

Data standards: procedures for the collation of sporting data for betting

Introduction

The provision and use of sporting event data has become an increasingly important aspect of the regulated betting market, notably driven by global consumer demand for product choice and access. The security and integrity of that data has correspondingly taken on increased significance. The International Betting Integrity Association (IBIA), which represents many of the largest regulated sports betting operators in the world, believes that ensuring the reliability and credibility of sporting event data is of paramount importance. There is a clear benefit for every party involved in the data supply chain in ensuring that such data is a product of high levels of accuracy and transparency.

Following discussions with stakeholders, and in acknowledgment of a general lack of formal regulation and licensing in aspects of the data collation and supply chain, IBIA has determined to promote a data collation process that endorses and verifies a set of minimum standards. IBIA believes that this is an effective means of achieving an approach which best serves to protect the integrity of sport, its data, betting markets generated by that data and consumers enjoying those products. No data approach is infallible or immune from potential corruption, but measures can and should be taken to guard against such illicit activity and effective controls can minimise the associated risks. IBIA has therefore set out a range of data standards and procedures in this document, which it invites interested parties to adopt and to demonstrate their commitment to.

Key Protocols

Core principles

Any sporting event data used for betting will be collated and offered in a manner that is:

- Accurate, reliable and transparent;
- Responsibly sourced and minimises risk; and
- Protects against criminality or misconduct.

Personnel vetting and training

It is vitally important to verify the probity and knowledge level of the individual/s sourcing data to ensure that any data collation meets a high threshold of accuracy, reliability and transparency. As a minimum, the following personnel recruitment and training protocols should be in place.

- a) Any persons involved in the collation of sporting event data must be at least 18 years old.
- b) The identities of those involved in the data collation process should be properly verified via official documentation (e.g. ID, proof of address) and interview (including video conferencing).
- c) Additional background checks should be made to ensure that there are no potential conflicts of interest or probity issues e.g. also working for other parties in the data supply chain.
- d) Prior to being operational, the data collation individual should pass a live training programme which consists of at least one full game in the respective sport/s they will cover.
- e) Prior to being operational, all persons involved in the data collation process should have demonstrated a sufficient knowledge of the business language used and the sport/s involved to ensure effective communication and awareness of processes and policies.

- f) Data collation, communication and integrity protocol training should be provided prior to any person involved in the data collation process being operational; where a person has been inactive for 90 days or more, appropriate operational retraining is encouraged.
- g) All persons must also be trained in how to identify and report integrity concerns, either in relation to the data collation operation or match/competition/club integrity issues.
- h) Breaches of any data collation protocols should be met with suitable disciplinary measures.

Data collation process

All relevant parties should recognise a duty of care to ensure that any data collated and distributed is done in a transparent manner and that any data is robust, accurate and reliable.

- a) The location, date/time and participation of those involved in a sporting event being offered should be confirmed by a reliable source at least 48 hours prior to matchday.
- b) Further checks on the veracity of the information on the sporting event on which data will be collated should be undertaken on the day of the event.
- c) The data supplier and its betting operator clients are encouraged to interact, and where necessary conclude contractual provisions, regarding the source, accuracy and reliability of any data, and which may include issues such as:
 - i. How that data has been generated e.g. a person at the venue or TV pictures; and
 - ii. The speed, latency and process for transmission of that data.
- d) Sporting event data should be collated on a secure device with compatible software and with clear policies on terms of use to minimize the potential risk of manipulation.
- e) All sporting events covered by data collectors should have post-match quality assurance checks conducted against key performance indicators, and with suitable remedial measures taken.
- f) The data collection database should provide visibility on which user created/edited/deleted data for every event and when, and all data should be securely maintained for at least 3 years.

Data integrity and reporting

Upholding and protecting the reliability and credibility of sporting data is of paramount importance.

- a) A detailed risk assessment should be conducted on any sporting events and competitions on which data is collated, with ongoing monitoring and review.
- b) All persons directly involved in the operation of collating, verifying and communicating sporting event data for betting should have suitable integrity and probity obligations placed in their contractual engagement terms and conditions.
- c) Where any data integrity issues are identified, all parties in that data supply chain and any other relevant integrity stakeholders must be informed immediately, an investigation process conducted, and the results and remedial measures shared with those parties.
- d) The data collection party will, in accordance with the respective law, agree to exchange information and engage in sporting and regulatory/law enforcement integrity investigations.

Auditing process and Kitemark

All parties involved in the collation of sporting event data, which may be distributed to regulated betting companies, may apply for the IBIA approved Data Standards Kitemark.

- a) Only those parties that meet and maintain the required standards set out in this document will be allowed use the approved Kitemark and for the duration that IBIA determines.
- b) IBIA will appoint an independent auditor/s to assess if a party meets the required data standards; those standards and this document may change as IBIA determines.
- c) The party applying for the Kitemark will agree to adhere to any assessment process set out by IBIA and its specified auditor/s and will meet any costs related to that process.
- d) That may include an additional assessment by the auditor where integrity issues and/or potential breaches of these data collation standards are identified.
- e) Auditing will take place annually, unless otherwise determined by IBIA, and any party meeting the requirements may be listed on the IBIA website and in any related documentation.
- f) All data provided to IBIA and its auditor will be retained in the strictest confidence and will not be circulated outside of those bodies unless or until agreed with the audited party; a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) will be signed where requested and deemed appropriate.
- g) Any party passing the audit may be invited to participate as a member of the IBIA Data Standards Steering Group; IBIA may invite other parties to participate as it determines.
- h) Applications to engage in the data standards auditing process should be sent to info@ibia.bet.

