



Gambling industry probed over complaints about unfair terms and conditions

The Gambling Commission has announced that it is supporting a Competition and Markets Authority (“CMA”) investigation into whether gambling operators are treating customers fairly. The CMA press release in relation to the investigation can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cma-launches-investigation-into-online-gambling>

Working with information supplied by the Commission and others, the CMA has contacted a range of gambling operators to demand information about their use of potentially unfair terms and misleading practices.

This investigation comes in response to concerns that consumers have raised about the industry on issues such as cancelling bets, altering odds after bets have been accepted, and offering misleading sign-up promotions.

Sarah Harrison, Commission chief executive, is reported as saying: *“We expect the gambling industry to ensure terms and conditions are not unfair. However, operators are still not doing enough. I continue to have concerns that many of these appear to bamboozle rather than help the customer make informed choices. Gambling, by its very nature, is always going to involve risk but customers must have faith that if they win, they will not end up feeling that the deck is stacked against them because of an obscure condition that they did not properly understand. We approached the CMA to work with them to address issues in the gambling sector and we are delighted to have agreed a joint programme of work to ensure terms are fair and transparent.”*

The joint work with the CMA builds upon the Commission’s call earlier this year to place consumer interest at the heart of the gambling industry, reflected in the recent launch of the Commission’s plan for communicating with consumers – see <http://cliftondavies.com/gambling-commission-starts-two-way-conversation-consumers/>

The CMA wishes to hear about the problems that consumers are facing in these areas as this will help inform the next steps for the investigation and it invites emails in this respect to be sent to Gambling@cma.gsi.gov.uk.

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