

## **Response**

Thank you for your requests for information received 24<sup>th</sup> July 2015.  
Please find our responses detailed below.

### **Request one**

- data and records of complaints submitted and received by the Gambling Commission, pertaining to Betfred
- data and records of complaints submitted and received by the Gambling Commission, pertaining to Coral
- data and records of complaints submitted and received by the Gambling Commission, pertaining to Ladbrokes
- data and records of complaints submitted and received by the Gambling Commission, pertaining to Paddy Power

We do not publish details regarding complaints against individual operators unless there is a public interest in doing so. As explained in our previous response relating to complaints, the Commission is not a complaints handling body. We do not investigate individual complaints, but will take account of the information provided in considering the suitability of the operator or whether to take compliance action.

Releasing information regarding selected operators when we do not publish it for all operators would be disproportionate and prejudice the voluntary supply of information which we rely upon to perform our statutory functions. This information is therefore exempt under section 31(2)(c). This is explained in the attached document.

### **Request two**

- expenses of Director of Regulatory Risk and Analysis, Matthew Hill. This includes, but is not limited to, travel and commuting expenses.

Public authorities are required to publish senior management expenses as part of Cabinet Office rules on transparency. Our senior management expenses are available via our website, here: [What we spend and how we spend it](#)

Benefits in kind received by Commission Directors are published in our annual report

### **Request three**

- the number of meetings held by Philip Graf and Martin Cruddace, whilst Mr Cruddace held his position at the Association of British Bookmakers
- Philip Graff had a catch-up meeting with Martin Cruddace in May 2015.

### **Complaints against operators**

Complaints raised against operators are used by the Commission to inform our regulatory approach and determine whether any regulatory action may be necessary.

Section 31 ('Law enforcement') provides that information held by a public authority is exempt if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the exercise of a public authority of its functions including "the purpose of ascertaining whether circumstances which would justify regulatory action in pursuance of any enactment exist or may arise" (s.31(2)(c)).

Section 31 is a qualified exemption so we are required to consider whether maintaining the exemption is in the public interest.

### **In favour of disclosure**

- There is a legitimate public interest in promoting the accountability and transparency of public authorities.
- There is also an interest in highlighting instances of non-compliance within the industry in order to promote compliance from other operators.

### **In favour of maintaining the exemption**

- Disclosing information regarding the number of complaints raised against specific operators is likely to impact on the openness of operators in providing detailed information in a timely manner. This in turn will impact on the ability of the Commission to effectively regulate.
- Detailing complaints against selected operators would be disproportionate as we do not publish details for all operators. Publishing such details would not be in keeping with regulatory best practice or the Commission's approach to highlighting regulatory non-compliance.
- The Commission is not a complaints handling body whereby such statistics would be an indicator of performance against statutory duties
- We have previously disclosed total figures for the number of complaints in relation to FOBTs.

### **Weighing the balance**

Having considered the balance of the public interest, the Commission is of the view that disclosing this information would negatively impact on the openness the Commission expects from operators. The balance of the public interest lies in operators being encouraged to make timely and frank submissions to the Commission regarding compliance matters to allow the Commission to take appropriate steps in a timely manner.

The Commission publishes statistics on licence reviews in its annual report as well as details of regulatory sanctions that are issued following serious compliance issues.

Having weighed these issues, the Commission is of the view that the public interest is best served through maintaining this exemption.

### **Review of the decision**

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your Freedom of Information request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you should write to FOI Team, Gambling Commission, 4th floor, Victoria Square House, Victoria Square, Birmingham, B2 4BP.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner (ICO) for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Gambling Commission. The ICO can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5A

## Requests

### Request one

I write in accordance with my rights under Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and make the following Freedom of Information request.

I specifically require information of any type of communication whether that is by letter, email, text, voicemail, telephone, attendance notes, social media or any other forms of communications held by the Gambling Commission in relation to data and records of complaints submitted and received by the Gambling Commission, pertaining to Paddy Power.

I would prefer to receive this information electronically, preferably not as a PDF. If the decision is made to withhold some of this data using exemptions under the Data Protection Act, please inform me of that fact and cite the exemptions used.

If some documents which form part of this request are easier to obtain than others, then I respectfully request that you release the available information, as soon as possible.

Please contact me using the details below if you require any clarification on my request. I should be grateful if you could confirm in writing that you have received this request and I look forward to hearing from you within the 20 working day statutory time period.

\*

I write in accordance with my rights under Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and make the following Freedom of Information request.

I specifically require information of any type of communication whether that is by letter, email, text, voicemail, telephone, attendance notes, social media or any other forms of communications held by the Gambling Commission in relation to data and records of complaints submitted and received by the Gambling Commission, pertaining to Ladbrokes. I would prefer to receive this information electronically, preferably not as a PDF. If the decision is made to withhold some of this data using exemptions under the Data Protection Act, please inform me of that fact and cite the exemptions used.

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communications held by the Gambling Commission in relation to data and records of complaints submitted and received by the Gambling Commission, pertaining to Gala Coral. I would prefer to receive this information electronically, preferably not as a PDF. If the decision is made to withhold some of this data using exemptions under the Data Protection Act, please inform me of that fact and cite the exemptions used.

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I specifically require information of any type of communication whether that is by letter, email, text, voicemail, telephone, attendance notes, social media or any other forms of communications held by the Gambling Commission in relation to data and records of complaints submitted and received by the Gambling Commission, pertaining to Betfred. I would prefer to receive this information electronically, preferably not as a PDF. If the decision is made to withhold some of this data using exemptions under the Data Protection Act, please inform me of that fact and cite the exemptions used.

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## **Request two**

I write in accordance with my rights under Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and make the following Freedom of Information request.

I specifically require information of any type of communication whether that is by letter, email, text, voicemail, telephone, attendance notes, social media or any other forms of communications held by the Gambling Commission in relation to the expenses of Director of Regulatory Risk and Analysis, Matthew Hill. This includes, but is not limited to, travel and commuting expenses.

I would prefer to receive this information electronically, preferably not as a PDF. If the decision is made to withhold some of this data using exemptions under the Data Protection Act, please inform me of that fact and cite the exemptions used.

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### **Request three**

I write in accordance with my rights under Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and make the following Freedom of Information request.

I specifically require information of any type of communication whether that is by letter, email, text, voicemail, telephone, attendance notes, social media or any other forms of communications held by the Gambling Commission on the number of meetings held by Philip Graf and Martin Cruddace, whilst Mr Cruddace held his position at the Association of British Bookmakers.

We also require this information to be itemised to show how many of these communications were by letter, email, telephone, text or via face-to-face meetings.

I would prefer to receive this information electronically, preferably not as a PDF. If the decision is made to withhold some of this data using exemptions under the Data Protection Act, please inform me of that fact and cite the exemptions used.

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