

Gordon Taylor OBE

“I have been invited to become Patron of the Football Safety Officers’ Association and I am pleased to accept.

After 20 years as a professional footballer with Bolton Wanderers, Birmingham City, Blackburn Rovers and Bury in the English Football League, in my first decade as Secretary/Chief Executive of the Professional Footballers’ Association I experienced very closely the terrible tragedies of Heysel, Hillsborough, Bradford and Birmingham and the possibility that football could have been closed down because of its problems with crowd control and safety. Many lessons were learnt in that decade in how to deal with such issues by a combination of sensible legislation, the spreading of information, all-seater stadiums and particularly the role played by Football Safety Officers.

As crowds have continued to increase in both the Premier League and the Football League, it is more important than ever that football grounds become a safe haven for men, women, young and old irrespective of culture, colour or creed.

The role of a Football Safety Officer is to make sure that the safety of all spectators is paramount and for that reason I am hopeful that I can improve the status of the safety officer and raise the profile of your Association so that you continue to have a pivotal role in the game and are able to contribute to the decision making process on all matters of health and safety for the good of players and spectators throughout the country.”

Regards

Gordon

24 March 2011