

FIFA extends Early Warning System contract for monitoring sports betting

As part of its efforts to safeguard the integrity of the game of football, FIFA is extending its early warning system for monitoring sports betting to take in the preliminary competition for the 2010 FIFA World Cup when it kicks off later this year.

Early Warning System GmbH, a company founded specifically for this purpose with its own staff and offices in Zurich, has been contracted to undertake this task and started the relevant work on 1 July 2007.

FIFA's actions are intended to prevent sports betting from having any negative impact on football matches and, at the same time, raise awareness of this problem throughout the entire football community. To achieve these goals, FIFA will offer support from a technical perspective and in terms of manpower through Early Warning Systems GmbH.

Furthermore, FIFA will immediately sign contracts via the company with bookmakers and betting organisations, under which the latter will be required to report any irregular betting activities.

The ever-increasing range of sports bets now available, largely as a result of advances in new media and internet technology, is having a growing influence on football at national and international level. In the light of various betting scandals in recent years, FIFA set up an early warning system prior to the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany and successfully piloted the scheme during the tournament.

The experience gained prompted this year's FIFA Congress in

Zurich on 31 May to formalise the early warning system and employ it once again for the 2010 FIFA World Cup finals in South Africa.