

## Integrity in Sports Betting

Policy position paper, October 2007

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### 1 Introduction

- 1.1** In May 2007, the Gambling Commission (the Commission) published an issues paper on Integrity in Sports Betting.
- 1.2** The issues paper was released as an opinion gathering exercise designed to provide the Commission with information on whether the interrelationship between sport and gambling might impact upon the licensing objectives. The subject matter is sports betting, including cheating and malpractice involving betting on sports. It is not involved with the technicalities of how bets are made.
- 1.3** This policy position paper summarises the Commission's thinking following the consultation on the issues paper. It supplements the responses document.

### 2 Policy position

- 2.1** After considering the responses to the issues paper consultation and the discussion at the workshop held in July 2007, the Commission has decided its policy on integrity in sports betting.
- 2.2** The Commission understands the importance of upholding integrity to both the sports bodies and the betting industry. However, the evidence points to the number of incidents giving cause for concern about integrity in sports betting being low.
- 2.3** There is no evidence to suggest that taking steps to limit the existing types of bet offered by British betting operators or making them pay a levy to sports bodies will impact on upholding integrity in sports betting. Extra regulation may encourage sports betting operations to relocate offshore. The possible measures considered were potentially burdensome and expensive, while not offering definite improvements to the risk to integrity in sports betting.
- 2.4** The Commission has decided to keep the situation under review and we will:
- call on the sports bodies and betting operators (both traditional and betting exchanges) to improve their understanding of how each other's industry operates and to share information relevant to integrity in sports betting;
  - continue to develop our intelligence sources to keep abreast of any emerging integrity in sports betting issues;
  - encourage the ABB offer to hold a seminar for sports bodies to give them the knowledge they need to understand the betting industry;
  - encourage the sports bodies to share best practice on integrity in sports betting and to understand the Gambling Act;
  - encourage the betting industry and sports bodies to meet so that the sports bodies can get a better understanding of how betting works and how it relates to their sports;
  - offer to facilitate meetings as appropriate between the sports bodies and the betting industry;

- meet with the relevant sports bodies to assist them to ensure their rules on sports betting are fit for purpose;
- monitor how the licence condition on information sharing operates and its effect on integrity in sports betting;
- encourage the sports bodies and the betting industry to continue to provide evidence of incidents that may impact on integrity in sports betting; and
- publish a regular monitoring report, detailing sports betting activity.

**2.5** The Commission considers it needs to take the steps noted above to support integrity in sports betting. These combined with the Commission licensing and compliance regime should be sufficient to secure the licensing objectives and support sporting integrity.

## **3 Conclusion**

**3.1** The Commission works on the principle of risk-based regulation and must act in a proportionate manner. This statement and the proposed actions reflect our view that the most important steps to take are that the betting industry and the sports bodies should work closely together to improve information sharing.

**3.2** We will maintain a watching brief on integrity in sports betting and will consider further measures if events suggest such action would be proportionate and effective.

**Gambling Commission October 2007**

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The Gambling Commission regulates gambling in the public interest. It does so by keeping crime out of gambling, by ensuring that gambling is conducted fairly and openly, and by protecting children and vulnerable people from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

The Commission also provides independent advice to government on gambling in Britain.

For further information or to register your interest in the Commission please visit our website at:  
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