

OUR SPORTS LAW OFFERING



Sport has a significant role in South African culture and our country's impressive and acclaimed track record when it comes to hosting major continental and international sporting events is testament to this.

Reflecting this culture, Webber Wentzel lawyers have exceptional experience in the sports sector. We advise corporates, financial sponsors, broadcasters, event and venue owners, marketing agents, sports foundations, promoters, equipment and clothing manufacturers, domestic sports federations, teams and athletes across a wide range of sporting codes.

The sports sector has seen dynamic growth in consumer interest and interaction with interactive technology creating true global reach. The ownership and protection of rights in a highly regulated environment are critical to long-term success.

WHAT DO WE OFFER?

We offer our clients cross-practice legal advice, with a depth of experience in all key areas of the law as it applies to this sector. We are able to provide an integrated, seamless, end-to-end service delivered at the very highest standards our firm is known for, which includes:

- Mergers & acquisitions transactions and private equity investments (including investments in clubs / teams / franchises)
- Investment opportunities in competitions and acquisitions of media and broadcast rights
- Joint ventures between sporting bodies / investors (both international)
- Debt / equity financing and securitisations structures in relation to funding for sports bodies, clubs, sports stadiums, commercial rights and players
- Commercial matters that affect athletes, teams and bodies within the sector (including sponsorship, branding, employment contracts, image rights, intellectual property rights, IT, data protection and events planning)

- Dispute resolution and reputation management (for athletes, teams and bodies)
- Regulatory and anti-trust matters (including investigations and governance and compliance reviews)
- Real estate transactions (including stadium development / expansion and financing)
- Occupational health and safety (including safety regulatory compliance)



African Legal Awards 2019



Chambers Global 2020
Legal 500 2020



South African Professional
Service Awards 2019/2020



Webber Wentzel
B-BBEE Rating

A STRATEGIC LEGAL APPROACH

Drawing on our collective expertise we will identify and recommend proactive steps to mitigate risk and to deal with the unique commercial and reputational issues that arise in the sports sector.

DEPTH OF EXPERIENCE

We have a diverse and high-profile client base which includes advising /representing:

- **The South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee**, including sponsorship agreements for various of the South African Olympic teams and sports codes.
- **South African Rugby Union** on the enquiry conducted by ICASA into the licensing of broadcasting rights and amendments to the National Sports and Recreation Act
- An international private equity fund in the previously proposed investment in **Western Province Rugby Football Union**, drafting and negotiating all of the transaction documentation, providing structuring and tax advice, ancillary property development agreement(s) and financing arrangements for move of the Newlands rugby stadium to the Cape Town stadium and all of the consequential regulatory advice.
- **Western Province Cricket Association** in a wide range of matters including arbitrations, disciplinary issues and group restructuring.
- **The Premier Soccer League (PSL)** in its dispute concerning sponsorship with SAFA.
- Instructing **senior counsel** to chair, and acting as secretariat in, an enquiry into allegations of racism by a former Sports presenter against his co-presenters.
- **South African Football Players Union** and certain individuals in contract negotiations with PSL clubs.
- **Football clubs** in disputes before the SAFA and the High Court concerning the eligibility of players to play for particular teams.
- **Football clubs** in engagements with the media (including Press Ombudsman complaints).
- **MTN** in relation to its appointment as the exclusive title sponsor for Ajax Cape Town Football Club.
- **Advising events organisers, media houses and sponsors** in sponsorship arrangements, including access and location agreements, multi-media, barter, relevant intellectual property, broadcasting and licensing agreements relating to major cycle events, including the Joburg 94.7 and Cape Epic races.
- **adidas** in litigating in relation to endorsement agreement disputes with athletes; drafting endorsement agreements for athletes and social media influencers; advising and litigating in relation to restraints of trade.
- **ESPN** in relation to the legislative framework applicable to the broadcast of a major sporting event.
- **MTN** in the negotiation and drafting of the agreement between MTN and FIFA relating to MTN's sponsorship of the 2010 FIFA World Cup and in the development and implementation of certain agreements concluded between MTN and MTN's operating companies in relation to the exploitation by the MTN operating companies of the sponsorship rights secured by MTN in respect of the 2010 FIFA World Cup.
- **DHL** in the Western Province Rugby (in liquidation) section 417 enquiry proceedings.

GLOBAL REACH

We support clients across the African continent and do so independently or together with our established and integrated network of alliance and key relationship firms. We bring an international perspective to our clients through our alliance with Linklaters, one of the world's leading firms, working alongside their sports practice.



"African Legal Awards 2019 awarded us network/alliance of the year (with Linklaters)."- **Webber Wentzel**

CONTACT US

Do not hesitate to contact us for any of your sports law queries by emailing us at sportslaw@webberwentzel.com

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About Webber Wentzel

We are the leading full-service law firm on the African continent, providing clients with seamless, tailored and commercially-minded business solutions within record times. Our alliance with Linklaters and our relationships with outstanding law firms across Africa ensure that our clients have the best expertise wherever they do business.