



English Chess Federation

ACHIEVEMENT REPORT AGAINST BUSINESS PLAN FOR 2007-2008

ECF Mission Statement

'To promote the game of chess, in all its forms, as an attractive means of cultural and personal advancement. To foster the highest level of achievement in the game. To make the Federation's services and membership available to all, without restriction, and to promote equal opportunities in a positive manner.'

Objects of the ECF are:-

To encourage the study and practice of chess in England and for the purpose of these objects England shall be deemed to include such part of North Wales as is within the jurisdiction of the Cheshire & North Wales Chess Association for so long as it shall so remain.

To institute and maintain British Chess Championships.

To promote national and international chess tournaments in England.

To secure the interests of English players (being those players who are entitled to represent England under the statutes and regulations of Federation Internationale des Echecs for the time being in force) in foreign chess tournaments and matches.

To support the Braille Chess Association and other chess organisations which are members of the Company and whose jurisdiction includes England unless and until in each such case separate equivalent English organisations shall be established which are members of the Company.

To secure the interests of English problemists in foreign tournaments and tourneys and to encourage English problem composers and solvers by instituting tournaments and tourneys and for these purposes support of the British Chess Problem Society shall be within the scope of this object unless and until a separate English Chess Problem Society shall be established which is a member of the Company.

To arrange such contests, meetings, etc., as may be deemed desirable and provide and present trophies for competitions to suitable organisations in England.

To provide assistance in relation to chess to British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, which are not for the time being members of Federation Internationale des Echecs, if requested to do so.

To maintain and increase a fund, known as the "Permanent Invested Fund", to be permanently invested in the name of trustees in accordance with an approved trust deed.

To maintain a system for grading the results of games of chess players participating in its own competitions and in the competitions of member organisations.

To make the Company's services available without discrimination on grounds of colour, creed, disability, impairment, occupation, race, religious or political affiliation, or sexual orientation and to promote equal opportunities in a positive manner.

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SECTION 1 OBSERVATIONS OF CEO ON ACHIEVEMENT REPORT

This document reports on the business year May 2007 to April 2008. A new management team has been established since April and thus we are inevitably reporting on the achievements of others. This year's Achievement Report has been written to a new format designed to better illuminate the extent to which the Business Plan was achieved. This has been done by concentrating on variances rather than overall achievement.

The achievement analysis highlights both the strengths and weaknesses of the Federation. The Strengths are in maintaining continuity across a wide range of events, the weaknesses are in the difficulties of finding new organisers and expanding the activity basis of chess - both problematic with a essentially volunteer organisation. Overall the 90% achievement against the actions is an acceptable outcome. The variances will be considered further in formulating the 2009/10 Business Plan.

Chris Majer
Chief Executive, ECF

SECTION 2 INTRODUCTION

SCOPE

The ECF publishes annually:

- a long-term Corporate Plan;
- a one-year Business Plan;
- a report against the previous one-year Business Plan.

The function of the Achievement Report is to delineate the extent to which the previous year's Business Plan was achieved. The Business Plan itself identifies the key objectives from the long term Strategic Plan that are targeted for achievement in a 12 month period from May to April. This Achievement Report covers the year May 2007 to April 2008. An overview of the ECF business-planning process is given in Section 3. The ECF is a Federation of independent Constituent Units. The regional activities of the Constituent Units are not addressed.

The Achievement Report describes:

- Achievement against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in section 4. Here a comparison is given against previous years,
- Achievement against the 2006/7 Business Plan¹ in Section 5. Rather than going through each plan on a point-by-point basis, the analysis is presented as overall achievement with variances identified.
- Achievement against the Key Board Targets are given in Section 6.

¹ A copy of the 2006/7 Business Plan can be found on the ECF website at ECF website at: http://www.englishchess.org.uk/organisation/general/business_plan_07-08.pdf.

SECTION 3 BUSINESS PLANNING

Annual ECF Business Planning Cycle

Because of uncertainties in its revenues and the voluntary, part-time dedication to its affairs by the Directors, the ECF has tended naturally to react opportunistically to events at the expense of the pursuit of longer-term goals. To some extent, this is inevitable and will continue to be so. However, the ECF does want to achieve greater clarity about where it is going as an organisation. To this end an annual business planning cycle has been established, given in the table below

- June/July: Meeting of Board at which any shortfalls in achievement against the previous year's annual Business Plan are discussed and any necessary amendments to the current long-term Corporate Plan are discussed.
- July-August: Preparation and agreement of Report of achievement against Annual Business Plan for previous year and new long-term Corporate Plan.
- September: Long-term Corporate Plan is submitted to ECF Council for approval. Report of achievement against Annual Business Plan for previous year is also submitted to ECF Council for approval.
- October: The approved Long-term Corporate Plan is submitted to the DCMS. The approved Report of achievement against Annual Business Plan for previous year is also submitted to the DCMS.
- January: Meeting of the Board devoted to Strategic Planning. This formulates top-down overall aims for the next operating year (May to April) to be captured in the Annual Business Plan. The planning process takes into account the existing long-term Corporate Plan.
- February: Preparation of Annual Business Plan.
- March: Board agrees Annual Business Plan for that year and the associated financial budget.
- April: Annual Business Plan for that year and Budget submitted to ECF Council for approval.
- May/June: The approved Annual Business Plan is submitted to the DCMS.

SECTION 4 REPORT AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The ECF monitors its performance using the following Key Performance Indicators and reports on them at the end of the year

- 1) Number of Direct Members;
- 2) Number of players in Grading list¹;
- 3) Number of female players in Grading list¹;
- 4) Number of games graded¹;
- 5) Number of titled players⁴;
- 6) Number of FIDE rated players⁵;
- 7) Number of counties in county championship zonals²;
- 8) Number of teams in national club championships²;
- 9) Number of schools in the ECF Schools Team Championships²;
- 10) The sustainable income of the ECF³.

Notes:

- 1) The Grading list is used as providing the best available source of information on the level of chess activity nationally. The reporting window for the Achievement Report is May to April; whereas the Grading year runs from June to May and the Master List on which statistical analysis is done is not generated until September. Consequently, the Grading data presented below is that generated in September of each reporting year based on the previous season's grading results.
- 2) If the size of the team is changed to encourage more teams, then some analysis will be necessary to see if this has resulted in more people playing chess.
- 3) One-off windfalls will be excluded from the KPI, because they can mask overall trends.
- 4) This is based on the following titles: GM, IM, WGM and WIM. In order to maintain a consistent comparison with previous years (FM and CM titles are not included).
- 5) This is based on the number of 'active' players in the rating list. Inactive players are also listed by FIDE. In the last year the number of active players has dropped despite there being more events. It appears that FIDE have, without explanation, changed the criteria for determining active/inactive since the number of inactive players increased from 463 to 629.

Achievement Analysis

	KPI	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8
1	Number of Direct Members	1156	1163	1338	1315	1474	1647
2	Number of players in Grading list	12,300	12,468	12,814	12,237	11,846	11,824
3	Number of female players in Grading list	284	530	603	447	632	645
3a	Number of male players in Grading list	12,016	11, 938	12, 211	12, 271	11,846	11,179
4	Number of games graded	280,000	290,760	302,722	272,457	268,471	270,163
5	Number of titled player	90	92	95	96	99	102
6	Number of FIDE rated players	532	560	615	625	665	629
7	Number of counties in county championship finals	49	49	46	43	44	43
8	Number of teams in National Club Championships	60	62	57	54	51	45
9	Number of schools in the ECF Schools Team Championships	154	144	124	130	93	136
10	The sustainable income of the ECF	£131,386	£142,873	£156,652	£156,458	£157,591	£161,686

SECTION 5 REPORT AGAINST BUSINESS PLANS

It should be noted that variance reporting by its very nature has a tendency to focus on negatives rather than achievements. The ECF has met 90% of actions identified in the Business Plan a good performance. A number of the variances are linked to the failure to expand the ECF team, always difficult in a volunteer organisation. A copy of the relevant Business Plan can be found on the ECF website at:

http://www.englishchess.org.uk/organisation/general/business_plan_07-08.pdf

Index	Directorate	Manager	No. of Actions	No. Achieved	% Achieved	Variances and Notes
5.1	Home Chess	Home	14	14	100%	
	Home Chess	Congress	14	13	93%	A replacement for the former Grand Prix has not been identified yet.
	Home Chess	Grading	20	18	90%	Fifth Aim: The investigation of events outside the grading system has not been conducted. Sixth Aim: an International Ratings page has not been established on the ECF web Note that there has been a prioritisation on resolution of grading anomalies and this has been that these secondary matters have not been addressed.
5.2	Junior and Education	Junior	24	18	75%	No progress was made on a) First aim third objective: "To organise matches against other countries in Western Europe" b) Seventh aim: "To support chess in prisons". c) Eighth aim: "To create a qualification to enable teachers and others to act with authority in chess matches".
	Junior and Education	Coaching	7	7	100%	
5.3	International	N/A	21	20	95%	Fifth Aim: The ECF website includes an international calendar, and reports on relevant international events. However, decisions on title and rating issues are not as yet addressed on the website.
5.4	Chief Executive	Women's	16	16	100%	It has not been deemed appropriate to provide grants for correspondence chess.
5.5	Finance	N/A	16	16	100%	
5.6	Marketing	N/A	0	0		The plan for Marketing had broad objectives rather than specific actions. Progress on the broad objectives has in the main been made.
5.7	Chief Executive	Strategic Planning	6	5	83%	The post of Strategic Planning Officer has remained vacant. Consequently, these duties have been performed by the Chief Executive.

Index	Directorate	Manager	No. of Actions	No. Achieved	% Achieved	Variations and Notes
5.8	Management Services	N/A	26	21	81%	4th Aim: Additional voluntary staff at regional/local levels to support Game Fee collection have not been appointed. 5th Aim: The existing volunteer ICT continues to provide excellent support to the Office. However, no progress has been made on the expansion of the ICT team. 6th Aim: It was decided it was not appropriate to buy a laptop computer.
Totals			164	148	90%	

Looking at the 16 variations

- i) Four relate to actions that have since been deemed not worthwhile to pursue at this time; i.e. the plan has been modified rather than the action was not achieved.
- ii) Five relate to the appointment of new officers, although this has not been done it has not impacted on the overall business performance.
- iii) Seven relate to areas where the ECF would wish to expand its activities.

SECTION 6: REPORT AGAINST PRIORITY TARGETS FOR THE BOARD

	TARGET	ACHIEVEMENT STATEMENT
	HOME CHESS AIMS	
1.	To gain greater detail on grading anomalies and if necessary to propose a solution including an impact statement.	Work was conducted during the reporting period and a solution to grading anomalies was proposed in August 2008. Consultation will continue throughout 2008/9.
2.	To create and maintain a grading forum.	Achieved.
3.	To put an international rating page on the website	Links have been established from the on-line grading database to the FIDE site. Further action was deferred until after resolution of grading anomalies.
4.	To increase the number of players and counties playing in the Counties Championship	On going. Proposals for improvements to the event will be brought to the October 2008 Council meeting.
5.	To introduce at least one new national tournament.	The new English Seniors Championship was launched in January 2008.
6.	To increase participation in the National Club. Failing this to create a new format for the competition.	A new section of the national club the u100 was introduced.
7.	To develop practical ways of helping Congress Chess	No progress.
8.	To introduce twice-yearly standard grades, should Council so instruct.	Council decided not to go ahead with twice-yearly standard grades.
9.	To increase the number of CRB cleared coaches and arbiters Notes: responsibility for coaches lies within the Junior Directorate, but was included here for reporting convenience.	The number of CRB cleared arbiters has increased from 28 to 37. The number of CRB cleared coaches has increased from 48 to 64.
10.	To help deliver a course for organisers.	No progress on the course, but an award for Congress of the Year has been introduced.
11	To increase the number of FIDE rated events held in England.	Achieved: The number of FIDE rated events in the period 05/2007 – 04/2008 was 42 compared to 33 for the previous year.
12	To improve the British Championships	Progress – The appointment of an on-site press officer. The decision to lower prize money and offer conditions. And the introduction of an English Prize all contributed to the success of the 2007 championships.
	JUNIOR CHESS AIMS	
1.	To deliver, with the Robinson Fund, a credible coaching programme	A strong and long-term coaching programme is now underway.
2.	To develop a self funding junior magazine	A junior magazine “The Right Moves” has been produced.
3.	To increase standard junior tournaments	On-going.
4.	To develop a series of Centres of Coaching Excellence	On-going.
5.	To create an online coaching presence	No progress.
6.	To send the strongest possible teams to international events	Progress – at World, European and other international events.
7.	To increase the number and geographical spread of junior training days.	On-going.
8.	To create a mechanism which allows us to monitor the progress of juniors	Juniors who fall within the coaching programme will be graded by the ECF system allowing progress to be monitored.
9.	To increase the number of junior members.	Some progress mainly through the spread of MOs and coaching days held by the junior director.
10.	To improve the Certificate of Excellence	New levels have been added.
11.	To develop a credible school's programme.	On-going.

INTERNATIONAL CHESS AIMS		
1.	To send the strongest possible teams to international tournaments	Teams have been sent
2.	To help our strongest players to maximise norm opportunities	The 2007 British Championships was also much more competitive than in previous years due to the decision to offer conditions at the expense of prize money. It proved impossible to maintain the number of players in the European Championships due to lack of funds. Elite training has also been provided to some of our best younger talents. Including Gawain Jones, Stephen Gordon and Jovanka Houska.
3.	To help create new International events in England offering norm opportunities. The target should be to support two new events over the next twelve months.	On-going - again some progress, notably the Young England vs. Middlesex event that took place in July 2007.
4.	To work with the Robinson Trust to create an elite training programme.	Ongoing.
MARKETING AIMS		
1.	To develop new marketing material	A new set of marketing brochures have been developed.
2.	To ensure that Chess Moves is improved	Some progress – The use of annotated games from those we support by sending abroad, has been welcomed by members.
3.	To develop membership services	Ongoing
4.	To develop publicity material for clubs	No progress – The Director involved has had a number of pressing family issues, which has meant that he has been unable to give his full attention to the workload involved.
5.	To ensure that the ECF is linked to all chess websites in the UK	No progress – see above.
6.	To improve the publicity surrounding ECF events.	Limited Progress – see above
FINANCE AIMS		
1.	To improve Game Fee credit control	The Director and Office have worked together to ensure better control, though the aim must now be to get to 100% collection.
2.	To ensure that membership schemes do not cost the Federation money	Changes in the MO agreements have now been adopted.
3.	To ensure that ECF accounts are posted on the website	Ongoing.
OTHER AIMS		
1.	To find more sponsorship for chess	Major sponsors remain to be found for the Grand Prix and for the British Championships. Sponsors have been found for English prizes for the British Championships, the National Schools Championships and the Certificate of Excellence.
2.	To increase membership numbers	Membership has increased from 1,474 in October 2006 to 1,647 in October 2007.
3.	To generate income outside the DCMS and Membership	Harry Potter contributed to the accounts and the ECF has signed an arrangement with a book publisher.
4.	To develop a members-only site on the web	No progress.
5.	To improve communications with our Counties and Unions.	The appointment of a liaison officer had improved communications. However, subsequent to the reporting period the liaison officer resigned and a replacement has not yet been found.
6.	To repair relations with NCCU.	The dispute is now over.