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25 February 2009

TO: ALL MANUFACTURERS

APPLICATION OF NEW RULES ON CLUBFACE MARKINGS

I refer to my letter dated 4 December 2008 regarding the application of the new Rules on club face markings, which are due to be introduced on 1 January 2010.

The purpose of that letter was primarily to clarify when the production of existing clubhead lines, which do not conform to the new Rules on club face markings, should be discontinued.

As you know, all new models of clubhead manufactured on or after 1 January 2010 must conform to the new groove regulations. Moreover, my December letter stated that all manufacture of existing models, which do not conform to the new Rules, should be completed by 31 December 2009, although assembly and distribution may continue until 31 December 2010. Under our current interpretation, those clubs manufactured on or after 1 January 2010 would be subject to the new specifications and would not benefit from the same grace period which has been granted to clubs manufactured prior to 1 January 2010.

Since receiving that letter, some manufacturers have informed us that the current economic climate has made it increasingly difficult to accurately plan production of those clubheads which will be affected by the introduction of these new Rules. To help mitigate these issues, some manufacturers have asked The R&A to extend the date by which the production of existing product lines should cease.

The purpose of this communication is to ask for your opinion on a proposal to extend by one year the permitted manufacture of existing lines until the end of 2010. Such an extension would mean that all existing products could continue to be manufactured on or after 1 January 2010 and the natural production lifecycle of most of the products affected by the new Rules can be completed without disruption. However, the stipulation that all such products must be assembled and distributed by 31 December 2010 would remain.

For the avoidance of doubt, all new models of clubhead due to be launched on or after 1 January 2010 must still conform to the new Rules. Furthermore, clubs used at the highest level of elite play from 1 January 2010 will still be required conform to the new Rules, via a condition of competition.



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I would stress that no final decision has yet been made on this issue and the decision will depend of the responses received. I would, therefore, be pleased if you could let me have your opinion on this matter as soon as possible and no later than 9 March 2009.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Claire Bates'.

CLAIRE BATES
Assistant Director – Equipment Standards