



HOME OFFICE  
 Queen Anne's Gate, LONDON, SW1H 9AT  
 Direct line: 01-213  
 Switchboard: 01-213 3000

Our reference:  
 Your reference:

20 January 1986

The Director General, Greater London Council  
 The Chief Executives, County Councils,  
 Metropolitan County Councils

The Chief Executives, District Councils )  
 Metropolitan District Councils )  
 London Boroughs )  
 Secretaries, Joint Fire and Civil )  
 Defence Authorities )  
 Chief Officers of Police )

) copied for information  
 only

Dear Sir

HOME OFFICE CIRCULAR NO 5/1986

SAFETY OF SPORTS GROUNDS: COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO CROWD SAFETY  
 AND CONTROL AT SPORTS GROUNDS: FINAL REPORT (CMND 9710 )

The Final Report of the Committee of Inquiry set up by the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Scotland following the events of 11 May 1985 at Bradford City FC and Birmingham City FC has now been published. The purpose of this circular is, first, to inform recipients of the recommendations contained in the Final Report and the Government's response to them; and, secondly, to seek the assistance and cooperation of local authorities and chief fire officers with a view to introducing new safety measures in line with the Report's recommendations.

Final Report of the Committee of Inquiry

2. The Final Report amends and expands upon the recommendations contained in the Inquiry's Interim Report (Cmd 9585) published last July. It stresses the need for improved safety to be effected urgently and draws attention to the additional hazards posed by crowd violence at some sporting events. These questions are subject to separate consideration: this circular is concerned however with safety matters only.

3. Attached at Annex A is a list of the recommendations of the Final Report. They supplement those contained in the Interim Report and supercede the provisional recommendations it contained. At Annex D is a copy of the Home Secretary's oral statement to Parliament responding to the Final Report.

4. Of the 9 recommendations on safety (recommendation 6 refers to Scotland only) recommendations 1, 7, 8 and 9 are longer term proposals to amend either the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 (SSGA) or the Fire Precautions Act 1971 (FPA). The latter, recipients will know, is already the subject of an uncompleted review contained in the consultative document issued in July 1985 and upon which comments were invited by 31 December 1985. The Government accepts the aims behind the Inquiry's approach to both Acts and proposes to issue as soon as possible a consultation document as to the best means of achieving them. This document will outline solutions inter alia by taking account both of the further factual information sought at paragraphs 10 and 11 below which was not available to the Inquiry and of the comments made on the proposals on the FPA in the July consultative document. The upshot therefore will be integrated proposals for the most effective form of safety provision in accordance with the principles recommended by the Inquiry.

5. The objective behind Recommendation 4 is also accepted and consultations will be undertaken with HSE and DOE with the aim of clarifying the interface between the responsibilities of the authorities concerned. Recommendation 10 (building regulations) is being considered by the Department of the Environment (DOE).

SSGA: extension of designation

6. As a result of the Government's acceptance of Recommendation 2 of the Final Report, the Home Secretary now proposes generally to extend designation under the SSGA 1975 to stadia and grounds with accommodation for over 10,000 spectators at which soccer or rugby union or rugby league or cricket is played. Consultation letters have been sent to the sporting bodies concerned seeking comments and information on the venues liable to be affected. Details of these, as known to the Home Office, are contained at Annex B. With the exception of rugby union the information is based on responses received to HM Chief Inspector of Fire Services' letter to chief fire officers of 21 August 1985 (No 11/1985). The information for rugby union includes data provided by the Rugby Football Union and the Welsh Rugby Union. Where information differs from that given by chief fire officers, the larger figure for spectator capacity has been used.

7. It is hoped that consultation with the sporting authorities will help resolve any points which might arise about the grounds and stadia affected. Local authorities to whom this circular is addressed are asked to check if there are any sports stadia or sports grounds in their area with accommodation for over 10,000 spectators at which rugby union or rugby league or soccer or cricket is played but which have been omitted from Annex B. Details of any such stadia or grounds should be passed to the Home Office as soon as possible, giving the full name and address of the stadium or ground in question, name and address of the principal occupier, approximate spectator capacity and the use to which the venue is put. This information can be passed by telephone on 01 213 5566 if this is more convenient.

Timing

8. Timing of the further designations as mentioned in paragraphs 6 and 7 above under the SSGA is subject to the consultation process which will include views expressed by the local authority associations. A phased programme may be necessary but it is intended to complete designation by the summer of 1986.

Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds (Football) (the "Green Guide")

9. The Green Guide is being revised along the lines recommended by the Inquiry and it is hoped, after consultation with interested bodies, to have a new edition of the Guide published before the 1986/87 seasons. Until then the advice in the existing Guide can continue to be followed as appropriate for all spectator sports. It is not intended to change the present status of the Green Guide.

Further controls over safety in sports premises

10. The Government has also accepted the need for some further safety controls to be applied to other sports stadia and grounds with stands holding over 500; and to indoor sports premises when they are used to accommodate more than 500 spectators (Final Report recommendations 3 and 5). As a first step to considering how best to proceed, further information is required to permit evaluation of the nature and number of the premises involved. Some information has already been provided (or may be available) as a result of the surveys carried out in response to DCO letter 11/1985 (seeking information on sports stadia with an overall capacity of over 5,000; sports grounds with constructed accommodation for more than 5,000; and indoor arenas with a spectator capacity of over 1,000). The information now sought overlaps with but is not identical to that previously given, so in an attempt to ease the administrative burden and to ensure consistency of response, those to whom this circular is addressed are asked to provide the information on the proforma at Annex C. Chief executives will no doubt wish to discuss with chief fire officers who is best placed to carry out this work.

11. For the purpose of this exercise indoor sports premises included in the return should be confined to those premises where, either on a regular or infrequent basis, sports events or other <sup>competitive</sup> activities take place for which accommodation is provided for more than 500 spectators.

12. To ensure that there is no short term gap in safety cover chief fire officers and, where appropriate, other members of the local authority safety team are asked to inspect those outdoor sports venues coming within the scope of recommendation 3 which were not inspected as part of the earlier exercise, and those indoor sports premises coming within the scope of recommendation 5 which have not

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been inspected in the last twelve months whether or not they are subject to entertainments licensing legislation. The purpose of these inspections would be to advise management on additional measures necessary to secure satisfactory standards of safety, and to consider emergency action where necessary under section 10 of either the SSGA or FPA as appropriate. Similarly, chief executives and chief fire officers are asked to keep under review the other outdoor premises previously inspected with the object of maintaining safety standards at those venues, even though they are not being designated under the SSGA.

13. Finally, it would be appreciated if the returns (Annex C) could be sent in as soon as possible and in any event not later than 21 February 1986 so that preparatory work can begin. The returns should be addressed to

Mr P Canovan  
Fire and Emergency Planning Department  
Home Office  
50 Queen Anne's Gate  
London SW1H 9AT

14. The Home Secretary recognises the efforts already made by both chief fire officers and local authorities generally to improve safety at sports grounds and is deeply grateful for all that has been done. It is appreciated that these latest tasks will be an additional but not, it is hoped, a substantial burden given the work already undertaken in many areas to improve spectator safety at sporting venues.

15. An additional copy of this circular is enclosed for the chief fire officer. In view of local government reorganisation copies have also been sent to the chief executives of Metropolitan District Councils and London Boroughs, and to the Joint Fire and Civil Defence Authorities. In addition, copies of this circular have also been sent to non-Metropolitan District Councils because of their responsibility for licensing some events in indoor sports premises under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions ) Act 1982.

16. Any enquiries should be directed to:

Mrs R Davies 01 213 5566

Mr J Fisher 01 213 7338 (proforma, Annex D only)

Yours faithfully



R M MORRIS

Copies sent for information to: Association of County Councils  
Association Metropolitan Authorities, Association of District  
Councils, London Boroughs Association and the Association of  
Local Authorities

Recommendations in the Final Report

1. The distinction made between sports grounds and sport stadia should be abolished. (Paragraph 3.14)
  
2. Further designation under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 of sports grounds and sports stadia with accommodation for over 10,000 spectators where Association Football, Rugby League, Rugby Union and cricket is played in England, Wales and Scotland. (Paragraph 3.23)
  
3. All sports grounds and sports stadia not already designated under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 and having a capacity in a stand of over 500 spectators should be designated under the Fire Precautions Act 1971 as premises requiring a fire certificate. (Paragraph 3.34)
  
4. One authority should be given the responsibility for securing structural safety at sports grounds and stadia not designated under the 1975 Act. (Paragraph 3.52)
  
5. In England and Wales indoor sports facilities with accommodation for over 500 spectators should require a fire certificate under the Fire Precautions Act 1971. (Paragraph 3.57)

6. An urgent review of the existing legislation on indoor sports facilities in Scotland should be undertaken and if they are not currently covered by fire regulations such facilities should be designated under the Fire Precautions Act 1971. (Paragraph 3.59)

7. Provision should be made in the Fire Precautions Act 1971 for authorised officers of a Fire Authority to have power to issue a prohibition notice. (Paragraph 3.64)

8. Provision should be made for authorised officers of the Local Authority to have power to issue a prohibition notice under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975. (Paragraph 3.65)

9. There should be (1) annual renewal of safety certificates issued under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975; (2) a duty on the local authority annually to inspect the premises prior to re-issuing the certificate and (3) power for the local authority to revoke the certificate. (Paragraph 3.68)

10. The Department of the Environment should urgently amend the Building Regulations Guidance Codes in relation to combustibility in new stands. (Paragraph 3.90)

11. In England and Wales the unfettered right of the police to search those who are either entering or trying to enter a football ground should be conferred by statute. (Paragraph 4.38)

12. In England and Wales consideration should be given to creating an offence of disorderly conduct at a sports ground. (Paragraph 4.74)

13. The power to arrest under Section 5 of the Public Order Act 1936 should be widened. (Paragraph 4.76)

14. The provision of Section 3(3) of the Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol etc) Act 1985 should be reviewed in relation to executive boxes. (Paragraph 4.91)

15. Consideration should continue to be given to some form of membership scheme for Football League clubs in England and Wales. (Paragraph 4.125)

STADIA/GROUNDS POTENTIALLY FOR DESIGNATION

[Undesignated sports stadia holding over 10,000 spectators, and sports grounds where constructed accommodation holds more than 10,000 spectators, where either rugby union, rugby league, cricket or soccer is played. Attached is a list of seemingly qualifying stadia and grounds for each of those sports.]

Definitions

"Sports ground" means any place where sports or other competitive activities take place in the open air and where accommodation has been provided for spectators, consisting of artificial structures or of natural structures artificially modified for the purpose;

"sports stadium" means a sports ground where the accommodation provided for spectators wholly or substantially\* surrounds the area used for activities taking place on the ground.

\*Where constructed spectator accommodation (which includes terracing and artificially made or modified slopes and banks, as well as stands) is on more than 3 sides of a playing area, the premises are regarded as a stadium.



I. OUTDOOR SPORTS VENUES (excluding stadia already designated under SSGA or stadia or grounds now proposed for designation (see Annex B))

Information on venues having at least one stand (ie roofed accommodation) capable of holding more than 500 spectators whether sitting or standing.

1 Name and address of venue	2 Name of principal occupier (and address if different to column 1)	3 Indicate whether stadium (S) or ground (G) (see definition in Annex B)	4 Spectator sports in order of frequency of use	5 Spectator capacity ie overall capacity of stadia; capacity of constructed spectator accommodation for grounds	6 Number of stands with capacity for more than 500 spectators showing individual capacity in each case	7 Date of most recent inspection	8 General assessment current safety standards ie satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U)

Where necessary continue on separate sheets with numbered columns

II. INDOOR SPORTS PREMISES

Information on premises (see paragraphs 10 and 11 of the Circular) having an overall spectator capacity in excess of 500 in which spectator sports events are staged.

1 Name and address of premises	2 Name of owner and/or occupier	3 Indicate if sport is main (M) or subsidiary(S) use of premises & specify	4 Indicate if premises are already licensed under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (or the London Government Act 1963) &, if so, specify for which sporting (or other) activities	5 Specify sporting events for which spectator accommodation in excess of 500 is provided	6 Indicate frequency of sporting events for which spectator accommodation in excess of 500 is provided	7 Overall spectator capacity showing amount of permanent(P) & temporary (T) accommodation for spectators	8 Date of most recent inspection	9 General assessment of safety standards ie satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory(U)

## Sports Grounds (Popplewell Report)

4.24 pm

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Douglas Hurd): With permission, Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a statement on the final report of the inquiry into safety and control at sports grounds under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice Popplewell, which was published today. The statement is a little longer than I would have wished. It consists of 14 paragraphs. The inquiry was established following the fire at Bradford City football ground and the events at Birmingham City on 11 May 1985.

Now that the inquiry's work is completed, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland and I would like to renew the Government's gratitude to the chairman and his two assessors for the speed and conscientiousness with which they have discharged their difficult task. In addition to dealing with the events at the Heysel stadium in Brussels on 29 May and discussing the causes of hooliganism, the final report makes 15 recommendations on crowd safety and crowd control.

On crowd control, there are a number of recommendations about the maintenance of order at football grounds: wider powers of police search and arrest; a new offence of disorderly conduct at sports grounds, and a review of the recent alcohol legislation as it applies to executive boxes. Continued progress with membership schemes is also recommended.

The Police and Criminal Evidence Act which came into force on 1 January has already extended the police powers of search and of arrest in ways which will help them deal with troublemakers at football grounds. I shall examine Mr. Justice Popplewell's recommendations for further powers when we see how the new Act works in practice.

On disorderly conduct, the Public Order Bill, to which the House gave a Second Reading on Monday seeks to create a new offence which will cover hooliganism in football grounds, as elsewhere. I shall consider the recommendation for a wider offence when we see how the offence in the Bill—disorderly conduct—works in practice.

The Government have already taken a number of steps to deal with forms of misconduct about which Mr. Justice Popplewell expresses particular concern. The Public Order Bill seeks to implement a recommendation in his interim report that the possession of smoke bombs and similar devices at sports grounds be made an offence. We have taken action to ban some other items which may be used as missiles. The alcohol legislation which was passed last summer makes it an offence to be in possession of a drinks can or bottle in any area of the grounds from which the pitch may be viewed direct.

During the proceedings in the House, representations were made about the effect on the revenue which clubs derive from executive boxes. The Government undertook to monitor the situation, and I have received some information from the Football League and representations from a number of right hon. and hon. Members. I have asked for more information from the football authorities and will wish to consider that carefully, in the light of what Mr. Justice Popplewell says, before deciding whether to allow some relaxation of the controls on alcohol in executive boxes. I shall report my conclusions to the House while the Public Order Bill is before Parliament.

On membership cards, we fully endorse Mr. Justice Popplewell's recommendation. The Public Order Bill contains provisions to enable the courts to ban convicted football hooligans from attending matches. This shows our determination to do what we can to keep troublemakers away from football grounds and to restore the good name of British football. It needs to be matched, in our view, by equally determined action by the football clubs and the football authorities. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has emphasised to them the value of an effective membership card system. The football authorities have made some progress on this. In the light of the exclusion order scheme in the Public Order Bill, I hope that they will now redouble their efforts.

I deal now with crowd safety. We accept the need to strengthen urgently the measures already announced by and taken following my predecessor's statements on 13 May and 24 July.

We accept the recommendation that all sports grounds and sports stadia in England and Wales with accommodation for more than 10,000 spectators and where association football, rugby league, rugby union and cricket are played which are not already designated under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 should be so designated. Consultations will begin immediately with the sports authorities and organisations concerned with a view to introducing the necessary orders as quickly as possible, and certainly by the summer of this year.

In Scotland, my right hon. Friend intends to introduce similarly, as soon as he can, an order designating stadia of clubs with accommodation for more than 10,000 spectators in the first and second divisions of the Scottish Football League.

We also accept the principle of the recommendations that safety controls should be extended to all sports grounds and stadia with stands for over 500 spectators and to indoor sports facilities with accommodation for over 500 spectators where adequate controls do not already exist. We need more facts about this. The present information that we hold at the centre is limited to stadia and grounds with accommodation for 5,000 or more, and indoor premises with an overall capacity of more than 1,000.

The first step will be to establish the full practical effects of these recommendations. All the relevant local and fire authorities in England, Wales and Scotland are to be invited to inspect all such stands and premises not previously inspected, and to report on them to my right hon. Friend and myself. Powers are already immediately available under both the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 and the Fire Precautions Act 1971 to deal with any exceptional hazard which might be found in the course of these inspections. Similarly, chief fire officers and firemasters will be invited to keep under review the places that they inspected under previous initiatives last year, with the object of maintaining safety standards at those places.

When we have considered these inspections we shall quickly issue a consultative document and propose ways of achieving the objectives of the Inquiry's final report, fitting this into the review already under way on the future of the Fire Precautions Act. Further legislation may well prove necessary. There will be no avoidable risk meanwhile, because any necessary emergency action can be taken under existing powers.

So far, happily, the figures this season show an improvement in the number of arrests and ejections from football grounds. Our measures against hooliganism should have a cumulative effect, but it is too soon to be satisfied. We have to deal not only with hooliganism, but with safety; not only with football grounds, but with sports grounds in general. Thanks in large part to Mr. Justice Popplewell and his colleagues, I believe that we are on the right track.

RUGBY UNION

<u>Stadia</u>		<u>Grounds</u>	
		Abertillery RFC The Park Abertillery	15,000
		Bristol RFC The Memorial Ground Filton Avenue Bristol	16,000
Exeter City RFC County Ground Stadium Church Road St Thomas Exeter	22,190		
Leicester Tigers RFC Aylestone Road Leicester	17,500		
Alexander Stadium Perry Barr Birmingham B42	13,700		
		Birkenhead Park RFC Park Road North Birkenhead	15,000
Gloucester RFC Kingsholm Gloucester	10,000+		
Redruth RFC Recreation Ground Redruth	21,725		
		Camborne RFC Recreation Ground Camborne	18,582
		Coventry RFC Barkers Butts Road Coventry	13,250
		Torquay Athletic RFC Torbay Recreation Ground Torquay	18,000
Llanelli RFC Stradey Park Llanelli	24,000		
Workington RUFC Ellis Sports Ground Moss Bay Road Workington	19,400		

Bridgend RFC Tondu Road Bridgend	15,000
Neath RFC The Gnoll Gnoll Park Road Neath	12,500
Swansea RFC St Helen's Ground Swansea	17,500
Aberavon RFC Manor Street Port Talbot	17,500
Newport Athletic Club Rodney Road Newport	22,000
Ebbw Vale RFC Eugene Cross Park Ebbw Vale	20,000
Pontypridd RFC Sardis Road Pontypridd	12,000
Cardiff RFC Cardiff Arms Park Westgate Street Cardiff	14,000

RUGBY LEAGUE

Stadia

Sheffield Eagles	12,500
Owlerton Sports Stadium	
Penistone Road	
Sheffield S6	

FOOTBALL

Stadia

Bath City AFC Twerton Park High Street Twerton	15,000
Wycombe Wanderers FC Loakes Park High Wycombe	12,000
Harlow Town FC Harlow District Sports Trust Hammarskjold Road Harlow	16,000
Chelmsford City FC New Writtle Street Chelmsford	18,000
New River Sports Centre White Hart Lane London N17	12,000
Tooting and Mitcham FC Sandy Lane Merton	16,000
Dulwich Hamlet FC Dog Kennel Hill London SE22	28,000
Worcester City FC St George's Lane Worcester	11,400
Dartford FC Watling Street Dartford	15,000
Chorley AFC Duke Street Chorley	10,000+
Boston United FC York Street Boston	13,000
Hastings United FC Pilot Field Elphinstone Road Hastings	18,000
Alexander Stadium Perry Barr Birmingham B42	13,700



Bilston Town FC Queen Street Bilston Wolverhampton	14,000
Billingham Synthonia Stadium Central Avenue Billingham	25,000
Berwick Rangers FC Shielfield Park Berwick-upon-Tweed Northumberland	10,200
Telford United FC Bucks Head Ground Telford	12,000
Nuneaton Borough FC Borough Ground Queen's Road	18,000

## CRICKET

### Stadia

Lords Cricket Ground St John's Wood London NW8	26,526
The Oval Kennington	13,000
Lancashire County Cricket Club Talbot Road Stretford Manchester	23,000
Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club Bridgford Road West Bridgford Nottingham	15,000
Warwickshire County Cricket Club Edgbaston Road Birmingham B5	19,000
Headingley Cricket Ground Leeds Cricket Football and Athletic Co The Pavilion St Michael's Lane Leeds	20,000
Cricket Ground Bradford Park Bradford	20,000
Scarborough Cricket Ground North Marine Road Scarborough	13,000