

# **“Is that Aloud?”**

## (The changes to Announcing and Alerting 2022)

### **1. Introduction**

The EBU govern the regulations enabling us to enjoy our games of bridge, and produce two publications in addition to The Laws of Duplicate Bridge, published by The World Bridge Federation and applied internationally.

The EBU's two publications are known as The White Book, which covers technical matters for directors, and The Blue Book, which is the Handbook of Permitted Understandings including the Announcing and Alerting of calls. The latest editions of these books came into force in September 2022 and we need to know how changes to the rules in The Blue Book apply to us. To save you reading the full regulations, which may be found at [The Blue Book](#), the main changes are as follows.

### **2. What Qualifies as a Strong Hand?**

The basis for many of the changes to announcing and alerting calls is a change to the way in which hands may be evaluated to be called strong. In the past, hands could be assessed by counting their controls (A=2, K=1), but this has been dropped, and only High Card Points (HCPs) now apply.

For those who play a Strong Club system, a 1♣ opening may contain as few as 13 HCPs and must be alerted. This would also apply to a strong 1♦ bid.

A Strong 2-level opening bid must contain either at least 16 HCPs, or two suits comprising at least 10 cards which contain a minimum of 13 HCPs. Opening bids at the 2-level must be alerted or announced as previously; e.g. alert Acol 2♣ and Benji 2♣/♦ openings, and announce strong and weak 2 openings.

For those who use playing tricks as a guide to strength, '8 playing tricks' is no longer considered as strong unless it also fulfills the point count limits above.

There are complicated changes relating to Multi 2♦ bids, which I will leave for the few of you who employ them to read the rules for yourselves in [The Blue Book](#). Multi 2♦ bids must be alerted.

### **3. Other Changes to Announcing**

There are three other changes to announcing that we should be aware of:

- a) a strong balanced 2NT opening should no longer be announced or alerted;
- b) all transfer bids to a nominated suit, including the minors, should be announced;
- c) if a '2 over 1' bid is game forcing, this should be announced.

### **4. Finally**

This addition to the “Ethic of the Month” series from 2016 and 2017 is to make our players aware of changes to regulations affecting the day-to-day auctions in our club and supersedes some of the information in the previous documents in the series.

Please remember that alerting and announcing calls is compulsory where applicable. If you are unsure about the meaning of one of your partner's calls it is safest to alert, and then to inform your opponents only if asked to do so, which they may do only when it is their turn to make a call or at the end of the auction. If there is any sort of issue at your table, it is important that you do call “Director, please!” and hold up a hand to show the Director from where the call has come.