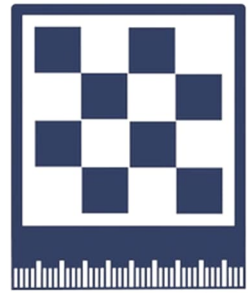




Technical Commission



Manual

Author: Technical Commission

Document type	Manual
Subject of Report	FIDE Technical Commission Policies and Procedures Manual
Document version	1.24
Date	07 March 2026

Foreword

Dear chess friends,

Chess today relies also on the quality and reliability of the equipment, pairing systems, and tie-break methods that support every move on the board. The FIDE Technical Commission (TEC) plays a central role in safeguarding this foundation. By defining, supervising, and regularly updating our technical standards, the Commission ensures that all tools used in official events meet the highest requirements of fairness, transparency, and consistency.

These standards are not abstract regulations; they are applied in every single FIDE tournament played around the world, from local open events to World Championships. When a digital board registers a move, a tournament handler program generates a pairing, or a tie-break decides a critical qualification, organizers, arbiters, and players rely on the work of the Technical Commission. The Commission's policies and decisions give our chess community confidence that results are comparable, rules are applied uniformly, and technology serves the game rather than distorting it.

This Manual clearly explains how chess equipment, software and systems are approved by FIDE. It shows how products are registered, checked against FIDE rules, endorsed for use, and regularly reviewed, and it outlines the basic data formats and tools needed for fair and consistent tournament reporting and pairings.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the members of the FIDE Technical Commission, its Chair, Secretary and all experts and contributors who have invested their time and knowledge in producing this Manual. Their work supports not only our top events, but also the countless organisers and arbiters who stage FIDE tournaments on every continent. I am confident that this document will be an essential reference for federations, vendors, software developers, arbiters, and all those who care about the technical integrity of our sport, and that it will help guide innovation in a way that preserves the spirit of chess.

Gens Una Sumus

Arkady Dvorkovich
FIDE President

Introduction

Dear Chess Friends

We are pleased to present the new work of the FIDE Technical Commission, the result of dedication, collaboration and shared passion for chess and technology.

As a Commission, we deeply value the efforts of all vendors and developers who contribute to our field. Their innovations help the chess world move forward — from digital boards and clocks to software and analytical tools. We know that true progress comes through experimentation, and even if not every idea will be accepted or approved, every contribution counts. Each initiative takes us a step further.

The mission of the Technical Commission is to evaluate, guide, and support the introduction of new equipment in chess, ensuring the highest standards of quality, fairness, and development. We welcome innovation that adds value to the chess community and see ourselves as partners in progress, serving the global chess family.

I am grateful to the entire Technical Commission team for their dedication and outstanding work.

Special recognition goes to Hendrik du Toit, who led the process with clarity and consistency; to Roberto Ricca, for his meticulous improvements and countless refinements;

to Mario Held, Otto Milvang, Arasu Balasubramani, and Mushaninga Fungirayiini, for their valuable contributions and insights.

We also sincerely acknowledge the continued support and constructive input of Victor Bologan and Sava Stoisavljevic.

Your professionalism, patience, and collaborative spirit made this achievement possible.

Gens Una Sumus

GM Tiberiu Georgescu

Chairman: FIDE Technical Commission

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CHAPTER 1 GENERAL

1.1 Usage of the Manual

1.1.1. The FIDE Technical Commission Manual (TEC Manual) complements the FIDE Handbook by providing comprehensive information, including definitions, processes, comments, and clarifications essential for understanding and implementing the FIDE technical regulations.

1.1.2. In cases of discrepancy between the FIDE Handbook and the TEC Manual, the FIDE Handbook takes precedence as the authoritative reference.

1.2 Definitions and Acronyms

Refer to Articles 2 and 3 of General Regulations (under Chess Equipment Technical Specifications, Rules and Regulations).

1.3 Acronyms

1. CC - Acceptance Cycle
2. FEAP – FIDE Endorsement of Accepted Product
3. TAPC – Technical Acceptance of Product Compliance
4. NRD - New Rules Date
5. SDPC – Self-Declaration of Product Compliance
6. PTC – Pairings and Tie-Break Checker
7. RTG - Random Tournament Generator
8. VCL – Verification Checklist
9. TEC - FIDE Technical Commission
10. THP – Tournament Handler Program
11. TP - Transition Period
12. TRF - Tournament Report File

CHAPTER 2 APPLICATIONS

2.1 Register as a Manufacturer or Vendor

2.1.1. Process Steps:

1. If you have not previously registered, fill out the online registration form available at [TEC Online Forms](<https://www.cognitofrms.com/FIDE/TECMenu>).
2. After completing the form, click "Submit."
3. Verify that you receive an email confirming your registration.
4. Retain this confirmation email, as it may be required should you need to update your details in the future.

2.2 "Self-Declaration of Product Compliance", "Technical Acceptance of Product Compliance" or "FIDE Endorsement of Accepted Product

2.2.1. Steps

1. Complete process as in 2.1.
2. Go to [TEC Online Forms](<https://www.cognitofrms.com/FIDE/TECMenu>)
3. Select "Applications"
4. Select the type of application you wish to complete.
5. Select the equipment for which you want to complete the application.
6. Complete the online application.
7. Make sure you get confirmation from the system. If you do not get a confirmation, contact secretary.tec@fide.com

2.2.2. Notes

1. Once an application is processed it will be locked to prevent changes to the application.
2. Follow the "Unlock Application to Revise" process if you want to amend the application. This will cause the application to be evaluated from the start.

2.3 Unlock an Application to Revise

2.3.1. Steps (not implemented)

1. Access the original email acknowledgement sent to the applicant.
2. Click on the link to update the information.
3. Follow the process to update the application.

CHAPTER 3 PROCESSES AND NOTES TO PROCESSES

The processes and notes below are complementary to the FIDE Handbook.

3.1 Self-Declaration of Product Compliance (SDPC)

- 3.1.1. The applicant must complete the necessary online application. First, register as a manufacturer, organiser or owner and then complete the SDPC form [TEC Online Forms](<https://www.cognitofrms.com/FIDE/TECMenu>).
- 3.1.2. If the equipment meets the required conditions, an acknowledgement of the SDPC will be issued to the applicant. Normally the declaration of acceptance will be automatically generated, but in certain cases TEC reserves the right to add an approval step.
- 3.1.3. Once the applicant is in possession of the SDPC document, the equipment can be used in FIDE tournaments as stipulated in FIDE Handbook, General Regulations, Usage of Equipment at Tournaments under General Rules and Technical Recommendations for Tournaments.
- 3.1.4. All equipment covered by the SDPC must be marked with the declaration number.

3.2 Technical Acceptance of Product Compliance (TAPC)

- 3.2.1. The Self Declaration of Product Compliance (SDPC) must be successfully completed.
- 3.2.2. TEC will initiate the formal certification process, which includes:
 1. Arranging for an invoice to be raised and sent to the manufacturer.
 2. The Chairman appointing a testing team.
 3. Creating the necessary communication groups.
 4. Request that the equipment be made available to the testers.
- 3.2.3. A TAPC can only be granted for the exact version of the Product that was previously issued a SDPC.
- 3.2.4. TEC will collaborate with the manufacturer to identify and address any defects.
- 3.2.5. If the defects are substantial, TEC reserves the right to suspend or reject the Product's acceptance.
- 3.2.6. If the Product has multiple significant failures, TEC will reject the TAPC application, providing detailed reasons for the decision.

3.3 FIDE Endorsement of Accepted Product (FEAP)

- 3.3.1. The Technical Acceptance of Product Compliance (TAPC) process must be successfully completed.
- 3.3.2. The Technical Commission will send the TAPC to the FIDE Management Board and request that the FEAP process be finalised. (See FIDE Handbook, General Regulations, Usage of Equipment at Tournaments under General Rules and Technical Recommendations for Tournaments)
- 3.3.3. Holding a TAPC does not automatically guarantee endorsement, nor does it imply endorsement. To receive endorsement, the manufacturer must successfully enter into a commercial agreement with FIDE.

3.4 Automatic Revocation of TAPC due to Rule Changes

- 3.4.1. If a rule change affects a Product, TEC will make every effort to inform all registered manufacturers of the changes.
- 3.4.2. Manufacturers registered with TEC will be notified directly.
- 3.4.3. However, it remains the manufacturer's responsibility to stay informed about rule changes published on the FIDE website and to understand their implications for TAPC and FEAP.
- 3.4.4. Compliance with all the requirements listed in the Verification Checklist (VCL) is determined at the time the TAPC is published. In other words, THP producers are generally not expected to meet any VCL items that were added or modified after the TAPC application was submitted.

3.5 Automatic Revocation of TAPC Due To Major Version Upgrade Instigated by Manufacturer

- 3.5.1. Refer to [Semantic Versioning](<https://semver.org/>) as a guideline for versioning practices.
- 3.5.2. It is the responsibility of the manufacturer to notify TEC of any major version changes. Upon such notification, the TAPC process will be initiated (see FIDE Handbook, General Regulations, Revocation of a TAPC under General Rules and Technical Recommendations for Tournaments).

3.5.3. TEC reserves the right to evaluate versions published by the manufacturer to determine if a major version change has occurred. If a major version change is identified, TEC will initiate the TAPC process (see FIDE Handbook, General Regulations, Revocation of a TAPC under General Rules and Technical Recommendations for Tournaments).

3.5.4. Failure to inform FIDE of major version changes or attempting to circumvent the publication of such changes under minor version changes will be considered a breach of the TAPC agreement.

3.6 Manual Revocation of TAPC Due to Credible Complaints

3.6.1. TEC regularly receives complaints from the chess community regarding defective Products.

3.6.2. Upon receiving such complaints, TEC will notify the manufacturer of the Product about the issue.

3.6.3. The manufacturer will be given a reasonable amount of time to address and rectify the issue. If the issue is not resolved within this timeframe, the TAPC will be revoked.

3.6.4. TEC will classify complaints into the following categories:

1. Defect: A defect prevents the use of the equipment and/or causes critical failures that can significantly alter the course of a game or undermine the Product's intended purpose.
2. Bug: A bug is a minor issue that occurs infrequently, is recoverable, and does not affect the outcome of the game.

3.7 Manual Revocation of TAPC Due to Mishandling of Known Defects

3.7.1. TEC is committed to collaborating with manufacturers to improve their equipment and better serve the chess community.

3.7.2. If defects or bugs are not resolved within a reasonable timeframe, TEC reserves the right to revoke the declaration of compliance of Compliance (TAPC).

3.8 Application for Temporary Acceptance of Product Compliance (TAPC)

3.8.1. If an Organiser or Chief Arbiter discover before the start of a tournament that some of the equipment does not have a TAPC, a temporary TAPC can be obtained by completing the online application.

3.8.2. Note that a TAPC is only available for equipment without electronic components.

3.9 THP TAPC Process

- 3.9.1. TEC must verify that THP's implementation of the pairing system and tie-breaks meets the requirements for a TAPC.
- 3.9.2. If the application is the first TAPC request for the pairing system in question, TEC must appoint a subcommittee of four people to assess whether the THP's pairing, and tie-breaks engine is suitable for acceptance. The subcommittee must report within nine months from the date of the appointment.
- 3.9.3. If a TAPC has already been issued for the pairing system in question, TEC must verify whether the THP's implementation of the pairing and tie-breaks engine remains compliant and suitable for acceptance by using the Verification Process described in the following article.
- 3.9.4. Verification of a Pairing and Tie-Breaks engine

1. Premise:

This verification applies only when there is already a FIDE-accepted THP that provides a Pairings and Tie-Breaks Checker (PTC) and Random Tournament Generator RTG (see FIDE Handbook, Chess Equipment with Electronic Components, 7.2 Tournament Data and Validation Tools under General Rules and Technical Recommendations for Tournaments).

The THP can be granted a TEC exemption if the software uses an external pairing and tie-breaks engine (see FIDE Handbook, Chess Equipment with Electronic Components, Conditions of Compliance under General Rules and Technical Recommendations for Tournaments) that is already integrated into another FIDE-accepted THP. However, if an external engine is employed, it is essential that TEC representatives have access to the input files provided to the engine, and preferably also to the files the engine returns.

2. Technical Instrumentation

- a. FIDE Data Exchange Format

Also called Format of Tournament Report File (TRF, see below), it is the agreed general Data-Exchange Format for tournament results to be submitted to FIDE, for testing pairing and tie-break programs, and for in-tournament data exchange between THPs and between THPs and pairing engines. See Chess Equipment with Electronic Component, Annexure A for the description of the current 2026 version (TRF26), and the TEC Manual for the description of older versions (Annexure B - Annexure B -

[TRF06 – Version 2006 and Annexure C - [TRF16 – Version 2016).

b. Tournament Report File (TRF)

It is a data file encoded in one of the standard formats, TRF26, TRF16, or TRF06.

c. (Free) Pairings and Tie-Breaks Checker (PTC)

The PTC is a tool embedded in the THP that contains the pairing engine and the tie-break routines, with a CLI that can be used freely by anyone (without the user interface).

For instance, on a Windows computer, be *yourprogram.exe* the name of the program executable. It is (normally) launched from a CLI or by double-clicking on it. The regular services it offers are not relevant from the (Pairings and Tie-Breaks) checker point of view.

What it is expected from a checker is the possibility to launch *yourprogram.exe* from a CLI with some parameters, like in:

```
yourprogram.exe -check FIDE_Report_File.fid
```

The checker must be able to read *FIDE_Report_File.fid* when encoded in TRF26 and should be able to read it when encoded in TRF16 or TRF06 (within the limitations of such formats). Then, for each round, the checker must rebuild the tournament, pair each round using the embedded pairing engine, check the standings according to the listed tie-breaks and output a report describing which pairings are or, more usefully, are not consistent with those produced by the pairing engine, and the same goes for the standings.

d. Random Tournament Generator (RTG)

The RTG is a freely available tool that, preferably run from a CLI, can easily generate many simulated tournaments widely parametrized (for number of players, number of teams, number of rounds, unplayed games, acceleration methods, tie-breaks used) producing a full TRF (TRF26) file for each of them.

In all those tournaments, the pairing rules implemented by the pairing engine must be strictly followed, and the standings must be calculated

correctly. It is recommended that the game results somewhat respect the probabilities given by the FIDE rating table (see the [TEC website - Documents](<https://tec.fide.com/official-documents/>), for suggestions on how to code such a probability table).

The output of the RTG is bound to be checked by one or more different PTCs.

3. The verification of the candidate pairing and tie-breaks engine is conducted automatically using the PTC and RTG of an already accepted THP, if we have previously defined as FIDE-accepted.. Otherwise, it should be a THP that has already received a TAPC.

Note: Since all the required verification tools are freely available to THP developers, TEC expects this step to be a routine formality. No TAPC application should be submitted unless the pairing system fully complies with the parameters described below.

4. Large-Scale Tournament Testing
 - a. An external RTG generates 50,000 random tournaments.
 - b. These tournaments are processed by the candidate PTC, and all discrepancies between expected and actual results are logged.
 - c. If the number of discrepancies does not exceed 10, each discrepancy is analysed.
 - d. If there are more than 10 discrepancies, FIDE Handbook, General Regulations, Revocation of a TAPC under General Rules and Technical Recommendations for Tournaments applies.
5. Classification of Discrepancies

Discrepancies identified by the candidate PTC may arise from:

- a. Errors in the input file – The discrepancy originates from the RTG of the already accepted THP.
 - b. Errors in the pairing engine of the candidate THP – The discrepancy is caused by a flaw in the candidate's implementation.
 - c. Interpretation divergences – The discrepancy is due to unclear rules in the FIDE pairing system.
6. If discrepancies stem from an input file error (3.9.4.9), they are referred to the RTG provider, provided that the issue is solely RTG-dependent and not due to a flaw in the already accepted THP. If the error is traced to the accepted THP, FIDE Handbook, General Regulations, Manual Revocation (By FIDE Decision) under General Rules and Technical Recommendations for Tournaments applies immediately.
 7. Cases classified under Article 3.9.4.5.c (interpretation divergences) are forwarded to TEC, which must issue an official clarification statement. Any necessary adjustments will be included in the next revision of the FIDE pairing system rules.
 8. If the discrepancy is due to an error in the candidate THP (3.9.4.5.b), the candidate must correct the issue. FIDE Handbook, General Regulations, Revocation of a TAPC under General Rules and Technical Recommendations for Tournaments applies.
 9. Testing Using the Candidate's Own RTG
 - a. If the candidate THP has its own RTG, this generator will be used to create 50,000 random tournaments.
 - b. These tournaments will then be processed by one or more available PTCs for verification.
 - c. The analysis of discrepancies follows the same rules outlined in FIDE Handbook, Chess Equipment with Electronic Components, Acceptance Framework for THPs under General Rules and Technical Recommendations for Tournaments.

Annexure A - Fees

A1. Structure

Seq	Description	Fee (USD)	
		Preliminary	Testing
1.	Mandatory Initiation Fee (once off)		300.00
	Equipment without electronic components	120.00	300.00
	Equipment with electronic components	300.00	900.00

A2. Example: TAPC for THP

Initiation Fee	USD 300.00
THP Classification	USD 900.00
<u>Total</u>	USD 1200.00

A3. Example: TAPC for THP and Hybrid Tournament Management (HTM)

Initiation Fee	USD 300.00
HTM Classification	USD 900.00
THP Classification	USD 900.00
<u>Total</u>	USD 2100.00

A4. Example: TAPC for THP with preliminary testing

Initiation Fee	USD 300.00
Preliminary testing	USD 300.00
THP Classification	USD 900.00
<u>Total</u>	USD 1500.00

Annexure B - [TRF06 – Version 2006](<https://tec.fide.com/spp-documents-archive/>)

Annexure C - [TRF16 – Version 2016](<https://tec.fide.com/spp-documents-archive/>)