

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Safety at Sports Grounds Sub Committee
Date: 20th January 2017
Report for: Information
Report of: The Deputy Chief Executive

Report Title

Report regarding the implications of the abandonment of the Manchester United match against AFC Bournemouth on Sunday 15th May 2016.

Summary

A report on the post-match actions and measures to safeguard spectator safety.

Recommendation

The report is for information and noting.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Tony Bibi – Team Leader (Pollution & Housing) Public Protection.

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Financial Implications:	N/A
Legal Implications:	N/A
Human Resources Implications:	N/A
Asset Management Implications:	N/A
E-Government Implications:	N/A
Risk Management Implications:	N/A

Report to Sports Grounds Safety Advisory Group concerning MUFC Stadium Evacuation and Subsequent Debrief and Remedial Actions Processes

Suspicious Device Stadium Evacuation - Sunday 15th May 2016

Overview of Incident

At 2:09pm on Sunday 15th May 2016, in the lead up to the last game of the season against AFC Bournemouth, a suspicious item resembling a pipe bomb was discovered on the rear of a toilet cubicle door in the 100 Club Executive Lounge in the North West Quadrant area of the stadium. The discovery of this device led to an evacuation of the North and West Stands and the eventual abandonment of the match. At the time there were 36,000 fans within the stadium with further 20-30,000 fans within the immediate area making their way to the game.

The evacuation of sports stadia is an extremely rare event and an evacuation of this magnitude and type has not previously been seen in the UK. It has been widely reported by partners and other industry professionals that the evacuation was extremely effective and very well managed. The key success criteria of any evacuation is the safety of customers and staff. The staff remained calm and professionally managed the situation throughout, which ultimately resulted in an effective evacuation without any reported injuries.

The heightened global security threat increases the likelihood of future evacuations. Manchester United is in a unique position to learn from this event not only internally but it also opens the opportunity to take a leading role nationally by sharing the key learning with others in the Industry.

Post Incident Debrief Process

Whilst it is acknowledged that the evacuation was a success, there are always areas for improvement. From the outset the debrief process sought to maximise learning by taking an open and self-critical approach with an overarching goal of developing world class emergency procedures.

Debriefing serves a variety of purposes whilst the basic goal is to extract information after an incident it also helps staff and stakeholders deal with the incident by giving them a voice, share experiences and clear up and misconceptions.

Due to the number of staff and stakeholders involved in the evacuation it was necessary to conduct both conversational style sessions and electronic surveys to capture the maximum feedback possible.

The debrief was completed over 6 stages as follows:

Stage 1- Staff E –Survey and Customer Feedback

Feedback was invited from all staff involved through an online survey. Over 700 surveys were completed from all aspects of the business including both casual and permanent staff. A number of customers also provided feedback through the Customer Care Team. All customer and staff responses have been analysed and

where appropriate actions developed to address any issues identified. These items of feedback amounted to over 1000 pieces of information.

Stage 2- Safety Management Team Debrief

The Safety Management Team chronologically reviewed the incident including decisions made and an examination of written logs. Key themes and issues were identified which then formed questions for consideration at subsequent debrief sessions. A secondary session was also held with Group Property Services (GPS) to discuss issues connected with 'Cause and Effects' mechanisms.

Stage 3- Operational Debrief Session

A facilitated debrief session was held with approximately 20 operational staff including the Control Room team, Head Stewards and key Controlled Event Solutions (CES) personnel. This session was very well attended, staff actively engaged in discussion with a primary focus on tactical and operational issues. This debrief session was successful in identifying a number of areas for improvement including quality of the public address system, deployments and emergency procedures.

Stage 4- Management Debrief Session

A facilitated debrief session was held with Key departmental managers including GPS, Catering, Executive Club, Venue, Ticketing, Disability and Sponsorship. This session identified cross departmental matters including communication challenges and facilities requiring improvement.

Stage 5- Multi-Agency Debrief Session

The club facilitated a debrief session with our partners including Greater Manchester Police, North West Ambulance Service, Crowd Doctor, St John's Ambulance, Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council and the Sports Ground Safety Authority. The session gave partners the chance to not only provide feedback to the club but also to examine their own contingency plans in respect of wider issues such as how an evacuation impacts upon the road network and public transport. In conclusion all partners were confident in the ability of the club to effectively manage emergency situations.

Stage 6- MUFC Strategic Debrief Session

The first 5 stages of the debrief process has rightly focused on operational issues. Further discussion on strategic considerations and wider governance processes were facilitated within a strategic senior management debrief session.

Conclusion

The stadium evacuation was completed in an extremely safe and effective manner resulting in all supporters leaving the stadium in a timely fashion with no resultant injuries or obvious concerns as a result of this event.

The incident provided MUFC with a massive learning experience, whereby the Club have been proactively able to reflect and debrief all aspects of the incident, and further

improve upon their already well developed safety and security procedures for the future.

Such a learning and development exercise has left the Club even better placed for the future during these times of increased terrorist threat levels. The debrief process led to the development of a detailed action plan that is now being implemented at the club to further improve procedures and overall security arrangements. Furthermore, the Club are also now able to share their learning experiences with other stadia around the country to ensure that not only do they remain at the forefront of stadium safety issues they are also able to impart valuable learning experiences and resolutions to their colleagues.

Phil Rainford
Head of Stadium Safety & Security