

The AFC Futsal Club Licensing Regulations

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SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND LICENSING PROCESS

1. Introduction

- A “Club License”, shall be granted by the Licensor if the applicant club fulfills the requirements specified below in these regulations.
- The “Club License” shall be a requirement to be eligible to participate in the National League and AFC Competitions.

2. Objectives

The main objective of any Futsal Club Licensing Regulations is to provide structure and guidance for the development of futsal clubs and seek to:

- Establish reliability, credibility and integrity of the National League along with the clubs participating in the league competition.
- Promotion and continuous improvement of standards of all the aspects of futsal.
- Ensure qualified coaches are engaged in training of the players in each National Futsal League participating club with the overall aim to improve the standard and quality of the matches.
- Ensure development of youth teams.
- Ensure adequate and good quality match and training facilities for the clubs participating in the National Futsal League.
- Improve the overall administration and management organisation of the clubs and make them more efficient, productive and transparent.
- Improve the economic and financial standings of clubs and generate revenues through effective marketing and commercial exploitation by the clubs.

3. LICENSOR

A. WHO IS THE LICENSOR?

- The National Football Association or its affiliated Futsal league is the Licensor.
- The National Football Association or its affiliated Futsal league as the licensor is legally authorised to draft, finalise and issue the license to any applicant seeking to get the license.
- The National Football Association or its affiliated Futsal league governs the licensing system, appoints the corresponding licensing bodies and fixes the necessary processes.
- The National Football Association or its affiliated Futsal league guarantees the license applicant (club) full confidentiality with regards to information given by the license applicant during the licensing process.
- Anyone involved in the licensing process or appointed by the Football Association or its affiliated Futsal league will ensure confidentiality of the tasks undertaken.

B. DECISION MAKING BODIES

The Licensor shall have two decision making bodies to decide on the application and hearing appeals on the granting of a license to the applicants. The two decision making bodies shall be independent of each other and the members shall not have any conflict of interest. Members of the decision making bodies shall have relevant knowledge of professional football and one or more of the criteria mentioned in these regulations. The quorum for the decision making bodies shall be three and all decisions made shall be in writing. The decision making bodies are:

- i. **First Instance Body (FIB)**
- ii. **Appeals Body (AB)**

i. **First Instance Body (FIB)**

- a. The FIB decides on whether a license should be granted to an applicant club on the basis of the documents provided and in accordance with the Futsal Club Licensing Regulations. Members of the FIB shall include a qualified lawyer and a qualified accountant/auditor.

ii. **Appeals Body (AB)**

- a. The AB decides on appeals submitted in writing and makes a final and binding decision on whether a license should be granted or revoked based on the documents submitted by the deadline. Members of the AB shall include a qualified lawyer and a qualified accountant/auditor.
- b. Appeals may be lodged by:
 - i. The license applicant club, who received the refusal of the FIB

- ii. The licensee club, whose license has been withdrawn by the FIB
- iii. The Licensing manager of National Football Association or its affiliated Futsal league
- c. The AB makes its decision based on the documents submitted before the FIB. No new documents or evidence shall be submitted.

C. LICENSING ADMINISTRATION

- a. The Licensing Administration of the National Football Association or its affiliated futsal league is responsible for all the administrative matters relating to the Club Licensing Regulations.
- b. The Licensing Administration is responsible for:
 - i. Preparing, implementing and further developing the Futsal Club Licensing Regulations
 - ii. Providing administrative support to the decision making bodies
 - iii. Assisting, advising and monitoring the licensed clubs during the season
- c. All persons involved in the licensing process must comply with strict confidentiality rules regarding information received during licensing procedure.
- d. The Licensing Administration will not be influenced or affected by the decision making bodies in any aspects.

D. NATIONAL FUTSAL LEAGUE SEASON

The National Futsal League Season is defined as one cycle of the National Futsal League competition that usually commences in the month of ----- and usually concludes in the month of ----- .

4. LICENCE APPLICANT AND LICENCE

A. DEFINITION OF LICENSE APPLICANT

- A license applicant is defined as a legal entity fully and solely responsible for the futsal team participating in national and international club competitions which applies for a license.
- An individual or a natural person cannot apply for a license.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LICENSE APPLICANT

The license applicant is responsible for ensuring that the Licensor is provided with all necessary information and/or documents relevant to proving that the licensing obligations are fulfilled, as these obligations relate to the criteria set out under the club licensing regulations.

C. LICENSE

A license is a right given by the Licensor to the futsal club to participate in the National Futsal League for the upcoming season. Once the license applicant has been granted with a license it becomes a licensee, i.e. an entity having a license to participate in the National Futsal League. The principles governing the License are:

- a. The Licensor will issue an invitation in writing to the futsal clubs to apply for a license. The club applying for a license (i.e. license applicant) must submit a written application. In this application, the club must, in particular, declare that it will fulfill the obligations of the licensing system.
- b. Only clubs which fulfill the criteria set out in the Futsal Club Licensing Regulations at the deadlines may be granted a license to enter into the National Futsal League season.
- c. A license expires without prior notice:
 - i. at the end of the League season for which it was issued, or
 - ii. on dissolution of the League.
- d. License may be withdrawn during a season if:
 - i. for any reason a licensee becomes insolvent and enters into liquidation during the season, as determined by the National Law: or
 - ii. any of the conditions for the issuing of a license are no longer satisfied; or
 - iii. the licensee violates any of its obligations under the Futsal Club Licensing Regulations.
- e. A license cannot be transferred.

5. CORE PROCESS

This article defines the details of process that the Licensor undertakes before deciding if a license applicant can be granted a license or not.

A. PRINCIPLE

- The Licensor defines the core process for the verification of the criteria described in these regulations and thus to control the issuance of a license to a license applicant club.
- The core process is aimed at:
 - i. Establishing an appropriate and efficient licensing process according to its needs and requirements
 - ii. Ensuring that the decision of the granting of the club license is made by the appropriate decision making body (FIB and/or AB)
 - iii. Ensuring that the decision making bodies receive adequate support from the Licensing Administration.

B. PROCESS

The core process of licensing implementations is as follows:

- i. The Licensor invites any club who wishes to participate in the National Futsal League and will provide the circular, application manual and other licensing documents and checklist to the clubs -----.
- ii. License Applicants should start the process of fulfilling and implementing the criteria in their respective clubs immediately after the Licensor has explained the terms, criteria and the requirements they need to fulfill and has provided the circular, application manual and other licensing documents and checklist.
- iii. The Licensing Administration will closely monitor and follow up on the License Applicants in fulfilling the criteria. If needed the Licensing Administration will visit the License Applicants and provide them with any kind of information or assistance that the License Applicant needs.
- iv. License Applicants need to submit the required supporting documents to the Licensor to prove compliance with the licensing criteria. The last date for submission of the supporting documents for participating in the upcoming season of the National Futsal League will be -----.
- v. The Licensing Administration will assess the documents submitted by the license applicant clubs to verify their compliance with the criteria once the License Applicants submit the application along with supporting documents -----.
- vi. The Licensing Administration will forward the license application along with the supporting documents to the FIB.
- vii. The First Instance Body (FIB) will decide on whether a license should be granted to the applicant club on the basis of the documents provided and in accordance of the Futsal Club Licensing Regulations -----.
- viii. On refusal of the license, the applicant club can lodge an appeal to General Secretary of the Licensor against the refusal. The appeal should be made in writing within 15 days of the receipt of refusal. It shall be compiled by Licensing Administration and forwarded to the AB.
- ix. The AB will examine the application, supporting documents and submitted evidence to make a decision on the issuing or refusing a license **by -----and the decision shall be informed to the license applicant within 3 days of the decision.**
- x. The Licensor will communicate to AFC and all the applicant clubs regarding the final decision on granting of license by -----.
- xi. The Licensor shall ensure equal treatment to all license applicant clubs during the core process.

SECTION B: LICENSING CRITERIA

6. CRITERIA

6.1 SPORTING CRITERIA

The purpose of having sporting criteria is to encourage the clubs to produce and manage a professional team.

The players need to be provided with effective and quality coaching to develop themselves and achieve positive results for the club.

The objectives of the sporting criteria are:

- i. Provide efficient coaching and support to the players on the field
- ii. Continuous production and development of skilled players for the club

6.1.1 HEAD COACH OF THE FIRST TEAM

The license applicant club must have appointed a Head Coach for its first team, who is responsible for all the sporting matters of the first team.

The Head Coach must:

- i. Hold at least a valid 'Level 3' Certificate or any valid coaching qualification that is equivalent to 'Level 3' recognized by the Licensor and AFC.
- ii. Be appointed by the executive body of the license applicant club through a written agreement endorsed by the head of club administration

Submission to the Licensor

The club must submit to the Licensor the name and CV of the Head Coach. The club must also submit a copy of his/her coaching qualification/coaching certificate along with an appointment letter or an employment contract stating the appointment of the person as the head coach of the first team of the club.

The Licensor shall verify the documents to confirm the appointment.

6.1.2 YOUTH TEAMS AND PARTICIPATION IN YOUTH COMPETITIONS

The license applicant club must have at least One (1) youth team within the age range of U18.

The youth team in the above mentioned age range should have regular training and must be coached by at least an AFC “Level 2” licensed coach. The youth teams shall participate in all the relevant youth competition(s) organised by the Licensor and such other bodies at the national, regional or local level. The youth team should also participate in any youth development activities organised by the Licensor.

Submission to the Licensor

The club needs to provide the details of all the youth team players including name, address, date of birth etc. and proof of participation in the youth competitions.

6.1.3 ASSISTANT COACH OF THE FIRST TEAM

The license applicant club must have appointed an Assistant Coach who is responsible for assisting the Head Coach in all the futsal matters of the first team and to train the U18 Team.

The Assistant Coach must:

- i. Hold at least a valid ‘Level 2’ Certificate or any valid coaching qualification that is equivalent to ‘Level 2’ recognized by the Licensor and AFC
- ii. Be appointed by the executive body of the license applicant club through a written agreement endorsed by the head of club administration

Submission to the Licensor

The club must submit to Licensor the name and the CV of the Assistant Coach. The club must also submit a copy of his/her coaching qualification/coaching certificate along with an appointment letter or an employment contract stating the appointment of the person as the assistant coach of the first team of the club.

The Licensor shall verify the coaching certificates and the CV to confirm the authenticity.

6.1.4 GOAL KEEPER COACH OF THE FIRST TEAM

The license applicant club must have appointed a Goal Keeper Coach for its first team, who is responsible for goal keeping matters of the first team.

The Goal Keeping Coach must:

- i. Hold at least a valid 'Level 1' Certificate or any valid coaching qualification that is equivalent to 'Level 1' recognized by the Licensor and AFC.
- ii. Be appointed by the executive body or the club secretariat of the license applicant club through a written agreement endorsed by the head of club administration.

Submission to the Licensor

The club must submit to Licensor the name and the CV of the Assistant Coach. The club must also submit a copy of his/her coaching qualification/coaching certificate along with an appointment letter or an employment contract stating the appointment of the person as the assistant coach of the first team of the club.

The Licensor shall verify the coaching certificates and the CV to confirm the authenticity.

6.1.5 PHYSICAL FITNESS COACH OF THE FIRST TEAM

The license applicant club must have appointed a Physical Fitness Coach for its first team, who is responsible for all the fitness matters of the first team.

The Physical Fitness Coach must:

- i. Hold at least a valid 'Level 1' Certificate or any valid coaching qualification that is equivalent to 'Level 1' recognized by the Licensor and AFC.
- ii. Be appointed by the executive body of the license applicant club through a written agreement endorsed by the head of club administration.

Submission to the Licensor

The club must submit to Licensor the name and the CV of the Assistant Coach. The club must also submit a copy of his/her coaching qualification/coaching certificate along with an appointment letter or an employment contract stating the appointment of the person as the assistant coach of the first team of the club.

The Licensor shall verify the coaching certificates and the CV to confirm the authenticity.

6.1.6 TEAM DOCTOR OR PHYSIOTHERAPIST FOR THE FIRST TEAM

The license applicant club must have appointed a Team Doctor or a Physiotherapist who is responsible for medical support during matches and training as well as for doping prevention.

The qualifications of the Team Doctor or Physiotherapist must be recognized by the appropriate national health authorities.

The Team Doctor or Physiotherapist must be duly registered with the member association and/or the affiliated league.

Submission to the Licensor

The club needs to provide the copy of qualification certificates along with an appointment letter or an employment contract of the Team Doctor or Physiotherapist.

6.1.7 MEDICAL SUPPORT SERVICES FOR PLAYERS

The license applicant club must provide all the players registered in the club with full access to medical support services. The players must undergo a yearly medical examination, including cardio vascular screening. The license applicant club must provide medical treatment to all its players in case of any injuries.

Submission to the Licensor

The club needs to provide certificate for each first team and reserve team player to the Licensor stating that the player has undergone a medical check and is fit to play.

6.2 INFRASTRUCTURE CRITERIA

Infrastructure should be seen as a long term investment whereby a club can attract more fans to the stadium, create a better atmosphere and generate revenue. Therefore, clubs should ensure that they have an access to a stadium that is attractive, safe, secured, hygienic and easy to access for the fans.

The objectives of the infrastructure criteria are:

- i. Clubs have access to a stadium that is approved by Licensor that provides necessary and adequate facilities for the players, officials and spectators.
- ii. Clubs have suitable training facilities for their players to help them improve their technical skills.

6.2.1 HOME PLAYING FIELD

The club must either own or have a guaranteed access to a Home Playing Field that is considered as its home venue for National Futsal League matches.

The playing field must be of minimum size as indicated in the FIFA Laws of the Game.

The Home Playing Field must have adequate:

- i. Dressing rooms for players (home team and away team)
- ii. Referees room
- iii. Media facilities (for print, radio and TV)
- iv. Medical facilities

Submission to the Licensor

The club must submit to the Licensor the name and address of the Home Playing Field along with the ownership document or agreement with the owner of the Home Playing Field stating guaranteed access to the club as its Home Playing Field for the National Futsal League matches. If the Club owns the Home Playing Field, it must submit the documents proving its ownership.

The Licensor shall verify the documents and visit the field to confirm the venues.

6.2.2 TRAINING FACILITIES

The club must either own or have a guaranteed access to Training Field/ Training Facilities that is available throughout the year where the players of the club can train on a regular basis.

The Training Facility must have:

- i. A full size futsal pitch of good quality
- ii. Goal posts

Necessary training equipments such as balls, cones, bibs, etc should be provided to the players.

Submission to the Licensor

The club must submit to the Licensor the name and address of the Training Facility along with the ownership document or agreement with the owner of the Training Facility stating guaranteed access to the club as its Training Facility for the entire year. If the Club owns the Training Facility, it must submit to the Licensor the documents proving its ownership

The Licensor shall verify the documents and visit the field to confirm the venue of the training field.

6.2.3 CLUB SECRETARIAT

The club must either own or have a guaranteed access to an office space to conduct its administration. The club administration must be based in this office space.

The administrative office must be equipped with all the necessary communication facilities such as telephone, fax, computer, internet, email, etc.

Submission to the Licensor

The club must submit to the Licensor the name and address of the club secretariat along with the ownership document or agreement with the owner of the office space stating guaranteed access to the club as its secretariat to conduct all its administrative tasks. The club must submit all the relevant contact details of the club secretariat.

If the Club owns the office space, it must submit to the Licensor the documents proving its ownership

The Licensor shall verify the documents and visit the office space to confirm the facility.

6.3 PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CRITERIA

Having professional, well-educated and experienced people in the administration of the club is the key in running any professional club in an efficient and effective manner. The license applicant club is responsible for identifying and recruiting people who meet the set requirements and comply with the defined profile either full time or part time.

The objectives of the personnel and administrative criteria are:

- i. Clubs have well-educated, qualified and skilled specialists with specific know how and experience.
- ii. Clubs are run by professional having experience and knowhow of the professional futsal industry.

6.3.1 FULL TIME/PART TIME CEO/GENERAL MANAGER/GENERAL SECRETARY

The club must have an appointed a full time or a part time CEO or General Manager or General Secretary who is the head of the administration of the club. He is responsible for managing and supervising the administrative matters of the club.

The CEO/General Manager/General Secretary should have adequate academic qualifications and must have experience of administration of a futsal club. He/she should have the necessary knowledge and communication skills required in club management.

He/she shall:

- i. Be responsible for executing the decisions of the Executive Body of the club.
- ii. Be responsible for the administration of the club secretariat and appointment and supervision of the administrative staff.
- iii. Assist and participate in the Congress and Executive Committee meetings of the club as an ex-officio.
- iv. Be responsible for all the official correspondence and communications with the Licensor, Government, Other Clubs and any other stakeholders involved.
- v. Attend all the club management and club development seminars organised by the Licensor, MA or any other governing bodies for the development of the club.

The appointment of the full time or the part time CEO/General Manager/General Secretary should be done by the Executive Body of the club through a written contract.

Submission to the Licensor

The club must submit the name and CV of the full time CEO/General Manager/General Secretary to Licensor along with an appointment letter or an employment contract stating his/her appointment as a full time head of club administration. The Licensor shall verify the documents and confirm the appointment.

6.3.2 FULL TIME/PART TIME FINANCE OFFICER

The club must have an appointed full time or part time Finance Officer who is responsible for its financial and accounting matters. He/she is responsible for managing and supervising all the financial matters of the club.

The Finance Officer should have adequate financial, accounting and book keeping academic qualifications and experience in these aspects of futsal industry/futsal club.

He/she shall:

- i. Be responsible to manage and oversee all aspects of club's financial functions and financial risks.

- ii. Be responsible for monitoring, management and reporting of all financial and accounting aspects of the club including: budgeting, accounting, banking, payroll, overhead costs, salaries, expenses and revenues.
- iii. Be responsible for preparing financial statements including profit and loss account and balance sheet.
- iv. Be responsible for preparing the annual budget.
- v. Be responsible for monitoring and control of cash flow and bank accounts.
- vi. Attend all the seminars and workshops organised by the Licensor or any other governing body for the development of the club in financial, accounting and governance aspects.

The appointment of full time/part time Finance Officer should be done by the head of the club administration through a written contract.

Submission to the Licensor

The club must submit the name of the full time/part time Finance Officer to the Licensor along with his/her CV and an appointment letter or employment contract stating his/her appointment as the head of all the financial matters relating to the club.

The Licensor shall verify the documents and confirm the appointment.

6.3.3 SECURITY OFFICER OR SECURITY ADVISOR

The license applicant club must have an appointed part time or full time security officer or a security advisor who is responsible for safety and security matters.

The appointment of full time/part time Security Officer or Security Advisor should be through a written contract.

Submission to Licensor

The club must submit the name of the security officer or security advisor to Licensor along with his CV and all his contact details. The club must submit an appointment letter or an employment contract stating the appointment of the official as the security officer or security advisor. The Licensor will verify the documents and confirm the appointment.

6.3.4 FULL TIME/PART TIME MEDIA OFFICER

The club must have an appointed part time or full time Media Officer being responsible for all media matters.

The Media Officer should have adequate academic qualifications and experience in media aspects of futsal industry/futsal club.

He/she shall:

- i. Be responsible to manage and oversee all aspects of club's media management.
- ii. Be responsible for communicating and interacting with mass media and external media/newspaper to provide all relevant information on club matters.
- iii. Be responsible for communicating with the Licensor for all media related matters of the club.
- iv. Be responsible for handling media operations including press conference, flash interviews, media briefing, etc during match days and non match days.
- v. Be responsible for all the Public Relations (PR) and Promotional aspects of the club.

The appointment of full time/part time Media Officer should be done by the head of the club administration through a written contract.

Submission to the Licensor

The club must submit the name of the full time/part time Media Officer to the Licensor along with his/her CV and an appointment letter or employment contract stating his/her appointment as the head of all the media commercial matters relating to the club. The Licensor shall verify the documents and confirm the appointment.

6.4 LEGAL CRITERIA

It is necessary that the club has an appropriate legal personality as per the legal principles in the country. The benefit of having legal criteria is encouraging the clubs to be stable over a long run.

The objectives of the legal criteria are:

- i. Establishing a stable and sustainable entity.
- ii. Compliance of the rules and regulations of the national association.
- iii. Increased protection for club, players and officials through compliance of contractual obligations.
- iv. Increased efficiency in player transfer procedures.
- v. Transparency in financial management.
- vi. Ability to secure contracts with sponsors and commercial partners.
- vii. Streamlining of approvals from government bodies for construction/ ownership of club infrastructure.

6.4.1 LEGAL ENTITY

The license applicant must be registered with an appropriate national authority as a legal entity as per the law prevailing in the country. The license applicant must be in possession of a legally valid declaration confirming the following:

- i. It is a legal entity registered with a recognised legal authority.
- ii. It holds a certificate/document stating its legal entity status.

Submission to the Licensor

The club needs to provide the necessary documents and certificates that prove that the club is a legal entity which is registered with the appropriate authority in the country.

6.4.2 WRITTEN CONTRACT WITH PROFESSIONAL PLAYERS

The professional players of the license applicant club must have a written contract with the license applicant in accordance with the relevant provisions of the FIFA Regulations for the Status and Transfer of Players and shall incorporate all key provisions required by National Law, Licensor, FIFA and AFC.

Submission to Licensor

The club needs to provide the contract of each player.

6.5 FINANCIAL CRITERIA

For any organisation to sustain and grow, it is of utmost importance that it has a healthy and sound financial position. It not only includes higher revenues but also includes proper maintenance of financial statements and accounts. The financial criteria will help deliver both short and long term improvements for clubs, and futsal in general.

The objectives of the financial criteria are:

- i. Improve the economic and financial capability of the clubs;
- ii. Increase clubs' transparency and credibility;
- iii. Place the necessary importance on the protection of creditors;
- iv. Safeguard the continuity of competitions.

6.5.1 ANNUAL BUDGET

The club must submit its annual budget before the start of the season. It should state the following:

- a) projected income for the coming financial year
- b) projected expenditure for the coming financial year
- c) all the sources of revenues and income projected for the financial year along with the amount
- d) all the sources of expenditures projected for the financial year along with the amount

Submission to the Licensor

The club needs to provide the budget with the above details which will be verified by the Licensor.

6.5.2 AUDITED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The club must submit its audited annual financial statements from the previous financial year.

The financial statements should include the following –

Balance Sheet

- i. Current Assets
- ii. Fixed Assets
- iii. Current Liabilities
- iv. Non Current Liabilities
- v. Net assets/liabilities

Profit and Loss Account

- i. Revenue
- ii. Expenses
- iii. Other

Submission to the Licensor

The club needs to provide the audited annual financial statements with the above details which will be verified by the Licensor.

6.6 Summary of the Criteria

Following is a summary highlighting the club licensing criteria for the clubs to participate in the National Futsal League:

SPORTING CRITERIA

1. License Applicant Club to appoint a Head Coach for its first team, who hold at least an AFC 'Level 3' Coaching Certificate.
2. License Applicant Club to have a U18 Youth Team.
3. License Applicant Club to appoint an Assistant Coach for its first team, who hold at least an AFC 'Level 2' Coaching Certificate.
4. License Applicant Club to appoint an Goal Keeping Coach for its first team, who hold at least an AFC 'Level 1' Coaching Certificate.
5. License Applicant Club to appoint an Physical Fitness Coach for its first team, who hold at least an AFC 'Level 1' Coaching Certificate.
6. License Applicant Club to appoint a qualified Team Doctor.
7. License Applicant Club to provide all its registered players with medical check and necessary medical support.

INFRASTRUCTURE CRITERIA

1. License Applicant Club to either own or have a guaranteed access to a Home Playing Field to play its National Futsal League matches.
2. License Applicant Club to either own or have a guaranteed access to Training Field/ Training Facilities throughout the year.
3. License Applicant Club to either own or have a guaranteed access to an office space to conduct its administrative task.

PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CRITERIA

1. License Applicant Club to appoint a full/part time CEO/General Manager/General Secretary as the head of club administration.
2. License Applicant Club to appoint a full/part time Finance Officer responsible for its financial and accounting matters.
3. License Applicant Club to appoint a full/part time Security Officer/Advisor responsible Safety and Security matters

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4. License Applicant club to appoint full/part time Media Officer responsible for all media matters.

LEGAL CRITERIA

1. License Applicant Club to be a legal entity registered with the appropriate authority with having club statutes.
2. License Applicant Club to have a written contract with all its professional players.

FINANCIAL CRITERIA

1. License Applicant Club to submit its annual budget
2. License Applicant Club to submit its annual audited financial statements from the previous financial year

These regulations were adopted by the AFC Executive Committee, at its meeting on Wednesday 13/09/2017 and came into force the next day onwards.