

6 January 2006

To: **ALL MANUFACTURERS**

MEASUREMENT OF CHARACTERISTIC TIME ENCOMPASSING CLUBS OF ALL LOFTS

I am writing further to my memorandum dated 24 March 2005 when I invited your comments on our proposal to routinely measure the 'spring-like' effect of all clubs of all loft (excluding putters). This proposal was prompted by a noticeable increase in the trend for designing higher lofted clubs with a high 'spring-like' effect. The purpose of this communication is to update you on The R&A's latest position on this matter.

All of the comments received from manufacturers as a result of my March memorandum have been carefully considered and further investigative work has been carried out. We now believe that our original proposal, to apply the same characteristic time test methodology to all clubs of all lofts (excluding putters), is not entirely appropriate. Whilst the application of the current limit and testing method with the modified pendulum remains pertinent to clubs such as fairway woods and hybrids, it would be overly penal for iron clubs.

In conjunction with the United States Golf Association (the "USGA"), we have developed a revised method for measuring the 'spring-like' effect of irons using the modified pendulum which de-lofts the club. However, we wish to conduct additional testing on the revised method and, until this is completed, The R&A's Equipment Standards Committee has decided to adopt the following interim procedures:

1. From 1 February 2006, all non-iron clubs (excluding putters) will be measured on the appropriate pendulum tester (see table below) and the current limit of 239 microseconds, plus 18 microsecond tolerance, will apply. This category of club will cover any club which is not considered to be a 'traditional' iron club and will include driving clubs, fairway woods and hybrids.
2. From 1 February 2006, iron clubs will be screened using the modified pendulum tester and, if necessary, they will also be tested using the cannon test at an appropriate velocity (i.e. 133 ft/s). Iron clubs which measure more than 0.008 above a baseline plate will be ruled non-conforming (for further details, see copy of the test protocol attached). During this interim period, no iron club will be ruled non-conforming based purely on its pendulum test result.

For the avoidance of doubt, a summary of the situation regarding the regulation of 'spring-like' effect in all clubs (excluding putters), from 1 February 2006, will be as follows:

Club Type	Test Method	Limit	Introduction Date
Driving Club	Pendulum	239 μ s (plus 18 μ s tolerance)	1 January 2008 [†]
Fairway woods, hybrids and all other 'non-irons'	Modified Pendulum	239 μ s (plus 18 μ s tolerance)	1 February 2006
Traditional Irons	Modified Pendulum (as a screening method); cannon test if necessary	0.008 above baseline plate	1 February 2006

[†] This Rule is already in use at the professional and elite amateur level via the Driving Club Condition of Competition.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns regarding the above. Technical queries concerning the protocol should be directed to Dr Steve Otto (steveotto@randa.org).

Yours faithfully

DAVID RICKMAN

Director of Rules and Equipment Standards