

FAR HILLS, N.J. and ST ANDREWS, Scotland, April 19, 2017 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- The USGA and The R&A are working with golf's handicapping authorities to develop a single World Handicap System for the game.

More than 15 million golfers in over 80 countries presently have a handicap, a numerical index long used as a measure of a golfer's potential skill level. Handicaps are currently delivered through six different systems around the world.

The aim of the proposed handicap system is to adopt a universal set of principles and procedures that would apply all over the world.

An extensive review of existing handicap systems administered by Golf Australia, the Council of National Golf Unions (CONGU) in Great Britain and Ireland, the European Golf Association (EGA), the South African Golf Association (SAGA), the Argentine Golf Association (AGA) and the United States Golf Association (USGA) has been undertaken.

Golf organizations from different parts of the world have also been engaged with the current handicap authorities for the past two years to help shape the proposed system, which takes into account the many inherent golf cultures and most common formats of play. Research conducted to date has also reviewed systems and best practices inherent to handicapping, such as course rating and administration.

A joint committee led by the USGA and The R&A has been formed, including representatives from each handicap authority as well as the Japan Golf Association and Golf Canada. The joint committee plans to announce its proposals later this year.

USGA Executive Director/CEO Mike Davis said, "One wonderful aspect of golf that separates it from other sports is the opportunity for players of differing abilities to play on an equitable basis through handicapping. With one global system, golf courses will be rated and handicaps calculated in a consistent manner everywhere in the world. Removing borders to provide an easy way for all to play together is great for the game and golfers everywhere."

Martin Slumbers, Chief Executive of The R&A, said, "We have been concerned for some time that many golfers find the handicapping landscape to be complicated and can be frustrated when it is not always applied in the same way in different parts of the world.

"We are working closely with the existing handicapping bodies to benefit from their insights as we try to formulate a system that will be easy to understand and can be applied consistently on a global basis. We very much appreciate their support for this initiative."

### **About the USGA**

The USGA conducts the U.S. Open, U.S. Women's Open and U.S. Senior Open, as well as 10 national amateur championships, two state team championships and international matches, attracting players and fans from more than 160 countries. Together with The R&A, the USGA governs the game worldwide, jointly administering the Rules of Golf, Rules of Amateur Status, equipment standards and World Amateur Golf Rankings. The USGA's reach is global with a working jurisdiction in the United States, its territories and Mexico, serving more than 25 million golfers and actively engaging 150 golf associations.

The USGA is one of the world's foremost authorities on research, development and support of sustainable golf course management practices. It serves as a primary steward for the game's history and invests in the development of the game through the delivery of its services and its ongoing "For the Good of the Game" grants program. Additionally, the USGA's Course Rating and Handicap systems are used on six continents in more than 50 countries. For more information, visit <http://www.usga.org>.

### **About The R&A**

Based in St Andrews, The R&A runs The Open, elite amateur events, international matches and rankings. Together The R&A and the USGA govern the sport of golf worldwide, operating in separate jurisdictions but sharing a commitment to a single code for the Rules of Golf, Rules of Amateur Status and Equipment Standards. The R&A, through R&A Rules Ltd, governs the sport worldwide, outside of the United States and Mexico, on behalf of over 36 million golfers in 140 countries and with the consent of 152 organisations from amateur and professional golf.

The R&A is committed to working for golf and supports the growth of the sport internationally and the development and management of sustainable golf facilities. For more information, visit [www.randa.org](http://www.randa.org).

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