

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES.**

**Safety at Sports Grounds Act 1975  
Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987.  
Notts. County F.C. Meadow Lane, Nottingham**

**1.0 SUMMARY**

This report deals with the annual review of the General Safety Certificate for the Notts. County Football Club for the forthcoming 2003/2004 football season.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Committee reviews the General Safety Certificate for the Notts County FC for the football season 2003/2004 and permits a maximum capacity of 19588 spectators as detailed in Appendix 1 and accepts the deviations to the 4th edition of the Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds (Green Guide) as listed in Appendix 2. The schedules contained within the current General Safety Certificate cover the following:

- Schedule A Definitions
- Schedule B Specified Activities
- Schedule C Staff and Crowd Control, Disabled Persons
- Schedule D First Aid and Medical Facilities
- Schedule E Buildings, Structures and Installations
- Schedule F Fire and Fire Fighting
- Schedule G Briefing, Testing and Inspection
- Schedule H Records and Certificates

**3.0 REPORT**

Notts. County F.C. are members of the Nationwide Football League and for the season 2003/2004 will play in Division 2 of that competition and appropriate cup competitions.

The Meadow Lane Stadium is all seated accommodation with an agreed maximum capacity of 19588 but an actual physical total capacity of 20300. The reduced capacity has been determined having regard to evacuation limitations from sections of the Derek Pavis Stand and the reduction of 712 for that Stand has been agreed and accepted by the Club. In the event of a near capacity crowd attending a match then ticketing arrangements along with management procedures and stewarding will ensure that those critical sections of the Pavis Stand will not be occupied by any spectators.

Although during the past 12 months the Club has faced severe financial difficulties for the most part being in administration, this has not impinged on the Club's attitude or safety management arrangements nor posed any risks to spectators.

A resume of the main activities during the past 12 months associated with safety matters are as follows:

There were no ground developments that affected the recommended capacities of the stands or which were relevant to safety issues,

Three meetings of the Safety Advisory Group were held on 3 October 2002, 12 December 2002 and 27 March 2003. These meetings are Chaired by the Service Manager Health and Safety of D.E.S. and are attended by representatives of the following organisations, Notts County Safety Manager, Supporters Club, Nottinghamshire Police, Nottinghamshire Fire Services, East Midlands Ambulance Service, Football Licensing Authority and Officers from the City Councils' Building Inspectors and Health and Safety Enforcement teams. (Notes of the Safety Advisory Group meetings are included as background papers),

Two match day inspections were completed by the team leader Health and Safety Enforcement on Saturday 9 November 2002 v Mansfield Town F.C. attended by 10,301 spectators including 3,83 away supporters, and on Tuesday 5 April 2003 v Blackpool F.C. attended by 5,551 spectators including 457 away supporters.

During the season the Club tested 2 of its contingency plans, one a simulated exercise and the second a reality situation. Prior to the game on Saturday 25 January 2003 v Plymouth Argyle F.C. a simulated exercise was completed by stewards whereby the whole Stadium was searched for a (planted) suspect package. The second at the end of the night game on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February v Crewe Alexandra F.C. when due to freezing conditions and on the initiative of the Kop Stand Supervisor alternative exiting arrangements were invoked as the usual exit route to the Stand had become potentially dangerous due to icing,

On going Steward training has continued throughout the season for new and existing stewards in accordance with National guidelines,

Average attendance during the season for a first team home game was 6,154, with 10,301 (Mansfield Town F.C.) being the highest and 3,875 (Crewe Alexandra F.C.) being the lowest attendance. During the season a total of 141,546 spectators attended first team games and during the season there were 8 reported injuries/illnesses to spectators who were attended to by either the match day doctor, personnel of the St. Johns Ambulance or Ambulance service medics none requiring hospitalisation.

On 30<sup>th</sup> January 2003 in conjunction with Nottinghamshire Police, Nottingham Forest F.C. and Mansfield Town F.C., Notts County F.C. launched an initiative named PACT, Police and Clubs acting together as a means of deterring and preventing supporters who have been banned from one ground in the County attending a match at one of the either of the other venues. This initiative received considerable regional and national publicity and was supported by the City Council in a press release containing praise and encouragement from the Chair of the Licensing Committee for the measures to drive away hooligans and to make football grounds and their surrounding environment safer places.

On Monday 24 March representatives of the Club attended a Special Safety Advisory Group Meeting organised jointly by Officers of both the City and County Council when a presentation was given by Special Branch and the Police Search Advisors. The purpose of the meeting was to bring Clubs and agencies involved in safety at large sporting and other events to discuss possible terrorist attacks on large venues.

During the year 2 meetings have been held attended by Chairs of Safety Advisory Groups from across the East Midlands when a number of topics have been discussed and good practices shared.

All recognised deviations to the recommendations of the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds (Green Guide) are detailed in Appendix 2 and it is recommended that the Committee accept these deviations as they are not considered by the Safety Advisory Group to be of significance as to jeopardise safety of spectators.

The Club and their Contractors are currently completing inspections of various structures, equipment and services in order to comply with requirement H21 of the General Safety Certificate requiring the annual submission of satisfactory certificates for a range of items. All certificates will be submitted as agreed by the Club to the City Council before the commencement of football fixtures at the ground including preseason friendly matches.

Review of the General Safety Certificate is supported by representatives of the Emergency Services and the Football Licensing Authority who are members on the Club's Safety Advisory Group and the only recommended alterations to the certificate are the replacement of reference to specifically named British Standards by reference to the current relevant British Standard and removal of reference to fire hoses within the Stadium which have now been removed.

**4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

**5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

The Stadium provides access and accommodation to enable spectators with mobility difficulties to be accommodated safely.

**BARRY HORNE  
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

**CONTACT OFFICER: ALEC THOMSON, SERVICE MANAGER HEALTH &  
SAFETY ENFORCEMENT**

List of background papers other than published works or those disclosing confidential or exempt information

S. A.G Meeting Notes	03.10.02
	12.12.02
	27.03.03
Match Day Reports	09.11.02
(M. Nightingale)	05.04.03

Contingency Plan Exercises Review 13.02.03 (R. Davy Notts County Safety Manager).

## NOTTS COUNTY FC

## Ground Capacity Season 2001/2002

Stand	Area	Capacities
Jimmy Sirrell Stand		5775
Family Stand	Seating	2139
	Boxes	144
Kop Stand	Upper Tier	2025
	Lower Tier	3413
Derek Pavis Stand		6092
<b>Total Ground Capacity</b>		<b>19588</b>

Note: In an emergency evacuation situation only 6092 spectators could be expected to evacuate the Derek Pavis Stand in the specified 8 minutes using the exit routes available. This is 712 less than the capacity limit of the stand. On the 12th January 1999 the club, therefore, agreed not to exceed 6092 spectators as a result of the recalculation exercise for the short-term until the situation can be resolved satisfactorily, this is still the current situation.

AT/LB. 14126a

**(4TH EDITION)**

<b>Deviations</b>		<b>Green Guide</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
<b>1</b>	Pavis Stand exit from Block D/E 1.90m high	Para 5.5 (a) recommends a minimum headroom of 2m	Critical only under existing structural beam
<b>2</b>	Pavis Stand exit from Directors Box 1.87m high	Para 5.5 (a) recommends a minimum headroom of 2m.	Critical only under existing structural beam
<b>3</b>	The metal constructed upper section of the stairway exiting the Kop stand towards Final Exit Gate D has open risers	Para 7.3 (c) recommends that open risers should not be used on stairways	This stairway is only used as a downward route for exiting and as such the open risers are not a safety consideration
<b>4</b>	Final Exit Gate F and perimeter gates 10 & 17 are not capable of opening opened inwards when used.	Para 9.15 (a) recommends that all exit doors and gates should be capable of opening outwards so that crowds can escape in an emergency without obstruction	All three gates are staffed at all times and will be opened by a steward before spectators are directed to evacuate along the route. Also when the gates are opened in an inward position they do not create an obstruction.
<b>5</b>	In the Pavis Stand the steps in the radial gangway risers from row D and up are 220mm.	Para 11.9 (b) recommends the risers of steps in radial gangways should not be more than 190mm and should also be uniform.	The compensatory factor (handrail) was only required at the higher levels of the stand as the installation of additional handrails would adversely effect lateral movement in the event of the adjacent vomitory being obstructed
<b>6</b>	All steps within radial gangways of all four stands have both the tread and riser painted a conspicuous yellow.	Para 11.9 (d) recommends that nosings of steps in radial gangways should be clearly identified	Para. 145 of the 3rd edition of the Green Guide required that radial gangways should be painted with a non-slip paint in a conspicuous colour. This the Club did on construction of the stands. To meet the requirements of the 4th edition it is agreed that as the paint-work of the tread sections wear only the nosings, edgings, risers and landings be painted as necessary

	Deviations	Green Guide	Remarks
7	Catering outlet roller shutters are not operated by fusible link. Concerns raised regarding the possibility of smoke build up which could ventilate through the exits from the seating above.	Para 15.10 (h) recommends catering outlets containing deep fat fryers or hot food cooking facilities should be separated from other internal areas or spectator accommodation ..... where roller shutters are used these should be capable of operating both manually and by fusible link.	Due to the configuration and layout of the catering outlets, fusible links could result in entrapment of staff/spectators and therefore, the compensatory factors currently in place are adequate. Location of food bars are adjacent to open air. In the event of a fire, smoke would vent to fresh air and would not rapidly fill the rear corridor or vent via the vomitories into the stand.