

BRBA Newsletter



January 2025

Chairmans Notes

Welcome to the new newsletter, we plan to keep members informed using emailed newsletters on a quarterly basis.

To all those who attended the AGM, thank you we do appreciate you showing interest in the association. It was lively to say the least with contentious issues such as the proposed change to article 4.1, after legal advice we decided it didn't need to be changed and we are happy to take the current interpretation given to us by our legal advisors, but at some point we should make it clearer in the articles of association.

Plus the changes to point to point sales procedure were also questioned, it has been decided that point to point pitch sales are to put on hold until a system suitable to the board and the point to point bookmakers can be agreed. The point to point committee meet 10th December.

Alan Wrigglesworth was appointed to the board of directors, Alan has previously been a director many years ago and the board look forward to working with him.

The good news is that the board has decided to reward the associations loyal members by reducing the membership fee for 2025 to just £60 this includes your blanket public liability insurance, and any gambling charity donation.

It has been quite active politically of late, the government has released details of it Levy for gambling harm which replaces the voluntary gambling charity donation. Details of the levy are shown later in the newsletter, I am disappointed that the government decided not to exclude us from the levy as we only pose a very small risk of attracting or creating problem gamblers. Also, I attended the RBC Technical Sub Committee again the details of that meeting are shown later in the Newsletter.

I Hope you enjoy the newsletter and the board would wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very profitable New Year.

Don't Forget Membership Subs are due now.

Gambling Harm

New Levy Imposed

The Government this recently imposed a new Gambling Harm Levy on all Gambling companies.

From April 2025 all on course bookmakers will be liable to pay to the Gambling Commission a levy of 0.2% of their gross gambling yields. The monies from this levy are to be distributed to the NHS and other bodies to fund treatments and research for problem gamblers.

We are concerned that oncourse bookmakers are included in this levy, but we do realise that they have classed us at a low risk level compared to other gambling platforms. Although we can't grasp why the Tote should be at 0.1% and we are 0.2% as we share the same arena and customers.

The link to the full Government report is shown on the BRBA website.

RBC Technical Sub Committee Meeting

At a recent RBC meeting after going through a long agenda the following proposals and rules were passed for future application.

- The rules are to be changed to allow secondary electrical boards, it is argued that these will help bookmakers display advertising, races at other meetings, and additional betting opportunities. It was agreed that these boards could only be forward facing and at the moment can only be used by Joint Bookmakers (ie. Not on the Rails) A specification is being prepared to ensure the joints are attached safely and that there are no health and safety issues.
- Bookmakers should ensure that proper signage is used on the bottom part of the joint either via a wrap around, attached boards or graphics which clearly shows their name, and bookmakers shouldn't solely rely on light board signage as their name disappears when the board is turned off.
- If a bookmaker is using an additional shelf on his joint to add space or provide somewhere for customer drinks, this shelf should not protrude forward from the Joint by any more than 12inches
- Bookmakers can't display a life span of a sleeper on their ticket. If a ticket can still be read and it is outstanding, then it should be paid.
- Lucky Dip tickets should only be used via computerised software providing a random number rather than the bookmaker making the selection for the customer himself.
- RBC's request for all workers to made to apply for workers cards from RBC similar to schedule Y's and X's was rejected
- The suggestion that on quieter days in the winter a designated numbers scenario being imposed with the effect of reducing the number of bookmakers able to attend those meetings was rejected.
- It was proposed that we monitor the use of Starlink broadcasts to ensure that they do not interfere with racecourse networks. It was noted that the system was similar to mobile hotspots and dongle broadcasts and that it may become common that bookmakers share their connections with each other which will reduce the number of networks and also save them costs. The current system will be monitored.

GAMBLING COMMISSION QUARTERLY RETURN

October to end of 2024 is now due

Please ensure your Gambling Commission quarterly return covering the period 1st October to 31st December is submitted by the deadline of 28th January. When completing the section regarding contributions made in relation to preventing gambling harm members can fill in the return using the annual payment of £2,000 made by the Association on 16th October 2024. Please put a note in the comments box that this is an annual payment. For the remaining 3 reporting periods next year, then complete the section by ticking “No” in the section, where it asks if contributions have been made in the reporting period.

AINTREE TICKET DISCOUNTS

Members are reminded that orders for discounted tickets for this year's Grand National meeting should be submitted by 31st January at the latest. As has been the case in previous years discounts are available for Thursday and Friday only.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Membership renewals are tracking at a similar level to last year and look likely to reach 160 again. The Board thank all members for their loyal support.