

IAA Affiliate Update - December 2008

Dear Members and Affiliates,

First of all, we in the IAA would like to wish you yourselves a successful, prosperous and healthy new year. We're very excited about 2009, and we hope to put more of an effort into keeping you up to date with what we're doing. This is the first of the monthly-or-so updates we'll be sending out to give you an idea of what we're up to. This update covers the month of December 2008.

- DoJ proposals and meeting Deputy Flanagan

Top of our agenda, of course, is the release of our draft proposals to the DoJ, and our meeting with Charles Flanagan in Leinster house. Deputy Flanagan sits on the committee which is producing the Miscellaneous Provisions Bill, which is the legislation we're so eagerly awaiting in the next few weeks. This meeting was very encouraging, and Deputy Flanagan was very impressed with our proposals. He himself is a paintballer, and now understands the premise of what Airsoft is. His feedback, and later feedback from our contacts in the DoJ indicate that our input was well received. We'd like to thank Tony Geraghty of Eirsoft for coming along to this meeting and providing valuable insight into the business side of Airsoft, and just how many people rely on it for their living, and how much it gives to the economy. We're meeting with the DoJ again in the next few weeks to discuss the bill, and will let you know how we get on.

- AGM

The 14th of December was our AGM, where we elected our new committee. We then worked on handing over responsibilities and information over the next few weeks. We also voted for the inclusion of Northern Ireland players and sites. We are currently talking to people from ASI about setting up a framework for northern affiliates and members, and are actively recruiting a northern representative. More on this in our next update.

- FIS

The IAA is currently in the process of applying for associate membership of the Federation of Irish Sports. The FIS is a body that offers assistance and representation to sport in Irish Society, and the governing and representative bodies for sport. We feel that this will go a long way toward legitimisation of the sport, and hope to make full use of the information and representation made available to us by FIS.

- IASRA

We recently sent out an email to affiliates, some of whom were unaware of IASRA, a body that claimed to represent them. The IAA currently have assurances from IASRA that they will meet with us in the new year to talk about our shared goals, with a view to working together to a common purpose. However, we have some grave concerns about the manner in which the body was set up, and some of the regulations and guidelines they seek to impose on players and retailers. We are however approaching the issue with open minds, and with an attitude of full disclosure and honesty. We will be sending out updates as we get them.

- Press

We were recently approached by the Irish Times, who were seeking to do a piece on Airsoft,

in light of the minister's comments about an outright ban. They were eager to see it being played, and we took a journalist and photographer from the Times to HRTA before Christmas. We're confident that this will result in a positive piece on Airsoft if published, and we'll let you know when it's published. Our special thanks go to Paul Carey of HRTA for allowing us to show the press our sport being played on his fine site.

- Wrapup

December has been a busy month for the IAA, and has been the culmination of many months of work from the committee, our affiliates, and our members. At the end of the day, it is the upstanding, safe, and responsible players of the sport that make it what it is today. We appreciate your support, and we appreciate you continuing to support Irish businesses, be they our affiliates or not. We hope to visit many of our affiliates in person in the new year, and we encourage both affiliates and non-affiliates to contact us at committee@irishairsoft.ie if you'd like to schedule a visit or meeting.