



Competition Regulations

AFC Champions League 2015



AFC Champions League 2015 Regulations

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DEFINITIONS

In these Competition Regulations, capitalised terms shall have the following meanings, unless the context specifically indicates otherwise:

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| Accommodation | Any location approved by the AFC which provides accommodation to the AFC Delegation. |
| Accreditation Card | Any physical item which is issued by the AFC and/or Organising Club which provides the recipient the right to access a Controlled Access Area (or part thereof) where the Controlled Access Area is under the control of the AFC, Host Club or the Host Association. |
| Advertising Rights | The right to promote brand and/or corporate names and/or products and/or services at and/or in relation to the Competition by whatever means available, whether existing now or to be developed in the future, whether at the Stadia or Facility Areas or within the Controlled Access Areas, in association with the Competition Marks and/or AFC Marks, by in-stadium/out-stadium perimeter signage and other advertising, digital signage and screens, closed circuit television, equipment usage or other methods and through printed matter (including digitally delivered printed matter) such as programmes, posters, letterheads, press releases, newsletters and Tickets, and subject to any AFC regulations the right to display such advertising on the clothing or footwear worn, or on any equipment used, carried or transported by officials (including for the avoidance of doubt referees and linesmen), medical and security staff, ballboys, player escorts, flag bearers and/or photographers. The display of the name and/or logo of the bona fide supplier of clothing on the strip of the uniforms of the officials are also included. For the avoidance of doubt, advertising on the strip of Participating Players is excluded, other than where it is the trade mark of the bona fide manufacturer and is in accordance with any FIFA and/or AFC regulations. Similarly, branding on any equipment, goods and/or services used in connection with a Competition, save where supplied by a Licensee, may only include customary branding of the bona fide manufacturer and may not be associated in any way with the Commercial Rights. |
| AFC | The Asian Football Confederation. |
| AFCAS | The AFC Administration System, the AFC's online competition management and registration system. |

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| AFC Champions League | The Competition. |
| AFC Commercial Rights Partner | The entity appointed by the AFC as the sole and exclusive representative of the AFC with regard to the sale of the Commercial Rights (or any part thereof) and the provision of services in relation thereto. |
| AFC Committee | One (1) or more (as the context defines) of the Standing Committees of the AFC as promulgated within the AFC Statutes. |
| AFC Competitions Committee | The AFC's internal organising committee for the Competition which has been appointed in accordance with the AFC Statutes, and which has ultimate authority over all matters relating to the organisation of the Competition. |
| AFC Delegation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) AFC staff; (ii) Match Officials; (ii) AFC Committee members; (iii) AFC guests; and (iv) Referees. |
| AFC Marks | All design marks, slogans, designations, names, logos, insignia, emblems or devices (in any application) owned and/or controlled by the AFC (in any language) relating to the AFC itself, but excluding the Competition Marks. |
| AFC Official Merchandise | Official merchandise of the Competition to which the AFC Marks and the Competition Marks may be applied at the sole discretion of the AFC. |
| AFC Website | http://www.the-afc.com |
| Away Club | A Participating Club who is playing a Match in the Competition away from their home Stadium. |
| Away Goals Rule | At the end of the second Match of a tie played in a knockout home and away format, the Participating Club which has scored the higher number of goals away from home shall be declared the Winner, if the |

Participating Clubs have both scored the same number of goals across both Matches.

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| Broadcaster | Any entity, including the Host Broadcaster, which has acquired from the AFC or the AFC Commercial Rights Partner, any rights in respect of the Media Rights of the Competition. |
| Champion | The Participating Club who is the Winner in the Final. |
| Club | A professional club or an amateur club which participates in Leagues or competitions under the auspices of a Football Association. |
| Commercial Rights | Advertising Rights, Concession Rights, Hospitality Rights, Image Rights, Media Rights, Merchandise Rights, Promotional Rights, Sponsorship Rights, and Travel and Tour Rights. |
| Competition | The AFC Champions League 2015®, which includes without limitation, all Matches as set out in the Match Schedule, all qualifying, Preliminary Stage and Playoff Stage Matches, all activities on the Field of Play (other than Matches), opening ceremonies, presentation or closing ceremonies, press conferences or Official Functions connected therewith. |
| Competition Data | Any and all information related to the Competition, including fixture lists, Image Rights, information and/or statistics about the Participating Clubs and/or Participating Players, information and/or statistics about their participation and/or performance in the Competition, Match analysis, Referee decisions, and any other information in relation to the Competition. |
| Competition Marks | <p>Either cumulatively, or individually:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) the competition logo officially adopted by the AFC as a visual design symbol of the Competition;(ii) any mascot officially adopted by the AFC for the Competition;(iii) any two-dimensional representation of the Competition trophy; |

- (iv) the official name of the Competition (in any language); and/or
- (v) any and all current and future trademarks, and/or logos, and/or copyrights and/or designs whether or not registered or applied for and whether registered in part or in whole including any present and/or future names, designations, symbols, logos or identifying music or sounds of the AFC or the Competition, the AFC Fair Play name and device mark, and other artistic and autographic representations in one, two or three dimensional proportions used by or in association with the Competition.

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| Complimentary Tickets | Tickets which are supplied without charge. |
| Concession Rights | Sampling, vending, display and other distribution methods and payment methods connected therewith for and of products or services, including pourage rights at the Stadia and Facility Areas. |
| Controlled Access Area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) any Stadium; (ii) any Official Training Site; (iii) any official hotel (public areas being excepted), subject to and to the extent agreed in any executed hotel agreement; (iv) any official exclusion zone encircling a Stadium on a Match day; (v) any official parking area, accreditation centre, International Broadcast Compound, and/or hospitality area; (vi) the venue of any Official Function; (vii) any official AFC fan park; (viii) Facility Areas; and/or (ix) any other location and/or facility designated by the AFC as a Controlled Access Area and to which access is permitted only to those in possession of an Accreditation Card, Ticket, |

and/or other officially-sanctioned entry permit.

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| Digital Media | Any digitalised media (including the AFC Website and any related Competition website) created by AFC in relation to the Competition, including but not limited to any mobile website, mobile application (app), online video channel, data product, photo-sharing account, social media account, and any further form of digital media developed herewith. |
| Extra Time | Two (2) equal periods of additional time which shall be played in accordance with these Regulations should there be no Winner at the conclusion of a Match in the Preliminary Stage, Playoff Stage or the Knockout Stage. |
| Facility Areas | The location of Official Functions, ceremonies, press centres, ticket offices, competition hotels, media areas (including without limitation areas used for viewing of any public exhibition), sponsor village areas (including without limitation “AFC fan park” areas, and areas used for the activation of the Commercial Rights), official hospitality areas (including without limitation areas used for the exploitation of the Hospitality Rights), and information centres controlled by or on behalf of the AFC and used in connection with the Competition whether at the Stadium or elsewhere at the Venues. |
| Field of Play | The area described in Law 1 of the Laws of the Game issued by the IFAB and administered by FIFA. |
| FIFA | The Federation International de Football Association. |
| Final | The final Match of the Competition which determines the Champion. |
| Fixed Media | Any magnetic, electronic or digital storage device or method including without limitation DVD, VHS or CD-ROM. |
| Football Association | The controlling body for football within a country or territory recognised by the AFC. |
| Force Majeure | Any event affecting the performance or any provision of these Regulations arising from or attributable to acts, events, omissions or accidents which are beyond |

the reasonable control of a party, and shall include but not be limited to abnormally inclement weather, flood, lightning, storm, fire, explosion, earthquake, structural damage, epidemic or other natural disaster, failure or shortage of power supplies, war, terrorist action, military operations, riot, crowd disorder, strike, lock-outs or other industrial action, or civil commotion.

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| Group Stage | The third stage of the Competition held in accordance with these Regulations. |
| Hospitality Rights | The opportunity to offer and sell hospitality and entertainment facilities at the Venues or within the Controlled Access Areas in combination with the Tickets as may be purchased from the Host Association whether such facilities are in boxes, marquees or otherwise, but excluding those private facilities reserved for AFC officials and its guests not forming part of the Commercial Rights. |
| Host Broadcaster | The organisation appointed by the AFC to ensure and provide the production of the broadcast signals of the Matches and other events of the Competition, and the provision of all related services in accordance with the Media Rights. |
| Host Association | A Member Association approved by the AFC to organise, stage, and host Matches in the Competition. |
| Host City | Any city and/or identifiable metropolitan area in which any Match is staged. |
| Host Club | A Participating Club who is approved by the AFC to organise, stage, and host Matches in the Competition in conjunction with their respective Host Association. |
| Image Rights | The right to use still and/or moving images and/or representations of images of Participating Clubs and Participating Players, all members of the AFC Delegation, Team Official Delegations, and Match Officials, forming part of the Competition. |
| Knockout Stage | The fourth stage of the Competition held in accordance with these Regulations. |

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| League | A professional league and/or amateur league which consists of a combination of Clubs within the territory of a Football Association and which is subordinate to and under the authority of that Football Association. |
| Licensee | Any entity to which the AFC or the AFC Commercial Rights Partner has granted any aspect of the Commercial Rights in respect of the Competition, including but not limited to Official Sponsors, Official Supporters, Official Licensees and Official Media Partners. |
| Loser | <p>For the Preliminary Stage, Playoff Stage and Group Stage, the Participating Club at the conclusion of a Match who is not the Winner.</p> <p>For the Knockout Stage, the Participating Club at the conclusion of the second Match who is not the Winner.</p> |
| Match | A football match in its entirety (including a replayed and/or deferred football match, Extra Time and Penalty Kicks) which takes place as part of the Competition in accordance with the Match Schedule |
| Match Officials | <p>Individually or collectively, any official appointed to one of the following roles in relation to any aspect of a Match in the Competition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Referees (separately defined below); (ii) Head of Delegation; (iii) AFC General Coordinator; (iv) AFC Match Commissioner; (v) Referee Assessor; (vi) Media Officer; (vii) Security Officer; (viii) Medical Officer; (ix) Technical Analyst; and, (x) any other official designation which the AFC deems to be required. |

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| Match Schedule | The official schedule which sets out, without limitation, the dates and times on which Matches will be played, the Stadia at which the Matches will be played, and the names of the Participating Clubs. |
| Match Subsidy | The payment made to a Participating Club after its participation in a Match, comprised of one or more of the following: travel subsidy, performance bonus, and/or participation fee. |
| Media | Any individual entitled to a media Accreditation Card as determined by the AFC. |
| Media Rights | The right and license to produce, edit, and transmit, for intelligible reception throughout the world in any language and in any format, and on any platform including film, Fixed Media, Digital Media, games, internet, public exhibition, radio, mobile, and television, visual, audio-visual, and/or audio signal and/or image or recording (including without limitation the basic feed, multi feeds, additional feeds, audio feeds, a feed incorporating competition data, basic feed, and unilateral feeds) of the Competition, and all interview activities and action during and forming part of the Competition including Official Functions and the Image Rights by any and all means of transmission distribution, exhibition and reception, now existing or hereinafter developed including but not limited to analogue, digital, satellite cable and interactive communication systems, on a live, delayed, and unlimited repeat basis, in full or in part (including without limitation by way of clips and/or highlights and/or support programmes and/or magazine shows and/or news access), and all rights to exploit any and all commercial opportunities (including for example broadcast sponsorship and commercial airtime opportunities) arising from and/or in connection with such rights. |
| Member Association | A Football Association which is a member of the AFC. |
| Merchandise Rights | The right to exploit the Competition Marks and/or Official Status in connection with the promotion, manufacture, packaging, distribution and sale of goods and services of all kinds, including items of clothing, coins, medals, other collectibles and premiums related to the Competition. |

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| Official Function | <p>Any event which is officially organised or sanctioned by the AFC in connection with the Competition.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, this expressly includes, without limitation, all matches and/or events held at Official Training Sites, the Opening Ceremony, the Closing Ceremony, any AFC gala dinner, lunch, or banquet, cultural events, official press conferences, and launch events.</p> |
| Official Training Site | Any site designated by the Host Association and approved by the AFC for use by the Participating Clubs throughout the duration of the Competition for training purposes. |
| Participating Club | A Club who is approved by the AFC to participate in the Competition. |
| Participating Official | Any official who is registered as part of a Team Official Delegation in the Competition. |
| Participating Player | Any player who is registered as part of a Team Official Delegation in the Competition. |
| Penalty Kicks | “Kicks from the Penalty Mark” as described in the Laws of the Game. |
| Playoff Stage | The second stage of the Competition held in accordance with these Regulations. |
| Preliminary Stage | The first stage of the Competition held in accordance with these Regulations. |
| Premiums | Any promotional item (including packaging, labelling, and/or containers thereof) which incorporates a mark and/or logo of the AFC and/or the Competition, and which is distributed free of charge or via prize competitions. |
| Promotional Rights | Any rights to official publications, official suppliers, official products, sales promotion including but not limited to the right to organise promotional competitions (including without limitation any sweepstakes or lotteries) and to make awards and give prizes, official music rights, the right to use an official designation and all other rights of commercial value in |

regard to the Competition.

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| Proprietary Interests | Without limitation, intellectual property, copyright and analogous rights, trademark rights, moral rights, performing rights, personality rights, and all remedies available under the applicable laws of unfair competition comprised in the Commercial Rights. For the purpose of this definition, “moral rights” shall mean a privilege, right, or claim which is based on moral considerations or ethical principles and which should be recognised by law, but which may not be legally imposed or enforced as such. |
| Quarter Final | The second round of Matches in the Knockout Stage. |
| Referee | Any individual appointed to officiate a Match in the Competition in the role of referee, assistant referee, fourth official, or fifth official. |
| Regulations | These Competition Regulations. |
| Round of 16 | The first round of Matches in the Knockout Stage. |
| Runner Up | The Participating Club who is the Loser in the Final. |
| Semi Final | The third round of Matches in the Knockout Stage. |
| Sponsorship Rights | An association with the Competition by any combination of Commercial Rights. |
| Stadium | <p>Any stadium at which a Match is played. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) the entire premises (to the extent that a valid Accreditation Card or Ticket is required in order to gain access) of a stadium facility inside the outer stadium perimeter fence and (on Match days and any day on which any official Team practice session takes place within the stadium), the aerial space above such stadium premises;(ii) parking facilities;(iii) VIP and hospitality areas (including any |

hospitality village);

- (iv) the media tribune;
- (v) concessions areas;
- (vi) commercial display areas;
- (vii) buildings;
- (viii) the Field of Play;
- (ix) any broadcast compound or stadium media centre;
- (x) any stands; and,
- (xi) any areas beneath the stands.

Team Official Delegation

The final-registered delegation of a Participating Club for each Match of the Competition which shall comprise of a maximum eighteen (18) Participating Players and eleven (11) Participating Officials, all of whom must be registered in the Preliminary Registration.

Ticket

A pass providing access to a venue for the purpose of attending either a Match or Official Training Site or Official Function.

Ticketing

All operational measures to provide Tickets to all spectators of every Match and for Official Functions of the Competition allowing them to enter the Stadium or a Venue. Ticketing shall include the management of the operation necessary for the production, sale, distribution, delivery and payment of the Tickets of the Competition.

Travel and Tour Rights

The exclusive right to organise and/or sub-license official travel and tour activities in relation to the Competition, which travel and tour activities shall, for the avoidance of doubt, include the provision of Tickets to a Match and/or Official Function of the Competition.

Venue

The Host City and immediate surrounding area in which a Stadium is located.

Winner

In the Preliminary Stage, Playoff Stage or Group Stage, the Participating Club who scores the higher number of goals in a Match, or where applicable, the higher number of Penalty Kicks.

In the Knockout Stage, the Participating Club who:

(i) scores the higher number of goals over both Matches; or

(ii) if tied, through the application of the Away Goals Rule; or

(iii) if still tied, the higher number of Penalty Kicks.

For the purposes of these Regulations, and provided the context so permits:

- (a) the singular shall include the plural and vice-versa.
- (b) the masculine gender shall include the feminine and vice-versa.
- (c) reference to natural persons shall include any legal person or corporation.
- (d) references to the AFC shall include its successors and permitted assigns and, in relation to the availability of the Commercial Rights, its respective Member Associations, national football associations, and AFC Committees.

SECTION 1: AFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2015®

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The AFC stages the AFC Champions League annually for Participating Clubs.
- 1.2. These Regulations set out the rights, duties, and responsibilities of the AFC and the Participating Clubs (as well as their Member Associations and Leagues) taking part in the Competition.
- 1.3. These Regulations and all directives, decisions, guidelines, and circulars issued by the AFC shall be binding upon all parties participating and involved in the preparation, organisation, and hosting of the Competition.
- 1.4. Any rights associated with the Competition that are not granted by these Regulations and/or specific agreements to any Member Association and/or its Participating Club(s) belong to the AFC.
- 1.5. The AFC Statutes and all AFC and FIFA regulations in force at the time of entry into the Competition shall apply. Any reference to the AFC Statutes and to AFC and FIFA regulations refer to those valid at the time of application.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2. The Asian Football Confederation
 - 2.1 The AFC Competitions Committee shall be responsible for organising the Competition in accordance with the AFC Statutes. The AFC General Secretariat shall carry out the necessary administrative work in support of the AFC Competitions Committee.
 - 2.2 The responsibilities of the AFC shall include, but are not limited to:
 - 2.2.1. supervising general preparations and deciding on the Competition format, the draws, and the entries to the Competition;
 - 2.2.2. determining the Match Schedule (*cf*Article 8);
 - 2.2.3. selecting Stadia for the Competition after consultation with the Participating Clubs and their Member Associations (*cf*Article 19);
 - 2.2.4. appointing Match Officials for each Match;
 - 2.2.5. choosing the official football and stipulated technical material;
 - 2.2.6. approving the choice of the WADA-accredited laboratories that will carry out the doping analyses (*cf*Article 68);
 - 2.2.7. reporting cases where appropriate to the AFC Disciplinary Committee (*cf*Article 69);
 - 2.2.8. replacing Participating Clubs that have withdrawn from the Competition (*cf*Articles 6 and 7);
 - 2.2.9. dealing with cases of abandoned Matches or cancelled Matches (*cf* Articles 18 and 17);
 - 2.2.10. dealing with cases of force majeure (*cf*Article 83);
 - 2.2.11. providing insurance coverage for any AFC staff and Match Officials appointed to any Match from the time of their departure from their home Member Association to their departure from the Host Association (*cf*Article 74); and
 - 2.2.12. dealing with any other aspect of the Competition that is not the responsibility of any other body of the AFC pursuant to these Regulations or the AFC Statutes (*cf*Article 84).
 - 2.3. All decisions made by the AFC Competitions Committee and/or AFC General Secretariat are final and binding and not appealable.

- 2.4. All decisions made by the AFC Disciplinary Committee in relation to the Competition are subject to the operation of the AFC Disciplinary Code.

3. Participating Clubs and Member Associations

- 3.1. The principal obligations and responsibilities of each Participating Club and its Member Association are stipulated in the Participating Team Agreement (hereinafter, PTA), these Regulations, the AFC Statutes, and all other AFC regulations, directives, guidelines and circulars.

- 3.1.1. A Participating Club (and its Member Association) that has qualified for the Competition (*cf* Article 5) must submit a PTA.

- 3.1.2. The PTA shall be completed and submitted to the AFC not later than the deadline provided by the AFC via facsimile, electronic mail, and registered post.

- 3.1.3. Failure to submit the PTA to the AFC by the deadline shall result in the non-participation of the Participating Club.

- 3.2. Each Participating Club who is participating in the Competition shall ensure as a condition of its participation that every member of its Team Official Delegation for each Match is aware of and agrees to comply with the PTA.

- 3.3. Each Participating Club shall undertake to:

- 3.3.1. observe all obligations set out in the PTA, these Regulations, the AFC Statutes, and all other AFC regulations, directives, guidelines and circulars, and applicable national and supra-national laws;

- 3.3.2. comply with the Laws of the Game laid down by the IFAB and published by FIFA;

- 3.3.3. accept that all the administrative, disciplinary and refereeing matters connected with the Competition shall be settled by the AFC in compliance with these Regulations;

- 3.3.4. field their strongest team throughout the Competition;

- 3.3.5. observe the principles of Fair Play;

- 3.3.6. ensure the good conduct of its Team Official Delegation who have been provided with an Accreditation Card and of any person carrying out duties on its behalf throughout the Competition, which includes but is not limited to their arrival on the territory of any Host Association until their departure;

- 3.3.7. as Host Club, make the appropriate arrangements for the staging of Matches, in conjunction with its Member Association and the AFC General Secretariat, in accordance with these Regulations;
- 3.3.8. accept all the arrangements made by any Host Association in agreement with the AFC;
- 3.3.9. attend and participate in all official activities and events, including without limitation any team arrival meeting, match coordination meeting, press conferences, and other media and marketing activities in accordance with the instructions issued by the AFC;
- 3.3.10. failure to attend any official activity or event shall result in the Participating Club being fined a minimum of USD10,000.00;
- 3.3.11. provide to the AFC, prior to the Competition, statistics and photographs of its Participating Players and Participating Officials, historical information related to its Participating Club and approved Stadium (including photographs), and any further data as requested and in accordance with instructions issued by the AFC; and
- 3.3.12. link the official URL for the Competition on its official website.
- 3.4. Each Participating Club (and its Member Association), at their own expense, are solely responsible throughout the Competition for:
 - 3.4.1. the insurance coverage of:
 - 3.4.1.1. its Team Official Delegation (including but not limited to, hospitalisation and surgical operations, team equipment), for both home and away Matches;
 - 3.4.1.2. its approved Stadium. A release of liability must be signed and returned to the AFC at least one (1) month before the start of the Competition. If such an indemnification is not received in due time, the Host Club agrees that the necessary insurance coverage may be concluded by the AFC and expensed to the Host Club;
 - 3.4.2. all other necessary insurance policies, which must provide an appropriate guaranteed sum for injury and damage to persons, objects, and property, and correspond to the specific circumstances of the Participating Club. Such policies must cover all risks connected with the staging of the Competition, exempt the AFC from all claims and liabilities, and name the AFC as a co-insured. The AFC must be notified of all insurance policies, and may request copies of any and all policies at its discretion.

- 3.4.3. payment of incidental expenses and for any costs incurred by its Team Official Delegation (*cf*Article 43);
- 3.4.4. payment of any costs of extending the stay of any member of its Team Official Delegation in any Host Association (*cf*Article 43);
- 3.4.5. obtaining visas to enter the territory of a Host Association no later than one (1) month prior to any away Match. This includes all costs related to the visa application process (*cf*Article 41);
- 3.4.6. payment of all taxes, fees, duties and any other costs related to the importation and/or exportation of equipment, merchandise and/or goods to be used for the Competition (*cf*Article 42); and
- 3.4.7. guaranteeing security and safety at its Venue and Stadium (*cf*Articles 4 and 19).
- 3.5. Each Participating Club and/or its Member Association shall indemnify, defend, and hold the AFC and all of its officers, directors, employees, representatives, agents, and all other auxiliary persons free and harmless against any and all liabilities, obligations, losses, damages, penalties, claims, actions, fines, and expenses (including reasonable legal expenses) of whatsoever kind or nature resulting from, arising out of, or attributable to, any non-compliance with these Regulations by the Member Associations, Participating Clubs, their Team Official Delegation, their affiliates and any third-parties contracted to the Participating Clubs or Member Associations.
- 3.6. The Champion may qualify directly and shall undertake, if required, to take part in the following competitions:
 - 3.6.1. the FIFA Club World Cup 2015; and
 - 3.6.2. any intercontinental competition(s) arranged by the AFC with other confederations.
- 3.7. Participating Clubs are not authorised to represent the AFC or the Competition without the prior written approval of the AFC.
- 3.8. All Participating Players and Participating Officials ensure their presence at the AFC Awards Night in the 2015 calendar year if they are nominated for an annual AFC award.
- 3.9. Each Host Club and its Member Association shall discharge the AFC and hold it harmless from all responsibility and relinquish any claim against the AFC and the members of its delegation for any damages resulting from any act or omission relating to the organisation of the Competition to the exclusion of damages caused by AFC or the members of its delegation acting with intent or gross negligence.

- 3.10. Each Host Club and its Member Association shall ensure that any decision made by the AFC relating to its duties and responsibilities is enforced immediately.

4. Security and Safety

- 4.1. Each Host Club and its Member Association shall, in conjunction with the relevant government authorities and/or Stadium owners, devise, plan, and implement adequate security and safety measures for the Competition at all Controlled Access Areas within the Venue and other relevant locations to protect all relevant persons, including without limitation the AFC Delegation, Team Official Delegations, AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Licensees, Broadcasters, Media, and spectators.
- 4.2. Each Host Club and its Member Association shall issue a detailed security plan in the form of a binding agreement with, without limitation, the management of the Stadium, Official Training Site(s), and the Accommodation of the AFC Delegation and Team Official Delegations. This security plan shall be based upon the principles set out in the FIFA Stadium and Safety Regulations.

SECTION 3: ENTRY, WITHDRAWAL, MATCH SCHEDULE, COMPETITION SYSTEM

5. Entry

5.1. Entry to the Competition is governed by the Manual for Decision Method for AFC Champions League Participation (Manual).

5.1.1. In accordance with Article 7.3 of the Manual, Participating Clubs are those who meet sporting criteria and club licensing criteria.

5.1.2. The sporting criteria and club licensing criteria are set out in the Manual.

5.2. Eligible Participating Clubs shall complete a PTA and submit it to the AFC in accordance with Article 3.

5.2.1. The name and/or logo of a Participating Club shall not directly refer to the name and/or logo of any other entity, whether or not entity is a commercial partner or sponsor of the Participating Club.

5.2.2. The only exception to the above shall be if the Participating Club meets both of the following requirements:

5.2.2.1. the name of the Participating Club must be a pre-existing name with long-term use. The entity must have been directly involved in the creation of the Participating Club itself (by financial or other means); and

5.2.2.2. the Participating Club previously competed in an AFC competition utilising the name.

5.3. All decisions by the AFC regarding entry to the Competition are final and binding and not appealable.

6. Withdrawal Prior to Commencement of the Competition

6.1. Any Participating Club that withdraws or is excluded from the Competition prior to its commencement may be replaced by another Participating Club.

6.2. The AFC Competitions Committee shall be responsible for making any necessary decisions, including without limitation whether to:

6.2.1. replace the Participating Club;

6.2.2. change the competition system (*cf*Article 9); and/or

6.2.3. change the technical rules (*cf*Section 4).

- 6.3. All decisions of the AFC Competitions Committee in this regard are final and binding and not appealable.
- 6.4. Any Participating Club who withdraws from the Competition in accordance with Article 6 may be referred to the AFC Disciplinary Committee.
- 7. **Withdrawal after Commencement of the Competition**
 - 7.1. Any Participating Club that:
 - 7.1.1. withdraws from the Competition after it has commenced; or
 - 7.1.2. does not report for any of its Matches; or
 - 7.1.3. refuses to continue any of its Matches at any stage; or
 - 7.1.4. leaves the Stadium prior to the completion of any of its Matches,shall be considered to have withdrawn from the Competition after its commencement.
 - 7.2. The Participating Club that withdraws from the Competition after it has commenced shall:
 - 7.2.1. have all its Matches cancelled and considered null and void. For the avoidance of doubt, all points and goals in those Matches shall not be taken into consideration when determining the final rankings in the Group Stage pursuant to Article 11.5;
 - 7.2.2. be required to pay compensation for any and all damages or losses suffered by, where applicable, the other Participating Club(s), the AFC, the AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Licensees, Broadcasters, and the Member Associations. The amount of compensation shall be determined by the AFC Executive Committee;
 - 7.2.3. be disqualified from participating in the next two (2) editions of the Competition;
 - 7.2.4. be disqualified from participating in any tournaments listed in Article 3.6, if qualification has been attained;
 - 7.2.5. be referred to the AFC Disciplinary Committee for possible additional sanctions; and
 - 7.2.6. return to the AFC any Match Subsidy that had been paid in support of their participation in the Competition or if not yet paid, forfeit their right to those Match Subsidies.

7.3. The above Articles 7.1 and 7.2 are not applicable in cases of Force Majeure recognised by the AFC Competitions Committee.

7.4. The AFC Competitions Committee shall take whatever action it deems necessary in cases of Force Majeure.

8. Match Schedule

8.1. All Matches shall be played according to AFC Competitions Calendar for 2015 set out at **Appendix 2**. The dates are final and binding and not appealable.

8.1.1. Participating Clubs shall indicate their preferred kick-off times upon entry to the Competition.

8.1.2. Where necessary for sporting reasons and logistically possible, taking into consideration the time zones, Matches in the same group of the Group Stage may be played simultaneously.

8.1.3. All kick-off times shall be determined by the AFC Competitions Committee, taking into consideration sporting, marketing, and broadcasting matters. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.

8.2. The Match Schedule shall be determined following the official draws for the Preliminary Stage, Playoff Stage, Group Stage and Knockout Stage. The date and format of the official draws shall be determined by the AFC Competitions Committee.

8.3. The AFC Competitions Committee retains final discretion to amend the Match Schedule.

9. Competition System

9.1. The Competition shall consist of four (4) stages:

9.1.1. the Preliminary Stage;

9.1.2. the Playoff Stage;

9.1.3. the Group Stage; and

9.1.4. the Knockout Stage.

9.2. The Manual sets out the calculation to determine the number of slots allocated to the Clubs of qualifying Member Associations in the Preliminary Stage, Playoff Stage, and Group Stage (**MA Ranking**). The AFC Competitions Committee shall decide upon the format of the competition system. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.

- 9.3. Depending on the number of entries, or in the case of withdrawal or suspension of any Participating Clubs, the AFC Competitions Committee may change the competition system and/or technical rules. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.

10. Preliminary Stage and Playoff Stage

- 10.1. Each round of the Preliminary Stage and Playoff Stage shall be conducted in accordance with the Match Schedule. The Participating Club from the higher-ranked Member Association pursuant to the MA Ranking shall host the Match, which shall be played on a single knock-out basis.

- 10.2. The duration of Matches, including Extra Time and Penalty Kicks (if required), shall be played in accordance with Articles 14 to 16. The Away Goals Rule does not apply in the Preliminary Stage and Playoff Stage.

- 10.3. At the conclusion of each Match in the Preliminary Stage:

10.3.1. the Participating Club who is the Winner shall qualify for the next round of the Preliminary Stage or for the Playoff Stage, depending on the competition system; and

10.3.2. the Participating Club who is the Loser shall, in accordance with their MA Ranking, either be eliminated from the Competition or enter the AFC Cup at the determined stage.

- 10.4. At the conclusion of each Match in the Playoff Stage:

10.4.1. the Participating Club who is the Winner shall qualify for the next round of the Playoff Stage. If it is the final round of the Playoff Stage, the Participating Club shall qualify for the Group Stage; and

10.4.2. the Participating Club who is the Loser shall, in accordance with their MA Ranking, either be eliminated from the Competition or enter the AFC Cup at the determined stage

11. Group Stage

- 11.1. The thirty two (32) Participating Clubs entered in the Group Stage shall be undertaken in accordance with the Manual. They shall be drawn into eight (8) groups of four (4) teams each.

11.1.1. Four (4) groups shall contain Participating Clubs from the West zone, South zone, and Central zone (West Region), and four (4) groups shall contain Participating Clubs from the East zone and ASEAN zone (East Region). The zones shall be in accordance with the AFC Statutes.

- 11.1.2. Participating Clubs from the same Member Association shall not be drawn in the same group.
- 11.1.3. The AFC Competitions Committee may decide to exceptionally depart from this system, taking into account sporting, geographic, and economic factors. Such decisions shall be final and binding and not appealable.
- 11.2. Each Participating Club shall play against the other Participating Clubs within its group in a home and away format in accordance with the Match Schedule. The match sequence shall be (the number designates the position drawn):
 - 11.2.1. Matchday (MD) 1: 1 v 4; 3 v 2
 - 11.2.2. MD2: 4 v 3; 2 v 1
 - 11.2.3. MD3: 4 v 2; 1 v 3
 - 11.2.4. MD4: 2 v 4; 3 v 1
 - 11.2.5. MD5: 4 v 1; 2 v 3
 - 11.2.6. MD6: 1 v 2; 3 v 4
- 11.3. The duration of Matches shall be played in accordance with Article 14.
- 11.4. At the conclusion of each Match:
 - 11.4.1. three (3) points shall be awarded to the Winner;
 - 11.4.2. one (1) point shall be awarded to each Participating Club for a draw;
 - 11.4.3. zero (0) points shall be awarded to the Loser.
- 11.5. The ranking in each group shall be determined in descending order as follows:
 - 11.5.1. higher number of points obtained in group Matches played among the Participating Clubs in question;
 - 11.5.2. if two (2) or more Participating Clubs are equal on points on completion of the group Matches, the following criteria are applied to determine the ranking (in descending order):
 - 11.5.2.1. higher number of points obtained in the group Matches played among the Participating Clubs in question;
 - 11.5.2.2. superior goal difference from the group Matches played among the Participating Clubs in question;

- 11.5.2.3. higher number of goals scored in the group Matches played among the Participating Clubs in question;
- 11.5.2.4. higher number of goals scored away from home in the group Matches played among the Participating Clubs in question;
- 11.5.2.5. if, after having applied Article 11.5.2.1 to 11.5.2.4, Participating Clubs still have an equal ranking, Articles 11.5.2.1 to 11.5.2.4 are reapplied exclusively to the Matches between the Participating Clubs in question to determine their final rankings. If this procedure does not lead to a decision, Articles 11.5.2.6 to 11.5.2.10 apply;
- 11.5.2.6. superior goal difference from all group Matches played;
- 11.5.2.7. higher number of goals scored from all group Matches played;
- 11.5.2.8. Penalty Kicks if only the two (2) Participating Clubs are both on the Field of Play;
- 11.5.2.9. the lower score calculated according to the number of yellow and red cards received in group Matches (**Appendix 1**); or
- 11.5.2.10. the Participating Club who belongs to the Member Association with the higher MA Ranking.

11.6. On the basis of Article 11.5, at the conclusion of the Group Stage:

- 11.6.1. the first-placed and second-placed Participating Club in each group shall qualify for the Knockout Stage; and
- 11.6.2. the third-placed and fourth-placed Participating Club in each group shall be eliminated from the Competition.

12. Knockout Stage

- 12.1. The Knockout Stage shall consist of the Round of 16, Quarter Finals, Semi Finals, and Finals.
- 12.2. Each round of the Knockout Stage shall be conducted in accordance with the Match Schedule and played on a home and away knock-out basis.
 - 12.2.1. The Participating Clubs from the West Region shall be drawn to play each other in the Round of 16, Quarter Finals, and Semi Finals.

- 12.2.2. The Participating Clubs from the East Region shall be drawn to play each other in the Round of 16, Quarter Finals, and Semi Finals.
- 12.3. The duration of Matches, including Extra Time and Penalty Kicks (if required), shall be played in accordance with Articles 14 to 16.
 - 12.3.1. The Away Goals Rule shall only apply in accordance with Article 14.2.1.
- 12.4. At the conclusion of each tie in the Round of 16:
 - 12.4.1. the Winner shall qualify for the Quarter Finals;
 - 12.4.2. the Loser shall be eliminated.
- 12.5. At the conclusion of each tie in the Quarter Finals:
 - 12.5.1. the Winner shall qualify for the Semi Finals; and
 - 12.5.2. the Loser shall be eliminated.
- 12.6. At the conclusion of each tie in the Semi Finals:
 - 12.6.1. the Winner shall qualify for the Finals; and
 - 12.6.2. the Loser shall be eliminated.
- 12.7. At the conclusion of the Finals:
 - 12.7.1. the Winner shall be declared Champion; and
 - 12.7.2. the Loser shall be declared Runner-Up.

SECTION 4: TECHNICAL REGULATIONS

13. Matches Played in Accordance with the Laws of the Game

- 13.1. All Matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game laid down by the IFAB and published by FIFA.
- 13.2. In case of any discrepancy in the interpretation of the Laws of the Game, the English version shall prevail and is authoritative.
- 13.3. Only three (3) substitutes listed on a Match Starting List (*cf* Article 35) may take part in a Match. Any Participating Player who has been substituted may take no further part in that Match.
- 13.4. At any stage of a Match, if a Participating Club is only able to field fewer than seven (7) players, the Match shall be abandoned and Article 18.3 shall apply.

14. Duration of Matches

- 14.1. Each Match shall last ninety (90) minutes, comprising of two (2) periods of forty-five (45) minutes (normal playing time). Matches shall start at the time set out in the Match Schedule.
- 14.2. There shall be an interval of fifteen (15) minutes between the periods, commencing from the whistle ending the first period and ending upon the whistle starting the second period.
 - 14.2.1. The Away Goals Rule shall only apply at the conclusion of normal playing time of the second Match in any tie in the Knockout Stage. It shall not apply in Extra Time of any Match.

15. Extra Time

- 15.1. If no Winner is determined at the end of normal playing time during the Preliminary Stage, Playoff Stage or Knockout Stage, Extra Time shall be played.
- 15.2. Extra Time shall consist of two (2) periods of fifteen (15) minutes, with an interval of five (5) minutes at the end of normal playing time, but no interval between the periods of Extra Time.

16. Determining the Winner by Penalty Kicks

- 16.1. If a Match is level after Extra Time, Penalty Kicks shall be taken to determine the Winner, in accordance with the procedures described in the Laws of the Game.
- 16.2. If Penalty Kicks cannot be completed because of weather conditions or for any Force Majeure reason, the result shall be decided by the drawing of lots by the

Referee in the presence of the AFC Match Commissioner and the two (2) captains of the Participating Clubs.

- 16.3. If, through the fault of a Participating Club, the Penalty Kicks cannot be completed, Article 7 of these Regulations shall apply.

17. Cancellation of Matches

- 17.1. If a Match cannot commence on time due to Force Majeure, the pitch not being fit for play, weather conditions, floodlight failure or any other reason, the following procedure shall be followed:

- 17.1.1. the Match must be delayed for a minimum of thirty (30) minutes. During this delay, the Referee may decide that the Match can commence prior to the completion of the delay;

- 17.1.2. following the first delay, either:

- 17.1.2.1. an additional delay of thirty (30) minutes shall occur if in the discretion of the Referee this second delay may allow the Match to commence; or

- 17.1.2.2. the Match is declared cancelled by the Referee;

- 17.1.3. following two (2) delays of thirty (30) minutes, the Referee must declare the Match cancelled;

- 17.1.4. within two (2) hours of the decision to cancel the Match, the AFC must decide, taking all sporting and organisational considerations into account, whether the Match can be rescheduled, or whether any other action and decision is needed to continue with the Competition. Any disciplinary sanctions resulting from the cancelled Match shall remain in force.

- 17.2. Decisions made pursuant to Article 17.1.1.4 are final and binding and not appealable.

18. Abandonment of Matches

- 18.1. If a Match is stopped by the Referee before the end of normal playing time or during any Extra Time due to Force Majeure, the pitch not being fit for play, weather conditions, floodlight failure, or any other reason except for that set out in Article 13.4, the following procedure shall be followed:

- 18.1.1. the Match is stopped for thirty (30) minutes. During this stoppage, the Referee may decide that the Match can commence prior to the completion of the stoppage;

- 18.1.2. subsequent to the first stoppage, either:
 - 18.1.2.1. an additional stoppage of thirty (30) minutes shall occur if in the discretion of the Referee this second stoppage may allow the Match to be resumed; or
 - 18.1.2.2. the Match is declared abandoned by the Referee;
 - 18.1.3. following two (2) stoppages of thirty (30) minutes, the Referee must declare the Match abandoned;
 - 18.1.4. within two (2) hours of the decision to abandon the Match, the AFC must decide, taking all sporting and organisational considerations into account, whether the Match result at the time of abandonment is valid, whether the Match can be rescheduled and completed, or whether any other action and decision is needed to continue with the Competition.
- 18.2. Should the AFC, pursuant to Article 18.1.1.4, determine that an abandoned Match should be rescheduled and completed, the following principles shall apply:
- 18.2.1. the Match shall recommence with the same score at the minute at which play was interrupted rather than being replayed in full;
 - 18.2.2. the Match shall recommence with the same Participating Players on the Field of Play and same substitutes at the time it was initially abandoned;
 - 18.2.3. no additional substitutes may be added to the Player Selection List or Match Starting List;
 - 18.2.4. the Participating Clubs may only make the number of substitutions to which they were still entitled when the Match was abandoned;
 - 18.2.5. any Participating Player sent off during the abandoned Match cannot be replaced;
 - 18.2.6. any sanction imposed before the Match was abandoned remain valid for the remainder of the rescheduled Match;
 - 18.2.7. the kick-off time, date and Stadium of the re-scheduled Match shall be decided by the AFC; and
 - 18.2.8. any other matters not set out above shall be decided by the AFC in its sole discretion.
- 18.3. If a Match is stopped by the Referee before the end of normal playing time or during any Extra Time as a result of a Participating Club being able to only field fewer than seven (7) Participating Players, the Match shall be declared

abandoned and the Participating Club who is able to field more than seven (7) Participating Players shall be declared the Winner by the score 3-0, or the score at the time of abandonment, whichever is higher.

- 18.4. Decisions made pursuant to Article 18.1.1.4 and Article 18.2.2.8 are final and binding and not appealable.

19. Stadium

- 19.1. Unless stipulated in these Regulations, Matches must be played in a Stadium which complies with:

19.1.1. the AFC Stadium Regulations;

19.1.2. the AFC Marketing & Media Regulations for AFC Club Competitions; and

19.1.3. any other safety and security standards issued by or contained within relevant AFC guidelines, directives, or circulars.

- 19.2. The Stadium to be utilised by each Participating Club shall be nominated in the Entry Form and subject to inspection and confirmation by the AFC.

19.2.1. The Stadium nominated shall be the normal home stadium of the Participating Club for matches in its League, unless otherwise instructed by the AFC.

19.2.2. The AFC reserves the right to refuse the nomination of a Stadium and require a Participating Club to play their Matches in a different stadium within the same Venue or territory of its Member Association, or alternatively in a neutral Venue.

- 19.3. Each Participating Club must play their home Matches in the one and only Stadium approved by the AFC throughout the Competition.

19.3.1. A Participating Club cannot change Stadium during the Competition unless forced to do so because of circumstances beyond its control.

19.3.2. Should a Participating Club wish to change Stadium during the Competition, it must provide evidence to the AFC General Secretariat, including without limitation photographs, other visual evidence, and letters from the relevant authorities as to why the Stadium is unable to host Matches, at least four (4) weeks prior to their next home Match.

19.3.3. Only upon receipt of the evidence shall the AFC make a decision on whether the Participating Club may nominate a new Stadium for home Matches. Such Stadium must comply with Articles 19.1 and 19.2.

- 19.3.4. The AFC shall decide whether to approve the new nominated Stadium. Should the AFC be required to conduct an inspection, all costs shall be borne by the Participating Club and/or its Member Association.
- 19.3.5. Should the new nominated Stadium not be approved, or should a Participating Club be unable to play home Matches in their one and only Stadium approved by the AFC and not nominate a new Stadium, the AFC General Secretariat shall select an alternate Stadium in accordance with Article 19.2.2.
- 19.4. Participating Clubs who are required to play home Matches in a neutral Venue shall comply with the matters set out in **Appendix 3**.
- 19.5. If at any time during the Competition the AFC General Secretariat deems that, for whatever reason, a Stadium is not fit to stage a Match, it shall consult with the Participating Club and its Member Association and propose an alternate Stadium which complies with the requirement in Article 19.1.
 - 19.5.1. Should the Participating Club not be able to propose an acceptable alternate Stadium within any deadline set by the AFC, or refuse to partake in Matches in the proposed alternate Stadium of the AFC General Secretariat, it shall be considered to have withdrawn from the Competition in accordance with Article 7.
- 19.6. Each Match of the Final shall be played in a Stadium approved by the AFC with a minimum capacity of forty thousand (40,000) spectators. The Venue shall be decided by the AFC taking into consideration all logistical factors, including without limitation, accommodation and transportation.
- 20. **Field of Play**
 - 20.1. Each Host Club shall ensure that the Field of Play is in playable condition.
 - 20.2. If a Host Club considers the Field of Play unfit, it shall immediately inform the AFC General Secretariat and, prior to their departure for the Host Association, the Away Club and the Match Officials. Failure to comply shall result in the Host Club paying for the travel, board, and lodging expenses of the parties involved.
 - 20.3. The AFC Match Commissioner will inspect each Stadium prior to the Match and ensure that all arrangements are in accordance with the Laws of the Game. If the conditions of the Field of Play including the dimension of the goal and field are not in accordance with the Laws of the Game, the AFC Match Commissioner shall issue instructions for the Host Club to ensure rectification.
 - 20.3.1. If, in the opinion of the AFC Match Commissioner, the instructions issued pursuant to Article 20.3 are not complied with by the start of the Match, the Host Club shall forfeit the Match in accordance with the AFC Disciplinary Code.

20.4. All Matches shall be played on a Field of Play in accordance with the Laws of the Game

20.5. If there is any doubt regarding the condition of the Field of Play prior to the Match, the Referee shall decide whether the Field of Play is playable. If the Referee declares that the Match cannot commence on time, Article 17 shall apply.

21. Team Bench and Technical Area

21.1. A maximum of eleven (11) Participating Officials and a maximum of seven (7) Participating Players are permitted to sit on the team bench during a Match, provided they are in possession of the appropriate Accreditation Card.

21.2. Participating Officials and Participating Players on the team bench must wear their Accreditation Card at all times.

21.3. All individuals on the team bench must wear kit that contrasts with the kit of the Participating Players and Referees present on the Field of Play. This kit must comply with the AFC Equipment Regulations (*cf* Article 58).

21.4. The Host Club shall occupy the team bench on the left when facing the Field of Play when viewed from the VIP Tribune.

22. Warming up

22.1. Each Participating Club shall be entitled to warm-up on the Field of Play before a Match if the weather permits.

22.2. During a Match, a maximum of six (6) Participating Players from each Participating Club may warm-up simultaneously without a ball (except for the goalkeeper), behind the goal closest to their team bench, or alternatively in a space determined by the AFC Match Commissioner. These Participating Players may be assisted by two (2) Participating Officials.

22.2.1. If there is no space to warm-up behind the goal, a maximum of three (3) Participating Players from each Participating Club may warm up simultaneously without a ball (except goalkeepers) behind Assistant Referee 1, to the right of the Away Club team bench. These Participating Players may be assisted by one (1) Participating Official.

23. Official Training Sessions at the Stadium

23.1. Depending on the weather and condition of the Field of Play, each Participating Club is entitled to an official training session of sixty (60) minutes duration in the Stadium in which are due to play either one (1) or two (2) days prior to their Match at the same time as the kick-off of the Match.

- 23.1.1. If the Field of Play is an artificial pitch, each Participating Club is entitled to either two (2) official training sessions of sixty (60) minutes duration or one (1) official training session of sixty (60) minutes duration one (1) and/or (2) days prior to their Match.
- 23.2. The Field of Play must be prepared to match-condition for official training sessions. If the Field of Play is not in match-condition, the AFC Match Commissioner may shorten or cancel the official training session and direct the Participating Clubs to inspect the Field of Play wearing training shoes only.
- 23.3. If a Participating Club chooses not to train at a Stadium, they must provide the AFC Match Commissioner with the time and location of their official training session at another designated Official Training Site approved by the AFC. This shall be treated as their official training session and they shall forfeit the right to train at that particular Stadium.
- 23.4. The Host Club is required to provide at least one (1) ambulance during the official training session at the Stadium.
- 24. **Official Training Sites**
 - 24.1. Unless stipulated in these Regulations, official training sessions must be undertaken in an Official Training Site which complies with:
 - 24.1.1. the AFC Marketing & Media Regulations for AFC Club Competitions; and
 - 24.1.2. any other safety and security standards issued by or contained within relevant AFC guidelines, directives, or circulars.
 - 24.2. The Official Training Site to be offered to the Away Club by the Host Club shall be nominated in the Entry Form and subject to inspection and confirmation by the AFC.
 - 24.2.1. The AFC reserves the right to refuse the nomination of an Official Training Site and require a Participating Club to nominate an alternate Official Training Site.
 - 24.2.2. Official Training Sites nominated by the Host Club shall be in good condition and situated no more than thirty (30) minutes or thirty (30) kilometres from the Accommodation of the Away Club, unless approved by the AFC. They shall contain a fully equipped training field prepared to Match-condition which includes without limitation portable goal posts and prepared line markings.

24.3. Official Training Sites shall be made available at least two (2) days prior to the Match. They shall not be used for any other purpose during this period, unless written permission has been obtained from the AFC.

25. Footballs

25.1. The footballs for the Competition shall be selected and supplied by the AFC.

25.2. Each Participating Club shall receive:

25.2.1. fifteen (15) footballs for training prior to the Competition; and

25.2.2. for each Match as Host Club, ten (10) footballs for each Match.

25.3. Participating Clubs are only permitted to use the training footballs provided by the AFC for training and warming-up purposes. Away Clubs are required to utilise the footballs as provided by Article 25.2.1 during away Matches.

25.4. Participating Clubs that utilise training balls not provided by the AFC shall be referred to the AFC Disciplinary Committee.

25.5. Each Member Association and/or its Participating Club(s) are responsible for any taxes and/or fees pertaining to the customs clearance of footballs delivered to their Member Association.

SECTION 5: TEAM OFFICIAL DELEGATION

26. Eligibility of Players

26.1. Each Participating Club shall ensure that all players:

26.1.1. are duly registered with the AFC pursuant to these Regulations; and

26.1.2. are duly registered by the Participating Club with its Member Association pursuant to its transfer rules and those set out in the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players.

26.2. Individuals who meet the criteria set out in Article 26.1 are Participating Players and eligible to participate in the Competition, subject to the provisions of the AFC Disciplinary Code.

26.3. The approval of the registration of a Participating Player by the AFC General Secretariat does not automatically provide for the eligibility of the Participating Player. Each Participating Club is responsible for and bears the onus of fielding only eligible Participating Players in a Match. Failure to do so shall lead to the consequences stipulated in the AFC Disciplinary Code.

26.4. A Participating Player shall be deemed ineligible, without limitation, if:

26.4.1. there is a violation of Article 26.1; or

26.4.2. he participates in a Match contrary to a decision of the AFC Disciplinary Committee, these Regulations, or the operation of the AFC Disciplinary Code; or

26.4.3. the AFC determines that any document submitted during registration is false.

27. Stages of Registration of Players

27.1. There are three (3) stages of player registration:

27.1.1. Preliminary Registration (*cf* Articles 29 to 31);

27.1.2. Player Selection List (*cf* Article 34); and

27.1.3. Match Starting List (*cf* Article 35).

28. Registration Windows

28.1. There are three registration windows for the Competition. Each registration window shall open on a date as communicated by the AFC.

- 28.1.1. Registration Window 1: for Participating Clubs entering at the Preliminary Stage or Playoff Stage, closing on 4 January 2015.
- 28.1.2. Registration Window 2: for Participating Clubs entering at the Group Stage, closing on 24 January 2015;
- 28.1.3. Registration Window 3: for Participating Clubs who qualify for the Quarter Finals, closing on 25 July 2015.
- 28.2. Participating Players and Participating Officials registered pursuant to the replacement provisions contained in Articles 29.4, 30.4, and 31.4 are considered to have been registered during the same registration window covered by those replacement provisions.
- 29. **Registration Window 1 (Preliminary Stage, Playoff Stage, Group Stage, Round of 16)**
 - 29.1. Each Participating Club shall submit to the AFC via the AFCAS online system, the “AFC Official Registration Form for Players” and the supporting documents in accordance with Article 32 by 4 January 2015.
 - 29.2. Each Participating Club must register minimum eighteen (18) Participating Players and maximum thirty (30) Participating Players each allocated a playing number between 1 and 99.
 - 29.2.1. Each Participating Club must register minimum three (3) Participating Players as goalkeepers, regardless of the squad size registered. Playing number 1 shall be reserved for a goalkeeper.
 - 29.2.2. Throughout the Competition, each Participating Player shall wear the same playing number allocated during the Preliminary Registration. Participating Players registered as replacements (*cf* Article 30.4) may only be allocated a new playing number.
 - 29.3. If a Participating Club fails to register the minimum eighteen (18) Participating Players by the stipulated deadline, it shall be considered to have withdrawn in accordance with Article 6. Proof of submission by facsimile, courier and/or email will not be accepted.
 - 29.4. Once the “AFC Official Registration Form for Players” has been received by the AFC, and after the stipulated deadline has passed, Participating Clubs may:

Preliminary Stage and Playoff Stage

- 29.4.1. No later than seven (7) days prior to their first Match in the Competition, replace up to three (3) Participating Players in the event that they are deemed medically unfit to play. The AFC must receive:

- 29.4.1.1. a detailed medical assessment in English by a certified doctor. This assessment may be reviewed by a member of the AFC Medical Committee to confirm whether the injury is sufficiently serious to prevent the Participating Player from taking part in the Competition; and,
 - 29.4.1.2. the supporting documents of the replacement Participating Player as stipulated in Article 32.
- 29.4.2. No later than seven (7) days prior to their first Match in the Competition, replace or add up to five (5) Participating Players for any reason provided that the maximum number of registered players is not exceeded.
- 29.4.3. For the avoidance of doubt, a Participating Club may replace or add, subject to the relevant provision, a maximum of eight (8) Participating Players during this replacement period.

Group Stage (if qualified)

- 29.4.4. No later than seven (7) days prior to MD1 of the Group Stage, replace up to three (3) Participating Players in the event that they are deemed medically unfit to play. The AFC must receive:
 - 29.4.4.1. a detailed medical assessment in English by a certified doctor. This assessment may be reviewed by a member of the AFC Medical Committee to confirm whether the injury is sufficiently serious to prevent the Participating Player from taking part in the Competition; and
 - 29.4.4.2. the supporting documents of the replacement Participating Player as stipulated in Article 32.
- 29.4.5. No later than seven (7) days prior to MD1 of the Group Stage, replace or add up to five (5) Participating Players for any reason provided that the maximum number of registered players is not exceeded.
- 29.4.6. For the avoidance of doubt, a Participating Club may replace or add, subject to the relevant provision, a maximum of eight (8) Participating Players during this replacement period.

Round of 16 (if qualified)

- 29.4.7. No replacement or addition of Participating Players is permitted.
- 29.5. A Participating Player registered pursuant to the replacement provisions shall not be eligible to participate in the Competition until he receives an Accreditation Card.

30. Registration Window 2 (Group Stage, Round of 16)

- 30.1. Each Participating Club shall submit to the AFC via the AFCAS online system, the “AFC Official Registration Form for Players” and the supporting documents in accordance with Article 32 by 24 January 2015.
- 30.2. Each Participating Club must register minimum eighteen (18) Participating Players and maximum thirty (30) Participating Players each allocated a playing number between 1 and 99.
 - 30.2.1. Each Participating Club must register minimum three (3) Participating Players as goalkeepers, regardless of the squad size registered. Playing number 1 shall be reserved for a goalkeeper.
 - 30.2.2. Throughout the Competition, each Participating Player shall wear the same playing number allocated during the Preliminary Registration. Participating Players registered as replacements (*cf* Article 30.4) may only be allocated a new playing number.
- 30.3. If a Participating Club fails to register the minimum eighteen (18) Participating Players by the stipulated deadline, it shall be considered to have withdrawn in accordance with Articles 6. Proof of submission by facsimile, courier and/or email will not be accepted.
- 30.4. Once the “AFC Official Registration Form for Players” has been received by the AFC, and after the stipulated deadline has passed, Participating Clubs may:

Group Stage

- 30.4.1. No later than seven (7) days prior to MD1 of the Group Stage, replace up to three (3) Participating Players in the event that they are deemed medically unfit to play. The AFC must receive:
 - 30.4.1.1. a detailed medical assessment in English by a certified doctor. This assessment may be reviewed by a member of the AFC Medical Committee to confirm whether the injury is sufficiently serious to prevent the Participating Player from taking part in the Competition; and,
 - 30.4.1.2. the supporting documents of the replacement Participating Player as stipulated in Article 32.
- 30.4.2. No later than seven (7) days prior to MD1 of the Group Stage, replace or add up to five (5) Participating Players for any reason provided that the maximum number of registered players is not exceeded.
- 30.4.3. For the avoidance of doubt, a Participating Club may replace or add, subject to the relevant provision, a maximum of eight (8) Participating Players during this replacement period.

Round of 16 (if qualified)

30.4.4. No replacement or addition of Participating Players is permitted.

30.5. A Participating Player registered pursuant to the replacement provisions shall not be eligible to participate in the Competition until he receives an Accreditation Card.

31. Registration Window 3 (Quarter Finals, Semi Finals, Finals)

31.1. Each Participating Club shall submit to the AFC via the AFCAS online system, the “AFC Official Registration Form for Players” and the supporting documents in accordance with Article 32 by 25 July 2015.

31.2. Each Participating Club must register minimum eighteen (18) Participating Players and maximum thirty (30) Participating Players each allocated a playing number between 1 and 99.

31.2.1. Each Participating Club must register minimum three (3) Participating Players as goalkeepers, regardless of the squad size registered. Playing number 1 shall be reserved for a goalkeeper.

31.2.2. Participating Players shall wear the same playing number allocated during Registration Window 1 or Registration Window 2. Participating Players registered as replacements (*cf* Article 31.4) or newly registered Participating Players may only be allocated a new playing number.

31.3. If a Participating Club fails to submit the “AFC Official Registration Form for Players” by the stipulated deadline, it shall be considered to have registered the same Participating Players registered for the Group Stage in the relevant registration window. Proof of submission by facsimile, courier and/or email will not be accepted.

31.3.1. The AFC shall send an official confirmation form to the Participating Club for them to confirm the registration of the Participating Players for the Quarter Finals, Semi Finals, and Finals.

31.3.2. The Participating Club shall indicate which registered Participating Players are no longer validly registered with the Participating Club (e.g. they have retired).

31.4. Once the “AFC Official Registration Form for Players” has been received by the AFC, and after the stipulated deadline has passed, Participating Clubs may:

31.4.1. No later than seven (7) days prior to the first Match of the Quarter Finals, replace up to three (3) Participating Players in the event that they are deemed medically unfit to play. The AFC must receive:

- 31.4.1.1. a detailed medical assessment in English by a certified doctor. This assessment may be reviewed by a member of the AFC Medical Committee to confirm whether the injury is sufficiently serious to prevent the Participating Player from taking part in the Competition; and,
 - 31.4.1.2. the supporting documents of the replacement Participating Player as stipulated in Article 32.
- 31.5. No further replacement or addition of Participating Players shall be permitted.
- 31.6. A Participating Player registered pursuant to the replacement provisions shall not be eligible to participate in the Competition until he receives an Accreditation Card.
- 32. Documents for Registration of Players
 - 32.1. Participating Players must be registered on the “AFC Official Registration Form for Players” submitted via the AFCAS online system, with the supporting documents set out below (unless already previously submitted to the AFC and available in AFCAS):
 - 32.1.1. “AFC Official Registration Form for Players”;
 - 32.1.2. a colour copy of a validly-issued passport, containing the full name, passport number, date of birth, date of issue, date of expiry and nationality of the relevant individual. Group passports shall not be accepted;
 - 32.1.3. a colour copy of a national identification card (where applicable);
 - 32.1.4. a colour copy of a birth certificate (where requested by the AFC);
 - 32.1.5. one (1) passport-size colour photo (taken within three (3) months of the registration);
 - 32.1.6. a copy of a valid contract, entered into between the Participating Player and Participating Club which contains the contract period and is in accordance with the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players. If the contract is not in English, an accredited translation shall be provided;
 - 32.1.7. (for amateur players only) a copy of the template AFC Memorandum of Understanding for Amateur Players, which is set out at Appendix 4 of these Regulations;

- 32.1.8. (for foreign players only, *cf* Article 33.1) a copy of the FIFA International Transfer Certificate (ITC) or evidence to demonstrate that an ITC has been issued in accordance with the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players. An ITC may be submitted after the close of the relevant registration window and the Participating Player will only be considered eligible in accordance with Article 33.6.
- 32.2. The AFC reserves the right to request additional documents than those set out above.
- 32.3. Each column in the “AFC Official Registration Form for Players” must be completed with the correct information. Any individual with missing documentation shall not be eligible for registration as a Participating Player.
- 32.4. All Participating Players will be issued with Accreditation Cards authorised by the AFC Competitions Committee. Should a card be misplaced, the Participating Club shall be required to pay USD1,000 as a replacement production fee.
- 33. Player Status**
- 33.1. Each Participating Club may register three (3) non-citizen or foreign Participating Players. Each Participating Club may register one (1) additional non-citizen or foreign Participating Player who has the nationality of a Member Association.
- 33.1.1. Any Participating Player who has acquired citizenship (e.g. through naturalisation) and wishes to participate in the Competition utilising that nationality must demonstrate that it was acquired more than one (1) year before MD1 of the Group Stage of the Competition.
- 33.1.2. Any Participating Player who does not meet the timeline stipulated in Article 33.1.1 shall not be eligible to take part in the Competition utilising that nationality.
- 33.2. A Participating Player shall be registered to maximum one (1) Participating Club per registration window.
- 33.3. A Participating Player shall be eligible to represent maximum one (1) Participating Club per Stage of the Competition.
- 33.4. Should a Participating Player be found to be in breach of Articles 33.2 or 33.3, he shall be referred to the AFC Disciplinary Committee, and may be sanctioned with a ban on participating in minimum one (1) future edition of the Competition, unless he can demonstrate that extenuating circumstances existed. The AFC Disciplinary Committee may also issue other sanctions. His Participating Club shall:

- 33.4.1. forfeit any Match in which he has been fielded in accordance with the AFC Disciplinary Code;
 - 33.4.2. be considered to have withdrawn from the Competition in accordance with Articles 6 or 7; and
 - 33.4.3. be referred to the AFC Disciplinary Committee for any further sanction.
- 33.5. For the purposes of the contract of a Participating Player, his date of registration to a Participating Club shall be:
- 33.5.1. For Participating Players who transferred internationally to the Participating Club, the official date of the ITC submitted in accordance with Article 32;
 - 33.5.2. For Participating Players who transferred domestically to the Participating Club or are a 'homegrown' player, the official date of the contract submitted in accordance with Article 32.
- 33.6. For the purposes of Article 32.1.8, an ITC shall only be accepted after the close of a registration window where:
- 33.6.1. the Participating Club entered into a valid contract with the player prior to the close of the registration window and submitted this to the AFC; and
 - 33.6.2. (for Registration Window 1) a copy of the ITC or evidence to demonstrate that an ITC has been issued in accordance with the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players is submitted via the AFCAS online system no more than seven (7) days prior to their first Match of the Competition; or
 - 33.6.3. (for Registration Window 2) a copy of the ITC or evidence to demonstrate that an ITC has been issued in accordance with the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players is submitted via the AFCAS online system no more than seven (7) days prior to MD1 of the Group Stage; or
 - 33.6.4. (for Registration Window 3) a copy of the ITC or evidence to demonstrate that an ITC has been issued in accordance with the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players is submitted via the AFCAS online system no more than seven (7) days prior to the first Match in the Quarter Finals.

34. Player Selection List

- 34.1. For all Matches, each Participating Club will receive a 'Player Selection List' on which the numbers and full names (last name, first name) of up to thirty (30) Participating Players are listed prior to their arrival at the Stadium.
- 34.2. Each Participating Club must indicate on the Player Selection List the eleven (11) Participating Players, including the team captain, who will start the Match and the seven (7) Participating Players who are designated as substitutes.
 - 34.2.1. Each Participating Club may select up to three (3) non-citizen or foreign Participating Players and one (1) additional foreign Participating Player with the nationality of a Member Association on the Player Selection List.
- 34.3. Each Participating Club must hand their Player Selection List together with the 'Officials on the Team Bench' List with the names of the Participating Officials who shall be entitled to sit on the team bench to the AFC Match Commissioner at latest ninety (90) minutes prior to the commencement of each Match.
- 34.4. Failure to adhere with Articles 34.1 to 34.3 shall result in the matter being referred to the AFC Disciplinary Committee.

35. Match Starting List

- 35.1. Upon receipt of the Player Selection List, the AFC Match Commissioner will produce, through AFCAS, the 'Match Starting List'.
- 35.2. The Match Starting List must be signed by the Head Coach and Team Manager of each Participating Club and returned to the AFC Match Commissioner, whose signature will make it an official document.
- 35.3. The AFC Match Commissioner will ask to see the Accreditation Cards and playing kits of the Participating Players listed on the Match Starting List seventy five (75) minutes before the Match. Each Participating Player must be in possession of their Accreditation Card. Only those Participating Players possessing an Accreditation Card are entitled to participate in Matches.
- 35.4. Following the finalisation of the Match Starting List but prior to the commencement of the Match:
 - 35.4.1. If any of the eleven (11) Participating Players selected to start the Match are unable to start for any reason, they may be replaced by any of the substitutes listed on the Match Starting List.

- 35.4.2. The Team Manager for the Participating Club shall immediately notify the Referees and the AFC Match Commissioner of the change to the Match Starting List.
- 35.4.3. There is no limit to the number of Participating Players that may be replaced pursuant to Article 34.4.1.
- 35.4.4. The replaced Participating Player(s) shall no longer be eligible to participate in the Match. The Participating Club may still undertake three (3) substitutions during the Match in accordance with Article 13.3.
- 35.4.5. No Participating Players listed as substitutes on the Match Starting List may be replaced. Should such a Participating Player be unable to be fielded for any reason, the number of listed substitutes shall be reduced accordingly.
- 35.5. Failure to adhere with Articles 35.1 to 35.4 shall result in the matter being referred to the AFC Disciplinary Committee.
- 36. **Registration of Officials**
 - 36.1. Each Participating Club shall submit to the AFC the “AFC Official Registration Form for Officials” and the supporting documents by the deadlines stipulated in the relevant registration window pursuant to Article 28.
 - 36.2. Each Participating Club may register maximum fifteen (15) Participating Officials.
 - 36.3. Each Participating Club shall submit to the AFC, on the “Officials on the Substitution Bench” form via the AFCAS online system, at the commencement of each Match, up to eleven (11) Participating Officials who shall be entitled to access the Field of Play.
 - 36.3.1. Each Participating Club must register the following Participating Officials to access the Field of Play for each Match:
 - 36.3.1.1. Team Manager;
 - 36.3.1.2. Head Coach; and
 - 36.3.1.3. Team Media Officer.
 - 36.3.2. Each Participating Club may register any other eight (8) Participating Officials for any other positions, including without limitation:
 - 36.3.2.1. Assistant Coach 1;
 - 36.3.2.2. Assistant Coach 2;

- 36.3.2.3. Goalkeeper Coach;
 - 36.3.2.4. Doctor;
 - 36.3.2.5. Physiotherapist (or Sports Trainer, Physical Trainer, or other similar function);
 - 36.3.2.6. Interpreter;
 - 36.3.2.7. Technical Director; and/or
 - 36.3.2.8. Equipment Manager.
- 36.3.3. Should the Participating Club nominate less than eleven (11) Participating Officials on the “Officials on the Substitution Bench” Form or the AFC does not approve the registration of any person(s) nominated, the number of Participating Officials permitted on the team bench shall reduce proportionately.
- 36.4. Each column in the “AFC Official Registration Form for Officials” must be completed with correct information. Any individual with missing documentation shall not be eligible for registration as a Participating Official.
- 36.5. All Participating Officials will be issued with official eligibility cards authorised by the AFC Competitions Committee. Should a card be misplaced, the Participating Club shall be required to pay USD1,000 as a replacement production fee.
- 36.6. For Registration Windows 1 and 2, should the AFC not receive the “AFC Official Registration Form for Officials” with all required documents by the stipulated deadlines, the Participating Club shall be considered to have withdrawn from the Competition in accordance with Article 6. Proof of submission by facsimile, courier and/or email will not be accepted.
- 36.7. For Registration Window 3, should the AFC not receive the “AFC Official Registration Form for Officials” with all required documents by the stipulated deadlines, the Participating Club shall be considered to have registered the same Participating Officials registered for the Group Stage and Round of 16 in the relevant registration window. Proof of submission by facsimile, courier and/or email will not be accepted.
- 36.7.1. The AFC shall send an official confirmation form to the Participating Club for them to confirm the registration of the Participating Officials for the Quarter Finals, Semi Finals, and Finals.
 - 36.7.2. The Participating Club shall indicate which registered Participating Officials are no longer validly registered with the Participating Club (e.g. they have had their employment terminated or retired).

- 36.8. Once the “AFC Official Registration Form for Officials” has been received by the AFC, Participating Clubs may replace any of the listed Participating Officials at any stage of the Competition no later than seven (7) days before a Match, subject to the provision of the relevant documents in Article 37. Only when a replacement Participating Official has received his Accreditation Card will he be eligible to participate in the Competition.

37. Documents for Registration of Officials

- 37.1. Participating Officials must be registered on the “AFC Official Registration Form for Officials” submitted via the AFCAS online system, with the supporting documents set out below (unless already previously submitted to the AFC and available in AFCAS):

37.1.1. “AFC Official Registration Form for Officials”;

37.1.2. a colour copy of a validly-issued passport, containing the full name, passport number, date of birth, date of issue, date of expiry and nationality of the relevant individual. Group passports shall not be accepted;

37.1.3. a colour copy of a national identification card (where applicable);

37.1.4. one (1) passport-size colour photo (taken within three (3) months of the registration);

37.1.5. evidence of his qualification or employment based upon his function:

37.1.5.1. Head Coach: minimum AFC “A” Coaching certification or its equivalent which must have received recognition from the AFC prior to his registration as Head Coach in accordance with the AFC Regulations Governing the Recognition of Experience and Current Competence.

37.1.5.2. Assistant Coach: minimum AFC “B” Coaching certification or its equivalent which must have received recognition from the AFC prior to his registration as Assistant Coach in accordance with the AFC Regulations Governing the Recognition of Experience and Current Competence.

37.1.5.3. Team Manager: full-time employment contract;

37.1.5.4. Team Media Officer: qualification in the field of communications or evidence of related experience and full-time employment contract; and

37.1.5.5. Team Doctor: relevant medical qualification.

37.2. The AFC reserves the right to request additional documents than those set out above.

38. Size of Delegation at Matches

38.1. Each Member Association shall register a Team Official Delegation comprising of eighteen (18) Participating Players and eleven (11) Participating Officials.

38.2. The Team Official Delegation shall be granted full access to all official Competition areas, including the Field of Play and other necessary Controlled Accessed Areas, as determined by the AFC.

38.3. Each Team Manager and Team Media Officer shall be responsible for coordinating all Participating Club and media-related matters with the AFC. They shall be expected to work in a full-time, exclusive capacity from two (2) days prior until one (1) day after each Match. They shall participate in all Official Functions related to Matches in the Competition, including without limitation the Match Coordination Meeting and all press conferences.

38.4. Each Participating Club may nominate maximum eleven (11) Participating Officials to sit on the team bench, which must include the Head Coach. The identity of said Participating Officials must be confirmed on the 'Officials on the Team Bench List' to be submitted prior to the commencement of each Match.

38.5. Participating Clubs shall ensure that no unauthorised persons are permitted entry into the team dressing room, Field of Play, or any other Controlled Access Area requiring an Accreditation Card.

SECTION 6: LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

39. Arrival and Departure at away Matches

39.1. Each Participating Club shall arrive at the official hotel at the Venue of each away Match in the Competition at least two (2) days before the Match.

39.1.1. Should a Participating Club wish to arrive at the Venue only one (1) day before the Match, they shall submit their request via official letter to the AFC with valid reasons and arrival flight itinerary details at least seven (7) days prior to the Match.

39.1.2. Should the AFC entertain such a request, the late arrival of the Participating Club shall not interrupt the timing of the Official Functions (e.g. Match Coordination Meeting, Pre-Match Press Conference).

39.2. Each Participating Club shall depart the Venue the day following each away Match in the Competition.

39.3. No Participating Club shall play in any non-official matches when travelling to and from the Venue of an away Match.

39.4. Should an Away Club arrive more than (2) days before a Match or depart more than one (1) day after a Match, it shall bear the all costs relating to those additional days in the Venue.

40. Airfares

40.1. Each Participating Club is responsible for payment of all airfares (international and domestic) for their Team Official Delegation for away Matches from:

40.1.1. their departure from the territory of their Member Association (or any other location) to the Venue of their away Match; and

40.1.2. their departure from the Venue of their away Match.

40.2. Each Participating Club is required to purchase published-fare air tickets which are endorsable and allow for date changes (with or without penalty) for their Team Official Delegation, for travel to and from the Host Association.

40.3. Any costs relating to non-compliance with Articles 40.1 and/or 40.2 shall be borne by the relevant Participating Club.

41. Visas

41.1. Participating Clubs, where applicable, must apply for all necessary visas for their Team Official Delegation to attend away Matches no later than one (1) month prior to each Match. The visa application costs shall be borne by the Participating Club.

41.1.1. Any Participating Club unable to fulfill a fixture as a result of non-compliance with Article 41.1 shall be considered to have withdrawn in accordance with Article 7.

41.2. Host Clubs and their Member Associations must guarantee and ensure that visas are granted to the AFC Delegation, Away Club Team Official Delegation, AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Licensees, Broadcasters, Media, and travelling supporters, without any discrimination on the basis of gender, race, or nationality.

41.2.1. Should it be determined that Article 41.2 has been violated, provided that the Away Club has complied with Article 41.1, the Host Club shall forfeit any affected Match in accordance with the AFC Disciplinary Code.

42. Taxes

42.1. Host Clubs and/or their Member Associations are responsible for all taxes, fees, duties and any other costs related to the importation and/or exportation of equipment, merchandise and/or goods to be used for the Competition.

42.2. Host Clubs and/or their Member Associations are responsible for any other taxes, fees, duties, and any other costs as set out in the AFC Marketing and Media Regulations for AFC Club Competitions.

43. Accommodation, Meals, and Refreshments for Away Clubs

43.1. Only official hotels approved by the AFC shall be used as Accommodation.

43.2. Each Host Club must provide at their own cost for the Away Club, from two (2) days before the Match until one (1) day after the Match:

43.2.1. accommodation in an international five-star hotel for the Team Official Delegation (or an international four-star hotel if there exist no international five-star hotels in the Venue), not exceeding twenty nine (29) persons, which shall comprise of nine (9) double rooms and eleven (11) single rooms;

43.2.2. one (1) additional empty room in said hotel for the purposes of medical treatment and storage;

- 43.2.3. one (1) briefing room in said hotel for the duration of the Competition equipped with whiteboard, DVD player and television;
- 43.2.4. three (3) meals per day (international buffet style) and one (1) additional light meal on Match-day in a dedicated dining area for the Team Official Delegation (not exceeding twenty nine (29) persons);
- 43.2.5. minimum three (3) litres of water per person per day for the Team Official Delegation (not exceeding twenty nine (29) persons), as well as ice and refreshments;
- 43.2.6. minimum three (3) litres of water per person per day for the Team Official Delegation (not exceeding twenty nine (29) persons), as well as ice and refreshments, for each official training session and each Match;
- 43.2.7. daily laundry services (but no dry cleaning or pressing) for playing and training outfits (eight (8) pieces per day per person) for the Team Official Delegation (not exceeding twenty nine (29) persons);
- 43.2.8. a club official or representative of the Host Club during arrival and departure to facilitate transportation, immigration, customs, and hotel check-in; and
- 43.2.9. at least one (1) liaison officer proficient in English and/or the language of the Away Club.
- 43.3. Each Participating Club shall pay for incidental expenses incurred by its Team Official Delegation during the course of their stay in the Host Association.
- 43.4. Each Participating Club shall pay for any costs incurred by additional members of their delegation not part of their Team Official Delegation.
- 43.5. Each Participating Club shall pay for any extension of stay in the Host Association of any member of their Team Official Delegation, other than where expressly permitted in these Regulations.
- 43.6. Should an Away Club decide to be accommodated in a different hotel than that proposed by the Host Club, it shall be responsible for its own costs. It shall ensure that the Host Club is notified at least one (1) month prior to the Match.
- 43.7. When available, the Host Club and Away Club must be accommodated in different hotels from the Match Officials.

44. Accommodation, Meals and Refreshments for Match Officials

44.1. Each Host Club must provide at their own cost for the AFC Delegation, from their arrival at the Venue of a Match until one (1) day after the Match:

44.1.1. accommodation in an international five-star hotel different from the Team Official Delegation unless approved by the AFC (or an international four-star hotel if there are no international five-star hotels in the Venue);

44.1.2. three (3) meals per day (international buffet style) and one (1) additional light meal on Match-day;

44.1.3. minimum three (3) litres of water per person per day, as well as ice and refreshments, at the Accommodation and Stadium;

44.1.4. minimum three (3) litres of water per Referee per day, as well as ice and refreshments, for their referee training sessions;

44.1.5. daily laundry services (but no dry cleaning or pressing) for playing, training, and business outfits of eight (8) pieces per day per person for the Referee Assessor and Referees;

44.1.6. daily laundry services (but no dry cleaning or pressing) for playing, training, and business outfits of six (6) pieces per day per person for the other Match Officials;

44.1.7. a club official or representative of the Host Club during arrival and departure to facilitate transportation, immigration, customs, and hotel check-in; and

44.1.8. liaison officers proficient in English.

45. Arrangements for Licensees

45.1. Each Host Club must assist any Licensees, upon request, to secure Accommodation of sufficient quality on the same terms as available to the AFC, in first-class hotels in a Venue, as well as reasonable transportations service from the Accommodation and centre of each Venue to a Stadium, and if applicable, air transportation to and between Venues.

46. Local Land Transportation for the Away Club and Match Officials

46.1. Each Host Club must provide at their own cost for the Away Club, from two (2) days before the Match until one (1) day after the Match:

46.1.1. one (1) bus with minimum forty-five (45) seats; and

46.1.2. one (1) sedan car,

for transportation of the Team Official Delegation to training, Matches, Official Functions, and airport transfers; and

46.1.3. one (1) additional luggage truck for airport transfers and Match day.

46.2. Subject to the relevant national law, where requested by the AFC or the AFC Match Commissioner, a police escort shall be provided to the Away Club Team Official Delegation for its travel to training, Matches, Official Functions, and airport transfers.

46.3. Each Host Club must provide at their own cost for the appointed Match Officials, from their arrival at the Venue of a Match until one (1) day after the Match:

46.3.1. one (1) sedan car for the AFC Match Commissioner;

46.3.2. one (1) sedan car for the AFC General Coordinator or AFC Assistant General Coordinator;

46.3.3. one (1) van for the Referee Assessor and Referees; and

46.3.4. additional transportation for other appointed Match Officials.

47. Disciplinary Action

47.1. Should a Host Club fail to provide for any of the matters set out in Articles 43 to 46, it shall forfeit its Match Subsidy and may be subject to any further action that the AFC Disciplinary Committee deems necessary.

48. Submission of Match DVD

48.1. The Host Club is responsible to provide, at its own cost:

48.1.1. one (1) copy of a Match DVD for each Match played at its Stadium to the AFC Match Commissioner immediately after the Match; and

48.1.2. one (1) copy of a Match DVD for each Match played at its Stadium to the AFC by latest the day after the Match.

48.2. The Host Club shall guarantee that the Match DVD is of good quality and covers the entire duration of the Match. The Match DVD shall not be delivered until it has been examined and approved by the AFC Match Commissioner.

48.3. Should a Host Club fail to provide for any of the matters set out in Articles 48.1 and/or 48.2, it shall be fined a maximum of USD10,000 and may be subject to any further action that the AFC Disciplinary Committee deems necessary.

49. Neutral Venues

- 49.1. The responsibilities and obligations of the Participating Clubs for Matches played in a neutral Venue are set out at **Appendix 3**.

SECTION 7: MEDIA

50. AFC Stadium Regulations and AFC Marketing and Media Regulations

- 50.1. The Host Club and/or Host Association are responsible, at their own cost, to ensure that all requirements for Media set out in the AFC Stadium Regulations and AFC Marketing and Media Regulations are met.
- 50.2. Where there are any discrepancies between the same matters set out in these Regulations and the Marketing and Media Regulations, these Regulations shall prevail to the extent of any inconsistency.

51. Media Accreditation

- 51.1. The Host Club must implement an accreditation programme for Media as instructed by the AFC to control and manage access to the Stadium.
- 51.2. The AFC Commercial Rights Partner shall produce media identity bibs for photographers, and television and ENG crews, under the supervision of the AFC. The Host Club shall be responsible for the distribution and collection of bibs of accredited photographers and written press. The Local Media Officer shall control and manage the distribution and collection of Official Photographers' bibs. The AFC Commercial Rights Partner shall be responsible for their distribution and collection of bibs of the Host Broadcaster and Broadcasters.
- 51.3. The Host Club, at its own cost, must put in place all reasonable security measures to protect the commentary area, camera positions, and equipment of the Broadcasters.

52. Media Access

- 52.1. Representatives of the written press and radio journalists are not permitted on the Field of Play or the area between the boundaries of the Field of Play and the spectators, with the exception of accredited Media who shall carry out their duties in the specific locations assigned to them.
- 52.2. Only photographers, cameramen of the Host Broadcaster and the main visiting Broadcaster and the personnel required to operate the electronic television cameras of the Host Broadcaster are allowed in the area between the boundaries of the field of play and the spectators, where they will carry out their work in the specific locations assigned to them.
- 52.3. No Media representatives are permitted to enter any team dressing room at any stage of any Match.
- 52.4. The Host Club and its Member Association shall ensure that the AFC, the Host Broadcaster, and all Broadcasters have free access to the Stadium from three (3) days prior to each Match until one (1) day following each Match, to allow for

the resolution of any technical issues and for the assembly of the relevant infrastructure required to execute the Media Rights.

- 52.5. The Host Club and its Member Association are responsible for ensuring that the Media Rights are protected and that no unofficial or unauthorised broadcaster and/or video or ENG camera crews are permitted access to any Stadium without the prior written permission of the AFC.

53. Training Sessions

- 53.1. From two (2) days before a Match, all training sessions are open to the Media.
- 53.2. Should a Participating Club wish to close its training session to the Media, it shall, as a minimum, open the session for the first fifteen (15) minutes.
- 53.3. If a training session is held at a Stadium, the areas accessible by the Media shall be the same as available to them during Matches. Access to such areas shall be security-controlled by the Host Club.

54. Press Conferences

- 54.1. The Host Club is responsible for the organisation of a pre-Match press conference to be conducted under the supervision of the Local Media Officer at least one (1) day prior to each Match it hosts in the Competition.
- 54.2. The Head Coach and minimum one (1) of the proposed eleven (11) starting Participating Players of each Participating Club must attend the pre-Match press conference for each Match in which they participate.
- 54.3. The Head Coach of each Participating Club and the Man of the Match must attend the post-Match press conference for each Match in which they participate, commencing no later than fifteen (15) minutes after the Match.
- 54.4. Each Team Media Officer must ensure attendance of the Head Coach and the relevant Participating Player(s).
- 54.5. Each Participating Club is responsible (if applicable) for the interpretation of its Head Coach and relevant Participating Players into English. Interpretation into the local language (if applicable) shall be the responsibility of the Host Club.
- 54.6. Non-compliance with Articles 54.2 and/or 54.3 shall result in the matter being referred to the AFC Disciplinary Committee, which shall issue a minimum fine of USD5,000 against the relevant individual and may issue a ban from the dressing room and/or the substitutes' bench.

55. Mixed Zone

- 55.1. Following each Match, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall enter the Mixed Zone on their way from the dressing room to their bus, which will be in operation from fifteen (15) minutes after the completion of a Match.
- 55.2. Non-compliance with Article 55.1 shall result in the matter being referred to the AFC Disciplinary Committee, which shall issue a minimum fine of **USD5,000** against the Participating Club.

56. Interviews

- 56.1. If requested by the AFC or its Commercial Rights Partner and agreed by the Participating Club, each Participating Club shall make their Head Coach and one (1) Participating Player available the day before each Match for an interview of up to ten (10) minutes, to be recorded by the Host Broadcaster or other Broadcaster, any Licensee or Official Partner, or by the AFC official website.
- 56.2. All interview locations shall be designated by the Local Media Officer or AFC Match Commissioner.
- 56.3. Non-compliance with Article 56.1 shall result in the matter being referred to the AFC Disciplinary Committee, which shall issue a minimum fine of **USD5,000** against the relevant individual and may issue a ban from the dressing room and/or the substitutes' bench.

57. Flash Interviews

- 57.1. Participating Players and Participating Officials are not permitted to give interviews during the Match, on the Field of Play, or in its immediate vicinity, without the express permission of the AFC.
- 57.2. An AFC Media Officer and/or Local Media Officer may designate an area which 'flash' interviews for the Host Broadcaster and the visiting Media Rights-holding Broadcaster (if applicable), may occur following each Match. The Local Media Officer shall be informed by the AFC or the AFC Commercial Rights Partner of the individuals requested to participate.
- 57.3. The AFC Media Officer and/or Local Media Officer shall inform the Team Media Officer(s) in the final minutes of the Match if the Head Coach or Participating Player(s) have been requested to participate. Those individuals are obliged to participate in any such 'flash interview'.
- 57.4. Non-compliance with Articles 57.3 shall result in the matter being referred to the AFC Disciplinary Committee, which shall issue a minimum fine of **USD5,000** against the relevant individual and may issue a ban from the dressing room and/or the substitutes' bench.

SECTION 8: EQUIPMENT

58. AFC Equipment Regulations

- 58.1. Each Participating Club must comply with the AFC Equipment Regulations.
- 58.2. The AFC Equipment Regulations are operational from the arrival of each Team Official Delegation at a Controlled Access Area until the departure of each Team Official Delegation from such areas.

59. AFC Badges

- 59.1. Each Participating Club shall allow space on its playing jersey to affix the relevant AFC badges as required by the AFC Equipment Regulations.

60. Kit Approval Procedure

- 60.1. Each Participating Club shall submit to the AFC for its approval one (1) sample of all kit, as defined in the AFC Equipment Regulations by **latest eight (8) weeks before the commencement of the Competition or alternatively at the Club Workshop.**
- 60.2. Each Participating Club shall submit to the AFC for its approval one (1) sample of all other apparel to be worn by their Team Official Delegation within the Controlled Access Areas during the Competition by **latest eight (8) weeks before the commencement of the Competition or alternatively at the Club Workshop.**
- 60.3. Should any equipment submitted to the AFC infringe the AFC Equipment Regulations or these Regulations, the Participating Club shall be required to resubmit corrected equipment to the AFC. In addition, the Participating Club may be required to present additional samples at any Team Workshop.
- 60.4. The AFC Match Commissioner, the AFC General Coordinator, and/or the AFC Marketing Manager all have the right and duty to inspect the kit of each Team Official Delegation at each Venue, and are entitled to seize and send such items to the AFC Headquarters for further inspection following each Match.

61. Responsibility

- 61.1. The AFC has the sole authority to approve the equipment (including kit) set out in the AFC Equipment Regulations.
- 61.2. Each Participating Club agrees to indemnify the AFC and hold it harmless from any and all damages in the event that a conflict arises as a result of any endorsement deal existing between itself and its sponsor(s) which contravenes the AFC Equipment Regulations.

61.3. Non-compliance with any aspect of Section 8 shall result in the matter being referred to the AFC Disciplinary Committee.

SECTION 9: TICKETING

62. General Conditions

- 62.1. Each Host Club shall be responsible for the production, distribution, and sales of all Tickets. The AFC shall provide a Ticket template design to the Participating Clubs.
- 62.2. Tickets shall include seat numbering and serial numbering, and only include those Competition Marks and or marks of Licensees which are part of the Ticket template design.
- 62.3. The Host Club and its Member Association must ensure that access to the Stadium is granted to the AFC Delegation, Away Club Team Official Delegation, AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Licensees, Broadcasters, Media and travelling supporters without any discrimination on the basis of gender, race, or nationality.
- 62.4. The AFC Competitions Committee shall determine the Ticketing policy (including distribution of Tickets) for the Finals in accordance with Article 74.

63. Terms and Conditions

- 63.1. In collaboration with the Participating Clubs, the AFC shall issue special ticketing terms and conditions which are applicable to all Ticket holders, including without limitation Member Associations, and which must be communicated to all relevant parties.

64. Complimentary Tickets

- 64.1. The Host Club shall provide the following complimentary Tickets to each Away Club:
 - 64.1.1. one (1) VVIP Ticket;
 - 64.1.2. five (5) VIP Tickets; and
 - 64.1.3. twenty (20) Tickets of the next-best category.
- 64.2. The Host Club shall provide the following Tickets for each Match to the AFC at least one (1) month prior to the Competition:
 - 64.2.1. fifty percent (50%) of the VVIP Tribune (including without limitation, royal boxes, sky or hospitality boxes and suites, or other type of suite);
 - 64.2.2. sixty (60) VIP Tickets;
 - 64.2.3. four hundred and ninety (490) Tickets of the next best category;

- 64.2.4. five hundred (500) Tickets of the second next best category; and
- 64.2.5. up to two hundred and fifty (250) Tickets to any Official Functions and/or special hospitality facilities at the Stadium, subject to capacity.
- 64.3. “Best Category” refers to the best Tickets available in the best category entitling the Ticket holder to sit in the sector immediately adjacent to the VIP area which in or directly opposite to the VIP Tribune.
- 64.4. All Tickets shall be provided in a continuous block.
- 64.5. The AFC shall be able to purchase Tickets at face value and on an individual Match basis for itself and Licensees from each Host Club.
- 64.6. The AFC reserves all Ticket Rights relating to the Finals in accordance with Article 74. The AFC is entitled to request any additional Tickets the number of which shall be communicated to the Host Club and/or its Member Association at the appropriate time.
- 65. Purchasable Tickets**
 - 65.1. The Host Club and its Member Association must make available at least five percent (5%) of the net saleable capacity of its Stadium available exclusively to the supporters of each Away Club, in a segregated, safe area to be determined by the Host Club and the AFC.
 - 65.2. This allocation shall be comprised of a mixture of Category 1 and Category 2 Tickets. The number of Tickets to be purchased must be declared to the Host Club by no later than two (2) weeks prior to the Match. The Away Club is responsible for all Tickets purchased, even if not utilised. The price of the Tickets shall not exceed the price of comparable Tickets that are sold to the supporters of the Host Club.
 - 65.3. The Host Club shall provide the AFC Commercial Rights Partner with the opportunity to buy Tickets at face-value for each Match. The number of Tickets to be purchased must be declared to the Host Club by no later than two (2) weeks prior to the Match.

SECTION 10: MEDICAL & ANTI-DOPING

66. Medical Facilities and Treatment

66.1. Each Participating Club is responsible, for all members of its Team Official Delegation, for the cost of any:

66.1.1. hospitalisation (admission to hospital);

66.1.2. surgical operations not provided for in Article 66.1; and

66.1.3. specialised investigative procedures.

66.2. The Host Club and its Member Association are responsible, for each Away Club from two (2) days before the Match until one (1) day after the Match, the costs of the following medical treatments sustained or occurring within the Host Association:

66.2.1. outpatient treatment (non-admission to hospital);

66.2.2. minor surgeries (e.g. suturing);

66.2.3. radiological investigations; and

66.2.4. emergency treatment.

66.3. The Host Club and its Member Association are responsible for the costs of the medical treatment set out at Article 66.1 for the AFC Delegation from their arrival at the Venue of the Match until one (1) day after the Match.

66.4. The Host Club and its Member Association at their own cost, must provide for each Match:

66.4.1. an emergency medical room located in close proximity to the dressing rooms and Field of Play equipped with the following medical supplies:

66.4.1.1. oxygen with appropriate masks / oral airway;

66.4.1.2. splints (for spinal injuries);

66.4.1.3. stretchers (preferably hardboard);

66.4.1.4. suction machine;

66.4.1.5. I/V dripsets with emergency injections and medication;

66.4.1.6. minor surgery supplies and equipment;

- 66.4.1.7. automated external defibrillator;
- 66.4.2. an air-conditioned, brightly-lit and well ventilated doping control room available at all times at the Stadium, equipped with the following:
 - 66.4.2.1. one (1) table and four (4) chairs;
 - 66.4.2.2. one (1) cabinet with a lock;
 - 66.4.2.3. attached bathroom and toilet equipped with washbasin, mirror, and shower;
 - 66.4.2.4. sofa for eight (8) persons;
 - 66.4.2.5. refrigerator equipped with non-alcoholic drinks in sealed mineral water bottles and canned juices; and
 - 66.4.2.6. a television.
- 66.5. Failure to provide any of the matters contained in Articles 66.4.1 or 66.4.2 will result in the Host Club forfeiting its Match Subsidy and being referred to the AFC Disciplinary Committee which may impose further sanctions.
- 67. Medical Personnel**
 - 67.1. The Host Club and its Member Association, at their own cost for each Match, must provide:
 - 67.1.1. one (1) certified medical officer supported by a team of support para-medical staff trained in emergency medical care (CPR/ALTS) in the Stadium emergency medical room;
 - 67.1.2. the following Field of Play medical services:
 - 67.1.2.1. one (1) medical officer trained in emergency medicine;
 - 67.1.2.2. eight (8) trained stretcher bearers in good physical condition; and
 - 67.1.2.3. two (2) ambulances with designated drivers equipped with oxygen, masks, defibrillator, I/V dripsets, emergency medicaments, and trained medical staff;
 - 67.1.3. the following doping control personnel:
 - 67.1.3.1. one (1) Doping Control Assistant (medical officer);
 - 67.1.3.2. four (4) Doping Control Chaperones; and

67.1.3.3. one (1) Security Officer.

67.2. Failure to provide any of the matters contained in Article 67.1 will result in the Host Club forfeiting its Match Subsidy and be referred to the AFC Disciplinary Committee which may impose further sanctions.

68. Anti-Doping

68.1. Doping is prohibited. The AFC Anti-Doping Regulations, the AFC Disciplinary Code, and all relevant AFC directives in relation to anti-doping are applicable to the Competition.

68.2. The AFC shall inform each Host Club and its Member Association by means of a circular of the doping control procedure for the Competition.

68.3. The AFC Medical Committee shall be responsible for the approval of the WADA-accredited laboratory which shall carry out the analysis of all doping samples.

SECTION 11: DISCIPLINARY

69. Disciplinary Measures

- 69.1. All disciplinary measures in relation to the Competition shall be undertaken in accordance with the current AFC Statutes, AFC Disciplinary Code, AFC Code of Ethics and any relevant AFC circular.
- 69.2. The AFC may introduce new disciplinary rules and sanctions for the duration of the Competition. Such rules shall be communicated to the Participating Clubs and their Member Associations one (1) month before the first Match of the Competition at latest.
- 69.3. All Participating Players agree to:
 - 69.3.1. respect the spirit of fair play, non-violence, and the authority of the Match Officials;
 - 69.3.2. behave accordingly; and,
 - 69.3.3. refrain from doping.

70. Cautions and Expulsions

- 70.1. All matters relating to cautions and/or expulsions, including the carrying forward of cautions between stages of the Competition, shall be undertaken in accordance with the AFC Disciplinary Code except where expressly set out below.
- 70.2. Any Participating Player who completes the Preliminary Stage having cumulatively received one (1) caution shall carry-over that caution to the Playoff Stage.
- 70.3. Any Participating Player who completes the Playoff Stage having cumulatively received one (1) caution shall not carry-over that caution to the Group Stage.
- 70.4. Any Participating Player who completes the Group Stage having cumulatively received one (1) caution shall not carry-over that caution to the Knockout Stage.
- 70.5. Any Participating Player who completes the Semi Finals having cumulatively received one (1) caution shall not carry-over that caution to the Final.

71. Indiscipline or Violent Conduct

- 71.1. Any individual reported for any act of indiscipline or violent conduct at the Stadium (including without limitation within the team dressing room or on the Field of Play), Official Training Site, Accommodation, or any other location within the Venue of a Match shall be referred to the AFC Disciplinary Committee.

72. Protest

A protest is an objection of any kind to any matter that has a direct effect on Matches and any matters related to breach of these Regulations.

72.1. Unless otherwise stipulated, protests shall be:

72.1.1. submitted in writing to the AFC Match Commissioner within two (2) hours of the Match in question;

72.1.2. followed up with a full written report, including a copy of the original protest, sent to the AFC General Secretariat by facsimile or registered letter to the AFC within forty eight (48) hours of the end of the Match.;

72.1.3. accompanied by a fee of USD500 submitted by the same deadline stipulated in Article 72.2.2 above, to be considered valid.

72.2. No protest shall be lodged relating to the Referee's decisions regarding facts connected with play. Such decisions are final and not subject to appeal, unless expressly otherwise stipulated in the AFC Disciplinary Code.

72.3. Should the AFC Disciplinary Committee determine that a protest is unfounded or irresponsible, it may impose a fine and the protest fee shall be forfeited.

72.4. If any of the formal conditions of a protest as set out in these Regulations are not met, such protest shall be disregarded. Following the completion of the final Match of the Competition, all protests shall be disregarded.

72.5. The AFC Disciplinary Committee shall make decisions on protests. The AFC Disciplinary Committee may transfer a protest to the AFC Competitions Committee for its decision if it is deemed to be purely operational in nature.

73. Arbitration

73.1. Any dispute in connection with the Competition shall be promptly settled by negotiation.

73.2. In compliance with the AFC Statutes, Participating Clubs, Member Associations, Participating Players, and Participating Officials are prohibited from initiating disputes in an ordinary court of law and must submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the AFC.

73.3. Participating Clubs, Member Associations, Participating Players, and Participating Officials acknowledge and accept that, once all internal channels have been exhausted at the AFC, their sole recourse shall be to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS). The Code of Sports-related Arbitration shall be applicable. The language of arbitration shall be English.

- 73.4. The jurisdiction of the CAS to resolve disputes is only available where it has not been expressly excluded or a decision is declared as final and binding and not subject to appeal.

SECTION 12: ADMINISTRATION

74. Financial Matters

74.1. Where set out in these Regulations, the Participating Clubs shall settle costs among themselves in an amicable manner.

74.2. The AFC shall pay for:

74.2.1. the international travel costs and allowances for Match Officials;

74.2.2. all doping control expenses; and

74.2.3. the following insurances:

74.2.3.1. medical insurance for Match Officials;

74.2.3.2. personal accident insurance for Match Officials;

74.2.3.3. travel insurance for Match Officials; and

74.2.3.4. trophy insurance.

74.3. Each Host Club shall retain all receipts from the sale of Match tickets. The receipts from the sale of Match tickets of each match of the Final shall be distributed as follows:

74.3.1. ninety percent (90%) to the Host Club;

74.3.2. ten percent (10%) to the AFC.

75. Match Subsidy

75.1. The Match Subsidy for Participating Clubs shall be made up of one or more of the following payments:

75.1.1. travel subsidy;

75.1.2. performance bonus; and

75.1.3. participation fee.

75.2. Match subsidies shall be sent directly to the Member Association of the Participating Club(s), unless otherwise directed by the Member Association.

75.3. The AFC will deduct any amount owed by Participating Clubs as a result of a violation of these Regulations and/or decision of the AFC Disciplinary Committee or other competent body of the AFC from their Match Subsidy.

Travel Subsidy

75.4. For each Match of the relevant Stage of the Competition set out below, the Away Club shall receive the corresponding travel subsidy:

75.4.1. Preliminary Stage: Nil

75.4.2. Playoff Stage : USD20,000;

75.4.3. Group Stage : USD34,200;

75.4.4. Round of 16 : USD30,000;

75.4.5. Quarter Finals : USD30,000;

75.4.6. Semi Finals : USD30,000; and

75.4.7. Finals : USD60,000.

75.5. For the Group Stage, the travel subsidy shall be paid in three (3) installments after MD2, MD4, and MD6 provided that the club has fulfilled all obligations under the relevant Articles of these Regulations.

Performance Bonus

75.6. For each Match in the Group Stage, the performance bonus will be paid:

75.6.1. for the Winner: USD40,000; and

75.6.2. for each Participating Club in the case of a draw: USD20,000.

Participation Fee

75.7. Each Participating Club shall receive a participation fee for taking part in the following Stages of the Competition:

75.7.1. Round of 16 : USD50,000;

75.7.2. Quarter Finals : USD80,000 and

75.7.3. Semi Finals : USD120,000.

76. Prize Money

76.1. The AFC will pay the following prize money:

76.1.1. Champion : USD1,500,000;

76.1.2. Runner-Up : USD750,000.

77. Awards

77.1. The following awards shall be presented:

77.1.1. Most Valuable Player (of the Competition);

77.1.2. Most Valuable Player (for each Match);

77.1.3. Top Goalscorer (of the Competition); and the

77.1.4. AFC Fair Play Award (of the Competition).

77.2. The Most Valuable Player of the Competition is awarded to the Participating Player who has a major influence on each of his Matches and the Competition overall.

77.3. The Most Valuable Player of the Match is awarded to the Participating Player who has a major influence on an individual Match.

77.4. The Top Goalscorer is awarded to the Participating Player who has scored the highest number of goals in the Competition. Goals scored in the Preliminary Stage and Playoff Stage are not taken into account. In the event of a tie, the number of assists will be taken into account to identify the winner.

77.5. The AFC Fair Play Award is awarded to the Participating Club who has collected the most Fair Play points in the Competition.

77.5.1. The Participating Club may be disqualified if it or any of its Team Official Delegation at any Match is involved in severe misconduct throughout the Competition.

77.6. The AFC Competitions Committee may decide to introduce further awards.

78. Trophy and Medals

78.1. The original Competition trophy is presented to the Champion during the prize presentation ceremony and shall remain in the possession of the AFC at all times thereafter. The Champion shall subsequently be awarded a full-size replica by the AFC as its permanent possession.

78.2. The AFC shall award the following medals:

78.2.1. forty-five (45) gold medals to the Champion; and

78.2.2. forty-five (45) silver medals to the Runner-Up.

78.3. Additional medals may be produced upon request and at the cost of the requesting Participating Club.

78.4. The replica trophy awarded to the Winner must remain within its control at all times, and must not leave its region or territory of its Member Association without the prior written consent of the AFC. The Winner must not permit the replica trophy to be used in any context where a third-party (including without limitation, their sponsors and other commercial partners) is granted visibility or in any other way which could lead to an association between any third party and the trophy and/or the Competition. The AFC may issue additional trophy guidelines which the Winner must comply with from time to time.

79. Prize Presentation Ceremony

79.1. A prize presentation ceremony, managed and controlled by the AFC and coordinated with the Host Club, its Member Association, and the AFC Commercial Rights Partner, shall be held immediately after the final Match of the Competition to present the awards, trophies, and medals listed in Article 78.

79.2. The Participating Players and Participating Clubs that qualify to receive the awards, trophies, and medals are required to attend the relevant prize presentation ceremony. Participating Clubs shall be represented by the eighteen (18) Participating Players, Head Coach and one other Participating Official registered in the Team Official Delegation for that match for the prize presentation ceremony following the Final. No other officials, players, or staff of the Participating Clubs may participate in the prize presentation ceremony.

80. Finals

80.1. The Finals shall be organised and managed by the AFC in collaboration with the Host Club and its Member Association, including without limitation:

80.1.1. Tickets and Ticketing in accordance with Articles 62.4 and 64.6;

80.1.2. Protocol;

80.1.3. Match organisation;

80.1.4. Marketing; and

80.1.5. Media.

80.2. Any additional events planned before, during and after the Final by a Participating Club shall be communicated at least seven (7) days prior and approved by the AFC.

81. Protocol

- 81.1. The AFC Protocol Guidelines for AFC Champions League shall apply for all Matches.

82. Special Instructions

- 82.1. The AFC Competitions Committee shall, in conjunction with the various Host Associations, issue any instructions necessitated by special circumstances which might arise in the organisation of Matches.

- 82.2. These instructions shall form an integral part of these Regulations.

83. Force Majeure

- 83.1. The AFC Competitions Committee is the only body capable of declaring a Force Majeure event.

84. Matters not provided for

- 84.1. Matters not provided for in these Regulations shall be decided by the AFC Competitions Committee. Such decisions are binding and final.

85. Enforcement

- 85.1. These Regulations were ratified by the AFC Executive Committee in Manila, Philippines on 29 November 2014 and came into force immediately.

For the AFC Executive Committee

President:

Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa

General Secretary:

Dato' Alex Soosay

APPENDIX 1: Determining the Ranking in a group using Fair Play criteria

1. This Appendix 1 sets out the calculation provided for in Article 11.5.2.9 of these Regulations.
2. Each Participating Club shall be awarded points for receiving red and yellow cards as indicated below:
 - 2.1 per yellow card: one (1) point;
 - 2.2 per red card (as a consequence of two yellow cards): three (3) points;
 - 2.3 per red card (direct):three (3) points; and,
 - 2.4 per yellow card followed by a red card (direct): four (4) points.
3. The Participating Club receiving the least number of points shall be ranked highest. The remaining Participating Clubs shall be ranked in descending order.

APPENDIX 3: Obligations of Participating Clubs playing Matches in a Neutral

[illegible]

Venue

1. This **Appendix 3** sets out the logistical and financial obligations for Participating Clubs playing Matches in a neutral Venue.
2. In this **Appendix 3**, the term “Host Club” refers to the first-named team in the Match Schedule.

Responsibility of Host Club

3. The Host Club must organise and stage the Match in cooperation with the:
 - 3.1 instructions of the AFC;
 - 3.2 Member Association on whose territory the Match shall be played;
and
 - 3.3 local authorities.
4. All costs relating to the staging of the Match are borne by the Host Club.

Visas

5. Visa matters set out in Article 41 apply to both Participating Clubs.

Accommodation, Meals and Refreshments

6. The Host Club must provide at their own cost for the Away Club, from two (2) days before the Match until one (1) day after the Match all matters set out in Article 43.

Local Land Transportation

7. The Host Club must provide at their own cost for the Away Club, from two (2) days before the Match until one (1) day after the Match all matters set out in Article 46.

Submission of Match DVD

8. The Host Club is responsible for the provision of the Match DVD in accordance with Article 48.

Ticketing

9. The Host Club is responsible for all aspects relating to Ticketing in accordance with Section 9.
10. The Host Club shall provide all complimentary Tickets to the Away Club in accordance with Article 64.

Financial Obligations

11. Each Participating Club may be eligible for a Match Subsidy, in accordance with Article 75.
12. The distribution mechanism set out in Article 75.1 and the deduction mechanism set out in Article 75.3 are applicable to the provision of the Match Subsidy, subject to Clause 13 of this Appendix below.
13. Regardless of which Stage of the Competition a Match is played, the travel subsidy for Matches governed by this Appendix shall be distributed:
 - 13.1 USD20,000 to the Host Club, where the Match is played at the Stadium of the Away Club; or
 - 13.2 USD20,000 to the Away Club, where the Match is played in a neutral Venue.
14. Notwithstanding the above, a Host Club who receives a travel subsidy in accordance with Clause 13.1 of this Appendix, can negotiate with the Host Association on an agreed sum and payment structure to cover Match organisation costs, accommodation and other logistical arrangements.

Documents for Approval of Neutral Venue

15. The Host Club must submit a confirmation letter from the Host Association which sets out the:
 - 15.1 name of the Stadium;
 - 15.2 kick-off time;
 - 15.3 Match date;
 - 15.4 Accommodation for the visiting Participating Team; and
 - 15.5 Accommodation for the AFC Match Officials.
16. The Host Club must submit letters from the Participating Clubs and their Member Associations which:
 - 16.1 agree to the proposed neutral Venue and Stadium;
 - 16.2 agree to any additional terms and conditions stipulated by the AFC; and
 - 16.3 set out the bank account for the payment of the travel subsidy.

AFC Champions League Final

17. Where the Match to be played in a neutral Venue forms part of the Final:

- 17.1 the AFC shall retain the right to approve the Accommodation, Stadium, Official Training Sites, Ticketing arrangements, and local transportation arrangements in collaboration with the Host Association and/or Host Club;
- 17.2 the Host Association and/or Host Club shall be responsible for assisting with arrangements for visas; and
- 17.3 all costs incurred by the AFC shall be deducted from the Match Subsidy due to the Host Club.

APPENDIX 4: Memorandum of Understanding for Amateur Players

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (FOR AMATEUR PLAYERS)

Dato' Alex Soosay
General Secretary
Asian Football Confederation

Dear Sir,

IN CONSIDERATION of participating in the AFC Champions League 2015, we (Name of Member Association) , (Name of Club) , (Name of Player) HEREBY UNDERTAKE:

1. to comply with all the obligations and requirements imposed on us under the AFC Champions League 2015 Regulations and in particular Article 33;
2. that the player (Name of Player) had been registered by (Name of Club) and (Name of Member Association) according to its own rules and those of the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players;
3. that the player (Name of Player) is registered only with (Name of Club) from the period dated (insert start date of contract) for the duration of (insert period of contract) and expiring on (insert end date of contract) ;
4. that the player (Name of Player) is NOT contracted, registered and / or playing with any other club in the world from (insert start date of contract) until (insert end date of contract) ;
5. that (Name of Club) and (Name of Member Association) shall be responsible for ensuring that all information provided by (Name of Club) shall be accurate; and
6. to guarantee our due compliance with the obligation, liabilities and requirements of the AFC Champions League 2015 Regulations upon which participation in the AFC Champions League 2015 is granted to us and our liabilities under this undertaking.

Dated this (date) day of (Month) , (Year)

(Member Association name) & SEAL
(General Secretary name) , General Secretary

(Name of Club) & SEAL
(General Secretary name), General Secretary

(Name of Player)