

Emergency Planning & Resilience Team

Safety at Sports Grounds Policy Document

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This document has been produced by Hampshire County Council and is the agreed policy and procedure for managing Safety at Sports Grounds within the County of Hampshire. Under the [Safety at Sports Grounds Act 1975](#), the county council is responsible for issuing and enforcing a safety certificate in respect of sports grounds designated by the Secretary of State. These are sports grounds that in his opinion have accommodation for more than 10,000 spectators or 5000 in the case of a Premiership or Football League ground in England or Wales. The document also applies to the safety certification of stands regulated in Hampshire under the [Fire Safety and Safety at Places of Sport Act 1987](#)

1.2 Purpose of document

The policy document provides an overview of policy and terms of reference for the management of Safety at Sports Grounds within Hampshire. It also clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the organisations and agencies involved

1.2 Policy aim

Hampshire County Councils policy aim, working in conjunction with its partner agencies is to ensure the reasonable safety of spectators attending any of the sports grounds in Hampshire falling within the scope of the Safety at Sports Ground Act 1975.

1.3 Policy objectives

Hampshire County Councils policy objectives are to:

- To ensure that spectator safety is of the highest attainable standard as is reasonably practical at all sports grounds but particularly those which are designated or have regulated stands in Hampshire
- To establish and manage the Safety Advisory Groups (SAG) for the designated grounds listed at [Appendix A](#)
- To establish and manage SAG for those grounds having a regulated stands listed at Appendix A
- To establish any ad hoc SAG as required
- To establish an annual review of the General Safety Certificate for each of the designated grounds
- To establish a review of the Safety Certificate for each of the regulated stands every 2 years unless capacity exceeds 2000 when a review will take place annually
- To foster, encourage and promote a safety culture within sports grounds in Hampshire

1.4 The Safety Certificate

The safety certificate is part of a total, integrated system for managing health and safety at sports grounds. While the local authority (Hampshire County Council) is responsible for issuing the safety certificate, safety cannot be achieved by one agency acting in isolation. The local authority has a statutory

responsibility to consult with Police, Fire and Building Control authorities. This duty will be discharged through the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) which is a multi agency advisory group consisting of officers of the Local Authority and representatives from Hampshire Constabulary, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Ambulance Service, representatives from the club concerned including their safety officer, representatives from planning control authorities, together with any other interested parties that the chair of the SAG considers appropriate. The primary function of the SAG is to provide specialist advice to the Local Authority

The safety certificate will contain the terms and conditions that the local authority considers necessary or expedient to secure the reasonable safety of spectators at sports grounds when it is being used for the activities specified in the certificate. The primary responsibility for the safety of spectators at the sports ground rests at all times with the sports ground management and will not be assumed by the local authority.

1.5 Consultation

This policy document has been consulted on with both the Emergency Services and the Sports Ground Safety Authority.

1.6 Definitions

The Safety at Sports Grounds Act 1975 defines a sports ground as 'A place where sports or other competitive activities take place in the open air, where accommodation has been provided for spectators, consisting of artificial structures or of natural structures artificially modified for the purpose'

The Fire Safety and Safety at Places of Sport Act 1987 defines regulated stands. The local authority decides which stands are regulated. A Regulated Stand is defined as 'Any covered stand with accommodation for 500 or more spectators whether seating or standing' The determination calculation for Regulate Stands is outlined in the Home Office circular 97/88, in brief this is calculated as:

- Number of seats or marked places on bench seats in seated areas
- Number of places available on bench seats allowing 530mm per person
- Number of spectators who can be accommodated on a terraced or sloping viewing area at a rate of 2.7 per square metre after disregarding gangways, stairways and landings, or
- Number of spectators who can be accommodated in front of two metres of a flat standing area at a rate of 2.7 metres

This calculation is determination calculation and not a safe capacity which would be calculated using the current edition of the Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds (Green Guide)

2.0 POLICY

2.1 Legislative duty

Hampshire County Council has a statutory duty under:

2.1.1 Safety at Sports Ground Act 1975 (As amended)

- To issue a General Safety Certificate for each designated sports ground within the county containing such terms and conditions as the local authority consider necessary or expedient to secure reasonable safety at sports grounds
- To serve a prohibition notice in respect of a sports ground if the authority consider that the admission of spectators to the sports ground involves or will involve a high risk to them, so serious that until steps have been taken to reduce the risk to a reasonable level, admission of spectators to the ground or that part of the ground ought to be prohibited or restricted
- To issue a special safety certificate where appropriate

2.1.2 Fire Safety and Safety at Places of Sport Act 1987

- To issue a General Safety Certificate for each regulated stand within the county containing such terms and conditions as the local authority consider necessary or expedient to secure the reasonable safety in the stand when it is in use for viewing the specified activity or activities at the ground

2.2 Designated Officer (Director of Transformation and Governance)

Hampshire County Council's Director of Transformation and Governance is the designated officer under the County Council's Constitution for this function. The Director of Transformation and Governance will act as lead officer to ensure that the requirements of the Safety at Sports Ground Act 1975 are met. Specifically:

- to issue and amend General Safety Certificates
- to issue, suspend and withdraw prohibition notices

For both the above, Hampshire Constabulary, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and NHS Ambulance Service will be consulted.

2.3 Lead Officer (Head of Emergency Planning & Resilience)

The Head of Emergency Planning & Resilience acts as lead officer; chairs all the SAG's both at designated grounds and those having regulated stands; and is authorised to devolve his authority to those officers both employed by HCC and SAG to carry out the functions set out in this policy document. Other EPRT officers will support this management role as required and a nominated Emergency Planning Officer will provide the secretariat to the SAGs.

2.4 Consultation

In imposing terms and conditions for spectator safety, Hampshire County Council is required to consult with Hampshire Constabulary, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and NHS Ambulance Service

2.5 Grounds to which legislation applies

The legislation is applicable at the locations listed in Appendix A

2.6 Guidance

The Department for Culture, Media and Sports has issued guidance on the subject, '[A guide to Safety at Sports Grounds](#)' (Known as the Green Guide). Hampshire County Council and SAG partners will utilise and apply the advice and guidance contained within the Green Guide.

The Sports Ground Safety Authority has issued guidance on the Safety Certification process. This guidance is applied.

Guidance is also issued from time to time in relation to non sporting activities taking place in sports grounds such as concerts and mass meetings. The SAG's will consider such guidance and take advice as appropriate to the circumstances.

2.7 Inspections

The achievement of reasonable safety is a continuous process that requires monitoring and inspections by appropriate members of each SAG. The inspection programme is as follows:

- For designated grounds a match day safety inspection will be undertaken at least once a year/season
- For regulated stands with a capacity of more than 2000 spectators a match day inspection will be undertaken at least once per year.
- For regulated stands with a capacity of less than 2000 spectators a match day inspection will be undertaken biennially

Those persons undertaking the inspections should be suitably qualified and competent to undertake inspections on the aspects they have been asked to inspect and report on. Best practice suggests that a team approach with a cross section of the SAG participating in the inspection.

Results of any inspections will be produced in a written report and supplied to the Lead Officer, who will liaise with the club management and/or SAG. A match day checklist is attached at [Appendix B](#) to this policy document.

3.0 SAFETY ADVISORY GROUPS

3.1 Safety Advisory Groups (SAG)

Hampshire County Council will establish SAG's to provide specialist advice in relation to safety at sports grounds, including determining the terms and conditions of each General Safety Certificate and monitoring their implementation. These are multi agency groups and are chaired by the councils lead officer in relation to Safety at Sports Grounds.

3.2 Terms of reference

The SAG's have been established to:

- Advise Hampshire County Council on specialist policies and procedures to be adopted in the implementation of the Acts and associated regulations and guidance
- Monitor the implementation of General and Special Safety Certificates
- To receive and approve where applicable, all proposals for alterations to the designated sports ground and regulated stand and the implications such alterations might have

A copy of the terms of reference for SAG's is found at [Appendix C](#).

3.3 Safety Advisory Groups Objectives

The SAG's will seek to

- Promote a safety culture within sports grounds
- Support and advise the management or operators of designated sports grounds, regulated stands and other sports grounds on measures to improve all aspects of spectator safety
- Work to ensure that sports grounds are safe for spectators

3.4 Membership of Safety Advisory Groups

The SAG will consist of the following core members and invited representatives.

3.4.1 Core members

The core members are those authorities who Hampshire County Council is required to consult under sports ground and licensing legislation as recommended in paragraph 31 of the final report into the Hillsborough Stadium disaster i.e.

- Local Authority as Chair
- Hampshire Constabulary
- Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service
- NHS Ambulance Service
- Borough or District Building Control

3.4.2 Invited representatives

Persons invited to SAG meetings to offer advice are not party to the decision making processes of the group. :

3.4.2.1 Invited to all meetings

The following are considered to be those organisations that should be invited to all SAG meetings as contributors:

- Sports ground representation – Certificate holder or Safety Officer
- Event organiser if applicable
- Sports Ground Safety Authority

3.4.2.2 Invited to SAG meetings as appropriate

The following may be invited to all SAG meetings or as appropriate:

- First Aid providers
- Emergency Planning Team
- Primary Care Trust
- Legal Representation
- Local Authority licensing/ Environmental Health/ Highways
- Elected members
- Local supporters representation

Membership of each designated ground SAG is found at [Appendix D](#) and [Appendix E](#).

3.5 Meeting frequency

- A Safety Advisory Group for the designated football ground will meet at least three times per year, schedule at [Appendix F](#)
- A Safety Advisory Group for the designated cricket ground will meet at least three times per year – Appendix F
- A Safety Advisory Group for each of the regulated ground will meet biennially – Appendix F, unless the stand capacity exceeds 2000 then annually

3.6 Main activities of Safety Advisory Group

Within the Terms of Reference outlined at Appendix C, the SAG will:

- Receive and discuss proposals for alterations to a sports ground or regulated stand and consider implications of holding activities there other than specified activities as included on the certificate
- Share experiences following attendance at specified activities
- Consider aspects of and possible changes to the terms and conditions in the General Safety Certificate
- Inspect the designated sports ground – [Appendix G](#)
- Discuss all aspects of spectator safety and changing requirements
- Undertake the same activities in relation to regulated stands
- Ensure that appropriate reports are produced and discussed with respect to alterations, inspections and any other issues

4.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Role of designated officers – Director of Transformation and Governance

- To oversee the lead officer's role in ensuring that Hampshire County Council properly discharges its responsibility under Safety at Sports Ground legislation
- To ensure that the Elected Members of the Regulatory Committee are kept informed of Safety at Sports Ground activities
- To be the authorising signatory for General and Special Safety Certificates
- In the event of clear division or dispute emerging from a SAG on safety matters, to oversee that any decision reflects the policies of Hampshire County Council
- To nominate the Head of Emergency Planning & Resilience to act as his representative in the discharge of the responsibilities outlined in this document

4.2 Role of the Lead Officer – Head of Emergency Planning & Resilience

- To ensure that Hampshire County Council properly discharges its responsibilities under the Safety at Sports Grounds Act 1975
- To manage the day to day activities of Safety at Sports Grounds Act 1975 work for Hampshire County Council
- To ensure that each SAG undertakes activities as appropriate to determine the terms and conditions of the General Safety Certificate and Special Safety Certificates and monitor their implementation
- To chair meetings of each SAG for designated grounds and ensure that decisions taken by the SAG are implemented
- To chair meetings of each SAG for regulated stands and ensure that decisions taken by the SAG are implemented
- To ensure that membership of each SAG reflects the interests of all parties as recommended in the Taylor report. (Final report by the Rt Hon Lord Justice Taylor following the inquiry into the Hillsborough Stadium Disaster in 1989)
- To oversee the issue and amendment of both General and Special Safety Certificates
- To advise on safe capacities for sports grounds in liaison with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and where appropriate a chartered civil engineer
- To draft , issue, suspend and withdraw prohibition notices under section 10 of the Safety at Sports Grounds Act 1975
- To initiate prosecutions authorised by Hampshire County Council for breach of the conditions of either a General or Special Safety Certificate and for any other offences under the Act
- To act in a coordinating role for all members of a SAG and be responsible for organising meetings and inspections as appropriate

- To attend on match days as appropriate to observe and understand the operation of the ground or to undertake inspections on aspects that the lead officer is suitably qualified to conduct
- To keep the designated officer informed of relevant issues
- To deputise for the designated officer in any of his functions

4.3 Role of Support Officer & Other Officers in the EPRT

To deputise for the lead officer as follows:

- To chair meetings of each SAG for designated grounds as directed and ensure that decisions taken by the SAG are implemented
- To chair meetings of each SAG for regulated stands as directed and ensure that decisions taken by the SAG are implemented
- To act in a coordinating role for all members of a SAG and be responsible for organising meetings and inspections as appropriate
- To attend as directed on match days as appropriate to observe and understand the operation of the ground or to undertake inspections on aspects that the lead officer is suitably qualified to conduct
- To keep the lead officer informed of relevant issues

4.4 Role of Support Officer – Emergency Planning & Resilience Officer

- To organise meetings of SAGs as required
- To coordinate and prepare agenda papers and supporting paperwork
- To take minutes and circulate to all members of the SAG and other interested parties
- To research and collate any information that may assist the SAG chair
- To ensure accurate documentation of all decisions and actions and pursue the action owner where necessary
- To advise the lead officer on any response required to interested parties and stakeholders
- To establish and maintain filing systems for SAG documentation

4.5 Role of SAG liaison officer – Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service

- To advise SAG and/or Hampshire County Council on fire safety matters referred to in the Green Guide including:
 - Means of ingress and egress to and from sports grounds
 - Width of all routes, staircases, gates and vomitories
 - Positioning of signage
 - Determining the provision of fire fighting resources and water supplies
 - Control of flammable materials and storage areas in sports grounds
 - Control of heating installations in sports grounds
 - Control and location of catering and merchandising outlets and other installations and provisions including temporary demountable structures

- Attend meetings of the Safety Advisory Group
- To select fixtures and arrange pre match inspections at each ground by a Fire Officer and report findings and actions to the chair of SAG or Lead officer bearing in mind that the operations of the sports ground and its installations and the responsibility for spectator safety lie with the holder of the General Safety Certificate
- Attend annual inspections of the sports ground and advise as appropriate
- To provide a Fire Officer to attend multi agency control rooms on selected match days as appropriate to observe and understand the operation of the ground and fulfil the role of Emergency Services Liaison Officer (Fire)

4.6 Role of Liaison Officer from Hampshire Constabulary

- To attend and advise the Safety Advisory Group for the designated ground or regulated stand
- To assist the local authority with the content and formulation of the General Safety Certificate
- To constantly monitor by means of attendance and observation the provision of safety measures provided by the club in question in terms of stewarding effectiveness and provision of police services
- To identify, inform and advise other agencies that have responsibility for crowd safety on any deficiencies that come to light
- To provide or obtain specialist advice from a police perspective at all stages of development or redevelopment of a sports ground
- To attend annual inspections of the sports ground and advise on crowd management signage, traffic management and public order issues as appropriate
- To provide a control room commander on selected matchdays

4.7 Role of SAG Liaison Officer NHS Ambulance Service or the organisation providing first aid cover

- To advise on health and first aid matters as referred to in the Green Guide
- To act as a point of reference for first aiders attending specific incidents
- To attend Safety Advisory Group meetings
- To attend on selected match days as appropriate to observe and understand the operation of the ground or to undertake inspections on aspects that the liaison officer is suitably qualified to report on
- Attend annual inspections of the sports ground and advise on health issues as appropriate
- To provide Ambulance officer to attend multi agency control rooms as appropriate. NB If NHS Ambulance Service are attending a fixture then it is likely that voluntary organisations will take direction from Senior Ambulance Officer

4.8 Role of SAG Liaison Officer from District or Borough

- To advise on building control issues in relation to the sports ground
- To advise on environmental health issues in relation to the sports grounds
- To advise on licensing issues in relation to the sports grounds
- To coordinate between the Safety Advisory Group and the District or Borough council on issues such as town and country planning
- Attend meetings of the Safety Advisory Group
- Attend annual inspections of the sports grounds and advise on safety issues as appropriate
- To attend on selected match days as appropriate to observe and understand the operation of the ground or to undertake inspections on aspects the liaison officer is suitably qualified to report on

4.9 Role of Sports Ground Safety Authority

The core functions of the Sports Ground Safety Authority as set out in the Football Spectators Act 1989 are to ensure the implementation of government policy concerning the safety and comfort of spectators at designated football matches (As developed from the final report by the Rt Hon Lord Justice Taylor following the inquiry into the Hillsborough Stadium Disaster in 1989) and specifically in relation to Local Authorities to:

- Keep under review the discharge by the local authority of their functions under the Safety at Sports Grounds Act 1975 in relation to sports grounds at which designated football matches are played
- Offer guidance on good practice issues relating to the organisation of safety advisory groups
- Where possible to attend meetings of each of the Safety Advisory Groups
- Where possible to attend annual inspections of the designated sports grounds
- Where appropriate to advise on crowd management and safety issues

4.10 Role of Holder of General Safety Certificate at Designated Sports Grounds or Holder of Safety Certificate at a Regulated Stand

- To be responsible for the safe operation of the sports ground including crowd safety and movement, segregation, entering, exiting , ticketing and stewarding
- To bring to the attention of the lead officer any observations of concern in relation to technical equipment e.g. turnstile operation, lighting etc
- To ensure that all terms and conditions of the General Safety Certificate are complied with
- To complete the annual self assessment questionnaire to assess the grounds compliance with the General Safety Certificate

- As required to provide relevant information as contained within the terms and conditions of the General Safety Certificate to the SAG and/or Hampshire County Council
- To notify the local authority of any developments, proposals, changes or proposed installations including temporary demountable structures at the sports ground that may affect the safety of spectators
- To action if appropriate any professional recommendations or requirements advised by the SAG or Hampshire County Council
- To attend meetings of the Safety Advisory Group
- To attend annual inspections of the sports ground

APPENDIX A – DESIGNATED GROUNDS AND REGULATED STANDS

Designated Sports grounds in Hampshire requiring a General Safety Certificate

- The Ageas Bowl

Regulated stands in Hampshire requiring a safety certificate

- Farnborough Town FC
- Basingstoke Town FC
- Havant and Waterlooville FC
- Thrupton Motor Circuit
- Aldershot Town Football Club
- Eastleigh FC

APPENDIX B – MATCH DAY INSPECTION REPORT

Ref	Item	Comments	Name of observer
1	Date, match, time of arrival, time of briefing and start time		
2	SAG members present		
3	Key points from briefing		
4	Attendance figures 15 minutes before start At start 30 minutes after start Actual declared		
5	No of first aid staff on duty		
6	No of stewards on duty including contractors		
7	No of police on duty and rank		
8	Any other Emergency Services		
9	Any persistent standing		
10	Any faults seen or highlighted by staff		
11	Check any incident locations reported from last SAG		
12	Any other issues		

APPENDIX C – SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP – TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference of XXXX Safety Advisory Group (SAG) are as follows:-

- To advise the Local Authority in the exercise of its powers under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 and the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987 in respect of the safety certification. *(delete as appropriate)*.
- To advise the Local Authority in the exercise of its powers under the Licensing Act 2003 *(delete as appropriate)*.
- To advise the Local Authority as the enforcing authority as defined in the Health and Safety (Enforcing Authority) Regulations 1998 for enforcement of the relevant statutory provisions.
- To advise the Local Authority in relation to its duty of care regarding sport grounds/ public events *(delete as appropriate)* that do not require to be Certified/ Licensed
- To provide advice and assistance to sports grounds certificate holders, event license holders and event planners on public safety related issues.
- To provide a forum within which the Local Authority and other agencies may develop a co-ordinated approach to spectator safety.
- Consider aspects of and possible changes to the terms and conditions in the General/Special Safety Certificate/ Licensed Conditions *(delete as appropriate)*.
- To receive and discuss all proposals for new sports grounds and public events *(delete as appropriate)*, alterations to existing designated Sports Grounds/ public events *(delete as appropriate)*,
- To receive any relevant reports in relation to matters found during inspections by Group members.
- Monitor that any matters raised by the Group have been reported to the Local Authority, other relevant Authority, or Club and that these matters are reported back to the Group.
- To discuss any significant incident with potential safety implications or “near miss” at a sports ground/public event *(delete as appropriate)*.
- To receive notification of the issue of any prohibition notice and any prosecutions under sports grounds /events legislation *(delete as appropriate)*.
- To consider the advice published in all available guidance documents

APPENDIX D – MEMBERSHIP OF ALDERSHOT TOWN SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP

Core

- Hampshire County Council
- Hampshire Constabulary
- Hampshire Fire & Rescue
- Rushmoor Borough Council (Building Control)

Invited

- Aldershot FC Certificate Holder, Chief Executive, Directors
- Aldershot FC Match Day Safety Officer
- St. John Ambulance
- Sports Ground Safety Authority

APPENDIX E – MEMBERSHIP OF AGEAS BOWL SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP

Core

- Hampshire County Council
- Hampshire Constabulary
- Hampshire Fire & Rescue
- NHS Ambulance Service
- Southampton & Eastleigh Building Control Partnership

Invited

- Sports Ground Safety Authority
- Ageas Bowl PLC
- Paris Smith Solicitors
- Eastleigh Borough Council

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are extended to the Sports Ground Safety Authority and Nottinghamshire County Council for their advice in preparing this document

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM					Risk Score	Rating	 Hampshire County Council			
Organisation / department / function / project; Safety at Sports Ground Service					15-25	High				
					8-14	Medium				
					1-7	Low				
Business Objective: Provision of efficient service meeting the requirements of the Safety at Sports Grounds Act 1975 & Fire and Safety at Places of Sport Act 1987										
Completed by: Ian Hoult, Peter Andrews			Date completed: 11.03.19		Date reviewed: 11.03.19					
No	Risk Description (Threat/Opportunity to achievement of business objective)	Initial Assessment of Risk [As of 02.04.09]			Risk Control Measures	Assessment of Current Risk [With control measures implemented]			Timescale/ Review	
		Likelihood (Probability) [L]	Impact (Severity) [I]	Risk Score [L x I]		Likelihood (Probability) [L]	Impact (Severity) [I]	Current Risk Score		Risk Level
1	Risk that processes are unclear and inconsistent leading to errors and certificates being issued inappropriately.	4	5	20	Suite of proforma documents in place using best practice from other issuing Authorities. Agreed processes in place that meet FLA requirements.	2	3	6	Low Threat	Quarterly
2	Risk that staff lack sufficient competency and experience to carry out efficient service.	5	5	25	Team have attended FLA training course. Clear responsibility lines agreed within EPU. Higher level of confidence in existing controls when compared to those in operation at other issuing organisations.	2	3	6	Low Threat	Quarterly
3	Risk that information provided by venues is incorrect or incomplete leading to certificates being issued inappropriately.	4	4	16	Building clear & good relationships with venue representatives with reputation for competency. Increased competency of team through training.	2	3	6	Low Threat	Quarterly
4	Risk that the roles and responsibilities between different regulatory bodies are unclear leading to errors in certificate issuing.	4	5	20	Terms of Reference for Safety Advisory groups are in place with clear roles & responsibilities; along with supporting documentation.	2	3	6	Low Threat	Quarterly
5	Risk that the media misunderstand HCC's role and criticise the CC for issues that are not HCC's responsibility in the event of an incident, damaging HCC's reputation.	5	3	15	Clear documentation in place. Improved competency. So, EPU clear about limit of responsibility, which is clearly documented.	2	3	6	Low Threat	Quarterly
6	Risk that the income received is insufficient to meet the costs of providing the service leading to budget pressure to EPU.	3	4	12	Fee levels in place, with effective budget monitoring in place.	1	2	2	Low Threat	Quarterly
7	Risk that other organisations that HCC is reliant on do not sufficiently prioritise sufficient resources at the right level and do not provide sufficiently robust challenge to sports ground's self assessments. (new risk 09.07.09)	4	4	16	Agencies cogniscent of their responsibilities. Good, professional relationships in place. Agencies are compliant.	2	4	8	Medium Threat	Quarterly