



MANAGEMENT OF PERSISTENT STANDING AT THE CARDIFF CITY STADIUM

UPDATE REPORT THREE

**Version 1.0
Final Report
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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 27 September 2014 for the match between Cardiff City and Sheffield Wednesday.
- 1.2. This report provides an update on three previous reports (the original report and update reports one and two) and should be read in conjunction with those documents. The three 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. Because of reduced season ticket sales subsequent to the club's relegation to the Championship, it was reported that the area where fans chose to stand had shrunk back broadly within the V shape marked out in white seats between gangways 104 and 107. The number of stewards deployed to keep the gangways clear had accordingly been reduced from 12 to eight and there were three gangways stewarded (105-107) rather than four (104-107).



There were eight stewards deployed to gangway duties in the Canton Stand.

- 2.1.2. 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 OF THE CANTON STAND

- 2.2.1. Observations confirmed that the area within which spectators chose to stand had indeed reduced. The photograph below (taken during the second half) shows that the blocks to the left of gangway 104 and to the right of gangway 107 were only sparsely populated. The crowd was denser in the central blocks, although there were still plenty of empty seats in these areas. The fans within the V shape marked out in white seats are broadly all standing up, whilst the fans elsewhere are broadly all sat down.



Compared with last season, the persistent standing area had reduced.

- 2.2.2. All stewards were seen to maintain their positions throughout the event. No incidents of any kind were observed or reported to the control room for this stand.



The gangways remained clearly visible and unobstructed at all times.

2.2.3. Given that the stand is no longer sold to season ticket holders only, the question was asked whether there were any customer service issues arising from individual match ticket holders wishing to sit and finding their view obstructed. Stadium management reported that there had been no such issues. Three reasons were given:

- It is now widely known that many fans in the Canton Stand choose to remain standing throughout the match – individual match ticket purchasers are therefore self-selecting to a large extent;
- The club had played five competitive home games before this match and no complaints had been received regarding persistent standing; and
- Stewards are briefed to offer to relocate spectators who wish to sit down and there is plenty of spare capacity to allow this.

2.3. CONCLUSIONS IN RESPECT OF THE CANTON STAND

2.3.1. 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.

3. MANAGING THE NINIAN STAND

3.1. INTRODUCTION

3.1.1. The previous update reports noted evidence of progress in tackling persistent standing in this stand through a combination of education, intervention and enforcement measures. The objective remained medium term and it was right to avoid provocative actions. The reports did however call for much firmer enforcement against the back two rows between gangways 116 and 117. The observations therefore anticipated such action and it was good to see it taking place at this match.

3.1.2. Due to the lower away ticket allocation in the Championship League, the segregation line had been reconfigured to leave the blocks around gangway 118 as a sterile area between the home and away fans. The reduced proximity was reported to have lowered the temptation for home fans around gangway 117 to stand and gesticulate at the away fans.

3.1.3. The briefing for quadrant managers and supervisors noted that persistent standing around gangway 117 was much reduced from last season. This was partly because a number of persons had chosen on renewal to relocate their season tickets to the Canton Stand. Nevertheless, staff were exhorted to carry on the work of getting fans in that area to sit down.

3.2. MATCHDAY OBSERVATIONS OF THE NINIAN STAND

3.2.1. Observations were carried out from the new level four middle tier, immediately behind blocks 116 and 117 of the lower tier.

3.2.2. It was noted that the front row of the middle tier is sufficiently low down that a standing fan in the back row of the lower tier would block the view. This means it remains important to ensure the back rows of the lower tier do not persistently stand.

3.2.3. When the match kicked-off, most of the Ninian Stand began to sit down. By four minutes gone, everyone in the Stand was seated except:

- Two persons persistently standing adjacent to vomitory 116;
- Some twenty persons persistently standing in the rear rows of blocks 116-117; and
- Isolated groups who stood briefly to allow late-comers to take their places.



By four minutes gone, all except a few people were sat down.

- 3.2.4. In the eight minute, an exciting period of play developed. Most of blocks 116 and 117 stood momentarily then sat back down again. Two pairs of stewards were then deployed in parallel up gangways 116 and 117, asking people to sit down. The pair adjacent to vomitory 116 were reportedly very quick to do so when they looked round and they realised (to their embarrassment) they were almost the only ones stood up.
- 3.2.5. The stewards were observed to secure prompt compliance from everyone except a very small group in the back row who were pointing out the persistently standing away fans. Stewards made their point in a friendly manner and then withdrew. There were now just six persons left persistently standing in the back row, together with ten others who were perching on their upright seat.
- 3.2.6. From the 20th minute, two stewards were redeployed by their quadrant manager to the middle tier. They had been briefed to be available – on his signal – to go along the back row and ask people to sit down.



From the 10th to the 30th minutes, there were just six persons persistently standing in the whole Ninian Stand.

- 3.2.7. In the 30th minute, the stewards went along the back row and asked the six persons standing to sit down. They did so, but five of them stood back up again once the stewards had passed by. One was a male with a goatee beard who was a known season ticket holder. Two others were middle-aged males wearing dark leather jackets. The other two were a younger male and female couple. The latter four were not recognised and were thought to be first time or occasional visitors.
- 3.2.8. When Cardiff scored in the 38th minute, most of the Stand stood up in excitement and celebration. Within a short time, all except a handful in the back row sat back down. On the half time whistle there were just seven persons persistently standing. Five of these were the above mentioned from blocks 116-117 and another pair were further along at the back of gangway 115.

- 3.2.9. Almost everybody took their seats when the second half kicked off. When Sheffield Wednesday scored in the 48th minute, there were just ten persons standing. These were all spread out along the back row.
- 3.2.10. In the 55th minute, the two stewards were again deployed behind the back row to ask people to sit down. All except one did so. The latter pointed at the away fans and refused to sit. One of the males in the leather jackets also stood back up. In the 58th minute, a supervisor was deployed behind the back row to follow up the two stewards. He could be seen using good communication skills with the fans and had secured full compliance by the time of the second Cardiff goal on 62 minutes.



Two stewards and then a supervisor were deployed to ask the back row to sit down.

- 3.2.11. By the 65th minute, most people had sat back down, however there were now 23 persons standing in blocks 116-117 and two others at the rear of gangway 115.
- 3.2.12. In the 69th minute, two pairs of stewards were again deployed in parallel up gangways 116 and 117 whilst the two stewards in the middle tier again deployed behind the back row. Between them they again secured full compliance. After the stewards had withdrawn only the man with the goatee beard and one of the males in the leather jackets stood back up again.
- 3.2.13. An additional steward was then deployed into the middle tier. He had been briefed to research the seat numbers of these two persistently standing fans for follow up action by stadium management. In fact the man with the goatee beard was quickly identified from the season ticket and supporters club databases. The stadium manager gave directions for his season card to be deactivated for the next home match. The fan will thus need to have a conversation with the quadrant manager before he can gain access to the stadium. If the fan again declines to comply with the requirements for this stand, the stadium manager has directed he will be served with a five game ban.
- 3.2.14. By the 75th minute, a larger group of fans had begun persistently standing towards the front of blocks 116-117. There were also 16 persons standing in the back two rows of those blocks. In the 80th minute, the pairs of stewards redeployed up the gangways and again secured full compliance throughout the stand. This was maintained until the Cardiff City substitution in the 85th minute.



A larger group of fans began persistently standing towards the front of blocks 116-117



The steward deployments in response secured full compliance throughout the stand.

- 3.2.15. After an exciting episode of play in the 86th minute, about 50 persons remained standing in blocks 116-117. There was then a Cardiff attack in the 89th minute, after which a large number remained standing for the five minutes of time added.

3.3. CONCLUSIONS IN RESPECT OF THE NINIAN STAND

- 3.3.1. 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 the 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 called-for firmer enforcement against the back two rows between gangways 116 and 117 was observed in action. There was better evidence of the stewarding deployments being well led and yielding results. One particular individual was also identified and targeted for follow up action by stadium management.