

Police conduct anti-illegal gambling operation during World Cup 2022

Police conducted a large-scale anti-illegal gambling operation codenamed "CROWBEAK cum WINDSHIELD" during the World Cup 2022 in November and December, resulting in the arrest of 1,104 persons and seizure of betting records valued over \$560 million and over \$10 million cash.

In this operation, Police conducted a total of 188 raids, leading to the arrest of 1,104 persons, including 645 males and 459 females, aged between 15 and 89, for the offences of "engaging in bookmaking", "betting with a bookmaker", "operating illegal gambling establishments" and "dealing with property known or reasonably believed to represent proceeds of an indictable offence" (commonly known as "money laundering"), etc.

Police also seized over \$560 million of betting records, over \$10 million of suspected crime proceeds in cash, 46 sets of computers and three vehicles suspected to represent crime proceeds.

In addition, Police also carried out the following preventive measures and education campaigns with the theme "Stay Away From Online Illegal Soccer Gambling" before and during the World Cup period:

- anti-illegal gambling publicity through online channels, including launching a promotional video (fb.watch/gH2skuv7IM/);
- broadcast of promotional video and distribution of posters and banners with anti-illegal gambling messages at entertainment premises and strategic locations; and
- working closely with the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau and the Ping Wo Fund to promote anti-illegal gambling messages through various channels.

Police appeal to the public that under the Gambling Ordinance Cap. 148, anyone who bets with a bookmaker commits an offence and is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and nine months' imprisonment on conviction. Anyone who engages in bookmaking, or promotes or facilitates bookmaking, commits an offence and is liable to a maximum fine of \$5,000,000 and seven years' imprisonment on conviction. A person would still be liable to the offences even if the gambling website is hosted overseas yet he/she engaged in its operation in Hong Kong.

The general public are reminded not to engage in illegal gambling and money laundering of any sort.