

iGB Live! HQ

Wednesday 18 July 2018, 10:00-10:15

Amsterdam RAI, hall 8 (Boardroom)

Europaplein, 1078 GZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Mr Joop Pot – Shedding light on the letter of the Minister of Legal Protection (d.d. 5 June 2018) regarding the draft bill on remote gambling and the growing interwovenness of games and gambling

Ladies and gentlemen,

It's my great pleasure to be here at iGB Live! in the RAI exhibition complex.

"RAI" means (in Dutch): *Rijwiel- en Automobiel-Industrie*; or in English: Bicycle and Automobile Industry.

I am sure that the founders of this exhibition complex never would have thought that one day their complex - nearly one hundred years after the original foundation of this complex in 1922 - would host the biggest igaming exhibition.

During iGB Live!, "RAI" could better be short for Ridiculous Amount of Igaming (*"belachelijke hoeveelheid iGaming"*).

I am happy to contribute today.

Enough about the past and about RAI, let's turn our focus to the future and to remote gambling, games and gambling.

According to the conference brochure, this "Elevator Boardroom" is short, sharp and to the point.

That's exactly what I intend to do in the coming 10 minutes.

Ladies and gentlemen,

You all know that the draft Remote Gambling Bill has been sent to Parliament in July 2014; in July 2016 one of the Houses agreed and the draft Bill was sent to the other House. It's still unsure when that House, the Senate, will discuss and approve the draft Bill. On 11 September, there's a meeting about the way forward.

That has to do with additional conditions for future licensees, agreed upon by the governing political parties in last year's coalition agreement.

On 5 June, the Minister responsible has sent a letter to Parliament clarifying these additional conditions. By doing so, Minister Dekker intended to remove the main roadblocks of the legislative process.

I will briefly touch upon three major elements of his letter:

1) Settlement requirement

2) Local representative

3) Gaming and gambling

Ad. 1) Settlement requirement: The letter addressed the requirement for (future) online licensees to establish some form of physical presence in the Netherlands. The Minister writes that only online licensees without a presence in the EU or the European Economic Area will be obligated to open an establishment in the Netherlands;

Ad. 2) Local representative: All (future) online licensees, however, even those already established in the EU or EER, will need to appoint a local representative in the field of addiction prevention;

Ad. 3) Gaming and gambling: The letter also announces measures to erect greater barriers between social gaming on the one hand and gambling on the other. The letter does not really indicate which measures that will be.

There's no reaction of Parliament yet. It's likely that a first formal reaction will be communicated by Parliament during a meeting of the Committee on Justice and Security on 13 September.

I can imagine that the iGaming community is awaiting the coming into force of this Remote Gambling Bill; and so does the Regulator!

The Bill will enable us to better protect the consumer; it will also give us additional enforcement powers and better (technological [CRUKS, CDB]) instruments to prevent gambling addiction.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I've said that I will be short, sharp and to the point. Therefore, I will move on to the growing mixing of games and gambling – one of the elements of the letter of the Minister. We see that:

- Gambling is advertised on gaming websites and vice versa;
- Gambling elements pop up in games and typical casino games of chance - such as roulette - can be played as a game.

These hybrid types of games and gambling, made us decide to officially change the English translation of *Kansspelautoriteit*.

Until recently, I would have said the Netherlands Gaming Authority; now, I will say the Netherlands Gambling Authority.

By doing that, I want to express that we are the regulator of gambling and gambling elements in other types of entertainment.

As just indicated, the letter of the Minister introduces greater barriers between social gaming and gambling. That's for a reason.

Research commissioned by the Netherlands Gambling Authority shows that the blurring boundary between social games and online gambling encourages young people or other vulnerable groups to participate in gambling.

It turns out that one in two young people (50%) switch online from gaming to gambling. Young people do not see this as a switch (*nor as a risk!*), because they actually do not stop playing games.

This is a serious development with an eye to the development of a gambling addiction.

As you all know, the Netherlands Gambling Authority has a threefold task:

- to protect and inform the consumer
- to combat illegality and criminality
- and to contribute to the prevention of gambling addiction

With regard to the protection of consumers and with regard to the prevention of gambling addiction, we welcome the additional measures with regard to gaming and gambling, as mentioned in the letter of the Minister.

We will investigate several ways of limiting the risks. These are:

- separating the online offer of games and gambling;
- restrictions to advertising of games with gambling elements;
- obligations for the age rating of games with gambling elements;

- and providing information to parents and schools about the risks of gambling and games with gambling elements.

In order to explore the feasibility of these measures, the Netherlands Gambling Authority engages with providers of games of chance and of games about the interweaving of products. We will organize this meeting in September, the exact date will be communicated to you via the appropriate channels (online!).

I call on providers of games of chance and of games, and I am sure that they are here, to participate in this meeting.

The best solutions usually come from a joint effort. A multidisciplinary approach will ensure that we will achieve solutions that are good for both regulators, operators and consumers.

Ladies and gentlemen,

With this call to work together, I come to the end of this short and sharp briefing.

I hope that this end is the beginning of a very fruitful day.

Thank you.

(976 woorden = 10 minuten)