

GLMS Boss Eyes US Expansion As Macolin Implementation Nears

15TH MAR 2019 | WRITTEN BY: ANDREW GELLATLY

The Global Lottery Monitoring System (GLMS), the lottery sector's sports-integrity body, is eyeing closer cooperation with US lotteries once the legal basis of the long-awaited convention on the manipulation of sports competitions is confirmed this year.

Only one more ratification is now required for the Council of Europe's 2014 initiative, also known as the Macolin Convention, to be fully ratified, a move that will trigger the creation of a powerful operational committee to oversee the international agreement to prevent, detect and punish match-fixing.

Switzerland, which has completed the ratification process, is expected to join Norway, Ukraine, Portugal and Moldova — the four states that have already ratified — and their notification is expected to be delivered in the coming weeks.

"As soon as it sends the ratification to the Council of Europe through the diplomatic channels the convention will be officially in force. This is expected to happen by the summer at the latest," said Ludovico Calvi, president of GLMS, the 32-member monitoring body for sports betting and sports lotteries.

Once constituted, the convention's statutory follow-up committee should turbocharge the efforts of the so-called Group of Copenhagen, a band of 22 member countries that have each created national platforms to tackle match-fixing while awaiting the ratification of the Macolin text.

"Britain, France, the Italians and the Nordics have been very active in that group," said Calvi. "The reason why it works even if they have different regulatory set-ups within their national platform is the presence of all key stakeholders: local law enforcement, the leagues or sports federations, the gaming regulator, the licensed betting operators, and the ministry of sport, health, or culture or finance."

The new statutory committee will bring "strategic oversight" to the group, said Calvi: "You will have an active, near daily, input of intelligence gathering without data-protection problems if the law enforcement agencies are directly involved in the intelligence flow. This is a plus for what could happen in terms of measures, so the names of the punters or athletes or operators can be shared."

Malta has consistently **fought against** the Council over the definition of "illegal betting" in the Macolin treaty, as has the European Sports Security Association (ESSA), which monitors betting patterns on behalf of private operators in Europe, but those objections will be marginalised once the Council of Europe convenes the follow-up committee, something it is obliged to do within a year from the entry into force.

Interested organisations can then also ask for observer status.

"With such a solid legal basis behind the convention, everyone, including the sport federations, will be cooperating more effectively" says Calvi.

Next, the GLMS group is looking to share its global experiences with the US where there is an explosion of interest in domestic sports betting, but also a very different sporting ecosystem, comprising powerful domestic sports leagues and influence-wielding team owners, where lotteries have so far had less sway in betting or sports integrity frameworks.

The establishment of a US monitoring platform could follow, Calvi said.

"We have been in contact with the **North American Association of State and Provincial Lotteries** (NASPL) — they are very keen to support us opening locally in the US, which can lead to the same set-up of analysts that we have in Hong Kong and Denmark to continue to monitor US sports-betting patterns locally and develop prevention and education programs and a culture of integrity," the GLMS president told GamblingCompliance.

With discussion on new sports-betting legislation in several states still tangled in debates over "integrity" fees to be paid to sports leagues, Calvi argues that "the notion of integrity has been abused in the US" in policy discussions to date.

"There has been confusion between integrity fees and royalty fees, which are different things, although the team-owners understand the need of addressing the betting market through commercial deals rather than pushing for ways to impose federal-wide obligations on state-licensed operators," he said.

"Since match-fixing is a global phenomenon, banning athletes on its own is not enough; you need to go further than that and prevention

and education play a fundamental role.”

Pointing to the involvement of US athletes in sports competitions all over the world, Calvi said a US-only view of integrity monitoring would be too restrictive, and that the efforts of [SWIMA](#), the integrity group launched by US casinos and sportsbook operators last year, might be insufficiently global.

SWIMA, the Sports Wagering Integrity Monitoring Association, was formed by operators including Caesars and MGM as a US equivalent of ESSA.

The [Supreme Court's May 14 decision](#) overturning the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act of 1992 (PASPA) created an opportunity for state lotteries in the US which, despite a recent unfavourable opinion by the US Department of Justice, continues to hold huge potential for public gaming operations.

Public lotteries in Delaware and Rhode Island are already involved in sports betting, with the District of Columbia, New Mexico and Oregon set to follow, and several states including Connecticut and Kansas considering legislation that would enable their lotteries to offer wagering on games.

“Lotteries are beginning to realise that sports betting could be a tremendous vehicle for innovation and for acquisition of new gaming customers, in particular millennials and young adults,” Calvi said.

“Who else in the US today has got the extensive retail network to take out the street bookies and the black market? It is the lotteries,” argues Calvi. “GLMS supports regulated and sustainable betting market environments because bans have often favoured the proliferation of black-market, criminal organisations and match-fixing.

“The public enemy is the black market. Unfortunately, sometimes, vested interests in the US tend to prevail.”

Ludovico Calvi will be taking part in a panel entitled “Integrity — Too Many Cooks?” in the “Science of Compliance” conference track, sponsored by GamblingCompliance, at next week’s [Betting on Football Conference](#) in London.

The panel will take place between 11.20 and 12.05 on Thursday March 21.

TOPICS

Compliance And Risk

Sports Integrity

Responsible Gambling And Corporate Social Responsibility

GEOGRAPHY

Europe

United States

SECTORS

Online Gambling

Online Betting

Land-Based Gambling

Betting Shops/Off Track Betting

Casinos

Lotteries

CONTENT

Regulatory Insights

Interviews