



## CLUB LICENSING POLICY

### **Establishment of Policy**

The Club Licensing policy is the plan of action developed by the Qatar Football Association (QFA) & Qatar Stars League Management (QSLM). This policy aims to serve as a guide in the efforts to bring about continuous improvement in all aspects of club football in Qatar.

The Licensing scheme is progressive and is designed to assist clubs in Qatar to develop to a level that will allow them to be sportingly competitive on the field and commercially competitive off the field.

The QFA/QSLM has agreed to the implementation of the licensing criteria stated in this policy and in conjunction with the Club Licensing Committee has the authority to review these criteria on an on-going basis and make recommendations towards the advancement of the scheme.

The Club Licensing Policy covers AFC and QSL Licensing Schemes.

A great deal of care and attention has been given to the drafting of the licensing criteria. The focus has been on establishing a set of standards that are central to the development of football in Qatar and Asia and from which clubs can accurately be assessed.

The six (6) criteria that clubs are required to meet and are assessed by are:

- Sporting
- Infrastructure
- Personnel and Administration
- Legal
- Financial
- Business

The above criteria are consistent with AFC standards where applicable and are specific to football in Qatar.

### **Club Licensing Objectives**

- **To promote and improve sporting standards of Qatari Clubs in both Domestic and Asian football.** The QFA/QSLM will encourage coaches and managers to attend the best possible coaching courses. For AFC license criteria, UEFA or AFC Pro License is required to manage the club, for Qatar stars league (QSL) criteria the UEFA or AFC 'A' License course must have been commenced. Academy training facilities and child welfare education are deemed to be of the highest importance with continued priority given to the training and development of young players in every club and to the level of qualification of coaches within youth academies.

- **To adapt clubs' sporting infrastructure to provide players, officials, spectators and media representatives with suitable, well equipped and safe facilities.** Stadiums throughout the Qatar Stars League must all meet the Qatar Stars League Licence requirements with at least seven (7) meeting the AFC infrastructure criteria requirements. All stadiums must also ensure that, where applicable, all safety legislative requirements are fulfilled and confirmed by the relevant authorities. The QFA/QSLM must continue to encourage and assist clubs upgrade their facilities to meet the needs of football stakeholders.
- **To improve the economic performance and financial viability / sustainability of clubs.** The club licensing process assists clubs to improve their economic and financial capability as well as increasing their transparency and credibility. Club licensing also introduces more discipline and rationality in club football finances and encourages responsible spending for the long-term benefit of football. The QFA/QSLM must continue to ensure that financial transparency and fair play receive the highest priority.
- **To continually monitor, assess and review the club licensing processes to ensure continued quality service delivery and a high level of stakeholder satisfaction.** The QFA/QSLM must ensure that all clubs are dealt with efficiently and in a timely manner and that all necessary relevant information is communicated and available in good time. This will help to reduce the risk of poor performance by the licensor. The QFA/QSLM Stars League will encourage the development of benchmarking for clubs in financial, sporting, legal, personnel, administrative and infrastructure-related criteria.

#### **Affirmation of Commitment to Club Licensing Scheme**

The QFA/QSLM acknowledges its responsibility towards license applicants and as licensor will endeavor to provide the best possible service to its clubs including a commitment to:

- Continually improve the effectiveness of the club licensing processes
- Provide the necessary support to license applicants / licensees with regard to the club licensing system
- Communicate the various rules and regulations to all relevant stakeholders in a timely manner
- Behave in an ethical manner and respect the core values of confidentiality and independence

In order to continually improve the level of services we provide to our clubs and to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the club licensing and club monitoring process, the QFA/QSLM will involve the clubs and all major stakeholders as closely as possible in the annual review.

The QFA/QSLM ensures that sufficient resources are allocated towards managing the licensing scheme and ensuring that the club licensing unit is staffed by qualified and experienced individuals that administer the licensing scheme and assist all license applicants through the licensing process.

The licensor is committed to communicating club licensing rules and regulations in a timely manner to all clubs engaged in the licensing process and will ensure that all relevant information is available to clubs to enable them to apply for license. The licensing unit communicates the club licensing policy to all those involved in the club licensing system and monitoring process, including any relevant information and updates on club licensing and monitoring processes, with the policy also being published on the official QFA/QSLM website.

The licensing process is transparent which enables the licensor to demonstrate to stakeholders that it adheres to the highest ethical standards necessary to maintain the credibility of the scheme. All persons directly involved in the club licensing system and monitoring process are required to sign confidentiality agreements and also declare in writing their independence upon appointment.

The QFA/QSLM ensures that each license applicant shall be treated equitably and shall have recourse to the QFA/QSLM to seek confirmation that all persons involved in the decision making process have no conflict of interest and are independent.

This present QFA/QSLM Club Licensing Policy has been developed in conformance with all applicable legislations, statutes and rules of FIFA, AFC the QFA and in accordance with national law.

### **Management of the Club Licensing System**

The Club Licensing Department manages the QFA/QSLM's Club Licensing Scheme for all clubs that wish to apply for a Club Licence(s) that enables them to compete in both domestic and AFC competitions.

The success of the licensing scheme depends largely on two principles working concurrently; clubs committing themselves to the licensing process and the Club Licensing Department providing the necessary support that will enable them to reach their objective of achieving a Club Licence.

The Club Licensing Department will develop (with AFC where applicable) all documents relevant to clubs applying for and receiving a Club Licence. Clubs will be provided with reasonable timescales at the discretion of the Club Licensing Committee.

The licensor remains committed to regularly communicating the various rules and regulations to all relevant stakeholders in a timely manner. Communication is made via circulars, emails, letters, site visits, seminars etc. within the QFA/QSLM, newsletters and memos are sent internally to keep the relevant staff informed on all licensing principles and changes that may occur during the course of the year.

Secure storage is provided in the licensing unit office for all documents submitted by each club and licensing affiliates. Additionally, information is stored electronically on specially created licensing folders which are backed up on the QFA/QSLM server should the computer system fail.

Each club that applies for a Club Licence will also be presented with a "Confidentiality Assurance Agreement" stating the confidentiality principles that the Club Licensing members, staff and advisors abide by.

### **Review and Evaluation of Club Licensing System**

In the interests of promoting a scheme with clear and measurable objectives and results, the Club Licensing Department will develop a benchmarking scheme that allows the review and evaluation of the overall performance of the licensing system. Benchmarking will also enable visibility as to how clubs that apply for a Club Licence score against the criteria they are being assessed by and against other license applicants.