



Betting operators and arbitration bodies agree dispute resolution procedure

4 March 2020: The International Betting Integrity Association (IBIA) has joined forces with arbitration bodies the Independent Betting Adjudication Service (IBAS) and eCOGRA to establish measures to inform and advance the customer betting dispute resolution decision-making process. The approach relates to circumstances where customer winnings are not paid for the period where a sporting event is under investigation.

Previously, when frustrated consumers have approached arbitration bodies they have had to request updates from operators on each customer claim on a piecemeal basis throughout the year. This has involved considerable administrative time and effort on behalf of arbitration bodies and operators, with some cases taking over two years to be completed as sports bodies undertaken investigations into potential corruption. Under the agreement, IBIA will seek updates on all outstanding cases of suspicious betting it has reported to sports twice a year. Arbitration bodies will then contact operators using the same timeline.

Khalid Ali, CEO of the International Betting Integrity Association, explained: “The approach is aimed at improving information sharing on the status of suspended accounts linked to potential match-fixing. Sports have been supportive, which is vital as the process relies on feedback on their investigations. IBIA members want to do all they can to stop corrupters from benefiting financially and will continue to suspend accounts where appropriate. However, it is recognised that not all suspicious betting is corrupt and that innocent consumers should not be penalised.”

Richard Hayler, Managing Director of the Independent Betting Adjudication Service, said: “We welcome this considered and proportionate response to a problem that IBAS had raised with the IBIA. We are optimistic that the system will alleviate some of the difficulties previously caused where customer accounts and balances have been suspended - or bets left unsettled - for indeterminate periods, during which ADR providers could offer no practical advice or information to claimants. The solution developed by the IBIA will expedite this process. It will reassure our adjudicators that important investigations remain active and encourage operators and those investigating to review whether every bet on a suspicious event needs to be treated the same way. It showcases both the benefits of ADR providing feedback to the industry and the ability of collaborative work to deliver practical service improvements.”

“Tex Rees, Director of eCOGRA said: “These initiatives have been much needed and provide clarity and consistency for consumers and operators alike. We appreciate the collaborative and inclusive approach the IBIA has taken, which demonstrates what can be achieved when the industry works together to provide practical solutions and raise standards.”

The process has been agreed by IBIA and its members, which make-up many of the largest operators in the world, and IBAS and eCOGRA, which represent two of the leading customer dispute resolution bodies covering the UK and wider regulated markets. The approach kicked in from the start of 2020 and will be monitored to see if it can be implemented in other markets. Any parties interested in joining this approach are encouraged to contact IBIA at info@ibia.bet.

END

About the International Betting Integrity Association

The International Betting Integrity Association is the leading global voice on integrity for the licensed betting industry. Our members share a common goal of combating betting corruption to protect the integrity of sport and their businesses. Established in 2005 and formerly known as ESSA, we are a not for profit association whose members include many of the world's largest regulated betting operators, active across six continents. Members undergo a rigorous due diligence process and must adhere to our code of conduct committing them to responsible betting practices.

The International Betting Integrity Association's Monitoring & Alert Platform is a highly effective anti-corruption tool that detects and reports suspicious activity on its members' betting markets. The bespoke system tracks transactional activity linked to individual consumer accounts, clearly distinguishing it from commercial monitoring systems focused on simple odds movements. The association has longstanding information sharing partnerships with leading sports bodies including FIFA, UEFA, the TIU and the IOC and many gambling regulators to utilise this data and prosecute corruption. The association maintains a policy of transparency and publishes quarterly integrity reports analysing activity reported on the Platform.

IBIA members can be see here <https://ibia.bet/who-we-are/>

About the Independent Betting Adjudication Service

The Independent Betting Adjudication Service (IBAS) is an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) service, approved by the Gambling Commission to provide informed and impartial adjudications on disputes that arise between licensed gambling operators and their customers, after the customer has completed the operator's own internal dispute procedures and where a deadlock still exists.

The members of the IBAS Adjudication Panel apply their specialist knowledge to the facts and adjudicate mainly by reference to the operator's own terms and conditions. IBAS also check that operators have complied with the standards set by the Gambling Commission and with the IBAS terms and conditions of registration. IBAS rulings are legally non-binding on consumers, who are free to pursue any case through the court system after using IBAS. Rulings are binding on registered operators up to the value of £10,000. Above that threshold, operators may demand that the dispute is also heard by a court.

IBAS registered companies are here <https://www.ibas-uk.com/operators/registered-operator-directory/>

About eCOGRA

Established in 2003 and based in the United Kingdom, eCOGRA is a leading independent and internationally approved testing agency, specialising in the certification of online gaming software and systems. eCOGRA is management controlled, and the majority of our staff members have had considerable legal, financial, business administration and IT auditing experience at one of the Big 4 audit firms. As professional auditors, these individuals are required to utilise International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board ('IAASB') Auditing Standards. Many of our staff are also Certified Information System Auditors and governed by the Information Systems Audit and Control Association ('ISACA'). Our games testers and data analysts are highly trained and specialised in the field of online gaming and other leading-edge systems and technologies, and are able to perform game evaluations both onsite and offsite. The company's compliance activities generally focus on the following policy objectives: protection of vulnerable customers; prevention of underage gaming; combating fraudulent and criminal behaviour; protection of customer privacy and safeguarding of information; prompt and accurate customer payments; fair gaming (e.g. RNG and RTP game evaluations); responsible marketing; commitment to customer satisfaction and support; and secure, safe and reliable operating environment.



The eCOGRA Alternative Dispute Resolution ('ADR') Service is an impartial mediation service, specialising in the field of online gambling disputes. eCOGRA is approved by the Great Britain Gambling Commission in accordance with The Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information) Regulations 2015 and the MCAA in Malta. eCOGRA accept disputes that arise between registered sites that hold an operating licence from the Great Britain Gambling Commission or Malta Gaming Authority and their consumers.

eCOGRA seal-holders are here https://www.ecogra.org/srs/holders_safe_fair_seals.php

