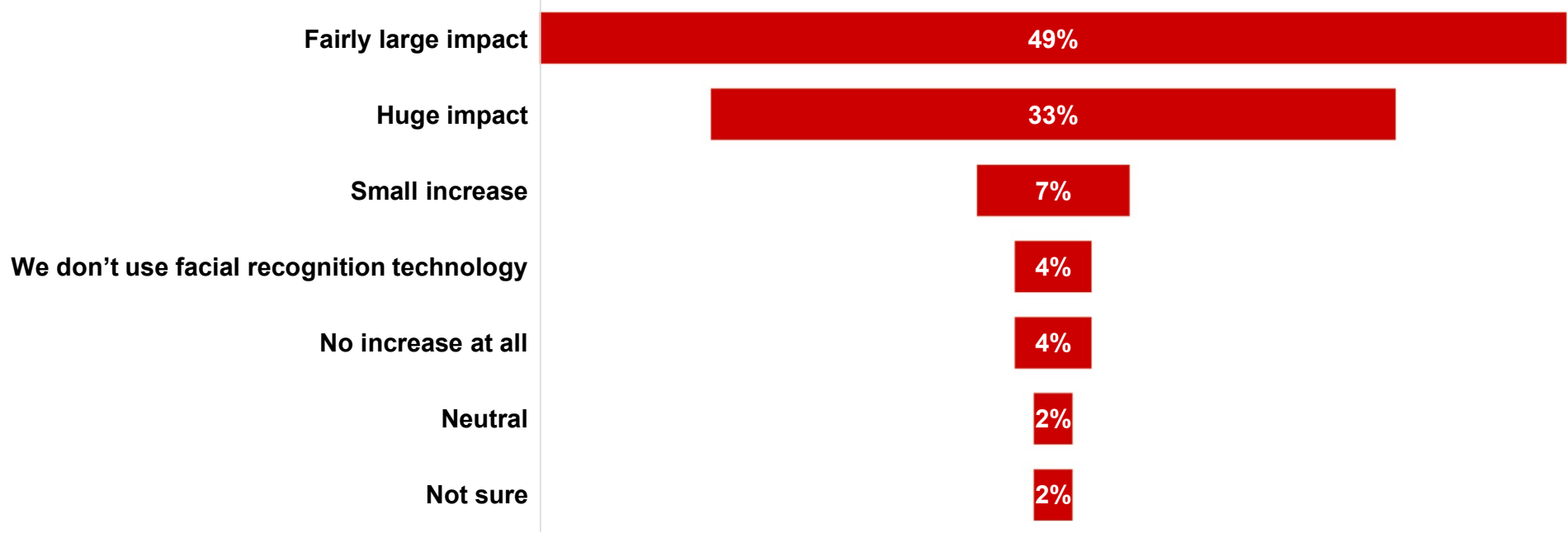
(Future investment plans were not included in the 2021 survey.)

2026: Plans to add facial recognition technology by type of casino

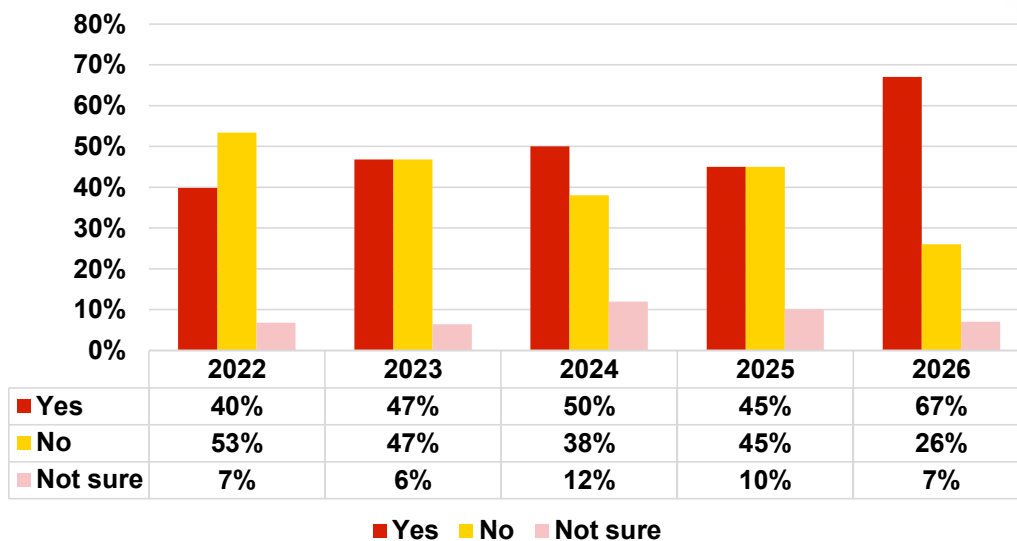


(This question was only answered by casinos that did not currently have facial recognition technology.)

Impact of facial recognition technology use on detecting crimes and undesirable activity



2022-2026: Percent of properties with ID scan solution



(ID scan question was not included in the 2021 survey.)

SECTION EIGHT: TECHNOLOGY

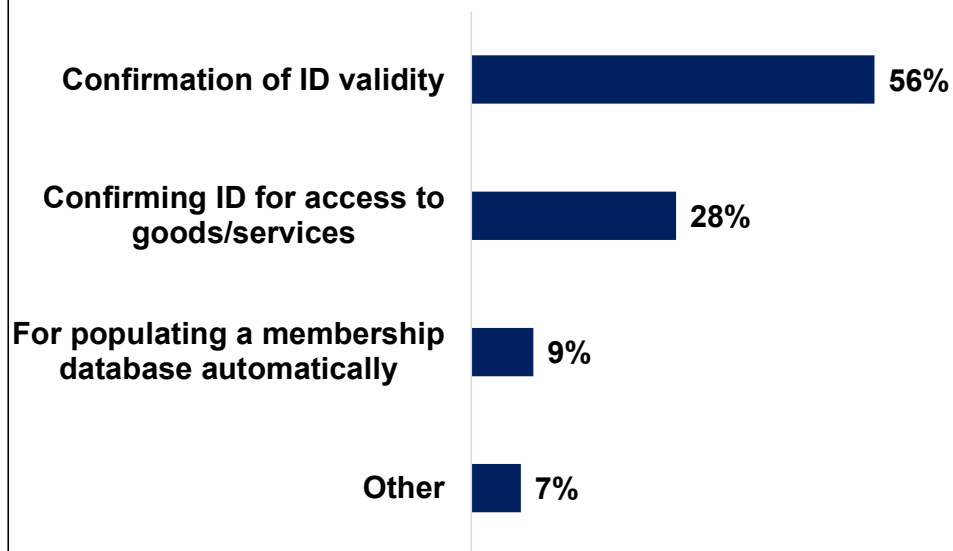
2026: Percent of properties with ID scan solution by type of casino

Usage	Commercial	Tribal
Yes	69%	67%
No	25%	20%
Not sure	6%	13%

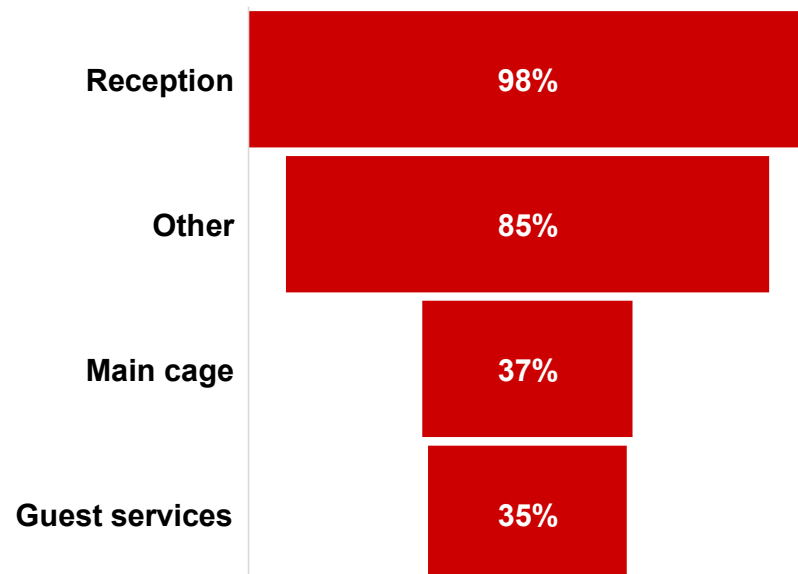
Veridocs is the clear top system used, and Veriscan is second in systems being used in 2026.

SECTION EIGHT: TECHNOLOGY

How ID scan is used

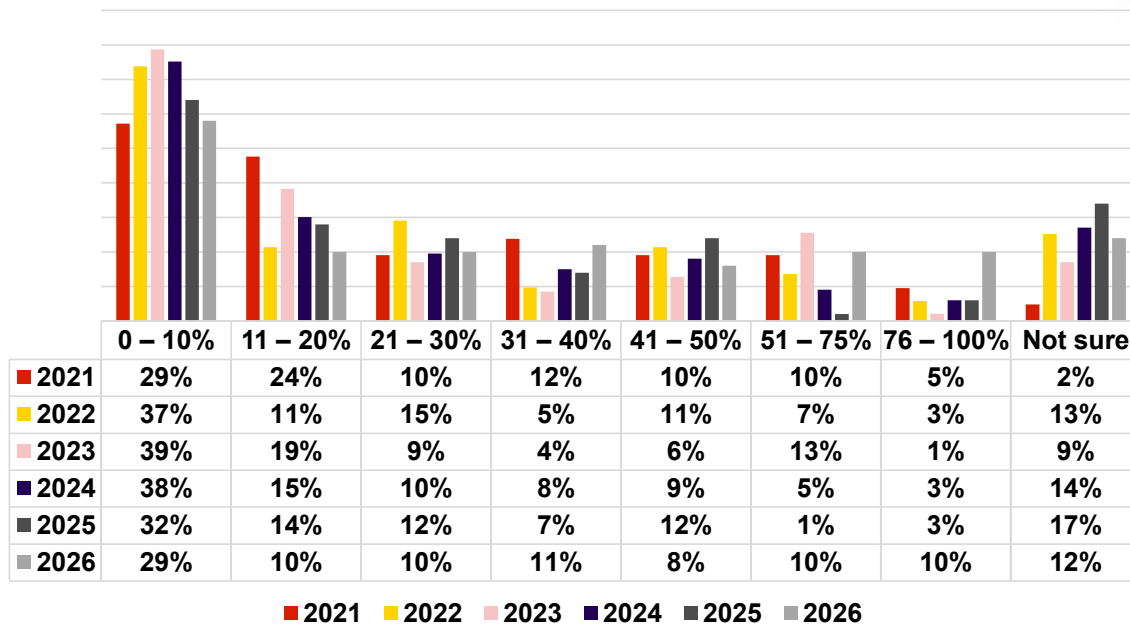


Where ID scan is used



SECTION EIGHT: TECHNOLOGY

2021-2026: Percent of investigations aided by eConnect or other advanced technology



**eConnect is one of the sponsors of this survey. Their sponsorship in no way influenced the data collection, analysis, or reporting of information, nor will it be used in any sales capacity.*

SECTION NINE

TOP THREATS

EXPERT OPINION:

“Internal theft/fraud remains the most significant risk, accounting for high-value losses and operational disruptions. Cheating remains the second-ranked concern, but cyber threats—while slightly down in 2025—continue to rival cheating losses in magnitude, especially through ransomware and phishing. The evolving threat environment demands that surveillance departments expand their scope beyond physical monitoring to include cyber-physical threat integration and post-incident recovery strategies.”

Derk J. Boss, CFE, CPP, CSP
President, IACSP



SECTION NINE

BEST PRACTICES



Recommended best practices to approach top threats:

1. Implement a full-spectrum audit and observation plan, covering all property areas with a focus on cash handling, high-value transactions, and restricted zones.
2. Incorporate cybersecurity awareness into surveillance training, including phishing recognition, ransomware incident response, and coordination with IT security teams.
3. Develop and regularly rehearse a cross-departmental contingency plan for system outages, prioritizing asset protection, manual tracking methods, and cash-equivalent lockdown procedures.

SECTION 9 OVERVIEW: TOP THREATS

Analysis

Survey respondents identified **internal theft/fraud** as the industry's highest-priority surveillance concern, followed by **advantage play, cheating, and cyber threats**. While traditional gaming-related risks remain the primary focus of surveillance operations, the survey also reflects the growing importance of technology-related threats within the industry's overall risk environment.

Key Findings

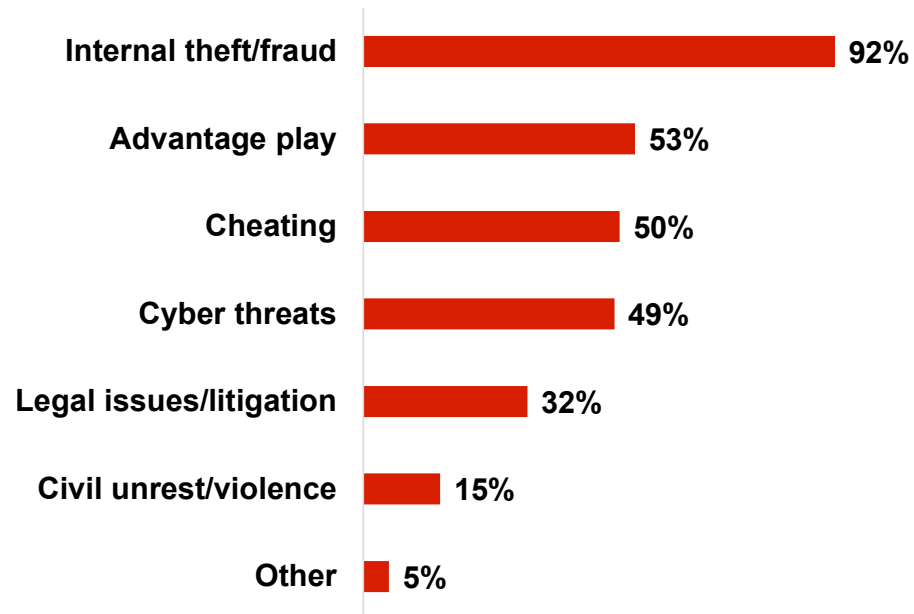
- **92%** of respondents identified **internal theft/fraud** as a top surveillance concern.
- **Advantage play (53%), cheating (50%), and cyber threats (49%)** were the next highest-ranked operational risks.
- Internal and external threats continue to require significant surveillance resources.
- Cybersecurity has emerged as a major operational concern alongside traditional gaming risks.

Why This Matters

- Survey results demonstrate that surveillance departments must address both traditional gaming threats and emerging technology-related risks.
- Effective risk management requires close coordination among surveillance, IT, compliance, security, and operational leadership.
- Regular risk assessments help ensure surveillance resources remain aligned with the industry's evolving threat landscape.

SECTION NINE: TOP THREATS

Top threats in 2026



THE FUTURE OF CASINO SURVEILLANCE

The International Casino Surveillance Survey continues to serve as the gaming industry's leading benchmark for measuring operational excellence, identifying emerging trends, and supporting informed decision-making for surveillance professionals worldwide.



LOOKING AHEAD

The 2026 International Casino Surveillance Survey demonstrates that surveillance is evolving from a reactive monitoring function into a strategic partner in enterprise risk management. While traditional responsibilities—including internal theft, cheating, and advantage play—remain central to the profession, today's surveillance departments are increasingly expected to leverage technology, intelligence, and cross-functional collaboration to protect casino operations.

The survey also highlights continued investment in people, training, and technology. Organizations that successfully integrate skilled personnel with advanced investigative tools will be best positioned to address an increasingly complex operational environment.

RELIABILITY OF THE DATA



This study was conducted by Debra Hilgeman, Ph.D., an experienced casino marketer and research expert who has been a part of Raving's team since 2006. She designed the survey and protocols for the survey to be administered online and externally using professional survey software. Casinos operate in highly competitive environments, and some of the questions ask for proprietary information. Anonymity is guaranteed for all survey participants. No information or reports will contain any information that can be used to identify any individual or casino.

Reliability and Validity of Data:

In large-scale consumer research, metrics such as 95% reliability and 5% margin of error are the standard. But in studies like this, based on substantial proportions of small overall populations, the larger concern is validity – whether elements of the population are appropriately represented. The participating casinos here show good distribution across size, geographic area, and services, and although the sample is self-selected, it constitutes a good representation of the entire industry. There are not enough data points for inferential statistics, but the description of the industry through its summary characteristics provides a good basis for reviewing overall trends and an opportunity to compare respondents' own casinos with others in the industry on key measures.



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