

RELEASE DATE  
29/08/2019**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****MGA establishes new Sports Integrity Unit**

The MGA is announcing the creation of a new Sports Integrity Unit as part of an initiative to increase focus and resources towards the fight against the manipulation of sports competitions.

The Sports Integrity Unit's role will consist of the gathering of intelligence and information relating to suspicious betting and will serve as a liaison with local and foreign regulatory authorities, law enforcement agencies, betting monitoring systems, sporting bodies and gaming operators in order to investigate irregular and suspicious betting activity. Furthermore, the Unit will also be liaising with other Directorates within the MGA to implement various policy initiatives, such as bringing into force the provisions at law relating to the reporting of suspicious betting activity by gaming operators to the MGA, signing agreements and deepening collaboration with entities having similar objectives and otherwise establishing a culture of cooperation amongst industry stakeholders to tackle the worldwide problem of corruption in sports.

The Unit will be headed by Senior Executive Antonio Zerafa as Sports Integrity Officer. Mr Zerafa has been at the MGA for 4 years, and has held various positions within the Criminal Probity Screening Department within the Enforcement Directorate and serves as Secretary to the MGA's Fit & Proper Committee. He holds a Degree in Criminology from the University of Malta, wherein he is a Visiting Lecturer, a Master's Degree in Counter Fraud & Counter Corruption Studies from the University of Portsmouth, and is currently reading for a PhD in Law and Criminology with a focus on gaming-related crime at the Sheffield Hallam University.

The MGA's CEO Heathcliff Farrugia stated that: "Having a dedicated Sports Integrity Unit is vital for the MGA's statutory objective to ensure that gambling is free from crime, specifically the manipulation of sports competitions. The MGA is committing to cooperation with stakeholders to the extent permitted by law to act against a pervasive phenomenon that threatens the integrity of both the sports and the betting industries."

The MGA informs the public that any matters/queries related to sports integrity or suspicious betting are to be forwarded via email to [sportsintegrity.mga@mga.org.mt](mailto:sportsintegrity.mga@mga.org.mt). The MGA treats all cases in strict confidence as per article 8 of the Gaming Act (Chapter 583 of the Laws of Malta).

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