



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

## **UPDATE REPORT TWO**

**Version 1.0  
Final Report  
04 February 2014**



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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 1 February 2014 for the match between Cardiff City and Norwich City.
- 1.2. This report provides an update on two previous reports (the original report and update report one) and should be read in conjunction with those documents.
- 1.3. The original report (Version 1.2 dated 14 February 2013) dealt with five main topics:
  - The customer service context;
  - The legalities of standing in football grounds;
  - The risks around standing in seated areas;
    - Risks to safety, security and service,
    - Progressive crowd collapse,
    - Bumping and scraping,
    - Blocked gangways,
    - Obstructed viewing,
    - Disorderly conduct.
  - Persistent standing in the Canton Stand; and
  - Persistent standing in the Ninian Stand.
- 1.4. Update report one (Version 1.1 dated 31 January 2014) commented on Cardiff City's management of persistent standing in the Canton and Ninian Stands at the match versus Arsenal on 30 November 2013.
- 1.5. The two reports are available to download from the Dropbox link at <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/xo6jd5f5aogl9t/kXC1zQ2uEc>.
- 1.6. As part of an ongoing fan engagement process, the two reports were presented to an open forum meeting on Friday 31 January 2014. All Travel Group representatives were invited and the opportunity to attend the forum was advertised on the club website at <http://www.cardiffcityfc.co.uk/news/article/persistent-standing-forum-1329185.aspx>. 70 other individual fans who had expressed views on persistent standing were also telephoned and invited to attend. As well as individual fans and Travel Club representatives, the forum was attended by club safety management staff, stewards and police.
- 1.7. This second 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**

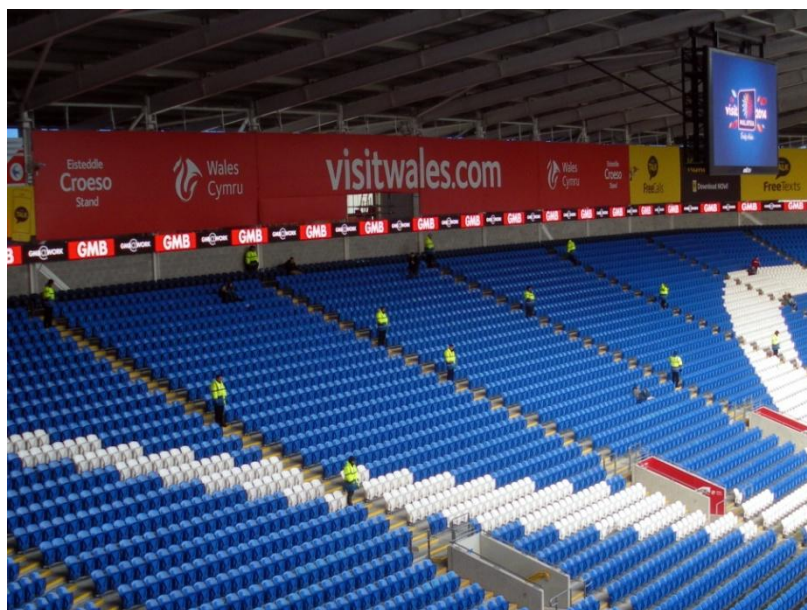
### **2.1. SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP COMMENTS**

2.1.3. The Safety Advisory Group had previously commented that the club should “keep matters under review on an event by event basis (consider how the different crowd profiles affect the proposed approach)”. In response, the first update report noted at paragraph 2.1.4 (first bullet point) that, “The spectators occupying the Canton Stand for the season 2013/14 are the same type of people as for the season 2012/13. They are like-minded individuals who create atmosphere and generally remain standing throughout the match. They are almost entirely season ticket holders who occupy the same seat at every game. The crowd profile is the same for all league matches and there is therefore no need to review the approach on an event by event basis. The approach would however be reviewed for cup matches once the audience profile was known.”

2.1.1. In reply to this point, the Chair of the Safety Advisory Group had made an observation for interim consideration, namely that this crowd profile for the Canton Stand “should be the basis of the event by event risk assessment”. From discussions with club officials, it is clear that the Canton Stand is indeed considered for each game. On the basis of hindsight and experience, the assessment made is that the crowd profile will be unchanged, that almost all of blocks 104 to 107 will remain standing and that there will be no problems with the crowd behaviour. This assessment forms part of the management briefing for each individual match.

### **2.2. MATCHDAY OBSERVATIONS OF THE CANTON STAND**

2.2.1. As previously observed at the Arsenal game, stewards were deployed in the gangways of the Canton Stand and on the pitch perimeter from before the stadium opened to the public. There were three stewards in each of the four central gangways. Their role was to monitor spectator ingress and to ensure the gangways were kept clear.



*There were 12 stewards deployed to gangway duties in the Canton Stand.*

- 2.2.2. As at the Arsenal match, it was observed that almost all spectators in blocks 104 to 107 remained standing all the way through the game.



*There was persistent standing throughout blocks 104 to 107.*

- 2.2.3. No incidents of a safety or security nature were observed and, with one exception, all the gangways remained clearly visible and unobstructed at all times. It was observed that fans were able to egress easily at half time and ingress easily after the interval.
- 2.2.4. The exception was a single individual in the gangway behind the goal. Whilst the game was in progress, this person was observed standing in the aisle, immediately in front of *Safestyle Steward Number 271*, from the 40th minute before half-time until after Cardiff's two second half goals (when the observation ceased). Although the encroachment was very minor, it was disappointing that the steward took no action.



*One fan encroached slightly into the aisle but was not dealt with by the steward.*



## **2.3. CONCLUSIONS IN RESPECT OF THE CANTON STAND**

- 2.3.1. In these unique circumstances, it is appropriate to be pedantic about keeping the aisles entirely clear at all times. **Safestyle management should therefore be reminded of the performance expected of their stewards on gangway duties.**
- 2.3.2. Otherwise 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. SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP COMMENTS**

- 3.1.1. The first update report noted at paragraph 2.1.4 (second bullet point) that, "Persistent standing continues to occur in parts of the Ninian Stand, however this is not a recent problem and so does not represent any form of 'creeping'."
- 3.1.2. In reply to this point, the Chair of the Safety Advisory Group had made an observation for interim consideration, namely that "the notable escalation of the existing problem is by definition a form of creep". It is fair comment that persistent standing has crept across from the rear of blocks 117 and 118 in 2012/13 to the rear of blocks 116 and 117 in 2013/14. It is however also clear that the club is committed to managing this issue – and to being seen to do so – through a combination of education, enforcement and independent inspection.
- 3.1.3. After receiving the first update report, the club reported making changes to their stewarding tactics and to having some success in getting spectators in the Ninian Stand to remain seated. For example, at the match versus West Bromwich Albion on Saturday 14 December 2014, only a few fans towards the rear of blocks 116 and 117 were still standing up at 4.20pm, when the following still photograph of gangway 117 was taken off the CCTV system.



*Revised stewarding tactics bore fruit at the West Bromwich Albion game.*

### **3.2. MATCHDAY OBSERVATIONS OF THE NINIAN STAND (FIRST HALF)**

- 3.2.1. Observations were carried out from a seat in the back row of block 118, on the south side of the segregation line. This area had been sold to home supporters for this match.
- 3.2.2. At kick-off, all of block 118 (on both sides of the segregation line) sat down, as did block 117 south of the gangway. On the north side of gangway 117, the remainder of block 117 and what could be seen of block 116 all remained standing.



*Blocks 118 and 117 south sat down at kick-off.*

- 3.2.3. At 3.05pm, stewards moved up gangways 117 and 116, working in parallel to get the fans to sit down. Everybody was quick to comply except a small number of people in the back four rows.



*The first stewards deployment at 3.05pm secured widespread compliance.*



- 3.2.4. At 3.10pm, a Cardiff City attack resulted in a near miss. Many in the Ninian Stand rose briefly as the excitement built, but then sat back down again. This was repeated when Cardiff City had an attacking free kick at 3.12pm. However the back four rows of blocks 117 north and block 116 south remained standing throughout.



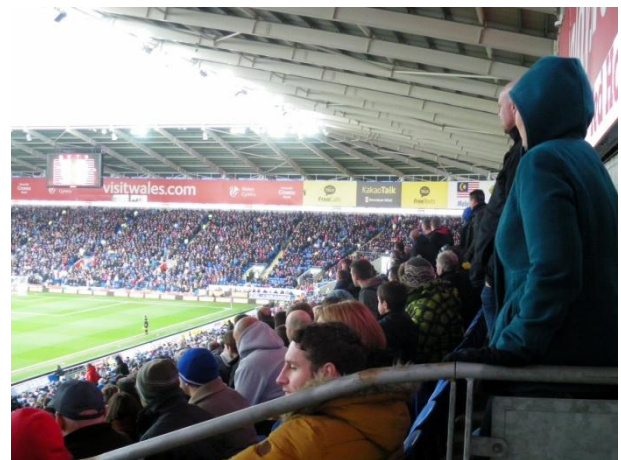
*The view from block 118 at 3.15pm – most fans are seated.*

- 3.2.5. At 3.17pm, three stewards came to the top of gangway 117 and made a concerted effort to get the back four rows down. Some fans could be heard objecting to the stewards' requests and there were a few shouts of, "Stand up if you hate Swansea". However the deployment was effective and eventually there were no more than 50 people still standing, confined to the back two rows.
- 3.2.6. One of the stewards then entered the second to back row (there was no evidence of risk to his personal safety in doing so) and appeared to be speaking directly with one or two individuals. It later became clear that he was also noting their seat numbers to allow for enforcement action to be taken at the next match. In this way the conversation will take place before the fan is admitted to the stadium rather than in the seating bowl. The stewards withdrew after a few minutes.
- 3.2.7. Half an hour into the game, it was clear that the stewarding tactics were much improved from the Arsenal match. Low key and proportionate interventions had secured widespread compliance and the vast majority of fans had been seated for the first third of the match. Wilful non compliance had been noted and would be dealt with subtly rather than through confrontation in the stand.



*The view from block 118 at 3.28pm – almost all fans are seated.*

- 3.2.8. On a minor note of criticism, there were a few individuals in block 118 north who persistently stood and whom the stewards could easily have dealt with. There was one lone individual who persistently stood against the segregation rail and three individuals who persistently stood in the back row.



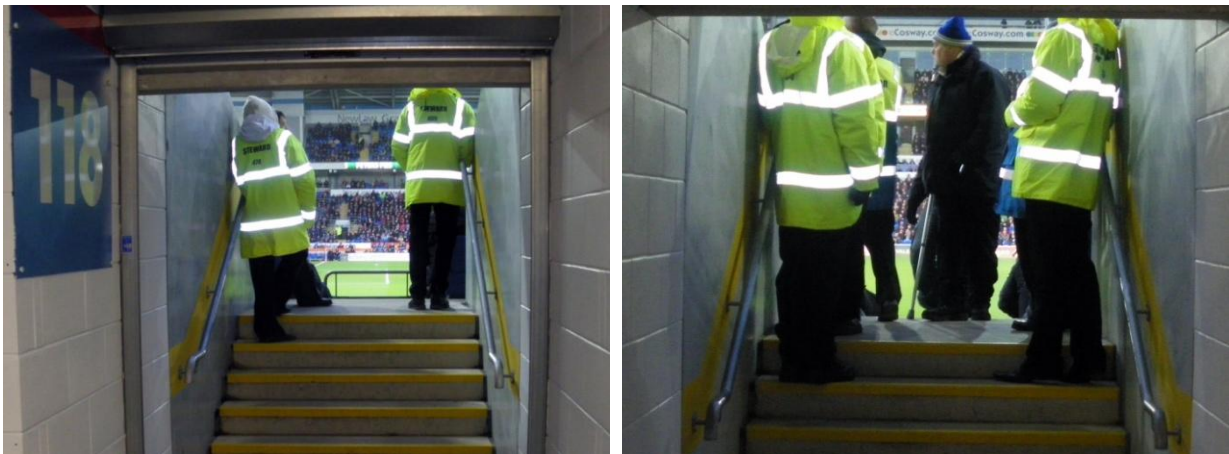
*These persistently standing individuals in block 118 should have been spoken to by stewards.*

### **3.3. MATCHDAY OBSERVATIONS OF THE NINIAN STAND (SECOND HALF)**

- 3.3.1. The two Cardiff City goals near the start of the second half raised the tension levels in the stadium to fever pitch. On observation, it was noted that almost all of the fans from gangway 115 through to the away fan sector were standing up in excitement. The Chief Steward and Quadrant Manager reported to the Control Room that, no sooner did their stewards begin asking fans to sit back down, an exciting episode of play developed and they stood up again.
- 3.3.2. This level of tension continued throughout the second half as Norwich City fought (unsuccessfully) for an equalising goal and is confirmed by the match statistics.



- 3.3.3. Given the complete non-compliance by several thousand people across four gangways, Safety Officer Alan Kerslake decided to take no further action. In the debriefing, he expressed the view that, in his opinion, the entire second half had been time of high excitement and that the standing had thus not been in breach of the ground regulations. This was a reasonable view to have formed in the circumstances.
- 3.3.4. The volatility of the crowd meant that it was not appropriate to take photographs.
- 3.3.5. In a minor note of criticism, given that there were plenty of stewards available in the vomitories (three in 115, four and one manager in 1116, four in 117 and three in 118), the opportunity could perhaps have been taken to organise a parallel deployment of a pair of stewards up each of the four gangways, co-ordinated from the front of the stand by the manager.
- 3.3.6. In any event, the stewards should have been deployed in the seating bowl to monitor crowd safety rather than concealed in the vomitories. As the crowd was standing, the stewards should have been deployed up the gangways to ensure the aisles were kept clear, as they are in the Canton Stand.



*These stewards should have been monitoring crowd safety in the seating bowl.*

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

- 3.4.1. There is evidence of progress in tackling persistent standing in the Ninian Stand through a combination of education, intervention and enforcement measures. The objective remains medium term and it is right to avoid provocative interventions.
- 3.4.2. As the season progresses, the club will continue to monitor the situation on a match by match basis. **It would be good to see interventions against individuals standing in blocks 118. It may also be that much firmer enforcement action needs to be taken against the back two rows between gangways 116 and 117.**