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Online Gambling in the UK – CMA Investigates Consumer Protection Concerns

The UK's Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has recently launched an investigation into the treatment of customers by online gambling companies. This is in response to concerns raised by the Gambling Commission that certain aspects of behaviour by online gambling companies, including misleading promotions, unfair terms, and the blocking of payouts might be breaching consumer protection laws. The investigation forms part of a wider joint programme of work between the CMA and the Gambling Commission tackling issues of fairness and transparency in the UK gambling industry.

The focus of the CMA's investigation includes:

- > the structure of gambling promotions, amid concerns that customers are being locked into complex and strict requirements that are difficult to understand and may be unachievable, including terms that delay or prevent the withdrawal of winnings;
- > the ability of betting companies, including licenced sports betting companies, to cancel bets, or alter odds, after bets have been received in circumstances where the betting company made a mistake when the odds were first set; and
- > limitations on the ability of players to challenge company's decisions, whether through restricting the scope of internal complaints procedures, or misleading consumers about the availability of other forms of redress.

The CMA has issued Information Notices to companies active in these markets requesting the submission of evidence. Any company receiving such a request will need to think carefully about the content of the response, as it can be used by the CMA to determine whether to take any further enforcement action under its consumer protection powers.

Individuals using gambling sites who have experienced these issues are being asked to provide further information. Any other interested parties will also be able to submit views on the issues raised.

If you have received an Information Notice and are unsure how to respond, or have not but would like to contribute to the CMAs investigation, [Greenberg Traurig's Global Gaming Group](#) has experience in the sector and in participating in CMA investigations, and is able to assist.

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