




COMPETITION OPERATIONS MANUAL

EDITION 2023





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AFC COMPETITION OPERATIONS MANUAL

EDITION 2023

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GENERAL SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

Dear friends,

It gives me great pleasure to present to you the latest edition of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Competition Operations Manual (Edition 2023), the eighth in our series and one that, as always, forms an essential component in contributing to the success of the AFC's competitions.

As emphasised in our Vision and Mission, the AFC strives to raise the standards of Asian football, and this updated publication contains all the requirements and guidelines to bring our ambitions to life.

It follows in the footsteps of its predecessors in showcasing the key operational aspects of competitions for our Member Associations (MAs), clubs and players. These characteristics continuously evolve in line with the tangible growth and progress across all levels.

The year 2023 marks a long-awaited return to the full roster of AFC competitions. While many, if not all, of our MAs may have relaxed some COVID-19 safety requirements in the current post-pandemic climate, safeguarding the health and welfare of our fans, players, match officials and stakeholders will continue to be prioritised by the AFC.

This edition sees the introduction of provisions for friendly and training matches, national anthems, full stadium closures, and ball crew, among others. In addition, there are also key amendments on other operational matters such as kit colour allocation, official training, and warming up areas which are just as integral to the smooth running and operations of all the AFC competitions.

I am confident you will find the operational tools and processes contained within to be of great use and value. When adhered to, they enable the MAs, Participating Clubs and all our stakeholders to focus on what drives the



game - the quality of play on the field and in creating the ultimate platform for the stars of Asia to shine.

As Asian football returns to normalcy, this Manual aims to uplift the already dynamic Asian game and take it to new heights of operational excellence and professionalism.

I look forward to your continued support as we collectively seek to raise the standards of Asian football and wish you much success for the future.

Datuk Seri Windsor John
AFC General Secretary



AFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

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PREAMBLE

This Competition Operations Manual ("Manual") sets out the operational responsibilities of the AFC, Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Officials, Participating Players and other relevant stakeholders involved in the staging, organising, and hosting of all AFC Competitions.

This Manual shall be read in conjunction with the relevant Competition regulations and circulars of each AFC Competition and any Organising Association Agreement ("OAA"), as well as all applicable directives and decisions of the AFC. This Manual forms an integral part of any such Competition regulations, circulars, OAA, directives and decisions. Failure to comply with any matter set out within the Manual is an offence and may be sanctioned accordingly by the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee.

In the event of a conflict between the Manual and any such Competition regulations, circulars, OAA, directives or decisions, those Competition regulations, circulars, OAA, directives and decisions shall always prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

This Manual does not affect any legal obligations arising from any applicable national legislation. The relevant Host Organisations and Participating Teams are solely responsible for complying with the applicable national legislation.

The AFC Competitions Committee in its meeting on 12 April 2016 granted a mandate to the AFC General Secretariat to amend the content within the Manual at its discretion. The AFC Futsal and Beach Soccer Committee and the AFC Women's Football Committee on 12 January 2021 also granted a mandate to the AFC General Secretariat to amend the content within the Manual at its discretion. Should the AFC General Secretariat undertake any amendments, it shall inform all relevant parties by a circular letter accordingly. The circular letter shall clearly state the date that such amendments come into force and are legally binding.

No part of this Manual may be reproduced or transmitted by any process or means without the prior written consent of the AFC.

This is the Eighth Edition (Edition 2023) and key updates from the previous version are highlighted in yellow.

DEFINITIONS

In this Manual, capitalised terms shall have the following meanings, unless the context specifically indicates otherwise:

Accommodation	Any location approved by the AFC which provides accommodation to the AFC Delegation, Team Official Delegations, AFC Commercial Rights Partner and Commercial Affiliates.
Accreditation Card	Any physical item which is issued by the AFC and/or Host Organisation which provides the recipient the right to access a Controlled Access Area (or part thereof) where the Controlled Access Area is under the control of the AFC or the Host Organisation.
Advertising Rights	The right to promote brand and/or corporate names and/or products and/or services at and/or in relation to the Competition by whatever means available, whether existing now or to be developed in the future, whether at the Stadiums or Facility Areas or within the Controlled Access Areas, by in-stadium/out-stadium perimeter signage and other advertising, digital signage and screens, closed circuit television, equipment usage or other methods and through printed matter (including digitally delivered printed matter) such as programmes, posters, letterheads, press releases, newsletters and Tickets, and subject to any AFC regulations, the right to display such advertising on the clothing or footwear worn, or on any equipment used, carried or transported by officials (including for the avoidance of doubt Match Officials), medical and security staff, ball crew, player escorts, flag bearers and/or photographers. The display of the name and/or logo of the bona fide supplier of clothing on the strip of the uniforms of the officials are also included. For the avoidance of doubt, advertising on the strip of Participating Players is excluded, other than where it is the trademark of the bona fide manufacturer and is in accordance with any FIFA and/or AFC regulations. Similarly, branding on any equipment, goods and/or services used in connection with the Competition, save where supplied by a Commercial Affiliate, may only include customary branding of the bona fide manufacturer.
AFC	Asian Football Confederation.
AFCAS	The AFC Administration System, the AFC's online competition management and registration system.
AFC Commercial Rights Partner	The entity appointed by the AFC for the sale of Commercial Rights (or any part thereof) and the provision of services in relation thereto.
AFC Committee	Any Committee of the AFC as constituted in accordance with the AFC Statutes.

AFC Delegation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) AFC staff members; (ii) Match Officials; (iii) other officials appointed by the AFC; (iv) AFC Committee members; and (v) AFC guests.
AFC Marks	All design marks, slogans, designations, names, logos, insignia, emblems or devices (in any application) owned and/or controlled by the AFC (in any language) relating to the AFC itself, but excluding the Competition Marks.
AFC Website	The official website of the AFC (currently http://www.the-AFC.com), including without limitation all other domains or official media platforms and channels created and/or owned by the AFC (e.g. Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc.).
Broadcast Partner	Any entity, including the Host Broadcaster, which has been granted the Media Rights (or any part thereof) to the Competition.
Champion	The Participating Team that wins the final Match of the Competition.
Clean Stadium	<p>A Stadium or Official Training Site whether inside, in the air space above or the outer perimeter, delivered to the AFC at a prescribed time, that is free from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) any advertising and commercial signage of any kind, whether on any stadium infrastructure, staff uniforms, accreditations, fences, equipment or elsewhere; (ii) third-party agreements relating to the use and operation of the stadium (or part thereof); and/or (iii) Stadium or venue naming rights.
Club	A professional club or an amateur club which participates in leagues or competitions under the auspices of a Football Association.
Commercial Affiliate	Any entity which has been granted the right to exercise and exploit the Commercial Rights (or any part thereof) in respect to the Competition.
Commercial Rights	Advertising Rights, Concession Rights, Hospitality Rights, Image Rights, Media Rights, Merchandise Rights, Promotional Rights, Sponsorship Rights, Travel and Tour Rights and any other rights of a commercial nature relating to the Competition.
Competition	Any AFC competition, including those set out in Appendix 23 (and their previous or future equivalents in case of any change in the Competition title), which includes without limitation, all Matches as set out in the Match Schedule, the Preliminary Competition and Final Competition, all activities on the Field of Play (other than Matches), opening ceremonies, presentation or closing ceremonies, press conferences or Official Functions connected therewith.

Competition Data	Any and all information related to the Competition, including fixture lists, Image Rights, information and/or statistics about the Participating Teams, information and/or statistics about the Participating Players' and/or Participating Officials' participation and/or performance in the Competition, Match analysis, referee decisions and any other information in relation to the Competition.
Competition Marks	All design marks, slogans, designations, names, logos, insignia, emblems, mascots or devices (in any application) owned and/or controlled by the AFC (in any language) relating to the Competition.
Complimentary Tickets	Tickets which are supplied without charge.
Concession Rights	Sampling, vending, display and other distribution methods and payment methods connected therewith for and of products or services, including pourage rights at the Stadiums and Facility Areas.
Controlled Access Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Any Stadium; (ii) any Official Training Site; (iii) any official hotel (public areas being excepted), subject to and to the extent agreed in any executed hotel agreement; (iv) any official exclusion zone encircling a Stadium on a Match day; (v) any official parking area, accreditation centre, international broadcast compound, and/or hospitality area; (vi) the venue of any Official Function; (vii) any official AFC fan park; (viii) Facility Areas; and/or (ix) any other location and/or facility designated by the AFC as a Controlled Access Area, associated to the Competition to which access is permitted only to those in possession of an Accreditation Card, Ticket, and/or other officially-sanctioned entry permit.
Digital Media	The AFC Website and any other authorised Competition website, in addition to any mobile application (app), online video channel, data product, photo-sharing account, social media account and any further form of digital media developed herewith.
Extra Time	Two (2) equal periods (one [1] period for beach soccer) of additional time which shall be played in accordance with the relevant Competition regulations and this Manual should there be no winner at the conclusion of a Match.
Facility Areas	The location of Official Functions, ceremonies, press centres, Ticket offices, Competition hotels, media areas (including without limitation areas used for viewing of any public exhibition), sponsor village areas (including without limitation "AFC fan park" areas, and areas used for the activation of the Commercial Rights), official hospitality areas (including without limitation areas used for the exploitation of the Hospitality Rights), and information centres controlled by or on behalf of the AFC and used in connection with the Competition whether at the Stadium or elsewhere at the Venues.

Field of Play	The area described in Law 1 of the Laws of the Game issued by The International Football Association Board (IFAB) and administered by FIFA. For the purposes of this Manual, and provided the context so requires, references to the Field of Play shall include the “pitch” area described in Law 1 of the Futsal Laws of the Game and the Beach Soccer Laws of the Game.
FIFA	The Fédération Internationale de Football Association.
Final Competition	The final round of a Competition including those identified in Appendix 23 .
Football Association	The controlling body for football within a country or territory recognised by the AFC.
Force Majeure	Any event affecting the performance of any provision of this Manual arising from or attributable to acts, events, omissions or accidents which are beyond the reasonable control of a party. This shall include, without limitation, abnormally inclement weather, flood, lightning, storm, fire, explosion, earthquake, structural damage, power supplies shortage/failure, war, terrorist action, military operations, riot, crowd disorder, strike, lock-outs or other industrial action, or civil commotion, epidemic or pandemic.
Friendly Match	Any match within the scope of the AFC Regulations Governing International Matches and/or FIFA Regulations Governing International Matches (as applicable).
Hospitality Rights	The opportunity to offer and sell hospitality and entertainment services at the Venues or within the Controlled Access Areas in combination with the Tickets whether such facilities are in boxes, marquees or otherwise, but excluding those non-commercial functions and facilities reserved for the AFC and/or Host Organisation officials and its guests not forming part of the Commercial Rights.
Host Broadcaster	The party appointed to ensure and provide the production of broadcast signals of the Matches and other events of the Competition, and the provision of all related services in accordance with the Media Rights granted to it.
Host City	Any city and/or identifiable metropolitan area in which any Match is staged.
Host Organisation	A Member Association (or any local organising committee established by the Member Association) and/or Club approved by the AFC to organise, stage, and host Matches. Where the context so permits, reference to the Host Organisation shall mean the host association and/or host Club as defined in the relevant Competition regulations.
Image Rights	The right to use still and/or moving images and/or representations of Participating Teams, Participating Players, Participating Officials, Match Officials and other officials and persons forming part of the Competition.

Kicks from the Penalty Mark	"Kicks from the Penalty Mark" ("Kicks from the Imaginary Penalty Mark" for beach soccer) as described in the Laws of the Game.
Laws of the Game	The laws of association football issued by the IFAB. For the purposes of this Manual, and provided the context so requires, references to the Laws of the Game shall include the Futsal Laws of the Game and the Beach Soccer Laws of the Game.
Manual	This AFC Competition Operations Manual.
Match	A football, futsal or beach soccer match in its entirety (including a replayed and/or deferred match, Extra Time and Kicks from the Penalty Mark) which takes place as part of the Competition in accordance with the Match Schedule. For the avoidance of doubt, a match formally commences when the Stadium is officially opened to spectators and formally concludes when the Stadium is officially closed to spectators.
Match Officials	Any individual appointed to officiate a Match in the Competition in the role of the referee, assistant referee, fourth official, video assistant referee (VAR), assistant video assistant referee (AVAR), and any other match official stipulated in the Laws of the Game.
Match Schedule	The official schedule which sets out, without limitation, the dates and times on which Matches will be played, the Stadiums at which the Matches will be played and the names of the Participating Teams.
Media	Any individual granted a media Accreditation Card by the AFC.
Media Access Area	The designated area(s) for access by Media with valid Accreditation Cards.
Media Rights	The right and licence to produce, edit, and/or transmit, for intelligible reception throughout the world in any language and in any format, and on any platform including film, fixed media, Digital Media, games, internet, public exhibition, radio, mobile, and television, a visual, audio-visual, and/or audio signal and/or image or recording (including without limitation the basic feed, multi feeds, additional feeds, audio feeds, a feed incorporating Competition Data, world feed and unilateral feeds) of the Competition, and all interview activities and action during and forming part of the Competition including Official Functions and the Image Rights by any and all means of transmission distribution, exhibition and reception, now existing or hereinafter developed including but not limited to analogue, digital, satellite cable and interactive communication systems, on a live, delayed, and unlimited repeat basis, in full or in part (including without limitation by way of clips and/or highlights and/or support programmes and/or magazine shows and/or news access), and all rights to exploit any and all commercial opportunities (including for example broadcast sponsorship and commercial airtime opportunities) arising from and/or in connection with such rights.
Member Association	A Football Association which is a member of the AFC.

Merchandise Rights	The right granted to Commercial Affiliates for the use and exploitation of the Competition Marks and/or official designation in the manufacture, packaging, distribution, and sale of goods and services of all kinds, including items of equipment (e.g. footballs), clothing, coins, medals, games (electronic or otherwise), other collectibles and Premiums related to the Competition.
Official Function	Any event which is officially organised or sanctioned by the AFC in connection with the Competition. For the avoidance of doubt, this expressly includes, without limitation, all matches and/or events held at Official Training Sites, the opening ceremony, the closing ceremony, any AFC gala dinner, lunch, or banquet, cultural events, official press conferences, official draws, workshops and launch events.
Official Training Site	Any site designated by the Host Organisation and approved by the AFC for use by the Participating Teams throughout the Competition for training purposes.
Participating Official	Any official who is registered to participate in the Competition.
Participating Player	Any player who is registered to participate in the Competition.
Participating Team	Any representative team or Club affiliated to a Member Association approved to participate in a Competition.
Preliminary Competition	The preliminary round of a Competition including those identified in Appendix 23 .
Premiums	Any promotional items (including packaging, labelling and/or containers thereof) which incorporate any mark and/or logo of the AFC and/or any Competition Mark, and which may only be distributed free of charge or as prizes.
Promotional Rights	Any advertising and/or promotions which are carried out in connection with the Competition, Competition Marks, or other rights/opportunities granted by the AFC.
Proprietary Interests	Without limitation, intellectual property, copyright and analogous rights, trademark rights, moral rights, performing rights, personality rights and all remedies available under the applicable laws of unfair competition comprised in the Commercial Rights.
Public Exhibition Rights	Viewing by an audience on a screen and or television set and/or radio receiver located anywhere in cinemas, bars, restaurants, stadiums, offices, construction sites, oil rigs, water borne vessels, buses, trains, planes, armed service establishments, educational establishments, hospitals and any other place other than a private dwelling, and all rights to organise and stage any event where an audience may view such transmission(s) (whether or not such viewing is open to the general public or otherwise), and all rights to exploit any and all commercial opportunities (including without limitation and for example, entrance fees, sponsorship, merchandising, broadcast sponsorship and supplier opportunities) arising from and/or in connection with such events, transmission and/or viewing.

Sponsorship Rights

The right, in any and all media, throughout the world, and in all languages, to promote an association between the Competition and certain products, services, and/or brands, and shall include (by way of illustration only) the exclusive right to exercise rights of association with the Competition, including without limitation the right to:

- (i) use an official designation;
 - (ii) use the AFC Marks and/or applicable Competition Marks on branded products and/or product packaging (including Premiums, and in relation to the Competition Marks only on items for retail sale) and/or advertising;
 - (iii) receive commercial programme Tickets; and
 - (iv) receive broadcast sponsorship opportunities in connection with broadcasts of a Match or Official Function.
-

Stadium

Any stadium at which a Match is played. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes:

- (i) the entire premises (to the extent that a valid Accreditation Card or Ticket is required in order to gain access) of a stadium facility inside the outer stadium perimeter fence and (on Match days and any day on which any official training takes place within the stadium), the aerial space above such stadium premises;
- (ii) parking facilities;
- (iii) VIP and hospitality areas (including any hospitality village);
- (iv) concession areas;
- (v) commercial display areas;
- (vi) buildings;
- (vii) the Field of Play;
- (viii) the media tribune;
- (ix) any broadcast compound;
- (x) the stadium media centre;
- (xi) the press conference room;
- (xii) the mixed zone;
- (xiii) any stands; and
- (xiv) any areas beneath the stands.

For the purposes of this Manual, and provided the context so requires, references to the Stadium shall include the "indoor stadium" for futsal and "arena" for beach soccer.

Team Official Delegation

1. Competition systems played in a home and away format
The final-registered delegation of a Participating Team for each Match of the relevant stage of the Competition subject to the limits set out in the relevant Competition regulations.
 2. Competition systems played in a centralised format
The final-registered delegation of a Participating Team for the duration of the relevant stage of the Competition subject to the limits set out in the relevant Competition regulations.
-

Team Technical Seats

The seats located in the stands behind the technical area with access to the Field of Play and team dressing rooms.

Ticket	A pass providing access to a Venue for the purpose of attending either a Match, official training, or Official Function.
Ticketing	All operational measures to provide Tickets to all spectators of every Match and for Official Functions of the Competition allowing them to enter the Stadium or a Venue. Ticketing shall include the management of the operation necessary for the production, sale, distribution, delivery and payment of the Tickets of the Competition.
Training Match	Any match played as a "closed-door" training match without spectators, ticket sales, sponsorship, broadcasting, or any type of marketing activities, and for which teams may not exercise any commercial rights.
Travel and Tour Rights	The right to organise and/or sub-licence official travel and tour activities in relation to the Competition, which travel and tour activities shall, for the avoidance of doubt, include the provision of Tickets to a Match and/or Official Function of the Competition.
Venue	The Host City and immediate surrounding area in which a Stadium is located.

For the purposes of this Manual, and provided the context so permits:

- (a) the singular shall include the plural and vice-versa;
- (b) the feminine gender shall include the masculine and vice-versa;
- (c) 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; and
- (f) all defined terms, unless otherwise stated herein shall bear the same meaning as ascribed in the AFC Statutes, unless the context indicates otherwise.

SECTION 1 | COMPETITION SYSTEM AND MATCH SCHEDULE

1. Competition System

- 1.1. All Matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game in force at the time of the Competition. In case of any discrepancy in the interpretation of the Laws of the Game, the English version shall be authoritative.
- 1.2. Should the Competition system involve groups composed of several teams, at the conclusion of each Match:
 - 1.2.1. three (3) points shall be awarded to the winner;
 - 1.2.2. only for Beach Soccer, two (2) points shall be awarded to the winner in Extra Time and one (1) point shall be awarded to the winner determined by Kicks from the Imaginary Penalty Mark;
 - 1.2.3. one (1) point shall be awarded to each Participating Team for a draw; and
 - 1.2.4. zero (0) points shall be awarded to the loser.
- 1.3. 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 [Appendix 2](#) of the Manual.
- 1.4. All kick-off times shall ensure that the Match concludes on the same day (the latest at 22:00 hours), unless otherwise approved in writing by the AFC.

2. Official Countdown

- 2.1. The Participating Teams shall observe the official countdown and all other Match-related protocol notified by the AFC (cf. [Appendix 3](#)).
- 2.2. A Participating Team that causes a delay of any scheduled kick-off of a Match (as determined by the official countdown) may be sanctioned by the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee at its discretion.
- 2.3. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes the kick-off to commence each period (e.g. the first half and second half) of a Match, and if applicable, the kick-off to commence each period of Extra Time.

3. Kicks from the Penalty Mark

- 3.1. Where stipulated in the relevant Competition regulations, Kicks from the Penalty Mark shall be taken to determine the winner, in accordance with the procedures described in the Laws of the Game.

- 3.2. If Kicks from the Penalty Mark cannot be completed because of weather conditions or for any Force Majeure reason, the result shall be decided by the drawing of lots by the referee in the presence of the AFC Match Commissioner and the two (2) captains of the Participating Teams.
- 3.3. If through the fault of a Participating Team, Kicks from the Penalty Mark cannot be completed, the applicable provisions of the relevant Competition regulations shall apply.

4. Match Sequence

- 4.1. The following Match sequence shall be applied in all Competitions featuring groups of several teams, unless otherwise approved in writing by the AFC. The number designates the seeding provided to the relevant Participating Team in the official draw:

No. of Teams	Format	Match Sequence
Group of three (3) teams	League format, centralised venue	Match day 1 3 v 1 Match day 2 2 v 3 Match day 3 1 v 2
	League format, home and away	Match day 1 2 v 3 Match day 2 3 v 1 Match day 3 1 v 2 Match day 4 3 v 2 Match day 5 1 v 3 Match day 6 2 v 1
Group of four (4) teams	League format, centralised venue	Match day 1 1 v 4, 2 v 3 Match day 2 4 v 2, 3 v 1 Match day 3 1 v 2, 3 v 4
	League format, home and away	Match day 1 1 v 4, 3 v 2 Match day 2 4 v 3, 2 v 1 Match day 3 4 v 2, 1 v 3 Match day 4 2 v 4, 3 v 1 Match day 5 4 v 1, 2 v 3 Match day 6 1 v 2, 3 v 4

Group of five (5) teams	League format, centralised venue	Match day 1 3 v 2, 5 v 4 Match day 2 4 v 1, 5 v 3 Match day 3 1 v 5, 2 v 4 Match day 4 2 v 5, 3 v 1 Match day 5 4 v 3, 1 v 2
	League format, home and away	Match day 1 3 v 2, 5 v 4 Match day 2 4 v 1, 5 v 3 Match day 3 1 v 5, 2 v 4 Match day 4 5 v 2, 3 v 1 Match day 5 4 v 3, 2 v 1 Match day 6 2 v 3, 4 v 5 Match day 7 1 v 4, 3 v 5 Match day 8 5 v 1, 4 v 2 Match day 9 2 v 5, 1 v 3 Match day 10 3 v 4, 1 v 2
Group of six (6) teams	League format, centralised venue	Match day 1 3 v 1, 4 v 6, 2 v 5 Match day 2 1 v 5, 2 v 4, 3 v 6 Match day 3 5 v 3, 6 v 2, 1 v 4 Match day 4 4 v 5, 6 v 1, 2 v 3 Match day 5 5 v 6, 3 v 4, 1 v 2
	League format, home and away	Match day 1 1 v 5, 2 v 4, 3 v 6 Match day 2 5 v 3, 6 v 2, 4 v 1 Match day 3 3 v 1, 4 v 6, 2 v 5 Match day 4 5 v 6, 3 v 4, 1 v 2 Match day 5 4 v 5, 6 v 1, 2 v 3 Match day 6 5 v 1, 4 v 2, 6 v 3 Match day 7 3 v 5, 2 v 6, 1 v 4 Match day 8 1 v 3, 6 v 4, 5 v 2 Match day 9 6 v 5, 4 v 3, 2 v 1 Match day 10 5 v 4, 1 v 6, 3 v 2

Knockout Stage

- 4.2. Unless stated otherwise in the relevant Competition regulations, the following Match sequence shall be applied in all Competitions featuring a knockout stage played in a single-leg knockout format.

Stage	Match Sequence	
Quarter Finals	Quarter Final (QF) 1: Winner A v Runner-up B	Quarter Final (QF) 3: Winner C v Runner-up D
	Quarter Final (QF) 2: Winner B v Runner-up A	Quarter Final (QF) 4: Winner D v Runner-up C
Semi Finals	Semi Final (SF) 1: Winner QF 1 v Winner QF 3	Semi Final (SF) 2: Winner QF 2 v Winner QF 4
3rd/4th Place Playoff and Final	3rd/4th Place Playoff: Loser SF 1 v Loser SF 2	Final: Winner SF 1 v Winner SF 2

5. Draw Principles

- 5.1. If a drawing of lots is required to decide the ranking in a group in accordance with the relevant Competition regulations, the following principles shall apply:
- 5.1.1. the names of the Participating Teams concerned shall be placed into a pot;
 - 5.1.2. the first name drawn shall be the highest ranked of the Participating Teams concerned; and
 - 5.1.3. if necessary and subject to the number of Participating Teams concerned, the procedure shall be repeated to determine the rankings of all Participating Teams concerned.

6. Cancellation of Matches

- 6.1. If a Match cannot commence for any reason, the following procedure shall be followed, should the Match not be cancelled prior to Match day:
- 6.1.1. the Match must be delayed for a minimum of thirty (30) minutes. During this delay, the referee may decide that the Match can commence prior to the completion of the delay;
 - 6.1.2. following the first delay, either:
 - 6.1.2.1. an additional delay of thirty (30) minutes shall occur if at the discretion of the referee this second delay may allow the Match to commence; or
 - 6.1.2.2. the Match is declared cancelled by the referee;

- 6.1.3. following two (2) delays of thirty (30) minutes, the referee must declare the Match cancelled.

7. Abandonment of Matches

- 7.1. At any stage of a Match, if a Participating Team is only able to field fewer than seven (7) (three [3] for futsal and beach soccer) players, the Match shall be abandoned, and Article 7.4 shall apply.
- 7.2. If a Match is stopped by the referee for any other reason except for that set out in Article 8.1, the following procedure shall be followed:
 - 7.2.1. the Match is stopped for thirty (30) minutes. During this stoppage, the referee may decide that the Match can commence or resume prior to the completion of the stoppage;
 - 7.2.2. subsequent to the first stoppage, either:
 - 7.2.2.1. an additional stoppage of thirty (30) minutes shall occur if at the discretion of the referee this second stoppage may allow the Match to be resumed; or
 - 7.2.2.2. the Match is declared abandoned by the referee;
 - 7.2.3. following two (2) stoppages of thirty (30) minutes, the referee must declare the Match abandoned.
- 7.3. Should the AFC determine that an abandoned Match should be rescheduled and completed, the following principles shall apply:
 - 7.3.1. the Match shall recommence with the same score at the minute at which play was interrupted rather than being replayed in full;
 - 7.3.2. the Match shall recommence with the same Participating Players on the Field of Play and same substitutes at the time it was initially abandoned;
 - 7.3.3. no additional substitutes may be added to the Player Selection List or Match Start List;
 - 7.3.4. (for football) the Participating Teams may only make the number of substitutions to which they were still entitled when the Match was abandoned;
 - 7.3.5. any Participating Player sent off during the abandoned Match cannot be replaced;
 - 7.3.6. any sanction imposed before the Match was abandoned remain valid for the remainder of the rescheduled Match;
 - 7.3.7. the kick-off time, date and Stadium of the re-scheduled Match shall be decided by the AFC; and

- 7.3.8. any other matters not set out above shall be decided by the AFC at its sole discretion.
- 7.4. If a Match is stopped by the referee before the end of normal playing time or during any Extra Time as a result of a Participating Team being able to only field fewer than seven (7) (three [3] for futsal and beach soccer) Participating Players, the Match shall be declared abandoned and the Participating Team who is able to field more than seven (7) (three [3] for futsal and beach soccer) Participating Players shall be declared the winner by the score 3-0 (5-0 for futsal and beach soccer), or the score at the time of abandonment, whichever is higher.

8. Match Interruption

- 8.1. The referee can interrupt a Match if the Field of Play is not fit for play or for any other issues which are not in line with the Laws of the Game.
- 8.2. The AFC General Coordinator and/or AFC Match Commissioner may, after consulting with the Host Organisation and/or AFC Safety and Security Officer, advise the referee to suspend the Match in the event that safety and security is not guaranteed in the Stadium and/or there exists potential danger to the Participating Teams and/or spectators.
- 8.3. If a Match is suspended before the completion of normal playing time or Extra Time, the following recommendations are to be considered subject to the nature of the incident. A Match shall restart at the same minute when it was suspended:
- 8.3.1. Suspended for up to 15 minutes: The Participating Teams should stay on the Field of Play subject to the nature of the suspension;
- 8.3.2. Suspension for 15-30 minutes: The Participating Teams should go to the team dressing rooms. They should be allowed to have ten (10) minutes for warm-up before the restart of the Match. A ten (10) minutes notice shall be given to all the parties involved (e.g. Participating Teams, Match Officials, spectators, Broadcast Partners, Media).
- 8.3.3. Suspension for more than 30 minutes: The Participating Teams should go to the team dressing rooms. They should be allowed to have twenty (20) minutes for warm-up before the restart of the Match. A twenty (20) minutes notice shall be given to all the parties involved (e.g. Participating Teams, Match Officials, spectators, Broadcast Partners, Media).
- 8.3.4. Suspension for more than 60 minutes: The Match may be considered appropriate to be abandoned, subject to the decision of the referee. After the final decision is made, the AFC General Coordinator and/or AFC Match Commissioner should inform the Participating Teams prior to any other parties.

9. Friendly Matches and Training Matches Prior to Centralised Competitions

9.1. Scheduling of Friendly and Training Matches:

- 9.1.1. Participating Teams are not permitted to play Friendly Matches less than five (5) days before the first Match of the Competition.
- 9.1.2. Participating Teams are permitted to play Training Matches at any time before the Competition.

9.2. Friendly Matches and Training Matches Requirements:

- 9.2.1. Participating Teams shall not play any Friendly and/or Training Match against any of the Participating Teams drawn in the same group for the Competition.
- 9.2.2. Participating Teams shall notify the AFC of the details of all Friendly and/or Training Matches and obtain the AFC's prior written approval for any Friendly Matches, including the approval of the Host Organisation.
- 9.2.3. Training Matches shall not be identified and/or promoted as Friendly Matches by the Participating Teams and their respective partners and/or affiliates. No association shall be created between the Friendly/Training Match and the AFC in any marketing, promotional or advertising materials produced in connection with the Friendly/Training Match.
- 9.2.4. Participating Teams are not permitted to organise any Friendly or Training Matches at the Stadiums or Official Training Sites of the Competition, unless otherwise approved in writing by the AFC.
- 9.2.5. For Friendly Matches, the relevant teams are entitled to exercise full control over the sale and exploitation of commercial rights and its activation of marketing rights relating to such matches subject always to the AFC's prior written approval.

SECTION 2 | STADIUMS AND OFFICIAL TRAINING SITES

10. Stadiums

- 10.1. Matches must be played in a Stadium which complies with the relevant AFC Stadium Regulations, the AFC Safety and Security Regulations, and all other requirements set out in the relevant AFC guidelines, directives and/or circulars, unless otherwise approved in writing by the AFC.
- 10.2. Stadiums shall be nominated by the Host Organisation and are subject to inspection and approval by the AFC.
 - 10.2.1. The AFC reserves the right to refuse the nomination of any Stadium and requires a Host Organisation to nominate an alternative Stadium.
- 10.3. If at any time during the Competition the AFC General Secretariat deems that, for whatever reason, a Stadium is not fit to host a Match, it shall consult with the relevant Host Organisation and the relevant Host Organisation shall propose an alternative Stadium. Should such Host Organisation not be able to propose an acceptable alternative Stadium by the deadline set by the AFC, the AFC General Secretariat may select an alternative neutral venue. The Host Organisation concerned, at its own cost, must organise and stage the Match in cooperation with the Member Association on whose territory the Match is played, in accordance with the requirements set out in the relevant Competition regulations and any other relevant AFC guidelines, directives or circulars (cf. [Appendix 4](#)).
- 10.4. Smoking is strictly prohibited within any section of the Stadium, and in particular, in the technical area, the vicinity of the Field of Play, the spectator stands, or within Competition areas which includes, without limitation, the team dressing room. For Stadiums with designated smoking areas, such areas must be approved in writing by the AFC in advance.
- 10.5. The use of drones or any flying object in the vicinity of a Stadium or an Official Training Site is prohibited, unless otherwise approved in writing by the AFC.
 - 10.5.1. The use of drones shall include drones being flown above the perimeter of a Stadium or an Official Training Site; and
 - 10.5.2. the Host Organisation shall be liable for drones being flown by spectators, media and broadcasting representatives and/or any other individual regardless of the question of culpable conduct or culpable oversight.
- 10.6. The use of any pyrotechnics/incendiary devices/ fireworks is prohibited within the Stadiums unless approved in writing by the AFC.

11. Field of Play

- 11.1. Each Host Organisation shall ensure that the Field of Play is in playable condition and complies with the requirements set out in the Laws of the Game, relevant Competition regulations, the relevant AFC Stadium Regulations and all other relevant AFC guidelines, directives and circulars.
- 11.2. The AFC General Coordinator and/or AFC Match Commissioner will inspect each Stadium prior to the Match and ensure that all arrangements are in accordance with the Laws of the Game. If the conditions of the Field of Play including the dimension of the goal and Field of Play are not in accordance with the Laws of the Game, the AFC Match Commissioner shall issue instructions for the Host Organisation to ensure rectification.
- 11.3. All Matches shall be played on a Field of Play in accordance with the relevant Laws of the Game.
- 11.4. If there is any doubt regarding the condition of the Field of Play prior to the Match, the referee shall decide whether the Field of Play is playable. If the referee declares that the Match cannot commence on time, Article 6 shall apply.

12. Official Training at the Stadium

- 12.1. Depending on the weather and condition of the Field of Play, each Participating Team is entitled to an official training of maximum sixty (60) minutes (one hundred and twenty [120] minutes if the Field of Play is an artificial pitch and forty-five [45] minutes for futsal and beach soccer) duration in the Stadium in which they are due to play, either one (1) or two (2) days prior to their first Match in the Stadium in the Competition.
 - 12.1.1. Each official training session shall be open to the Media and any other individuals approved by the AFC at least for the first fifteen (15) minutes. The fifteen (15) minutes shall commence from the scheduled start time of the session or the actual start time (in case it is later than the scheduled start time), to be determined by the AFC Match Commissioner. The areas accessible by the Media (if any) shall be the same as the areas accessible for them during the Match, provided that they are in possession of valid accreditation. Such areas shall be strictly controlled by the Host Organisation. All Media, without exception, shall leave the Stadium at the end of the first fifteen (15) minutes or at a later time if decided by the relevant Participating Team.
 - 12.1.2. The official training session shall only commence at the time and run for the duration determined and approved in writing by the AFC. Participating Players are prohibited from entering the pitch prior to the scheduled time for the official training.

- 12.2. If the Field of Play is not in good condition or the official training session might negatively affect the state of the pitch for the Match, the AFC General Coordinator and/or AFC Match Commissioner may limit the area on the Field of Play for the official training, **only allow the visiting team to conduct the official training at the Stadium**, shorten or cancel the official training. For football Competitions, the AFC General Coordinator and/or AFC Match Commissioner may allow Participating Teams to conduct familiarisation sessions to inspect the Field of Play, wearing training shoes only. **For the avoidance of doubt, such familiarisation sessions shall not replace the official training as an official media activity and Participating Teams shall comply with the requirements set out in Article 12.4.**
- 12.3. The AFC shall determine the official training schedule for the Participating Teams at its discretion. Participating Teams shall strictly follow the official training schedule determined by the AFC. Any request from the Participating Teams to change the schedule of the official training must be submitted to the AFC at least twelve (12) hours prior to the relevant training session. If a Participating Team wishes to cancel any official training, they shall provide twelve (12) hours prior notice to the AFC. **For matches played in a home and away format, should both Participating Teams wish to train at the same time, the visiting team shall be given priority.**
- 12.4. In any case a Participating Team does not train at the Stadium, they must provide the AFC General Coordinator and/or AFC Match Commissioner with the time and location of their official training at another designated Official Training Site approved in writing by the AFC and comply with the other requirements set out in Article 12. They shall provide twelve (12) hours' notice to the AFC. This shall be treated as their official training, and they shall forfeit the right to train at that particular Stadium prior to the relevant Match. Any such Official Training Site shall be provided as a Clean Stadium, unless otherwise approved by the AFC.
- 12.5. The Host Organisation is required to provide at least one (1) ambulance equipped with advanced life support equipment and trained personnel and an adequate number of security personnel during the Official Training at the Stadium.

13. Official Training Sites

- 13.1. With the exception of official training sessions at the Stadium in accordance with Article 12, any official training must be undertaken in an Official Training Site approved in writing by the AFC.
- 13.2. Official Training Sites must comply with all relevant AFC regulations and any other requirements set out in the relevant AFC guidelines, directives, or circulars, unless otherwise approved in writing by the AFC.
- 13.3. Official Training Sites shall be nominated by the Host Organisation and are subject to inspection and approval by the AFC.
- 13.3.1. The AFC reserves the right to refuse the nomination of any Official Training Site and require a Host Organisation to nominate an alternative Official Training Site.

- 13.4. If at any time during the Competition the AFC General Secretariat deems that, for whatever reason, an Official Training Site is not fit to stage an official training, it shall consult with the relevant Host Organisation and select an alternate Official Training Site.
- 13.5. No training equipment of any kind (e.g. free kick walls, mannequins, speed ladders, marker cones, slalom poles, etc.) will be provided by the AFC and/or the Host Organisation. If Participating Teams wish to use any training equipment during the training sessions, they must arrange it themselves (and use of such training equipment shall be at the teams' own risk).



SECTION 3 | TECHNICAL OPERATIONS

14. Team Bench and Technical Area

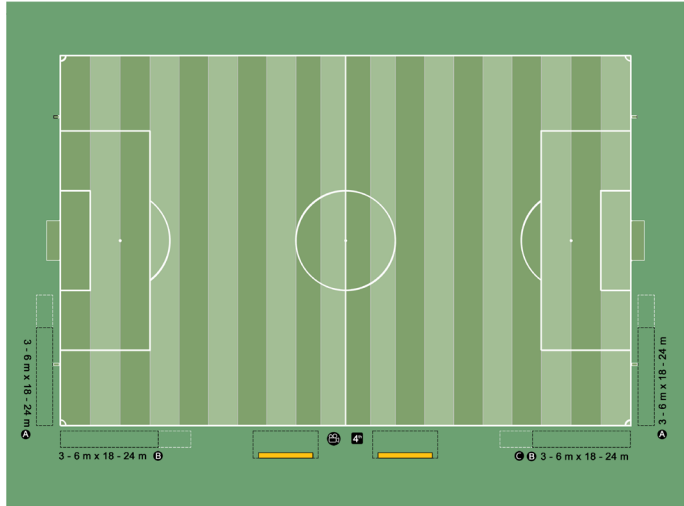
- 14.1. Participating Officials must wear their Accreditation Card at all times. Participating Players should be able to show their Accreditation Card when they enter the Field of Play and on the team bench if they are requested.
- 14.2. All individuals on the team bench must wear kits that contrasts with the kits of the Participating Players and Match Officials present on the Field of Play. This kit must comply with the AFC Equipment Regulations.
- 14.3. "Team A" shall occupy the team bench on the left when facing the Field of Play from the fourth official bench (timekeeper's table for futsal and beach soccer).
- 14.4. Participating Players (including substitutes/substituted and sent off players) are not permitted to wear or use any form of electronic or communication equipment (except where electronic performance and tracking systems [EPTS] is allowed). The use of any form of electronic communication by Participating Officials is permitted where it directly relates to player welfare or safety or for tactical/coaching reasons but only small, mobile, handheld equipment (e.g. microphone, headphone, earpiece, mobile phone/smartphone, smartwatch, tablet, laptop) may be used. A Participating Official who uses unauthorised equipment or who behaves in an inappropriate manner as a result of the use of electronic or communication equipment will be sent off from the technical area. The use of EPTS must be in line with [Appendix 7](#).
- 14.5. Individuals serving a Match suspension and non-selected Participating Players are not permitted to enter the Field of Play and/or sit on the team bench. They may sit at the designated area in the stand for Team Official Delegations.
 - 14.5.1. [Appendix 8](#) sets out the restrictions that apply inside the Controlled Access Areas for Participating Players and Participating Officials who have been expelled or are serving a Match suspension.

15. Warming Up and Cool Down

- 15.1. Before a Match:
 - 15.1.1. Each Participating Team shall be entitled to warm-up on the Field of Play before a Match if the weather and/or pitch condition permits. Such warm-up should not affect the condition of the Field of Play during the Match. The AFC may shorten or cancel the warm-up if it may severely affect playing conditions during the Match.
 - 15.1.2. The warm-up shall be conducted in accordance with the official countdown, unless otherwise instructed by the AFC.
- 15.2. During a Match:

- 15.2.1. Participating Players must wear bibs with assigned or contrasting colour.
- 15.2.2. Participating Officials assisting the warm-up shall not give instructions to the goalkeeper or any other outfield players on the Field of Play.

Football



- 15.2.3. The surface of the warm-up area shall be similar to the playing surface which is preferably natural grass or high-quality artificial turf. These warm-up areas are recommended to be three (3) to six (6) metres wide by eighteen (18) to twenty-four (24) metres long.
- 15.2.4. **As the most preferred option**, if there is adequate space behind the goal, the warm-up area shall be located behind the goal on the side closest to the team benches as designated by the AFC (A).
 - 15.2.4.1. A maximum of six (6) Participating Players from each Participating Team may warm-up simultaneously, assisted by a maximum of two (2) Participating Officials.
 - 15.2.4.2. **Only in this option (A) and only goalkeepers may warm-up with a football.**
- 15.2.5. **If there is insufficient space behind the goals, both Participating Teams shall warm-up beside their respective team bench, within the area as designated by the AFC (B).**
 - 15.2.5.1. **A maximum of six (6) Participating Players from each Participating Team may warm-up simultaneously, assisted by a maximum of two (2) Participating Officials.**

15.2.6. If there is insufficient space beside the “team A” bench, as the least preferred option, both Participating Teams shall warm-up together behind assistant referee No.1 beside the “team B” bench, within the area as designated by the AFC (C).

15.2.6.1. In such cases, a maximum of three (3) Participating Players from each Participating Team may warm-up simultaneously, assisted by a maximum of one (1) Participating Official per Participating Team.

15.2.6.2. Setting up of equipment by Participating Teams shall not be permitted in such cases.

Futsal and Beach Soccer

15.2.7. A maximum of five (5) Participating Players from each Participating Team may warm-up simultaneously, without the ball, at the designated area behind their team bench, or alternatively in a space designated by the AFC.

Post-Match Cool Down

15.3. Upon request, a Participating Team’s cool down may be accommodated after each Match as instructed by the AFC General Coordinator and/or AFC Match Commissioner, provided that the following rules are observed:

15.3.1. Any cool down after a Match may last no longer than thirty (30) minutes and commence approximately fifteen (15) minutes after the final whistle or as instructed by the AFC.

15.3.2. Participating Players may join the cool down only after fulfilling the required post-match media, commercial or any other activities as determined by the AFC.

15.3.3. Depending on the pitch condition, Participating Teams shall cool down at the designated area to be instructed by the AFC. No access will be granted to the goal areas.

15.3.4. Activities shall be restricted to post-exercise cool down for the Participating Players who actually played in the Match (e.g. stretching, jogging in straight lines).

15.3.5. Participating Teams are not allowed to set up or use any training equipment and footballs.

15.3.6. Training sessions for substitutes shall not be accommodated.

15.3.7. The AFC may impose further restrictions (in particular, to protect the pitch).

16. Cooling Break

Football

16.1. Depending on the weather conditions, a cooling break may be implemented on a match-by-match basis in accordance with [Appendix 22](#).

- 16.2. For purposes of distinction, official and mandatory cooling breaks will not be pre-established. However, the climatic conditions prior to a Match will be evaluated by the AFC Venue Medical Officer (VMO).
- 16.3. The Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) is a composite temperature used to estimate the effect of temperature, humidity, wind speed (wind chill) and visible and infrared radiation on players. WBGT will be the official measure to determine whether cooling breaks shall be implemented.
- 16.4. Should the WBGT exceed 32°C (thirty-two degrees Celsius), and/or taking into account additional factors such as the time of day, the amount of cloud cover and Stadium location, the VMO will recommend cooling breaks to the AFC General Coordinator and/or the AFC Match Commissioner. Responsibility for the implementation and control of the cooling break resides with the referee.
- 16.5. Cooling breaks of a maximum of three (3) minutes duration shall be implemented by the referee at approximately thirty (30) minutes into the run-of-play in both halves (i.e. around the thirtieth [30th] minute and seventy-fifth [75th] minute respectively).
- 16.6. The following rules shall apply to any cooling break:
 - 16.6.1. the ball must be out of play for the break to commence;
 - 16.6.2. the referee will signal the start of the break (informing both Participating Teams and the Match Officials);
 - 16.6.3. all Participating Players will go to their respective team bench or technical area and use ice and cold towels to cool down;
 - 16.6.4. the Stadium clock will continue to run;
 - 16.6.5. after a maximum of three (3) minutes (from whistle to whistle), the referee will give a ten (10) second warning to mark the end of the break following which the Match will restart; and
 - 16.6.6. the time allowed for the cooling break shall be added as stoppage time.

17. Drinking Procedure during Matches

Football

- 17.1. Water bottles are allowed around the Field of Play, at least one (1) metre outside the touchline and the goal line (respecting marketing and advertising obligations around the Field of Play).
- 17.2. Water bottles shall be placed very carefully so they do not interfere with the assistant referees (ARs) running on the touchline. It is suggested that water bottles are not placed on each of the half part of the touchline behind the AR1 and AR2.
- 17.3. No water bottles are allowed in the goal area. Water bottles must be outside the goal, not touching the post or the goal net.

- 17.4. Participating Players can drink at any time during a Match. If drinking in front of the technical area, Participating Players shall remain on the Field of Play whereas substitutes and Participating Officials must remain outside the Field of Play.
- 17.5. If medical staff enters the Field of Play, they shall solely treat injured Participating Players and not give instructions or distribute water bottles.
- 17.6. Water bottles, water bags or ice cubes shall not be thrown on the Field of Play.

18. Ball Crew

- 18.1. The use of a multiple ball system is mandatory in all Competitions to limit the time the ball is out of play.
- 18.2. For all football Competitions, ten (10) to twelve (12) ball crew members and one (1) ball crew supervisor shall be appointed by the Host Organisation (unless otherwise approved in writing by the AFC) and be:
 - 18.2.1. dressed in accordance with the AFC Equipment Regulations with contrasting colours from the Participating Teams and Match Officials;
 - 18.2.2. of an age capable of performing their duties, preferably between the ages of twelve (12) and sixteen (16); and
 - 18.2.3. instructed beforehand of their duties and capable of performing them to satisfaction, in accordance with [Appendix 25](#).
- 18.3. Stools / low chairs shall be provided by the Host Organisation for ball crew during Matches.

19. Match Ceremonies and Protocol

Opening Ceremony

- 19.1. Any opening ceremony shall not affect any pre-Match operations, including without limitation Participating Teams' warm-up and the pre-Match ceremony.
- 19.2. The Field of Play shall be strictly protected from damage caused by any activity related to the opening ceremony.
- 19.3. The Host Organisation shall submit a comprehensive event plan outlining the number of workers, a flow plan, the run-down and other related information for the AFC's review and approval.

Pre-Match/Post-Match Ceremonies

- 19.4. The pre-Match and post-Match ceremonies in all football Competitions shall be in accordance with [Appendix 9](#).

Flag Protocol

- 19.5. The flag protocol in all football Competitions shall be in accordance with [Appendix 10](#).

20. Giant Screen and Infotainment

- 20.1. The use of giant screens, including but not limited to any display, replay or announcement, must comply with the instructions by the AFC. The Host Organisation shall ensure that no commercial, political, religious or personal message or slogan in any language or form is transmitted on the giant screen, unless otherwise expressly approved in writing by the AFC.
- 20.2. The standard announcement script as set out in [Appendix 11](#) shall be used in all Competitions and incorporated into the relevant infotainment runsheet. English shall always be read first, followed by the local language where applicable.
- 20.3. The Host Organisations shall comply with the AFC replay policy to ensure that the replays of the Match being played are filtered on the giant screens, in order not to disrupt a Match.
- 20.3.1. Replays of goals, shots on goal, impressive football skills or saves may be shown on the giant screens during play.
- 20.3.2. Replays of controversial decisions, fouls or unsporting behaviour are not permitted to be shown.
- 20.3.3. In the event of any controversial situation on the Field of Play involving Participating Players, Participating Officials and/or Match Officials, the television feed shall not be shown.
- 20.3.4. Highlights may be shown on the giant screen after the Match while considering the below:

Examples of replays to be shown	Examples of replays NOT to be shown
Indisputable goals	All offside decisions
Different angles of goals	Controversial goals (e.g. any fouls before goal)
Goalscoring opportunities	All fouls and all penalty decisions
Saves by the goalkeeper	Unsporting behaviour by Participating Players and/or Participating Officials
Demonstrations of excellent skill	Controversial referee decisions
Fair play situations	Tense situations in the technical area (e.g. discussions between Participating Officials and the 4th official)

21. Video Assistant Referee (VAR) Technology

Football

- 21.1. VAR technology may be used in accordance with the Laws of the Game and the relevant VAR protocol for the purpose of assisting the referee. The assistance from the video assistant referee (VAR) will relate to using replay(s) of the incident. The referee will make the final decision which may be based solely on the information from the VAR and/or the referee reviewing the replay footage directly.
- 21.2. No sources or systems other than the official VAR technology installed and approved in writing by the AFC may be used by the referee to review replays during the Match.
- 21.3. VAR technology may be used at any stage during the Competition. However, the AFC may decide to not use VAR technology in certain Matches.
 - 21.3.1. Should it be necessary for whatever reason, Matches may start and/or finish without the use of VAR technology, and any failure, unavailability, use or non-use of the VAR technology will in no way prejudice the validity of the referee's decisions, with such decisions being final in all cases.
- 21.4. Following a VAR review, the AFC may use any existing screens in the Stadium to show relevant graphics and/or replays supporting the decision taken by the referee.
 - 21.4.1. The AFC may decide, at any time, to stop VAR replays from being shown in the Stadium;
 - 21.4.2. the AFC shall decide which graphics and/or replays are to be shown and shall ensure they are provided to the giant screen operators; and
 - 21.4.3. the use of any other different graphics/replays by the Host Organisation is strictly forbidden.
- 21.5. Each Host Organisation authorises the AFC and/or the AFC's technology service providers to install the relevant system approved in writing by the AFC for the Competition/Match in its Stadium, which may include the use of existing Stadium infrastructure (e.g. cabling, WLAN, screens and/or giant screens).
 - 21.5.1. Each Host Organisation must, at all times, provide access to the Stadium and Stadium facilities as required by the AFC and/or the AFC's technology service providers (e.g. as regards access to and use of power in the Stadium for the video operation room and referee review area).
 - 21.5.2. The VAR system and the associated technology (including all cabling) may not be used, changed or touched by anyone other than the AFC and the relevant technology service providers.

SECTION 4 | TEAM OFFICIAL DELEGATION

22. Team Official Delegation

- 22.1. All Participating Players and Participating Officials of a Team Official Delegation will be issued with Accreditation Cards authorised by the AFC General Secretariat.
- 22.2. The Accreditation Card remains the property of the AFC at all times. The AFC may revoke, cancel, and/or confiscate an Accreditation Card at any time for any reason, including without limitation, misuse or abuse.
- 22.3. The Team Official Delegation shall be granted full access to all official competition areas, including the Field of Play and other necessary Controlled Access Areas, as determined by the AFC.
- 22.4. Each Team Manager shall be responsible for coordinating all matters involving the relevant Participating Team with the AFC. The Team Manager shall ensure participation of the relevant Participating Players and Participating Officials in all Official Functions related to Matches in the Competition, including without limitation the Match coordination meeting. For the avoidance of doubt, the Team Manager shall also act as the Team Media Officer in case there is no dedicated Team Media Officer.

23. Documents for Registration of Players

- 23.1. Participating Players must be registered via AFCAS with all documents set out below (unless such document was previously submitted, and a valid copy is available in AFCAS).
- 23.2. Where original documents are not in English, the original document and a certified English translation shall be provided by the Member Association of the Participating Team.
- 23.3. The AFC reserves the right to request additional documents in all cases.
- 23.4. In case of registration of players who have acquired a new nationality in accordance with the FIFA Regulations Governing the Application of the Statutes, the documents set out in [Appendix 12](#) must also be submitted.
- 23.5. In case of registration of players who are eligible to represent more than one (1) Member Association on account of his/her nationality in accordance with the FIFA Regulations Governing the Application of the Statutes, the documents set out in [Appendix 13](#) must also be submitted.
- 23.6. In cases of registration of stateless individuals, the Member Association of the Participating Team must have submitted a request for eligibility from the FIFA Football Tribunal in accordance with the FIFA Regulations Governing the Application of the Statutes. Copies of any relevant decision from the FIFA Football Tribunal and/or from the Court of Arbitration for Sport shall also be submitted.

National Team Competitions

- 23.7. In addition to the documents stipulated at Articles 23.1 to 23.6, the following documents shall be submitted:
- 23.7.1. a colour copy of a valid passport of the country the Participating Player wishes to represent, containing the full name, passport number, place of birth (where applicable), date of birth, date of issue, date of expiry and nationality of the relevant individual. Group passports are not accepted;
 - 23.7.2. a colour copy of a national identification card (where applicable);
 - 23.7.3. one (1) passport-size colour photo (taken within six [6] months); and
 - 23.7.4. a copy of a birth certificate (where requested by the AFC).

Club Competitions

- 23.8. In addition to the documents stipulated at Articles 23.1 to 23.6, the following documents shall be submitted:
- 23.8.1. a colour copy of a valid passport of the country the Participating Player wishes to represent, containing the full name, passport number, place of birth (where applicable), date of birth, date of issue, date of expiry and nationality of the relevant individual. Group passports are not accepted;
 - 23.8.2. a colour copy of a national identification card (where applicable, unless the player is a foreigner);
 - 23.8.3. one (1) passport-size colour photo (taken within six [6] months);
 - 23.8.4. a copy of a birth certificate (where requested by the AFC);
 - 23.8.5. a copy of a valid contract, entered into between the Participating Player and his Club, which contains the contract period and shall be in accordance with the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players ("RSTP");
 - 23.8.6. (for amateur players only) a copy of a valid Memorandum of Understanding for Amateur Players, utilising a template which is provided in [Appendix 14](#); and
 - 23.8.7. (for players who transferred internationally) a copy of the International Transfer Certificate (ITC) or evidence to demonstrate that an ITC has been issued in accordance with the FIFA RSTP. An ITC may be submitted after the close of the relevant registration window and the Participating Player will only be considered eligible in accordance with the specific provisions set out in the relevant Competition regulations.

24. Player Selection List and Officials on the Substitution Bench Form

- 24.1. For all Matches, each Participating Team will receive a "Player Selection List" on which the numbers and full names (last name, first name) of the Participating Players are listed prior to their arrival at the Stadium. The numbers on the Participating Players' kit shall correspond with the numbers indicated on the Player Selection List.

- 24.2. Each Participating Team must mark on the Player Selection List the starting eleven (11) (five [5] for futsal and beach soccer), including the team captain, and up to the maximum number of substitutes specified in the relevant Competition regulations.
- 24.3. Each Participating Player who is marked on the Player Selection List must be available at the player and equipment check undertaken by the AFC Match Commissioner on Match day.
- 24.4. Each Participating Team must submit their Player Selection List signed by the Head Coach or the Team Manager, together with the "Officials on the Substitution Bench" form with the names of the Participating Officials who shall be entitled to sit on the team bench in accordance with the relevant Competition regulations, to the AFC Match Commissioner by latest ninety (90) minutes prior to the commencement of each Match. Should the listed Participating Players or Participating Officials be less than the maximum number allowed, or if the AFC does not approve the registration of any person(s) listed, the number of maximum Participating Players and/or Participating Officials permitted on the team bench shall reduce proportionately.

25. Match Start List

- 25.1. Upon receipt of the Player Selection List, the AFC Match Commissioner will issue, through AFCAS, the "Match Start List".
- 25.2. The Match Start List shall be signed by the AFC Match Commissioner, whose signature will make it an official document.
- 25.3. The AFC Match Commissioner will ask to see the Accreditation Cards and playing kits of the Participating Players listed on the Match Start List approximately seventy-five (75) minutes before the Match. Each Participating Player must be prepared, available and in physical possession of their Accreditation Card to avoid any delays. Only those Participating Players possessing an Accreditation Card are entitled to participate in Matches, unless otherwise authorised by the AFC in exceptional circumstances.
- 25.4. Following the production of the Match Start List but prior to the commencement of the Match:
 - 25.4.1. If any of the eleven (11) (five [5] for futsal and beach soccer) Participating Players selected to start the Match are unable to start for any reason, they may be replaced by any of the substitutes listed on the Match Start List.
 - 25.4.2. The Team Manager of the Participating Team shall immediately submit an updated Player Selection List to the AFC Match Commissioner, who shall produce an updated Match Start List.
 - 25.4.3. There is no limit to the number of replacements.
 - 25.4.4. The replaced Participating Player(s) shall no longer be eligible to participate in the Match. For football Competitions, the Participating Team may still utilise the maximum number of substitutions during the Match as specified in the relevant Competition regulations. The Participating Team shall not be entitled to add any further substitutes, and the number of substitutes shall be reduced accordingly.

- 25.4.5. The replaced Participating Player(s) may still sit on the team bench during the Match. If so, they may be subject to doping control.
- 25.4.6. Only Participating Players who are identified as the starting eleven (11) (five [5] for futsal and beach soccer) on the Match Start List produced by the AFC Match Commissioner may start the Match.

26. Documents for Registration of Officials

- 26.1. Participating Officials must be registered via AFCAS with all documents set out below (unless such document was previously submitted, and a valid copy is available in AFCAS):
 - 26.1.1. a colour copy of a valid passport, containing the full name, passport number, place of birth, date of birth, date of issue, date of expiry and nationality of the relevant individual. Group passports are not permitted;
 - 26.1.2. a colour copy of a national identification card (where applicable, unless the official is a foreigner from a non-AFC Member Association);
 - 26.1.3. one (1) passport-size colour photo (taken within **six [6]** months);
 - 26.1.4. evidence of their qualification based upon their function:
 - 26.1.4.1. Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Fitness Coach, and Goalkeeper Coach: as set out in [Appendix 15](#); and
 - 26.1.4.2. Team Doctor: relevant medical qualification.
- 26.2. Where original documents are not in English, the original document and a certified English translation shall be provided.
- 26.3. The AFC reserves the right to request additional documents in all cases.

27. AFC Name Policy

- 27.1. The AFC Name Policy as set out in [Appendix 16](#) shall be applied during registration for all Competitions.

SECTION 5 | EQUIPMENT

28. General Requirements

- 28.1. Each Host Organisation and Participating Team must comply with the AFC Equipment Regulations.
- 28.2. For Participating Teams, the AFC Equipment Regulations are operational from the arrival of each Team Official Delegation at a Controlled Access Area until the departure of each Team Official Delegation from such areas.

29. Footballs, Futsal Balls and Beach Soccer Balls

- 29.1. Footballs, futsal balls and beach soccer balls for Matches shall be selected and supplied by the Host Organisation unless selected and supplied by the AFC. In this regard, in the event that the AFC appoints an official supplier for a given Competition (or Matches thereof [e.g. final Match]), such AFC designated Match balls shall be used in the relevant Matches and where applicable, for official training sessions and Official Functions, to the exclusion of any other balls.
- 29.2. All balls used in Matches must comply with the Laws of the Game and bear one (1) of the following marks:
 - 29.2.1. FIFA Quality PRO; or
 - 29.2.2. FIFA Quality; or
 - 29.2.3. FIFA Basic (previously known as International Match Standard [IMS]).

30. Competition Badge

- 30.1. Each Participating Teams shall allow space on its kit to affix the following sleeve badges as required by the AFC Equipment Regulations:
 - 30.1.1. AFC Competition sleeve badge on the right arm; and
 - 30.1.2. AFC campaign sleeve badge on the left arm (if applicable).

31. Kit Approval Procedure

- 31.1. Each Participating Team shall submit to the AFC via the Team Equipment Services (TES) platform for its approval, sample photos or artworks of their kits along with the measurements of all identifications, as defined in the AFC Equipment Regulations, by the date(s) provided by the AFC. The AFC reserves the right to request Participating Teams to submit actual samples of their kits at the Participating Team's own cost and expense for physical checks if necessary.

- 31.2. Each Participating Team shall submit to the AFC for its approval one (1) sample of all other apparel to be worn by their Team Official Delegation within the Controlled Access Areas during the Competition by the date(s) provided by the AFC.
- 31.3. Should any equipment submitted to the AFC infringe the AFC Equipment Regulations, the Participating Team shall be required to resubmit corrected equipment **information via TES platform to the AFC for approval** in accordance with the AFC Equipment Regulations.
- 31.4. The AFC has the right and duty to inspect the kit of a Team Official Delegation at each Venue, and is entitled to send such items to the AFC Headquarters for further inspection following each Match.

32. Allocation of Kit Colours

- 32.1. The AFC shall decide on the kit colour (shirts, shorts, and socks) to be worn for each Match on the basis of the equipment information submitted by each Participating Team prior to the Competition. In principle, each Participating Team shall wear its official colours for both outfield players and goalkeepers. In case of any clash between the colours of the Participating Teams and/or the Match Officials, the following order of priority shall be applied by the AFC to allocate the match colours.
 - 32.1.1. Outfield players of Team A;
 - 32.1.2. Outfield players of Team B;
 - 32.1.3. Goalkeepers of Team A;
 - 32.1.4. Goalkeepers of Team B; and
 - 32.1.5. Match Officials.
- 32.2. If the above order of priority does not produce a clear colour contrast, the allocation shall continue step by step in reverse order (starting from 32.1.5 to 32.1.1) until an acceptable colour contrast is confirmed.
- 32.3. If necessary, Participating Teams may be required to wear a combination of their official and reserve colours.
- 32.4. The colours shall be reviewed during the Match Coordination Meeting by the Match Commissioner and Referee Assessor, who shall decide on the colour allocation at their sole discretion. Such colour allocation communicated during the Match Coordination Meeting is final.
- 32.5. Regardless of the above, Participating Teams shall ensure to bring both sets of kits (both official and reserve) for all Participating Players for each Match, including the extra goalkeeper shirts without names and numbers (for special circumstances in which an outfield player must take the position of a goalkeeper during a Match).

SECTION 6 | LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

33. Arrival and Departure

- 33.1. Unless stated otherwise in the relevant Competition regulations, each Participating Team shall arrive at the Venue of their Match no later than the evening before the date of the Match or by the official arrival date to be determined by the AFC, whichever is earlier.
- 33.2. Each Participating Team shall depart the Venue of their final Match one (1) day after the Match, unless otherwise approved in writing by the AFC.
- 33.3. Participating Teams shall bear all costs as a result of arriving early or departing late from a Venue.
- 33.4. Where members of the Team Official Delegation arrive at the Venue of the Match by different flights, the Participating Team shall notify the AFC of the arrival of the main delegation as their official arrival time and all other arrivals (including airport pick up and other arrangements) shall be at the cost of the team. The same shall apply to departure.

34. Transportation to Venues

- 34.1. Each Participating Team is responsible for the payment of all transportation (international and domestic) for their Team Official Delegation from their departure from the territory of its Member Association (or any other location) to the Venue of its Matches and its departure from the Venue of its Matches.
 - 34.1.1. Where the Venue of a Match is not serviced by an international airport, the Host Organisation is responsible for the payment of all travel of the visiting Participating Team from the closest international airport to the Venue.
- 34.2. When required to purchase an airfare, each Participating Team is required to purchase published-fare air tickets which are endorsable and allow for date changes for travel to and from any Venue.
- 34.3. Participating Teams shall bear all costs as a result of non-compliance with the above Articles.

35. Domestic Transportation

- 35.1. Dedicated vehicles (with a designated driver) for the AFC Delegation shall be provided by the Host Organisation for the duration of stay, as requested by the AFC.
- 35.2. Unless stated otherwise in the relevant Competition regulations, the following vehicles (with a designated driver) shall be provided to each Participating Team by the Host Organisation for the duration of stay:
 - 35.2.1. one (1) dedicated sedan or multi-purpose vehicle (MPV);

35.2.2. one (1) dedicated bus with a minimum of forty (40) seats; and

35.2.3. one (1) luggage truck for airport transfers and Match days.

36. Visas

36.1. Each Participating Team must apply for all necessary visas for their Team Official Delegation no later than thirty (30) days prior to each Match played outside its territory. This obligation includes potential away Matches, taking into account successful qualification for a further stage of a Competition. Visa application costs shall be borne by each Participating Team.

36.1.1. Any Participating Team unable to fulfil a fixture as a result of failure to secure visas shall be referred to the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee.

36.2. Each Host Organisation shall ensure that visas and/or entry to the relevant territory are granted to the AFC Delegation, all members of any Team Official Delegation, the AFC Commercial Rights Partner Commercial Affiliates. Each Host Organisation shall also ensure that visa processes for Media and travelling supporters shall be handled by their local authorities without any discrimination on the basis of, without limitation, gender, race, or nationality.

36.2.1. Provided that the visiting Participating Team has complied with Article 36.1 and/or obtained valid visas granting the right of access to the relevant territory, in case a Match cannot be played as a result of failure to comply with Article 36.2, the Host Organisation (except in cases where the Match is played in a neutral venue) shall be referred to the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee.

37. Accommodation, Meals, Refreshments and Laundry

37.1. Accommodation, meals, refreshments and laundry for the AFC Delegation shall be provided by the Host Organisation for the duration of stay, as requested by the AFC.

37.2. Each Participating Team shall pay for incidental expenses incurred by its Team Official Delegation during the course of their stay in the Venue, all costs relating to any extension of their stay in the Venue, and all costs incurred by additional members of the Team Official Delegation.

37.3. Where there exists genuine unavailability (confirmed by the AFC Travel Office in writing) of flights for a Participating Team to depart the Venue one (1) day after a Match, the Host Organisation shall pay for all expenses of the Participating Team until departure. **The same shall apply in case of arrival earlier than the official arrival date as determined by the AFC.**

37.4. Each Host Organisation must assist any Commercial Affiliate, upon request, to secure Accommodation of sufficient quality on the same terms as available to the AFC, in first-class hotels in a Venue, as well as reasonable transportation services from the Accommodation and centre of each Venue to a Stadium, and if applicable, air transportation to and between Venues.

SECTION 7 | MEDIA

38. Media Rights

38.1. The AFC owns all Media Rights relating to the Competition.

Final Competition

38.2. The AFC is the sole owner and has the sole right, to the exclusion of the Host Organisation, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials and any other party, to exploit any and all Media Rights to the Competition. Accordingly, the AFC is entitled to use and exploit all Media Rights relating to the Competition and has appointed the AFC Commercial Rights Partner as its exclusive representative for the sale of the Media Rights relating to the Competition.

38.3. The AFC has granted the exclusive right of association, use and exploitation of the Media Rights to its Commercial Affiliates pursuant to their respective agreements with the AFC and the AFC Commercial Rights Partner.

38.4. Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall not use and/or exploit and shall ensure that no individual, company or commercial entity uses and/or exploits the Media Rights in any way and shall inform the AFC immediately of any unauthorised use and/or infringement of the Media Rights.

38.5. The use and/or proposed use of the Media Rights relating to the Competition shall be, at all times, subject to the prior written approval of the AFC and any applicable guidelines as issued by the AFC.

38.6. Where prior written approval for use of the Media Rights has been granted by the AFC, the Host Organisation, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall not use any Media Rights so granted in a manner which may damage or bring into disrepute the good name, image and reputation of the AFC, Competition or sport of association football or imply an endorsement or association to any particular product or service of the Host Organisation, Participating Teams, Participating Players, Participating Officials and/or any associated third-parties.

38.7. The Host Organisation, Participating Teams and Participating Officials may record any part of a Match only with the prior written approval of the AFC. The use of any such footage shall only extend to technical analysis purposes. Under no circumstances shall any recording or image of any part of a Match be publicly distributed or otherwise used for any type of commercial or non-commercial exploitation. Any abuse of such recording or image constitutes a serious violation of the Media Rights and shall be sanctioned by the AFC.

Preliminary Competition

38.8. The AFC hereby grants the Host Organisation the right to use and/or exploit, in whole or in part, the Media Rights for the Preliminary Competition, subject to the terms contained in this Manual and all applicable Competition regulations.

- 38.9. The AFC reserves the right to withhold or revoke any Media Rights granted to the Host Organisation at any time prior to or during the Competition. Any rights not expressly granted to the Host Organisation shall be expressly and unconditionally reserved by the AFC.
- 38.10. In so granting, Host Organisations shall ensure that no individual, company or commercial entity other than those approved by the Host Organisation pursuant to the grant of rights hereunder, uses and/or exploits the Media Rights in any way which may likely draw or infer an association with the AFC, the Competition and/or any other football competition or event organised by or under the auspices of the AFC, and shall inform the AFC immediately of any unauthorised use and/or infringement of the Media Rights.
- 38.11. Notwithstanding the above, the grant of rights to the Host Organisations shall not extend to any Matches played in a neutral venue and shall be subject to any reservation of rights as determined by the AFC.
- 38.12. The Host Organisation shall be entitled to use and/or exploit the Media Rights upon its appointment as Host Organisation and such grant shall extend until thirty (30) days after the final Match hosted by the relevant Host Organisation or such other term as determined by the AFC. All rights granted to the Host Organisation shall automatically cease upon expiry of the said term.
- 38.13. The Host Organisation shall not use and/or exploit any part of the Media Rights beyond the said term without the prior written approval of the AFC.
- 38.14. The Host Organisation shall execute written agreements with each of its Broadcast Partners regarding the grant of Media Rights which fully reflect the terms of this Manual and shall provide the AFC with a copy of such agreements, where requested.
- 38.15. Each Host Organisation shall submit a written, comprehensive plan that sets out their proposed media activities for the AFC's written approval prior to the use and/or exploitation of Media Rights.
- 38.16. Each Host Organisation shall remain fully and primarily responsible for and liable to the AFC for the acts and/or omissions of each of its Broadcast Partners in connection with the use and/or exploitation of Media Rights relating to the Competition.
39. AFC Website and Competition Website
- 39.1. The AFC Website, Competition website (if any) and official social media channels shall be the only official Digital Media platforms for the Competition.
- 39.2. Host Organisations are prohibited from launching any official website and/or releasing any official communication to media organisations related to the Competition without the prior written approval of the AFC.
- 39.3. Host Organisations may use the Competition Marks and Competition title on their own website or social media channel(s) to promote their hosting and staging of a Match in the Competition provided that:
- 39.3.1. any use or reference to the Competition Marks and/or Competition title shall be in its official form and in the approved format only;

- 39.3.2. the Competition Marks and/or Competition title shall not be used or placed within the title bar, menu bar and/or footer or header of the website or placed in a similarly prominent position on the website or social media channel(s) that would give the appearance that such platform is an official AFC or Competition website or channel; and
- 39.3.3. the Competition Marks and/or Competition title shall not be used or placed in association or close proximity to the name and/or identifier of any third-party or commercial entity.
- 39.4. Host Organisations shall ensure that no third-party logos, products, reference and/or identifiers are used on the website in a way which may likely draw or infer an association to the AFC or the Competition.
- 39.5. Where a website created under this provision is in the native language of the Host Organisation, the Host Organisation shall ensure that the website is also made available in English.
- 39.6. When referring to a Competition or Match on an official Member Association and/or Participating Team website or Digital Media platform, only the official Competition or Match social media and digital tags (hashtags) as provided by the AFC shall be utilised.
- AFC Digital**
- 39.7. A maximum of two (2) AFC digital personnel (each following one [1] team) shall be allowed to have access similar to those of the official photographers during a Match.
- 39.8. Each member of the AFC digital crew will wear a dark blue bib with AFC DIGITAL written on it instead of OFFICIAL.
- 39.9. The AFC digital crew shall be allowed to film team arrivals, team dressing rooms, the team march-in (together with other photographers from inside the rope), the Match (from behind the boards), mixed zone and press conferences.
- 39.10. In all cases, the Host Broadcaster will have priority access in all the above activities (e.g. the Host Broadcaster will film the dressing rooms first, followed by official photographers and then the AFC digital crew).
- 39.11. The AFC digital crew can film the spectators' arrival to the Stadium from outside the stands, while filming the spectators' reactions shall be filmed from behind the boards.
- 39.12. The AFC digital crew shall follow the instructions of the AFC Media Officer and shall be treated equally as the other photographers during the Match.
- 39.13. The AFC digital crew shall be given a position behind the boards, when requested, by the AFC Commercial Rights Partner to do pre-Match stand-ups and shall be allowed to do flash interviews, if appropriate and pre-agreed, at the end of the Match after the Host Broadcaster and any other Broadcast Partner.
- 39.14. The AFC digital crew shall also have pitch access following the completion of the final Match of a Competition to film the celebrations.

- 39.15. The AFC digital crew shall also be allocated space after the Host Broadcaster and other Broadcast Partners at the mixed zone.

40. Pre-Match Promotional Material

- 40.1. Prior to the commencement of each Match, the Participating Teams shall, upon request by the AFC, provide the AFC, free of charge, with photographs and audio-visual materials regarding the Participating Team, Participating Players and Participating Officials and any further information (including without limitation, statistics and historical information) as requested by the AFC.
- 40.1.1. The Participating Teams shall, upon request by the AFC, make all Participating Players and Participating Officials available for head shots and video walk-ups for media, commercial and/or promotional purposes by the AFC and Commercial Affiliates at least one (1) time before the start of the Final Competition or at any other time requested by the AFC due to any additional registration of Participating Players or Participating Officials. The time and venue of such head shots and video walk-ups shall be agreed between the relevant Participating Team and the AFC.
- 40.2. All Participating Teams hereby grant the AFC the right to use and where applicable, authorise the AFC Commercial Rights Partner and the Commercial Affiliates to use the aforesaid provided materials for commercial, promotional and/or media purposes relating to the Competition.
- 40.3. All materials shall be provided to the AFC in a timely manner, and in the form and format as prescribed by the AFC at no cost.

41. Team Media Officer

- 41.1. Each Participating Team shall appoint a dedicated English-speaking media officer to coordinate all media arrangements between the AFC and where applicable, the AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Broadcast Partners, Participating Teams, Participating Players, Participating Officials and the Media, including without limitation all press conferences and interviews, and to cooperate on all related matters at the Venue. In case the relevant Competition regulations do not require a team media officer to be registered, the team manager shall act as the team media officer and be responsible for all the obligations of a team media officer as set out in this Manual.
- 41.2. For the avoidance of doubt, if a request is made to the Team Media Officer or to the Team Manager (who shall also act as the Team Media Officer in case there is no dedicated Team Media Officer) by or on behalf of the AFC regarding any obligation of a Participating Player and/or Participating Official, such request shall be deemed to have been properly communicated to the relevant Participating Player and/or Participating Official by virtue of the request being made to the Team Media Officer or Team Manager.

- 41.3. The Participating Teams and their appointed media officer shall be responsible for ensuring the provision of interpretation and translation services for its Participating Players and Participating Officials who conduct media sessions in languages other than English. For the avoidance of doubt, the interpretation and translation services provided shall be for translation of dialogues from all other languages into the English language. In case interpretation and translation into the local language of the host country is necessary, it shall be the responsibility of the Host Organisation to ensure the same.
- 41.4. Where applicable for football Competitions, the Participating Teams and their appointed media officer shall be responsible for the distribution and translation of the relevant media guidelines as set out in [Appendix 17](#) and [Appendix 18](#).

42. Media Infrastructure, Facilities and Services

- 42.1. The Host Organisation shall extend all necessary assistance to the AFC and where applicable, the AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Commercial Affiliates, Host Broadcaster and Broadcast Partners in facilitating and ensuring the successful transmission of broadcast signals for each Match including technical assistance relating to production requirements and the exercise and exploitation of Media Rights.
- 42.2. The Host Organisation shall ensure that the number of camera positions as required by the AFC and where applicable the AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Host Broadcaster and Broadcast Partners, can be accommodated. Where any required camera position may present a safety or security hazard, the Host Organisation shall provide the AFC with sufficient notice of any such concerns and where necessary, propose an equal or better position for utilisation as an alternative.
- 42.3. The Host Organisation shall be responsible for ensuring that each Stadium shall have a broadcast compound situated in the immediate perimeter of the main stand of the Stadium to facilitate the parking of outdoor broadcast (OB) vans. It shall be secured by a perimeter fence and have clear cable routes between the broadcast compound and the broadcast areas in and around the Stadium. The broadcast compound shall have office cabins as well as access to shared wireless internet and local grid power.
- 42.4. The Host Organisation shall be responsible for ensuring that each Stadium shall have a media tribune situated in the main stand of the Stadium, together with a press conference room, media centre and mixed zone. The media tribune shall consist of a section with and without desks, offer unobstructed views of the Field of Play and provide access to power and shared wireless internet. The media tribune shall be situated in line with, or on either side of, the halfway line that is closest to the broadcast compound and it shall be physically separated from the public areas either by a fence, or by a buffer zone.
- 42.5. The Host Organisation shall be responsible in ensuring the safety and security of all media infrastructure and facilities provided at any Stadium and Official Training Sites.

- 42.6. As a result of technological developments, new and improved camera equipment may be developed which may require new camera positions in any Stadium and/or Official Training Site. Subject to space, safety and security considerations, such camera positions may be approved and requested by the AFC on a case-by-case basis and, where applicable, in consultation with the AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Host Broadcaster and Broadcast Partners. The Host Organisation shall comply with any new directions as issued by the AFC in such regard.
- 42.7. The Host Organisation shall be responsible in ensuring that each Stadium shall be equipped with a signal delivery system to facilitate the distribution of live broadcast video/audio signal to the following areas within the Stadium:
 - 42.7.1. media centre;
 - 42.7.2. media tribune;
 - 42.7.3. VVIP/VIP Lounge;
 - 42.7.4. doping control room;
 - 42.7.5. AFC Secretariat; and
 - 42.7.6. AFC Match Commissioner/Referee Assessor position.

43. Media Access and Accreditation

- 43.1. The Host Organisation shall be responsible for the management and provision of support to all Media for the Competition through the implementation of:
 - 43.1.1. accreditation procedures;
 - 43.1.2. procurement and setting up of Media Access Area(s); and
 - 43.1.3. coordination of all Media-related activities at any Stadium and Official Training Site.
- 43.2. The Host Organisation shall observe all instructions and directions of the AFC in relation thereto to ensure the full and unencumbered exercise of rights and media coverage of the Competition.
- 43.3. The Host Organisation shall ensure at its own cost that the AFC and, where applicable, the AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Commercial Affiliates, Host Broadcaster and Broadcast Partners are provided full and unrestricted access and accreditation to the Competition and/or Official Functions and facilitate in the operations of the AFC and where applicable the AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Commercial Affiliates, Host Broadcaster and Broadcast Partners in the exercise and exploitation of Media Rights.
- 43.4. The Host Organisation shall provide the AFC with all Media accreditation requests together with details relating to the specific request including:

- 43.4.1. the full name and designation of the requesting persons;
 - 43.4.2. the media company they represent;
 - 43.4.3. their nationality; and
 - 43.4.4. the type of media coverage they intend to cover for the Competition.
- 43.5. Upon receipt of approval by the AFC, the Host Organisation shall produce and issue Accreditation Cards to approved Media in a timely manner and shall be responsible for any delay resulting in the issuance or provision of such accreditation to the Media.
- 43.6. The Host Organisation is responsible for ensuring that the Media Rights and any rights to the Competition Data are protected and that no unofficial or unauthorised persons or parties including without limitation any broadcasters and/or video or ENG camera crews are permitted access to any Stadium without the prior written permission of the AFC.
- 43.7. The Host Organisation shall ensure that designated Media access area(s) may only be accessed by authorised Media with valid Accreditation Cards and that no Media shall be allowed access to any parts of the Stadium or Official Training Sites other than as permitted under their respective accreditations.
- 43.8. The Participating Teams shall ensure that any officials or Media persons or third-parties accompanying them possess valid Accreditation Cards to gain access into the relevant areas at any Stadium and/or Official Training Sites and shall comply with all applicable terms and instructions as issued by the AFC.
- 43.9. The Participating Teams shall ensure that no Media representatives accompany them in the team bus to and from the Stadium or Official Training Sites.
- 43.10. (for football) All approved Media shall comply with the Photographer Operation Guidelines for Football as set out in [Appendix 17](#) and Broadcast Operations Guidelines for Football as set out in [Appendix 18](#) and have access to and remain in the designated Media Access Areas as follows:
- 43.10.1. the Host Broadcaster, Broadcast Partners, and official photographers shall adopt positions around the Field of Play and on the spectator stand areas or such other areas as advised by the AFC;
 - 43.10.2. Only ENG crews from a Broadcast Partner or other party appointed by the AFC and/or the AFC Commercial Rights Partner shall adopt positions behind the advertising boards at the back of each goal posts and main camera platform at the main stand area or such other areas as advised by the AFC, subject to availability of space; and
 - 43.10.3. photographers shall adopt positions behind the advertising boards at the back of each goal posts or such other areas as advised by the AFC, subject to availability of space.

- 43.11. Under no circumstances shall Media other than the Host Broadcaster, Broadcast Partners and official photographers be allowed access on the Field of Play or between the boundaries of the Field of Play and spectator stands at any time during the Competition.
- 43.12. Notwithstanding the above, Media may in certain instances be allowed access to the halfway line on the Field of Play to record, film or photograph the team walk-in and line-up ceremony at the start of each Match and the presentation of the Player of the Match award (if any) at the end of each Match.
- 43.13. All Media who are authorised by the AFC to enter the Field of Play shall be required to wear media bibs at all times.

Final Competition

- 43.14. Unless otherwise instructed by the AFC, the AFC Commercial Rights Partner shall be responsible for the production of Media bibs and shall provide the relevant number of Media bibs to the Host Organisation for distribution to approved Media with valid Accreditation Cards.
- 43.15. Media bibs may bear commercial branding of a Commercial Affiliate as approved in writing by the AFC.
- 43.16. The Host Organisation shall be responsible for the issuance of Media bibs to approved Media with valid Accreditation Cards and shall ensure that all Media bibs issued are returned to the AFC at the end of each Match or Competition in case of Matches played in a centralised format. The Host Organisation shall be responsible for any lost or unreturned Media bibs.
- 43.17. The bib colours for approved Media and **Team Video Analysts** shall be as follows:
 - 43.17.1. Host Broadcaster: to wear grey identification bibs;
 - 43.17.2. Broadcast Partners: to wear brown identification bibs;
 - 43.17.3. Official Photographers/AFC digital crew/AFC Commercial Rights Partner crew/LOC Photographers: to wear dark blue identification bibs;
 - 43.17.4. ENG crew (from a Broadcast Partner or other party appointed by the AFC and/or the AFC Commercial Rights Partner): to wear pink identification bibs;
 - 43.17.5. Photographers: to wear dark green identification bibs; and
 - 43.17.6. Team Video Analyst: to wear orange identification bibs.**

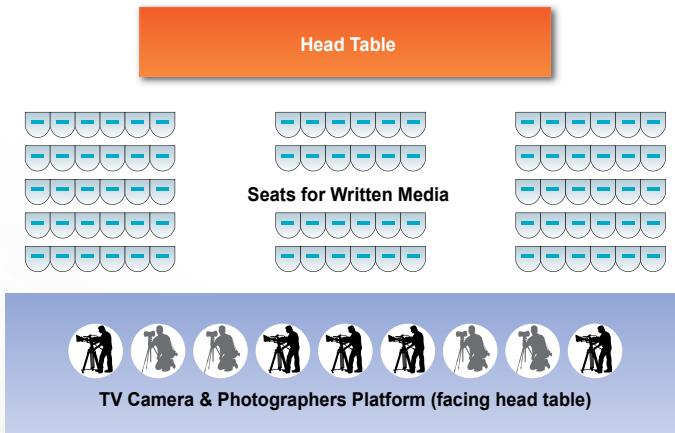
Preliminary Competition

- 43.18. The Host Organisation shall be responsible for the production and distribution of all Media bibs to approved Media.

44. Press Conferences and Interviews

- 44.1. The AFC reserves all rights in respect to the coordination of all public relations and communication activities relating to the Competition including without limitation the coordination of all press conferences, interviews and release of press statements and the selection of designated media areas for the conducting of all press conference and interview sessions.
- 44.2. The Host Organisation, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall participate and provide full support to the AFC and where applicable the AFC Commercial Rights Partner and Commercial Affiliates in relation to any public relations and communication activities organised by the AFC and where applicable the AFC Commercial Rights Partner and/or Commercial Affiliate and shall observe all instructions, communications or guidelines as issued by the AFC.
- 44.3. The Participating Teams through its appointed media officer shall assist the AFC and where applicable the AFC Commercial Rights Partner with the coordination of all press conference and/or interview sessions by ensuring that the key members of their Team Official Delegation selected to conduct any such activities are available and brought to scheduled sessions in a timely manner. For the avoidance of any doubt, the Participating Team through its appointed media officer shall be responsible for ensuring that members requested by the AFC of its Team Official Delegation that are selected to participate in any such media activity attend the same in accordance with the instructions of the AFC.
- 44.4. The Participating Teams shall ensure that the selected members of their Team Official Delegation conducting any press conference or interview sessions refrain from making any statements or references which will or is likely to damage or bring into disrepute the good name, image and reputation of the AFC, Competition or sport of association football.
- 44.5. The Participating Teams shall ensure, during any press conference or interview session, that:
 - 44.5.1. the products or other identifiers of their affiliated Member Association, the Participating Team, Participating Players, Participating Officials, or their commercial partners or any associated third parties do not appear or are not used in any manner;
 - 44.5.2. their Participating Players and Participating Officials do not make reference to any third-party products or entities.
- 44.6. In the event the Head Coach is suspended for the Match or medically unfit (certified by an AFC Medical Officer or otherwise proven to the comfortable satisfaction of the AFC), the Participating Team shall request the individual replacing the Head Coach on the team bench to attend any scheduled press conferences or interview sessions.

- 44.7. Where the Player of the Match award recipient is required to undergo doping tests, they shall fulfil all doping obligations in accordance with the AFC Anti-Doping Regulations. Any delayed reporting and/or temporary departure from the doping control room (e.g. for flash interviews) may be permitted by the AFC Doping Control Officer in accordance with the AFC Anti-Doping Regulations. In the event of any discrepancy between this Manual and the AFC Anti-Doping Regulations, the AFC Anti-Doping Regulations shall prevail.
- 44.8. If requested by the AFC, each Participating Team shall make their Head Coach and one (1) Participating Player available for an interview of up to ten (10) minutes, to be recorded by the Host Broadcaster or other Broadcast Partner, any Commercial Affiliate, or by the AFC digital channels.
- 44.9. The following set-up is recommended for press conferences:



- 44.10. Stand-up interviews are strictly prohibited at all times except where approved in writing by the AFC and where applicable the AFC Commercial Rights Partner. Participating Teams shall ensure that their Participating Players and Participating Officials refrain from conducting any such activities.
- 44.11. Notwithstanding the above, the AFC and, where applicable, the AFC Commercial Rights Partner shall designate an area between the team benches and team dressing rooms where unilateral and multilateral flash interviews can be conducted by Broadcast Partners at the end of a Match.
- 44.12. No interviews of any kind shall be conducted at any Controlled Access Area, its immediate vicinity or any other restricted areas unless otherwise advised by the AFC or where applicable the AFC Commercial Rights Partner.
- 44.13. Where the AFC organises additional media and/or promotional activities or awards, such as the mixed zone, such activities may supplement but not replace the obligatory press conferences or interview sessions. Notwithstanding the above, the Participating Teams shall ensure that their Participating Players and Participating Officials participate in such activities.

44.14. The Host Organisation shall provide an audio splitter at the back of the press conference room for the TV cameras to get a clear audio feed.

44.14.1. Save except for any AFC or Competition branded microphone cubes and/or windshields, only unbranded in-house microphones will be placed at the head table.

44.14.2. No other branded microphones, microphone cubes and/or windshields, except those provided by the AFC, irrespective of the broadcaster or media crew category, shall be allowed to be placed on the main press conference table or used during any press conference.

45. Mixed Zone

45.1. The Host Organisation shall coordinate and cooperate with the AFC in ensuring that a mixed zone, containing a sectioned-off area reserved for the Broadcast Partners is set up and organised for the media after the Match and that the mixed zone is conducive and safe for the Participating Officials and Participating Players to pass through from the team dressing room to the team transport area.

45.2. The Participating Teams shall ensure that all of their Participating Players pass through the mixed zone and are encouraged to conduct interviews with the Media giving priority to requests from Commercial Affiliates. **The Head Coach shall only be required to pass through the mixed zone in the event that there is no post-Match press conference held after a Match.**

46. Team Dressing Room

46.1. Team dressing rooms are strictly off-limits to any Media at all times during the Competition. The Participating Teams shall ensure that their respective media personnel observe and comply with these provisions.

46.2. Notwithstanding the above, the AFC reserves the right to grant the Host Broadcaster, official photographers, AFC digital crew, AFC Commercial Rights Partner and Commercial Affiliates access to the team dressing rooms prior to the arrival of a Team Official Delegation to record and film the Participating Team's playing kit and equipment.

46.3. In certain instances, AFC reserves the right to allow its rights-holding broadcasters to do stand-up in the team dressing room. These stand-ups are restricted to the rights-holding broadcasters from the respective Participating Teams' Member Association and shall be done at the time of the dressing room filming, before the Participating Team's arrival at the Stadium. Prior arrangement shall be made with all the stakeholders, including Participating Teams if such an activity needs to take place.

46.4. Only Host Broadcaster and official photographers as approved by the AFC may in certain instances be allowed to film the winning celebrations inside the team dressing rooms.

47. Field of Play

- 47.1. Media and/or any unauthorised third parties are strictly prohibited from entering the Field of Play or any prohibited areas in the Stadium including technical areas and the area between the boundaries of the Field of Play and spectator stands. Host Organisations shall ensure that no such parties shall be allowed access or brought to the said areas unless otherwise authorised by the AFC.
- 47.2. Notwithstanding the above, only accredited and authorised photographers, television crew and cameramen, the Host Broadcaster or any authorised Broadcast Partner shall be allowed access to the Field of Play and the area between the boundaries of the Field of Play and spectator stand to enable the performance of obligations and exercise of rights relating to the Competition in accordance with the AFC's accreditation policy.

SECTION 8 | TICKETING

48. General Requirements

- 48.1. The Host Organisation shall provide Complimentary Tickets to the AFC, AFC Commercial Rights Partner and Participating Teams, free of charge and as instructed by the AFC. The minimum number of Complimentary Tickets to be provided to the AFC and/or AFC Commercial Rights Partner is provided in [Appendix 19](#).
- 48.2. In addition to the above, the Host Organisation shall provide the AFC, AFC Commercial Rights Partner and Participating Teams, the opportunity to purchase Tickets at face value for each Match. The minimum number of purchasable Tickets to be provided to the AFC and/or AFC Commercial Rights Partner is provided in [Appendix 19](#).
- 48.3. The location of both complimentary and purchasable Tickets shall be determined by the AFC. A zoning principle regarding the allocation of seats is provided in [Appendix 20](#).
- 48.4. The Host Organisation shall provide facilities and services to host the guests of the AFC and/or Commercial Affiliates as instructed by the AFC.
- 48.5. The Host Organisation is responsible for delivering all Tickets by the deadline provided by the AFC.

49. Ticket Sales

- 49.1. The Host Organisation is responsible for the sales of Tickets and shall manage it in a manner that meets all applicable safety and security standards. The Host Organisation shall retain all receipts from the sale of Tickets.
- 49.2. In all cases, Tickets may be sold at the Stadium or anywhere else in the Host City on the day of the Match only with the approval of the police and/or other competent authorities and after consultation with the Participating Teams.
- 49.3. Tickets shall provide holders with all the information they may need such as the names of the Competition, Participating Teams and Stadium, the date, kick-off time and a clear seat location indication (including sector, row and seat number).
- 49.4. Tickets shall include serial numbering and, in the event e-tickets are utilised, they should also have QR codes or similar information.

SECTION 9 | COMMERCIAL**50. Commercial Rights**

50.1. The AFC owns all Commercial Rights relating to the Competition.

Final Competition

50.2. The AFC has appointed the AFC Commercial Rights Partner as its sole and exclusive representative for the sale of Commercial Rights relating to the Competition.

50.3. The AFC has granted the exclusive right of association, use and exploitation of the Commercial Rights to its Commercial Affiliates pursuant to their respective agreements with the AFC and the AFC Commercial Rights Partner.

50.4. Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall not use and/or exploit and ensure that no individual, company or commercial entity uses and/or exploits the Commercial Rights and shall inform the AFC immediately of any unauthorised use and/or infringement of the Commercial Rights.

50.5. Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and/or Participating Officials shall provide the necessary assistance and support to the AFC, AFC Commercial Rights Partner and/or Commercial Affiliates and ensure that any individuals and/or third parties associated to them observe all instructions of the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner in relation to the protection and enforcement of the Commercial Rights or any commercial programme established by the AFC for the Competition.

Preliminary Competition

50.6. The AFC hereby grants the Host Organisation the right to use and/or exploit, in whole or in part, the Commercial Rights for the Preliminary Competition, subject to the terms contained in this Manual and all applicable Competition regulations.

50.7. The AFC reserves the right to withhold or revoke any Commercial Rights granted to the Host Organisation at any time prior to or during the Competition. Any rights not expressly granted to the Host Organisation shall be expressly and unconditionally reserved by the AFC.

50.8. In so granting, Host Organisations shall ensure that no individual, company or commercial entity other than those approved by the Host Organisations pursuant to the grant of rights hereunder, uses and/or exploits the Commercial Rights in any way which may likely draw or infer an association to the AFC, the Competition and/or any other football competition or event organised by or under the auspices of the AFC, and shall inform the AFC immediately of any unauthorised use and/or infringement of the Commercial Rights.

50.9. Notwithstanding the above, the grant of rights to the Host Organisations shall not extend to any Matches played in a neutral venue and shall be subject to any reservation of rights as determined by the AFC.

- 50.10. The Host Organisation shall be entitled to use and/or exploit the Commercial Rights upon its appointment as Host Organisation and such grant shall extend until thirty (30) days after the final Match hosted by the relevant Host Organisation or such other term as determined by the AFC. All rights granted to the Host Organisation shall automatically cease upon expiry of the said term.
- 50.11. The Host Organisation shall not use and/or exploit any part of the Commercial Rights beyond the said term without the prior written approval of the AFC.
- 50.12. The Host Organisations shall execute written agreements with each of its Commercial Affiliates regarding the grant of Commercial Rights which fully reflect the terms of this Manual and shall provide the AFC with a copy of such agreements, where requested.
- 50.13. Each Host Organisation shall submit a written, comprehensive plan that sets out their proposed commercial and sponsorship activities for the AFC's written approval prior to the use and/or exploitation of Commercial Rights.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Host Organisation may procure sponsors from any brand category save except as follows:

- 50.13.1. tobacco;
 - 50.13.2. liquor;
 - 50.13.3. alcohol (if prohibited by the laws of the Host Organisation);
 - 50.13.4. betting and gaming services; and
 - 50.13.5. any other industries which may, at the discretion of the AFC, be deemed inappropriate if associated with the Competition.
- 50.14. Each Host Organisation shall remain fully and primarily responsible for and liable to the AFC for the acts and/or omissions of its Commercial Affiliates in connection with the use and/or exploitation of Commercial Rights relating to the Competition.

51. Commercial Infrastructure, Facilities and Services

- 51.1. The Host Organisation shall ensure that Commercial Affiliates are provided rooms, storage and display/activation areas in and around the Stadium to facilitate commercial activations. Such rooms and locations shall be determined by the AFC.
- 51.2. Details of the Commercial Affiliates' activation shall be communicated to the Host Organisation via circular letter.
- 51.3. The Host Organisation shall remain responsible to organise and secure at its own cost and expense any local permits as required by local authorities as the organiser of the event. The AFC Commercial Rights Partner will collect and compile Commercial Affiliates' information as required for any local permits in connection with any activations relating to the Competition in and around the Stadium, Official Training Site or Official Functions and share with the Host Organisation as per any timelines instructed by the AFC, so they may secure local approval.

52. Commercial Access and Accreditation

- 52.1. The AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner shall be responsible for the management and provision of support to all Commercial Affiliates through the implementation of:
 - 52.1.1. accreditation procedures; and
 - 52.1.2. coordination of all sponsor-related activities at any Stadium, Official Training Site and Official Functions.
- 52.2. The Host Organisation shall observe all instructions and directions of the AFC and the AFC Commercial Rights Partner in relation thereto to ensure the full and unencumbered exercise of Commercial Rights.
- 52.3. The Host Organisation shall ensure at its own cost that the AFC and, where applicable, the AFC Commercial Rights Partner and Commercial Affiliates are provided full and unrestricted access and accreditation to the Competition and/or Official Functions and facilitate in the operations of the AFC and, where applicable, the AFC Commercial Rights Partner and Commercial Affiliates in the exercise and exploitation of Commercial Rights.
- 52.4. The Host Organisation shall be responsible for the production of Accreditation Cards for Commercial Affiliates, as requested by the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner. These Accreditation Cards must be provided to the AFC or the AFC Commercial Partner as instructed by the AFC for further distribution to the final recipient.

53. Intellectual Property

- 53.1. The AFC owns all rights, title and interest relating to the Competition including all intellectual property and Proprietary Interests whether created in the past, present or future and reserves all rights in respect to the use and/or licence of such rights.
- 53.2. The use of any intellectual property rights relating to the Competition, whether for the Final Competition or Preliminary Competition, shall be subject at all times to the prior written approval of the AFC.
- 53.3. Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Players, and Participating Officials shall not oppose and shall use reasonable efforts to ensure that none of its affiliates oppose any trademark or copyright applications filed in respect to the AFC or Competition and may not in any way challenge or apply for any copyright, trademark, patent or domain name registrations which would adversely affect AFC's Proprietary Interests in the Competition.
- 53.4. Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall promptly notify the AFC of any infringement, or suspected infringement, of any intellectual property rights relating to the Competition upon becoming aware of any such matter.

Final Competition

- 53.5. The AFC has granted the exclusive right of use and exploitation of the intellectual property rights relating to the Competition to its Commercial Affiliates pursuant to their respective agreements with the AFC and the AFC Commercial Rights Partner.

Preliminary Competition

- 53.6. The AFC hereby grants to the Host Organisation the right to use and/or exploit, in whole or in part, certain intellectual property rights relating to the Competition pursuant to its appointment as Host Organisation subject to the terms hereunder.

54. Competition Data

- 54.1. The AFC is the sole owner and has the sole right, to the exclusion of the Host Organisation, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials and any other party, to exploit any and all rights to the Competition Data. Accordingly, the AFC is entitled to use and exploit all rights, title and interest to the Competition Data relating to the Competition and reserves all rights in respect to the use and/or licence of such rights worldwide.
- 54.2. Any use and/or proposed use of the Competition Data shall be subject to the prior written approval of the AFC.

55. Image Rights

- 55.1. The AFC is entitled to use and exploit all Image Rights relating to the Competition and reserves all rights in respect to the use and/or licence of such rights for any purposes (including promotional, commercial and non-commercial purposes and otherwise) free from any condition, royalty or compensation.

Final Competition

- 55.2. Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials acknowledge that their participation and attendance in the Competition shall constitute an agreement to the use and/or recording of their image, voice or likeness without notice or compensation, and shall indemnify, release, defend and hold harmless the AFC, AFC Commercial Rights Partner and Commercial Affiliates from any and all claims relating to the use of their images and likeness in relation to the Competition and/or grant of rights relating to the Competition.

- 55.3. Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall ensure that no individual, company or commercial entity uses and/or exploits the Image Rights in any way which may likely draw or imply an association to the AFC, Competition or Commercial Affiliates and shall inform the AFC immediately of any unauthorised use or infringement of the Image Rights.

Preliminary Competition

- 55.4. Any use and/or proposed use of the Image Rights by the Host Organisation or any of its associated third parties shall be subject to the prior written approval of the AFC.

- 55.5. Host Organisations shall ensure that no individual, company or commercial entity uses and/or exploits the Image Rights in any way which may likely draw or infer an association to the AFC and/or Competition and shall inform the AFC immediately of any unauthorised use or infringement of the Image Rights.

56. Public Exhibition Rights

- 56.1. The AFC is entitled to exploit all Public Exhibition Rights relating to the Competition and reserves all rights in respect to the use and/or licence of such rights worldwide.

Final Competition

- 56.2. Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall not organise and ensure that any third parties associated to the Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and/or Participating Officials do not organise any form of public exhibition of the Matches of the Competition, at any time, whether prior to, during or after the Competition.
- 56.3. Any intention or proposed intention to hold or organise any form of public exhibition and/or use or exploit any Public Exhibition Rights relating to the Competition shall be subject to the prior written approval of the AFC and in accordance with the directions and instructions as issued by the AFC.

Preliminary Competition

- 56.4. Each Host Organisation shall not organise and ensure that any third parties associated to the Host Organisation does not organise any form of public exhibition of the Matches of the Competition, at any time, whether prior to, during or after the Competition period without the prior written approval of the AFC.
- 56.5. Any intention or proposed intention to hold or organise any form of public exhibition and/or use or exploit any Public Exhibition Rights relating to the Competition shall be subject to the prior written approval of the AFC and in accordance with the directions and instructions as issued by the AFC.

57. Official Functions

- 57.1. The AFC is entitled to exploit all rights relating to the Official Functions and events relating to the Competition and reserves all rights in respect to the organising and/or staging of such functions or events.

Final Competition

- 57.2. Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall not organise and ensure that any third parties associated to the Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and/or Participating Officials do not organise any Official Functions or events relating to the Competition without the prior written approval of the AFC. Any party that wishes to organise and/or stage any Official Function shall provide the AFC with a detailed plan setting out among others the date, time and venue of the proposed function or event and shall follow and comply with any directions or instructions issued by the AFC regarding the overall organising and/or staging of the Official Function.

- 57.3. Any events or functions proposed to be organised and/or staged by such parties, shall be on a non-commercial basis with no sale of Tickets or payment in cash or kind from any third party or company and/or no association to the Competition, the AFC and/or its Commercial Affiliates.

Preliminary Competition

- 57.4. Host Organisations shall be entitled to organise official events relating to the hosting of any Match of the Competition subject to the prior written approval of the AFC. In so doing, Host Organisations shall provide the AFC with a detailed plan setting out amongst other matters, the date, time and venue of the proposed event and comply with any directions or instructions of the AFC regarding any matters relating to the overall organising and staging of such events.
- 57.5. Host Organisations acknowledge that any events proposed to be organised shall be on a non-commercial basis with no sales of Tickets or payment in cash or kind from any third party save except for any such contribution from its Commercial Affiliates as part of its agreement with the Host Organisation.
- 57.6. In the event the Host Organisation intends to use any images or footages of materials owned by the AFC during any such events, the Host Organisation acknowledges that such use shall be subject to the provisions of Articles 55.4 and 55.5 above.

58. Competition Marks and Competition Title

- 58.1. The AFC is the owner and/or controller of all rights, title and interest to the Competition Marks, Competition title and Competition branding elements (such as the trophy and anthem) and reserves all rights in respect to the use and/or licence to use of such rights worldwide.

Final Competition

- 58.2. The AFC has granted the exclusive right of use and exploitation of the Competition Marks, Competition title and Competition branding elements to its Commercial Affiliates pursuant to their respective agreements with the AFC and the AFC Commercial Rights Partner.
- 58.3. Any proposed use of the Competition Marks and/or Competition title shall be in the approved format in accordance with AFC guidelines, subject at all times to the prior written approval of the AFC.
- 58.4. Where approval to use of the Competition Marks and/or Competition title has been granted by the AFC, Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and/or Participating Officials shall ensure that they do not use the Competition Marks, Competition title and/or Competition branding elements in any manner which may damage or bring into disrepute the good name, image and reputation of the AFC, Competition or sport of association football or likely imply an endorsement or infer an association to any particular product or service of the Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and/or any third-parties.

Preliminary Competition

- 58.5. Any proposed use of the Competition Marks, and/or Competition title shall be in the approved format in accordance with the branding guidelines as issued by the AFC, subject at all times to the prior written approval of the AFC.
- 58.6. The Commercial Affiliates procured by a Host Organisation may use and/or exploit the Competition Marks and Competition title for promotional purposes relating to the Competition pursuant to their respective agreements with the Host Organisation and subject to the terms of this Manual and all applicable Competition regulations.
- 58.7. Where approval to use of the Competition Marks and/or Competition title has been granted by the AFC, the Host Organisation and any of its appointed Commercial Affiliates shall ensure that such use shall not be in a manner which may damage or bring into disrepute the good name, image and reputation of the AFC, Competition or sport of association football or likely imply an endorsement or infer an association to any particular product or service of the Host Organisation or appointed Commercial Affiliate.
- 58.8. The Host Organisation acknowledges that the right to use the Competition Marks and Competition title shall not extend to use of the AFC Marks.

59. Merchandise Rights

- 59.1. The AFC is entitled to exploit all Merchandise Rights relating to the Competition and reserves all rights in respect to the use and/or licence of such rights.

Final Competition

- 59.2. The AFC has granted the exclusive right of use, association and exploitation of such rights to its Commercial Affiliates through means of franchising, display, sampling, demonstration and/or sale of products and services pursuant to their respective agreements with the AFC and the AFC Commercial Rights Partner.
- 59.3. Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall not use and/or exploit and ensure that no individual, company or commercial entity uses and/or exploits the Merchandise Rights and shall inform the AFC immediately of any unauthorised use and/or infringement of such rights.
- 59.4. Any use or exploitation and/or proposed use or exploitation of the Merchandise Rights relating to the Competition shall be in accordance with the AFC guidelines, subject at all times to the prior written approval of the AFC.

Preliminary Competitions

- 59.5. The Host Organisation shall not exploit the Merchandising Rights to the Competition without the prior written approval of the AFC.
- 59.6. Any use or exploitation and/or proposed use or exploitation of the Merchandise Rights relating to the Competition shall be in accordance with the AFC guidelines, subject at all times to the prior written approval of the AFC.

60. Official Products and Equipment

Final Competition

- 60.1. The AFC and the AFC Commercial Rights Partner shall be responsible for the coordination of all sponsorship of official products and equipment relating to the Competition.
- 60.2. The Host Organisation shall assist the AFC and the AFC Commercial Rights Partner in arranging for the proper storage and safekeeping of materials and equipment relating to the Competition and all Matches.
- 60.3. The Host Organisation shall liaise with government and local authorities in ensuring the unfettered, duty free clearance of such goods used in relation to the Competition.
- 60.4. As part of the exclusive rights accorded to the Commercial Affiliate under their respective agreements with the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner, the Commercial Affiliates may supply official products and equipment containing the branding of the Commercial Affiliates for use in relation to the Competition. Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall use all such official products and equipment as instructed by the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner pursuant to its participation in the Competition, to the exclusion of competing products and equipment.
- 60.5. Where no supply of official products and equipment are made available by the Commercial Affiliates, the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner shall reserve the right to determine the products and equipment used in relation to the Competition and the Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall observe all instructions issued by the AFC.
- 60.6. Host Organisations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall not use, exhibit or display any sponsor or third-party marks, names, branding or indicia on themselves or any products, playing or training kits and/or other team supplies or equipment, in a Controlled Access Area or when attending any press conferences, interviews or any media activity, Official Function or event relating to the Competition, save as otherwise permitted under the AFC Equipment Regulations.

Preliminary Competition

- 60.7. The AFC shall be responsible for the coordination of all sponsorship of official products and equipment relating to the Competition unless such responsibility is granted to the Host Organisation.
- 60.8. The Host Organisation shall assist the AFC in arranging for the proper storage and safe keep of materials and equipment relating to the Competition and all Matches.
- 60.9. The Host Organisation shall liaise with government and local authorities in ensuring the unfettered, duty free clearance of such goods used in relation to the Competition.
- 60.10. Where no supply of official products and equipment are made available by the AFC, the AFC shall reserve the right to determine the products and equipment used in relation to the Competition and the Host Organisation, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall observe all instructions issued by the AFC in this regard.

60.11. The Host Organisation, Member Associations, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall not use, exhibit or display any sponsor or third-party marks, names, branding or indicia on themselves or any products, playing or training kits and/or other team supplies or equipment, in a Controlled Access Area or when attending any press conferences, interviews or any media activity, Official Function or event relating to the Competition, save as otherwise permitted under the AFC Equipment Regulations.

61. Advertising and Branding

61.1. The Host Organisation, Participating Teams, Participating Players, and Participating Officials shall not use, display or erect any signage or advertising in any Stadium or Official Training Site at any point during the Competition, without the prior written approval of the AFC.

61.2. The Host Organisation shall be responsible, at its own cost, for obtaining all licences and permits required for the use, placement and publishing of any advertising or branding of the Competition, including in relation to the placement of Pitch-side perimeter advertising boards and/or any displays at any Stadium, Official Training Site or any Controlled Access Area.

61.3. The Host Organisation acknowledges that a restricted view may arise as a result of the placement and positioning of certain advertising and branding of the Competition but shall comply with all such arrangements as advised by the AFC.

Final Competition

61.4. Subject to Article 62.2, the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner shall be responsible for the advertising and branding of the Competition. The Host Organisation shall provide the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner with all necessary assistance, as requested by the AFC.

61.5. The Host Organisation shall ensure that all advertising and branding relating to the Competition including that of the Commercial Affiliates are placed and displayed in accordance with the instructions of the AFC.

61.6. The Host Organisation shall install, remove or conceal any decoration, signage or advertising in accordance with the direction of the AFC, at no cost to the AFC.

61.7. The Host Organisation shall ensure that the AFC, AFC Commercial Rights Partner and Commercial Affiliates are provided with sufficient space and appropriate infrastructure (including access to electricity) within the commercial display area as determined by the AFC to enable the AFC, AFC Commercial Rights Partner and/or Commercial Affiliates to fully exercise and exploit the Commercial Rights.

Preliminary Competition

61.8. The Host Organisation shall be responsible for the advertising and branding of the Competition, subject to the approval of the AFC.

61.9. The Host Organisation shall install, remove or conceal any decoration, signage or advertising in accordance with the direction of the AFC, at no cost to the AFC.

- 61.10. The Host Organisation shall, where applicable, ensure that the AFC is provided with sufficient space within the commercial display area as determined and where requested by the AFC.

62. Controlled Access Areas

- 62.1. The Host Organisation shall be responsible for the operation and management of all Controlled Access Areas in cooperation with venue operators and, where appropriate, the relevant local and national government authorities.
- 62.2. The Host Organisation shall produce, install and remove all look and feel elements in the Controlled Access Areas in accordance with the specific directions of the AFC and shall only use the look and feel artwork as provided by the AFC.
- 62.3. The Host Organisation shall bear all costs associated to the provision and use of the Controlled Access Areas.
- 62.4. The Host Organisation shall ensure the immediate concealment or removal of any or all unauthorised or third-party advertising, marketing or promotion from the Stadium or Official Training Site and that the Stadium including all Controlled Access Areas and Official Trainings Sites shall be free from any third-party agreements relating to the use and operation of the Stadium or any part thereof.

63. Clean Stadium

- 63.1. The Host Organisation shall, at its own cost, be responsible for the delivery of a Clean Stadium in accordance with the timelines set out by the AFC.
- 63.2. The Host Organisation, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall ensure that they and their commercial partners or associated third-parties refrain(s) from undertaking any actions which may likely impede or effect the delivery of a Clean Stadium.
- 63.3. The AFC reserves all rights in respect to the removal or placement of all advertising or commercial signage within all Stadia and Official Training Sites. The Host Organisation, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall comply with all directions or instructions of the AFC in relation thereto.

64. Rights Protection and Ambush Marketing

- 64.1. The AFC has established a rights protection programme to provide a framework for the recognition of all rights associated to the Competition and to combat any unauthorised use and/or association of rights relating to the AFC and/or Competition.
- 64.2. The Host Organisation, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall provide all assistance and support to the AFC, authorities and/or any appointed parties in ensuring the successful implementation and enforcement of the programme and shall notify the AFC of any infringement, suspected infringement or ambush marketing-related activities upon it becoming aware of such matters.

- 64.3. The Host Organisation, Member Association, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall ensure that their commercial partners and/or associated third-parties do not partake in any matters which are likely to be considered as an ambush marketing-related activity or infringement of the rights of the AFC and/or Competition.

65. Printed Materials

- 65.1. All rights in and to all Competition related collaterals and publications including without limitation, the official souvenir programmes, Match day programmes, official magazine, location guidebooks and official posters are exclusively reserved by the AFC.
- 65.2. The Host Organisation, Member Association, Participating Teams, Participating Players and Participating Officials shall not publish any Competition- or Match-related publications without the prior written approval of the AFC.

66. Reporting and Match Recording

Preliminary Competition

- 66.1. Host Organisations shall submit the below reports in accordance with the stipulated timelines:
- 66.1.1. Television Broadcasting Report: Domestic and International Broadcast Schedules
- 66.1.1.1. Contents: station name, broadcast territory, date and time of broadcast, transmission media (e.g. terrestrial, satellite, or cable); broadcast mode (e.g. free-to air, pay, or pay-per-view), and nature of transmission (e.g. live, delayed, or repeat);
- 66.1.1.2. Delivery: latest ten (10) days before the Competition.
- 66.1.2. Sponsorship Status Reports
- 66.1.2.1. Contents: company names, sponsorship categories, industries, and sponsor benefits and obligations;
- 66.1.2.2. Delivery: latest twenty (20) days before the Competition.
- 66.1.3. Final Report
- 66.1.3.1. Contents: sponsor activities with photos, Host Organisation activities, television distribution data, and commercial sales information;
- 66.1.3.2. Delivery: latest one (1) month after the final Match of the Competition.
- 66.2. Immediately after each Match, the Host Organisation shall provide four (4) copies of the full Match recording to the AFC Match Commissioner.

Final Competition

- 66.3. The requirements for reporting and Match recording for Final Competitions shall be communicated to the Host Organisations by the AFC.

SECTION 10 | SAFETY AND SECURITY

67. General Requirements

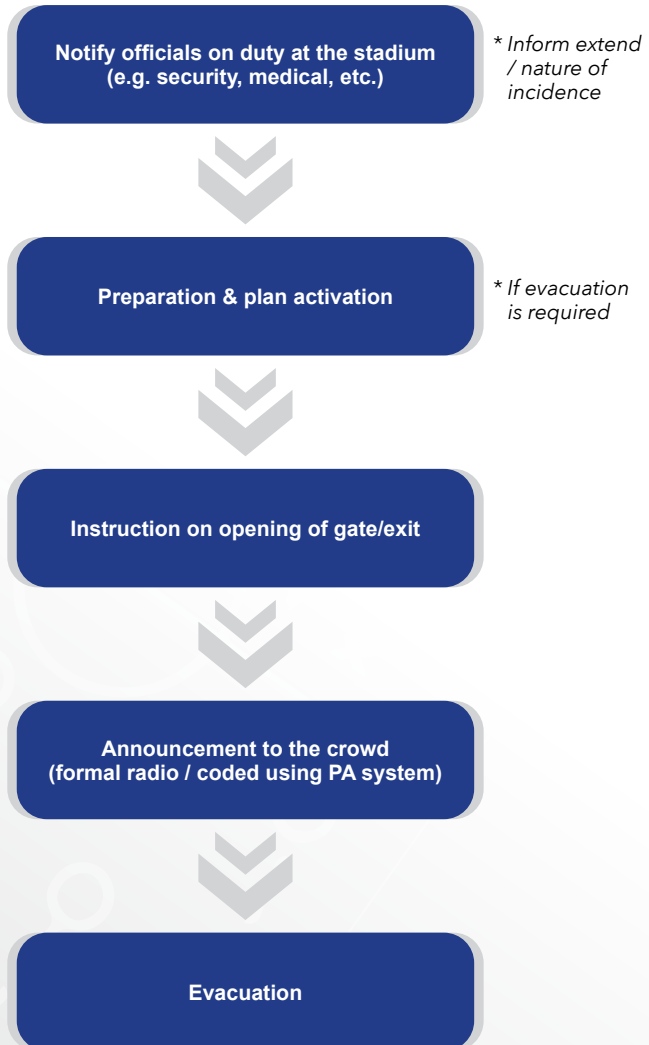
- 67.1. Each Host Organisation and Participating Team must comply with the AFC Safety and Security Regulations.
- 67.2. The Host Organisation is responsible for liaison with public authorities in the host country and/or Host City to ensure that they work towards implementation of the measures contained in the AFC Safety and Security Regulations.
- 67.3. Each Host Organisation shall appoint a local safety and security officer, who shall:
 - 67.3.1. develop, implement and review safety and security policy and procedure, including risk management and planning;
 - 67.3.2. be the main point of contact between the public authorities and the Host Organisation in respect of the safety and security organisation for Matches;
 - 67.3.3. manage the Match safety and security operations including resourcing, briefing, deployment and debriefing; and
 - 67.3.4. ensure that Stadium infrastructure, systems and equipment are certified as fit for purpose. The safety and security officer shall be qualified in accordance with the relevant national legal framework.
- 67.4. Host Organisations shall be responsible to ensure formal accreditation is applied and put into force before the start of the Competition as instructed by the AFC (cf. [Appendix 21](#)). Once accreditation has been established, access to Stadiums and other Controlled Access Areas shall only be permitted for those individuals with a valid permit.

68. Information for All Supporters

- 68.1. The Host Organisation shall provide the following information to all supporters:
 - 68.1.1. Stadium opening time;
 - 68.1.2. Stadium map, including approach roads, car parks, public transport stops and location of viewing sectors; and
 - 68.1.3. Stadium code of conduct, including the prohibition of items from entering Stadiums and offensive articles as well as the procedure for searching spectators.

69. Public Address System

- 69.1. One of the apparent causes of unease and anxiety among spectators at any mass gathering event is a lack of adequate information at the time of crises. To avoid any panic and injuries among the spectators, it is essential to provide vital information concerning the nature of any emergency, hazard or risk. In such an unlikely event the following standard procedure is recommended to be followed:



SECTION 11 | MEDICAL & ANTI-DOPING

70. Ambulances at Stadiums

- 70.1. Two (2) ambulances must be stationed for the Participating Players at the designated tunnel near the Medical Room and the Field of Play from ninety (90) minutes before the commencement of each Match until the Participating Teams leave the Stadium. In addition to the above, one (1) ambulance must be stationed for the care of Participating Officials, VVIP/VIP guests and AFC Delegation.
- 70.2. Each ambulance must be equipped with advanced life support equipment such as defibrillator, oxygen/mask, I/V drip sets and emergency medicaments and trained emergency medical personnel.
- 70.3. The Host Organisation shall be responsible for establishing communication channels with the ambulance(s) for emergency evacuation.
- 70.4. The tunnel wherein the ambulance(s) are stationed shall be free from any obstruction. Media is not permitted within this area.

71. Medical Rooms at Stadiums

- 71.1. Each Stadium must have two (2) fully equipped medical rooms for medical care of the Team Official Delegations and AFC Delegation on Match day.
 - 71.1.1. The first medical room shall be located in the tunnel close to the Field of Play and team dressing rooms for emergency treatment of seriously injured Participating Players.
 - 71.1.2. A second medical room shall be located in the vicinity of the VVIP/VIP tribunes to provide emergency and related medical services. Alternatively, a mobile paramedic can be allocated to cover the VVIP/VIP tribunes.
 - 71.1.3. The following emergency equipment shall be present and fully operational in both medical rooms:
 - 71.1.3.1. a minimum of two (2) examination and treatment tables;
 - 71.1.3.2. a minimum of two (2) hardboard/spinal stretchers with head blocks;
 - 71.1.3.3. a defibrillator with rhythm and patient data recording or an automated external defibrillator (AED);
 - 71.1.3.4. infusion mounting and system with all equipment for injections and infusion including venous indwelling cannulae;
 - 71.1.3.5. intubation equipment, laryngoscope, laryngeal mask airway (LMA), Ambubag (bag valve mask), lubrication;

- 71.1.3.6. a minimum of 2,000L (two thousand litres) of stationary oxygen or a minimum of 400L (four hundred litres) of portable oxygen;
 - 71.1.3.7. stationary non-manual suction device with a minimum negative pressure of 500mm (five hundred millimetres) of mercury;
 - 71.1.3.8. immobilisation equipment such as spinal board, cervical collar set; and
 - 71.1.3.9. cyro-thermal regulation therapy (e.g. ice/warm blankets).
- 71.2. Medical support at the Field of Play is recommended to be equipped with a transportable medical bag consisting of:

Diagnostic Equipment

- 71.2.1. Stethoscope, blood pressure monitor with cuff size 10cm (ten centimetres) / 66cm (sixty-six centimetres), pupil lamp, reflex hammer, blood sugar gauge and/or blood sugar test sticks, digital thermometer, pulse oximeter.

Circulation

- 71.2.2. Infusion equipment with administration sets and solution, portable defibrillator with rhythm and patient data recording (AED).

Breathing

- 71.2.3. Portable airway care system, aspirator, suction catheter, a minimum of 400L (four hundred litres) of portable oxygen, resuscitator with masks and airway, mouth to mask ventilator with oxygen inlet, larynx mask, intubation equipment, tubes.

Emergency Surgical Equipment

- 71.2.4. Needle holder, forceps, scalpel, scalpel blades, scissors (sharp and tape), nail clippers, syringes (2ml [two millilitres], 5ml [five millilitres], 10ml [ten millilitres]), needles, suture cutters, local anaesthetics (lidocain with and without adrenaline (epinephrine), Steri-strips (1/8inch, 1/4inch), alcohol swabs, sterile dressing pads, dressing strips, tube and dressing gauze and a container for contaminated needles.

Medicaments

- 71.2.5. Oral analgesics/antipyretics, injectable analgesics (not in the list of prohibited substances), NSAIDs/COX2-inhibitors, injectable adrenalin (epinephrine) for anaphylaxis, antibiotics, antacids, antihistamines, anti-asthmatic inhalators (beta-2-agonist, corticosteroid), 50% glucose solution, sedatives, hypnotics, throat lozenges, cough mixture/antitussive medications, creams/ ointment (anti-fungal, antibiotic, corticosteroid, anti-inflammatory), eye and ear antibiotic drops, tetanus toxoid and anti-diarrhoea tablets/liquids.

Equipment

- 71.2.6. Splints, triangular sling bandage, tongue depressors, cotton tip applicators, rigid sports tape, elastic bandage, adhesive tape, adhesive foam, adhesive spray and coolant spray. Vacuum mattress or long spinal board complete with head immobilizer, cervical collar, cervical upper spinal immobilization devices and disposable gloves.

72. Medical Provisions for Extreme Environment Conditions: Heat, Cold and Haze

72.1. The Host Organisation at its own cost, shall set-up the following requirements, in accordance with [Appendix 22](#), in case of extreme environment conditions.

Hot Environment

72.2. Once the decision to introduce cooling breaks has been established, the Host Organisation shall provide the following:

72.2.1. two (2) cooler boxes (one [1] per Participating Team) with adequate quantities of ice during each period of the Match for cooling breaks (e.g. 30th & 75th min.). Participating Teams may use their own cooling items if they so require;

72.2.2. face towels soaked in ice cold water for Participating Players and Match Officials for each cooling break;

72.2.3. additional cold bottled water for Participating Players and Match Officials for each cooling break; and

72.2.4. emergency medical services:

72.2.4.1. heat stroke diagnostic equipment and treatment logistics (rectal temperature thermometer, medications for anti-convulsion, tub and tepid water spray, etc.); and

72.2.4.2. a medical team conversant with treatment of heat related injuries.

Cold Environment

72.3. The Host Organisation shall provide the following in the event the environment is cold:

72.3.1. trained team of emergency medical personnel (familiar with treatment of cold related injuries) to treat hypothermia with passive and active re-warming, frost bite (extremely rare); and

72.3.2. medical supplies and equipment for treatment for hypothermia; exercise induced-asthma (EIA); hypoglycaemia, etc.

Haze

72.4. The Host Organisation shall provide the following in the event there is haze and/or air pollution:

72.4.1. an emergency medical team trained in such emergencies, including if possible access to a respiratory physician (an expert in dealing with such emergencies);

72.4.2. additional medical personnel; and

72.4.3. adequate medical supplies and equipment.

73. Head Concussion

- 73.1. A Participating Player who experiences a suspected concussion during a Match must undergo an examination by the team doctor in accordance with the protocols established by the AFC Medical Committee and/or documented in the FIFA Football Emergency Medicine Manual. The referee may temporarily suspend play up to three (3) minutes whenever an incident of suspected concussion occurs. The referee may only allow the injured Participating Player to continue playing with the authorisation of the team doctor, who will have the final decision.
- 73.2. The team doctor may call-upon the Host Organisation medical personnel on the pitch and/or the AFC Medical Officer to assist on the assessment and management (if deemed necessary).
- 73.3. The AFC recommends that Participating Teams follow the return to play protocol set out in the Sport Concussion Assessment Tool 5 (SCAT5) for any player who has suffered a concussion. SCAT5 recognises that the time frame for return to play may vary, including based on the player's age and history, and that doctors must use their clinical judgment in making decisions with respect to return to play.

74. Official Training Sites

- 74.1. Official Training Sites must be equipped with basic emergency medical equipment, massage tables and supply of ice, and staffed with paramedic/medical personnel. An ambulance must be stationed at each Official Training Site equipped with advance life support equipment such as a defibrillator, oxygen, I/V drip sets, emergency medicaments and trained emergency medical personnel.

75. Accommodation

- 75.1. Medical services and facilities must be set-up at hotels for the Participating Teams and the AFC Delegation.
- 75.2. Host Organisations must provide contact details of the designated doctor(s) that will be on-call twenty-four (24) hours for the duration of the Match and/or Competition.

76. Hospital

- 76.1. One (1) to two (2) hospitals per Stadium shall be identified to provide, as a minimum, twenty-four (24) hour accident and emergency department services, including without limitation the ability to manage major trauma.
- 76.2. All designated hospitals must be located within the proximity of a Stadium and Accommodation as to minimise any response time for emergency incidents and/or the transfer of a patient to hospital.
- 76.3. The transfer by road of any officially-escorted medical emergency vehicle should not exceed fifteen (15) minutes, and in the event that this cannot be guaranteed due to logistical, geographical or other challenges, helicopter evacuation and transfer should be comprehensively catered for.

- 76.4. Hospitals and emergency departments selected by Host Organisations are subject to approval by the AFC.

77. Spectators

- 77.1. The following emergency medical response(s) must be readily available to cater for spectators in Stadiums:
- 77.1.1. fixed medical post to which any non-emergency or self-referring emergency patient can report and which must be adequately signposted from one (1) hour before the gates are opened to the public and thirty (30) minutes after the Match. This facility should preferably be a permanently designated medical room but logistically can undertake a form of a mobile post (e.g. ambulance or mobile medical staff);
 - 77.1.2. adequate mobile personnel with equipment that can speedily move to any part of a Stadium. Personnel who are on duty and involved must be clearly identifiable by spectators;
 - 77.1.3. a "crowd doctor", qualified and experienced in pre-hospital immediate care, should be available for all spectator volumes in excess of two thousand (2,000) persons; and
 - 77.1.4. the presence of suitably trained first aiders at the ratio of one (1) first aider per one thousand (1,000) supporters (1:1,000), and thereafter one (1) first aider per two thousand (2,000) supporters (1:2,000) in an all-seating Stadium. If, however, seating and standing accommodation is present the ratio shall increase.
- 77.2. The following logistical requirements for medical services are recommended:

Medical Service	Spectators	Minimum Number Required
Ambulance with a minimum of 2 staff each	Up to 15,000	2 on site
	15,000 - 25,000	3 on site + 1 off site*
	25,000 or more	4 on site + 2 off site*
Fixed Medical Post with a minimum of 2 BLS staff each	Up to 15,000	2
	15,000 - 25,000	3
	25,000 - 50,000	4
	50,000 or more	6

Mobile Medical Teams** with a minimum of 2 BLS staff each	Up to 15,000	4
	15,000 - 25,000	8
	25,000 - 50,000	16
	50,000 or more	20
Advanced Life Support (EM doctor, EM nurse, paramedic)	Up to 15,000	1
	15,000 - 25,000	2
	25,000 - 50,000	3
	50,000 - 75,000	4

(BLS: Basic Life Support, EM: Emergency-Medicine Trained)

* Off Site: The ambulance(s) must be designated before the event and should be in close proximity to the Stadium. They should report to the rendezvous point and the staff should be fully briefed on their role at the event, should they be called to assist.

** Mobile Medical Teams: The number and designation of these teams will depend on the structure of the Stadium (number of levels, spectators, movement limitation measures, etc.) and the accreditation limitations of the event.

78. Communication

- 78.1. Key medical personnel should have various forms of functioning electrical communication devices to communicate with officials, staff and any relevant external parties inside and outside the Stadium.
- 78.2. The various forms of communications that may be available inside a Stadium, include portable two-way radio, cellular mobile phones, portable pager message devices, etc.
- 78.3. Host Organisations shall ensure that a written plan is available on all forms of communication that will exist in the event of emergencies.

79. Accreditation of Foreign Medical Personnel

- 79.1. Each Host Organisation shall provide the AFC with information on the guidelines and procedures issued by the local authorities regarding the accreditation of foreign medical personnel (e.g. temporary registration to practice medicine, approval of medicines, notification of scheduled substances and medical devices to be utilised).

80. Anti-Doping

- 80.1. Doping control may be carried out in accordance with the latest AFC Anti-Doping Regulations.
- 80.2. Every Participating Player may be subjected to in-competition testing and out-of-competition testing in accordance with the AFC Anti-Doping Regulations.
- 80.3. The doping control officer is responsible for the implementation of doping control in all Matches. The Host Organisation shall appoint a local doping control officer (who must be a Medical Doctor) to provide assistance in doping control matters.
- 80.4. Host Organisations shall ensure that all Stadiums and Official Training Sites have the required doping control facilities. It is recommended that the doping control room be within the vicinity of both team dressing rooms. The waiting and sampling area must be air-conditioned, well ventilated, brightly lit and with easy washable and non-slippery floors.
- 80.5. The Doping Control Room requirements are as follows:

Waiting Area

- 80.5.1. a minimum space of 16m² (sixteen square metres);
- 80.5.2. seating to accommodate eight (8) to ten (10) persons;
- 80.5.3. one (1) refrigerator equipped with sufficient unopened drinks in plastic bottles or glass (no soft drinks or alcoholic drinks);
- 80.5.4. one (1) television **with live feed of the Match**; and
- 80.5.5. one (1) wastepaper bin for bottles.

Sampling Area

- 80.5.6. a minimum space of 16m² (sixteen square metres);
- 80.5.7. one (1) cleaned desk (e.g. covered with white linen cloth) with four (4) chairs;
- 80.5.8. one (1) lockable cabinet;
- 80.5.9. two (2) large wastepaper bins; and
- 80.5.10. one (1) desk for doping control equipment.

Sanitary Facilities (adjacent or next to the Sampling Area with private access)

- 80.5.11. an examination couch for the Participating Player to lie down on if blood sampling is to be undertaken at the tournament;
- 80.5.12. one (1) toilet and toilet paper;
- 80.5.13. one (1) washbasin and mirror;

- 80.5.14. one (1) shower with sufficient towels and soap/shampoo; and
- 80.5.15. one (1) wastepaper bin.
- 80.6. The AFC shall supply doping control kits, all necessary forms and doping control vests.
- 80.7. Urine and blood samples will be screened for prohibited substances by the accredited World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) laboratory. Upon the completion of each doping control, samples will be immediately transported by official courier (express delivery) to the accredited WADA laboratory. The Host Organisation shall ensure the arrangements with the local courier. All costs of couriating samples shall be borne by the AFC.
- 80.8. In the event of any discrepancy between this Manual and the AFC Anti-Doping Regulations, the AFC Anti-Doping Regulations shall prevail.

81. Working Seats for Medical Officers and Doping Stewards

- 81.1. Permanent seats at the VVIP/VIP tribune must be allocated for the AFC Medical Officer and Host Organisation medical officer. The seats must be next to an aisle for quick access to the VVIP/VIP tribune and Field of Play.
- 81.2. Five (5) permanent seats must be allocated for doping control officers and four (4) doping control stewards, preferably in the first row of the tribune.

82. Obligations for Medical Treatment

- 82.1. Each Host Organisation is responsible for the costs of the following medical treatments for each Participating Team from the arrival of their Team Official Delegation on its territory (as approved in writing by the AFC) until one (1) day after their final Match:
 - 82.1.1. out-patient treatment (non-admission to hospital);
 - 82.1.2. minor surgeries (e.g. suturing);
 - 82.1.3. radiological investigations (x-rays); and
 - 82.1.4. emergency treatment.
- 82.2. Each Host Organisation is responsible for the costs of the medical treatments set out above for all members of the AFC Delegation from their arrival on its territory until their departure.
- 82.3. Each Participating Team is responsible for the costs of the following medical treatments for all members of its Team Official Delegation:
 - 82.3.1. hospitalisation (admission to hospital);
 - 82.3.2. surgical operations not provided for in Article 82.1; and
 - 82.3.3. specialised investigative procedures (e.g. MRI, CT-Scan).

83. Identifiable Uniforms

- 83.1. Medical and doping control personnel must wear an identifiable uniform which provides easy recognition by the AFC Delegation, Team Official Delegations, spectators, and Media.
- 83.2. The AFC shall provide bibs for on-pitch medical staff and doping control stewards. The Host Organisation shall provide an identifiable uniform for all other medical and doping control personnel.

SECTION 12 | AWARDS

84. Competition Trophy

- 84.1. For all Competitions, the original Competition trophy shall be presented to the Champion during the prize presentation ceremony only. The Champion shall be awarded a replica by the AFC after the ceremony for its permanent possession.
- 84.2. The replica trophy awarded to the Champion must remain within its control at all times and must not leave the region or territory of its Member Association without the prior written consent of the AFC. 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 may issue additional trophy guidelines, which the Champion must comply with from time to time.

85. Awards

- 85.1. The Player of the Match is awarded to a Participating Player who has a major influence in an individual Match.
- 85.2. The Most Valuable Player of the Competition is awarded to the Participating Player who has a major influence in each of their Matches and the Final Competition overall.
- 85.3. The Top Goal Scorer is awarded to the Participating Player who has scored the highest number of goals in the Final Competition. In the event of a tie, the number of assists as determined by the AFC Technical Study Group will be taken into account to identify the winner. If there is still a tie, the total minutes played will be taken into account with the Participating Player with the lower number of minutes played ranked higher.
- 85.4. The Best Goalkeeper (if applicable) is awarded to the most outstanding goalkeeper based on his performance in the Final Competition.
- 85.5. The AFC Fair Play Award is awarded to the Participating Team who has collected the most fair play points, as assessed by the AFC, in the Final Competition. A Participating Team may be disqualified if it or any of its Team Official Delegation is involved in any severe misconduct related to the Competition.
- 85.6. The AFC may decide to introduce further awards.

86. Medals

- 86.1. The AFC shall award medals to the;
 - 86.1.1. Champion;
 - 86.1.2. runner-up;

86.1.3. third place (if applicable); and

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

87. Prize Presentation Ceremony

- 87.1. A prize presentation ceremony, managed and controlled by the AFC in coordination with the Host Organisation and AFC Commercial Rights Partner, shall be held immediately after the final Match of a Competition to present the trophy, awards, and medals.
- 87.2. The Participating Players and Participating Teams that qualify to receive the trophy, awards and medals are required to attend the prize presentation ceremony. Participating Teams shall be represented by their Team Official Delegation for the final Match of the Competition. No other officials, players, or staff of the Participating Team may participate in the prize presentation ceremony.

SECTION 13 | CLOSING PROVISIONS

88. Taxes and Duties

- 88.1. Host Organisations and Participating Teams are responsible for the payment of all taxes, duties, and other charges payable in relation to the implementation of any matter set out in the Manual.

89. Fees and Expenses

- 89.1. Host Organisations and Participating Teams are responsible for the payment of all fees and expenses in relation to the implementation of this Manual, except where expressly identified otherwise in the relevant regulations or a specific agreement.
- 89.2. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes all professional (legal, accounting, etc.), banking, and monetary exchange costs.

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

90. Indemnification

- 90.1. Host Organisations, Member Associations, Participating Teams, Participating Players, and Participating Officials shall indemnify, hold harmless and defend the AFC, the AFC Commercial Rights Partner, the 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 attorneys' fees and expenses) which such parties may suffer or incur in connection with, resulting from, or arising out of any breach that party (including its officers, directors, representatives, auxiliary persons, employees or agents) or any act or omission by that party (including its officers, directors, representatives, auxiliary persons, employees or agents) in connection with the performance of its obligations pursuant to this Manual.

91. Disciplinary Measures

- 91.1. All disciplinary measures in relation to this Manual shall be undertaken in accordance with the current AFC Statutes, AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code, the relevant Competition regulations and any relevant AFC circular.

92. Decisions

- 92.1. All decisions made in accordance with this Manual, except where expressly identified otherwise, are final and binding and not appealable in accordance with the AFC Statutes.

93. Amendments

- 93.1. The AFC General Secretariat reserves the right to make amendments to any part of this Manual for any reason whatsoever. Such amendments shall be duly communicated in due course.

94. Force Majeure

- 94.1. The AFC Competitions Committee is the only body capable of declaring a Force Majeure event pursuant to this Manual.

95. Matters Not Provided For

- 95.1. Matters not provided for in this Manual or relevant Competition regulations shall be decided by the relevant AFC Committee. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.

96. Implementing Provisions

- 96.1. The AFC General Secretariat is entrusted with the operational management of the Competitions and is therefore entitled to make decisions and adopt the detailed provisions necessary for implementing this Manual.

97. Enforcement

- 97.1. The First Edition of this Manual (Edition 2016) was ratified by the AFC Executive Committee on 1 June 2016 and came into force immediately.
- 97.2. The Second Edition of this Manual (Edition 2017 | Version 1) was amended by the AFC General Secretariat on 17 November 2016 and came into force on 1 January 2017.
- 97.3. The Third Edition of this Manual (Edition 2017 | Version 2) was amended by the AFC General Secretariat on 1 June 2017 and came into force on 1 July 2017.
- 97.4. The Fourth Edition of this Manual (Edition 2018) was amended by the AFC General Secretariat on 1 March 2018 and came into force on 1 April 2018.
- 97.5. The Fifth Edition of this Manual (Edition 2019) was amended by the AFC General Secretariat on 2 December 2018 and came into force on 1 January 2019.
- 97.6. The Sixth Edition of this Manual (Edition 2019 | Version 2) was amended by the AFC General Secretariat on 1 July 2019 and came into force on 1 August 2019.
- 97.7. The Seventh Edition of this Manual (Edition 2021) was amended by the AFC General Secretariat on 12 January 2021 and came into force on 1 February 2021.
- 97.8. The Eighth Edition of this Manual (Edition 2023) was amended by the AFC General Secretariat on 1 March 2023 and came into force on 3 July 2023.

APPENDIX 1 | RANKING IN A GROUP BASED ON YELLOW AND RED CARDS

1. Each Participating Team shall obtain points for receiving red and/or yellow cards as indicated below:
 - 1.1. per yellow card: one (1) point;
 - 1.2. per indirect red card (as a consequence of two yellow cards): three (3) points;
 - 1.3. per direct red card: three (3) points; and
 - 1.4. per yellow card followed by a red card (direct): four (4) points.

For the avoidance of doubt, only one of the above points shall be applied to a Participating Player in each Match.
2. The Participating Team receiving the least number of points shall be ranked highest. The remaining Participating Teams shall be ranked in descending order.

APPENDIX 2 | BEST-RANKED TEAM FROM DIFFERENT GROUPS AND OVERALL COMPETITION RANKING

While determining the best-ranked Participating Teams among different groups, the following principles shall be applied:

- 1.1. Should all groups consist of the same number of Participating Teams, the best-ranked Participating Team from among different groups shall be determined in descending order as follows:
 - 1.1.1. higher number of points obtained in all group Matches;
 - 1.1.2. superior goal difference from all group Matches;
 - 1.1.3. higher number of goals scored from all group Matches;
 - 1.1.4. the lower score calculated according to the number of yellow and red cards received in the group Matches in accordance with [Appendix 1](#); or
 - 1.1.5. drawing of lots.

Case 1: Should the best second-placed Participating Team be required to be identified among the following groups:

Group A

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
Team A	3	2	1	0	3	0	3	7
Team B	3	2	0	1	6	3	3	6
Team C	3	0	2	1	0	3	-3	2
Team D	3	0	1	2	2	5	-3	1

Group B

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
Team E	3	3	0	0	4	0	4	9
Team F	3	2	0	1	5	3	2	6
Team G	3	1	0	2	4	4	0	3
Team H	3	0	0	3	1	7	-6	0

- (i) Team B and Team F are the second-placed Participating Teams from each group.
- (ii) Both teams have six (6) points, therefore, criteria 1.1.1 does not determine the best second-placed Participating Team. Team B has a goal difference of +3 whereas Team F has a goal difference of +2. Applying criteria 1.1.2, Team B is ranked as the best second-placed Participating Team.

- 1.2. Should the groups consist of different numbers of Participating Teams, the Participating Teams in each group will have played a different number of Matches in total. In order to ensure equality, all Participating Teams shall be compared across the same number of Matches, the number of which shall be decided by the AFC. In principle, the results between the relevant Participating Teams and the bottom-placed Participating Team in the relevant group shall be considered null and void. In such cases, the best-ranked Participating Team from among different groups shall be determined in descending order as follows:
 - 1.2.1. higher number of points obtained in Matches identified by the AFC;
 - 1.2.2. superior goal difference from the Matches identified by the AFC;
 - 1.2.3. higher number of goals scored from the Matches identified by the AFC;
 - 1.2.4. the lower score calculated according to the number of yellow and red cards received in the group Matches in Matches identified by the AFC in accordance with [Appendix 1](#); or
 - 1.2.5. drawing of lots.

Case 2: Should the best second-placed Participating Team be required to be identified among the following groups:

Group A

<i>Team</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>GF</i>	<i>GA</i>	<i>GD</i>	<i>Pts</i>
<i>Team A</i>	3	2	1	0	3	0	3	7
<i>Team B</i>	3	2	0	1	6	3	3	6
<i>Team C</i>	3	0	2	1	0	3	-3	2
<i>Team D</i>	3	0	1	2	2	5	-3	1

Group B

<i>Team</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>GF</i>	<i>GA</i>	<i>GD</i>	<i>Pts</i>
<i>Team E</i>	4	3	1	0	14	1	13	10
<i>Team F</i>	4	3	0	1	5	2	3	9
<i>Team G</i>	4	1	2	1	5	5	0	5
<i>Team H</i>	4	0	2	2	2	9	-7	2
<i>Team I</i>	4	0	1	3	2	11	-9	1

- (i) *Team B and Team F are the second-placed Participating Teams from each group.*
- (ii) *Groups A and B have played a different number of matches. In order to identify the best second-placed Participating Team, the number of matches shall be equalised.*

- (iii) The number of matches to be identified shall be equal to that played in Group A (i.e. the group with the lower number of matches per Participating Team). Accordingly, the number of matches played in Group B shall be reduced to three (3) matches per Participating Team. In principle, the match between Team F and Team I, who is the bottom-placed Participating Team in the group, will be considered null and void.
- (iv) Assuming Team F won the match against Team I 3-0, we will have a new calculation for Team F:

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
Team F	3	2	0	1	2	2	0	6

- (v) After applying criteria 1.2.1, both Team B and Team F are equal, having accrued six (6) points. Team B has a goal difference of +3 and Team F has a goal difference of 0, and after applying criteria 1.2.2, Team B is identified as the best second-placed Participating Team.

Note: In operating the procedure set out in 1.2, the points or rankings of the other Participating Teams in the same group shall not be affected. Any new calculation is solely for the purpose of determining the best-placed Participating Team among the groups.

After each National Team Competition, AFC will produce an overall Competition ranking based on the following criteria:

1.3. Determination of ranking positions for Participating Teams involved in the knockout stage of a Final Competition

Team's ranking	Comments
1	The champion of the Competition shall be ranked one (1)
2	The runner-up of the Competition shall be ranked two (2)
3 - 4	<p>If there is a 3rd/4th place playoff, the winner shall be ranked three (3) and the loser shall be ranked four (4).</p> <p>If there is no 3rd/4th place playoff, only the losers of the semi finals are entitled to be considered for ranking positions three (3) and four (4). In such cases, the Participating Teams ranked three (3) and four (4) shall be determined in descending order as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) superior goal difference in the semi finals; (ii) higher number of goals scored in the semi finals; (iii) superior goal difference in the quarter finals (if applicable); (iv) higher number of goals scored in the quarter finals (if applicable); (v) superior goal difference in the round of 16 (if applicable); (vi) higher number of goals scored in the round of 16 (if applicable); or (vii) procedure as per 1.1 or 1.2 (as applicable).
5 to 8	<p>If there are quarter finals, only the losers of the quarter finals are entitled to be considered for ranking positions five (5) to eight (8). In such cases, the Participating Teams ranked five (5) to eight (8) shall be determined in descending order as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) superior goal difference in the quarter finals; (ii) higher number of goals scored in the quarter finals; (iii) superior goal difference in the round of 16 (if applicable); (iv) higher number of goals scored in the round of 16 (if applicable); or (v) procedure as per 1.1 or 1.2 (as applicable).

9 to 16

9 to 16 If there is a round of 16, only the losers of the round of 16 Matches are entitled to be considered for ranking positions nine (9) to sixteen (16). In such cases, the Participating Teams ranked nine (9) to sixteen (16) shall be determined in descending order as follows:

- (i) superior goal difference in the round of 16;
- (ii) higher number of goals scored in the round of 16; or
- (iii) procedure as per 1.1 or 1.2 (as applicable).

- 1.4. Determination of ranking positions for Participating Teams that get knocked out at the end of the Preliminary Competition (Qualifiers) or group stage of the Final Competition shall be in accordance with 1.1 or 1.2 (as applicable).

Note: as a general principle, a Participating Team that finished lower in one group cannot be ranked higher than a Participating Team that finished higher in that group or any other group. For example, a Participating Team that finished third (3rd) in one group can only be compared to other Participating Teams that finished third (3rd) in other groups.

Participating Teams that do not qualify for the knockout stage cannot be ranked higher than Participating Teams that have qualified. Similarly, Participating Teams that do not qualify for the group stage of the Final Competition cannot be ranked higher than Participating Teams that have qualified.

If Playoff Matches are played to determine qualification slots for international competitions, then such Playoff Matches shall not be considered for the overall Competition ranking

APPENDIX 3 | OFFICIAL COUNTDOWN

Standard Countdown

Countdown	Activity
-05h	Arrival of AFC Match Commissioner, AFC Media Officer and other AFC officials
-04h 45'	Final Stadium Inspection
-04h 30'	AFC/Host Organisation Venue Meeting
-04h	Final rehearsal for pre-match ceremony & infotainment
-03h	All Security must be at designated positions and briefing with Chief of Security
-02h	Enforcement of Access Control (SAD)
-02h	Arrival of Referees
-02h	Opening of Stadium to spectators
-01h 30'	Latest Teams arrival
-01h 20'	Match Start List produced and distributed to Teams, Media, Broadcaster, Announcer, Match Officials, VIP and Host Organisation
-01h 15'	Team A - AD Card and Equipment check by MC and Match Official
-01h 10'	Team B - AD Card and Equipment check by MC and Match Official
-50'	Warm-up of Goalkeepers and Outfield Players
-30'	Announcement of Team list & Match Officials by Announcer
-20'	Warm-up sessions ends. Teams return to respective dressing room
	All flagbearers and flags are ready in the tunnel
-15'	Media Officer and Photo Marshal to secure photographers at the Technical Area
-10'	Substitute Players and Officials to be on the Bench
	All Starting Players and Match Officials to be in the tunnel
-9'	Referees check on starting players list and player's equipment in the tunnel
	Flagbearers enter with national flag of Team A and followed by national flag of Team B (for National Team Competitions)
-8'	Flagbearers enter with the AFC and campaign flags, Match Officials and teams
-7'	Start of ceremony including team lining up in front of VIP Tribune, VIP handshake (if applicable), National Anthem (for National Team Competitions), teams handshake, teams photo, coin toss and exchange of pennants
-0'	Kick-off

If there is any VIP handshake, 2 minutes to be added to the above countdown.

Note: The above countdown is a standard template. The official countdown for each Match shall be produced by the AFC Match Commissioner.

APPENDIX 4 | AFC POLICY ON NEUTRAL VENUE MATCHES

1. Host Organisations that are required to play in neutral venues shall submit the following to the AFC within the stipulated deadlines:
 - 1.1. The nominated venues with the names of the proposed Stadium, Official Training Sites and Accommodation.
 - 1.2. All supporting documents related to Match operations including **security guarantees, safety and security plans (if required)** by the Member Association on whose territory the Match is played and their respective public authorities.
2. Failure to submit the above documents by the stipulated deadlines would result in the relevant Host Organisation losing the hosting rights of the Match in question. In such cases:
 - 2.1. The Match shall be automatically awarded to be played in the Venue of the respective opponent Participating Team.
 - 2.2. Regardless of the above, the order of the Match shall be maintained with the host team to be considered as "Team B" in order to ensure the sporting factor.
3. For the avoidance of doubt, with regard to any Match played at a neutral venue, the designated Host Organisation for the Match shall be responsible for:
 - 3.1. all arrangements for the staging of the Match at the neutral venue; and
 - 3.2. all costs and expenses relating to the staging of the Match at the neutral venue,in accordance with the relevant Competition regulations, this Manual and any instructions issued by the AFC.

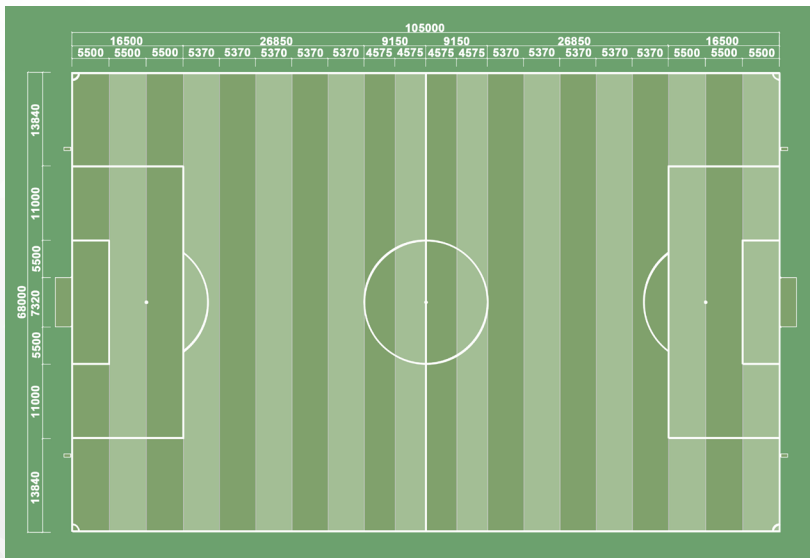
APPENDIX 5 | FOOTBALL PITCH PREPARATION GUIDELINES

Pitch Surface

- Matches shall be played on natural, artificial or hybrid surfaces, in accordance with the requirements set out by the AFC.
- The colour of artificial surfaces must be green.
- Where artificial surfaces are used in either competition matches between representative teams of member associations affiliated to FIFA or international club competition matches, the surface must meet the requirements of the FIFA Quality Programme for Football Turf or the International Match Standard, unless special dispensation is given by FIFA.

Grass Cutting Pattern

To enable the activity of assistant referees, the grass cutting pattern shall be as below (in millimetre).



Grass Height and Watering Procedure

- Grass height shall be, in principle, between 20 and 30mm depending on the type of grass and climate. The entire playing surface must be cut to the same height. The height should be the same for the training sessions and the Match.

- The pitch shall be watered evenly and not only in certain areas for players' safety. The decision of pitch watering shall be made by the AFC Match Commissioner and/or General Coordinator based on the following:

Time/Schedule	Decision by
1 hour before first Official Training and before the second Official Training if necessary	AFC Match Commissioner / General Coordinator
Before match = T-3hr and/or T-60m and/or T-20m	
During half-time	
After official training	Stadium management
Morning of Match Day	

** Please ensure sprinkler heads are properly covered after watering.*

Line Marking / Paints

Line marking can be done by spray markers or manual brush. Please make sure proper procedure and caution are made before marking the lines:

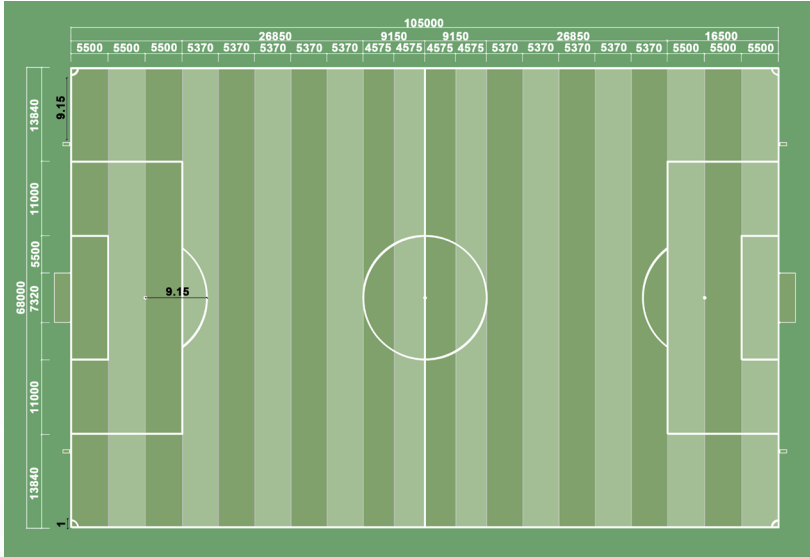
- Check for leaks before starting (do not let paint leaks or spills on the pitch).
- Set out the lines with string; the string must be left in place until the line is dry, otherwise it will transfer paint.
- Lines must be painted at a slow walking speed, consistently and layer by layer; it will take at least 2-3 applications to have the line correct.
- The lines must be allowed to dry for at least three (3) hours before training, warm-ups or other maintenance is carried out.
- A bucket of water and a soft brush/sponge should be used to remove transfer of paint when marking out.
- The paint colour recommended is matt bright white.
- The width of the lines must be same as the width of the goalpost (e.g. 12cm).
- The penalty spot must be 20cm diameter solid spot. The centre circle spot should be 24cm diameter solid spot.
- Lines to be marked latest by MD-2.

Turf Colorant

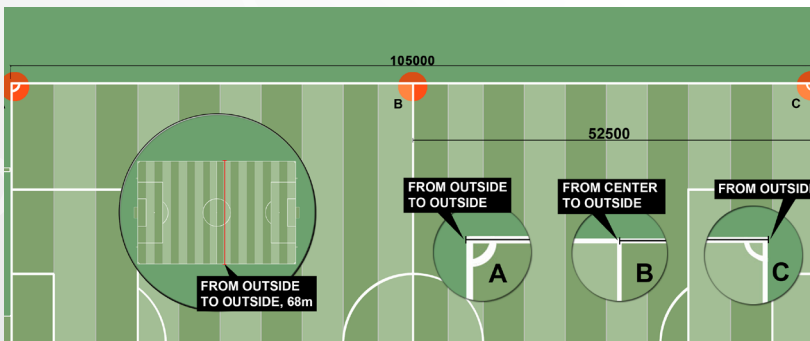
- In the situation where the colour of the pitch is significantly inconsistent due to poor condition, colorant may be used to improve the visual of the pitch.

- The decision to apply paint or turf colorant to a pitch will be recommended if necessary by the consultant and approved by the AFC General Coordinator and/or Match Commissioner. Turf colorants may not be applied without approval.

Pitch Dimensions



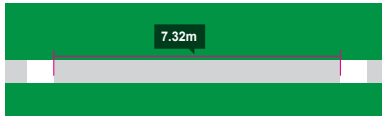
- The pitch size does not need to be 105m x 68m but must be within the size allowed in the Laws of the Game.
- Measurement of pitch size shall be taken between the distance from outside both goal lines and from outside both touchlines.



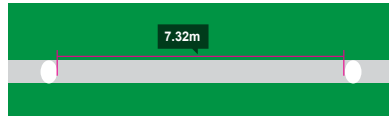
Pitch Markings

- The lines belong to the areas of which they are boundaries.
- All lines must be the same width as the goalpost, which do not exceed 12cm.
- All lines shall be of bright white colour.

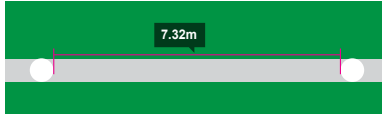
Goalposts is square (viewed from above)



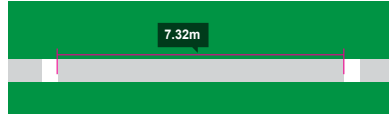
Goalposts is elliptical (viewed from above)



Goalposts is round (viewed from above)

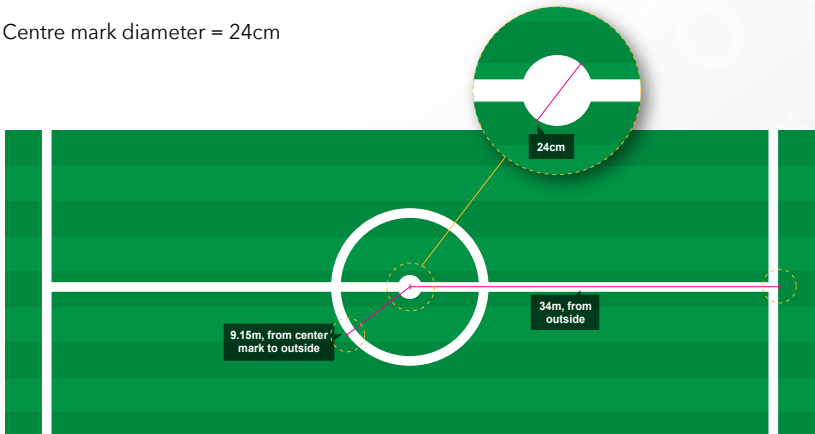


Goalposts is rectangular (viewed from above)

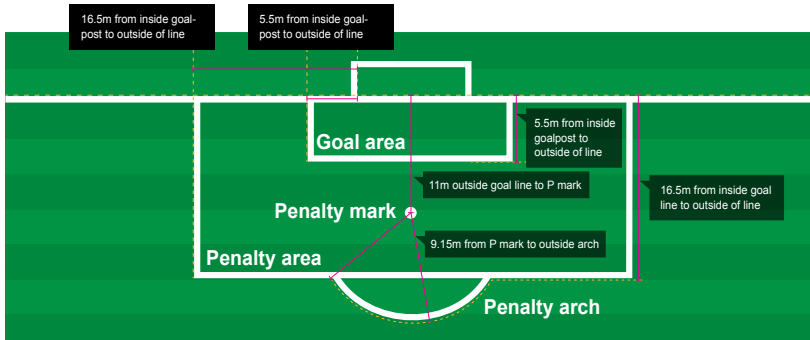


Centre Circle

- Centre mark = 34m, from outside the touchline to the centre mark
- Centre circle radius = 9.15m, from the outside line to the centre mark
- Centre mark diameter = 24cm



- Goal area = 5.5m, from inside of each goalpost to outside each line and 5.5m from outside the goal line to outside the goal area line.
- Penalty area = 16.5m, from inside of each goalpost to outside each line and 16.5m from outside the goal line to outside the penalty area line.
- Penalty mark = 11m from the goal line to the centre of the mark and 20cm in diameter.
- Penalty arch = 9.15m radius from the **centre of the** Penalty mark to the outside line.



Artificial Turf Markings

Where artificial surfaces are used, other lines are permitted provided that they are of a different colour and clearly distinguishable from the lines used for football.



Artificial Turf Stadium before other markings being removed

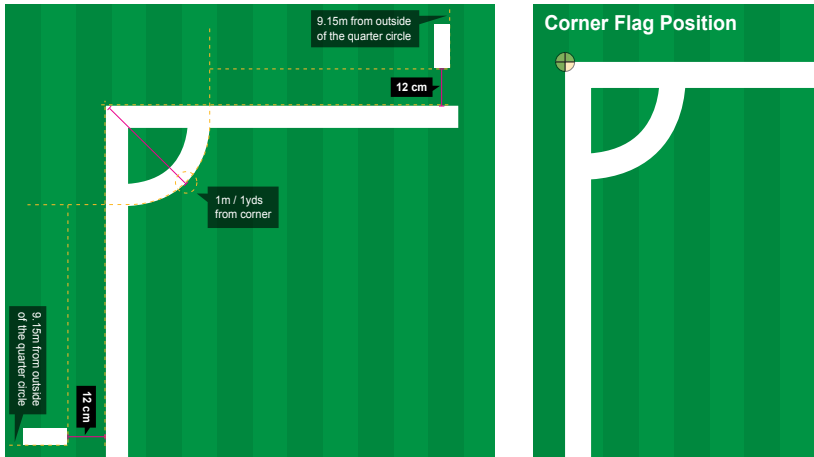


Artificial Turf Stadium AFTER non-football markings are removed

Corner Arc / Flag Post

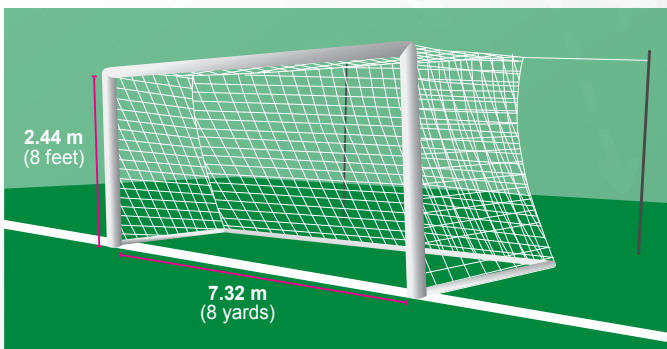
- **Eight (8) marks (two [2] at each corner)** may be made off the field (optional) = 9.15m from outside of the quarter-circle. The marks shall be 24cm long and separated (12cm) from the goal line/**touchline**.

- A quarter circle with a radius of 1m from each corner flag post is drawn inside the field of play.
- A flag post, not less than 1.5m high, with a non-pointed top and a flag must be placed at each corner.



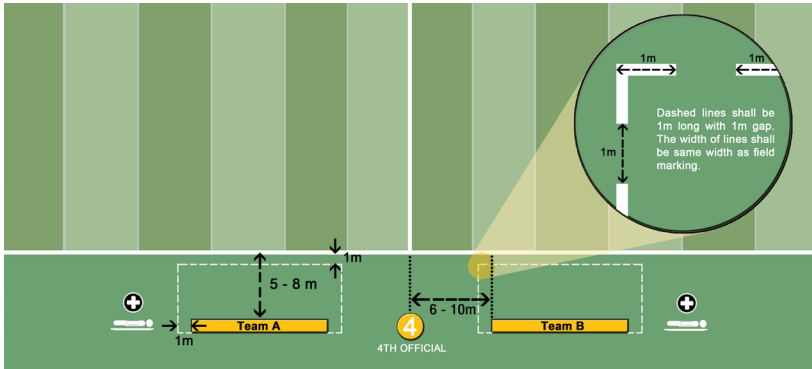
Goals

- A goal must be placed on the centre of each goal line.
- The goalposts and crossbar must be made of approved material and must not be dangerous. **The goalposts and the crossbar of both goals must be the same shape, which must be square, rectangular, round, elliptical or a hybrid of these options.**
- Goals height = 2.44m and width = 7.32m.
- Goal must be white and Sub posts shall be a darker colour, e.g., black or dark grey.
- A net repair kit should be available to repair any holes which develop in the net during the warm-up or during the game.
- The integrity of the net should be checked daily by the ground's manager.

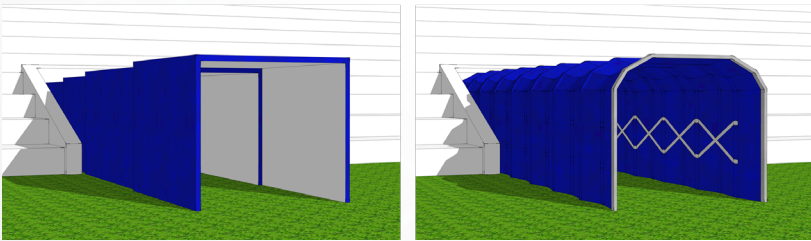


Bench and Technical Area

- Distance from the Team Bench to halfway line = 6-10m.
- Distance from the Team Bench to touchline = 5-8 m (or depending on the space available).
- Benches shall not block the view of the VIPs / spectators.
- Number of seats at the Team Bench is as per Competition regulations.



Movable Tunnel



Movable tunnel is recommended for the following:

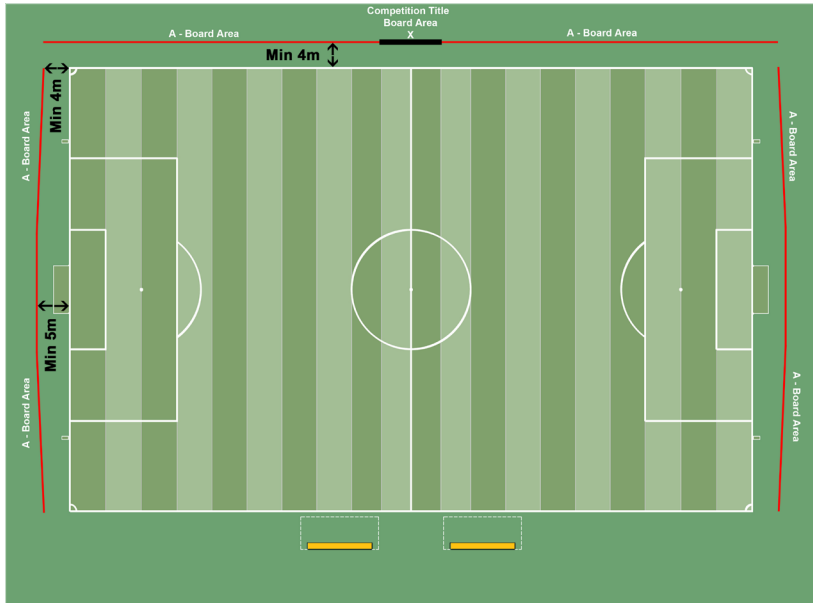
- when normal ticket holders are sitting just above the tunnel area
- very short existing tunnel

Movable tunnel is to be used during the following times:

- pre-match ceremony
- half-time
- after the final whistle

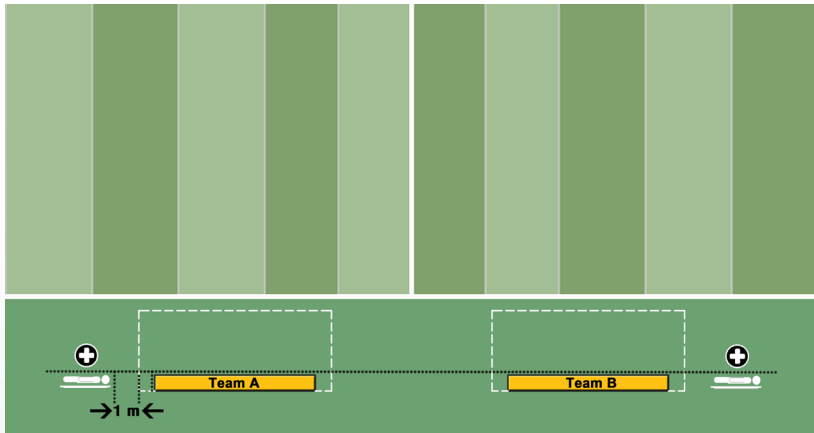
Title and A-Boards

- A-Boards along the touchline shall be placed at least 4m from the touchline for the safety of players. The A-boards behind the goal lines shall be placed at least 4m behind the goal line at all four corners and 5m behind the goal line at all other points.
- The A-boards shall have good base support and shall not pose any danger (e.g., with sharp edges).
- The Competition title board is normally placed at the center.



Stretchers' Position

- The Host Organisation shall prepare at least two (2) sets of four (4) stretcher bearers for the match.
- Stretcher bearers must be above 18 years old, in good physical condition and trained in carrying and transferring injured players.
- Both sets of stretcher bearers shall be located 1m away from both the Technical Areas (as shown below).
- They shall be on the same line as the team benches and 4th Official Bench.



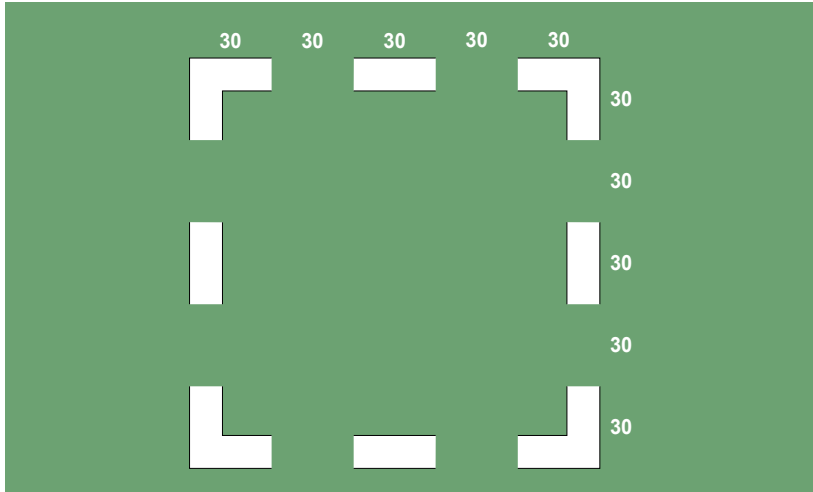
5th Official's Position

- In matches where a 5th Official is appointed, the 5th Official seat will be located at right side of stretcher bearers next to the Team B Bench.

Referee Review Area (RRA)

- In matches using Video Assistant Referee (VAR) technology, RRA is to be safeguarded with the area being boxed off as follows:

(Recommended Size) Dotted lines of 30cm and 2 x 30cm empty spaces on each of the 4 sides to form the box with L painted corners (width of lines to be 12cm).

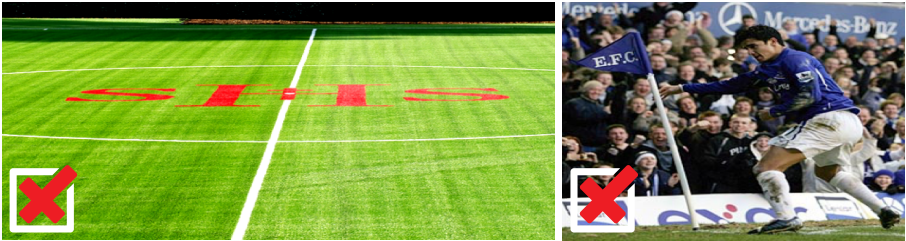


(Reference) The photos below are examples of RRA marking:



Branding on FOP

1. No form of commercial advertising, whether real or virtual, is permitted on the field of play, on the ground within the area enclosed by the goal nets or the technical area, or within 1 m (1 yd) of the touchline from the time the teams enter the field of play until they have left it at half-time and from the time the teams re-enter the field of play until the end of the match. Similarly, advertising is not permitted on the goals, nets, flagposts or their flags and no extraneous equipment (cameras, microphones, etc.) may be attached to these items.
2. The reproduction, whether real or virtual, of representative logos or emblems of FIFA, confederations, member associations, leagues, clubs or other bodies is forbidden on the field of play, the goal nets and the areas they enclose, the goals, the flagposts and their flags during playing time.



Irrigation Heads / Running Track Metal Installation

3. All irrigation system, such as water sprinklers, pumps, drainage and covers, in and surrounding the pitch shall be safe for players and properly covered with suitable material. Covers inside the field of play shall be either natural grass/earth or artificial turf (of the same colour as the grass).



Metal cover too near corner mark



Proper drainage cover



Concealed sprinkler head



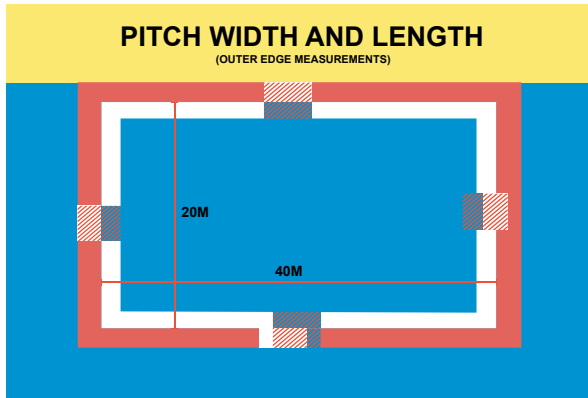
Unsuitable cover in the pitch



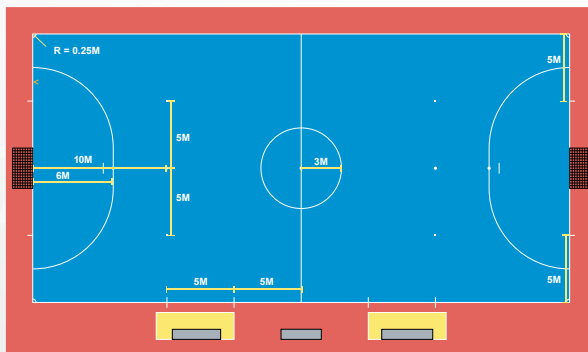
Exposed irrigation head



Metal cover on touchline

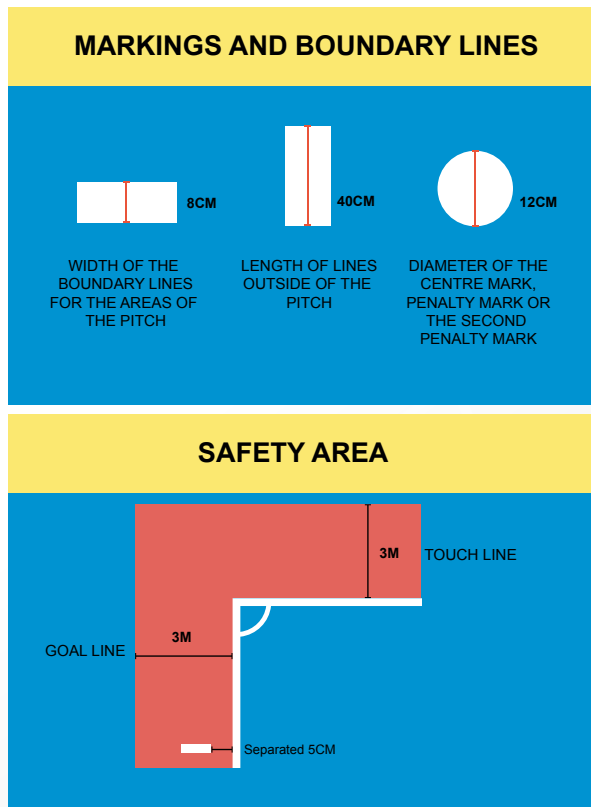
APPENDIX 6 | FUTSAL PITCH MARKING GUIDELINES**Dimensions**

- The pitch size does not need to be 40m x 20m but must be within the size allowed in the Laws of the Game.
- The pitch surface should be flat, smooth and non-abrasive preferably made of wood or artificial material.
- All lines must be 8cm wide.

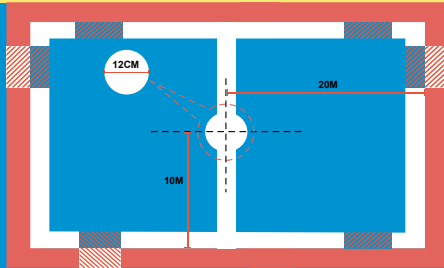
**Pitch Markings**

- The pitch is rectangular and marked with lines. The lines act as boundaries and therefore have to be clearly distinguishable from the colour of the pitch.

- The two longer lines are what we call touch lines, and the two shorter lines are called goal lines. The pitch is divided into two halves by a halfway line, which joins the midpoints of the two touch lines.
- The centre mark is a circle with a 3m radius marked around it. It is positioned in the middle of the halfway line.
- A marking must be drawn on the pitch, 5m from the corner arc and at right angles to the goal line. This is to make sure that defending players retreat this distance when a corner kick is being taken. The width of this mark is 8cm.
- Two additional marks, each at a distance of 5m to the left and the right of the 10m mark, must be made on the pitch to indicate the minimum distance to be retreated when a kick is being taken from the 10m mark. The width of this mark is 8cm.

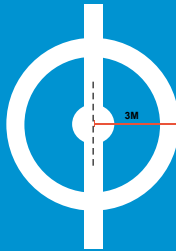


CENTRE OF THE PITCH



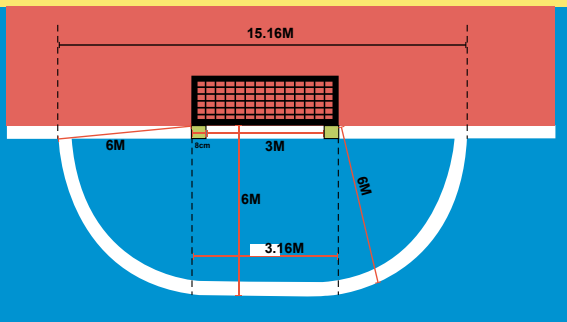
FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE PITCH CENTRE MARK TO THE OUTER EDGE OF THE GOAL LINE AND TOUCH LINE

CENTRE CIRCLE



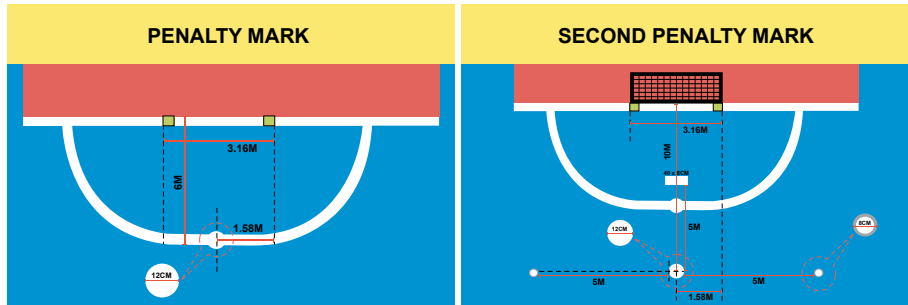
FROM THE CENTRE OF THE HALFWAY LINE TO THE OUTER EDGE OF THE CIRCLE

PENALTY AREA



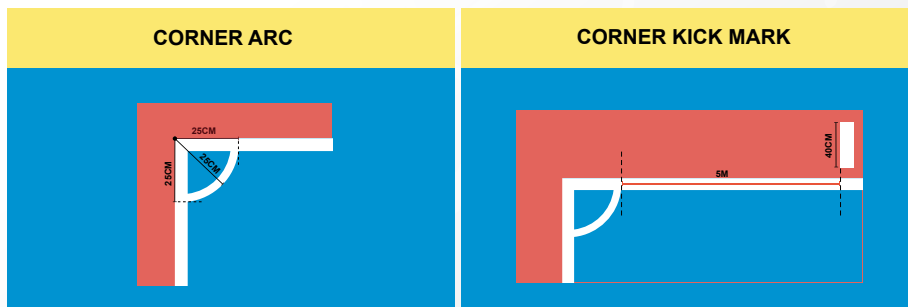
The Penalty Area

- Two imaginary lines of 6m in length are drawn from the outside of each goalpost and at right angles to the goal line. At the end of these lines a quarter circle is drawn in the direction of the nearest touch line, each with a radius of 6m from the outside of the goalpost. The upper part of each quarter circle is joined by a line 3.16m in length running parallel to the goal line between the goalposts. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area.
- Within each penalty area, a penalty mark is made 6m from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them.
- An additional mark (line) must be made in the penalty area, 5m from the 10m mark, to ensure that the defending goalkeepers observe this distance when a direct free kick beginning with the sixth accumulated foul is being taken. This mark is 8cm wide and 40cm long.



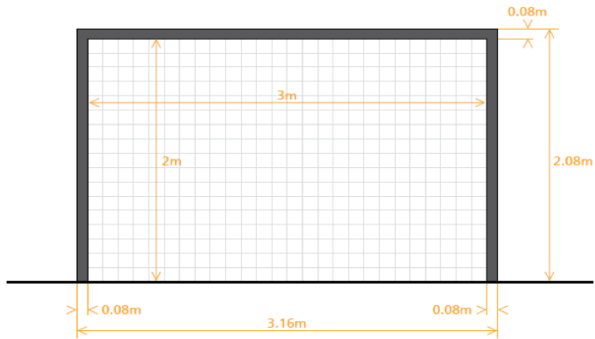
The 10m Mark

- A second mark is made 10m from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them.



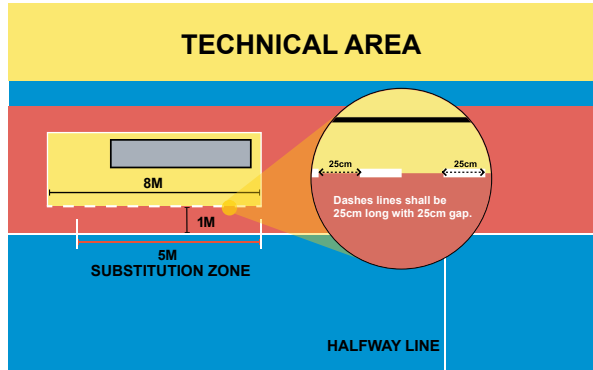
The Corner Arc

- A quarter circle with a radius of 25cm from each corner is drawn inside the pitch.



Goals

- A goal must be placed on the centre of each goal line.
- It consists of two upright posts equidistant from the corners and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The goalposts and crossbar must be made of **an adequate** material. They must be square **(with rounded edges to guarantee the safety of players)** or round in shape and must not be dangerous to players.
- Goals height = 2m and width = 3m
- The distance (inside measurement) between the posts is 3m and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is 2m.
- Both goalposts and the crossbar have the same width and depth (8cm).
- They must be properly supported and must not interfere with the goalkeeper.
- The goalposts and crossbars must be a different colour to the pitch, and the goals must have a stabilising system that prevents them from overturning.

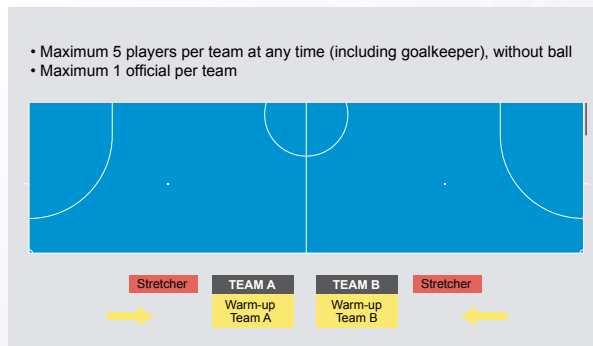


The Substitution Zones

- The substitution zones are the areas on the touch line in front of the team benches.
- They are situated in front of the technical area and are 5m in length. They are marked at each end with a line 80cm in length - 40cm of which is drawn on the pitch and 40cm off the pitch, and 8cm wide.
- The area in front of the timekeeper's table 5m to either side of the halfway line is kept clear.
- A team's substitution zone is situated in the half of the pitch defended by said team and changes in the second half of the match and periods of Extra Time, if any.

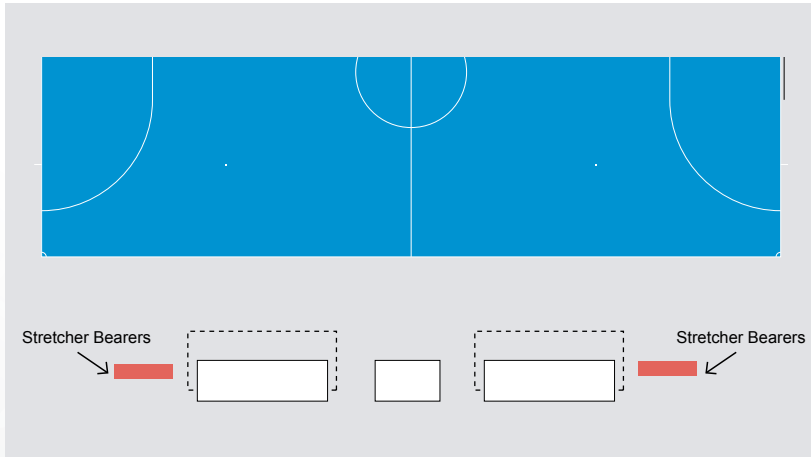
Warm-up Areas

- It is recommended that the warm-up area space is 2m wide x 8m long, following the length of the Team Bench.
- The surface of the warm-up area shall be similar to the playing surface which is preferably wood or artificial material.



Stretcher's Position

- The Host Organisation shall prepare at least two (2) sets of four (4) stretcher bearers for the match.
- Stretcher bearers must be above 18 years old, in good physical condition and trained in carrying and transferring injured players.
- Both set of stretcher bearers shall be located 1m away from both technical areas (as shown below).
- They shall be on the same line as the team benches and timekeeper's table.



APPENDIX 7 | APPROVAL OF ELECTRONIC PERFORMANCE TRACKING SYSTEM (EPTS) DEVICES

In case a Participating Team intends to use any EPTS device, it shall inform the AFC of the type of device that it will be using. All devices shall be inspected by the AFC, which shall make the final decision regarding their use. If there are any concerns, the devices may be presented to the AFC Medical Officer for further inspection.

Independent testing institutes verify the functionality of the products, playing surfaces and technologies in accordance with the respective standard. The institutes conducting these tests are subject to the approval of FIFA. The following quality marks identify those products, playing surfaces and technologies tested and certified to the prevailing requirements:

- FIFA Quality Pro
- FIFA Quality
- FIFA Basic (previously known as International Match Standard [IMS])

Regarding the data collected through such devices, please note the following points:

- The data (including physical, technical and tactical data) collected, or any interpretation of it, may only be used by the respective Participating Team and/or the Participating Player for performance monitoring purposes and by no means for any commercial purpose and/or in association with any third-party.
- The data may not be disclosed to the public for any reason.
- To protect the integrity of, and AFC's rights in, the Competition, AFC may impose further restrictions on the use of the data collected by an approved electronic performance or tracking system device.

In accordance with the AFC Equipment Regulations, the device shall not display the branding of its manufacturer or any third-party.

Participating Teams shall ensure that all members of their Team Official Delegation fully comply with the above requirements. The responsibility for failing to do so will be borne by the respective team.

AFC would like to emphasise that any device worn is at the risk and responsibility of the Participating Player and/or Participating Team concerned.



APPENDIX 8 | EXPULSIONS AND SUSPENSIONS AT COMPETITIONS

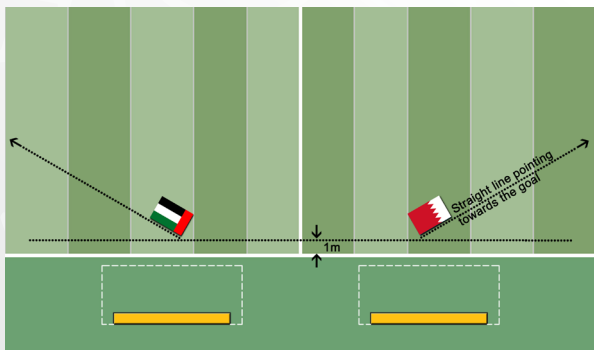
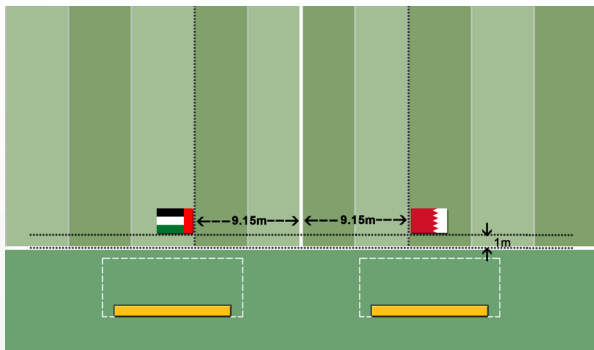
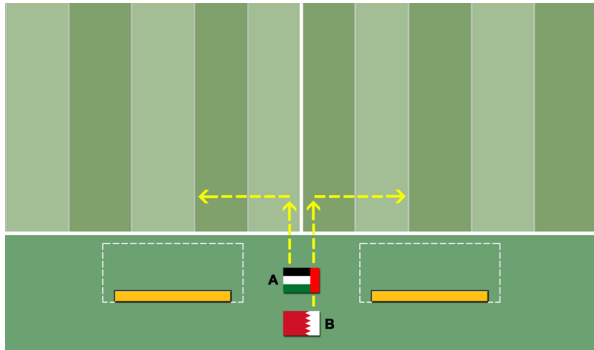
Venue	Player		Official	
	Expulsion	Suspension	Expulsion	Suspension
Field of Play	ordered to leave the Field of Play and its surroundings	banned from the Field of Play and its surroundings	ordered to leave the Field of Play and its surroundings	banned from the Field of Play and its surroundings
Team Bench	ordered to leave the team bench	banned from the team bench	ordered to leave the team bench	banned from the team bench
Technical Area	cannot sit in the technical area	banned from the technical area	cannot sit in the technical area	banned from the technical area
Team Dressing Room	shall stay in either the team dressing room or doping control room accompanied by a chaperon until the names of the players selected for the doping test are communicated	banned from the team dressing room at any time before and during the Match in question (can join after the final whistle)	banned from entering the team dressing rooms at half time if sent off during the first half of the Match	banned from the team dressing room at any time before and during the Match in question (can join after the final whistle)
Stands	allowed to sit in the stands, provided his integrity and security are safeguarded, he is not picked for doping control and is no longer wearing his football equipment	allowed to sit in the stands, but not in the immediate vicinity (e.g. Team Technical Seats) of the Field of Play, provided his integrity and security are safeguarded	allowed to sit in the stands, but not in the immediate vicinity of the Field of Play, provided his integrity and security are safeguarded	allowed to sit in the stands, but not in the immediate vicinity of the Field of Play, provided his integrity and security are safeguarded
Team Bus	allowed to take the team bus	allowed to take the team bus but not allowed to talk to the Media upon arrival or departure	allowed to take the team bus	allowed to take the team bus but not allowed to talk to the Media upon arrival or departure

Venue	Player		Official	
	Expulsion	Suspension	Expulsion	Suspension
Prize Presentation Ceremony	allowed to take part in the prize presentation ceremony	allowed to take part in the prize presentation ceremony	allowed to take part in the prize presentation ceremony	allowed to take part in the prize presentation ceremony
Mixed Zone	not allowed in the mixed zone	banned from the mixed zone	not allowed in the mixed zone	banned from the mixed zone
Press Conferences	not allowed to attend or participate in any Match-related press conference	banned from all Match-related press conferences	not allowed to attend or participate in any Match-related press conference	banned from all Match-related press conferences with the exception of any pre-Match press conference on Match day-1
Official Training	N/A	allowed to attend and participate in official training	N/A	allowed to attend and participate in official training
Media Activities	not allowed to undertake any media activities in the Stadium	not allowed to undertake any media activities in the Stadium	not allowed to undertake any media activities in the Stadium	not allowed to undertake any media activities in the Stadium on Match day
Doping Control Room	eligible for doping control and shall stay accompanied by a chaperone until the names of the players selected for the doping test are communicated	N/A	N/A	N/A
Contact and Communication	not allowed in the VIP tribune	can sit in an area designated by the AFC	shall not communicate with or contact anyone involved in the Match by any means whatsoever	shall not be permitted to communicate with or contact any person involved in the Match by any means whatsoever for the duration of a Match

APPENDIX 9 | MATCH CEREMONIES FOR FOOTBALL

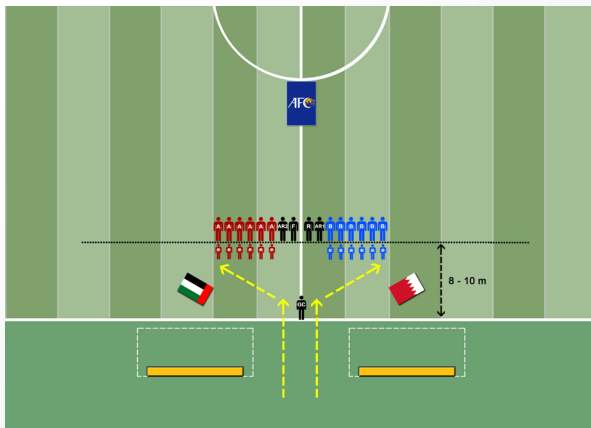
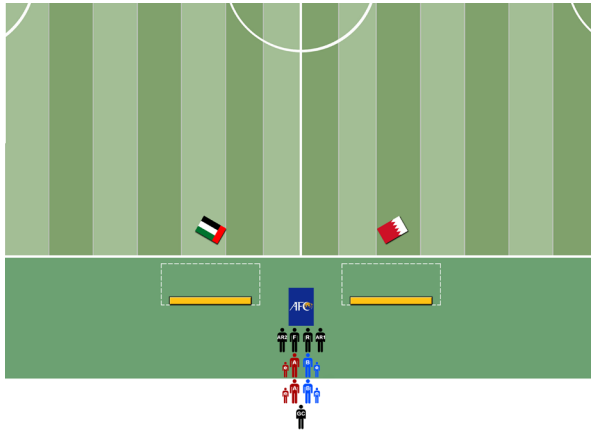
1. Entry of national flags (only applicable for National Team Competitions):

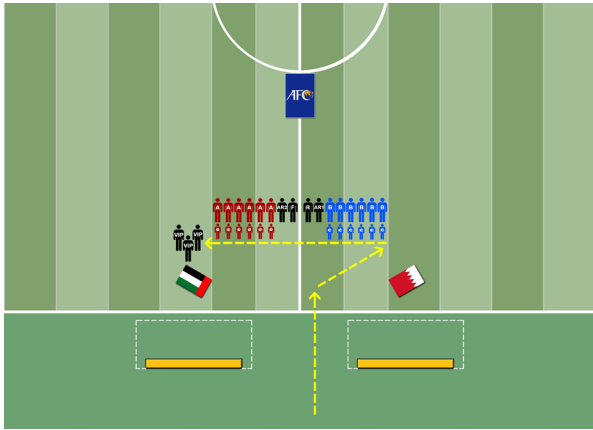
- Team A's National Flag will march onto the field first, followed by Team B's National Flag.



2. Entry of Participating Teams with AFC Flag:

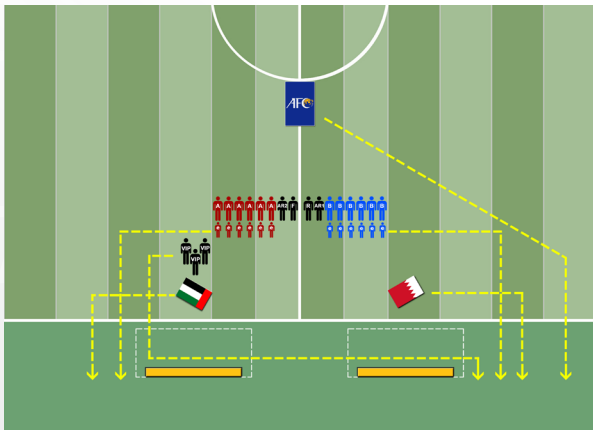
- After National Flags are in Position (if applicable), following the AFC Anthem, the AFC Flag shall enter the pitch (six [6] flag bearers are required for each flag)
- Followed by Referee (R), Assistant Referees (AR1) & (AR2) + 4th Officials (F)
- Followed by Participating Teams (A) & (B) led by team captains with player escorts (if applicable)
- **Followed by:**
 - **In centralised matches: AFC General Coordinator (GC) or Local General Coordinator (if no GC is appointed)**
 - **In home and away matches: Local General Coordinator**





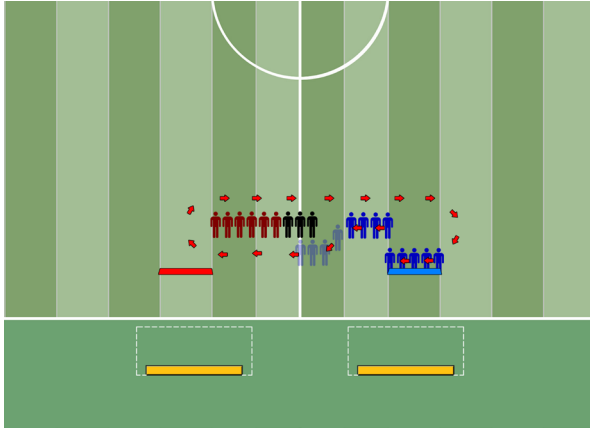
3. VIP handshake procedure (if applicable):

- During the VIP announcement, Protocol Officer will escort VIP(s) to the pitch.
- Team captains will introduce players and Referee will introduce match officials to VIP(s).
- VIP(s) will stand at the VIP position below during playing of national anthems.
- VIP(s) return to the VIP Tribune OR handshake with officials at both team benches.

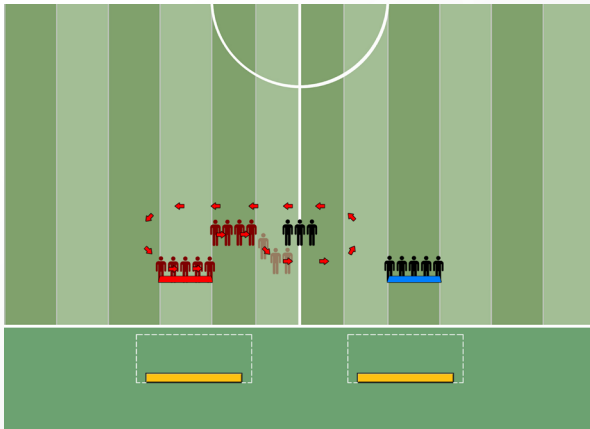


4. Handshake procedure:

- Referees and Team A do not move;
- Team B moves towards Team A, shakes hands with the Referees and Team A;
- Team B will return to their original position to regroup for a team photo;

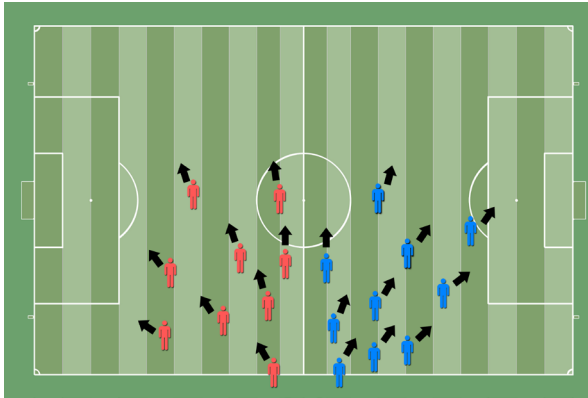


- Team A moves towards the Referees and shakes hands with Referees;
- Team A returns to their original position to regroup for photo;
- Referees do not move;



5. Team Entry for Second Half:

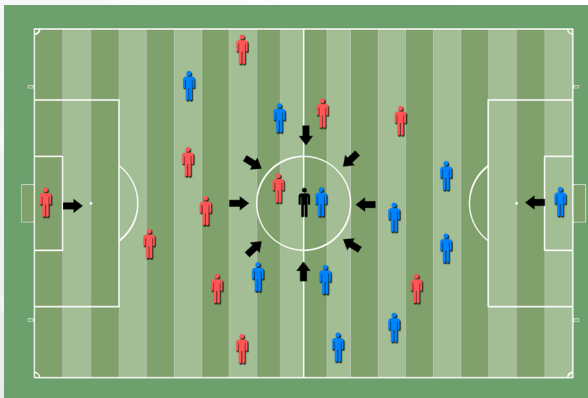
- Players of both teams and Referees enter at the same time;



6. Post-Match handshake:

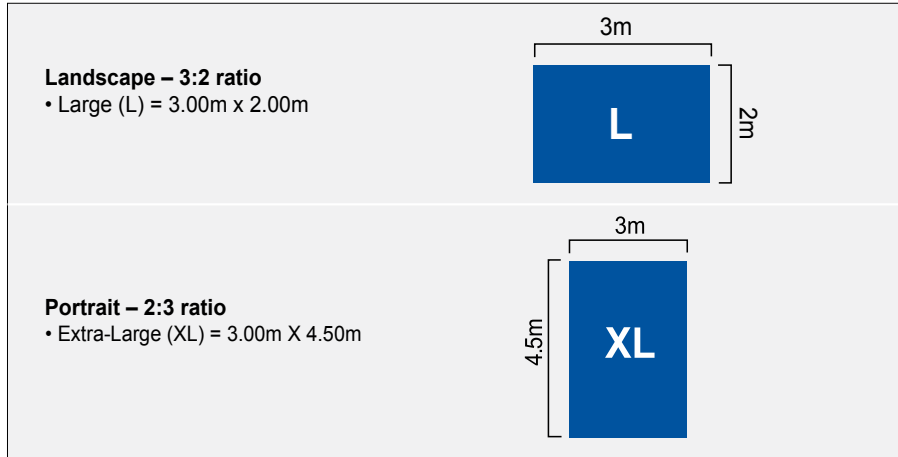
After final whistle:

- Match Officials and all players to gather at the centre circle;
- Team captains are responsible to get their players to centre circle;
- Handshake ceremony to be similar to those prior to the match;
- Players of both teams and Referees enter at the same time.



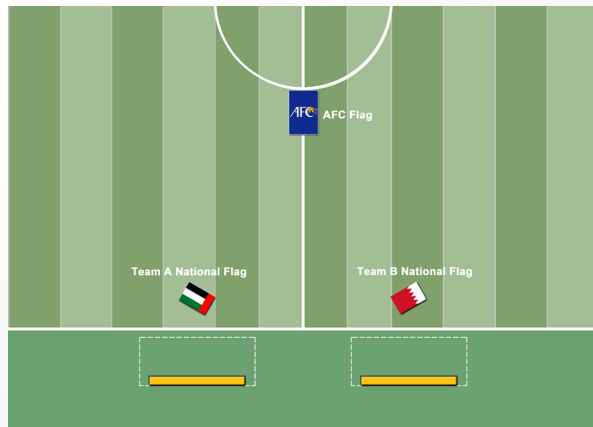
APPENDIX 10 | AFC STANDARD FLAG & NATIONAL ANTHEM GUIDELINES

The sizes below are the AFC standard Flag guidelines:



The table below applies to march-in flags (national flags are used in National Team Competitions only):

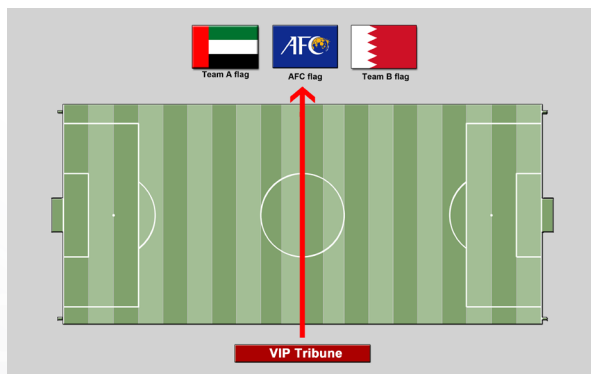
Sequence	Flags	Size	Quantity
1	Team A national flag	L - Landscape	1
2	Team B national flag	L - Landscape	1
3	AFC flag	XL - Portrait	1



The table below applies to flying flags at the Stadium (national flags are used in National Team Competitions only):

Flags	Size	Quantity
AFC flag	L - Landscape	1
Competition flag	L - Landscape	1
Team A national flag	L - Landscape	1
Team B national flag	L - Landscape	1
Host Country Flag	L - Landscape	1

The AFC Flag hanging opposite to the VIP Tribune shall be placed in the centre and the Host Country Flag can be flown on a flagpole behind the goals if available.



In case there are double-headers two (2) Matches in one (1) Stadium on the same day, flags shall be interchanged between the Matches. However, if flag interchange is not possible due to the Stadium structure, the following flag arrangement shall be applied:



Below are the guidelines to be followed for the national anthems to be submitted to the AFC:

- High quality audio format (both .wav and .mp3)
- Instrumental (no vocal)
- Preferably not exceeding ninety (90) seconds
- The AFC shall continue to use the national anthem previously provided by the Participating Teams or Member Associations unless otherwise notified or provided with the updated version by the respective Member Association.

APPENDIX 11 | STANDARD MATCH ANNOUNCEMENT SCRIPT

The announcement script provided below is only a standard template which may be adjusted for each Competition. The actual announcement script used for any Match shall be prepared by the Host Organisation in accordance with any instructions from the AFC.

Pre-Match - Introduction of Teams and Match Officials

Time	Names	Announcement Text	Note
T-30	Introduction of match	Welcome to ____ (<i>Stadium name, City name</i>) for today's match of the ____ (<i>Competition Name</i>) between ____ (<i>Team A Name</i>) and ____ (<i>Team B Name</i>)	Giant Screen must coordinate with announcer and display the match information.
	Introduction of Team A	Here are the team line-ups, for ____ (<i>Team A Name</i>). Number ____ (<i>player number</i>), ____ (<i>popular name</i>) The substitutes are, number ____ (<i>player number</i>), ____ (<i>popular name</i>) The Head Coach is ____ (<i>Head Coach name</i>), from ____ (<i>country of origin</i>)	Giant Screen must coordinate with announcer and display the Team A Players' and Head Coach Photos and name (<i>if applicable</i>)
	Introduction of Team B	Here are the team line-ups, for ____ (<i>Team B Name</i>). Number ____ (<i>player number</i>), ____ (<i>popular name</i>) The substitutes are, number ____ (<i>player number</i>), ____ (<i>popular name</i>) The Head Coach is ____ (<i>Head Coach name</i>), from ____ (<i>country of origin</i>)	Giant Screen must coordinate with announcer and display the Team B Players' and Head Coach Photos and name (<i>if applicable</i>)

	<p>Introduction of Match Officials</p>	<p>The referee for this match is ____ (name of referee) from ____ (country of origin)</p> <p>The assistant referees are ____ (name of assistant referee 1) from ____ (country of origin) and ____ (name of assistant referee 2) from ____ (country of origin)</p> <p>The fourth official is ____ (name of Fourth Official) from ____ (country of origin)</p> <p><i>(if applicable)</i> The Video Assistant Referee is ____ (name of Fourth Official) from ____ (country of origin)</p> <p><i>(if applicable)</i> The Assistant Video Assistant Referee is ____ (name of Fourth Official) from ____ (country of origin)</p>	<p>Giant Screen must coordinate with announcer</p> <p>Giant Screen shall display the Match Officials' name</p> <p>Only the names of the Match Officials as defined in this Manual shall be announced and displayed. For the avoidance of doubt, the names of any other official (e.g. Match Commissioner, Referee Assessor) shall not be announced.</p>
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The above shall be completed within 5-7 minutes

Pre-Match Ceremony

* AFC General Coordinator and/or AFC Match Commissioner will reconfirm the time on a match by match basis.

Time	Names	Announcement Text	Note
			Giant Screen shall go on LIVE by T-12'
-9*	Teams' Flag March-in		LIVE - March in of Teams' flag
-7* (GC to Q)	Teams' March-in	Let's welcome the teams of ____ (<i>Team A Name</i>) and ____ (<i>Team B Name</i>)	After Teams' flag are in position. GC to give the Q
	AFC Anthem		Anthem to be tuned down slowly at the signal of GC
tbc	Introduction of VVIP (<i>only when instructed by GC</i>)	We have the pleasure to invite the AFC President, His Excellency Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa and the dignitaries onto the pitch to be introduced to the players and match officials.	AFC Protocol will escort the VVIPs to the FOP
After tune down AFC anthem	Team *A National Anthem	Please stand up for the national anthem of ____ (<i>Team A Name</i>)	Team A national anthem is played immediately after the announcement
After end of 1st anthem	Team *B National Anthem	and now the national anthem of ____ (<i>Team B Name</i>)	Team B national anthem is played immediately after the announcement

* National Anthems are played only for National Team Competitions. Host national anthem will always be the second anthem even if they are Team A

During the Match

Time	Names	Announcement Text	Note
	Goal	Goal for (Team/Club)	Immediately after the referee confirms the goal. Giant Screen shall display Graphic for Goal.
	Goal Scorer	Goal for ____ (name of team) by player number ____ (player number), ____ (popular name of player)	Immediately after the GC gives the confirmation of goal scorer, or immediately after the Graphic for Goal Giant Screen shall display TV Replay or Photo of Player (if available).
	Own goal	Goal for ____ (name of team).	The player shall NOT be mentioned Giant Screen shall display Match Results.
	Substitution	Substitution for ____ (name of team); Player number ____ (player number), ____ (popular name of player) OUT ; player number ____ (player number), ____ (popular name of player) IN	Announce only when players cross touch line or approximately 2-3 seconds after the start of 2nd half Giant Screen shall display Graphic for Substitute. Photo of Players.
	Additional time	Additional time: __ minutes (s)	Announce when Fourth Official shows the Additional Time at the touchline. Giant Screen shall display Graphic for Additional Time.
Half-time	Half-time Score	The half-time score is ____ (Team A Name, [score]), ____ (Team B Name, [score])	Immediately after half-time whistle
75th minute	Number of spectators	The official attendance for today's match is ____ (number of spectators). Thank you for attending!	Giant screen to show the graphic and text. No announcement or giant screen graphic if attendance is less than 1,000

Full-time (after whistle)	Final Score	The final score is ____ (Team A Name, [score]), ____ (Team B Name, [score])	Immediately after final whistle
tbc	Player of the Match Award	We have the honour to present the Player of the Match Award to ____ (popular name of player), player number ____ (player number) from ____ (team name) for his/her excellent performance in the match.	At the beginning of the PoTM award presentation
After the PoTM Award	Next Match Information	We thank you for your attendance today and hope you enjoyed the match as much as we did. The next match to be played here is between ____ (teams name) at ____ (time), ____ (date). We hope to see you again and good night.	

* Host Organisation must ensure that full use can be made of giant screens to display yellow and red cards

Extra Time Announcement

Time	Names	Announcement Text	Note
End of regular time (if applicable)	Extra Time	The match will go to Extra Time. If the match is still tied after this Extra Time, there will be Kicks from the Penalty Mark.	Giant screen to show the graphic and text

Post-Match Announcement

Time	Names	Announcement Text	Note
Announce Only In Last Match In Venue		We would like to invite a round of applause for the Volunteers!	

Moment of Silence / Applause

Time	Announcement Text	Note
	<p>We kindly ask you to stand to observe a moment of silence in memory of ____ (reason). Thank you.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>We kindly ask you to take part in a moment of applause in celebration of ____ (reason). Thank you.</p>	<p>Giant Screen shall display "Moment of Silence".</p> <p>Giant Screen shall display "Moment of Applause".</p>

Match Abandonment / Cancellation

Time	Names	Announcement Text	Note
	Match Abandonment	<p>It is regrettable that the match will be stopped temporarily due to some unforeseen circumstances.</p> <p>We will update you when the match will be resumed. Thank you for your understanding and patience.</p>	Giant screen to show the graphic and text
	Match Cancellation	<p>It is regrettable that the match kick-off will be delayed due to unforeseen circumstances.</p> <p>We will update you when the match will start. Thank you for your understanding and patience.</p>	Giant screen to show the graphic and text

Other Announcements

Time	Names	Announcement Text	Note
	Lost Child	We have a lost child somewhere in the Stadium. We are looking for a little boy/girl, ____ (age) years old, wearing a ____ (description of shirt or attire). He/she was last seen on the ____ (location found). If you have seen this child please notify the nearest member of security.	Giant screen to show the graphic and text
	Found Child	We have found a little girl/boy, approximately ____ (age) years old, who tells us his/her name is ____ (child's name) and that he/ she is here with his/her daddy/mommy today. If you are with ____ (child's name), please come to the nearest customer service desk.	Giant screen to show the graphic and text
	Stadium Evacuation	<p>Please proceed CALMLY but QUICKLY to your nearest exits - be patient and courteous of those around you.</p> <p>Follow instructions from Stadium volunteers / security in case it becomes necessary to re-route away from the closest exit for some reason.</p> <p>Please note that the elevators and escalators will NOT be operational. Therefore, fans in VIP/ VIP Tribunes should move CALMLY and QUICKLY to the exit.</p> <p>Once OUTSIDE the stadium, ALL fans should continue to MOVE AWAY from the building to ensure proper space for EVERYONE to get safely away from the structure.</p>	Giant screen to show the graphic and text.

APPENDIX 12 | REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS WHO HAVE ACQUIRED A NEW NATIONALITY

No.	Documents
1.	The player must provide one of the following categories of documents:
a)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Letter from the Member Association of the player's previous nationality or country of birth declaring that the player has never participated in a match (either in full or in part) for its representative team in an official competition of any category or any type of football; and 2) Letter from the player declaring that he has never participated in a match (either in full or in part) for any representative team of any Member Association in an official competition of any category or any type of football.
b)	Decision of the FIFA Football Tribunal or from the Court of Arbitration for Sport allowing the player to change Association.
2.	The player must provide a clear copy of their passport of the country the player wishes to represent.
3.	The player must provide a clear copy of their national ID card of the country the player wishes to represent.
4.	If a player seeks to rely upon 1(a) above, the player must provide one of the following categories of documents:
a)	Evidence that the player was born on the territory of the relevant association.
b)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Evidence that their father or mother was born on the territory of the relevant association; and 2) Evidence that such person is their biological parent.
c)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Evidence that their grandfather or grandmother was born on the territory of the relevant association; and 2) Evidence that such person is their biological grandparent.
d)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Evidence that the player has lived on the territory of the relevant association in accordance with the FIFA Regulations Governing the Application of the Statutes; and 2) Any further evidence as required in the FIFA Regulations Governing the Application of the Statutes.

APPENDIX 13 | REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS WHO HAVE A NATIONALITY ENTITLING THEM TO REPRESENT MORE THAN ONE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

No.	Documents
1.	The player must provide one of the following categories of documents:
a)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Letter from the Member Association of the player's previous nationality or country of birth declaring that the player has never participated in a match (either in full or in part) for its representative team in an official competition of any category or any type of football; and 2) Letter from the player declaring that he has never participated in a match (either in full or in part) for any representative team of any Member Association in an official competition of any category or any type of football.
b)	Decision of the FIFA Football Tribunal or from the Court of Arbitration for Sport allowing the player to change Association.
2.	The player must provide a clear copy of their passport of the country the player wishes to represent.
3.	The player must provide a clear copy of their national ID card of the country the player wishes to represent.
4.	If a player seeks to rely upon 1(a) above, the player must provide one of the following categories of documents:
a)	Evidence that the player was born on the territory of the relevant association.
b)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Evidence that their father or mother was born on the territory of the relevant association; and 2) Evidence that such person is their biological parent.
c)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Evidence that their grandfather or grandmother was born on the territory of the relevant association; and 2) Evidence that such person is their biological grandparent.
d)	Evidence that the player has lived on the territory of the relevant association for at least five (5) years.

APPENDIX 14 | MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR AMATEUR PLAYERS**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
(For Amateur Players)**

IN CONSIDERATION of participating in the AFC (*Name of Competition*), we (*Name of Member Association*), (*Name of Club*), (*Name of Player*) HEREBY UNDERTAKE:

1. to comply with all the obligations and requirements imposed on us under the relevant Competition regulations and AFC Competition Operations Manual;
2. that the player (*Name of Player*) has been registered by (*Name of Club*) and (*Name of Member Association*) in compliance with its own transfer rules and the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players;
3. that the player (*Name of Player*) is registered only with (*Name of Club*) from the period dated (*insert start date of memorandum*) for the duration of (*insert period of memorandum*) and expiring on (*insert end date of memorandum*);
4. that the player (*Name of Player*) is NOT contracted, registered and/or playing for any other club in the world from (*insert start date of memorandum*) until (*insert end date of memorandum*);
5. that (*Name of Club*) and (*Name of Member Association*) shall be responsible for ensuring that all information provided by (*Name of Club*) is valid and accurate; and
6. to guarantee our due compliance with the obligation, liabilities and requirements of the relevant regulations and AFC Competition Operations Manual upon which participation in the AFC (*Name of Competition*) has granted to us and our liabilities under this undertaking.

Dated this (*date*) day of (*Month*), (*Year*)

(*Member Association name*) & SEAL
(*General Secretary name*),
General Secretary

(*Name of Club*) & SEAL
(*General Secretary name*),
General Secretary

Name of Player
Player

APPENDIX 15 | MINIMUM COACHING REQUIREMENTS

For each Competition, Participating Teams shall submit the minimum coaching requirements for the registration of their Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Goalkeeper Coach and Fitness Coach as listed below.

Football

- **National "A" Team (Men's & Women's) & U23 Team (Men's)**

Coaching Position	2023	2024	2025	2026
Head Coach	Pro	Pro	Pro	Pro
Assistant Coach	A	A	A	A
GK Coach	GK A	GK A	GK A	GK A
Fitness Coach	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2

- **National U20 Team (Men's & Women's)**

Coaching Position	2023	2024	2025	2026
Head Coach	A	A	A	A
Assistant Coach	B	B	B	B
GK Coach	GK A	GK A	GK A	GK A
Fitness Coach	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2

- **National U17 Team (Men's & Women's)**

Coaching Position	2023	2024	2025	2026
Head Coach	A	A	A	A
Assistant Coach	B	B	B	B
GK Coach	GK B	GK B	GK B	GK B
Fitness Coach	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2

- **AFC Champions League**

Coaching Position	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Head Coach	Pro	Pro	Pro	Pro
Assistant Coach	A	A	A	A
GK Coach	GK A	GK A	GK A	GK A
Fitness Coach	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2

- **AFC Cup**

Coaching Position	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Head Coach	A	A	A	A
Assistant Coach	B	B	B	B
GK Coach	GK A	GK A	GK A	GK A
Fitness Coach	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2

- AFC Women's Champions League**

Coaching Position	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Head Coach	A	A	A
Assistant Coach	B	B	B
GK Coach	GK B	GK B	GK B
Fitness Coach	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1

Futsal

- National "A" Team & U20 Team (Men's)**

Coaching Position	2023	2024	2025	2026
Head Coach	Level 2	Level 2	Level 3	Level 3
Assistant Coach	Level 1	Level 1	Level 2	Level 2
GK Coach	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1
Fitness Coach	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1

- National "A" Team (Women's)**

Coaching Position	2023	2024	2025	2026
Head Coach	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2
Assistant Coach	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1
GK Coach	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1
Fitness Coach	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1

- Futsal Club (Men's)**

Coaching Position	2023	2024	2025	2026
Head Coach	Level 2	Level 2	Level 3	Level 3
Assistant Coach	Level 1	Level 1	Level 2	Level 2
GK Coach	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1
Fitness Coach	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1

Beach Soccer

- National "A" Team (Men's)**

Coaching Position	2023	2024	2025	2026
Head Coach	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1	Level 2
Assistant Coach	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1
GK Coach	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1
Fitness Coach	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1

In addition to the above, Fitness Coaches must also have qualifications in sports science and a reputable background in the field.

Where the proposed official does not meet the minimum coaching requirements or its recognised equivalent, they must apply for recognition of their coaching competence as per the AFC Regulations Governing the Recognition of Experience and Current Competence (or any future equivalent issued by the AFC), which is available for download on the AFC Website.

For any queries regarding the recognition of coaching experience, please contact the AFC Technical Division.

APPENDIX 16 | AFC NAME POLICY

Four (4) Name Categories

Name Category		Sample 1	Sample 2	Sample 3	Sample 4
Passport Name	Last Name(s) / Surname	Kim	Abdulla Abdulrahman Mohamed Marzooq	Karimi	Doan Viet Cuong
	First Name(s) / Given Name	Nam Il		Mohammad Ali	
AFC Popular Name		Kim Nam Il	Abdulla Marzooqi	Ali Karimi	Doan Cuong
Shirt Name		Namil	A. Marzooqi	Karimi	Cuong

Information concerning the four AFC name categories

1. **LAST NAME(S) – COMPLETE SURNAME:** Family names used in official documents and passport.
2. **FIRST NAME(S):** Given name as used in official documents and passport.
3. **AFC POPULAR NAME:** The internationally recognised name for everyday use (media, public use) which also appears on the Match Start List and other reports. No accents or umlauts in the Popular Name.
4. **SHIRT NAME:** Each player must be identified on the back of the shirt by means of his Shirt Name. The Shirt Name must correspond to the AFC Popular Name as indicated on the AFC Official List of Players and all other official AFC reports and outlets. Accents and umlauts ARE permitted in the Shirt Name. Each shirt name must be distinctive in the same team playing in the same Competition.

APPENDIX 17 | PHOTOGRAPHER OPERATION GUIDELINES FOR FOOTBALL

1. Failure to adhere to this Appendix may result in the eviction of a photographer from a Stadium and refusal of accreditation for future Competitions.
2. All photographers requiring access to the Competition must contact the relevant Host Organisation and complete the necessary application procedures to clear their request.
3. All photographers requiring field area access must wear a Media bib. Bibs are available from the Host Organisation at the entrance to a Stadium upon showing the approved media accreditation.
4. Match Start Lists will be made available in the media centre no later than sixty (60) minutes before kick-off.
5. Access to the Field of Play is not permitted at any time, including before and after the Match.
6. Before the start of each Match, photographers may shoot the line-ups of the Participating Teams from the touchline but must not enter the Field of Play.
7. Once the Match starts, photographers must stay behind the advertising boards behind the goals and are only permitted to change sides during half-time or between the end of normal playing time and the start of Extra Time. When changing sides on half-time, photographers should pass along the opposite side of the team benches from behind the advertising boards. Under no circumstances will photographers be allowed to shoot from either touchline during the Match, except when seats have been allocated in any particular Match.
8. The Head Coaches of the Participating Teams shall attend a press conference that will commence immediately after the Match. All Media are allowed to attend the post-Match press conference, except photographers.
9. The AFC official photographer may work from any position, including touchlines, but should not move during the Match. The instructions provided by the AFC, AFC Media Officer, AFC General Coordinator and AFC Match Commissioner at a Stadium shall be followed.
10. Photographers are required to obtain the prior authorisation of the AFC before setting up any remote camera in designated areas. Remote cameras shall not exceed the height of 25 centimetres and shall only be serviced during half-time.

Photographer Rope Procedure

11. The Host Organisation shall ensure that two ropes (20m each) are available for smooth conduct of the photographer's rope procedure during teams' march-in.
12. The Host Organisation shall be also responsible for providing a minimum of six (6) volunteers (three [3] on each side) to hold the ropes in an L shape when the teams march-in and close the ropes forming one straight line after the last player from each team enters the Field of Play.
13. The rope should remain in the straight-line position until the team captains finish their group photos with the Match Officials.
14. After being escorted by photo marshals to the centre, the photographers may change sides before the national flags are brought inside the Field of Play.
15. The official photographer shall not occupy any position in the middle of the teams' march-in or together with the HB camera, instead of the top end corners of the ropes.

APPENDIX 18 | BROADCAST OPERATIONS GUIDELINES FOR FOOTBALL

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Introduction

These Broadcast Operation Guidelines sets out the procedures to be observed and adhered to by the appointed Host Broadcaster, Broadcast Partners, Non-Rights Holders and/or Electronic News Gathering crew in relation to the production and broadcast coverage of Competitions.

The requirements and procedures contained herein serve as a guideline and are by no means definitive for all Competitions. The AFC reserves all rights, in consultation with the AFC Commercial Rights Partner, to determine any matters relating to the broadcast operations of each Competition at its discretion.

Definitions

All defined terms, unless otherwise stated herein shall bear the same meaning as ascribed in the Manual.

Ceremonies means without limitation, the opening ceremonies, the presentation ceremonies, award ceremonies, the closing ceremonies and/or launch of the Competition Marks.

Electronic News Gathering means television producers, reporters, and editors making use of electronic audio and video technologies for gathering and presenting news.

Field Area means, in respect of a Stadium, the area between the boundaries of the Field of Play and the spectators, excluding the Field of Play.

General Coordinator means the person appointed by the AFC, at its discretion, to manage and coordinate all matters relating to the Stadium.

Match Day means the day of a Match.

Match Day-1 (MD-1) means the day prior to a Match.

Multilateral World Feed means live and continuous clean television signals of each Match, Ceremony and Official Function including without limitation all timing, computer, statistical and/or other computer graphics in English as featured therein, together with the international sound on a separate track with or without English commentary, established for general distribution to all Broadcast Partners.

Non-Rights Holder means any entity that has not been granted the right to exploit the broadcast of the Competition.

Pitch means the Field of Play.

Programming means the Multilateral World Feed and Unilateral Feed of the Matches, the Ceremonies or Official Functions (or parts thereof) of the Competition.

TMO means the Team Media Officer for a Participating Team competing in a Competition.

Unilateral Feed means a distinct feed, supplementary to the Multilateral World Feed, established by or on behalf of a Broadcast Partner (RTV) for its sole and exclusive use.

PART A: BROADCAST DESIGNATIONS AND ACCESS TO VENUES

1. Host Broadcaster (HB)

- 1.1. The HB shall be responsible for the production of the Multilateral World Feed of each Match and installation of the necessary cameras and/or broadcast equipment to enable the use, access and/or exploitation of the Multilateral World Feed and broadcast of the Programming by the RTVs.
- 1.2. Any appointed HB shall observe and comply with all instructions, guidelines and/or regulations including without limitation, broadcast standards, specifications and/or requirements, as issued by and/or on behalf of the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner from time to time.
- 1.3. The appointed HB's staff shall be provided with a valid Accreditation Card and provided access to designated area(s) within the Stadiums and/or any Controlled Access Area(s) for the proper performance and execution of its obligations and duties as HB. All appointed HB staff shall use their Accreditation Cards and/or any other official forms of identification provided by the AFC including without limitation Media bibs and/or apparels, at all times.

2. Broadcast Partners (RTV)

- 2.1. An RTV shall have the right to exhibit and/or broadcast, and where applicable, sublicense the right to exhibit and/or broadcast to a third-party broadcaster, some or all of the Programming in accordance with the rights granted to the RTV under its respective broadcast licence agreements with the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner.
- 2.2. All RTVs shall access the live feed of each Match played by joining the Multilateral World Feed established by the HB and shall not establish or request for an alternative third-party to establish a live feed of the Programming.
- 2.3. All RTV staff shall be provided with a valid Accreditation Card and provided access to designated area(s) within the Stadiums and/or any Controlled Access Area(s) and shall use their Accreditation Cards and/or any other official forms of identification provided by the AFC including but not limited to Media bibs and/or apparels, at all times.

3. Non-Rights Holders (NRH)

- 3.1. Any party which is not granted rights to use and/or exploit the broadcasting rights to the Competition, including without limitation, any individuals appointed to accompany the Participating Teams and/or Participating Players (in total, the Non-Rights Holders), shall not be allowed access to any area(s) within the Stadiums and/or any Controlled Access Area(s) designated for the HB and/or RTVs.
- 3.2. The AFC may at its discretion, in certain instances, allow and grant access to MD-1 training sessions, press conferences and/or the mixed zones to NRHs, subject to availability.

- 3.3. Any NRH that intends to attend and/or obtain access to any training sessions, press conferences, post-match conferences and mixed zones shall be required to apply for a NRH Accreditation Pass which may be issued by the Host Organisation on behalf of the AFC, subject to the discretion of the AFC. NRHs will not be allowed to apply for any other form of accreditation, including Media accreditation. NRHs may apply for access to press conferences and mixed zones at individual Matches to the AFC desk at the media centre but access will only be given where the RTVs have not taken all available slots.
- 3.4. NRHs granted access shall not be allowed to carry and/or use any audio and/or visual equipment within the Stadiums and/or any Controlled Access Area(s) for the entire duration of the Match. NRHs shall be required to register and deposit any audio and/or visual equipment at the storage facilities at the designated stadium media centre immediately upon their arrival. NRHs may not shoot inside the Controlled Access Area (including the stadium concourse area, the media centre and/or the spectator stands) before, during or after the Match. NRHs shall only collect their equipment to proceed immediately to the press conference room and/or mixed zone ten (10) minutes before the scheduled end of the Match. NRHs shall observe and comply with all applicable AFC regulations, instructions, directives and/or guidelines relating to the Competition.
- 3.5. Any person(s) found in contravention of these rules may have their Accreditation Card revoked and be requested to leave the Stadium and/or its surrounding vicinity immediately. All actions relating to non-compliance of these provisions shall be reported to and sanctioned by the AFC.

4. Electronic News Gathering (ENG) Crew

- 4.1. Electronic News Gathering (ENG) crews shall comprise of not more than three (3) people (the cameraman, a producer/assistant and a reporter) and may only work on behalf of the HB, RTVs or the AFC Commercial Rights Partner.
 - 4.1.1. ENG crews shall only film from the ENG positions designated by the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner, which generally include:
 - 4.1.1.1. behind the goal line pitch-side advertising boards (cameraman plus one [1] other person only) and/or designated main camera platform in the VIP stand alongside the HB cameras (subject to the availability of space);
 - 4.1.1.2. on the near touchline, behind the photographer's rope for pre-match player walk-ons and player presentations;
 - 4.1.1.3. in Matches that end in Kicks from the Penalty Mark, ENG crews can relocate to the end where the kicks will be taken, subject to the availability of space and AFC approval;
 - 4.1.1.4. the rear of the press conference room (cameraman only); and
 - 4.1.1.5. the mixed zone (up to three [3] persons per broadcaster only).

- 4.1.2. For the avoidance of doubt, the ENG crew shall not film once the camera leaves or is moving between each designated position.
- 4.1.3. ENG crews may never enter the Field of Play, the team dressing rooms or the stands at any time before, during or after the Match. Any ENG crew entering any of the prohibited locations shall have their Accreditation Card withdrawn immediately for the duration of the Competition.
- 4.1.4. ENG crews shall only be allowed to interview Participating Players and/or Participating Officials in the mixed zone after the Match.
- 4.1.5. Where space is limited the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner reserve the right to prioritise access to the Stadium for ENG crews.
- 4.1.6. ENG crews shall be provided with valid Accreditation Cards and provided access to designated area(s) and shall use their Accreditation Cards and/or any other official forms of identification provided by the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner including but not limited to Media bibs and/or apparels, at all times.

5. Access to Stadiums

- 5.1. Access for the HB and RTVs OB equipment, the VAR supplier and or Virtual Advertising supplier shall be granted by the LOC and the venue from MD-4 or earlier if required and agreed with the AFC. The HB and RTVs may bump-in OB Vans and Satellite News Gathering (SNG) vans, lay or connect cables or connect to power on Match Days with prior written approval of the AFC. They must be in the compound, parked, powered and cabled, at least eight (8) hours prior to kick-off or at the time determined by the AFC.
- 5.2. RTVs can lay their own cables in the Stadium provided they secure prior written approval from the AFC or the AFC Commercial Partner, and then only under the supervision of the AFC Commercial Rights Partner. Cabling must be neatly laid along designated paths. Cabling within the OB compound, from the RTV to the HB can be undertaken by the RTV, however it must be laid under the guidance of the AFC Commercial Rights Partner. The AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner may refuse to connect cabling that has not been properly laid. RTVs must receive approval from the AFC Commercial Rights Partner before connecting to technical or local grid power in the broadcast compound.
- 5.3. The broadcast compound will be open and powered from 08:00 (morning) until two (2) hours after the end of the Match on Match Days and 21:00 (evening) on non-Match Days. RTVs that wish to access the compound at any other time (e.g. overnight or in the early morning) must make a written request to the AFC Commercial Rights Partner venue manager at least forty-eight (48) hours before the time access is required.
- 5.4. RTVs must inform the AFC Commercial Rights Partner venue manager in the broadcast compound when they arrive to start work and when they leave the compound at the end of each day.

PART B: HOST BROADCASTER AND UNILATERAL CAMERAS

6. Pre-Match Filming

- 6.1. The HB shall be permitted to film:
 - 6.1.1. inside the team dressing rooms, including filming of the team equipment, up to two (2) hours prior to kick-off; and
 - 6.1.2. the arrival and departure of each Participating Team bus in the bus arrival area.
- 6.2. No more than one (1) HB production camera per Participating Team may be used for the interviewing of each head coach on arrival with one (1) other camera filming the Participating Team bus arrival (cf. PART D, Article 15).
- 6.3. HB production cameras or RTV crews can interview members of the team delegation, except playing or non-playing players and head coach provided they have a pre-arranged agreement with the team and have notified the AFC in advance. The team delegation must have the correct accreditation and supplementary access device (SAD) to allow them to access the presentation position. All accreditations must be applied for in advance of the match - no passes can be issued on matchday.
- 6.4. No form of filming or recording shall be permitted on a Participating Team bus en route to, and from, any Stadium, without the prior written approval of the AFC.

7. Steadicam/Handheld Cameras

Filming of Participating Teams and Participating Players: entrance, half-time and exit

- 7.1. The HB may be granted access to film the Participating Team(s) and Participating Players at designated areas within the Field Area and/or player tunnel prior to kick-off, at half-time and at the end of a Match, subject to availability of space and prior written approval of the AFC.
- 7.2. HB Steadicam/handheld cameras may be allowed access to film on the Field of Play at the end of a Match, subject to the prior written approval of the AFC.
 - 7.2.1. Up to two (2) HB Steadicam/handheld cameras may film within the Field Area, player tunnel and/or Field of Play, subject to the prior written approval of the AFC; and
 - 7.2.2. all HB Steadicam/handheld cameras shall be manned by designated camera assistants to ensure the safety and operations of any camera cable(s) (if cabled).

Camera movement for Extra Time and Kicks from the Penalty Mark

- 7.3. During the intervals at the end of normal playing time, between the periods of Extra Time or at the end of Extra Time (if the Match is to be decided by Kicks from the Penalty Mark), no Steadicam/handheld camera is allowed onto the Field of Play with the exception as set out below:

- 7.3.1. one (1) Steadicam/handheld camera **may come from their in-match position beside** the team benches to the inner or outer edge of the technical area to shoot the Participating Team preparations during the intervals;
- 7.3.2. not more than one (1) Steadicam/handheld camera may be granted access onto the Field of Play to cover the coin toss in the event that a match is to be decided by Kicks from the Penalty Mark;
- 7.3.3. one (1) Steadicam/handheld camera operator with an assistant shall be permitted to access the Field of Play at the end of Extra Time should the Match be decided through Kicks from the Penalty Mark. The Steadicam/handheld camera operator and its assistant must be positioned on the opposite side of the Pitch from where the Kicks from the Penalty Mark will take place at the halfway line.
- 7.3.4. The Steadicam/handheld camera operator shall take up the position at the outer edge of the centre circle behind the Participating Players and shall only be permitted to reposition between each kick from the penalty mark. The operator shall not move position once the Participating Player enters the penalty area.

Field of Play access: Pre-Match Events

- 7.4. Up to two (2) HB Steadicam/handheld cameras may access the Field of Play prior to kick-off for purposes of producing broadcast coverage of the Participating Teams' line-up, singing of the respective national anthems (if applicable), the coin-toss and/or any other special AFC ceremony or presentation ("Pre-Match Events"), subject to the prior written approval of the AFC.
- 7.5. The HB shall:
 - 7.5.1. record and/or produce broadcast coverage of the Pre-Match Events from the designated area(s) provided by the AFC and undertake all reasonable steps to ensure that it does not impede and/or perform any actions which may impede or affect the view of Media (including photographers) at the Pre-Match Events;
 - 7.5.2. exit the Field of Play immediately upon the conclusion of the Pre-Match Events.
- 7.6. In general, the HB will be required to film the starting line-up of the Participating Teams, Participating Players and/or Match Officials during the playing of the national anthem (if applicable) prior to the commencement of the Match.
- 7.7. The filming of the starting line-up shall be conducted as follows:
 - 7.7.1. to film the starting line-up of the first Participating Team moving from left to right towards the centre of the line-up where the Match Officials are positioned;
 - 7.7.2. to reposition the Steadicam/handheld camera (where required) and film the starting line-up of the second Participating Team moving from right to left towards the centre of the line-up where the Match Officials are positioned; and

7.7.3. to reposition the Steadicam/handheld camera to film the exchange of handshakes between both Participating Teams and Match Officials.

7.7.4. To maintain at least 1.5m distance from Participating Players and Match Officials at all times.

7.8. The HB may use the HB Steadicam/handheld camera to film at the outside of the Field of Play up to sixty (60) minutes prior to the commencement of the Match subject to the prior written approval of the AFC.

Field of Play access: During Normal Play

7.9. During the course of a Match, the HB shall ensure that the Steadicam/handheld cameras used and operated along the nearside touchlines of either half of the Field of Play shall:

7.9.1. not interfere with the Match and/or Participating Players or Match Officials' movements, including without limitation the referee and assistant referees', on the Pitch;

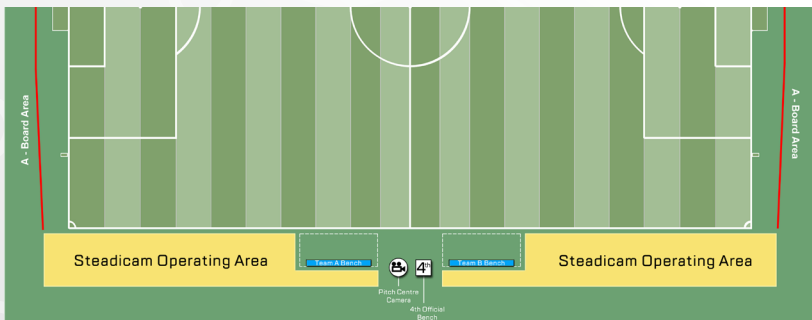
7.9.2. not be used to film the technical areas, or be positioned to move between the technical areas and the touchline;

7.9.3. operate at a safe distance from the touchline and the team benches and not impeded for a prolonged duration the line of sight from the fourth official and the team benches to the Field of Play;

7.9.4. operate at a safe distance from the corner area to ensure that it does not interfere with the movements of any Participating Player taking a corner kick;

7.9.5. be manned at all times by a camera operator, and where the Steadicam/handheld cameras are cabled, an additional cable assistant must assist the camera operator at all times; and

7.9.6. only operate up to the start of the advertising board, when operating around the corner.



Field of Play access: End of the Match

- 7.10. Up to two (2) Steadicam/handheld cameras may access the Field of Play at the end of each Match provided always that any such use shall not interfere with any Participating Players' and/or Match Officials' movement on the Field of Play, to operate in close proximity to the Participating Players, in order to capture the emotion of the end of the Match and, where relevant, to follow the Participating Team on any lap of honour around the Field of Play.
- 7.11. The HB shall not conduct any interviews with Participating Players and/or Match Officials at the end of a Match and any filming made at such time shall only contain Participating Players' and/or Match Officials' movements on the Field of Play.
- 7.12. The HB shall safeguard the safety of the Participating Players, Match Officials and television production personnel when operating Steadicam/handheld cameras by:
- 7.12.1. using only camera-mounted microphones during filming;
 - 7.12.2. using Steadicam/handheld cameras on the Field of Play only after the final whistle of each Match and upon receiving confirmation from the AFC and the AFC Commercial Rights Partner;
 - 7.12.3. operating Steadicam/handheld cameras along with assistants, who shall be responsible for acting as the eyes and ears of the camera operator and for the placement of camera cables to ensure the safety of all those around them. No more than one (1) assistant may accompany a camera operator onto the Field of Play; and
 - 7.12.4. following any special instructions from the AFC to ensure that the Steadicam/handheld cameras at no time cause any safety or security issues. Either or both Steadicam/handheld camera crews shall immediately exit the Field Area if directed by the AFC at any time prior to, during, or after, a Match.
- 7.13. Up to two (2) Steadicam/handheld cameras may enter the Field of Play during the trophy ceremony at the end of the final Match of the Competition, by arrangement with the AFC and under its direction.

During MD-1: Official Training

- 7.14. The HB may use Steadicam/handheld cameras for selected MD-1 coverage, to shoot Participating Team arrivals, Field of Play inspection and official training, subject to the prior written approval of the AFC.
- 7.15. The HB shall not conduct any interviews during the filming of any MD-1 coverage, except for within the specified mixed zone.

Number of Personnel for Steadicam/Handheld Camera Operation

- 7.16. The two (2) crews operating the HB Steadicam/handheld cameras shall comprise a maximum of two (2) personnel per camera (cameraman and cable rigger), if technically necessary.

- 7.17. These crew members shall observe and comply with all instructions and/or regulations of the AFC in relation to the access and production of broadcast coverage of the Competitions.

8. Jibs

- 8.1. The HB shall be responsible for the management of all HB television production jibs including without limitation, in relation to the operation and positioning of the jibs during Matches.

Jib positioning: during Matches

- 8.2. The HB must ensure that the jib cameras at each end of the Field of Play:
 - 8.2.1. shall be located behind the goal posts and operated by one (1) or two (2) persons;
 - 8.2.2. shall be positioned behind the Pitch-side advertising boards which are located directly behind the goal posts. At no point during its operation shall any jib camera come into contact and/or interfere with the goal structure, netting, and/or movement of the ball, Participating Players and/or Match Officials during the Match;
 - 8.2.3. shall not move any closer to the Field of Play other than from the position advised by the AFC; and
 - 8.2.4. shall remain stationary during any penalty kicks awarded during a Match unless the ball is in the other half of the Field of Play.

Jib position: Opening and Closing Ceremonies

- 8.3. The HB acknowledges that a jib camera may be required to produce broadcast coverage of any Ceremonies of the Competition and shall provide the AFC with the assistance necessary for the broadcast of such Ceremonies, if so required. The AFC reserves the right to determine the exact position of the jib camera prior to the commencement of any ceremony.

9. In-Goal Cameras

- 9.1. The HB shall be responsible for the management of all in-goal cameras including without limitation, the installation, operation and maintenance of such cameras throughout the Competition.
- 9.2. The HB shall ensure that all in-goal cameras:
 - 9.2.1. are positioned in the top corner of the back of the goal net;
 - 9.2.2. are attached to the support structure of the netting (such as ropes, poles) or installed on an independent pole or tripod structure, providing both camera and tripod are beyond the stretch-limit of the net, and positioned in such a way so as to not affect, in any way whatsoever, the flight of the ball or the movement or safety of the Participating Players and Match Officials during the Match;

- 9.2.3. are enclosed in an independent casing or housing, which shall be connected to the ground and the rear tensioning line of the net;
- 9.2.4. do not require any adjustment once the Match has commenced. Access may be required to these cameras at half-time for maintenance; and
- 9.2.5. are not installed with any microphones.



10. Pitch-Level Cameras

- 10.1. The HB shall ensure that the positioning of Pitch-level cameras shall be as ascribed in the HB camera plan set out in Schedule B to this Appendix.

Pitch-level Centre Camera Position in Relation to Team Benches and Fourth Official Bench

- 10.2. The exact positioning of the Pitch-level **centre** camera is of vital importance for the broadcast **coverage** of Matches due to their proximity to the **match action**, team benches and fourth official bench. The HB shall ensure that all personnel in the designated technical area(s) shall be provided with a clear and uninhibited view of the Field of Play.
- 10.3. Where the Host Broadcaster uses a camera seat, the following conditions must be met:
 - 10.3.1. be located in front of the fourth official bench, in line with the halfway line;
 - 10.3.2. have sufficient padding to the side and front of the camera seat to ensure the safety of the Participating Players and Match Official;
 - 10.3.3. the outermost part of the camera seat setup must be at least three (3) meters from the nearside touchline;
 - 10.3.4. camera seat must not be more than 1.4 meters high in order to not impede and/or interfere with the Participating Officials' and/or Participating Players' view of the Field of Play;
 - 10.3.5. not interfere with the movement of the assistant referee(s) who are stationed at the nearside touchline of the Field of Play;
 - 10.3.6. not affect the entrance and/or exit of the Participating Players, flow of people movement in the area and/or encroach upon any technical areas designated for Match Officials; and

10.3.7. not affect the entrance and/or exit of the Participating Players, flow of people movement and/or encroach upon any area(s) designated for the Team Official Delegations and Match Officials.

10.4. Where the Host Broadcaster uses a camera on tripod, the following conditions must be met:

10.4.1. be located to the side of the fourth official bench;

10.4.2. not impede and/or interfere with the Participating Officials' and/or Participating Players' view of the Field of Play;

10.4.3. not interfere with the movement of the assistant referee(s) who are stationed at the nearside touchline of the Field of Play;

10.4.4. not affect the entrance and/or exit of the Participating Players, flow of people movement in the area and/or encroach upon any technical areas designated for Match Officials; and

10.4.5. not affect the entrance and/or exit of the Participating Players, flow of people movement and/or encroach upon any area(s) designated for the Team Official Delegations and Match Officials.

10.5. Any positioning of the Pitch-Level Camera other than as provided for above shall be subject to the prior written approval of the AFC.

11. Aerial Camera Systems

11.1. The HB shall be responsible for the operation and management of all aerial camera systems (e.g. Spidercam). The following conditions shall apply in relation to the use of such systems on Match Day and MD-1.

General Guidelines

11.2. All aerial camera system mounts, wires and cables shall be installed according to a schedule provided to the AFC by the AFC Commercial Rights Partner and approved in writing by the AFC.

11.3. The mounting and functional system of the aerial camera system shall not be changed or modified once installed and approved by the relevant authorities.

11.4. Installation of the camera shall be approved and certified by the relevant safety authorities and Stadium management.

Coverage of Match and MD-1 Official Training

11.5. The HB shall ensure that:

11.5.1. the aerial camera system is not operated where the wind speed is recorded at a rate of 6+ or higher on the Beaufort scale;

- 11.5.2. the aerial camera system operates at a minimum height of twenty-one (21) metres above the Field of Play for all Matches, and ten (10) metres above the Field of Play for all MD-1 official training, in order to avoid any interference with the run of play;
- 11.5.3. the camera may operate at a height of five (5) metres outside of the Field of Play during the Match;
- 11.5.4. the camera shall be located out of range (on the touchlines) for goal clearances; and
- 11.5.5. the camera may operate at a height of five (5) metres on the Field of Play and five (5) metres outside the Field of Play for the duration of any cooling breaks throughout the Match and/or MD-1 official training.

Pre-Match, Half-Time, Post-Match

- 11.6. The HB may operate the aerial camera at a minimum height of five (5) metres when filming in the stands or Field of Play surroundings and a minimum height of five (5) metres when covering warm-ups, half-time and post-Match.
- 11.7. Detailed coordination is required to accommodate the needs of spectators, Ceremonies and security.

Kicks from the Penalty Mark

- 11.8. The HB may operate the aerial camera at a minimum height of ten (10) metres above the Field of Play to follow each Participating Player from the centre circle as he walks to place the ball prior to taking his kick.

12. Tunnel Camera

- 12.1. The HB shall be responsible for the operations and broadcast coverage of any tunnel camera used. The tunnel camera shall encompass the filming of Participating Players from both Participating Teams gathered in the player tunnel prior to entering and leaving the Field of Play during kick-off, half-time and full-time.
- 12.2. Any remotely controlled camera and associated microphone shall be installed under the tunnel roof or via an appropriate mounting and in such a way so as to not interfere with any match ceremonies, the Match and/or Participating Players' or Match Officials' movements. The placement of the tunnel camera shall be determined by the AFC in accordance with the tunnel layout and according to the team line-up position.
- 12.3. Up to one (1) manned TV production camera team is permitted for filming inside the "gathering area" of the player tunnel at the fixed position advised by the AFC prior to the commencement of the Match to film the checking of the studs by the Match Officials.
- 12.4. A tunnel camera can only be used just before the players enter the Field of Play for the pre-Match warm-up, for the start of the first and second halves and when they leave the Field of Play after the warm-up. They cannot be used to show the Participating Players, Participating Officials and/or Match Officials returning to the dressing room, either during or after the Match.

13. Unilateral Cameras

- 13.1. RTVs may position unilateral cameras during the match, subject to the availability of space:
 - 13.1.1. on the main camera platform;
 - 13.1.2. in designated areas behind the goals;
 - 13.1.3. in broadcast studios;
 - 13.1.4. in commentary positions, when their operation will not affect any other party; and
 - 13.1.5. any other positions subject to the prior written approval of the AFC.
- 13.2. Additionally, RTVs may position unilateral cameras before and after the Match, after making prior arrangements with the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner:
 - 13.2.1. near the corner flags for pre/post-Match unilateral stand-ups;
 - 13.2.2. at the designated flash interview position after the Match; and
 - 13.2.3. at the press conference and/or mixed zone.
- 13.3. RTVs may not move cameras during the Match except by prior arrangement with the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner at half-time, the end of normal playing time, or the start of Extra Time. RTVs may not position unilateral cameras in any other location at any time. RTVs must submit a camera plan to the AFC Commercial Rights Partner detailing their proposed camera positions, which must be approved in writing by the AFC before the RTV starts operations.

PART C: MICROPHONES

14. Guidelines for Microphone Use

- 14.1. The HB shall ensure that all Field of Play microphones, particularly those in sensitive areas (i.e. on Steadicam/handheld cameras) are used in such a manner as to collect ambient sounds only in order to capture the audio and visual experience of the Match, without encroaching on any of the Participating Players' and/or Match Officials' privacy.
- 14.2. The positioning of all Field of Play microphones is detailed in the generic microphone plan in Schedule E to this Appendix. In general, the HB shall ensure that:
 - 14.2.1. the microphones will be placed in front of the Pitch-side advertising boards, between the board and Field of Play in such a way as to allow clear view of the sponsor branding on the boards;
 - 14.2.2. no microphones will be placed inside the technical area around the team benches;
 - 14.2.3. the microphones shall not be permitted to be attached to the goalposts, nor to any persons directly involved in a Match, including without limitation any Participating Players and/or Match Officials;
 - 14.2.4. roaming microphones are strictly prohibited from use at all times; and
 - 14.2.5. the microphones will have a minimum of two (2) metres distance from touchlines.
- 14.3. All microphone placements and positioning shall be reviewed during the Field of Play inspection by the General Coordinator and/or AFC Match Commissioner, AFC Marketing Officer and the AFC Commercial Rights Partner venue manager.
- 14.4. AFC or Competition branded windshields and/or microphone cubes shall be used at all pre/ post-Match interviews. The AFC reserves the right at its sole discretion to permit the use of RTV branded windshields and/or microphone cubes for pre/post-Match unilateral interviews, upon request from any RTV.

PART D: INTERVIEWS

15. Head Coach Match Day Arrival Interviews

- 15.1. The HB shall carry out head coach arrival interviews at every Match immediately upon the arrival of the Participating Team at specific areas designated by the AFC, subject to the following conditions:
 - 15.1.1. only one (1) HB production camera may be used for conducting the head coach arrival interview.
 - 15.1.2. All personnel and equipment shall be in place to avoid any delay in conducting the proposed interviews;
 - 15.1.3. all interviews shall be conducted in English or the mother tongue of the Participating Team. Where the head coach does not speak the mother tongue of the Participating Team, the Participating Team shall provide interpretation into the mother tongue of the Participating Team.
 - 15.1.4. each interview shall not exceed ninety (90) seconds in duration and shall be in front of a Competition backdrop, as produced and provided by the AFC Commercial Rights Partner;

16. Multilateral World Feed Flash Interviews at the End of the Match

- 16.1. The HB shall conduct flash interviews at the end of the Match with Participating Players and/or Participating Officials at specific areas designated by the AFC, subject to the following conditions:
 - 16.1.1. there will be one (1) designated Multilateral World Feed flash position with only one (1) HB production camera used for conducting the multilateral flash interview.
 - 16.1.2. any additional positions provided shall be pre-approved in writing by the AFC upon request through the AFC Commercial Rights Partner;
 - 16.1.3. the Multilateral World Feed flash interview positions shall be located near either corner flag on the side of the Pitch where the team benches are located or at a suitable location determined by the AFC;
 - 16.1.4. all personnel and equipment shall be in place to avoid any delay in conducting the proposed interviews;
 - 16.1.5. all interviews shall be conducted in English or the mother tongue of the Participating Team. Where the head coach and/or selected players do not speak the mother tongue of the Team the Team shall provide interpretation into the mother tongue of the Team.

- 16.1.6. each interview shall not exceed ninety (90) seconds in duration and shall be in front of a Competition backdrop, as produced and provided by the AFC Commercial Rights Partner;
- 16.1.7. Multilateral World Feed flash interviews may be conducted by a RTV of the nationality of a Participating Team taking part in the Competition or respective Match;
- 16.1.8. there will be one (1) interview (head coach or player) conducted with each Participating Team (the relevant head coach or player shall be part of the “head coach and up to 3 players” each Participating Team is required to provide for flash interviews subject to the relevant Competition regulations);
- 16.1.9. all such interviews shall be carried out in front of a relevant backdrop, if specified by the AFC and/or the AFC Commercial Rights Partner; and
- 16.1.10. the AFC Commercial Rights Partner shall provide the list of individuals requested by the RTVs for flash interviews no later than ten (10) minutes before the end of the Match. The HB and the RTVs shall not approach Participating Players or Participating Officials directly to request interviews.

17. Unilateral Flash Interviews

- 17.1. RTVs with live unilateral productions at the Stadium may conduct flash interviews at the end of the Match with Participating Players and/or Participating Officials at specific areas designated by the AFC, subject to the following conditions:
 - 17.1.1. all personnel and equipment shall be in place to avoid any delay in conducting the proposed interviews;
 - 17.1.2. all interviews shall be conducted in English or the mother tongue of the Participating Team or interviewee. There is no requirement for the Participating Team to provide translation;
 - 17.1.3. each interview shall not exceed ninety (90) seconds in duration and shall be in front of a Competition backdrop, as produced and provided by the AFC Commercial Rights Partner;
 - 17.1.4. the unilateral flash-interview positions shall be located near either corner flag on the side of the Pitch where the team benches are located or at a suitable location determined by the AFC;
 - 17.1.5. each RTV may conduct a maximum of four (4) sequential interviews (the head coach and up to three [3] Participating Players) with each Participating Team (the head coach or player who attended the multilateral flash interviews shall also be requested to attend interviews of RTVs as part of the “head coach and up to 3 players” each Participating Team is required to provide for flash interviews subject to the relevant Competition regulations);

- 17.1.6. the AFC Commercial Rights Partner shall provide the list of individuals requested by the RTVs for flash interviews no later than ten (10) minutes before the end of the Match. The HB and the RTVs shall not approach Participating Players or Participating Officials directly to request interviews;
- 17.1.7. all such interviews shall be carried out in front of a relevant backdrop, if specified by the AFC and/or the AFC Commercial Rights Partner; and
- 17.1.8. all RTV personnel shall position themselves behind the touchline advertising board or leave the Field Area upon conclusion of the Unilateral flash interview.

18. Mixed Zone (Match Day and MD-1)

- 18.1. The Mixed Zone will be located between the team dressing rooms and the Participating Team buses. The AFC shall provide priority access to the mixed zone to RTVs. If space is available, the AFC and the AFC Commercial Rights Partner may at its discretion provide access to NRHs.

Entrances and Exits

- 18.2. There will be three (3) entrances and exits into the mixed zone:
 - 18.2.1. for Participating Players and Participating Officials to enter the mixed zone from the team dressing room area;
 - 18.2.2. for Participating Players and Participating Officials to exit the mixed zone to their team bus; and
 - 18.2.3. for Media to enter and exit the mixed zone.
- 18.3. They shall only be accessed with a valid Accreditation Card.

Layout

- 18.4. The Participating Players and Participating Officials shall pass along a corridor through the mixed zone, wherein the Media will be able to speak to them over a barrier.
- 18.5. The mixed zone will be divided into separate sections for representatives from television, radio and the written press.
 - 18.5.1. The Participating Players and Participating Officials shall pass through the area designated for representatives from television first;
 - 18.5.2. Participating Players and Participating Officials are required to pass through the mixed zone but are not obliged to give any interviews;
 - 18.5.3. A designated area, with suitable lighting and backdrops, shall be provided for all RTVs in the mixed zone.
- 18.6. Only RTVs and admitted NRHs may conduct video interviews in the mixed zone. Other Media may conduct recorded audio interviews only.

19. Press Conference Room (Match Day and MD-1)

- 19.1. A camera platform with a view of the top table shall be assigned for use by the HB or Media. The AFC Commercial Rights Partner will give priority for access to the press conference to the HB and the RTVs. If space is available, the AFC Commercial Rights Partner may at its discretion give access to the NRHs.
- 19.2. A public announcement system with audio distribution via a splitter box at the camera platform shall be installed by the Host Organisation.
- 19.3. No other microphones or recording devices, other than those installed by the LOC for the public announcement system, are allowed on the top table.
- 19.4. The top table will be suitably lit to provide for clarity in filming and/or broadcast.
- 19.5. The backdrops to the press conferences may be as provided by the AFC and/or the AFC Commercial Rights Partner and may change depending on the party being interviewed;

PART E: PITCH-SIDE OPERATIONS

20. Host Broadcaster Floor Manager

- 20.1. The HB floor manager shall:
 - 20.1.1. be present at all times during the on-air production and/or rehearsal;
 - 20.1.2. oversee the operation of the HB cameras in sensitive areas (dressing rooms, team arrivals, interviews and tunnel) and shall be in constant communication with the HB match director;
 - 20.1.3. be on the ground and available to liaise and coordinate with the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner Venue Manager;
 - 20.1.4. be the initial point of contact for any technical or personnel issues with the HB crew for the AFC and pass on the information to the HB match director and his production team in the OB van;
 - 20.1.5. liaise with the AFC Media Officer and the AFC Commercial Rights Partner venue manager regarding post-Match interviews and is responsible to cue the start of these interviews;
 - 20.1.6. liaise with the General Coordinator and/or AFC Match Commissioner and/or AFC Marketing Officer during the Match to ensure that the AFC is satisfied with the allocation of touchline cameras, pitch centre cameras and cameramen movements, if necessary;
 - 20.1.7. be the point of contact for the AFC in relation to decisions about cooling breaks, **weather-related delays and other match interruptions**, and shall communicate this information to the HB match director; and
 - 20.1.8. remain at a fixed position at the discretion of the AFC throughout the duration of the Match.
- 20.2. Under no circumstances shall any member of the HB crew approach the fourth official to obtain information regarding substitutions, cautions and injury time during the Match. The HB floor manager shall coordinate with the AFC, at the AFC's direction, to obtain such information.

21. Pre/Post-Match Stand-Up Interviews and Pitch-Side Reporters

Pre and Post match Stand-Up interviews

- 21.1. RTVs, comprising of up to three (3) persons, may conduct stand-up interviews near the corner flag and/or behind the goal line Pitch-side advertising boards, subject to the prior consent of the AFC and booking a position with AFC Commercial Rights Partner. Any guest must be accredited for access to the Field of Play.

- 21.2. The area will be available for use by RTVs during pre-Match warm-up. The interview shall be finished **twenty (20)** minutes prior to kick-off.
- 21.3. The following individuals shall not be interviewed during any pre/post-Match stand-up interview:
 - 21.3.1. any Participating Officials that are registered to sit on the team bench; and
 - 21.3.2. any Participating Players listed in the starting line-up, as substitutes, or that are suspended for the Match.
- 21.4. One (1) Pitch-side reporter plus one (1) assistant may make live voice reports during the Match from the position behind the goal line Pitch-side advertising board (at the unilateral camera positions).
- 21.5. The Pitch-side reporter shall not have any direct communication with any of the Participating Officials and/or Participating Players during the Match.
- 21.6. The Pitch-side reporter shall be required to remain seated and immobile at all times during the Match. At no time may a Pitch-side reporter approach the team bench and/or any individuals during warm-up.
- 21.7. The Pitch-side reporter shall be required to use a headset microphone only. No other equipment (such as a desk or camera) except for a small monitor by arrangement with the AFC Commercial Rights Partner and with the prior approval of the AFC shall be allowed in this area during the Match.

PART F: VIDEO RECORDINGS OF MATCHES BY THE TEAM OFFICIAL DELEGATION

22. Video Recordings

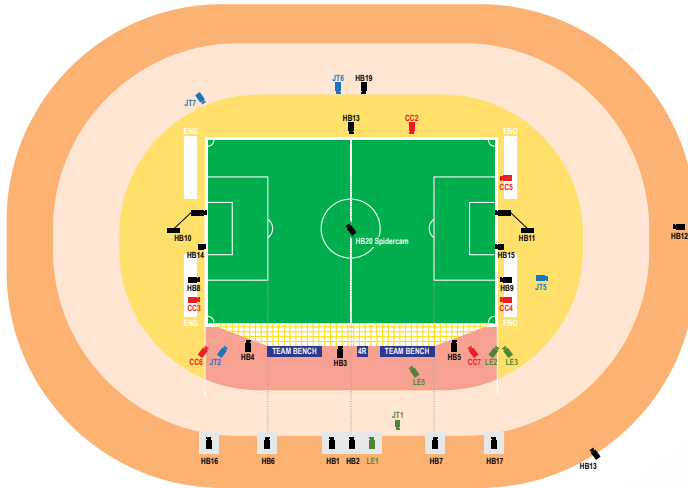
- 22.1. The AFC reserves the sole and exclusive right to produce, exploit and further distribute any content and/or filming for any commercial and non-commercial purposes, including but not limited to documentaries and online video content, related to the Competition and/or the Participating Team, Participating Players and/or Participating Officials.
- 22.2. The Participating Team shall ensure that no member of its Team Official Delegation or any third-parties produce, exploit, and/or further distribute any film material relating to the Competition or the participation of a Participating Team in the Competition, for any purposes without prior written consent of the AFC.
- 22.3. Participating Teams can request for permission to film the following activities which are subject to AFC's review and approval:
- 22.3.1. "Live or recorded" footage of team training sessions at the team's training site on MD-2 or earlier, noting that there is no ambush marketing on sponsorship partners;
 - 22.3.2. "Live or recorded" footage of team's MD-1 Official training sessions for the first 15mins only (similar restriction imposed on the media);
 - 22.3.3. "Live or recorded" footage of Pre/Post-Match Press Conferences on ENG cameras / mobile devices;
 - 22.3.4. "Live or recorded" footage of Team Bus Arrivals* (providing there is no hinderance to the HB and is in a fixed position);
 - 22.3.5. "Live or recorded" footage of Team Warm-ups* (KO-50min to KO-20mins ONLY);
 - 22.3.6. Post-Match dressing room celebrations (If approved, Participating Teams must share a copy of the recording in its native format (if requested) with the AFC and/or AFC Commercial Partner;
- 22.4. Participating Teams shall also be permitted to conduct Technical Filming during Matches subject to the following:
- 22.4.1. only two (2) members of the Team Official Delegation may make such recordings - one (1) camera operator and one (1) assistant;
 - 22.4.2. only one (1) camera per Participating Team may be used (unless otherwise provided for in the relevant Competition regulations);
 - 22.4.3. only lightweight, compact video camera equipment on tripod may be used;

- 22.4.4. during filming, the Participating Official making the recording must wear the technical filming bib distributed by AFC Media Officer at the start of the Competition. Only **two (2)** such bibs will be distributed to each Participating Team. It must be returned when the Participating Team is eliminated from the Competition;
 - 22.4.5. the Participating Official must make contact with the AFC Marketing Officer and AFC Media Officer before the Match to locate a suitable position;
 - 22.4.6. filming is permitted for technical analysis purposes only as opposed to any general documentation of the stay in the host country and the Competition.
- 22.5. Under no circumstances shall recordings or images taken in the Stadium or other Controlled Access Area be publicly distributed or otherwise used for any type of commercial or non-commercial exploitation, either before, during or after the Competition. Any abuse of video footage constitutes a serious violation of the Media Rights and will be sanctioned by the AFC.

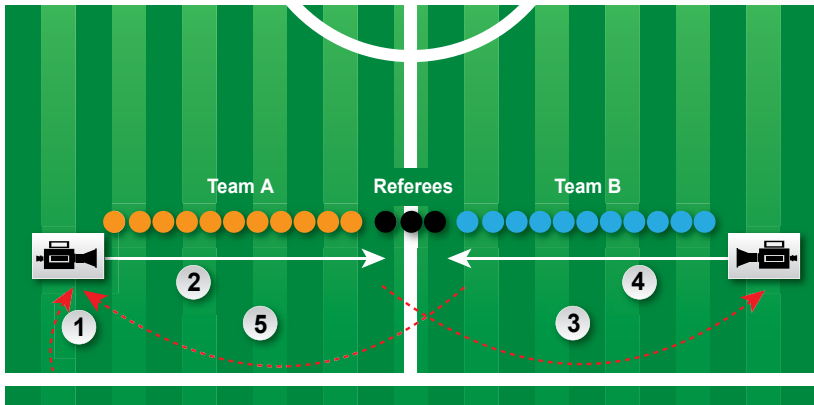
SCHEDULE A - Camera Positioning Summary

- **Main cameras:** The main cameras need to be positioned directly on the halfway line at a suitable height within the main stand. The cameras need to have a clear, unobstructed view of the Field of Play at all times.
- **Pitch-level center camera:** To be located in line with the halfway line in front of the fourth official if suitable camera seat is used or will be fixed on the halfway line next to the fourth official if camera on tripod is used.
- **Offside cameras:** Located in the main stand facing the sixteen (16) metre line at each end of the Pitch on the same side of the Stadium as the main cameras. These cameras can be located higher in the main stand than the main cameras.
- **Pitch level cameras behind the goal line:** Cameras will be located behind the advertising boards that run parallel to the goal lines at each end of the Pitch. The exact location and number of cameras in this area is decided on a Match by Match basis, with the locations being confirmed on MD-1.
- **Pitch level cameras along the by line:** Cameras can be located in a fixed location at Pitch level on the same side as the main cameras as long as they do not obstruct the view of the Field of Play for the fourth official and or the team benches. The cameras should also be far enough back from the Pitch to ensure that there is no danger to Participating Players.
- **Steadicams/handheld cameras:** Steadicams and handheld cameras can be used on the same side of the Pitch as the main cameras, with one operating on each half of the Pitch. This will be operated by one (1) cameraman, and if cabled, one (1) cable assistant. The cameras must not encroach in front of the team benches, should not interfere with the assistant referee running the line and should not block the line of sight from the fourth official to the Field of Play.
- **Pitch level Steadicam/handheld cameras outside of play:** Up to two (2) Steadicams or handheld cameras are allowed on to the Field of Play to cover the players walking on, team line-ups, anthems, VIP Handshakes and the coin toss, plus post-Match reactions and celebrations.
- **Tunnel camera:** A single handheld camera is allowed into the tunnel prior to the teams walking out before the start of the Match, half-time and full-time. The camera must not impede the Participating Players, Participating Officials or Match Officials.
- **Stand camera behind goals:** A camera can be installed in the stand directly behind each goal, with the camera located directly in line with the penalty marks at each end. The penalty mark closest to the camera should be visible above the crossbar of the goal.
- **Beauty shot:** Where access is suitable a fixed camera can be located at a high point in the Stadium to allow a panoramic shot of the complete venue.
- **Reverse pitch level cameras:** A camera or cameras can be located behind the advertising boards on the opposite side of the Pitch to the main cameras to allow for a different perspective and coverage of the team benches.
- **Reverse stand level camera:** Cameras can be placed within the stand opposite to the main stand.

SCHEDULE B - Generic HB Camera Plan



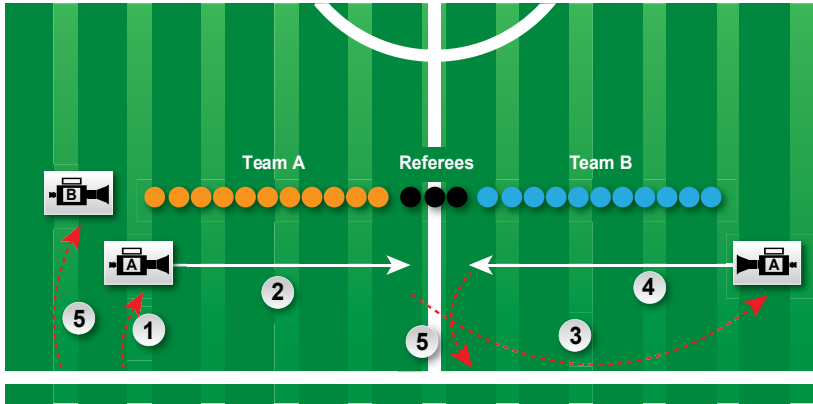
SCHEDULE C - Steadicam/Handheld Cameras



As the teams walk out, Steadicam/handheld camera is off the Field of Play

1. Steadicam/handheld camera enters the Field of Play as the teams line up for Team A anthem.
2. Steadicam/handheld camera walks down Team A line-up and stops at the referees.
3. Steadicam/handheld camera repositions to the end of Team B line-up, ready for Team B anthem.
4. Steadicam/handheld camera walks up Team B line-up and stops at the referees.
5. Steadicam/handheld camera repositions to 1 to cover handshakes before leaving the Pitch.

Note: If Team A is hosting, process is the same but Steadicam/handheld camera starts with Team B line-up shoot. The procedure shall differ on a Match-by-Match basis



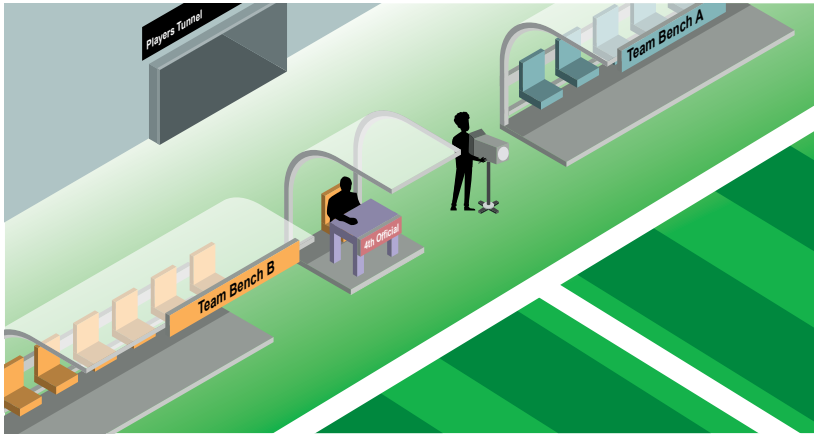
As the teams walk out, both Steadicam/handheld cameras are off the Field of Play

1. Steadicam/handheld camera A enters the Field of Play as the teams line up for Team A anthem.
2. Steadicam/handheld camera A walks down Team A line-up and stops at the referees.
3. Steadicam/handheld camera A repositions at the end of Team B line-up, ready for Team B anthem.
4. Steadicam/handheld camera A walks up Team B line-up and stops at the referees.
5. Steadicam/handheld camera A leaves the Field of Play directly.

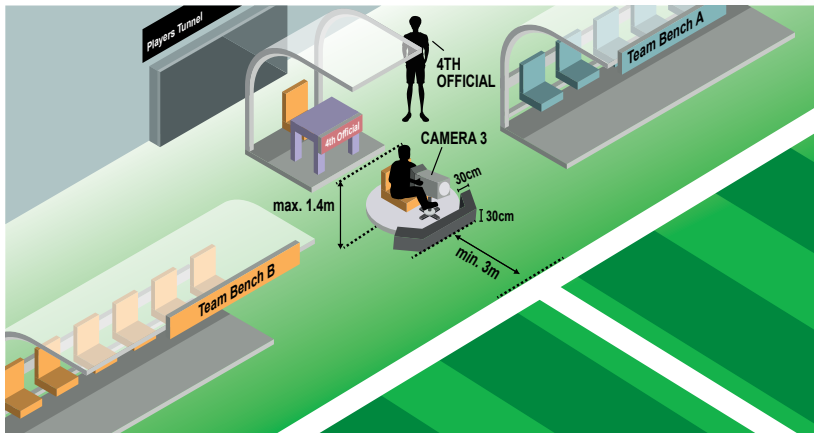
Simultaneously, Steadicam/handheld camera B enters the Field of Play to cover handshakes.

Note: If Team A is hosting, the procedure is the same but Steadicam/handheld camera A starts with Team B line-up shoot.

SCHEDULE D - Pitch-Side Halfway Line Camera Positioning

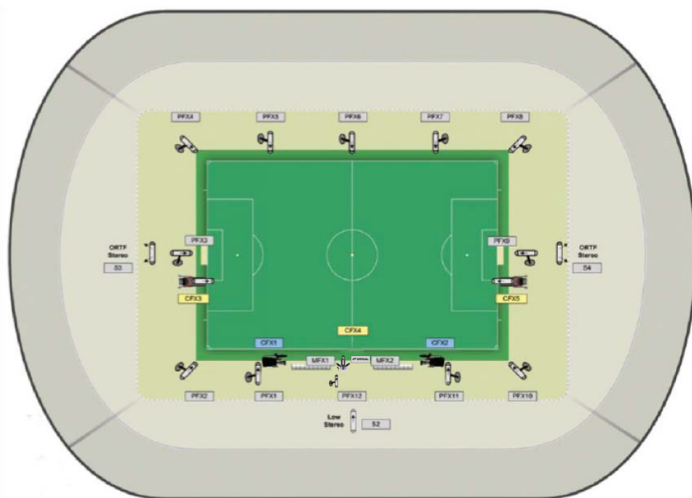


The camera shall be positioned as above, sharing the halfway line with the fourth official bench, if the camera is used on a tripod.



The camera shall be positioned as above, in front of the fourth official bench, if the camera is used on a suitable seat and fulfils the requirements as stipulated in Article 10.3 above.

SCHEDULE E - Generic Microphone Plan



SCHEDULE F - Match Day Operation Countdown

Time	Task	Location
Up to 2 hrs to Kick-off	Team Dressing Room Filming	Team Dressing Rooms
- 90 min	Team Bus Arrival Filming	Team drop off area
- 90 min	Head Coach Arrival Interview	Team drop off area
- 20 min	Pre/Post Stand-ups - complete by	Field of Play
- 10 min	Players Tunnel	Tunnel
0	Kick-off	Field of Play
+ 80 min	Flash Interview Preparation	Field of Play
+ 90 min	Flash interviews	Field of Play
	Post-Match Press Conference	Press Conference
+ 100 min	Mixed Zone Interviews	Mixed Zone

SCHEDULE G - Commentary Positions

Commentary positions are positions for three (3) persons, preferably located at the middle of the main stand or within the media tribune which are allocated by the AFC. Each position is separated by a partition screen or gangway and has access to share wireless internet and power.

All commentary positions shall have easy access to/from the broadcast compound, Field of Play, mixed zone, press conference room and media centre.

APPENDIX 19 | MINIMUM TICKET ALLOCATION

1. Complimentary Tickets

- 1.1. Host Organisations shall provide the following Complimentary Tickets, for each Competition to the AFC and/or AFC Commercial Rights Partner:
 - 1.1.1. fifty percent (50%) of the VVIP Tribune (including without limitation, royal boxes, sky or hospitality boxes and suites, or any other type of suite) for each Match; and
 - 1.1.2. VIP (including any hosting services, if available), Zone A and Zone B Tickets for each Match, as follows.

AFC Asian Cup

Match	VIP	Zone A	Zone B
Opening Match	120	1,000	500
Group Stage* / Round of 16	100	800	300
Quarter Finals	100	900	300
Semi Finals / Final	120	1,000	500

* excluding the opening match

AFC Champions League

Match	VIP	Zone A	Zone B
Group Stage	60	450	300
Round of 16 / Quarter Finals	60	500	350
Semi Finals	80	500	350
Finals	100	600	400

AFC Cup

Match	VIP	Zone A	Zone B
Group Stage	40	250	200
Knockout Stage*	40	250	200
Zonal Final (West) / Inter-Zone Finals	50	250	200
Final	80	300	200

* excluding Zonal Final (West) and Inter-Zone Finals

FIFA World Cup Qualifiers Final Round

Match	VIP	Zone A	Zone B
All Matches	100	600	400

AFC U23 Asian Cup

Match	VIP	Zone A	Zone B
Group Stage / Quarter Finals	60	450	300
Semi Finals / 3rd/4th Place Playoff / Final	80	500	350

AFC Futsal Asian Cup

Match	VIP	Zone A	Zone B
All Matches	30	200	150

AFC Futsal Club Championship

Match	VIP	Zone A	Zone B
All Matches	30	150	100

Other Competitions

Match	VIP	Zone A	Zone B
All Matches	50	350	300

2. Purchasable Tickets

2.1. Host Organisations shall provide the AFC Commercial Rights Partner with the opportunity to purchase Tickets at face-value for each Match.

2.1.1. Zone A and Zone B Tickets for each Match, as follows:

AFC Asian Cup

Match	Zone A	Zone B
Opening Match	1,150	2,000
Group Stage / Round of 16	340	600
Quarter Finals	540	1,000
Semi Finals / Final	1,150	2,000

AFC Champions League

Match	Zone A	Zone B
Group Stage	130	200
Round of 16 / Quarter Finals	130	200
Semi Finals	330	600
Finals	400	600

AFC Cup

Match	Zone A	Zone B
Group Stage	120	100
Knockout Stage*	120	100
Zonal Final (West) / Inter-Zone Finals	130	100
Final	140	200

* excluding Zonal Final (West) and Inter-Zone Finals

FIFA World Cup Qualifiers Final Round

Match	Zone A	Zone B
All Matches	350	500

AFC U23 Asian Cup

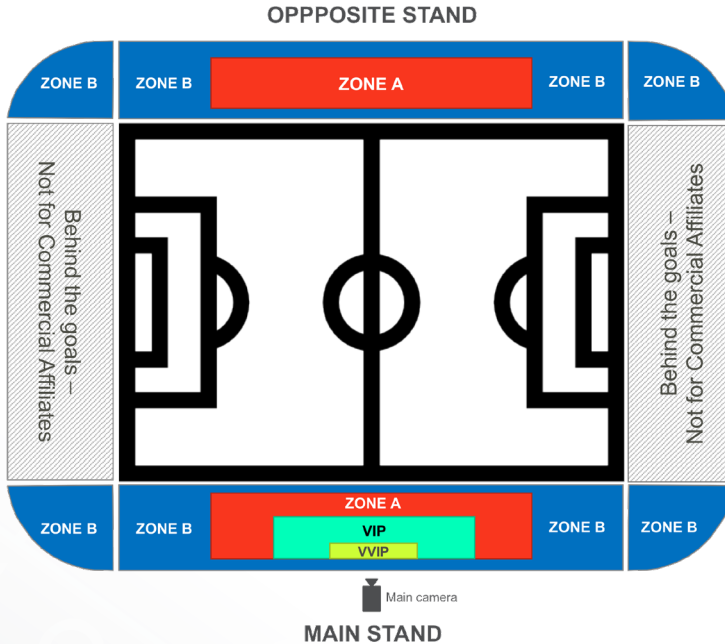
Match	Zone A	Zone B
Group Stage / Quarter Finals	120	200
Semi Finals / 3rd/4th Place Playoff / Final	140	200

Other Competitions

Match	Zone A	Zone B
All Matches	110	100

The AFC reserves the right to request for any Tickets in addition to those set out herein.

APPENDIX 20 | TICKET ZONING PRINCIPLES



ALL TICKETS WITHIN A ZONE MUST BE GROUPED IN A CONTINUOUS BLOCK

VVIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VVIP hosting by Host Organisation • Highest non-saleable tickets • Includes hosting area with F&B services
VIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best seats in the house • Situated on the main stand and as much as possible level with the centre line with clear view on the entire pitch • Must be between the two (2) penalty areas • Includes hosting when existing/available
ZONE A*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situated between the penalty areas in principle and no further than the goal lines • As much as possible level with the halfway line • Main stand, covered (roof) and lower tier as a 1st option • Opposite stand provided it is covered as a 2nd option • Stops at the same height as the VVIP area (on the main stand)
ZONE B*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situated anywhere except behind the goals or in the core fan areas

* Tickets within a zone may be a combination of different existing categories.

APPENDIX 21 | ACCREDITATION POLICY

1. Only individuals in possession of a valid permit shall be granted entry to the Stadium. Valid permits shall include:
 - 1.1. Tickets;
 - 1.2. Accreditation Cards and, when necessary (i.e. access to Control Access Areas), supplementary accreditation devices (SADs); and
 - 1.3. other permits as determined by the AFC or Host Organisation.
2. If an individual cannot produce a valid permit, they shall be refused entry and may be escorted from the respective Controlled Access Area.
3. It is the responsibility of the Host Organisation and their stewards, Stadium safety and security management staff and public authorities to ensure that only those persons with authority to be inside the Stadium, including members of the public, officials and staff, are permitted into the Stadium.
4. Where restricted access zones within a Controlled Access Area have been established (e.g. official areas, the Field of Play, the media centre etc.), stewards or other appropriate security staff shall be stationed at the designated area to enforce and control access in accordance with the established accreditation and Stadium zoning plan.
5. Accreditation shall be issued by the AFC or the Host Organisation to individuals with specific functions at a Competition or Official Function.
6. Accreditation shall, as far as possible, be forgery-proof and provide protection against multiple use.
7. Accreditation is non-transferable.
8. Permits shall restrict access to specific, clearly marked areas and specified Controlled Access Areas.
9. The number of “access all areas” passes shall be kept to an absolute minimum and access rights must be based on working requirements.
10. Accreditation does not permit the holder to attend a Match as a spectator or to occupy any seat in the Stadium that would normally be assigned to a Ticket.
11. A background/criminal check may be performed by the Host Organisation as part of the accreditation process where necessary.

12. Provision must be made for the withdrawal (on a temporary or permanent basis) of accreditation if the holder is acting in a manner that may prejudice the safety and security of others, a criminal act has been committed or suspected by the holder, the holder's actions are prejudicing the smooth running of the event or the holder has breached the Stadium code of conduct.
13. Subject to the agreed security concept and approved accreditation plans, identity cards held by members of the police and other official agencies (including fire and ambulance services) that allow them to carry out operational tasks at the Stadium shall also be regarded as valid permits, provided said members are in uniform and clearly identifiable.
14. Police officers and members of other security agencies wearing plainclothes shall be issued with appropriate accreditation for the tasks they are performing.

Access Rights: Accreditation Zones

Zone 1 Field Area	pitch, team benches, fourth official's bench, tunnel and access to field of play, photographers' and cameramen positions.
Zone 2 Competitions Area	team/referee dressing rooms, medical and doping control rooms, AFC and Host Organisation offices, corridors (with access to dressing rooms)
Zone 3 Public Areas	general public entrance, public sanitary facilities, public points of sale, concession areas, first aid, commercial display and spectator seats
Zone 4 Operations Areas	all rooms not in zone 2 (IT room, PA announcer booth, police/fire brigade rooms, electrical generator, medical facilities) and storage areas
Zone 5 VVIP/VIP Areas	VVIP/VIP reception and lounge, VVIP/VIP seats and VVIP area
Zone 6 Media Area	Media seats, mixed zone, press conference room, radio and TV commentary positions and observer seats
Zone 7 Media Centre	Media working area, Media catering area, Media briefing area, photographers' area and Media services
Zone 8 Broadcast Area	TV compound, radio and TV studios, camera platforms
Zone 9 Hospitality	hospitality areas

Disclaimer: The above is a standard zoning applicable to Competitions. The zoning that will be applied for each Match and/or Competition shall be determined by the AFC and/or Host Organisation. Otherwise, competitions areas in general will be divided into official areas (OA) and Field of Play (FOP).

AD and Zoning Activation Times

Day	AD Enforcement	Accreditation Zoning Activation	SADs Activation
Match days	An Accreditation Device is required to access the Stadium at any time	<p>Start: 4 hours before kick-off (roaming security in all access control points and rooms to be locked, accessible by relevant persons via access keys)</p> <p>Finish: 2 hours after final whistle (or until the end of activities in the relevant operational area such as the mixed zone and doping control room, whichever comes later)</p>	<p>Start: 2 hours before kick-off</p> <p>Finish: 2 hours after final whistle (or until the end of activities in the relevant operational area such as the mixed zone and doping control room, whichever comes later)</p>
Non-Match days		<p>Zoning Activation (Zones 1 & 2) 1 hour before the first training session / pre-Match press conference (whichever is earlier) until 1 hour after the last team's training session / pre-Match press conference (whichever is later)</p>	No activation

Access Boards

Access boards shall be set up within the Venues to display relevant information required for accreditation and access control. They shall be positioned at accreditation sensitive points throughout the Controlled Access Area in any official venue of an Official Function. The Host Organisation shall be responsible to set up the access boards, which shall be checked by the AFC Match Commissioner and AFC Safety and Security Officer before the commencement of any Official Function.

The access board displays information on which zones (and SADs, where applicable) are needed to enter an area, and the time when control of SADs is activated. In addition, on every Match day the respective Match number (sample of the SAD) shall be displayed on the board.

APPENDIX 22 | AFC MEDICAL GUIDELINES AND POLICIES**PART A: AFC GUIDELINES - FOOTBALL PARTICIPATION IN EXTREME CONDITIONS: HEAT, COLD AND HAZE**

Football, the most popular sport in the world, is played throughout the year with exposure to various extreme weather conditions. Limited scientific data and ethical issues that hamper research have not determined threshold levels or specific guidelines for safe participation in sports in extreme environments. Some studies have been conducted in football with the support of F-MARC. Participation in extreme environments may have a detrimental effect on the health of players and impair their performance. However, sport-specific guidelines need to be in place to protect players in each sport. The AFC Medical Committee recommends the following guidelines for participation in extreme environmental conditions.

1. Hot Environment

Ambient temperature and humidity, duration of exposure and intensity of physical activity, physical state of player and other related risk factors, if adequate precautionary measures are not taken, may expose players to heat related injuries - heatstroke, heat exhaustion and heat cramps. These conditions are rare in football but more importantly are preventable by the introduction of cooling breaks during Matches. No incidence of heatstroke has been reported during FIFA/AFC competitions.

Decision Process

- 1.1. The decision to introduce cooling breaks during a Match shall be based on the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) readings at ninety (90) and sixty (60) minutes prior to the commencement of the Match. If the WBGT readings are 32°C (thirty-two degrees Celsius) and above, cooling breaks may be introduced after consultation with the AFC General Coordinator and/or AFC Match Commissioner and the referee. This information must be communicated to each Participating Team and/or team doctor as well as the relevant authorities such as Media, Host Organisation, etc. Each break per half (i.e. at 30th and 75th minute) shall comprise three (3) minutes. During this stoppage time, players may rehydrate and soak themselves with cold wet towels provided by the Host Organisation.

Preventive Measures

- 1.2. Participating Teams shall be responsible for:
 - 1.2.1. monitoring players who have past history of heat related injuries;
 - 1.2.2. monitoring players with medical conditions (e.g. blood disorders);
 - 1.2.3. monitoring players on medications;
 - 1.2.4. modulating the iron-field activities (advise players to limit running with the ball, more passing during the match);
 - 1.2.5. setting strategies for hydration (encourage players to keep hydrating themselves prior and during match); and

- 1.2.6. advising good sleep and diet.

Host Organisation Obligation

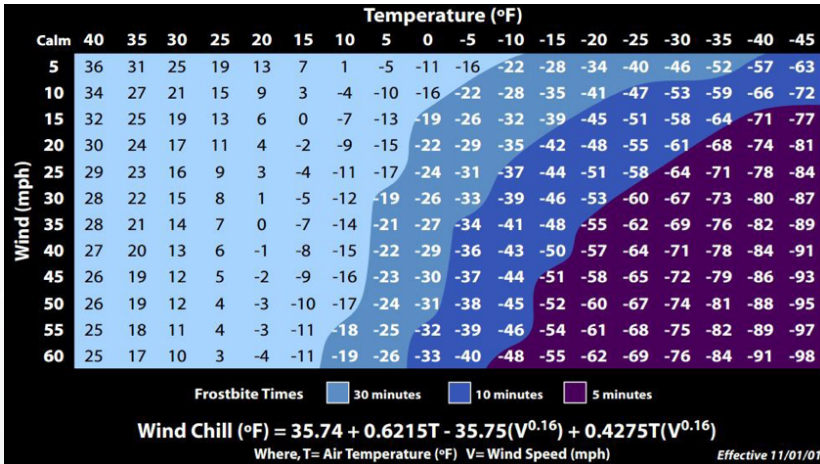
- 1.3. The Host Organisation shall be responsible for providing:
 - 1.3.1. two (2) cooler boxes (one for each team) with adequate quantities of ice during each half of the match for cooling breaks (i.e. 30th and 75th min.). Teams may use their own cooling items, if they so require;
 - 1.3.2. face towels soaked in ice cold water for players of each team (i.e. 11x2=22 and 4 for referees) for each cooling break;
 - 1.3.3. additional cold bottled water for players and referees for each cooling break; and
 - 1.3.4. emergency medical services as below:
 - 1.3.4.1. heat stroke diagnostic equipment and treatment logistics are available (rectal temperature thermometer; medications [anti-convulsion]); tub and tepid water spray etc.
 - 1.3.4.2. a medical team conversant with treatment of heat related injuries.

References:

- *F-MARC; FIFA Football Emergency Medicine Manual*
- *Clinical Sports Medicine, Brukner & Khan, fourth edition; Read chapter 58 page 1,132-1,142; Exercise in the heat;*
- *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports; volume 20, supplement 3, October 2010; Exercise in Hot Environments: From basic concepts to field applications*
- *Hydration and Sweating responses to hot-weather football competitions; SS Kurdak, SM Shirreffs, RJ Maughan, KT Ozgunen, C. Zeren, S. Korkmaz, Z. Yazici, G. Ersoz, MS Binnet, J. Dvorak*
- *Living, training and playing in the heat challenges to the football player and strategies for coping with environmental extremes; RJ Maughan, SM Shirreffs, KT Ozgunen, SS Kurdak, G. Ersoz, MS Binnet, J.Dvorak*
- *Hyperthermic-related challenges in aquatics, athletics, football and triathlon*
- *BJSM 2012 volume 46 issue 11, M. Mountjoy; JM Alonso; MF Bergeron; J. Dvorak; S. Miller; S Migliorini; DG Singh*
- *IOC Consensus statement on thermoregulatory and altitude challenges for high-level athletes; BJSM 2012 volume 46 issue 11;*
- *F-MARC Football Medicine Manual 2nd Edition. Chapter 2.6 Environmental Factors*

2. Cold Environment

Cold should not be a barrier to football participation if all risk factors are adequately evaluated and appropriate preventive actions are taken. Hence, cold related injuries, mainly hypothermia (core body temperature 35.0°C [thirty-five degrees Celsius] and below) can be prevented. Mild hypothermia may result in shivering and loss of musculoskeletal coordination. Heat can be lost through conduction, convection, radiation and evaporation. Body heat is lost more rapidly via wet conditions (conduction) and wind chill (convection / evaporation). There is no specific scientific data to demonstrate the threshold temperature to stop football activity. However, wind chill factors, clothing, with or without rain/snow fall together with ground conditions are additional factors taken into consideration to determine whether to continue or discontinue football activity. Officials may use a wind chill chart as a guide. Players will find cold acclimatisation more difficult to achieve and less effective to sustain normal body temperature or preventing cold related injuries than heat acclimatisation. Most football activities or matches take place around -10°C (minus ten degrees Celsius) or at higher temperatures.



Decision Process

- 2.1. Sixty (60) minutes before the commencement of the match, the AFC Medical Officer shall take note of the ambient temperature and wind chill. If temperature readings are -15°C (minus fifteen degrees Celsius) and below, the AFC Medical Officer shall advise the AFC Match Commissioner and the referee of the possibility of postponement of the Match and shall inform the team doctors and the medical team to observe the players carefully. If temperature readings are -25°C (minus twenty-five degrees Celsius) a postponement of the Match should be strongly advised. The decision of the referee shall be final in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

Preventive Measures

- 2.2. Participating Teams shall be responsible for:
 - 2.2.1. ensuring the players have appropriate clothing with insulation and/or windshield liner (wearing it in several layers) and protecting officials and players on the bench from cold weather/wind (i.e. warm clothing/windbreakers);

- 2.2.2. monitoring of players susceptible to hypothermia (previous episodes and especially lean players and cold intolerance). Children and adolescents are at a greater risk due to the greater body surface to mass ratio and low subcutaneous fat;
- 2.2.3. monitoring of players with medical conditions (e.g. Exercise Induced Asthma [EIA]/asthma, diabetes, hypothyroidism, cold induced urticaria);
- 2.2.4. encouraging drinking of fluids to prevent dehydration;
- 2.2.5. encouraging players to have a diet rich in carbohydrates (pre-participation increase in carbohydrate reserves is essential);
- 2.2.6. encouraging players to keep moving on the field and checking goalkeeper's movements;
- 2.2.7. being aware of the players on medication;
- 2.2.8. knowing the individual risk factors (age, body composition, medical history, fatigue) and additional risk factors for hypothermia such as injuries, dehydration; and
- 2.2.9. immediately after any football activity, removing wet clothes and encouraging hot showers, sauna etc.

Host Organisation Obligations

- 2.3. The Host Organisation shall be responsible for providing:
 - 2.3.1. trained team of emergency medical personnel (familiar with treatment of cold related injuries) to treat hypothermia with passive and active re-warming, frost bite (extremely rare); and
 - 2.3.2. medical supplies and equipment for treatment (e.g. hypothermia, EIA, hypoglycaemia etc.)

References:

- *FIFA Football Emergency Medicine Manual 2nd Edition*
- *Clinical Sports Medicine, Brukner & Kahn, fourth edition; chapter 59 page 1,146 -1,157*
- *Prevention of Cold Injuries during Exercise; Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise: November 2006 - Volume 38 - Issue 11 - pp 2012-2029; doi: Castellani, John W.; Young, Andrew J.; Ducharme, Michel B; Giesbrecht, Gordon G; Glickman, Ellen; Sallis, Robert E.*
- *Cappaert TA, et al, NATA position statement: environmental cold injuries. Journal of Athletic Training 2008; 43:640-658*
- *NCAA Guideline 2a; Cold stress and exposure. 2010-11; ports Medicine Handbook (21st Edition)*
- *Rich BSE, et al. Management of on-site emergencies, In: McKeag D Moeller JL, eds ACMS's Primary Care Sports Medicine, 2nd Edition Philadelphia, PA:LLW' 2007:155-164*

3. Haze – Air Pollution

No scientific studies have been conducted on the safety of elite athletes in extreme air pollution (haze). Limited scientific studies (environmental health) are published and information from health authorities provides some measure of direction. Air pollutants measured include sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and suspended particulate matters of less than 10µm (ten microns), mostly industrial waste, vehicular emissions and open burning (forest fires). With worldwide climatic changes, haze is becoming a common phenomenon especially in Asia and Member Associations are concerned about the safety and health of players. From an organisational point of view, suspension of Matches lead to additional financial commitments, broadcasting rights, travel rescheduling, ticketing etc. Furthermore, severe adverse health effects have been reported when exposed to haze, such as smarting of eyes, flu, sneezing, dry throat, dry cough, asthma and allergic reactions. The short term or long-term effects of exposure have not been well documented.

Air Pollution Index (API or PSI) – haze particulate matter consists of smoke, dust, moisture and vapour suspended in air that impair visibility and affect health. Most common contributor is open burning from domestic and forest fires, motor vehicles and industrial waste into the atmosphere. The air quality is measured using PSI – Pollution Standard Index or Air Pollution Index (API) and provides information on health hazards. The API or PSI levels defer from country to country and hence there is no common consensus. The following are the guidelines:

PSI/API	Up to 50	51 - 100	101 - 200	201 - 300	>300
	Good	Moderate	Unhealthy	Very unhealthy	Hazardous

Decision Process

- 3.1. As weather changes from time to time, it is important that Air Pollution Index (API) readings be taken at hundred twenty (120) minutes and sixty (60) minutes before the kick-off of the Match. The AFC Medical Officer shall contact the weather authorities for the API readings. If the API readings are 200 and above, the AFC Medical Officer shall report to the AFC Match Commissioner and the referee with a view to postpone the match. The decision of the referee shall be final.

Preventive Measures

- 3.2. Participating Teams shall be responsible for:
- 3.2.1. ensuring that players drink plenty of fluids;
 - 3.2.2. monitoring players that have history of asthma, exercise induced bronchospasm, players with history of allergies;
 - 3.2.3. watching out for players that may not perform optimally during the Match;
 - 3.2.4. maintaining good hygiene and staying indoors; and
 - 3.2.5. administration of flu vaccine.

Host Organisation Obligations

- 3.3. The Host Organisation shall be responsible for providing:
- 3.3.1. an emergency medical team / trained in such emergencies;
 - 3.3.2. access to a respiratory physician, if possible - an expert in dealing with such emergencies;
 - 3.3.3. additional medical personnel; and
 - 3.3.4. adequate emergency medical supplies and equipment.

References:

- <http://app2.nea.gov.sg/anti-pollution-radiation-protection/air-pollution/haze/health-advisory-for-haze#sthash.2BQTpmU4.dpuf>
- *The Link between Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices in Relation to Atmospheric Haze Pollution in Peninsular Malaysia*; Laura De Pretto , Stephen Acreman, Matthew J. Ashfold, Suresh K. Mohankumar, Ahimsa Campos-Arceiz ; 2015 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0143655>
- *Air Pollution Exposure and Physical Activity in China: Current Knowledge, Public Health Implications, and Future Research Needs* Jiaojiao Lü 1, Leichao Liang 1, Yi Feng 1, Rena Li 1,2,* and Yu Liu 1,* *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* 2015, 12, 14887-14897; doi:10.3390/ijerph121114887

PART B: AFC POLICY AND PROTOCOL ON HEAD CONCUSSION

4. Head Concussion

Concussion is defined as a complex pathophysiological process affecting the brain, induced by traumatic biomechanical forces. Several common features that incorporate clinical, pathological and biomechanical injury constructs that may be used in defining the nature of a concussive head injury are:

- concussion may be caused by a direct blow to the head, face, neck, or elsewhere on the body with an impulsive force transmitted to the head;
- concussion typically results in the rapid onset of short-lived impairment of neurological function that resolves spontaneously;
- concussion may result in neuropathological changes, but the acute clinical symptoms largely reflect a functional disturbance rather than structural injury;
- concussion results in a graded set of clinical syndromes that may or may not involve loss of consciousness; and
- no abnormality on standard structural neuroimaging studies are seen in concussion.

Protocol and Decision Process during the Match

4.1. A Participating Player who experiences a suspected concussion during a Match must undergo an examination by the team doctor in accordance with the protocols established by the AFC Medical Committee and/or documented in the FIFA Football Emergency Medicine Manual. The referee may temporarily suspend play up to three (3) minutes whenever an incident of suspected concussion occurs. The referee may only allow the injured Participating Player to continue playing with the authorisation of the team doctor, who must have evaluated the player and concluded that the player is **not exhibiting signs or symptoms of concussion**. The team doctor will have the final decision based on his/her clinical examination and is forbidden to allow a Participating Player to continue playing if concussion is suspected.

4.2. AFC recommends that Participating Teams follow the **return to play protocol set forth in the Sport Concussion Assessment Tool 5 (SCAT5)** for any player who has suffered concussion. SCAT5 recognises that the time frame for return to play may vary, including based on the player's age and history, and that doctors must use their clinical judgement in making decisions with respect to return to play.

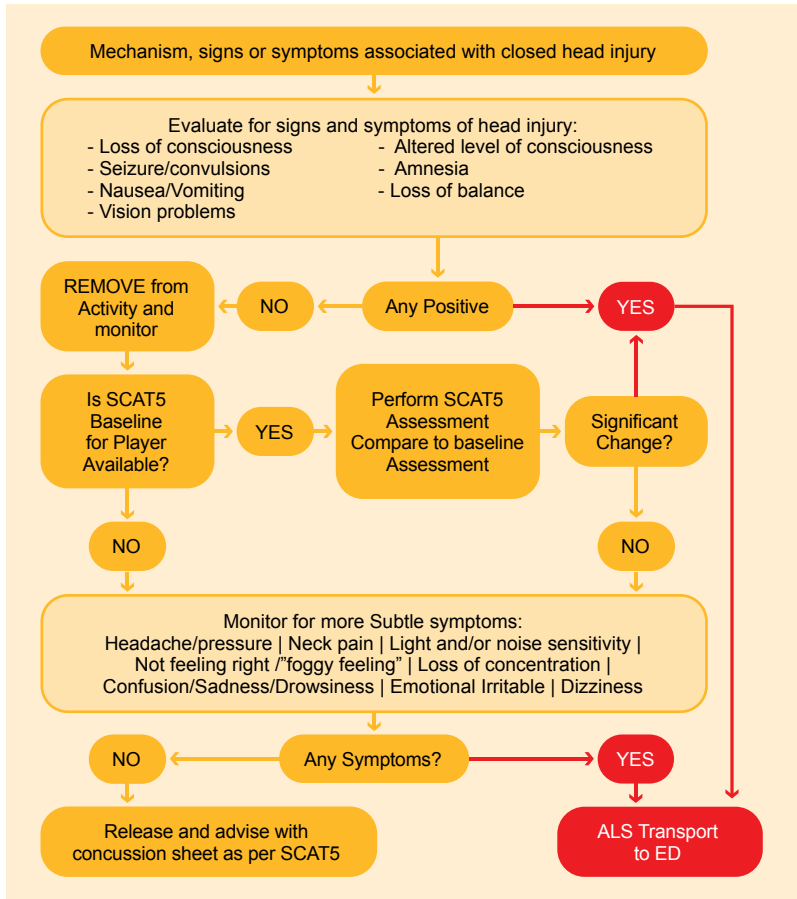
Head
Concussion

Referee to
stop the
play –
3 mins

Team
Physician
SCAT5 –
3 mins

Team
Physician
decision to
be relayed
to the
Referee

Referee to
take action
based on
decision by
the Team
Doctor



* The above is the visual flow of the management and treatment of head concussion.

Host Organisation Obligations

4.3. The Host Organisation shall be responsible for providing:

- 4.3.1. emergency medical personnel trained in the management of traumatic head concussion for cases in which they may be called-upon to assist the team medical personnel (team doctor and/or team physiotherapist) on assessment and treatment (if requested);
- 4.3.2. emergency personnel familiar with the SCAT5 protocol; and
- 4.3.3. on-pitch medical equipment available for treatment and management of head concussion (spinal board with head rest, immobilisation supplies and medications).

APPENDIX 23 | AFC COMPETITIONS

AFC National Team Competitions

No.	Final Competition	Preliminary Competition
1	AFC Asian Cup (Finals)	AFC Asian Cup (Qualifiers)
2	AFC U23 Asian Cup (Finals)	AFC U23 Asian Cup (Qualifiers)
3	AFC U20 Asian Cup (Finals)	AFC U20 Asian Cup (Qualifiers)
4	AFC U17 Asian Cup (Finals)	AFC U17 Asian Cup (Qualifiers)
5	AFC Solidarity Cup	
6	AFC Women's Asian Cup (Finals)	AFC Women's Asian Cup (Qualifiers)
7	AFC Women's U20 Asian Cup (Finals)	AFC Women's U20 Asian Cup (Qualifiers)
8	AFC Women's U17 Asian Cup (Finals)	AFC Women's U17 Asian Cup (Qualifiers)

AFC Club Competitions

No.	Final Competition	Preliminary Competition
1	AFC Champions League (Group Stage and Knockout Stage)	AFC Champions League (Preliminary Stage and Playoff Stage)
2	AFC Cup (Group Stage and Knockout Stage)	AFC Cup (Preliminary Stage and Playoff Stage)
3	AFC Women's Champions League (Group Stage and Knockout Stage)	AFC Women's Champions League (Preliminary Stage)

AFC Futsal and Beach Soccer Competitions

No.	Final Competition	Preliminary Competition
1	AFC Futsal Asian Cup (Finals)	AFC Futsal Asian Cup (Qualifiers)
2	AFC Futsal Club Championship	
3	AFC U20 Futsal Asian Cup (Finals)	AFC U20 Futsal Asian Cup (Qualifiers)
4	AFC Women's Futsal Asian Cup (Finals)	AFC Women's Futsal Asian Cup (Qualifiers)
5	AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup (Finals)	AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup (Qualifiers)

APPENDIX 24 | FULL STADIUM CLOSURE

1. Unless otherwise ordered by a competent AFC judicial body in accordance with the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code, no spectators are allowed to attend a match which is subject to a full stadium closure, with the exception of the following:
 - 1.1 a maximum of 27 VIP and VVIP guests (in total) for each Participating Team;
 - 1.2 the Team Official Delegation as per the relevant Competition Regulations;
 - 1.3 accredited broadcast staff and Media (journalists, photographers, etc.);
 - 1.4 police officers and security staff with tasks related to security at the Match;
 - 1.5 individuals carrying out functions related to the stadium (pitch maintenance, lighting, signage, etc.) and persons carrying out functions related to the Match (ball crew and children involved in the pre-Match ceremony and their chaperones, etc.);
 - 1.6 AFC staff and representatives and other authorised persons who are carrying out functions at the Match; and
 - 1.7 staff, officials, representatives and guests of the AFC and AFC Commercial Rights Partner, Broadcast Partners, Commercial Affiliates and Host Broadcaster.

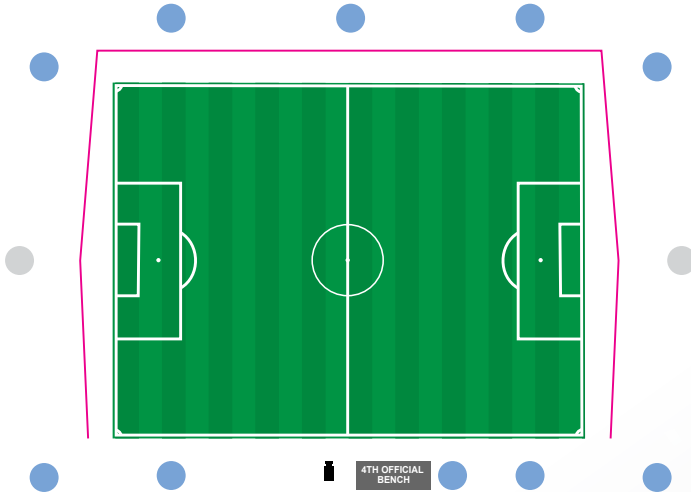
APPENDIX 25 | BALL CREW GUIDELINES

1. Standard ball crew pre-match schedule, which may be adjusted by the AFC Match Commissioner or AFC General Coordinator if needed:

Countdown	Activity
-05h	Arrival of ball crew at the stadium
-04h	Rehearsal starts
-01h	Ball crew lines up in tunnel (without balls)
-55'	Ball crew in position (without balls)
-20'	Ball crew returns to holding room
-15'	Ball crew lines up in tunnel (with balls)

2. All ball crew members should have an understanding of the game and have experience at least at the domestic level.
3. **Briefing on matchday:** Upon arrival at the stadium, the ball crew shall be directed to the relevant holding room to wait for the Official Countdown to begin. The AFC Match Commissioner, with assistance from the ball crew supervisor, shall brief the ball crew about their duties during the rehearsal.
4. **Accessing the Pitch:** The ball crew shall line up in two lines in the tunnel before the players' warm-up session (without balls) as well as before the match and before the second half (with balls). The ball crew members that will be positioned furthest away from the tunnel shall lead the two lines and the ball crew members positioned closest to the tunnel shall go last. The ball crew shall leave the tunnel in an orderly manner and jog towards their assigned positions.

5. **Positioning:** For Matches in which twelve (12) ball crew members are used, there shall be three (3) ball crew members each on both touchlines and three (3) ball crew members each on both goal lines as shown below. In case there are only ten (10) ball crew members used for a Match, the ball crew members behind each goal can be removed.



6. Unless instructed by the Referee, the ball crew must always remain behind their goal line/touchline and never enter the field of play.
7. Ball crew shall stay attentive throughout the Match and follow the action on the pitch. This will assist them in ensuring where to send the balls when the ball on the pitch goes out of play.
8. **Holding the ball:** During the Match, the ball crew should sit on the stools/low chairs provided and hold a ball in their hands. The ball crew shall not play with a ball at any time.
9. **Advertising boards:** The ball crew shall stand behind the advertising boards and behind any photographers or camera operators. They shall never touch or lean over the advertising boards. The ball crew shall not jump over the advertising boards to collect a ball. They shall always run around the boards using one of the gaps in a corner to retrieve a ball. The ball crew shall only walk in front of the advertising boards when action on the pitch is away from the area.
10. **Throwing the ball to a player:** When the ball on the pitch goes out of play, the ball crew member closest to the point where the ball went out of play shall throw their ball in an underarm motion to the player who will restart the game. The ball crew member must ensure that a new ball is definitely needed before sending a ball onto the pitch. They should also wait until the player is at the touchline and gives a signal to receive the new ball, before throwing their ball to the player.

11. **Rolling a ball to another ball crew member:** Ball crew shall only roll balls to another ball crew member and the same shall be done quickly and accurately. Ball crew shall get low to the ground by stepping forward with the opposite foot of the rolling hand. The ball shall then be rolled along the ground without any bounces.
12. **Retrieving a ball:** When play has restarted, the ball crew member who gave their ball to the player shall retrieve the ball that went out of play and then immediately return to their position. Depending on where the ball went out of play comes to a stop, the following shall be done by the ball crew member who gave their ball to the player:
 - a. **Between the touchline and the advertising boards:** the ball crew member must wait until the action moves away from that area before they retrieve the ball.
 - b. **In the stands:** the ball crew member shall try to retrieve it with the help of the stewards and security while remaining at pitch level. The ball crew member shall never go into a stand to retrieve a ball but should instead ask the spectators to throw the ball back without taking any risks. If the spectators do not return the ball, the ball crew member shall return to their position and wait for a new ball to be provided by the ball crew supervisor.
13. **Players' warm-up:** The ball crew shall take their positions without the balls for the players' pre-match warm up as well. Participating Teams shall use their own balls for warm-up but the ball crew shall assist with retrieving any balls that leave the pitch. Between the end of warm-up and start of the match, the ball crew may return to their holding room for drinks and a toilet break, but they should return to the tunnel at least fifteen (15) minutes before kick-off, or as instructed by the AFC Match Commissioner.
14. **Half-time:** The ball crew shall return to their holding room and all balls must be returned to the ball crew supervisor. The ball crew shall take their positions for the second half in the same process as followed for the first half.
15. **Kicks from the Penalty Mark:** Only three (3) ball crew members shall be used beside the goal and behind the advertising boards where the kicks from the penalty mark are taken. The remaining ball crew members shall return to the holding room as per the end of match procedure and shall not remain on the pitch to watch the kicks from the penalty mark.
16. **End of Match:** At the end of the match, the ball crew shall return to the holding room and return all balls to the ball crew supervisor. The ball crew shall not give a ball to any players even if they request for one. The ball crew supervisor shall return all balls to the AFC Match Commissioner.





ASIAN FOOTBALL CONFEDERATION

AFC House, Jalan 1/155B, Bukit Jalil, 57000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

T: +603 8994 3388 | F: +603 8994 2689

the-AFC.com