

**COMMITTEE ON SAFETY AND SECURITY
AT SPORTS EVENTS (T-S4)**

**COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONVENTION ON AN INTEGRATED
SAFETY, SECURITY AND SERVICE APPROACH AT
FOOTBALL MATCHES AND OTHER SPORTS EVENTS
(CETS No. 218)**



Strasbourg, 19 January 2026

Rec (2026) 1

Saint-Denis Convention (CETS No. 218)

Committee on Safety and Security at Sports Events

Advisory Group on Standard Setting and Legal Issues (T-S4 LI)

Recommendation Rec (2026)1 on countering chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive (CBRN-E) risks at football matches and other sports events

**Adopted by the Saint-Denis Committee by written procedure
on 19 January 2026**

RECOMMENDATION REC (2026) 1

COMMITTEE ON SAFETY AND SECURITY AT SPORTS EVENTS, OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONVENTION ON AN INTEGRATED SAFETY, SECURITY AND SERVICE APPROACH AT FOOTBALL MATCHES AND OTHER SPORTS EVENTS (SAINT-DENIS COMMITTEE OR T-S4)

Strasbourg, 19 January 2026

Recommendation Rec (2026) 1 on countering chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive (CBRN-E) risks at football matches and other sports events

Preamble

The Saint-Denis Committee,

Recalling the objectives and principles set out in the Council of Europe Convention on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events (Saint-Denis Convention, STCE No. 218), in particular the emphasis on multi-agency, integrated, and human-rights-based measures to ensure the safety, security and service at sports events;

Recognising that sports events and associated gatherings, may be vulnerable to chemical, biological (pathogens and toxins), radiological, nuclear and explosive (CBRN-E) incidents, whether malicious or accidental;

Concerned by the potential for evolving safety and security threats, including misuse of technological advances by malicious actors, to cause serious harm to people, property, and public confidence;

Acknowledging that the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery from CBRN-E incidents requires effective cooperation between public authorities, private operators, event organisers, supporters and local communities;

Mindful of relevant work undertaken by the United Nations, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the International Atomic Energy Agency, INTERPOL, the European Union, and other regional or international bodies in this field;

Building upon the EU Council conclusions on countering chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive (CBRN-E) risks at mass events, in particular mass sport events;

Considering that the existing standards on CBRN-E set in T-S4 Recommendation Rec (2021) 1 , Annex A (Safety), Appendix 7 (Counter terrorism), need to be further developed,

Recommends that Governments of Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events (CETS No. 218) adopt or refine their legal frameworks and policies on countering chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive (CBRN-E) risks at football matches and other sports events based on the following principles:

I. Policy and Strategic Planning

1. Integrate CBRN-E risk prevention and management into national legislation, policies and guidelines for the safety, security and service of sports events, consistent with the multi-agency integrated approach of the Saint-Denis Convention.
2. Establish clear standards or minimum requirements for infrastructure, equipment, and multi-agency plans, procedures and measures regarding the prevention, preparedness response to and recovery from CBRN-E incidents and attacks at sports venues, before, during and after the organisation of sports events, proportionate to the assessed risks.

II. Risk Assessment and Monitoring

1. Carry out regular threat and vulnerability assessments of high-risk sports venues, identifying potential exposure points to CBRN-E incidents or attacks.
2. Based on these assessments, implement actions and monitoring mechanisms to improve the ability to anticipate, prevent, protect and respond to CBRN-E incidents, with the aim to enhance the resilience of event facilities to withstand or mitigate such risks.

III. Multi-Agency Coordination

1. Ensure that CBRN-E preparedness and response measures are planned and delivered through multi-agency cooperation involving law enforcement, emergency services, public health, agriculture and environmental services¹, municipal authorities, venue operators, sports governing bodies and relevant private sector actors.
2. Include CBRN-E scenarios and exercises in integrated operational plans and command structures before and during sports events.

IV. Capacity-building and Training

1. Develop and deliver regular, scenario-based CBRN-E training for organisers, stadium managers, stewards, security staff, volunteers, and relevant public authorities.

¹ Especially relevant for zoonotic diseases, as well as sport events involving animals.

2. Cover key topics such as:

- recognition of indicators² coming from agents (biological or chemical) listed in the Biological Weapons Convention and Chemical Weapon Convention³;
 - understanding the growing importance of substances listed in both Conventions (toxins like ricin, abrin or T-2);
 - recognition of indicators coming from non-military CBRN-E agents;
 - recognition of indicators coming from CBRN-E agents, especially of a new and growing importance (like synthetic opioids, biotoxins, next generation nerve agents);
 - basic knowledge of CBRN-E measures (e.g.: monitoring, protection, preparedness and response, decontamination, public awareness - measures that aim to minimize the risk and impact of CBRN-E incidents on public safety and security);
 - CBRN-E vulnerability assessment of the venue and surroundings;
 - crowd management and evacuation procedures under CBRN-E conditions;
 - incident response protocols or procedures;
 - development of security plans, including CBRN-E;
 - communication with the public;
 - protective and decontamination measures and managing consequences (post-event);
 - data recovery management after an incident or attack; and
 - data protection and information security.
3. Encourage cooperation with national, regional, and international CBRN-E training facilities and research bodies.

V. Preventive and Protective Measures

1. Avoid the storage of hazardous CBRN-E materials in facilities for sports venues; where unavoidable, ensure secure storage with robust access control.
2. Implement both visible and discreet protective measures proportionate to risk, in compliance with human rights and privacy obligations.

² An indicator is a signal or piece of information that suggests the possibility of an incident or situation requiring particular attention.

³ Some biological agents that are not specified in the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) could still lead to incidental incidents. The same applies to certain chemicals, including some precursors and discreet organic chemicals (DOCs). Therefore, conducting a credible threat assessment will help to identify potential biological and chemical agents that are relevant to a specific location and its environment.

VI. Knowledge Sharing and Cooperation

1. Facilitate cross-border and cross-sectoral exchanges of good practice and lessons learned in CBRN-E prevention and response in the context of sports events.
2. Promote collaboration with academic and research institutions to support evidence-based policy, scenario modelling, and innovation in CBRN-E detection and mitigation.
3. Engage, when needed, with relevant international organisations with a mandate covering CBRN-E prevention, preparedness and/or response, such as INTERPOL, OPCW or IAEA.

VII. Resources and Support

1. Ensure responders are provided up to date training in preventing, recognising and responding to CBRN-E incidents
2. Ensure responders are provided appropriate equipment and resources to deliver CBRN-E preparedness and response capability at all relevant levels.
3. Where safe and permissible, repurpose expired or near-expiry CBRN-E stocks for training purposes.

VIII. Follow-up

1. The Saint-Denis Committee shall:
 - Monitor the implementation of this Recommendation through exchanges between Parties;
 - Facilitate the development of practical tools, model procedures, and checklists to assist Parties in integrating CBRN-E measures into their safety, security and service frameworks; and
 - Liaise with relevant international organisations to ensure coherence and complementarity of guidance.

ANNEX 1

Practical Checklist for Integrating CBRN-E Preparedness into Safety, Security and Service Plans for Sports Events

1. Risk Assessment

- Conduct a formal **threat assessment** for CBRN-E risks prior to each sports event.
 - Carry out **vulnerability assessment of** the sport facility and surroundings.
 - Carry out **vulnerability mapping** of venues, access points, and surrounding public spaces.
 - Identify **high-risk activities** or locations (e.g., storage areas, VIP zones and catering facilities).
 - Update the assessment based on **intelligence and incident trends**.
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2. Multi-Agency Coordination

- Establish a **joint planning group** involving:
 - Law enforcement agencies
 - Fire and rescue services
 - Public health authorities
 - Agriculture and environmental services
 - Medical services
 - Venue operators and event organisers
 - Sports governing bodies
 - Relevant private sector partners.
 - Define **roles and responsibilities** for CBRN-E prevention, detection, response, and recovery.
 - Ensure **real-time communication channels** are in place between agencies.
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3. Preventive Measures

- Eliminate or **minimise storage of hazardous substances** on site.
- Where storage is unavoidable, apply **strict security controls** (access restrictions, CCTV, inventory checks).
- Conduct **pre-event venue sweeps** for hazardous materials.

- Install or make available **detection systems** for CBRN-E threats where feasible.
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4. Preparedness and Training

- Provide **annual training** on CBRN-E threats and risks for:
 - Event managers
 - Security and stewarding staff
 - Medical and emergency responders
 - Volunteers
 - Include **scenario-based exercises** with simulated CBRN-E incidents.
 - Train staff on:
 - Recognition of CBRN-E indicators
 - Evacuation under CBRN-E conditions
 - Decontamination procedures
 - Recovery procedures
 - Communication protocols with the public and media
 - Handling sensitive data and operational information.
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5. Crowd Management and Evacuation

- Integrate CBRN-E contingencies into **crowd management plans**.
 - Identify **primary and secondary evacuation routes** that account for contamination zones.
 - Pre-designate **safe holding areas** and decontamination points.
 - Conduct **public awareness campaigns** where appropriate.
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6. Response and Recovery

- Maintain a **CBRN-E incident command structure** aligned with national emergency frameworks.
- Pre-arrange **specialist response teams** (police, hazmat, medical) for rapid deployment.
- Identify and maintain **scientific reachback** for rapid access to specialised expertise.
- Establish **post-incident communication plans** to inform the public and stakeholders.

- Plan for **recovery operations**, including site clearance, psychological support, and reputational management.
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7. Post-Event Review

- Conduct a **post-event debrief** with all stakeholders.
- Document **lessons learned** and integrate them into future planning.
- Share relevant insights with other Saint-Denis Convention Parties through the Committee's monitoring, international cooperation and technical assistance mechanisms.

ANNEX 2
CBRN-E Readiness Quick Card
for Sports Venues

1. KNOW YOUR RISKS

- Threat assessment before every event.
 - Map vulnerabilities (access points, storage, VIP areas).
 - Update with latest intelligence.
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2. WORK TOGETHER

- Joint planning group: police, fire, health, venue operations, sports bodies, private sector.
 - Clear roles & contacts.
 - Real-time communication links tested before event.
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3. PREVENT PROBLEMS

- No hazardous substances on site unless unavoidable.
 - Secure storage: access control.
 - Pre-event sweeps for suspicious substances/devices.
 - Install or use portable detection if possible.
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4. TRAIN & PRACTICE

- Annual training for safety and security staff and volunteers.
 - Run CBRN-E scenario drills (evacuation, decontamination, crowd messaging).
 - Teach: CBRN-E indicators recognition, personal protective equipment use, public communication, data security.
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5. MANAGE AND CONTROL THE CROWD

- Include CBRN-E in crowd plans.
 - Pre-designate evacuation routes & safe areas.
 - Identify decontamination points.
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6. RESPOND FAST

- Use established incident command system.
 - Pre-alert hazmat/medical units.
 - Clear public messaging channels ready.
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7. RECOVER SMART

- Plan site cleanup, victim care, and media handling.
- Debrief all partners after the event.
- Share lessons learned nationally & via Saint-Denis Committee network.