

# All stop for Chinese online lotteries

Several companies that in recent weeks announced online lottery initiatives with counterparts in China are halting operations pending more clarity on their overall legality in the wake of a statement this week from the Ministry Of Information Industry and the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT).

Proposed new regulations set to go into affect at the end of the month have been designed to crack down on the explosion of audio-visual content on the Internet. The Government stated that sexual and politically sensitive materials would not be tolerated under the new rules and that only State-controlled entities would have the right to operate websites that post audio-visual content.

“Those who provide Internet audio and video services should insist on serving the people, serving socialism and abide by the moral code of socialism,” read a Government notice. According to the notice, all content must be free of violence, sex and gambling and cannot reveal State secrets or portray morally, socially or politically harmful situations.

“These regulations have been formulated to safeguard the interests of the nation and the public and to safeguard the healthy and orderly development of audio-visual services,” read the notice.

The Xinhua news agency in China has reported that, as a result, the sale of online lottery tickets has been banned in China. According to the report, sales of lottery tickets online will not be permitted and companies that have started operations could face prosecution.

Xinhua quoted Wang Xuehong, Head of the Lottery Research

Institute at Beijing University, who stated that online lottery sales were difficult to regulate. "It's hard to say whether a website will buy lottery tickets for the buyers after it receives money from them," he said.