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Press release - Licensing of Bookmakers

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PRESS RELEASE FROM THE PREMIER (MR. DUNSTAN)

40755

LICENSING OF BOOKMAKERS

The Betting Control Board of South Australia takes account of five factors when considering applicants for bookmakers' licences or in promoting bookmakers, the Board chairman, Mr. T.E. Cleland, said today.

Mr. Cleland outlined the Board's general policy in licensing and promoting bookmakers at the request of the Premier, Mr. Dunstan.

The five qualifications are: integrity, courtesy and consideration towards the betting public; ability to take bets to the desired extent; willingness to do so; length of service as a licensee and age.

Mr. Cleland noted that clerks to be licensed are selected by the bookmakers seeking to employ them.

Some licensed clerks are appointed course agents and so conduct their employers' interstate business and, on occasions, their local business.

Applications for bookmakers' licences from members of the public are also received in response to advertisements by the Board.

Generally the first issue of a bookmaker's licence in the metropolitan area is to someone from these three groups and the licence normally permits the holder to bet in the Trotting Flat.

After this he can be promoted to the Trotting Stand or the Racing Flat, Racing Derby and Racing Grandstand successively. Country course bookmakers are eligible for appointment or promotion to metropolitan enclosures.

The Board, when it considers vacancies, obtains a list of people seeking appointment and some licence holders it thinks should be considered.

This sets out the age, length of service as a bookmaker or clerk, betting turnover at different classes of racing, financial position and references of the applicants.

Mr. Cleland said the Board then considers applicants on the basis of the five qualifications and makes its recommendations.

Length of service and age are not prime considerations but may be a factor after considering the questions of integrity and ability and willingness to bet.

The Board considers it is undesirable that all bookmakers in a betting ring should be those who would, if they could, limit business to large transactions.

Many, probably most, bettors outlay small sums and it would be an embarrassment to them to tender a 50 cent bet when others, at the same time, were laying very large bets.

The Board feels it is desirable that a betting ring should include a proportion of bookmakers who carry on a modest business while also selecting some who, after promotion ending in the Grandstand ring, would be willing to meet the demands of large bettors.

Mr. Cleland said the Board also felt its duties involve a degree of discretion to be exercised in the interests of the public and State generally and those of bettors, bookmakers and clubs.