



23 September 2006

ECB Officials Association

You will no doubt be aware that the ECB has established the ECB Officials Association and ECB OA has been operational since April 2006. During July we briefed all the County Boards in England and Wales on the progress and current status of ECB OA and I am now writing to make the information provided to County Boards available to umpiring and scoring organisations across the country.

The County Boards now have explicit responsibility for ensuring that officials (umpires and scorers) within their area are recruited, trained, retained and encouraged to develop their skills and expertise. The funding being made available to County Boards via the ECB Trust, which has replaced the Cricket Foundation as the main source of funding to County Boards, will be used by the Boards to develop cricket at all levels in the County, including the development of officials. Funding will be channelled through County ECB OA Associations and each County Board has been asked to put in place local arrangements to create these Associations.

The County Associations will be responsible for representing the interests of their ECB OA members who will elect a Chair to sit on the County Board and on the Regional Associations which are also being set up. The Regions (North, Midlands, London and South East, South and West, Wales) will be represented on the ECB OA Board, as will the European Cricket Council. The Counties making up each Region are shown on the attached sheet.

We appreciate that there are many different structures in place across the country at present and this is why we have asked each County Board to make appropriate arrangements on a local basis. We hope that all organisations that currently represent or interact with officials, including ACU&S Branches, League Panels, local Associations and other bodies, will be prepared to talk to their local County Board or Boards in order to evolve the best local structure to support and represent officials within the County.

ECB OA has been set up to support and develop officials at all levels of the game and we are developing training courses, examinations and assessment procedures based around four 'levels' of qualification, from entry level to the first class level. Some courses and examinations will be available in autumn 2006; others will be phased in over the next eighteen months. We are holding a seminar for prospective tutors and assessors in early October, when the first courses and materials will be made available. The latest version of the Training Structure is enclosed for your information.

Although ACU&S is represented on the Steering Group which is overseeing the establishment of ECB OA and there have been a number of meetings between ACU&S and ECB, including one in January 2006 at which ECB was represented by John Pickup, Chairman of the Recreational Assembly, and Hugh Morris, Deputy Chief Executive of ECB, it has not currently been possible to establish a way to move

towards a single body to represent all officials. ACU&S members have received very little information on the discussions and no information on the current or projected financial position of ACU&S. ECB believes that clarification of the financial situation is essential if further talks are to make any progress but remains willing to participate in future meetings should ACU&S request them.

The subscription levels for individual members in 2007 will remain at £20 (if paid by direct debit) for full members and £15 for associate members. Both memberships include insurance cover. The ECB OA Board will establish other subscription rates, including affiliation fees, when it meets later this year. Any subscription received after 30th September 2006 will cover the period until the end of December 2007. Further details including membership forms and direct debit mandates are available from the ECB OA Membership Officer, Lucy Morris, who is based at Lord's (0207 432 1231 or lucy.morris@ecb.co.uk). Information is also available on the ECB web site – www.ecb.co.uk.

The ECB believes that the establishment of a body able to represent umpires and scorers at all levels of the game and fully supported by the National Governing Body for cricket is in the best interests not only of the game but also of the officials themselves. We ask all those involved with umpiring and scoring to work with your local County Board to put in place appropriate arrangements to ensure that the importance of umpires and scorers is fully reflected in the activities of the Board and supports League and all other cricket in the area.

Chris Kelly, the ECB Umpires and Match Operations Manager, and I are more than happy to answer any questions or to meet with Associations and other bodies to discuss any aspect of our plans for ECB OA. Chris can be contacted on 0207 432 1170 or chris.kelly@ecb.co.uk and my contact details are shown below. Please get in touch with us.

I hope that the enclosed information will help to clarify the current position and future plans of ECB OA. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for all the work you do to support cricket.

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