19 November 2026

Notice to Manufacturers

Notice and Comment on New Model Local Rules
for Elite Professional Tours

The R&A, USGA, PGA Tour and DP World Tour issued a joint statement on 17 June 2026 regarding ongoing conversations about distance increases at the elite level of men's professional golf, in which The R&A and USGA committed to working closely with key stakeholders to review, test and implement a variety of options that will have an impact on distance at the elite level.

In addition to the work regarding distance impact at the elite level, The R&A and USGA issued a Notice to Manufacturers on 21 September 2026 outlining the exploration of three Model Local Rules, also intended for the elite level, requested by the DP World Tour and PGA Tour relating to the following topics:

(a) Requiring the use of a golf ball model included on the List of Conforming Golf Balls with an overall distance of 317.0 yards or less when tested by the USGA or The R&A.
(b) Requiring the use of a driver head of a model and loft included on the List of Conforming Driver Heads, and when tested prior to competition has a maximum CT of 239 microseconds.
(c) Restricting the maximum permitted length of all clubs (other than putters) to a limit that is less than the 46-inch limit imposed by MLR G-10.

Following receipt of feedback to the 21 September 2026 Notice to Manufacturers from The R&A and USGA, including from the PGA Tour and DP World Tour, The R&A and USGA propose making the following two Model Local Rules (MLRs) available from 1 January 2028. If adopted, these near-term MLRs would not change existing Equipment Rules and would not impact the conformance status of any conforming golf balls or clubs. At this time, The R&A and USGA are not advancing a proposal relating to an MLR for a shorter club length limit.

(a) MLR Prohibiting use of Golf Balls exceeding an Overall Distance Standard (ODS) of 317.0 yards

"The player must use a golf ball model included on the List of Conforming Golf Balls issued by The R&A and USGA with an overall distance of 317.0 yards or less."

Golf ball submissions to The R&A and USGA will continue to be evaluated for conformance

following the protocols and rules as currently defined in the Equipment Rules.

Beginning 1 January 2028, the MLR would require that a player must use a golf ball model included on the List of Conforming Golf Balls which, when tested by The R&A or USGA, tests for ODS at 317.0 yards or less. This would include all testing conducted after 1 January 2028, either during conformance submission, resubmission, or periodic check testing.

This MLR would be intended for use only at the highest level of elite male professional competitions.

(b) MLR Prohibiting use of a Clubhead, included on the List of Conforming Driver Heads, exceeding a CT of 239 microseconds

> *"Any club that the player uses to make a stroke that has a clubhead identified by model and loft on the current List of Conforming Driver Heads issued by the R&A and USGA must have a CT less than or equal to 239 microseconds when subjected to on-site testing."*

Driver head submissions to The R&A and USGA would continue to be evaluated for conformance following the protocols and rules as currently defined in the Equipment Rules.

Should a player's club have a CT result, when tested prior to competition, between 240 and 257 microseconds (inclusive) then the club would not be permitted for use in competitions where the MLR is in effect, but the club would still conform for competitions where this MLR is not in effect.

This MLR would be intended for use only at the highest level of elite male professional competitions and where the organisers can administer on-site check testing of clubs.

Note: As outlined in the 21 September 2026 Notice, The R&A and USGA recognize the importance of providing manufacturers with timely guidance and remain committed to updating manufacturers regarding the updated test conditions for the Overall Distance Standard within the five month timeframe previously communicated in September 2026. It is anticipated that a Notice of Decision regarding the above proposed Model Local Rules would be issued within that same timeline, dependent on the responses received by The R&A and USGA.

Comments

Please send any comments on these proposed Model Local Rules on or before 18 December 2026 to Dr Mark Grattan at The R&A via the email address equipmentstandards@randa.org.