



Rugby Football Union
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englandrugby.com

Ms Rachael Griffin,
Senior Coroner, for the Coroner Area of Dorset
Bournemouth Coroner's Court
Town Hall
Bournemouth
BH1 6DY

20 June 2022

Dear Ms Griffin,

CHARTERING COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS – REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATH

We write with reference to the Inquest into the death of professional footballer Emiliano Sala on 21 January 2019, and the Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths dated 18 March 2022 and issued to the RFU under paragraph 7, Schedule 5 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013 (the Regulation 28 Report).

Thank you for your forbearance whilst we have worked to identify, review and action the recommendations in the Regulation 28 Report, and we are pleased to respond as follows.

Having considered which of our members are likely to charter aircraft for commercial operations, we can confirm that we have cascaded the findings in the Regulation 28 Report to all clubs involved in the Premiership, being the top level of the professional game in England. This is the only fully professional league within rugby union in England. A copy of the letter which has been sent to the Chief Executives of all such Clubs is enclosed for the Coroner's reference. We also raised this subject at the June meeting of the Professional Game Board, which is the forum for discussing principal matters relating to the professional game, made up of representatives of the RFU, Premier Rugby, Premiership rugby clubs, Championship rugby clubs and the Rugby Players' Association.

We do not consider it likely that other clubs within the membership of the RFU are likely to, or indeed can afford to, charter private aircraft for commercial purposes, neither are we aware of this having happened in the past. It is our understanding that to the extent Clubs need to charter flights for either team travel or other purposes, they are likely to make use of commercial airlines given the costs involved.

We would also wish to add that there are Clubs within the membership of the RFU and who participate in the RFU leagues who travel to Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man to play rugby union. As above, these teams make use of commercial airlines for these purposes.

The RFU itself has a commercial arrangement with British Airways, and the majority of flights used for RFU staff and teams are organised through British Airways.

Aside from those mentioned above, we do not consider that the Regulation 28 Report needs to be shared further with other Clubs within the RFU membership, as it is highly unlikely that they would be chartering commercial flights for Club or rugby union related purposes. It is important to note that the financial resources of Clubs within the RFU membership is significantly lower than those in Football or some other sports, and accordingly the risk of Clubs chartering the type of flights which the Regulation 28 Report seeks to highlight is, in our opinion, minimal. We have nonetheless taken action and communicated the associated risks to those Clubs where we believe the risk is potentially the highest.

Should you have any queries, or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Will Loney of these offices via [REDACTED] who will be able to assist.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Director of Legal and Governance
Rugby Football Union**