

THE GAMBLING REGULATORY AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT) BILL
(No. XV of 2025)

Explanatory Memorandum

The object of this Bill is to amend the Gambling Regulatory Authority Act with a view to revamping horse racing activities.

DR. N. RAMGOOLAM, G.C.S.K., F.R.C.P.

*Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and
External Communications, Minister of Finance,
Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands*

20 June 2025.

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(No. XV of 2025)

ARRANGEMENT OF CLAUSES

Clause

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A BILL

**To amend the Gambling Regulatory Authority Act with a view
to revamping horse racing activities**

ENACTED by the Parliament of Mauritius, as follows –

1. Short title

This Act may be cited as the Gambling Regulatory Authority (Amendment) Act 2025.

2. Interpretation

In this Act –

“principal Act” means the Gambling Regulatory Authority Act.

3. Section 2 of principal Act amended

Section 2 of the principal Act is amended –

- (a) in the definition of “cash” –
 - (i) by deleting the word “and” at the end of paragraph (a);
 - (ii) by adding the following new paragraph, the word “and” being added at the end of paragraph (b) –
 - (c) includes digital currency which is issued by the Bank of Mauritius under section 35(1) of the Bank of Mauritius Act;
- (b) by deleting the definition of “Horse Racing Division”;
- (c) in the definition of “inspector”, in paragraph (b) –
 - (i) by deleting the word “and” at the end of subparagraph (i);
 - (ii) by inserting, after subparagraph (i), the following new subparagraph –
 - (iA) an employee who conducts any search or inspection, or does any other thing in the course of an inspection, on behalf of the AML/CFT Division; and
- (d) in the definition of “jockey” –
 - (i) in paragraph (b), by deleting the words “or professional jockey” and replacing them by the words “, professional jockey, apprentice jockey or trackwork rider,”;
 - (ii) by deleting the words “licensed by the Horse Racing Division” and replacing them by the words “licensed by the Authority”;
- (e) by deleting the definition of “Managing Committee”;
- (f) by deleting the definition of “owner”;
- (g) by deleting the definition of “racing fixtures”;

- (h) in the definition of “Rules of Racing”, by deleting the words “made by the Horse Racing Division” and replacing them by the words “made, with the approval of the Authority, by the horse racing organiser”;
- (i) by deleting the definition of “specified licensee”;
- (j) by deleting the definition of “sporting event” and replacing it by the following definition –

“sporting event” means a sporting event, as approved by the Authority, which takes place outside Mauritius;
- (k) by deleting the definition of “totalisator operator” and replacing it by the following definition –

“totalisator operator” means a horse racing organiser licensed to operate a totalisator;
- (l) by deleting the definition of “veterinarian” and replacing it by the following definition –

“veterinarian” means a veterinarian registered with the Authority to provide veterinary services to horses;
- (m) by inserting, in the appropriate alphabetical order, the following new definitions –

“digital currency” has the same meaning as in the Bank of Mauritius Act;

“Division” means a Division of the Authority referred to in section 3(2);

“equestrian centre” means a centre, as approved by the Authority, designed to accommodate and train horses for horse racing;

“horse owner” –

 - (a) means a person who holds a part or full interest in one or more horses; but
 - (b) does not include a person who holds a lease, whether a part or full interest, in a horse;

“Horse Racing Integrity Division” means the Horse Racing Integrity Division referred to in section 3(2);

“racing calendar” means the number of horse race meetings and races for a racing season as approved by the Authority;

“Responsible Gambling Board” means the Responsible Gambling Board referred to in section 11B;

4. Section 3 of principal Act amended

Section 3 of the principal Act is amended –

- (a) by repealing subsection (2) and replacing it by the following subsection –

(2) The Authority shall comprise –

- (a) the Administrative, Procurement, Finance and Human Resources Division;
- (b) the Licensing Division;
- (c) the Gambling Inspectorate and Enforcement Division;
- (d) the Anti-Money Laundering/Counter Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Division;
- (e) the Horse Racing Integrity Division;
- (f) the Information Technology and Innovations Division;
- (g) the Legal and Compliance Division; and
- (h) such other Divisions as the Board may set up.

- (b) by adding the following new subsections –

(3) Any Division set up under section (1)(b) shall have such functions and powers as the Board may determine.

(4) The Chief Executive Officer may, with the approval of the Board, direct a Division to discharge such functions and

exercise such powers as may have been assigned to another Division.

5. Section 4 of principal Act amended

Section 4 of the principal Act is amended –

- (a) by repealing paragraph (b) and replacing it by the following paragraph –
 - (b) regulate, control and monitor the organisation of horse racing activities and, in particular, to –
 - (i) promote public confidence in the integrity of the horse racing industry by ensuring proper standards of conduct and competence;
 - (ii) protect the integrity of horse racing and ensure that horse racing is fair, clean and free from corruption or malpractice;
 - (iii) ensure that there is a clear and transparent framework for access to participation in horse racing;
 - (iv) promote the welfare and leisure of the race going public;
 - (v) ensure that there is transparency and good governance in the organisation of horse racing;
 - (vi) ensure that a horse racing organiser effectively discharges its responsibilities regarding the organisation of horse racing in all its aspects, including safety, comfort and standards of hygiene, security, discipline and the prevention of fraud; and
 - (vii) ensure, where a horse racing organiser is paid such amount as the Board may determine by a totalisator operator, a bookmaker or a sweepstakes organiser to use its race cards and fixtures, that the horse racing organiser does not prevent the totalisator operator, bookmaker or sweepstakes organiser from using its race cards and fixtures;

- (b) in paragraph (c), by deleting the words “and the horse racing industry”;
- (c) by repealing paragraph (g), the words “; and” at the end of paragraph (f) being deleted and replaced by a full stop and the word “and” at the end of paragraph (e) being added.

6. Section 6 of principal Act amended

Section 6 of the principal Act is amended –

- (a) by numbering the existing provision as subsection (1);
- (b) in the newly numbered subsection (1) –
 - (i) by repealing paragraph (a);
 - (ii) by repealing paragraph (b);
 - (iii) in paragraph (g), by deleting the words “horse racing,”;
- (c) by adding the following new subsection –
 - (2) The Board shall, with respect to horse racing –
 - (a) initiate, develop and promote strategies conducive to the development of horse racing and the protection of the public in relation to risks inherent to horse racing;
 - (b) coordinate with the *Police des Jeux* for the prevention and detection of illegal acts in connection with horse racing;
 - (c) conduct disciplinary proceedings that may arise in relation to the conduct of horse racing;
 - (d) set and enforce standards for racecourses;
 - (e) conduct research and development in equine science and welfare;
 - (f) enforce the Rules of Racing, other rules and guidelines and directions;

- (g) set up panels of racing stipendiary stewards;
- (h) issue rules, directions and guidelines to any horse racing organiser to –
 - (i) ensure the safety and security of racehorses; and
 - (ii) ensure anti-doping measures;
- (i) issue directions to racecourse officials;
- (j) licence or register, as the case may be, trainers, assistant trainers, jockeys, apprentice jockeys, riders, stables, equestrian centres, equine veterinarians and other horse racing professionals;
- (k) procure laboratory services for the testing of equine blood, urine and other samples;
- (l) approve the dissemination of race images and their intellectual property rights;
- (m) provide clearance to the Division of Veterinary Services for the importation of horses for horse racing;
- (n) advise the Minister on any matter relating to the organisation of horse racing; and
- (o) undertake such other functions as may be prescribed.

(3) The Board shall maintain, with a bank, an account through which fees shall be collected directly from trainers and jockeys in order to secure payment for –

- (a) elective test;
- (b) transfer test; and
- (c) confirmatory test, together with courier fees and any related expenses where the test is sent to foreign laboratory.

7. Section 7 of principal Act amended

Section 7 of the principal Act is amended, in subsection (1) –

- (a) by repealing paragraph (ab);
- (b) by repealing paragraph (g) and replacing it by the following paragraph –
 - (g) approve a racecourse, the use of a racecourse, the frequency and the number of race meetings in a year;

8. New sections 8A and 8B inserted in principal Act

The principal Act is amended by inserting, after section 8, the following new sections –

8A. Secretary to Board

- (1) There shall be a Secretary to the Board who shall –
 - (a) prepare and attend every meeting of the Board;
 - (b) keep minutes of the proceedings of every meeting of the Board;
 - (c) follow up on the implementation of the decisions of the Board;
 - (d) service the Board and such other Committees as may be set up by it; and
 - (e) perform such other duties as may be conferred upon him by the Board.
- (2) The Secretary to the Board shall be an employee of the Authority.

8B. Committees

- (1) The Board may set up such Committees as it deems necessary to assist it in the discharge of its functions, including a Committee for each Division.

(2) A Committee may consist of board members and such other persons as the Board may designate.

(3) Every Committee shall –

(a) be subject to, and act in accordance with, any directive given to it by the Board; and

(b) report to the Board.

(4) Every Committee shall regulate its meetings and proceedings in such manner as it may determine.

(5) A Committee may request any person to attend any of its meetings for the purpose of advising it on any matter under discussion but that person shall have no right to vote on any matter considered by it.

(6) Every committee member or any person requested under subsection (5) to attend any meeting of a Committee may be paid such fees and allowances as the Board may approve.

9. Section 11A of principal Act amended

Section 11A of principal Act is amended, in paragraph (b), by deleting the words “Managing Committee” and replacing them by the words “Responsible Gambling Board”.

10. Section 11B of principal Act amended

Section 11B of the principal Act is amended –

(a) by repealing subsection (1) and replacing it by the following subsection –

(1) The Responsible Gambling and Capacity Building Fund shall be administered by the Responsible Gambling Board.

(b) by inserting, after subsection (1), the following new subsection –

(1A) The Responsible Gambling Board shall consist of the members of the Gambling Regulatory Board and shall be paid such fees as the Gambling Regulatory Board may determine.

(c) in subsection (2), by deleting the words “Managing Committee” and replacing them by the words “Responsible Gambling Board”;

- (d) in subsection (3), by deleting the words “Managing Committee” and replacing them by the words “Responsible Gambling Board”;
- (e) in subsection (4) –
 - (i) by deleting the words “Managing Committee” and replacing them by the words “Responsible Gambling Board”;
 - (ii) by deleting the words “or Board” wherever they appear.

11. Section 13 of principal Act amended

Section 13 of the principal Act is amended by repealing subsections (3) and (4) and replacing them by the following subsections –

- (3) The Chief Executive shall, in the discharge of his functions –
 - (a) attend every meeting of the Board and take part in its deliberations, but shall have no right to vote;
 - (b) be responsible for the execution of the policy and functions of the Board;
 - (c) have all powers relating to the administrative and operational matters pertaining to the roles and functions of the respective Divisions and ensure effective coordination between the Divisions; and
 - (d) do such other things as may be necessary to attain the objectives of the Authority.

(4) The Chief Executive may delegate any of his functions and powers to any officer.

12. New section 13A inserted in principal Act

The principal Act is amended by inserting, after section 13, the following new section –

13A. Head of Division

- (1) Every Division shall be under the responsibility of a Head.
- (2) Every Head shall be under the administrative control of the Chief Executive.

13. Section 15 of principal Act amended

Section 15 of the principal Act is amended, in subsection (4), by deleting the words "Head of the Investigations Division of the Authority" and replacing them by the words "Head of the Administrative, Procurement, Finance and Human Resources Division".

14. Part IIIA of principal Act repealed

Part IIIA of the principal Act is repealed.

15. Section 30 of principal Act amended

Section 30 of the principal Act is amended, in subsection (2), by repealing paragraphs (b) and (c), the word "and" being added at the end of paragraph (a).

16. Section 31 of principal Act amended

Section 31 of the principal Act is amended –

(a) in subsection (1) –

- (i) in paragraph (a), by deleting the words "issued by the Horse Racing Division" and replacing them by the words "approved by the Authority";
- (ii) by repealing paragraph (b);
- (iii) in paragraph (c), by deleting the words "the Horse Racing Division or chief stipendiary steward" and replacing them by the words "the Authority";
- (iv) in paragraph (d), by deleting the words "the Horse Racing Division" and replacing them by the words "the Authority";
- (v) in paragraph (e), by deleting the words "the Horse racing Division" and "remittance to such laboratory as the Horse Racing Division may approve" and replacing them by the words "the Authority" and "conveyance to the equine laboratory for sampling", respectively;
- (vi) in paragraph (f), by deleting the words "the Horse Racing Division" and replacing them by the words "the Authority";
- (vii) in paragraph (g), by deleting the words "race vision,";

- (viii) in paragraph (m), by deleting the words “licensed by the Horse racing Division” and replacing them by the words “approved by the Authority”;
- (ix) in paragraph (o), by deleting the words “the Horse Racing Division” and replacing them by the words “the Authority”;
- (x) in paragraph (q), by deleting the words “the Horse Racing Division” and replacing them by the words “the Authority”;
- (b) in subsection (2) –
 - (i) in paragraph (a), by deleting the words “the Horse Racing Division” and replacing them by the words “the Authority”;
 - (ii) in paragraph (b), by deleting the words “the Horse Racing Division” and “the Division” and replacing them by the words “the Authority” and “it”, respectively;
 - (iii) by repealing paragraph (d), the semicolon at the end of paragraph (c) being deleted and replaced by a full stop;
- (c) by repealing subsections (3) and (4).

17. New section 32 inserted in principal Act

The principal Act is amended by inserting, after section 31, the following new section –

32. Rules of racing

(1) A horse racing organiser shall implement the Rules of Racing, as well as any other rule, direction or guideline, issued by the Authority, that affect the organisation of horse racing.

(2) The Rules of Racing, any other rule, direction or guideline issued by the Authority shall be consistent with –

- (a) this Act;
- (b) the directions given under section 100;
- (c) the regulations made under section 164; and
- (d) such international best practices as the Authority may approve.

18. Section 34 of principal Act amended

Section 34 of the principal Act is amended –

- (a) by revoking subsection (1) and replacing it by the following subsection –

(1) Subject to subsection (5), no person shall operate a totalisator unless he is a horse racing organiser that holds a totalisator operator licence.

- (b) in subsection (4), by inserting, after paragraph (a), the following new paragraph, the word “and” at the end of paragraph (a) being deleted –

(ab) may, with the approval of the Board, appoint agents to manage his totalisator facilities; and

- (c) by adding the following new subsection –

(5) Any person who is the holder of a valid totalisator operator licence and is, on the commencement of subsection (1), not a horse racing organiser shall continue to operate the totalisator until the expiry of that licence.

19. Section 44 of principal Act amended

Section 44 of the principal Act is amended –

- (a) in subsection (2), by deleting the words “The Board” and replacing them by the words “Subject to subsection (3A), the Board”;

- (b) by inserting, after subsection (2), the following new subsections –

(3) Subject to subsection (3A), the Board may, on an application made for the conduct of fixed odds betting on approved local races, issue a bookmaker licence authorising the applicant to operate outside the racecourse.

(3A) No bookmaker licence shall be issued to an applicant to operate both at the racecourse and outside the racecourse.

20. Section 93B of principal Act amended

Section 93B of the principal Act is amended by inserting, after subsection (2), the following new subsection –

(2A) Notwithstanding subsection (1), a person who is the holder of a licence under this Act shall not be required to hold a personal management licence to act as a director, manager or officer of a licensee.

21. Section 94 of principal Act amended

Section 94 of the principal Act is amended, in subsection (2)(b)(iii), by deleting the words “3 months” and replacing them by the words “6 months”.

22. Section 94C of principal Act amended

Section 94C of the principal Act is amended, in subsection (7), in the definition of “significant interest”, in paragraph (a), by deleting the words “10 per cent” and replacing them by the words “20 per cent”.

23. Section 101 of principal Act amended

Section 101 of the principal Act is amended –

- (a) by numbering the existing provision as subsection (1);
- (b) in the newly numbered subsection (1), by deleting the words “in the Fourth Schedule” and “in that Schedule” and replacing them by the words “in Part I of the Fourth Schedule” and “in that Part”, respectively;
- (c) by adding the following new subsection –

(2) (a) For the purposes of securing the payment of any debt due to its employees and thereafter to remaining stakeholders, a trainer or stable owner shall, at the time the licence for trainer is issued or renewed, or the stable is registered or the registration of the stable is renewed, furnish, subject to paragraph (b), to the Authority security by means of a bank guarantee or a deposit in the amount specified in Part II of the Fourth Schedule corresponding to the licence, for such period as may be approved by the Board.

(b) Where a person is both a licensed trainer and the owner of a registered stable, he shall be required to furnish only one bank guarantee or deposit.

24. Section 105 of principal Act amended

Section 105 of the principal Act is amended, in subsection (2), by deleting the words “otherwise by remote communication”.

25. Section 113B of principal Act amended

Section 113B of the principal Act is amended –

- (a) by deleting the heading and replacing it by the following heading –

113B. Transaction exceeding 50,000 rupees

- (b) in subsection (1), by deleting the words “10,000 rupees” and replacing them by the words “50,000 rupees”.

26. Section 117 of principal Act amended

Section 117 of principal Act is amended by deleting the words “5,000 rupees” and “50,000 rupees” and replacing them by the words “50,000 rupees” and “500,000 rupees”, respectively.

27. Section 156 of principal Act amended

Section 156 of the principal Act is amended, in subsection (4A), by deleting the words “a foreign” and “the Horse Racing Division” and replacing them by the words “a local or foreign” and “the Authority”, respectively.

28. Section 165 of principal Act amended

Section 165 of the principal Act is amended by adding the following new subsection –

- (19) The licence fee payable under the Third Schedule in respect of Category 3 shall, for the calendar year 2025, be 50 per cent of that fee.

29. Third Schedule to principal Act amended

The Third Schedule to the principal Act is amended –

- (a) in CATEGORY 3, under the subheading “Totalisator operator licence”, by adding the following new paragraph and its corresponding entries –

(g) for operating as agent of totalisator operator	500,000	Yearly or part thereof
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- (b) in CATEGORY 6, by adding the following new paragraphs and their corresponding entries –

(m) Trainer licence	5,000	yearly
(n) Assistant trainer licence	3,000	yearly
(o) Jockey/Foreign jockey licence	3,000	yearly
(p) Apprentice jockey licence	1,500	yearly
(q) Trackwork rider licence	500	yearly
(r) Equestrian centre registration	15,000	yearly
(s) Stable registration	5,000	yearly

30. Fourth Schedule to principal Act amended

The Fourth Schedule to the principal Act is amended –

- (a) by deleting the heading and replacing it by the following heading –

PART I

- (b) by adding the following new Part –

PART II

Security to be furnished in respect of –	Amount of security (Rs)
Trainer licence	3,000,000
Registered stable	3,000,000

31. Consequential amendment

The State Lands Act is amended, in section 29 –

- (a) by repealing subsection (1) and replacing it by the following subsection –

(1) Any corporation may, on such terms and conditions as the Minister may determine, be vested with the control and maintenance of the State land known as the Champ de Mars.

- (b) in subsection (2), by deleting the words "COIREC" and replacing them by the words "The Corporation";
- (c) in subsection (3), by deleting the word "COIREC" and replacing it by the words "the corporation";
- (d) in subsection (4), by deleting the word "COIREC" and replacing it by the words "the corporation";
- (e) in subsection (5) –
 - (i) in paragraph (a), by deleting the word "COIREC" and replacing it by the words "the corporation";
 - (ii) in paragraph (b), by deleting the word "COIREC" and replacing it by the words "The corporation";
 - (iii) in paragraph (c), by deleting the "COIREC" wherever it appears and replacing it by the words "the corporation", respectively;
- (f) in subsection (6), by deleting the word "COIREC" and replacing it by the words "the corporation";
- (g) by adding the following new subsections –

(7) (a) Any proceedings, whether judicial or extra-judicial, started by or against COIREC and pending on the commencement of this section shall be deemed to have been started by or against the corporation.

(b) All rights, obligations and liabilities subsisting in favour of or against COIREC shall, on the commencement of this section, continue to exist under the same terms and conditions in favour of or against the corporation.

(c) The assets and funds of COIREC shall, on the commencement of this section, vest in the corporation.

(d) Any act or thing done by COIREC shall, on the commencement of this section, be deemed to have been done, and shall continue to be done, by the corporation.

(e) Where this section does not make provision for any saving or transition, the Minister may make such regulations as may be necessary for such saving or transition.

(8) In this subsection –

“corporation” means any statutory body or Government-owned company.

32. Commencement

Section 31 shall come into operation on a date to be fixed by Proclamation.
