

IN THE MATTER OF A REGULATORY COMMISSION

BETWEEN

THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

and

MR MARKO SALATOVIC

WRITTEN REASONS OF THE REGULATORY COMMISSION

Regulatory Commission: Sally Davenport (Chair) – Independent Legal Panel
Member
Ian Atkins – Independent Football Panel Member
Graham Mackrell – Independent Football Panel Member

Secretary: Conrad Gibbons – Judicial Services Assistant Manager

Date: 2 February 2026

Venue: Held remotely via Microsoft Teams

Introduction

1. These are the written reasons of the Regulatory Commission that considered the charge against Marko Salatovic (“MS”).
2. MS is the Assistant Head Coach of Hull City FC (“Hull”).

3. On 17 January 2026, Hull played a match in the English Football League Championship against Southampton FC (“the Match”). MS was shown a red card during the Match.
4. On 17 January 2026, The FA received an Official Report Form from the Referee, Samuel Allison, reporting that he had sent MS off under Law 12 section: Other. He provided additional information as follows:

“Marko had already received a Stage 1 (YC) warning at 49 minutes. In the 90+4 minute, he threw a water bottle forcefully into the ground within the technical area in a violent and aggressive manner due to a decision a didn’t give on field. The fourth official witnessed this incident and informed me that the away team assistant head coach must be shown a red card, with a Stage 2 sanction issued and the individual sent to the dressing room.”

5. In response to an email from The FA, the Referee subsequently clarified that the first caution was for persistent unacceptable behaviour, stating that despite numerous warning offences by the Fourth Official, MS kept standing at the front of the technical area and ignored the warnings.
6. In response to an email from The FA, the Fourth Official, Richie Watkins, also provided information to The FA about the incidents, stating as follows:

“Mr Salatovic was warned of his persistent standing and coaching at the front of the technical area, whilst the Hull manager Sergej Jakirovic was doing the same. As per guidelines only one member of the technical area staff can stand and coach at the front of the technical area.

He was warned at 7:18, 9:37, 21:30 and 47:10, before I called the referee over in the 49th minute to issue a yellow card for persistent unacceptable behaviour, despite numerous warning offences.

In the 94th minute of the game, following a perceived missed foul on a Hull player, Mr Salatovic stood up from his seated position within the technical area with a bottle of water in his hand. He proceeded to violently throw the bottle to the ground, with part of it breaking off towards the Southampton manager. This can be seen on the MOAS footage at 93:00 via 18 Yard camera 1.

I informed the referee that Mr Salatovic's conduct met the threshold for a red card to be issued, as he had already been shown a yellow card."

7. By letter dated 21 January 2026 ("the Charge Letter"), The FA charged MS with misconduct in respect of a breach of FA Rule E3.1 ("the Charge"). It alleged that in or around the 49th and 90+4th minute of the Match, MS acted in an improper manner, leading to his dismissal.
8. The FA designated the case as a Non-Standard Case as the particular facts of the alleged misconduct were of a serious and/or unusual nature.
9. Together with the Charge Letter, MS was sent the Report referred to in paragraph 4 above, the email correspondence with the Referee and the Fourth Official, and various video clips.

The Response

10. On 26 January 2026, MS submitted a Disciplinary Proceedings Reply Form to The FA. MS accepted the Charge and indicated that he did not wish to attend a personal hearing before the Commission. David Beeby ("DB"), the Hull Club Secretary, also submitted a letter of the same date, stating that MS's command of English was not good and he was therefore writing on his behalf. DB confirmed that MS understood and accepted the Charge and wished to apologise for his behaviour.
11. DB went on to make submissions on sanction, as detailed below. He also submitted a document headed "English Football League – Championship Key Match Incidents" and additional video footage.
12. On 28 January 2026, The FA submitted its Response to DB's letter.

The Relevant Rule

13. FA Rule E3.1 states:

“A Participant shall at all times act in the best interests of the game and shall not act in any manner which is improper or brings the game into disrepute or use any one, or a combination of, violent conduct, serious foul play, threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting words or behaviour.”

The Hearing

11. In advance of the hearing the Commission read the documents referred to above and watched the video clips provided to it.

12. As the Charge was admitted, the Commission accepted that it was proven and considered the submissions from the parties solely in relation to sanction.

13. The following paragraphs summarise the submissions provided to the Commission. They do not purport to be a verbatim record of all the points made. The absence of a point or submission in these reasons should not imply that the Commission did not take that point or submission into account when determining the case. For the avoidance of doubt, the Commission carefully considered all the material before it.

MS’s Submissions

14. In the letter submitted on MS’s behalf, DB indicated that MS apologised for his behaviour and was sorry that he had allowed his frustration to get the better of him. However, his frustration had been due to poor decisions by the Referee. DB drew the Commission’s attention to the Championship Key Match Incidents document which highlighted an incident in which a Southampton player should have been shown a red card. He also referred to another poor decision, not referenced in the document.

15. DB submitted that the case was “borderline” Non-Standard. It was at the lower end of the scale of improper conduct. There was no violent conduct, serious foul play, threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting words or behaviour. The water bottle had been aimed at the ground and did not come close to hitting anyone.

16. DB pointed to multiple mitigating factors, including the following:

- MS’s lack of experience in English football;
- the fact that MS had accepted his dismissal and left the pitch immediately;
- the fact that it was minor incident;
- MS’s clean record;
- MS’s acceptance of the Charge and cooperation;
- MS’s apology.

17. DB submitted that the case did not merit a fine or a sporting sanction. A warning would be a reasonable and fair outcome. In the event that the Commission was minded to impose a fine or sporting sanction, he invited the Commission to suspend the penalty in accordance with Regulation 43 of the Disciplinary Regulations (“the Regulations”).

The FA’s Submissions

18. In its Response, The FA submitted that throwing a water bottle within the technical area was serious and unusual, such that Regulation 9 of the Regulations applied. It invited the Commission to exercise its discretion and impose a sanction in excess of the relevant Standard Penalty.

19. In terms of DB’s submissions and the mitigation advanced on MS’s behalf, The FA submitted that while frustration at refereeing decisions could provide context for the misconduct, it could not amount to a justification or mitigation. The fact that the other examples of misconduct in FA Rule E3.1 had not occurred, did not lessen the

seriousness of the misconduct. The FA accepted that MS had not been aiming the water bottle at a particular individual or area, but his actions were nonetheless reckless.

20. The FA did not seek a sporting sanction, but submitted that a warning would not suffice in the circumstances and would be unduly lenient. It accepted that MS's apology amounted to mitigation and that he should be given credit for admitting the Charge, but rejected the other mitigating factors put forward by Hull. Lack of experience in English football could not serve as mitigation; MS had worked within a professional football environment, and participants would be expected to uphold a standard of behaviour appropriate to that environment. The fact that MS had not contested his dismissal meant that there was no aggravating feature to the misconduct (or further charge), but credit could not be given for the absence of further misconduct. MS's clean disciplinary record could only attract limited credit, given that he had only been subject to The FA's jurisdiction for a short period of time.

The Commission's Decision

21. The Commission noted that as this was a non-standard case, the applicable penalty was at its discretion.

22. The Secretary confirmed that MS had no previous proven misconduct charges.

23. The Commission agreed with The FA that this was not a minor case of misconduct. MS had persistently ignored multiple warnings about his behaviour, which had led to a yellow card, and had then thrown a water bottle at the ground with force in a moment of frustration. Fortunately it had not hit anyone, but that did not mean that it was not a serious matter. Although The FA did not seek a sporting sanction, the Commission debated at length over whether a match ban would be appropriate in the circumstances. It ultimately decided that a financial penalty would suffice, but agreed with The FA that a penalty in excess of the Standard Penalty would be appropriate.

24. The Commission noted that the Standard Penalty for an admitted charge for an Assistant Coach would be £1,000. It had been provided with, and took account of, MS's net weekly income. It agreed that credit should be given for the admission, albeit that it would have been hard to deny the Charge in view of the clear video evidence. It agreed with The FA that only limited credit could be given for a clean disciplinary record in circumstances where the participant had only recently come under the jurisdiction of The FA. It noted MS's apology, but agreed with The FA that frustration at poor refereeing decisions could not justify his behaviour or reduce the penalty. It did not consider that lack of experience in English football could excuse MS's poor behaviour. MS had worked for multiple professional clubs in several different countries and would have been subject to similar codes of conduct in those countries.

25. Although DB had asked that any penalty be suspended, it had not advanced any reasons for the request. The Commission noted that clear and compelling reasons were required before it could consider suspending a sanction. It did not identify any such reasons in this case.

26. Taking all of the above points into account, the Commission made the following order:

- MS must pay a fine of £1,500.

27. The decision of the Commission may be appealed in accordance with the appropriate Regulations.

Sally Davenport

Ian Atkins

Graham Mackrell

4 February 2026