



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CHANCELLOR MISSES OPPORTUNITY FOR BUSINESS GROWTH

Today's announcement of a 15% GPT has been greeted with disappointment by The Bingo Association.

Following announcements made by the Chancellor in his budget statements during 2002 and a period of consultation with all parties involved in the industry, including players, it had been hoped that this important issue would be decided and set at a level to benefit players, operators and the Treasury.

Sir Peter Fry, Chairman of The Bingo Industry said:

"The Chancellor has missed the chance to make a real difference for bingo players and the industry. Although this rate would appear to be an improvement on the old 10% duty, the reality for our clubs is that it will make little difference to them."

The industry had put forward proposals for an overall GPT of 15%, bringing bingo into line with betting and the football pools. This rate would have generated an extra £482million worth of games for players and stimulated a growth in bingo admissions through higher prize money.

Sir Peter continues

"Leaving VAT on participation fees means that clubs will have much less to give back to players in increased prizes. A GPT rate of 15% would have generated

an additional £482 million for players. The system announced today leaves a figure woefully short of this amount.”

“The Chancellor has failed to deliver his commitment to provide growth for the industry and to help many smaller clubs who are penalised by the current system. This is not the better deal that we were promised - the overall tax burden on bingo remains high, affecting both the player and the industry, with tax merely paid at a different point in the system.”

“It is difficult to see why the Chancellor has not taken steps to reduce the excessive tax burden on bingo, bringing it into line with betting and pools, as he proposed. The introduction of GPT at 15% for betting gave a better deal to millions of men who enjoy a flutter.”

“I am sure that our players will be wondering why the Chancellor is unwilling to do the same for the millions of women who enjoy bingo.”

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Notes to editors:

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Pictures of Sir Peter available electronically

About The Bingo Association:

The Bingo Association is the trade body for the licensed bingo industry in Great Britain, representing the proprietors of bingo clubs licensed under the Gaming Act 1968. The purpose of The Bingo Association is to promote and develop the interests of the licensed bingo industry and to represent members' interests in contacts with third parties, in particular with various government departments, other trade associations and the media.

There are 110 proprietors in membership and between them they operate 538 bingo clubs. Membership profile ranges from the very large operators with well over 100 clubs, to many single unit businesses.
www.bingo-association.co.uk

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