

# GAMBLING COMMISSION

20 December 2024

By email: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

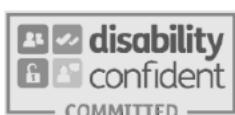
## Review of official statistics used by [REDACTED] in the media

I am writing to you to raise concerns that the Commission has about how [REDACTED] have been discussing official statistics in recent media appearances.

In a recent BBC Breakfast interview that [REDACTED] [then shared on social media](#), [REDACTED] states that ‘...of that 2.5% (PGSI 8+ in the GSGB Annual Report 2023), 44% are at high risk of suicidal behaviour. That’s half a million people.’ We cannot find any justification for using this statistic in connection to the Gambling Survey for Great Britain official statistics and it is not acceptable to gross up estimates from the GSGB to an equivalent number in the population, [as outlined in our guidance](#). I understand that in the context of a live television interview it is easy to misspeak but given our previous dialogue and correspondence about the need to use official statistics appropriately, the Commission is very concerned that these remarks were promoted further. As a result we would like to understand the rationale for the 44% figure and where it has come from. We also expect that it will not be used in a way that suggests it is either a GSGB official statistic or conflates or compares it to official statistics again in future.

I would also like to remind you that it is not correct to say that the percentage of people scoring 8 or more on the PGSI in the GSGB (2023) is 6 times higher than previous estimates. Firstly, the figure used from the HSE is a combined measure of PGSI and DSM, whereas the GSGB only uses PGSI so it is not a like for like comparison. Secondly, due to the significant changes in methodology direct comparisons between the GSGB and previous estimates should not be made, as stated in our guidance. To help with the above, we have provided a suggestion of what you could say instead:

***“Whilst it would be inaccurate to make a direct comparison to previous survey estimates due to a change in the way data is collected which might be impacting results, the GSGB estimates a higher proportion of people are scoring 8 or more on the PGSI than previous surveys suggested”***



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I would also like to inform you that we expect the raw data from the Gambling Survey for Great Britain to be available via the UK Data Archive in the near future. This will for the first time give everyone with an interest in the statistics the chance to explore the data in full. We hope this will be a useful resource in the years ahead and help inform discussions and policy around gambling going forwards. It is essential the debate around gambling is informed by the appropriate and accurate use of statistics and this is a matter we are regularly discussing with people, companies and organisations across gambling and those interested or impacted by it. Should you have any doubts about how particular data should be used please do not hesitate to seek advice from us beforehand.

Yours sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.