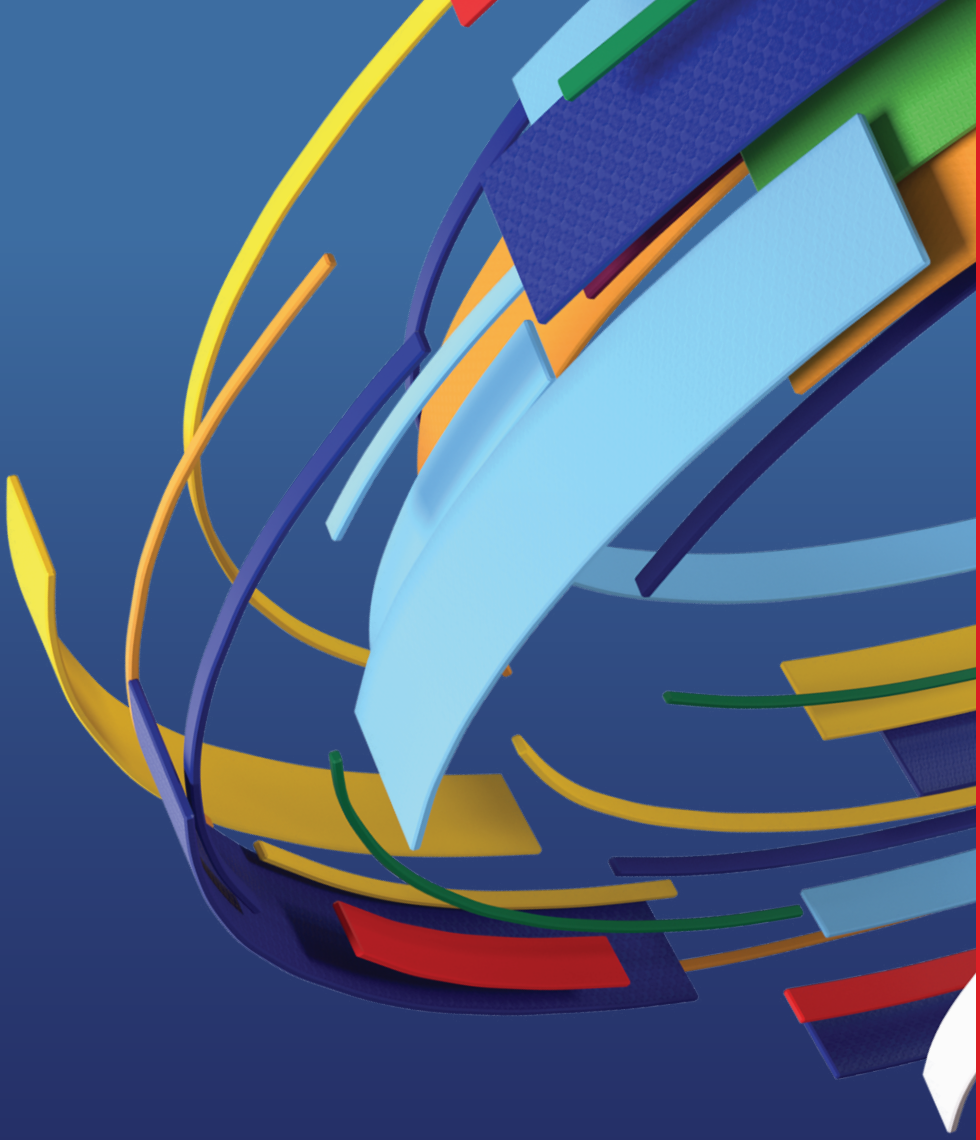


COMPETITION REGULATIONS

AFC ASIAN CUP SAUDI ARABIA 2027

OCTOBER 2026

AFC ASIAN CUP™


AFC
ASIAN
CUP

COMPETITION REGULATIONS

AFC ASIAN CUP SAUDI ARABIA 2027

AFC ASIAN CUP™

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DEFINITIONS

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

Accommodation	For the purposes of these Regulations, any location approved by the AFC which provides accommodation to the AFC Delegation, Official Team Delegations, AFC Commercial Rights Partner, and Commercial Affiliates.
Accreditation Card	For the purposes of these Regulations, any physical item which is issued by the AFC and/or Host Association 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 or the Host Association.
Accreditation Device	Any device which: (i) is issued by, or at the instruction of, the AFC and/or the Host Association to persons conducting an official function in connection with the Competition and/or an Official Function at a Site; and (ii) permits its holder to access such Site as well as any areas and zones needed to be accessed to perform the function, including (without limitation) any Accreditation Card, bib, wristband and any supplementary access devices (SAD).
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 Stadiums or Facility Areas or within the Controlled Access Areas, 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 Match Officials), medical and security staff, ball crew, 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 is also included. For the avoidance of doubt, advertising on the strip of Participating Players is excluded, other than where it is the trademark 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 the Competition, save where supplied by a Commercial Affiliate, may only include customary branding of the bona fide manufacturer.
AFC	The Asian Football Confederation.

AFCAS	The AFC Administration System, the AFC's online competition management and registration system.
AFC Commercial Rights Partner	The entity appointed by the AFC for the sale of Commercial Rights (or any part thereof) and the provision of services in relation thereto.
AFC Committee	Any Committee of the AFC as constituted in accordance with the AFC Statutes.
AFC Competitions Committee	The Standing Committee of the AFC described in Article 44 of the AFC Statutes.
AFC Delegation	(i) AFC staff members; (ii) Match Officials; (iii) other officials appointed by the AFC; (iv) AFC Committee members; and (v) AFC guests.
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 Website	The official website of the AFC (currently http://www.the-afc.com), including without limitation all other domains or official media platforms and channels created and/or owned by the AFC (e.g. Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc).
Broadcast Partner	Any entity, including the Host Broadcaster, which has been granted the Media Rights (or any part thereof) to the Competition.
Champion	The Participating Team that wins the final Match of the Competition.
Clean Site	A Site, whether inside, in the air space above, or the outer perimeter, delivered to the AFC at a prescribed time, that is free from: (i) any advertising and commercial signage of any kind, whether on any Site infrastructure, staff or volunteer uniforms, accreditations, fences, equipment, surrounding vicinity or elsewhere; (ii) third party agreements relating to the use and operation of the Site (or part thereof); (iii) encumbrances that may affect the use and exploitation of Commercial Rights; and/or (iv) third party rights such as Site naming rights.
Commercial Affiliate	Any entity which has been granted the right to exercise and exploit the Commercial Rights (or any part thereof) in respect of the Competition.
Commercial Rights	Advertising Rights, Concession Rights, Hospitality Rights, Image Rights, Media Rights, Merchandise Rights, Promotional Rights, Sponsorship Rights, Travel and Tour Rights and any other rights of a commercial nature relating to the Competition.

Competition	The AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027, which shall consist of the Qualifiers and the Finals. For the avoidance of doubt, the Competition shall include, without limitation, all Matches in the Qualifiers and the Finals, as well as all activities on the Field of Play (other than Matches), opening ceremonies, presentations or closing ceremonies, press conferences or Official Functions connected with the Qualifiers and the Finals.
Competition Data	Any and all information related to the Competition, including fixture lists, Image Rights, information and/or statistics about the Participating Teams, information and/or statistics about Participating Players' and/or Participating Officials' participation and/or performance in the Competition, Match analysis, referee decisions, and any other information in relation to the Competition.
Competition Marks	All design marks, slogans, designations, names, logos, insignia, emblems, mascot or devices (in any application) owned and/or controlled by the AFC (in any language) relating to the Competition.
Competition Website	The official website of the Competition (if any) with a dedicated URL including without limitation all other domains or official media platforms and channels of the Competition created and/or owned by the AFC (e.g. Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc) for the purposes of these Regulations.
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 Stadiums and Facility Areas.
Controlled Access Area	For the purposes of these Regulations, the Stadiums, Field of Play and Pitch Area, Official Training Sites and such other locations associated with the Matches and/or Competition, including their fences, perimeters and the aerial space above; the location of Official Functions, press centres, ticket office, IBC, any official AFC fan park, designated official hotels (including but not limited to the official hotels for the Participating Teams), Media Facilities, Hospitality boxes or such other official Hospitality and VVIP or VIP areas, and such information centres that are used in connection with the Competition, whether at the Stadiums or elsewhere within proximity of the Venues; and any other areas to which admission is regulated by the Accreditation Policy, and the surrounding and adjacent areas to the locations described above.
Digital Media	The AFC Website and any other authorised Competition Website, in addition to any 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 normal playing time.
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	For the purposes of these Regulations, the area described in Law 1 of the Laws of the Game issued by the International Football Association Board (IFAB).
FIFA	The Fédération Internationale de Football Association.
Finals	The final stage of the Competition, split into the Group Stage and Knockout Stage.
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. This shall include, without limitation, abnormally inclement weather, flood, lightning, storm, fire, explosion, earthquake, structural damage, power supplies shortage/failure, war, terrorist action, military operations, riot, crowd disorder, strike, lock-outs or other industrial action, or civil commotion, epidemic or pandemic.
Group Stage	The first stage of the Finals held in accordance with these Regulations.
Hospitality Rights	For the purposes of these Regulations, the opportunity to offer and sell hospitality and entertainment services at the Venues or within the Controlled Access Areas in combination with the Tickets whether such facilities are in boxes, marquees or otherwise, but excluding those non-commercial functions and facilities reserved for the AFC and/or Host Association officials and its guests not forming part of the Commercial Rights.
Host Association	For the purposes of these Regulations, a Member Association approved by the AFC to organise, host and stage Matches in the Competition. In the context of the Finals, this means the "Organising Association" as described in the OAA.

Host Broadcaster	The party appointed to ensure and provide the production of broadcast signals of the Matches and other events of the Competition, and the provision of all related services in accordance with the Media Rights granted to it.
Host City	Any city and/or identifiable metropolitan area in which any Match is staged.
Image Rights	The right to use still and/or moving images and/or representations of Participating Teams, Participating Players, Participating Officials, Match Officials, and other officials and persons forming part of the Competition.
International Competition	An international football competition organised by the AFC in conjunction with other continental football confederations and/or by FIFA in conjunction with other continental football confederations.
Knockout Stage	The second stage of the Finals held in accordance with these Regulations.
Laws of the Game	The laws of association football issued by the International Football Association Board (IFAB).
Manual	The AFC Competition Operations Manual which sets out the operational responsibilities of the relevant stakeholders in relation to the organising, hosting and staging of Matches and Competitions.
Match	For the purposes of these Regulations, a football match in its entirety (including a replayed and/or deferred football match, Extra Time and Penalties which takes place as part of the Competition in accordance with the Match Schedule. For the avoidance of doubt, a Match formally commences when the Stadium is officially opened to spectators and formally concludes when the Stadium is officially closed to spectators.
Match Officials	Any individual appointed to officiate a Match in the Competition in the role of the referee, assistant referee, fourth official, video assistant referee (VAR), assistant video assistant referee (AVAR), and any other match official stipulated in the Laws of the Game.
Match Schedule	For the purposes of these Regulations, the official schedule which sets out, without limitation, the dates and kick-off times on which Matches will be played, the Stadiums at which the Matches will be played, and the names of the Participating Teams.
Media	For the purposes of these Regulations, any individual granted a media Accreditation Card by the AFC.

Media Rights	The right and license to produce, edit and/or 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, a 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, world 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 granted to Commercial Affiliates for the use and exploitation of the Competition Marks and/or official designation in the manufacture, packaging, distribution, and sale of goods and services of all kinds, including items of equipment (i.e. footballs), clothing, coins, medals, games (electronic or otherwise), other collectibles and premiums related to the Competition.
Neutral Venue	Any Stadium utilised for a Match which is not in the territory of the Host Association. The designation of a Stadium as a Neutral Venue must be expressly authorised by the AFC in accordance with these Regulations.
Official Function	Any event which is officially organised or sanctioned by the AFC in connection with the Competition. 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, official draws, workshops and launch events.
OAA	For the purposes of these Regulations, the Organising Association Agreement concluded between the AFC and the Host Association for the organisation, hosting and staging the Finals of this Competition.
Official Team Delegation	The delegation of a Participating Team which is registered on AFCAS for the relevant stage of the Competition as provided for in these Regulations.
Official Training Site	For the purposes of these Regulations, any site designated by the Host Association and approved by the AFC for use by the Participating Teams throughout the Competition for training purposes.

Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup	The Standing Committee of the AFC as described in Article 56 of the AFC Statutes.
Participating Member Association	A Member Association whose representative team participates in the Competition.
Participating Official	Any official who is registered to participate in the Competition.
Participating Player	Any player who is registered to participate in the Competition.
Participating Team	Any representative team affiliated to a Participating Member Association.
Penalties	'Penalties (penalty shoot-out)' as described in the Laws of the Game.
Preliminary Joint Qualification for the FIFA World Cup 2026 and AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027	The preliminary competition organised by FIFA in collaboration with the AFC pursuant to the regulations for the FIFA World Cup 2026 Preliminary Competition, comprising two rounds (Round 1 and Round 2).
Premiums	Any promotional item (including packaging, labelling, and/or containers thereof) which incorporates any mark and/or logo of the AFC and/or any Competition Mark, and which only be distributed free of charge or as prizes.
Promotional Rights	Any advertising and/or promotions which are carried out in connection with the Competition, Competition Marks or other rights/opportunities granted by the AFC.
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.
Qualifiers	The qualifying stage of the Competition, comprising the Qualifiers Playoff and the Qualifiers Final Round.
Qualifiers Final Round	The last round in the Qualifiers to decide the Participating Teams that advance to the Finals.
Qualifiers Playoff	The home and away knockout Matches between the losing teams of Round 1 of the Preliminary Joint Qualification for the FIFA World Cup 2026 and AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027.
Regulations	These Competition Regulations.

Site	Any location that is used for the organisation, hosting and staging of the Competition. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes: (i) any Stadium; (ii) any Official Training Site; (iii) any area, Accreditation, service, Ticketing or Volunteer centre, SMCs, the IBC (if any), the MMC (if any), the VIP and VVIP areas, including the VIP Tribune and the VVIP Tribune, used in relation to the Competition or an Official Function; and (iv) any other locations, areas and/or facilities designated by the AFC in a Venue as an official site in relation to the Competition and which are Controlled Access Areas.
Sponsorship Rights	The right, in any and all media, throughout the world, and in all languages, to promote an association between the Competition and certain products, services, and/or brands, and shall include (by way of illustration only) the exclusive right to exercise rights of association with the Competition, including without limitation the right to: (i) use an official designation; (ii) use the AFC Marks and/or applicable Competition Marks on branded products and/or product packaging (including Premiums, and in relation to the Competition Marks only on items for retail sale) and/or advertising; (iii) receive commercial programme Tickets; and (iv) receive broadcast sponsorship opportunities in connection with broadcasts of a Match or Official Function.
Stadium	For the purposes of these Regulations, any stadium at which a Match is played. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes: (i) the entire premises (to the extent that a valid Accreditation Device 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 training 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) concession areas; (v) commercial display areas; (vi) buildings; (vii) the Field of Play; (viii) the media tribune; (ix) any broadcast compound; (x) the stadium media centre; (xi) the press conference room; (xii) the mixed zone; (xiii) any stands; and, (xiv) any areas beneath the stands.

Team Technical Seats	The seats located in the stands behind the technical area with access to the Field of Play and team dressing rooms.
Ticket	A pass providing access to a venue for the purpose of attending either a Match, official training 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 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.

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

(a) the singular shall include the plural and vice-versa;

(b) the feminine gender shall include the masculine and vice-versa;

(c) references to natural persons shall include any legal person or corporation;

(d) references to the AFC shall include its successors and permitted assigns, and where the context requires, AFC Committees;

(e) references to the AFC Commercial Rights Partner or Commercial Affiliates shall include where advised by the AFC, its successors and permitted assigns;

(f) all defined terms, unless otherwise stated herein and/or unless the context indicates otherwise, shall bear the same meaning as ascribed in the AFC Statutes and the Manual; and

(g) references to Articles shall mean the Articles of these Regulations, unless expressly stated otherwise.

SECTION 1 : GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027

1.1. The AFC stages the AFC Asian Cup, comprising the Qualifiers and the Finals, once every four (4) years.

1.2. These Regulations govern the rights, duties and responsibilities of the AFC, Host Associations, Member Associations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials taking part in the Competition.

1.3. These Regulations and all related 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. Further details in relation to various aspects of the Competition may be communicated to the Member Associations via circular letters. In the event of any discrepancy between the circular letters and these Regulations, the circular letters shall prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

1.4. The Manual forms an integral part and shall be read in conjunction with these Regulations. The Manual shall be binding upon all parties participating and involved in the preparation, organisation and hosting of the Competition. In the event of any discrepancy between these Regulations and the Manual, these Regulations shall prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

1.5 Any failure to adhere to any matter set out in the Manual, these Regulations and/or any related directive, decision, guideline, and/or circular issued by the AFC may be referred to the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee.

1.6. Any rights and Proprietary Interests associated with the Competition that are not granted by these Regulations and/or specific agreements to any Host Association or Participating Member Association shall vest in the AFC.

1.7. Any reference to the AFC Statutes and to AFC and FIFA regulations refer to those valid at the time of application.

2. The Asian Football Confederation

2.1. The Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup shall advise and assist the AFC Executive Committee on matters relating to the Competition in accordance with the AFC Statutes. The AFC General Secretariat shall carry out the necessary administrative work in support of the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup.

2.2. The responsibilities of the AFC General Secretariat shall include, but are not limited to:

2.2.1. recommending the Competition format, deciding the entries and draws of the Competition;

2.2.2. determining the Match Schedule (cf. Article 11);

2.2.3. selecting Stadiums for the Competition after consultation with the Host Associations (cf. Article 14);

2.2.4. appointing Match Officials and any other AFC Delegation for each Match;

2.2.5. choosing and/or approving the official football and stipulated technical material;

2.2.6. approving the choice of the WADA-accredited laboratories that will carry out doping analyses (cf. Article 46);

2.2.7. reporting cases where appropriate to the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee (cf. Article 54);

2.2.8. providing insurance coverage for the AFC Delegation appointed to any Match from the time of their departure from their home Member Association to their departure from the Venue; and

2.2.9. dealing with any other aspect of the Competition that is not the responsibility of any other body pursuant to these Regulations or the AFC Statutes (cf. Article 64).

2.3. All decisions made by the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup and/or AFC General Secretariat in relation to the Competition are final and binding and not appealable.

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

3. Host Association

3.1. The principal obligations and responsibilities of any Host Association are stipulated in (where relevant) the OAA, these Regulations, the Manual, the AFC Statutes and all other AFC regulations, directives, guidelines and circulars.

3.2. Each Host Association shall undertake, at its own cost, to:

3.2.1. observe all obligations set out in the (where relevant) OAA, these Regulations, the Manual, the AFC Statutes and all other AFC regulations, directives, guidelines and circulars and all applicable national and supra-national laws;

3.2.2. perform each of its obligations and exercise each of the rights granted to it as host, in connection with the hosting, staging and organisation of the Competition in accordance with professional standards;

3.2.3. assist and coordinate with Participating Member Associations on all arrangements relating to the Competition in agreement with the AFC;

3.2.4. negotiate with and/or lobby the appropriate government bodies and/or local authorities to assist in the successful hosting, staging and organising of the Competition;

3.2.5. obtain all applicable and relevant licenses, permits, grants and authorisations as may be required to fulfil its obligation in relation to the hosting, staging and organising of the Competition;

3.2.6. comply with the AFC's instructions on the provision of key services, facilities, equipment and infrastructure at each Stadium;

3.2.7. provide the necessary assistance and support to the AFC, AFC Commercial Rights Partner and Commercial Affiliates in relation to the use and exploitation of the Commercial Rights and all Proprietary Interests of the AFC and the protection and enforcement of rights in relation thereto;

3.2.8. procure all necessary insurance policies which shall provide coverage for all risks relating to the hosting, staging and organising of the Competition and name the AFC as a co-insured;

3.2.9. obtain all clearances and execute all required documentation to enable the free and unfettered exercise and exploitation of Commercial Rights and clearance of all products, equipment or materials relating to the exploitation of the Commercial Rights of the Competition; and

3.2.10. guarantee safety and security at the Stadium.

3.3. Each Host Association shall indemnify, hold harmless and defend the AFC, the AFC Commercial Rights Partner, its Commercial Affiliates as well as their officers, members, agents, auxiliary persons, representatives and employees from and against all liabilities, obligations, damages, losses, claims, demands, recoveries, deficiencies, costs or expenses (including without limitation all costs and expenses for finding and contracting with another Host Association able and willing to stage the Competition and/or all attorneys' fees and expenses) which such parties may suffer or incur in connection with, resulting from or arising out of any breach by the Host Association (including its officers, directors, representatives, auxiliary persons, employees or agents) or any act or omission of the Host Association (including its officers, directors, representatives, auxiliary persons, employees or agents) in connection with the performance of its obligations under the OAA and these Regulations.

4. Participating Member Associations

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

4.1.1. Each Member Association that has entered the Competition must submit a PTA.

4.1.2. The PTA and such other documents as requested by the AFC in relation to the PTA shall be completed and submitted to the AFC not later than the deadline provided by the AFC.

4.1.3. Failure to submit a validly-completed PTA to the AFC by the deadline shall result in the non-participation of the relevant Member Association.

4.2. Each Participating Member Association shall ensure as a condition of its participation in the Competition that every member of its Official Team Delegation for each Match is aware of and agrees to comply with the PTA.

4.3. Each Participating Member Association shall undertake to:

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

4.3.2. comply with the Laws of the Game;

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

4.3.4. field their strongest team throughout the Competition;

4.3.5. observe the principles of fair play;

4.3.6. ensure the good conduct of its Official Team Delegation 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;

4.3.7. accept all arrangements made by any Host Association in agreement with the AFC;

4.3.8. ensure that Participating Players and Participating Officials 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;

4.3.8.1. failure to attend and/or fully participate in any official activity or event shall result in the Participating Member Association being fined at least USD10,000; and

4.3.8.2. the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may issue further sanctions at its discretion.

4.3.9. provide to the AFC, free of charge, prior to the Competition, any photographs, audio/visual materials and/or information regarding the Participating Member

Association, Participating Team, Participating Player and/or Participating Officials including without limitation statistics and historical information and any further information as requested by the AFC;

4.3.10. link the official URL for the Competition on its official website; and

4.3.11. not establish any digital, media or social media platform in connection with the Competition without the involvement and express written approval of the AFC.

4.4. Each Participating Member Association shall, at its own expense, be solely responsible throughout the Competition for:

4.4.1. the procurement of insurance coverage for:

4.4.1.1. their Official Team Delegation which shall include without limitation hospital and surgical insurance, travel insurance, and/or sports equipment insurance for all Matches;

4.4.1.2. all risks in connection with staging and organising Matches, including but not limited to public liability insurance. The AFC shall be expressly identified as a named insured party in all such insurance policies.

4.4.2. all other necessary insurance policies, which must provide an appropriate guaranteed sum for injury and damage to persons, objects and property, and correspond with the specific circumstances of the Participating Member Association's participation in the Competition. The AFC must be notified of all insurance policies, and may request copies of any and all policies at its discretion;

4.4.3. payment of incidental expenses and for any costs incurred by its Official Team Delegation (cf. Article 48);

4.4.4. payment of any costs of extending the stay of any member of its Official Team Delegation in any Host Association (cf. Article 48);

4.4.5. obtaining visas to enter the territory of any Host Association no later than thirty (30) days prior to its first Match at that Venue. This includes all costs related to the visa application process; and

4.4.6. 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.

4.5. Each Participating Member Association shall indemnify, defend and hold the AFC and all of its officers, directors, employees, representatives, agents, subsidiaries, local organising committees 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 Participating Member Association, its Official Team Delegation, its affiliates and any third parties contracted to the Participating Member Association.

4.6. It is acknowledged that one or more Participating Member Associations may qualify directly for one or more International Competitions as a result of their performance in the Competition. Where applicable, each such Participating Member Association undertakes to participate in the relevant International Competition(s).

4.7. Participating Member Associations are not authorised to represent the AFC or the Competition without the prior written approval of the AFC.

4.8. All Participating Players and Participating Officials are encouraged to attend the AFC Annual Awards if they are nominated for an award.

4.9. Each Participating Member Association shall ensure that any decision made by the AFC relating to its duties and responsibilities is enforced immediately.

5. Entry

5.1. The AFC shall determine the Member Associations who are eligible to participate in the Competition.

5.2. Eligible Member Associations must complete a PTA and submit it to the AFC in accordance with Article 4 to confirm their entry into the Competition.

5.3. All decisions by the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup regarding entry to the Competition are final and binding and not appealable.

5.4. Twenty-four (24) Member Associations shall participate in the Finals of the Competition by virtue of:

5.4.1. qualifying through the Preliminary Joint Qualification for the FIFA World Cup 2026 and AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027;

5.4.2. qualifying through the Qualifiers; and/or

5.4.3. being the Host Association; and/or

5.4.4. being invited by the AFC to participate in the Finals.

6. Withdrawal from the Competition

6.1. All Participating Member Associations undertake that their Participating Teams shall play all of their Matches in the Qualifiers and, if relevant, all of their Matches in the Finals until elimination.

6.2. Without limitation, any Participating Member Association that (for any reason):

6.2.1. informs the AFC in writing that it does not intend to or is unable to report to a Venue and/or for a Match;

6.2.2. fails to report to a Venue and/or for a Match;

6.2.3. refuses or fails to continue a Match;

6.2.4. leaves the Stadium prior to the completion of a Match;

6.2.5. is excluded, suspended or banned by any competent body from participating in the Competition (or any stage of the Competition) at any time after the draw for the Competition (or stage, as appropriate); or

6.2.6. is excluded, suspended or banned by any competent body from participating in any Match in the Competition at any time after the relevant Match has been scheduled,

shall be considered to have withdrawn from the Competition.

6.3. Subject to Articles 6.5 to 6.7, the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup shall be responsible for making the necessary decisions where a Participating Member Association withdraws from the Competition at any stage, whether before or after commencement of the Qualifiers or Finals (as applicable), and shall be entitled to take any action it considers appropriate in such circumstances, including without limitation regarding whether or not to change the technical regulations (cf. Section 4) and/or the competition system (cf. Article 7) and, where applicable, the means of effecting such change(s).

6.4. The Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup shall be responsible for determining events of Force Majeure in connection with any withdrawal and shall, subject to Articles 6.5 to 6.7, be entitled to take any action it considers appropriate in such circumstances. Any Participating Member Association that wishes to put forward a case of Force Majeure for the consideration of the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup must do so in writing (with supporting evidence) no later than thirty (30) days after the date of its withdrawal. The AFC General Secretariat may put forward cases of Force Majeure for the consideration of the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup at its discretion at any time (provided that the case has not been referred to the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee).

6.5. In the event that a Participating Member Association withdraws from the Competition at any stage, whether before or after commencement of the Qualifiers or Finals (as applicable), the Competition shall continue with the remaining Participating Member Associations and Matches without any replacement.

For the avoidance of doubt, this Article 6.5 shall apply in all instances and is applicable even in cases of Force Majeure determined by the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the AFC General Secretariat may, at its discretion, put forward a request to replace the relevant Participating Member Association and, where applicable, the means of effecting such replacement, for the consideration of the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup, in which case the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup shall be entitled to take a decision in the matter.

6.6. Any Participating Member Association that withdraws from the Qualifiers or Finals after it has commenced (as applicable) shall have all its Matches cancelled and considered null and void. All points and goals in those Matches shall not be taken into consideration when determining the final rankings in a group pursuant to Article 7.3.

For the avoidance of doubt, this Article 6.6 shall apply in all instances and is applicable even in cases of Force Majeure determined by the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup.

6.7. Where any Participating Member Association fails to comply with Article 6.1 and withdraws from the Competition at any stage, the case shall be referred to the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee.

In this regard, any Participating Member Association that withdraws:

6.7.1 from the Qualifiers, before it has commenced, shall be fined:

6.7.1.1 at least USD10,000 if its withdrawal occurred thirty (30) days or more before its first Match in the Qualifiers; or

6.7.1.2 at least USD20,000 if its withdrawal occurred less than thirty (30) days before its first Match in the Qualifiers.

6.7.2 from the Qualifiers, after it has commenced, shall be fined at least USD50,000.

6.7.3 from the Finals, before it has commenced, shall be fined:

6.7.3.1 at least USD30,000 if its withdrawal occurred thirty (30) days or more before its first Match in the Finals; or

6.7.3.2 at least USD50,000 if its withdrawal occurred less than thirty (30) days before its first Match in the Finals.

6.7.4 from the Finals, after it has commenced, shall be fined at least USD100,000.

6.7.5 may be disqualified from participating in the next edition of the AFC Asian Cup; and

6.7.6 where relevant, may be disqualified from participating in any tournament organised under Article 4.6, if qualification has been attained.

In addition, in all instances, the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee shall order the relevant Participating Member Association to return to the AFC any subsidy that has been paid in support of its participation in the Competition (or, if not yet paid, to forfeit its right to that subsidy) and to pay compensation for any and all damages or losses suffered by, where applicable, the other Participating Member Associations, the AFC, the AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Commercial Affiliates and the Host Association. The amount of compensation shall be determined by the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee.

This Article 6.7 is not applicable in cases of Force Majeure determined by the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup, but shall apply in all other instances.

6.8. All decisions of the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup under Articles 6.3 to 6.5 shall be final and binding and not appealable.

SECTION 2 : COMPETITION SYSTEM AND MATCH SCHEDULE

7. Competition System

7.1. The AFC Competitions Committee shall decide upon the format of the Qualifiers. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.

7.2. The Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup shall decide upon the format of the Finals. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.

7.3. Should the competition system involve groups of several teams, the ranking in each group shall be determined in accordance with Article 1 of the Manual and in descending order as follows:

7.3.1. higher number of points obtained in all group Matches;

7.3.2. if two (2) or more Participating Teams are equal on points, the following criteria are applied to determine the ranking (in descending order):

Head-to-Head criteria

7.3.2.1. higher number of points obtained in the group Matches played among the Participating Teams in question;

7.3.2.2. superior goal difference from the group Matches played among the Participating Teams in question;

7.3.2.3. higher number of goals scored in the group Matches played among the Participating Teams in question;

Tiebreaker

7.3.2.4. if, after having applied the Head-to-Head criteria, two (2) or more Participating Teams still have an equal ranking, the Head-to-Head criteria shall be reapplied exclusively to the Matches between the Participating Teams in question to determine their final rankings. If this procedure does not lead to a decision, the Group Results criteria shall apply;

Group Results criteria

7.3.2.5. superior goal difference from all group Matches;

7.3.2.6. higher number of goals scored from all group Matches;

7.3.2.7. Penalties if only two (2) Participating Teams still have an equal ranking and have played their last group Match against each other;

7.3.2.8. the lower score calculated according to the number of yellow and red cards received in the group Matches (Appendix 1 of the Manual); or

7.3.2.9. the drawing of lots.

7.4. Should the competition system require the best-ranked Participating Teams from among different groups to advance, the rankings shall be determined by the method set out in Appendix 2 of the Manual.

8. Qualifiers

8.1. For the sake of completeness, the Qualifiers shall commence after the completion of the Preliminary Joint Qualification for the FIFA World Cup 2026 and AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027.

Qualifiers Playoff

8.2. The Qualifiers Playoff shall consist of Participating Teams drawn into pairings, with each pairing to be played in a home and away knockout format. The number of pairings will be determined depending on the number of Participating Teams.

8.3. Participating Teams shall play one (1) home and one (1) away Match against one (1) Participating Team in accordance with the Match Schedule. In principle, the first leg of each pairing shall be hosted by the lower-seeded Participating Team while the second leg shall be hosted by the higher-seeded Participating Team.

8.4. The Participating Team which scores the higher aggregate of goals over the two (2) legs shall be declared the winner.

8.4.1. If the Participating Teams score the same number of goals, Extra time and Penalties (if required) shall be played at the end of the second leg in accordance with Article 10.

8.5. At the conclusion of the Qualifiers Playoff:

8.5.1. the winners shall qualify for the Qualifiers Final Round; and

8.5.2. the losing teams shall be eliminated from the Competition.

Qualifiers Final Round

8.6. The Qualifiers Final Round shall consist of twenty-four (24) Participating Teams, drawn into six (6) groups of four (4) teams each, with each group played in a home and away league format.

8.7. Participating Teams shall play one (1) home and one (1) away Match against each of the other Participating Teams within its group in accordance with the Match Schedule.

8.8. At the conclusion of the Qualifiers Final Round:

8.8.1. the first-placed Participating Team in each group shall qualify for the Finals; and

8.8.2. all other Participating Teams shall be eliminated from the Competition.

9. Finals

9.1. The Finals shall commence after the completion of the Qualifiers.

Group Stage

9.2. The Group Stage shall consist of twenty-four (24) Participating Teams drawn into six (6) groups of four (4) teams each, with each group played in a centralised league format. The Participating Teams shall be designated as follows:

Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	Group E	Group F
A1	B1	C1	D1	E1	F1
A2	B2	C2	D2	E2	F2
A3	B3	C3	D3	E3	F3
A4	B4	C4	D4	E4	F4

9.3. Each Participating Team shall play one (1) Match against each of the other Participating Teams within its group in accordance with the Match Schedule.

9.4. The ranking in each group shall be determined in accordance with Articles 7.3 and 7.4.

9.5. At the conclusion of the Group Stage:

9.5.1. the first-placed and second-placed Participating Team in each group, as well as the four (4) best third-placed Participating Teams among all groups, shall qualify for the Knockout Stage; and

9.5.2. all other Participating Teams shall be eliminated from the Competition.

Knockout Stage

9.6. The Knockout Stage shall consist of the round of 16, quarter-finals, semi-finals and final Match, with each round played in a centralised knockout format.

9.7. For each round of the Knockout Stage, Participating Teams shall play one (1) Match in accordance with the Match Schedule.

9.8. The sixteen (16) Participating Teams that qualify from the Group Stage shall play the round of 16 as follows:

R16-1: 2A vs 2C
R16-2: 1D vs 3rd from B, E, or F
R16-3: 1B vs 3rd from A, C, or D
R16-4: 1F vs 2E
R16-5: 1C vs 3rd from A, B, or F
R16-6: 1E vs 2D
R16-7: 1A vs 3rd from C, D, or E
R16-8: 2B vs 2F

For the avoidance of doubt, the above does not represent the chronological order in which the matches will be played.

9.9. The following table indicates the pairings in the round of 16 for the qualified first-placed and third-placed Participating Teams.

(For example, if the Participating Teams finishing third in groups A, B, C and D qualify, the pairings shall be 1A vs 3C, 1B vs 3D, 1C vs 3A and 1D vs 3B).

Qualified	1A vs	1B vs	1C vs	1D vs
A B C D	3C	3D	3A	3B
A B C E	3C	3A	3B	3E
A B C F	3C	3A	3B	3F
A B D E	3D	3A	3B	3E
A B D F	3D	3A	3B	3F
A B E F	3E	3A	3B	3F
A C D E	3C	3D	3A	3E
A C D F	3C	3D	3A	3F
A C E F	3C	3A	3F	3E
A D E F	3D	3A	3F	3E
B C D E	3C	3D	3B	3E
B C D F	3C	3D	3B	3F
B C E F	3E	3C	3B	3F
B D E F	3E	3D	3B	3F

Qualified	1A vs	1B vs	1C vs	1D vs
C D E F	3C	3D	3F	3E

9.10. The eight (8) winners of the round of 16 shall play the quarter-finals as follows:

QF1: Winner R16-1 vs Winner R16-2
QF2: Winner R16-3 vs Winner R16-4
QF3: Winner R16-5 vs Winner R16-6
QF4: Winner R16-7 vs Winner R16-8

For the avoidance of doubt, the above does not represent the chronological order in which the matches will be played.

9.11. The four (4) winners of the quarter-finals shall play the semi-finals as follows:

SF1: Winner QF1 vs Winner QF2
SF2: Winner QF3 vs Winner QF4

9.12. The two (2) winners of the semi-finals shall play the final Match as follows:

Final: Winner SF1 vs Winner SF2

10. Extra Time and Penalties

10.1. If no winner is determined at the end of normal playing time in:

10.1.1. the second leg of any tie in the Qualifiers Playoff; or

10.1.2. any Match in the Finals (Knockout Stage),

Extra Time comprising two (2) periods of fifteen (15) minute each shall be played.

10.2. Extra Time shall be played after an interval of five (5) minutes at the end of normal playing time. A short drinks break (which should not exceed one [1] minute) is permitted at the interval of half-time in Extra Time.

10.3. If no winner is determined at the end of Extra Time, Penalties shall be taken in accordance with the Laws of the Game and the Manual.

11. Match Schedule

11.1. All Matches shall be played in accordance with the AFC competitions calendar. The dates are final and binding and not appealable.

11.2. The Match Schedule shall be determined by the AFC General Secretariat following the official draws for the relevant stages of the Competition. The date and format of the official draws shall be determined by the AFC General Secretariat. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.

11.3. The AFC General Secretariat retains final discretion to amend the Match Schedule at any time.

12. Cancellation of Matches

12.1. For any Match which is cancelled as a result of Force Majeure, the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup shall decide on the matter at its sole discretion and take whatever action is deemed necessary.

12.1.1. Decisions made pursuant to Article 12.1 are final and binding and not appealable.

12.2. Any Match which is cancelled, except in cases of Force Majeure recognised by the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup, may lead to the imposition of sanctions by the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee against the relevant party that has caused the cancellation in accordance with the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code.

12.3. If a Match cannot commence for any reason, the procedure described in Article 6 of the Manual shall be followed.

13. Abandonment of Matches

13.1. For any Match which is abandoned as a result of Force Majeure, the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup shall decide on the matter at its sole discretion and take whatever action is deemed necessary.

13.1.1. Decisions made pursuant to Article 13.1 are final and binding and not appealable.

13.2. Any Match which is abandoned, except in cases of Force Majeure recognised by the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup, may lead to the imposition of sanctions by the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee against the relevant party that has caused the abandonment in accordance with the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code.

13.3. If a Match is stopped by the referee for any reason, the procedure described in Article 7 of the Manual shall be followed.

SECTION 3 : STADIUMS AND OFFICIAL TRAINING SITES

14. Stadiums

14.1. The Host Association shall ensure that all Matches in the Competition are played in Stadiums which meet the requirements defined in the AFC Stadium Regulations and any other applicable AFC regulations. The AFC General Secretariat may carry out inspections at any time before and during the Competition to check whether the requirements are met. All costs related to any such inspection shall be borne by the relevant Host Association.

14.1.1. For the Qualifiers, each Participating Member Association shall, by no later than the deadline set by the AFC General Secretariat, nominate the Stadium(s) to be utilised for their home Matches. The AFC General Secretariat may reject the nomination of any Stadium and take any decisions under this Article 14.1.1. If the AFC General Secretariat deems, for whatever reason, that a Stadium is unfit to stage the Match(es), the relevant Participating Member Association shall propose an alternative Stadium. Should the Participating Member Association not propose an acceptable alternative Stadium by the deadline set by the AFC General Secretariat, the AFC General Secretariat may select an alternative Stadium within the territory of the relevant Member Association or a Neutral Venue to stage the Match(es).

14.2. Unless prior written permission has been obtained from the AFC, the relevant Host Association shall ensure that no football matches and/or any other events or activities are held in any Stadium:

Qualifiers

14.2.1. during the period starting at least seven (7) days prior to each Match until one (1) day after the Match; and

Finals

14.2.2. during the period starting at least thirty (30) days prior to the first Match until two (2) days after the last use of the Stadium in connection with the Finals.

14.3. Unless otherwise specified or directed by the AFC, the Stadiums shall be made available to the AFC for its exclusive use as follows:

Qualifiers

14.3.1. during the period starting at least seven (7) days prior to each Match until one (1) day after the Match; and

Finals

14.3.2. during the period starting at least thirty (30) days prior to the date on which the Stadium will first be used in connection with the Finals (such as the first Match or training session to be held in the Stadium, or any other Competition-related event to be held in the Stadium prior to such Match or training session) until two (2) days after the last use of the Stadium in connection with the Finals.

14.4. A Host Association that fails to comply with Article 14.2 or 14.3 shall be:

14.4.1. fined at least USD10,000; and

14.4.2. the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may impose further sanctions at its discretion.

15. Official Training Sites

15.1. Official Training Sites shall contain a fully equipped training field prepared to match condition.

15.1.1. A Host Association that fails to comply with this Article 15.1 shall be fined at least USD10,000.

15.1.2. The AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may impose further sanctions at its discretion.

Qualifiers

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

15.2.1. A Host Association that fails to comply with this Article 15.2 shall be fined at least USD10,000.

15.2.2. The AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may impose further sanctions at its discretion.

15.3. Participating Teams must strictly follow the official training schedule decided in the match coordination meeting one (1) day prior to the Match. Should both Participating Teams wish to train at the same time, the visiting Participating Team shall be given priority.

Finals

15.4. Official Training Sites shall be made available at least ten (10) days prior to the first Match of the Competition until one (1) day after the last Match staged in the respective Venue. They shall not be used for any other purpose from thirty (30) days prior to the start of the Competition, unless written permission has been obtained from the AFC.

15.4.1. A Host Association that fails to comply with this Article 15.4 shall be fined at least USD10,000.

15.4.2. The AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may impose further sanctions at its discretion.

15.5. Participating Teams must solely utilise Official Training Sites for any training at the Venue (excluding any official training that may be held at a Stadium) from four (4) days prior to their first Match.

SECTION 4 : TECHNICAL REGULATIONS

16. Laws of the Game

16.1. All Matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game. In the case of any discrepancy in the interpretation of the Laws of the Game, the English version shall prevail.

16.2. Each Match shall last ninety (90) minutes, comprising two (2) periods of forty-five (45) minutes, with a half-time interval of fifteen (15) minutes; wherever required in accordance with Article 10, Extra Time shall be played.

16.3. Only five (5) substitutes listed on the start list of a Match may take part in a Match. Any Participating Player who has been substituted may take no further part in that Match.

16.4. One (1) additional substitute and one (1) additional substitution opportunity may be used when a Match goes into Extra Time (whether or not the Participating Team has already used the full number of permitted substitutes).

16.5. In accordance with Law 3 of the Laws of the Game, a maximum of one (1) additional permanent concussion substitution may be used by each Participating Team in a Match. A concussion substitution may be made regardless of the number of substitutes and opportunities already used. The opposing Participating Team then has the option to use an additional substitute for any reason.

16.6. The AFC General Secretariat may, at its discretion, decide to use football technologies in any Match or Matches in the Competition or in the Competition as a whole (including goal-line technology [GLT], a video assistant referee [VAR] system, electronic performance and tracking systems [EPTS] or any other football technologies) in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

17. Refereeing

17.1. If the referee is prevented from carrying out his duties, such referee shall be replaced by the fourth official. The same applies to either of the assistant referees if a reserve assistant referee is not appointed.

17.2. A video assistant referee (VAR) may assist the referee to make a decision using replay footage in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Laws of the Game in force at the time of the Competition.

18. Team Bench and Technical Area

Qualifiers

18.1. A maximum of twelve (12) Participating Players and a maximum of eleven (11) Participating Officials are permitted to sit on the team bench during a Match, provided they are in possession of the appropriate Accreditation Devices.

Finals

18.2. A maximum of fifteen (15) Participating Players and a maximum of eleven (11) Participating Officials are permitted to sit on the team bench during a Match, provided they are in possession of the appropriate Accreditation Devices.

18.3. The Host Association shall reserve a minimum of thirty (30) Team Technical Seats for each Participating Team's additional Participating Players and Participating Officials who will not be seated on the team bench. For the avoidance of doubt, only Participating Players and Participating Officials from the Official Team Delegation are permitted to sit on the Team Technical Seats, provided they are in possession of the appropriate Accreditation Devices.

18.4. Any additional Participating Officials registered in accordance with Article 21.4 and 21.4.1 are permitted to sit on the Team Technical Seats, provided they are in possession of the appropriate Accreditation Devices.

19. Footballs

Qualifiers

19.1. The footballs used in the Qualifiers shall be selected and supplied by each Host Association. The Host Association shall supply the visiting Participating Team with the same football for its training throughout the period of its stay.

19.2. Participating Teams shall solely utilise the training footballs provided by the Host Association for training and warming-up purposes.

19.3. Only footballs that bear one (1) of the FIFA quality marks shall be utilised for the Qualifiers.

Finals

19.4. The footballs used in the Finals shall be selected and supplied by the AFC General Secretariat.

19.5. Participating Teams shall solely utilise the footballs provided by the AFC for training and warming-up purposes.

19.6. Each Participating Member Association is responsible for any taxes and/or fees pertaining to the customs clearance of footballs delivered to it by the AFC.

20. Equipment

20.1. The AFC General Secretariat has the sole authority to approve the equipment (including kit) in accordance with the AFC Equipment Regulations.

20.2. Each Participating Member Association shall indemnify the AFC and hold the AFC 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.

SECTION 5 : OFFICIAL TEAM DELEGATION

21. Official Team Delegation

21.1. All Participating Players and Participating Officials of an Official Team Delegation will be issued with Accreditation Cards authorised by the AFC General Secretariat. Participating Players and Officials shall only be eligible to participate in the Competition after receiving their Accreditation Cards.

21.2. Each Participating Team shall ensure that no person in its Official Team Delegation or otherwise affiliated to it enters or is present on its team bus, in its team dressing room, on the Field of Play or in any other Controlled Access Area without being in physical possession of the necessary Accreditation Device which has been validly issued to such person.

Qualifiers

21.3. Subject to the conditions set out below, for each Match in the Qualifiers, Participating Teams shall register an Official Team Delegation, comprising a minimum of eighteen (18) and a maximum of twenty-three (23) Participating Players and a minimum of four (4) and a maximum of eleven (11) Participating Officials.

21.3.1. Each Participating Team may nominate an additional nine (9) Participating Officials as part of its Official Team Delegation, who shall receive the same Accreditation Card as the eleven (11) Participating Officials referred to in the above.

21.3.2. All costs related to the additional nine (9) Participating Officials shall be borne by the relevant Participating Member Association.

Finals

21.4. Subject to the conditions set out below, Participating Teams shall register an Official Team Delegation, comprising a minimum of eighteen (18) and a maximum of twenty-six (26) Participating Players and a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of twenty (20) Participating Officials.

21.4.1. Each Participating Team may nominate an additional ten (10) Participating Officials, who shall receive the same Accreditation Card as the twenty (20) Participating Officials included in the Official Team Delegation.

21.4.2. All costs related to the additional ten (10) Participating Officials shall be borne by the relevant Participating Member Association.

21.5. No individual shall be simultaneously registered as both a Participating Player and a Participating Official.

22. Eligibility of Players

22.1. Each Participating Member Association shall ensure that all players:

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

22.1.2. hold the nationality of its country and are subject to its jurisdiction; and

22.1.3. are eligible to participate for the representative team of the Member Association in accordance with the Regulations Governing the Application of the FIFA Statutes.

22.2. Individuals who meet the criteria set out in Article 22.1 are eligible to participate in the Competition, subject to the provisions of the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code.

22.3. The approval of the registration of a Participating Player by the AFC General Secretariat does not mean that the Participating Player is eligible to participate in the Competition. Each Participating Member Association is responsible for fielding only eligible Participating Players. Failure to do so shall lead to the consequences stipulated in the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code.

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

22.4.1. there is a violation of Article 22.1; or

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

22.4.3. the AFC determines that any document submitted during registration is falsified or forged.

23. Preliminary Registration of Players

Qualifiers Playoff and Qualifiers Final Round

23.1. Each Participating Team must submit a squad of minimum eighteen (18) Participating Players, with no limit on the maximum number in the Preliminary Registration.

23.2. Each Participating Team shall submit the supporting documents in accordance with Article 25 via AFCAS no later than thirty (30) days prior to its first Match in the relevant round of the Qualifiers (i.e. Qualifiers Playoff and/or Qualifiers Final Round), or as otherwise determined by the AFC General Secretariat.

23.3. There is no allocation of shirt numbers during the Preliminary Registration.

23.4. Each Participating Team must register a minimum of four (4) goalkeepers in its Preliminary Registration.

23.5. If a Participating Team fails to register a minimum of eighteen (18) Participating Players, its Member Association shall be deemed to have withdrawn from the Competition and subject to Article 6.

23.6. Should the AFC not receive all required documents by the stipulated deadline, the individual concerned shall be considered not eligible to be registered and participate in the Competition.

23.7. No later than seven (7) days prior to each Match, each Participating Team may replace or add any Participating Players in the Preliminary Registration.

Finals

23.8. Each Participating Team shall register a minimum of eighteen (18) and a maximum of fifty (50) Participating Players in the Preliminary Registration.

23.9. Each Participating Team shall submit the supporting documents in accordance with Article 25 via AFCAS no later than thirty (30) days prior to the first Match of the Finals, or as otherwise determined by the AFC.

23.10. No later than ten (10) days prior to the first Match of the Finals, each Participating Team may replace or add up to five (5) players for any reason provided that the maximum number of registered players is not exceeded.

23.11. The provisions of Articles 23.3 to 23.6 shall apply equally to the Finals.

23.12. The individuals registered for the Preliminary Registration for each round of the Qualifiers and the Finals may differ.

24. Final Registration of Players

Qualifiers Playoff and Qualifiers Final Round

24.1. Each Participating Team shall submit prior to each Match a Final Registration of a minimum of eighteen (18) and a maximum of twenty-three (23) Participating Players no later than one (1) day prior to the respective Match in the Qualifiers.

24.1.1. The Final Registration may only be composed of those Participating Players registered in the Preliminary Registration for the respective round of the Qualifiers.

24.1.2. Participating Players must be assigned shirts numbered 1-23. Shirt number 1 shall be reserved for a goalkeeper.

24.2. Each Participating Team must register a minimum of three (3) goalkeepers in its Final Registration.

Finals

24.3. Each Participating Team shall submit a Final Registration of a minimum of eighteen (18) and a maximum of twenty-six (26) Participating Players. The Final Registration shall be submitted no later than ten (10) days prior to the first Match of the Finals.

24.3.1. The Final Registration may only be composed of those Participating Players registered in the Preliminary Registration for the Finals.

24.3.2. The Participating Players must be assigned shirts numbered 1-26. Shirt number 1 shall be reserved for a goalkeeper. Each Participating Player shall wear the same number allocated in the Final Registration during all Matches in the Finals.

24.4. The provisions of Article 24.2 shall apply equally to the Finals.

24.5. Once the Final Registration for the Finals has been submitted to the AFC, Participating Teams may only replace any of the registered Participating Players in the event of serious injury or illness. Participating Teams may request for such replacement(s) up until twenty-four (24) hours prior to their first Match in the Finals. The request shall be approved by the AFC General Secretariat, provided that:

24.5.1. it is accompanied by a written medical report, in English, detailing the extent of the injury or illness to the relevant Participating Player(s) with all relevant information as requested by the General Secretariat;

24.5.2. any replacement Participating Players must have been registered in the Preliminary Registration;

24.5.3. any replacement Participating Players shall only be allocated the vacated shirt numbers;

24.5.4. the Participating Team provides the AFC with the Accreditation Card of the Participating Player who is being replaced (it being noted that the Participating Team shall receive the Accreditation Card of the replacement Participating Player in exchange); and

24.5.5. any replacement Participating Players shall only be eligible to participate in the Competition after receiving their Accreditation Card.

24.6. Notwithstanding Article 24.5, if a Participating Player registered as a goalkeeper suffers a long-term injury or illness, the relevant Participating Team may request to replace the injured goalkeeper by registering a new Participating Player as a goalkeeper. The following conditions shall apply:

24.6.1. An injury or illness shall be considered long-term for the purposes of this Article if, based on the medical report submitted to the AFC, it is reasonably expected to prevent the Participating Player from participating in Matches for a period of at least thirty (30) days from the date of the replacement request.

24.6.2. A medical report, in English, must be submitted to the AFC General Secretariat detailing the extent of the injury or illness of the relevant Participating Player before any replacement can be approved by the AFC General Secretariat.

24.6.3. The replacement Participating Player must have been registered in the Preliminary Registration.

24.6.4. Any replacement must be requested no later than twenty-four (24) hours before the kick-off time of the Participating Team's next Match in the Finals.

24.6.5. The replacement Participating Player must be registered as goalkeeper and assigned the next available shirt number not already allocated to another Participating Player (e.g. 27).

24.6.6. The AFC General Secretariat shall decide whether or not to approve any replacement at its sole discretion, based on the medical report provided by the Participating Team. The AFC General Secretariat may request and/or procure independently any further medical information, examination or medical assessment that it considers necessary for the purposes of its assessment, and the Participating Player and Participating Team shall cooperate with any requests made in connection with such matters. The decision of the AFC General Secretariat shall be final and binding and not appealable.

24.6.7. Incidents involving the provision of false or misleading evidence or information to the AFC in connection with any replacement under this Article (as regards the provision of medical reports or otherwise) may be referred to the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee.

24.6.8. For the avoidance of doubt, once a Participating Player has been replaced pursuant to this Article, that Participating Player shall not be eligible to be re-registered in the Finals (including as a replacement player) during the remainder of the Finals.

25. Documents for Registration of Players

25.1. Participating Players must be registered via the AFCAS with the supporting documents set out in the Manual, together with any additional information requested by the AFC General Secretariat.

25.2. Each Participating Member Association shall ensure to submit valid and authentic documents for the registration of its Participating Players.

26. Player Selection List

Qualifiers Playoff and Qualifiers Final Round

26.1. Each Participating Team must submit via AFCAS the player selection list by selecting the starting eleven (11), including the team captain and up to twelve (12) substitutes. The player selection list shall be submitted no later than ninety (90) minutes prior to the

commencement of each Match. For the avoidance of doubt, any player who is not selected as the starting eleven (11) or substitutes (as applicable) shall be identified as "not playing".

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26.2. Each Participating Team must submit via AFCAS the player selection list by selecting the starting eleven (11), including the team captain and up to fifteen (15) substitutes. The player selection list shall be submitted no later than ninety (90) minutes prior to the commencement of each Match. For the avoidance of doubt, any player who is not selected as the starting eleven (11) or substitutes (as applicable) shall be identified as "not playing".

26.3. Each Participating Player who is selected on the player selection list as the starting eleven (11) or substitutes (as applicable) must be available at the player and equipment check undertaken by the AFC Match Commissioner on Match day.

27. Registration of Officials

Qualifiers Playoff and Qualifiers Final Round

27.1. Each Participating Team may nominate a minimum of four (4) and a maximum of eleven (11) Participating Officials. Each Participating Team may also nominate an additional nine (9) Participating Officials in accordance with Article 21.

27.2. Each Participating Team shall submit the supporting documents in accordance with Article 28 via AFCAS no later than thirty (30) days prior to its first Match in the relevant round of the Qualifiers (i.e. Qualifiers Playoff and/or Qualifiers Final Round), or as otherwise determined by the AFC.

27.3. For each match in the Qualifiers, each Participating Team must include the following four (4) Participating Officials in the registration list:

27.3.1. Head Coach;

27.3.2. Team Manager;

27.3.3. Team Media Officer; and

27.3.4. Team Doctor.

27.4. Up to eleven (11) Participating Officials may sit on the team bench for each Match. The following three (3) Participating Officials must be selected on the officials on the substitution bench list:

27.4.1. Head Coach;

27.4.2. Team Manager; and

27.4.3. Team Doctor.

27.5. Each Participating Team may register video analysts, however, for each Match, only one (1) of them shall be entitled to receive the necessary Accreditation Device and they shall be the only member of an Official Team Delegation entitled to record Matches in the Competition. They shall use only one (1) lightweight amateur camera. This recording shall be strictly for technical purposes and should not interfere with Match operations or be utilised by any Broadcast Partner or otherwise be distributed. For the avoidance of doubt, video analysts are only allowed to film Matches of their Participating Team, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the two (2) Participating Teams of the relevant Match. A fixed camera position will be determined by the AFC at each stadium for use by video analysts, subject to availability of the space.

27.6. Should the AFC General Secretariat not receive all required documents by the stipulated deadline, the individual concerned shall be considered not eligible to be registered and participate in the Competition.

27.7. Once the registration of Participating Officials has been received by the AFC, Participating Teams may replace any of the listed Participating Officials in the Qualifiers with twenty-four (24) hours' notice to the AFC, by submitting the documents set out in Article 28 via AFCAS, subject to the conditions below:

27.7.1. to replace a Participating Official, a Participating Team must provide their Accreditation Card to the AFC and shall receive the Accreditation Card of the replacement Participating Official in exchange; and

27.7.2. the replacement Participating Officials shall only be eligible to participate in the Competition after receiving their Accreditation Card.

27.8. Each Participating Team shall submit via AFCAS the officials on the substitution bench list by selecting up to eleven (11) Participating Officials who shall be entitled to sit on the team bench by latest ninety (90) minutes prior to the commencement of each Match.

Finals

27.9. Each Participating Team may nominate a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of twenty (20) Participating Officials. Each Participating Team may also nominate an additional ten (10) Participating Officials in accordance with Article 21.

27.10. Each Participating Team shall submit the supporting documents in accordance with Article 28 via AFCAS no later than thirty (30) days prior to the first Match in Finals, or as otherwise determined by the AFC.

27.11. Each Participating Teams must include the following five (5) Participating Officials in the registration list:

27.11.1. Head Coach;

27.11.2. Team Manager;

27.11.3. Team Media Officer;

27.11.4. Team Doctor; and

27.11.5. Team Security Officer

27.12. Up to eleven (11) Participating Officials may sit on the team bench for each Match. The following three (3) Participating Officials must be selected on the officials on the substitution bench list:

27.12.1. Head Coach;

27.12.2. Team Manager; and

27.12.3. Team Doctor.

27.13. The provisions of Articles 27.5 to 27.8 shall equally apply to the Finals.

28. Documents for Registration of Officials

28.1. Participating Officials must be registered via the AFCAS online registration with the supporting documents set out in the Manual, together with any additional information requested by the AFC General Secretariat.

28.2. Each Participating Member Association shall ensure to submit valid and authentic documents for the registration of its Participating Officials.

SECTION 6 : MEDIA

29. Media Access

Qualifiers

29.1. Each Host Association shall ensure that the AFC, Commercial Affiliates, Host Broadcaster and all Broadcast Partners have free access to each Stadium from five (5) days prior to each Match until one (1) day after the respective Match to allow for the resolution of any technical issues and for the assembly and/or disassembly of the relevant infrastructure required to execute the Media Rights.

Finals

29.2. The Host Association shall ensure that the AFC, AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Commercial Affiliates, the Host Broadcaster and all Broadcast Partners have free access to each Stadium from thirty (30) days prior to the first Match in the Stadium until two (2) days after the last Match in the Stadium to allow for the resolution of any technical issues and for the assembly of the relevant infrastructure required to execute the Media Rights.

30. Dressing Room Filming

30.1. If requested by the AFC, each Participating Team shall complete their respective Match day dressing room set up no later than two and a half (2.5) hours prior to Match kick-off and thereafter grant access to the AFC, the Host Broadcaster and all Broadcast Partners inside their team dressing room to conduct the following activities:

30.1.1. to film the Match day set up of the team dressing rooms;

30.1.2. for the Broadcast Partner reporter to conduct a standup reporting; and

30.1.3. to film the arrival of Participating Players and Participating Officials in the team dressing rooms.

30.2. All team dressing room footage will be pre-recorded and edited before any transmission. The duration allowed in each team dressing room will be confirmed by the AFC Media Officer in consultation with the respective Participating Team.

30.3. Participating Teams shall ensure that there are no technical, tactical or confidential materials displayed on the walls or TV screen in the dressing room during filming.

30.4. Any Participating Team that fails to set up their dressing room for filming when requested by the AFC shall be fined at least USD10,000. The AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may impose further sanctions at its discretion.

31. Press Conferences

31.1. The Host Association is responsible for the organisation of a pre-Match press conference at least one (1) day prior to each Match it hosts in the Qualifiers. The AFC shall decide the final timing of the pre-Match press conference in the absence of an agreement on timing by the Participating Teams in the Qualifiers.

31.2. The Head Coach and minimum one (1) of the key Participating Players of each Participating Team must attend a pre-Match press conference for each Match in which they participate to be held at least one (1) day prior to the Match.

31.3. The Head Coach of each Participating Team must attend a post-Match press conference for each Match in which they participate, commencing no later than fifteen (15) minutes after the Match. Subject to compliance with the AFC Anti-Doping Regulations, where additional awards (e.g. Player of the Match) are granted, the winner of such awards must also attend the post-Match press conference if requested by the AFC General Secretariat.

31.4. Each Participating Team is responsible for the interpretation and translation of any communication made by its Participating Players and Participating Officials into English. Interpretation into the local language (if applicable) shall be the responsibility of the Host Association.

31.5. Any individual who fails to attend an obligatory press conference shall be fined at least USD10,000. The relevant Participating Team shall also be held liable in accordance with Article 4.3.8. The AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may impose further sanctions at its discretion.

32. Interviews Prior to the Match

32.1. If requested by the AFC, each Participating Teams shall make the following individuals available at the time prior to each Match for an interview as specified:

MD-1 Interview

32.1.1. Head Coach and one (1) Participating Player on the day before each Match for an interview of up to ten (10) minutes, to be recorded by the Host Broadcaster or any other Broadcast Partner, any Commercial Affiliate and/or the AFC. All interview locations shall be designated by the AFC Media Officer or AFC General Coordinator/ Match Commissioner.

Stadium Arrival Interview

32.1.2. One (1) Participating Player on Match day for an interview of not more than ninety (90) seconds at their point of arrival at the Stadium for the Match.

Pre-Match Interview

32.1.3. Head Coach on Match day for an interview of not more than ninety (90) seconds before or during the respective Participating Team's pre-Match warmup.

32.2. Any individual who fails to conduct an interview when requested shall be fined at least USD10,000. The relevant Participating Team may be held liable for any failure to conduct an interview when requested in accordance with Article 4.3.8. The AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may impose further sanctions at its discretion.

33. Flash Interviews

33.1. If requested by the AFC, any Participating Player (Maximum five [5]) and/or Participating Officials (Head Coach) shall participate in a flash interview following each Match.

33.2. Any individual who fails to conduct a flash interview when requested shall be fined at least USD10,000. The relevant Participating Team may be held liable for any failure to conduct a flash interview when requested in accordance with Article 4.3.8. The AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may impose further sanctions at its discretion.

34. Mixed Zone

34.1. The Head Coach and all Participating Players shall pass through the mixed zone on their way from their team dressing room to their bus after each Match.

34.2. Any individual who fails to pass through the mixed zone shall be fined at least USD10,000. The relevant Participating Team may be held liable for any failure to pass through the mixed zone in accordance with Article 4.3.8. The AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may impose further sanctions at its discretion.

35. Access to Match Footage

Qualifiers

35.1. After each Match, the relevant Host Association shall promptly provide four (4) copies of the full Match recording to the AFC Match Commissioner.

35.2. Any Host Association that fails to comply with Article 35.1 shall be fined at least USD5,000. The AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may impose further sanctions at its discretion.

Finals

35.3. The AFC General Secretariat shall provide each Participating Team with access to view and download relevant Match footage in accordance with the applicable AFC guidelines.

SECTION 7 : TICKETING

36. General Requirements

36.1. Tickets, electronic or hard copy, shall include seat numbering and serial numbering, and only include AFC Marks, Competition Marks and/or marks of Commercial Affiliates approved by the AFC.

36.2. The AFC reserves the right at its sole discretion to substitute the seating area or the gate entrance identified on the Ticket with another, if deemed appropriate.

36.3. The Host Association must ensure that access to the Stadium is granted to the AFC Delegation, Official Team Delegation, AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Commercial Affiliates, Media and travelling supporters without any discrimination.

36.4. The Host Association shall not create any other ticket categories and/or types other than as expressly approved by the AFC.

37. Terms and Conditions

37.1. Each Host Association shall be responsible at its own cost for the design, production, distribution and sales of all Tickets. Such matters are subject to the approval of the AFC.

Qualifiers

37.2. Each Host Association shall determine for each of the Matches:

37.2.1. the total number of Tickets made available in a stadium in which a Match takes place;

37.2.2. the pricing of all Tickets;

37.2.3. the category of Tickets; and

37.2.4. the assignment of Stadium seats to Tickets.

37.3. The AFC may change the terms and conditions and shall advise each Host Association on any requirements relating to Ticket production, distribution and/or sales.

Finals

37.4. The AFC shall, in collaboration with the Host Association, issue Ticketing terms and conditions which are applicable to all Ticket holders.

38. Complimentary Tickets

38.1. Each Host Association shall provide Complimentary Tickets to the AFC for each Match in the Competition as instructed by the AFC.

38.2. Each Host Association shall provide the following Complimentary Tickets to each Participating Team competing at a Venue which it controls:

Qualifiers

38.2.1. two (2) VVIP Tickets for each Match the Participating Team participates in;

38.2.2. five (5) VIP Tickets for each Match the Participating Team participates in; and

38.2.3. twenty (20) Tickets of the next-best category (as determined by the AFC General Secretariat) for each Match the Participating Team participates in;

Finals

38.2.4. two (2) VVIP Tickets for each Match the Participating Team participates in;

38.2.5. ten (10) VIP Tickets for each Match the Participating Team participates in;

38.2.6. thirty (30) Tickets of the next-best category (as determined by the AFC General Secretariat) for each Match the Participating Team participates in; and

38.2.7. two (2) Tickets of the next-best category (as determined by the AFC General Secretariat) for all other Matches at the Venue not involving the relevant Participating Team.

38.3. Notwithstanding Article 38.2, the AFC General Secretariat reserves the right to request any additional complimentary Tickets for a Match, the number of which shall be communicated to the Host Association at the appropriate time.

39. Purchasable Tickets

39.1. Each Host Association must make available at least eight percent (8%) of the net saleable capacity of a Stadium available exclusively to the supporters of each Participating Member Association playing in a Match, in a segregated, safe area to be determined by the AFC General Secretariat and the Host Association.

39.2. The number of Tickets to be purchased must be declared by each Participating Member Association in accordance with the Ticketing timeline and guidelines issued by the AFC. Each Participating Member Association is responsible for all Tickets purchased, even if the Tickets are not utilised. The price of the Tickets shall not exceed the price of comparable Tickets that are sold to the general public in the relevant Host Association.

39.3. Each Host Association 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 at a time to be mutually agreed between the AFC Commercial Rights Partner and the Host Association.

SECTION 8 : COMMERCIAL

40. Commercial Rights

40.1. The AFC is the owner of all the Commercial Rights emanating from the Competition as well as from any other related events coming under its jurisdiction, without any restrictions as to content, time, place and law. The AFC may grant the Host Association the Commercial Rights, in whole or in part, in accordance with the Manual which governs the rights, duties and responsibilities of all parties regarding the Commercial Rights.

40.2. Each Host Association shall use its best endeavours in seeking political and administrative support from all local, regional and national governmental authorities to ensure the effective exploitation and protection of the Commercial Rights (including through the implementation of government guarantees and tabling of supplementary legislation).

40.3. Each Host Association shall appoint a reasonable number of personnel to assist the AFC in the implementation and enforcement of its rights protection programme.

41. Clean Site

Finals

41.1. Except where otherwise instructed or notified by the AFC General Secretariat, the Host Association shall deliver all the Stadiums and Official Training Sites as Clean Sites thirty (30) days before the first Match of the Competition, until two (2) days after the last use of the Site in connection with the Competition.

42. Advertising and Branding

Finals

42.1. Except where otherwise stipulated or notified by the AFC General Secretariat, the Host Association shall ensure that all relevant approvals are secured, and unrestricted access for the placement and publishing of advertising or branding of the Competition shall be available to the AFC ten (10) days before the first Match at each Stadium or training at each Official Training Site.

SECTION 9 : SAFETY AND SECURITY

43. General Principles

43.1. All matters relating to safety and security shall be undertaken in compliance with the AFC Stadium Regulations and the AFC Safety and Security Regulations.

43.2. Each Host 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, Official Team Delegation, AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Commercial Affiliates, Media and spectators, and all goods brought in by the AFC, Official Team Delegation, AFC Commercial Rights Partner and Commercial Affiliates.

43.3. Each Host Association shall issue a detailed security plan (including, without limitation, evacuation plans, the stadium safety certificate and security personnel deployment plans) in the form of a binding agreement with, without limitation, the management of all Stadiums, Official Training Sites, and the Accommodation of the AFC Delegation and Official Team Delegation. This security plan shall be based upon the principles set out in the AFC Stadium Regulations and the AFC Safety and Security Regulations.

43.4. The Host 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 the AFC or the members of its delegation acting with intent or gross negligence.

SECTION 10 : MEDICAL AND ANTI-DOPING

44. Pre-Competition Medical Assessment

44.1. Each Participating Member Association shall ensure that each Participating Player undergoes a Pre-Competition Medical Assessment (PCMA) at least thirty (30) days prior to the first Match of the Finals.

44.1.1. Participating Players who have undertaken a PCMA for a FIFA competition or any AFC competition may provide the AFC General Secretariat with the physician and player's declaration form originally provided to FIFA or the AFC, provided that the PCMA was conducted within one (1) year of the Finals.

44.1.2. The AFC shall provide all Participating Member Associations with the PCMA form setting out the necessary matters to be tested, which shall include testing to prevent players from experiencing sudden cardiac death during any Match.

44.1.3. Each Participating Member Association must submit to the AFC by latest ten (10) days prior to the first Match of the Finals the following signed documents:

44.1.3.1. "Member Association Declaration of Agreement to the PCMA"; and

44.1.3.2. for each Participating Player, the "Player and Examining Physician Declaration for PCMA".

44.1.4. Any player for whom the required documents are not provided is not eligible to be registered in the Final Registration for a Participating Team.

44.2. The AFC Medical Committee may, in its sole discretion, order any further medical evaluation of a Participating Player that it deems necessary. The cost of such further testing shall be borne by the AFC.

45. Facilities and Personnel

45.1. Each Host Association shall provide a medical room and doping control room fully equipped with all items stipulated in the Manual.

45.2. A Host Association shall be fined:

45.2.1. at least USD20,000 for failing to fully equip the medical room; or

45.2.2. at least USD10,000 for failing to fully equip the doping control room; or

45.2.3. at least USD40,000 for failing to fully equip both rooms.

45.2.4. The AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may impose further sanctions at its discretion.

45.3. Each Host Association shall provide all medical personnel and doping control personnel stipulated in the Manual and as requested by the AFC.

45.4. A Host Association shall be fined:

45.4.1. at least USD10,000 for failing to provide all required doping control personnel (subject to Article 45.3); or

45.4.2. at least USD20,000 for failing to provide all required medical personnel.

45.4.3. The AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may impose further sanctions at its discretion.

46. Anti-Doping

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

46.2. The AFC General Secretariat shall inform each Participating Member Association by means of a circular of the doping control procedure for the Competition.

46.3. The AFC Anti-Doping Unit (mandated by the AFC Medical Committee to handle organisation and administration of anti-doping activities) shall be responsible for the approval of the WADA–accredited laboratory which shall carry out the analysis of all doping samples.

SECTION 11 : FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

47. General Responsibilities

47.1. Any financial payments to be made by the AFC in accordance with these Regulations shall be subject to all applicable laws, regulations, orders, by-laws and international sanctions.

48. Logistical Arrangements for Participating Teams

Qualifiers

48.1. Participating Member Associations shall settle all logistical costs among themselves. The following conditions shall apply during the official period of two (2) days prior to each Match until one (1) day after the Match:

48.1.1. The visiting Participating Team shall cover its international travel costs to the Venue or the nearest airport, as well as board, lodging costs and incidental expenses;

48.1.2. The Host Association shall cover the following minimum domestic transport costs at the Venue for the entire Official Team Delegation of the visiting Participating Team and any additional transport requirements as requested by the AFC General Secretariat, subject to flight connections:

48.1.2.1. one (1) bus with a minimum of forty-five (45) seats;

48.1.2.2. one (1) multipurpose vehicle with a minimum of seven (7) seats; and

48.1.2.3. one (1) luggage truck for airport transfers, hotel transfers (if applicable) and Match day;

48.1.3. The Host Association shall provide the visiting Participating Team with a liaison officer for the visiting Participating Team's entire stay at the Venue;

48.1.4. The Participating Teams shall not be permitted to stay at the same hotel as each other or at the hotel chosen for the AFC Delegation;

48.1.5. details of the logistical arrangements relating to a Match (including the matters set out above) shall be notified to the AFC by the relevant Host Association in advance of the Match; and

48.1.6. Any disputes arising regarding financial provisions under this Article 48 shall be resolved amongst the Participating Member Associations concerned but may be submitted to the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup for a final decision.

Finals

48.2. Each Participating Team in the Finals shall arrive in the Venue of their first Match four (4) days prior to their first Match in the Finals at the latest and depart one (1) day after their last Match in the Finals, unless otherwise approved in writing by the AFC.

48.3. The Participating Teams shall cover their international and domestic travel costs to the Venue of their first Match in the Finals and departure from the Venue of their last Match in the Finals or the nearest airport, as well as incidental expenses.

48.4. The AFC General Secretariat and the Host Association shall provide all other logistical arrangements in accordance with the OAA. Such arrangements shall be communicated to the Participating Teams by circular prior to the Finals.

49. Logistical Arrangements for AFC Delegation

Qualifiers

49.1. From their arrival at the Venue until their departure from the Venue, each Host Association must provide at its own cost and expenses, for the AFC Delegation:

49.1.1. Accommodation in an international five-star hotel different from the Official Team Delegations unless approved by the AFC General Secretariat (or an international four-star hotel if there are no international five-star hotels at the Venue);

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

49.1.3. minimum six (6) litres of water per person per day, as well as ice and refreshments, at the Accommodation, referee training and the Stadium;

49.1.4. daily laundry services (excluding dry cleaning or pressing) of eight (8) pieces per person per day for the Match Officials (except for the referee assessor who shall be subject to Article 49.1.5);

49.1.5. daily laundry services of six (6) pieces per person per day and dry cleaning of two (2) pieces per person on alternate days for the other members of the AFC Delegation;

49.1.6. activated mobile telecommunication cards (e.g. SIM Cards) with sufficient credit and data;

49.1.7. an official or representative of the Host Association should be assigned to coordinate airport reception, immigration and customs, airport transfers, domestic transportation and Accommodation for the AFC Delegation;

49.1.8. liaison officers proficient in English;

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

49.1.10. one (1) multipurpose vehicle with a minimum of seven (7) seats for the Match Officials; and

49.1.11. additional vehicles upon request of the AFC General Secretariat for other members of the AFC Delegation.

Finals

49.2. The Host Association shall provide all logistical arrangements for the AFC Delegation in accordance with the Organising Association Agreement.

50. Prize Money

50.1. Five percent (5%) of the prize monies from the Champion and runner-up shall be retained and allocated to the AFC Dream Asia Foundation to fund social responsibility activities.

51. Disciplinary Action

51.1. Where a Host Association fails to comply with any of its obligations under Articles 47 to 49 with regard to a Match, the case shall be referred to the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee. In all such instances, the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee shall order the relevant Participating Member Association to return to the AFC any financial contribution that has been paid to it in respect of the relevant Match (or, if not yet paid, to forfeit its right to any Financial Contribution due to it in respect of the relevant Match) and to pay compensation for any and all damages or losses suffered by, where applicable, the other Participating Member Associations, the AFC, the AFC Commercial Rights Partner and Commercial Affiliates. The amount of compensation shall be determined by the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee, which may impose further sanctions at its discretion.

SECTION 12 : AWARDS

52. Trophy, Awards and Medals

52.1. The original trophy of the Competition shall be presented as a formality to the Champion during the award ceremony after the final Match. Following the conclusion of the ceremony, the original trophy shall be returned to the AFC and remain in the possession of the AFC at all times. The Champion shall subsequently be awarded a replica by the AFC for its permanent possession.

52.2. The replica trophy awarded to the Champion 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 General Secretariat. The Champion 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 General Secretariat may, from time to time, issue additional trophy guidelines with which the Champion must comply.

52.3. The following awards of the Competition shall be presented in accordance with the Manual:

52.3.1. Most Valuable Player;

52.3.2. Top Goal Scorer;

52.3.3. Best Goalkeeper; and

52.3.4. AFC Fair Play Award.

52.4. The AFC shall award the following medals:

52.4.1. fifty-six (56) medals to the Champion;

52.4.2. fifty-six (56) medals to the runner-up; and

52.4.3. commemorative medals for the Match Officials of the final Match.

52.5. Additional medals may be produced upon request and at the cost of the requesting Participating Team.

52.6. The Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup may decide to introduce further awards.

53. Award Ceremony

53.1. An award ceremony, managed and controlled by the AFC and coordinated with the Host Association and the AFC Commercial Rights Partner, shall be held immediately after the final Match of the Finals to present the trophy, awards and medals listed in Article 52.

53.2. The Participating Teams and Participating Players that qualify to receive the trophy, awards and medals are required to attend the relevant award ceremony. Relevant Participating Teams shall be represented by the twenty-six (26) Participating Players and eleven (11) Participating Officials registered in the start list for the final Match of the Competition. No other officials, players or staff of the Participating Teams may participate in the award ceremony.

SECTION 13 : DISCIPLINARY

54. Disciplinary Measures

54.1. All disciplinary measures in relation to the Competition shall be undertaken in accordance with the current AFC Statutes, AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code, and all relevant AFC regulations and circulars.

54.2. The AFC may introduce new disciplinary rules and sanctions for the duration of the Competition. Such rules shall be communicated to the Participating Member Associations thirty (30) days before the first Match of the Finals at the latest.

54.3. All Participating Players and Participating Officials agree to:

54.3.1. comply with the provisions of the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code, in particular by respecting the spirit and principles of fair play, not engaging in violent behaviour, respecting the authority of the Match Officials, not making bets in connection with any Match and not engaging in any activities linked to the manipulation of Matches; and

54.3.2. refrain from doping and doping-related activities, and comply with the provisions of the AFC Anti-Doping Regulations.

55. Good Conduct

55.1. Each Participating Member Association is liable for the improper conduct of:

55.1.1. any member of its Official Team Delegation; and/or

55.1.2. any person affiliated to it and/or carrying out duties on its behalf throughout the Competition.

55.2. For any violation of Article 55.1, the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may impose any sanction listed in the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code.

56. Administrative Procedure

56.1. Subject to the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code, for any offence set out in these Regulations with a listed minimum fine, where it is the first such offence committed by a party:

56.1.1. the AFC, after completing its investigation but prior to opening disciplinary proceedings, may write to the party and make an offer to compound the offence and reduce the listed fine by twenty percent (20%) should the party admit to the offence;

56.1.2. if the offence is admitted, the AFC shall submit the compounded offence to the Chairperson of the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee for approval;

56.1.2.1. should the party deny the offence, the AFC shall open disciplinary proceedings;

56.1.3. upon approval of the Chairperson of the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee, the sanction shall be notified and applied administratively by the AFC;

56.1.3.1. should the Chairperson of the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee not approve the compounded offence, the AFC shall open disciplinary proceedings;

56.1.4. by agreeing to compound the offence, the party waives its right to request a motivated decision or appeal the sanction issued;

56.1.5. any sanction issued administratively comes into force immediately upon notification in accordance with the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code.

57. Cautions and Expulsions

57.1. 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 and Ethics Code except where expressly set out below.

Qualifiers

57.2. Single cautions issued in the Preliminary Joint Qualification for the FIFA World Cup 2026 and AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027 will not be carried over to the Qualifiers. Match suspensions resulting from cautions issued in different matches of the Preliminary Joint Qualification for the FIFA World Cup 2026 and AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027 will not be carried over to the Qualifiers. For the avoidance of doubt, match suspensions resulting from expulsions (i.e. direct red card and/or an indirect red card as a result of two cautions being received during the same match) issued in the Preliminary Joint Qualification for the FIFA World Cup 2026 and AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027 will be carried over to the Qualifiers.

57.3. Any Participating Player or Participating Official who completes the Qualifiers Playoff having only received one (1) caution shall not carry over that caution to the Qualifiers (Final Round).

57.4. Any Participating Player or Participating Official who completes the Qualifiers Final Round having only received one (1) caution shall not carry over that caution to the Finals.

57.5. Any Participating Player or Participating Official who completes the Qualifiers Final Round with a match suspension as a result of receiving two (2) cautions imposed in different matches of the Qualifiers Final Round shall not carry over that match suspension to the Finals.

Finals

57.6. Any Participating Player or Participating Official who completes the Group Stage, round of 16, and quarter-finals having only received one (1) caution shall not carry over that caution to the semi-finals.

58. Protest

58.1. For the purpose of these Regulations, a protest is an objection of any kind related to any event and/or matter that has a direct effect on a Match.

58.2. Unless otherwise stipulated in these Regulations, to be considered valid, a protest must be:

58.2.1. submitted in writing (using the appropriate Protest Form issued by the AFC General Secretariat) to the AFC Match Commissioner for the relevant Match within two (2) hours of the final whistle or, if the relevant Match was cancelled or abandoned, within two (2) hours of the decision to cancel or abandon the Match (the "Protest Deadline");

58.2.2. followed up with a full written report (including a copy of the original Protest Form) which must be sent to the AFC General Secretariat within twenty-four (24) hours of the Protest Deadline; and

58.2.3. accompanied by a non-refundable fee of USD1,000 (non-inclusive of any bank charges) which must be transmitted to the bank account nominated by the AFC General Secretariat within twenty-four (24) hours of the Protest Deadline.

58.3. No protest shall be lodged relating to the Referee's decisions regarding facts connected with play. Such decisions are final and binding and not subject to appeal, unless otherwise stipulated in the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code. The same applies to any potential issue concerning the use and/or operation of any goal-line technology (GLT) and/or video assistant referee (VAR) system.

58.4. Any protest which relates to the eligibility of a player to participate in the Finals must be submitted to the AFC General Secretariat no later than five (5) days before the day on which the first Match of the Finals is scheduled to take place. To be considered valid, such a protest must be:

58.4.1. submitted in writing (in the form of a full written report); and

58.4.2. accompanied by a non-refundable fee of USD1,000 (non-inclusive of any bank charges), which must be transmitted to the bank account nominated by the AFC General Secretariat before the expiry of the aforementioned deadline.

58.5. If any of the formal requirements set out in Article 58.2 and/or 58.4 are not met, the relevant protest shall be disregarded. The AFC General Secretariat decides whether or not such formal requirements have been met. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.

58.6. Subject to Article 58.5 and any other exceptions set out in these Regulations, the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code, the AFC Statutes and/or any other applicable AFC regulation, the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee shall make decisions on protests. Should the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee determine that a protest is unfounded or irresponsible, it may impose a fine. The AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may transfer a protest to the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup for its decision if it is deemed to be purely operational in nature.

59. Arbitration

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

59.2. In compliance with the AFC Statutes, Participating 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.

59.3. Participating 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. Any hearing, if required, shall take place at the CAS Alternative Hearing Centre in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

SECTION 14 : CLOSING PROVISIONS

60. Special Instructions

60.1. The AFC General Secretariat and/or Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup (as appropriate) shall, in conjunction with the Host Association, issue any instructions necessitated by special circumstances which might arise in the organisation of Matches.

60.2. These instructions shall form an integral part of these Regulations.

61. Decisions

61.1 All decisions made in accordance with these Regulations, except where expressly identified otherwise, are final and binding and not appealable in accordance with the AFC Statutes.

62. Amendments

62.1. The AFC reserves the right to make amendments to any part of these Regulations for any reason whatsoever. Such amendments shall be duly communicated in due course.

63. Force Majeure

63.1. The Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup is the only body capable of declaring a Force Majeure event for the purposes of these Regulations.

64. Matters not provided for

64.1. Matters not provided for in these Regulations shall be decided by the Organising Committee for AFC Asian Cup. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.

65. Implementing Provisions

65.1. The AFC General Secretariat is entrusted with the operational management of the Competition and is therefore entitled to make decisions and adopt the detailed provisions necessary for implementing these Regulations.

66. Enforcement

66.1. These Regulations were ratified by the AFC Executive Committee on 9 August 2024 and came into force immediately.

66.2. These Regulations were amended by the AFC Executive Committee on 16 October 2025 and such amendments came into force immediately. The relevant amendments are highlighted in these Regulations.

66.3. These Regulations were amended and approved by the AFC Executive Committee on 19 October 2026 and such amendments came into force immediately. The relevant amendments are highlighted in these Regulations.

For the AFC Executive Committee

Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa
President

Datuk Seri Windsor John
General Secretary


AFC
AFC ASIAN CUP QATAR 2023









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