



MEDIA STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

31ST OCTOBER 2025

The South African Bookmakers' Association ("SABA") has noted the recent judgment of the Supreme Court of Appeal ("SCA") in the matter of *Portapa (Pty) Limited t/a Supabets and Others v Casino Association of South Africa and Another*, and *The Gauteng Gambling Board v Casino Association of South Africa v Portapa (Pty) Ltd t/a Supabets and Others* (182/2024 & 215/2024) [2025] ZASCA 158 (21 October 2025), as well as the Media Release issued by the National Gambling Board dated 19 October 2025, and the various media reports which have been in circulation regarding that judgment.

SABA considers it necessary and appropriate to point out that, contrary to certain of the reports which have been published and the opinions which have been expressed in the media regarding the judgment, the decision of the SCA neither rules nor implies that licensed bookmakers throughout South Africa are prohibited by law from offering betting on the game of roulette, or any other casino game. In addition, nothing in the judgment of the SCA is consistent with the conclusion that these activities have been banned.

Instead, the crux of the judgment of the SCA is that licensed bookmakers in the Province of Gauteng may not legally offer betting on the game of roulette, because the Gauteng Gambling Act provides that bookmakers who are licensed by the Gauteng Gambling Board may offer betting only on sporting events, as defined in that Act. In its judgment, the SCA ruled that the game of roulette does not fall within the definition of "sporting event" in the Gauteng Gambling Act.

Because the judgment turns on the interpretation of the definition of "sporting bet" in the Gauteng Gambling Act, it does not automatically outlaw betting on roulette in particular, or casino games in general, throughout South Africa. The licensed operations of bookmakers in other Provinces of the country are governed by the applicable provincial legislation, which in many cases permits them to

Mission Statement

To render to, for and on behalf of its members any services of mutual aid, whilst maintaining and promoting honorable practices amongst bookmakers and their stakeholders within the racing and wagering industry.

offer betting on any contingency (which is not the case in Gauteng), provided of course, that any such contingency is not in itself unlawful. In this regard, it has been widely reported, following upon the judgement of the SCA, that all licensed bookmakers in South Africa who are offering betting on roulette or comparable casino games are doing so unlawfully. In the same vein, it has been contended that offering fixed odds betting on casino-style games amounts to interactive gambling, which is unlawful in terms of the National Gambling Act, 2004. Neither of these two statements is correct.

SABA believes that it is in the public interest that the correct legal position should be objectively and unambiguously communicated to the betting public. It is this: The betting offered online by licensed bookmakers anywhere in the country is not interactive gambling, because, in terms of the National Gambling Act, a bet or wager offered by a licensed bookmaker is not a gambling game. In terms of the same Act, an interactive game (or interactive gambling) means a gambling game which is made available to be played and accessed over the internet. Since the National Gambling Act makes it clear that any fixed odds bet offered by a bookmaker is not a gambling game, any such bet cannot, by definition, be an interactive game or constitute interactive gambling.

Accordingly, it is not unlawful for bookmakers in South Africa to offer betting on the game of roulette, or other casino-style games, provided the legislation in force in the Province in which they are licensed does not prohibit this, as in Gauteng, where bookmakers are permitted to offer betting on sporting events only.

While the betting public should be aware of the judgment, particularly in terms of its impact on licensed online betting operations in Gauteng (pending any further developments), it is equally important that patrons of licensed online bookmaking operations in other Provinces of the country, which permit betting to be offered either on any lawful contingency or on any contingency which has been approved in terms of the legislation, should be assured that their patronage of these operations is not unlawful, and therefore that they are not exposing themselves to the threat of a criminal conviction by betting with those bookmakers or to the forfeiture of any winnings payable to them by those bookmakers.

SEAN COLEMAN

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Founded in 1951, the South African Bookmakers' Association is the leading voluntary association for bookmakers and represents the interests of its members in the gambling industry.