

# THE POKIES PLAY YOU

## Alliance calls for AFL to terminate Beteasy sponsorship deal

Friday, June 14, 2019

The Alliance for Gambling Reform is calling for the AFL to terminate its sponsorship arrangement with foreign gambling giant Beteasy to prove it is serious about tackling rising concerns about gambling addiction amongst AFL players and the wider community.

Following [revelations by gambling counsellor](#) Jan Beames about enormous gambling harm within the AFL player community, The Alliance is writing to all AFL Presidents urging them to get behind a move to reduce the influence of the gambling industry over the AFL.

Alliance director and spokesman Tim Costello said it has now been two years since the UK Football Association took the lead and [terminated its sponsorship arrangement with Ladbrokes](#) and now is the time for the AFL to follow this lead.

“The \$10 million a year Beteasy sponsorship will [reportedly expired](#) at the end of the 2019 season and it should not be renewed,” Mr Costello said.

“The AFL Commission should work with clubs and the players association to all agree a strategy that will not see any new direct sponsorship deals between the AFL and multi-national gambling companies such as Beteasy.”

“Sporting professionals are particularly vulnerable to gambling addiction, partly because most of the major codes have done inappropriate sponsorship deals with various foreign-owned bookmakers such as Beteasy (AFL), Bet 365 (Cricket Australia) and Sportsbet (NRL).”

“When combined with direct sponsorship of clubs by gambling companies, clubs operating pokie dens and the deluge of advertising on television, radio and at stadiums across Australia, it is impossible for our sporting stars to avoid being overwhelmed by gambling promotion and offers.”

“The major codes have failed miserably when it comes to player education and intervention on safe gambling practices because they are all up to their armpits with the gambling industry at various levels. The AFL is meant to be a ‘family friendly’ and safe for children yet this gambling takeover compromises all of that.”

“Even the Big Freeze charity promotion for MND at the MCG on Monday was spoilt by large [Beteasy branding messages](#) next to the AFL logo which was completely inappropriate.”

“The UK Football Association blazed the trail by [terminating its Ladbrokes sponsorship deal](#) in June 2017 to avoid the obvious conflicts of interest with regulating gambling in British soccer, so it is remarkable that no major Australian code has seen fit to do likewise almost two years later.”

Mr Costello made his comments in the same week sports gambling company Pointsbet listed on the ASX after raising \$75 million from investors.

"The [Pointsbet prospectus](#) is an alarming document as it highlights the rapid growth of sports gambling and the huge marketing of gambling via sports broadcasting which is impossible for children to avoid," Mr Costello said.

"There are already way too many major companies competing to attract new Australian gamblers and it is alarming that we are seeing new entrants raising significant funds to compete when Australians are already the world's biggest gamblers in per capita terms."

"Our sporting codes and major media outlets should not be partnering up with these gambling companies to assist them spread the harm of gambling throughout the community, locking in future generations to record levels of addiction and distress."

## Background and key links

[Bulldogs President Peter Gordon concerned about gambling advertising](#)

The Age, 13 June, 2019

[Gambling epidemic amongst AFL players](#)

Herald Sun, 8 June, 2019

[What AFL players told gambling counsellor Jan Beames](#)

Herald Sun, 8 June, 2019

[Patrick Dangerfield and Jan Beames interviews on 3AW](#)

3AW, 8 June, 2019

[Football Association announces end to all UK gambling sponsorship](#)

22 June, 2017

[Crown announces Andrew Demetriou appointment to board](#)

August 7, 2014

[Crownbet sold to Canada's The Stars group ahead of Beteasy rebranding](#)

23 April, 2018

[Beteasy reported to be paying \\$10m pa for AFL sponsorship deal](#)

SMH, 1 December, 2014

[Crown and Beteasy join forces](#)

The Age, 16 December, 2014

[Sportsbet wins \\$60m NRL sponsorship deal](#)

Adnews, 16 May, 2016

[Pointsbet prospectus lodged with ASX](#)

ASX, June 2019

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