



Australian
Communications
and Media Authority
communicating | facilitating | regulating

Final Investigation Report – Interactive gambling – Mitch Robinson

Summary	
Entities involved in the service / advertisement	Mitch Robinson
Name of service	Vegastars
Relevant legislation	<i>Interactive Gambling Act 2001</i>
Date finalised	30 September 2026
Findings	Contravention of subsection 61EA(1A) on two occasions: > (a) by publishing the YouTube video on 10 March 2026; and > (b) by publishing the Instagram video on 6 April 2026.

Background

1. The Australian Communications and Media Authority (the ACMA) commenced an investigation under section 21 of the *Interactive Gambling Act 2001* (IGA) into Mitch Robinson, a former Australian Football League (AFL) player and co-host of the Rip Through It podcast. The investigation concerns advertisements for the Vegastars service published on Mr Robinson's social media accounts.
2. The investigation was commenced following a media enquiry concerning promotional content for the offshore gambling service Vegastars published by Mr Robinson on social media platforms.
3. Prior to commencing this investigation, the ACMA separately investigated Neptune Projects SRL, the provider of the Vegastars service. That investigation resulted in findings that the Vegastars service was being provided in contravention of subsection 15(2A) of the IGA as a prohibited interactive gambling service with an Australian-customer link. On 20 January 2026, the ACMA issued Neptune Projects SRL with a formal warning under section 64A of the IGA for contraventions of subsection 15(2A).
4. The ACMA investigated whether Mitch Robinson promoted the Vegastars service in contravention of the advertising prohibitions under Part 7A of the IGA.

The entities involved

Mitch Robinson

5. Between March and May 2026, Mr Robinson published content on Instagram and YouTube that promoted the Vegastars service.
6. The content included videos displaying the Vegastars name, logo and website address, together with footage of gameplay on the Vegastars service.
7. For the purposes of this investigation, the content investigated by the ACMA (Investigated Content) comprises the Instagram video published on 6 April 2026 on the @mitchrobinson Instagram account, as well as a YouTube video published by "Rip Through It" on 10 March 2026, as recorded in Schedule A. The videos display gameplay on the Vegastars service, together with the Vegastars name, logo and website address and include commentary by Mr Robinson promoting the service. The ACMA's findings in this report relate to that content.
8. The ACMA issued a statutory Notice to Produce (ACMA Notice) to Mitch Robinson on 12 May 2026. A response was received on 16 June 2026.
9. According to the response, Mitch Robinson entered into two agreements connected with the promotion of Vegastars on or about 3 March 2026:
 - a. an Exclusive Ambassador Agreement (**EAA**) under which he agreed to provide onsite, social media, YouTube and streaming content in exchange for payments of \$30,000 per month; and
 - b. a Podcast Promotion Agreement (**PPA**) under which promotional content was to be provided through the Rip Through It Podcast in exchange for payments of \$10,000 per month.
10. Searches conducted by the ACMA did not identify a registered corporation or business name known as "Rip Through It Podcast". The PPA was executed by Mr Robinson personally and the ACMA therefore considers Mr Robinson to be a party to that agreement.
11. According to the response to the ACMA Notice, Mitch Robinson was paid \$120,000 prior to his receipt of the ACMA Notice on 12 May 2026, at which time he ceased all involvement with Vegastars and took down all content posted by him containing the Vegastars logo. Documents produced in response to the Notice also indicated that Mr Robinson received this \$120,000 in three instalments of \$40,000, in connection with the promotion of Vegastars. The payments were received during the period in which the EAA and PPA were operating and are relevant to the consideration of the exception in section 61EE of the IGA.

Vegastars and Neptune Projects SRL

12. Neptune Projects SRL has been identified as the provider of the Vegastars service.
13. The website for Vegastars indicates that the service is owned and operated by Neptune Projects SRL under an Internet Gaming Licence issued by the Tobique Gaming Commission.
14. Company information obtained from the Costa Rica business registry indicates that Neptune Projects SRL is incorporated under the laws of Costa Rica (registration number 4062001319545) as a limited liability company.
15. A formal warning was issued to Neptune Projects SRL on 20 January 2026, and we requested Australian ISPs block the primary and alternate Vegastars websites in February 2026.
16. The Vegastars service continues to be provided into the Australian market, and the ACMA has subsequently requested that Australian Internet Service Providers (ISPs) block additional alternative sites for the service.
17. According to the response to the ACMA Notice, Mr Robinson's management appears to have acted as the intermediary responsible for engaging Mr Robinson to undertake promotional activities relating to the Vegastars service.

Rip Through It Podcast

18. The Rip Through It Podcast is an AFL-focused podcast available on YouTube and other streaming platforms, including Apple Podcasts and SoundCloud. The podcast also maintains associated social media accounts, including Instagram and TikTok.

Relevant provision/s of the IGA

19. Extracts of the relevant provisions of the IGA are provided at **Attachment A**.

Findings

20. Mitch Robinson published designated interactive gambling advertisements, being the Instagram video published on the @mitchrobinson Instagram account on 6 April 2026 and the YouTube video published on 10 March 2026, identified as the Investigated Content, in contravention of subsection 61EA(1A) of the IGA.

Reasons for decision

Publication of gambling advertisements on Instagram and YouTube

21. To assess whether a contravention of subsection 61EA(1A) of the IGA has occurred, the ACMA considered the following questions:

- > Is the content a designated interactive gambling advertisement?
- > Was the designated interactive gambling advertisement published in Australia?

Is the content a designated interactive gambling advertisement?

22. The content considered by the ACMA is the Investigated Content, which displays the Vegastars name, logo and website address, depicts gameplay on the Vegastars service and includes commentary promoting the service.
23. Relevantly, section 61BA of the IGA defines designated interactive gambling service advertisement broadly to include any writing, still picture, sign, symbol or other visual image, or any audible message, or any combination of two or more of those things, that gives publicity to, or otherwise promotes or intends to promote:
 - > a designated interactive gambling service
 - > designated interactive gambling services in general
 - > a domain name or URL that relates to a designated interactive gambling service
 - > any words that are closely associated with a designated interactive gambling service.

24. In this instance, the Investigated Content comprises visual and audio material promoting the Vegastars service and includes:
- > branding logo and name of the Vegastars service
 - > playing on or gambling on the Vegastars service
 - > display of the URL for the Vegastars service
 - > voice-over accompanying footage showing Mitch Robinson and another person apparently winning approximately \$800 while using the Vegastars service.
 - > commentary during the Rip Through It podcast promoting the Vegastars service
25. Accordingly, the ACMA's view is that the Investigated Content is advertising.
26. The next question is whether the advertising is for designated interactive gambling services. According to section 4 of the IGA, a designated interactive gambling service means a prohibited interactive gambling service.
27. The online casino service advertised through the Investigated Content is the Vegastars service which was found by the ACMA to be a prohibited interactive gambling service with an Australian-customer link. The Vegastars service is therefore a designated interactive gambling service.
28. The Investigated Content promotes the Vegastars service through the display of its branding, name and website address, together with footage of gameplay and apparent winnings obtained while using the service.
29. Further, Mitch Robinson under the EAA and PPA, agreed to "incorporate":
- > "Giveaways (funded by the Company)
 - > Live commentary during the footy
 - > Slot play and betting content"
30. The contractual requirement to provide "slot play and betting content" supports the conclusion that the Investigated Content was created and published for the purpose of promoting the Vegastars service.
31. Therefore, the ACMA is satisfied that the Investigated Content is a designated interactive gambling service advertisement.
32. There are several exceptions to the definition in section 61BA, none of which are relevant in this case.

Was the advertisement published in Australia?

33. Subsection 61EA(1A) of the IGA provides that a person must not publish a designated interactive gambling service advertisement in Australia unless the publication is permitted by another specified section of the IGA.
34. Section 61CA sets out what is meant by publish a designated interactive gambling service advertisement for the purposes of Part 7A of the IGA.
35. Relevantly, paragraph 61CA(1)(a) provides that a person publishes a designated interactive gambling service advertisement if the person includes the advertisement, or something that contains the advertisement, on a website.
36. The Investigated Content was uploaded by Mr Robinson to Instagram and YouTube and thereby included on websites accessible by members of the public. The ACMA is therefore satisfied that Mr Robinson published the advertisements for the purposes of paragraph 61CA(1)(a).
37. In addition, paragraph 61CA(1)(f) of the IGA provides that a person 'publishes' a designated interactive gambling service advertisement if the person:
- (i) *brings the advertisement, or something that contains the advertisement, to the notice of; or*
 - (ii) *disseminates the advertisement, or something that contains the advertisement, to;*

the public, or a section of the public, by any means (including, for example, by means of a film, video, computer disk or electronic medium).

38. By uploading the Investigated Content to Instagram and YouTube, Mr Robinson disseminated the advertisements to the public, or a section of the public, through electronic media and therefore also published the advertisements for the purposes of paragraph 61CA(1)(f).
39. The Investigated Content was able to be viewed in Australia, by an ACMA staff member physically present in Australia using an Australian IP address. The ACMA staff member was able to access and view both the Instagram video and the YouTube video from Australia.
40. Notably in this case, Mitch Robinson was responsible for creating the content within the requirements set out by the providers of the Vegastars service under the EAA. This included the Investigated Content.
41. Therefore, the ACMA is satisfied that Mr Robinson published the Investigated Content for the purposes of section 61CA of the IGA.
42. Further, the ACMA is satisfied that the Investigated Content was published in Australia for the purposes of section 61EA(1A), because:
 - > Mitch Robinson, an Australian citizen residing in Queensland, was engaged by the providers of Vegastars to endorse and promote its service under an agreement in which he was paid to create and upload content to his Instagram account and participate in promotional podcast content.
 - > His audience is predominantly Australian, as he is a former AFL player and co-hosts a podcast which discusses the AFL, a competition exclusive to Australia.
 - > The Investigated Content can be viewed without creating a “login” and so is easily accessible to people in Australia.
 - > The Investigated Content appears to target his Australian Instagram followers, by appearing to gamble on the Vegastars service while in a popular hotel in Brisbane, Australia, during an AFL match and giving away the purported winnings from his gambling on the Vegastars service to the patrons of the hotel, by providing free drinks.
43. In addition, subsection 61EA(3) provides that a designated interactive gambling advertisement included on a website is taken to be published in Australia where the website is available for access by end users in Australia and it is likely that a majority of persons accessing the website are physically present in Australia. The Investigated Content was available for access in Australia and, having regard to the AFL-focused nature of the content, Mr Robinson's Australian public profile, the Brisbane-based imagery contained in the Investigated Content and the manner in which the content was promoted through Mr Robinson's social media accounts and podcast, the ACMA considers it likely that a proportion of persons accessing the Investigated Content were physically present in Australia.
44. The ACMA considers that none of the exceptions in sections 61CB-61CF, which exclude certain things from the 'publication' definition in section 61CA, apply to the publication of the advertisement in this case.

Was the publication permitted by the IGA?

45. Subsection 61EA(1A) provides that the publication of a designated interactive gambling service advertisement is not a contravention if it was permitted by sections 61EB – 61EF. There is no evidence that any of these exceptions to subsection 61EA(1A) apply in this case.
46. In the circumstances, the ACMA is satisfied that none of the following exceptions apply;
 - > that the website is a periodical distributed outside Australia (section 61EB)
 - > that publication was accidental or incidental to the publication of another matter with no evidence of any benefit being received (section 61ED)
 - > nor was it published during the flight of an aircraft (section 61EF).

47. The ACMA is also satisfied that the publication of the Investigated Content is not permitted by section 61EE (publication by a person not receiving any benefit) during the period that the EAA and PPA were active, because as the publisher of the Investigated Content, Mitch Robinson received a direct financial benefit from the providers of the Vegastars service, in accordance with the EAA, as set out in his response to the ACMA's Notice.
48. The EAA between Mitch Robinson and the providers of Vegastars commenced in March 2026 and was purportedly terminated in or around May 2026 following the ACMA's Notice to Mitch Robinson. Mr Robinson's response to the ACMA notice stated that he promptly removed Vegastars related promotional content shortly after receiving the Notice. ACMA staff confirmed that the Instagram content was removed.

Correspondence with Mitch Robinson

49. On 4 August 2026, the ACMA made preliminary findings that:
- > The Instagram video published on 6 April 2026 on the @mitchrobinson Instagram account, comprising footage of gameplay on the Vegastars service and displaying the Vegastars name, logo and website address, is a designated interactive gambling service advertisement for the purposes of section 61BA of the IGA;
 - > By publishing that content on Instagram, Mr Robinson published a designated interactive gambling service advertisement in Australia;
 - > The publication was not permitted by sections 61EB, 61ED, 61EE or 61EF of the IGA;
 - > Accordingly, Mr Robinson contravened subsection 61EA(1A) of the IGA.
50. On 10 August 2026, the ACMA wrote to Mr Robinson, providing these preliminary findings with reasons and requested a response by 31 August 2026.
51. On 31 August 2026, the ACMA received a response from Mr Robinson. He indicated he was not aware Vegastars was a prohibited interactive gambling service and expressed remorse.
52. The ACMA has considered Mr Robinson's submission that he was not aware Vegastars was a prohibited interactive gambling service. However, subsection 61EA(1A) does not require proof that a person publishing a designated interactive gambling service advertisement knew that the advertised service was a prohibited interactive gambling service. Accordingly, that submission does not affect the ACMA's findings regarding publication of the Investigated Content.
53. On 7 September 2026, the ACMA wrote to Mr Robinson to inform him that we had become aware of the YouTube video promoting Vegastars and seek his response to this additional finding. On the same day, Mr Robinson provided a further response, explaining that he had not been aware initially that the YouTube content remained available and had taken immediate steps to confirm that the content had been removed.
54. The ACMA acknowledges and has considered Mr Robinson's submissions of 31 August 2026 and 7 September 2026.

List of Attachments

Attachment A Key provisions of the IGA

Attachment A

Key provisions of the IGA

4 Definitions

designated interactive gambling service means:

- (a) a prohibited interactive gambling service; or
- (b) an unlicensed regulated interactive gambling service.

gambling service means:

- (a) a service for the placing, making, receiving or acceptance of bets; or
- (b) a service the sole or dominant purpose of which is to introduce individuals who wish to make or place bets to individuals who are willing to receive or accept those bets; or
- (c) a service for the conduct of a lottery; or
- (d) a service for the supply of lottery tickets; or
- (e) a service for the conduct of a game, where:
 - (i) the game is played for money or anything or else of value; and
 - (ii) the game is a game of chance or of mixed chance and skill; and
 - (iii) a customer of the service gives or agrees to give consideration to play or enter the game; or
- (f) a gambling service (within the ordinary meaning of that expression) that is not covered by any of the above paragraphs.

Unlicensed regulated interactive gambling service means a regulated interactive gambling service that is provided in contravention of subsection 15AA(3).

5 Prohibited interactive gambling services

(1) For the purposes of this Act, a **prohibited interactive gambling service** is a gambling service, where:

- (a) the service is provided in the course of carrying on a business; and
- (b) the service is provided to customers using any of the following:
 - (i) an internet carriage service;
 - (ii) any other listed carriage service;
 - (iii) a broadcasting service;
 - (iv) any other content service;
 - (v) a datacasting service

Note: This definition relates to the offence provisions and civil penalty provisions set out in section 15 and Part 7A.

(2) Subsection (1) has effect subject to subsection (3).

Excluded services

(3) For the purposes of this Act, none of the following services is a **prohibited interactive gambling service**:

- (a) a telephone betting service;
- (aa) an excluded wagering service (see section 8A);
- (ab) an excluded gaming service (see section 8B);
- (aba) a place-based betting service (see section 8BA);
- (ac) a service that has a designated broadcasting link (see section 8C);
- (ad) a service that has a designated datacasting link (see section 8C);
- (ae) an excluded lottery service (see section 8D);
- (b) a service to the extent to which it relates to the entering into of contracts that are financial products within the meaning of Chapter 7 of the *Corporations Act 2001*;
- (ba) a wholesale gambling service;
- (bb) a trade promotion gambling service (see section 8BB);
- (c) an exempt service (see section 10).

8 Australian-customer link

For the purposes of this Act, a gambling service has an Australian-customer link if, and only if, any or all of the customers of the service are physically present in Australia.

8E Regulated interactive gambling service

(1) For the purposes of this Act, a **regulated interactive gambling service** is:

- (a) a telephone betting service (see section 8AA); or
- (b) an excluded wagering service (see section 8A); or
- (c) an excluded gaming service (see section 8B); or
- (d) a place-based betting service (see section 8BA); or
- (e) a service that has a designated broadcasting link (see section 8C); or
- (f) a service that has a designated datacasting link (see section 8C); or
- (g) an excluded lottery service (see section 8D); or
- (h) an exempt service (see section 10);

where:

- (i) the service is provided in the course of carrying on a business; and
 - (j) the service is provided to customers using any of the following:
 - (i) an internet carriage service;
 - (ii) any other listed carriage service;
 - (iii) a broadcasting service;
 - (iv) any other content service;
 - (v) a datacasting service; and
 - (k) in the case of an exempt service—a determination under subsection (2) is in force in relation to the service.
- (2) The Minister may, by legislative instrument, determine that each exempt service included in a specified class of exempt services is covered by paragraph (1)(k).
- (3) Subsection (1) has effect subject to subsection (4).
- (4) For the purposes of this Act, neither of the following services is a **regulated interactive gambling service**:
- (a) a wholesale gambling service;
 - (b) a trade promotion gambling service (see section 8BB).

15 Prohibited interactive gambling services not to be provided to customers in Australia

(2A) A person must not provide a prohibited interactive gambling service that has an Australian-customer link (see section 8).

Civil penalty: 7,500 penalty units.

(3) Subsections (1) and (2A) do not apply if the person:

- (a) did not know; and
- (b) could not, with reasonable diligence, have ascertained;

that the service had an Australian-customer link.

Note: In the case of proceedings for an offence against subsection (1), the defendant bears an evidential burden in relation to the matters in subsection (3) (see subsection 13.3(3) of the *Criminal Code*).

61BA Basic meaning of designated interactive gambling service advertisement

- (1) For the purposes of this Part, a designated interactive gambling service advertisement is any writing, still or moving picture, sign, symbol or other visual image, or any audible message, or any combination of 2 or more of those things, that gives publicity to, or otherwise promotes or is intended to promote:
- (a) a designated interactive gambling service; or
 - (b) designated interactive gambling services in general; or
 - (c) the whole or part of a trade mark in respect of a designated interactive gambling service; or
 - (d) a domain name or URL that relates to a designated interactive gambling service; or
 - (e) any words that are closely associated with a designated interactive gambling service (whether also closely associated with other kinds of services or products).
- (2) This section has effect subject to sections 61BB, 61BC, 61BD, 61BE, 61BF, 61BG and 61BGA.

61CA Basic meaning of publish a designated interactive gambling service advertisement

- (1) For the purposes of this Part, a person ***publishes*** a designated interactive gambling service advertisement if the person does any of the following things:
- (a) the person includes the advertisement, or something that contains the advertisement, on a website;
 - (b) the person includes the advertisement in a document (including, for example, a newspaper, magazine, program, leaflet or ticket) that is available, or distributed, to the public or a section of the public;
 - (c) the person includes the advertisement in a film, video, television program or radio program that is, or is intended to be, seen or heard by the public or a section of the public;
 - (d) the person:
 - (i) sells, hires or supplies the advertisement, or something containing the advertisement, to the public or a section of the public; or
 - (ii) offers the advertisement, or something containing the advertisement, for sale or supply to, or hire by, the public or a section of the public;
 - (e) the person displays, screens or plays the advertisement, or something that contains the advertisement, so that it can be seen or heard in or from:
 - (i) a public place; or
 - (ii) public transport; or
 - (iii) a workplace;
 - (f) the person otherwise:
 - (i) brings the advertisement, or something that contains the advertisement, to the notice of; or
 - (ii) disseminates the advertisement, or something that contains the advertisement, to; the public, or a section of the public, by any means (including, for example, by means of a film, video, computer disk or electronic medium).
- (2) This section has effect subject to sections 61CB, 61CC, 61CD, 61CE and 61CF.

61EA Designated interactive gambling service advertisements not to be published in Australia

- (1A) A person must not publish a designated interactive gambling service advertisement in Australia if:
- (a) the publication is not permitted by section 61EB; and
 - (b) the publication is not permitted by section 61ED; and
 - (c) the publication is not permitted by section 61EE; and
 - (d) the publication is not permitted by section 61EF.
- Civil penalty: 180 penalty units.
- (2A) A person must not authorise or cause a designated interactive gambling service advertisement to be published in Australia if:
- (a) the publication is not permitted by section 61EB; and
 - (b) the publication is not permitted by section 61ED; and
 - (c) the publication is not permitted by section 61EE; and
 - (d) the publication is not permitted by section 61EF.
- Civil penalty: 180 penalty units.
- (3) For the purposes of this section, a designated interactive gambling service advertisement that is included on a website is taken to be published in Australia if, and only if:
- (a) the website is accessed, or is available for access, by end-users in Australia; and
 - (b) having regard to:
 - (i) the content of the website; and
 - (ii) the way the website is advertised or promoted;
 it would be concluded that it is likely that a majority of persons who access the website are physically present in Australia.