

In developing the proposed timescale the Working Group was acutely aware of the need to conduct the ballot before the start of the ACU&S financial year on November 1 so that members would be able to decide whether or not to join the new organisation before renewing their subscriptions.

The ECB Officials Association subscription year runs from January 1 each year so more time is available for consultation with ECB OA members.

ECB OA has confirmed that the subscription rates for 2008 will be the same as for 2007 and are set at the same level as the Working Group proposed for the new Association.

The new structure of qualifications meeting the QCA National Standards is being developed by an Education Taskforce, led by Chris Kelly, the ECB Umpires and Match Operations Manager. The Taskforce, which includes representatives of ACU&S and ECB OA, will continue its work as a matter of high priority. It is anticipated that the first of the new courses will be accredited and the initial training of tutors and assessors will be completed no later than the end of 2007.

This presentation given to General Council is included within the newsletter together with additional information which was delivered verbally during the meeting. ECB OA members will be balloted before any decision is taken to establish ECB ACO, but such a ballot is clearly not required until ACU&S agree to put the proposals to their membership.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2008 will see the introduction of a completely new Education and Training structure for ECB OA. The Education Taskforce led by Chris Kelly is overseeing the introduction of a new and comprehensive structure of qualifications for umpires and scorers which meet the National Standards set by Sports Officials UK (SOUK) and conform to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) National Framework. Significant progress has been made towards accreditation of the Level 2 courses, which it is hoped can be achieved before the end of 2007, and it is expected that training of tutors and assessors will take place during December 2007 to allow the new courses to run in the New Year. The new courses will only be available through ECB OA and ECB OA County Associations will be asked to identify tutors and assessors for training and to organise courses in conjunction with their County Board. It is likely that, initially, courses will be arranged regionally if individual County Associations are not resourced to offer local courses.

With the imminent introduction of these new qualifications, which will be externally verified and awarded by 1st4Sport Qualifications, ECB OA will not be offering Level 2 courses until the New Year. Introductory courses leading to a Level 1 qualification may be arranged by County Associations on a local basis.

The Level 2 courses for umpires and scorers will include a requirement for candidates to supply details of officiating in a specified minimum number of matches (in addition to passing the relevant examination), with an observed assessment of some of these matches, in order to achieve the qualification.

It is expected that, in most cases, candidates will attend the Level 2 course during the spring and complete the practical requirements during the summer.

LAWS OF SPORT DVD

Production of the Cricket element of the 'Understanding Laws of Sport' qualification, which is taken as part of the A Level and GCSE Physical Education qualifications and of the BTEC Laws of Sport and First/National in Sport qualifications, is progressing rapidly. This is a national qualification at Level 2 and is administered by Edexcel. Currently some 130,000 students take the Laws of Sport qualification. Edexcel only work with Governing Bodies in this area and the inclusion of Cricket will be of major significance. The final video clips and animations, with commentary by Mark Nicholas, are being added and the DVD will be available during the 2007-08 academic year. ECB OA will be able to obtain copies of the DVD free of charge.

TRANSFER OF QUALIFICATIONS

ECB OA will recognise equivalent qualifications obtained from other appropriate organisations until the end of December 2007. After this date new members will be expected to achieve the appropriate ECB OA qualification although individual exceptions will be considered.

MATCH APPOINTMENTS 2008

All County Boards have been asked to work with their local Association(s) to identify umpires who have the potential and the desire to progress to a higher level and the information provided to the ECB will be used, along with other information collected by the ECB, when appointments are made for the 2008 season. As an example of how the new system will work in practice, the umpires appointed to stand in the 2007 Cocks spur Cup Final were selected based on their performances in the competition during this season, a significant change from previous practice.

COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

All County Boards have been asked to ensure that there is an ECB OA County Association in each County Board area and that this Association has direct representation on the County Board as well as sending a representative to meetings of the appropriate Region (based on the four English Regions plus Wales).

Under their Memorandum of Understanding with the ECB, County Boards have a responsibility for the development of Officials in their area, which includes the recruitment, training, progression and retention of umpires and scorers. The establishment of a proactive local Association or the evolution of an existing Association into an ECB OA Association will be an essential element in meeting this responsibility.

Depending on existing local arrangements and local geography it is possible that there will be more than one Association within the County Board area and it is not intended to be prescriptive about local arrangements, which individual County Boards are best placed to assess and work with. The ECB OA requirement is to have a County Association able to lead the development of Officials in the most appropriate way based on local circumstances and to ensure that the interests of members are recognised and acted upon.

Where ECB OA County Associations have been created the Association has received a rebate of £4 on the annual subscriptions paid by Full members. Most County Boards are now in the process of establishing their County Associations and it is hoped that all Counties will be eligible to receive the rebate in 2008.

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

Although there have recently been some changes to the ECB OA site on ecb.co.uk the introduction of the new membership system which is being implemented by the ECB will result in a significant change in the site and will allow members to update their personal details and access a members-only area protected by the member's personal password. The new system will also be used to process bookings for education courses and examinations.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Members will be issued with a membership card for 2008 showing their membership status and confirming their CRB clearance if appropriate.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2008

Subscription rates for 2008 will be unchanged:

	DIRECT DEBIT	CHEQUE
Full member	£20	£22
Associate member	£10	£12
Junior member (U21)	£5	£7
Overseas member (non ECC)	£10/€15	£12/€17

Full and Junior members must hold a current CRB Enhanced Clearance Certificate. Associate membership is only available to individuals who are no longer actively involved in umpiring or scoring.

HOW TO JOIN ECB OA

Application and Direct Debit forms for ECB OA are available on the website or direct from Sam Greaves, the Membership Officer. Active members need to have an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau clearance and the CRB forms can be obtained from your County Board Welfare Officer or from the Child Protection team at Lord's.

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL STRUCTURES

The formal establishment of the ECB OA Board was delayed until the results of the discussions with ACU&S were known and this is now a priority, as is the creation of the Regional Forums that will each elect a Director to the Board. It is expected that the National and Regional structures will be in place before the end of 2007.

PERSONNEL CHANGES

Most members will be aware that Sam Greaves took over as ECB OA Membership Officer earlier this year. There will be a further change in the personnel involved with ECB OA when Frank Kemp, Head of Operations for Non First Class Cricket, retires at the end of October, having joined ECB ten years ago. It is expected that his replacement will be appointed during October.



New Ties & Coat for 2007

MERCHANDISE

The new coats and ties which were introduced in 2007 will again be available to members and negotiations are continuing to provide a wider range of ECB OA merchandise for umpires and scorers. We appreciate that demand for the coats in particular led to unacceptably long delays in fulfilling orders during 2007 and we apologise to any members who experienced a significant delay in receiving a coat. We believe that our discussions with the manufacturer will result in a dramatic improvement in availability in 2008 but would encourage members to place orders as soon as possible.

Further information can be found on the ECB OA website – visit <http://www.ecb.co.uk/ecb/ecb-officials-association/ecb-officials-association-merchandise>.



BARTERCARD SPONSORSHIP

Bartercard's sponsorship of ECB OA continues in 2008 and it is expected that the County Associations will make increasing use of the national arrangements allowing them to acquire goods and services provided by other Bartercard members.

ECB OA CONTACTS

ECB OA Website www.ecb.co.uk/ecboa
Frank Kemp frank.kemp@ecb.co.uk or 020 7432 1216
Chris Kelly chris.kelly@ecb.co.uk or 020 7432 1170
Sam Greaves sam.greaves@ecb.co.uk or 020 7432 1231
Bartercard <http://www.bartercard.com/uk>



OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION INFORMATION SHEET SEPTEMBER 2007

INTRODUCTION

As we approach the end of one of the wettest summers on record this Newsletter contains an update on the discussions between the ECB and the Association of Cricket Umpires and Scorers (ACU&S) and information relating to the 2008 season, including subscription rates and the introduction of the new training arrangements which meet National Standards.

DISCUSSIONS WITH ACU&S

The Working Group established jointly by ECB and ACU&S to explore the benefits of working more closely together met on four occasions and on 25th July the proposals of the Group were presented to the General Council of ACU&S at a Special Meeting held in the MCC Committee Room. The proposals envisaged the creation of a new organisation, the ECB Association of Cricket Officials (ECB ACO) to bring together the two organisations and proposed that the members of ACU&S and ECB OA should be separately balloted on the following propositions:

That members be asked to support the proposed creation of a new Association of Cricket Officials under the auspices of the ECB and with close links to the MCC, bringing together the Association of Cricket Umpires and Scorers and the ECB Officials Association, both of which would cease to exist as separate bodies

That members be asked to support the proposition that the Association of Cricket Officials begins operation on 1st November 2007

Unfortunately General Council asked for more time to consult with ACU&S members before considering the possibility of a ballot and deferred further consideration of the proposals until their next meeting, which is scheduled for 27th October 2007. This means that ACU&S members will not be given the opportunity to vote on the proposed creation of the new Association before the beginning of the next ACU&S financial year on 1st November.

Following the meeting of General Council ECB issued the following statement:

ECB STATEMENT RE ACU&S GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING ON 25 JULY 2007

The England and Wales Cricket Board has today (July 31) expressed its disappointment and frustration to the Association of Cricket Umpires and Scorers (ACU&S) following General Council's decision to defer approving a ballot of members on the proposed creation of a new Association of Cricket Officials.

The new Association was the main recommendation of a Working Party jointly set up by ACU&S and ECB and was regarded as a move which would benefit cricket. However, General Council has decided to defer any decision on a ballot until the next meeting of General Council which is not scheduled until Saturday October 27, 2007.

The ECB believe that the recommendations of the Working Party are the best way to establish a single organisation to represent the interests of all officials, working closely with the ECB County Boards, Regions and the European Cricket Council (ECC), and with close links to the MCC.

The new Association would also have benefited from the introduction of a new and comprehensive structure of qualifications for umpires and scorers which meet the National Standards set by Sports Officials UK (SOUK) and conform to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) National Framework. These new qualifications will now be introduced by the ECB Officials Association.

ACU&S AND ECB WORKING PARTY Presentation to General Council 25 July 2007

Special Meeting Purpose

- To discuss the possible creation of a new Association of Cricket Officials

Objectives of ACO

- Bringing together ACU&S and ECB OA
- Independent democratic structure
- Based on County Associations and Regional Forums
- Under auspices of ECB and known as ECB ACO
- Close links to MCC
- Comprehensive education structure meeting National Standards
- Best available insurance cover for members
- Regular communication with members via magazine and website
- Fully integrated into County Board strategies and funding streams
- Able to attract national and local sponsorships
- Inclusive of all umpires and scorers at all levels

Structure of ACO

- Based on County Associations in each County Board area (39 in England and Wales)
- Regional Forums based on 5 ECB Regions
- European Cricket Council (ECO) as 6th Region
- National Board with independent Chair
- Under umbrella of ECB
- Able to benefit from charitable status of England and Wales Cricket Trust (EWCT)
- ACU&S Patron and President to be invited to accept similar positions with ACO

County Associations

- ECB County Boards to establish an ACO County Association with direct representation on the County Board
- County Association to elect the County Board representative as well as their representative to the Regional Forum
- Representative to have a position within the County Board structure which ensures that the ACO CA can influence budget allocations and report to the County Board on all matters relating to ACO activities
- All information flows and funding to be between the County Association and the County Board

County Associations

- Local Associations or Branches can continue or be set up under the County Association in larger Counties if appropriate
- Arrangements for existing Associations that cross County Board boundaries to be negotiated locally
- Only County Associations able to access Bartercard sponsorship funds via ACO
- ACO members will automatically become members of the County Associations based on their home address
- 'Option to transfer membership to another County Association but multiple memberships not allowed'

It is intended that each ACO member is automatically a voting member of their County Association. If members wish to transfer their membership to another County Association they can do so but can only have one vote. It will be up to County Associations to decide if they allow individuals to join their Association as well as the one they join automatically by becoming a member of ACO.

ECB County Boards

- Responsible for all aspects of cricket development within their area
- Memorandum of Understanding with ECB defining key obligations
- Specifically responsible for ensuring the recruitment, training, progression and retention of umpires and scorers
- Funding based on delivery of key objectives and County Board Annual Action Plan
- County Boards able to align priorities with local needs based on Club Development Plans

The responsibilities and funding arrangements for the ECB County Boards have changed significantly in the past two years. The Memorandum of Understanding that all County Boards have signed defines their responsibilities, which now explicitly include responsibility for Officials - umpires and scorers – as key members of the workforce supporting cricket. The funding available to the County Boards is based on the number of clubs and schools in their area together with the size of population and the number of areas of deprivation within the County. The Boards can make their own decisions on the allocation of this funding in support of their Annual Action Plan, taking into account the local priorities identified by the detailed Club Development plans being produced by clubs. These Development Plans identify not only the numbers of existing volunteers, including umpires and scorers, but also the shortages as seen by the clubs. This means that the County Boards will be able to identify what is needed in terms of recruitment, training, retention and progression of officials within their area and work with the County Association to ensure that the necessary steps are taken to address the shortages. The County Boards can allocate funding to support the work of the County Associations in these areas. The Annual Action Plan, which the Boards agree with the ECB Regional Development Managers, will identify the local priorities and progress in each area will be monitored twice a year. Part of the funding allocated to the County Boards will only be released if the Board meets the objectives that have been agreed and it will not be possible for a Board to ignore individual areas of their responsibilities.

County Association Funding

- County Associations to receive rebate on annual subscription paid by all ACO Full Members linked to that Association
- Recommended that the rebate be fixed at £4 initially
- County Associations able to charge subscriptions if they wish
- County Associations to work with County Boards to access public funding sources
- County Boards to allocate appropriate funding to County Associations to support the achievement of the 'Officials' objectives within the Improvement Planning Process

ACO Board Structure

- Independent Chair
- 6 Regional Representatives (including ECC)
- Representative of MCC
- Education Director
- ECB Finance Director/Treasurer
- Representative of Scorers
- Representative of Women's Cricket
- Independent Director
- ECB Executive Director
- Secretariat provided by ECB

Election of Board Members

- Regional Representatives elected by Regional Forums made up of County Association delegates
- Independent Board members elected by majority vote of County Associations
- Nominations made by Board or by minimum 3 CAs
- 3 year terms of office, phased with some elections each year
- All these proposals subject to confirmation by members

Committee Structure

Proposed:

- Education Committee
- Audit Committee
- Member Services Committee – if requested by members

Others:

- Discipline
- Permanent seat on Discipline Standing Commission (DSC)
- Members subject to ECB Directives and Regulations
- DSC to handle hearings and appeals as required
- Technical
- MCC as Guardian of the Laws
- Representation on MCC Laws Sub-Committee
- Board able to appoint other Committees/Working Parties

It is envisaged that the Education Director would be supported by a Committee with appropriate skills and that the Audit Committee would ensure the financial probity of the Association. ACO would not require separate Discipline and Technical Committees as these areas would be delegated to the Discipline Standing Commission and the MCC Laws Sub-Committee respectively.

Membership Categories

- Full Members – holding a CRB clearance
- Associate Members – not active
- Junior Members – Under 21
- Overseas Members – outside ECC
- Honorary Members – elected by ACO Board
- CRB Enhanced Clearance required for all Full and Junior members
- Members in ECC countries – Full or Associate or Junior
- Affiliation arrangements to be assessed by ACO Board

It is recognised that the arrangements for Criminal Record Bureau or equivalent checks differ from country to country and that members from EEC and overseas countries will need to meet their local requirements.

Subscriptions

- Full Members £20 / €30
- Associate Members £10 / €15
- Junior Members £5 / €8
- Overseas (non ECC) Members £10 / €15
- Cheque payments add £2 / €2
- Recommendation to ACO Board to retain these levels until 2010

Education

- 5 Level structure for Umpires and Scorers
- Levels 1 to 3 based on National Standards set by Sports Officials UK (SOUK) conforming to Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) National Framework
- Able to access funding from Learning and Skills Council as well as National, Regional and County public funding
- Tutors trained to equivalent of Certificate in Tutoring Sport standard
- Internal and external verification of standards
- 1st4sport as awarding body for courses meeting the QCA National Framework standards
- Entry level and introductory courses as appropriate

5 Level Structure for Umpires and Scorers
Level 1 - Introduction – stepping stone – accessible to all (incl. parents, coaches, juniors...)
First exposure to cricket officiating
Basic competences & health and safety
Level 2 - Core competences – Laws of Cricket
External and internal assessment to include self assessments, practical observation

Aimed at umpires involved regularly in club cricket and is the first stage of officiating education
Level 3 - Continued development of competences
Support – analysis – motivation – enjoyment of hobby
Honing of skills and specialisation – access to further competitive levels

Level 4 - Development to professional game
Level 5 - Progression to international accreditation
Level 2 and Level 3 will follow National Standards defined by SOUK
SOUK represents sports national governing bodies with responsibility for training, education and development
SOUK addresses common problems, recruitment and the sharing of good practice
Sitting on National Qualification Framework allows access to funding from Learning and Skills Council
These are NOT one off customised qualifications BUT are standard nationally recognised qualifications in sports officiating
NOS for Level 4 currently under development by SOUK
Why have 1st4Sport awarding qualification?
Third party endorsement – monitoring
We cannot take easy options
Raise standards and expectations
Benchmarking and consistency
Funding – at a regional and local level

Laws of Sport Course

- Module that forms part of Physical Education A Level, GCSE and BTEC courses
- Course content developed by Edexcel working with Governing Bodies
- Currently 7 sports involved
- Laws of Cricket module being developed by ECB with support and approval from MCC
- DVD covering all 42 Laws with MCC 'Open Learning Manual' explanations and ECB video, photos and graphics
- Courses currently taken by 130,000 students annually
- Additional copies of the DVD available free of charge to ECB ACO
- Significant opportunity to involve more young people in cricket and officiating

What are we trying to achieve?

Raise standards – changing game, expectations, demands
Quality assure
Fantastic, high quality experience for all
Better equip people to do what they need to do
Build on each other's skills and knowledge
Build a world class system together

Funding of Education

- Costs of education courses and examinations to be set nationally
- County Associations able to set course fees based on local circumstances, including support from County Boards
- ECB to ensure that public sources of funding for 'workforce development' are accessed and centrally co-ordinated
- Active co-operation with Cricket Australia to spread course development costs
- Discussions initiated with ICC

Qualifications

- Qualifications based on attainment of appropriate Level within the Education structure
- Existing ACU&S qualifications recognised

Member Services

- New membership computer system based on 'Consensus' product giving on-line access
- Annual membership card showing membership category and CRB clearance
- Interactive web site to be developed, hosted by ECB
- Magazine to be distributed to all members – target of 6 editions a year if suitable content available

- Independent editorial control of content within ECB standards
- Member Conferences
- County Associations AGMs
- Regional AGM and Conference
- National Conference with Members Forum to be considered

Member Services

- To be decided by ACO Board:
 - Annual Dinner
 - Annual Handbook
 - National Annual General Meeting
- National Awards – proposed that existing ACU&S Awards be continued, awarded by ACO Board

Staffing

- ACU&S Administration Manager to be asked to continue
- ECB OA Membership Officer to remain
- Requirement for Marketing Manager to be evaluated
- Staff to be based at Lord's but with option for remote working to meet individual circumstances
- Volunteers to continue to play an essential role in the running of ACO
- ECB to provide support from existing staff to assist with:
 - Membership systems
 - Web site hosting
 - Finance and audit
 - Commercial
 - Communications and publications

Insurance

- Existing suppliers to be asked to tender for ACO business
- Objective to exceed existing arrangements at reduced unit cost
- Legal and Tax Helpline to be retained
- Minimum age 16 years – no maximum limitation

Consideration will be given to the provision of appropriate insurance cover for members younger than 16 years of age.

Merchandise

- New ties, badges etc. to be produced
- Range of coats and kitbags to be available
- Specific merchandise for scorers to be available
- Umpire shirts similar to those introduced for First Class cricket to be evaluated
- Other on and off field merchandise to be offered
- New member starter kits
- Merchandise to be sourced either under existing or planned ECB contracts or independently as appropriate

ACO will be able to benefit from ECB contracts where these are beneficial but will also be able to source merchandise from other suppliers.

ACO Funding

- ACO main revenue sources
 - Member subscriptions
 - Merchandise
 - National sponsorship(s)
 - Matching public funding
 - Magazine and web site advertising
- ACO direct expenditures
 - Insurance
 - Rebate to County Associations
 - Membership support services
 - Membership communications including magazine and website
 - Marketing and recruitment expenses
 - National administration expenses

Sponsorship

- Existing support to ECB OA from Bartercard to be continued
- Other sponsorship opportunities to be investigated in conjunction with ECB Commercial Department
- County Associations to review local potential for support

Bartercard, the world's largest trade exchange company, has confirmed their willingness to transfer their existing sponsorship of ECB OA to ACO if ACO is created. Bartercard recently returned to private ownership. The sponsorship is worth £70,000 over the next two years, and the funding can be used either by ACO nationally or by County Associations on application to ACO centrally. The Bartercard funds can be used to acquire goods and services from other members of the Bartercard scheme, which enables members to exchange or 'barter' goods and services with other members rather than through a cash transaction. It is anticipated that County Associations could request funding support based on their share of the ACO membership within the UK.

Appointments

- New ECB reporting arrangements via County Associations and County Boards to continue, identifying officials with potential
- Introduction of Regional Appointments Officers (voluntary) to be considered
- ACO to seek to maintain current ACU&S role in appointments to competitions not run by ECB
- ACO membership to be required for appointment to ECB national competitions
- County Associations to work closely with Leagues and Cups on a local basis

Ballot Proposition

That members be asked to support the proposed creation of a new Association of Cricket Officials under the auspices of the ECB and with close links to the MCC, bringing together the Association of Cricket Umpires and Scorers and the ECB Officials Association, both of which would cease to exist as separate bodies

That members be asked to support the proposition that the Association of Cricket Officials begins operation on 1st November 2007

Decisions for ACU&S

- Disposition of the funds in the ACU&S Trust, based on the advice of the Trustees
- Disposition of the fund established by the Bates Bursary
- Disposition of any ACU&S assets held as at 31st October 2007, including the copyright to 'Tom Smith's'

Draft Timescale

- 25 July Meeting of General Council
- 31 August Distribution of ballot papers and supporting materials
- 28 September Final date for return of ballot papers
- 5 October Announcement of result of ballot

If formation of ACO approved:

- 12 October Distribution of ACO membership and subscription documentation
- 1 November Formal creation of ACO
- 1 January 2008 First subscriptions to ACO due

