



18th December 2025

FAO

**Rt Hon Dame Karen Bradley
Chair of Home Affairs Committee
Via email**

General information

The UK Football Policing Unit (UKFPU) was established in 2005. We are a police team, and I have led the team since 2014. We take our strategic and operational overview from the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) Football Lead, Chief Constable Mark Roberts.

We have several functions within the team, but the most relevant in this case relates to the National Football Information Point (NFIP) role we undertake for the UK. This was an obligation under EU regulations, and since leaving the union, has been carried on under the auspices of the Council of Europe. This requires the unit to facilitate the transfer of information and intelligence between UK police forces and other police forces, both in Europe and elsewhere, when teams play in overseas (such as UEFA/FIFA sponsored) events, international matches or indeed pre-season friendlies. In Europe, there is a network of countries that have the same function. In countries where these are not established, we will try and facilitate contact by utilising the FCDO network in country. There is a central repository of “post-match” reports that are completed by host countries following a game, which enables a picture to be established around the threat and risks involved in an event, from a policing standpoint. However, it is important to note, that different countries have better systems in place than others when it comes to the completeness of these forms.

To assist us in information sharing, each police force in England and Wales have a nominated Dedicated Football Officer (DFO) for all clubs in the top 5 steps of the football pyramid. We have also established a force operational football lead with whom we can engage in more overarching matters. We also have nominated contacts within Police Scotland and Police Service for Northern Ireland for information sharing purposes. When a force has a football event with a international dimension, they will request information or provide information through my team.

To be clear however, the operational planning and deployment of police staff is one for the force that has operational responsibility for the ground where the game is to be played.

In relation to your questions in the letter, I have copied these below for ease of reference.

What record you have of meetings with Lord Mann, the Government's Independent Adviser on Antisemitism, following the AFC Ajax v Maccabi Tel Aviv fixture in November 2024, and why his report on the fixture was not shared with West Midlands Police prior to the decision to ban Maccabi Tel Aviv fans.

To be clear, Lord Mann wrote to Chief Constable Mark Roberts on 23 July 2025 not to our unit. This was clearly marked Private and Confidential. A virtual meeting was proposed for 31st July but no response was received from Lord Mann. After summer recess a virtual meeting was arranged for 29 September 2025 but unfortunately Lord Mann did not attend. Another meeting was arranged for 30 September 2025 but again Lord Mann did not appear. The UKFPU were already in contact with WMP as part of their normal approach to supporting forces who are engaged in overseas football events.

What communications you had with Maccabi Tel Aviv and Israeli football authorities in relation to the risk posed by the Maccabi Ultras, including whether you were informed that the Ultras were not planning to attend the fixture in Birmingham.

My team attempted to contact the Israeli Police. They do not have a NFIP. The contact was through the FCDO in country as we do not have a NFIP contact. The initial request for information or contact from Israeli Police was made on 23rd September and followed up on 26th September. There were no details supplied to either of these requests. This is not unusual in countries where there is not an established NFIP.

We had no contact with the supporters, and would not normally do so, as this is a function that would be expected of the host force in Israel. We also had no contact with Maccabi Tel Aviv, as this is normally done between clubs and not ourselves.

What communications you had with the Home Office ahead of the decision to ban Maccabi Tel Aviv fans from the fixture in Birmingham, particularly whether you indicated that a ban on away fans was a likely, rather than a possible, option, and if so what response you received.

I received several emails from various departments in the Home Office. My main contact is the HO Football Policy Team, that now sits under the Police Powers Unit. I have detailed my contact with them below (only prior to the event itself)

- 22/9/2025 – received from HO Policy Team -
 - Do host police have an early-stage policing plan for this match, which could provide reassurance to (i) minister, and (ii) public correspondence

- If the SAG has imposed any additional requirement or restrictions
 - Is information exchange taking place between the UK NFIP and the Israeli NFIP, and the Netherlands NFIP (cognisant of the Ajax v Maccabi Tel Aviv match last season)
 - If there are any plans to refuse entry to the UK to known risk Israeli fans
- I forwarded the email to the Operational leads in WMP on 22nd September and asked to speak to them regarding this. I spoke with them and then spoke with them and then spoke with the HO. The basis of our conversation was, at this early stage the WMP were planning for a high-risk fixture, and all options were being explored.
- 26/9/2025 – received another email, this time from the Emergency Response Team (HO) who were making enquires for Number 10. They were aware of protests but wanted to know if we had any further information. I spoke with the policy team in HO and he was happy with our previous conversations.
- 2/10/2025 – email received from HO (policy team) asking for further information. I replied back on 2nd October (after a conversation with WMP) detailing the options being considered at this time 1) No supporters 2) Home supporters only 3) Both supporters but limit away fans.
- 8/10/2025 – email from HO (policy team) – confirms that the CC from WMP has briefed the Home Secretary that away fans may be banned. “We’ve heard that the West Midlands Chief briefed the Home Sec earlier that a condition of the match going ahead may be to ban away fans.” I spoke with WMP and I replied on 8th October that the SAG had met but no final decision had been made. However, working assumption is that away fans will be banned.

Under what circumstances you would ordinarily communicate with the Home Office or other Government departments about applying restrictions to away fans attending matches in the UK.

The UKFPU act as a conduit for information for the HO and other government departments when they require information about football issues. This function allows a single point of contact for government departments who otherwise may struggle to get the right contact in force or indeed a response in timeframes they require. I should add we deal with the policy team on a very regular basis (we have a 6 weekly scheduled meeting for example) which enables verbal updates on issues from both sides. As explained earlier, the UKFPU are not the decision makers on operational issues but act as facilitators when required.

Peer Review Document

This document contains intelligence and information that is owned by West Midlands Police and as such the sensitivity and disclosure remains within their purview.

I have spoken with West Midlands Police and they will supply you with a copy of the report with areas that cannot be disclosed appropriately redacted. I trust this is in order.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Johnson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael Johnson
Director UK Football Policing Unit

17th December 2025