

## Update from Anne Marie Caulfield, CEO

### Welcome to Issue 4 of our newsletter.

In this issue is an overview of the recent work of the Authority as we continue to build our team and establish our functions.

I am particularly pleased to report that we have made considerable progress in establishing the systems and regulations that will enable us to begin licensing the gambling sector in Ireland.

Licensing gambling companies is important for a number of reasons, not least to ensure that we have a well-functioning gambling sector in which the public are protected from gambling harm. The extensive work undertaken by our Licensing team as we focus on the roll out of the first phase of licensing applications is outlined in this newsletter.

The establishment of a Social Impact Fund will enable us to support our legislative remit to protect the public from gambling harm. We had a very positive response to our Call for Input, and we continue to work with Pobal on developing the operational policies and processes for the management and disbursement of funding once the Fund is established.

At the start of the summer, we welcomed Minister of Justice Jim O'Callaghan and Minister of State Niall Collins to our new offices. Minister O'Callaghan officially opened our new premises and took the opportunity to hear from the newly appointed Authority.

The Authority is currently finalising the Statement of Strategy 2025 – 2027, which sets out the roadmap to delivering a modern, fair, and trusted regulatory regime that reflects the constantly evolving nature of gambling and the expectations of the Irish public. We look forward to sharing our Statement of Strategy with our stakeholders when it is finalised in the coming weeks.



**Anne Marie Caulfield**  
Chief Executive Officer  
of the Gambling  
Regulatory Authority  
of Ireland

## Official Opening of the GRAI Offices

### The GRAI's new offices officially opened by Minister of Justice Jim O'Callaghan at the start of the summer.

Paul Quinn, Chairperson of the Authority, welcomed Minister O'Callaghan who was joined by Minister of State at the Department of Justice, Minister Niall Collins. Both Ministers and Department of Justice officials had the opportunity to meet the Authority and staff, and a plaque was unveiled to mark the occasion.

Minister O'Callaghan spoke of the important mandate given to the GRAI, and also joined the Authority as it met to discuss the Regulator's strategy, which will be published in the coming weeks.

The new offices provide the GRAI with expanded facilities to support future growth as the Regulator establishes its many functions under the Gambling Regulation Act 2024.

Visit [here](#) to read the story in full.



*The GRAI welcomes Minister Jim O'Callaghan and Minister of State Niall Collins to its new offices.*

# GRAI-commissioned research shows the potential damaging effects of gambling inducements

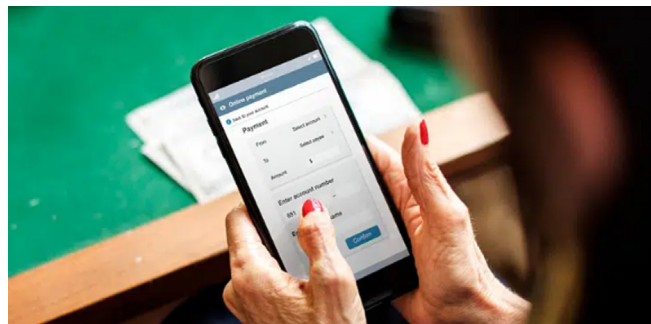
**Special offers or inducements, such as free bets and moneyback guarantees, are regularly used by gambling companies in their marketing campaigns.**

A new study undertaken by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) on behalf of the GRAI found that these special offers or inducements encourage people to gamble more than they would otherwise, even when the odds offered are “bad”.

The study found that vulnerable people, such as those at higher risk of becoming problem gamblers, were most at risk of gambling more and losing more as a result of being offered inducements.

In a controlled experiment, participants were given money to place up to six realistic bets on the Euro 2024 football tournament.

Half of the participants were randomly selected and shown offers of free bets and moneyback guarantees on some bets. These special offers caused the participants to spend over 10% more than those who were not given inducements.



The inducements also reduced the number of participants opting not to bet by nearly half. Even inducement bets that were designed as “bad”, showing odds far below market rates, were undertaken by participants in this group, who were three times more likely to spend money on “bad” bets.

These findings illustrate the harm inducements can cause, particularly to those who are susceptible to gambling harm. The report was published by the International Journal of Behavioral Addictions, which publishes scientific information and research with regard to behavioral addictions.

## Progress on the introduction of GRAI Licenses

**As the GRAI continues its preparations to open for licensing applications, we are pleased to report on several important developments that have progressed since the publication of our last newsletter.**

### **Application Guidance published**

The Licensing Application Guidance Document has now been published on our website. This document gives a high-level overview of the licensing application process and a step-by-step guide for operators. Licensing will take a phased approach, but this document will assist licensing applicants to familiarise themselves with the process.

### **Draft licensing regulations notified to the European Commission**

Following a public consultation process, we received many informative and detailed submissions on the draft licensing regulations developed by the licensing team. These submissions were given careful consideration and helped inform the draft regulations which have been notified to the European Commission via TRIS. We would like to thank all those who engaged in the consultation process.

### **Licensing application built, tested, and ready for applications upon opening**

The past few months have seen great progress on the licensing application portal. This portal will make the application process as streamlined and user-friendly as possible to align with the GRAI's digital first approach.

The GRAI partnered with Deloitte in designing this system, which will allow operators to upload necessary documents, calculate fees, and submit applications for a gambling license all in one portal.

A system of this size and functionality requires numerous rounds of testing, and the final product will be rolled out when we open for licensing.

### **Tender to support our in-person licence premises assessments**

We are expecting a high volume of applications when we open for the first phase of licensing. To help manage this, the licensing team published a call for tender for the provision of in-person licence assessments in June. When completed, this appointment will help ensure that all applications for in-person licences are evaluated in a timely manner.

For further information on Licensing, please visit [here](#).

## Focus groups emphasise the need for resources across the country

**Earlier this year, the GRAI and Pobal published an initial 'Call For Input' on the development of a Social Impact Fund which will provide funding and supports for organisations helping to tackle gambling harm.**

As part of this Call for Input, a public consultation was undertaken to assess the level of need across the country.

Alongside our partner Pobal, the GRAI published online questionnaires to collect feedback from five specific groups:

- ▶ People with lived experience of gambling harm/addiction
- ▶ People who have been affected by the gambling behaviour of others, including family or friends
- ▶ Addiction services that provide treatment or support to those affected by gambling harm
- ▶ NGOs, Charities, and Sporting Organisations working with members of society who may be vulnerable to gambling harms, including children and young people
- ▶ Research institutes and academics working in the field of gambling harm

After receiving a great response from participants, we then hosted focus groups around the country to get further feedback and understanding from the various groups. This process, managed by Pobal, proved a great success and will go a long way to informing the Social Impact Fund strategy.

We are mindful of the need to ensure that the contributions from industry to the Social Impact Fund are transparently disbursed to organisations and areas where they will have the greatest impact.

We expect that the Social Impact Fund will become operational later in 2026 and we thank all those who participated in our Call for Input to date.



*Participants at our Social Impact Fund focus group in Dublin.*

## GRAI Extends Co-Operation to Gibraltar

**As part of the process to put in place information sharing agreements with other regulatory bodies, CEO of the Gambling Regulatory Authority of Ireland Anne Marie Caulfield signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Commissioner Andrew Lynam representing the Gambling Regulator of Gibraltar in June.**

The GRAI continues to sign memorandums of understanding with other gambling regulators to ensure a framework for cooperation with other jurisdictions. In addition to Gibraltar, agreements have also been signed with Belgium and the UK with more planned in the weeks ahead.



## Compliance and Enforcement

As soon as we begin to license operators, we will also commence our compliance and enforcement functions. The Compliance Function will monitor licensed operators to ensure their regulatory compliance and will issue compliance notices where a potential breach is identified. Should these compliance measures fail, our Enforcement Function has the power to issue sanctions as well as to prosecute operators who fail to meet their legal obligations. Compliance and Enforcement are working closely with our Licensing Function as we prepare to open for licensing applications.





## Growing our Organisation

The GRAI recently completed a recruitment drive to expand our team. This included exciting new roles in Consumer Protection, Finance, Data Analytics, and generalist roles at a variety of grades across the organisation. It was heartening to see the number of applications received across the various roles and the public's interest in working with the GRAI.

Over the coming months, we will grow our staff further across a variety of areas. This is an exciting time to join Ireland's newest Regulator as we introduce regulation for the gambling sector for the first time. Joining our team, you will have an opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of people across Ireland. Please follow our LinkedIn page and visit our [Careers webpage](#) and [publicjobs.ie](#) for all employment opportunities.

## Current Vacancies

### Assistant Director of Corporate Governance Compliance

*(Closing Date 10th October)*

Reporting to the Director of People and Corporate Services, the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance Compliance (AP - Standard Scale) will have the responsibility for developing and managing the corporate governance function of the GRAI. The Assistant Director will ensure the establishment, maintenance, monitoring of best practice policies, procedures, reporting, and compliance in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies and other obligations including statutory provisions as appropriate. This role involves responsibility for the administrative arrangements for the GRAI's seven-member Board and its Committees, managing internal and external audits, ensuring GDPR compliance, handling Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, procurement, protected disclosures and fulfilling other statutory obligations and duties as required.

## IT Update

Our IT section continues to make strides in implementing our digital first approach. Substantial collaborative work has been completed with Deloitte to roll out vital systems that underpin our licensing application portal, and in time our National Gambling Exclusion Register, which will be the first of its kind in Ireland.

Our IT team is continuing to work alongside our website partner to integrate and embed systems within our standalone website and, along with our Licensing team, is preparing for the opening of our licensing applications portal in the coming months.

## Banks' Commitment to Voluntary Gambling Blocks

The GRAI was delighted to attend the Irish Banking Culture Board's launch of the Common Commitment of Care for Problem Gambling. This launch brought together the main retail banks, care providers, and people with lived experience. Oisín McConville spoke of his own experience in recovery, and Director of Consumer Protection at the GRAI Steven Sheridan joined the panel discussion. More information available at: <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7374788592662945792>



## Contact Details

If you would like to contact the Gambling Regulatory Authority of Ireland, please use the e-mail address below:

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If your query is specific to licensing, please contact [licensing@grai.ie](mailto:licensing@grai.ie).

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