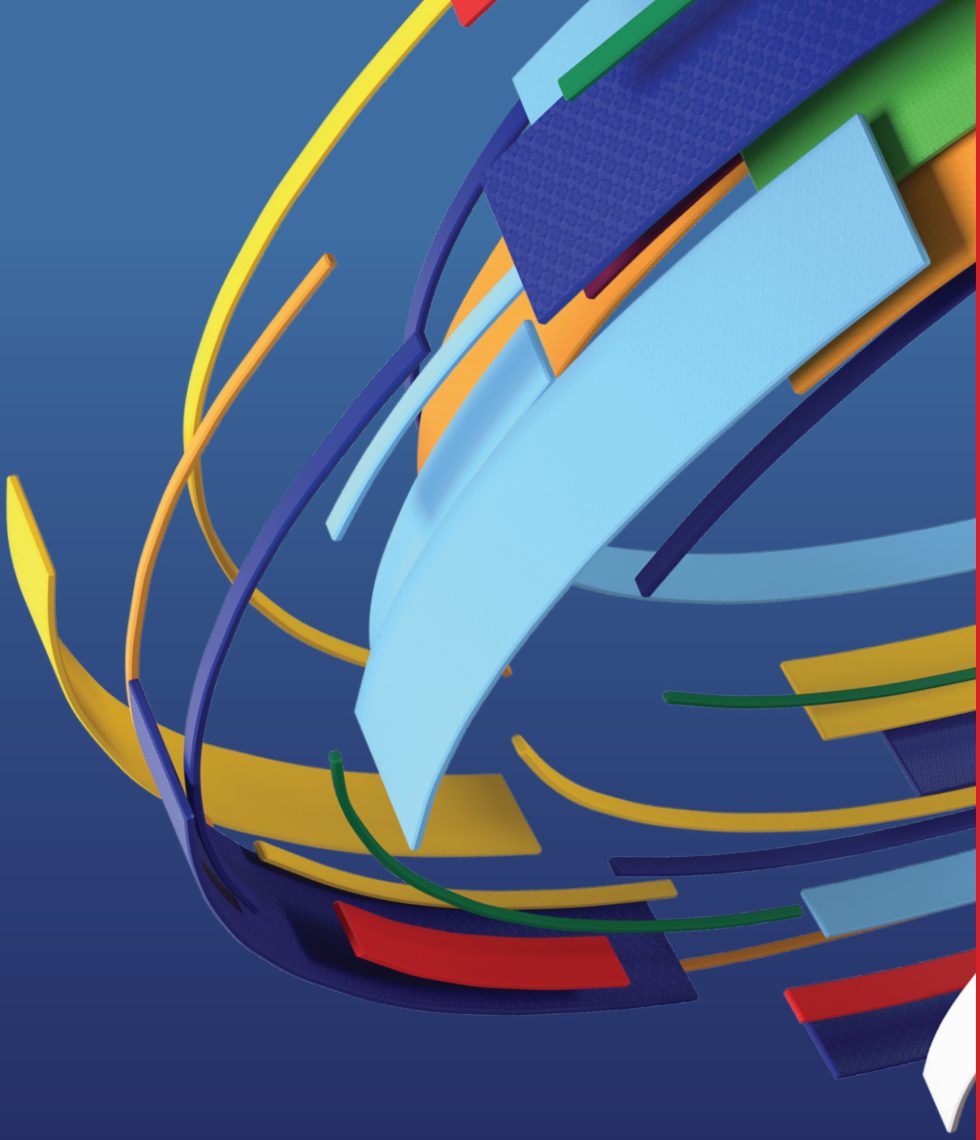


COMPETITION REGULATIONS

AFC U23 ASIAN CUP 2028

AFC U23 ASIAN CUP™

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CONTENTS

DEFINITIONS 7

SECTION 1: GENERAL PROVISIONS 9
1. ..... AFC U23 Asian Cup 2028 9
2. ..... The Asian Football Confederation 9
3. ..... Host Association 10
4. ..... Participating Member Associations 11
5. ..... Entry 14
6. ..... Withdrawal from the Competition 14

SECTION 2: COMPETITION SYSTEM AND MATCH SCHEDULE 18
7. ..... Competition System 18
8. ..... Qualifiers 19
9. ..... Finals 19
10. ..... Extra Time and Penalties 20
11. ..... Match Schedule 21
12. ..... Cancellation of Matches 21
13. ..... Abandonment of Matches 21

SECTION 3: STADIUMS AND OFFICIAL TRAINING SITES 22
14. ..... Stadiums 22
15. ..... Official Training Sites 23

SECTION 4: TECHNICAL REGULATIONS 24
16. ..... Laws of the Game 24
17. ..... Refereeing 24
18. ..... Team Bench and Technical Area 24
19. ..... Footballs 24
20. ..... Equipment 25

SECTION 5: OFFICIAL TEAM DELEGATION 27
21. ..... Official Team Delegation 27
22. ..... Eligibility of Players 27
23. ..... Preliminary Registration of Players 28
24. ..... Final Registration of Players 29
25. ..... Documents for Registration of Players 31
26. ..... Player Selection List 31
27. ..... Registration of Officials 31
28. ..... Documents for Registration of Officials 33

SECTION 6: MEDIA 34
29. ..... Media Access 34
30. ..... Team Dressing Room Filming 34
31. ..... Press Conferences 35
32. ..... Interviews Prior to the Match 35
33. ..... Flash Interviews 36
34. ..... Mixed Zone 36
35. ..... Access to Match Footage 36

SECTION 7: TICKETING 37
36. General Requirements 37
37. Terms and Conditions 37
38. Complimentary Tickets 38
39. Purchasable Tickets 38

SECTION 8: COMMERCIAL 39
40. Commercial Rights 39
41. Clean Site 39
42. Advertising and Branding 39

SECTION 9: SAFETY AND SECURITY 40
43. General Principles 40

SECTION 10: MEDICAL AND ANTI-DOPING 41
44. Pre-Competition Medical Assessment 41
45. Facilities and Personnel 41
46. Anti-Doping 42

SECTION 11: FINANCIAL PROVISIONS 43
47. General Responsibilities 43
48. Logistical Arrangements for Participating Teams 43
49. Logistical Arrangements for AFC Delegation 43
50. Disciplinary Action 44

SECTION 12: AWARDS 45
51. Trophy, Awards, and Medals 45
52. Award Ceremony 45

SECTION 13: DISCIPLINARY 47
53. Disciplinary Measures 47
54. Good Conduct 47
55. Administrative Procedure 47
56. Cautions and Expulsions 48
57. Protest 48
58. Arbitration 50

SECTION 14: CLOSING PROVISIONS 51
59. Special Instructions 51
60. Decisions 51
61. Amendments 51
62. Force Majeure 51
63. Matters Not Provided For 51
64. Implementing Provisions 51
65. Enforcement 52


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DEFINITIONS

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

AFC Competitions Committee	The Standing Committee of the AFC described in Article 44 of the AFC Statutes.
Champion	The Participating Team that wins the final Match of the Competition.
Competition	The AFC U23 Asian Cup 2028, 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 Finals, all activities on the Field of Play (other than Matches), opening ceremonies, presentation or closing ceremonies, press conferences or Official Functions connected with the Qualifiers and Finals.
Finals	The final stage of the Competition, split into the Group Stage and Knockout Stage.
Group Stage	The first stage of the Finals held in accordance with these Regulations.
Host Association	Any Member Association approved by the AFC to organise, host and stage Matches in the Competition.
Hosting Agreement	The hosting Agreement concluded between the AFC and the Host Association for the organisation, hosting, and staging of the Finals of this 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.
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.
Participating Member Association	A Member Association whose representative team participates in the Competition.
Qualifiers	The qualifying stage of the Competition.
Regulations	These Competition Regulations.

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

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

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

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

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

(e) reference to the AFC Commercial Rights Partner or Commercial Affiliates shall include where advised by the AFC, their 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 U23 Asian Cup 2028

1.1. 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.

1.2. 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 Participating 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.

1.3. The Manual forms an integral part of 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.

1.4. Any failure to adhere to any matter set out in these Regulations the Manual and/or any related directives, decisions, guidelines, and/or circulars issued by the AFC may be referred to the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee.

1.5. 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.

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

2. The Asian Football Confederation

2.1. The AFC Competitions Committee 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 AFC Competitions Committee.

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

2.2.1. recommending the Competition format and 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 Association (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 World Anti-Doping Agency (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 53);

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 63);

2.3. All decisions made by the AFC Competitions Committee 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 AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code.

3. Host Association

3.1. The Host Association shall comply with the principal obligations and responsibilities in connection with the hosting and staging of the relevant Matches in the Competition.

3.2. The principal obligations and responsibilities of any Host Association are stipulated in the (where relevant) Hosting Agreement, List of Requirements (LOR), these Regulations, the Manual, the AFC Statutes and all other AFC regulations, directives, guidelines and circulars.

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

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

3.3.2. 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;

3.3.3. assist and coordinate with Member Associations on all arrangements relating to

the Competition in agreement with the AFC;

3.3.4. 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;

3.3.5. 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;

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

3.3.7. 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;

3.3.8. 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;

3.3.9. 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

3.3.10. guarantee safety and security at the Stadium.

3.4. The 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 Hosting Agreement, LOR 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 other such documents as requested by the AFC General Secretariat in relation to the PTA shall be completed and submitted to the AFC General Secretariat not later than the deadline provided by the AFC General Secretariat.

4.1.3. Failure to submit a validly completed PTA to the AFC General Secretariat 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 its Participating Players and Participating Officials attend and participate in all official activities and events, including, without limitation, any draw ceremonies, team workshops, team arrival meeting, match coordination meeting, press conference, 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 USD5,000; 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 Players 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 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 (1) or more Participating Member Associations may qualify directly for one (1) 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 General Secretariat.

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 which are eligible to participate in the Competition.

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

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

5.4. Sixteen (16) Member Associations shall participate in the Finals of the Competition by virtue of:

5.4.1. qualifying through the Qualifiers; and/or

5.4.2. being the Host Association of the Finals; and/or

5.4.3. 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 General Secretariat 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 AFC Competitions Committee 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 AFC Competitions Committee 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 AFC Competitions Committee 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 AFC Competitions Committee 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 the 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 AFC Competitions Committee.

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 AFC Competitions Committee, in which case the AFC Competitions Committee 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. No yellow cards, red cards, points and goals in those Matches shall be taken into consideration when determining the final rankings in a group pursuant to Articles 7.2 and 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 AFC Competitions Committee.

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 from:

6.7.1. 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 USD25,000 if its withdrawal occurred thirty (30) days or more before its first Match in the Finals; or

6.7.3.2. at least USD40,000 if its withdrawal occurred less than thirty (30) days before its first Match in the Finals.

6.7.4. the Finals, after it has commenced, shall be fined at least USD75,000.

6.7.5. may be disqualified from participating in the next edition of the AFC U23 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 financial payment that has been paid in connection with its participation in the Competition (or, if not yet paid, to forfeit its right to that financial payment) 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 Associations. 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 AFC Competitions Committee, but shall apply in all other instances.

6.8. All decisions of the AFC Competitions Committee 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 Competition. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.

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

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

7.2.2. 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

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

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

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

Tiebreaker

7.2.2.4. 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 below shall apply;

Group Results criteria

7.2.2.5. superior goal difference from all group Matches;

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

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

7.2.2.8. the lower score calculated according to the number of yellow and red cards received in the group Matches in accordance with the Manual; or

7.2.2.9. the drawing of lots.

7.3. 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 the Manual.

8. Qualifiers

8.1. The Qualifiers shall consist of Participating Teams drawn into groups depending on the number of Participating Teams, with each group played in a centralised league format. The AFC General Secretariat shall determine the Host Association and the number of groups for the Qualifiers following the confirmation of entries.

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

8.3. The ranking in each group shall be determined in accordance with Articles 7.2 and 7.3.

8.4. At the conclusion of the Qualifiers:

8.4.1. the best-ranked Participating Teams determined in accordance with the competition system shall qualify for the Finals; and

8.4.2. 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 sixteen (16) Participating Teams drawn into four (4) 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
A1	B1	C1	D1
A2	B2	C2	D2
A3	B3	C3	D3
A4	B4	C4	D4

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 Article 7.2.

9.5. At the conclusion of the Group Stage:

9.5.1. the first-placed and second-placed Participating Team in each group 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 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 eight (8) Participating Teams that qualify from the Group Stage shall play the quarter-finals as follows:

QF1: 1st A vs 2nd B
QF2: 1st B vs 2nd A
QF3: 1st C vs 2nd D
QF4: 1st D vs 2nd C

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

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

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

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

9.10. 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 any Match in the Knockout Stage, Extra Time comprising two (2) periods of fifteen (15) minutes 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, format and draw mechanism of the official draw 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 that is cancelled as a result of Force Majeure, the AFC Competitions Committee 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 that is cancelled, except in cases of Force Majeure recognised by the AFC Competitions Committee, 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 the Manual shall be followed.

13. Abandonment of Matches

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

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

13.2. Any Match that is abandoned, except in cases of Force Majeure recognised by the AFC Competitions Committee, 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 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 that meet the requirements of Category E for the Qualifiers and Category C for the Finals, as defined in the AFC Stadium Regulations, as well as any additional requirements in the Manual 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. The AFC General Secretariat may, at its sole discretion, reject the nomination of any Stadium(s) and select an alternative Stadium(s) to stage the relevant 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 at any Stadium:

Qualifiers

14.2.1. during the period starting at least seven (7) days prior to the first Match in the Stadium until one (1) day after the completion of the last Match in the Stadium; and

Finals

14.2.2. during the period starting at least fourteen (14) days prior to the first Match of the Finals until one (1) day 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 the first Match until one (1) day after the completion of the last Match; and

Finals

14.3.2. during the period starting at least seven (7) days prior to the first Match of the Finals until one (1) day after the last use of the Stadium in connection with the Finals.

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

14.4.1. fined at least USD5,000; 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 with field markings in accordance with Law 1 of the Laws of the Game.

15.1.1. A Host Association that fails to comply with this Article 15.1 shall be fined at least USD5,000.

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 three (3) days prior to the first Match of the respective group in the Qualifiers until one (1) day after the last Match in the Venue. They shall not be used for any other purpose during this period unless written permission has been obtained from the AFC General Secretariat.

15.2.1. A Host Association that fails to comply with this Article 15.2 shall be fined at least USD5,000.

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

15.3. Participating Teams must solely utilise Official Training Sites for any training at the Venue from two (2) days prior to their first Match of the Competition.

Finals

15.4. Official Training Sites shall be made available at least seven (7) days prior to the first Match of the Finals until one (1) day after the last use of the Official Training Site concerned as scheduled by the AFC General Secretariat.

15.5. Official Training Sites shall not be used for any other purpose from fourteen (14) days prior to the start of the Competition until one (1) day after the last use of the Official Training Site concerned as scheduled by the AFC, unless written permission has been obtained from the AFC General Secretariat.

15.5.1. A Host Association that fails to comply with Articles 15.4 and 15.5 shall be fined at least USD5,000.

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

15.6. 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; and wherever required in accordance with Article 10, Extra Time shall be played.

16.3. Only five (5) of the substitutes listed on the start list of a Match may take part in the Match, utilising a maximum of three (3) substitution opportunities in accordance with Law 3 of the Laws of the Game. 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 (regardless of whether the Participating Team has already utilised the full number of permitted substitutes and opportunities).

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 and opportunity for any reason. The additional opportunity can be used only for this additional substitute.

16.6. The AFC General Secretariat may, at its discretion, decide to use football technologies in any Match(es) 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 technology) in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

17. Refereeing

17.1. If the referee is prevented from carrying out his/her 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 in making 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

18.1. A maximum of twelve (12) Participating Players and a maximum of eight (8) Participating Officials are permitted to sit on the team bench during a Match, provided they are in possession of the appropriate Accreditation Devices.

18.2. The Host Association shall reserve a minimum of twenty (20) Team Technical Seats for each Participating Team's additional Participating Players and Participating Officials who will not be seated on the team bench.

18.3. Only Participating Players or Participating Officials who are registered in accordance with Articles 21.3 and 21.4 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 the Host Association. The Host Association shall supply each visiting Participating Team with twenty (20) of the same footballs 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 Devices (as applicable) authorised by the AFC General Secretariat. Participating Players and Participating 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, 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 up to a maximum of eight (8) Participating Officials.

21.3.1. Each Participating Team may nominate an additional twelve (12) Participating Officials as part of its Official Team Delegation, who shall receive the same Accreditation Cards as the eight (8) Participating Officials referred to above.

21.3.2. All costs related to the additional twelve (12) 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-three (23) Participating Players and a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of twelve (12) Participating Officials.

21.4.1. Each Participating Team may nominate an additional eight (8) Participating Officials as part of its Official Team Delegation, who shall receive the same Accreditation Cards as the twelve (12) Participating Officials referred to above.

21.4.2. All costs related to the additional eight (8) 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 in the Qualifiers and the Finals.

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;

22.1.3. were born on or after 1 January 2005; and

22.1.4. 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

23.1. Each Participating Team shall register a minimum of eighteen (18) and a maximum of fifty (50) Participating Players 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 the first Match of the Qualifiers, 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 considered to have withdrawn from the Competition and be subject to Article 6.

23.6. 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.

23.7. No later than ten (10) days prior to the first Match of the respective group in the Qualifiers, 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.

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 General Secretariat.

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 Qualifiers and the Finals.

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

24. Final Registration of Players

Qualifiers

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

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

24.1.2. Participating Players must be assigned shirts numbered 1 to 23. 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 Qualifiers.

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

24.3. Once the Final Registration 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 such replacement(s) up until six (6) hours prior to their first Match in the Qualifiers. The request shall be approved by the AFC General Secretariat,

provided that:

24.3.1. 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 AFC General Secretariat;

24.3.2. any replacement Participating Player must have been registered in the Preliminary Registration;

24.3.3. any replacement Participating Player shall only be allocated the vacated shirt numbers;

24.3.4. 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

24.3.5. any replacement Participating Player shall only be eligible to participate in the Qualifiers after receiving their Accreditation Card.

Finals

24.4. Each Participating Team shall submit via AFCAS a Final Registration of a minimum of eighteen (18) and a maximum of twenty-three (23) Participating Players. The Final Registration shall be submitted no later than ten (10) days prior to the first Match of the Finals.

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

24.4.2. Participating Players must be assigned shirts numbered 1 to 23. 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.

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

24.6. Once the Final Registration has been submitted to the AFC General Secretariat, Participating Teams may only replace any of the registered Participating Players in the event of serious injury or illness. Participating Teams may request 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:

24.6.1. 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 AFC General Secretariat;

24.6.2. any replacement Participating Player must have been registered in the Preliminary Registration;

24.6.3. any replacement Participating Player shall only be allocated the vacated shirt number;

24.6.4. 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

24.6.5. any replacement Participating Player shall only be eligible to participate in the Finals after receiving their Accreditation Card.

25. Documents for Registration of Players

25.1. Participating Players must be registered via 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

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 no later than ninety (90) minutes prior to the commencement of each Match. For the avoidance of doubt, any Participating Player who is not selected as the starting eleven (11) or substitutes (as applicable) shall be identified as 'not playing'.

26.1.1. 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 matchday.

27. Registration of Officials

Qualifiers

27.1. Each Participating Team may nominate a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of eight (8) Participating Officials. Each Participating Team may also nominate an additional twelve (12) 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 of the Qualifiers or as otherwise determined by the AFC General Secretariat.

27.3. Each Participating Team must include the following three (3) Participating Officials in the registration list:

27.3.1. Head coach;

27.3.2. Team manager; and

27.3.3. Team doctor.

27.4. Up to eight (8) Participating Officials may sit on the team bench for each Match. The following three (3) Participating Officials must be selected from the officials on the substitution bench list and must sit on the team bench for each Match:

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 relevant stage of 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 the availability of 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 General Secretariat and after the stipulated deadline has passed, Participating Teams may replace any of the listed Participating Officials in the relevant stage of the Competition 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 its Accreditation Card to the AFC and shall receive the Accreditation Card of the replacement Participating Official in exchange; and

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

27.8. Each Participating Team shall submit the officials on the substitution bench list 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 twelve (12)

Participating Officials. Each Participating Team may also nominate an additional eight (8) 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 of the Finals, or as otherwise determined by the AFC General Secretariat.

27.11. Each Participating Team 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 doctor;

27.11.4. Team media officer; and

27.11.5. Team security officer.

27.12. The provisions of Articles 27.4 to 27.8 shall apply equally to the Finals.

28. Documents for Registration of Officials

28.1. Participating Officials must be registered via AFCAS with the supporting documents set out in the Manual, together with any additional information and/or documents 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. The Host Association shall ensure that the AFC, Commercial Affiliates, the Host Broadcaster, and all Broadcast Partners have free access to each Stadium from five (5) days prior to the first Match in the Stadium until one (1) day after the last Match in the Stadium 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 Partners, Commercial Affiliates, the Host Broadcaster, and all Broadcast Partners have free access to each Stadium from ten (10) days prior to the first Match in the Stadium until one (1) day after the last Match in the Stadium 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.

30. Team Dressing Room Filming

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

30.1.1. to film the matchday set-up of the team dressing rooms;

30.1.2. to allow the Broadcast Partner's reporter to conduct and film stand-up reporting (as approved by the AFC); and

30.1.3. to film the arrival and entry of Participating Players and Participating Officials.

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

30.3. Participating Teams shall ensure that no technical, tactical or confidential materials are visible in the team dressing room during filming.

30.4. Any Participating Team that fails to complete the team dressing room set-up for filming when requested by the AFC shall be fined at least USD5,000. The AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may impose further sanctions at its discretion.

31. Press Conferences

Qualifiers

31.1. The Host Association is responsible for the organisation of a pre-Match press conference at least one (1) day prior to the first Match it hosts in the Qualifiers. The AFC shall, in collaboration with each Host Association, decide the final timing of the pre-Match press conference.

Finals

31.2. The AFC, with support from the Host Association, is responsible for the organisation of a pre-Match press conference at least one (1) day prior to each Match in the Finals. The AFC shall decide the final timing of all the pre-Match press conferences.

31.3. The head coach and one (1) of the key Participating Players (as determined by the AFC at its sole discretion) of each Participating Team must attend the pre-Match press conference organised in accordance with Articles 31.1 and 31.2.

31.4. 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, etc.) are granted, the winner of such awards must also attend the post-Match press conference, if requested by the AFC.

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

31.6. Any individual who fails to attend an obligatory press conference shall be fined at least USD5,000. The relevant Participating Team shall also be held liable for any failure to attend a press conference 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 Team shall make the following individuals available for an interview prior to each Match as follows:

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.

Stadium Arrival Interview

32.1.2. one (1) Participating Player on matchday 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 matchday 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 participate in an interview when requested shall be fined at least USD5,000. The relevant Participating Team may be held liable for any failure to participate in 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, a Participating Team shall make available a maximum of three (3) Participating Players and Participating Officials (head coach) for flash interviews following each Match.

33.2. Any individual who fails to participate in a flash interview when requested shall be fined at least USD5,000. The relevant Participating Team may be held liable for any failure to participate in 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 of each Participating Team 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 USD5,000. 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. Within twelve (12) hours of the conclusion of the relevant Match, the relevant Host Association shall provide the AFC Match commissioner and the Participating Teams in the same group with the Match footage in an acceptable broadcast quality and format.

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 General Secretariat.

36.2. The AFC reserves the right at its sole discretion to substitute the seating area or the gate entrance identified on a 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. The 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 General Secretariat.

Qualifiers

37.2. The 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.

Finals

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

37.4. In respect to the Qualifiers and Finals, the AFC General Secretariat reserves the right at its sole discretion to determine the scope and terms relating to ticketing and shall advise the Host Association on any requirements relating to Ticket production, distribution and/or sales.

38. Complimentary Tickets

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

38.2. The Host Association shall provide the following Complimentary Tickets to each Participating Team in the respective group of the Qualifiers and/or in the Finals (as applicable):

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;

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; and

38.2.4. 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 per cent (8%) of the net saleable capacity of each Stadium available exclusively to the supporters of each Participating Team 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 General Secretariat. 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 by 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 Commercial Rights emanating from the Competition as well as from any other related events under its jurisdiction, without any restrictions as to content, time, place and law. The AFC General Secretariat 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. The 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. The 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 Stadiums and Official Training Sites as Clean Sites seven (7) days before the first Match of the Finals, until one (1) day after the last use of the Site in connection with the Finals.

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 Delegations, AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Commercial Affiliates, Media, spectators, and all goods brought in by the AFC, Official Team Delegations, AFC Commercial Rights Partner, and Commercial Affiliates.

43.3. The Host Association shall issue a detailed security plan 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 (including, without limitation, evacuation plans, the stadium safety certificate and security personnel deployment plans).

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 start of the Finals.

44.1.2. The AFC General Secretariat 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 General Secretariat 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, at 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. The Host Association shall provide a medical room and a 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. The 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 the 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. Each visiting Participating Team shall cover its return international and domestic travel costs (if applicable) to the Venue or the nearest airport, as well as incidental expenses.

48.2. The Host Association shall cover the cost of all other logistical arrangements in accordance with the list of requirements published by the AFC General Secretariat during the period starting two (2) days prior to the first Match of the respective group in the Qualifiers until one (1) day after the last Match of the respective Participating Team, unless otherwise requested by the AFC General Secretariat. Such arrangements shall be communicated to the Participating Teams by circular prior to the Qualifiers.

Finals

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

48.4. The Participating Teams shall cover their international and domestic travel costs (if applicable) 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.

48.5. The AFC General Secretariat and the Host Association shall provide all other logistical arrangements in accordance with the Hosting Agreement during the official period of four (4) days prior to each Participating Team's first Match until one (1) day after the last Match of the respective Participating Team, unless otherwise requested by the AFC. Such arrangements shall be communicated to the Participating Teams by circular prior to the Finals.

49. Logistical Arrangements for AFC Delegation

Qualifiers

49.1. The Host Association shall cover the cost of all logistical arrangements for the AFC Delegation in accordance with the list of requirements published by the AFC General Secretariat. Such arrangements shall be communicated to the Host Association by circular prior to the Qualifiers.

Finals

49.2. The Host Association shall provide all logistical arrangements for the AFC Delegation in

accordance with the Hosting Agreement.

50. Disciplinary Action

50.1. Where a Host Association fails to comply with any of its obligations under Articles 3, 48 and/or 49 with regard to the Qualifiers and Finals, 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 payment that has been paid to it in respect of the relevant stage of the Competition (or, if not yet paid, to forfeit its right to any financial payment due to it in respect of the relevant stage of the Competition) 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

51. Trophy, Awards, and Medals

51.1. 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.

51.2. 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.

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

51.3.1. Most Valuable Player;

51.3.2. Top Goal Scorer;

51.3.3. Best Goalkeeper; and

51.3.4. AFC Fair Play Award.

51.4. The AFC shall award the following medals:

51.4.1. forty-three (43) medals to the Champion;

51.4.2. forty-three (43) medals to the runner-up; and

51.4.3. commemorative medals to the Match Officials of the final Match of the Competition.

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

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

52. Award Ceremony

52.1. 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 51.

52.2. 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-three (23) Participating Players and eight (8) 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

53. Disciplinary Measures

53.1. 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.

53.2. 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.

53.3. All Participating Players and Participating Officials agree to:

53.3.1. 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/unsporting behaviour, respecting the authority of Match Officials, not making bets in connection with any Match and not engaging in any activities linked to the manipulation of Matches; and

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

54. Good Conduct

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

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

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

54.2. For any violation of Article 54.1, the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee may impose any sanction listed in the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code.

55. Administrative Procedure

55.1. 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:

55.1.1. 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 per cent (20%) should the party admit to the offence;

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

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

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

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

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

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

56. Cautions and Expulsions

56.1. 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

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

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

Finals

56.1.3. Any Participating Player or Participating Official who completes the Group Stage having only received one (1) caution shall carry over that caution to the quarter-finals.

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

57. Protest

57.1. 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.

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

57.2.1. 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");

57.2.2. 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

57.2.3. 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.

57.3. 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 and/or any other football technology in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

57.4. 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:

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

57.4.2. 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.

57.5. If any of the formal requirements set out in Article 57.2 and/or Article 57.4 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.

57.6. Subject to Article 57.5 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 AFC Competitions Committee for its decision if it is deemed to be purely operational in nature.

58. Arbitration

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

58.2. 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.

58.3. 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

59. Special Instructions

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

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

60. Decisions

60.1. 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.

61. Amendments

61.1. 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.

62. Force Majeure

62.1. The AFC Competitions Committee is the only body capable of declaring a Force Majeure event for the purposes of these Regulations.

63. Matters Not Provided For

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

64. Implementing Provisions

64.1. 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.

65. Enforcement

65.1. These Regulations were ratified by the AFC Executive Committee on 29 July 2026 and came into force immediately.

For the AFC Executive Committee

Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa
President

Datuk Seri Windsor John
General Secretary


CHAMPIONS
AFC U23 ASIAN CUP™ SAUDI ARABIA 2026

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