GVC response to UK Gambling Commission guidance

12 May 2020

GVC, the global sports-betting and gaming group, welcomes the publication of additional guidance to the industry from the UK Gambling Commission on the prioritisation of customer protection during the lockdown period.

While it is also pleasing that the Commission has found no evidence to-date of any increase in problem gambling in the lockdown period, GVC strongly endorses the additional focus on protecting customers. The Group was one of the first operators to introduce additional responsible gambling safeguarding measures to ensure that its products can continue to be enjoyed safely. Building on our Changing for the Bettor safer gambling strategy, these measures include:

- The addition of two new Markers of Harm ("MoH") indicators to the Group’s safer gambling algorithm, enabling the identification of potentially problematic gambling behaviour at an earlier stage. The additional MoHs will specifically review player behaviour pre and post home isolation. In the event that increased-risk behaviour is identified, a sliding scale of interventions will be initiated, which ultimately may result in the suspension or closing of accounts.

- Proactive communication with all customers, across all Group brands and in all territories, to remind players to gamble responsibly and direct them to the Group’s suite of safer gambling tools. Through these tools, customers are encouraged to set deposit and time limits as well as enabling them to self-exclude from the Group’s sites altogether. In the coming weeks the Group will introduce further tools including curfew setting, stake limit setting on slot games, and reverse
withdrawal settings. (See below for further details).

- The adoption of the Betting and Gaming Council’s voluntary ban on all UK broadcast gaming advertising, and its replacement with responsible gambling messaging during the lockdown period.

- Increased responsible gambling messaging on the homepage and throughout all sites, with a new page providing dedicated advice on keeping betting sensible and enjoyable during the current crisis.

- GVC gaming brands are running responsible gambling-led, multi-channel advertising and marketing campaigns to promote responsible gambling to customers while they enjoy time on our sites.

- Specific guidance and restrictions mandated to all affiliates preventing them from referencing the pandemic or encouraging excessive play due to boredom or isolation. This advice includes a specific blacklist of banned terms.

GVC CEO Kenneth Alexander commented:

“We welcome the finding from the UK Gambling Commission that there is no evidence to suggest an increase in problem gambling during the COVID-19 lockdown. Nevertheless, we remain committed to taking all necessary actions to keep our customers safe whilst they enjoy our products. Providing a robust safety net for those who may experience harm is particularly important during this unprecedented time of uncertainty and social restrictions. That is why we continue to enhance our tools to track problematic play so that we can proactively interact with any player if we see changes that suggest they are having problems.”

GVC has a range of controls to ensure players maintain a healthy control of their gambling. These include:

1. Customer-led methods
   - Deposit Limits
   - Time Outs
   - Self-exclusion (by brand or across GVC)
   - In the coming weeks we will be introducing new tools to set curfews, reverse withdraw settings and set stake limits for slot games.

2. Company-led methods
   - Customer Service intervention during conversations
   - Markers of Harm – Software-based algorithm to identify at-risk gambling behaviour and initiate Responsible Gambling team to make interventions with customer
   - Responsible Gambling reviews – review of customer accounts where we have concerns about player behaviour. Mandates players to communicate with us to avoid account suspension
   - Operator restrictions placed on customers we are concerned about (such as deposit limits or
reversal restrictions)

3. Responsible gambling messaging throughout the gaming sites and within marketing

ENDS

Contacts:

GVC Holdings PLC
Jay Dossetter, Head of CSR & Corporate Communications
Tel: +44 (0) 203 938 0000

Powerscourt
Rob Greening / Elly Williamson
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7250 1446

Notes to editors

About GVC Holdings
GVC Holdings PLC is one of the world’s largest sports-betting and gaming groups, operating both online and in the retail sector. The Group owns a comprehensive portfolio of established brands; Sports Brands include bwin, Coral, Crystalbet, Eurobet, Ladbrokes, Neds and Sportingbet; Gaming Brands include CasinoClub, Foxy Bingo, Gala, Gioco Digitale, partypoker and PartyCasino. The Group owns proprietary technology across all of its core product verticals and in addition to its B2C operations provides services to a number of third-party customers on a B2B basis. The Group has also entered into a joint-venture with MGM Resorts to capitalise on the sports-betting and gaming opportunity in the US. The Group, incorporated in the Isle of Man, is a constituent of the FTSE 250 index and has licences in more than 20 countries, across five continents.

For more information see the Group’s website: www.gvc-plc.com

Changing for the Bettor
Launched in January 2019, Changing for the Bettor remains the most ambitious and far-reaching safer gambling strategy within our industry. The vision behind the strategy is to establish GVC as the most trusted and enjoyable betting operator in the world.

Changing for the Bettor comprises seven key pillars for action, each of which has substantive projects and outcomes attached to it. These pillars are:

1. Understand the problem
2. Educate stakeholders
3. Advertise responsibly
4. Make it easy to stay safe
5. Help people in need
6. Design for safety
7. Change ourselves for the bettor

For further details see: Changing for the Bettor (https://gvc-plc.com/corporate-responsibility/safer-gambling-strategy-in-action/)