

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR SAFETY AT INDOOR CONCERTS

Licensing of Indoor Concerts to be Considered

Mr. Noel Dempsey, T.D., Minister for the Environment and Local Government today (22 October) published a Code of Practice for Safety at Indoor Concerts.

The Minister said that the Code is intended to help all involved in the organisation of indoor concerts to plan and manage events safely. The primary responsibility for the control of crowds and ensuring the safety of persons attending an indoor concert rests with the person in control of the event. The Code will assist them in meeting that responsibility. Minister Dempsey urged promoters of indoor concerts to take a positive approach in supporting the Code. "The implementation of its recommendations will provide the safety that the public expects and deserves", said Mr. Dempsey.

The Code was prepared by a special Inter-Departmental Working Group and is the third in a series, two of which were published in 1996 by the Department of Education; these are the Code of Practice for Safety at Sports Grounds and the Code of Practice at Outdoor Pop Concerts. The new Code follows the general principles of safety and the organisational parameters set out in the other Codes. These reflect the recommendations of the Report of the Hamilton Committee on Crowd Control.

The Code sets out the minimum functional requirements for the safe organisation and management of concerts. It provides practical guidance and advice for promoters on a wide range of parameters relevant to crowd control such as event planning and management, crowd management, the use of barriers, stewarding, and emergency medical facilities. Other aspects dealt with include fire precautions and fire safety, structural matters, electrical installation and communications.

Indoor concerts take place in a wide variety of venues and cover a wide range of events. "For that reason", the Minister said, "the guidance is set out in broad functional terms and the requirements will have to be adapted to the needs of a particular event".

The Code is not intended to apply to the smaller type of event held in pubs, discos, etc.

The Code will operate in a voluntary manner. The history of, and experience with, the two previous Codes is that the voluntary, flexible approach has worked well, the Minister said.

The Minister added that his Department and the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform will examine the issue of licensing indoor concerts, including the implementation of the recommendation made by the Hamilton Committee on Crowd Control on the licensing of indoor concerts with audiences above 2,000 people and the role which local authorities might play in such a licensing system.