



Business In Sport and Leisure Limited

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CONSULTATION: GAMBLING ACT 2005 (Licensing Authority Policy Statement (England and Wales) Regulations A Response by Business In Sport and Leisure (BISL)

Introduction

Business In Sport and Leisure (BISL) is an umbrella organisation that represents over 100 private sector companies in the sport and leisure industry. Its members include most of the major operators of commercial sport and leisure in the UK and many consultants who specialise in this field. Members of BISL represent a wide range of interests in the gambling sector and include operators of casinos, bingo, betting, pools, greyhound and horse racing, snooker and ten pin bowling centres, pubs and the suppliers of gaming machines. In fact as far as we are aware BISL is the only umbrella body representing all major sectors of the Gambling Industry.

BISL welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Licensing Authority Policy Statement from DCMS.

Overview

BISL welcomes this framework set out by DCMS which all local authorities must follow. It is a marked improvement on the Licensing Act 2003 where the lack of a framework contributed to confusion among local authorities and a set of policies which overburdened the industry with inconsistencies and over regulation. It is therefore very important the local authorities follow the framework set down in this document.

Questions

Is there anything else you think ought to be included in the licensing policy statement regulations and why?

BISL does not believe that there is anything else which should be included in the licensing policy statement. BISL welcomes Section 349 of the Gambling Act which sets out the principles which local authorities must follow.

Is there anything that we intend to include in the licensing policy regulations that you disagree with and why? In particular we are interested to hear views on the provision relating to the advertisement and publication of statements and subsequent revisions and the use of the term 'principal office' of the authority.

BISL is happy that the licensing policy regulations include the right issues.

In these regulations there is a proposal that a newspaper advertisement is one of a number of places which can be used by the local authority to advertise the statement. As the Department is aware most operators who have a Premises Licence find the requirement to advertise in the local newspaper both costly and wasteful. This is because the cost of advertising is huge – in London it is only possible to advertise in the London Standard which costs in excess of £1,000 each time. On top of the cost, very few residents read this information in local newspapers, if they read a local newspaper at all.

BISL does not believe that an advertisement in a local newspaper is cost effective for local authorities, the public or individual operators. The local public will be informed by other the proposals made for notices at local authority offices, public libraries or local authority circulars. For the trade, BISL believes that a local authority should every attempt to bring the statement to the notice of existing operators. In most local authorities the number of gambling premises will be few and easily identifiable. It might also be proposed that the local authority notify the relevant trade association centrally. Again it would not be difficult to provide a list of the relevant trade associations for local authorities, either from the Gambling Commission, or from DCMS.

BISL has no objection to the use of 'the principal office of the authority'.

In Conclusion

Business In Sport and Leisure supports the Licensing Authority Policy Statement from DCMS and looks forward to working with local authorities as they prepare their policies.

For further information, please contact:

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20th February 2006