

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 13 OCTOBER 2012

PROPOSAL: Standards of Conduct & Complaints Procedure

It is proposed that:

- (a) The Standards of Conduct for ECF Officials as set out in Appendix A to this proposal be adopted with immediate effect;
- (b) The ECF Complaints Procedures as set out in Appendix B to this proposal be adopted with immediate effect.

Comment: *These documents are unchanged from the papers presented to Finance Council in April 2012. The feedback received to the consultation paper was sparse, but Council may wish to consider the following additional points raised by the two people who responded:*

- 1. That ECF Directors and officials should be required to restrict their public comments to official ECF channels;*
- 2. That the Board should have the authority to remove one of its own members in the event of a serious breach of standards.*

APPENDIX A

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR ECF OFFICIALS

1. Introduction

This document sets out the standards of conduct expected of all English Chess Federation (ECF) directors, managers and other officials. It is supplementary to the ECF Articles and Bye Laws and does not replace them.

It is impossible to cover every specific eventuality in this document, and officials should be aware of the spirit of the Standards as much as the individual wording of the clauses.

The ECF acknowledges with gratitude that the large majority of ECF officials offer their services on a voluntary basis and for no financial reward other than reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses.

2. Standards of Conduct

2.1 All officials of the ECF are representatives of the organisation and must ensure that their actions do not:

- cause gratuitous offence;
- injure the ECF, its officials or its events, directly or indirectly;
- bring the game of chess or the ECF into disrepute.

This includes, among other things, ensuring that the views, rights, values and dignity of others are treated with sensitivity and respect. As ambassadors for the game and for the ECF, officials must ensure that their actions reflect such personal qualities as honesty, empathy, responsibility and good sportsmanship.

2.2 All ECF officials must comply with the FIDE Code of Ethics.

2.3 Behaviour which is contrary to the principles set out in paragraph 1 or to the FIDE Code of Ethics may be subject to disciplinary action by the ECF. This may include such measures as a written warning, a temporary suspension and, in the case of officials appointed by the Board, removal from post. Officials appointed by Council may only be removed by means of a motion passed by Council.

2.4 When acting in their official capacity, ECF officials must ensure that their actions are objective and that they declare any conflict of interest. A public register of interests in chess-related organisations, events and businesses is to be maintained to ensure that the highest standards of openness are seen to be observed.

2.5 When representing the ECF at an official event or function, officials must ensure that their actions do not directly or indirectly damage events or discourage sponsors, volunteers and other parties. Standards of dress appropriate to the occasion should be maintained, including compliance with any applicable dress code. Official events or functions are not to be used for the promotion of a non-chess related organisation, business or cause without the prior agreement of the ECF Board.

3. Standards of Written Communications

- 3.1 Care must be taken to ensure that written communications comply with the expected standards of behaviour set out in section 2 above. The use of any profane, vulgar, offensive, racist, sexist or demeaning language is prohibited, as are all forms of harassment and/or personal insults.
- 3.2 ECF publications (including the ECF website and the *ChessMoves* newsletter) enjoy a very wide readership, including juniors and potential sponsors. The importance of these publications to the ECF cannot be overstated: to a very large extent they are the public face of the ECF. Thus, publication of material which gratuitously injures the ECF directly or indirectly (including its reputation) in these media may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 3.3 Editors have a responsibility to ensure that the following guidelines are publicised to authors and also, where it is reasonably possible, to ensure that material which breaches these guidelines is not published.
 - 3.3.1 The use of any profane, vulgar, offensive, racist, sexist or demeaning language is prohibited, as are all forms of harassment and/or personal insults.
 - 3.3.2 ECF publications are not to be used as a forum for polemics on non-chess related subjects. For example, statements and discussions about religion, politics, race, sexual orientation, etc., are prohibited.
 - 3.3.3 ECF publications are not to be used for attacking or criticising individuals: any disputes between individuals must be resolved by direct private communication between the parties, failing which the matter should be referred to the relevant authorities including, when other means have been exhausted, the ECF Board.

APPENDIX B

ECF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

This document sets out the procedures for the handling of complaints concerning the English Chess Federation (ECF) and the actions of its officials when acting in an official capacity.

2. Instigation of Complaint

- 2.1. A complaint will normally be considered by the ECF only after all direct routes for the resolution of the matter have been attempted. For example, if the complaint concerns an event run independently of the ECF, but registered with it, it should initially be addressed to the organisers or controllers of the event in question.
- 2.2. Complaints should be made in writing as soon as practicable after the incident in question.
- 2.3. The appropriate recipient of the complaint should be determined as follows:
 - 2.3.1. In the first place, the complaint should be addressed to the Director responsible for the event, policy or official encompassed by the complaint;
 - 2.3.2. If the responsible Director is not clear, or if the complaint spans more than one directorate, the complaint should be addressed to the Chief Executive;
 - 2.3.3. If the complaint concerns a member of the ECF Board (apart from the Chief Executive), it should be addressed to the Chief Executive;
 - 2.3.4. If the complaint concerns the Chief Executive, it should be addressed to the Chairman.

An up-to-date list of ECF directors and other officials is maintained on the ECF website.

3. Handling of Complaint

- 3.1. The ECF will endeavour to acknowledge receipt of all complaints within 72 hours.
- 3.2. The ECF will endeavour to provide a written response to complaints within 14 calendar days of receipt. If the official handling the complaint does not expect to be able to meet this timetable, this will be advised to the complainant at the earliest opportunity and in any event within 14 calendar days of receipt of the original complaint.
- 3.3. The response to the complaint shall be made in writing and shall include an explanation of the ruling and its basis.
- 3.4. If disciplinary action in respect of an ECF official is considered appropriate, this may include such measures as:
 - a written warning;
 - a temporary suspension from duty;
 - dismissal from post.

4. Appeals Procedure

- 4.1. Appeals must be made in writing within 7 calendar days of the issue of the original ruling.
- 4.2. The appeal should be addressed to the next official in the sequence as set out in paragraph 2.3. For example, if the Chief Executive ruled on the original complaint, the appeal should be addressed to the Chairman.
- 4.3. In the event that the original ruling was made by the Chairman, the appeal should be addressed to the Non-Executive Directors for consideration by the Board as a whole.
- 4.4. The timetable for acknowledging and responding to the appeal shall be as set out in paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2. If the appeal is to be heard by the Board, it may be necessary to await the next scheduled Board meeting.
- 4.5. An appeal must include a substantive basis beyond disagreement with the original ruling. Such a basis could include:
 - 4.5.1. Failure to give the evidence proper consideration;
 - 4.5.2. Failure to consult with relevant parties;
 - 4.5.3. Failure to follow the applicable procedures;
 - 4.5.4. The argument that, in the light of the evidence, the ruling was perverse.
- 4.6. The decision in the appeal will be final.