Qatar Football Association
Electoral Code

A. GENERAL REMARKS

Article 1 Scope of application

1 This Code is applicable to presidential elections as well as those for members of the Executive Committee as well as to members of any other bodies of QFA which according to the Statutes of QFA have to be elected by the general assembly of the QFA (hereafter the "General Assembly").

2 This electoral code is also applicable to elections to executive bodies of the leagues and regional associations that are subordinate to the QFA and whose regulations and procedures are controlled by the QFA.

Article 2 Principles, obligations and rights of parties, government interference

1 The democratic principles of segregation of powers, transparency and publicising of the electoral processes of the QFA must be observed without exception.

2 Government interference of any kind in the electoral process or composition of the General Assembly of the QFA is not permitted. Consequently, government rules on elections shall not apply to the internal governing bodies of the QFA and the electoral rules of the QFA shall not require the approval of any government body.

3 Furthermore, the QFA shall inform FIFA of the commencement of the elections to its internal governing bodies, the announcement of the elections and its electoral rules at one month's notice. It shall likewise inform FIFA of the duration of the elections and of the mandates. The QFA is likewise obliged to immediately inform FIFA of any government interference in the electoral process.

4 Unless this Code states otherwise, the internal governing bodies of the QFA shall continue to exercise their functions until the completion of the electoral process.

B. ELECTORAL COMMITTEE

Article 3 Basic principles

1 The electoral committee (hereafter the "Committee") organises and supervises the election process by the General Assembly and takes all decisions relating to the elections by the General Assembly.

2 The members of the Committee and the election appeal committee (hereafter the "Election Appeal Committee") must under no circumstances be members of the Executive Committee of the QFA. The General Secretary of QFA cannot be a member of the Committee or the Election Appeal Committee.

3 The members of the Committee and the Election Appeal Committee must immediately decline to give an opinion and withdraw from the matter in progress and resign if they are:
a) a candidate for an elected post;
b) a relative, whether by birth or marriage, of one of the candidates for an elected post;
c) occupies any political position.

4 In the event that a member does not fulfill the above requirements, the member in question shall immediately leave his position and be replaced by a substitute.

5 A member shall immediately disclose any conflict of interests with respect to any of the candidates.

Article 4 Election of the Electoral Committee and the Election Appeal Committee

1 The Committee and the Election Appeal Committee are elected, in accordance with the provisions of this code, by the General Assembly for a term of four (4) years.

2 The General Assembly elects the five (5) members of the Committee and three (3) substitute members of the Committee as well as the three (3) members of the Election Appeal Committee and two (2) substitute members of the Election Appeal Committee.

3 The members of the Committee and the Election Appeal Committee are not permitted to serve for more than two (2) consecutive terms.

4 The General Assembly at which the Committee and the Election Appeal Committee are elected shall take place at least four (4) months before the elective General Assembly at which the Executive Committee is elected.

Article 5 Composition of the Electoral Committee

1 The Committee shall be composed of five (5) members.

2 The Committee comprises:
a) a chairman;
b) a deputy chairman;
c) three (3) members.

3 The general secretariat of the QFA serves as the secretary to the electoral committee. The General Secretary may take part in the activities of the Committee in a consultative capacity, is responsible for the related logistical matters and takes care of administrative matters.

4 The Committee appoints the chairman and deputy chairman from among its members.

5 In the event that one or more members of the Committee stand as candidates for an elected post or are unable to carry out their duties, they shall resign from the Committee. Any member who resigns shall be replaced by a substitute.

6 The members of the Committee shall officially declare their candidature for elected posts in such a way as to allow the replacement process described above to be carried out harmoniously and without any time pressure that would be prejudicial to the elections of the Executive Committee.

7 The Committee may be assisted by members of the general secretariat at any time provided that they are not standing as candidates for elected posts.

Article 6 Duties of the Committee

1 The Committee is responsible for all tasks relating to the organisation, running and supervision of the elective General Assembly. In particular, it is responsible for:

a) strictly enforcing the QFA's statutes and regulations;
b) strictly enforcing the statutes, directives and regulations of FIFA and the regulations of the QFA and AFC where they do not contradict FIFA regulations;
c) strictly enforcing the electoral code;
d) strictly enforcing the statutory deadlines for elections;
e) distributing information to the members of the General Assembly as well as to government bodies, the media and the public;
f) managing relations with government bodies (where necessary);
g) the candidature procedure (launch, distribution of information, evaluation, publication of official list etc.);
h) organising, in administrative and technical terms, the elective General Assembly;
i) drawing up the list of voters in accordance with the QFA's statutory provisions;
j) verifying the identity of the voters under the supervision of the bailiff appointed for this purpose;
k) the voting procedure;
l) all other tasks necessary to ensure the smooth running of the electoral process.

2 Logistical matters shall be taken care of by the QFA.

Article 7 Convoking the Committee and quorum

1 Only if the Committee is convoked validly by the chairman of the Committee is it entitled to deliberate and pass decisions.

2 A quorum is constituted by the absolute majority of the members of the Committee.

Article 8 Decisions of the Committee

1 All of the Committee's decisions must be passed by an absolute majority of the valid votes cast. If a vote is tied, the chairman of the Committee shall have the casting vote.

Decisions are recorded in minutes signed by the chairman and the secretary of the Committee.

2 Appeals against the Committee's decisions that are not final according to this code may be lodged only with the Election Appeal Committee, to the exclusion of the possibility of appealing said decisions before any other body, particularly a government body.

C. CANDIDATURES

Article 9 Criteria

The eligibility criteria are defined by this code and the statutes of the QFA and must comply with the statutes and regulations of FIFA.

Article 10 Submission of candidatures

Candidatures shall be sent along with a nomination letter of the QFA Member and a brief description of the candidate by recorded post or delivered in exchange for confirmation of receipt to the general secretariat of the QFA at least 45 days before the elective General Assembly is held.

Article 11 Examination of candidatures

1 The candidatures shall be examined by the electoral committee within seven (7) days of the deadline for their submission.

2 The candidates shall be informed of the decision of the Committee's examination within the same period of seven (7) days.

Article 12 Appeal procedure

1 The Election Appeal Committee is constituted of three (3) members and two (2) substitutes elected by the General Assembly at the same time as the members of the Committee. One of these members shall have legal training who will be the chairman. Article 5 par. 3 to Art. 5 par. 7, Art. 7 and Art. 8 par. 1 of this Code apply also by analogy to the Election Appeal Committee.

2 The Election Appeal Committee comprises:
a) a chairman;
b) two (2) members.

3 Any appeal, with its reasons, shall be sent by hand delivery in exchange for confirmation of receipt to the general secretariat of the QFA within three (3) days of receipt of the Committee's decision.

4 Appeals shall be considered by the Election Appeal Committee within four (4) days of their receipt by the general secretariat.

5 The decisions of the Election Appeal Committee are final and may not be monitored by any administrative body of the government.

Article 13 Distribution of the final official list

1 The final official list of candidates shall be sent along with the agenda for the General Assembly at which the Executive Committee will be elected to all the members of the General Assembly and, where necessary, to the relevant government bodies no less than thirty (30) days before the elective General Assembly is held.

2 The final official list of candidates may also be publicised in the press.

D. VOTING PROCEDURE

Article 14 Deadline for convoking an elective General Assembly

An elective General Assembly shall be convoked the requisite number of days before it takes place as stipulated in the QFA's statutes. Notification shall be addressed to all the members of the General Assembly and, where necessary, to the relevant government bodies. The elective General Assembly may be announced through the media.

Article 15 Duties of the Committee

The duties of the Committee are as follows:

a) to monitor the voting procedure during the elective General Assembly using the electoral register that it has compiled;
b) to count the votes;
c) to take any decision that is necessary regarding the validity or invalidity of ballot papers;
d) in general, to pass a definitive decision on any matters relating to the voting procedure during the elective General Assembly;
e) to draft official minutes of the election and distribute them to the members and, where necessary, to government authorities;
f) to declare the official results;
g) to organise a media conference, where necessary.

Article 16 Ballot papers

1 The QFA's general secretariat shall produce the ballot papers under the supervision and charge of the Committee. The ballot papers shall be printed clearly and legibly.

2 The ballot papers shall be of a different colour for each round of the election.

Article 17 Urn

1 Before the start of the voting procedure, the urn – which shall be transparent where possible – shall be opened and presented to the members of the General Assembly. It shall then be closed and placed in a visible position near to the members of the Committee.

2 During the vote, the urn shall be monitored by one of the members of the Committee.

Article 18 Polling booths

Polling booths shall be erected near to the urn and the polling station so that the members of the members of the General Assembly who are entitled to vote may complete their ballot paper in secret.

Article 19 Vote

1 The chairman of the Committee shall explain in detail the voting procedure (urn, ballot papers, valid and invalid ballot papers, count, required majorities, results etc.) and cite any relevant statutory or legislative provisions.

2 The chairman of the Committee calls in turn each member of the General Assembly who has the right to vote and invites him, through one of his delegates, to move to the front of the hall where the election is taking place.

3 Once called, the member moves to the front of the hall and, after signing, he receives his ballot paper.

4 The member then completes his ballot paper in the polling booth designated for this purpose.

5 The member in question deposits his ballot paper in the urn, signs the electoral register and then returns to his seat.

6 The counting procedure begins as soon as all of the members with the right to vote have deposited their ballot papers in the urn. A member of the Committee opens the urn and tips out the ballot papers. The count then commences.

7 In case there is only the exact number of candidate(s) for the available position(s), the election can take place by acclamation. For the decision that the acclamation can take place, an absolute majority (50%+1) of the votes recorded and valid is necessary.

E. COUNT

Article 20 General conditions/Decisions in the event of dispute

1 Only the members of the Committee may take part in the count. All operations (opening the urn, counting the ballot papers, counting the votes etc.) shall be carried out in a way that can be followed clearly by the members of the General Assembly.

2 In the event of a dispute regarding the validity or invalidity of a ballot paper, the validity or invalidity of a vote, the drafting of the protocol for the count, the declaration of the results or any other matter relating to the counting or voting procedure during the elective General Assembly, the Committee's decision shall be final.

Article 21 Invalid ballot papers

1 The following are considered invalid:

a) ballot papers that is not the official ballot paper distributed by the Committee;
b) ballot papers that bear any words other than the names of the candidates;
c) ballot papers that are illegible or have been defaced;
d) ballot papers that bear marks identifying the voter.

2 The chairman of the Committee shall write on the back of any invalid ballot paper (in red) the reasons for its invalidity and confirm with a signature.

Article 22 Spelling mistakes

Spelling mistakes shall result in the invalidity of a vote only if they mean that it is not possible to identify with certainty any of the official candidates.

Article 23 Count and declaration of results

1 Once the urn has been opened, the members of the Committee shall count out loud the number of ballot papers and verify their validity. If the number of ballot papers is equal to or less than the number of ballot papers issued, the ballot is valid. If it exceeds the number of ballot papers issued, the ballot shall be declared void and recommence immediately in accordance with the procedure described above.

2 After the number of ballot papers has been verified, the members of the Committee shall proceed to count the number of votes cast for each different candidate.

3 Once the count has been completed and verified, the chairman shall officially declare the results to the members of the General Assembly.

4 If a second (or subsequent) round of voting is required, the voting procedure shall be repeated in accordance with the above articles. The members of the General Assembly are also to be informed of the statutory provisions that apply for the second (and subsequent) rounds of voting (e.g. any changes to the majority required, elimination of candidates).

Article 24 Declaration of final results

1 After each round of the election, the chairman of the Committee shall officially declare the results to the members of the General Assembly. The minutes are to be drafted and signed by all the members of the Committee.

2 The final minutes shall be distributed to the members of the General Assembly and to the relevant government bodies. They shall be entered in the record of the deliberations of the General Assembly.

Article 25 Verification of procedure

A bailiff or other person of equivalent legal status recognised by the courts shall attend the General Assembly and draw up minutes. He is specifically responsible for verifying the identity of the voters and ensuring compliance with the voting procedure.

Article 26 Entry into force

1 This electoral code was adopted by the General Assembly when it convened on 31 March 2013 and comes into force immediately.

2 This Code replaces the previous QFA Electoral Code (Edition 2008).

Article 27 Language

This Code has been drafted in both Arabic and English versions and in case of discrepancy in the interpretation between them, the Arabic version prevails.

F. FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 28 Violations, rights of FIFA, archiving of documents, omissions

1 Failure by the QFA to apply the principles of this code shall be considered a serious violation of the provisions of article 13 of the FIFA Statutes and shall lead to the consequences described in article 14 of the FIFA Statutes or the disciplinary measures provided for under article 65 of the FIFA Statutes.

2 FIFA has the right to intervene in the electoral processes of the QFA at any time to monitor its integrity and check that this code and the statutes and regulations of FIFA are being applied.

3 FIFA may likewise suspend or invalidate the electoral processes and/or appoint a provisional administration for the QFA, as the case may be.

4 The Committee shall hand over all the official documents relating to the elections to the QFA's general secretariat, which is responsible for passing them on to the relevant bodies, where required, and for archiving them.

5 All matters relating to the administrative and technical organisation of the elective General Assembly that are not covered by this code or the QFA Statutes shall be ruled upon by the Committee.

6 All matters relating to the actual running of the elections not covered by this code or the QFA Statutes shall be ruled upon by the Committee.

7 The members of the Committee and Election Appeal Committee shall observe the utmost impartiality when carrying out their duties.