



## Activision's Call of Duty® World League Marks New Era for eSports

*New Global eSports League Triples its Prize Pool to \$3 million, Expands Competitive Opportunities for Pros and Amateurs Alike*

*Call of Duty Championship Moved to Fall 2016 in Support of All-New Seasonal Structure*

*The Arrival of Call of Duty: Black Ops III Will Mark the Deepest eSports In-Game Integration in Franchise History*

SANTA MONICA, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- With the upcoming release of **Call of Duty®: Black Ops III**, the sequel to the best-selling series in *Call of Duty®* history, eSports is poised to expand to new audiences, while introducing new ways for fans of all skill levels to join the eSports movement. [Activision Publishing, Inc.](#), a wholly owned subsidiary of Activision Blizzard (Nasdaq: [ATVI](#)), and Call of Duty announced today the creation of the Call of Duty® World League, a worldwide eSports league by Activision in support of the #1 console eSports franchise, *Call of Duty*. The new league marks an unprecedented commitment by *Call of Duty* and its dedicated eSports team to directly support the growing community of eSports fans. The program will provide a deeper level of engagement with the elite circuit of professional gamers, while also encouraging casual fans and aspiring competitors of *Call of Duty* to enjoy the thrill of competition across different skill levels.

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"Call of Duty has always been about community, camaraderie and competition, which drives incredible engagement with the game all year long. eSports allows us to deliver these moments to our fans whether they are playing the game themselves or cheering on those who are," said Eric Hirshberg, CEO of Activision Publishing, Inc. "Three years ago, we held the first Call of Duty Championship to showcase the dedication and skill of Call of Duty players around the world. Since then, eSports has become a global phenomenon with more than 120 million people watching online competitive gaming each year and Call of Duty continues to lead as the top console eSports franchise in the world."

### Call of Duty World League

The Call of Duty World League will be comprised of two Divisions - The Pro Division and The Challenge Division - each of which will feed into the grand finale of the competitive Call of Duty season, and the biggest event in console eSports, the Call of Duty Championship. Professional Call of Duty teams in North America, Europe, and Australia & New Zealand will battle throughout the year in regional competition during The Pro Division regular season to earn their ticket to the Call of Duty Championship, and will compete for the largest seasonal cash prizes in Call of Duty to date. The Call of Duty World League Pro Division kicks off competition in January 2016 in North America, Europe, and Australia & New Zealand.

The Challenge Division will provide a path for amateur and other aspiring pro players to compete with each other and enhance their competitive skills as well. The winning teams in The Challenge Division will also earn a spot in the Call of Duty Championship by competing in a series of official LAN events.

"Treyarch's passion for competitive gaming precedes **Call of Duty: Black Ops II**, a heritage that inspired us to introduce dedicated eSports features into the franchise and one that compelled us to push the boundaries of **Call of Duty: Black Ops III's** offerings beyond anything we've delivered before," said Mark Lamia, Treyarch studio head. "While our global fan base of players range from casual to professional, they all share a desire to compete - some at the highest levels. With **Call of Duty: Black Ops III**, we are introducing a series of new features, like Arena mode that not only accommodate that diversity of play styles, but also let players see how they stack up against one another. Treyarch is giving the community of *Call of Duty* players new ways to compete and enjoy the thrill of competition."

### Call of Duty Championship

For the first time in its history, the Call of Duty Championship will move from spring to fall, taking place in fall of 2016 to give players an extended amount of time to hone their competitive skills in **Call of Duty: Black Ops III** through competing in the Call of Duty World League regular season.

With the Pro and Challenge Divisions of the Call of Duty World League there is an unmatched level of series and tournament combined prizing available. There's more than \$3 million on the line between series payouts, LAN events, and the Call of Duty Championship, making it is the biggest total prize pool for Call of Duty eSports, and more than triple the previous prizing.

Activision has formed a team dedicated to launching and coordinating the Call of Duty World League, which will start with the

launch of **Call of Duty: Black Ops III**. Further details including broadcast, personnel and partnerships will be released at a later date. For more information on the Call of Duty World League, announcements about the Call of Duty Championship 2016 and other Call of Duty eSports news go to <https://www.callofduty.com/esports>. Fans can also follow @eSportsCOD on Twitter.

More information on **Call of Duty: Black Ops III** can be found at <http://www.callofduty.com/blackops3>, on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/Callofduty> or on Twitter @Treyarch.

#### **About Activision Publishing, Inc.**

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eSports features not supported on all platforms.

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#### **Activision Publishing, Inc.**

**Robert Taylor**

**PR Manager**

**310.496.5206**

[robert.taylor@activision.com](mailto:robert.taylor@activision.com)

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