

Report and recommendations of the Working Group considering the future administration of existing betting areas:

Responses

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In February 2007, following a meeting of stakeholders, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) facilitated the setting up of a Working Group to consider future administrative arrangements for betting on racecourses.
- 1.2 On 31 August 2007, the Working Group published a report containing its proposals and recommendations for the administrative arrangements until 31 August 2012. The four substantive sections of the report were headed: -
 - Proposals and recommendations;
 - Remit of the Working Group;
 - Proposals regarding the current administrative functions of the NJPC; and
 - The nature of responsible bodies.
- 1.3 The report was issued¹ for a six-week consultation period ending 12 October 2007.
- 1.4 During the consultation period, the Federation of Racecourse Bookmakers held three regional open meetings, to which all bookmakers were invited, to discuss the report and aspects relating to 'NewCo,' which was the company recommended by the Working Group to perform the future administrative arrangements.
- 1.5 Also during this period, the Racecourse Association's Gambling Legislation Group (a body representing the majority of racecourses) held a meeting to consider the report in detail. Subsequently, the RCA discussed the report and its ramifications at an open forum of all its members.
- 1.6 There were four responses to the consultation document – three from trade associations and one from an individual bookmaker. These responses have been published in full on the NJPC website (www.njpc-ltd.co.uk) and the respondents are listed in Appendix A.
- 1.7 We are grateful for all of the responses received. This document aims to reflect the views offered, but does not purport to describe all of the responses in detail.

¹ It was distributed by post directly to interested parties, including all racecourse managers, on-course bookmakers and the stakeholders at the February 2007 DCMS meeting. It was also available for public download on the NJPC website.

- 1.8 Alongside this document, readers should also refer to the report of the Working Group, which is published separately on the NJPC website. The terms of reference are included in that report.
- 1.9 Copies of this report may be obtained from the NJPC website or by writing to NJPC Limited, 2b Kings Hall, St Ives Business Park, St Ives, Cambridgeshire, PE27 4WY.

2 PROPOSALS AND RESPONSES

Consultation proposals

- 2.1 The Working Group proposed that the racecourses would nominate NewCo as the appointed administrator for the existing betting rings. The authority for NewCo would emanate from the terms and conditions of entry to the racecourse. The report was not specific, however, about the make-up of the NewCo board.

Respondents' views

- 2.2 The three trade associations made comments in relation to the make-up of the NewCo board. It had been proposed at the bookmaker open meetings that the board should be comprised of five members – one from each of the representative bookmaker associations² plus two independent members, including an independent chairman.
- 2.3 The three trade associations stated that the proposed make-up of the NewCo board was disproportionate in comparison to the respective number of members signed up to the three representative bookmaker associations.
- 2.4 One trade association proposed that the board should be made up of seven members, comprised of the five members as stated above plus two additional members appointed on a proportional basis dependent on the size of the memberships held by the three representative bookmaker associations.

Our response

- 2.5 The Working Group invited the bookmaker members to consider this feedback and make alternative recommendations on the structure of the NewCo board.
- 2.6 Consequently, with the unanimous agreement of the three bookmaker associations, the board structure was altered. It will now comprise of the five members detailed in 2.2 above plus an additional member each for the NAB and the RBA.
- 2.7 The Working Group noted the bookmakers' agreement that any changes to the Bookmakers' Rules would require the unanimous agreement of the board.

² The National Association of Bookmakers, the Association of Racecourse Bookmakers and the Rails Bookmakers' Association.

Consultation proposals

- 2.8 The Working Group pointed out in its report that the ABS department³ of the NJPC would be discontinued after 31 August 2007.

Respondents' views

- 2.9 An individual bookmaker commented that the ABS department should be reinstated as its demise would lead to a restriction of bookmakers' opportunities to bet and this was against the interest of racecourses, punters and bookmakers themselves.

Our response

- 2.10 The Working Group was not persuaded by the individual bookmaker.
- 2.11 However, NewCo has undertaken to explore all options going forward and if it can install ABS arrangements that are suitable and cost-effective, it will do so.

³ The ABS system compelled bookmakers to declare in advance whether they wish to attend race meetings.

Appendix A

List of respondents

Respondent	Category
National Association of Bookmakers	Trade association
Fife and District Bookmakers' Association	Trade association
East of Scotland Bookmakers' Association	Trade association
Laurence Bond	Individual bookmaker