

Tennis continues to dominate suspicious betting alerts

Brussels, 27 October: Tennis accounted for 84% of all cases of suspicious betting reported to the relevant sporting and regulatory authorities by international betting integrity body ESSA during the third quarter (Q3) of 2016. Tennis alerts have now dominated ESSA's integrity statistics for seven consecutive quarters since ESSA introduced its quarterly reporting practice at the start of 2015.

The third quarter of 2016 saw 37 cases of suspicious betting activity identified by ESSA and its members, which currently number 22 of the largest regulated international betting operators, with four new members so far this year. Tennis accounted for 31 of those cases with the remainder in football, with three cases, and one case each in table tennis, volleyball and beach volleyball.

ESSA Chairman Mike O'Kane stated: "Our Q3 2016 integrity statistics follow much the same pattern as the previous six quarters, with tennis alerts far exceeding that of any other sport." Whilst ESSA and its members welcome recent integrity discussions with the Tennis Review Panel, O'Kane's editorial highlighted that the Panel's Interim Report is not due until the first quarter of 2017, a year after it was set up, with another period of consultation to follow before a final report is published.

"Whilst the TIU [Tennis Integrity Unit] has made some welcome additions to its investigatory team, the implementation of any wider recommendations unfortunately looks to be some way off, whilst alerts continue to rise," O'Kane remarked. O'Kane's editorial also drew attention to the conclusions of the recently published in-play position paper by the British Gambling Commission, which found no evidence to show that the integrity risks of in-play betting are greater than pre-event betting.

ESSA's Q3 integrity report includes an article by the British Gambling Commission on that issue and its decision to continue to regulate rather than restrict in-play betting, along with another article from Charles Coppolani, President of French regulator ARJEL, on the integrity process employed during Euro 2016.

ESSA holds positions on match-fixing policy forums at the European Commission, Council of Europe and the IOC. It is driving a number of activities aimed at addressing match-fixing, including a player education programme with EU Athletes (see [here](#)) and an international project, entitled "Keep Crime out of Sport", led by the Council of Europe and funded by the European Commission (see [here](#)).

A copy of the full ESSA Q3 2016 integrity report and previous reports can be accessed [here](#).

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ESSA 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 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: the ABB, Betclac, Bet-at-Home, Betsson, Bet365, BetVictor, Betway, bwinparty, Digibet, Expekt, Fonbet, the Hong Kong Jockey Club, Interwetten, Ladbrokes, Paddy Power, Sky Bet, Sporting Index, 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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