

CONFEDERATION AFRICAINE DE FOOTBALL

3 Abdel Khalek Tharwat Street, El Hay El Motamayez, P.O. Box 23

6th October City, Egypt.

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CAF CLUB LICENSING SYSTEM GUIDELINE

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A- Introduction and Objectives of the CAF Club Licensing Guide of Implementation:

Starting from the 2015 Season of CAF Inter-Clubs Competitions, all CAF Member Associations shall comply with the CAF Club Licensing System. Clubs must fulfil the minimum criteria set by their own association, with minimum criteria fulfilled as per CAF Club Licensing Regulations in order to receive the green light to participate in CAF Inter-Clubs' Competitions.

CAF created this guide with the purpose of helping and guiding our Member Associations through the Implementation phase of the Club Licensing System. The CAF clubs licensing system shall have the undermentioned objectives:

- The promoting and improving of the quality and the level of all football aspects in Africa;
- Ensuring that the clubs have the appropriate infrastructure, knowledge and application in respect of management and organization;
- Adapting and improving the clubs sporting infrastructure;
- Improving the economic and financial capacity of the clubs, through proper corporate governance and control;
- Ensuring and guaranteeing the continuity of the international competitions of clubs during the season;
- Allowing the parallel development and comparison amongst the clubs by ensuring the necessary compliance in terms of financial, sporting, legal, Infrastructure and administrative criteria.

Once the Federation starts the implementation of the project, CAF will conduct and help fund a Club Licensing Seminar in each Federation to provide better explanation of the system to the Clubs, the federation and other relevant stakeholders.

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B- The Legal Basis of the Club Licensing System:

1- Adopting the Club Licensing System Statutory Clauses:

The first step of the Implementation process starts with CAF Member Associations acknowledging the Club Licensing System by including the following 2 Statutory Clauses to their Statutes in accordance with article 56 of CAF Statutes:

- I. The National Association of will proceed to the granting of licenses to the clubs according to the club licensing system setting the minimum requirements adopted by CAF for the granting of the license.
- II. The said club licensing system includes in particular:
 - The Minimal Criteria to be met by the clubs in order to be allowed to take part in CAF competitions.
 - The Procedure for granting the license to the clubs.
 - The minimal requirements to be applied by the licensors.

Copies of the updated and signed Statutes must be sent to CAF and at least to all Clubs competing in the First Division of National Competitions.

2- Defining the Jurisdiction of the Court of Arbitration as per CAF Club Licensing regulations Article 4.2.V:

The Member Association must decide whether or not its Club Licensing System comes under the authority and jurisdiction of the court of arbitration (CAS).

A Clause regarding the jurisdiction of the Courts of Arbitration (CAS) must be inserted in the Statutes of the Federation.

3- Appointing the Decision Making Bodies:

As stipulated in the CAF Club Licensing Regulations Article 4.D, all CAF Member Associations are required to inform CAF on the implementation and composition of the two decision-making bodies for the Club Licensing System Namely:

- I. First Instance Body (FIB)
- II. Appeals Body (AB)

CAF Member Associations are required to ensure that the conditions for appointing the members of the 2 above-mentioned Decision-Making Bodies are properly applied. When revising the documentation provided by the Federations, we found some of our Member Associations not in compliance with articles (4.1.d) and (4.2.viii) of CAF Club Licensing Regulations regarding the independence of the members of both decision making bodies from any other Statutory body or committee of the Licensor.

The appointed or elected members of the 2 Club Licensing Decision-Making Bodies should have experience in one or more of the 5 CAF Club Licensing Criteria. CAF highly recommends

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its Member Associations to appoint or elect at least 1 person with Legal background and 1 person with background in Finance in each of the 2 Decision-Making Bodies. Both these Decision-Making Bodies shall be Independent of each other.

Once both Decision-Making Bodies have been appointed or elected, a confirmation of the setting of these bodies together with the names of the appointed members must be officially sent to CAF.

4- Creating the National Club Licensing Regulations:

The next step in the implementation process of the Club Licensing is that the Federation integrates CAF Club Licensing Regulations in its National Regulations for the procedure of licensing to their affiliated clubs. The CAF Club Licensing Regulations could be used as a template for the Member Association as only minor changes will be necessary in order for the CAF Club Licensing Regulations to be directed from Federation to Clubs.

CAF Member Associations must ensure that CAF Club Licensing Criteria is fulfilled in their National Club Licensing Regulations. CAF Club Licensing Criteria are:

- I. Sporting Criteria;
- II. Infrastructure Criteria;
- III. Administrative and Personnel Criteria;
- IV. Legal Criteria;
- V. Financial Criteria.

The above-mentioned CAF Club Licensing Criteria are graded into 3 separate categories:

- Criteria “A” – MUST: If the Club does not fulfil any criteria “A” requirements, then it cannot be granted a license to enter CAF Inter-Clubs Competitions.
- Criteria “B” – MUST: If the Club does not fulfil any Criteria “B” requirements, then it may be subject to sanctions as per the Book of Sanctions created by the Federation but may still qualify to receive a license to enter CAF Inter-Clubs Competitions.
- Criteria “C” – BEST PRACTICE: Criteria “C” are best practice recommendations. Even if the Club does not fulfil any Criteria “C” requirements, the Club could still participate in CAF Inter-Clubs Competitions.

Kindly check Annex 1 for the points that MUST be incorporated in your National Club Licensing Regulations in order to receive CAF approval.

Once the National Club Licensing Regulations have been created and officially adopted a copy shall be sent to CAF and at least the clubs competing in the First Division of the National Competitions.

5- Creating a Book of Sanctions for the Club Licensing System:

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A detailed book of sanctions regarding the process of the Club Licensing system must be created and sent to both CAF and at least the Clubs participating in the First Division.

C- Communicating the Club Licensing System:

1- Appointing the Club Licensing Manager:

CAF Member Associations are required to appoint or select a person within their administrations who will focus on the implementation of the Club Licensing System. The duties of the person serving as “Club Licensing Manager” will be to act as the point of contact with Clubs and with CAF in order to:

- i- Follow up with the updated regulations of Club licensing;
- ii- Follow up the implementation of Club Licensing at the National level;
- iii- Collecting the necessary documentation from Clubs;
- iv- Organizing and presenting the documentation to the 2 Decision Making Bodies of the Club Licensing System;
- v- Monitor the impact of Club Licensing both on National Competitions as well as CAF Inter-Clubs Competitions;
- vi- Ensure that Clubs already granted the licenses are still in compliance with the Club Licensing Regulations throughout the season.

2- Timelines:

The deadline set by CAF to receive the licenses granted by the Federations to Clubs in order to participate in CAF Inter-Clubs Competitions is November 30th from each year (For example: which would be around 2 months before the beginning of the Inter-Clubs Competitions).

Other deadlines are set by the Federations therefore it is necessary to ensure that the documents are received, organized, investigated and the final decisions of both Decision-Making Bodies are made 2 months prior to the beginning of the CAF Inter-Clubs Competitions.

Deadlines must be established by the Federation regarding the below processes and events:

- Deadline for the Federation to Send official letters to the Clubs that shall be participating in the CAF Inter-Clubs competitions in order to invite them to apply for the Licenses;
- Deadline for the Clubs to submit the Club License Application including all the necessary documentation;
- Deadline for the Federation to complete the spot-checks at least on the Clubs participating in CAF Inter-Clubs competitions;
- Deadline for the First Instance Body to make their decisions regarding the licensing of Clubs;
- Deadline for the Federation to communicate the decisions of the First Instance Body to the Clubs;
- Deadline for the Clubs to finalize their formal appeals to the Appeals Body;

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- Deadline for the Appeals Body to make their decisions regarding the licensing of Clubs;
- Deadline for the federation to communicate their final decisions to Clubs in case of appeal.

3- Creating a Club Licensing manual:

CAF created this manual in order to facilitate and further explain the steps required from its Member Associations and therefore Member Associations are highly encouraged to make a manual with the idea to explain to Clubs the steps that are expected from them in order to remain in compliance with the National Club Licensing Regulations and be able to participate in CAF Inter-Clubs competitions.

The Club Licensing Manual shall at least include a clear explanation of the following points:

- Introduction and objectives of the Club Licensing System;
- Deadlines and Timelines for Clubs as well as the Federation;
- Duties and responsibilities of the Federation;
- Duties and responsibilities of Clubs;
- The book of sanctions.

4- Organizing a Seminar:

CAF Member Associations are required to organize a Club Licensing Seminar at least for First Division Clubs in order to introduce and give a general explanation of the system to the Clubs.

The following points must be clearly explained to Clubs:

- The objectives of Club Licensing;
- Deadlines and Timelines of the process;
- Duties and Responsibilities of the Federation;
- Duties and Responsibilities of Clubs;
- Distributing the Club Licensing Manual and the Book of Sanctions;

As previously mentioned, CAF will also organize a seminar in each of its Member Associations in order to further explain the system, answer any questions regarding the project and also to have a better understanding of the situation in each Federation. The seminars will be conducted by instructors who were chosen and approved due to their vast experience in fields concerning the 5 Criteria of CAF Club Licensing System.

D- Collecting the Necessary Documents and Information:

1- Signing the Confidentiality Agreement:

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The Federation must guarantee the Clubs full confidentiality with regard to all information they have provided. Therefore any person involved in the licensing process or appointed by the Federation must sign a “Confidentiality Agreement” before commencing their tasks.

Kindly find in Annex 2 the Confidentiality Agreement created by CAF which must be signed by:

- General Secretary of the Member Association;
- Club Licensing Manager of the Member Association;
- Members of the First Instance Body;
- Members of the Appeals Body;
- Any external advisors, experts who could review Club Documentation.

The original signed versions of the Confidentiality Agreement must be included in the file of the Club and copies must be sent to the Club.

2- Collecting the Documents:

As we mentioned earlier the deadline for submitting the Club License Application and all the necessary documents must be communicated to all Clubs especially Clubs that shall be participating in CAF Inter-Clubs competitions.

Clubs shall be advised to submit the documents before the deadline in order to give the Club Licensing Manager of the Federation time to make the necessary revision and organization of the documents. The Clubs Licensing Manager has the right to ask Clubs for any missing documents as long as the deadline had not passed yet. Once the deadline has passed, the Club Licensing Manager has to organize the documents and prepare them for the First Instance Body.

The Clubs Licensing Manager of the Federation must confirm receipt of any documents he receives from Clubs in order to ensure that all documents that were sent by the Club have been received by the Federation before the deadline for submitting the documents. Thus, the Federation and Clubs will avoid any misunderstanding or awkward situations that could occur once the decision of the First Instance Body has been delivered to Clubs.

3- Conducting Site Inspection Visits:

Once the documents have been submitted to the Federation, representatives from the Federation must conduct Site Inspection Visits through which they ensure that all the documentation presented to the Federation is correct. During the Site Inspection Visit, the representatives of the Federation will be required to visit the Club Headquarters, Stadium(s), Training Facilities and any other infrastructure belonging to or being utilized by the Club. The 5 Criteria of CAF Club Licensing System must be properly investigated during the visit.

4- Conducting a general Club Meeting:

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Towards the end of each season the Federation will be required to organize a meeting with each Club that shall be participating in any of next season's CAF Inter-Clubs Competitions. The meeting shall be organized by the Club Licensing Manager of the Federation and it shall at least include the following representatives of the Club: General Manager, Finance Officer, Security Officer, and Head of Youth Development Program.

The purpose of the General Club Meeting is:

- i- To discuss and evaluate the progress made by the Club during the previous season in regards to the implementation of the Clubs Licensing system and;
- ii- To generate recommendations that would help the Club be fully prepared before the start of the next season.

E- Decision Making Process:

1- Submitting Documents and Information to the First Instance Body:

The first step in the Decision Making Process begins by the Clubs Licensing manager of the federation preparing and organizing the documentation provided by Clubs and information gathered about them during the Site Inspection Visit in order to submit their Folders or Files to the First Instance Body.

The Clubs Licensing Manager of the Federation must also make the First Instance Body aware of any documents that were provided after the deadline for submitting the documents has already passed or in case there were any incorrect information in a Club's Documentation.

2- Assessing the Documents:

The First Instance Body consists of a minimum of 3 Members and the Chairman has the casting vote. The FIB will meet to assess and revise the documentation and information of each Club that they have at their disposal. The First Instance Body shall ensure that all the necessary steps for the implementation of CAF Club Licensing System and that all 5 criteria have been fulfilled before granting the License to a Club.

3- Decision of the First Instance Body:

The First Instance Body shall vote in order to come up with a decision regarding the approval or rejection of granting the license to the Club after discussing and evaluating the File of the Club. As we mentioned before, the chairman of the First Instance Body has the Casting Vote.

The First Instance Body does not necessarily have to reject granting the license to a Club because it missing one of the Club Licensing System Criteria but it could be given a certain amount of time to complete the missing criteria. If the Club doesn't fulfil the missing

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Criteria, the Federation must impose sanctions that could reach withdrawing the License and not granting the Club the right to participate in CAF Inter-Clubs competitions.

4- Communicating the Decisions of the First Instance Body to Clubs:

The decision of the First Instance Body (FIB) must be delivered to the Club in a written formal letter. The First Instance Body (FIB) could include any comments or recommendations in the letter and in case of rejection they must set out the reason for such refusal. The letter must be signed by all members of the First Instance Body (FIB).

In case of rejection, the Club has the right to appeal the decision and rend the case to the Appeals Body (AB).

5- Submitting the Decisions of the First Instance Body to CAF:

CAF must be informed of the decisions reached by the First Instance Body (FIB), therefore the Federation must send copies of the letters that were sent to Clubs to CAF as well.

6- Beginning the Appeals Process:

As we mentioned earlier, in case of rejection, the Club has the right to appeal the decision and rend the case to the Appeals Body (AB) through an official written letter requesting the appeal.

7- Decision of the Appeals Body:

The Appeals Body (AB) consists of at least 3 Members and the Chairman has the Casting Vote.

The Appeals Body (AB) shall make its decisions based on the evidence provided by the Club or the Federation.

8- Communicating the Decisions of the Appeals Body to Clubs:

The decision of the Appeals Body (AB) must also be delivered to the Club in a written formal letter. The Appeals Body (AB) could include any comments or recommendations in the letter and in case of rejection they must set out the reason for such refusal. The letter must be signed by all members of the Appeals Body (AB).

The Decision made by the Appeals Body (AB) is final and cannot be appealed unless the Federation decides that the Clubs Licensing System comes under the authority and jurisdiction of the Court of Arbitration (CAS) which they would have clarify in their Statutes.

9- Submitting the Decisions of the Appeals Body to CAF:

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CAF must be informed of the decisions reached by the Appeals Body (AB) and therefore the Federation must send copies of the letters that were sent to Clubs to CAF as well.

F- CAF Support Tools:

1- Seminars:

CAF will organize Club Licensing Seminars for each Member Association. Each Seminar will be conducted by at least 3 experienced CAF Instructors. The Instructors will further explain the system and answer any questions that Members of the federations or Clubs might feel the need to ask.

The Seminars will be partially financed by CAF depending on the size of the Federation and the amount of effort and development it has invested in Club Licensing.

2- CAFONLINE.COM:

CAF Media department developed a new website that includes a Clubs Licensing Section. The Club Licensing Section is accessible to all Member Associations and Clubs in order to enable everyone working on the project to follow the latest news regarding the system, any updates on the Club Licensing regulations and also enable them to download all the necessary documents of CAF Club Licensing System.

3- CMS:

CAF will integrate the Club Licensing Process in CMS (CAF Management System).

4- Case Studies (Pilot Project):

At the end of each year, starting from 2015, CAF will provide all Member Associations with a document containing Club Licensing System case studies.

The Case Studies will be mainly chosen from the Federations that have been selected to take part in the Clubs Licensing System's "Pilot Project".

The following points are the objectives of the pilot Project for the Club Licensing System:

- To encourage and help the Federations that have put effort into the implementation of Club Licensing;
- To study different situations in different Federations in the ongoing learning process of Club Licensing System;

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- To monitor the basic obstacles and difficulties that the federations face during the implementation process and find solutions for them;
- To study different Models of National Club Licensing regulations and monitor their effects.

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CAF Club Licensing System Criteria

Category	Criteria A	Criteria B	Criteria C
Sporting	Approved Youth Development Program	-	-
	Youth Teams		
Infrastructure	Stadium - Certification	Stadium - Ground Rules	Stadium - Individual Seats
	Stadium - Control Room	Training Facilities - Availability for Club	Stadium - Covered Seats
	Stadium - Capacity	Stadium - Sanitary Facilities	Stadium - Accommodation of Visiting Supporters
	Stadium - Availability		Stadium - Signposting and Directions
	Stadium - Floodlighting		Stadium Media Facilities
	Stadium - Spectator Areas		Spectators with Disabilities
	Stadium - First-Aid Rooms and Doping Control Room Field of Play - Specification		
Administrative and Personnel	Club Secretariat	Rights and Duties	-
	General Manager	Duty to Notify Significant Changes	
	Finance Officer		
	Security Officer		
	Medical Doctor and Physiotherapist		
	Head Coach of the First Squad		
	Head of the Youth Development Program Youth Coaches Safety and Security Organization - Stewards		
Legal	Declaration in Respect of Participation in Inter-Clubs Competitions	-	-
	Statutes and Register Extract Ownership and Control of Clubs		
Financial	Annual Financial Statements- Audited	-	-
	No Payables Overdue Towards Football Clubs Arising From Transfer Activities		
	No Payables Overdue Towards Employees and Social/Tax Authorities		

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ANNEX 1

CLS Regulation Check List

Definitions	A
Objectives	A
Grades of Criteria	A
Legal Basis	A
Book of Sanctions	A
Delegation of Licensing	A
Confidentiality Clause	A
2 Bodies	A
Conditions of First Instance Body	A
Conditions of Appeals Body	A
Responsibilities of License Applicant (Page 8&9) Article 5.2	A
License is delivered for 1 or many seasons + Conditions	A
(Sporting Criteria)	
Youth Development Program	A
Youth Development Program must be Approved by licensor	A
Objectives and youth development philosophy	A
Organization of youth sector	A
Personnel and required minimum qualifications	A
Infrastructure for youth sector	A
Financial Resources	A
Football education Program for different age groups	A
Educational Program (Laws of the Game)	A
Medical Support for young players	A
1 team of age between 15-21	A
1 team of age between 10-14	A
(Infrastructure Criteria)	
Stadium Certification according to national/local law	A
Stadium Certification not older than 2 years before the start of CAF Inter-clubs competitions	A
Stadium control room	A
Stadium capacity according to the average demand of tickets for the national competition	A
Stadium availability 1-owns it. 2-contract with owners.	A
Stadium Floodlighting	A
Stadium spectators areas (Ability to separate into different sectors)	A

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Stadium First-Aid rooms and doping control room	A
Doping Control room near the dressing rooms and inaccessible to public	A
Field of play Specification 1-Natural Grass. 2- Artificial Grass (according to FIAF and CAF)	A
Stadium Ground Rules (Admission Rights)	B
Stadium Ground Rules (Abandonment or postponement of Events)	B
Stadium Ground Rules (Description of prohibited behaviors and penalties)	B
Stadium Ground Rules (Restrictions with regard to alcohol, fireworks, banners etc...)	B
Stadium Ground Rules (Seating Rules)	B
Stadium Ground Rules (Causes for ejection from the ground)	B
Stadium Ground Rules (Risk Analysis specific to the stadium)	B
Training facilities (Availability) 1-Owned. 2- Contract with Owners.	B
Stadium Sanitary Facilities Sufficient, clean and for both sexes	B
Administrative and Personnel Criteria	
Club Secretariat	A
General Manager	A
Finance Officer	A
Security Officer (Qualification)	A
Medical Doctor and Physiotherapist (Recognized and Certified by national authority + Registered)	A
First Squad Head Coach (Fulfilling 1 of the requirements)	A
Head of Youth development Program (Fulfilling 1 of the requirements)	A
Youth Coaches (Minimum Qualification as defined by licensor)	A
Safety and Security Organization – Stewarding	A
Rights and Duties of staff defined in writing	B
Duty to notify significant changes	B
Legal Criteria	
Declaration in respect of participation in inter-clubs competitions	A
Legally binding statutes, rules and regulations of FIFA, CAF, NA and if available National League.	A
Recognizing the exclusive jurisdiction of CAS	A
Prohibition to recourse to ordinary courts	A
At national level play in competitions endorsed by the member association	A
At continental level competitions endorsed by CAF	A
Abide by provisions and conditions of national regulations	A
Submitted documents are complete and correct	A
Authorize the competent club licensing authority to examine the docs	A
Acknowledging FIFA and CAF rights to execute checks	A
The A/M Legal Declaration must be signed 3 months before deadline of submission to the licensor	A
Statutes and Register Extract (Copy of Valid Statutes)	A
An extract of a public register	A
Ownership and control of clubs (Conditions in Page 23)	A

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Financial Criteria		
	Annual Financial Statements-Audited	A
	Audited by independent auditors	A
	Minimum information (Page 24+25+26)	A
	No payables overdue towards football clubs arising from transfer activities	A
	No payables overdue towards employees and social/tax authorities	A
	CAF will implement spot checks	A