



HOME OFFICE

Queen Anne's Gate, LONDON, SW1H 9AT

Direct line: 01-213

Switchboard: 01-213 3000

 TH
 9537.
 DC@

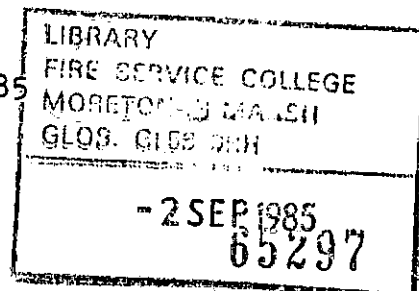
Our reference:

21 August 1985

Your reference:

To all Chief Fire Officers

No 11 /1985



Dear Chief Officer

 INTERIM REPORT OF THE INQUIRY INTO CROWD SAFETY AND CONTROL AT
 SPORTS GROUNDS

1. My letter to you of 16 May asked for your assistance in arranging for visits to be made to all uncertificated sports stadia in accordance with the Home Secretary's request and for reports on the visits to be sent to me. As you will already know from Home Office circular No 54/1985, copies of which were sent to chief fire officers, the Home Secretary when announcing to Parliament the publication of the Interim Report expressed his gratitude to chief officers for the prompt, efficient and careful manner in which this survey was carried out. I would wish to add my thanks to you for your commendable efforts in this matter.

2. The Interim Report contained a number of recommendations and provisional recommendations. I would be grateful for your assistance in obtaining certain information which is required in relation to two of the provisional recommendations so that I will be in a position to advise the Inquiry further. These provisional recommendations are numbers 5 and 6 on page 51 of the Interim Report and are as follows:

"5. I am minded to recommend that the Secretary of State should exercise his powers to designate all sports grounds whatever their size, to include indoor as well as outdoor activities (Paragraphs 3.145)".

"6. I am minded to recommend immediate designation of any ground capable of holding over 5,000 spectators, to cover all sports grounds, not merely football grounds. (Paragraph 3.146)".

3. Taking Provisional Recommendation 6 first we now need information on:

(a) sports stadia with spectator capacity of more than 5000. A sports stadium is defined as any place where sports or other competitive activities take place in the open air and where accommodation is provided for spectators consisting of artificial structures or of natural structures that have been artificially modified for the purpose and where this accommodation wholly or substantially surrounds the area used for activities taking place on the ground;

E.R.

(b) other sports grounds which are not stadia (ie which do not have constructed spectator accommodation substantially surrounding the playing area) but where there is artificially constructed spectator accommodation that has a capacity of more than 5000.

4. All that we need for these categories (and it would help if they could be separately listed in your return because to some extent they are subject to different provisions of the Act) is:

(i) the name and address of the sports stadium or sports ground;

(ii) the capacity of the stadium as a whole or, in the case of sports grounds, the capacity of the artificially provided accommodation;

(iii) the capacity (actual or permitted) of any roofed accommodation for spectators in those sports stadia or sports grounds;

(iv) the sport or sports carried on at the stadium or ground. It is emphasised that we are concerned in this exercise with all forms of competitive sport, not merely football.

It is recognised that in certain cases some or all of this information may already have been provided in the context of the previous request for information, but it would nevertheless be appreciated if the details could be repeated for the purpose of this exercise. However information need not be provided on designated sports stadia..

5. Turning to Provisional Recommendation 5, the new element here is the proposed extension of designation to indoor sports grounds; this would, of course, involve amendment of the definition under the Act, presumably so that the definition of a sports stadium would apply to indoor ones as well as open air ones.

6. As far as the capacity threshold is concerned, although Provisional Recommendation 6 mentions a figure of 5000 it will be appreciated by chief fire officers that the potential fire hazards in buildings are of a different nature than those in outdoor sports grounds and it may therefore be necessary to advise the Inquiry that a lower cut off spectator capacity is needed to achieve a comparable standard of fire safety in buildings and in outdoor sports grounds. On this basis we think that it might be prudent to look to a substantially lower capacity threshold of 1000 for this category of stadium in the designation context, and, moreover, not to confine it to buildings where sports activity is carried out in a single hall, but also to sports complexes which may consist of several adjacent halls or rooms forming part of substantially the same buildings. These should be included provided that there is accommodation in total for more than 1000 spectators.

E.R.

7. As for the sports activities to be covered, the existing definition under the 1975 Act refers simply to any place where "sport or other competitive activities take place in the open air". It is not clear at this stage just how the Inquiry envisages this formula being adapted to cover indoor sport. But it would seem reasonable for the purposes of this exercise to retain the implicit ingredient of competitive physical activity and confine the information to buildings where competitive sports take place involving physical exertion rather than intellectual, cultural or dramatic skills. It is appreciated that some buildings may only be occasionally or infrequently used for sports activities; but they should be included in the survey and an indication given to this effect in the report.

8. In so far as this exercise on indoor stadia breaks new ground, I am afraid that we shall need rather more comprehensive data. It would be helpful if the information could be provided under the following heads:

- (i) name and address of premises;
- (ii) name of the owners/occupiers;
- (iii) maximum spectator capacity;
- (iv) sporting activity or activities catered for,
- (v) the legislation (if any) currently controlling use of the building or part of the building for fire precautions purposes;
- (vi) date of last inspection by the fire authority and the outcome;
- (vii) any remarks or comments.

9. Finally, I would be grateful if chief officers would provide me with some further information to supplement the reports on sports stadia they have already submitted. Some of these reports indicated that in the case of certain unsatisfactory sports stadia the fire authority considered that the admission of spectators should be prohibited or severely restricted until remedial work or rebuilding had been completed. It would be very helpful to know how many of these prohibitions or restrictions still remained on the 17 August 1985. Please give the names of the sports stadia concerned, identifying the stand(s) and, where there is a restriction on its use, indicating the maximum permitted number of spectators. This information is requested on stadia or sports grounds of any capacity.

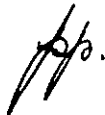
10. I recognise that this task will be an additional but, I hope, not a substantial burden on your fire prevention department. I would be grateful if the information requested could be sent to me in the suggested form as soon as it has been obtained and in any event not later than 20 September 1985. For your convenience, a proforma check list is attached covering the information needed.

E.R.

11. Any enquiries on this letter should be directed to:

Mr J Fisher (01) 213 7338.

12. A copy of this letter is being sent for information to chief executives of county councils and the Director General of the GLC.



HM Chief Inspector of Fire
Services

E.R.

CHECK LIST OF INFORMATION REQUIRED

Open air grounds (paragraphs 3 and 4)

(a) sports stadia with capacity of over 5000

- (i) name and address
- (ii) spectator capacity of the stadium as a whole
- (iii) spectator capacity of any roofed accommodation
- (iv) sport or sports involved

(b) Other sports grounds, where the constructed spectator accommodation has a capacity of over 5000

- (i) name and address
- (ii) spectator capacity of the constructed spectator accommodation provided at the ground
- (iii) spectator capacity of any roofed accommodation
- (iv) sport or sports involved

Indoor sports premises (paragraphs 5 to 8)

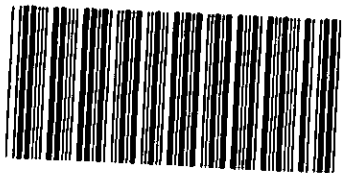
Sports premises or complexes with overall spectator capacity of more than 1000 (including those used only occasionally for sporting activities)

- (i) name and address of premises
- (ii) name of the owners/ occupiers
- (iii) maximum spectator capacity
- (iv) sporting activity or activities catered for
- (v) the legislation (if any) currently controlling use of the building or part of the building for fire precautions purposes
- (vi) date of last inspection by fire authority and the outcome
- (vii) any remarks or comments

Prohibitions or Restrictions (paragraph 9)

- (i) name and address of sports stadia
- (ii) extent of prohibition or restriction remaining on 17 August 1985.

**The Fire Service
College**



00124265