

Safety at Sports Grounds Certification

A safety certificate is part of a total, integrated system for managing health and safety at sports grounds. While the local authority (Caerphilly County Borough Council) is responsible for issuing the safety certificate, safety cannot be achieved by one agency acting in isolation. The local authority has a statutory responsibility to consult with Police, Fire and Building Control authorities.

The primary responsibility for the safety of spectators at the sports ground rests at all times with the sports ground management.

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has issued guidance on the subject, "[A Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds](#)" (known as The Green Guide).

What is a Designated Sports Ground?

The Secretary of State may designate any sports ground, which in his opinion has accommodation for more than 10,000 spectators, or 5,000 in the case of Premiership or Football League grounds in England and Wales as a 'Designated Sports Ground'.

The designation function is performed by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, (*DCMS*).

The primary legislation covering "Designated Grounds" is the [Safety at Sports Ground Act 1975](#)

What is a Regulated Stand?

A regulated stand is any covered stand within a sports ground, with accommodation for 500 or more spectators, whether seated or standing. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to determine whether any of the stands at sports grounds within its area qualify as regulated stands.

In determining the occupancy of a stand, the Local Authority will have regard to the Home Office Circular 97/1988, which gives detailed statutory guidance on how to determine whether or not a stand provides accommodation for 500 or more spectators. In the final determination the actual occupancy may be substantially lower than the anticipated capacity and may even fall below 500 persons.

The primary legislation covering "Regulated Stands" is [Fire Safety and Safety at Places of Sport Act 1987](#).

General Safety Certificates.

If a sports ground has been designated by the Secretary of State as a 'Designated Sports Ground, or if the Local Authority has determined that a stand within an

Safety at Sports Grounds



undesigned sports ground is a 'Regulated Stand'; then that ground or stand will require a 'General Safety Certificate'.

A 'Responsible Person' acting on behalf of the relevant sports ground must make an application for a 'General Safety Certificate' to the Local Authority and subject to all requirements being met, the Local Authority will then issue the safety certificate.

In preparing a general safety certificate the Local Authority will:

- Request suitable plans and drawings from the applicant
- Request structural, electrical, mechanical and other pertinent certification
- Request information as to the stands use in the previous three year period
- Survey the ground in detail
- Consult with emergency services
- Consult with ground management
- Determine appropriate conditions
- Determine numbers of spectators permitted into the ground/stand

After the issue of a 'General Safety Certificate' routine inspections will be undertaken by the Local Authority, (on match days or during other sporting occasions), to ensure that the terms and conditions of the Certificate are appropriate and to monitor the observance of those terms and conditions.

Inspections will also be undertaken in accordance with statutory requirements.

Special Safety Certificates.

'Special Safety Certificates' are issued in respect of activities which are not included within the 'General Safety Certificate' already issued in respect of the ground or stand; for instance to authorise the provision of a live music event at a venue normally used for rugby football.

The process for the issue of a 'Special Safety Certificate' is similar to that for a 'General Safety Certificate'.

Applying for a Safety Certificate.

If a sports ground has been designated as a 'Designated Sports Ground' by the Secretary of State or if the Local Authority has served notice that a stand is a 'Regulated Stand' upon the owner/operator of the sports ground, (and no 'General Safety Certificate' has been issued in that respect); then an application must be made for a 'General Safety Certificate'.

A 'General Safety Certificate' application form can be found via the following link.
[General Safety Certificate Application Form](#)

A 'Special Safety Certificate', (which may be required to authorise activities not covered by the 'General Safety Certificate'), uses the same application form.

Safety at Sports Grounds



For 'Regulated Stands' a separate application form must be completed in respect of each stand at the sports ground, although the safety certificate issued may relate to all stands.

Transfer and Amendments

An application form to apply for a transfer of a certificate or amend a certificate can be found via the following link:-

[Application form to change a safety certificate for a regulated stand at a sports ground.](#)

What happens next?

On receipt of an application for a safety certificate the Local Authority will process the application in accordance with the guidelines outlined above and when all matters have been satisfactorily addressed, the appropriate safety certificate will be issued.

Fees

Under the Safety of Places of Sports Regulations 1987 Local Authorities may levy a fee in respect of an application for the issue, amendment, replacement, transfer or cancellation of a Safety Certificate in respect of a regulated stand, (in line with any costs reasonably incurred),

The current fees applicable are available on the website at <http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Business/Licences-and-permits/Licence-fees-and-notices.aspx>