



# The Federation of Racecourse Bookmakers Limited



Association of  
Racecourse Bookmakers

National Association  
of Bookmakers

Rails Bookmakers  
Association

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Federation of Racecourse Bookmakers Ltd, 19 Culm Valley Way, Uffculme, Devon, EX15 3XZ

## NOTICE FOR ON-COURSE BOOKMAKERS - UPDATE ON THE TENURE DISPUTE

26<sup>TH</sup> November 2009

This autumn we have had a series of meetings with the RCA, and with the RCA and the Minister for Sport Gerry Sutcliffe MP, regarding the list positions dispute. During the negotiations we continually emphasised the need to secure bookmakers' livelihoods at every track across the UK. It has been a drawn out and complex process, and there is much to do to ensure that bookmakers' businesses remain viable beyond 2012. However, we believe that we have made progress and so would like to take this opportunity to update you.

At our most recent meeting with the Minister and the RCA, on 25<sup>th</sup> November, the RCA reported on the results of their survey of member views. As you may have read in the Racing Post this morning, the RCA has agreed to recognise bookmakers list positions in existing betting rings until at least 2052. The RCA has also agreed, in general, to allocate pitches in new betting areas on the basis of existing pitch lists.

However, it is clear that there is still a long way to go. There is, as yet, no security for bookmakers at any RCA-member racecourse. It has been agreed that the FRB will now work alongside local bookmakers to take forward negotiations to work towards deals at every racecourse across the UK. As the Minister has said, 'it is now crucial that racecourses and bookmakers work up commercial contracts to formalise this agreement on the ground'. The RCA has offered to help facilitate this, for which we thank them, and we will be taking them up on it.

Whilst we are pleased with the progress and look forward to meeting with racecourses, we remain cautious. It is critical to point out that the issue is a multidimensional one; it is not simply a question of 'how long'. The Minister recognises this. Duration of tenure is irrelevant unless access charges and commercial terms are fair and reasonable.

The Minister has said that he is sure the great majority of deals will go through without hitting any stumbling blocks, and that both sides will act fairly and reasonably. But, if there are problems, he will have an independent arbitrator to help us work through it. We are very thankful for the Minister's involvement, and are convinced that we would not have got to this stage without him. We are also grateful that he has agreed to keep an eye on the situation.

Mr Sutcliffe has asked both sides to report back to him in March 2010, and has challenged us to complete all deals within six months. In the meantime, your continuing support and patience is greatly appreciated, and we believe that we are nearing the "end of the beginning". However, it remains a sensitive set of issues, and we must be cautious as we look to make further progress. We will update you in the near future as we move to the next phase.

Robin Grossmith, Keith Johnson, Barry Johnson  
**Federation of Racecourse Bookmakers (FRB) Working Party Representatives**