

Sports Grounds Safety Authority Guidance

Preparing Counter Terrorism Measures at Sports Grounds

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

Increasingly, terrorist activities are impacting on daily life and, in recent years, have included attacks on sports grounds and other entertainment venues.

Sports grounds' management are responsible for the reasonable safety of people at their ground. Taking measures to protect those at the ground from terrorist attack and having plans in place to minimise the impact of any attack should be important elements of any day to day ground security plan and event day planning. Sports grounds should ensure that their plans and procedures take account of the threat from terrorist activities.

1.2 Structure of Document

This document is directed at the management of sports grounds and provides guidance as to how and where they can find advice on their responsibilities to counter the threat of terrorist activity at the ground. Local Authority staff will find the guidance of use when considering the safety of sports grounds within their area and, where a ground is subject to a safety certificate, may wish to consider this guidance when determining appropriate terms and conditions for inclusion within the certificate. There is specific guidance for local authorities at the end of this guidance note.

2. Guidance for Sports Ground Management

It is important that ground management take account of the latest guidance from the Government, police and other bodies when developing their counter terrorism plans. There are a number of different Government and police organisations that can assist ground management with advice and guidance. The primary source of advice for sports grounds on the development of plans to keep people safe is the NaCTSO Crowded Places Guidance (see 2.1).

2.1 Event Safety Policy Statement

Sports ground management should have in place a written Event Safety Policy Statement which outlines the ground's operational safety policy and its commitment to managing, assessing, preventing and reducing the risk of harm or injury to those present at the ground during an event. The policy should identify the need for the ground to have in place a plan to mitigate any risks of physical harm or injury from terrorist activity. The SGSA has provided a template Event Safety Policy Statement as an example [here](#).

2.2 Available advice -Government and Police Bodies

NaCTSO

The National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) is a police unit that supports the “Protect and Prepare” strands of the Government’s counter terrorism strategy. They provide help, advice and guidance to Government and industry to help to protect crowded places from terrorist threat. In particular, they have issued advice and guidance relating to “crowded places”. The Crowded Places Guidance includes advice to sports grounds. This advice is available on the internet from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) at www.gov.uk/government/publications/crowded-places-guidance. The Crowded Places Guide seeks to help venues reduce the risk of a terrorist attack and limit the impact an attack might cause. It highlights the vital part ground management can play in the UK counter terrorism strategy.

CPNI

The Centre for Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) is the Government’s technical authority for protective security advice to the UK national infrastructure. Their role is to protect national security by helping to reduce the vulnerability of the national infrastructure to terrorism and other threats in support of NaCTSO’s documents. They issue advice and guidance on hardware, equipment and strategies to counter the threat of terrorism. They propose that planning using the principles of Deter, Detect and Delay will deter and frustrate a potential attacker and provide initial protection to premises. Their advice can be found on www.cpni.gov.uk

MI5

The MI5 website publishes the current UK threat level. MI5 is HM Government’s security service protecting the UK against threats to national security. The current main threat to national security is terrorism. MI5 is responsible for setting the threat levels from Irish and other domestic terrorism. CPNI is accountable to MI5. Information on threat levels and other related subjects can be found on www.MI5.gov.uk.

JTAC

The Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) is an intelligence body advising the Government on the current threat to the country from international terrorism. They are responsible for setting the threat level for international terrorism. The current threat levels can be found on the MI5 website.

2.3 Available Advice – Police Personnel

CTSA

Counter Terrorism Security Advisors (CTSAs) work with businesses and the community to identify and assess sites that may be vulnerable to terrorist or extremist attack. CTSAs are coordinated, trained and tasked by NaCTSO. They identify and assess local critical sites, which may be vulnerable to terrorist or extremist attack, then devise and develop appropriate protective security plans to minimise impact on that site and the surrounding community. These could be stadia, bars, shopping centres, airports etc.

CTSAs also promote awareness of the threat from terrorism and provide Project Argus and Project Griffin training.

SecCos

Police Counter Terrorism Security Co-ordinators (SecCos) are attached to local police forces. They develop security plans with a view to minimising, managing and mitigating risk in respect of a policed event or operation (such as a high-profile sporting event) and are able to provide practical suggestions for mitigating the security risks specific to the events taking place at a ground.

2.4 Available Advice – Other Bodies

SGSA

The Sports Grounds Safety Authority assists NaCTSO by issuing guidance for sports grounds that makes some elements of counter terrorism related subjects in the Crowded Places Guidance more relevant to sports grounds. This includes guidance on *Planning for Lockdown; Planning for Increased Threat Levels; Planning for Moving People in an Emergency Terrorist Situation*. These are available on their website at www.sgsa.org.uk.

2.5 Threat Levels

Information about the national threat level is available on the MI5 website. Threat levels are set by MI5 for Irish and other domestic threats and by JTAC for international threats. They are published on the MI5 website. The five threat levels are:

- **Critical** - An attack is expected imminently
- **Severe** - An attack is highly likely
- **Substantial** - An attack is a strong possibility
- **Moderate** - An attack is possible but not likely
- **Low** - An attack is unlikely.

2.6 Response Levels

There are three response levels to the threat analysis, which the management of buildings/grounds are encouraged to adopt:

- **Exceptional.** This is the recommended response to a Critical threat level. It requires maximum protective security measures to meet specific threats and to minimise vulnerability and risk. It is generally accepted that this level of response is unsustainable other than for a very short period of time.
- **Heightened.** This is the recommended response to a Substantial or Severe threat level. It requires additional and sustainable protective security measures reflecting the broad nature of the threat combined with specific business and geographical vulnerabilities and judgements on acceptable risk.
- **Normal.** Routine protective security measures appropriate to the business concerned.

2.7 Terrorist Methodologies

Sports grounds differ in many ways including size, location, layout and operation which makes them susceptible to different types of attack.

As explained in the NaCTSO Crowded Places Guidance, attacks can come in many different forms including:

- Explosive devices (exploded remotely, by timer or other means)
- Vehicle borne improvised explosive devices
- Person borne improvised explosive devices
- Co-ordinated gun and knife attacks
- Vehicle as a weapon
- Individual shootings and close quarter attacks (often using knives or other sharp blades)
- Kidnapping and hostage taking
- Cyber attack.

Any risk assessments, mitigation measures and contingency plans should consider all possible forms of terrorist attack threat for the ground.

2.8 Risk Assessments / Mitigation

The risk assessment process is well known to most sports grounds. In the case of the threat of terrorism, information is available from the Government and media about the current security climate locally and globally, or about recent terrorist activities. Local police will also be able to advise on any local threat issues. This information will inform the risk assessment.

The ground should develop a plan outlining their counter terrorism arrangements in line with the advice provided in the NaCTSO Crowded Places Guidance.

Information on CCTV and lighting, hostile vehicle mitigation, control rooms and access control and other physical, personal and cyber counter measures can be obtained from the CPNI and can be accessed via hyperlinks in the relevant chapter of the Crowded Places Guidance.

In relation to the cyber threat, The National Cyber Security Centre works with UK organisations, businesses and individuals to provide authoritative and coherent cyber security advice and cyber incident management.

For some grounds, advice and assistance regarding counter terrorism planning will be available from CTAs or SecCos. Such advice and guidance should, where reasonable and proportionate, be incorporated into the ground's plans.

If the ground is subject to a safety certificate details of the risk assessment and counter terrorism plan should be shared with trusted partners in the certifying authority.

3. Guidance for Certifying Authorities

Where a Safety Certificate is in place, the certifying authority will need to assure themselves that counter terrorism provision at the ground is such that reasonable safety is being achieved. This applies whether the certificate is a general safety certificate, special safety certificate or a regulated stand certificate.

The certifying authority should ensure that the sports ground outlines its commitment to counter terrorism in the Event Safety Policy Statement and produces a counter terrorism plan as discussed in 2.6 of this Guidance. Routes and areas outside the ground do not, at most grounds, fall within the responsibility of the ground management. They will be either part of the public realm or be in private ownership. It is therefore vital that planning for counter terrorism measures in these areas involves the input of all responsible external organisations, such as the police, local authorities, highways agencies and private property owners.

It is important that counter terrorism plans for the ground and the areas around the ground provide a co-ordinated approach.

The threat from terrorist activities and counter terrorism planning should be a standing item on SAG agendas. It is important that the police officer attending should be able to advise the SAG and the certifying authority on counter terrorism issues with CTSA's or SecCos attending, where possible.

It will be particularly important to discuss counter terrorism at the SAG or pre-event meetings if the threat level changes.

The Local Authority may receive details of the counter terrorism plans which they could share with members of the SAG in line with the confidentiality requirements of the ground or police.

In recognition of the sensitivities involved in discussing these matters, it may be necessary for counter terrorism issues to be discussed in a separate meeting of the SAG where only those needing to be engaged are present. Separate confidential minutes might also be required for that part of the meeting to prevent issues arising in relation to the unwitting release of sensitive material in response to FOI requests or requests from unauthorised SAG partners. The precise membership of this of this smaller SAG meeting will be dictated by local requirements and protocols in relation to information sharing agreements. It is important that the privacy of counter terrorism documents is preserved and that the attendance at discussions is restricted to those who need to be present. The handling and sharing of all documents relating to CTSA or SecCo advice and the ground's counter terrorism plans should be marked and distributed in accordance with a suitable and agreed security marking scheme, for instance the Government Security Classification Scheme.

It may be that the certifying authority will have limited expertise regarding counter terrorism measures, relying for advice on trained police officers. It is probable that the majority of counter terrorism activities will be agreed between the ground and local police. On those rare occasions when there is a disagreement the matter should be referred to a national counter terrorism expert, facilitated by the SGSA, along with a representative of the relevant competition organiser. These two parties should seek to intervene and find a

workable solution to the disagreement. If this cannot be achieved, the certifying authority shall make a determination under the powers provided to it under the safety certificate.