

Safety of Sports Grounds (NI) Order 2006

Regulated Stands Assessing the 'S' Factor

APRIL 2014

This guidance document is issued by Sport NI to provide guidance to the District Councils regarding safety certification with respect to Regulated Stands.

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 operators of Regulated Stands to obtain a safety certificate from the District Council, the safety certificate will state the safe capacity(s) for these Regulated stand(s) at the venue and Terms and Conditions to be applied to ensure the reasonable safety of spectators attending specified activities. The safe capacity will be dependant on the 'P' factor which relates to the physical condition and layout of the stand, and on the 'S' factor which relates to the quality of the Safety Management. Both of these factors should be referenced against the contents of the Northern Ireland Guide to Safety of Sports Grounds (Red Guide). The purpose of the guidance is to provide a framework that District Councils may use when determining the 'S' factor for a Regulated Stand as part of the certification process.

1.2 Background to the Guidance

District Council officers have previously expressed concern regarding the methodology that should be used to make an assessment of the 'S' factor when calculating the safe capacity of a venue for designation purposes. This document provides guidance to District Council officers on a method of assessing the 'S' factor which may be used for Regulated Stands. District Councils may adopt other methodologies; however, they should ensure that records of any calculations and attendant documentation are kept to support their findings.

1.3 Need for Guidance

It is important that the Safety of Sports Grounds (NI) Order 2006 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 variety of other duties and few, if any, will concentrate solely on safety issues at sporting venues in their area. Calculation of the 'S' factor can be quite a subjective process and it is therefore important that information is provided to assist with the calculations to ensure that an appropriate assessment is made, and there is consistency across the various venues containing Regulated Stands and District Council areas.

1.4 Applying the Guidance

The methodology contained in this document offers a process that may be adopted by a District Council when assessing the 'S' factor. As stated above District Councils may develop and implement their own methodologies, these however, should be based on the contents of the Northern Ireland Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds, and to ensure the reasonable safety of spectators.

Methodology

2.1 Overview

There are a number of elements, many of which are interrelated, that contribute to the quality of Safety Management. Some of these are likely to be referred to directly in the Terms and Conditions of a Safety Certificate, such as Marshalling arrangements and communication arrangements. Some elements are also related to the physical layout and condition of the Regulated Stand(s). It is important to remember however, that the condition and layout of the Regulated Stand at the venue are assessed in the 'P' factor. This methodology does not include all of the elements that contribute to the 'S' factor but considers a number of elements that play a significant role.

It is possible that some elements that contribute to the quality of Safety Management, that are undertaken with relation to the Regulated Stand, can compensate for others that are undertaken not so well. This methodology endeavours to place a value on a number of significant elements that are perceived to contribute to the quality of Safety Management at a Regulated Stand. These values range from 0, where the element is undertaken in an extremely poor manner, to 1 where it is undertaken in a competent manner. Guidance is provided to enable District Councils to place a value on each element. Each of the elements identified should be awarded a value based on the guidance (additional elements could be added to those elements already listed, or an element could be removed if the District Council feels that this is appropriate).

When a value has been awarded to each element, the elements should again be considered this time making an assessment regarding the impact other elements could contribute, for example, should the Suitability of the Contingency Planning Arrangements fall short of the District Councils expectations and therefore be awarded a low score, some compensation may be considered if for example the Competency of the Chief Safety Marshall, the Effectiveness of the Marshalling Arrangements and the Effectiveness of the Communication Arrangements were considered to be of a high standard. The revised value awarded to the Suitability of the Contingency Planning Arrangements element may be increased accordingly. It is unlikely that the value of any element could be raised by more than 0.1 or 0.2 because of the perceived impact of other elements. A revised value should therefore be awarded to each element accordingly. Having awarded a revised value to each element, the District Council should then use the lowest value as the 'S' factor for the Regulated stand.

Assuming that the 'P' factor is reasonably high for the Regulated Stand, a lower 'S' factor will have a significant impact on the safe capacity. It is generally accepted that the reasonable safety of lesser numbers of spectators can be accommodated at a Regulated Stand where the safety arrangements are limited, however in order to accommodate higher numbers with reasonable safety, the 'P' factor and/ or the 'S' factor must be improved. If the quality of safety management for a Regulated Stand is considered to be poor, a limited number of spectators may still be able to be accommodated with reasonable safety. The 'S' factor is a method of limiting the number of spectators attending specified activities at the venue to ensure the reasonable safety of those attending.

The 'S' factor can be amended upward or downward depending on any changes in circumstances, for example additional training being provided, or revisions to safety documentation. A reassessment of the 'S' factor can be initiated by either the venue operator or the District Council.

Element	Knowledge / Competence of the Chief Safety Marshall	Effectiveness of the Marshalling Arrangements	Effectiveness of the Communication Arrangements	Suitability of the Contingency Planning Arrangements	Suitability of the Safety Documentation
Score					
Amended Score					

The 'S' factor is the lowest of the Amended Scores

Assessing the Score

- 0.8-1.0** The District Council considers that this element of Safety Management is of a high standard and the reasonable safety of spectators would be addressed for attendances at or close to capacity of the Regulated Stand.
- 0.4-0.7** The District Council considers that this element of Safety Management is reasonably good, however, improvements would be required to ensure the reasonable safety of spectators for attendances at or close to capacity of the Regulated Stand.
- 0.1-0.3** The District Council considers that this element of Safety Management is poor and therefore a limited number of spectators should be admitted to the Regulated Stand to ensure the reasonable safety of spectators for larger attendances.
- 0** The District Council considers that this element of Safety Management is so poor that the reasonable safety of spectators will not be addressed.

Some elements have a number of component parts and the average of these should be used to assess the score.

Assessing the Amended Score

It may be that at a given venue one or more elements are weak, however, other elements may be better addressed and thus a higher score may be afforded to other elements to reflect this issue. Generally an increase would not exceed 0.2.

‘S’ FACTOR ELEMENTS

3.1 Knowledge/Competence of the Chief Safety Marshall – When assessing the competence of the Chief Safety Marshall, it may be useful to adopt the following methodology.

1. Ask the Chief Safety Marshall to escort you around the venue to point out the entrancing, viewing and exiting arrangements for the Regulated Stand, and to comment on the general condition and layout of the Regulated Stand, and the impact this may have on Safety Management (if the Regulated Stand or parts of the Regulated Stand are in a poor condition, this should not have a negative impact on your assessment of the ‘S’ factor as long as the Chief Safety Marshall is aware of these issues – this will be addressed in the assessment of the ‘P’ factor – you are assessing the Chief Safety Marshalls knowledge of the venue in relation to spectator safety).

0.8 - 1.0 The Chief Safety Marshall Officer has a good knowledge of the condition and layout of the Regulated Stand(s), and the impact this will have on spectator safety.

0.4 - 0.7 The Chief Safety Marshall has a reasonable knowledge of the condition and layout of the Regulated Stand(s), and the impact this will have on spectator safety.

0.1 - 0.3 The Chief Safety Marshall has a poor knowledge of the condition and layout of the Regulated Stand(s), and the impact this will have on spectator safety.

0 The Safety Officer has an extremely poor knowledge of the condition and layout of the Regulated Stand(s), and cannot relate these issues to spectator safety.

2. Ask the Chief Safety Marshall to give you an overview of how the Safety Marshalls are managed at a fixture. This should include the roles and responsibilities of the various safety personnel and how they are managed (including arrangements for pre-event checks).

0.8 – 1.0 The Chief Safety Marshall can demonstrate that he has a sound understanding of the roles and responsibilities of Safety Marshalls with respect to the Regulated Stand(s), and a structured and credible method of managing them (this should include briefing and debriefing arrangements).

- 0.4 – 0.7** The Chief Safety Marshall can demonstrate that he has a reasonable understanding of the roles and responsibilities of Safety Marshalls with respect to the Regulated Stand(s), and a structured and credible method of managing them (this should include briefing and debriefing arrangements).
- 0.1– 0.3** The Chief Safety Marshall is unable to demonstrate that he has a reasonable understanding of the roles and responsibilities of Safety Marshalls with respect to the Regulated Stand(s), and the arrangements for managing them are poor.
- 0** The Chief Safety Marshall does not have an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of Safety Marshalls with respect to the Regulated Stand(s), and does not have a management system in place.

3. Having first read the material, ask the Chief Safety Marshall to discuss the documentation relating to the Regulated Stand(s) with you for example the safe capacity of the Regulated Stand(s), the Contingency Plans for the Regulated Stand(s), the Management Plan for a fixture.

- 0.8 – 1.0** The Chief Safety Marshall has a good understanding of the documentation and the implications for spectator safety at the Regulated Stand(s).
- 0.4 – 0.7** The Chief Safety Marshall has a reasonable understanding of the documentation and the implications for spectator safety at the Regulated Stand(s).
- 0.1 – 0.3** The Chief Safety Marshall has a poor understanding of the documentation and the implications for spectator safety at the Regulated Stand(s).
- 0** Either the documents do not exist, or do not address safety issues specific to the Regulated Stand(s) at this venue, or the Chief Safety Marshall does not have an understanding of these documents and how they relate to the Regulated Stand(s).

The score awarded should be the average of the above components.

- 3.2 Effectiveness of the Marshalling Arrangements** – When assessing the competence of the effectiveness of Marshalls, it may be useful to adopt the following methodology.

1. Speak to the Safety Marshalls to assess if they have an understanding of their roles and responsibilities regarding the Regulated Stand(s) at the venue.

- 0.8 – 1.0** The Safety Marshalls have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities to ensure the reasonable safety of spectators at the Regulated Stand(s).

0.4 – 0.7 The Safety Marshalls have a reasonable understanding of their roles and responsibilities to ensure the reasonable safety of spectators at the Regulated Stand(s).

0.1 – 0.3 The Safety Marshalls have a poor understanding of their roles and responsibilities to ensure the reasonable safety of spectators at the Regulated Stand(s).

0 There are no Safety Marshalls dedicated to the Regulated Stand(s).

2. Select a number of Safety Marshalls for the Regulated Stand(s) at a fixture (if possible), and ask them a number of specific questions i.e. Where is the first aid point located? Where is the nearest radio holder? What would you do if you observed a spectator climbing on a structure? etc

0.8 – 1.0 All (or practically all) of the Safety Marshalls provided good answers to the questions.

0.4 - 0.7 The majority of the Safety Marshalls provided good answers to the questions.

0.1 – 0.3 Only a minority of the Safety Marshalls provided good answers to the questions.

0 None of the Safety Marshalls provided good answers to the questions.

The score awarded should be the average of the above components.

3.3 Effectiveness of the Communication Arrangements - When assessing the suitability of the Communication Arrangements, it may be useful to adopt the following methodology.

1. The officer should check that -

- If there is PA system, that it is clearly audible in the Regulated Stand(s) (if possible - this should be checked when a capacity, or near capacity, crowd is present).

- There is suitable access to this PA system for safety personnel to relay important safety information to spectators in the Regulated Stand(s).
- There are an appropriate number of radios available for Safety Marshalls, the radios can be heard throughout the venue and in particular at the Regulated Stand(s) (if possible - this should be checked when a capacity crowd is present – this may involve the use of head sets).
- Megaphones are available.
- There is access to a telephone to contact agencies not in attendance.

0.8 – 1.0 There is either a PA available to the Regulated Stand(s) or there is/are an appropriate number of megaphones available for safety personnel to relay information to spectators in the Regulated Stand(s); there is good access to the PA system for safety personnel; there are an appropriate number of short wave radios and that these are audible with or without the use of headsets in all parts of the ground and in particular at the Regulated Stand(s) and there are suitable telephone arrangements to contact agencies not in attendance.

0.4 – 0.7 There is either a reasonably audible PA available to the Regulated Stand(s), or there is a reasonable number of megaphones available for safety personnel to relay information to spectators in the Regulated Stand(s); there is reasonable access to the PA system by safety personnel to relay information to spectators in the Regulated Stand(s); there are a reasonable number of short wave radios and that these are audible with or without the use of headsets in all parts of the ground and in particular at the Regulated Stand; and there are reasonable telephone arrangements in the control room to contact agencies not in attendance.

0.1 – 0.3 One or more of the following is considered not to be of a reasonable standard: Either the audibility of the PA system/lack of megaphones available for safety personnel to relay information to spectators in the Regulated Stand(s); access to PA system for safety personnel to relay information to spectators in the Regulated Stand(s), short wave radios, or telephone availability to contact the emergency services.

0 There are no suitable arrangements to suitably convey information between safety personnel, or information to spectators within the Regulated Stand(s).

3.4 Suitability of Contingency Planning Arrangements - When assessing the Contingency Planning Arrangements, it may be useful to ask the Chief Safety Marshall to talk through the content of the Contingency Plan and consider the following:-

- Is the Chief Safety Marshall familiar with the content of the Contingency Plan?

- Does the plan relate to the Regulated Stand at the Venue?
- Is the command structure detailed in the document?
- Are the communication arrangements detailed in the document?
- Are there suitable arrangements for contacting the emergency services (if they are not present at the venue)?
- Are there suitable evacuation procedures detailed in the document?
- Has the Contingency Plan been communicated to the emergency services?
- Does the Contingency Plan link to the emergency plan of the emergency services?
- Are there suitable arrangements for testing the Contingency Plan?

0.8-1.0 The Chief Safety Marshall has a good understanding of the content of the document, and the document covers the issues above in an appropriate manner, and there are suitable arrangements for testing the Plan.

0.4-0.7 The Chief Safety Marshall has a reasonable understanding of the content of the document, the document covers the issues above in a reasonable manner and there are suitable arrangements for testing the Plan.

0.1-0.3 The Chief Safety Marshall has a poor understanding of the content of the document, and/or the document does not cover the issues adequately and / or the arrangements for testing the Plan are poor.

0 There is no Contingency Plan.

3.5 Suitability of the Safety Documentation – When assessing the contents of safety documentation, it may be useful to adopt the following methodology.

Review all documents which relate to Safety Management arrangements for the Regulated Stand(s). The procedures in these documents if adopted should ensure the reasonable safety of spectators attending specified activities. The content of these documents may be dependant on the size of the venue, the nature of fixtures played etc. These documents may include the following;- Health and Safety Policy for Employees, Health and Safety Policy for Spectators, Risk Assessments for all activities at the venue, Statement of Intent between PSNI

and venue operators, Safety Personnel Training Records, Job Descriptions for Safety Personnel and Records of Incidents. Some documents may have a greater impact on the reasonable safety of spectators than others.

The documents should include appropriate detail but not be overly complex, and therefore relevant to the activities taking place. They should relate to the venue and refer to the management structures in place. Care should be taken to reflect the impact that the content or lack of content within the documents have or will have on the reasonable safety of spectators.

- 0.8 – 1.0** Safety documents provided are of appropriate detail, address the relevant issues, are relevant to the Regulated Stand(s) at the venue, include suitable arrangements for communicating the content to the appropriate persons and there are suitable review arrangements in place. The contents of the documents if implemented should ensure the reasonable safety of spectators attending specified activities at the venue.
- 0.4 – 0.7** Safety documents provided are of reasonable detail, address the relevant issues, are relevant to the Regulated Stand(s) at the venue, include reasonable arrangements for communicating the content to the appropriate persons, and there are reasonable review arrangements in place.
- 0.1 – 0.3** Safety documents provided are of limited detail, fail to address many of the relevant issues, are of limited relevance to the Regulated Stand(s) at the venue, the arrangements for communicating the content to the appropriate persons are poor and the review arrangements in place are less than satisfactory.
- 0** Safety documents do not exist, or the contents of the documents are inadequate, or do not relate to the Regulated Stand(s) at the venue.