

WCA OVERVIEW OF KEY ISSUES ON ICC REGULATIONS ON SANCTIONING OF EVENTS AND PLAYER RELEASE (REGULATIONS)

WCA BELIEVES IN A FAIRLY AND CONSISTENTLY REGULATED GLOBAL CRICKET SYSTEM BUILT ON CONTRACT STABILITY, AND RECIPROCITY OF RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS BETWEEN STAKEHOLDERS.

Event sanctioning regulations should protect the integrity, coordination and sustainability of the global game, while also guaranteeing minimum professional standards and protections for players whose labour underpins it. This is especially important if players are to be restricted from participating outside sanctioned cricket. The table details some of the key issues in relation to the current Regulations and provides possible solutions to enhance the integrity, sustainability and credibility of all sanctioned cricket.

WCA continues to advocate for the game's leadership to implement these changes.

ISSUE	RECENT EXAMPLE	SOLUTION
<p>No requirement within the Regulations for minimum employment standards to apply within sanctioned cricket.</p> <p>This results in provisions in some player contracts that are unreasonable and unfair, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>unilateral termination or extension provisions</i> • <i>inconsistent payment terms</i> • <i>inconsistent commercial rights protection</i> • <i>no safeguarding provisions</i> 	<p>IPL, WPL, MLC, Hundred, ILT20, BPL, ABT10 all have unilateral termination provisions within them. These ceased to exist in some other sports 60 years ago.</p>	<p>Sanctioning should be contingent upon compliance with minimum player employment standards, which are collectively bargained, to ensure sanctioned cricket meets basic principles of fairness, player welfare and contractual certainty.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>guaranteed payment dates</i> • <i>limits on unilateral termination or extension</i> • <i>insurance requirements</i> • <i>fair dispute resolution clauses</i> • <i>minimum medical/safeguarding obligations</i> • <i>clear and balanced image rights exchange</i>
<p>No effective avenue within the Regulations to adequately address late or non payment issues or contract enforceability.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>there are no effective cricket specific enforcement mechanisms</i> 	<p>In the Caymans Max60 Event in 2025, sanctioned by ICC Member - Caymans Cricket, 23 players were not paid, or paid late, fees owing to them under their contracts. They have still not received payments owing to them.</p> <p>Examples of other impacted events include: Bangladesh Premier League, Abu Dhabi T10, Lanka Premier League.</p>	<p>Globally bargained minimum contract standards for all sanctioned cricket should include preventative protections and enforcement remedies that leagues must satisfy as a condition of receiving and maintaining sanctioning approval.</p> <p>For example:</p> <p>Preventative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>escrow/bonding requirements</i> • <i>proof of liquidity</i> • <i>central clearing mechanism</i> • <i>minimum insurance requirements</i> <p>Enforcement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>fast-track cricket specific arbitration / resolution mechanisms built on equal employer and employee representation</i> • <i>sporting and economic sanctions for non-compliance</i> • <i>automatic recognition/enforcement across members</i> • <i>event owner liability</i> • <i>restrictions on future sanctioning for repeat offenders</i>

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<p>The Regulations do not provide clarity on player status and provide for arbitrary limitations with respect to player release or transfer.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Player movement - the Regulations create restrictive limitations and approval requirements relating to overseas player participation in certain domestic events (4 player rule) – from a labour mobility perspective, this is an unreasonably wide restraint</i> • <i>Freedom of movement - the almost unconditional ability for a national federation to refuse to issue an NOC for a professional cricketer to participate in a "domestic match" played on the territory of a national cricket federation to which they are not affiliated – this tool is often exploited by administrators particularly where there is power imbalance</i> 	<p>In 2026, several governing bodies attempted to prevent multiple players from competing in a foreign domestic T20 event, despite not having a contractual relationship with those players. The Boards cited the ICC regulations in their attempt to restrain the players.</p>	<p>A 'fit for purpose' global regulatory framework should recognise labour principles such as proportionality, restraint of trade, due process.</p> <p>Such framework should include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A global registration and tracking system for the international movement of players – enshrining freedom of movement, in addition to contract stability</i> • <i>A mandatory release mechanism between Boards and domestic teams (and vice-versa) to protect player access to domestic employment opportunities, in addition to contract stability</i> • <i>Player status committee / body to hear matters with respect to player status on an expedited basis</i>
<p>The Regulations lack recognition or respect for fundamental labour rights.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>recognition of player associations</i> • <i>freedom of association</i> • <i>collective bargaining rights</i> • <i>minimum health and safety standards</i> • <i>anti-harassment/safeguarding systems</i> • <i>independent reporting mechanisms</i> 	<p>Players from numerous countries continue to report active, intimidatory opposition to forming or joining a players' association, or negotiating collectively.</p>	<p>The Regulations should include a requirement for all sanctioned leagues to comply with fundamental principles and rights at work, which apply to professional athletes.</p> <p>The application of these to professional sport and athletes is set out in the ILO Guidelines (HERE) and internationally recognised labour standards.</p>
<p>The Regulations provide for very little due process or procedural fairness.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>no appeal rights for NOC refusals</i> • <i>no timelines around decisions</i> • <i>no requirement for written reasons</i> • <i>no proportionality test</i> • <i>broad sanctioning discretion</i> 	<p>In 2025/26, multiple players from multiple countries were forced to litigate through national courts to challenge unreasonable restraints imposed on them by national governing bodies citing ICC regulations.</p>	<p>Independent, transparent and time-bound review and appeal mechanisms should be incorporated into the Regulations.</p> <p>Timeframes regarding decision making should also be evidenced within the Regulations e.g. in respect of approved / disapproved cricket.</p>

Stronger and more credible regulation benefits everyone in the game - players, leagues, governing bodies, partners and fans. Modernising the current system would strengthen trust, improve standards, support global growth and help ensure cricket remains unified, sustainable and globally competitive.

MORE INFORMATION

WCA's Global Game Structure Report ([HERE](#)) looks at these and other broader issues with the current game structure and regulatory framework, in context.