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T-RV (2003) 1

**European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events
and in particular at Football Matches (T-RV)**

**Recommendation Rec (2003) 1 of the Standing Committee
on the role of social and educational measures
in the prevention of violence in sport
and handbook on the prevention of violence in sport**

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The Standing Committee of the European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in particular at Football Matches;

In accordance with Article 9.1.c of the Convention;

Having regard to Article 3, paragraphs 2 and 5 of the Convention;

Recalling its Recommendation N°2/89 on comprehensive report on measures to counter hooliganism;

Having regard to the Council of Europe's Integrated Project on "Responses to violence in everyday life in a democratic society";

Noting that violence and misbehaviour amongst spectators at sports events, and in particular at football matches, have not been eradicated, and is moving increasingly from within stadia to town centres and other places;

Considering that such violence is part of a wider social phenomenon, which adversely affects genuine law-abiding supporters and local residents and that an integrated approach is needed to counter it;

Noting the many significant improvements since the Heysel tragedy, for example on police activity and co-ordination, stadia infrastructure, crowd management and video monitoring, organisation (most notably ticketing), stadium bans and the use of the criminal law at national and international level have had a real impact in reducing violence, particularly near and within stadia;

Noting various positive initiatives in different countries with regard to educational and social measures at national and international levels to prevent violence;

Drawing on the experience gained at recent major tournaments such as the World Cup in 2002 or the European Football Championship in 2000, which have demonstrated that making arrangements to accompany and welcome supporters is useful and effective;

Considering that the further development and use of such preventive measures will contribute to a further reduction of spectator violence and will provide structural support to those involved in the organisation and management of major sports events;

Aware of the need to place a greater emphasis on prevention within the framework of the overall international policy to fight hooliganism in order to supplement the necessary conventional security measures and to ensure that they are kept in balance;

Recommends to the Parties to the Convention:

That they take preventive social and educative measures aiming at improving the welcoming and coaching of supporters, with regard to their national circumstances, drawing inspiration from the principles and initiatives presented in the *Handbook on prevention of violence in sport* appended herewith, notably by:

- setting-up a fan coaching policy, developing fan embassies and the use of accompanying persons;
- encouraging clubs to develop closer relations with their supporters, to value the official supporters' clubs, to stimulate their setting up and to give them a role in the context of club management and life of the club;
- making the clubs aware of the role that they can play in their social environment;
- enabling national and local authorities, and also other bodies to play a major role in developing policy measures for preventing violence.

Calls upon all sport organisations, such as FIFA and UEFA and national football associations, to assist in these aims with all the means available to them.

Appendix to Recommendation Rec (2003) 1

Handbook on the prevention of violence in sport

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Introduction

The prevention of spectator violence is a necessity for many sports events in every country of Europe.

The concept takes many forms and corresponds to widely differing realities in practice.

Preventive activities vary widely, ranging from evening remedial lessons for child supporters run by football clubs, to adventure sport activities organised for hooligans at weekends, to well-publicised fan embassies at major tournaments, and fair play campaigns. Activities are also organised by private associations on their own initiative, and others are run under government programmes carried out by public or semi-public institutions.

Even if the philosophies and the political lines behind them vary, these schemes as a whole prove highly useful and are definitely effective.

The promotion of a more consistent approach to problems that are common to many different countries is desirable. This is particularly important in the context of international matches or tournaments.

This manual is designed to identify and promote existing good practice so that individual countries may learn from each other's experiences. It is not intended to be prescriptive. It is a menu from which each member state may select according to its needs and circumstances.

Most incidents at sports events stem from either defective infrastructure, or inadequate organisation (sale of too many tickets, spectator areas with insufficient capacity) or the poor organisation, or actions of the security staff. It is now possible to take the view that, if national legislation and security regulations are complied with, the recommendations made in the European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events are applied, and the crowd is well managed, the kind of disasters that happened in the 1980s and early 1990s can now be avoided (although the circulation of spectators and ticket management are still areas of concern, in the latter case especially where international tournaments are concerned, because of the existence of black markets).

I. General principles behind a prevention policy

A. The current situation as regards hooliganism

In this early part of the 21st century, spectator violence at football grounds still remains a topical and disturbing problem, in spite of all the efforts made and resources invested over the past twenty years or so.

Most European countries are affected to a greater or lesser extent. However, the problem takes different forms. In most countries, the situation has been stabilising, with violence shifting from inside football grounds to outside, including urban areas and city centres. In some countries the nature of those involved in such violence has also changed. Football fans include young people from difficult neighbourhoods and hooliganism is becoming linked to urban violence.

1. Clubs and leagues

Violence has occurred at football grounds ever since football became a spectator sport, namely since the 1870s in England and the early years of the 20th century on the continent.

Spectator violence, whether spontaneous or planned, is most closely associated with professional football, though in some countries it is also to be found in the amateur game and in a variety of other sports.

The contemporary football world also faces violence of a premeditated kind. This is group violence, in the form of physical aggression or vandalism, engaged in by hard-core groups of supporters. These hard-core groups follow a particular club and systematically seek confrontation with their counterparts from rival clubs. They regard themselves as elite supporters and their membership of a group of hooligans as a “way of life” which helps to add value to their social identity.

This violence may take a relatively organised form. Some hard-core groups make use of new communications technologies (GSM, the Internet, and so on) when planning and carrying out their acts of violence.

2. International tournaments

International tournaments are one-off large-scale events where considerable spectator movements and significant crowds have to be managed over a fairly long period of time.

Over the years there have been a number of serious incidents of disorder.

In most places, virtually no incidents occur inside football grounds during such tournaments; most incidents happen in city centres, after matches or in the days between them.

B. The need for preventive measures to combat violence in sport

A large number of practical measures have been introduced since the Heysel tragedy to prevent violence, both by states and by international co-operation, relating to police activity, infrastructure improvements, crowd management and video monitoring, better organisation (ticketing). This has included the use of the criminal law.

In contrast, while many proactive educational or social initiatives have been launched at local level to prevent football supporters resorting to violence, there is no common or co-ordinated approach towards prevention at international or pan-European level.

It is therefore desirable that greater attention and emphasis should be given to proactive preventive measures at these levels. These should be seen as complementing conventional security measures. An appropriate balance needs to be maintained between these different measures.

While the constitutional arrangements will vary from country to country, in most of them local authorities are likely to have a major role to play in developing and providing the various measures described in this manual for preventing violence in sport. Indeed, the lowest tier of public institutions, particularly city councils, may need to be catalysts in prevention policies and to give impetus to activities involving sports organisations or associations.

II. Initiatives and preventive measures

A. Relations between clubs and supporters

1. Introduction

The relationship between clubs and supporters provides a framework for a number of preventive measures. The clubs should take responsibility for initiating such measures.

It would seem natural for sports clubs and federations to adopt a stronger fan support policy, thus starting a process by which they draw closer to their fans, forging a new social link.

2. Supporters' charter

In an ideal world, a joint charter should be drawn up by the club and the representatives of its supporters' associations, setting out the club's obligations to its supporters and the supporters' obligations towards the club and clearly defining each party's rights and duties. This would help to formalise the relationship between clubs and supporters.

A supporters' charter could cover membership, consultation and information, accessibility, ticketing policy, merchandise, community activity, and loyalty rewards. It should be based on communication with the club, and also involve partnerships with local authorities and the media, and be centred on the values of fair play in sport.

UEFA could encourage national associations to set out a possible way forward, using positive examples.

3. Club officials responsible for supporter relations and associations of fans

Clubs should value supporters' associations, encourage their setting up and consult them regularly on issues that affect supporters. The more such groups are involved in the club's decision making, the more they are likely to be committed to the creation of an enjoyable trouble-free environment for all spectators. This has been particularly noticeable in the anti-racism initiatives adopted by clubs and supporters' groups in many countries.

All professional clubs in Germany have successfully adopted a system whereby a club official with decision-making authority has been made responsible for relations with fans, so as to ensure that supporters' associations receive support and that the process of communication between club and fans is a concrete and permanent one. This is a requirement from UEFA for all clubs in international competitions.

4. Supporters' departments

Larger clubs could consider establishing specific "supporters' departments" to manage all aspects of their relationships with supporters. These will vary from club to club but may include ticketing, fixture list, information, organisation of travel to matches and regulations. Many clubs employ supporters in these departments. Part of the club management structure, they provide a specific interface between the club and its supporters.

B. The club's role in its social environment

1. Working with the community

As clubs have a high symbolic value, they are uniquely placed to play a leading role within their neighbourhood, their community and the whole of their local environment throughout the week. The club can play a pivotal role in supporting broader social policies and can represent a genuine driving force for the promotion of sport and for encouraging the learning process for young people, and even for supporting good citizenship. Football's link with society cannot be limited to match days, or stop where the sporting competition ends.

There are various noteworthy examples which show the way and deserve adoption elsewhere.

One is the community programme run in England. This may typically comprise a partnership with the local authority's educational services, under which the club organises remedial lessons for children who have difficulties at school. Classes are taken by official teachers at the ground, to which pupils are brought in vehicles bearing the club's logo. A high level of voluntary participation has been achieved, as has a clear improvement in the children's school results.

Another example are the "social units" to promote the playing of football in residential neighbourhoods, to organise amateur football tournaments and to get professional players involved in campaigns which highlight the value of engaging in sporting activities and of sporting ethics.

Some clubs in the Czech Republic, with the help of government programmes, have set up junior fan clubs, aimed at very young supporters (from 8 to 12 years), and these run sporting and educational activities, as well as offering social assistance with the help of a social worker, at a "clubhouse" which is a centre for leisure activities. The aim is to highlight such groups of young supporters with a positive mentality and positive behaviour, thereby giving rise to a "new" culture of sport and developing a new generation of fans who will remain loyal.

The numerous local initiatives deserve support and an international framework. It would be useful in this context to appoint within every national federation, and at UEFA and FIFA, a person to be responsible for "prevention and social programmes", who would help develop such activities and provide institutional support for them.

2. The city at the stadium and the stadium in the city

The football ground is the place where many different kinds of people come together, and sport provides a potential link between all the various component parts of the urban community, encouraging positive group action.

The football ground should play a full part in the life of the city, so that the people who live in the city also feel a sense of belonging at the football ground.

During World Cups, for example, the stadia could help to foster the involvement of local people in the sporting sphere and to bring the sporting infrastructure into the heart of the city. Firstly, by taking advantage of the pool of jobs to which the World Cups give rise, in synergy with the social reintegration programmes being run with young people in the neighbourhoods; secondly, by organising tours of the stadium for local people to show that it remains accessible; and finally by organising multicultural days in the context of the sporting event in which all local associations and authorities take part.

C. Fan coaching

1. The social and educational coaching of fans

Having regard to the changing nature of hooliganism and to its particular local circumstances, several countries have concluded that it is necessary to ask social workers to carry out educational activities targeted specifically at supporters, and have taken steps towards this end. Supplementing both passive security measures connected with infrastructure or supervision and police action to manage events, fan coaching is part of an operational prevention policy extending over the medium and long term, based on ongoing grass-roots work with supporters.

2. Definition

Fan coaching is part of the effort described as “proactive socio-prevention”. It is carried out wherever the target audience is to be found and requires such an approach. Promoting a positive fan culture and creating positive conditions for the stay of visiting supporters are key prerequisites.

The basic principle is one of active social and educational action in the field by skilled professionals who work in a targeted manner, focussing on groups of young football fans. It is essential to let projects evolve continually, ensuring that new staff are constantly brought in and provided with in-service training, so that activities do not become bogged down in tradition. The supporters’ world is changing, so, by definition, fan-coaching projects have also to develop.

Fan coaching schemes are quality background activities that take on their full scope when they are part of the local environment, and they are run within a club or a city. Fan coaches’ intervention in the specific area of football is part of a broader prevention or urban security programme implemented at municipal level.

In practice, fan coaching is carried out in many different ways, mainly because supporters have different profiles, but also because hooliganism itself differs as well, leading to the adoption in each country of different methods of action. Fan coaching is therefore a flexible concept, adapted to each situation on the ground, according to local needs and specific national cultures. The most structured and institutionalised efforts in terms of fan coaching have mainly been made in Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands.

In these countries, the activities are carried out by teams of professionals specialising in social or educational work and steeped in the supporters’ culture. Due to the sensitive area in which the activities are conducted and the complexity of the psycho-social problems involved, the teams work in and among the fans.

As regards responsibilities and funding, governments have a role to play, with direct support from the clubs and local authorities concerning the organisational aspects and implementation.

3. The staff involved

“Fan coaches” usually work under an employment contract.

4. The method

Fan coaching involves a mobile effort, both home and away, also encompassing ongoing educational and social work during the periods of supporters’ lives when they are not involved in football, thanks to the organisation of structured educational activities.

While some fan coaching takes place on match days, using a situation-based approach, its main focus is on educational and social activity, which is ongoing during the rest of the week.

a. Educational activities

The educational activities provide a valuable opportunity to carry out specifically targeted educational work with young supporters outside the particular context of matches, with their associated excitement.

The organisation of classical sporting activities (such as football on a full-sized or smaller pitch) as part of an educational project to involve young people and make them more responsible is also intended to prevent young supporters from finding themselves at a loose end in their cities, while at the same time enabling them to meet their need to be active. Some structure is offered through participation in amateur championships.

Adventure sports, such as rafting and climbing, prove very appropriate, enabling young supporters to prove their worth in a positive field, by meeting open-air sporting challenges, rather than through resorting to violence. They also enable young people to expend their pent-up energy, while providing them with the excitement they need. Significantly, they learn proper standards by participating in this kind of activity.

As the key to these efforts is learning to be actively involved and to be responsible, offering supporters consumer activities merely to keep them occupied is to be avoided, for the essential aim is to enable young supporters' positive resources and potential to be used and developed, and to express themselves through action.

b. Social support

The link with football may provide an opportunity to carry out social work targeted at certain disadvantaged groups. Fan coaching may thus enable individuals with social difficulties who are not helped by conventional institutions to be given assistance. When fans' social situations are improved, one step is thereby taken towards making them more independent, also as individuals.

c. Street work

Permanent contact with fans is important, providing the cement that binds the educational work that needs to be done.

Such contact may be maintained through street work carried out in residential neighbourhoods or on premises frequented by fans, such as bars, keeping in contact with them between matches and activities, and enabling a relationship of trust to develop.

Or it may take the form of a fan centre, an educational infrastructure open during the week and offering games and educational material, providing a place where fans can meet each other freely in an educational context. This kind of infrastructure provides a permanent interface between fan coaching and fans.

d. Match days

The main aim of fan coaching on match days is to ensure that a channel of communication is open between supporters and organisers.

When fan coaching services are provided by staff recognised by the authorities and accepted by the fans, the staff can be regarded as a link between organisers and fans. Thanks both to their special position at the heart of events and to constant dialogue, they can often defuse some conflicts and thereby help to avoid certain incidents.

5. Relations between fan coaching schemes and the police

Fan coaching taking place in a context of integrated prevention is of proven effectiveness. An uncoordinated approach could prove counter-productive. Positive co-operation between the police and “fan coaches” is vital to a long-term structured prevention policy. While the methods differ, the objectives are identical: to reduce violence in sport.

Both partners therefore need to understand each other’s roles and perspectives and to value their contributions, in particular on the defusing of tension on match days. Fan coaches can act as important channels of communication between the police/clubs and groups of supporters.

In successful projects, the police and fan coaches have established a formal mechanism for consulting each other and exchanging information, co-ordinated through the local authority. At the same time, while there is considerable merit in a formal police contribution to the management of the fan coaching project, some countries consider it inadvisable to integrate the police into the fan-coaching structure.

6. International co-operation in the field of fan coaching

With both football and hooliganism now having an international dimension, other countries may wish to adopt the fan coaching approach according to their local needs.

Each country, region and city has its own peculiarities, and activities must be tailored to these specific local features, in particular as regards the level of institutionalisation and dialogue between fan coaches, the club, the local authority and the police.

International relations between fan coaching schemes could focus on exchanges of specific experience, so as to reinforce and enrich each country’s practice.

There is a strong case for local fan coaching activities to be interlinked via a national platform. Thus each country might wish to appoint a national fan coaching correspondent to help centralise information and disseminate it both locally and to counterparts in other countries. This could prove valuable when clubs are competing in international competitions.¹

These correspondents might come together from time to time in an appropriate forum to analyse developments and share their experiences.

Fan coaching is a concept that is primarily aimed at club supporters. Any international fan coaching structure for fans of national teams should focus more on the concept of the use of “accompanying persons” (see section E6), a concept that is more flexible and enables the work done to extend to all supporters. While the “accompanying persons” may include some workers from the fan coaching schemes, not all need come from that source.

¹ If this information is seen as useful for the guarantee of public order, the national fan coaching correspondent can pass it on to the national police football information point. The national police football information point can then in turn pass on the information to the national fan coaching correspondent whenever this could be useful to the correspondent’s work.

D. The role of local authorities and other agencies

1. Educational activities

Local authorities are best equipped to co-ordinate and support activities that use sport as a tool for prevention or reintegration, especially activities run in schools or targeting school pupils. In Austria, for example, some activities are organised to teach school pupils about fair play and tolerance, and to inculcate in them respect for other cultures, by making them aware of the need to combat racism. At the same time, the FARE network runs national and international campaigns against racism.

In the urban context, one of the main focal points for action is that of rough estates, to which priority is given where policies of prevention through sport are concerned. It is important to provide facilities to enable young people from disadvantaged communities to engage in sport on a regular basis and in a structured context, and for financial considerations not to constitute an obstacle to this.

Amateur sport is the basis of all sporting activity and has a key role to play. While the media focus first and foremost on professional sport, the problems of violence are also significant in day-to-day sport, including in amateur football.

In addition to awareness-raising campaigns, targeted action is needed among amateur clubs and those who take part in sport at that level.

French legislation provides for an “officer responsible for the prevention of violence in sport” to be appointed in 26 *départements*. This officer acts as a resource person and a facilitator for local sporting associations, institutions and other bodies, with a view to combating violence in amateur sport.

2. The role of advisory committees for the prevention of violence in sport

Local authorities need to establish appropriate structures for addressing the problem of violence in sport and for co-ordinating activities. These could take the form of a committee made up of members who play an active part in fan coaching, the police, the football club and the courts, in combination with youth and sports associations and institutions of higher education.

The committee could also be responsible for offering opinions and sending proposals to the local authority on the form to be given to prevention policy and to its programmes. It could act as a direct intermediary between those who work in the field and policy-makers. It could also give impetus to specific projects involving the partners, either in the form of awareness-raising campaigns or through targeted action meeting real needs.

Finally, it could identify new trends, with a view to ensuring speedy, appropriate and effective responses. In some countries, such committees already exist at national level.

E. Fan embassies

1. The atmosphere of the tournament

The fundamental principle underlying the organisation of a sports event must be the priority given to spectator and public safety. Thus the major challenge during sports events is that of striking a

balance between the strict requirements of safety and security in the light of actual risk factors and the need to maintain the festive and convivial nature of the event.

The event must remain a welcoming and festive one, with local and foreign fans being treated correctly and with respect. As far as hospitality in connection with the matches is concerned, there is a need for a clear, well-understood and, where possible, consistent approach to the way in which supporters are treated, to the reception facilities organised for them and to the transport and accommodation policy adopted.

This can only be achieved if there is an integrated strategy under which all the responsible parties work together with common aims and objectives. This partnership requires a consensus among all concerned and their involvement during both the planning stage and the event itself.

It is important to note that the work done before matches take place, in the hours and even days preceding games, is vital. Well organised events preceding matches invariably have a positive effect on supporter behaviour and on the atmosphere in the ground.

A fundamental aim of such preventative arrangements is to create a partnership with the police, and to relieve them of some of their workload (in respect of the secondary task of providing public information), thus enabling them to concentrate on their main task of maintaining public order. The prevention programme also plays a significant role in creating a calm atmosphere and hence limiting the number of situations that might require police action.

2. Purpose

Fan embassies are intended to offer a point to which foreign supporters can go, and they focus on fan culture and on supporters' specific needs during the tournament. They provide supporters with an opportunity to talk in their own language to people familiar with the supporters' specific environment, and who have the necessary skills to help solve their individual difficulties. Fans can also obtain information and assistance relating to matches, to ticket sales, to accommodation, to travel, to leisure activities, to any planned screenings of matches, to the theft or loss of documents and to health care, and a wide variety of information about such matters as currency exchange or alternative activities.

The aim is thus to provide a channel of communication between supporters and the local and national authorities and the tournament organisers, particularly so that up-to-date information can be rapidly and efficiently disseminated, for a tournament, by definition, has a life of its own and can undergo constant change, with situations altering considerably and speedily. As the tournament itself is not fixed and immovable, it is essential to have a facility directly linked to the situation in the field, and able to adapt to changing situations.

Fan embassies can also represent the views of the supporters to the authorities if problems arise and take proactive initiatives to build good will between different supporter groups and with local ethnic groups.

3. Functioning

a. Structure

During any international tournament, each host city should have a fan embassy scheme. Various formats are possible: a single embassy, or two embassies - one for each of the countries concerned - possibly even with a third information centre for other foreign fans in transit. The degree of

professionalism and the structure's autonomy differ according to national cultural tendencies. Fan embassies are sometimes set up by the organising public authorities or alternatively by the supporters themselves.

The key requirement is that the structure should be capable of dealing with supporters in an appropriate manner, in particular fans of visiting teams.

b. Staffing and human resources

Clearly it is desirable for those involved in fan embassy provision to be adequately resourced and to possess the skills required to fulfil the functions described above.

In some cases, these can be paid staff contracted to an institutional authority or appointed association. In other cases, the involvement of committed volunteers from supporters' organisations has also proved effective.

The staff of a fan embassy should collectively possess an understanding of the fan culture of its target groups; detailed local knowledge; close contact with all relevant local, national and international agencies; and good knowledge of the languages of the target groups and the host nation.

c. Opening hours

Fan embassies should be accessible and contactable by telephone during the greatest possible number of hours. Experience has shown that permanent opening throughout the tournament may be desirable. The embassies must be open for as long as possible on the day before, the day of and the day after each match. One of the advantages of fan embassies is their accessibility, and another is their flexibility, enabling them to adapt to the situations that arise and also to tailor their activities to the lifestyles of visiting supporters.

d. Location and access

Choosing a location is a sensitive part of the preparations, as fan embassies should be accessible, visible and in a place that is easy to get to. This question of location needs to be the subject of close consultation between prevention services, supporters' associations, police and local authority, in the light of specific local characteristics. Ideally, it is useful for fan embassies to be located in city centres, enabling a considerable amount of work to be done in advance of the match and making the embassies accessible to the greatest possible numbers, for supporters as a whole traditionally go to the ground only an hour or two before kick-off.

It is useful, as was done at Euro 96, to set up a fan consulate near the ground, so that supporters have an alternative point of reference during the periods immediately before and after each match.

The way to fan embassies should be indicated by means of effective and visible signs, making it easy for supporters to find them and making them accessible at any time. It helps if the signs contain a logo that is common to all the host cities, making identification easier. The literature distributed to supporters in their own countries before the tournament should give the addresses and other details of the fan embassies. Printing special posters with city maps showing the location of fan embassies (and other useful information such as where to find bus stops, cash dispensers, etc.) for display in the windows of shops and cafes will enable supporters to establish their own location or to find out where their fan embassies are.

e. Reception facilities, services and information

As fan embassy staff are in constant touch with the organiser, local and national authorities, the police and the security services, they are able to provide supporters with up-to-date and accurate information. They must make sure that this information is definite and reliable, and constantly check its accuracy, so that no misleading information is provided to supporters.

An associated aim is to nip rumours in the bud. The widest variety of quite fantastic rumours circulates among supporters during tournaments, and these may create difficulties that are not easy to deal with. As fan embassies combine an official position at the heart of the network of organising bodies with special and immediate relationships with supporters on the spot, they are able rapidly and definitively to help put a stop to such kinds of rumours.

Matches and arrangements for the tournament

Fan embassies distribute brochures containing information about football grounds, their location, access to them, local public transport and the kick-off times of matches. This information should include legislation or regulations relating to the tournament or to crowd management and the rules applied within each ground, including any items that are prohibited and forms of behaviour which are regarded as anti-social. Regulations vary from country to country and even from match to match, as far as items such as banners, fireworks, cameras, mobile telephones, video cameras and umbrellas are concerned.

Tickets and their distribution

Tournament organisers should make accurate and up-to-date information available to fan embassies about pricing, sales outlets, the numbers of tickets remaining (if any) and the time limits and conditions applying to sales or provide a point of contact for them to obtain this information. It is important for fans to be told at a sufficiently early stage - and to know that this information is reliable - when a match has sold out, or how many tickets are still available and at what prices, or when ticket sales have finished. Fan embassies do not, however, sell tickets.

Accommodation

Generally speaking, fan embassies complement or back up conventional tourist offices, which provide information about various types of accommodation and services. It is important that information should be provided not only about hotels, but also about more economical accommodation, such as campsites or bed and breakfast establishments, and accurate information should also be supplied about public transport services to these places (location, cost and timetable).

When all local accommodation is taken, supporters must be able to be pointed towards more distant accommodation and told about the means of transport they can use to get there. When more critical cases arise, fan embassies may, in consultation with the local authority or police, identify the need for emergency and temporary accommodation for supporters, directing them to improvised campsites, gymnasia with camp beds, and so on.

Travel

Moving around the country, within its cities and to and from its football grounds, is a major challenge during tournaments, and the quality of information provided on the subject is particularly important. Not only city maps, but also public transport timetables (for trains, buses, trams and underground railways) should be available, and supporters should be provided with information

corresponding to their personal needs. Information similarly needs to be provided about public and privately owned parking areas in the city or near the ground, park-and-ride facilities and the timetables of shuttles to the ground (ideally with a stop at the “fan embassy”).

Theft or loss of documents

Official documents, such as identity cards, passports and social security documents, as well as airline tickets and match tickets, among other things, are frequently lost or stolen during tournaments, causing dismay to the supporter who feels lost in an unknown environment and has to try to cope with a foreign language. Supporters need the benefit of a direct link or of having their problems dealt with directly by the “fan embassy”, the reception facilities and hospitality of which come into their own when this kind of problem has to be solved.

In this context, the presence of a consular official in the vicinity of the fan embassy proves a considerable bonus and is therefore recommended.

Health care

Fan embassies need to be able to supply information about hospitals, ordinary or emergency medical services, emergency dentists and social welfare systems, so that supporters can be pointed in the right direction.

Activities

Fan embassies are a major source of information about leisure, sports and cultural activities organised for local people, or specifically for supporters, in the city or in other parts of the country, as well as details of how to get there. Such activities are sometimes even organised by “fan embassies” themselves, by or for supporters, and these extend to concerts, games and other activities.

It is important that information should be up-to-date, and that the very latest news should be passed on, for many activities are organised too late to be publicised in official literature, or, alternative activities may not be included in this. Other activities, news of which should be circulated mainly by the fan embassy, include public screenings of matches, which are not always planned in advance and sometimes provide a last-minute solution to the problem of channelling the movements of spectators who cannot be accommodated at a sold-out match.

4. Other aspects

a. Embassies in transit cities

As well as setting up the basic fan embassies in host cities, additional facilities can usefully be set up in those cities through which large numbers of fans will pass, or where large numbers will be staying. Such cities are those which have tourist attractions, are centres of entertainment, offer attractive activities or have large numbers of hotel rooms likely to be used by many supporters, or cities located in such a geographical position that supporters will inevitably pass through.

These scaled-down facilities can easily be placed within ordinary official services, such as tourist offices. One of their roles is also to provide information about the tournament’s host cities.

b. Local information centres

It is useful if local organisers or local authorities can establish an information centre for local fans at the ground, so that they can obtain information. This would complement but not supplant the classic fan embassies. A classic fan embassy in the city with large numbers of staff is not justified over the whole period of the tournament.

5. Finance

If it is to operate effectively, a fan embassy will incur significant logistical and staff costs.

In view of the one-off nature of the event, part of the needs may be met with equipment, premises and staff made available by local authorities and associations. However, special funding is essential.

Governments and tournament and match organisers will need to play their part in providing the necessary funding and support for the facility.

6. Accompanying persons**a. Role and tasks**

Some countries also find it useful to send “accompanying persons” with their supporters who travel to other countries or to request that such persons accompany supporters coming from other countries. These persons come from the fans’ countries of origin, speak the host nation’s language and are familiar with the culture of the national supporters.

They travel with their national supporters wherever they go within the host country, basing their movements on the dates of the fixtures. They are present in the host city on the day before, the day of and the day after the game. They also travel to other places if large numbers of fans are present there.

They may either be based in the fan embassy and provide a form of outreach to spectators or they may act as stewards, escorting organised groups from their home countries to the stadium and home again. This latter form is more commonly adopted for the supporters of clubs playing in international competitions.

Such “accompanying persons” have no legal status outside their own country so their role must by definition be limited.

Their main duty is to look after the visiting supporters and to provide appropriate services so as to improve the reception that they receive and to optimise the hospitality shown to them. They can provide the fans with information and help them to solve problems, in close consultation with the fan embassy.

They play a roving fan ambassador role, helping to develop and strengthen a positive fan culture based on respect and tolerance. In some circumstances and in some countries, they may also be able to facilitate dialogue between police and supporters, so as to defuse tension and settle disputes without the need for police intervention.

In some circumstances, by agreement between the two countries concerned, they may be able to perform the tasks undertaken on match days by fan coaches (see section C). In this case the same considerations apply as at the local level.

b. Structure

The size of the team and the means of liaison with the organisers, police and local authorities will vary according to local needs and circumstances. It is important to ensure that there are clear lines of communication and that the responsibilities of each party are agreed and clearly understood.

c. Recruitment, selection and training

Host countries may also find it helpful to recruit welcoming staff and interpreters from among the nationals of visiting countries who already live there. Some countries, such as Turkey and Yugoslavia, may have many supporters resident in the organising country or neighbouring states. Other nations also have a considerable number of immigrant fans on the spot, among them Spain, Italy and Portugal.

The desired profile for accompanying persons does not necessarily have to be that of someone who does the work professionally or of someone who works in the education sphere with hooligans or with juvenile delinquents. As their tasks are mainly those of primary prevention aimed at all supporters, it may be beneficial not to be led by professional reflexes or different work practices.

F. Activities for local people during international tournaments

a. Awareness-raising campaigns

Related activities need to be held to raise awareness among local people and encourage them to get involved in the event, so that the festive dimension of the tournament and the concept of hospitality come right to the fore. If this is done, a convivial atmosphere will bind everyone together in the spirit of fraternity everyone expects during the tournament.

The tournament, with all its heavy symbolism, can act as a catalyst for larger-scale preventive activities. The dissemination of the values of tolerance and respect is encouraged through multicultural activities and awareness-raising campaigns.

Awareness can be raised among local people through preventive campaigns. One example of a very worthwhile initiative is that of the primary prevention activities undertaken in the "Welkom!" schools project in the Netherlands.

It is necessary to emphasise the festive side of the event, as well as the concept of fair play, and, in particular, to demystify the mood of panic inevitably generated by the media in the preparatory phase of such tournaments, to help reduce tension in the local population, and to get ready for a fraternal festival of football, rather than for confrontations with foreign invaders with a thirst for both beer and violence.

People who run pubs and bars are a specific target, for they play a vital part in preventing over-consumption of alcohol. Both staff and management of alcohol outlets need to be made aware of their responsibilities. Information needs to be targeted at them so as to reduce the likelihood of incidents occurring.

b. Targeted prevention

An effort must be made to avoid making an already socially vulnerable group of the population feel excluded. It is undesirable for the tournament and all that goes with it to become the preserve of a few privileged people. Preventive activities need to be carried out in local estates, especially those considered difficult.

Such activities should take further local policies on integration through sport and on intercultural prevention, and should be organised in co-operation with associations and similar bodies that have experience of socio-preventive work. Alternative activities can be organised to avoid leaving people at a loose end or bored, a situation which often leads to offences being committed, examples of such activities being sporting tournaments, “taster” sessions in certain sports, themed evenings, concerts and educational activities. Such activities also have a structuring function if they are part of a carefully considered educational project. And they distract the attention of young people from their potential interest in possible conflict areas and from taking part in clashes.