Background to Safety Advisory Groups

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Purpose of Session

- This session will explain the background to Safety Advisory Groups and consider:
  - defining terms of reference
  - membership/roles and responsibilities
  - supporting arrangements
  - practical considerations
  - ‘pros’ and ‘cons’
Background
Lord Justice Taylor 
Interim Report

• “The performance by the City Council of its duties in regard to the Safety Certificate was inefficient and dilatory.”

• “A number of breaches of Green Guide standards were permitted.”

• “The Advisory Group lacked a proper structure; its procedure was casual and unbusinesslike.”
“It is a depressing and chastening fact that mine is the ninth official report covering crowd safety and control at football grounds. After eight previous reports and three editions of the Green Guide, it seems astounding that 95 people could die from overcrowding before the very eyes of those controlling the event……”
“That it was allowed to happen, despite all the accumulated wisdom of many precious reports and guidelines must indicate that the lessons of past disasters and the recommendations following them had not been taken sufficiently to heart.”
Safety Advisory Group

- Assist local authority to exercise safety function

- Membership :-
  - LA staff including building control
  - Police
  - Fire
  - Ambulance services

- Consult clubs and recognised supporters’ association
Safety Advisory Group

- All matters concerned by crowd safety
- Regular visits to the ground
- Chair appointed by local authority
- Resolutions recorded
- Written reports to the local authority
For what events is a SAG important

- Sporting events, especially those subject to certification
- Concerts
- Festivals
- Air shows
- Carnivals
- County shows
- Religious gatherings – not in churches
- All very large congregations of spectators
Safety Advisory Groups

• Now the good practice model for a broad range of events extending way beyond football

• Problem – in the absence of clear direction a variety of approaches and terms of reference have have developed

• Challenge – to bring some consistency to Safety Advisory Groups whilst recognising some bespoke aspects
Introduction – Benchmarking for SAGs

‘Applications to local authorities for events will be considered by their Safety Advisory Groups or equivalent, who will consider the application against environmental and safety grounds…..’
Introduction – Benchmarking for SAGs

‘Safety Advisory Groups can be seen a fundamental core around which the safety planning at all sports grounds and public events can be considered. They can bring together inter-agency expertise to advise and guide the Local Authority in both certified and non-certified sports grounds, as appropriate’ - **The Core Cities Group – Safety at Sports Grounds and Public Events Working Group**

**Health Warning** – this guidance was written with sports venues in mind
So what do you expect from the ‘Chair’?

- Expert or facilitator
- Good communicator
- Manager
- Motivator
- Decision maker
Safety Advisory Group

Governance

- Terms of Reference
- Meetings with pre determined agendas
- Minutes
- Record of resolutions
- Audit trail
Safety Advisory Groups

- **ARE** the good practice model to be applied to a broad range of venues and events not merely sports grounds and licensed events.

- **ARE NOT** to be confused with arrangements which may exist to ‘guide’ persons through the processes and procedures of organising events.

- **ARE NOT** the structures for managing events although some representatives may cover both aspects.
Developing SAG Terms of Reference

Whatever the nature of the venue(s) and/or event(s) the terms of reference **MUST** reflect:

- Promoting high standards of public health and safety
- Promoting good practice in safety and welfare planning
- Promoting a coordinated multi agency approach to event planning
- Promoting the formulation of appropriate contingency and emergency arrangements
- Minimising any adverse impact from events
- Considering the safety implications of any significant incidents relevant to their venue(s)/event(s)
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities within the group
Additionally

Specific ToR may also include:

- Advice to the certifying authority with regards to safety certification
- Advice to licensing authority relevant to it’s powers under licensing legislation
Benefits of a SAG

What should the SAG produce?

- Integrated approach to event management
- Development of a corporate approach to safety
- Multi agency expertise
- Use of published guidance
- Succession planning / resilience
Pitfalls of a SAG

- Taking comments at face value
- Working outside of the team
- Weak leadership
- Sending apologies
- Becoming ‘bogged down’ in minutia
- Corporate manslaughter
Remember

- Never turn a ‘blind eye’
- Audit trails are essential
- Treat all certificates/ tests as MOT’s
- Get the right frequency for your meetings
- Encourage participation
- Learn the lessons