

Keith Bristow appointed as Chairman of new Industry Anti-Money Laundering Group

8th February 2016 – Keith Bristow QPM, who recently retired as Director-General of the UK National Crime Agency, has been appointed as the first chairman of the Gambling Anti-Money Laundering Group (GAMLG).

GAMLG was established in January 2016. Its initial membership is comprised of the Remote Gambling Association (RGA) and the Association of British Bookmakers (ABB). The sectors they represent account for over 70% of the British gambling market.

It is modelled on the financial services sector's Joint Money Laundering Steering Group. Its aim is to improve the gambling industry's ability to combat money laundering. It will primarily do this by producing, in collaboration with the sector's statutory regulator (The Gambling Commission), industry good practice guidelines. However, its remit will enable it to consider a wide range of related issues.

Commenting on his appointment, Keith Bristow said:

'We should never forget that serious and organised criminals commit crime to make money, causing untold misery in the process. The total amount of money laundered into and through the UK is unknown, but we do know that it will include the proceeds of virtually all serious and organised crime in the UK as well as significant sums from overseas. Criminals use a range of dishonest methods to launder their criminal profits including gambling which can provide a credible explanation for a source of wealth. I have been impressed by the commitment of the gambling industry to tackle money laundering. The industry acknowledges that there is more to be done. As Chair of the GAMLG, I will work constructively with

the industry to continue to drive up standards and, when necessary, robustly challenge current policy and practice. By making it even more difficult for criminals to exploit the gambling industry, we will make a real contribution to the protection of UK businesses and communities.'

Clive Hawkswood, Chief Executive of the RGA, commented that:

'As the Government's national risk assessment has shown, gambling per se is considered low risk. However, we all accept there are risks that we must recognise and address. GAMLG will help us to identify and promote best practice to ensure that we deal with these threats consistently and effectively. I am delighted that Keith accepted our invitation to become GAMLG chairman. His appointment reflects how seriously we take these issues and, knowing him as I do, there is no doubt that he will very much hold us to account.'

Malcolm George, Chief Executive of the ABB, added:

'We have put in place strong processes through the existing ABB code to minimise the threat of money laundering in betting offices, but money launderers do not respect sector boundaries and the more that we can share information and best practice across the wider industry the better it will be. This is an area where we cannot be complacent and the appointment of someone with the standing and reputation of Keith Bristow underlines our commitment to being leaders in this field.'