

# Herald Sun

## **Offshore gambling firms take billions and Australian authorities cannot act**

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**BILLIONS of dollars are being bet on rugby league and other major sports using unregulated offshore gambling companies — and football bosses are -helpless to stop it.**

**Government regulations aimed at illegal gambling and the threat it poses to the integrity of sport are “laughable”, according to insiders.**

**Racing Australia chief executive Peter McGauran said rugby league and other football codes were like “babes in the woods” as they battled overseas gambling interests.**

**The Philippines, Malta, -Antigua and remote Alderney in the Channel Islands have become betting havens for punters wishing to outlay hundreds of thousands of dollars to escape detection by Australian regulators.**

**A leading racing figure, who asked not to be named, estimated \$1 billion a year is bet overseas on Australian sports.**

But retired owner of Bet-Choice Mark Morrissey, who sold his company to Unibet for \$20 million in 2012, believes the figure is twice that.

“One overseas bookie alone turns over \$60 billion a year,” Mr Morrissey said.

“We are talking telephone number bets — STD numbers, not local calls.

“There are places where you can get on in the hundred thousands and millions of dollars on an Australian sporting event. I know people who have got on in the \$100,000s on greyhounds.”

Police have an ongoing -investigation into allegations of match fixing in the NRL.

Industry insiders believe Australian football codes are unequipped to deal with -offshore betting.

While large and uncharacteristic bets with Australian bookies trigger automatic alarm bells, overseas wagers are unrestricted.

The non-relegated overseas betting agencies do not care about the integrity of the sport. If they believe there is a fix, they will lay off the bet with other bookmakers.

“If a bookie thinks something is wrong they will offload the money,” Mr Morrissey said.

Former NSW premier Barry O’Farrell led a review into illegal offshore gambling which kept in-play live betting banned and closed loopholes used by overseas bookmakers.

This included blocking certain websites and stopping payments to bank accounts.

**“The IP (internet provider) blocking is laughable,” Mr Morrissey said.**

**“Anyone can download a proxy. IP masking is how they get around it.”**

Mr McGauran said racing in Australia had devoted millions to police gambling.

Link: [www.heraldsun.com.au/news/offshore-gambling-firms-take-billions-and-australian-authorities-cannot-act/news-story/f160dcc4b26861158a87dcc776dof79c](http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/offshore-gambling-firms-take-billions-and-australian-authorities-cannot-act/news-story/f160dcc4b26861158a87dcc776dof79c)