

**THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
REGULATORY COMMISSION**

**PREMIER LEAGUE
CHELSEA FC V ARSENAL FC
SATURDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER 2015**

MEMBERS OF COMMISSION:- B.W. BRIGHT [CHAIRMAN]
G. FARELLY
G. APLIN

**MR. M. IVES – The Head of Judicial Services of The Football Association acted as Secretary to the
Regulatory Commission**

1. By letter of the 21st September 2015 Mr. Diego Costa was charged with misconduct for a breach of FA Rule E3 arising out of an incident in the fixture Chelsea FC v Arsenal FC on Saturday 19th September 2015.
2. It was alleged that in or around the 44th minute of the game, as evidenced in reports and a video clip that behaviour by Mr. Diego Costa constituted violent conduct.
3. The matter was not seen by the match officials and Members of the Regulatory Commission had before them Email correspondence between Mr. T. Leblatier of The Football Association and PGMOL Senior Referee Coaches Mr. S. Dunn; Mr. A. Wiley and Mr. E. Wolstenholme all dated the 21st September 2015.
4. By way of a Response of the 22nd September 2015 under the hand of Mr. James Bonnington of Chelsea FC the Charge was denied.
5. The Members of the Regulatory Commission also had before them:-
 - a. Correspondence from Mr. Diego Costa dated the 22nd September 2015.
 - b. A submission dated 22nd September 2015 submitted by Mr. Diego Costa and Chelsea FC.
6. All correspondence from various parties was carefully considered in detail by the Regulatory Commission members.
7. The Regulatory Commission had the opportunity of viewing several times and carefully scrutinising the video clip of the incident.
8. The Regulatory Commission noted that all three former senior referees consulted separately were agreed that, if the referee had seen the incident in question then Mr. Diego Costa would have been dismissed from the field of play for violent conduct.
9. The Regulatory Commission read in detail the submissions and in particular noted:-
 - i. The opinion of the player and his club that ‘the analysis of two of The FA refereeing experts should be discounted’ and the reasoning for such opinions.

The Regulatory Commission, after careful consideration, did not concur with this opinion.

- ii. The opinion of the player and his club 'that the incident in question cannot be fairly described as violent conduct' and the reasoning for that submission.

The Regulatory Commission read in detail the detailed reasoning put forward by the player charged, Mr. Diego Costa, and in particular his opinion as in para., 7 sub-section a to d [inclusive] relating to his arm and hand in the incident.

The Regulatory Commission did not concur with various aspects of Mr. Diego Costa's opinion and noted that the incident occurred away from the flow of the match ball; that his arm was pulled back and struck the opposing player who was behind him in the head and concluded this action of the arm was an act of violent conduct.

CONCLUSION

Having considered all matters and after viewing the video again the Regulatory Commission unanimously concluded that the Charge was PROVEN.

SANCTION

Having concluded that the Charge was proven the Regulatory Commission proceeded to consider the penalty to be served by the Player. The standard punishment for an offence of violent conduct is a suspension of three matches. The Regulatory Commission, under the regulations, could decrease or increase the standard punishment but only in exceptional circumstances. As part of the deliberations the Regulatory Commission considered the factors set out at regulation d) i) and ii) of Schedule A. Having done so the Regulatory Commission was satisfied that the circumstances of this case were not exceptional.

DECISION

That Mr. Diego Costa be suspended for 3 matches.

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BARRY W. BRIGHT
CHAIRMAN - 23rd September 2015

G. FARRELLY
G. APLIN