

Response

Thank you for your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 for the following:

How many complaints have you received about a) online gambling accounts being shut down and b) users unable to withdraw funds from online gambling accounts in the years:

- i. 2014
- ii. 2015
- iii. 2016

Unfortunately, we do not categorise our contact centre enquires in such a way that we can easily extract this data. All calls and emails are logged and categorised but the searchable fields are limited. We do not use a category which would identify complaints regarding online accounts being closed, the only way we could identify these is through a manual check of the free text comments section in the records or emails that have been attached to the record.

With regards to problems withdrawing funds, there is a category used but the records do not differentiate between online gambling and non-remote gambling. A number of gambling operators will have both an online presence as well as a retail presence on the high street (bookmakers, bingo, casino and so on). The only way to identify which aspect a complaint relates to for these is again, manually checking the comments entered against the records, or emails attached to the records. From sampling these records, they contain various issues including complaints around sign-up bonuses and introductory offers, ID verification processes, payment delays etc.

Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for public authorities, such as the Commission, is set at £450. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 2.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information. We estimate that it would take in excess of 2.5 working days to determine appropriate material and locate, retrieve and extract any relevant information in reference to your request as there are over 3000 records which may contain relevant information and would need to be checked. If you are able to narrow your request, in terms of the timescale or type of complaint we should be able to provide some data by working up to the time limit.

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 5AF.

Request

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I request the following information:

How many complaints have you received about a) online gambling accounts being shut down and b) users unable to withdraw funds from online gambling accounts in the years:

i. 2014

ii. 2015

iii. 2016

This information should be made available to me in electronic form if possible. Please let me know if you would like any clarification of the question.