



PRESS STATEMENT

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ESSA STATEMENT ON THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S GREEN PAPER ON ONLINE GAMBLING

Brussels, 24 March 2011 – The European Sports Security Association (ESSA) welcomes today's publication of the European Commission's Green Paper on Online Gambling as a solid step towards building an online gaming market in Europe. Nonetheless, ESSA questions the assertion in the Green Paper that sports events on which sports betting can be organised may, due to criminal activities, be subject to a higher risk of match fixing.

Match fixing is an unfortunate and unwanted problem in sport but there is no evidence that offering odds on a match places it at higher risk of match fixing. Indeed, sporting contests are manipulated often for purely competitive reasons, such as to secure promotion or prize money.

Bookmakers suffer financially from match fixing which is why Europe's licensed, regulated bookmakers have invested in security technology and initiatives such as ESSA. This investment has reached a point where, today, licensed, regulated operators in Europe are very rarely defrauded as a result of match fixing.

This leadership is an asset to European sports, European sports fans and to the European economy. ESSA believes that it is also a great asset to a future harmonised EU online gambling market as it is this model, rather than the establishment of a non-exclusive betting right, that offers the best opportunity to preserve integrity in sports.

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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: Betclick; 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>.