



# Safety in Outdoor Sports Grounds

The following details highlight some of the hazards and risks that might exist in your sports ground. They are by no means exhaustive and will vary depending on your own particular type of ground. As a starting point use the blank sheet provided in this pack to carry out your own simple risk assessment.

## Main Types of Risk

### Slips, Trips and Falls Arising From:

Defective terracing, e.g. crumbling or subsiding sections and the presence of weeds.

Poor lighting to stands, stairways, entrances and exits.

Steep steps without handrails or guardrails, particularly at exits.

Spectators climbing on structures such as boundary walls, lighting pylons and advertising hoarding, in order to get a better view.

Lack of crush barriers dividing steep terracing.

## Managing the Risk

- Introduce an inspection and maintenance programme and include the removal of weeds and debris.
- Ensure that hazardous areas such as stairways, all exit routes, steep terracing, and covered stands are adequately lit.
- Provide adequate handrails to all stairways and steps, particularly if wider than 1.6m (divide stairways if necessary).
- Provide deterrents against climbing on structures, e.g. razor wire (placed well out of reach) and provide warning signs in the vicinity of such deterrents. Periodically examine all barbed wire and razor wire to ensure it remains safely out of reach.
- Provide crush barriers to terracing, particularly if steep. Include these in any inspection and maintenance programme.

### Crowd Disorder Which can manifest itself in:

Crushing

Fighting

Property damage

The throwing of missiles

Pitch Invasions

Unauthorised entry to segregated areas

- Introduce a selective search programme of spectators prior to entry to the ground. Ensure that bottles, tins and other potential missiles are not sold from catering facilities within the ground. Provide adequate spectator segregation at confrontational events. Physical barriers and distance are both useful factors in deterring the throwing of missiles.
- Find out the number of people which can be safely accommodated in each part of the ground and introduce an accurate means of calculating the number of people entering the ground in order to prevent overcrowding, e.g. ticket only events.
- Regularly inspect all crush barriers, segregation fences, handrails and pitch perimeter fences for damage, and repair as necessary.
- Provide trained stewards to direct spectators safely through the ground, monitor crowds, control ingress and egress points and to assist in safe and swift evacuation of the ground as required.
- Provide an effective communication system, audible in all parts of the ground and manned by trained personnel.



### Fire Risks Arising From

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| Accumulations of rubbish particularly below stands.      | ■ Introduce an inspection and clean up system after each event to ensure that rubbish does not accumulate.   |
| Unsafe flammable structures                              | ■ Ensure that exit routes and final exits are clearly visible by the provision of signage and brightly painted aisles. Final exit gates and doors should be capable of being easily opened at all times. |
| Poorly maintained and unmarked exit routes.              | ■ Draw up an emergency evacuation plan for the ground.<br>(The Police, Ambulance and Fire Authority will be happy to help).  |
| Exit gates blocked by vehicles or locked.                | ■ Ensure that access routes for emergency vehicles are kept free from obstruction.   |
| Lack of an emergency or contingency plan for the ground. | ■ Appoint a responsible person, fully briefed on the emergency plan, with a master key for all gates and access to the communication system.   |
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### Others

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| Injuries from machinery during ground maintenance or from vehicles during exiting from events. | ■ Train all grounds staff in the use of equipment and machinery. Provide necessary protective equipment, e.g. goggles, gloves and shin pads for strimming. Introduce a programme of planned maintenance for all machinery and equipment. |
| Electric shock from inappropriate electrical equipment being used out of doors.                | ■ Introduce vehicle and pedestrian segregation systems.<br>■ All electrical equipment used out of doors should be suitably insulated and should be supplied through a circuit protected by a 30mA Residual Current Device.               |
| Exposure to pesticides.  | ■ Training on the storage and use of pesticides should be given.   |

#### ■ For Further Information:

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