

# GRA NEWSLETTER



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## Introduction

We are proud to present the very first issue of the GRA Newsletter, a semi-annual publication whose aim is to shed light on the progress and latest achievements made by the Gambling Regulatory Authority.

The GRA Newsletter was primarily designed as a means to engage further with our external stakeholders, thus enabling our licensees and the public at large to have a better understanding of the Authority's activities.

For this project to materialise, an editorial team comprising technical officers from different departments/units was diligently put together. As it embarks on this new adventure, the editorial team commits to providing timely and relevant information through this platform to, amongst others, enhance transparency.

We look forward to creating a truthful and meaningful relationship with our stakeholders and sincerely hope that this publication will bring about greater awareness of our initiatives.

*The Editorial Team*

## NEWS

### E-Board



The E-Board project was recently implemented at the Gambling Regulatory Authority and was introduced in an attempt to digitalise and modernise its internal processes. This tool thus enables officers to digitally sign and submit Board papers from their respective work stations. Moreover, Board papers can be sent to Board members electronically, hence rendering the whole process paperless and environmental friendly. This solution also allows consultation of documents in real-time, insertion of comments and annotations, amongst others. In addition, the E-Board is a solution which enhances security and confidentiality thanks to data encryption.

### Helpline 8909

Problem gamblers who find it difficult to keep their gambling habits in check can henceforth obtain assistance through our helpline without having to bear telephone costs. Helpline 8909 is a dedicated telephone line which was launched in July 2018. Since the midst of 2021, the line became free of charge for callers seeking help on how to control or stop gambling.



In the near future, the Gambling Regulatory Authority is also looking to set up a full-fledged support system for gamblers suffering from gambling addiction. The system will include psychological treatment and follow-up sessions with problem gamblers, their family members and peers.

### Recruitment



The Gambling Regulatory Authority has recently reinforced its Finance Section. Two Accounting Technicians were appointed on a permanent and pensionable basis. This recruitment exercise was carried out in order to cope with the exigencies of the service. Additionally, several other recruitments were carried out by the Authority to man the Horse Racing Division, an independent division responsible for regulating horse racing in Mauritius. These officers were appointed on a contractual basis.



## NEWS

### New Horse Racing Organiser

The People's Turf Public Limited Company was licensed in June 2022 by the Gambling Regulatory Authority under Section 30 of the GRA Act 2007 to organise horse racing activity at the Champ de Mars.



### Third Tote

The People's Turf Public Limited Company was granted a Totalisator Operator licence on 14 October 2022 to operate at the racecourse, outside the racecourse and through remote communication. It was also authorised to operate 25 outlets, namely 1 on-course and 24 off-course, around the island. This licensee offers both exotic and non-exotic bets, and is the third totalisator operator to be licensed by the Gambling Regulatory Authority.



# LOTTERY ACTIVITIES THROUGH THE INTERNET



Since the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Authority has noticed that the demand for holding lottery activities through the Internet has skyrocketed. In an attempt to regulate these online activities, an amendment was recently made to the Gambling Regulatory Authority Act whereby the definition of the term *lottery* was broadened. Same is henceforth said to comprise:

**"promotional lottery activities through the Internet, including social media and messaging platforms [...]"**

This amendment implies that those who wish to organise promotional lottery activities through the Internet need to obtain a valid licence from the Authority before doing so. Such a licence is also compulsory to make use of social media, messaging platforms and mobile applications for

promoting lottery activities as these platforms are considered to be internet-based.

## Offences

The following sanctions shall apply to those who are in violation of the GRA Act :

- Carrying on a betting activity without a licence is a punishable offence which may warrant a heavy fine and several years of imprisonment.
- Any person who organises a lottery without a licence shall commit an offence and, on conviction, be liable to a fine not exceeding Rs 500,000 and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years.
- Any person who transacts any business regulated by the Act with a person who is not licensed shall commit an offence and, on conviction, be liable to a fine not exceeding Rs 50,000 and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year.

## Risks to Players

The list below lays out the risks associated to playing with unlicensed lottery organisers:

- Playing with an unlicensed lottery organiser is considered as an offence and may entail fines and imprisonment (refer to the Offences section above).
- When the player wins a bet, there is no guarantee that the winnings will be paid by the unlicensed lottery organiser.
- As an unauthorised lottery is not supervised by the GRA, the chances of same being unfair or rigged are high.
- If the lottery is cancelled, the player's chances of being refunded are close to nil.



# IMPORTATION OF GAMING DEVICES

## A Step-by-Step Guide

The importation of gaming devices is regarded as a lengthy and tedious process by many operators. This is due to the fact that there are presently no manufacturers of such devices in Mauritius, hence implying that licensees need to turn to foreign manufacturers for the provisioning of brand-new machines.

The Gambling Regulatory Authority (GRA) currently regulates three different types of gaming devices namely Amusement machines, Limited Payout machines and Gaming machines. Sections 28, 29A and 29F of the GRA Act 2007 stipulate that gaming devices are to be imported solely by operators licensed by the Authority. Subsequently, any person, other than an authorised operator, who imports such machines on the Mauritian territory is considered to be in contravention with provisions of the Act. Given the various steps involved in the importation of gaming devices, it is not uncommon for licensees to inadvertently omit some of them. In order to ease and facilitate this process, below is a step-by-step guide to follow for acquiring such machines:

### Step 1

The licensed operator should send an application to the GRA to seek approval for the importation of machines in respect of the operator's licence.

### Step 2

The application should be submitted with relevant technical reports from one of the three recognised testing laboratories namely GLI, BMM or SIQ.

### Step 3

The Gambling Regulatory Board gives its approval upon reception of satisfactory reports from the recognised laboratory.



### Step 4

The licensee is informed about the Board decision, be it positive or negative.

### Step 5

If the decision is positive, a clearance letter is issued to the Ministry of Commerce to allow importation of the gaming devices.

### Step 6

After importation and following the visit of MRA officers, GRA officers will physically inspect each machine and note down their serial numbers.

### Step 7

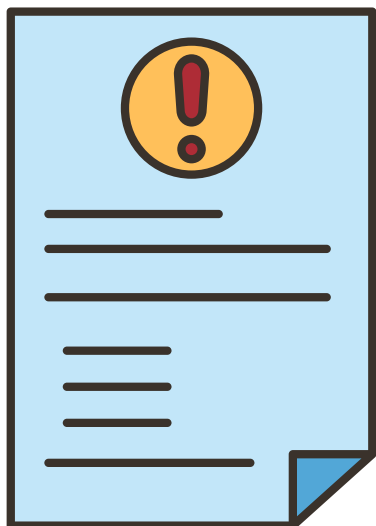
The licences of the machines are ready to be paid for at the GRA.

### Step 8

Once payment has been made, the machines are ready for use.

# INSPECTIONS & COMPLAINTS

## Making a Complaint



One of the main prerogatives of the Gambling Regulatory Authority is to protect punters' rights. For this reason, any person who feels aggrieved by any act or omission in respect of any regulated activity under the GRA Act can make a complaint in writing to the Authority. However, the Act also stipulates that the Authority shall not investigate a complaint where same is made more than one month after the date of the act or omission. Below is a set of guidelines that needs to be taken into account in order to register a complaint:

- Complaint has to be made in writing to the Authority
- No verbal complaint shall be entertained
- A copy (details) of the ticket is important when registering a complaint
- Full contact details of complainant (name, address and contact details)
- No claim shall be entertained in respect of a lost or mutilated ticket
- Validity of ticket is as follows:
  - a) Football - 30 days
  - b) Horse Racing - 30 days
  - c) Lottery - 6 months
  - d) Casino/ Gaming House - 6 months

## Inspections on Race Days

During each race meeting, officers of the Gambling Regulatory Authority are physically present on and off the race course to carry out field work and ensure that bookmakers, totalisators, dart games and sweepstakes operators comply with the conditions attached to their respective licences. For the year 2022, about 150 inspections were done on race days.



The compliance checklist provided below elaborates on the different aspects that are being examined during inspections (horseracing only) :

- To verify validity of licence and conditions of licence.
- To check Bookmaker's clerk badge.
- To ensure that not more than 3 terminals are in operation, out of which one shall be used exclusively to effect payments.
- To check the book value range – Lower limit: 575, Upper limit: 750.
- To ensure that no minors are placing bets.

## PUNTER EDUCATION

### First Goal Scorer



The First Goal Scorer is a type of bet that can be placed prior to a football match. The aim of the game is to guess who will be the first player to score in a specific match.

If the first goal is an own goal it does not count as a goal for settlement purposes. All bets on first goal scorer will therefore be settled on the next goal scored. Own goals do not affect the settlement of any bets placed on correct score or other related markets. A goal will be considered an own goal if it is officially recognised as such on the day of the game.

If the chosen player doesn't start (play) and there has already been a first goal scorer decided before they come on then the first goal scorer bet is void. If they come on and no first goal scorer has been decided yet then it is still a valid bet as they still have an opportunity to score the first goal.

If a player has any opportunity to fulfil the bet they are counted as a runner, regardless of how long they have played. This means that if the selected player goes off injured in the first minute and hasn't scored, they are deemed a loser; likewise, if the chosen player comes off the bench late on and doesn't score, they are also deemed a loser.

## Spin the Wheel and Handpicked Draws

Is a licence required to organise activities such as the Spin the Wheel or Handpicked Draws? It is presently the case, as these activities are regulated under the Gambling Regulatory Authority Act where they are categorised as promotional lotteries.

The Spin the Wheel game, sometimes referred to as "Roue de la Fortune" or Wheel of Fortune, is a revolving device whereby participants are offered the chance to win different prizes by spinning a wheel. Meanwhile, a Handpicked

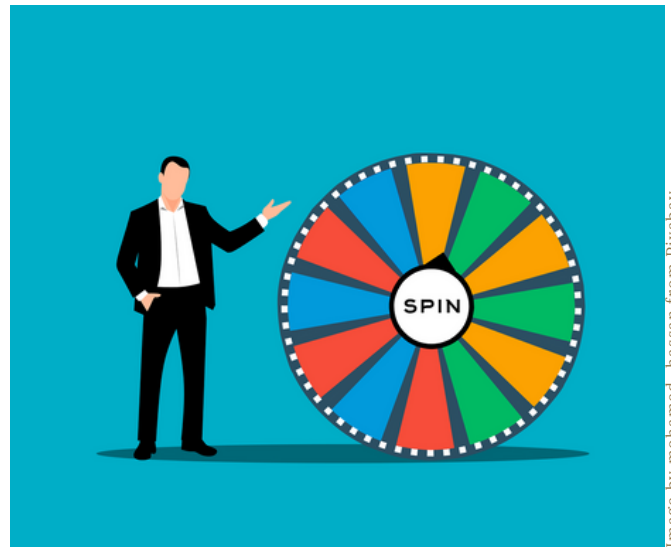


Image by mohamed\_hassan from Pixabay

Draw is another type of promotional lottery whereby all participation forms are gathered in a box, mixed thoroughly and out of which a form is randomly picked in order to designate a winner. Both games are widely used for commercial and marketing purposes to promote a brand, product or service. However, as the Spin the Wheel game and Handpicked Draws are regulated under the Act, it is thus compulsory to obtain a valid licence from the Authority prior to holding such activities. Failure to do so is an offence and shall, upon conviction, entail a fine not exceeding Rs 500,000 and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years.



# SI OU FASON ZWE PE STRES OU...



## APEL NOU LOR 8909

Enn nimeru spesial pou ed ban zwer konpilsif ena enn meyer kontrol kan zot gamble



## KONSEY EK SOLISION

Nou ban konseyer a lekout. Zot la pou don konseyer ek solision a ban zwer ki perdi kontrol fasilman



## KONFIDANSIEL EK ANONIM

Ban lapel trete an tou konfidansialite ek ou kapav swazir pou rest anonim



## SERVIS GRATWI

Tou ban lapel ek konseyer ki lor 8909 gratwi

**HELPLINE 8909 - ENN INISIATIV GAMBLING REGULATORY AUTHORITY**