

MEDIA STATEMENT

DATE: 15 MARCH 2021

TO: ALL JOURNALISTS AND EDITORS

GAMBLING AND WORLD CONSUMER RIGHTS DAY

15th March is World Consumer Rights Day. This annual consumer movement serves as a means to raise global awareness about consumer rights and needs. Celebrating this day is a chance to demand that the rights of all consumers are respected and protected, and to protest against market abuses and social injustices which undermine those rights.

Punters are by definition consumers of gambling services/products. In South Africa, legal gambling is made available by licensed gambling operators through the offering of gambling products and services. These particular goods or services are marketed in the ordinary course of the operator's business to attract punters to consume these products or services. When a punter elects to participate in a gambling activity offered by a licensed operator, that punter effectively enters into a transaction with the operator as a supplier in the ordinary course of the supplier's business.

It is thus important to reflect on the punter as a consumer, and raise awareness of the rights of punters as consumers in terms of the various legislative instruments available to them in the country, as well as the institutions available to offer recourse in the event that that are dissatisfied with a product or service that they have received.

Consumer rights are protected through various pieces of legislation, the most notable being the National Credit Act, 2005 (Act 34 of 2005) (NCA) and the Consumer Protection Act, 2008 (Act 68 of 2008)(CPA). In simple terms, the CPA defines a consumer as a person to whom particular goods or services are marketed in the

ordinary course of the supplier's business, or a person who has entered into a transaction with a supplier in the ordinary course of the supplier's business.

At the same time, while punters are entitled as consumers to partake of licensed gambling products and services, it is equally important to raise awareness of the risks and socio-economic impact of gambling. To be a responsible punter, starts with the knowledge that gambling is a form of recreation: it is not a form of income generation. Monies used to gamble should be monies that one can afford to lose. Once you find yourself unable to stop playing, or you are spending more than you can afford to lose, then it is time to stop. Over-consumption of gambling can lead to problem gambling or addiction, which is extremely destructive to the punter as well as to their loved ones and dependents.

If you are having difficulty managing your gambling habit, or know of someone who is, help is readily at hand, through advice and counselling on a toll -free number – **0800 006 008** – that is provided by the South Africa Responsible Gambling Foundation, available 24/7.

Winners know when to stop!

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