

Legal Requirements at Sporting Events

The following document was issued by the Traffic Commissioners to operators to re-state the current position for all operators, and its contents remain in force:

For some years the coach industry has complied with a voluntary code of practice whereby operators taking passengers to a designated sporting event meet certain guidelines set by the police. This has worked very well, and it has seldom been necessary for a Traffic Commissioner to take any further action against an operator who has contravened the guidelines. Nevertheless the police in England and Wales are concerned that football hooliganism is again on the increase, and have asked the Commissioners to revise the guidelines. This has been done in conjunction with the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT), and the opportunity has been taken also to clarify the situation pertaining to meal stops. The following revision of the guidelines is to be brought into immediate effect.

Carriage of passengers to designated Sporting Events Voluntary Guidelines - England and Wales

PSV operators are reminded of the terms of Section 1 (1) of the Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol) Act 1985, as amended by the Public Order Act 1986, which prohibits the carriage of alcohol on a PSV that is being used for the principal purpose of carrying passengers for the whole or part of a journey to or from a designated sporting event.

A “designated sporting event” generally means any association football match, whether national or international. The full legal definition of “designated sporting events” may be found in The Sports Grounds and Sporting Events (Designation Order) 1985, as amended by SI 1520/1987.

It is an offence for an operator of a PSV (or his servant or agent) knowingly to cause or permit the carriage of alcohol on journeys to which these Regulations apply.

In addition to these statutory provisions, the police have asked that operators comply with the following guidelines when conveying passengers to such sporting events:

a. Coach operators taking bookings from groups of supporters are to notify the police liaison officer at the destination, at least 48 hours before the event, of the number of supporters expected to travel and the number of coaches booked.

b. Coaches are not to stop within 10 miles of the venue either en route to or on departure from the event unless prior agreement is obtained from the local police liaison officer.

- c. Unless directed otherwise by a police officer, coaches may stop at premises where intoxicating liquor is sold only if it is sold ancillary to a substantial meal. Prior agreement for meal stops where alcohol is available should be sought from the operator's local police liaison officer.
- d. Coaches are to arrive at the venue no earlier than two hours before and not later than one hour before the scheduled start of the game, unless otherwise directed by police.
- e. Coaches are not to set down or uplift passengers at any unauthorised locations without prior permission of the police.
- f. Coaches must leave the venue within one hour of the finish of the event.
- g. Intoxicating liquor must not be carried on coaches travelling to or from designated grounds. Operators will draw hirers' attention to the requirements of the law, and drivers shall, as far as reasonably practical, supervise boarding passengers and check that they are not obviously carrying intoxicating alcohol. Drivers will not be expected to carry out baggage or body searches, nor will they be expected to confiscate alcohol or to remove passengers without police assistance.

Operators are asked to comply with these guidelines on a voluntary basis. However if the police inform the Traffic Commissioner of any failure on an operator's part to comply with them the Commissioner will consider applying them as a formal condition to that operator's licence under the authority of Section 16(3) of the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981."

Carriage of passengers to designated Sporting Events Voluntary Guidelines - Scotland

I would like to remind you of the terms of section 70 of Part V of the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 1980, which confers liability on operators of PSVs that are being operated for the principal purpose of conveying passengers to or from a designated sporting event.

Designation of sports grounds and sporting events is by [the Secretary of State for Scotland], by order under terms of section 68 of the Act, and those grounds and events designated are listed in The Grounds and Sporting Events (Designation) (Scotland) Order 1985, as amended.

It is an offence for the operator of a PSV, or his servant or agent, knowingly to cause or permit the carriage of alcohol on journeys to which these Regulations apply.

In addition to these statutory provisions, the police have asked that operators comply with the following guidelines when conveying passengers to all such sporting events south of the Border:

- a. Coach operators taking bookings from groups of supporters are to notify the police liaison officer at the destination, at least 48 hours before the event, of the number of supporters expected to travel and the number of coaches booked.

- b. Coaches are not to stop within 10 miles of the venue either en route to or on departure from the event unless prior agreement is obtained from the local police liaison officer.
- c. Unless directed otherwise by a police officer, coaches may stop at premises where intoxicating liquor is sold only if it is sold ancillary to a substantial meal. Prior agreement for meal stops where alcohol is available should be sought from the operator's local police liaison officer.
- d. Coaches are to arrive at the venue no earlier than two hours before and not later than one hour before the scheduled start of the game, unless otherwise directed by police.
- e. Coaches are not to set down or uplift passengers at any unauthorised locations without prior permission of the police.
- f. Coaches must leave the venue within one hour of the finish of the event.
- g. Intoxicating liquor must not be carried on coaches travelling to or from designated grounds. Operators will draw hirers' attention to the requirements of the law, and drivers shall, as far as reasonably practical, supervise boarding passengers and check that they are not obviously carrying intoxicating alcohol. Drivers will not be expected to carry out baggage or body searches, nor will they be expected to confiscate alcohol or to remove passengers without police assistance.

Operators are asked to comply with these guidelines on a voluntary basis. However if the police inform the Traffic Commissioner of any failure on an operator's part to comply with them the Commissioner will consider applying them as a formal condition to that operator's licence under the authority of Section 16(3) of the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981."

All operations within Scotland should continue to comply with police restrictions in force at individual events.