

BETTING OPERATORS AND ENGLAND HOCKEY SIGN INTEGRITY AGREEMENT

20 August, Brussels – Sports betting integrity association ESSA, which represents many of the world’s largest regulated betting companies, has signed an integrity agreement with England Hockey prior to the Unibet EuroHockey Championships taking place in the UK at the Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London during 21-30 August.

The agreement will see the two bodies work closely on integrity issues with a view to protecting hockey events, bookmakers and consumers from any corrupt activity linked to betting. ESSA will also be working with England Hockey to educate the players and officials on the issues around betting and ensure that integrity remains the priority. The Championships are a major biennial international televised event involving the top eight European national men’s and women’s teams.

Commenting on the new arrangement, ESSA Secretary General Khalid Ali praised the sport for taking a proactive, partnership approach with the betting industry. “This is a positive and forward thinking move by the England Hockey and we welcome the opportunity to expand our integrity network to include hockey. Whilst we have not seen any suspicious betting activity to concern fans of the sport, it is nevertheless important that suitable measures are put in place to deter corrupters”, Ali stated.

“The risk to the Unibet EuroHockey Championships and to hockey in general is low, but it is nevertheless important that we have suitable preventative measures in place. This arrangement provides us with access to essential data from ESSA’s responsible regulated betting operators to identify and punish any corrupt activity. It sends a very clear and forceful message,” stated Sally Munday, Chief Executive of England Hockey.

ESSA continues to play a key role as the regulated betting sector’s representative body at national and international match-fixing policy forums and holds positions on working groups at the European Commission, Council of Europe and the International Olympic Committee (IOC). It represents many of the world’s biggest regulated sports betting operators, serving over 40 million consumers in the EU alone, and is continually reassessing and improving its reporting and early warning systems.

The organisation funds player education programmes and promotes a transparent and evidence-based approach to betting integrity policymaking, regularly publishing integrity statistics covering its members’ regulated betting markets. The latest report, covering Q2 2015, can be found [here](#).

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Notes to Editors

About ESSA:

ESSA is a key player in the fight against betting related match-fixing. It represents many of the world's biggest regulated sports betting operators, serving over 40 million consumers in the EU alone. Concerned regulated bookmakers created ESSA in 2005 to monitor betting markets and alert sporting bodies and national regulators to suspicious betting patterns. The goal was and is to protect consumers from potential fraud caused by manipulating sporting events. ESSA helps to combat this with evidence-based intelligence it provides to sporting bodies and regulators

Every year, our members invest over €50m in compliance and internal security systems in order to help combat fraud. They also give back to sport and society by spending €400m on sponsorship around the world - €250m of that in Europe alone. This increases substantially when advertising and photo and video-streaming rights are taken into consideration. ESSA and its members also co-fund an education programme on gambling with EU Athletes that reaches out to 15,000 athletes/players across at least ten different sports in 13 EU countries.

ESSA members include the ABB, Betclix, Bet-at-Home, Betsson, Bet365, BetVictor, Betway, bwinparty, Digibet, Expekt, the Hong Kong Jockey Club, Interwetten, Ladbrokes, Paddy Power, PMU, Sky Bet, Stanleybet, Unibet and William Hill.

For more information see ESSA's website at www.eu-ssa.org or visit us on twitter: @ESSA_Betting

About England Hockey

England Hockey is the national governing body for hockey in England. It is responsible for the governance and development of the sport in this country. England Hockey is also the 'nominated country' for Great Britain. Consequently, it is responsible for preparing the Great Britain hockey teams for the Olympic Games, on behalf of and with the support of the other home nations, Scotland and Wales.

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