



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## Research and Information Service Briefing Note

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# Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds: Zone Five

The UK Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds<sup>1</sup> (or the 'Green Guide') and the Northern Ireland Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds<sup>2</sup> (or the 'Red Guide') both state that 'it may be helpful' to plan the circulation of spectators in terms of a series of zones. The categorisation of these zones is slightly different in each case, as follows:

Zone	UK Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds
1	The pitch or area of activity. This may be considered a place of reasonable safety, to which spectators can be evacuated before using other emergency exits. Even where this is protected from Zone Two, Zone One should still be accessible to spectators via any gates or openings in the pitch or area of activity perimeter barriers.
2	Spectator viewing accommodation.
3	Internal concourses and hospitality areas. If this area needs to be evacuated in an emergency, it should preferably be to Zone Four.
4	The outer circulation area. Zone Three and Four may, in certain situations, be considered a place of reasonable safety, to which spectators can be evacuated before exiting to Zone Five. In planning terms, Zone Four can serve as a vital access area for emergency and service vehicles, without disrupting circulation in Zone Two.
5	A buffer zone outside the sports ground perimeter, used for the public to gather before entry and for links to car parks and public transport. The public should be able to circumnavigate the perimeter in this zone, in order to find an appropriate point of entry. Zone Five should be the designated place of safety in the event of an emergency.

<sup>1</sup> Department for Culture, Media and Sport. 2008. *Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds*. London: page 57 <http://nia1.me/2mr>

<sup>2</sup> Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure. 2007. *The Northern Ireland Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds*. Belfast: page 53.

Zone	Northern Ireland Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds
1	The pitch or area of activity. This may be considered a place of comparative safety, to which spectators can be evacuated before using other emergency exits (but see Sections 9.13.b and 15.16). Although protected from Zone Two, Zone One should still be accessible to spectators via gates or openings in the pitch perimeter barriers.
2	Spectator accommodation, including internal concourses and hospitality areas. If this area needs to be evacuated in an emergency, it should preferably be to Zone Four. Note: at the majority of sports grounds, Zones Two and Three will form a single area, usually underneath or part of the stands.
3	The outer circulation area. Zone Three may, in certain situations, be considered a place of comparative safety, to which spectators can be evacuated before exiting to Zone Four. In planning terms, Zone Three can serve as a vital access area for emergency and service vehicles, without disrupting circulation in Zone Two.
4	A buffer zone outside the sports ground perimeter, used for the public to gather before entry and for links to car parks and public transport. The public should be able to circumnavigate the perimeter in this zone, in order to find an appropriate point of entry. Zone Four should be the designated place of safety in the event of an emergency.

It can be seen from these two tables that although the Red Guide was based very largely on the Green Guide, the Red Guide combines Zones Two and Three, thus reducing the total number of zones into just four. In other words, the Red Guide considers the viewing accommodation and the internal concourse to be essentially the same.

Zone Five in the Green Guide is therefore the same as Zone Four in the Red Guide.