

DISCIPLINARY & ETHICS COMMITTEE OF FOOTBALL AUSTRALIA
DETERMINATION IN THE FOLLOWING MATTER:

Player and Club	Chinaza Uchendu (Melbourne City FC)
Alleged offence	Offence No 4, R2 <i>Assault on a Player (e.g. violent conduct when not challenging for the ball) or against any other person other than a Match Official, including an attempted Assault</i>
Date of offence	22 March 2026
Occasion of offence	Melbourne City FC and Western Sydney Wanderers FC
Date of Disciplinary Notice	23 March 2026
Basis the matter is before the Disciplinary Committee	Appeal: see clause 11.24 of the A-Leagues Disciplinary Regulations
Date of Hearing	8 April 2026
Date of Determination	8 April 2026 (oral pronouncement of determination) 9 April 2026 (written reasons for determination)
Disciplinary Committee Members	Anthony Lo Surdo SC Lance Sacks David Barrett

A. INTRODUCTION AND JURISDICTION

1. The Disciplinary and Ethics Committee of Football Australia (**Committee**) has jurisdiction under clause 4.6 of the A-Leagues Disciplinary Regulations applicable to the 2025/26 A-leagues Season (the **Disciplinary Regulations**) to determine matters which has been referred to it pursuant to the Disciplinary Regulations. When a matter is referred, clause 3.3(a) provides that the Committee must determine the matter and impose such sanctions as are authorised and appropriate to the determination.
2. This matter comes before the Committee by way of referral under clause 11.24(b) of the Disciplinary Regulations. Chinaza Uchendu (**Player**) received a direct red card by the Referee in a match playing for her Club, Melbourne City FC (**MCY**) against Western Sydney Wanderers FC (**WSW**) on 22 March 2026.

3. The Match Review Panel (**MRP**) formed the view that, on the material available to it, the offence is to be categorised as Offence No.4, being “*Assault on a Player (e.g. violent conduct when not challenging for the ball) or against any other person other than a Match Official, including an attempted Assault*”. The MRP proposed a sanction of four (4) matches, being the Minimum Match Suspension of two (2) matches plus an additional two (2) matches.
4. The Player has elected not to accept the proposed additional sanction and, in accordance with clause 11.24(b) of the Disciplinary Regulations, to refer to the Committee for hearing the determination of what additional sanction should be imposed (above the Minimum Sanction (inclusive of the MMS which must always be served)) applying the Range at the Table of Offences in accordance with the Regulations.
5. The Player does not contend that Exceptional Circumstances apply and therefore a sanction outside of the Range at the Table of Offences should be imposed or that the Offence should be re-classified.
6. The function of the Committee in such circumstances is solely to determine the question of whether an additional sanction should be imposed over and above the MMS, and if so, what that additional sanction should be. In doing so it is not constrained by the recommendation of the MRP and can impose a greater sanction if it thinks fit, or a lesser one. Guilt or innocence is not up for review. That issue has been finally determined by the earlier process. The Committee has no jurisdiction to deal with that question and will not express any view on it.

B. THE HEARING

7. On the evening of 8 April 2026, the Committee heard the referral of the matter by AVL.
8. Disciplinary Counsel was Mr Anais D’Arville, of Counsel, instructed by Mr Lorenzo Crepaldi, Head of Regulatory, Football Australia and Mr Ben Young, Legal Counsel, Football Australia.
9. The Player was in attendance at the hearing represented by Mr Austin Galli, Legal Counsel, MCY. Mr Pedj Rodinovic, MCY General Manager, Football Operations, was also in attendance.
10. Ms Jessica Lees, Legal Counsel, Football Australia, was present in her capacity as Administrator to the Committee.

11. Disciplinary Counsel relied upon the following evidence:
 - (a) Disciplinary Notice, dated 23 March 2026;
 - (b) video footage of the incident;
 - (c) incident report from the Referee;
 - (d) incident report from Assistant Referee 2;
 - (e) the Player's disciplinary record;
 - (f) video of comparable incidents relating to *Lourdes Bosch*, *Isobela Nino* and *Storm Roux*; and
 - (g) previous Determination of this Committee in *Nino*.
12. Mr Galli for the Player, relied upon the following evidence:
 - (a) video footage of the incident;
 - (b) the Player's full professional career history, spanning over 130 matches across seven countries including in a representative capacity for Nigeria;
 - (c) Instagram messages from the Player to three members of WSW on 22 March 2026 apologising for the incident;
 - (d) an exchange of Instagram messages between the Player and WSW Player Cerne on 2 April 2026; and
 - (e) previous Committee cases, *Thomas James* and *Isobela Nino*.
13. Whilst the Player was in attendance and afforded an opportunity by the Committee to present evidence orally, no objection to that course having been taken by Disciplinary Counsel, she only did so in answer to a question from one of the members of the Committee.
14. That evidence was limited to the following statements: that there was "*no excuse*" for her behaviour; that she could say "*nothing to justify her behaviour*;" it was "*really bad*"; and that her conduct occurred after she had been pushed in the back by WSW Player Cerne.
15. The Committee was also assisted by the parties' written submissions which they supplemented orally.

C. FACTS

16. In or around the 16th minute of the A-League Women Match played on Sunday, 22 March 2026 between MCY and WSW, WSW Player Chessari and the Player were challenging for the ball.
17. After the ball was cleared, the Player pushed WSW Player Chessari in her back causing her to fall to the ground.
18. WSW Player Cerne then pushed the Player in the back causing her to stumble forward.
19. After the Player regained her footing she turned to face WSW Player Cerne who was behind her and swung her outstretched arm or arms with what appears to be an open hand making contact with WSW Player Cerne. There is an issue between the parties as to whether contact was made with the head or neck of WSW Player Cerne or with her shoulder.
20. In her incident report, the Referee stated that the Player “...used excessive force to strike her opponent in the face in the 15th minute of play..” for which she was shown a direct red card for the offence of R2 – Violent Conduct.
21. The incident report from Assistant Referee 2 is consistent with that of the Referee. She reported witnessing the Player swinging “...her arm with excessive force, striking [WSW Player Cerne], to the head with an open hand...After providing information to the referee that [the Player] had struck [sic] the opponent with excessive force she was shown a red card and left the field of play.”
22. The Player did not remonstrate with the Referee when shown the direct red card. However, both the Referee and the Assistant Referee 2 noted in their respective reports that when leaving the field of play, the Player made “...a foul and abusive gesture towards the crowd (middle finger gesture).” That conduct is not the subject of these proceedings.
23. The events leading up to and culminating in the sending off of the Player are depicted in the following images taken from the video footage:

Image 1: The Player pushing WSW Player Chessari in the back and WSW Player Chessari falling to the ground



Image 2: The Player turning around after being pushed.



Image 3: The Player making initial contact with WSW Player Cerne



Image 4: The Player striking WSW Player Cerne



D. SUBMISSIONS

24. What follows is a summary of the parties' submissions. It does not necessarily encompass every contention put forward by the parties. To the extent that it omits any contentions, the Committee notes that it has considered all of the evidence and

arguments submitted by the parties even if there is no specific reference to those submissions in the following summary.

25. Disciplinary Counsel submitted, in summary, that:

- the Player was issued with a direct Player Red Card for violent conduct after striking WSW Player Cerne to the head with her hand at approximately the 16th minute of the game against MCY on 22 March 2026;
- the Player was issued a direct Player Red Card for violent conduct after striking WSW Player Cerne in the head with her hand during an altercation. The incident was classified as a Category 1 Offence "Assault on a Player (e.g., violent conduct when not challenging for the ball) or against any other person other than a Match Official..." by the MRP and it proposed a suspension of four matches, which includes the Minimum Sanction of two matches plus two additional matches. The maximum sanction for this offence is 24 months;
- the relevant sequence of events was as follows:
 - o Uchendu was dispossessed near the attacking 18-yard box.
 - o she pushed WSW Player Chessari in the back, causing her to fall.
 - o WSW Player Cerne retaliated by pushing Uchendu in the back.
 - o Uchendu then struck WSW Player Cerne in the head with excessive force using an open hand.
 - o after being shown the red card, Uchendu made a foul and abusive gesture (middle finger) toward the crowd while leaving the field.
- the objective of any sanction is to deter players from violating the rules, both to prevent repeat offences by the player and to discourage similar conduct by others;
- the offence was serious. It was a retaliatory strike to the head which is considered more severe than strikes to other parts of the body. The incident occurred away from the ball and was not in the "heat of the moment";
- the offending is considered objectively more serious than:
 - o *Isobela Nino*: a decision of the Committee in April 2024: in which the player was suspended for two matches for striking an opponent's throat and face during a scuffle while trying to separate players.

- *Storm Roux*, a decision of the MRP in April 2025: in which the player was suspended for three matches for a forceful elbow to the chest after play was stopped; and
- *Lourdes Bosch*, a decision of the MRP in May 2025: Suspended for two matches for striking an opponent's head during an altercation near the sideline.
- The Player's disciplinary record is as follows:
 - 2025/26 A-League Women's: 16 matches, 1 yellow card, 0 red cards (prior to this incident).
 - 2024/25 Premiere Ligue Women: 6 matches, 0 yellow cards, 0 red cards.
- No data was available (at the time that these submissions were prepared) regarding the Player's disciplinary record in national team games or previous professional clubs; and
- a suspension of four A-League Women matches is warranted considering the seriousness of the offence and its retaliatory nature.

26. The Player submitted, in summary, that:

- her conduct warranted a red card and she has shown genuine remorse, apologising to teammates and the opposing team;
- she did not strike an opponent's head with an open hand. The action was an open-hand push, not a strike, with contact being made with the upper shoulder of the opponent, not the head or neck;
- contact with the head or neck is considered more serious due to vulnerability;
- the Assistant Referee reported contact to the head from approximately 20 metres away during a dynamic, multiplayer incident;
- the precise point of contact cannot be determined with certainty, especially with an open-hand motion near the upper body;
- the video footage does not clearly show head contact, and the opponent's reaction does not suggest such contact;
- the Committee should assess the conduct objectively rather than relying solely on the Assistant Referee's description;

- the conduct should be characterised as being at the lower end of Offence No. 4 because there was no contact with the head or neck, it was reactive, brief and in response to physical contact, was not sustained and immediately de-escalated;
- the conduct does not warrant an uplift beyond the minimum sanction;
- key comparators include:
 - o *Bosch*, involving a deliberate open-hand strike to the head resulting in a two-match sanction; more serious than the present circumstances;
 - o *Nino*, involving contact with the throat and face in a scuffle resulted in a two-match sanction; more dangerous conduct than the present matter;
 - o *James*, comprising intentional and targeted contact to a vulnerable area, coupled with a significant disciplinary history, resulted in a four-match sanction, more serious than the present matter;

The present matter is less serious than *Nino* and *James*, and even *Bosch* (which involved deliberate head contact) received only a two-match sanction. Consistency requires no more than a two-match sanction.

- she has a clean disciplinary record, having played over 130 professional matches across seven countries with only one prior red card (a one-match suspension for a footballing challenge in South Korea).
- the Committee has historically treated a clean disciplinary record as a mitigating factor (e.g., *Geria*, *Grant*, *Youlley*);
- she has demonstrated genuine remorse. She apologised to teammates during and after the match; was visibly distressed and has recognised the seriousness of the incident; and reached out to the opposing team to apologise immediately after the match;
- the minimum sanction reflects the baseline seriousness of Offence No. 4;
- given the reactive and brief nature of the conduct, lack of proven head/neck contact, and comparable cases (*Bosch*, *Nino*, *James*), a four-match suspension is disproportionate and inconsistent with precedent;
- the two-match minimum sanction should apply. Alternatively, if the Committee considers that any sanction above the minimum is appropriate, the Committee should partially suspend any additional matches under Regulation 14.2; and

- the Committee should have regard for the fact that any sanction above the minimum or any uplift with part of that the sanction not suspended, would deprive the Player of an opportunity to play finals football.

27. Disciplinary Counsel submitted in reply that:

- the Player's apologies and her acceptance of responsibility are positive actions. However, these actions cannot outweigh the need to deter such misconduct, as outlined in the Disciplinary Regulations;
- the claim of "immediate remorse" is disputed due to evidence from the Referee and Assistant Referee, which indicates that the Player made an offensive gesture (sticking up her middle finger) to the crowd as she left the arena. While this act is not part of the disciplinary notice, it undermines the claim of immediate remorse;
- apropos the Instagram message from WSW Player Cerne confirming that contact was not made with her face or throat; FA does not dispute the Instagram message but notes that it does not confirm contact was made with the shoulder, leaving open the possibility of contact with another part of the head;
- the Assistant Referee's report indicates that the Player swung her arm with excessive force in the region of WSW Player Cerne's head, shoulders, or neck, which is considered objectively serious conduct;
- the video footage does not provide clarity on the exact point of contact; however, the claim that the contact was an "open-hand push" is not supported, rather the footage supports the Assistant Referee's account of a "swinging arm with excessive force" and that given the lack of clarity in the video footage the Committee should afford primacy to the Assistant Referee's account consistent with clause 21.2 of the Disciplinary Regulations that the facts in a referee's report are presumed to be accurate unless the contrary is established. The Player has not rebutted that presumption;
- the incident was not merely "reactive and brief." It was part of a sequence of retaliatory actions initiated by Player Uchendu. Her actions were deliberate and reckless, that is, without regard for the danger to, or consequences for, an opponent;
- the Player's disciplinary record is commendable and better than the record of Player James. While her good record and apologies may justify reducing the

sanction to three matches, the seriousness of the offence—a deliberate swinging arm to the head region—necessitates a strong deterrent; and

- reducing the sanction to the minimum would not be justified given the need to uphold the integrity of the A-Leagues and deter similar actions.

E. CONSIDERATION AND FINDING

28. The sole issue for the Committee is what, if any, sanction should be imposed over the MMS.

29. The Committee has made plain on many occasions that an important consideration is the safety of all players and, relevant to these circumstances, the safety of an opposing player.

30. “Violent Conduct” is defined in the LOTG as:

“...when a player uses or attempts to use excessive force or brutality against an opponent when not challenging for the ball, or against a team-mate, team official, match official, spectator or any other person, regardless of whether contact is made.

In addition, a player who, when not challenging for the ball, deliberately strikes an opponent or any other person on the head or face with the hand or arm, is guilty of violent conduct unless the force used was negligible.”

31. Clause 13.2 of the Disciplinary Regulations requires that when determining any appropriate sanction in accordance with the Range at the Table of Offences, a Judicial Body, which includes the Committee, may consider:

- (a) the nature and severity of the Offence, including whether it was intentional, negligent or reckless;
- (b) the Player’s past record and whether or not this is a repeated Offence;
- (c) the remorse of the Player; and
- (d) any extenuating circumstances relevant to the commission of the Offence.

The nature and severity of the offence

32. There is no issue that the Player’s actions warranted a red card for “Violent Conduct.” The primary dispute between the parties is whether the Player struck WSW Player Cerne in the head and neck with an open hand as Disciplinary Counsel contends or the action was an open-hand push, not a strike, with contact being made with the upper shoulder of the opponent and not the head or neck, as submitted by the Player. Contact with the head or neck is considered more serious due to vulnerability.

33. Relevant evidence is the video footage, the incident reports by the Referee and Assistant Referee and an Instagram message from WSW Player Cerne to the Player, dated 2 April 2026.
34. The video footage is all taken from one wide angle. There are no close angles or reverse angle footage. Any attempts made to enlarge stills taken from the video footage as we did for the purposes of our examination of the event culminates in a progressive loss of clarity.
35. It is, however, relatively clear that the Player, in a retaliatory manner, first scuffles with and then lashes out towards WSW Player Cerne with an outstretched arm or arms in a swinging motion with an open hand. What is not entirely clear from the footage is whether contact is made with WSW Player Cerne's head and neck or with her upper shoulder, although WSW Player Cerne's head can be clearly seen instinctively retreating or turning away from the Player's outstretched arm or arms in a defensive manner.
36. In her incident report, the Assistant Referee relevantly reported being "*...in line with the players 20 metres from where the offence occurred...*" where she witnessed WSW Player Cerne approaching the Player and push "*...her with 2 hands low force with minimal movement, in a retaliatory manner. In response, [the Player] turned around and swung her arm with excessive force, striking [WSW Player Cerne], to the head with an open hand...After providing information to the referee that [the Player] had struck [sic] the opponent with excessive force she was shown a red card and left the field of play.*"
37. In her incident report, the Referee reported that the Player "*...used excessive force to strike her opponent in the face in the 15th minute of play. Subsequently she was sent off.*"
38. It appears that the Referee acted upon the Assistant Referee's on-field report of the incident as the Assistant Referee was clearly better placed than the Referee.
39. Clause 21.2 of the Disciplinary Regulations provides that "*facts in a Referee's report are presumed to be accurate unless the contrary is established.*"
40. It is therefore for the Player to establish to the comfortable satisfaction of the Committee that the facts in both the Assistant Referee's Report and the Referee's Report are inaccurate.

41. Apart from making submissions based on the video footage itself, the Player relies upon a statement contained in an Instagram message from WSW Player Cerne provided to the Player on 2 April 2026 in which, and in response to a message from the Player in which she asks WSW Player Cerne, “*are you comfortable with me presenting to the disciplinary hearing that I made contact with your shoulder, not face or throat?*,” WSW Player Cerne says, “[*t*]hat is totally fine! You didn’t make contact with my face or throat!”
42. The Player gave only limited evidence to the Committee as summarised earlier in this determination. Critically, she gave no direct evidence of the contact, if any, between her and WSW Player Cerne. WSW Player Cerne did not give evidence to the Committee. The statement contained in her Instagram message to the Player was accordingly not tested. Taken at its highest, it is evidence that the Player did not make contact WSW Player Cerne’s face or throat. It says nothing of any contact made with the head more generally. And it does not suggest that contact was with the shoulder.
43. The evidence of WSW Player Cerne is not inconsistent with the facts stated in the Assistant Referee’s Report that contact was made by a swinging arm with excessive force to the head, if not the face. In any event, the Assistant Referee was in the best position to make the observations recorded in her report. She was only 20 metres away and appears from the video footage to have had a reasonably clear and unobstructed view of the incident. We are accordingly not comfortably satisfied that the presumption in clause 21.2 of the Disciplinary Regulations has been rebutted.
44. The Committee finds that the Player, in a retaliatory manner, first scuffles with and then lashes out towards WSW Player Cerne with an outstretched arm or arms in what appears to be a swinging motion with an open hand contacting WSW Player Cerne’s in or about the head.
45. It did not cause any injury to WSW Player Cerne. However, as the head and neck are vulnerable to injury, it had the potential to do so. The fact that no injury was caused is a matter taken into consideration by the Committee in assessing the overall nature and severity of the offence.
46. The Player acted intentionally and recklessly, that is, without regard for the danger to or consequences for, WSW Player Cerne. As the Player frankly and properly said during the hearing, her actions were “*really bad*”, inexcusable and unjustified. There is no place in football for such behaviour.

47. Any sanction must reflect the seriousness of the conduct and address elements of specific and general deterrence.
48. As to comparable cases, the Committee has repeatedly observed (for example, in *Cortes*, 21 February 2023; *Sasse*, 19 October 2023; and *James*, 25 October 2025) that each case turns on its own merits and circumstances having regard to the factors in clause 14.2 of the Disciplinary Regulations and thus comparing incidents alone without being cognisant of all the circumstances which informed the Committee's reasoning process is of little assistance in achieving the objective of consistency in decision making. Decisions of the MRP alone are not helpful for the same reasons.
49. Furthermore, as the Appeal Committee said in *Steve Pantelidis, Gold Coast United FC and FFA* (3 February 2010), it is "...not a valid logical or jurisprudential exercise for the Disciplinary Committee to use sanctions imposed by the Match Review Panel as 'comparable verdicts' for the purposes of its own power to impose a sanction." The approach of the Appeal Committee in *Pantelidis* was endorsed by the Appeal Committee in *O'Donovan* (25 January 2016). Therefore, we do not propose to consider any of the MRP decisions upon which the parties have relied as comparable cases.
50. Of the decisions to which the parties have referred as being arguably "comparable" only *Nino* and *James* are decisions of the Committee.
51. *James* involved an offence of Violent Conduct. However, it was a very different type of offending. The offending was adjudged by the Committee to have been an intentional, retributive contact by Player James with an opponent's genitals. Further, it came to the Committee for consideration by way of a referral under clause 12.34 of the Disciplinary Regulations because the FA had formed the view that the referee in that case had made an "Obvious Error" by failing to send off Player James for Violent Conduct.
52. Therefore, issues for the Committee in that case included whether there was an "Obvious Error," and whether Player James committed the offence and, if so, the appropriate sanction. Player James admitted that he had engaged in Violent Conduct and did not contest that there had been an "Obvious Error" by the referee. These are each matters that the Committee found in favour of Player James. The Committee found that Player James had a "*less than commendable disciplinary history*" (para. 56) including three prior suspensions for Violent Conduct. The Committee made very plain in its decision that but for the Player's guilty plea and remorse the sanction would have been more extensive. Hence, we do not consider *James* to be comparable.

53. *Nino* can also be distinguished from the present case for at least the following reasons: in *Nino* play had stopped following an earlier altercation and *Nino* ran into the area where play had stopped to separate players and *Nino* became involved in a scuffle with an opponent during the course of which contact was made by *Nino*'s hand with that opponent at or around the neck area. The Player, by comparison, acted in a retaliatory manner in back play when not challenging for the ball. She chose for reasons best known to her to react to being pushed rather than walking away. Further, the Player lashed out with her arm or arms in a swinging motion which, even with an open hand, had potential to cause serious harm. To the extent that it is comparable, the Committee considers *Nino* to be a less severe form of offending than the present.

The Player's Disciplinary Record

54. The Player's disciplinary record obtained by FA discloses that she played 16 matches with only 1 yellow card and no red cards (prior to this incident) in the current season of the A-League and played 6 matches on the 2024/25 Premiere Ligue Women with no cards. That, however, does not appear to be the Player's full disciplinary record.
55. The Player appears to have made her professional debut in Nigeria in the 2017-2018 season. She has played over 130 professional games across seven countries, represented Nigeria in 10 matches including at the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup, 2018 Women's Africa Cup of Nations and the 2016 FIFA U20's Women's World Cup. Over that career, she has only received one other red card, a one match suspension for an on the ball incident when playing in South Korea.
56. The Player clearly has had good disciplinary record which stands in her favour and has been taken into consideration.

The Player's Remorse

57. On the evening of 22 March 2026, the Player sent Instagram messages to three WSW players including WSW Player Cerne apologising for her conduct. She also apologised to her own team mates at half time in the game.
58. During the course of the hearing, the Player accepted responsibility for her actions describing them as without excuse, unjustifiable and really bad.
59. The Committee does not consider that the Plaintiff's alleged "finger gesture" to spectators when leaving the field of play to necessarily be inconsistent with the her being remorseful or immediately remorseful. The circumstances surrounding that conduct, or the conduct itself, is not a matter of which the Committee is seized.

60. The Player expressed remorse to her teammates at half time and to WSW players including WSW Player Cerne on the evening of the incident. We do not consider the timing of each act of remorse to be inconsistent with a genuine act of contrition.
61. The Player has expressed true and sincere remorse for her conduct. It stands in her favour.

Impact of any sanction on the Player's prospects of playing finals

62. The Committee has not taken into consideration, as urged by the Player, the consequences of any sanction on her opportunity of competing in finals football. As the Committee has made plain (see, for example, *Geria*, 30 April 2024), this is not a matter that would ordinarily mitigate or otherwise impact the nature of a sanction. It is a necessary but unfortunate consequence of the Player's conduct.

Conclusion

63. Weighing up these factors, the Committee considers an appropriate sanction to be the MMS plus one (1) additional match.
64. The Committee does not propose to suspend any part of the sanction under clause 14.2 of the Disciplinary Regulations. First, the exercise of the discretion in clause 14.2 is subject to the provisions of clause 14.3(a) of the Disciplinary Regulations which provides that the Committee cannot suspend any part of a sanction unless the part of the sanction that comes into immediate effect is at least one half of the total sanction to be imposed which includes the MMS. Therefore, having regard to the sanction determined by the Committee, it has no power to suspend any part of it as to do so would offend clause 14.3(a).
65. Secondly, even if it had power to suspend part of the sanction, the Committee would have declined to exercise its discretion because the seriousness of the offence does not warrant such consideration.
66. There is no place in football for such acts of aggression especially directed to a player's head or neck area which is vulnerable and especially susceptible to injury. The Player should have walked away. She chose not to. But for the Player's good disciplinary record and evident remorse a greater sanction may have been warranted.

E. RESULT

67. The sanction we impose is the MMS plus one (1) additional match for a total of three (3) matches.

F. APPEAL RIGHTS

68. A participant has a right to appeal against any Determination of the Disciplinary and Ethics Committee. To initiate the appeal the Participant must notify Football Australia of its intention to appeal within seven (7) days from the date of the written Determination, or by 16 April 2026. The Participant must use the Prescribed Forms DR02 found in the Disciplinary Regulations and be accompanied by an appeal fee of \$2,500 to Football Australia. The grounds of appeal specified in clause 23.5 of the Disciplinary Regulations are as follows:

- a) The participant was not afforded a reasonable opportunity to be heard on the issues;
- b) The Determination was affected by bias; and
- c) The decision was one that was not reasonably open to the Committee, having regard to the evidence before the Committee.

A handwritten signature in brown ink, appearing to read 'A. Lo Surdo'.

Anthony Lo Surdo SC, Disciplinary & Ethics Committee, Chair

9 April 2026