Joint Open Letter to Riot Games Global Esports Management on the Current State of the League of Legends Championship Pacific

November 12, 2026

We are a group of viewers, community members, and independent media workers who have long followed and supported League of Legends esports in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Vietnam, Japan, and Oceania.

Since the League of Legends Championship Pacific (LCP) was established in 2025, audiences and teams across the region have hoped that consolidating the leagues would bring a more stable competitive environment. Over the past two years, however, league operations led by Riot's Singapore office have repeatedly produced serious failures — in hardware provision, officiating decisions, schedule planning, and support for the tier-two ecosystem — that undermine competitive integrity and the viewing experience.

On 11 November 2026, at the 2027 season promotion qualifier held in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, game five of the deciding series was interrupted by a technical pause lasting more than one hundred minutes because of network latency, and the series as a whole ran for more than seven hours. According to post-match accounts from participating players, on-site staff stated that the original game could not be recovered and required players to choose a remake format within ten minutes, yet staff subsequently resumed and concluded the original game. Although both teams initially agreed to remake with the original draft, after connection issues prompted a switch to Singapore servers, the officiating side cited data issues and unilaterally mandated a fresh ban and pick phase — without allowing coaching staff to participate in the discussion or providing any avenue for appeal. As a result, the affected team had a core champion it had previously selected banned by its opponent during the re-draft, and officials later published an inaccurate statement on social media claiming both sides had agreed to the re-draft. [1, 2]

This incident is why we have decided to present six specific demands to Riot Games headquarters through a public petition, in the hope that headquarters will confront the governance crisis now facing the Asia-Pacific region.

1. Guarantee competitive integrity and make officiating decisions transparent

Professional leagues and promotion qualifiers determine whether clubs survive and how players' careers unfold, so they must be backed by standard technical safeguards and transparent decision-making procedures. This offline promotion qualifier was not equipped with a LAN server to isolate the competition from external network fluctuations; yet when the community asked, the managers involved would only say that they were not at liberty to explain the reasons in detail and that a LAN server could not be used for this match. [3]

When the technical problem interrupted the match, the on-site officiating procedure clearly violated Articles 7.1.3, 7.4.6, 7.6.3, and 7.6.4 of the 2026 LCP Official Competition Rules, as well as Articles 5.2.13 and 5.3.10 of the 2026 League of Legends International Competition Rules, which set out explicit standards for determining a valid game record and preserving the re-game setup.

Under the rules, game five had already passed the two-minute threshold for a valid game record by the time three dragons had spawned, so a re-game should not have carried over any draft setup. Yet on-site officials, two hours into the pause, improperly required the players to choose within ten minutes between replaying with the original draft and re-drafting from scratch, and did not allow coaches to join the discussion. When the teams followed official instructions and started a new game with the same draft, only for server problems to force a switch to Singapore servers, the officiating side — again without giving the players room to discuss — overturned that agreement and forced a fresh ban and pick

phase. Afterwards, the official statement claimed that both teams had agreed to re-draft, covering up the contradictions and procedural failures of the on-site decisions.

We demand that the officials publish a complete investigation report covering the causes of the technical failure at this qualifier, the decision process in which on-site referees violated Articles 7.4.6 and 7.6.4 of the rules, the legal basis for forcing a re-draft after the server switch, and why the official announcement contradicts the players' testimony; apologise to the affected teams and players; and ensure that every future officiating decision strictly follows the competition rules. [4, 5]

2. Acknowledge the constraints of the budget structure and restore a reasonable format and schedule

We understand that the global esports industry is facing an objective reality of shrinking budgets, but tightening budgets should not become a reason to sacrifice core competitive quality. The management team has repeatedly stated publicly that its reforms were meant to raise the level of the region, yet in practice it has sharply cut the number of high-intensity best-of-five matches and scheduled regular-season games for weekday afternoons, when most viewers are at work or in class.

That arrangement directly caused the 2026 season's peak concurrent viewership to fall by more than sixty percent year on year, while total watch hours and average viewership both declined by nearly forty percent. [6]

We demand that the management department confront the current allocation of resources honestly, stop packaging cost-cutting measures as efforts to improve competitiveness, and reconsider both the structure of the competition and the broadcast time slots, so that players can accumulate real match experience over long series and viewers retain their basic right to watch.

3. Review the suitability of the Singapore management team and establish real accountability

From the failure of the venue's air-conditioning system and the broadcast signal problems at the 2025 finals in Da Nang, Vietnam, to the recent serious operational failure at the promotion qualifier, the league's core management has repeatedly been absent from on-site supervision during key matches, observing the situation only remotely. [7]

When players publicly complained that the forced re-draft procedure was unfair, the product manager responded on social media with only a few brief words — that notes had been taken and thanks for sharing — showing neither the crisis-management ability nor the sense of responsibility the situation required. [8]

In addition, the results Asia-Pacific teams have achieved on the international stage — GAM in 2023, PSG defeating the North American region in 2024, and CFO reaching the top eight at the 2025 World Championship — all came from independent funding by the clubs' parent companies and from the players' long-term efforts.

Yet on public social media, the product manager listed those team results on a timeline of his own tenure in the Asia-Pacific region and compared them with Europe and North America, while arguing that because Asia-Pacific rosters invest less than other World Championship participants, outsiders should be less dismissive of the region. Such an argument not only ignores the substantial operating funds that individual clubs' parent companies actually put in, but also — while the league itself failed to provide adequate logistical support, stable broadcast slots, and a reasonable competition format day to day — unilaterally appropriates competitive results that teams achieved by overcoming environmental disadvantages, turning them into public-relations talking points for management to deflect outside criticism and preserve the appearance of the league's operations. [9]

We demand that Riot Games headquarters carry out a comprehensive performance review and personnel accountability process for the current League of Legends Championship Pacific director and product management team.

4. Stop reversing regional policy and preserve community identity

The sustainable development of an esports league depends on audiences' long-term identification with local teams and regional culture. In 2025, the officials forcibly merged the four major leagues of Taiwan-Hong Kong-Macau, Vietnam, Japan, and Oceania into a single league, forcing audiences in each region to adapt to an entirely new competitive structure. At the pre-finals press conference before the September 2025 final in Da Nang, Vietnam, the league director said publicly that Taiwan-Hong Kong-Macau and Vietnamese teams had shown marked improvement after merging and playing each other every week, and that one season alone had produced results beyond expectations. Yet the following year, after viewership and buzz fell sharply and some teams faced a fight for survival, management announced in September 2026 that from the 2027 season it would cancel the LCP regular season entirely — citing a tighter schedule, helping teams operate sustainably, and preserving resonance with home fans — and require teams to return to their existing regional leagues operating independently. [10]

Overturning its own core argument and top-level design within two years proves that the original merger policy lacked any long-term assessment, and it severely drains the logistical resources of teams in every region and the trust of audiences. At the same time, when the Chinese-speaking community questioned the repeated policy reversals, management stopped communicating directly on Chinese-language social platforms, citing an inability to convey its meaning precisely and a change of work communication platforms — further deepening the gap between the officials and their core audience. [11]

We demand that, when formulating future structural policy for the Asia-Pacific region, the officials maintain medium- and long-term institutional stability, establish regular communication channels across language communities, and fully respect the historical context and local community views of each sub-region.

5. Adopt pragmatic budget management and deliver on basic operations

When funding is limited, league operations should focus all the more on keeping basic services stable. On the eve of the 2025 Da Nang finals, management publicly claimed that the venue experience would exceed expectations, and in a public Q&A in September 2026 stressed that its job was to create the best possible environment to realise its vision for league venues and finals week, even suggesting that it might study running home-and-away tours modelled on the European region in future.

Yet in practice, over the past two years the league has repeatedly suffered low-level administrative and technical failures: ticket announcements omitting match times, official promotional graphics using the wrong player photos, the air-conditioning failure at the Da Nang finals venue, and the absence of a LAN server at the promotion qualifier followed by severe network latency. The vast gap between the public-relations vision and the actual quality of execution shows that existing resources are not being allocated properly to core competition operations.

We demand that the management department abandon empty public-relations rhetoric and incomplete format experiments, and direct the limited budget first to server stability, basic broadcast quality, professional training for referees, and internal administrative checks, so as to restore with a pragmatic attitude the basic standards a professional league should meet.

6. Rebuild the tier-two system and support community tournaments at the grassroots

A healthy esports ecosystem needs a solid tier-two league and grassroots tournaments as its talent base. Although the league director has repeatedly said in public that talent development has always been a priority for the officials, and has described the promotion qualifier as an important mechanism for young teams to challenge established ones and level the playing field across regions, actual policy runs entirely counter to the original goal of nurturing talent.

Open tournaments in Southeast Asia still offer basic prize pools, whereas the Taiwan-Hong Kong-Macau tier-two league — which nurtured the only team in the history of the League of Legends Championship Pacific to reach the top eight at a world championship — has long been trapped in a system

with no official broadcast, no prize money, and restrictions on the promotion eligibility of academy teams, and has even had to rely on community volunteers to handle broadcasting for free. [12]

In addition, for the return to regional leagues in 2027, the officials have said only that the Taiwan-Hong Kong-Macau region will keep using its existing venue, while offline events in Vietnam and Japan are left to future cooperation with teams and third-party organisers, with no concrete or equal guarantee of resources.

We demand that the officials reallocate substantive resources to the tier-two leagues and third-party community tournaments of each sub-region, provide basic broadcast support, prize subsidies, and a reasonable promotion and relegation system for academy teams, and give grassroots players and academy squads real room to survive and develop.

Players and audiences in the Asia-Pacific region have always held a deep passion for League of Legends, and clubs continue to invest resources to stay competitive in difficult circumstances. That passion and investment need to be protected by a management team with professional competence, respect for the rules, and the willingness to take responsibility. We sincerely call on Riot Games Global Esports Management to listen to the real voices of the communities in Taiwan-Hong Kong-Macau, Vietnam, Japan, and Oceania, and to answer the six demands above with concrete responses and institutional reform.

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esports.sorai.tw/openletter?lang=en

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Sources

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