

STANDING COMMITTEE (T-RV)

EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON SPECTATOR VIOLENCE
AND MISBEHAVIOUR AT SPORTS EVENTS AND
IN PARTICULAR AT FOOTBALL MATCHES



Strasbourg, 29 May 2010

Rec (2010) 2

Recommendation Rec (2010) 2 of the Standing Committee on hospitality principles when organising sports events

adopted by the Standing Committee on 28 May 2010

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

Having regard to the need to ensure the safety of every spectator in connection with sports events and in particular football matches;

Having noted that a welcoming approach to supporters increases the level of safety and security at sports events;

Emphasising the resulting need to improve hospitality and make sports events festive occasions for the largest possible numbers of fans and supporters and also for the local population where the event takes place;

Taking note of recent research in crowd psychology;

Recognising that police tactics can have a significant influence on supporters' behaviour;

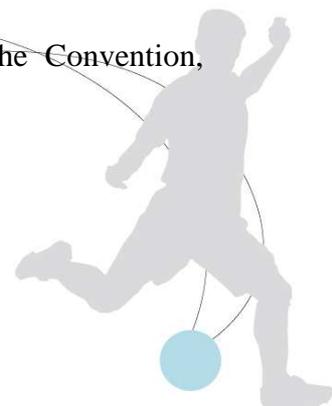
Also recognising that an inappropriate approach to spectators can trigger incidents and unrest;

Also recognising the success of the policing style and overall approach to supporters based on hospitality principles used during recent years at football matches in Europe;

Pointing out that a successful and festive match or tournament is a complex event where all the agencies involved must play their role;

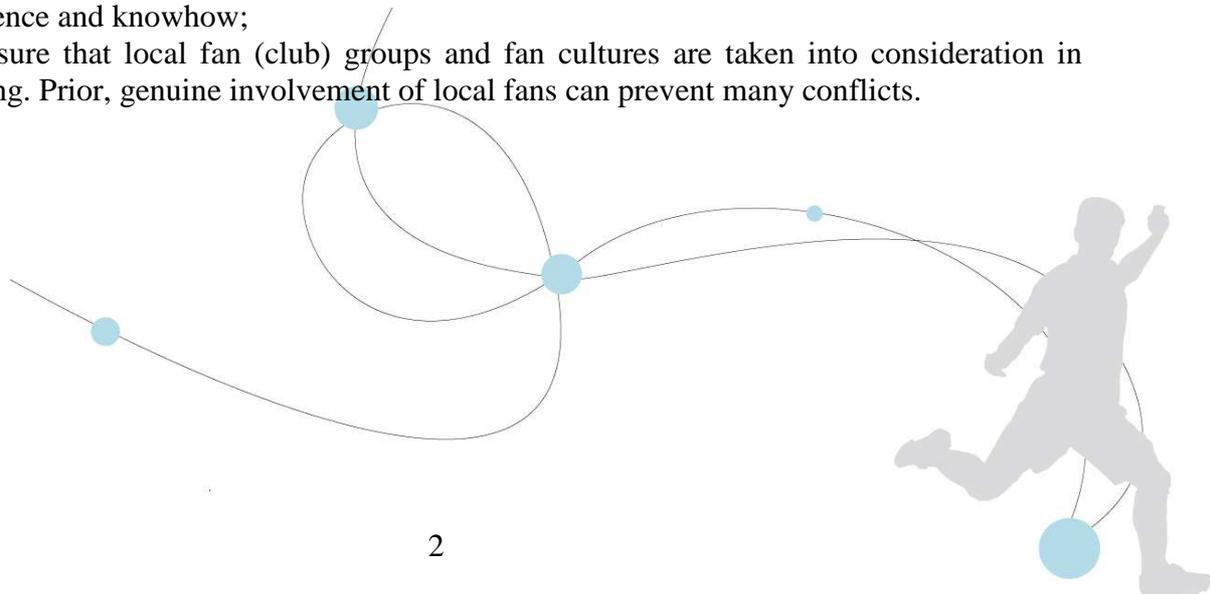
Acknowledging that all States Parties to the Convention have full authority to determine their police tactics;

Having identified certain principles, which are valid in all States Parties to the Convention, notwithstanding their different background, history, culture and legal systems;



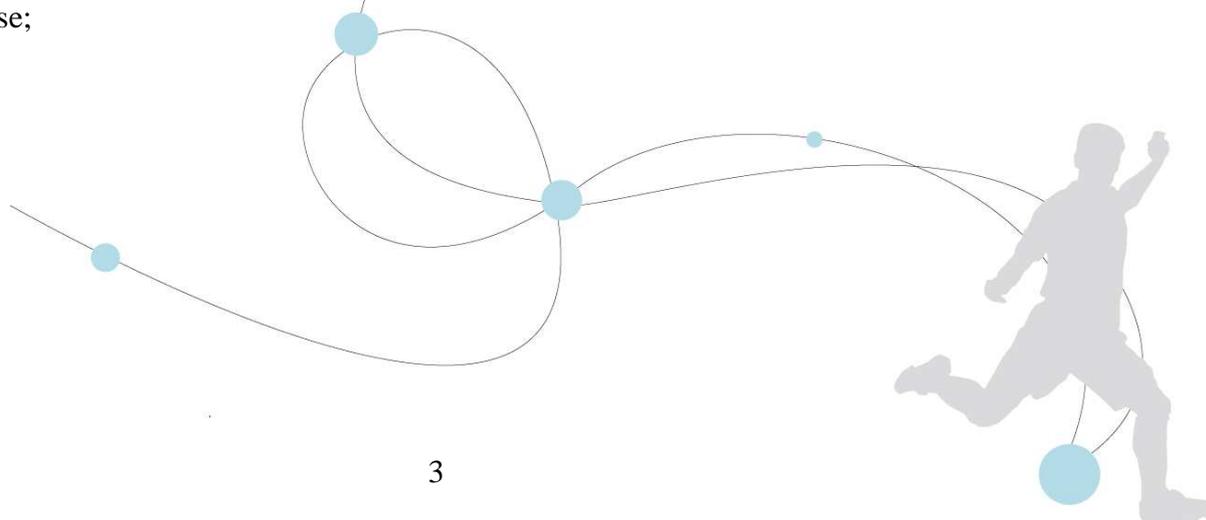
Recommends to Governments of Parties to the European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in particular at Football Matches that when organising sports events they should:

1. Ensure that organisers, in close co-ordination with sports bodies, municipalities and the police:
 - a. Recognise the importance of a customer-oriented approach, taking account of and welcoming the diversity of fan culture internationally in all policies relating to the event;
 - b. Recognise that well-informed, well-cared-for fans feel comfortable and people who feel comfortable remain relaxed;
 - c. Arrange for a high level of spectator hospitality both during matches and during free time before or after matches;
 - d. Ensure that visiting supporters are treated in the same way as home supporters, including with regard to the use of banners, flags, etc.
 - e. Make full use of measures which have proved to be successful and effective in previous major sports events and which provide supporters with sufficient information and facilities, for example fan projects, fan liaison officers (at the level of the club and/or at the level of the police), fan embassies, fan parks, public viewing areas, and other facilities designed to host fans;
 - f. In this connection, make full use of Standing Committee Recommendation Rec (2009) 1 on public viewing areas;
 - g. Make sure that information on fan culture, fan behaviour and supporters' rituals in all its diversity is widely disseminated among the local population, local businesses, local tourism agencies, local police/security forces and media to avoid unwarranted fear of supporters;
 - h. Ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for friendly, relaxed meetings between the opposing fan groups e.g. by offering activities they can both attend (such as. street kick-about areas, painting walls, table soccer, joint fan parties or concerts);
 - i. Avoid gender-related stereotypes in the planning and implementation of the event since women are the biggest growing group of spectators at sports events (especially football matches). As a rule female fans have the same needs and preferences as male fans.
 - j. Because sports events attract people from all over the world, make sure that there is widespread information and training to guarantee a warm and discrimination-free welcome and stay to people with different cultural, religious and social backgrounds as well as sexual orientations;
 - k. Make sure that information is available in every language required by the event.
 - l. Work with international experts on fan culture, fan hosting, diversity and anti-discrimination, such as the Football Supporters Europe (FSE) network, the Football Against Racism in Europe (FARE) network and similar institutions to benefit from their experience and knowhow;
 - m. Make sure that local fan (club) groups and fan cultures are taken into consideration in planning. Prior, genuine involvement of local fans can prevent many conflicts.

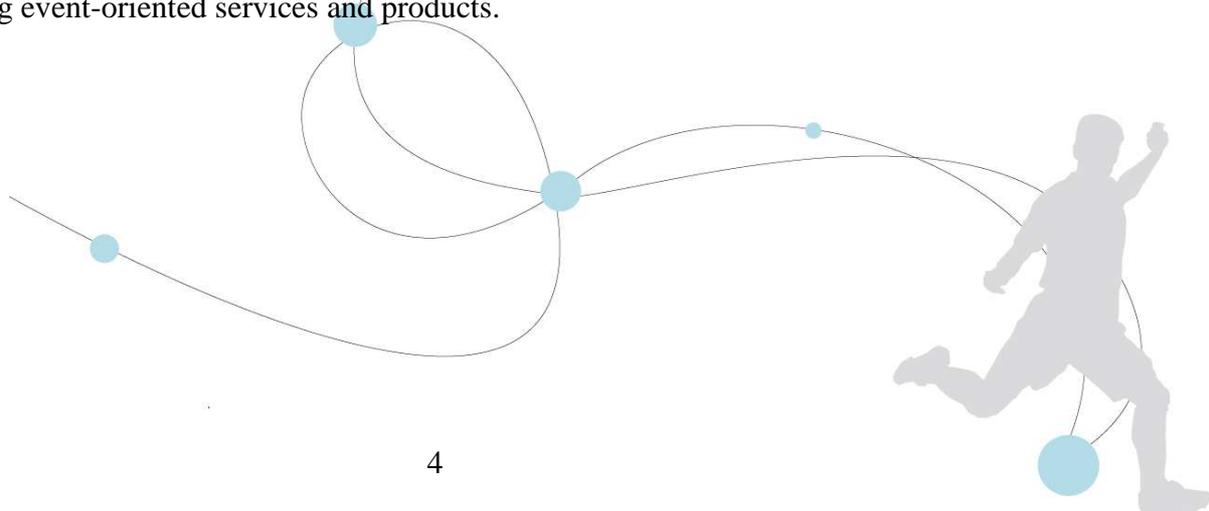


2. Encourage sport associations, clubs and other relevant sports bodies, public or private, to acknowledge the following principles when organising sports events:
 - a. Recognise the social and festive nature of sports events;
 - b. Recognise that the vast majority of spectators want to enjoy the sports event freely in a good-natured and peaceful manner;
 - c. Recognise that well-treated and well-cared for spectators are less inclined to cause trouble;
 - d. Acknowledge that supporters expect not only an interesting event but also adequate services, decent sanitary facilities, hygienic catering, and clear information;
 - e. Accordingly arrange for a sufficient quantity and quality of food and non-alcoholic drinks;
 - f. Recognise that the distribution and pricing of match tickets is a sensitive issue and that it is necessary to distribute tickets in as fair, equitable and transparent a manner as possible, within the constraints of the security and safety requirements;
 - g. Use all appropriate means to inform spectators about the match/tournament, safety and security requirements, including information on the route to the stadium, guidance within the stadium and the rules applied there;
 - h. Arrange for well-trained stewards and/or volunteers to welcome supporters in a friendly manner and to cater for them;
 - i. In this connection, make full use of the Standing Committee Recommendation Rec 99/1 on stewarding and Recommendation Rec (2008) 2 on visiting stewards;
 - j. Pay proper attention to the special needs of families, women, children, elderly people and the disabled when planning sports events. Make sure that fans with disabilities have access to all areas and programmes offered. Take account of the growing number of supporters from all parts of society (e.g. women, ethnic minorities and disabled fans) when organising e.g. promotion material, security staff, sanitary facilities, etc.

3. Recommend a strategy for policing sports events, based on the following principles:
 - a. The policing of sports events is a highly professional operation which requires all participating officers to receive proper, updated training;
 - b. Timely and accurate strategic information about supporters can positively influence the level and style of police deployment. This should be supported by operational dynamic risk assessment throughout the duration of the operation which should, in turn, influence police tactics;
 - c. Experience has proven that adopting a gradual approach, based on the above-mentioned principles of dynamic risk assessment and crowd management can help prevent outbreaks of disorder;
 - d. Police should, as far as is practicable, be deployed in a non provocative manner in order to underline the festive nature of the event. Police officers are often the first people supporters come into contact with and to whom they may put their questions, as they are highly visible and easy to identify. It is therefore desirable that all police officers are aware of their role and of the importance of presenting a friendly, calm and respectful response;



- e. Police units unnecessarily deployed in full protective equipment may not prevent incidents, indeed there is a risk that they may provoke them; sufficient police with the necessary equipment should, however, be available for deployment when needed;
 - f. The EU “Handbook with recommendations for international police co-operation and measures to prevent and control violence and disturbances in connection with football matches with an international dimension, in which at least one Member State is involved” provides important guidance when developing a strategy for policing sporting events;
 - g. International police co-operation includes the key role of information exchange prior to and during international matches/tournaments; the network of National Football Information Points (NFIP) and the deployment of foreign police delegations also provide an indispensable source of information / support;
 - h. Recent research in crowd psychology and crowd management can provide a good basis for the policing of major sports events.
4. Encourage municipalities to participate actively in the preparation and management of major sports events. In particular to:
- a. Ensure the co-ordinated planning and collaboration between different agencies responsible for different aspects of the organisation of major sports events;
 - b. Organise side events for supporters between matches or for those who could not attend the event; make sure that these side events are intercultural and bring people from different backgrounds together;
 - c. Ensure that local inhabitants, especially from deprived neighbourhoods, are involved in the event;
 - d. Ensure the support and involvement of the local population in the event by providing information about and ensuring that they participate, making special use of the knowhow and skills of local football fans and migrant communities; involve fan groups, fan projects and other relevant initiatives in the preparations;
 - e. In this connection, make full use of Standing Committee Recommendation Rec (2003) 1 on the role of social and educational measures in the prevention of violence in sport;
 - f. Make proper arrangements, in close co-ordination with the organising committee and police, for local transport to facilitate the influx of supporters, ensure the smooth circulation of supporters, by whatever means of transportation is chosen; travel options should be available in all price categories;
 - g. Provide for adequate accommodation to meet the needs of different income groups, including youth hostels, camp sites, etc.;
 - h. Arrange for sufficient catering in all price categories;
 - i. Provide sufficient information for visitors at the sports event and, in this connection, make the necessary arrangements with tourist offices and fan experts, such as fan liaison officers and the leaders of fan projects, local fan groups and fan associations;
 - j. Encourage local businesses to take part in the event; ensure that they comply with local alcohol policy relating to the event and contribute to the overall hospitality scheme by offering event-oriented services and products.



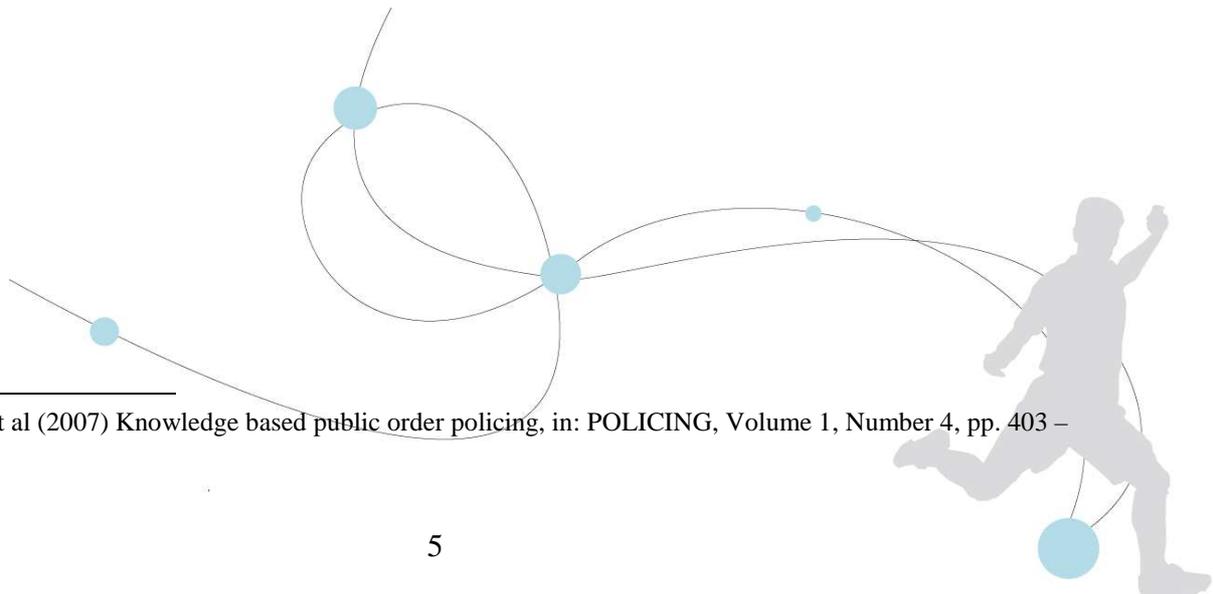
Explanatory note

Recent research in crowd psychology has established that a crowd is not an irrationally aggressive entity but rather that it tends to act meaningfully in reaction to the attitude and actions taken towards it by other groups, e.g. police. The crowd's perception of the legitimacy of their interactions with the police (or other groups) and their own sense of empowerment are particularly important. It is now understood that the approach adopted by the police during a crowd event can either unite all the different groups and individuals within the crowd against the police as a common enemy or, on the contrary, support and empower non-violent elements in the crowd¹. Police tactics with regard to the use of force can therefore be one of the primary factors influencing the likelihood of major incidents.

Research has established that good police practice can depend primarily upon gathering information and intelligence by conducting a relevant and ongoing/dynamic risk assessment. It is only by understanding and possessing up-to-date knowledge of different supporters' groups, their behaviour and history, that it is possible to identify reliably and accurately the level of risk these groups pose to public order. Therefore it is of great practical importance to know and assess the social identities of the various groups of supporters, their values and standards, aims and goals, their sense of what is right and proper, their stereotypes and expectations of other groups, their history of interaction with other groups and anything (dates, places, forms of action) that has particular significance. It is also extremely important to gather ongoing information during the event concerning the behaviour of fan groups so that the use of police force, where appropriate, can be accurately targeted and proportionate. Specific guidelines can be found in the "EU Handbook with recommendations for international police co-operation and measures to prevent and control violence and disturbances in connection with football matches with an international dimension, in which at least one member state is involved".

Different approaches and doctrines were suggested as a guide for police tactics during the recent football championships and international matches, for example the 3D approach or principles of "appropriate visibility, early intervention and low friction". 3D is an acronym for the police tactics used in some countries and is based on a graduated response philosophy – dialogue, de-escalation, determination. It is based on the premise that, at all stages of public order incidents, the police should only use such force as is necessary to resolve the situation. The police should use full force only as a last resort, when other methods such as communication have been used but were not sufficient, since "overreacting" may cause even more incidents by initiating the dynamics that may lead to the breakdown of law and order.

¹ See e.g. Reicher et al (2007) Knowledge based public order policing, in: POLICING, Volume 1, Number 4, pp. 403 – 415.



The European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in particular Football Matches was developed by the Council of Europe and entered into force on 1 November 1985.

A Standing Committee was set up to follow the implementation of the Convention, to adopt recommendations and to reply to new challenges.

For more information <http://www.coe.int/sport>

