

FINAL Minutes

SSAG Meeting held on Friday 5 January 2024 @ 11am
at the London Stadium

Attendees:	Sheila Roberts (SRO)	LBN – Licensing and Regulatory Services - Chair
	[REDACTED]	LBN – Licensing and Regulatory Services - minutes
	Leah Pratten	LBN – Licensing and Regulatory Services
	Louise Jeffery	ABBA Voyager
	Kevin Jones	ABBA Voyager
	Mark Ashley	British Transport Police
	Sara-Ellen Williams	LLDC
	John Walker	LLDC
	Peter Swordy	London Stadium 185 Limited
	Darren Raczkowski	London Stadium 185 Limited
	Jason Eglash	London Stadium 185 Limited
	Vanessa Ferreira	London Stadium 185 Limited
	Andy Fraser	London Stadium 185 Limited
	Malcolm Gillespie	Metropolitan Police Services
	Andy Sheldon	Metropolitan Police Services
	Ann Ramage	Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA)
	Ken Scott	Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA)
	Matthew Atkinson	St John Ambulance
	Stuart Phillips	South Eastern Rail
	Gary Ashe	Transport for London
	Darryl Morgan	West Ham United Football Club
	Ben Illingworth	West Ham United Football Club
	Nicola Keye	West Ham United Football Club
	Alison Stuart	Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield

MINUTES	ACTIONS UPDATE FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES	Action
1 Aug 23	Persistent standing in lowers & banning update LS185 informed members they are reviewing the whole process, from banning, enforcement and messaging to develop a concise and overarching strategy to deal with the issue. WHUFC will look to support and work with the Stadium on implementing changes.	
5 Sept 23	<u>Update on Persistent standing in lowers & banning update</u> Ongoing discussions between LS185, WHUFC and the SGSA reviewing mitigation actions for persistent standing in the lowers.	Ongoing
20 Oct 23	Platform 13 update Second meeting to be arranged between GA (TFL) and WHUFC to further discuss the Accessibility Shuttle Bus service on what can be delivered once the new station entrance and public realm are open.	GA
5 Jan 24	<u>Update</u> Discussions to be continued and will be signed off at the Westfield Transport update meeting.	Closed

<p>20 Oct 23</p> <p>Ingress / egress / road closures No formal process for vehicles parked in the bus lane during road closures. EK to follow up with LBN Highways.</p> <p>5 Jan 24</p> <p><u>Update</u> <i>Issues have been raised with LBN Highways and currently going through the legal process - work in progress.</i></p>		<p>Followed up at TAG</p>																											
<p>AGENDA ITEMS</p>		<p>Actions</p>																											
<p>1. Introductions and apologies</p> <p>Meeting convened and apologies received from: Bes Yemane (Stratford Cross), Catherine Wattley (MPS), Chris Betts (URW), Christopher May (LFB), Howard Clark (Sadler’s Wells), Jim Jordan & Peter Ng (LBN), Louise Duncan (ABBA), Neal King (TFL), Thomas Bleach (MTREL)</p>																													
<p>2. Minutes</p> <p>Minutes from the last meeting held on 20 October 2023 agreed.</p>																													
<p>3. Strategic learnings and actions</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="108 1099 943 1458"> <tr> <td>29 Oct 23</td> <td>WH vs Everton</td> <td>KO: 1pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 Nov 23</td> <td>WH vs Arsenal (Carabao Cup)</td> <td>KO: 7.30pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>09 Nov 23</td> <td>WH vs Olympiacos</td> <td>KO: 8pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12 Nov 23</td> <td>WH vs Nottingham Forest</td> <td>KO: 2pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 Dec 23</td> <td>WH vs Crystal Palace</td> <td>KO: 2pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14 Dec 23</td> <td>WH vs SC Freiburg</td> <td>KO: 8pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17 Dec 23</td> <td>WH vs Wolves</td> <td>KO: 2pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>23 Dec 23</td> <td>WH vs Man United</td> <td>KO: 12:30pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>02 Jan 24</td> <td>WH vs Brighton</td> <td>KO: 7:30pm</td> </tr> </table> <p>Overview of the above nine fixtures shared. Total of 422,667 attendees across the games. 244 ejections. Persistent standing is still an ongoing challenge, LS185 routinely share block details with WHUFC for actioning. No pyros within the ground and very few outside for the UEFA fixtures.</p> <p>LBN attend all medium and high-risk matches and a DPI is available for the SGSA audit.</p> <p>As part of the UEFA rules, clubs are expected to allocate and provide 200 seats to away fans within the home area, which poses a huge amount of risk and challenges. For the larger games from the quarterfinals onwards, 400/500 away fans are expected. LS185 have developed a plan to support these away fans in the home areas. London Stadium have raised their concerns on numerous occasions with UEFA, as has WHUFC, no changes have been forthcoming despite the potential risk to the games, safety and enjoyment for fans. WHUFC reiterated that the UEFA rule is an ever-growing problem. The club are working on a number of parameters to mitigate risk, including ticketing and reviewing roaming addresses and data. Tickets sales under review.</p> <p>Chair announced that as the Licensing Authority, LBN would consider writing to UEFA to share risk and safety related concerns following ongoing observations.</p>		29 Oct 23	WH vs Everton	KO: 1pm	1 Nov 23	WH vs Arsenal (Carabao Cup)	KO: 7.30pm	09 Nov 23	WH vs Olympiacos	KO: 8pm	12 Nov 23	WH vs Nottingham Forest	KO: 2pm	3 Dec 23	WH vs Crystal Palace	KO: 2pm	14 Dec 23	WH vs SC Freiburg	KO: 8pm	17 Dec 23	WH vs Wolves	KO: 2pm	23 Dec 23	WH vs Man United	KO: 12:30pm	02 Jan 24	WH vs Brighton	KO: 7:30pm	<p>LBN</p>
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<p>Members debated concerns and challenges associated with increasing numbers of international fans attending Premier League fixtures and not affiliated to any one team. WHUFC confirmed that processes are in place to ensure away fans are not wearing colours/badges/scarfs and only go through one turnstile for their own safety. SGSA feel assured that the current processes in place is working as best as it can.</p> <p>MPS Overview shared by MPS. Police dealt with ejections, pitch incursions, racial abuse, ASB, missile throwing and drugs related issues across the 9 fixtures. 23 home and 27 away suspects dealt with for offences over the 9 fixtures. 12 arrests at the SC Freiburg UEFA game. . WHUFC confirmed that banning letters are being sent out. SR requested the banning schedule update from WHUFC. SGSA would like to see a comparison from last year’s police data. MPS informed the group that numbers are similar to last year’s data.</p> <p>Following the Casey report, it has been acknowledged that drugs have been a huge factor to fan behaviour. WHUFC have a higher drugs arrest than other Premier League clubs and it is down to the proactive work undertaken by LS185 and WHUFC as well as the MPS drugs operation mainly based at the Away gate.</p> <p>Police commended the CCTV system in operation, which assisted in identifying and capturing the incidents.</p> <p>LLDC added that they saw a high number of their street furniture ticketed by SC Freiburg as well as ASB and public urination.</p> <p>There are up to three police-planning meetings before every single fixture dependent on risk.</p> <p>LLDC have a comprehensive CCTV operation monitoring drug use on the park. They have offered to assist LS185 and the police when they have operations in place ahead of games.</p>	<p>BI (WUFC) AS</p>
<p>4. Upcoming fixtures</p> <p><u>07 Jan 24 - WH vs Bristol City (FA Cup) KO: 2pm</u> No concerns or risk groups. BAU fixture with about 37/38 away coaches. Working with the Licensing team in relation to potential Bristol fans arriving early on the park.</p> <p><u>1 Feb 24 -WH vs Bournemouth KO: 7.30pm</u> No issues, 2,100 away fans expected about 6 coaches.</p> <p><u>11 Feb 24 -WH vs Arsenal KO: 2pm</u> Risk categorisation still to be confirmed and will be fed back.</p> <p><u>26 Feb 24- WH vs Brentford KO: 8pm</u> BAU, no concerns. Police are planning to do a joint operation with Brentford on Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG).</p> <p><u>09 Mar 24 - WH vs Burnley KO: 3pm</u> No concerns, BAU fixture.</p>	

<p><u>14 Mar 24</u> Europa home fixture pending updates. European fixtures go into extra time in the second leg; with the first leg only going to 90 minutes a game.</p> <p><u>17 Mar 24 - WH vs Aston Villa KO: 3pm</u> No concerns and will be BAU fixture</p> <p><u>02 Apr 24 - WH vs Tottenham KO: 7:45pm</u> Categorisation shared.</p> <p><u>BTP</u> West Ham fans have been the best performers this year in the southern region in terms of arrests and incidents.</p>	
<p>5. Ingress / Egress</p> <p>There is a meeting next week with LBN Highways and partners to discuss the update on the Westfield cycle works that has an impact on events and the Montfichet Road update as well as Platform 13.</p> <p>No concerns raised by other partners. Ingress and egress process currently under review and will be presented to LBN on completion.</p> <p>JJ (LBN) to update on the ATTRO.</p>	<p>LS185</p> <p>JJ</p>
<p>6. Road closures and impact on ABBA Arena</p> <p>ABBA Area shared their concerns in relation to double parking outside and around the venue. Separate transport and planning meetings will be organised, ABBA parking concerns added to that agenda.</p>	<p>AT (LBN)</p>
<p>7. North Bar update</p> <p>Four trial runs of the use of the North Bar to stagger egress successfully completed. No record of any disorderly conduct. LS185 are looking at increasing the capacity and would like permission from the Licensing Authority to do so. JE to share capacity calculations with LBN.</p> <p>Chair reminded partners that it is an offence to take alcohol off the island, the Premises Licence only includes on sales and not off sales. There are challenges around enforcement of this. LBN recommended that West Ham communicate this to fans as part of the ground rules and conditions. BI (WHUFC) confirmed that comms had been circulated to fans and announcements go out on social media. SR (LBN) requested sight of the comms issued to fans.</p> <p>LS185 added that issues with off sales forms part of the steward briefing and comms published on their socials.</p>	<p>JE (LS185)</p> <p>BI (WHUFC)</p>

8. SGSA update

St Denis Convention

On the 31 October, the UK formally ratified the St Denis Convention on an integrated safety, security and service approach at football matches and other sports events. This Convention is the only internationally binding instrument to establish an integrated approach based on three interdependent pillars: safety, security and service.

SGSA are the UK representatives at the Convention, it is a good platform to share the safety issues raised at Stadium SAGs. KS (SGSA) added that the problem persists around all stadia and the founding principal of allowing any visiting fans is that you are able to provide a safe facility. There are a number of clubs pushing back on the 15% purely on the basis that they cannot provide adequate safe segregation required and that is a legitimate reason to go back to UEFA as there is a clear risk. This is all touched upon in the Green Guide. The Convention is the right forum to raise these concerns.

The Chair requested sight of evidence on which other clubs have based their objection on the 15%.

SGSA

SGSA would like WHUFC to capture evidence of all their concerns for the SGSA to share at the Convention. They added that the UK are ahead of many of the international counterparts on many of the safety areas.

WHUFC

Council of Europe (CofE)

SGSA will take up some of the UEFA issues raised at the CofE. Fan behaviour and Ultras who have a large say with UEFA competition fixtures and arrangements.

Near Misses

Near misses can provide vital information, which could contribute to preventing future disasters. LS185 record near misses in numerous formats/ways on event day and reported to the board. Learnings are building in on event days with continual improvement and development.

It is important that near misses are recorded by grounds, and investigated to find out what happened, why, and how it might be prevented from happening again. SGSA guidance on Safety Certification states that: The LA should always convene a meeting of the SAG as soon as possible after any significant incident or “near miss” at a sports ground in order to ascertain whether there were any breaches of the safety certificate and whether the operations manual and/or safety certificate should be amended.

The SGSA has begun to keep a central record of near misses at sports grounds which are brought to the attention of our local inspectors to identify any trends, learning points etc.

Pyrotechnics

There’s been some good practice from a few grounds lately about responses to pyro incidents at clubs:

1. Stevenage - the club CEO and Chairman issued a club statement saying how the throwing of pyro was not acceptable and this has a significant positive impact, with no, more pyro’s (so far) from Stevenage.
2. Crawley Town – published a strong message from the safety officer on its website, ” The use of highly dangerous and toxic pyrotechnics and the missile throwing under the cover of the smoke put not only the rest of the crowd in that area at risk but also the players and stewards. If these people were genuine supporters like the rest of the amazing fans they wouldn’t put our Club at risk of fines and points deductions.”

<https://www.crawleytownfc.com/news/2023/september/a-message-from-the-safety-officer/>

The SGSA’s pyrotechnics toolkit continues to be available for use by grounds:
<https://sgsa.org.uk/pyrotechnics-education>.

SIA Sports Ground Exemption – Policy Guidance

See <https://sgsa.org.uk/sgsa-policy-guidance-sia-sport-exemption/>. The revised GSC will be issued in the next few weeks.

Martyn’s Law

In the King’s Speech earlier this month, it was confirmed that Martyn’s Law would form part of the Government’s legislative programme. The Home Office has updated its Martyn’s Law factsheet, which details what is known at this moment in time. There is also new Martyn’s Law landing page on ProtectUK, which includes information on good security practices. When the SGSA have further information, this will be shared.

Persistent Standing

There has been some good practice in the uppers; however, more work is required in other areas across the stadium in both the home and away sections where supporters are still standing. In terms of PS, it is illegal and against Premier League conditions of entry and not safe. SGSA need to look at how they will help to facilitate safe standing. The 2019 Conservative Party manifesto pledged that if the SGSA can produce guidance that could convince them that standing could be implemented safely, it would then be considered. SGSA prepared a report, which contained and outlined three key points to support safe standing: one to reduce capacity, the second remove fans in the highest risk area and relocate them to the lower risk zone, and thirdly installation of physical apparatus.

SGSA are encouraging clubs on the journey towards managing the risks, as safety management on its own will not be sufficient. There is an increase in the numbers of fans preferring to stand throughout the course of the match.

The SGSA recommend a re-evaluation of the Persistent Standing Risk Management Plan as the current plan only produces ways to tackle the issues, which are currently not working well.

WHUFC
LS185

The SGSA would like to know the full procedure/timeline from the time persistent standing is identified including actions taken by WHUFC once in receipt of the data provided by LS185. WHUFC confirmed that they write to fans in the areas of concern about persistent standing. Banning for persistent standing may not be the solution going forward. WHUFC shared the details of their banning protocol, which does not include persistent standing.

LS185
WHUFC

The SGSA reiterated that persistent standing is a safety risk and WHUFC must formulate a plan to address this. SGSA suggested a working group to review and debate the risks and agree a suitable safe solution. Reviewing each element as some zones are more lively and at risk. Prime objective is fan safety at the Stadium.

WHUFC

NK (WHUFC) echoed the SGSA’s objectives ensuring fans are safe whilst in the stadium. Safety risk mitigations are in place which include some blocks being closed off and the installation of rails in the uppers. **The club will undertake a review of the persistent standing strategy.** WHUFC added that the gradient in the lowers is very low. The SGSA have identified that gradient is not the only risk factor to access progressive crowd collapse but how fans celebrate the goals as a large crowd can create a force that could be damaging on any level.

WHUFC

AR (SGSA) last inspection was 20 August 2023 PL fixture v Chelsea. This was a well planned and implanted event. Exit was tested which was excellent through to Stratford Station. SGSA acknowledged that Zone Ex arrangements were impressive.

<p>Follow-up actions from SGSA observations at the fixture included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comms risks • Persistent Standing Plan CP23 and associated plans such as ASB Plan and Ticketing Strategy worth a fresh look at and a review • Met with JE (LS185) for a familiarisation of the Safety Management Systems <p>The SGSA commended the open and transparent relationship and comms between partners at the London Stadium.</p>	<p>WHUFC LS185</p>
<p>9. Annual Audit update</p> <p>LBN undertook the annual audit end of 2023 pending the update on the Fire Risk assessment, which went well.</p> <p>The Fire Strategy, which was last written in 2014, is being updated with a consulted. LS185 are undertaking a new Fire Risk Assessment. Fire Action plan currently being worked through and will be shared when completed.</p>	<p>LS185</p>
<p>10 West Ham capacity increase</p> <p>No official application has been submitted.</p> <p>LS185 reminded the club that they are required to officially approach them to request any potential increase in capacity. NK (WHUFC) will update SAG members.</p>	<p>NK(WHUF)</p>
<p>13. Review of SAG membership</p> <p>The Chair put up for discussion the plan to split the SAG meeting into two parts, island/red line concerns and Zone Ex with a dial in option for the Zone Ex partners.</p> <p>Members all approved and agreed new SAG meeting format. Changes implemented as of 1st March 2024.</p>	
<p>14. Safety related issues raised by fan groups</p> <p>No safety related concerns raised. SAG chair expressed thanks to JH (fans liaison member) for his work with the fan group and extended their best wishes for his future venture.</p>	
<p>15. Any other football safety related business</p> <p>Should WHUFC win the Europa League on Wednesday 22 May the victory bus parade will take place in the borough and on a similar route as that held last year.</p>	
<p>16. Date of next Football SAG</p> <p>Friday 31 May 2024</p>	