

Technical Sub-Committee Notes 2025

TECH SUB-COMMITTEE – KEY OUTCOMES & ACTIONS

1. Heat / Sun Protection Policy

Outcome

- Shared recognition that working in high temperatures is a health & safety issue for bookmakers (especially older layers and where heavy umbrellas are used).
- Final decisions on umbrellas and shade remain with each racecourse, but there should be a common guidance baseline.

Actions

- RCA to circulate its existing “working in warm weather” guidance (currently used for racecourse staff) to RBC and bookmaker associations.
 - Bookmaker associations to use this as a basis for direct discussions with individual racecourses on allowing umbrellas/parasol use in extreme heat.
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2. RBC Finances, Structure & Use of Technicians

Outcome

- Contract is between RCA and RDT; RBC is a wholly owned RDT subsidiary set up to separate betting-ring accounts.
- RBC funds are currently held in an RDT bank account (HSBC informed) and will continue to be, due to bank guarantee issues.
- There is no request to increase bookmaker daily fees in the coming year.
- RDT technicians are used as BRMs on ~400 days/year. They are trained and signed off, but there is concern about over-use on major days.
- RDT will continue to monitor the amount of quieter meetings and decide on a rota and case by case scenario if more meetings should be covered by the dual role at these meetings.

Actions

- RDT/RBC and their accountants to produce a short-written explanation of:
 - Group structure (RDT/RBC),
 - How RBC funds are shown in RDT’s accounts,

- How costs (incl. technicians / vehicles) are allocated between RDT and RBC. This is to be shared with RCA and then summarised to bookmaker associations.
 - RBC to:
 - Maintain/strengthen training & sign-off for technicians acting as BRMs (including dispute-handling).
 - Keep technician-BRM usage at busy fixtures under review to ensure adequate experienced BRM cover.
 - RCA / racecourses to raise any concerns about specific meetings' BRM coverage with RBC for adjustment.
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3. Joint Alignment & Name Display

Outcome

- Existing rules confirmed:
 - Joints must be in a straight line, square, and facing forward.
 - Name/header and wrap-around must remain clearly visible for 30 minutes after the last race.

Actions

- RBC to issue a short reminder to all bookmakers on:
 - Alignment rules and the requirement not to angle joints forward.
 - Name display / wrap-around visibility for 10 minutes, with BRMs instructed to enforce consistently.
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4. Second Boards on Rails Pitches & Content Rules

Outcome

- Agreed in principle that rails bookmakers may use a second board, provided it is:
 - Mounted using a standard, approved frame compatible with the existing rails system;
 - Secure, aligned and facing in line with the main board.
- Main rails at Ascot and Cheltenham are exceptions where the standard frame will not fit.
- Consensus that prices displayed on any board should be for horse racing only. Basic branding / website / account info is acceptable; non-racing odds or casino-style promotions are not.

Actions

- RBC to:

- Build and test a standard second-board frame for rails (compatible with Secured-type rails).
 - Once signed off by this committee, authorise it for nationwide use except on non-standard rails (e.g. Ascot/Cheltenham main rails).
 - Bookmakers will have to Purchase an approved Bracket if using a second board on rails pitch.
 - Continue work to identify a new supplier to replace Secured for rails equipment and share details when available.
 - RBC / BRMs:
 - Monitor all boards; report any non-racing prices displayed (with photos where possible) through normal reporting channels.
 - Associations to brief members that:
 - Board prices (main or second) should be horse-racing only; avoid advertising non-racing betting or online casino products.
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5. Winning Ticket Validity

Outcome

- Agreed guideline: on-course winning tickets should be treated as valid for a minimum of 13 months from the event date.
- After 13 months, payment is at the bookmaker's discretion, depending on legibility and ability to verify.

Actions

- RBC & associations to publish a short guidance note stating:
 - Recommended ticket validity: 13 months minimum.
 - Bookmakers should not use shorter printed limits going forward (e.g. 6 months).
 - Bookmakers retain discretion to honour older tickets case by case.
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6. Win / Place Displays

Outcome

- No change: it remains prohibited to display win-only and place-only prices together on the same joint under current special conditions.
- The committee may later explore a safe way to show win vs each-way prices more clearly, but nothing changes now.

Action

- RBC / RCA to restate this rule in any revised price display guidance.
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7. BRM Role & Disputes

Outcome

- BRMs' primary role is premises-licence and special-conditions compliance on behalf of racecourses.
- They act as mediators/catalysts in disputes but cannot compel settlement; the bookmaker is responsible for resolving customer disputes.

Actions

- RBC to emphasise in training that:
 - BRMs are compliance agents and mediators, not “judges”.
 - Escalation route is via racecourse management where bookmakers ignore compliance advice.
 - Associations to brief members clearly on where BRM responsibility ends and bookmaker responsibility begins.
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8. Under-18 Events / Pony Racing

Outcome

- Regulatory good-practice is moving towards not offering bets on children-only events (e.g. pony races).
- Some bookmakers already do not lay these bets; others occasionally do on family days.

Actions

- Bookmaker associations to consider and, if appropriate, adopt and communicate a good-practice recommendation that:
 - Members should not lay bets on pony/children-only races.
 - RCA/RBC to monitor and share any updated Gambling Commission guidance.
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9. Starlink & Connectivity

Outcome

- Racecourses must protect their own Wi-Fi and operational systems from interference.
- The problem is not using Starlink to reach the sky, but rebroadcasting Wi-Fi from Starlink in the same bands/channels as racecourse networks.
- Ascot's “tether-only” model worked well; JCR is drafting similar technical requirements.

Actions

- Elite / bookmakers:
 - Finalise and roll out the router-based Starlink solution:
 - Starlink dish → Ethernet → mobile router → terminals/card machines;
 - Router configured to disable 2.4GHz and use only agreed 5GHz channels at low power.
 - Document configuration clearly for racecourses.
- JCR / RCA:
 - Review Elite's technical spec; if satisfied, formally endorse it as the standard for JCR tracks and recommend across other racecourses.
- RBC / RDT:
 - Continue to use non-conflicting channels and share technical learnings with racecourse IT where helpful.
- All parties accept that properly tethered, non-interfering Starlink use is acceptable; performance to be monitored at major fixtures and reviewed at future meetings.