

# SUPPORTER LIAISON OFFICER HANDBOOK



"While players, coaches and even owners change with increasing frequency, supporters remain loyal to the colours they proudly wear. Because fans are the reason football exists at all, their voice has to be heard and fans have to help shape football's future."

UEFA



# CONTENTS

**03 - FOREWORDS**

**04 - ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK**

**05 - THE SLO ROLE: BY DEFINITION**

**06 - THE SLO ROLE: FULFILLING THE SLO ROLE**

**07 & 08 - THE SLO ROLE: IN PRACTICE**

**09 - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**10 - LICENSING**

**11- BENEFITS OF THE SLO ROLE**

**12 & 13 - SD SCOTLAND'S ROLE**

**14 & 15 - SELECTING THE SLO**

**16-18 - AN SLO'S DUTIES**

**19 - THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

**20 - UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT**

**21 - IMPLEMENTING AT SMALLER CLUBS**

**22 - DISABILITY ACCESS OFFICERS**

**23 - THE SLO ROLE IN NUMBERS**

**24 - SD SCOTLAND CONTACT DETAILS**



## SCOTTISH FA FOREWORD

---

The Scottish FA is pleased to partner with Supporters Direct Scotland on the Supporter Liaison Officer (SLO) programme. This initiative plays a vital role in building a relationship between clubs and fans and has been proven to reap a number of benefits for both sides.

The SLO role has been a requisite for clubs applying for a UEFA club license to compete in Europe for several years now. The programme has proven to be so beneficial that since January 2017 the Scottish FA has adopted it as a requirement for all silver and gold clubs in our own club licensing process.

Funding has been set aside by the Scottish FA to help embed the SLO role within Scottish football, through the creation of a close-knit community of SLOs across Scottish clubs and the development of best practice resources such as this handbook.

By working with Supporters Direct Scotland to help facilitate an SLO position at every Scottish club the Scottish FA aims to encourage dialogue between fans and clubs – dialogue that will help improve fan behaviour, generate positive ideas and add vibrancy and colour to match atmospheres.

At the Scottish FA, we recognise how vital the SLO role is to improving the culture within Scottish football. The SLO role is a forward-thinking initiative and we are committed to supporting its development.

Ian Maxwell, Chief Executive of the Scottish FA

## SUPPORTERS DIRECT SCOTLAND FOREWORD

---

It's with great pleasure that we bring to you the first Scottish Supporter Liaison Officer Handbook. The SLO role is one that we've taken much joy in working to promote and develop in partnership with the Scottish FA.

This handbook is a culmination of everything we've learned through our SLO Development Days, discussions with our friends at SD Europe and UEFA and also what clubs have been doing across Europe with the role. We hope it will provide SLOs, clubs and supporters valuable information regarding the role and offer them best practice examples and guidelines to implement at their own club. In today's age of football, the SLO role and true and proper engagement between supporters and their clubs has never been more valuable.

This is reflected by the Scottish FA's decision to make having an SLO a licensing requirement for clubs seeking a Silver or Gold license – something welcomed by SD Scotland. Going forward we hope the rise in the number of SLOs appointed by clubs throughout the SPFL and beyond continues. We hope you find this a beneficial resource and will update it on a regular basis.

We look forward to receiving feedback on where we can continue to support clubs and SLOs with the role.

Alan Russell, CEO of SD Scotland

# ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK



This handbook should serve as a guide for all newcomers to the SLO role as well as those already established within their position. It is important to note that this document should serve as a baseline for all those associated with clubs. The handbook was crafted using feedback from supporters groups; national associations, clubs and other stakeholders. Together with various online resources that SD Europe and UEFA are developing, this handbook is designed to give context to the SLO role in Scotland as well as set out minimum requirements and recommendations.

# THE SUPPORTER LIAISON OFFICER ROLE

## BY DEFINITION: WHAT IS A SUPPORTER LIAISON OFFICER?

The SLO role was the result of detailed talks between European football's governing body and Supporters Direct Europe and led to the implementation of Article 35 which says those applying for a UEFA license must have a liaison officer to 'act as a key contact point for supporters.'

## WHAT IS ARTICLE 35? - THE SUPPORTER LIAISON OFFICER

1. The license applicant must have appointed a Supporter Liaison Officer to act as the key contact point for supporters.
2. The Supporter Liaison Officer will regularly meet and collaborate with the relevant club personnel on all related matters.

## ORIGINS OF THE ROLE

The role has its roots in Germany, where the first SLO appeared at Borussia Mönchengladbach in 1989 in a part-time and volunteer capacity. In 1992, the German "National Concept Sport and Security" introduced the SLO as part of its concept on how to tackle the hooliganism and violence that surrounded German football in the 1970s and 1980s. The first full-time SLO was employed in 1996, and today all Bundesliga clubs have three full-time SLOs.

In a survey initiated by UEFA in 2007, a majority of the consulted national associations wanted to improve relations between clubs and fans, to enable fans to become "more serious and responsible partners". To achieve this, UEFA started backing several European supporter organisations, such as Supporters Direct Europe and Football Supporters Europe. UEFA also acknowledged that football supporters had been largely ignored in the dialogue surrounding football, but should be considered valued members of the football family. This work led to the introduction of Article 35 in 2012 which required clubs participating in UEFA club competitions to have an appointed SLO.

**"I'VE BEEN HIRED BY THE FANS AND THE CLUB.  
THE CLUB JUST PAYS THE FANS' CONTRIBUTION TO MY WAGES."**

**- PATRICK VESTPHEL, SLO BRØNDBY IF**

To ensure we all mean the same thing when we refer to SLOs, we have come up with the following standard definition of their role: As the name suggests, a supporter liaison officer is someone who liaises – they are a mediator between the fans and the club, the national association and the league. The SLO also serves as a link between other parties involved in football, such as the police and stewards. Ideally employed by the club in order to liaise with the fans, the SLO is an advocate of both sides, representing the interests of the club (or national association/league) AND those of the supporters.

# THE SUPPORTER LIAISON OFFICER ROLE

## FULFILLING THE SLO ROLE

**To do the job properly, the SLO needs to receive good information from all sides. It is therefore essential that the SLO is credible and has the respect and acceptance of everyone involved, i.e. the club, the fans, the national association, the league, the police, the stewards, etc.**

When it comes to decisions made by the club management, it may often be preferable for these decisions to be communicated to the fans by the SLO rather than fans simply reading about them in the newspaper or on the club website. At the same time, the fans can put their suggestions to the club via the SLO. In this process the SLO can help the club make better decisions by communicating the views, needs and concerns of the fans to the club management. SLOs therefore have an active role to play in shaping club policy and processes and are not simply there to provide a service.

Building relationships with the various stakeholders is a key part of the SLO's job. This involves talking not only to fans but also to the police and the organisations responsible for crowd control. One way of doing this is at a pre-match security meeting, where potential problems associated with that particular game can be discussed. The SLO can play an important

role in this by communicating the mood among supporters to the police and stewards.

It is in everyone's interest for matches to pass off peacefully. Providing fans with reliable information helps to achieve this. SLOs know their own fans, their own cities and their own special fan culture and so can exchange valuable information, such as how to get to the stadium, where fans can park, which pub away supporters can use safely, what fans are allowed to take inside the stadium, whether supporters have been involved in trouble recently, etc. In addition, fans know that in the SLO they have someone who will

communicate with police and stewards on their behalf. For the home club, this exchange of information between SLOs means they know what to expect from the away fans and can prepare accordingly. They know whether some elements of the visiting supporters have a reputation for trouble, for example, and they know how supporters will be travelling to the ground. This allows clubs to differentiate, rather than treating all away fans in the same way, and thus it means fans are treated better. The establishment of a network of SLOs across Europe will be a key factor in this process and is one aim of the project.



# THE SUPPORTER LIAISON OFFICER ROLE

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN PRACTICE?

It is important to understand that we are at the beginning of a process and that this process can only involve minimum requirements in the beginning. The SLO is not a recognised job as such – everyone knows what a taxi driver is and does, but few understand the role of the SLO. It will therefore require a lot of learning by doing in the initial period in addition to the basic training



**“THE SLO IS A COMMUNICATOR, NOT A ‘FIREFIGHTER’”**

provided by Supporters Direct Scotland and the Scottish FA in association with Supporters Direct Europe and UEFA. Networks at national and European level will also help SLOs to exchange experience, learn from each other and further raise standards.

In liaising between the club on one side and the fans on the other, the role of the SLO has been likened to trying to ride two horses at the same time. The SLO has to make sure they stay close together. If the SLO puts too much weight on only one horse, i.e. representing the interests of one side more than the

other, they are not doing their job properly and will not be effective. The two sides will drift apart.

Another important thing to understand is that the SLO is a communicator, not a ‘firefighter’. One task of the SLO is to try to prevent trouble from happening. The SLO does this by educating, communicating, informing, persuading and engaging with fans. The aim is to encourage supporters to take responsibility for their own actions. Self-regulation by fans will always be the best form of prevention, and modern police strategies as laid down in the EU Handbook

for Police Cooperation now recognise the urgent need to develop close links and engage in dialogue with supporter groups and, of course, with SLOs. But if violence does occur, then it is too late – the intervention of the SLO is over and they have to hand over to the police or stewards. Prevention and self-regulation are the key words here. This involves making violence a taboo and promoting respect and tolerance for other fans and for minorities who attend football matches. Encouraging fans to write and commit to a code of conduct is one way of approaching this task.

The SLO is better placed than the security officer to achieve self-regulation among fans, as they are one of them. Supporters are far more likely to trust and listen to the SLO. To maintain this trust, the SLO has to treat sensitive information about fans confidentially, and clubs should understand that the SLO would not be able to tell them everything that comes to their attention. In addition, whereas the security officer may only see the crime, the SLO sees the process that may lead to that crime. This is why we believe the SLO and the security officer should be two separate roles, as set out in Article 35. This is also why credibility is so important.

These days, however, an SLO is much more than a mediator between club and fans. As part of their role, the SLO sometimes takes on tasks that fit more the profile of a travel agent, a customer relations manager or a counsellor.

This is precisely why the SLO should be chosen from among the supporters whenever possible. The SLO must be present among the fans. The SLO must know them and be known and accepted by them. Only then can they assess the mood among supporters. Only then can they understand the problems fans may face and their needs and wants. It is a difficult job that demands a lot of resilience and hard work. We therefore recommend the appointment of a genuine supporter.





# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## • WHO NEEDS AN SLO?

There is a perception only 'big clubs' require an SLO, however, every club in the SPFL that is seeking a Silver or Gold license with the Scottish FA is required to have a 'dedicated and identified official' as their SLO. Equally, a club with aspirations to participate in a UEFA competition will also be required to have an SLO under 'Article 35'. SD Scotland recommend all clubs in the SPFL and beyond consider implementing the role, regardless of the level they are participating as the benefits can be numerous and can be considered an investment (either financially or of time)

## • SO WHAT IS AN SLO?

Simply put, an SLO is a club employee who is responsible for building bridges between the club and its fans. SLOs might communicate fans' opinions to a club's board or senior staff members, and should also liaise with stewards, police and counterparts at opposition clubs. They should be the first point of contact for supporters with their club.

## • WHO ARE SLOS?

In our experience most SLOs in Scotland have been appointed from within the club. There are SLOs whose sole focus is the role itself, however many also have shared job titles in PR, the ticket office or customer service departments to make it more practical to implement from the clubs' perspective. We believe the ideal situation would be to have a full time SLO employed or three volunteer SLOs at every club, however appreciate that this could be difficult to implement at smaller clubs. There is a guide to implementing the position at smaller clubs within this handbook.

## • IF THEY'RE JUST A CLUB EMPLOYEE, WHAT'S THE FUSS?

We believe if properly implemented, the SLO role can be a major step forward for engagement and dialogue between fans and their clubs. In Germany SLOs have been a fixture for some time now, and they have proved a huge success. Most Bundesliga SLOs are now appointed from within the fanbase, giving them legitimacy and credibility among supporters.

Typically they are involved in things like matchday security, travel arrangements and ticket distribution, however it wasn't always the case, and a lot of lessons have been learned along the way. As UEFA themselves say, an SLO should be an 'advocate of both sides, representing the interests of the club AND those of supporters'. The capitalisation is UEFA's, highlighting the fact that an effective SLO must be more than a club employee who defends his employers from criticism.

**YOU CAN FIND CONTACT DETAILS FOR ALL SPFL CLUBS' SLOS ON OUR WEBSITE:  
[WWW.SUPPORTERS-DIRECT.SCOT/SLO](http://WWW.SUPPORTERS-DIRECT.SCOT/SLO)**

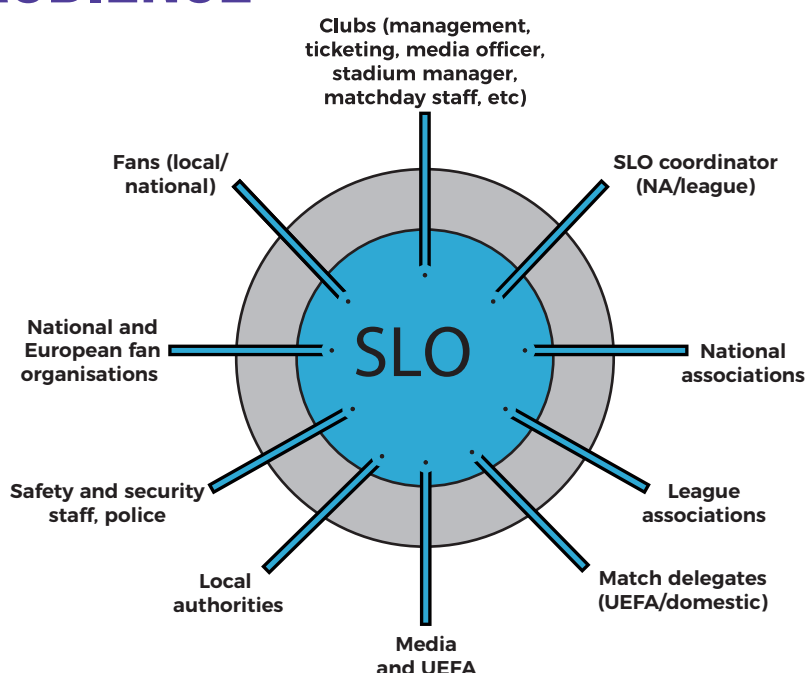
# LICENSING

Licensing requirements for UEFA and Scottish FA:

The criterion and guidelines as set by the SFA are listed below. The subheadings are ratings set by Scotland's top governing body in terms of what standards must be met in order to achieve a Gold, Silver, Bronze or Entry accolade.

Criteria	Gold/Silver	Bronze/Entry
Supporter Liaison Officer refers to the person appointed by the club's executive body to meet and engage with the relevant club personnel on all related matters.	<p>Individual in role with signed Job Description, contract or SLA.</p> <p>The SLO contact details must be published on the club website.</p> <p>The club must be able to provide evidence of activities carried out by the SLO on a regular basis.</p> <p>It is best practice that the individual should not belong to the senior management of the club. Further guidance on the role is available from SD Scotland.</p>	Not required but considered 'best practice'.

## TARGET AUDIENCE



# BENEFITS OF THE SLO ROLE

In order for both clubs and fans to enjoy maximum benefit from the introduction of SLOs, both sides must work together. Drawing on experiences from countries that already have SLOs in place, the following potential benefits have been identified for clubs, national associations, leagues and supporters:

Improved relationships with fans (national team supporters' club, national fan organisations, relevant fan groups at club level);

Direct line of communication between clubs, national associations/leagues and supporters;

Improved dialogue between fans of different clubs, SLO's tying in with one another;

Greater insight into supporter viewpoints, scope for two-way communication between club and fans;

Better conflict management; greater transparency on both sides. Better feedback and improved decision making;

Positive impact on the matchday experience;

Financial benefits, bigger crowds, higher merchandise sales. sponsorship revenue with fans feeling a closer identification and less violence with better conflict management.

The SLO role is a very cost-effective tool due to the benefits associated with the job superseding the investment and start up costs. This is because SLO's possess intangible expertise, which is incredibly difficult to imitate, and not made readily available on the marketplace. For example, SLOs can serve as a buffer between club officials and supporters, offering a fixed point of contact for fans that may otherwise bombard the director of sport, press officer or security officer with requests for information. For fans they offer an opportunity to ensure their views are heard and not simply ignored. Supporters feel their needs and wants are being taken seriously, and the standing of the club among fans is enhanced. With an SLO serving as the lynchpin for cross communication between clubs and fans, the rapport between both groups will substantially improve. The SLO role was originally formed partially as a way to engage with fans not attending games to find out how the club could improve its offering to lapsed or potential new supporters. In this sense, it can be considered an investment

The SLO system should also lead to improved dialogue and cooperation between fans of different clubs. Discussions between SLOs before a game are an example of this, where the home SLO provides the away SLO with information on a wide variety of subjects. Fans may also take responsibility for reducing antagonism by meeting before games to discuss any potential problems and passing on relevant information to police and security officers.

Clubs should also see an improvement in the atmosphere, as the SLO can be used to communicate with supporters in all areas. The SLO can work with ultra groups to arrange choreographies, for example, or organise singing areas and ticket sales for the most loyal sections of the club's support, etc.

## **SD SCOTLAND ROLE**

**WHILE CLUBS AND OFFICIALS PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS, SD SCOTLAND ALSO HELPS TO DEVELOP SLOS. SD SCOTLAND WORKS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE SCOTTISH FA TO DELIVER A DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR SLOS IN SCOTLAND. THIS OCCURS THROUGH REGULAR COOPERATION WITH SLOS, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT EVENTS AS WELL CONFERENCES TO PROVIDE VIVID INSIGHTS AS TO WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE SLO ROLE. SD SCOTLAND WILL CONTINUE TO WORK WITH THE SCOTTISH FA TO HELP DEVELOP THE NETWORK OF SLOS IN SCOTLAND AND TO FACILITATE THE SHARING OF KNOWLEDGE AND BEST PRACTICE TO IMPROVE THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS, IN PARTICULAR THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUPPORTERS AND CLUB DIRECTORS/OWNERS/SAFETY AND SECURITY ORGANISATIONS.**





# SELECTING THE SUPPORTER LIAISON OFFICER



**IDEALLY, SLOS SHOULD COME FROM THE FAN BASE.**

- SLOS ARE SEEN BY FANS AS “ONE OF US” AND ARE THEREFORE CREDIBLE.
- SLOS REGULARLY LIAISE WITH FANS TO BUILD A RELATIONSHIP OF TRUST AND EXERT POSITIVE INFLUENCE.
- SLOS PROMOTE SELF-REGULATION AND ISOLATION OF “UNDESIRABLE BEHAVIOUR”.

The job specification will be tailored to the requirements of the club and it is therefore the senior management who will make the appointment. The newly appointed SLO, while meeting the requirements of club management, must be widely accepted by the fans, as it is they who the SLO will mainly represent. Communication and regular tie ins with fans can help develop the relationships between club and fans whilst also gaining acceptance of

those the SLO is catering for.

There are various ways to approach this. SD Scotland are happy to visit clubs in person to advise and help them to appoint a suitable person/s to the role, preferably in consultation with the relevant supporters trust/local fan groups. In view of the liaison and mediation role played by the SLO, it is important that the person selected has the acceptance of all the main stakeholders

(club board and management, supporters, police, stewards, etc.).

Experience from other countries shows the recruitment of SLOs from the fan base has worked well. This does not mean that an existing member of the club staff cannot be chosen for the role, however, provided that person has a good understanding of the needs of and problems faced by supporters, is credible and enjoys the trust of the fan



base. Nevertheless, in most cases we would recommend the appointment of a recognised supporter.

The number of SLOs appointed, and whether they work on a full-time, part-time or voluntary basis, will depend on the size of the fan base and the needs of the club. Some clubs will require full time SLOs whereas other SPFL clubs may be able to manage with one or two part-time SLOs, or even volunteers. Lower league clubs can make good use of a team of volunteers. We recommend the appointment of a team of three to ensure each competitive match played by the first team can be covered by at least one SLO.

Full-time SLOs should also build

up a team of volunteer workers to assist them with the multitude of tasks requiring attention on matchdays (e.g. staffing contact points at home matches, away section monitors, mobile contact points at away matches, etc.). In Germany, Borussia Mönchengladbach deploy as many as 30 volunteers on home matchdays.

At clubs using a team of volunteer SLOs the work should be broken down into different areas with specific tasks for each SLO. Each SLO should, however, be able to provide the basic level of support on matchday, bearing in mind the fact that they will often be working alone. Third-division German club SV Darmstadt can serve as a useful model in this respect.

A number of good practice examples already exist in Scotland when it comes to the definition of the skills, aptitudes and personal qualities of the person being sought. This also applies to job descriptions and job profiles. Taken together with the examples from the rest of Europe provided in the UEFA toolkit, SD Scotland will draw up a comprehensive menu of recruitment options for clubs to encourage the establishment of base level uniform standards throughout the country. In view of the different cultures, structures and circumstances at work at each club, however, the nature of the work conducted in practice will, of course, vary at every club.

# SLO DUTIES

---

## THE SLO'S DUTIES CAN BE SPLIT INTO 3 AREAS: HOME MATCH DAYS, AWAY MATCH DAYS & BETWEEN MATCHES.

### ON HOME MATCH DAYS:

- In advance of home matches, the SLO should consult with supporter groups re any displays of flags, banners, etc., assist with coordinating procedures for such displays and assist with preparation of any planned on-pitch supporters' presentations.
- Before the match, the SLO should mingle with supporters in pubs and bars around, and also within the stadium; upon arrival of away supporters' coaches, meet the visiting SLO and be available to answer any outstanding questions about the day's arrangements.
- During the match, the SLO should sit/stand with supporters in standard price accommodation (i.e. not in corporate hospitality or the directors' box); at not less than 50% of games SLO should sit/stand with supporters in the lowest priced area of the ground. The SLO should encourage support for the team by positively influencing fans and seeking to defuse recognisable tendencies towards violence.
- During half-time, the SLO should circulate among fans in main gathering points or take up a presence at a well-publicised, accessible information point in order to be available to answer any supporter questions/assist with queries and/or problems.
- After the match, the SLO should take up a presence in the vicinity of the information point (or similar contact place) and communicate there with fans, subsequently attend any fan meetings in pubs in the area and, if applicable, any events organised by supporters' groups.
- Later, the SLO should summarise any complaints from fans at the match and try to establish the circumstances and underlying reasons for these complaints and any other issues that arose.
- Throughout match day, fans should be able to contact the SLO by mobile phone (voice & SMS).



## ON AWAY MATCH DAYS:

- The SLO should attend most or all first team away games.
- In advance of the match, the SLO should gather and distribute travel information, including details of meeting places / pubs for away fans, contact the home team's SLO, provide information for supporters about the upcoming game on the club website, via social media and by e-mail/phone contact with supporters' groups, etc.
- On the day of the match, the SLO should travel to the away game with supporters, alternating the mode of transport to cover all options over the course of the season.
- Before the match, the SLO should mingle with supporters in pubs and bars around the ground and also within the stadium; upon arrival of coaches (if not personally travelling on them), the SLO should meet supporters as they disembark, meet the host club SLO, be available to answer any outstanding questions about the day's arrangements and provide a presence for imparting information outside of the away supporters' section of the ground.
- During the game, the SLO should have a presence in the supporters' section and communicate with fans at half-time. After the game, the SLO should take up a presence near the away section exit, communicate with fans as they leave and monitor their departure.
- Later, the SLO should summarise any complaints from fans at the match and try to establish the circumstances and underlying reasons for these complaints and any other issues that arose.



## BETWEEN MATCHES THE SLO SHOULD:

---

- Attend all meetings of organised fans groups, e.g. Supporters Club & Trust and unless the respective organisation indicates that it would prefer such attendance to be by invitation.
- Be available in person at well-publicised set times for supporters to call in and ask questions, i.e. 'consulting hours'.
- Actively communicate with supporters via letter, e-mail, telephone and through a regular social media presence to promote a positive supporter culture.
- Organise/attend meetings to inform fans about the latest developments at the club/ deal with fan-related requests and concerns.
- Initiate meetings between supporters and club representatives and institutional representatives (police, stewards, local authorities, etc.), for example, with the aim of improving dialogue between the various parties and their understanding of each other's roles and views.
- Work with the media, paying special attention to ensuring that supporter liaison work and fans in general are accurately portrayed in the media.
- Contact the SLO of the other club before a game to exchange information of relevance, counteract negative attitudes and prejudices and prevent conflict to fans.
- Act as a point of liaison between club officials and supporters facing a possible stadium ban and ensuring on the supporter's behalf that due process is followed and that the supporter is made aware of his/her rights, including in respect of representation and appeal.
- Assist supporters groups with the staging of supporter events, e.g. by arranging for the presence of club staff and/or players.
- Communicate/network with the SLOs of other clubs, attending regional and national meetings including the annual SD Scotland Supporters Summit.

## OTHER GROUPS YOU MAY WISH TO CONTACT

---

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| • The Fair Play Foundation                 | • Volunteer Scotland        |
| • Show Racism the Red Card                 | • Fans Supporting Foodbanks |
| • Women at the Game                        | • Leap Sports               |
| • Scottish Disabled Supporters Association | • Bemis                     |
| • Stonewall                                | • On The Ball               |

# THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

---

The recruitment process itself can take various forms, including:

- Standard recruitment process with job advert placed on the club website and in other appropriate media and subsequent vetting of applications and interview process with the possible involvement of SD Scotland.
- Internal selection of a suitable candidate from the fan base, preferably through consultation with supporter representatives, fans forum, etc.
- Internal selection of an existing club employee who fits the requirements referred to above.
- Election by fans.
- Combined post.

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

---

The SLO should:

- Ensure that all club staff are provided within an anti-discriminatory framework and take account of such issues as race, gender, sexuality, disability, religion and age.
- Carry out their work in a manner which promotes equality of opportunity for everyone.



# UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT

---

SLOs are ideally placed to help promote positive messages of support to fan bases and work towards stopping unacceptable conduct.

SLOs work with the safety officer and are not the extended arm of the safety officer. They work to prevent negative incidents from happening through dialogue and communication.

In this area, SLOs should ideally:

- Help the safety officer to understand fan structures.
- Help the safety officer to promote mutual understanding between stakeholders.
- Help the safety officer to identify trends and gauge the mood within the fan base.
- Attend pre-match security/planning meetings.

Some practical steps:

- Promote and encourage behaviour appropriate for the environment.  
(Fans Charter or similar)
- Ensure your supporters are aware of the potential consequences of hate behaviour (through club messaging)
- Share cases of good practice from amongst the supporters to the supporters.  
(Club website, social media etc)
- Hold an information sharing meeting at least annually with regards to general fan conduct and behaviours.
- Build relationships with additional key partners, for example supporters groups, residents groups, police and other organisations.

What SLOs should work towards trying to achieve:

- Football matches are open and welcoming for all – no part of the community should feel excluded, and each community is of equal value.
- The match should take place in a safe environment where the facilities provided are appropriate for the diversity of the community likely to support or visit that club.
- Positive support and celebration of fan culture should be encouraged, where fan culture is defined as the right of fans to give vocal and visual support of the club and express their views.
- Songs or chants shouldn't lead members of the community to believe, or allow the perception to exist, that they are excluded from supporting the team because of their colour, creed, gender sexuality or religion.
- Everyone has a shared responsibility in making football better and ensuring it grows and prospers in the coming years.

# IMPLEMENTING AT SMALLER CLUBS

---

Preferably, the SLO should be employed on a full-time basis, however, for smaller clubs with limited resources, it may be harder to employ an SLO on this basis (although UEFA believe it should be considered an investment).

If it isn't possible to employ a full time SLO, a club may wish to consider the following:

- Volunteer SLO (expenses being reimbursed)
- Part-time SLO
- SLO + another role in the club

If the SLO is 'part' of a wider role within a club, about a third of working time should be spent on the following SLO duties throughout the week (with two thirds on their other role):

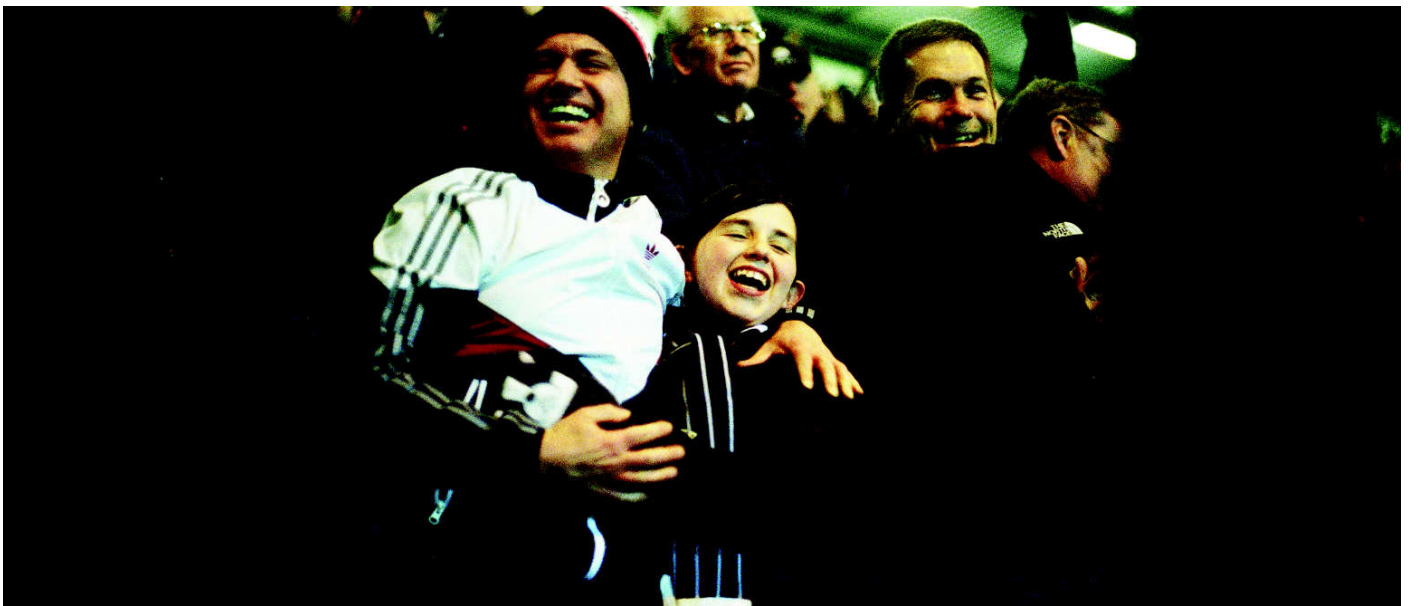
- Communication with the fans
- Participating in fan meetings
- Organising away travel (+ ticketing)

On match days, their time should be fully concentrated on the SLO role. For volunteers a basic requirement of SLOs should be:

- Having a presence in their own supporters' section
- Travelling on organised supporter coach

Minimum requirement of SLO at smaller clubs

- Ensure SLO is able to attend national association SLO training courses
- Provide adequate resources (e.g. office, equipment, accreditation, club email address, etc.)
- Stage regular meetings between the club management and the SLO
- Make provision for regular meetings between the SLO and the various fan groups
- Consult the SLO on matters of relevance to fans



# DISABILITY ACCESS OFFICERS

---

UEFA and CAFE recently took another step towards ensuring that access and inclusion for disabled people are integrated into every level of football with the introduction of a new club licensing criterion in the 2015 edition of the UEFA Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Regulations. Article 35bis of those regulations was approved by the UEFA Executive Committee at its meeting in Prague in June 2015.

Article 35bis requires clubs to appoint a Disability Access Officer (DAO), who is responsible for improving access for disabled people (on both matchdays and non-matchdays) and ensuring continued progress in this critical area.

The role of the DAO is not an entirely new concept, with successful models already in existence in a number of European countries – notably Germany and the United Kingdom. Both of those countries have made substantial progress in terms of making stadiums and matches more accessible, especially when compared with other countries who do not have such models.

## ARTICLE 35BIS

**1. THE LICENCE APPLICANT MUST HAVE APPOINTED A DISABILITY ACCESS OFFICER TO SUPPORT THE PROVISION OF INCLUSIVE, ACCESSIBLE FACILITIES AND SERVICES.**

**2. THE DISABILITY ACCESS OFFICER WILL REGULARLY MEET AND COLLABORATE WITH THE RELEVANT CLUB PERSONNEL ON ALL RELATED MATTERS.**

Many national associations and clubs (including several in Scotland) have chosen to combine the SLO role with the DAO role. While this may seem the most logical way to go, it is essential to recognise that the two positions are very different in terms of their responsibilities and requirements. It is important to recognise that the DAO role – unlike the disability liaison officer (DLO) role previously seen in some countries – is about more than just liaising with disabled spectators and ticketing.

For more information on Disability Access Officers, visit the UEFA website and the specially produced Handbook.

# THE SLO ROLE IN NUMBERS

# 11

AWARENESS PRESENTATIONS HELD BY SD SCOTLAND WITH CLUBS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

# 24

CLUBS HAVE APPOINTED NEW SUPPORTER LIAISON OFFICERS SINCE 2016

# 20%

THE REDUCTION IN VIOLENCE SWEDISH FOOTBALL EXPERIENCED FOLLOWING THE SLO PROGRAMME WAS IMPLEMENTED

# 9%

INCREASE OF AWARENESS OF SUPPORTERS OF THE SLO BETWEEN 2017 & 2016

# 700%

MORE SLOS IN PLACE THAN AT THE START OF THE PROJECT (3 IN 2016, 24 NOW)

# 21

VISITS TO CLUBS ACROSS SCOTLAND BY SD SCOTLAND TO DISCUSS THE SLO ROLE

**SD SCOTLAND ARE A COMMUNITY BENEFIT SOCIETY WHOSE MISSION IS TO FURTHER FAN REPRESENTATION, INVOLVEMENT AND DIALOGUE WITHIN SCOTTISH FOOTBALL.**

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

**WEBSITE: [WWW.SUPPORTERS-DIRECT.SCOT](http://WWW.SUPPORTERS-DIRECT.SCOT)**

**EMAIL: [INFO@SUPPORTERS-DIRECT.SCOT](mailto:INFO@SUPPORTERS-DIRECT.SCOT)**

**TWITTER: [@SUPPDIRECTSCOT](https://twitter.com/SUPPDIRECTSCOT)**

**FACEBOOK: [@SUPPORTERSDIRECTSCOTLAND](https://www.facebook.com/SUPPORTERSDIRECTSCOTLAND)**

**INSTAGRAM: [@SUPPDIRECTSCOTLAND](https://www.instagram.com/SUPPDIRECTSCOTLAND)**

**YOUTUBE: [/C/SUPPORTERSDIRECTSCOTLAND](https://www.youtube.com/c/SUPPORTERSDIRECTSCOTLAND)**

**ADDRESS: SD SCOTLAND, 118 NORTH MAIN STREET, CARRONSHORE, FALKIRK, FK2 8HU**

