

Comparative Annual Statistical Reporting 2019-2021

Reporting Periods: 1 October 2020 – 30 September 2021 vs. 1 October 2019 – 30 September 2020

Independent Betting Adjudication Service (IBAS)

a. Dispute Volumes

Dispute Source	2020-21	2019-20
Domestic Consumers to Domestic Operators	4,840	4,475
Domestic Consumers to Overseas Operators	0	0
<i>Overseas Consumers to Domestic Operators: NB - legislation requires that statistical data below relates to domestic disputes</i>	1,155	1,198

Any company licensed in the UK is classified as a 'domestic operator' for this purpose.

Dispute Status	2020-21	2019-20
Completed	2,303 (48%)	2,511 (56%)
Rejected/Discontinued Without Conclusion	2,537 (52%)	1,964 (44%)

b. Types of Complaint

Dispute Type	2020-21	2019-20
Disputed Settlement Criteria/Bet Instructions	846	1,048
Price Dispute	268	341
Late Bets	44	165
Customer Identity	1706	945
Bonus or Promotional Offer Terms	329	368
Cash Out Mechanism	88	128
Game/Machine Malfunction	42	110
Alleged Cheating/Match-Fixing/Crime	65	93
Social Responsibility/Self-Exclusion – Outside of ADR Remit	474	752
Social Responsibility/Self-Exclusion – Suitable for ADR	228	
Banking/Financial Transactions	341	300
Customer Service Complaints	272	124
Others	137	101

c. Disputes Rejected by IBAS

Grounds for Rejection	2020-21	2019-20
Operator's Complaints Process Not Exhausted	1,752	604
Vexatious/Frivolous Dispute	71	209
Monetary Value Too Low/High	0	0
Dispute Outside 12 Month Time Limit	5	33
Too Complex/Requires Legal/Police Investigation	17	79
Regulatory Matter (e.g. self-exclusion)	532	653
Operator Not Registered with IBAS	64	54
Customer Communication Ceased	60	315
Operator Licence Revoked/Surrendered	36	17

NOTES ON SECTION C:

In 2020-21 we reclassified 'grounds for rejection'. Anyone who lodged a claim through IBAS and was unable to provide evidence of the final decision of the company at the end of its internal complaints procedure was classified as 'Operator's Complaints Process Not Exhausted' even if they later informed us that they had agreed a mutually satisfactory resolution to the dispute. 60 customers proactively wrote to IBAS mid-dispute asking for us to discontinue the ADR process.

d. Dispute Process Discontinuation

Grounds for Discontinuation (with or without conclusion)	2020-21	2019-20
Technical/Procedural Discontinuation	0	0
Customer/Operator Communication Ceased	60	315
Operator Concession or Compromise Agreed (Known)	820	853

e. Average Dispute Completion Times

Dispute Completion Time (days)*	2020-21	2019-20
Domestic Disputes	31 days	51 days
Cross-Border Disputes (UK citizen to non-UK operator)	N/A	N/A

* In accordance with ADR legislation, this is recorded as the time taken from the point at which the dispute file was completed to the point of an adjudication being published. It does not include time taken to gather evidence from both disputing parties.

f. Average Length of Time to Receive Complete Information from Gambling Businesses

Average Length of Time to Receive Complete Information**	2020-21	2019-20
	15 days	27 days

** This measures the number of days from when the first question or questions were asked of the gambling business in relation to a complaint we had received, to the time when the case file was deemed to be complete (and ready to be passed to our adjudication panel).

g. Rate of Compliance with ADR Decisions in Consumer's Favour

Rate of Compliance	2020-21	2019-20
	92%	100%

h. Professional Cooperation With Other ADR Entities (None at Present)

There are no current cooperating arrangements in place with non-UK EU-based ADR entities

i. Dispute Outcome Statistics

Dispute Conclusions	2020-21	2019-20
Consumer Complaint Not Upheld	1,276	1,350
Consumer-Satisfactory Pre-Ruling Outcome, e.g. by agreed settlement or operator concession	820	853
Consumer Complaint Upheld	207	308
% Consumers Receiving ADR Outcome to Satisfaction	45%	46%

Observations on Dispute Trends to Report to the Competent Authority

Gambling when Self-Excluded

226 dispute forms submitted through our website talked about people being allowed to gamble despite being registered on the industry wide online self-exclusion scheme Gamstop. We have met with Gamstop and the Gambling Commission to highlight our concerns and we look forward to seeing new initiatives developed in the months ahead. On balance, we think the cross referencing process should err more on the side of caution and that it is worth delaying the opening of accounts for some people who aren't self-excluded and never have been for the sake of letting those who are self-excluded but have changed some of their personal details slip through the net. Perhaps more important still is ensuring that checks conducted by operators at account opening are undertaken to the same level of precision as those adopted by Gamstop.

Technical Faults – Warning Consumers

We received a glut of disputes in the summer of 2021, as one leading betting operator suffered an ongoing issue with its ability to make and execute 'cash out' offers to customers. We consider that no bet should be placed on the assumption that a consumer will definitely be given the opportunity to cash it out (for a profit or loss) before the outcome of the bet should be determined. Even when the service is advertised without warning, we consider that consumers must always accept the possibility that a website may not be available for some unforeseen technical reason.

However, where a website is suffering a persistent technical issue, we believe that it is a reasonable expectation of consumers that the website will warn them that services that they promote/advertise which are *usually* available are temporarily unavailable.

Sporting Statistical Betting

146 claims submitted during the year included the phrase "shots on target". There has been a substantial growth in the popularity of statistic-based football betting markets. IBAS has previously expressed reservations about betting markets that introduce any element of subjectivity into the bet settlement process. Almost all of these markets are settled without controversy but every couple of months the way that a certain incident is logged by third party data providers causes a rush of complaints to arrive. One of the difficulties is that there is no mechanism for punters to complain to the data providers or to request a review of a decision. It doesn't help either when different data providers publish conflicting data.

Customer Identity Disputes

This is largest and fastest growing area of dispute. There is a clear correlation in our annual data between growth in disputes concerning "Customer Identity" and growth in requests for adjudication that were rejected because an operator's internal complaints procedure was not completed. Thankfully the majority of ID related complaints are resolved amicably before the full ADR process is needed but the spike in complaints about what consumers argue to be unnecessary and intrusive checks is impossible to ignore – whatever factors might be behind it. We believe that the growth in volumes of complaints about customer identity justifies an investigation into the cause.