



PRESS RELEASE

WARNING FOR FOOTBALL FANS

SCOTLAND'S police forces are to mount a major operation to detect people who drink to excess or try to bring alcohol to the Scotland versus Macedonia football match this Saturday.

As well as tracking down people carrying alcohol, officers will pay special attention to those who try to approach the National Stadium at Hampden Park in Glasgow under the influence of alcohol or without a ticket.

All eight forces in Scotland will be joined by colleagues from British Transport Police in ensuring that the World Cup qualifying fixture is not spoiled by those who have been drinking excessively or who behave in a disorderly or violent way.

Buses and trains from all over the country bringing fans to Glasgow for the big game will be targeted and anyone found in possession of alcohol may be arrested and charged. In addition bus drivers and operators would be liable to prosecution if they knowingly allowed alcohol to be carried on their vehicles.

Although Scotland international football fixtures are generally free of serious disorder or violence there is growing concern that excessive drinking, sometimes during three or four hour train or bus journeys to the game, may lead to trouble.

Assistant Chief Constable John Neilson of Strathclyde Police, speaking on behalf of the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland, said: "The Scotland team is supported by loyal and enthusiastic fans and we are expecting a good support for the game against Macedonia.

"Members of the Tartan Army have a tremendous reputation around the world for their friendliness and high spirits. We are determined to ensure that this does not deteriorate into rowdiness or violence because too much drink has been taken by an irresponsible few.

"We are not out to spoil the party but will make sure that people heading for this important game will not spoil it either by carrying alcohol or having too much to drink.

“Supporters and those operating the coaches are urged to leave plenty of time for their journey as there is a possibility of them being stopped for roadside police checks.”

Graeme Wellburn

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This press release has been prepared in accordance with the Lord Advocate's Guidelines

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