

Independent Head of Integrity: summary of role and selection process

The Asian Football Confederation is currently seeking an Independent Head of Integrity to gather information on cases of wrongdoing involving AFC competitions or activities, within the framework of AFC's new "Do The Right Thing" (whistleblower) Policy.

Deadline to apply: 28 February 2017

Independent Head of Integrity: independence

Based on the experience of existing "whistle-blower" policies in other industries, for many football-lovers the only way that the Policy will work is if "the person/organisation that the football-lover reports wrongdoing to is external to and independent from AFC." It should be self-evident from the nature of the organisation or individual chosen as Independent Head of Integrity that they will not be controlled or unduly influenced by AFC – this must be the case both in perception and in reality.

Therefore, the Independent Head of Integrity is independent from AFC – they can have no current or past connections to AFC or any AFC member association for a minimum of 10 years. Otherwise the Policy will not work because many people will not trust it. The full definition of independence is contained in Annex 1 of the Policy.

Independent Head of Integrity: role

The Independent Head of Integrity's primary role is being a focal point, managing the receipt of the information outside of AFC, and assessing whether the information should be rejected or investigated.

The Independent Head of Integrity will fulfil several roles such as:

- filter: the Independent Head of Integrity will need to sift the different information to evaluate what should be rejected and what should be passed on (in case of doubt the information is passed on);
- anonymiser: the Independent Head of Integrity ensures that the football-lover who is reporting the information has their identity carefully and effectively protected (unless the football-lover consents otherwise);
- advisor and information point: since some people may not know whether the information that they have constitutes wrongdoing or not, they may feel confused and/or afraid, or they may simply be unaware of the relevant rules so the Independent Head of Integrity advises throughout the procedure. Not every contact may constitute a report, for example where a football-lover may initially be only seeking guidance. This role may on occasion require liaison between the Independent Head of Integrity and AFC (and/or its MAs or stakeholders) in order to ensure consistency of interpretation of the relevant regulations,

to gather additional information, to establish whether the information is important/credible/useful (e.g. based on previous investigations), etc.;

- intermediary: the Independent Head of Integrity acts, if needed, as a fully-autonomous and fully-independent intermediary between AFC and the football-lover in order to (a) ensure protection of the football-lover's identity, whilst (b) also trying to maximise the quantity and quality of information;

- onward communication: it may be necessary, in liaison with the football-lover, and in view of the relevant legal framework, to inform state, law enforcement or other potentially affected authorities (e.g. in case of credible and serious criminal implications outside the scope of AFC's Regulations).

Additional information is contained in Section 8 (Procedure) of the Policy.

Independent Head of Integrity: selection

The Independent Head of Integrity will be selected in the six months following the approval of this Policy, using best practice recruitment as used in other industries, but, in any case, according to certain basic principles:

- the selection must be open and via a public tender process,
- the selection process will be managed by the AFC Governance Task Force,
- the selection process must include a review of relevant criteria such as:
 - relevant expertise, knowledge and experience,
 - personal/character/reputation qualities such as a "fit and proper" assessment, ethical background, independence and a high reputation for ethical and professional conduct,
 - ideally a legal background (and there may be specific advantages, depending where he/she is based, if the Independent Head of Integrity is a lawyer), and
 - ideally knowledge of football and its stakeholders, and sport in general
- specifically regarding independence, the Independent Head of Integrity must meet the AFC criteria of independence as set out in Annex 1 of the Policy,
- the Independent Head of Integrity may be a natural person or associated with a legal person (e.g. it could either be an individual or from an organisation like an NGO or a company),

- the individual Independent Head of Integrity can be a man or a woman,
- the interested party must provide a detailed cost estimate to AFC (including an external resources budget that would be used in cases where the Independent Head of Integrity needs to use external resources to assess information provided),
- the appointment by the AFC Governance Task Force shall be for a period of no less than four years.

Please send any proposal including the latest CV of the candidate (if an individual), or Statement of Qualifications (if an entity) by registered mail by 28 February 2017 to:

Asian Football Confederation
AFC House
Jalan 1/155B
Bukit Jalil
57000 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

Should you require any clarification or further information please contact Mr. Alex Phillips (alex.phillips@the-afc.com)