
The Baroness Casey Review

An independent Review of events surrounding the
UEFA Euro 2020 Final '*Euro Sunday*' at Wembley

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The Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB

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2.4 Covid-19 and screening tests

Another condition of allowing crowds at Wembley was that ticket holders had to provide evidence of a negative Covid-19 lateral flow test or proof of full vaccination at the OSP when showing their ticket. This required fans to be able to access the web-based NHS app on smartphones via a mobile phone signal.

The MPS told the Review that it raised concerns about the mobile phone signal at Wembley during initial tournament planning. Wembley told the Review problems with it emerged significantly when capacity hit 40,000 for England's 'round of 16' match and then when capacity increased for subsequent matches.

"At the Germany game we saw little incidents. At the semi-finals it was a significant problem. To a point, we had to accept someone coming up and showing the 'circle of death' loading on their app." - FA/Wembley official

The MPS raised concerns about Covid-19 checks creating a risk of public order problems with the Wembley Safety Advisory Group ahead of the final.

"If you keep the OSP the same every time with more people coming in, there is far less signal capacity. Then where they were placed and where they are going to be used. It was always going to be a problem." - MPS senior officer

An extra mobile phone mast was provided in an attempt to solve this problem for the final. However, staff considered the lateral flow check represented a tension between controlling Covid-19 and controlling a crowd safely.

"At the OSP, you see the queue building up. At some point, something has to give; an injury may occur because the sheer numbers create risk. We will either have quite a lot of injuries through pushing and shoving or congestion which would never stop." - FA/Wembley official

Brent Council, who had public health responsibilities as the local London Borough, considered the Covid-19 check to be largely worthless and unenforceable since it used home-based testing.

2.5 Limited fan zones

Fan zones have become a tried and tested means to accommodate the desire of football supporters unable to get tickets for a significant match to still watch it as part

of a crowd. Staged in parks or other open air spaces, supporters follow a game on a giant screen with the facility to buy food and drink, including alcohol.

Capacity in a fan zone can vary from several hundred people to much larger crowds which would otherwise fill a mid-sized stadium. During the 2018 World Cup, London's Hyde Park staged a fan zone for 30,000 people to watch England's semi-final against Croatia. In June, however, the Covid-19 regulations which restricted gatherings to a maximum of 30 people made it impossible to set up a suitably sized fan zone outside of the ERP.

Ahead of the tournament, the GLA secured agreement from DCMS to set up a fan zone in Trafalgar Square with a capacity of 750 under the ERP for England's matches against Croatia on 13 June, against Scotland on 18 June and against the Czech Republic on 22 June.

Both the GLA and the MPS believed that if England progressed through to the latter stages of the tournament, a significant increase in fan zone capacity would be required.

The MPS has told the Review that it repeatedly raised its concerns about the lack of fan zones as England progressed through the tournament with DCMS and the Home Office. In all, the MPS expressed its view that there was a need for a large capacity fan zone somewhere in London on repeated occasions.

"In order to manage crowds and the people that would come [on the day of the final] you would need to have a fan zone and the fan zone needed to have a lot of capacity. Fan zones are part of the fabric and fixture of a football tournament now. People expect to come to Trafalgar Square"
- MPS senior officer

On 23 June, the day after England qualified for the 'round of 16', a senior police officer raised concerns with the Home Office at a meeting of the UK Football Policing Unit about the "invidious" position it faced in enforcing Covid-19 regulations while maintaining public order with large football crowds.

The MPS again requested the Home Office ask DCMS for a review of fan zone provision for England's subsequent matches with a view to increase capacity so supporters had legitimate places to gather together.

The MPS discussed its concerns with the GLA, which also believed fans needed managed spaces where they could gather to watch matches if England progressed into the latter stages of the tournament. GLA officials raised the possibility of a much larger fan zone in Hyde Park for the final with DCMS. This was ruled out by the

government on the grounds that this would not be possible because ERP could not accommodate any more events.

In addition, government argued that the fan zone set up in Trafalgar Square had not been necessary for England's match against Scotland and this weakened the case for additional fan zone capacity in later rounds though the others believed take-up was affected by heavy rain while the MPS believed the balloting system was to blame.

In the days leading up to the final, GLA officials continued to explore alternatives to a large fan zone including a series of smaller fan zones throughout Hyde Park. This idea was dropped once it proved impractical and too costly.

In previous tournaments, Wembley established two outdoor fan zones around Wembley Stadium called Arena Square and the Events Pad. Arena Square can hold up to 1,800 people and is located outside The SSE Arena, directly opposite Brent Civic Centre, while the Events Pad can hold 1,750 people and is located outside the London Designer Outlet.

When used, both fan zones are barriered spaces and do not require pre-booked tickets for entry, meaning ticketless fans who have travelled to Wembley on the spur of the moment have somewhere to go. This was not possible due to Covid-19 regulations. Even if these spaces had been used for fan zones these may not have been able to absorb all the supporters who made impromptu journeys to Wembley because they would have been ticketed, with proof of full vaccination or negative lateral flow test a condition of entry.

On 28 June, one day before the England game against Germany, the issue of fan zones was raised during a strategic partner call and recorded in the minutes. DCMS said "conversations are ongoing with the Euros team on possible Fan Zone expansion if England progress".

On 30 June, the MPS was told by the Home Office following a meeting of the Cabinet Office's Covid-19 taskforce about the semi-finals and final that their position on the need for a fan zone was "with DMCS".

"We pretty much got dismissed which frustrated me. It wasn't a proper explanation or a proper understanding - it was just a 'no'. For me this was a fundamental foreseeable issue we kept on raising with those responsible for managing access to the Event Research Programme, it was something of a frustration that it wasn't taken as seriously as it should have been." - MPS senior officer

On 5 July, just ahead of the semi-finals, during another strategic partner call, the GLA asked if any considerations had been made if England made it to the final. The

response from DCMS was "consideration [had] been given to different fan zone options. There is no scope to make the existing one an ERP or create additional fan zones."

DCMS officials told the Review that requests from both the MPS and the GLA for a large capacity fan zone were considered carefully and the decision not to explore ways to permit one involved a number of different government departments. Government was concerned that sanctioning a major gathering of football fans outside a stadium would undermine public health messaging which was aimed at maintaining compliance with Covid-19 regulations right up until 'freedom day' on 19 July. It would have entailed significant change to the ERP pilot.

In conclusion, partners went into the semi-finals and the final with the issue of fan zones unresolved insofar as the MPS and other partners saw the need for one and yet the government felt unable to meet it due to the requirements of managing Covid-19 and public health.

2.6 Pubs and bars in Wembley

Pubs and bars had reopened in England on 17 May at the start of the ending of lockdown restrictions. However, their capacity was significantly reduced by the need to maintain social distancing and rules which prevented more than 6 people or two households from mixing.

These regulations had been scheduled to be lifted completely on 21 June. However, three days after Euro 2020 began, the government announced that the so-called 'freedom day' would be postponed by four weeks.

As a result, Euro 2020 would be completed before pubs and bars could return to full capacity. This became a major issue for all involved with managing Wembley, the tournament and Olympic Way. It meant that capacity in bars and pubs on the footprint such as Box Park on Olympic Way, and the White Horse by the Spanish Steps leading up to the stadium, remained drastically reduced. These and other venues can collectively accommodate 9,000 people under normal circumstances, allowing significant numbers of football supporters to enjoy the atmosphere at Wembley on match day and watch the football with other fans. During Euro 2020, capacity was reduced to only 1,500.

Brent Council officers and the FA were worried about the lack of space for fans to drink and eat ahead of the matches in the final week. In minutes of a partnership meeting, a Brent senior officer said

"There will be escalated challenges this week. The main issue is larger numbers gathering and drinking on Olympic Way due to restricted capacity in local pubs and bars."

2.7 Transport

On the rail network, where mask-wearing was mandatory, the BTP was concerned how its officers would strike a balance between their public health and public order responsibilities during the tournament.

On 13 June, the Department for Transport asked the BTP to contribute to cross-government discussions about raising capacity at Wembley under the ERP for later rounds in the tournament. The BTP told the department on 21 June that its officers would not be able to enforce Covid-19 regulations if stadium capacity rose above 40,000. In the BTP's view, larger crowds and alcohol consumption on trains by football fans would result in widespread non-compliance with the regulations. They also believed that attempts by its officers to enforce the regulations would result in disorder and therefore delays and disruption on the rail network.

"The minute we got to the critical mass being less willing to comply, there was no way we could enforce Covid rules. It's much easier when 99% of people are wearing masks on Monday morning versus 90,000 people not doing it." - BTP officer

This illustrates that a key agency was aware of the challenge of enforcing regulations and sought support from the government to be excluded from the obligation to do so.

2.8 'Freedom Day'

The decision to delay so-called 'freedom day' (the lifting of all remaining Covid-19 restrictions) by a month, meant that Euro 2020 games in England were played in an atmosphere of anticipation that it would be very soon safe and permitted to gather in large numbers.

There had already been indications that, given sufficient cause for celebration, football crowds would gather when all but the strongest lockdown restrictions were in place. In June 2020, more than 2,000 Liverpool fans gathered outside Anfield to celebrate the club's first league title for 30 years. During the same month, crowds numbering in the hundreds gathered in Leeds and Coventry to celebrate the promotions of their teams.

Professor Geoff Pearson has been a member of the Policing and Security Workgroup for the SPI-B arm for SAGE, the government's key scientific advisory body during the Covid-19 pandemic. In his opinion commissioned by the Review, he notes

Chapter 8: Conclusions and recommendations

One of the reasons for establishing this Review was to 'identify any lessons to be learned and to make recommendations to ensure there is no repeat' in the future. Inevitably, with a report of this nature, the conclusions are nuanced. While some of what occurred might have been foreseeable, the ferocity of some of the behaviours on display shocked even the most hardened stadium security and policing personnel. Moreover, there were a number of mitigating factors, for example, relating to Covid-19, which made planning and preparation more challenging.

The report provides a detailed timeline of what occurred both in the build-up to, and during the day of the final. In so doing, it has shone a light on the roles and responsibilities of different agencies in preparing for, and responding to events and the decisions that were taken. One of the things that has come through strongest is that no single agency was to blame for what occurred. There was a collective failure to foresee risk.

This was not just a football match, but an event or occasion of great national significance. A mood of euphoria was sweeping the country. Sadly, a minority of England supporters turned what should have been a day of national pride into a day of shame. The blame for what happened lies squarely with them.

While there are undoubtedly things that could have been done differently by the various organisations involved in planning the delivery of Euro Sunday, no steward or police officer should expect to be confronted with the kind of violence and aggression that occurred on Euro Sunday. We must not fall into the trap of normalising such extreme, reckless and criminal behaviour because of its association with football.

Summary of key findings

The key findings of the Review are as follows:

- The behaviour of a large minority of England supporters was not just disgraceful, it recklessly endangered lives
- There were a series of crowd 'near misses' which could have led to significant injuries or even death
- Planning and preparation for Euro Sunday was hampered by a set of unique conditions, including the ongoing need to manage the Covid-19 pandemic, which combined to create a 'perfect storm'
- Many of the events that unfolded were foreseeable, and, while there were many mitigating factors, there was a collective failure to plan for the worst case scenario

- A loss of experienced stewards as a result of the pandemic left Wembley's stewarding operation vulnerable when confronted with the most aggressive and disorderly crowd Wembley had ever seen
- The absence of a fan zone or fan zones denied the police and other agencies a key crowd management tool and was potentially a very significant factor.
- There was insufficient enforcement of the ban on consuming alcohol on public transport in London
- The policing of the final did not sufficiently mitigate the risk of ticketless fans with officers deployed too late in the day
- There are a lack of enforcement mechanisms available to respond to and deter the kind of behaviour witnessed at Euro Sunday
- Planning of the final did not match the 'occasion' that was Euro Sunday

Recommendations

This Review makes 5 recommendations for national consideration and 3 specifically for the FA and Wembley and its partners. This Review has been conducted on behalf of the FA to look at their own responsibilities with regard to Euro Sunday.

We have considered the wider partnerships and the national context within which the event took place and taken the liberty of making some recommendations with that in mind. It should also be noted that while this Review is concerned with football there are many lessons that could be applied to the wider stadium and event industry.

1. I recommend that the Government considers a new category for football matches of national significance

The majority of partners treated the Euro final as another match albeit a significant one, rather than an event of national significance. As a result, the security arrangements surrounding the final were underpowered and public safety was not given the prominence it deserved.

In the future, there should be a new category for football matches of national significance, with the SGSA, police, and other key partners setting out what steps should be taken for such matches. This could include:

- A maximalist police (and other agencies with enforcement powers) resourcing and deployment plan
- The establishment of a sterile area within Zone Ex which is restricted to ticket-holders
- More robust governance arrangements including an independent checkpoint as part of the process

- Enhanced enforcement of bans on alcohol consumption on public transport and in other designated public spaces

The prospect of new legislation is welcome and timely as it gives the Government the opportunity to update the legal framework that governs spectator safety which has not been significantly reviewed since the Hillsborough tragedy.

2. I recommend that the Government consider tasking the SGSA to work with the FA and the event industry to undertake a review of stewarding SGSA should undertake review and research the current challenges faced by live sporting events in securing sufficient numbers of trained stewards and provide guidance to the sector on how public safety can be assured.

A range of wider factors, including the pandemic (which prompted many experienced stewards to find new vocations) and global supply chain challenges, have created significant workforce challenges for the stewarding sector. It is important that the implications of these shortages are understood for the wider events sector.

The SGSA should work with key partners (including the FA and United Kingdom Crowd Management Association (UKCMA) to understand the particular factors in play here and their implications for the longer-term sustainability of the stewarding role at major sports events. That, in turn, should inform wider considerations within the Government and the sector itself.

3. The SGSA, the events industry, the police and local government agree on a way forward on who is accountable for Zone Ex.

There should be clear accountability for public safety in Zone Ex. The question of who was responsible for public safety on Olympic Way was a contributing factor to the inability to deal with the disorder seen in the build-up to kick-off. The police and stadium operators have for many years contested the issue of who is responsible for safety and security in Zone Ex (the area of public space outside the stadium used by supporters) and the financing of it remains a contested issue. This should be resolved.

The SGSA should review the provisions of the 1975 Safety of Sports Grounds Act, together with its oversight powers and any associated guidance for local authorities, to determine if they are still fit for purpose, particularly in relation to the control and management of Zone Ex.

4. I ask that The FA - as the governing body that oversees football - lead a national campaign to bring about a sea-change in attitudes towards supporter behaviours

The appalling behaviour of supporters on Euro Sunday should be a wake-up call for us all. For too long, the actions of a minority of England fans have been tolerated as

a part of our national culture (albeit an embarrassing one), rather than confronted head-on.

The FA and Wembley, working with others, should step up action on eradicating such behaviours from football, including:

- refusing to allow entry to fans who arrive chanting foul abuse and/ or are clearly under the influence of alcohol and/ or drugs
- stricter enforcement (with police support) against those behaving badly inside the stadium, with consideration given to ejections also leading to an automatic exclusion and ban from all football grounds (not just Wembley)
- more proactive engagement with the Football Safety Officers Association around intelligence-sharing, particularly with regards to fan behaviours
- a considerable step-up action again to stamp out racism by the FA, Premier League and English Football League
- Appoint the Football Supporters Association (supported by the FA) to a leading role in working with fans and others to eradicate these behaviours

5. I recommend that the Government consider strengthening the penalties for football-related disorder, particularly behaviours which recklessly endanger lives and these penalties should be well understood and robustly enforced

The existing enforcement mechanisms available to the police and other enforcement officers do not offer enough deterrent against those determined to use the cover of football matches to commit criminal offences. Tailgating, for example, should become a criminal offence. Sanctions for those breaking into football stadiums and/ or recklessly endangering lives is weak.

It is welcomed by the Review that the Prime Minister has committed to making it possible to obtain a football banning order against a person convicted of online racist offences.

In light of expert advice provided to this Review by Daniel Greenberg CB, we recommend that the Home Office considers options for strengthening the legal framework surrounding football-related disorder, with a particular focus on addressing the weaknesses and gaps identified in this Review. Specifically, the Home Office should consider:

- ensuring that the FBO regime to ensure drugs-related disorderly behaviour is treated in the same way as alcohol-related disorder
- identifying a suitable legislative mechanism for deterring the practice of tailgating, such as through an expanded FBO regime or through the application of PNDs

- identifying a suitable legislative mechanism for a new offence of endangering public safety in a stadium through reckless behaviour, such as interfering with emergency doors, triggering fire alarms or damaging barriers and other safety infrastructure, with penalties comparable to those for endangering the safety of an aircraft
- Greater urgency to introduce the Online Safety Bill should be given as it is a real opportunity to stiffen penalties for racism and hate speech online

6. Recommendations specifically for the FA/Wembley and key partners.

6.a The FA and Wembley should strengthen plans for safety both physical and human, ahead of any matches or events of significant risk. This should include but not be limited to:

- The physical fences and means of separating and filtering unticketed fans from those with legitimate access.
- Particular attention should be made to ensuring those entering through gates provided for wheelchair users and other more vulnerable members of society are not endangered by the reckless actions of others.
- A staff survey of all those involved with security, stewarding and safety on Euro Sunday so the FA can be doubly sure their views are taken into any future changes
- Security plans should be regularly peer reviewed by experienced safety and security professionals to ensure rigour
- The incoming Chair of the FA should take steps to be sure that she and the Board have suitable oversight of safety and security at Wembley Stadium

6.b. A more joined up approach between Wembley and the MPS is required to managing public safety on match-days, including joint tasking and debriefing of operational teams

6.c The key partners represented on the Wembley SAG, most notably the MPS, the FA and Brent Council, need to make a concerted effort to proactively solicit and listen to each other's concerns and avoid any single agency from becoming too dominant