

German Sports Bodies Protest At Licensing Chaos

15TH APR 2015 | WRITTEN BY DANIEL MACADAM

Germany's Olympic and football federations have delivered another blow to the country's licensing of sports betting by quitting their role in the ill-fated process.

All the members of a sports advisory council to Germany's federal gambling regulator are refusing to work until their concerns about the licensing paralysis are resolved.

The high-powered board is made up of representatives from Germany's Olympic Sports Confederation, Football Association, Bundesliga football league, Sports Aid and regional sports federations.

Rolf Müller, president of the Hesse Sports Federation and one of the board members to step down, said its proposals have "neither been answered nor considered" by the Federal Council of Games of chance, or Glücksspiel-Kollegium.

"The main issue is the quantitative limitation of the available licences to 20," Müller said, adding that licences should instead be awarded based on the quality of applications.

"This way the process would be more transparent and unsuccessful applicants would have less opportunity to bring court proceedings," he told GamblingCompliance.

"Under the current system there will be no licences issued in the foreseeable future because of the pending court proceedings," he added.

Regulators in Hesse shortlisted 20 betting companies last October, but are yet to issue any licences amid a deluge of lawsuits from **failed and successful bidders**.

Müller added that the advisory sports council will only start working again once the Kollegium addresses its proposals.

He told German radio station Deutschlandfunk last week that sports organisations no longer wanted to be a "fig leaf" for the controversial betting regime.

"It's understandable that they are doing this in light of the chaotic way the whole licensing process has been handled," said Luka Andric, general manager of the German Betting Association.

The board represents the "crème de la crème" of German sports, so its decision is "quite a big blow" for the gambling regulators, Andric said.

The German Olympic Federation (DOSB) is due to make a statement in the coming days, after being delayed by its work on the decision to select Hamburg as Germany's bid city over Berlin for the 2024 Olympic Games.

The **German Football Association** (DFB) also expressed concerns about the licensing concerns last summer, shortly after Germany's national team won the FIFA World Cup.

The Glücksspiel-Kollegium, made up of gambling regulators from Germany's 16 regions, will meet next week, when it is likely to discuss the sports bodies' decision.

The group was unavailable for comment when contacted by GamblingCompliance.

"It's a further signal that something is wrong with the sports betting regulation," said Matthias Spitz, an attorney at Melchers law firm. "Maybe it gives the regulators food for thought."

Litigation has piled up in the courts in Wiesbaden, the capital city of Hesse where betting companies located outside of Germany can file their challenges to the process.

"Officials say it's just the courts that stopped proceedings. It's not the courts, it's the whole structure," said Wulf Hambach, partner at Hambach & Hambach law firm.

Meanwhile, the German Betting Association, which represents companies including Betfair, Tipico and Stanleybet, met with sports organisations yesterday to discuss betting integrity issues.

The body is working closely with sports to improve areas like information flows between operators and governing bodies.

It comes as a draft bill to tackle match-fixing is likely to be presented to Germany's federal parliament, the Bundestag, later this year.

Topics:



Geography:



Sectors:



Content:

