



AFC

Electoral Code

Edition 2015



A large, stylized star graphic on the left side of the page. The star is composed of a grid of small blue dots, creating a halftone effect. It has five main points and is set against a dark blue background with lighter blue curved accents at the bottom.

AFC Electoral Code

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I. GENERAL REMARKS

ARTICLE 1 Scope of application

- I. This code is applicable to all elections to AFC bodies pursuant to the AFC Statutes.

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

- I. The democratic principles of segregation of powers, transparency and publicising of the electoral processes of the AFC must be observed without exception.
2. Government interference of any kind in the electoral process or composition of the elective body of the AFC is not permitted. Consequently, government rules on elections shall not apply to the elected internal bodies of the AFC and the electoral rules of the AFC shall not require the approval of any government body. Furthermore:
 - a) the AFC shall adapt and approve the electoral rules of its elected internal bodies in accordance with this code and pertinent FIFA regulations.
 - b) at the very least, the AFC Electoral Code as well as any electoral code of the members of the AFC shall include the following information: the number of members and elections, if appropriate, of the general assembly; deadlines, requirements, regulations and the announcement of the final lists of candidates; the voting procedure, ballot papers, urns, polling booths and the announcement of the results; verification of the procedure and appeals.
 - c) the AFC should inform FIFA of the commencement of the elections to its elected internal bodies, the announcement of the elections and its electoral rules at one month's notice. It should likewise inform FIFA of the duration of the elections and of the mandates. The AFC is obliged to immediately inform FIFA of any government interference in the electoral process.

- d) unless this code or the AFC Statutes state otherwise, the elected internal bodies of the AFC shall continue to exercise their functions until the completion of the electoral process.

II. ELECTORAL COMMITTEE AND ELECTION APPEAL COMMITTEE

ARTICLE 3 Basic principles

1. The Electoral Committee organises and supervises the election process and makes all decisions relating to the election.
2. The members of the Electoral Committee must under no circumstances be members of the AFC Executive Committee or the judicial bodies of the AFC (as defined in the AFC Statutes).
3. The members of the Electoral Committee and the Election Appeal Committee shall be members of the AFC Legal Committee and the AFC Audit Committee.

ARTICLE 4 Election

1. The Electoral Committee is elected, in accordance with the provisions of the AFC Electoral Code, by the AFC Congress for a term of four (4) years, subject to the operation of Article 27 of the AFC Electoral Code.
2. The Election Appeal Committee is elected, in accordance with the provisions of the AFC Electoral Code, by the AFC Congress for a term of four (4) years, subject to the operation of Article 27 of the AFC Electoral Code.
3. The members of the Electoral Committee and Election Appeal Committee are not permitted to serve for more than two (2) consecutive terms.

ARTICLE 5 Composition

1. The Electoral Committee and Election Appeal Committee shall each be comprised of between three (3) and five (5) members.

2. The Electoral Committee and Election Appeal Committee shall each comprise of
 - a) a Chairman; and

 - b) between two (2) and four (4) members.

3. The AFC General Secretary serves as the Secretary to the Electoral Committee and Secretary to the Election Appeal Committee. He takes part in the activities of the Committees in a consultative capacity, is responsible for the related logistical matters and takes care of administrative matters. The AFC Director of Legal Affairs shall serve as Deputy Secretary to the Electoral Committee and Deputy Secretary to the Election Appeal Committee.

4. In the event that any member of the Electoral Committee or Election Appeal Committee:
 - a) stands as a candidate for an elected post;

 - b) is a relative, whether by birth or marriage, of one of the candidates;

 - c) has an identifiable conflict of interest (e.g. business relationship with a candidate); or

 - d) is unable to carry out their duties,they shall resign from the relevant Committee. Any member who resigns shall be replaced by an individual from the eligible individuals. That replacement shall be appointed by the AFC Executive Committee for the remainder of the term of the vacated position.

5. The members of the Electoral Committee or Election Appeal Committee shall be expected to officially declare their candidature for elected posts in such a way as to allow the replacement process described above to be carried out harmoniously and without any time pressure that would be prejudicial to the elections of the bodies to be elected.
6. The Electoral Committee or Election Appeal Committee may be assisted by members of the AFC General Secretariat at any time provided that they are not standing as candidates for elected posts.

ARTICLE 6 Duties

- I. The Electoral Committee is responsible for all tasks relating to the organisation, running and supervision of the elective AFC Congress. In particular, it is responsible for:
 - a) strictly enforcing the Statutes, Directives and Regulations of FIFA and the AFC;
 - b) strictly enforcing the AFC Electoral Code;
 - c) strictly enforcing the statutory deadlines for elections;
 - d) distributing information to the members of the AFC Congress as well as to the media and the public;
 - e) managing relations with government bodies (where necessary);
 - f) the candidature procedure (launch, distribution of information, evaluation, publication of official list, etc.);
 - g) organising, in administrative and technical terms, the elective AFC Congress;
 - h) drawing up the list of voters in accordance with the statutory provisions of the AFC;

- i) verifying the identity of the voters under the supervision of the bailiff appointed for this purpose;
 - j) the voting procedure; and
 - k) all other tasks necessary to ensure the smooth running of the electoral process.
2. Logistical matters shall be taken care of by the AFC.

ARTICLE 7 Convoking the Electoral Committee and quorum

- 1. Only if the Electoral Committee is convoked validly by its Chairman it is entitled to deliberate and pass decisions.
- 2. A quorum is constituted by the absolute majority of the members of the Electoral Committee.

ARTICLE 8 Decisions

- 1. All of the Electoral Committee's decisions must be passed by an absolute majority of the valid votes cast. If a vote is tied, the Chairman of the Electoral Committee shall have the casting vote. Decisions are recorded in the minutes signed by the Chairman and the Secretary (or Deputy Secretary) of the Electoral Committee.
- 2. Appeals against the Electoral Committee's decisions may be lodged only with the Election Appeal Committee of the AFC, to the exclusion of the possibility of appealing said decisions before any other body.

III. CANDIDATURES

ARTICLE 9 Criteria

- I. The eligibility criteria for candidature are defined within the AFC Statutes.

ARTICLE 10 Submission of candidatures

- I. Candidatures shall be sent by recorded post or delivered in exchange for confirmation of receipt to the AFC General Secretariat in accordance with the relevant provisions in the AFC Statutes.

ARTICLE 11 Examination of candidatures

- I. The candidatures shall be examined by the Electoral Committee within fifteen (15) days of the deadline for their submission.
2. The candidates shall be informed of the decision of the Electoral Committee's examination within the same period of fifteen (15) days.
3. The list of candidates shall be published and provided to the members in accordance with the relevant provisions in the AFC Statutes.

ARTICLE 12 Appeal procedure

- I. The Election Appeal Committee shall decide upon any appeals of decisions made by the Electoral Committee. The Election Appeal Committee shall be convoked upon the receipt of an appeal submitted pursuant to Article 12.2 below.
2. Any appeal, with its reasons, shall be sent by registered post or delivered in exchange for confirmation of receipt to the AFC General Secretariat within five (5) days of receipt of the Electoral Committee's decision.

3. Appeals shall be considered by the Election Appeal Committee within five (5) days of their receipt by the AFC General Secretariat.
4. The decisions of the Election Appeal Committee are final and may not be appealed to any internal body.

ARTICLE 13 Distribution of the final official list

1. The final official list of candidates shall be sent to all the members of the AFC in accordance with the relevant provisions in the AFC Statutes.
2. It shall also be published in the press.

IV. VOTING PROCEDURE

ARTICLE 14 Deadline for convoking an elective AFC Congress

1. An elective AFC Congress shall be convoked in accordance with the relevant provisions in the AFC Statutes.
2. Notification shall be addressed to all the members of the AFC in accordance with the relevant provisions in the AFC Statutes.
3. The elective AFC Congress shall be announced through the media.

ARTICLE 15 Duties of the electoral committee

1. The duties of the Electoral Committee at an elective AFC Congress are as follows:
 - a) to monitor the voting procedure during the elective AFC Congress using the electoral register that it has compiled;
 - b) to count the votes;

- c) to make any decision that is necessary regarding the validity or invalidity of ballot papers;
- d) in general, to pass a definitive decision on any matters relating to the voting procedure during the elective AFC Congress;
- e) to declare the official results; and
- f) with the AFC General Secretary, organise a media conference.

ARTICLE 16 Ballot papers

- 1. The AFC General Secretariat shall produce the ballot papers under the supervision and charge of the Electoral Committee. The ballot papers shall be printed clearly and legibly.
- 2. The ballot papers shall be of a different colour for each round of the election.

ARTICLE 17 Urn

- 1. Before the start of the voting procedure, the urn for receiving votes, which shall be transparent where possible, shall be opened and presented to the members of the AFC Congress. It shall then be closed and placed in a visible position near to the members of the Electoral Committee.
- 2. During the vote, the urn shall be monitored by a member of the Electoral Committee.

ARTICLE 18 Polling booths

- 1. Polling booths shall be erected near to the urn and the polling station so that the members of the AFC Congress who are entitled to vote may complete their ballot paper in secret, in accordance with the AFC Statutes.

ARTICLE 19 Vote

1. The Chairman of the Electoral Committee shall explain in detail the voting procedure (urn, ballot papers, valid and invalid ballot papers, count, required majorities, results, etc.) and cite any relevant statutory or legislative provisions.
2. The Chairman of the Electoral Committee calls in turn each member of the AFC Congress who has the right to vote and invites him to move to the front of the hall where the election is taking place.
3. Once called, the member of the AFC moves to the front of the hall and, after signing, he receives his ballot paper.
4. The member of the AFC then completes his ballot paper in the polling booth designated for this purpose.
5. The member of the AFC deposits his ballot paper in the urn, signs the electoral register and then returns to his seat.
6. The counting procedure begins as soon as all of the members of the AFC with the right to vote have deposited their ballot papers in the urn. A member of the Electoral Committee opens the urn and tips out the ballot papers. The count then commences.

V. COUNT

ARTICLE 20 General principles, decisions in the event of dispute

1. Only the members of the Electoral Committee may take part in the count. All operations (opening the urn, counting the ballot papers, counting the votes, etc.) shall be carried out in a way that can be followed clearly by the AFC Congress.
2. In the event of a dispute regarding the validity of a ballot paper, the validity of a vote, the declaration of the results or any other matter relating to the counting procedure, the Electoral Committee's decision shall be final.

ARTICLE 21 Invalid ballot papers

1. The following are considered spoiled:
 - a) ballot papers that do not bear the official distinctive marks defined by the Electoral Committee;
 - b) ballot papers that bear any words other than the names of the candidates;
 - c) ballot papers that are illegible or have been defaced; and
 - d) ballot papers that bear identifying marks.
2. The Chairman of the Electoral Committee shall write on the back of any invalid ballot paper (in red) the reasons for its invalidity and confirm with a signature.

ARTICLE 22 Spelling mistakes

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

ARTICLE 23 Count and declaration of results

1. Once the urn has been opened, the members of the Electoral Committee shall count out loud the number of ballot papers and verify their validity. If the number of ballot papers is equal to or less than the number of ballot papers issued, the ballot is valid. If it exceeds the number of ballot papers issued, the ballot shall be declared void and recommence immediately in accordance with the procedure described above.
2. After the number of ballot papers has been verified, the members of the Electoral Committee shall proceed to count the number of votes cast for each different candidate.
3. Once the count has been completed and verified, the Chairman of the Electoral Committee shall officially declare the results to the AFC Congress.
4. If a second (or subsequent) round of voting is required in accordance with the AFC Statutes, the voting procedure shall be repeated in accordance with the above articles. The members of the AFC are also to be informed of the statutory provisions that apply for the second (and subsequent) rounds of voting (e.g. any changes to the majority required, elimination of candidates, etc).

ARTICLE 24 Declaration of final results

1. After each round of the election, the Chairman of the Electoral Committee shall declare the results officially to the AFC Congress.
2. The official minutes of the AFC Congress shall be drafted and approved in accordance with the AFC Statutes. The Chairman of the Electoral Committee shall additionally be asked to sign the minutes.
3. The official minutes shall be distributed to the members of the AFC and to FIFA.

ARTICLE 25 Verification of procedure

1. The Secretary to the Electoral Committee, in conjunction with the AFC General Secretariat, is specifically responsible for verifying the identity of the voters and ensuring compliance with the voting procedure.

VI. FINAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 26 Violations, archiving of documents, omissions

1. The Electoral Committee shall hand over all the official documents relating to the elections to the AFC General Secretariat, which is responsible for passing them on to the relevant bodies, where required, and for archiving them in accordance with the AFC Statutes.
2. All matters relating to the running of the elections not covered by this code shall be ruled upon by the Electoral Committee.
3. The members of the Electoral Committee shall observe the utmost impartiality when carrying out their duties.

ARTICLE 27 Transitional clause

1. The Chairman and Members of the Electoral Committee as well as the Chairman and Members of the Election Appeal Committee shall be elected at the AFC Extraordinary Congress in 2014. The term of office shall expire at the end of the AFC Congress in 2015. This service shall not be considered a 'term' for the purposes of Article 4.

ARTICLE 28 Enforcement

- I. This AFC Electoral Code was approved by the AFC Executive Committee when it convened in Manama, Bahrain on 9 March 2015 and comes into force immediately.

For the AFC Executive Committee

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