

SPORTS GROUND ADVISORY WORKING GROUP

ABERDEEN, 14 January, 2010. - Minute of Meeting of the SPORTS GROUND ADVISORY WORKING GROUP. Present:- Brenda Flaherty, Licensing, Caroline Treanor, Licensing, David Kidd, Building Standards, Grant Tierney, Building Standards, Drew Carr, Scottish Ambulance Service, Sergeant Salter Watson, Grampian Police, Temporary Chief Superintendent Adrian Watson, Grampian Police, Kevin Coutts, Grampian Fire and Rescue Service, Alex Venters, Environmental Health and Ivor Churcher, Environmental Health.

MINUTE OF MEETING OF 8 OCTOBER 2009

1. The Group had before it the minute of 8 October 2009.

The Group resolved:-

to approve the minute subject to the following amendments at:-

1. Item (B) Media Provision, second paragraph to read:-
“It was confirmed that a joint inspection had taken place by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Environmental Health. Aberdeen Football Club carried out their own risk assessment based on the advice of the HSE and a copy had been forwarded to Environmental Health”
2. Item (D) Disability Discrimination Act 2005, first sentence to read:-
“David Kidd advised that there was a deviation from the Green Guide in respect of disability guidance”
3. Part 2 – Role of Sports Ground Advisory Working Group, third paragraph to read:-
“... certificate to be amended to allow contingency exercise to be carried out every 2 to 5 years”

MATTERS ARISING

2. Sergeant Watson requested that the issue of the contingency exercise be discussed at item 4 of the agenda.

CLARIFICATION OF ROLES

3. David Kidd advised that the issue could be taken at item 4 of the agenda.

SAFETY TEAM VISITS

4. Temporary Chief Superintendent Watson advised the Group of the practice of Glasgow City Safety Team. The Team consisting of representatives from the police, fire service, ambulance service and building standards visit stadia on match days on a collective rather than on an individual basis.

Brenda Flaherty commented that Aberdeen Football Club had previously stated that they were happy to accommodate visits to Pittodrie.

Temporary Chief Superintendent Watson further advised that the Safety Team looked at such issues as ensuring exits were clear, first aid points and meeting with stewards. He asked the group for their views on adopting a similar approach in Aberdeen for visits to Pittodrie Stadium.

Following discussion there was a general consensus that it would be a worthwhile exercise particularly to see the stadium whilst at full capacity and to see procedures in practice.

Drew Carr considered that from his service's view point there was already a presence on match days. He advised that he would consult with colleagues in the west of Scotland on their practices.

Sergeant Watson advised that the contact in Glasgow City Council was Christina Taylor. Brenda Flaherty agreed that Licensing would contact Glasgow to discuss their approach. It was further agreed that each representative of a service would contact their counterpart in another authority to establish their service's approach to visits to Stadia in their local authorities' area.

The Group resolved that:-

- (i) Licensing would contact Glasgow City Council with a view to establishing their approach to collective visits to Stadia; and
- (ii) each service representative would also contact their counterparts in other areas to establish their approach to collective visits to Stadia.

DEVIATIONS

5. David Kidd advised that the terms of the Safety Certificate required Aberdeen Football Club to produce a list of deviations by 4 December 2009.

Caroline Treanor advised that documents relating to deviations had been received and that Aberdeen Football Club believed they had fulfilled the requirements.

David Kidd advised that it was the opinion of Building Standards that the information provided was insufficient and lacked detail.

Brenda Flaherty advised that Aberdeen Football Club may be in breach of clause 4 of the Certificate.

Temporary Chief Superintendent Watson expressed concern that if the Club were in breach of Clause 4 of the Safety Certificate and that the matter went unresolved by

the Group it could leave the Group open to criticism because the terms of the Safety Certificate were being breached. It was acknowledged, however, that Pittodrie Stadium was not unsafe but that there was no audit trail to show what reasonable steps had been taken to address any deviations from the Green Guide.

David Kidd circulated a list of potential deviations to highlight some of the areas the club should be looking at and an example of a deviation list from another local authority's safety certificate. Both documents are appended to the minute at appendix A.

Following discussion it was agreed that Licensing should write to Aberdeen Football Club explaining that the information submitted was insufficient and that they were potentially in breach of Clause 4 of the Safety Certificate. The Club should provide a more detailed list of deviations for the approval of the Group within two weeks. Assistance to the Club in preparing a deviation list would be offered.

Contingency Exercise

Sergeant Watson advised that in terms of the Green Guide a contingency exercise should be carried out annually. Aberdeen Football Club had previously advised that this was not practical. Sergeant Watson has discussed the matter with the police emergency planning team.

A tabletop exercise led by Grampian Police was carried out in August/September 2009. Grampian Police have advised Aberdeen Football Club that these exercises should be led by them and some progress has been made in that regard. Sergeant Watson suggested that the wording of the Safety Certificate be amended. Following discussion it was agreed to amend the wording of the certificate to insert "aspects" before "contingency plan" at Clause 14, paragraph C.

The Group resolved:-

to write to Aberdeen Football Club advising them that they were potentially in breach of Clause 4 as the information provided in relation to deviations was insufficient and that a further comprehensive list should be provided within two weeks.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

6. None.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7. 8 April 2010, 8 July 2010 and 14 October 2010 at 10am.

Appendix 2
Table of Deviations from the Green Guide - Granted

The list of deviations granted is as follows:

<i>Clause number</i>	<i>Standards provided...</i>	<i>Granted on the basis that...</i>
7.7 – Barriers on stairways	The protective barriers serving the vomitories to the seating deck of the East Stand are infilled to a height of not less than 462mm utilising constructions which prevent the passage of 100mm sphere. Height 900mm	A reasonable standard has been achieved which minimises the obstruction problems caused by a fully complying protective barrier.
9.10 – Design of emergency evacuation routes	The vomitory exists in the East Stand . are not served by their own individual corridor route. They discharge into one of two concourse areas, which are fire compartments.	Given that there is a low fire load to the seating deck and concourse areas, that an alternative means of escape exists onto the pitch, the travel distances comply with the Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations, there is a fire detection system and active precautions in the concourse area, it is considered that more than one vomitory exiting into a fire compartment provides a good standard of safe escape.
9.15 – Exit doors and gates	Exit gate adjacent to the new East Stand/South Terrace within the south east corner of the stadium opens against the direction of escape. The gate is manned at all times by a steward in radio contact with the control unit.	The topography of the stadium at this point would not allow the gate to open in the direction of travel unless there was a significant gat at its foot. The steward who mans the gate will be able to quickly open it if its use is required in an emergency.
10.4 – Barrier heights	The protective barrier to the TV gantry in the East Stand is 750mm high. The protective barriers serving the ends of the seat rows at the west end of the North Stand and around the North Stand vomitory opening to have a minimum height of 800mm.	The gantry is not a public area and is only used by trained TV crew personnel, raising the height of the barrier would be an impediment to the viewing scope of the cameras. Deviation is considered to be reasonable having regard to the location of the protective barriers and the necessity for clear sightlines for seated spectators. A relaxation of the Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations has been granted for the reduction in barrier heights. (Ref no 02/00031/RLX).
11.7 – gangways in seated areas – general requirements	1.1m wide lateral gangway between the radial gangways serving the Director's Box.	The 1.1m width, which is less than the recommended 1.2m, is considered acceptable as the gangway is only 1.5m in length between 2 radial gangways where the 90° change in direction will already slow the flow rate, and it will only be used as an alternative means of escape from the Directors Box which has a capacity of just 55.
11.9b – Radial gangways in seated areas	The top 4 risers of the radial gangway providing a second means of escape from the Directors Box are 216mm in height and are not uniform with the remaining risers.	The increased height of the new stairs is required to tie the existing gangway into the new seating deck formation. The trip hazard will be minimal as the stairs are used for escape only from the Directors Box, and therefore the change in rise will be decreasing in the direction of travel. It will only affect the last riser for those accessing Club seats, where the trip hazard will be minimized due to change of direction at this point. A handrail will be provided adjacent to this section of the gangway.
15.10 – Restriction of fire growth and spread	The glazing and wall which separates the seating deck in the East Stand from the hospitality areas is not fire resistant.	The compartmentation of the building complies with the Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations and a comprehensive system of fire detection and additional escape routes have been installed.

10.16 Exit doors and gates

- d. All exit doors and gates on an exit route should always be capable of opening outwards so that crowds can escape in an emergency without obstruction. In situations where the opening of the exit doors or gates would cause an obstruction on a public highway, they should be resited (that is, put further back) within the exit route they serve.
- e. Where practicable exit doors and gates should be sited adjacent to entrances. There should be no obstructions and no changes in level at exit doors.
- f. Sliding or roller-shutter gates should not be used because they are incapable of being opened when pressure is exerted in the direction of crowd flow. Is there an agreed written clarification that the management of exits balances the use of sliding doors?

7.5 Factors affecting the entry capacity

The rate at which people can pass through each turnstile or entry point will vary according to a number of local factors. The rates of entry should therefore be measured at least once a year and recorded.

The main factors affecting the rate of entry are:

A the number and dispersal of turnstile /entry points
is the "press only" turnstile taken into account to Main Stand?

8.4 Flights of stairways

Flights of stairways should not provide long, uncontrolled paths down which crowd pressures and surges can be created. For this reason:

- a. Number of risers

For new construction: Individual flights should consist of no more than 12 risers. However, where the stairway is a secondary stairway for escape only, this may be increased to 16 risers. Reference should also be made to the Building Regulations.

For existing construction: Individual flights should consist of no more than 16 risers.

- b. If there are more than 36 risers in consecutive flights, the path of the stairway should change direction of travel by at least 30 degrees.

Significantly more than 16 rises per flight in parts (South Stand, Merkland Road Stand). Where flights and landings are consecutive and exceed 36 risers in total the guidance looks for at least a 30 degree change of direction rather than the straight line which exists. In the case of Pittodrie due to its age the design of its stairs exceed 36 risers without any landings, without any 30 degree change of direction.

1.7 Deviating from the Guide

The Guide seeks to encourage the meeting of achievable standards, particularly for new construction, but does not attempt to provide a universal minimum standard for existing sports grounds.

It may therefore be possible to deviate from individual guidelines without detracting from the overall safety of a sports ground.

However, it is stressed that the recommendations within the *Guide* are based upon research and experience. Deviations from the *Guide* should therefore only be acceptable when considered to be necessary and reasonable. An accumulation of deviations which result in the application of lower standards in relation to any part of the ground or any aspect of its management should be regarded as unacceptable.

It is the responsibility of ground management to ensure that any decision to deviate from the Guide should be recorded, with supporting written evidence, including the details of a risk assessment. If the deviation is then approved (by management and, where a safety certificate is in force, by the local authority), the action taken should strictly adhere to the contents of the written evidence.

It is further stressed that, unless it can be demonstrated that the alternative measures to be taken are able to achieve an equal or greater degree of safety than those recommended in the *Guide*, a capacity lower than the one which would otherwise be permitted will be required. The extent of such a reduction may be severe.

The above relates to deviating from individual guidelines within the Guide. I have noted a couple of examples of guidelines below

10.8 Design and management of exit systems

f. Keeping exit routes clear

Exit routes should be kept clear of obstructions. Catering, sales or toilet facilities should be located in such a way that neither they, nor any queue or waiting they attract, obstruct an exit route. Where exit routes pass through car parks or other areas affected by vehicular movements, consideration should be given to suitable methods of traffic control.

Has half time crowd build up at catering to main stand been reviewed?