


Chapter 35

An Integrated, Multi–Agency, Consumer–focused, Safety Management Approach in the Sports Industry

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ABSTRACT

Over the past decades, European football went through a large number of tragedies, mainly due to the absence of an integrated framework that could enable every involved agency to operate under specific safety procedures and laws. It is commonly perceived that disorder behaviour has adverse effects on football, minimising potential revenues and obliterating the consumer's experience. Football's unique structures involve a large number of agencies that need to constantly adopt specific safety approaches in order to create a sustainable environment and provide entertainment and pleasure to the consumers. The purpose of this chapter is to theoretically recognise the generic football safety management guidelines introduced by the European institutions over the years in order to minimise the problem and create a safe atmosphere for the consumers. In addition, the research will identify and decode the key actions taken by the authorities in Cyprus as a response to the problem in order to draw critical lessons both for and from the case study.

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INTRODUCTION

Football is a rising business, generating a tremendous economic interest among a variety of consumers and a large number of stakeholders; as well as forcing constant changes that significantly strengthen the value of football as a business (Thrassou et al., 2012). Engaging and involving fans in various match activities is a vital goal which creates the need of sustaining a friendly environment in order to enable them to interact, bond and consider themselves part of the overall club community (Loureiro et al., 2015). Football fans, are loyal to their club, consuming many products, such as match tickets, club merchandizing, sponsors' brands etc. (Loureiro et al., 2014), repetitively expressing their love by actively engaging themselves to a large number of activities, directly linked to their club. Consumers who experience brand love are more passionate and willing to engage actively (Kaufmann et al., 2016). To build customer loyalty, the event organizers should provide fan experience based on the customers' own needs (Signori et al., 2019).

Football has been related to commercialisation and high-level competition and a consequence of this connection is the surface of disorder and violence between fans (Spaaij, 2000). Hooliganism is defined as the fans' disruptive, antisocial and violent behaviour, intervening with any normal sporting activity. Disorder incidents usually involve clashes between rival fans, insults or racist behaviour, object throwing, flares or other flammable objects usage, pitch invasion, property damages, etc. (Carnibella et al., 1996; Frosdick and Marsh, 2005).

It is commonly perceived that hooliganism behaviour and disorder incidents have adverse effects on football consumerisms, minimising potential revenues and obliterating the consumer's experience. A number of European countries have been affected by hooliganism, with United Kingdom, Germany, Netherlands and Italy being among of the countries that have experienced the biggest problems over the past years (Spaaij, 2007). For decades hooliganism has been one of the major issues in football, widely recognised as a social problem that directly affects the business of football.

This resulted in the awakening of several agencies in Europe, forcing, in the early 1980s, the European Union and the Council of Europe to step into the problem and take a keen interest in finding an immediate solution to the scourge called football hooliganism. Under this scope, in 1985, the Council of Europe under the Convention ETS No.120, introduced a number of measures and encouraged all parties to implement them in order to prevent violence and control the problem.

Safety management at sports grounds has progressively become more sophisticated and more professional over the past thirty years, primarily based on an ongoing assessment in order to ensure that football and other sports events provide a safe, secure and welcoming environment for the fans - consumers. These consumers are the lifeblood of every sport. They should enjoy the event in a festive environment without concerns about their safety and well-being. Therefore, their safety always comes first and in order to maintain this principle, a number of agencies need to work closely and together.

Research Aim And Methodology

The purpose of this book chapter is to theoretically recognise the generic football safety management guidelines, procedures, models and concepts introduced by the Council of Europe and proposed to every member country as a strategic management tool, in an effort to minimise hooliganism, recover the business value. In addition, the research will identify and decode the key actions taken by the authorities in Cyprus as a response to football hooliganism, in order to draw critical lessons both for and from the case study.

Methodologically, the research relies on an extensive theoretical study taking into consideration several concepts on safety management, the Decisions and Resolutions of the European Union, the Conventions of the Council of Europe, the Recommendations of the Standing Committee and the Cyprus law on violence in sports, including the different amendments over the years.

Significance of the Study

The paradigm of Cyprus as a peculiar field of study, due to its unique characteristics, can be used as a pilot study for countries aiming to resolve sports safety issues, especially in football and create an environment that will enable fans to engage and interact safely. The findings of this research can provide invaluable insight for small-size football industries and draw explicit theoretical and practical conclusions towards scholarly advancement and managerial implementation in the context of improving the business of football by implementing pre-existing theories and well-established European practices.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Safety Management in Football Grounds

Most people prefer watching a football game at home, but many of them take the opportunity to travel to the stadium, enjoy the event, be part of the spectacle and support their team. All safety measures cover the entire event flow, involving every stage, and start from the time the game is officially set, until fans return safely back home. In cases where fans travel from one country to another, planning must include all necessary measures for safely entering and leaving the country. The event flow involves several steps and interconnected stages, with the event itself being the highlight. Match organisers need to structure and implement a safety plan, aiming to provide the best possible welcoming environment for the fans (Yiapanas, 2016).

Based on a value-based analysis model created by Vrontis et al. (2014), fans as consumers have a strong correlation towards the value proposition of football entertainment and pleasure. If the fans enjoy the event, they will revisit the venue, support their team and spend more money. The main goal in safety management is to maintain public order and create a safe, secure and friendly environment inside and outside the sports facility, before, during and after the sporting event. In addition to this, the overall mission is to prevent any disruption and discourage criminal acts associated with incidents that may have an impact on the supporters and counteract attempts that might obstruct the smooth operation of the sports facility and its systems (Great Britain: Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2018).

Safety is based on an ongoing assessment of risks posed by the operation of the sports venue, identifying those areas that are most vulnerable to these risks, while determining what can be done to limit them to an acceptable level. Since minimizing risk always costs money, the challenge is to minimize them at the lowest possible cost. This involves a sequence of actions and practices aiming to provide a safe and secure environment to every participant. These procedures guide, advice and support match officials, providing best practices to accomplish their goal (Frosdick and Whalley, 1999).

These principles and guidelines are the backbone and the central philosophical foundation for every safety plan, that defines the order of priorities and outlines of the operations and management actions. It is the compass of preserving a general direction and strategy in implementing adaptations or im-

provements to the safety management system and in this respect, it will allocate the relative weight and importance to each of the various elements which together constitute an integrated safety management plan (Whalley, 2008).

It is necessary to supervise, control and practice all forces and technology systems, separately and together, to build an integrated operational readiness (Chalmers and Frosdick, 2011). According to Frosdick and Chalmers (2005), all partners involved in a football match share the same concern and responsibility to preserve a balance between the three elements (the three S's concept) of safety management.

The Three S's Concept for a Successful Sporting Event

The trinity of *service*, *safety* and *security* formulates a three-pillar concept, and although these three elements are used together and in balance, they have an isolated and a different role to play within the concept. Chalmers and Frosdick (2011) define service as the most visible element that refers to any measures designed and implemented with the primary aim of making individuals and groups feel comfortable, appreciated and welcome, providing an exciting spectacle. This implies having suitable facilities, such as sanitary facilities, food and beverages, goods and products, etc.

Safety, as the less visible fragment, refers to any measure designed and implemented with the primary aim of protecting and looking after the health and wellbeing of the fans who attend a football event. Safety mainly deals with the structural design and maintenance of the venue in order to prevent buildings from collapsing. It manages venue capacities and specific aspects such as human behaviours, emergencies and evacuations in case of serious incidents.

Finally, security refers to any measure designed and implemented with the primary aim of preventing and reducing the risk, and responding to any criminal activity, inside and outside the venue. It mainly deals with issues such as crime prevention and detection, terrorist attacks and serious threats. The three elements are interconnected and in cases where an overemphasis on security occurs, this could cause safety and service problems. Therefore, safety and security must always be kept in a wide-ranging balance (Frosdick and Whalley, 1999).

The single overarching objective of this concept is expanded into six main pillars: venue safety: ensuring that the venue is maintained in a good and safe condition; venue security: preventing unauthorised people from entering the venue; venue staff safety: ensuring that the venue staff is safe, and able to take care of the fans; crowd management: making sure that fans can enter inside the venue, enjoy the game, and go back home safely; spectator experience: supporting the event, ensuring that it is enjoyable, exciting and comfortable for the fans-consumers; success of the event: supporting the main objective of the event, which is to be profitable, safe and sustainable.

These aims have not always been achieved, as many disasters occurred in the past, with tragic consequences, demonstrating that sports venues are not always safe and secure. Although things may be very well planned and organised, things can always go wrong (Yiapanas, 2016).

Football Disasters and Aftermath - The Emergence of a Regulatory Framework

Over the past decades, several football tragedies occurred in different venues all around Europe. The official reports fundamentally changed the procedures and the safety management concept. The causes of the major tragedies vary. Poor safety and security management, closed exit doors, inadequate segregation

of fans, overcrowding, bad communication, riots, fire, etc. (Yiapanas, 2016). Today, safety is considered a top-level priority for every agency.

The Valley Parade and Heysel disasters, both in 1985, together with the Hillsborough disaster in 1989, are the incidents that incited a series of additions and amendments in football grounds safety management (Elliot and Smith, 1993). These disasters led to serious sports grounds redevelopments and to numerous important safety guides publications. Until the mid-80s, football hooliganism was not an issue of concern for the European institutions. In 1984, the Council of Europe at the growth of football-related violence led to the adoption of the Recommendation N° R (84)8, drafting the first outline of a counter-hooliganism policy on a European level (Council of Europe, 1984).

According to Marsh et al. (1996), right after the Heysel disaster in 1985, the different agencies started making efforts to launch a cross-border cooperation between the police and football authorities against hooliganism. The Council of Europe immediately adopted the European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events proposals and asked all member states to respond immediately to football violence (Anderson and Apap, 2002), establishing a strong co-operation and unity between their agencies and the authorities, to prevent violence and control any disorder incidents at sports events (Council of Europe, 1985).

European Convention (19.VIII.1985) on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in Particular Football (CETS No. 120)

The Treaty was based on Heysel's aftermath report which identified a series of absurd organisational faults and communication problems. According to the official report, the lack of communication between the two diverse police forces operating back then in Belgium, and the overall insufficient communication with all the independent agencies, was the main reason for the unforeseen tragedy (Darby et al., 2005).

The Council of Europe requested every member country to convince the police forces to build a close collaboration, encourage prosecutors of offenders to apply the appropriate penalties, and incite match organisers to enforce strict control of tickets, set restrictions on alcoholic drinks and provide effective crowd management (Council of Europe, 1985). For this, a Standing Committee was established in order to refine or implement the provisions of the European Conventions and influence all the domestic agencies to introduce new legislations, pledging the recommendations introduced by the Council of Europe and the European Union (Tsoukala, 2010).

The European Union adopted in 1996 the United Kingdom's proposals and issued a series of guidelines on dealing with football hooliganism (Council of Europe, 1996). These guidelines involve information exchange between the police and the extensive training of stewards in crowd management and safety procedures. Furthermore, all police forces needed to participate in joint training programs to learn how to exchange information and how to prevent disorder incidents (Marsh et al., 1996).

INTRODUCING AN INTEGRATED, MULTI-AGENCY APPROACH MODEL

The Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach Strategic Concept

The Standing Committee issued a number of Recommendations in regard to the three-pillar concept. Recommendation Rec.2011/1 involves good practices on how to establish the core functions of safety

officers and safety stewards and how to gain the maximum through the appropriate training. In addition, the Standing Committee encourages clubs and other agencies, to develop a stewarding system, based on specific principles (Rec.91/1), to promote the use of advisory police spotters (Rec.88/1), to adopt effective policies and measures in order to prevent and combat racist, xenophobic, discriminatory and intolerant behaviour in football (Rec.2001/6), and to forbid the use of pyrotechnical devices at sporting events (Rec.2008/3) (Council of Europe, 2015).

All Recommendations made by the Council of Europe involve a variety of agencies, such as the police, clubs, stadium owners, local authorities, supporters, etc., and consequently, each one of them must have a clear view of the duties and responsibilities they convey, as well as the ways of communication. This multilevel approach created the urge of introducing, implementing and adopting a strategic framework in order to promote a balanced integrated approach towards safety, service and security and at the same time ensure its applicability by every agency, covering every step of the event flow and determine the level of responsibility of every agency involved (Primorac and Pilić, 2019).

European Convention (3.VII.2016) on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events (CETS No. 218)

Taking the three-pillar concept into account, the Council of Europe developed and introduced an integrated approach framework based on extensive experience and good practices and invited every member state to sign and accede the Treaty 3.VII.2016 (Council of Europe, 2016). Although, integrating the components of any strategic framework into a unified management system is a complex procedure, by managing to do so, a substantial and unique value is created towards the business of football (Kartakoullis et al., 2013).

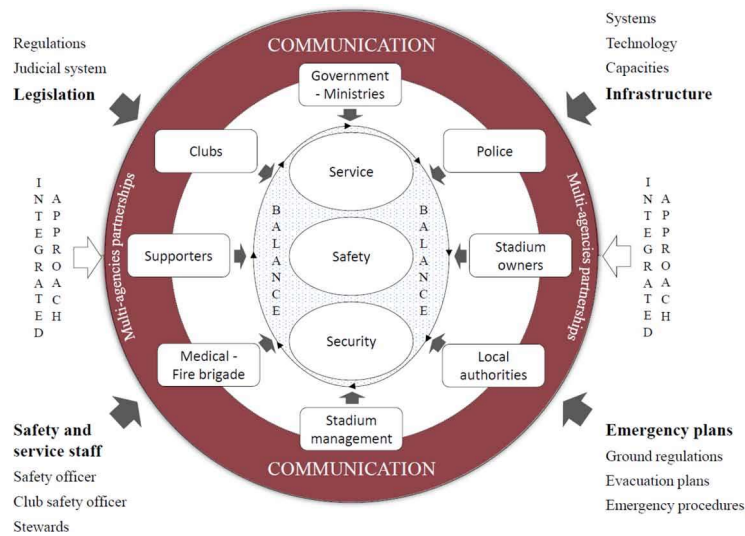
This Convention goes beyond the scope of the Convention of 1985 (No. 120), as it requires the agencies involved, to implement additional provisions, notably with regard to international co-operation and treatment of offenders (subjects of Articles 4 and 5 of the Convention No. 120 (19.VIII.1985)). It incorporates the key principles and measures through good practices, which are widely held to reduce safety and security risks in football (Council of Europe, 2016).

All parties are now required to develop effective exclusion arrangements. European experience evidences that this measure is the most effective for preventing repeat offences. Football-related offenders should receive appropriate sanctions, not only within the country of residence or citizenship, but also within the country where the offence was originally committed (Primorac and Pilić, 2019).

European practice reveals that government-led national coordination arrangements need to be in place to ensure that a coherent and integrated safety, security and service strategy is developed, refined as necessary in the light of experience and implemented effectively at international and local level. A strong legislation and judicial system, in combination with well-maintained infrastructure, trained and experienced staff and detailed plans, procedures and regulations, empower agencies to provide a safe and secure sporting environment for the fans (Myakon'kov and Shelyakova, 2015).

The aim of this strategic framework is to enforce all parties to “adopt an integrated, multi-agency and balanced approach towards safety, security and service, based upon an ethos of effective local, national and international partnerships and co-operation; to ensure that all public and private agencies, and other stakeholders, recognise that safety, security and service provision cannot be considered in isolation, and can have a direct influence on delivery of the other two components; and take account of good practices in developing an integrated approach to safety, security and service” (Council of Europe, 2016, p.1).

Figure 1. Integrated, multi-agency approach model



Utilising all the above, an integrated, multi-agency approach model is introduced (Figure 1), in the direction of safety, security and service elements. This multi-agency model can be used as a generic strategic tool towards an effective safety management system.

The key components of this framework consist of four pillars, a strong legislation, an adequate infrastructure, trained staff and detailed emergency procedures. These elements work as a catapult in the model, as they deliver the basic resources in the safety management planning and procedures.

A crucial factor in order to safeguard a multi-agency strategy is having an effective legislative framework with appropriate and clear provisions designed to offer legal clarity on roles and responsibilities and empower the relevant authorities to undertake their tasks effectively. Experience demonstrates that an appropriate legislative and regulatory infrastructure can encompass a diverse range of themes, enabling policing measures and exclusion of violent supporters through the appropriate judicial procedures (Council of Europe, 2013).

Ensuring the proper sports venue conditions, together with the usage of the suitable technology and systems, allows the efficient and effective safety and security operations. In parallel, it increases and upgrades the spectators' experience. One of the main principles of effective safety management is to have adequate ingress and egress and wide radial gangways and set the stadium capacity at a level which can effectively facilitate a safe environment for all spectators (Council of Europe, 2015).

The role and responsibility of the Safety Officer is crucial for the framework's integration. Deploying experienced safety personnel (Rec.2011/1) is vital for the overall safety planning. With the cooperation of the club safety officer, and using various communication channels, the safety and service staff will be able to guide the fans and provide a safe environment and great experience. Consideration should also be given by the authorities, to ensure that all stewards are suitably and equally trained and qualified, and the training is delivered by experienced and skilled trainers (Council of Europe, 2015).

Emergency planning as part of the overall risk assessment, is inevitably the most sensitive and critical component of the framework. Every agency must assess the possible risks, identify every critical deficiency in the venue, merge every safety element with the different stages of the event flow, and pre-

pare the necessary emergency plans accordingly (De Falco et al., 2016). Therefore, each agency should structure and follow specific procedures and actions in cases of emergencies. Past experience shows that a tragedy is so far but yet so close.

The second level contains the multi-agencies partnerships, with every actor who has a vital role to play in safety management. Each agency has specific duties and responsibilities, and all fit into an integrated system that covers every stage of the event flow. The model's core components complete the integrated multi-agency approach model, since the elements of safety, security and service constitute the ultimate aim of every safety plan. Every agency involved in football events, share a single overarching objective, the creation of a secure, safe and welcoming environment for the customers, maintaining at the same time a complete balance between these core elements.

It is important to maintain an appropriate balance between maintaining order (security), spectator safety and providing an enjoyable experience (service). Policing should wherever possible be steered with a light touch, taking crowd management as a priority over crowd control. A low-profile strategy for policing football events based on important values such as information gathering, targeted intervention, risk assessment, interaction and dialogue, could enhance improvements.

A significant element of the multi-agency framework is the communication and media handling strategy, in a manner that explains the importance and content of an integrated safety, security and service approach. No model of prevention can be successful if it does not embrace a multi-agency approach. A coordination mechanism should be established with representatives of the local authorities, the police, the clubs, the stadium owner, the supporters, the medical services and fire brigade and agencies involved in preventive projects (Council of Europe, 2016).

Industry Research Context - The Paradigm of the Safety Management Approach in the Football Industry in Cyprus

Football in Cyprus was introduced in the early 1900s through a British army initiative and later developed into friendly games organised by local schools. Some years later, several clubs were formed and participated in friendly tournaments. In 1934, the National Association was established to control and organise football in Cyprus (Meletiou, 2011).

The first football hooliganism incident in Cyprus was recorded back in 1939 between rival spectators. As a result, eight fans were arrested by the police and fined by the District Court (Cyprus Sociological Association, 2001). During the next decade, the Association went through several dissolutions due to political arguments and localism issues. This forced several football clubs to disaffiliate from the Association because of their ideological beliefs. These historical events strongly affected football in Cyprus and ever since, it has been dominated by strong political localism and ideological beliefs (Phinicarides, 2013). Hooliganism in Cyprus is strongly influenced by and directly related to a variety of historical, cultural and political factors. Football-related violence inevitably constitutes a social phenomenon, concerning most of the public opinion, and is always top news in mass media (Cyprus Sociological Association, 2001).

Football hooliganism is one of the main challenges and greater management issues in Cyprus (Kartakoullis and Theophanous, 2009), affecting the football business in terms of attendance and income. There exists a long list of disorder incidents in the last decade involving street battles, car bombings, pitch invasions, riots, object throwing and many more.

Various disorder incidents in Cyprus serve as examples of bad safety management in the various workshops organised by the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), classifying Cyprus as

one of the most problematic countries in relation to football violence. According to the UEFA Incident Index, Cyprus has one of the worst history records in Europe. The incident assessment reports, over the years, record anarchic fan behaviour, extensive use of pyrotechnics, use of political banners, etc., and suggest immediate actions by the agencies.

For years, there was no common understanding, strategy or policy on safety and security at sports events, in particular football matches, with everyone believing that adequate talks and efforts were made but not enough implementation of the solutions. One of the main discussion points between the stakeholders was the lack of an efficient judicial follow-up against troublemakers (Council of Europe, 2013).

Various committees were appointed, mainly following serious disorder incidents, to resolve the problem in Cyprus, but unfortunately, they were unable to combat football violence. The lack of implementation of the law created a culture of immunity that fans were aware of. It was clear that such a situation influenced the behaviour of potential troublemakers. Since there was a common agreement that football violence constitutes a serious social phenomenon in Cyprus, then the responsibility for it was lying on everyone's shoulders.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The Council of Europe immediately after the Heysel disaster in 1985 introduced the treaty (19.VIII.1985) on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in particular football. Cyprus signed the treaty on 19th December 1986 and ratified it on 22nd June 1987. The treaty entered into force on 1st August 1987.

Following the recommendations, resolutions and guidelines of the European Council, the government brought into effect the Spectator of Violence, Misbehaviour and Relevant Offences at Sports Events Law in 1994, adopting most of the Standing Committee's Recommendations (Rec.93/1) concerning measures to be taken by the organisers and the authorities (Council of Europe, 2015).

The law consisted of twenty articles, securing adequate public order resources to counter-brake violence and disorder incidents, inside and outside the sports venue. It also facilitated strong collaboration between the police and the agencies involved. Finally, it enabled prosecutors to apply the appropriate penalties on offenders found guilty (Spectator of Violence, Misbehaviour and Relevant Offences at Sports Events Law 1994).

The Council of Europe in cooperation with UEFA initiated an effort for reducing the problem and a number of consultative visits took place in the early 2000s, in order to evaluate the situation. Experts from the Council of Europe and UEFA proposed a series of actions and measures as a response to football hooliganism in Cyprus. In addition, several independent experts visited Cyprus, and evaluated the safety management procedures. Through analysing the recommendations of the visiting agencies, it became apparent that the existing law (Spectator of Violence, Misbehaviour and Relevant Offences at Sports Events Law, L.5(I)/1994) needed considerable amendments in order to provide the necessary means to the authorities for efficient safety in football grounds.

The First Law Amendment in 2005

The Council of Europe, in 2002 (Decision 2002/348/JHA), imposed on every member state to establish a National Bureau for exchanging information with other member states in connection with football games

with an international dimension (Council of Europe, 2002). Cyprus, in order to align with the Council's Resolutions, established in 2005 the National Football Information Point - NFIP and in conjunction to this, the existing law was amended in order to foster several legal procedures and regulations for the operation of the bureau in Cyprus.

The amended law incorporated a handbook for the NFIP cooperation and introduced measures to prevent and control violence and disorder incidents in connection to games with an international dimension (Spectator of Violence, Misbehaviour and Relevant Offences at Sports Events (amended) Law 2005). According to the handbook, each Bureau, prior to an international game, must respectively communicate information regarding possible risks that the game might present concerning safety and security, possible risk fans that will travel abroad, and data that will assist in any way the security and safety managers to provide efficient and effective measures to maintain public order and safety (Jurczak and Struniawski, 2015).

The Enactment of the New Law in 2008

The enactment of the new law in 2008 (For the Prevention and Tackle of Violence in Sports Venues Law of 2008, L.48(I)/2008) was a massive step forward. It came after a long and painful period of numerous disorder incidents and extensive discussions involving all the agencies and the authorities. After years of hard work, the new law was passed by the House of Representatives on 11th July 2008. This was the twitch of turning the condition around. The new law was based on the preexisting law and the Recommendations (Rec.93/1) of the Standing Committee (Council of Europe, 2015).

From this point on, agencies, such as the clubs, the stadium owners, the federation, the municipality, the police and other public authorities, had a clear understanding of their responsibilities. Infrastructure amendments and the installation of technology such as a CCTV system, an access system, an electronic ticketing system and a public audio system, were the flagship of the implemented law.

Since infrastructure is considered a vital safety security and service element, ground owners are now legally bound to ensure that all necessary measures have been taken and the venue is able to safely accommodate the fans, having the adequate ingress and egress, wide gangways, proper segregation, clean seats and sufficient services and medical support.

The articles referring to the infrastructure were allowed a three-year transitional period since most venues in Cyprus had specific issues to resolve and it was impossible to meet with the new requirements. The installation of a CCTV system, an electronic access control system and an electronic ticketing system, were postponed for some years (For the Prevention and Tackle of Violence in Sports Venues Law of 2008).

In addition, every agency must now establish good communication, before, during and after the game, and exchange the necessary information that will assist every party to accomplish its aim. The ground's regulations and procedures must ensure that no alcohol selling is permitted, and dangerous objects are possessed.

Another major asset of the new law was the legitimisation of the safety officer (with immediate application) and a stewarding system that would be implemented at a later stage, after the preparation of the regulations under which the system would operate (Council of Europe, 2013). The role of the safety officer was legally introduced, obligating the ground owners to appoint a trained and experienced individual (article 43) who will be responsible for the safety of the spectators. This position covers a series of actions such as crowd management and supervision, risk assessments, preparing and executing emergency plans, etc. Together with the stewards, the safety officer has full control of what is happening

inside the stadium, while the police have the responsibility of maintaining public order and preventing criminal offences outside the venue.

Finally, the new law introduced several measures for suppressing violence and more disorder incidents and actions are now criminalised, enabling prosecutors to apply much stricter penalties.

The Amendment of the Law in 2011

In 2011, the government requested the House of Representatives to vote for a law amendment, and expand the transitional period for at least a year, as many venues were still unable to comply with specific articles regarding infrastructure requirements. An amendment was passed to cover the above request, including descriptive notes regarding their specifications (For the Prevention and Tackle of Violence in Sports Venues Law of 2008 and 2011).

Closing the backlog from the law enactment in 2008 (Article 18, L.48(1)/2008), the House of Representatives passed the implementation of safety services and stewarding regulations. As a starting point, the Cyprus Stewarding Commission was formed (Article 3, 119(1)/2012), having as main responsibility to recruit and train stewards and at the same time, maintain an adequate stewarding system (Yiapanas et al., 2018). Their duties and responsibilities are now well-defined. Stewards are empowered to perform a variety of tasks such as venue inspections, flow monitoring, ticket control and body search, crowd management, fans segregation, ensuring safe exit and preventing overcrowding, maintaining free and uninterrupted access to every exit gate, responding to emergencies and assisting fans in any possible way, creating a friendly and safe environment, etc. (Safety services and stewarding regulation, 2012).

In parallel with the above implementation, and as an outcome of the discussions during the preparation of the Safety services and stewarding regulation (119(I)/2012), the club safety officer role needed to have statutory recognition, and his duties and responsibilities to be clarified. Some Articles were added and other amended in order to include and define his role and identify his duties and responsibilities. Every football club must now assign a trained and experienced safety officer, whose main responsibility is to cooperate with the venue safety officer and provide information regarding the club's fans, that might assist in any way towards a smooth operation of the event (For the Prevention and Tackle of Violence in Sports Venues Law of 2008 to 2012).

Following the implementation of the safety services and stewarding regulation 119(I)/2012, the UEFA Stadium and Security Unit was requested to host a stewarding training program in Cyprus. An innovative "train the trainers" program was designed followed by a training course addressed to people who will eventually be deployed as stewards at football games in Cyprus. Thirteen individuals successfully completed a five-day training and qualified to pass their knowledge to stewards across the island. The training included a variety of modules on the integrated safety, security and service approach, structured by the UEFA (Council of Europe, 2013).

This is now an ongoing program, supervised by the Stewarding Commission, to sustain the available workforce for all the venues in Cyprus. New stewards are trained on an annual basis, while the existing stewards are required, every two years, to go through a refresher course to improve their knowledge and develop new skills.

Council of Europe Consultative Visit - Evaluation Report

In 2013, a consultative team delegated by the Standing Committee of the European Council, carried out a consultative visit to Cyprus under the program for monitoring commitments on the implementation of the Convention. Their aim was to assist the authorities and other relevant stakeholders in their learning process in the field of safety and security at sport events.

The consultative team immediately recognised the progress achieved over the past years, by putting in place, at several levels, a structure which was based on recognised European good practice and which was in line with the Convention and most importantly, the Standing Committee's recommendations. They identified the detailed and specific legal framework, the police structure (including an NFIP) and the stewarding system that was in progress (Council of Europe, 2013).

Their main recommendations towards the authorities were:

- To task a national co-ordination group to develop a common multi-agency strategy on safety, security and service at football events, that includes provisions concerning the responsibilities of each agency on the implementation of its various aspects;
- To establish a co-ordination mechanism at local level, with representatives of the local authorities, the police, the club, the stadium owner, the medical services and fire brigade, the supporters and other agencies involved in preventative projects, all of them reporting to the national co-ordination group;
- To communicate and clearly explain the role and responsibilities of each individual partner agency;
- To develop an integrated and proactive media and communication strategy in the field of safety and security at sport events, in co-operation with all agencies involved; to establish an independent agency to annually check all stadiums on safety and security issues and issue a safety certificate for the stadium;
- To identify and implement systems for ensuring the provision of adequate and appropriate training, at both theoretical and practical level, for safety officers, stewards, police commanders, etc.;
- To create communication structures between clubs, police and supporters' organisations making full use of the Recommendation of the Standing Committee (Rec.2012/1) on dialogue and interaction with fans;
- To stimulate services to become an integral part of the overall integrated strategy on safety and security at sport events, by working together with all partner agencies in order to have a large diversity of people in the stadium, including women, children, disabled, etc.

Their recommendations mainly emphasised the multi-agency approach framework, and the generic concepts of safety, security and service. The consultative team recognised that some of these recommendations cannot be implemented immediately as they need to go through a parliamentary process.

The Amendment of the Law in 2014

In June 2014, while assessing a series of serious disorder incidents, the authorities decided to proceed with explicit law amendments, adopting the recommendations of the consultative delegation and the Council of Europe. The government's aim was to strengthen the preventive measures and eliminate anonymity inside the venues (Yiapanas, 2016).

An independent agency was established, the Stadium Licencing Authority (SLA), to annually evaluate all stadiums based on their safety, service and security conditions and issue a certificate for the venue. The venue owners are now obliged to submit a series of documents regarding their venue capacities, the evacuation plan procedures, the infrastructure conditions, the ground regulations, the ingress and egress volumes and procedures, the existing technology and systems, etc., and the SLA attests and certifies the appropriateness of the venue to organise sports events (For the Prevention and Tackle of Violence in Sports Venues (unified) Law of 2014).

The unified law now segregates and defines the duties, the responsibilities and the role of each individual partner agency, establishing in this way a balanced approach towards safety, security and service. Immediately after the House of Representatives passed the amendments, the authorities established a communication strategy to explain the importance and the content of the new articles and how they will eventually implement the integrated multi-agency approach.

The amended law's landmark is the implementation of the fan card register, a measure that intends to end anonymity and exclude troublemakers from sporting events. This measure was not implemented until 2018, due to a series of queries and issues raised by several stakeholders, which involved the data protection ownership.

The amended law was introducing a series of actions, responsibilities and duties for numerous agencies; therefore, it was necessary for the government to path a joint training program, involving all the partners. Experience elsewhere has shown that training police and stadium managers together is more beneficial than training these target groups separately. Within this scope, in January 2015, the UEFA Stadium and Security Unit designed and carried out a two-day training conference, aiming to raise awareness among the participants regarding the integrated approach and the ideal policing methods.

The Fan Card Scheme Implementation

In July 2018, the authorities, through the Cyprus Sports Organisation (CSO), a semi-governmental organisation and the highest sport authority in the country, linked to the Ministry of Education and Culture, implemented the fan card register (under Articles 39A and 39B of the unified Law of 2014 - 132(I)/2014).

Today, every supporter in Cyprus, in order to purchase a ticket, must first issue and hold a valid fan card. The registry keeps information such as the name, age, address and national ID number of the cardholder, together with their photo (For the Prevention and Tackle of Violence in Sports Venues (unified) Law of 2014). This scheme is applied as a preventive measure based on the abolition of the fan anonymity and as a direct exclusion sanction. Troublemakers and fans breaching the law are excluded through the fan card cancellation process.

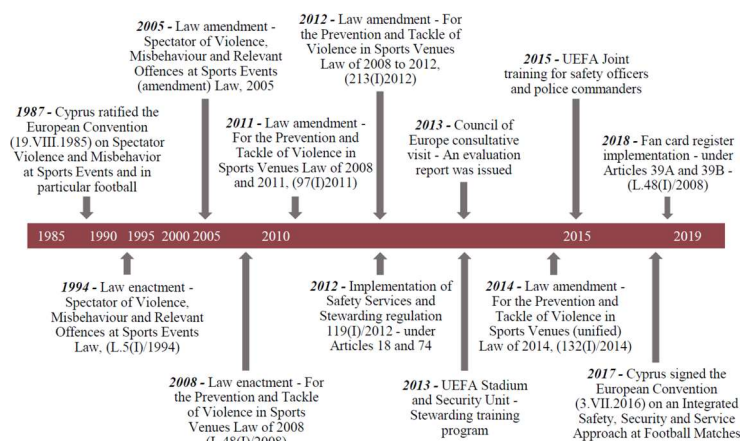
Although a well-structured communication strategy was applied by the authorities, the reactions were immediate and coming from various key stakeholders. A large volume of fans reacted with mass demonstrations against the law, while the majority of the football clubs placed themselves against it. Despite the pressure and the various reactions, the authorities persevered in keeping the measure. During the season 2018 - 2019, a large volume of fans, the majority of them being ultra-fans, abstained from football events, as a way to manifest their disapproval, causing a direct impact on the clubs' revenues. On the other hand, evidence show that the disorder incidents have not only been dramatically reduced, but as from July 2018, not a single disorder incident has been recorded.

Catalexis

It is a common belief that football violence constituted a serious social phenomenon in Cyprus. Disorder incidents evidenced the fact that football venues were not safe, with the authorities struggling for decades to find a solution to this multi-level problem. Unfortunately, the various committees seemed unable to develop a national strategic framework, and this, over the years, created a culture of immunity.

The authorities turned their hopes to the Council of Europe, who organised a number of consultative visits in order to evaluate the situation and recommend a series of actions. It became apparent that the existing law (L.5(1)/1994) needed considerable amendments in order to provide the necessary means to the authorities for efficient safety in football grounds. It was also noted that every agency needed to recognise its responsibility and build a strategic framework that takes into consideration the existing international safety management principles and concepts.

Figure 2. Chronological roadmap of the key actions as a response to the football hooliganism and violence problem in Cyprus



Identifying the key actions (Figure 2) taken by the authorities as a response to football hooliganism in Cyprus, reveal that during the past thirty years a lot of effort has been made. The above figure demonstrates an escalating procedure on behalf of the government. The amendment of the law in 2005, but essentially the enactment of the new law in 2008 and the amendments in 2011 and 2014, were the major actions taken by the authorities as a response to the football hooliganism problem in Cyprus.

It is evidenced, in the case of Cyprus, that the integrated, multi-agency approach model can be used as a strategic tool towards an effective response to football hooliganism. Cyprus authorities managed through a series of key actions, and by adopting the Recommendations of the Council of Europe, to implement this approach towards the three-pillar concept of safety management, and currently, every agency clearly recognises its duties and responsibilities, enabling them to provide a safe and secure environment in sporting events.

In 2017, Cyprus signed the European Convention (3.VII.2016) on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events (CETS No. 218) and is now accountable to promote on a national level, a multi-agency, integrated balanced approach, with the responsibilities

of each agency clearly specified. This final action can be considered the end of a very long journey, and the authorities in Cyprus have achieved to align their strategy and policy with what exists in other European countries and more specific to what it is now considered "best practice".

Every agency, within the limits of its respective constitutional provisions, must now take every necessary step to activate this Convention in respect of football games and adopt an integrated, multi-agency approach towards the three-pillar concept of safety, security and service.

RECOMMENDATIONS

International experience shows that setting up various educational programs improves supporters' awareness thus having a significant value in responding to hooliganism. The authorities in Cyprus should think of designing and implementing a range of educative and social programmes on the prevention of violence in sports and begin with activities within elementary and high schools. Creating the ideal fan culture requires a long-term strategic plan, and campaigns, involving a variety of agencies or individuals, such as players, sport entities, clubs and federations, having specific roles and targets.

Cyprus introduced a fan card scheme that has already been implemented in other countries and failed. The implementation was mistakenly introduced as a measure to control disorder behaviour and not as a tool to improve the fun experience and engagement in sports. The authorities should consider modifying the scheme into a more club-related loyalty scheme, that will enable them to create a database and use it as a marketing tool through a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. Loyalty schemes are considered valuable tools for maximising the buy-rebuy behaviour and instilling customer loyalty (Themistocleous, 2018).

This solution will change the fans' perception and at the same time give the opportunity to the clubs to increase their revenues. According to Ulun (2017), when consumers believe that the brand offers value, gives pleasure and generates quality, it is easy for them to accept it.

CONCLUSION

European football went through a large number of tragedies, mainly due to the absence of a generic framework that would enable every involved agency to operate under specific safety procedures and laws. Immediately after the Heysel disaster in 1985, the Council of Europe adopted the European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events (CETS No. 120) and persuaded every member state to establish close collaboration and communication and set strict crowd management procedures.

Since then, the Council has issued a number of Recommendations, based on the best European safety practices, to improve the football experience and reduce safety and security risks in football. Taking the three-pillar concept of safety, security and service into account, the Council of Europe developed an integrated approach framework and invited every state party to sign and accede the Treaty 3.VII.2016.

The aim of this strategic framework is to encourage all parties to adopt an integrated, multi-agency approach, based on national and international partnerships and co-operations and to ensure that all public and private agencies, and other stakeholders, recognise that safety, security and service provisions cannot be considered in isolation, and can have a direct influence on delivery of the other two components (Council of Europe, 2016).

An effective football safety management plan depends on an ongoing risk assessment and managers must continuously supervise, control and practice all forces and technology systems, separately and together, in order to build an integrated operational readiness and successfully organise such multi-complex events, preserving at the same time the balance between the safety management elements.

A safe environment creates value and the success of the football business counts on how well fans, as consumers, are treated and how comfortable and safe they feel at every stage of the event-flow. Only when managers truly understand the value that fans find in football and the needs, they satisfy through these values can they consider the business successful (Vrontis et al., 2014). Fans need to live the experience of a football match in its wholeness and if they enjoy the event, most probably they will revisit the venue, support their team and spend more money.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY AND PRACTICE

Overall, the book chapter presents a number of actions that can be implemented on a national level as a response to football hooliganism, based on the Recommendations, Resolutions and guidelines of the European Council. The authorities in Cyprus managed to build a national strategic framework and establish a strong legislation, clearly segregating the duties and responsibilities of each agency, in an effort to provide the means for an efficient safety management.

The findings of this research are certainly improving the business of football and undoubtedly constitute a valuable and essential tool for safety managers to adopt. Sports events organizers need to realize that they are responsible to ensure the safety of their customers, and good practices can serve as a basic tool in order to accomplish their objective (Rahmat, 2011). The integrated strategic framework, based on European experience and best practices, efficiently supports match officials to accomplish their goals. It is evidenced that strategic choices, if addressed through systemic changes and not through isolated actions, are more effective and affect the essence of the business and in this case football itself (Rossi et al., 2013).

The European Convention (3.VII.2016) on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events (CETS No. 218) is currently signed by twenty-three European members, who are accountable to promote on a national level, a multi-agency, integrated safety management approach. By implementing this strategic tool on a European level, with the assistance and the control of a reliable and efficient organising body (i.e. UEFA), it is ensured that football events all around Europe are organised in safe, secure and welcoming conditions.

Safety management is an ongoing assessment, evolving in a dynamic environment. Through this European network, safety personnel and managers will be able to constantly evaluate good practices and upgrade their procedures.

As for the theoretical implications of the research a new concept in the literature of safety management is presented, discussing the importance of guiding every agency to adopt specific attitudes and procedures in order to accommodate specific elements and implement the framework. Furthermore, the integrated framework can be adjusted and proposed in other industries as well, as a strategic tool towards major complications.

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

There are certain limitations in this research, such as the method used and the size of the examined industry. Although the paradigm of Cyprus comprises a valuable example for small-sized countries, the key-actions taken cannot be generalised due to the different characteristics and circumstances that exist in every country.

The proposed framework cannot be used as a generic strategic tool. In order to implement and integrate such a multilevel framework, involving so many agencies, the authorities need to take into consideration critical elements such as cultural issues, moral and ethical barriers, political, economic and legal factors, etc., as these elements have a direct impact and influence on how well, fast and efficiently, the framework can be adopted.

FURTHER RESEARCH

This book chapter provides the theoretical groundwork for the generic football safety management concepts. The theoretical findings of this research need to be tested in order to identify and recognise the value that the integrated multi-agency framework generates, when used as a strategic tool to build a business-related environment and create fan engagement and loyalty.

The research findings create the urge for empirical research, in terms of validating the key actions taken by the authorities in Cyprus in order to respond to football hooliganism and test the degree of application to the explicit environment. More specifically, firstly there is clearly a need to empirically recognise to what extent and how these actions have been implemented by the different agencies in Cyprus, and secondly to verify whether they adequately respond positively in solving such a multi-level problem.

Additionally, there is a need of empirical research to examine the volume of impact of the national fan card register scheme on football attendance and revenues, based on the fact that the implementation of this measure created chain reactions from both clubs and fans.

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