



European Fencing Confederation
Confédération Européenne d'Esime

EUROPEAN FENCING CONFEDERATION

LEGAL COMMISSION

Activities Report

2025-2026 Season | September 2025 - April 2026 | v0.1

Prepared by the EFC Legal Commission | April 2026

PUBLIC



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I. EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

The 2025-2026 season has been very legally productive. The Commission entered the season with a structured work plan covering ad-hoc, tactical, and strategic activities. All three streams delivered substantive outputs.

The Commission's work this season falls under five principal headings:

- EFC-A Counter-Strategy – comprehensive legal and institutional response to the rival European Fencing Clubs Association
- Governance and Statutes – preparation for research on Congress structure and proposals for the 2026 Congress including voting reform
- Brand and IP Protection – IP usage policy, EUIPO trademark filing, and review criteria for the PMC Brand Toolkit
- Ad-hoc Legal Support – contract advisory work, nationality licence issues, FIE statutes impact assessment

The Commission meets as a full body and in smaller working groups. Meeting #14 (31 March 2026) reviewed all active workstreams and set priorities for the remaining pre-Congress period. The next major deadline is the 2026 Congress in Antony (13-14 June 2026).



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II. 2025-2026 WORK PLAN

The Commission adopted its work plan for the 2025-2026 season in November 2025. Three categories of activity were defined.

A. Ad-hoc Activities

Reactive legal support for COMEX and the Bureau on matters arising during the season. Items included:

- Licence issues for U14 and U17 athletes with pending nationality changes
- TFEU and EU freedom-of-movement implications for EFC competition rules

B. Tactical Activities (Short-Term)

Work expected to produce outputs within the 2025-2026 season:

- Brand protection, sponsorship contract support, and licensing agreements
- Assessment of FIE Statutes and Administrative Rules changes and their impact on EFC
- EFC-A threat review and counter-strategy
- Transfer of rights from FIE to EFC for the organisation of the European Games fencing events
- 2025-2026 Statutes and Internal Rules proposals for Congress

C. Strategic Activities (Long-Term)

Foundational work extending beyond the 2025-2026 season:

- Review of EFC organisational structure and governance model, and consequences for Statutes and Internal Rules
- Evaluation of the location of the EFC's financial seat
- Evaluation of EFC Congress format and improvement proposals
- Research on EFC Ethics Code and Disciplinary Tribunal



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III. EFC-A COUNTER-STRATEGY

A. Background and Threat Assessment

The European Fencing Clubs Association (EFC-A) registered in Hungary in 2025 under its president Abdurrahman Karatas. The EFC-A is structured as a pan-European association of fencing clubs with statutory ambitions that directly overlap with the EFC's exclusive mandate as the FIE-recognised continental governing body.

The Commission's threat assessment identifies a number of concerns arising from the EFC-A Statutes.

B. Counter-Strategy Summary

A counter-strategy document (in draft) sets out a multi-track response.



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IV. GOVERNANCE AND STATUTES

A. Proposed Statute and Internal Rules Amendments

The following substantive proposals are being prepared for the 2026 Congress:

Provision	Proposed Amendment	Purpose
Art. 4.10 (Statutes)	Debate and deliberations on each agenda item must terminate before the vote commences. No discussion after voting begins.	Procedural integrity – prevents last-minute influencing during voting
Art. 5.8-5.9 (Statutes)	Multi-candidate elections use successive runoff rounds: lowest vote-getter eliminated each round until one candidate achieves an absolute majority or two candidates remain.	Ensures genuine majority mandate in contested elections
IR 2.9	Any single delegate may request a secret ballot before deliberations begin on any item. Once a secret ballot is called, a show-of-hands vote for that item is precluded.	Strengthens voting confidentiality; prevents delegate intimidation
IR 2.11	Multi-option votes use successive elimination rounds (option with fewest votes eliminated each round). Tie in final round resolved by lot conducted by Election Commission Chair.	Consistent decision mechanism for complex agenda items

B. Congress Reform Proposals

The Commission reviewed EFC Congress structure and identified several improvements for adoption:

- Electronic voting – paper/show-of-hands voting is ineffective; electronic system recommended for all future Congresses. Recommend a model that eliminates user induced errors.
- Merge Ordinary and Elective Congresses in Olympic years – current separation creates risk of conflicting decisions and duplicate delegate registration
- Statute changes in election years – restrict or exclude proposals affecting election procedures in elective years



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C. CJEU Case C-623 Analysis

The Commission analysed the impact of the CJEU ruling in Case C-623 (Royal Football Club Seraing – Belgium) on the EFC's Statutes and Internal Rules. The conclusion is that no immediate Statute changes are required at EFC level. The analysis has been submitted to the Bureau

D. Commission Membership and Engagement

The Bureau has observed that some members have been inactive during the 2025-2026 season. The LC has drafted a proposal for a structured warning system:

- Written warning after extended absence without explanation
- Formal notice before considering removal from the Commission
- Process to be integrated into the Commission's internal procedures



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V. BRAND AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PROTECTION

A. EUIPO Trademark Filing

COMEX authorised the EUIPO European Union Trademark (EUTM) filing at its January 2026 meeting. Tom Cadman (IP counsel) has been instructed to proceed. Nice classes are to be confirmed. The Madrid Protocol is also under consideration for international coverage beyond the EU.

B. Brand Guidelines Analysis

The Commission produced a comprehensive brand guidelines analysis (v0.2, March 2026) identifying:

- 7 brand strengths in the current EFC Brand Book
- 8 weaknesses including: three conflicting blue shades, no typographic scale, domain inconsistency across platforms, and absence of brand governance provisions
- 6 blocking decisions identified for Bureau resolution (font, primary blue, domain strategy)

The Bureau resolved the blocking decisions in April 2026, enabling the Brand Architecture framework to proceed.

C. Three-Tier Brand Architecture

A three-tier brand architecture has been defined (v0.5, April 2026):

- Tier 1 – Brand Book: defines identity foundations; COMEX-governed; amended only by COMEX
- Tier 2 – Brand Guidelines: digital-first operational rules; PMC-governed; updated annually
- Tier 3 – Brand Toolkit: practical assets for member federations and partners; PMC-maintained

D. IP Usage Policy

The Commission drafted and finalised an IP Usage Policy (March 2026) covering:

- Three user categories: EFC member federations (implied licence), commercial partners (formal licence), and accredited media (limited use)
- Enforcement by the Legal Commission
- Approved in 22 February COMEX meeting.



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E. Brand Toolkit Review Criteria

The Commission produced review criteria for the PMC Brand Toolkit (due 20 April 2026). The criteria cover five assessment areas:

- Alignment with the IP Usage Policy
- Consistency with EUIPO filing strategy
- Visual standards compliance
- Digital and social media standards
- Governance and version control provisions

The Commission is scheduled to review the PMC submission against these criteria after 20 April 2026.



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VI. AD-HOC LEGAL SUPPORT

A. Contract Advisory Work

The Commission provided legal review and advisory support on employment and services contracts during the season.

B. Nationality Licence Issues

The Commission reviewed and provided guidance on licence eligibility for U14 and U17 athletes in the process of nationality change. Guidance was provided to the relevant national federations.

C. FIE Statutes and Administrative Rules Impact

The Commission assessed the impact of FIE Statutes and Administrative Rules changes on EFC governance and operations. Analysis was submitted to the Bureau. No immediate EFC Statute changes are triggered; monitoring continues.

D. EFC Reimbursement Policy

The Bureau updated the EFC's travel and expense reimbursement policy at its April 2026 meeting. The LC confirmed that the revised policy is consistent with the EFC's contractual and governance obligations.



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VII. PENDING ITEMS AND OUTLOOK

A. Items for the 2026 Congress (13-14 June 2026, Antony)

Item	Lead	Status
Review of Member Federation Proposals and present legal opinion	LC	In preparation
IR amendments: IRs 2.9, 2.11 (secret ballot; successive rounds)	LC	Proposals ready – formal submission pending
EUIPO EUTM filing status update	LC	Pending Nice classes confirmation

B. Items for COMEX Decision (Pre-Congress)

Item	Decision Required	Deadline
Statutes and IRs changes	Authorise sending	TBD
Legal Opinion concerning the three proposals from Serbia, Bulgaria and Türkiye.		TBD
Commission membership renewal and engagement framework		TBD

C. Items Deferred to 2026-2027 Season

- Transfer of rights from FIE to EFC for European Games fencing organisation
- Financial seat evaluation – final recommendation



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VIII. DELIVERABLES SUMMARY

Complete list of documents produced by the EFC Legal Commission in the 2025-2026 season:

Document	Date	Category	Status
EFC LC Work Plan 2025-2026	Nov 2025	Governance	Adopted
Brand Guidelines Analysis v0.2	Mar 2026	Brand & IP	Submitted to Bureau
IP Usage Policy v0.1	Mar 2026	Brand & IP	Approved by COMEX
Brand Toolkit Review Criteria v0.1	Mar 2026	Brand & IP	Adopted by LC
Legal Opinion	May 2026	Governance	TBD
CJEU C-623 Analysis	Mar/Apr 2026	Governance	Submitted to Bureau
Statute/IR Amendment Proposals (x4)	Mar/Apr 2026	Governance	Proposals – for Congress 2026
EFC Brand Architecture v0.5	Apr 2026	Brand & IP	Draft
LC Meeting #14 Minutes	Mar 2026	Administration	Approved

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