

If I Were a Betting Man . . . I'd Watch Out for INTERPOL: What Lawyers Need to Know

By [Michelle A. Estlund](#) on May 27, 2011

I'm still thinking about the topic of the last post: [FIFA's historic donation to INTERPOL](#). The donation is meant to be used to prevent future crimes by training players, officials, and fans about the dangers of illegal betting and match-fixing. It is not for the purpose of investigation of the crimes themselves.

Does this mean that criminal defense attorneys with clients who are prone to illegal betting should advise our clients to rest easy?

Alas, no.

Remember, INTERPOL still has in its arsenal the INTERPOL Major Event Support Team (IMEST), which is available for aiding in the investigation and arrests of persons accused of crime surrounding major sporting events. And should we need proof of INTERPOL's zeal or effectiveness in investigating sports related illegal betting, simply look back to its 2010 World Cup operation "SOGA III," which led to [over 5,000 people across Asia being arrested](#).

The only arrests that will be avoided due to FIFA's donation will be those that do not happen because the goal behind the donation has been met: people have been educated, trained, and warned to the point that the illegal activity does not occur.

We'll see how that goes.

As always, thoughts and comments are welcomed.