

1995

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

BOOKMAKERS ACT 1985

No. 158 of 1995

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

DETERMINATION OF RULES FOR SPORTS BETTING

Circulated by the Authority of BILL STEFANIAK MLA

Minister for Sport and Recreation

Outline

The *Bookmakers Act 1985* (the Act) governs the activities of bookmakers in the Australian Capital Territory.

Part IIIA of the Act provides for the conduct and control of sports betting. In particular, the legislation empowers the Minister to determine the rules for sports betting.

Section 39C (1) of the Act provides that the Minister may, by instrument, determine or vary rules for sports betting.

This instrument sets out the rules for sports betting. The rules encompass issues such as the:-

- different betting rules in respect of the approved sports betting events;
- minimum and maximum bet limits;
- approved methods of betting;
- requirements for giving security in respect of long term bets; and
- record keeping requirements.

In particular, this instrument sets out the types of bets a sports bookmaker may take bets on and provides the betting rules in respect of each approved sports betting event.

This instrument sets the minimum and maximum face value of bets at the discretion of the licensed sports bookmaker for sports betting with the exception that, if requested by the punter, the bookmaker must accept any bet to lose a minimum of \$2,000.00 in respect of any approved sports betting event.

In accordance with the minimum bet levels applying to on-course telephone betting for bookmakers, telephone bets received by licensed sports betting bookmakers on thoroughbred, harness and greyhound racing events have a minimum bet of \$250.00 or for the bookmaker to lose a minimum of \$2,000.00.

In addition, the instrument brings the arrangements for racing betting by sports betting bookmakers into line with the other restrictions applying to on-course bookmakers. The instrument provides that bookmakers may only disclose the prices of a maximum of three contestants in any one race. This restriction is designed to reduce the capacity of illegal starting price (SP) bookmakers to obtain betting information.

The instrument further determines the methods of accepting sports betting transactions. The approved methods are by face-to-face in the approved sports betting venue, by telephone or by facsimile. The instrument issued under Section 39(B)(1) provides that all telephone calls into the auditorium are recorded on the approved voice recording equipment. The additional restrictions in respect of bets transmitted by facsimile provide appropriate level of control on facsimile bets.

Furthermore the instrument determines the arrangements for sports bookmakers to provide security over cash bets, credit card bets or bets where the bookmaker debits a bank accounts of clients, on wagers where the outcome is not decided for a period exceeding twenty eight days from the date of making the bet.

Finally the instrument outlines the requirements for sports bookmakers to maintain records of bets and provide monthly reports to the Registrar of Bookmakers.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications from this instrument. The introduction of sports betting in the ACT is expected to provide increased levels of revenue to the Government. The minimum bet level for betting on racing events is consistent with the minimum bet levels for on-course telephone betting and is designed to protect the levels of turnover to ACTTAB.

The establishment of a mechanism to protect the long term cash bets provides an appropriate level of security to cash punters.

The requirements for the recording of all bets accepted will ensure that the appropriate level of turnover tax is paid to the Government, that appropriate records of the sports betting business are maintained and a record of all transactions is available in the event of a dispute between a punter and a licensed sports betting bookmaker.