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### DEFINITIONS

In these Procedural Rules governing the AFC Entry Control Body, capitalised terms shall have the following meanings, unless the context specifically indicates otherwise:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFC</td>
<td>Asian Football Confederation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body</td>
<td>The AFC Entry Control Body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club</td>
<td>A professional club or an amateur club which participates in a league or competition under the auspices of a Football Association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>The AFC Champions League or the AFC Cup.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football Association</td>
<td>The controlling body for football within a country or territory recognised by the AFC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match</td>
<td>A football match in its entirety (including a replayed and/or deferred football match, extra time and penalty kicks) which takes place as part of the Competition in accordance with the match schedule. For the avoidance of doubt, a Match formally commences when the stadium is officially opened to spectators and formally concludes when the stadium is officially closed to spectators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member Association</td>
<td>A Football Association which is a member of the AFC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules</td>
<td>These Procedural Rules governing the AFC Entry Control Body.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the purposes of these Rules, 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.
CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Objective

1.1. The objective of these Procedural Rules governing the AFC Entry Control Body (Rules) is to set out the rules and procedure for matters to be decided by the AFC Entry Control Body (Body).

2. Scope

2.1. The procedures of the Body shall be conducted in accordance with these Rules.

2.2. The Body has the power to make all orders necessary to ensure that only those Clubs that meet the eligibility criteria in the Entry Manual for AFC Club Competitions 2017-2020 (Entry Manual) are granted entry to participate in a Competition.

2.3. The final decisions made by the Body are of an administrative nature. They pertain solely to the eligibility of a Club to enter and participate in a Competition.

3. Applicable material law

3.1. In their application and adjudication of the law, the Body shall apply the AFC Statutes and AFC regulations, as well as the specificity of sport.

3.2. Malaysian law shall apply in a subsidiary manner.
4. AFC Entry Control Body

4.1. The Body has jurisdiction to determine the eligibility of a Club to participate in a Competition where:

4.1.1. the AFC or a Club alleges that a Club has been directly or indirectly involved in match-manipulation (cf. Article 12.8, Entry Manual);

4.1.2. the AFC or a Club alleges that there exists a violation of the rules relating to control or influence (cf. Article 12.13, Entry Manual);

4.1.3. the AFC or a Club alleges that a Member Association has nominated the incorrect Club(s) to participate in a Competition (cf. Article 10, Entry Manual);

4.1.4. the AFC or a Club alleges that a Member Association has incorrectly granted a licence to a Club to participate in a Competition (cf. Article 7.3.4, AFC Club Licensing Regulations);

4.1.5. a Club submits an Extraordinary Application to participate in a Competition (cf. Article 7.4, AFC Club Licensing Regulations).

4.2. The Chairperson has jurisdiction to decide on the following matters alone:

4.2.1. whether the Body has jurisdiction to hear a matter;

4.2.2. objections to members of the Body to adjudicate a case; and

4.2.3. the extension of time limits.
5. Court of Arbitration for Sport

5.1. Those decisions of the Body or its Chairperson that are appealable may be exclusively appealed before the Court of Arbitration for Sport within ten (10) days of notification of the decision.

5.2. Appeals shall be subject to the following limitations:

5.2.1. the appeal shall automatically be subject to an expedited procedure and be completed (if relevant) prior to any Competition draw;

5.2.2. the appeal shall be heard by three (3) arbitrators;

5.2.3. the appeal shall be conducted in English; and

5.2.4. any hearing, if required, shall be at the CAS Alternate Hearing Centre in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

SECTION 2: ORGANISATIONAL RULES

6. Composition

6.1. The Body is independent of all other bodies of the AFC.

6.1.1. Its members shall not belong to the AFC Executive Committee, AFC General Secretariat, any AFC standing committee, or any AFC judicial body.

6.1.2. The Chairperson shall have legal qualifications. The remaining members shall have legal qualifications or related experience.
6.2. The Body is composed of five (5) members made up of:

6.2.1. one (1) Chairperson; and

6.2.2. four (1) Deputy Chairpersons (designated as First, Second, Third and Fourth).

6.3. The members shall be elected by the AFC Congress upon the proposal of the AFC Executive Committee for a term of four (4) years.

6.4. The term commences from the day of appointment or election.

6.5. In the event of death, resignation, suspension, or inability of any member to perform their function, the AFC Executive Committee shall appoint the replacement until the next AFC Congress. The AFC Congress shall elect a replacement upon the proposal of the AFC Executive Committee for the remainder of the vacated term.

7. Meetings

7.1. The Body meets when convened by its Chairperson.

7.2. The required quorum for any decision is three (3) members.

7.3. Its administrative organisation and support are conducted by the AFC General Secretariat. The AFC General Secretary shall appoint a Secretariat for this task.
8. Chair

8.1. The Chairperson leads each meeting.

8.2. The Chairperson may make certain decisions acting alone as provided by these Rules.

8.3. If the Chairperson is unavailable, the First Deputy Chairperson shall lead a meeting or make the required decision alone. This process shall continue with the remaining Deputy Chairpersons in descending order until a quorum is not achieved for those decisions requiring a quorum.

9. Independence

9.1. The Body makes its decisions entirely independently. It shall not receive instructions from any other AFC body.

9.2. A member of another AFC body may not stay in the meeting room during deliberations unless they have been explicitly summoned to attend.

10. Withdrawal and Conflicts of Interest

10.1. The members must recuse themselves from matters where there are serious grounds for questioning their impartiality.
10.2. This applies, without limitation, in the following cases:

10.2.1. if any conflict of interest exists or is perceived to exist;

10.2.2. if the member has the same nationality as a party;

10.2.3. if the member has already dealt with the case under different circumstances.

10.3. Members who recuse themselves shall notify the Chairperson in writing immediately.

10.4. A party may raise an objection to any member they believe to be biased. The Chairperson or his replacement shall decide on such objections.

11. Confidentiality

11.1. The members shall ensure that everything disclosed during the course of their duty remains confidential.

12. Exemption from liability

12.1. Neither the members nor the Secretariat may be held liable for any action or omission relating to any procedure conducted pursuant to this Rules.
CHAPTER THREE: PROCEDURE

SECTION 1: TIME LIMITS

13. **Calculation of time limits**

   13.1. The starting time for a time limit for a party that has directly received a document shall commence the day after receipt of the relevant document.

   13.2. The starting date for a time limit for other parties shall commence four (4) days after receipt of the relevant document by its affiliated Member Association.

   13.3. If the last day of a time limit coincides with an official public holiday in the place of domicile of the party required to comply, the time limit will expire on the next day that is not an official public holiday.

14. **Compliance with time limits**

   14.1. Compliance occurs if the action required has been carried out before expiry of the time limit.

   14.2. If the action required is the submission of a document, such document must be submitted or mailed no later than 23:59 on the last day of the time limit.

   14.3. Parties may submit documents by facsimile, electronic mail, or courier.
15. **Pause of time limits**

15.1. Time limits are paused:

15.1.1. during the period two (2) days before the AFC Congress up to two (2) days after;

15.1.2. during the period two (2) days before the first Match up to two (2) days after the final Match of the AFC Asian Cup (Finals); and

15.1.3. during the periods when AFC House is officially closed. The exact dates of the closure will be announced to the Member Associations via circular.

16. **Extension of time limits**

16.1. Time limits that have been set may be extended, upon request. The time limits fixed in these Rules shall not be extended.

16.2. A time limit shall not be extended more than twice and, the second time, only in exceptional circumstances.

16.3. The decision to extend a time limit is made by the Secretariat, unless the time limit is granted by the Chairperson or member, who shall decide. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.
SECTION 2: RIGHT TO BE HEARD

17. Right to be heard

17.1. A party shall be given the opportunity to be heard before any decision is made.

17.2. A party may, without limitation:

17.2.1. refer to the AFC file;

17.2.2. present their argument in fact and in law;

17.2.3. request production of proof;

17.2.4. be involved in the production of proof; and

17.2.5. obtain a reasoned decision.

18. Restrictions

18.1. The right to be heard may be restricted in exceptional circumstances. Such exceptional circumstances shall be determined by the Chairperson.

18.2. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.
SECTION 3: EVIDENCE

19. Types of evidence

19.1. Any type of evidence may be produced.

19.2. The following categories of evidence, without limitation, are inadmissible:

19.2.1. evidence that violates human dignity; and

19.2.2. evidence in a language other than English that is not accompanied by a certified translation.

20. Anonymous witnesses

20.1. When an individual’s testimony could endanger his life or put him or his family or close friends in physical danger, the Chairperson may order on request that:

20.1.1. the witness not be identified in the presence of a party;

20.1.2. the witness not appear at the hearing;

20.1.3. all or some of the information that could be used to identify the witness be included only in a separate, confidential case file.
20.2. In view of all the circumstances and in particular if no other evidence is available to corroborate that of the anonymous witness and if it is technically possible, the Chairperson may exceptionally order on request, that:

20.2.1. the voice of the witness be distorted;

20.2.2. the face of the witness be masked;

20.2.3. the witness be questioned outside the hearing room;

20.2.4. the witness be questioned in writing through the chairman.

20.3. Anyone who reveals the identity of an anonymous witness or any information that could be used to identify an anonymous witness has committed an offence and shall be referred to the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee.

21. Identification of anonymous witnesses

21.1. To ensure their safety, anonymous witnesses shall be identified behind closed doors in the absence of a party.

21.2. This witness identification shall be conducted by the Chairperson alone or by all members together, and shall be recorded in minutes containing their personal details.

21.3. These minutes shall not be communicated to a party.
21.4. The party shall receive a brief notice which:

   21.4.1. confirms that the anonymous witness has been formally identified; and

   21.4.2. contains no details that could be used to identify the anonymous witness.

22. Standard of proof

22.1. The Body will have absolute discretion regarding proof.

22.2. The standard of proof shall be to the comfortable satisfaction of the members.

23. Burden of proof

23.1. Any party that asserts a fact has the burden of proving it.

24. Collaboration

24.1. Anyone subject to these Rules is obliged to collaborate to establish facts if requested by the Secretariat or the Chairperson. In particular, they shall comply with requests for information.

24.2. Anyone subject to these Rules that fails to collaborate has committed an offence and shall be referred to the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee.
SECTION 4: ORAL HEARINGS, DELIBERATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

25. Oral hearings

25.1. As a general rule, there are no oral hearings and the Body makes decisions on the basis of the file.

25.2. The Chairperson may decide that a matter is suitable for oral hearing and request the party to attend an oral hearing. If the party declines or fails to respond to this invitation, the Body will make a decision on the basis of the file.

25.3. A party may request for an oral hearing. The Chairperson shall decide on such requests. This decision is final and binding and not appealable.

25.4. Oral hearings are always conducted behind closed doors.

26. Procedure for oral hearing

26.1. The Chairperson decides on the procedure of any oral hearing.

26.2. This procedure for an oral hearing shall be communicated at least two (2) days in advance.
27. **Deliberations**

27.1. The Body deliberates behind closed doors.

27.2. If an oral hearing has occurred, it will immediately be followed by deliberations.

27.3. Deliberations shall be conducted without interruption.

27.4. The Chairperson leads and decides the manner of deliberations.

27.5. The Secretariat has consultative powers only.

28. **Deliberations without meeting**

28.1. If the circumstances so require, the Secretariat may arrange deliberations to be conducted via telephone conference or electronic means.

28.2. In such cases, a party shall not be permitted to request an oral hearing.

29. **Decisions**

29.1. Decisions are passed by a simple majority of the members present and eligible to vote.

29.2. Every member present shall vote.

29.3. If votes are equal, the Chairperson has the casting vote.
SECTION 5: MISCELLANEOUS

30. Representation

30.1. A party may be legally represented.

30.2. A party is free to choose their own representation.

30.3. A party must provide written authorisation to be represented.

31. Language

31.1. The language used in all proceedings shall be English.

31.2. The Body may use the services of an interpreter. The costs of interpretation shall be borne by the party requiring the interpreter.

32. Costs and Expenses

32.1. Costs and expenses related to proceedings may be imposed on the unsuccessful party or split among several parties.

32.2. If there is no unsuccessful party, they shall be borne by the AFC.

32.3. The Chairperson shall determine the amount (if any) for costs and expenses. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.
Section 6: PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE BODY

33. Proceedings

33.1. Where the AFC opens proceedings, the Secretariat shall notify the Chairperson and directly affected Club(s) in writing and provide a full copy of the AFC case file.

33.2. A Club may request the opening of proceedings by making a written petition to the Secretariat. The request shall contain the following particulars:

33.2.1. the name and address(es) for service of the Club;

33.2.2. the name and address(es) for service of its representative, if applicable, and the power of attorney;

33.2.3. the identity of any Club(s) directly affected by its request to open proceedings;

33.2.4. its full written argument with reference to the relevant AFC regulations;

33.2.5. its full body of evidence;

33.2.6. its requests for relief; and

33.2.7. the date and a valid signature
33.3. The Secretariat shall assess whether the requirements listed above are complied with.

33.3.1. If the request is compliant, the Secretariat shall as soon as practicable after receipt notify the Chairperson and the directly affected Club(s).

33.3.2. If the request is not compliant, the Secretariat shall inform the Club and request immediate rectification.

33.3.3. Failure to provide a compliant request shall result in the matter not being decided upon by the Body.

33.4. The directly affected Club(s) shall have five (5) days to provide their written response to the petition filed by the AFC or a Club.

33.4.1. In cases of urgency, the Chairperson may shorten this time limit.

33.4.2. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.

33.5. The parties are not permitted to supplement or amend their arguments or requests for relief or to produce new evidence following their submissions. The Secretariat may at any time request additional statements and/or documents which shall form part of the case file.

33.6. The Chairperson or Secretariat may invite any party that it considers affected but not named in a petition to provide written submissions or participate in an oral hearing.

33.7. Where the jurisdiction of the Body to hear a matter is contested, the Chairperson shall make a preliminary decision on jurisdiction.
34. Notification of decisions

34.1. Any decision by the Body shall be immediately notified to the parties.

34.2. The parties shall only be notified of the terms of decision.

34.3. A party has ten (10) days from receipt to request in writing the grounds of the decision. Failure to comply shall result in the decision becoming final and binding and not appealable.

34.4. If a party requests the grounds of a decision, the motivated decision will be communicated in full, written form. The time limit to lodge an appeal begins upon receipt.

34.5. Decisions shall be communicated by facsimile, email, or registered letter to be legally binding. Decisions enter into force as soon as they are notified.

35. Publication of decisions

35.1. All decisions shall be published on the AFC website following notification.

35.2. Where appropriate, the Secretariat may redact the written reasons.
CHAPTER FIVE: ADMINISTRATION

36. Disciplinary Measures

36.1. All disciplinary measures in relation to these Rules shall be undertaken in accordance with the current AFC Statutes, AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code, and any relevant AFC circular.

37. Decisions

37.1. The Body acts as a final-instance decision-making body.

37.2. These Rules set out which decisions are appealable and those which are final and binding and not appealable in accordance with the AFC Statutes.

38. Amendments

38.1. The AFC reserves the right to make amendments to any part of these Rules for any reason whatsoever. Such amendments shall be duly communicated.

39. Matters not provided for

39.1. The Body shall decide on all matters not provided for within these Rules. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.
40. AFC Statutes

40.1. To the extent that these Rules are inconsistent with the AFC Statutes, the AFC Statutes shall prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

40.2. To the extent that these Rules are inconsistent with any AFC regulations, these Rules shall prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

41. Closing Provisions

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

42. Adoption

42.1. The AFC Executive Committee adopted these Rules on 8 November 2017.

42.2. These Rules come into force immediately.

For the AFC Executive Committee

Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa
President

Dato’ Windsor John
General Secretary