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Delivering for you
in gambling



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The gambling industry is constantly in a state of change. While regulatory liberalisation is creating new opportunities in some jurisdictions, tightening legislation is closing down avenues in others. Our deep knowledge of the sector allows us to advise our clients on how to recognise, protect and optimise their opportunities within this shifting landscape.

Our gambling practice comprises lawyers drawn from across the firm, including our Commercial & Regulatory, Corporate, Tax, Dispute Resolution, Financial Services, EU & Competition and Intellectual Property practices and our expertise extends to all gambling products including betting, gaming, lotteries, prize competitions and promotions, both remote and land-based.

Well connected

Through our work for gambling operators and other organisations involved in the gambling industry, we have built up a wide network of industry connections, including at the DCMS, the UK Gambling Commission and with regulators in other jurisdictions.

Global offering

Clients benefit from our experts in more than 35 countries. This, along with long-standing relationships with local counsel in other jurisdictions, means that we are well placed to offer advice as new licensing regimes are introduced or legislation changes or on cross-border M&A. We can advise on the best jurisdiction for a client from both a regulatory and tax perspective. Whether a client wants to establish a new company, obtain a licence or needs market leading gambling tax advice, we provide a one-stop service.

“They are pragmatic; proactive; commercial and demonstrate an excellent understanding of the UK betting and gaming environment

*Business Affairs Director,
Sporting Index Group*

“Their combined experience in corporate law and the gaming sector is unmatched, and we thank them for their advice and insights.

*Noel Hayden,
Chairman and Founder of Gamesys*

Key expertise

As well as years of experience in advising on gambling products, we have market leading financial services expertise which underpins our advice on payments issues and anti-money laundering.

“An international, full-service gambling practice as well as expertise in the increasingly busy remote gaming sector

Legal 500 2016

“Offers a full range of assistance to leading names in the gambling industry. Regularly counsels on high-value transactions, disputes and tax concerns, as well as data protection and IP issues.

Chambers and Partners 2018

“They have the right balance of experience and dynamism; the team they put together has deep knowledge, plenty of energy and strategies to deal with these issues at a practical level.

Chambers and Partners 2018

“Their knowledge and advice is outstanding.

Chambers and Partners 2018

How we can help you



Commercial

Our commercial lawyers negotiate contracts from every perspective within the industry. Our experience includes advising on “white label” or “skin” arrangements, affiliate deals, hosting and cloud services agreements, linking agreements, carriage deals, brand licensing arrangements, software licences and payment processing agreements. We also advise a number of clients on the terms and conditions for their consumer websites, ensuring that they comply with gambling, data protection and consumer protection regulations.

Gambling Duties and Tax

We are unique in the UK legal market in that we have a gambling taxes group, made up of tax advisers who have a specific focus on the gambling industry. Our work with both traditional and online gambling operators and proprietary gambling operations covers all of the UK’s seven different gambling duties, VAT in a gambling context and all other, more generic, UK taxes. We regularly assist clients in structuring their operations including advising on where and how to set up their overseas subsidiaries and have successfully represented clients in dispute with HMRC on gambling tax issues.

Dispute Resolution

We have considerable experience in litigating complex commercial disputes involving companies in the gambling sector in all the major courts and tribunals. This includes advising on judicial review proceedings and other public and regulatory disputes. We also have significant experience in all forms of alternative dispute resolution, having acted in major gambling disputes in the UK, Gibraltar and the BVI.

Corporate

Our full service Corporate group is able to assist clients with any corporate outcome that they might be seeking to achieve, be that fundraising, listing on a public market, public or private corporate acquisitions or disposals, joint ventures, internal re-organisations, tax planning and structuring or employee incentive arrangements.

Data Protection

We regularly advise operators as to their obligations in respect of data protection law and privacy issues. This has included successfully defending clients against joint investigations by the ICO and Gambling Commission in respect of their use of data in their marketing practices.

Regulatory

We regularly advise gambling clients on licence applications as well as on the full range of regulations that apply to their activities (including gambling regulations, licence conditions, advertising codes of practice, data protection and consumer protection) and on the potential for overlap between them, particularly where the regulatory regime of more than one jurisdiction applies. In addition, we are experienced in dealing with competition issues in the gambling sector and advise clients on the full range of EU and national competition (antitrust) laws.

Anti-Money Laundering

We advise on anti-money laundering (AML) compliance on a regular basis, dealing with day-to-day reporting obligations and strategic advice as to operators’ policies.

Highlights of our recent experience

32 Red plc

On its GBP 176.5m recommended takeover by Kindred Group plc, one of the largest online gambling companies in the world.

Betfred

On a platform software licence with bwin.party for Betfred and the Totes's entire online offering, including online pool betting, numbers betting, sports book, and casino, bingo and poker services.

Gamesys

On the sale of its JackpotJoy and other brands to Interntain for an initial payment of GBP 425.8m. We also advised on its online gaming partnership with the New Jersey casino Tropicana, acquisition of Virgin Games and partnership with Metric Gaming to launch its sportsbook offering.

GVC

On regulatory advice in the context of GVC's bid for bwin.party Digital Entertainment Plc, as well as providing support during the due diligence process running-up to the successful bid made by GVC for bwin.party. We also advised in relation to its GBP 60m redomiciliation from Luxembourg to the Isle of Man.

Pinnacle Sports

On the sale of a controlling interest in the operator of one of the world's largest online sportsbooks.

Sportingbet

On its GBP 343m transfer from AIM to the Official List; GBP 119m equity and convertible bond issue and acquisition of Centrebet; GBP 125m disposal of its Turkish facing online gaming business; putative takeover approach by Ladbrokes; GBP 80m convertible bond issue and GBP 485m recommended offer by William Hill and GVC.

Tote Media Limited

On its deal that enabled the Great Leighs racecourse to reopen and to enter the British Horseracing Authority's fixture application process for the 2015 season.

888

On its successful application for a GB gambling licence and a range of regulatory, commercial, tax, employment and litigation matters

Blackstone and CVC

On regulatory advice in the context of its successful bid for Paysafe Group plc.

Gibraltar Betting and Gaming Association (GBGA)

In relation to the UK Government's reform of the taxation of remote gambling services. We also advised on its legal challenge to the introduction of place of consumption licensing and regulation in Britain.

Intellectual Property & Software/ Rocket 9

On the sale to LeoVegas of IPS' B2C multi-brand gaming assets (including brands such as Pink Casino, 21.co.uk, Slotboss, Bet UK and UK Casino) and the assets of UK marketing services business Rocket 9.

Sportech plc

On the sale of its Vernons casino, poker and bingo e-gaming business to NetPlay TV and providing pool betting duty and VAT advice.

TabCorp

On the drafting and negotiation of a software licence and services agreement with Playtech, under which it was licensed casino games for use under the "Sun Bets" brand.

William Hill

On a judicial review of the Levy Board on behalf of the BHA and William Hill in relation to the applicability of the horse race betting levy to betting exchanges.

Knowledge and know-how

As market leaders, we have to know what's new and what's coming – not just legal and regulatory developments, but commercial, technological, social, political and economic changes. And as well as knowing about new things, we work hard to make sure we genuinely understand them, and can make a realistic assessment of the impact they will have on our clients.

We make a point of sharing these insights with our clients. This page shows a small selection of the thought leadership and regular news and analysis that's available to you.

Brexit Next

Analysis and commentary on the impact of Brexit on businesses operating in, and trading with, the UK.
www.cms-lawnow.com/brexit



Gambling in Europe

An interactive guide to the regulation of online gambling
https://eguides.cmslegal.com/gambling_regulation



European Gaming on LinkedIn

We encourage you to join this group and contribute to discussions.



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