

Sent by email
(emelie.astrom@mrtv.se)

The Swedish Broadcasting Authority
PO Box 33,
SE-121 25 Stockholm-Globen

For the attention of:
Ms Emelie Åström

Zurich, 15 October 2013
sha/sar

Public consultation on the proposed wording for a possible future list of major events in Sweden as stipulated in the draft report of the Swedish Broadcasting Authority

Dear Madam,

We write to you with regard to your email dated 25 September 2013 on the above mentioned subject matter.

On behalf of the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), we would like to thank you for informing us about the public consultation and for the opportunity to present to the Swedish Broadcasting Authority (SBA) FIFA's views on the proposed wording for a possible future list of major events in Sweden.

FIFA acknowledges the importance of public consultation procedures in shaping broadcasting policy in national territories – in this case the possible future broadcasting policy in Sweden – and appreciates the thorough examination the SBA is undertaking involving all relevant stakeholders in this early stage of the process. We, therefore, hope that our views and commitment to making a wide range of matches publicly available irrespective of the existence of any such legal obligation can contribute to the final decision-making process of the Swedish government.

Prior to the merits of our contribution, we would like to seize the opportunity of such correspondence and provide you with some information on FIFA including an overview of our general policy on the broadcasting of its events.

FIFA's objectives as football's world governing body and in accordance with its Statutes are:

- to improve the game of football constantly and promote it globally in the light of its unifying, educational, cultural and humanitarian values, particularly through youth and development programmes
- to organise its own international competitions;

- to draw up regulations and provisions and ensure their enforcement
- to control every type of Association Football by taking appropriate steps to prevent infringements of the Statutes, regulations or decisions of FIFA or of the Laws of the Game
- to promote integrity, ethics and fair play with a view to preventing all methods or practices, such as corruption, doping or match manipulation, which might jeopardise the integrity of matches, competitions, Players, Officials and Members or give rise to abuse of Association Football;

FIFA is able to discharge its statutory duties by relying, as a primary source of revenue, on the sale of broadcasting and marketing rights for the FIFA World Cup™, which accounted for 87% of the overall revenue generated in the 2012 financial year.¹

Consequently, it is the revenues generated from the FIFA World Cup™ that enable FIFA to implement and pursue its extensive development and social programmes around the world in addition to its contributions for humanitarian purposes on an ad hoc basis. For example, the financial success of the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ allowed FIFA to grant to each of its Member Associations – regardless of their qualification at the final stages of the FIFA World Cup™ – a payment of USD 550.000 in addition to the USD 1 million granted under the Financial Assistance Programme (FAP) for each financial cycle. Further examples of FIFA's reinvestment into football, apart from the competition-related investments, include the *Goal* Programme, Football for Hope, initiatives for the promotion of women's football, Football for Health and other solidarity projects. In total, 69% of the overall expenditure of the 2012 financial year was invested directly in football.²

The commercial exploitation of audiovisual media rights is of paramount importance for the sustainable financing of sport in general, as well as for the persistence of the financial redistribution and solidarity mechanisms within the sport structures.

The proposed wording of the possible future list of events is consistent with FIFA's policy regarding "prime" matches of the FIFA World Cup™ being those matches broadcast live on free-to-air television channels which have nationwide coverage. These "prime" matches include the matches involving the national team of the relevant Member State, the two semi-finals and the final match of the FIFA World Cup™. This policy is applicable regardless of whether these matches are designated events or similar legal requirements are applicable in the relevant territory as FIFA recognises that these matches should be accessible to the widest possible audience. In FIFA's opinion the goal of listed events legislation, to establish public access to sporting events of major importance to society, can be reached without resorting to state regulation as FIFA remains committed to making a wide range of matches publicly available.

As a general remark, in FIFA's view, conflicts arise when listed events legislation includes matches of the FIFA World Cup™ regardless of their importance for the respective society. In such cases the distortion of competition outweighs any possible advantages of designated events legislation, rendering it unreasonable and in interference with established EU policies, such as the White Paper on Sport³ as well as various Communications⁴ and reports from the European Parliament⁵ whereby it is

¹ FIFA Financial Report 2012, page 17; also see <<http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/finances/income.html>>.

² FIFA Financial Report 2012, page 18; also see <<http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/finances/expenditure.html>>.

³ COM(2007) 391 final of 11 July 2007.

⁴ E.g. COM(2011) 12 final of 18 January 2011, "Developing the European Dimension in Sport".

acknowledged that the revenues from sources as the television rights contribute to the financing of the lower chains of sport throughout Europe and beyond while calling for an adequate legal protection of sports content.

FIFA takes note with satisfaction that the draft report of the SBA identified individual matches of the FIFA World Cup[™] as events of major importance to society and orientated itself on recital (52) of Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2010, specifically the interest of a general public and footballs' roots in the Swedish culture, when defining which sport events are of major importance to Swedish society, cf. page 37 of the draft report.

As it is not yet determined whether or not a Swedish list of designated events of major importance to society will be introduced, at this stage FIFA has no comment to make other than as set out herein. Notwithstanding the foregoing, FIFA reserves the right to revise its comments on the subject matter.

As a closing remark and considering that the consultation procedure is on-going we deem appropriate to envisage the possibility of bilateral meetings in order to gain a better understanding of the general rationale of the draft report as well as on other specific elements of the envisaged provisions. Finally, we would like to thank you for considering our response in the context of your consultation procedure and remain available to discuss any elements of our answer in further detail should you deem appropriate.

Yours faithfully,

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE
DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



Niclas Ericson
Director of TV

⁵ E.g. 2011/2087(INI), A7-0385/2011 of 18 November 2011.