



PRESS RELEASE

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Available for interview: Geoffrey Godbold OBE, Director, RIGT
Andrew Tottenham, Managing Director, Harrahs and Chairman, RIGT

SPORTS MINISTER, GERRY SUTCLIFFE, ANNOUNCES CONTINUED VOLUNTARY FUNDING TO HELP PROBLEM GAMBLERS

Today's announcement by the Sports Minister, Gerry Sutcliffe, accepting the assurances given by the gambling industry on voluntary fundraising and stating his decision not to introduce a statutory levy, was welcomed by Baroness Neuberger (Chair of the Responsible Gambling Strategy Board - RGSB), Andrew Tottenham (Chair of the Responsibility in Gambling Trust - RIGT) and Mark Harris (on behalf of the trustees of the Responsible Gambling Fund - RGF).

To underpin the industry's voluntary funding commitment, the new tripartite structure recommended in the Gambling Commission's final Report on Research, Education and Treatment (RET) has been put in place - a single purpose fundraising body (RIGT), led by the industry; a new commissioning body (RGF); and an independent Strategy Board (RGSB). RGF and the Strategy Board have also agreed to create a shared executive.

Baroness Neuberger said -

"I am delighted that everyone's hard work has delivered the certainty of voluntary funding and the new structures envisaged in the Gambling Commission's RET Report. The Strategy Board is up and running. We are keen to listen and learn, and we aim to have an initial strategy and priorities ready in October, so that RGF can move as quickly as possible to commission new, three year funding programmes."

Andrew Tottenham said -

"We are delighted that the Minister has made this decision. RIGT has been working with the industry and other stakeholders for the last six months to ensure that the funds required, under a continuing voluntary system, will be in place. The industry is committed to the new arrangements which will provide funds so that the strategy and priorities developed by the RGSB can be developed efficiently. We look forward to working with both organisations to prove the Minister's confidence is rightly justified."

Mark Harris said -

"We are very pleased that the voluntary funding arrangements are now in place. As the newly created commissioning body, we will maintain existing funding arrangements over the current year whilst we develop our approach to commissioning. By the latter part of the year, we will have the initial strategy and priorities from the RGSB and a sound funding methodology in place to commission new, three year funding programmes. We will also make further grants in the latter part of the year as new funds become available from RIGT."

The Strategy Board and its three expert panels, which will also advise RGF, are already working on the development of an initial strategy and priorities for research, education and treatment. The Board and panels will wish to engage with key stakeholders as this work progresses.

- ENDS -

NOTE TO EDITORS

For further information or to request an interview with Andrew Tottenham, RIGT's Chairman, or Geoffrey Godbold OBE, RIGT's Director, please contact Karen Churches on 020 7518 0023 or by email churchesk@thegreatfoundation.org.uk.

2009-10 will be a transitional year, as the new funding arrangements and structures bed down. The funding position will be as follows -

- RIGT will raise funds from the industry of at least £5m within the financial year, in accordance with the industry's commitment to Ministers. The final tranche of the £5m will be transferred at the end of March 2010, and so will not be available for spend in 2009-10.
- RGF will, however, receive funds of at least £5m in 2009-10, made up of new income raised by the industry (of which at least £3.6m will be available for spend in year one). RGF will also have reserves of £0.9m carried over from RIGT. This is in addition to payments of approximately £720k made by RIGT to treatment providers in respect of April-June 2009.

- The balance of income raised by RIGT in 2009-10 and not spent by RGF in year one will be carried forward to 2010-11 and will be additional to the £6m that the industry has undertaken to raise in that second year.
- The trustees of RIGT and RGF will together need to ensure that sufficient reserves are built up and maintained from year to year to minimise operating risk and satisfy the Charity Commission's requirements.
- RGF has inherited significant contractual commitments from RIGT, which must be funded in 2009-10. There will be very limited scope for further spend in year one in addition to those commitments, and any such resources are unlikely to be available until the final quarter of 2009-10. From November onwards, RGF will aim to put in place commissioning arrangements for new three year funding programmes beginning in 2010-11. In developing these programmes, RGF will take full account of the strategy and priorities developed by the Strategy Board.

The Responsibility in Gambling Trust (RIGT) was established as a charity in 2002 as Britain's largest funding body responsible for tackling problem gambling through the funding of treatment, research and education programmes from voluntary donations. Since May 2009, following a restructuring of the organisation, RIGT has concentrated solely on fundraising. In addition to receiving voluntary funding from gambling licence holders, RIGT now also seeks to obtain donations from all industries that profit from gambling - but who do not currently make any contribution to helping problem gamblers - such as the finance, media and professional services industries.