

2 March 2017

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Telephone: 028 9052 4106  
Email: [farmpolicybranch@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:farmpolicybranch@daera-ni.gov.uk)

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Horse Racing (Charges on Bookmakers) Order 2017**

The Department sought your views in July 2015 on the future rate for charges on bookmakers in Northern Ireland which are paid into the Horse Racing Fund, administered by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

The purpose of this letter is to seek your further views on the off-course rates that have been negotiated between the Northern Ireland Horse Racing Group (NIHRG) and the Northern Ireland Turf Guardians Association (NITGA) for a 5 year period starting from 2017.

The NIHRG and NITGA have come to an agreement that the off-course charges should be set as follows:

<b>Licensing Year</b>	<b>Charge per bookmaker</b>
2017	£1600
2018	£1700
2019	£1800
2020	£1900
2021	£2000

Following this 5 year period, the rate will remain at £2000 from 2021 until such time as a new review is undertaken and subsequently new legislation made.

The on-course charges will remain unchanged at £99.

The intention is that the charges will provide assistance to the racecourses with regard to the provision of racing, including prize money, facilities and services, and health and safety of spectators, with some of the funding for improvement of eligible infrastructure.

The ability to instigate a review of the rate lies with DAERA and both parties to this agreement understand that DAERA may instigate a review of the HRF rate at any stage

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during the 5 year period of this agreement. However, a review is not anticipated within this 5 year period, unless exceptional circumstances arise; it would be for DAERA to determine or agree that exceptional circumstances have arisen.

This agreement between NIHRG and NITGA is contingent upon the revised rates being set in place by the required legislation by 1 July 2017 (when bookmakers begin to pay their fees).

Should it not prove possible to enact the required legislation as proposed by 1 July 2017, DAERA will re-engage with NIHRG and NITGA to agree proposals for a rate to start from 2018.

DAERA is now seeking to engage with a targeted group of stakeholders (as per the cc list below) to take their views on the revised off-course charges that have been agreed between NIHRG and NITGA. **Your response is requested by 20 March 2017.**

Following this engagement, DAERA will fully consider the responses and take them into account in progressing the legislation necessary to put in place revised charges. DAERA will aim to bring forward the required legislation in conjunction with the Department of Finance to enact the new charges by 1 July 2017.

#### **What comments are requested?**

In addition to the agreement set out in this letter, the attached draft Regulatory Impact Assessment sets out an assessment of the costs and benefits of the proposals. Views on this draft assessment, its underlying assumptions and their applicability would be welcomed, especially from smaller bookmakers.

A draft Horse Racing (Charges on Bookmakers) Order 2017 is also included for your comment.

An Equality Impact Assessment screening was carried out in 2015, and the Department's view that the proposed legislation will have only a minor impact on any of the groups provided for in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 is unchanged.

You may comment on all or only some of the information included. You may also submit additional comments if you wish.

These documents are available at:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations>

For ease of reference, the consultation documents from July 2015 can be viewed at:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/public-consultation-horse-racing-charges-bookmakers-order-ni-2016>

**Comments, to arrive by Monday 20 March 2017, should be sent:**

**by e-mail to [farmpolicybranch@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:farmpolicybranch@daera-ni.gov.uk)**

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**Or by post to:**

**Jim McIlduff  
Farm Policy Branch  
Room 919 Dundonald House  
Upper Newtownards Road  
Belfast BT4 3SB**

Copies of the documents can also be made available, on request, in alternative formats e.g. in large print, Braille disc, audio cassette and other languages. Please contact Sonya Verschuur on 028 9052 4488 or, for those with hearing difficulties, via the Department's Text Relay Service by dialing 18002 028 9052 4488.

In line with DAERA's policy of openness, copies of the responses we receive may be made publicly available from the Department at the above address. The information they contain will also be published in a summary of responses.

If you do not consent to the release of information which you submitted, you must clearly request that your response be treated confidentially. Any confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system in e-mail responses will not be treated as such a request. You should also be aware that there may be circumstances in which DAERA will be required to communicate information to third parties on request in order to comply with its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations.

Copies of responses will be made available to personal callers or in response to telephone or e-mail requests. Wherever possible, personal callers should give at least 24 hours notice of their requirements. An administrative charge may be made to cover photocopying and postage costs.

Should you have any comments or complaints about this targeted engagement process (as opposed to comments about the issues which are the subject of this engagement) they should be sent to Jonathan Wightman at the address above or by e-mail to [farmpolicybranch@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:farmpolicybranch@daera-ni.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely

**Jim McIlduff  
Farm Policy Branch**

CC On-course bookmakers including NIOCBA  
Off-course bookmakers including NITGA  
Down Royal and Downpatrick Racecourses  
Equine Council Northern Ireland

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