



Welcome to a new Club Licensing cycle.

The year 2017 was a challenging one, as we set the aim of having all the AFC Cup Member Associations implement Club Licensing. Looking back, I am happy to note that we accomplished our goal, thanks to your support and hard work.

Looking ahead, 2018 presents us with equal challenges. We need to persevere and keep up the progress we achieved in 2017. The MAs which started implementing Club Licensing in 2017 not only need to keep up the pace, but also need to find ways of improving their Club Licensing system. The ACL Member Associations, too,

have a formidable 'to-do' list with the introduction of the AFC Club Licensing Quality Standard. As we all know, the quality compliance of the Member Associations will be assessed from this licensing cycle onwards.

Now that we have almost all the AFC Member Associations in the fold of Club Licensing, it is time for us to emphasise and improve the quality of Club Licensing in Asia. As Club Licensing Managers, you will be caught between the urge to support clubs from your own Member Associations and your moral and legal duty to enforce the licensing requirements. I am unequivocally convinced that by choosing to enforce the Club Licensing regulations to their letter and spirit, you are helping to develop professional football in your Member Association and clubs, which

would not be possible if you were to be lenient with clubs for their short-term benefits. So, let the clubs and all stakeholders in football know that Club Licensing is a tool for their benefit and is done with their betterment in mind.

I also take this opportunity to remind you of the different deadlines in this licensing cycle and to take timely action according to your Member Association's needs. Please feel free to get in touch if you need any help.

I wish you all a successful Club Licensing year 2018.

Mr Mahajan Vasudevan Nair
AFC Head of Club Licensing

CLUB LICENSING MANAGER – PROFILE



Mr Park Seong-kyun (Jeff)
Korea Football Association (KFA)

How did your career in football start and how did you progress to your current position as Club Licensing Manager?

I started my football career with the K League in 2001, right before the 2002 World Cup. I was interested in sports marketing and had an opportunity to work in the Sports Marketing Department in the K League. My 15 years of experience in various areas, i.e. marketing, public relations (communication), competition, youth, planning and human resources has allowed me to take advantage of an opportunity to work as a Club Licensing Manager because this position requires a vast knowledge and understanding of club football's progress. Club Licensing back then was under the administration of the Korea Football Association (KFA), but the responsibility was later delegated to the K League in 2015.

What are the main challenges that you are currently facing in Club Licensing in your MA?

Other Member Associations may believe that Korea's

football infrastructure is perfect, however, we are constantly struggling with infrastructure control and management matters as the ownership belongs to the local government. As much as the clubs want to concentrate and expand on their youth development programmes/activities, the shortage of facilities does not permit to do so.

What are the main goals that you are trying to achieve in/through Club Licensing in your MA?

The main goals are achieving long-term financial stability for football clubs and developing a stronger youth system. The league is currently working on the Financial Fair Play project and hoping to implement the financial regulations soon to establish a competitive league system. Besides that, the league has already started a youth assessment programme (a.k.a. YOUTH TRUST). We are now gathering all information from the past two years of consultation, investigation and assessment to create a world-class youth system. These new initiatives will be integrated into the Club Licensing regulations in near future.



Mr Andrew Soorian
Football Association of Malaysia (FAM)

In your view, what are the skills required for a Club Licensing Manager?

A Club Licensing Manager should have a passion for details in football management and possess a global perspective of club football.

What are the main challenges that you are currently facing in Club Licensing in your MA?

Having to implement a Club Licensing system at the national level for the first year in Malaysia, the current football structure has many conflicting concepts with the principle of Club Licensing. The main challenge is to restructure the football clubs in Malaysia to be in line with the global Club Licensing concept.

What are the main goals that you are trying to achieve in/through Club Licensing in your MA?

The main goals are to be able to improve and professionalise the management of football clubs in Malaysia and utilising Club Licensing as an educational tool for the development of football in Malaysia to achieve the world-class football standards.

AFC CLUB LICENSING WORKSHOP – WEST ZONE: AMMAN, JORDAN

The 2018 Club Licensing cycle in the West Zone was kicked off with a workshop on 21 – 23 January 2018 in Amman, Jordan. The workshop was organised by the AFC in collaboration with Jordan Football Association (JFA). The participants were welcomed by the Jordan Football Association's (JFA) General Secretary Mr Sizar Soubar.

The Club Licensing workshop, conducted in Arabic was led by Mr. Ahmad Bkhashkh, an AFC Club Licensing Consultant who is also the JFA's Club Licensing Manager. The workshop covered all basic elements of Club Licensing, including the objectives and importance of it, the definition and responsibilities of a licensee and licensor and the composition and responsibilities of decision-making bodies.

The workshop was structured into multiple sessions to explain each criterion of the AFC Club Licensing Regulations and AFC Cup Club Licensing



Regulations and was followed by a Q and A session. The Club Licensing Managers were also educated on the operation of CLAS during the Club Licensing Core Process.

The workshop was successful in equipping the Club Licensing Managers with necessary information and expertise to lead the Club Licensing administration in their respective Member Associations.

The AFC would like to take this opportunity to thank the Jordan Football Association and its administration for their wholehearted support and willingness to coordinate and host this workshop in Amman, Jordan.

The AFC organised a similar workshop for the AFC Cup Club Licensing implementing MAs on 5 – 6 February 2018 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

[LINK](#)

FIFA CLUB LICENSING MANAGER EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

A recently introduced FIFA-AFC's initiative, the Club Licensing Manager Exchange Programme aims to expose new Club Licensing Managers to another Member Association's Club Licensing system. This programme provides an opportunity for the Club Licensing Managers to observe good practices and procedures implemented by an experienced Club

Licensing administration and adopt those practices in his or her new Club Licensing implementing Member Association.

In November 2017, Ms Andrea Cassandra Laurel Andrea, Club Licensing Manager from the Philippine Football Federation (PFF), participated in this programme by visiting the Qatar Football Association (QFA). It was an intensive three-day programme covering areas such as the operation and expectations of a Club Licensing system and managing and coordinating communication with relevant stakeholders.

She said: "The exchange was very interesting and enlightening as it helped me understand how more advanced CL systems have managed the challenges I am currently concerned with.

"It also made clear to me how PFF/PFL's CL system should evolve and develop in the future and informal exchange and communication with hosting MA is ongoing and very beneficial for both – project's management and technical matters."

If you are interested in participating in the programme or would like to have more information, kindly contact the AFC Club Licensing Unit at club.licensing@the-afc.com.

FIFA's Exchange Program

Objectives

- To facilitate capacity-building educational opportunities for CLMs to improve by engaging and learning from advanced systems
- To foster in-depth positive engagements between CL Systems
- To efficiently collect feedback from CLM peers
- To support MAs having implemented proper CL System

Objectives of the Exchange Programme

A sample of the agenda

MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS CORNER – FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION OF MALAYSIA (FAM)'S CLUB LICENSING EFFORTS

In 2014 Malaysian football embraced the concept of club licensing. Since then, club licensing has developed to a higher level where in 2018 it became a mandatory requirement for clubs to be licensed to participate in the national league.

Although there were concerns by some football stakeholders on whether Malaysian clubs were ready for club licensing, the FAM managed to successfully implement it for all clubs. Ultimately, the FAM aspires to utilise club licensing to bring the Malaysian clubs towards greater heights in football at international level. Having the goal set, the FAM has made the effort to create benchmarking reports to help design a tailor-made regulations which are stricter than the AFC's requirements and will be applicable across all its clubs.

FAM started the 2018 club licensing implementation cycle by conducting the Club Licensing Seminar in January and inviting all participating clubs to the seminar. Additionally, a series of educational workshops to assist clubs to familiarise themselves with the regulations and promote good practices adopted by football stakeholders in Asia and at the global level is being conducted. The FAM Club Licensing Administration is also organising multiple site-visits to the clubs to provide further support towards the fulfilment of club licensing requirements.

Currently, FAM's club licensing administration is headed by Mr Andrew Soorian and assisted by Mr Vijash Naidu with four consultants in place to support the administration.



AFC CLUB LICENSING ADMINISTRATION CORNER

Announcement(s):

1. AFC Club Licensing Task Force Members

We would like to extend our warm welcome to Mr Omon Gafurov from the Uzbekistan Football Federation (UFF) and Mr Aloysius Emmanuel Vetha from the Football Association of Singapore (FAS) as members of the AFC Club Licensing Task Force.

Meanwhile, our sincerest appreciation to Mr Muminov R. Alisher and Mr Kok Wai Leong for their contribution and support during their tenure as Members of the AFC Club Licensing Task Force. We wish you the best in your future endeavours.

2. AFC League Development Programme (LDP) Award goes to the UAEFA & PLC for Introduction of New Media Education Programme for Players.

Congratulations to the United Arab Emirates Football Association (UAEFA) and the United Arab Emirates Professional League Committee (PLC) for winning the AFC LDP Award.

“The UAE PLC’s decision to introduce a mandatory player education programme under the national Club Licensing Regulations is a major step forward and will play an important role in elevating the club administration and management standards in the country,” said the AFC Development Committee Chairperson HE Mohamed Khalfan Ms Al Romaithi.

The AFC LDP award recognises the unique and exceptional work under the former AFC Development Programme.

3. AFC Club Licensing Quality Standard

This document which explains the minimum quality standards for operating a Club Licensing system has come into force this year. All Member Associations, specifically the ACL Club Licensing Implementing Member Associations, have to comply with the quality requirements to remain as a licensor in 2019 and onwards. The document was shared with the MAs via email on 23 January 2018 and is also available in the AFC website.

4. AFC Club Licensing Administration System (CLAS)

The ever-developing CLAS has been updated with new features. Among others, now the FIB and AB can conduct decision-making meetings on CLAS and the clubs and CLMs can initiate appeals from within the system.

Other Matters:

5. All regulations must be submitted and approved by the AFC no later than **Sunday, 15 April 2018**. Club licences granted based on regulations not approved by the AFC will not be accepted by the AFC.
6. All requests for the AFC’s assistance in workshop and/or activities must be made known and communicated to the AFC, at least, **two (2) months** before the event.
7. All exception requests must be submitted to the AFC for approval:
 - a. Other Matters:
 - i. **60 days** prior to the start of the Club Licensing Core Process for AFC Club Licensing Regulations
 - ii. **10 days** prior to the start of the Club Licensing Core Process for AFC Cup Club Licensing Regulations
 - b. Two-Year Rule:
 - i. Can be submitted any time during the Club Licensing season.
8. Any extraordinary applications must be notified to the AFC in writing latest by **Friday, 31 August 2018** by Member Associations. The respective Member Association shall forward all required documentation to the AFC by **Sunday, 30 September 2018** for approval.

Please refer to the respective regulations for details and procedure of the exception policy.

Please refer to the respective regulations for details and procedure of the extraordinary application.

