



Department for  
Digital, Culture,  
Media & Sport

Rt Hon John Whittingdale OBE MP  
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16 June 2021

Carolyn Harris MP  
House of Commons,  
London, SW1A 0AA

Our Ref:  
MC2021/07984/NB

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your correspondence of 13 April to the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP, on behalf of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Gambling Related Harm, regarding the collapse of Football Index and Footstock. Your correspondence has been passed to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport as it falls within our remit. I am replying as the Minister for Media and Data and apologise for the delay.

I recognise the serious concerns you have raised about these events and how they have affected your constituent and others.

The government is taking these events and the concerns of those affected by them very seriously. On 20 April, the government announced an independent review of the regulation of the Football Index gambling product. It is reported that many thousands of customers have been affected by the product's collapse, with some having lost very large sums, and we want to establish both how this situation came about and what lessons we can learn from it. Further detail can be found [here](#).

Alongside this independent review, the Gambling Commission's regulatory investigation into BetIndex Ltd (the operator of Football Index) is continuing. Further information on the Gambling Commission's investigation, including additional background to its regulatory action, is available [here](#). Administration proceedings for BetIndex are also underway and Begbies Traynor LLP has been appointed as the administrator.

WR Digital GmbH (trading as Footstock) surrendered its operating licence to the Gambling Commission on 26 March with immediate effect, and the company is going through an administration process in Germany. The Gambling Commission has made clear that it expects both Football Index and Footstock customers to be kept fully informed of any developments which might impact them.

While I appreciate that the situation regarding Footstock has also affected some British customers, it would not be straightforward to include the regulation of both companies in the scope of an independent review. As significantly more customers in Britain were affected by its collapse, the review will focus on Football Index. However, we hope the insights from the investigation will inform how novel products are regulated in future. Its findings will form part of the evidence informing the government's Review of the Gambling Act 2005, announced in December 2020. That review is considering whether changes are needed to the regulatory framework around gambling, including the Gambling Commission's powers and resources and how it uses them, as well as how novel and complex products should be licensed and



regulated. Our call for evidence closed on 31 March, and we are carefully considering all the evidence submitted, including by those affected by these events. Further detail can be found [here](#).

Our independent review of the regulation of the Football Index gambling product is separate to the Gambling Commission's investigation. It will be carried out and report in a way which will not compromise it. It will also be without prejudice to the administration proceedings of both BetIndex and WR Digital GmbH which include, among other things, looking at the assets and liabilities of the company and recompense to customers.

Yours sincerely,



Rt Hon John Whittingdale OBE MP  
**Minister of State for Media and Data**