

12 July 2011

Committee Secretary
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary

I am writing in relation to the Joint Select Committee's inquiry into interactive and online gambling and gambling advertising. The Australian Federal Police (AFP) submission relates to item (c) of the Committee's Terms of Reference being "*the relative regulatory frameworks of online and non-online gambling*".

Under the framework of the *Interactive Gambling Act 2001* (the Act), the Australian Communication and Media Authority (ACMA) and the Department of Broadband Communication and Digital Economy (DBCDE) are responsible for regulating online gambling activities.

The Act also criminalises certain activities, specifically:

- providing an interactive gambling service to customers in Australia;
- providing an Australian-based interactive gambling service to customers in designated countries; and
- advertising an interactive gambling service.

The Act requires ACMA and DBCDE to refer alleged criminal activity to an Australian police force.

In the previous two years (since 2009), the AFP received 15 referrals concerning allegations of offences committed contrary to the Act. In isolation, when compared to other criminal activity, these referrals were categorised as low priority for investigation and consequently not investigated.

The AFP is aware that a number of countries have established a stringent regulatory regime, including licensing of sites, in an attempt to address this emerging issue.

On 2 June 2011, the AFP facilitated a meeting with ACMA and DBCDE, where it was agreed to develop a stringent regulatory regime with a view to deterring those engaging in this unregulated industry. ACMA and DBCDE will lead the development of this strategy.

The AFP is committed to working collaboratively with other relevant Agencies to develop mechanisms to better regulate this industry and, where appropriate, investigate allegations of serious criminality.

Yours sincerely

Ramzi Jabbour
National Manager Crime Operations