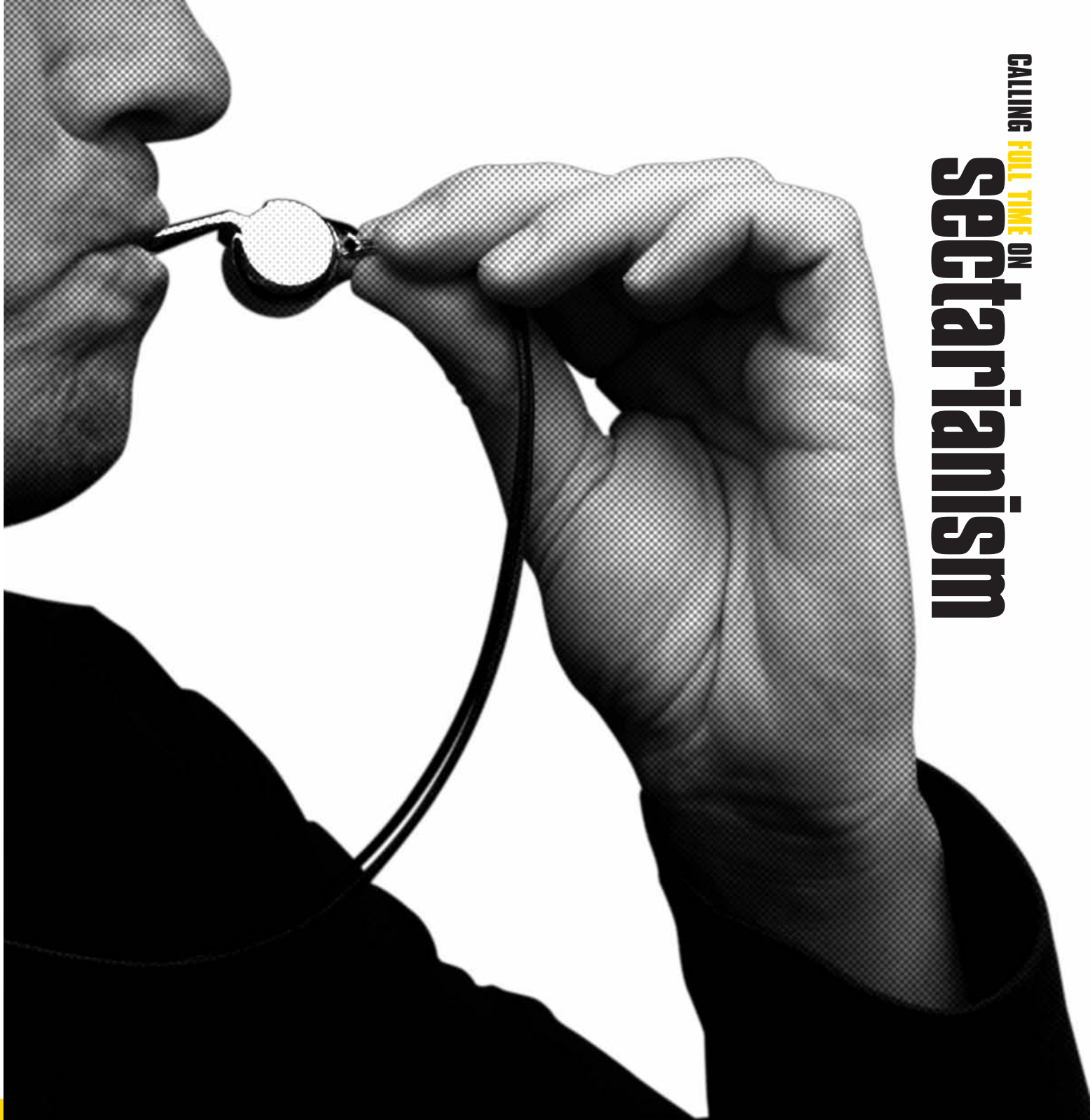


CALLING FULL TIME ON

Sectarianism



one
scotland
SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

CALLING **FULL TIME** ON
sectarianism

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Declaration

Sectarian abuse and violence can manifest itself in a very visible and prominent way within Scottish football. The popularity of the game in Scotland – and its resultant high profile – serves to highlight any misbehaviour and abusive chanting by football fans. This is harmful to Scottish football and can present a very negative image of Scottish society, both domestically and across the world. This situation must be addressed if we are to secure a bright future for Scotland where bigotry, intolerance and hatred do not exist and where sectarianism is consigned to history.

To achieve this goal we, with our partners across football and wider Scottish society have set out the following actions:

ACTION 1:

To establish a new body to focus effort, develop and deliver activities to tackle sectarianism associated with Scottish football.

ACTION 2:

To undertake a nationwide anti-sectarianism awareness raising campaign at the beginning of 2007.

ACTION 3:

To ensure that any new sportscotland investment in the Scottish FA is linked to the achievement of Foundation and Preliminary levels of the Equity Standard in 2009.

ACTION 4:

To strengthen the National Club Licensing Scheme to require clubs to demonstrate policies and actions being undertaken against sectarianism and other forms of discrimination.

ACTION 5:

To introduce a new disciplinary offence of unacceptable conduct in football grounds in Scotland which will carry potential sanctions against clubs, officials, players or spectators engaging in sectarian behaviour.

ACTION 6:

To encourage football clubs to develop standardised and consistent approaches to stewarding matches across Scotland.

ACTION 7:

To ensure that Football Banning Orders are used by police forces across Scotland in a consistent way so that those who persistently indulge in sectarian abuse can be excluded from football.

ACTION 8:

To put in place processes to effectively monitor, evaluate, review and report on the effectiveness of the actions which are contained in this strategy.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patricia Ferguson'.

Patricia Ferguson
Minister for Tourism,
Culture and Sport



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Taylor'.

David Taylor
Chief Executive
Scottish FA



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julia Bracewell'.

Julia Bracewell
Chair of sportscotland

Contents

	Page
Background	2
Developing the Strategy	4
Action Points	6
ANNEX A The Sectarianism in Football Working Group	17
ANNEX B Summary of Actions	18



Background

Tackling sectarianism in football is central to creating the truly multi-cultural and multi-faith Scotland that people aspire to and deserve – a Scotland where difference is the basis for mutual respect and understanding. Healthy rivalry between football clubs is important and the passion that fans have for their clubs is something that Scotland is known for worldwide. However, passionate rivalry should not be allowed to spill over into abuse, violence and hatred. Loyalty goes hand in hand with being a football supporter but this should not lead to the making enemies of those who support other teams. And it most certainly does not give licence to fans to engage in sectarian or disorderly behaviour.

No one has the right to use football as an excuse for abusive behaviour. Hiding behind a warped interpretation of your club's history and traditions does not validate bigotry and small-mindedness. Using your club to defend offensive anti-social behaviour tarnishes its name, its reputation and humiliates everyone involved. Yet it is such behaviour which perpetuates the link between sectarianism and Scottish football.

In recent years concerted efforts have been made to tackle sectarianism by football authorities, clubs and supporters' groups, campaigning groups and the police. Particular progress has been made in the last 12 months, with significant programmes of activity undertaken by the Old Firm clubs. These efforts have certainly made an impact on the fight against sectarianism and should be applauded. However, we cannot be complacent, the fact remains that sectarianism is still deeply engrained in many areas of Scottish society and it is time to eradicate it from Scottish football.

It is for these reasons that the *Strategy on Tackling Sectarianism in Scotland*, launched by the Scottish Executive on 30 January 2006, included a recommendation that a strategy for tackling sectarianism in football be developed. Action 6 in that Action Plan stated:

The Scottish Executive will work in partnership with the Scottish FA and sportscotland to develop a strategy for tackling sectarianism in football. This will be launched by the end of 2006.



Developing the Strategy

A Sectarianism in Football (SIF) Working Group was established to take forward work to tackle sectarianism in football and produce this strategy. The SIF Working Group was formed as a direct response to action 6 in the Action Plan on Tackling Sectarianism in Scotland. Details of the membership and remit of the group can be found at Annex A.

Scope and aim of the Strategy

The SIF Working Group agreed that the scope of the strategy needed to cover all aspects of sectarianism in Scottish football including the behaviour of fans, players and other club officials and representatives. This is an agenda where everyone can play a positive role. The SIF Working Group aimed to identify and agree appropriate and realistic actions to be carried out by all relevant parties, either individually or collectively, that would have a positive impact on tackling sectarianism however it manifests itself in and around Scottish football. Such actions should aim to prevent sectarian behaviour occurring in the first place, and allow for appropriate action to be taken in response to sectarianism behaviour.

The SIF Working Group recognised the particular importance of the role of football clubs in challenging any sectarian behaviour of among fans, for anti-sectarian policies to be clear and easy to understand and for appropriate penalties to be applied to those who indulge in sectarian behaviour on or off the field.

Definition of Sectarianism

Sectarianism is easy to recognise, but can be difficult to define. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a person is sectarian if he or she adheres in a bigoted or narrow-minded fashion to a sect or body of persons who have agreed upon particular religious doctrines or practices. In the context of football, we should be more concerned with the actions and words of individuals rather than their beliefs as such. In Scottish football, the particular problem that must be addressed relates to the divide between club supporters claiming to be attached to the Protestant and Catholic faiths. Whilst recognising that there can be other manifestations of sectarian behaviour towards other religious groups, the Working Group agreed that this particular strategy must focus on the intra-Christian divisions which manifest themselves within Scottish football. However, other forms of negative behaviour related to faith or religion should be tackled as part of wider efforts to address discrimination in football and society in general.

This Sectarianism Strategy is designed to focus on intra-Christian religious prejudice within Scottish football and introduce a series of measures to tackle any forms of discrimination, defamation, harassment, or abuse.

This includes – but is not limited to – physical, verbal, or written abuse, including the publication or display of discriminatory or defamatory materials, the chanting of sectarian songs, or any act of violence directed towards an individual, a group of people, or property.

Strategy Design

In designing the strategy, the SIF Working Group were keen to adopt an approach which attacked sectarian problems at their origin. Hence the need for educational and promotional initiatives, and the reinforcing of positive behaviour exhibited by football fans themselves. It was also felt important to work with football clubs and their players, as these were seen by fans to be the most authoritative sources of messages which influence their actions. As part of the overall effort to influence behaviour, there nevertheless has to be a role for sanctions to deal with and discourage specific incidents of unacceptable behaviour. New measures such as Football Banning Orders will be important, as will be the training of stewards at football grounds.

The result is that the Working Group have produced a comprehensive and co-ordinated strategy which will require the active involvement of a number of organisations if it is to be successful. The Strategy consists of 8 Action Points set out in the following pages.



Sectarianism in Football Action Points

ACTION 1:

To establish a new body to focus effort, develop and deliver activities to tackle sectarianism associated with Scottish football.

Consideration

There is a need for new leadership to bring together the efforts of the various organisations who are committed to removing sectarianism from Scottish football. This could be done by the Scottish FA itself, but the role of the Scottish FA as a regulator can present complications in running campaigns or specific activities with football clubs. Moreover, there would be benefits in establishing a separate focus for anti-sectarian activities through the establishment of a new body. Such a body could be established as a registered charity, and have representatives of various bodies as trustees.

The experience and success of Show Racism the Red Card demonstrates the value of a separate organisation. This organisation – which is supported by the Scottish Executive and the Scottish FA – does not however wish to have its anti-racist message diluted through adding anti-sectarianism to its remit.

Conclusion

A new organisation – Football for All – will therefore be established with initial financial support from the Scottish Executive and project support from the Scottish FA. It is intended that the new body will be set up as a registered charity. Other organisations will be invited to offer financial support or support in kind. Football for All will have an initial focus on anti-sectarian activities but in time its remit will widen to encompass wider equality and anti discrimination work with the Scottish FA and other bodies in developing support for social inclusion programmes based on football’s wider role in Scottish society.

Lead organisation

The Scottish Executive and the Scottish FA through funding of projects will support the establishment of this new body.

Timescale

Football for All will be set up early in 2007 and will commence its first programme of action in February 2007.

ACTION 2:

To undertake a nationwide anti-sectarianism awareness raising campaign at the beginning of 2007.

Consideration

It is essential that the anti-sectarian message is clearly articulated and reinforced to all football supporters. Raising awareness through advertising campaigns can be very effective if the campaigns are well focussed and employ a range of media to deliver their message. Knowledge of where football supporters gather and the routes taken to and from football grounds is essential if anti-sectarian messages are to reach their target football-supporting audience.

The Scottish Executive has been involved in a number of campaigns to raise awareness of discrimination and equalities issues. By drawing on these experiences and their outcomes it should be possible to develop an effective anti-sectarian awareness raising campaign with a specific football focus. In particular the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland and the Scottish Executive jointly delivered a campaign to raise awareness of the impact of Football Banning Orders during September 2006. This campaign was specifically targeted at football supporters and the outcomes from this will be very helpful in developing an anti-sectarian campaign.

Conclusion

A Nationwide anti-sectarian campaign will be initiated which is specifically targeted at football supporters. The message – or set of messages – should be straightforward and simple. It should be aimed at regular spectators and encourage their wholehearted rejection of any forms of sectarian behaviour.

Lead organisation

The Scottish Executive and **sportscotland** will take the lead in developing the campaign through Football for All.

Timescale

The campaign will be taken forward at the beginning of 2007 and initially last for one month. The outcomes from the initial campaign will be evaluated to inform decisions on further activity in response to this action.

ACTION 3:

To ensure that any new **sportscotland** investment in the Scottish FA is linked to the achievement of Foundation and Preliminary levels of the Equity Standard in 2009.

Consideration

The Equity Standard (The Standard) is a nationally recognised, four-level accreditation framework which is intended to help guide sports organisations towards achieving equity in their policies, procedures, actions and decision-making processes. It is owned jointly by UK Sport and the four home country sports councils.

The Standard is intended to provide a consistent, practical framework that allows organisations to gradually embed equity into all of their functions, to ensure that discrimination is tackled and that equality of opportunity for all existing and potential participants, staff, volunteers, and members is promoted. Organisations must take steps to help prevent and tackle all forms of discrimination – including that which occurs on the grounds of religion or belief. Therefore, the Standard provides an excellent mechanism to help sports organisations tackle sectarianism as part of a wider equity framework. The steps that the Scottish FA takes to achieve the first two levels of the Standard will contribute directly to its efforts to tackle sectarianism at all levels of football for which the governing body is responsible.

sportscotland is currently encouraging and supporting a number of governing bodies as they work towards achieving the Standard. By 2012, **sportscotland** will only invest in governing bodies that have achieved **at least** Foundation level.

Conclusion

The Scottish FA will begin working towards achievement of the Foundation level of the Standard by the end of 2006. It will aim to achieve both Foundation and Preliminary levels by 2009. Any new programmes of support for the in the Scottish FA from late 2006 will be linked to the requirement to work towards the achievement of this target.

Lead organisation

The Scottish FA will be responsible for achieving Foundation and Preliminary levels of the Standard by 2009. **sportscotland** will support the Scottish FA, and will also ensure that any new **sportscotland** investment in the Scottish FA is linked to the requirement to work towards the achievement of this target.

Timescale

Work to achieve the Foundation and Preliminary levels of the Equity Standard will begin by the end of 2006, and it is expected that significant progress will be made by 2007. Full implementation will be complete by 2009.

ACTION 4:

To strengthen the National Club Licensing Scheme to require clubs to demonstrate policies and actions undertaken against sectarianism and other forms of discrimination.

Consideration

Many clubs already undertake extensive community work and have policies on discrimination; much of this work is unheralded and goes largely unnoticed by the media and the fans. There is a need for clubs themselves to examine how successful they are in getting anti-sectarian and anti-discrimination messages out to supporters. Matters which need to be kept under review include:

- > How good behaviour is promoted and recognised;
- > How a positive atmosphere on match days can be further encouraged;
- > How self-policing amongst supporters can be further encouraged;
- > More interaction with fan groups on the wider role of the club in society.

There are also measures which can be taken by clubs themselves – which many have already taken – to make their position crystal clear to supporters, e.g.:

- > Suspension or removal of season tickets for those exhibiting sectarian behaviour;
- > Stricter policies for allocation of tickets for away matches;
- > Appropriate pre-match and half-time entertainment to reflect a positive image of the clubs and challenge any motions of sectarian bias amongst club supporters.

Where this work is already being undertaken, there has been an improvement in behaviour. It must continue and club messages need to be reinforced. Fans also need to be praised – and their clubs praised – where progress is seen to be made.

The Scottish FA, as the governing body of the game, should monitor the actions of clubs more closely in their efforts to combat sectarian or discriminatory behaviour. This can be done via an annual system of auditing to ensure that appropriate actions are being taken at individual club level.

Conclusion

The Scottish FA will strengthen its National Club Licensing Scheme to require clubs to demonstrate, as part of an annual club audit, that club policies are in place and actions have been taken to challenge any forms of sectarian behaviour. Clubs will be required to produce evidence of actions taken to deal with any issues or incidents associated with the behaviour of their supporters, or anyone else connected to their club.

It is intended to introduce these measures as a mandatory requirement for obtaining a National Club Licence with effect from season 2007/08.

Lead organisation

The Scottish FA will take the lead in this initiative.

Timescale

This system is to be effective from season 2007/08.

ACTION 5:

To introduce a new disciplinary offence of unacceptable conduct in football grounds in Scotland which will carry potential sanctions against clubs, officials, players or spectators engaging in sectarian behaviour.

Consideration

The difficulties of definition of what is sectarian behaviour and what is not are acknowledged. However, any form of discrimination or disorderly conduct is not welcome in any Scottish football ground, and the football authorities in Scotland will work together to introduce a new disciplinary offence and new sanctions to help eradicate all forms of such behaviour in Scottish football grounds. It is important that a wide definition of discrimination and disorderly conduct is used to align with the new definitions introduced by world and European football governing bodies, FIFA and UEFA, to deal with racist or discriminatory behaviour.

Conclusion

The detailed wording of the new provisions will require further consideration and approval by the Scottish FA, Scottish Premier League and Scottish Football League.

In designing these new regulations, it will be important to introduce clarity regarding the respective responsibilities of the Scottish FA and the professional leagues. Clarity is also required in terms of agreed procedures for dealing with individual incidents – in particular how and by whom disciplinary charges are to be initiated. Changes to administrative procedures may not require any constitutional amendments, but may be the subject of a protocol or guidance issued to clubs. Any such protocol should however be published in the wider public interest.

Lead organisation

The Scottish FA, as the governing body of football in Scotland, will have overall responsibility for the introduction of these new measures.

Timescale

Formal approval will require to be given to the introduction of new regulations and this is likely to require amendment to the constitutions of the Scottish FA, the Scottish Premier League and the Scottish Football League.

The aim is for all changes to be effective for the start of season 2007/08.

ACTION 6:

To encourage football clubs to develop standardised and consistent approaches to stewarding matches across Scotland.

Consideration

For many spectators, the public face of authority in football grounds is the club steward. Increasingly, stewards have replaced police officers at football grounds for routine matters of crowd control. The powers of stewards are limited, however, but their interaction with fans is extensive. It is important that stewards and safety officers at clubs have adequate training to carry out their duties.

There is a high turnover of stewards making it difficult to achieve consistent and uniform standards of stewarding at individual clubs, never mind across Scotland as a whole. Some clubs use their own stewards, others contract with stewarding companies. Training programmes are variable across the country and need to be improved so that stewards and football fans recognise what is expected of them. Specific attention should be given to training stewards in how to recognise and deal with any form of sectarian or discriminatory behaviour.

Conclusion

Effective and standardised training of Football Safety Officers would help football clubs to identify and tackle any incidents in their own grounds. It would also assist in establishing a more uniform approach across Scotland to incidents of misbehaviour.

Kick-start funding will be required to launch new training programmes but clubs themselves will have to shoulder the ongoing responsibility for maintaining training support for stewards, either directly or through the stewarding companies they employ. We will explore avenues regarding the training of Football Safety Officers with a view to the programme being owned and taken forward by Scotland's football clubs.

Lead organisation

The Scottish Executive and Scottish FA will work with the Football Safety Officers Association of Scotland to consider suitable training provision for stewards and safety officers.

ACTION 7:

To ensure that Football Banning Orders are used by police forces across Scotland in a consistent way so that those who persistently indulge in sectarian abuse can be excluded from football.

Consideration

The Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland is acutely aware of the potential impact that Football Banning Orders can have on abusive behaviour at football matches across the country. Dealing with the worst and most persistent behaviour in relation to football hooliganism and sectarianism, Football Banning Orders seek to exclude people who behave in this manner from all football environments and act as deterrent to others who act in this manner. A consistent and coordinated approach to policing is being developed across Scotland which aims to ensure that the worst excesses of behaviour are uniformly dealt with wherever they occur.

Conclusion

The new legislation has the potential to dramatically improve the football environment in Scotland, meaning that the next generation of football supporters can watch their teams in a positive atmosphere. In particular, there is a willingness on the part of the Scottish police service to use these provisions as a powerful tool to remove sectarianism from the football arena.

Operational delivery standards have been discussed with Scotland's Police Forces in an effort to ensure that the legislation is delivered consistently across the country, not only in theory but in the provision of effective, robust policing which specifically targets sectarian behaviour. Raising awareness and promoting the use of Football Banning Orders will provide Forces with additional capacity to specifically attempt to reduce sectarian related offences.

Lead organisation

The Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland are leading on the delivery of this action.

ACTION 8:

To put in place processes to effectively monitor, evaluate, review and report on the effectiveness of the actions which are contained in this strategy.

Consideration

It is essential that effective monitoring of the implementation of the actions within this strategy takes place to ensure that progress can be measured effectively. The impact of these actions on sectarian behaviour at and around football matches must also be evaluated as tolerance of sectarian behaviour decreases.

Conclusion

As part of the development work for each of the actions in this strategy, each lead organisation should also make sure that it establishes appropriate processes to monitor the effectiveness of each action. This should be done with a view to preparing a report on the progress made. This report will also present opportunities to share positive work being carried out by individual organisations and clubs across the whole of Scottish football.

A range of information will be used to monitor progress against the action points as well as to evaluate the impact of the overall strategy on Scottish football. SPL delegates at all SPL matches will monitor and report on any manifestations of sectarian behaviour at SPL matches. Facts and statistics including numbers of arrests and football banning orders for sectarian behaviour will be looked at as part of the evaluation exercise, and ACPOS will report on the number of incidences of sectarian behaviour at matches. This will include information from match commanders' reports.

Lead organisation

Each of the organisations involved in delivering the actions in this strategy will be responsible for monitoring each action for which they are responsible. The SIF Working Group shall be responsible for evaluating the impact of the overall strategy on sectarianism in football when it prepares the progress report.

Timescale

The SIF Working Group will reconvene at the end of the 2006/07 football season to determine the extent of implementation of the actions, and to evaluate their effectiveness. A report on progress made, and further actions, will be made prior to the start of the 2007/08 football season.

ACTION 8: (continued)

Conclusion

The Scottish Executive, **sportscotland** and the Scottish FA wholly condemn all forms of discriminatory behaviour, including sectarianism, and are all committed to taking action to tackle discrimination on the basis of colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, gender, transgender identity, sexual orientation, age or disability. We regard all forms of discrimination as extremely serious and we are committed to working individually, and in partnership with other authorities and organisations, to tackle this damaging behaviour.

The Scottish Executive, **sportscotland** and the Scottish FA believe that sectarianism has no place whatsoever in Scottish football, and will work to tackle this problem within the wider framework of tackling all forms of discrimination in football.

The members of the Sectarianism in Football Working Group believe this strategy presents a great opportunity to tackle these problems and make a real impact on Scottish football and on wider society. With the support of everyone involved in football and from football fans up and down the country, the scourge of sectarianism can be removed from our game.

ANNEX A

The Sectarianism in Football Working Group

Group Membership

Name	Organisation	Role
David Taylor	Chief Executive, Scottish Football Association	Chairman
Joyce Hunnam	Scottish Executive Sports Division	Secretariat
Gareth Jones	Scottish Executive Sports Division	Secretariat
Norma Pilcher	Scottish Executive Sports Division	Secretariat
Derek Kirkwood	Head of Security, Scottish Football Association	Member
Lawrie Randak	sportscotland Partnership Manager	Member
Jill Bennett	sportscotland Ethics Manager	Member
Karen Holmes	Scottish Executive Sports Division	Member
John Gilmour	Scottish Executive Sports Division	Member

In addition, the following people attended SIF Working Group meetings and contributed to the development of the strategy:

Name	Organisation
Assistant Chief Constable Kevin Smith	Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland
Chief Superintendent Kenneth Scott	Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland
Iain Blair	Scottish Premier League
Jim Ballantyne	Scottish Football League
David Bell	Scottish Executive Police Division

Additional contributions

A range of organisations and individuals made representations and contributed written comments to the SIF Working Group. These were given due consideration as the strategy was being developed.

The SIF Working Group considered recommendations by Bert Moorhouse, Director of the Research Unit in Football Studies at Glasgow University, based on his consultation with football supporters groups. The Working Group is grateful to these organisations and individuals for playing their part in this process.

Both Celtic FC and Rangers FC made presentations to the Working Group which provided a detailed insight into the commitment and effort of both Old Firm clubs towards eradicating all forms of sectarian behaviour. Although sectarian behaviour of fans is not a problem exclusive to Rangers and Celtic, it is clear that, as the biggest clubs in Scotland, they recognise they have a lead role in tackling the problem.

ANNEX B

Summary of Actions

Action number	Action	Lead organisation	Timescale for delivery
1	To establish a new body to focus effort, develop and deliver activities to tackle sectarianism associated with Scottish football	Scottish Executive/ Scottish FA	Early 2007
2	To undertake an anti-sectarianism awareness raising campaign at the beginning of 2007	Scottish Executive/ sportscotland	Early 2007
3	To ensure that any new sportscotland investment in the Scottish Football Association is linked to the achievements of the first two levels of the Equity Standard in 2009	sportscotland / Scottish FA	By 2009 with significant progress by 2007
4	To strengthen the National Club Licensing Scheme to require clubs to demonstrate what actions are being taken to discourage sectarian behaviour	Scottish Executive/ Scottish FA	August 2007
5	To introduce a new disciplinary offence of unacceptable conduct in football grounds in Scotland which will carry potential sanctions against clubs, officials, players or spectators engaging in sectarian behaviour	Scottish FA SPL/SFL	August 2007
6	To encourage football clubs to develop standardised and consistent approaches to stewarding at football matches across Scotland	Scottish FA	Ongoing
7	To ensure that Football Banning Orders are used by police forces across Scotland in a consistent way so that those who persistently indulge in sectarian abuse can be excluded from football	Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland	Ongoing
8	To put in place processes to effectively monitor, evaluate, review and report on the effectiveness of the actions which are contained in this strategy	Scottish FA/ Scottish Executive/ ACPOS/ sportscotland	August 2007

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