



## Gary GRIEF

Executive Director, Texas Lottery  
Chair of the Powerball Group

**PGRI Introduction:** Powerball is sold in 47 jurisdictions. It is operated by the Multi-State Lottery Association (www.MUSL.com) for the benefit of its members and the states that license the right to sell Powerball. On the drawing of Wednesday, January 13, the Jackpot that rose to over \$1.58 billion dollars was won by three people with the winning ticket. The tickets were bought in stores in Munford, Tennessee, Chino Hills, California, and Melbourne Beach, Florida. The winner in Tennessee has already stepped forward to claim his portion (\$528.8) of the Jackpot. The January 13 draw alone saw an additional 26,110,643 win smaller jackpots totaling more than \$273.9 Million.

This is a singularly momentous event for the industry. Gary Grief is not only the current Chair of the Powerball Group, he is a past president of the North American State and Provincial Lottery Association (NASPL), has been with the Texas Lottery since its inception in 1992, and was appointed to lead the Lottery in 2010. We appreciate him taking a few minutes out of an extraordinarily busy time (this interview was done January 14, the day after the Powerball Jackpot was won!), and congratulate Director Grief and all the Powerball Lottery Directors for their stewardship of this flagship brand.

**Paul Jason, PGRI:** *The \$1.5 billion Powerball Jackpot is a singularly huge event for the entire industry. What are some of the implications of this for the U.S. Lotteries going forward?*

**Gary Grief:** This incredible Powerball jackpot run has delivered positive results to the lottery industry on several levels.

Obviously the sales and revenue are top of mind. From the last time the Powerball jackpot was won on November 4, 2015 to the drawing for the world record-setting advertised jackpot of \$1.5 billion on January 13, 2016,

Powerball jurisdictions nationwide sold more than \$3.3 billion in Powerball tickets. More importantly, more than \$1.3 billion in additional revenue was generated nationwide for good causes like public education, scholarships, the environment, and assistance to veterans and senior citizens. Three lucky winners in Florida, Tennessee and California will soon be coming forward to claim their share of the almost \$1.6 billion jackpot that was calculated by the time the drawing occurred, and a record 81 additional millionaires were made last

Wednesday night alone by virtue of them winning second prizes in the Powerball drawing.

*How does the publicity that surrounded the run-up to this huge jackpot impact the Brand Value of Powerball, and Lottery in general? Wouldn't it attract the attention and interest of new consumer groups?*

**G. Grief:** Absolutely. We made critical gains in the younger demographic by virtue of this incredible jackpot that grabbed the nation's attention. 20 and 30 something's were "discovering" the

Powerball brand and game, and their purchases helped fuel sales to heights never seen before. The attractive jackpot taught them how to play, when to play, and forever impressed them with the “power” of the Powerball brand.

Likewise, significant inroads into the social media space occurred at many lotteries around the country. The number of “likes,” “followers,” and “friends” increased exponentially as the jackpot rolled, bringing in new players to the space, many of them of the younger variety.

*This must be a wonderful boon for the ticket sales, and the funding for Good*

*Causes that Lottery supports.*

**G. Grief:** For those of us who work in the industry, new individual state records for sales and revenue were being set on nearly a daily basis, and the numbers involved sometimes seemed too large to be accurate; but indeed they were correct. And yes, Education and the Good Causes that are Lottery’s mission to support are the real beneficiaries.

*And now, what might the residual longer-term impact of this event be for Brand Lottery going forward?*

**G. Grief:** The question for us now as an industry is how we can leverage all

the excitement that was generated, all the new players reached, all the social media progress made, and turn this moment into a “tipping point” for the industry in an upward direction. That’s a tall order but I know we are up to the challenge. Just give us a few days to enjoy the results of this record jackpot, get our batteries recharged, and we will get back to moving the industry to even greater heights! ■