

**COMMITTEE ON SAFETY AND SECURITY
AT SPORTS EVENTS (T-S4)**

COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONVENTION ON AN
INTEGRATED SAFETY, SECURITY AND SERVICE
APPROACH AT FOOTBALL MATCHES AND OTHER
SPORTS EVENTS (CETS No.218)

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Recommendation Rec (2021) 1

of the

Committee on Safety and Security

at Sports Events

(adopted at the 1st meeting of the

Committee on April 15, 2021)

**Recommendation (2021) 1 of the Committee on Safety and Security
at Sports Events (adopted at the 1st meeting of the Committee on April 15, 2021)**

Adopted by the Standing Committee of the European Convention on Spectator Violence (ETS No. 120), at its 49th meeting, on 4th December 2019, in Strasbourg (France).

The Standing Committee ;

Having regard to the Articles of the European Convention ETS No. 120;

Having regard to the Articles of the Council of Europe Convention CETS No.218;

Having regard to the Recommendation 2015/1 and previous Recommendations adopted by the Standing Committee on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in particular Football Matches since 1985;

Having regard to decades of European experience and the development of good practice;

Having regard to the on-going threat to the safety of spectators posed by the significant number of safety and security incidents occurring annually in sports events throughout Europe, especially at football matches;

Having regard to the wide variations in the constitutional, judicial, cultural, and historical circumstances among States;

Taking into account that whilst safety and security incidents at sporting events are a European-wide phenomenon, in particular at football matches, the character and degree of seriousness can and does vary across the continent and, indeed, within States;

Recognising that at international, national and local level a wide range of public, private or other agencies or organisations are actively involved in preventing and responding to safety and security incidents and in creating a welcoming environment at sporting events;

Recognising that no one agency (public or private) can effectively minimise safety and security risks at sporting events if operating in isolation;

Recognising that minimising safety and security risks in connection with sporting events will necessarily comprise a range of inter-related measures;

Having regard to the dynamic interaction and overlap between safety, security and service measures;

Recommends to governments of parties to the Conventions on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events (2016) and Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events, and in particular Football Matches (1985), that

they ensure that the recommendations and good practices highlighted in this Recommendation (including its accompanying Annexes) are taken fully into account in developing and refining an integrated approach to football safety, security and service;

Resolves that this Recommendation replaces all recommendations, resolutions and statements adopted by the Standing Committee since its establishment (listed at the end of this document).

Introduction

1. This version of the Recommendation and its 4 Annexes were updated in 2019 to incorporate recommended good practices established or refined following adoption of the Recommendation Rec (2015)1 from June 2015; and are intended to assist States adopt practices that are consistent with the content of the 2016 Council of Europe Convention.
2. It centres on the established need to develop and implement an integrated multi-agency approach to safety, security and service in connection with football and other sports events, based on comprehensive national and local coordination arrangements and effective international, national and local partnerships.
3. It incorporates three, inter-related, Annexes providing a range of established good practices on: Safety - Recommended Good Practices (Annex A); Security - Recommended Good Practices (Annex B); and Service - Recommended Good Practices (Annex C), along with a series of checklists (Annex D). intended to assist in monitoring the extent to which national arrangements are in compliance with the good practices herein.
4. The Annex on safety good practices (Annex A) incorporates a large number of thematic appendices designed, in part, to provide an accessible resource for stadium safety officers and other practitioners designated with safety responsibilities or functions.
5. However, in view of the extent to which safety, security and service overlap and interact, it is crucial that all governmental (national and local), policing, football and other participating agencies are familiar with the content of this Recommendation in its entirety.
6. It is stressed that whilst the good practices contained within this Recommendation are focused on football matches, each country can adapt and apply the content for other sporting events as appropriate or desirable.
7. The term “national” used in this Recommendation and its Annexes shall be read as “federal” for Federal States and “confederate” for Confederate States.
8. For ease of reference, the thematic contents below, and the respective contents section of the accompanying annexes, provide an indication of the primary relevant Convention Article.

Integrated Approach to Safety, Security and Service (Article 2)

9. The importance of adopting an integrated approach is highlighted throughout this Recommendation. Underpinning this approach is the need to adopt a comprehensive risk assessment culture designed to identify the measures necessary to provide a safe, secure and welcoming event.

10. Developing integrated strategies and operations is the preserve of each State and the good practices contained herein are not intended to undermine that core principle.

11. Moreover, it is neither possible nor desirable to provide definitive models of application in view of wide variations in the constitutional, judicial, policing, cultural, and historical circumstances, and the equally varied character and severity of football-related incidents, among and within each State. Instead, it is intended that the recommended good practices herein are taken into account by each State when developing, refining and delivering a customised integrated, multi-agency strategy.

National Coordination Arrangements (Article 4)

12. European experience demonstrates that government-led national coordination arrangements need to be in place to ensure that a coherent and integrated safety, security and service strategy is developed, refined as necessary in the light of experience (good and bad) and implemented effectively at international, national and local level.

13. It is important, therefore, that the national coordination group comprises personnel able to make or influence key policy decision. It is equally important that all agencies involved in preparing and managing football events are represented. This is likely to include relevant governmental departments (notably interior, justice and sports departments); prosecuting agencies; national football authorities; relevant policing and security agencies; safety authorities and other agencies, like rescue and ambulance services, with responsibility for a range of logistical, safety, emergency, and service functions.

14. In recognition that legislative and other elements of the integrated approach are likely to fall under the umbrella of different government departments, it is imperative that the relevant personnel are aware of all the measures contained within this Recommendation.

15. It is also highly desirable for the national coordination group to liaise and engage with representatives of football supporter groups and other stakeholders on a regular basis.

16. The national coordination group should be tasked, inter alia, to consider and deliver a range of crucial enabling imperatives, including:

- (i) determining how European good practices can be adapted and applied at national and local level;

- (ii) providing legal clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the various public and private agencies engaged in football safety and security operations;
- (iii) identifying and recommending to the relevant governmental authority the legislative and regulatory framework necessary to facilitate delivery of key components of the safety, security and service strategy;
- (iv) ensuring that effective local multi-agency coordination arrangements are in place;
- (v) overseeing national, multi-agency preparations for tournaments and high risk football matches played at home or abroad involving national and club football teams;
- (vi) monitoring and analysing incidents in connection with football matches played at home or abroad if supporters resident in the State are involved;
- (vii) developing effective stadium licensing, safety certificate and inspection arrangements;
- (viii) ensuring that key operational personnel (public and private) are trained and equipped to deliver their various tasks effectively and appropriately, including facilitating joint training for police officers, stadium safety officers and other key practitioners employed on duties where they may be expected to interact either routinely or in high risk scenarios;
- (ix) stressing the importance of all agencies adopting a service ("hospitality") ethos in developing and delivering safety and security operations;
- (x) developing a multi-agency media and communications strategy designed to ensure that communities and supporters (resident and visiting) are kept pro-actively informed of the measures pursued in delivery of the integrated multi-agency approach;
- (xi) ensuring that a high priority is accorded to preventing and tackling racism and all other forms of discrimination in connection with football events;
- (xii) encouraging and facilitating football-related community engagement and preventative initiatives.

17. These and other key tasks requiring national coordination are pursued as appropriate throughout this Recommendation.

Local Coordination Arrangements (Article 4)

18. It is equally important that at a local level (that is cities and towns hosting football matches) multi-agency coordination arrangements are in place to ensure that:

- (i) local planning and operational arrangements (inside and outside of stadia) are comprehensive and take full account of the principles set out in the national integrated strategy and the good practices contained herein;
- (ii) operational strategies of local stakeholders are complementary;
- (iii) local strategies are reviewed and updated (where necessary) to reflect any refinements to the national integrated approach and post-match analysis of events connected to previous matches;
- (iv) the respective roles and responsibilities of all personnel engaged in delivery of football related operations are clear, concise and widely understood;
- (v) multi-agency preparations take account of all matters that may impact on the match day dynamic, notably policing strategies, stadium licensing, ticketing, stewarding and other in-stadia operating arrangements; local hospitality and related activities (including community and supporter liaison); transport and other logistical factors; and crisis planning for emergency scenarios (inside and outside of stadia);
- (vi) representatives of football supporter groups and local communities and businesses located in the vicinity of football stadia and public areas (where supporters are likely to gather before and after matches) are consulted and kept informed of operational strategies in public and private spaces (including in and around football stadia); and
- (vii) consideration is given to identifying and facilitating delivery of football-related community and wider social preventative projects and otherwise promoting the active engagement of local football clubs and partner agencies within local communities.

19. In view of the wide and critical remit of the local coordination group, it is imperative that all key local agencies are represented at an appropriate ("influential") level, including: local authorities, policing agencies, football clubs and other bodies involved in operational planning and delivery, logistical arrangements, and emergency scenarios.

Role of National Government (Article 4)

20. The role of government is crucial in ensuring effective delivery of a range of key strategic objectives like adapting and adopting European good practices; providing leadership, promoting effective multi-agency partnerships; and steering effective multi-agency communication strategies.

21. Government is also crucial in terms of ensuring that the police and other key public agencies are resourced to deliver their functions effectively.

22. Of equal importance is the need for Government to ensure that a comprehensive legislative and regulatory framework is in place with appropriate and clear provisions designed to provide

clarity on roles and responsibilities and empower the relevant authorities to undertake their tasks effectively.

23. European experience demonstrates that the legislative and regulatory framework should encompass a diverse range of themes (including stadium licensing and safety certification; police enabling measures; exclusion arrangements for supporters who have caused or contributed to violence and disorder).

24. Comprehensive legal, regulatory, and operating, arrangements should oblige agencies (with clear legal primacy) to consult with partner agencies regarding matters that may impact on their respective operations. For example, requiring:

- municipal authorities to consult the police and other emergency services about football-related events in public spaces (e.g. fan zone and/or public viewing events); and
- football authorities and clubs to consult with the police and other relevant agencies regarding the content and delivery of a range of football stadia safety regulations and match day safety and security arrangements.

Role of Municipal Authorities (Articles 4 and 6)

25. The statutory functions of municipal authorities (including mayors where appropriate) vary significantly across Europe. In some States, they have extensive powers and responsibilities regarding safety and security matters whereas in others their role is limited.

26. Similarly, in some countries, municipal authorities and/or mayors play an important role in determining the character and scope of policing operations whereas in others the police are wholly independent or accountable to a national policing structure or even central government.

27. The position can be further complicated in some countries by municipal authorities owning football stadia. This can bring additional responsibilities and a potential conflict of interest. In such cases, good practice demonstrates the need for clear separation of responsibility in respect of management of municipally owned stadia and oversight of public safety and security imperatives, notably in respect of stadium licensing and safety certification.

28. Clearly, the exact character of the relationship between municipal authorities and partner agencies will vary in accordance with the constitutional position. That is why this Recommendation stresses the importance of customised local coordination arrangements and clarity in terms of function and responsibility.

29. All municipal authorities have a key role to play in co-ordinating multi-agency planning for the impact of football matches on public spaces and on transit/public transport arrangements.

30. In co-ordinating local multi-agency preparations, municipal authorities should ensure that all of the relevant agencies work together in providing a safe, secure and welcoming environment in public spaces for people attending football matches.

31. These preparations should incorporate delivery of a range of initiatives designed to promote engagement with, and provide reassurance to, local communities and businesses (in particular those located in the vicinity of football stadia).

32. The municipal authorities also have a key role to play in encouraging and facilitating a range of football-related community and social projects in their locality.

Role of Police (Article 9)

33. Policing structures vary considerably across Europe. In some States, the police are national in design and delivery whilst in others responsibility is devolved to police authorities at regional or local level.

34. Irrespective of whether the policing structure is national or local in character and remit, it is widely recognised that the principal role of the police in connection with football matches centres on crowd management and on preventing and responding to public disorder and criminality in public and private spaces (including football stadia). Police match commanders, intelligence officers, spotters and uniformed operational units all undertake important roles in meeting these objectives.

35. European experience evidences that effective delivery of these core policing responsibilities requires a sophisticated policing strategy incorporating a number of established good practices, including: risk based, graded deployment; dialogue and interaction with supporters; early and targeted intervention to prevent minor incidents escalating in scale; and robust evidence gathering arrangements for prosecution and exclusion purposes.

36. However, the police also need to work in partnership with other stakeholders, notably in respect of supporting event organisers in the provision of a safe and secure environment within football stadia and responding appropriately to any significant in-stadia public disorder or other forms of criminality;

37. Delivery of these in-stadia policing functions centres on local police commanders establishing an effective partnership with the stadium safety officer (that is the individual designated with primary responsibility for ensuring in-stadia safety and security). This partnership is of particular importance in clarifying the role of the police in the event of any emergency or major incident scenarios.

38. In terms of football matches with an international dimension, European experience evidences the importance of all States should having a single point of contact to facilitate information exchange and international police cooperation. In Member States of the European Union, it is mandatory for this role to be undertaken by a designated National Football

Information Point (NFIP). A number of other countries have adopted this model and it is strongly recommended that all non-EU Member States do likewise.

39. The National Football Information Point (NFIP) can also provide a national source of policing football expertise and assist domestic policing football operations through the collection and analysis of information on trends in supporter behaviour and associated risks.

40. These and related concepts are further explained in the guidance set out in Annex B (Security - Recommended Good Practices).

Role of Football Authorities and Football Clubs (Article 5)

41. The key function and responsibility of the football authorities, in particular the event organiser, is to ensure that stadia hosting a professional football match (or other sports event where appropriate) provide a safe, secure and welcoming environment for all participants and spectators. This is a complex and multi-faceted responsibility which European experience evidences is best vested in a designated stadium safety officer to act on behalf of the organiser and employed either by the club or by the stadium owner or contracted user of the stadium, depending upon the circumstances concerned.

42. The establishment of effective national multi-agency coordination arrangements, highlighted above, can be crucial in providing a forum in which the football authorities and partner agencies can share perspectives and operating imperatives in order to develop a joint partnership ethos and complementary operating strategies.

43. The national coordination arrangements also provide a platform for the football authorities to consult the police and other partner agencies in determining and refining policies on a range of in-stadia safety, security and service considerations, including: ticketing, sale and consumption of alcohol, pyrotechnics, segregation of rival supporters (inside and on the approaches to and from stadia), entry checks and controls, counter-terrorist measures, and threats posed by organised criminality (for example, counterfeit tickets and the unauthorised sale of tickets through the black market).

44. As indicated above, Annex A (Safety - Recommended Good Practices) provides a wide range of guidance in respect of stadium safety imperatives designed to assist the football authorities and their safety personnel fulfil their crucial safety obligations.

Role of Supporters (Articles 5, 6 and 8)

45. European experience demonstrates that the vast majority of supporters want to enjoy the football experience in an enthusiastic but good-natured manner and that when treated with respect and in a hospitable manner are far less inclined to cause or become involved in violence or disorder.

46. Moreover, it is often overlooked that supporters are the principal victims of football related violence and disorder and, on occasions, the counter measures employed. Experience shows

that in some countries a cycle of confrontation is firmly established and that overcoming an ethos of mutual distrust can pose challenges for all concerned.

47. However, European experience also evidences that such challenges can be overcome, and the potential for conflict significantly reduced, if all of the relevant agencies and stakeholders demonstrate a willingness to work together in making football events safe, secure and welcoming. Effective communication and engagement with supporters can significantly contribute to meeting this objective.

48. This Recommendation highlights the importance of all agencies developing effective supporter liaison strategies: a process often labelled as "dialogue". In terms of football club engagement with supporters, designated Supporter Liaison Officers can play a key role in this area. The dialogue theme is developed further in Annex B (Security - Recommended Good Practices) and Annex C (Service - Recommended Good Practices) respectively.

Multi-Agency Communication and Media Strategy (Article 8)

49. European experience demonstrates the importance of developing an effective multi-agency communication and media handling strategy as a means for explaining the importance and content of an integrated multi-agency safety, security and service approach.

50. National and local spokespersons from all key public and football agencies should therefore collaborate in the preparation and delivery of a comprehensive media arrangements.

51. In addition to providing explanation and reassurance to the wider community, an effective (multi-agency) media strategy can be crucial in terms of providing supporters with important information on relevant legislative and regulatory provisions (and associated safeguards and reassurances). It can also emphasise the importance which partner agencies place on creating a safe and welcoming environment for all football supporters.

52. At a local level, municipal authorities, police and football club spokespersons have a key role to play in terms of communicating with local and, in particular, visiting supporters about designated/recommended areas for recreation before, during and after matches, and policing tolerance levels (offering clear advice on what constitutes unacceptable behaviour) as well as highlighting any additional or exceptional measures planned for what are designated as higher risk matches.

Integrated Approach - Event Flow Model (Article 4)

53. European experience evidences the need for the planning and management of football events to be undertaken on the basis of an integrated approach which reflects the overlapping

character of safety, security and service measures. This key principle is stressed throughout this Recommendation.

54. However, the integrated concept extends beyond the planning and delivery of preventative and operational measures for events in stadia and city centres. The concept should embrace the football experience in its entirety. This approach is termed the "event flow model" and is traditionally applied to international football tournaments and matches, but the principles can also be applied to domestic football events, albeit in modest and less challenging circumstances.

55. The rationale for adopting such an approach is based on the reality that the experience of supporters at any stage of the event flow can have a significant impact on their enjoyment of the event and on their behaviour. For example, supporters can be treated in a welcoming and respectful way on arrival at a stadium but if their experiences in the city centre or en-route to a stadium have been negative then this may impact on their perceptions of the event generally and their willingness to self-regulate their behaviour and comply with steward instructions in particular.

56. To further explain and reinforce the need for a truly integrated event experience, an event flow pictogram is attached to this Recommendation. It incorporates the event flow from a supporter perspectives, along with an outline of how this impacts on the multi-agency approach to managing the event during its various stages. The text provides an outline of the various core components of event preparations and operations but is not intended to be exhaustive or to prioritise the actions highlighted.

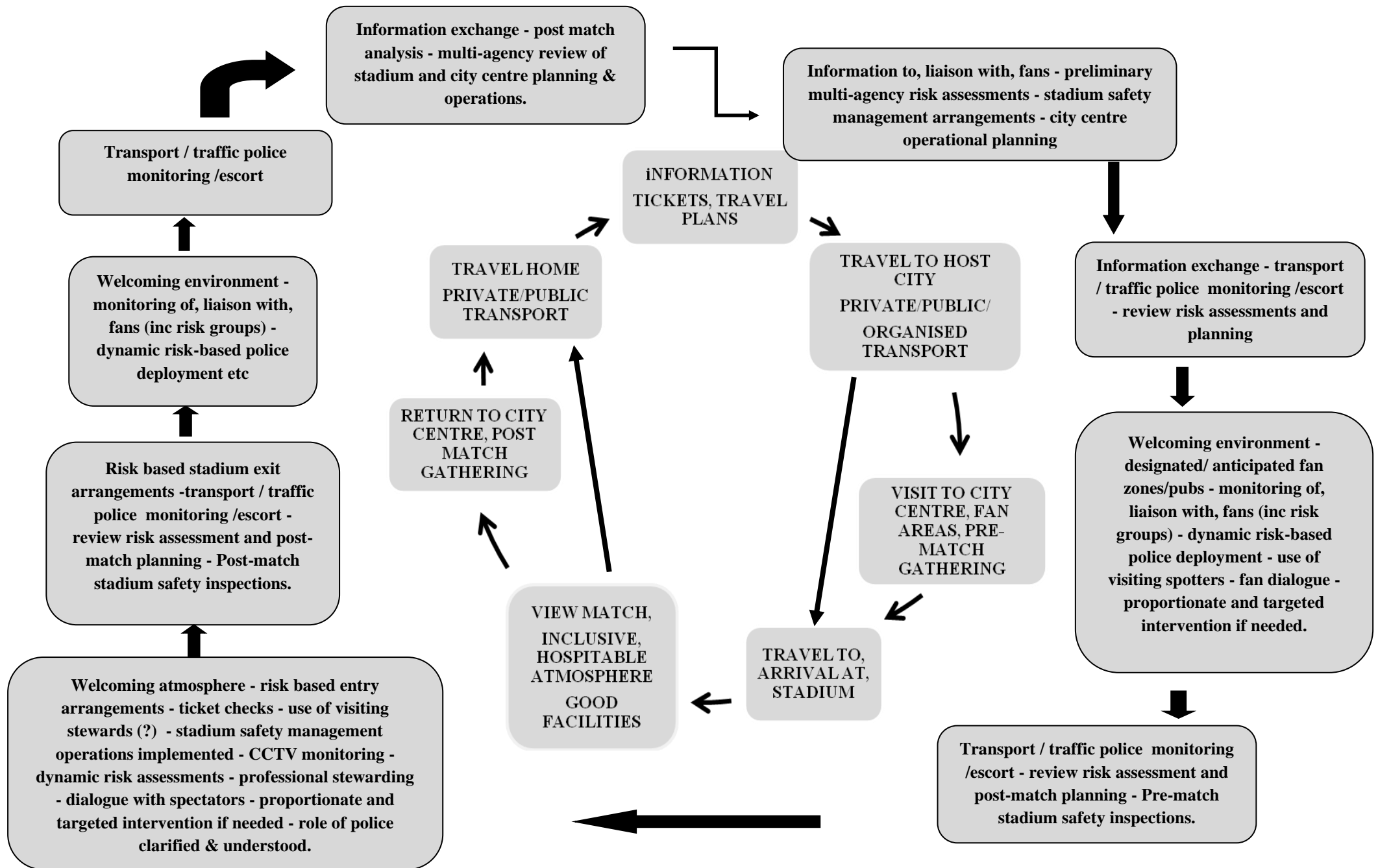
Recommendation Checklists

57. As indicated above, to assist States in monitoring the extent to which national arrangements reflect established European good practices, Annex D provides four checklists, each of which comprises a series of questions, covering: the core principles and policies outlined in this Recommendation along with the more detailed guidance set out in the Annexes on Safety, Security and Service. Once completed, the checklists will also provide a basis for external monitoring, including any Standing Committee or other advisory, consultative and monitoring visits

Indoor Venues (Article 5)

58. This Recommendation is focused on providing policy makers and practitioners alike with important information and a wide range of good practices covering the key elements involved in making a football event, inside and outside of stadia, safe, secure and welcoming. However, it is recognised that some countries may wish to apply at least some of the recommended good practices to other major sports events. The thematic safety appendices at Annex A therefore incorporates guidance on safety at indoor sports events.

EVENT FLOW MODEL - INTEGRATED MULTI-AGENCY PLANNING & OPERATIONS - CREATING A SAFE, SECURE & WELCOMING EVENT



List of recommendations, resolutions and statements adopted by the Standing Committee since its establishment, and replaced by the Recommendation Rec (2015) 1

This Recommendation Rec (2015) 1 of the Standing Committee on Safety, Security and Service at Football Matches and other Sports Events cancels and replaces all recommendations, resolutions and statements adopted by the Standing Committee since its establishment, namely:

- Recommendation on alcohol sales and consumption (87/1)
- Recommendation on crowd searches (87/2)
- Recommendation on police cooperation (87/3)
- Recommendation on police cooperation (88/1)
- Recommendation on preparation for major events (88/2)
- Recommendation on guidelines for ticket sales (89/1)
- Recommendation on comprehensive report on measures to counter hooliganism (89/2)
- Recommendation on guidelines to the Parties for the implementation to Article 5 of the Convention: identification and treatment of offenders (90/1)
- Recommendation on the promotion of safety at stadia (91/1)
- Recommendation on Article 4 of the Convention: international cooperation and its Explanatory memorandum (91/2)
- Recommendation to Parties on Measures to be taken by the Organisers of Football Matches and Public Authorities (93/1)
- Recommendation to parties on measures to be taken by organisers and public authorities concerning high-risk indoor sports events (94/1)
- Recommendation on the use of standard forms for the exchange of police intelligence concerning high risk sports events and its Explanatory memorandum (97/1)
- Resolution of the Standing Committee on the use of non-discrimination terms (97/1)
- Statement on fences and barriers, 1997
- Recommendation on stewarding (99/1)
- Recommendation on removal of fences in stadiums (99/2)
- Recommendation on the identification and treatment of offenders and the exchange of intelligence at the European Football Championships (EURO 2000) (99/3)

- Recommendation on guidelines for ticket sales at international football matches (teams and nations) Rec (2002) 1
- Recommendation on the role of the social and educative measures in the prevention of violence in sport and the handbook on the prevention of violence in sport (2003/1)
- Recommendation on the checklist of measures to be taken by the organisers of professional sporting events and by the public authorities Rec (2008) 1
- Recommendation on the use of visiting stewards Rec (2008) 2
- Recommendation on the use of pyrotechnical devices at sports events Rec (2008) 3
- Recommendation on the use of public viewing areas at large scale sports events Rec (2009) 1
- Recommendation on Supporters' Charters Rec (2010) 1
- Recommendation on Hospitality principles when organising sports events Rec (2010) 2
- Recommendation on safety officer, supervisor and safety steward training and its Manual Rec (2011) 1
- Recommendation on dialogue and interaction with fans Rec (2012) 1