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**NOTE**

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
No. prev. doc.:	11907/16
Subject:	Draft Council Resolution concerning a handbook with recommendations for preventing and managing violence and disturbances in connection with football matches with an international dimension, in which at least one Member State is involved, through the adoption of good practice in respect of police liaison with supporters

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Delegations will find in annex the draft Council Resolution concerning a handbook with recommendations for preventing and managing violence and disturbances in connection with football matches with an international dimension, in which at least one Member State is involved, through the adoption of good practice in respect of police liaison with supporters, which was agreed by the Law Enforcement Working Party at its meeting on 29 September 2016.

**DRAFT COUNCIL RESOLUTION**

**of**

**...**

**concerning a handbook with recommendations for preventing and managing violence and disturbances in connection with football matches with an international dimension, in which at least one Member State is involved, through the adoption of good practice in respect of police liaison with supporters**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Whereas:

- (1) The European Union's objective is *inter alia* to provide citizens with a high level of safety within an area of freedom, security and justice by developing common action among the Member States in the field international police cooperation.
- (2) This resolution is complementary to Council Resolution concerning an updated handbook with recommendations for international police cooperation and measures to prevent and control violence and disturbances in connection with football matches with an international dimension, in which at least one Member State is involved ("EU Football Handbook")<sup>1</sup>.
- (3) Taking into account experience at recent tournaments and other football matches with an international dimension and the experts' assessment of measures that would assist international police cooperation in respect of international and club football tournaments and matches, the attached handbook provides a range of good practices which have been shown to reduce the scope of, and assist in the management of, incidents of violence and disorder.
- (4) The recommendations included in the annexed handbook are without prejudice to existing national provisions, in particular the division of responsibilities among the different authorities and services in the Member States concerned and the exercise by the Commission of its powers under the Treaties,

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<sup>1</sup> 12795/16.

HEREBY

- (1) REQUESTS Member States to continue to further enhance police cooperation in respect of football matches with an international dimension through the adoption of measures designed to enhance consultation, communication and liaison with football supporters in connection with football-related events in private and public places.
- (2) DEMANDS that to that end the handbook annexed hereto, providing recommended working methods, be made available to the police.
- (3) STATES that this Resolution is complementary to other Council Decisions and Resolutions in connection with football events with an international dimension.
- (4) STATES that, whilst the measures contained in the annexed handbook are intended primarily for football events, Member States may, where appropriate, apply the measures in respect of other major international sports events and football matches played in accordance with national competitions.

**DRAFT Handbook with recommendations for preventing and managing violence and disturbances in connection with football matches with an international dimension, in which at least one Member State is involved, through the adoption of good practice in respect of police liaison with supporters**

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

The purpose of this document is to enhance safety and security at international football matches. The document outlines recommendations as regards good practice on police liaison with supporters during international football events. This concerns policing operations in public places, in particular.

The content, where appropriate, can also be applied to other international sporting events and other national football events.

The content is wholly consistent with the legal basis and content of the new Council of Europe Convention on an integrated approach to safety, security and service at football matches and other sports events.

The handbook is also complementary to the updated handbook with recommendations for international police cooperation and measures to prevent and control violence and disturbances in connection with football matches with an international dimension, in which at least one Member State is involved ("EU Football Handbook")<sup>2</sup>.

The content is without prejudice to existing national provisions, in particular the competencies and responsibilities of the various agencies within each Member State.

The content is designed to ensure that police commanders and partner agencies can take full account of good practice in developing and refining national and local policing football strategies, notably in respect of:

- (i) integrating policing operations within a wider, multi-agency approach to safety, security and service in connection with football matches and tournaments;

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<sup>2</sup> 12795/16.

- (ii) developing effective policing arrangements to reduce the risk of violence or disorder through consultation, communication and liaison with football supporters, and to make public spaces safe, secure and welcoming for supporters before, during and after football matches;
- (iii) planning and delivering proportionate policing operations based on pre-match risk analysis, ongoing dynamic risk assessments and key operational principles such as dialogue, graded deployment and early targeted intervention where appropriate.

This document focuses mainly on international police cooperation and policing operations. However, in view of the multi-agency character of managing football events, this document does refer to police interaction with other key partners such as municipal authorities and event organisers.

International police cooperation and football policing operations must be guided by the principles of legality and proportionality.

The competent authority in the host country is responsible for ensuring a safe and secure environment in connection with the event. However, authorities in participating states have a responsibility to provide assistance where appropriate.

This document should be widely disseminated and its recommendations applied in each Member State as well as in other European countries and beyond in order to minimise risks to safety and security and ensure effective international police cooperation.

It should be stressed that effective liaison with supporters is but one, albeit important, element of a wider integrated approach to safety, security and service. This should not be considered in isolation from other measures designed to maintain public safety and security and to promote football as an inclusive activity, and from effective but proportionate exclusion arrangements designed to prevent individuals who evidently act in a criminal manner from participating in the football experience, inside and outside stadia.



## CHAPTER TWO

### Service Ethos

#### Section One - Evolution of Concept

Over the past decade, extensive European experience has demonstrated the positive impact that a service-based approach can have on football-related events, not least on reducing safety and security risks.

Since Euro 2004, the importance of services has played a major role in minimising the impact of safety and security incidents at a series of international tournaments and high profile UEFA Champions League and Europa League Finals.

However, the extent to which the concept has been embraced for individual international and domestic football matches remains variable for a number of reasons, not least because of a lingering perception that the ethos of service is supplementary, rather than integral, to multi-agency planning and delivery of football safety and security operations.

#### Section Two - Service and Security

Service is neither a soft option nor an alternative to tackling misbehaviour or excluding individuals who engage in football-related crime. It is complementary to effective crowd management arrangements (inside and outside stadia) and to the implementation of an effective exclusion strategy.

European experience and academic research show that individual supporters and groups of supporters react positively when treated in a welcoming, inclusive and respectful manner.

If supporters are made to feel appreciated and valued, they are far less likely to act in a violent or anti-social manner. This, in turn, can help prevent the escalation of minor incidents into instances of significant public disorder and can help efforts to marginalise, identify and deal with any individuals or groups seeking to cause problems. There is also evidence that supporters categorised as risk fans are not immune to the impact of hospitality-focused strategies.

A service approach involving effective communication and liaison can assist in generating high levels of compliance and in encouraging self-regulation among supporters. Supporters who feel respected and appreciated will often be less tolerant of violent, discriminatory and other anti-social behaviour. This, in turn, can help to marginalise, identify and exclude individuals who act in a criminal manner in connection with the event.

On a daily basis, policing agencies deliver to their communities a wide range of service-focused functions, on a routine and emergency basis. However, the profile and activities of the police in connection with football is often perceived to be just focused on public order and on preventing and responding to crime. These are and will remain core police responsibilities, but the adoption and application of a service ethos to the policing of football events will not only be welcomed by supporters but can also significantly help reduce the need for major public order operations and help reduce levels of football-related criminality.

Adopting a service ethos can pose challenges for policing personnel and supporters alike. This is not surprising as decades of having to deal with relatively high levels of misbehaviour by a minority of supporters has distorted the perception of the policing role in connection with football matches, both among policing personnel and supporters.

As a consequence, the desirability of adopting intelligence-led, risk-based and service-focused crowd management operations, rather than more reactive and repressive public order operations, can present challenges.

The recommended good practice outlined in this handbook stresses the importance of overcoming such challenges, where they exist, and sets out a range of different options.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Working in Partnership

#### Section One - Local Multi-Agency Coordination

The police cannot in isolation develop or apply a service ethos to football-related events. A number of partner agencies, in particular municipal authorities, have a range of duties in this regard. It is important for senior police officers to participate pro-actively in local, multi-agency coordination arrangements and in the preparation of an integrated approach to safety, security and service.

The police should be actively engaged in developing and influencing a wide range of service-related arrangements which are likely to have an impact on a given football event. These include public transport, hospitality-related activities, information provided to the general public and crisis planning for emergency scenarios (inside and outside stadia).

It is especially important for police risk assessments to be taken fully into account by all partner agencies in event-specific arrangements for home and visiting supporters. Particular attention should be paid to safety and security arrangements in connection with any proposed public viewing events or official fan zones, and city centres or other locations where home and visiting supporters can be expected to gather before, during and after a football match.

The aim throughout should be to make public spaces safe, secure and welcoming for supporters and local communities alike. In practice, this means that public, private and other agencies should work together to develop appropriate and proportionate preventative measures designed to enhance the overall football experience for supporters. At the same time disruption to local communities and businesses should be kept to a minimum.

## **Section Two - Cooperation with Supporters**

It is equally crucial for the police to participate in stakeholder consultations and for that consultation to incorporate liaison with representatives of visiting police delegations, supporter groups, professional or voluntary bodies expert in supporter dynamics - in particular fan embassy or fan coaching personnel (where applicable) and the designated football club (or National Federation) Supporter Liaison Officer (SLO) - see Chapter 7.1.d.

This consultation is crucial as it can help significantly in determining how best to meet the needs and, where possible or acceptable, the wishes of supporters in designing and implementing event preparations. Historical considerations and previous experience can be taken into account. However, supporter dynamics are continually evolving and the specific circumstances at each event will vary to some degree.

Host police commanders will have ready access to expert information and advice on the behaviour of, and any risks associated with, home supporters, provided by designated police football intelligence officers (or coordinators) and police spotters, local SLOs, local supporter groups, fan coaches (where applicable) and others.

However, comparable information and advice as regards visiting supporters should be obtained from the police in the country of the visiting team via the European network of National Football Information Points (NFIPs). This will include anticipated numbers of visiting supporters, the type of transport used, itineraries, duration of stay, behavioural characteristics and any associated risks. Information obtained by football clubs and football supporter networks can add value to this information.

If the visiting police delegation undertakes a pre-visit, this will provide an opportunity to explore preparatory arrangements in more depth. In a similar vein, security meetings on the day before the match can be crucial in enabling all the parties involved to exchange last minute information and adapt their preparations and security concepts dynamically according to potentially changing risk assessments. The participation of fan embassy or other supporter representatives in pre-event visits and pre-match security meetings can also be useful for information gathering and event planning.

Access to up-to-date information and sources of expert advice are prerequisites to developing customised preparations designed to minimise safety and security risks.

### **Section Three - Cooperation with Event Organiser**

In addition to the need to share match-specific information and risk assessments with stadium safety (or security) officers, it is important for the police to liaise closely with the organiser in developing joint approach designed to make all supporters (home and visiting alike) feel safe, secure and welcome throughout the event.

European experience demonstrates that the way supporters (especially visiting supporters) are treated in public spaces can impact on behaviour inside and outside stadia and *vice versa*. It is desirable, therefore, for the police and stadium safety (or security) officer to develop and implement a harmonised hospitality approach inside and outside of stadia. This will significantly impact on supporter perceptions, enhance their enjoyment of the event, marginalise the influence of any individuals or groups seeking confrontation and encourage supporters to self-regulate their behaviour and act in compliance with safety and security instructions.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Operational Planning

#### Section One - Core Principles

Clearly the planning for policing operations in connection with football events embraces a range of important considerations, including traffic controls en-route to and from city centres, community reassurance, emergency incidents and the arrangements for dealing with any public disorder or misbehaviour in a timely and proportionate manner.

However, European experience and academic research in the field of crowd dynamics demonstrates that embedding a series of inter-related core considerations in crowd management planning lies at the heart of reducing and managing supporter-related risks. These considerations include pre-event information and intelligence gathering and analysis; ongoing dynamic risk assessment; risk-related graded deployment; early but targeted intervention; and, crucially, effective and ongoing communication with supporters. The effectiveness of this liaison can be especially vital in preventing minor tensions and incidents from escalating into significant public disorder.

#### Section Two - Understanding Supporter Dynamics and Risks

The starting point for developing and refining any effective football policing strategy centres on obtaining a clear understanding of supporter behaviour, crowd dynamics and the character and threat posed by potential football-related offenders (otherwise known as "risk groups").

European experience shows that the behaviour of supporters generally, and risk groups in particular, can be variable and influenced by a wide range of external factors, including policing tactics. The definition of "risk supporters" (set out in the "EU Football Handbook") stresses the importance of clarifying the factors and circumstances which generate negative behaviour. It should not be assumed that all risk supporters automatically act in a certain manner or that they will not react positively to policing measures which are proactively welcoming to supporters. Similarly supporters not associated with known risk groups can and do sometimes act in a violent or other unacceptable manner if they feel they are being mistreated by the police.

It is important, therefore, to ensure that policing strategies are always flexible and not based on false assumptions and expectations about the risks posed by supporters based solely on historical trends or ill-informed preliminary risk assessments.

Moreover, experience demonstrates that stereotyping supporter behaviour and policing supporters (including known risk groups) in a disproportionate manner can sometimes generate conflict between supporters and the police, empowering any violent or confrontational supporters and exacerbating the actual degree of risk by provoking other supporters.

Experience shows that treating supporters on the basis of their actual behaviour rather than reputation reduces risk. It is better to determine policing deployment and tactics on the basis of ongoing dynamic risk assessment. Early and targeted police intervention can be highly effective in marginalising the influence of any supporters seeking confrontation.

### **Section Three - Hospitality Good Practice Guidance**

Guidance on the key principles of the service or "hospitality" approach is set out in **Appendix A** of this handbook. This guidance is based on that issued by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and was drawn up in consultation with the Council of Europe Standing Committee on Spectator Violence. It comprises a range of measures designed to provide a welcoming and hospitable environment for host and visiting supporters and resident communities alike.

The content is aimed at the police, municipal authorities and all public and private partner agencies involved in the football experience outside stadia. The strategies described have been tested and proven to work effectively at a series of tournaments and high profile matches. Whilst the text is largely focused on tournaments, the key principles can and have been successfully customised and adopted in respect of domestic football matches as well as international football events.

## Section Four - Risk Based Policing Preparations

Transforming the principles and good practice, outlined in the hospitality guidance above, into event-specific preparations requires that police commanders identify a range of public safety and other possible risks. As already indicated, this process encompasses traffic and transport management, community considerations as well as specific factors relating to supporter dynamics. This is crucial to ensuring that an event is managed in a safe, secure and welcoming manner.

As regards supporter dynamics and risks, the starting point for operational planning should be an informed risk assessment which should always be prepared in consultation with the police in the country or city from which visiting supporters will be travelling. Football clubs, Supporter Liaison Officers (SLO's), supporter group representatives and other supporter focused experts should assist in this process.

The aim of this pre-event or preliminary risk assessment should be to identify factors and circumstances which could impact on supporter behaviour. These include:

- the anticipated reaction of home risk groups to their visiting counterparts and visiting supporters generally;
- the pre-event habits and preferences of visiting supporters (*e.g.* will they travel independently or in organised groups, will they go directly to the stadium or gather in the city/town centre before and/or after the match);
- patterns of alcohol consumption or drug use in connection with football events;
- use of pyrotechnics in public places (and stadia);
- reaction to various policing strategies and tactics (*e.g.* do supporters respond positively or negatively to high or low profile police deployment);
- possible relations and interaction (negative or positive) and tensions between supporters and local community groups.



A home and visiting supporter perspective on these and other generic and event-specific considerations can be extremely useful. The self-evident willingness to consult and liaise with supporters at this early stage will also generate a positive reaction from influential supporter representatives.

Once the risks have been identified, the aim should be to incorporate risk mitigation and counter options specific to the risk concerned. The aim should also be to ensure that the preliminary planning arrangements for the wider policing operation will enable a positive and safe supporter experience.

The key element in all planning considerations is recognition that preliminary risk analysis is just the starting point. Risk analysis will need to be reviewed as additional information emerges and once supporters (home and visiting alike) begin to arrive in the city or town (see Chapter Five).

Throughout this preparatory phase, full account should be taken of the need to cater for the needs of female supporters, children, other vulnerable supporters and those with disabilities. Appropriate facilities should be identified and set up before the event.

### **Section Five - Pre-Event Communication and Media Strategy**

Once the preliminary preparations are in place, it is important for the police to participate actively in the development and delivery of an effective multi-agency communication and media handling strategy. This strategy should explain the content of the preparations and the adoption of a positive and friendly service ethos within a wider multi-agency approach designed to reducing safety and security risks in connection with the event.

The strategy should aim to use media channels (including websites, etc.) to relay key messages to the maximum number of supporters (home and visiting alike) and to provide information and reassurance to local communities in cities and towns hosting football matches. Messages can incorporate a wide range of important information on policing football arrangements, behavioural tolerance levels and relevant legislative and regulatory provisions. They can and should also highlight the priority accorded by the police (and partner agencies) to creating a safe, secure and welcoming environment for all football supporters.

However, to be truly effective, key messages need to have credibility with football supporters, the primary target audience. The preparation of policing strategies should include proactive engagement with Supporter Liaison officers (SLOs), representatives of supporter groups and other specialists, such as fan embassy and fan coaching coordinators. Such persons can play an important role in communicating relevant information in a language that is tailored to their peers. These persons can help ensure that important information is relayed to all supporters (including any risk supporters). This can have a positive impact on behaviour, given that supporters may often be sceptical and mistrust official sources of information.

More detailed guidance on communication with supporters and media handling in general is set out in Chapter 11.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Dialogue with Supporters

#### Section One - Models of Application

Effective liaison and communication ("dialogue") between the police and supporters lies at the heart of the planning and delivery of proportionate, intelligence-led and risk-based policing of football events.

There are various interpretations of what dialogue means in practice. A number of different models have been adopted by the police across Europe.

One version provides a dialogue model that focuses on establishing permanent communication structures between police and supporter group representatives. This is often achieved through designated SLOs (see Chapter 7). In this respect, specially trained "dialogue officers" can play a positive role, in particular if their role is fully incorporated within police operations as part of a wider service ethos.

The aim of this model is to facilitate the exchange of perspectives within a wider strategy that aims to promote mediation and negotiation with supporters. This can help develop mutually acceptable operational arrangements and reduce the risk of conflict on match days. This structured approach also provides an opportunity for supporter representatives to be consulted on a wide range of event-related safety and security considerations.

In other countries, the dialogue concept focuses on training designated personnel, or all frontline police officers, to communicate with supporters during a policing operation. This reflects the approach to dynamic risk outlined in Chapter Six.

At an operational level, dialogue can be the core policing tactic, particularly at low risk matches. As a rule, it can be employed to complement other strategic and tactical aims. To that end, effective dialogue with supporters may help:

- promote a friendly and welcoming atmosphere at the sporting event;
- challenge supporter perceptions of policing operations;
- demonstrate that policing tactics are designed to provide a safe and secure environment for all supporters;
- encourage supporters to understand and comply with operational decisions;
- encourage supporters to regulate their own behaviour;
- isolate the influence of any violent or confrontational individuals or groups, who may not be willing to engage in dialogue, and thus reduce the level of associated threats; and
- enable early, targeted interventions without escalating risk.

European experience shows that whilst customised dialogue can and should be incorporated into the ethos of any policing operation, there may be a need to provide training in communication and conflict resolution skills. This training should be given to all frontline police personnel, including crowd control units.

Although policing strategies should embrace the concepts of dialogue and hospitality, some police officers may be apprehensive and reluctant to communicate openly with supporters (especially if they are used to conflict scenarios). For this reason, this handbook stresses the importance of personnel receiving specialist training.

As regards the dialogue approach, training is especially important as uniformed police officers are highly visible and will often be approached by supporters seeking assistance and information. It is therefore desirable for all police officers to be aware of the importance of presenting a friendly, calm and respectful demeanour.

Police liaison with supporter groups at national and local level can have a significant impact in minimising safety and security risks relating to football matches. Nevertheless, cooperation can be undermined if supporter representatives are perceived to be working on behalf of the police or a football club.

That perception can impact on the potential role and influence of some SLOs (given that they are employees of a football club or National Association). This may be unfair, but effective communication can be compromised if the focus for supporter liaison is placed solely on one source. For that reason, dialogue should also embrace ongoing liaison with supporter-led/supporter-related initiatives such as Fan Embassies, Fan Projects and representatives of supporter groups.

Dialogue with visiting supporters during operational scenarios should also embrace the potential benefits to be derived from maximising the liaison opportunities presented by visiting police delegations and, where possible, visiting stewards, visiting SLOs and accompanying persons who will be aware of the character and culture of the visiting supporters.

More comprehensive guidance on the importance of structured dialogue between the police and supporters is set out in **Appendix B** of this handbook.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Dynamic Risk Assessment and Crowd Management

*Note: this Chapter is based on the EU Football Handbook.*

#### Section One - Key Principles

Current understanding of effective crowd management, reinforced by extensive research, highlights the importance of:

- maintaining perceptions of appropriate policing among crowd participants;
- avoiding the use of force against crowds as a whole when only a minority are posing a risk to public order;
- a ‘low profile’ or ‘graded’ tactical approach to policing that enhances police capability for communication, dialogue and dynamic risk assessment.

#### a) Facilitation

- The strategic approach should be preventative through low-impact targeted intervention rather than arbitrary or indiscriminate reaction;
- it is important that at every stage of an operation police strategy and tactics should take account of and facilitate the legitimate intentions of supporters, as far as these are peaceful (*e.g.* to celebrate their identity and culture, travel to and from the fixture in safety);
- if it is necessary to impose limits on supporter behaviour, it is important to explain to those supporters why police action has been taken and what alternative measures the police are taking through which legitimate aims can be achieved.

**b) Balance**

- During any crowd event the levels of risk to public order can change rapidly;
- it is important that there is a proportionate balance between the style of police deployment and the level, sources and nature of risk at the point of police / crowd interaction;
- it is important that the policing is graded and capable of adaptation in response to the nature and levels of emerging and decreasing risk;
- where balance is achieved, the majority in the crowd are more likely to perceive the actions of the police as appropriate and less likely to support and associate with those seeking confrontation;
- therefore, to help decrease the likelihood and scale of incidents, it is critical that risk assessments are accurate and that these inform police tactics at all times.

**c) Differentiation**

- The indiscriminate use of force can contribute to a widespread escalation in the levels of public disorder as a result of crowd dynamics;
- differentiation between individual supporters actually posing a danger and those that do not is therefore a consideration that should be built into every strategic and tactical decision relating to the management of crowds (*i.e.* training, planning, briefing and operational practice);
- it is inappropriate, and most likely to be counter-productive, to act against a whole crowd who happen to be present in a given location, unless there is evidence that they are uniformly seeking to provoke disorder.

#### **d) Dialogue**

- It is important to adopt a welcoming and friendly manner and to communicate proactively with supporters. This is best achieved through police officers with good communication skills;
- the focus is to create a welcoming atmosphere and avoid potential for conflict;
- this approach can assist in the gathering of high quality information on supporter intentions, perspectives, concerns and sensitivities and any other information relating to potential risk;
- it also allows the police to communicate concerns about supporter behaviour, risks they may face and solutions to any emerging difficulties.

### **Section Two - Models of Good Practice**

#### **a) Before the event**

Risk assessment should take into account:

- the culture of the supporter groups to be policed (*e.g.* characteristic behaviour, motivations and intentions - what is considered typical risk behaviour in one country or region might not necessarily be the same for supporters from a different country/region);
- any factors likely to impact on risk: *e.g.* the activities of other groups (such as opposition supporters and / or local communities), sensitivities, history and anything else that has particular significance (dates, places, forms of action, symbols);
- any circumstances likely to impact on the behaviour of, or risk posed by, those supporters or groups perceived to pose a risk to public order.

Behavioural tolerance levels should be defined and priority given to communicating these to supporter organisations. Consideration should be given to encouraging supporters to gather in a safe/controlled environment (*e.g.* a fan zone) or pre-defined areas / bars in the city centre.

On the basis information and intelligence gathered, it should be possible to predict and distinguish fixtures presenting a normal and increased risk to public order.



## **b) Initial contact**

The level of risk to public order is not fixed but highly dynamic. It can increase and decrease rapidly according to circumstances. The levels of risk should therefore be monitored and accurately assessed on an ongoing basis.

To achieve this:

- police should be encouraged to engage in high levels of positive interpersonal interaction with supporters (non-aggressive posture, smiling demeanour, deployment in pairs or in small groups in standard uniform, wide dispersal within crowds, agreeing to requests for photographs where appropriate etc.);
- for international matches, where possible, police officers with relevant foreign language skills should be deployed in key locations (*e.g.* in fan zones, in the city centres, main public transport routes to stadia, at stadium entrances) to help communication with supporters;
- where language is not a barrier, officers should try to communicate with supporters to gather information about their demeanour, intentions, concerns and sensibilities;
- public order or riot units with protective equipment, vehicles, etc. should be kept in discreet locations unless the situation determines that more forceful intervention is required.

This and ongoing risk assessment will assist the host police gather information and inform command decisions on tactical deployment.

## **c) Increasing risk**

Where circumstances indicating risk are identified, it is important to:

- communicate to any supporters acting in an unduly provocative, threatening or other unacceptable manner that their behaviour is likely to prompt a police intervention;
- where an incident involves visiting supporters, host police assessments should be validated by the visiting police delegation;

Should the above measures not de-escalate tensions, then use of force by the police may be required. The objective of police deployment at this stage is to minimise further risk and it is therefore essential that any action does not escalate tensions (*e.g.* indiscriminate use of force).

Where any potential for an increase in risk is identified:

- it is vital that information about the persons creating the risk and its nature is communicated clearly to the intervention squads being deployed so that any use of force can be appropriately targeted in order to prevent a scenario where innocent bystanders become involved;
- those not posing any risk should be allowed to leave the vicinity and / or be able to impose 'self-policing' before police intervention becomes necessary.

**d) De-escalation**

- Once the incident(s) has been resolved, policing levels should return to an appropriate level.

**e) After the event**

- A thorough debrief should be conducted and any relevant information (*e.g.* the quality of information received before and during the event, the behaviour and management of supporters, police tactics and the enforcement of tolerance levels) should be recorded.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Intermediaries

#### Section One - Need for Intermediaries

Police contact with supporters either in an ongoing structured manner or as part of specific policing operations, or both, is a primary imperative in terms of effective liaison with supporters and in minimising safety and security risks.

However, it is recognised that it may sometimes be productive for the police and supporters alike if the liaison is undertaken with the assistance of an intermediary person or body. This is especially the case in circumstances where tensions are emerging and when the immediate need is to diffuse tension and/or resolve conflict.

The key requirements in such circumstances centre on the intermediary being: trained and tested in handling conflict scenarios; familiar with the behaviour, culture and perceptions of the supporters involved; and known and trusted, at least to some degree, by the police and the supporters concerned. A number of (visiting or specialist) policing or other designated personnel, such as SLOs or accompanying persons, can undertake this intermediary role depending on local circumstances.

As stressed throughout, intermediaries should only be deployed by the police on the basis of a risk assessment.

#### a) Designated Police-Supporter Dialogue Personnel

In some countries, communication with supporter groups, including risk groups, is undertaken by specialist police dialogue officers who are experienced in interacting with supporter groups and are perceived by supporter groups as being distinct from operational personnel. The dialogue officers can often develop a high degree of trust among supporters and this reputation can be used to good effect in terms of defusing conflict situations before they escalate into significant public disorder. To provide added value to football policing operations, the primary function of dialogue personnel should be to develop effective channels of communication and a trusting relationship with supporters.

## **b) Visiting Police Delegations**

In accordance with the EU Football Handbook, some visiting police delegations include personnel designated to undertake supporter liaison duties. Their primary role is to continuously liaise between host police agencies and visiting supporters. This role enables the individual officers concerned to develop a good understanding of visiting supporter dynamics and associated risks and to be recognised and trusted, especially among supporters who travel to away fixtures on a regular basis. It should be recognised, however, that not all members of a visiting police delegation are trained, equipped or experienced in this role and the deployment of such liaison spotters should always be based on a risk assessment by the head of the visiting police delegation.

## **c) Visiting Stewards**

In some countries, it is common practice for visiting clubs to deploy teams of stewards to support host club stewards in liaising with visiting supporters. They are familiar with and experienced in dealing with the behaviour and culture of their supporters. The stewards are also known to travelling supporters and, as such, are often treated with a higher degree of tolerance and respect than either host stewards and/or police personnel. However, the role of any visiting stewards should be agreed prior to the event and their use as intermediaries should only be considered if there is prior agreement that their role will extend beyond the stadium to include public spaces and conflict resolution scenarios. Again, deployment should be governed by a risk assessment undertaken by the head of the visiting steward delegation.

## **d) Supporter Liaison Officers (SLOs)**

A separate Chapter on Supporter Liaison Officers (SLOs) is included within this handbook. This sets out guidance on the potential role of designated SLOs communicating with supporters in pubs and supporter meeting places and playing an intermediary role in tension and conflict resolution in public places. It is important to remember that SLOs are club/Federation employees and that their skills and competencies will vary across Europe. SLOs should be an important and competent point of contact for all stakeholders (on match days and beyond) in various scenarios. However, they should not be deployed as intermediaries unless they are trained and willing to undertake the task. Deployment should always be subject to a police risk assessment.

## e) Accompanying Persons

The practice in some European countries is for designated “accompanying persons” to travel with visiting supporters. These persons come from the supporters’ country or city/town of origin or residence and are familiar with the culture of the visiting supporters.

They travel with their club or national supporters wherever they go and are present in the host city on the day before, the day of and the day after the game. They also travel to other places if large numbers of supporters are present.

They may either be based in the fan embassy and provide a form of outreach to spectators or they may act as stewards, escorting organised groups from their home countries or cities/towns to the stadium and home again.

Such “accompanying persons” have no legal status outside their own country so their role should, by definition, be limited to liaison activities.

Their main duty is to look after the visiting supporters and provide appropriate services to improve the reception that they receive and to optimise the hospitality shown to them. They can provide the supporters with information and help them to solve problems, in close consultation with the fan embassy.

They play a roving fan ambassador role, helping to develop and strengthen a positive fan culture based on respect and tolerance. In some circumstances and in some countries, they may also be able to facilitate dialogue between police and supporters, so as to defuse tension and settle disputes without the need for police intervention.

The size of the team and the means of liaison with the organisers, police and municipal authorities will vary according to local needs and circumstances. It is important to ensure that clear lines of communication are established and roles and responsibilities clearly understood.

The desired profile for an accompanying person does not necessarily have to be that of someone who does the work professionally, or of someone who works in the education sphere with risk supporters, as their tasks focus mainly on primary prevention aimed at all supporters. Dialogue and conflict resolution skills and competencies therefore can be of particular value.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### **Inclusiveness and Combating Discrimination**

In accordance with Article 21 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, and taking into account Article 11 of the Charter on Freedom of Expression and Information, football events should be wholly inclusive and attractive to all communities within society. This is a key component of an effective service-orientated approach. As such, there should be no tolerance of any form of discriminatory behaviour. The aim should be to ensure that the football experience (inside and outside stadia) is welcoming and enjoyable for everyone irrespective of their colour, language, religion or belief, nationality, national, ethnic or social origin, disability, age, gender or sexual orientation.

It is important, therefore, for the police to participate in local multi-agency arrangements - a coordinating body - that set out comprehensive and sophisticated measures designed to prevent and counter racist and other forms of discriminatory behaviour in connection with football events. Football-related activity should form part of a broader and systematic programme of anti-discriminatory activity by the police.

This coordinating body should ensure that the definition of what constitutes discriminatory and intolerant behaviour is clear, widely understood and applied. The definition should include:

- public incitement to violence, hatred or discrimination;
- public insults and defamation;
- threats against a person or a group of persons;
- public expression of an ideology which claims the superiority of, or which deprecates or denigrates, another group of persons on the basis of race, colour, language, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, gender or sexual orientation;

- public denial, trivialisation, justification or condoning of discrimination or intolerance;
- public dissemination or public distribution, or the production or storage with the intention of public dissemination or public distribution, of written, pictorial or other material containing manifestations of discrimination or intolerance covered under legislation.

Certain types of behaviour, including any behaviour that represents a criminal offence in the host country, should be prohibited, including racist insults and chanting, the flaunting of racist banners and symbols and the wearing, distribution and selling of racist and other discriminatory banners, symbols, flags, leaflets or images.

Local agencies should work together to develop a clear response strategy and use available legal provisions to penalise racist and other discriminatory behaviour. The measures imposed should be proportionate but sufficiently robust to prevent and deter potential offenders and, where appropriate, include an educational dimension.

In addition to ensuring enforcement of the relevant legal provisions, the coordinating body should ensure that specialist training is provided for the police and in-stadia personnel on implementation of the law, on offence identification and on combating more hidden forms of discrimination and intolerance. The police should liaise closely with all local agencies involved in the criminal justice system, including prosecutors and judges/adjudicators, in order to increase awareness of the need to penalise and impose appropriate sanctions on any supporter, or other participant, convicted of a racist or discriminatory offence.

It is also important for the police and other authorities to liaise with supporters in determining the football club's anti-discrimination and intolerance strategy and on how to encourage supporters to self-regulate and encourage victims to come forward with complaints. The designated SLO can play a pivotal role in such liaison. Support should be given to existing supporter initiatives actively focused on preventing and tackling racism or other forms of discrimination. The designated SLO can play a pivotal role in such liaison and in the development of a sustainable multi-agency strategy against discrimination.

## CHAPTER NINE

### Supporter Liaison Officers (SLOs)

#### Section One – Regulatory Background

Since the beginning of the 2012/13 season, clubs applying for a licence to play in one of the European competitions (Champions League/Europa League) are required under Article 35 of UEFA's Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Regulations to appoint a dedicated Supporter Liaison Officer (SLO) as a main contact point for fans.

This personnel requirement, agreed by the UEFA Executive Committee in 2010, is a further indication of the importance attached by European football's governing body to the promotion of constructive relationships between clubs, supporters and other key stakeholders, such as police and security officials.

With the majority of national associations or leagues having adopted a similar clause in their own domestic licensing regulations, more than 1,000 clubs across Europe are required to have at least one SLO.

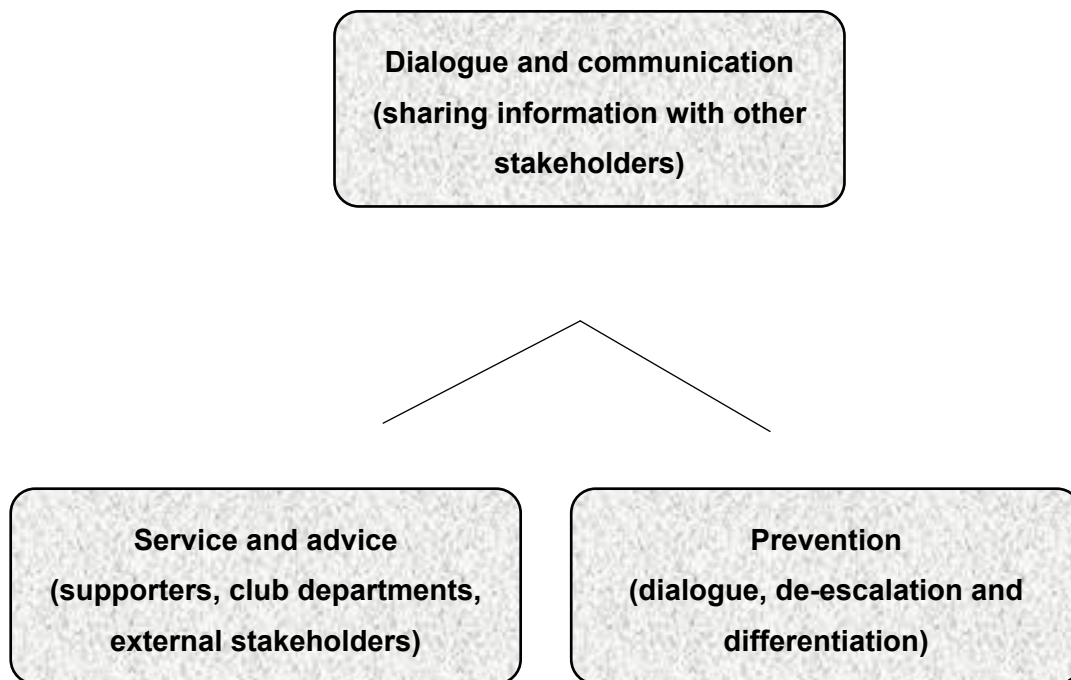
#### Section Two – Role of the SLO

The primary role of a SLO is to act as a bridge between the supporters and the club/federation and to facilitate dialogue between the two sides. SLOs will normally also perform this intermediary role with external stakeholders, such as the police and stewarding services, communicating the needs and wants of each side and acting as a "translator" in the event of misunderstandings or erroneous interpretations of behaviour.



UEFA, in partnership with Supporters Direct Europe have been engaged in overseeing the roll-out of the SLO project and the implementation of Article 35 at national association level. Together they have produced a detailed handbook on the SLO concept. This UEFA Supporter Liaison Handbook outlines a standard definition of the role, functions and anticipated benefits etc. of SLOs<sup>3</sup>.

The overarching theme in the work performed by SLOs is dialogue and communication. It is at the heart of everything they do.



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<sup>3</sup>[http://www.uefa.org/MultimediaFiles/Download/Tech/uefaorg/General/01/84/35/28/1843528\\_DO\\_WNLOAD.pdf](http://www.uefa.org/MultimediaFiles/Download/Tech/uefaorg/General/01/84/35/28/1843528_DO_WNLOAD.pdf)

In the area of prevention, SLOs can perform the following tasks:

- acting as an interface and communicating between fans, security officers, stewards and the police, etc. before, during and after matches;
- providing detailed information for fans attending matches to facilitate match day travel and logistics and removing the potential for misunderstandings;
- providing input at security meetings before home games and high-risk away games;
- explaining the actions of fans to police and stewards and vice-versa to break down barriers and misconceptions;
- attending "concourse meetings" inside the stadium with club security officers, stewards and the police an hour or so before kick-off to evaluate the situation;
- working to prevent disorder by exerting a calming and de-escalating influence on fans and other stakeholders, mediating in conflict situations, and encouraging a positive supporter culture;
- attending debriefing meetings after matches;
- contributing to police training;
- participating in local sport and security committees, etc.
- building an effective communication structure with fans, clubs, security staff, police, local and national government, other SLOs, transport companies, etc.

### **Section Three – Interaction with the Police and Security Staff**

SLOs should not be seen as the extended arm of the club security officer or the police. SLOs should not have a security role within a club, league or association, nor should they work for an organisation appointed by the club to carry out security tasks. With their insight into the prevailing mood within the fan base, SLOs can act as a kind of seismograph, identifying potential conflict situations at an early stage and working to prevent their escalation. SLOs can provide valuable feedback on developments among fans and the effects, positive and negative, of police tactics that can feed into risk assessments and dynamic match day policing strategies. They can also perform an intermediary role in conflict situations as part of a de-escalation strategy.

The implementation status of the SLO project varies greatly from country to country and, within countries, from club to club. In addition, SLOs do not have to be employed full-time and often work on a part-time or volunteer basis. These points should be borne in mind when assessing how to make best use of their services.

### **Section Four – Trust and Credibility**

In view of the varied nature of the job, it is important that everyone has a good understanding of the work SLOs do. It should be clear that SLOs are not supporter representatives. They work for the club, preferably on the same hierarchical level as the security officer. Ideally, SLOs should come from the fan base and know its protagonists and groups very well. As credibility and trust are key factors in the work of SLOs, they should have the acceptance and respect of all stakeholders. In the interface between club board members, supporters, police and stewards, they act as "balanced players", acting as dialogue and communication partners to ensure a positive match day experience.

## **Section Five – Perception**

The perception of the SLO role varies from stakeholder to stakeholder. For the fans, they are points of contact, mediators and advocates of their interests. For the police and crowd control or stewarding organisations, SLOs act as cooperation partners who can help them to ensure that match days pass off smoothly and without incident. And for the clubs, SLOs can provide a direct communications link to the fan base. These differing perceptions make their role particularly valuable, but also especially challenging. It is therefore vital that SLOs are supported by all stakeholders and given the necessary scope and trust to carry out their work.

## CHAPTER TEN

### Fan Embassies

Fan embassies are intended to offer a means for meeting the specific needs of visiting supporters in connection with a football event. They are usually associated with football tournaments but can also be deployed for domestic and international matches in which a significant number of visiting supporters are involved.

Fan embassies provide visiting supporters with a focal point in the host city or town centre for obtaining a wide range of information and assistance, including the location of areas designated for the use and refreshment of visiting supporters, local travel and transport arrangements, ticket availability, accommodation, local leisure activities, any planned screenings of matches, theft or loss of documents, health care and, importantly, policing strategies and tolerance levels, etc.

Fan embassies also provide a channel of communication between supporters and the local police and other authorities. They can be an effective means for rapidly and efficiently relaying up-to-date information on any emerging or changing situations.

Fan embassies can also represent the views of the supporters to the authorities if problems arise. They can take proactive initiatives to build goodwill between different supporter groups and with local minority ethnic communities.

#### **a) Structure**

Fan embassies are sometimes set up by the public authorities in the host city or alternatively by the supporters themselves.

The key requirement is that the structure should be capable of dealing with supporters in an appropriate manner, in particular with supporters of the visiting team.

## **b) Staffing and human resources**

Clearly, it is desirable for those involved in fan embassy provision to be adequately resourced and to possess the skills required to deliver their activities effectively.

In some cases, these can be paid staff contracted to an institutional authority or appointed association. In other cases, the involvement of committed volunteers from supporters' organisations has proved to be equally effective.

The staff of a fan embassy should collectively possess an understanding of the fan culture of its target groups. They should have access to detailed local knowledge and have close contact with all relevant local agencies, including the police.

## **c) Opening hours**

Fan embassies should be accessible and contactable by telephone throughout the period of the event and should be open for as long as possible on the day before, the day of and the day after each match. One of the advantages of fan embassies is their accessibility and flexibility. This enables them to adapt to the situations that arise and to tailor their activities to the needs and lifestyles of visiting supporters.

## **d) Location and access**

Choosing a location is a critical factor for fan embassies. The location should be accessible and visible. The question of location needs to involve close consultation between supporter representatives, police and the municipal authorities. Ideally, fan embassies should be based in city centres, so that a considerable amount of work can be done before a match and so that they are accessible to as many people as possible. This is especially important for supporters who traditionally gather in city centres and only go to the stadium an hour or two before kick-off.

It can also be useful to set up a fan embassy near the ground, so that supporters have an alternative point of reference during the periods immediately before and after each match.

The route to fan embassies should be indicated by means of effective and visible signs, making it easy for supporters to find them and making them accessible at any time. Information distributed to visiting supporters before the event should give the location and other details of the fan embassy. The distribution of city maps to visiting supporters, showing the location of the fan embassy and other useful information such as the location of bus stops, cash dispensers, etc. will also be of assistance to, and appreciated by, these visiting supporters.

**e) Reception facilities, services and information**

As fan embassy staff are in constant touch with the organiser, local and national authorities, the police and the safety and security services, they are able to provide supporters with up-to-date and accurate information. They should make sure that this information is definite and reliable and constantly check its accuracy, so that no misleading information is given to supporters.

An associated aim is to pre-empt the spread of rumours. The widest variety of quite fantastic rumours can circulate among supporters and these may create difficulties. As fan embassies combine an official position at the heart of the network of organising bodies with special and immediate relationships with supporters on location, they are able rapidly and definitively to help prevent the dissemination of rumours.

A fan embassy can make use of social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.) to inform supporters on all issues relevant to them.

**f) Pre-match arrangements**

Fan embassies can distribute brochures containing information about football stadia, their location, access to them, local public transport and match-specific information. This information should include legislation of the host country and regulations relating to the to crowd management and stadium entry regulations, including any items that are prohibited and forms of behaviour which are regarded as anti-social. Regulations can vary from stadium to stadium and even from match to match, as far as items such as banners, cameras, mobile telephones, video cameras and umbrellas are concerned.

### **g) Tickets and their distribution**

Tournament organisers should make accurate and up-to-date information available to fan embassies about pricing, sales outlets, the numbers of tickets remaining (if any) and the time limits and conditions applying to sales, or they should provide a point of contact at which fan embassies can obtain this information. It is important for supporters to be told at a sufficiently early stage - and to know that this information is reliable - when a match is sold out, or how many tickets are still available and at what prices, or when ticket sales have finished. Fan embassies should not sell or distribute tickets.

### **h) Accommodation and car parking**

As a rule, fan embassies complement or back up conventional tourist offices, which provide information about various types of accommodation and services. It is important that information should be provided not only about hotels, but also about less expensive accommodation options, such as campsites or bed and breakfast establishments. There is also a need for accurate information as regards public transport services to these places (location, cost and timetables).

When all local accommodation is booked up, fan embassies can provide information about the availability of more distant accommodation and the means of transport to such accommodation. When more critical cases arise, fan embassies may, in consultation with the local authorities or police, provide information on emergency and/or temporary accommodation.

In addition to information on public transport timetables (for trains, buses, trams and underground railways), fan embassies can also provide information to supporters on public and privately owned parking areas in the city or near the stadium, along with any park-and-ride facilities and the timetables of shuttles to the ground (ideally with a stop at the “fan embassy”).



**i) Theft or loss of documents**

Official documents, such as identity cards, passports and social security documents, as well as travel and match tickets, among other things, are frequently lost or stolen during football events, causing dismay to the supporters concerned who may feel lost in an unknown environment. In such scenarios, a fan embassy can be of great assistance in dealing with the problem or in providing access to the relevant authorities.

**j) Health care**

Fan embassies need to be able to supply information about hospitals, ordinary or emergency medical services, emergency dentists and social welfare systems, so that supporters can be pointed in the right direction.

**k) Activities**

Fan embassies are a major source of information about transport links to leisure, sports and cultural activities organised for local people, or specifically for visiting supporters, in the town or city in question. Such activities can sometimes even be organised by the fan embassy in partnership with club or national SLOs or home supporter groups.

**l) Information**

It is important that all information made available to a fan embassy is up-to-date in order to ensure that the very latest news can be relayed to visiting supporters. This is important as some activities may be organised and not be publicised in official supporter information packs/leaflets. Other activities, news of which can be circulated by the fan embassy, might include unplanned public screenings of a football match which can sometimes provide a last-minute solution to the problem of channelling the movements of spectators who cannot be accommodated at a sold-out match.

**m) Finance**

If it is to operate effectively, a fan embassy will incur significant logistical and staff costs. In view of the one-off nature of the event, part of the needs may be met with equipment, premises and staff made available by local authorities and associations. However, special funding is essential. Governments, municipal agencies and match organisers can play their part in providing the necessary funding and support for fan embassies.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### Fan Coaching

In some European countries social workers are appointed to coordinate activities designed to help prevent football-related violence, discriminatory or anti-social behaviour. These comprise educational activities, known as fan coaching, targeted at supporters and designed to supplement passive security measures and police action to manage events. As such, fan coaching constitutes a preventative policy that extends over the medium and long term and is based on ongoing grass-roots work with supporters.

Fan coaching is also designed to promote a positive fan culture and create positive conditions for visiting supporters to enjoy a football match or tournament.

#### **a) Fan coaching principles**

The basic principle is one of active social and educational action in the field by skilled professionals who work in a targeted manner and focus on groups of young football supporters. It is essential to let projects evolve continuously, ensuring that new staff are given in-service training, so that activities do not become mundane. The supporters' world is changing, so, by definition, fan-coaching projects should evolve accordingly.

In practice, fan coaching is carried out in many different ways, mainly because supporters have different profiles, but also because football-related crime itself differs as well. Fan coaching is therefore a flexible concept that is adapted to circumstance, local needs and specific national cultures.

#### **b) Fan coaching funding**

As regards responsibilities and funding, governments have a role to play, with direct support from the clubs and local authorities on organisation and implementation.

**c) Fan coaching staff**

Fan coaches usually work under an employment contract with local authorities or any other competent organisation/agency.

**d) Fan coaching methods**

Whilst fan coaching is primarily focused on the organisation of structured educational and social activities, it can also involve the provision of outreach work, such as mobile match-related activity which can in turn assist policing operations.

The main aim of fan coaching on match days is to ensure that a channel of communication is open between supporters and organisers.

When fan coaching services are provided by staff recognised by the authorities and accepted by supporters, the staff can be regarded as a link between organisers and fans. Owing to their special position at the heart of events and to constant dialogue, they can often defuse conflicts and thereby help to prevent incidents.

**e) Relations between fan coaching schemes and the police**

Positive cooperation between the police and fan coaches is vital to a long-term structured prevention policy. While methods differ, the objectives are identical: to reduce violence in sport.

Both partners therefore need to understand each other's roles and perspectives and to value their contributions, but also limitations, in particular on the defusing of tension on match days. Fan coaches can act as important channels of communication between the police, clubs and groups of supporters.

**f) Medium and longer term cooperation**

In successful projects, the police and fan coaches have established a formal mechanism for consulting each other and exchanging information, coordinated through the municipal authorities. Although there is considerable synergy between a successful police operation and the daily work of a fan coaching structure, it is not considered advisable to integrate the police into the fan coaching structure as this could undermine the added value of fan coaching in preventing and reducing safety and security risks.

However, the shared objective of reducing risks means that the police can support and work with fan coaching staff with longer term objectives in mind.

**g) Educational activities**

The educational activities of fan coaches can provide valuable opportunities as regards targeted educational work with young supporters outside the particular context of matches.

Sporting activities (such as football on full-sized or smaller pitches) can be part of an educational project designed to involve young people, make them more responsible and focused and prevent them from finding themselves at a loose end. Participation in amateur championships adds structure to such activities.

Adventure sports, such as rafting and climbing, are very appropriate. They enable young supporters, who might otherwise resort to violence, to prove themselves in a positive sense. Such activities also enable young people to expend pent-up energy, while giving them with the excitement they need. Significantly, participation in such activities promotes the development of positive social skills.

As learning, participation and the development of a sense of responsibility are important, there is a need to avoid "consumer activities" that merely serve to keep young people occupied.

## **h) Social support**

The link with football may provide an opportunity to carry out social work targeted at certain disadvantaged groups. Fan coaching may thus help those individuals with social difficulties who do not otherwise benefit from help offered by conventional institutions. When an individual's social situation is improved, this can lead to a positive outcome.

## **i) Street work**

Constant contact with fans is important and facilitates the educational work that needs to be done.

Such contact may be maintained through street work carried out in residential neighbourhoods or on premises frequented by fans, such as bars. Maintaining contact with them between matches and activities helps enable a relationship of trust to develop.

Street work can also take the form of a fan centre or an educational facility open during the week that offers games and educational material and provides a place where supporters can meet each other freely in an educational context. This kind of infrastructure provides a permanent interface between fan coaching and supporters.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### Communication and Media Handling Strategy

As stressed throughout this handbook, European experience demonstrates the importance of the police actively participating in the development of an effective multi-agency communication and media handling strategy designed to explain the importance and content of an integrated, multi-agency approach to football safety, security and service.

A multi-agency media strategy can be particularly important in providing all parties, notably visiting supporters, with a range of important information such as travel advice, access routes to the stadium, applicable legislation and behavioural tolerance levels.

The central aim should be to promote a positive image of the event among home and visiting supporters, local communities, the general public and individuals participating in safety and security operations. This can help generate a welcoming environment for all involved and make a significant contribution to minimising safety and security risks. The provision of information, advice and explanation can also be crucial in encouraging supporters to self-regulate.

The police, in particular, should use the multi-agency media strategy to:

- provide information in a proactive, open and transparent manner;
- provide information on safety and security preparations in a friendly, reassuring and positive manner;
- communicate the police intention to facilitate the legitimate activities of supporters;
- identify what kinds of behaviour will not be tolerated by the police.

Police spokespersons should work closely with governmental and local agencies, football authorities / organisers and supporter groups in establishing and delivering a multi-agency media strategy based on shared and updated briefing material. Such material should be regularly refined to take account of recurring themes or questions and emerging risks or events.

Where possible, supporter representatives should be encouraged to participate in media briefings and to relay positive messages about the event.

However, to be effective the communication strategy should not be limited to the sharing of event-specific information. It should also encompass a commitment to engage with supporter groups in order to provide clear messages and glean a fans' perspective on a range of matters. As crucial stakeholders in the football experience, supporters share a vested interest in working with the police and other authorities in developing a meaningful dialogue with supporter groups and supporters generally.

Dialogue is a two-way process and there are a number of communication options available for sharing information and perspectives, and otherwise engaging with supporters.

These include:

- supporter meetings;
- supporter panels or consultation groups for gathering feedback from fans;
- supporter satisfaction surveys/fan feedback forms;
- supporter clinics or surgeries (informal meetings between club personnel and supporters);
- complaints procedures;
- interaction with supporters on websites;
- newsletters and similar publications;
- social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, etc.);
- match day volunteers to assist supporters with a wide range of issues;
- fan zones;
- fan embassies (*e.g.* at European matches);



- open player training days;
- supporter events (*e.g.* at Christmas or pre-season) with autograph signing sessions.

Before matches, police commanders can convey pre-match information and a welcoming note directly to supporters through police and club websites. Experience demonstrates that such pre-match initiatives can be highly effective in outlining general behavioural limitations and in clarifying that the aim of policing operations is to facilitate a good and positive match experience for supporters. Such an approach can promote a feeling of safety among supporters and encourage the perception of transparent and positive interaction. This, in turn, helps to reduce tensions from the outset. It is important, however, that any commitments contained in such initiatives are delivered as an integral part of policing operations. This maintains credibility and reduces the risk that public statements are mistrusted.

After match days, experience demonstrates the value of the police proactively seeking independent feedback from match-going supporters and incorporating such feedback into the police debrief/match evaluation process. In cases where internal evaluation reveals obvious mistakes in police operations, public acknowledgement can help to reduce tensions and encourage the establishment of a respectful culture of constructive criticism both by the police and by supporters. Likewise, publicising positive behaviour by supporters through the media can significantly enhance mutual respect and cooperation and encourage increased levels of such positive behaviour.

In cases of incidents, police spokespersons should consult, where possible, with all relevant agencies, experts in supporter behaviour and other intermediaries before making any substantive statements to the media and the wider public. The publication of inaccurate information or superficial assessment of incidents can exacerbate tensions between supporters and the police, and unintentionally increase future risk levels.

Improvement in effective communication and media handling strategy requires better media cooperation. The media needs to understand the risk of inadvertently inciting violent, disorderly, racist or other discriminatory behaviour and avoid reporting incidents in a manner that could be perceived as appearing to glorify or encourage such criminal behaviour.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### Sources of Information

A supporters' perspective on the importance of dialogue and other issues can be obtained from:

- **Football Supporters Europe (FSE)** (<http://fanseurope.org>).

Advice on making football stadia and its environs accessible to disabled supporters can be obtained from:

- **Centre for Access to Football in Europe (CAFE)** (<http://www.cafefootball.eu>).

Advice on combating racist and other discriminatory behaviour can be obtained from:

- **Council of Europe - European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)** ([http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/default\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/default_en.asp));
- **Football Against Racism in Europe (FARE)** (<http://www.farenet.org>);
- **European Gay & Lesbian Sport Federation (EGLSF)** (<http://www.eglsf.info/>).

Advice on **Supporter Liaison Officers** and copies on the Joint UEFA/Supporters Direct SLO Handbook can be obtained from:

- <http://www.supporters-direct.coop>

## Appendix A

### Hospitality Approach at Football Events

The following guidance notes, based on guidance issued by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in 2004 summarise the principles of established European good practice as regards minimising risks through the adoption of a service (or hospitality) approach in connection with football events.

Whilst the main focus here is the need for an integrated, multi-agency approach, the police have a primary role to play in ensuring that policing operations reflect the wider need to provide supporters with a safe, secure and welcoming environment in connection with football events played in their locality. The following guidance is therefore tailored to meet the role of local policing agencies.

#### Guidance Notes

1. Ensure that the police work closely with the municipal authorities, the event organiser, local resident and business communities, designated Supporter Liaison Officers (SLOs) and supporter representatives:
  - a. Recognise the importance of a customer-oriented approach that welcomes the diversity of fan culture and recognises inter-cultural and international differences in supporter culture, as regards planning and delivering policing football operations in connection with the event;
  - b. Recognise that well-informed, well-cared-for supporters feel comfortable and therefore relaxed;
  - c. Arrange for a high level of supporter hospitality before, during and after the match;
  - d. Ensure that visiting supporters are treated in the same way as home supporters, and that the same rules apply to the use of banners, flags, etc.;

- e. Make full use of measures which have proved to be successful and effective in previous football events and which provide supporters with sufficient information developed in partnership with, *e.g.*, SLOs, fan projects, fan embassies, designated areas for visiting supporters, public viewing areas (based on a police risk assessment) and other facilities designed for use by supporters;
- f. In this connection, take full account of Council of Europe recommended good practice in respect of public viewing areas;
- g. Ensure that information on fan culture and supporter behaviour is widely disseminated among the local population, businesses, tourism agencies, police/security personnel and media to avoid unwarranted fear of supporters;
- h. Ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for friendly, relaxed meetings between the opposing supporter groups *e.g.* by offering activities they can both attend (such as designated pubs, public spaces, street kick-about areas, wall painting events, table soccer, joint fan parties or concerts);
- i. Avoid gender-related stereotypes in the planning and implementation of the event, given that women are increasingly attending football events. As a rule female supporters have the same needs and preferences as male supporters;
- j. Ensure that there is widespread information and training to guarantee a warm and discrimination-free welcome and stay to people with different cultural, religious and social backgrounds as well as sexual orientations;
- k. Work with international experts on fan culture, diversity and anti-discrimination, such as the Football Supporters Europe (FSE) network, the Football Against Racism in Europe (FARE) network and similar institutions to benefit from their experience and knowledge;

1. Ensure that local supporter (club) groups and supporter cultures are taken into consideration in planning. Prior engagement with local supporters can help reduce tensions and prevent conflicts.
2. The police should encourage football associations, football clubs and other relevant bodies, public or private, to acknowledge the following principles when organising football events:
  - a. Recognise the social and festive nature of football events;
  - b. Recognise that the vast majority of supporters wish to enjoy the football event freely in a good-natured and peaceful manner;
  - c. Recognise that well-treated and well-cared for spectators are less inclined to cause trouble;
  - d. Acknowledge that supporters expect not only an interesting and enjoyable event but also adequate services, decent sanitary facilities, hygienic catering, and clear information;
  - e. Arrange for a sufficient quantity and quality of food and non-alcoholic drinks;
  - f. Recognise that the distribution and pricing of match tickets is a sensitive issue and that it is necessary to distribute tickets in as fair, equitable and transparent a manner as possible, within the constraints of security and safety requirements;
  - g. Use all appropriate means to inform spectators about match safety and security requirements, including information on the route to the stadium, guidance within the stadium and the rules applied there;
  - h. Welcome visiting supporters in a friendly manner and cater for them;

- i. Pay proper attention to the special needs of families, women, children, elderly people and the disabled when planning football events. Ensure that supporters with disabilities have access to all areas and that appropriate facilities are provided;
  - j. Take account of the growing number of supporters from all parts of society (*e.g.* women, ethnic minorities and disabled fans) when drawing up, for instance, promotion material, and making arrangements for security staff, sanitary facilities, etc.
3. Encourage municipalities to participate actively in the preparation and management of football events, aiming to:
- a. Ensure that the police participate in coordinated planning and collaboration between different agencies responsible for different aspects of the organisation of a football event;
  - b. Ensure that local inhabitants and communities are consulted and reassured about the event;
  - c. Involve SLOs, supporter groups, fan projects and other relevant initiatives in the preparations;
  - d. Provide sufficient information for visitors supporters, liaise with tourist offices and fan experts, such as SLOs, fan projects, local supporter groups and others as appropriate;
  - e. Encourage local businesses to take part in the event, ensuring that they comply with local alcohol policy and contribute to the overall hospitality approach by offering event-oriented services and products.

## **Awareness-raising campaigns**

The police should encourage and participate in related activities designed to raise awareness among local people and encourage them to participate in the provision of hospitality-focused services.

Preventative campaigns should emphasise the festive side of the event. In particular, they need to counter and demystify any negative publicity regarding supporter behaviour generated by the media in the preparatory phase to help reduce tension among the local population.

People who run pubs and bars can play a vital part in preventing excessive consumption of alcohol. Both staff and management of alcohol outlets need to be made aware of their responsibilities. Information needs to be targeted at them so as to reduce the likelihood of unwanted incidents.

## **Targeted prevention**

An effort should be made to avoid making any socially vulnerable communities feel excluded from the football event experience.

Sporting events should aim to help integrate such groups into society as a whole and should be organised in cooperation with associations and similar bodies that have experience in such work. Alternative activities can be held so that people do not feel at a loose end or bored. Examples of such activities include tournaments, themed evenings, concerts and educational activities.

## Appendix B

### Structured Dialogue and Interaction with Supporters

#### 1. Guidance Notes

The police should work closely with partner agencies and in particular SLOs in developing an open and transparent dialogue with supporters on a short-term (match preparation) and long-term basis (problem solving) by:

- a. Setting up such permanent dialogue at international, national and local level;
- b. Avoiding stereotyping and negative labelling between supporters and police. Partnership and dialogue require commitment and a willingness to listen to all sides, taking into consideration and understanding the needs of others;
- c. Ensuring that a dialogue takes place at regular intervals and that this involves the following partners, where applicable:
  - club SLOs;
  - supporters and supporter-focused initiatives;
  - professional supporters projects;
  - municipal authorities;
  - transport organisations;
  - clubs and national Football Associations;
  - stadium security personnel;



- d. Promoting platforms and dialogue with fans. Enhancing mutual respect among all partners in a clear and transparent manner;
- e. Encouraging governmental and other partner agencies to establish an internet platform for supporters. This should contain tourist and administrative information and should be designed to facilitate communication with supporters;

**2. Create opportunities for discussion by:**

- a. Creating ongoing and flexible communication structures with local supporter groups, SLOs and other professional and voluntary experts on supporter behaviour and crowd dynamics;
- b. Using mediation and negotiation with supporters as a first step in conflict situations;
- c. Taking into consideration the concerns and interests of supporters;
- d. Creating opportunities for front-line police personnel involved in match day operations to engage with supporters;
- e. Raising awareness on fan culture and best practice on policing supporters;
- f. Taking into account the remarks of supporters in the evaluation of the event;
- g. Including foreign language training for designated personnel participating in policing football matches with an international dimension.

**3. Set up a thorough engagement with supporters by:**

- a. Participating with SLOs and partner agencies in creating, at national and local level, a multi-agency network which can establish itself as a focal point for supporter engagement;
- b. Building up more tolerance from both sides by improving mutual trust. Barriers can be overcome by learning about each other;

- c. Creating the right conditions for socio-preventive work with supporters that helps to enhance the acceptance and mutual trust of supporters and agencies involved in managing the football experience;
- d. Determining with SLOs the best means (*e.g.* supporter charters etc.) for encouraging clubs to take supporters' views into account in a structured way on all topics which directly affect them. Topics can include ticket prices, stadium facilities, delays, kick-off times;
- e. Ensuring that clubs provide their supporters with information on the club homepage and via all relevant channels of communication, such as social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.);
- f. Encouraging football associations, clubs and municipalities to devise programmes with SLOs, representatives of supporter groups and supporter-focused initiatives in order to exploit the potential offered by sport for social and cultural integration;
- g. Encouraging the above entities to establish dialogue and work in partnership with organisations involved in promoting sportsmanship and tolerance, and in combating racism and xenophobia in sport. Partnerships need to work to ensure that measures are taken to prevent racism in sports grounds and at local level;
- h. Acknowledging the will of many supporters to take responsibility for the atmosphere and conditions in their stands and for tackling problems that they experience - supporters are in a good position to find solutions to problems;
- i. Working with supporters to create conditions which empower them to regulate their behaviour - self-regulation is a very powerful tool;
- j. Encouraging and supporting the formal or informal self-organisation of supporters. Encouraging regular discussions between the different groups of supporters to learn about representative supporters' views on key issues;
- k. Encouraging organised supporter groups to seek advice from Football Supporters Europe (FSE) which represents a trans-national organisation of fan experts and representatives;

- l. Encouraging all clubs, not just those competing in European competitions, to deploy an SLO to engage with fans;
- m. Encouraging all national football licensing bodies (national associations or leagues, as appropriate) to seek advice on training and development of the SLO project from Supporters Direct Europe (SD Europe).

**4. Promote good behaviour by:**

- a. Taking into account that passion can generate positive as well as negative behaviour, *e.g.* in its dynamic interaction with safety and security operations;
- b. Highlighting the added value of good behaviour at football events and exchanging positive experience between different kinds of sports with different fan cultures;
- c. Dealing with supporters in a balanced way and on the basis of their actual behaviour and not on the basis of history or perceptions, taking into account the national legal framework and exclusion of supporters who act in a criminal or anti-social manner;
- d. Having trained spotters, experts in supporter behaviour, at away games;
- e. Providing clear instructions and information on what supporters can expect on a match day;
- f. Informing supporters about safety and security measures or legal measures;
- g. Exchanging good practice concerning a well-conceived balance between acceptable fan culture and safety and security measures.

**5. Ensure fairness and respect when dealing with supporters:**

- a. Taking into account supporter views, where appropriate, in the preparations of legal measures or of the safety and security strategy for the event;
- b. Encouraging supporters to work with the police in challenging “enemy stereotypes”;
- c. Creating an atmosphere of mutual respect, discussion, fraternisation and respect for laws and regulations;
- d. Focusing on challenges which can bring partners together in the future as opposed to issues which have separated them in the past;
- e. Showing greater transparency in policing and stewarding operations.
- f. Acknowledging the needs of supporters, rather than condemning an entire fan culture because of some negative behaviour. Supporters who act reasonably and responsibly should be encouraged to become more involved.

The use of the Internet (*e.g.* an Internet platform for supporters containing tourist and administrative information etc.) to welcome and facilitate communication with supporters should also be promoted.

