



To – All Australian Golf Clubs (25 September 2019)

I am writing to provide you with some updates on the implementation of the World Handicap System (WHS).

Implementation Dates

- **The World Handicap System will take full effect in Australia on 30 January 2020.** Golf Australia's national computerised handicapping service (GOLF Link) will be taken offline from 27 to 30 January 2020. During this time, GA Handicaps will be recalculated using all of the new WHS regulations. Later this year, we will provide advice on the exact offline/online times for 27-30 January, as well as advice on how to manage competitions during the offline period.
- Note: Australia already operates most of the WHS regulations. Many countries will start the WHS on different dates throughout 2020 due to their greater change-management challenges in areas such as rating courses, education, software, etc.
- The Australian third-party handicapping & competition management software companies (ie Tier 3 companies) that have committed to the WHS are listed at – www.golf.org.au/WHStier3.

Handicapping Changes

The handicapping experience for Australian golfers under the WHS will be largely the same as it is now. However there are four changes that many golfers and administrators will see. These are:

- **NEW REGULATION | Bonus Reduction for Exceptional Net Score.** GOLF Link will apply an automated extra reduction to a player's GA Handicap for any net score that is at least 7 strokes better than it.
- **NEW REGULATION | Soft Cap.** In addition to the existing Hard Cap of 5 strokes, a Soft Cap is being introduced. The Soft Cap will take effect once a player's GA Handicap increases to 3 strokes above its best point for the previous 12 months. Once in the Soft Cap zone, a player's GA Handicap will only be allowed to increase by 50% of the calculated amount.
- **CHANGED REGULATION | Adjustment made to Daily Handicap if Scratch Rating is different to Par.** This will make 36 Stableford points (or net par) the universal measure of a golfer playing to their handicap. As a result, it will become simple to conduct mixed-gender or multi-tee competitions. *Examples of the adjustment:* If Scratch Rating 73 & Par 70; 3 is added to the Daily Handicap calculation (ie $73 - 70 = +3$). If Scratch Rating 68 & Par 70; 2 is subtracted from the Daily Handicap calculation (ie $68 - 70 = -2$).
- **CHANGED REGULATION | Transfer of 0.93 Multiplier.** The 0.93 Multiplier will be transferred out of the GA Handicap calculation and into the Daily Handicap calculation. Note: Our statisticians confirm this change will have no overall impact on the handicaps players actually play off (ie Daily Handicaps). This is because **the slight increase it will cause to GA Handicaps** (by being removed from the GA Handicap formula), will be exactly the same as the decrease it will cause to Daily Handicaps (by being transferred into the Daily Handicap formula). As a result there will be no overall impact.

To assist you with educating your members on what they need to know about the WHS, we will send 3 copies of a poster to every club for display on noticeboards. We will also develop a brief summary resource for distribution direct to golfers. We estimate these resources being distributed in early December.

More detailed information on what the WHS means for Australian golfers is included in the ATTACHMENT.

We will provide more updates on the WHS in the coming months, but please reach out to us at any time if you would like more information (rules&handicapping@golf.org.au).

Simon Magdulski
Senior Manager – Play Management & Regulations