

ESSA Statement: UK-France sports corruption/match-fixing pact

Brussels, 22 January: “The UK and France should be commended for agreeing the joint Declaration of Intention to tackle sports corruption and match-fixing through illegal and irregular sports betting. Both countries have put integrity as a priority issue and have developed what are widely regarded as best practice models in this area. The move further strengthens their information sharing protocols and can only benefit the integrity of their respective betting markets and sporting events.

“ESSA has consistently promoted increased international cooperation as a vital component in the eradication of match-fixing. The association therefore welcomes this important initiative which builds upon the work of the Council of Europe established Group of Copenhagen Network of National Platforms, seeking to develop and establish common tools in the fight against the manipulation of sports competitions, which both the UK and France are members of.

“ESSA encourages other nations to follow the example of the UK and France and place international cooperation and information sharing at the forefront of their betting integrity policies. ESSA remains committed to working with the Gambling Commission and ARJEL through our information sharing agreements and to working with all responsible parties to share our knowledge and expertise in this area,” stated Khalid Ali Secretary General of international sports betting integrity body ESSA.

ESSA holds positions on match-fixing and betting policy forums at the European Commission, Council of Europe and the IOC. It is driving a number of important initiatives aimed at addressing match-fixing and is currently involved in four anti-match-fixing projects (see [here](#)), having hosted an international betting integrity conference at Lords Cricket Ground (see [here](#)) at the end of last year, attended by over 150 senior officials from sports bodies, regulators and other key stakeholders.

ESSA has memorandum of understanding (MoU) with both the UK Gambling Commission and French regulator ARJEL to exchange information regarding suspicious betting. The association’s Q3 integrity report for 2017 ([here](#)) stated that 72 cases of suspicious betting had been referred to the relevant authorities during the quarter, adding to a total of 152 alerts over the first three quarters of the year; the 2017 annual report will be available shortly.

A copy of the UK-France sports betting integrity pact can be accessed [here](#).

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About ESSA:

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