



## FIFA clears VAR official of racism after concern over hand gesture

### Description

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A few seconds of television coverage during the 2026 FIFA World Cup turned into an issue that sparked widespread controversy in sporting and media circles. Australian VAR official Sean Evans was seen making a controversial hand gesture ahead of the match between Germany and Curaçao. As the [Canary previously reported, Evans was seen to have:](#)

briefly formed an "OK" gesture with his right hand near his leg, a symbol that has been co-opted by white extremist groups.

The gesture was quick, but it was enough to trigger immediate concern from FIFA's anti-discrimination unit, which monitors all matches for offensive behaviour. The monitor formally requested that Evans be stood down from further involvement in the tournament pending review.

However, FIFA have now claimed that after investigation they do not believe Evans contravened guidelines.

## FIFA clear VAR official

FIFA's [Independent Disciplinary Committee stated that](#)

Fifa's independent disciplinary committee can confirm that, after looking into the matter involving support video assistant referee Shaun Evans, it has found no evidence of breaches of the Fifa disciplinary code

Evans also issued his first comment on the matter, confirming that the gesture was not deliberate and was not intended to convey any message or political or ideological affiliation, explaining that what happened was an "involuntary and unconscious movement", and that other footage showed him repeating the gesture whilst holding a pen during the match.

Although the referee has been officially cleared, the case has sparked widespread debate about the sensitivity of symbols and gestures at major sporting events, after the organisation "FARE" called for his exclusion from the tournament, arguing that the gesture resembled a symbol used by far-right groups in some Western countries.

This incident brings to the fore the challenges facing world football in the fight against racism, as the battle is no longer limited to chants and behaviour in the stands, but now also encompasses symbols and gestures that may carry political or ideological connotations in the eyes of large sections of society.

*Featured image via the Canary*

By [Alaa Shamali](#)

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