

The Gaming & Leisure Association of Ireland (GLAI) welcomes today's publication by the Government of proposals to regulate the Casino sector and urges the Government not to delay drafting legislation in this regard and to propose a concrete timeline for regulation.

The Gaming and Leisure Association of Ireland (GLAI) represents the interests of private members gaming clubs across Ireland and has actively proposed and sought regulation of the gaming sector for nearly five years. The GLAI has also been working closely with the Department of Justice in a consultative role to achieve regulation and as such, the Association is fully supportive of and is encouraged by this initiative being taken by the Government today.

David Hickson, Director, GLAI *"applauds the government for taking this step. At a time when jobs need to be protected and entrepreneurs encouraged, there is little doubt that proper regulation of the gaming sector will ensure operators put appropriate measures in place to; promote responsible gambling, protect the weak and vulnerable, lead to an increase in jobs for the industry, consolidate legal certainty for businesses and consumers and indeed create substantial tax income from the sector for the exchequer."* Hickson continued, *"Having lobbied for regulation for a number of years, we are very keen to see the Government's policy proposals become draft legislation, sooner rather than later. We are therefore somewhat concerned with the Minister's suggestion that a regulatory impact assessment will be required before draft legislation will be proposed, without any indication of an agreed timeline in this regard"*

While Ireland is the last of the 27 EU Member States, apart from southern Cyprus to regulate casinos, under these policy proposals, it will now become one of only a handful of countries leading the way in endeavoring to regulate the on-line gaming sector. A licensing system will help deliver greater customer protections and the 'Kite Mark' that such an exercise provides, will differentiate between those web sites that are reputable and those that are designated as not.

The Gaming and Leisure Association of Ireland will continue to engage at all levels to ensure a proper regulatory regime is put in place in Ireland.

Press queries: please contact David Hickson on 087-683-5023

Extensive background material is available at: www.glai.ie