



essa  
SPORTS BETTING INTEGRITY

**15 January 2018**

## **INTERNATIONAL TIES STRENGTHENED IN FIGHT AGAINST MATCH-FIXING**

A world first agreement will provide police with more information from across the world to target suspicious betting activity and deter betting-related match-fixing.

The Letter of Agreement was signed between Victoria Police and the regulated private sports betting operators' international integrity body ESSA (Sports Betting Integrity) in December last year.

This means the agreement will be in place for 2018 sporting events in Victoria including the Australian Open tennis.

Police will be able to receive real-time betting alerts from ESSA on sporting events Australia-wide should any matches exhibit suspicious betting activity.

These alerts will be sent to the Sporting Integrity Intelligence Unit, however ESSA will not be able to access any law enforcement data.

This is a world first agreement between ESSA and a law enforcement agency, with the organisation previously only sharing data with sporting federations and gambling regulators.

ESSA is a not-for-profit organisation whose members include many of the largest licensed on and offline private betting companies with operations around the world, including Australia.

The association's role is to provide an alert and monitoring system with the specific aim of detecting and deterring the corruption of betting markets through the manipulation of sporting events.

Detective Superintendent Peter Brigham said corruption in sport is one of the fastest growing crime types globally and this agreement will allow Victoria Police to target and investigate these crimes better than ever before.

"We often refer to Melbourne as Australia's sporting capital, however with that title comes a level of risk in relation to sports betting," he said.

"It is a massive business and in such a lucrative market there is always the potential for corruption."

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“A number of ESSA members facilitate betting on Victorian events, however have no presence within Australia.”

“This means that police such as our Sporting Integrity Intelligence Unit investigators have limited ability to contact these betting agencies directly when making enquiries into suspicious betting activity on local sporting events.”

“Given the real time aspect of the alerts, it gives our investigators the ability to act quickly and even attend the sporting event in question to immediately commence the investigation.”

“The challenge for police is to stay ahead of the game when it comes to this offending and to continually strive to create an environment where it’s difficult for those criminals to exist.”

“This agreement with ESSA highlights Victoria Police’s commitment to taking steps to create an environment that will make it difficult for organised crime to infiltrate our shores and our sporting codes.”

In 2016, ESSA reported a total of 130 alerts of suspicious activity identified on its members’ betting markets and the association has reported a further 195 alerts in the first three quarters of 2017 (a full 2017 report will be available in the coming weeks).

ESSA Secretary General Khalid Ali welcomed the agreement stating: “Our cooperation arrangement with Victoria Police is an important cog in our global outreach and further highlights the international momentum and partnership working which is increasingly gathering pace between responsible stakeholders. This agreement sends a clear message of both parties’ desire to address an issue that blights the enjoyment of fans of both sport and betting.”

The Victoria Police Sporting Integrity Intelligence Unit was created in 2013 to proactively focus on monitoring integrity issues across all sporting codes.

The unit works with all racing and sporting bodies to enhance our knowledge and awareness of identified sports integrity issues.

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#### **About ESSA:**

ESSA represents many of the world’s largest 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 sports bodies and regulatory authorities to suspicious betting patterns. The goal was and is to protect consumers and sports from potential fraud caused by the manipulation of sporting events. ESSA helps to combat this with evidence-based intelligence.

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 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). The organisation is continually reassessing and improving its alert and reporting systems and has established information sharing arrangements with a range of sports bodies and regulatory authorities.

ESSA members include: 888sport, ABB, Bet-at-Home, Betclac, Betdaq, Betsson, BetStars, BetVictor, Betway, bet365, bwin, Cashpoint, Expekt, Fonbet, Interwetten, Ladbrokes Coral, Paddy Power Betfair, Sky Bet, Sportingbet, Sporting Index, Sportium, Stanleybet, Stoiximan, Unibet and William Hill. For more information see ESSA's website at <http://www.eu-ssa.org/> or visit us on twitter: [@ESSA Betting](https://twitter.com/ESSA_Betting)

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