



NEWSLETTER

WBA safe-seating plan rejected

West Bromwich Albion's hopes of introducing a safe-standing section at The Hawthorns have been rejected by the Government.

The Baggies had offered to run a pilot scheme in the Smethwick End for both home and away fans and made a formal application in October 2017 to install the section this summer in readiness for the 2018/19 campaign.

But Tracey Crouch MP, the Minister for Sport, has ruled out the idea confirming there are no plans to change the all-seater policy at football stadia.

The decision has been described as both "surprising" and "disappointing" by West Bromwich Albion's Director of Operations, Mark Miles, who has written back to the Sports Grounds Safety Authority urging a review.

After lengthy research into the safe-standing option, Mark had proposed to install "rail-seating" across the Smethwick End in the belief that it would be safer for fans in a section of the stadium where persistent standing is a problem.

He took in visits to Celtic Park and the Bundesliga club TSG 1899 Hoffenheim, where the same system is used successfully, and received encouragement from across the football industry to pursue the proposal.

"I find the decision from the Minister of Sport both surprising and disappointing," he said.

"It will certainly be disappointing for many, many supporters I have spoken to who were in favour of what we were proposing. It has also been a regular topic of discussion at our Albion Assembly meetings where the members support has been clear."

He said the Albion's proposal did not seek to introduce additional standing at The Hawthorns but to manage that which was already taking place.

He added: "I think the Minister has taken a short-sighted view and is preventing the club from creating a safer environment for supporters.

"The system we proposed is well-tested across Europe and has also worked successfully at Celtic, who are governed by different legislation than in England and Wales. We were prepared to run a pilot which would enable the Club to gather data and feedback to further inform us in the issue of crowd safety. But I have become convinced that rail-seating would enhance safety. The Club is extremely disappointed with this decision and we have written back requesting a review."

Following the decision to reject the bid, football fans launched a petition calling on the Government to reconsider their views on introducing safe-standing areas at Premier League and Championship clubs, which has been signed by more than 50,000 people in four days.

The FSOA's view...

"The all-seater policy for football grounds in England and Wales was developed over 25 years ago and the landscape of football ground safety has changed beyond recognition in that time.

"The issue of supporters persistently standing in seating areas is one that affects all-seater football stadia up and down the country and threatens to compromise the safety of thousands of fans every match day.

"Something must be done to tackle this issue, and the introduction of an alternative such as 'rail seating' or other systems currently being developed to enhance safety should not be ignored.

"West Bromwich Albion's bid to trial a safe-standing section in the Smethwick End was submitted after lengthy research across Europe and also at Celtic, where similar systems are already working successfully. The pilot would have provided the perfect opportunity to gather much-needed data and feedback with the view of possibly introducing similar systems at grounds across England and Wales in future.

"Safety Officers and Club Directors across the country are subject to legislative requirements but this is one legislation that should be given careful consideration. However we move forward in future, the safety of spectators must always remain paramount. But it seems that as we strive to improve standards of safety already achieved at our grounds, the Government is then choosing to ignore what may prove to be a safer alternative to standing in seated areas.

"It is disappointing that the rejection of West Bromwich Albion's bid means the club will not be able to explore this option of safe-standing to enable positive change and enhance match day safety at all grounds going forward."

Stewarding for 2018 and beyond

Violent protests at West Ham showed the ugly face of the beautiful game. John Newsham, Business Development Manager of the Football Safety Officers Association, says it's now time systems are streamlined to support the stewards expected to cope with protests and much more.

Chaotic scenes that marred West Ham's 3-0 defeat by Burnley were an ugly reminder of how quickly a passionate crowd can spill dangerously out of control.

Captain Mark Noble grappled with one angry protester who had stormed on to the pitch, whilst another angry supporter ripped up a corner flag and attempted to slam it into the centre circle. Young supporters cowered in the visitors' dug-out as a livid mob gathered under the directors' box in protest against the board, resulting in club co-owner David Sullivan allegedly being hit by a coin.

There is possibly no other sport in the world that evokes passion quite like football does and these shameful scenes erupted as a result of a perfect storm of issues and toxic feelings, including anger over the move from the cherished Upton Park to the London Stadium - a stadium of almost double capacity which many consider devoid of atmosphere. Some fans have shown their dissatisfaction with directors by displaying banners that claim they have been 'sold a dream, given a nightmare'.

The focus in the aftermath switched from the fans' violent behaviour to the role played by stewards, including their response to the pitch invasions and how they were overwhelmed by the surge towards the directors' box, which allegedly saw one female steward knocked to the ground. Attention has been thrust on to stadium operators LS185, which controls stewarding, with reports suggesting the club is keen to take over the stewarding budget and responsibility.

Investigations are ongoing into all of the day's events but the issues that led to the incident - and the way they were dealt with - are far too complex to be simply wrapped up with a sweeping statement blaming stewards and their responses, especially with such politics and emotions at play in this case. It does, however, highlight a crucial aspect of stadium safety - stewarding - that urgently needs thrusting to the top of the agenda for every organisation, agency or sports club that deals with crowd control.

The role of the steward has changed beyond recognition over the past 25 years and now it is vital that agencies join together to re-evaluate how stewards are trained so they can do their jobs effectively and be retained to ensure the safest environment for all spectators at crowded events.

As recently as the early 1990s, stewards were no more than supporters in tabards. Their roles began and ended on match days, their duties were assigned in an ad-hoc fashion and there were no official policies or training packages in place. It was only after the tragedy at Hillsborough that the footballing world stood up and agreed that more needed to be done to ensure the safety of spectators and staff at grounds.

Developing the roles of safety officers and enhancing the role and responsibility of stewards was among the priorities outlined to achieve this goal. Aston Villa FC - with the support of then Villa Park Police Commander Jim Chalmers - was one of the first clubs to benefit, as it developed its first ever Steward Training Programme. It was the passionate belief of all involved with the organisation that stewards should be properly trained, equipped, managed and led to ensure their competence to play a vital role in every event safety management operation that drove this development.

During the years that have followed, football authorities have developed a number of training programmes - each one more complex and demanding than the previous versions - from the red book back in 1995 to the latest training package (On The Ball) in 2010, which was produced by the football authorities and which the FSOA and the SGSA, formally the FLA, contributed to. This training package provided an innovative and interactive resource that, at the time, satisfied the NVQ level 2 recommendation requirements for stewards - as introduced in 2009 - and represented a commitment to supporting the highest level of stewarding.

But what started in 1995 with the first Football Authorities Steward Training programme has now grown out of all proportion and needs to be radically reviewed, reduced and streamlined to meet the actual training needs of a steward. There is also a need to review whether the Level 2 NVQ is too time consuming, bureaucratic and costly to sustain as the only recommended training standard, mainly due to the requirement for external assessment validation. Despite all the best intentions to ensure stewards are properly trained to deal with all the eventualities they could face whilst keeping spectators safe, the steward training and qualification pendulum has swung too far from nothing to extreme. The time and cost involved for a steward to obtain a Level 2 NVQ can be far too onerous for many sports clubs when many of them have a high wastage rate of steward personnel. The issue was highlighted during the London Olympics when a number of stewards were trained to an acceptable standard but were unable to complete a full qualification within the strict timeframe and therefore are no longer working within the industry.

Despite the strict training that goes into the Level 2 NVQ, which is provided by OFQUAL, candidates are never then required to refresh their qualifications, leading to the possibility of some stewards working to outdated practices and in disciplines no longer relevant to the role in this ever-changing industry. (Continued over page...)

To ensure all stewards are on the same page and are best trained to deal with the constantly developing challenges their roles present most efficiently, a suitable alternative qualification to the NVQ needs to be introduced. The FSOA, SGSA, EFL and Premier League have agreed to collectively look at this issue and are working together to identify the current issues with steward training whilst exploring options around an alternative training package and accreditation process. This would likely include the introduction of a refresher course every three years to ensure those working in the industry are up-to-date with the latest threats and stewarding techniques.

This alternative qualification would not depart significantly from the NVQ requirement - which was initially put in place in order to secure an exemption for in-house stewards employed directly by clubs from the requirement to be licensed by the SIA - but instead focus on developing the requirements of stewards' training for the future of all events, not just at football matches.

As the status, authority and competency of the Safety Officer has now improved beyond all recognition over the past 25 years, we now also need to re-examine the option of reintroducing self-training and self-assessment and self-qualification, which clubs are currently not allowed to do. The time is now right to allow and trust Safety Officers to train, assess and qualify their own personnel by giving them a Certificate in Stewarding Competency as was evidenced in 1999. In order for a successful overhaul of steward training and assessment processes, we must also take a look at exactly what we are now asking of our stewards - and how much they are paid. A selection of the vast guidance documents produced over the years to aid stewards gives some insight into just some of the additional challenges our stewards are now expected to face, including safely identifying and disposing of pyrotechnics. Many changes have also been made to the environments in which they work. Stadiums have had to become more diverse in their use and some stadiums have become more complex by design. Couple that with the way society has also changed and increasing threats of terrorism and the myriad demands that are placed on our stewards starts to become clearer. The fact that many are paid a fraction of what they could command having earned an NVQ in other industries goes some way to explaining why there are so few fully trained and qualified stewards currently available. The problem of recruitment and retention of stewards at both clubs and private agency companies has been increasing over the years, particularly since 2012, and unless something is done to attract more people to become stewards then the industry is going to suffer further to the detriment of spectator safety at events going forward. The Sports Ground Safety Authority is currently compiling the 6th edition of its Green Guide, which will include the National Occupational Standard it recommends clubs should train its stewards to. This therefore provides the perfect opportunity for authorities and organisations within the sports and events industries to work together to streamline the system and ensure everyone is on the same page.

Only by demanding ALL stewards - irrespective of whether they are club stewards working at sports stadia or agency staff controlling crowds at music concerts - are qualified to the same National Occupational Standard can we be sure that they are best trained to deal with the vast challenges their jobs throw at them - such as the violence that erupted at West Ham.

In an official club statement released in the the aftermath of the violent scenes at the London Stadium, West Ham confirmed that the safety of all supporters was 'always the club's number one priority'. Stewarding is a crucial aspect in the highly-complex and ever-evolving landscape of spectator safety and it's time every organisation involved in crowd control joins together to streamline the system so it truly supports all stewards for the benefit of every spectator hoping to enjoy a football match, concert or festival without fear.

*John Newsham is a Risk Management Consultant with 30 years' experience in stadium safety. He worked at Blackburn Rovers FC for 24 years, having started his career as a steward before building up to become the club's Safety Officer.

The FSOA in the press...

Following violence during the West Ham Vs. Burnley game, the FSOA was approached to write an article about the future of stewarding by Football & Stadium Management Magazine. The above article is what appeared in its April/May edition. The images below show how it appeared in print.



Spring AGM Conference 2018 Roundup



Thank you to all of our delegates and exhibitors who came along to our Spring 2018 AGM Conference and Exhibition at Stratford Manor Hotel.

The event, on March 20th and 21st, was another huge success packed with informative talks and interactive exercises to aid our delegates in their working lives. More than 20 exhibitors also attended to showcase the latest solutions and technology available in stadium safety.

The event gave members the chance to network with peers and industry experts to share their experiences, expertise, knowledge and best practices to help continue the FSOA's ongoing drive to improve all aspects of stadium and spectator safety. It also featured a packed programme of talks, Q&A sessions and interactive activities focusing on a range of topical issues such as national terrorism threats, crowd control and the impact of weather on match day operations.

Long-time friend of the FSOA, Andy Ashworth, then compered a fantastic evening of entertainment featuring two of our best ever speakers. Cricket legend Geoff Miller OBE, proved why he has formerly been voted as After Dinner Speaker of the Year with a lively recap of his career highlights and lowlights that had the crowd in fits of laughter before comedian Rod Woodward took to the stage for a sidesplittingly funny routine that ended the evening on an hysterical note.



New Chair appointed



Mark Miles has been appointed the new Chair of the FSOA, with Tamworth FC's Louise Shepherd voted in as the organisation's Vice Chair. Mark, West Bromwich Albion's Director of Operations, said it was a privilege to lead the FSOA and ensure it re-asserted its position as the relevant 'go-to place' for all information regarding stadium safety. Everyone at the FSOA would like to thank outgoing Chair, Sharon Cicco, for all of her hard work and dedication to the FSOA and wish Mark and Louise all the best in their new roles.

Thank you to our exhibitors:



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Latest Counter Terrorism campaign unveiled

Claire Worley, from the West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit, updated members on the current national terrorist threat picture, whilst highlighting the latest ACT (Action Counters Terrorism) campaign. The campaign is being rolled out to football clubs across the country, encouraging them to spread the message to supporters.

The activity is part of a wider drive to get the sports industry involved in raising awareness of terrorism and suspicious behaviour among visitors to venues and events.

FSOA members were told that they could make a significant contribution to helping keep local communities safe and were urged to take the steps needed to respond quickly should the threat level be raised to critical again in the future - as it was twice in 2017.

The latest ACT campaign video can be found by clicking <https://act.campaign.gov.uk>

A look at Steward Training

FSOA Business Development Manager, John Newsham, briefed delegates on the progress being made to create an alternative steward training and certification offering. Currently, the NVQ is the only officially accepted qualification but the training process is considered too complex by many, whilst candidates are not required to update their qualifications.

The FSOA is working with partners to create an alternative which would simplify the initial training and require refresher courses every three years to ensure stewards are up-to-date with the latest techniques and are able to deal efficiently with ever-changing challenges.

A lesson in Crowd Modelling

Dr Aoife Hunt and Kat Steinberg, both experts in people movement, briefed members about how Crowd Modelling can be used by football clubs to get an idea of realistic behaviours and crowd flow, and examine multiple hypothetical situations. The dynamic pair, both from Movement Strategies, also talked about instances where Crowd Modelling would be of no benefit.

Increase in membership fees given unanimous approval

Members unanimously voted to raise the membership fees for the first time in 10 years. The annual price of membership has stood at £100, inclusive of VAT, since 2008. Members have now voted to add VAT on to the price, taking the annual cost to £120.

6th edition 'Green Guide' update

Laura Strong, from the SGSA, updated members on the release of the much-anticipated 6th edition Green Guide draft. The draft is now out for consultation and people have until **April 27th** to put forward their comments. The Green Guide is used mainly by ground management, their professional advisors and the regulatory authorities to inform safety at sports grounds. The primary purpose is to provide guidance on the safe capacity, such as the number of spectators who can be accommodated during an event.

The Guide's secondary purpose is to identify good practice and standards against which existing and proposed structures and systems can be assessed and if possible improved. As well as being a practical document for clubs and their professional advisers, it has become an international design guide and is widely used by designers of stadium around the world.

The 6th edition takes into account of the improvements in the design and safety management of sports grounds since the current edition was published in 2008. It is not intended to alter the fundamental principles and purpose of the Guide or be used to ratchet up minimum standards, unless this is necessary on safety grounds.

Some of the new areas which are covered in the guide include:-

- Extension of management responsibility from all spectators in the ground to all people present at the ground (including sports ground and sub-contracted, staff, media personnel, medical providers)
- New guidance on the circulation and movement of spectators in those areas of the public domain that lie beyond the outer perimeter of the sports ground, but which are integral to the safe management of spectators and other personnel, both before and after an event, known as Zone EX.
- Crowd modelling is now used by stadium designers to improve crowd flows in and around the stadiums. The new Green Guide sets out the parameters by which crowd modelling is used.
- Fire engineering is used by stadium designers of the Green Guide, there will be more detail in an annex to follow, however there is a note of when and where fire engineering is best used.
- More detailed guidance on concourses, plus an understanding of levels of service, density and loading on concourse wall.
- Inclusion of smart stadia or lightbulb moment
- Recognition of the role played by mobile devices and social media in safety management and communications in general
- Concept of 'invacuation'. Stadiums must consider the implications of an incident outside the ground. Safety management options such as lockdown, partial evacuation and horizontal phased evacuation are explained.



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Working together to shape the future

Before the launch of the FSOA, the world of football safety was a very different place. Heavy-handed policing styles and hard engineering features such as high perimeter fences were used to achieve control. But, coupled with poorly maintained grounds, this control was achieved at the expense of safety and comfort for spectators.

The needs of safety and security were out of balance. Following a long history of tragedies at UK football grounds, numerous inquiries and reports all agreed that the safety of spectators was the responsibility of the sports grounds management. However, these were not enough to prevent the 1989 Hillsborough Stadium disaster when 96 football fans tragically died.

The FSOA was formed in 1992 to change the landscape of football safety and ensure such tragedies are never repeated. As an organisation, we are proud to have remained at the forefront of this industry, playing an integral role in the training of stewards and developments in stadium design whilst bridging the gap between clubs and authorities to ensure best safety practices are formulated and adhered to against a backdrop of ever-increasing threats.

Times continue to change, which is why we are now looking forward to the next phase of the FSOA's evolution and building on our solid foundations to remain a respected and relevant voice within the industry.

The FSOA recently surveyed members about the way they view the FSOA and where they would like to see it going in future. Thank you to all members who took the time to complete our surveys, which were created to give the FSOA Management Board a greater insight into the way members view the organisation and the direction they would like it to take in the future.

The results of our surveys show that the vast majority of our members continue to see their relationship with the organisation as integral to their job roles during a challenging time of budget cuts, lack of stewards and changing responsibilities, thanks mainly to the opportunities membership provides to share best practice, knowledge and expertise with peers.

However many of you are keen for the FSOA to have more of a 'voice' about industry issues and play a leading role with partner authorities regarding changes to policies and legislation. Whilst many of those who answered the surveys are positive about widening membership to other sports, the majority are against opening the organisation up to people from other roles within football clubs, other than stewards. As around half of those who responded to the surveys started their careers in stewarding, many agreed that their experiences would be of benefit to the Safety Officers, Stadium Managers and Operations Managers within the organisation.

The results of the surveys will now be used to build on the FSOA brand going forward, working with marketing consultants The M Word Media to build on the organisation's reputation as the 'go-to place' for information and expert guidance, as well as support on all aspects relating to stadium and spectator safety.



Transforming stadium safety over 25 years.

The future? That is yet to be written...

Spring AGM Conference 2018 Roundup

Putting knowledge into practice

Ian Kerr, from ID Resilience, led an interactive tabletop exercise which gave members the chance to share their ideas and best practice. This year's exercise, called 'Blackout', focused on an escalating scenario that started with a severe weather warning for high winds and flash flooding. Members worked with peers to discuss what considerations would need to be made on match day in such conditions and at what stage, if any, the game would be called off. **A debrief of the exercise can be found below.**



EXERCISE BLACKOUT

EXERCISE BLACKOUT OVERVIEW INTRODUCTION

Delegates participating in Exercise BLACKOUT included member Safety Officers from clubs throughout England and Wales in addition to representatives from various stewarding and security companies. Representatives from the Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA) were also in attendance.

Exercise BLACKOUT provided a developing scenario around a severe weather warning to engage delegates and encourage the sharing and review of response arrangements and capabilities in such circumstances.

The key objectives of the exercise were to;

- Increase awareness of contingency plans and key risks within football stadia, ensuring response is proportionate and effective
- Consider communication flows and mechanisms to further enhance understanding of roles and responsibilities
- Provide delegates with the opportunity to work through a developing scenario, designed to exercise key risks and elements of stadium contingency plans
- Provide a safe environment for learning to allow discussion and feedback of identified issues into the ongoing planning process

EXERCISE FORMAT

Exercise BLACKOUT was delivered as a table-top exercise, with delegates seated in syndicates within the exercise room. The exercise was based around a progressive scenario, resulting in a road traffic accident at the stadium road closure and progressing to major flooding compromising access and egress.

Delegates were invited to discuss their responses at the various scenario stages with facilitated feedback discussion allowing for the sharing of views and knowledge. 'Live' newscasts and simulated social media injects added to the realism of the scenario and influenced delegates considerations in respect of the management of media and communications.

1. Red Weather warning policy for travel:

Discussion ensued around the weather warning and whether or not the games should proceed. The real time example was relayed in relation to the recent heavy snow-storms. Discussion ensued around a club stating they were required to travel despite a red weather warning being in place. It was widely regarded that a stronger measure should be in place, perhaps through a policy to state that during Red weather warnings teams should not be required to travel as it is endangering the team, fans and other road users.

2. Social media engagement and use for quick communications:

The importance of now engaging with clubs social media teams was highlighted. In terms of quick communications, social media has to be incorporated into the safety officers' armoury to help warn and inform the public. Links and the most appropriate means of achieving this and who signs off the messages is important. Situation dependent, cross and multi-agency communications should be co-ordinated where possible. A suitable process for this should be discussed at the SAG.

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EXERCISE BLACKOUT

3. Impacts of snow and ice to our stadiums, contingencies we didn't think of! i.e impacts on Invacuation:

As the scenario developed, many safety officers discussed issues that arose as a result of the heavy snow fall. Impacts such as snow entering onto major areas within the seating bowl and also the clearing of the snow and where to place the snow. Contingencies for the removal of snow from pitch-side had to be deployed to ensure the area was clear for any potential required invacuation.

4. Staff welfare in extreme or severe weather:

Staff welfare was then discussed and roles and responsibilities were considered in response to the RTA and continuing severe weather. Many safety officers also recounted how they flexibly changed hours during severe weather to accommodate for staff to get home and also measures such as hot drinks and frequent breaks were used to ensure staff were fit to deliver their duties in light of the severe weather.

5. Importance of coordinated communications messages:

Following on from the previous point, in light of the vehicle crash during the scenario, co-ordinated communications were discussed as a key factor in the incident response and management. The ability to agree the most appropriate message was deemed important in addition to considering the many sources that would be required to be briefed on the message, such as stewards and other internal staff who all public facing.

6. Early engagement in incident management to establish the facts quickly (CT or non CT RTA) Senior staff to have a ready link to Police Gold to dispel or prove quickly:

Establishing the key facts was agreed as being vitally important. In response to the car crash colliding with 2 people it was important to establish the circumstance and top react in a proportional manner. Given that a known terrorist attack methodology is a vehicular attack a quick link to Police Gold to ascertain the most detailed intelligence and information is of vital importance in managing the situation effectively.

7. Review response arrangement around utilities providers:

The timescales of utilities providers could have a bearing on many factors such as whether there is appropriate water for services etc can be maintained to allow the match to continue or go ahead. Contact with utilities providers is recommended to be refreshed with details held on file to allow quick communication with the most appropriate person when required.

8. Importance of being able to respond by standing up the incident management group to help deal with the wider implications of the incident:

As the scenarios developed consideration for incident response teams was discussed. The ability to convene an incident response team was deemed important and will help ensure that the key people are grouped together with the authority to make the key and important decisions which can thereafter be quickly implemented and communicated.

KEY LEARNING

Whilst Exercise BLACKOUT highlighted responses and many real-life examples shared by clubs and safety officers as a result of the recent snow (Beast from the East) which was a timely resume of how these challenges were met, considered and managed. Matters such as Business Continuity, Customer Support, Staff Welfare, Brand Protection, Reputational Damage, Insurance, Corporate Liability and other Legal Implications were mentioned and given the media coverage that, it is recommended that clubs / venues give consideration to their current arrangements and review them as considered necessary.

SUMMARY

In summary, Exercise BLACKOUT delivered upon the aims and objectives with the main observation of the session being the benefits to Safety Officers of being able to interact with their peers and other agencies to discuss relevant and topical issues pertaining to their roles and responsibilities at their respective venues. Exercise BLACKOUT demonstrated the strength of experience and planning which clearly already exists across the multitude of venues which are represented within the FSOA. The consequences of the scenario were considered by delegates and the overall actions relating to the review of response and management procedures and subsequent staff awareness, training and support were recognised as key actions to take away. The crucial role of accurate incident logging and policy logging, allowing Safety Officers the opportunity to record rationale behind key decisions was another strong feature of learning during Exercise BLACKOUT. Many of the responses from delegates during feedback centred around the need to review respective venue response plans and a common recurring theme was the desire for further ID Resilience exercise exposure, specific to their own venues, which would allow for venue-specific staff to be exposed to the benefits of exercising and learning in the style of Exercise BLACKOUT.

Overall, Exercise BLACKOUT provided an excellent opportunity for testing of existing response plans and procedures and sharing of information in a safe environment and ID Resilience would like to thank all delegates for their attendance and participation.

NEWS FOR MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome new members: Andrew Tim Cutbill, from All England Lawn Tennis and Dave Langton, from Notts County FC, who replaces Phil Plackett.

Please also join us in welcoming new Corporate Partners, Controlled Events, and Event Detection Dogs (EDD)

We wish the best of luck to Vaughan Pollard in future endeavours after leaving Liverpool FC. Best wishes also go to John Thorogood, who has left Boston United FC to take up the position as Safety Officer at Spalding United FC and Paul Lewis, former Deputy Safety Officer at Leicester City FC, who has taken up a new position at Nottingham Forest FC.

The East Midlands regional meeting will be held at Derby county FC on May 24th May. Please contact Paul Lewis paul.lewis@nottinghamforest.co.uk for more information and to confirm attendance.

The NW regional meeting will be held at Wigan Athletic FC on May 15th. Please contact the FSOA office info@fsoa.org.uk for further information and to confirm attendance.



CONSIDERATIONS CLUBS SHOULD MAKE AMID THE EMERGING THREAT OF DRONES

Industry analysts Price Waterhouse Cooper recently suggested that the drone market is expected to be worth over \$127billion within the next few years. Whilst the majority of this will be for business applications, one major area of growth will be the consumer drone market with as many as 1 million new drones entering the airspace every month.

Within the sporting arena we have already seen;

- Drones crashing into spectators
- Drones delivering contentious objects into the arenas
- Drones being used to distribute leaflets
- Drone being used to deliver drugs

Whilst the threat of drones remains as an emerging consideration, it is vital that safety professionals consider strategies to observe and build practises to safeguard their respective organisations. Whilst there are now a plethora of providers offering solutions, safety offices need to ensure they consider solutions that are legal and in line with current UK legislation. (Currently effecting based solutions such as Jammers and virtual fences are not permitted)

FSOA partner Dedrone believe that the first thing any safety officer needs to do is to understand: 'Do I have a problem?'. This can be achieved by auditing your airspace, which is a cost-effective way to see whether drones pose a problem in your airspace.

Please consider this as the start of a new strategy and be aware that contrary to what you may have been told, there is no miracle cure for this new threat as it will continue to evolve over time.

To find out more, contact Amit Samani (amit.samani@dedrone.com)

JOB VACANCIES

Jobs are currently available for a Safety Officer at Tottenham Hotspur and for a Safety and Security Manager at Manchester City FC. For more information about the roles, visit <http://www.tottenhamhotspur.com/jobs/> or jobs@cityfootball.com

For more information about the FSOA, to learn more about the benefits of being a member or to enquire about advertising in this newsletter for as little as £50 per month (+VAT) visit www.fsoa.org.uk, email info@fsoa.org.uk or call 01254 841771