

## REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CITY DEVELOPMENT

**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 2004/2005 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 2004/2005 and permits a maximum capacity of 19,588 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 Coca Cola League and for the season 2004/2005 will play in Division 2 of that competition as well the appropriate cup competitions, having unfortunately been relegated from the former Division 2 of the Nationwide League.

The Meadow Lane Stadium is all seated accommodation with an agreed maximum capacity of 19,588 but an actual physical total capacity of 20,300. 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.

During most of the last 12 months the Club faced severe financial restraints for the most part being in administration, but this has not impinged on the Club's attitude or safety management arrangements nor posed any risks to spectators. During the season the Club came out of financial administration and a group, The Notts County F.C (Blenheim Consortium) Ltd now own and run the Club.

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

1. There were no ground developments that affected the recommended capacities of the stands although the Club did replace a large number of damaged seats especially within the Spion Kop Stand (always occupied by the visiting team supporters) as well as replacing and providing new fencing to the car park situated at the rear of this stand. These two issues were items that had been considered by this Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2003 and were recorded in minutes 9(1) (ii) and (iii) as requiring attention;
2. Four meetings of the Safety Advisory Group were held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2003, 27<sup>th</sup> November 2003, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2004 and 20<sup>th</sup> May 2004. These meetings are Chaired by the Service Manager Health and Safety of City Development 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);
3. Two match day inspections were completed by the team leader Health and Safety Enforcement on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September v Tranmere Rovers F.C. attended by 4,215 spectators including 390 away supporters, and on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2004 v Barnsley F.C. attended by 7,358 spectators including 1,621 away supporters;
4. 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 24 January 2004 v Swindon Town F.C. a simulated exercise was completed by stewards whereby the Pavis Stand was 'swept' as if simulating evacuation. The second occurred prior to the kick off on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January v Barnsley F.C. when a signal transmission fault developed between the main crowd monitor computer in the Club Secretary's office and Match Control room. This was overcome by deploying staff at the two locations relaying information by phone and the club radio system. The fault was later rectified;
5. Ongoing Steward training has continued throughout the season for new and existing stewards in accordance with National guidelines;
6. Average attendance during the season for a first team home game was 5,940 with 9,601 v Sheffield Wednesday F.C. on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2004 being the highest and 4,145 v Brentford F.C. on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2003 being the lowest attendance. During the season a total of 136,612 spectators attended first team games and during the season there were 8 reported injuries and 6 reported illnesses to spectators. These people were attended to by either the Match Day Doctor, personnel of the St. Johns Ambulance or Ambulance service medics. Of these reported cases only one person was referred to hospital with a suspect broken wrist sustained as a result of falling when climbing a perimeter fence;
7. It was recognised by both the Club and the Safety Advisory Group that problems were occurring on match days regarding the level of medical cover provided by both the Match Day Doctor and the St John's Ambulance Brigade. As a consequence another Match Day Doctor has now therefore been appointed and is attending in accordance with the requirements of the General Safety Certificate. In view of St John's Ambulance Brigade not being able to guarantee sufficient 'first aiders' the Club has now trained and utilises the services of former stewards as first aiders. It should be noted that at least 1 first aider is required for every 1,000 spectators anticipated for the match;
8. During the year 2 meetings have been held attended by Chairs of Safety Advisory

Groups for Designated Sports Grounds 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.

#### **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 and is in the process of completing an audit of the Stadium having regard to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

#### **6.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

S. A.G Meeting Notes	11.09.03
	27.11.03
	04.03.04
	20.05.04
Match Day Reports	20.09.03
(M. Nightingale)	31.01.04

Contingency Plan Exercises Review 29.03.04 (R. Davy Notts County Safety Manager).

**BARRY HORNE  
CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CITY DEVELOPMENT**

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SAFETY ENFORCEMENT**

## NOTTS COUNTY FC

## Ground Capacity Season 2004/2005

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

**DEVIATIONS FROM THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE GREEN GUIDE -  
(4TH EDITION)**

Deviations	Green Guide	Remarks
1 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
2 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
3 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
4 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.
5 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
6 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 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.