



PRESS RELEASE

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ESSA Statement on the European Commission Communication on Sport

Brussels, 19 January 2011 – ESSA, the European Sports Security Association, welcomes the emphasis that the European Commission, through its newly-published Communication, *Developing the European Dimension in Sport*, places on sports integrity and calls on all stakeholders in sport to work together to ensure that that this remains the highest priority.

Through investment in security technology and through initiatives like ESSA, Europe's licensed, regulated bookmaking industry has taken a global leadership role in the fight against match fixing, all at no cost whatsoever to the sporting community or the European tax payer. However, in order to maintain the integrity of sport, ESSA calls for the Commission and other stakeholders to act in the following areas:

- To ensure that sports governing bodies act in the interest of their sport by acting on all information provided by ESSA and/or other early warning systems and put in place the mechanisms to ensure that, for any case of match fixing or suspected match fixing by either players or officials, the matter is dealt with effectively and decisively.



- To address other threats to sporting integrity with the same vigour as match fixing. The Commission correctly identifies sport-related match fixing as a serious threat to the integrity of sport, but does not recognise other, equally potent threats to integrity. These include the use of illegal performance-enhancing technology, sporting- and management-related financial irregularities, money laundering, espionage, the transfer of young players across borders and cheating, all of which have affected our most popular sports in recent years. Only a holistic approach to tackling these threats will ensure the Commission's goal of placing clean and fair sport at the heart of the European Union.

Since it was created by leading European bookmakers as an early warning system in 2005, ESSA has created links with no fewer than 21 sports governing bodies, with whom it shares information on suspected betting fraud. This success in alerting suspected foul play to authorities has helped to reduce the amount of fraudulent behaviour that passes through ESSA's membership.

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About ESSA

The European Sports Security Association (ESSA) was established in 2005 by the leading online sports book operators in Europe to monitor any irregular betting patterns or possible insider betting from within each sport. To achieve this goal ESSA implemented an early warning system between its members that highlights any suspicious betting activity. The Early Warning System allows ESSA to work with the sports regulators and their disciplinary and legal department, ensuring that when an alert is given the regulator is informed immediately which may prevent the possibility of any game manipulation on a given event. So far, ESSA has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with FIFA, UEFA, EPFL, The FA, DFB, ATP, ITF, WTA and has established close relations with the IOC and many other sports regulators. ESSA members include: Betcltic; Bet-at-Home; bwin; Digibet; Expekt; Goldbet; Interwetten; Ladbrokes, Paddy Power, PartyGaming; Sportingbet; StanJames; Stanleybet, Unibet and William Hill and. For more information on ESSA please go to the ESSA website <http://www.eu-ssa.org>.