

# **Safety of Sports Grounds (NI) Order 2006**

## **Guidance Note 2**

### **Model Terms of References for Establishing a Safety Advisory Group**

This guidance document is issued by Sport NI to provide guidance to the district councils regarding safety certification.

The information contained in this publication is intended to provide useful guidance, but may not be a definitive statement applicable in all circumstances. Further advice may be required as appropriate

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## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Purpose of the Guidance**

The Safety of Sports Grounds (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 requires the operator of designated venues obtain a safety certificate from the District Council, the safety certificate will state the safe capacity(s) for the venue and Terms and Conditions to be applied to ensure the reasonable safety of spectators attending specified activities at the venue. The safe capacity will be dependant on the 'P' factor which relates to the physical condition of the venue and 'S' factor which relates to the quality of the safety management at the venue, both of these factors are referenced against the contents of the Northern Ireland Guide to Safety of Sports Grounds. The purpose of the guidance is to provide Model Terms of Reference that District Councils may use when establishing a Safety Advisory Group for designated venues.

### **1.2 Background to the Guidance**

In paragraph 31 of the Final Report of his inquiry into the Hillsborough Stadium Disaster, the then Lord Justice Taylor recommended that –

'To assist the Local Authority in exercising its functions, it should set up an Advisory Group (if this has not already been done) consisting of appropriate members of its own staff, representatives of the police, of the fire and ambulance services and of the building authority. The Advisory Group should consult representatives of the club and of a recognised supporters' organisation on a regular basis. The Advisory Group's terms of reference should encompass all matters concerned with crowd safety and should require regular visits to the ground and attendance at matches. The Advisory Group should have a chairman from the local authority, and effective procedures. Its resolutions should be recorded and it should be required to produce regular reports for consideration by the local authority'.

The Safety of Sports grounds (NI) order 2006, Guidance Note 1, Safety Certification, part 4.3 paragraph 2 states that -

'A Safety Advisory Group should provide specialist advice to the district council so that it may effectively discharge its functions under the 2006 Order. In practice, it should also provide the vital forum within which the District Council and other agencies may develop a corporate approach to spectator safety at the sports grounds concerned, while each exercising its own responsibilities'.

### **1.3 Need for guidance**

The Safety of Sports Grounds (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 is a recently enacted piece of legislation, and it is important that it is enforced in an effective and consistent manner throughout Northern Ireland. It is appreciated that many officers involved in the certification processes will have a wide variety of other duties and few if any will concentrate solely on safety issues at sporting venues in their area. This document will assist District Councils in ensuring that appropriate Terms of Reference are put in place for Safety Advisory Groups and that there is consistency across the various venues and District Council areas.

### **1.4 Applying the guidance**

The terms of reference contained in this document offers a model that may be adopted by a District Council when establishing a Safety Advisory Group. District Councils may develop and implement their own terms of reference for Safety Advisory Groups, however, they should ensure that the terms of reference adopted are appropriate to allow all persons / organisations involved to provide expert advice to the District Council who will ultimately issue the safety certificate.

## **Model Terms of Reference**

### **2.1 [Name of Venue] – Safety Advisory Group**

#### **Introduction to Terms of Reference**

The [Name of Venue] Safety Advisory Group (SAG) is a multi agency body established to provide specialist advice to the District Council regarding the Terms and Conditions to be included in the Safety Certificate and associated safety related issues.

It is also a forum to discuss various options regarding the actions to be taken, and the Terms and Conditions that might be included in a Safety Certificate to secure the reasonable safety of spectators attending specified activities at the venue.

#### **2.2 Aim of Safety Advisory Group**

[Name of Council] working in conjunction with external agencies aims to ensure that the Terms and Conditions included in the Safety Certificate for [name of venue] will ensure the reasonable safety of spectators attending specified activities.

## **2.3 Terms of Reference**

The SAG will provide advice to [name of council] regarding the Terms and Conditions contained in the Safety Certificate for [name of venue]. This will involve each of the constituent members providing specialist advice based on the expertise of their respective organisations and observations made regarding the venue, specified activities hosted at the venue and related matters.

This may also involve providing specialist advice with regard to fire safety matters, health and safety at work matters, contingency planning and related matters.

It will also facilitate discussions regarding safety arrangements for proposed fixtures and advise the District Council accordingly.

The District Council will appoint a Chairperson for the SAG and provide accommodation and administrative support to facilitate the meetings.

The District Council will request external agencies to nominate representatives to become core members, and invited members of the SAG as appropriate.

The Chairperson will arrange meetings at least 2 times per year and:-

- following any incident or 'near miss' considered to be of significant magnitude by any of the core members, or invited members,
- significant structural alterations to the venue or,
- in the event of significant changes to the safety management arrangements at the venue or,
- if core members or invited members become aware of any other issue that may have a significant impact on the reasonable safety of spectators at the venue.

The District Council will circulate minutes of previous meetings prior to a forthcoming meeting.

## **2.4 Membership of the Safety Advisory Group**

The SAG should be chaired by an officer appointed by the District Council who can make decisions with regard to the Terms and Conditions of the Safety Certificate on behalf of the District Council ('the Lead Officer'), or an officer who will report the recommendations of the SAG to the District Council Officer(s) / Members who make decisions with regard to the Terms and Conditions of the Safety Certificate on behalf of the District Council.

The District Council should consider inviting the following as core members of the SAG :-

- A representative of the Environmental Health department of the District Council with responsibility for the enforcement of Health and Safety legislation (or the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland – where appropriate).
- A representative of the Building Control department of the District Council.
- A representative of the District Council with responsibility for Contingency Planning issues.
- A representative of any other department of the District Council with safety related interest at the venue.

Note – if the Chairperson undertakes any of the roles listed above it may not be appropriate for a second officer from that discipline to be a core member of the SAG.

- A representative of the Police Service of Northern Ireland as appointed by the Chief Constable, who has authority to speak on behalf of the organisation with regards to operational matters.
- A representative of the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service as appointed by the Chief Fire Officer, who has authority to speak on behalf of the organisation with regards to operational matters.
- A representative of the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service appointed by the Chief Executive who has authority to speak on behalf of the organisation with regards to operational matters.
- A representative of the first aid / medical provider for specified activities held at the venue.

The invited members should consist of:-

- A representative of Sport Northern Ireland with responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the Safety of Sports Grounds (NI) Order 2006.
- The Holder of the Safety Certificate ('the Qualified Person').
- The Safety Officer at the venue.
- Users of the venue as appropriate.

In addition it may be appropriate to invite:-

- A representative of a recognised supporters group.
- A representative of any other organisation that the Chairperson considers could provide useful input to a meeting / elements of a meeting of the SAG.

These representatives should only be invited to specific meetings / elements of specific meetings.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **3.1 The Chairperson**

The Chairperson will call meetings of the SAG and ensure that suitable arrangements are made to host the meeting including the provision of administrative support.

The Chairperson will ensure an agenda is drafted and circulated along with minutes of the previous meeting and any other relevant documents.

The Chairperson will request a report from core members and where appropriate invited members and others prior to any review of the Terms and Conditions contained in the Safety Certificate.

Should the Chairperson be authorised to make decisions regarding the Terms and Conditions to be included in a Safety Certificate they will do so having considered the views of the SAG. Where the Chairperson does not have the authority to make decisions regarding the Terms and Conditions contained in a Safety Certificate they will convey the recommendations of the SAG to the relevant Council Officer(s) / Members regarding the drafting of, or amendment to the Terms and Conditions contained in the Safety Certificate.

### **3.2 Core Members and Invited Members**

Core members and invited members and any additional persons should provide advice to the District Council regarding the Terms and Conditions contained in the Safety Certificate and other matters relating to the safety of spectators and others attending specified activities at the venue.

Core members and invited members where appropriate should provide a report to the Chairperson regarding their areas of expertise prior to the annual review of the Safety Certificate and when otherwise requested.

### **3.3 District Council**

The District Council should include Terms and Conditions in the Safety Certificate with a view to securing the reasonable safety of spectators at the venue having considered the recommendations of the members of the SAG.

## **Safety Advisory Group**

### **4.1 Suggested Agenda Items**

- Review of safety issues at previous fixtures.
- Consideration regarding the classification of forthcoming fixtures in relation to safety arrangements.
- Structural arrangements at the venue.
- Safety Management arrangements at the venue.
- Incidents at the venue.
- Incidents at other venues that may impact on the venue.
- Recent guidance documents etc.
- Reports from each agency.
- Medical treatments.