



# **MANAGEMENT OF PERSISTENT STANDING AT THE CARDIFF CITY STADIUM**

## **UPDATE REPORT FOUR**

**Version 1.0  
Final Report  
2 March 2015**



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This document is an independent report prepared by Dr Steve Frosdick of IWI Associates Ltd following a visit to the Cardiff City Stadium on Saturday 28 February 2015 for the match between Cardiff City and Wolverhampton Wanderers.
- 1.2. This report provides an update on four previous reports (the original report and update reports one, two and three) and should be read in conjunction with those documents. The four previous reports are available to download from <http://tinyurl.com/n2uo3v9>.
- 1.3. This update report makes further comment on the management of persistent standing. The report is structured in two main sections:
  - Managing the Canton Stand; and
  - Managing the Ninian Stand.

## 2. MANAGING THE CANTON STAND

### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1.1. The club reported that there had been no safety, security or service issues whatsoever since the last update report in September 2014. Cardiff fans in the Canton Stand continued to choose to persistently stand within the wave shape marked out in white seats between gangways 104 and 107. The exception had been the game versus Fulham on 10 January 2015 – the first game in which the team played once again wearing blue – when the persistent standing was over a wider area. The club provided a photograph which showed a busy stand full of happy standing fans but with the radial gangways all clear and stewarded for emergency access.



*The Canton Stand celebrated the return to blue but kept the gangways clear.*

- 2.1.2. The number of agency stewards from Safestyle deployed to keep the gangways clear was nine. There was one steward deployed behind the white wave line in gangway 104, three each in 105 and 106 and two in 107. The deployments were clearly shown in the Safestyle deployment plan, which included the statement in bold red font: **“We will place particular emphasis on preventing standing in the gangways!”**
- 2.1.3. All nine stewards were seen to be on post before the stadium opened to the public and to remain there until they were withdrawn for phase three duties shortly before the final whistle.



*The nine stewards deployed to gangway duties in the Canton Stand.*

- 2.1.4. As previously reported, the gangway stewards continued to be supported in their duties by stewards in the vomitories and around the pitch perimeter. Their collective role was safety; supervising spectator ingress, monitoring crowd density/behaviour and ensuring the gangways were kept clear.

## **2.2. MATCHDAY OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS FOR THE CANTON STAND**

- 2.2.1. Direct observations were kept from the gantry behind the Canton stand and from level four of the Ninian stand. All stewards were seen to maintain their positions and no incidents were observed or reported to the control room.
- 2.2.2. The Canton Stand works very well as it is. There was nothing arising from the match day observations to suggest any change was needed to the club's approach to managing persistent standing in the Canton Stand.





*Gangways 105 and 106 shown early in the second half.*

### **3. MANAGING THE NINIAN STAND**

#### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

- 3.1.1. Because of the risks of ‘banter’ from Wolves fans across segregation line, and of migration of home fans towards segregation line, the sterile area in the Ninian Stand covered all of block 118 and all bar three seats of block 117 south of the gangway.
- 3.1.2. At the management briefing, the Safety Officer made it clear he expected the stewards in the Ninian Stand to be deployed up the gangways and behind the lower tier (in level four) to deal with any persistent standing.
- 3.1.3. The Stand Manager reported that two particular individuals had been banned for five matches for wilful persistent standing but were now back and had sat down for most of the previous match.
- 3.1.4. There was intelligence that, in the 12th minute, people would stand and applaud as a mark of respect for a 12 year old boy who had been run over and killed at 1600 hours the previous day in Ninian Park Road.

#### **3.2. MATCHDAY OBSERVATIONS OF THE NINIAN STAND**

- 3.2.1. Observations were again carried out from the new level four middle tier, immediately behind blocks 116 and 117 of the lower tier. Direct observations were kept from kick-off until the 40th minute and then again from the 55th to 85th minutes.
- 3.2.2. At kick-off at 1500 hours, almost all of the Ninian Stand crowd sat down. However, most of block 117 north of the gangway remained standing. A man and boy were standing beside the segregation netting in the very back row of block 117, south of the gangway. They were persuaded by a patient but persistent steward to move back into block 117 north of the gangway.
- 3.2.3. In the sixth minute, two stewards deployed up gangway 117 and got everyone to sit down. After 30 seconds, Cardiff won an attacking free kick and they all stood again.

- 3.2.4. In the eighth minute, the man and boy left the stand, apparently because the boy could not see. This customer service issue reinforced the requirement for persistent standing to be eliminated from the Ninian Stand.
- 3.2.5. By the eleventh minute, most of block 117 had sat down. Only the back three rows or so stood up. This was only about 30 people out of the thousands in the stand.
- 3.2.6. At the start of the 12th minute, the whole crowd stood as expected and applauded for one minute as a mark of respect for the tragically deceased boy. After the tribute, everyone sat down except the spectators in block 117 north of the gangway.
- 3.2.7. In the 17th minute, two pairs of stewards deployed up gangways 117 and 116 and got the whole stand sitting. Before sitting down, the male who had recently returned from a five game ban waved at the observer and called across, “You got me a ban last time.”



*Steward deployments in the sixth and 17th minutes succeeded in getting everyone to sit.*

- 3.2.8. In the 20th minute, some of the crowd started singing, “We’re Cardiff City, we’ll always be blue”. All of block 117 north of the gangway stood up again.
- 3.2.9. In the 30th minute, the same two pairs of stewards, supported by the two stewards in level four, got just about everyone sat back down. This held until half time.



*Just about the whole Ninian stand remained seated from the 30th minute until half-time.*

- 3.2.10. On returning to level four observation point in the 55th minute, it was noted that there were only 32 people stood up in the Ninian Stand, 28 in the back three rows of 117/116, and four others elsewhere along the back row.
- 3.2.11. In the 58th minute, a pair of stewards were deployed up gangway 117, supported by the two stewards in level four. All but ten persons in the whole stand were now seated.
- 3.2.12. Two fans in the back row of block 117 objected being asked to sit down by the stewards behind them on level four. Response stewards were deployed to the situation by the control room. The male person nearest the gangway was asked to leave the seating bowl. He quickly did so and was escorted down the gangways to be ejected. The second man was further into the block. Several fans, particularly two males and one female – all three known to the club – migrated laterally and were telling the person not to leave. These three and others were remonstrating with the stewards not to eject the person. Most of the back five rows of block 117 and some of the back five rows of block 116 were now standing and watching the scene. The stewards were calm, patient and persistent. After a few minutes, the second person also moved out into the gangway to be escorted down and ejected.



*Pictured in the 32nd minute, this person was the second of two to be ejected in the second half.*

- 3.2.13. The 30 or so persons in the back few rows were seen to remain standing up until 85th minute, when the observations ceased. There was no further enforcement action, which could have been counterproductive. On a dynamic balance of risks basis, no further action was appropriate. With the two ejections the club's point had been made.
- 3.2.14. It was noted that stewards on the segregation line within a gangway's width of the standing fans made no efforts to ask people to sit down. In fact they were seen to be chatting affably with the standing fans. This was queried in the debrief, where the Stand Manager explained that these had been his directions. He had wanted the requests to sit down to come from stewards specifically deployed for this purpose.





*Some 30 persons remained standing for the remainder of the game.*

### **3.3. CONCLUSIONS IN RESPECT OF THE NINIAN STAND**

- 3.3.1. The first conclusion from the previous update report remains valid. The observations confirm further evidence of progress in tackling persistent standing in this stand. A combination of education, intervention and enforcement measures, combined with some voluntary relocation and reduced attendances, has served to considerably reduce the issue in the first place. Where it still occurs, stewarding was seen to be more responsive and more effective. Indeed there were several periods in the match when there was nobody persistently standing at all.
- 3.3.2. The second conclusion from the previous update report can be reframed in even more positive terms. Firmer enforcement against persistent standing in the back two rows between gangways 116 and 117 was observed in action. There was good evidence of the stewarding deployments being co-ordinated, well led and yielding results.
- 3.3.3. There remain about 30 persons who appear inclined to continue to stand throughout the game and only sit down reluctantly when specifically asked to do so. They then stand up again at the slightest excuse and remain standing. There are no safety issues in this because of the low angle of rake. There are, however, customer services issues as they are preventing others – for example the man and boy – from enjoying the view. They are also obstructing the view from the first two rows of level four, which will from time to time be occupied. There are also security issues as some of their number are abusive to stewards and obstruct them in their duties.
- 3.3.4. Given the very small number of residual persons involved, the time has perhaps come for the club to identify them and simply decline to renew their season tickets in the Ninian stand.