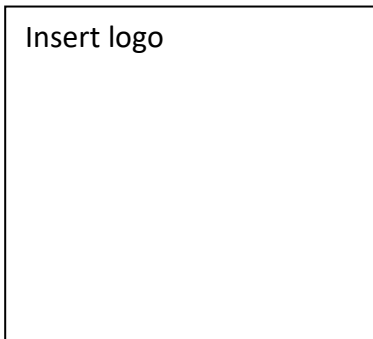




SAFETY AND SECURITY OPERATIONS MANUAL

ANNEX XXX: Pitch Protection Plan

|               |                                                  |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Author        |                                                  |
| Document Name | Matchday Operations Plan – Pitch Protection Plan |
| Version       |                                                  |
| Source        | Wolves FC: Facilities, Safety & Security Dept    |
| Document Date |                                                  |

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

|                                              |    |
|----------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Overview of responsibilities .....        | 3  |
| 2. Team structure/selection .....            | 3  |
| 3. Training .....                            | 4  |
| 4. Equipment/Clothing .....                  | 5  |
| 5. Briefing - content .....                  | 5  |
| 6. Deployments and response .....            | 7  |
| 7. Command, Control and Communication .....  | 10 |
| 8. Match Officials .....                     | 10 |
| 9. Multiple/Major incursions .....           | 11 |
| 10. Protests .....                           | 12 |
| 11. Post event review .....                  | 12 |
| APPENDIX 1: EXAMPLE MASS INVASION PLAN ..... | 13 |

**Document review**

| Last reviewed | Version | Brief detail of amendments |
|---------------|---------|----------------------------|
|               |         |                            |
|               |         |                            |
|               |         |                            |
|               |         |                            |
|               |         |                            |

**NOTE:**

This document is provided by Wolves FC as a template/example only. The template was created using a variety of sources, including internal club plans and anonymised plans from other stadiums provided by the Premier League safety and security advisors.

The development of a bespoke pitch protection plan is the sole responsibility of the safety management team using this template, based on a process of risk assessment for the specific fixture.

## 1. Overview of responsibilities

- 1.1. To ensure a safe and secure environment for players and officials during an incursion or protest.
- 1.2. To ensure the safe and swift removal of any offender, and the apprehension for purposes of law and order.
- 1.3. To ensure that the actions taken by staff are legally sound, and that if force is used it was necessary, justifiable, and proportionate in the circumstances and not liable to incite escalation.
- 1.4. The safety officer will ensure that a specific risk assessment is carried out per game, including the threat from pitch incursion. This will include an assessment of information and intelligence obtained from various sources, such as the police, FSOA match reports or opposition clubs. The following procedures will be adapted in line with the threat assessment as required.
- 1.5. To assist the Tunnel Stewards to ensure a safe and secure environment for players and officials to arrive and depart from the stadium.

## 2. Team structure/selection

- 2.1. The selection process for the team members is key to the success of this plan. While the plan is designed to be relatively simple to implement it does rely on staff remaining vigilant, alert, and responsive at all times.
- 2.2. The team will be selected by the Match Day Safety Team, ensuring that they are physically capable to offer an immediate deterrent and response to an offender.
- 2.3. All team members will be assessed using the following methods prior to being selected.

### Yo-Yo test

An intermittent run, the test is a 20m shuttle test, similar to a beep test with rest periods of 10 seconds between each level. For the purposes of what we want to achieve they will run 15m shuttles, those tested will be asked to get to level 5 of this test although getting to and completing level 4 will be adequate for what is required. – see below for explanation of levels:

| Level | Speed Level | Shuttles | Approx. time per shuttle (back and forth) |
|-------|-------------|----------|-------------------------------------------|
| 1     | 5           | 1        | 14.5 seconds                              |
| 2     | 9           | 1        | 11.5 seconds                              |
| 3     | 11          | 1        | 10.5 seconds                              |
| 4     | 11          | 1        | 10.5 seconds                              |
| 5     | 12          | 1        | 10 seconds                                |

This will be followed by a brief rest and recovery period before then taking the Illinois test.

### Illinois Agility Run Test

- The course will be set up as detailed in the diagram below
- On command “GO” the stopwatch starts.

Diagram illustrating the layout of a 10-metre high jump landing pit. The pit is 10 metres high and 5 metres wide. The layout shows a start line on the left, a finish line on the right, and a central area with three 3.3m high jump bars. The path of the jump is indicated by red arrows.

- ### 3. Training

- Page 4 of 15

## 4. Equipment/Clothing

- 4.1. Each member of staff will wear appropriate clothing and footwear to allow them to respond freely and effectively to a pitch incursion. This will include a high visibility bib that identifies their role and footwear suitable for use on the pitch to prevent slipping but can also be used on other surfaces (i.e., studded or trail type trainers).  
Pitch Protection Stewards are also required to carry a radio, on closed comms, so they can communicate between one another and the Safety Officer in the Control Room.
- 4.2. Maintenance staff will provide an appropriate tool kit, to be available at pitchside to enable the removal of any person attaching themselves to pitch furniture as part of a protest or demonstration. There are spare goal sets should they be required.  
The Tool Kit will comprise Bolt Cutters, Snips, Scissors, 3mm thick rubber sheeting section, 5 pairs of vinyl gloves, safety glasses and a de-bonding kit.

## 5. Briefing - content

- 5.1. The aim is to ensure no person disrupts the game by entering the pitch. This is an offence under the Football Offences Act 1991. Our intention is to ensure that persons attempting access are detained and ultimately handed to police for arrest.
- 5.2. The priorities for all stewards are:
- *Deter and prevent persons from leaving spectator areas to enter the trackside/pitch*
  - *Protect the players, officials, and tunnel area.*
  - *Protect all persons located pitchside, ball crew, media and broadcasters.*
  - *Respond swiftly to incidents as they arise*
- 5.3. You are to ensure that you understand your duties and the part you play within the team and must not leave your post without permission from your supervisor.
- 5.4. The correct uniform and PPE must be worn by dedicated pitch staff.
- 5.5. You must be aware of what is happening on the pitch, be on high alert and remain vigilant for any attempts to access the pitch. You are expected to stand during heightened on pitch activity, i.e., corners, free kicks, penalties, red cards, goals or contentious issues.
- 5.6. VAR: In the event of VAR review all staff to stand and face the crowd, the nearest to the Referee Review Area (RRA) must stand behind the monitor facing the crowd.
- 5.7. Be aware of distraction techniques, persons may attempt to distract you while the main offender goes unnoticed.
- 5.8. You should watch the crowd at all times and not the game.
- 5.9. If you restrict an offender from entering the pitch, using the correct control and restraint techniques, remove them to the nearest response stewards and/or police officers, you should then return immediately to your position.

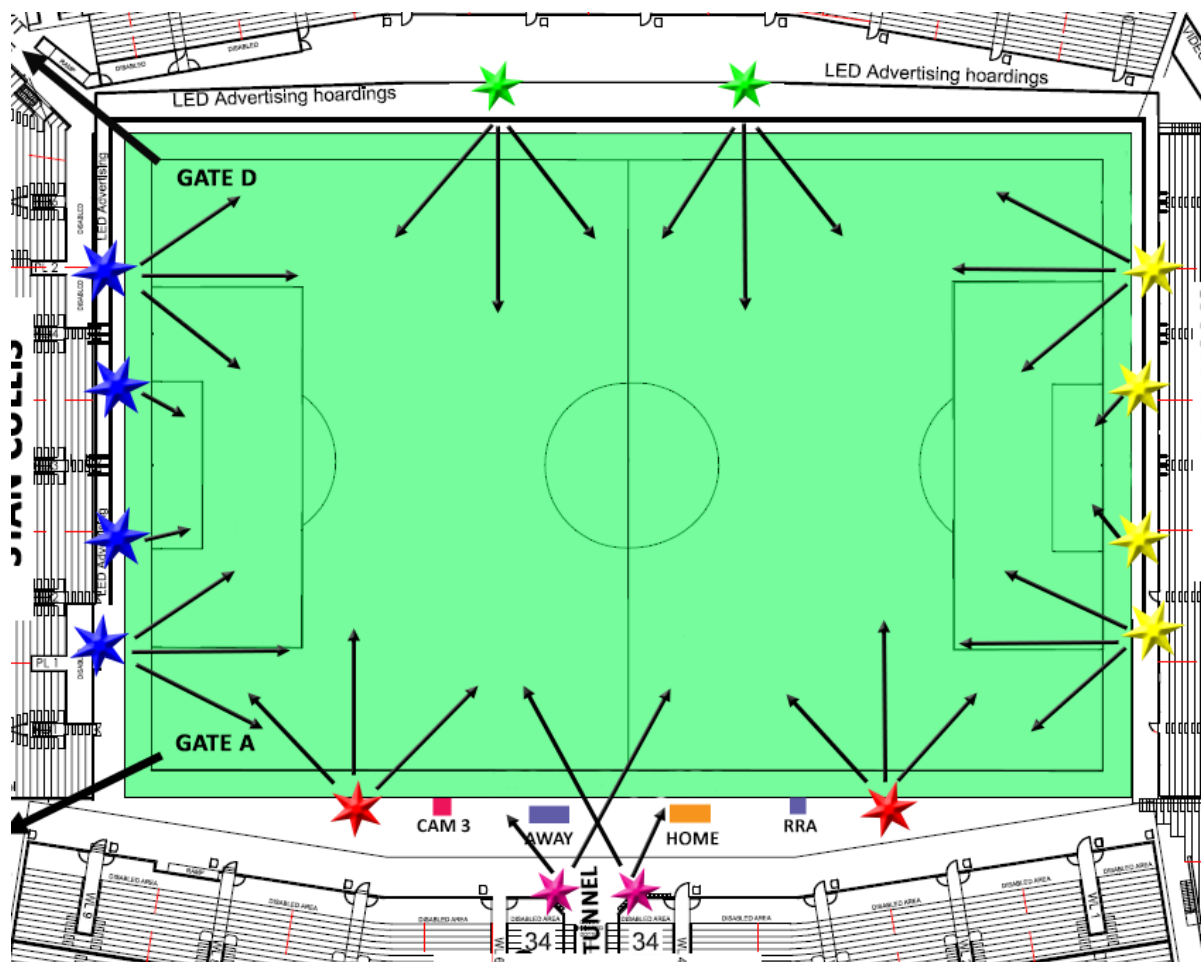
- 5.10. If a person evades the stewards in front of the stands and enters the pitch, stand stewards are not permitted to chase the offender on to the pitch. The initial response to any persons accessing the pitch will be from the pitch stewards.
- 5.11. If you believe there is a threat in your section, immediately stand and inform the staff to your left and right to help reduce the threat. You should raise your arm to alert your supervisor.
- 5.12. Stand stewards will carry out regular gangway patrols to ensure they are kept clear and to look for suspicious activity, persons intent of accessing the pitch may make 'practice runs' down gangways, any suspicious activity must be reported to Control immediately.
- 5.13. When working in the coach compound High Vis vests must be worn at all times, staff must not engage in directing the coaches unless specifically trained to do so. No one is permitted to enter the road to stop traffic. Be alert for persons standing on walls adjacent to the player's entrance.

## 6. Deployments and response

### 6.1. Standard Dedicated Deployments:

- 6.1.1. These deployments will be reviewed regularly and varied according to threat and match specific risk assessment.
- 6.1.2. Prior to gates opening and once the teams and officials have left the pitch at the end of the match, the pitch stewards will assist the tunnel stewards with team arrivals/departures.
- 6.1.3. From gate opening time the pitch stewards will be located as shown on image 1, including two per goal, each has responsibility for the areas indicated with arrows and will face the pitch.
- 6.1.4. The players tunnel has a dedicated team of stewards, two will be located as shown at the mouth of the tunnel for the duration of the game.
- 6.1.5. The Pitch Response Senior Supervisor will be located in the vicinity of the tunnel.
- 6.1.6. One pitch supervisor will be located centrally in front of the away support, the other close to the RRA.

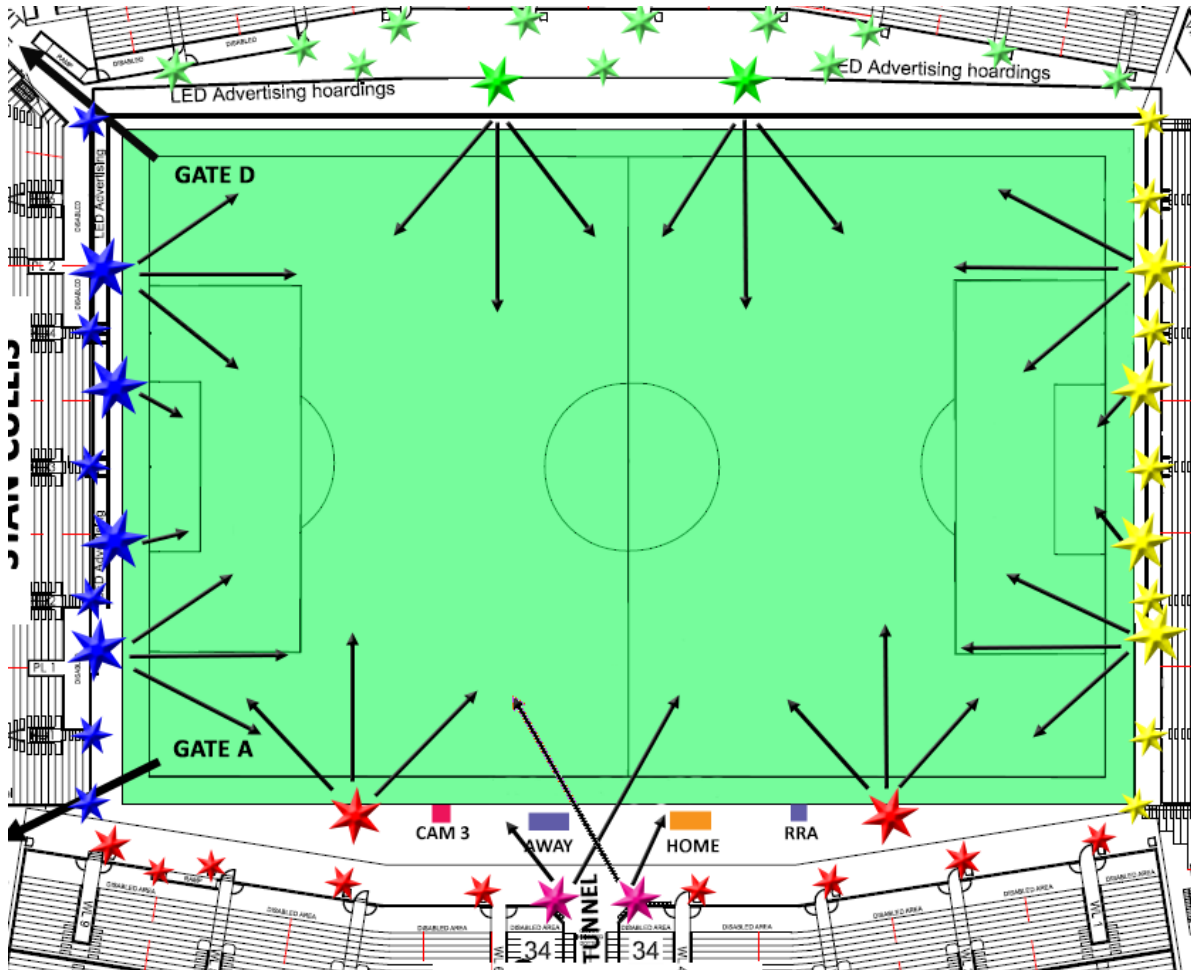
Image 1:



## 6.2. Supplementary Deployments:

- 6.2.1. From 10 minutes before kick off each of the home stands will deploy staff to patrol pitchside until search team come in. This will be done by leaving one steward per gangway where required.
- 6.2.2. Away section: will ensure that pitchside is covered, one per gate prior to kick off. For high-risk games there will be two persons allocated per gate during the game.
- 6.2.3. Search teams will immediately deploy to pitchside when finished on search. These will be supported by general stewards placed around the pitch perimeter whose role it is to watch the crowd, also referred to as Shadow Stewards.

Image 2:



### **6.3. Response:**

- 6.3.1. If one individual breaches the perimeter fence, the trackside stewards and enters the field of play the pitch stewards must respond quickly in a calm and coordinated manner.
  - 6.3.2. Four of the nearest pitch stewards will respond directly to the perpetrator, while those nearest to the officials immediately provide them security. The remainder of the team are to remain vigilant for further incidents or to provide assistance to those on the pitch.
  - 6.3.3. Stewards should evaluate the situation and carry out a dynamic assessment as to the intentions of the offender. They should close in on the offender and should attempt to box in the offender and remove from the pitch using minimum force, apprehending safely if possible.
  - 6.3.4. The players tunnel stewards will immediately respond by securing the tunnel. Two of the team will also make their way to the team benches to ensure their protection.
  - 6.3.5. The response team will be instructed to receive the offender, at the nearest corner, restraining them, if necessary, to be handed over to the police for arrest.
  - 6.3.6. All pitch perimeter stewards will stand and face the crowd to monitor for any further movement and to prevent any other persons entering the pitch or perimeter.
  - 6.3.7. In the event of more than one person entering the pitch (not a mass incursion) the response team will be instructed to support the pitch stewards. If there are more than two on the pitch at anytime it must be assumed that this is a mass incursion, and the priorities will be the safety of the players and officials, refer to section 9.
- Note:** The Safety Officer will direct the stewards on the best place to leave the pitch depending upon circumstances at the time. The most direct routes out of the stadium, Gates A & D, are indicated on the images above.
- 6.3.8. **Aggressive offenders:** If the offender is aggressive or threatening, especially towards the players and officials, the stewards should attempt to tackle and restrain the individual as quickly as is possible.
  - 6.3.9. The response and tunnel steward teams will be directed to provide additional security, protection of officials and players and to assist with the removal of the offender. The offender should then be immediately handed over to the police.
  - 6.3.10. **Naked offenders:** to support the deployments a female steward from the response team will support in the event of a female offender, a male steward for a male. They will make appropriate attempts to cover the person up if possible. The same sex steward will stay with the offender until their clothes are recovered.
  - 6.3.11. **Children or Adults at Risk:** It is a criminal offence for any spectator to encroach onto the field of play, regardless of age.

- 6.3.12. We have a responsibility to ensure a child (a person under the age of 18) or an adult at risk (AAR) that may be affected by a pitch incursion (encroachment), is protected from harm. In addition, we also need to consider our approach and safeguarding responsibilities if the encroachment is by a child or adult at risk.

A primary responsibility of the Match Day Safety Officer is to ensure the safety of every person present at the event in any capacity. It is acknowledged that at the point when a child/AAR encroaches the field of play, the match day safety officer must undertake a dynamic and rapid assessment of risk to others in and around the field. Others may include spectators, the child/AAR, both teams of players, match day officials, ball assistants, media crew and stewards. Other factors which may affect the dynamic risk assessment may include the age and physical size/presentation of the child/AAR, or aggravating factors such as: any available police intelligence to indicate the potential for violence, the nature of the fixture (known rivalry between teams), previous match day incidents, on field decisions or current score. Command Control, at the earliest opportunity, will contact safeguarding leads to offer support.

- 6.3.13. In most circumstances the child/AAR should be monitored from a safe distance and be guided or steered to leave the field, with open arms and clear verbal instructions; where they will be met and detained with the minimum force necessary to maintain their safety by a steward. Only when it is considered that the child/AAR poses an immediate risk of harm to himself or any other person on the field of play, may a steward be directed to restrain them using the minimum of force necessary and by the appropriate method to remove them off field.
- 6.3.14. As encroachment is regarded as a criminal offence, the Club has a responsibility to detain the offender until such a decision is made on Police involvement or the Club recording details of the offender for post-match action. However, there must be immediate consideration for the presentation of the child/AAR, the presence and engagement of a parent/carers, any injuries sustained and removing the offender to a place of safety as soon as practically possible.
- 6.3.15. The Match Day Safety Officer will liaise with the Police Match Commander and Lead Match Day Safeguarding Officer to agree the most appropriate action to deal with the child/AAR and parents/carers.

## **7. Command, Control and Communication**

- 7.1. Command and control of any incursion will be from Stadium Control, under the direction of the Safety Officer and communicated via the Channel One Radio Operator.
- 7.2. The Pitch Response Senior Supervisor, supervisors & stewards will be issued with closed communication radios.
- 7.3. The Pitch Response Senior Supervisor will be the link to the Fourth Official in the event of an incursion.

## **8. Match Officials**

- 8.1. The safety team will ensure that the match officials are provided with a comprehensive overview of the event and related procedures in advance of each fixture.

- 8.2. On the day of the game, they will also receive a briefing, delivered by Deputy Safety Officer, checking that they are aware of these procedures, along with an update on any specific threats in relation to the fixture.
- 8.3. As standard practice, at the end of the first half and at the end of the game, the tunnel stewards will escort the match officials from the pitch to their dressing room.

## 9. Multiple/Major incursions

- 9.1. It is highly likely that a pitch incursion will be anticipated, they are usually focused on pivotal moments of the season, such as possible relegation or promotion. Via the process of carrying out the event specific risk assessment the safety officer will prepare a detailed bespoke plan to manage any potential invasion, see example at [appendix 1](#).
- 9.2. It is important to remember that the circumstances will inevitably vary subject to results and reaction of supporters therefore this plan has to be flexible. The following points give general guidance:
  - **The Safety Officer will:** Consider initiating the **CODE BLUE** alert and Liaise with the Police Commander (if present) regarding the use of Stewards/Police resources. Assess whether the pitch incursion is likely to be celebratory or hostile.
  - In the event of being informed of or it appears a major pitch incursion is likely the plan will allow for three phases of management.
    - Phase 1 – arrange steward cordon around the perimeter of the track.
    - Phase 2 – respond to any incursions, staff will be deployed to the area of most concern.
    - Phase 3 – Clear pitch and encourage supporters back into the stands.
  - Stewards will not pursue persons onto the Pitch unless instructed to do so, but will assist Police Officers (if present) in the dispersal of/and apprehending of offenders who may well have committed a criminal offence.
  - A common-sense approach will be adopted by Stewards and wherever possible individuals will be encouraged to leave the Pitch without any physical restraint being used.
  - If a considerable number of spectators have intruded onto the pitch during play, the game will have to be stopped. The Tunnel manager will assemble sufficient stewards to escort the officials and players off the pitch.
  - Consideration should be given to the use of the Public Address System for Warning Messages or advising Spectators to clear the pitch area and return to their seats.
  - Consider the use of cordons to prevent further breaches or confrontation between rival fans.
  - If the pitch incursion escalates into serious disorder inside the Stadium, ensure Stewards give assistance to the Police to restore order (Be mindful of the fact that Stewards are not afforded the same physical protection equipment as the police).
  - If the game has had to be stopped refer to procedures for abandoned fixtures.

## 10. Protests

10.1. Football fixtures are likely to remain a target with some concern that other methods may be employed, especially those designed to maximise disruption – attaching to tunnels/other infrastructure, even players/officials.

### 10.1. Additional considerations for briefing:

- Searching: look for concealed zip ties, glue and identifying markers like logos or T-Shirts.
- Be aware: the crowd may react adversely to protesters resulting in further pitch invaders/missile throwing.
- Be observant: Offenders may film themselves making a statement, with friends or on their own, inside or outside the stadium.
- If called upon to respond: stewards to remain cautious as offenders may be covered in high strength glue. **Wear gloves** and don't do anything that may cause injury.
- Be aware of distraction techniques, there may be more than one protester.
- Stewards will deploy initially supported by Response. If possible, escort offenders to police, however police will come to support if needed.
- In the event the offender is securely attached, remain calm and await support from police, fire team, maintenance and **doctor**. The aim is to deal with the situation in the most proportionate way to avoid any potential injuries occurring to the offender, or staff.
- Tunnel 1 to liaise with the match officials regarding considerations for stopping play/removing players.

## 11. Post event review

11.1. Should an incident occur, there will be a debrief following the event, held by the Head of Major Event Safety. The purpose being to examine the before, during and after factors and to identify and reoccurring themes or trends and areas for operational or strategic improvement and to build upon lessons learned.

11.2. Statements will be sought from key witnesses and a full CCTV review will also be completed.

11.3. Any supporters found to be partaking in pitch incursions, will be primarily dealt with by the Police, with further sanctions to be applied by the Club, in line with its Acceptable Behaviour Policy.

## APPENDIX 1: EXAMPLE MASS INVASION PLAN

**There has been lots of publicity asking fans to stay off the pitch at the end of the game.** The players will return to the dressing rooms at the final whistle. They will return to the pitch **only if supporters stay off the pitch.**

Arrangements for these deployments should be made pre match, identify the staff required and brief them on what is expected. When the instruction is given from control these will be your end of match deployments.

**Remember** you must take care of yourselves at all times, stay alert and remain close to your colleagues.

**Safety 2:** will be responsible for pitch, tunnel, officials and teams and liaison with media.

**Safety 3:** is responsible for away fans and egress of them, reverting inside once clear.

Our strategy will be to deter and prevent fans from entering the pitch while the players and officials are still on the pitch. Post match Stewards must use verbal instructions and hand gestures to try and prevent fans coming on to the pitch. Keep an early eye out for gatherings in the gangways, notify control immediately and monitor.

**Each stand manager to be in possession of a LOUD HAILER to be used to encourage fans to remain in the stands. PPE is provided for those in front of the away section and adjacent home areas, managers to ensure this is distributed.**

**O1:** Leave O2 plus 5 staff internal, all others including your contractors to staff external area outside SB stand.

**Pitch Protection Team (PP1):** To assist Tunnel to ensure the safety of the match officials and players getting back to the dressing rooms.

**T1/PP1:** to secure tunnel area to prevent access

**G1,** All vomitory to trackside to form as tight a cordon as possible, link in with police. Staff to be deployed to cover external stair barriers.

**B1:** All lower vomitory stewards to trackside, leave 1 per vomitory and a supervisor in upper tier deploy remainder to trackside. **To provide 15 stewards to report to Y1,** 6 staff to external barriers, close concourse seg doors.

**Y1:** All stewards to trackside, **4 stewards are to be positioned on the stairs at the front of each gangway to prevent migration (should this be unsuccessful they move to trackside).** 5 stewards plus sup on disabled balcony

**R1:** All lower tier to trackside, leave 1 per vomitory in the upper plus supervisors, the remainder to trackside.

**Provide 20 stewards to report to G1,** supervisors to remain in upper tier. Monitor the front of the upper tier.

**P1/R1/B1:** stewards should be positioned at the front of the upper tiers, be aware of fans standing on the front wall and take action if required. **P1, staff to be proactive to stop issues arising.**

**Exec 1:** maintain the area above the tunnel to prevent entry from the suites, no one to be permitted access to the tunnel via the stairs.

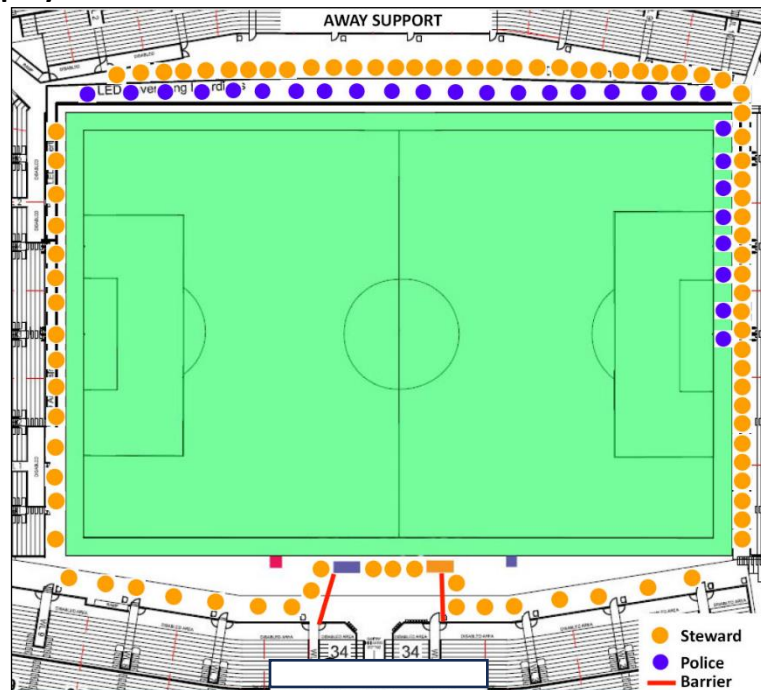
**Fire 1:** to position team at trackside in front of away fans, ready to deploy as instructed to deal with incidents as required, such as protection of the goals. Be prepared to split into 2 teams. All defib stewards to be deployed to the 4 corners of the stadium under your control.

**All: Monitor and ensure safety of Ball Boys, disabled supporters, media and photographers.**

**Phase 1:** Stewards are to form a cordon stand side of the AD boards. **Red and white barrier tape supplied, this is to be rolled out along the front of each stand to be held by cordon stewards.**

**G1:** Stewards in front of the away section should link in with the police to manage/monitor the away fans, stay close to the perimeter wall and gates initially – **reasonable effort must be made in this area to prevent away fans entering the pitch area, however do not put yourselves at risk and in the event of disorder occurring stewards must step back and allow the police to manage the issues.**

**Phase 1 indicative deployments:**

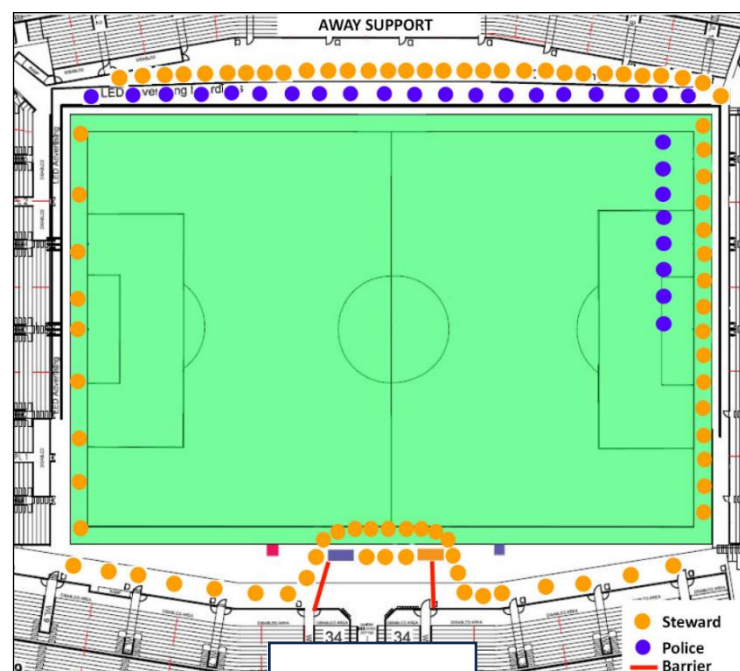


**If the cordon is breached by large numbers:** Stewards to fall back onto the pitch and open exits in the perimeter fences, and any A Frames exits in front of stands must be removed and placed to the side on the grass, any LED AD exits will need to be pushed over.

The objective then is to slow the flow down on to the pitch, encourage others to remain in the stand and deal with anyone who may have fallen or is injured.

Stewards **must not try to physically restrain** any persons entering the pitch at this point. You will then be directed to reform in a cordon to clear the pitch.

**G1:** Stewards to remain in front of the away section with the police to manage and monitor the away fans, stewards to encourage the visitors to leave the stadium at the earliest opportunity.



**Phase 2:** Once supporters have left the stands, or on instruction from control:

One section supervisor should remain in front of their respective stands with 2 stewards for support.

**B1/R1/T1/O2/PP1:** Teams to rendezvous in the tunnel area.

**Y1:** To create an additional cordon in front of the LED pitchside of away section to prevent fans approaching AWAY section. **Safety 2** will organise reinforcement of the tunnel paying attention to the dugouts, ensure that no one climbs on them, barrier tape to be used around dugouts to prevent access.

**S2** will then lead B1, R1 and O2 and in conjunction with S1 will organise the deployments on the pitch.

**S3** will lead G1 and Y1 and O1 to organise and manage the departure of the visitors.

In the event that the pitch incursion occurs during play, S1 will communicate with Club Management/Safety 2 regarding whether or not the circumstances are satisfactory for the game to continue/recommence.

### Phase 3:

**B1/R1/T1/O2:** to commence with sweep of the pitch in conjunction with Y1/G1 to prevent them gathering in front of the visitors. Once fans are back in the stands the cordons used in phase 1 are to be reinstated.

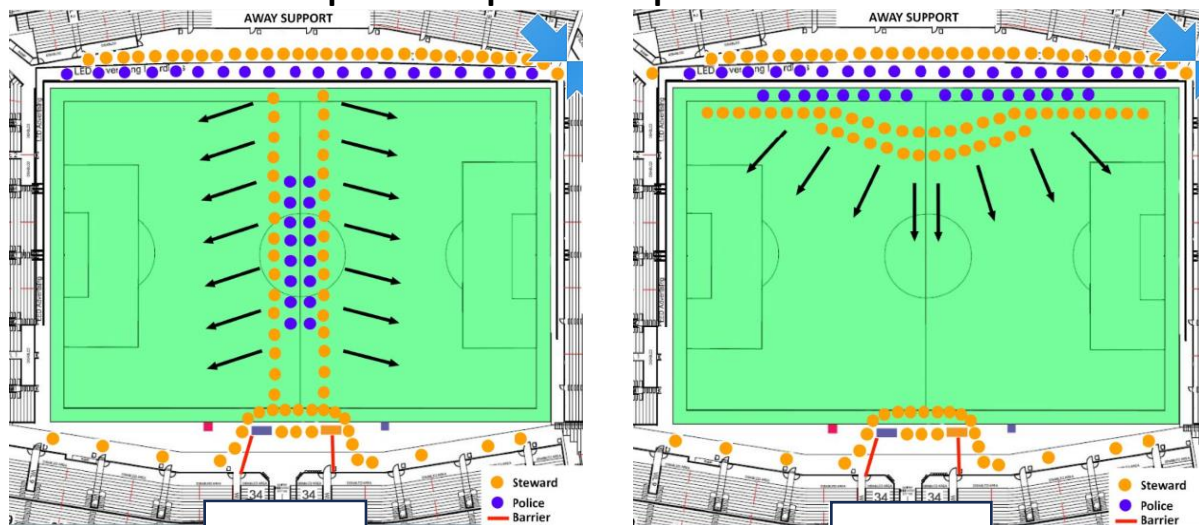
In the event that the cordon is breached at this point the procedures detailed above will be repeated. **The players will not come back out again.**

Once the ground is clear, all stewards to sweep pitch to remove any objects, and then report back to their respective stands to complete the post-match sweep.

Watch out for anyone standing/sitting or trying to climb over the front walls of the upper tiers.

Supporters may leave the Upper tiers of the stadium to try and gain access at pitch level.

### Phase 3: Indicative options for pitch sweep



#### Key:

**Safety 2 & 3** – 2 x deputy safety officers.

**B1** – Left hand home stand manager.

**G1** – Away section lower tier stand manager.

**P1** – Upper tier stand manager, opposite tunnel.

**Y1** – Right hand home stand manager.

**R1** – Home stand manager, tunnel side.

**O1** – Response team manager, **O2** – response supervisor.

**T1** – Players tunnel manager.

**PP1:** Pitch protection team leader.