News Release

20th November 2008

Rank welcomes SNP call to end bingo tax discrimination

The Rank Group Plc ('Rank') welcomes the decision of the Scottish National Party ('SNP') to call for tax reform for the licensed bingo clubs industry.

Stewart Hosie MP of the SNP has written to Treasury spokesperson Angela Eagle MP to call for an end to Double Taxation (whereby bingo clubs, uniquely in the leisure sector, are subject to both 17.5% VAT and 15.0% gross profits tax). The SNP is the first major political party to adopt tax reform for bingo as policy.

Ian Burke, chief executive of Rank, said: "In recent years the Government has inflicted substantial damage on Britain's licensed bingo clubs industry. This has resulted in the closure of more than 100 bingo clubs, the loss of thousands of jobs and the disappearance from many communities of an important social amenity.

"We at Rank and our peers within the Bingo Association have received strong cross-party backbench support for our campaign to abolish Double Taxation, but the official support of the Scottish National Party represents a real breakthrough."

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Notes to editor

Double taxation

The licensed bingo clubs industry is subject to 'Double Taxation', paying both Value Added Tax at 17.5% and Gross Profit Tax at 15.0% on bingo participation fees (revenue). This regime is unique to bingo and contrasts unfavourably with the tax treatment of revenue from internet gambling, bookmaking and gaming machines, despite bingo being generally considered as a 'soft' form of gaming.

The knock-on effects of this taxation system over the past five years have been the closure of more than 100 bingo clubs across the country, the loss of more than 2,300 jobs and the deprivation for tens of thousands of people of an extremely important local amenity.

Rank has supported the Bingo Association in its calls for HM Treasury to remove VAT from Bingo participation fees. Over the past 18 months Rank has met with over 60 MPs in constituencies where it operates Mecca Bingo clubs, as part of this campaign.

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An absence of harmony: how bingo is singled out for double taxation

	Gaming Duty	VAT
Bingo	15%	17.5%
Betting exchange	15%	-
Online gaming	15%	
Sports betting	15%	-
Tote	15%	-
Casino poker	-	17.5%

Rank in Scotland

The Rank Group operates 14 Mecca Bingo clubs and one G Casino in Scotland, employing more than 800 people.

Rank's Mecca Bingo clubs in Scotland are located at: Aberdeen; Ayr; Dundee Douglasfield; Dundee Playhouse; Edinburgh FountainPark; Leith; Glasgow Drumchapel; Glasgow Forge; Glasgow Qauy; Glasgow Rutherglen; Greenock; Hamilton; Paisley and Wishaw.

About the Rank Group

Rank is a leading European gaming business, head-quartered in the UK and listed on the London Stock Exchange (RNK.L). The Group's principal activities are: the operation of Mecca Bingo clubs and casinos in the UK with complementary on-line gaming and bookmaking services. For more information about The Rank Group, visit www.rank.com.